

# **Sport, Leisure & Active Recreation Strategy 2022 – 2027**

# Foreword

Welcome to this Sports, Leisure and Active Recreation Strategy 2022-2027. We are entering into one of the most exciting times for sport and leisure in this Borough.

Despite sport and leisure being a discretionary power for local authorities this Administration committed in its Manifesto and subsequently in the Corporate Plan 2019-2023 to replace our outdated leisure facilities and enhance our sport and leisure offer. Since 2019 and despite the pandemic this is being delivered. From working with the new leaseholders on the former Fleet Leisure/Bowater's site in Northfleet which will provide much needed community sports pitches, to designing and soon to build a brand new multi million pound sport and leisure centre, to replace Cascades, which includes a new regional level swimming pool, gym, studios, soft play, climbing walls and outdoor play all while still retaining the fun and family element, this authority is committed to ensuring that residents have the very best we can provide.

I am grateful to the residents and sports clubs and organisations that took the time to engage with us in the consultation on this strategy and you will be able to see that as a listening Council we have sought to incorporate many of your views as we seek to enhance our wider sports, leisure and recreation offer in Gravesham. We are so grateful as a Council for the sports and leisure clubs and organisations in the Borough many of which offer their own time to help provide excellent opportunities for residents including children and young people to participate in sport. We are also grateful to the businesses and trusts including our current partners Gravesham Community Leisure Ltd for providing such a wide sports and leisure offer in Gravesham so far.

We have had some great successes for sport in Gravesham from professional Olympians to small junior clubs. Each important and needed. We want to help provide and facilitate that platform for success here in the Borough.

The Council cannot do, own, run or fund everything however and that is why partnership is so important going forward. This long-term strategy details our vision, ideas and way forward for the next few years for sports, leisure and recreation in the Borough and I look forward to us journeying together as one community to ensure we continue to have a Borough to be proud of.

**Cllr Shane Mochrie-Cox**  
**Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure**

# Introduction

The Communities Directorate have in recent years implemented a suite of key strategies including the Arts & Cultural Strategy, a Community Engagement Strategy, a Youth and Community, Health and Wellbeing Strategy and a Tourism & Heritage Strategy. This new related strategy is our Sport, Leisure & Active Recreation Strategy. Together this portfolio of strategies, including our overarching Council Corporate Plan for 2019-2023 leads the Communities Directorate to provide a sound and coherent framework for improving and enhancing our services including leisure, culture, and tourism, in its widest sense for the foreseeable future.

It is widely recognised that taking part in physical activity through sport and active recreation can improve the quality of life for individuals and communities and delivers a range of social, health (including mental health), economic and environmental benefits. Gravesham has large scale health inequalities and, whilst improvements have been made in recent years, the difference experienced across the borough varies widely. Our Youth, Community, Health and Wellbeing Strategy will also work in tandem with this strategy focusing on improving health outcomes (including mental health) for residents.

The Sport, Leisure & Active Recreation Strategy will outline a number of key priorities and actions which will provide a framework for tackling inactivity, as well as linking into wider developments such as our wider sports and leisure offer including future facility provision within the borough.

## Local Picture

The 2019 Public Health England Local Health profile summarises that the health of people in Gravesham is generally similar to the England average. However, estimated levels of excess weight in adults (aged 18+) and physically active adults (aged 19+) are significantly worse than the England average, with 67.2% classed as overweight or obese. For children in year 6, the prevalence of obesity, including severe obesity, is rated at 20.4%, compared to a regional level of 16.8%, although comparable to the England average of 20.2%.

Sport England's 'Active Lives' Survey is a capturing tool which provides insight into the physical activity habits of the nation. The data looks at national, regional and local participation levels. The most recent survey covers May 2020 to May 2021 and shows that residents in Gravesham (aged 16+) are the second least active in Kent with only 57.7%, reaching the recommended 150+ minutes of exercise per week. The national figures and those for Kent are currently 60.9% and 61.8% consecutively.

