

## **Issue – meeting the everyday needs of residents for leisure and recreation**

The Issues and Options document provides the overall definition and background to this particular issue. The identification of this issue as an essential part of the Core Strategy is justified by key evidence set out in first table below.

### **Desirable outcomes by 2026**

The Community Plan identifies leisure and culture as a priority area for the district. The Community Plan sets out clear aims about where the District wants to be in 2015:

- Local people will be living more active lifestyles helping both the individual and community
- Local people will be aware of and able to access local and regional leisure and cultural opportunities.
- Local people, voluntary sector and local authorities will recognise the importance of leisure and culture in helping to bring communities together and fulfil individual potential.
- The area will fully benefit from the international profile of Shakespeare and the very broad cultural diversity of the district. Membership of local clubs and other organisations will continue to grow especially by young people as a result of improved school/ education sector links with clubs.

The emphasis can be seen to be less on the provision of facilities and more on getting the full value out of opportunities by making sure that people can access the facilities that exist, that involvement results in improved community ties, and that young people are involved in clubs. This links closely to aims related to encouraging walking and cycling, strengthening communities and improving transport and access to facilities.

Discussions with the Environment Agency and Natural England have highlighted other significant opportunities for overlapping benefits between public open space and green travel/ recreation networks, nature corridors for wildlife, and provision of Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes.

The Stratford District Council Corporate Strategy 2008-12 also seeks to encourage healthier lifestyles by extending opportunities for sport and active recreation. It aims to provide a high quality environment by protecting and maintaining our current green spaces and provide new public open spaces through delivery of the Local Plan proposals.

### **Policy context**

## **National**

National guidance set out in PPG17 Planning for Open Space, Sport and Recreation sets out how planning for everyday leisure can contribute to a broad range of government objectives including raising the quality of life and health of local residents, promoting social inclusion and community cohesion, and promoting more sustainable development by ensuring people can access facilities by foot, cycle or public transport.

Local Authorities should determine the needs of the District for open space and recreation facilities in terms of quantity, quality and accessibility and then set local standards. The current provision can then be assessed against these standards, and opportunities for improvement identified.

Open space, sport and recreational building and land should be preserved unless assessment shows that it is clearly surplus to requirements. Particular value and protection should be given to small open spaces in urban areas, community resources for formal and informal events, and wildlife and biodiversity areas. Existing facilities, open spaces, and right of way should be enhanced, and new ones created if needed.

## **Regional**

A draft Preferred Option document of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase Two Revision was published in Dec 2007. It highlights the importance of leisure facilities and green space in the context of climate change and creating sustainable communities. Green infrastructure should be encouraged because of its benefits for sport, providing sustainable transport options, biodiversity and allowing wildlife migration, carbon sinks and mitigation of heat island effects (Policies SR1 &2). The RSS sets out general principles for location of development – town and city centres should serve as a focus for major leisure and cultural facilities which will draw large numbers of people (PA11). Market towns (approx 2 – 20,000 residents) and larger villages should play a role in providing a good range of everyday services, supported by good public transport access (PA12b). It is important to improve the range and quality of services available in rural services, although this can be achieved through innovative service delivery and siting of services in settlements accessible to a rural hinterland as well as retention and improved provision in rural communities (RR4).

Issue/Challenge	Current State	Trends	Source of Information
Meeting residents' everyday needs for leisure and recreation	<p>Stratford and all the main rural centres in the district except Henley-in-Arden have a deficit of children's play areas. Two thirds of Centres have a deficit of adult sport and recreation space.</p> <p>Not all existing open spaces are maintained to acceptable standards. Even where provision standards are met, certain types of open space are lacking in certain areas of the settlements.</p>	<p>Existing open space with leisure or amenity value is protected from development, therefore levels should not be decreasing.</p> <p>There are opportunities to improve provision through on-site and off-site required contributions from new development, although this will be in proportion to increased population.</p>	Open Space Audit of Stratford and the Main Rural Centres (SDC, 2005)
	<p>Protecting and improving village facilities is a frequent and prioritised theme in Parish Plans. Village halls are highly valued, with several parishes seeking to retain or improve their village hall (4, 2*) and 2 lacking an adequate meeting place.</p> <p>Communities are concerned that it is difficult for those without a car to access facilities and leisure activities, especially young people in the evenings.</p> <p>Some villages are lacking a space for children's play, sports, or village events. One larger settlement has some but would like more.</p>	<p>Communities are active in improving available facilities through Parish Plans and Grants.</p> <p>Many are seeking to provide more activities for young people and improve evening bus services. Several are seeking to improve existing sports fields and play areas.</p> <p>Many communities are working with the WCC on improvement of right of way through the Parish Pathways Partnership (P3)</p>	Main themes in Parish Plans from the Parish and Town Plans adopted by Stratford-on-Avon District Council up to Dec 2007
	In 2003 almost a quarter of		Citizen's panel on leisure facilities

