



Sport and Physical Activity Strategy

2018 - 2022

Introduction

Sport and physical activity can have a hugely positive impact on individuals and local communities.

It can improve physical health including lower risks of heart disease and strokes and up to a 50% lower risk of type 2 diabetes. It also improves mental health, helping to lowering the risk of depression and reductions in cognitive decline. Taking part in sport and physical activity can also boost productivity and support increase learning.

However, while there are clear benefits to sports and physical activity, we also recognise that a coordinated and strategic approach to sports provision is needed if we are going to ensure that all residents can benefit from its affects.

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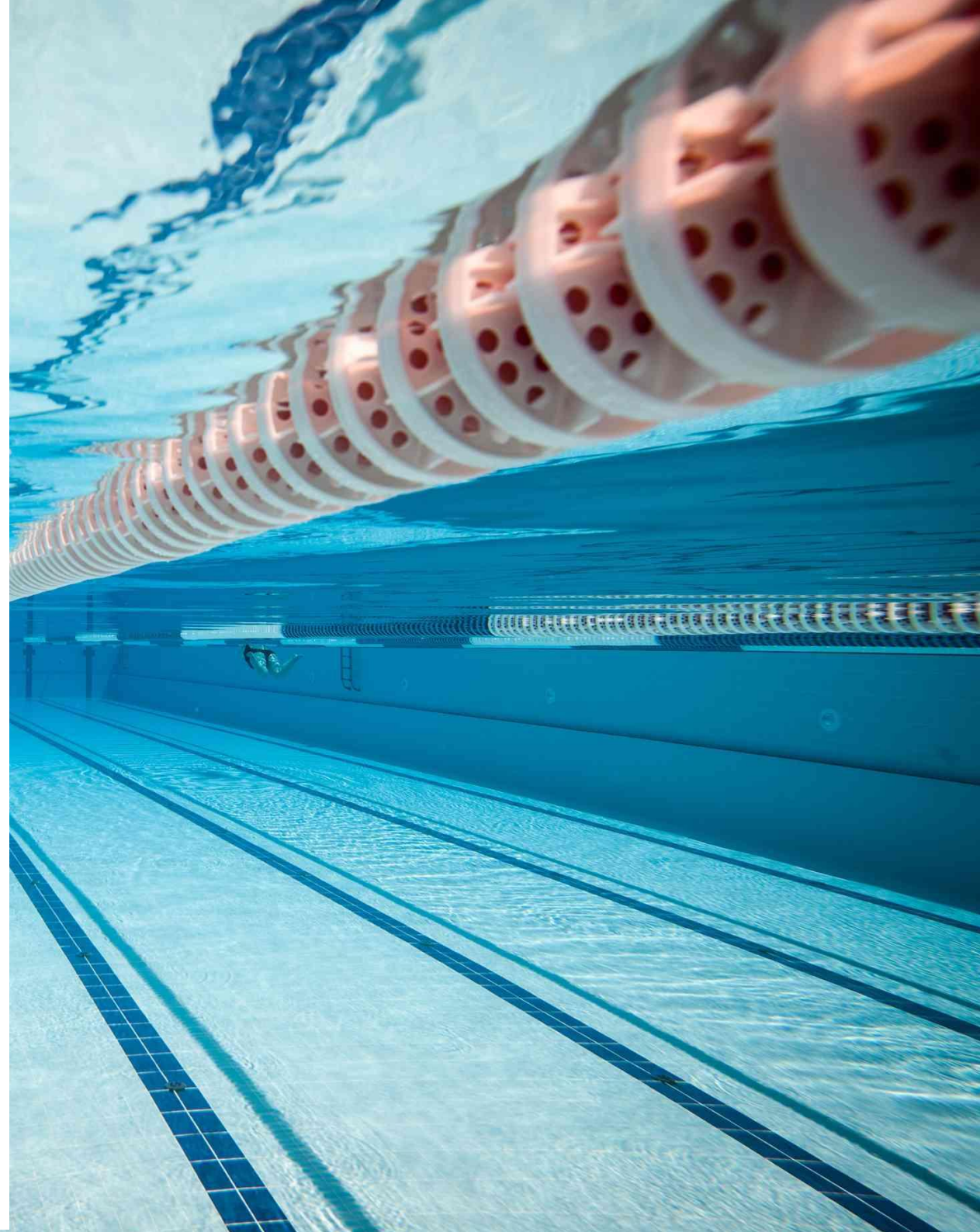
Councils have an important leadership role to play, bringing schools, voluntary sport clubs, National Governing Bodies of sport (NGBs), health and the private sector together to forge partnerships, unblock barriers to participation and improve the local sport delivery

