

**NUNEATON AND BEDWORTH  
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**SPORT, ACTIVE RECREATION AND  
WELLBEING STRATEGY**

**2012 – 2017**

September 2012

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## **Foreword - Councillor Ian Lloyd. Portfolio Holder Arts and Leisure**

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council has always attached great importance to the provision of leisure services. The superb leisure centres, children's play facilities and our wonderful parks and open spaces are testament to our belief that we must continue to invest in opportunities for all those who live in our Borough, to not only exercise through sport and play, but to also enhance their health and to promote wellbeing.

It is not just the facilities that are important; the programmes and activities provided by the Leisure Trust, Play Rangers, sporting organisations and clubs have a massive impact on the wellbeing of our Borough. I want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who is involved in a voluntary capacity and who give so much of their time to enable others to achieve.

2012 is truly a momentous year with sportsmen and women competing at the highest level at what I feel have been the greatest Olympic Games ever. I am sure that this Borough will build upon the tremendous achievements of our illustrious sporting heroes and up and coming stars that I had the pleasure of meeting at the Civic Hall in Bedworth earlier this year.

I am sure this strategy will help us in that task. It has done away, wherever possible, with jargon and measures that mean little to those who are working at providing opportunities for sport and leisure. It recognises that the Borough has to overcome some significant challenges if we are to improve our health and 'narrow the gap' whereby many of our citizens have three years less life expectancy than those in the most affluent areas of the County.

To really get to grips with some of the problems that face us we have to look at changing some ingrained habits. To do so is not going to be easy and I can see no better way than to invest the greatest efforts into improving the lives of our children and young people. This strategy promotes the notion that we must ensure that our young people have access to sporting opportunities, indoor and outdoor, formal and informal, and such opportunities are combined with the additional information relating to food and diet, quality play and an environment that inspires and encourages wellbeing.

Of course we are all aware that at a time when this is more important than ever, the resources available are shrinking year on year. That is why, as this strategy points out more than once, priority must be given to ensuring that everyone who is involved in delivering better health and leisure outcomes works together and without duplication.

I thank all those organisations and individuals who have helped and will continue to help enrich the lives of others within our Borough.

**Councillor Ian Lloyd September 2012**

## 1. Introduction – our priorities

1.1 The previous strategy, Sport and Active Recreation 2007 – 2011 was structured around the Local Area Agreement theme block. Local Area Agreements are no longer in place. This strategy therefore, attempts to identify those corporate issues and priorities that can be affected positively by the work of this council and its partners over the life of the document.

1.2 In a report of January 2012, a Leisure Provision Working Group report was presented to Economic Overview and Scrutiny Panel. That report made a number of recommendations:

- the new strategy will encompass Sport, Active Recreation and Wellbeing and will be for the period 2012 – 2017.
- that greatest emphasis will be placed on improving the health and wellbeing of all our residents by advocating all forms of physical activity and recreation.
- while recognising there is a need for all our residents to have opportunities to participate in recreation, greatest emphasis will be placed upon:
  - those living in the most deprived areas of the borough
  - children and young people
  - the elderly.
- that a greater strategic and supporting role be provided by the council directly and, if necessary, current structure and resources will be re-organised to achieve this. This may influence the way in which sport and leisure is delivered post 2014 when the current leases granted to Nuneaton and Bedworth Leisure Trust expire.

1.3 This strategy has at its heart the following principles upon which all future activities will be based within the life of this report:

- Provide opportunities for all residents of the Borough to partake in a wide range of physical and recreational activities in order to maintain or improve their overall health and wellbeing. Priority will be given to encouraging children and young people develop healthy habits for life, enabling them to enjoy the lifespan of the rest of Warwickshire's residents.
- Such opportunities will not be restricted to just NBBC's existing sports facilities but will be encouraged at other indoor and outdoor leisure venues, either formal or informal as appropriate.
- Local communities will be encouraged and supported to establish their own programmes and manage facilities to

enable them to become self sufficient, sustainable and, wherever possible, unburdened by bureaucracy.

- A strategic framework will be put in place to co-ordinate the work of NBBC and other agencies/partners in order to achieve Best Value and prevent duplication.
- Commitment to clubs and the volunteers that run them will be re-affirmed and we will look to support them further in order that they develop and prosper.

## **2. Sport and Active Recreation Plan 2007 - 2011**

- 2.1 The previous strategy expired on 31 March 2011. The Portfolio Holder for Arts and Leisure, Councillor Ian Lloyd, extended the life of that document to enable a scrutiny cross party working group to meet and advise on the new strategy. The chair of the working group, Councillor Gerald Smith, gave the findings of the working group in his report of 24 January 2012.
- 2.2 The plan was utilised by partners, including Nuneaton and Bedworth Leisure Trust, to formulate their business plans.
- 2.3 In future, NBLT and other partners will be asked to submit a yearly business plan outlining what will be delivered in order to meet the targets and principles within this document. Such plans will outline cost and perceived outcomes and will be monitored throughout the year. The Council recognises that some organisations may find such a process difficult so, if necessary, the council will assist those organisations to fulfil this requirement.

ISSUE 1: There is a need for agreed and co-ordinated planning involving the Council and all partners involved in delivering sport and recreation, but in particular the delivery of provision that is directly funded by the Council.

ACTION 1: As part of the budget setting process all partners will, utilising this strategy, provide a costed Annual Business Plan outlining actions and intended outcomes.

## **3. Nuneaton and Bedworth Council – Strategic Overview**

- 3.1 *Shaping our Future* – NBBC’s Community Plan 2007 – 2021 reaffirms the Council’s commitment to a ‘Stronger, Safer, Healthier and Sustainable Borough’. It promises to give residents the opportunity to shape their local area and promote community involvement.
- 3.2 It further commits the Council to raising awareness of mental health issues, encourage healthier lifestyles, tackle health inequalities and

places greater emphasis on combating obesity, poverty and deprivation issues.

- 3.3 The theme relating to the environment touches on the need to improve and protect open space. However, it does not outline the potential of parks and open spaces to address many of the priorities relating to the health and well-being of residents. It is becoming evident that to encourage people to partake in physical activity, alternative venues and programmes to those currently in existence need to be available. The green infrastructure, in all its forms across the Borough, could, in part, answer that need. The popularity of green gyms and measured miles for informal exercise are good examples and could provide the entry point for the first tentative attempts at exercise for some residents who feel uncomfortable in the formal gym setting. Stockingford Recreation Ground provides a model that, while requiring increased input across the board, has the potential to become a park that is much more relevant to the needs of all the residents who live around it. It would provide a perfect opportunity to look again at the establishment of a locally run park supported by health, horticultural and leisure partners with the aim of improving physical health, mental health and well being for the entire community.

**ISSUE 2:** There is a need to widen opportunities for sport and leisure pursuits. The role of open space is underutilised and presents unique opportunities for communities to not only exercise but enjoy the social and wellbeing benefits associated with open space and landscape.

**ACTION 2:** Continue to build on the community involvement and resulting initiatives that have taken place at Stockingford Recreation Ground and use it as a model for other areas of open space in the future. Ensure that NBBC and all partners support the residents who live around and/or use the park to establish a beacon of good practise that can be replicated throughout the Borough.

- 3.4 The Corporate Plan, 2007 – 2021, re-emphasises the priorities of the Community Plan, promising to:

*‘improve the quality of life and social justice for residents so it is much closer to that enjoyed by the rest of Warwickshire’*

Again, that is a priority of this document.

3.5 **Facts and Figures**

Area and Population:

<b>Authority</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Area</b>
Warwickshire County Council	535,100	1975 sq. km
Nuneaton and Bedworth	122,000	78.9 sq.km

Demographics:

	<b>Nuneaton and Bedworth</b>	<b>West Mids</b>	<b>England</b>
Male	49.5	48.9	48.9
Female	50.5	51.1	51.1
16 to19	6.1	6.7	6.3
20 to 24	5.5	8.5	8.5
25 to 34	16.6	15.1	16.2
35 to49	27.1	26.7	27.2
50 to 64	24.5	22.7	22.3
65+	20.1	20.3	19.4
White	94.3	86.7	88.9
Non White	5.8	13.2	11.0
DDAonly disabled	2.1	3.9	4.1

Life Expectancy and Obesity Levels (including comparison with Stratford)

	<b>Nuneaton and Bedworth</b>	<b>Stratford</b>	<b>West Mids</b>	<b>England</b>
Life Expectancy (yrs) Male	76.7	79.3	77.2	77.9
Life Expectancy (yrs) Female	80.9	82.6	81.6	82.0
Obesity Levels Adult (%)	29.0	23.3	26.4	24.2
Obesity Levels Childhood (%)	8.6	6.1	10.1	9.6

**4.0 Local Government delivery in a time of austerity**

4.1 The October 2010 Comprehensive Spending Review introduced cuts of 27% in funding (£6.7 billion) from central to local government over four years. Authorities are under significant pressure to deliver the same service or more for less and NBBC is no different.

