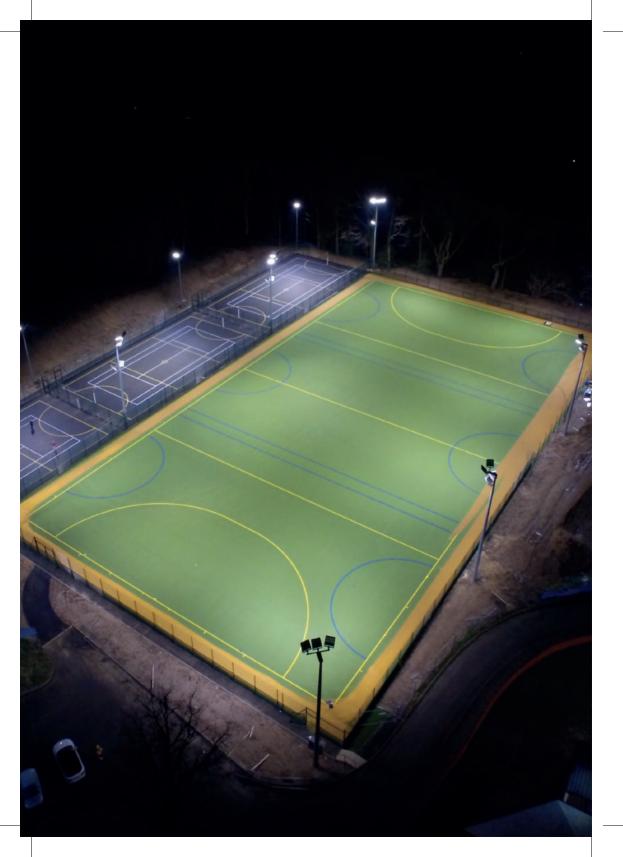
## ENGLAND HOCKEY FACILITIES STRATEGY



Helping every hockey club in England to work towards having appropriate and sustainable facilities that provide excellent experiences for players.





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# Facilities strategy

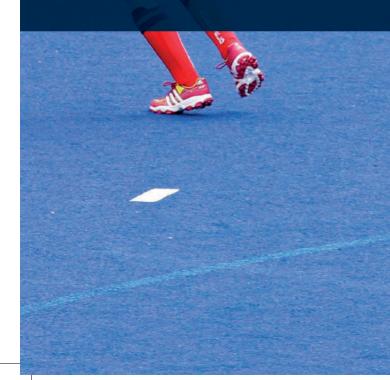
## Vision:

Every hockey club in England to have appropriate and sustainable facilities that provide excellent experiences for players. erate

**Summers** 

## Mission:

More, better, happier players with access to appropriate and sustainable facilities.



# Introduction

England Hockey's strategy is based on a virtuous circle which aims to use international success to create visibility which in turn can be used to drive participation. We have demonstrated that this can be successful with the 2012 'Hockey Nation' programme helping to grow junior participation by 65% in our clubs between 2011 and 2015. With the gold medal success at Rio 2016, we are expecting a similar increase. This remains our approach for the 2017 to 2021 period.





Our club market is well structured and clubs are required to affiliate to England Hockey to play in community leagues. As a result only relatively few occasional teams lie outside our affiliation structure.

As traditional 11-a-side hockey provision is reliant on suitable synthetic surfaces, of which there are a limited number, the club game has consolidated over the past 25 years as clubs have merged. In the late 1980's there were over 2000 clubs compared to just over 800 now. Clubs have grown significantly into larger units with clubs now having an average size of 150 players and 4.5 adult teams. The largest clubs have around 1000 members and we currently have around 50 with over 500 playing members. The continued growth of our clubs is the critical factor for the growth of hockey in England and therefore the provision of appropriate facilities is essential to this.

