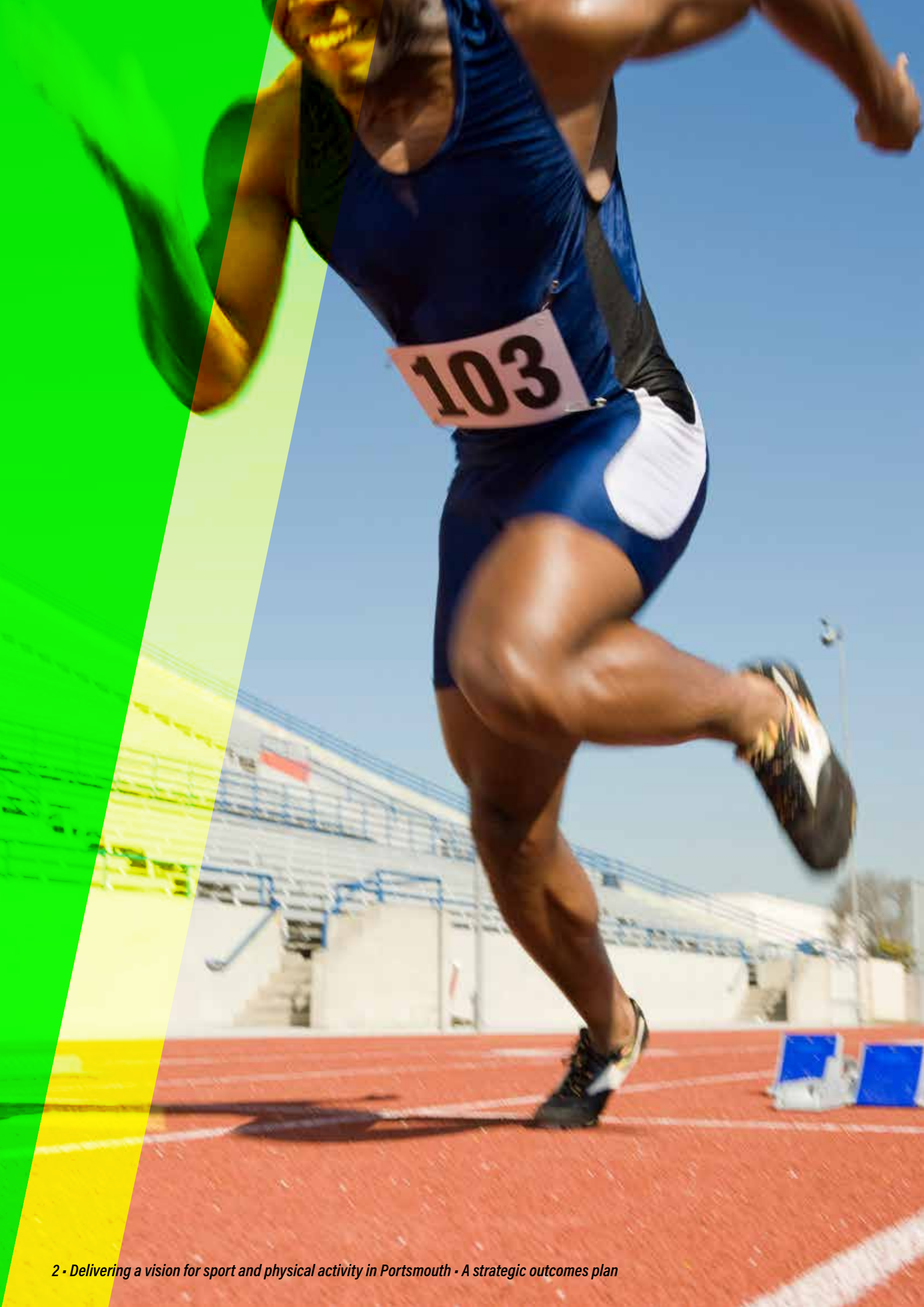




Portsmouth  
CITY COUNCIL

# **DELIVERING A VISION FOR SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IN PORTSMOUTH**

*A strategic outcomes plan*



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# **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

Portsmouth City Council has been working to transform sport and physical activity in the city, recognising it as a driver of resident health and wellbeing. In general, the health of people in the city is worse than in the rest of England, and there are significant health inequalities and disparities across the city.

The need for a citywide approach to the provision of leisure facilities and programmes led to the development of an Indoor Facility Strategy for the city, adopted by the authority in 2017. The authority also approved a Playing Pitch Strategy in 2018, and an Open Space Strategy.

These documents have guided strategic thinking in recent years about how and where the city needs to have leisure facilities, and approaches to making this happen. The 2017 work identified a range of issues related to community need, sustainability, age and condition of facilities, and established that the existing facility mix was not fit for purpose. A recent update to the strategy highlighted that the key messages remain the same – there is a need to replace ageing buildings, and specifically pools and sports halls, to provide improved environments in which people can be active and which will act as encouragement to those who are inactive to engage and participate.

The Covid-19 pandemic provided a harsh illustration of the impact of underlying poor health on a community, and demonstrated the importance of supporting populations to be healthy and look after their wellbeing. The authority developed a recovery document, noting that physical activity has



never been more important as Portsmouth emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, and setting out a vision for sport and physical activity in the city, reflected in this report.

In support of the vision, the authority and partners are now investing significantly into sport and physical activity in the city, with key projects including:

- King George V Playing Fields 3G pitches
- Bransbury Park Leisure Centre
- Hilsea Lido
- Pyramids transformation
- Mountbatten Centre infrastructure investment
- Moneyfields 3G pitches
- University of Portsmouth Ravelin Sports Centre

This document sets out how we continue to develop the role of sport and physical activity in the city, including how capital investment will be targeted for greatest impact.

# DEVELOPING A STRATEGIC OUTCOMES PLAN

The Strategic Outcomes Planning Model is based on Sport England guidance which has been published to assist local authorities to take a strategic approach to maximising the contribution that sport and physical activity makes to its local outcomes and to ensure that any local investment made is as effective as possible and is sustainable in the long term.

The structure of this report follows the order of the guidance so as to understand the council's position within the strategic planning process. The guidance is structured around four stages:

## STAGE 1 – OUTCOMES

Develop shared local strategic outcomes for your place;

## STAGE 3 – INTERVENTIONS

Identify how the outcomes can be delivered sustainably; and

## STAGE 2 – INSIGHT

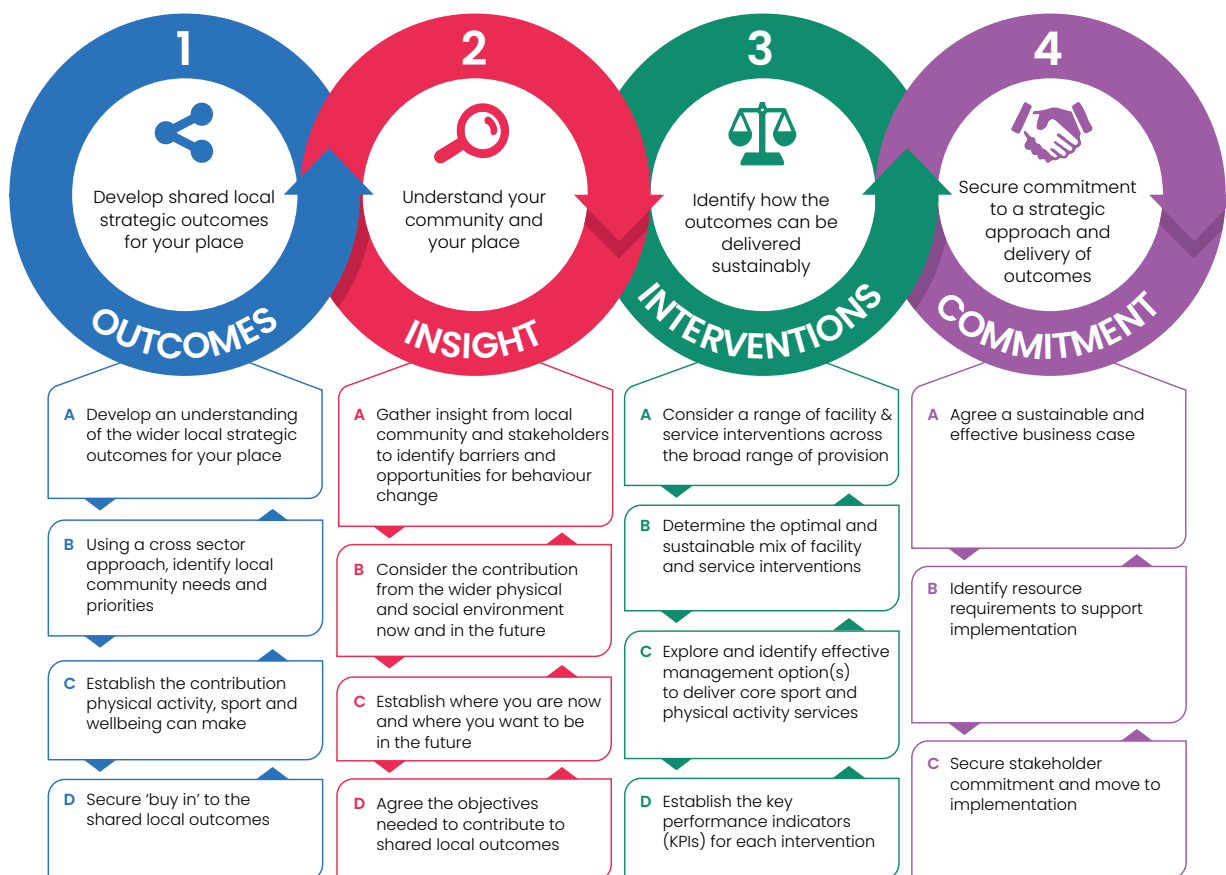
Understand your community and your place;

## STAGE 4 – COMMITMENT

Secure commitment to a strategic approach and delivery of outcomes.



**Figure 1: Sport England Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance approach**



# STAGE 1: OUTCOMES

*Develop shared local strategic outcomes for your place*

**Stage 1 of the strategy outlines the key local and national strategic priorities and considers how sport, leisure and physical activity can contribute towards achieving them.**

## *National priorities*

Former Chief Medical Officer Liam Donaldson commented that 'the potential benefits of physical activity to health are huge. If a medication existed that had a similar effect, it would be regarded as a 'wonder drug' or 'miracle cure'. Being active can prevent and manage over 20 chronic diseases with inactivity associated with 1 in 6 deaths in the UK.<sup>1</sup> Regular physical activity is proven to help prevent and manage non-communicable diseases such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes and several cancers. It also helps prevent hypertension, maintain healthy body weight and can improve mental health, quality of life and well-being.<sup>2</sup> Physical activity for young people can increase bone density and create a benefit that lasts all of their life, and in later life can increase the strength and thickness of cartilage and prevent deterioration of the joints. Indirect benefits from planned and incidental physical activity, such as active travel, include environmental benefits such as reduced air pollution

<sup>1</sup> *Physical Health: applying All our Health, 2019, PHE*

<sup>2</sup> *World Health Organisation, 2020*





from car travel; social benefits through improvements in social capital and community cohesion due to increased social mixing; economic benefits with reduced treatment costs, increased productivity, reduced absenteeism and improvements to the local economy through greater pedestrian footfall. The current Chief Medical Officer, Professor Sir Chris Whitty has noted that “There is no situation, there is no age and no condition where exercise is not a good thing”.

These messages were reinforced in a British Medical Association briefing, ***Get Moving – Steps to increase physical activity levels in the UK***. The report, published in October 2019, examines the wide range of benefits of physical activity (see diagram below), the current low levels of physical activity in the UK and the significant inequalities that exist in levels of physical activity within the population. Policy recommendations are across four core parts of people’s lives:

- **travel** (increased investment in active travel);
- **leisure** (access to open spaces and recreation facilities);
- **school** (physical education recognised and protected as an essential part of the school curriculum); and
- **work** (encourage active travel).

**Figure 2: British Medical Association (BMA) 'Get Moving Report', October 2019**



Whilst many national and local strategies address the health and wellbeing benefits of lower obesity and higher physical activity levels for residents, there have also been national assessments of the economic impact of increasing levels of activity. Research carried out by the Sport Industry Research Centre at Sheffield Hallam University for Sport England demonstrates that community sport and physical activity generates significant social and economic value to England, and in doing so contributes to the five government outcomes identified in *Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation* (physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development, and economic development).

The findings of the above report show that for every £1 spent on community sport and physical activity in England, an economic and social return on investment of £3.91 is generated. Taking into account physical health benefits, mental wellbeing uplifts and economic development, the contribution was found to benefit some £85.5 billion to the English economy and society.

Conversely, Public Health England estimates the cost of physical **inactivity** in the UK to be £7.4bn per year, including £0.9bn to the NHS alone.

The importance of sport and physical activity to the social and economic wellbeing of the UK is now highlighted in a number of recent reports and is reflected in many policy frameworks at a national level.

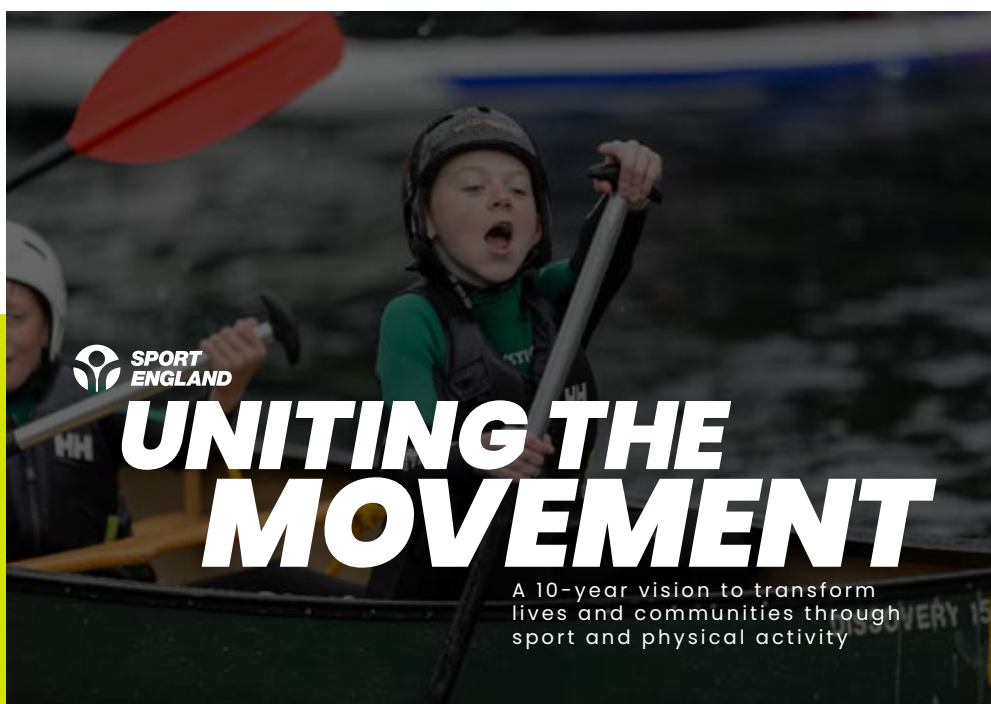
In 2015, the Government produced ***Sporting Future: A new strategy for an active nation***. This cross-government strategy was designed to

tackle head on the flatlining levels of sport participation and high levels of inactivity in this country. The strategy focuses on five key outcomes: physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development and economic development, with a mission for more people from every background regularly and meaningfully: a) taking part in sport and physical activity, b) volunteering and c) experiencing live sport. This strategy informs wider government frameworks relating to sport and physical activity.

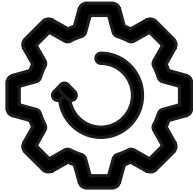
A further important cross-government initiative of relevance was launched in 2018, **"A connected society – a strategy for tackling loneliness."** Then Prime Minister, Theresa May, highlighted in the foreword to the document that loss of social contact is incredibly damaging to health and wellbeing of everyone, with research now showing that loneliness is as damaging to our physical health as smoking. The importance of supporting grassroot opportunities to strengthen local social relationships and community ties was highlighted, with sport noted as one of the key sectors that could foster social connections through participation and providing volunteering opportunities.

**Sport England 'Uniting the Movement' Strategy 2021-2031** – The new Sport England Strategy 'Uniting the Movement' was launched on 26th January 2021 with the vision: *'Imagine a nation of more equal, inclusive and connected communities. A country where people live happier, healthier and more fulfilled lives'*. The mission of this strategy is to *'invest in sport and physical activity to make it a normal part of life for everyone in England, regardless of who you are.'*

**Figure 3a: Sport England Uniting the Movement Strategy, 2021–2031**

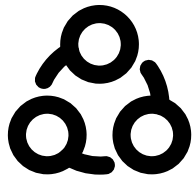


# FIVE BIG ISSUES



## **RECOVER AND REINVENT**

Recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.



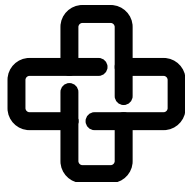
## **CONNECTING COMMUNITIES**

Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.



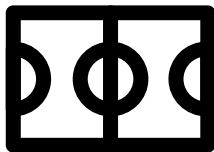
## **POSITIVE EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

Unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.



## **CONNECTING WITH HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.



## **ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS**

Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

The Sport England 5 big issues are: **Recover and Reinvent, Connecting Communities, Positive Experiences for Young Children and Young People, Connecting with Health & Wellbeing** and **Active Environments**.

The strategy also focuses on 'expanding our **place-based working** by collaborating with more places and their decision-makers on their local priorities and partnership opportunities, helping them use sport and physical activity to deliver the outcomes they want, and their communities need. In the places we're working intensely already, we'll do more to join-up our investment and use what we're learning to influence others.'

A very significant policy statement was the Sport England report, **The Future of Public Leisure**, published in December 2022. The report provides an overview of the current landscape and proposes a model that will enable the sector to create a more sustainable future.

This model – a shared vision between all stakeholders – would see traditional leisure services transition to being focused on active wellbeing. It will create a closer relationship between health and leisure, built on social prescribing, co-location of services and the delivery of preventative activity opportunities – providing users with convenient places and ways to be active, located in close proximity to other health and social care services and facilities.

Co-location of facilities maximises the impact and value for money of these services, and the new vision is built around four inter-related foundations and commitments:

- Alignment of leisure, physical, mental health and social care
- Place-based provision
- Low carbon provision
- Strong sector leadership

**PHE Strategy 2020 – 2025 Protecting and Improving the Nation's Health** (published September 2019) – This strategy outlines the foremost priorities to focus on for the next five years to both protect people and help people to live longer in good health. Whilst focus is given to reductions in smoking and air pollution, increased levels of physical activity can significantly support reducing childhood obesity and improved mental health.

