



East Devon  
District Council

Leisure Strategy  
2021-2031

A report by Strategic Leisure Limited

June 2022

## Contents

<b>1. Our Vision</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. Key Principles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. Executive Member Foreward</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4. Introduction</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5. Overview of the Leisure Facilities Supply and Demand Audit</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6. Our Challenges and Issues in Providing Leisure Services and Facilities</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>7. Strategic Core Objectives 2021 - 2031</b>	<b>12</b>
1. Facilities that meet the current and future sporting and leisure needs of East Devon residents	12
What do we know?	12
How do we meet future Needs?	13
2. EDDC priorities are aligned to and compliment Outreach Health and Wellbeing	14
What do we know?	14
How do we meet Future Needs?	16
3. Effective Partnerships Delivering a Sustainable Community Sport and Leisure Offer	16
What do we know?	16
How do we meet future needs?	17
4. Harnessing the Value of the Great Outdoors	17
What do we know?	17
How do we meet future need?	18
5. Review of the existing Leisure Management Contract	18
What do we know?	18
How do we meet future need?	19
<b>8. Next Steps</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Disclaimer</b>	<b>21</b>

## Appendices

Appendix 1 - Strategy Consultees

Appendix 2 - Supply and Demand Evidence Base

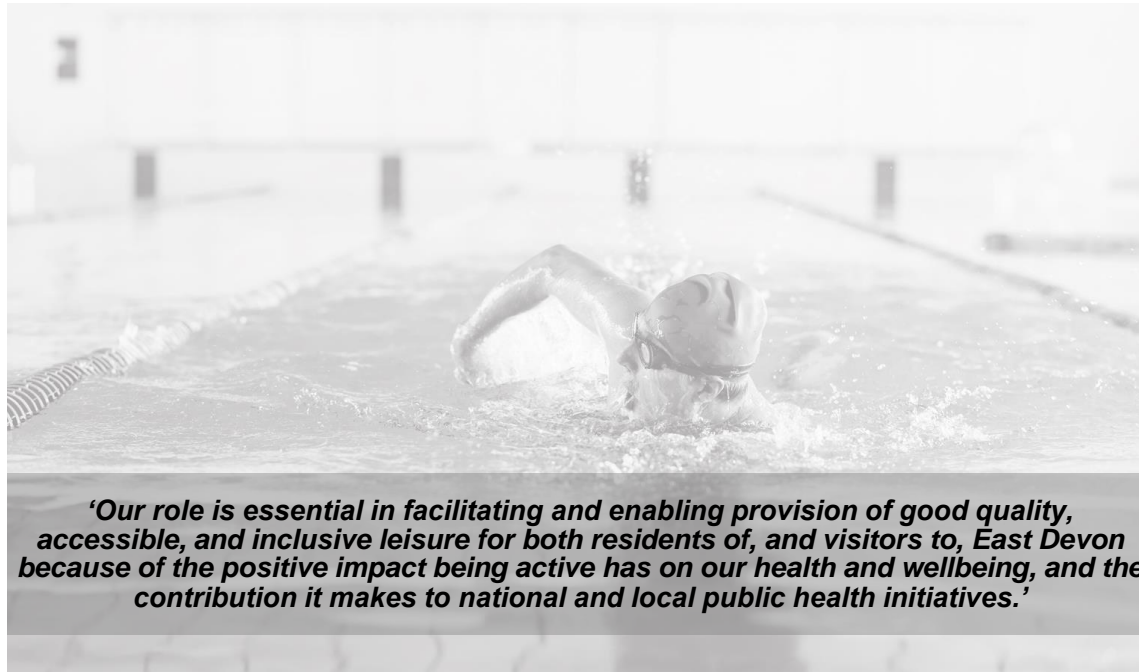
Appendix 3 - Summary of Community Consultation

Appendix 4 - Summary of Sports Club Consultation

Appendix 5 - Summary of Schools' Consultation

## 1. Our Vision

1.1. Our Vision for the future provision of leisure services and facilities in East Devon is:



- 1.2. Our approach will specifically target and cater for those residents who are socially and economically disadvantaged to ensure they are able to benefit from affordable and accessible opportunities which contribute to reduced health inequalities and improved quality of life.
- 1.3. Partnership is key to delivery of our Leisure Strategy to ensure co-ordination across culture, leisure and tourism services, and that it co-exists with the policies and priorities of our local partners.

