

Midlothian Council Football Pitch Needs Assessment

Final

Midlothian
Football
Pitch Needs
Assessment

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CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	3
Scope of Study	3
The Need for the Study	3
The Role of Synthetic Turf Pitches	4
Methodology	5
Establishing Current Supply and Demand	6
Planning Assumptions	6
Future Demand	8
Previous Policies	8
2. FOOTBALL IN MIDLOTHIAN – AN OVERVIEW	9
The Structure of the Game	9
Clubs and Teams	10
Settlement By Settlement Analysis	10
3. SETTLEMENT BY SETTLEMENT ANALYSIS	10
Bonnyrigg, Lasswade, Dalkeith, Easthouses, Mayfield, Newbattle, and Newtongrange	10
Danderhall, Millerhill & Shawfair	14
Gorebridge and Arniston	15
Loanhead and Bilston	17
Pathhead	19
Penicuik & Auchendinny	19
Roslin	21
Rosewell	21
4. SUMMARY	21
5. RECOMMENDATIONS	22
Bonnyrigg, Lasswade, Dalkeith, Easthouses, Mayfield, Newbattle, and Newtongrange	22
Danderhall, Millerhill & Shawfair	22
Gorebridge and Arniston	23
Loanhead and Bilston	23
Penicuik and Auchendinny	23

I. INTRODUCTION

Scope of Study

- 1.1 Torkildsen Barclay was commissioned by Midlothian Council in September 2016 to undertake a review of the 2007 Sports Pitch Needs Assessment with the aim of updating population projections, pitch usage, and demand criteria, and providing recommendations as to future levels of pitch provision, in particular those provided by the local authority. This study was completed in 2017. In 2022 the Council requested an update of this study, specifically for football, taking account of new housing development and the increasing importance of the provision of synthetic grass pitches for both playing and training.

The Need for the Study

Population Growth

- 1.2 The county of Midlothian covers over 35,000 hectares. According to the Council's *Profile of Midlothian 2021* the 2020 population was estimated at 93,150, up from the 87,390, identified in the 2017 study. The county encompasses a range of medium sized and small towns, villages and hamlets. About two thirds of the county is substantially rural in nature. There are three main settlements, Penicuik, Dalkeith and Bonnyrigg, all with populations over 10,000, six smaller urban settlements (3,000 – 8,000 population) and 17 other settlements. The county is bordered by Edinburgh to the North, by West and East Lothian to either side and the Scottish Borders to the south.
- 1.3 The Council anticipates that: "Between 2018 and 2028, the population of Midlothian is projected to increase by 13.8% to 103,940 compared to a 1.8% for Scotland as a whole. Midlothian is projected to have the highest percentage change in population size out of all the 32 council areas in Scotland (2018 to 2028)".
- 1.4 It is therefore important to assess the degree to which current outdoor football facility provision meets current requirements and the extent to which demand for football facilities created by the future population growth can be catered for by existing provision, or whether additional or improved facilities are required.

Strategic Priorities – The Importance of Facilities

- 1.5 Developing participation in football, and indeed other sports, provides many benefits. As **sportscotland** sets out in its *Sport for Life* website, it can support health, improve activity, develop skills, strengthen communities and help the economy.
- 1.6 To develop participation, however, requires both an infrastructure of coaches, volunteers, clubs, community and public support (the "software" of sport), AND an infrastructure of appropriate facilities (the "hardware") on and in which such participation can take place. The Scottish Football Association (SFA) states on its website that:

"Facilities play a fundamental part in the support and development of our national game. As the Scottish FA's facilities strategy, The Big Pitch, states, it's

‘where the game is played’ and without these places to play our game would struggle to grow....The Scottish FA therefore places great importance on the development of quality football facilities and the impact these have across the game, whether that be attracting children into the game for the very first time, right through to players in the professional ranks.”

- 1.7 The Scottish FA's overarching strategy *The Power of Football Strategic Plan 2021-2025* has the key vision to “Harness the power of football to inspire the nation, transform lives and build a united and successful game”. To meet these aspirations further strategies have been produced, including *Accelerate Our Game Scottish FA Strategy for Girls' and Women's Football 2021-2025* produced in conjunction with UEFA and founded on best practice from women's football across Europe. Since the FIFA Women's World Cup in 2019 women's and girls' participation has grown by 17% and this growth is anticipated to continue. Wider participation in the game is also the goal of the Scottish FA's *Football for All* plan, which aims at both tackling equalities and creating community focussed clubs. Discussions with the Community Football Clubs in Midlothian (see below) indicates that participation, particularly in the younger age groups, is continuing to grow, with waiting lists for some of the age groups. Facilities are therefore an essential element in meeting current and future need.

The Role of Synthetic Turf Pitches

- 1.8 Traditionally football has been played on natural grass pitches. However, as the technology has improved the usage of synthetic turf pitches (STPs) suitable for football training and playing has increased. As the SFA's *The Big Pitch* states:

“Scottish football requires high capacity, floodlit facilities which can combat the challenging Scottish climate and satisfy the high demand for facilities for both training and match activity...The inextricably linked issues of capacity and demand prevalent across the country, mean that more synthetic pitches are a high priority simply because they can support continuous play for up to 12 hours every day, 7 days a week. Natural grass pitches, irrespective of quality or whether floodlit or not, simply cannot support this level of training and match activity, with 6-8 hours of use per week recognised as the maximum playing time before a good quality natural grass surface begins to deteriorate”.

- 1.9 It is not intended that STPs replace grass pitches altogether but that a “sensible” mix of both is used.
- 1.10 It should be noted that since the development of synthetic turf for sport in the 1960's there are now several different types of STP and many are sand dressed, sand filled or water based. Whilst these can sometimes be utilised for basic football training by the younger age groups they are not suitable for playing league matches at any level or age group, and are not popular for training by most clubs. Hence the development of 3G (third generation) STPs suitable for football. Conversely such a pitch would not be suitable for hockey or tennis for instance.
- 1.11 In terms of the cost of STPs the SFA states: "... well managed STP's have the potential to generate sufficient income to meet operating costs, fund any capital borrowing needed to build them and equally importantly, contribute to a surface replacement fund...As every new synthetic turf pitch will increase the overall playing capacity in the area, the demand on natural grass pitches will decrease. As a result, this will offer councils the option of disposing of their

poorest quality grass pitches which at the very least cost up to three times as much to maintain as an STP, or in the very worst cases are almost beyond cost-effective maintenance”.

