



**Executive**  
15<sup>th</sup> January 2007

**Report from the Director of  
Environment and Culture**

For Action

Wards Affected:  
ALL

**Update on Progress - Strategy for Sport and Physical  
Activity in Brent 2004 - 2009**

Forward Plan Ref: E&C-06/07-022

**1. Summary**

- 1.1 The Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity in Brent was agreed by Members in 2004. This report informs members of the progress and key achievements made to date by the Council and key stakeholders against the six key themes within the strategy. The report also shows progress made by the Sports Service against the strategy action plan and attaches copies of the three sports specific development plans which have been agreed by sports specific working groups.

**2. Recommendations**

The Executive:

- 2.1 Note the achievements made to date by the Council and key partners to deliver the main themes of the Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity in Brent.
- 2.2 Note the progress made to date by the Sports Service against the strategy's action plan for the Council.
- 2.3 Agree the sports specific development plans for tennis, swimming and cricket.

### 3. Detail

- 3.1 In 2002 the Audit Commission report found the Sports Service to be 'poor'. As a consequence the Council took a number of actions to address the situation. A challenge day was held in November 2002 with key stakeholders where it was acknowledged that there was a lack of overall co-ordination and planning for the development of sport in Brent. It was therefore identified that a strategy for sport, endorsed by key stakeholders was essential in order to agree priorities, address areas of weakness and achieve maximum benefit for the development of sport within the Borough.
- 3.2 A considerable amount of consultation and research was undertaken during the strategy's production to ensure input from Brent's residents. Prior to writing the strategy surveys were undertaken at the borough's leisure centres, citizens panel surveys asked sports related questions, focus group sessions were held and audits undertaken. The draft strategy was widely consulted upon in order to give local people and organisations additional opportunities to add their views and comments. This consultation included presentations to Consultative User Forums and Brent Sports Clubs, direct mailing to neighbouring boroughs and partners as well as articles in local papers, Brava news and on the Council's website. The information received was used to inform the final version of the strategy and a table showing all the comments and feedback received was displayed on the Sports Service's website.
- 3.3 To bring together key stakeholders the Brent Sports Forum (BSF) was established in November 2003. The Forum comprises of key stakeholders from the Primary Care Trust (PCT), Brent Sports Council (voluntary sports sector), private leisure operator Leisure Connection (LC), Local Education Authority (LEA), School Sports Partnerships (SSP), Youth Service, Parks Service and Sports Service. The Forum gave significant direction to the production of the strategy, helping to direct the key themes, agree the priority sports and endorse the final version. The Brent Sports Forum were eager that this Strategy was relevant to all providers of sports and physical activity and they were enthusiastic to oversee the delivery of the Strategy by undertaking annual reviews comparing achievements against actions and identifying any slippages and new opportunities.
- 3.4 The Strategy for Sport and Physical Activity in Brent 2004 – 2009 was presented and approved by Members at the Council's Executive meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2004.
- 3.5 The Strategy acknowledged that the Council is just one of many providers of sports opportunities in the Borough and that the Council's role should be to facilitate and support provision and provide a basic infrastructure that can support the effective and sustainable development of sports opportunities across all the relevant sectors. The strategy therefore is a plan not just for Brent Council alone, but for everyone involved in delivery of sport and physical activity in Brent.

3.6 The strategy identified a number of key findings which identified either gaps in provision or weaknesses in opportunities. Some of these key findings included:

- 75% of Brent's residents are interested in taking part in sport or physical exercise
- Compared to national data, Brent's sports centres are used by a low percentage of women.
- 'Old age' was quoted by many residents as a reason for not taking part in sport or physical activity
- Lack of awareness about the facilities and opportunities for sport and physical activity in the Borough.
- Cost' and a 'lack of / poor transport' were identified as barriers to participation
- Lack of affordable recreation facilities for 'older' young people
- Need to improve ancillary facilities at sports pitches to enable them to be used simultaneously by males and females.
- Need to improve links between schools and local sports clubs
- There is potential to increase community use of schools sports facilities where good quality facilities exist

3.7 The strategy identified six key themes that were to form the strategic focus for sports providers. These themes took account of the benefits that sport and physical activity can make to achieving wider social and economic benefits as well as improving quality of life.