4.2 NBBC's change in spend from last year is dramatic:

	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>% change</b>
Formula Grant	£9m	£7.7m	-14.6%
Spending Power	£18.1m	£16.9m	-6.8%

- 4.3 Local authorities are one of the most significant casualties of public spending contraction and will need to continue to remodel the way services are provided. The scale of the cuts will mean that there will be a continued reduction.
- 4.4 Although great emphasis has been placed on the need to protect front line service delivery, the last two years have seen a significant decrease in the revenue budget allocated to leisure across all areas, including the Management Fee paid to the Leisure Trust, but particularly in Parks and Countryside, where a number of posts have been lost.
- 4.5 In January 2012 the Joseph Rowntree foundation published a report 'Serving Deprived Communities in a Recession'. This report examined how English local government is dealing with the severe contraction in grant income. It utilised detailed analysis of local authority budget and expenditure data at a national level and interviewed a representative sample of senior executives within English local authorities.
- 4.6 The analysis concluded that the most deprived authorities will be hardest hit and the consequences for vulnerable people and places in the most disadvantaged council areas would be substantial.

The report argues that although cuts will be apparent across an extensive range of services, the impact of such service reduction will fall more heavily on disadvantaged people because of their greater reliance on a broad range of public services.

- 4.7 This council is committed to ensuring that all leisure and recreation opportunities are accessible to all and in particular, those in greatest need. As an example, the Passport to Leisure scheme (PTL) was recently revised enabling all children and young people, OAP's and those in receipt of benefits to access some gym and all public swimming free of charge. (Nationwide, this is now the exception rather than the norm following the demise of the recent free swimming scheme). Recent uptake of PTL by schools following concerted marketing by NBLT has led to a substantial increase in numbers of children holding the card. This warrants further investigation as it may truly be a means of helping to create a 'sporting habit for life', particularly if applied to other sport and active recreation activities. The uptake by those on benefits, particularly those residing within Super Output Areas (SOA's) is, as yet, not showing significant uptake however. This may be due to the facilities and venues being difficult to access in terms of confidence for some. Further research is required.

ISSUE 3: The increase in junior uptake is encouraging as is that of OAP'S but there is still a reluctance by some target groups to utilise the PTL. There is a need to widen the opportunities of the PTL card, making it more attractive to prospective holders.



**ACTION 3:** The uptake of the card by target groups is monitored and reported annually to Scrutiny by Nuneaton and Bedworth Leisure Trust.  
A further review is carried out as to how PTL can be further improved is carried out within the lifetime of this strategy.

## **5.0 Planning Policy relating to Sport, Active Recreation and Well-being**

5.1 Councils have no statutory duty to provide 'leisure services' but nearly all local authorities do so as a discretionary service. The Local Government Act 2000 gives councils the power to provide 'economic, social and environmental well-being' and the correlation between the well-being of communities and participation in sport, recreational and cultural pursuits is well understood.

5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was released in draft form in August 2011 and represented the most significant change to the planning system ever.

The three objectives of the new guidance are:

- improve the clarity of national policy so as to give developers greater certainty, reduce costs and burdens for businesses and provide sustainable development
- hand back power to local communities to decide what is right for them – instead of imposing an excessive control from central government
- be more user friendly and accessible so that it is easier for the public to react to proposed planning decisions

5.3 Central to the document is an emphasis on approving developments which are seen to be sustainable, and that the presumption in favour of sustainable development should be seen as *'the golden thread running through both plan making and decision taking'* for local authorities.

5.4 This sustainable development is based on three principles:

- planning for prosperity (economic role)
- planning for people (social role)
- planning for places (environmental role)

5.5 The NPPF further advises that local authorities should determine what facilities are required to meet the needs of local communities. Also, Local Green Space Designation can be used to give extra protection to playing fields.

5.6 The need to ensure sport and leisure is included as an integral element of community life within the Borough is paramount. In the past this has not always been the case with opportunities missed through

lack of consultation at the design stage or through a lack of corporate strategic documentation to evidence that need. With the changes to planning procedure there must now be a much greater understanding of what is required and liaison between Planning, Leisure and Open Space officers should take place at the earliest stage. There are encouraging signs that this is developing.

- 5.7 As part of the research relating to the Borough Plan, work is now underway to formulate a Facilities Planning Model for leisure within Nuneaton and Bedworth in conjunction with Sport England. This, alongside the Open Space Strategy, will provide evidence based future leisure needs to support development discussions.

ISSUE 4: There is a need to ensure that an evidence based strategic needs analysis relating to all leisure and open space is in place. This is essential in order to ensure future development within the Borough is resourced properly via the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) that will outline what will be expected of developers to provide.

ACTION 4: The Facilities Planning Model is completed and the Borough Plan is evidenced by leisure and open space requirements.

## **6.0 Localism – The Big Society**

- 6.1 The Coalition Government has stated that their aim is to give citizens, communities and local government the power and information they need to come together and solve the problems they face to build the society they want. The aim is to develop a cultural shift where everyone has a social responsibility.
- 6.2 To support the development of the Big Society, the Government is aiming to:
- cut red tape and make it easier to set up and run voluntary and community organisations
  - put more resources into the voluntary sector
  - make it easier for the voluntary sector to work with the state and commission longer term contracts
- 6.3 Since the concept was launched the arguments for and against have become more polarised. There is also an increasing frustration that it is taking too long to come on stream and that it is a smokescreen to hide the continuing financial constraints.
- 6.4 Those in the leisure industry share that frustration, not least because the cornerstone of leisure and community delivery is an understanding of community engagement. The problem for this council and the organisations it works with is how much time and effort should be invested in 'the Big Society'.  
What is not in doubt is the benefits that can arise from supporting communities who wish to improve their wellbeing and community surrounds.

- 6.5 Residents will often need support if they are to harness and develop local people willing to develop a sports, leisure facility or open space. There is therefore, a need to support and encourage resident participation across the sport and active recreation realm as a whole. Not to do so could mean that those areas with the worst levels of deprivation will suffer further.
- 6.6. However, the notion that a sudden surge of community participation will be evident in these areas is difficult to envisage. They need support to germinate and develop and prosper. That support should be provided by NBBC or a partner with a clear mandate as to what is required. For that to be possible within current financial constraints, a review of what and how sport, recreation and leisure pursuits is provided in future needs to be agreed and incorporated into future specifications and plans. It may need to be radically different to the current model.
- There are successful examples of community led initiatives where, through the enthusiasm and endeavours of an individual or likeminded group, enterprises flourish. Sport, allotments, community gardens, crèches, social clubs etc all provide purpose and diversion for all ages and communities. Examples would include:
- Boxing clubs based at Bulkington Recreation Ground and Heckley Pavilion
  - The allotment and community garden Mount Pleasant, Bedworth
  - Nuneaton BMX club based at Jubilee Recreation Ground
  - The Community Foundation at Nuneaton Town Football Club
  - together with a huge number of other clubs and voluntary organisations supported by NBLT and Community and Voluntary Action (CAVA)
- 6.7 Currently, NBLT has a part time (20 hrs/week) Club Development Officer who offers clubs support to bring in external funding. This is proving very successful and over a quarter of a million pounds has been invested in clubs and organisations as a result of this tremendous work. It is becoming increasingly clear that should this work be increased then even greater rewards would probably be forthcoming in order to develop community based programmes and initiatives. Where that increased support sits, i.e. within NBBC or as part of an organisation that provides sport and active recreation warrants further examination.

ISSUE 5: The need to help residents who wish to improve their lives or help others to do so needs sustainable support.

ACTION 5: A review of how NBBC can, utilising current resources, support and develop communities who either currently provide services within their area or wish to do so. Particular attention should be given to assessing how NBBC officers and employees within our major partners, NBLT for example, can work together more effectively.

