

**Local Development Plan**

**Preparatory Studies**

**Paper 10: Open Space, Recreation and Leisure**

**March 2017**

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**Open Space, Recreation and Leisure across Newry, Mourne and Down**

**Purpose: To provide the Council with an overview of matters relating to open space, recreation and leisure and implications for land use in the Newry, Mourne and Down District.**

**Content: The paper provides:**

1. **The nature and benefits of open space;**
2. **The regional planning policy context for open space;**
3. **Government strategies relating to open space and recreation;**
4. **The role of the local development plan in the protection and provision of open space**
5. **An overview of the open space and recreational assets within the District**
6. **An analysis of outdoor space and children’s play provision within the District and future need over the plan period.**
7. **Introduction**
   1. The purpose of this paper is to inform members on the provision of open space, recreation and leisure within the Council area and future needs to 2030. It provides an overview of the regional policy context for open space, recreation and leisure and examines initial responses from various public bodies with a responsibility for these topic areas. Consideration of indoor leisure activities is also provided.
   2. The paper assesses the existing open space provision against the Fields in Trust (National Playing Fields Association – NPFA) recommended minimum standard for playing pitches and children’s play areas. Other less formal, passive complementary areas of open space in Newry, Mourne and Down District such as woodlands, historic parks, gardens and demesnes and indoor facilities are also considered in so far as they also contribute to the overall provision of areas of open space, recreation and leisure in the District.

**Definition and explanation of open space**

* 1. Open space is defined in Planning Policy Statement 8 (PPS) Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation as:

*“all open space of public value, including not just land, but also inland bodies of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and outdoor recreation and can also act as a visual amenity.”*

* 1. Open space, sport and outdoor recreation are important components of life. They provide many cultural, social, economic and environmental benefits and contribute positively to physical and mental health and a better quality of life. Open space can enhance the character of residential areas, civic buildings, conservation areas, listed buildings and archaeological sites. It can also help to attract business and tourism and thereby contribute to the process of urban regeneration. The use being made of the countryside for a range of sporting and outdoor recreational activities, particularly where these are associated with farm diversification, can contribute to the process of rural regeneration and help promote natural resource tourism.
  2. Sport is defined as “all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships, or obtaining results in competitions at all levels” (Council of Europe 1992). This paper focuses mainly on outdoor recreation, but it also briefly considers provision of both current and future forms of indoor recreation in the District.

**Figure 1 - Benefits of Sport in Northern Ireland**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Growing the Economy** | In 2010, Sport NI commissioned the Sport Industry Research Centre to re-assess the economic contribution of sport. The picture of NI is as follows:   * Consumer’s expenditure on sport in 2008 was £688m. This represents an increase of 54% over the 2004 figure * Sport and associated industries are estimated to employ in excess of 17, 900 people corresponding to 2.3% of total employment in the region * Furthermore, the gross value added of 2.3% is greater than that of a similar UK region, North West England (1.7%) and North East England (2.0%). |
| **Public Health & Well Being** | Sport can play a vital role in improving public health and wellbeing. Evidence suggest regular participation in sport and physical activity can:   * Contribute to the reduction of illnesses; such as diabetes, some types of cancer, osteoporosis, and cardiovascular disease * Promotes mental well-being; having a positive effect on anxiety, depression, mood and emotion and self-esteem * Help tackle obesity; obesity has become a major public health concern, not only in Northern Ireland, but globally. Rising levels of obesity rates, particularly among children has led to the situation being described as “epidemic”. |
| **Community Cohesion & Social Inclusion** | In recent years recognition has grown of the ‘added value’ that sport can bring to communities, promoting social inclusion, contributing to stronger communities and as a key generator of social capital.  Sporting activities and events can contribute to the development of stronger social networks and more cohesive communities by providing opportunities for social interaction, which strengthens community involvement, identity and civic pride. When there is an affinity with a team or individual the power of sport makes people feel good and a sense of sharing in the success of others from their country, county, town or community, which can be celebrated collectively. |
| **Improving Northern Ireland’s Image** | NI is striving to improve its image at home and abroad following decades of civil and political unrest. Government is using a range of initiatives set in the context of a broader vision for a more sustainable, cohesive and prosperous society, which, in turn offers the visitor a world-class experience.  Sports events and activity tourism provide numerous opportunities for promoting NI as a flourishing society, proud of its cultural identity. Major sporting events such as the London 2012 Pre Games Training Camps (2011/2012), World Police and Fire Games (2013) and Giro D’Italia Big Start (2014) have all attracted international competitors, spectators, officials and media coverage. |

Source: Sport NI Response to Proposed 2015-16 Exchequer Budget Reductions.

**Green Infrastructure**

* 1. Green infrastructure, or blue-green infrastructure, is a phrase used to describe all green and blue spaces in and around our towns and cities. The term allows us to refer to – and consider the collective value of – all of these spaces at once. Component elements of green infrastructure include parks, private gardens, agricultural fields, hedges, trees, woodland, green roofs, green walls, rivers and ponds. The term covers all land containing these features, regardless of its ownership, condition or size.
  2. Green infrastructure incorporates green, blue and yellow space:

 green space - parks, natural spaces, river banks, village greens etc;

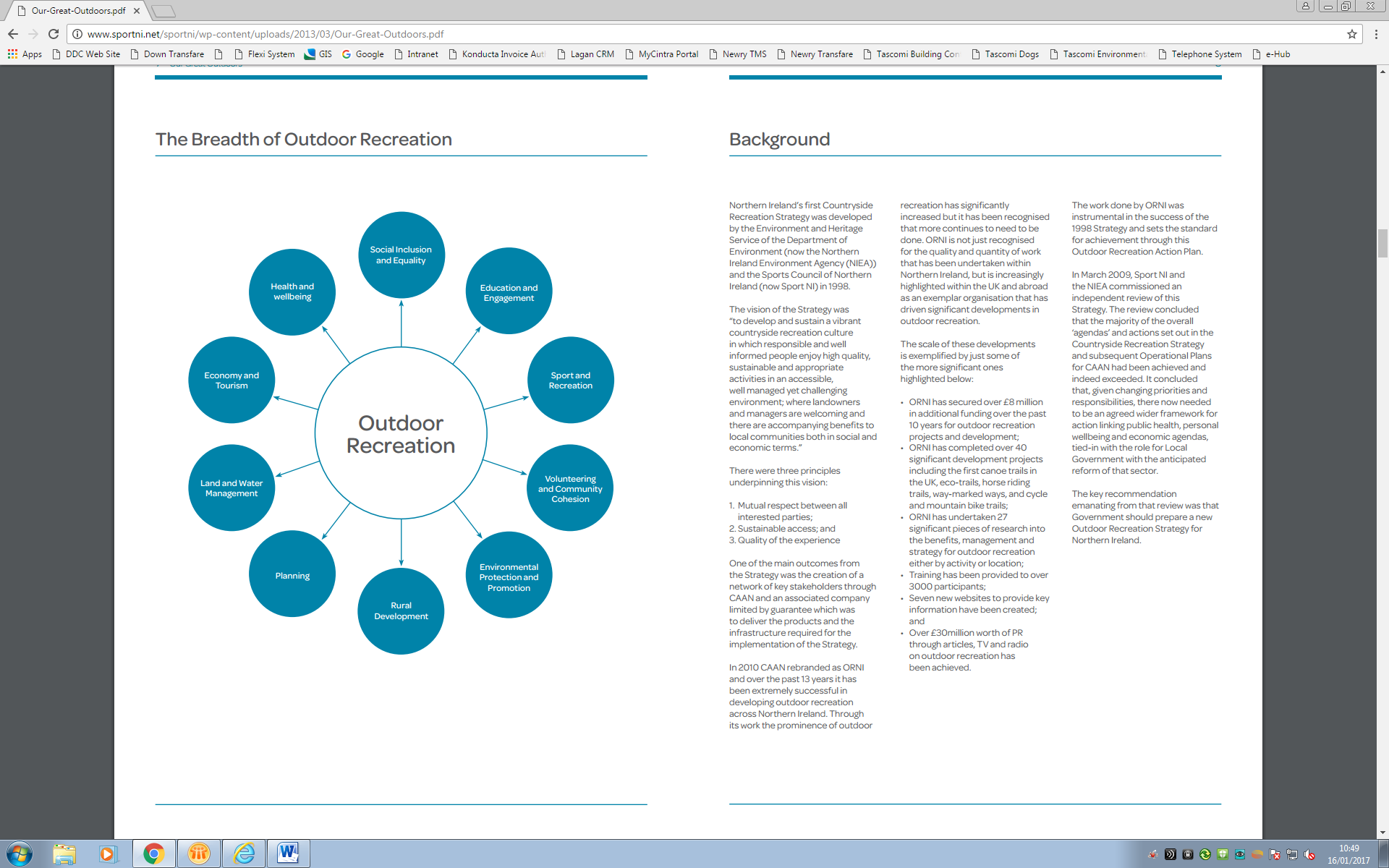
 blue space - ponds, rivers, lakes, streams, wetlands etc; and

 yellow space – beaches

1.8 In the past, green spaces have often been valued for single uses, such as for sport/recreation, or simply for their aesthetic appeal. The term green infrastructure reflects the fact that green spaces can perform a number of functions, often simultaneously. One site could be providing several functions at once, providing us with multiple benefits. The real benefit of green infrastructure to planning is that it can help deliver other local, regional and national policy objectives, not just those related to green space.

1.9 The challenge is ensuring that green infrastructure is capable of providing functions which will meet numerous planning objectives; this requires thorough design, planning and management. Success is reliant on a shared understanding between developers, planners etc. of what green infrastructure is, what it can achieve and how to achieve this.

**Figure 2: Multi- benefits of outdoor recreation**



Source: Multi Benefits of Outdoor Recreation- Source: Our Great Outdoors, The Outdoor Recreation Action Plan for Northern Ireland, March 2014

**Sport and recreation in Northern Ireland**

1.10 District Councils are obliged to make provision for recreational facilities under the Recreation and Youth Service Order 1986. Other bodies who contribute to the provision of such facilities include the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA), the Department for Communities (DfC) the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE) and the Education Authority.

1.11 As well as having responsibility for sport and recreation provision, the Council is leading the community planning process for the District, working in partnership with statutory agencies and the community, voluntary and business sectors to plan for and improve services that matter to local people, including sport and recreational facilities.

1.12 The report from the DfC 2015/16 Continuous Household Survey (CHS) provides data in relation to sport participation by the adult population in Northern Ireland. This report illustrates a number of key findings:

* 2015/16, more than half of adults in Northern Ireland (53%) had participated in sport and physical activity within the last 12 months, a similar figure to 2014/15 (55%). A target was set in the strategic document Sport Matters, to halt the decline in sports participation by 2013. This was achieved in 2013 and has been maintained in the following two years.
* In 2015/16 around half of adults (47%) normally participated in sport and physical activity on at least one day a week. This figure was similar to the previous year, 2014/15 (49%).
* More than a fifth of adults (21%) were members of a sports club in 2015/16, which is also similar to the previous year, 23% in 2014/15.
* Over the time period from 2007/08, sport participation by adults living in the most deprived areas of Northern Ireland initially decreased before returning to 46% in 2015/16. Sport participation by adults living in the least deprived areas has remained relatively static over the same time period at around 65%.

**Figure 3 Engagement1 in culture and leisure activities by adults in Northern Ireland, 2014/15-2015/16**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sport | Adults | | | |
| 2014/15 | | 2015/16 | |
| % | Base | % | Base |
| Sport participation | 55 | 3,348 | 53 | 3,286 |
| Normally participates in sport or physical activity at least one day per week2 | 49 | 3,349 | 47 | 3,286 |
| Member of a sports club | 23 | 3,349 | 21 | 3,286 |

Source: Continuous Household Survey

1Data presented relates to participation, attendance and visits in the last 12 months unless otherwise stated.

2 Participation at least one day per week excludes those who had walked for recreation only.

1.13 In the same survey, according to parents, 86% of children had participated in at least one sport within the previous year (2014/15), outside of school or afterschool with 84% participating outside of school and 51 % in afterschool sport.

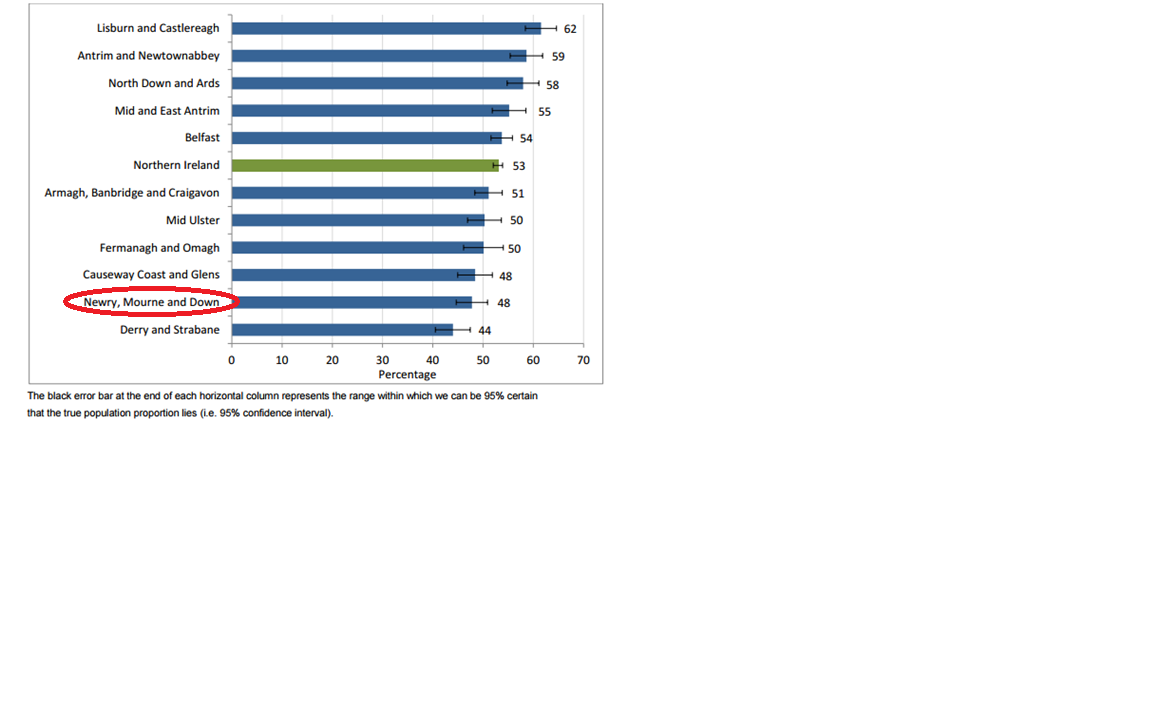
1.14 The most popular sports to take part in outside of school within the year 2014/15 were ‘Swimming or diving’’ (38%), football (33%) and cycling (26%). These were the top three sports for boys also (36%, 51% and 26%, respectively). For girls the top sports outside of school within the previous year were ‘Swimming or diving’ (41%), cycling (25%) and ‘Keep-fit, Aerobics, Yoga, Dance exercise’ (24%).