- 1.12 The current and planned supply of STPs in Midlothian will be considered as part of this strategy update. However, the success of current and future supply of STPs will depend on how well they are programmed and the demand in the area. In general it makes economic sense to provide STPs on education sites where they can be used for educational purposes during the day and community sports use during the evenings and weekends.
- 1.13 Lastly, there are no “standards” in Scotland for how many STP's should be provided for a given population. **Sportscotland** does have a Facility Planning Model which shows theoretical supply and demand for any given area, but the demand data on which this is based is now very dated and does not reflect current developments.
- 1.14 The FA in England uses a formula to calculate the number of football teams a third generation artificial grass pitch can service for training. This is based on peak time access for training and the goal that every team has the opportunity to train on a 3G STP at least once a week. Having examined the usage of 3G STPs in Midlothian we have adapted this approach to provide a model more specific to the area, and this is explained in the supply and demand section below.
- 1.15 However, any proposals for new STP's should be subject to a detailed feasibility before a final decision on provision is made.

Methodology

- 1.16 In preparing this study we have referred to the **sportscotland** guidance document ‘Guide to the Preparation of Pitch Sport Strategies’. Face to face consultation was undertaken with a number of the community football clubs, and all identified clubs in Midlothian – both amateur and professional/semi professional – were sent questionnaires. All the Scottish FA Charter Mark Community Football Clubs were met with or responded to the consultation. The response from other clubs was more variable with a relatively low 35% response rate. However, including the CFC's, the responses received represent 76% of all football teams (as opposed to individual clubs) in Midlothian.
- 1.17 The Scottish FA provided both strategy documentation and the number of registered teams by club and age group, sourced from their own records, Scottish Women's Football, and the Scottish Youth FA. Additional data was sourced from league and club websites. All data relates to the 2021/22 season.
- 1.18 **Sportscotland** provided access to their planning advice and their Facility Planning Model.
- 1.19 Midlothian Council officers provided booking information for council pitches, gradings for those pitches, population data and projections, and information on known planned facilities. Where pitches and STP's existed that were not under the direct control of the Council the providers were directly contacted to discuss levels of use and demand.

Establishing Current Supply and Demand

- 1.20 The data collected was used to determine current patterns of play on pitches and to assess the demand for football pitches by settlement. To do this a planning model was developed to provide an indication of whether there is an under or over supply of pitches in any specific area. The model then allows a review of different scenarios if required e.g. the impact of removal or addition of pitches, the impact of either growth or reduction in team numbers etc.
- 1.21 It must be remembered that the supply and demand assessment is a snapshot in time. Age group teams can vary from year to year, new teams can come into being and also fold. Investment in pitch maintenance can reduce affecting the number of matches that each pitch can accommodate. All of this can affect the overall picture of supply and demand. However, accepting these limitations the assessment should give a reasonable overview of current provision which can then be updated on a regular basis.

Planning Assumptions

Geographical Distribution of Pitches

- 1.22 Midlothian covers a wide geographical area although all the key settlements are located in the northern third of the district. Travel between settlements necessitates private car ownership or reliance on public transport links. Given that participation in sport is partially affected by access to facilities, the provision of local pitch facilities is clearly important, particularly for young people.
- 1.23 For the purpose of the 2017 study Midlothian was assessed by settlement areas that are generally used by the Council for planning and educational purposes. However, a review of the bookings of council pitches shows that clubs – and in particular the main Community Football Clubs – use facilities across a number of adjacent settlements. Dalkeith Thistle CFC, for instance, do not just use facilities in Dalkeith but also in Mayfield, Newbattle and Newtongrange, whilst Bonnyrigg Rose CFC use facilities not only in Bonnyrigg, but in Newbattle, and these are just two examples. For the purpose of assessing supply and demand therefore we have pulled together those settlements where obvious links exist to gain a more realistic picture of provision and need.

Qualitative Assessment

- 1.24 Along with feedback from the clubs the Council has graded those pitches owned by the Council on a scale of 1-3, based on the following:

Grade 1

Well drained pitch with a good surface (capable of hosting 4 games a weekend for adults or 6 junior games over a weekend)

Grade 2

Good surface. Pitch has limited effective drainage (capable of hosting 3 games a weekend for adults or 4 junior games over a weekend)

Grade 3

Poor drainage wet or partially wet pitch (capable of hosting 2 adult games or 3 junior games over a weekend).

- 1.25 These grades have been used to assess capacity against demand when looking at grass pitch provision. We refer to the capacity as the number of Match Equivalent Sessions (MESs) for a pitch. So a Grade 1 pitch has a capacity of 4 adult MESs. However, capacity is in practice impacted by the day of peak demand. So whilst a grass pitch could physically accommodate four matches for instance, this will only be the case if there are teams that wish to use the pitches on a Saturday and a Sunday. This is often not the case with the main demand being for Youth matches which are generally played on a Sunday. So even with staggered kick off times in practice the pitch can only accommodate two matches. This is explained again later in the report.

Grass Pitch Supply – Matches

- 1.26 Where adult grass pitches are provided in a settlement area it is assumed that the adult and youth teams in that area will use these for matches, and this is supported by a review of pitch bookings. In assessing the number of pitches required per team it is assumed that each team will have home and away fixtures, so one pitch with a Grade 3 capacity will be able to meet the needs of four teams (2xMES with two teams playing at home and two away). There are additional complications as mentioned above in relation to days of peak demand and staggering of kick off times. Where a grass pitch is on an education site its capacity is deemed to be half of its grading to take account of wear and tear created by use by the school/college itself.
- 1.27 Where there are 9v9 and 7v7 grass pitches it is assumed that each pitch can accommodate three matches on a match day.

3G Synthetic Turf Pitches – Matches

- 1.28 Where a settlement has an STP available for club and community use it is assumed that, if possible, the child age groups (Under 7s to Under 12's) will use these for matches/weekend training, and this should be a target. A full size STP capable of accommodating an adult game can also accommodate 2 x 9v9, 2 x 7v7, and 4 x 5v5 (although not all these running at the same time). The Scottish FA in *The Big Pitch*, its facilities strategy, identifies an 11 a side pitch being able to be split into three 7v7 pitches for recreational use. For the purpose of the supply and demand model we have conservatively assumed each STP can accommodate an average of 2 age group pitches for matches. Match times vary according to the age group but assuming one hour slots and a typical 3 hour session, then capacity is for 6 child MESs (2 pitches x 3 hours). No account has been taken of home and away matches for these age groups and it is assumed they will need access to the pitches each week. Not all Community Football Clubs have access to an STP, however, and this is explored later under the specific settlements.

