

## Active lifestyle including physical activity, sport, parks and leisure

(See also 'Obesity' data pack)

### Headlines

There is an increasing wealth of data confirming the significant social and economic benefits of greater physical activity. Physical activity, sport and active recreation contribute to the health, wellbeing and self-esteem of individuals, provide fun and enjoyment, and support community development, civic pride and the cultural life of the city. The Chief Medical Officer has stated that 'physical activity is the best buy in public health'.<sup>1</sup>

Data provided through Sport England shows that:

- 22.4% of adults in Leeds take part in sport and active recreation compared to the national average of 22%. However, 45.2% of adults do no sport or active recreation at all.
- 56.7% of adult residents in the city want to start playing sport or do a bit more.
- Significant inequalities in participation persist, especially in deprived areas.
- 91% of school pupils participated in two hours of physical education and sport during the 2007/08 academic year.
- The Physical Education, School Sport and Youth Participation (PESSYP) Survey (2008/2009) showed that only 42% of Leeds pupils participated in three hours each week, compared to the national figure of 50%.
- Joint clinical and physical activity intervention projects such as Heart Watch have clearly demonstrated how health can be improved through joint health and sport interventions.
- The health cost of inactivity in Leeds is at least £10.1 million per year.

### Health cost of sporting inactivity

Geography	The health cost of sporting inactivity	
	Cost	Cost per 100,000 pop
Leeds	£10,189,600	£1,405,352
Yorkshire and the Humber	£77,274,050	£1,526,968
England	£764,661,980	£1,531,401

Source: Department of Health, 'Be Active, Be Healthy', 2006/07

### Why is this important?

Regular physical activity of a moderate intensity as recommended by the Chief Medical Officer can bring about major health benefits by:<sup>2</sup>

- Reducing the risk of coronary heart disease, hypertension, stroke, diabetes and some cancers, especially colon cancer and breast cancer.
- Reducing the risk of death and ill health for those who are overweight or obese, helping to avoid weight gain and maintain weight loss.
- In childhood, promoting healthy growth and development, maintenance of energy balance, psychological wellbeing and social interaction.
- Reducing the risk of depression and dementia in later life and relieving clinical depression. Regular physical activity can be as successful as psychotherapy or medication, particularly in the longer term. More generally, physical activity helps people feel better in and about themselves, as well as helping to combat the effects of stress.

### Story for Leeds

Partners within Leeds, including Leeds City Council, NHS Leeds, the two Leeds universities and the third sector, are committed to increasing physical activity in the city. The Sport Leeds partnership published its first strategy in 2002 and works to deliver improved outcomes in the city through sport and active recreation.

<sup>1</sup> Department of Health (2011) 'Start Active, Stay Active'.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Health (2011) 'Start Active, Stay Active'.

A broad range of physical activity is available for people to get involved in: active living activity such as walking groups; active recreation such as exercise classes in community venues and private and council run gyms; and active sport including competitive sporting activity. Swimming remains the most active participation sport in the city.

than 100,000 employees.

Leeds has some of the best parks and green spaces in England so there are fantastic opportunities to get people active outdoors. The largest parks in the city are Roundhay, Temple Newsam, Middleton, Golden Acre, Lotherton Hall and Kirkstall Abbey.

The most popular parks measured by volume of visits per annum (in order) are Roundhay Park, Woodhouse Moor, Temple Newsam, Pudsey and Horsforth Hall ('A Parks and Green Space Strategy for Leeds', 2009).

One way of supporting people to lead an active lifestyle is by promoting active travel (walking and cycling) for everyday journeys. This might mean cycling to work, walking the children to school or simply walking to the shops instead of taking the car. Improving active travel is a key policy objective and recommendation in 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives' (the Marmot Review, 2010).

The economic benefits of active travel range from improved access to employment to reduced absenteeism in a healthier workforce. In Leeds there are many initiatives promoting active travel and road safety across the community. As part of the West Yorkshire Local Transport Plan, Leeds are investing in a new Core Cycle Network (see map in 'Outdoor spaces' below) and cycle skills training across schools and workplaces. All schools in Leeds have a travel plan with targets to increase walking and cycling on the journey to school. Over 100 organisations are members of the West Yorkshire Travel Plan Network promoting active travel to more

Whatever their current activity level, the people of Leeds need the opportunity to become more active through being able to access activities that are right for them.

