



Wroughton Youth Football Club
Request for Wroughton & Wichelstowe Parish Council endorsement as Grassroots Partner Club for the Wichelstowe Sports Hub

Wroughton Youth Football Club (WYFC) attended the Annual Parish Meeting, submitted a report and provided an update on its work supporting more than 430 children and young people in Wroughton, Wichelstowe and the surrounding area. WYFC is a not-for-profit organisation supported by over 60 volunteers and promotes inclusivity, physical activity, fair play, respect and wellbeing. The club has plans to expand provision over the coming months and years.

As part of this programme of development, the club is progressing the following changes:

1. Rename the club from *Wroughton Youth Football Club (WYFC)* to *Wroughton and Wichelstowe Football Club (WWFC)* to align with Wroughton & Wichelstowe Parish Council (W&WPC) and the Wichelstowe Sports Hub. The new name will come into effect following the end of their current Financial Year (June 26).
2. Address outstanding requirements to achieve FA three-star accreditation; the club is on track to meet this in the next grading cycle (a requirement for Wiltshire FA and the Football Foundation).
3. Restructure as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) to widen eligibility for grants that could, where appropriate, support the Wichelstowe Sports Hub.
Registered Charity number 1217495.
4. Establish pan-disability football provision locally.
5. Establish weekly girls' sessional football aligned to the FA Wildcats programme, in addition to the five existing girls' teams. The club is now formally approved by England FA as an FA Wildcats provider for girls sessional football.
6. Undertake a joint project with Wiltshire FA to measure and evidence the club's social impact (the first club in the county selected for this work).
7. Expand provision to include pathways into senior football for adult men and women.
8. Implement measures to reduce barriers for women and girls in sport, including provision of period products for teams from Under 11 upwards. The club was recognised as the first of its kind in the county to promote such an initiative.

Further detail is provided at Appendix 1.

WYFC is seeking formal designation by Wiltshire Football Association as the Grassroots Partner Club. The Football Foundation is the final decision-maker and is expected to ratify the designation at a Board meeting; the next available agenda item is in December. WYFC has requested an earlier, interim indication to enable planning and joint communications with the FA in June 2026.

WYFC requests W&WPC's endorsement to support the FA/Football Foundation decision-making process. The club considers it well placed to deliver affordable, inclusive football at scale for the Wroughton and Wichelstowe community.

To date, progress has been made in good faith while the formal decision is pending. If WYFC is not designated, the role may be awarded to a club outside the parish, which could require WYFC to reconsider the scale and timing of its current programme of change. WYFC has limited external communications while the outcome remains uncertain, to avoid creating expectations that cannot be confirmed until the designation is agreed.

While designation as Grassroots Partner Club would significantly strengthen winter provision (including access to artificial grass and floodlighting), capacity at the Sports Hub is not expected to accommodate all WYFC teams. The club therefore anticipates continuing to use W&WPC pitches but may reduce use of the Deanery facilities due to cost.

Notwithstanding these developments, Wroughton & Wichelstowe FC remains committed to its long-standing community purpose and values, that have served the community for over thirty years. The community focused club seeks to provide high-quality football that is affordable, inclusive and accessible; the current subscription is £21 per month, stated as the lowest among comparable clubs in the county.

Safeguarding and welfare are central to it's club culture: All coaches working with children are required to hold appropriate safeguarding, first-aid and coaching qualifications. Aside from the physical health benefits to children and young people, participation also supports wider personal development and mental wellbeing, including teamwork, resilience, emotional regulation and respect for opponents & officials. Given that schools are increasingly concerned about the impact of digital screens and social media algorithms on children, the importance of the mental wellbeing benefits to children participating in sport should not be underestimated.

In conclusion, there are significant funds contributing to the development of the Wichelstowe Sports Hub. In order for the facility to thrive in the community, it requires a sports club to activate this investment in order to deliver meaningful outcomes. Wroughton & Wichelstowe FC are fully embracing the opportunity and are making the necessary changes to their governance and operational capabilities to meet the challenges for the expected growth whilst demonstrating strong community values.

Recommendations

1. That W&WPC endorses WYFC's bid to be designated the preferred Grassroots Partner Club for the Wichelstowe Sports Hub and confirms this endorsement to Wiltshire FA and the Joint Venture Team.
2. That W&WPC continues to support WYFC through enabling current and future use of parish-owned facilities, subject to applicable arrangements.