3.8 The strategy's six key themes are:

1. Promoting the health benefits of an active lifestyle
2. Increasing awareness of sports opportunities
3. Ensuring facilities are 'fit for purpose'
4. Reducing barriers to participation and ensuring equity in sport
5. Supporting and developing local sports clubs
6. Increasing sports opportunities for young people.

3.9 The strategy identifies that certain groups had relatively low levels of participation

and that developmental work should be undertaken to raise these levels and reduce inequalities. The five target groups are shown below although it is recognised that many people belong to more than one target group:

- Young people
- Older People
- Black and Ethnic Minority People
- Disabled People
- Women and Girls

Sport England recognises over 100 sports and the 2002 Audit Commission inspection highlighted that a lack of focus and priority was one of the key weaknesses of the service. The Brent Sports Forum therefore agreed that

there should be a focus on specific sports so that resources could be prioritised. A matrix was developed with a number of selection criteria against which each sport was plotted. These criteria included:

- Sports which were part of a regional focus
- Sports which have good facility provision in Brent
- Focus sports for Brent's schools
- Sports which have successful clubs or no club structures in Brent
- Sports which are played by Brent's diverse communities
- Sport England priority sports.

3.10 The Brent Sports Forum, informed by the strategy consultation process selected eight priority sports for Brent and these are:

- Athletics
- Basketball
- Cricket
- Football
- Martial Arts
- Netball
- Tennis
- Swimming

3.11 For each priority sport the Sports Service will establish working groups made up of

representatives from sports clubs, schools, National Governing Bodies (NGB's) of sport, facility providers and other stakeholders to write co-ordinated development plans for each sport. These plans will help each sport develop according to its own specific needs and help prioritise action and resources. The Brent Sports Forum identified two sports per annum for which development plans would be written. Three development plans have been completed:

- tennis
- swimming
- cricket

and the development of plans for athletics, netball and football are commencing.

3.12 The three completed priority sports plans have been endorsed by the Brent Sports Forum and are attached as appendices 2, 3 and 4. Members are requested to note these plans and give them their formal endorsement.

3.13 Whilst the Strategy is for all sports providers it also included 55 tasks within an action plan that the Council's Sports Service would implement in order to address the key themes of the strategy and increase participation by target groups. In December 2005 the Brent Sports Forum reviewed progress against the Action Plan and this review was posted on the Sports Services Website. Appendix 1 attached provides the Sports Service's update on progress against the Action Plan as at November 2006 Brent Sports Forum and identifies potential 'new' opportunities. For example, when the Strategy was agreed in 2004 London had not been selected as a candidate city for the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the Audit Commission had not

established Key Performance Indicators for sports participation or facility provision, thus these and other developments in sport are missing from the original strategy.

- 3.14 The information below shows some of the major achievements by the Council and stakeholders that have helped deliver the key themes within the Strategy. It is acknowledged that there is a degree of cross-over between theme headings under which achievements could sit and therefore a best fit' has been chosen. For example the provision of multi use games areas within parks has been listed under 'increasing sports opportunities for young people' but equally it could have been listed under 'reducing barriers to participation and ensuring equity in sport' or 'ensuring sports facilities are fit for purpose'.

#### **Promoting the health benefits of an active lifestyle**

- The new leisure management contracts for Vale Farm and Willesden sports centres requires the contractors to work with the PCT, doctors and health professionals to implement an Exercise Referral scheme to enable those with poor health to take part in structured physical exercise as a means to improving their health, well being and quality of life.
- The Primary Care Trust (PCT) is co-ordinating a Healthy Living project in St Raphs funded by Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF) to reduce health inequalities and this project includes a section on increasing physical activity
- The Sports Service has appointed a sports development officer to lead on improving the health of Brent residents through physical activity.
- During this winter a programme of 7 weekly leader led walks has been introduced at 5 different parks across the Borough attracting on average 15 people per walk.
- The cardiac team at Monks Park clinic and the sports development team have trained a local instructor who will deliver a programme of Phase 4 cardiac rehabilitation programmes which are an essential part of the rehabilitation process for people who have had major heart surgery.
- The PCT's Healthy Living initiative runs activity projects for the elderly as a way of improving mobility and tackling isolation through activities such as yoga and gentle aerobics.
- The PCT has used Brent's sports centres to host their smoking cessation courses and to try and encourage those giving up smoking to consider taking up exercise
- The sports development team are working in partnership with Kingsbury Manor day centre to plan and a programme of physical activity for mental health clients.
- Healthy Schools Programme is now working closely with School Sport Partnerships on the delivery of the physical activity strand of the Healthy Schools framework and the target is to increase the number of 'healthy schools' from 36% at present to 100% by 2010.
- A health conference was held in November 2005 themed 'The Shape of Things to come' which looked at tackling childhood obesity through healthy eating and physical activity and promoting a whole school approach to physical activity and healthy eating.