The Saturday club game is currently the bottleneck in the provision of facilities. Having the right pitches, with the right availability of use, in the right places is critical. We expect the number of Saturday teams to gradually rise over time with most of the growth in the club game coming from the diversification of club provision at other times of the year and into informal formats that can happen away from Saturday winter season use.

Our club and player research (undertaken in 2014 and 2016) helped us better understand that the traditional 'Saturday' club game is in good shape with players largely satisfied with their experiences. However, there were a few clear messages:

• We need a clear vision for facilities on a national and local level to help provide clubs with the tools to influence provision and access appropriate facilities.

• Less than 20% of clubs play their home matches next to their club house, yet being social is a key element for the retention and acquisition of players, therefore the facilities strategy needs to consider ancillary facilities as well as pitches.

 Players stated at the 3 areas for most improvement for a club were facilities (pitch and ancillary facilities), coaching and training.

# Schools

We have a large number of "strongly attached" hockey schools which play a significant role in introducing players to the sport. They primarily deliver to under 16's and many will be asset owners with their own hockey pitch. The majority of these will be independent schools, although not exclusively.

Given the reliance on suitable artificial grass surfaces we have created adapted introductory

games (Quicksticks, In2Hockey and Rush) that are played with a bigger ball that allowing schools, in particular, to play hockey on any surface. These games are proving popular with Quicksticks in particular massively increasing the provision of hockey in Primary schools. They are not reliant on any specific facilities due to the different ball and adapted equipment.

# Universities

This is a mature area of the hockey market with a large British University and College Sport (BUCS) competition programme of around 450 teams (2nd largest of all sports after football) and good intramural programme in many Universities. A lot of Universities invest heavily in hockey both through facilities and through large University hockey clubs, many of whom also play in community leagues. In a significant number of Universities there are also large intra-mural programmes that take place on the University hockey pitches. This area is expected to grow in future given the large increase in the number of club players under the age of 16 and we are working to diversify the provision of hockey in Universities to accommodate this growth. Increasingly the number of 11-a-side BUCS teams significantly is relatively unlikely given the costs associated with this; however, alternative small sided formats and more local and/or festival competition formats are likely to support greater hockey provision.





# Facilities in England

### The State of Play

#### What we have got

We have over 800 hockey clubs in England of which 99.9% use artificial turf pitches to train and play their matches. The change of surface from grass to artificial turf has meant that 90% of the playing surfaces used by clubs are not owned, freehold or on a long-term lease, by the club. Therefore the main providers of hockey playing facilities are education establishments (Universities, Colleges, Schools) followed by local authorities (often operated by Leisure Trusts) The hockey artificial grass pitch stock is ageing; at the time of writing (2016) over 50% of the pitches played on are over 10 years old. To compound this, the maintenance programmes associated with hockey sites is often very mixed. Many sites do not have appropriate plans in place resulting in poor pitches and the need for early replacement. Improving the maintenance programmes that sites have in place is a key requirement and we want to improve the education around maintenance for clubs and facility owners. Ancillary facilities were highlighted as important to the acquisition and retention of players. Whilst the majority of hockey clubs do have a base to provide refreshments after the game this is often not at the same site as the playing provision.

The majority of hockey clubs that own/co own their club houses do not have a pitch on site and have to travel to play games and train. This means many players have participation experiences that do not meet their expectations which can affect retention in the sport. Through analysis of our investment through capital funding we have been able to see the return on investment in terms of participation at the clubs. The impact was significantly higher in terms of participation increases when we invested in a new build compared to a refurbishment. This was expected and reflected the increased amount of funding per project in new builds. The research indicates that refurbishments help to retain existing hockey players and reduce the risk of drop out and improves the satisfaction of players. New facilities help to provide new participants with a suitable facility in areas where the existing pitches are at capacity. Future investment will be focused where there is known demand in areas where the existing pitches are at capacity. In the two years following an investment from England Hockey we see the following growth in participation in the user clubs:

New Build – Mean- 55.93% Median 49.60% Refurbishment- Mean- 19.03% Median 21.11%



### **Game formats**

There are a variety of game formats offered by England Hockey and the International Hockey Federation (FIH). These game formats all fit on to a standard full-size artificial grass pitch with markings and other technical details covered in the appendices. To grow the reach of the game some of these formats (e.g. Quicksticks and In2Hockey) have adapted equipment which mean that they can be played on any surface and are not limited to appropriate synthetic turf pitches.

