

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 NI

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.

A review of the provision of sport and physical activity opportunities for people with disabilities (incorporating a review of Sport NI's Investment into Disability Sport NI) between 2020 – 2025

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Adopting a	Policy <input type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Implementing a	Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Plan <input type="checkbox"/>
Revising a	Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Strategy <input checked="" 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.

Sport NI – Disability Mainstreaming Policy,
The Power of Sport – Sport NI Corporate Plan,
Active Living – NI Strategy for Sport & Physical Activity & Active Living: No Limits Action Plan

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

The purpose of this review is to ensure that the nature and quantum of Sport NI's investment aligns with its statutory duty to promote increased activity and participation in sport by disabled people; Consideration is given to both existing and alternative funding models; Identification of clearly defined measurable outcomes and targets for DSNI to enable meaningful participation data amongst disabled people is captured and reported; Progress against KPIs is reviewed; Comparison and benchmark against other similar Home Nation and Irish organisations. Sport NI understands the strategic landscape for sport for disabled people within District Council, National Governing Bodies and the Community & Voluntary and Charity sector; Sport NI understands the level of current provision, identifies any gaps in provision ; geographically, demographically, or by disability); Sport NI recognises opportunities to provide support to build capacity or capability to enable the increase in relevant and appropriate participation opportunities.

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 review will consider the disability provision towards disabled people including those disabled people in rural areas. This is reflected in the terms of reference purpose, referenced above, which specifies “geographical areas”. It will be considered in attendees and topics of consultation groups, which will specifically consider rurality. It will also be considered in non-monetary benefits, in participant data and case study evaluations.

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.

The review itself will not impact people in rural areas differently as it will address specifically rurality as specified above to ensure an equitable consideration.

It is recognised that the barriers to public life positions, positive attitudes and sporting system representation and participation may be compounded for disabled people in rural areas, and this will be considered within the review itself.

The review will make recommendations and lead to further actions to improve disability provision for disabled people, including disabled people from rural areas. However the scope of this RNIA is assigned to the review terms of reference and process only. Further RNIA will be applied to any further policies, programmes and projects as a result of this review.

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Poverty in Rural Areas	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Deprivation in Rural Areas	<input checked="" 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="Social Inclusion and sports development in rural areas"/>

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.

N/A

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other Methods or Information Sources (include details in Question 3C below).			<input checked="" 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.

- Sport NI Corporate Plan 2020-25 consultation evidence. Sport NI specifically consulted with DAERA, rural Councils, governing bodies, rural community and sporting group and S75 groups. [Corporate Plans | Sport NI](#)
- An EQIA on the corporate plan was completed: [Equality-Impact-Assessment-Sport-NI-Corporate-Plan.pdf](#) which considered rural needs.
- Continuous Household Survey: experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland 2024/25, [Experience of sport by adults in Northern Ireland 2024/25 | Department for Communities](#)
- Children's Sport and Physical Activity, [CSPPA Reports – CSPPA.ie](#)
- Kids Life and Times and Young People Life and Times, ([Northern Ireland Kids Life and Times Survey: 2023](#) and [Young Life and Times Survey: Sport](#)).
- Young People's Behaviours and Attitudes Survey, [Young Persons' Behaviour and Attitude Survey 2022 | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency](#)
- NI Census and NISRA rural dashboard, [Home Page | NI Area Statistics | NISRA](#)
- DOH Health Inequalities Report and interactive dashboard, [Health Inequalities Annual Report 2025](#)
- CHS – wellbeing rural statistics, [Wellbeing: Urban-Rural Statistics | Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs](#)
- DSNi research library, [Disability Sport NI | Resource Library - Disability Sport NI](#)
- DAERA's Key Rural Issues Northern Ireland 2023 was also considered and <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/poverty-and-income-inequality-report-urban-rural-statistics>.
- [Rural Disability and Community Participation | Frontiers Research Topic](#)
- [Disability in rural areas: A matter of perception](#)
- [On making disability in rural places more visible: Challenges and opportunities \[Introduction to a special issue\] - ScienceDirect](#)
- [Intersectionality, childhood disability and rurality: What does rural life mean for disabled children and their families? - Flynn - 2025 - Sociologia Ruralis - Wiley Online Library](#)

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

A summary of the social and economic needs are as follows:

- To address social isolation and loneliness,
- To provide diversity of opportunities in rural areas to be improved and distance to travel to sporting activities.
- To address the limited reach in the West of the province for sports provision.
- To deliver more strategic engagement between organisations.
- To utilise the natural environment and coastal areas.
- To improve volunteer capacity in rural areas needs.
- To address lack of public transport and regularity in rural areas.
- To address the requirement to have opportunities in rural areas advertised better.
- To improve the availability of health and wellbeing services in rural areas.

This is further compounded by the barriers experienced by disabled people 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?

N/A

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.

The review will consider the disability provision for disabled people, including those in rural areas. Issues such as transport regularity and provision, loneliness and social exclusion, lack of diversity of provision, lack of provision and opportunities, poor communication and referrals to provision, access issues to natural environments, lack of volunteer capacity will be explored in consultation, in participation data and case study evaluations, and non-monetary benefits.

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 ☒ No ☐ 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.

Yes the needs from rural areas have been considered in the terms of reference for the review in terms of geographical analysis of data, consultation with disabled people from rural areas, in non-monetary benefits and case study evaluations pertaining to rural areas.

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.

n/a

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.

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Rural Needs Impact Assessment undertaken by:	Ali Campbell
Position/Grade:	Policy and Insights Manager
Division/Branch	Sport NI
Signature:	A Campbell
Date:	03 12 25
Rural Needs Impact Assessment approved by:	Angharad Moore
Position/Grade:	Interim Head of Sports Systems , G7
Division/Branch:	Sport NI
Signature:	AW Moore
Date:	18/12/25