

Pitch Together Fund

Pitch Procurement Guidance

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December 2025

Introduction

Installing an artificial grass pitch (AGP) is a major capital project that requires careful planning and technical expertise. To help you navigate this we, we have outlined below:

1. The process for developing an AGP project
2. AGP Fund Requirements
3. Useful Links for applicants

If you have any queries regarding the application form or the application process, please don't hesitate to contact us at enquiries@pitchtogetherfund.co.uk

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1. Process Flow

Below we have outlined the steps recommended for best practice, to help clubs make informed decisions, secure the best value, and ensure a high-quality, long-lasting pitch.

Engage an Independent Sports Pitch Consultant While not mandatory, engaging an independent sports pitch consultant from the outset is highly recommended. They provide expert guidance, oversee key technical assessments, and support procurement and installation.

Site Surveys & Feasibility A thorough assessment should be undertaken at the start to help identify potential challenges and determine project viability. For new builds, this includes a feasibility study, and refurbishments require a Pitch Condition Survey.

Technical Report Once the project is deemed feasible, a technical report should be produced. This will outline the design specifications and construction requirements while also providing cost estimates. Having these figures early allows the club to start considering its funding package before moving forward.

Planning & Approvals If planning permission is required, clubs should submit applications at this stage. Early engagement with local authorities and stakeholders can help avoid delays later in the process.

Procurement & Tendering Running a competitive tender process ensures clubs secure the best contractor at the best value. Comparing costs, experience, and expertise before appointing a contractor is crucial to achieving a high-quality build within budget.

Construction & Quality Control Construction should be carried out to the agreed specifications. Regular inspections, performance testing, and quality assurance checks should be built into the process to maintain high standards, leading to a final sign-off before handover.

Handover & Ongoing Maintenance Once the pitch is complete, a structured maintenance programme should be implemented to protect its quality and lifespan. Proper maintenance ensures the surface remains safe, durable, and fit for purpose for years to come.

Please note: Because tenders can expire quickly, we encourage clubs to speak to us before tendering. We can consider an “up to” award and confirm the final amount once tender results are available.

If you already have a tender, you are still welcome to apply.

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2. Fund Requirements

If you are applying for the Pitch Together Fund, there are a few things we will expect from your application to ensure your project meets the necessary standards and delivers long-term value.

Applicants must provide evidence of the following:

- ✓ **Technical Designs & Specifications** – You must submit technical designs and specifications, demonstrating that the project will comply with FIH and England Hockey standards.
- ✓ **Full Planning Permission** – Applicants must have obtained, or be in the process of obtaining, Full Planning Permission. Your application must include evidence of this, along with details on discharging any pre-commencement conditions and securing additional required consents (e.g., landowner approval, Department for Education, Section 77).
- ✓ **Procurement & Tendering** – We expect projects to have either professionally prepared cost estimates or evidence of a competitive tendering process. Applicants will be required to evidence the process for contractor selection, including justification if competitive bids could not be obtained.
- ✓ **Professional Team & Contractors** – Applicants may be required to provide proof of professional indemnity insurance (PII) for both the appointed Sports Pitch Consultant (if applicable) and any selected contractor. If your contractor is on the FIH Framework, they will be deemed acceptable.
- ✓ **Performance & Construction Standards** – Projects must adhere to the following construction and quality assurance standards, with evidence submitted upon completion:
 - Performance testing and FIH certification.
 - Quality control inspections and certification of practical completion.
 - Post-installation support, including a defects period and warranties.
- ✓ **Maintenance Programme** – You must provide details of your ongoing maintenance plan, including both in-house and specialist contractor support. During the monitoring period, evidence of maintenance may be requested.

You will note from the process flow in section 1 that the appointment of an Sports Pitch Consultant is not required for the fund. However, [we strongly recommend it](#). Appointing an Sports Pitch Consultant can provide the following benefits:

- **Expert Guidance:** A consultant offers expert advice to help you determine the most suitable solutions for your specific project, ensuring your pitch meets both immediate and future needs.
- **Planning Support:** Consultants assist in developing and implementing the design of your sports pitch, ensuring compliance with all necessary planning and regulatory requirements for a smooth and legally sound process.
- **Tailored Specifications:** Consultants ensure the facility is designed to meet detailed specifications, addressing both current requirements and any potential future needs, thus enhancing the pitch's long-term usability.
- **Project Monitoring:** A Sports Pitch Consultant oversees the construction process, ensuring the project adheres to quality standards and stays aligned with the initial design, helping to avoid costly mistakes and delays.

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If you are considering appointing an Sports Pitch Consultant, we recommend the following:

- Engage a qualified pitch consultant from start to finish.
- Ensure that you select consultants with a proven track record in AGP specification and performance standards.
- Consider referencing the Sports & Play Construction Association (SAPCA) list of approved consultants (a recognised industry standard).
- Conduct due diligence when appointing professional support.

For Replacement AGP Projects Only:

For projects involving the removal and disposal of an existing AGP, the applicant must ensure that they take a proactive and responsible approach to end-of-life disposal. This should include consideration of environmentally sustainable options, such as recycling, and compliance with all relevant environmental regulations. Costs incurred may be eligible for grant support, which will contribute towards the additional cost of recycling compared with landfill disposal.

Please ensure your Sports Pitch Consultant or Contractor is aware of these requirements so they can be included in the project specification.

At the application stage, you will be required to provide:

- The estimated cost of recycling the pitch.
- If known, the estimated cost of disposal without recycling.

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3. Useful Links

[Sport England Planning for Sport Guidance](#)

[Certified FIH Field Builders](#) – England Hockey recommend that clubs use FIH Pitch Builders, where possible

[FIH Certification Levels](#)

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