**National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** – this document sets out the requirement of local authorities to establish and provide adequate and proper leisure facilities to meet local needs. Paragraphs 96 and 97 outline the planning policies for the provision and protection of sport and recreation facilities, stating that *"Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and wellbeing of communities. Planning policies should be based on robust and up to date assessments of the needs for open space, sports and*

*recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. The assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sports and recreational provision is required”.*

Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places (para 91) which:

- promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example, through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;
- are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example, through the use of clear and legible pedestrian routes and high-quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and,
- enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and wellbeing needs – for example, through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.

Investment into physical activity is not just limited to leisure centres. The Department for Transport has recognised the benefits, particularly during Covid-19, of cycling and walking. They have recently published their ‘bold vision’ for cycling and walking in their **Gear Change** strategy (2020).

This strategy highlights the many benefits of cycling and walking as seen in the infographic (*figure 4*). The vision extends to healthier, happier and greener communities, safer streets, convenient and accessible travel. It also highlights the importance of active travel with better cycling and walking infrastructure being at heart of all transport policy and planning. Their vision is that:

*“England will be a great walking and cycling nation. Places will be truly walkable. A travel revolution in our streets, towns and communities will have made cycling a mass form of transit. Cycling and walking will be the natural first choice for many journeys with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030”.*

The Gear Change aspirations are reflected in the NPPF document, **‘Promoting Sustainable Transport’**, which notes that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals, so that **‘opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued’**.

**Figure 4: Department for Transport "Gear Change" strategy.**

A bold future vision of cycling and walking in England:



### Healthier, happier and greener communities

Peoples' health and quality of life is improved by more people walking and cycling; the number of short journeys made by car is vastly reduced, meaning people from all parts of our communities around the country can enjoy the benefits of cleaner, healthier, safer and quieter streets.

### Safer streets

Nobody is afraid to cycle; every child is confident and safe walking or cycling to school; all road users treat each other with mutual respect.



### Convenient and accessible travel

Cycling and walking are recognised as the most convenient, desirable and affordable way to travel in our local areas; more women and disadvantaged groups enjoy walking and cycling as part of their daily journeys; everybody has opportunities to take up walking and cycling.

### At the heart of transport decision-making

Better cycling and walking infrastructure has allowed more efficient use of road space, to the benefit of all road users; cycling and walking routes are well connected with wider public transport services; cycling and walking measures are no longer seen as an afterthought but have moved to the very heart of considerations for all transport policy and planning, at all levels of leadership.

Sport England's Active Environments guidance notes that Every space and place that we move through in our daily lives can have a bearing on if and how we move more, so we need to look at the big picture to truly create active environments.

The guidance takes the approach that there's no such thing as a 'neutral space'. The places and spaces around us can have a positive or negative impact on whether, how, when, and where we move. The guidance approaches these spaces in three broad categories:

- Dedicated sport and physical activity facilities: i.e. pitches, courts, pools and leisure centres, where historic investment focus has been.
- Other community spaces: i.e. parks and open spaces, village halls, community centres and schools.
- The wider built environment: i.e. streets, housing estates, squares and tow paths.

These national policy priorities broadly highlight the importance of linking with health and wellbeing, creating positive environments and thinking about how specific populations can be supported to participate in sport and physical activity. These issues are specifically addressed in a range of local frameworks.

## **Local priorities**

**The vision for Portsmouth** – In 2019 and 2020, the local authority embarked on an exercise with partners, "Imagine Portsmouth", to create a shared vision for the city. The authority worked with 2,500 people representing business and organisations who live and work in Portsmouth to talk about their hopes and dreams for the city. People created big bold plans for what they wanted in the future.

The key themes were:

*We believe in:*

- Equality
- Innovation
- collaboration
- respect
- community

*By 2040, we want to see a:*

- happy and healthy city
- city rich in culture and creativity
- city with a thriving economy
- city of lifelong learning
- green city
- city with easy travel.'





Figure 5: Portsmouth City Vision



This vision belongs to the city, not just the council. However, we have adopted it and will be an important part of turning the vision into a reality, so we have set clear priorities for the organisation to help us do that.

The administration has set out their own clear mission in the corporate plan recently published for the authority.

***“Our mission for 2022/23 is to work together with partners and communities to stand up for Portsmouth, taking action to improve the city and the lives of our residents, and to tackle the climate crisis.”***

In support of this mission, there are underpinning priorities to focus attention and resources.

Figure 6: Portsmouth City Council Corporate Priorities

# DELIVERING FOR PORTSMOUTH OUR MISSION AND PRIORITIES 2022/23



We will work together with partners and communities to stand up for Portsmouth, take action to improve the city and the lives of our residents, and tackle the climate crisis.

## STAND UP FOR PORTSMOUTH

- support people during the cost-of-living crisis
- work with partners to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour
- ensure access to health services
- have a strong voice in our region

## IMPROVE LIVES

- deliver major improvement projects
- deliver new, affordable homes
- improve transport
- help people live independent, healthy lives
- ensure access to cultural and leisure opportunities

## TACKLE THE CLIMATE CRISIS

- reduce our carbon impact
- support people to take positive action
- encourage wider environmental responsibility
- make the city greener

At heart of the plan is providing the services that our residents rely on, and the support services that enable these to be provide effectively

ensure older people and vulnerable adults are looked after and supported to live independently, maintain our transport infrastructure, parks, open spaces and buildings, offer housing services, support education, early years and children with special educational needs, keep children safe and families together, encourage economic development, provide planning, support culture, museums and libraries, provide benefits and collect council tax and business rates, collect their bins, and keep the city clean.



## HEALTH AND WELLBEING STRATEGY 2022 – 2030

The authority has also worked with partners to refresh a joint **Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2022–2030**. The strategy seeks to tackle the wider determinants of health in the city and looks at five key issues:

- Poverty
- Education
- Housing
- Positive relationships
- Active travel and air quality

The themes all have clear relationships between them, and support the idea of positive environments and facilities as drivers of wellbeing for the city.

This strategy is supported by a delivery plan for Health and Care Portsmouth, and documents focusing on supporting physical health for children and adults in the city, overseen by the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight regional Physical Activity Strategy – We Can Be Active produced by Energise Me and co-created with delivery partners was launched at the end of July 2021. It takes a broad, inclusive view of increasing physical activity. To reduce health inequalities, the focus is on areas where the health needs are highest, activity levels lowest and the potential health gains the greatest.

The strategy's mission is: *'To inspire and support active lifestyles so we can all be active in a way that suits us'*. Success is defined as: *'People who*

*once struggled to be active feel the positive benefits of increased activity*'. To achieve this, collaborative working across systems will be required, with activity aligned under 5 underpinning priorities:

- Positive early experiences for our children and young people.
- Opportunities that meet our needs and interests, that are accessible and easy to find.
- Places and travel routes where we all feel safe and are encouraged to be active.
- Support to help us get started or keep moving when we feel that we can't do it alone.
- Bold leaders working together to create happier and healthier communities.

The approach to increasing physical activity in Portsmouth includes not only organised activity such as sport, but also incidental activity. In other words, any activity built up in small amounts over the day, such as walking up the stairs or to the bus stop. The focus of action includes sport and leisure facilities, but also the built and natural environments that can enable physically active behaviours.

**Sports Facilities Strategy** and the **PCC Sports and Leisure's post-Covid-19 Vision** – PCC is continuing to invest in its leisure facilities to ensure that they meet the needs of the people of Portsmouth, and to enable them to operate sustainably and in an environmentally friendly way.

Based on public consultation the Sports Facilities Strategy adopted in 2017 recommended that some of the older, lower quality facilities (Eastney Swimming Pool, Wimbledon Park Sports Centre) be closed and re-provided as a combined new facility. The decision was taken in October 2020 to close the Pyramids leisure pool and re-purpose the building by converting the pool into an indoor adventure play and bounce attraction, and large modern gym. This is now fully operational, and work is underway to further enhance the offer by exploring options for sensory provision and installing a Changing Places facility. There is an ongoing consideration of the longer term future



of the site, given the aging building fabric and positioning within the wider seafront masterplan.

The University have now opened the Ravelin Sports Centre, designed to be one of the UK's most sustainable sports centres located in the historic Ravelin Park in Old Portsmouth. The centre includes a 175 station gym, 8 court sports hall, 8 lane 25m swimming pool, multi-purpose fitness class studios, Squash courts, Ski simulator and Climbing wall and is open to the community as well as staff and students of the university. The development of the site has enabled wider thinking about the facility mix in the south of the city.

Proposals have been brought forward to bring community, sports and swimming facilities together in one new modern and ecologically sound hub at Bransbury Park. There is an aspiration that the new offer would be a broader service hub, including health services and looking at the enhancement of the wider environment to reflect the principles of active environments and social prescribing.

This is not the only significant investment under consideration by the local authority into improving the sport and physical activity offer in the city. The authority is working with the Football Foundation to bring forward a football hub in the north of the city, at King George V playing fields, which will include 2 artificial grass pitches (one of which will be supersize) and enhanced ancillary facilities. The Foundation are also supporting the local football club's community foundation, Pompey in the Community, to bring forward enhanced facilities on the former site of Moneyfields Football Club. Engagement with Portsmouth Football Club remains strong, with the authority keen to support aspirations around improved training facilities and enhanced stadium access.

The Levelling Up agenda has also provided a catalysing opportunity to look at facilities in the city that can be transformational for their communities, and the city council has been awarded Levelling Up funding to regenerate the 1930s Hilsea Lido site and develop the wider area as a Linear Park, with a focus on improving opportunities for activity in the local community and enhancing physical and mental wellbeing.

Portsmouth is unique as the UK's only island city, and we also recognise the opportunities that water brings to activate physical activity and sporting opportunities. The city developed a **Watersports Strategy**, which recognises that the city has thriving a watersport and coastal recreation community and some excellent facilities, but that there was a need to work within the national and local policy contexts to build on this foundation and harness the energy that exists to ensure there is a significant impact for residents, visitors and business. In developing the strategy, we consulted with a wide range of partners. Four key themes were highlighted:

- Ensuring participation in watersports and coastal recreation is as safe, easy and inclusive as possible
- Taking and making opportunities to make the most of facilities and assets across the city to improve the watersports and coastal recreation offer in Portsmouth
- Building on the watersports and coastal recreation opportunity to promote the Great Waterfront City
- Using the opportunity presented by watersport and coastal recreation to enhance the education and skills offer of Portsmouth.

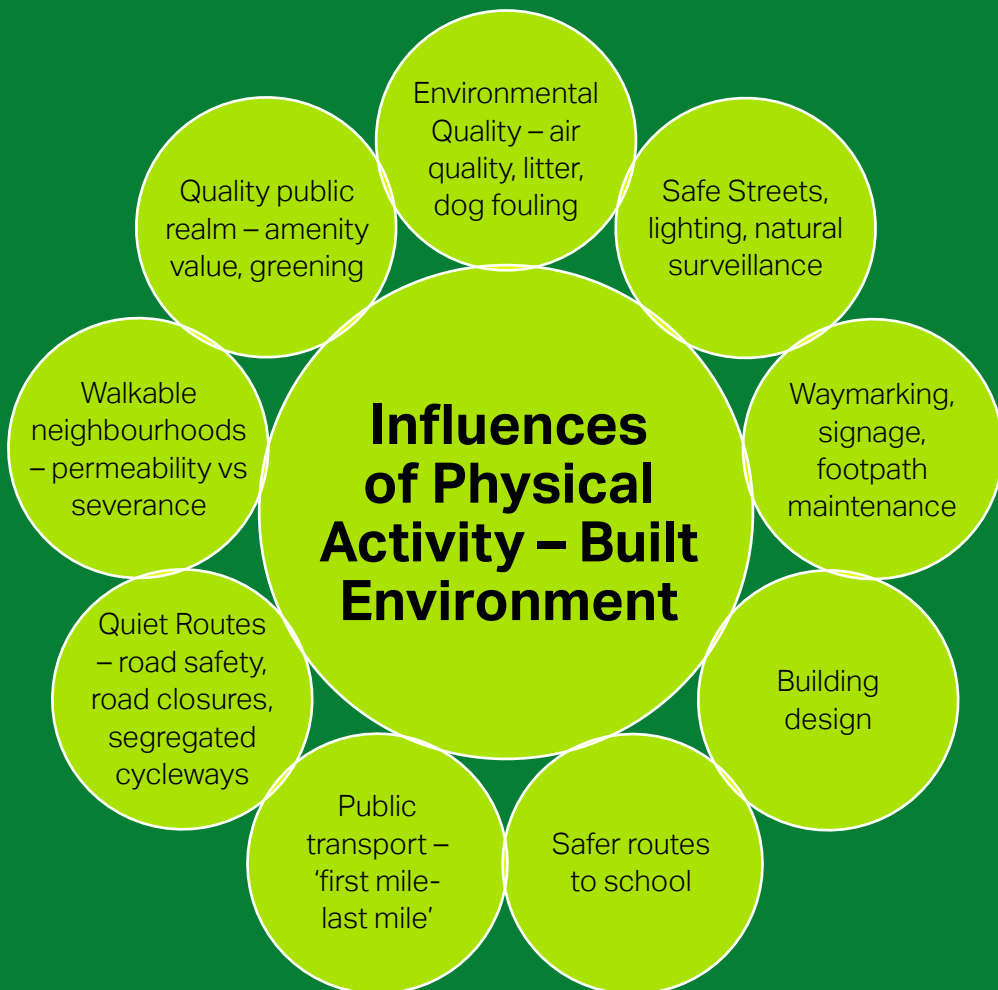
There have been some significant outcomes as a result of this work. The city has successfully retendered the contract for the Watersports Centre and this is now operated by Andrew Simpson Foundation who have successfully repositioned the operation and raised the profile of the centre and its potential. Building on the engagement with Ben Ainslie Racing and the America's Cup, we continue to look to the opportunity of water-based events, and in September 2023, will host the European Kite Surfing Championships. There is also considerable work underway to consider how the Hilsea sites can be activated for water-based sports and activity.

**Youth Strategy** – the administration is clear that support and services for young people are essential, and have developed a framework for sustaining youth services in the future. The model draws on work to develop a strong model of activity through the Holiday Activities and Food programme (HAF) in the city, where sports and activity providers have been strong leaders in provision. The approach also seeks to bolster existing provision in the city for play and youth services, which tends to be located in the west of the city where there are larger estate locations, by looking at sites in areas

where open-access youth provision is not as embedded. A local authority bid has been made to the Youth Investment Fund (YIF) to support schemes for active and positive environments at King George V Playing Field (linked to the Football Hub) and Bransbury Park (looking to enhance the wider site including skate park provision). Pompey In the Community have also secured YIF funding to support the Moneyfields development.

**Active Environments** – There is a significant body of work being delivered across PCC and by partner organisations within the city that both directly and indirectly influences physical activity. The diagram below indicates some examples of the way the built environment can positively impact physical activity.

**Figure 7: Key built environment influences of physical activity**



The Transport team in the Council aim to 'deliver a people centred network that prioritises walking, cycling and public transport to help deliver a safer, healthier and more prosperous city'. The development of the **Local Transport Plan 3** and **Local and Cycling Walking and Infrastructure Plan** have included close involvement with public health colleagues to ensure physical activity are central considerations. Both emphasise the need for a modal shift away from car travel to more active modes. A wide range of transport policies support active travel and physical activity including, but not limited to: the School Streets programme and Pompey Monsters Walk to School initiative to promote active travel to school; the South East Hampshire Rapid Transit network to promote rapid bus travel in the Portsmouth travel to work area; development of Quieter Routes for safer cycling; an electric scooter scheme; development of an East-West Cycle corridor from Fratton to the Hard; a range of schemes to improve air quality which encourage modal shift away from private cars towards active travel modes.

The **Local Plan** is currently being refreshed and will be considering the impact of the built environment on residents. The sports facility strategy will be a key piece of evidence to the document, along with the **Playing Pitch Strategy**, which was adopted in 2018 and highlights challenges in provision of pitches of sufficient capacity and quality in the city. This is a particular challenge because of the density of the city. The developments at King George V Playing Fields and Moneyfields have been directly influenced by the strategy, and we also note the need to try and develop strong community access to sites that are not controlled by the local authority, such as HMS Temeraire, the home of Naval sport; Langstone Campus, where the university have a number of sports pitches; and pitches in a number of school and school partnership sites across the city.

We are also refreshing the city's **Parks and Open Spaces Strategy**. A consultation on the new Draft Parks and Open Spaces strategy launched on 21 February 2023 and now will determine how parks and open spaces will be maintained and protected over the next 15 years. The draft document includes reference to spaces that have a dual purpose as pitches and more informal outdoor spaces for recreation. They include spaces such as Anchorage Park, Bransbury Park, Great Salterns and St. Helens Playing Field. The strategy will consider the role of parks as community spaces and as contributors to the health and wellbeing of the city.

Green spaces in urban settings provide places for people to come together to engage in social activities, enable connection between communities, including between minority groups contributing to improved mental health outcomes by increasing social cohesion and belonging. The natural environment is also able to provide for sensory environments; different types of planting and scented trails can enable people to interact with nature.





This is a growing area of interest; green bathing or forest bathing is a form of ecotherapy which credits the benefit of spending time in green spaces to human health. The NHS have updated their advice on social prescribing to include green prescribing. Green social prescribing will link individuals under NHS care to nature-based interventions and activities which might include walking for health groups and community gardening projects. This includes a £4 million investment by the government to the NHS and Sport England to embed green social prescribing into communities to improve health outcomes. This is an ideal opportunity for our health partners to work with the Parks Service for delivery models.

The city's parks and open spaces provide an ideal environment for outdoor fitness. This can take the form of outdoor exercise classes which have become more popular during the pandemic due to the issues concerning indoor air circulation. The city can accommodate outdoor fitness classes and outdoor fitness equipment at several parks. There are designated routes for walking and cycling journeys through green spaces, for example at Victoria Park, Bransbury Park and Hilsa Lines, enabling active travel connections between different parts of the city. Additionally, it may be possible to provide measured miles routes as part of the Portsmouth Transport Strategy. Measured miles provide for both independent and organised walking, cycling and jogging routes.

To encompass the demographics of the city, other types of exercise may also be catered for in the city's open spaces, such as yoga and tai chi. Contemporary exercise models need to be inclusive for all social groups. There is opportunity in the city's open spaces to include activities such as PramActive or BuggyFit. These classes provide both an opportunity for exercise, develop social networks and improve mood. The city's natural open spaces provide an idyllic environment for trail walking. In addition the number of landmarks in the city allow for urban trail walking between different points.