	<p>residents (23%) had visited or participated in local leisure pursuits at least once a week. However, a further quarter (24%) had not visited/participated in local leisure pursuits in the last twelve months.</p> <p>The main barriers preventing respondents from visiting or participating in leisure pursuits locally were; time pressures (30%), being too expensive (29%) and a lack of interest (25%).</p>		(SDC, Dec 2003)
	<p>Leisure and culture was seen as a less important issue facing the District compared to other social issues such as housing, transport and local services. 27.9% felt it was important.</p>		Issues and Options consultation survey sent to random sample of residents (SDC May 2007)
	<p>71% of people in Stratford-upon-Avon rate physical activity as important. 65.8% take moderate physical activity at least 3 times a week (2005).</p>		2005 Quality of Life Survey Warwickshire County Council.
	<p>In a survey carried out by WCC in December 2003, 65% of citizens said that access to footpath networks has a big impact on their personal health and well-being.</p> <p>In 2002-4, 68.6% of the rights-of-way network in Stratford District was easy to use for the public.</p>	<p>The proportion of footpaths in the county which are "easy to use" is gradually increasing.</p> <p>The WCC Countryside Access Team hope to improve working relationship on large scale planning applications where there are right of way, in order to protect and improve the quality of rights of way possibly through planning gain.</p> <p>There is an identified opportunity to "develop a flagship trail between</p>	<p>Countryside Access and Right of Way Improvement Plan for Warwickshire 2006-16 (WCC Countryside Access Team) available at <a href="http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/rowip">www.warwickshire.gov.uk/rowip</a></p>

		Warwick and Stratford upon Avon along the River Avon for walkers and cyclists” (p.56) Actions have also been identified to relaunch existing section of the Avon Valley Way from Stratford to Marlcliff, and develop an information point, with toilets and car parking, in the Stratford District.	
--	--	--	--

The evidence base demonstrates that provision of recreational facilities and open space is important to quality of life (see opinion surveys). The Open Space audit demonstrates a lack of provision of open space in the larger settlements in the district. There is a lack of information on local residents’ needs for community and indoor recreation facilities, and how this relates to current provision (does Citizens Panel 2003) other than that residents would like to do more physical activity. Parish Plans indicate that there is a perceived need for improved community and recreation facilities in rural communities, although this is being addressed to some extent through small-scale community-led initiatives. There are opportunities to improve the rights of way network and its contribution to access to the countryside, leisure, sustainable tourism and sustainable travel.

### Analysis of public consultation on the Issues and Options stage

**Question 20: Is it important to improve leisure and cultural facilities in the District? If yes, are there specific schemes which you would like to see implemented?**

Answer to parent question	Comments made on question	Analysis of response
Of those who answered, 82% said yes, 18% said no.	District Council should play a key role in delivery of enhanced leisure and cultural facilities and the Trust welcome further dialogue with the Council. Use towpaths for walking, fishing, jogging, cycling and facilitate sailing, rowing and dog walking. Canal leisure should be developed as waterways in district are part of a substantial linked ring navigation. Would like to see boats accommodated off line. Incorporate extensions to waterways into development design. Local swimming pools and redevelopment of SDC leisure centre in better location.	The most noticeable theme was an emphasis on provision for young people (18 mentions). Also: Green Space and Nature

