The Use of School Sports and Cultural Facilities

A Review of the Impact of Policies and Management Regimes

by

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and
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for

sportscotland
Scottish Arts Council
Scottish Government

Research Report no. 107

FURTHER INFORMATION

This is the main report of a comprehensive study prepared on behalf of **sport**scotland, the Scottish Arts Council and the (then) Scottish Executive. Most of the work was carried out in 2004 but the bulk of the findings and conclusions remain of value. The study was undertaken by Genesis Strategic Management Consultants and Professor Fred Coalter with additional contributions by Penny Lochhead of PMR Leisure.

The study is summarised in the following document:

- *The use of school sports and cultural facilities: a review of the impact of policies and management regimes. Summary*. (**sport**scotland Research Digest no. 100) Edinburgh: **sport**scotland, 2006 (minor updates, 2008).

Guidelines have been prepared based on the study:

- *Managing school facilities for community use: practical guidelines*. Edinburgh: **sport**scotland, 2006 (minor updates, 2008).

A detailed guide to planning for community use of school facilities for sport is available from **sport**scotland:

- *Guide to community use of school sports facilities.* Edinburgh: **sport**scotland, 2004. www.sportscotland.org.uk/ChannelNavigation/Resource+Library/Publications/Guide+to+Community+Use+of+School+Sports+Facilities.htm

- *Community use of school sports facilities: workbook.* Edinburgh: **sport**scotland, 2004. (A second edition incorporating the results of the study has been drafted.) www.sportscotland.org.uk/ChannelNavigation/Resource+Library/Publications/Workbook+for+Community+Use+of+School+Sports+Facilities.htm

These can be viewed on the sportscotland website: www.sportscotland.org.uk

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CONTENTS

FOREWORD

With the current record levels of government and local authority investment in the school estate in Scotland, it is important to consider how best to optimise the opportunities presented by this investment and to ensure that all schools make the most effective contribution to cultural and sporting life throughout Scotland. Most schools make their sports and cultural facilities available to their communities. But are communities and schools getting all the possible benefits from these arrangements?

sportscotland, the [then] Scottish Executive and the Scottish Arts Council combined to fund an investigation into the impact of different management regimes on the extracurricular and community use of schools for sport and cultural activities. The intention was to use the data to identify common elements of best practice approaches that maximise community use of school facilities for sport and cultural activities.

The resulting study, by Genesis Strategic Management and Professor Fred Coalter of Stirling University, was a large and complex undertaking. The rich data collected by the researchers gives us a much better understanding of the actual patterns of provision of school facilities for community use as well as the complex issues involved in managing this provision. The research highlights both successes and shortcomings, ultimately offering detailed recommendations for the way forward.

Key findings indicated the need for development of clear, integrated strategies for sport, cultural and facilities development that cross the boundaries of local authority departments. An effective strategy for delivering community use of school facilities is a matter for sport and leisure, culture and education departments, all working together. Neither the school nor the local authority can work in isolation, and consultation with the community is essential. A proactive stance and clear policy for the development and delivery of the community use of schools has many benefits for sport, for the arts and for social inclusion.

This is why the community use of schools is so important. Placing schools at the centre of their communities provides benefits for the school and for the entire community. The Scottish Executive [now Government], the Scottish Arts Council and **sport**scotland welcome this valuable study and we hope that the recommendations will help local authorities and schools to develop management strategies that will result in improved opportunities for participation in sport, the arts and cultural activities for pupils and their communities.

January 2007

Note: The bulk of the research for this investigation was undertaken in 2004. The reports were circulated in the interim and are now being published for wider availability in the context of the review of the School Estates Strategy being undertaken by the Scottish Government. This report reflects the circumstances at the time of the research; while a number of recommendations have been acted on the findings do remain of value in the current environment. **December 2008**

1: INTRODUCTION

Schools throughout Scotland provide a critically important resource to support local community cultural and sporting activities of every level and type. The strategic importance of school facilities has been fully recognised in the national strategy for sport *Reaching Higher*[1] and by the Scottish Arts Council in their developing facilities strategy. With the current record levels of government and local authority investment in the school estate, it is all the more important to consider how best to optimise the opportunities presented by these developments and to ensure that all schools make the most effective contribution to cultural and sporting life throughout Scotland.

In 1999 the Programme for Government[2] committed to building or significantly renovating 100 schools by 2003. In 2002 a further commitment was made to complete an additional 200 new or substantially refurbished schools by 2006[3], and in 2003 this was extended to enable the renewal of 300 schools by 2009 (including the 200 schools identified in 2002)[4]. Audit Scotland considered that, depending on how 'significantly renovate' and 'substantially refurbished' are defined, the targets for 2003 and 2006 had been achieved and the 2009 target would be achieved[5]. Local councils and the (then) Scottish Executive spent or committed some £3.9bn on capital improvements to school buildings during the seven years 2000/01-06/07, which was likely to reach more than £5.2bn by April 2008. Most of that additional investment was due to PFI contracts, estimated at £896m in 2007/08[5].

This level of investment has been accompanied by increased emphasis on maximising the use of the school estate. For example, *The 21st century school*[6] states that, in addition to meeting the needs of the individual child, a key objective of new investments and approaches was to put the school at the heart of the community and deliver better services. As part of the strategy for integrated community schools, there has been a requirement to engage with the communities that the schools serve, in part by offering services and access to

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[1] Scottish Executive *Reaching higher: building on the success of Sport 21*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive, 2007. www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2007/03/07105145/0

[2] Scottish Executive *Making it work together: a programme for government.* Edinburgh: Scottish Executive, 1999. http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/1999/09/3423/File-1

[3] Scottish Executive *Closing the opportunity gap: Scottish budget for 2003-2006.* Edinburgh: Scottish Executive, 2002, p12. www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2002/10/15579/11900

[4] Scottish Executive *A partnership for a better Scotland: partnership agreement.* Edinburgh: Scottish Executive, 2003. www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2003/05/17150/21952

[5] Audit Scotland *Improving the school estate.* Edinburgh: Audit Scotland, 2008. www.audit-scotland.gov.uk/utilities/search_report.php?id=750

[6] Scottish Executive *The 21st century school. Building our future: Scotland's school estate*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive, 2003. www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2003/08/18007/25286

services and facilities. The Scottish Executive partnership agreement[7] stated that:

- We will develop the largest ever school building programme in Scotland's history, renewing 200 more schools by 2006, rising to 300 by 2009. These schools should be available to the whole community and include high quality facilities for drama, music, sport, IT and, in secondary schools, science laboratories.

- New schools should demonstrate commitment to the highest design and environmental standards.

- We will make sure that by 2007 every school is an integrated community school.

In 2006, the Scottish Executive stated that the Integrated Community School initiative had developed and been overtaken by the wider integration agenda:

- It no longer makes sense to think of schools separately from other agencies. We would now say that: 'By 2007 every school in Scotland will participate in delivering Integrated Children's Services'. [8]

Paralleling these policy developments there has been a concern to increase levels of participation in sport among both school-aged children and local communities. Reflecting this policy concern, Active Schools coordinators have been appointed in most secondary schools to provide after-school activities and to establish closer links with local clubs. Further, with increased concern to address issues of poor fitness and health in the adult population, the long-standing recognition of the need for local and accessible facilities and restrictions on local government capital spending have led to greater interest in the use of school facilities. The importance of these issues is indicated by the fact that **sport**scotland has produced detailed guidance on community use of schools for sport: *Guide to community use of school sports facilities*[9] and *Community use of school sports facilities: workbook*[10].

Within this context **sport**scotland, the (then) Scottish Executive and the Scottish Arts Council combined to fund this investigation into the impact of different management regimes on the extracurricular and community use of schools for sport and cultural activities (drama, dance, music, visual arts, crafts, literature).

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[7] Scottish Executive *A partnership for a better Scotland*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive, 2003, p26. www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2003/05/17150/21958

[8] Scottish Executive and HMIe *Improving outcomes for children and young people: the role of schools in delivering integrated children's services*. Edinburgh: Scottish Executive, 2006. www.scotland.gov/uk/Resource/Doc/92327/0022073.pdf

[9] **sport**scotland *Guide to community use of school sports facilities*. Edinburgh: **sport**scotland, 2004. www.sportscotland.org.uk/ChannelNavigation/Resource+Library/Publications/Guide+to+Community+Use+of+School+Sports+Facilities.htm

[10] **sport**scotland *Community use of school sports facilities: workbook*. Edinburgh: **sport**scotland, 2004. www.sportscotland.org.uk/ChannelNavigation/Resource+Library/Publications/Workbook+for+Community+Use+of+School+Sports+Facilities.htm

The main aim of the research was to explore the current situation and investigate differing approaches to the management of the school estate. This will enable the production of practical advice to ensure that the management of sports and cultural facilities in schools results in maximum benefit to community and extracurricular users, particularly in opening them up to the former.

Research Approach

To achieve this aim a range of data collection methods was used, from a survey of all Scottish local authorities to case studies of individual schools. The approach could be described as broadly hierarchical and developmental, with attempts to use data from each stage to inform the next. The research took place between December 2003 and December 2004.

Postal Survey of Scottish Local Authorities

This survey was conducted via a short questionnaire sent to Directors of Education, which requested core information on:

- Policies for community access

- Policies for extracurricular activities

- Details of PPP school provision made and planned

- Published information on booking/management practices

- Details of who manages community access

- Extracts from relevant contracts

- Contact details for further enquiries

The initial intention had been to use this information to select eight local authorities for further in-depth study, to explore a variety of approaches to the management of the school estate. However, the overall low response rate to the initial questionnaire (21 out of 32 local authorities) meant that this approach was not feasible. Consequently, the second phase of the project, the selection of the case study authorities, was undertaken in consultation with the clients and the Project Steering Group. Membership of the Project Steering Group is given in Appendix 1.

Case Study Local Authorities

In order to explore in detail different management approaches, the second phase involved interviews with a range of relevant personnel in eight local authorities. The authorities were chosen to reflect different geographical locations and different approaches to managing the school estate. The eight authorities were:

- Dumfries and Galloway

- Edinburgh

- Fife

- Glasgow

- Highland

- Orkney

- Stirling

- West Dunbartonshire

In each authority, interviews were undertaken with key senior staff in Education and Leisure Services or equivalent departments. In addition, a focus group was conducted with staff at different levels in relevant departments and from schools. Both approaches explored broadly similar issues and were structured around three themes which inform the project – policy, provision and performance.

Policy

The issues included:

- The council's policies for community use

- How effective these policies are in delivering community use

- The measures of performance used and the nature of available data

- Key issues which limit or enhance community use

- How community use is managed

Provision

The issues included:

- Approaches used to deliver community access and, if relevant, PPP provision

- The main assets and limitations of the present school estate

- The authority's development plans for the future

- The organisation and promotion of extracurricular sport and cultural activity

- How much of the school estate is regularly open for community use

Performance

The issues included:

- How success is assessed in delivering community access and supporting extracurricular use

- Improvements made in the last five years

- Examples of good practice

- Areas for improvement

- Major factors limiting community use

In addition to this information, each authority identified a number of secondary schools (the numbers proportionate to their size) to enable the researchers to undertake more detailed case study investigations.

School Surveys

A postal survey of 80 schools was undertaken and the following information was collated:

- Type of and dimensions of facility provision

- How facilities are managed for extracurricular and out-of-school-hours use

- Type of use

- Responsibility for health and safety

- Views on the quality of provision, maintenance and operation of the facilities

- The perceived impact of management on community use of the facilities and on the school

- Nature of recent improvements in facilities

- Opening hours in and out of term

- Sources of funding for community use

- Extracurricular activities

School Case Studies

Within each case study authority a number of schools were selected for further in-depth study. A total of 18 schools were visited (the plan had been to visit 20 case study schools, but two withdrew at short notice and could not be replaced in the timescale). Some of these and a number of additional schools, both within and outwith the target authorities, were identified as exemplifying best practice and are presented as case studies in Appendix 3.

During each visit, interviews were conducted with relevant school and, where appropriate, community and facilities management staff such as the head

teacher; deputy head teacher; business or PPP contractor manager; heads of department including PE, music, art, drama; head of community use; facility manager; school sports coordinator; cultural coordinator; and sports development officer or equivalent.

A pupil questionnaire was conducted with a representative sample of pupils and meetings were held, where possible, with community users and members of the school boards.

Issues discussed included:

- Policies for, and provision of, extracurricular activities

- Attractions and barriers to participation

- Management and extent of community use

- Positives and negatives of community use

  o from the school point of view; and
  o from the community point of view

- Where appropriate, the impact of the PPP investment and management of school facilities

Surveys of Pupils

In the secondary schools, an interviewer-assisted self-completion questionnaire survey of S1-S6 pupils was undertaken. In primary schools, pupils in P6 and P7 completed the questionnaire. These collected data on sporting and cultural activities undertaken outside normal lessons; constraints on participation; evaluations of the schools' sports and cultural facilities; and the nature of any desired improvements.

Surveys of Individual and Club Community Users

Self-completion questionnaires with reply-paid envelopes were distributed in the case study schools requesting information from individual and club community users on why they used the school facilities, their views on the management of the facilities and why they thought that others did not use the facilities.

Interested Agencies and Organisations

In addition to the above, a series of interviews was conducted with representatives of the following interested organisations:

- Officers with PPP responsibilities through the Association of Directors of Education for Scotland

- PPP Contractors

12

- Scottish Arts Council

- Scottish Association of Local Sports Councils

- Scottish Executive – representatives of relevant sections

- **sport**scotland

- Voice of Chief Officers of Cultural, Community and Leisure Services in Scotland (VOCAL)

Conclusions

The data from the various research elements outlined above are reported in the following sections. The intention is to use these data to identify 'best practice' approaches that maximise community use of school facilities for sport and cultural activities. It is unlikely that the concept of best practice will produce a single blueprint, applicable to all schools. Certainly best practice should identify common threads, but it should also give a range of examples that vary as they take account of relevant local circumstances. Common elements of best practice are likely to include the processes of management (such as customer focus, partnership working, cost/benefit appraisal) with a range of examples to illustrate these.

2: REVIEW OF LOCAL AUTHORITY POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Introduction

This section reports on data from two postal surveys of:

- All local authority education departments

- Eighty schools in the eight case study authorities

The surveys collected information on the policies and approaches relating to community use, the nature and extent of current provision and use and some views about the management and impact of community use.

Among local authorities there was a two-thirds response rate (21 of 32, see Appendix 2), and also a two-thirds response rate from schools (52 out of 80). We believe that this level of response provides a useful illustration of the range of current policies and approaches relating to the community use of schools.

In this chapter the strategic data relating to local authority policy and practice are supplemented by data from the schools survey, illustrating important local issues and variations.

Survey of Local Authority Education Departments

Number of Schools Open for Community Use

Despite some variations (mostly relating to primary schools), the majority of secondary schools are, potentially, available for community use – in 16 of the 21 responding authorities all secondary schools are available (Table 1). It is possible that this is an understatement, with some authorities including as 'available' only those schools with regular bookings, with the remainder being available on request.

Table 1: Schools Available for Community Use

Local Authority	Primaries Open	Secondaries Open
	Percentage of schools	
Aberdeenshire	90	88
Argyll and Bute	80	80
Dumfries and Galloway	97	75
Dundee City	95	90
East Ayrshire	43	100
East Renfrewshire	96	100
Edinburgh City	87	100
Falkirk	100	100
Fife	100	100
Glasgow City	100	100
Moray	100	100
North Ayrshire	21	100
North Lanarkshire	100	100
Orkney	82	100
Renfrewshire	21	92
Scottish Borders	99	100
Shetland	100	100
South Lanarkshire	0	100
Stirling	98	100
West Dunbartonshire	100	100
West Lothian	45	100

Types of Use

The widespread community use is dominated by regular bookings, with low levels of casual use (Table 2) – the 1% of primary schools offering casual use are mainly in Orkney. Of course, opening a school for casual use is much less cost effective than the predictable pre-booking approaches. Furthermore, many schools do not have the type of facilities to encourage such, often individual, use (eg, swimming pools, fitness suites). However, as will be seen in the school data, the pattern of bookings varies substantially between types of activities.

Table 2: Types of Use of Available Schools (multiple responses)

	Primary Schools	Secondary Schools
	Percentage of schools	
Ad hoc bookings	74	81
Regular bookings	61	87
Local authority classes	25	67
Other types of use	9	10
Casual (pay as you go)	1	13

The low levels of casual use of secondary schools might not be of concern in urban authorities, where there will usually be alternative opportunities. However, it could be a significant issue in rural areas with no, or limited, casual access to other facilities.

Facilities Provided

The lower availability of primary schools is explained partly by the fact that provision is dominated by a limited number of types of rather basic facilities (Figure 1) – school gyms, halls with and without a stage, multi-purpose games halls, grass pitches and reception facilities.

Figure 1: Primary School Facilities (n=1,573)[11]

Percentage of Schools

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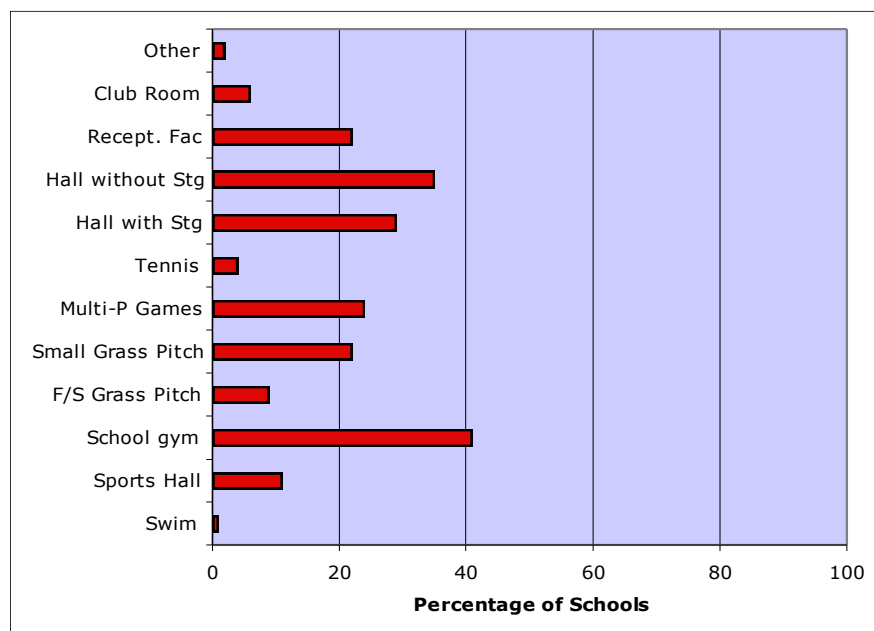
[11] Respondents were asked to list all the facilities present in their schools. This number represents the total number of facilities that were listed.

As is to be expected, a much higher proportion of secondary schools offer a wider range of facilities compared to primary schools (Figure 2). In terms of sport, three-quarters or more provide access to gyms, sports halls and full- size grass pitches. In addition, nearly 40 percent provide access to swimming pools, with about half having fitness suites available to the public.

Figure 2: Secondary School Facilities Available for Community Use (n=261)
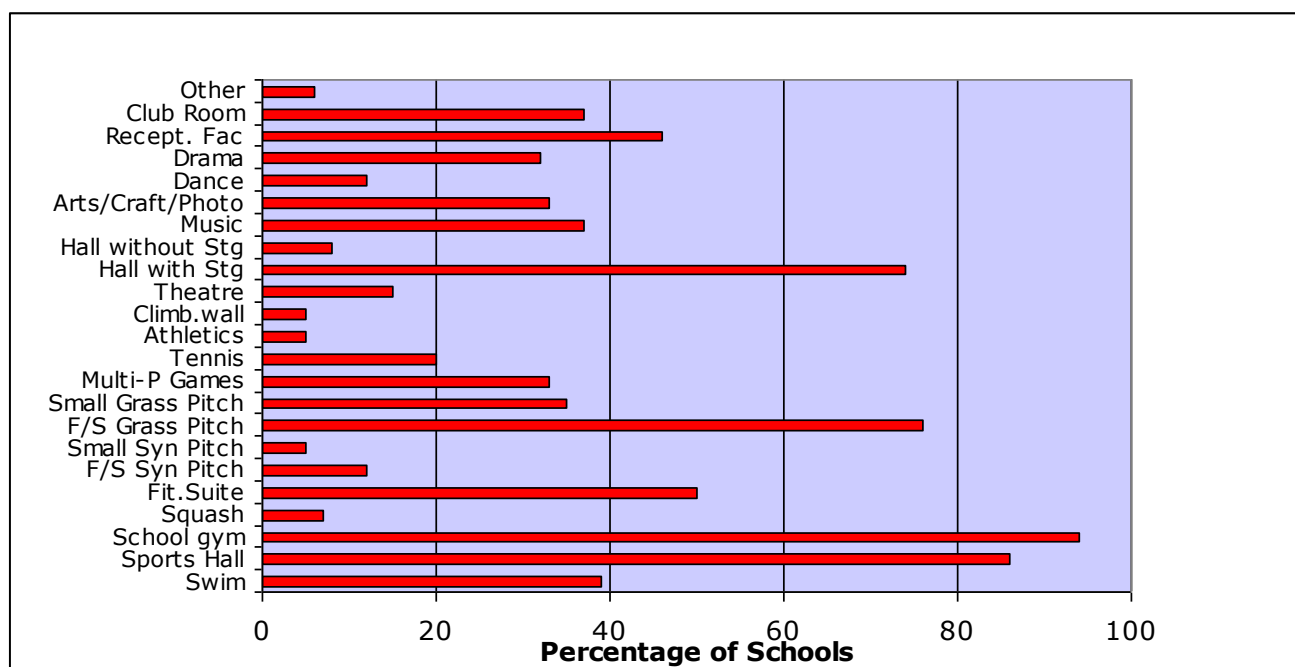
Use of facilities for cultural activities is much less common, although more than a third provide public access for drama, arts/crafts/photographic workshops and music and around three quarters offer a hall with a stage. This relatively low level of provision may be a mixture of perception of the lack of potential of facilities and/or lack of community demand. Perhaps there is a need to promote the potential to use such facilities, which some authorities seem to regard as important cultural provision.

How are the Facilities Provided?

The predominant form of provision is by the local authority on the school site (Table 3). However, one-fifth (20%) of community sport in secondary schools is managed under a PPP contract, as is one-seventh (14%) of cultural provision. Further, 13 per cent of secondary schools use adjacent local authority sport facilities.

