

MEDWAY SPORTING LEGACY

2017 - 2020

PLAY COMPETE SPECTATE



Foreword by the Minister for Sport Tracey Crouch

Sport has a unique power to change lives for the better. It brings communities together, has a positive impact on mental as well as physical health and teaches people valuable life lessons whether that's teamwork or striving to be the best you can be.

Medway Council understands this and I applaud them for their ongoing commitment to sporting provision and programmes that are hugely beneficial to local people.

The Council's Medway Sporting Legacy Strategy chimes with the government's own aim to get more people active and give children a great experience of sport.

Four years after London 2012 it is important that we continue to invest and support sport at all levels and ensure that the legacy from that incredible summer is maintained.

The development of Medway Park, an £11m centre of sporting excellence, is just one example of how the council is backing sport at all levels. It not only supports the grassroots, providing opportunities to all, but also is a base for talent development too.

Medway's availability of many different programmes to inspire people to get active shows the importance of having engaging schemes to bring new people to sport and then keep them involved when they take that step by making the experience fun and enjoyable.

Medway successes like the offer of free swims, the Mini Youth Games and the Medway Festival of Sport have shown just what can be achieved when councils get their offer right.

I wish Medway Council every success for the future with its sporting strategy and I also give my thanks to the many coaches and volunteers that play such a crucial role in promoting and delivering sport in the area. Keep it up.





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Welcome to Medway's Sporting Legacy Strategy 2017-2020

This document sets out how we will continue to use sport as a catalyst for good – encouraging active and healthy lifestyles, maintaining the quality of and evolving sports delivery and facilities, supporting and inspiring local talent and cementing Medway's reputation as a centre of excellence for sport.

It shows how Medway will respond to and meet the challenges and ambitions set out in both Sport England's Sporting Future Strategy and its new investment strategy 2016-2021: Towards and Active Nation.

Medway was firm in its commitment to deliver a tangible, lasting legacy from the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Four years on, and as we embark on another Olympic cycle, investment in that sporting legacy remains a major priority for the council.

Sporting legacy is embedded in Medway's Cultural Strategy 2014-2019. The important role of physical activity is also a key theme of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Medway 2012-2017.

The story so far...

There are a number of headline successes to celebrate from the period covered by our En Route to Rio Legacy Strategy 2013-2016. These include:

- Six sports centres attracting 2 million visits and generating over £4million income;
- 100,000 free swims a year;
- Participation in Medway Sport activity projects and events up 46 per cent. 42,000 participants in 2014/15;
- £1.9m refurbishment of Strood Sports Centre;
- The growth in our Mini Youth Games programme, with more than 40 primary schools now taking part in almost every event;
- The launch of new mass participation events in swimming and cycling;
- More than 40,000 participants in Medway Festival of Sport from 2012 to 2015.

What next?

A major focus of our plans for the next four years as we count down to the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2020 is on innovative approaches to increasing activity levels, using non-traditional activities in non-traditional settings to inspire those who are currently inactive to get moving.

This mirrors the national government's focus for future investment as outlined in the new Sport England Strategy: Towards an Active Nation.

We will also be investing further in our sports centres, and taking the next step in enhancing Medway Park as a national centre of sporting excellence.

Headline new initiatives include:

- Medway Park becoming the official home and training venue of England Wheelchair Rugby League;
- The expansion of our ParkSport programme to bring informal, recreational sport to parks and open spaces in some of Medway's most deprived wards;
- The launch of new mass participation events including a mass buggy push and mass workout to grow our portfolio of mass participation community events;
- Launching innovative new events to maximise and diversify the programming in our sports centre settings;
- Launching new health projects, such as our Fit to Tackle fitness programme, as well as projects targeted at groups with specific medical conditions such as heart issues, strokes, kidney problems and Alzheimer's.

We will ensure our priority groups - those with disabilities, women and girls, seniors, Medway's BME communities and communities in areas of high deprivation - remain a golden thread through all that we do, and that we are providing the right projects in the right places to grow participation rates amongst under-represented groups.

Four core activities will underpin the legacy projects set out in this strategy - the growth and development of our sports centres, clubs, coaches and volunteers. It is upon these solid foundations that participation and sporting success can flourish.

CLlr Howard Doe

Medway Council Deputy Leader and Housing and Community Services Portfolio Holder

01

PHYSICAL
ACTIVITY,
HEALTH AND
WELLBEING



Medway Sport recognises the vital role sport and physical activity plays in improving the health of the people of Medway. Tackling inactivity is a priority in this strategy.

This strategy sets out how we will further grow physical activity levels in Medway through a range of new and established projects, with a particular focus on taking sport into non-traditional settings.

The story so far:

More than 42,000 people participated in school events, community activity sessions, major events or coach-led projects delivered by Medway Sport in 2014/15. This was an annual increase of 46 per cent.

That figure included 27,000 participants in projects using public health funding and targeting hard-to-reach groups including seniors, women and girls, and Medway's minority ethnic groups in both community and sports centre settings.

Success stories so far:

- 15 boccia and new age curling clubs set up with older people's groups in the community.
- Almost £200,000 of external funding secured for targeted projects for 14-25-year-olds. More than 2,000 young people engaged in coach-led sports sessions.
- Launch of a new handball club on the back of a 12-week community inclusion club session run by Medway Dragons. Around 30 players now competing in county and regional divisions and winning regional competitions.





What next?

Further consultation with our priority groups will help ensure that our delivery is matching local demand, and a greater emphasis will be placed on measuring the physical, mental and social benefits that participants enjoy, in line with Sport England's increased focus on the importance of insight and evaluation.

We will also continue to work closely with the Medway Public Health Team to support and develop activity programmes, including new projects tailored to those with specific health needs.

Our approach to promoting physical activity is structured in three sections, with a natural progression pathway from one to the next, reflecting the stages of Sport England's behaviour change model for getting people active:

1 Health and wellbeing projects

2 Informal activities

3 Structured sports sessions

All of the work outlined will help meet the following Sport England Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):

- 1 Increase in the percentage of the population taking part in sport and physical activity at least twice in the last month
- 2 Decrease in the percentage of people physically inactive
- 3 Increase in the percentage of adults utilising outdoor space for exercise/health reasons

1 Health and wellbeing projects

These projects use sport and physical activity to tackle health inequalities, social isolation and mental wellbeing. Some are established programmes and others are new projects that we are launching in this strategy.

Our sports-related health and wellbeing work is guided by Medway's Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2012-2017, and by the national Everybody Active Everyday public health strategy.

The importance of health-related physical activity was highlighted in the government's new Active Nation strategy, which has expanded Sport England's role to include activities such as walking and cycling, and dance.

On Your Marks

On Your Marks is our return-to-exercise programme designed to break down barriers to getting active. Low-intensity fitness classes in our sports centres allow newcomers and those returning to exercise to access classes tailored to those nervous about taking that first fitness step.

The classes are pay-as-you-go, giving people the freedom to attend without having to commit to a monthly membership before they wish.

A survey carried out after four months of On Your Marks classes found that 97 per cent of participants who responded had seen their activity levels improve as a result of attending OYM fitness classes. Crucially, 70 per cent had more energy, 53 per cent had improved body image and 44 per cent had improved body confidence.

What's new?

On Your Marks classes will be reclassified to offer a generic workout in one of the five themes of our new-look sports centre fitness timetables – cardio, conditioning, dance, combat and mind and body.

Dedicated studios and instructors will create a welcoming and supportive environment for the new-look classes, and additional resources will be invested into researching the health and wellbeing benefits of the programme and developing it further.