## Key stakeholders

It is apparent that there are clear priorities and outcomes shared across key partners and stakeholders in Portsmouth. These focus on improving the life chances and outcomes of Portsmouth residents, through improved health, education and opportunity. All partners were involved in the development of the city vision, and physical activity and the provision of supporting leisure infrastructure is at the heart of how these organisations will contribute to these shared outcomes.

The local authority also has regular liaison meetings, as part of the Playing Pitch Strategy framework, with representatives of national governing bodies for sport. Through these sessions, there are regular chances to share information, identify challenges and explore opportunities.

Key organisational partners identified in this work include:

- Royal Navy
- University of Portsmouth
- HIVE Portsmouth
- Hampshire and Isle of Wight Integrated Care Board
- Sport England
- Football Foundation
- Hampshire FA
- Energise Me
- England Hockey
- Rugby Football Union
- Hampshire Cricket
- Swim England
- Lawn Tennis Association
- Sustrans
- BH Live
- Andrew Simpson Watersports Centre

This is without naming the numerous schools, colleges, community associations and grassroots organisations in the city without whom none of the activities we discuss would be possible. The city owes all of these partners appreciation for everything that they do.

## Summarising our shared local outcomes

The national and local evidence base highlights some key areas where sport and physical activity can have a positive impact on the lives of residents.

**Table 1: Impacts for local communities, linked to Sporting Futures outcomes**

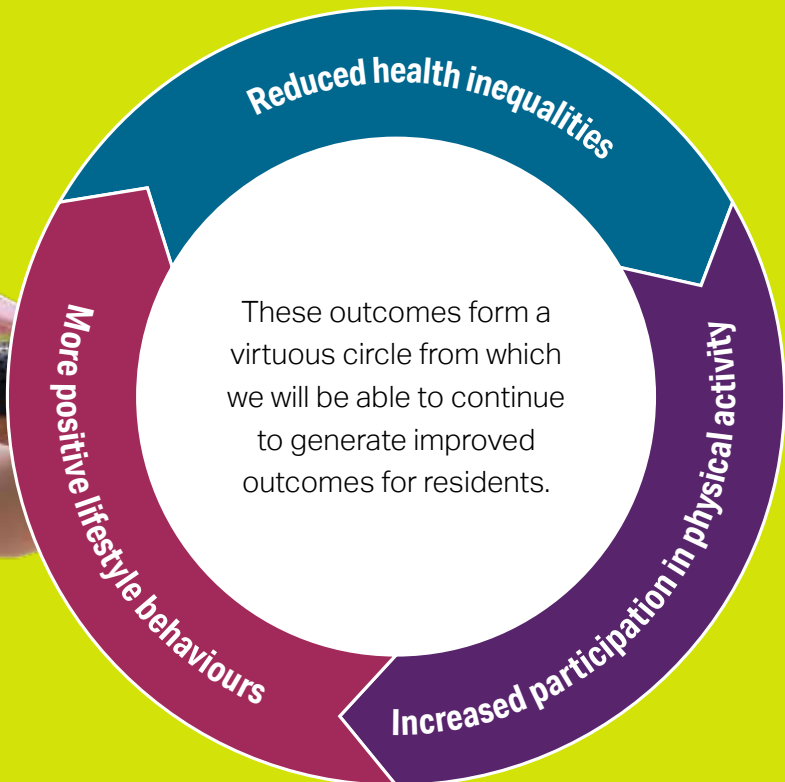
Category	Impact
<b>Wellbeing</b>	The physical benefits of sport and physical activity are well documented. Being active can reduce the risk of developing type 2 diabetes by 30-40% and can reduce the risk of a range of medical conditions, including cancer, dementia, strokes, heart disease and depression
<b>Mental Wellbeing</b>	Physical activity can reduce stress and anxiety and mastering new skills can increase confidence and self-esteem.  These positive mental wellbeing outcomes are as important as the physical benefits from taking part and evidence is clear on the mental as well as physical health benefits of meeting the CMO guidelines  We have evidence of how through participation in sport and physical activity, residents are experiencing positive mental wellbeing outcomes
<b>Individual Development</b>	Evidence shows that taking part in physical activity improves educational behaviour and attainment, as well as having a positive impact on their employment opportunities. It can also have a positive role in tackling the problems of those who are not in employment, education or training (NEETS)
<b>Social and Community Development</b>	As well as developing individuals, participation can help build stronger communities by bringing people together, often from different backgrounds, to make them feel better about where they live, improve community links and cohesion and build social capital.  We know that people who volunteer in sport, for example, are more likely to feel they belong in their area and people who take part in sport are likely to enjoy stronger social links with other people.
<b>Economic Development</b>	The economic impact of sport, how it creates jobs, promotes growth is recognised within this strategy as participation in grassroots sport, consumer spend on clothes, trainers and other equipment, club and gym memberships all add value to the local economy.

Based on the national and local evidence, and the priorities that flow from these, we have developed a number of shared outcomes around sport and physical activity to be achieved.



**Figure 11: Key shared outcomes for Portsmouth**

Our overarching aim is to improve outcomes and opportunities for residents through the sport and physical activity offer in the city. We will seek to achieve three key outcomes:		
<b>Outcome 1:</b>  <b>Reduced health inequalities</b>	<b>The evidence tells us that:</b>  Physical activity can be a preventative and therapeutic factor for a range of non-communicable diseases and support wider wellbeing	<b>We will know we are achieving the outcome if:</b>  Key measures of health outcomes improve for the city
<b>Outcome 2:</b>  <b>Increased physical activity levels</b>	<b>The evidence tells us that:</b>  Most people are not doing enough physical activity and increasing levels of activity can improve physical and mental wellbeing	<b>We will know we are achieving the outcome if:</b>  Increased numbers of people are taking part in physical activities and programmes at recommended levels
<b>Outcome 3:</b>  <b>More positive lifestyle behaviours</b>	<b>The evidence tells us that:</b>  Physical activity can be a way in which people can start to think about changing behaviours and participating in their communities	<b>We will know we are achieving the outcome if:</b>  Increased numbers of people engage with key facilities and programmes, including a community hub offer



# STAGE 2: INSIGHT

*Understand your community  
and your place*

**Stage 2 sets out the insight data used to understand the socio demographic context of the city, which will need to be reflected in services developed for the future. These will need to reflect the population and health profile of the city. The section also includes a review of the city's physical activity participation rates and current profile of service provision.**

## *Portsmouth - an overview*

Portsmouth is a city with an incredible waterfront, a rich cultural heritage and a strong maritime history. With a naval base, international port and strong local links across the south, we are the centre of culture and enterprise for our area.

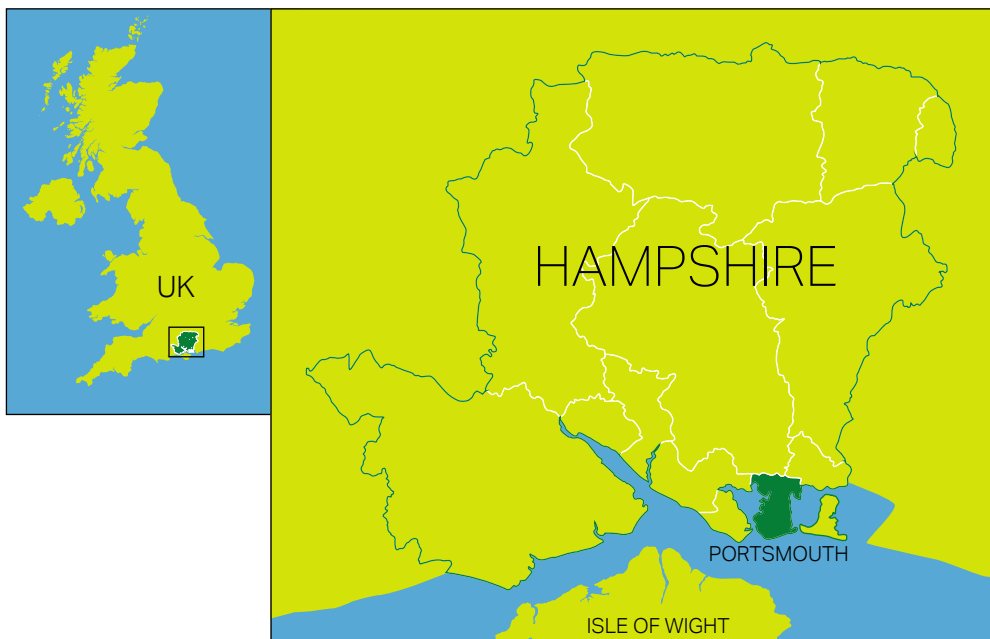
Portsmouth is the UK's only island city, with Portsea Island accounting for 62% of the city's land mass. Portsmouth is the second most densely populated Local Authority area in the UK outside of central London, with a population of 208,100 (as per the 2021 census) residing within 15.5 square miles.

It is a largely flat, compact city benefiting from the South's moderate climate, which makes it ideal for activities such as running and cycling, as well as major events such as the city's triathlon. Portsmouth has a range of great sporting facilities, and a diverse range of sports festivals and events,



including cycling and sailing. There are already many sporting events that add to the identity of Portsmouth as a Great Waterfront City, such as the Great South Run. In 2015 and 2016, these were augmented by America's Cup World Series events, world class sailing regattas that promoted Portsmouth's international profile.

**Map 1: Portsmouth Location**



Portsmouth is ranked 59th most deprived out of 317 local authorities in England (where 1 is the most deprived), with 15% of the city's population experiencing income deprivation. Charles Dickens ward tends to be the most deprived ward in the city across all of the various domains. 22% of all children (aged 0-19) in the city are living in poverty (which is above the England average) and in some areas the rate is twice the national average (Charles Dickens ward). The percentage of children in the city known to be eligible for, and claiming, free school meals is higher than the national average, reflecting low incomes in the city.

The city is becoming more ethnically diverse. 16% of the City's overall population are not of White British ethnicity – this rises to 20% of school-age children. 87.8% of the City's population was born in the UK. The city has a relatively young population, as typically found in cities and which is boosted by the student population attending the University of Portsmouth.

Portsmouth has 50 primary schools, 10 secondary schools and four special schools (including one multi-site provision). In addition there is a further education college (comprising two colleges which recently merged), one maintained nursery school and a University Technical College (UTC), which is a school for young people aged 14-19 interested in pursuing a technical career. There is one further education college in the city, City of Portsmouth College, operating across multiple sites, and a number of the city's young people attend Havant and South Downs college too.

Portsmouth performs a key role as an employment hub for its suburban hinterland, most notably the boroughs of Fareham, Gosport and Havant which supply nearly a quarter of the city's workforce. The employment rate in Portsmouth increased to 76.7% in the year to September 2021, above the UK average rate (74.5%). However, at 5.5% the unemployment rate in Portsmouth is also higher than the UK average, although this had decreased on the previous quarter. In the 12 months to September 2021, the youth unemployment rate in Portsmouth decreased to 12.8%, lower than the UK average (13.3%). The most recent statistics show that the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training has risen to 5.2%. There is also concern about the number of young people leaving post-16 education without a positive destination.

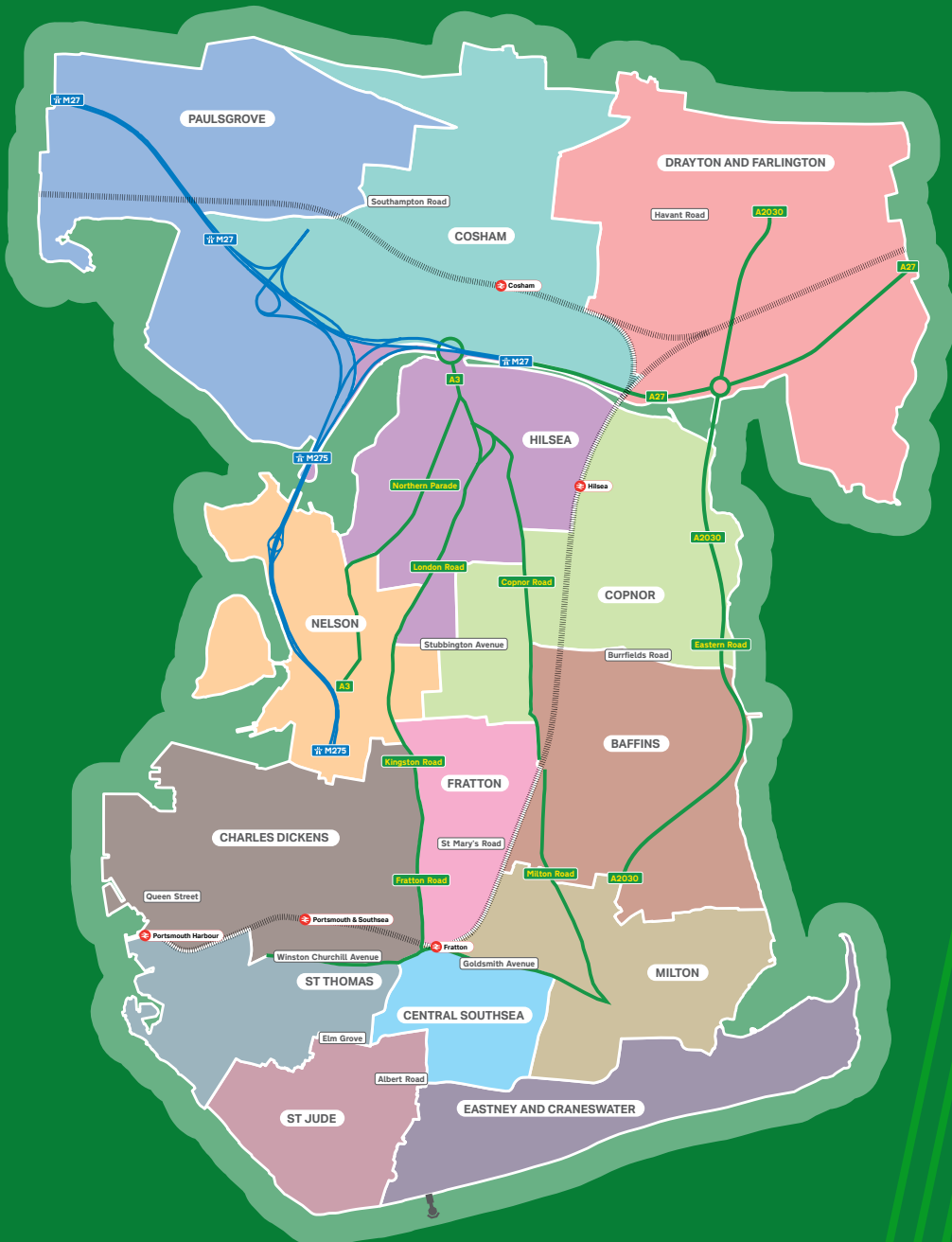
Despite being a university city, Portsmouth has relatively few people with degree level skills; this poses a challenge for residents looking to obtain highly paid work. Portsmouth also has a higher proportion of residents with no skills (6.9%) compared to the average for the south-east (5.6%), though this remains lower than the national average (8.0%). We know that local resident earnings are significantly lower than local workplace salaries, suggesting that many of the higher paid jobs are filled by people commuting into the city. In 2021, the median gross weekly pay for Portsmouth residents



was £598, below the average for England (£613), Southampton (£602), and significantly lower than the South East (£660).

Portsmouth is well connected with strategic road and rail routes as well as domestic and international ferry routes to a range of destinations. There are five train stations in the city, with the railway line running through the heart of the city north to south. However, intercity rail journeys from, and to, Portsmouth are relatively slow. We also have limited road capacity due to the “island” nature of the city, and only three road routes on/off Portsea Island – although congestion levels compare well with other cities. Traffic and associated emissions are a significant challenge to air quality in certain areas of the city.

**Map 2: Portsmouth Wards**



## Our people insight

A key factor for Portsmouth is that as a city, there are some huge variations in opportunities and outcomes for residents. Some areas are characterised by significant deprivation, and others by affluence. There are differences across the city in age profile, ethnicity and health outcomes.

### Deprivation

The **Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)**<sup>3</sup> is the official measure of relative deprivation. Portsmouth and Southampton are significantly more deprived than any other Lower Tier Local Authority within Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. Of 317 local authority districts in England, Portsmouth is the 57th most deprived by the average rank of each lower super output area (LSOA), the 59th most deprived by average score of LSOA, and 72nd most deprived by the proportion of its LSOAs that are in the most deprived 10% nationally. With only 2 LSOAs in the least deprived 10% nationally, and 15 in the most deprived 10%, Portsmouth has pockets of affluence rather than pockets of deprivation.

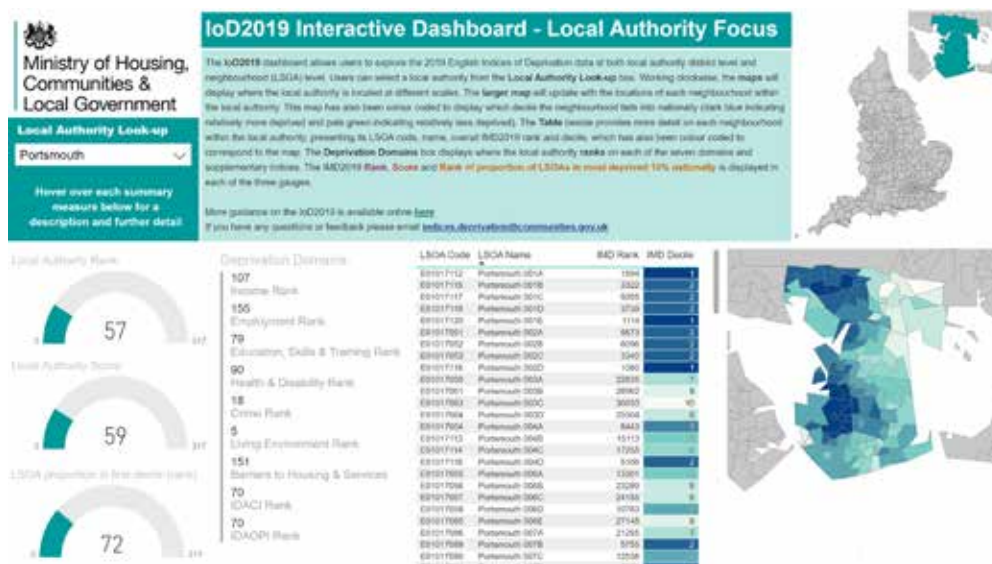
In practice, this means that:

- 6,500 (16.5%) children under 16 in Portsmouth are in absolute low-income families (before housing costs, 2019/20)
- 8,000 (20%) children under 16 are in relative low income families (before housing costs, 2019/20)
- 6,500 (17%) of over 60s live in income deprivation (IDAOPI, 2015/16).
- 21,000 (25%) households in Portsmouth are below 60% of the median income after housing costs (ONS 2013/14 estimates), rising to 45% in more deprived areas of the city.
- In 2021, the median average weekly earnings in Portsmouth was £468, which is than the England average (£496) and Southampton (£521.40); and significantly lower than the South East (£530.40).
- 38% of residents do not have access to a car.