**Sport and recreation in Newry, Mourne and Down**

1.15 There are a range of parks and children’s play facilities across the District. The area is presently well served by a wide range of formal private recreational clubs including soccer, rugby, cricket, Gaelic games and golf. The widespread of school playing fields throughout the area also offers future potential for community use. The Council is also actively involved in community partnerships for the development and operation of recreational sites.

* 1. DfC prepared a report for the new Local Government Districts which is based upon a combination of the continuous household survey results for 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14. This report illustrates the difference in sport participation rates amongst adults within the previous year. Newry, Mourne and Down is ranked joint 9th with Causeway Coast and Glens when compared to sport participation across the council districts and is also below the Northern Ireland average - see figure 4 below.

**Figure 4 - Sport Participation in 2014 by Council Area**

Source: Engagement in Culture, Arts and Leisure by adults in Northern Ireland’s new council areas – Findings from combined Continuous Household Surveys 2011 – 2014 May 2015

**2.0 Regional Policy Context**

1. Programme for Government 2011-2015 (PfG)

2.1 The Office of the First and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) published the Programme for Government Building a Better Future on 12th March 2012. Included within the strategy priorities 1-4 set out for the Assembly term 2011 to 2015 are multiple references to improving the health, including mental health, and well-being of the population; unlocking the potential of the leisure sector as an instrument for positive change; and seeking to encourage greater involvement in sporting activities to advance social cohesion and integration – all of which have direct links to the provision and accessibility of open space and recreation.

2.2 The PfG specifically identifies the Play and Leisure Action Plan as one of its ‘building blocks’ to underpin the first strategic priority of creating opportunities, talking disadvantaged and improving health and well-being.

2.3Last year, the Executive agreed the draft Programme for Government Framework 2016-21. The draft framework contains 14 strategic outcomes which, taken together, set a clear direction of travel and enable continuous improvement on the essential components of societal wellbeing. They touch on every aspect of government, including the attainment of good health and education, economic success and confident and peaceful communities.

2.4 The draft PfG states its purpose is 'Improving wellbeing for all - by tackling disadvantage, and driving economic growth'. A key outcome of the draft that is particularly relevant to the topic of open space, recreation and leisure is 'we enjoy long, health, active lives'. Specific targets have not been set at this stage but will follow in the final programme for government following the consultation period that closed in December 2016.

(b) The Regional Development Strategy 2035 (RDS)

2.5 The importance of open space, sport and outdoor recreation to health and the environment is acknowledged in the Regional Development Strategy for Northern Ireland 2035 (RDS). The following Regional Guidance (RG) in the RDS and Spatial Framework Guidance (SFG) are relevant to this paper:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *RG 7 Support urban and rural renaissance* | The RDS recognises that regeneration is necessary to create more accessible vibrant city and town centres which offer people more local choice for shopping, social activity and recreation. It aims to ensure that environmental quality in urban areas is improved and maintained, particularly with adequate provision of green infrastructure. Part of the process of urban and rural renaissance requires even greater significance being given to the design and management of the public realm. It is important to promote recreational space within cities, towns and neighbourhoods, and new developments or plans should make provision for adequate green and blue infrastructure. This is important near designated nature-conservation sites as it will help reduce recreational pressures on these sites. |
| *RG 11 Conserve, protect and, where possible, enhance our built heritage and our natural environment* | The RDS recognises that built heritage is a key tourism and recreational asset and that is makes a valuable contribution to the environment, economy and society. Regarding built heritage the key policy aim is to identify, protest and conserve the built heritage and maintain the integrity of built heritage assets including historic landscapes. With regard to the natural heritage the key aim is to sustain and enhance biodiversity, protect and encourage green and blue infrastructure within urban areas, and conserve, protect and enhance areas recognised for their landscape quality. This policy aims to identify, protect and manage ecological networks. It states that such networks could also be of amenity value if linked to the green infrastructure provided by walking and cycling routes to heritage and other recreational interest. This policy also considers the establishment of one of more National parks which would conserve and enhance the natural, built and cultural heritage of areas of outstanding landscape value while promoting the social and economic development of the communities they support. |
| *SFG 13 Sustain rural communities living in smaller settlements and the open countryside* | This includes establishing the role of multi-functional town centres for business, housing, administration, leisure and cultural facilities for both urban and rural communities. |

(c) Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)

2.6 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) was published on the 28th September 2015. The SPPS reduces 20 separate planning policy statements to one. One of the SPPS’s core planning principles includes improving health and well-being. This is a key priority of the Northern Ireland Executive and this is reflected in the Programme for Government 2011-2015 and in the RDS 2035. The draft SPPS contains objectives in respect of open space, recreation and leisure and sets out the considerations that councils may wish to pursue in the preparation of LDPs.

* *Regional Strategic Policy Objectives*

|  |
| --- |
| Safeguard existing open space and sites identified for future such provision; |
| Ensure that areas of open space are provided as an integral part of new residential development and that appropriate arrangements are made for their management and maintenance in perpetuity; |
| Facilitate appropriate outdoor recreational activities in the countryside; |
| Ensure that new open space areas and sporting facilities are convenient and accessible for all sections of society, particularly children, the elderly and those with disabilities; |
| Achieve high standards of siting, design and landscaping for all new open space areas and sporting facilities; and |
| Ensure that the provision of new open space areas and sporting facilities is in keeping with the principles of environmental conservation and helps sustain and enhance biodiversity. |

* *LDP Preparation*

2.7 The SPPS states that in plan making Councils should:

* bring forward an Open Space Strategy that must reflect the aim, objectives and policy approach of the SPPS, tailored to the specific circumstances of the plan area;
* bring forward appropriate local policies and proposals for the area informed by a survey/ assessment of existing open space provision and future needs;
* have a policy presumption against the loss of open space to competing land uses irrespective of its physical condition and appearance;
* bring forward policy to require new residential development of an appropriate scale (generally 25 or more units, or on sites of one hectare or more) to provide adequate and well-designed open space as an integral part of the development;
* locate intensive sports facilities within settlements in order to maximise the use of existing infrastructure. It notes an exception for a sports stadium may be allowed outside of a settlement where clear criteria is established; and
* contain policy for the consideration of outdoor recreation in the countryside, taking account of a range of issues including visual and residential amenity, public safety (including road safety), any impact on nature conservation, landscape character, archaeology or built heritage and accessibility.

2.8 In preparing a LDP Councils should assess the existing provision of open space in the plan area against the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) recommended minimum standard of 2.4 hectares of ‘outdoor playing space’ per 1000 population (commonly referred to as the ‘6 acre standard)’. This assessment should consider the level of ‘outdoor playing space’ provision in the plan area, and the distribution and accessibility of that land.

2.9 Zonings for future needs should take into account the following:

* accessibility to and from existing and proposed housing areas;
* the potential for any detrimental impact on biodiversity or on sensitive environmental areas and features;
* the contribution that open space can make to the quality of the environment, sense of place and community life;
* the importance of protecting linear open spaces such as pedestrian and cycle routes, community greenways, former railway lines and river and canal corridors many of which are valuable in linking larger areas of open space and providing important wildlife corridors/ ecological networks;
* promoting and protecting public access to and along the coat;
* making adequate provision of green and blue infrastructure; and

identifying and designating areas of open space which perform a strategic function, such as landscape wedges in urban areas.

2.10 Where appropriate, key site requirements for zoned residential land should include guidance on the provision of areas of public open space as an integral part of the development.

2.11 Where residential zonings occur in close proximity to existing or zoned open space, plans will normally provide guidance on the need for linkages between the development and these areas in order to facilitate ease of access

(d) Planning Policy Statements

2.12 The following Planning Policy Statements (PPS’s) provide the planning policy context for open space, recreation and leisure. The key policy objectives are noted below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PPS2 Natural Heritage** | To seek to further the conservation, enhancement and restoration of the abundance, quality, diversity and distinctiveness of the regions natural heritage.  To further sustainable development by ensuring that biological and geological diversity are conserved and enhanced as an integral part of social, economic and environmental development.  To assist in meeting international (including European), national and local responsibilities and obligations in the protection and enhancement of the natural heritage.  To contribute to rural renewal and urban regeneration by ensuring developments take account of the role and value of biodiversity in supporting economic diversification and contributing to a high quality environment.  To protect and enhance biodiversity, geodiversity and the environment. | |
| **PPS7**  **Quality Residential**  **Environments** | To ensure quality in residential development adequate provision should be made for public and private open space and landscaped areas as an integral part of the development. | |
| **PPS8**  **Open Space, Sport And Outdoor Recreation** | To safeguard existing open space and sites identified for future such provision.  To ensure that areas of open space are provided as an integral part of new residential development and that appropriate arrangements are made for their management and maintenance in perpetuity.  To facilitate appropriate outdoor recreational activities in the countryside.  To ensure that new open space areas and sporting facilities area convenient and accessible for all sections of society, particularly children, the elderly and those with disabilities.  To achieve high standards of siting, design and landscaping for all new open space areas and sporting facilities.  To ensure that the provision of new open space areas and sporting facilities is in keeping with the principles of environmental conservation and helps sustain and enhance biodiversity. | |
| **PPS21 Sustainable Development in the Countryside** | To manage growth in the countryside to achieve appropriate and sustainable patterns of development that meet the essential needs of a vibrant rural community;  To conserve the landscape and natural resources of the rural area and to protect it from excessive, inappropriate or obtrusive development and from the actual or potential effects of pollution;  To facilitate development necessary to achieve a sustainable rural economy; including appropriate farm diversification and other economic activity; and  To promote high standards in the design, siting and landscaping of development in the countryside. |

(e) Other Relevant Government Strategies

2.13 The Northern Ireland Government has launched several important policy documents in recent years which promote the delivery of enhanced facilities for open space, sport and recreation. These strategies re-affirm the importance of sport and recreation and are expected to be delivered by a combination of central government departments together with Council and the community/voluntary sectors.

Play and Leisure Policy Statement for Northern Ireland

2.14 This document was produced by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister in 2009. The aim of this policy framework is to improve existing play and leisure provision for all children and young people from 0 - 18 years. As a result, the Play and Leisure Implementation Plan (2006-2026) was produced in 2011. This specifies high level outcomes with emphasis on the value placed on play, improved play and leisure facilities for all children and young people in order to support their development, enjoyment and growth.

Sport Matters The NI Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation 2009-2019

2.15 This strategy was delivered by Sport Northern Ireland working in partnership with the former Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL). It sets out a new shared sporting vision of ‘a culture of lifelong enjoyment and success in sport’, as well as the key strategic priorities for sport and physical recreation, and informs the direction of future investment – underpinning three areas; Participation, Performance, and Places. It sets out the case for on-going and increased investment in sport and physical recreation to deliver a range of sporting outcomes and support the wider social agenda in areas such as education, health, the economy and the development of communities over the period 2009-2019. It explains how sport in Northern Ireland will be developed over the next ten years and affirms Government commitment to put in place effective structures and mechanisms in support of a vision.

Active Places Research Report 2009 & Bridging the Gap 2014 Update

2.16 This report provides an evidence base to inform the strategic development of sports facilities in Northern Ireland. The 2009 report identified unmet demand and shortfalls for sports facilities such as sports halls, swimming pools, tennis courts, athletic facilities and pitches in Northern Ireland. The 2014 update presents facility shortfall tables for Pitches and Sports halls only.

The facility shortfall tables presented in the 2009 Report excluded school sports facilities due to their limited availability for community use. However, in light of Community Use of Schools guidance published by Sport NI and the Department of Education, it is important to recognise the potential value of school sports facilities in addressing the facility shortfalls throughout Northern Ireland.

Community Use of Schools (January 2014)

2.17 This document was produced at the result of collaborative work between the former Department Of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL), Sport NI, The Department of Education and other educational and non-educational stakeholders. It provides practical guidance to achieving community use of school sports facilities. There are a range of educational, recreational and sporting facilities which can be used to meet a variety of needs not only for pupils, but also local communities.

DARD - The Rural White Paper Action Plan – June 2012

2.18 This action plan aims to identify and address the key challenges facing rural communities. One of the rural visions within this document is for the continuing development of linkages between rural and urban areas so that everyone can enjoy the beauty and uniqueness of rural places and the facilities and services of larger towns and cities. It sets out a number of policy priorities one of which includes: “to safeguard the beauty and fabric of our rural areas and increase opportunities for all to enjoy the benefits of the countryside”.