Table 3: Form of Community Provision for Available Schools[12]

Form of Provision	Primary: Sport %	Primary: Culture %	Secondary: Sport %	Secondary: Culture %
Integral to school site/managed by local authority	73	55	64	50
Integral to school site/managed under PPP contract	0.9	0.4	20	14
Adjacent facility, LA managed	1.7	0.2	13	1.5
Adjacent facility, community managed	1.2	0.5	1	0.3
Adjacent facility, leisure trust	0.3	0	5	0
Other	0.2	0	0.7	0

Management Responsibility for Out-of-school-hours Use

For primary schools, devolved management (40%) and management by departments of culture and leisure (38%) are the predominant approaches to the management of out-of-school-hours use. As Table 4 illustrates, these are also two of the three main approaches in secondary schools, with about one-fifth also managed by community education departments. Community use in one-fifth of schools in responding authorities is currently managed via a PPP contract, although this is likely to increase in the future.

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[12] **Note**: The columns in Table 3 do not add up to 100% for two reasons:
- In some schools there is more than one form of provision (eg, a school might have its own gym, but use a sports centre for swimming).
- Most authorities assumed that if there were no specialist cultural facilities, (eg, a theatre), they should not respond to this question.

Table 4: Schools Available for Community Use – Management Responsibility

Management Responsibility	Primary	Secondary
	Percentage of available schools	
PPP	1.4	20
Devolved	40	36
Shared	0.2	2
Culture and Leisure	38	20
LA Trust	0.3	3
Community Trust	0.1	0
Community Education	8	18
Other	11	0

Regularity of Opening

Term Time

The formal availability of schools for community use tells us little about the hours available both in and out of term time. Not all responding authorities provided complete information, but the available data are presented in Figure 3.

Not surprisingly, out-of-school hours on weekdays is the period of maximum availability for both primary and secondary schools, with over three quarters available at this time. Reflecting their broader range of facilities, secondary schools are more likely to be available on Saturdays before 6pm – 60 per cent, compared to less than 40 per cent of primary schools. However, in general, weekend availability is less than weekday. Although this may reflect a lack of demand, it is also often related to increased janitorial and other costs at weekends.

As might be expected, only a small proportion of schools are open for community use during the school day – about one-fifth of primary schools and less than one-fifth of secondary schools. Concerns about safety and security were expressed in the interviews and focus groups, although some authorities, through a combination of design and management, have facilitated some community access during the school day.

Figure 3: All Schools: Term-time Availability for Community Use
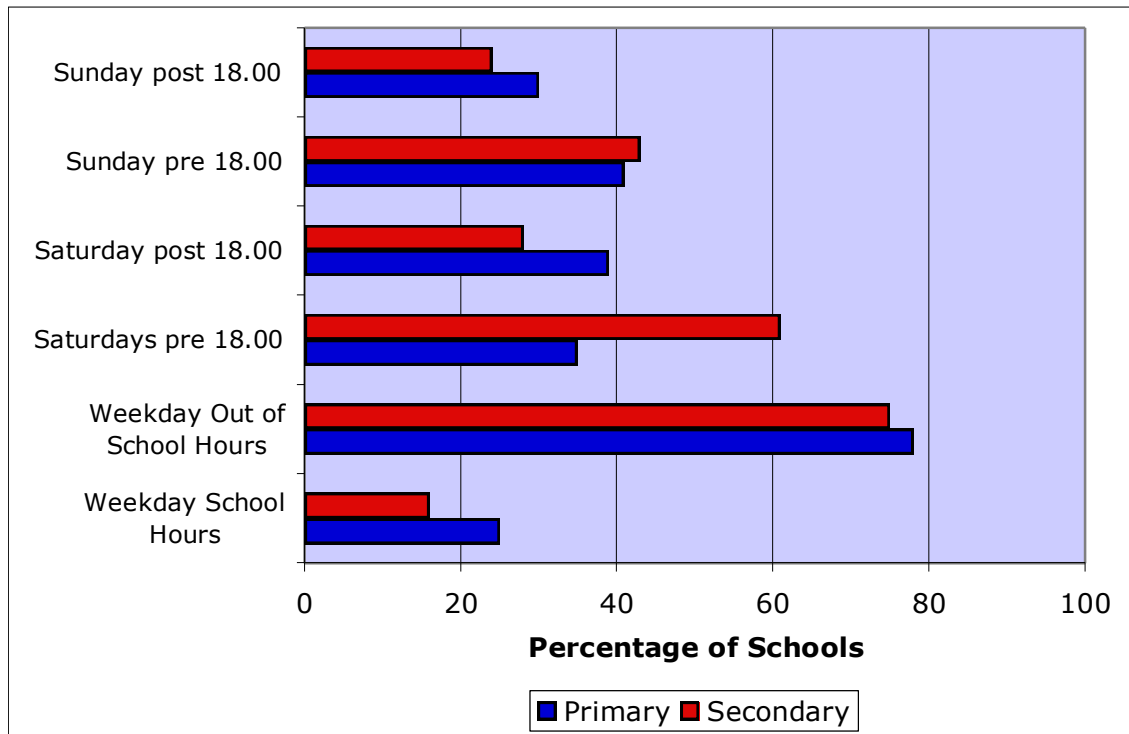
School Holidays

In general, there is limited holiday use, especially for primary schools. Less than-one-fifth are available for weekday school use during school hours, usually for formally organised holiday schemes and local authority lets. Use at other times is minimal. Figure 4 illustrates a higher level of availability of secondary schools, with 30 per cent available for holiday schemes during weekday school hours and 10 per cent after school hours. Although some are available via regular lets and casual use, the overall picture is of much reduced community availability during school holidays.

While this reduced availability may reflect reduced demand, it is also possible that it reflects a lack of development work and unfulfilled potential.

Figure 4: Holiday Availability – Secondary Schools

Legend: ■ Secondary LA lets ■ Secondary Holiday Schemes □ Secondary Casual Use
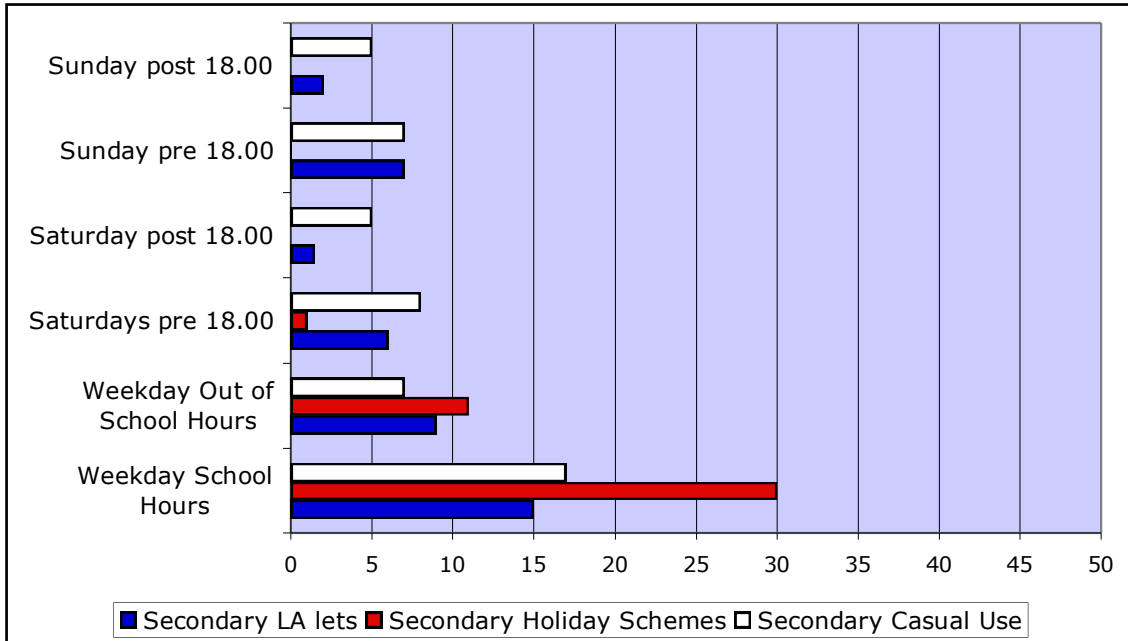
Survey of Schools

In this section we report on the findings of the postal survey of the 52 responding schools (out of 80) in the eight case study authorities. This provides a more detailed view of local variations, both within and between authorities.

Type Responding

Two-thirds (65%) of the surveyed schools responded and Figure 5 shows their distribution and the proportion managed as part of a PPP contract.

Figure 5: Type of School (n=52)
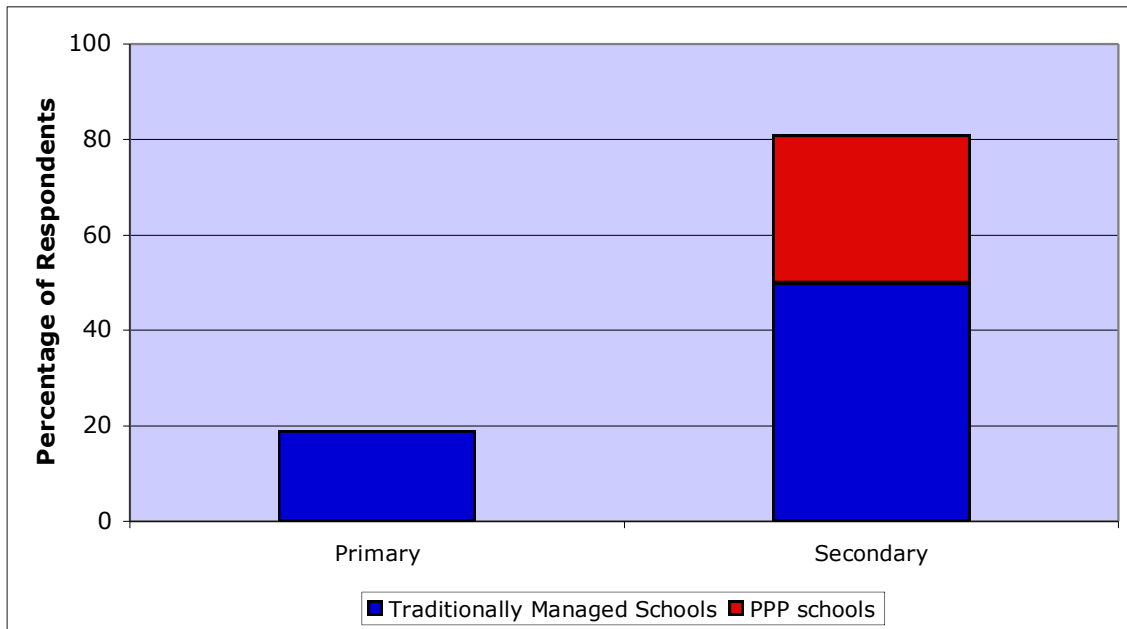
On-site Management Responsibility

There is a wide variety of approaches to the management of out-of-hours use – often involving a range of partnerships – presenting a more complex local picture than the more general strategic view derived form the local authority data (Figure 6). These partnerships mostly involve the school and a variety of local authority departments, reflecting local structures and responsibilities. PPP contractors also play a significant role in the management of facilities, often in partnership with different local authority departments.

Figure 6: Out-of-hours Sports Facility Management Responsibilities (n=52)
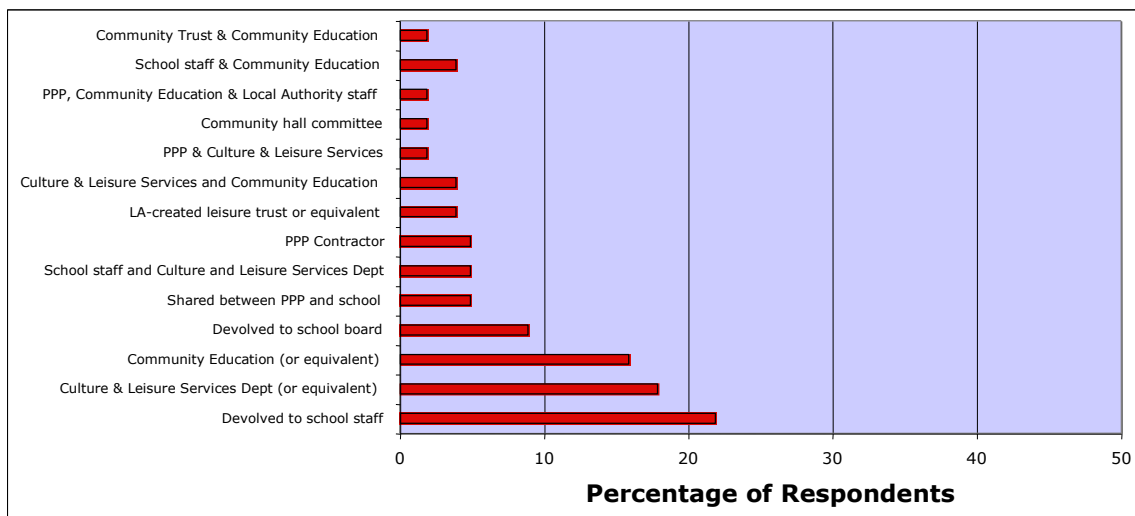
The pattern of management responsibilities for cultural facilities is as diverse as for sport (Figure 7), although departments of community education are responsible in a higher proportion of schools. However, paralleling the local authority survey, a number of schools did not indicate the form of management responsibility – reflecting a mixture of their perception that they did not have specialist cultural facilities, provision is not made or demand does not exist.

Figure 7: Out-of-hours Cultural Facility Management Responsibility (n=43)
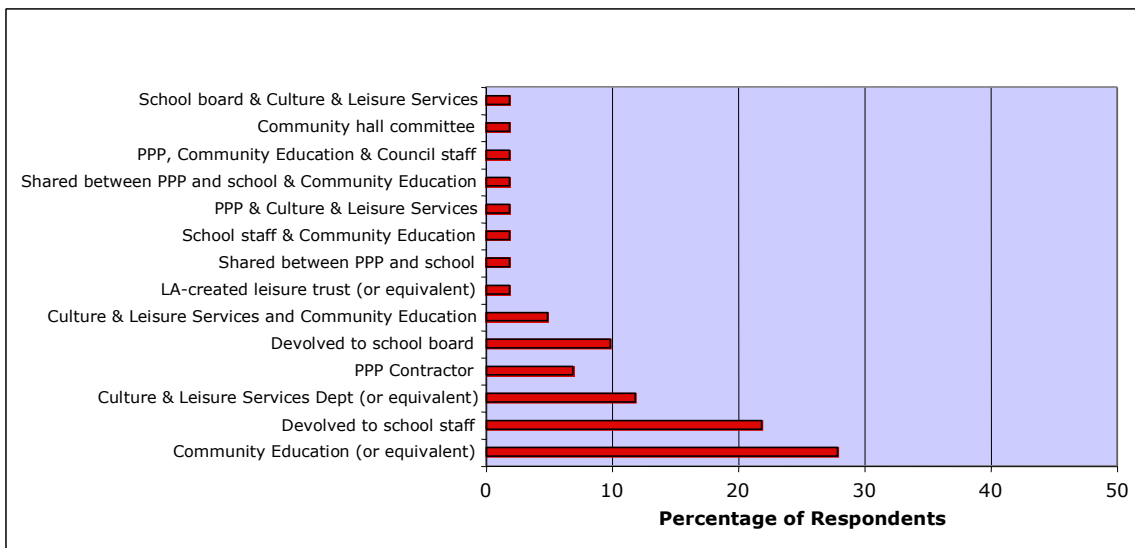
Funding of Community Use

Funding is required if school facilities are to be opened for community use. Reflecting the variety of local authority structures, there is a wide variety of funding sources, although the predominant funders are departments of education and community education (separately and in combination). Leisure departments are less frequently involved as the core funders of community use (although they are sometimes involved in partnership funding with other departments). (Figure 8)

Figure 8: Funding of Community Use (n=56)
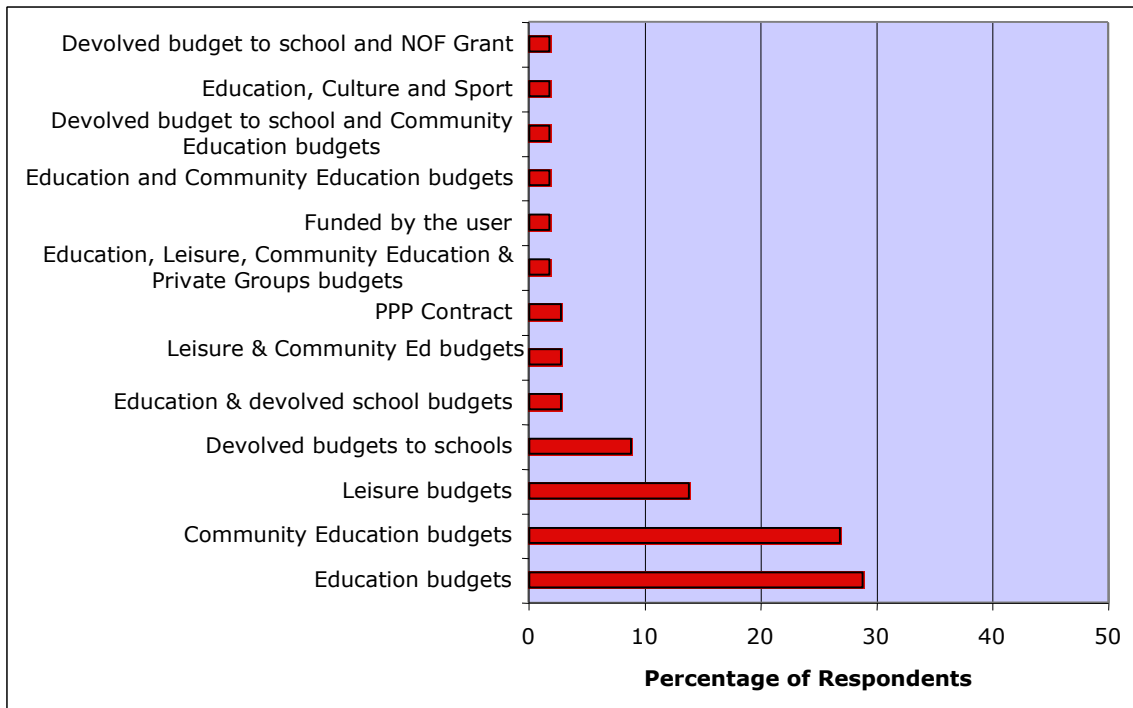
Health and Safety and Security Responsibility

Responsibilities for health and safety and security broadly reflected management responsibilities.

Out-of-hours Cover

Paralleling the variety of management arrangements, there is also a mixture of approaches to providing cover for out-of-hours sports and cultural facilities (although, again, several respondents did not provide information about cultural provision) (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Sports (n: 50) **and Cultural Facilities** (n: 41) **– Out-of-hours Cover**
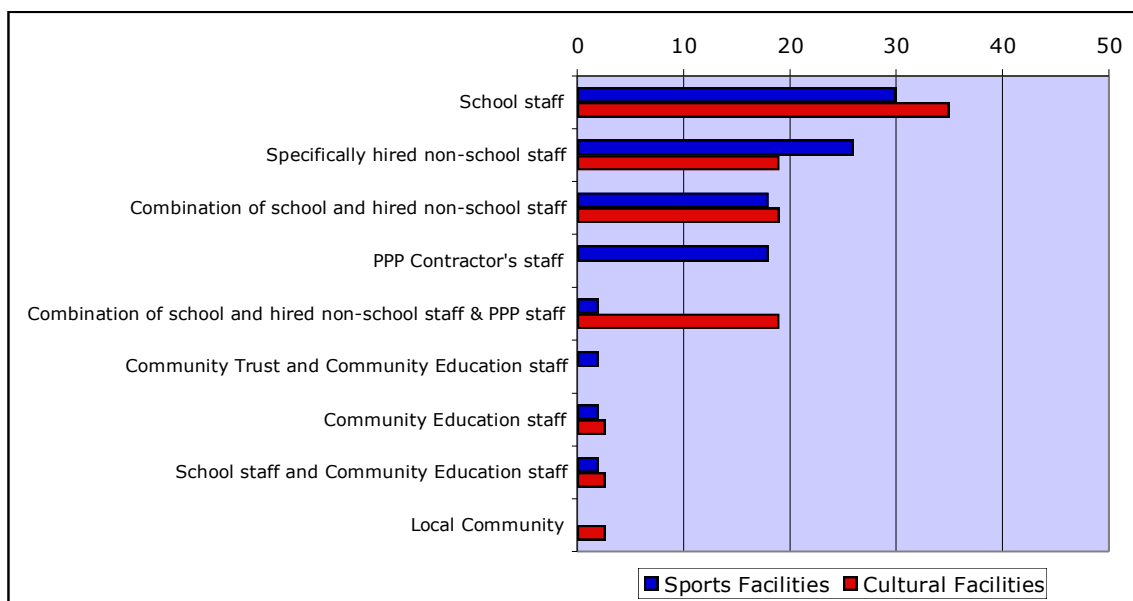
 In about one-third of schools, school staff provide out-of-hours cover for both sports and cultural facilities. The other three main approaches are specially hired non-school staff, a combination of school and non-school staff, and PPP contractors' staff.

Views on the Impact of Management Regimes

There was a generally positive evaluation of the management, organisation, maintenance, cost effectiveness and efficiency of community use provision (Figure 10). Further, the general view was that the management of community use works well with the school management.