## 7 **Sport**

- 7.1 The launch of this report coincides with the staging of the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games in London– the biggest sporting event in the world.
- 7.2 One of the main aims of the Games is to inspire more people and young people in particular, to get more involved in sport, both at school, college or in their spare time.
- 7.3 Because of the heightened awareness, it is anticipated that there may be a significant increase in the numbers taking part in sport and should this be the case then it is imperative that every opportunity is taken to grow this momentum, particularly in the more deprived areas of the Borough. To enable this to happen it is important that there is the infrastructure in place to deliver locally and, as stated earlier, that the strategic framework is also in place to integrate with regional and national infrastructure.
- 7.4 The Department for Culture, Media and Sport leads on getting more people active through sport. Sport England continues to work on ensuring more people are regularly taking part in sport while the Department of Health is leading on co-ordination of health related activities.
- 7.5 Since the previous NBBC Sports and Active Recreation Plan 2007 – 2011, the Coalition Government has significantly changed the national approach to sport delivery. Whereas previously, the funding and interaction with participants was very much via local authorities, much greater emphasis is now placed on National Governing Bodies (NGB's) for sport.
- 7.6 This change in direction is most notable in the recently published Sport England document 'Creating a Sporting Habit for Life – a new youth sport strategy. Jeremy Hunt, Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport promised:
- 'we will bring a new sense of direction and purpose across the entire sporting family through payment-by-results: a collective discipline of building on what works, and discarding what doesn't. The most successful organisations will be re-invented; and those that don't deliver will see their funding reduced or removed'*
- 7.7 For NBBC this new direction means that there is a need to establish a new and effective strategic role(see Section 8.13), liaising with national and regional bodies and co-ordinating the work of a range of local sporting organisations.
- 7.8 Creating a Sporting Habit for Life 2012–17 aims to increase consistently year on year, the number of young people participating in sport. During a five year period, Sport England will invest over £1 billion of Lottery and Exchequer funding in ensuring young people play

sport and to break down those barriers that currently prevent young people playing.

To do that they have promised to continue to work with schools, colleges and universities, local County Sports Partnerships (CSP's), local authorities, the voluntary sector and above all, National Governing Bodies.

7.9 The aim is to increase the proportion of people playing sport, particularly the proportion of 14 – 25 year olds who play sport. The report sets out how this will be done in partnership with Sport England:

- **build a lasting legacy of competitive sport in schools**  
A School Games will provide a framework for competitive school sport at school, district, county and national levels. Physical Education will remain a compulsory part of the National Curriculum.
- **Improving links between schools and community sports clubs**  
Sport England will work with sports such as Football, Cricket, Rugby Union, Rugby League and Tennis to establish at least 6000 partnerships between schools and local sports clubs by 2017. The aim is to ensure every secondary school and many primary schools will have contact with at least one club. This will be facilitated by a dedicated officer within every County Sports Partnership.
- **Working with the sports governing bodies: focusing on youth**  
All sports governing bodies, where young people are the main participants, will be asked to ensure they spend around 60% of their funding on activities that promote sport as a habit for life amongst young people.
- **Investing in facilities**  
A further £160million will be spent on new and upgraded sports facilities in addition to the £90million previously spent as part of Sport England's Places, People, Play programme. This also aims to see schools open up their facilities to the public.
- **Community and the voluntary sector**  
Support, although much less than previously, will be offered to local authorities, voluntary groups and others to widen the sporting offer to young people. By 2017, over £50million will be made available to 'well-run' sports clubs and voluntary groups.

ISSUE 6: NBBC'S priority is to increase participation in sport by children and young people.

ACTION 6: NBBC and all its partners engaged in sporting provision will do so within the Sporting Habit for Life initiative and all business plans and funding applications to NBBC be expected will reflect that.

### **Sports Participation – National and Local**

- 7.10 The national average for participation in sport and active recreation based on three occasions per week for thirty minutes duration is 21.9%. There are a variety of measures relating to participation both locally and nationally that need to be studied and understood if greater participation is to take place.

One of the most important is the Active People Survey – the largest ever survey of sport and active recreation to be undertaken in Europe. The survey was designed to enable analysis of a broad range of demographic information such as: gender, social class, ethnicity, household structure, age and disability. It also provides the measurement for the local area estimates of adult participation in sport and active recreation (formerly N18).

The first survey was in year 2006 and has been carried out yearly with the current survey – Active People Survey 6, due to be published in October 2012. This report will use survey 1 – 5, i.e. October 2005 to October 2011.

	<b>Nuneaton and Bedworth B.C.</b>
APS 1	19.2%
APS 2/3	20.4%
APS 4/5	21.3%
APS change between APS 1/4/5	2.1% (range 3.5%)*

\*figs accurate to +/- 4% so, therefore, no significant change can be recorded for increased participation.

- 7.11 No authority in Warwickshire can show an increase in participation and North Warwickshire actually shows a decrease – down over 4.2% over the three year period.
- 7.12 In July 2011, the Department of Culture, Media and Sport carried out in depth research into the drivers, impacts and value of engaging in culture and sport. The key findings were:
- Young people's participation in organised sport improves their numeracy scores, on average, by 8% above that of non-participants.
  - The participation of underachieving young people in extra-curricular learning activities linked to sport increases their

numeracy skills, on average by 29% above that of non-participants, and their transferable skills by 12 – 16%.

- Sport generates substantial long-term economic value in terms of reducing health costs and improved health-related quality of life.
- Engagement in sport has a positive and quantifiable effect on a person's perceived well-being.
- A range of factors, including age, gender, alcohol consumption, childhood experience of sport, socio-economic variables, a limiting illness or disability, educational attainment, unemployment, TV and internet use and the proximity of local sports facilities are directly associated with people's participation.
- Of the various cultural sectors, only participation in sport shows a decrease with age and lower levels of engagement amongst women.

7.13 Such findings not only reinforce the need to encourage and develop participation in sport in the Borough but also points to why many of our less affluent and deprived wards, or Super Output Areas (SOA's) within them, reflect a low participation and difficult to engage population. Recently, (May2012), NBLT targeted all the households in two deprived SOA's within the Borough. Of just over 2000 applications put through letterboxes to apply for a PTL only 9 were returned. This contrasts sharply with the returns from schools whereby a high percentage were returned over a short period

Again it is clear that there needs to be changes in how the council delivers opportunities for sporting and recreational activity within the borough if participation numbers are to be increased. There needs to be further examination of the role of less mainstream sports such as BMX, skateboarding, outdoor gyms and dance, for example.

ISSUE 7: There are an increasing number of less mainstream sports and activities that appear to be increasingly popular and could significantly drive up participation rates, particularly among the young.

ACTION 7: Evaluate the type, numbers of participants and geographical spread of these less mainstream activities with the aim of increasing their availability across the Borough.

### **Sporting Excellence**

7.14 In addition to increasing participation, the council is committed to supporting residents of all ages who wish to maximise their ability and excel in their chosen sport. It recognises that there are clubs who provide coaching of the highest standard and provide pathways for progression to the top level. NBLT helps support that by:

- Providing support, information & activities to assist the community of Nuneaton and Bedworth to live healthy & active lives. In addition they also provide a wide range of advice and assistance to local sporting organisations and other groups developing sports based projects.
- Being committed to the development of Inclusion & Disability Sport.
- Assistance in developing local sports clubs including guidance on funding and club accreditation.
- Promotion of local sports organisations through their 'Guide to Sports Clubs' booklet.
- Increase volunteering opportunities and develop a pathway for a career in leisure.

7.15 The processes of identifying sporting potential remains open to improvement. Does the current system provide a seamless pathway from school to club to coach to excellence? With some exceptions, there is a considerable way to go to put such a system in place and it will require further strategic input to do so. The communication between schools, clubs and other providers has to be improved. That is not to diminish the role of NBLT as they currently provide tremendous work in this area but once again, the strategic role is missing. The proposed new Sports Network(see section 8.8) would, it could be argued, be the ideal vehicle for promoting and monitoring sporting progression.

7.16 There is a need to examine and further develop existing sporting pathways that enable the identification of talent and the means of supporting and developing it to its full potential. If not, then young people, in particular, are being failed.

ISSUE 8: There is a need to review how talent is identified within the Borough and how it is nurtured and developed.

ACTION 8: Examine the role of NBLT in this work and how it can be supported further.

Ensure that the proposed Local Sports Network is also a key participant in co-ordinating the development of talent.

### **Delivery of Sport within the Borough**

7.17 Sport within the borough and the opportunity to participate in it is delivered via the local authority (through NBLT), schools, commercial organisations and voluntary groups.



- 7.18 The majority of the main sporting facilities are located fairly centrally within Nuneaton. The Pingles in the centre of Nuneaton lies adjacent to the premier park, Riversley Park, and Bedworth Leisure Centre again lies adjacent to the equally impressive Miner's Welfare Park in Bedworth. Residents in other areas of the Borough rely on smaller community facilities, which are variable in quality and accessibility. Depending on location some resident's needs are met by facilities beyond the borders of the authority such as Atherstone or Coventry.

Over recent years, residents have indicated that there is a need for more local, easily accessible, reasonably priced or free participation opportunities, not necessarily facilities based.