Mountain Bike Strategy for Northern Ireland 2014-2024

2.19 This Strategy was prepared by Outdoor Recreation NI in May 2014. The vision of this strategy is to make NI a world class mountain bike destination. It identified Tollymore Forest Park as a potential location for a National Mountain Bike Trail Centre.

Sports Facilities Strategy for Northern Ireland

2.20 Sports NI, has been working, in partnership with the District Councils, to develop a Sports Facilities Strategy for Northern Ireland and the 11 District Council Area Reports. The strategy identifies the need for sports facilities of Northern Ireland wide significance, sports facilities that are of cultural importance, high performance training and competition sports facilities and local sport facility needs (i.e District Council areas). District Council Area Reports will flow out of the Strategy and identify the need for local facilities and recommend locations for the development and/or refurbishment of sports facilities. The Council’s Sports Facility Strategy is further noted below.

Outdoor Recreation Action Plan for Northern Ireland 2015 - 2020

2.21 This plan highlights the importance of making the outdoors accessible to everyone and the opportunities within rural areas and the urban fringes. It highlights that access to green space has been recognised across the world to be very important for people’s health, especially mental wellbeing. It acknowledges that Northern Ireland has extensive natural resources and wonderful landscapes which have the potential to be fully maximised through our great outdoor activities. The vision for the action plan is, “*a culture of dynamic, sustainable outdoor recreation in Northern Ireland*”.

**3.0** **Local Policy Context**

Development Plans

3.1 The Ards and Down Area Plan 2015 (ADAP) and the Banbridge/Newry and Mourne Area Plan 2015 (BNMAP) are the current statutory plans for the District and provide the framework against which to assess development proposals. Newry City and the five main towns within the District also have their own Town Centre Masterplan which were completed by the former Department of Social Development (DSD) in conjunction with the legacy Councils and are concerned with urban regeneration initiatives in each respective town centre. The Council is currently carrying out a review of the action plans identified in these master plans with a view to agreeing a list of priority actions for each plan that could be achieved within the life of the current Council.

Ards and Down Area Plan 2015

3.2 The ADAP identifies the various resources and types of open space that are located within the District. It notes that natural resources, such as Strangford Lough and the Mourne Mountains, provide a wealth of opportunities for active outdoor pursuits. It also notes the area contains a variety of informal recreational open space, particularly parkland with Castlewellan and Tollymore Forest Parks being notable examples. In addition it states that informal recreation facilities are associated with natural resources such as rivers, canals, lakes, heritage sites and disused railway tracks with Tyrella Beach and Murlough Nature Reserve being popular examples. Opportunities for cultural recreation are provided at places like Castleward and other National Trust properties and historic monuments.

3.3 The plan does not contain any specific policies with regard to open space, sport and recreation. It does however identify existing recreational open spaces and amenity land within the major settlements and relevant villages throughout the plan area. It also identified lands within some urban areas for proposed open space, to meet future demand, where there was a commitment to provide open space by an enabling authority. Areas of open space, whether identified or not by the plan, were to be safeguarded by Policy OS1 in PPS8 as no additional policies were included in the plan.

3.4 The plan identified a total of eleven sites for proposed amenity space in the plan area. Six of these were located in Downpatrick, one in Saintfield, two in Ballynahinch, one in Newcastle and one in Ballykinler. (Further information on the planning history of these sites is included in appendix 1).

3.5 Lands ideally suited for amenity, recreation and open space as part of future housing developments were also identified in some larger settlements and criteria for their development was provided as part of the key design considerations for the zoned housing lands.

3.6 The ADAP calculated the level of open space provision within the plan area taking account of land and facilities that were firstly in the ownership of the legacy Down District Council and secondly in private ownership.

3.7 It used these figures to assess the outdoor open space provision against the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) recommended a minimum standard of 2.4 hectare ‘outdoor playing space’ per 1000 population. The plan calculated the existing level of provision, and subsequent need, on the provision that was in the Council’s ownership.

3.8 As shown in figure 5 overleaf it found that the total area of active recreation provision owned by the former Down District Council was 63.05 hectares with 61.1 hectares being comprised of outdoor sports (playing fields) and 1.95 hectares children’s playing areas. It therefore concluded that the Down District had a deficit of both outdoor sports space (41.3 hectares) and children’s play areas (49.25 hectares) and the deficit could increase (as a result of population growth) over the plan period to 56.37 hectares and 56.78 hectares respectively. This calculation included the total population of the Down District i.e urban and rural while the existing provision only included that of the towns and villages. (The breakdown of the provision across the settlements is detailed in Appendix 3).

Banbridge / Newry & Mourne Area Plan 2015

3.9 The Plan area covers a largely rural area which includes much of the Mournes Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (including Slieve Croob), the Ring of Gullion Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the shores of Carlingford Lough.

3.10 BNMAP identifies the natural resources within the plan area, such as Camlough Lough, Slieve Gullion Forest Park, Kilbroney Forest Park, Silent Valley and Newry Canal and Tow Path, that provide numerous opportunities for open space, sports and outdoor recreational activities.

3.11 The plan identified major areas of existing open space, sport and outdoor recreation but no additional lands for open space were identified. Existing areas of open space, whether identified by the plan or not, were to be safeguarded under policy OS1 in PPS 8 as the plan did not introduce separate policies.

3.12 It notes the Department (former DoE) would reassess open space provision and if a deficit was established the Department would work with the Council to explore the appropriate mechanisms to address this.

3.13 The total area of active recreation provision in the Newry and Mourne area identified by the BNMAP (as shown in Figure 5 below) was 110.54 hectares with 98.86 hectares being comprised of outdoor sport provision (primarily playing fields) and 11.68 hectares of children’s play areas. The plan calculated this provision to include lands/ facilities located in the City of Newry, towns and villages that were in the legacy Newry and Mourne Council ownership and those in private ownership including GAA, Education facilities, NI Housing Executive and Churches. (The breakdown of the provision across the settlements is detailed in Appendix 3).

3.14 The BNMAP concluded that, when compared to the NPFA recommended 2.4 hectare per 1000 population standard there was a deficit of 17.50 hectares outdoor sport and children’s play areas in the plan area. This calculation did not include the total population of the plan area as it excluded the rural population.

**Figure 5: Outdoor Sports and Children’s Play Area Provision identified by ADAP and BNMAP**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Development Plan** | **Outdoor Sports (Playing Fields)** | **Children’s Play Areas** | **Total** |
| **ADAP (Towns & Villages)** | 61.1\* | 1.95\* | 63.05\* |
| **BNMAP (City, Towns and Villages)** | 98.86 | 11.68 | 110.54 |
| **NMD (City, Towns, Villages)** | 159.96 | 13.63 | 173.59 |

\*ADAP calculated outdoor sports provision based on the legacy Down District Councils ownership. It then calculated a private ownership category of private ownership (34.63ha) that would be more in line with the approach of BNMAP.

Newry Masterplan

3.15 The Masterplan for Newry was published in October 2011. The Masterplan proposes the following in relation to recreation and sporting opportunities;

* Creating a world class waterfront by capitalising on the Clanrye river and the Newry canal that runs through the city centre. This was to include the re-opening of the Newry Canal to boat traffic as part of a national connection between Lough Neagh and Carlingford Lough,
* Development of ‘The Newry Super Greenway’- a network of greenways linking the City’s neighbourhoods to eachother and the city centre,
* Regenerating Newry’s primary streets including Hill Street and Abbey Way with public realm upgrades and improving the connections from attractions such as Bagenal’s Castle and St Patrick’s Cathedral with the rest of the city centre;
* Establishing a new network of city parks to include improving linkages and co-ordinated enhancements to three parks (Heather Park, Kilmorey Park and The Rocks) and the creation of a new, larger public park as part of the redeveloped grounds of former Abbey Grammar School, and;
* Sensitively enhancing Daisy Hill Wood (Local Nature Reserve) for wildlife conservation and public recreation as a vital asset for the City.

Downpatrick Masterplan

3.16 The Downpatrick Masterplan was published in July 2010. In terms of open space the master plan focuses on the Quoile Nature Reserve to the north of the town. This is an important and sensitive area of conservation and recreation. The Masterplan proposes that the Quoile River will play a central role as an amenity for both local residents and visitors to Downpatrick, and as a place to relax, spend time and play. The proposal for a Quoile River Country Park presents the opportunity for encouraging activities along the river such as walking, cycling, fishing and canoeing.

3.17 The master plan also notes that the opportunity exists to enhance links between the Quoile area and the Town Centre. Other areas of amenity open space are located at the Town Park and at The Grove, adjacent to Down Cathedral and the St Patrick’s Heritage Centre. The legacy Down District Council proposed to acquire additional land adjacent to Pemberton Park to add to the existing Town Park.

Ballynahinch Masterplan

3.18 The Ballynahinch Masterplan was published in October 2014. It notes that natural resources such as the Ballynahinch river which runs through the centre of the town and the drumlin landscape that surrounds the town offer large areas of openspace within a short distance of the town centre. However, use of these areas is limited. The masterplan therefore proposed a number of initiatives to improve their use including:

* the extension of riverside pathways along the entire length of the river for walking and cycling,
* development of a new street and linear river park,
* creation of drumlin parks as community parks developing a network of new walking and cycling links between them, and;
* creation of a Lough Park with improved recreational facilities, allotments and enhanced network of pathways through the wetland habitat.

South East Coast Masterplan

3.19 The Masterplan for the South East Coast was published in January 2013. A theme of the masterplan is to develop leisure and recreation in the three towns.The proposals included:

3.20 -Newcastle

* Identification of major development opportunity sites including Donard Park for the location of a leisure centre.
* Redevelopment of Castle Islands Park to include a family zone, adventure zones and Eco-zone.
* It also notes the development of the proposed ‘Donard Gondola’, to provide access to the Mournes for all.

3.21 -Kilkeel

The master plan proposes to create a riverside park and walkway from Town Square to the Harbour providing a high quality park and pedestrian link. This large green space also presents an opportunity to create a new iconic play area. Other proposals included an improved esplanade with play and picnic facilities and improved access points to the beach to encourage more outdoor interaction and activity.

3.22 -Warrenpoint

The master plan seeks to promote and develop the town’s reputation as a hub for water sports and activities, utilising its location on Carlingford Lough. Proposals include the extension of the promenade along Rostrevor Road and the development of a new outdoor multi-activity area at Conallon Park with potential for an indoor facility alongside it. The plan also seeks to revitalise the public spaces within the town centre, creating event space and making it more attractive, people friendly and less car dominated.

**4.0 Newry, Mourne and Down Plans and Strategies**

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Corporate Plan

4.1 The Council’s mission as detailed in the Corporate Plan 2015-19 is to lead and serve a District that is prosperous, healthy and sustainable.

4.2 The Council has identified eight strategic objectives that it aims to have achieved by 2019. One of these is that it will have ‘Supported improved health and well-being outcomes’ by participating in improving quality of life and reducing health inequalities, primarily through programmes, services and access to open spaces.

Community Planning

4.3 Community Planning came into operation on 1st April 2015 as part of the full implementation of local government reform. The new duty of community planning requires councils as the lead partner to be responsible for making arrangements for community planning in their areas and it requires statutory bodies to participate in the process. The Council, statutory bodies and local communities will develop and implement a shared vision for promoting the well-being of the area, promoting community cohesion and improving the quality of life of its citizens.

4.4 The Community Plan is to be the overarching strategic plan for integrated planning and delivery of services in Newry, Mourne and Down. It provides a framework for the other strategies and plans the Council will put in place to contribute towards the outcomes in the community plan and it is based on a detailed analysis of future risks and opportunities for Newry, Mourne and Down.

4.5 Newry, Mourne and Down District Council’s draft Community Plan (Nov 2016) “Living Well Together” aims to provide a framework for collaborative working in order to support positive change for communities. The vision of the Community Plan is that:

*“Newry, Mourne and Down is a place with strong, safe and vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people’s needs”*

District Council Play Strategy

4.6 The Council finalised its Play Strategy for the District in February 2017. It is a five year strategy that will act as the guidance document to develop if needed or create a more efficient, effective play provision within the District. The strategy also gives guidance to the Council over the next five years where the Council is required to continue to monitor policy areas and develop those highlighted in areas which fall short of the Play Guidance detail.

District Council Sports Facility Strategy

4.7The Councilfinalised its Sports Facility Strategy for the District in February 2017. It is a 10 year strategy that provides a framework for the future prioritisation, development and provision of sports facilities at local level, to meet identified community need. The Strategy reflects the wider – NI 10 Year Plan for the provision of Strategic Sports Facility Strategy for Northern Ireland (2016), which focuses on the need for future provision that are of cultural significance, as well as those that provide for high performance training and competition. These facilities contribute to the vision and targets set out within strategic documents such as the Programme for Government (2011-2021), Building a Better Future (2011-15) and Sport Matters, the Northern Ireland Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation (2009-19). At local level, the identification of need for sports facility provision is also aligned to the Councils Corporate Plan 2015-2019 and the new Community planning process.

**5.0 Open Space, Recreation and Leisure Provision in the District**

5.1 The District benefits from a wide range of existing open space and recreation assets which are integral to our heritage, identity and economy. A variety of open spaces in public and private ownership also contribute to the quality of life for those who live within and visit the District. These include formal parks and gardens, sports and recreation grounds, children’s playgrounds, and less formal open spaces.

5.2 Active Outdoor Recreation & Open Space Provision

-Measuring Outdoor Playing space

Both PPS8 and the SPPS make reference to assessing existing open space provision against the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA) which operates under the name Fields in Trust. It recommends a minimum standard of 2.4 hectares per 1000 population for ‘outdoor playing space’. This is commonly referred to as the Six Acre Standard (SAS) and is comprised of 1.6 hectares (4 acres) of outdoor sport and 0.8 hectares (2 acres) of children’s play area.