## Other formats

'Flyerz' hockey is our disability format which is appropriate for any surface although many clubs host it integrated on club sites. Again this can use a big or small ball so is flexible to any surface.

Indoor hockey - this is a relatively small element of participation and not a significant factor in our growth strategy. Guidance on indoor hockey provision will be included in the technical guidance in the appendices.

### Summary

In light of the above comments the provision of appropriate full-sized hockey artificial grass pitches with appropriate ancillary facilities is critical to growth and improvement of the sport and the facilities strategy focuses on this.

## Influencing factors on current landscape

• Since moving from grass pitches in the 1980's the sport has become more fragmented in terms of the ancillary facilities proximity to the playing provision as playing locations have followed the provision of artificial grass pitches.

• England Hockey has invested £4,019,360 into the build and refurbishment of existing facilities since 2009 with the total project costs coming in at over £20,000,000. The focus of this investment was around retention of players through refurbishment and acquisition through new builds. Whilst this has made a significant difference to key areas across the country this equates to circa 50 pitches out of a stock of





circa 1000 pitches that are used. The England Hockey led investment has been able to support around 7 pitches per year when the actual need for replacement is in the region of 100 pitches (based on 1000 pitches lasting 10 years each). With the ageing stock issue identified earlier this issue is more severe with more than 50% of pitch surfaces now over 10 years old.

 A significant proportion of hockey is played at local authority and education sites at a time when the public sector budgets are under pressure. This is a concern for the game especially with the age of the current surfaces. It is imperative that the clubs and England Hockey continue to work closely with these partners to ensure that hockey is sustainable at the appropriate sites. This is particularly relevant when it comes to demonstrating the value that the income through hockey brings to sites and working to provides sites with a long term community partner. The maintenance of facilities has been affected by this and many sites are needing to be resurfaced before their expected lifetime.

• Playing Pitch Strategies - To ensure that there is a good supply of high quality Artificial Grass Pitches "in the right places" for hockey and other sports including Football and Rugby on a National scale, Sport England has developed a guidance document that provides a recommended step-by-step approach to developing and delivering a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS). The document has been developed in partnership with the following National Governing Bodies of Sport:

- THE FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION
- ENGLAND HOCKEY
- ENGLAND AND WALES CRICKET BOARD
- RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION
- RUGBY FOOTBALL LEAGUE

The document replaces Sport England's previous 2003 guidance document 'Towards a level playing field: A guide to the production of playing pitch strategies'. Sport England believe that to ensure there is a good supply of high quality playing pitches and playing fields to meet the sporting needs of local communities,



all Local Authorities should have an up to date PPS. By providing valuable evidence and direction a PPS can be of significant benefit to a wide variety of parties and agendas. During the early development process of the PPS, England Hockey's current data, along with direct consultation with Hockey clubs will determine the content within the PPS.

Once the PPS has been completed it will provide vital information that will support the delivery of England Hockey's Facilities Strategy to Protect, Improve and Develop hockey pitches and ancillary facilities within the Local Authority area.

• The Football Association (FA) and the Rugby Football Union (RFU) have both approved long pile (Third Generation / 3G) as a suitable surfaces for play. This is not a preferred surface for hockey, as no competitive league hockey can be played on a 3G surface. The FA has committed to significant investment into long pile pitches across the country and this will have an effect on hockey suitable provision. We currently have a good relationship with the FA and we will need to continue to work closely with the FA and other partners to ensure that the hockey provision remains where required.