## 2. Key Principles

2.1. The key Principles underpinning this Vision are:

- 1. That the provision of leisure facilities for residents and visitors alike is an essential function of this Council.**
- 2. That such leisure facilities are important to improve the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors alike and thereby support national and local public health initiatives.**
- 3. That such leisure facilities are inclusive and must cater for all residents and visitors, irrespective of ability, age, gender, ethnicity, income and belief.**
- 4. That this Leisure Strategy specifically targets and caters for those residents who are socially and economically disadvantaged to ensure that such residents gain access to and benefit from the Council's Leisure facilities.**
- 5. That the term "Leisure Facilities" refers to all facilities be they built or non-built, man-made or natural which are used, or could be used to deliver the concept of Leisure within East Devon.**
- 6. That such leisure facilities, are provided by a range of providers including the Council, its partners, community organisations, private facilities and schools.**
- 7. That the Council's partner Leisure Provider (for EDDC owned/leased facilities) is financially sustainable in both the short and long term.**
- 8. That this Leisure Strategy will co-exist and support other strategies, particularly Culture, Tourism and Public Health to promote amongst the residents of East Devon the needs of good health, positive wellbeing, cultural diversity and economic development irrespective of age, gender, orientation, ethnicity, income and belief.**

### 3. Executive Member Forward

Welcome to East Devon District Council's Leisure and Built Facilities Strategy which has been developed from the Council's firm belief that access to high quality leisure facilities enables the physical activity which is so vital to ensuring that East Devon residents enjoy the benefits of participation, improved health and wellbeing (both physical and mental) as well as fostering a sense of community. East Devon District Council recognises the significant benefits that the provision of sport and recreational activities and facilities can bring to our communities. Sport and leisure undoubtedly impact on the physical and social health of our communities; they contribute to both the economic growth of areas and community cohesion. They can also engage those who are disadvantaged and help to raise achievement in our schools. We are extremely fortunate that in East Devon the Council can provide a wide variety of access to sport and leisure facilities for residents, sports clubs and our communities. There are challenges ahead, both with an aging portfolio of council owned facilities and ensuring that there is continued good access to leisure provision in a large rural district. Our key challenges identified within the Strategy are more about condition and investment than they are about access. Increasing levels of population and the expansion of housing in East Devon means that additional facilities will be required during the life of this strategy. This strategy has been developed within the context of the council and its partners being committed to improving the health, wellbeing and the aspirations of our residents within an environment of change and financial constraint. It is now more important than ever that we make the most of the resources we have to provide services that residents expect. The strategy provides an essential background for officers, members and stakeholders, under which all actions can be considered and decisions made. It is especially important to ensure that future communities have the right infrastructure to lead active, healthy and fulfilling lives, and this document along with its supporting strategies form part of the council's development contributions for supplementary planning documents.



Councillor Nick Hookway, Portfolio Holder for Tourism, Sports, Leisure & Culture.

## 4. Introduction

- 4.1. The aim of this strategy is to improve the quality of life for East Devon residents and provide good quality opportunities to be regularly physically active. The role of the Council in co-ordinating, facilitating, enabling, and in some cases delivering opportunities to be physically active is key, whether provision relates to facilities or services, indoors and outdoors.
- 4.2. In East Devon 'leisure' means physical activity, sport and recreation – programmes, services and facilities – provided by the Council, its partners, community organisations, private facilities and schools, which provide an opportunity for individuals, clubs and teams to take part and be active. "Leisure Facilities" refers to all facilities be they built or non-built, manmade or natural which are used, or could be used to deliver the concept of Leisure within East Devon.
- 4.3. This strategy sits alongside the Council's Corporate Plan, Local Plan, Asset Strategy, Public Health, Cultural and Tourism strategies to ensure that important corporate considerations including carbon reduction, reducing inequality and maximising the value of East Devon's assets are integral principles in the way that leisure facilities are delivered.
- 4.4. The strategy is supported by a detailed Leisure Facilities Supply and Demand Audit (Appendix 2) which identifies the current and future facility needs to support an increase in population in the District. The Strategy is also informed by detailed community, sports club and school consultation and feedback from key stakeholders, National Governing Bodies of Sport and neighbouring authorities.
- 4.5. East Devon's Leisure Strategy identifies the current and future built leisure facility needs of East Devon's population through to 2031. The Council's Playing Pitch Strategy is in the process of being updated and will identify outdoor sports pitch and facility needs going forward. This will provide the Council a complete overview of leisure provision and requirements across the District.
- 4.6. The Leisure Strategy recognises that there are significant challenges with delivering the level of infrastructure required, and while the Council has a role in championing and enabling the provision required, it is unrealistic to expect the Council to be able to deliver everything. Innovative partnerships, cross-sector sustainable delivery and funding models, and significant amount of capital funding will be required in order to achieve the level of provision that this strategy identifies as needed.

