

Welcome

Thank you for visiting the Wichelstowe Community Sports Hub (WCSH) consultation event.

This event forms part of the second phase of consultation on the Wichelstowe Community Sports Hub and provides an opportunity to view and comment on the emerging plans prior to the detailed planning application being prepared. All the information shared today is also available on the Let's Talk Swindon website.

The first stage consultation took place in late 2024 and included a residents survey, the findings of which are summarised below, as well as discussions with a range of local sports, community groups and those who already provide sporting facilities such as the Deanery CE Academy.

These discussions highlighted the high demand for football pitches, particularly those that can be used in all weathers. The pitches at the Deanery are designed for hockey so there is no football specific provision in Wichelstowe that can be used during poorer weather and there remains high demand for pitches elsewhere in the borough.

The feedback also highlighted the challenges in making a site financially viable and the need to tailor facilities to those which can support the running of the Hub.

Football therefore forms the basis of the site and we are delighted that Wiltshire FA have joined the team to help develop the design and are the preferred not for profit operator of the Hub once it is up and running.

The survey and discussions did however highlight the demand for non-football activities and the opportunities to support walking/running. There is also a high demand for a play space for children and community spaces for hire. It is for this reason that we have changed the name from Wichelstowe Sports Hub to Wichelstowe Community Sports Hub to highlight it is not all about high level sport but a space for all the community.



Welcome to Let's Talk Swindon

Welcome to Let's Talk Swindon, a space for Swindon residents to share ideas, discuss important topics, provide feedback on policy, planning and contribute to the future of Swindon.

The design and delivery of the Wichelstowe Community Sports Hub is being led by Swindon Borough Council.

The plans are being delivered with input from Wiltshire FA (the preferred operator) and Wroughton Parish Council.

The team designing the Community Sports Hub include BDP, Phoenix Design Partnership and Keystone.

The scheme will be largely funded by Section 106 contributions from Wichelstowe LLP.



384 surveys were completed with responses from across the local area



Responses were also received from: Blunsdon, Mill Lane, Upper Stratton, Taw Hill, Marlborough, Covington, Westlea, West Swindon, Eldene, North Swindon,

Tadpole, Chiseldon, Westleaze, Old Walcot, Park North, Rodbourne Cheney, Haydon Wick, Stratton, Lawn, Broad Hinton, Royal Wootton Bassett, Coate, Elcombe.

When asked how they would travel to the Wichelstowe Sports Hub:

29% said they would walk.



21% said they would either walk or cycle.



33% said they would use a combination of methods including walking/cycling and the car



16% would only travel by car



2% listed bus as an option



94% of those who completed the survey walk, run or cycle for leisure or exercise



86% Walk



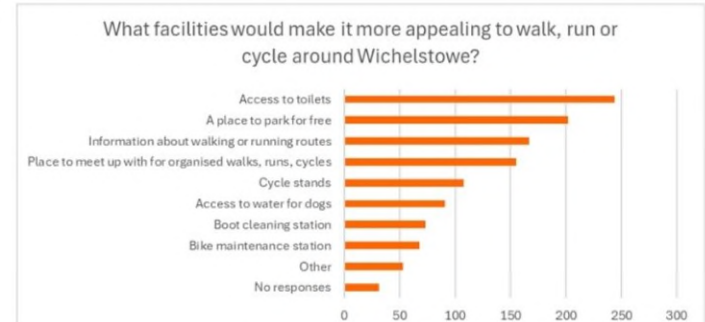
47% Run



43% Cycle

92% reported that they walk or run around Wichelstowe

With 9% people stating they are part of a running group and 3% people stating they are part of a walking group



69% would visit play facilities at the Wichelstowe Sports Hub

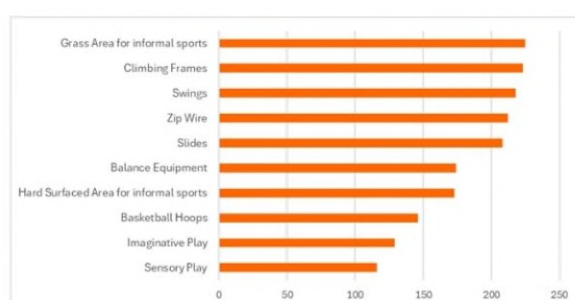
79% Would be interested in using a free space to informally play sport

258 people would be interested in using a grass area to play informal football, rounders or games.



