

**WIVENHOE & DISTRICT
SPORTING FACILITIES TRUST**

**FIRST
ANNUAL REPORT**

MARCH 1997

'Creating Opportunities for Sport'

WIVENHOE & DISTRICT SPORTING FACILITIES TRUST

REPORT of the TRUSTEES

With its main objective to manage and develop sporting facilities at Broad Lane, Wivenhoe Town Football Club's ground on the edge of Wivenhoe, the Trust was formed at a meeting held on 16th November, 1995. The beneficiaries of the Trust will be the residents of Wivenhoe and others living in the surrounding area on the eastern side of Colchester and also potentially those living in the west of Tendring District.

Under a complicated financial arrangement, the private and sole owner of Wivenhoe Town Football Club Ltd, Mr David Watts eventually agreed to sell the Football Club, or more correctly the exclusive right to the name Wivenhoe Town Football Club, and its ground for a sum which had originally been set at £150,000. Under this arrangement, Colchester Borough Council agreed to buy the land and buildings for £80,000, with the Trust entering into a 99 year lease with the Borough Council for an annual lease payment of £5,000. In order to complete the transaction with, six individuals donated sums totalling £13,000; the University of Essex donated £10,000, Wivenhoe Town Council £2,500 and Wivenhoe Tennis Club £1,000. This money was paid to the solicitors acting for the Committee and Members of Wivenhoe Town Football Club 1994 (the successor Club to that owned by Mr David Watts) which, together with money paid by the Club and its Supporters Club, concluded the sale of the Club with the land and buildings. Indeed, from the beginning of 1994 when Mr watts decided to sell, the Supporters Club raised over £10,000, part of which was paid in rent to Mr Watts for use of the facilities at Broad Lane. The final consideration paid for Broad Lane remains confidential at the request of the vendor.

The sale was concluded on 15th February, 1996 and on which date the Trustees entered into a lease with the Borough Council. Thus ended a two year struggle to prevent the land being sold for purposes other than football and the potential for other sports.

At the creation of the Sporting Trust, the Trustees adopted the objectives appended to this report. Having secured a home for Wivenhoe Town Football Club, one of the main objectives of the Trustees is to broaden the range of sports which can be played at Broad Lane. In recognition of this key objective, the Trustees adopted the mission statement '*Creating Opportunities for Sport*'.

The Trustees, during the year, published their 10 year Outline Development Plan giving a vision of what might be desirable and possible, if the funding could be secured. This Plan is based on a phased development approach starting with the provision of a hard-surface multi-games area comprising four tennis courts which would open up the site to wider use, as well as giving Wivenhoe Tennis Club a permanent home. Overall, it is the objective of the Trustees to create a *Community Sports Centre* where local residents can participate in a wide variety of sports, as players or spectators, and where they can improve their playing abilities and fitness.

As a community-based Sports Centre, the Trustees intend that there will be a Club to represent each different sporting interest, and that each of these Clubs will be responsible for promoting and running their sport for the benefit of residents in the local area. Each Club will

also be responsible for maintaining their own part of the sporting facilities, thus involving people at all levels and keeping the cost of running the sports facility overall to a minimum. The intention of the Trustees is to create easy and cheap access to wide ranging sporting recreation facilities at Broad Lane for everyone in the local area.

The Trustees recognise that the Development Plan can only be achieved through hard work and particularly the support and financial input from the Borough Council in order to gear up a Lottery grant. The Trustees have therefore worked to keep the Borough Council informed of progress and to meet obligations under the lease in a timely manner. From these endeavours, the Trustees have received positive feed-back. The Trustees are also extremely conscious of the help and support received from the officers and Members of Colchester Borough Council at the time of the acquisition and are grateful to them for it.

The Trustees also drew up a Management Plan covering the period through to mid-1997. This Plan specifies 15 major actions, many of which break-down into a large number of smaller actions e.g. draw up a schedule of maintenance and repairs and to implement them. Significant progress has been made on nearly all of these points, particularly in respect to the repair and maintenance of the club-house and site generally where 87 separate actions were identified at a thorough inspection carried out in May 1996. The Trustees are grateful to the members of the Football Club who have almost completed the work specified, and all on a voluntary basis. It has been estimated that the cost of this work would have been around £25,000 if commercial contractors had been employed.

