

Can Quest make a contribution to the
successful achievement Sport
Matters target PL25?

Places SMIG

Wednesday 28th March 2012

Context:

- Sport Matters, the Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation (2009-2019) has a ten year life cycle, of which we are only three years into our journey.
- The strategy introduces five targets under the theme 'Places', including PL25 – the subject of today's discussion:

“By 2019 to ensure that 90% of the population have quality accredited, multi-sports facilities, that have the capacity to meet demand, within 20 minutes travel time.”

Purpose of PL25:

- The purpose of PL25 is to primarily ensure that the Northern Ireland population have access to quality accredited environments in which to engage in a choice of sport and/or physical recreation.
- There has been a common misconception that PL25 is the 'catch all' target that aims to increase the quantity of sports facility provision throughout Northern Ireland.

Key elements of PL25:



Definition of PL25:

- Sport Northern Ireland (SNI) officials discussed the key elements of PL25 and attempted to apply a rational definition to each. These are:

Quality Accreditation

- Quest Accreditation or a comparable alternative

Multi-Sport

- Facilities that can cater for at least 3 sports or 2 sports and one recreational activity at the one site

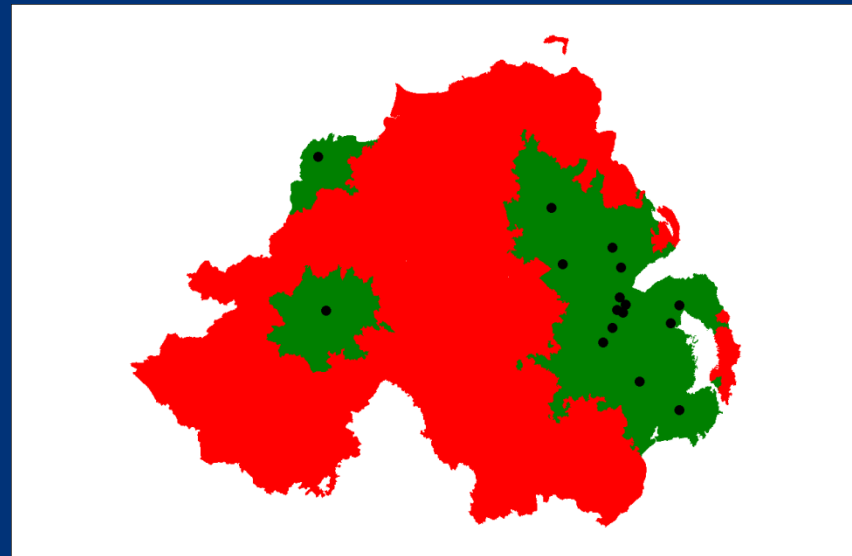
Access Within 20mins

- 20 minutes drive time

PL25 Baseline:

- Appendix 7 of Sport Matters refers to a baseline position of **65%** for target PL25.

The methodology employed to calculate the baseline position overlaid Quest accredited sports facilities over census population data accompanied by a 'drive-time analysis.



What is Quest?

- Quest is the leisure industry's only accepted Quality Assurance and Continuous Improvement Tool for facility management and sports development, supported by Sport England, Sport Scotland, Sport Wales and Sport Northern Ireland as well as the institute IMSPA and CLOA.
- Quest is now run under a 3 year contact by Right Directions/Leisure Net Solutions, on behalf of the Home Country Sports Councils (financed by Sport England).

What is Quest?

- Quest is available at three levels (Entry, Plus & Stretch). All levels include a one or two day assessment and either an 'informed' or 'uninformed' mystery visit (MV).
- At all levels, centres must undertake the Core Module Assessment on day one, which includes:

Cleaning and House Keeping
Health and Safety Declaration
Team
Continuous Improvement

Maintenance and Equipment
Customer Experience
Business Planning

What is Quest?

- Day two assessment (Plus & Stretch only) includes:

Measuring Impacts & Outcomes

Legacy

Health & Wellbeing

Health & Safety

Financial Management

Working with Governing Bodies

Skill Development

Customer Insight

Sales & Retention

Access & Equity

- Day two also includes a choice of specific modules, including:

Ice Rink

Golf

Climbing

Athletics Track

Dual Use Facilities

Water Sports

Why does the industry need Quest:

- With District Council resources being stretched to the limit and the consequent impact on contract monitoring and other leisure related budgets, now is the time for organisations to retain or introduce Quest.
- In this time of “more for less” it is essential to demonstrate to both Councillors and the public that councils provide a high quality and value for money service with less requirement for direct monitoring. Quest provides the nationwide benchmarking framework, which is the best tool to demonstrate how well services are run.
- District Councils could continue to use Quest as a key monitoring tool, and may consider adding additional Quest assessments throughout the year, as this may be a cost effective approach to monitoring contracts.

Other benefits include:

- It encourages and celebrates success amongst staff teams;
- It demonstrates quality to consumers in an objective manner;
- It drives continuous improvement;
- It delivers cost savings and income generating ideas with benefits outweighing the costs of an assessment;
- It now measures outcomes and impacts, which are, in the current climate essential pre-requisites.

Cost of Quest:

- Set in the context of an Operational budget of a District Council leisure facility, the cost of introducing or retaining Quest is relatively low. It is believed that income generating ideas within the assessment report could outweigh the cost of an assessment:

Quest Structure:	Description:	Cost:
Quest Entry	1 day assessment + informed mystery visit (MV)	£850.00 (per annum)
Quest Plus	2 day assessment + 1 informed & 1 uninformed MV	£2300.00 (2 year cycle)
Quest Stretch	Quest Plus + a choice of 5 additional modules	£2300.00 (2 year cycle)

Quest in NI:

- There are mixed views on Quest from within the industry in Northern Ireland. At present approximately 11 out of 26 Councils have facilities accredited by the scheme and many of those have realised the benefits:
- **Roe Valley Leisure Centre (Limavady) – Barry Toorish**
- *“Quest has undoubtedly made a difference to the leisure industry. It has driven up standards and ‘professionalised’ the sector. The new Quest is much less prescriptive and will stretch us further. At a time when local authority leisure is increasingly under the spotlight, it is crucial that we have a framework to ensure that what we provide is quality proved.”*

Recommendations:

In the short to medium term (and in the absence of an industry specific alternative), we need to encourage the industry to embrace Quest if the 90% target of PL25 is to be realised. Some recommendations for consideration include:

- Leisure Net/Right Directions to deliver an information session on the new Quest 2011 scheme and to use the session as an opportunity to gauge the views of the industry in NI;
- As a Home Country Sports Council, SNI are invited onto the Quest Board which meets quarterly at Sport England HQ. If the views of NI are to be represented in Quest policy and development, then a commitment should be made to attending these meetings;

Recommendations continued:

- As an incentive to engage District Councils in Quest, SNI should consider opening a small grant scheme to fund 1st entry assessment (in a similar manner to Adventure Mark scheme). It is anticipated that a small budget (e.g. £20K) aimed at District Councils currently not involved in Quest could bring us closer to our 90% target;
- SNI invest considerable sums of money into the development/refurbishment of sports facilities. SNI should consider making Quest a condition of award for those projects that would be applicable to the Quest scheme;

Thank You

Discussion