Figure 10: Views on the Impact of Management Regimes
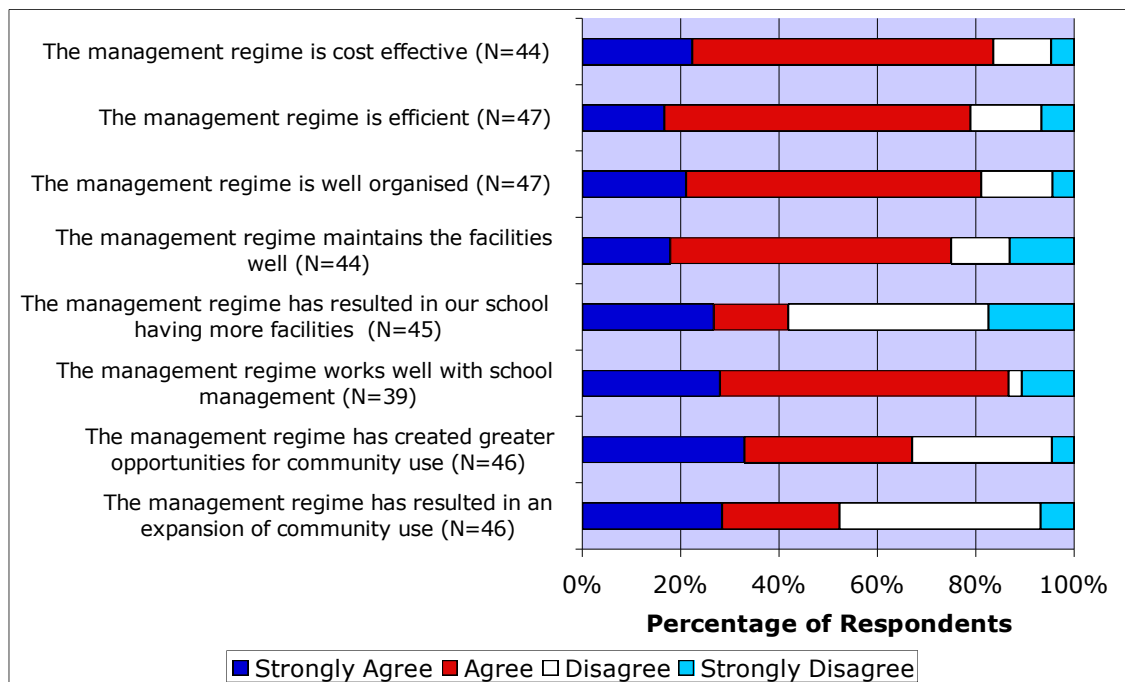
Attitudes were less positive regarding the more general impact on the community. The majority of respondents did agree that the management regime had created greater opportunities for community use and that such use had expanded in the last three years. However, more than a quarter (29%) disagreed/strongly disagreed that community use had increased. Such views suggest that, in certain schools (or authorities), a relatively low priority has been accorded to community use and that historical patterns of participation and letting may dominate.

The most negative evaluation related to the lack of increases in school facilities (which could also contribute to increased community use). Nearly 60 per cent disagreed/strongly disagreed that the specific regime had made a contribution to developing more facilities at the school (which, as we will see below, reflects the fact that only a minority of schools had made improvements to facilities in the last year).

Schools' Views about Community Use of School Facilities

There is a generally positive view of community use of schools, with almost unanimous agreement that it provides a valuable service to the community and has improved the image of the school (Figure 11). Further, in operational terms, few regard community use as being in conflict with pupil needs, or resulting in facilities and equipment being unavailable for pupil use.

Figure 11: Views on the Opening of School Facilities for Community Use
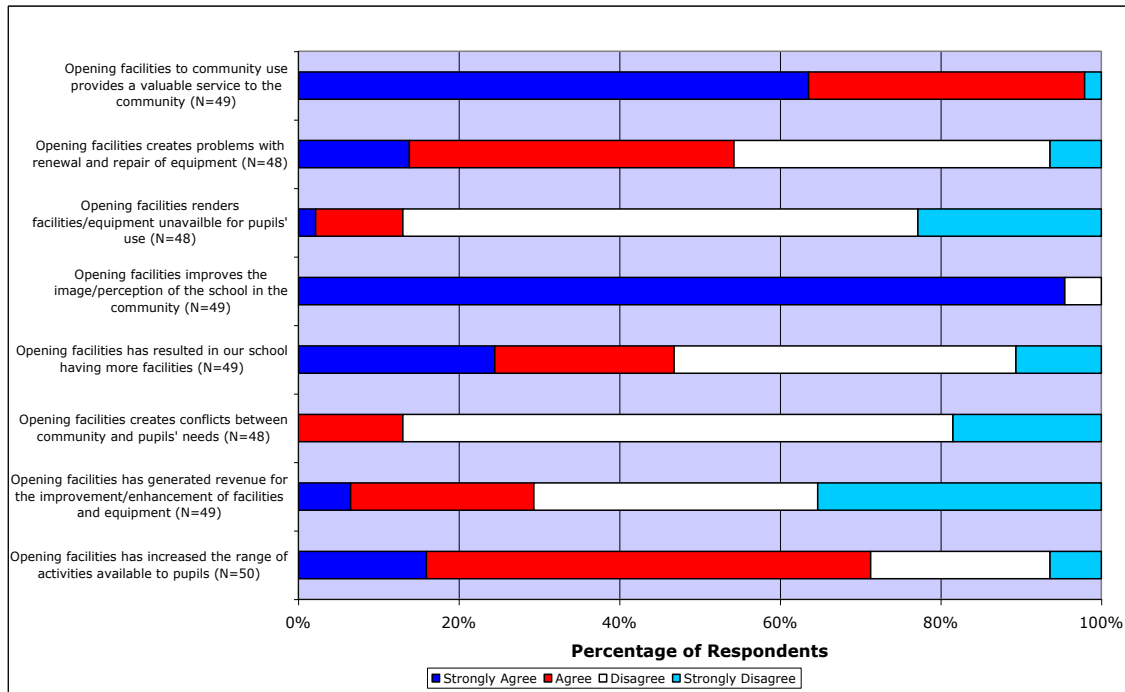
There are less positive evaluations of the extent to which community use has increased the range of activities available to school pupils. Perhaps most importantly, community use is perceived to provide limited revenue for investment in the improvement/enhancement of school facilities and equipment. Opinion is evenly divided about the extent to which it creates problems about the renewal and repair of school equipment.

Improvements to Facilities

The relatively negative evaluations of the extent to which community use has led to increased investment in improved or new facilities is confirmed by the fact that the majority of schools have not had any improvements to such facilities over the last year (ie, during 2004). About 20 per cent have had improvements in cultural facilities – the majority in non-PPP schools.

Of the small number who reported improvements to cultural facilities in the last year, these related mainly to new equipment (n: 5), although two schools had refurbished facilities and two had additional staff. The main perceived effect of these improvements was in the quality of provision. Although two schools reported increased community use, some felt that it was too early to comment on the impact of the improvements.

About 30 per cent of responding schools had some type of improvements to sports facilities in the last year, the majority being in PPP schools. Most improvements related to both new and upgraded indoor facilities, followed by new outdoor facilities and equipment. The perception was that these new or improved facilities had led to both increased quality and increased use of facilities, with some being able to extend the range of activities provided.

Community Use of Facilities

Community Use of Cultural Facilities

Figure 12 demonstrates low levels of casual use for cultural activities, perhaps reflecting the fact that such activities often involve long-term projects (eg, drama production or musical shows). The majority of access is through regular lets or local authority instructional classes. The more specialist activities, such as art, crafts and new media, are more likely to be provided through local authority classes, probably because of the need for expert tutoring.

Figure 12: Forms of Use of Cultural Facilities
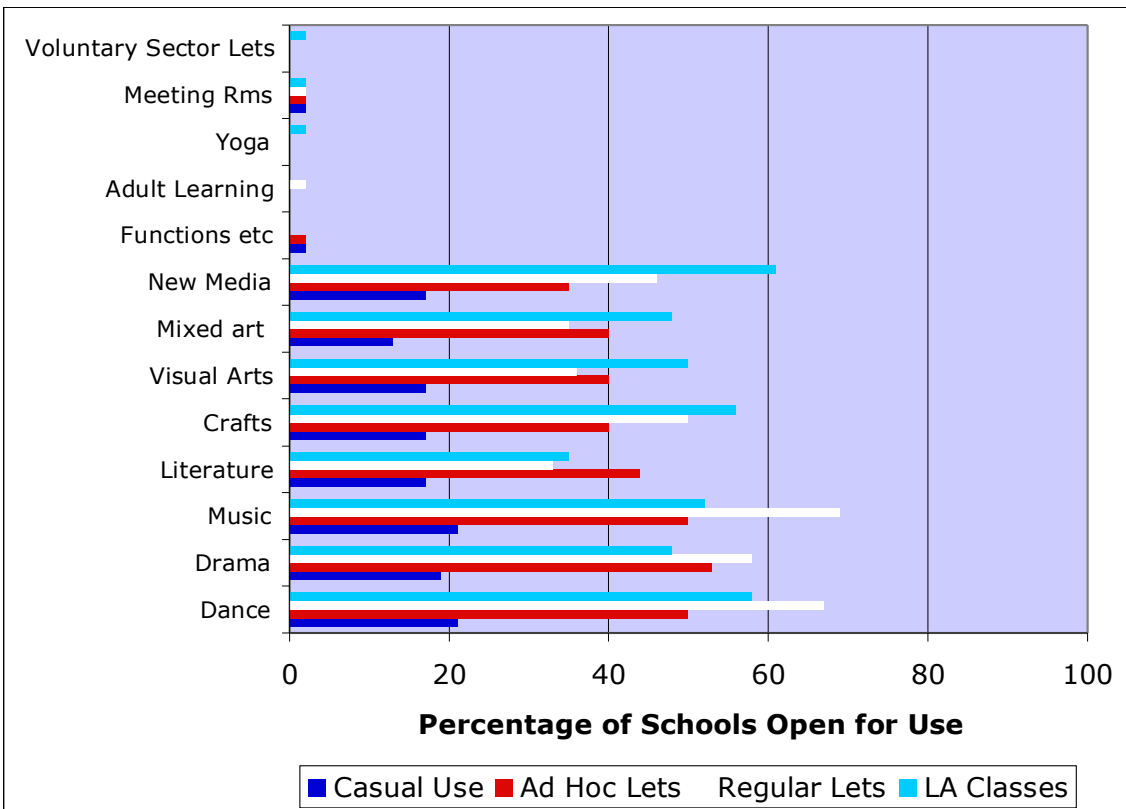
Community Use of Sports Facilities

Figures 13 and 14 illustrate the very wide range of sports on offer across the sample schools. The predominant regular lets for team and partner sports are football, basketball and badminton, with volleyball and hockey also being prominent (Figure 13). The three main sports are also the predominant activities for all types of letting, although regular lets are the main approach.

Figure 13: Games Use of Sports Facilities

Percentage of Schools Open for Use

Casual Use Ad Hoc Lets Regular Lets LA Classes
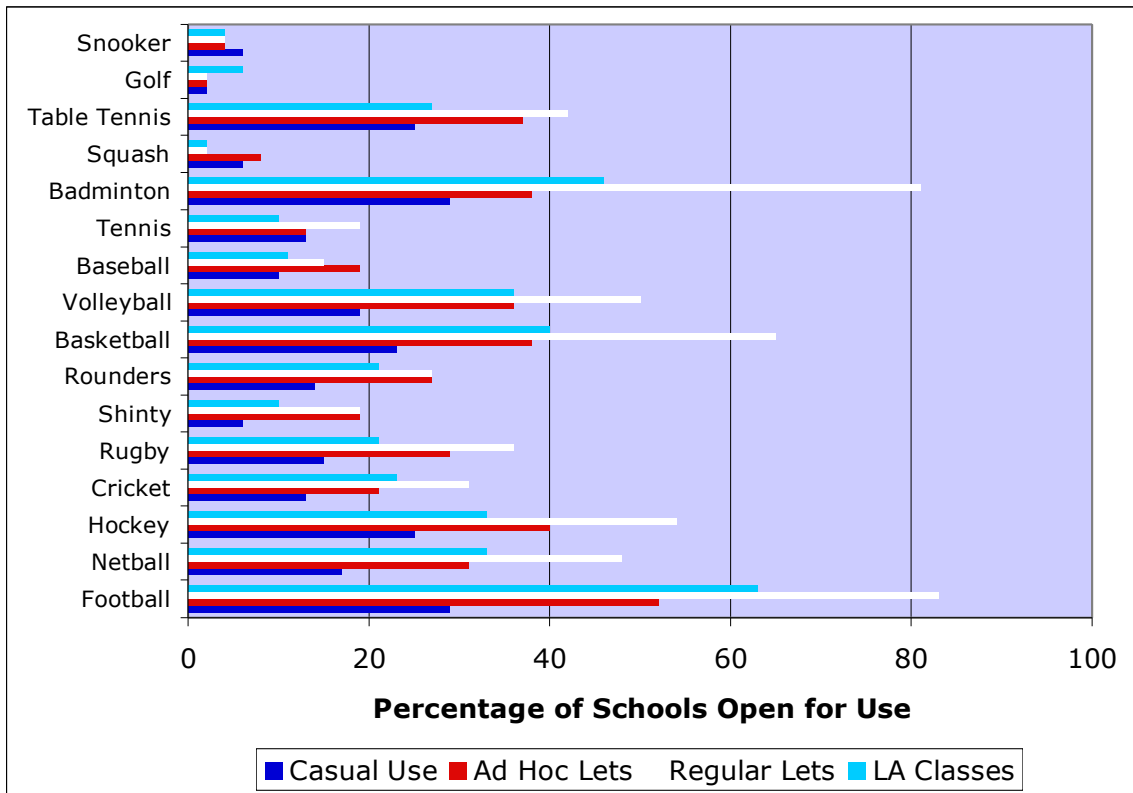
Among other activities, gym, aerobics and combat sports are the most popular (Figure 14). These are booked mainly via regular let and local authority classes. As might be expected, the main casual use activities are multigym, aerobics and swimming.

The high percentage of schools offering football pitches, games hall or gym-based activities reflects the fact that most schools have these basic facilities. Percentages are lower for activities that require more specialist equipment or facilities, or that have lower levels of demand.

Figure 14: Other Sports Activities
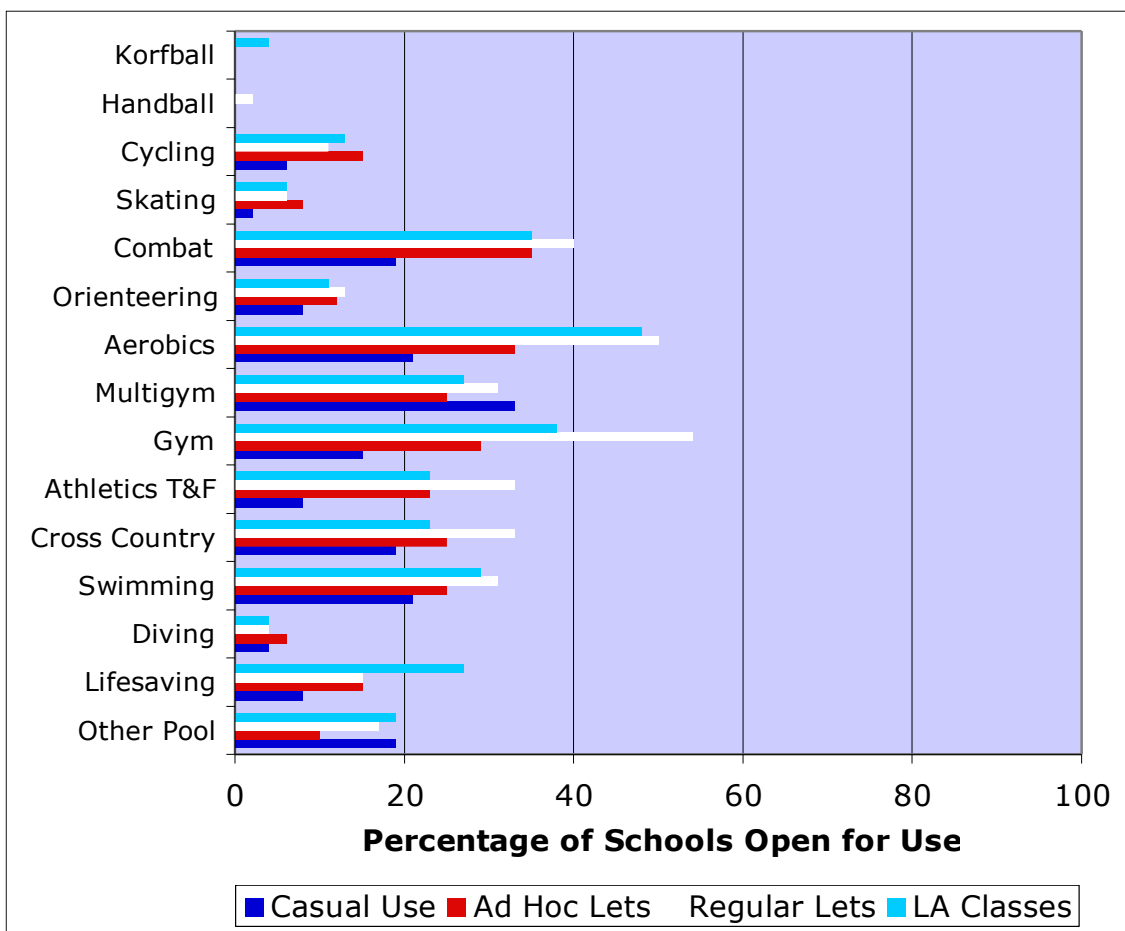
The Local Authority survey indicated that the greatest availability for community use is weekday out-of-school-hours, with approximately three quarters of both primary and secondary schools available at this time. Figure 15 confirms this pattern, while providing additional information on the type of lets. Although regular letting is the main approach, there are also high proportions of ad hoc lets and use by local authority classes. However, casual use of facilities, although more limited, is available after 6pm in just under 40 per cent of the schools that were open for community use.

Figure 15: Term-time Weekday Use – Type and Time
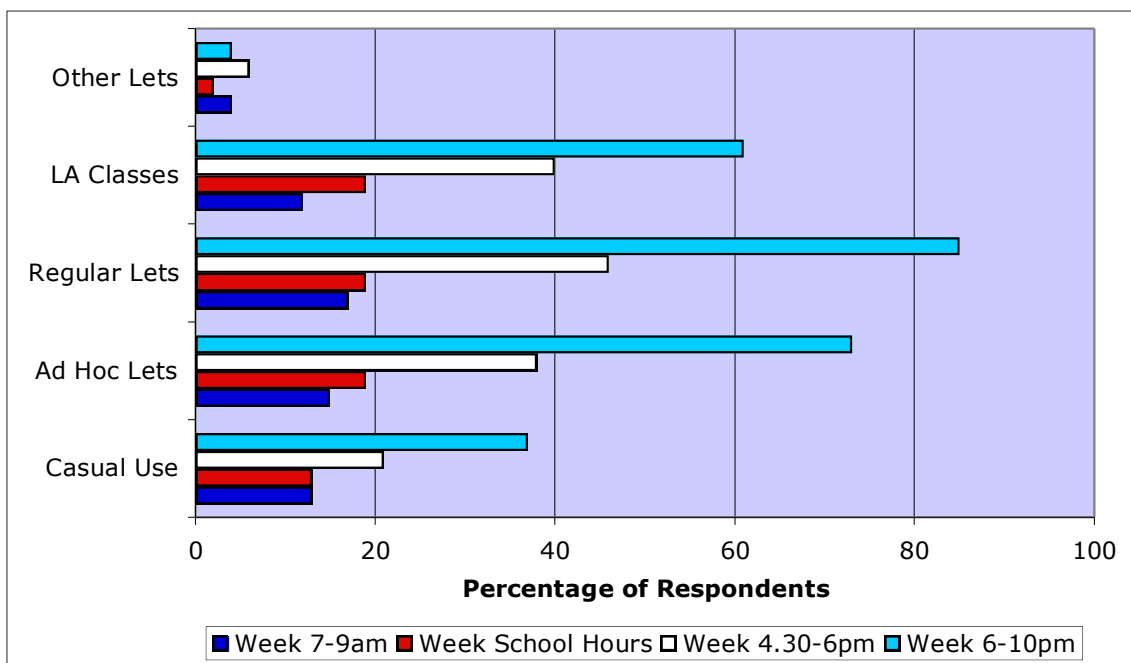
The Local Authority survey indicated that weekend availability is less than weekday and is usually during the day. This reflects a mixture of lack of demand and/or the increased janitorial and other costs. Figure 16 illustrates that, once again, the predominant form of use is through the administratively simple regular lets, followed by ad hoc letting. As with weekday use, weekend casual use is much more limited, although still available in about one third of schools.

Figure 16: Term-time Weekend Use of School Facilities
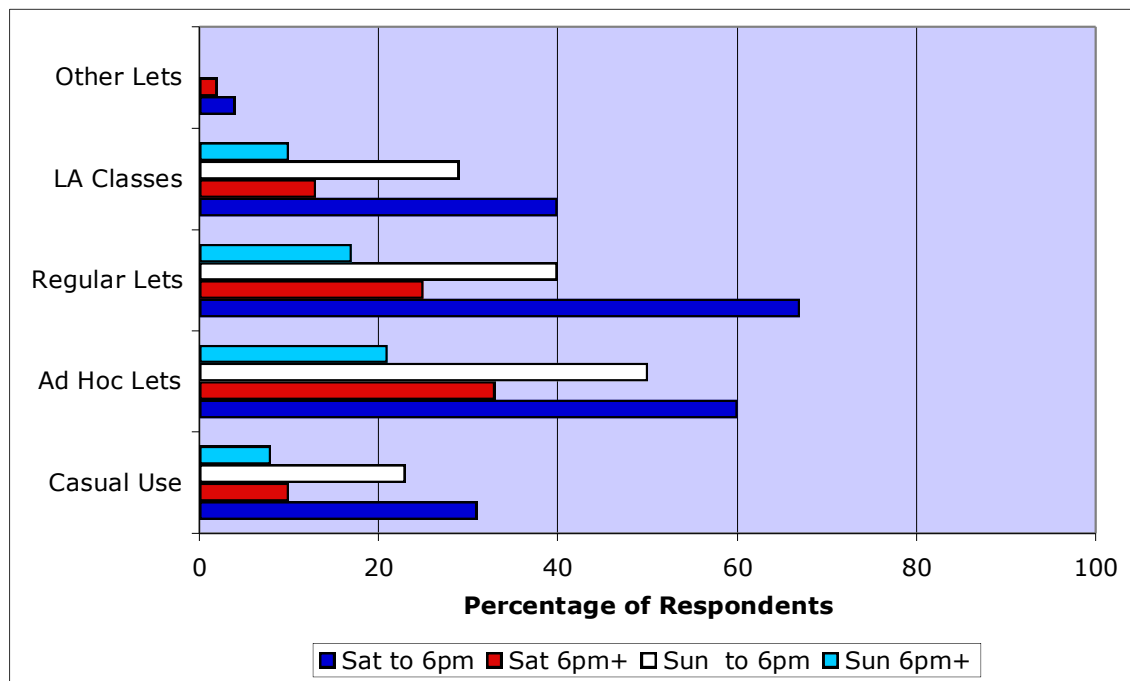
School Holiday Type of Availability

Less than half of the responding schools are open for community use during school holidays. Whether this is due to lack of demand or to prohibitive costs is not clear. Among those that are open, the predominant form of holiday use is through the administratively simple, formal mechanisms of organised holiday schemes and closely related local authority lets (Figure 17). Nevertheless, there are relatively high levels of availability for casual use before 6pm on weekdays and weekends.

