



Comhairle Ceantair  
an Iúir, Mhúrn  
agus an Dúin

**Newry, Mourne  
and Down**  
District Council

**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:

- i. The nature and benefits of open space;**
- ii. The regional planning policy context for open space;**
- iii. Government strategies relating to open space and recreation;**
- iv. The role of the local development plan in the protection and provision of open space**
- v. An overview of the open space and recreational assets within the District**
- vi. An analysis of outdoor space and children's play provision within the District and future need over the plan period.**

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 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**

- 1.3 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."*

- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 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**

<p><b>Growing the Economy</b></p>	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumer’s expenditure on sport in 2008 was £688m. This represents an increase of 54% over the 2004 figure</li> <li>• Sport and associated industries are estimated to employ in excess of 17,900 people corresponding to 2.3% of total employment in the region</li> <li>• 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%).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Public Health &amp; Well Being</b></p>	<p>Sport can play a vital role in improving public health and wellbeing. Evidence suggest regular participation in sport and physical activity can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribute to the reduction of illnesses; such as diabetes, some types of cancer, osteoporosis, and cardiovascular disease</li> <li>• Promotes mental well-being; having a positive effect on anxiety, depression, mood and emotion and self-esteem</li> <li>• 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”.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Cohesion &amp; Social Inclusion</b></p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p><b>Improving Northern Ireland’s Image</b></p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>

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

## **Green Infrastructure**

- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 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 Engagement<sup>1</sup> 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 week <sup>2</sup>	49	3,349	47	3,286
Member of a sports club	23	3,349	21	3,286

Source: Continuous Household Survey

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

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

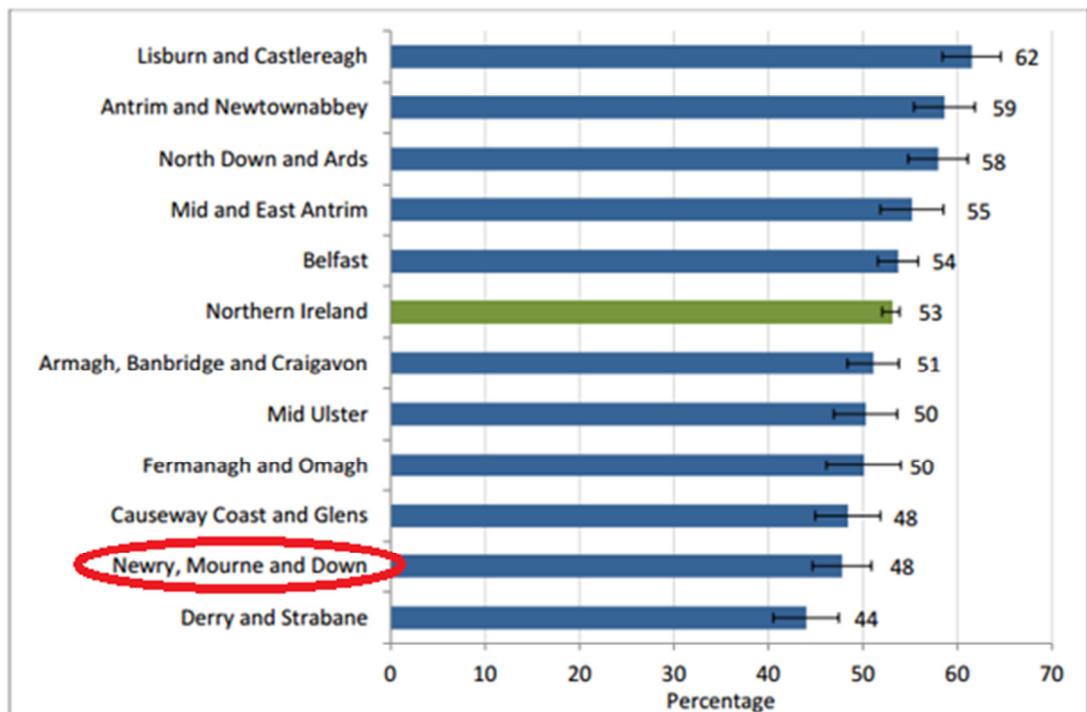
1.13 In the same survey, according to parents, 86% of children had participated in at least one sport within the previous year (2014/15), outside of school or afterschool with 84% participating outside of school and 51 % in afterschool sport.

