



Successful Management of Dual Use Cricket and Football sites



1.0 Introduction

There are many grounds around the country where football and cricket is played on the same site. This partnership has often worked well due to the seasonal nature of both sports and the need for facilities to be generating income all year round.

There are many benefits to a successfully managed joint site which working together can provide a sustainable future for those parties involved. Some of the main benefits include;

- Shared cost of operation
- Improved quality of pitches
- Better experience for all the players
- Increased capacity of matches
- More time to focus on aspects of the club

Unfortunately a poorly managed site can cause conflicts to arise. Disputes can be caused for a variety of reasons with the most common issue being a lack of informed decision making, often manifesting itself in a lack of communication between relevant parties. This can occur on any site however large or small and whoever is ultimately responsible for the management of the site.

The aim of this document is to provide a practical guide to organisations that manage playing field sites with football and cricket pitches to ensure the long term future viability of the site. This guide will provide facility operators with a greater understanding on the following;

- Identifying a clear decision making process.
- Improved financial planning for the site.
- Understanding of the technical knowledge and experience required to maintain sports pitches.
- Improved maintenance and repair regime on the pitches.
- Improved pitch layout and effective use of the site.

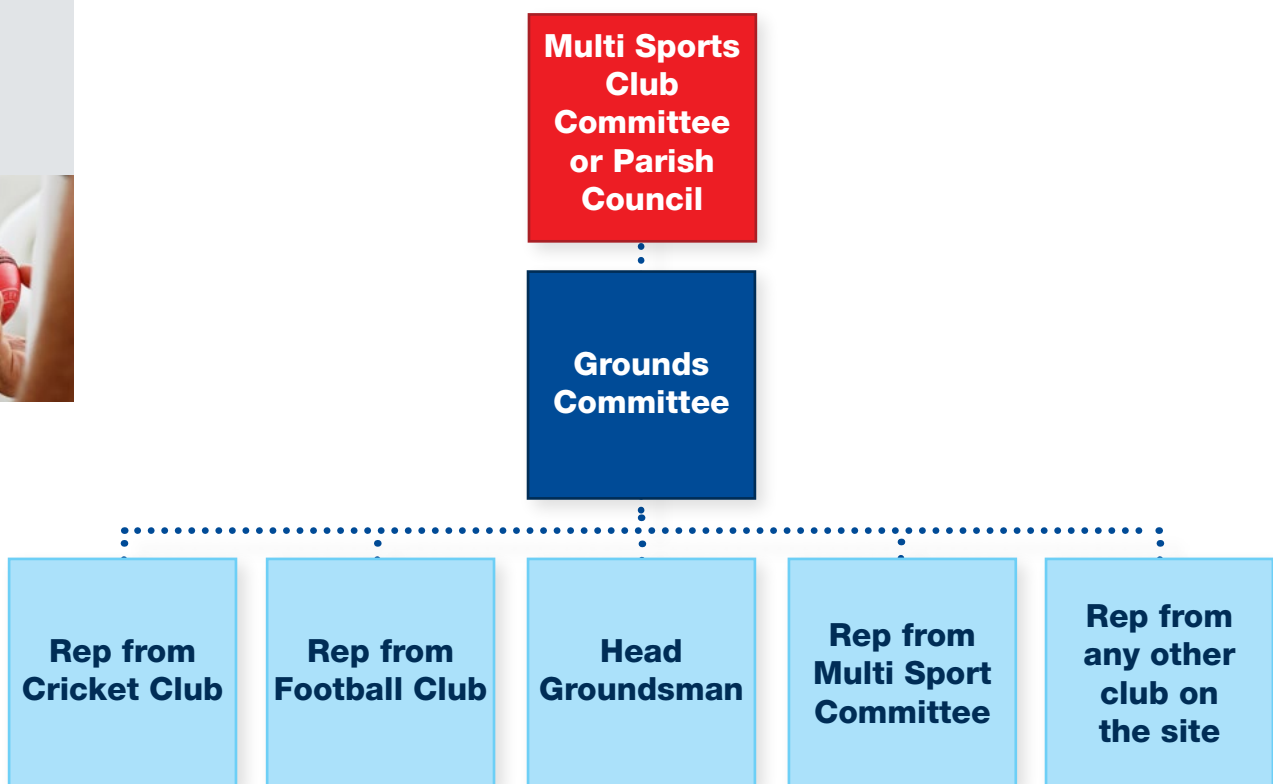
This document is targeted at all facility operators, from the small local club to local authorities managing large multi pitch sites. Its purpose is to identify the key issues and show through a series of useful tips and case studies how both sports can enjoy a long future of working together.