Providing a much more progressive menu of available activity will help people to go from doing nothing to being and competing with the best, if that is what they want.

Which groups are most affected by this issue?

Research suggests that:

- Men are significantly more likely than women to participate in sport and active recreation.
- People from black, Asian or other black and minority ethnic communities are far less likely than white people to be active in their leisure time.
- People with a long term illness or disability are significantly less active than those without a disability.

## Adult (16+) participation in sport and active recreation (formerly NI8) by year, duration and gender

Indicator	Year	Leeds			Yorkshire and the Humber			England		
		All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All	Male	Female
0 days / 0x30	2005/06	49.9%	42.2%	56.9%	52.3%	46.8%	57.3%	50.0%	45.1%	54.6%
	2008/10	45.2%	40.0%	50.2%	48.9%	43.2%	54.5%	47.8%	42.3%	53.1%
1-3 days	2005/06	9.1%	11.6%	6.9%	8.2%	9.3%	7.2%	8.8%	9.5%	8.1%
	2008/10	9.1%	10.2%	7.9%	8.5%	9.3%	7.7%	9.0%	9.7%	8.4%
4-7 days / 1x30	2005/06	12.7%	13.1%	12.4%	11.5%	12.1%	11.1%	12.0%	12.8%	11.3%
	2008/10	13.9%	13.9%	13.6%	12.2%	12.7%	11.7%	12.6%	13.5%	11.8%
8-11 days / 2x30	2005/06	7.7%	9.0%	6.6%	7.6%	8.6%	6.7%	8.0%	8.7%	7.3%
	2008/10	9.4%	11.9%	6.9%	8.2%	9.1%	7.3%	8.5%	9.4%	7.7%
12-19 days / 3x30	2005/06	10.4%	12.0%	8.9%	9.3%	10.6%	8.0%	9.6%	10.9%	8.4%
	2008/10	11.9%	12.9%	10.9%	10.7%	12.0%	9.4%	10.7%	12.2%	9.2%
12+ days / 3x30 - NI8	2005/06	20.6%	24.2%	17.4%	20.4%	23.2%	17.7%	21.3%	24.0%	18.7%
	2008/10	22.5%	23.8%	21.1%	22.2%	25.8%	18.8%	22.0%	25.1%	19.0%
20+ days / 5x30	2005/06	10.3%	12.2%	8.5%	11.1%	12.6%	9.7%	11.7%	13.1%	10.3%
	2008/10	10.6%	10.9%	10.3%	11.6%	13.8%	9.4%	11.3%	12.9%	9.8%