We will also launch a new buddy scheme, using volunteers from our gyms and classes to buddy-up with those who are new to exercise to help make exercising less intimidating and more enjoyable and encourage long-term behaviour change, in line with latest insights outlined by Sport England.

Targeted health interventions - Fit To Tackle:

Medway Sport recognises the power of sport to inspire change. Our new Fit To Tackle programme will use sport as the tool to combat health inequalities.

One new scheme will see target groups of overweight males attend three activity and nutrition sessions a week over a 12-week period at Medway's sports centres and other venues, using a love of football, cricket or rugby as a motivational and reward tool. Mentors will support participants through the programme and exit routes into local sports clubs and sessions will be established to enable the graduates to sustain their new more active lifestyles.

The programme is being developed in partnership with the A Better Medway campaign and other health experts. Following the pilot, similar projects will be developed with partners and experts to help target other specific health needs including those with Alzheimer's and heart conditions.



A Better Medway:

Medway Sport works closely with colleagues from the Medway Public Health Team, who deliver a number of physical activity programmes as part of the A Better Medway campaign.

Active Medway cycle scheme: The first of its kind in England, this scheme is designed for beginner riders, those who need to build their confidence or those simply wanting to get fitter. These free rides are led by specially-trained ride leader volunteers and take place at the same time and same location every week. In the last year 133 rides took place, with 260 riders attending at least one ride. In total riders accumulated 1,100 hours of cycling as part of the programme.

Medway health walks: These free short, social walks led by volunteer walk leaders that are designed to help people get the most out of walking for their physical and mental health. They are particularly beneficial to those getting little or no exercise, returning from illness or lacking in confidence. The walks are graded by distance and difficulty of gradient. In the last year 1,037 walks took place, with 2,000 walkers attending at least one walk, with walkers accumulating 1,600 hours of walking time on the programme.

Nordic walking groups: Nordic walking uses a pair of specially-designed poles that allow you to get fit by walking with the security of the balancing poles. Participants are given full instruction on how to safely and effectively use the poles. These free walks are led by specially-trained volunteers and in the last year 93 walks took place, with 90 walkers attending at least one walk.

Exercise referral: People in Medway with a long-term health condition are eligible for a subsidised 12-week exercise programme in Medway Council's sports centres. Participants are referred via their GP or nurse and receive support from an instructor with specialist training on long term health conditions. All people on the programme receive regular assessments and are invited to take part in supervised gym or small group exercise classes. Medway Sport will work with the Public Health Team to train staff within our sports centres to be GP referral exercise instructors, thus increasing the capacity and reach of the scheme.

A Better Medway also runs healthy weight programmes for children, teenagers and adults delivered in Medway's sports centres and other community settings.

In the last 12 months over 500 people completed the 12 week programme, with over 75 per cent reducing their cardiovascular risk



Senior sport:

Medway's older residents are one of our priority target groups, and we will continue to develop programmes to help as many older people as possible remain fit and active for as long as possible, and to help tackle the issue of social isolation.

The story so far:

We launched a new senior sports offer programme at our centres, with an improved membership package, a larger number of fitness classes tailored to their needs and access to our thriving senior activities sessions including short mat bowls, short tennis and badminton.

We set up new walking football sessions at Strood Sports Centre and Anchorians FC. The senior players at Strood - Medway Marauders - have since reached the semi-finals of the BBC Inspired People's FA Cup, as well as being a thriving, social club.

Eight Medway care homes and active retirement associations now hold regular boccia sessions using equipment provided by Medway Sport. We have also supported the Pandora Club in Gillingham to develop monthly sessions in a range of sports which regularly have up to 50 participants each month.

Senior tea dances launched in partnership with the Arts Development Team have also provided older residents with an opportunity to socialise and enjoy ballroom dancing once a month.

Over 60s in Medway can also swim for free at any of Medway Council's pools.

What next?

As well as consolidating the successes of existing activities, we will build on the walking football programme by launching walking netball sessions and other similar low-intensity versions of traditional sports, such as hockey, rugby, and cricket.

As part of the development of the On Your Marks programme we will also ensure that there are classes tailored to the needs of our older customers, including seated exercise and tai chi.

We will showcase the achievement of veteran and senior competitors by staging events such as the European Veterans' Team Fencing Championships. Free tickets will be given to senior groups to spectate, and have-a-go sessions will be laid on for them at the event.

"I decided that I wanted to meet some new people and try to get a bit more active having retired early. We all have different motives."

Chris Pocock,
Medway Marauders
Walking Football Team

Pregnant and new mums:

Staying active during pregnancy can help relieve many pregnancy complaints, make giving birth easier, and help your body to recover more quickly after giving birth. For both pregnant and new mums, it is vital that it is the right exercise done the right way at the right time.

To help encourage this priority group to remain active, we will continue to develop initiatives to support pregnant and new mums, as well as making it as easy and appealing as possible for new mums to resume an exercise regime after having a baby.

The story so far:

We produced a guide with pre and post-natal exercise advice and opportunities for new and expectant mums in partnership with health visitors and children's centres.

We launched a number of exercise classes for new mums through Medway's children's centres, including BuggyFit, Dance with your baby, and dance fitness sessions.

What next?

The new Medway Big Buggy Push will be an annual mass participation event bringing young families together for a 5km power walk around the Great Lines Heritage Park as part of the Medway Festival of Sport. The event will be used to showcase pregnancy and post-natal fitness opportunities, as well as opportunities for mums with older children to get active, plus other support services available through the Better Medway campaign, the Sure Start centres and the National Childbirth Trust.

We will invest in our sports centre staff to gain qualifications in pre and post-natal exercise. This will allow us to increase capacity for pre and post-natal exercise sessions, and provide activities at an affordable price.

We will also build on the success of the free swimming of pre and post-natal mums by launching a similar offer giving access to appropriate fitness classes.

More than 1,100 pregnant and new mums have already signed up for our free swimming offer to help them remain active before and after childbirth



2 Informal activities

This area of work focuses on removing perceived barriers to participation by offering informal traditional and non-traditional activities in a mixture of traditional and non-traditional settings.

ParkSport:

ParkSport is one of Medway Sport's flagship activity programmes. Sport England has granted Medway Sport £157,000 from its Community Sport Activation Fund to develop ParkSport over the next three years.

ParkSport offers informal multi-sport sessions in local parks and open spaces situated within some of Medway's most deprived communities. The aim is to encourage young people aged 14-25 to get active, improve their health and fitness and have some active outdoor fun.

Since April 2016, free sessions have been held at seven sites across Medway throughout the week, with coach-led activities including archery tag, flag football, pop-up tennis, boot camps and much more.

The target is to engage 3,000 participants over three years of the programme, steering them towards existing community sports clubs or forming permanent new clubs themselves through the creation of community champions groups. The wards being targeted are Gillingham South, Gillingham North, Strood South, Luton and Wayfield, Chatham Central and the Hoo Peninsula.

3,000 participants
over three years of
the programme

Sports centres gyms and classes:

Echoes gyms at Medway's Sports Centres offer people of all fitness levels the perfect environment in which to work out, at an affordable price. Uniquely, members have the flexibility to exercise at any of our four fitness suites located at:

- Hundred of Hoo Sports Centre
- Medway Park, Gillingham
- Splashes, Rainham
- Strood Sports Centre

We have an expert health and fitness team on hand to offer a comprehensive induction and a personal programme. The gyms offer a range of equipment including a cardiovascular area with treadmills, rowing machines, cross-trainers and bikes, a resistance area and free-weights. Medway Park, Strood and Hoo also have functional fitness rigs. Our team of highly-skilled professionals also offer personal training support and motivation to help members achieve their fitness goals.