Figure 17: School Holiday Opening of Facilities
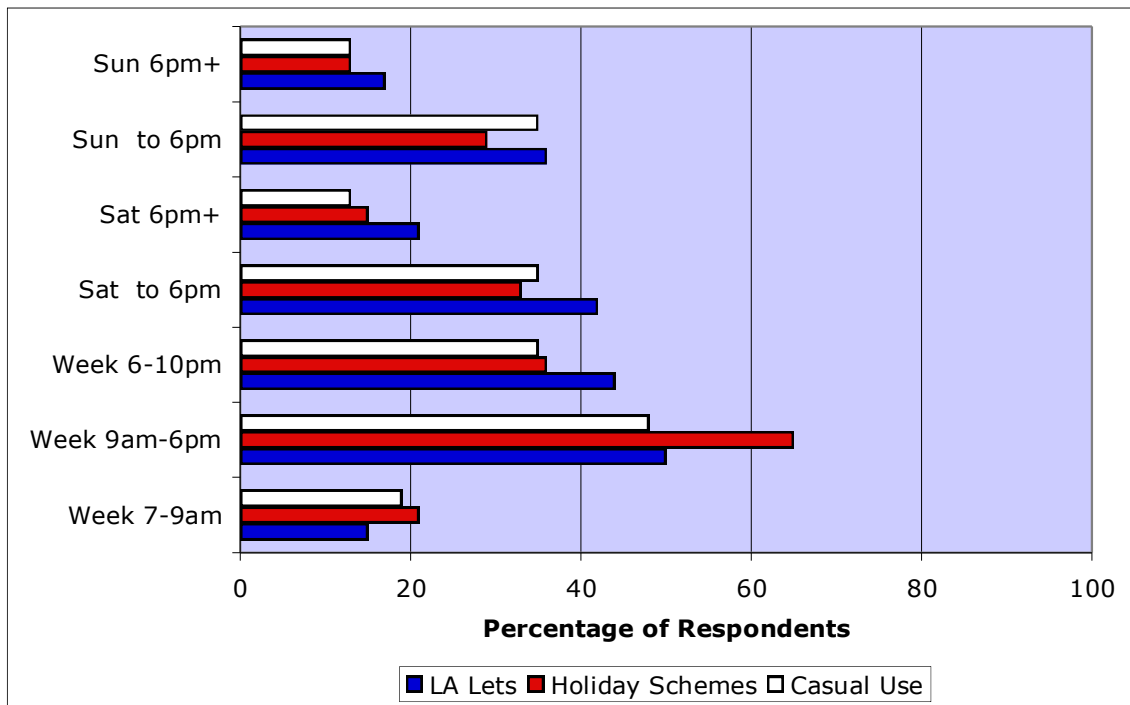
Community User Groups

Three-quarters (73%) of responding schools do not have a community users' group. This seems to indicate an absence of a strategic and consultative approach at a local level. Such groups can provide important information about how a school's facilities are perceived by a variety of users and inform a more strategic approach to provision and development.

Extracurricular Cultural Activities

Reflecting the previous data, Figure 18 demonstrates that extracurricular use of cultural facilities is limited across all the schools. The predominant activities are music, drama and dance, with most activity occurring after school (probably via drama clubs or school orchestras). However, just over 40 per cent provide music during school lunchtimes.

Figure 18: Timing of Extracurricular Cultural Activities (n=52)
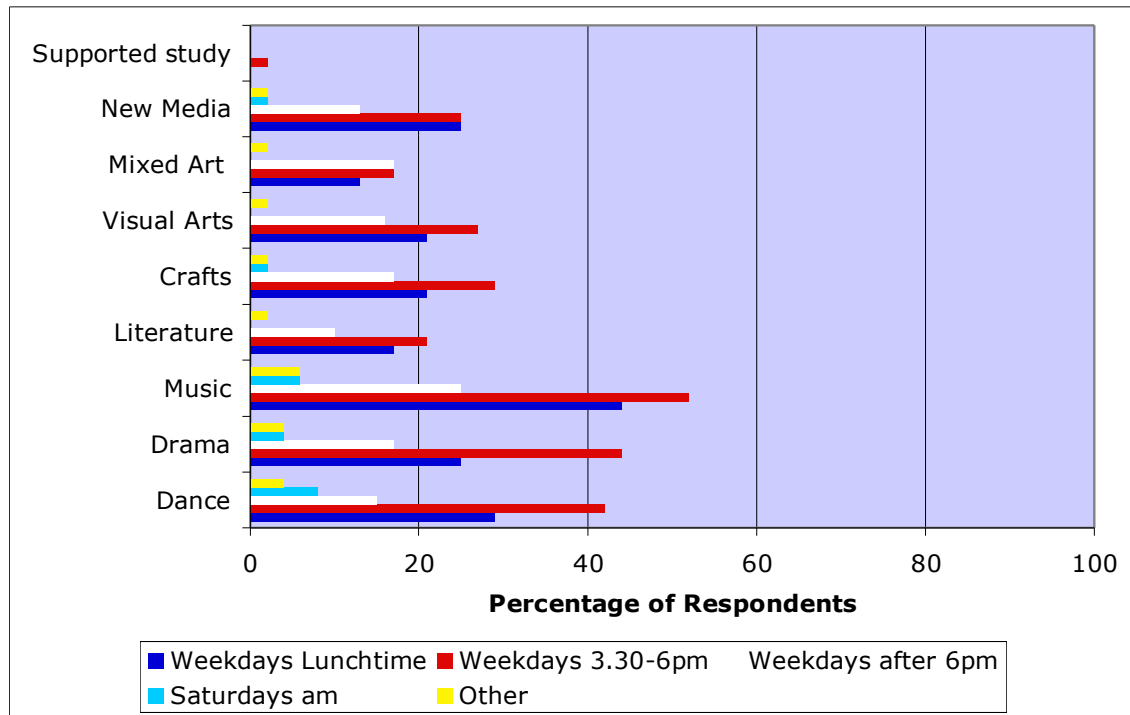
Extracurricular Sport

Figure 19 illustrates that a wide variety of extracurricular sports is provided, although a few predominate. The team sports of football and basketball use school facilities for extracurricular activity at about 60 per cent of the responding schools, with about half of these schools providing badminton. The second tier of team sports includes rugby, hockey and athletics. Football is easily the most intensive user of facilities, with a large proportion of schools providing at lunchtime, immediately after school and on Saturday mornings. A substantial proportion also provide basketball and badminton at lunchtimes.

Figure 19: Extracurricular Sporting Activity (n=52)

Legend:
- Weekdays Lunchtime
- Weekdays 3.30-6pm
- Weekdays after 6pm
- Saturdays am
- Other

X-axis: Percentage of Respondents
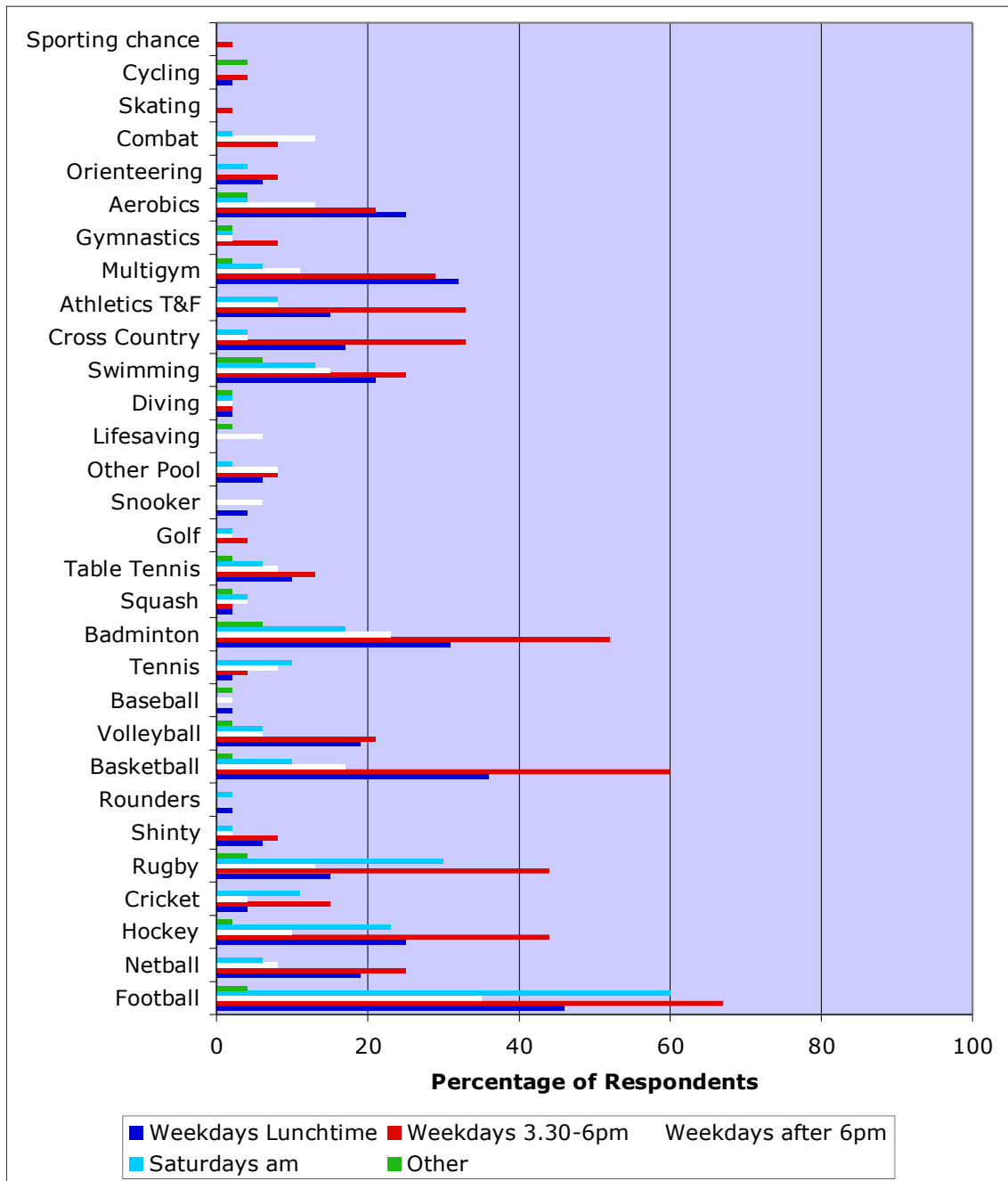
LA Policies and Practices: Summary and Conclusions

The data on local authority policies and practices and from the sample of schools indicate both common patterns and substantial variations:

- Community access to schools is widespread, with 80 per cent of responding authorities providing access to all their secondary schools. One-third provide access to all of the (less well equipped) primary schools, with a further 40 per cent providing access to 80 per cent.

- Various forms of pre-booked and regular use dominate. Although this is a cost effective approach, it probably reflects (and reinforces) historical patterns. In the sample schools, the predominant regular lets in sport are football, basketball and badminton. The predominant regular lets for cultural activities are dance, drama and music (with local authority classes also widespread).

- The reported provision of cultural facilities is much lower than for sport. It is not wholly clear if this reflects a lack of local demand or a perception of a lack of "specialist facilities".

- Levels of availability for the administratively more complex casual use are much lower and are concentrated in secondary schools, especially for cultural activities. In sport the main casual activities are the more individual exercises, such as multigym, aerobics and swimming, two of which depend on specialist provision.

- Approximately three-quarters of primary and secondary schools are available during out-of-school hours on weekdays. Secondary schools are nearly twice as likely as primary schools to be available on Saturdays. In general, weekend availability is less than that on weekdays. Among the sample schools, the predominant form of term-time use is regular weekday lets between 6pm and 10pm (reflecting adult availability). Weekend use is more limited, occurs during the day and is dominated by regular and ad hoc lets.

- Overall there are very limited levels of community use during school holidays, with the most widespread type of use being formally organised holiday schemes and local authority lets during weekdays. In our sample, less than half the schools were open for community use during school holidays. It is not clear whether this reflects lack of demand, lack of development work or prohibitive costs.

- Primary school facilities are almost all integral to school sites and managed by the local authority. The picture for secondary schools is more varied. For example, one quarter of sports facilities are integral to the school site but part of a PPP contract, and 13 per cent are in an adjacent, local authority managed facility.

- Overall, community use is managed in a variety of ways, largely reflecting different local government structures. The responsibility for primary schools is divided between devolved responsibility to the school, community education, culture and leisure and 'other' (presumably the janitor). The main difference in secondary schools is the one fifth managed via PPP contracts. In the sample schools there was a range of partnership arrangements, mostly involving the school and a variety of local authority departments, with PPP contractors also playing a significant role. In both surveys, several respondents either did not indicate the management responsibility for cultural facilities, reported that provision is not made or suggested that demand does not exist.

- Reflecting differing local authority structures and management approaches, there is a wide variety of funding sources for community use, although the main sponsors are education and community education departments.

- School staff provide out-of-hours cover for sports and cultural activities in about one-third of the sample schools, with others having a mixture of staff, local authority personnel and PPP contractors. Specifically hired non-school staff are more likely for sport than cultural activities.

- There were very positive evaluations about the general operational and management aspects of community use. Further, the general view appeared to be that community use has improved the image of schools and provides a valuable local service.

- There was a more mixed evaluation of the extent to which current management approaches have created more opportunities for community use. There was also a perception that community use has not generated sufficient revenues for investment in improvements of facilities. The majority of schools had not had any improvements to cultural and sports facilities in the last 12 months. However, among those that did, some regarded the improvements as leading to increased use.

- The majority of schools do not have a community users' group.

- Extracurricular use for cultural activities is limited across all schools, although there is a wide variety of extracurricular sport (with football being the dominant activity).

3: TARGET AUTHORITIES

A sample of eight local authorities was chosen in discussion with the Project Steering Group. The selection was made to reflect the diversity of authorities and to ensure that a variety of management regimes was included. The authorities were:

- Dumfries and Galloway

- Edinburgh

- Fife

- Glasgow

- Highland

- Orkney

- Stirling

- West Dunbartonshire

Information was collected via a series of focus groups in each authority. These focus groups included senior staff from education departments, leisure services (where relevant), and others with an interest or involvement in community use of schools (summaries of each authority's inputs are available in the data report).

The composition of the focus groups varied because each authority selected the relevant staff. However, in general, they included primary and secondary head teachers, sports and cultural development officers, cultural and sports coordinators, community education and administrative staff involved in letting. Other staff who attended included school business managers, out-of-school-hours coordinators, PE teachers, officers with PPP responsibilities and, in one authority, a councillor.

The information and opinions were analysed under the headings of **Policy**, **Provision** and **Performance**. Key issues were identified under each heading, representing the main conclusions from this part of the project. Additionally, we have identified a number of more specific issues that were seen as being relevant to some or all of the authorities.

Policy

Key Issues

Overall, there is an absence of integrated strategies for the community use of schools, with most provision being based on a mixture of historic lettings and reaction to local demand. It is widely acknowledged that strategies and policies

which address both the community use of schools and the contribution of this to broader strategies for sports and cultural provision and development are needed.

In many authorities there is no clear strategic responsibility for community use of schools and the area is characterised by a lack of dedicated strategic management resources. Within the context of a need for strategic thinking, there is general agreement that local needs and flexibility are paramount considerations.

With a few exceptions, a coherent approach to subsidising community use is generally lacking, with schools often having to carry the net cost. There is a perception that the growth of community use is restricted by limited revenue budgets and an inconsistency of pricing policies across council sections and departments.

There is a wide variety of management models not only between authorities, but often within the same authority. These include devolved management to schools, local community committees of variable effectiveness, and service level agreements with recreation departments, heads of community use, central and area letting systems and PPP contractors. There was no evidence that any one management model was more effective in developing community use than any other, in part because of a lack of robust and comparable usage data. The critical issue seems to be the policy framework within which management regimes operate. In authorities where the policies for community use had been reviewed and revised, the various management models generally worked quite well. Where the policy context and strategic commitment to community use was not clear, provision tended to be reactive and ad hoc.

Some authorities were making significant strides towards an integrated approach to the provision of community facilities in all their schools, regardless of the management regime. This is only possible if the scope of the PPP contracts, where they are involved, leave the council with sufficient control of the relevant facilities and policies in the same way as they do in directly managed schools.

The more far-sighted of authorities had extended the concept of integration to include their other non-school based leisure and community provision.

Specific Comments

- Policies are often based on historical precedent with anomalies and inconsistencies, often related to successive reorganisations of local government. In some areas the previous district councils' polices were still in operation.

- Authorities that have inherited robust policies for community use from predecessor authorities have generally maintained these through the

various reorganisations and have been better placed to secure the best arrangements in a PPP environment.

- Most authorities are seeking to harmonise policies, with some developing innovative approaches to integration that are strongly focused on expanding all forms of community use.

- Most authorities with traditionally managed schools reported continuing concerns about the cost of janitorial cover often making weekend use too costly. In some cases although, in theory, the schools were open for seven days a week, these extra costs often led to extremely limited use at weekends.

- However, service level agreements, either with recreation departments or trusts, are growing in popularity as a model for delivery of community use. This, in turn, is contributing to more integrated approaches.

- Authorities regarded the New Opportunities Fund as having a positive impact on community use – often forcing reconsideration of historic policies.

- The existence and role of management committees varied considerably, from community schools where the management committee was responsible for all aspects of community use, to schools without management committees.

- Where community management is an established practice, authorities provided guidance and advice to the voluntary committees. In some authorities, detailed manuals were available to guide community representatives.

- Few authorities reported any major community use during the school day and cited security concerns and related poor design. In rural authorities there have been greater efforts made to tackle this issue, often because of the lack of suitable alternative facilities.

Provision

Key Issues

In general, poor changing and showering facilities restrict community use for sport and other physical activities. This seems to be confirmed by the perceived increase in community use in certain PPP schools, which have greatly improved facilities (especially changing accommodation). In some cases it was reported that they appear to be attractive because "they don't look like schools".

Given the reactive, demand-led nature of much current policy and practice, there is an acknowledged need for more systematic development work. In some authorities this work is beginning, with the appointment of cultural and sports development officers working from schools. In others there were reports of the

school management limiting the scope of use for cultural and sports development because of cost.

Although community access during school hours is rare, because of concerns about child protection and poor design, there are some examples of best practice, where design and zoning are used to enable daytime community use (eg, to a fitness suite or library). Officers involved in second phase PPP projects reported the challenges of addressing these issues within constrained budgets. They indicated, in particular, the difficulty of retaining sports facilities at **sport**scotland-recommended dimensions and also the problem of building changing facilities at standards appropriate to community use.

Specific Comments

- Councils were focused on estate strategies and these were identifying the extent of the need for renovation and redevelopment.

- The lack of transport provision outwith the school day was reported as a significant constraint by a number of councils.

- PPP projects had made a positive contribution in most areas, but there were some concerns about the loss of specific facilities, such as swimming pools (although such decisions were often part of a broader facility strategy).

- The provision of facilities and opportunities for arts and cultural activities was more limited than it was for sport.

- In rural areas, care was often taken not to compete with other local provision like village halls. However, in these rural areas, primary schools generally had a more significant role to play than in urban areas.

- Casual access was generally limited, with the majority of use being via the more cost-effective system of long-term, short or ad hoc lets.

- The quality of grass pitch provision was a concern in some areas.

Performance

Key Issues

Although some cultural development officers have been appointed, community use for cultural activities appears much more limited than for sport. Cultural organisations often use community halls and other facilities, sometimes because of the higher costs of school use and sometimes because the alternative sites are more appropriate for their needs.

There is a general failure to address the constraints associated with janitorial costs. Further, many of those consulted felt that janitors did not have appropriate expertise to manage community use effectively. As already indicated, authorities are addressing this issue where they see community use as a priority.

Attitudes of head teachers are crucial and a number of authorities are requiring head teachers to play a more significant role in delivering community use. Two factors restrict the achievement of that objective:

The first is the time that head teachers have available to support community use is restricted by the other demands on their time. The provision of business managers in schools is one way in which this is being addressed, but generally there is a need for greater recognition of the importance of time constraints and the provision of more effective training and support, if head teachers are to be empowered to develop community use.

Secondly, the budget provisions in devolved school budgets need to be reviewed to ensure that expanding community use does not have a negative impact on the funds available to schools. This can happen when school and community budgets are integrated and when the community component may be seen to be a cost rather than a revenue generator.

Specific Comments

- There was agreement that improved quality leads to increased demand. This was noted most especially in PPP schools.

- The appointment of school sports and cultural coordinators was seen as a major positive contribution to the development of extracurricular provision. However, most authorities reported that extracurricular provision and its uptake were patchy[13].

- Booking systems were generally complicated and confusing, with multiple categories of users leading to problems for both users and administrators. Most authorities were starting to address these issues.

- There was, in general, little promotion aimed at expanding the use of facilities and broadening the base of provision. Authorities committed to opening up more schools were concerned that, without appropriate budgets and development staff, they might simply dilute the use of existing leisure and cultural facilities.

- Despite major progress in improving the quality of school facilities, in many areas their poor quality was still seen as a major limiting factor.

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[13] In the past two years, extracurricular sport provision has increased greatly under Active Schools.

- One authority indicated that cleaning was reduced outside the school day and term time and said that this had a detrimental impact on community use.

- One authority reported particular impact through the combination of school and community library provision, with approximately 50% increase in use.

- The ability to have an in-depth discussion with PPP contractors was viewed as critical to eventual performance. It is difficult to say exactly when this discussion should take place but generally it was judged best to have initial discussions early and then to follow them through as each stage of the contract process is developed.

- The historical booking arrangements reported above often led to the letting of space with little concern about the impact of the activity generated on the councils' wider policy agendas.

4 : CASE STUDY SCHOOLS

Introduction

Within each case study authority a number of schools were selected for further in-depth study, following discussions with representatives of the relevant local authority departments. The plan was to visit 20 schools across the eight local authority areas, but only 18 visits could be arranged.

During each visit, interviews were conducted with relevant school staff and, where appropriate, community and facilities management staff, eg head teacher; deputy head teacher; business manager; heads of department (PE, Music, Art, Drama etc); head of community use; facility manager; school sports coordinator; cultural coordinator; sports development officer or equivalent. A survey was conducted by questionnaire with a representative sample of the school pupil population and meetings were held, where possible, with community users and members of the school boards. Questionnaires were left for distribution to individual and club community users to complete and return in Freepost envelopes.

