

'Places Focus': Research Update

Places SMIG

18th January 2011



Today's Presentation:

- Sports Facility Provision in Northern Ireland;
- What facility provision do we have?
 - *Facilities Database*
 - *Active Places NI*
- What facility provision do we need?
 - *Research*
 - *Bridging the Gap Report*
- How do we get our facility provision?
 - *Local Facilities Strategies*
 - *Leading Facilities Strategy*
- Potential of the School Estate

The value of sport?

- Sport makes a significant contribution to our economy, our environment, our society and plays an important role in the life of the Northern Ireland population.
- Sport has an important role in:
 - Tackling Social Exclusion
 - Reducing Anti-Social Behaviour
 - Improving Community Cohesion
 - Promoting Healthy Lifestyles
 - Urban Regeneration
 - Increased Employment
 - Child/Personal Development
- And of course, **Sport for Sports Sake**
- However, research by Sport NI has identified 'a lack of appropriate and quality sporting provision' to be one of the key barriers to participation.

Sports Facility Provision in Northern Ireland

- There are four key providers of Sports Facilities in Northern Ireland; District Councils, Governing Bodies/Clubs, Education and the Private Sector.
- Currently there are a number of areas for concern regarding sports facility provision in Northern Ireland. These include:
 - Location
 - Quantity
 - Quality
 - Condition
 - Specification
 - Accessibility
 - Universal Access

We need to see less of this...



Less of this...



And less of this...



BUT more of this...



The Way Forward?

In order to work towards a more strategic provision, SNI has attempted to answer a number of important questions:

What do we have?

What do we need?

How do we get it?

In doing this SNI has:

- Assessed the adequacy of existing sports facilities and the need for new provision in Northern Ireland.
- Published the Active Places Research Report, 'Bridging the Gap', 2009.
- Developed 'Sport Matters', the Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation (2009-2019).
- Offered guidance to facility providers on the type and quality of sports facilities that should be developed or improved in Northern Ireland.

What do we have?

“What do we have?”

Development of a Sports Facilities Database

Active Places NI

Biennial audit of sports facilities in NI

Consultations with key sports facility providers

Analyse facilities database content – Bridging the Gap

Sports Facilities Database

The Sports Facilities Database was created in order to assess “what we have” in Northern Ireland. It currently records information on over 6000 individual sports facilities (across all sectors).

- The facilities database records information on:
 - Dimensions
 - Condition
 - Surface Type- Ancillary Facilities (changing rooms etc)
 - Opening Hours
 - No of facilities available on site
 - Contact Information
 - Type of facilities available on site
- The facilities database is updated once every two years by auditing the key providers of sports facilities (District Councils, Governing Bodies, and Education).

Active Places NI - Website

Active Places NI is an online and interactive website, providing detailed information on sports facilities from the facilities database. Active Places is available to view at: www.sportni.net/activeplaces

- Active Places NI is a user friendly website and shows sports facility information in relation to interactive maps of Northern Ireland, which can be interrogated for more detailed information or maps.
- Active Places NI provides free promotion of all sports facilities in Northern Ireland. District Councils should explore the possibility of promoting the website on all sport/leisure related marketing material.
- Active Places NI can also be used as a basic planning tool, in the development of new or improved sports facilities by the key providers.

Active Places NI – Website Demo



The screenshot shows the homepage of the Active Places NI website. At the top right, there are links for "Sign In | Contact Us | FAQs | Help". The main header features the "Sport Northern Ireland" logo on the left and the text "Active Places Northern Ireland" on the right, set against a background image of three young boys in yellow basketball jerseys. Below the header is a green navigation bar with the date "Monday 17 August 2009" on the left and menu items "Home", "About Us", "Future Plans", "Links", "Latest News", and "Register". The main content area is divided into two columns. The left column contains the "active places ni" logo and a "LOGIN" form with fields for "Email" and "Password", a "New User Registration" link, and a "Click Here To Start Your Search" button. The right column features a row of five small images showing various sports activities, followed by the heading "Active Places NI Helping People Get Active" and a paragraph of text describing the database's scope, including a link to "Read more about us". Below this is the heading "Search the Database" and a paragraph explaining search methods like "browse an interactive map" and "search for facilities", with a link to "name and address". The footer contains "About the Data | Terms and Conditions", "Design: Veetoo", and "© Active Places NI 2007".