2.0 Structures

The management of a site is critical to its on-going success and viability. The key to good management is making good decisions based on accurate and relevant information. The structure of an organisation can greatly assist in this process by pulling together the people with the right skills to assist in key management decisions.

This structure will be different depending on the type and size of your organisation. Within a club environment it is often best to form a grounds management committee who make strategic and operational decisions about the management of the ground.

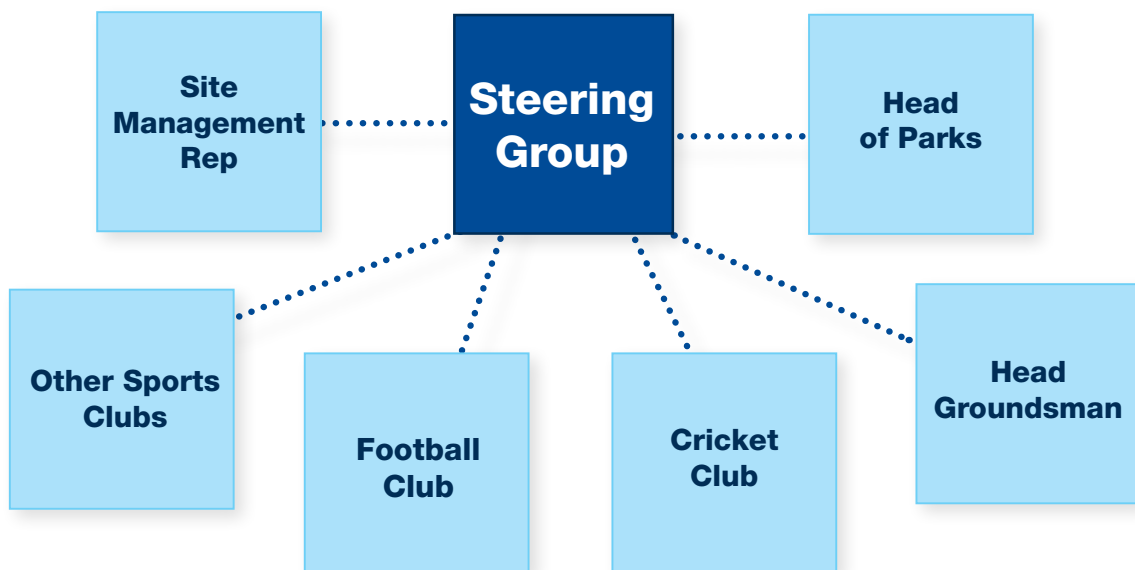


This example brings together the key partners with the Head Groundsman being heavily involved in these discussions. The grounds committee can then report to the overarching club committee.

In some cases it is not always practical to form a Grounds Committee so this could be replaced by a steering group who meet regularly. This group should be made up of representatives of the key users while also incorporating the maintenance and management team for the site. This type of structure works well in a local authority environment where a council can't devolve power.

Ensuring that the right people with the rights skill sets are part of the decision making process will greatly assist in the long term management of the site.

This structure would allow the groundsman a voice at management level so decisions regarding the site are taken with all factors considered, not simply based on income generation. This is critical if a site is to be maintained and managed to a high standard, without it the pitches can deteriorate very quickly.



The Ground Management Committee would be responsible for ensuring all relevant legislation has been adhered to in relation to the pitches. For more information on relevant legislation please see appendix 2.

If the management team need technical expertise on grounds maintenance, this is available through the network of County Groundsman Associations and ECB Pitch Advisers. [Ref link](#)

When considering the management of a multi-sport playing field it is important to understand the staff and roles that need to be performed to ensure a sustainable facility is possible.

- It is essential to have an appropriate number of ground staff to manage your facility. This is important whether they are employed directly or a contractor is used.
- Ensure all ground staff have appropriate industry qualifications and training to keep them up to date with new methods and techniques. (Contact GMA for more details).
 - Head Groundsman minimum GMA level 3
 - Assistant groundsman, minimum GMA level 2
- The grounds maintenance team should have expertise and a proven track record in managing turf under high usage loads.



3.0 Financial Planning

To ensure a facility can be used to its full capacity all year round it is important to produce a business plan and yearly budget.

Good financial planning allows a club to understand its future opportunities and risks so the club can continue to be sustainable in the long term. Even in small clubs where finances are very tight it is important that they go through this process to ensure the pitches are maintained and income is maximised.

To produce a financial plan there are a number of steps that should be taken which are as follows:

1. Identify what your objectives or ambitions are for the site. This is where you articulate where you want to be in the future, even if it is keeping the status quo. This will need to be linked into the objectives and ambitions of the club/organisation as a whole.