The following issues were discussed:

- The management and extent of community use
- Positives and negatives of community use
  - o   from the school point of view; and
  - o   from the community point of view
- Policy for and provision of extracurricular activities:
  - o   attractions and barriers to participation
- Where appropriate, the impact of the PPP investment and management of school facilities on both extracurricular and community activities

Management of Community Use

Local authorities adopt a variety of approaches to the community use of their schools. The purpose of this section is to examine the issues as observed in the schools we visited, drawing general conclusions while preserving the anonymity of the individual schools. On the basis of the interviews undertaken in the various schools, the survey data and other information, we have divided the management practices in schools into two broad sections.

Where It Worked Well

Staffing

Community use of schools works best when staff have been appointed on site to promote and manage it. In one city authority, the school with formal community status was 'buzzing', while another, which was not so designated, was barely used, despite excellent facilities and a surrounding community that could have been a ripe source of interest. In one authority, the approach adopted in all their schools ensures that they are truly centres of their communities and also eases potential problems that inevitably arise with dual use of facilities. In other authorities, where community use is managed centrally, there appears to be a less active programme and certainly less buy-in and involvement of school staff. The city school that had been designated a Community Learning Centre and had a staff structure to support it was much more active in addressing the specific needs of its community than were the other schools that we visited in the same authority.

Head Teachers

The attitude of the head teacher is again crucial. It was particularly noticeable in rural areas that the schools were considered a central part of the community, providing a service to it. There appeared to be greater opportunity for head teachers to adopt a more flexible approach to the use of their facilities and to come to mutually beneficial arrangements with community users. Fears were expressed that this flexibility of approach might be more difficult if a PPP policy were to be adopted, despite the better facilities that they would clearly gain. However, even in the city areas, the different attitudes and priorities of the head teachers played a large part in determining the programmes of community use.

Facilities

The quality and appropriateness of the school facilities also played a role. New facilities with appropriate amenities and equipment were more likely to attract community use than old and/or inappropriate facilities, as we would expect. However, management and the quality of personnel are even more important than facilities, as instanced by one school, which received very high community user ratings despite outdated and largely inadequate facilities.

Alternative Provision

The extent to which the local community uses its school facilities can also be affected by the quality, appropriateness, cost and range of alternative provision in the area. Although this is particularly relevant in urban areas, where there is more likely to be a range of local authority and private facilities within easy reach, it can also be seen in rural areas. A church hall in the centre of the village or

town may be considered more attractive than a larger hall in a secondary school on the outskirts.

Partnerships

Where successful partnerships with local clubs were forged, beneficial results ensued for both the school and the club. The club provided coaches, instructors or other volunteer helpers to the school, and the school provided potential members to the club. Although this approach raised potential difficulties – for example about child protection and disclosure – these could be resolved through careful management and training.

Partnerships with sports centres could also work well, providing better facilities and equipment than either sports centre or school could afford on its own, although this was less effective in the case of the privately-owned and managed sports centre attached to one school we visited.

Community Users' Views

Individual community user questionnaires were received: 38 from town areas, 40 from rural areas and 37 from urban/city areas. For urban users, the provision of appropriate facilities that were open when needed was the main reason why school facilities were used; in rural areas, appropriate facilities with the right equipment, that were well managed and had an effective booking system emerged at the head of the list; in town areas, good management, good maintenance and the right equipment and facilities were stressed.

For those using the schools for cultural activities, the priorities were appropriate facilities that were well managed and open when needed, while for sports users, accessibility, good maintenance, good value for money and an effective booking system were most important.

Forty-seven club community questionnaires were received from 11 schools, 19 from town areas (12 from one school), 20 from rural areas (4 schools) and 9 from urban areas (3 schools). Because of the limited nature of both the number of responses and the spread of schools, it is difficult to draw firm conclusions. However, for the urban schools that responded, appropriate facilities with the right equipment that were well managed and open when they wanted them emerged as the main reasons why clubs used school facilities; in rural areas, the best local facilities with an effective booking system that were well maintained and provided good value for money emerged as top of the list; in town areas, appropriate facilities that were well managed and open when they wanted them were stressed.

Where It Worked Less Well

Lack of Budget

Although most schools accepted the concept of community use, in cases where no staffing or budget were available to promote it, their attitude was reactive rather than proactive, so use of their facilities was generally limited. It could also lead to conflicts, since there was no provision made to manage and supervise the lets.

In cases where the school received no income from the lets but incurred the costs of repairs and replacements, there was little incentive for opening their facilities to outside users.

Letting Procedures

Complicated letting procedures in some places added to the challenges for both schools and community users. One youth club leader, offering a wide range of activities to his 320 members, claimed that he had to complete 13 different letting applications on an annual basis. As a result of this policy, the local authority had to process 92,000 separate applications each April/May. The higher prices charged for use outside the core hours were often a challenge for voluntary organisations – as a result, this youth club could only afford to operate for 40 weeks of the year. Complicated, centralised letting processes can result in breakdowns of communication and subsequent frustration for both users and providers.

Community Users' Views

When asked about possible improvements, respondents in the towns and cities supported a more convenient booking system, greater consultation with the community and facilities that were open more when needed. Rural respondents also stressed the need for a more convenient booking system, but added better facilities and equipment.

When asked why others did not use the school facilities, urban individual respondents suggested that they were not interested in the activities on offer, rural respondents cited the lack of appropriate facilities and facilities that were not open when wanted; and town respondents said either that there were other, better facilities in the vicinity, or that the schools did not offer appropriate facilities.

The club responses were similar, although all suggested that other clubs did not use school facilities because they were already fully booked for local authority classes.

Challenges of Community Use

Dual Use

The greatest challenge of community use of schools is the dual use of the facilities. Teachers have traditionally regarded their teaching areas as their own space and we frequently encountered complaints about classroom layouts being disrupted, equipment displaced, abused or damaged and the cleaning difficulties presented by constant use of facilities.   Shared facilities require careful management, a clear definition of roles and responsibilities and good communication between the users. In some schools staff said they had received no communication about where and when their teaching areas might be used. In addition, unless they were confident that tutors using the school's facilities and equipment would act responsibly and maintain comparable standards to theirs, they were reluctant to open them to community use. In some cases, teaching staff knew and trusted the tutors who would be using their teaching areas and equipment, and thus were very willing to share both. Difficulties arose when different standards were applied to the use and storage of equipment by school and community staff.

Staffing

The dual use of facilities worked best where there were specialist staff employed to manage it and a clear understanding about the respective roles and responsibilities of school and community staff, engendering mutual respect and reducing disputes. Personal relationships between school and community staff were also important and regular formal and informal meetings helped to resolve difficulties before they became major sources of conflict. A willingness to be flexible was also critical.

Personal Relationships

The personal relationship between the school and its community users is perhaps the most critical factor in the success of community use of school facilities, so formal and informal communication mechanisms are vital. It is obviously easier to have flexible and mutually beneficial arrangements in a small rural school and we observed some excellent examples of these (eg, volunteer key holders), which would less feasible in an inner city secondary school. A liaison committee can help in this regard, since school boards generally have little knowledge of, or interest in, the community use of their schools.

Volunteers

Many community activities, especially in rural areas, are dependent on volunteer leaders. However, the demands on these volunteers are increasing and in some places deep concerns were expressed about volunteer burnout. Training is required (eg, child protection, lifeguard training), which is both time consuming

and expensive and there is evidence that volunteers are becoming increasingly reluctant to devote the time and money involved. As work demands increase, fewer people are able and/or willing to donate their time to running community activities, especially as an increasingly litigious society is perceived to make such volunteering an ever more hazardous undertaking.

Child Protection

Health and safety and security issues are of increasing concern, even in well-managed community schools. Secure and separate community access to school buildings is often difficult to ensure, so few schools are willing to offer access during school hours, even when facilities are available. Potential difficulties can arise between 3.45pm and 5/6pm, when community and extracurricular activities may coincide, so most schools agree a rigid time divide between school and community use. This tended also to apply when schools used adjacent sports centres.

Concerns

Specific concerns that were raised included:

- Lack of guidelines about how to monitor clubs using the school facilities. Although clubs are encouraged to have enhanced disclosure procedures, the school had no legal right to see the leaders' disclosures and thus had to rely on the integrity of the clubs themselves.

- Although councils issued guidelines for youth registration, the perception was that schools were left to devise and operate their own systems, which could therefore differ.

- Although there were strict guidelines for daytime tutors to have disclosure checks, no such requirements existed for the students who attended their classes, sometimes during school hours.

- Great care had to be taken to protect the confidentiality of pupils, especially when spaces such as staff rooms were let for community use. Extra vigilance was required to ensure that documents were not left where members of the public could read them.

Extracurricular Activities – Issues

To Pay or Not to Pay…

Policies and practices towards extracurricular activities appear to be mainly determined by the head teachers of individual schools, and vary markedly from school to school. In some, the ethos of voluntary extracurricular provision remains strong, with most staff 'expected' to offer activities and a wealth of choice available to the pupils. In others, particularly in urban areas, there is little in the way of a voluntary programme, and the New Opportunities Fund for PE and Sport, study support and other sources of funding are accessed to pay staff to run activities. This disparity of approach is causing rifts amongst staff and can be demotivating for those who have freely given of their time and expertise over many years – although most acknowledge the benefits that such activities can have on their relationships with pupils and on their effectiveness as teachers. PE and music departments tend to be the most active and enthusiastic providers, although many heads of department expressed concern that young teachers coming into the profession may be less willing in future to offer this service without financial recompense. If funding is not available, clear and public recognition of extracurricular contribution is a viable alternative, such as recognition through the McCrone chartered teacher scheme and/or inclusion as a criterion for promotion.

Pupils' Favourite Cultural and Sporting Activities

From the pupils' survey, football emerged as overwhelmingly the favourite sporting activity, out of the 29 listed in the questionnaire, followed by swimming. Choosing a favourite cultural activity out of the eight on offer proved more challenging for the pupils, many of whom declared that they did not like any of them, but the responses indicated a preference for music and arts and crafts.

Barriers to Extracurricular Provision

PE Staff

PE teachers have traditionally offered a wide range of extracurricular sporting opportunities, but the legacy of the 'work to contract' in the 1980s, combined with the introduction of Standard grade and Higher PE, has resulted in fewer staff being prepared to devote every afternoon and Saturday mornings to these activities. Increasingly, schools and Active Schools coordinators are looking to forge partnerships with sports clubs as a means of widening coaching and competitive opportunities for their pupils.

Additional Demands

Many teachers mentioned the additional paperwork and other demands involved in leading extracurricular activities and the growing 'blame culture' as disincentives to becoming involved, especially in out-of-school trips, even to the theatre. Some said that "under no circumstances" would they take a residential trip. Others said that the demands to raise standards and achieve excellence were so great that they could not contemplate additional demands on their or their pupils' time and so some schools no longer staged end-of-year school shows. In others, the tradition remained and there were fine examples of real cross-departmental efforts to stage ambitious productions.

An Ageing Profession?

A further concern expressed by some was the difficulty that a sometimes ageing profession experienced in offering 'young' activities that would appeal to their pupils, such as street dance or skateboarding. There is evidence that where such activities are offered by young, 'cool' instructors they can increase participation.

McCrone

Some teachers suggested that the implementation of McCrone's recommendations, which formalised the working week to 35 hours, combined

with the twin imperatives of continuing professional development (CPD) and chartered teacher status as a means of increasing earnings, was proving detrimental to the provision of extracurricular activities. Staff had less time to devote to these activities and the perception was that they would not be credited or valued as much as attendance at training courses. With restricted opportunities for promotion, the acquisition of chartered teacher status was becoming important as a means of increasing earnings. Involvement in voluntary extracurricular activities reduced the time available to devote to the scheme.

Staff Restructuring

Allied with this was the restructuring of staffing being undertaken by a number of local authorities. The move towards replacing departmental principal teachers with a smaller number of faculty heads is perceived as a loss of status for many principal teachers who are, in consequence, even less inclined than before to offer extracurricular activities for which they have no contractual obligation.

Barriers to Participation in Extracurricular Activities

Peer Pressure

Pupil uptake of the extracurricular opportunities offered also varies from school to school. In some, such as the island community school, it is the norm for almost everybody to be involved. In other schools where there is a strong tradition of involvement there is also evidence of enthusiastic participation. Sometimes participation has increased due to the enthusiasm and drive of a sports or cultural coordinator, sports development officer or equivalent and their innovative approach to broadening opportunities and exciting interest. In other schools there is little uptake, despite a varied programme provided – peer pressure can have both a positive and a negative impact.

Transport

Amongst the most significant barriers to participation is transport. Many schools have a large catchment area, with most pupils reliant on school buses to take them to and from school. Although many schools provide late passes and some even lay on late buses, transport difficulties clearly deter some pupils from staying after school. This is particularly evident in the winter months. Transport costs, especially in rural areas, can also have a negative impact on the provision of out-of-school activities.

Pupil Attitudes

Some teachers also commented on the lack of commitment and 'stickability' of today's young people, who appear more willing to try something for a while and then move on to something else than to make a long-term commitment to any one activity. Many pupils said either that they were not interested in taking part in any extracurricular activities or that there were no activities on offer in which they were interested – this was particularly noticeable in the case of cultural activities (46% of the 767 respondents). Conversations with pupils suggested that many of the boys only wanted to play football and were uninterested in anything else; some others (boys and girls) disliked school and were unwilling to spend any longer there than strictly necessary!

Facilities

The quality of facilities can also have an impact on extracurricular participation, with bright, new, clean facilities and up-to-date equipment being more attractive to young people. Changing rooms are particularly influential on the attitudes of young people, especially girls and in one school swimming had been removed from the curriculum because of the reluctance of school pupils to change in very cramped and inadequate changing rooms. However, the ethos of the school and the attitude of staff can overcome inadequate facilities, as was seen in one school we visited.

Other Demands

Many schools have restructured the school day, often involving a reduction of the lunch hour. This has reduced the number and range of lunchtime activities that are possible. Curriculum demands and the pressure to improve academic results mean that teachers are less willing than before to release pupils from classes, for example for school show rehearsals, and more likely to offer supported study classes than extracurricular activities after school, especially since they are more likely to be paid for the former.

Staffing

Activities offered are often dependent on the expertise and enthusiasm of the staff who are working in the school – if they move, the activities often go with them and are therefore lost to the original school.

The Impact of PPP/PFI

Some of the schools we visited had been built or refurbished as a result of the PPP initiative and this section summarises its impact on the schools and the services they provide to their pupils and communities.

Facilities

Clearly, external investment has enabled the provision of much better facilities in a shorter timescale than would have been possible for the local authorities working on their own. PPP schools tend to have all-weather sports areas, large multi-use areas and games halls, purpose-built and well-equipped drama facilities and modern music areas. In some cases, there was meaningful and constructive consultation with staff prior to the finalisation of plans. "Without doubt, the best facilities I have encountered in 30 years of teaching." (Principal Teacher of Music)

In others, a more generic approach was adopted and such consultation was considered impossible. In some schools visited, whether or not consultation had taken place, frustrations were expressed that the facilities were not as good as they could have been, often because specialist teaching staff had not been included at the planning stage.

Specific complaints included:

- Opportunities for much-needed improvements were missed, for example in changing rooms.

- Cost-cutting resulted in variable quality of provision, such as windows, doors, floor surfaces, paintwork.

- Generic approach allows for no flexibility according to local needs.

- Sometimes the new facilities were considered inferior, such as the siting of an all-weather pitch making a track impossible, resulting in the elimination of the athletics programme from the PE curriculum; inaccessible positioning of lighting gantries, making adjustments impossible without the employment of specialist staff and equipment.

- Resolution of snagging problems, such as heating or flooding sinks, was often delayed due to disputes over responsibility.

- Construction contractor's withholding of facilities until other disputes are resolved – in some cases resulting in significant reduction in availability of provision.

Management

Once the school construction and/or refurbishment have been completed, the responsibility for security, health and safety, maintenance and management passes to a facilities management company. In some cases, the company appoints a manager for each school; in others, the manager carries responsibility for a number of schools spread across the local authority area. The benefits of a facilities management company were identified as follows:

- Greater commitment to the maintenance of the school fabric – the assertion was that in the past, the maintenance budget was always the first to be cut in a difficult financial climate.

- Risks and costs are transferred from the school to the contractor, and school staff are released from commercial matters to focus more on educational matters.

- The contractor has greater experience in deploying and managing support staff and can introduce standardised procedures and good practice, so that support staff are developed and rapid response to problems can be made.

- Discrete and experienced staff on site can ensure higher standards of maintenance.

This arrangement appears to work best when the contractor has a representative on site to monitor performance, liaise with the school and respond quickly to problems. It works less well where the contractor operates a centralised help line. Business managers complained that their job had become more complex, involving liaison with a number of different bodies and individuals, a loss of control over the janitorial staff and prioritisation of work schedules, and disputes about responsibility for damage and wear and tear. They also complained about a lack of flexibility around access to the school, which prevented individual solutions being applied to individual problems. In other cases, staff simply circumvented the regulations and made their personal arrangements with janitorial staff as before.

The lack of flexibility occasioned by centralised management of facilities was a recurrent theme. A swimming club using one school's pool three evenings a week complained about the inflexible arrangements for access and storage of equipment – a more bureaucratic system than before – and poor communication about the new arrangements. Where there were contractor personnel on site, these problems seemed to be more easily resolved.

Costs

A major concern appears to be the costs of access to facilities outwith core hours, especially for users designated as 'third party'. They have to bear the full cost of additional cleaning and janitorial staff, as a result of which the costs become prohibitive to sports clubs, amateur dramatic societies and similar organisations that are largely dependent on voluntary leadership and members' subscriptions. In one instance, a former pupils' rugby club attempting to broaden its base by attracting football and hockey clubs to share its facilities has lost both since PPP. Because they needed to use the school's changing facilities, they incurred janitorial and cleaning charges that tripled the cost of the pitch hire – a prohibitive burden. As a result, the rugby club has lost income and the school has lost the coaching input and school/club links that these clubs provided. Further examples were provided in other local authorities of organisations being forced to move elsewhere because of unaffordable hire charges. If local authorities are committed to the greater use of school facilities, they must consider how the question of charges can be resolved, perhaps through subsidies. In the mean time, some excellent facilities are largely unused outside core hours.

Success Factors for the Management of PPP Schools

- Meaningful consultation with school staff to ensure appropriate and practical teaching facilities and the commitment of teachers to the PPP concept

- Facilities management staff (which could be an **empowered** head janitor) on site to ensure speedy repairs, quality maintenance and good liaison and communication with school staff

- Two discrete functions are needed:

  o Management and supervision of community lets
  o Delivery of all security, health and safety requirements

- It is, however, the responsibility of each local authority to decide how these two functions are delivered:

  o By one management body
  o The first by community use staff and the second by facilities management staff

5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Although there are wide variations in policy and practice, both between and within local authorities, there are also clear strategic conclusions that can be drawn from the data. In this section we summarise the general issues and propose some specific recommendations to assist in the achievement of the strategic objective to increase the community use of schools for sporting and cultural activities.

Central to our whole assessment is the conclusion that community use must not simply be seen as an 'add on' or a 'nice to have'. The level of capital investment in the school estate makes it an imperative that the maximum benefit is derived for communities well beyond the standard school day. This, in turn, means that whatever the management regime, it must seek the most cost-effective mechanisms to maximise the contribution to community life.

Given the strategic importance of the schools' resources to culture and sport, there is a definite role for the Scottish Arts Council and **sport**scotland to provide clear guidance based on the findings of this study. These lead agencies will want to work closely wherever possible with CoSLA, VOCAL, ADES and the relevant departments and sections of the Scottish Government.

The general conclusions are presented under the three main headings of **policy**, **provision** and **performance and management**.

Policy

Although community use of schools is widespread, there is a general lack of coherent strategies that address developmental issues and seek to integrate such use with broader sports and cultural provision. There is recognition of the need for such strategies, but progress is slow.

The lack of strategies is reflected in, and probably reinforced by, a general lack of dedicated strategic management resources (although some authorities are considering structural change to address such issues).

Reflecting local conditions and structures, community use is managed in a variety of ways, with a range of partnership arrangements, although the main sponsoring departments are education and community education.

With a few exceptions, a coherent approach to subsidising community use is generally lacking, with schools often having to carry the net cost. This gives rise to a perception that the growth of community use is restricted by limited revenue budgets. It needs to be clearly understood that with very few exceptions,

community use costs money and does not provide revenue surpluses for reinvestment. Further, there is often an inconsistency of pricing policies (often for the same activities) across council sections and departments.

The importance of a reasonably coherent broad policy framework is emphasised by our finding that no one management model emerged as being more effective in developing community use than any other (although usage data on which to make this judgement were very limited). Where general policies for community use were relatively clear, the various management models worked quite well. Where the policy context and strategic commitment to community use were not clear, provision tended to be rather reactive and ad hoc.

There is an acknowledged need for more systematic development work. In some authorities this work is beginning, with the appointment of cultural and sports development officers working with schools. Without a developmental and marketing approach, both cultural and sporting facilities will fail to deliver their optimum contribution to the communities they serve.

Key Recommendations: Policy

Policy 1 – Clear and Integrated Policies

Although we found no robust evidence that there is one optimal management regime, it is clear that the general policy framework has a major impact on attitudes to community use and the approach to provision and management. Consequently, our primary recommendation is that there is an urgent need for local authorities to develop **clear and integrated policies** for the promotion of community use of schools. These policies would:

- Establish a clear philosophy about the required balance between schools as child-centred educational establishments and as community resources

- Detail the relationship with broader strategies for sports and arts development and the contribution of community use to these

- Establish the role and function of school facilities within the councils' wider sport and arts facility strategies (including weekday and weekend use). In this regard it should be noted that the community use of schools for cultural activities is much less than for sport

- Provide a clear and coherent framework for decisions about the relative pricing of schools and other council sports and arts facilities. There is also a need to simplify current pricing structures

- Establish a coherent basis for the funding of the community use of schools

- Establish a clear management responsibility for the community use of schools, with an appropriate level of resources

- Identify the subsidy philosophy and commit the funding required

- Show a clear understanding of the issues of complementarity and the impact of competing provision and pricing regimes

Policy 2 – The Standard PPP Contract

There is provision in the Scottish Schools Standard PPP Contract for community use of school facilities. However, it is up to local authorities to stipulate local requirements, including appropriate community use. Details are for agreement between the local authority and the PPP provider in the light of demand and other local considerations. Consequently, we recommend that such arrangements should enable an integrated approach and, where desired, the use of leisure departments or trusts to deliver community use.

