

SOUTH DERBYSHIRE SPORT PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY

November 2011

WHY A PLAYING PITCH STRATEGY?

There is widespread agreement that the provision for pitch sports in England needs to be improved and protected. Playing pitches are important recreation and amenity features and provide open space in both urban and rural landscapes. Loss of playing fields can have a significant impact on the availability of facilities, the quality of facilities (as a result of increased pressure on those remaining), and visual loss of open space.

South Derbyshire is the fastest growing District in Derbyshire (and the 9th fastest in England) with a predicted population growth of 14.3% by 2021. The population is not only growing, it is ageing, with a predicted 33.5% increase in residents over 55 years by 2021. Within the next 20 years significant numbers of new houses are likely to be required. It is therefore important to assess the sporting and recreational needs of the changing demographic base, and to ensure the pressure for new housing development positively contributes to the stock of playing fields and outdoor sports facilities, and does not adversely impact on it.

In context of prevailing obesity levels in England – the 2007 Health Survey for England highlighted that nearly 1 in 4 Adults, and over 1 in 10 Children aged 2-10 are obese, diminishing trends in participation are of great concern. As obesity rates are predicted to increase even further, with the associated detrimental affects of people's health and well being, it is vital to stimulate and support the growth of local sport.

The planning system is key in determining how places grow, but the way this happens is currently undergoing review. The proposed new National Planning Policy Framework, which has just completed its consultation phase, sets out the Government's direction to have planning decisions based on up-to-date local plans, formulated with communities and based on adequate evidence of need. It places a much stronger emphasis on localism and a presumption in favour of development.

This Playing Pitch Strategy provides valuable evidence of sporting and community need for protecting and developing local outdoor sports facilities.

It has been designed to provide the framework by which all partners can contribute. By partners, we include both professional agencies and voluntary groups, who are each vital to ensure we achieve success.

"Our ambition is to improve opportunities within Sport and Health activity and to be a physically active District. Adequate provision of good quality, accessible facilities is critical to achieving this, which this Strategy provides for admirably.

We are in challenging economic times and now, more than ever, we need a creative and strategic approach to getting the right resources to improve our facilities. Effective partnership working with sports clubs, National Governing Bodies, Schools and community organisations is crucial to successful delivery of this Strategy. All partners have been involved in the production of this Strategy and will continue to be engaged in its delivery."

**Chair South Derbyshire Sport,
Cllr John Lemmon**

SCOPE OF THE WORK

The South Derbyshire Playing Pitch Strategy provides a strategic framework for pitch sports across the District and an objective assessment of need for:

- ✓ Identifying priorities for investment and action
- ✓ Guiding long-term planning policy and decisions
- ✓ Making supporting applications for external funding.

At the outset of the work three objectives were set for the Strategy:

- 1 Audit current pitch provision in relation to quantity; quality and accessibility, as well as to help identify future requirements, in line with sports club development, and population growth.
- 2 Make an objective assessment of demand, including detailed consultation with users, in relation to current provision, and specifically identify any areas of over or under-provision.
- 3 Develop a Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan that will address any issues identified with current provision, and provide recommendations for future provision, in context of established local needs and aspirations, together with the Government's future population projections for the District.

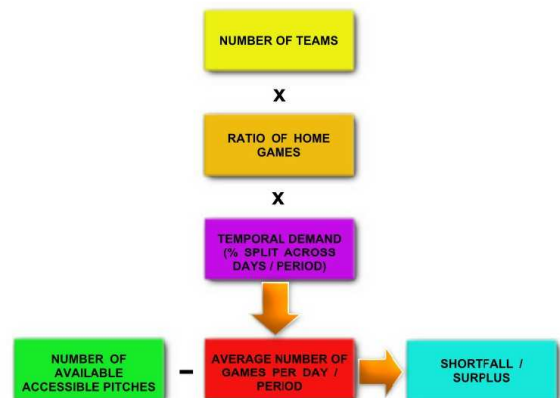
Sports included for the auditing were: Cricket; Football; Hockey; Rugby Union; Bowls (Crown Green and Flat Green); Tennis and Netball.

