



# An evaluation of facilities investment and support

Final technical report for **sportscotland**

November 2019

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# Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Contextual overview	2
3.	Building on previous research	6
4.	Participation request forms	16
5.	Funding recipients views	22
6.	Facility users experience	48
7.	Unsuccessful applicants views	74

# 1. Introduction

1. This technical report accompanies the main report of the external evaluation of **sportscotland's** facilities investment and support. The evaluation was undertaken by EKOS Ltd and Integratis Consulting between November 2018 and August 2019, and focussed on:
  - two main **sportscotland** facilities investment programmes - Sport Facilities Fund (SFF, 2013/18) and Legacy 2014 Active Places Fund (APF, 2013/15) and
  - the blend of planning and design support **sportscotland** provides to applicants and other organisations.
  
2. This technical report provides the detailed analysis of key secondary and primary research strands:
  - contextual overview;
  - building on previous research;
  - participation request forms;
  - funding recipients telephone and online surveys;
  - facility users online survey; and
  - unsuccessful applicants' online survey.

## 2. Contextual overview

3. This section sets the scene for the evaluation. It covers the different indoor and outdoor environments and settings for taking part in sport and physical activity, background context on **sportscotland**'s work in this area, and the evolving policy landscape.

### 2.1 Places for sport and physical activity

4. The beauty of sport and physical activity is that it can take place in a diverse range of environments and settings. This commonly includes:
  - [indoor environments](#) – for example sports centres, gyms, sports clubs, swimming pools, community centres and halls; and
  - [outdoor environments](#) - including the built and natural environment (e.g. Scotland's water, air, pathways, mountains and countryside); and
5. **sportscotland**'s recent consultation on the future direction of Scotland's sporting system (2019)<sup>1</sup> highlighted that Scotland has a good range of indoor and outdoor sports facilities, but that more action is needed to improve access.
6. [Issues such as availability, affordability, and ease of travel were mentioned within the consultation as the main barriers to sports participation.](#)
7. The provision of quality facilities is crucial to encouraging more people to participate in, and stay involved in, sport and physical activity. This includes among under-represented groups who often face barriers to participation. It is not just about the quality of facilities. Location is an equally important consideration. Having facilities in the right place, and which are easily accessible and familiar, is key to encouraging more people to have an active life.

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<sup>1</sup> **sportscotland** [Consultation Report](#), February 2019.

## 2.2 sportscotland's role in developing places for sport

8. Places for sport are a key enabler for driving up participation, for supporting the performance pathway, and for supporting progression in and through sport. Over the years, **sportscotland's** work in places has been focused on developing a network of quality places that provide people with the opportunity to get involved and stay involved in sport.
9. The overall goal has been to provide more and better opportunities for people to participate and progress in sport. There has been an increased focus in recent years on investing in projects that impact on **sportscotland's** priorities for improvement (i.e. equalities and inclusion, people development, and collaboration and impact).
10. In delivering on its ambition to develop places for sport and aspiration to “build a world class sporting system for everyone in Scotland”<sup>2</sup>, **sportscotland** has invested significant resources through its facilities investment programmes. It is a core part of what the national agency for sport does. This investment has supported the development of many facilities that have local, regional and national significance - across a variety of settings (e.g. school and education, clubs and communities, and performance).
11. **sportscotland's** facilities role is about much more than investment. An important aspect is the depth and breadth of internal knowledge, skills, and expertise within the small facilities team that provides planning and design support to applicants and other organisations.

## 2.3 Current and evolving policy context

### Sport for life

12. **sportscotland** has recently launched its new Corporate Strategy – Sport for Life (2019)<sup>3</sup>. The vision is for “an active Scotland where everyone benefits from sport”.
13. People and places continue to feature strongly in **sportscotland's** plans for the future. People relates to the skilled workforce (staff and volunteers) that help people take part and progress in sport, while places relates to our diverse range of environments and settings for sport and physical activity.

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<sup>2</sup> **sportscotland**, [Raising the Bar](#), Corporate Plan 2015-19.

<sup>3</sup> **sportscotland**, [Sport for Life](#), A vision for sport in Scotland, June 2019.

14. Both are viewed as strong sporting assets. By this we mean that people and places are key in encouraging and enabling people living in Scotland to be more active, to have healthier lifestyles, and to enjoy sport at every level. They also help attract major sporting events and tourists to Scotland.
15. The focus going forward is no longer about building the sporting system, but about helping people get the most out of our existing sporting system. As such, Sport for Life places a greater focus on the importance of developing relationships with others to support delivery of the plan. This includes building and strengthening connections between sport and the public and third sectors (e.g. health, education, transport and environment).
16. This policy evolution is in recognition that it is not just the role of those operating in the sport sector that have a role to play in creating a more active Scotland (albeit sport has a big role to play).

### Active Scotland outcomes framework

17. The Active Scotland Outcomes Framework (ASOF) describes Scotland's ambitions for sport and physical activity<sup>4</sup>. The Framework aligns strongly with the Scottish Government's National Performance Framework, and its ambition to create a more successful country, with opportunities for all to flourish.
18. [The vision is of a Scotland where more people are more active more often.](#)
19. This is in recognition that being physically active throughout our lives makes a strong contribution to our personal, community and national wellbeing. The six outcomes are underpinned by a commitment to equality, **Figure 2.1**.

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<sup>4</sup> More information on the [Active Scotland Outcomes Framework](#) on the Scottish Government website.

**Figure 2.1: ASOF – six outcomes**



20. **sportscotland** contributes to the ASOF in many different ways. In relation to facilities investment and support, the most relevant outcome is **ASOF 4 - We improve our active infrastructure - people and places**. As highlighted in Sport for Life, **sportscotland** will measure its contribution towards this outcome by evidencing the **impact of coaches/facilities on people’s activity**. In a broader sense, **sportscotland**’s facilities investment and support contributes to other ASOF outcomes. It has the potential to be a catalyst for change, **Figure 2.2**.

**Figure 2.2: sportscotland’s facilities contribution to ASOF outcomes**





## 3. Building on previous research

21. **sportscotland** has undertaken or commissioned research<sup>5</sup> into different portfolios of its work or specific programmes. Some have touched on the role of facilities and the input of the facilities team. The existing evidence base provides useful insights into **sportscotland**'s facilities investment and support, and the impact it is having within communities. Key findings from this research is outlined below.

### 3.1 Clubs and communities portfolio

22. The Clubs and Communities evaluation assessed **sportscotland**'s support within the clubs and communities environment. This included: Community Sport Hubs; Scottish Governing Bodies for Sport (SGBs) Regional Posts; Direct Club Investment; **SFF**; Awards for All; and Help for Clubs.

#### Evidence from sportscotland's clubs and communities evaluation

Relevant points on facilities to note from the clubs and communities evaluation report:

- Many clubs and groups mentioned the lack of suitable facilities as being a barrier to their future growth. The main challenge for clubs was access to facilities, where access was limited, costly or required members to travel long distances.
- Having affordable, accessible and high-quality facilities was an important issue for clubs. Support through the SFF has helped improve access and provided opportunities for clubs and for local communities.
- The SFF has provided the infrastructure for participation opportunities. There are now more, better or higher quality facilities and equipment, with better community access.
- The SFF has resulted in improved playing facilities, surfaces, equipment and changing facilities. Support for the provision of all-weather surfaces and lighting have increased participation through allowing year round use of facilities.
- The SFF provides quality places for participation, including for a range of age groups, for disabled people, for girls and young women. Some clubs felt that the facilities provided much needed places for sport and physical activity which were otherwise unavailable in rural areas. Others said it encouraged joint working, including between different sports and with schools.
- The SFF also plays an important role in supporting participation and athlete development.

Source: Research Scotland, Final Report, [Evaluation of sportscotland Activity: Clubs and Communities](#), May 2018.

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<sup>5</sup> On its own or with partners.

## Evidence from sportscotland's clubs and communities evaluation (cont'd)

- The range of **sportscotland** support has helped clubs to increase participation, improve the quality of, and access to facilities, improve clubs' use of facilities, develop better pathways, provide more training opportunities, provide higher quality opportunities, and build more professional and sustainable organisations.
- New or re-developed facilities have helped provide a safer environment for athletes and spectators. High quality pitches and courts have supported athletes to train to a higher standard, and have allowed clubs achieve quality marks and recognition through SGBs.
- New recreational facilities, such as clubhouses, have helped clubs generate income, contributing to longer term sustainability.
- Investment from **sportscotland** often acted as a catalyst for other funders.
- Some clubs felt that the application process was lengthy, complex and daunting, and would welcome more support from **sportscotland** in the early stages of the process.
- There was largely positive feedback on the advice, support and help provided by **sportscotland**, including from the facilities team. This typically centred on identifying needs and resources; planning and designing facilities – including providing guidance, advice on new surfaces and enabling communication between the club and the SGB; applying for funding - including the SFF and other sources of funding; legal matters; and maintenance and contractors.
- Where clubs met with the **sportscotland** facilities team before submitting an application, they felt well supported and confident in their applications. Some clubs worked closely with **sportscotland** and other funders throughout the development of facilities, and the expert knowledge from the facilities team was appreciated. **sportscotland** emphasised the value of early engagement on facilities issues when progressing sports development projects. Provision of ongoing support by **sportscotland**'s facilities team as facilities projects moved into the construction phase was also welcomed (e.g. site visits).
- Clubs in receipt of SFF were usually supported by a range of funders contributing varying amounts. Clubs felt that funding opportunities were limited, and often highly competitive. Stakeholders and facilities staff noted that the funding landscape had changed in recent years, and that sometimes, **sportscotland** investment was being used to develop facilities that, prior to budget cuts, would have been funded by local authorities.
- The SFF has the potential to further support key outcomes across the clubs and communities environment, and connections between different programmes and priorities should be strengthened. For example, a focus on inclusive facilities and changing rooms would support greater engagement with people with different needs.
- Monitoring information should also be further developed to ensure that the link between facilities and enhanced participation can be clearly articulated at a national level.

Source: Ibid.

## 3.2 Schools and education portfolio

23. The Schools and Education evaluation assessed **sportscotland's** (and partners) work within the schools and education environment. This included: Active Schools; Active Girls; School Sport Award; School Sport Competition; Competition Organiser Training; Young Ambassadors; Young People's Sport Panel; and [Facilities Support](#).

### Evidence from sportscotland's schools and education evaluation

Relevant points on facilities to note from the schools and education evaluation report:

- The experience of schools and local authorities which accessed funding through the SFF was broadly positive. Most were content with the support provided by **sportscotland**. This included application advice, and support with planning and designing new facilities (e.g. commenting on plans, advising on layout and surfaces, liaison with other partners and consultants, and attending planning and design meetings and site visits). Some, however, would have liked greater support or more timely feedback.
- Most reported that the expertise provided by **sportscotland** was not otherwise available within the local authority, or that it complemented existing expertise. This provides evidence of the added value of **sportscotland** facilities support.
- The main reasons why schools sought support from the SFF focussed on three main issues: existing facilities were becoming run down and required improvement; new schools were being built and additional investment was needed to assist with developing sporting facilities; and schools were working with other partners (e.g. clubs, community groups) that had identified a need for new or improved facilities.
- Investment from the SFF enabled schools to, for example, develop sports halls which demonstrated good school to club links; undertake projects which demonstrated the community sport hub philosophy; and upgrade facilities to increase community access or the range of sports offered. There has been investment in facilities such as all-weather pitches, playing fields, climbing walls, swimming pools and sports complexes.
- Schools that received investment from the SSF were positive about the support provided by **sportscotland**, and the impact that new facilities had for schools, clubs and communities.
- There was very positive feedback on the impact of the investment. Impacts depended on the school and the facility developed, but included: greater use and improved access, better health and safety, enhanced school to club pathways and links, increased community participation in sport, more sustainable sports clubs, development of interest in new sports, and a more vibrant PE department.
- Strong levels of additionality – strong feedback that the facilities projects would not have been developed at all, or would have been reduced in scale or quality, in the absence of **sportscotland** facilities investment and support.

Source: Research Scotland, Final Report, [Evaluation of sportscotland Activity: Schools and Education](#), May 2018.

### Evidence from sportscotland's schools and education evaluation (cont'd)

- Some rural areas face particular barriers to delivering a range of quality opportunities – this included challenges around transport, timing of sessions, access to facilities, and access to skilled coaches.
- Schools and local authority officers felt that facilities were accessible and popular. Some had arrangements in place to ensure that young people were able to use the facilities in an affordable way, or to ensure that bookings for young people took priority over adults.
- Some facility related barriers to the Active Schools programme were identified. Teachers and Active Schools teams highlighted concerns about access to gym halls (e.g. often used for other purposes, may not be available in the evenings due to lack of janitorial cover or competing for wider community access). Some young women highlighted that poor quality changing facilities can put some people off participating in school sport activities.
- Stronger linkages could be made between evidence on facilities related barriers to Active Schools work and the investment decisions made in relation to SFF awards in schools.

Source: Ibid.

## 3.3 Feedback on sportscotland facilities services

24. **sportscotland** undertook an online survey of customers/users of its facilities team services in 2015. The survey was issued to 801 contacts and 178 responses were received (22% response rate). The majority of responses were from local authorities and leisure trusts (53%), followed to a lesser extent by SGBs (14%). The lowest number of responses was from schools.
25. The key findings, outlined on the following pages, have been taken from the Summary Report produced by **sportscotland**<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> **sportscotland**, Customer Feedback Evaluation, Summary Report – Facilities Team 2015.