It's not just about the fitness suites. Echoes members have free use of the swimming pools during public swimming times. Our pools offer SwimFit training programmes to help customers get the most from their workout.

Premier Echoes members also get unlimited access to our comprehensive fitness class programme, as well as racquet sports. We have more than 200 fitness classes on offer across Medway each week, catering for a wide range of fitness levels and interests, including innovative new 30-minute classes at Splashes and Aqua Gym classes at Medway Park.

Family sport:

Family Sports Days were introduced at our sports centres as part of our post-2012 sports participation strategy. They are designed to let families play sport together with the support of expert coaches – a priority for investment set out in Sport England’s Towards an Active Nation strategy.

The coaches offer guidance and supervision, from getting a game going to running small drills and activities. Sports and activities on offer change each month and include athletics, archery tag, badminton, basketball, bubble football, dance, dodgeball, frisbee, handball, softball, squash, swimming, table tennis and touch rugby.

What’s new?

Until now, sessions have been held one Sunday each month at Medway Park and Strood Sports Centres for families with children aged six to 11. However, from April 2016 Family Sport was rebranded Family Funday Sundays and extended to also include pool parties and other activities at Splashes, and Hoo Sports Centre as well.

Special themed paid-for sessions will be held at all four sites throughout the year, at Easter, in the summer, Halloween and at Christmas. A Summer Special event in 2016 had a Celebrating Rio theme, with the opportunity to try a number of Olympic and Paralympic sports.

We will be working in partnership with our leading local sports clubs to bring additional expertise to the coaching on offer and to create links for those interested in continuing with a particular sport.

Running:

Running is a huge growth activity in Medway, as can be seen by the surge in participant numbers in Medway’s running groups and parkrun events.

Seven new community running groups have been set up with our support since 2012, all with thriving memberships.

The Great Lines parkrun and Medway junior parkrun at the Strand now attract more than 400 runners and walkers every weekend, supported by a committed volunteer workforce. Medway’s junior parkrun is currently the biggest in Kent.

400+ runners
and walkers
every weekend

Many of these runners also now take part in the annual Medway Mile, Sport Relief Mile, Medway 5k Summer Series and Medway 10k events organised by Medway Sport.

What's new?

We will work with junior parkrun to grow the event further to accommodate the growing demand, potentially launching a second event at another location.

We will also continue to offer support to Medway's community running groups, promoting their sessions and providing them with well-organised races and events for when they are ready to step up to competitive running.

As part of the Extreme Medway programme we will also develop opportunities for canicross running (competitive running with dogs), cross country running and orienteering in Medway.

3 Structured sport

Medway has a flourishing network of clubs delivering quality coaching and competition to thousands of Medway residents day in, day out.

There are more than 500 clubs and teams providing Medway's population with the chance to compete or simply keep active. From traditional sports such as rugby, football and hockey to korfbal, handball and triathlon, sailing and watersports, as well as disability sports, there is something for everyone, regardless of age or ability.

Medway Sport works with our leading clubs and national governing bodies to offer more structured sports sessions for people wanting to try a new sport, to get back into a sport they used to play, or simply to get fit playing sport. Many of these sessions are targeted at our priority groups, especially women and girls, ethnic minority communities, seniors and those with disabilities.

Over the past three years, we have worked particularly closely with the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), Rugby Football League (RFL), British Handball, the Amateur Swimming Association (ASA) and the Kent Football Association.

Success stories include:

- Developing a programme with the LTA that included pop-up tennis sessions, junior and adult coaching, Tennis Tuesdays, ParkSport and Street Games sessions, and a month of Mini Tennis activities. In the spring/summer of 2015 the participation rate exceeded 1,500.
- Women-only sessions launched including Back to Netball, Tennis Tuesdays, Synchro Fitness, Squashsize (squash-based exercise programme), Breeze Cycling (women's cycling scheme), and football.
- Back to Hockey community sessions at Holcombe Hockey Club.

- Working with Prince Arthur Bowls Club in Gillingham to launch a boccea session. It has now grown into an established section within the club with more than 20 players. The club is now driving the establishment of a Kent league that would be based at Medway Park.
- Staging of the Kent and Medway Business Games at Strood Sports Centre, supporting the Government objective of employees being given more opportunities to be physically active.

What's next?

We will develop this work with national governing bodies and other partners over the lifetime of this strategy to identify yet more opportunities to work together to increase participation rates and bring new sports such as walking netball to Medway.

These will launch new Back 2, Return 2 Sport and Get Into Sessions with our local clubs, building on the success of sessions already launched in netball, hockey and rugby.

We will work with Medway's leading sports clubs to develop ways of diversifying their sporting offer to capture new members, creating new club sections or experimenting with innovative new ways of using their facilities. This will build on the initial success of pilot schemes with High Halstow Cricket Club (rounders), Holcombe Hockey Club (rounders and handball), Medway Dagens RFLC (fitness, netball and handball), Jumpers Rebound Centre and Gillingham Gymnastics Club (parkour/free running).

We will also launch quick leagues in our sports centres, offering dynamic inter-team competitions outside of more established leagues.

We will continue to maintain and develop our online club directory, linking the public to Medway's leading sports clubs if they have been inspired to take up a new sport.

Case study

Medway Sport has worked closely with Anchorians Football Club on a range of projects to grow participation and create new opportunities for people to get active.

We have funded two projects, delivered by the Clubmark club to engage with our priority groups, and a third project is in the pipeline.

A women and girls project has led to the launch of a junior girls team at the club while a 12-week disability football scheme for players with special needs or learning difficulties has evolved into a weekly session and the creation of the Anchorians Equal team.

We have supported the launch of walking football at Anchorians FC for older players and those wanting to enjoy the glorious game at a gentler pace. The Anchorians Football Festival is also an annual fixture on the Festival of Sport calendar.

02

MAJOR EVENTS
AND MASS
PARTICIPATION



Medway is proud of its flourishing programme of community and elite-level major events.

From international-level competitions to mass participation community events, the people of Medway are able to enjoy the thrill of playing, competing and spectating on a grand scale.

National and international sports events

The story so far:

Medway has firmly established itself as a venue for elite level competition, with a particular focus on providing a platform for minority and disability sports.

Since the creation of Medway Park, Medway has staged eight international events and a raft of national and regional competitions in sports ranging from modern pentathlon and handball to judo, sitting volleyball and fencing.

A particular focus for Medway is on community and volunteering programmes linked to major sports events. An initial 12-week community handball course aimed at Medway's Eastern European Communities which ran alongside the Under 21 Handball World Championships Qualifiers in January 2015 has evolved into a thriving club enjoying success at a regional level.

The success of the Wheelchair Rugby League World Cup, Four Nations and European Championships staged respectively in 2013, 2014 and 2015 has led to the Rugby Football League choosing Medway Park as the home of England Wheelchair Rugby League.

Medway Park is also one of the leading pools in the South East for swimming galas. It hosted 39 galas during 2015, many at county and regional level.

What next?

Our priority over the next four years is to ensure the facilities available to the RFL and other sports are on a par with the best training facilities in the country. Medway Park will become the home of England Wheelchair Rugby League, with the players using the venue for regular training. Medway Park will also host the annual SuperLeague Wheelchair RL Grand Final.

We will also further develop our partnerships with other National Governing Bodies to make Medway their venue of choice for competitions and events, and continue to provide a first-class event experience for minority and disability sports, raising their profile and showcasing them to new audiences through a parallel community engagement programme.