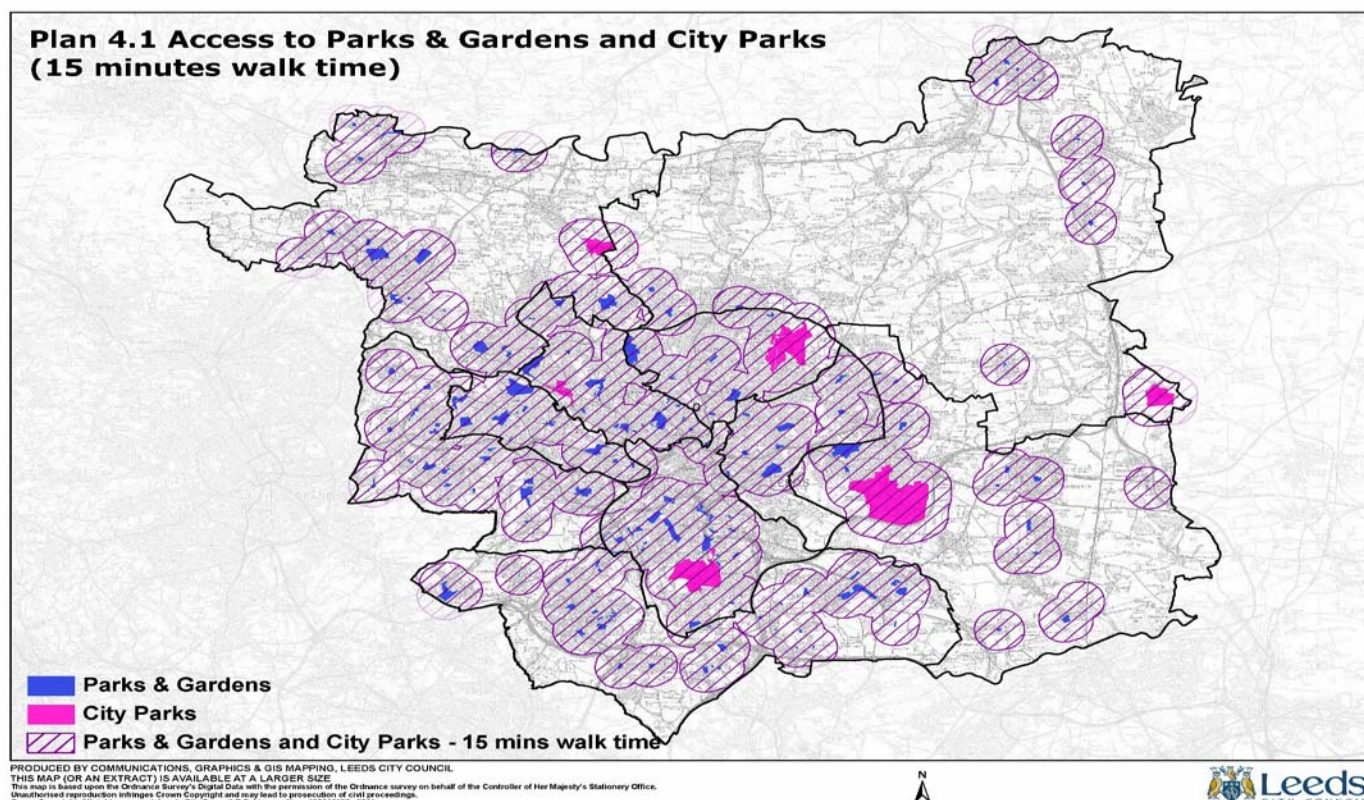
Source: Active People Survey, 2005/06 (APS1), 2008/10 (APS3/4) or 2009/10 (APS4) if LA sample is boosted. The most recent data for this local authority is from the APS3/4 data set.

### Views of local people\*

\* An initial selection of surveys and focus group outputs were gathered to enable inclusion of public opinion data within the JSNA. Please note as this is only an initial selection. It is not a comprehensive data set and therefore may not be representative of the whole population of Leeds. This part of the data set is under development for future versions of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

assessment of key assets in the city to support physical activity. This section summarises some of the key findings on opportunities for physical activity and sport (indoors and outdoors) in Leeds and local people's views on the quality of provision.

Planning Policy Guidance 17 (PPG17) 'Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation' undertook a needs



## Outdoor spaces

The Open Spaces Survey showed that 80% of respondents use open spaces and gardens at least once a month. There is also regular usage of natural areas, amenity areas and play areas for children.

Reasons for non usage include:

Lack of facilities	23%
Lack of time	43%
Distance from home	20%
Lack of money	14%
Poor quality of facilities	19%
Not aware of facilities	9%

Residents are particularly keen for the city centre to have more:

- 'green' areas
- facilities for children and young people
- indoor sports provision.

Respondents to the Open Spaces Survey showed mixed attitudes regarding the quality of play areas for children. Over half of respondents considered the quality of play areas to be average or above; 29% of household survey respondents and 21% of on-street survey respondents considered the quality to be poor/very poor.