What do we need?

Active Places Research Report

This question has led Sport NI to the Active Places Research Report, '**Bridging the Gap**', 2009. This report has assessed the adequacy of existing sports facility provision, and the need for additional sports facilities in Northern Ireland by:

- Analysing Northern Ireland's sports facility provision in a recognised model for assessing demand of sports facilities.
- Comparing Northern Ireland's sports facility provision against national standards for sports facilities.
- Comparing Northern Ireland's sports facility provision to that in other regions of the United Kingdom.
- Liaising with the Governing Bodies of sport (and others) in order to promote individual facilities strategies that meet needs and requirements of their sports.

‘Bridging the Gap’ Research Methodologies

Bridging the Gap used two key methodologies for assessing sports facility provision, these are:

- The Facilities Planning Model, developed by Sport Scotland; is assessed by using:
 - English and Scottish parameters
 - Northern Ireland facilities data
 - Northern Ireland population data
 - Northern Ireland demographic data

(Sports halls, Swimming pools, Tennis Courts, and Athletic facilities)
- The Six Acre Standard, developed by Fields in Trust; is assessed by using:
 - Northern Ireland facilities (pitches) data
 - Northern Ireland population data

(Pitches – grass and synthetic)

‘Bridging the Gap’ Research Methodologies

The key methodologies were also supported by a number of others, namely;

- Home Country Sports Councils – Comparative Analysis;
A pro rata comparative analysis that compares Northern Ireland’s sports facility provision to other regions of the United Kingdom.
- National Standards for Sport – Comparative Analysis;
Comparisons against facility standards developed by Governing Bodies for sport.
- Northern Ireland Sports Facility Providers – Supporting Information;
Supporting information gathered from the providers of key sports facilities.

General Research Findings

‘Bridging the Gap’ has established two general findings:

- There is a significant shortfall in sports facility provision in Northern Ireland.
- The deficit is not uniform.

Facilities Planning Model

RESULTS

NI needs 36 new sports halls

Area	Projected Population 2011	Unmet Demand – Visits per Week	Badminton Courts Required	Shortfall by Unmet Visits to Population Percentage
Derry City/Strabane	150,592	3,421	17	2.27%
Newry City/Down	164,514	3,261	16	1.98%
Armagh City/Bann	190,559	3,639	18	1.91%
Causeway Coast	140,436	2,466	12	1.76%
Antrim/Newtownabbey	132,389	2,173	11	1.64%
Ards/North Down	155,882	2,459	12	1.58%
Mid-Antrim District Council	132,378	1,996	10	1.51%
Belfast	263,313	3,887	19	1.48%
Lisburn City/Castlereagh	178,544	2,625	13	1.47%
Mid-Ulster District Council	129,915	1,879	9	1.45%
Fermanagh/Omagh	112,400	1,020	5	0.91%

NI needs 6 new swimming pools

Area	Projected Population 2011	Unmet Demand – Visits per Week	Number of Pools Required	Shortfall by Unmet Visits to Population Percentage
Newry City/Down	164,514	3,506	1.49	2.13%
Fermanagh/Omagh	112,400	2,107	0.89	1.87%
Causeway Coast	140,436	1,972	0.84	1.40%
Mid-Ulster District Council	129,915	1,523	0.65	1.17%
Ards/NorthDown	155,882	1,668	0.71	1.07%
Antrim/Newtownabbey	132,389	1,374	0.58	1.04%
Derry City/Strabane	150,592	1,501	0.64	1.00%
Armagh City/Bann	190,559	1,570	0.67	0.82%
Mid-Antrim District Council	132,378	898	0.38	0.68%
Lisburn City/Castlereagh	178,544	1,119	0.47	0.63%
Belfast	263,313	1,375	0.58	0.52%