In 2016 Medway has hosted the Kurling World Championships, European Veterans' Fencing Team Championships, a Women's Sitting Volleyball International Paralympic warm up event, and European-level table tennis.

We will also continue to profile and support the national-level competitors who do battle on a weekly basis at Medway's elite clubs including Gillingham FC and Gillingham Ladies FC, Holcombe Hockey Club, the Invicta Dynamos, Kent Crusaders Basketball, Chatham Town FC and Medway Dragons RFL, as well as in regattas on the River Medway.



“ The Rugby Football League's relationship with Medway Park and Medway Council has gone from strength to strength since we first staged a Wheelchair Rugby League International between England and France at Medway Park in 2012.

Since then, our partnership has covered the staging of the Wheelchair Rugby League World Cup in 2013, the Wheelchair Rugby League Home Nations in 2014 and the inaugural Wheelchair Rugby League European Championships in 2015. Looking forward, we hope to continue to strengthen the relationship, using the centre as our training base for the England Wheelchair team and to staging showpiece events such as the Wheelchair League Finals and future international tournaments in the years to come.

In addition to Wheelchair Rugby League, Medway Park's facilities are used regularly in other disciplines of the game, which has seen the South East Cup Finals, London Junior Origin Matches and a host of coaching courses and training events being run from the excellent facilities available on site.

In all our dealings with Medway Park and Medway Council, we have always been impressed by the levels of service and attention that the RFL has received. The team at Medway Park's attention to detail in staging some of our most prestigious events, combined with a constant desire to add value to our activities, has created a very valued partnership which we look forward to continuing together for both the benefit of our sport locally and on an international stage.

Brian Barwick, Chairman, Rugby Football League

Medway Sporting Ambassadors and volunteering

The story so far:

Our major events programme is supported by our growing army of Medway Sporting Ambassadors.

Our volunteers play a vital role in the success of the international events that are hosted in Medway, and in the staging of our mass participation events the Medway Mile, Big Splash and Big Ride.

From carrying kit bags and sorting packed lunches to welcoming spectators and carrying parade flags, our ambassadors can experience every element of elite-level competitions.

During the mass participation events, our ambassadors are on the front line, running registration, leading activities and handing out medals.

Reward evenings are now held at least once a year in recognition of their contribution and dedication, and volunteers are also offered places on coaching qualifications through Medway Sport.

Our Sporting Ambassadors represent a wide range of demographics; young and old, male and female, able bodied and those with disabilities and representatives from Medway's BME community.

What next?

The Government's new Sport Strategy - Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation (December 2015) highlights the benefits of volunteering to both the individual and the delivery of sport. It also announced the creation of a new volunteering strategy for sport and physical activity and set a target for the number of people volunteering in sport at least twice a year.

Our Sporting Ambassadors programme meets Sport England's new KPIs:

7: Increase in the number of people volunteering in sport at least twice in the last year.

8: The demographics of volunteers in sport to become more representative of society as a whole.

We will continue to invest in our volunteers, giving them worthwhile and rewarding experiences - both short and long term - and celebrating their contribution to sport in Medway. This will include identifying and training leaders from within the scheme to act as volunteering mentors.

We will also extend the use of young volunteers to support events, capturing the details of one-off volunteers brought along by schools and colleges to support our school sport events so that we can promote wider volunteering opportunities to them and using children from our Sporting Academy and other programmes to experience volunteering at national and international sporting events.

“ Since I first volunteered as a Sporting Ambassador I have made new friends, learnt about new sports and as an older retired person realised I can still get involved in the community.”

Medway Sporting Ambassador Roger Lodge

I get a huge buzz out of volunteering - being busy, meeting loads of different people and helping to make big events a success. I've also made good friends among the regular volunteers and we have a lot of fun working together.

Wendy Ansley, Medway Sporting Ambassador



The Medway Mile

The story so far:

The Medway Mile is the largest mass participation sports event staged in Medway.

Initially established to mark the countdown to the opening ceremony of the London 2012 Olympics, the Mile has become a landmark event on Medway's calendar.

Medway Mile in numbers:

- Capacity 3,000 runners every year since 2012
- More than 15,000 event participants since London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games

In the first year, approximately 500 people took part in the Mile. The event now attracts a capacity 3,000 runners every year, along with thousands more spectators.

The one-mile route around historic Rochester weaves through the high street, The Vines and the cathedral grounds before ending within the grounds of Rochester Castle.

The event has grown to now include pre-run activities and entertainment, children's races, a mascot race, competitive adult race, a mass participation warm up and the mass Medway Mile.

The 2016 Medway Mile was a celebration of Rio in anticipation of the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Brazil, including Olympic and Paralympic-themed activities and entertainment.

What next?

The event is limited by safety to a capacity of 3,000 participants, but we will maximise the opportunities for people to get involved in the free entertainment and activities, the children's and competitive adult races. By involving a wide range of local sports clubs and other groups, we highlight the numerous ways participants can remain active as a legacy of the mile.

Planning is also underway to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Medway Mile - a decade on from its launch in 2007. As part of the celebrations we will hold a People's Triathlon, offering a special reward to anyone who completes the Medway Big Splash, Big Ride and Medway Mile in 2017.

As a wider initiative linked to the Medway Mile - and to encourage physical activities in our schools - we will launch a Medway Mile Schools Challenge. This will see pupils offered rewards for rising to the challenge of running one mile every day at school in the build up to the annual Medway Mile.

Medway Big Splash

The story so far:

The Medway Big Splash, launched in 2014, is a mass participation event based around watersports, aquatics and water-based activity sessions. It takes place over a weekend in January across all four of Medway's sports centres.

The event has evolved since its launch and in 2016 included four pool parties, four Big Splash taster sessions, the Big Swim Challenge and the new Big Splash Team Challenge.

The Big Splash has given profile to many of Medway's aquatics clubs who have enjoyed a surge in interest since after each Big Splash event. Olympians Kate Haywood, Mhairi Spence and Blake Aldridge have also supported the event for the last two years.

The Big Splash is used to promote the Medway Sport Swim Academy programme and our free swimming offer for under 16s and over 60s. Demand has also been generated for new lessons and clubs, including diving and rookie lifeguarding which have now been launched at our pools.

Since the introduction of the Medway Big Splash, swimming timetables at all centres have been reviewed in partnership with the Amateur Swimming Association to maximise usage. We have also worked with the ASA to train more swimming teachers and to introduce SwimFit programmes into every pool. New equipment including giant inflatables and water zorbs has also been introduced as a legacy of the Big Splash.

The number of people in Medway swimming on a regular basis has increased steadily since the launch of the Big Splash, bucking the national trend (Sport England Active People 9).

Medway Big Splash in numbers:

- More than 5,000 participants in first three years



What next?

We will grow the Medway Big Splash as our first major event of the year. Ambitions include:

- Further integrating the Mini Youth Games and Disability Youth Games galas into the event week;
- Growing the scale of the new Team Challenge event following the pilot in 2016;
- Creating opportunities for the public to contribute to the Swim Challenge total during the build up to the main event day;
- Growing the number of people swimming on a regular basis in Medway;
- Further developing our swimming lessons programme, including additional courses for all ability levels over the summer holiday period;
- The launch of an aquatics development centre across our sports centres to include water polo, lifeguarding, diving, synchronised swimming, and SwimFit.