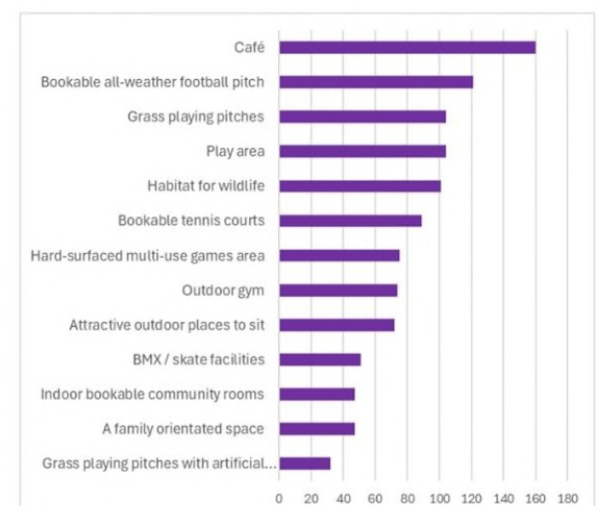
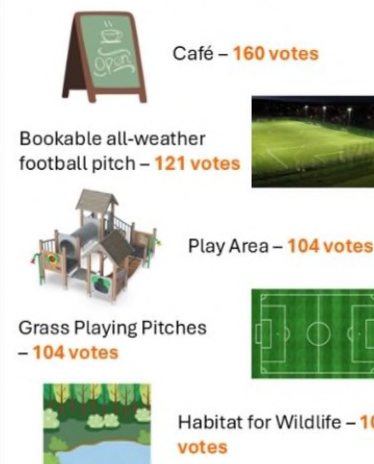
166 people would be interested in using a hard surfaced area to play games and **152** would be interested in a hard surfaced areas with basketball or netball nets

All types of play facilities were popular with the most votes received for informal grass area, climbing frames and swings.



The survey asked all respondents to identify the **top 3 facilities** they would like to see at the Wichelstowe Sports Hub out of the options provided.

The top 5 options, which all received more than 100 votes were:



Location



The Wichelstowe Community Sports Hub will be located to the north and south of the East Wichel Way bus lane.

The planning application will include all the areas within the red-line shown to the left.

This picks up all the developed areas, the drainage connections, including a section of foul sewer connecting into the Mill Lane / Foxham Way roundabout, and landscape improvements.

The planning application will need to demonstrate how a 10% biodiversity net gain is achieved and this will include improvements in the field adjacent to East Wichel.

The exact boundary of the green spaces to be included will be refined as the landscape and ecology strategy is finalised.

All the areas included within the red line will be within Wroughton Parish.



Layout



BDP.

Pavilion



The pavilion serving the Community Sports Hub has been developed alongside the Wilts FA learning from the experience of operating other sites.