2. Undertake an audit of your facilities, equipment and cash to understand your current position. This would include understanding the condition of your pitches and machinery.



3. Once an audit has been undertaken it is important to analyse this and know where your strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are. This will help you to identify things like replacement machinery, do more pitches need to be marked out to meet demand, do you need more money to pay for more grass seed etc.



4. This analysis of the audit and the identified objectives will allow you to plan for the future. This may mean planning for more staff to help maintain the facility, the securing of more land to accommodate increased activity, or simply planning to keep the site running as it is now.



3.0 Financial Planning continued



5. Once the strategic direction has been mapped out the next step is to produce yearly budgets to deliver that plan. There should be budgets for each part of the business which will include one for the ground. When considering the budget for the ground some key factors to consider are:

- Yearly machinery servicing.
- Sinking funds for replacement machinery and equipment.
- Training requirements.
- Enhanced storage requirements to meet legislation.
- Changes in the costs of raw materials such as diesel and loam.
- Ensure the right level of maintenance is budgeted for. Too little and irreversible damage to the playing area could occur, too much and you are wasting time and money.
- Increased matches will increase labour and material costs.
- Ensure that the carrying capacity of the pitches is not exceeded (carrying capacity is explained in the next section 4.1). Too many matches could cause irreversible damage which take a large capital investment to rectify



6. Once a budget has been produced it is important for it to be monitored throughout the year. If any issues do occur then the monitoring of the budget should be able to highlight these and a plan put in place to rectify them. A good example of this could be the sudden breakdown of a mower which can't be repaired so a new one is required which wasn't budgeted for.



3.0 Financial Planning continued

A budget is essential to allow decisions to be made on how best to use funds, for example neglecting the maintenance of machinery could become a false economy as machines life spans are reduced.

An example expenditure budget for a ground can be found in Appendix 1. Please note that this is part of a full club budget and is not a stand-alone document.

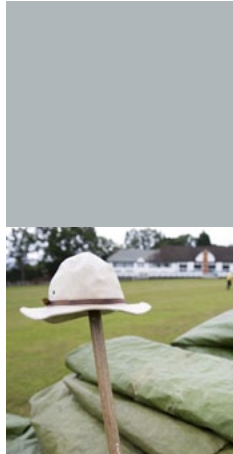
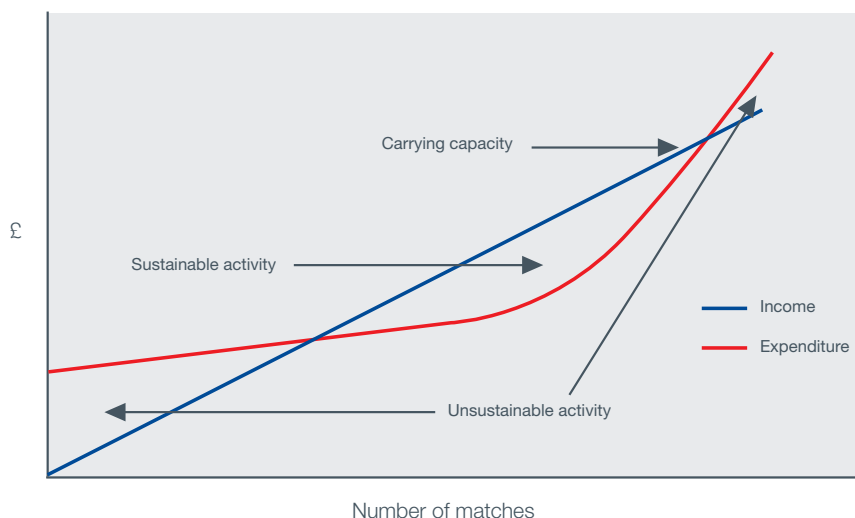
Within local authorities it is not always this simple, as often the budgets are devised more centrally and then passed down to the team on the ground. There may be no link between the income generated, and the expenditure of maintaining the site.

In these circumstances local authorities are strongly urged to consider each playing field as individual business plans so the income generated to the site is linked to the expenditure. Currently in a lot of cases this does not happen. By doing this it allows those responsible for the site to plan appropriately and can then follow the process described above.

If there are centrally incurred costs these should be split across multiple sites depending on the proportion of time and resource used for each site. For example one person may be responsible for three grounds so for budgeting purposes it is important that their time cost is split proportionally across each site budget.

This diagram highlights the balance between increased matches and the impact on expenses to rectify over use of a facility. When looking at the expenditure there are a number of fixed costs and then as matches increase so the variable costs increase the total expenditure. With grass pitches there comes a point when too many matches cause significant damage to the pitches. If pitches are over used this could cause considerable damage to them which would require extensive repair or reconstruction work. It means an increase in games does not always mean an increase in profit.