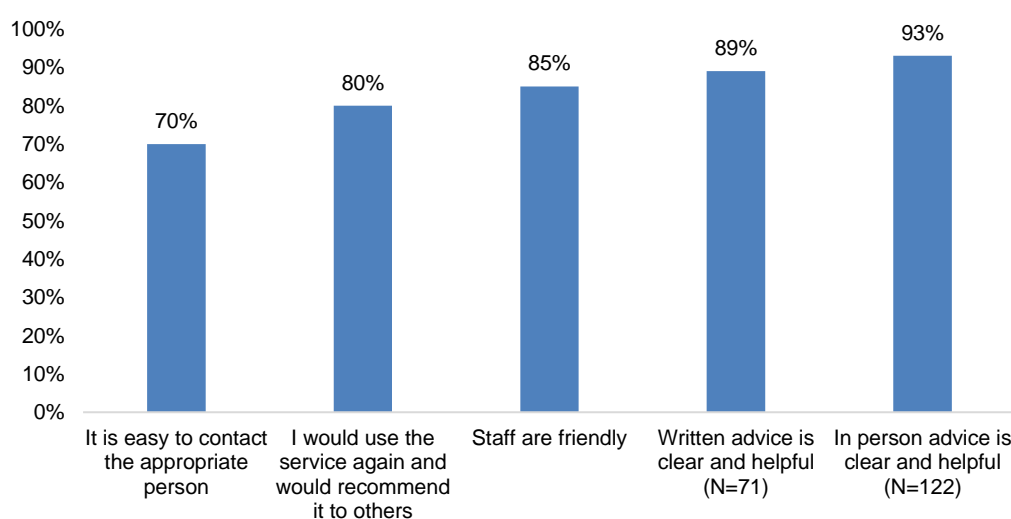
**Table 3.1: planning, design and invest**

sportscotland facilities investment and support	
<b>Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>79% had accessed <b>sportscotland</b> planning advice and support.</li> <li>The main enquiries for planning support related to pitches and facilities strategies (70).</li> <li>Fewer enquires related to the use of the Facilities Planning Model (27).</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>58% had used <b>sportscotland</b> design services.</li> <li>The highest number of design enquiries related to advice on sports facilities design standards and guidelines (98%).</li> </ul>
<b>Investment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>57% had used <b>sportscotland</b> investment services.</li> <li>Most enquiries related to the SFF (80).</li> <li>A smaller number of enquiries were about CashBack for Communities and the APF (about 40 each).</li> <li>91% of those that had applied for investment were either awarded funding in full or awarded part-funding.</li> </ul>

26. Overall, the majority of customers were satisfied with their engagement, and with the advice and support provided by **sportscotland**'s facilities team, **Figure 3.1**. Levels of satisfaction ranged from:

- a low of 70% who felt that it was easy to contact the most appropriate person in the facilities team. It was reported that the advice service was timely, good quality, and that their needs and interests were fully understood;
- to a high of 93% for the clarity and usefulness of advice provided face-to-face.

**Figure 3.1: users' views on the sportscotland facilities team**



Source: Customer Feedback Evaluation, Summary Report – Facilities Team 2015. Note: base number for each statement not provided in all cases.

27. **Figure 3.2** highlights common words and phrases that were used by customers to describe what was good about the services and support provided by **sportscotland's** facilities team. This clearly demonstrates the value placed by local authorities, leisure trusts, SGBs and others on being able to tap into facilities related expertise, advice and guidance.

**Figure 3.2: what was good about sportscotland facilities services accessed**



Source: Customer Feedback Evaluation, Summary Report – Facilities Team 2015.

28. Areas for improvement were identified by customers, and **Table 3.2** highlights responses which were identified most often (i.e. not a comprehensive list).

**Table 3.2: areas for improvement in sportscotland facilities services and team**

sportscotland facilities investment and support	
<b>Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formalise the format of planning consultation responses (1).</li> <li>• Re-introduce an annual sport pitch losses report (1).</li> <li>• Align work with local authorities on Local Development Plans (LDPs) with housing growth (1).</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidance on post-installation good practice/maintenance for buildings and pitches with shared best practice projects (2).</li> <li>• Guidance on management, programming, increasing participation impact and value of facilities. Guidance is very design and technical focussed (2).</li> <li>• Idiots guide to facility development and clearer information on <b>sportscotland</b> standards (2).</li> </ul>
<b>Investment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broader or more flexibility on project funding eligibility (4).</li> <li>• More support, training and advice for individuals and groups applying for funding and ensure applicants are aware of liabilities (4).</li> </ul>
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve response times to enquiries (5).</li> <li>• More staff availability (4).</li> </ul>
<b>Misc.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue good quality advice/dialogue and clear feedback on proposals. Better search function and links on website (both 4).</li> </ul>

### 3.4 CashBack for communities programme

29. The CashBack for Communities programme was a Scottish Government initiative which recovered funds through the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002, and invested this into local communities. It largely focussed on providing opportunities for young people (aged 10 to 25 years) to take part in free sporting, cultural, youth work and employability activities.

#### Evidence from cashback for communities programme evaluation

Key points to note on facilities from the CashBack for Communities evaluation (2014/15):

- A number of thematic areas of work were covered through the investment. This included facilities, culture, sports, youth work, sport for change and employability.
- Between 2008 and 2014 over £10 million was invested in/committed to facilities. The investment was used to support a wide range of activity, including: 3G pitches, new changing facilities, pitch upgrades, installing new lighting, etc.
- A key impact of the CashBack investment was increased participation in a positive activity. In 2014/15, approx. 233,000 young people were involved.

Source: Research Scotland, Final Report, [Impact Evaluation of the CashBack for Communities' Programme 2014/15](#) February 2016.



### Evidence from cashback for communities programme evaluation (cont'd)

- Within the CashBack for Facilities theme, the key priority was to increase participation in sport. The evaluation noted that the location of new facilities does not mean that all (or most) participants are necessarily from the specific area they are located in. Analysis found that many of the facilities were near an area of deprivation, and within reasonable travelling distance. Most facilities were within a mile of a datazone within the most deprived 20% of datazones in Scotland.
- In 2014/15, 7,900 young people a week used facilities funded through CashBack for Facilities (from the 2011 round of facilities investment). In addition, approximately 4,000 adults used the facilities each week. These figures equate to over 400,000 visits to CashBack funded facilities each year (young people), and over 200,000 visits each year (adults).
- Some challenges were identified around access to facilities. This included identifying suitable facilities in more deprived areas and transportation.
- The main lesson learned was around the importance of partnership working. This was identified as one of the key success factors (e.g. access to local knowledge, expertise in tackling inequality and disadvantage, links to and referrals from young people who may not otherwise engage, better connections, signposting and links between organisations, and opportunities for progression, volunteering, learning and work experience). Successes around equality and disadvantage were largely associated with the knowledge, experience and flexibility of staff, and working with committed and experienced partners.
- For facilities projects there is a need to measure impact and outcomes over a longer term period due to the additional time required for development and construction. Aligned to this were lessons around simplifying and aligning monitoring arrangements across different funding partners.

Source: Ibid.

## 3.5 Sustainable sport for communities fund

30. The Legacy 2014: Sustainable Sports for Communities Fund was a £1 million programme which ran from 2014 to 2017. The programme was funded by the Scottish Government and The Robertson Trust, and was supported by an Advisory Group that included representation from the two funders, **sportscotland**, Senscot, and Social Investment Scotland. The aim of the Fund was to support the sustainability and capacity of aspiring and existing social enterprises delivering sport and physical activity in Scotland.



Key points from the Sustainable Sport for Communities Fund evaluation and learning report:

- The Fund had four main outcomes, namely that Funded organisations: a) have increased knowledge, skills and capacity to operate, earn income, deliver services and operate facilities; b) demonstrate increased ownership and management of community assets; c) are more sustainable; and d) are better able to meet the needs of their community through delivery of appropriate services and facilities.
- Thirty-three organisations were awarded investment through one of two strands of support: 1) support and funding to organisations considering taking on ownership or management of a facility to enable them to develop their plans and test their viability; and 2) support and funding to organisations which were already operating as a social enterprise within their community to enable them to build their skills and capacity and become more sustainable.
- The programme was about much more than investment. Learning, development and capacity building were built into programme's design from the outset.
- There can be significant challenges for community based sports organisations aspiring to move beyond a sports participation model. The main barriers are capacity, resources, skills and knowledge. These can affect an organisation's ability to take on ownership and management of facilities, and to deliver sustainable and impactful services.
- There was strong appetite among organisations to develop and manage facilities in the community sport sector. However, the evaluation found that it was not always clear how the development of a capital asset would enable organisations to be more sustainable or to meet a need (sporting or otherwise) within their community.
- Volunteers are a key asset within the sporting sector and are essential to the running of sporting organisations and clubs. More support is required to help organisations with their recruitment, retention and development of volunteers (particularly beyond those involved in coaching).
- Organisations do not always have the capacity, skills and knowledge to take on wider aspects of organisational governance, operation and development beyond delivery of sport. This situation can leave clubs vulnerable (financially and operationally). The skills of the Board/Management Committee need to be regularly reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose.
- Key learning was that where a need was identified for the development or refurbishment of a community asset, it is essential that the lead organisation has the necessary skills, capacity and resources for each stage of the development, including the planning and management of the asset after it has been completed. If this is a new area of work - they may not know what skills and knowledge are required, and should be supported accordingly.

Source: The Robertson Trust, Legacy 2014: Sustainable Sport for Communities Fund, Evaluation and Learning, End of Grant Programme Report, December 2018.

- Wider learning was that organisations need support when developing new or existing community assets – it is important for organisations to take their time and, importantly be realistic about what they can achieve. Trying to do too many things at once could be setting up the project to fail.
- Many organisations value the opportunity to share peer learning and to discuss successes and challenges. This seems to be true for planning capital projects which is often a new area of focus for organisations and those managing them.
- Linked to the afore-mentioned points were a series of recommended actions:
  - Develop a support guide which highlights the process and likely success factors in developing and managing a facility or physical asset.
  - Develop, or signpost to, support, training and resources for organisations seeking to develop a physical asset.
  - Develop a guide for commissioning and managing consultants.
  - Consider opportunities for peer learning for organisations developing physical assets.
  - Funders of capital projects should consider how they are best able to support the development phase of a capital project, and how they can support its ongoing success once the facility is operating (whether directly through funding, or other forms of support).
- Wider recommended actions of note from a facilities perspective, include:
  - Support sporting organisations to think in broader terms about the role of volunteers within their organisation (beyond coaches and board members).
  - Develop training, support and resources (including best practice guidance and a diagnostic tool) around recruiting, training and supporting volunteers.
  - Develop training, support and resources (including best practice guidance and a diagnostic tool) which enables boards to consider their role, the skill set required within the board, and to look at whether they need to recruit new directors to fill any skills gaps that exist.
  - Investigate ways to raise awareness among sporting sector organisations about the types of support available to them through non-sporting agencies.
  - Conversations should be held with funders of sports organisations around the need for resources to be made available to support the core costs and operations of organisations beyond capital and sports development.

Source: Ibid.

## 4. Participation request forms

### 4.1 Background Context

31. A challenge for the evaluation has been a lack of readily available performance monitoring data on the number of people participating in facilities that have received investment from **sportscotland**.
32. While some estimated data is captured at the application stage, there has been no routine and systematic follow-up by **sportscotland** post-investment or post project completion to understand: the immediate outputs of its investment; and longer-term outcomes.
33. We recognise that there are inherent challenges in measuring how well facilities are performing, including broader impacts beyond participation in sport and physical activity. This mainly relates to the time-lag between approval of investment and the time taken to: secure match funding; and develop and construct facilities. This can often be a number of years following the initial approval of **sportscotland**'s investment. Nevertheless, this is an obvious data gap.
34. Our understanding is that **sportscotland** has more limited engagement with organisations once the investment has been made (albeit there are likely to be some exceptions). There is a clear need to improve monitoring processes to help develop a stronger evidence base on the link between investment in facilities and increased participation in sport and physical activity (as well as broader outcomes) at a national level.
35. This data gap has potential implications for assessing the need and demand for facilities, and for planning how/where future investment should best be directed.

### 4.2 Data request forms

36. A phased approach was taken to the research to help fill this data gap. One of the first tasks undertaken was to gather participation data from organisations in receipt of **sportscotland** facilities investment (i.e. where projects were complete and operational). **sportscotland** emailed successful applicants to the SFF and APF with background on the research and a data request form. The form sought to capture information on projects supported, if and how participation data is collected, and actual/projected participation data.

37. A total of 117 data request forms were returned for facilities projects, representing some £10.9m investment from **sportscotland**.
38. The following contextual points are worthy of noting:
- the nature of some projects has meant that participation data is difficult for organisations to collect in any robust way (e.g. paths and skate parks that have open and free access). This means that the participation/usage figures reported below will likely be an under-estimate; and
  - the quality, fullness and depth of participation data provided was variable. There were differences in terms of:
    - time-periods for reporting e.g. financial and calendar year;
    - who was (and/or could be) counted e.g. members only, members and other regular users, school rolls, high level estimates;
    - some, but not all, provided a breakdown by adult and juniors and
    - some, but not all, provided a detailed equalities breakdown.
39. This has presented challenges in aggregating and interpreting the data in any meaningful or robust way.

### 4.3 Overview of responses

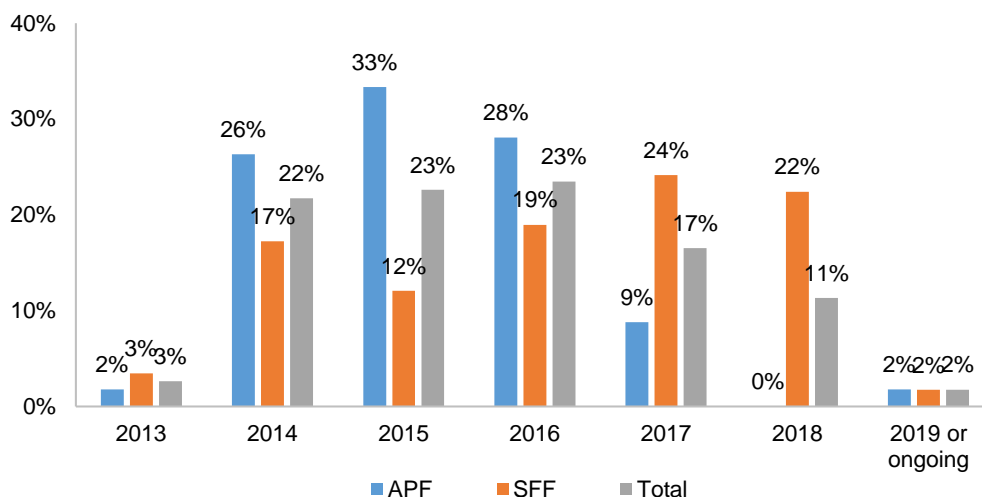
40. A total of 117 forms were completed and returned – **Table 4.1**. Some organisations have had more than one award from **sportscotland** and returned multiple forms. These have been counted as separate entries.

**Table 4.1: responses to data request**

Fund	Number of responses
APF	59
SFF	58
<b>Total</b>	<b>117</b>

41. APF projects were largely progressed in the 2014/16 period, while SFF projects were more evenly spread – **Figure 4.1**. This reflects the one-off nature of the APF investment (i.e. Commonwealth Games legacy investment). The SFF on the other hand is a long-established facilities investment programme.