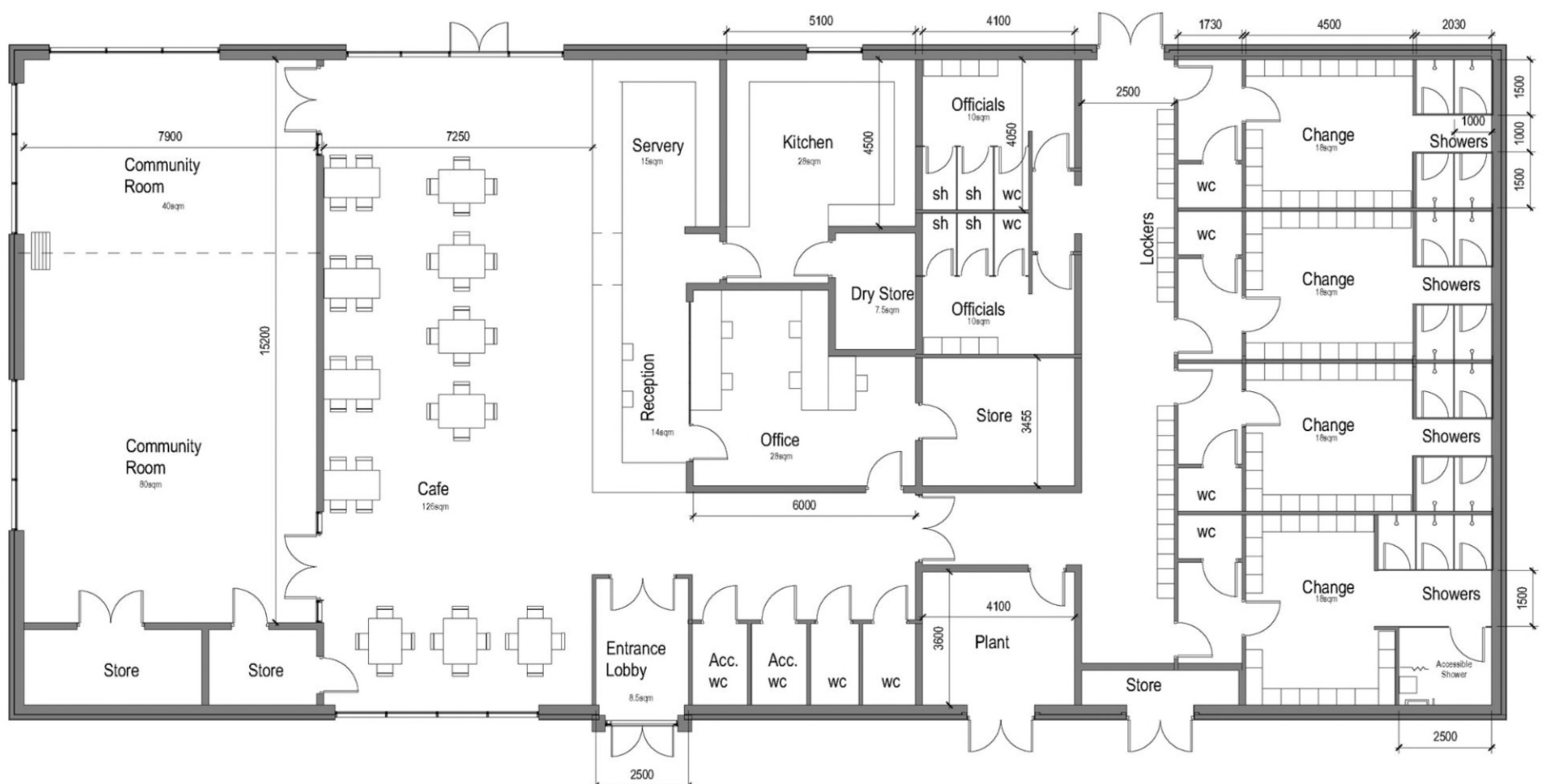
Four team changing rooms are included, each with a WC and four showers (with one including an accessible shower). In addition, two officials rooms are included and one of the store areas will be built flexibly to allow it to be used as a shower room if needed in future.

The main space will include a cafe and seating area. A kitchen and servery are provided along with a door out to the hard-surfaced area at the top of the spectator bank which will include outdoor seating.

The kitchen and office space are co-located to allow staff to undertake multiple roles and easily move between the non-public areas.

A large community space is also proposed, which can be divided into a larger 80m² room and a smaller 40m² space.

The exterior of the building will include a defibrillator and bleed control kit located adjacent to the car park and ambulance parking space. PV panels will be added to the roof allowing the building to generate its own electricity.



Access Points & Parking



The car park is access from the existing junction off Foxham Way and includes 137 spaces of which 14 (10%) are disabled spaces. In addition there are two minibus parking spaces.