5.3 The SAS was established as a guide to ensure that sufficient land is set aside in appropriate locations to enable the population to participate in sports, outdoor play, games and other physical recreation. It is noted that the SAS is not a legislative requirement, but is commonly used as a benchmark in spatial planning throughout the United Kingdom. It should be noted however, that the SAS mainly highlights the quantitative aspects of provision and does not consider aspects such as quality or demand.

5.4 Governments throughout the UK have called for more clearly defined and adopted policies for planning standards for open space, sport and recreation including outdoor facilities for sport and play. They called for local determination and adoption of standards relating to quantity, quality and accessibility. That said, the nature of the NPFA’s own recommendations have been changed to recognise this and are still recognised as a useful tool for planning authorities to refer to, use or adopt. The Fields in Trust 2015 guidance ‘Beyond the six acre standard’ retains the same headline rates of provision but draws out new recommendations for accessibility, the application of standards and the minimum dimensions of formal outdoor space. The standards also no longer differentiate between urban and rural areas.

5.5 Outdoor Playing space is made up of two components:

-The first is land provided for outdoor sport, principally for adults and youths. This refers to all playing pitches and other outdoor recreational sports grounds such as bowling greens and tennis courts which are available for use by the public. It also includes private sports facilities which serve the recreational needs of their members or the public.

-The second is play space for children which consists of Casual Play areas and Equipped Playgrounds that can be complemented by other facilities including multi-use games areas (MUGAs) and skateboard parks etc.

5.6 The NPFA standard is a useful way to measure formal outdoor playing space but it does not take into account indoor sport and recreation facilities or other outdoor areas including Parks and Country Parks, General Amenity Areas such as riverside walks or Private Playing Fields including stadiums or pitches that are not available for general public use that can all contribute to recreation provision.

5.7 The figure 6 below shows the Fields in Trust recommended benchmark guidelines for formal outdoor space.

**Figure 6: Fields in Trust recommended benchmark guidelines- formal outdoor space**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Open Space Typology | Quantity Guideline  (hectares per 1000 population) | Walking Guideline (walking distance: metres from dwellings) |
| Playing Pitches | 1.20 | 1200m |
| All Outdoor Sports | 1.60 | 1200m |
| Equipped/ designated play areas | 0.25 | LAPs - 100m  LEAPs - 400m  NEAPs - 1000m |
| Other Outdoor provision (NUGAs and skateboard parks) | 0.30 | 700m |

Source: ‘Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard’ England, Oct 2015.

5.8 The Sport NI Report ‘Active Places- Bridging the Gap’ analysed the adequacy of existing sports facility provision in Northern Ireland. It carried out an audit of the current stock of sports facilities as well as information relating to accessibility, universal access and condition.

5.9 Sport NI completed a 2014 update of this report quantifying all pitches in the 11 Local Government Districts. Using the SAS baseline it assessed the need for pitches based on 3 acres per 1000 population (approx. 1.2hectare). It produced two tables:

* Playing Pitches Including Educational Synthetic but Excluding Grass (figure 7 overleaf)
* Playing Pitches Including educational Synthetic and including Grass (figure 8 overleaf)

5.10 While the SAS recommends the value of a synthetic pitch to be twice that of a grass pitch Sport NI recommended the value to be four times that of a grass pitch due to the additional usage a synthetic pitch can withstand.

**Figure 7: 2014 Quantity of playing pitches in District Councils Areas (including Education Synthetic pitches but excluding grass pitches).**

Source: Sports NI – Update of the Active Places Research Report. \*Average pitch size is 2.5 acres

5.11 From this table it can be seen that the District was considered to have an under provision of 25 pitches.

5.12 Figure 7 (above) was completed based on 2011 population projections which show Newry, Mourne and Down to have a population of 164514. However, NISRA has since released NI 2011 Census figures (March 2015) which shows the actual population to have been 171533. Using this figure the provision of playing pitches can now be calculated more accurately against the NPFA standard as set out overleaf.

**Population Amended to actual 2011**(2011 Census) **= 171533**

Acres recommended by SAS = (171533 ÷ 1000) x 3 acres = 514.60

Acres existing (SNI) = 431.1

**Required Acres** = 514.60- 431.1 = 83.5

**Required Pitches** = 83.5 ÷ 2.5 (average pitch size) =33.4 = **33 pitches required**

5.13 This shows that the District has a shortfall of 33 pitches when calculated to exclude education grass pitches.

**Figure 8: 2014 Quantity of playing pitches in District Council Areas (including education synthetic pitches and including education grass pitches).**

Source: Sports NI – 2014 update of the Active Places Research Report

\*Average pitch size is 2.5 acres

5.14 From this table (figure 8 above) it can be seen that the District was considered to have a surplus of 45 pitches.

5.15 Again this was calculated on a projected 2011 population of 164514. The calculation overleaf shows the provision of playing pitches to include education synthetic and grass pitches for the actual 2011 population of 171533.

**Population Amended to Actual 2011** (2011 Census) **= 171533**

Acres recommended by SAS = (171533 ÷ 1000) X 3 acres = 514.60

Acres existing (SNI) = 607.15

**Required Acres** = 514.60- 607.15= -92.55

**Required Pitches**= -92.55 ÷ 2.5 (average pitch size) = -37.02 = **37 surplus pitches**

5.16 Future Needs

An assessment of the future needs of the District over the 15 year plan period can be calculated. Assuming the population of Newry, Mourne and Down District grows to 194994 in 2030 (NISRA, May 2016) and using Sport NI’s methodology the future need of the District can be calculated as shown below:

5.17 **Excluding education grass pitches:**

**Projected population 2030** (NISRA May 2016) **= 194994**

Acres recommended by SAS = (194994 ÷ 1000) x 3 acres = 584.98

Acres existing (SNI) = 431.1

**Required Acres** = 584.98- 431.1 = 153.88

**Required pitches** = 153.99 ÷ 2.5 (average pitch size) = 61.55 = **62 pitch shortfall**

5.18 **Including education grass pitches:**

**Projected population 2030** (NISRA May 2016) **= 194994**

Acres recommended by SAS = (194994 ÷ 1000) x 3 acres = 584.98

Acres existing (SNI) =607.15

**Required Acres** = 584.98- 607.15 = -22.17

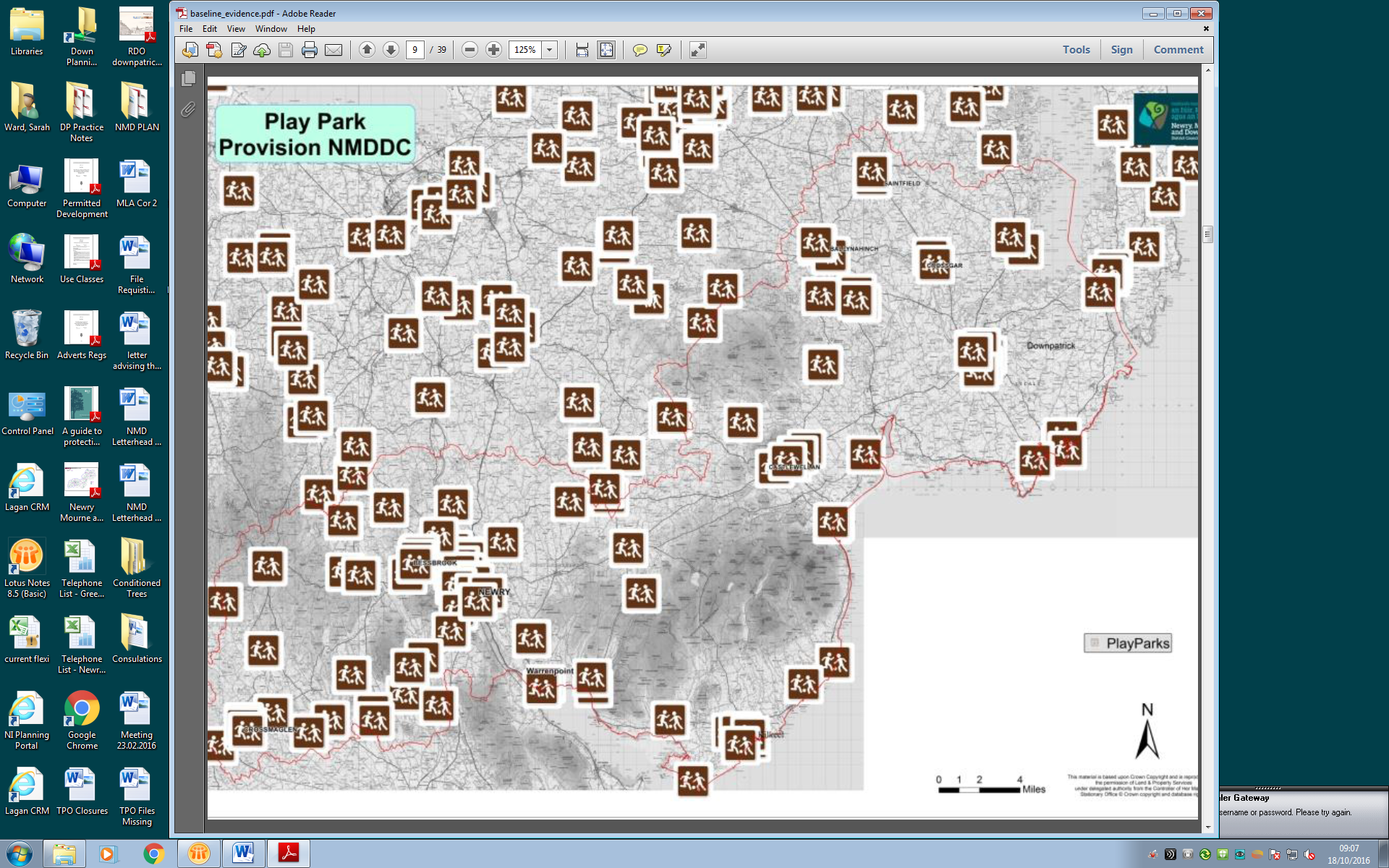
**Required Pitches** = -22.17÷ 2.5 = -8.87 = **8 surplus pitches**

5.19 Playing pitches are noted in the NPFA standard as providing for 1.2 hectare of the 1.6 hectare required for outdoor sport. The remainder would comprise of uses such as bowling greens and tennis courts. The Council’s Sports Strategy identified 12 outdoor bowls club sites and 7 tennis court sites within the District.

**6.0 Children’s Play Space Provision**

6.1 NPFA/ Fields in Trust’s ‘Planning and Design for Outdoor Sport and Play’ sets out a standard of 0.8ha per population of Children’s Play Space with a minimum standard of 0.6ha. As shown previously (in Figure 6) the 2015 guidance ‘Beyond the Six Acre Standard’ provides a benchmark of 0.25ha per 1000 population for equipped play areas. There are a number of outdoor play areas located throughout the District. These are primarily located within the urban areas with the City of Newry, all the towns and all but two of the villages in the district (Attical and Mayobridge) benefiting from a fixed play area. In additionsome small settlements also benefit from equipped children’s play areas (see appendix 5 for further detail). The map below (figure 9) provides information on the geographical distribution of play parks throughout the District that are provided and maintained by the Council. It demonstrates that most of the Districts settlements have some form of play park within or near to them.

**Figure 9: Map showing the geographical distribution of play parks in the District**



Source: NMD Council Sports Facility Strategy

- Measuring Children’s Play Space Provision

6.2 Using the Fields in Trust’s recommendation of 0.25ha per 1000 population for equipped/ designated play area provision the required amount of play space can be calculated as shown overleaf:

**Population 2011** (2011 Census) **= 171533**

Hectares recommended by SAS= (171533 **÷** 1000) x 0.25 hectares = 42.88 ha

Existing provision (identified in ADAP and BNMAP) = 13.63 ha

**Required Play Space**= 137.22-13.63 = **29.25 ha**

This indicates a deficit of 29.25ha of children’s outdoor play space.

6.3 During the LDP process children’s play space provision will be assessed in two tiers: the overall quantum and the spatial distribution. Relative to each other the spatial distribution is seen as more important as it relates to access provision within the various settlements i.e. in relation to children’s homes.

6.4 NPFA/ Fields in Trust define a three tier hierarchy of play facilities:

* LAP - These are unsupervised small open spaces specifically designed for young people for play activities close to where they live. Although without play equipment, LAP’s have characteristics that make the area conducive to children’s play. Such characteristics include ease of access, a relatively level site, informal surveillance and modest provision of landscaping so that play is no inhibited. As illustrated above, the FIT consider that LAP’s should be within 1 minute walking time from home.
* LEAP - These are unsupervised play areas that are equipped for children of early school age. While sharing similar characteristics to LAP’s, LEAP’s feature a range of different types of play equipment. The FIT consider these should be located within 5 minutes walking time of home.
* NEAP - These are also unsupervised but they are intended to serve a substantial residential area. While sharing similar characteristics to LEAP’s, NEAP’s feature a significant range of different types of play equipment. It is equipped mainly for older children but also having opportunities for play for younger children. The FIT recommend that these should be located within 15 minutes walking time of home.

6.5 It also recommends different travel times and distances depending on the nature of the facilities as detailed in Figure 10 below.