APPROACH

The approach used to produce this Playing Field Strategy is the eight-stage model recommended by Sport England, and the Sport and Recreation Alliance. Shortfall /surplus of pitches is based on the number of teams, ratio of home teams, temporal demand to calculate the average number of games per and compare this with the number of available assessable pitches.

In preparing the Strategy, the following tasks were undertaken. It has involved:

- Audit of all existing pitches in the District which are open to community use, and cataloguing location, condition and accessibility
- Identifying clubs and teams, and predicting future demand in reference to both club development and population growth using Sport England's Team Generation Rate Calculator
- Establishing aggregate home games per week, total number of pitches required and peak demands for games by location
- Consultation with all sports clubs, to assess current situation in terms of members, teams, development plans and to establish challenges and issues they currently face
- Study of the national trends in each sport and consultation with National Governing Bodies



- Division of the District into 5 Sub-Areas, to help assess supply and demand and plan for the future on a more local level.

NATIONAL TRENDS IN SPORT

Since the Active People Survey (APS) commenced in 2006, it has been possible to analyse trends in participation in different sports. The Survey, which involves telephone interviews with a minimum sample of residents in every local authority in England, is on-going, and the results are analysed on an annual basis.

Nationally, participation levels in most pitch-based and outdoor sports are decreasing.

1 x 30 minute participation per week	APS2 (Oct 2007-Oct 2008)		APS3 (Oct 2008-Oct 2009)		APS4 (Oct 2009-Oct 2010)			
	Sports	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	Statistically significant change from APS 2
Bowls ²	3.40%	277,800	3.07%	254,400	2.92%	246,600	Decrease	No Change
Cricket	0.49%	204,800	0.49%	206,600	0.41%	171,900	Decrease	Decrease
Football	5.18%	2,144,700	5.08%	2,122,700	4.96%	2,090,000	Decrease	No Change
Netball	0.29%	118,800	0.32%	133,500	0.34%	145,200	Increase	No Change
Hockey	0.24%	99,800	0.23%	95,700	0.21%	86,800	Decrease	No Change
Rugby Union	0.56%	230,300	0.50%	207,500	0.46%	194,200	Decrease	No Change
Tennis ¹	1.18%	487,500	1.27%	530,900	1.04%	437,500	Decrease	Decrease

¹ Since publication of the APS3 results in December 2009, Tennis figures have been recalculated to include Wheelchair Sports - Tennis.

² The participation rate for Bowls refers to the proportion of the population aged 65 or over participating for at least 30 minutes at any intensity

As obesity rates are predicted to increase, with the associated detrimental affects on peoples' health and well-being, it is vital to stimulate and support the growth of local sport.

LOCAL PRIORITIES AND PLANS

The Strategy contributes to the delivery of the South Derbyshire Community Strategy by delivering against the following themes:

- **Healthier Communities** – the delivery of the Strategy aims to increase participation in active sport and recreation and, in doing so, will contribute to a healthier and active lifestyle across all communities
- **Vibrant Communities** – working closely with sports clubs to improve their facilities, will lead to increased membership of clubs, and ultimately provide more opportunities in community and voluntary action
- **Sustainable Development** – effectively planning for future growth, tested against a robust evidence base, will ensure successful existing and new communities which meet the population's needs and aspirations
- **Children & Young People** – by providing improved access to better quality facilities which meet the needs of the District, the delivery of the Strategy will improve the aspirations of children in South Derbyshire, and help to create opportunities where

all children and young people can achieve their full potential, and make a positive contribution to their community.

The Playing Pitch Strategy will also make a valuable contribution to the following plans and strategies influencing policy and investment decisions in South Derbyshire:

- Corporate Plan 2009-2014
- Sport and Health Strategy for South Derbyshire 2011-2016
- “2012 And Beyond” Derbyshire Sport’s Strategy
- Active Derbyshire Plan 2009-2013.