“ The Big Splash gives our club the chance to let people try synchronised swimming in a fun, relaxed atmosphere. By running these taster sessions we have raised our club profile and grown our membership. The range of aquatic activities on offer over the weekend is amazing, and the fact that it is free means that is accessible to everyone. ”

Medway Synchro Club





The Medway Big Ride

The story so far:

The Medway Big Ride, also launched in 2014, encourages Medway's masses to get on their bikes.

The event is the curtain raiser to the annual Festival of Sport and offers opportunities for all ages, from experienced endurance cyclists to young children.

The event day begins with sportive rides for the serious riders. The main event features children's races, fun bike-based activities and a mass family ride on the roads around Medway Park, Medway's centre of sporting excellence. Participants can also get advice on maintaining their bikes and on road safety.

The Big Ride is supported by the Medway Public Health Team's Active Medway cycling programme and local and national cycling clubs and organisations, including British Cycling.

In 2016 the Big Ride formed part of the Celebrating Rio Festival of Sport and included a dedicated Teen Zone and an hour dedicated to children's races around the Medway Park track. We also linked up with the Lord's Taverners to use the Big Ride to raise money for a new minibus for Bradfields Academy.

What next?

Cycling is a key priority for Medway. The Cycling Action Plan 2015-18 sets out how Medway is encouraging residents to lead healthier, more active lifestyles by developing a cycling culture. A total of over £2.5million of Growth Funding will be invested in cycling in Medway by 2018 to:

The Medway Big Ride in numbers:

- More than 4,000 participants in first two years of event.
- Almost 3,000 miles cycled in a Road to Rio cycling challenge in build up to 2014 event.

- Expand and improve Medway's cycle network to provide safe, attractive and useful facilities;
- Increase physical activity and improve the health of people who live and work in Medway;
- Increase cycling during peak travel times to ease road network congestion;
- Support novice and young cyclists;
- Help reduce social isolation by encouraging more local people to become involved in cycling club activities;
- Promoting the large amount of off-road cycling available on Medway's cycle network.

Our ambition is for the Big Ride to become as large as the Medway Mile in the lifetime of the Cycling Action Plan, providing a platform for showcasing and encouraging cycling for all ages in Medway. We will also explore the possibility of further competitive cycling events both on and off road.

Medway Festival of Sport

The Medway Festival of Sport is our annual sporting extravaganza celebrating Medway's sporting offer. The festival showcases sporting excellence, boosts participation in sport, promotes healthy lifestyles and inspires the whole community to play, compete and spectate.

Since its launch in 2010, the summer festival has grown hugely in size and stature and will continue to be the centrepiece of Medway's sporting legacy offer. Established events will continue to evolve and grow, and new elements will be added to the Festival offer.

For 2016 it has been extended as part of the Celebrating Rio campaign to incorporate international sporting events in the spring and the period of the Olympic and Paralympic Games.



Growing the Medway Festival of Sport

Big Buggy Push:

This new mass participation event aimed at new mums and young families is being launched in 2017.

Mums and dads with buggies will do a mass 5k buggy walk around the Great Lines Heritage Park, while those who don't need to push a buggy can run. There will also be a shorter run for young children, along with a mass buggy workout warm up.

The event is being supported by the Better Medway campaign, Sure Start Children's Centres and other partners. The aim is to encourage one of our key priority groups to want to stay active, and to learn about the regular opportunities available to them in Medway.

The inaugural Big Buggy Push will raise money for the Oliver Fisher Special Care Baby Trust at Medway Maritime Hospital.

The Big Workout:

The Big Workout is a new event to encourage participation and promote the fitness programmes at our sports centres.

The inaugural event in 2016 featured a gym challenge competition as the culmination of a summer Celebrating Rio challenge, as well as a mass clubacise workout at Medway Park.

The Big Workout is held on the same day as the Medway Sport Open Day and will evolve each year, with future plans including a UV mass workout and a relay challenge linking all four of Medway's sports centre gyms.

The Medway Open Series:

Our ambition is to establish new, high-quality open competitions across a range of sports to provide further opportunities for club players and non-club players alike to compete.

The Medway Golf Open has been established as a highly-regarded, quality golf tournament at Deangate Ridge. Pilot competitions for badminton, squash and footgolf were held in 2015 and expanded for the 2016 festival and beyond.

The Medway Opens include categories for both women and men, and where appropriate categories for veteran and senior players.

We will launch at least one additional Open event each year. The target for 2017 will be boccia, one of the growth disability sports in Medway and across the county.

Festival of Sport in numbers:

- More than 40,000 participants since 2012
- More than 200 coaches and 380 volunteers in 2015
- 58 events in 2015



Major events

In addition to the Medway Big Ride and the Medway Mile, there are a number of firmly established events which feature in the Festival of Sport calendar.

Medway 10k and 5K series: The Medway 10k was launched in 2014 and regularly attracts more than 200 runners. The 5K series is held on weeknights across the summer at Medway's parks and greenspaces, with prizes handed out at each event and points amassed towards an overall series total. We will continue to grow the participation numbers in both of these events, building on their early success and the huge popularity of running in Medway.

Schools events

The Festival of Sport marks the culmination of the Mini Youth Games series, with the staging of Night of Champions finals and the crowning of the overall MYG champions for the year. The 2016 Festival will include a Euro 2016-themed football tournament and a Rio-themed Olympic opening ceremony element at the athletics event.



I think it's wonderful that the children are interactively exposed to such diversity and challenges of life, more importantly to recognise there is nothing they themselves can not achieve with the right mental, physical and spiritual attitude.

Amanda Onadeko, mother of Sitting Volleyball international young volunteer Shem Onadeko.



Sport-specific competitions and festivals

The annual Festival of Sport programme also features a number of established sporting competitions and festivals, including the finals of the Medway T20 Cricket competition, the Anchorians FC Football Festival, Wilsonian Sailing Club's Medway Dinghy Regatta, and a Rugby League Festival. These events are all delivered by, or in partnership with, Medway's leading local clubs.

Disability Sport

The Festival of Sport places a focus on promoting disability sport, with the programme including a disability sports club taster day and the annual Disability Youth Summer Games. The 2016 Festival period also features two international-level disability sporting events, and we will bring further high profile disability sporting events to Medway in future years.

Medway Extreme

Medway Extreme is our new offer to the thrill-seeking, mud-loving endurance sports enthusiasts of Medway. In line with offering non-traditional sports in non-traditional locations, we are looking at new, innovative ways of using our outdoor spaces.

The story so far:

The Extreme Big Splash Open Water Challenge at The Strand in 2015 and Deangate turns Meangate weekend in February 2016 both proved hugely popular, attracting competitors from far and wide.

Meangate saw hundreds of people tackle an 8km obstacle course set up in the rolling fairways and woodland around the site of the golf course at Deangate Ridge. The event weekend also included cross country, cyclocross and mountain biking events.



What next?

We will build on the success of the inaugural Medway Extreme events by adding more events to our annual calendar.

Deangate will host regular Meangate days, including a Rio-themed event in October 2016, plus cross country, mountain biking and orienteering events.

We will also work with the emerging sport of canicross to establish Medway as its home by staging monthly dedicated races. Canicross is the fast-growing sport of cross country running with a harnessed dog and proved popular when piloted as part of the Deangate Meangate weekend.

Our other sites will also develop events such as a compact relay obstacle course on the infield and athletics track at Medway Park.

The Extreme Swim Challenge will become the opening event for the Strand outdoor pool each year, and we will work with the Medway Youth Services and two local gymnastics clubs to run parkour sessions for Medway's dare-devil urban acrobats.