- Many schools are extending curriculum provision with daily 10/15 min aerobic exercise e.g. Buzz Time or take 10.
- Green Travel plans are being developed in schools promoting walking buses and Walk on Wednesday initiatives, maps showing short walking routes between Council premises and maps of cycle routes and other green travel around Park Royal have been produced.
- 70% of primary schools have structured playground activities at lunch times.

### **Increasing awareness of sports opportunities**

- The Sports Service has considerably improved their website such that it provides extensive information about activities, facilities and opportunities in and around the Borough as well as links to other partner's websites. In 2004 the sports service had recorded 248,365 hits on its website, in the first ten months in 2006 the website has already had 623,976 hits.
- A free Directory of Sports Clubs has been created and is maintained on the website – over 70 clubs have registered and are included in the Directory which also includes a postcode search so you can find the sports club nearest to where you live
- The Sports Service has increased the amount of literature available providing information about sports opportunities in the Borough. The quality of the literature has been improved, the website promoted on all literature and opportunities for translation available on main leaflets.
- Through the dissemination of information, attendance at forums and steering groups and improved partnership working there is much greater sharing of information, good practice and improved distribution resulting in increased awareness of the range of opportunities available for sport and physical activity
- A twice yearly newsletter is produced by the Sports Service to inform key partners, stakeholders and individuals with an interest in sport, what the Sports Service has been delivering and what's coming up in the near future.
- JCDecaux boards have been used on several occasions to promote physical activity opportunities in the Borough and free swimming for pensioners and disabled people.
- Continuing Professional Development opportunities are provided in the School Improvement Service brochure for adults other than teachers as well as teachers
- One School Sport Partnership has its own website and the other is developing a site.
- Willesden and Vale Farm sports centres have newly created posts the role of which is to undertake outreach work to enable and encourage low and non participant groups to make greater use of the two sports centres.
- Information and advice is given to local businesses on simple ways to be active during the working day combined with healthy eating suggestions through the Get fit get active @ work campaign.

### **Ensuring sports facilities are 'fit for purpose'**

- State of the art Willesden Sports centre opened on 1<sup>st</sup> November, on time and on budget. The centre which boasts facilities of regional significance compliments the sports facilities of neighbouring Capital City Academy and will provide opportunities for individuals and sports clubs in Willesden and the surrounding area.
- The leisure management contract for Vale Farm sports centre has been retendered with an enhanced specification that will increase standards in cleanliness, marketing, programming and increase levels of participation.
- Charteris sports centre was brought back in-house and will enable the Council to develop the centre to increase participation and deliver the Strategy's key themes in the Kilburn area.
- There has been capital investment at the Boroughs sports centres e.g. at Bridge Park to ensure that the centre complied with health and safety standards and changes to legislation. At Vale Farm and Charteris sports centres the old contract included a programme of capital works and the new contracts will see investment in new fitness equipment and Information Technology (IT) booking and management information systems.
- Improved drainage and levelling is underway on the playing pitches at Willesden Sports ground and the cricket square is being reinstated
- A new Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) was installed at Roe Green Park as part of a programme to involve youth in physical activity.
- A review of Vale Farm recreation ground has been completed
- Section 106 monies have been used to improve the fitness studio at Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre
- Section 106 monies (£424,178) has also been used to improve physical activity in the Borough's Parks. At One Tree Hill Open Space, a new Wildcat unit was installed, (£12,500), tennis courts at Preston Park and King Edward V11 Park were refurbished, (£111,678) and there are plans to include a MUGA in a plan of improvements at Grove Park in 2007 (£300,000).
- A new pavilion and artificial turf pitches have been provided in Stonebridge; part funded by the Football Foundation
- New Opportunities Fund (NOF) Physical Education and sport lottery funding has been secured towards new changing rooms in Gladstone Park and provided 3 schools with MUGA's (Newfields, St Mary RC, St Marys C of E,) 1 school with a Sports Hall (Chalkhill), and 3 schools with improved drainage to pitches (Preston Manor, Kingsbury and Claremont schools).
- Lottery funding was awarded to improve the pitches at Gibbons Recreation Ground and funding applications have been submitted to the Football Foundation for part funding to provide new changing accommodation for the pitches at Gibbons Rec.