As outlined earlier, the opportunity to provide significantly more direct provision through in-house or NBLT will not be possible for the foreseeable future but this re-enforces the need for community led provision via local authority support. Again, it is also important to see that provision in its widest form in terms of the opportunities it could present. For example, the installation of an outdoor gym could lead to an informal women's running club that in turn leads to the formation of a crèche, then a play centre, leading to a sports club and so on. The aim must be to provide support and eliminate any unnecessary bureaucracy that can quickly stifle ambition.

- 7.19 It is important for the Council to ensure that it has the appropriate capability, both in terms of expertise and staff numbers in order that it can shape the delivery of sport and active recreation within the Borough in order to respond national initiatives. Given the ongoing reductions in its overall budget and the subsequent decrease in employee numbers as a consequence, it may be appropriate for the Council to review its current organisational structure over the next eighteen months to ensure that synergies across various teams are maximised.

ISSUE 9: Are the resources currently within NBBC being utilised to maximum effect in terms of addressing the priorities of the Council in relation to health, wellbeing, anti-social behaviour, open space and community involvement?

ACTION 9: Examine what resources and how such resources relating to the above priorities of NBBC are expended and whether a different approach may be more effective. Include within such a review the resources expended by NBLT in these areas.

## 8.0 **Strategic co-ordination with external partners**

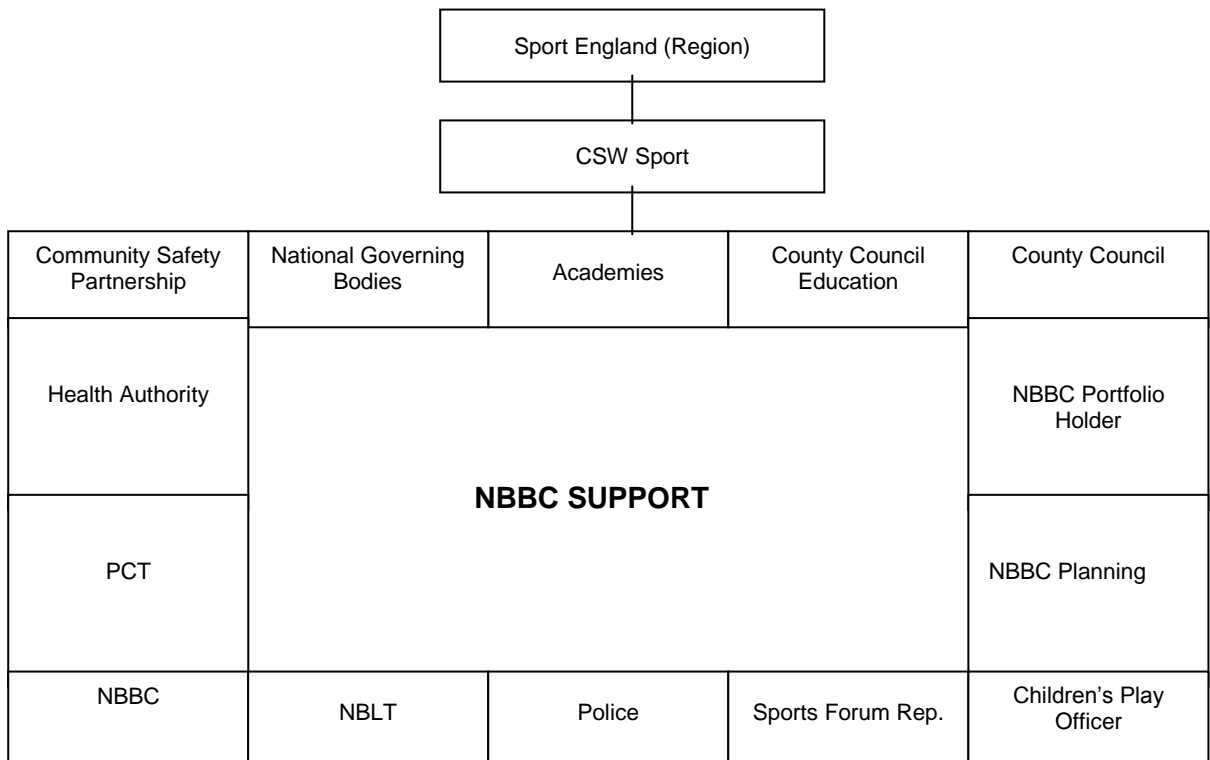
- 8.1 As stated earlier, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport is currently developing new ways of ensuring participation in sport increases year on year.
- 8.2 Greater emphasis is being placed on Sports Governing Bodies (SGB'S) who are being funded directly and paid by results. Equally, school and the voluntary sector will play an increasing role with local authorities providing some services but also ensuring that they co-

ordinate partners in order to achieve the best delivery and avoid duplication.

Included within the co-ordination role will be the greater involvement with health authorities and their preventative programmes and initiatives.

- 8.3 There is a commitment by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) to continue to support County Sports Partnerships (CSP's). Sport England invests in CSP's and they in turn support national governing bodies and local authorities.
- 8.4 NBBC's partnership, Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Sport (CSW Sport) is one of the six sub-regional partnerships within the West Midlands and one of 49 across England. It comprises seven local authorities, national governing bodies and the volunteer sector. It is co-ordinated by a core team of staff whose role is to develop, co-ordinate and promote sporting opportunities through the sub-region
- 8.5 However, within the Borough, there is not, unlike many other boroughs, a Local Sports Network that could represent the various sporting organisations. Such a network could feed into, and be supported by, CSW Sport.
- 8.6 There is a Sports Forum representing sports clubs within the Borough that meets bi-monthly. The meetings are not as well attended as in past years but the establishment of a Local Sports Network could help support and invigorate it by being part of a more meaningful strategic network. A proposed Local Sports Network is suggested overleaf.

**Local Sports Network – proposed structure**



ISSUE 10: The establishment of a Local Sports Network representing all areas of delivery relating to sport, active recreation and wellbeing would greatly enhance the strategic relationships within the borough. The network could be administered by but not necessarily chaired by NBBC. Its aim would be to ensure clubs, volunteers and individuals were represented regionally and equally, be aware of issues relating to their development, including funding.

ACTION 10: A Local Sports Network is established as soon as possible within Nuneaton and Bedworth.

## **9.0 Nuneaton and Bedworth Leisure Trust (NBLT)**

9.1 Established in 2003 and registered as a charity in June 2005, NBLT is a company limited by guarantee and is governed by its Memorandum and Articles of Association. The objects of the charity are laid out in its principal activities, namely:

- Provide or assist in the provision of facilities and services for recreational, sporting or other leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare to the public at large or to any section or sections of the public who may have need of such facilities and services by reasons of their youth, age, infirmity or disability or social and economic circumstances;
- Promote and preserve good health through community participation in healthy recreation;
- Operate and maintain the catering and ancillary trading facilities in support of the above.

9.2 NBBC paid NBLT a Management fee of:

2010/11	£1,859,500
2011/12	£1,669,262

Their accounts for 2010/11 show that they received £2,284,000 in income from sporting activities.

NBBC maintains the buildings and pays all energy costs relating to those buildings

9.3 NBLT's 'core services' includes the day to day management of the four sports facilities within the borough. They also provide a sports

development programme that includes some more marginal services such as: Walking for Health, lifestyle advice, Youth Inclusion and club development.

The Sport & Physical Activity Team work closely with other organisations to provide high quality Sport & Active Recreation Opportunities and Health initiatives to benefit the community of Nuneaton & Bedworth.

The Sport & Physical Activity Manager is responsible for the strategic planning for the team. Ensuring the delivery of outputs and actions detailed within the NBLT Business Plan and Sport & Recreation Team

The Club Development Officer (CDO) has many roles and responsibilities to perform, the main aim being to provide a wide range of assistance to local sporting organisations.

The Community Walking Coordinator, funded by Sport England through the Community Investment Fund, aims to get more people walking in their own communities, especially those who take little exercise or live in areas of poor health. Walking is set to play a bigger role in creating a healthier nation. Described by health experts as 'almost perfect exercise', walking requires no equipment or expense and is the ideal way for most people to become more active.

The Physical Activity Consultant aims to positively raise the awareness of the benefits of exercise through the promotion of physical activity across the borough with particular emphasis within the socially deprived wards in Nuneaton & Bedworth. Offering informal, friendly advice and assistance on how you can positively benefit from increased physical activity.

The Active Recreation Officer, funded by Sport England through the Community Investment fund, aims to increase volunteering opportunities and activities at community and residential venues across Nuneaton & Bedworth.

The Family Lifestyle Advisers, funded by NHS Warwickshire, provide a free nine week programme aimed at families who live in Nuneaton, Bedworth and North Warwickshire and have children aged between 4 - 13 years. The programme is a practical way of developing healthy eating and fitness for the family.

