

# **Draft Sport & Leisure Strategy 2018 - 2023**

Produced by *Sport and Leisure Delivery Review  
Project Team*

May 2018

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### ***Links to other strategies***

- Corporate Plan
- Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy
- Our Strategy for Success
- Emerging Local Plan

## **1.0 Foreword**

Harrogate Borough Council is committed to enabling people to enjoy sport and physical activity in ways which meet their needs.

Harrogate is a district that offers a wide range of opportunities for our residents and visitors to participate in sport and active leisure pursuits. From swimming, a gym workout, a Pilates or yoga session to a walk in one of our parks or through Nidderdale AONB, there is a wide choice for everyone, whatever your age, ability or preference.

Maintaining and developing these opportunities is an essential part of making Harrogate district a progressive and vibrant place to live, work and visit. Harrogate Borough Council is proud of the investments which we have made, and continue to make in our sport and leisure facilities. However, in common with other local authorities across England, the council continues to face financial pressures.

Harrogate Borough Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy identifies the importance of ensuring that the council plans and manages our services in a way that aligns our limited resources with the priorities set out in our 2018-2022 Corporate Plan. Those priorities include developing "a model for cost-effective and commercially focussed Sport and Leisure Service".

Against this backdrop, and in light of the new national strategy for sport and physical activity that was launched in December 2015, it is appropriate the council now defines a strategic vision for our sport and leisure service. That vision will help shape and guide the future direction of the service and ensure that it focuses on delivering outcomes linked to the strategy.

The publication of this draft strategy provides an opportunity for everybody to comment on its direction and content before the final version is published and adopted.

I strongly encourage you to consider this document and provide feedback using the consultation response form on the council's website: <https://www.harrogate.gov.uk/sportstrategy>

The strategic vision, priority outcomes and principles of delivery that are eventually agreed will define the direction of our sport and leisure services for the next five years.

Councillor Stanley Lumley  
Cabinet Member for Culture, Tourism and Sport  
Harrogate Borough Council

## 2.0 Aims

- 2.1 To define a strategic vision for the service and identify the priority outcomes that the council wishes to see delivered.
- 2.2 To identify a set of delivery principles that should reflect in work to deliver the strategic vision and priority outcomes.

Taken together, the vision, priorities and principles will help shape and guide the future direction of the service and ensure that it delivers the agreed outcomes.

## 3.0 Where we are

- 3.1 Harrogate Borough Council recognises that the provision of sport and leisure activities and facilities can bring significant benefits to the physical, social and economic health of our communities.

The health benefits associated with physical activity are widely documented and participation in group activities can engage those who are isolated. Recent research<sup>1</sup> has concluded that for every £1 spent on sport and physical activity, £1.91 worth of social benefit is generated.

Harrogate BC operates 6 swimming pools and leisure centres as well as outdoor facilities including playing pitches, tennis courts, bowling greens, pitch and put golf, table tennis and disc golf. The district's parks and other green spaces (including Nidderdale AONB) provide opportunities for walking and other exercise.

The net cost of running the council's sport and leisure facilities is budgeted to be £2.9m for the year 2018/19; the equivalent of £18.23 per head of population.

There is no statutory requirement for councils to provide sport and leisure facilities, but the overwhelming majority of district, metropolitan and unitary authorities in the UK do so.

Local government and the public sector in general have faced significant challenges throughout the past decade. Over the last five years the district's central government grant has reduced by over half and our net revenue budget by over 28% (from £25 million to £18 million). Grant funding will continue to decrease significantly, representing the biggest change to local government financing in recent history. The current forecast is that our general grant from the Government will cease completely by the financial year 2018/19.

The Corporate Plan 2018-2022 identifies 20 key projects designed to help deliver the council's priorities, one of which is to "Develop a model for cost-effective and commercially focussed Sport and Leisure Service".

Against the backdrop of increasingly scarce resources and its wish to develop a new delivery model for the Sport and Leisure Service, the Council needs to set out a strategic vision for the service. That vision will help shape and guide the future direction of the service and ensure that it focuses on delivering the agreed outcomes.