	<p>Low cost tickets to Royal Shakespeare theatre for residents of the district.  More urban greenspace, local nature reserves and not just 'dog emptying' circuits.  Including water based recreation and visitor accomodation.  Further evidence of a deficit is required including a recreation audit.  We support I&amp;O docs statement regarding value of promoting green infrastrucutre network through new development.  Maintain open spaces for informal recreation.  Focus on the young.  Should support new and existing cultural facilities and attractions as important to local residents and local economy.  This can be enhanced through mixed use schemes allowing for sustainable patterns of growth.  Greater access to sport  see question 36  People should pay for own leisure and culture to free money for more needy causes.  Cycleways and footpaths.  Not specifically  More leisure opportunities in local centres and less in larger centres. Giving money to parish councils and sports clubs utilises the power of volunteers.  Not let culture decline, don't permit developers to gain controll of town leisure facilities as brownfeild sites for new housing.  Funded leisure facilities.  Provide amateur arts grants, local cinema facilities. Swimming pools in areas with population greater than 4,000.  Cultural facilities best focussed at Stratford-upon-Avon but there is scope for promotion of country walks and long-distance footpaths. Are there opportunities for establishing new country parks?  Support village halls and youth clugs/groups. Community based clubs /societies. Rural cinema.  Back theatre re development and other non shakespeare related schemes.  Encourage and fund youth activities and mother and toddler groups.  Move away from focussing the main cultural activities on Stratford to the outer locations would be benefital.  Just about everything lacking inspite of shakespeare heritage.  Rural cinema scheme is a worthwhile initiative. Amateur touring theatres could be supported.  Specific building availability for local theatrical and cultural activities.  There should be policies for the provision of new community, cultural and leisure facilities e.g. open space, sports, youth and adult education, health, public services, to meet the needs of any new development. It is also important that the need for developer contributions to the infrastructure of cultural venues is identified and could lead to an SPD on 106 agreements to addresss cultural provision.  Theatres are important cultural assets providing jobs, skills and learning opportunities and the Core Strategy should aim to support the continued success of these venues. Theatres Thrust suggest that it is better to concentrate on providing extensive facilities in the larger settlements in the district.  Generally good, and the planning system is not likely to influence whether they change.  More youth provision, 3 nights a week minimum. A purpose build club for hard to reach youth. Enlarge</p>	<p>reserves (9 mentions)  Footpaths and Cycle paths or creation of country park areas, in rural and urban areas (6 mentions)  Swimming pools (6 mentions)  Increasing use of canals and towpaths (3 mentions)  Places to play sport (2 mentions)  Mobile libraries and cinemas (1 mention)</p> <p>Location:  The most popular approach was to place more emphasis on local community facilities in all settlements including villages (9 mentions) with the benefits of funding local community-led projects emphasised (6 mentions). While only one response, relating to theatre, said that facilities should be in Stratford town, 6 responses said that the larger settlements were the most appropriate place to locate leisure and cultural facilities.  2 suggested that a comprehensive audit of leisure provision and need should be undertaken to inform the approach.</p>
--	--	--

	<p>'ironman alcester' museum.</p> <p>Main facilities will have to be in main towns with better public transport. SUA lacks open space in larger housing estates. Should aim for all towns and large villages to have community hall able to host visiting shows, and local play area and sports field. Stratford Leisure Centre and Civic Hall need major refurbishment and possible expansion, leisure centre to include facilities for young people such as ice rink or bowling alley. Both should be retained within town boundary to avoid creating more car journeys. More youth facilities to keep youths off the street.</p> <p>Should support new and existing cultural facilities and attractions as important to local residents and local economy.</p> <p>A leisure scheme at Long Marston.</p> <p>Need to support new and existing facilities and attractions as these are important to residents and to local economy. Existing leisure and cultural activities at Long Marston Airfield should be improved and expanded.</p> <p>Stratford Canal has potential for greater use. Provision of additional mooring/ mooring basin would allow sustainable access for tourist attractions and holiday location with rail access to nearby towns.</p> <p>Nothing specific, but important to improve facilities.</p> <p>Stratford's attraction is high culture and heritage so down-market intrusions must be resisted. Circular walk from Tramway to Lucy's Mill should be improved.</p> <p>Any facilities which would provide space and worth while activities for the young.</p> <p>Expand on the existing facilities. No need to rebuild SDC leisure centre.</p> <p>Sport and general club for teenagers.</p> <p>Maintain and create more school playing fields. Have park wardens for play grounds.</p> <p>Keep pool and civic centre.</p> <p>Greater partnership between main agencies to improve these facilities.</p> <p>Youth oriented facilities to maintain health and reduce delinquency.</p> <p>This is consistent with expanding tourism.leisure business opportunities in the district.</p> <p>Opportunities for youth to meet, activites promoted for them.</p> <p>Activities for young people in villages.</p> <p>Generally adequate, do not close the Leisure Centre pool over school holidays.</p> <p>Green space for yound people.</p> <p>Urgent need to improve leisure and sport facilities for teenagers to keep them off the streets.</p> <p>High-tech business.</p> <p>New leisure centre in walking distance of town centre. Preserve Civic Hall.</p> <p>The concept of supporting village halls and in Stratford Town would area centres would draw people together</p> <p>An improved leisure centre, better tennis courts</p> <p>Should like the youth of the town more involved in what they would like and involve them in the actual planning process and delegate authority for maintenance and care of the facilities.</p> <p>More in depth analysis needed.</p> <p>Young people's response to UDF showed current lack of leisure activities - land could be allcoated for uses such as 10 pin bowling, improved cinema. UDF identifies current leisure centre site as key opportunity for a susbstantial new cultural attraction. This would require alternative sustainable site for leisure centre.</p>	<p>On specific schemes, 6 said that the Stratford Leisure Centre should be improved and maintained in its current site/ a town centre location and 1 said that it should be redeveloped elsewhere.</p> <p>3 representations commented that facilities should be funded through s106 contributions from development.</p>
--	---	---