It is not anticipated that there will be a demand for coach parking, if however coaches do bring users to the site it is proposed that they would drop off / park in the existing bus interchange on Foxham Way.

In accordance with SBC standards 10% of parking spaces proposed will include Electric Vehicle Charging Points. An additional 10% of spaces will be fitted with the necessary infrastructure to enable installation of charging points in the future. The chargers have been grouped together and located in the run of spaces to the north of the car park.

A barrier will be installed at the entrance to the car park allowing it to be locked at the end of each day and preventing errant parking. The site will still be accessible on foot with the footpath routes remaining open. Bollards will also be installed on pedestrian / cycle access points to prevent cars using these routes for access.

The 5 key access points to the Wichelstowe Community Sports Hub are shown below.

The site is well located for visitors from all areas of Wichelstowe as well as Wroughton (via the foot/cycle route from Inverary Road) and Old Town (via Mill Lane/Old Town Railway Path).



1) Southern Access

From the canal towpath adjacent to the East Wichel lock.



2) Western Access

From the footway on Foxham Way adjacent to the junction / crossing point.



3) Car Park Access

From the existing junction on Foxham Way



4) Bus Lane Crossing Point

New zebra crossing point connecting the northern and southern sections of the Hub.



5) Mill Lane Access

From the existing low traffic section of Mill Lane.



Walking & Cycling

In the landscaped area adjacent to the car park and pavilion a number of smaller features are included in the design to support a range of different users.

Bike Zone

Closest to the car park is the bike zone which includes cycle parking and a potential cycling centre which could accommodate bikes for hire / information about cycling. This area will include a public bike maintenance station to support basic repairs.

Additionally to support young people learning to ride, a fenced off learn to ride area provides a mini track. Benches are located alongside for parents to sit and supervise.



Meeting Place

A circular meeting place has been included at the heart of the site adjacent to the pavilion. This will be surrounded by benches and will be a flexible space that could be used as the meeting point for walking or running groups, or a space for the cafe to place additional outdoor tables in the summer.

A boot cleaning station will be included in this area to be used by walkers as well as those cleaning football boots. This will also be one of the spaces which will be accessible for walkers with dogs as all the sports areas to the north are securely fenced.

Information for Visitors

One of the key findings from the initial survey was that residents and visitors love walking and running in and around Wichelstowe.

The Old Town Railway Path and the canal towpaths create excellent traffic free routes and as the development expands the central boardwalk and western paths will continue to grow the path network.

The Community Sports Hub provides an opportunity to create a base for these activities with a cafe and public toilets as well as a car park for those travelling from further away. In order to support these signage will provide information on popular routes and wayfinding.

The will also be linked to the Wichelstowe Trails website which highlights key ecology, landscape and public art features across the site.

www.wichelstowetrails.co.uk



All-Weather Pitch



The northern section of the Community Sports Hub is based around a full size all weather football pitch.

The pitch is floodlit with multiple lighting locations proposed in order to minimise the height. Lighting shields will be added to ensure light is focussed on the pitch and minimise light spill.

This artificial surface will be secured with a 4.5m perimeter fence to ensure balls are largely kept within the playing area.

A run-off area is included around the perimeter along with cut-outs for dugouts and goal storage. On the south-west side a wider hard-surfaced space is available for spectators to watch matches. There will also be a grass banked area (outside the main fence) for spectators.

The pitches are drained into the swale and attenuation pond with drains running west to east. An additional drain is also included at the bottom of the spectator bank.

Two stepped access points provide access down this bank, with the wider steps providing access for spectators and players and a second narrower set leading directly from the changing rooms just for those playing on the surface. A step free access is also provided in the southern corner via a ramped path.

To the south of the artificial pitch is a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) along with an area for outdoor storage. The MUGA is made of a more durable surface allowing play without the specialist footwear required for the main pitch.