The pattern of deprivation is unequal across the city, with particular concentrations of lower incomes in key areas in the west of the city, mostly characterised by high densities of local authority and social housing, developed in the post-war period, as demonstrated in the dashboard below:

<sup>3</sup> [www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019)

**Figure 13: Index of multiple deprivation dashboard for Portsmouth**



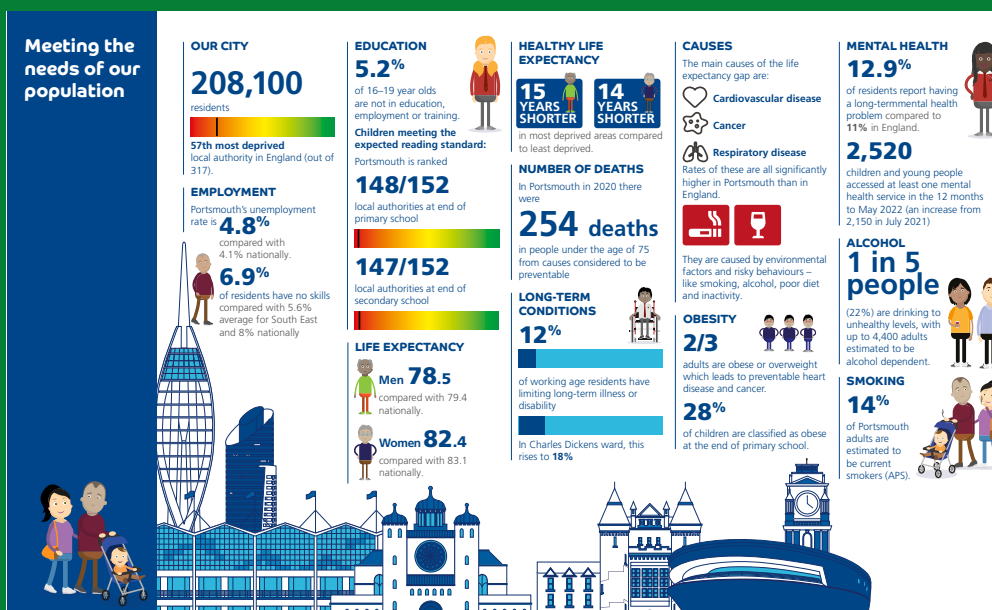
Portsmouth City Council is keenly aware of the importance of supporting residents around these issues, and maintains a Leisure Card facility which provides reduced prices for residents in receipt of certain means tested benefits, and also maintains free swimming for under 12s at key facilities. There is a focus on ensuring a geographic spread of facilities in the city to ensure that everyone has access without incurring additional travel expense, and facilities in school sites (particularly St Edmunds and Charter) are key in supporting residents in the Charles Dickens ward and surrounding area.

In terms of health, the pattern of differences is repeated, and in many cases mirrors the geographic pattern around deprivation.

Key health issues are shown in the infographic below, but in summary:

- Life expectancy in the city is shorter than for the wider population nationally, and healthy life expectancy is up to 15 years shorter in the areas of greatest deprivation that the more affluent areas of the city.
- The main causes of the life expectancy gap are cardiovascular disease, cancer and respiratory disease, all of which are significantly higher in Portsmouth than nationally, and known to be caused by factors including poor diet and inactivity
- Two thirds of adults are overweight or obese, a significant contributor to preventable illness, and 28% of children are classified as obese at the end of primary school.
- 12% of working age residents have a limiting long term illness or disability and in the most deprived ward, this rises to 18%

**Fig 14: Key health issues for Portsmouth**



The links between deprivation levels and health outcomes are clear.

Specifically in terms of physical activity, we know that rates in Portsmouth do not meet recommended standards. The most recent Active Lives report (covering the period November 2021–2022) noted that around 65% of adults in Portsmouth are classed as physically active<sup>4</sup>, and a further 10% as fairly active, but this means that 24.5% of the adult population do less than 30 minutes of activity a week.<sup>4</sup> In common with the most recent national findings, activity levels in the city have recovered since the pandemic, and activity levels in Portsmouth adults are similar to the national average, there is wide variation relating to deprivation. The Portsmouth Health and Lifestyle survey (2015) indicated that those in the most deprived quintile of neighbourhoods are more likely to be sedentary.<sup>5</sup>

Under 16 activity levels are also low with 62% of Portsmouth's children and young people not meeting the recommended daily level of 60 minutes of activity a day.<sup>6</sup> This is likely to have a direct relationship to the most recent data from the National Childhood Measurement Programme indicates that both regionally and nationally there have been statistically significant increases in overweight and obesity at Year 6. Regionally, 22% of Reception children and 32% of Year 6 children were classed as overweight or obese in 2020/21. Moreover, obesity prevalence nationally was at least double for children living in the most deprived areas compared to those living in the least deprived areas. In Reception, 13.3% in the most deprived areas were obese compared to 6.0% in the least deprived. Severe obesity prevalence

<sup>4</sup> Active Lives Survey, 2021–22, Sport England

<sup>5</sup> <https://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk/documents/s18382/Portsmouth%2520draft%2520hwb%2520strategy%252016032018%2520Cabinet.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> Public Health Outcomes Framework, 2018–29, PHE

was almost four times as high in the most deprived areas (3.9%) than the least deprived areas (1.0%). Between 2006/07 and 2020/21 the gap between obesity prevalence for children attending schools in the most and least deprived areas increased by 1.8% at Year R and 4.8% at Y6.

## **Barriers to participation**

### **Covid impact on activity levels**

In April 2021, Sport England analysed the impact of coronavirus on activity levels across England. They found that the combined impact of the storms and coronavirus had a significant effect on outdoor activity in early 2020 and a large number of people were inactive – doing less than 30 minutes of activity a day, or nothing at all.

The report found that compared to the previous 12 months, activity levels had fallen amongst all groups, with those from lower socio-economic groups seeing larger drops than those from higher socio-economic groups. As such, existing inequalities widened. Interestingly, whilst the restrictions severely limited the ability to take part in some activities such as walking for travel and team sports, the data showed how significant attempts were made by the population to find alternatives through increases in activities like 'walking for leisure', 'running' and 'cycling for leisure and sport'.

Although at home exercise was encouraged, and the numbers of people working out at home increased significantly, it was not enough to offset the lost gym environment and drop in those taking part in team sports.

The most recent Active Lives report notes that activity levels have broadly started to bounce back nationally since the pandemic, and this is the experience in Portsmouth too. Rates of activity are the highest since 2017/18.

During the pandemic, PCC started, and has maintained a series of Big Surveys, longitudinal resident research in the city that captures views on specific issues as well as capturing long term trends. In the first wave of research, conducted in July/August 2020, 24% of residents said that they were consciously doing more exercise, and in the 2nd wave of research (December 2020) 17% said they were doing so. This is consistent with wider national research that highlights the pandemic was a point of change for many people. We also know that there was increased usage of parks and open spaces in the city, as people sought to find spaces for permitted outdoor activity. In the most recent Big Survey (November 2022), 51% of residents reported frequently using these spaces. It is important that the emerging Parks and Open Spaces Strategy reflects the importance of these spaces to sport and physical activity in the city.



### **Market implications of covid and other economic factors**

Following the re-opening of leisure centres in April 2021, Sport England launched the largest ever data gathering of; financial performance, participants, throughput, customer experience, service delivery (Quest) and social value of public leisure centres. The data will assist local authorities, leisure providers and policymakers to support the recovery of public gyms and leisure centres, taking informed decisions to keep the nation active.

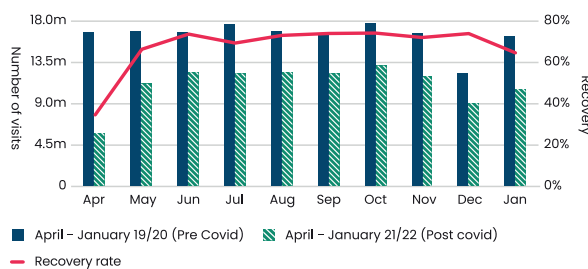
## Figure 15: Moving communities analysis

Source: Moving Communities Data – Apr 2021–Jan 2022

Strong recovery from women, under 16s and low socio-economic groups, but lower recovery to return from older people

### Throughput and Participants

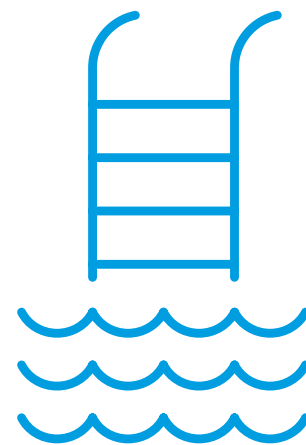
Visits recovery by month 2019/20 v 2021/22



There was an initial spike in recovery rate when leisure centres re-opened in April 2021 followed by a flat recovery and then drop off in January 2022.

The **recovery rate** peaked at 74% in Sept - Oct 2021 but the average recovery rate from April–January 21/22 was **68%**. However, **unique known participants** is lower at only **65%**.

Average visits per month **4.85** compared to 4.28 in 2019 confirming fewer people are coming more often.



### Leisure centres

- New and recently refurbished (in last 10 years) leisure centres are recovering best.
- Visits to leisure centres in minor urban areas recovered at higher rate (71%) compared to centres located in urban cities or towns (66%) or rural areas and major urban areas (67%).
- Leisure centres in rural areas tend to have older populations who are slower to return or visit.
- Urban cities may be doing less well as people still working from home so not commuting into urban cities for work.

### Social value

5.1m participants in 642 leisure centres across England have generated over £549 million of social value through their consistent activity between April 2021 –January 2022.

### Activities

Whilst participation levels across all activities have recovered to 65% of pre-covid levels this has varied by activity type.

**strong recovery** in outdoor activity, gym activity, swimming lessons and swimming activities.

**poor recovery** in group workouts and sports hall activities. This is likely to be due to having to book activities, restrictions and shift to digital offer.

## **Cost of Living Crisis**

As the city recovers from the pandemic, another significant area of impact is emerging, which is the increased cost of living. Increased costs, including energy costs are impacting on the local authority, leisure operators and individual residents and households.

The impact of energy costs on operators, particularly pool operators, has been well-publicised. Overall costs have increased through pay inflation and inflation on supply and services, affecting day to day revenue operations but also capital investment programmes.

However, it also means that customers have less to spend. Gym memberships are still at lower levels than pre-Covid, despite overall activity levels broadly recovering. In October 2022, BH Live saw more membership leavers than anticipated, with October traditionally a strong month for subscriptions. In a three month period, 229 memberships were cancelled at the bank, and 148 cancelled due to price, far outstripping other reasons such as leaving because of facility standard or because goals aren't being achieved. Wave 4 Portsmouth Big Survey, 94% of residents noted that they had seen their cost of living increase. 70% of residents said that they had been forced to reduce spending on non-essentials, with 26% cutting back on meals to be able to make ends meet, and 9% reporting they were unable to make important payments such as rent. In a city with high levels of deprivation, these are concerning findings. We know that deprivation is a barrier to participation and external factors mean that these barriers will become ever greater.

These issues were all acknowledged in the Future of public Leisure report issued in December 2022, which noted:

*"The restrictions of the coronavirus pandemic and people's changing exercise habits a result, the rising cost of energy, chemical shortages and staff retention have created a challenging landscape for the public leisure sector."*



## Other barriers

In developing this refreshed document, we have undertaken stakeholder consultation and identified some key barriers to participation and opportunities for improvement.

**Figure 9: Barriers to participation**

<b>Location</b> of Eastney Swimming Pool for many people- difficult to walk or cycle	<b>Location</b> of key facilities- for many people- difficult to walk or cycle
<b>Condition</b> of Eastney Swimming Pool	<b>Lack of fitness suite</b> facilities at key sites
<b>Condition</b> of changing rooms at Eastney Swimming Pool	<b>Condition</b> of Wimbledon Park Sports Centre
<b>Accessibility (location)</b> – many people do not have easy access to transport, this can present a significant barrier both in terms of cost and time.	<b>Accessibility (venue)</b> – no outdoor space around either Eastney Swimming Pool nor Wimbledon Park Sports Centre - no active environment
<b>Lack of awareness</b> – many people are simply not aware of the opportunities to engage in physical activity in their locality	<b>Accessibility</b> for those with a disability
A <b>lack of activities</b> relevant to local residents	<b>Cost</b>
A <b>lack of parking</b> at some key facilities	<b>Poor quality of existing facilities;</b> not modern
	<b>Opening hours</b>

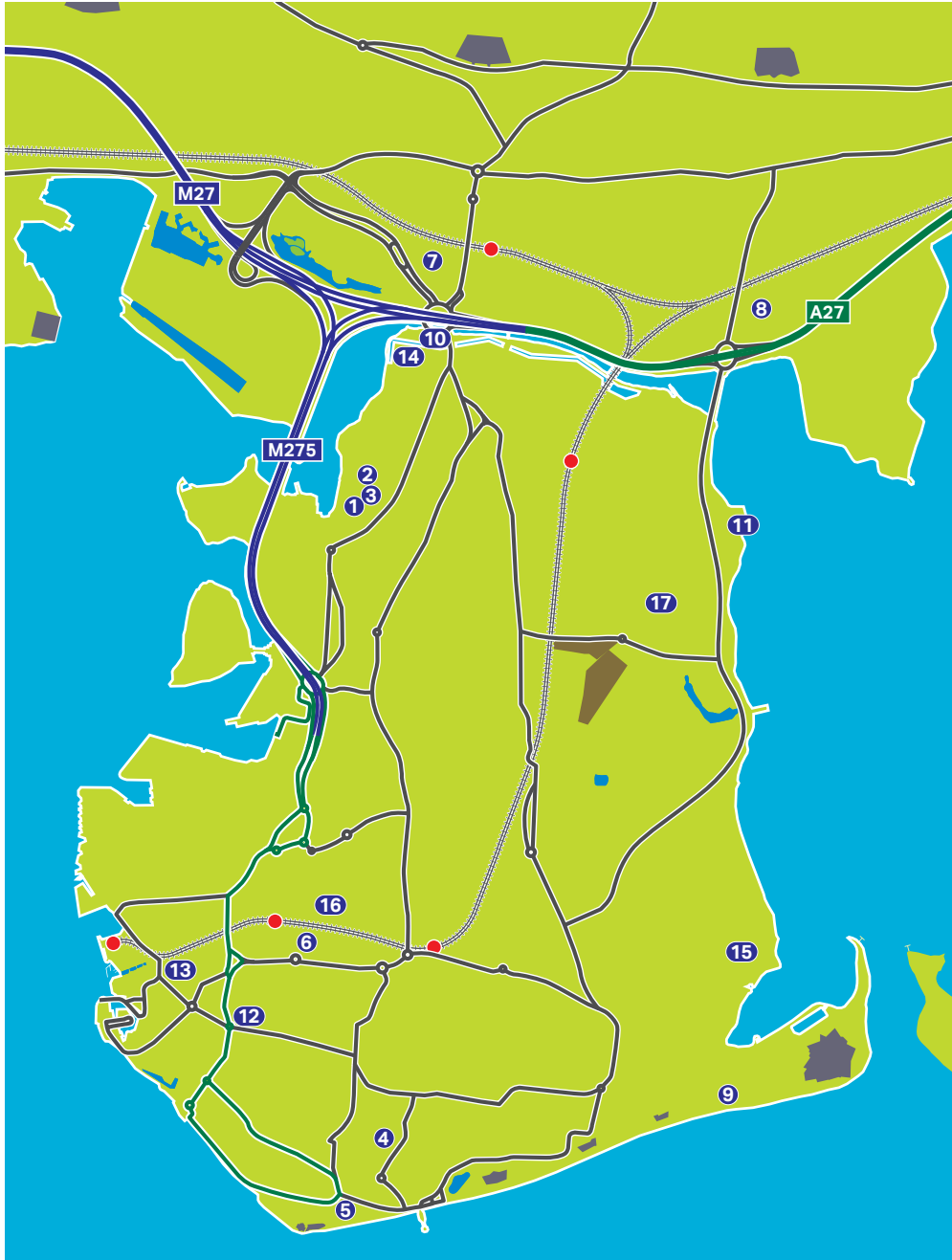
**Figure 10: Opportunities for change**

<b>Co-located provision - community physical activity and community centre</b>	<b>Collaborative working with onsite and wider City partners</b>
<b>Development of an active environment- indoor and outdoor</b>	<b>Physical activity provision responding to community need eg modern, good quality pool and fitness suite</b>
<b>Creation of social opportunities to engage and encourage participation eg walking and cycling groups</b>	<b>Improved disability access</b>
<b>Creation of active travel routes ie walking and cycling</b>	<b>Increased opportunities to take part in physical activity because more facilities are on one site</b>
<b>Good quality changing provision</b>	<b>A focus on participation by families, younger and older people</b>
<b>A fitness suite on the same site as a pool</b>	<b>Increased provision for parking</b>

## Our facilities and services insight

Facilities are located around the city, with the Mountbatten Centre cluster of facilities located in the central western side of the island.

In terms of the geographic locations:



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- |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| 1. The Mountbatten Centre                                | 8. Farlington playing field                 | 13. HMS Temeraire (MoD)                          |
| 2. Portsmouth Tennis Centre                              | 9. Eastney swimming pool (now closed)       | 14. Portsmouth Grammar School playing field      |
| 3. Portsmouth Gymnastics Centre                          | 10. Hilsea Lido (currently closed)          | 15. Langstone pitched (University of Portsmouth) |
| 4. Wimbledon Park Sports Centre                          | 11. Andrew Simpson Watersports Centre       | 16. St Edmunds School                            |
| 5. Pyramids Adventure Play and Fitness Centre (Exploria) | 12. Ravelin Park (University of Portsmouth) | 17. Admiral Lord Nelson School                   |
| 6. Charter Community Sports Centre                       |   |  |
| 7. King George V playing field                           |   |  |

BH Live currently manages the following PCC leisure facilities.

- The Mountbatten Centre;
- Portsmouth Tennis Centre;
- Portsmouth Gymnastics Centre;
- Wimbledon Park Sports Centre;
- Pyramids Adventure Play and Fitness Centre (Exploria); and
- Charter Community Sports Centre (dual-use); this ten year agreement was extended from 2020 for a further 10 years.

Following the successful 2021 Levelling Up Fund (LUF) bid for the Lido, consideration of the future management of that facility, once re-developed, is also a priority. This is being explored as part of the masterplanning work now underway. The Masterplan is now into its second phase; capital costs are awaited on the investment options for the Lido and the surrounding park area.