**Figure 4.1: year of project completion**



N= 58 (APF) & 57 (SFF)

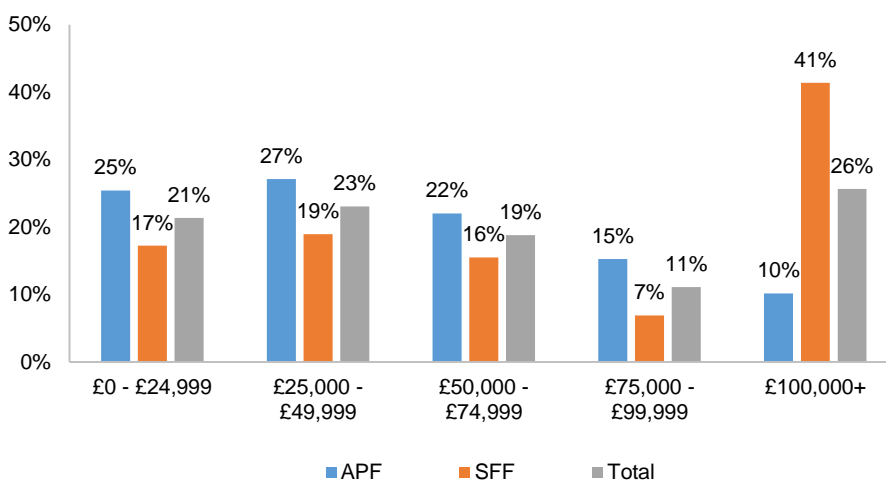
42. The value of each grant is shown, as size bands, in **Figure 4.2**. This includes a mix of:

- small awards (less than £100,000) – 74%
- large awards (more than £100,000) – 26%. Most large awards were SFF, and most of these awards were £250,000+.

43. Total **sportscotland** investment across the 117 projects was around £10.9m:

- APF - £3.081; and
- SFF - £7.875m.

**Figure 4.2: value of grant**



N=59 (APF) & 58 (SFF)

## 4.4 Quality of data

44. Successful applicants were asked to provide:
- usage data for three years (actual for 2017 and 2018, projected for 2019); and
  - the total number of participants - split by adult/junior and gender.
45. The depth and quality of the data supplied varied, **Table 4.2**.
46. In some instances the only data recorded related to the number of club members or, in some cases, regular groups or participants taking part in coaching sessions, with no mechanism for capturing wider use. Some facilities (e.g. tennis courts) are staffed part of the time (e.g. summer months), but otherwise rely on an honesty box.
47. Some projects, particularly those funded through the APF, are free to use and accessible at all times. This includes play parks, footpaths, footbridges, and skate parks. There are understandable difficulties in monitoring usage of such projects.

**Table 4.2: quality of data provided**

	APF	SFF	Total
Complete or partially complete data provided	22	30	52
High level estimate provided	7	0	7
School roll provided	5	0	5
Club members/ number of regular users provided	8	26	34
Project is not yet complete or open	0	1	1
No participant data available	17	1	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>117</b>

## 4.5 Total participants

48. As highlighted earlier, there have been challenges in aggregating and interpreting the data in any meaningful or robust way. That being said, **Table 4.3** provides a snapshot of actual participation in 2017 and 2018, with projections for 2019 showing a continuing upward trend.
49. **Table 4.3** shows the total number of participants recorded by respondents. Some organisations did not have an accurate record of participant sessions. Rather they simply provided the number of club members, the school roll, or the number of regular users of the facility (e.g. those who take part in weekly coaching sessions).

50. However, as usage by club members/regular users is likely to vary significantly, e.g. school pupils may use play facilities daily while golf club members may play once a week or less, it is not possible to translate this into the number of participant sessions.
51. Nonetheless, it can be assumed that use by club members/regular users that is not otherwise recorded will amount to a substantial additional number of participant sessions.

**Table 4.3: total participants using SFF/APF supported facilities**

	2017	2018	2019	
	Actual	Actual	Projected	
<b>SFF</b>				
Participant sessions	483,492	585,902	649,817	↑
Club members/ regular users	5,830	6,844	7,933	↑
<b>APF</b>				
Participant sessions*	291,111	285,143	306,717	↑
Club members/ school pupils/ regular users	1,879	1,974	2,137	↑
<b>Total</b>				
Participant sessions	<b>774,603</b>	<b>871,045</b>	<b>956,534</b>	↑
Club members/ school pupils/ regular users	<b>7,709</b>	<b>8,818</b>	<b>10,070</b>	↑

\*an estimate of 160,000 users of the Ben Nevis footpath was provided for 2018 and 2019, although the counter was not operational in 2017. This has been removed so as not to skew the figures.

## 4.6 Age and gender of participants

52. Successful applicants were asked to provide the age and gender of participants that used facilities projects – however, not all projects were able to:
- for SFF projects, around two-thirds provides a gender breakdown and 77% an age breakdown; and
  - for APF projects, only around one-quarter provided a gender breakdown, and one-third an age breakdown. In some, but not all cases, the inability to provide such data is likely to reflect the nature of some of the projects supported (e.g. pathways).
53. Despite such limitations, the results in **Table 4.4** show higher participation among males when it comes to using facilities, for both adults and under 16s.

**Table 4.4: age and gender of participants (2018)**

	Adults		Youth (under 16)	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>SFF</b>				
Visits	71%	29%	76%	24%
Club members/ regular users	70%	30%	55%	45%
<b>APF</b>				
Visits	89%	11%	76%	24%
Club members/ school pupils/ regular users	59%	41%	58%	42%
<b>Total</b>				
Visits	<b>73%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>24%</b>
Club members/ school pupils/ regular users	<b>68%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>44%</b>

54. A larger proportion of participants are under 16 years, **Table 4.5**.
55. This is at least partly influenced by a higher number of young people taking part in formal coaching sessions, which are more readily recorded than casual use of facilities. It is also generally the case that sports clubs, particularly football, rugby, gymnastics and martial arts, have more child members/users than adults, although there are exceptions to this (golf and bowls in particular).

**Table 4.5: split by age (2018)**

	Adults	Youth (under 16)
	<b>SFF</b>	
Visits	47%	53%
Club members/ regular users	40%	60%
<b>APF</b>		
Visits	16%	84%
Club members/ school pupils/ regular users	23%	77%
<b>Total</b>		
Visits	38%	62%
Club members/ school pupils/ regular users	37%	63%

Results differ slightly from gender/age split as this table has a larger sample of responses



## 5. Funding recipients views

56. This section presents the main findings from the primary research undertaken with successful applicants to the SFF and APF.

### 5.1 Introduction and Context

57. The fieldwork with successful applicants involved two stages:

- firstly, a telephone survey – a representative sample for the telephone survey was prepared, including by: size of award, type of organisation, and geography. The sample included 181 contacts across both Funds. The target of 40 telephone interviews was achieved; and
- secondly, an online survey – all other contacts were issued an online survey for completion. Once the telephone survey was completed, the remainder of contacts in the sample were also emailed the online survey. The online survey resulted in 79 responses, however, there were 13 “doublers”. These were removed<sup>7</sup> and resulted in 66 responses.

58. A total of 106 successful applicants completed the surveys, **Table 5.1**.

**Table 5.1: successful applicants’ survey responses**

	Telephone interviews	Online survey responses	Online survey responses with doublers removed	Total
SFF	21	40	34	55
APF	19	39	32	51
<b>Total</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>106</b>

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<sup>7</sup> Doublers included responses from applicants who had already participated in telephone interview or multiple responses from same organisation to online survey on the same project.

## 5.2 Profile of successful applicants

### Location

59. A spread of responses were received from organisations based across all six **sportscotland** regions. The most common responses were from organisations located in Tayside & Fife, West and East, **Table 5.2**. This reflects the regions which have received most **sportscotland** facilities investment over the time period examined.

**Table 5.2: respondents by sportscotland region**

	SFF	APF	Total
Tayside & Fife	24%	24%	<b>24%</b>
West	20%	22%	<b>21%</b>
East	20%	20%	<b>20%</b>
Highland & Islands	11%	14%	<b>13%</b>
Grampian	19%	4%	<b>12%</b>
Central	6%	16%	<b>11%</b>

Total (N=104), SFF (N=54), APF (N=50)

60. Successful applicant organisations that participated in the survey are based across 26 different local authority areas in Scotland. The most common were Fife (11%) and Highland (11%), **Table 5.3**.

**Table 5.3: respondents by local authority area**

SFF	%	APF	%	Total	%
Aberdeenshire	13%	Fife	14%	<b>Fife</b>	<b>11%</b>
Dundee City	11%	Highland	12%	<b>Highland</b>	<b>11%</b>
Highland	9%	Stirling	10%	<b>Aberdeenshire</b>	<b>8%</b>
Dumfries & Galloway	7%	Argyll & Bute	6%	<b>Dundee City</b>	<b>8%</b>
Fife	7%	Falkirk	6%	<b>Stirling</b>	<b>7%</b>
Scottish Borders	7%	Glasgow City	6%	<b>Scottish Borders</b>	<b>6%</b>
Aberdeen City	6%	West Lothian	6%	<b>Argyll &amp; Bute</b>	<b>5%</b>
City of Edinburgh	6%	City of Edinburgh	4%	<b>City of Edinburgh</b>	<b>5%</b>
East Lothian	6%	Dundee City	4%	<b>East Lothian</b>	<b>5%</b>
Perth & Kinross	6%	East Ayrshire	4%	<b>Perth &amp; Kinross</b>	<b>5%</b>
Argyll & Bute	4%	East Lothian	4%	<b>Dumfries &amp; Galloway</b>	<b>4%</b>
Stirling	4%	Perth & Kinross	4%	<b>West Lothian</b>	<b>4%</b>
West Dunbartonshire	4%	Scottish Borders	4%	<b>Aberdeen City</b>	<b>3%</b>
Clackmannanshire	2%	Aberdeenshire	2%	<b>Falkirk</b>	<b>3%</b>
North Ayrshire	2%	Angus	2%	<b>Glasgow City</b>	<b>3%</b>
North Lanarkshire	2%	Inverclyde	2%	<b>East Ayrshire</b>	<b>2%</b>
Orkney Islands	2%	Midlothian	2%	<b>North Ayrshire</b>	<b>2%</b>
South Ayrshire	2%	Moray	2%	<b>Orkney Islands</b>	<b>2%</b>
West Lothian	2%	North Ayrshire	2%	<b>South Ayrshire</b>	<b>2%</b>
		Orkney Islands	2%	<b>West Dunbartonshire</b>	<b>2%</b>
		South Ayrshire	2%	<b>Angus</b>	<b>1%</b>
				<b>Clackmannanshire</b>	<b>1%</b>
				<b>Inverclyde</b>	<b>1%</b>
				<b>Midlothian</b>	<b>1%</b>
				<b>Moray</b>	<b>1%</b>
				<b>North Lanarkshire</b>	<b>1%</b>

Total (N=104), SFF (N=54), APF (N=50)

## Organisation type

61. A wide range of organisations and clubs responded to the survey. Third sector organisations made up almost three-quarters of respondents<sup>8</sup>, with sports clubs heavily represented, **Table 5.4**. Public sector organisations made up the remainder (27%)<sup>9</sup>, with the most common being local authorities.

**Table 5.4: successful applicants – organisation type**

	SFF	APF	Total
Sports club	64%	22%	<b>43%</b>
Voluntary organisation	18%	33%	<b>25%</b>
Local authority	7%	12%	<b>9%</b>
Educational institution	2%	12%	<b>7%</b>
Other	2%	8%	<b>5%</b>
Leisure trust	5%	4%	<b>5%</b>
Other public sector organisation	0%	8%	<b>4%</b>
Sports governing body	2%	2%	<b>2%</b>

Total (N=106), SFF (N=55), APF (N= 51).

'Other' responses included charity (4) and community group (1).

## 5.3 Pre-application support

### sportscotland support

62. Prior to submitting the facilities fund application, 65% of respondents received support in some shape or form from **sportscotland**.
63. A relatively high proportion, however, had not tapped into this support (35%). A number of factors are likely to be at play, including:
- a lack of awareness of **sportscotland** support beyond investment;
  - support was accessed from another source(s);
  - capacity constraints; and
  - a perception among some applicants that wider facilities support was not required.

<sup>8</sup> This includes sports clubs, voluntary organisations and other.

<sup>9</sup> This includes all other categories in Table 3.4.

64. Where respondents had accessed pre-application support from **sportscotland**, this largely took the form of facilities planning support (61%) followed by project design advice (46%), **Table 5.5**.

**Table 5.5: pre-application support from sportscotland**

	SFF	APF	Total
Support in planning in relation to your project	58%	65%	<b>61%</b>
Advice on project design	58%	35%	<b>46%</b>
Advice relating to planning permission and the planning process	21%	29%	<b>25%</b>
Advice on other funding sources	36%	6%	<b>21%</b>
Other	3%	18%	<b>10%</b>

Total (N=67), SFF (N=33), APF (N=34). Multiple responses possible.

'Other' responses included general advice (4), guidance on technical aspect of report (1) and support for consultation and engagement with facility users (1).

65. Pre-application support added value in a number of areas namely:
- improved the quality of the project (78% either agreed or strongly agreed); and
  - improved the chances of the project achieving positive impacts in terms of local area/region (70%), participation (66%) and development of the sport (66%), **Table 5.6**.
66. Of note, is that the pre-application support accessed from **sportscotland** was less about supporting applicants to consider alternatives to capital work, improve business planning or improve the flexibility of facility design.

**Table 5.6: impact of pre-application support from sportscotland**

	Strongly Agree/ Agree	Neither/ Nor	Disagree/ Strongly Disagree	Don't know
Improved the quality of our project (N=63)	78%	8%	3%	11%
Improved the chances of our project achieving positive impacts in terms of the local area/ region (N=60)	70%	10%	3%	17%
Improved the chances of our project achieving positive impacts in terms of participation (N=58)	66%	9%	2%	24%
Improved the chances of our project achieving positive impacts in terms of the development of the sport (N=58)	66%	9%	3%	22%
Improved the chances of our project achieving positive impacts in terms of equalities and inclusion (N=59)	61%	5%	5%	29%
Improved the sustainability of our project (N=60)	58%	12%	5%	25%
Improved the design of our project (N=59)	54%	15%	14%	17%
Enabled our project to happen more quickly (N=61)	54%	16%	11%	18%
Improved the business planning for our project (N=62)	48%	11%	19%	21%
Improved the flexibility of our design for the facility (N=56)	29%	23%	18%	30%
Encouraged us to consider alternatives to capital work (N=56)	20%	23%	23%	34%

### Support from other organisations

67. A larger proportion of applicants tapped into pre-application support from other organisation(s) (83%). As might be expected, the most common source of pre-application support was provided by local authorities (57%). This was followed by architects/engineers (45%) and from sports governing bodies (44%), **Table 5.7**.

