



## Sports Complex



# SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN

April 2026 – March 2027



# 2026/27 OAKLEAF SPORTS COMPLEX SERVICE DELIVERY PLAN

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to the annual update of the Oak Leaf Sports Complex Service Plan.

The Oak Leaf Sports Complex is a facility provided by Great Aycliffe Town Council.

This Service Plan has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Performance Management Framework and aims to demonstrate the links between the overall Strategic Aims and Targets of the Council, as set out in the Council's Service Delivery Plan, and the role carried out by the Oak Leaf Sports Complex in helping to achieve these objectives.

The purpose of this Service Plan is to put in place a mission statement, service aims and objectives, performance management arrangements, and an annual action plan specific to the work of the Oak Leaf Sports Complex.

The delivery of the Service Plan during the year will help ensure the Finance Section contributes towards the achievement of the Council's Strategic Aims and Targets, deliver service improvements, and effectively meet and hopefully exceed the expectations of the users of the Oak Leaf Sports Complex.

The Service Plan also sets internal objectives and targets for the staff working within the Oak Leaf Sports Complex and helps communicate to all other staff and Members of the Council how the Oak Leaf Sports Complex contributes towards the Council's overall vision and strategic aims.

This Plan has been prepared for the purposes of the 2026/27 financial year and will be updated on an annual basis.

The Plan will be reported to and approved by the Recreation Committee and progress on the Action Plan will be monitored by the Sports Complex Manager throughout the year.

This Service Plan will be used to define the forces that work for and against the business and to determine what will be done to improve over the next year.

It will also be used on a continual basis in the evaluation of performance against targets and to ensure that the statement of purpose, aims and objectives are achieved.

If you have any comments or feedback on the Service Plan, please feel free to forward these to the Sports Complex Manager, who will ensure that any views are taken into account in future updates of the Plan.

## **2. EQUALITIES STATEMENT**

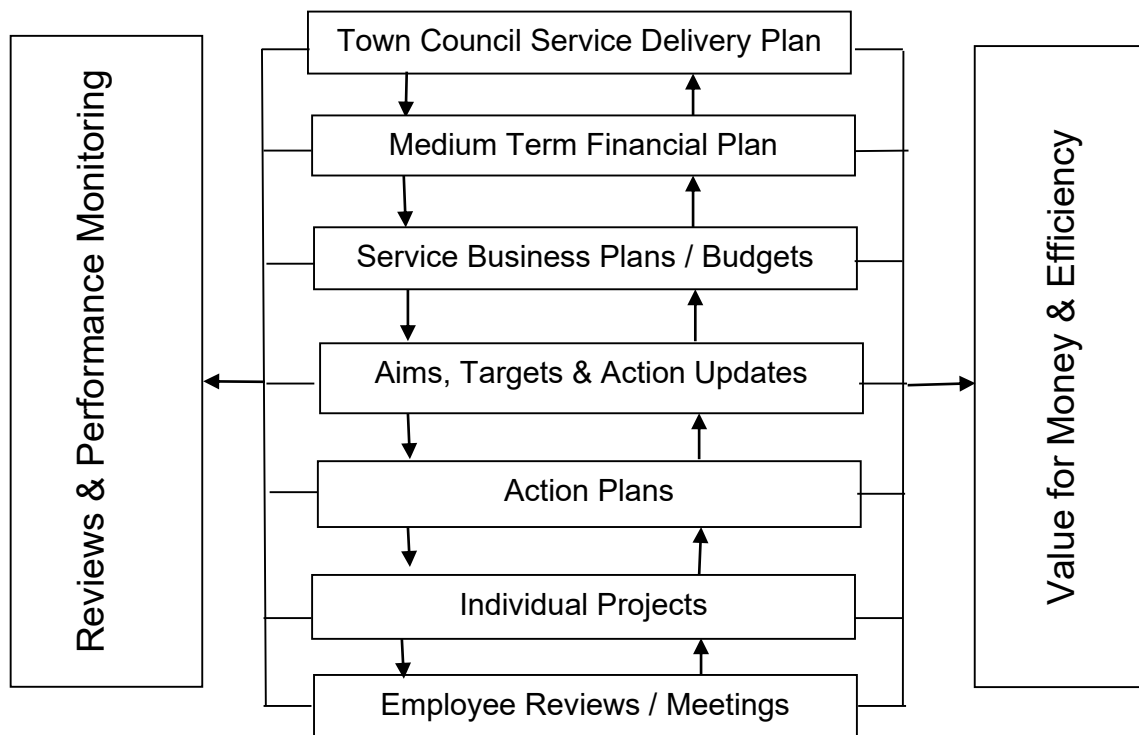
Although this is an internal working document, this Service Plan is also available to anyone who may be interested in the work of the Finance Section at Great Aycliffe Town Council.