In addition to this, just under one third, 31.1% of residents in Gravesham are classed as inactive, meaning they do less than 30 minutes of physical activity per week. Nationally this figure stands at 27.5%. These figures demonstrate that efforts are required to encourage and to make it easier and more accessible for the most inactive in the Borough to do more physical activity.

The Borough's future sport and leisure offer cannot focus solely on formal participation at outdoor and indoor sports facilities, but there will be a need to reach under-represented groups and individuals who may not ordinarily be motivated to participate in sport, or who do

not wish to pursue activities within a club environment, or perhaps find the traditional gym or leisure centre environment intimidating.

We will therefore need to make full use of all the Borough's assets, including parks and open spaces to provide opportunities for informal recreation and promote healthy activities such as walking, running, and cycling and seek also to break the stigma of those seeking to improve their health (including mental health), wellbeing and body image.

The strategy is designed to ensure that the Council is better placed to deliver our own programmes, promoting a long-term vision for Sports, Leisure and Active Recreation to our residents but also wider afield. We recognise that no one organisation can influence the changes in perception and behaviour required to create a more active and healthy population. As a district authority, the provision of sport and recreation is a legally a discretionary function with a small core team of officers and so the need to work in partnership with other organisations across the public, private and not-for-profit sectors is vitally important to improve the sports and leisure offer, in order to help build stronger, healthier and more active communities.

The way we participate in physical activity has been significantly altered as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. With restrictions on movement, cancellation of grassroots sports and the closure of physical activity provision there have been fewer opportunities for people to take part in physical activity.

Sport England's research, 'Understanding the Impact of Covid-19' estimates that the proportion of the population classed as active has dropped over 7% which equates to approximately 3 million less active adults. A few facilities, organisations and clubs will have been affected in many different ways during the last two years and so the new strategy will need to reflect this recovery going forward.

## **National, County and Local Priorities**

Encouraging more people to become physically active is a countrywide challenge. By looking at national, county, and local strategies, Gravesham Borough Council can ensure that our objectives align with other organisations who seek to improve participation in sport, leisure, and active recreation.

### **National Priorities**

#### *Sport England: Uniting the Movement 2021*

Sport and physical activity have a big role to play in improving the physical and mental health of the nation, supporting the economy, reconnecting communities and rebuilding a stronger society for all. From this notion, Sport England (the national non-Governmental body for sport) has recently released its new strategy, Uniting the Movement, which is a 10-year vision to transform lives and communities through sport and physical activity.

It seeks to tackle the inequalities long seen in sport and physical activity. Providing opportunities to people and communities that have traditionally been left behind, and helping to remove the barriers to activity, has never been more important.

There are three key objectives to the Strategy:

- Advocating for movement, sport and physical activity
- Joining forces on five big issues
- Creating the catalyst for change

In particular, the five big issues are identified where the greatest potential is seen for preventing and tackling inequalities in sport and physical activity. Each one is a building block that, on its own, would make a difference, but together, could change things profoundly:

- *Recover and reinvent*: Recovering from the biggest crisis in a generation and reinventing as a vibrant, relevant and sustainable network of organisations providing sport and physical activity opportunities that meet the needs of different people.
- *Connecting communities*: Focusing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.
- *Positive experiences for children and young people*: Unrelenting focus on positive experiences for all children and young people as the foundations for a long and healthy life.
- *Connecting with health and wellbeing*: Strengthening the connections between sport, physical activity, health and wellbeing, so more people can feel the benefits of, and advocate for, an active life.
- *Active environments*: Creating and protecting the places and spaces that make it easier for people to be active.

#### *Sport England - Understanding the impact of Covid-19*<sup>1</sup>

Activity levels for adults had been increasing until coronavirus restrictions were introduced in March 2020. This led to unprecedented drops in activity during the first few weeks of full lockdown between mid-March and mid-May 2020. The proportion of the population classed as active dropped by 7.1%. This represents just over 3 million fewer active adults.