3G Synthetic Turf Pitches – Training

- 1.29 As highlighted earlier, given the importance of STP's we are working on the minimum aim of each team (whether adult, youth or child) having access to a floodlit STP for training at least once a week. However, it is the target of the Scottish FA – and indeed some Midlothian clubs - that teams should train twice a week and the implication of this option is also explored. In Midlothian there is very little Friday use of STPs by clubs, being so close to weekend match days, but the rest of the week is busy. Booking periods are generally from 1800-2100, split into two one and a half hour blocks. On the earlier basis that a full size STP can be split into two separate training areas then over an evening 4 team/age groups can be accommodated (2 training areas x two sessions),

or 16 sessions from Monday to Thursday. Once again this will give an indication of potential over or under supply, although in practice a number of age groups from the same club may hire the whole pitch, or for some STP's hires are split into a third of a pitch each. With regard to this, when looking at the target of each team training twice a week we have made a pragmatic assumption that the extra demand will necessitate each STP being divided into three training areas, rather than two, thereby increasing capacity per day to 6 sessions (3 training areas x 2 sessions) or 24 sessions from Monday to Thursday.

Future Demand

- 1.30 This strategy is not just about current requirements, but must also look to the future land use needs of Midlothian. In many ways it is difficult to predict the level of participation and therefore the possible number of pitches that will be required for football in the future, as so many factors can play a part, not least the success or otherwise of the growth in women's football and other football development initiatives. It is not unreasonable to assume that there will be relative growth in participation as a result of these initiatives, although measuring this is more difficult.
- 1.31 Equally, the population of Midlothian is increasing as a result of planned residential development. In order to help plan for this the study has calculated Team Generation Rates (TGR's) for Midlothian. TGR's take the population within the team playing age group divided by the number of teams. This then provides a locally based standard from which future facility needs generated as a result of population growth can be calculated. In general a pitch with pavilion and car parking to the standards set out by **sportscotland** would be required for every two to four teams generated by the population growth (depending on the age groups).
- 1.32 In determining future population growth Midlothian's Housing Land Audit 2022 map has been used to calculate the number of households planned or being built within each settlement. The number of households has been multiplied by the average household occupancy rate for Midlothian of 3.3 people per household (based on the Scottish Government Statistics page for 2020) to arrive at total population growth. The age group profile of this population has been assessed by using the Midlothian mid year population estimates by single year of age and sex for 2020.

Previous Policies

- 1.33 The 2017 report set out a number of recommended policies, which are repeated here.

Transfer of Pitch/Pavilion Responsibility to Recognised Community Clubs

- 1.34 The financial pressures on local authorities to provide and maintain grass pitches and pavilions has been recognised by the Scottish FA.
- 1.35 Within Midlothian there are a number of thriving community football clubs with many teams. One way of helping such clubs develop, whilst relieving financial pressures on the Council, is to transfer responsibility to those clubs for the management and maintenance of pitches and pavilion, typically on a long lease. This allows them to raise external funding for facility development and to use the facilities according to their specific needs, rather than those determined by the Council. This is generally a standard model across the UK

for cricket and rugby clubs and there are also good examples in Midlothian where this has now occurred, such as Bonnyrigg Rose Community Football Club.

- 1.36 Such transfer of responsibility will be dependent on reaching agreements with the clubs and ensuring the clubs themselves have the necessary management and technical skills to take on these responsibilities. The quality of pitches will also be a consideration, as transfer of poor quality pitches could simply be transferring liabilities to the club. In some cases pitch areas also double as public open space and the implications of this would also need to be considered.

Multi Pitch Sites

- 1.37 National guidance on playing pitch provision produced by **sportscotland** supports the development of multi pitch sites and there are good reasons for this in terms of economy and sports development.
- 1.38 Where practical therefore, future provision should be based on multi pitch locations rather than single pitch sites.

Bookings

- 1.39 It is important to ensure that a strategic approach is taken to the booking and pricing of pitches, with priority given to those clubs with accepted development programmes and which are community based. Pricing for the pitches should be benchmarked annually with other local authority providers as a measure of good practice.

2. FOOTBALL IN MIDLOTHIAN – AN OVERVIEW

The Structure of the Game

- 2.1 The Scottish FA has a clear development pathway for children starting at Under 7 years of age through to Under 12's. This progresses from 4 a side through to 9 a side (see figure below) before transitioning onto youth football (Under 13 to Under 18) with 11 a side matches, then onto adult football.

	YEAR OF BIRTH	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010
	SWF	U7	U7	U8	U10	U10	U12	U12
	MAX PERMITTED FORMAT	4v4 Multi Game	4v4	5v5	7v7	7v7	7v7	9v9
	ADVISED MAXIMUM GAME-DAY SQUAD	6	6	7	10	10	10	14
	PLAYING SEASON	March to November	March to June Transition to 9s August 2022	August 2022 to June 2023 March to June Transition to 11s May 2022				
	BALL SIZE	3	3	3	4 Boys 3 Girls	4 Boys 3 Girls	4	4

Clubs and Teams

- 2.2 In general it is the Community Football Clubs (CFC's) who provide opportunities for children's and youth football. There are five CFC's in Midlothian that have achieved the Scottish FA Charter Mark Standard: Arniston Rangers CFC, Bonnyrigg Rose CFC, Dalkeith Thistle CFC, Loanhead Miners CFC and Penicuik Athletic Youth Football Club. There are a further four identified CFC's who are not Charter Marked. Whilst the CFC's may share the same name as the professional/semi professional adult clubs that are in their area, and may have links with them, they are generally financially and management wise separate and independent entities in their own right. As an indication of the size of these clubs, based on the information provided by the Scottish FA, the two largest CFC's (Bonnyrigg Rose and Dalkeith Thistle) have respectively 30 and 26 registered teams in the 2021-22 season.
- 2.3 In terms of adult football there are some 10 amateur teams playing in the Lothian and Edinburgh Amateur Football Association leagues, and seven professional/semi professional clubs, most playing in the East of Scotland Football League, with Bonnyrigg Rose having achieved promotion to Scottish League Two.
- 2.4 With regard to women's and girls' football there are some 30 registered girls' age group teams in Midlothian in the 2021-22 season and one adult team.
- 2.5 Overall there are some 137 teams across all ages and genders within Midlothian.

Settlement By Settlement Analysis

- 2.6 The following section looks at each settlement and sets out the number of pitches, their use and quality. Overall estimates of over or under supply are then made, and recommendations based on future growth set out. The demand model enables changes to the number of teams, pitches and population profile to be made, so that the impact of future variations can be estimated.