PROPOSED STRATEGY FRAMEWORK

Aim and Objectives

To have access to good quality playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities across South Derbyshire, to meet the current and future demands of residents of the District, and the aspirations of local clubs.

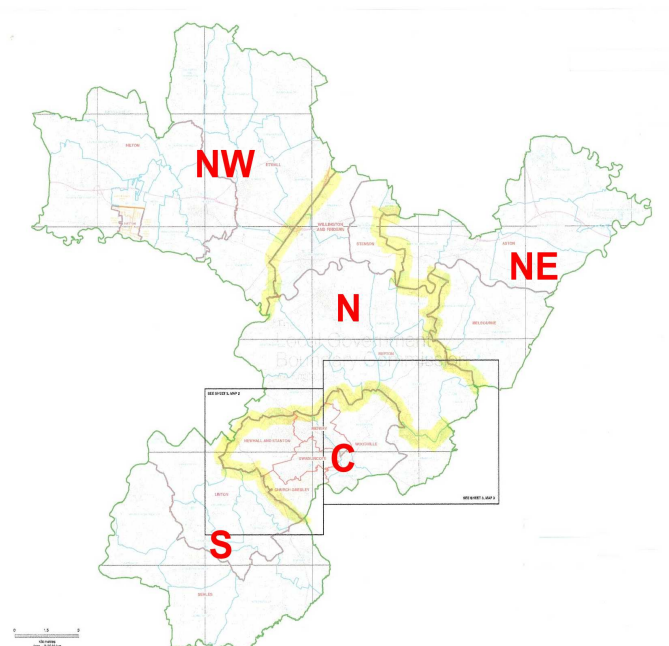
1. Contribute to increased participation in sport and physical activity by improving the quality of outdoor playing pitches and sports facilities across South Derbyshire for adult and junior players.
2. Contribute to increased participation in sport and physical activity by ensuring that there are sufficient outdoor playing pitches and sports facilities to meet current and anticipated future demand of adult and junior players.
3. Contribute to increased participation in sport and physical activity by facilitating greater access to outdoor playing pitches and sports facilities for all population groups and areas of the District.
4. Secure resources, and identify priorities for on-going investment in playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities.
5. Work in partnership with individual sports; clubs and community groups, to help them achieve their ambitions.

Sub-Areas

Previously the District was divided into three areas (North, Central and South) for facility planning. However there is a need to help assess supply and demand on a more local level with regards to sports pitches. To achieve this, five Sub-Areas have been identified:

NORTH WEST

17.9% of population
Wards: Etwall; Hatton; Hilton



NORTH

15.1% of population

Wards: Repton; Stenson; Willington & Findern

NORTH EAST

12.3% of population

Wards: Aston; Melbourne

CENTRAL

43.8% of population

Wards: Church Gresley; Midway; Newhall & Stanton; Swadlincote; Woodville

SOUTH

10.9% of population

Wards: Linton; Seales

KEY FINDINGS

The key findings from the assessment of playing pitches are summarised below.

Variable Quality

- The quality of pitches and outdoor sports provision varies widely across the District
- A detailed visual inspection identifies 26 football pitches that are poor or inadequate when assessed against recommended criteria for: pitch size; evenness and slope, and availability of changing rooms
- Only 6 of 10 Junior football pitches meet the quality standard required, with some Junior teams playing on full size pitches, contrary to the recommendations of the FA.
- The majority of football teams train on their main pitches, which results in additional wear and tear and high risk of cancellation of matches in the winter
- Of the 15 League Cricket grounds, only 9 currently meet the highest League standards (A+ or A rating) for quality of wickets; size of outfield, etc
- The quality of Bowling Greens and Tennis courts varies across the District.