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<sup>1</sup> ["Social Return on Investment in Sport: A participation-wide model for England"](#) – Sport Industry Research Centre, Sheffield Hallam University (2016)

## 3.2 National Context

Sport has played a major role in British society for over a century and is considered by many to be part of our national identity. Its benefits include<sup>2</sup>:

- improving physical and mental health
- increasing skills
- enhancing confidence and self-esteem
- improving educational attainment
- building individuals' character and discipline
- developing social skills
- supporting employment and economic growth
- improving community cohesion

The benefits of sport come not only from direct participation. Volunteering enables others to participate and can also be an enjoyable and rewarding experience for the volunteer. Spectating at a live event can be hugely enjoyable and bring communities together. The London Olympic Games in 2012 took volunteering to new highs with its "Games makers" and brought the nation to a collective standstill on "Super Saturday".

One of the key legacy objectives of the London Olympics was to inspire a generation to play more sport and improve their lives as a result. However figures for 2014 showed participation levels had dropped dramatically.

### 3.2.1 In October 2014 Public Health England (PHE) produced the national physical activity framework: "[Everybody Active Every Day](#)". The report stated<sup>3</sup>:

"Around one in two women and a third of men in England are damaging their health through a lack of physical activity. This is unsustainable and costing the UK an estimated £7.4bn a year. If current trends continue, the increasing costs of health and social care will destabilise public services and take a toll on quality of life for individuals and communities.

- over one in four women and one in five men do less than 30 minutes of physical activity a week, so are classified as 'inactive'
- physical inactivity is the fourth largest cause of disease and disability in the UK"

In response to this and criticism that the Government did not have a national strategy for sport and inactivity, the Government published "[Sporting future – a new strategy for an active nation](#)" in December 2015.

This policy sought to look beyond simple goals of participation. Its stated ambition was for all partners, including local government; to work together to create a more physically active nation and deliver five key outcomes:

- physical wellbeing
- mental wellbeing
- individual development
- social and community development
- economic development

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<sup>2</sup> Extracts from "[Sporting future – a new strategy for an active nation](#)"

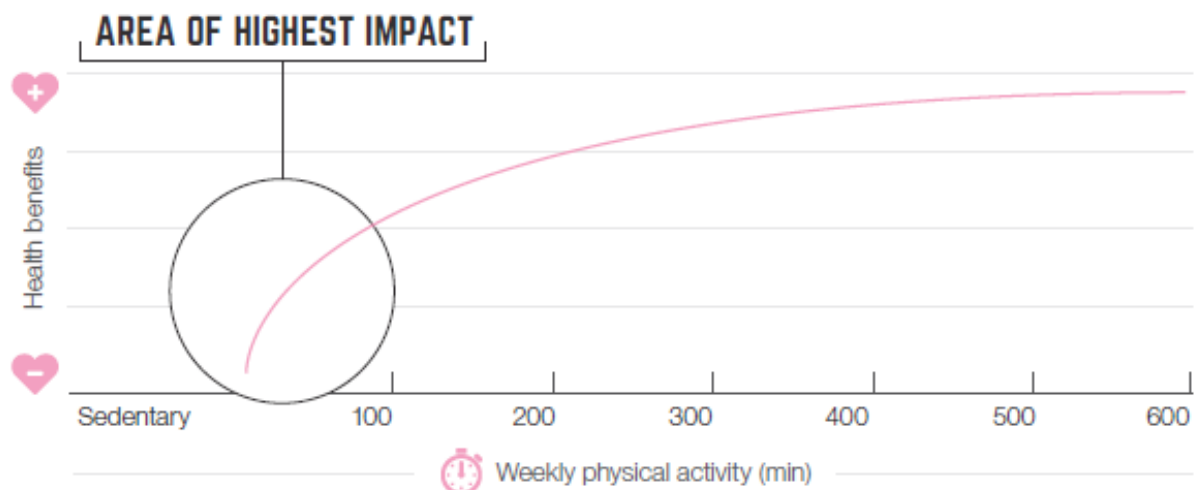
<sup>3</sup> Everybody active, every day; page 4

3.2.2 In May 2016 Sport England produced its own strategy: “[Towards an Active Nation 2016-21](#)”. This set out how Sport England and its partners (including councils, charitable leisure trusts and other leisure management companies) would deliver the *Sporting future* strategy.

*Towards an Active Nation* marked a significant shift in attitude for Sport England – away from its historic focus on participation levels within traditional organised sports, to increasing “activity” in general and a much stronger focus on tackling “inactivity” in particular.

Sport England also highlighted that ‘the biggest gains and the best value for public investment is found in addressing the people who are least active’. This claim is made based on scientific evidence presented as a dose-response curve graph<sup>4</sup> which is reproduced below.

