



Dacorum Borough Council

Sports Policy Statement

Background

This document has been written by Dacorum Borough Council in consultation with key relevant partners. For the purpose of this statement, the definition of Sport will be as set out by Sport England from the European Council:

'Sport means all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels'.

The primary purpose of this statement is to show Dacorum Borough Council's commitment to Sport. This statement is not supported by specific funding, but it is hoped that it will help to focus existing resources and, by its existence, it will help to attract relevant funding to the Borough.

Context

Sport can help deliver the Council's Vision and priorities in the following ways:

- **Regeneration**

Exemplar buildings such as the Snow Centre and XC encourage sporting tourism to Dacorum, which in turn creates economic benefits. Good opportunities for sport to comprise part of the offer of an attractive place to live and work, therefore forms part of a package to attract investment. Having good sporting provision helps regenerate the area as a whole. A strong base of successful and active community clubs also attracts visitors into the community and enhances its reputation.

- **Safe and Clean Environment**

Active transport (walking and cycling) can reduce carbon emissions and the promotion of sport and leisure activities allows people to connect to their environment, therefore building up a level of respect for the area. Sport can help promote a safer environment as it can act as a diversionary activity for young people. Greater participation in sport can work towards reducing health inequalities and obesity in the Borough. Well maintained outdoor sporting facilities, such as playing fields, can help to protect and enhance our green areas and overall environment.

- **Building Community Capacity**

Sport is closely linked with the voluntary sector; 52% of adults who volunteer do so in sport, therefore it plays an integral part of building community capacity. The majority of sport in Dacorum is delivered through community clubs which are a vibrant part of the third sector. Sport can also engage the entire community, not just participants: for example sports clubs require support in the form of treasurers, chairpersons and other committee members. Schools also use sport to engage the wider community and collaborative work which extends beyond that of the National Curriculum.

- **Affordable Housing**

Dacorum Borough Council is committed to providing affordable housing within the Borough, sport provision is an important consideration within this to ensure that our residents have access to appropriate sports facilities and services.

- **Dacorum Delivers**

The health benefits gained from participating in exercise are important for staff and therefore may have an impact on sickness levels and performance of the workforce. By promoting physical activity within the workforce (and beyond), DBC can be an exemplar employer thus attracting a high calibre of staff and potentially reducing staff turnover.

Commitment

Dacorum Borough Council recognises the importance of sport clubs and facilities for citizens of, and visitors to, the Borough. Dacorum has a thriving sport sector in which the skills and commitment of volunteers (administrators, coaches, officials, managers etc) is integral to sport delivery. Our aim is to ensure that, through Council resources and by the support of local community sports providers (such as community clubs), the Borough is able to deliver the sporting infrastructure necessary to promote participation and provide appropriate sporting opportunities for all sectors of our community. Dacorum should promote its wealth of sporting facilities and aim to be one of the most active Boroughs in Hertfordshire.

To achieve these aims, Dacorum Borough Council will:

1. Seek positive partnerships with local clubs and sporting organisations, building relationships and promoting joint working where possible
2. Maintain a relationship with Dacorum Sports Trust who deliver major sports provision to the community using sports centres owned by the council
3. Continually strive to improve the quality and quantity of sporting facilities in the Borough and endeavour to ensure that socially and geographically appropriate opportunities are available to people in Dacorum
4. Work with community sports providers who wish to expand their operations by supporting funding applications where it fits with DBC policy
5. Work towards a joined up approach on sports policy and regeneration and develop proposals that enhance sports provision in the Borough
6. Promote sports and recreation through development proposals in the Borough, by applying planning policies that support the provision of new open space and leisure facilities, and encourage dual use
7. Ensure that the provision and development of sporting facilities is considered as an option for the allocation of infrastructure funding

8. Promote a healthy, motivated workforce by encouraging employees to participate in sports and physical activity
9. Enable clubs to take on some management responsibilities for the Council's sport and leisure facilities such as football clubs who may want to manage grass pitches and facilities in order to improve them and try and develop them as the club's own ground.

These aims will be delivered through the application of policies within the Council's Local Planning Framework (LPF), planning decisions and ongoing partnership working with the Dacorum Sports Trust and other Sports clubs/providers.