Therefore it is important to know the carrying capacity of your site and what your level of activity is sustainable.



4.0 Factors affecting the capacity of site

4.1 Usage

Understanding who will use your pitches and how often is critical to producing an appropriate management plan for the year.

When understanding how much usage of the pitches takes place you will need to consider the following variables:

- The type of activity that is proposed by each sport, such as competition, education and training.
- The level of play that is proposed such as junior, senior, league requirements etc.
- Identify how much use there will be for each 'Type of activity' and 'Level of play category' for each sport.
- NB Industry standards state that a cricket pitch can be used for 5 adult day matches or 7 junior matches. Football pitches can be used depending on the level of maintenance and quality of drainage of the pitches.

It is important to map out each seasons usage and to identify any potential overlap of use within the year. This should be done on a twice annual basis, once during the summer in preparation for the football season, and once in the winter in preparation for the cricket season. This will highlight where issues such as overuse, maintenance requirements and usage conflicts, may occur and appropriate compromises can be found. However, it is important that usage plans are reviewed regularly throughout the season as matches do need to be rescheduled for various reasons and this can put added strain on the cross over periods.

When the decision to call off matches is taken, the Head Groundsman needs to be an integral part of the decision making process as using a pitch when conditions are very poor can cause long lasting damage to the sports pitches. Please contact your league regarding local regulations on the cancellation of matches.

Where possible a cut off date should be introduced for the end of the football season so that renovation work can take place in preparation of the cricket season. Where this is not possible it is important that a compromise solution found. Examples of solutions include moving the start time of matches to accommodate both sports, and moving the location of matches away from home. This may involve co-ordinating fixtures with the respective leagues so early consultation with them is essential.

At Sawston CC, there are two dates in the year whereby each sport cannot play past. This allows each club the ability to obtain priority usage of the site while allowing the grounds team time to plan the maintenance work required. The football season does start before the end of the cricket season but each year the football club liaises with its league to ensure the first few matches are played away.



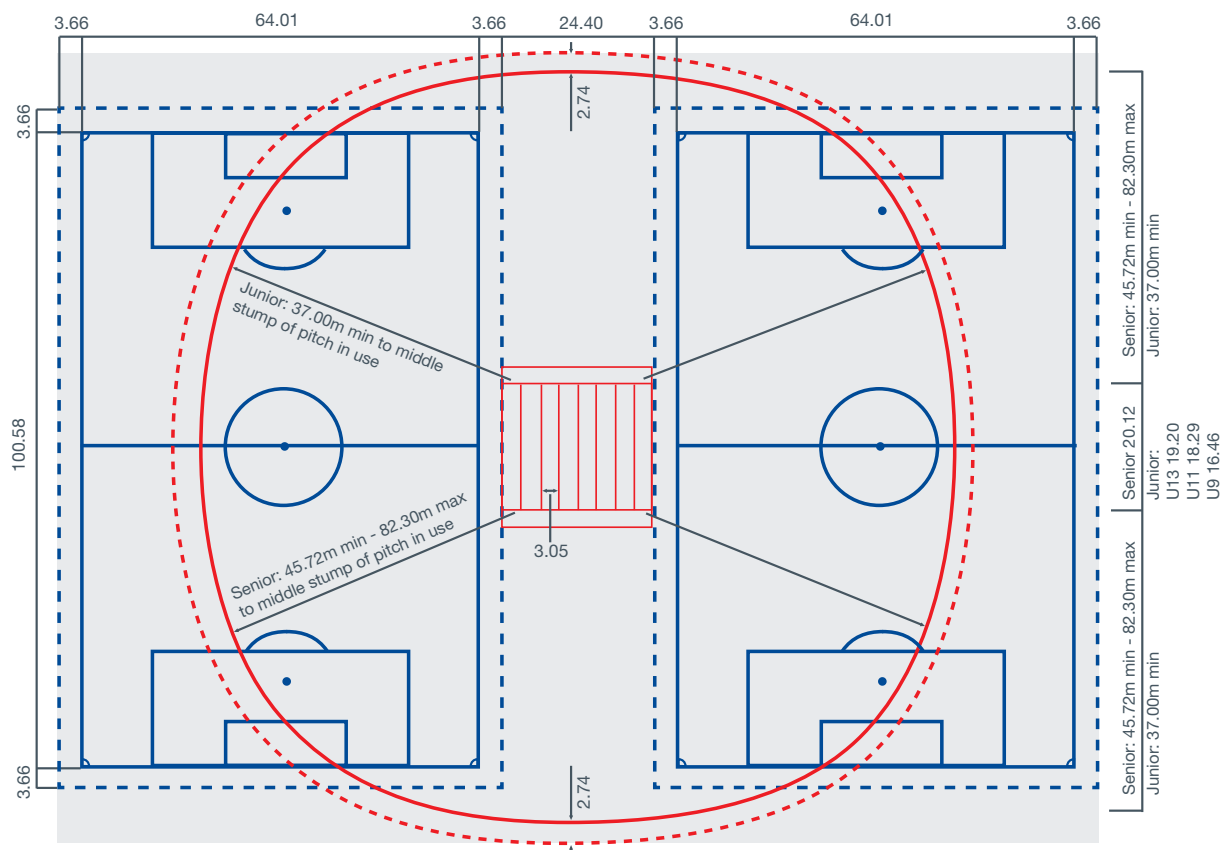
4.0 Factors affecting the capacity of site continued