**Table 5.7: alternative sources of pre-application support**

	SFF	APF	Total
Local authority	40%	73%	<b>57%</b>
Architect/ engineer	45%	45%	<b>45%</b>
Sports governing body	68%	23%	<b>44%</b>
Consultants	20%	32%	<b>26%</b>
Other	8%	16%	<b>12%</b>
Bank/ accountant	5%	0%	<b>2%</b>

Total (N=84), SFF (N=40), APF (N=44). Multiple responses possible.

'Other' responses included colleges, government agencies, local land owners, charitable trusts, development partnership and enterprise agency.

68. Some wider points to note, include that:
- APF recipients were more likely to receive pre-application support from other organisation(s) compared to SFF recipients (88% and 78% respectively); and
  - SFF recipients were more likely to have accessed support from the relevant SGB, while APF recipients were more likely to have received support from local authorities.

## 5.4 About the projects

### sportscotland investment and match funding

69. Based on data provided by respondents, the total investment from **sportscotland** was in excess of £8.2 million. The average award was around £78,000, **Table 5.8**.

**Table 5.8: successful applicants funding amount**

	Total	Average award	Highest award	Lowest award
SFF	£5,584,751	£103,421	£500,000	£8,000
APF	£2,633,121	£51,630	£250,000	£5,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£8,217,872</b>	<b>£78,265</b>		

Total (N=105), SFF (N=54), APF (N=51)

70. The vast majority of respondents secured match funding for the facilities projects (87%), **Table 5.9**. A mix of grant funding was secured from a number of sources, including local authorities and charitable trusts (e.g. Robertson Trust). Wider investment was provided by SGBs and local community funds (e.g. wind farm funding).

**Table 5.9: match funding secured**

	Yes		No	
	Number	%	Number	%
SFF	46	87%	7	13%
APF	44	86%	7	14%
<b>Total</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>13%</b>

Total (N=104), SFF (N=54), APF (N=54)

71. Based on data provided by respondents, the total amount of match funding secured was in excess of £15 million, **Table 5.10**.
72. The average amount of match funding was around £146,000. It should be noted that one project secured over £3.3 million and this skews the analysis. When this outlier is removed, the average match funding secured was around £115,000.

**Table 5.10: total and average amount of match funding**

	Total	Average	Highest award	Lowest award
SFF	£10,906,761	£198,305	£1,735,000	£1,000
APF	£4,548,571	£89,188	£828,245	£300
<b>Total</b>	<b>£15,455,332</b>	<b>£145,805</b>	<b>£1,735,000</b>	<b>£300</b>

Total (N=90), SFF (N=46), APF (N=44)

73. Total project costs for successful applicants amounted to almost £23.7 million, **Table 5.11**. As might be expected, the SFF projects were larger in scale than APF.

**Table 5.11: total project costs**

	Total project costs for all projects	Average cost	Highest cost	Lowest cost
SFF	£16,491,512	£305,398	£3,865,000	£11,100
APF	£7,181,592	£143,632	£1,520,707	£11,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>£23,673,104</b>	<b>£227,626</b>	<b>£3,865,000</b>	<b>£11,100</b>

Total (N=105), SFF (N=54), APF (N=51)

74. **sportscotland** investment represents over one-third of total project costs (35%), with the remainder match-funding. Every £1 of **sportscotland** investment has leveraged in a further £1.88 of investment.

### Project purpose and expected benefits

75. The primary purpose of securing the facilities investment from **sportscotland** was to build a new facility (59%) and/or to upgrade an existing facility (49%).
76. More specifically, investing in new/existing facilities to increase participation in sport and physical activity was a key driver by organisations that accessed facilities investment, **Table 5.12**. This was followed by taking forward facilities projects to improve participants' experience, and to fill a gap in current provision.



**Table 5.12: reasons for applying for sportscotland funding**

	SFF	APF	Total
To invest in new facilities to increase participation in sport/ physical activity	52%	73%	<b>62%</b>
To invest in new facilities to improve participants' experience	46%	49%	<b>48%</b>
To upgrade existing facilities to increase participation in sport/ physical activity	48%	41%	<b>45%</b>
To fill a gap in current provision in our area	35%	53%	<b>44%</b>
To upgrade existing facilities to improve participants' experience	43%	31%	<b>37%</b>
To invest in new facilities to improve access	30%	43%	<b>36%</b>
To upgrade existing facilities to improve access	28%	31%	<b>30%</b>
To improve organisational sustainability (through new income streams)	31%	12%	<b>22%</b>
Other	6%	0%	<b>3%</b>

Total (N=105), SFF (N=54), APF (N=51). Multiple responses possible.

'Other' responses included to allow handover of running of the facility to leisure trust, urgent upgrade of existing facility, and to acquire new equipment to support performance programme.

77. Aligned to the overall purpose of projects, the vast majority of respondents reported that the expected benefits of the facilities projects would be an increase in the number of people participating in sport and physical activity (87%) and an improved experience for participants (82%), **Table 5.13**.

**Table 5.13: expected benefits of supported project**

	SFF	APF	Total
Increase in the number of people participating in sport/ physical activity	87%	86%	<b>87%</b>
Improved experience for participants	83%	80%	<b>82%</b>
Enabling the organisation to improve its existing services and activities	69%	35%	<b>52%</b>
Improved access (e.g. for people with disabilities)	43%	59%	<b>50%</b>
More people progressing in the sport	67%	31%	<b>50%</b>
Enabling the organisation to expand its services and activities	57%	31%	<b>45%</b>
Enabling a more diverse range of people to participate in sport/ physical activity	37%	51%	<b>44%</b>
A more sustainable model for our organisation	46%	10%	<b>29%</b>
Enabling new partnerships for our organisation	33%	22%	<b>28%</b>
Other	4%	10%	<b>7%</b>
Reduce operating costs for the facility	11%	0%	<b>6%</b>
Don't know	0%	0%	<b>0%</b>

Total (N=105), SFF (N=54), APF (N=51). Multiple responses possible. 'Other' responses included positive impact on local area and community (2) and local school to benefit from facility (2).

## Sport and physical activity projects

78. Facilities investment from **sportscotland** was used to provide increased opportunities across a diverse range of sports. The main sports were football, followed by cycling, rugby, and tennis, **Table 5.14**. Taken together, this represents 72% of projects.

**Table 5.14: sports related projects supported**

	SFF	APF	Total
Football	24%	28%	<b>26%</b>
Cycling	4%	35%	<b>18%</b>
Rugby	26%	2%	<b>15%</b>
Tennis	9%	17%	<b>13%</b>
Other	4%	22%	<b>12%</b>
Basketball	0%	17%	<b>8%</b>
Athletics	4%	9%	<b>6%</b>
Mountaineering/Climbing	4%	9%	<b>6%</b>
Cricket	9%	0%	<b>5%</b>
Fitness Classes	0%	11%	<b>5%</b>
Gymnastics	6%	4%	<b>5%</b>
Orienteering	2%	9%	<b>5%</b>
Aquatics/Swimming	2%	7%	<b>4%</b>
Bowling	6%	2%	<b>4%</b>
Hockey	2%	7%	<b>4%</b>
Canoe/Kayak	4%	2%	<b>3%</b>
Golf	4%	2%	<b>3%</b>
Ice sports (curling, skating, ice hockey)	4%	2%	<b>3%</b>
Martial Arts (Judo, Taekwondo etc.)	4%	2%	<b>3%</b>
Shinty	4%	2%	<b>3%</b>
Badminton	0%	4%	<b>2%</b>
Netball	0%	4%	<b>2%</b>
Rowing	4%	0%	<b>2%</b>
Sailing	4%	0%	<b>2%</b>
Dance	0%	2%	<b>1%</b>
Equestrian	2%	0%	<b>1%</b>

Total (N=100), SFF (N=54), APF (N=46). Multiple responses possible.

'Other' responses included wakeboarding, volleyball, Gaelic football, roller skating and team sports.

79. Almost half of the projects supported intended to support activities over and above sporting opportunities (i.e. wider physical activity opportunities). As might be expected, more organisations used APF investment to support this type of activity (75% of organisations compared to 25% for SFF).
80. Across both Funds, the **sportscotland** investment was largely intended to provide opportunities for play, active travel and/or outdoor learning, **Table 5.15**.

**Table 5.15: main activities catered for by sportscotland investment**

	SFF	APF	Total
Play	36%	47%	<b>44%</b>
Active Travel (Walking, Cycling, Running)	36%	45%	<b>42%</b>
Outdoor Learning	36%	45%	<b>42%</b>
Skatepark	0%	16%	<b>12%</b>
Other	14%	5%	<b>8%</b>
Parkour	0%	0%	<b>0%</b>

Total (N=52), SFF (N=14), APF (N=38). Multiple responses possible. 'Other' responses included community health, climbing and performance.

## 5.5 Project progress and delivery

81. Almost all facilities projects were complete and operational (99%), **Table 5.18**. One project was still in the construction phase and due to complete later this year.

**Table 5.18: current project status**

	SFF		APF		Total	
	Number	% of projects	Number	% of projects	Number	% of projects
Completed and operational	53	98%	51	100%	102	<b>99%</b>
Underway – capital works are ongoing	1	2%	0	0%	1	<b>1%</b>
Still in procurement	0	0%	0	0%	0	<b>0%</b>
Still in planning	0	0%	0	0%	0	<b>0%</b>

Total (N=105), SFF (N=54), APF (N=51)

82. Many of the facilities projects have been fully operational for between three and five years (61% completed between 2014 and 2016), **Table 5.19**. The remainder were more recently operational or yet to come on stream.

83. Given that the APF was a Commonwealth Games legacy fund, it is unsurprising that a higher proportion of facilities projects supported by this fund are now complete and operational, when compared to the SFF.

**Table 5.19: year of project completion**

	SFF	APF	Total
2014	12%	18%	<b>15%</b>
2015	12%	28%	<b>20%</b>
2016	14%	38%	<b>26%</b>
2017	28%	12%	<b>20%</b>
2018	22%	2%	<b>12%</b>
2019	12%	2%	<b>7%</b>

Total (N=100), SFF (N=50), APF (N=50)

## 5.6 Project impacts and benefits

84. The facilities investment from **sportscotland** has resulted in a wide range of benefits and impacts – for applicant organisations and their facility users, but also in a much broader sense (e.g. for sport, for local areas).
85. Firstly, fund recipients were asked to consider the main benefits and impacts that have/will be achieved as a direct result of taking forward the facilities project. This was asked as an “open question”, and we then clustered responses into common themes.
86. The main benefits and impacts reported span three aspects:
- **increased participation**
    - more children and young people being active and participating in sport and physical activity (12 responses)
    - the facility is better able to cater for people of all ages (11 responses)
    - increased participation in sport (11 responses)
    - it has attracted a more diverse range of participants (7 responses);

- club or organisation
  - now able to provide extra sessions/new activities, including for particular target groups e.g. ASN classes (10 responses)
  - can now provide year round provision (8 responses)
  - increased membership (7 responses – note all SFF respondents)
  - increased income generation (7 responses, almost all SFF); and
- wider impacts
  - sport development within the local area or region (7 responses);
  - it means that people do not need to travel far distances to access sports facility provision (6 responses)
  - improved health and wellbeing (6 responses).

*“It is a destination for a great day out as well as being a very physically active park with lots of climbing, mounds and running space. Red faced, out of breath children are common sights”.*

*“Young people in the village can access the facility on their door step”.*

*“Loads of parents saying kids would normally be on a computer, now on their bikes”.*

*“We have provided a facility that gives access to a sport that was not available in our area. This means a much more diverse range of participants will have the opportunity to try the sport and regularly participate if they wish”*

*“We can now offer coaching programmes in the evening and after school in the winter. This has improved our product offering greatly and allowed us to have year round momentum in our development programmes”.*

87. Secondly, respondents were asked to consider a pre-defined list of benefits and impacts, and to indicate the extent to which their project delivered against these, **Table 5.20**. Almost all respondents reported at least one benefit (97%). The top five benefits reported (i.e. the benefit had been achieved to a great extent) were:

- improved participants’ experience of the facility (86%);
- enabled the organisation to offer new services/activities (72%);

- increased the number of people participating (71%);
- increased the frequency of participation amongst users of the facility (66%);  
and
- enabled us to develop new partnerships (56%).

**Table 5.20: extent to which project delivered benefits**

	To a great extent	Somewhat	A Little	Not at all	Don't know
Improved participants' experience (N=102)	86%	11%	0%	0%	3%
Enabled us to offer new services/ activities (N=94)	72%	17%	4%	5%	1%
Increased the number of people participating (N=103)	71%	22%	7%	0%	0%
Increased the frequency of participation amongst users of the facility (N=101)	66%	26%	5%	0%	3%
Enabled us to develop new partnerships to the benefit of our work (N=78)	56%	23%	10%	8%	3%
Enabled participants to progress more easily in the sport (N=92)	52%	27%	12%	2%	7%
Encouraged a more diverse range of people to participate in sport/ physical activity (N=101)	50%	31%	13%	2%	5%
Enhanced organisational capacity (N=69)	46%	22%	17%	9%	6%
Increased the income to our organisation (N=67)	34%	18%	24%	19%	4%
Saved money (e.g. operating costs) (N=48)	23%	8%	21%	42%	6%

'Not the purpose of the project' responses removed from our analysis.

88. These benefits are broadly aligned to the expected benefits earlier reported by organisations. While new partnerships were not expected to be a benefit for most organisations (28%), more than half reported that projects had enabled new partnerships to be formed.
89. Despite many of the benefits centring on expanding service provision and increasing the number/frequency of participation, this has not always translated into increased income generation. Nor have the projects resulted in costs savings for many of the organisations.

90. Across the board, organisations in receipt of APF investment were more likely to report that benefits occurred to “a great extent”.

**Table 5.21: benefits reported from undertaking facilities projects – by SFF and APF**

	Total	SFF	APF
Improved participants' experience	86%	83%	90%
Enabled us to offer new services/ activities	72%	67%	78%
Increased the number of people participating	71%	58%	84%
Increased the frequency of participation amongst users of the facility	66%	52%	82%
Enabled us to develop new partnerships to the benefit of our work	56%	54%	59%
Enabled participants to progress more easily in the sport	52%	53%	51%
Encouraged a more diverse range of people to participate in sport/ physical activity	50%	35%	64%
Enhanced organisational capacity	46%	45%	48%
Increased the income to our organisation	34%	33%	36%
Saved money (e.g. operating costs)	23%	24%	20%

Source: EKOS successful applicants' survey.

Organisations reporting that the benefit occurred to “a great extent”.

91. On average, respondents reported increased income of £48,385 and cost savings of £9,250, **Table 5.22**. Note: relatively few respondents provided this information and caution should be advised when interpreting these results.