	<p>Publicise more what is available and ask for feedback  More mobile libraries/ cinemas.  Support local leisure centres especially Alcester Greig centre. Centres receive hidden benefits if owned by local council.  A lido with diving boards  More playing fields.  Olympic size swimming pool.  Specified building for local people for theatrical, musical and cultural activities.  Look after what we have.  more for young people  More green spaces for sport and recreation in residential areas. More youth facilities.  More investment in rural access. Public footpaths and bridleways kept clear and signposted.  Involvement with young local people regarding future design of the town.  More money needed to villages and market towns. SUA gets disproportionate amount of funding and is inaccessible to the majority of the District's residents. Investment in village halls and youth activities.  Comprehensive leisure centre in Wellesbourne with swimming pool.</p>	
--	--	--

## Identification and assessment of Options relating to leisure and recreation

It is clear from the evidence base and the aims of the Community Plan that a further audit of green space and recreation facilities will be required, leading to a Strategy for future provision in the District. The scope of this strategy should be fairly detailed, looking at needs and opportunities in individual settlements, and should therefore be a separate document prepared in partnership with other council services.

Some decisions need to be made at the Core Strategy stage to inform related strategic issues and to lead the approach to be taken in a Green Space and Recreation Strategy. The key issues requiring recognition are:

- o The need for access to leisure and recreation facilities for all, in a rural district with limited transport for many.
- o Providing better recreation opportunities for young people
- o The need to improve provision of and access to natural green areas – green spaces, wildlife areas, rights of way, green corridors, country parks.

### Option 1

Provision of leisure facilities in accordance to a hierarchy of settlement size; with extended facilities for leisure, culture and open space in Stratford-upon-Avon, a range of facilities in larger rural settlements, and small-scale, often community-led, provision in small rural settlements serving a rural catchment.

## **Option 2**

Focus on small-scale provision, often community-led, in all settlements, to a scale appropriate to meet the needs of the local community, but without additional resources targeted to larger centres.

## **Option 3**

Provision of some large facilities serving more than the local community in rural locations and small villages. Such facilities would be likely to attract visits from people beyond the normal catchment of the settlement in terms of other everyday services.

It is considered that the following aspects of a strategic approach to recreation and leisure provision do not have any realistic alternatives:

Planning policy should emphasise the importance of recreation facilities and open space in supporting the quality of life in the district. They should also recognise that open space can support several key objectives for sustainable development including health, biodiversity, flood risk, community involvement/ stewardship, landscape and townscape, and high quality design. The policies should acknowledge the particular importance of access to the countryside for the district, and support local strategies (including the Rights of Way Improvement Plan and many Parish Plans) which seek to extend the rights of way network and increase its accessibility for all.