Policy 3 – Community Use Manuals

To enable the systematic development of community use, authorities should produce **community use manuals**. These would document all aspects of policies and practice and provide the framework for local community management and/or agreements with leisure trusts or cultural and leisure departments for the management of community use.

Provision

Community use is widespread, especially in secondary schools. However, in most cases, lettings are based on historical precedent and block bookings and regular users dominate the letting system. Although this is a cost-effective approach, it probably reflects (and reinforces) historical patterns. The use of the administratively more complex casual use is much less and is concentrated in secondary schools (although the demand for casual use will depend partly on the availability of such provision as swimming pools and fitness suites).

Clearly, school-based sports and cultural facilities are not the only ones serving community needs. Free-standing community cultural and leisure facilities managed directly or through a Trust and also voluntary sector provided and managed facilities all make an important contribution. We believe that it is vital to ensure complementarity amongst all these forms of local provision and especially to look strategically at the impact of proposed new provision and pricing policies. A number of authorities are looking at a completely integrated approach to pricing across all the different types of facilities they manage and these approaches have much to commend them.

There is a wide variety of management models, not only between authorities, but often within the same authority. These include devolved management to schools, local community committees of variable effectiveness, service level agreements with recreation departments, heads of community use, central and area letting systems and PPP contractors. As previously stated, general policy frameworks seemed more important than specific management regimes.

Most authorities with traditionally-managed schools reported continuing concerns about the cost of janitorial cover (although few were seeking to address the issue). More significantly, many of those consulted felt that janitors did not have appropriate expertise to manage community use effectively.

In part reflecting relatively high janitorial costs, community use tends to be concentrated during weekdays, after school hours. Weekend use is more limited, occurs during the day and is dominated by regular and ad hoc lets.

The design of cultural and sporting facilities for community use was not a specific part of this study as it was an issue that had been addressed previously. However, it is impossible to ignore the critical impact of design on both the ease of community access and the quality of the activities which are possible. It is possible that this might be an issue which could be considered by Architecture and Design Scotland.

School-time use is very limited, often constrained by unsuitable design and concerns with child safety, although there are some examples of the use of design and zoning to enable daytime community access (eg, to a fitness suite, theatre or library). Those involved in second phase PPP projects reported the

difficulties of addressing these issues within constrained budgets. For example, there are problems about retaining sports facilities at **sport**scotland-recommended dimensions and with standards appropriate to community use.

Overall there are very low levels of holiday use, with the most widespread type of use being formally organised holiday schemes and local authority lets during weekdays. It is not clear whether this reflects lack of demand, lack of development work or prohibitive costs.

In general, poor changing and showering facilities restrict community use for sport and other physical activities. This seems to be confirmed by the reported increase in community use in certain PPP schools, with their improved facilities.

The reported provision for cultural activities is much lower than for sport. It is not wholly clear if this reflects a lack of local demand, or a perception that schools did not have specialist cultural facilities equivalent to those required for sport (where capital investment is more obvious).

The general view of schools was that community use has improved the image of schools and provides a valuable local service. However, there were more negative evaluations of the extent to which community use had generated sufficient revenues for investment in improvements of facilities.

The majority of schools do not have a community users' group, although there were some examples of proactive management committees in Community Schools.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS - PROVISION

Provision 1 – Changing and Showering Facilities

Evidence from various PPP schools suggests that their improved facilities have attracted increased community use (especially for sport). Conversely a widespread view is that poor quality changing and showering facilities are restricting the development of community use. Consequently, if a broad policy for the development of community use is desired, this will require some strategic investment in such facilities to ensure that they are suitable for adult use.

Provision 2 – Daytime Use

In certain locations there may be a demand for daytime use from particular target groups (eg, retired people, women with young children). Where possible (especially when refurbishment or new build occurs), consideration should be given to the development of zoning to enable such use.

Provision 3 – Holiday Opening

Many schools are closed for significant periods during the main holidays at Christmas, Easter and in the summer. In the worst examples, schools are not available for community use on public holidays and at mid-term breaks. We recognise that at some of the main holiday periods demand drops but we recommend that authorities examine their approaches to ensure that an appropriate level of service is maintained.

Provision 4 – Casual Use

Current use is dominated by the administratively convenient system of lettings. This may reflect the nature of current demand and/or the nature of available school facilities. However, there is a general need to consider policies for casual access within the context of the local network of sporting and cultural opportunities.

Provision 5 – Use by Sport and the Arts

We recognise the general commitment being made by authorities to the opening up of specialist sporting facilities, particularly in response to the national sports strategy, *Sport 21* and its successor *Reaching Higher*, and local strategies for sport and physical activity. The lack of a similar strategic framework for the development of facilities for the arts needs to be addressed if the general and specialist facilities which are available in schools are to make their full contribution to community arts activity. We recommend therefore that local authorities should consider the development of local cultural facilities strategies.

Provision 6 – Design

Although design was not an explicit part of this study, the challenges of poor design came up in all forms of management regime. We find it necessary to state what should be obvious – that proper provision for community use needs to be designed into all new-build and renovation projects from the outset and not added as an afterthought.

Performance and Management

As previously indicated, because of an absence of robust management information we found it very difficult to assess precisely the impacts of different management approaches on community use.

The appointment of school sports (subsequently Active Schools) and cultural coordinators was seen as making a positive contribution to the development of extracurricular provision, although most reported that provision and uptake were patchy.

Although some cultural development officers have been appointed, community use for cultural activities is much more limited than for sport.   Cultural organisations often use community halls and other facilities, sometimes because of the higher costs of school use and sometimes because they are more appropriate for their needs.

Where improvements to quality had been made, especially in PPP schools, there was general agreement that this had led to increased use.

Although some schools employ staff to market and promote community use, in general, many do not. This led to a widespread lack of consideration about the impact of the programme on councils' wider sports and cultural strategies.

The attitudes of head teachers are crucial and a number of authorities are requiring them to play a more significant role in delivering community use. However, their ability to address these issues is constrained by more core educational demands.   In some cases this has been addressed by the appointment of directors or managers of community use.   However, there is a general need for greater recognition of the importance of this and the provision of more effective training and support for the staff involved.

In certain circumstances budget provisions in devolved school budgets meant that the expansion of community use had a negative impact on funds. This was because school and community budgets are integrated and the community component is seen as a cost which needs to be funded, rather than as a revenue opportunity. In a devolved budget, the head teacher must judge whether the potential revenue that could be generated by opening the premises will outweigh the costs involved. Unless there is clear revenue to be gained from opening schools for community access or a separate budget assigned to funding the community use of schools, the head teacher may choose to spend the budget on other items or programmes that are considered to be more valuable for the school population.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS – PERFORMANCE

PERFORMANCE 1 – The Role of Head Teachers

There is also a need to consider the desired role of head teachers in the development of community use (our data suggests that the attitudes of head teachers are crucial to the commitment to community use). If head teachers are to play a significant role they must be provided with relevant support (eg, directors of community use; leisure trusts) either on an area or individual school basis.

PERFORMANCE 2 – Janitorial Approach

Our evidence suggests that the standard janitorial approach often makes the costs of community use prohibitive and restricts the hours available for community use. If councils wish to promote the community use of schools, it is essential that this issue be addressed, for example, by using cultural and leisure services, leisure trusts or PPP leisure staff to provide more cost effective and flexible solutions.

PERFORMANCE 3 – Involvement of Staff and the Community

More generally, our data illustrated the need for greater overall commitment to the involvement of relevant staff and the community in the planning and design and planning of PPP and other new school-based facilities.

There is a need for community user groups in all schools with reasonable levels of community use or the potential to achieve this. Although the school board could perform this function, we found no evidence of this happening.

PERFORMANCE 4 – Booking Processes

In some of our case studies, both users and managers identified the issue of historical booking processes and multiple user categories as a major concern. As part of the general strategic review, consideration should be given to simplification and integration into the councils' broader pricing strategies.

PERFORMANCE 5 – Management Information

The project identified a widespread lack of robust and detailed information on the nature and extent of community use. Consequently, there is a clear need for a more effective approach to the collection of information about community use. This is required to establish the nature of current use as a basis for the formulation of informed strategies and in order to evaluate the longer-term impact of new policies and provision.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS – PERFORMANCE (cont)

PERFORMANCE 6 – Marketing

Community use is generally reactive and based on historical precedent. While such provision is catering for aspects of local demand, there is a clear need to adopt a more proactive, marketing approach if the community use of schools is to become more inclusive and needs orientated. Some authorities are in the early stages of developing such an approach, with the appointment of sport and arts development officers. However, a more systematic and integrated approach is required.

PERFORMANCE 7 – Dedicated Staff

It is unlikely that the optimal community use of schools will be achieved without dedicated community use staff. The evidence from this research indicates that, as with local authority sports and cultural facilities, resources are required to promote facilities and to encourage increased participation.

However, as previously argued, this work must be undertaken within the context of a coherent, integrated strategy which identifies the precise contribution of the community use of schools to councils' overall strategic objectives in sport and the arts.

APPENDIX 1: MEMBERSHIP OF THE PROJECT STEERING GROUP

Name	Organisation	Role/Designation
Jon Best*	**sport**scotland: Policy: Research Unit	Senior Research Manager
Iain Munro	Scottish Arts Council	Head of Capital
Jim Hislop	Scottish Executive (SE) Education Department: Tourism, Culture and Sport Group	Sports Policy Unit
Lee Cousins	**sport**scotland: Policy	Head of Policy
David Liddell	**sport**scotland: Facilities Development	Planner
Andy Kelly	**sport**scotland: Facilities Development	Project Manager: Local Facilities
Maggie Murray	**sport**scotland: Widening Opportunities	Acting Director of Widening Opportunities
Cathy Stobo	SE Education Department: Schools Division	I/c School Estates Branch
Naseef Huda	SE Education Department: Information, Analysis and Communication Division	Sports Economic Adviser, Schools Group
Fiona Black	SE Finance and Central Services Department	Senior Project Adviser
Rod Stone	Convention of Scottish Local Authorities	COSLA Representative
Murdo McIver	Association of Directors of Education in Scotland	ADES Representative
Charlie Raeburn	Voice of Culture and Leisure	VOCAL Representative
Penny Lochead	PMR Leisure	PPP Contractors' Adviser
Brian Porteous	Genesis Consulting	Lead Project Consultant
Prof. Fred Coalter	University of Stirling: Department of Sports Studies	Joint Project Consultant
Sheila Gray	Genesis Consulting	Consultant
Anna Hegley	Genesis Consulting	Research Consultant

* Manager of the research project on behalf of the three sponsors – Scottish Executive, Scottish Arts Council and **sport**scotland

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF RESPONDING LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Aberdeenshire Council

Argyll and Bute Council

Dumfries and Galloway Council

Dundee City Council

East Ayrshire Council

East Renfrewshire Council

City of Edinburgh Council

Falkirk Council

Fife Council

Glasgow City Council

Moray Council

North Ayrshire Council

North Lanarkshire Council

Orkney Islands Council

Renfrewshire Council

Scottish Borders Council

Shetland Council

South Lanarkshire Council

Stirling Council

West Dunbartonshire Council

West Lothian Council

APPENDIX 3: CASE STUDIES DEMONSTRATING BEST PRACTICE[14]

Bathgate Academy, West Lothian

1 Policy

Local Authority Policy for Community Use of Schools

West Lothian Council has a variety of school facilities utilising a range of approaches to managing community access. There is a strong Council policy for establishing access to schools by the community and local sports clubs.

School Policy for Community Use

Bathgate Academy has had a good community ethos for some years. However, actual direct engagement with the community had been limited due to the traditional nature of the letting system (based on regular bookings and janitorial access) and the lack of any vehicle for the schools to liaise with the community about sporting and cultural activity.

When West Lothian Council put forward five schools in 2001 for PPP they identified Bathgate Academy for major sporting improvements, as it was an ideal site for the placement of a Regional Sports Hall. The Council applied for supplementary funding from the **sport**scotland Lottery Fund for the enhanced sports facilities. The West Lothian PPP team worked with the preferred bidder on the design and implications of such a project, requiring that the new facilities would be open daily, at least 40 hours per week, to the community.

The process of the marrying of the PPP contract and the **sport**scotland funding was led directly by the school head teacher and PPP manager to ensure that the project was delivered as the school board intended. The net result of the PPP and Lottery funding at Bathgate Academy provided a six-court sports hall, a club room and a full-size synthetic pitch – all facilities previously lacking from the school and its community.

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[14] All information in the case studies, including opening hours, pricing and staffing details, are current as of the beginning of 2005. Although some details may have changed at a later date, these changes do not change the principles and lessons highlighted in the case studies.

2 Management of Community Use

How is the School Managed Out of School Hours?

The sports hall is now managed by the Bathgate Academy Sports Trust, which was formed by the school board to oversee and manage the operations of the new sports facilities out of school hours.

A school board member serves as the chair of the Trust. Each key club (badminton, table tennis, basketball, hockey and cricket) was given a place on the Trust. The head of the school and head of PE are also on the Trust management team. The Trust has overall responsibility for setting the programme and lettings policy.

It was key from the outset that the Trust would financially manage the project without directly employing staff. The staff are employed by the Council, but under the supervision of the Trust. The financial accounting and income from lettings and expenditure go through the Trust bank account and they are accountable under charitable law. The Trust pays the Council the staff wage bill on invoice from the Council. In effect, the Council is an agent for staff employment. The positive effect of this for the Trust is that they have the responsibility of managing the staff to deliver the service properly but do not have to become an employer.

The Trust takes in all monies connected with the facility management from lettings. Bookings are made direct to the Trust telephone number; this had been a school number but is now independently managed, administered and paid for from income. The lettings are controlled through a booking pro forma request and agreed by the Trustees. The positive PPP contract made by West Lothian allows the Trust to gain all income from lets out of school hours without incurring the facility maintenance costs, which are included in the PPP contract.

The Council ensured that the PPP contract reflected their plans to increase the use of the facilities by expanding the definition of core hours. This contractual arrangement permits the Trust or community management to use the facilities without incurring the additional facilities maintenance costs that would otherwise apply outwith core hours. The Trust has the task of ensuring that its income can pay for its staffing and administrative costs. Setting a policy of working with local clubs rather than full casual use has allowed for low staff levels and affordable pricing. This arrangement is seen by the community as a managed facility rather than a more traditional, and more negatively evaluated, janitorial/ lets system. It allows many of the benefits of a friendly managed facility without much of the cost burden, although there is limited provision for casual use.

The Council has a place on the Trust as a non-voting member. A Council employee from community services dept liaises with the Trust on a regular basis

and guides the Trust where needed. The department played a key role in overseeing the initial organisation of the Trust. Once the facilities were coming to completion, the department acted in an outreach development role to help the Trust develop policies, recruit staff and programme facility use. This support was instrumental in the early stages as the Trust was finding its feet and developing its role.

The initial PPP contract provided the Trust with control of lets during term time evenings and weekends and holiday period evenings. Under that agreement control of daytime lets during the school holidays reverted to the PPP operator and did not allow for proactive sports development to take place during holiday periods.

Staffing Levels

Three part-time supervisory staff are employed to operate the sports facilities. Their role is to welcome all participants, verify their booking and ensure that the equipment is available and ready for their session. The staff engage with the users to support their requirements and, if necessary, liaise with the Trust on their behalf with issues regarding the facilities or letting requirements. Staff are all qualified leisure attendants with first aid, sports coaching and child protection qualifications/checks. The PPP janitor is on site, as required by contract, but does not have any personal interaction with the sports users. This led to contract discussions designed to enable Trust to have more responsibility for the access and closing up of the sports side of the school building and possibly revising the hours of present staff so that they can deliver community use from 4pm rather than 6pm on school days when the school is not holding any after school activity.

The staff work closely with the school PE staff and Active Schools coordinator. The staff are currently on supervisory duties whilst in the facility, although they each have coaching qualifications, and the Trust wants to be able to use them for proactive sport development roles. The Trust does not have a sports development post and would like in the future either to make better use of the Council sport development team or to employ their own to work directly with their community.

3 Programming and Use of the Facilities

The programme of community use is set by the Trustees. It is based on the key aims set in their Deed of Trust:

A) To manage the sports hall and synthetic pitch to provide sports facilities for

- core users of the facilities;
- other sports clubs and community organisations;
- training and competition by national and regional bodies of sport;

- sports development activity; and
- general sports and physical recreation by the local community.

B) To encourage maximum use of the facilities and participation in sport and physical activity by the local and wider community, core users and other sports clubs.

The Trustees meet at the start of each season to agree on the forward lettings. Lets are prioritised based on the core aims and the following policy guidelines:

Priority in the letting of the sports hall will be ranked as follows:

1. Core sports — basketball, table tennis, badminton, hockey and cricket
2. Other indoor activities
3. Outdoor activities

Groups with open memberships, those providing structured coaching and those who have support from West Lothian Sports Council receive priority over those who do not. Also, the policy is to prioritise youth clubs/groups over adult, and amateur over professional clubs.

In accordance with the local policy to provide for its community, the Trust grades clubs by their geography, with priority going to Bathgate, followed by West Lothian clubs and lastly those outwith West Lothian.

Those governing bodies working with youngsters to improve their sporting opportunities within West Lothian will receive high priority.

The balance of the programme over the first year met the agreed procedure but there was difficulty in planning the programme to completely satisfy the local and regional needs of the different sporting communities.

In the first year of the programme demand for the facility was very high. The Trust has had to monitor the prioritisation of various groups very carefully so that it does not overlook key development needs of the local community.

4 Pricing

As noted, the core aim of the Trust is to meet the needs of its community and to employ staff to operate the facility. They do not need to raise income for maintenance costs or renewals. They do, however, wish to achieve a surplus to improve their level of service by hiring extra staff, undertaking good marketing and providing sports development programmes.

Letting charges for the facility were set by the Trust were initially set low to meet the needs of the local market. Core prices to hire the facility are £20 per hour for

the synthetic pitch for adults and £12 for juniors. The sports hall is charged out at £24 per adult group and £14 per junior group. West Lothian Council are currently reviewing their charges across the Council area for all services that are offered and the Trust is part of the working group to help guide a revised pricing policy for West Lothian.

Operating costs

In the first year of operation (July 2003-2004) the Trust employed leisure attendant staff to cover all opening hours (6-10pm week days, 12-6pm Saturday and 9am-6pm Sunday, when booked). The Trust also provided administration to cover the booking requests and paid insurance. This cost amounted to c£8,500. Income from lettings and a small donation/grant from the Council came to c£15,000.

Thus, although the level of income for the facilities is low, the Trust has operated at a comfortable surplus which can be reinvested in the operation of the facility and promotion of the facilities.

Is It Sustainable in Current Format?

It is clear from the accounts from the first year that the school and the Trust have a very positive and financially stable future. Financial stability is clearly influenced by the fact that they will not have to pay for any facility maintenance / energy costs and they are in a building tied to a PPP guaranteeing continued quality facilities for a 30-year period. This model is one that could easily be replicated by all local authorities if they took the following issues on board:

1. There is a need to ensure that this model is part of the ITN (Invitation to Negotiate) document in the PPP bid.

2. The local authority accepts that the life cycle of the facility needs to extend to full community hours for the whole year – not just term time.

3. There will be no third party opportunity for the bidder to reduce the unitary charge in their bids.

4. Although operating costs may be lower and therefore assist the establishment of a Trust or community management mechanism, the Authority will be still be paying for the additional operating costs. Those costs will be paid centrally through the PPP contract.

5 Key Lessons from Bathgate

1. Although the funding bids required a plan for the development of the Trust and management arrangements, it was difficult to begin planning because there was not any one person appointed to support the project. It is essential that if a local authority was interested in replicating this model that

key staff be assigned to work with the school board for a period of time in the early stages of setting up a Trust and developing management arrangements and procedures to begin the planning process.

2.   A school wishing to undertake such a process will require good legal and planning advice to guide the establishment of the key partnerships that will form the Trust and on setting the operational objectives for the Trust. The appointment of a full- or part-time sports development officer to support the project for its first year of operation will help in this regard and in promoting and marketing the facility in the community.

3.   Although the local authority has provided a very good model to replicate within PPP arrangements, it is essential that the requirements of the model be introduced into the PPP negotiation process very early so that the PPP management contract contains an appropriate definition of core hours and grants the Trust sufficient flexibility to implement the programme. In West Lothian's case, the local authority had to undertake additional negotiations in order to ensure that this localised management system would be accepted by the PPP contractor. In addition, there are still outstanding issues with management of out-of-term access, an issue that should ideally be resolved at the PPP bidding stage.

4.   There are difficulties with marrying the regional demands of the funding from **sport**scotland with the local needs. If regional facilities are to be placed on school sites these conflicting demands must be reconciled. Programming must allow for the necessary level of access buy the regional development squads and governing bodies as required in the conditions of Lottery funding. That aside, not all facilities will attract Lottery funding, and fewer still for the regional level facilities such as those at Bathgate.

5.   By having a local community Trust operate the school after school hours the school really does become part of its community and gains respect from those who live and work around it.

6.   The Trust feel that Bathgate has good mix of facilities but would recommend that any newly planned project has the capacity for a small café, food/drinks facility or vending machine to support the users' needs.

7.   This model shows clearly that community use of schools in its purest form, with quality staff responding to community demands and engaging with a community management system, is possible within a good PPP contract. A true partnership – and an affordable one – can exist within PPP.

8.   Whilst having access to external funding greatly enhanced the school facilities and ensured community use hours, local authorities should not need to rely on this option as the only away to achieve good community use. Good policy married with good specifications within a PPP contract should ensure facilities are built and that they are fully available for community use.

Inveralmond Community High School, West Lothian

Inveralmond is located in the Ladywell area of Livingston. The school opened in 1979 and was designed to meet the educational and social needs of the surrounding communities, as well providing comprehensive secondary schooling for approximately 1,000 high school pupils.

While the school's facilities are no longer modern by current standards, the school continues to be the major local provider in the area of sport, leisure and learning opportunities for children and adults alike.

1 Policy

Local Authority Policy for Community Use of Schools

West Lothian Council took an active approach to implementing the Scottish Executive's policy on Integrated Community Schools. This initiative, launched as New Community Schools in 1998, aimed to improve social inclusion and to provide integrated services for children through the school and focus support on the family unit. All secondary schools were targeted for inclusion in this initiative. In 2005 the Scottish Executive further developed and refocused the Integrated Community Schools policy, stating that by 2007 every school in Scotland will participate in delivering Integrated Children's Services.