## 5. Overview of the Leisure Facilities Supply and Demand Audit

- 5.1. The Leisure Facilities Supply and Demand Audit (Appendix 2) considers facility provision for both the existing and projected future population of East Devon through to 2040 (to coincide with the end date of the Council's new Local Plan).
- 5.2. The scope of the audit incorporates the following public, private and voluntary sector owned/operated facilities:
- Swimming Pools
  - Outdoor Pools
  - Sports Halls (3 badminton courts +)
  - Activity Halls (1 badminton Court)
  - Health and Fitness Suites
  - Studios
  - Indoor Tennis Courts
  - Indoor Bowls Rinks
  - Squash courts
  - Athletics – indoor and outdoor
  - Artificial Turf Pitches (ATP's)
- 5.3. This audit has been carried out using the methodology provided by Sport England (Assessment of Needs and Opportunities Guidance (ANOG)) and provides a robust and objective evidence base to support requests for on-site provision and contributions from developers and justification of needs, within the Council, following the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy. It can also be used to support applications for grant funding for sport and leisure projects; not just by the Council but by others, such as sports clubs and schools.
- 5.4. Artificial Turf Pitches (ATP's) are included within the scope of the audit on the basis that the majority of ATP's in East Devon are located on school sites where dual use arrangements exist between the school and the Council for indoor leisure facilities provided on site. However, a more detailed analysis of ATP's will be included in the new Playing Pitch Strategy as need for ATP's should be considered in association with grass pitch provision.
- 5.5. Key findings from the Leisure Facilities Supply and Demand Audit are summarised in the table below:



# East Devon District Council

## Leisure Strategy 2021-2031

Table 1: Key Findings – Leisure Facilities Supply and Demand Audit

Facility Type	Key Issues to Address
<b>Sports Halls and Activity Halls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As a minimum, the current community access arrangements are maintained for sports halls on school sites with dual use arrangements in place.</li> <li>EDDC should seek to engage with those organisations currently operating with much smaller used capacity figures to encourage greater access to their sports halls during peak hours, securing this use where possible, through a Community Use Agreement (CUA) e.g. Bickton College, Cranbrook Education Campus, Exmouth College.</li> <li>A large number of dwellings are still due to be built as part of the Cranbrook development and are included in the current Local Plan. To address future demand, EDDC should consider the provision of a 4 court sports hall as part of the planned development of a new Leisure Centre in Cranbrook. This would allow daytime pay and play community access.</li> <li>Subject to the development of a new sports hall facility in Cranbrook, EDDC to consider the future viability of the neighbouring Broadclyst Sports Hall within the EDDC Leisure Portfolio, taking into consideration the age and poor condition of the facility and the current limited community access arrangements.</li> </ul>
<b>Swimming Pools</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Sport England Sports Facility Calculator estimates that by 2040, East Devon will have a shortfall of 489.4 sqm of water space and will need the equivalent of an additional two 25m x 4 lane swimming pools, to address future demand resulting from projected housing and population growth across the District.</li> <li>EDDC to consider the inclusion of a swimming pool (minimum 25m x 4 lane) as part of the development of a new leisure centre at Cranbrook.</li> </ul>
<b>Health and Fitness Suites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a need to increase provision of community accessible fitness stations (an additional 71 now and by 2031 a 223).</li> <li>ECCD in partnership with LED is a key provider of community accessible fitness; the rurality of the area and scale of population means there are fewer large fitness chains/budget gyms so there is an opportunity for EDDC to be a 'provider of choice'. However, investment is needed to achieve this position and a growth in fitness membership and usage.</li> </ul>
<b>Studios</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a need to provide additional studios to cater for demand from a growing population.</li> </ul>
<b>Squash</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As a minimum, EDDC need to maintain existing level of pay and play squash provision at Exmouth, Honiton and Sidmouth Leisure Centres.</li> <li>Using the NGB requirement of 1 court per 10,000 population, there is a shortfall of 8 courts across the district. EDDC to consider the inclusion of squash courts as part of the development of any new leisure facility within the district.</li> <li>Consideration of provision needs to reflect existing levels of demand and participation in squash</li> </ul>

# East Devon District Council

## Leisure Strategy 2021-2031

Facility Type	Key Issues to Address
<b>Indoor Bowls</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDDC to support the continued provision of existing indoor bowls clubs in the District, and the continued availability of community pay and play.</li> </ul>
<b>Indoor Tennis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDDC to continue to support existing provision at Exmouth Tennis and Fitness Centre, focussing on improving community pay and play access where possible</li> <li>• EDDC to work in partnership with the leisure operator to extend the existing Clubspark scheme to Coburg Gardens and provide a proactive programme of casual use, coaching and activities to maximise the use of the courts and improve income generation.</li> <li>• EDDC to consider the feasibility of introducing paddle tennis as part of any future outdoor sports hub provision</li> </ul>
<b>Gymnastics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDDC should, as a minimum, support Honiton and Axminster Gymnastics Clubs in securing long term dedicated space for gymnastics.</li> <li>• It is unlikely that a shared dedicated space for both clubs could be considered due to the current geographical distance between the 2 clubs and existing catchment of their members, similar demand for peak time use etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Athletics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The cinder track at Imperial Recreation Ground, Exmouth, is in poor condition and leased to Exmouth Harriers, who are responsible for its maintenance. All clubs in the district are essentially running and cross country clubs and do not participate in other athletics disciplines/field events.</li> <li>• There is no identified demand for provision of a new athletics track in the District due to the proximity of Exeter Arena, which is a regional facility and attracts NGB funding.</li> </ul>
<b>ATPs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a significant demand for ATP provision in the district and to improve those facilities that already exist e.g. replacement surfaces, floodlighting.</li> <li>• Investment in existing infrastructure so it can be better used by more people is a priority as is investment in additional provision.</li> <li>• The priorities for investment in ATPs are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Colyton (surface and floodlighting)</li> <li>➤ Honiton (new pitch)</li> <li>➤ Sidmouth (improved surface)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The ATP at Sidmouth would also benefit from being floodlit which would extend operating hours and increase throughput and revenue generation.</p>

5.6. The above summary highlights that there are a number of additional facilities that need to be provided and some existing facilities need to be replaced or refurbished over the lifetime of the strategy. These are included in the strategic priorities section of this strategy.