• Currently a large proportion of hockey clubs will have short term or rolling annual leases on sites. The clubs are often investing thousands into the facilities, without any tenure or legal security for the future. This is a real concern and it does not provide the club with any opportunity to plan and invest in the future.

• Financing of pitch replacement is going to become a requirement given the scarcity of other funding available. The principle of 'hire purchasing' replacement surfaces or securing large loans against assets and repaying rather than up front funding a pitch is going to become a necessity. England Hockey will play a key role in securing avenues for this to happen.



Hockey clubs are often the biggest single user group on an artificial grass pitch as many other users are either in smaller user groups (e.g. 5-a-side football) or more sporadic in the way that they book. Therefore many clubs need to negotiate better partnerships with the facilities they use. The following calculations are based on an indicative pitch hire cost and other data provided by clubs through affiliation and surveys.

	Pitch	Mid week	Saturday	Sunday	TOTAL	Mid week (@£50/h)
2 senior team club	First pitch	1.5	1.5	0	3	£75
6 team club & 50 juniors	First pitch	3.5	6	1.5	11	£175
10 team club & 100 juniors	First pitch	9*	7	3	19	£427.50
Additional pitch(es)	Additional pitches	2.5	3	1.5	7	£156.25

#### Average Usage (hours)

#### Indicative

15 team club & 200 juniors	First pitch	13**	7	4.5	24.5	£612.50
	Additional pitches	o	4.5	1.5	6	£o

\* 3 hours will be charged at junior rate (£42.50p/h) to reflect junior midweek training

\*\* 5 hours will be charged at junior rate (£42.50p/h) to reflect junior midweek training



#### Weekly Income/Cost

£350

£281.25

#### Indicative WeeklyIncome/Cost (24 weeks)

Saturday (@£50/h)	Sunday (@£42.50/h)	TOTAL	Mid week	Saturday	Sunday	TOTAL
£75	fo	£150	£1800	£1800	£o	£3600
£300	£63.75	£538.75	£4,200	£7,200	£1,530	£12,930
£350	£127.50	£905	£10,260	£8,400	£3060	£21,720
£187.50	£75	£418.75	£3,750	£4,500	£1,800	£10,050

			ined Total	±31,770		
£191.25	£1,153.75	£14,700	£8,400	£4,590	£27,690	
£75	£356.25	fo	£6,750	£1,800	£8,550	

Combined Total £36,240



# The strategy

There will be 3 key objectives for the facilities strategy to help to retain existing players and attract new players into the game.

- 1. Protect: To safeguard existing hockey provision.
- Improve: To improve the existing facilities stock both at grassroots and elite level.
- 3. Develop: To strategically build new hockey facilities where there is an identified need and ability to deliver and maintain. This might include consolidating hockey provision in a local area where appropriate.

### 1. Protect:

To conserve the existing hockey provision

We currently have around 1000 pitches that are used by hockey clubs (including University clubs). We need to retain the current provision where appropriate to ensure that hockey is maintained across the country. Tactics for supporting this will include:

- Working with hockey clubs on their facilities partnerships
- Influencing Playing Pitch Strategies (PPS)
- Continuing the strong relationship with the FA on a local and national level to identify priorities





#### 2. Improve:

To improve the existing facilities stock (physically and administratively)

The current facilities stock is ageing and there needs to be strategic investment into refurbishing pitches and ancillary facilities. More support is required for clubs to obtain better agreements with facilities providers and to receive better education about owning and maintaining an asset. Tactics for supporting this will include:

- Targeted investment through England Hockey and other key funding partners
- Education around asset owning including when it is appropriate for clubs to asset own as opposed to hire facilities.
- Improving the administration and business planning with asset owning organisation to ensure there is appropriate finances in place for the replacement of the surface.
- Developing stronger partnerships between hockey clubs and the asset owner recognising that many clubs are the single largest user of an artificial grass pitch.
- Strategic investment into pitches that provide opportunities to deliver our player pathway
- Supporting clubs in the national leagues to achieve the facilities Elite Operating Standards requirements

### 3. Develop:

To strategically build new hockey facilities where there is an identified need and ability to deliver and maintain. This might include consolidating hockey provision in a local area where appropriate.

