



Newbury Community Football Group

We believe that Newbury should have a football facility to be proud of, to inspire our children to play sport and to allow our senior men's and women's teams to compete at the highest level

What are we trying to do?

- We want to protect and improve our community football ground, this means we have to stop the current plans to demolish it and build flats
- The existing ground has a grass pitch, stands, changing rooms, floodlights and a clubhouse. Our plans are to build an all-weather pitch (3G) and new facilities, to allow even greater access to all of Newbury's football community, 7 days a week, all year round.
- The Council's own evidence states that Newbury's football ground is not needed as housing land. Put simply: football not flats.



How the ground looks today



How it could look in the future

How do you know we need it?

- A petition by NCFG against the destruction of the Ground was signed by nearly 7,000 people
- The Football Association conducted a survey of West Berkshire and highlighted the area was 4 full size 3G pitches short to meet demand of the West Berks community.
- Newbury is home to over 45,000 people and is set to grow by about 6,000 over the next 10 years.
- All of the evidence concludes that sporting facilities are indisputably essential to maintaining a healthy community.
- We wholeheartedly support the vision to improve the London Road Estate. As part of this vision, our proposal to improve the Community Football Ground with state of the art 3G pitches for all ages and new clubhouse facilities enhances the public-realm and is in harmony with Victoria Park.

Did you know?

- That the Faraday Road football pitch and associated facilities such as the club house, floodlights, stands etc. is listed by WBC as an Asset of Community Value – which is unequivocal evidence of demand for use and essential value to the community.
- A 3G pitch is an artificial pitch that be used over 100 times more a week than a grass pitch. NCFG has submitted a planning application for a state of the art 3G pitch and new clubhouse facilities at Faraday Road which can be used 7 days a week, in the evening and all year round
- The Football Association conducted a survey of West Berkshire and highlighted the area was 4 full size 3G pitches short to meet demand of the West Berks community. The FA also identified the Faraday Road pitch and ground as an exemplary facility.
- A survey by NCFG in May 2017 received over 200 responses from 37 local teams and leagues concluded that there are insufficient well-maintained grass or artificial pitches in Newbury and there is massive support for a new 3G facility that can be used by all ages all year round and in the evenings.
- Newbury's senior Ladies team is hugely successful now team have to play cup games at Lambourn because Newbury's Football ground has been closed by the council. This places a glass ceiling on their ability to progress.
- The biggest drop-out rates for Youth Football is 16 -18-year olds, which is a vulnerable age-group. After many years of successful involvement and since 2016 Newbury can longer enter teams in the local youth floodlit league because our Council will not provide the tenure agreement required.
- Hungerford Town and Thatcham Town can play in senior leagues such as the National League South and the Evo-Stik league South. Newbury's ground allows a Newbury senior team to play in similar leagues but the Council's refusal to give security of tenure for the last several years is the sole reason that Newbury's senior men's team have been successively demoted.
- After the senior men's team were evicted from Newbury football ground by our Council they now have to play in Brimpton, a village with a population of just 616 and play teams such as Wrightchoice, Unity Sports and Wraysbury Village. Newbury is twinned with Braunfels in Germany (population 11,000), Bagnols-sur-Cèze in France (population 18,000) and Eeklo in Belgium (population 21,000) – all have football grounds.
- According to Government research, every £1 spent on sporting facilities produces a return of £7.63 and enhances educational attainment amongst the young.

Who are NCFG?

- NCFG was formed, in late 2015, as a direct response to West Berkshire Council's "vision" to demolish the town's main football ground and stadium as part of a larger land redevelopment in the London Road Estate area **without** any commitment to provide a replacement.
- NCFG consists of members which represents the voice of the football community in Newbury. It has a broad base of members that represents senior men's football, senior ladies' football, boys & girls club football, youth and development football and representative primary school football.
- NCFG represents well over 500 players and volunteers in and around the Newbury area.
- NCFG is about protecting and improving the central community football ground for ALL users.
-

Supporting notes / facts:

The following organised football teams are members of NCFG:

- Newbury FC,
- Newbury Ladies FC,
- AFC Newbury Boys and Girls,
- AFC Newbury Colts,
- Newbury District Primary Schools
- FA, Pro-cision Football Academy.