It is clear that there is not a surplus of leisure and culture opportunities in the District, and therefore the loss of facilities should be avoided e.g. policies to protect facilities from re-development. Opportunities to improve facilities should be taken, especially if guided by further research on specific areas needs and opportunities. It will be necessary to undertake a full assessment of green space and leisure facilities and prepare a Green Space and Recreation Strategy. The Strategy should take into account the importance of provision for young people and improved access to the natural green areas and green wildlife and travel networks.

Open space to meet the needs of all occupants of new development should be incorporated into the development scheme. It is very important that some open space is provided directly within the site so that it can be used by the residents on an everyday basis. There may however be occasions where it is not essential and practical to provide all kinds of open space directly adjacent to the homes in which case a financial contribution to fund provision elsewhere could be considered. The current policies regarding developer contributions for open space should therefore be continued and extended and can be used to implement in part the Green Space and Recreation strategy once prepared.

The following symbols have been used in the assessment:

- + positive impact
- negative impact
- o neutral impact

- ++ more positive compared with a positive impact for other options
- more negative compared with a negative impact for other options
- / not applicable

Factors	Option 1 Provision to match settlement hierarchy	Option 2 Small scale and community led provision	Option 3 Some larger facilities in rural areas	Commentary
<b>Consistency with national policy</b>	0	0	-	PPG17 emphasises the benefits of green space and leisure facilities but requires local authorities to set their own standards for provision. Option 3 would be incompatible with national objectives to reduce reliance on the private car, as rural locations for larger facilities are unlikely to be accessed by the majority of users on foot, bike or public transport
<b>Consistency with regional policy</b>	+	0	-	Existing RSS and emerging revision both identify a hierarchy of settlements with Stratford-upon-Avon being the only 'strategic centre' in the District. Option 1 would result in provision of major facilities in SUA and facilities in smaller centres to meet their residents plus a rural catchment which would support the vision behind policies PA11, PA12b and RR4 in the RSS. Option 2 would not detract from this policy but would also not enhance the role of strategic and service centres. Option 3 would detract from the roles set out in the RSS for different sized settlements.
<b>Consistency with Community Plan and Corporate Strategy</b>	+	+	0	The Community Plan emphasises encouraging greater use of facilities by local people, providing access for all and promoting social and community inclusion through culture and sport. Option 2 may be most successful in promoting community inclusion and ensuring access. Option 1 could also support these aims providing there is good non-car transport to facilities for those living outside the settlement. Option 3 could only support these aims if new high quality public transport was provided.
<b>Consistency with response to Issues &amp; Options consultation document</b>	+	+	0	Consultation comments focussed on community provision and facilities for young people which could be supported by Options 1 and 2. Option 2 could best meet this aspiration provided that avoiding further development of facilities in larger centres channelled further resources into local small scale schemes. However if improvements are to be funded by s106 agreements they should occur in settlements where development is taking place i.e. the

Factors	Option 1 Provision to match settlement hierarchy	Option 2 Small scale and community led provision	Option 3 Some larger facilities in rural areas	Commentary
				larger settlements. Some respondents felt that SUA was the most appropriate place for new facilities, supporting Option 1. There were no comments that supported Option 3, except that several respondents suggested more Country Parks, locations for which would be likely to be determined by landscape, nature and ownership considerations as much as their connection to the main settlements.
<b>Participation – provide scope to contribute to decision-making</b>	+	++	0	Option 2 would offer the most scope for local participation as small scale schemes are most likely to be community led and owned. Option 1 would also allow for this to a limited extent. Option 3 could be seen to impose large-scale development on small communities, although in certain cases may be welcomed for specific benefits to the local community.
<b>Crime – reduce crime/anti-social behaviour and fear of crime</b>	+	++	0	Fear of crime often results from people not knowing others in the community, and young people not having anywhere to go. Small-scale schemes in all settlements, especially those currently lacking facilities, would be most effective in addressing this problem. Alternatively enhanced provision in places served by good public transport in the evenings could help to provide activities for young people.
<b>Education – provide facilities for all stages of life</b>	+	+	+	All these options could enhance facilities for learning.
<b>Health – provide facilities and promote healthy lifestyles</b>	++	++	+	Any improvement in provision would provide better opportunities for people to enjoy active leisure. Options 1 and 2 would result in facilities where they are accessible to the highest number of people. Options 1 and 3 may result in facilities that are more likely to be different and persuade people to try something new. Option 2 is more likely to allow sport to be integrated into people's everyday routine.
<b>Poverty – tackle disadvantage</b>	++	++	+	An improvement to facilities generally would help to support those who are disadvantaged, provided that the facilities are accessible to all. Small-scale facilities in all settlements will be the easiest and cheapest to access, but would not be a cost effective way to provide more extensive facilities such as