Flexibility of Uses

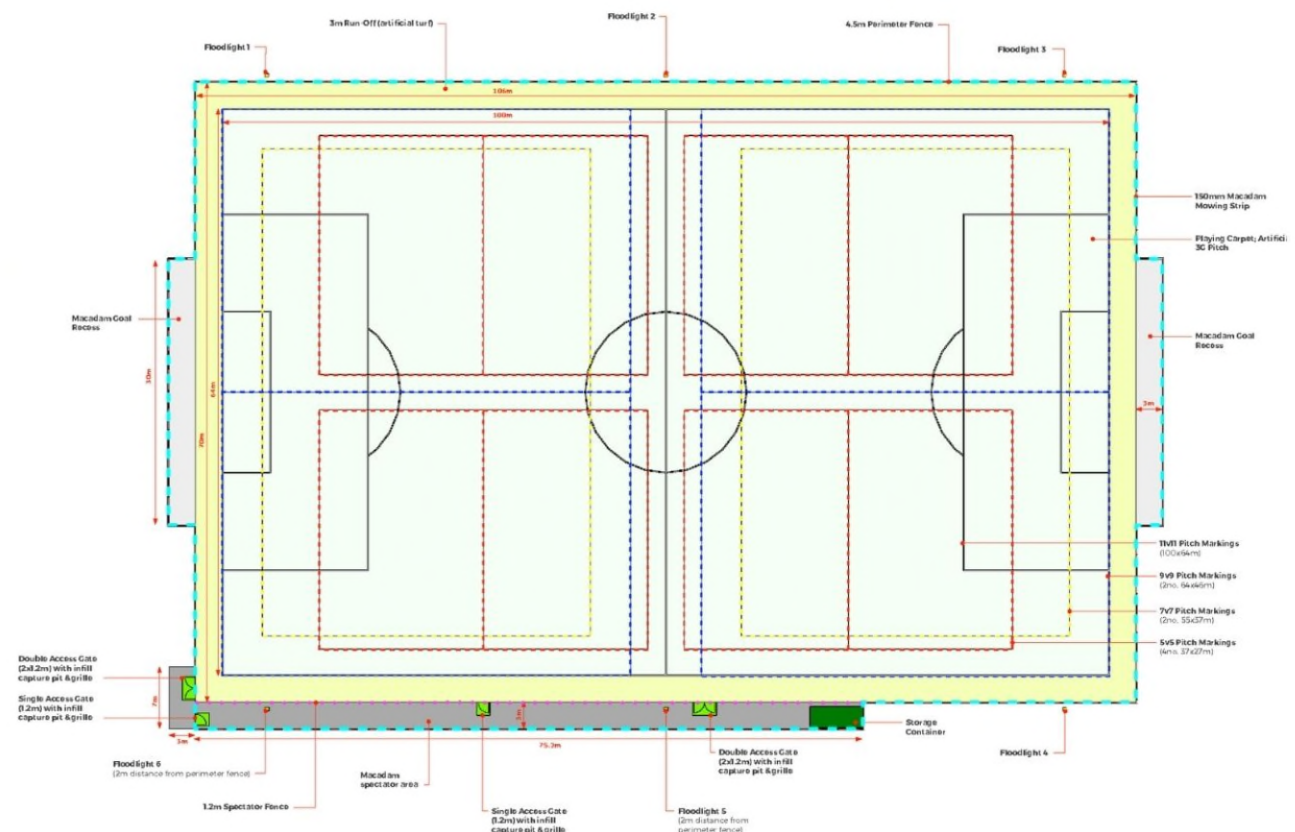
The all-weather pitch (106mx70m) has been designed to provide maximum flexibility and allow a range of different matches to be hosted.

A divider net will be included allowing the two halves of the pitch to be formally separated and the line markings will allow the area to be separated into smaller pitch arrangements.

The all-weather pitch can be divided into either:

- 1no. 11v11 pitch (100m x 64m)
- 2no. 9v9 pitches (64m x 64m)
- 2no. 7v7 pitches
- 4no. 5v5 pitches

The multi-use game area can also be used for a range of different uses with a dividing net allowing it to be split into two halves. The plans show this marked out as two basketball courts but over time this could be marked out and adapted to tennis or pickleball depending on demand.