3. SETTLEMENT BY SETTLEMENT ANALYSIS

Bonnyrigg, Lasswade, Dalkeith, Easthouses, Mayfield, Newbattle, and Newtongrange

Current Provision

- 3.1 As identified in 1.23 above, whilst these are separate settlements they exist in close proximity to each other, with overlap by clubs in one area using facilities in another. It therefore makes sense to look at these in the round. Current provision in these settlements includes:
- **KGV Bonnyrigg Park**, graded a 1, with 1 x Adult pitch. Bookings for 2021/22 shows use on a Saturday afternoon by Bonnyrigg Rose Athletic FC and Sunday use by Bonnyrigg Rose Community Football Club.
 - **Dundas Park** – this is a private ground, home to the professional/semi professional club, Bonnyrigg Rose Athletic FC whose senior team play in Scottish League 2. They also have an Under 20's team.

- Poltonhall Complex** – 2 x Adult size grass pitches graded 1. There are also two relatively new floodlit 3G STPs equivalent to one and a half full size pitches. This site is home to Bonnyrigg Rose Community Football Club who run some 30 teams from under 7's through to under 18's with some 600 registered players and 108 coaches. The club manages and maintains the pitches and refurbished the pavilion which it took responsibility for in 2016. An asset transfer from the Council to the club for the site is currently underway which will require the club to permit other organisations, such as the neighbouring Lasswade Rugby Club, to use the 3G pitch. The club is an excellent example of a community club, not only providing for football but running social inclusion initiatives covering a range of target groups.
- Lasswade High School** – 1 x Adult pitch graded 1. Also a full size floodlit STP hockey pitch (not 3G) and one full size floodlit 3G football pitch. Regular weekend use of the grass pitch is by Bonnyrigg Rose CFC. Weekend use of the hockey STP is by the hockey club but during the week use is shared by the hockey club, Bonnyrigg Rose CFC and Loanhead Miners CFC Under 19's. The floodlit 3G STP is booked Saturday morning by the Hibs Community Foundation and Sunday morning by Bonnyrigg Rose CFC. Weekday bookings are extensive with high levels of use by Bonnyrigg Rose CFC, and Bonnyrigg Rose Athletic FC with one booking a week for half the pitch by Lasswade Thistle CFC and Whitehill Welfare FC respectively.
- Cowden Park** – 2 x 7's pitches rated a Grade 2 and 2 x Adult pitches rated a Grade 1. There is also a small STP approximately 35m x 35m. The site is exclusively used by Dalkeith Thistle CFC and the pavilion is leased to the club. Dalkeith Thistle CFC is a Chartered Mark community club with some 25 registered teams at youth and child level (the club itself identifies 28) with membership having increased significantly over the past few years. The club states that the pitches on this site are in "decent" condition but get heavily used and the club has had to invest its own funds to enhance the maintenance provided by the Council. The club also uses pitches in Mayfield and Newtongrange.
- Kings Park** – this is the site of Dalkeith Thistle's professional/semi professional club with adult pitch and spectator provision for 2000 people. The club has a 40 year lease of the ground from the Council and works closely with Dalkeith Thistle CFC.
- Waterfall Park** – this was a grass area only approximately the size of a 9's pitch used for training. Feedback from Dalkeith Thistle CFC, confirmed by the Council, is that the site is still used for occasional training.
- Dalkeith Community Campus** – the site has 4 x adult grass pitches managed by the education PPP provider BAM, one of which is floodlit and all of which are grade 1. There is also a full size floodlit 3G STP. Discussion with the PPP provider indicates that the main user of the 3G pitch is Dalkeith Thistle CFC, with Lasswade Thistle FC the next highest user. The 3G pitch is fully booked from 1700-2100 Monday to Friday. Weekend use is much more sporadic with broadly one match booking each week. The grass pitches themselves are not heavily used by the club and community, although the schools on the campus will use them. Dalkeith Thistle CFC also train indoors in the games hall on this site.
- Mayfield Complex** – the complex has 2 x adult pitches graded 1 and a further adult pitch, which is leased to Easthouses Lily CFC, graded 2. There is also a 9 aside pitch and 7 a side pitch graded 2. Drainage for both needs upgrading. The site is also home to Easthouses Lily Miners professional/semi

professional club with its own pitch and a ground capacity of 600. The pitch here also needs drainage improvements. Easthouses CFC had one youth and five child registered teams and use a number of teams pitches on the site. Pitches are also used by Dalkeith Thistle CFC and Easthouses Amateur FC.

- **Newbattle High School** – Newbattle High School is directly adjacent to the Mayfield Complex and has one grass 11 a side pitch (no rating provided but as a new pitch it is assumed to be graded 1), and a full size floodlit 3G STP. The 11 a side pitch is used on a Saturday morning by the school, Saturday afternoon and Sunday afternoon by Dalkeith Thistle CFC, and Sunday morning by Bonnyrigg Rose CFC. The 3G pitch is used extensively during weekday evenings by a wide range of clubs and on Saturday by the school in the morning, Lasswade Thistle CFC in the afternoon and Bonnyrigg Rose and St. Bernards on Sunday morning.
- **Abbeylands** – located in Newtongrange, Abbeylands has one adult pitch graded 1 and a 9v9 and 7v7 pitch. No grade was provided but it is assumed these are similarly graded. The pitches are dedicated solely for use by Dalkeith Thistle CFC.
- **New Victoria Park** – this is home to the semi professional/professional club Newtongrange Star, with a floodlit adult pitch. The club also owns and hires out a 7 a side floodlit STP.

Expressed Issues

- 3.2 The position here is complex due to the size of the areas covered and the number of clubs. However, as a result of the crossover of use of facilities by different clubs across different settlements, taking the wider view provides the best way of assessing the overall picture.
- 3.3 Firstly, let us consider the feedback from the main community clubs in this area, starting with Bonnyrigg Rose CFC. The club's view is that pitch provision for matches is not an issue, but that adequate access for training is a problem. This is based on the aim that each team can train twice a week. The club's aspiration is that a further 3G STP is provided on one of the grass pitches to resolve this, particularly as the club has a waiting list for girls' teams and certain age groups.
- 3.4 With regard to Dalkeith Thistle CFC, as with Bonnyrigg Rose CFC, the club's training and playing is spread across a wide range of sites, including the indoor Saltire Soccer Centre in Mayfield which has six 3G pitches of either 5 or 7 a side. This is a commercial operation and used by a wide range of casual users as well as the club, which identifies the pitches as being of good quality but increasingly expensive to hire. In general the club is dissatisfied with its access to pitches for playing and training as it states it needs more space, particularly in the winter months with greater access to 3G STP facilities. The club's aspiration, as referred to earlier, to provide a 3G pitch at Kings Park, would resolve this issue.
- 3.5 Dalkeith Thistle senior club are generally happy with their facilities, using their own ground for training during the summer and Dalkeith community campus during the winter. The club has strong links with the CFC and is seeking to convert their grass pitch into a 3G so it can be used over the whole week for playing and training.
- 3.6 The professional/semi professional club, Easthouses Lily Miners, with its ground in the Mayfield Complex, is generally happy with its facilities for playing and

training and uses the 3G pitch at Newbattle High School for the latter. The club has no formal ties with the CFC.