- 9.4 As the previous Sport and Recreation Plan pointed out, there are sound reasons why NBLT should engage in such activities. However, it remains unclear as to whether these additional initiatives are part of NBBC's policy or 'ad-hoc' and opportunistic widening of the service – based on taking advantage of external funding in addition to the NBBC Management Fee.
- 9.5 With the the leases relating to the facilities managed by NBLT on behalf of NBBC expiring in 2014, work is currently underway

examining future sport/recreation need and how it will be delivered in the future. Clarity is required as to:

- what does the Council want in terms of sport, recreation and well-being?
- how should it be provided?
- by whom should it be provided?

ISSUE 11: With the expiry of the leases to NBLT in 2014 there is the opportunity to decide and clearly lay out how the future delivery of sport, sport development, active recreation and wellbeing will be structured. The period of delivery will be over a term that will allow for external funding and/or economies of scale.

ACTION 11: An internal procurement team is set up to identify leisure and sporting need over a possible 7-10 year term, commencing 2014.

## 10 Health

10.1 In November 2008 Professor Sir Michael Marmot was asked by the Secretary for Health to chair an independent review that would provide the most effective strategy for reducing health inequalities in England from 2010. The Marmot Review, Fair Society, Healthy Lives, was published in February 2010.

10.2 The report included nine key messages:

- a) Reducing health inequalities is a matter of fairness and social justice. In England, the many people who are currently dying prematurely each year as a result of health inequalities would otherwise have enjoyed, in total, between 1.3 and 2.5 million years of extra life.
- b) There is social gradient in health – the lower a person's social position, the worse his or her health. Action should focus on reducing the gradient in health.
- c) Health inequalities result from social inequalities. Action on health inequalities requires action across all the social determinants of health.
- d) Focusing solely on the most disadvantaged will not reduce health inequalities sufficiently. To reduce the steepness of the social gradient in health, actions must be universal but with a scale and intensity that is proportionate to the level of disadvantage. This is called proportionate universalism.
- e) Action taken to reduce health inequalities will benefit society in many ways. It will have economic benefits in reducing losses from illness associated with health inequalities. These currently account for productivity losses, reduced tax revenue, higher welfare payments and increased treatment costs.
- f) Economic growth is not the most important measure of the country's success. The fair distribution of health, well-being and sustainability are important social goals.

Tackling social inequalities in health and tackling climate change must go together.

g) Reducing health inequalities will require action on six policy objectives:

- give every child the best start in life
- enable children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
- create fair employment and good work for all
- ensure healthy standards of living for all
- create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities
- strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention

h) Delivering these policy objectives will require action by central and local government, the NHS, the voluntary and private sectors. National policies will not work without effective local delivery systems focused on health inequality in all policies.

i) Effective local delivery requires effective participatory decision making at local level. This can only happen by empowering individuals and local communities. (Marmot 2010)

ISSUE 12: NBBC recognises these key messages.

ACTION 12: NBBC will base future decisions relating to sport and recreation delivery on improving residents health and well-being and overcoming inequalities in health within the Borough

### 10.3 **The local picture relating to health**

The health of people in Nuneaton and Bedworth is mixed compared with the England average. Although deprivation is lower than average, 5110 children live in poverty and life expectancy for both men and women is lower than the England average.

10.4 Life expectancy is 10.7 years lower for men and 7.4 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Nuneaton and Bedworth than in the least deprived areas. (Slope Index of Inequality 5.01.2011)

10.5 About 18.7% of Year 6 children are classified as obese. In addition, estimated levels of adult 'healthy eating' and obesity are worse than the England average, the borough percentage being 29.8% against the England average of 24.2%.

10.6 It is recognised that many of the leading causes of disease and disability within the borough are associated with physical inactivity such as:

- coronary heart disease (CHD)
- strokes
- obesity
- Type II diabetes
- Hypertension
- Colon/rectal cancer
- stress and anxiety
- osteoarthritis
- osteoporosis
- lower back pain

- 10.7 37% of CHD deaths can be attributed to physical inactivity.
- 10.8 The Department of Health has calculated that the health costs of physical inactivity within the borough is £1,629,512 (measured 2006-07).
- 10.9 In 2013, the budget and responsibility for public health will transfer to Warwickshire County Council. This should allow for a focus on health and well-being across all services.
- 10.10 The County Council (WCC) has recently reorganised and within the Communities Group is the Public Health Business Unit. One of the roles of that unit is to promote health improvement by developing policies for healthcare provision in order to prevent illness and reduce hospital or long-term healthcare.
- 10.11 It is assumed that in order for this unit to impact upon the residents of Nuneaton and Bedworth, it will utilise the services of leisure provision, children's play, well-being and parks and countryside.

There is, perhaps, despite the financial climate, great opportunities for County, NHS and the local authority to re-assess how the prevention of ill-health and a greater sense of well-being can be delivered to all NBBC residents.

ISSUE 13: There is a need to work closely with the Health Authority in order to offer sporting programmes and activities that will improve over time the health of residents.

ACTION 13: Greater co-ordination and communication is established between NBBC and the Health Authority

- 10.12 Warwickshire Health and Well-being Board  
Health and Well-being Boards were introduced as part of the government's reform of health and social care outlined in the Health and Social Care Bill 2011. They will be the main forum for discussing and implementing strategy relating to health, social care and public health in the County – bringing together representatives from the county, district and borough councils, the NHS, public health and social care.

10.13 The Board's key responsibilities will be:

- to ensure a co-ordinated approach to health, social care and public health across the County
- to lead the development of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)
- to develop a shared Health and Well-being Strategy that will act as an overarching strategy for all partners involved
- to receive and consider the commissioning plans of the GP led Clinical Commissioning Groups
- to receive and consider patient and public feedback via regular reports from Warwickshire Health Watch

10.14 What is a JSNA?

In 2007, the government placed a joint statutory duty on all upper tier local authorities and PCT's to undertake a JSNA. It would document the key local priorities across health and social care and in Warwickshire, will help develop Warwickshire's Health and Well-being Strategy, Commissioning Plans and Transformation Plans for the local health economy.

10.15 The Coalition Government has reaffirmed the importance of JSNA's and to do so through the Health and Well-being Board.

10.16 At the time of writing, the health reforms nationally, and as a consequence, locally, are not being greeted wholeheartedly, not least by some of those in the profession. However, they are being implemented and the overarching NHS Commissioning Board will be judged against four strategic objectives:

- transferring power to local organisations
- establishing the commissioning landscape
- developing specific commissioning and financial management capabilities
- developing excellent relationships

10.17 So how will this new approach affect the residents of Nuneaton and Bedworth? The plans will look to improve people's health and, in order to do that, those health professionals charged with so doing will want to ensure that as many people as possible are given the opportunities and encouragement to alter or improve their diet, exercise more and live in communities and environments that uplift the spirit and promote well-being.

10.18 To do that, the local authority, sports clubs, the voluntary sector, schools and all those organisations that touch upon people's health and well-being have a major role to play. It follows, therefore, that such provision has a value, both in terms of adding value to a person's lifestyle and a further value relating to preventing illness. All of the above organisations must be in a position to evaluate that value and provide evidence that what they are doing is helping in the overall aim – improving the lives of residents. Then, and only then, can such



organisations confidently be considered for commissioning by the Health Authority.

10.19 Warwickshire Joint Health and Well-being Strategy 2012 – 15

The Health and Well-being Strategy is a plan that has been developed between the NHS, social care, public health and local authorities in Warwickshire. The document sets out the desired future direction for Warwickshire in relation to health and well-being. It requires all the partners outlined above to indicate how they will contribute to improving the lives of Warwickshire residents.

10.20 It recognises the need to integrate and co-ordinate services in order to maximise resources expended. The focus will be on improving health and well-being of people rather than reacting to problems.

10.21 The proposed strategy also acknowledges that it will have to do this during a time of falling budgets and an increasing older population.

10.22 As stated in the introduction, the emphasis of this strategy is based on how we can improve the health and lifestyles of the people in Nuneaton and Bedworth. NBBC will commit to ensuring that all our facilities and the people who work in them, including parks, gyms and health and fitness practitioners will have as their first priority, the need to improve health and physical and mental well-being.

ISSUE 14: The health of our residents is a major issue facing the residents of Nuneaton and Bedworth now and will, unless steps are taken to reverse the decline in people's health, only get worse in future.

ACTION 14: The main priority of NBBC and its partners when delivering any sporting or active recreation will be with the aim of improving health and wellbeing.

