

## **“Excellent facilities” - Our Development Plan**

### ***What analysis have we done?***

In 2005 Active York commissioned research to establish the local demand for some major facilities and analysis of how supply compares to this. This process has provided the city with a flexible planning tool which can be used to assess the impact of planned and theoretical facilities on the city.

This tool is available to be used by anyone planning new facilities, planning residential developments, raising funding for facilities or just interested in sports provision in the city. Queries on the current situation in terms of facility and pitch provision can be made to the council, who will also be able to use the tool to assess the impact of various facility development scenarios.

The following information is based on the levels of provision and the population projections in May 2006. An updated version of this chapter will be available on an annual basis.

### **Swimming**

We now know that there is an under supply of pool space in the city of 669 square meters (this equates to approximately 12, 25m lanes of pool space) which will only increase as the City's population continues to grow. The city also has no facilities that meet modern competitive requirements or dedicated training facilities. This need coupled with the need for public swimming facilities can logically be met by the provision of a publicly accessible county standard pool (25m 8 lane pool with training / teaching pool). To best address the primary areas of under supply a facility of this type should be provided in the East or South of the city.

The development of a county standard pool would create a logical home for the city's competitive swimming club and would allow the existing and new community pools to cater predominantly for community and fitness users.

*The supply analysis only includes facilities that are available for casual community use, and does not reflect the relatively high level of fitness gym (often with pools) membership that exists in York. Even with the provision of a county standard pool, such as that proposed at the University, the City will continue to be considered to have an under supply of pool space. As with other types of facilities, Active York aim to open up and improve existing facilities wherever possible, in the case of swimming this will mean negotiating public access to school, hotel, gym and club facilities as appropriate.*

### ***What will we do to improve swimming facilities in York?***

- ⇒ Offer support and assistance to a scheme to create an 8 lane 25m pool with teaching/ training pool suitable of hosting county level competition.

- ⇒ Work with and represent local residents in negotiations with other pool providers to allow and encourage public access to a new range of facilities. This may also require seeking funding for facility improvements, staffing or other supporting costs.
- ⇒ Work with the council to ensure that any reprovision/ replacement of community pools involves the increase in overall provision & provides high quality facilities that fill an identified gap in provision.
- ⇒ Assist and advise on other schemes that offer the opportunity to increase pool facilities in the city; and support those that offer accessible, sustainable and affordable provision.
- ⇒ Ensure that the aquatics development plan reflect the status of facility provision and uses all pool space in the most appropriate way.

### ***Astroturf / Synthetic Pitches***

Statistical analysis based on national participation rates indicates that the current supply of Astroturf pitches meets demand. Sport England currently recommend one pitch per 60,000 people in the population. However Active York's consultation, the zone development plans and local research has identified that hockey participation rates in York are higher than the national average, and that York hockey club are keen and able to grow and compete at a regional level and beyond.

However for the development of hockey in the city there is a need for at least one water-based synthetic pitch. This should on the same site as a sand based facility to provide for all levels of competition and training. For this to be sustainable this must become the home of competitive hockey and hockey development in the city and must have the backing of England Hockey.

Some discussions and longer term planning for a water-based pitch have taken place, however none of these have concrete funding plans. A location to accommodate club, casual and school usage needs to be found. Such a facility must have supporting ancillary and social facilities, and needs to have access to good road transport links.

### **What will we do to improve synthetic turf pitches in York?**

- ⇒ Offer support and assistance to a scheme to create a hockey complex comprising of at least one water based pitch, with at least one other synthetic pitch either sand or water based, teaching & training facilities, fully accessible changing facilities and social amenities.
- ⇒ Make representation to planning bodies in support of those developing the complex, stressing the essential nature of floodlighting, teaching and social facilities for the sustainable future of hockey development.

### **Sports Halls.**

Statistical analysis has shown that there is currently an under supply of 24 publicly accessible badminton courts in the city. The under provision is spread almost evenly across the city and is therefore an issue faced by each of the zones.