Great Aycliffe Town Council is committed to the removal of all barriers preventing access to our services arising from ethnicity, religion, special needs, language differences, learning difficulties, sexual orientation, gender, age, disability, or geographic location.

Information will generally be provided by the Council in English only. Where we are required under other statute to provide certain information in other languages, this information will be translated. You can request an alternative format copy by contacting Great Aycliffe Town Council on 01325 300700.

### 3. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The Council's performance management framework, detailed below, helps to demonstrate how the Council's Strategic Aims and Targets from the Parish Performance Plan link to the Council's other strategies and how they feed down into the aims and objectives of individual service areas, right down to the objectives of individual officers, and how they combine to help the Council deliver its aims.



### 4. GREAT AYCLIFFE TOWN COUNCIL STRATEGIC AIMS

The Council has adopted a strategic mission statement, which is that Great Aycliffe Town Council aims to be:-

*'A pro-active and responsive Council, working in partnership, listening to and speaking up for the community, contributing towards making Great Aycliffe an excellent place in which to live for all its residents.'*

In support of this mission statement, the Council agreed the following eight strategic aims:

1.	To provide good quality governance and management of the Council.
2.	To manage the Council's finances and assets in a responsible manner.
3.	To provide accessible, affordable leisure facilities and opportunities.
4.	To provide pre-school education as appropriate in Great Aycliffe.
5.	To contribute to the environmental improvement of Great Aycliffe by managing and developing parks, play areas and green spaces.
6.	To help and encourage partnership working to improve the services and facilities for the residents of Great Aycliffe.
7.	To encourage the residents of Great Aycliffe to become involved in local democracy.
8.	To research information and make the case for Great Aycliffe.

Each of the aims is supported by targets found in the Town Council Service Delivery Plan and/or Departmental Service Plans.

## **5. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC AIMS**

The running and future development of Oak Leaf Sports Complex and the services it provides will assist in achieving the following Council Strategic Aims:

1. *To manage the Council's finances and assets in a responsible manner.*
2. *To provide accessible, affordable leisure facilities and opportunities.*
6. *To help and encourage partnership working to improve the services and facilities for the residents of Great Aycliffe.*
8. *To research information and make the case for Great Aycliffe.*

## **6. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS**

Monitoring and management of the performance of the Oak Leaf Sports Complex is undertaken by the Sports Complex Manager, supported by the Duty Managers.

An annual Action Plan is included within the Oak Leaf Sports Complex Service Plan, setting out specific actions that are planned during the year to improve the quality of the services provided.

This Service Delivery Plan will be monitored via:

- a) Discussion as required at the Duty Managers' meetings
- b) An annual Service Plan Report to the Recreation Committee

## **7. INVESTMENT IN EMPLOYEES**

It is recognised that employees are the Council's greatest asset in delivering services effectively and investment in employees is therefore paramount in helping the Council to deliver its strategic aims and targets.

It is also acknowledged and recognised that the Oak Leaf Sports Complex is a customer-oriented service and as such should maintain a customer focused approach. It is therefore vitally important that the employees should have sufficient skills and training to meet customer expectations and requirements.

The Council is committed to investing in the training and development of all of its employees and operates a Performance and Development Appraisal Scheme which helps to monitor and improve the performance of all staff as well as identify training and personal development needs.

A training budget is in place for the sports complex staff to provide for any identified training needs.

The staffing structure of the Oak Leaf Sports Complex is attached in Appendix A.