The Case for a Sports and Physical Activity Strategy

Research shows that there are huge benefits linked with being physically active which can have a profound effect on improving a person's physical and mental health. It can also improve the quality of life and generate improvements in learning, employment and in reducing social isolation.

That is why we have developed a new strategy and vision which will ensure we have the approach, infrastructure and commitment to deliver a lasting legacy for sports and physical activity across Dacorum.

This strategy gives us a clear vision that everyone can work towards, it set out our priorities and allows us to target resources where we will see the most impact. It helps us to engage with stakeholders and develop a more detailed action plan that will sit alongside this strategy. In developing this strategy we hope to see a greater investment in sport and physical activity across the borough which will in turn lead to a healthier and happier community.



The Activity Profile of Dacorum

Existing Activity

Dacorum Borough Council (DBC) is hugely supportive of local sport. There are over 200 sports clubs within Dacorum, which offer residents a whole host of different opportunities to take part and be active, as well as a number of high profile clubs within Dacorum including Hemel Storm (Basketball), Hemel Stags (Rugby League) and Sapphire Gymnastics. Our sport and leisure facilities that are run by Everyone Active have around 4,800 members, a number that continues to grow with the ever-expanding activities and opportunities they present for the community.

Deprivation, Demographics and Health Issues

Dacorum is made up of 25 wards and is considered a largely rural and affluent area. However, Dacorum does have pockets of deprivation with 6 of its wards being graded at a 4 or below on the index of multiple deprivation, and within these wards average life expectancy is 7.2 years lower for men and 5.6 years lower for women. Cardiovascular disease in people aged between 30 and 74 in Dacorum is statistically significantly higher than the averages for England and Hertfordshire and around 50,000 residents aged 50 and above suffer from a long-term health problem or disability.

Physical Infrastructure

Within Dacorum we are fortunate enough to have a number of high quality facilities to support sport and physical activity provision within the borough. We have two large leisure centres which boast 7 swimming pools, as well as an athletics track, all of which are run by Everyone Active. We also boast a golf course, an indoor extreme sport centre and a ski slope, as well as an abundance of green parks and open spaces, all of which provide opportunity to be active within Dacorum.



Currently **21.2%** of Dacorum population is inactive which is less than the national average (**25.7%**) but more than two other districts within Hertfordshire (Three Rivers - **20.5%** and St Albans - **18.3%**)



The Vision

Provide opportunities for residents to take part in activities that create healthier, more active communities and will shape and promote a positive attitude towards sport and physical and emotional wellbeing.

Our vision is for Dacorum to be a leader in the promotion of health and wellbeing with physical activity being a key driver in creating healthier, more active communities.

In Dacorum, reducing physical inactivity amongst residents is about more than just getting people moving. It is about helping and supporting them to live an active lifestyle and fulfilling their potential.

We want to create an environment that allows our residents to be physically active as part of their daily routine, removing barriers and stigmas attached to sport and physical activity.

We aim to deliver a high quality-sporting environment, which enables people to play, enjoy and benefit from sport, whether they are a beginner, enthusiastic amateur or an elite performer.

We have worked collaboratively with clubs and other external partners to identify the needs and priorities of the borough. Using stakeholder insight to develop this strategy, as well as supporting strategies from Central Government and Sport England, we have developed five outcome-based commitments.



The Commitments

These commitments and the action plan that will be developed to deliver these will help ensure that we can achieve our ambitious vision for Dacorum.