The supply analysis only includes facilities that are considered to be sports halls and have at least 2 badminton courts, single court and community halls have not been included as they are not considered by Sport England to have a significant impact on sports development or participation rates.

Some of the shortfall can be met through community use agreements to offer public, casual access at existing sites. However, some new facilities are essential. A regional standard badminton facility with provision for spectators is needed to cater for the current demand, provide a modern replacement for the competition facilities that are aged and may be at risk as part of the York Central development at the RI in Queen St. There is also a significant demand for indoor basketball, roller hockey, judo and netball competition facilities in the city.

The University of York's expansion plans include proposals for sports halls that would accommodate an additional 12 badminton courts with community access. Stand alone sports halls, or sports centres often require extensive subsidy to cover operating, marketing and facility costs. Sports halls are often included as supporting facilities at schools and colleges, it is important that the city takes the opportunity to get community access to as many facilities as possible. York College will be opening a new sports hall late in 2006 which will allow community access via a community use agreement. The City also currently has 3 secondary schools without full size sports halls. These could make good locations for community sports halls, and would benefit both the school and geographical community.

### **What will we do to improve sports hall provision in York?**

- ⇒ Support the University of York to develop further sports hall facilities to accommodate 12 new badminton courts. Active York will also work with the University to ensure that the design and programming of these facilities best serve the sporting and broader community in the city.
- ⇒ Where strong schemes are developed to create new sports hall facilities on school sites (that currently have no sports hall), that have clear community benefits and sports development outcomes, Active York will support these schemes and where possible assist with funding and planning processes.
- ⇒ Active York will work with York college to raise awareness of the new facilities and the level of community access available, to encourage usage and to help the college and its students realise the benefits of community use.
- ⇒ Work with and represent local residents in negotiations with other sports hall providers to allow and encourage public access to a new range of facilities.

This may also require seeking funding for facility improvements, staffing or other supporting costs.

### **Health & Fitness**

Statistical analysis has shown that there is no un-met demand for health & fitness facilities in the city. This is again based on national participation and membership rates, however York has higher than average membership rates for fitness gyms.

There is currently only one fitness facility created and designed to be fully accessible for disabled users. With the increasingly aged and obese population it is important that more facilities are made accessible or that new purpose built facilities are created which can cater for new, less able and mobile users.

Competitive venues in most sports require training facilities, York currently has a number of community sports clubs with small supporting fitness gyms. To be able to develop sporting excellence in the city, fitness training facilities designed around improvement in performance in specific sports are needed.

### **What will we do about Health & Fitness provision in York?**

- ⇒ Active York will only offer support to schemes that create new fitness facilities if they fill an identified gap in the fitness market, either catering for a target community or improving performance in specific sports.

### **Professional Sports Stadium**

Both York City and York Knights urgently need a modern professional stadium that meets league and safety standards and can attract investors, players and spectators. This facility must cater for the full sports development continuum. It must be accessible by the community as a training and participation venue and as the route to excellence. This venue must be viewed by the professional clubs and the community at large as a Citywide, multi sport facility.

### **What will we do to support the provision of a professional stadium in York?**

- ⇒ Active York will work with the clubs to identify an appropriate site.
- ⇒ We will make representation to developers and the council to ensure that the need for a stadium is identified in planning documents.
- ⇒ We will work with the clubs and developers to engage the community in design and usage plans to ensure the long term sustainability of the facility.

### **Athletics**

The need to maintain a county athletics facility in the city remains. The current facility at Huntington stadium is adequate but it is unlikely to meet competition standards for much longer. The need to reconfigure the facilities must be addressed. If York Knights are relocated there may be scope to modernise the athletics facilities at Huntington, or to relocate the athletics facilities to a new stadium.

**Sports development through sports science and education**

We need to support coaches and coach development to enhance the voluntary sector and individual sporting performance. Our coaches should be given access to excellent training facilities and opportunities to develop using new technology and the latest techniques. A facility in the city for developing our coaches and sports leaders is required.