## 8. OAK LEAF SPORTS COMPLEX PROFILE

The Oak Leaf Sports Complex was officially opened in 1978.

The sports complex is open seven days a week, apart from the following dates when the complex will be closed:

- 25<sup>th</sup> December - Christmas Day
- 26<sup>th</sup> December - Boxing Day
- 1<sup>st</sup> January - New Years Day

The facilities will close early on the following dates:

- Friday 24<sup>th</sup> July - AycLive (Close at 8pm)
- Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July - AycLive (Close at 8pm)
- 31<sup>st</sup> December - New Years Eve (Close at 5pm)

The opening times are as follows for the 2026/27 financial year:

Play Sports Between		9:00am-10:00pm	
Reception Open		9:00am-8:55pm	
Online Bookings Available 24 hours a day 7 days a week			
BAR		KITCHEN	
		LUNCH	EVENING
Monday	11:15am - 10:30pm	12:00pm-2:30pm	5:00pm-8:00pm
Tuesday	11:15am - 10:30pm	11:30am-2:30pm	5:00pm-8:30pm
Wednesday	11:15am - 10:30pm	12:00pm-2:30pm	5:00pm-8:00pm
Thursday	11:15am - 10:30pm	11:30am-2:30pm	5:00pm-8:00pm
Friday	11:15am - 10:30pm	11:30am-2:30pm	4:30pm-8:00pm
Saturday	11:00am - 10:30pm	11:00am-3:15pm	4:30pm-8:00pm
Sunday	11:00am - 10:00pm	11:00am-6:30pm	

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The Oak Leaf Sports Complex delivers the following sports which can be booked online, over the phone or in person:-

- Five a Side Football
- Badminton
- Table Tennis
- Squash
- Indoor Bowls
- Pickleball
- Darts

A number of local clubs utilise the facilities, including Netball, Baseball, Running, Tri-Club, Beekeepers, and Camera Club.

The bar and catering section provides a good range of reasonably priced drinks and meals.

The multi-purpose function room caters for up to 60 users. It is an excellent venue for activities such as meetings/conferences, exercise classes, and birthday parties.

The facility employs a core team of 26 members of staff. It is planned to carry out a staffing review, once the recruitment for the vacant duty manager post is complete, to align the staffing structure with the approved opening times, accommodate the lessons learnt from the trial, and address recruitment challenges.

The core staffing team is supported by 12 casual members of staff to meet the wide range of varied and specialist activities provided and staff cover requirements.

## **9. OAK LEAF SPORTS COMPLEX MISSION STATEMENT**

The Oak Leaf Sports Complex has adopted the following statement as its mission statement:-

*“To support and improve health and well-being and quality of life through sport and recreation”.*

## **10. SERVICE AIMS**

In order to achieve this mission statement the Oak Leaf Sports Complex’s key aims and objectives will be as follows:-

1. To provide affordable, value for money activities and facilities for all users.
2. To provide a customer focussed, professional and friendly service.
3. To increase wider participation in physical activity
4. To nurture talented athletes within available resources
5. To provide the opportunity to improve the health and well-being.
6. To encourage young people’s participation in sport.
7. To provide well maintained, clean, safe and attractive facilities.
8. To operate sound and consistent business practices.
9. To provide a positive working environment for our employees.
10. To ensure the long-term financial viability of the Sports Complex.
11. To ensure the Sports Complex plays an active role in supporting sustainable communities and fosters social inclusion in partnership with other organisations.
12. To develop strategies and policies to meet the leisure needs, as far as practicable given limited resources and facilities, for the people of Great Aycliffe.

## **11. SERVICE OBJECTIVES**

1. To increase community participation in physical activity.
2. To maintain or improve customer satisfaction to a high level.
3. To participate in sports development initiatives.
4. To reduce the cost of running the service, whilst maintaining high standards.
5. To maintain staff satisfaction.

## **12. CHALLENGES AND CONSTRAINTS**

1. Rising public expectations.
2. Demographic profiles and deprivation.
3. Economic environment, consumer confidence and financial constraints on residents and users.
4. Budget pressures and available finance.
5. Asset management and maintenance of an aging building.
6. Recruiting and retaining suitable staff.