The graph shows the health benefits of getting people more active from different starting points. It illustrates that an extra 30 minutes of exercise undertaken by a sedentary person produces a much larger increase in health benefits as compared to somebody who already does 150 minutes of exercise each week.



The health benefits referred to in the chart include reducing the risk of many chronic conditions such as type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease, some common cancers and mental health conditions.

*Towards an Active Nation* (page 6) identified a series of strategy changes required for Sport England to deliver its new policy:

- Focussing more money on tackling inactivity to get the greatest gains for individuals and society in general.
- Investing in children and young people from the age of 5 to build positive attitudes to sport and activity from an early age. (Previously support was directed at people aged 14 and over)
- Helping those who are already active to carry on, but at a lower cost to the public purse over time. (Less funding for sports’ national governing bodies.)
- Making activities attractive, welcoming and inclusive, especially for people who do not tend to take part; women and girls, disabled people, older people and those in lower socio-economic groups.
- Encouraging stronger local collaboration to deliver a more joined up experience of sport and activity for customers.

<sup>4</sup> Towards an Active Nation 2016-21; page 18: Dose-response curve for physical activity, Nigam, 2011

### 3.2.3 Definitions

PHE guidelines recommend that adults (16+) should undertake 150 minutes of moderate (or 75 minutes of vigorous) physical activity a week for good health. Adults undertaking less than 30 minutes a week are regarded as “inactive”; with those doing 30 – 149 minutes a week being classed as “fairly active”.

PHE<sup>5</sup> offers the following definitions:

Physical activity	Body movement that expends energy and raises the heart rate
Everyday activity	Includes cycling, walking, heavy housework, active or manual work
Active recreation	Includes dance, yoga, active play, recreational walking or cycling
Sport	Includes swimming, rowing, fitness training, climbing, parkour, tennis, and organised sports

## 3.3 Harrogate District Context

### 3.3.1 How active is Harrogate district?

[Sport England’s “Active Lives Survey”](#) tracks activity levels in line with the *Sporting future* strategy. Data for the period May 16 to May 17 shows the percentage of various groups that fall into the three activity classifications:

	Active (150+ mins pw)	Fairly Active (30 – 149 mins pw)	Inactive (<30 mins pw)
Harrogate District	68.1%	12.9%	19.1%
North Yorkshire	63.3%	13.0%	23.7%
England	60.6%	13.8%	25.6%
England (males)	63.2%	12.6%	24.3%
England (females)	58.3%	15.0%	26.7%
England (no disability)	65.2%	13.8%	21.0%
England (disabled)	42.6%	14.1%	43.3%
England (16-64 years)	65.1%	13.5%	21.4%
England (65+ years)	44.9%	14.7%	40.4%

The data shows:

- Whilst the district has a lower proportion of “inactive” residents than both North Yorkshire and England, one in five adults still takes less than 30 minutes of moderate exercise per week and one in three fails to achieve the 150 minutes weekly target.
- Females, people with disabilities and older people are all less active groups. (District level data is not available for these groups.)

<sup>5</sup> [“Everybody Active Every Day”](#) Page 4

### 3.3.2 Health indicators for Harrogate district

PHE's "[Harrogate District - Health Profile 2017](#)" concludes that the health of people in the district is generally better than average, pointing to the fact that the district is one of the 20% least deprived authorities in England.

Indicator	Harrogate district result	England result
Excess weight in 4-5 year olds (2016/17)	19.0%	22.6%
Excess weight in 10-11 year olds (2016/17)	26.6%	34.2%
Excess weight in adults (2016/17)	57.9%	61.3%
Recorded diabetes	5.5 cases /100,000 population	6.4 cases / 100,000 population
<75 yrs cardiovascular mortality	57.6 cases /100,000 population	74.6 cases /100,000 population
<75 yrs cancer mortality	117.4 cases /100,000 population	138.8 cases /100,000 population

Demographic profiling shows that compared to the national average the district has a lower percentage of people aged 0 -44 years and a higher proportion aged 45+. The proportion of the population aged 65 and over in the district is 21.9%, compared to 18.3% nationally.<sup>6</sup>

It is estimated that by 2039 greater than 1 in 3 of the district's population will be aged 65 or older.<sup>7</sup>

The growth in numbers aged 65 and over will bring with it a proportionate rise in the numbers affected by age related health issues as well as social isolation and falls. In his 2017 annual report<sup>8</sup> the Director of Public Health for North Yorkshire focuses on the older population within the county and stresses the benefits of physical activity for older adults. The report highlights evidence that physical activity can reduce adults and older adults chance of:

Type II Diabetes	-40%
Cardiovascular Disease	-35%
Falls, Depression & Dementia	-30%
Joint & Back Pain	-25%
Cancers (Colon & Breast)	-20%

The district's residents are more active and enjoy better than health than is average across England. Clearly, being "better than average" does not obviate the need for work to deliver further improvement and tackle the challenges that will come with an increasingly aged population.