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.
- 1.16 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 9<sup>th</sup> 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**



The black error bar at the end of each horizontal column represents the range within which we can be 95% certain that the true population proportion lies (i.e. 95% confidence interval).

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

### (a) 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 12<sup>th</sup> 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, tackling disadvantaged and improving health and well-being.
- 2.3 Last 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:

<i>RG 7 Support urban and rural renaissance</i>	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
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	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.
<i>RG 11 Conserve, protect and, where possible, enhance our built heritage and our natural environment</i>	The RDS recognises that built heritage is a key tourism and recreational asset and that it makes a valuable contribution to the environment, economy and society. Regarding built heritage the key policy aim is to identify, protect 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 or 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.
<i>SFG 13 Sustain rural communities living in smaller settlements and the open countryside</i>	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 28<sup>th</sup> 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 coast;
- 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.

<b>PPS2 Natural Heritage</b>	<p>To seek to further the conservation, enhancement and restoration of the abundance, quality, diversity and distinctiveness of the regions natural heritage.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>To assist in meeting international (including European), national and local responsibilities and obligations in the protection and enhancement of the natural heritage.</p> <p>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.</p>
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	To protect and enhance biodiversity, geodiversity and the environment.
<b>PPS7 Quality Residential Environments</b>	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.
<b>PPS8 Open Space, Sport And Outdoor Recreation</b>	<p>To safeguard existing open space and sites identified for future such provision.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>To facilitate appropriate outdoor recreational activities in the countryside.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>To achieve high standards of siting, design and landscaping for all new open space areas and sporting facilities.</p> <p>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.</p>
<b>PPS21 Sustainable Development in the Countryside</b>	<p>To manage growth in the countryside to achieve appropriate and sustainable patterns of development that meet the essential needs of a vibrant rural community;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>To facilitate development necessary to achieve a sustainable rural economy; including appropriate farm diversification and other economic activity; and</p> <p>To promote high standards in the design, siting and landscaping of development in the countryside.</p>

(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 Mourne 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**

<b>Development Plan</b>	<b>Outdoor Sports (Playing Fields)</b>	<b>Children’s Play Areas</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>ADAP (Towns &amp; Villages)</b>	61.1*	1.95*	63.05*
<b>BNMAP (City, Towns and Villages)</b>	98.86	11.68	110.54
<b>NMD (City, Towns, Villages)</b>	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 each other 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 Mourne 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 1<sup>st</sup> 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

- 4.7 The Council finalised 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).**

District Council	2011 Population Projection	Acres Recommended by SAS	Existing Provision				Shortfalls	
			Grass	Synthetic		Total Acres SNI	SNI Standard	
			Total Grass Acres	Existing Acres	SNI by 4		Perceived Acres Shortfall	Pitches Required
<b>Ards/North Down</b>	155,882	468	141	17	69	209	258	103
<b>Lisburn/ Castlereagh</b>	178,544	535.632	168.97	19.03	76.12	245.09	290.54	116
<b>Antrim/Newtownabbey</b>	132,389	397.167	121.05	15.44	61.76	182.81	214.36	86
<b>Mid Antrim</b>	132,378	397.134	162.1	10.83	43.32	205.42	191.71	77
<b>Derry/Strabane</b>	150,592	451.776	206.22	11.41	45.64	251.86	199.92	80
<b>Belfast</b>	263,313	789.939	377.41	49.07	196.3	573.69	216.25	86
<b>Armagh/Bann</b>	190,559	571.677	331.79	23.38	93.52	425.31	146.37	59
<b>Causeway Coast</b>	140,436	421.308	316.46	14.6	58.4	374.86	46.448	19
<b>Newry/Down</b>	164,514	493.542	370.5	15.15	60.6	431.1	62.442	25
<b>Fermanagh/Omagh</b>	112,400	337.2	260.36	6.61	26.44	286.8	50.4	20
<b>Mid Ulster</b>	129,915	389.745	316.93	21.97	87.88	404.81	-15.07	-6
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,750,922</b>	<b>5253.12</b>	<b>2772.79</b>	<b>204.49</b>	<b>818.98</b>	<b>3590.75</b>	<b>1661.37</b>	<b>665</b>

