

# Integrated Impact Assessment – Summary Report

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Each of the numbered sections below must be completed  
Please state if the IIA is interim or final

## **1. Title of proposal**

Sports Pitch Strategy

## **2. What will change as a result of this proposal?**

To lead a healthy life you have to be active. The benefits of being active, for your physical, mental, and social health, are internationally recognised. Being active is a fantastic way to feel better, improve your health and have fun, as well as to boost productivity, embed key employability skills, support educational outcomes, and contribute to stronger communities – amongst other things.

Sports pitches play a key role in the provision of physical activity opportunities and the Pitch Strategy aims to improve the provision, maintenance, usage and efficiencies of pitches in Edinburgh.

The aim of the Strategy is to deliver an integrated strategic approach to future investment and change in the city's pitches which better meet the needs of Edinburgh's communities and clubs through the delivery of a range of identified actions and recommendations.

The resultant changes aim to contribute to increasing population levels of physical activity through improved access to sports pitches in Edinburgh with targeted action towards the specific groups that have lower levels of participation and activity and higher health inequalities.

## **3. Briefly describe public involvement in this proposal to date and planned**

The development of the Strategy was based on a programme of engagement and comprehensive information gathering including a significant amount of research, such as pitch and pavilion condition surveys. A stakeholder engagement process was undertaken which involved a wide range of local and national stakeholders with a direct role and/or interest in sports pitches- over 50 individuals across 21 organisations were engaged in individual one-

to-one interviews. In addition, an online survey was circulated to over 300 sports clubs with 42 responses received.

In addition, a public consultation process on the wider Physical Activity and Sport Strategy was completed between 3 April and 26 June 2024. This involved an online survey promoted through the Council's Consultation Hub, face-to-face engagement, a series of focus group workshops targeting equalities groups and those with protected characteristics, and two in-person events. Over 1,000 individuals and organisations participated in the process with 939 survey responses received from individuals and 31 received from organisations. Questions on sports facilities, places and spaces were included in this wider public consultation.

**4. Is the proposal considered strategic under the Fairer Scotland Duty?**

No

**5. Date of IIA**

24<sup>th</sup> December 2024

**6. Who was present at the IIA? Identify facilitator, lead officer, report writer and any employee representative present and main stakeholder (e.g. Council, NHS)**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Job Title</b>	<b>Date of IIA training</b>
Graham Croucher	Sports Partnership Development Manager	
Evelyn Kilmurry	Head of Libraries, Sport and Wellbeing	December 2021
Jen Holland	Chief Executive, Edinburgh Leisure	
Perrotine Orr	Operations Director, Edinburgh Leisure	

## 7. Evidence available at the time of the IIA

Evidence	Available – detail source	Comments: what does the evidence tell you with regard to different groups who may be affected and to the environmental impacts of your proposal
Data on populations in need – where available use disaggregated data	<a href="#">Edinburgh Poverty Commission</a>  <a href="#">Edinburgh by Numbers 2023</a>	<p>Edinburgh is an affluent city with high average incomes and employment rates and low unemployment.</p> <p>Information detailed within Edinburgh by Numbers shows that compared to other major UK cities, Edinburgh also performs well when measuring personal wellbeing.</p> <p>The city, however, has a high number of residents that fall into the high poverty risk groups. The 2018 report by the Edinburgh Poverty Commission estimates that 82,000 people live in relative poverty, 16% of the total population.</p> <p>The poverty rates vary across from 5% to 27%. It is also estimated that 22% of all children in Edinburgh live in poverty while some areas record child poverty rates as high as 35%.</p> <p>People from minority ethnic groups are also more likely to be in poverty compared to those within the White – British group. Asian and Asian – British groups along with other minority ethnic groups have between 35% and 38% living in poverty (across Scotland) compared to 18% of the White – British group.</p> <p>Poverty rates are also higher for families in which someone is disabled. Households without a</p>

Evidence	Available – detail source	Comments: what does the evidence tell you with regard to different groups who may be affected and to the environmental impacts of your proposal
		disabled child or adult living in poverty sit at 19% and 17% respectively compared to 25% and 24% for those households with a disabled child/adult.
Data on service uptake/access	<p><a href="#">Edinburgh People's Survey 2018</a></p> <p>Data current sports pitch supply, demand and usage was gathered in the development of the new pitch strategy.</p> <p>(Culture and Communities Committee 27 February 2025- Sports Pitch Strategy Report Appendix)</p>	<p>Edinburgh People's Survey <a href="#">results</a> from 2018 indicated that 72% of those interviewed engaged in at least one activity in the last 4 weeks.</p> <p>In the 45-64 age group this was 49% and for the 65+ age group it was 54%. The figure reduced to 52% for those with a disability or long-term illness and low levels of activity were also reported for the retired, unemployed and people within lower social economic groups.</p> <p>The Council and Edinburgh Leisure operate the majority of sports pitches across Edinburgh (89%).</p> <p>The SIMD Quintile 1 population within the city has a higher level of accessibility to sports pitches than the overall population of the City of Edinburgh. Access to 3G pitches, in particular, when accessed via public transport or walking is higher than the average and is indicative of the proximity of these facilities to areas of higher deprivation.</p>
Data on socio-economic disadvantage e.g. low income, low wealth,	<a href="#">Edinburgh by numbers</a>	Between 2019 and 2022 17% of households in Edinburgh had equivalised income below 60% of the UK median income in the same year for all ages and after