Some audiences found it harder to be active before Covid-19 and are finding it hard now. Inequalities between different groups have persisted since lockdown restrictions began in March. Those who have found it hardest to stay active include:

- People with long-term health conditions/disabilities
- People from lower socio-economic groups
- Women
- 16–34-year-olds
- 55 years and over
- Black adults, Asian adults, and adults from other ethnic groups

The proportion of children and young people reporting that they were active during mid-May to late July 2020 (the summer term) fell by 2.3%, with just over 100,000 fewer children meeting the recommended level of activity compared to the same period 12 months earlier. The impact was greater for some groups than others. Whilst all groups have been impacted

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<sup>1</sup> Sources:

Active Lives Adult Survey. Coronavirus (Covid-19) Report. Mid-March-Mid-May. Published October 2020

Active Lives Children and Young People Survey Coronavirus (Covid-19) Report. Mid-May-late July 2020. Published January 2021

in terms of activity levels, girls fared far better than boys, whilst those from Black and Mixed Heritage backgrounds saw noticeable drops in activity levels.

Sporting activities saw a large decrease with over a million fewer children and young people (-16.3%) reporting they took part in swimming and team sports in the last week\* compared to the same period 12 months earlier. Walking, cycling and fitness all saw large increases in the numbers reporting they took part in the last week compared to the same period 12 months earlier. 1.6m more children and young people went for a walk (+22%) or did fitness activities (+22.1%), whilst 1.4m more cycled for fun or fitness (+18.4%).

In addition, lack of disposable income may lead to a reduction in sports sector spend and could impact activities which cater for children and young people as well as adults. Uncertain employment and financial circumstances mean that greater numbers of people will be looking for affordable and flexible opportunities to stay active. Fewer people will be able to make an ongoing financial commitment to participate.

### Regional/County Priorities

'Everyday Active 2022-2027' is a strategic framework for Sport and Physical Activity in Kent and Medway, overseen and run by The Kent and Medway Active Partnership, known as Active Kent & Medway, funded by Kent County Council and Sport England. It aims to complement Sport England strategies, whilst also providing a local context and five priority themes. These are:

- Connecting Communities – Making it easy to be active locally
- Positive Experiences for Children & Young People – To develop a lifelong habit of being physically active
- Regenerate and Reinvent – Support facilities, clubs and groups to provide appropriate activities
- Connecting with Health and Wellbeing – Enable everyone to benefit physically & mentally from an active lifestyle
- Active Environments – Help everyone build activity into their everyday life

### Local Priorities

Gravesham Borough Council's 2019 to 2023 Corporate Plan has identified that physical activity is important in ensuring that residents are 'safe, healthy and active' Section two of the plan, 'Place' lays out the council's commitments towards this:

- Design a quality and affordable leisure offer – improved facilities and creative sports programmes to tackle local health inequalities
- Improve resident wellbeing – provide and preserve a suite of high-quality play areas and promote opportunities for active lives
- Manage a programme of proactive healthy living interventions – work with partners to support and safeguard vulnerable residents

## **Open Space, Sport & Recreation Assessment & Strategy**

The new strategy will need to be read in conjunction with the Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment. This large piece of work was originally carried out in 2016, providing technical evidence-based assessments covering the current provision of indoor sports facilities, playing pitches and open spaces across the borough.

Further strategy and standards documents were also provided containing information on Gravesham's specific needs, plus any demand shortfalls or surpluses. These documents provide strategic recommendations and support to inform planning application decisions and future corporate/strategic development opportunities as and when they arise.