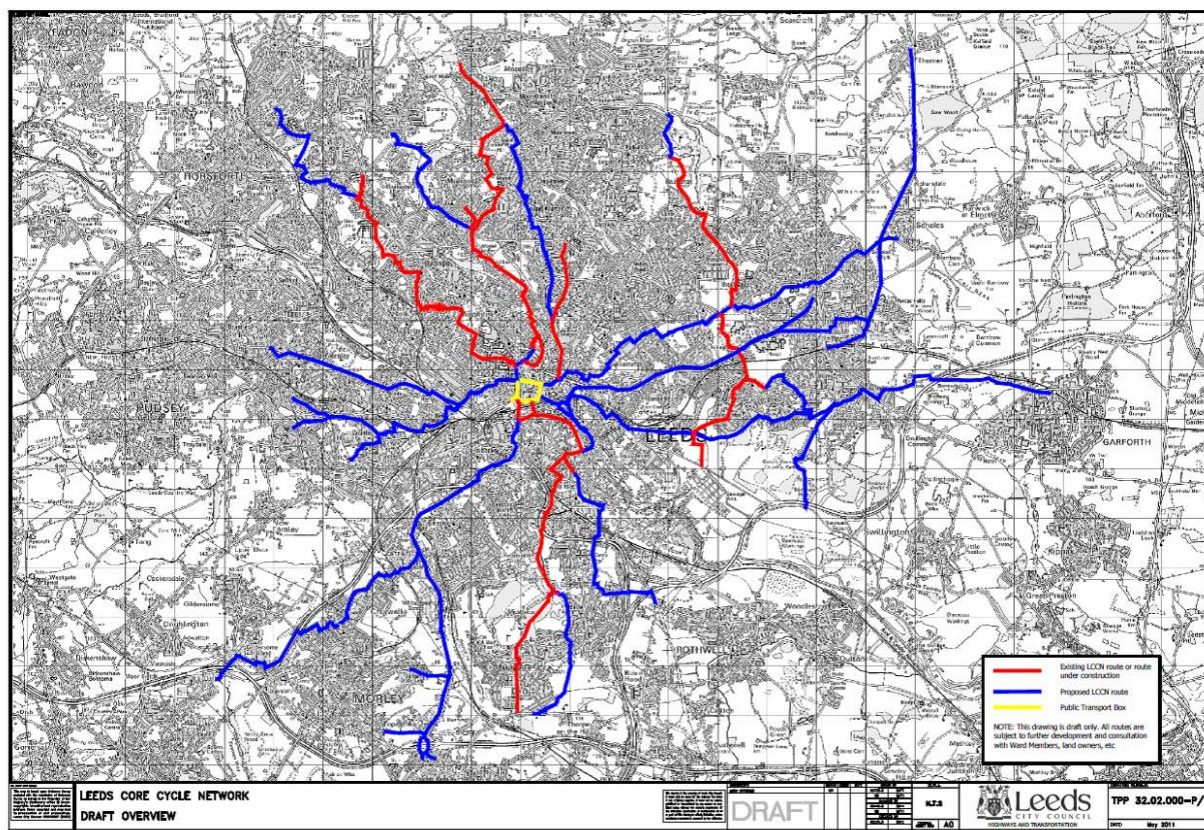
The main issues identified were:

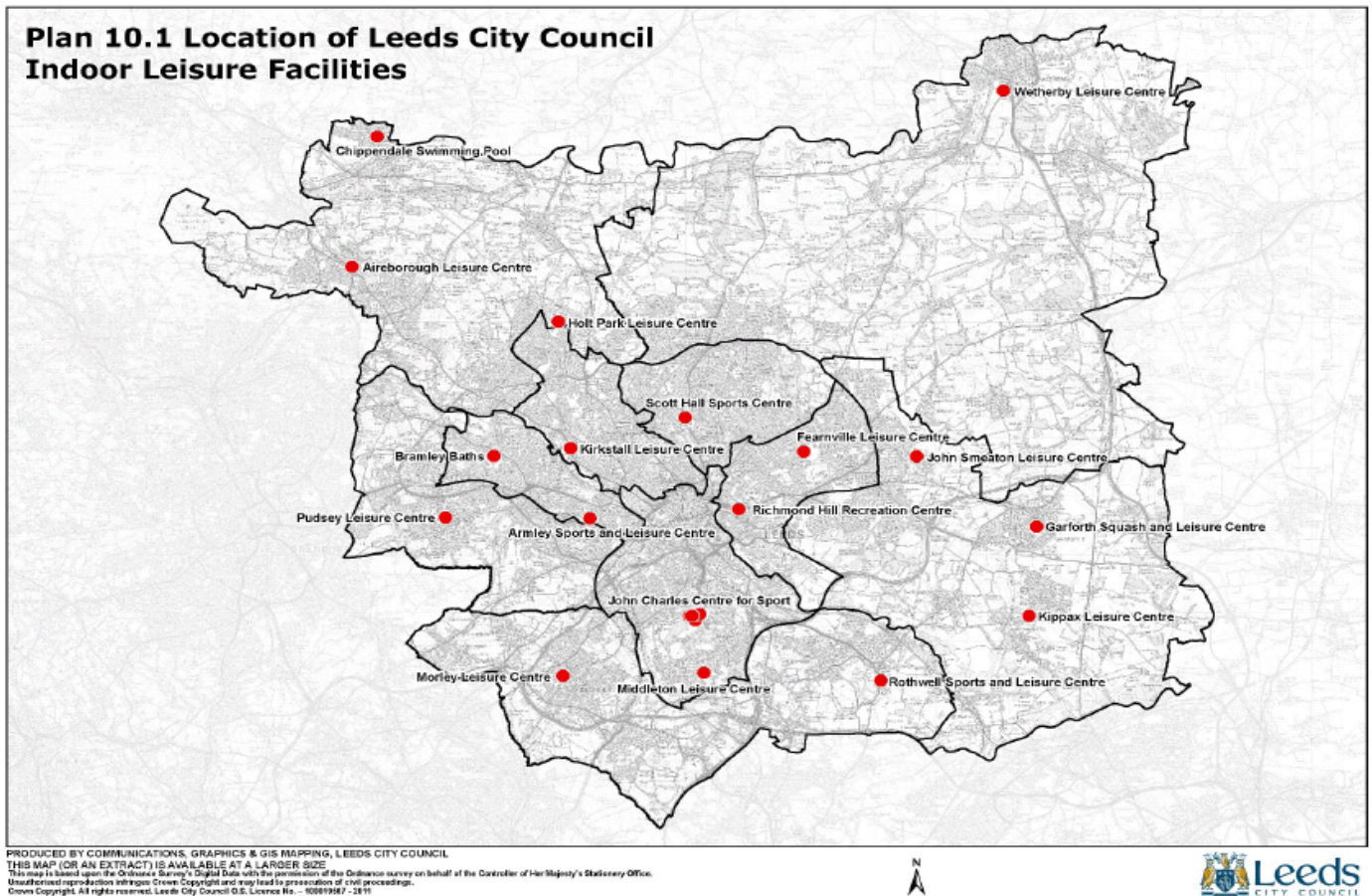
- vandalism/graffiti
- misuse of the site
- safety/age of equipment
- maintenance of equipment
- litter.