The research has identified key areas across the country where there is a lack of suitable hockey provision and there is a need for additional pitches. There is an identified demand for multi pitches in the right places to consolidate hockey and allow clubs to have all of their provision catered for at one site. The tactics for supporting this will include:

- Targeted investment through the Capital Investment Programme and other key funding partners
- Mapping of sites through research and priority areas
- Clear rationale developed and implemented that identifies where multi pitch sites should be placed.



# **Principles & outcomes**

The principles below provide assessment criteria for internal and external stakeholders to use to support internal and external decisions about hockey provision in the future. The principles are based on significant research in 2014-15 on the use and costs associated with using hockey facilities. From this evidence base we have developed the following model.

### **Principles:**

- The right pitches are required in the right places
- The sport must retain its geographical reach particularly in more rural areas
- Appropriate ancillary facilities are required as they are a critical part of the playing experience
- The local Playing Pitch Strategy needs to identify the hockey provision (if in place)

To support these principles we have developed a decision making matrix – this is available from the England Hockey website: www.englandhockey.co.uk/facilities

### **Technical Section**

To support the strategy we will continually update and improve our guidance and support for facility operators and developers. Given this will be regularly updated you will find this guidance here: www.englandhockey.co.uk/facilities



# **Case Studies**



# Protect Worthing Hockey Club

In 2014 Worthing Hockey Club (West Sussex) was under threat of losing their Council owned water based Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) to a Third Generation (3G) football surface. With no other secure pitch options, the club was in real danger of disbanding with no offer of club hockey within the immediate area.

The club contacted England Hockey for support and advice. England Hockey coordinated a meeting with the Council, Sport England, the County Football Association, Worthing Hockey Club and a local school that was going through site redevelopment, to try and resolve the issue of the potential loss of the pitch.

None of the parties wanted to lose hockey in the area. However, the Local Authority Playing Pitch Strategy had identified a real need for increased football facility provision to accommodate the increase in participation due to the lack of suitable natural grass and AGP's in the area. However losing the hockey AGP would clearly show a need for a new hockey AGP to be developed.

Various options were looked at and, after further meetings, a decision was made to convert the existing water based AGP to a 3G AGP for football and build a new hockey AGP at the school site. The hockey club already had a good relationship with the school, providing coaching and player pathways from the school to the club. The school was very keen to have a facility on site that would provide for hockey and other pitch sports during school hours.

The Council finally agreed that increased funding would be made available to the school to develop a new hockey compliant AGP and access to changing facilities and community space, already planned through the redevelopment programme. The hockey club and school entered into a Community Use Agreement, the partnership offering financial sustainability for the ongoing AGP maintenance and future resurfacing.

The new sand dressed AGP at the school was opened to the hockey club and wider community sports clubs in 2015. The Club and school continue to have a strong partnership. Although the water based hockey AGP was not protected we were, as a partnership, able to negotiate an alternative that was acceptable to all parties. Funding from England Hockey or Sport England was not required in the development of this project.

# Protect Selby Hockey Club

In February 2012 Selby Leisure Centre (North Yorkshire) burnt to the ground, with the existing hockey pitch put out of commission until a decision could be made on the redevelopment of the site. The pitch was the base for Selby Hockey Club, a ClubsFirst accredited club, with over 100 participants and good links with the local schools.

The club secured the use of a hockey pitch outside of the area. However, this impacted greatly on player retention due to travel times and pitch access at appropriate times for training and playing matches.