Meeting Demand

- There are 94 individual pitch sites across the District
- The Playing Pitch Model suggests there is currently a sufficient supply of accessible football pitches within the District to accommodate demand, but the pitches are not always in the localities where the teams want to play
- Applying Sport England's Team Generation Rate Calculator and national population projections there is potentially a net shortfall of: 2-3 grass football pitches plus additional training provision and 4 cricket grounds by 2021. However, some of this demand will be met by proposals at Cockshut Lane; a more equitable mix of Senior and Junior pitches, and increased access to School pitches
- Some additional demand is met by neighbouring areas in Derby, Burton and Ashby although there are capacity issues and reliance should not be placed on these facilities for future facility planning.
- The peak demand period for Football is Sunday morning, which causes practical issues for Clubs who frequently have to go outside the District to find a pitch
- There is only one Rugby Union Club in South Derbyshire, **but** there is a shortfall in available pitches at peak demand
- The availability of Bowling Greens and Tennis Courts does not always match demand, in terms of location
- There is no Hockey Club based in the District, although Burton Hockey Club do use the Synthetic Turf Pitches at Repton School.

Limited Accessibility to School Pitches

- The 3G Synthetic Grass Pitch at Pingle School is operating at over 86% capacity
- The majority of the best quality grass pitches (e.g. at Repton; Pingle and John Port Schools) are not accessible for community use.
- Currently, only 2 Secondary Schools (Granville Sports College & William Allitt School) allow community use of their grass pitches.

Priorities

- An objective assessment of playing fields has been used to identify strategic priorities for the District, and local priorities in each Sub-Area.

Reliance on Partnership Working

- Clubs in South Derbyshire rely on provision in adjacent Districts for most of the Central Venue Mini Soccer leagues, and for Synthetic Turf facilities required by Hockey, which are operating at or near capacity, and will require replacement
- Several clubs have clear visions to grow their membership, improve links with their communities and raise their playing standards and require support to do so.

Response from the Club Workshop to the Overall Findings and Proposals

Generally, those who attended the Club Workshop agreed with the findings. However, the Football Focus Group did not totally accept that there was a sufficient supply of suitable full-sized pitches to meet demand - they said that although numerically, there may be enough full-size pitches, they were either not able to use some of them, or the quality was inadequate. One example was given by a Club that wanted to use a School pitch at weekends, but was refused because the School would not have time to repair any damage before it was used again on a Monday by their pupils.

“As lots of teams are playing outside the District, doesn't that mean there are not enough?”
Workshop Respondent

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Strategy proposes the following District-wide recommendations:

- 1 Devise and implement a rolling programme of pitch improvements based on a quality assessment of pitch size, evenness and slope and the availability of changing accommodation.
- 2 Ensure existing grounds are not lost to development without appropriate replacement provision being in place.
- 3 Develop new pitch facilities to match demand generated by future population growth in each Sub-Area, based on Sport England modelling. Agree & devise appropriate formula, based on national standards and local situation.
- 4 Ensure each Sub-Area has a basic provision of facilities including:
 - a. At least one 'Hub Club' as a focus, to grow and develop sport, which are the larger, multi-team clubs with Junior sections that have ambitions and a Development Plan to grow their clubs
 - b. Adequate basic supply of pitches for Football, Cricket and Bowls



- 5 Explore increasing access to pitches through community use of School sites.
- 6 Explore transfer of site management responsibility and assets with Clubs, as appropriate.
- 7 Improve communications and relationships with Clubs, to achieve mutual goals and increase participation.
- 8 Work with Clubs and NGB's to secure investment to implement a rolling Action Plan for delivery of the Playing Pitch Strategy.

IMPLEMENTATION

Clubs, Governing Bodies of Sport, Parish Councils, and Derbyshire Sport, as well as South Derbyshire District Council will all have responsibility for delivering elements of the Playing Pitch Strategy. The following mechanisms will be put in place:

- **South Derbyshire Sport** – for monitoring and reviewing the Strategy annually
- **Annual Club Workshop** – for identify opportunities and challenges faced by clubs
- **Cricket Focus Group** – for identifying cricket priorities; responding to opportunities and challenges, and monitoring progress against the Action Plan
- **Football Focus Group** - will be re-established with the role of identifying football priorities; responding to opportunities and challenges, and monitoring progress against the Action Plan
- **'Hub Clubs'** - annual consultation meeting to review and renew their Club Visions, so that the Action Plan can take these into consideration when being rolled forward.