The Management Plan also calls for the Trustees to endeavour to create a close working relationship with the Wivenhoe Youth Football Club (WYFC) who own playing fields adjacent to our land, and much time has been devoted by the Trustees to complex issues involving this relationship. Under an earlier transaction between WYFC and WTFC Ltd, the previous owner of Broad Lane, WYFC were promised permanent changing facilities but were provided with the use of two portacabins. As a goodwill gesture, Wivenhoe Town Football Club 1994, formed in January 1994 after Mr Watts' decision to sell, continued to pay the rental cost of the portacabins although under no obligation so to do, as the commitment was made by and remains with Mr David Watts. However a deal was agreed mid-1996 where the portacabins were bought by Wivenhoe Youth F.C. and the Trustees have allowed them to remain on Trust land and, for the time being at no cost, as a further goodwill gesture. The Trustees also drew up a draft framework agreement outlining the basis on which the Trust, Wivenhoe Town F.C. 1994 and Wivenhoe Youth could all work together in the future, particularly in the development of new changing facilities. This is under consideration by Wivenhoe Youth.

The Trustees also produced an agreement covering the basis of the relationship between the Trust and WTFC 1994 under which the Football Club has certain obligations to maintain the facilities they use and to pay all running costs. The Trust also charges them the full amount of the annual lease cost of £5,000. At the end of its first year, the Trust was pleased to pay this sum to the Borough Council on the due date in February 1997.

Having published the 10 year Development Plan and it being approved by the Borough Council's Arts and Leisure Committee on 12th November, 1996, the Trustees presented their proposals to the members and supporters of WTFC 1994 on 29th January 1997. These were well received. The Trustees are arranging similar presentations to members of the Borough

and Wivenhoe Town Councils, and also to the members of the Wivenhoe Youth Football Club.

The Trustees note that access by members of the general public to the sporting facilities of the nearby University of Essex are getting less easy as the student population continues to grow (it has more than doubled in the last ten years to over 5,000 students, and is projected to rise to over 7,000 in the next ten years). This is another important reason for the Trust's being. It is also of relevance to the University for which reason they made a very substantial donation to assist in the acquisition of the site, and the Trustees are pleased to acknowledge not just their contribution but the on-going desire to have a close working relationship with the Trust for mutual benefit. We are also pleased to have the benefit of Mr Andrew Nightingale, Estate Officer at the University, as a Trustee.

During 1996, an offer was made by Stanley Braggs, a Colchester firm of architects to undertake an initial feasibility study based on our 10 year Development Plan and we look forward to having the benefit of their professional view, as well as preliminary drawings and costings.

A meeting was held during 1996 with the Chairman of the Wivenhoe and District Judo Club with the idea of incorporating a 'Dojo', a building dedicated to the various martial arts sports, into our development plans. At the present time, the Club uses a school building in Wivenhoe with the distinct disadvantage of having to put down and take up their expensive mats for each meeting with consequential deterioration. The Trustees are attracted to this idea. The Trustees would also welcome similar approaches from other sporting organisations looking for a permanent base.

In particular, the Trustees want to give priority to creating four tennis courts at Broad Lane as there is an active tennis club in Wivenhoe but no tennis courts. This is recognised in the Development Plan.

The Trust has submitted a formal application to the Charity Commissioners for charitable status which is being processed. Application is made on the basis that the purpose of the Trust is beneficial to the community by providing sporting and recreational facilities for the general public. It will be important to demonstrate that people do not have to be a member of a Club to enjoy the facilities being created. The Trustees also believe that as it is their intention for instruction and training to be offered by the Clubs, the Trust will be given charitable status in due course.

In broadening the use of the facilities at Broad Lane, the Trustees were pleased to note that during the year the club-house was used by a wide variety of groups from the local community including a Disabled Club, a Ladies Darts Team and a Bridge Club as regular users. Apart from the Wivenhoe Town semi-professional football team, seven other football teams are based there providing playing opportunity to people under 18 as well as ladies. In addition, the Football Club hosts an annual visit from American boys and girls soccer teams who play local teams at Broad Lane.

Mention should also be made of Wivenhoe Town Council; this Council has pushed for an improvement in community facilities for many years and it has welcomed the initiative to create the Trust, acquire the site and to develop sporting facilities.

Finally, I should like to acknowledge the hard work, time and commitment put in by my fellow Trustees and to thank them very much for what has been achieved to date. To some people, it may seem that nothing has changed; Wivenhoe Town are still playing football at Broad Lane and recently finding their form again. However, it could all so easily have been different. The Club would have had to close and the site become derelict awaiting possible change of use to residential development at some date well into the future and after a long battle. But now, we have a very different future to which to look forward. Proper foundations are being created on which we can lay the makings of a thriving and vibrant community sports centre, run by volunteers and benefiting people not just in Wivenhoe but in the surrounding area also.