- 3.7 It is also necessary to take account of imported and exported demand. Although based in Rosewell the professional/semi professional club, Whitehill Welfare, uses Lasswade High School 3G and the Newbattle School 3G pitch for midweek training. The club states that its Under 20's team has to train in Edinburgh because it cannot get access to 3G training facilities in Midlothian. Other imported demand includes Loanhead U19's who have to use the Hockey STP, whose surface is not suitable for football training or playing.

Evaluation

- 3.8 The limitations and assumptions of the supply and demand model must be taken into account here, but it provides a degree of empirical evaluation on which to assess provision. Looking at grass pitch provision across the settlements there is an adult/youth MES surplus of 29. Assuming most adult/youth pitches have a capacity of 4 MES, this equates to seven pitches. However, this figure masks the fact that the majority of pitch use is by youth, not adult, teams. According to the South East Region Youth Football Association nearly all youth league matches (with the exception of U17's and U18's) are played on a Sunday. There are very few Saturday adult teams (apart from the professional/semi professional clubs) playing in this area, so whilst a pitch may have a 4 MES capacity, in practice it could only accommodate two full matches on each weekend day, and if the main match day is a Sunday then spare capacity on a Saturday is irrelevant. The oversupply figure is therefore misleading in this instance. We therefore look at under/over supply on the peak day of use as the main indicator. In this case there is an oversupply of 12 MES, or three pitches. The model also assumes one team will be playing at home whilst another plays away, which will not always be the case, so some flexibility in availability is required. The majority of grass pitches in these settlements are managed (in terms of allocation of teams) by the main CFC's who will also allocate some 11 a side pitches for use by younger age groups.
- 3.9 The main recurrent theme is in relation to access to 3G STP's for midweek training. The area is well supplied with STP's, yet if we assume each team (adult, youth and child) should be able to use a 3G pitch once a week for training, then there is effectively no extra capacity. If we assume – as is the case, and as recommended by the SFA - that some teams will wish to train more than once a week, then that capacity disappears. Even if we allocate three areas of each STP for training, rather than two, we end up with a deficit of 35 sessions, equivalent to 1.5 STP's based on a training capacity of 24 sessions a week. The supply side of the equation also includes the Lasswade High School hockey STP whose surface is not suitable for football and is avoided by most clubs.
- 3.10 Looking at the aspiration to play all U12 and below matches on a 3G STP, it should in practice be possible for matches but is dependent on the coordinated and strategic allocation of pitches.

Future Population Growth

- 3.11 The population growth in the above settlements as a result of housing development, as set out in Midlothian's 2022 draft Housing Land Audit, equates to just over 8,600 people. As a stand alone calculation, based on the assumptions set out in 1.30-1.32 above, this would lead to the need for 2 grass

pitches to meet the needs of 6-11 year olds, and 2 grass 11 v 11 pitches (assuming each pitch can accommodate two games on a match day and there is an equal split of teams playing home and away). However, if there is already a surplus of grass pitch provision we should not automatically look for additional pitches to be provided but seek developer contributions to improve existing pitches and ancillary accommodation. In this instance existing grass pitch provision should be able to meet the needs of future population growth.

- 3.12 With regards to STP provision for training, 13 teams will be generated by population growth, equating to the need for 26 weekday training sessions (assuming each team trains twice a week). This is equivalent to just over one full size STP based on a midweek training capacity of 24 sessions. Since there is already an identified deficit in STP provision this would be an additional requirement.

Conclusions

- 3.13 Adult/youth 11 a side grass pitch supply (and to a lesser extent the small number of smaller side grass pitches) is adequate to meet current demand with some spare capacity to account for pitch rotation and inclement weather, both now and in the future. Drainage improvements are required on the Easthouses Lily Miners ground and the two child pitches on the Mayfield Complex.
- 3.14 The main issue is the need for further 3G STP facilities to meet midweek demand for training. Whilst we support in principle Bonnyrigg Rose CFC's aspiration for a further 3G STP, priority must firstly sit with other clubs who do not have the superb facilities enjoyed by Bonnyrigg Rose, who nonetheless clearly need what they already have, and will need more if they continue to grow. Priority, however, should be given to seeking how to help Dalkeith Thistle CFC achieve the proposed STP at Kings Park. In addition it is understood that a new STP is being proposed for a new school in Mayfield. This should be a 3G pitch and floodlit. If both these facilities are provided, and strategically booked to ensure equitable access by clubs requiring these facilities, then the identified current and future deficit of 2.5 full size STP's will largely be met.

Danderhall, Millerhill & Shawfair

- 3.15 Danderhall and Millerhill are two small settlements located at the Northern tip of Midlothian and north of the Edinburgh City By-pass. Shawfair is a new settlement that has/will introduce an additional population and facilities.

Current Provision

- 3.16 Current provision includes:
- **Danderhall Park** – 1 x Adult pitch graded 2. It has space for a second adult pitch which can be set up if required (also graded 2). The pitch is booked by Danderhall Miners Amateur Football Club on a Saturday afternoon. The club has one adult team.

Future Population Growth

- 3.17 The population growth in the above settlements as a result of housing development, as set out in Midlothian's 2022 draft Housing Land Audit, equates to just over 12,400 people. As a stand alone calculation, based on

the assumptions set out in 1.30-1.32 above, this would lead to the need for 3 grass pitches to meet the needs of 6-11 year olds, and 3 grass 11 v 11 pitches (assuming each pitch can accommodate two games on a match day and there is an equal split of teams playing home and away).

- 3.18 As discussed earlier account does need to be taken of existing provision, and there is a surplus equivalent to one adult grass pitch currently, so future need will be for 3 6-11 pitches and 2 adult/youth pitches.
- 3.19 Overall the population growth will generate some 19 new teams. On the same assumptions as discussed earlier (each team training twice a week and pitch divided into three training areas) this will lead to the need for 38 midweek training sessions, equivalent to 1.6 STP's.