## **13. ACHEIVEMENTS IN 2025/26**

2025/26 was another positive and productive year for the facility.

Usage fell slightly (by 1.6%) compared to the previous 12-month period (as at 28<sup>th</sup> Feb 2026). This reduction is primarily due to fewer block bookings for football and a decline in squash usage, which has likely been affected by the emergence of specialised padel centres attracting a significant number of racket-sports players.

### **a) Large Events**

The following large events took place:

- Cliffecon - 10<sup>th</sup> May 2025
- Ayclive – 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> July 2025
- K9 Pursuits Dog Show – 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2025
- Families Open Day – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2025
- Darlington Model Railway Exhibition - 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> September 2025
- Fantazmagoria - 12<sup>th</sup> October 2025
- Cliffecon Halloween Edition - 25<sup>th</sup> October 2025
- Christmas Market – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2025
- Regional Bowls Competition - 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> March 2026

### **b) Small Events/Partnerships**

The following small events/partnerships and coaching sessions continued:

- Mini Markets
- Children's Badminton Club (Tuesday Evenings)
- Children's Football Coaching Sessions, delivered by Active Future Darlington (Thursday Evenings)
- Over 50s Activity Groups (Oak Life/Rackets and Bats)
- Active Future Darlington Holiday Club
- RISE North East

### **c) Facility Upgrades**

Throughout the year the facilities have had several upgrades utilising Capital Budgets, VAT windfall funding, or other grants, and these are listed below:

- Leisure Management Till and Booking System Upgrade (including online booking implementation) – implemented 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025
- Bar Furniture replacement (30 bar chairs)
- Male Toilet Refurbishment
- Games Room (Function Room alternative use)

## 14. ACTION PLAN AND TARGETS

### Income and Usage

Ref	Description	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Target	2025/26 Actual	2026/27 Target	Officer & Timescale	Comment(s)
1	Number of visits per annum	104,808	110,000	93,017 (as at 28 <sup>th</sup> February)	110,000	March 2027 A. Clark	Despite falling short last year the ambitious figure of 110,000 users has been retained for 2026/27.
2	Net cost per visit	£2.77	£3.46	£3.10 (as at 28 <sup>th</sup> February)	£3.24	March 2027 T. Woodhead	The actual figure for 2025/26 will be confirmed once the final year-end outturn position has been completed. This information will be reported to the May meeting of the Recreation Committee. The position and target are based on the approved budget.
3	Overall cost of running the facility	£290,509	£381,000	£288,764 (as at 28 <sup>th</sup> February)	£356,450	March 2027 A. Clark T. Woodhead	

### Clean, Safe and Attractive Facilities

Ref	Description	2026/27 Target	Officer & Timescale	Achieved in 2025/26
4	Review Health and Safety	2 reviews per year	March 2027 A. Clark Duty Managers	Health and Safety Audit, Legionella Risk Assessment, Boiler Replacement
5	Deliver in house training	12 training sessions per year	March 2027 A. Clark Duty Managers	1 per month

## Professional and Friendly Service

Ref	Description	2026/27 Target	Officer & Timescale	Achieved in 2025/26
6	Continue team meetings to encourage staff involvement with development of facilities	4 per year	<b>March 2027</b> A. Clark Duty Managers	Quarterly department meetings, Monthly Duty Manager meetings
7	Continue annual staff meetings, to work alongside group meetings	2 per year	<b>March 2027</b> A. Clark Duty Managers	Two meetings achieved
8	Continue to provide regular bar/catering promotions	6 per year	<b>March 2027</b> A. Clark Duty Managers	Weekly quiz and Interactive Quiz.
9	Diversify and develop complex usage	3 per year	<b>March 2027</b> A. Clark Duty Managers	Families Open Day
10	Develop annual forecast of events to promote televised sport screened in the bar	Monthly	<b>March 2027</b> A. Clark Duty Managers	Continue to promote Premier League and local team football matches, Six Nations and other sports.
11	Increase Social Media Footprint	Weekly	<b>March 2027</b> A. Clark Duty Managers	3.2k follows (+130) Instagram 71 followers
12	Introduce and market online bookings through the upgraded Leisure Management and Till System	Weekly	<b>March 2027</b> A. Clark Duty Managers	1,712 online bookings and 50 new membership registered online (both figures do not include March 2026)