## 6. Our Challenges and Issues in Providing Leisure Services and Facilities

- 6.1. The Leisure Strategy involved extensive consultation with key stakeholders including District Councillors and officers, the Council’s Leisure Operator, and town and parish councils. Surveys were also distributed to schools, sport clubs and local residents (850+ responses). Appendix 3 – 6 incl. of this strategy provides a summary of these consultations. National Governing Bodies of Sport (NGB’s) were contacted regarding the current club and facility provision for their sport and their aspirations for future provision in East Devon. Neighbouring authorities were also consulted to gain an understanding of their current and future plans for leisure provision, recognising that residents living close to the borders of East Devon would visit their closest facility, regardless of geographical boundaries.
- 6.2. In addition, it is important to be clear that in terms of EDDC’s leisure facilities:
- The leisure assets are ageing (community leisure facilities have a lifespan of 30-35 years, in general)
  - There is a stand-alone pool site
  - The dual-use sites cost a significant amount to operate and yet do not provide daytime access to the East Devon community, the majority of whom are ageing and want to use facilities during the day
  - The LED contract covers a wide range of facilities and the underpinning cost model is not a standard model usually found with leisure contracts
  - There is not an over provision of leisure assets so the existing infra structure largely needs to be retained and invested in
  - There is opportunity to develop increased use of the great outdoors and other informal assets e.g. community centres/village halls to reduce reliance on formal built provision
- 6.3. The following table provides a summary of the key issues identified from the stakeholder consultations undertaken. These issues inform the identified Core Objectives and the areas recommended for action moving forward.

**Table 2: Summary of Key issues identified from stakeholder consultations**

Key Issue	Relevant Factors to consider in developing the future Leisure Strategy
<b>Built Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The key issues concerning the existing leisure facilities in East Devon are:</li> <li>• Age and condition, particularly of the EDDC facilities</li> <li>• Activities offered - type, timing and nature</li> <li>• Lack of investment</li> <li>• Location of existing facilities, particularly in relation to new communities</li> <li>• Dated dual-use agreements which do not facilitate community access (particularly daytime), use nor taking part in physical activity</li> <li>• Growth of Axminster and impact on demand; Flamingo Pool small and average quality offer but does have a hydro pool; migration seen to Chard</li> </ul>

East Devon District Council  
**Leisure Strategy 2021-2031**

Key Issue	Relevant Factors to consider in developing the future Leisure Strategy
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some assets in particularly poor condition e.g. Broadclyst</li> <li>• Lack of indoor facilities in Cranbrook; a lack of provision for young people and teenagers; the Education Campus facilities are managed commercially and are already full of football;</li> <li>• The proposal for a leisure centre in Cranbrook and whether capital resources are available</li> <li>• Opportunity to work more closely with Exeter City Council in terms of developing new facilities serving cross-border communities</li> <li>• The option of asset transferring all outdoor facilities to Town Councils</li> <li>• Pitch investment priorities are Exmouth and Honiton</li> <li>• The future geographical focus for provision needs to reflect existing and new e.g. Exmouth, Honiton and Axminster</li> </ul>
<b>Physical and Mental Health and Wellbeing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Already many providers and lots offered</li> <li>• The role of EDDC in health and wellbeing.</li> <li>• Needs better co-ordination and joined-up approach e.g. linking the work of Public Health and LED</li> <li>• Need for audit of existing offer before more is developed to optimise resources; develop offer based on existing networks</li> <li>• Opportunity to develop increased Volunteer capacity</li> <li>• GP Referral/Social Prescribing- how can these partnerships be developed</li> <li>• Links to the arts could be explored in these programmes</li> <li>• New app being developed – EDDC should be part of the development of the new Health and Wellbeing App to improve co-ordination</li> <li>• LED is already delivering a lot e.g. working with GPs, online signposting etc., but where does EDDC want their focus to be; should the focus be in areas of deprivation through e.g. the Holiday Hunger programme</li> <li>• Memory cafes – could be the starting points for healthy walks etc.</li> </ul>
<b>The Great Outdoors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of the natural active environment</li> <li>• Safe walking, running and cycling routes</li> <li>• Co-ordinated cycling routes – mapped and co-ordinated – residents and tourists</li> <li>• Outdoor gyms – lack of utilisation</li> <li>• Growing participation in wild swimming</li> <li>• Growing participation in informal activities e.g. skateboarding, BMX</li> <li>• Group exercise growing in popularity – how control use/access?</li> <li>• Potential to link physical activity into some agricultural support work</li> <li>• Exmouth seafront – is this a venue for physical activity?</li> <li>• Residents like being active outdoors but want to feel safe</li> </ul>
<b>Urban v rural</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Isolation</li> <li>• Accessibility</li> <li>• Limited public transport; worse in more rural areas</li> </ul>