Evaluation

- 3.20 Current pitch provision is more than adequate to meet current demand for matches.
- 3.21 As part of the future Shawfair development a new secondary school will be provided. At the time of writing, in terms of football, this will have two adult size grass pitches and a smaller pitch. Two STPs are also proposed although whether these are floodlit, 3G or sand filled/sand dressed is not yet decided. At least one would need to be a floodlit 3G pitch to meet future team training requirements and also meet the need for 6-11 year old team match day facilities, without providing additional grass pitches. Given its location the STP is as likely to attract teams from the Edinburgh area and East Lothian as well as Midlothian. Council policy is that teams within Midlothian have priority booking and there is a 50% surcharge on pitch hire for non Midlothian teams.

Gorebridge and Arniston

- 3.22 Located to the south-eastern part of the urban section of Midlothian Gorebridge and Arniston merge into each other to create a residential area popular with commuters. There is a professional/semi professional club with its own ground and facilities for community football are provided at the two local parks.

Current Provision

- 3.23 Current provision is set out below and includes:
- **Gore Glen Park** – 3 x Adult size pitches graded 2 and 2 x 9's pitches also graded 2. One of the adult pitches is also marked up for a 9v9. The site is home to Arniston Rangers CFC who lease the adjacent pavilion. The club had five registered youth teams and 10 registered child teams in the 2021/22 season. The club is continuing to grow with some 300 players (compared to around 80 10 years ago) and states that it will have seven youth teams and 12 child teams in the 2022/23 season. The club also has 5 a side, 4 a side and pre school children as part of its academy. The club has started working together with the senior side - Arniston Rangers Football Club - looking towards building a pathway for both boys and girls from 2/3 year olds through to adult football. The CFC has helped the senior club set up an under 20s for next season as well as a Ladies team with the aim of playing competitively in early 2023

- **Arniston Park** – Arniston Rangers CFC has 2 x floodlit 5/6 a side STP pitches at Arniston Park used for training by the younger age groups.
- **Newbyres Park** – this is home to Arniston Rangers senior side with an adult grass pitch and spectator accommodation.
- **Birkenside Park** – recently reinstated for use by Arniston Rangers CFC the site has 3 x 7 a side pitches, although drainage needs improving.

Expressed Issues

- 3.24 The CFC sees fitting games each weekend into the available pitches as a challenge. In terms of training the club uses the small STP they have and also uses the grass pitches at Goreglen with portable floodlights. The club has access to a third of the Newbattle School 3G for an hour and a half twice a week.
- 3.25 At the time of consultation the club pointed out that Birkenside Park, close to Gore Glen, was no longer used. Since the decision to remove pitches here demand at the club has increased substantially. The club states:

"If we could use that area to house 4 x 7 a side pitches as a club we would happily work with the council to pay for grass cutting and lining. We could use our portable, low level floodlights to train there in the winter months as well. That would then leave scope to put 2 fixed 9 a side pitches at Goreglen and free up again the 3rd 11 a side pitch."

Since this statement the Council has re-instated the site for use.

Evaluation

- 3.26 Looking at the supply and demand analysis for the 11 a side pitches used by the youth teams, as identified in an earlier discussion whilst a pitch may be graded with the capacity to accommodate three matches over a week, the peak day capacity is reduced in practice to two matches, provided kick off times are staggered. If we adjust the model to take this into account AND factor in the use of one 11 a side pitch for 9v9 matches, then the club's statement that fitting weekend games onto the pitches is a challenge is supported, even with Birkenside Park re-instated. This may become a further issue when the number of teams increases in the 2022/23 season.
- 3.27 There is no STP available for training in this settlement and if the target of each team training once a week on half a pitch was met then the need would be for three quarters of a full size STP. With the target of two training sessions a week on a third of a pitch then a full size floodlit STP is justified.

Future Population Growth

- 3.28 The population growth in the above settlements as a result of housing development, as set out in Midlothian's 2022 draft Housing Land Audit, equates to just under 5,900 people. As a stand alone calculation, based on the assumptions set out in 1.30-1.32 above, this would lead to the need for 1 grass pitch to meet the needs of 6-11 year olds, and 1.3 grass 11 v 11 pitches (assuming each pitch can accommodate two games on a match day and there is an equal split of teams playing home and away), so in practice 2 grass 11v11 pitches. Current provision shows a potential surplus equivalent to

just one adult/youth grass pitch, so a minimum of one additional grass pitch would be required.

- 3.29 With regard to STP's the population growth would generate 10 new teams or the demand for 20 weekday training sessions – just under the equivalent of one full size STP.

Conclusions

- 3.30 The club's proposed solution to meeting its current challenges by bringing Birkenside Park back into use is a sensible one, and one which has now been implemented, although the drainage on this site needs to be improved.
- 3.31 Provision of a full size floodlit 3G STP can be justified based on the size of the club and all teams using the facility for training, with weekend U12 and below matches being played on the pitch. Grass pitch provision for the younger age groups would not then be required, although this would need to be reviewed at the time if the club continues to grow substantially. To maximise use and sustainability of a new 3G pitch it should be located on an education site where it could be used throughout the day, or at Newbyres Park subject to the involvement of the senior club. Population growth points to the need for a further STP. It is understood that a new high school with an STP is being mooted to serve the area, but has yet to receive approval.

Loanhead and Bilston

- 3.32 Loanhead is located on the North-western side of Midlothian and close to the Edinburgh City By-pass. There are currently facilities for football available at four local parks. Bilston is a small settlement to the Southwest of Loanhead.

Current Provision

- 3.33 Current provision includes:
- **Memorial Park** – 1 x Adult pitch. Graded 2. The pitch has had work undertaken on it during the summer (2022) to improve the drainage, the success of which will be monitored as the season progresses. The pitch is used by Loanhead Miners CFC. Loanhead Miners CFC use a range of pitches in Loanhead (see below). The club had six youth and nine child teams registered in the 2021/22 season with around 300 members.
 - **KGV Park** – 1 x 7v7 and 1 x 9v9. Both graded 2. The pitch is used by Loanhead Miners CFC.
 - **Westend Park** – 1 x Adult pitch. Pitch score 3 with poor drainage. The pitch is used by Loanhead Miners CFC and Loanhead Miners AFC.
 - **Burghlee Park** – 2 x 7's pitches. Graded 2. Base for Loanhead Miners' 4's, 5's and 7's. The pitch is used by Loanhead Miners CFC.
 - **Bilston** - Adult size pitch provided at the primary school. No grading provided but as a relatively new pitch assume a 1. Pitch used by Pentland Athletic AFC.

