SPORT ACROSS STAFFORDSHIRE & STOKE-ON-TRENT

Sports Facilities Framework
2009-2021

Executive Summary

March 2009

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Introduction

1. The Sports Facilities Framework for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent has been commissioned by Sport Across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent (SASSOT), the County Sports Partnership (CSP).

2. The Framework provides a strategic and coherent link between the West Midlands Regional Facilities Framework (2007) and the existing or emerging strategies of the individual local authorities within Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, national governing bodies of sport and other key partners/stakeholders. It covers the period up to 2021.

3. It prioritises investment in “hub level” and above facilities (see Figure 1 below) across the sub-region by:

   - Guiding sub-regional strategic planning (including the provision which will be required if the planned housing growth is realised);
   - Taking account of population trends;
   - Anticipating the impact of a 1% per annum growth in participation on facility needs;
   - Highlighting gaps in strategic facility provision across the SASSOT area and identifying options to address them;
   - Taking into account the role of the education sector in sports provision and community use, paying particular attention to the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and Academy programmes;
   - Inputting into the statutory planning process;
   - Providing an input into other agendas e.g. health, regeneration.

4. The Framework does not propose specific standards of provision, nor timetables for individual facility developments, as these would need to be developed at the individual local authority level.
Principles for new provision

5. The Framework is built on a number of guiding principles for new facilities which should:

- Meet identified needs of community provision;
- Provide for the forecast populations – both in terms of population size and profile;
- Provide sufficient facilities to enable a 1% per annum growth in participation;
- Support national governing body aspirations;
- Build on existing club networks and encourage multi-sport facilities;
- Take account of equity (disability, income);
- Prioritise the most popular sports;
- Be cost-effective i.e. based on a sound and sustainable business model;
- Be opportunistic, for example in relation to the Building Schools for the Future programme.
Research

6. The research behind the Framework has included discussions with a wide range of stakeholders and reviews of published documents at national, regional, county and local authority levels. These have been supplemented with quantitative assessments, consideration of the likely demographic changes over the period, and a qualitative assessment of how the sporting picture may change over the period up to 2021.

Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Profile

7. The Framework includes detailed “pen portraits” for each local authority within the SASSOT area. They describe the:

- local demographics;
- anticipated changes up to 2021;
- current facilities considered within the scope of the Framework;
- issues, aspirations and opportunities that have influenced the recommendations emerging from the framework.

8. However, looking at the SASSOT area as a whole, the following picture emerges up to 2021:

Demographics

9. The population is projected to increase by approximately 73,000 up to 2021 (and a further 24,500 by 2026). Overall the population is ageing.

10. The SASSOT area has a very small population of black and minority ethnic communities (BME) compared to the region and the rest of the UK. However, the non-white British groups are concentrated in specific parts of the area.

11. Deprivation follows a similar pattern. Whilst looking quite low overall, there are pockets of deprivation, particularly in Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme and East Staffordshire.

Housing

12. The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) has allocated a total of 66,300 new houses for Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent in the period up to 2026. The authorities set to experience the largest numbers of new housing are Stoke-on-Trent, East Staffordshire and Stafford. The Framework addresses the implications of this housing growth, should it be achieved.
**Health**

13. Sport England have mapped levels of participation of people undertaking 30 minutes of sport or active recreation* three times a week (based on the Active People Survey 2006 - Figure 2). The levels of participation in parts of Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent are relatively low, particularly in Stoke-on-Trent, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Burton-upon-Trent and Cannock.

14. Extensive research has demonstrated the links between levels of physical activity and health. The Primary Care Trusts across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent are committed to addressing the issue and will be key partners in the delivery of the participation targets.

*Sport and active recreation includes the sports and recreational activities as measured in the Active People Survey (including for example recreational walking and recreational cycling).
Figure 2: Rates of participation in sports & active recreation
15. Building Schools for the Future (BSF) is a national building programme that affords local authorities the opportunity to rebuild or refurbish all secondary schools over the next 10 to 15 years. As part of any new build schools are required to provide a minimum level of sports facilities.

16. BSF provides an unparalleled opportunity to develop and/or extend community use of school sites both for multi-purpose sports facilities and specialist sports provision (where, for example, the school site provides a geographical and strategic link to a specialist club and/or a national governing body plan).