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 =  $(171533 \div 1000) \times 3$  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).**

District Council	2011 Population Projection	Acres Recommended by SAS	Existing Provision			Shortfalls		
			Grass	Synthetic		SNI Standard		
			Total Grass Acres	Existing Acres	SNI by 4	Total Acres SNI	Perceived Acres Shortfall	Pitches Required
<b>Ards/North Down</b>	155,882	468	180	17	69	249	219	88
<b>Lisburn/ Castlereagh</b>	178,544	535.632	241.57	19.03	76.12	317.69	217.94	87
<b>Antrim/Newtownabbey</b>	132,283	397.167	214.25	15.44	61.76	276.01	121.16	48
<b>Mid Antrim</b>	132,378	397.134	257.79	10.83	43.32	301.11	96.024	38
<b>Derry/Strabane</b>	150,592	451.776	293.51	11.41	45.64	339.15	112.63	45
<b>Belfast</b>	263,313	789.939	520.21	49.07	196.3	716.49	73.449	29
<b>Armagh/Bann</b>	190,559	571.677	460.27	23.38	93.52	553.79	17.887	7
<b>Causeway Coast</b>	140,436	421.308	498.64	14.6	58.4	557.04	-135.7	-54
<b>Newry/Down</b>	164,514	493.542	546.55	15.15	60.6	607.15	-113.6	-45
<b>Fermanagh/Omagh</b>	112,400	337.2	352.45	6.61	26.44	378.89	-41.69	-17
<b>Mid Ulster</b>	129,915	389.745	456.19	21.97	87.88	544.07	-154.3	-62
<b>Totals</b>	<b>1,750,816</b>	<b>5253.12</b>	<b>4021.43</b>	<b>204.49</b>	<b>818.98</b>	<b>4840.39</b>	<b>412.8</b>	<b>164</b>

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 =  $(171533 \div 1000) \times 3$  acres = 514.60

Acres existing (SNI) = 607.15

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

**Required Pitches** =  $-92.55 \div 2.5$  (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 =  $(194994 \div 1000) \times 3$  acres = 584.98

Acres existing (SNI) = 431.1

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

**Required pitches** =  $153.99 \div 2.5$  (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 =  $(194994 \div 1000) \times 3$  acres = 584.98

Acres existing (SNI) = 607.15

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

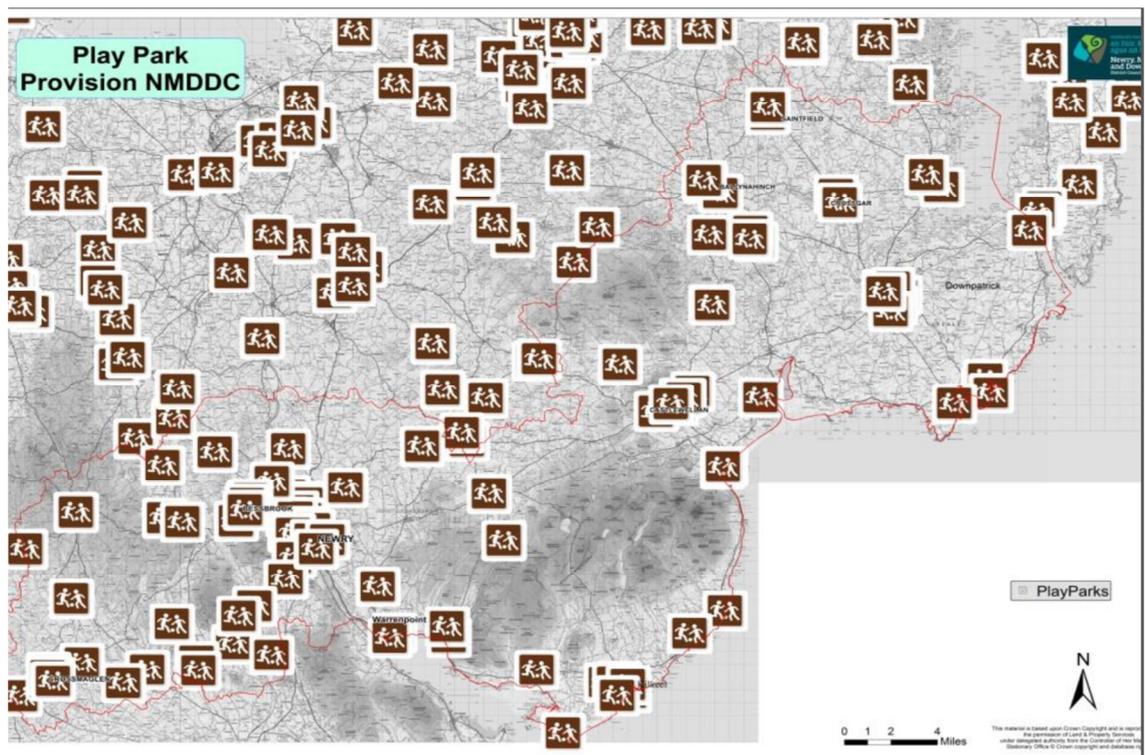
**Required Pitches** =  $-22.17 \div 2.5 = -8.87 = 8$  surplus pitches