School Policy for Community Use

Inveralmond Community High School has been working within an Integrated Community School approach for the last 20 years and therefore has practical delivery expertise and experience that can be shared across many of the other schools in the area. However, it still aims to improve its services and their delivery to the community.

Following a community profiling exercise designed to identify needs that could be addressed via school and community resources, the school set up a community liaison forum in 2003. This forum, in turn, established sustainable mechanisms for ongoing dialogue between the school and community representatives. The school is a now a leading player in the Ladywell Action Plan, a community-led partnership aiming to improve the quality of life for all sections of the local community.

The school was selected for refurbishment under PPP, with a planned completion date of December 2006. The refurbishment will involve upgrading and modernising the indoor (swimming pool, gymnasia, dance studio, squash courts, fitness suite and crèche) and outdoor community facilities, including the addition of a full-size floodlit synthetic turf pitch.

2 Management of Community Use

How the School is Managed Out of School Hours

The head teacher carries overall responsibility for all aspects of the school. Management decision-making is led by the community and leisure manager within the context of West Lothian Council policies and strategies and in consultation with staff and other stakeholders. The community and leisure manager is a member of the school's senior management team and reports to the team on a regular basis. Operational decisions are made routinely by the sport and leisure team leader and supervisors. The school board are not directly involved in decision-making but are kept informed of community issues and developments by the head teacher.

At present, Inveralmond Community High School does not operate a community user forum. However, the Council's Sports Development Plan commits the school to establishing a forum of representative community users of its sports facilities by 2006.

The 'community side' is led by the community and leisure manager who reports to the head teacher and leads a team of staff dedicated to community use. Delivery of sport and leisure, including community use of school's PE facilities, is one function of the community and leisure service. Other functions are adult learning, working with young people and community capacity building. Each week the school is used by 93 regular clubs and groups, 200 adult students and around 900 pay and use participants.

Staffing Levels

The sport and leisure team comprises a sport and leisure team leader, two sport and leisure supervisors and six sport and leisure assistants. Staff work shifts covering opening hours of 7.30am-10pm Monday-Friday and 9am-5pm Saturday and Sunday. Each shift is led by a supervisor or the team leader. The team leader is responsible for managing the team, developing the sport and leisure programme and ensuring quality and safety. Supervisors oversee and support colleagues and are responsible for the smooth operation of the service and the health and safety of users. The sport and leisure assistants' duties include life-guarding, supporting users, cleaning and routine maintenance. All sport and leisure staff have current national pool life-guarding qualifications. The additional qualification profile for team leader and supervisors includes pool plant operator's certificate and a leisure/recreation management qualification. Two staff are fully qualified swimming teachers and two are completing training leading to gym instructor qualifications. Staff are encouraged to teach and lead activities.

Teachers/instructors are also employed on a part-time sessional basis to take weekly sport and leisure classes. Currently under contract are two swimming

teachers, three aerobics instructors, one dance teacher, one pilates instructor and one yoga instructor.

Two crèche supervisors staff an under-fives crèche which provides up to two hours of childcare to enable parents/carers to attend classes or groups or use the sport and leisure facilities.

Two full-time and seven part-time staff provide a reception service and undertake a range of 'whole school' and 'community side' administrative and clerical duties including lets, bookings and financial administration.

Clearly, the school employs a significant number of staff members in order to deliver community use. Essentially, all staff posts on the community side are directly funded by the Council. Sport and leisure programmes (eg, holiday sports programmes) may be enhanced by temporary staffing funded via grant aid. The sport and leisure team is enhanced by three people undertaking part-time voluntary training placements.

3 Programming and Pricing

The programming of community activities at the school is set annually in the context of the community and leisure development plan (which reflects key policies and priorities), the community side budget, the Council's letting scheme and the demands of the school for extracurricular activities and events. Programming is managed by the community and leisure manager.

The community side of the school's operations supports the following activities and groups:

- After School Hockey Club
- After School Badminton Club
- After School Football Training
- Harrysmuir After School Club
- P7/S1 After School Club
- Karate
- Tae Kwon Do
- Kung Fu
- Kick Boxing
- Dance
- Boxercise
- Running Club
- Roller Skating Club
- Aquanauts
- Danceworld

- Dance Academy
- Jangles Dance Club
- Rainbows
- Brownies
- Jumpin Gymmies
- Inveralmond Youth Groups
- Newtown Football Club
- Broxburn Colts Football Club
- Inveralmond Football Club (Juniors)
- Dynamo Dragons Football Club
- Fernhaul Football Club
- Enable Scotland – Art Group
- Ladywell Community Council
- Eliburn Day Group

At the time of the study, prices for main activities at the school were as follows:

Facility	£ Adults	£ Junior	£ Concessions
Games Hall	22 per hour	11 ph	n/a
Gymnasium	14.20 ph	7.10 ph	n/a
Swimming	1.40 per session	0.80 ps	Senior Citizens & U5s Free
Spinning Studio	2.50 ps	/	/
Fitness Gym	2.20	/	/
Leisure Classes (20 hours tuition)	40	20	10
Holiday Programmes	/	10-15 per week (1-2 hours per session over 5 days)	/

The community elements of the school are operated by dedicated staff of 18, which includes a mixture of managerial, manual and administrative posts. Projected staff costs following PPP refurbishment at the school are £388,000 per annum and when added to estimated property costs and supplies and services the gross expenditure is estimated at £490,000. Estimated income from the variety of activities provided by the school following PPP refurbishment is £136,000, leaving a Council-funded deficit of £354,000.

4 Key lessons from Inveralmond Community High School

1. Dedicated management and staffing to concentrate on service provision and use of school by the community improves results.

2. Close working and strategic links with the local community – local nursery and primary schools, other Council departments, facility user groups, sports clubs, community council, local police, voluntary groups and agencies – results in programming that is tailored to the community's needs.

3. Strategic working relationships between PE staff and Community Leisure staff facilitates effective community use.

4. The case study demonstrates efficient use of community space, as school and community share facilities during curriculum time.

5. Sensitive pricing and programme delivery enables the school to increase use by groups/individuals traditionally excluded through minimal disposable income.

6. Flexibility in programming between casual use and lets/block bookings enables a diversified profile of community use.

7.   There is a need to take forward community forums and feedback from users in order to tailor programmes further.

8.   More links with clubs are needed.

9.   Because of the devolved management and high level of staffing required, this model offers a very costly option that was developed within the context of the Integrated Community Schools initiative.   Inveralmond requires significant financial input from the local council. Such funding may not be available to all schools.

Eastbank Academy, Glasgow

1 Policy

Local Authority Policy for Community Use of Schools

Glasgow City Council policy is to have all schools open for community access where required. This has been undertaken through janitorial support and a centralised letting system for many years. Many clubs in Glasgow use school facilities which, often having older, less appropriate facilities and lacking management staff on site, have historically been priced at a much cheaper rate than the community-based sports facilities.

In recent years there has been a move by some schools to collaborate with the Culture and Leisure Department in exploring ways to enhance the club opportunities within their schools.

School Policy for Community Use

Eastbank Academy has a history of working with and welcoming their local community into the school in the evenings and weekends, and has an agreed open use policy for school lets and clubs to hire. This is a historical legacy from the policy of dual use when the school was managed under Strathclyde Region. Due to their previous commitment to community use of the school and direct commitment from the head teacher, Eastbank was chosen to become the pilot school for the Community Club concept funded by Better Neighbourhood Services. The pilot initially ran from 2001 to 2003 under this funding and has continued under further funding that is due to end in 2006.

Based on the success of the initial pilot, the programme has since grown to 12 schools across Glasgow. These have all been funded by New Opportunity Fund NOPES funds and Out of School Activity funds from the lottery. The schools targeted are those either in higher areas of deprivation or serve an area of deprivation. Eastbank Academy's catchment includes G (police) division, one of the more deprived areas of Glasgow.

Eastbank Academy has been part of Glasgow's PPP programme. Although it has not received all that the head teacher would have hoped for in the refurbishment, the facilities overall have improved and there is a programme of facilities maintenance that is appropriate for a community use school.

2 Management of Community Use

The Community Club programme now has a full-time development officer managing the programme and community club officers across the city. The key aim of the Community Club concept is to:

> Through partnership working, including working with the voluntary sector to provide a network of clubs that offer access to affordable and sustainable activities within the local community.

The Community Club programme at Eastbank is managed by a paid, part-time development officer (the officer shares two schools) and the work is overseen by a local voluntary management committee.

The key role of the officer is to undertake the following:

- Match existing clubs with a school, offering free lets to clubs in an effort to encourage them to work with young people.

- Offer clubs an audit and health check to ensure all clubs working with young people have appropriate child protection and youth policies in place. If not, the officer will help them become accredited.

- Help clubs access coach education and directly link into the school to promote their clubs.

- Promote club forums for user clubs to discuss facility issues, like condition or access, with the school or local authority.

- Survey the school pupils of both primary and secondary schools in their catchment to identify the most appropriate programme for the school to run, and at what times, to maximise attendance.

- Create a local management committee with clubs and key workers in the area to help everyone understand their roles and access shared information.

- Promote programmes for after-school and weekend activity for primary and secondary pupils.

- Work closely with outreach workers to identify key target groups and ascertain what activities the young people want.

Although the overall facility management is still with the Council (via the PPP contractor), Eastbank continues to use the traditional centralised booking system with the janitorial staff overseeing access to the facility. The particular difference under the Community Club programme is the employment of a key link officer for all groups who let the premises. This provides opportunities for local clubs to grow by engaging young people and by taking advantage of the free lets that

make such expansion affordable and sustainable. It appears to be a good partnership for community, school and club.

The other key role of the Community Club programme is promoting the use of instructors and coaches for the local primary school after-school programme. At Eastbank, teachers are paid to provide after-school activities. Other coaches are also brought in to supplement this work of providing a full programme through the weekend where possible.

The local management committee at Eastbank offers a forum for users to identify issues with the Council or school through the community club officer. The committee includes community sports club representatives, the school head teacher, recreation officers, the local police, outreach workers for the area and the service development officer in the school. This group agrees on local policy and monitors the programme quarterly from reports given by the community club officer.

The budget for the programme at Eastbank Academy is £50,000; this is made up of £40,000 from the local authority funding grant and £10,000 from the school. This pays for the community club officer (£20,000 plus expenses) who manages the Eastbank Community Club programme, plus an outreach team. The other funding is used to promote the school/outreach programme and to subsidise lets for the partner clubs.

3 Programming

Programming is based on several approaches, all of which are characterised by a proactive stance towards development. The school works directly with local clubs and encourages them to extend their club by engaging in youth development (while offering facilities in which to do so) and also develops programmes based on pupil research and outreach team work involving liaison with community youth organisations. The community club officer collates the use requests and research data to plan the term programme and the allocation of the budget. Their research clearly indicates that the schools will have to promote after-school activity and classes for the primary school age group in activities such as dance, cheerleading, street dance or team combat and that these activities must be instructor/session led. However, at the secondary level they hope to establish evening classes that can be developed and run by partner clubs. The school recognises that it still has some way to go to get the sustained levels of activity and feels that some support will be required over the long term to ensure activity remains at target levels.

There are still some traditional community lets for groups who want to just book and play rather than taking on the full commitment of engaging with the programme. The community club officer wishes reduce the number of these lets

by relocating them to community sports facilities in order to allow the clubs in the programme greater access to the school.

4 Pricing

Clubs pay the community charge levels at the schools. These charge levels, which are determined by the Council, have been set across the city at all schools and are lower than those at community sports facilities. The average price for school hall is £7 and for a synthetic pitch is £20.15. These prices are not payable by the club when they undertake youth development sessions.

The hope is that clubs will use the schools as part of a development pathway and that they will move on to local sports centres in time when they grow. Concern is expressed as to the effect that the sudden increase in price will have on the clubs when they make this jump. No club is asked to move to a sports centre; they tend to do so only when they recognise the need for better facilities or managed facilities for matches or competition.

The Council hopes that through the Community Club programme many clubs can grow in an affordable way with support and guidance. In targeting the deprived communities within the city they realise that the programme will take time to establish and that good quality staff and outreach workers are essential to this process.

The project developed under a PPP contract which includes all their janitorial and life cycle costs within the unity charge. This allows the school letting prices to be kept to a minimum as the facility costs are covered elsewhere.

The Council hopes that the programme will be sustainable, although it is too early to make judgements at this point. They are monitoring the programme carefully and hope that it will be mainstreamed at its current sites and then extended to other sites across the city.

5 Key Lessons from Eastbank Academy

1. The programme provides an alternative way to look at the traditional janitorial system. Although Eastbank relies on janitorial supervision of the premises rather than specialised staff, they have developed an innovative means of expanding community use by using a school-based sports development lead programme and focusing on the development of club links.

2. The programme does not demand high levels of community management. While it is preferable to have the community be involved and have a sense of community ownership of the programme, this can not always be the case.

3. The programme needs long-term commitment from the city to enable it to continue, as it is currently funded from grants.

4. The structure of the Community Club programme fits into the Learning Community network to allow all programme staff in the community to work together.

5. The programme has clear targets set by the Council and this focuses the officer's work.

6. There are not any directly planned school PE curriculum links in the community club programme.

7. The school is concerned by the short-term nature of the programme and the impact of staff turnover (not only experienced at Eastbank), which has brought its difficulties to the programme in establishing relationships locally.

8. A programme such as this has clear benefits in targeting clubs to work with young people and can help change the way community lets are operated within a school.

9. The programme is unlikely to become fully sustainable in the long term. However, it should provide demonstrable benefits in the areas of club growth, increasing participation in areas of social exclusion and providing opportunities for youth sport development. In order to recognise these benefits, the programme is likely to need long-term financial support.

North Lanarkshire Sports Comprehensives – A National Pilot Project

The case study for North Lanarkshire is based upon the one of the pilot schools (St Maurice's, Cumbernauld), which is part of the National Pilot for Sports Comprehensives. The three schools involved in the Sports Comprehensives pilot are St Maurice's High School in Cumbernauld, St Margaret's High School in Airdrie and Braidhurst High School in Motherwell. The Sports Comprehensives are part of a three-year pilot scheme supported by the (then) Scottish Executive and have three key strands to deliver:

- The school curriculum for PE within the school and its cluster primaries

- The extended curriculum

- Community use of the school

To enable realisation of the full vision of the Sports Comprehensives, each of the schools needed extensive improvements in their sports facilities. Therefore, over the first two years of the pilot the schools have been concentrating on the first two strands of the programme; that is, curriculum development and extended curriculum activity. The success and impact of the curriculum delivery aspect of the sports comprehensive is not the subject of this case study, although it is an integral part of the pilot and provides an important context for the development of community use in these schools. This case study focuses on how community use has evolved during the pilot phase and the plans for the schools and their communities when the facilities are in place.

1 Policy

Local Authority Policy for Community Use of Schools

North Lanarkshire Council has a history of significant community use of their schools, managed in a very traditional way. That is, at the end of the school day the schools are managed by the janitor (employed by Community Services) and he/she lets the pre-booked groups into the premises and locks up after they leave. The schools are rarely used in the school holiday periods except for specialist courses. The process is controlled by an area-based booking system. It has resulted in many groups having consistent lets for many years but not does allow much room for sports development or change in approach to out-of-hours use. However, the costs are affordable to the groups and to the Council.

Seven years ago, the education department and several principal teachers of PE began to look at how they could improve the current PE curriculum. As part of this process they also began to explore ways to work with clubs and governing bodies' development officers to improve community access and use of the school

facilities. After examining models from England under the Sports Colleges programme, North Lanarkshire created their own model of the Sports Comprehensive, which was envisioned not as a specialist school for sport but as one where the ethos of improving PE had an effect across the school, its local cluster primaries and other local secondaries, and would demonstrate a new way to deliver community use of schools.

A pilot was launched in 2002. Each chosen school was given a budget for three years to use directly on delivery of the three strands of the programme.

This money was allocated for revenue spends for additional PE staff and small equipment, training and transport costs. However, the Council faced the challenge of promoting this exciting programme with a poor stock of school sports facilities that were neither inviting to pupils and the community nor designed to accommodate them. The result was an extensive refurbishment and new build requirement at each school.

North Lanarkshire committed its entire allocation of NOPES capital funding plus a sports lottery grant and additional Council capital to the three schools. This building programme is currently under way at two schools and the new facilities will be operational by the end of 2005. None of the schools in the sports comprehensive programme is a PPP school.

Although this whole programme is currently a pilot, the Council is committed to the Sports Comprehensive ethos. It is expected that the Council will extend the approach to other schools.

School Policy on Community Use

St Maurice's High School was chosen as one of the pilot schools because it had an existing school ethos of school improvement and community involvement, as well as a PE department that was very committed to an ambitious vision of what PE and sport could bring to the broader educational environment for all pupils.

The school board was also very keen to raise achievement levels of all school pupils and concluded that an extended PE curriculum and wider opportunities for pupils to participate in sport and other physical activity could have a very positive effect on the entire school.

2 Management of Community Use

At the time of the study, St Maurice's was in the midst of a significant building project, which will result in the construction of a brand-new stand-alone sports hall on site. The hall will have a fitness room, a community club room and extensive changing areas. The site will also incorporate external pitches, adding

to the current facilities, which include a small sports hall and swimming pool and small gym. These facilities are currently let by local groups and clubs.

The pilot and the associated build programme have offered an opportunity to rethink the current booking and management system. St Maurice's has developed very good links between the school and local clubs through their PE curriculum. Coaches from local clubs have been involved in providing sport within and outside the curriculum. Club contacts expressed a need for facilities to support further community development. After consulting with clubs and local sport centre managers, the school board determined that the major local demand was for club facilities, rather than facilities for casual bookings, and developed the management group to pursue this goal. The management group, which is considered to be a subgroup of the school board, currently includes the following representatives:

- The school board chair

- The head teacher

- Principal teacher of PE

- School sports coordinator

- Five local sports clubs representatives

- The Active Schools manager

- Local voluntary sector representative

- Local sports centre manager

The management committee will be financially responsible for the budget. The facility budget will be ring fenced and managed by the school board as a cost centre for the school. They will set all policy on usage. The management committee will not become a separate entity from the Council. Local management and identity is crucial to this project and the involvement of the clubs is crucial to ensure the facility delivers on its objectives.

The management committee will manage the appointment of the appropriate staff, although staff will be employed by the Council.

The key staff member to be employed will be a club links officer. The club links officer will be responsible for club and community liaison and the creation of a youth sports development programme in a variety of sports that links to the school's extracurricular activity programme. This position will be managed by the principal of PE to encourage a clear pathway from curricular to club activity. Sports attendants will be appointed to oversee the operation of the facility's fitness room and to ensure adherence to health and safety requirements. Many of the clubs will take responsibility for the times they use the facilities to lower staffing costs.

3 Programming

The programme reflects the local need for club opportunity and for youth development. It is based on the continued development of a pathway leading from the curriculum through extracurricular activity to club-based participation for young people. At the same time, it provides facilities that will enable clubs to expand their development in other ways and encourages clubs to contribute to the development of sporting opportunities, coaching, etc for young people. The programme focuses on key sports so that provision may complement that of other sports providers, rather than competing with them.

One criticism that may be levied at this approach is that it could lead to the establishment of a 'closed shop'. The school board and management committee have tried to deal with this issue proactively by ensuring that a diversity of clubs are involved in the management committee. In addition, the programme will be monitored and reviewed on an ongoing basis by the club links officer and principal of PE.

4 Pricing

The pricing of the facility has been interesting for the management committee. The school and the clubs all buy into the ethos of using a barter system to support each other, for example if a club provides a free coach to the school then that club would get reduced rates for the facilities. However, they all recognise that the facility has to operate and function as a cost centre. The education department will ensure that maintenance, heat and light are included as part of the school expenditure; however, the costs of staff, marketing and administration will need to be covered by income. Rates have been used for business planning purposes based on per person charges and projected realistic usage. At the time of writing the costs for use have not been finalised; however, it is clear to all of the management committee the proposed rates will leave the facility well within affordable limits. There is a grant for the first two years from the NOPES facilities revenue, which will help towards the cost of staff, and there will be a certain amount of the Sport Comprehensive budget which is used to deliver youth sports development work within the facility. This initial external funding will be essential to help with establishing long-term sustainability.

5 Key Lessons from the NL Sports Comprehensives Pilot

1. The philosophy of the whole school in regards to community use is key to the success of the North Lanarkshire Sports Comprehensives pilot. St Maurice's has traditionally focused on integration with the community and began this project with a strong legacy of school-club links. A genuine partnership with the community exists and the school was able to draw on this to move their community use strategy forward.

2. When embarking on a programme that will be based on club development through community use, it is vital that local clubs commit to the project at an early planning stage. This will provide support for the school staff and the school board in developing and implementing the community use strategy. It also provides motivation for partnership working, and ensures that the programming and facilities are developed in a way that will enable the school and the clubs to reach their goals.

3. Local clubs and volunteers have many skills to bring to the table and these should be utilised at all times. Working in partnership with clubs can help schools to improve the level of participation and skills among their pupils while providing knowledge and personnel to reduce staff demands at the facility.

4. Not all schools will have the ability to bring such a process together. Many will require a lot of support from the Council to achieve this. It is not advisable to push a school board down this route unless they are fully committed to community use of their school.

5. Funding has assisted these pilots greatly. Capital investment has ensured that each school will have appropriately designed facilities for encouraging community use. Many schools do not. When embarking on a community use project, the authority needs to be aware of facility changes that will be needed to ensure the buildings are community friendly.

6. Community use schools need to be strategically placed within communities. Each school in North Lanarkshire was selected either because they had the opportunity to work with neighbouring facilities (St Margaret's is next door to Airdrie Sports Centre and they are sharing a new synthetic pitch) or because they were located in a part of town where demand is greatest and no facilities exist. Consultation with the local community identified a niche that the community schools could effectively service. The inclusion of local sport centre managers on the management committee team has helped to ensure that the programming at the schools complements that of local sport centres, rather than competing with them.

7. The Sports Comprehensive ethos is different from that of the other case studies because the focus is on continuity between curriculum, extracurricular sport provision and community use in the form of a player development pathway. There is a much higher involvement by the PE staff in the Sports Comprehensive projects than the other schools.

8. The programme needs to be carefully planned to ensure that club self-interest does not dominate the programming. The management committee at all times needs to be balanced and set with a few very clear goals from the start. Regular monitoring is crucial.

Balfron High School, Stirling

1 Policy

Local Authority Policy for Community Use

Stirling Council's policies are largely historic and in need of further modernisation. Despite attempts to have a single integrated community letting policy, further streamlining is considered advantageous.