17. However, BSF is not the panacea to solve all facility-shortfall issues. Loss of playing fields and loss of existing community-use agreements are common threats, and the funding available does not cater for provision over and above curricular demands. Therefore it is essential that the key stakeholders (including the school, local authority, local education authority, CSP and, where relevant, sports governing bodies) work together early to:

- determine viable options including management arrangements;
- secure any additional funding that is required.
Major Facilities

Sports Halls

18. The Framework concentrates on the larger sports halls (6 badminton court and above), plus those which are 4-court size and managed intensively to provide for general community needs and club competitions. The larger halls are strategically important because they are able to cater for elite/high level use for a number of sports including badminton, basketball, handball, netball and volleyball.

19. The Framework therefore proposes that a network of 6+ court halls should be established across the SASSOT area, with the exception of South Staffordshire which has good access to such facilities via neighbouring authorities. In some places this would mean the provision of new facilities, whilst in others it would involve the upgrading/retention of existing halls.

20. The Framework also provides an indication of the priority locations for new 4 court halls. These will need to be tested by more local assessments within the individual local authorities.

21. The proposals:

- Develop a network of 6 and 8 court halls, one per authority (more in Stoke). This includes a new 6-court hall in Newcastle, a new 6/8-court hall in Stafford, a new 6-court hall in Lichfield and 8-court hall in Tamworth. They are illustrated in Figure 3:

- Secure community use of 4-court halls in the following areas:
  - South Staffordshire – Dudley/Wolverhampton border area
  - South Staffordshire – Walsall boundary area
  - South Staffordshire – north Wolverhampton area
  - South Staffordshire/Cannock boundary

- Provide new 4-court halls in the following areas:
  - Lichfield – central-south area, towards Birmingham boundary
  - Tamworth
  - East Staffordshire – around Burton, linked to new housing growth

- Seek enhanced community use of secondary school sites, with more intensive management in all areas of SASSOT.
Figure 3: Sports Hall Proposals
Swimming Pools

22. There is currently sufficient capacity to provide for swimming across the SASSOT area, and there are no particular ‘hot spots’ where an additional community pool is justified at this time. However:

- Although the network of pools includes some modern pools the majority are aged or ageing;

- The current amount of water space in the SASSOT area includes a significant proportion of small school pools and large commercial facilities, such as Waterworld in Stoke. These provide limited sports development opportunities for the community and therefore need to be (largely) discounted in assessing the amount of additional provision needed in the future.

23. The Framework acknowledges the above and recommends a long term facility network which will also meet the needs of the growing population and the anticipated growth in swimming.

24. The following table identifies proposals which begin to address the space requirements up to 2021 (illustrated in Figure 4). These will need to be confirmed by further local feasibility studies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Authority</th>
<th>Proposal</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cannock Chase District Council</td>
<td>Replace the existing pool at Chase Leisure Centre with an 8 lane x 25 m pool and teaching pool.</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Staffordshire Borough Council</td>
<td>Improve the existing pool at Meadowside to meet ASA competition requirements, and develop a new 25m x 4 lane pool in Burton.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lichfield District Council</td>
<td>Develop an additional pool of 25m x 4 lane plus a teaching pool in city centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council</td>
<td>Replace Jubilee Pool with a 25m x 8 lane pool plus teaching pool. Replace/improve the pool provision at secondary schools and introduce intensive management to enable pay and play use of the facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Staffordshire District Council</td>
<td>Consider retaining and improving the community use of Great Wyrley High School pool, increasing its size, introducing more intensive management and enabling pay and play use.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stafford Borough Council</td>
<td>Develop a new 25m x 8 lane pool with teaching pool close to the area of new housing growth. Consider options for developing an additional pool provision elsewhere in Stafford borough of 25m x 4 lane possibly linked to BSF school development but must have intensive management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffordshire Moorlands District Council</td>
<td>Consider developing new dual-use centre on the western side of the authority with a 25m pool. Determine requirements for future provision in the light of final decisions made by Stoke.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stoke-on-Trent City Council</td>
<td>Review the network of smaller pools to develop fewer larger pools of minimum 25m x 6 lane plus teaching pool. Sites to be intensively managed to enable pay and play.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamworth Borough Council</td>
<td>Develop one new 25m x 6 lane pool plus teaching pool as part of new dual-use centre/leisure centre, with intensive management enabling full pay and play. Possibly linked to sports hall proposal.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4: Swimming Pool Proposals