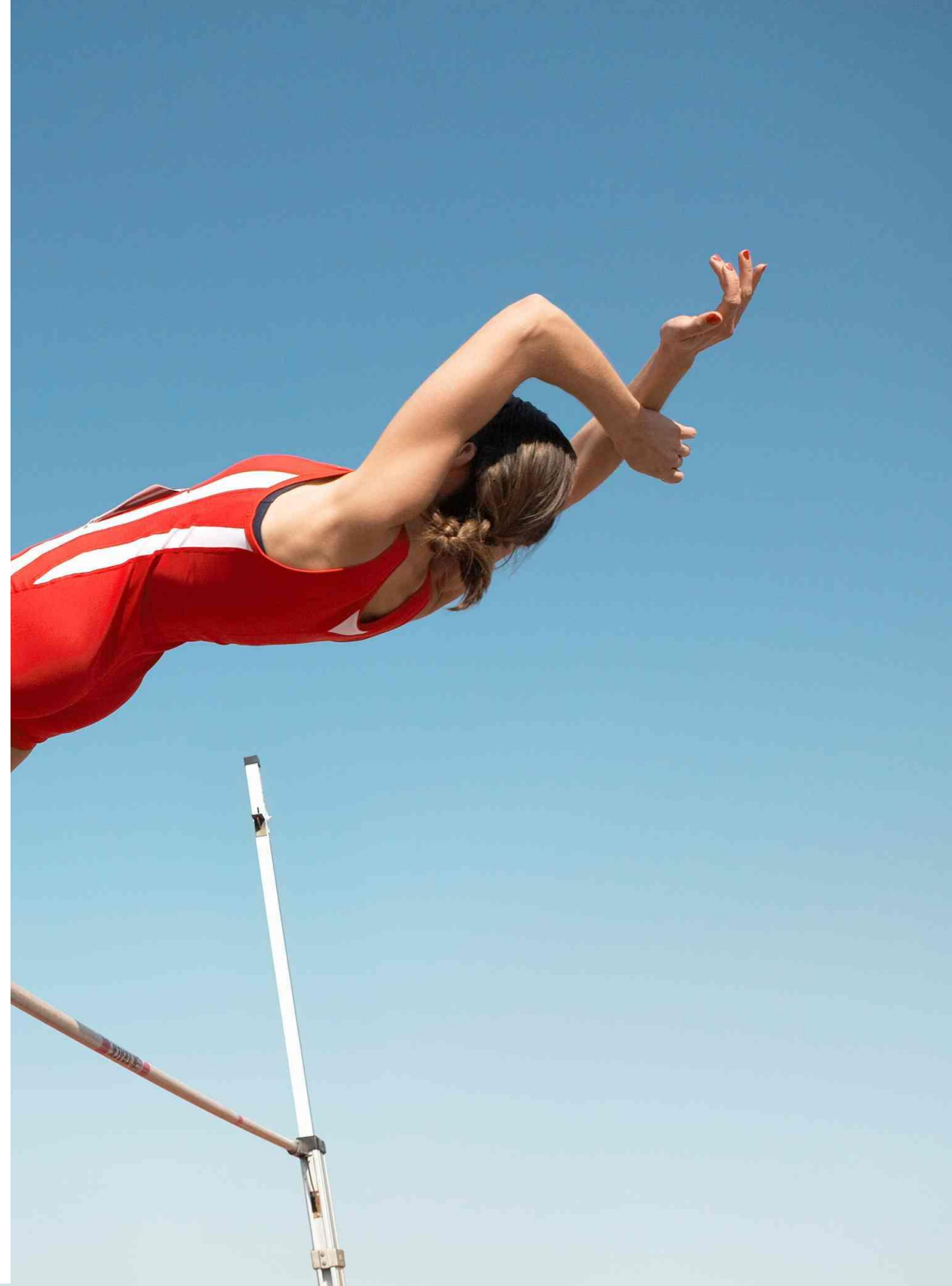
Commitment 1: Increase participation in sport and physical activity for inactive people

Commitment 2: Working in partnership with clubs, National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and other key stakeholders

Commitment 3: Ensure that we provide high quality sporting infrastructure, which can be accessed by all members of the community

Commitment 4: Developing sporting provision and activity at a local, regional, and national level

Commitment 5: Increase the profile and reputation of sports in Dacorum



Commitment 1: Increase participation in sport and physical activity for inactive people

Current position

In Dacorum, some 64.6% of its adult population are active. However, there are many groups who do not engage in physical activity for various cultural, economic, personal or practical reasons. Within Dacorum there are a number of areas with high levels of multiple deprivation, within which there are a number of residents who belong to underrepresented groups, although they are not exclusively within these areas.