## Opportunities for Young People's Participation and Excellence

Ref	Description	2026/27 Target	Officer & Timescale	Achieved in 2025/26
13	School Holiday and Children's Activity partnership with Active Future Darlington	2	<b>March 2027</b> A. Clark Duty Managers	Easter, May, Summer, and Christmas Holiday Clubs
14	Increase junior usage through promotions and weekly coaching sessions	2	<b>March 2027</b> A. Clark Duty Managers	Badminton Club (105) Football Coaching sessions – Active Future Darlington (1,455)
15	Develop family sessions to engage young people and families	2	<b>March 2027</b> A. Clark Duty Managers	Increased memberships and participation
16	Increase Junior Membership Numbers	35 junior members	<b>March 2027</b> A. Clark Duty Managers	Increased junior membership numbers = 30 (+24 on 25/26)

## Opportunities for Improvement to Health and Well Being

Ref	Description	2026/27 Target	Officer & Timescale	Achieved in 2025/26
17	Maintain senior programme	2 per week (Rackets and Bats and Oak Life)	March 2027 A. Clark Duty Managers	Oak Life (876) Rackets and Bats (801)
18	Develop new sports opportunities for all members of the community	4 throughout the year	March 2027 A. Clark Duty Managers	Open Day Bowls Competition
19	Develop new partnerships and business opportunities	2 per year	March 2027 A. Clark/Duty Managers	Newton Aycliffe Business Park Network Active Future Darlington
20	Develop promotions/events in line with national events	1 per quarter	March 2027 A. Clark	None
21	Develop golf links and promotions	2 per year	March 2027 A. Clark Duty Managers Golf Staff	Regular department meetings
22	Develop health and wellbeing opportunities		March 2027 A. Clark/Duty Managers	None

## Carbon Reduction and Sustainability

Ref	Description	2026/27 Target	Officer & Timescale	Achieved in 2025/26
23	Complete installation of solar panel system linked sports complex building	Completion of project	March 2027 D. Austin A. Clark	Riba 1 Feasibility Study completed.

## 15. P.E.S.T. ANALYSIS (External Environment)

In analysing the external environment, it is important to identify the factors that are likely to influence the usage, costs, income, and effective operation of the Oak Leaf Sports Complex.

A P.E.S.T. analysis is a framework that categorises issues in the external environment in which the Oak Leaf Sports Complex operates broken down into political, economic, social, and technological forces.

This analysis is not a set of rigid compartments into which ideas need to be sorted and is best thought of as a broad summary of what is happening in the external environment that will or may affect the Oak Leaf Sports Complex.

The P.E.S.T. analysis for the Oak Leaf Sports Complex is set out on the following page:-

**Political:**

<b>PEST ANALYSIS FACTORS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT</b>	<b>POTENTIAL IMPACT</b> High Medium Low Undetermined	<b>Type:</b> Strength Weakness Opportunity Threat	<b>Impact:</b> Increasing Unchanged Reducing Unknown	<b>Importance:</b> Critical Important Unimportant Unknown	<b>ACTION</b>
Government policy	Determines priorities for local authorities	Medium	Weakness	Unknown	Unknown	Keep up to date with legislation.

**Economic:**

<b>PEST ANALYSIS FACTORS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT</b>	<b>POTENTIAL IMPACT</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Impact:</b>	<b>Importance:</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
Inflation/interest rates	Affects the secondary spend capacity	High	Weakness	Increasing	Important	Increase in taxes, cost of living crisis
Employment	Affects the spending resources available	High	Weakness	Increasing	Important	Increased unemployment less spending available
Council Budget	Budget pressures and Council priorities	High	Threat	Unknown	Critical	Continue to monitor budgets via MTFP

**Social:**

<b>PEST ANALYSIS FACTORS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT</b>	<b>POTENTIAL IMPACT</b> High Medium Low Undetermined	<b>Type:</b> Strength Weakness Opportunity Threat	<b>Impact:</b> Increasing Unchanged Reducing Unknown	<b>Importance:</b> Critical Important Unimportant Unknown	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>SOCIAL:</b> Fads and trends	Changes in health and fitness ideas	Medium	Threat	Unchanged	Important	Monitor and react.
Poor public transport	May miss out on some trade but good parking is available	Low	Weakness	Unchanged	Unimportant	