Other key providers in the City include the University of Portsmouth (new Ravelin Park Sports Centre opened in 2022; there is an agreed community use arrangement in place between PCC and the University), Portsmouth College, the Royal Navy, schools and community organisations. Work is underway to develop a new relationship with Portsmouth Grammar School in relation to sports and community use. Pompey in the Community are in the process of developing a purpose built sports and education facility.

## **Summary of existing facilities**

The Indoor Facilities Strategy provided a summary of facilities in the city.

The Strategy was developed using the Sport England Assessing Needs and Opportunities Guidance (ANOG), published in 2014. The scope of the work included analysis of provision in the city for:

- Sports Halls
- Swimming Pools
- Health and Fitness
- Indoor Tennis
- Squash
- Table Tennis
- Gymnastics
- Indoor Bowls

In addition to purpose built facilities, consideration is given to the role in meeting local need of community assets (including community halls) and education facilities. The Strategy covers the administrative area of Portsmouth, but references areas outside the city boundaries as appropriate.



The key conclusions arising from this work were:

### **Sports Halls**

At the time of development, there were 39 sport and activity halls in the city, over 26 sites. 23 of these are "strategic sized" halls (i.e. 3 courts or more). However, only 13 of these provide for pay and play access; and areas in the north and north east of the city are outside a 20 minute drive time of a pay and play, community accessible facility. Geographically, strategic size sports halls are distributed across the city, with the majority on education sites with limited daytime access. There is one formal dual-use arrangement in place. There are 16 activity halls, of which 7 offer pay and play access; 9 offer community access, but tend to be used by clubs and organisations. There are also a number of community centres in the city which are used for a wide range of cultural, leisure and social uses. The FPM identifies a very slight undersupply of badminton courts in the city (-0.38), but when factors such as community access are taken into account this undersupply increases to -9.64 courts for the current population. In relation to sports halls, the main issues that need to be addressed are accessibility (both in terms of location and times of availability) and facility quality. The only significant change in the city since the development of the work has been the opening of the Ravelin Park facility, which increases hall provision in the south of the city. The 4-court sports hall at St Edmunds Catholic School will become available for community use from June 2023, and the council is in discussions with them around formalising a community use agreement.



### **Health and fitness:**

At the time of development, there were 441 pay and play community accessible fitness stations in Portsmouth, which represents an undersupply for the current population of -166 stations. However, given the increased level of relatively low-cost pay and play commercial provision in the city, the current undersupply is likely to be less than this figure; although without ensuring there are more affordable pay and play community accessible fitness stations in the city, the under-supply will increase as the population grows. There are 33 studios in the city, the majority of which are provided as part of a health and fitness offer within other facilities. 33% of these are provided by commercial operators also operating commercial fitness suites, and a number are on non-community accessible education sites. NGB feedback demonstrated that there is a need to continue to grow and develop existing boxing clubs in the city, given their potential to address inactivity in some of the more deprived areas of Portsmouth; and also a need to ensure that martial arts clubs have access to good quality studios/ small hall facilities, appropriate for the sport and its future development in the city. There is expected to be provision for boxing at the new John Jenkins Stadium development led by Pompey in the Community, and studio provision has been increased due to the Ravelin development.



### **Other provision:**

At time of publication, there were 25 squash courts over 9 sites in the Portsmouth. The quality of existing courts is generally of a reasonable to good standard, although all courts are now ageing. There are no squash clubs with their own facilities in the city, and the only pay and play community accessible glass-back courts are at the Mountbatten Centre and Spinnaker Sports Centre (which have been replaced as part of the Ravelin development).

Portsmouth is very well-served by indoor tennis facilities, which are in good condition. The facilities are available for pay and play bookings, as well as lessons, coaching, league and club use. Demand for usage is high, but the Lawn Tennis Association has not identified the need for any additional courts.

There is one main and dedicated indoor bowling facility at the Victory Indoor Bowling Centre, which has six indoor rinks. The facilities are well-used by a local club which has the potential to grow and develop further. However, the facility is ageing, and needs investment to improve the quality and address some issues with plant. It is an important sport to encourage, given the potential to reach older people in the population, both as physical activity and to counter social isolation.

There is one main athletics track in the city – adjacent to the Mountbatten centre. It is an ageing facility, although the track was resurfaced in 2018.



There is sufficient track provision to meet demand, the quality of the track is becoming an issue. Since this was identified the track was resurfaced in late 2018.

Gymnastics is a very active sport in the city, with several clubs, some of which also incorporate trampolining. The Portsmouth Gymnastics Centre is an excellent facility providing for club use, coaching, and lessons, as well as competitions. Other non-purpose built facilities are used across the city, given the high demand for the sport. There is a specific demand for additional trampolining facilities in the city.

There are no dedicated table tennis facilities in Portsmouth, but the sport is played competitively at a number of venues across the city. Table Tennis England has not identified a need for additional facilities in the city, but does identify the need to retain existing facilities, given the significant local participation in the sport (which is notably growing at junior level).

The strategy identified principles for future provision which was to ensure all residents in all areas of Portsmouth have pay and play access to good quality local accessible and affordable provision and to ensure that public money is invested strategically to ensure economic viability and sustainability of provision.



This will be achieved through:

- Ensuring that existing, and any new, sports facilities on education sites provide a balance of opportunities for community access – both pay and play and club use
- Replacing and refurbishing ageing facilities where updated provision is required – and all new and refurbished provision should be designed and developed based on Sport England and NGB guidance and be fully inclusive.
- Considering opportunities to rationalise provision where new, fit for purpose facilities can replace or improve existing buildings (but maintain at least current levels of provision in areas of undersupply).
- Making better use of existing facilities and investing strategically in existing provision to improve quality
- Where possible, making facilities available closer to where people live, with a focus on improving access to multi-purpose halls.

These principles guided the formulation of recommendations to respond to the findings of site audits, consultation and policy analysis.



## Recommendations

The work undertaken resulted in recommendations for a 10-point strategy for Indoor Facilities in Portsmouth:

- 1** PCC and partners to prioritise provision and access to sports halls to address identified need for provision – this should include extending pay and play access to existing sports halls on education sites

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- 2** PCC and partners work to develop and implement Community Use Agreements (including with local authority maintained schools and other education providers) to ensure a better balance of pay and play use and club use.

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- 3** PCC and partners address the projected undersupply of swimming pool provision in the city through a package of measures including considering options for replacement of older facilities; extension of community use agreements; widening pay and play access to commercial sites; and considering programming of current capacity to ensure it is used most effectively and with regard to needs of clubs.

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- 4** PCC and partners to facilitate increased access to pay and play fitness and studio facilities/space where studio activities can take place e.g. community halls

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- 5** Ensure current levels of squash courts are retained and ageing provision s invested in.

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- 6** Work with gymnastics clubs and NGB over future provision of dedicated gymnastics and trampolining facilities, with a focus on additional sports hall time and space for trampolining.

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- 7** Work with NGB and Victory Indoor Bowling Club to further develop the Club and facilitate investment in indoor bowling facilities.

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- 8** Work with boxing clubs to develop appropriate leasing arrangements for facilities

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- 9** Work with martial arts clubs to develop improved access to available hall space.

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- 10** Work to retain and improve watersports centre provision in the city.

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## Facilities insight – swimming pools

PCC's own network of built swimming facilities (operated under a long-term contract by BH Live) comprises:

**Mountbatten Leisure Centre**

**Charter Community Leisure Centre (dual-use)**

This provision is complimented by:

**St Edmunds Catholic School**

**Hilsea Lido (seasonal outdoor pool – currently not operational)**

and in addition:

**The existing small pool on the Portsmouth Naval Base (HMS Temeraire) campus**

**The new University of Portsmouth (UoP) Ravelin Sports Centre (due to open in late 2022)**

**Other small educational pools (usually not available for community access)**

**Privately owned and operated pools (require membership to access)**

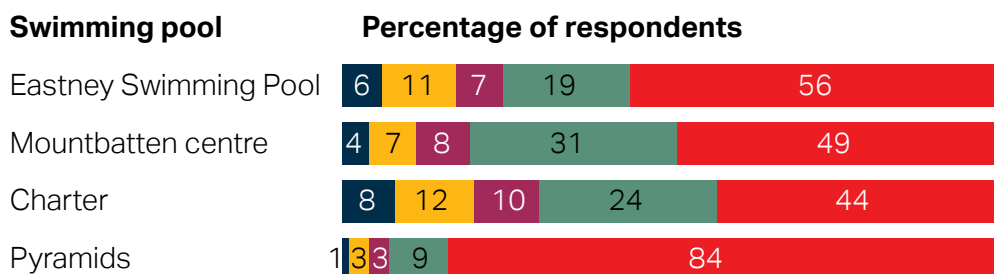
The Pyramids pool closed in 2020 and was redeveloped as a soft play and gym site and has been very successful. The Council recognises that development of a new 25m swimming pool at the University of Portsmouth, which opened in 2022, provides the Council with an opportunity to strategically re-distribute swim usage. The decision by the MOD to operate HMS Temeraire facilities, including their pool on a more commercial basis, creates a similar opportunity. Ark Charter Academy has also confirmed that with the asset transfer of the Charter Sport Centre to the school, they would retain at least the same level of community access to the facilities. This includes the 20m pool.

Since the development of the strategy, Eastney Swimming Pool has closed due to critical condition issues and Springfield School's pool has now closed.

Work is ongoing to consider the possibility of a replacement facility for the Eastney pool at Bransbury Park. This is much needed – consultation in the Summer of 2020 showed that the pool was well-used and provided a vital facility for the south of the city, particularly given the reduction in the Pyramids uptake.

**Figure 16: Frequency of swimming pool visits**

■ 3+ visits per week   
 ■ 1–2 visits per week   
 ■ 1–2 visits per month  
■ Less than one visit per month   
 ■ Never



In terms of reasons for using the site, Recreational swimming was most popular amongst those aged 65 and over (55%), as well as 35-44 year olds (50%), and the smallest proportion who selected this by almost 20 percentage points were 16-24 years old (15%). However, visiting Eastney Swimming pool for adult swimming lessons was most popular amongst 16-24 year olds (15%) compared to any other age group. A fairly equal proportion of those aged under 55 selected that they visit for children's swimming lessons (23% of 16-24 year olds, 21% of 25-34 year olds, and 25% of both 35-44 and 45-54 year olds). Finally, there was a clear correlation by age in terms of those who visited for group classes; the younger the respondent the more likely they were to select this reason.



## Facilities insight – playing pitches

In 2016, alongside the Indoor Facilities Strategy, Portsmouth City Council commissioned a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS). In line with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework, the PPS sets out to assess existing sports pitches, the future need for sports pitches, and opportunities for new provision. Sport England made some funding available towards the cost of completing this work.

The PPS initially covered the period to 2022 (five years based on Sport England recommendations), and has been reviewed on an annual basis to keep it up-to-date and robust (with a break during the pandemic period due to resource pressures). The plan included a projection of future demand to 2033. A range of agencies were involved in putting the document together, including national governing bodies of sport (football, cricket, rugby union and hockey) and local football, hockey, rugby union, and cricket clubs.

This PPS is based on a supply and demand assessment of playing pitch and importantly is for the whole city, not just the Council. The aim of the PPS is: 'to provide an assessment of the "fit for purpose" of the sports pitches and facilities, whilst identifying opportunities for retaining, reducing or removing this provision and prospects for new provision and partnerships. The assessment identifies specific needs and quantitative and/or qualitative deficits or surpluses of sports pitches and facilities in Portsmouth, and provides the evidence base for:

- The Council's New Local Plan
- Identification of projects for which contributions can be sought as part of new development.
- Funding bids from National Sports bodies like Sport England and the National Governing Bodies (NGB's) of sport
- decisions about revenue and capital spending in the medium term, as part of the whole planning and policy framework for the organisation.

The key findings from the work were:

- There is a shortfall of high quality football provision in the city, particularly 3G pitches, and this applies across the age ranges for the game.
- The key issues for cricket in the city are to improve the quality of PCC cricket pitches eg protecting pitches and outfielders from dog walkers, providing nonturf pitches for midweek games and junior cricket.
- The current and future demand for hockey teams can be met by existing hockey AGP pitches. However, this will be dependent on the protection of the main hockey pitch AGPs across the City and refurbishment of pitches held on school sites, at the University and at HMS Temeraire.

- There is a current shortfall of rugby pitches and a need to work with clubs to meet their needs on the available facilities.

The PPS provided recommendations for various sites based on three principles:

- PROTECT: The strategy seeks to make sure that the right amount of playing pitches and ancillary facilities of the right quality are in the right place. This could involve providing protection of sites through the local planning framework, or recommending where issues around tenure or usage could be made more secure.
- ENHANCE: Key partners such as Portsmouth City Council, local schools, private and voluntary sector sports clubs, and NGBs must work together to maximise the full potential of playing pitch assets and the long term sustainability of these assets and recognise that an improvement in quality and ongoing maintenance can have an impact on the capacity of use.
- PROVIDE: In times of public sector austerity, investment needs to be directed at sites which will provide the best impact and highest increase in participation. It is the policy of Portsmouth City Council to support projects and sports clubs that are able to; demonstrate sustainable long term development, increase participation and have achieved the appropriate accreditations e.g. Clubmark and / or Charter Standard providing player and sports development pathways.

The PPS has been a helpful platform for steering conversations with clubs and NGBs in the city, and for attracting funding, for example, by influencing the development of the Local Football Facilities Plan. The key challenges remain land availability in the city, and constrained resources across all funders and providers, and partnership working to address these issues are key. Pitch sports are a huge source of participation and engagement with sport and physical activity in the city and it is vital that this is supported. The PPS is due for refresh from 2023, and discussions are underway with Sport England to agree the process for this work.

### **Further facilities provided in the city**

Portsmouth City Council continues to operate two 18 hole golf courses available for pay and play – Portsmouth golf course outside the city, and Great Salterns golf course on the Eastern Road. .

Portsmouth golf course is a testing hilltop course of 6139 yards and par 69, situated off Crookhorn Lane on the South Downs above Portsmouth. Great Salterns golf course at Burrfields Road is a mature parkland course with excellent greens, 5620 yards and par 69 with two holes playing across Salterns Lake. The 300 yard, 22-bay, floodlit driving range has Power Tee systems in every bay, a practice bunker and green.



Both sites are well used, with high levels of casual player participation, and generate an income for the local authority. Fees are extremely competitive, with a wider range of reductions and concessions to encourage participation from across the community.

Portsmouth is also home to two high quality skatepark facilities. Southsea Skatepark is possibly the oldest and most iconic facility of its kind in the UK, and celebrates its 45th anniversary this year. One of the first skateparks in the country (along with Romford, Livingstone and Harrow) the site now boasts a mix of the legendary concrete from the 70s with the contemporary street/park section, which includes a state of the art vert ramp, spine mini, and a 4ft metal mini. The park covers a range of styles and is inclusive and family friendly. The facility is operated by the **Southsea Skatepark Trust**, who have a 60 year lease on the park at a peppercorn rent from the local authority, when a community transfer took place after a failure to secure an operator in 2005. In the first five years of operation the Trust received year-on-year reducing revenue funding from the Council. This funding ceased on 31st March 2016, since when the Trust has been wholly self-funding. The Skatepark is open all year round and caters for beginners to professionals, with some 90% of users being under 16. The Trust has ambitious future plans for the site, including seeking to create more shelter to make the park less weather-dependent.

In 2022, a new indoor skatepark opened in the former Sainsbury's building to the north of the city centre. Portsmouth City Council bought the former Sainsbury's building on Commercial Road to help unlock long-term regeneration opportunities in the area, and in the meantime, the council has let the building to the Pitt Street Skatepark to support this exciting community project.

The park includes ramps, rails and ledges and enough variations to hold competitions alongside day-to-day use. The venue is welcoming BMX riders, roller bladers, scooter riders, skaters with quad boots, and offers sessions for 'silver surfers' and 'teeny boppers'. The multi rink has also recently been host to the local We Creates market. The venue was supported to get started with a Sport England grant.

Facilities for skating, BMX and scooters are also included in parks across the city to encourage wide participation. In 2015, a BMX pump track was installed at Hilsea and is well used and provides a hub for youth activity, so we are considering options for replicating the provision in the south of the city too.

The city is also home of the South Coast Wakepark. Based in the heritage environment at Hilsea Lines, the site is commercially operated as a British Water Ski and Wakeboard accredited facility. Facilities include a 200m straight line cable wakeboarding system with a range of features to help participants progress at any ability level. The operator has ambitions for further extension of the facility and are a key partner in the development of the wider Hilsea levelling up scheme.

## ***Summarising our insight and using this to develop objectives***

Key issues emerging from the insight in the city are:

- There is a reasonable geographic distribution of facilities in the city, but the condition issues in Eastney Swimming Pool and Wimbledon Park mean that there is an urgent and pressing need to develop a future solution, with Bransbury Park a preferred current option.
- There is a need to consider the needs of a population where there are high levels of deprivation and challenges associated with this, including travelling to facilities.
- There is a need to reflect in future thinking the relatively poor levels of health in the city, with differences in outcomes across wards, and overall outcomes poorer for the city than the rest of the country.
- The high levels of disability and limiting long term illness mean that we have to think about programmes that will enable participation, and also consider other groups who may not be participating, such as minority groups and older people.



- There is relatively high demand for facilities in the city, but a need to ensure that these are modern and fit for purpose and do not in themselves represent a barrier to participation.
- There are successful community and commercial operators in the city providing a really exciting facilities mix, meaning that there are a huge range of opportunities for participation.

These insights influence our thinking:

**Figure 17: Insights for Portsmouth**

Our overarching aim is to improve outcomes and opportunities for residents through the sport and physical activity offer in the city. We will seek to achieve three key outcomes:			
<b>Outcome 1:</b>  <b>Reduced health inequalities</b>	<b>The evidence tells us that:</b>  Physical activity can be a preventative and therapeutic factor for a range of non-communicable diseases and support wider wellbeing	<b>We will know we are achieving the outcome if:</b>  Key measures of health outcomes improve for the city	<b>Insight tells us that:</b>  There are significant differences in health outcomes for Portsmouth and we can improve inequality in the city and between the rest of England, and this high level of health need means we need to think about programmes that will enable participation.
<b>Outcome 2:</b>  <b>Increased physical activity levels</b>	<b>The evidence tells us that:</b>  Most people are not doing enough physical activity and increasing levels of activity can improve physical and mental wellbeing	<b>We will know we are achieving the outcome if:</b>  Increased numbers of people are taking part in physical activities and programmes at recommended levels	<b>Insight tells us that:</b>  There are lots of opportunities for participation in the city, but too many people are not participating and the barriers include cost, access and lack of awareness as well as some being put off by facility quality.
<b>Outcome 3:</b>  <b>More positive lifestyle behaviours</b>	<b>The evidence tells us that:</b>  Physical activity can be a way in which people can start to think about changing behaviours and participating in their communities	<b>We will know we are achieving the outcome if:</b>  Increased numbers of people engage with key facilities and programmes, including a community hub offer	<b>Insight tells us that:</b>  We need to make facilities and services as welcome and attractive as possible, but also ensure that they remain affordable and relevant to their communities

# ***OUR VISION FOR SPORT IN PORTSMOUTH***

**Taking all of the wider policy drivers and insight into account, we have developed an ambitious vision for sport and physical activity in the city.**

We have seen from other areas of the authority's work, including in the pandemic response, that bringing the public sector, the private sector and the voluntary sector together can lead to better information sharing, collaborative working, new options for funding, and a better experience for the people who use services. We should adopt this model and apply it to the sports and leisure sector to bring together stakeholders to take a strategic view of physical activity across the city.