ACTION PLAN

Key to priority rating:

Green	Short term actions that have potential to be implemented within 12 months, or essential actions that need to be pursued.
Amber	Medium term actions that require preparation work before they can commence, or new opportunities (such as successful funding applications) to emerge before they can be pursued
Red	Longer term actions requiring new policy decisions, potentially lengthy processes (such as land acquisition) or detailed discussions to establish need/proposals

Objective	Method	Target	Lead	Finance	Priority
<i>What do we want to do?</i>	<i>How are we going to achieve it?</i>	<i>What will we do and where?</i>	<i>Who will be responsible?</i>	<i>What will it cost?</i>	
Contribute to increased participation in sport and physical activity, by improving the quality of existing outdoor playing pitches and sports facilities across South Derbyshire for adult and junior players.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide good quality all weather training facilities for Mini Soccer and Football (Junior & Senior) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3G AGP Pitch at John Port School 60x40 AGP Floodlit pitch at Cockshut Lane 3G Central Training venue in Swadlincote area 	SDDC/JPS MSP	500k 250k	Amber
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree a rolling improvement programme on SDDC/Parish sites not meeting required standard as identified in Pitch Audit (<i>short term targets are listed in the Action Plan; a full list of pitches for medium and longer term are included in the full Report</i>). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Back Lane, Hilton Walton on Trent Recreation Ground Woodhouse Recreation Ground Gresley Old Hall Coton-in-the-Elms Recreation Ground 	PC/SDDC/ SDDC/PC SDDC GOH Trustees SDDC/PC	500k 100k	Amber
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review pitch maintenance requirements on SDDC/Parish sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify costs and provide for in budget setting Deliver cycle of verti-draining and sand banding on key sites 	SDDC/PC SDDC/PC		Green
Contribute to increased participation in sport and physical activity, by ensuring that there are sufficient outdoor playing pitches and sports facilities to meet current and future demand of adult and junior players.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure no pitches are lost to development without appropriate replacement provision in place 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oppose Planning applications which will have a net detrimental impact on existing sports pitches / grounds 	SDDC/SE		Green
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure increased demand from new housing can be met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devise calculation formula for new provision based on SE calculator and improvement plan, Provide on site facilities for large developments and secure off-site contributions for small/medium developments in accordance with calculation formula 	SDDC/SE		Green
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase the number of designated Junior pitches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconfigure some existing senior sites Establish more formalised pitches on areas currently used for informal recreation 	SDDC/PC/Clubs SDDC/PC/Clubs	50k 100k	Amber

Objective	Method	Target	Lead	Finance	Priority
<i>What do we want to do?</i>	<i>How are we going to achieve it?</i>	<i>What will we do and where?</i>	<i>Who will be responsible?</i>	<i>What will it cost?</i>	
Contribute to increased participation in sport and physical activity, by facilitating greater access to outdoor playing pitches and sports facilities for all population groups and areas of the District.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broker greater community access or improved provision to existing Junior grass pitches at Secondary School sites (particularly John Port School, Granville Sports College and Pingle School) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate dialogue between clubs and schools for increased community use of pitches 	SDDC/SSP/NGB		Amber
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regenerate club activity on underused sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify potential sites and broker use, working with clubs & Parish Council (e.g. Barrow on Trent Sports Field & Hartshorne Recreation Ground) Protect and enhance facilities at Mickleover Country Park Social Club to increase club activity 	SDDC/PC/Sports clubs	50k	Red
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop programmes targeting under-represented groups e.g. girls & women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Instigate outreach project/"Back to" projects at venues across the District 	SDDC/Village Games	20k	Amber
Secure resources, and identify priorities for on-going investment in playing pitches and outdoor sports facilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the application of a suitable level of Section 106 contribution/Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on all new developments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devise appropriate formula for new provision, based on SE standards and cross reference with improvement plan Where appropriate, funds to be pooled to support delivery of larger projects, according to Sub-Area 	SDDC/SE		Green
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Strategic Facility Improvement Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver Cockshut Lane Masterplan Development of a full-size floodlit 3G Synthetic Pitch at John Port School / Etwall Leisure Centre Covered Tennis courts at JPS Pursue development of a Central Venue facility in Swadlincote area 	MSP SDDC/JPS	2.25 million Costed elsewhere	Amber
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify external and internal funding sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make grant applications to deliver facility improvements 	SDDC/JPS SDDC/Active Nation SDDC/PC	350k Costed elsewhere	Red
Work in partnership with individual sports clubs, Parish Councils and community groups, to help them achieve their ambitions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate dialogue between clubs and Local Planning Authority 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with clubs to ensure pre-application discussions happen. 	SDDC		Green
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate dialogue between clubs and NGB's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaison with clubs to ensure NGB support for club/facility development 	SDDC		Green
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore transfer of site management to clubs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a SDDC site with sole-club use, and run pilot project to trial asset transfer 	SDDC/Sports club	30k	Red

