

# Facilities for Sport and Physical Activity in Keighley



**Strengthening the Plan – Forming the Strategy**

**Brief for Consultancy Study**

**December 2005**

**sportKeighley**

**Keighley  
Town Council**

## Facilities for Sport & Physical Activity in Keighley Strengthening the Plan – Forming the Strategy

### 1. Introduction

In 2002 a Physical Activity Action Plan (PAAP) was produced by the *sportKeighley* partnership relating to all aspects of sport and physical activity in the district of Keighley in West Yorkshire.

The introduction to the PAAP contained the following section:

“The *sportKeighley* Physical Activity Action Plan (PAAP) has arisen as a result of input from people and organisations in the town of Keighley. It is a structure plan that is designed to enable simple, straightforward and cost-effective access to participation in physical activities of all kinds (sport, dance, walking, etc.) in the town and surrounding villages.

Such access is for *everyone*: young, middle-aged and older; males and females; residents, visitors and tourists; able and less able; talented and just plain enthusiastic; religious and non-religious; private sector, public sector, voluntary sector and volunteers’ sector; professional and amateur.

The premise of the plan is simple and is as follows:

***“It is a good thing for all people to be involved in some form of physical activity throughout their lives.”***

In order to access opportunities for such activity, there are a number of key requirements for all age groups:

- Information as to what is going on, where and when;
- Suitable facilities for activities to take place;
- Where appropriate, suitable leadership or coaching at those facilities;
- Means of travelling to the facilities;
- Ability to be able to afford to access the activities.

A further basic premise of the *sportKeighley* initiative in general is:

***“You don’t have to travel far to take part in sport and physical activity, even at the highest level.”***

There is inherent in the UK the attitude that somehow we must travel “somewhere else” to access facilities and/or expertise in order to satisfy our needs. The PAAP suggests that we look first at what we have in Keighley, create the opportunities to use what we have to its fullest extent, and then to use that success to generate new ideas, facilities and expertise in the town. This enables the strategy to work well with current agendas in healthcare, education, regeneration and sustainability.

The PAAP is designed to be implemented, not put on a shelf. It is a live document, it is not cast in stone, but it does provide a focus and a framework for the wide variety of activity that does (and that might in the future) go on in Keighley.”

A cornerstone of the *sportKeighley* PAAP is its starting point, that is, the recognition that if all available facilities are indeed made fully available (including schools, community centres, open spaces, etc.) then it is clear that Keighley is indeed blessed with a wide range of facilities.

### 2. The Need for a Strategic Multi-Partner Approach

Despite the foregoing, there are many issues that have arisen, particularly in relation to facility management, availability, use and access, that suggest that a further strategic study of future courses of action by an independent source would be of immense value.

The overarching requirement is to move from a situation where existing facilities are used by a section of the community during certain times for a certain price, to a situation where a greater proportion of the community make use of the facilities for an extended period of time at a lower unit cost per person, without threatening the viability of the facilities, either operationally or in terms of maintenance/repair/investment.

The factors that are relevant to this issue are as follows:

1. The need to have a clear overall cross-sectoral facilities strategy in order to inform and help to activate other strategic plans and investment in the area, most notably the Airedale Masterplan but also Bradford Council's PPG17 and future spatial and planning strategies and Bradford Council's Physical Activity and Sport Strategy. Other strategies that will be affected/will affect this include transport and education.
2. The need to have a clear overall cross-sectoral facilities strategy in order to focus key activities in the area which will allow the development of clear points of reference, co-ordinated grant fund bids, reference for private developers, reinforcement of investment streams and much clearer activity pathways, especially for those who are not currently engaged in sport or physical activity. Examples are as follows:

Marley (Council-owned):	Soccer Focus
Utley (Council/College/RUFC):	Rugby Focus
Greenhead (Council/School):	Athletics & Disability Sport Focus
Leisure Centre (Council):	Swimming Focus
Holy Family Sports Hall (School):	Basketball and Netball Focus
Oakbank (School):	Cycling, Hockey & Table Tennis Focus

It is emphasised that the above list is not exhaustive and that the activities refer to focuses: it does not mean that venues will not host other activities.

3. The need to effectively open, manage and market existing facilities so that maximum usage can be obtained. Many facilities that represent considerable capital investment in the Keighley district are closed in evenings, at weekends or during school holidays due in part to a lack of funding and/or expertise in their management and control. There also needs to be a clear strategic backing for the opening up of facilities to counter restrictive planning conditions and "secure-by-exclusion" policies often promoted by the Police in planning situations.
4. The need to bring into effective use facilities that are currently not utilised or being considered for redevelopment for alternative uses. The most notable of these is Bronte School but also include Damside Car Park and various other open spaces and link routes.
5. The need to understand Bradford Council's future role in the provision and management of facilities and for development plans in that sector to be aligned with the expressed needs and requirements of the community. This

includes the need for clarification of shared facilities policies. The potential for privatised management of facilities under the current AMP also needs to be identified, as does the need to very quickly establish a position whereby the (multi-sectoral) community is understood to be a key stakeholder in such discussions.

6. The need to understand the role of the developing “Extended Schools” initiative and network in supporting the requirements outlined above. There appears to be confusion as to whether the initiative refers solely to the extension of opening and facilities to pupils at the specific school, or, as is interpreted by the *sportKeighley* partnership, as opening a wide range of facilities and opportunities for the whole community. The potential impact of the recent Education White Paper on how schools relate to each other (ie, competition) also needs to be assessed as it is perceived that a risk arises that schools will seek investment in their “own” sites at the expense of other sites, possibly running counter to the more strategic “common good” as promoted by the *sportKeighley* initiative.
7. The need to very quickly establish a position whereby the (multi-sectoral) community is understood to be a key stakeholder in the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme and has a clear input into design and also management expectations and charging policies of the resulting schools. BSF represents one of the biggest investments in facilities in the area and an opportunity that will not be repeated for the next quarter of a century at least.

### 3. The Brief

- To investigate points 1 to 7 above by means of interview of key stakeholders and use of already-available information;
- To compare the findings with the *sportKeighley* PAAP and to make recommendations for future actions with respect to this;
- To comment on the strategic use of facilities as described in (2) above and make suggestions for further focusing and the potential role of facility focus/steering groups.
- To comment on the options and viability of the *sportKeighley* “Kafe” initiative in addressing the issues in (3) above, including school facilities.
- To comment on the demand for use of existing facilities, new facilities or the opening of existing, under-utilised facilities, with specific reference to Bronte School and Damside.
- To make recommendations for the format of stakeholder groups in future Extended Schools/BSF/AMP programmes.

### 4. Required Output

A report, referenced to the *sportKeighley* PAAP and other key strategy documents, that can be easily copied and distributed in paper form and electronically and displayed for reference on relevant websites.

### 5. Timescale

To be complete by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2006. Draft to be submitted 5 days previously.

### 6. Progress Monitoring

By email and telephone throughout the study period.

### 7. Commissioning Bodies

Keighley Town Council and sK(UK) Ltd on behalf of the *sportKeighley* Partnership.

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