



London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

ENVIRONMENT, LEISURE & RESIDENTS SERVICES SELECT COMMITTEE

DATE	TITLE	Wards
6 th November 2012	Sports Participation in Hammersmith & Fulham of Parks and Open spaces	All

SYNOPSIS

This report details sports participation in Hammersmith & Fulham parks, open spaces and leisure facilities. It addresses the impact on uptake and participation in the light of recent pricing reviews and how the Council can build on the legacy of the 2012 Olympic Games.

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RECOMMENDATIONS:

The Committee is asked to;

1. review and comment upon sports participation in Hammersmith & Fulham and the relationship between pricing and uptake.
2. comment on the usage of the parks and open spaces for sports activities, future pricing strategies and the Olympic legacy activities.

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NEXT STEPS

Comments and recommendations submitted by the Committee will be considered by Officers and the Cabinet Member for Residents Services.

1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this brief report is to summarise and review sports participation in H&F parks and open spaces, particularly with a view to ensuring balance and fairness considering the increasing demands placed upon the limited resources by the various stakeholder groups, whilst also gauging the impact of pricing policies.

2. POLICY AND PROCEDURE

- 2.1 Historically all sports bookings were recorded, managed and allocated via the dedicated Sports Booking resource at Residents Services, 77 Glenthorne Road, Hammersmith. Since 9th July 2012 Quadron Services Limited have taken on the responsibility of all borough tennis bookings. QSL have also taken on the responsibility to collect for casual pay and play payment for those games not pre-booked. This move has seen a significant improvement to the service in terms of hours available to pre-book, 7-days per week from 9am - dusk. The increased resource on the ground has also resulted in increased revenue from casual usage across all sites. The transfer is still in its infancy but initial results are promising.
- 2.3 Standard sports bookings are made over the phone, although complex block bookings are often made via Email and will on occasion require a site visit/meeting to ensure clarification and correct interpretation. All bookings (excluding tennis) are currently recorded on Artifax software and weekly reports are distributed to the following to action and facilitate the booking:
- Grounds maintenance – Quadron Services Limited
 - Parks team
 - Sports Officers
 - Community Sports Team
- 2.5 The fees and charges levied for usage are currently reviewed on a 6-monthly basis. This review is completed through a method of benchmarking with neighbouring boroughs and an annual % uplift. Rates will vary depending on the location and status of the group booking; in borough state schools receive the lowest rates and out of borough private schools being charged higher rates. Single bookings pay a premium and those booking 10+ sessions may qualify for a discount + VAT exemption depending on the terms of their booking.
- 2.6 A number of factors must be taken into consideration when allocating sport bookings. These include:
- Suitability of desired location,
 - Ancillary facilities availability e.g. changing rooms and toilets.
 - Potential conflict with residents/parks users
 - Continuity of bookings
 - Avoiding overuse of particularly popular areas.
 - Maximising child safety

It is imperative that the dedicated sports booking team use a common sense approach to balance the views of both residents and sport team/bookers alike. Challenges revolve around supporting longstanding bookings and agreements whilst also providing opportunities for new bookings to be introduced.

3. FACILITY OVERVIEW

3.1 Facility List:

Venue	Facilities Available
Tennis	
Bishops Park Tennis Facility	12 FS tennis Courts, 4 x junior
Brook Green Tennis Facility	4 x tennis courts
Ravenscourt Park Tennis Facility	7 x tennis courts
Eel Brook Common	2 x tennis Courts
South Park	4 x tennis courts
Hurlingham Park	3 x tennis courts / 2 x Netball courts
All Weather Pitch	
Ravenscourt Park	3/4 size football pitch
Hurlingham Park	3/4 size football pitch
Eel Brook Common	2 x 5-side football pitch
Gyms & Fitness	
Linford Christie Outdoor Sports Centre	Athletic Stadium, 4x5side AWP, 1xFS-AWP, 1xgrasspitch
Sands End Gym	Gym and 2 x studios
Lillie Road Fitness centre	Gym and 2 x studios
Hammersmith Broadway Squash Club	Gym + 2 x studio + 4 squash courts
Fulham Pools	Gym + gym
Phoenix Fitness Centre & JA swimming Pool	Gym + swimming pool + 2 studios
Other	
South Park Sports facilities	Grass pitches (2 x Cricket, 2 x Football, Jnr Rugby)
Hurlingham Park Sports Facility	Grass pitches (2xfootball, 2xRugby), Netball, Training Area
Wormwood Scrubs	Grass pitches(12xfootball, 1xGaelic, 1xRugby)
Ravenscourt Park Basketball Area	1 x Basketball court, 3 x Netball Court

3.2 Facility Provisions:

Fitness gyms :There are four public facilities and a large distribution of private health and fitness sites across LBHF which is significantly higher than any neighbouring borough. GLL currently operate 3 sites in H&F, whilst Virgin Active operate Fulham Pools

Grass pitches: The borough continues to increase the number of grass sports pitches where possible and the FA recognise Wormwood Scrubs as the second largest green field facility, providing a Hub site for club sports.