Evidence	Available – detail source	<b>Comments: what does the evidence tell you with regard to different groups who may be affected and to the environmental impacts of your proposal</b>
material deprivation, area deprivation		<p>housing costs. This is below the Scotland average of 21%.</p> <p>Survey results from the Scottish Household Survey in 2022 show that 33% of residents living in the most deprived areas of Edinburgh took part in sport in the last four weeks, compared to 63% in the least deprived areas. Sport and physical activity participation levels across the city have remained static over the years, with a significant gap in participation between the least and most deprived areas of the city.</p>
Data on equality outcomes	<a href="#">Scottish Household Survey 2022</a>	<p>Survey results from the Scottish Household Survey 2022 shows that men and boys are more likely to participate in sport than women and girls. Male participation in sport has steadily reduced in Edinburgh from 68% in 2013 to 62% in 2022. Female participation has remained stable, with 53% participating in 2013 increasing to 54% in 2022.</p> <p>There is also inequality when considering participation by those with lower levels of qualification. With 69% of those who have achieved an HNC or higher taking part in sport compared to 21% with no qualifications. This shows a widening gap between those participating in sport with higher qualifications and those with no qualifications in the last three years.</p> <p>Similar patterns exist for people with disabilities and those from ethnic minority communities. In the</p>

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		<p>2022 Scottish Household Survey, 42% of people surveyed with a disability took part in sport at least once in four weeks compared to 62% of people without a disability. When reviewing figures against ethnicity, 53% of those identifying as White Scottish and 72% of White British had participated in sport at least once in the last four weeks compared to 46% of those from ethnic minorities.</p> <p>In summary, sport and physical activity participation levels across the city have remained static over the years, with a significant gap in participation between the least and most deprived areas of the city. This picture remains the same when we take educational achievement, disability, and ethnicity into account. There is also an increasing number of residents in Edinburgh who do not have access to networks or opportunities. For physical activity such as walking, 60% of people living in the most deprived areas participated in recreational walking for at least 30 minutes in the last four weeks in 2019, increasing slightly to 63% in 2022. This compares to 86% of people who participated in the least deprived areas in 2019, decreasing slightly to 82% participation in 2022.</p> <p>Additional evidence obtained on a national level for Scotland (see below) also shows differentials for those living in poverty, gender, disability and ethnicity.</p>

Evidence	Available – detail source	Comments: what does the evidence tell you with regard to different groups who may be affected and to the environmental impacts of your proposal
Research/literature evidence	<p><a href="#">Impact of child poverty - Child poverty overview - Child poverty - Children - Population groups - Public Health Scotland NEW REPORT SHOWS THE IMPACT OF POVERTY ON SCOTLAND'S YOUNG PEOPLE - Scottish Sports Futures (ssf.org.uk) On Track: Research &amp; data spotlight (sportscotland.org.uk) Disability-Sport-Review-Aug-2021-final.pdf (oss.scot)</a></p>	<p><b>Poverty</b>  Children born into poverty are more likely to experience a wide range of health problems, including poor nutrition, chronic disease and mental health problems. Poverty puts an additional strain on families, which can lead to parental mental health and relationship problems, financial problems and substance misuse.  One in four children in Scotland live in poverty and one in five live in absolute poverty. These young people are more likely to be less physically active; are at higher risk of obesity; have higher levels of stress and depression; and experience social isolation, shame and stigma.</p> <p><b>Girls</b>  Boys are more likely to meet recommended physical activity levels than girls, including school-based activities (76% of boys compared to 67% of girls) and excluding school-based activities (66% and 55% respectively).</p> <p><b>Disability</b>  Disability and sport participation data from national surveys. From the Scottish Health Survey (2018) it is possible to link limiting longstanding illness (disability) to sporting activity to assess the extent by which disability impacts on sporting participation compared to the able-bodied population. In the younger age group (2-15 years old) the proportion of children who undertook any sporting activity in</p>