The links between exercise and health could not be clearer. We need to strengthen links with partners to create pathways to physical activity which people can follow easily and affordably. We need to be ready to respond to public health priorities, to support campaigns and demonstrate best practice.

The council is not the only provider of sports and leisure facilities in Portsmouth. The University of Portsmouth (with its new facility in Ravelin Park), the Royal Navy (with HMS Temeraire), schools and colleges, community centres and private businesses all have facilities which are, or could be, available to the public. Taking a strategic approach to programming of activities across the city will improve access to clubs and pay-and-play customers alike. Use of community access agreements would formalise arrangements and ensure that access is secure.



Imagine if all the opportunities for physical activity were co-ordinated across the city; where answers to questions like 'Where can I swim right now?' or 'where can I play badminton in Portsmouth?' or 'what yoga groups are there that I could join?' can be found in one place and booked there and then. Since the changes that have taken place during the COVID-19 pandemic, people expect online booking and we need to work with all stakeholders to support this to happen, not just for our main leisure offer where online is already the norm, but for community centres and other settings too.

When designing facilities or programming activities we need to be attentive to the needs of the under-represented groups we hope to encourage into sport and physical activity. This might mean widening the scope of the kind of activities that go on in our facilities to attract people who otherwise might not participate. We need to attract more women, older people, people from ethnic minorities and people from low income households.

We need to invest in our facilities to ensure they are fit for purpose in the modern world. Lack of investment since the financial crisis has led to rising need for ongoing subsidy as participation levels decline in response to tired facilities. The sports facilities strategy recommended a new purpose for the Pyramids and a new leisure centre for the south east of the city. We need to get on and finalise delivery of these projects.

The focus needs to move away from bricks and mortar and onto marketing, innovation and driving up participation with the aim of achieving measurable health improvements. Our partnership with BH Live, the council's leisure centre operator, should be a vehicle for driving up participation in physical activity.

The council owns other buildings which can be used for physical activity – like community centres, schools or libraries – where there is scope to do more to get people moving. These settings might lend themselves to activities like dance, martial arts, pilates, yoga and many others. We should encourage groups to use these facilities and ensure that doing so is affordable.

Portsmouth also has public open spaces that have seen extremely high use during the pandemic. Fitness classes, running groups, boot camps and the like are increasingly making use of our parks and open spaces. We should remove barriers for groups to operate, while acknowledging that they need to contribute to the upkeep of our parks. Our new parks and open spaces strategy should emphasise physical activity in parks.

As well as our green spaces, Portsmouth has an abundance of outdoor water space for swimming, sailing, rowing and many more aquatic activities. We want to encourage greater use of our outdoor water spaces, and will look for opportunities to bring funding in to develop this offer.

We need to be able to understand who our customers are and what makes them use our facilities. We also need to understand more about people who don't access our facilities. We should connect more with our customers to better understand their needs.

Communication is important. We need to have a consistent approach to marketing our offer, to link in with other public health, physical health or mental health messaging. We should cultivate a brand for a new connected city wide approach to physical health and wellbeing, and work with partners to focus on the residents of and visitors to Portsmouth and what we can do to get them more active.

Portsmouth is already home to some world class sporting events like the Great South Run and the America's Cup World Series. We believe that events can inspire people to take up physical activity and will work to bring more events to the city.



# STAGE 3: INTERVENTIONS

*Identify how the outcomes  
can be delivered sustainably*

**This stage will identify the optimal and most sustainable mix of facilities and interventions.**

A central question that this stage addresses is how to design services in a sustainable way which encourages people to be more active. This should encompass all services and sites including parks and open spaces, community venues, and the walking and cycling infrastructure. This holistic understanding of services is important as the solution to improving physical activity will not only be 'leisure centre' based.

To enable us to achieve our vision for sport and physical activity in the city, we will build upon the recommendations of major strategic exercises undertaken in recent years, and align them to current needs, opportunities and policy directions.

We have moved away from a 'build it and they will come' approach, which focuses purely on the provision of physical facilities as the major driver for increasing participation and driving improvements in outcomes. We need to take an insight-driven and person centred approach to increasing opportunities to get active. The findings of the indoor facilities strategy remain valid, identifying that "It is important that PCC continues to work with partners moving forward, given funding restraints, to develop and deliver facility provision. PCC can no longer be the provider and funder of last resort, but needs to adopt more of an enabling and facilitating role". The issues that



need to be addressed in Portsmouth are not solely a lack of facilities – we need to make the city’s existing facilities more accessible to people, in all respects.

That isn’t to say that quality facilities aren’t important. The government’s Sporting Future Strategy acknowledges that good quality sporting infrastructure is essential to drive up participation. It suggests ways of achieving greater participation through quality facilities:

- Co-locating sporting facilities with other services that people use like libraries, doctors’ surgeries or community centres.
- Focusing on the customer and their experience.
- Providing artificial pitches.
- Improving outdoor infrastructure like footpaths, pavements and parks.
- Making better use of school facilities (and other public sector facilities).

Sport England’s Towards an Active Nation Strategy stated that building the right things in the right places makes taking part in sport and physical activity a realistic option for many more people and leads to a better experience for those who are already engaged. The new Uniting the Movement strategy states that investment in dedicated sport and physical activity facilities

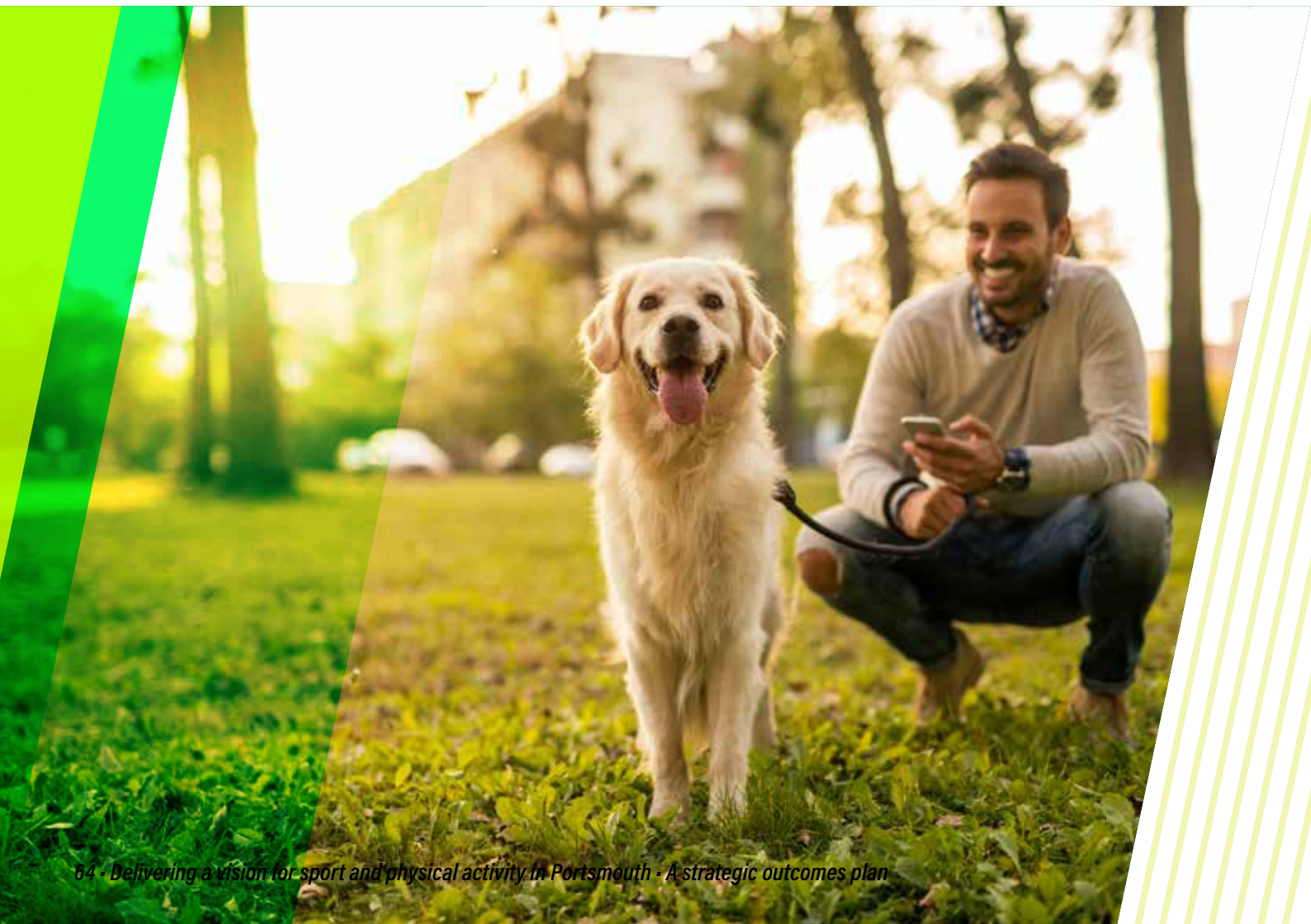
remains vital, and emphasises that these facilities need to be co-located, well-designed, supported and maintained.

There are some key messages that run through our proposed interventions:

- Co-located facilities are essential
- Parks and open spaces are valuable assets
- Wider community spaces are important for activating physical activity
- Solving complex problems requires collaboration.

On this basis, our key interventions can be summarised on the themes of:

- Improving built facilities to address community need
- Working with partners to programme space to maximise city capacity
- Engagement and broadening access





## ***Facilities interventions – summary***

- Proposed development of a new physical activity and community hub, co-locating physical activity facilities and a new community centre on 1 site, as set out below: and Investment in new tennis and netball courts
- Investment in Hillsea Lido
- Development of a new indoor active play facility (already developed and opened – Exploria)
- Development of football hub at King George V playing field

In 2017, the city adopted an indoor facility strategy that set out key principles for future approaches, set out earlier in the document.

A huge amount of work underpinning a strategic approach to future facility provision has been undertaken in the City since 2017; the key elements include:

- Feasibility Study and Options Appraisal on future citywide facility needs
- Appointment of a Strategic Development Manager, Sports and Leisure
- Renewed community use and operational agreement for Charter Sports Centre
- Bransbury Park Feasibility Study
- Citywide community consultation on the options for Eastney Pool and Wimbledon Park Sports Centre
- Decision to re-open Wimbledon Park Sports Centre on reduced operating hours
- Revised leisure management contract with BH Live
- Commitment from PCC Members to invest in a new co-located physical activity hub in Bransbury Park, backed up by £15m of PCC funding
- Transformation of the Pyramids wetside and play area into a new Active Play Zone (Exploria), and the conversion of the plaza events space into new and larger health and fitness facilities
- a citywide Vision for Swimming has been developed and work has started on re-locating groups previously using Eastney Swimming Pool e.g. the naturist swimming group is using St Edmund's Catholic School pool; Portsmouth Swimming Club is using other facilities in the City- Mountbatten, HMS Temeraire etc.
- Commitment to update the 2017 Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS) for the City
- Commitment to refurbish the sports hall roof on the Mountbatten Leisure Centre (2022)
- Completion of a SOPG Diagnostic (2021) followed by this full SOPG report.

Portsmouth City Council has recognised that a proactive, strategic approach needs to be taken in the interest of long term sustainability both in terms of participation, financial, economic, cultural and tourism offer and the wider City agendas. Implementing this approach has already been seen in the refurbishment of the Pyramids to an indoor active play and fitness centre.

There have also been a number of wider changes that key factors have had a significant impact and enabled PCC to develop its citywide Vision for future leisure provision:

- the University of Portsmouth has opened a new leisure facility including an eight lane 25 metre pool (Ravelin Park Sports Centre opened late 2022, with a community use agreement in place between the University and PCC for use of the swimming pool and sports hall facilities);
- the MOD has decided to try and operate HMS Temeraire facilities, including their pool more commercially;
- the Pyramids has been refurbished to provide a large indoor active play and fitness facility – Exploria (leisure pools closed) and a new fitness facility;
- The local authority has been awarded significant LUF funding (2021) to regenerate Hilsea Lido; this will transform the northern gateway to the City and facilitate provision of an all year round outdoor swimming offer as part of an active environment
- the sports hall at St Edmund’s Catholic School (4 courts not currently available for community pay and play use) will be opened from 2023 for community pay and play use as well as clubs and groups.

The remaining recommendations in relation to built facilities from the 2017 Strategy and associated 2019 options appraisal are replacing Eastney Swimming Pool and Wimbledon Park Sports Centre, and re-developing Hilsea Lido – the final elements to complete in the citywide network of physical activity facilities.

## **Replacement of Eastney Swimming Pool and Wimbledon Park Sports Centre**

In 2018/19, an options appraisal was undertaken to consider a range of scenarios around the water and fitness provision in the south of the city, namely the Pyramids, Eastney Swimming Pool and Wimbledon Park Sports Centre. All had been identified as poor quality, with building challenges in the short to medium term. The appraisal considered a range of scenarios and options for the above three sites that clearly reflected the relationship between them and other city sites, set out the risks and benefits of the options, and considers revenue and capital implications. It also set out possible routes to delivery for the options.

This Options Appraisal informed a discussion with Members as they entered their next round of capital decision-making and the recommended outcome was adopted:

<b>Facility Option</b>	
<b>Close Eastney Swimming Pool</b>	
<b>Close Wimbledon Park Sports Centre</b>	
<b>Close Pyramids</b>	
<b>Develop one new wet and dry facility – location to serve existing catchment areas of the above</b>	
<b>Advantages</b>	<b>Disadvantages</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Development of new facility – wet and dry.</li> <li>■ Loss of three ageing and costly facilities.</li> <li>■ Could proceed with Coastal Plan implementation at Pyramids/ Eastney Swimming Pool site.</li> <li>■ Release of land.</li> <li>■ Contribution to wider City agendas.</li> <li>■ Positive impact on City's tourism and cultural offer.</li> <li>■ Improves participation opportunities in physical activity</li> <li>■ Pro-active and decisive approach; may be longer timescale given all it involves.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Unlikely to address conferencing and venue business opportunity.</li> <li>■ 'Selling' approach locally.</li> <li>■ Loss of existing leisure pool, but this could be mitigated through design of new pool. Future role of Hulsea Lido important.</li> </ul>
<b>Capital Impact</b>	<b>Revenue Implications</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Capital cost of one new facility.</li> <li>■ Could be a very significant facility if all existing provision replicated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Reduction in operational management costs –three facilities to one facility.</li> <li>■ Opportunity to generate more income.</li> <li>■ Would require contract re-negotiation – may assist current funding situation.</li> </ul>

This is now the politically supported way forward; the Pyramids has remained open with the exception of the wet facilities. Closure of the leisure pool has facilitated investment in an alternative physical activity offer i.e. Exploria Active Play, so that there remains a seafront offer for both residents and visitors to the City.

The indoor play facilities are proving very successful with significant growth in throughput since opening. Since its opening in August 2021, there have been 84,813 visits to Exploria compared to 66,963 swimming visits per annum, before August 2021. As a result of Exploria, usage has increased meaning more young people are active, income is significantly more and costs are lower (energy).

**Table 2: Exploria Visits 2021/22**

Month	Total number of visits	Total parties	Total party visits	Average number/party
16th Aug	8164	0	0	0
Sep	7196	31	398	13.51
Oct	8389	108	1449	13.51
Nov	5223	108	1471	13.61
Dec	4548	77	1044	13.48
Jan	6595	99	1449	14.63
Feb	9668	95	1321	13.94
Mar	5268	97	1342	13.64
Apr	7210	101	1449	14.44
May	4999	108	1446	14.95
June	4237	73	1073	13.78
July	4673	80	1244	10.22
Aug	8643	37	508	13.71
<b>Total</b>	<b>84813</b>	<b>1014</b>	<b>14194</b>	<b>13.62</b>

Eastney Swimming Pool did not re-open following Covid 19. Wimbledon Park Sports Centre is located in the southeast of the city. Facilities in the southeast of the city, in comparison with those in the southwest (Ravelin Centre) and north (Mountbatten Sports Centre) are old, in poor condition, and do not provide users with a modern, fit for purpose environment in which to



***Eastney Leisure Centre – small, stand-alone pool; does not meet DDA/ safeguarding requirements; poor physical condition means significant investment would be required to bring site back into use***

be physically active. This was endorsed by the community feedback in the 2020 survey.

Condition surveys of the facilities, carried out in 2018, highlighted the need for significant investment of £3.7 million in Eastney Swimming Pool, and Wimbledon Park Sports Centre within the next 5 to 10 years, simply to keep the facilities operational and health and safety compliant. The investment would have no impact on increasing utilisation or income on the basis that there would be no improvement to the physical environment or user customer experience on site. At the time, usage at Eastney Swimming Pool and Wimbledon Park Sports Centre was stable but operating well below capacity.

### **Eastney Pool**

Eastney Pool suffered from poor parking and public transport provision, there was no learner pool for swim lessons, poor disability and safeguarding controls on site, no additional facilities other than the pool to attract greater usage e.g. gym, studios. In 2020 an investment need of £1.9m – £2.3m in the facility was estimated to ensure it remained operational. £1.3m was needed in immediate investment.



***Wimbledon Park Sports Centre - fitness offer which could generate significantly more revenue; car park issues; needs considerable investment to enable it to remain open in the long term.***

### **Wimbledon Park Sports Centre**

Wimbledon Park Sports Centre, located close to Eastney Pool and the Pyramids, is a basic four court sports hall facility. It is used for indoor sports (predominantly badminton (53%), school bookings (33%) and gym use (14%). There is poor access to the site and limited parking. The facility is operating at a financial loss and below capacity. It is one of five existing sports halls in the City available for daytime use. The site operator, BH Live advises that the badminton players are not particularly local to the area and could easily be accommodated at the Mountbatten Centre (the Bangladeshi Badminton Club has already been re-located to Mountbatten). The gym is small and BH Live is currently undertaking a latent demand study for gyms in the south east of the city as they believe that there is significant latent demand as has been evidenced at the Mountbatten Centre and the Pyramids.