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 addition some 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 District's 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=  $(171533 \div 1000) \times 0.25$  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 not 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.

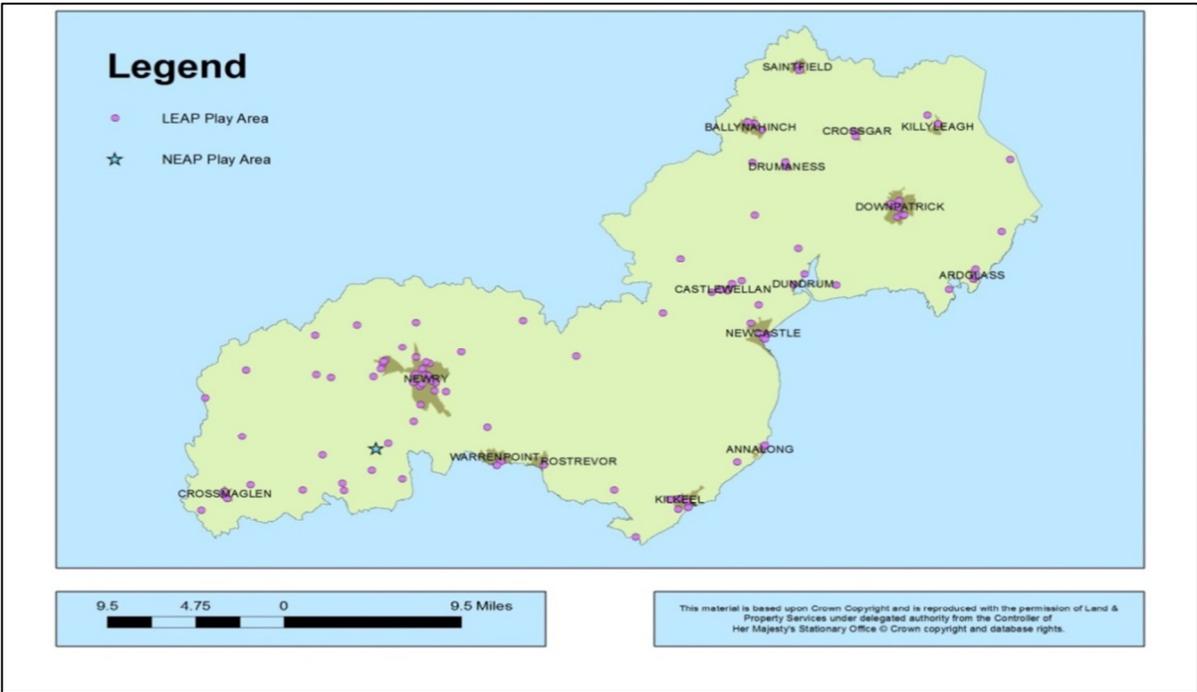
**Figure 10: Recommended Walking Times to Children’s Playing Space**

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=  $(194994 \div 1000) \times 0.25$  hectares = 48.75 ha

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

**Required Play Space=  $48.75 - 13.63 = 35.12$ ha 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:

- (i) provide policy for the protection and safeguarding for public open space;
- (ii) the needs identified are taken account when formulating both the aims and objectives of the plan and future policy.
- (iii) provide adequate and well-designed open space in new housing developments as an integral part of the development;
- (iv) facilitate where possible large scale leisure proposals on opportunity sites within or near town centres and smaller scale proposal elsewhere within settlement limits;
- (v) 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.
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### Saintfield