Respondents occasionally raised the issue of safety/fear of crime.

67% of household survey respondents and 37% of on-street survey respondents didn't think there were enough teenage facilities.

## LEEDS CORE CYCLE NETWORK





Number of Leeds sports facilities compared with nearest neighbours

Facilities	Leeds	Sheffield	Bristol	Birmingham	Bradford
Athletics tracks	3	2	1	5	2
Golf	41	13	4	17	23
Grass pitches	524	241	170	348	263
Health & fitness suite	92	59	44	108	52
Ice rinks	0	2	1	0	1
Indoor bowls	1	1	2	2	0
Indoor tennis centre	7	4	2	4	2
Ski slopes	0	5	0	4	0
Sports hall	130	80	60	199	81
Squash courts	23	8	10	17	10
Swimming pool	54	27	25	66	28
Artificial grass pitch	22	17	19	25	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>897</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>795</b>	<b>479</b>
<b>Population (000s)</b>	<b>631.9</b>	<b>441.0</b>	<b>341.6</b>	<b>789.1</b>	<b>390.0</b>

Source: Active Places Power, Jan 2011. Population Data: ONS Annual Population Survey 2010

### Sports facilities

In terms of provision of dedicated sports facilities, Leeds compares well with its nearest neighbours (comparable socio-economic conditions and / or spatial location) for both the number of sports facilities and the ratio per 1,000 population.

Research has found that the condition of sports facilities is one key enabler of participation. Furthermore, new and modern facilities in good condition are more attractive to communities if they are located appropriately.

Leeds residents were asked about provision of a variety of sports facilities. 51% of household survey respondents and 35% of on-street survey respondents reported using indoor sports facilities once a month or more

Provision was considered adequate for:

- sports halls
- grass pitches
- indoor bowls
- bowling greens
- private gyms
- golf courses
- racquet sports.

Some respondents said they would like to see more:

- tennis courts
- swimming pools
- ice rinks
- council run gym facilities.

Current provision of tennis courts was considered to be very run down. However a significant investment of £265,000 has recently gone into a number of tennis courts in the city.

Deficiencies in the quality and quantity of sports facilities in deprived areas are apparent. If health outcomes in Leeds are to be improved this must be addressed as part of a holistic approach to health. The 'Vision for Council Leisure Centres' reviewed local authority provision and set out a road map for improvement. To maximise the success of leisure centres in terms of both financial performance and community outcomes across all areas of the city, leisure centres need to be located:

- in town and district centres
- by main arterial roads
- adjacent to complementary facilities, such as high schools.