Objective <i>What do we want to do?</i>	Method <i>How are we going to achieve it?</i>	Target <i>What will we do and where?</i>	Lead <i>Who will be responsible?</i>	Finance <i>What will it cost?</i>	Priority
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish development initiatives for Bowls, Netball and Tennis on SDDC sites 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Tennis facility at Maurice Lea Park Explore use of Bowls Greens at Maurice Lea Park Develop Netball provision at Etwall Leisure Centre 	SDDC	10k	Amber
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support grant applications to external funding bodies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding advice/assistance/critical friend Letters of support 	SDDC	5k	Green
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support improvement projects as identified in Club Development Plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Floodlighting on Bowls Greens (Hatton, Etwall, Mickleover, Melbourne, Willington) Artificial Cricket Wickets (Melbourne, Aston on Trent, Swarkestone, Ticknall, Hilton, Hartshorne, Woodville, Walton on Trent) Second Cricket Grounds (Melbourne, Etwall, Swarkestone, Ticknall, Walton on Trent) Improve "B" & "C" rated grounds to "A" standard (Hilton (2nd), Ticknall (2nd), Hartshorne, Woodville) 	Sports Clubs		Red
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capitalise on 2012 opportunities to help clubs increase their profile, membership and volunteers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help clubs link into 2012 opportunities and legacy projects through community engagement and sports activity 	SDDC/PC/Clubs/NGBs / Village Games		Green
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve communications between sports clubs and site managers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-ordinate workshops/forums with clubs to air and resolve issues 	SDDC		Green

GLOSSARY

Abbreviations used in this document are described below:

AGP	Artificial grass pitch
APS	Active People Survey – a survey commissioned by Sport England for measuring participation rates in sport
APS2	Active People Survey 2 (undertaken between October 2007 and October 2008)
APS3	Active People Survey 3 (undertaken between October 2008 and October 2009)
APS4	Active People Survey 4 (undertaken between October 2009 and October 2010)
Central Venue League	Games played at a single venue usually for mini soccer
ECB	England and Wales Cricket Board

FA	Football Association
GOH	Gresley Old Hall
Hub Clubs	Larger, multi-team clubs with Junior sections, that have ambitions and a Development Plan to grow their club
JPS	John Port School
MSP	Melbourne Sporting Partnership
NGB	National Governing Bodies of Sport
PC	Parish Council
SSP	School Sports Partnership
SDDC	South Derbyshire District Council
SE	Sport England

VAGA Associates Limited was commissioned to produce this Playing Pitch Strategy by South Derbyshire District Council on behalf of South Derbyshire Sport.

The following additional supporting documents have been produced and are available for download from www.south-derbys.gov.uk

1. Detailed Strategy report

2. Sport specific reports:

- Football
- Cricket
- Other sports (Rugby Union, Bowls, Tennis, Hockey, Netball)

3. Area specific reports:

- North West
- North East
- North
- Central
- South

4. Pitch Audit Technical report