Evidence	Available – detail source	<b>Comments: what does the evidence tell you with regard to different groups who may be affected and to the environmental impacts of your proposal</b>
		<p>the disabled group was 12% vs 81% for those who reported no limiting longstanding illness. For adults (16-74 years old) the corresponding participation was 33.4% vs 52.7%. This data for Scotland is comparable to that for England and Wales (29.3% vs 51.4%, Taking Part Survey, 2012/13).</p> <p><b>Ethnicity</b>  Provision of tackling racism and racial inequality in sport - data gathering and analysis services, Sheffield Hallam on behalf of UK Sport, 2021 – see attached 14.2 In the <i>Scottish Health Survey 2012</i><sup>132</sup>, Pakistani respondents were the least likely to achieve the recommended physical activity levels (27% did so compared to the national average of 38%) and were also the least likely to participate in sport (30% compared to 49% on average). This finding corresponds with other research (2010)<sup>133</sup> that found that, in Britain, Pakistani individuals and south Asian ethnic groups generally, are less likely to be sufficiently active. An earlier study (2007)<sup>134</sup> highlighted gender differences in the levels of physical activity within ethnic groups: Pakistani respondents were found to be less active overall, but also with a gender difference most prominent in the younger age groups. No other ethnic groups in the <i>Scottish Health Survey</i> were significantly different from the national average in relation to</p>



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		<p>physical activity or sport participation.</p> <p>14.3 In a summary of sports equality research in the UK covering a period of 15 years<sup>135</sup>, the EHRC reports that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The overall participation rate for ethnic minority people in sport was 40%, compared with the national average of 46%; and</li> <li>• The lowest participation rates were among Indian (31%), Pakistani (21%) and Bangladeshi (19%) women (citing the <i>National Survey of Ethnic Minorities and Sport</i>, 1999).</li> </ul>
Public/patient/client experience information		<p>From the public consultation completed as part of the strategy development, feedback on current provision was mixed:</p> <p>There was positive feedback from clubs relating: ease of booking pitches, accessibility, quality of pitches, quality of the playing surface, and availability of pitches. There was however negative feedback on the quality of pavilions and wider ancillary provision such as: social space, kitchen or catering space, changing accommodation, showers, and toilets, as well as wider concerns relating to anti-social behaviour at some pitches.</p>

<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Available – detail source</b>	<b>Comments: what does the evidence tell you with regard to different groups who may be affected and to the environmental impacts of your proposal</b>
Evidence of inclusive engagement of people who use the service and involvement findings	<p>Data current sports pitch supply, demand and usage was gathered in the development of the new pitch strategy through information gathering and engagement. (Culture and Communities Committee 27 February 2025- Sports Pitch Strategy Report Appendix)</p> <p>Culture and Communities Committee 5 December 2024- <a href="#">Physical Activity and Sport Strategy: Appendix 2- Consultation Feedback Summary Report.</a></p>	<p>Online survey reached out to 300 sports clubs across the city and feedback from users was captured, detailed within the strategy and informed conclusions and actions.</p> <p>In addition, a public consultation process on the wider Physical Activity and Sport Strategy was completed where over 1,000 individuals and organisations participated in the process. Views were gathered on sports facilities, places and spaces and informed the city’s Physical Activity and Sports Strategy 2025-2035.</p>
Evidence of unmet need		<p>Levels of utilisation from the Pitch Demand Analysis exercise suggest there is ample room to make better use of existing pitches, especially during peak demand times. Many grass pitches are either well-used or overplayed, requiring enhanced maintenance to maintain their quality.</p> <p>The city’s existing sport’s pitch hub sites (e.g. Meggetland) experience disproportionately high demand, possibly due to better quality pitches and facilities. Clubs expressed a growing need for pitches, either due to existing demand or future growth</p>

Evidence	Available – detail source	Comments: what does the evidence tell you with regard to different groups who may be affected and to the environmental impacts of your proposal
		aspirations. As clubs diversify or expand provision to target under-represented groups (for example women, older people), the need for appropriate ancillary facilities (such as changing rooms, toilets) will also grow.
Good practice guidelines	Fields in Trust's <a href="#">Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play Scotland</a> (2020) report	<p>Fields in Trust's <a href="#">Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play Scotland</a> (2020) report recommends that there should be 1.20 hectares of outdoor pitch facilities per 1,000 population. Currently Edinburgh has 2.4 hectares per 1000 of population (CEC <a href="#">Open Space 2021</a>). Additionally, the guidelines suggest that there should be playing pitches within a 1,200 metre (walking distance) from residential areas. Currently 50% of the Edinburgh population are within a 10-minute walk of a sports pitch.</p> <p>The development of the Pitch Strategy has followed the <b>sportscotland</b> methodology for sports pitch strategies which defines a five stage process:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Defining the scope of the strategy.</li> <li>2) Preparing an inventory of facilities.</li> <li>3) Considering supply and demand factors.</li> <li>4) Developing the strategy and financial plan.</li> </ol> <p>Delivering and monitoring the strategy.</p>
Carbon emissions generated/reduced data	No	
Environmental data	No	