**Technological:**

<b>PEST ANALYSIS FACTORS</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF IMPACT</b>	<b>POTENTIAL IMPACT</b>	<b>Type:</b>	<b>Impact:</b>	<b>Importance:</b>	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>TECHNOLOGICAL</b> Internet	Information on council website	Medium	Opportunity	Increasing	Important	Monitor and react.
Social media	Users can react without having to interact with a member of staff leaving scathing reviews which are not warranted but an easy option	High	Threat	Increasing	Critical	Improved advertising and reach to wider audience.
Advances in computerised games	More time spent sat at computers playing games	High	Threat	Unchanged	Important	

## 16. S.W.O.T. ANALYSIS (Internal Environment)

In order to ensure continuous improvement in the work of the Oak Leaf Sports Complex, it is important to analyse the existing internal strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities and threats which may impact on service delivery:-

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Capitalise on strengths</b>
Strong community identity and established local presence	Leverage community hub positioning.
Friendly, customer-focused staff	Enhance social fitness experience.
Competitive pricing and value-for-money	Promote affordability amid cost pressures.
Flexible staffing model	Optimise resourcing to manage rising costs.
Good disabled access and inclusivity	Market inclusivity and target older demographics.
Wide range of food, drink, sport & social offers	Promote as multi-purpose third space.
Strong community identity and established local presence	Leverage community hub positioning.

<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Address weaknesses</b>
Ageing building	Plan phased upgrades prioritising energy efficiency.
Limited digital integration	Introduce low-cost digital enhancements.
Seasonal usage	Develop year-round programming and wellness partnerships.
Limited specialist development expertise	Strengthen partnerships with coaches and sports bodies.
Marketing not maximised	Expand digital and social strategy.

<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Maximise opportunities</b>
Growing wellness and holistic health interest	Expand into wellness, physiotherapy, nutrition services.
Rising UK sport participation	Promote accessible memberships.
Hybrid fitness growth	Build on digital booking system and virtual engagement.
Demand for local experience-led leisure	Increase community events and social activities.
Partnership potential	Collaborate with NHS, schools, wellbeing providers.
ESG/energy efficiency funding	Seek grants for sustainability upgrades.

<b>Threats</b>	<b>Minimise threats</b>
Competition from low-cost and boutique gyms	Differentiate through community and service.
Rising operational costs	Monitor finances and improve efficiency.
Fragile consumer confidence	Offer value-focused memberships.
Labour shortages	Develop internal training pathways.
Ageing building maintenance	Plan essential upgrades with via capital programme..

## 17. RISK ASSESSMENT

The achievement of the aims and objectives set out in this Service Plan has been subject to a risk assessment, and the following risks to the achievement of the Action Plan have been identified.

This list is by no means exhaustive and risk assessments are being undertaken in detail and reviewed on a regular basis by the Complex Manager, Duty Managers, Management Team and Members of Great Aycliffe Town Council.

Detail of Risk	Current Control	L'hood	Impact	Score	Residual Impact
Bar price increased to unacceptable levels	Monitor and react. New price list leading to price rises, currently maintaining gross profit	1	2	Low	Fall behind inflation
Food poisoning	Kitchen hygiene checked; staff trained. Policy in place. Safer foods, better business being put in place	1	2	Low	Contamination from outside source
Failure of XN Leisure system	Additional security measures in place, cloud-based system now in place (can revert to manual system).	1	2	Low	Loss of income/reputation
Failure of existing heating system	Annual inspection and maintenance programme (new system recently installed)	1	2	Low	Breakdown still possible
Loss of Catering Service	Review prices, staffing, opening hours	1	2	Low	Under constant review