Wimbledon Park Sports Centre is currently open, but if it were to be kept open long-term, it would require considerable investment (£941,000 at 2020 prices) to address the structural issues. There would be limited improvement to the customer experience without further cost. The facility has always operated at a deficit (Parkwood average £-24,000 per year, BH Live pre-Covid-19 average £-12,000 per year).

Recommended intervention – Bransbury Park

## Physical Activity and Health Hub

PCC plans to develop a new co-located wet and dry physical activity community hub to replace Eastney Swimming Pool and compensate for the reduced opening hours at Wimbledon Park Sports Centre.

The preferred site for this new co-located wet and dry leisure facility is **Bransbury Park** which is within a short distance of both existing sites. The proposal would be to co-locate with a new GP Surgery (5 consulting rooms) to replace the aged GP facility within a 5 minute walk and encourage a renewed focus on holistic health and wellbeing.

The **Bransbury Park Physical Activity and Health Hub** would provide the following facilities:

- **Main Pool:** A new pool 25m x 4 lane pool to replace Eastney Swimming Pool. It will be designed to facilitate lane swimming, lessons and some club use.
- **Learner Pool (12.5m x 8.5m):** To accommodate more swimming lessons and improve income levels.
- **Multi-purpose hall space (circa 2 badminton court size):**
- **Studio** (capacity 30)
- **Gym:** A large gym (50-60 stations) to improve participation and income levels as part of a multi-functional facility.
- **Outdoor Courts and Pitches:** Existing outdoor facilities at Bransbury Park include a 4-court hard surface facility which is laid out for netball, a smaller ball court and a small, carpeted football court/pitch. Two of the outdoor courts would be retained; working with Netball England, the LTA and the local clubs and leagues, there will be investment into the existing outdoor netball and tennis courts at the Mountbatten Centre to mitigate the loss of 4 courts at Bransbury. The proposal and investment is detailed later in this report, and is supported by both NGBs.
- The co-located hub will offer a range of outreach health and community services alongside opportunities to be physical active, with a focus on social prescribing.

In identifying the opportunity, a wider evaluation of other potential sites has been undertaken. From a planning perspective, the key issue would be the loss of open space resulting from a new build in Bransbury Park. However, there are options for mitigating this loss e.g. return the Eastney Pool site to open space, improve the quality of the open space and/or utilisation of the developed space at Bransbury Park. A full site options appraisal was undertaken to drive site selection.



There are two development options being considered for Bransbury Park, as follows:

- **Option 1:** A traditional building co-locating physical activity and a GP Surgery (5 consulting rooms).
- **Option 2:** A traditional building providing a physical activity offer

The preferred development option for the Bransbury Physical Activity and Community Hub is Option 1. However, development of this option will impact on the existing outdoor courts in Bransbury Park. There are 6 existing netball courts at Bransbury Park, which are floodlit. These used to be used by up to 50 netball teams on a Tuesday night, but numbers dwindled to 28 teams. The reasons for this reduction include:

- Health and safety – court surfaces are poor
- Games kept getting interrupted by teenagers hanging round the courts

Netball teams now use Portsmouth University courts (2 courts) and the three netball courts at Crookhorn. Ideally, netball need 2 floodlit outdoor courts in the City for playing and training. The Hampshire Indoor League is played at Admiral Lord Nelson School. Mayfield School courts are also used for some club netball.



4 of the 6 tennis/netball courts will be lost at Bransbury Park as a result of developing the new Hub. 2 brand new (re-provided) courts will be retained in the park. To be in a position to support this the Football Foundation need to be sure that both the LTA and England Netball are also in support of the approach developed to mitigate this loss. The planned mitigation is that the existing four tennis courts at Mountbatten will be extended and resurfaced to provide for both netball and tennis. England Netball is supportive of this as Mountbatten is a much more accessible location for both training and competitive play, given players come from both the City and surrounding areas.

The LTA is also supportive of this approach as tennis will benefit from two new courts at Bransbury Park, plus improved quality floodlit courts at Mountbatten.

Detailed stakeholder and community consultation on the proposed scheme has been undertaken and in summary:

- The majority of respondents have never visited Eastney Swimming Pool (56%); 6% visited three or more times a week, 11% visited once or twice a week, 7% visited once or twice a month and 19% visited less than once a month.
- The most popular reasons selected by respondents to explain why they never visited Eastney Swimming Pool were the condition of the building (36%), the location (34%) and the condition of the changing facilities (28%).
- The largest proportion of respondents who visited Eastney Swimming Pool at least once a week live in the Eastney area where the pool is located (PO4 postcode district – 22%).
- Lane swimming and recreational swimming were the main reasons why respondents used Eastney Swimming Pool (64% and 43% respectively).
- The most popular theme that emerged from the open-ended comments about Eastney Swimming Pool in general was that it is in a good location which is convenient.
- The most frequently visited sports centre for the use of indoor sports courts and/ or the gym was the Mountbatten Centre, with 18% of respondents visiting at least once a week.
- An overwhelming majority of respondents have never visited Wimbledon Park Sports Centre (81%); 7% visited at least once a week, 3% visited at least once a month and 9% visited less than once a month.
- The top three reasons for never visiting Wimbledon Park Sports Centre were that respondents did not know it was there (29%), the location of it (28%), or they do not play sports/ use a gym (26%).

- The highest proportion of respondents who visited Wimbledon Park Sports Centre at least once a week live in the PO5 postcode area (14%), which is where the centre is located.
- Of those who had visited Wimbledon Park Sports Centre, just over three quarters used the indoor sports courts to play badminton, basketball and/or table tennis (76%). A third of respondents also visited the centre to use the gym (33%).
- The main theme that emerged from the thematic analysis of further comments about Wimbledon Park Sports Centre was that it has good facilities for badminton, with some claiming that it is the best in the city for the sport.
- The majority of respondents agree/ strongly agree with the proposal to use the money that would maintain Eastney Swimming Pool and Wimbledon Park Sports Centre as they are, on a new facility at Bransbury Park (63%). Just over a fifth of respondents strongly disagree/ disagree with the idea (22% net), and 14% are neutral.
- The most common theme that emerged from the open-ended comments explaining why respondents disagree with the proposal was that they would rather the money was spent on upgrading current sport and leisure facilities (33%).
- Keeping sport and leisure facilities in the current locations of Eastney Swimming Pool and Wimbledon Park Sports Centre was the main suggestion of other locations for a new centre by respondents (30%). Almost as popular was rebuilding on the Pyramids site and locating a new sport and leisure facility there (29%).
- The most important things selected by respondents for a new centre at Bransbury Park to include are good quality changing rooms for the swimming pool (84%) and gym (78%), being able to walk or cycle to the centre (83%), and ease of access for disabled people and people with limited mobility (84%).
- More parking at Bransbury Park if a new centre is built was the main theme that emerged from the thematic analysis of other suggestions from respondents; there need to be enough spaces so as not to impact resident's parking, and many discussed how it would be good to keep parking free.
- Finally, several themes emerged from the open-ended comments about sport and leisure facilities in Portsmouth in general; getting the development at Bransbury Park "right" was most popular. Respondents called for a high-quality, modern facility with better management and long-term maintenance.



## **Hilsea Linear Park**

Currently managed by a Community Trust (Hilsea Lido, Pool for the People), the Lido is an important element in Portsmouth's heritage. The site was previously wholly owned and operated by Portsmouth City Council, but was subject to a community asset transfer in 20028 when the authority took the decision that it was no longer economically viable to operate the site. The pool is 68 metres long, but unheated. Current operating arrangements, however, do not realise its full potential or benefit to the City. The Lido is currently open for limited seasonal hours.

However, there has always been a recognition that the site could play an important role in the sporting and physical activity life of the city if the necessary investment could be found and wider support for activity generated. The Levelling Up Fund provided an opportunity to lever in capital investment but also to articulate an ambitious vision for the wider setting that talked about how the north of the city could be reimagined as a destination for heritage, culture, nature and physical activity with the Lido and Hilsea Lines at the heart of this, also relating to the development of the King George V Football Hub.

The ambition is that the Lido will be re-developed as a facility for the City's community with longer and more accessible opening hours, and a revised operating model. This will also act as a catalyst for the development of a

wider water sports offer in the north of the City, also linked to an 'outdoor' physical activity offer, as part of an overall masterplan for that area of the City. Particular focus is placed on how we activate the wider site for water-related sport, building on the opportunities in particular for linking the built and natural environment and providing a range of experiences.

A range of partners are involved to create the sporting hub model, including:

- BH Live
- Andrew Simpson Watersport Centre
- University of Portsmouth (including a focus on the Athletic Skills Model)
- Hilsea Lido Pool for the People Trust
- Portsmouth City Council
- British Canoeing
- British Triathlon.

Sustrans have also been commissioned to undertake work looking at the wider activation of public realm for physical activity, and to look at the active travel options around the site. As a linkage to this, consideration is being given to development of wider "liveable city" options in the neighbourhood, with a focus on safety and creating an age-friendly community.

Again, extensive community consultation has been undertaken to shape the development of work and this resulted in the development of key pledges that will be taken into account to shape the site:

1. Open the Lido more often for everyone to enjoy
2. Explore the potential of heating at least part of the pool
3. Include a food and drink facility
4. Provide play equipment and a diverse range of activities and events
5. Make the Lido welcoming and accessible to everyone
6. Improve shower, toilet and changing facilities
7. Create a well-maintained, attractive, and fun facility
8. To make the lido as affordable as possible

The lido design is now underway with the pledges at the heart of the brief, and the scheme will be complete by March 2025.

## King George V Playing Field Football Hub

In 2018, the city adopted a Playing Pitch Strategy which identified a shortage of pitches across most pitch sports and a particular deficit in relation to provision of AGP for Football. The local authority continued to work closely with the Football Foundation to identify options for addressing this shortfall (which has a material impact on other sports because the demand generated by football sucks up a large proportion of available pitch space capacity locally).

After an extensive period of options appraisal, and discussion with the football community locally, the partners agreed that an appropriate location would be the King George V Playing Field in Cosham, which already functioned as the city's key base for football, but also provides much needed multi-functional open space for the local community.

Extensive community consultation took place in 2021, and was overwhelmingly positive about the opportunity, with some concerns raised about potential loss of open space. On this basis, a funding application was progressed with the Football Foundation, and significant Portsmouth City Council capital committed to enable the scheme to move forward.



The scheme will now include a new pavilion with changing facilities, café space and toilets, as well as the AGPs, one of which will be supersized. The two AGPs would be marked up to provide a variety of pitch options, such as:

- 2 full size 100 x 64m pitches
- 4 9v9 pitches
- 6 7v7 pitches
- 12 5v5 pitches

Having a range of smaller pitches will help meet the needs of youth football matches and training and would enable more children to take part in the sport. There will still be a number of grass football pitches available in the rest of the playing fields and we are considering what other improvements we could make to the wider landscape to enhance the active environment, and this will be subject to a further bid to the Youth Investment Fund.

The site is due to be complete by January 2024, and the process of securing an operator is concluding. The expectation is that this will be an operator with specialism in football and able to bring substantial advantage to the city through provision of additional dimensions such as training provision.

An additional significant and complementary development is the John Jenkins Stadium in Baffins Ward, led by Pompey in the Community. It is intended that the scheme will provide a home ground for Moneyfields FC, as well as a base for the work carried out by Pompey in the Community across all its programmes, which include education, elite development and community work. The scheme will also include open-access youth provision. This is a further significant move towards the achievement of the objectives in the Playing Pitch Strategy.



## ***Programming and capacity interventions - summary***

- A strategic citywide approach to provision for swimming
- A wider strategic approach to improvement of tennis courts in the City
- Refresh of the Playing Pitch Strategy

### **A Strategic Approach to Swimming Provision in Portsmouth**

Portsmouth City Council has taken a strategic and coordinated citywide approach to future swimming provision. The key issue for Portsmouth is that replacing ageing facilities with more modern provision will have an impact in 5 key areas:

- Reduction in capital liability i.e. a saving of circa £4m;
- Increased throughput;
- Increased revenue generation;
- Ability to better address and deliver the health and well-being priorities in the City; and
- Deliver better long-term value from capital investment (clearly capital investment will be needed to develop replacement provision).

Portsmouth City Council's (PCC) adopted 2017 Indoor Sports Facility Strategy (BFS) identifies the need for change and investment in the existing provision of swimming facilities and also the citywide programming of, and access to, swimming facilities. The 2022 updated Sports Facility Strategy endorses this approach.

The rationale for this is to increase inclusive access to the Portsmouth community to create and delivery, more opportunities for Learn to Swim, casual, lane and family swimming, alongside a balanced programme of club, education, and other aquatic activities.

This Vision has been developed with PCC and their key partners, the University of Portsmouth, BH Live, Swim England, local aquatic clubs, and other pool providers. The Vision comprises PCC's own network of built swimming facilities (operated under a long-term contract by B H Live) and partner sites across the city.

The Citywide Vision for aquatic activities is set out in below:

**Figure 18: Citywide Vision for aquatic activities**

<b>Mountbatten Pool</b>	■ Community swimming lessons
■ L2 swim	<b>Charter Community Pool</b>
■ Family swimming	■ L2 swim
■ Community swimming (lane, casual, disability)	■ Relocated club use (from Eastney)
■ Daytime education	■ Canoeing/kayaking
■ Club use (synchro, club, galas)	<b>New PCC Pool (Bransbury Park)</b>
<b>MOD Pool</b>	■ L2 swim
■ Club use	■ Health and wellbeing focus (older people, social prescribing, GP referral)
■ Organised groups	■ Family swimming
<b>UoP Pool</b>	■ Specialist group sessions
■ University use	<b>Other pool providers</b>
■ Memberships (including Community)	■ Club use
■ Local educational use	■ Organised groups / aquatic activities

The Principles underpinning this Vision are:

**Figure 19: Underpinning Principles**

- 1 Inclusive community swimming will be available in the city at all times in at least one of PCC's pools.
- 2 The citywide network of water spaces will provide a balanced programme facilitating delivery of the Portsmouth aquatic pathway.
- 3 The L2Swim Programme will be consistent quality across the city.
- 4 All available water space will be optimised for the benefit of participation across the aquatic pathway.
- 5 Opportunities to engage with those who are inactive will be promoted across the city.



Development of an improved swimming offer across the City will now also include the Hilsea Lido.

This overall approach provides a strategic network of water space across the City, catering for all existing needs in better quality facilities, which, with revised programming, will offer optimal revenue generating potential. It is recognised that this approach is likely to require some revision to the current BH Live management contract and specification and would benefit from a city-wide partnership approach to aquatics.

The development of a Citywide Aquatics Group, as recommended in the Leisure Facilities Options Appraisal (2019), would ensure a coordinated approach to the delivery of physical activity across the City, to increase participation and reduce health inequalities, and is a priority for future development.

### **A strategic approach to tennis**

The LTA is keen to work with PCC to improve the existing 'park' tennis courts in the City, having worked with the council a decade ago, to invest in the courts.

To this end, the LTA plans to commission and pay for an independent consultant to conduct on-site condition surveys for the tennis courts in parks. The visits will be undertaken on tennis courts at Drayton, Cosham, Milton and Baffin's Pond to identify a schedule of works required and a future approach to maintenance.

Use of the courts to have condition surveys is as follows:

**Table 3: Condition Surveys**

<b>Location</b>	<b>Modelled Unique Players</b>
<b>Milton Park</b>	2545
<b>Cosham Park</b>	3081
<b>Drayton Park</b>	1582
<b>Baffins Pond</b>	2589

The LTA's local strategy states that Portsmouth is well provided for in terms of number of and range of tennis courts. It has indoor centres, private members clubs and courts in public parks.

In particular the North (Drayton, Cosham, Portsmouth Tennis Centre), the Southwest (Portsmouth Tennis Academy, Southsea Tennis Club) and southeast of the City (Southsea Community Tennis, Milton Park, Bransbury Park) are well-provided for in terms varied tennis playing opportunities. The strategic gap of a local tennis playing opportunity exists in the Eastern Park of the city. The courts at Baffins Pond are in poor condition, with little maintenance and previous addition of MUGA equipment. The reinstatement of some or all of

the courts at Baffins pond would be a priority for the city and identified mitigation if there was loss of courts elsewhere in the city. The loss of courts at Bransbury Park to the new leisure centre provide and opportunity to re look at the distribution of tennis facilities across the city.

The LTA is keen to work in partnership with PCC to resolve the long terms sustainability and security of tennis courts in the parks. The courts currently have a booking system (Milton, Cosham and Drayton) and are well used. However, there is currently no plan in place to generate income or budget for these courts being refurbished when it is required.

The LTA wishes to engage in dialogue with the council to share model elsewhere and consider installation of a mixed charging / free tennis system for tennis courts in the City. It is understood that this will need to be part of a wider political discussion. The rationale is to ensure the long term future of the courts by ringfencing income generated for future refurbishment.

Working with the LTA, Hampshire Netball and England Netball an agreed proposal has been developed to improve the existing floodlit outdoor tennis courts at the Mountbatten Centre, to become high quality netball and tennis courts. The existing courts will be enlarged by 30% to provide four netball courts suitable for playing and competition. The centre is well-located for netball use and provides plenty of parking.

In summary the LTA's view is:

- The courts that are available and up and running (Drayton, Milton, Cosham) all need a plan for future schedule of works and maintenance.
- This can be achieved through affordable charging mixed with free provision as we proposed elsewhere but can also be achieved through allocation of council budgets.
- The former clearly has less impact on council budgets and carries less perceived risk to the future of the courts.
- The potential refurbishment of the courts at Baffin's Pond would fill a strategic gap in access to public tennis in the South and South East of the City.
- The Southern Part of the city is provided for with offers on the seafront with the venues at Southsea Tennis Club and Court X on Canoe Lake
- As ever the LTA to see and support a sustainable long-term future for indoor facilities at Portsmouth Tennis Centre and Portsmouth Tennis Academy
- The LTA is supportive of the mitigation proposed to offset the loss of 4 tennis courts in Bransbury Park as a result of developing the new Hub. Tennis will benefit from two new courts at Bransbury Park, plus improved quality floodlit courts at the Mountbatten Centre.

## **Refresh of the Playing Pitch Strategy**

In 2018, PCC adopted a playing pitch strategy with a five year horizon. This is now due for a refresh.