The previous approach of locating facilities directly in the most deprived communities has produced only small gains in terms of participation of those living in the 3% most

deprived super output areas; overall outcomes relative to the 10 and 20% most deprived areas aren't significant. The overarching performance of such facilities is poor, including the key priority of 'increasing participation'. The approach in future must be to locate facilities in deprived areas that are accessible to the whole community, of a reasonable quality and affordable to those most in need. Sport development and community approaches can improve outcomes significantly.

Household survey respondents were asked to comment on their perception of the quality of indoor and outdoor sports facilities as a whole. Indoor sports facilities were perceived to be of better quality than outdoor sports facilities:

- 68% of respondents considered the quality of indoor sports facilities to be average or good/very good; 18% considered them to be poor/very poor.
- 55% of respondents considered the quality of outdoor sports facilities to be average or good/very good; 25% described them as poor/very poor.

Safety/fear of crime can sometimes be an issue at both indoor and outdoor sports facilities. Other issues identified were:

- Indoor sports facilities: poor quality changing facilities, vandalism/graffiti, safety/age of equipment, litter, cost of swimming or sports classes.
- Outdoor sports facilities: vandalism and graffiti, dog fouling, litter, a lack of changing facilities, safety/age of equipment.

The following aspects were considered important in providing good quality indoor and outdoor sports facilities:

- Indoor sports facilities: cleanliness, cost, range of activities, maintenance, welcoming staff.

- Outdoor sports facilities: clean and litter free, well kept grass, toilets, parking, provision of changing facilities.

Improved access to swimming facilities for disabled residents was also highlighted as an issue by a couple of people in focus groups who felt access was 'not very good'. In addition the report 'Quality of Swimming Provision 2010 – Aquatics Research' highlights that changing facilities continue to be the most frequently suggested area for improvement, especially the cleanliness of changing areas and adjoining toilets.

Café provision is another area that customers continue to suggest as a way of improving facilities, either the introduction of a café or provision of healthier options within existing cafés.

The majority of respondents (over 70%) expected to reach outdoor facilities by walking for 10 minutes compared to indoor sports facilities where people expected to walk or drive.

It's important to note that PPG17 made a generic assessment of *all* sport facilities in the city. With regards to Leeds City Council run facilities, the Citizens' Panel Survey that supported the 'Vision for Council Leisure Centres' found that only 28% of respondents felt that the Council's leisure centres were of high or reasonable quality; 43% thought they were of average standard and 29% thought they were of low or very low quality. These figures are clearly a cause for concern.

### Considerations for the future

Raising levels of physical activity is fundamentally important to improving health and wellbeing, particularly for those who are defined as 'inactive' – that is, people who participate in less than one hour of physical activity per week.

'Taking the Lead', the strategy for sport and active recreation in Leeds 2006–2012, identified the following priorities:

- Increase participation levels across all sections of the community
- Ensure equality of opportunity and narrow the participation gap in sport and active recreation between different sectors and groups within the community
- Ensure increased awareness of the opportunities and benefits of sport and active recreation
- Ensure that the health benefits of sport and active recreation are recognised and developed.

Sport Leeds will publish its Olympics Legacy Action Plan during 2012 and in the latter part of the year its new strategy. To tackle health inequalities and deliver on the 'Best city... for health and wellbeing' the following key areas will need to be taken forward:

- Continue to increase participation, especially amongst sedentary groups, those less likely to participate, those with poor health and those likely to develop poor health.
- Work within the National Planning Policy Framework to continue to establish community need for indoor and outdoor sport facilities and green space.
- Continue to improve the quality, quantity and accessibility of facilities in the city in line with community needs and the growing population.
- Continue to develop other less formal areas of physical activity such as active travel, walking and cycling.
- Develop better intelligence in order to support strategic development and focus resources on the communities and individuals that need the most support to develop active and healthy lifestyles.
- Integrate physical activity related outcomes in local strategies, service planning, commissioning and external funding approaches.



- Continue to work in strong partnerships such as Sport Leeds to deliver improved outcomes in this area.

It is essential that current partners work closely together with a joint aim of increasing participation, not only for health benefits but also to achieve sporting excellence. The current population of Leeds shows a range of physical activity levels and people need to be able to access activity that is right for them. This means that we need to provide a much more progressive menu of activity for our residents.

The 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games offer a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity to inspire the nation to become more active and Leeds must ensure its own legacy of enhanced participation in sport and activity.