- Redevelop Dimensions to include 6 lane x 25m pool
- Network of 4 lane x 25m pools and smaller including new pools at Longton, refurbishment at Shelton
- Consider new dual use centre with 25m pool - determine in light of decisions made by Stoke
- Refurbish and improve Meadsworth to meet modern ASA competition needs
- Develop new 4 lane x 25m pool in Burton
- Develop additional pool 4 lane x 25m plus teaching in city centre (if none in Curborough)
- Consider retaining community use of Great Wyreley High School pool - improve, possibly increase size and intensively manage
- Develop 6 lane x 25m pool plus teaching as dual use/leisure centre and intensively manage

Proposed Swimming Pools
25m 4-5 lane Pools within Staffordshire
- Local Authority Owned
- Education Owned
- Privately Owned
25m 8 lane Pools within Staffordshire
- Local Authority Owned
- Education Owned
- Privately Owned
25m 8 lane Pools outside Staffordshire
- Local Authority Owned
- Privately Owned
- Crewe - Proposed 50m Pool

Urbans Areas
- Local Authority Boundaries
- Staffordshire Boundary

Produced for Sport Across Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent
Full Size Synthetic Turf Pitches (STP)

25. Different types of STP surfaces exist. The main ones are:

- Sand-based/sand-filled with short pile – most suited to hockey, but usable for football. The most common surface for school sites, and the longest established;
- Rubber-crumb with long-pile often known as 3rd Generation or 3G – preferred surface for football and rugby, but not usable for club hockey;
- Water-based – specialist hockey surface which can also be used for football and rugby training.

26. The current provision across the SASSOT area is lower than both national and regional provision. This will be further exacerbated if the increase in population and the anticipated 1% increase in participation are factored in. Although there is no national standard of provision the Framework adopts the current national rate of provision to identify future requirements.

27. The future demand for STPs is difficult to predict as this is one of the fastest-changing ‘markets’ in terms of sports, with a strong trend in football towards use of these surfaces instead of grass pitches. Regular review of the provision will therefore be needed, and assessment undertaken at the local authority level to determine the ‘viability’ of new proposals.

28. In a strategic sense, there is justification for providing additional large size 3G pitches in areas where they do not currently exist, and this is supported by the emerging strategies from both the Staffordshire FA and the Rugby Football Union (and Staffordshire Rugby Union).

29. Large size 3G pitches should be high priorities for the following areas, linked either with main leisure centres, or with school sites with full dual use and intensive management:

- Staffordshire Moorlands – Leek area, and possibly Cheadle
- Stafford – linked to the new growth areas, and aspiration of the rugby club(s)
- Stoke-on-Trent – linked to new school proposal(s)
- East Staffordshire – Uttoxeter
- Cardinal Griffin Catholic High School

The proposals are illustrated in Figure 5.

30. Sand-based pitches should be developed on school sites where there is clear curriculum need. Local feasibility assessments should always be undertaken to determine the likely level of demand from the community as part of the business planning.
31. No further water-based pitch provision has been identified as required by England Hockey, but this may need to be reviewed in the light of the forthcoming governing body Whole Sport Plan.
Figure 5: 3G pitch proposals
Sports Specific Proposals

32. The assessment of provision for individual sports across SASSOT area has included consultations with the relevant National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and a review of national and/or regional plans and strategies. Some sports will be able to use multi-purpose spaces whilst others require special facilities, particularly at the higher end of performance and excellence.

33. Some sports have detailed facility strategies setting out aspirations for the provision of specific facility types and, in some cases, preferred/suggested locations. Other sports currently have no relevant plans or other documents although this position is likely to change for some sports in response to the new Sport England strategy which sets out the following key targets for the period 2009 – 2013:

- One million people playing more sport;
- Cutting the drop-off in at least five different sports by 25%;
- Increasing people’s satisfaction with their experience of sport;
- Improving talent development in at least 25 sports;
- Making a major contribution to the delivery of the Five Hour Sport Offer.

34. The strategy reflects Sport England’s recognition that NGBs are the experts in their sport and, as such, will be “commissioned” by Sport England to deliver against the above key targets.