**Table 5.22: average increased income and cost savings**

	increased income	cost savings
SFF	£62,539	£13,000
APF	£13,000	£5,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£48,385</b>	<b>£9,250</b>

Total (Increased income N=14 with 3 respondents stating per annum figures. Cost savings N=4 with one respondent stating per annum figure).

SFF (Increased income N=10 with 2 respondents stating per annum figures. Cost savings N=2 with one respondent stating per annum figure)

APF (Increased income N=4 with one respondent stating per annum figure. Cost savings N=2)

92. Almost all organisations reported a wider benefit arising from the facilities projects taken forward (98%). The main wider benefits arising from the facilities projects, **Table 5.23 and Table 5.24**, were considered to be:

- improving the infrastructure (71%);
- increased profile of the supported sport/physical activity (61%); and
- improved the profile of our organisation (60%).

**Table 5.23: extent to which project delivered wider benefits**

	To a great extent	Somewhat	A Little	Not at all	Don't know
Improved the infrastructure for our sport(s) (N=101)	71%	22%	7%	0%	0%
Improved the profile of our sport(s) (N=95)	61%	25%	13%	0%	1%
Improved the profile of our organisation (N=89)	60%	27%	10%	0%	3%
Improved the local area (N=103)	58%	26%	10%	1%	5%
Supported wellbeing and resilience in our community (N=99)	54%	30%	14%	0%	2%
Helped us to form new partnerships/ collaborations (N=88)	49%	31%	13%	3%	5%

'Not the purpose' responses removed from sample.

**Table 5.24: wider benefits and impacts reported – by SFF and APF**

	Total	SFF	APF
Improved the infrastructure for our sport(s)	71%	80%	65%
Improved the profile of our sport(s)	61%	62%	60%
Improved the profile of our organisation	60%	67%	43%
Improved the local area	58%	53%	64%
Supported wellbeing and resilience in our community	54%	44%	61%
Helped us to form new partnerships/ collaborations	49%	48%	50%

Source: EKOS successful applicants' survey.

Organisations reporting that the benefit occurred to "a great extent".



93. It is likely that going forward there will be a greater need for those involved in the sporting system (including those involved in the direct provision of sport and physical activity opportunities) to ensure a greater focus on supporting health and wellbeing and developing partnerships with a broader range of sporting and non-sporting organisations.

### Target groups

94. Around half of respondents reported that **sportscotland's** investment in facilities had enabled specific activities to be undertaken that actively engaged with the inactive and/or under-represented in sport and physical activity, **Table 5.25**.

**Table 5.25: investment enabled delivery of specific activities with those with protected characteristics, under-represented in sport and/or the inactive**

	Yes		No		Don't know	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
SFF	29	57%	11	22%	11	22%
APF	23	46%	14	28%	13	26%
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24%</b>

Total (N=101), SFF (N=51), APF (N=50)

95. The main target groups included disabled people. This was followed by women and girls, children, and older people, **Table 5.26**.

**Table 5.26: Target groups and activities**

Main target groups	Number	Activities	Outcomes (Number of responses)
Disabled people	22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects to increase and improve accessibility.</li> <li>• Wheelchair sports (tennis, cricket, curling).</li> <li>• Disability sports (para football, cricket for visually impaired).</li> <li>• ASN sessions (diving assistance).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved physical access to the facility (9).</li> <li>• Increased access to the sport (4).</li> <li>• Improved safety to participate in sport and physical activity (4).</li> </ul>
Women & Girls	19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishing women only teams and sessions (football, tennis, rugby, swimming general fitness in the outdoors e.g. through Tennis Tuesdays, a women's only group, after school girls clubs, mums club and aqua-natal classes).</li> <li>• Improving changing facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased membership of sports club (2).</li> <li>• Encouraged outdoor activity (1).</li> <li>• Encouraged healthy lifestyle (1).</li> <li>• Improved access to the sport (1).</li> <li>• Success at international event (1).</li> </ul>
Children	13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Including a greater focus on SIMD areas or low income families.</li> <li>• Active Schools programmes.</li> <li>• After school classes and sessions.</li> <li>• General fitness and play.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved access to sport and physical activity (1).</li> <li>• Increased opportunity to participate in sport and physical activity outside of school hours (1).</li> <li>• Skills development (1).</li> <li>• Enhanced school curriculum with the investment (1).</li> <li>• Encouraged healthy lifestyle (1).</li> </ul>
Older people	8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Walking football.</li> <li>• Fitness.</li> <li>• Dance.</li> <li>• Memories through sport groups (social interaction for people with memory problems to meet others).</li> <li>• Activities to help reduce social isolation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decreased social isolation (3).</li> <li>• Improved access to sport and physical activity (1).</li> <li>• Improved fitness (1).</li> <li>• Increased confidence (1).</li> <li>• Increased enjoyment (1).</li> </ul>

## Legacy of the Active Places Fund

96. As highlighted, a key aim of the APF was to create a lasting legacy from the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games. Those in receipt of APF investment were asked some follow-on questions relating to this issue.
97. All APF respondents stated that their project had enhanced local sport and physical activity facilities (of which 80% strongly agreed), **Table 5.27**.

**Table 5.27: did project enhance local sport and physical activity facilities**

	APF respondents
Strongly Agree	80%
Agree	20%
Neither/Nor	0%
Disagree	0%
Strongly Disagree	0%

N=51

98. The most common responses were that the facilities projects:
- helped protect access to sport and physical activity for generations to come (12 responses);
  - created permanent high quality facility that are well used (11 responses); and
  - supported people to take part in sport recreationally, but also provided opportunities for progression (7 responses).

*“It is a permanent structure rebuilt in a way that enhances the activity of local people and tourists. It was built with sustainability in mind and likely to be still standing for decades... It will be a huge asset for the area to encourage physical activity for all ages, all forms of disability and other activities”.*

99. The legacy of the sports facilities for local people, particularly children and young people, allows *“progression at elite and bottom ends”* as *“the facility has already helped young people involved in the Junior Cycling Club to develop their skills to compete at a regional level”*.

## 5.7 Additionality of sportscotland investment

100. There are strong levels of additionality associated with **sportscotland**'s facilities investment and support, **Table 5.28**:

- 58% reported that the project would not have gone ahead in the absence of investment;
- a further 37% reported that the project would have gone ahead, but that the investment and support enabled the project to happen sooner, be of a better quality, and/or be of a bigger scale; and
- only 5% reported that the project would have gone ahead anyway.

101. The investment was considered particularly important. Some successful applicants mentioned that the contribution from **sportscotland** acted as an enabler to help unlock investment from other sources. Some also reported that the investment from the national agency for sport gave project ideas credibility.

**Table 5.28: additionality of sportscotland investment and support**

	SFF	APF	Total
Project would not have gone ahead	55%	61%	<b>58%</b>
Project would have gone ahead but later	21%	29%	<b>25%</b>
Project would have gone ahead but would have been smaller	19%	22%	<b>20%</b>
Project would have gone ahead but would have been lower quality	11%	12%	<b>12%</b>
Project would have gone ahead anyway	8%	2%	<b>5%</b>

Total (N=104), SFF (N=53), APF (N=51)

*“The facility would have closed without the project with no facility for the High School and 4 Primary Schools to receive swimming lessons let alone any recreational participation”.*

*“If no grant had been received this project would not have happened and we would not have been able to offer our facilities free of charge to several of the charitable groups in this deprived area”.*

102. The investment was considered important as the contribution from **sportscotland** often formed a significant proportion of project costs and acted as an enabler for other funding - *“once got the funding it opened the doors to other funding which would not have been available without APF”.*

*"The funding provided by **sportscotland** probably would not have been able to be secured from any other source and the participation of sportscotland as a funding partner was key to securing match funding from other sources".*

*"Securing **sportscotland** funding meant that other funders believed in our project".*

## 5.8 Challenges encountered

103. A number of common challenges were encountered in the development and ongoing management of facilities project, as detailed in **Table 5.29**.
104. Securing investment to cover the total project costs was the main challenge for many. It was typically reported that there were challenges in *"getting that initial funding for other funders to commit"* and to get *"all funders on board at the same time"*. Therefore significant work was required to be carried out by people within the organisation, often volunteers, to source and secure funding.
105. Many of the organisations that responded to the survey were third sector organisations and groups. A key challenge reported by these organisations was that taking forward capital projects can be a major undertaking, and that many continue to be heavily reliant on the time, expertise and goodwill of volunteers. Some of the issues encountered include:
- capacity constraints – many rely on a small number of "active" volunteers;
  - maintaining volunteer momentum and commitment throughout the process was difficult; and
  - ensuring that management committees have the right mix of skills to develop and run facilities.
106. This reliance on volunteers was another challenge faced by successful applicants throughout the different stages of the project.

*"Getting that money for a small club when all volunteers is hard; took 18 months to procure that funding".*

*"The project doesn't stop with completion of the facility".*

*"It's a very large commitment from board members to project manage the project".*

107. A further challenge was considered to relate to working with local authorities:

- it was difficult to navigate council processes (i.e. planning and procurement);  
and
- the pace of decision-making within councils could be slow – this had a knock-on effect and cause delays to anticipated facility project timescales.

*"Initially working with the council to overcome planning, health and safety and navigate their procurement procedures was very time consuming and involved a lot of collaboration - which for volunteers (parent council) took a lot of time and would put people off from doing similar projects in the future".*

**Table 5.29: main challenges**

Theme	Challenge	How challenge was addressed
<b>Securing investment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Difficulties in securing funding from a range of different sources. Often need one investor to commit to help unlock other sources of investment.</li> <li>• Need to ensure an appropriate contingency fund – for unexpected or increased costs.</li> <li>• Accessing funding for associated staff training (e.g. project management).</li> <li>• Difficulties securing revenue funding for ongoing delivery and maintenance of facilities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applied to as wide a range of funders as possible and tried to maintain regular contact with each funder.</li> <li>• Secured additional financial support by fundraising, taking out loan (SIS) or overdraft, and/or by dipping back into their own funds.</li> <li>• Handful of projects sought advice from <b>sportscotland</b> and other organisations on how and where to source funding.</li> <li>• Perseverance and dedication to secure funding (e.g. time and effort of volunteers).</li> </ul>
<b>Voluntary nature of many organisations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges in maintaining volunteer momentum and commitment (during the project and following its completion).</li> <li>• Ensuring that management committees have the right mix of skills.</li> <li>• Capacity constraints.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organise volunteer days to ensure a level of commitment from volunteers.</li> <li>• If applicable, working with other stakeholders of the facility (such as school). In a couple of cases, this has been formalised into a stakeholder group. Sharing responsibility for facility eases capacity constraints of voluntary organisations.</li> </ul>
<b>Working with local authorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Challenges around navigating local authority processes (e.g. planning and procurement).</li> <li>• The pace of decision-making can often cause delays to anticipated project timescales.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular contact with local authority to keep pressure on councils to progress project.</li> <li>• Adapt design of project to meet requirements of local authority (e.g. planning).</li> </ul>

*“All the support was about getting it built. Support is needed once it’s built. Who takes responsibility? How to maximise opportunity for new active place? All good having Active Places Fund but then how do you maintain it being an active place and not a white elephant – there needs to be more structure about keeping clubs running etc.”.*

## 5.9 Lessons learned

108. The main lesson learned for respondents was around partnership working. Much of the feedback emphasised the importance of ongoing engagement with key stakeholders and with the local community. Engagement at an early stage was considered key to ensuring wider support and buy-in for project, and to help maximise utilisation and benefit for the community in the longer-term.

*“The partnership approach was key at all stages including securing the funding, early project planning, communication with key stakeholders including local residents, construction phase and into operation”.*

109. Another useful lesson learned related to project planning, including financial planning and project management. It was felt that *“the importance of planning and being well prepared as all aspects of the project had to be thought through and all possible outcomes /implications considered”*. Robust financial planning was considered vital to help keep capital costs in check and to understand the likely income generation potential of the facility.
110. Of note, is that some respondents reported that they have taken the lessons learned, and embedded that learning into other projects. Much of the feedback highlighted that organisations had learned a great deal from the planning and delivery of the facility project – application processes, funders’ requirements, financial and project planning, etc. It was reported that this has led to better planning and closer partnership working with key stakeholders and the community.
111. Two-thirds of successful applicant respondents stated that they would be able to make the same application now, **Table 5.30**. It was reported that the skills, confidence and experience gained from delivering the facilities project placed organisations in a good position to make future funding applications and to take forward new projects. That being said, some raised capacity constraints as a potential barrier, as well as wider external factors such as increased competition for investment, reduced funding available, etc.



**Table 5.30: do you think you would be able to make the same application now?**

	Yes		No		Don't Know	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
SFF	38	72%	6	11%	9	17%
APF	29	60%	10	21%	9	19%
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18%</b>

Total (N=101), SFF (N=53), APF (N=48)

*"Yes, but we are aware that the available funds have been reduced from a potential maximum of £500,000 to £100,000 and therefore compound the challenge to secure sufficient funds to deliver a project of the same magnitude again".*

## 5.10 Funding landscape and sportscotland response

112. The general consensus among successful applicants was that it had become increasingly difficult to source and secure funding for facilities projects.
113. Most made reference to ongoing reductions in public sector funding and investment for sports projects. With less funding available, this was reported to have implications for the scale of future projects. Plus, with an increasingly competitive funding environment, it was also reported that it took organisations longer to secure funding.
114. *"Financial support through grants are becoming less available and increases the challenge to secure sufficient funds to deliver more complex or high value projects".* As such, *"aspirations of putting together a larger project have been put on hold"* for some organisations.
115. Others pointed to a policy shift whereby funders were now looking for greater evidence around the wider socio-economic benefits of sports and physical activities project:

*"After doing 2017/18 funding applications (about 5-6 successful) – the criteria that you have to meet in order to be considered have altered, we had a good discussion with The Robertson Trust early on and then found their criteria had stiffened up – more community/disadvantaged group benefits"*

116. The value of adapting to these changing requirements was highlighted as “*until sports organisations focus on social outcomes, rather than just usage, they will not access that funding*”.
117. Some suggestions for how **sportscotland** should respond to these changes in the funding and policy landscape included:
- lobbying role to Scottish Government to ensure sufficient funding to support continued development of sports facilities– “*They should continue to lobby politicians to ensure budgets are maintained to try and support organisations to grow and encourage more people to get active*”; and
  - greater consideration of the community aspect of sporting facilities with potential to support social elements of projects (e.g. kitchen and social areas) – “*Be aware that sports facilities often have a significant community element especially in rural areas*”;

## 5.11 Areas for improvement

118. The main areas for improvement in **sportscotland** support to help organisations develop sports facilities included:
- raise awareness of different sources of investment and support (**sportscotland** and other sources);
  - streamline the application and claims process;
  - ongoing support to organisations post project completion;
  - higher value of maximum awards;
  - investment for replacement of facilities (e.g. 3G pitches); and
  - support approaches that consider the wider social impact of investment.