**KEY Likelihood :**

- 3 – high
- 2 – medium
- 1 – low

**Impact :**

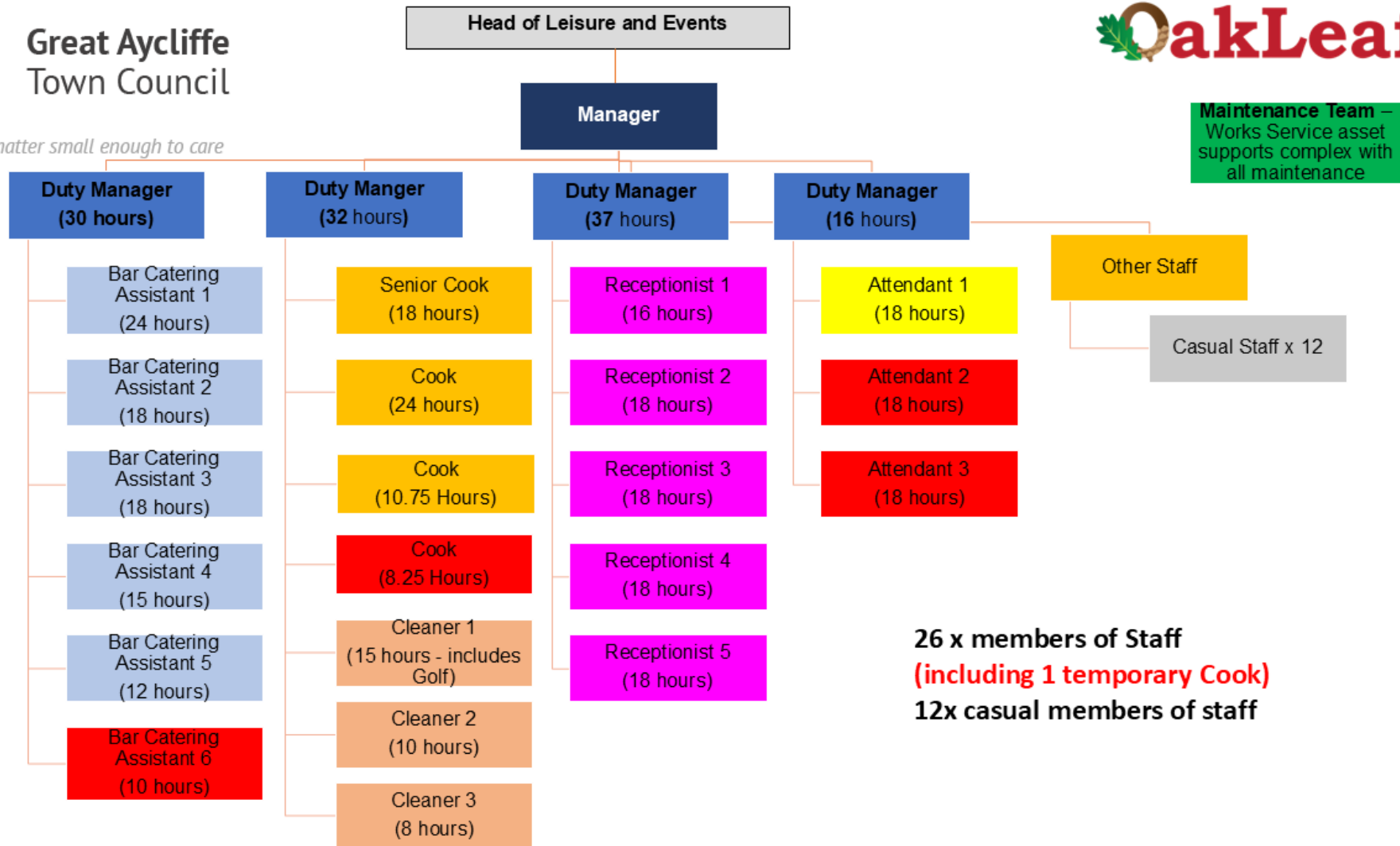
- 3 – high
- 2 – medium
- 1 – low

# Oakleaf Sports Complex Organisation Chart



Great Aycliffe  
Town Council

*Big enough to matter small enough to care*



**26 x members of Staff  
(including 1 temporary Cook)  
12x casual members of staff**

- **Please note it is planned to have a staffing review during the first quarter of the year**