**Figure 10: Recommended Walking Times to Children’s Playing Space**

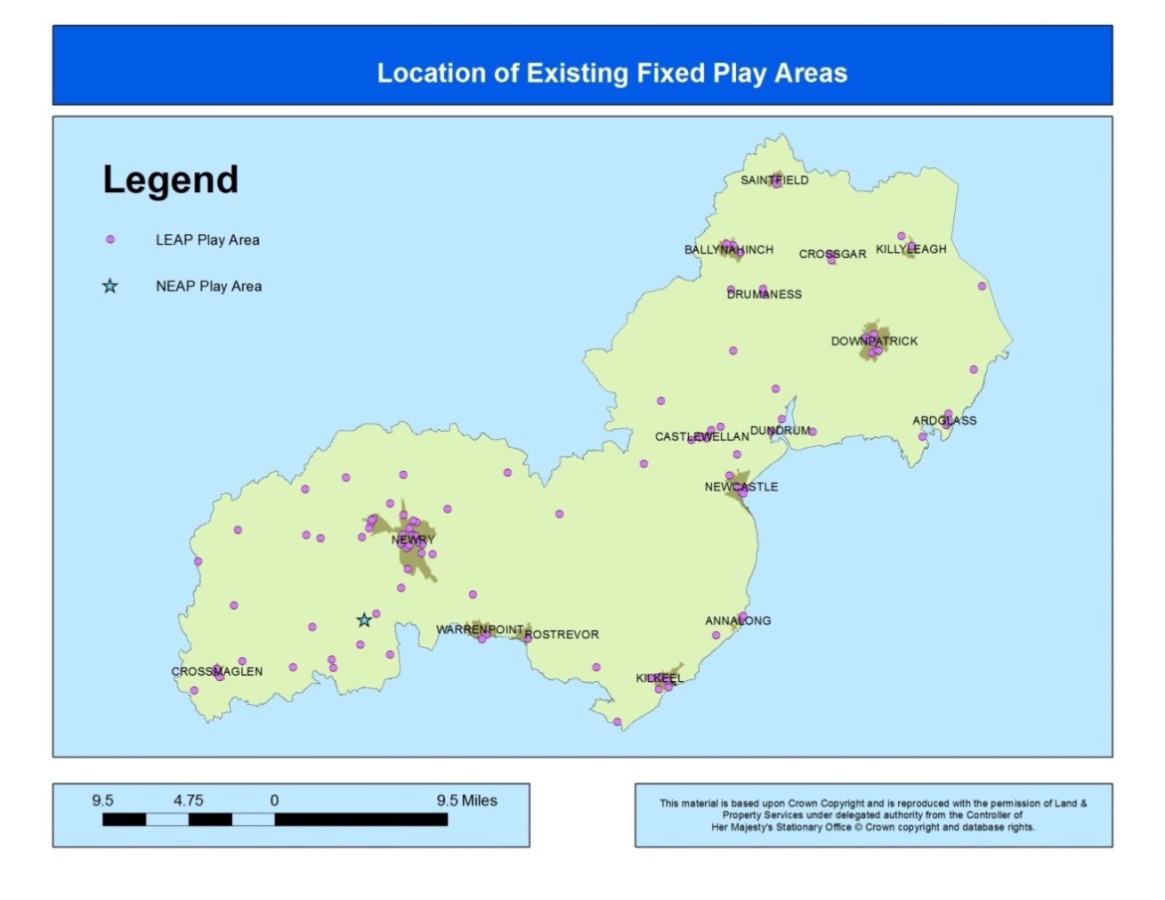
|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Children’s Playing Space | Walking Time | Pedestrian Route | Straight Line Distance |
| LAP | 1 minute | 100 metres | 60 metres |
| LEAP | 5 minutes | 400 metres | 240 metres |
| NEAP | 15 minutes | 1000 metres | 600 metres |

Source: NPFA 2008

6.6 Figure 11 below shows the geographical distribution of LEAPs and NEAPs within the District. There are currently 107 fixed play areas within the District comprising of 106 LEAPs and 1 NEAP located at Slieve Gullion.

6.7 While sharing similar characteristics to LEAP’s, NEAP’s are intended to serve a substantial residential area. They feature a significant range of different types of play equipment mainly for older children but also having opportunities for play for younger children. The FIT recommend that these should be located within 15 minutes walking time of home.

**Figure 11: Map showing the spatial distribution of LEAPs and NEAP in the District**

Source: NMD Councils Sports Facility Strategy

Future Needs

6.8 Again using NISRA population projections it is possible to assess the future needs of the District over the 15 year plan period. Assuming the population grows to 194994 in 2030 the NPFA standard can be applied as shown below:

**Projected 2030 population= 194994**

Hectares recommended by SAS= (194994 ÷1000) x 0.25 hectares = 48.75 ha

Existing Provision (identified by ADAP and BNMAP) = 13.63 ha

**Required Play Space**= 48.75-13.63 = **35.12ha required**

6.9 This is an approximation based on the total projected population for the District. As noted in the previous preparatory paper on Population and Growth (paper 2) almost 40% of the Districts population live in rural areas. The dispersed rural nature of the population has implications for the provision of fixed play areas as there may not be an established need and it is not always a viable option.

6.10 The Council’s Play Strategy outlined the methodology used for identifying need throughout the District. Using the benchmark of 150 children or young people for urban (100 for rural areas) it identified a number of areas where there was a gap in provision- Mayobridge, Ballymartin, Kilmore, Kilclief, Megennis Villas (Newry) and Bannamaghery Villas (Saintfield). In addition it also identified low value play areas that require upgrading, removal or site transformation.

6.11 The LDP process will include the completion of survey work to gather further information on the existing level of open space provision within the District including Casual Play Area provision that contributes to the NPFA standard.

**7.0 Passive Outdoor Recreation & Open Space**

7.1 In addition to playing pitches and children’s play areas there are many opportunities for outdoor recreation that do not contribute to the NPFAs formal outdoor sports standard provision but still provide valuable opportunities for outdoor activity and recreation. The District is renowned for its wealth of opportunities for outdoor recreation. In fact one of the objectives of the Council’s ‘Economic Regeneration and Investment Strategy 2015-2020’ is to become NI’s premier outdoor/ adventure destination. The section below provides further information on some of the informal open spaces within the District.

Walking Routes

7.2 There are a number of Public Rights of Way (PROWs) in District. Public Rights of Way are created through the ‘Access to the Countryside (Northern Ireland) Order 1983. Under this order Councils have a duty ‘to assert, protect and keep open and free from obstruction or encroachment any public right of way, and compile and preserve maps and other records of public rights of way in their District’. (Details of the PROWs are included in appendix 6).

7.3 The Ulster Way is a 625mile (1000km) circular walking route that encircles the six counties of Northern Ireland. Within the District the Ulster Way comprises of five sections:

-The Lecale Way (Strangford to Newcastle) 34 miles (55km)

-Mourne Way (Newcastle to Rostrevor) 26 miles (42km)

-Rostrevor to Newry 10 miles (16km)

-Ring of Gullion Way (Newry to Carnbane) 37 miles (59km) and;

-Newry Canal Way (Carnbane to Portadown) 17.5 miles (28km)

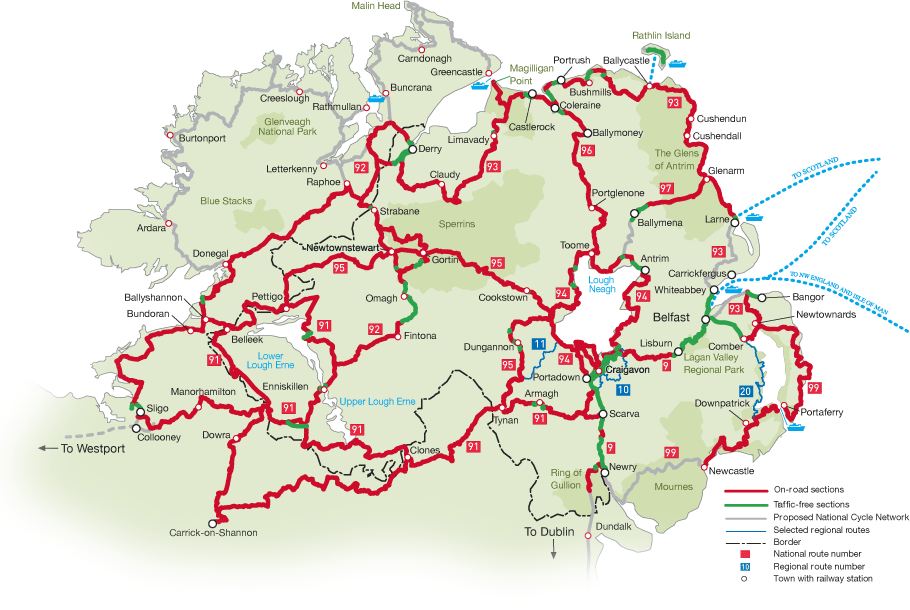
These routes provide important linkages to other town, villages and areas of open space and should be identified and protected in the LDP.

Cycle Ways

-National Cycle Network

7.4 The National Cycle Network is a comprehensive network of safe and attractive cycling routes throughout the UK, developed by the charity Sustrans. In Northern Ireland, the Network extends to more than 800 miles, mostly on quiet country roads and includes 106 miles of traffic free paths.

**Figure 12: Map showing the National Cycle Network**



Source: CycleNI Website

7.5 There are three national cycle network routes that run through the District. The Regional Route (No. 20) runs along the shore of Strangford Lough from Comber to Downpatrick. The National Route 99 runs along the southern shores of Strangford Lough to Newcastle while the National Route 9 follows the Newry Canal Towpath from Portadown to Newry and then veers off towards Bessbrook and Camlough finishing close to Slieve Gullion Courtyard Complex.

7.6 In addition CycleNI has identified over twenty cycle routes in the District ranging from 0-60 miles in length. The District is also a popular Mountain Bike destination with two of NI’s three National Mountain Bike Trails in Rostrevor and Castlewellan. (Rostrevor won multiple Mountain Bike NI Awards in 2016). There is also a regional trail in Castle Ward and a local facility in Tollymore.

Parks and Forests

7.7 There are numerous country parks, forests, parks and gardens throughout the District that are owned by public bodies, including the Council, which offer valuable open space and recreation opportunities for activities such as walking, hiking, running, cycling and mountain biking. (Details of these areas and other assets are included in Appendices 7 & 8).

7.8 Evidence of the quality of some of the Districts open space assets is demonstrated with the various awards they have received. For example Slieve Gullion Forest Park was awarded the Green Flag Award. This is a prestigious award setting an international benchmark standard for the management of parks and green spaces. A Green Flag is a sign to the public that the space boasts the highest possible standards, is beautifully maintained and has excellent facilities.

Coast

7.9 The District has 100miles of coastline and is home to Strangford Lough, Carlingford Lough, a number of beaches and inland waterways including canals, rivers and lakes that all offer water-based activity opportunities including canoeing, kayaking, diving, bird watching, fishing, swimming, boating, yachting, jet skiing, pier jumping, banana boating and wet bouldering.

(Appendix 8 provides further information on the outdoor recreation provision in the District).

**8.0 Existing Indoor Recreation and Leisure**

8.1 Outdoor recreation and leisure facilities are supplemented by indoor facilities. The Council provides a significant number of indoor leisure facilities in the District. It is currently constructing replacement Leisure Centres in Newry and Downpatrick. Both of these centres will include a swimming pool and will be in addition to existing swimming pool facilities in the Kilkeel Leisure Centre. Each of the existing, and proposed, centres provide a number of other facilities including sauna, steam room, sports hall, activities hall, squash courts and fitness suite.

8.2 In addition to the leisure centres the Council also provides a number of indoor leisure and community centres throughout the District that provide a number of facilities including fitness suites, sports/ multi-purpose halls and meeting rooms.

8.3 The facilities provided by the Council are supplemented by those provided by some schools, GAA clubs, Churches and private enterprises such as fitness suites, including private gyms and hotels.

8.4 The Council’s Sports Strategy identified a number of facilities in the District that were considered to be accessible to the community. These included 18 boxing clubs, 13 sports hall sites, 3 squash court facilities and 18 fitness gyms with over 20 fitness stations.

8.5 The District also benefits from a variety of other indoor leisure and recreation facilities including museums, art galleries, children’s indoor play centres and entertainment venues including restaurants, pubs, nightclubs, cinemas, bingo halls and amusements arcades located primarily in the larger settlements across the District.

8.6 -Future Plans

The vision of the Council’s Sports Facility Strategy is the ‘Development of an evidence based assessment of facility need, which will inform and prioritise future investment in and development of, a network of high quality sports facilities, addressing the needs for increased community participation’ in the District.

8.7 The Council in its Sports Strategy identified gaps in the District’s sports provision and noted it has committed to providing:

* + - 36 badminton court sports hall spaces which will meet the projected need until 2037
    - additional water space will be required by 2037 (approximately 212sqm)
    - an all-weather pitch at Saintfield to replace the out-dated shale hockey pitch
    - a tennis bubble to provide all year round tennis at Newry and Newcastle Tennis Clubs
    - each DEA with a sports hub over time

It also identified:

* the need for an athletic facility in and around Downpatrick/ Newcastle
* that yachting and wet sports facilities could be enhanced particularly at Annalong, Newcastle and Dundrum.
* that use of the Newry Canal and disused quarries could also be improved.

**9.0 Open Space within Residential Areas**

9.1 This includes formal and informal play areas for children. While facilities for adults and youths may be located within a reasonable distance of housing areas it is imperative that children’s play areas are immediately adjacent to or within such areas. PPS 8 Open Space, Sport & Outdoor Recreation, Policy OS 2 states that new residential developments for 25 units or more, or on site of one hectare or more, will only be permitted where public open space is provided as an integral part of the development. There are some exceptions to this requirement e.g apartment developments or specialized housing where a reasonable level of private communal open space is provided. Otherwise, where public open space is required, the precise amount, location, type and design of such provision, will be negotiated with applicants having regard to the following:

* A normal expectation will be at least 10% of the total site area;
* For residential development of 300 units or more, or for development sites of 15 hectares or more, a normal expectation will be around 15% of the total site area; and
* Provision at a rate less than 10% of the total site area may be acceptable where the residential development is located within a town or city centre; is close to and would benefit from ease of access to areas of existing public open space; provides accommodation for special groups; or incorporates the ‘Home Zone’ concept.

9.2 For residential developments of 100 units or more, or development sites of 5 hectares or more, an equipped children’s play area will be required as an integral part of the development.