Town Hill	No relevant history
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## Appendix 2 – Sport Facilities in Newry, Mourne and Down

An Ríocht 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 Burren	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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>98.86</b>	<b>11.68</b>	<b>110.54</b>

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
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61.1</b>	<b>1.95</b>	<b>63.05</b>	<b>34.63</b>	<b>95.73</b>

\*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 Dymnna	Downpatrick	Downpatrick
Upper Scotch Street	Downpatrick	Downpatrick
Cumber Road Play Park	Drumaness	Sieve Croob
Dan Rice Hall	Drumaness	Sieve Croob
Drumaroad Play Park	Drumaroad	Sieve Croob
Barnmeen Play Area	Drumgath	Crotlieve
Inner Bay Play Park	Dundrum	Sieve Croob
St Donard's Walk	Dundrum	Sieve Croob
Bog Road Play Area	Forkhill	Sieve Gullion
Drumintee Play Area	Forkhill	Sieve Gullion
Fairview Park Play Area	Forkhill	Sieve Gullion
Lurganare Play Area	Glen	Crotlieve
Spelga Park Play Area	Hilltown	Crotlieve
Jonesborough Play Area	Jonesborough	Sieve 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	Sieve Croob
Maghera Play Park	Maghera	Mournes
Meigh Play Park	Meigh	Sieve Gullion
Conway Park Play Park	Mullaghbawn	Sieve 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
<b>Down Legacy Total 46</b>		
<b>Newry &amp; Mourne Legacy Total 64</b>		
<b>17 No. Play Park Sites with no equipment Not Listed</b>		

Source: NMD Council

## Appendix 5

### Settlements Fixed Play Provision

SETTLEMENTS	FIXED PLAY AREA PROVISION
<b>CITY</b>	
Newry	✓
<b>TOWNS</b>	
Crossmaglen	✓
Kilkeel	✓
Newtownhamilton	✓
Warrenpoint/ Burren	✓
Downpatrick	✓
Ballynahinch	✓
Newcastle	✓
<b>VILLAGES</b>	
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	✓
<b>SMALL SETTLEMENTS</b>	
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	
Chapelton	
Clonvaraghan	
Coney Island	
Darragh Cross	
Derryboye	
Drumaghliis	
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
Harmony 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 Aughnahooray 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

<b>FORESTS</b>	<b>OWNERSHIP</b>
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

<b>WOODLANDS</b>	<b>OWNERSHIP</b>
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/>

<b>FOREST/ COUNTRY PARKS/ GARDENS</b>	<b>OWNERSHIP</b>
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

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

**BEACHES**

Cranfield Beach, Kilkeel

Murlough Beach

Newcastle Beach

Tyrella

Warrenpoint

**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

**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

<b>OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES</b>	<b>FACILITY</b>
<b>Activity Centres</b>	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
<b>Angling</b>	There are numerous locations for angling within the District with Strangford and Carlingford Loughs and its many rivers and lakes.
<b>Athletics</b>	There is a 6 lane athletics track with field events at St Colman's College, Newry
<b>Bowling</b>	There are 12 outdoor bowls club sites in the District.
<b>Canoeing</b>	Two of NI's nine recognised Canoe Trails are located in the District: Strangford Lough and South East Coast Trails
<b>Cricket</b>	There are four cricket club grounds located in the District: Dundrum, Downpatrick, Saintfield and Drumaness Cricket Clubs.
<b>Cycling</b>	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.
<b>GAA</b>	There are 45 GAA Clubs located in the District.
<b>Golf</b>	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.
<b>Hockey</b>	There are a number of men and womens hockey teams that train in the District including Ballynahinch, Down, Saintfield, Kilkeel and Newry
<b>Horse riding</b>	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.
<b>Motorsports</b>	There are 4 motor sports facilities in the District

<b>Rugby</b>	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
<b>Soccer</b>	There are approximately 42 soccer clubs in the District.
<b>Swimming</b>	Tropicana Outdoor Pool in Newcastle is open July and August.
<b>Tennis</b>	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
<b>Watersports</b>	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.