



## Yateley United FC

### Yateley Community Sports and Wellness Centre

The cumulative planned development of facilities by Yateley United FC at Sean Devereux Park is one which encompasses far more than just sport but importantly aids the health of our community. As a result this development is best described as a Community Sports and Wellness Centre.

Most people will be aware the Government and the NHS have been stressing the growing health challenges posed by obesity, dementia, diabetes, high blood pressure, mental health issues etc, with exercise being strongly promoted as one of the key solutions to these, which is of course what sports clubs provide. A simple example of this is the growing YUFC Walking Football group. Within this group we have members who are registered disabled, diabetic, recovering heart attack victims, a transplant donor, recovering cancer patient together with those who are overweight and playing to reduce this. Such health issues are not just restricted to this group but also afflict younger members of our teams.



The most significant part of the development is the new Yateley United Community Centre pictured above. This consists of changing rooms and showers with disabled access, medical rooms, kitchen, bar and a large room within which can be held referee, coaching, 1<sup>st</sup> aid, safety and other training courses for any sport, but importantly also as a location for a Vaccination Centre administering annual flu or Covid-19 jabs together with wellness seminars, health promotion, Sporting Memories Café (Dementia), slimming groups, cardiac and other health focused recovery groups etc as well as a refreshment and social area. New parking on site will provide total space for over 150 vehicles.

The current changing rooms building will be refurbished to include treatment rooms and an open area for Yoga, Pilates, Dance etc. In addition, there will be a new multi-use floodlit games area providing an evening football training space and facilities for Walking Football, Walking Netball and other sports.

Improvements to the heavily used existing pitches have already commenced on several youth pitches plus completely new drainage and relocation of the main pitch, plus plans for a new pitch barrier, hard standing around the pitch and floodlights etc to follow. This pitch upgrade will enable a higher standard of football to be played and youth floodlit games to take place during the week.

These facilities will be offered to all in our community providing sport and wellbeing for ages 4 to 80+ years. Importantly it not just about football. A local running group and Yateley Netball club have already agreed to use them and other clubs are welcome to talk to us.

We have a great deal of support for this development outside of the club from Hampshire County Council, Hart District and Yateley Town councillors, our MP, and the heads of the local comprehensive schools. All of whom were willing to support our application for a very significant grant from the Football Foundation. We are also delighted, following a meeting with the practice manager, for support from our local medical practice Oakley



Health <http://www.oakleyhealth.org/> who provide health services to our community with 28,000 registered patients. They appreciate the huge health benefits this development could bring to the community in terms not just of fitness but importantly social cohesion.

Raising funds to help pay for this development has not been achieved overnight but is a direct result, spread over the past 10 years, of the continued hard work from our great teams of volunteers, including organisation of the annual Gig on the Green community music festival <http://www.gigonthegreenyateley.co.uk/> and new for this year the Blackwater Valley Cask and Cork Festival <http://www.yateleysports.org/bvcaskcork.asp> . All arranged by our sister fundraising company Yateley Sports Community Interest Company, set up for this purpose. These funds, coupled with the generous grants from the Football Foundation, and Hampshire County Council enabled us in 2020 to commence construction of the Yateley United Community Centre.

However, the fund raising is not over, far from it. One of the important features of the building yet to be budgeted for is for it to be as 'Green' as possible with a very low carbon footprint. One plan we have to achieve this is to cover its roof with solar panels, which, together with an air source heat pump, will hugely reduce our reliance on externally supplied electricity. In addition we are looking longer term into the provision of a bore hole to again eliminate our need for an external supply.

We are developing a number of ways of raising further funds for the remainder of the development from straight donations, sponsorship, commercial loans, the provision of personal small interest free loans, grants, covenants and a significant 'Buy a Brick' campaign plus the provision of goods in kind. The hard work continues and all help on the journey to completion is gratefully received.