**10.0 Key Findings and Conclusion**

10.1 The purpose of this paper has been to provide an overview of open space provision within the District incorporating pitch provision and children’s play space provision. This paper has assessed the future needs of the Council area over the plan period to 2030. The distribution and accessibility of such provision has also been assessed at a general level.

 Open Space and Recreation is an important part of the Councils vision;

 Importance of recreation and blue and green infrastructure are recognised in the RDS;

 The SPPS sets out a number of strategic objections and policy directions that the LDP must address in relation to open space, sport and outdoor recreation;

 Application of the NPFA standards, as required by the SPPS, demonstrates that at this point, when excluding education grass, the District would require 33 additional playing pitches however if education grass was included it would in fact have a surplus of 45 pitches;

 In terms of future need over the plan period when excluding education grass 62 additional pitches would be required, however when including education grass there would be a surplus of 8 pitches over the period up to 2030;

 Outdoor space in terms of children’s play provision is focused in the urban areas with the City of Newry, all the towns and all but two of the villages (Attical and Mayobridge) benefiting from a fixed children’s play area(s). In addition some small settlements also have a fixed children’s play area. The Council’s play strategy identified a gap in provision in Mayobridge, Ballymartin, Kilmore, Kilclief, Megennis Villas (Newry) and Bannamaghery Villas (Saintfield).

 The District benefits from numerous informal and passive recreation facilities which are well distributed throughout the plan area, in both urban areas and the countryside. These are not included in the outdoor playing space calculations but do provide invaluable recreational spaces;

 The District also benefits from indoor recreational and leisure facilities, many of which are provided by the Council, that are primarily located within the larger settlements.

* Further consideration of the quantum and distribution of children’s play provision will be necessary following survey work to fully ascertain the existing provision in the District.

10.2 These key findings will be used to inform the preparation of the LDP. The LDP will also take account of the Council’s Play Strategy, Sports Facility Strategy and draft Community Plan.

10.3 This paper has been based on a desk top exercise. In developing this baseline evidence further work will be required including detailed survey work and analysis of open space, sport and recreation facilities within the District. Consultation with relevant bodies such as the Education Authority and NI Housing Executive who own or control significant quantities of open space will also be carried out.

10.4 Taking into account the policy approach of the SPPS, it is suggested that key actions of the local development plan at strategy level may include the following:

1. provide policy for the protection and safeguarding for public open space;
2. the needs identified are taken account when formulating both the aims and objectives of the plan and future policy.
3. provide adequate and well-designed open space in new housing developments as an integral part of the development;
4. facilitate where possible large scale leisure proposals on opportunity sites within or near town centres and smaller scale proposal elsewhere within settlement limits;
5. protect environmental open spaces for example parks, gardens and linear open space such as pedestrian and cycle routes/walkways and river corridors that have open space value.

**Appendix 1 – Planning Histories for sites identified in ADAP as proposed amenity space.**

**Downpatrick**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Lands at Pemberton Park | No relevant history |
| Lands at Sampson’s Stone | No relevant history |
| Land within The Meadows Development | R/2006/1045/O Housing development Approved 27/09/2012 |
| R/2006/0424/RM 96 dwellings Approved 16/5/2007 |
| Lands to the North of Ballyhornan Road | No relevant history |
| Lands East of Rathkeltair Road and North of Ardenlee Gardens | R/2012/0513/F 16 Houses Approval 01/07/2014 |
| Lands at the junction of Ballyhornan and Struell Wells Road | No relevant history |

**Ballynahinch**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Windmill Hill | R/2001/1018/F Construction of paths, pedestrian access at Windmill Avenue, a random stone wall and a ramp and steps at Windmill Lane for access to park  Approval 11/11/2004. |
| Adjacent to Ballynahinch River | No relevant history |

**Newcastle**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Adjacent to Ashleigh House | R/2000/0537/O & R/2002/0351/RM Phase 1 Housing. Approved 16/1/2001 and 6/9/2004 respectively. |
| R/2003/1509/RM Phase 2 Housing. Approved 19/1/2005. |
| R/2006/0390/F Phase 3 Housing. Approved 9/4/2010. |

**Ballykinler**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Marian Park | R/2013/0426/F Playground Approval 14/11/2013. |

**Saintfield**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Town Hill | No relevant history |

**Appendix 2 – Sport Facilities in Newry, Mourne and Down**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| An Riocht GAC | Club |
| Ardglass GAC | Club |
| Atticall GAC | Club |
| Ballyholland Harps GAC | Club |
| Ballykinlar GAC | Club |
| Ballymartin GAC | Club |
| Ballynahinch United | Club |
| Castlewellan GAC | Club |
| Bright GAC | Club |
| Bryansford GAC | Club |
| Camloch Craobh Rua Hurling Club | Club |
| Camlough Rovers FC | Club |
| Carrickcruppin GAA | Club |
| Castlewellan GAC | Club |
| Clonduff GAC | Club |
| Craobh Rua Camlocha Hurling Field | Club |
| Crossmaglen Rangers GFC | Club |
| Cullaville GAC | Club |
| Dorsey Emmetts GAC | Club |
| Drumaness GFC | Club |
| Drumgath GAC | Club |
| Dundrum GFC | Club |
| Kilclief Ben Dearg GAC | Club |
| Loughlinisland GAC | Club |
| Mayobridge GAC | Club |
| Mullaghbawn Cuchullains GAC | Club |
| Newry Rugby Football Club | Club |
| Peadar O'Doirnin Park | Club |
| Saval GAA | Club |
| Shamrocks GAA | Club |
| Shane O'Neills GAA | Club |
| Showgrounds Newry | Club |
| Silverbridge Harps GFC | Club |
| St Brigid's Amateur Boxing Club | Club |
| St Bronagh's GAA | Club |
| St John's GAC Drumnaquoile | Club |
| St Killian's GFC | Club |
| St Malachys GFC Youth Club | Club |
| St Mary's GFC Burrren | Club |
| St Michael's GFC Newtownhamilton | Club |
| St Moninna's GAC | Club |
| St Patrick's GAC Cullyhanna | Club |
| St Patrick's GAC Dromintee | Club |
| St Patrick's GAC Saul | Club |
| Teconnaught GAC | Club |
| Warrenpoint GAC | Club |
| Wolfe Tones GAC Killyleagh | Club |
| Castlewellan Football Club | Club |
| Glenn GAC | Club |
| Ballynahinch Rugby Club | Club |
| Cloughreagh Community Centre | Community |
| Longstone Community Hall | Community |
| Annsborough Playing Fields | District Council |
| Carginagh Road Playing Fields | District Council |
| Churchill Park | District Council |
| Crossmaglen Playing Fields | District Council |
| Derrylecka Playing Fields | District Council |
| Donard Park | District Council |
| Down Leisure Centre | District Council |
| Downpatrick Road Football Pitch | District Council |
| Drumalane Football Pitch | District Council |
| Drumaness Mills Football Club | District Council |
| Dublin Road Playing Fields | District Council |
| Dundrum Playing Fields | District Council |
| High Street Soccer Pitch | District Council |
| Kilbroney Park | District Council |
| Kilkeel Sports Centre and Macauley Park | District Council |
| Killyleagh Football Club | District Council |
| Kilmore Playing Fields | District Council |
| Langley Road Playing Fields | District Council |
| Marian Park Ballykinlar | District Council |
| Meadow Football Pitch | District Council |
| Millburn Park | District Council |
| Milltown Playing Fields | District Council |
| Mourne Esplanade Football Pitch | District Council |
| Newry Swimming Pool | District Council |
| Norman Brown Park | District Council |
| Orior Park | District Council |
| Owen Roe Park | District Council |
| Robert Adams Park | District Council |
| Russell Gaelic Union | District Council |
| Strangford Playing Fields | District Council |
| Abbey Christian Brothers Grammar School | Education |
| Anamar Primary School | Education |
| Annalong Primary School | Education |
| Assumption Grammar School | Education |
| Castlewellan Primary School | Education |
| De La Salle Secondary School | Education |
| Down High School | Education |
| Downpatrick Primary School | Education |
| Downshire Primary School | Education |
| High School Ballynahinch | Education |
| Holy Family Primary School Downpatrick | Education |
| Kilkeel High School | Education |
| Killowen Primary School Newry | Education |
| Newtownhamilton High School | Education |
| Sacred Heart Grammar School | Education |
| Shimna Integrated College | Education |
| St Colman's College | Education |
| St Colman's High School Ballynahinch | Education |
| St Colman''s Primary School Saval | Education |
| St Colmcilles High School | Education |
| St Columbans College | Education |
| St Joseph's Boys High School Newry | Education |
| St Joseph's High School Newry | Education |
| St Joseph's Primary School Bessbrook | Education |
| St Joseph's Primary School Crossgar | Education |
| St Joseph's Primary School Killough | Education |
| St Louis Grammar School Newry | Education |
| St Malachy's High School Castlewellan | Education |
| St Malachy's Primary School Carnagat | Education |
| St Malachy's Primary School Castlewellan | Education |
| St Malachys Primary School Downpatrick | Education |
| St Marks High School Warrenpoint | Education |
| St Mary's High School Downpatrick | Education |
| St Marys Primary School Annalong | Education |
| St Mary's Primary School Mullaghbawn | Education |
| St Mary's Primary School Newcastle | Education |
| St Mary's Primary School Saintfield | Education |
| St Nicholas Primary School Ardglass | Education |
| St Patrick's Grammar School Downpatrick | Education |
| St Patrick's Primary School Castlewellan | Education |
| St Patrick''s Primary School Crossmaglen | Education |
| St Patrick's Primary School Newry | Education |
| St Paul's High School Newry | Education |
| Tyrella Primary School Downpatrick | Education |
| Windsor Hill Primary School | Education |

Source: <https://www.opendatani.gov.uk>

**Appendix 3**

**Open Space Identified in BNMAP**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Settlement** | **Outdoor Sport** | **Children’s Play Area** | **Total** |
| Newry City | 36.23 | 4.97 | 41.2 |
| Crossmaglen | 5.28 | 0.13 | 5.41 |
| Kilkeel | 7.73 | 0.33 | 8.06 |
| Newtownhamilton | 3.94 | 0.06 | 4 |
| Warrenpoint | 6.85 | 0.36 | 7.21 |
| Annalong | 1.95 | 0.53 | 2.48 |
| Attical | 1.12 | 0 | 1.12 |
| Ballyholland | 2.65 | 0.21 | 2.86 |
| Ballymartin | 1.12 | 0.42 | 1.54 |
| Bessbrook | 2.22 | 1.5 | 3.72 |
| Burren | 6.43 | 0.63 | 7.06 |
| Camlough | 5.02 | 0.31 | 5.33 |
| Cullyhanna | 1.6 | 0.05 | 1.65 |
| Forkhill | 2.01 | 0.1 | 2.11 |
| Hilltown | 2.86 | 0.25 | 3.11 |
| Jonesborough | 0.26 | 0.04 | 0.3 |
| Mayobridge | 3 | 0.46 | 3.46 |
| Meigh | 1.55 | 0.17 | 1.72 |
| Mullaghbane | 2.9 | 0.04 | 2.94 |
| Rostrevor | 4.14 | 1.12 | 5.26 |
| **TOTAL** | **98.86** | **11.68** | **110.54** |

Ownership: Mostly NMDC but also GAC/GFC/GAA/ CCMS/SELB/NIHE/CHURCH/PRIVATE

**Active Amenity Open Space and Recreation Provision Identified in ADAP**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Settlement** | **Outdoor Sport**  **(DDC owned)** | **Children’s Playground (DDC owned)** | **Total (DDC Owned)** | **Outdoor Sport**  **(Private)** | **Total Outdoor Sport \*** |
| Downpatrick | 10.67 | 0.43 | 11.1 | 10.28 | 20.95 |
| Ballynahinch | 7.05 | 0.2 | 7.25 | 2.35 | 9.4 |
| Newcastle | 12.93 | 0.27 | 13.2 | 0.12 | 13.05 |
| Annsborough | 3.27 | 0 | 3.27 | 0 | 3.27 |
| Ardglass | 2.36 | 0.14 | 2.5 | 0 | 2.36 |
| Ballykinler | 0.97 | 0 | 0.97 | 1.96 | 2.93 |
| Castlewellan | 4.23 | 0.24 | 4.47 | 1.84 | 6.07 |
| Crossgar | 4.08 | 0.17 | 4.25 | 0.73 | 4.81 |
| Drumaness | 1.98 | 0.13 | 2.11 | 6.8 | 8.78 |
| Dundrum | 1.70 | 0.05 | 1.75 | 3.68 | 5.38 |
| Killough | 2.22 | 0.01 | 2.23 | 0 | 2.22 |
| Killyleagh | 3.71 | 0.05 | 3.76 | 4.89 | 8.6 |
| Saintfield | 1.3 | 0.05 | 1.35 | 1.98 | 3.28 |
| Shrigley | 0 | 0.07 | 0.07 | 0 | 0 |
| Strangford | 1.81 | 0.10 | 1.91 | 0 | 1.81 |
| The Spa | 0 | 0.04 | 0.04 | 0 | 0 |
| Annacloy | 2.82 | 0 | 2.82 | 0 | 2.82 |
| **TOTAL** | **61.1** | **1.95** | **63.05** | **34.63** | **95.73** |

\*Total Outdoor Sport includes land/ facilities in the legacy Down District Councils ownership and private ownership