## 6. Facility users experience

119. This section provides a summary of the main findings from the primary research undertaken with users of facilities that have benefitted from **sportscotland** investment.

### 6.1 Introduction and context

120. It is important to set the research undertaken with facility users in context.

121. A phased approach was undertaken to the online survey with facility users, and this was largely undertaken to help expand reach, and to boost responses.

122. The original focus for the promotion and distribution of the survey were the 40 successful applicant organisations that took part in the telephone survey. During the telephone interviews we asked respondents a) what would be the best approach to secure feedback from their facility users<sup>10</sup>, and b) whether they would be able to promote and distribute a survey on our behalf. About 30 organisations agreed to support the survey work. Various email reminders were sent by **sportscotland**, and the deadline was extended twice.

123. [This resulted in 261 responses from the users of 26 facilities projects.](#)

124. Latterly, the survey was distributed by **sportscotland** to successful applicants that responded to our online survey (i.e. a further 65 organisations). Various email reminders were sent by **sportscotland**, and the facility users' survey deadline was also extended.

125. [This resulted in 71 responses from the users of 13 facilities projects.](#)

126. A prize draw of five x £200 vouchers for sporting equipment was offered as an incentive to boost responses to the survey.

127. [A total 331 responses were received from facility users of 39 projects.](#) We did not expect a much higher response rate for the following reasons:

- some awards were made five+ years ago. Some facility users might not have viewed the survey as particularly relevant, and/or recall is likely to have lessened as more time has passed;

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<sup>10</sup> All suggested an online survey.

- the nature of some facilities projects makes undertaking primary research with facility users challenging (and more so through the use of online surveys). Many projects supported have public access and/or more casual or ad hoc use (e.g. parks, skate parks). Some organisations might not have issued the survey because they did not see the relevance and/or they did not have a distribution list of facility users;
- given that we were not able to access contact details of facility users directly, we relied on the goodwill of successful applicant organisations to issue the survey introduction/link on our behalf. While online surveys have the benefits of being cost effective, easy to set up, and can achieve good reach, we did not have any real control over whether organisations distributed the survey, how many it went to, or when it was sent out. The reality is that this will have been lower down in some organisations' list of priorities. **sportscotland's** help in distributing the survey to organisations and email reminders did help raise the profile and importance of the research; and
- our understanding is that **sportscotland** has limited engagement with organisations once the facilities investment has been made to organisations. Requests for help in promoting surveys were sent out to many project contacts with whom **sportscotland** does not have a close relationship (e.g. no routine monitoring information/data is collected post project completion). Some organisations might have been less inclined to help, especially in instances where the investment was made some time ago.

128. There is, however, some useful learning to be gleaned from the research in terms of:

- the role **sportscotland** could have with organisations post facilities investment;
- alternative methods and approaches for undertaking primary research with facility users; and
- measuring ongoing impact and performance where investments have been made.

## 6.2 Profile of facility users

129. The vast majority of facility users were of working age (81%). There was much less response among older people and children/young people, **Table 6.1**.

**Table 6.1: facility users by age**

	Number	%
Under 13	16	5%
13-15	16	5%
16-24	27	8%
25-34	38	11%
35-44	61	18%
45-54	100	30%
55-64	41	12%
65-74	28	8%
75-84	4	1%
85+	0	0%

N=331. Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

130. Most facility users who participated in the survey were male (58%), **Table 6.2**.

**Table 6.2: facility users by gender**

	Number	% of respondents
Male	190	58%
Female	138	42%
Prefer not to say	2	1%

N=330. Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

131. Nine percent of facility users reported that they had a disability or impairment, **Table 6.3**. The most common types of disability were physical disability, long-term illness or condition and/or a mental health issues, **Table 6.4**.

**Table 6.3: facility users by disability or impairment**

	Number	% of respondents
No	290	88%
Yes	30	9%
Prefer not to say	7	2%
Don't know	1	0.3%

N=328. Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

**Table 6.4: nature of disability or impairment**

	Number	% of respondents with a disability
Physical disability	13	43%
Long-term illness, disease or condition	13	43%
Mental health condition	10	33%
Learning disability	3	10%
Deafness or partial hearing	2	7%
Blindness or partial sight	2	7%
Prefer not to say	2	7%
Learning difficulty	1	3%
Other	1	3%
Developmental disorder	0	0%

N=30. Multiple responses possible. 'Other' response was recovery from stroke.

132. Almost all facility users were from a White background (94%), primarily White Scottish, **Table 6.5**.

**Table 6.5: facility users by ethnicity**

	Number	% of respondents
White Scottish	231	70%
White British	66	20%
White other	11	3%
Prefer not to say	8	2%
Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British	5	2%
White Irish	4	1%
Other	4	1%
Caribbean or Black	1	0.3%
Don't know	1	0.3%
African	0	0%

N=331. 'Other' responses included White English, Black British, North African/Scottish and France/Madagascar. Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

133. Adult facility users (16 years +) were asked further equalities questions relating to their religion, sexual orientation and whether they had ever identified as transgender.
134. Over half of adults (55%) did not identify themselves with any religion, **Table 6.6**. The main religion identified was the Church of Scotland.

**Table 6.6: facility users by religion**

	Number	% of respondents
None	163	55%
Church of Scotland	67	23%
Roman Catholic	27	9%
Prefer not to say	15	5%
Other Christian	14	5%
Other	6	2%
Muslim	2	1%
Buddhist	2	1%
Hindu	1	0.3%
Sikh	0	0%
Jewish	0	0%

N=297. 'Other' responses included Humanist and Church of England. Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

135. The vast majority of adults were heterosexual/straight (93%), **Table 6.7**. One respondent identified as transgender, **Table 6.8**.

**Table 6.7: facility users by sexual orientation**

	Number	% of respondents
Heterosexual/straight	273	93%
Bisexual	8	3%
Other	6	2%
Gay woman/lesbian	4	1%
Gay man	2	1%
Not sure	2	1%

N=295. 'Other' responses were not specified. Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

**Table 6.8: facility users that have identified as transgender**

	Number	% of respondents
No	290	99%
Prefer not to say	3	1%
Yes	1	0.3%

N=294. Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

136. Where facility users provided their home postcode, we mapped this using the Scottish Government SIMD Look-Up Files to determine the extent to which facility users live within one of Scotland most deprived areas (i.e. 20% most deprived datazones).

137. Few facility users who participated in the survey live in one of the SIMD 2016's most deprived 20% datazones, **Table 6.9**.

**Table 6.9: facility users by SIMD 2016 most deprived 20% datazones**

	Number	% of respondents
Do live in a most deprived 20% datazone	257	93%
Do not live in a most deprived 20% datazone	18	7%

N=275.

138. However, this finding needs to be set in context:
- facility users responding to the survey are unlikely to be completely representative of facility users across all of the facilities projects supported by **sportscotland**;
  - the top response from facility users was from a project located in one of the least deprived areas in Glasgow (Hyndland). Some 13% of all responses were from this particular project (Hayburn Park);
  - only 8% of the facilities projects accessed by facility users who responded to the survey are based within one of Scotland's 20% most deprived datazones; and
  - the findings reflects wider trends in participation in sport and physical activity. People living in the most deprived areas of Scotland are much less likely to participate in sport – 42% excluding walking (2017) compared to 65% for those living in the least deprived areas. The same research also noted that a more limited range of sports have achieved any real reach into the most deprived areas<sup>11</sup>.

## 6.3 Facility project and club

139. There was a spread of responses from facility users that accessed 39 different facilities projects located in 18 different local authorities in Scotland, **Table 6.10**.
140. Facility users most commonly noted that they used Hayburn Park in Hyndland (Glasgow) (13%), Alloa Rugby Football Club (10%) or The Pickaquoy Centre (9%).

<sup>11</sup> Observatory for Sport in Scotland, Executive Summary, Sport participation in Scotland: trends and future prospects, June 2019.



141. Postcode data of the facilities projects were used to determine the proportion of projects in the most deprived 20% datazones (i.e. SIMD quintile 1).
142. Only 8% of the facilities projects supported are based within one of Scotland's 20% most deprived datazones. These projects were Alloa Rugby Football Club, Clydebank Community Sports Hub and Elphinstone Primary School.

**Table 6.10: number of respondents by facility project**

Facility	Local authority	SIMD Quintiles	Number of responses	% of total respondents
Hayburn Park, Hyndland	Glasgow City	5	43	13%
Alloa Rugby Football Club - Upgraded Clubhouse & Changing Facilities	Clackmannanshire	1	32	10%
The Pickaquoy Centre - Swimming Pool Submersible Platform Lift	Orkney Islands	4	31	9%
Forfarshire Cricket Club - Synthetic Cricket Training Area	Dundee City	5	23	7%
Fort Matilda Tennis Club - Floodlight Installation	Inverclyde	3	18	5%
Clydebank Community Sports Hub	West Dunbartonshire	1	16	5%
Mar Orienteering Club - Deeside Orienteering Mapping Project 2014	Aberdeenshire	5	15	5%
Royal Commonwealth Pool - 1m Platform	City of Edinburgh	5	13	4%
Mountain Rescue Base, Dingwall (Dundonnell Mountain Rescue Team)	Highland	2	12	4%
Abercorn Sports Club - Floodlighting for Tennis Courts	City of Edinburgh	5	11	3%
Michael Woods Sports Centre & Leisure Centre - Indoor Football Centre	Fife	3	11	3%
Etrick Forest Archers - The Cabin	Scottish Borders	3	9	3%
Kirkmichael Path Network - Perth & Kinross Countryside Trust	Perth & Kinross	N/A	9	3%
Victoria Park Tennis Courts	Glasgow City	3	8	2%
Kilmaurs Tennis Club - Tennis Courts	East Ayrshire	2	7	2%
Arisaig Amenity Space - Arisaig Community Trust	Highland	3	6	2%
Balmullo MUGA	Fife	5	6	2%
Westburn Tennis Centre Outdoor Courts	Aberdeen City	3	6	2%
Aberdeen Kayak Club - Canoe and Kayak slalom course on the River Don at Seaton Park	Aberdeen City	5	5	2%

Facility	Local authority	SIMD Quintiles	Number of responses	% of respondents
Banks O Dee Sports Club - Construction of changing rooms for 4 additional teams	Aberdeen City	3	5	2%
Room for All at Albyn Park, Broxburn United Sports Club	West Lothian	2	5	2%
Beeslack Community High School - Cycle Path	Midlothian	5	4	1%
Fife Cycle Park	Fife	2	4	1%
Mormond Community Hub at Mormond Thistle Football Club	Aberdeenshire	3	4	1%
Kinross-shire Cricket Club - Extension of changing facilities and installation of artificial wicket	Perth & Kinross	5	3	1%
The Perth College Climbing Centre	Perth & Kinross	3	3	1%
Gracemount Leisues Centre - Gymnastics Sprung Floor	City of Edinburgh	3	2	1%
King George V Skatepark, Whitburn	West Lothian	2	2	1%
Elphinstone Primary School	East Lothian	1	2	1%
Murrayfield Curling - Upgrade of curling rink ice pad and building	City of Edinburgh	5	1	0.3%
XCITE Linlithgow Leisure Centre - Upgraded Changing Facilities	West Lothian	5	1	0.3%
Appin Community Council - Jubilee Bridge	Argyll & Bute	3	1	0.3%
Athnamulloch Cottage Renovation (Trees for Life)	Moray	3	1	0.3%
Ben Nevis Mountain Path - Repair Scheme, Riverside All-Ability Path & Bridge	Highland	N/A	1	0.3%
Dunaverty Hall - Village Hall & Sports Centre	Argyll & Bute	3	1	0.3%
Glenrothes Strollers CC - Sports Pavillion	Fife	5	1	0.3%
John Muir Way - Carbeth Link	Stirling	4	1	0.3%
Newcastleton Bike Skills Park at Rock UK Whithaugh Park	Scottish Borders	3	1	0.3%
Speyside Trust - Badaguish Centre All Abilities Bike Track & Sports Pitch	Highland	4	1	0.3%

Facility	Local authority	SIMD Quintiles	Number of responses	% of respondents
Other			6	2%
<b>Total</b>			<b>331</b>	<b>100%</b>

N=331. 'Other' responses included Kirkcaldy Leisure Centre (2), Carnegie Leisure Centre (2), Cupar Gym (1) and not stated (1).

143. Similarly, a wide range of clubs across various sports have used the facilities projects and thus been supported either directly or indirectly through investment from **sportscotland**, **Table 6.11**. The vast majority of facility users were members of a sports club (85%).

**Table 6.11: facility users by club**

	Number	% of respondents
Alloa Rugby Club	23	15%
Forfarshire Cricket Club	18	12%
Fort Matilda Tennis Club	15	10%
Mar Orienteering Club	11	7%
Dundonnell Mountain Rescue Team	10	7%
Abercorn Sports Club	7	5%
Edinburgh Diving Club	7	5%
Ettrick Forest Archers	6	4%
Aberdeen Kayak Club	4	3%
Mormond Thistle FC	4	3%
Kilmaurs Tennis Club	4	3%
Glasgow Gaels	4	3%
Clydebank Rugby Club	3	2%
Kinross-shire Cricket Club	2	1%
Broxburn Athletic Colts	2	1%
Caly Highlanders Cricket	2	1%
Drumchapel Amateurs	2	1%
Various	1	0.7%
Broxburn United	1	0.7%
Synergy Cycles	1	0.7%
Glenrothes Triathlon Club	1	0.7%
Hayburn Playpark Association	1	0.7%
Cheer Evolution	1	0.7%
Orkney Judo	1	0.7%
Orkney Octopush Club	1	0.7%
Dunfermline ASC	1	0.7%
Dunfermline Waterpolo Club	1	0.7%
Dundee and Angus Cricket	1	0.7%
Forthill Community Tennis Club	1	0.7%

	Number	% of respondents
Beeslack Family Disabled Club	1	0.7%
Mallaig High School Girls Football Team	1	0.7%
Dunaverty Bowling Club	1	0.7%
Freuchie Badminton Club	1	0.7%
Glenrothes Strollers 2005s	1	0.7%
Trees for Life	1	0.7%
Glenrothes Badminton Club	1	0.7%
Glenrothes Gymnastics Club	1	0.7%
Dardas Diamonds	1	0.7%
FCIT Badminton	1	0.7%
Kilpatrick Boys Club 2009	1	0.7%
GTF Tae Kwon Do	1	0.7%
Carnegie Swim Club	1	0.7%
Badaguish Holiday Care Lodge	1	0.7%
Temple Hall United	1	0.7%
Fife Synchronised Swimming Club	1	0.7%
Kuk Sool Won Kirkcaldy	1	0.7%

N=149. Multiple responses possible.