When the local Council indicated that the new pitch surface at the Leisure Centre would be a Third Generation (3G) surface, the Club turned to England Hockey for advice. England Hockey immediately opened up talks with the Council and the Football Association to explain that the change in surface would be detrimental to the hockey club whilst a sand based surface would accommodate a variety of sports. Agreement was reached that the pitch should be replaced like for like, as a multi sports surface would be beneficial for sports activities and financial sustainability. It was also agreed between the Council and both National Governing Bodies that any future artificial grass pitches developed in the area would be 3G to accommodate specific football activity.

The new sand based AGP opened in February 2015 enabling Selby HC to return 'home'. Players have returned to the Club and membership has grown again. The extensive use of the pitch by a variety of sports has enabled the Leisure Centre to develop a sustainable sinking fund that provides the funding for the ongoing maintenance and resurface when necessary.

Partnership funding from Sport England enabled the pitch to be resurfaced as part of the overall Leisure Centre rebuild.

# Improve Bromley & Beckenham Hockey Club

#### Bromley & Beckenham Hockey Clubs are two of the oldest clubs in London; however the two clubs decided to merge in 2005 to become one, and to share facilities and club management responsibilities.

The clubhouse is at Beckenham Cricket Club, shared with the Tennis, Cricket, Football, Running, Squash and Cycling sections. Matches are played and training takes place at Langley Park School for Girls and Langley Park School for Boys, with overflow pitches at Bromley High School, Trinity Schools and HSBC Sports Club. The hockey club is represented on the board of the multi sports club with shared management responsibilities. The club currently hosts 9 men's and 6 ladies teams with over 300 juniors; the total number of playing participants affiliated to the club is around 500.

In 2014 the hockey club approached England Hockey for support in negotiating with Langley Park School for Girls to make improvements to the existing hockey AGP facility at the school site. The AGP was over 20 years old and the floodlighting did not deliver the recommended 350 lux level required for competitive hockey matches. The club was not part of a Community Use Agreement with the academy, although they were investing approximately £20,000 a year in hiring the hockey AGP. The club, however, has developed an excellent relationship in terms of hockey development through school to club links, with satellite coaching sessions.

England Hockey worked in partnership with the hockey club and the academy to enable

the academy (as the land owner) to submit a funding application to England Hockey and Sport England for the resurfacing of the existing hockey AGP including a floodlighting upgrade. England Hockey supported the joint application through the funding application process, and facilitating the link to NottsSport, (a facilities partner to England Hockey) who provided support to the technical parts of the project and managed the tender processes. After securing funding from both England Hockey and Sport England, and with partnership funding from supplied by Beckenham Cricket Club (as parent to Bromley and Beckenham Hockey Club) and academy, the project was finally completed in March 2016. The project included a new sand dressed AGP surface, shock pad and upgraded floodlighting to 500 lux level. As part of the funding Terms & Conditions it was paramount that the hockey club secured a

was paramount that the hockey club secured a long term Community Use Agreement with the academy to have priority use of the AGP outside of educational hours. A key priority, was also, to ensure a separate sinking fund account to provide finance for the ongoing maintenance and future resurfacing, to avoid future reliance on public funding. The Community Use Agreement between the hockey club and academy, including a separate sinking fund, account has now been agreed and authorised by the Education Funding Agency.

The club continues to thrive and grow and has a secure and strong relationship with the academy to continue to develop and grow hockey in the community.

## Improve Taunton Vale Hockey Club

In 2012 Taunton Vale Hockey Club based in the South West region (Somerset), approached England Hockey for funding, support and advice for the resurfacing of their existing sand dressed hockey AGP and floodlighting upgrade to an LED system. Due to the current AGP was in a poor condition and the floodlighting was below the required lux lighting levels of 350.

The club was supported in putting bids into England Hockey, Sport England and the National Hockey Foundation; the club also put significant funding into the project themselves and sourced further funding support from the Local Council through a Section 106 Agreement. It is highly recommended from all funding bodies that partnership working and funding is paramount in delivering projects, this was significant in accessing funding from all of their applications in 2013.