<sup>6</sup> North Yorkshire Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2016 – Harrogate District Summary

<sup>7</sup> 2016 ONS Mid-year population estimates

<sup>8</sup> Director of Public Health annual report 2017:Healthy Transitions; Growing old in North Yorkshire, page 26

## 4.0 Where we want to be

4.1 The strategic vision for Harrogate Borough Council is to have:  
*“A healthier more active population living longer, more productive and happier lives”*

This vision reflects:

- National policy regarding the general health and wellbeing benefits of reducing inactivity and having more people more active more often.
- The district’s forecast demographic profile through to 2039.
- Regional strategies such as the North Yorkshire Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives Strategy<sup>9</sup> and North Yorkshire Sport’s focus on using Sport as a Driver for Change<sup>10</sup>.

## 4.2 The strategic priorities for Harrogate district

Underpinning the strategic vision are four priority outcomes. Those are set out in the table below alongside notes regarding their importance and relevance to the district:

Priority outcome	Importance and relevance
Improve health and physical wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Increasing the proportion of the population that is active and the amounts of activity undertaken will support efforts to reduce further the numbers who are overweight or obese along with related illnesses such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease and cancer which cost the NHS significant amounts to treat and are a major cause of premature death.</li><li>• Focusing on reducing inactivity levels among older adults will help keep Harrogate district’s aging population active and healthier for longer; reducing falls, depression and dementia.</li><li>• Increasing the activity levels of children and young people will help combat obesity, improve educational achievement and establish positive attitudes to sport and activity which can lead to them living an active life.</li><li>• Supporting those who are active to remain so and increase their levels.</li></ul>
Be inclusive and remove barriers to participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Harrogate district covers a large geographic area including many smaller rural communities. A range of opportunities to be active should be accessible to all residents and visitors.</li><li>• Activities should be inclusive, providing affordable opportunities for both regular and occasional users; targeting hard to reach and under-represented groups.</li><li>• Improve the range and communication of opportunities for those with lower incomes and disabilities.</li></ul>
Improve mental wellbeing and community cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Participating in sport, leisure and physical activities can be an enjoyable and sociable experience.</li><li>• Clubs and groups can provide friendly, safe, local and sustainable opportunities to be active.</li><li>• Volunteering creates opportunities for others to be active and volunteers can gain skills and satisfaction from their involvement.</li><li>• Sporting and other events can bring communities together.</li></ul>

<sup>9</sup> North Yorkshire Health and Wellbeing Board: [Healthy Weight, Healthy Lives Strategy](#)

<sup>10</sup> North Yorkshire Sport – [Sport as a Driver for Change](#)



<p>Deliver a positive customer experience</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The council’s sport and activity programmes should be safe and enjoyable. Participants should feel comfortable and be supported by friendly, professional, qualified staff.</li> <li>• Facilities should be of fit for purpose, good quality, attractive to users, well maintained and sustainable.</li> <li>• Services and activities should represent good value for money for their users</li> <li>• Positive customer experiences will result in repeat visits and increased participation.</li> </ul>
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The priority outcomes can be used to guide all sport and physical activity opportunities in Harrogate district, whether delivered by the council or its partners.

