Leisure expenditure per person in the UK is projected to grow significantly over the next decade, based on Experian forecasts.

Can existing facilities cater for this additional demand? What role should local planning authorities and the development industry play in meeting future growth?

Development plan policy and site allocations have tended to focus on meeting housing, employment and retail needs. The National Planning Policy Framework indicates a local authority’s planning strategy must be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for sports and recreation facilities and opportunities for new provision. These assessments should identify specific needs and quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses of open space, sports and recreational facilities in the local area. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what provision is required now and in the future.

**How can Fit for Purpose help?**

Local authorities need to play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. Access to open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation make an important contribution to the health and well-being of communities.

To deliver social and recreational facilities, the local community, planning policies should plan positively for new provision and guard against the loss of valued facilities. A shared vision is needed with local communities, which identifies what facilities residents would like to see in their area.

Fit for Purpose is an innovative cost efficient and robust methodology for quantifying existing and future needs for sport and recreational facilities with any defined area.

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**Figure 1: The Fit For Purpose framework**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area Potential</th>
<th>Define catchment area</th>
<th>Quantity population</th>
<th>Population demography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local sports participation rates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Factor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local demand adjustment factor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identify Requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convert local demand into sport/recreation facilities needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NLP’s Fit for Purpose methodology combines GIS mapping capabilities and catchment area analysis. Figure 2 below provides an example of sport and leisure facilities mapped within the drive time catchment area, which provides a visual indication of where provision is focused and where there are areas of deficiency. The potential for additional sport and recreation provision is shown in the infographics overleaf.

The outputs of Fit for Purpose can assist in the production of:

- sport and leisure strategies for local authorities;
- background evidence for emerging development plans;
- supporting evidence for planning applications;
- assessing the impact of new facilities or the loss of existing facilities; and
- assessing the need for facilities or CIL contributions generated by major housing developments.

Figure 2: Sport and Leisure Facilities Catchment Analysis

**Current Sport & Leisure Clients**

Barking & Dagenham Council | Bourne Leisure | British Land | Calderdale Council
Coventry City Council | Craven Council | De Vere Hotels | Enfield Borough Council
Farleigh Borough Council | Hammerson | intu | Lee Valley Water Centre Legacy Board
Legal and General | Merlin Entertainment Group | M&G Real Estate | Newcastle Falcons
Oadby & Wigston Borough Council | Rushmoor Borough Council | The Football Association
Wandsworth Council | Wigan Metropolitan Council | Wycombe District Council | X-Leisure

Other NLP methodologies which may be of interest

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eVALUATE
Making the Economic Case for Development

Cinescope
Cinema Development Intelligence

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The Great NLP Menu: Harnessing Growth in the Food and Beverage Sector

Fit for Purpose
In addition to the catchment analysis, ‘Fit for Purpose’ quantifies the amount of additional facilities required in the local area and presents this in an accessible and clear infographic report seeking to offer practical ways forward.

Figure 3: An example ‘Fit for Purpose’ Dashboard

Source: Not based on region-specific data. For illustrative purposes only.

About NLP

NLP are the market leaders in innovation, developing planning tools and methodologies to work on the UK’s most important development projects.

We have nurtured an integrated cross-discipline approach which ensures our clients benefit not only from the services we provide them, but also from the full range of our expertise. For over five decades, this unique approach has enabled us to take full advantage of new practices and respond quickly and intelligently to change.

As the UK’s leading planning and development consultancy we offer a full range of services across all the key development sectors. The Royal Town Planning Institute has recognised NLP as Planning Consultancy of the Year over three consecutive years, an unprecedented feat.

Read More: You can find out more about NLP and our tools and methodologies at: nlpplanning.com/nlp-insight