



**Óifig an
Rialaitheora Pleanála**
**Office of the
Planning Regulator**

Planning for Sports & Recreational Facilities

Planning Training Webinar for Elected Members &
Staff of Local Authorities, Regional Assemblies and
An Coimisiún Pleanála

23 October 2026

Webinar Outline



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Office of the
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Opening Address – AILG President, Cllr. Aengus O'Rourke



Overview of Scoping Paper on Planning for Sports and Recreation Facilities

John Keating, Senior Planner, OPR



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Demographic Shift and Issues Arising – The GAA's Perspective

Dr. Peter Horgan, Strategy, Insights and Innovation Manager, GAA



Building a National Evidence Base for Sport Facility Planning

Benny Cullen, Director of Research & Innovation, Sport Ireland



SPÓRT ÉIREANN
SPORT IRELAND

Social Infrastructure Audits in County Kildare

David Jordan, Senior Executive Planner, Kildare County Council



Questions & Answers



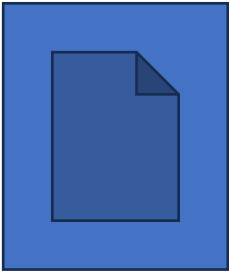
Tionscatal Éireann
Project Ireland
2040

For Your Information



How to ask Questions in GoToWebinar

- Just click on the Question Mark icon ?
- Click into the area that says... Ask the Staff a Question
- Type in your question and press the Send button



All Training Materials from today will be made available on the OPR Website

- Follow up Questions & Answers Sheet
- Presentations
- Video Recording of Webinar
- Useful Links Page

OPR & Sport Ireland

Scoping Paper on...

Sport & Recreation Amenity Planning in Ireland

Objectives

- ☐ Share Findings
- ☐ Share Perspectives
- ☐ Inform Discussion on Policy



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Scoping Paper on Sport and Recreation
Amenity Planning in Ireland

Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) and Sport Ireland

October 2026



The Impetus for - Sports & Recreation Facilities Planning

- NPF – Housing Targets
 - 300,000 Homes to 2030
 - 50,000 per year to 2040
- Development Plan Reviews
- Fundamental Infrastructure
- Feedback from Councillors
- Sport Ireland – Prescribed Body Status
- Programme for Government 2025
 - Audit of Sports Facilities



Funding & Delivery

- Community Sports Facilities Fund – (CSFF)
- Large Scale Sports Infrastructure Fund – (LSSIF)
- Local Authority Expenditure
- Developer Led Provision



Greater Coordination



The Work Undertaken

■ 12 Development Plans

Waterford City & County Council	Meath County Council	Kildare County Council
Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council	Wicklow County Council	Louth County Council
Limerick City & County Council	Cork City Council	Galway City Council
South Dublin County Council	Fingal County Council	Dublin City Council

Looked at: Policies, Objectives, Standards and Approaches relating to Sports Facilities

■ Analysis set out under 4 Themes:

1. Awareness and Integration of wider Government Policy
2. Social Infrastructure and Public Open Space Audits
3. Use of Metric Standards
4. Protection of Existing Infrastructure & Assets

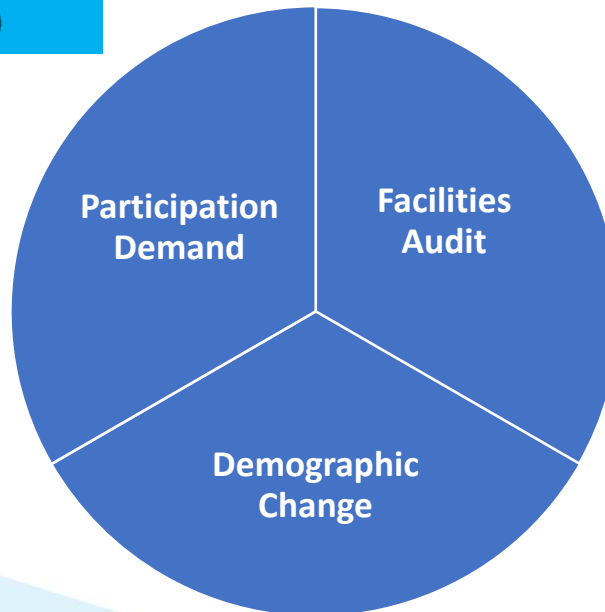
Theme 2 Social Infrastructure and Public Open Space Audits

Variety of Audit Approaches...

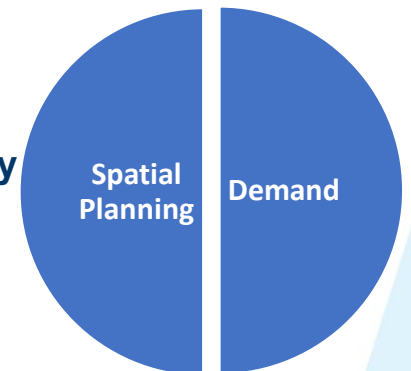
- Public Open Space Audit (POSA)
- Social Infrastructure Audit (SIA)
- Community & Social Audit (CSA)
- Sports & Recreation Facilities Audit (SRFA)
- Community, Social & Cultural Infrastructure Audit (CSCIA)
- Active Recreational Needs Study (ARNS)
- Community & Cultural Audit (CCA)
- Recreation & Amenity Needs Study (RANS)

- Feed into Development Plan Preparation
- Stated as Future Actions
- Require Audits with Planning Applications
- No Consistently Defined Scope or Methodology

**Underpinned by
Strong & Consistent
Evidence Base**



**Opportunity for
Consistent Methodology**



Theme 3 Use of Metric Standards

Fields in Trust Standards
Creating great spaces for all



Local Authority	Ratio of Open Space
Dublin City Co	City-wide range of 2.5–3.6 ha of parks per 1,000 population
South Dublin Co Co	2.4 ha per 1,000 population
Kildare Co Co	Open space: 2.5 ha per 1,000 population
Wicklow Co Co	Active open space: 2.4 ha per 1,000 population
Waterford City & Co Co	Additional open space at a minimum rate of 2.83 ha (7 acres) per 1,000 population

- How many pitches?
- How many courts?



Theme 4 Protection of Existing Infrastructure & Assets

9.4.1.2 Policy Objective OSR10: Protection of Sports Grounds/Facilities

- That existing sports facilities and grounds within the established urban area are protected, retained, and enhanced.

9.4.1.1 Policy Objective PHP2: Sustainable Neighbourhood Infrastructure

It is a Policy Objective to:

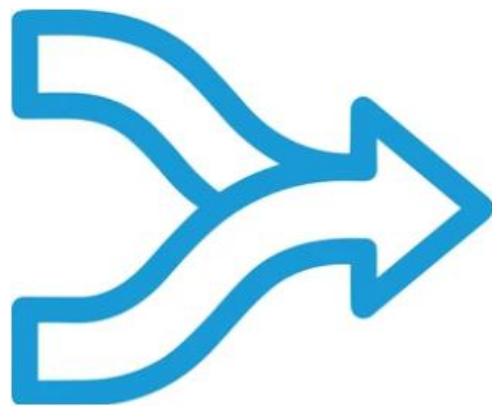
- Protect and improve existing sustainable neighbourhood infrastructure as appropriate.



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Sports Planning

Spatial Planning



Key Points....

- National Level Policy & Guidance
- Consistent & Appropriate Methodology
- Building Awareness & Technical Capability
- Sport Ireland is a Key Player
- Feedback Welcome



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Thank You