A number of significant actions have been progressed, and there have also been some major influences that need to be taken into account including: –  
Progression of the Football Hub at King George V Playing Fields

- Development of the John Jenkins Stadium at the former Moneyfields site by Pompey in the Community
- The intention of the MOD to take a more commercial approach to the facility in HME Temeraire
- The disposal of St John's Playing Field in Farlington, following the closure of the school in 2022
- The intention of Portsmouth Football Club to develop further facilities in the city
- The ongoing development of the site of the former St James's Hospital and the possible impact on community cricket facilities
- The intentions of the university around future playing pitch allocation
- The increased reliance on school sites for provision around hockey in particular
- The intention of the Portsmouth Grammar School to become an active community partner and consider widened access to facilities
- The potential impact of the proposed Aquind interconnector on playing pitches in the short to medium term, subject to the outcome of judicial review.

It is therefore expected that the local authority will commission a refresh of the playing pitch strategy to guide future work in relation to pitch sports over the next medium term planning window.

## ***Engagement and broadening access interventions summary***

- Ongoing delivery of events and engagement activity related to these
- Delivery of the superzone
- Support for families in the cost of living crisis, including ongoing support for the leisure card and delivery of HAF



## Events and engagement

The local authority continues to compete for the right to hold high profile events in the city, recognising the wider economic benefits that large scale events bring, but also the value of events in supporting wider participation and engagement with sport and physical activity.

### **The Great South Run**

The Great South Run started life in Southampton in 1990 as the Diet Coke Great South run (as it was known) attracting 2,500 entries before moving to Portsmouth 12 months later where it has been held ever since. The fast flat route has now become an international gold standard where, with the support of prevailing winds in the right direction it has given thousands of people the opportunity to achieve a personal best time as well as fundamentally encouraging participation in mass physical activity. This 10 mile event attracts a wide range of participants from the international athletics elite to the charity fundraisers with this mid distance event supporting runners as they progress from the 10km routes up to the half marathon. As a renowned European IAAF Gold Label Road Race the event attracts some of the most successful professional runners with world class athletes such as Sonia O'Sullivan, Paula Radcliffe and Mo Farah to name but a few.



The event is however primarily structured as a mass participation event where it has regularly achieved its capacity of around 25,000 participants and the necessary infrastructure is now firmly established to both provide the maximum enjoyment for participants as well as minimal disruption to the city on this closed road course.

The event has also continued to maintain and develop a wider range of shorter distance participatory events which take place along sections of the longer event course the Saturday before the Great South Run. These currently consist of a series of 5k, junior (2.5k), mini (1.5k) and since 2018 a dog race for speedy dogs and their owners. This expansion of the events using the overarching infrastructure and much of the scenic flat course has been aimed at encouraging those who have been intimidated by the 10 mile distance of the main event by offering a more manageable option for those new to running or getting back into training after some time off so linking further to the Council's priorities around health and well being.

As well as the core events over the weekend of the Great South Run, Portsmouth also hosts a Great Run Local event on a weekly basis on a Sunday morning in the north of the city. Supported by trained volunteers these events encourage active participation over either a 2k and 5k course which is timed with progress being monitored through a unique mobile app for all participants. The very active volunteer team in Portsmouth has

supported in excess of 25,000 participants in activity since the event commenced in 2015 with 944 people participating in January 2020 alone despite the poor weather again illustrating a commitment to providing opportunities to help the Council meet the health and wellbeing priorities.

In 2013, race promoter Nova International commissioned a repeat piece of research on the Great South Run following on from their 2008 research which, whilst slightly dated still provides some indication of the greater value of the event to the city. Some of the core statistics illustrate:

- Growth of the Total Economic Impact of the event from £933,000 in 2008 to £3.3 million in 2013
- Growth in accommodation needs with 57% of those needing accommodation in 2013 staying in Portsmouth
- 54% of all runners were raising money for charitable causes

Participation in endurance events in on the up and running is by far the most popular activity with an estimated 800,000+ running events held in the UK every year. The London Marathon, the UK's flagship event, regularly received entries from up to 300,000 for the 40,000 places on the start line. As a result we have also seen the participation run market growing in Portsmouth and it now includes fun/beginning runs, (Park Run, Run Local offered by Nova International Limited), endurance/mud runs (Pretty Muddy), and unique runs (Santa Fun Run, Colour runs). All elements of the Great Run offer have a significant dependence and opportunity for volunteering. Great Run Local can only take place due to the dedication and support of trained volunteers who give up time on a weekly basis to support the Hilsea event.

The city remains committed to the event as a flagship sporting opportunity and continues to invest significantly to ensure that Portsmouth remains the home of the Great South Run and the associated activities.

### **2023 Formula Kite European Championships**

The UK is to showcase super-fast kite foil racing in the countdown to the Paris 2024 Olympics when the RYA hosts the 2023 Formula Kite European Championships, and Portsmouth will be the host city for the event. The world's best racers from the Olympic circuit will battle it out on the waters off Eastney Beach in Portsmouth from September 19 to 24 for the title of European champion – and potentially a place at the Games. 150 athletes from 35 nations will be taking part in the regatta.

It will be the first time the UK has hosted an international Formula Kite regatta since the exciting new discipline was added to the Olympic roster. Kite foiling sees riders 'fly' above the water on hydrofoils attached to boards, powered by huge kites which can propel them to incredible speeds of up to 45 knots (51mph). Formula Kite will make its Olympic debut at Paris 2024, with medals available for both male and female athletes.



The Formula Kite Europeans will also mark the UK return of the international Olympic circuit for the first time since the 49er, 49erFX and Nacra 17 European Championships which took place in Weymouth and Portland in 2019

Crucially the regatta will continue the legacy of London 2012, offering world-class racing in a city centre location easily watched by spectators UK Sport has provided National Lottery funding for the regatta, and the RYA has teamed up with Portsmouth City Council to deliver the event on behalf of the IKA.

Eastney beach will provide the perfect viewpoint to watch the high-octane racing, which will take place just a few hundred metres from the shore.

Racing will start on September 19 and run through to a thrilling knock-out finale on September 24, held in front of hundreds of onlookers with expert commentators explaining all the action. The final two days of racing will also be streamed live for those wanting to follow the racing remotely.

Throughout the event, the RYA will be working in partnership with local watersports providers to engage with the local community. School aged children and young people from the Portsmouth area will be able to learn more about this exciting new sport from a specially-created Beach Classroom on Eastney beach.

A range of activities will be on offer including kite flying, while experts will also be on hand to explain the basics of the sport. The event is also the perfect opportunity for youngsters to learn more about the range of watersports available on their doorstep and connect with the waterfront of Portsmouth.

Portsmouth has a track record of delivering world class sailing events, having hosted the America's Cup World Series in 2015 and 201, and is committed to continuing the delivery of prestigious watersports event to drive social and economic benefit, as set out in the watersports strategy.

## Superzone

A Superzone is a place-based approach to improving urban environments for health, covering a 400m radius around a central point. The initiative brings together people from across the system to address local issues identified as factors that limit wellbeing. The project was originally established to tackle the drivers of childhood obesity and was first piloted in London.

In Portsmouth, Arundel Court Primary Academy (ACPA) in the Charles Dickens ward is the central point of the Superzone. The road boundaries

**Map 3: Superzone location**





of Fratton Road, Lake Road, Commercial Road and Canal Walk are approximately 200m from the school.

A total of 3 schools expressed an interest to pilot the Superzone. The rationale for choosing ACPA was based on its high levels of childhood obesity, its location in the ward with the highest deprivation and in an Air Quality Management Area.

Extensive work was carried out with school pupils to determine the environmental barriers and enablers for them to be healthy. A thematic analysis of their insight uncovered four themes: healthy food environment, active places, cleaner air and community safety.

These themes informed workshops with a range of professionals linked to health, education, housing and community. The aims, objectives and output indicators agreed between delivery stakeholders, form the basis of the action plan. The goal is to develop a series of multi-faceted interventions to generate short term improvements in healthy eating, physical activity, community safety and air quality.

Each intervention has multiple co-benefits for short- and long-term health. Overall, the Superzone aims to positively impact long term child health outcomes, both directly through interventions, and indirectly by collaborating and pooling resources across agencies and the community.

The first Superzone pilot in Portsmouth was approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board in Sept 2019 with delivery on course to start in March 2020 just as the Covid-19 pandemic began, which resulted in an unforeseen 18-month delay. The Superzone pilot was restarted in September 2021 with a soft launch, due to the ongoing impact of the pandemic on the school community. As a result, communication and engagement linked to the Superzone has been through ACPA's school network rather than directly with pupils and parents. This has had the unforeseen benefit of using a trusted partner to gain deeper and more honest feedback and insight from children.

Delivery during the 21/22 academic year continued to be hampered by the impact of Covid-19 in schools. In the summer term, it was agreed to extend the pilot into the current academic year (22/23) with the additional time being extremely valuable. Most of 21/22 was devoted to learning more about the issues raised by the children and local community and working collectively on solutions to tackle them. On more than one occasion, original plans were altered based on the increased knowledge and insight gained in 21/22.

The learning from the action plan will be taken into additional work with a focus on active environments and linking with work around greening the city and air quality in particular.



## **Supporting people with barriers to participation**

The local authority recognises that there are many barriers to participation in sport, and a critical one is cost. This is both cost to travel to facilities, and the cost of participation. We have committed to a wide distribution of sites across the city, so that everyone has a facility within a reasonable distance of their home, and our work around active environments is focused on ensuring that everyone can be active in their everyday lives.

However, we know from our insight that issues around income and deprivation are particularly acute for many in our city, and especially for some of our families and children, so we have a number interventions targeted at this issue in particular.

### **PCC Leisure Card**

The Portsmouth leisure card entitles residents to discounts at Portsmouth City Council facilities as well as some other services.

Applying for a leisure card is free – they are available to residents that receive means-tested benefits, including Universal Credit, Income Support or Working Tax Credit including within PO1 to PO6 areas.

This means that cardholders can enjoy discounts or even free access to a range of cultural facilities in the city including sports centres, swimming

pools and golf courses. Importantly, the leisure card is also accepted by partners in the city, including Southsea Skatepark.

The cost of supporting the leisure card is generally absorbed by partners (and therefore PCC takes a smaller income from the BH Live contract) with PCC spending around £3500 a year to centrally administer the scheme.

### **Free swimming, splashpools , play and walks**

Free swimming is a local, council supported scheme designed to extend opportunities to swim and maximise the health benefits of swimming. The scheme is for Portsmouth residents, 12 years old and under and gives free access to council-run pools in the city.

The authority also maintains a range of free splashpools across the city to ensure children can access safe, water-based play in the summer, at around £50,000 per year

The authority provides playparks across the city, and also supports adventure playgrounds that provide more adventurous activity for older children in urban areas with relatively few other options for play. These sites have playworkers attached to them who also build wider relationships with children and families to provide support. These sites are largely funded through the authority's housing revenue account.

### **Holiday Activities and Food programme – HAF Fun Pompey**

Funded by the Department of Education, the HAF programme has been rolled out across the country to support lower income families during the school holidays. In addition to supporting families, HAF Fun Pompey is an initiative to help children thrive, not just survive. The scheme is full of activities to spark their fascination, ignite their talents and enrich their lives.

The HAF programme in Portsmouth is delivered through a range of partners with a focus on physical activity, including:

- Pompey in the Community
- BH Live
- Andrew Simpson Watersports Centre
- Active Minds
- Basketball for Buckland
- DM Sports
- JG Tennis
- Peter Ashley Activity Centres

## Creating social value through sport and physical activity

The local authority has a social value policy where all contracts are considered in terms of the wider value that the Portsmouth Pound is driving for residents in economic, social and environmental terms. We work closely with our key providers of sport and leisure in the city on this mission and have closely aligned values.

In early 2023, BH Live presented key examples of their work in this area – focused on support to adults with long term illnesses and disabilities, and some of our most vulnerable residents – to the annual city social value conference, Broadening Horizons.

The BH Live team focus on four key areas to drive social value in the city:

- Supporting people with long term health conditions
- Working with harder to reach groups, such as low income families, black and minority ethnic communities and older people
- People with mental health challenges
- Young people through a junior activities programme.



Specific examples of activity include:

- Providing an exercise referral scheme working in partnership with the local NHS to support conditions ranging from joint injury, diabetes, obesity, cancer and mental health, with three touchpoint assessments to monitor and engage. Residents supported through the scheme receive reduced price memberships and received targeted advice and guidance.
- Delivery of additional classes to support health including cancer pre-hab in partnership with Macmillan, Let's Bounce Back weight management working alongside PCC, and Breathe Easy classes to support people with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD).
- Providing the Interaction scheme, to improve the health and social inclusion of adults with a mental health condition, by providing opportunities for participation, personal development and achievement in sport and leisure activities. The scheme helps build a pathway between crisis and community care, by delivering activities in a friendly and inclusive environment where social networks are created and confidence can be developed.
- Delivery of programmes to support people with disabilities, including in partnership with Headway, DS Active (supporting people with Down's Syndrome), and providing activities for children with SEND, working age people living with Parkinson's disease, and visually impaired people.
- Delivery of programmes for walking sport, including football and netball.

BH Live have used a tool developed by Sheffield University, using funding from Sport England and DCMS, to accurately measure and value the impact of sports and physical activity. In 21/22, the team calculated that they reached 23,467 participants through various programmes, delivering £3.21m of social value.

# STAGE 4: COMMITMENTS

***Secure commitment to a strategic approach and delivery of outcomes***

**This stage brings together all the key outputs from previous stages into a business case that provides a holistic and complete view of the local authority's strategic approach. This stage will show that implementation is affordable, achievable, and sustainable.**

## ***Portsmouth City Council financial position***

These are challenging times for local government. Through an extended period of pressure on public finances, and the significant social and economic shocks of recent years, including the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council has shown great flexibility in the way that it has adapted to changing needs, delivery of services and ways of working.

The biggest share of the money that the local authority receives comes from government grant. Since 2011/12, the Council will have made £106m in savings (49% of controllable spend). Adult and Children's Social Care represent in excess of 50% of the authority's controllable spend. These services provide services to the most vulnerable, but also experience the greatest cost pressures and have historically received significant protection from savings.



The financial environment has changed dramatically over the past 12 months with CPI inflation peaking at 11.1% during the year, the highest in over 40 years but funding levels have not kept pace (e.g. Council Tax increases of up to 4.99%). The Council continues to operate in a climate of uncertainty created by existence of extra-ordinary levels of inflation, cost of living related increases in demand for services, the legacy of the Covid pandemic and the forthcoming reform of the Local Government Funding system. The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy has been developed to respond to these very challenging circumstances. The Strategy has a strong regeneration and value for money focus with a presumption that capital investment will be targeted towards cost savings, income generation and economic growth.

In February 2023 full council considered reports budget and council tax proposals for 2023/24. The key proposals recommended a budget for 2023/24 that provides for:

- the full financial impact of the extra-ordinary inflation and associated demand related cost pressures experienced over the past year and extending into 2023/24
- £2.0m of Savings in order to meet the extra-ordinary Budget Pressures that have not been met through additional Government Funding or Council Tax and that the Council has been unable to mitigate

- the ongoing impact of the Covid Pandemic in the current year and its expected ongoing legacy over the next 3 years
- a Council Tax increase of 4.99% (2.0% of which is raised specifically to be passported to Adult Social Care)
- increased spending in Adult Social Care of £7.4m being greater than the funding provided by the Adult Social Care precept and the additional Social Care Grant from Central Government
- increased spending in Children's Social Care of £6.1m
- a forecast for the 3 year period to 2026/27 which remains in balance
- no savings requirement for 2024/25 but with any future year's savings beyond 2024/25 subject to review at next year's Annual Budget Meeting (February 2024)
- new Capital Investment of £61.3m.

The Budget setting process for the forthcoming year has been one of the most challenging experienced by the Council. A year ago, it was envisaged that the Council would not have been required to make any savings in the coming year. Shortly after the Budget was approved last year, the financial environment changed rapidly precipitated by the war in Ukraine, the existence of practical full employment in the economy and the strains on international supply chains due to continuing Covid lockdowns across the globe. This, coupled with the more local legacy impacts of the Covid pandemic and resulting pressures on the health system and Council Services more generally, has led to a high cost / high demand environment which the Council alone would not have been able to contend with without substantial cuts to statutory and discretionary services.

Despite this huge challenges, the authority's overall financial health remains sound, and the administration remains committed to supporting sport and physical activity in Portsmouth through a range of revenue and capital support.

## ***Key revenue commitments***

The authority continues to provide significant revenue support to sport and physical activity in the city. There have been no savings requirements specifically of leisure and physical activities services in recent years, and the authority renegotiated the BH Live contract around the Covid pandemic to ensure a viable operation could continue, The authority takes a reduced fee from the contract to ensure that services such as the Leisure Card and free swimming are maintained. The authority continues to maintain sports pitches, open spaces, splashpools, golf courses, parks and events through the revenue budget and values these services highly.



## Key capital commitments

Portsmouth City Council and partners have made capital commitments in the most recent capital programmes in line with the Strategic Outcomes Plan as set out below: As at 31st March 2023

Name	Expenditure	Commitment	Total
Hilsea Splashpool	375,254	0	375,254
Drayton Park – Tennis Court Conversion	216,524	0	216,524
Sports and Leisure Facilities Investment	1,286,183	13,817	1,300,000
Mountbatten Centre Floodlights	445,590	0	445,590
Kingston Recreation Ground Play Improvements	328,361	0	328,361
Farlington Pavilion Refurbishment	271,955	2,307	274,262
Outdoor Fitness Equipment	40,743	0	40,743
Track Re-surfacing – MBC and Bransbury AWP	161,429	0	161,429
Invest in Football Facilities Including Changing Facilities	1,162,231	6,937,769	8,100,000
Pyramids Refurbishment	3,845,317	0	3,845,317
Repair/Refurbishment of Southsea Splashpool	101,736	0	101,736
Contribution to Roof Repairs at Southsea Skatepark	10,000	0	10,000
Portsmouth Watersports Centre	146,583	392,417	539,000
Bransbury Park Pavilion	0	150,000	150,000
Reprovision of Leisure Centre, Pool & Community Centre	507,002	13,982,327	14,489,329
Loan to Pompey in the Community – John Jenkins Centre	0	800,000	800,000
Paulsgrove Football Club Fencing	1,855	28,145	30,000
Linear Park	236,616	7,513,384	7,750,000
Mountbatten Centre Roofing Project	0	6,800,000	6,800,000
Farlington Playing Field	0	500,000	500,000
BMX Track (Baffins)	0	65,000	65,000
Hilsea Basketball Court – Refurbishment and resurfacing	0	60,000	60,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9,137,379</b>	<b>37,245,166</b>	<b>46,382,545</b>

For a number of the schemes there are asks of other partners and funders which are being worked through.

The most significant of the investments is for the Bransbury Park Physical Activity Hub.

# Portsmouth's Strategic Outcomes Plan for Sport and Physical Activity on a page









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