All-weather pitches: There is generally good provision of smaller all-weather pitches, although they are not evenly distributed and some are in need of refurbishment.

Swimming pools: There are enough pools to meet local demand; most residents live within easy travel distance to their local pool. The Leisure Needs Assessment indicates that “There is a surplus of swimming provision and pools are currently not operating at full capacity despite LBHF being an importer of demand”.

Sports halls: Although the borough has a small number of community sports halls based in schools, sports facilities and community centres, it currently lacks community provision and this is something that ELRS looks to correct over the next three years.

4. CURRENT USAGE & PRICING

4.1 As the table below indicates, the general trend is towards an increase in participation. This is a trend that continues to be identified in 2012.

Hammersmith & Fulham Sports Usage/Bookings Information

	April 2010 - 31 March 2011 Usage/bookings	2010/11 Cost £	April 2011 - 31st March 2012 Usage/bookings	2011/12 Cost £	Usage % Inc	Price % Inc
Sport Bookings						
Cricket	161	£60.00	282	£85.00	75.16	41.67
Rugby	334	£60.00	360	£70.00	7.78	16.67
Football	1558	£60.00	1801	£70.00	15.60	16.67
Tennis	9058	£7.00	12421	£7.00	37.13	0.00
All-weather pitches	4525	£30.00	4691	£35.00	3.67	16.67
Training Area	158	£30.00	121	£32.00	-23.42	6.67
Netball	953	£9.00	1364	£10.00	43.13	11.11
Activity Areas	906	£15.00	787	£20.00	-13.13	33.33
GLL Usage						
Broadway Squash Centre	234,025	Various	274,224	Various	17.18	
Lillie Road Fitness Centre	145,220	Various	178,144	Various	22.67	
Phoenix + JA	160,443	Various	160,835	Various	0.24	
Fulham Pools						
Swim	64,629	Various	63,145	Various	-2.30	
Gym	4,169	Various	4,394	Various	5.40	

4.2 The leading factors contributing towards this increase in uptake and participation include:

- Competitively priced facilities, regularly benchmarked against neighbouring authorities.
- Improvement in grounds maintenance contract. Better playing surfaces that attract custom and improved durability, allowing more usage.
- Increase in the amount of school usage, due to increase in capacity of many schools dependent upon H&F parks and open spaces.
- Increase in floodlight provision
- An increase in facilities available
- Effect of Olympic build up.

4.3 Ravenscourt Park and South Park have seen significant demand from school usage. This is particularly apparent in the summer months. Demand at

Ravenscourt Park is reaching a significantly challenging level. This combined with local school growth and dependency on the site will certainly lead to Ravenscourt Park popularity continuing. The following measures are being taken or considered to ease the demand moving forward:

- All schools have been surveyed re: their sporting requirements and estimated usage from Autumn 12 - Summer 15. A summary of responses identifies the areas of conflict across each term. The main clashes are over the All Weather Pitch (AWP) usage in the afternoons
- The suggestion to mark up 2 new netball courts on the existing north-side tennis courts has been carried out; this has eased the clash over netball facilities.
- Requests for usage for the Spring term 2013 have been received - these are currently being reviewed with the intention to offer preliminary confirmation to schools by October half term
- Schools will be surveyed to determine their usage of the AWP, in order to determine what innovations can be made, additionally, the proposed renovations of Wormholt Park will be costed as will proposals to convert the north tennis courts (now marked for netball as well) to an additional AWP, although this would make potential conflict in usage with tennis and netball.
- 2014 - Hammersmith Park (South Africa Rd, White City) is to be renovated, and will provide additional sporting facilities. Wormholt Park - also to be renovated, could also provide capacity for users. It should be noted that this venue has historically provided a non-chargeable facility, which may become chargeable after renovations.
- Facilities are finite and all schools will not necessarily be able to get their preferred slots, but will have to be willing to compromise in the short term until developments are able to open up more facilities.

4.4 Linford Christie Outdoor Sports Centre offers a range of sports facility and continues to have capacity to accommodate higher level usage although some schools are put off by the building/facility conditions (which are currently being enhanced) and location, with the associated travel costs.

5. PARTICIPATION

5.1 In terms of identifying the most common barriers preventing people from being more active, these include, and are certainly not unique to Hammersmith & Fulham; work commitments, financial constraints, lack of motivation and the need for more family activities. Other factors that have been identified as contributing towards low levels of participation include limited awareness of opportunities generally, need for more opportunities for adult men to take part in team sports, limited awareness of the availability of childcare facilities, published information does not generally indicate whether services are accessible for disabled people, specifically for disabled people or mixed ability, embarrassment, not being able to afford to be active (this is more a perceived barrier as physical activity can be free.)

6. SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS / OPPORTUNITIES

A number of improvements have been identified for possible implementation with a view to both improving the service and customer experience whilst also increasing participation, revenue and reducing costs.

6.1 **Online Booking** – Work continues to identify an online booking solution. A previous project to implement an online booking facility (Zipporah) was rejected at

the user acceptance stage. Other options are currently in the process of being considered.

- 6.2 **Addressing Unauthorised Usage** - A greater emphasis on addressing those schools that currently refuse to book and pay for their usage of the parks and open spaces with the co-operation of Parks Constabulary and Sports Officers reporting usage that is not included in the weekly parks booking sheets. This highlights the importance of booking to ensure the sustainability of the parks in preventing overuse and avoiding double usage.
- 6.3 **Finding Alternative/New Locations** – Efforts are being made to try and relocate activities from some of the more popular locations to those currently underused. Lillie Road Recreation Ground, Eel Brook Common and Wormwood Scrubs all have greater capacity and efforts are being made to encourage schools to relocate their PE activities where possible. Wormholt Park will also provide additional capacity once the works have been completed.
- 6.4 **Floodlights** – The darker winter months often result in lower participation. Some of this reduction could be avoided by the introduction of greater floodlight provision. Recent improvement to existing floodlight provision has been achieved at Bishops Park (extending usage from 8pm to 9pm) and Hurlingham Park (Inc provision and addition of Wednesday evening).

7. OLYMPIC LEGACY PROJECTS

- 7.1 The following projects have been identified to potentially harness the spotlight of the Games on London as a catalyst to inspire change locally, in particular with a view to increasing the numbers of residents taking part in regular physical activity and sport in priority groups and specific wards (White City) with the highest levels of lifestyle related illnesses or the lowest levels of participation.
- 7.2 Redevelopment of the hard court facility in Ravenscourt Park to deliver an outdoor Basketball and Netball court that meets minimum national guidance situated in accessible location. The project would become Hammersmith and Fulham's as well as West London's most visible Legacy project for the 2012 London Olympics. The cost was £197,500 funded by external grants from the EBA and Inspired Facilities fund (lottery) (£147,000), and from the Parks Capital budget (£50,000). The project was completed and launched on 18th August 2012
- 7.3 Sports Development created a new sports club development initiative called Club Excel for the Olympic period. It is designed to reward clubs for improving their practice so as they achieve the best standards of delivery possible. So far 5 clubs have achieved rewards through the initiative with another 10 planned for the next year.
- 7.4 During the Olympic period the Ping! Table tennis project visited Hammersmith and Fulham. Table tennis tables were located at three venues across the borough offering free pay and play table tennis (Westfield, Lyric Square, Fulham Broadway). Following the end of the Paralympics the tables have been relocated to local H&F communities to enable continued free table tennis opportunities.
- 7.5 As part of the Sport England Olympic Legacy programme, Sports Development have been delivering the Sportivate initiative. The project targets young people aged 14-25 years who do little sport with new 8 week activity courses with the aim

to inspire them into continued participation. To date the programme has been very successful with H&F leading West London in terms of numbers engaged.

- 7.6 Charities that support disabled people (HAFAD, Mencap, MIND) are working with Sports Development to apply to the Sport England 'Inclusive Sports Fund'. If successful the project would target disabled residents with new sports opportunities through both opening up mainstream activity and expanding disabled specific opportunities.
- 7.7 **Ride London** - Another legacy for H&F following the inspiring road race coming through Hammersmith & Fulham is the RideLondon campaign. RideLondon will be a world-class festival of cycling, - www.ridelondon.co.uk It is anticipated that this will encourage both commuter and casual cycling through-out the borough. LBHF have baseline figures that we can compare year on year to evaluate the project and gauge its relative success.
- 7.8 Other legacy projects include creating opportunities with Thames Valley Harriers Athletics Club based at Linford Christie Outdoor Sports Centre and Furnivall Scull Club and a number of volunteering organisations.

8. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES

- 8.1 Fees and charges for the Leisure service will be reviewed as part of the 2013/14 budget setting process and agreed by Full Council in February 2013, ready for implementation from 1st April 2013. Fees and charges should be set to be competitive against the market but should also reflect the enhanced service offering given the service improvements and investment set out in paragraphs 4.2 and 7.2.
- 8.2 The general trend towards an increase in participation should also be considered as part of the fees and charges review to ensure that any link between price and demand is optimised. It should be noted that the lead Cabinet Member for the Environment, Leisure and Residents Services Department has delegated authority to approve changes to fees and charges where the anticipated annual impact on income is less than £100k. This allows the service to more quickly respond to changes in the service and/or market in order to maximise the return to the Council.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to;

1. review and comment upon sports participation in Hammersmith & Fulham and the relationship between pricing and uptake.
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LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

No.	Description of Background Papers	Name/Ext of holder of file/copy	Department/ Location
1.	None		