35. The sports specific proposals are summarised in Figure 6.

Walking and Recreational Cycling

36. The National Framework for Sport (2004) set a target of increasing participation in sport and active recreation by 1% every year through to 2020. Walking and recreational cycling can potentially make a significant contribution to achieving this target and are included within the KPI 1 and NI 8. Walking and cycling are not, however, included in the target “one million people playing more sport” mentioned above. Nonetheless, they have a vital role to play in increasing general levels of physical activity.

37. Walking is the number one activity in terms of participation across the SASSOT area, with swimming second and recreational cycling third.
38. It is likely that those organisations already involved with recreational cycling (e.g. SUSTRANS) and walking in both urban and countryside areas will continue to lead on this area of provision and participation. However a priority should be to forge closer working relationships at both regional and CSP levels, to support more joint initiatives aimed at improving and extending opportunities to increase participation.

**Review and monitoring**

39. The Framework’s proposed facility network is designed to meet the needs of the SASSOT area up to 2021. However, it does not include a timetable for specific facility provision, replacement, or upgrading. The timetable for delivery of specific facilities will need to reflect the circumstances within each individual local authority, such as the timetable for the Building Schools for the Future programme, and the details of future housing growth. The timetables will also need to take account of the anticipated life-span of the existing individual facilities.

40. The Framework will therefore require full updating by 2014 to take account of:
   
   - Changes in population growth, and confirmed housing projections, including further long term projections;
   - Trends in individual sports – including the long-term impact of the new free swimming programmes;
   - Building Schools for the Future programme; outcomes and remaining proposals;
   - Facility investment decisions by authorities;
   - Improved cross-boundary co-ordination;
   - Technical changes to sport facility requirements;
   - Trends in overall participation – has a 1% growth been achieved, and in every sphere?
   - Changes in policy directions by the SASSOT partners;
   - Future Active People Survey results.