Play Area & Grass Pitches



Layout

To the south of the East Wichel Way bus link the tarmac path provides access to the play area and the grass playing pitches. The plan shows the grass area laid out as two full size pitches but this area can be laid out as a range of different size pitches or used flexibly for other grass based sports/games.

Access

South of the central access point to the grass pitches the path changes to a more rural hoggin path and extends to connect to the canal towpath.

Vegetation and Landscaping

The existing vegetation to the south and the east of the pitches will be retained and where possible the sections fronting the road will also be retained. A new tree line will be also be planted, forming the western boundary of the play area reinforcing the screening alongside the road.

Managing Access for Dogs

It is acknowledged that this area will form part of a route where residents will walk dogs but in order to ensure the play areas are kept secure this area will be fenced with a combination of metal and wooden fencing with hedges. Dogs will also be discouraged from accessing the grass pitches by lining the path with hedging.

Drainage

The pitches will drain southwards into the existing series of ditches and small ponds which feed into the East Wichel lakes network.

The play area is located in the triangle between Foxham Way and the East Wichel Way bus link. This location allows the space to be well overlooked whilst the design ensures that no play equipment is closer than 30m to the houses in Wichel Fields.

The space is split into 6 different zones described below and on the next board:

Zone A - Play equipment aimed at younger children

Zone B - Multi-Use Games Area

This smaller MUGA is play focused and will include built in goals. The fencing on the eastern boundary will be higher acting as additional protection against balls entering the play zone from the adjacent grass pitches.

Zone C - Quieter Area

Surrounded by grass banks and tree planting, this area includes swings and benches.

Zone D - Play equipment aimed at older children

Zone E - Skate Area

A range of ramps and features focused on skateboarding

Zone F - Informal Games

A grass area for informal play



Play Area

Zone A - Play equipment aimed at younger children

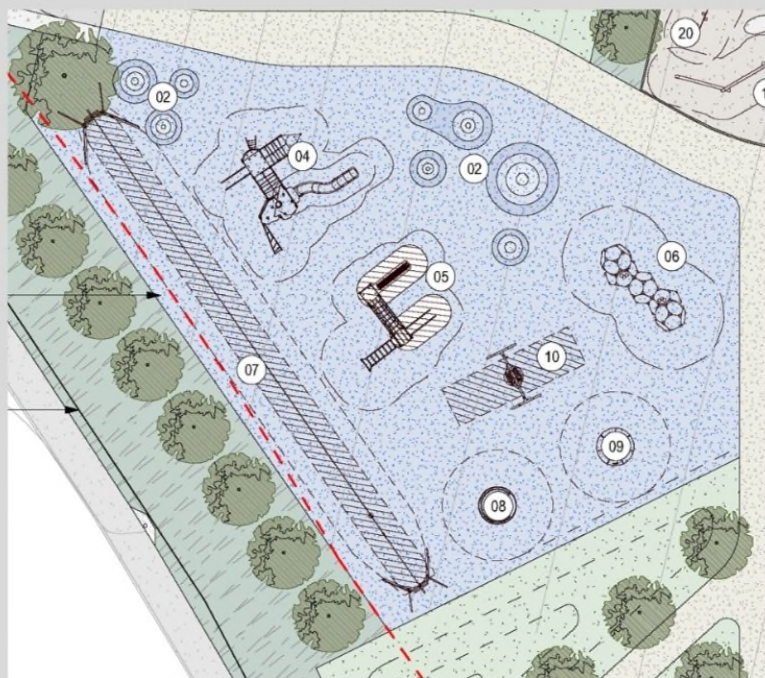
Zone A comprises a fenced area with play equipment aimed at younger children. The proposed equipment is illustrated on this page and includes climbing, equipment, swings and an obstacle course area.