**11 Olympics 2012**

11.1 The Chief Executive of Sport England, Jenny Price, visited Athens in the autumn of 2007 in order to observe how a previous host city had utilised the Olympics facilities after the Games held in 2004. The Olympic stadium was closed, locked and behind padlocked gates. It was, along with the swimming pools, crumbling. There was no increase in sports participation.

11.2 As soon as it was announced that the United Kingdom had won the bid to host 2012, it was decided that the main priority, in addition to a successful event, would be a lasting legacy. That legacy would see the regeneration of east London, leaving a centre for elite and participation sport and, equally important, a sport sector (and to a lesser extent cultural) that would be in a position to massively increase participation.

In 2007, the Culture, Media and Sport Committee report – London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games: funding and legacy, noted that no host city could show evidence of any increased participation in sport – especially children.

- 11.3 It appears there is a lot of work to do. Participation is decreasing and as Price points out, the gender gap in sport participation is alarming with only 28% of women playing sport once a week compared with 40% of men. Participation among 16-19 year olds is also decreasing.

Further research shows that events held in the UK, such as the Commonwealth Games in Manchester, have had no measurable impact on post event participation and that major sporting events do not provide the 'role model' impetus whereby people take up sport after watching their heroes.

- 11.4 Perhaps that is confirmed by noting how, during Wimbledon fortnight, the country's public tennis courts are oversubscribed throughout but it is rarely the case two weeks after the event.

- 11.5 The DCMS specifically stated, as part of the four main targets of the Games that the government would focus on:

'harnessing the United Kingdom's passion for sport to increase grass roots participation, particularly by young people and to encourage the whole population to be more physically active'

- 11.6 So how will participation increase in Nuneaton and Bedworth? Will the 'Sporting Habit for Life' – the £1 billion plus investment by Sport England in their 2012-17 Youth and Community Strategy impact upon our young people?

- 11.7 In some ways it already has. Some of the National Governing Bodies for Sport whose endeavours impact upon the sporting participants within the Borough have or will receive part of the £450 million investment in NGB 13-17 funding.

- 11.8 Sport England's other initiative 'Places People Play' has delivered funding to clubs within the Borough already, including Nuneaton Harriers Athletics Club, Bedworth United Football Club and Nuneaton Tennis Club. All received not insignificant sums to develop their facilities.

ISSUE 15: The Olympics may not lead to an immediate or sustained upsurge in people participating in sport.

ACTION 15: NBBC recognises that this may be the case but still regards the need to provide opportunities to increase physical activity is of paramount importance, particularly by children and young people.

## **12 Parks and Open Space**

- 12.1 Nuneaton and Bedworth's Open Space Strategy 2011-2021 was formally approved by Cabinet in late 2011.
- 12.2 It recognised that the open space within the Borough is essential to the health and well-being of all residents and makes a considerable contribution to the quality of life. It provides places to meet, exercise and play and, equally as important, impacts on mental health and well-being.
- 12.3 The strategy outlines a range of key policies in order to improve, protect and develop public green space over a period of ten years. The most important being:
- identification of key routes and new links to enable continuous routes of open space and wildlife corridors through the Borough.
  - a continuous improvement in the quality of grounds maintenance
  - a commitment to ensure young people living in the Borough have access to quality play provision
  - address the key barriers to the use and quality of open space, most notably anti-social behaviour, vandalism and the perception of public safety
  - to work with partners, both organisations and individuals to ensure that green space becomes a real choice in the fight against many of the health issues affecting residents' lives.
  - To establish, develop and continue to support 'Friends of Groups'.
- 12.4 There is a need to be clear as to what opportunities there are for open spaces to help deliver a major positive contribution to the health and well-being of residents.
- 12.5 In October 2011, a report: 'A Rapid Review of the Evidence Base in Relation to Physical Activity and Green Space and Health' was published by HM Partnerships on behalf of NHS Ashton, Leigh and Wigan. That review concluded that there was a positive association between access to high quality green space and health and access to high quality green space and physical activity.
- 12.6 It further concluded that notwithstanding an increase in usage of parks in recent years, much green space remains underused, particularly in deprived communities. Investment in green space should be seen as an investment in public health. The review found clear evidence that those living in deprived neighbourhoods access green space far more infrequently than those from more affluent areas. Therefore, improving green space in deprived areas has the potential to benefit those who have most to gain.
- 12.7 The local authority has, through the Open Space Strategy 2011-2021, identified on a hierarchical basis, the quantity and quality of its green

space. Considerable investment over the past five years, particularly in children's play areas and green gyms has been undertaken. There is now a danger that the impetus to further improve open space, making them relevant to a wider demographic, will be lost.

- 12.8 There is a need to work with external partners in order to maximise the potential of open space. The National Health Service should be a major partner and supporter of NBBC's parks if the long term health benefits are to be realised.

### 13.0 **Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Plan**

- 13.1 The Borough Plan sets out the overall planning vision and framework for the Borough over the next 15 to 20 years. It is currently being prepared and will form a key part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for Nuneaton and Bedworth. It will portray the vision and strategic objectives for the Borough, as well as core policies that will set the basis for directing development over the plan period.

- 13.2 In June 2009 the Council produced an Issues and Options document setting out the main discussion points relating to the social, economic and environmental factors alongside housing, employment, health education and leisure provision. The aim is to create a document that considers how all the elements will work together to create cohesive and sustainable communities with local identity and distinctiveness.

- 13.3 The Issues and Options element of the document highlighted a number of key issues facing the Borough that would need to be addressed in order to achieve the vision of what Nuneaton and Bedworth should be like in 2026. Those relating to this strategy in particular are outlined below:

- Household earnings are the lowest in Warwickshire and there are a number of people of working age claiming benefits. This contributes significantly to poverty and deprivation.
- Unemployment in Nuneaton and Bedworth is high, adding to the vulnerability of the Borough's economy.
- The Borough has a poor skills base and GCSE attainment is the second lowest in the County.
- There are, in parts of the Borough, low aspirations and this limits educational achievement and contributes to low wages, deprivation and dependency on benefits.
- The quality and diversity of the retail sector in Nuneaton is limited and that could weaken future competitiveness.
- There is not a strong evening or night time economy with limited transport after 6.00 pm and poor perceptions of public safety.
- Bedworth town centre has limited residential provision and other than the Civic Hall, poor leisure provision.

- Community facilities are scattered across the Borough but their quality, popularity and variety of provision varies greatly.
- The legacy of mining and heavy engineering has had a negative impact on the landscape. The Borough has over 100 ha of derelict land and over 300 potentially contaminated sites.
- Land outside the existing urban area is currently designated countryside, Area of Restraint or Green Belt, meaning future growth of the Borough could impact on sensitive landscape and biodiversity.
- There are only three local nature reserves in the Borough and accessibility to woodland is lower than anywhere in Warwickshire.
- While Riversley Park and Miners' Welfare Park serve the whole Borough, other parks and recreation grounds are unevenly distributed with the greatest concentration to the north.
- There is a good green corridor network running through the middle of the borough linked to the Coventry canal and the Nuneaton/Ashby disused railway. There are no corridors in Bulkington or the south west which reduces biodiversity and opportunities for leisure.
- Access to some of the Borough's leisure facilities is restricted for people without a car. Public transport to Bermuda Park is limited and there are no public footpaths along the A444.
- Few people travel by public transport, cycle or walk.
- There is a massive difference in deprivation between the north and south of Warwickshire and within Nuneaton and Bedworth there is a significant divide between east and west – the most deprived areas being located in the west.
- Life expectancy in the borough is the lowest in Warwickshire and lower than the national average.
- Fear of crime and actual crime in the borough is the highest in Warwickshire and has the highest levels of anti-social behaviour. This has a significant negative impact on community well-being.

13.4 This strategy identifies with the issues outlined above and in setting out the Action Points throughout the document, will utilise sport, recreation and well-being to assist in achieving the Spatial Vision currently being consulted on as part of the Issues and Options appraisal.

13.5 While the points below are not the entire vision, they are those that can be impacted upon by this strategy over the next five years and beyond:

- have a quality of life that is at least equal to that experienced by the rest of Warwickshire
- be able to access a wide range of services and facilities easily by walking, cycling or using public transport

- the quality of local landscapes will be better and there will be improvements to biodiversity and the natural environment
  - be healthier, have active lifestyles, improved access to healthcare and increased life expectancy. Communities will be safer and feel safer because of reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour and they will be cohesive, equitable and empowered
- 13.6 Nuneaton and Bedworth currently has a population of 122,700 and this is expected to rise to 133,200 by 2026. It is also anticipated that there will be an additional 7,900 homes by 2028 and this will provide additional population growth beyond that above. This additional housing growth could further increase population by a further 27,000 people, taking the total population to an estimated 160,200.
- 13.7 Such growth will impact upon the need for sporting and recreational facilities and programmes. When the preferred options are known then a rigorous review of where, when and how that growth will be catered for will be required.