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Option 1 Provision to match settlement hierarchy</b>	<b>Option 2 Small scale and community led provision</b>	<b>Option 3 Some larger facilities in rural areas</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
				swimming pools and indoor facilities.
<b>Access – improve services and opportunities</b>	+	+	0	This factor highlights the need for access to be considered in the design and implementation of any further provision, including opportunities to encourage walking and cycling to facilities and to link facilities within a green network. Providing larger facilities/ grouping facilities at leisure centres will be the most feasible way to improve the range of provision in the district. Locating these within main settlements will be the most equitable way to ensure most people can access the facilities, though this will still not serve all people who live in isolated areas without access to a car.
<b>Culture &amp; recreation – increase participation</b>	+	++	+	An improvement to facilities generally would help increase participation in recreation. Community-led schemes may engage people who currently do not travel out of their way to participate in activities.
<b>Housing – provide good quality and affordable homes</b>	+	0	0	Ensuring that new developments are adequately served by usable and attractive open spaces will increase the quality of housing in the district. The provision of such spaces will follow the location of new development in the district which is likely to reflect the settlement hierarchy. Gaps in current provision should be identified and tackled through the preparation of a Leisure and Recreation Audit and Strategy.
<b>Population – balance needs of residents and visitors</b>	+	0	+	Larger-scale facilities are most likely to attract and be supported by visitors.
<b>Historic and cultural heritage – preserve and manage assets</b>	0	+	0	A community-led approach would provide the opportunity to make the most of local heritage and cultural features.
<b>Landscape and townscape – maintain</b>	+	0	0	Provision of good quality open space within towns could complement their character and appearance.

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Option 1 Provision to match settlement hierarchy</b>	<b>Option 2 Small scale and community led provision</b>	<b>Option 3 Some larger facilities in rural areas</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>character and appearance</b>				
<b>Environmental assets – preserve natural and built features</b>	+	+	+	There may be opportunities to preserve natural, historic and environmental features through promotion of cultural facilities or open spaces. Such an approach should be led by the occurrence of special features rather than an over all strategy.
<b>Biodiversity – protect and enhance species and habitats</b>	0	0	0	All options should provide opportunities for protection of enhancement of biodiversity.
<b>Land use – optimise use of brownfield land</b>	+	0	0	Emphasis on providing additional and improved facilities in main centres should provide scope to use brownfield sites.
<b>Urban development – achieve high quality environments</b>	+	0	0	Provision of good quality open space and facilities within the main settlements will increase their attractiveness for residents.
<b>Stewardship – encourage local responsibility</b>	0	+	0	Community-led provision will encourage local involvements and responsibility in the facilities.
<b>Pollution - minimise air, water and soil pollution</b>	/	/	/	

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Option 1 Provision to match settlement hierarchy</b>	<b>Option 2 Small scale and community led provision</b>	<b>Option 3 Some larger facilities in rural areas</b>	<b>Commentary</b>
<b>Climate change – minimise District’s contribution</b>	+	+	-	Providing improved facilities in all main centres should help to reduce the need to travel, and allow greatest use of public transport. Providing small-scale facilities in all sizes of community would also achieve a reduction in the need to travel. Providing large scale facilities in places not accessible by means other than the car could result in an increase from transport emissions.
<b>Flood risk – avoid increasing risk</b>	-	+	0	Several of the main settlements in the district are at risk from surface water and river flooding. Providing small-scale facilities in a range of places would reduce the risk of flooding of facilities. It may also provide most opportunities to integrate provision of open spaces with provision of natural environments to absorb flood waters.
<b>Energy – increase efficiency and use of renewable sources</b>	+	0	+	Medium and large scale leisure developments are well-suited to low-carbon decentralised energy sources.
<b>Conservation – reduce consumption of natural resources</b>	0	0	0	
<b>Standards – improve design and construction of buildings</b>	0	0	0	
<b>Planning – promote sustainable</b>	++	+	0	Focussing development, including leisure facilities and spaces, on main settlements would allow the use of existing infrastructure. Supporting small scale schemes would provide schemes suitable to the scale of the local