## The Vision

*“The council’s overall vision is ‘to have a Sport, Leisure and Recreation offer across the Borough that works with and encourages all local residents, visitors, organisations, businesses and communities to adopt a regular active and healthier lifestyle’. This can be achieved by utilising the full range of provision available, including traditional sports clubs, indoor and outdoor sports, leisure, and recreational spaces. It will be necessary to remove barriers to participation, increase accessibility and facilitate opportunities for all to develop sporting potential and ambition to represent the Borough locally, regionally, nationally, or internationally.”*

In recognising that leisure is legally a discretionary service that this Council and Administration is committed to providing and enhancing, this Sport, Leisure & Active Recreation Strategy sets out the Council's aims, objectives, and priorities for developing sports opportunities and facilities in the borough and using sport and active recreation to develop and promote healthy lifestyles. So, to achieve this vision this strategy outlines the following aims and objectives will be met:

### 1. A Renewed Leisure Centre Offer

1.1 As part of the consultation for our Corporate Plan in 2019 and focusing on the manifesto of the Administration there was a clear identified need from residents to develop, design and enhance our sport and leisure offer in the Borough ensuring quality and affordability and as a listening Council this is sought to be met through this strategy and the development of our new leisure offer and leisure centre provision of those centres owned by Gravesham Borough Council and currently run by our partners Gravesham Community Leisure Ltd (GCLL) which operates as a leisure trust.

1.2 Building on the recommendations contained within the original 2016 Indoor Sports Assessment, a feasibility study for the future provision of council owned leisure centres within the Borough was commissioned and has recently been completed.

1.3 The key focus of the study was to refresh the Council's 2016 Indoor Leisure Assessment and to redefine its needs and options over the long term for investment in its facility portfolio, specifically in relation to the Council owned Cascades and Cygnet Leisure Centres. It investigated replacement of one or both Council owned facilities, taking into account capital and revenue costs and future management options. It also recognised a changing context, including proximity of the development of the proposed Highways England and UK Government supported Lower Thames Crossing, potential

developments within Ebbsfleet Development Corporation Area, and the impact of Covid-19 on the leisure industry.

- 1.4 The feasibility study recommended replacing the existing Cascades Leisure Centre at its existing site with a brand-new leisure centre, as opposed to a major refurbishment and remodelling of the existing site to address some of the Borough's current facility needs. This recommendation also considered the complications relating to the complexities of the Cygnet Leisure Centre site as part of the physical building is owned by Kent County Council. Hence the Council is taking forward the decision of concentrating on redevelopment of Cascades Leisure Centre now.
- 1.5 Whilst proposals for a landmark leisure facility within Ebbsfleet Development Corporation area have yet to be firmed up, it is assumed that this will be delivered as a leisure offer replacement for Cygnet Leisure Centre and this Council is clear with its policy in this regard.
- 1.6 The Council's policy position for the amount of and provision of leisure centres in the Borough is that there should always be two leisure centres that are physically located within the Borough's boundaries to meet the needs of our residents. This includes any potential future new facility in the west of the Borough to replace the ageing site at Cygnet Leisure Centre. Gravesham Borough Council will be working with the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation to ensure that any proposed leisure offer for any new centre in Northfleet meets the needs of local residents and provides an offer that matches the needs identified by our study and in consultation with local residents. We shall also seek to ensure that any centre or the land that it sits on has close formal or legal/ownerships links with Gravesham Borough Council to ensure that there is some local accountability for the leisure offer and provision.
- 1.7 In the meantime, it is the policy of this Council that Cygnet Leisure Centre shall remain fully open and maintained and complement the new leisure centre and leisure offer to replace Cascades once this has been built. Additionally, Cascades Leisure Centre and site shall remain open as far as practically possible during the construction of the new leisure centre.
- 1.8 Based on the findings of the needs assessment and strategic options appraisal (and on the assumption that the facility at Ebbsfleet will be delivered), it is proposed that developing a community health/well-being and family focussed leisure centre is the most appropriate course of action for the council's future leisure provision. Central to this will be a new swimming facility which is essential to meeting the Borough's existing and future shortfall in provision, specifically with lane swimming and learner pool provision. A higher capital cost of a new build can be balanced against the significant benefits provided in terms of its attractiveness, potential for co-location of health and wellbeing spaces, and greater capacity to generate revenue via a more cohesive and modern orientation of spaces. Development of a new-build facility will enable the Council to further deliver its ambition for its operations to be net-zero by 2030.
- 1.9 Our ambition for the leisure offers and provision at Cascades and for the Borough as a whole is that at a minimum there will be the ability for some Regional Level Competitive Sports and Leisure meeting the current requirements of various sports governing bodies for regional training and competitions. We will work with residents, clubs, and sport's governing bodies as well as regional and national bodies and funding bodies to