DBC successfully delivered a 3-year Sport England funded project (Get Set Go Dacorum) which ended in September 2017. This project aimed to reduce inactivity across the borough and focussed primarily on underrepresented groups. The project engaged with over 3000 people during the 3 years it was delivered, the majority of which were either inactive or doing moderate activity prior to this.

However, there are many groups who do not engage in physical activity for various cultural, economic, personal or practical reasons. Within Dacorum there are a number of areas with high levels of multiple deprivation, within which there are a number of residents who belong to underrepresented groups, although they are not exclusively within these areas.

Our Commitment

We will develop and implement a series of targeted campaigns and actions to improve participation amongst demographic groups that typically report higher levels of physical inactivity. This will be built around five key areas:

- Low income Families
- Black and Minority Ethnic Groups
- People with disabilities
- Women and Girls
- Older Adults

To achieve this, we will:

- Identify how we can change/ influence people's attitudes, beliefs and perceptions towards physical activity
- Work with our Everyone Active to deliver a 'Sports Development and Outreach Plan' within Dacorum
- Work with partners such as Herts Sports Partnership (HSP) to actively source funding to support underrepresented groups to become more physically active
- Consult with those underrepresented groups, identifying needs and priorities surrounding the provision of sport and physical activity and remove barriers to entry which could affect them taking part in sport/ physical activity
- Work with the housing team to support residents in social housing
- Create resources that are available for the public which outline what is available within the borough and signpost them to these activities

Commitment 2: Working in partnership with clubs, National Governing Bodies (NGBs) and other key stakeholders

Current position

DBC works closely with a number of partners across the public, private and third sector.

Within Dacorum there are over 200 sports clubs, offering a huge variety of different sports to thousands of residents. The standard of sports clubs within the borough is high, both in terms of performance level and the community work they undertake. We also work closely with the HSP and local sports club representatives.

Our Commitment

Effective partnership working is integral in delivering this strategy. We want to encourage a collaborative approach with both local and national organisations.

This commitment seeks to further build upon the relationships the council has with voluntary and sporting organisations and clubs, whilst also forging new partnerships, sharing ideas and experiences to develop a stronger offer to the local community.

To achieve this, we will:

- Work with key partners to support the delivery of this strategy and ensure buy in to delivering the 5 commitments i.e. signed commitment to the strategy
- Hold regular meetings with local clubs and Everyone Active to identify actions and opportunities to support growth in club membership and usage
- Work closely with Dacorum School Sports Network to support development of activity within local schools
- Identify opportunities for funding and sponsorship of local clubs from Sporting NGBs and other public, private and voluntary sector organisations
- Liaise with NGBs and HSP using their specialist knowledge and revenue to support growth in Dacorum
- Ensure DBC leisure management contracts are well managed to deliver a great service to members and casual users

Commitment 3: Ensure that we provide high quality sporting infrastructure, which can be accessed by all members of the community

Current position

Dacorum has many sporting facilities and open spaces which can be used to support residents in becoming more physically active. In 2016 we conducted an audit and assessment of our sports facilities within Dacorum which aimed to provide evidence of the current condition of the council's portfolio and future community need within Dacorum. DBC have since committed to build a brand new athletics track as well as significantly invest into refurbishing the Tring facility.

Facility	Number
Athletics Track	1
Football Pitches (Grass)	155
Artificial Grass Pitches	7
Netball Courts	71
Squash Courts	23
Golf Courses	4
Cricket Pitches	40
Rugby Pitches	37
Swimming Pools	21
Sports Halls	36

Source: Dacorum Borough Council Outdoor Facilities Study September 2014 and Strategic Review of the sports and leisure facilities in Dacorum 2016

Our Commitment

This commitment seeks to identify ways in which Dacorum can better utilise its existing facilities, support the growth of local sports clubs and create a more active environment for the community to thrive.

