

Appendix I - Rural Needs Impact Assessment (RNIA) Template

SECTION 1 - Defining the activity subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016

1A. Name of Public Authority.

Sport Northern Ireland

1B. Please provide a short title which describes the activity being undertaken by the Public Authority that is subject to Section 1(1) of the Rural Needs Act (NI) 2016.

The Sports Councils' Recognition Policy - update of The Sports Councils' Recognition Policy 2017.

1C. Please indicate which category the activity specified in Section 1B above relates to.

Developing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Adopting a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Revising a	Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Designing a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Delivering a Public Service	<input type="checkbox"/>		

1D. Please provide the official title (if any) of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service document or initiative relating to the category indicated in Section 1C above.

The Sports Councils' Recognition Policy.

1E. Please provide details of the aims and/or objectives of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service.

This Policy sets out the purpose of Recognition, the basis upon which a Sport is recognised by the Sports Councils and the Criteria upon which the Sports Councils Recognise a National Governing Body as a leading organisation that governs and develops a Sport within the UK, GB or a Home Country.

1F. What definition of 'rural' is the Public Authority using in respect of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Population Settlements of less than 5,000 (Default definition).

☒

Other Definition (Provide details and the rationale below).

☐

A definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

☐

Details of alternative definition of 'rural' used.

N/a

Rationale for using alternative definition of 'rural'.

N/a

Reasons why a definition of 'rural' is not applicable.

N/a

SECTION 2 - Understanding the impact of the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

2A. Is the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service likely to impact on people in rural areas?

Yes ☒ No ☐ If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **2E**.

2B. Please explain how the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas.

The Policy will be used to determine what is 'Recognised' by the UK Sports Councils as a sport (or discipline of a sport) and which governing bodies are Recognised across each of the UK jurisdictions as being the leading organisations that govern and develop those sports.

The Policy will therefore impact people in rural areas, as well as those in urban areas in the same way.

2C. If the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently from people in urban areas, please explain how it is likely to impact on people in rural areas differently.

N/a - we do not expect the policy to impact on people from rural areas differently from people in urban areas.

2D. Please indicate which of the following rural policy areas the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is likely to primarily impact on.

Rural Businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Tourism	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Housing	<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs or Employment in Rural Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Education or Training in Rural Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Broadband or Mobile Communications in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Transport Services or Infrastructure in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Health or Social Care Services in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poverty in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deprivation in Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Crime or Community Safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rural Development	<input type="checkbox"/>
Agri-Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other (Please state)	<input type="text" value="Sport participation and development opportunities"/>

If the response to Section 2A was YES GO TO Section 3A.

2E. Please explain why the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service is NOT likely to impact on people in rural areas.

SECTION 3 - Identifying the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

3A. Has the Public Authority taken steps to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas that are relevant to the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service?

Yes ☒ No ☐ If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **3E**.

3B. Please indicate which of the following methods or information sources were used by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

Consultation with Rural Stakeholders	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Published Statistics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Consultation with Other Organisations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Research Papers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Surveys or Questionnaires	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other Publications	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below).			<input type="checkbox"/>

3C. Please provide details of the methods and information sources used to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas including relevant dates, names of organisations, titles of publications, website references, details of surveys or consultations undertaken etc.

In developing Sport NI's Corporate Plan 'The Power of Sport' (2021/26), there was a significant consultation processes including several focus group meetings with organisations including those representing Rural Communities.

The Corporate Plan Equality Impact Assessment, Sport NI reviewed academic and other sources pertaining to rural needs in NI and their experiences of sport here [Equality-Impact-Assessment-Sport-NI-Corporate-Plan.pdf](#)

Further to this Sport NI considers the data on rural needs from DAERA: [List of Rural Related Research, Publications and Other Information - August 2023.pdf](#)

We have also considered the Continuous Household Survey, Children's Sport and Physical Activity Survey, national governing body and programme monitoring data

3D. Please provide details of the social and economic needs of people in rural areas which have been identified by the Public Authority?

- Children and young people from rural areas were least likely to say that they walked or cycled to school.
- The lower population density in rural areas means that the distance between family homes and schools is larger, and for some young people it may therefore be unfeasible to walk or cycle to school, especially at post-primary level where some young people must travel significant distances to get to their school.
- 35% of children and young people live in a rural community.
- Females, living alone or in a rural area, retirement, fair/poor emotional health and activity being limited by illness are significantly associated with inactivity.
- Those from rural areas described the challenges they faced such as lack of choice of sports, transport issues and social isolation.
- Physical literacy is a cornerstone of Physical Activity involvement. 77.5% of children scored between 'very poor' and 'below average' in FMS proficiency. There was no difference between children attending urban and rural schools, but notably, when socioeconomic status is taken into account, the schools in middle and upper-class neighborhoods scored significantly higher.
- Children and young people understand the importance of an active lifestyle to their overall general health and wellbeing.
- Need for increased promotion of the sport and physical activity options available in local communities, particularly in rural areas - believed there are opportunities out there but people unsure where to look.
- Need for additional consideration for enhancing opportunities for those living in rural areas.

If the response to Section 3A was YES GO TO Section 4A.

3E. Please explain why no steps were taken by the Public Authority to identify the social and economic needs of people in rural areas?

SECTION 4 - Considering the Social and Economic Needs of Persons in Rural Areas

4A. Please provide details of the issues considered in relation to the social and economic needs of people in rural areas.

Sport NI considers the impact of the following on rural communities when designing its policies and programmes

- Limited access to transport both private and public networks negatively affecting individual ability to access sport and physical activity.
- Opportunities for children in rural areas to engage in active travel is limited especially at post-primary level.
- Females in rural areas greater susceptibility to inactivity.
- Limited choice of sport and physical activity opportunities in rural communities, need to diversify.
- Need for wider promotion of the current sport and physical activity opportunities, acknowledgement that these exist but those living in communities not aware where they can find information.

However this policy is only concerned with the recognition of sports, while these issues are considered where there is scope to address them within a policy or programme, it is not within the scope of this recognition policy.

SECTION 5 - Influencing the Policy, Strategy, Plan or Public Service

5A. Has the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, been influenced by the rural needs identified?

Yes

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No

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If the response is **NO** GO TO Section **5C**.

5B. Please explain how the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or delivery of the Public Service, has been influenced by the rural needs identified.

If the response to Section **5A** was **YES** GO TO Section **6A**.

5C. Please explain why the development, adoption, implementation or revising of the Policy, Strategy or Plan, or the design or the delivery of the Public Service, has NOT been influenced by the rural needs identified.

There is no impact of this policy on rural needs, nor opportunity for it to positively impact upon rural needs. This policy is designed to help the Sports Councils identify what is considered a sport (and/or a discipline of a sport) and to identify the leading organisations for governing those sports across the UK jurisdictions.

SECTION 6 - Documenting and Recording

6A. Please tick below to confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained by the Public Authority and relevant information on the Section 1 activity compiled in accordance with paragraph 6.7 of the guidance.

I confirm that the RNIA Template will be retained and relevant information compiled. ☒

Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:	Ian Weir
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Division/Branch	Sport Northern Ireland
Signature:	<i>Ian Weir</i>
Date:	17.11.24
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Rebecca Hope
Position/Grade:	Interim Director of Sport / G6
Division/Branch:	Sport Northern Ireland
Signature:	R Hope
Date:	20/11/25