East Devon District Council  
**Leisure Strategy 2021-2031**

Key Issue	Relevant Factors to consider in developing the future Leisure Strategy
<b>Specific Sports</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very limited indoor netball facilities – only two</li> <li>• No regional netball facilities</li> <li>• No netball facilities in Sidmouth</li> <li>• Limited indoor tennis facilities; not all well used; Clubspark should be introduced to outdoor courts; bookings could then be on LED website</li> <li>• Gymnastics needs a site in Honiton</li> <li>• Lack of 3G pitches</li> <li>• Youth offer under-developed e.g. boxing, martial arts</li> <li>• The role of sports clubs in terms of increasing and sustaining participation moving forward needs to be better defined</li> <li>• Sea sports/activities need more promotion and support</li> <li>• Is there opportunity to develop new sports e.g. Padel tennis</li> <li>• Residents' priority activities are swimming, walking and gardening; followed by cycling, the gym and GP Exercise Referral; where relevant EDDC should be responding to these as a priority</li> </ul>
<b>Disability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a need for improved disability facilities and access e.g. pool pods</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Alignment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDDC Public Health Strategy should be the driver for the outcomes of the Leisure Strategy</li> <li>• Also the Leisure Strategy should align to the new Active Devon Strategy</li> </ul>
<b>Affordability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inconsistencies in concession pricing</li> <li>• LED Membership offer is the same across East Devon, irrespective of facility mix offered</li> </ul>
<b>Demography</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East Devon has a predominantly older population; provision needs to meet their needs</li> <li>• Community survey identifies daytime as the favoured time to take part in physical activity</li> <li>• Reduction in young people taking part in physical activity</li> <li>• There is a need to properly identify needs of each age group and then provide for them</li> <li>• Cost is an issue for the elderly</li> <li>• Residents think physical activity is very important – to stay fit, for enjoyment, to improve health</li> <li>• Residents identify barriers to participation as: cost, time, poor quality facilities, lack of safe routes, lack of provision, inability access activities at the time they need them</li> <li>• In general, residents want to be more active</li> </ul>
<b>Communication and Co-Ordination</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of car parking in Sidmouth for physical activity facility</li> <li>• Needs to be greater awareness of what is already available and being delivered, by whom and where. Audit mapping would help to focus resources in the future</li> </ul>

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East Devon District Council  
*Leisure Strategy 2021-2031*

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Key Issue	Relevant Factors to consider in developing the future Leisure Strategy
<b>Future Operational Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• LED would like an annual agreement over the management fee</li><li>• Risk allocation e.g. utility costs</li><li>• Need for capital investment in built assets</li></ul>

## 7. Strategic Core Objectives 2021 - 2031

7.1. The outcomes and recommendations from the comprehensive stakeholder consultation process and Leisure Facilities Supply and Demand Audit support five high level strategic priorities:

### 1. Facilities that meet the current and future sporting and leisure needs of East Devon residents



#### What do we know?

- 7.2. EDDC's leisure portfolio includes 6 dual use sites, 3 leisure centres, 3 outdoor facilities and a theatre; a significant number of these facilities are ageing in need of investment to meet the current and future population of the district.
- 7.3. A large proportion of facilities are on school sites with dual use arrangements which operate on a legal basis which favours the school both operationally and financially, rather than EDDC. The dual use arrangements restrict daytime community use for those who would benefit the most e.g. young families, retired etc.
- 7.4. There is a high demand for these facilities, with a number of the sports halls for example, operating at capacity, essentially due to the dual use nature of the sites.
- 7.5. There is a current under supply of health and fitness suites across the district (undersupply of 101 stations) and this is exacerbated by the restricted availability at dual use sites. This situation will only get worse as the population grows (requirement for 253 stations by 2040).
- 7.6. There is a current small over supply of swimming pools in the district, and scope to improve used capacity at Exmouth, Honiton and Sidmouth swimming pools in the short term. However, by 2040, there will be a need to provide an additional 2 x 4 lane 25m pools as the population increases.
- 7.7. There is a current high demand for ATPs across the district and therefore a need for good quality, floodlit facilities which can cater for this demand.
- 7.8. The cost of facilities was raised as a key issue and concern that the needs of those who are socially and economically disadvantaged at not being met.
- 7.9. The Social Value generated across EDDC's leisure portfolio is approximately £8.9 million (2019) when measured against the categories of health and wellbeing, education and crime. Social Value is a framework for measuring the non-market social and environmental value created by an activity, organisation or intervention. In East Devon, this clearly demonstrates the high beneficial social impacts of participation in sport and physical activity across the leisure portfolio.