#### **14.0 Children's Play**

- 14.1 In what is a period of financial restraint, it is easy to achieve savings by cutting services that are viewed, by some, to be what may be described as a 'luxury' element of a service.
- 14.2 NBBC takes pride in the fact that it continues to invest in bettering the lives of children. Since 2004 it has, through a major capital programme, refurbished or rebuilt nearly all of the play areas within the Borough.
- 14.3 Going further, it has continued to invest in the Play Ranger service when the National Lottery funding ran out in 2009. Thousands of children continue to be encouraged to play in the parks and open spaces throughout the Borough.
- 14.4 The service is not a luxury, it is an essential service that is leading the way in reversing the trend that sees young children leading a more sedentary lifestyle.
- 14.5 The National Trust has recently published a report: 'Natural Childhood', authored by Stephen Moss. Moss is one of Britain's leading writers on nature and the original producer of the BBC series Springwatch. The report is a seminal work and one that offers incontrovertible evidence that, if the descent into a sedentary, indoor childhood is not quickly reversed, then the risk of social, medical and environmental problems in the future will seriously impact upon the lives of children and adults.
- 14.6 The report confirms the perception that children are leading a largely screen-based lifestyle:

- on average, children watch more than 17 hours of television a week – two and a half hours per day, every day of the year (12% increase since 2007)
- they spend 20 hours a week on-line, mostly utilising social networking sites
- as they grow older, screen time increases with 11 – 15 year olds spending 7.5 hours a day in front of a screen

14.7 The report points out that it would be easy to pin the blame for children’s inactivity solely on this screen based lifestyle. However, it highlights other issues.

14.8 Children are becoming ‘prisoners in their own homes’. Since the 1970’s, children’s ‘radius of activity’ – the area around their home in which they can roam unsupervised, has declined by 90%. In 1971, 80% of seven and eight year olds walked to school. Two decades later this was less than 10%. Two out of three ten year olds have never been to a shop or a park by themselves.

14.9 It is becoming increasingly clear that this sedentary lifestyle is having a serious impact upon not only the physical but also the mental health of children.

14.10 The health decline has been outlined earlier. Shockingly, however, the following is also evident:

- one in ten children between five and sixteen years of age has a clinically diagnosed mental health disorder
- one in twelve adolescents are self-harming
- there is an ‘epidemic’ of children exhibiting conduct, behavioural and emotional problems

14.11 NBBC’s Play Ranger service, via the Children’s Play Officer and five staff, provide four after school sessions a day during February to October and one session a day November to February. During school holidays, five hours of play are provided at Destination Parks, mainly Riversley Park and Miners’ Welfare Park.

14.12 Attendances per year are as follows:

<b>2008-2009</b>	<b>2009-2010</b>	<b>2010-2011</b>	<b>2011-2012</b>
8,888	11,945	18,317	26,780

14.13 The service fulfils the original intention of encouraging more children and their parents or guardians into the Borough’s parks and open spaces. There is no doubt that, in so doing, these spaces have become a choice for children and their parents that may not have been considered before. It would not be unreasonable to conclude that such choices will, in many cases, germinate healthier lifestyles as a result.

ISSUE 16: The Play Rangers have successfully increased the number of children having access to active play within parks and open spaces.

ACTION 16: Continue to ensure that the opportunities for active play are retained and the numbers participating are maintained.

## **15.0 Sports Clubs – the need to support them.**

- 15.1 It is universally accepted that sport and active recreation has a huge and positive impact on crime prevention, health, education, social cohesion and regeneration.
- 15.2 Without local clubs and the volunteers who run them, community sport would not exist. Within Nuneaton and Bedworth the biggest driver to get people participating in sport is that of local clubs.
- 15.3 Should, the Olympics 2012 make any contribution to a sustained increase in sports participation, then clubs must be ready to absorb any surge in new members. Equally, they must also utilise the Games to market their club or organisation and provide the nervous newcomer a welcome that ensures their return.
- 15.4 Within the Borough there is a wide variety of clubs operating at various levels of competence, financial soundness and membership.
- 15.5 In a presentation given by club representatives to the Scrutiny Working Group as evidence for this strategy, it was clear that now, more than ever, clubs need the support of a strategic body in order to ensure their well-being and long term survival.
- 15.6 As a result of the lack of strategic lead, many clubs operate below their capacity and potential, sometimes unaware of the advantages that could be gained if part of a strategic organisation. Unfortunately the Sports Forum, in its current guise, is not effective in bringing the many clubs together or providing sufficient advantages for being actively engaged within it.
- 15.7 A small example portrays this: currently there is a significant upsurge in Triathlon, with a club being established within the Borough. This new club would provide a very attractive diversion for those who have gone as far as they can in competitive swimming. Moving on to Triathlon could provide fresh and invigorating new challenges but such movement could only properly be exploited by both clubs being aware of what each is providing. Regular communication through a revitalised Sports Forum (that in turn supports a Local Sports Network) would be hugely helpful and should be supported by NBBC.
- 15.8 In order to support clubs better there is a need to re-evaluate what they provide and assess that value in terms of direct support – financial or otherwise.



Nuneaton and Bedworth Swimming Club gave evidence to the Scrutiny Working Group in late 2011. It was clear that for a club operating within a borough of this size they are providing high quality coaching and producing swimmers who can go on to compete at the highest level. Equally, they offer a sporting activity, along with all the benefits that gives to an individual in terms of health, discipline and well-being to up to 400 young people. It does so only by the support and skills of a wide range of volunteers. Such endeavour is replicated within clubs across the Borough: Nuneaton Town Football Club Community Foundation, Bedworth United Football Club, Nuneaton Harriers Athletics Club, rugby clubs, cycling clubs, the numerous junior football and cricket teams etc.

- 15.9 Mention should also be made relating to the rise in small boxing clubs throughout the Borough. Often run on a shoestring, sometimes in premises that are far from ideal, the clubs such as those based in Bulkington, Exhall and Bedworth, together with the ambitious Boxing Clever Academy, offer a structured and sporting lifestyle to significant numbers of young people.
- 15.10 To lose any of the above clubs would be a significant setback for the sporting and recreational well-being of the Borough. However, it is clear that many of these clubs are facing greater organisational challenges than ever before – often resulting in their ambitions being curtailed due to diminishing volunteers or parental involvement.
- 15.11 They plainly need greater support. It is proposed, therefore, that the current expenditure patterns on sport and leisure by NBBC should be reviewed with the aim of offering greater financial support either directly or in kind, to enable these clubs to have at least medium term sustainability.
- 15.12 Obviously there would need to be a framework in which clubs would operate, based on agreed outcomes and financial stringency. However, such conditions should not be so onerous that they put even greater strain on clubs administration.

ISSUE 17: What are the benefits offered by clubs and organisations engaged in physical activity across the Borough and, given greater support, are they capable of substantially increasing participation among target groups?

ACTION 17: A study is carried out evaluating the value that small, medium and larger sports clubs offer in terms of coaching, diversion from ASB, health improvement, volunteering opportunities. Further examination be carried out as to whether such clubs given support, financially or in kind, could expand their impact upon communities.

## **16.0 Food and Diet.**

- 16.1 In Nuneaton and Bedworth, in line with every other town and city in the United Kingdom there are a large number of individuals who lack basic food skills and education. They are unaware of where food comes from, how it is produced, what constitutes a balanced diet and they are unable to produce healthy food for themselves.
- 16.2 Nuneaton is a Heart Town- a scheme promoted by the British Heart Foundation that sees entire communities come together to beat heart disease, one of the biggest causes of premature death.
- 16.3. In 2005, a survey by the British Heart Foundation found that 37% of children aged 8-14 years did not know that cheese was made from milk and 36% could not identify the main ingredient in chips.
- 16.4 The Chief Medical Officer has compared the crisis in children's diets to a health 'time bomb' which must be defused. Unfortunately, that applies to the young people of Nuneaton and Bedworth just as much as anywhere else in the land. The consequences of childhood obesity are now clear: incidences of high blood pressure, raised cholesterol, and even clogged arteries are rising. Obesity in childhood is likely to develop into obesity in adulthood increasing the risk of heart disease, diabetes or cancer.
- 16.5 The psychological impact of obesity can be as damaging as the physical for many children. Being overweight or obese is associated with increased levels of distress, disadvantage and psychological problems.
- 16.6 The problem therefore is that there is an urgent need to reverse the out of control obesity that sees our adult residents in Nuneaton and Bedworth having reached the fourth highest level in England.
- 16.7 Without doubt, the most urgent priority for all those engaged in sport, health, education and voluntary work is the need to help young people understand what is a healthy diet and to realise the need to become more active, burning off more calories than those taken in. It will need a sustained, long term programme.
- 16.8 How to bring this about is a major challenge and while there are pockets of good practise within the Borough there needs to be an initial coming together of all those who have an interest in tackling obesity. Maybe that could be carried out under the Heart Town banner?
- 16.9 Endeavours could include:
- Assist schools to develop their food education and establish growing projects in schools, parks, community centres and town centre locations
  - Establish two full time Food and Growing Officers to co-ordinate the various programmes. Such posts could

replace existing health or sports development posts if it was agreed that they are a priority.