In addition to play equipment, the area includes seating for both children and adults. Additional benches are also placed off the path overlooking this area



Zone D - Play equipment aimed at older children

Zone D comprises a more open space aimed at older children. The proposed equipment is illustrated on this page and includes a zip line, climbing equipment and swings.



The evaluation identified ditches and pits relating to a 2nd-4th century AD Romano-British settlement, as well as probable natural features. The field system produced 5.145 kg of pottery the majority of which was broadly dated to the Romano-British period, although some was more closely dated to the 2nd-4th centuries AD. Finds also included a Romano-British copper alloy hairpin, two fragments of copper alloy bracelet and a probable silver denarius of Septimus Severus dated AD 195.

The works will include the planting of hundreds of new trees and new hedges. The trees will be focussed in areas where they provide visual screening and can assist in preventing balls being kicked out of the playing areas. The planting will also indicate areas where dogs should be kept to the paths and eventually provide shade in the central meeting place





WE ARE WILTSHIRE FA

EDUCATE. DEVELOP. SUPPORT.

4 YEAR STRATEGY 2024-2028 Context:

#WILTSHIREFOOTBALL

- Wiltshire has a population of 743,700 (2021 census) with 234,400 (31%) in Swindon alone.
- Population growth in Swindon (+11.6%) and the county as a whole (+9.4%) in the period since the last strategy, is significantly ahead of the average for all of England (+1.4%).
- In the previous strategy periods, for the most part, all of the objectives were achieved:
 - 18,947 registered male players, 12.9% above target.
 - 2,944 registered female players, 26.6% above target.
 - 93% of youth teams have a qualified coach (versus the target of 90%).
 - We were the first County FA to achieve the Code of Governance standard.
 - Our County HQ was delivered in 2020, since then it has surpassed participation and revenue targets by improving football locally and county wide. This continues to be our aim year on year.



4 YEAR STRATEGY 2024-2028

#WILTSHIREFOOTBALL

Our IMPACT, where and for whom will we make a difference:

- Tackle poor behaviour**, for the benefit of everyone involved in #WiltshireFootball
- Be relevant, responsive, and respected** by everyone involved in #WiltshireFootball
- Prioritise safeguarding**, providing relevant training, support, and guidance on this issue to those we serve.
- Develop a valued network of volunteers, coaches and referees** that meets the needs of all those involved in #WiltshireFootball
- Build more and improve facilities across #WiltshireFootball, both directly operated and otherwise.**
- Address the accessibility, affordability, and sustainability** across all of #WiltshireFootball

When we do all of these effectively, we know retention and participation increase.



Our Aims for the Wichelstowe Hub:

#WILTSHIREFOOTBALL

- A Home for local football teams for training, and for matches for a minimum of 40 weeks of the year.
- A place for local community groups to share and enjoy. To relax, network and socialise in the Café or Community Rooms.
- A venue with a local feel that is affordable and professional. A price structure that promotes maximum community usage.
- An established café that is a meeting point for the community: walkers, footballers, community groups and others.
- A site that we will invest in and continue to improve year on year.



Investment in Wiltshire football

#WILTSHIREFOOTBALL

We are passionate about investing in and improving grassroots facilities in Wiltshire. Both as an operator and as an advisor to sites, clubs and councils around the county.



GREEN LANE PLAYING FIELDS

#WILTSHIREFOOTBALL

Our Success of running multisport venues:

- The Green Lane Headquarters in Devizes hosts: **3 natural turf pitches, 1 full size artificial 3G, Café, Meeting Rooms, Archery Range, skatepark and areas for recreation activity/fitness classes.**
- In under 5 years our Partner Clubs at Green Lane have grown from **less than 350 players** to over **600 players Combined**. This now includes **girls, disabled** and over **50s Walking Football teams**.
- Hosts over **1500 games** per season.



GREEN LANE PLAYING FIELDS

#WILTSHIREFOOTBALL

Continually improving facilities, investing in our grass pitches:



The Success of our improvement lead to the launch of the 'Grounds and Facility Support Group' in May 2025, to help grass roots clubs in Wiltshire with grounds care.