<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Available – detail source</b>	<b>Comments: what does the evidence tell you with regard to different groups who may be affected and to the environmental impacts of your proposal</b>
Risk from cumulative impacts	No	
Other (please specify)		
Additional evidence required		

**8. In summary, what impacts were identified and which groups will they affect?**

<b>Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights and Children’s Rights</b>	<b>Affected populations</b>
<p><b>Positive</b></p> <p>Strategy and action plan to increase population levels of physical activity and target specific population sub-groups who are traditionally less likely to participate including those with protected characteristics.</p> <p>Strategy and action plan to improve sports pitch provision across the city, improve equalities and the health and wellbeing of the city’s population. Low decile SIMD areas have above average access to synthetic pitches within their communities.</p>	All
<p><b>Negative</b></p> <p>Officers will need to ensure that there are more traditional methods of communications considered when taking forward the Active Promotions priority as digital exclusion remains an issue for those who are living in deprivation or may not have the skills required to engage digitally.</p>	Those at risk of digital exclusion.

<b>Environment and Sustainability including climate change emissions and impacts</b>	<b>Affected populations</b>
<p><b>Positive</b></p> <p>Promote and improve public choice around modes of transport and travel around the city and towards active travel / carbon neutral options such as walking and cycling.</p> <p>Improve co-ordination of facility access and encourage clubs to be based within specific communities to reduce travel time and carbon footprint.</p>	All
<p><b>Negative</b></p> <p>Increase in synthetic (3G pitches) in place of grass pitches could lead to environmental impact from the SBR rubber in-fill used to support the carpet pile. SBR in-fill can be washed away with rainwater and cling to player's kit resulting in the microplastics ending up in local waterways.</p> <p>In September 2023 the European Commission completed the adoption of the EU REACH (Registration, Evaluation, Authorisation and Restriction of Chemicals) restriction on the sale of intentionally added microplastics onto the European market, which includes rubber infill for 3G pitches. This ban comes into effect from September 2031 but does not apply to the UK.</p>	All

<b>Economic</b>	<b>Affected populations</b>
<p><b>Positive</b></p> <p>Increase in sport and physical activity levels will boost businesses and clubs across the city creating growth, spend and job opportunities across the city. Good physical, mental and social health improves confidence and employability opportunities.</p>	All
<p><b>Negative</b></p>	

- 9. Is any part of this policy/ service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors and if so how will equality, human rights including children's rights, environmental and sustainability issues be addressed?**

No

- 10. Consider how you will communicate information about this policy/ service change to children and young people and those affected by sensory impairment, speech impairment, low level literacy or numeracy, learning difficulties or English as a second language? Please provide a summary of the communications plan.**

Some of the actions specifically relate to public communication led activity, therefore as they are developed, detailed consideration will be given to specific needs.

- 11. Is the plan, programme, strategy or policy likely to result in significant environmental effects, either positive or negative? If yes, it is likely that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will be required and the impacts identified in the IIA should be included in this. See section 2.10 in the Guidance for further information.**

No

- 12. Additional Information and Evidence Required**

If further evidence is required, please note how it will be gathered. If appropriate, mark this report as interim and submit updated final report once further evidence has been gathered.

No further evidence required.

- 13. Specific to this IIA only, what recommended actions have been, or will be, undertaken and by when? (these should be drawn from 7 – 11 above) Please complete:**

<b>Specific actions (as a result of the IIA which may include financial implications, mitigating actions and risks of cumulative impacts)</b>	<b>Who will take them forward (name and job title)</b>	<b>Deadline for progressing</b>	<b>Review date</b>
Ensuring that Active Promotions priority explores inclusive communications with trusted organisations/ sports clubs, beyond digital methods to reduce impact on those that are digitally excluded.	Graham Croucher- Sports Partnership Development Manager	March 2026	September 2026
A report on the impact of synthetic grass pitches will be tabled at Education, Children and Families Committee in 2025.	Crawford McGhie – Head of Strategic Asset Planning	Summer 2025	Summer 2026

**14. Are there any negative impacts in section 8 for which there are no identified mitigating actions?**

No

**15. How will you monitor how this proposal affects different groups, including people with protected characteristics?**

A partnership group comprising Council and Edinburgh Leisure officers was established to develop the new strategy. An oversight group will be set-up once the strategy has been approved to monitor impact and progress. An implementation plan will be developed with accompanying performance measures/ targets which will include equalities measures.

**16. Sign off by Head of Service**

**Name** Evelyn Kilmurry – Head of Libraries, Sport and Wellbeing

**Date** – 11/2/25

**17. Publication**

Completed and signed IIAs should be sent to: [integratedimpactassessments@edinburgh.gov.uk](mailto:integratedimpactassessments@edinburgh.gov.uk) to be published on the Council website [www.edinburgh.gov.uk/impactassessments](http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/impactassessments)

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