**Appendix 4**

**Fixed Play Parks Newry, Mourne and Down**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Newry, Mourne & Down Council Fixed Play Parks** | | |
| **Name** | **Location** | **DEA** |
| Annalong Cornmill Play Park | Annalong | Mournes |
| Mona View Play Area/Grass Area | Annalong | Mournes |
| Annsborough Play Park | Annsborough | Slieve Croob |
| Ardglass Playing Fields | Ardglass | Downpatrick |
| Quay Street | Ardglass | Downpatrick |
| Seaview | Ardglass | Downpatrick |
| Innisfree Park Play Area/Grass Pitch/Bitmac Area | Ballyholland | Crotlieve |
| Bishopscourt | Ballyhornan | Downpatrick |
| Ballykinlar Play Park | Ballykinlar | Slieve Croob |
| Pious Hill Play Area | Ballymartin | Mournes |
| Ballynahinch Centre | Ballynahinch | Rowallane |
| Hillfoot Junior Play Park | Ballynahinch | Rowallane |
| Hillfoot Toddler Play Park | Ballynahinch | Rowallane |
| Langley Road Play Park | Ballynahinch | Rowallane |
| Belleek Village Green/Play Area | Belleek | Slieve Gullion |
| Drumilly Play Area (Oliver Plunkett Park) | Belleek | Slieve Gullion |
| Carrickvista Recreation Area (Grass Area/Kickabout) | Bessbrook | Slieve Gullion |
| Charlemont Square Play Area/Grass Area | Bessbrook | Slieve Gullion |
| College Square Play Park | Bessbrook | Slieve Gullion |
| Father Cullen Park Play Area | Bessbrook | Slieve Gullion |
| Pond Field Play Park | Bessbrook | Slieve Gullion |
| Burren Village Green/Play Area | Burren | Crotlieve |
| Burrenbridge Recreation Area | Burrenbridge | Mournes |
| Oliver Plunkett Park/Quarter Road Play Area | Camlough | Slieve Gullion |
| Burrenbridge Road | Castlewellan | Mournes |
| Bunkers Hill Play Park | Castlewellan | Slieve Croob |
| Mourne Gardens Play Park | Castlewellan | Slieve Croob |
| Clough Play Park | Clough | Slieve Croob |
| Lislea Drive Play Park | Crossgar | Rowallane |
| Westlands Play Park | Crossgar | Rowallane |
| Ardross Park Play Area/Grass Area/Kickabout/Basketball Court | Crossmaglen | Slieve Gullion |
| Creggan Play Area | Crossmaglen | Slieve Gullion |
| Culloville Play Park | Crossmaglen | Slieve Gullion |
| Lismore Park Play Area | Crossmaglen | Slieve Gullion |
| Rathview Park Play Area | Crossmaglen | Slieve Gullion |
| Cullyhanna Play Area (St Patricks Park) | Cullyhanna | Slieve Gullion |
| Ardmore | Downpatrick | Downpatrick |
| Ballymote Centre | Downpatrick | Downpatrick |
| Bridge Street | Downpatrick | Downpatrick |
| Knocknashinna | Downpatrick | Downpatrick |
| Marion Park | Downpatrick | Downpatrick |
| Model Farm | Downpatrick | Downpatrick |
| Saul GAC | Downpatrick | Downpatrick |
| St Dympnas | Downpatrick | Downpatrick |
| Upper Scotch Street | Downpatrick | Downpatrick |
| Cumber Road Play Park | Drumaness | Slieve Croob |
| Dan Rice Hall | Drumaness | Slieve Croob |
| Drumaroad Play Park | Drumaroad | Slieve Croob |
| Barnmeen Play Area | Drumgath | Crotlieve |
| Inner Bay Play Park | Dundrum | Slieve Croob |
| St Donard's Walk | Dundrum | Slieve Croob |
| Bog Road Play Area | Forkhill | Slieve Gullion |
| Drumintee Play Area | Forkhill | Slieve Gullion |
| Fairview Park Play Area | Forkhill | Slieve Gullion |
| Lurganare Play Area | Glen | Crotlieve |
| Spelga Park Play Area | Hilltown | Crotlieve |
| Jonesborough Play Area | Jonesborough | Slieve Gullion |
| Kilcoo GAC | Kilcoo | Mournes |
| Ballymaderphy Play Area | Kilkeel | Mournes |
| Bencrom Play Area | Kilkeel | Mournes |
| Cranfield Play Park | Kilkeel | Mournes |
| Hillside Drive Grass Area/Play Area | Kilkeel | Mournes |
| Kitty's Road Play Area | Kilkeel | Mournes |
| Mourne Esplanade Play Area | Kilkeel | Mournes |
| Rooney Road Play Area | Kilkeel | Mournes |
| Scrogg Road Play Area | Kilkeel | Mournes |
| Killough Playing Fields | Killough | Downpatrick |
| Bridge Centre | Killyleagh | Rowallane |
| Leitrim Play Park | Leitrim | Slieve Croob |
| Maghera Play Park | Maghera | Mournes |
| Meigh Play Park | Meigh | Slieve Gullion |
| Conway Park Play Park | Mullaghbawn | Slieve Gullion |
| Backfield Play Park | Newcastle | Mournes |
| Castle Park | Newcastle | Mournes |
| Downs Road Play Park | Newcastle | Mournes |
| Islands Park | Newcastle | Mournes |
| Newcastle Centre | Newcastle | Mournes |
| Carnbane Gardens Play Area | Newry | Newry |
| Carrivemaclone Play Area | Newry | Newry |
| Derrybeg Play Area/Kickabout | Newry | Newry |
| Emmett Street Play Area | Newry | Newry |
| Heather Park Play Park | Newry | Newry |
| Latt Crescent Play Area | Newry | Newry |
| Lisdrumgullion Play Park | Newry | Newry |
| Loanda House/Barcroft Play Park | Newry | Newry |
| Martin's Lane | Newry | Newry |
| Mourneview Park Play Area | Newry | Newry |
| Peter McParland/Barley Lane Park Play Area | Newry | Newry |
| Raymond McCreesh/Patrick Street Play Park | Newry | Newry |
| Shandon Park Play Area | Newry | Newry |
| Springhill Drive Play Area | Newry | Newry |
| Windmill Road Play Area | Newry | Newry |
| Latt Villas Play Area | Newry | Slieve Gullion |
| Newtowncloughoge Play Area | Newry | Slieve Gullion |
| Altnamackin/Fane Grove Play Park | Newtownhamilton | Slieve Gullion |
| Dungormley Play Area | Newtownhamilton | Slieve Gullion |
| Kilbroney Park Play Area | Rostrevor | Crotlieve |
| Lislane Play Park | Saintfield | Rowallane |
| Newline Play Park | Saintfield | Rowallane |
| Granite View Play Area | Saval | Crotlieve |
| Shrigley Play Park | Shrigley | Rowallane |
| Lisnalee Play Area | South Armagh | Slieve Gullion |
| Slieve Gullion Play Park | South Armagh | Slieve Gullion |
| Tullydonnell Play Area | South Armagh | Slieve Gullion |
| Hillside Play Park | Spa | Slieve Croob |
| The Links | Strangford | Downpatrick |
| Clonallon Park Play Park | Warrenpoint | Crotlieve |
| Ringmacilroy Play Park | Warrenpoint | Crotlieve |
| Warrenpoint Park Play Area | Warrenpoint | Crotlieve |
| Whitecross Play Park | Whitecross | Slieve Gullion |
| **Down Legacy Total 46** | | |
| **Newry & Mourne Legacy Total 64** | | |
| **17 No. Play Park Sites with no equipment Not Listed** | | |

Source: NMD Council

**Appendix 5**

**Settlements Fixed Play Provision**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **SETTLEMENTS** | **FIXED PLAY AREA PROVISION** |
| **CITY** |  |
| Newry |  |
| **TOWNS** |  |
| Crossmaglen |  |
| Kilkeel |  |
| Newtownhamilton |  |
| Warrenpoint/ Burren |  |
| Downpatrick |  |
| Ballynahinch |  |
| Newcastle |  |
| **VILLAGES** |  |
| Annalong |  |
| Attical |  |
| Ballyholland |  |
| Ballymartin |  |
| Bessbrook |  |
| Camlough |  |
| Cullyhanna |  |
| Forkhill |  |
| Hilltown |  |
| Jonesborough |  |
| Mayobridge |  |
| Meigh |  |
| Mullaghbane/ Mullaghbawn |  |
| Rostrevor |  |
| Annsborough |  |
| Ardglass |  |
| Ballykinler |  |
| Castlewellan |  |
| Clough |  |
| Crossgar |  |
| Drumaness |  |
| Dundrum |  |
| Killough |  |
| Killyeagh |  |
| Saintfield |  |
| Shrigley |  |
| Strangford |  |
| The Spa |  |
| **SMALL SETTLEMENTS** |  |
| Altnamacken/ Cortamlet |  |
| Ballymadeerfy |  |
| Ballmoyer |  |
| Barmeen |  |
| Belleek |  |
| Creggan |  |
| Cullaville |  |
| Dorsey |  |
| Drumintee |  |
| Dunnaval/ Ballyardle |  |
| Glassdrumman (Co. Armagh) |  |
| Glassdrumman/ Mullartown |  |
| Glen |  |
| Greencastle |  |
| Jerrettspass |  |
| Killeen |  |
| Killowen |  |
| Lislea |  |
| Longstone |  |
| Lurganare |  |
| Mullaghglass |  |
| Newtowncloghoge |  |
| Sheeptown |  |
| Silverbridge |  |
| Tullyherron |  |
| Whitecross |  |
| Annacloy |  |
| Ballyalton |  |
| Ballyhornan |  |
| Ballynoe |  |
| Bryansford |  |
| Burrenbridge |  |
| Carrickinab |  |
| Chapeltown |  |
| Clonvaraghan |  |
| Coney Island |  |
| Darragh Cross |  |
| Derryboye |  |
| Drumaghlis |  |
| Drumaroad |  |
| Kilclief |  |
| Kilcoo |  |
| Kilmore |  |
| Loughinisland |  |
| Maghera |  |
| Raholp |  |
| Saul |  |
| Seaforde |  |