The club has over 500 playing participants with an excellent club development plan and strong links with the local schools, which is shaping the club to enable growth year on year, this was significant in accessing the England Hockey and Sport England funding applications for the facility improvements. It was clear from the pitch condition and floodlighting reports and assessments that without facility improvements the club would find it difficult to retain and increase participants in the long term, as England Hockey consultation suggests, participants are influenced by facility conditions.

It was also an advantage that the hockey club was part of a wider multi sports club including Cricket, Tennis and Netball, who are the freeholder of the land and facilities, and have good governance through being a Company Limited by Guarantee.

In the summer of 2014 the project was fully completed, this included being the first sports field in the United Kingdom to have LED floodlighting, the club continues to thrive and going forward is financially sustainable through generating income from facility hire charges, to finance ongoing maintenance and future AGP resurfacing costs.



# Develop Lindum Hockey Club

Lindum Sports Association (Lincolnshire) is a multi sports club that hosts hockey, cricket and squash and is an Incorporated Charity with a freehold on the land. In 2011 the Sports Association, in partnership with Lincoln and Lincoln Roses Hockey Clubs, approached England Hockey with a project to develop a new floodlit sand dressed hockey AGP on the sports club site.

The hockey clubs were playing on AGP's off site and using the clubhouse facilities for hosting teams after matches. Between them the two hockey clubs had 14 teams and extensive junior sections.

It had always been the intention to develop a hockey AGP on the site of an existing grass hockey pitch. However, this had been used by the local rugby club for many years and, due to Sport England's planning policy on the loss of natural grass pitches, it was not possible to convert to a hockey AGP. In 2008 the rugby club gave formal notice to the sports club that they intended moving off the site. This allowed the sports club to apply for planning permission to develop a new hockey AGP on the site and planning permission was granted in 2010. Funding applications from the Sports Club were submitted to England Hockey, Sport England and the National Hockey Foundation to develop the project; all were successful and with additional funding from the sports club, a local trust fund and an interest free loan the project went ahead.

The Lindum Sports Association entered into a Community Use Agreement with the hockey clubs and the project was completed in 2013.

In 2015 the hockey clubs merged to form one club, Lindum Hockey Club, which was to become a centre of excellence for hockey in Lincolnshire. The club now has a player participation affiliation number of over 700, with excellent hockey development links to local schools and Lincoln University; unfortunately the single pitch cannot accommodate all the hockey activities so some matches are played at other venues, including Lincoln University.

Since the merger the club has gone from strength to strength with excellent secure facilities. The social impact has also improved with more players using the clubhouse facilities generating increased income.

# Develop Bromsgrove Hockey Club

Bromsgrove Cricket, Hockey and Tennis Club (Worcestershire) had freehold of the land, a fantastic clubhouse and several tennis courts and cricket pitches. However the hockey club had to travel outside Bromsgrove to utilise poor hockey AGP's with limited access, having a significant impact on the clubs development. The Local Council Playing Pitch Strategy identified the need for one additional hockey compliant AGP within Bromsgrove, this helped with the case for developing the project.

In 2013 the hockey club, in partnership with the sports club, approached England Hockey to seek assistance in developing a new sand dressed hockey AGP on the club site; planning permission was granted in 2012 but the club had very little funding or experience in delivering a project of this size.

Club representatives met with the local Council and England Hockey and it was agreed that funding applications should be made to England Hockey, Sport England and the National Hockey Foundation. The Council made a commitment of £50,000 from a Section 106 Housing Development Agreement and club fund raising of £40,000 was proposed along with possible interest free membership loans.

In 2014 all funding applications were successful but the shortfall from raising club funds delayed the start of the project until 2015. The project encountered difficulties caused through bad weather leading to increased project costs which had not been factored in. Sport England stepped in and increased their funding to enable the completion in the same year.

The club has seen a 9% growth in player participation since the AGP was completed and is attracting back players who had previously stopped playing. The social impact has also been significant with more volunteers getting involved and club revenue increasing.



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