## 6.4 Facility use

144. Almost three-quarters of facility users reported taking part in sport and/or physical activity at an upgraded or new facility, **Table 6.12**. The relatively high proportion of “no” or “unsure” responses might reflect the fact that some of the **sportscotland** investment was some time ago.

**Table 6.12: facility changes since started using facility**

	Number	% of respondents
It has been refurbished or upgraded in some way	170	51%
It is a brand new facility	70	21%
No	59	18%
Unsure/don't know	32	10%

N=331

145. Facility users have accessed the facility for varying lengths of time. Almost 60% had used it for at least three years, **Table 6.13**.

**Table 6.13: length of facility use**

	Number	% of respondents
Less than a year	45	14%
One to two years	89	27%
Three to five years	80	24%
More than five years	117	35%

N=331

146. Facility users accessed the facility in a range of ways, with the most common being as a club member (50%). This was followed by parents/guardians (28%), **Table 6.14**.

**Table 6.14: basis of facility use**

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Club member	163	50%
Parent/guardian	91	28%
Volunteer	50	15%
Coach	46	14%
Casual user (pay per session)	45	14%
Centre member	44	13%
Member of public	23	7%
Other	6	2%

N=329. Multiple responses possible. 'Other' responses included teacher/staff member (4), therapist (1) and school child (1).

147. Facility users' frequency of facility use varied – this ranged from less than once a week to more than five times a week, **Table 6.15**. Over half of facility users made use of the facility either once or twice a week (54%). A further 30% used the facility more often.

**Table 6.15: frequency of facility use**

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Less than once a week	55	17%
Once a week	88	27%
Twice a week	88	27%
Three times a week	54	16%
Four times a week	17	5%
Five times a week	16	5%
More than five times a week	13	4%

N=331. Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

148. Almost all facility users spend at least one hour at the facility each visit, with the most common timeframe between one and two hours (73%), **Table 6.16**.

**Table 6.16: time spent at facility on an average visit**

	Number	% of respondents
Less than one hour	26	8%
Between one and two hours	242	73%
Between three and four hours	47	14%
More than four hours	15	5%

N=330.

149. The main reasons for using the facility related to the positive experience of users (71%) and proximity to the facility (62%), **Table 6.17**. Affordability (41%) and free access (29%) were less influential factors for those who took part in the survey.

**Table 6.17: reasons for facility use**

	Number	% of respondents
I enjoy going there	236	71%
It is near to where I live/work/go to school	206	62%
To take part in activities with friends/family	171	52%
My club sessions take place there	154	47%
It is affordable	135	41%
It has specialist equipment/facilities which I use	128	39%
It is free to use	96	29%
Other	5	2%

N=331. Multiple responses possible. 'Other' responses included attending community and social events (2), a site for meetings (1), and that they were unable to secure their own facility (1).

## Sport and activities

150. Most facility users take part in one activity at the facility (74%), while just over one-quarter take part in multi-sports or activities. The main sports/activities participated in by facility users were football (16%), tennis (15%), swimming (12%), gym and fitness (11%), play (10%) and rugby (10%), **Table 6.18**.



**Table 6.18: sports and/or activities participated by facility users at the facility**

Sport/Activity	Number of responses	% of respondents
Football	38	16%
Tennis	36	15%
Swimming	29	12%
Gym and fitness	27	11%
Play	24	10%
Rugby	23	10%
Social events	21	9%
Cricket	19	8%
Basketball	16	7%
Cycling	15	6%
Walking	14	6%
Orienteering	12	5%
Diving	11	5%
Mountain rescue training	10	4%
Climbing	8	3%
Kayak and canoe	6	3%
Badminton	5	2%
Archery	5	2%
Squash	5	2%
Gymnastics	4	2%
Gaelic football	4	2%
Running	3	1%
Netball	3	1%
Scoters	2	1%
Martial arts	2	1%
Hockey	1	0.4%
Bowls	1	0.4%
Volleyball	1	0.4%
Roller skiing	1	0.4%
French boules	1	0.4%
Cheerleading	1	0.4%
Rowing	1	0.4%
Golf	1	0.4%
Ball games	1	0.4%
Mountain biking	1	0.4%

N=238, multiple responses allowed

## 6.5 Physical activity

151. Facility users were asked a series of questions regarding their level of physical activity. This was based on their age – adults were asked slightly different questions from those aged under 16 years.
152. At the time of writing, the physical activity guidelines, provided by the Chief Medical Officers of the UK, are as follows:

**Figure 3.2: current physical activity guidelines**

Adults 16+	Meet guidelines	150 or more minutes of MVPA <sup>12</sup> a week
	Some activity	30-149 minutes of MVPA a week
	Inactive	Less than 30 minutes of MVPA a week
Teenagers 11-15	Meet guidelines	420 minutes a week (average of 60 minutes a day)
	Some activity	210-419 minutes (average of more than 30 minutes but less than 60 mins a day)
	Inactive	Less than 210 minutes a week (doing less than 30 minutes a day on average)

Note: new guidelines for physical activity were published in September 2019 (after this report was finalised).

153. Facility users that responded to the survey are currently physically active. The vast majority currently meet physical activity guidelines (83%) and in part this reflects high levels of club membership and regular use of sports facilities, **Table 6.19**.
154. Although the remainder were not meeting physical activity guidelines, only 1% of service users were inactive with 16% participating in some physical activity.

<sup>12</sup> MVPA – moderate to vigorous physical activity.

**Table 6.19: current levels of physical activity of facility users**

	Number	%
Meeting physical activity guidelines	273	83%
Not meeting physical activity guidelines – some activity	52	16%
Not meeting physical activity guidelines - inactive	4	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>329</b>	

Source: EKOS service users survey. N=329.

**Table 6.20: all facility users' - current level of physical activity**

	Length of facility use		Total facility users
	Less than 3 years	3+ years	
Meeting physical activity guidelines	86%	81%	<b>82%</b>
Not meeting physical activity guidelines	14%	19%	<b>17%</b>
Total	133	196	<b>329</b>

Note: Two respondents from the total of 331 respondents did not provide physical activity information. Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

155. In order to better understand whether investment in facilities has had an [impact on facility users levels of physical activity](#), those facility users that had been using the facility for less than three years were asked to provide information on:
- their level of physical activity [before](#) they started using the facility; and
  - their level of physical activity [now](#)<sup>13</sup>.
156. Data shows that there has been an increase the number of facility users that meet physical activity guideline when pre and post-facilities investment is considered (an increase of 39 people or 30 percentage points), **Table 6.21**.

<sup>13</sup> It was not considered appropriate to ask before and after physical activity levels for those that had been using the facilities for any longer than three years. The thinking was that the longer a person has used a facility, changes in physical activity could not be directly attributed to the sportscotland investment.

**Table 6.21: changes in levels of physical activity before and after facility use**

	Current		Before facility use		Change
	Number	%	Number	%	
Meeting physical activity guidelines	114	86%	75	56%	↑
Not meeting physical activity guidelines – some activity	17	13%	42	32%	↓
Not meeting physical activity guidelines – inactive	2	2%	16	12%	↓
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>		<b>133</b>		

N=133. Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

157. Looking at the data in more detail it can be seen that the investment has:

- encouraged those who were active to stay active (55%);
- encouraged, but to a lesser extent, people to meet physical activity guidelines who were previously not (31%), **Table 6.22**.

**Table 6.22: change in physical activity levels of facility users since facility use**

	Number of respondents	%
Continued to meet guidelines	73	55%
Now meeting guidelines after previously not	41	31%
Now not meeting guidelines after previously doing so	2	2%
Continued to not meet guidelines	17	13%
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>	

N=133. Percentage totals may not equal 100% due to rounding.

**Table 6.23: change in physical activity levels of facility users since facility use**

Service users that are currently active		
Change	Number	% of active
Continued to meet physical activity guidelines	73	64%
Now meeting guidelines after previously only some activity	34	30%
Now meeting guidelines after previously inactive	7	6%
	<b>114</b>	
Service users currently participating in some activity		
Change	Number	% of some activity
Previously met guidelines but now only participates in some activity	2	12%
Continued to participate in some activity	7	41%
Previously inactive but now participates in some activity	8	47%
	<b>17</b>	
Service users that are currently inactive		
Change	Number	% of inactive
Previously met guidelines but now inactive	0	*
Now inactive after previously participating in some activity	1	*
Continued to be inactive	1	*
	<b>2</b>	

N=133. \*Absolute numbers too small to calculate useful percentage figures.

158. The findings suggest that while the investments have largely engaged those who are already engaged in sport and physical activity, they have also contributed to making the inactive more active.

## 6.6 Goals

159. Facility users that responded to the survey made reference to a wide range of goals they sought to achieve by participating in sport and physical activity. These related to:
- improving physical and mental health and wellbeing (107 responses);
  - improving or maintaining levels of fitness and to be active (84 responses);
  - improving skills, mainly sporting but also life skills (43 responses);
  - the social aspect - meeting new people and/or participating along with friends and family (36 responses);

- for enjoyment (28 responses); and
- to help others, especially children and young people, by encouraging participation and enjoyment of sport and physical activity (26 responses).

*“To continue to stay active, fit and healthy, achieve success at the highest level possible for me and to continue to develop lifelong friendships”.*

*“I want to encourage others within our local community to get the same enjoyment out of the sport that I have had over the years and this new facility can only help as it looks fantastic”.*

*“I wish to continue to compete at the highest level possible, to grow and improve not only as an athlete but as a person, enjoying the process along the way”.*

*“Be the best I can be and have fun”.*

160. A positive findings is that the vast majority of facility users reported that they were achieving these goals (85%), **Table 6.24**.

**Table 6.24: do you feel you are achieving these goals?**

	Number	% of respondents
Yes	242	85%
No	5	2%
Don't know	38	13%

N=285

## 6.7 Benefits from using the facility

161. Almost all facility users reported at least one benefit from using the facility (99%).
162. For facility users, the main benefits of being involved in sport and/or physical activity at the facility related to being more active (84%) and making friends/socialising (73%), **Table 6.25**.

**Table 6.25: benefits of facility use**

	Number of responses	% of respondents
Be more active	277	84%
Make friends/socialise	240	73%
Get better at sport/other activities	188	57%
Develop your skills	187	57%
Be more motivated to take part in sport or physical activity	181	55%
Be more confident in sport or physical activity	160	49%
Learn new skills	150	46%
Feel more comfortable to take part in sport and physical activity	128	39%
Other	13	4%

N=328. Multiple responses possible. 'Other' responses included encourage children and young people to get active (3), support children with additional needs, coach others, relieve stress, become healthier, play safely, become more efficient as a team and develop transferable skills.

*"Thanks to the park my 12 year old daughter is very active and sociable as her group of friends often meet up to play sports which is a fantastic and very healthy way of helping them develop into healthy young adults at the heart of the community".*

*"Having been a member of the club for more than 45 years, I wish that the facilities that they have now had been available to me in my younger days. The facilities enable the players of today to improve their strength and conditioning in a warm, comfortable environment and at times that suit them".*

*"Myself, as an older member it allows me to at least try and maintain a level of fitness that improves my health and wellbeing. It is a fantastic facility that can only enhance the community and all who use it".*

163. Being involved in sport and physical activity at the facilities was reported to have made a difference to users beyond participation in sport and physical activity. It has also helped the vast majority of respondents to feel healthy (90%), included (81%) and relaxed (81%), **Table 6.26**.

**Table 6.26: do you feel that taking part in sport and physical activity at the facility has helped you to feel...?**

	Yes	Sometimes	No
Healthy (N=315)	90%	9%	1%
Included (N=288)	81%	16%	3%
Relaxed (N=303)	81%	16%	3%
Useful (N=288)	77%	19%	5%
More involved in your community (N=288)	74%	20%	6%
Optimistic about the future (N=293)	71%	24%	5%
Able to think clearly (N=285)	66%	30%	4%
Able to deal with problems (N=284)	61%	31%	8%
Able to make your mind up about things (N=279)	57%	35%	8%

### Changes since the facility was developed/ improved

164. Where facility users have been using a brand new facility, the main change has been the development of skills and increased level of performance (86%), **Table 6.27**. Wider feedback largely centred on the facility providing increased opportunities (e.g. more training sessions) and greater access to year-round opportunities.

**Table 6.27: changes for facility users since started to use new facility**

	Increased a lot/ a little	About the same	Decreased a lot/ a little
Your skills and level of performance (N=64)	86%	13%	2%
Your motivation to take part in sport and physical activity (N=67)	78%	22%	0%
Your confidence to take part in sport and physical activity (N=66)	77%	23%	0%
Your frequency of visits (N=68)	74%	26%	0%
Your participation in sport and physical activity generally (N=67)	72%	28%	0%
How long you stay each time you visit (N=66)	67%	33%	0%

*The new facility has given me the chance to train more often to improve my game further”.*

*“I use the cycle park to work on my technical skills, namely cornering ability, which would be less safe when performed on open roads”.*

*“It has allowed me to train in winter and in poor weather, previously sessions would have been cancelled or not scheduled”.*



165. Where facility users have been using an upgraded facility, two-thirds reported that their frequency of visits to the facility had increased, **Table 6.28**. Some reported that they now have a better overall experience e.g. increased accessibility.

**Table 6.28: changes for facility users since facility was upgraded/improved**

	Increased a lot/a little	About the same	Decreased a lot/a little
Your frequency of visits (N=168)	66%	33%	1%
Your motivation to take part in sport and physical activity (N=160)	58%	41%	1%
How long you stay each time you visit (N=164)	55%	44%	1%
Your skills and level of performance (N=156)	54%	45%	1%
Your participation in sport and physical activity generally (N=161)	53%	47%	1%
Your confidence to take part in sport and physical activity (N=157)	46%	53%	1%

*“The new facilities have made training and gym sessions more enjoyable”.*

*“I feel more independent using the new pool’s disabled access. The old one was very heavy for the staff to use. Even though the staff were friendly, I felt a nuisance. The new lift is operated with remote control, allowing easy access”.*

*“I see my kids confidence grow for example on the monkey bars (having progressed from small boat/climbing frame). Fantastic to see them gain confidence and skill in the different spaces the park offers”.*

*“Being outside, walking to the park, round the park and being active with the kids has encouraged me to be more active and I’ve grown in confidence”.*

166. Combining the results from the facility users of new facilities and upgraded facilities highlights that more than two-thirds of facility users have increased their frequency of visits to the facility (68%), **Table 6.29**.