Medway Sports Awards

The Medway Sports Awards are our opportunity to celebrate the achievements of Medway's athletes, coaches, volunteers and officials from our clubs and schools.

The story so far:

The gala awards evening is held every two years, when gold, silver and bronze awards are presented in a range of senior and junior categories recognising individual and team successes. Recent guests of honour have included Olympic long jump champion Greg Rutherford and gold medal-winning boxer Anthony Joshua.



Previous winners have included World Cup-winning rugby player Rachael Burford, Paralympic gold medallist Charlotte Evans and the star-studded Holcombe Hockey Club Ladies First XI featuring the 2015 EuroHockey-winning goalkeeper Maddie Hinch.

What next?

Medway Sports Awards continues to be staged every two years.

In 2014, Medway Sport's new Hall Of Fame proudly welcomed its first three inductees - footballer Andy Hessenthaler, football commentator Brian Moore and Olympic rower Liz McVeigh of Medway Towns Rowing Club. The Hall of Fame will be expanded at each Medway Sports Awards event, and a permanent gallery honouring its inductees will be created at Medway Park.

Commemorating landmark events**Dutch Raid (Battle of Medway):**

June 2017 Medway will see the commemoration of the 350th anniversary of the Dutch Raid, known on continental Europe as The Battle of Medway.

Medway Sport will contribute to a major programme of celebrations in Medway by organising themed events. Plans include a Holland-to-Medway bike ride, friendly fixtures between Dutch and Medway teams and popular Dutch sports such as korfbal being showcased through our community sport programmes.

Strand 125:

The year 2021 will mark 125 years since the opening of a lido at The Strand in Gillingham. In the build up to the anniversary we will develop commemorative activities culminating in a season of celebration in 2021, alongside a programme of ongoing improvements to the Strand Leisure Park.

Dickens 2020:

9 June 2020 is the 150th anniversary of the death of Charles Dickens in Rochester. Medway is establishing itself as Dickens Country and Medway Sport will be contributing to a wider programme of commemorative celebrations with Victorian-themed sporting activities in the summer of 2020.

Isaac Newell:

2019 will mark the 150th anniversary of Strood-born Isaac Newell travelling to Argentina. Newton was a teacher a pioneer of football in Argentina. Lionel Messi's former club and legendary Argentinian football team Newell's Old Boys in Rosario was founded by Newell, and is named after him.

We will support a campaign to create a memorial to Newton in Strood and celebrate his contribution to football in Argentina in 2019.

Significant global sporting events:

We will also tailor our annual sporting programmes, in particular the Festival of Sport programme, to reflect major global tournaments taking place each year, in particular those taking place on home soil. This will include themed competitions and participation programmes to harness the legacy of each event.

The highlights include:

- Athletics World Championships (London, 2017);
- Rugby League World Cup (New Zealand, Australia and Papua New Guinea, 2017);
- Winter Olympics (PyeongChang , 2018);
- FIFA World Cup (Russia, 2018);
- Cricket World Cup (England and Wales, 2019);
- Rugby World Cup (Japan, 2019);
- Olympic and Paralympic Games (Tokyo, 2020).



03

CHILDREN
AND YOUNG
PEOPLE



Medway Sport's work to engage young people in sports coaching and competitions has increased significantly in size and scale as a legacy of London 2012, and will continue to remain a primary focus in this and future strategies.

Sport England's remit has now been extended to work with children and young people from the age of five, with a focus on sporting opportunities outside of the school curriculum.

Mini Youth Games

The story so far...

Since its launch in 1999, the Mini Youth Games series has grown from small inter-school competitions involving fewer than 10 schools to large-scale events featuring more than 40 schools, with more than 400 primary school children at each event.

Thousands of young people each year get to enjoy the thrill of friendly, competitive sport during 10 events in a range of sports including rugby, football, hockey, netball and athletics.

Prizes are awarded at each event to the top-performing schools and the team which best exemplifies the values of fair play. Schools also amass points towards the highly-coveted annual Mini Youth Games title.

The top eight schools from each individual competition also qualify for a Medway Night of Champions event, held during the summer Festival of Sport. Where appropriate, winning schools also progress to the Kent School Games competition.

The Mini Youth Games in numbers:

- Around 4,000 children took part in the 10 events in 2014/15
- More than 150 volunteers and 10 local clubs supported series in 2014/15



Mini Youth Games events are linked to a leading local sports club, creating a pathway for children to continue playing a sport beyond the school setting.

The Mini Youth Games programme also includes the Disability Youth Games programme. There are two stand-alone events each year – a winter skiing competition and a multi-sport summer games. More than 50 children from four schools took part in the summer games in 2015.

What's new?

We will evolve the Mini Youth Games programme, reviewing the sports featured in the series and engaging with the small number of schools not currently participating in the events.

The Mini Youth Games series will celebrate its 20th anniversary in the lifetime of this strategy, when we will hold a special year of celebration.

We will develop the Night of Champions and ensure that, where possible, the Mini Youth Games series feeds into the national School Games programme currently being examined by the Government as part of its Active Nation Strategy.

Our programmes for children and young people help meet a number of Sport England's new KPIs:

4: Increase in the percentage of children achieving physical literacy

6: An increase in the percentage of young people (11-18) with a positive attitude towards sport and being active

Medway Sport Development Centres

The story so far:

Mini Youth Sports Clubs were piloted as a new addition to the MYG package in 2015/16, offering quality coaching for 8-11-year-olds in sports that feature in the Mini Youth Games series.

Taking place after school at Medway Park and Strood Sports Centres and delivered, wherever possible, by a coach from one of Medway's leading clubs, the centres aim to create a pathway for children to continue to develop their skills more formally in a club setting.

What next?

We will evolve the Mini Youth Sports Clubs programme into a programme of after-school Development Centres offering informal coaching in specific sports at multiple sites, without the commitment of joining a club.

Each year we will look to add at least one additional development centres into our sites. They will include dance (Medway Park), golf

(Deangate), swimming (multiple sites) and football (through the Gillingham FC Community Scheme at Strood).

We will also create opportunities for talented youngsters to be identified and potentially invited to join the Medway Sporting Academy programme or progress into a community sports club.

The development centres directly reflect Sport England's ambition of creating new opportunities for after-school sport.

Mini Youth Sport Camps

The story so far:

Medway's sports camps have become one of the most popular activity programmes in our sports centres.

The three-day camps run during the school holidays at Medway Park, when scores of primary school children receive quality sports coaching from our team. More than 300 children attended the camps in 2015.

The camps are being rolled out to Strood Sports Centre, where children can also receive football coaching from Gillingham FC community coaches on the centre's 3G multi-sport pitches.

What next?

After pilot sessions at Deangate Ridge, Strood and Splashes in 2016 we will establish Mini Youth Sports Camps at all of our sports centres during every school holiday by 2018, allowing residents across Medway to access top quality holiday sports coaching.





Mini Youth Sports Coaching

The story so far:

Medway Sport's coaching offer to schools has been developed and enhanced significantly over the last two years.

We offer a package of sport-specific coaching linked to forthcoming Mini Youth Games competitions, along with a more general bespoke package.

More than 3,300 primary school children received PE and School Sport coaching from Medway Sport in last two years.

Our coaches run PE lessons or club sessions before, during or after school in a total of 25 sports, including Mini Youth Games and other Olympic and Paralympic sports.

Schools also access help organising intra-school sports competitions and sports days, or teacher training to upskill their teachers to be able deliver PE lessons. Schools are also offered discounted use of facilities at Medway's sports centres, and in Olympic year can book Olympic and Paralympic sport taster sessions delivered by Medway Sport.