Expressed Issues

- 3.34 Loanhead Miners CFC has identified that programming the 11 a side pitches on a Sunday can be a problem. Midweek training is also an issue with teams split across a range of venues with a number having to train in the Edinburgh area. Whilst Burghlee Park has training lights they are not of a high standard and training on grass during the winter months is problematic when inclement weather sets in.

Evaluation

- 3.35 The supply and demand analysis shows a small surplus of adult/youth MES across the settlements, but this disappears if more than half of the youth teams have to play at home, adjustments are made to account for capacity on peak day of use, and the factoring in of supply that also includes the Bilston pitch which is not currently used by the CFC and is already booked on a Sunday morning by Pentland Athletic AFC.
- 3.36 Access to good local training facilities is also a key issue with teams having to travel outside the area, and in some cases outside of the county, for midweek training. Based on the number of teams if the target of each team training once a week on half a pitch was met then the need would be for eighty per cent of a full size STP. With the target of two training sessions a week on a third of a pitch then a full size floodlit STP is justified.

Future Population Growth

- 3.37 The population growth in the above settlements as a result of housing development, as set out in Midlothian's 2022 draft Housing Land Audit, equates to just over 3,700 people. As a stand alone calculation, based on the assumptions set out in 1.30-1.32 above, this would lead to the need for 1 grass pitch to meet the needs of 6-11 year olds, and 1 grass 11 v 11 pitch (assuming each pitch can accommodate two games on a match day and there is an equal split of teams playing home and away). The current provision would be inadequate to contribute to this additional need.
- 3.38 In terms of the impact of population growth on new STP provision for training a total of 6 teams or 12 training sessions would be generated, equivalent to half a pitch.

Conclusions

- 3.39 Based on the number of teams in Loanhead and Bilston provision of a full size floodlit 3G STP can be justified with all teams using the facility for training and with weekend U12 and below matches being played on the pitch. To maximise use and sustainability of a new 3G pitch it should ideally be located on an education site where it could be used throughout the day, although other sites could be considered.
- 3.40 There are drainage issues with most of the grass pitches in Loanhead and provision should be made to remedy these where practical.
- 3.41 Future population growth will lead to the need for an additional child and an additional 11v11 grass pitch, and half a full size STP.

Pathhead

3.42 Pathhead is located to the East of Midlothian, close to the border with East Lothian. It is a small settlement, although the area encompasses additional settlements.

Current Provision

3.43 Current provision includes:

- **Callender Park** – an adult size pitch graded 3. Also a smaller grass area that can be used for training. Hired out to Pathead AFC on a Saturday afternoon and Thornybank AFC on a Sunday afternoon during the 2021/22 season, although it is believed the latter club has ceased operation.

Evaluation

3.44 The pitch is more than adequate to meet current demand with capacity to accommodate further clubs should new demand arise. Given its distance from other main settlements in Midlothian it is unlikely to be useful in meeting unfulfilled demand elsewhere but should be retained whilst demand for its use exists locally.

Penicuik & Auchendinny

3.45 Penicuik is one of the largest settlements in Midlothian situated to the south-west of the urban areas and adjacent to the Pentland Hills.

Current Provision

3.46 Current provision includes:

- **Penicuik High School (Bog Road)** – 2 x 7's and 2 x Adult pitches. Graded 2. As well as school use these pitches are booked at weekends by Penicuik Athletic Youth Football Club (a CFC) along with a range of other facilities in the settlement (see below). The 7v7 pitches have extensive use weekday evenings during the season. The club has around 400 players, with six youth and seven child registered teams, although the club puts this number as currently higher with 10 youth and 13 child teams. The number of players has been increasing over the past five years and the club anticipates that this will continue.
- **Carlops Road** – 9v9 pitch. Not graded. Used by Penicuik Athletic YFC on a Sunday morning.
- **Penicuik Public Park** – this is home to the professional/semi professional club Penicuik Athletic FC which has an "extended let" on the ground. It has a full size floodlit grass pitch and has a spectator capacity of around 1,250. The club has a senior team and an Under 20's side. Both teams train on the 3G STP at Penicuik Park (see below).
- **Penicuik Park** – 3G full size floodlit STP. The pitch is booked solidly from Monday to Thursday by the Youth Football Club, the senior club and Peebles Rovers. Weekend use appears to be limited to a Sunday morning booking by the Youth Football Club.

- **Beeslack High School** – 2 x Adult pitches, 2 x 7v7 pitches. A 3G STP floodlit 11 a side pitch was added in 2016. Bookings for this facility are not under the Council's Sport and Leisure control. However, discussions with the school indicate that the 3G pitch is booked to capacity on Monday to Friday evenings and also used Saturday and Sunday mornings. It is understood that Penicuik Athletic YFC have "first refusal" on bookings. Other users include Loanhead Miners CFC, Pentland Athletic AFC and Penicuik Athletic FC.
- **Glencorse Community Centre** - run by a community association this site has an adult grass pitch and 5 a side floodlit STP (sand based) that was built in 2014, together with indoor changing. In 2017 the centre was looking for users to hire the 11 a side pitch. That position has now changed with an average of two pitch bookings per weekend and sometimes three. The pitch drainage is an issue, so three matches would be the ideal maximum. The pitch is used by various clubs with varying frequency, including Penicuik AFC who use it as their home ground, Penicuik Athletic YFC's girls' U16's, and Pentland Athletic.

Expressed Issues

- 3.47 Penicuik Athletic Youth Football club state that they struggle to accommodate every team with the facilities they have access to. They state that they lose access to the 11 a side pitches at both Penicuik and Beeslack school sites during the summer as they are marked out by the Council for running tracks and field athletics.

Evaluation

- 3.48 The supply and demand analysis shows a small surplus of MES's on grass pitches for both adult/youth and child matches, broadly equivalent to a pitch each for both. This is premised on the registered number of teams shown for Penicuik Athletic YFC last season. If the club's latest stated team numbers are used then this puts child provision into deficit. Either way, current provision is just adequate to meet demand.
- 3.49 With regard to access to 3G STP's for training the area has two facilities, and theoretically, with the objective of every team having access to such a facility twice a week there is a small surplus of provision. In practice there is also imported demand from outside the settlement area which means these pitches are fully booked.