Source: Playboard NI

**Appendix 6**

**Public Rights of Ways in Newry, Mourne and Down**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Description of PROW** | **Length (metres)** | **Status** |
|  |  |  |
| Sampson's Lane, Downpatrick | 600 | PROW |
| Park Lane/Saul Lane, Harry's Loney | 650 | PROW |
| Belfast Road to Jane's Shore, Downpatrick | 950 | Public path |
| English Street to Market Street, Downpatrick | 110 | PROW |
| Net Walk and Shore Loney, Killyleagh | 900 | PROW |
| The Broadmeadows, Killyleagh | 600 | PROW |
| Green Lane, Raleagh | 1200 | Bridle path |
| Chapel Pad, Drumaness | 480 | PROW |
| St Marys Primary School, Killyleagh | 275 | Footpath |
| Harmoney Hill, Drumaness | 1150 | Bridle way |
| Riverside Walk, Ballynahinch | 600 | Footpath |
| Tannaghmore Rd to Newcastle Rd, Loughinisland | 450 | Footpath |
| Cumran Lane, Clough | 1750 | Footpath |
| Ballywillwill Rd to Clonvaraghan Road | 950 | Bridle path |
| Clonvaraghan Road to Slievehanny Road, Castlewellan | 1490 | Bridle Path |
| Drumsnade Road to Tannaghmore Road, Ballynahinch | 3000 | Bridle Path |
| Castlewellan Road to the Square, Clough | 500 | Footpath |
| Magheratimpany Rd to Newcastle Rd, Drumaness | 200 | Footpath |
| Ringhaddy Road to Quarterland Road, Killinchy |  | Footpath |
| Carrownacaw Road to the Ballyculter Rd, Raholp | 720 | PROW |
| Castle Flannen, Kilclief | 80 | PROW |
| Bishopscourt Rd to Glebe Rd | 900 | PROW |
| Ballyhornan to St Patrick's Well, Sheepland | 4100 | PROW |
| Killough to St John's Point | 2950 | PROW |
| Lough Money to Ballystokes | 1450 | PROW |
| Ballyalton to Ballysugagh | 1700 | PROW |
| The Shore to Raholp | 1150 | PROW |
| Raholp to Lough Money | 1400 | Bridle path |
| Castle Lane, Ardglass | 130 | Footpath |
| Downpatrick Rd to Castle Street, Strangford | 1400 | Public path |
| Strangford Road to Porthamish, Ballyhornan | 645 | Footpath |
| Sheepland Road to Ballyhornan to Sheepland PROW | 40 | Footpath |
| Drumroe Road to Churchtown Road, Strangford | 570 | Carriage way |
| Bath Lane, Newcastle | 90 | PROW |
| Glen River, Newcastle | 4600 | PROW |
| King Street to South Promenade, Newcastle | 44 | Footpath |
| Trassey Track | 6840 | PROW |
| Kilcoo Graveyard | 350 | PROW |
| Magee's Walk, Castlewellan | 100 | PROW |
| Rock Lane, Castlewellan | 1100 | PROW |
| Cow Lane, Castlewellan | 850 | PROW |
| Caskell Lane, Castlewellan | 750 | PROW |
| Castle Lane, Dundrum | 550 | PROW |
| Back Lane, Dundrum | 400 | PROW |
| Dam Walk, Dundrum | 950 | PROW |
| Tipperary Lane, Newcastle | 700 | Footpath |
| Wild Forest Lane, Newcastle | 1600 | Bridle path |
| McSherry's Lane, Castlewellan | 1850 | Bridle path |
| Manse Lane, Dundrum | 200 | PROW |
| Drumee Cemetary | 1830 | Bridle path |
| Drumee Road to Carnacaville Road Laneway, Castlewellan | 2000 | Bridle path |
| Drumree Cemetary to Drumee Carnacaville Road | 470 | Bridle path |
| Lower Burren Road to Newcastle Road PROW | 500 | Footpath |
| Carnacaville Road to Church Hill Road, Newcastle | 580 | Bridle path |
| Barbican Farm to Wild Forest Lane | 600 | Bridle path |
| Tullybrannigan Rd to Tullybrannigan Rd Loop | 1080 | Bridle path |
| Ballylough to Annsborough Primary School | 600 | Bridle path |
| Kilmegan Road to the Priests Road | 820 | Bridle path |
| Wateresk Road to Kilmegan Road | 1200 | Bridle path |
| Ballybannon Road to Waterest Road | 1300 | Bridle path |
| Drumee Road to Dundrinne Road Upper | 750 | Bridle path |
| Dundrinne Road to Brook Cottage | 550 | Bridle path |
| Green Lane, Burrenreagh, Castlewellan | 550 | Footpath |
| Macleans Close, Bryansford Road, Tullyree | 600 | Footpath |
| Dundrinne Road to Ballybannon Road, Castlewellan | 2000 | Bridle path |
| Drumee PROW to Newcastle Road, Newcastle | 150 | Footpath |
| Byransford Road to Tullyree Road | 1600 | Footpath |
| Primrose Lane, Newcastle | 60 | Footpath |
| Porters Lane, Newcastle | 60 | Footpath |
| Dromara Road to Castle Hill, Dundrum (Quarry Lane) |  | Footpath |
| Beach Avenue, Newcastle | 57 | Carriage way |
| Mound of Down to the Belfast Road, Downpatrick | 240 | Footpath |
| Adders Loanain -Millvale Road to join the Moat Pad, Ballyward | 1250 | Footpath |
| Flush Road to Eelwire Road, Ballyward | 950 | By-way (foot, horse and vehicle) |
| Glen Loanin-Moneyanabane to Drumboy Road, Dromara | 1100 | Bridle path |
| Darby's Loanin-Moneyanabane Road to Castlewellan Road, Dromara | 1100 | Bridle path |
| Scotch Rock Pad-Slievenaboley Road to Rathfriland Road, Ballyward | 2290 | Footpath |
| Windy Gap Pad-Slievenaboley to Legananny Road, Ballyward | 1500 | Footpath |
| Bellman’s Loanan from Windsor ave to upper Damolly Road, Newry | 210 | footpath |
| Moygannon Road to foreshore at Dobbin Point, Warrenpoint | 200 | Footpath |
| Yelverton Lane, from Killowen Road to foreshore, Ballyedmond, Rostrevor | 665 | Footpath |
| Fairy Glen, from Newtown Road to Forestbrook Road, Rostrevor | 700 | Footpath |
| Manus Lane, Rooney Road to Harbour Road, Kilkeel | 160 | Footpath |
| Cloughmore Stone to Shore Road, Rostrevor, via Fiddlers’ Green | 1700 | Footpath |
| Dog Kennel Lane, Kennard Villas to Upper Damolly Road, Newry | 800 | Footpath |
| Rathfriland Road to Crieve Road, Newry (Upper Lane) | 600 | Footpath |
| Orchard Hill to Summerhill, Warrenpoint | 50 | Footpath |
| Rathfriland Road to Crieve Road, Newry (Lower Lane) | 600 | Footpath |
| Newtown Road to Forestbrook Road, Rostrevor | 160 | Footpath |
| “Crilly’s Loanan”, Father Cullen Park to Camlough Road, Bessbrook | 800 | Footpath |
| Kilkeel Road to junction of Baan and Rocky Rivers |  | footpath |
| Mayo Road to Chapel Hill Road, Mayobridge | 400 | Footpath |
| Millvale Road Bessbrook to Craigmore Road Newry | 1000 | Footpath |
| Canal Towpath, Newry, from Canal Quay to Gambles Road | 10350 | Footpath |
| Drumlough Road to Drumlough School Road, Rathfriland | 1200 | Footpath |
| Killowen Road to the foreshore, between No. 1 and No. 5 Killowen Road, Rostrevor | 55 | Footpath |
| Old Warrenpoint Road to Dual Carriageway, Newry | 60 | Footpath |
| Glen Loanan, Ballymartin | 240 | Footpath |
| Ballard Road to Slieve Gullion South Cairn | 3500 | Footpath |
| Shean Road to Urney Graveyard, Forkhill | 800 | Footpath |
| Ballynabee Road, Camlough to Father Cullen Park, Bessbrook | 600 | Footpath |
| Ameracam Lane to Fair Road, Cranfield | 1330 | Footpath |
| Ballymoyer Forest | 400 | Footpath |
| Warrenpoint Road to Foreshore, adjacent to Rosses Quay, Rostrevor | 105 | Carriageway |
| Hickey’s Lane, Armagh Road to Canal towpath, Newry | 400 | Footpath |
| Ulster Avenue to the Harbour, Annalong | 310 | Footpath |
| 100m South of No. 80 Shore Road, Rostrevor | 40 | Footpath |
| Killowen Road to the foreshore adjacent to No. 9 Killowen Road | 70 | Footpath |
| “Old Schoolhouse Lane”, Killowen Road to Killowen Old Road, Ballyedmond, Rostrevor | 170 | Footpath |
| Killowen Road to foreshore, Rostrevor at Killowen Cottage, adjacent to 67 Killowen Road, Rostrevor | 230 | Footpath |
| Killowen Road to the foreshore, adjacent to Killowen Outdoor Education Centre, Rostrevor | 105 | Footpath |
| Ballinran Road to Aughnahoory Road, Kilkeel | 1500 | Bridleway |
| Chapel Road to Seafin Road, Meigh | 100 | Carriageway |
| “Hip Road”, Carewamean Road, Carrickbroad to border with the Irish Republic | 200 | Footpath |
| Hanna’s Close, Kilkeel | 1000 | Footpath |
| Kilkeel Road to the foreshore, Moneydarragh Beg, Ballymartin | 100 | Footpath |
| Camlough River to Father Cullen Park, Bessbrook | 405 | footpath |
| Concession rd to the Border with the Republic of Ireland | 240 | Carriageway |
| Greenpark Road to Drumsesk Road, Rostrevor | 550 | Footpath |
| Drumsesk Road, Rostrevor to Moygannon Road, Warrenpoint | 1500 | Footpath |
| Hillhead Road to Flagstaff Road, Newry | 600 | Footpath |
| Millvale Road at Beetle row to Derrymore Road | 400 | Footpath |
| Millvale Road at the Old Mill to Derrymore Road | 700 | Footpath |
| Shannagh drive to Coastal path, Annalong | 100 | footpath |
| Kileavy Old Church (Ballintemple Road) to Saint Moninna,s Well | 575 | footpath |

Source: NMD Council

**Appendix 7**

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| **FORESTS** | OWNERSHIP |
| Annalong Forest | Forestry Service NI |
| Ballymoyer Forest | Forestry Service NI |
| Bohill Forest | Forestry Service NI |
| Camlough Forest | Forestry Service NI |
| Castle Ward Forest | Forestry Service NI |
| -Castlewellan Forest | Forestry Service NI |
| Cold Brae Forest | Forestry Service NI |
| -Daisy Hill Wood LNR | Forestry Service NI |
| Donard Forest | Forestry Service NI |
| Drumkeeragh Forest | Forestry Service NI |
| Fathom Forest | Forestry Service NI |
| Hollymount Forest | Forestry Service NI |
| Mourne Forest | Forestry Service NI |
| Narrow Water Forest | Forestry Service NI |
| Rostrevor Forest | Forestry Service NI |
| Tollymore Forest | Forestry Service NI |
| Slieve Gullion Forest | Forestry Service NI |

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| **WOODLANDS** | **OWNERSHIP** |
| Nut Wood | Woodland Trust |
| Glass Water Wood | Woodland Trust |
| Pond Water and Compass Hill | Woodland Trust |
| Windmill Hill Wood | Woodland Trust |
| Carnbane Wood | Woodland Trust |
| Daisy Hill Wood | Woodland Trust |

Source: Woodland Trust Website <http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/map/47%20Ballytrim%20Road,%20Killyleagh,%20BT30%209/54.40200599031809/-5.70200252532959/10/>

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| --- | --- |
| **FOREST/ COUNTRY PARKS/ GARDENS** | **OWNERSHIP** |
| Castle Ward | National Trust |
| Castlewellan Forest Park | Forestry Service NI |
| Delamont Country Park | Forestry Service NI |
| Derrymore House | National Trust |
| Kilbroney Forest Park | NMDDC |
| Rowallane Garden | National Trust |
| Slieve Gullion Forest Park | Forestry Service NI |
| Tollymore Forest Park | Forestry Service NI |

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| **OTHER RESOURCES** | **OWNERSHIP** |
| Murlough National Nature Reserve | National Trust |
| Newry Canal Tow Path | NMDDC & ABCBC |
| The Mournes | Various |
| Silent Valley | NIW |
| Strangford Lough | Various |
| Carlingford Lough | Various |

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| **BEACHES** |
| Cranfield Beach, Kilkeel |
| Murlough Beach |
| Newcastle Beach |
| Tyrella |
| Warrenpoint |

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| **GOLF COURSES and DRIVING RANGES** |
| Ardglass Golf Club |
| Ashfield Golf Club, Cullyhanna |
| Bright Castle Golf Club, Downpatrick |
| Cloverhill Golf Club, Mullaghbawn |
| Crossgar Golf Club |
| Downpatrick Golf Centre |
| Golf Centre, Newcastle |
| Kilkeel Golf Club |
| Mayobridge Golf Club |
| Mourne Golf Club, Newcastle |
| Newry Golf Inn Academy |
| Royal County Down Golf Club, Newcastle |
| Royal County Down Ladies Golf Club, Newcastle |
| St Patricks Golf Club, Downpatrick |
| Spa Golf Club, Ballynahinch |
| Warrenpoint Golf Club |

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| **ACTIVITY CENTRES- PRIVATE OWNERSHIP** |
| Acton Adventures, Poyntzpass |
| Bluelough Adventure Centre, Castlewellan Forest Park |
| Clearsky Adventure Centre, Castleward Estate |
| East Coast Outdoor Activity Centre, Rostrevor |
| Flagstaff Adventure, Newry |
| Greenhill YMCA, Newcastle |
| Life Adventure Centre, Castlewellan |
| Peak Discovery, Tollymore, Newcastle |
| Rock and Ride Outdoors, Kilcoo |
| Tollymore National Outdoor Centre, Newcastle |
| 26 Extreme, Warrenpoint |

**Appendix 8**

**Outdoor Activities and Facilities in the District**

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| **OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES** | **FACILITY** |
| **Activity Centres** | Tollymore National Outdoor Centre, Newcastle; East Coast Outdoor Activity Centre, Rostrevor,; Acton Adventures, Poyntzpass; Greenhill YMCA, Newcastle; Peak Discovery, Tollymore, Newcastle; Life Adventure Centre, Castlewellan; Rock and Ride, Kilcoo; Flagstaff Adventures, Newry; Bluelough Adventure Centre, Castwellan Forest Park; 26 Extreme, Warrenpoint; Clearsky Adventure Centre, Castleward Estate |
| **Angling** | There are numerous locations for angling within the District with Strangford and Carlingford Loughs and its many rivers and lakes. |
| **Athletics** | There is a 6 lane athletics track with field events at St Colman’s College, Newry |
| **Bowling** | There are 12 outdoor bowls club sites in the District. |
| **Canoeing** | Two of NI’s nine recognised Canoe Trails are located in the District: Strangford Lough and South East Coast Trails |
| **Cricket** | There are four cricket club grounds located in the District: Dundrum, Downpatrick, Saintfield and Drumaness Cricket Clubs. |
| **Cycling** | CycleNI has identified over twenty cycle routes in the District ranging from 0-60 miles in length. The District is also a popular Mountain Bike destination with two of NI’s three National Mountain Bike Trails in Rostrevor (Multiple Mountain Bike NI award winner in 2016) and Castlewellan. There is also a regional trail in Castle Ward and a local facility in Tollymore. |
| **GAA** | There are 45 GAA Clubs located in the District. |
| **Golf** | There are 16 golf courses/ driving range facilities within the District including Royal County Down (Mens and Ladies), Kilkeel, St Patricks, Downpatrick, The Spa, Crossgar, Ardglass, Bright Castle, Warrenpoint, Mayobridge, Ashfield, Cloverhill, Mourne, Golf Centre, Newcastle, Downpatrick Golf Centre and The Golf Inn, Newry. |
| **Hockey** | There are a number of men and womens hockey teams that train in the District including Ballynahinch, Down, Saintfield, Kilkeel and Newry |
| **Horse riding** | There are many equestrian centres in the district which provide opportunities for all abilities. They include: Mourne Trail Riding Centre; Lessans Riding Stables, Saintfield; Gamer keepers Lodge Equestrian Centre, Kilkeel; Western Style Horse Riding, Hilltown; Mount Pleasant Trekking Centre& Mount Pleasant Equestrian Centre, Castlewellan. There is also a racecourse in Downpatrick. |
| **Motorsports** | There are 4 motor sports facilities in the District |
| **Rugby** | There are rugby clubs in Ballynahinch and Newry. A number of schools also offer rugby including High School Ballynahinch; Down High School, Downpatrick; Kilkeel High School and St Colman’s College, Newry |
| **Soccer** | There are approximately 42 soccer clubs in the District. |
| **Swimming** | Tropicana Outdoor Pool in Newcastle is open July and August. |
| **Tennis** | There are a number of tennis club sites in the District including: Downpatrick Tennis Club (Down High School), Newcastle Tennis Club, Warrenpoint Tennis Club, Newry Tennis Club, Mourne Esplanade, Kilkeel, Kilbroney Park, Rostrevor and Annalong Tennis Court   |  | | --- | |  | |
| **Watersports** | There are a number of watersport opportunities in the District with Strangford and Carlingford Loughs, inland rivers and lakes. The Council’s Sports Strategy identified 10 sites that offer water sports in the District. |

\*This list is not exhaustive but indicates the main activities available within the Newry, Mourne and Down District Council Area.