4.2 Pitch layout and orientation

Layout of the pitches is very dependent on each individual site but consideration should always be made for the areas of most wear and tear. Allowing these areas to recover during the off season will help provide a sustainable site.

Pitch orientation is an important consideration when laying out the site's pitches. The orientation of the pitch can have a significant impact on the game as the setting sun can cause considerable disruption. Therefore pitches broadly need to have a North South orientation but please consult the Sport England guidance document, 'Natural Turf for Sport' for more details. Note that the correct orientation of pitches is absolutely essential for cricket facilities, but dependent on the shape of the site, is desirable for football.

It is extremely important to understand that using exactly the same pitch layout year on year will mean that wear will be concentrated on certain areas, like the goal mouths and centre circles. If space allows, you should consider off-setting the location of the pitches to ensure that the areas of most wear are changed each year. You could look at three year pitch layout rotation which gives the hard wearing patches time to recover.



Source: Sport England Guidance - Natural Turf - Combined Winter Sports and Cricket (8 Wicket Pitch)

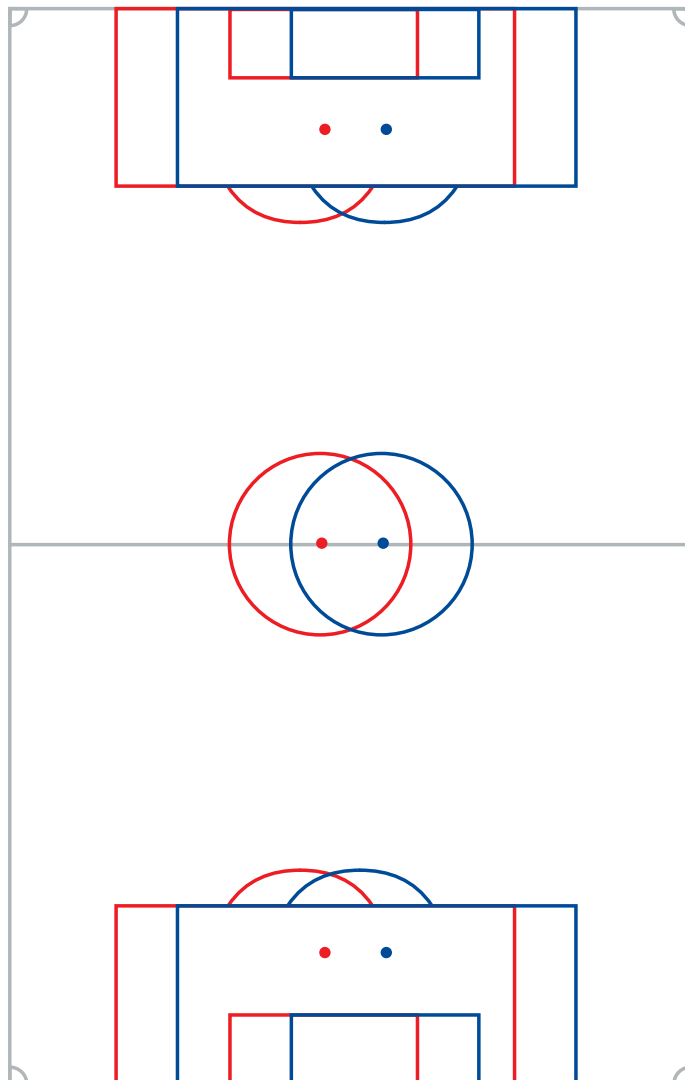
4.0 Factors affecting the capacity of site continued

4.2 Pitch layout and orientation continued

The selection of football goal posts is essential to the feasibility of pitch rotation. Mobile counter weighted goalposts are the most desirable option as these can be moved relatively easily to facilitate pitch rotation.