41. It is proposed that an interim update is undertaken in 2010 – 2011 to take account of local assessment outcomes, committed build programmes and any implications for the SASSOT area contained within the emerging National Governing Body Whole Sport Plans and associated facility strategies.
### Figure 6: Sports specific proposals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Proposal</th>
<th>Cannock Chase</th>
<th>East Staffordshire</th>
<th>Lichfield</th>
<th>Newcastle</th>
<th>South Staffordshire</th>
<th>Stafford</th>
<th>Staffordshire Moorlands</th>
<th>Stoke on Trent</th>
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<td><strong>Archery</strong></td>
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<td>Replace/refurbish existing sports hall at Thistley Hough School to cater for archery</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Athletics</strong></td>
<td>Review future of athletic provision in southern half of SASSOT area, including in relation to Rowley Park, Stafford</td>
<td>Improve Shobnall</td>
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<td>Improve Rowley Park, possibly additional spectator capacity and improved changing</td>
<td>Repairs to track and possible development as part of Leek Sports Village Project</td>
<td>Maintain or relocate Northwood track to Fenton Manor site</td>
<td>Indoor regional level provision at Northwood (or relocate alongside track)</td>
<td>Small scale indoor provision</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Badminton</strong></td>
<td>NGB aspirations met via proposed network of 6 court sports halls (see above) and four court halls likely to be located on school sites and designed/refurbished to meet standards for badminton. Total 2 sites per authority but 4 in Stoke.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Basketball</strong></td>
<td>Develop specialist basketball centres, geographically spread in urban locations to maximise accessibility – met via the proposed network of 6 court + other 4 court sports halls (see above)</td>
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<td><strong>Boxing</strong></td>
<td>No specific requirement for hub level facilities. However, should explore opportunities in relation to providing facilities on school sites – to meet needs of extended skills acquisition agenda. Specialist facilities are not required but dedicated space is ideal.</td>
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<td><strong>Canoeing</strong></td>
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<td>Support replacement/refurbishment of facilities at Gailey CC</td>
<td>Support development of facilities at Stafford and Stone CC</td>
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<td>Facility Proposal</td>
<td>Cannock Chase</td>
<td>East Staffordshire</td>
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<td>South Staffordshire</td>
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<tr>
<td>Climbing</td>
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<td>Develop specialist indoor climbing centre either in Newcastle or Stoke</td>
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<td>Develop specialist indoor climbing centre either in Newcastle or Stoke</td>
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<td>Cricket</td>
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<td>Await outcomes of Staffordshire Cricket Board facility development plan</td>
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<td>Cycling</td>
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<td>Secure future of closed-road cycling at current Curborough circuit or relocated site</td>
<td>Explore feasibility of floodlit closed road circuit at Lyme Valley</td>
<td>Explore options for cyclo-cross, BMX or similar at Central Forest Park. Explore feasibility of outdoor cycle facility at Fenton Manor which is complementary to existing and proposed provision at Newcastle.</td>
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<td>Equestrian</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Encourage private sector provision by positive planning policies particularly around Stafford and Stoke</td>
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<td>Fencing</td>
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<td>Requirements can be met through existing sports hall and other facility provision</td>
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<tr>
<td>Football</td>
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<td>National Centre at Burton – impact unknown.</td>
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<td>Gymnastics</td>
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<td>Enhance existing provision to cater for a wide range of disciplines. Await further guidance from emerging Whole Sport Plan. Proposal for replacement specialist gymnastics centre either at Fenton Manor or at Dimensions in Stoke.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facility Proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Handball</td>
<td>Requirements will be met via network of 6+ court sports hall proposals (see above)</td>
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<td>Hockey</td>
<td>Anticipate provision will be met via existing/new sand-based pitches but, await guidance from updated NGB facility strategy in relation to water-based pitches and support proposals for further requirements in relation to ancillary provision at key sites if identified by NGB.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Indoor Bowls</td>
<td>Review long-term future of indoor bowls facility at Chase Leisure Centre and assess demand for a replacement facility</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kabaddi</td>
<td>No specific facility requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Martial Arts</td>
<td>No evidence of demand for further major centres in region. Demand across the CSP can be met via existing facilities and other multi-purpose/sport sites</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modern Pentathlon</td>
<td>No specific facility requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Motorsports</td>
<td>Hednesford Raceway-anticipated lease renewed along same lines</td>
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<tr>
<td>Netball</td>
<td>To be confirmed following NGB facility strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Orienteering</td>
<td>No built facility requirements. Ensure/support access to areas of open space including Cannock Chase</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rowing</td>
<td>Provision will be based around existing bodies of water. No apparent opportunities to develop new facilities in Staffordshire area</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rugby Union</td>
<td>Support proposal for a 3G pitch in Stafford, Burton and South Staffs. Relocate Stafford RFC and Burton RFC Support projects at local level identified within Staffordshire Rugby Union County Facility Plan (2009 – 2012)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sailing</td>
<td>No specific recommendations because there is no evidence of demand for additional facilities and currently no NGB proposals</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shooting</td>
<td>No specific facility requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skiing</td>
<td>No specific facility requirements</td>
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Nortoft Partnerships Ltd
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent
Sports Facilities Framework – Executive Summary
March 2009
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility Proposal</th>
<th>Cannock Chase</th>
<th>East Staffordshire</th>
<th>Lichfield</th>
<th>Newcastle</th>
<th>South Staffordshire</th>
<th>Stafford</th>
<th>Staffordshire Moorlands</th>
<th>Stoke on Trent</th>
<th>Tamworth</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Squash</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No specific recommendations – no evidence of demand for additional facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Table Tennis</td>
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<td>Good spread of provision at all levels. No evidence of demand for further provision with possible exception of Leek. Explore opportunity to provide space as part of the proposed new football facility at Birchall</td>
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<td>Tennis</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Await decision on new 3 court indoor tennis centre at Stafford Sports College - anticipated December 2008</td>
<td>Proposed indoor tennis site (3 courts) in south part of City</td>
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<td>Triathlon</td>
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<td>Closed-road cycle circuits – see Cycling notes</td>
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<td>Open Water Swimming – support access to suitable venues (regular water quality testing, provision of safety cover, marked course). Likely to be still water (reservoir/lake) with existing sports provision e.g. Trentham Lake, Rudyard Lake, Chase Water</td>
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<td>Volleyball</td>
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<td>Requirements met via proposed network of 6+ court sports halls</td>
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<td>Waterskiing</td>
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<td>Await outcome of new national facility strategy – likely to reflect national/international significance of Chase Water</td>
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<td>Wrestling</td>
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<td>No specific facility requirements</td>
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