The population for Newbury, Thatcham and Hungerford is calculated by adding up wards as attached, from information on the Council's website <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/population> - mid-year 2016 estimate. 45k is used in Newbury Town Plan - page 19, which also sets out that Newbury finds it difficult to retain young people - which supports the need for enhanced sporting facilities.

Core Strategy states *at least* 10,500 new homes between 2006 and 2026, of which 5,400 (51%) will be delivered in Newbury (Spatial Strategy and ADPP2 - Newbury). As at March 2016, 5,012 dwellings had been delivered leaving about 5,500. Ave. population is 2.4 per house. The housing site allocations DPD allocates land for more than 10,500 (about 11,300) and focuses most delivery in Newbury. and the indications are that housing delivery at a similar rate after 2026 (i.e. say, between 500 and 650 per annum, or about 575.), 51% or more of which will be in Newbury. Therefore, Newbury population will grow by between 612 and 795 per annum (say an average of 700). At the lower figure, the population will grow by almost 5,000 by 2026 or over 6,000 in ten years.

Sport England

Sport England's policy is to protect all parts of a *playing field*, not just those which happen, for the time being, to be laid out as pitches

In December 2015 the Government published Sporting Future: A New Strategy for an Active Nation. It sets a bold and ambitious direction for sport policy which has been widely welcomed. It looks beyond simple participation to how sport changes lives and becomes a force for social good.

At its heart are five outcomes: physical wellbeing, mental wellbeing, individual development, social and community development and economic development.

What does Sport England seek to achieve through its engagement in the planning system?

Building on its strategy Towards an Active Nation, Sport England's aim in working with the planning system is to help provide places that maximise opportunities for sport and physical activity for all, enabling the already active to be more so and the inactive to become active.

This aim is supported by three objectives:

PROTECT: To protect the right opportunities in the right places.

ENHANCE: To enhance opportunities through better use of existing provision.

PROVIDE: To provide new opportunities to meet the needs of current and future generations.

Sport England will oppose the granting of planning permission for any development which would lead to the loss of, or would prejudice the use of:

- all or any part of a playing field, or
- land which has been used as a playing field and remains undeveloped, or
- land allocated for use as a playing field unless, in the judgement of Sport England, the development as a whole meet with one or more of **five specific exceptions**

Exception 1

A robust and up-to-date assessment has demonstrated, to the satisfaction of Sport England, that there is an excess of playing field provision in the catchment, which will remain the case should the development be permitted, and the site has no special significance to the interests of sport.

Exception 2

The proposed development is for ancillary facilities supporting the principal use of the site as a playing field, and does not affect the quantity or quality of playing pitches or otherwise adversely affect their use.

Exception 3

The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and does not:

- reduce the size of any playing pitch;
- result in the inability to use any playing pitch (including the maintenance of adequate safety margins and run-off areas);
- reduce the sporting capacity of the playing field to accommodate playing pitches or the capability to rotate or reposition playing pitches to maintain their quality;
- result in the loss of other sporting provision or ancillary facilities on the site; or
- prejudice the use of any remaining areas of playing field on the site.

Exception 4:

The area of playing field to be lost as a result of the proposed development will be replaced, prior to the commencement of development, by a new area of playing field:

- of equivalent or better quality, and
- of equivalent or greater quantity, and
- in a suitable location, and
- subject to equivalent or better accessibility and management arrangements.

Exception 5

The proposed development is for an indoor or outdoor facility for sport, the provision of which would be of sufficient benefit to the development of sport as to outweigh the detriment caused by the loss, or prejudice to the use, of the area of playing field.