If socketed football posts are used then multiple holes need to be created and appropriate solution needs to be found to cover and protect them during the summer months while cricket is played. Please ensure that all goal posts meet BS EN 748.

The example below shows what can be done on an area with a 70m width. The two football pitches are 60m in width and by creating three goal post sockets you can easily move a pitch to rotate the hard wearing areas around.



4.0 Factors affecting the capacity of site continued

4.3 Environmental factors

The environment and the management of resources can have a significant impact on the maintenance and management of sports pitches. The impact of climate change is having a significant impact on our weather with increased periods of more extreme weather.

This causes challenges in the preparation of pitches which will require more careful planning and management of resources.

Trying to minimise the effect of extreme weather can be achieved through a variety of sources depending on the problem.

Water management is a key consideration in both periods of high and low rainfall. As rainfall increases it may become necessary to obtain covers to protect run ups for cricket matches or introduce a new drainage system. Information on major capital schemes such as drainage is covered later in section 6.

As we experience longer dry periods the need for an irrigation system could become essential. The water for such a system could come from a rain water harvesting system using the clubhouse as a collection point or water extraction from a local natural source. These projects would need further investigation from an appropriate professional and may need approval from the local planning department and environmental agency.



The increase in flooding in recent years has had an impact on the maintenance regimes of clubs. This relates to the protection and reinstatement of the playing areas but also the protection of assets such as machinery.

Consideration needs to be made to the storage of fuels and chemicals to prevent damage and contamination. Under current legislation, detailed in appendix 2, all fuels and chemicals need to be stored in a secure and well ventilated place.

These environmental factors offer both challenges and opportunities and as technology is improving they can result in more efficient use of resources and improved maintenance practices.

5.0 Maintenance

5.1 Regular maintenance



The quality of maintenance undertaken on playing surfaces has a major impact upon the degree of deterioration of the surface during the playing season.

Savings made on maintenance contracts are often smaller than the additional costs of repair/renovation work required at the end of the playing season, resulting in a false economy of saving.

Therefore focusing on recommended maintenance programmes will result in a playing surface that requires less repair/renovation when moving from winter sports to summer sports usage. For joint football and cricket sites there are some common maintenance issues such as compaction of soil, uneven surfaces and bare patches. To address these types of problems some key considerations are:

- **Regular quality mowing with well maintained machinery.**
- **Access to a water supply to provide irrigation whenever necessary.**
- **Weed control to ensure only desirable grasses are present in the sward.**
- **The use of approved marking materials; users can be injured by the use of inappropriate materials. The use of these inappropriate materials is often illegal.**
- **Pitch rotation where possible to allow hard stress areas time to repair.**

Performance Quality Standards are an objective method of assessing a playing surface against set standards for the playing surface in question. This system is useful in helping to monitor the effectiveness of the long-term management of a playing surface and in setting standards for contractual maintenance works.

[Need to signpost to PQS REF LINK](#)



5.0 Maintenance continued

5.2 Renovations and Managing season handover period

Managing a playing field with both cricket and football pitches does provide some challenges to groundsman, especially in the change over period between seasons.

The change over between the two sports does allow the groundsman an opportunity to undertake some important and necessary repair work. This repair work is critical to the long term use of the pitches and failure to undertake this can lead to a deterioration of the pitches over time.

It is essential to build in time to make repairs and allow them to establish. Some of the common issues that need to be managed are;

- **Grass gets damaged very easily and needs to recover. Some key considerations to assist in the recovery are**
 - Compaction of the soil reduces grass grow and drainage so aeration should be increased as usage levels increase.
 - In hard wear areas it is necessary to repair the surface levels.
 - The use of fertilisers and pesticides is essential in the establishment and growth of the turf.
 - Allowing sufficient time for new sward to establish and recover so that a good grass covering is in place.
- **Each sport does have different requirements and these need to be considered and addressed. The change over period between seasons allows for some of these considerations to be addressed.**
- **It is also important to educate the site users so they are aware of why certain activities are happening and understand the need for a balance between all the users.**



Examples of good and poor practice relating to maintenance regimes are provided below:

Good Practice:

- Routine mowing with sharp well set cutting units; this increases plant density and increases the plant's ability to resist wear damage, thus reducing repair/renovation costs.
- Annual testing of available soil nutrients to facilitate the replenishment of nutrients shown to be deficient.
- As usage increases, increase the amount of soil de-compaction undertaken to assist in maintaining a healthy sward.