Future Population Growth

- 3.50 The population growth in the above settlements as a result of housing development, as set out in Midlothian's 2022 draft Housing Land Audit, equates to just over 4,100 people. As a stand alone calculation, based on the assumptions set out in 1.30-1.32 above, this would lead to the need for 1 grass pitch to meet the needs of 6-11 year olds, and 1 grass 11 v 11 pitch (assuming each pitch can accommodate two games on a match day and there is an equal split of teams playing home and away). According to the supply and demand equation there is currently a surplus of one adult grass pitch which could meet this deficit, but no surplus of a pitch to meet the needs of 6-11 year olds, so an additional pitch would be required.
- 3.51 In terms of the impact of population growth on new STP provision for training a total of 6 teams or 12 training sessions would be generated, equivalent to half a pitch.

Conclusions

- 3.52 There is little grass pitch spare capacity for matches, supporting the Penicuik Athletic YFC assertion that programming matches can be difficult. Peak match use for the younger age groups is Sunday morning, which is also when both 3G STP's are in use, so capacity to absorb additional demand is limited. It is difficult to justify further 3G provision here as there is a small current surplus capacity (but this is based on dividing the STP into three) which becomes a minor deficit with team growth as a result of future population growth, although if new 3G pitches were provided in other settlements where no such provision currently exists, then this would free up space for training where imported demand would relocate back to their own settlements. The previous strategy suggested there should be a coordinated approach between the two 3G pitch providers to allocating 3G space and this recommendation remains in place.

Roslin

- 3.53 A small settlement, Roslin is located between Penicuik and Loanhead on the western side of Midlothian. There is no provision currently here and no obvious demand.

Rosewell

- 3.54 Rosewell is another small individual settlement that lies to the southeast of Roslin. There is currently provision for Whitehill Welfare FC who have their own ground at Ferguson Park. Issues raised by the club are discussed in 3.7 above.

4. SUMMARY

- 4.1 Consultation with the community football clubs within Midlothian shows that participation at under 18 level and below is continuing to grow. This will be further impacted by the growth in popularity of women's and girls' football and the participation initiatives being introduced by the Scottish FA. There are some 51 youth and 63 child teams in the county, which is an increase since the 2017 study. However, the number of adult teams has marginally declined since 2017.
- 4.2 Grass pitch provision for matches is currently adequate, although some of the CFC's struggle at times to programme all their teams on a match day. After the 2017 study a number of grass pitch sites ceased to be used for football. There is no rationale for further closures.
- 4.3 However, the main recurring issue relates to access to and provision of 3G STP's for midweek training. All Midlothian 3G STP's are booked solidly throughout the week during the season and clubs are having to use facilities outside of their immediate area in order to meet their requirements. Some of the FA Chartermark Community Football Clubs, specifically Loanhead Miners CFC and Arniston Rangers CFC, have little to no access to 3G STP's for training and some teams are having to travel outside of Midlothian to train.
- 4.4 The importance of 3G STP's for the future of football has been highlighted in the introduction to this study, together with the benefits they bring, and there is a clear justification for ensuring each settlement and key CFC within Midlothian has access to one for training and indeed match play where

appropriate. Options for making provision in both Loanhead and Arniston should be a priority of this strategy.

- 4.5 There are a number of caveats to this. The first is that whilst the Council can act as a facilitator and coordinator for new 3G pitches, it does not mean it has to be the funder. Funding should be a partnership between a wide range of bodies, including the clubs, to make such provision happen. Following on from this any proposed new 3G pitch should first be subject to a more detailed feasibility as to its viability, looking at capital funding, ongoing revenue costs, levels of usage and income, and any savings on grass pitch provision that can be made by transferring usage to the 3G pitch. Where possible new 3G provision should be provided on an education site so that maximum benefit from the investment can be achieved. With regard to this some smaller STP's have been provided on primary school sites and could be used for some training/matches for the younger age groups. However, often the size of these pitches is not suitable for such use, being smaller than the basic SFA requirement for a 7 a side pitch which should be the minimum standard i.e. 36m by 55m minimum, 55m by 65m maximum with a run off area required if surrounded by a fence.
- 4.6 Midlothian is home to some excellent football clubs whose work with, and contribution to, their local community is both commendable and an example for other clubs outside of the county to aspire to. Having the correct facilities is just one part of providing these benefits, but nonetheless the essential base from which those benefits can be delivered.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The following is a summary of the facility recommendations for each settlement area. The context for these recommendations needs to be understood by reading the more detailed evaluations in this report. A degree of pragmatism is also required in relation to new facilities needed as a result of population growth, particularly the provision of new 3G STP's. Priority needs to be given to current deficits, particularly in Gorebridge and Arniston and Loanhead and Bilston, and the impact of making such provision on future demand can then be more accurately assessed. If a settlement is not mentioned below then there is no required action

Bonnyrigg, Lasswade, Dalkeith, Easthouses, Mayfield, Newbattle, and Newtongrange

- Provide two additional 3G STP's – one at Kings Park if practical, one at planned new secondary school.
- Impact of population growth – need for one additional 3G STP. Additional demand for grass pitch provision can be met by existing facilities.
- Grass pitch improvements – upgrade drainage on the two pitch areas of the Mayfield Complex as identified in this report.

Danderhall, Millerhill & Shawfair

- Impact of population growth – need for 3 x 6-11 grass pitches and 2 additional adult/youth grass pitches. 2 adult pitches and one 6-11 pitch currently planned for the Shawfair development.

- Impact of population growth - need for 1.6 3G STP's – support current planned provision for 2 STP's as part of new Shawfair development.

Gorebridge and Arniston

- Provide a 3G STP to meet current demand – the lack of such a facility to serve these settlements makes this a **PRIORITY** project.
- Improve drainage at Birkenstone Playing Field.
- Impact of population growth – need for one additional 11v11 grass pitch.
- Impact of population growth – growth in team numbers justifies a further 3G STP.

Loanhead and Bilston

- Provide a 3G STP to meet current demand – the lack of such a facility to serve these settlements makes this a **PRIORITY** project.
- Improve drainage on grass pitches.
- Impact of population growth – need for one additional 11v11 grass pitch and one additional 6-11 year old grass pitch.
- Impact of population growth – need for a half size 3G STP.

Penicuik and Auchendinny

- Impact of population growth – need for one additional 6-11 year old grass pitch.
- Impact of population growth – need for a half size 3G STP.

Primary Schools

- Any new 3G STP provision at a primary school should as a minimum meet the SFA's size guidance for a 7v7 pitch, to ensure its potential use by community clubs.

STP Surface Replacement

- As well as considering new STP provision, finance will need to be set aside or budgeted for in order to replace each STP surface as and when it becomes worn. This will typically be required every eight to ten years after installation depending on levels of use and quality of maintenance. A schedule for such replacement should be established to inform the Council or other relevant organisations' capital programmes, and ideally an annual sinking fund set up for new STP facilities to cover future replacement.