- 7.10. There is a real need for a new leisure facility in Cranbrook. When housing is completed, the town will have 8,000 new homes and a population of 18 – 20,000. Any leisure centre will go in the town centre (either CT2 or CT4D & E) and will be co-located with the Health and Wellbeing Hub. A Developer contribution of £4 million is being sought towards the scheme. No additional funding has been identified.
- 7.11. As Cranbrook forms part of a Sport England Local Delivery Pilot (LDP), there is an opportunity to develop a scheme involving the LDP, EDDC, and Sport England working together, co-locating health outreach services, possibly education and the leisure operator to deliver an effective scheme for the area.

### How do we meet future Needs?

- 7.12. There is a need for EDDC to invest in its existing ageing portfolio of leisure facilities, but also invest in new provision.
- 7.13. EDDC should seek where possible to improve disability access within existing sites and ensure that all new leisure facility provision is compliant with The Equalities Act 2010.
- 7.14. Investment in new leisure facility provision should focus on co-located sites rather than standalone sites as this will reduce both management and operating costs.
- 7.15. All leisure facilities need to be self-sustaining and to do this, some facilities may need to operate differently. This may include the need to vary membership types to the specific facility mix of a facility and the needs/demographics of the community it serves.
- 7.16. There is a need to provide additional water space by 2040 equivalent to 2 x 4 lane x 25m pools. These pools should be located where they can benefit most people.
- 7.17. EDDC should support the continued third party operation of Flamingo Pool in Axminster to ensure that the facility continues to be accessible to the local community.
- 7.18. There is a need to increase provision of community accessible fitness stations (an additional 101 now and by 2040 a total of 253). Where dual use health and fitness suites operate with restricted community daytime access and space, EDDC should support the relocation of such facilities to alternative sites to improve the financial viability. The Leisure Operator's current scale of health and fitness operation is not sufficient to offset the cost of running the Council's swimming pools.
- 7.19. There is a need to provide additional studios to cater for demand from a growing population.
- 7.20. There is a need for additional indoor and outdoor netball courts across the district.



- 7.21. EDDC should support existing gymnastics clubs in finding long term dedicated facilities within the District.
- 7.22. The specific geographical priorities for improved/new provision are:
- Cranbrook
  - Exmouth
  - Honiton
  - Axminster
- 7.23. There is a need to invest in ageing ATPs (Colyton and Exmouth are priorities) and look at ways to improve the utilization and financial viability of pitches, including the provision of floodlights at Sidmouth Leisure Centre. Honiton is the priority in terms of a new pitch.
- 7.24. There is a need to renegotiate all existing dual use facility agreements in favour of the Council to increase access and value for the East Devon Community.
- 7.25. A new leisure facility in Cranbrook is a priority scheme and should include as a minimum a 4 court sports hall, 6 lane 25m swimming pool, community gym and 2 studio. Broadclyst Leisure Centre site has reached the end of its useful life and should continue to operate in the medium term and only close once a decision has been made on the provision of a new leisure centre for Cranbrook and associated timescales for delivery are known.

## 2. EDDC priorities are aligned to and compliment Outreach Health and Wellbeing



### What do we know?

- 7.26. East Devon has an ageing population with 30.4% of residents over the age of 65 years. This is set to increase to 37% by 2043. This will have an impact on healthcare, housing requirements, the labour market and economic growth. At just over 82.6 years old, the life expectancy for residents in East Devon is very high, ranking in the top 10% of districts nationally.
- 7.27. The District is comparatively affluent and its ranking in the Indices of Multiple Deprivation of 238 out of 317. Across the district, there are just two LSOA's in the most deprived 30% of all areas across England which are contained within the wards of Exmouth Littleham and Exmouth Withycombe Raleigh. There are areas of Honiton St Michael's and Exmouth Town which are in the top 40% most deprived nationally.
- 7.28. There are also relatively high levels of house ownership and car ownership, reflecting the rural nature of the district.