Poor Practice:

- Infrequent mowing, especially with blunt cutting units; this weakens the plant and reduces rooting depth, thus reducing the plants ability to withstand wear.
- Use of a heavy roller to level the surface; this compacts the high points, reducing the ability of desirable grasses to establish, leading to ingress of weed grasses which do not withstand normal levels of usage well.
- Not over-seeding annually; this results in an aging sward which is less able to resist the level of usage with passing years, resulting in increased levels of wear with passing years.
- Using areas of the playing surface which are normally subject to high levels of wear (goal mouths for training).

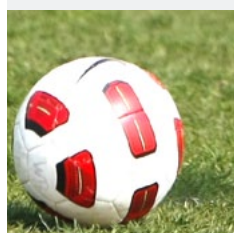
5.0 Maintenance continued

5.3 Example Management Schedule

This calendar presumes a financial year end date of 31 December.

Month Actions required

January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Setting of yearly budget• Scheduling of fixtures for upcoming season – Cricket
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quarterly Grounds Management Committee meeting• Technical site inspection – nutrient analysis• Yearly machinery maintenance
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training of staff
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce compaction in high impact areas like goal mouth and centre circles.• Reseed and establish sward in worn areas.• Prepare outfield for cricket correcting any level issues and adjusting the cut height on the mowers accordingly to achieve the correct height of grass
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quarterly Grounds Management Committee meeting
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technical site inspection – full PQS review• Order of materials for end of season renovations• Order of specialist machinery for end of season renovations
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scheduling of fixtures for upcoming season – Football
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quarterly Grounds Management Committee meeting
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reseed and establish sward in worn areas.• Prepare pitches for football by correcting any level issues and adjusting the cut height on the mowers accordingly to achieve the correct height of grass.
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training of staff
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quarterly Grounds Management Committee meeting• Audit of assets• Identify asset replacement plan for year
December	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Groundsman / Grounds Committee feedback to committee to discuss requirements for next year



6.0 Improvements/Large scale works

When the grounds experience structural failures or the design of the site is no longer fit for purpose, it may be necessary to consider and implement large scale redevelopment works.

These could range from drainage projects to the construction of new playing fields.

When embarking on a project of this size it is important to consider the following:

- Site investigations will need to be taken by an appropriately qualified sports turf consultant to assess the feasibility of the proposed works.
- The cost benefit of the proposed works needs to be assessed to ensure it is the best long term solution for the site as improvement works can increase significantly yearly maintenance costs.
- The level of resources available for ongoing maintenance does affect the initial design of the works to be carried out.
- Consider the year round impact on all users of the facility of any proposed works as these will vary from sport to sport. Eg drainage of a football pitch may ensure a couple of extra matches are fulfilled each year but without summer irrigation could result in an unsafe outfield for cricket.
- Ensure the design consultants have been provided with the grounds staff's capacity to manage and maintain the pitches after the works are completed.
- Planning for a large scale project is important and should begin at least a year ahead.
- The timing of major works needs to be carefully considered to reduce the impact on the activities of each sport and reduce the risk of delays due to inclement weather. This may lead to plans being put in place to relocate for a season.
- The designer should provide a management and equipment schedule prior to contracting the works so clubs can check that the design can be maintained within their budget and resources.
- Make sure all the pros and cons of any large scale works are considered and evaluated at the feasibility stage.



7.0 Support, Guidance Documents and Useful Contacts

There is an extensive support structure within the ECB, FA and GMA who can advise clubs on the issues raised throughout the document.



ECB Places Team

Along with dedicated staff to provide advice, details below, there is also a network of county ECB Pitch Advisers and County Groundsman Associations who can provide specialist knowledge and support to clubs on a local level.

Regional Funding and Facilities Managers facilities@ecb.co.uk

Tim Nicholls – London & East
tim.nicholls@ecb.co.uk

John Huband – Midlands
john.huband@ecb.co.uk

Chris Whitaker – South & South West
chris.whitaker@ecb.co.uk

Dan Musson – North
daniel.musson@ecb.co.uk

ECB Pitch Advisory Scheme

Further details can be found on www.ecb.co.uk/places

The ECB also have relevant guidance documents to support clubs in developing their facilities. These can be downloaded from www.ecb.co.uk/places

TS4 – Recommended Guidelines for the construction, preparation and maintenance of cricket pitches and outfield at all levels of the game

Developing a Project – From Concept to Completion

Sustainable Clubs www.ecb.co.uk/sustainableclubs



7.0 Support, Guidance Documents and Useful Contacts continued



FA Facilities Team

The FA have dedicated staff to provide advice to clubs in developing and managing their facilities.

