

**Okehampton Town Council
Parks Committee Meeting 16th November 2020
Meeting Report**

Date:	5 th November 2020
Name:	Emma James, Town Clerk
Subject:	South Hams and West Devon Playing Pitch Strategy

The following correspondence and questionnaire has been received from www.belap.co.uk to which the Committee is requested to resolve a response. Draft responses have compiled by Cllr Marsh and the Clerk for consideration:

As you may know, South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council are currently preparing a Playing Pitch Strategy (PPS), assessing whether there is sufficient provision throughout their areas for the sports of football, cricket, rugby, hockey and other pitch sports (such as rounders) into the foreseeable future. This study will help to improve planning for and investment in these sports and it is being overseen by a small Steering Group of local authority officers and national governing bodies of sport. Despite the uncertainty of the current situation, we are hoping to complete it by late Spring 2021.

We are writing to introduce ourselves as the consultants carrying out this work and to arrange a time when we could discuss with you the projects and aspirations involving playing fields within Okehampton. We have carried out similar work in the area in the past and are based in Newton Abbot. Jon Parkinson (Specialist (Assets – Leisure/Recreation at the Council and Project Manager for the Strategy) and Alexis Huggins (Specialist – Place Making; Open Space, Sport and Recreation) have helpfully updated us, and we would like to follow this up by speaking to you directly.

We are currently visiting all cricket sites in the area, carrying out non-technical quality assessments, in line with advice from the ECB and Devon Cricket. (There is no need for anyone from the clubs to be present at these assessments as all clubs will be consulted via a questionnaire and/or telephone call over the next few weeks.) Winter pitch sport sites will be assessed later in the year, from early November onwards.

1 Please state if you are responsible for the bookings of any football, cricket, rugby or hockey facilities in your town and if so, give brief details of the clubs/teams who book them and when they play (if known). (We will have some of this information from other sources)

No, these are booked through other organisations such as OCRA and Okehampton College

2 If you are responsible for the maintenance of any of the grass playing pitches, please briefly state which, and set out the maintenance specification (e.g. frequency of grass cutting, seeding, aeration, weed killing and application of fertiliser, if known)

The Council does not maintain any playing pitches, although it does maintain the recreation field in Simmons Park but this is not a dedicated pitch for any sport.

3 Are there any concerns around the quality and/or maintenance of your playing pitches and their associated changing facilities in your town?

None known

4 Are you aware of any groups in your community which are not catered for by the current provision of playing pitches?

Not that the Council is aware of

5 Do you receive requests for the use of playing pitch facilities which you cannot accommodate?

The football club sometimes use Simmons Park recreation field, but this is primarily a field for the use of the general public

6 Please list any current aspirations and/or proposals for new or improved grass and/or artificial grass playing pitches in your town and if possible, state the stage reached in planning/funding etc.

The new St James' primary school is looking to install artificial grass pitches the Council understands

7 What other/particular issues within your town would you like the strategy to address and highlight? (e.g. any deficiencies in provision, improvements, cost of maintenance, access to school facilities, the ongoing effects of Covid-19 etc.)

The lack of available green space within the town boundary means there is little scope for the provision of new facilities near the centre of the town