- Utilise the Play Rangers to place greater emphasis on growing and good food.
- Market allotments more effectively with smaller plots that are prepared and ready to begin growing rather than having to overcome overgrown large plots.
- Create centres of excellence –the former nursery site within the Miner’s Welfare Park and recently acquired by People in Action stands out as an ideal venue to enthuse children and young people.
- Build on the increasingly successful scheme currently underway at Nuneaton Town that replicates (on a smaller scale) the Villa Vitality programme. This is a partnership between Aston Villa and the local health service available to all year 5 pupils in the city. They have their own gym at the football ground, cook a healthy meal with a chef and learn about healthy eating. The Community Foundation at Nuneaton Town manages to achieve much including now having its own allotment at the club. Again this warrants further support.

ISSUE 18: There is a need to encourage healthier eating and an understanding of food, particularly among children and young people.

ACTION 18: Put the knowledge of food, diet and growing food alongside exercise, play and sport in terms of importance. Investigate the potential of the nursery in the Miners’ Welfare Park, Bedworth, currently being transformed by People in Action, as a hub for such work.

## 17.0 NEXT STEPS

This strategy identifies a number of priorities and actions to address during the life of the document. They are summarised below:

**ISSUE 1:** There is a need for agreed and co-ordinated planning involving the Council and all partners involved in delivering sport and recreation, but in particular the delivery of provision that is directly funded by the Council.

**ACTION 1:** *As part of the budget setting process all partners will, utilising this strategy, provide a costed Annual Business Plan outlining actions and intended outcomes.*

**ISSUE 2:** There is a need to widen opportunities for sport and leisure pursuits. The role of open space is underutilised and presents unique opportunities for communities to not only exercise but enjoy the social and wellbeing benefits associated with open space and landscape.

**ACTION 2:** *Continue to build on the community involvement and resulting initiatives that have taken place at Stockingford Recreation Ground and use it as a model for other areas of open space in the future. Ensure that NBBC and all partners support the residents who live around and/or use the park to establish a beacon of good practise that can be replicated throughout the Borough.*

**ISSUE 3:** The increase in junior uptake is encouraging as is that of OAP'S but there is still a reluctance by some target groups to utilise the PTL. There is a need to widen the opportunities of the PTL card, making it more attractive to prospective holders.

**ACTION 3:** *The uptake of the card by target groups is monitored and reported annually to Scrutiny by Nuneaton and Bedworth Leisure Trust.*

*A further review is carried out as to how PTL can be further improved is carried out within the lifetime of this strategy.*

**ISSUE 4:** There is a need to ensure that an evidence based strategic needs analysis relating to all leisure and open space is in place. This is essential in order to ensure future development within the Borough is resourced properly via the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) that will outline what will be expected of developers to provide.

**ACTION 4:** *The Facilities Planning Model is completed and the Borough Plan is evidenced by leisure and open space requirements.*

**ISSUE 5:** The need to help residents who wish to improve their lives or help others to do so needs sustainable support.

**ACTION 5:** *A review of how NBBC can, utilising current resources, support and develop communities who either currently provide services within their area or wish to do so. Particular attention should be given to assessing how NBBC officers and employees within our major partners, NBLT for example, can work together more effectively.*

**ISSUE 6:** NBBC'S priority is to increase participation in sport by children and young people.

**ACTION 6:** *NBBC and all its partners engaged in sporting provision will do so within the Sporting Habit for Life initiative and all business plans and funding applications to NBBC be expected will reflect that.*

**ISSUE 7:** There are an increasing number of less mainstream sports and activities that appear to be increasingly popular and could significantly drive up participation rates, particularly among the young.

**ACTION 7:** *Evaluate the type, numbers of participants and geographical spread of these less mainstream activities with the aim of increasing their availability across the Borough.*

**ISSUE 8:** There is a need to review how talent is identified within the Borough and how it is nurtured and developed.

**ACTION 8:** *Examine the role of NBLT in this work and how it can be supported further.  
Ensure that the proposed Local Sports Network is also a key participant in co-ordinating the development of talent.*

**ISSUE 9:** Are the resources currently within NBBC being utilised to maximum effect in terms of addressing the priorities of the Council in relation to health, wellbeing, anti-social behaviour, open space and community involvement?

**ACTION 9:** *Examine what resources and how such resources relating to the above priorities of NBBC are expended and whether a different approach may be more effective. Include within such a review the resources expended by NBLT in these areas.*

**ISSUE 10:** The establishment of a Local Sports Network representing all areas of delivery relating to sport, active recreation and wellbeing would greatly enhance the strategic relationships within the borough. The network could be administered by but not necessarily chaired by NBBC. Its aim would be to ensure clubs, volunteers and individuals were represented regionally and equally, be aware of issues relating to their development, including funding.

**ACTION 10:** *A Local Sports Network is established as soon as possible within Nuneaton and Bedworth.*

**ISSUE 11:** With the expiry of the leases to NBLT in 2014 there is the opportunity to decide and clearly lay out how the future delivery of sport, sport development, active recreation and wellbeing will be

structured. The period of delivery will be over a term that will allow for external funding and/or economies of scale.

**ACTION 11:** *An internal procurement team is set up to identify leisure and sporting need over a possible 7-10 year term, commencing 2014.*

**ISSUE 12:** NBBC recognises these key messages.

**ACTION 12:** *NBBC will base future decisions relating to sport and recreation delivery on improving residents health and well-being and overcoming inequalities in health within the Borough.*

**ISSUE 13:** There is a need to work closely with the Health Authority in order to offer sporting programmes and activities that will improve over time the health of residents.

**ACTION 13** *Greater co-ordination and communication is established between NBBC and the Health Authority.*

**ISSUE 14:** The health of our residents is a major issue facing the residents of Nuneaton and Bedworth now and will, unless steps are taken to reverse the decline in people's health, only get worse in future.

**ACTION 14:** *The main priority of NBBC and its partners when delivering any sporting or active recreation will be with the aim of improving health and wellbeing.*

**ISSUE 15:** The Olympics may not lead to an immediate or sustained upsurge in people participating in sport.

**ACTION 15:** *NBBC recognises that this may be the case but still regards the need to provide opportunities to increase physical activity is of paramount importance, particularly by children and young people.*

**ISSUE 16:** The Play Rangers have successfully increased the number of children having access to active play within parks and open spaces.

**ACTION 16:** *Continue to ensure that the opportunities for active play are retained and the numbers participating are maintained.*

**ISSUE 17:** What are the benefits offered by clubs and organisations engaged in physical activity across the Borough and, given greater support, are they capable of substantially increasing participation among target groups?

**ACTION 17:** *A study is carried out evaluating the value that small, medium and larger sports clubs offer in terms of coaching, diversion from ASB, health improvement, volunteering opportunities. Further examination be carried out as to whether such clubs given support, financially or in kind, could expand their impact upon communities.*

**ISSUE 18:** There is a need to encourage healthier eating and an understanding of food, particularly among children and young people.

**ACTION 18:** *Put the knowledge of food, diet and growing food alongside exercise, play and sport in terms of importance. Investigate the potential of the nursery in the Miners' Welfare Park, Bedworth, currently being transformed by People in Action, as a hub for such work.*

There is also recognition that, in order to overcome what are significant challenges relating to health and increasing physical activity, then a co-ordinated approach involving everyone employed within the sector. This will encompass change within NBBC's delivery and how it strategically supports the work of others.

17.1 In order to begin this process and set up a sound foundation for this strategy to fulfil the actions over a five year term, the following route map is proposed:

1. That all the issues and actions are agreed and prioritised.
2. The delivery of sport and leisure post 2014 is agreed
3. The Local Sports Network is established
4. A One Year Plan is agreed whereby all partners within the LSN outline their role, contribution and outcomes.
5. Measures and indicators are agreed that will enable progress to be monitored.
6. Priorities for the next year are agreed
7. Progress on implementation is reported annually to Social Scrutiny Committee.

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