### **Reducing barriers to participation and ensuring equity in sport**

- The leisure discount scheme was reviewed and the new 'B.Active' scheme introduced which gives greater discount to concessionary groups. This has resulted in a 100% increase in the number of concessionary cards sold.

- The leisure management contracts at Vale Farm and Willesden sports centres require the contractor to organise activities specifically for the Strategy target groups e.g. women only sessions, sessions for disabled people.
- Information about public transport routes is included on the majority of literature about sports facilities and activities in Brent
- Considerable funds have been invested in the Borough's indoor and outdoor sports facilities to make them compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act and encourage greater use and access by disabled people.
- An ongoing programme of surveys has been undertaken by the Sports and Parks Services to gain a better view of levels of customer satisfaction and customer needs.
- Free swimming for pensioners, under 5's and disabled people has been introduced at Willesden and Vale Farm sports centres
- Move It project in North Brent constituency is providing free sports activities to specific year groups within identified secondary schools.
- School Sport Partnerships are providing free of charge activities to large groups of primary pupils through the Primary Night initiative. For some pupils this has also included provision of transport to the venue.
- There are numerous NOF funded projects in School Sport Partnerships for specific groups eg Greenhouse table-tennis project for boys at risk of exclusion, motor skills programme for pupils with coordination difficulties or girls only football sessions.
- The Stepping Stones project delivers football and personal development programmes with hard to reach young people e.g. teams from traveller's sites and local estates. This is delivered by the Youth Service in conjunction with Crime Concern.
- The PCT supports an African families activity programme in Kilburn and Harlesden as a way of reaching this target group and engaging adults and their children together in activity

### **Supporting and developing local sports clubs**

- A sports development officer post has been created which leads on coach and club development, organising coaching and leadership courses and helping clubs and community groups deliver 'best practice', expand and become more sustainable.
- The sports development team enabled 319 people to gain sports coaching and/or sports leadership qualifications in 2005/06
- Senior council officers meet with the Brent Sports Council on a regular basis, enabling the Sports Council to have direct contact with the Council and raise any issues which their members have regarding the provision of sports opportunities and facilities in the Borough
- Many schools and sports clubs have been assisted in the completion of applications for external funding and the majority of these have been successful e.g. Brent Dolphins Swimming Club were awarded £4,475 from Awards for All.
- The Lawn Tennis Association have funded the development of a Community Tennis Club in Gladstone Park, one of the initiatives identified within the tennis development plan



- School Sport Partnerships are improving their working with sports clubs that exist in the borough. Much of this work is as a result of the sports specific development plans that have been written. The framework is beginning to provide pathways for young people.
- In 2006 the Youth Service supported and enabled twenty five young people to obtain the Community Sports Leadership Award and 10 British Amateur Weightlifting Association award (BAWLA) and registered one Wembley Youth Centre as licensed deliverers, some young people are now attached to schools or clubs.

### **To increase sports opportunities for young people**

- The number of pupils aged 5-16 years taking part in 2 hours of physical activity each week has increased from 40% in 2004 to 62% in 2005 to 82.5 % in 2006 which places Brent in the upper threshold for this Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) key performance indicator
- An Local Public Service Agreement (LPSA) stretch target was approved to increase the number visits by young people to the Borough's sports centres from 21,477 in 2004 to 30,725 in 2006, an increase of 7,100. This target was exceeded by 4,921 with 35,646 visits recorded.
- A Local Area Agreement (LAA) stretch target has now been introduced to build on the work achieved by the LPSA with a target of 40,920 visits by young people to the Borough's sports centres to be achieved in 2008/09.
- Free swimming has been introduced during school holidays resulting in the number of junior holiday swims more than doubling from 7,720 in 2004 to 15,672 in 2005.
- Teams were entered in all Brent's priority sports at the main London Youth Games with boys' judo winning gold and boys' football winning silver.
- Multi Use Games Areas have been provided at Roundwood and Roe Green Parks.
- Skateboard facilities have been provided on St. Raphael's Open Space.
- Funding has been awarded under the LAA Access to Leisure theme to increase participation in sport by looked after children and by disabled children / young people and officers are being recruited to introduce and develop initiatives and schemes to enable the targets to be met.
- LAA funding has also been awarded under the Access to Leisure scheme to provide diversionary activities to reduce the opportunity for young people to engage in crime and anti social behaviour.
- To help achieve the LAA targets a vastly expanded summer holiday programme was delivered in 2006 with 25 sports coaching courses, 10 taster sessions and over 60 multi sports activities organised at 23 venues in 15 wards during the summer holidays
- A PE advisor was appointed to support primary and secondary schools deliver quality PE and act as a point of contact for National Initiatives so that PE and sport within Brent's schools is developed strategically
- All Brent schools are now included in a School Sport Partnership in Brent including Special Schools and Pupil Referral Units.