**Table 6.29: changes for all facility users after completion of facility project**

	Increased a lot/a little	About the same	Decreased a lot/a little
Your frequency of visits (N=236)	68%	31%	0.4%
Your motivation to take part in sport and physical activity (N=227)	64%	35%	1%
Your skills and level of performance (N=220)	63%	35%	1%
How long you stay each time you visit (N=230)	59%	41%	0.4%
Your participation in sport and physical activity generally (N=228)	58%	41%	0.4%
Your confidence to take part in sport and physical activity (N=223)	55%	44%	1%

## 6.8 Overall facility users' experience

167. Facility users were asked to rate the extent to which they strongly agreed or disagreed with a series of statements about the facility and elaborate on their experience of the facility, **Table 6.30**.
168. Around two-thirds of facility users agreed/strongly agreed with each statement. The highest levels of agreement related to:
- the ease of facility use in terms of affordability (96%);
  - accessibility to and within the facility (91% for easy to access and 90% for well-designed facility to ensure maximum access);
  - convenience of opening hours (90%).
  - the facility was well-maintained (90%).
169. Affordability did not appear to be an issue. However, it is important to note that few facility users that responded to the survey came from deprived areas. Plus some spaces that received investment are free to use. Wider research shows that affordability continues to be one of the main barriers to participation for many people.
170. Supporting facilities, such as refreshment/social areas (65%), toilets (68%) and changing rooms (68%) were less likely to score as positively amongst respondents.

**Table 6.30: facility users' experience of facility**

	Strongly Agree/Agree	Neither/Nor	Disagree/Strongly Disagree
Taking part is affordable for me (N=325)	96%	3%	1%
It is easy to access via the transport options available to me (N=320)	91%	6%	3%
It is a well-designed facility to ensure maximum access (N=320)	90%	9%	1%
It is a well-maintained and looked after facility (N=324)	90%	5%	5%
The opening hours are convenient for me (N=309)	90%	10%	1%
The entrance space is welcoming and accessible (N=311)	86%	8%	5%
The quality and range of equipment meet my needs (N=305)	83%	12%	5%
There are sufficient car parking spaces (N=317)	78%	14%	8%
The changing areas meet my needs (N=292)	68%	26%	7%
The toilet areas meet my needs (N=301)	68%	21%	12%
Refreshment/social areas are inviting and accessible (N=298)	65%	27%	8%

*"Being severely disabled this facility gives me equal opportunities to other users".*

*"Great all round facility and with 24 hour access to the gym it fits around my often busy life".*

*"I only play tennis and don't shower or socialise there as it's quite run down and limited".*

*"The courts are great but the club house is ageing".*

## 6.9 Areas for improvement

171. Facility users were asked if there was anything that would make their experience of using the facility better. Where areas for improvement were identified by facility users, the main points raised were:

- the need for more or replacement sports/gym equipment (14 responses);
- the cleanliness of facilities (12 responses);
- the provision of, or improvements to toilet areas (8 responses); and

- expansion of facilities to cater for more people and/or to provide more sporting opportunities (8 responses).

172. These points relate to the overall user experience, and are more relevant to facility operators than **sportscotland**.

## 7. Unsuccessful applicants views

173. This chapter presents the main findings from an online survey of unsuccessful applicants to the SFF and APF.

### 7.1 Profile information

174. **sportscotland** issued an introduction and online survey link to unsuccessful applicants as follows, **Table 7.1**. Twenty-two responses were received from unsuccessful applicants, in the main from those who had applied to the SFF. This represents a response rate of 8%.

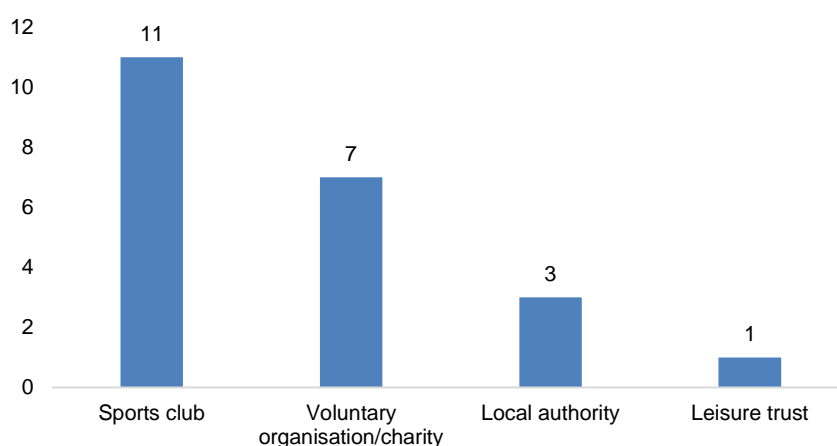
**Table 7.1: unsuccessful applicants' survey**

	Population of unsuccessful applicants	Nos. of bouncebacks	Reduced population	Nos. of responses received
APF	199	41	158	7
SSF	153	22	131	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>289</b>	<b>22</b>

Note: Two unsuccessful applicants had applied unsuccessfully to both Funds.

175. Unsuccessful applicant organisations that responded to the survey are based across 15 different local authority areas in Scotland. The most common locations were the City of Edinburgh, East Renfrewshire, Glasgow City, and North Ayrshire. Almost all respondents are third sector organisations (i.e. sports clubs, voluntary/charity, leisure trust), **Figure 7.1**.

**Figure 7.1: unsuccessful applicants - organisation type**



N=22. No responses from sports governing bodies or educational institutions.

## 7.2 About the unsuccessful application

176. The unsuccessful applications included a fairly equal mix of project ideas which sought investment to upgrade an existing facility (13) or build a new facility (11).
177. A handful of unsuccessful applications were for multi-sport or multi-activity facilities. Investment from **sportscotland** would have catered for a diverse range of sports. The main sports covered by the unsuccessful applications were rugby, followed by bowling, football and tennis.
178. Around half of the unsuccessful applications would also have catered for wider activities over and above sporting opportunities. In the main this centred on providing opportunities for play, outdoor learning, and/or active travel. A couple of unsuccessful applicants commented specifically on the potential role that the projects could have played in contributing towards the wider regeneration of the local area and helping to combat isolation and loneliness.

## 7.3 Pre-application and application support

179. Over two-thirds of unsuccessful applicants reported that they had not received any support from **sportscotland** before submitting the application (15).
180. Seven unsuccessful applicants had received support from **sportscotland** at the pre-application stage. The main type of support received from **sportscotland** was on the planning side<sup>14</sup>, **Table 7.2**. The “other” support identified related to advice on the application process or support to complete the application form.

**Table 7.2: sportscotland support received**

	Number
Strategic support in planning in relation to your project	3
Other	3
Advice relating to planning permission and the planning process	1
Advice on other funding sources	1
Advice on project design	0

N=7, multiple responses allowed.

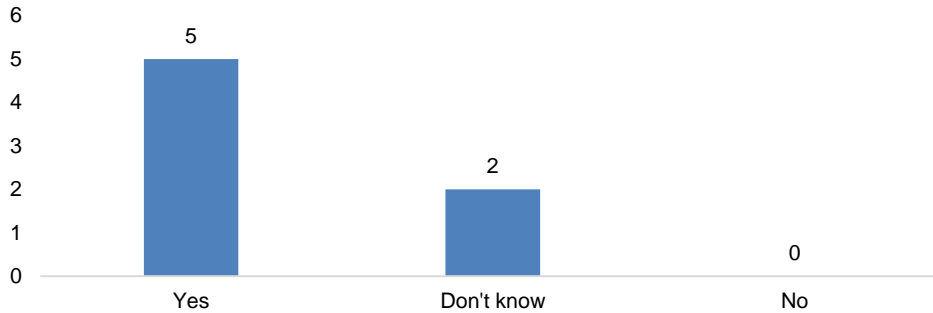
181. It would appear that project design advice had not been tapped into by unsuccessful applicants.

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<sup>14</sup> This covers strategic support in planning in relation to your project and/or advice relating to planning permission and the planning process.

182. A positive finding is that most unsuccessful applicants that had received pre-application support from **sportscotland** found it useful, **Figure 7.2**.

**Figure 7.2: was pre-application support from sportscotland useful**



N=7

## 7.4 The application decision

183. There was relatively mixed feedback from unsuccessful applicants regarding whether they felt that the reason(s) for the application being unsuccessful were made clear, **Table 7.3**. Of note, is that almost all reported that they were not offered any further support from **sportscotland** following the decision.

**Table 7.3: following the unsuccessful decision**

	Yes	No	Don't know
Did you feel that the reason(s) for your application being unsuccessful were made clear to you	10	9	3
Were you offered further support following your unsuccessful application	1	19	2

N=22

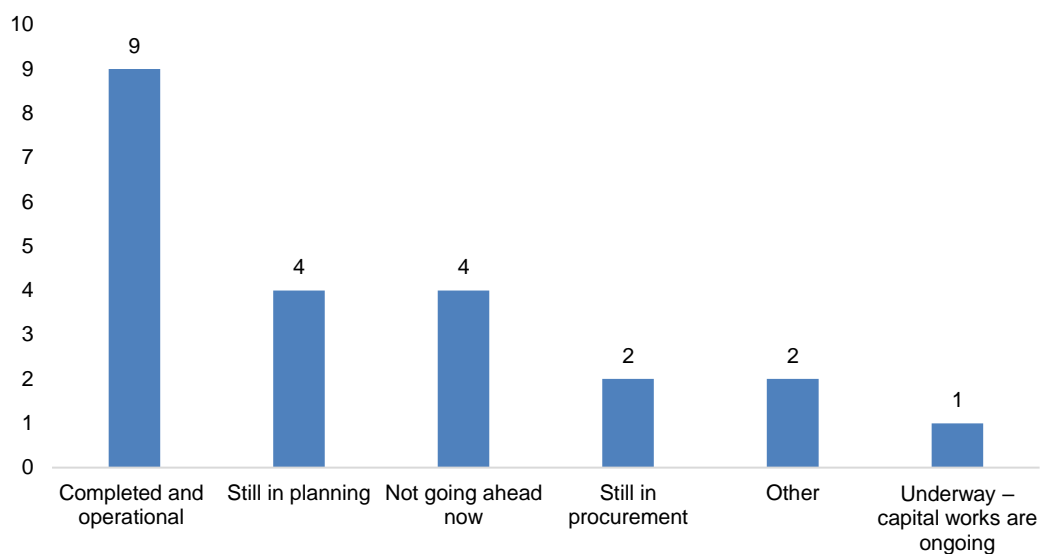
184. The unsuccessful applicant who reported that they received follow-on support said that this included planning support as well as signposting to alternative funders. This support from **sportscotland** was considered helpful.

## 7.5 Project progress

185. While the application to sportscotland for facilities investment was unsuccessful, the survey sought feedback from unsuccessful applicants on the status of the project now.

186. A positive finding is that over three-quarters of projects (18) have either progressed or are in the process of moving forward, albeit some are still at relatively early stages (e.g. still in planning or procurement), **Figure 7.4**.
187. Some nine projects have since secured funding from alternative sources and are now fully operational. Another one project is currently in the construction phase.

**Figure 7.4: current project status**



N=22

188. Some information was provided on project completion (expected completion) dates, **Table 7.4**. Where data was provided, all bar one have since completed the capital works and the facilities are operational.



**Table 7.4: when capital works complete/expected to complete**

	Nos. of projects
2015	1
2016	2
2017	1
2018	2
2021	1

N= 7

189. Four respondents said that the project did not progress, with the main feedback that they had experienced difficulties securing alternative funding.
190. Wider feedback centred on competing priorities in relation to facilities development, and recognition that all facilities needs cannot be addressed at the same time. Another commented that a phased approach was now being taken, and that another application to sportscotland might be submitted in the future.

## 7.6 Changes to the funding landscape

191. A couple of common themes emerged from the feedback from unsuccessful applicants on how the funding landscape for facilities has changed over recent years. This centred on:
- reductions in the maximum award available from sportscotland (i.e. SFF reduced from £1 million to £100,000); and
  - ongoing reductions in local authority budgets – implications both for funding new facilities projects and maintaining existing facilities.
192. Some wider points (or challenges) were raised by **individual** unsuccessful applicants:
- with constraints on investment from public sources, there is a feeling that loan funding might require to become part of the funding packages (e.g. Social Investment Scotland);
  - internal financial constraints can make it difficult for applicants to put in their own funding contributions;
  - reduction in the number of people participating in sport has had knock-on implications for income generation potential;
  - change in priorities – active travel moving up the policy (and funding) agenda – also has implications for securing investment;

- there was interest in extending useable hours (for outdoor activities) and the range of activities on offer to boost usage and income – although constraints such as a lack of floodlighting or durable surfaces and suitable toilet and changing facilities were reported; and
- a perception that **sportscotland** prioritises facilities in areas that will have higher usage levels (and therefore higher benefit), which disadvantages rural areas.

## 7.7 How **sportscotland** should respond

193. The main ways in which unsuccessful applicants felt that **sportscotland** should respond are highlighted below:

- **sportscotland** should make a case to the Scottish Government for increased facilities investment and support;
- expand its funding remit – to support renovation works (not just new builds and extensions), replacement/upgrading of indoor playing surfaces, funding for replacement of artificial playing surfaces which have a finite life, funding to help make existing facilities safe, wind and watertight, etc;
- greater support for rural communities;
- support to help applicants develop sustainable business plans for facilities investment, including robust/realistic financial projections; and
- provide clear, unambiguous guidance on priorities for funding and open lines of communication with applicants. This includes understanding the different capacities of groups/organisations to go through the application process (some might need more hand-holding); greater encouragement (or even a requirement) for applicants to engage with **sportscotland** prior to submitting an application; an early indication of the likelihood of application success; clear reasons provided for why applications are unsuccessful; site visits; and making applicants aware of future funding opportunities.

194. Wider feedback includes:

- decision making process needs to take into consideration the overall picture of facility development in a geographic area (or centre);
- important to support/protect existing facilities that have a proven track record – it should not always be about investing in new facilities within a geographic area;
- provision of design advice (and funding) to support increased usage of facilities to accommodate specific target groups (e.g. females/LGBTI) and broaden range of sports or level of performance – note this is already provided by **sportscotland**;
- the cost of specialist surveys (e.g. feasibility studies, etc) can be expensive and adds to the overall project costs. It was suggested that it would be good to explore ways to help keep these costs down;
- ensuring no overlap or duplication of funding e.g. **sportscotland** and governing bodies of sport;
- supporting grass roots level participation is as important as supporting performance sport; and
- criteria for the previous fund seemed to be based on the expectations for fixed location sports like Football or Gymnastics. A more holistic understanding of different types of facilities would be useful.