What next?

The Government confirmed in 2015 that it would continue to invest in the Primary PE and Sport Premium. This ring-fenced money is given to primary school headteachers to improve the quality of the PE and sport activities they offer their pupils and is used by many Medway schools to employ the services of our Mini Youth Sports Coaching team.

We will build on the early popularity of the Mini Youth Sports Coaching programme, getting additional schools to make use of their Primary PE and Sport Premium to receive our quality coaching offer.

Our ambition is to have delivered coaching in a third of Medway's primary schools in the lifetime of this strategy, placing a particular focus on providing coaches to schools in Medway's rural communities.



Talent development

The story so far:

The Medway Sporting Academy – our pioneering programme to help develop young athletes who show sporting potential – has evolved as a legacy of London 2012.

Alumni who have benefited from membership of the Sporting Academy include England under 15 footballer Miri Taylor, plus age group international modern pentathletes and national level rugby players, swimmers, runners, triathletes, boxers and squash players.

Successful athletes selected during the annual summer trials benefit from coaching sessions that complement their sport-specific training with their clubs.

The academy is delivered in three stages, with stage one being the entry point and stage three being for athletes who are on a recognised national governing body pathway.

The coaching team represents a range of sports and has experience of developing athletes to national and international level.

As athletes progress through the academy and succeed in their chosen sports they are able to benefit from sport science workshops led by the University of Kent. Parents are also invited to attend parental behaviour workshops, where they can learn how best to support and influence their children to reach their sporting potential.

Beyond the Academy, Medway Sport supports young athletes up to the age of 21 as they progress up the rankings on their way to national and international level.

What next?

The structure of the academy has recently been refined to ensure that children with the most potential receive the best possible quality of coaching. We will also introduce a policy that every new inductee will join a recognised community sports clubs within six months of joining the programme to help encourage progression and retention in talent pathways.

We will constantly monitor and enhance both the calibre of our coaches and the quality of the young athletes on the programme. We will also build on the role local sports clubs and NGBs can play in identifying potential new recruits and developing our future sporting stars in partnership with Medway Sporting Academy.

We will also raise the profile of some of our most talented young athletes by establishing an online gallery and regularly reporting on their sporting successes in our e-newsletters and via our social media channels.

At all times we will ensure we are creating an environment that is positive, rewarding and inclusive.

Secondary, HE and FE projects**The story so far:**

Medway Sport has successfully secured almost £30,000 from the Sportivate Lottery fund over the last two years to deliver sports projects for 14-25-year-olds.

The money has been used to offer free or subsidised coaching for more than 2,000 young people who may not otherwise have been interested in or able to try a new sport.

Coaching was given in six-week blocks in a range of activities including golf, wheelchair basketball, climbing, sailing, and girls' cricket. The funding was also used to support the six-week blocks of sports activities delivered as part of our flagship ParkSport programme at The Strand.

Sport England has now awarded Medway Sport almost £160,000 to roll out the ParkSport programme over the next three years. This will engage almost 3,000 young people from Medway's more deprived areas in weekly multi-sport sessions in Medway's parks and open spaces.

Medway Sport also works closely with the Street Games charity to set up Doorstep Sport Clubs in partnership with the Medway Youth Service.

Multi-sport and handball clubs have been set up at three locations to offer 14-25-year-olds sport on their terms. More than 60 young people

Secondary, FE and HE in numbers:

- Almost £200,000 of external funding secured for targeted projects
- More than 2,000 young people already engaged in coach-led sports sessions.

regularly attend the free sessions on a weekly basis, and we are currently working to identify young leaders from the sessions who can be trained to run the clubs on an ongoing basis.

What's next?

We will have a dedicated officer working on projects for 14-25-year-olds, developing existing clubs and programmes and identifying new funding streams and projects in partnerships with Medway's secondary schools, colleges and universities.

Young volunteers from Medway's secondary schools and colleges who support our Mini Youth Games programme and other events as umpires and event volunteers will now get access to training, branded clothing and other recognition rewards in a Street Games project launched by Medway Sport. We will also aim to transition these volunteers onto our Medway Sporting Ambassadors programme.

Medway Sport will also offer work placements to sports studies undergraduate students from the University of Kent, giving them practical experience of running events and delivering projects.



04

MEDWAY'S
SPORTS
CENTRES



Medway Council has invested millions of pounds in redeveloping its sports centres over the past two years.

This builds on the £11 million investment in Medway Park to transform Medway Park into a centre of sporting excellence as a legacy of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, in partnership with Sport England, The University of Kent and the Department for Communities and Local Government.

Facility investment

The story so far:

Strood Sports Centre has undergone a major refurbishment worth £1.9 million, transforming it into a more spacious and inviting facility for all of Medway to enjoy.

The state-of-the-art fitness suite is double the size of the previous one, and there are new fitness studios hosting an exciting new programme of classes.

General improvements to the reception, changing areas and more mean Medway's second busiest sports centre is more bustling than ever before.

The Strand Leisure Park has also been given an overhaul, including a facelift for the tired outdoor pool, complete with a new, customer-friendly glass reception area. The tennis courts and other facilities have been tidied up and the whole site has been opened up more with the removal of shrubbery and new signage. The par 3 golf course has been developed into one of the leading footgolf courses in the region.

The former Stirling Sports Centre has undergone a £500,000 refurbishment in a partnership between the King's School and Medway Council. This includes internal refurbishments and the completion of seven new tennis courts, and five netball courts.

Our open spaces have also benefited from investment with the addition of marked running routes at Capstone and Riverside Country Parks and



the installation of outdoor gyms across Medway's parks and greenspaces.

There has also been considerable funding by external partners in new sporting facilities in Medway, including a new footgolf course at Lordswood School.

What's next?

Medway Council will work with partners to explore options for a new sports centre serving Rainham and the East of Medway.

We will also be investing in the facilities at Medway Park as it becomes the national training base for the England Wheelchair Rugby League team. Our ambition will be to attract additional teams to use the first-class facilities for regular training.

A new footgolf course, par 3 golf course and mountain bike course opened at Deangate Ridge Sports Complex in 2016. We are now working with Sport England to produce a facilities strategy which will help determine the strategic sporting needs of the whole of Hoo Peninsula into the future, and to develop plans for the future development of all our sports centres.

We will also support the planning for a new BMX pump track in Medway as part of the Medway Cycle Action Plan.

Work is also now underway on the new privately-funded Avenue Tennis indoor and outdoor tennis centre on the site of the former 44Two Sports Club in Gillingham. We will work with the venue as part of our ongoing programme to develop the sport of tennis in Medway.

Gillingham Anchorians Hockey Club has been granted £45,000 by Sport England towards its bid for a vital new astroturf pitch. The funding grant means it is now within reach of the money needed to replace the ageing all-weather surface at its Gillingham-based site.

Innovative programming

A major priority for the further development of our sports centres is innovative new programming, using fresh ideas to make our activity offers more welcoming and inclusive.

The story so far:

Strood Sports Centre is leading the way in maximising the use of its facilities through innovative programming. The 3G outdoors football centre has become a multi-sport venue offering a wide range of activities, including bubble football, archery tag, laser tag and multi-sport sessions as part of the ParkSport programme. As a result, it has become the go-to venue for a party or corporate away days, and has become the home of the Kent and Medway Business Games.

Splashes has also recently launched a new Fit Club, offering two evenings packed with 30-minute fitness classes that take place on poolside.

Medway Park has recently introduced exciting and innovative new fitness classes, including an Aqua Gym class that uses freeweights designed for a workout in the water.