Peter M. Hill, Chairman

Trustees during the Period 16th November, 1995 to 28th February, 1997

1. **Chairman - Peter Hill;** Wivenhoe Town Councillor (former Mayor of Wivenhoe);
co-opted Trustee
2. **Deputy Chairman - Geoff Langsdon;** Wivenhoe Town Councillor (present Town
Mayor); co-opted Trustee
3. **Chris Barlow** - Financial Director, Wivenhoe Town Football Club; WTFC ex-
officio Trustee
4. **Kevin Hall** - Wivenhoe Town Councillor; nominative Trustee from Wivenhoe
Town Council
5. **Andrew Nightingale** - University of Essex; ex-officio Trustee, representative of the
Registrar and Secretary
6. **Harry Welsh** - co-opted Trustee (President of Wivenhoe Town Football Club)
7. **Dave Whymark** - co-opted Trustee (currently Chairman, Wivenhoe Town Football
Club)
8. **Vacancy** - ex-officio Trustee (as Chairman of Wivenhoe Town Football Club)
9. **Vacancy** - co-opted Trustee

Observer: Cllr Gill Newman, Colchester Borough Councillor (representative of
Colchester Borough Council's Arts and Leisure Committee)

Financial Statement for the Period from 16th November 1995 to 28th February, 1997

INCOME

Donation from Wivenhoe Mayor's Charity Fund	£700.00
Interest from Mayor's Charity Fund	£ 8.34
	£708.34
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EXPENDITURE

Business Rates (period 15/2/96 to 31/3/97 after charitable relief)	£282.53
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NET POSITION at 28th February, 1997	£425.81
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Balance at Bank at 28th February, 1997	£425.81
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Notes:

1. Money to finance the purchase of the Wivenhoe Town Football Club name, the land and buildings from Mr David Watts was paid direct to Greenwood Page and Ward, Solicitors who acted on behalf of Wivenhoe Town Football Club 1994 and Wivenhoe & District Sporting Facilities Trust in the transaction. Apart from the very substantial amount raised by WTFC1994 and its Supporters Club, significant donations came from: University of Essex - £10,000; Wivenhoe Town Council - £2,500; Messrs P.Hill, G.Langsdon, R.Perry, H.Welsh, D.Whymark - each £2,500; Wivenhoe Tennis Club - £1,000; S. Sharman - £500. Grateful thanks are also due to Cllr R. and Cllr Mrs J. Richardson for paying Greenwood Page and Ward's extremely reasonable legal expenses of approximately £500.
2. A bank account was opened with National Westminster Bank, Colchester branch, on 31st January, 1997. Prior to that date the donation of £700 remained in the Mayor's Charity Fund account maintained by Wivenhoe Town Council and from which the business rates were paid. As this donation and subsequent balance were held on deposit, a small amount of interest was also paid to the Trust following the opening of the Trust's own account.
3. The lease payment of £5,000 due to Colchester Borough Council was paid by a cheque drawn on the account of Wivenhoe Town Football Club 1994. In the future the money will be paid via the bank account of the Trust.
4. None of the Trustees claimed any expenses during the period.

P.M.Hill

WIVENHOE & DISTRICT SPORTING FACILITIES TRUST

TRUST OBJECTIVES

1. To develop a prestigious sporting facility at Broad Lane for the benefit of inhabitants of the surrounding area.
2. To promote football and other sporting and recreational activities generally at Broad Lane.
3. To broaden the range of sporting activities at Broad Lane for the benefit of residents living in Wivenhoe and in the adjoining local area.
4. To encourage participation and excellence in all sporting activities conducted at Broad Lane.
5. To support efforts to run a successful semi-professional football team playing non-league football up to the highest possible level in order to bring prestige to the area as well as to encourage high footballing standards of youngsters playing football in the local area.
6. To provide adequate facilities to the Wivenhoe Town Football Club semi-professional football team to achieve success in non-league football and to meet the requirements of the relevant league and F.A. rules.
7. To encourage the formation of sporting associations and groups for the purpose of using the facilities at Broad Lane.
8. To promote co-operation between sporting organisations and groups using the facilities at Broad Lane.
9. To encourage the involvement of users of the facilities at Broad Lane in the care and maintenance of those facilities.
10. To foster a close relationship with the sporting side of the University of Essex.

16th November, 1995