NI needs 347 new tennis Courts

Area	Projected Population 2011	Unmet Demand – Visits per Week	Tennis Courts Required	Shortfall by Unmet Visits to Population Percentage
Derry City/Strabane	150,592	5,489	63	3.64%
Belfast	263,313	8,931	103	3.39%
Mid Ulster District Council	129,915	4,335	50	3.34%
Newry City/Down	164,514	5,249	60	3.19%
Armagh City/Bann	190,559	5,865	67	3.08%
Antrim/Newtownabbey	132,389	3,904	45	2.95%
Lisburn City/Castlereagh	178,544	5,192	60	2.91%
Fermanagh/Omagh	112,400	3,244	37	2.89%
Mid-Antrim District Council	132,378	3,631	42	2.74%
Ards/NorthDown	155,882	3,982	46	2.55%
Causeway Coast	140,436	3,427	39	2.44%

Six Acre Standard

RESULTS

NI needs 821 new pitches

District Council	2011 Population Projection	Acres Recommended by SAS	EXISTING PROVISION				SHORTFALLS		
			Grass	Synthetic		Total Acres of Pitches	SNI Standard		
			Grass Acres	Synthetic Acres	SNI Standard x 4		Perceived Acres Shortfall	Pitches Required	Shortfall by Acre to Population
Ards/ North Down	155,882	468	146	7	29	174	293	117	0.19%
Lisburn City/ Castlereagh	178,544	535.632	147.74	15.71	62.84	210.58	325.05	130	0.18%
Antrim/ Newtownabbey	132,389	397.167	117.31	9.53	38.12	155.43	241.74	97	0.18%
Mid-Antrim	132,378	397.134	170.38	4.89	19.56	189.94	207.19	83	0.16%
Derry City/ Strabane	150,592	451.776	202.36	7.76	31.04	233.4	218.38	87	0.15%
Belfast	263,313	789.939	369.69	32.49	130	499.65	290.29	116	0.11%
Armagh City/ Bann	190,559	571.677	322.49	12.52	50.08	372.57	199.11	80	0.10%
Causeway Coast	140,436	421.308	277.59	6.81	27.24	304.83	116.48	47	0.08%
Newry City/ Down	164,514	493.542	361.53	8.77	35.08	396.61	96.932	39	0.06%
Fermanagh/ Omagh	112,400	337.2	260.36	8.07	32.28	292.64	44.56	18	0.04%
Mid-Ulster District Council	129,915	389.745	317.33	8.29	33.16	350.49	39.255	16	0.03%
TOTALS	1,750,922	5,252.77	2,692.7	121.97	487.9	3,180.58	2,072.2	829	

Limitations of ‘Bridging the Gap?’

‘Bridging the Gap’ has a number of limitations. These are:

- At the time of development no Northern Ireland participation data was available. The findings of Bridging the Gap have been established using English and Scottish participation parameters;
- As a result, the facility shortfalls identified do not reflect local needs, sporting interests or facility development aspirations;
- The figures do not reflect the quality or condition of existing sports facility provision in Northern Ireland; and
- The research provides statistics for a limited number of facility types. This has left the document open to some criticism from some sporting organisations.

“What do we need?” - Other deficiencies

- Facilities for other sports
- Spectator facilities
- Performance Development Centres
- Countryside Facilities
- Multi-sport Facilities
- Motorsport Facilities

How do we get it?