To achieve this, we will:

- Create an environment in which being physically active is made easier for residents
- Better utilise and promote how parks and open spaces are used for recreation as well as sports facilities
- Work with clubs to explore management options to bring facilities onsite
- Set out an annual budget for capital works investment in new and existing sports and leisure facilities within the borough
- Explore the use of section 106 funding to support use of green space for sport and physical activity.

Commitment 4: Developing sporting provision and activity at a local, regional, and national level

Current position

Whilst we understand the importance of getting those people who are inactive active, it is important we do not neglect those that are already active.

Dacorum has produced high quality sportsmen and women, which is something we are keen to continue to support. The annual Dacorum Sports Awards recognises the great work all sporting people, clubs and organisations do in Dacorum each year.

Our Commitment

Becoming complacent about this group could lead to them losing their active habit when they experience life changes. Life changes are unavoidable, but what is important is that we are prepared to support people through these changes and ensure we offer an activity that will continue to meet their needs. In conjunction with this, the best way to ensure sporting provision is by supporting our local clubs and teams, aiding them in delivering a high quality experience to their members.

This commitment seeks to create opportunity and alternative routes to remaining active for already active residents, should their circumstances / needs change. It also seeks to support local clubs in delivering a quality service which will help retain existing members as well as improve the opportunity of recruiting new ones. Furthermore, it will focus on progression and development routes for young aspiring sportsmen and women as well as talent identification.

To achieve this, we will:

- Work with the Everyone Active and clubs to support residents who can no longer partake in particular sports/ activities due to a personal change in circumstances
- Provide a signposting tool to support residents to find local groups and clubs
- Support recruitment and retention of volunteers in sport and physical activity
- Work with local clubs to support young sportsmen and women in identifying talent pathways
- Allocate a proportion of community grant funding to be used to support provision for active people.

Commitment 5: Increase the profile and reputation of sports in Dacorum

Current position

Over the years Dacorum has played a role in some large national sporting events, such as the Tour of Britain, and has also produced some notable world class sports men and women, most recently Max Whitlock (Rio 2016 double Olympic gold medal winning gymnast) and Jessica Stretton (Rio 2016 Paralympic gold medallist in Archery).

Our Commitment

We want to put Dacorum on the radar and to make it a location capable of hosting major sporting events. We also want people to think of Dacorum as an innovative borough where sporting associations can trial new projects and approaches to sport. We have a proven track record of delivering large events successfully, have a strong infrastructure and a number of high quality facilities. With a number of professional sportspeople and top sports teams, we believe we can further enhance our reputation in elite sports development by showcasing and supporting talented individuals and teams.

To achieve this, we will:

- Work closely with local and regional clubs, Everyone Active, HSP and Sport England to showcase the quality of sport within Dacorum
- Promote Dacorum to NGBs encouraging them to view Dacorum as a hub for sport
- Look to host large scale events in Dacorum
- Continue to produce and promote elite sportspeople and sports clubs from Dacorum

Putting Commitments into Action

There is a fantastic opportunity for DBC to develop sport and physical activity in Dacorum. The power and influence that sport and physical activity can have on people's lives and the positive impact it can have on entire communities is the exact purpose for developing this strategy.

The Council will prepare an annual action plan in collaboration with partners, both internal and external, such as Planning, HSP, and Everyone Active, which aligns to this strategy. In this plan, we will set out a series of more specific actions which will take place throughout the year, taking the strategy forward.

Monitoring

A sport and physical activity board will be created consisting of both internal and external stakeholders. It will meet at least twice a year to discuss progress on the outcomes of the strategy and the annual plan.

Targets

Setting measurable targets is a key part of being able to evaluate the success of our actions and interventions. In those areas where we can use quantifiable targets it is important that we do so as this will be a valuable measure of progress for the strategy.

Both Public Health (Health Profile Tool) and Sport England (Local Profile Tool & Active Lives Survey) also provide useful information about the profile of sport and physical activity across Dacorum which can be used as a success measure.