maximise the potential for this site. While it is acknowledged that we will not necessarily be able to build an 'Olympic Park' and meet requirements and standards for international training and competition levels for every sport, this new provision could be a steppingstone towards many of the requirements and provide experience and opportunity that does not currently exist in the Borough.

- 1.10 Alternative sites for leisure centre development in the Borough are extremely limited and consequently Cascades Leisure Centre's existing car park has been appraised as the highest ranked site, given that it is in Council ownership, has the potential to create good visibility and a site frontage for a new leisure centre.
- 1.11 Steps are being taken to fund the capital cost of the project from a combination of the leisure centre earmarked reserve, attributable S106 contributions, capital receipts, revenue reserves and/or external grant contributions (where these can be secured), with the remaining balance funded through external borrowing funded from the forecast improved revenue income from the site. Should the improved revenue income from the site not be sufficient to meet the full cost of borrowing, the Council will need to consider other options for how these costs may be met in the longer term. Potential operating models for consideration include the setting up of a wholly owned Local Authority Trading (LATCO) a wholly owned company (WOC), a competitive procurement process (including commercial leisure operators) and a traditional trust management option. All will be explored to ensure that residents and visitors can be sure that the leisure offer meets their needs and that as per our Corporate Plan we design a quality and affordable leisure offer.

## 2. Sports and Leisure Facilities in Gravesham

- 2.1. The Council will consider both the strategic provision of formal and informal facilities, both indoor and outdoor; and their long-term management and the development of social infrastructure and support mechanisms to foster and support physical activity within the borough.
- 2.2. Not all sports and leisure facilities are owned or run by Gravesham Borough Council or through our formal partners Gravesham Community Leisure Ltd. We will seek to work in close formal and information partnership, dialogue and coordination with those leisure facilities, trusts, companies, businesses that are not in the gift or control of the Council as bodies or through land or building ownership to ensure a wider and cohesive sport and leisure offer for residents and visitors.
- 2.3. The Council shall continue to work with and seek completion of other externally owned/run/leased or funded planned facilities such Former Fleet Leisure etc. as well as facilities in planned new development areas such as Ebbsfleet Development Corporation.
- 2.4. To reaffirm as Administration policy as agreed by Full Council that the freehold land that was formerly known as Bowaters/Fleet Leisure in Northfleet shall remain in public hands and not be sold for development, no housing will be permitted on the site and the site will be retained as a community sports facility.

## 3. Partnership Working

- 3.1. GBC will support continued work with partners at a local level, such as Active Kent & Medway, Gravesham Community Leisure Limited (GCLL) and The Grand etc. to

implement a shared vision for a more active and healthy population and to support a reduction in health inequalities across the borough and to encourage people to adopt healthier lifestyles and in developing new ways to support and to make it easier for the inactive to become active.

- 3.2. In addition, we shall seek to work in close partnership with local sports clubs, national governing bodies, community organisations and sport and leisure local, regional and national bodies including at club and governing levels to also ensure that this strategy is realised.
- 3.3. The Council will also utilise and explore opportunities for wider, true partnership working with key strategic partners and seek potential funding through partners such as Kent County Council, HM Government, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the NHS through the new Integrated Care Partnership on matters within this strategy and seek to ensure that Gravesham Borough Council's voice is heard through formal engagement and participation in boards, committees, working groups and engagement activities to lever support for the vision for sports and leisure in Gravesham.