Using ‘Bridging the Gap’ to make a difference:

- ‘Bridging the Gap’ is and will continue to set a strategic agenda for SNI’s capital programmes;
- ‘Bridging the Gap’ is and will continue to prioritise the distribution of SNI’s capital funding;
- ‘Bridging the Gap’ will be used by SNI to encourage the District Councils to take the lead in developing local facility strategies for Northern Ireland;
- SNI has developed a ‘**Terms of Reference**’ for the Chief Leisure Officers Association to encourage the development of these strategies; and
- ‘Bridging the Gap’ is and will continue to provide the strategic context for the development/refurbishment of any sports facility provision in Northern Ireland.

Delivering a leading Sports Facilities Strategy for Northern Ireland

- 'Sport Matters', the Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation (2009 – 2019) is categorised by three development themes; Participation, Performance, and **Places**.
- Three Strategic Monitoring & Implementation Groups (SMIG's) for Participation, Performance, and **Places** have been established.
- The **Places** SMIG will take forward the strategy targets relating to sports facilities and will develop a leading sports facilities strategy for Northern Ireland.

Delivering a leading Sports Facilities Strategy for Northern Ireland cont....

- Using the results of the new SAPAS survey, SNI will commission the University of Edinburgh to overlay Northern Ireland's sports participation data with existing facility provision.
- The results from this new research will provide the most accurate picture of facility need to have ever been developed in Northern Ireland.
- SNI will advise the **Places** SMIG on a leading facilities strategy that will have the new research statistics at the heart of its development. The leading strategy and new research will form the context for the ongoing development of local facilities strategies.

The potential of the school estate in Northern Ireland

Community Use of the School Estate:

- Schools provide valuable sports facilities for their pupils and play an important role in developing fundamental movement skills, encouraging life-long participation, improving health, and in improving the level of performance of young people. It is, however, often the case that these facilities are used almost exclusively for PE and school sport and are not made available for community use.
- The principle of 'community use' is a major factor in unlocking the potential of school sports facilities and would assist in addressing shortfalls identified in sports facility provision throughout Northern Ireland.
- Through widening access to facilities, schools can place themselves at the centre of local communities. Improvements to design and appropriate specifications would enable these facilities to provide a useful resource for both the school population and the community.
- By way of example, Bridging the Gap has identified a shortfall of 142 badminton courts (equivalent to 36 four court sports halls) in Northern Ireland. If 50% of post primary schools were opened for community use the shortfall could be reduced to 37 badminton courts (9 four court sports halls).

Independent Strategic Review of Education, Schools for the Future (December 2006):

Professor Sir George Bain's review was commissioned primarily to examine strategic planning and organisation of the schools' estate. The reviews makes four key points:

- School facilities should be made available to outside groups at reasonable cost;
- Schools and other providers should work together to share provision and maintenance of facilities;
- The planning of the school estate should, as far as possible, be co-ordinated with planning in such fields as health, sport and recreation, and community regeneration and development;
- The provision of new school facilities and the refurbishment of existing facilities should take account of provision at other schools in close proximity, other provision in the area (district councils, sports clubs etc), and the sports/activities offered by the school.

Achieving Community Use of the school estate?

Partnerships delivering community use are limited in Northern Ireland, and the number of schools offering their facilities outside of strategic partnerships are also limited. However, SNI are working to improve these statistics:

- The successful delivery of 'Sport Matters' the Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation (2009-2019) will place particular emphasis on developing community accessible and multi-sport hubs within the school estate;
- In early 2010 SNI contributed to a working group commissioned by the Education Minister, and were a key contributor to the final report and recommendations. SNI forwarded a number of comments to the department and specifically referenced the updating of the Building Handbook as a key factor to enabling community use at school sites;
- Since 2007 SNI have been actively working in partnership with the Department of Education to encourage positive changes to the 'Building Handbook';
- Through recent capital programmes SNI has encouraged a number of partnerships which have created excellent examples of best practice in community use, such as projects at; St Patricks High School, Keady; Lurgan Junior High School and Downshire Primary School, Hillsborough.

Thank-you

Questions & Answers