Factors	Option 1 Provision to match settlement hierarchy	Option 2 Small scale and community led provision	Option 3 Some larger facilities in rural areas	Commentary
<b>Locations and effective use of infrastructure</b>				community and infrastructure.
<b>Transport – encourage modal shift from use of private car</b>	+	+	-	Provision of large-scale schemes which would attract many visitors in rural areas would increase the use of private cars. Small-scale schemes in all communities would reduce the need to travel by any means. Focussing provision in main settlements will allow most residents to access the facilities without a private car provided that public transport is maintained and improved, particularly evening and weekend services.
<b>Waste – reduce consumption and increase re-use and recycling</b>	/	/	/	
<b>Local sourcing – encourage local supply of goods and materials</b>	/	/	/	
<b>Growth – achieve sustainable economic growth</b>	/	/	/	
<b>Employment – provide opportunities suited to workforce</b>	+	0	0	Providing larger facilities is more likely to create employment, whereas community-led schemes will require volunteer time. In Option 1 these jobs would be in urban areas where the workforce is more able to access them, whereas Option 3 could result in clusters of jobs in remote locations.

Factors	Option 1 Provision to match settlement hierarchy	Option 2 Small scale and community led provision	Option 3 Some larger facilities in rural areas	Commentary
<b>Investment – assist prosperity</b>	+	0	0	Providing facilities in main settlements will bolster their role and encourage prosperity.
<b>Skills – engage in learning and skills development</b>	/	/	/	
<b>Innovation – encourage culture of enterprise</b>	/	/	/	
<b>Technology – promote new technologies</b>	/	/	/	
<b>Responsibility – involve local organisations and agencies</b>	+	++	+	There are opportunities to involve local organisations and agencies in any leisure development in the district. This would be most feasible for small community-led schemes.
<b>Tourism – enhance visitor experience</b>	++	+	++	All leisure and open space provision will enhance the visitor experience. Larger-scale facilities are more likely to attract visitors, locating these in main settlements would increase the chances that they are used by tourists visiting other local attractions. Locating these in rural areas may offer the chance to spread the benefits of tourism to a wider area.

### Identification of Preferred Option

Based on the above assessment, it is apparent that Option 1 makes a more positive contribution to the objective of achieving sustainable development given the circumstances faced by Stratford District.

Option 2 also makes a positive contribution, and it is felt that many of the benefits of a community-led approach can be combined with the provision of facilities based on the settlement hierarchy by ensuring that a level of small-scale provision extends to all rural communities. Option 3 contradicts sustainability objectives by increasing reliance on private car transport and working against national and regional policies to support the role of service centres and locate development in sustainable communities.

### **Advantages of Option 1**

Supportive of national and regional policy

Supportive of social objectives such as encouraging healthy lifestyles and promoting access to facilities for all

Supportive of economic and service centre role of main settlements

Allows provision of wider range of large-scale facilities for use by both residents and visitors

Allows for access by sustainable transport providing weekend and evening public transport services are maintained and improved

Larger-scale facilities may provide opportunities for employment and decentralised energy sources.

There are opportunities to combine some of the advantages of Option 2 by supporting small-scale community-led projects in rural and urban areas in addition to different scales of facilities to match the settlement hierarchy.

### **Mitigation of Option 1**

The sustainability appraisal identified certain concerns that would need to be mitigated:

To ensure that this option genuinely results in facilities which are accessible to all, the public transport/ walking and cycling network connecting rural communities to service centres must be maintained and enhanced, including evening and weekends when people are most likely to use leisure and recreation facilities.

It was identified that town centre locations in this district, where the main facilities would be located under this option, are often susceptible to flooding.

### **Disadvantages of Option 2**

There are no major disadvantages for Option 2. This Option performs particularly well in terms of objectives to increase community involvement in local projects, and participation in decision-making. However it did not provide many of the other identified benefits of Option 1 such as the opportunities to support the role of service centres and provide a more diverse range of facilities which will attract both residents and visitors.

### **Disadvantages of Option 3**

Inconsistent with national and regional policy

Increases reliance on the private car

Creates facilities which are not accessible to all, in unsustainable locations