#### 4. Community Groups and Sports Clubs

- 4.1. Complement and support where possible the delivery of existing and future sport and physical activity services delivered by local organisations and local clubs.
- 4.2. Support local clubs and organisations by creating and maintaining a local directory of sports clubs and assist in the publicity of clubs.
- 4.3. Ensure there is a named contact at the Council to assist with sports related queries, including assistance with applying for grants.
- 4.4. Focussing on sport and physical activity's ability to make better places to live and bring people together.
- 4.5. To work with local organisations in providing a range of activities, especially for those residents that are not normally active.
- 4.6. Through our Community Engagement work look at what support, training or networking opportunities can be offered to clubs and community groups regarding volunteering opportunities.

#### 5. Communication, Publicity and Community Engagement

- 5.1. Enhance usage of publicity, promotional tools, branding, social media, communications, and web-based support for it to be easier for users to find activities and support/ advice to take part in physical activity.
- 5.2. We will involve community groups, residents, visitors and users to improve facilities at our centres and across the Sports and Leisure Offer through our Community Engagement Strategy and Team to help ensure that the work of our centres and our wider leisure offer contributes to better public health, social inclusion and the wellbeing of our residents including our children and young people.
- 5.3. Community Engagement is important so the Council will commit to ongoing dialogue with the community via our community engagement team and our partners regarding sports and leisure.

#### 6. Events and Play

- 6.1. Continue to support the popular summer play schemes for children and young people in our leisure centres and outdoor facilities
- 6.2. Using local insight, quantitative and qualitative data tools and intelligence (E.g. Active Lives data etc.) as well as our community engagement methods, to target future activities and interventions across the borough.
- 6.3. As part of continuing development, we shall review the offer of the council's own programme of activities, including the Summer Programme and Active Gravesham initiatives held throughout the year to ensure that this reflects the evolving needs of residents and visitors.
- 6.4. That this Council strategically recognises play and fun as one of the most important motivators to developing healthy lifestyles including mental health and wellbeing.

## 7. A Holistic Journey – from Fun Sports and Leisure to Regional and National Sports

- 7.1. The strategy aims to help enable and facilitate a holistic approach to sports and leisure in the Borough by ensuring that as well as opportunities for fun and enjoyment our residents and visitors can have opportunities where possible to train, grow and develop on both amateur and professional sports circuits and events.
- 7.2. The Council will seek to link with national, and regional strategies relating to sports and active recreation and play our part in influencing their development and delivery.
- 7.3. Working with partners, the Council will look to focus on positive experiences for children and young people as the foundation for a long and healthy life.

## 8. Links with local strategies

- 8.1. This strategy will work with, enhance, develop and complement existing local strategies, such as the Open Space, Sport & Recreation Assessment, the Arts & Cultural Strategy, the Youth and Community, Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Tourism & Heritage Strategy as well as the overarching Council's Corporate Plan 2019-2023.
- 8.2. The Council shall provide further strategic support when considering sport, leisure and active recreation within the planning, policy and decision-making processes of the Council
- 8.3. This strategy (including others within GBC) and accompanying action plan(s) and policies shall seek to run closely alongside in partnership with and eventually subsume and supersede strategies and actions plans that relate to sport, leisure and active recreation that are in place, or are created by, the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation.

## 9. Funding and Resources

- 9.1. We shall target Council resources and funding regarding sport and leisure more effectively, in line with corporate strategic priorities.
- 9.2. In line with the successful small Council Arts Grants and Community Grants we shall examine the possibility at what small, limited and targeted financial support can be offered to local clubs through a small annual Sports and Leisure grant scheme if this is financially possible or through in-kind support subject to budgets and resources or through support to gain external funding or support.

- 9.3. We shall seek all opportunities to lever in and attract external funding for the delivery of revenue sports and leisure and for capital expenditure for infrastructure and facilities improvements where required.