- Over 1500 Brent teachers have attended at least one module of The National PE and School Sport Professional Development Programme.
- A young volunteers group (Phoenix) has been established and are currently applying their learning and skills by working on a Community sports fun-day to be held on 20<sup>th</sup> December 06.

3.16 The Sports Service will continue to review annual progress and report this to the Brent Sports Forum. A Major review is required in 2008 to allow sufficient time for a subsequent strategy to be produced.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

4.1 The majority of actions have been implemented within existing budgets and/or by working in partnership with other providers.

4.2 Where possible services have applied for external / internal funding (e.g. ward working, NRF) or have worked with external organisations and the voluntary sector to assist them gain external funding (Awards for All, Football Foundation) to help deliver some of our key themes. External funding has also been awarded for larger projects such as revenue funding to deliver LAA and LPSA targets.

4.3 Capital funding has been made available to deliver some of the necessary improvements to facilities and open space to ensure they are able to remain 'fit for purpose'. This has been used to match fund external grants. However other than Willesden sports centre the Borough's sports centres are aging and in order to keep the facilities 'fit for purpose' and compliant with legislation and health and safety requirements there is a need for further capital investment. A third pool is identified in the strategy as being required and whilst officers will continue to try and identify sources of external funding it is extremely unlikely that this will provide 100% funding and so capital monies would be required to enable a third pool to be built within the borough.

4.4 In 2006/07 capital funding has been used to match external funding secured for sports facility improvements in parks. £275K was matched with NOF funding and S106 funding to develop new changing facilities at Gladstone Park, £140K was matched with S106 funding and Football Foundation funding for changing rooms at Gibbons recreation ground and £120K has been used for pitch improvements and reinstating the cricket square at King Edwards Recreation Ground, which compliments the changing facilities provided in the new Willesden Sports Centre.  
In addition, £300K of capital was spent at Bridge Park Community Leisure Centre on essential health and safety works.

4.5 Section 106 monies have been made available to improve sports facilities and open spaces, both indoor but mainly outdoor , as outlined above.

4.6 Further capital funding will be necessary to complete the actions within the Sport and Physical Activity Strategy and sports specific development plans. Where possible Officers will continue to seek external funding for these and

growth bids will need to be submitted which are subject to the Council's budget process.

## **5.0 Legal Implications**

5.1 The Council has power pursuant to section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 to provide such recreational facilities as it thinks fit. This power includes the power to provide buildings, equipment and assistance of any kind.

## **6.0 Diversity Implications**

6.1 The Strategy identifies that development work should focus on a number of target groups that are currently under-represented in terms of participation in sport and physical activity. These groups are listed in paragraph 3.9 and many of the actions taken to date show how we have implemented actions to increase participation by these groups.

6.2 The CPA's Culture Block includes key performance indicators based on the representativeness of sports centre users and includes, gender, disability, age and representation from BME communities as part of this measure.

## **7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)**

7.1 Following the best value review a minor review of the structure of the Sports Service was undertaken which has helped implement the actions arising from the Strategy. Two fixed term posts have been created linked to achieving the LAA targets which will simultaneously help us achieve our strategic objectives. The decision to bring Charteris in-house will enable us to review the staffing structures within our leisure centres to ensure we are operating effectively and efficiently and meeting our strategic objectives.

## **Background Papers**

Executive Report 14<sup>th</sup> June 2004 - A strategy for sport and physical activity in Brent 2004 – 2009

## **Contact Officers**

Any person wishing to inspect the above papers should contact Gerry Kiefer, Head of Sports Service, 020 8937 3710.

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