Mark Liddiard - East
mark.liddiard@theFA.com

Eamonn Farrell - North West
eamonn.farrell@theFA.com

Stuart Lamb – South East
stuart.lamb@theFA.com

Dylan Evans - London
dylan.evans@theFA.com

Mark Coulson - North & Yorkshire
mark.coulson@theFA.com

Matt Bartle - East Midlands
matt.bartle@theFA.com

Simon Wood - South West
simon.wood@theFA.com

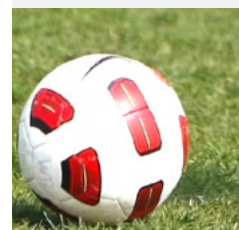
Hannah Buckley - West Midlands
hannah.buckley@theFA.com

They also have relevant guidance documents to support clubs in developing their facilities. These are as follows:

- The FA's Outdoor Pitch Guidance Notes
- Grass Pitch Quality Performance Standards
- The FA's GMA Groundsman Guidance Document

All guidance can be downloaded from:

http://www.thefa.com/GetIntoFootball/~/_/link.aspx?id=2B126098B0014E32A550A5560117734E&z=z



7.0 Support, Guidance Documents and Useful Contacts continued



GMA

The GMA run a variety of groundsman training courses to meet the needs of all groundsmen ranging from foundation to advanced level. Please visit the GMA website at www.thegma.org.uk for more details.

The GMA also have a network of Regional Advisors to support groundsmen around the country whose details are below.

Andy Clarke – East Anglia
aclarke@thegma.org.uk

Ian Norman – London & South East
inorman@thegma.org.uk

Allan Moore – Midlands
amoore@thegma.org.uk

Len Smith – Wales,
South & South West
len.smith@live.co.uk

Ian Mather-Brewster - North
imather-brewster@thegma.org.uk

The GMA Performance Quality Standards tables can be downloaded from

Sport England

Natural Turf for Sport Design Guide 2011

http://www.sportengland.org/facilities_planning/design_and_cost_guidance/natural_turf.aspx

Comparative Sizes of Sport Pitches and Courts 2011

http://www.sportengland.org/facilities_planning/design_and_cost_guidance/natural_turf.aspx

Environmental Sustainability Checklist

http://www.sportengland.org/facilities_planning/design_and_cost_guidance/other_design_guidance.aspx



Appendix 1

Costs	A	B	C	D	E	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
	Yearly Budget	Forecast	Final Budget (A+B)	Actual spend	Budget vs Actual (C-D)												
Materials																	
Loam	2,000		2,000	2,129	-129			442					1,234				453
Seed	500		500	575	-75		330						245				
Fertiliser	300		300	278	22		122				156						
Pesticide	250		250	246	4			112		134							
Line marking materials	100		100	86	14					86							
Utilities and fuel																	
Water	600		600	613	-13	21	17	35	36	67	79	85	72	112	53	19	17
Diesel	400		400	299	101	19	18	21	35	29	32	27	30	31	20	18	19
Other	50		50	52	-2		15			17				20			
Training courses for staff	250	150	400	450	-50	175					275						
Staff costs and wages																	
Full time staff	24,000		24,000	24,000	0	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Part time staff	6,000	2,000	8,000	8,000	0			1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000		
Expenses	400		400	305	95	34			56		117			98			
Machinery and Equipment																	
Servicing	6,000		6,000	6,540	-540	4,900					1640						
Hire of specialist equipment	2,000		2,000	1,930	70		960							970			
Replacement	5,000	7,500	12,500	11,821	679					245			576		11,000		
Specialist servies (eg tree cutting)	8,000		8,000	8,621	-621				5,934								2,687
Total	55,850	9,650	65,500	65,945	-445	7,149	2,502	4,570	9,061	3,341	3,262	5,386	5,157	4,113	3,191	13,037	5,176

Example budget for a joint cricket and football ground

Legislation

There is a duty of care for all site providers to ensure that all pitches are safe to play on.

- Legislative considerations include
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)
- BS EN 748 Goal post safety
- Alternatives to permanent goal sockets in cricket outfields
- Storage of sports equipment, machinery and substance likely to cause environmental damage (case studies of prosecutions)
- Site access for maintenance equipment and emergency services
- Ground-water regulations
- Oil storage regulations
- Provision of Work Equipment Regulations (PUWER)
- Personal Protective Equipment at Work Regulations 1992 – over-view
- Food and Environmental Protection Act 1985
- Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986, amended 1997 and amended codes of practice, (see link below):

http://www.pesticides.gov.uk/safe_use.asp?id=870&link=%2Fuploadedfiles%2FWeb%5FAssets%2FPSD%2Fyellow%5Fcode%2Epdf