

# Protecting Playing Fields

## Conyers School Field Regeneration



### CASE STUDY THEMES

- Increased availability of football
- Increased participation in football
- Increased participation in other sports
- Improved financial sustainability
- Increased demand for staffing

### PROJECT SUMMARY

Facility name	Conyers School
Lead organisation	Go Sport Conyers School
Organisation type	Community sport project within the school
Location	Yarm, Cleveland, North East.
Sport	Football
Total project cost	£75,615
PPF funding	£50,000 (66% of total)
Other funding sources	£25,615 Stockton Borough Council
Tender process	Used Sport England Framework contractor
Contract type	Design and Build
Start and end date	July 2013 - August 2014
Duration of capital works	1 year
Increased usage achieved per week in season	20 hours

#### Achieved outcomes

- Facilitated more playing opportunities with the new pitch and regenerated pitch
- Increased participation at senior and junior level
- Increased participation in other sports at the facility



## Introduction

Go Sport Conyers is a community sport project that provides a variety of sporting activities to the local community as well as to students of Conyers School. The facility was previously offering reduced provision for extra-curricular and community football and unable to meet the demands for football playing space, due to having only one pitch which was in poor condition. There was provision for one senior team but no junior football. The project allowed the existing pitch to be regenerated and a new pitch to be developed. This has enabled increased opportunities for participation in extra-curricular and community football.

## The Project

The project involved two elements, the building of a brand new grass pitch and the regeneration of the existing grass pitch (levelled and re-grassed). The work was completed in August 2014 and the pitches have been in use since September 2014. The project was funded by the Protecting Playing Fields programme (£50,000) and funding from Stockton Borough Council (£25,615). The project was managed by Go Sport, a not-for-profit community sport project based at Conyers School. The project would not have gone ahead without the grant from Sport England, as the cost of the works would not have been possible to have been covered by Go Sport themselves. The work was undertaken by Total Turf Solutions and relaying of the pitch by Cleveland Land Services. .

### DURING THE WORK



### THE NEW PITCH



## Outcomes

### The Playing Field

The project has provided a brand new pitch as well as improved the condition of the existing pitch. The original plans for this project also included the provision of piped drainage with sand grooves to the field that is prone to flooding. This work was deemed necessary to prevent the cancellation of games for both school and community users in poor weather. Unfortunately permission for the drainage work was not granted by the local council and as a consequence this is still a problem for the facility. The drainage issues are demonstrated by the delayed start date for the building of the new pitch and regeneration of the existing pitch, as the project was planned to commence in July 2012 but high rainfall meant the ground was too wet and the work was delayed for 12 months.

### Sports Participation

Since the project's completion, football participation has greatly increased. Prior to this project, there was one senior team using the facility for one 90 minute game per week, and no opportunities for junior football. There are now five senior teams and one junior team using the facility. This means that there is now provision of football from age 7 through to the senior teams. The pitches are now used for 7.5 hours per week by senior teams for fixtures plus 2 hours for training, and 12 hours by junior teams, totalling 21.5 hours per week usage. There has also been a knock on effect for Go Sport as the increase in numbers of people visiting the facility to play or watch football means that throughput to the facility as a whole has increased considerably. User surveys with participants showed that the majority were "very satisfied" with the facility (87%), and the same proportion were doing more physical activity than prior to the improvements to the pitches.

The numbers of people that visit the facility (in order to participate in the range of other sports offered, not just football), are currently on average 2,500 per week, in comparison to 1,292 per week prior to this project taking place.

THROUGHPUT	Baseline	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
Target	-	151	2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700
Actual (per week)	1,292	2,500	No data	No data	No data	No data

Once the football season comes to an end, the pitches are likely to be used by the school for other sports, including athletics and by the football clubs for pre-season training. The likely amount of usage is unclear at the moment, due to this being the first year since the completion of the work, but the pitches are predicted to be regularly used throughout the summer months in addition to the September-May football season.

## Local Community

The increase in participation was the main driver of this project; however additional impacts are as follows:

- The facility is used by Conyers School as well as by the local community. The profile of Go Sport has been greatly increased within the local community since the new pitches were developed.
- An increase in throughput and the increase in football participation and games at the weekends mean that existing Go Sport staffing hours have been increased. In particular there is an increased demand for staff at the weekends.
- Longer term financial sustainability is stronger. Increased opportunity to play through more teams, fixtures, training sessions and the knock-on impact on increased participation in other sports offered at the facility are all anticipated to have a positive impact on income.



## Key Findings

The key outcomes of the project have been:

- Increased availability of football with a new pitch and regenerated pitch - resulting in increased participation by the school and local community in football (usage has increased from 1.5 hours per week to 21.5 hours per week).
- Increased participation in senior football and the creation of additional teams at junior level means a pathway for football development is starting to take shape.
- Potential for the pitches to be used for other sports during the summer months and for pre-season football, meaning that the pitches will be used year-round.
- Increased participation in other sports within the facility due to greater awareness and throughput which has increased the visibility of the other facilities (throughput has increased from 1,292 people per week to 2,500 people per week).
- Increased working hours for existing staff due to the increased demand for the facilities.
- Increased participation and throughput are anticipated to have a positive impact on income.

Go Sport were disappointed that they were unable to provide the drainage work to the pitch as this will still have some negative impact in that the pitch can still become flooded at times of high rainfall. However they do report that the works that were completed as part of this project were highly successful and they are happy with the results and optimistic for the future development of their sports project.