The Strand has also become a hub for organised sporting activities. It is the home of Junior parkrun, hosts ParkSport sessions and other community programmes including Tennis Tuesdays for the LTA. In July 2016 it will be one of three host venues for the inaugural Medway Tennis Festival.

What next?

A similarly creative approach is now being implemented across all of our sports centres to maximise usage and access for the general public and to generate revenue to reinvest in our facilities.

Plans include:

- A programme of additional weekly outdoor activities including archery tag, boot camps, mountain biking, and orienteering at Deangate;
- New quick leagues in a variety of sports;
- Walking sport leagues and multi-sport sessions on the 3G pitches at Strood and other sites;
- New sessions and equipment for Laser Tag and Splash Tag;
- Enhance use of our functional fitness equipment for pre-season training sessions for local clubs and teams;
- Launch of new development centres in aquatics, golf, dance and football;
- Creative new events such as obstacle runs on the Medway Park track.



05

WORKFORCE
CLUB AND
COACH
DEVELOPMENT



For those wanting to pursue a career in sport, Medway is the place to be. Its colleges and universities have an enviable reputation for the calibre of their sports-related courses, while Medway Sport itself is investing significant amounts of time and money in developing its own staff.

Support is also given to local volunteer and professional sports coaches through a programme of training and development courses hosted at Medway Park and other venues in partnership with Kent Sport.

Medway is proud of the role it plays in supporting Sport England's KPI 16: Employment in the sport sector.

Further education and sport in Medway

Medway has an excellent reputation for quality further and higher education in a range of sports-related disciplines.

Medway Council and its partners continue to strive to make Medway synonymous with forging a career in sport.

University of Kent

The University of Kent is recognised nationally and internationally as one of the leading universities for sport and exercise science study and research.

Its School of Sport and Exercise Sciences has approximately 500+ students and 24 academic staff, offering four undergraduate degrees – including a new Sport Management course, and three postgraduate study pathways (in Master's, PhD and a Professional Doctorate). More than half of UoK graduates go on to careers in the sport, exercise and health sectors, including sports therapy, working with the NHS, with sports governing bodies or working with similar exercise professionals.

The University has a strong reputation for research in the fields of sport, exercise and health, with between 10-15 Medway-based researchers and expert practitioners conducting studies to develop new knowledge and professional practice in the sport and exercise sciences.

Staff in its research groups have published and presented hundreds of scientific papers in the last few years, attracting hundreds of thousands of pounds of research funding and working with local and national organisations and governing bodies of sport.

The University of Kent is a partner in Medway Park, Medway's centre of sporting excellence, and operates thriving sports therapy and high performance clinics, as well as a state-of-the-art research laboratory within the centre.

In the future the School hopes to expand its international reach, attracting high quality students from overseas, alongside the current influx of UK and EU students. With this, might bring opportunities to develop further postgraduate study programmes and funding.



University of Greenwich

The University of Greenwich sports science programmes are part of the Centre for Science and Medicine in Sport and Exercise (CSMSE), which offers state-of-the-art facilities including 3D motion-capture systems, strength and conditioning facilities and a specialised environment chamber.

The University's programmes equip students with the knowledge and analytical skills needed for a career in sport and exercise science, both health-related exercise and high level sports performance.

The research Centre for the CSMSE at the University brings together scientists and medical professionals to share their expertise in assisting people to perform better in elite sports and in helping members of the public to prevent ill-health or recover from illness through regular exercise.

It also has an outstanding track record of publishing in peer-reviewed journals and presenting work at international conferences. The CSMSE plans to increase its already successful programme of external grant-funded projects through National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) projects in collaboration with local clinicians.

The CSMSE is also taking on responsibility for Clinical Researcher Career Development for Kent Surrey and Sussex, in partnership with Health Education England and the NIHR (Integrated Clinical Academic Internship Programme, 2016-17).

MidKent College

MidKent College is situated alongside Medway Park, and has a strong partnership relationship with Medway's centre of sporting excellence.

The college helps students prepare for a high performance career in a range of sports employment roles including sports marketing, personal training, fitness instruction, coaching, teaching, sports therapy, psychology, sports science and sports management.

The college offers an array of sports-related qualifications ranging from level 1 to 5 and has approximately 300 full time students studying sports-related diplomas, fitness and coaching courses.

With a range of backgrounds in many different aspects of the sports industry, the experienced and professional staff are passionate about

sport and fitness. They work to inspire the next generation, with high expectations placed at the forefront, and challenge learners to excel beyond their means.

The college has a partnership with Gillingham FC and Maidstone United FC, with options to study a HND at the college or progress to university. MidKent College students have extensive use of the sporting facilities at Medway Park.

Staff training and apprenticeships

The story so far:

Medway Council employs exceptional staff across its sports centres, whose passion, drive and enthusiasm helps us deliver the best possible service for our customers.

These staff are given every opportunity to improve their skills and improve the centres, and make working at Medway Council's sports centres a career in which they can achieve and prosper.

Between August 2014 and October 2015, Medway Sport staff gained 89 new qualifications in gym instructing, leading fitness classes and swim teaching. These included level 1 and 2 qualifications in swimming instruction, gym courses and gym refreshers and exercise to music qualifications.

In March 2016 nine sports officer also passed Level 2 Street Games Training Academy qualifications in Principles and Preparation for Coaching and Multi Skills Coaching. One of our sports participation officers has also qualified as a tutor for the Street Games training academy.

All managers complete accredited management training courses as we look to upskill and motivate our employees and improve our service to our customers.

In addition, some 14 apprentices have secured jobs in Medway's sports centres since January 2015, giving them first-hand experience and a first step on the career ladder. They each complete an NVQ Level 2 in Sport and Fitness.

What's next?

We will invest even more in training our staff and funding additional qualifications, enabling them to be able to deliver more classes, lessons and coaching sessions in our centres. These courses will include Swim Level 1 and 2 courses, Street Games training Academy coaching courses and specific qualifications for delivering a range of fitness classes, including pre and post natal, as well as sport-specific NGB coaching qualifications.

We will also employ a minimum of 10 apprentices each year who will each complete a Level 2 NVQ in Sport and Fitness.

Club and coach development

Medway's sports coaches and volunteers have a vital role to play in coaching the local community. Coaching is central to the development of sport at every level.

Medway Sport offers aspiring coaches access to introductory modules for would-be coaches, as well as working with national governing bodies and our colleagues at Kent Sport to lay on sport-specific coaching courses and club development workshops.

Medway Sport also supports local clubs to gain Clubmark, ClubFirst or equivalent accreditation from their national governing bodies as a quality mark for their junior provision.

We will continue to support additional clubs wanting to work towards achieving accreditation, and with any additional support with funding bids or other development plans.

Find out more

Local

Medway Sport: medway.gov.uk/sport

   [@MedwaySport](https://www.instagram.com/MedwaySport)

Medway Council: medway.gov.uk

Enjoy Medway: enjoymedway.org

A Better Medway: abettermedway.co.uk

Kent Sport: kentsport.org

University of Kent: kent.ac.uk/sportsciences

University of Greenwich: gre.ac.uk/engsci/research/groups/csmse

MidKent College: midkent.ac.uk

National

Department of Culture, Media and Sport:
gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-culture-media-sport

Sport England: sportengland.org

UK Sport: uksport.gov.uk

Association of Physical Education: afpe.org.uk

Sport and Recreation Alliance: sportandrecreation.org.uk

Youth Sports Trust: youthsporttrust.org

Street Games: streetgames.org



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