- 7.29. The Sport England Active Lives Data May 2019/20 reveals that a lower percentage of adults in East Devon (20.2%) participate in less than 30 minutes activity per week compared to Devon (20.4%) and England (25.5%); only 9.2% of adults are fairly active (30 – 149 minutes per week) which is comparable to Devon but less than England (11.7%); however, 70.6% of adults in East Devon are active which is better than both Devon (70.3%) and England overall (62.8%). The analysis therefore shows that participation levels in East Devon are relatively good with low levels of inactivity. This is also reflected in low levels of adult obesity within the district (55.8%) compared to Devon (61%) and England overall (62%).
- 7.30. In 2019, 12.7% of children in Year 6 (10 – 11 years old) were classified as obese. This is lower than both the county of Devon (16.5%) and England overall (20.2%). However, 8.1% of Reception age children were classified as obese which is higher than Devon (7.4%) and England (9.7%). The recent Sport England Active Lives data detailed below (May 2019/20) suggests that levels of activity within the district are deteriorating amongst children and young people and therefore obesity levels will start to increase.
- 7.31. Participation rates amongst children and young people varies with higher levels of inactivity in East Devon (26.8%) compared to Devon (23.7%) but lower when compared to England (29%); 18.9% of children and young people are fairly active in East Devon (30 – 59 minutes per day) which is lower than for both Devon and England. However, 54.6% are active (60 plus minutes per day) which is higher than for England (46.8%) but lower compared to Devon (54.6%). Overall, the District exhibits poorer participation rates amongst children and young people in comparison to the county of Devon.
- 7.32. More active lifestyles will continue to reduce health inequalities and benefit both individual and community health. The provision of quality, affordable and accessible leisure facilities, and community outreach activities (e.g. healthy walks) can contribute towards significantly towards:
- Maintaining an active lifestyle
  - Maintaining low levels of diabetes and cardio-vascular disease
  - Further reducing levels of obesity for both children and adults
- 7.33. Outreach health and wellbeing is defined as programmes/activities/opportunities to be physically active in environments other than leisure centres. This could include the great outdoors, including beaches, informal facilities such as village halls or community centres, and informal settings such as parks, open space, walking and cycling routes, and encompass a range of activities.
- 7.34. In East Devon, there are a wide range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations delivering outreach health and wellbeing services alongside those provided by EDDC and its leisure operator. This in part reflects the rural nature of the district, with organisations serving relatively small populations across a number of towns and villages. However, there is a lack of understanding within the Council as to what its focus and role should be in terms of outreach health and wellbeing and how this sits alongside other providers. There are opportunities to take a more co-ordinated approach internally and externally to avoid duplication and ensure that services are provided where they are most needed.

- 7.35. Although the leisure operator currently delivers a successful outreach health and wellbeing programme, this service is not included in the leisure management contract with EDDC, and until the Covid pandemic, the leisure operator had absorbed the cost of this service. The contract makes no reference to the Council's key priorities, outcomes and associated key performance indicators for health and wellbeing e.g. percentage of older adults in target geographical areas with low physical activity levels taking part in physical activity for 30 minutes plus per week.

### How do we meet Future Needs?

- 7.36. The Council's role in providing health and wellbeing services needs to be clearer so that it complements the extensive existing third sector offer Partnerships.
- 7.37. Internally the provision delivered by the council has potential to be more joined -up and better complement what is delivered through the partner operator.
- 7.38. There is a need to update the contract agreement with LED to be clear about the expectations for them delivery health and wellbeing programmes. Key Performance Indicators to be agreed against which each programme's success will be measured. These Key Performance Indicators should be aligned to the Public Health Strategy and Active Devon Strategy.

## 3. Effective Partnerships Delivering a Sustainable Community Sport and Leisure Offer



### What do we know?

- 7.39. Active Devon has recently launched its new Strategy 'Devon Moving Together' with a vision to strive towards 'everyone in Devon active for life' and a mission 'to unlock the ability of movement to change lives for the better'. Its focus is on working with communities and partners to connect, advocate and enable people to move more. It wants movement to be a positive experience for all people, contribute towards reducing social inequalities, and gain increased local commitment to using movement to change people's lives. In the absence of a Council Leisure Development Team and Leisure Strategy, Active Devon has had little direct interaction with EDDC in recent years. There is now a real opportunity for the Council to work more closely with Active Devon and aligning shared outcomes between the 2 strategies.
- 7.40. The new town of Cranbrook has been highlighted throughout the consultation as a place where a new leisure facility is really needed. There is a lack of indoor leisure provision in the town, particularly for families with young children and teenagers. Exeter City Council led a successful bid for Sport England funding for an Exeter and Cranbrook Local Delivery Pilot (LDP). The programme is hosted by Exeter City Council and the original focus was on outdoor provision and improving health and physical activity locally. There is an opportunity for EDDC to work with the Local Delivery Pilot to develop a partnership approach regarding new facility provision in Cranbrook.

- 7.41. There is an extensive network of walking and cycling routes across East Devon and an opportunity to work more closely with Devon County Council to map and promote these routes and where possible, create better linkages to reduce reliance on the car and improve accessibility and attractiveness for both residents and tourists to the area e.g. the Clyst Valley Regional Park and Clyst Valley Trail.

#### How do we meet future needs?

- 7.42. There is an opportunity for the Council to work more closely with Active East Devon based on the alignment between the two new strategies.
- 7.43. The Council should engage with the Sport England Local Delivery Pilot to develop a partnership approach regarding new facility provision in Cranbrook.
- 7.44. Closer collaboration with Devon County Council over mapping and promotion of existing and new cycle routes.