## 10. Outdoor Sport and Leisure Active Environments –

- 10.1. The Council will protect, maintain, increase where possible and improve the open parks and spaces that make it easier for people to be active, enabling residents to enjoy our parks and open spaces, to participate in outdoor exercise, as well as active travel connections to these locations
- 10.2. In balance with the needs of local areas support the development of sustainable cycle routes in the Borough working with Kent County Council and residents to ensure harmony amongst all leisure users.
- 10.3. Use strategic evidence base documents (E.g., Open Space, Sport & Recreation Assessment) to inform future provision across the borough, both for formal and informal facilities.
- 10.4. To build on the success of activities that have become popular in recent times, including during Covid-19, such as active travel, walking routes, cycling, and running.
- 10.5. The Council will continue to invest in our play equipment for children and young people across the Borough so that it is safe and fit for use.

## 11. Wider Sports and Leisure Offer

- 11.1. The Council through this strategy will strategically promote the wider leisure offer in Gravesham including the wide variety of sports that are on offer including sports and leisure activities that are potentially specialist in nature. While the Council cannot provide facilities, venues or resources for all sports at all levels it can provide the culture and policy direction to allow such ventures to flourish through a positive and holistic approach to sports and leisure.
- 11.2. Leisure time in the Borough for people is precious and feedback from residents and clubs said that the wider sports and leisure offer within the Borough should be as family friendly as possible and should also be experiential, ensuring that all involved can experience fun, enjoyment and develop closer family ties which the Council shall seek to promote and develop.

## 12. Accessibility and Barriers to Participation

- 12.1. This Council is a listening Council and through the consultation residents asked for the wider sports and leisure offer to be as accessible as possible
- 12.2. The Council will work with partners to ensure that all sports and leisure provision is as open and accessible to all residents in particular to those that identify with a disability. The Council is ensuring with partners that in the new Leisure Centre Offer, accessibility is at the heart of all that is being done.
- 12.3. There are many barriers to participation in sports and leisure including cost/affordability, fear or stigma, culture or preference. The Council commits to working with partners to ensure that sports and leisure programmes can be as accessible as possible, and that work is done to enable participation. An example requested by residents was ladies only provision.
- 12.4. While leisure provision, especially centres, must be able to be raise funds through their pricing structure for staffing, facilities development, safety, maintenance and

service provision, there should be schemes and programmes that ensure accessibility and participation along with the need to balance cost viability for access. Both can and should be achieved.

- 12.5. Sports and Leisure is not reserved to leisure centres and our wider leisure offer must speak to the whole Borough, catering where possible, for the diverse needs of residents and should include outreach events at low or free cost and facilities such as outdoor gyms where residents can experience sport and leisure at low cost or free.

## Key Outcomes

By the end of the life of this strategy some of the key outcomes shall be:

1. Reduced health inequalities and increased participation levels.
2. A network of accessible, flexible, sustainable, and inclusive facilities.
3. To provide a programme of activities and interventions that will be attractive to all.

Gravesham's vision and priorities will only be realised by:

- Changing the culture and community view of sport, leisure and activity.
- Addressing key inactivity trends and barriers to participation.
- Bringing together sport, health, education, community safety, and many others to use sport and activity to improve the quality of people's lives.
- Partners working together in a co-ordinated way to create and sustain opportunities for 'more people, to be more active, more often' in sports, leisure and active recreation activities.
- To use non-traditional interventions where feasible that encourages and supports physical activity through new technology.
- The delivery of new sports and leisure sites that include, the new Cascades Leisure Centre but also the former Fleet Leisure site where a lease has been agreed and planning permission granted for new football and sporting provision in the borough.

## Action Plan & Resources

An operational action plan will be generated by Officers incorporating the strategy aims and objectives, which have been aligned following consultation and feedback from the public consultation in June and input by Members of the Gravesham Borough Council Community and Leisure Cabinet Committee.

Progress of the plan will be monitored through the council's key performance indicators using qualitative and quantitative data and by our community engagement methods and strategy and reported through the Community and Leisure Cabinet Committee structure.

Overall, it is anticipated that this action plan can be achieved through the council's current levels of budgetary provision as amended from time to time by Full Council at its budget setting meeting. This will be reviewed on an annual basis and therefore may change. Some of the key areas that will require additional funding, could be partially funded, possibly through partnership working or external funding.