### 4.3 Principles of Delivery

Work to deliver the strategic vision and priority outcomes should reflect the following principles of delivery:

- 4.3.1 Adopt a life course approach – recognising that the benefits of being active are relevant across the whole of a person’s life, but acknowledging that barriers, demands and motivators will vary at different stages.
- 4.3.2 Recognise the importance of communication. Making people aware of opportunities and encouraging them to remain active and engaged.
- 4.3.3 Activities should be inclusive, providing affordable opportunities for both regular and occasional users.
- 4.3.4 Work in partnership – across the council’s service areas and externally by engaging with the health, education, voluntary and private sectors as well as other public bodies and agencies including North Yorkshire Sport and sports’ governing bodies that can support this agenda.
- 4.3.5 Recognise the importance of clubs and volunteering. Clubs provide opportunities for their members to be active. Most clubs would not exist without the contribution of volunteers.
- 4.3.6 Support the development of pathways to enable people to stay active and progress in their sport; including competition, talent identification/ support.
- 4.3.7 Seek to identify opportunities to invest in sport, activity and leisure in the district and prioritise those which will have most impact.
- 4.3.8 Look to and plan for the future – work across the council and with partners to ensure that sport, leisure and activity provision will meet the evolving needs of those who live, work in or visit the district.
- 4.3.9 Seek sustainability – where a facility or activity is capable of operating without subsidy, it should do so. Revenue should cover lifecycle maintenance costs.
- 4.3.10 Recognise the opportunity to use non-built facilities including the countryside, parks and other urban green space for the purpose of physical activity.

- 4.3.11 Support the development of more active workplaces. Working with business and other organisations to engage their employees and overcome barriers to them being more active. Active workplaces are more productive<sup>11</sup>.
- 4.3.12 Support active travel. Promote and facilitate walking and cycling as alternatives to other forms of transport. (56% of Harrogate residents that both live and work in the urban area commute by car or motorcycle despite average journey lengths being only 1.6 miles).

## 5.0 Measuring our success

Priority outcome	Measures
Improving health and physical wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sport England’s Active Lives survey               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Percentage of the district’s adult population reported as “Inactive”</li> <li>○ Percentage of the districts adult population taking 30 minutes or more physical activity per week</li> <li>○ Percentage of adult residents who have taken part in sport or physical activity at least twice within the last 28 days.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Supporting those who are active to remain so and increase their levels.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Total attendances at council outreach programmes, leisure centres and swimming pools as a percentage of the total district population</li> <li>○ Average number of attendances made by Brimhams members per annum.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Reductions in the numbers in the district who are overweight or obese as reported by PHE – Harrogate District Health Profile</li> <li>• Increases in activity levels among older adults               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Brimhams membership numbers aged 65+ as a percentage of the district population aged 65+.</li> <li>○ Attendances at age targeted activity classes.</li> <li>○ Concession attendances as a percentage of the total district population.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Reducing falls               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Hospital re-admittances following a fall</li> <li>○ Attendance figures for falls prevention classes</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Increasing the activity levels of children and young people               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Total attendances: children’s’ admissions, Team Tone Zone, learn to swim, learn to dive and junior coaching programmes as a percentage of the district population aged 16 and under.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Excess weight in children               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Percentage of 4-5 year olds and 10-11 year olds being reported as overweight by Harrogate District Health Profile</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

<sup>11</sup> NICE guideline: [“Physical activity in the workplace”](#) (2008)

Be inclusive and remove barriers to participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attendance figures for activity sessions in rural areas</li> <li>• Hard to reach groups. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number of female gym memberships as a percentage of districts' female population.</li> <li>○ Number of concessions and memberships held by resident in deprived wards as a percentage of the wards' total population</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Improve the range and communication of opportunities for those with lower incomes and disabilities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Number of concession attendances as a percentage of total attendances at leisure centres and pools</li> <li>○ Attendances at targeted lessons and sessions for disability groups</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Improving mental wellbeing and community cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of the districts adult population taking 30 minutes or more physical activity per week (Sport England Active Lives survey).</li> <li>• Percentage of clubs achieving Clubmark.</li> <li>• Percentage of district population reported as having volunteered in past 12 months (Sport England Active Lives survey).</li> <li>• Percentage of the district's adult population who have attended at least 2 live sports events in the last 12 months (Sport England Active Lives survey)</li> <li>• Number of sporting and activity focused events taking place on council controlled land (including attendance estimates where available).</li> </ul>
Delivering a positive customer experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of members cancelling Brimhams membership in a period as a percentage the number of members at the start of the period plus joiners during the period.</li> <li>• An appropriate user satisfaction survey will need to be introduced.</li> </ul>

## 6.0 Action Plan

An action plan will be developed to implement the strategy.

## 7.0 Reporting and Review

The priority outcomes should be incorporated into the Service Area Plan for Culture Tourism and Sport. Monitoring and reporting will be part of that management process.

The strategic vision and priorities will be reviewed in five years' time in light of any changes to national policies and the evolving priorities of Harrogate District.