The Council has established the principle of linking community use of PPP schools to the Council's letting policy. A strategic approach is being pursued, bringing all the Council's community facilities for sports and cultural activities into the one school.

There is a high percentage of fixed lets by specific clubs and community organisations which change little from year to year.

There is a range of letting charges for core hours which cover commercial, concessionary and exempt circumstances. Prices for these lets are not sufficient for cost recovery, except in commercial circumstances. Bookings outwith standard letting times – usually weekends – require full cost recovery in respect of a contribution to heating, lighting and power costs, and janitorial costs for opening and closing the facilities.

Anticipated profit from third party use of £35,000 is built into the contract agreed by the contractor and the Council; this is deducted from the contractor's annual charge to the Council. Any additional profit is then split 50/50 between the contractor and the Council.

School Policy for Community Use

The school policy follows that of Stirling Council, with the principal aim being to maximise the community use of the facility. As a result, a flexible approach is taken to encourage as many groups as possible to use the school for their activities. Every effort is also made to contribute to the local community. For example, accommodation was offered free of charge to events associated with the 700th anniversary of the village, with the only additional charge being that required to pay the janitors' overtime.

Lets at Balfron High School are administered directly by the PPP operator in accordance with the Council's policy. The arrangements are covered by the PPP project agreement, with the relevant clause being:

> The parties agree and acknowledge that the cost of making the school available for Educational Use, Office Use and Community Development Use is included in the Basic

Annual Payment. The Services Company shall be entitled to charge users of the School or its associated facilities for Community Facility Use based on rates broadly comparable to those charged by the Council for use of other facilities of the same nature as the School.

There are few community lets during the school day (only specially organised events), although Falkirk College have a room in the school where they run classes for adults and all school classes are open for adults to join.

2 Management of the Facility

Prior to the building of this PPP school there was a comprehensive programme of consultation, comprising:

- Public meetings

- Community representatives on the local steering group

- Meetings with the village community planning group

- Survey of the local community about the location of the school and the facilities it should have

Bookings for both school and community use are taken through a 'one-stop' approach run by the contractor, with a priority system in operation for lettings. The school and Stirling Council receive first priority and can use the facilities free of charge. The second priority group, which consists of community support, sports development and the local community also use the facilities free of charge. Concessions (eg, the Girl Guide Association) have third priority and are largely based on the lets that operated in the old school. Standard rates are paid by most remaining lessees, with relatively few commercial rates being levied – mostly for private functions such as weddings.

The facilities operator (Jarvis) employs 42 staff – management, leisure attendants (including swimming pool lifeguards), janitors, technicians, catering staff and cleaners. Most are employed on a seven-day shift rotation and so overtime charges apply only outwith normal working hours (typically after 10pm). In this way, prohibitive charges are avoided at weekends and during the holidays.

The contractor operates a help desk on site, receiving and recording all reports of repairs/maintenance required. Most repairs are carried out by their own staff within agreed target times.

A community user group (with members from the community, contractor, school and Stirling Council) meets every two months and has the remit to maximise community use of the school.

The school board is not involved in the operation of the facility, although they do act in an advisory capacity.

The school has appointed a PPP adviser who meets regularly with the contractor. Stirling Council sends representatives to the monthly and quarterly meetings.

Although there is great potential to attract use from a wide area, some difficulties have emerged:

- The cost of advertising is prohibitive. There is considerable dependence on word of mouth and many people do not realise that the whole community can use the school. This is being proactively addressed by the contractor, who receives free advertising space in the *Press and Post* in return for assistance in distributing this free newspaper.

- An application for a licence was refused on the grounds that the building was primarily a school. For special events, an agreement has been made with the local pub which operates a bar, and while this helps to attract events, it represents a loss of potential income for both the contractor and Stirling Council.

- Although the sports facilities are excellent, local clubs do not identify with the school and have been unwilling to amalgamate to use its facilities.

- There are problems with storage and the changing room layout – which could perhaps have been avoided with greater input from leisure personnel at the design stage. Some changing room lockers have been replaced and are now for the exclusive use of community users.

3 Programming

The department of community learning and development has an office on campus. Their remit is to plan all programmes of classes and courses and arrange for tutors to take them. They then apply to the facilities management for access to the appropriate accommodation.

Additional activities are planned and organised directly by the contractor, such as car boot sales, from which 40% of revenue goes to charity. Every effort is made to support new ventures like the film club and attract new groups to use the facilities.

Falkirk College has exclusive access to a computer room from 9am to 9pm on Mondays and 9am to 4pm on Tuesdays. In addition to classes, there is some drop-in use, supervised by the tutor on duty.

The school has exclusive use of the 25m swimming pool during the day, with the contractor providing the lifeguards. Stirling Council then runs an active programme of swimming lessons in the evenings of Monday to Thursday and on

Saturday mornings. Public access is limited to late evenings Monday-Thursday; Friday evenings; Saturday afternoons and evenings; and Sundays.

Great sensitivity is evident in the contractor's use of the facility. For example, a conference room on the ground floor is kept for exclusive use by the school because of its position in the head teacher's corridor; before the staff area is opened for community use, all potentially confidential material is removed.

4 Pricing

The charging policy is based on a consistent set of charges for similar sized rooms/halls across the Stirling Council area, with prices based on the group using the facility – standard, concession (50% of standard), and commercial. Concessionary rates apply to all children's/youth groups under 16, mother and toddler groups, uniformed organisations, voluntary and non-profit charitable organisations, churches and groups where the amount earned by the leader does not exceed £15 per hour. Commercial rates apply where the leader accrues more than £15 per hour through charges to members. Within this, rates can be negotiated to ensure that classes actually run and to encourage the use of the campus facilities.

Full cost-recovery charges apply at weekends and during school holidays, although when the school would otherwise be open at weekends for normal school activities, groups can apply for a let and will be charged the relevant letting rate rather than full cost recovery. Where full cost recovery applies, the lessee is charged the higher of either the relevant letting charge or full recovery but not both.

5. Key Lessons from Balfron High School

Balfron is new and still evolving as a community facility. Part of this evolution involves a cultural change as people come to regard it truly as a community facility, rather than a school that happens to open for community use. It faces some challenges that could have been avoided in the planning stages of construction, such as shared use of swimming pool changing rooms and other challenges which are more problematic. For example, Balfron village is relatively small, so that most potential community users have to travel some distance to attend classes, courses and events.

However, there are a number of features which could be mirrored elsewhere to good effect:

1.   Balfron benefits from good communication between facility management, the department of community learning and the school, with regular meetings and much informal contact. The facilities management office is beside the

94

main school office and reception, and the community learning and development office is just opposite.

2. There are excellent personal relationships between the contractor, the Council and the school.

3. A flexible approach is taken to all facility use, with the central tenet being to maximise the community use of the buildings and other facilities. This includes the negotiation of affordable rates to allow courses, classes and other events to take place.

4. The presence of a help desk on site means that most problems can be dealt with speedily and effectively. In addition, health and safety and other risk assessments take place before a facility is used for a new activity or by new users so that damage and misuse are minimised.

5. Maintenance and technical staff show a willingness to contribute in ways outwith their job remit, such as making a stable to house nativity figures at Christmas, providing and maintaining plants and flowers.

6. The school has a community user group which meets every two months.

7. Enthusiastic support and leadership from the head teacher and the senior management team help to foster the ethos that this is a community facility that operates as a school by day, rather than a school that is occasionally open to the community.

Madras College, Fife

1 Policy

Local Authority Policy for Community Use

There is a long-standing commitment to the community use of schools in Fife, within a wide definition of community learning and development. All policies respond to the key drivers of Fife Council, which are:

- Active citizenship

- Lifelong learning

- Social inclusion

The Fife Community Learning and Development Strategy, 2004-2007, identifies four key priorities:

- Improving community engagement and learner involvement, and promoting community learning and development as an empowering process.

- Improving needs identification and targeting of resources towards disadvantaged communities.

- Improving the focus on community and learner as the drivers for service development.

- Improving target setting and adopting a more rigorous focus on community and individual outcomes.

Community use is managed by community services, which has three sectors – leisure and parks; arts, libraries and museums; community learning and development. Its current structure is a head of service; three service managers, one for each of the above sectors; and six operational team leaders, with two based in each of the three regions in Fife (East, Central and West). The leadership and support given by the head of service and the service managers is regarded as a vital element in setting the context in which individual schools can operate. Should this be missing or ineffective, the heads of community use would find their task more challenging.

Most community schools, including Madras, have dedicated heads of community use who are fully integrated into their school's management structure. In most cases they are members of the school senior management team and sit on the school board of studies. Their relationship with the head teacher is vitally important. As future community schools are created, heads of community use will probably be responsible for two schools and this practice has already been

implemented in some cases. In the case of Madras, which is a split-site school, there is one head for this school only.

There are local planning groups for community learning and local flexibility in determining delivery is regarded as key, within the context of overall Fife policy.

The organisation and management of community services in the authority is currently being reviewed, with some of the main concerns expressed being:

- Lack of specific functional management responsibility, resulting in varying approaches in the three regions.

- Lack of management capacity – additional workload, with little or no additional resource allocation.

- Although the area management approach is based on strong partnership working, the community use heads who chair the committees have no executive authority.

- Potential lack of local flexibility in PPP contracts.

- Lack of relationship between local provision and the overall strategy for, for example, sports development.

School Policy for Community Use

Central to the policy of the school is the philosophy – shared by the head teacher and the head of community use – that since Fife Council owns the buildings and the equipment, the school and the community have equal rights to use them. The aim is to make the best use of the facilities for the benefit of both the school and the community populations.

Within the context of this shared philosophy the day-to-day management and operation of the facilities relies on the application of common sense, with as much flexibility as possible built in. As the school plans its calendar, it seeks to avoid disruption to the community programme. For example, it consults community use about which rooms are needed for evening classes before allocating rooms for parents' nights. Similarly, if the school requires the use of accommodation, such as the school hall or the drama studio, for a show or a higher drama examination, community use will reschedule or relocate the classes that would normally have used that accommodation. Flexibility and good communication, rather than rigid rules and contracts, are the key elements to the success of the policy.

2 Management of the Facility

In accordance with the local authority's policy, the community programme is run by the head of community use who is a member of the school's senior

management team (SMT). As an ex-teacher, he understands and is sensitive to the needs and priorities of the teaching staff and pupils. His status as a member of the SMT shows the value put on community use of the school facilities by the school as well as the local authority.

The emphasis is on providing an excellent service that people will want to use. Responses to our club questionnaire would indicate that they are largely successful in this. One respondent was universally dissatisfied, but the remaining 11 out of 12 responses indicated that they used the school facilities because they offered good value for money, had an effective booking system and were well managed. Comments included:

- "We feel we could not have a better service."

- "All staff work hard to create a proper caring atmosphere in which our players can train."

- "The community use facilities are managed and run very efficiently."

Flexibility on all sides and good communication help to resolve any potential conflicts which are, in any case, kept to a minimum because:

- The head of community use is an ex-teacher and combines an understanding of education with leisure/recreation and adult education management skills.

- There is committed support from the head teacher.

- There is a general feeling of acceptance that facilities are the property of the authority, and not of the school or individual departments.

- Because the school is on a split site, staff are already used to sharing rooms and equipment. Few of their initial fears about damage have been realised.

3 Programming

Committees are formed to run programmes and ensure funding. The costs of new equipment are often shared between school, community use and the community user group, to the mutual benefit of all. Support is offered to clubs and other organisations to apply for the funding (like Awards for All) required to extend their operations.

There is ongoing liaison with colleges and other organisations to ensure a coordinated programme and to eliminate duplication with, for example, the Community Learning Plan for Young People and Community Learning Plan for Adults. As a result, the various education providers collaborate rather than compete, and have the opportunity to identify needs and adopt a targeted

approach to supplying programming. It is thus possible for a person with no qualifications and minimal confidence to acquire relevant qualifications and experience up to degree level without ever leaving St Andrews.

4 Pricing

Charges are kept to a minimum to ensure inclusively and are usually paid weekly with attendance. Charges for all classes follow the guidelines agreed by Fife Council. The standard charge is currently £1.80 for an hour's class. However Madras, in common with other such facilities, operates the Fifestyle card scheme which offers discounts on the standard charges. This operates at three levels:

- **Premier**. For individuals and families resident in Fife and in receipt of means-tested benefits, income-based Job Seekers' Allowance or New Deal. The card is free and offers up to 50% discount on classes.

- **Super**. For individuals in Fife who are Skill Seekers; with a disability; aged 60 years and over and not in work; in receipt of contributory Job Seekers' allowance; students in full-time further education; in receipt of Invalid Care Allowance; or in receipt of Industrial Injuries Disablement Benefit. The card costs £5 and offers up to 50% discount.

- **Bonus**. For anyone resident in Fife who does not qualify for Premier or Super; and for non-residents of Fife. This card costs £10 (adult), £20 (family); £5 (junior) and offers 10% discounts.

Revenue from well-supported programmes is used to subsidise minority or new programmes in order to ensure extensive choice.

- "It seems to me that the activities provided through Madras Community Use are the best deal in town." (Individual user)

Profit from programmes is also used to buy new equipment, often in collaboration with the school to their mutual benefit, or to subsidise other services like advertising/promotion of classes.

Charges for the use of the facilities are set by community use and will vary from school to school, according to the quality and nature of the facilities they and other local providers have to offer.

5 Key Lessons from Madras College

1.   Too often, poor facilities are cited as a reason why community use of a school is limited. The facilities at Madras are ageing and, in many cases, are not as good as others in the area. Changing facilities in particular are old-fashioned and inadequate. "Kilrymont facilities, especially the changing

areas, are run-down and tatty looking. The external appearance of the gym and pool building is very unattractive to clubs and visitors." (Club user) Yet Madras demonstrates that enthusiasm and effective management can overcome deficiencies in facilities and offer a programme and a service that fits the needs of the community.

2. The positive support of the head teacher and his/her staff is vital. The head teacher is committed to maximising the use of the school facilities, both by the pupil population through the provision of an extensive extracurricular programme and by the community at large.

3. Dedicated personnel driving a community programme and liaising with the school, outside partners, potential competitors and the community at large are vital to the success of any community programme.

4. Flexibility and good communication can resolve potential difficulties and conflicts before they become a problem. This is aided by the fact that the head of community use sits on the school's senior management team and is on site with his staff, all of whom appear to be proactive in ensuring that all runs smoothly.

Wester Hailes Education Centre, Edinburgh

1 Policy

Local Authority Policy for Community Use

It is the policy of the City of Edinburgh Council to maximise the use of educational premises by making them available to community and other groups, subject to available resources, through school use, adult education classes or lets. The main period of community use of schools is specified as school days from 6pm onwards during term time (except for the first two weeks of the autumn term and the first week of the spring term), at weekends and during school holidays.

There has been a political manifesto commitment to opening up at least five secondary schools.

Although present policy looks as if all schools are open, the net cost of community use outside core hours has to be met from devolved budgets at secondary level. Schools are set a target income which forms part of their capitation budget. Once that target has been met, the school can keep the surplus. However, without dedicated staffing to promote and manage community use, the costs of lets frequently outweigh the income and there is little incentive (or capacity) for head teachers to expand their community programmes.

The Edinburgh focus group was of the view that pricing and funding considerations were being put before community benefit and that there needed to be a clear philosophy established for community use that did not regard it merely as an extra, but was closer to the integrated approach exemplified by the Wester Hailes Education Centre (WHEC).

School Policy for Community Use

WHEC was established in 1978 as Lothian Regional Council's first community high school, combining an excellent range of secondary school accommodation with a large public swimming pool. It offers three main service elements: secondary schooling; community education; and leisure and recreation.

As originally conceived and subsequently operated, it aims to be open and democratic, progressive, responsive and dynamic, serving the whole community and adopting a fully integrated approach.

Unlike other community schools in Edinburgh, it is open to the community for 85 hours a week, 52 weeks of the year, closing only for two days at Christmas and two at New Year.

The Centre's aims are to deliver "educational, recreational and cultural provision in partnership with many statutory and voluntary agencies in the community. We combine the facilities and services of a college with the friendly approach of a smaller community organisation."

2 Management of the Facility

In 1978, with enlightened political support, the decision was taken to adopt a unitary management model rather than dual management of the school and community centre. The management of the community element is thus fully integrated with that of the school, with the centre manager also being a deputy principal and a member of the senior management team of the school, although not a teacher. He is responsible for health and safety and the maintenance of all the buildings throughout the whole facility. He line manages the centre's support staff and leads the recreation team's meetings (see below). He has ultimate responsibility for programming of recreation and community education. As a senior member of the centre's management team, he plays a role in the reviews of the school departments, appointment of senior staff and in disciplinary matters.

Teaching departments have responsibility for statutory education and are actively involved in the integration of adult course and evening classes, so the problems experienced elsewhere of sharing teaching space and equipment are largely avoided. Teaching staff, particularly in the PE Department, contract to cover evening sessions in the centre in return for time off in lieu during the school day. Members of the senior management team operate a duty head rota which ensures that one senior manager is either on site or on call at all times. Principal teachers are involved in recruitment to ensure that all tutors are suitably qualified.

The recreation team, consisting of the centre manager and the three recreation managers, meets regularly to discuss operational issues and plan future programmes. They liaise closely with other community groups such as the health centre to ensure that the programmes are meeting community needs.

Since the centre is open for community use throughout the school day and school pupils and the general public often use the facilities simultaneously, a high level of qualified staffing is required. The recreation staff comprise three shifts of 11 people, each of which consists of one recreation manager; two cashier/receptionists; three lifeguards; two changing room attendants; two recreation attendants; and a plant operator. They rotate to cover the centre's opening hours. The recreation centre's reception desk is permanently manned, so all emergency procedures for the whole centre are routed through it.

In all, some 99 support staff are employed (79.5 full-time equivalents) in the centre. These include the centre manager, administration staff, dining room supervisors, recreation, leisure and fitness suite staff, technicians, learning assistants, childcare staff, librarian, community education staff, engineering and

service support staff. Support staff salaries are included as part of the centre's devolved budget and amount to approximately £1m of a total budget of nearly £4.5m. However, since all staff support both the school and the community centre, it is arguably more cost effective than running two separate facilities.

A sophisticated software package enables all lettings and casual usage to be recorded on a single database which can be used to monitor throughput and maintain seamless communication between the staffing shifts. Lettings include all recreational facilities, conference rooms, seminar rooms and classrooms.

3 Programming

The centre manager has ultimate responsibility for the community programme which includes both interest and pleasure and certificated courses and classes in the following areas:

- Art

- Cooking and craft

- Computing

- English for speakers of other languages

- First aid

- Enjoying arts and culture

- Music

- Outdoor activities

- Personal development

- Physical recreation

The community education department and the recreation department are mainly responsible for determining the programme and meet regularly to ensure that what they offer matches community needs and demands. Feedback is sought whenever a new course is planned to test whether demand exists and the course can be commercially viable. The programme is reviewed regularly and can thus respond to changing activity trends. Coaching is offered in a number of sports and links are forged with local clubs to encourage participation.

An active 'Learn to Swim' programme is in operation and attracts some 700 children a week. Holiday sports clubs are offered during school holidays and working parents can take advantage of the supervised sessions that run between the activity sessions in the mornings and afternoons. A crèche is available throughout the year. The cafeteria is open 9am to 9pm weekdays, 10am to 4pm

weekends throughout the year. During the school terms school lunches are served in an adjoining area.

4 Pricing

The City of Edinburgh Council education department has established a schedule of letting charges for educational premises, which includes some 17 different letting categories. WHEC follows this schedule, with one significant exception – because it has a permanent staff working a seven-day shift rota, its charges do not escalate at weekends but remain the same. (Edinburgh's charges assume that overtime will have to be paid to janitorial and other staff at weekends.)

Visits to other Edinburgh schools revealed that the additional charges levied at weekends were often an inhibiting factor for clubs and groups that wished to use school facilities – to the point that they were going elsewhere. In addition, the requirement for many separate letting applications, according to the category of provision or group, created a complex task for both the applicant and for the central letting department. WHEC uses its own stand-alone letting software which reduces the complexity. A comparable system could be adopted to cover citywide provision.

WHEC has been given an operational budget of £285,000 for the year 2004/05. Experience has shown that they can operate within this budget and make a surplus because of the high level of throughput in the facility. Previous surpluses, combined with funding from **sport**scotland and other funding sources, have been used to upgrade and add to the facilities and activities on offer. Examples include the new fitness suite, conversion of a science lab into the crèche, conversion of general classrooms into seminar rooms for let, etc. The pooling of the resources – facilities, personnel, budgets – between the school and the community centre would indicate that this is a sustainable model for the future and more cost effective than running separate facilities. However, there may be a need for future capital investment to ensure that facilities, already 26 years old, continue to meet the needs of the twenty-first century.

5 Key Lessons from the Wester Hailes Education Centre

WHEC had the considerable advantage of starting from first principles in 1978 and enjoyed enlightened political support to ensure that sufficient staffing and other resources were allocated to allow the approach to be successful. Teaching staff employed then and since have fully 'bought into' the concept of the integrated approach and are involved in the community programme. It is now considered the norm for community and school populations to coexist in their shared facility.

There is no question that the establishment of a similar approach would be more challenging in another facility that had not been purpose built for it, particularly if it lacked the facilities that would be an immediate draw for the community – for example a swimming pool such as the one in WHEC.

However, there are lessons that can be learned from the WHEC experience which could be implemented elsewhere.

1. The unitary model of management means that the community programme is an integral part of the centre/school, not an additional/optional extra.

2. All staff must be engaged and involved and an effective way of doing this is to involve them in the delivery and/or planning of the community programme. This is likely to require additional staff resources (to allow for the time off in lieu), but it is arguable that this is a worthwhile investment that will produce long-term dividends and reduce conflicts.

3. Sufficient resources must be allocated in terms of facilities, equipment and staffing if a full and satisfactory programme is to be delivered.

4. Sufficient numbers of qualified staff must be appointed, especially where casual use is encouraged and where the school and community populations are using the facilities at the same time. By employing permanent staff on a shift system, increased charges outside traditional core hours can be avoided.

5. If an authority is committed to the community use of its schools, every effort must be made to ensure that the facilities are appropriate for community use. This may involve some design changes which would arguably benefit both the school and the community.

6. It is of great advantage to offer catering services whenever the centre is open. These can be combined with the provision of school meals and can be contracted out.

7. By integrating the school and the community centre in the way that WHEC has done, both school and community benefit – socially, educationally and in terms of available amenities – and the cost to the Council is less than that required to run two separate facilities.