## 4. Harnessing the Value of the Great Outdoors



### What do we know?

- 7.45. The community survey highlighted the popularity of walking and cycling in the district, and there is a wide network of footpaths and cycle ways available to use.
- 7.46. EDDC's Green Infrastructure Project Manager is delivering the Clyst Valley Regional Park (Strategy 10 in the Local Plan) and Clyst Valley Trail (presently going through a public consultation). The 25-year masterplan for the CVRP includes objectives for health and wellbeing and outdoor learning. Targets are set for expansion of accessible green space by 740 hectares and for 80 km of traffic-free trail to encourage active travel. Some major new green spaces resulting from new housing developments have already been delivered e.g. Cranbrook Country Park (managed by Cranbrook Town Council), Pin Brook Country Park and Poltimore Park restoration. Two Heritage Lottery-funded projects have also been delivered, the latest of which has established a weekly Wellbeing Walk at Broadclyst, and guided rides on Co-Bikes. Separately LED's Community Engagement Manager has had success at Exmouth surgery, and has trained GP's to lead on Wellbeing Walks.
- 7.47. LED a Wellbeing Walk programme and has previously delivered 'Couch to 5k' projects part funded by Active Devon. Other outdoor initiatives include wild water swimming, and outdoor exercise classes.
- 7.48. EDDC also runs a very successful countryside conservation volunteering programme which allows the public to get involved in practical work which not only helps the environment but has a positive impact on the mental and physical health and wellbeing of those who take part.

7.49. There are 6 outdoor gyms located across the district in parks and open spaces. The equipment includes a mixture of aerobic and stretching equipment. Although the facilities are promoted on the Council website and the facilities offer all residents a great opportunity to participate in free and informal physical exercise, levels of use across the sites are variable.

### How do we meet future need?

7.50. There is significant opportunity to improve awareness of existing opportunities for active travel e.g. walking and cycling, and to develop a more co-ordinated offer.

7.51. Develop additional health and wellbeing programmes based on using the great outdoors, and utilising existing assets such as outdoor gyms..

7.52. The Council should develop increased use of the great outdoors to encourage increased levels of participation in physical activity.

## 5. Review of the existing Leisure Management Contract



### What do we know?

7.53. EDDC has a 30 year leisure management contract with LED Community Leisure which commenced in January 2006.

7.54. The contract operates on the basis of a Service Fee (subsidy) payment which is reviewed every 5 years between EDDC and LED. A new Service Fee is calculated by looking at the trading performance for the previous period and factoring in anticipated increases in income and expenditure to produce a net figure. There is no surplus share arrangement in the current contract between EDDC and LED.

7.55. There have been a number of changes in recent years which have impacted on the leisure contract in East Devon including changes within the leisure industry and types of contract, competition from other providers and new leisure activities, reductions in local authority funding, changes in legislation, changing public needs and expectations, and Covid. It is very difficult under the current contract arrangements for either party and foresee these changes 5 years in advance. The contractor may therefore be having to factor in an element of risk into their fee proposal.

7.56. The EDDC contract portfolio of facilities is very limited in terms of income generation. The provision of relatively small gym facilities on the dual use sites exacerbates this problem, Both LED and the Council has invested in the facilities in the past but this has been done in the absence of a strategic plan.

7.57. The contract makes no reference to the Council's key objectives for leisure or the delivery of a community health and wellbeing programme. Despite this, LED has taken it upon itself to deliver a health and wellbeing programme, including GP Referral, Cardiac Rehab etc. Up until recently, the programme was self-financing, but as a result of Covid, EDDC now contribute £50k pa towards the continued provision of this service.

### How do we meet future need?

7.58. The current leisure contract has another 14 years to run (end date 2036). On the basis that there are no break clauses written into the existing contract, EDDC should consider renegotiating and possibly extending the terms of the contract with LED, to incorporate new/other opportunities.

7.59. Review the financial arrangements between EDDC and LED with consideration given to introducing a business plan through to the end of the contract period, replacing the Service Fee with a baseline Management Fee increased by RPI annually, a revised P and L reporting format to be agreed with EDDC, clearly showing the management fee payment allocated to each site P and L account.

7.60. Any revised contract should clearly set out the Council key outcomes for sport, health and physical activity and identify Key Performance Indicators against which the leisure contractor will be monitored.

7.61. Any revised contract should clearly set out contractor requirements for delivery of:

- Core Facilities
- Community Health and Wellbeing Programme
- Commissioned Leisure Projects

7.62. The Council should subsidize the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Programme.

## 8. Next Steps

- 8.1 In order to develop the identified priorities and support the Council's commitment to delivering leisure facilities and services to make people more active, the following needs to take place:
- Production of an Action Plan with timescales
  - Work with existing partners to identify options to meet priorities in existing facilities
  - Identify new potential partnership working opportunities
  - Establish the resources required to deliver the priorities, not just financial
  - Investigate external funding opportunities
- 8.2 This Leisure Strategy provides a summary of need up to 2031 using technical analysis and consultation with partners and residents. It sets the strategic framework for providing this need. It should be updated periodically alongside other EDDC key corporate plans.
- 8.3 The Action Plan will support this strategy, identifying priorities for action including how and when actions can be taken.
- 8.4 In order to deliver the strategy, significant investment will be required in facilities. A Delivery Plan will sit alongside the action plan. Innovative funding models, extremely strong partnerships and collaboration will be required.

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