

# more than football

# Investing in Young People's Future **Be Part of It**

# Sporting WALLSEND

The objectives of the club are to support young people living in North Tyneside through their involvement in organised sport and activity programmes in order that *they can achieve their potential and realise their ambitions*.



## **Be Part of it** ABOUT US

Wallsend Boys Club ("WBC") was founded in 1904 by the employees and directors of Swan Hunters Shipyard in order to provide recreational activities for the apprentices and young people in the area. WBC runs a variety of activities that are open to all young people in the local area, and has a strong history and track record of supporting disadvantaged young people on Tyneside.

After a major setback caused by the loss of its youth facility to a storm in 2012, WBC has embarked on an ambitious project to relaunch its sporting and community programmes based around the concept of **'Sporting Wallsend**', a community based, open access sports club, offering free or low cost membership to all local Tyneside residents. *Sporting Wallsend* will build on the work, ethos and developmental approaches of WBC which will remain at the centre of operations. The delivery of this project is based around the redevelopment of the facilities on its main site at Kirkley Park, Wallsend.

The first phase, a 3G artificial grass pitch (AGP), has been constructed and is now operational. WBC are now focused on the second phase, the funding and construction of a community hub, which will be located on the upper floor of the existing changing accommodation.



We are a registered Charity and a registered Company, limited by guarantee that gives young Boys and Girls the opportunity to play football in a safe, challenging and empowering environment. The Club has more than 40 Representative Teams from Mini Soccer (Under 7s) to 11-a-side (Under 16s). We also have adult Men's and Ladies Teams and even a Men's Over 40's Team. The reason we exist can be traced back to the Club's establishment at the start of the 20th century.

Over the next five years **Sporting Wallsend** will continue to support WBC and ensure its reputation, nationally and internationally is sustained. It will play a significant role in bringing different communities together, both at Kirkley Park *through direct delivery and by working with trusted partners*. It will improve the physical and mental health of its members by *supporting and delivering* a range of evidence-based prevention and early intervention programmes which help reduce existing health inequalities.

#### **WBC'S LEGACY?**

The Club came about because of a time honoured fact of life – if young people cannot channel their natural energy into positive activities during their leisure time, there is a temptation to channel that same energy into negative activities.

The Directors of Swan Hunter Shipyard recognised this reality and deliberately set about creating an outlet for their young Shipyard Apprentices to channel all of that energy positively and founded Wallsend Boys' Club in 1904. The early Volunteers who managed WBC quickly realised that the most effective way to engage the young Apprentices was to get them involved in Sport.



For most of the 20th Century the Club provided access to whatever sporting activities could be delivered within the usual constraints of finance, coaches, facilities, etc. so many ex-Members will recall their involvement in activities as diverse as Boxing and Trampolining, Basketball and Netball, etc.

In addition, the ex-Members had a thriving social environment and frequently performed Pantomime and Variety Shows and hosted regular Dances where many of them met their lifetime partners.

From the mid-60s, the Club was based at a building in Wallsend town centre on Station Road and whilst many of the materials for this building were largely donated from Swan Hunter Shipyards, the Club could boast one of the first indoor 5-a-side pitches in the North East of England.

The opening of this building coincided with the appointment of Peter Kirkley (now President of WBC) who was invited to manage the Club's Representative Football Teams. The sheer passion for *The Beautiful Game* on Tyneside, coupled with Peter's unique capacity to identify ability in players and manage them to achieve their full potential, combined to create an environment that has successfully served as an incubator for the careers of over 85 Professional Footballers, 7 of whom have gained International honours. This incredible production line of talent has tended to dominate the external perception of the Club as purely a community football academy. However, that is simply a wonderful, unintended consequence of what the Club has always done since 1904 – give young people a safe place to go and meet their friends, whilst being encouraged to participate in positive sporting and social activities – so the vast majority of our Members have never gone onto grace the game of Professional Football, but have graced every other walk of life with one thing in common – very fond memories of their time at WBC. In essence, as our strapline reminds us, Wallsend Boys' Club is, and always has been... *"more than football*"

Sadly, we lost our 1960s building in 2012. The same spare parts from the Swan Hunter Shipyard that enabled us to have a modern facility in 1965, had sadly depreciated almost 50 years later to the point that weaknesses in the walls were exposed through a January night of strong wind storms and one of the walls collapsed, so the building had to be condemned.

Fortunately, the Club had taken over control of its own Pitches and Changing Rooms at Bigges Main for the first time in its history from 2010, so at least we were able to continue managing the Club from those Changing Rooms and the Representative Teams continued to develop and grow exponentially from 17 teams in 2010, to 43 teams just 7 seasons later.

However, since January 2012 we have more closely resembled the outside perception of being purely a community football academy for the first time in over a century, as we have been unable to offer the same breadth and depth of sporting and social activities from these Changing Rooms.

This is an issue we urgently need to address by developing our site at Bigges Main – now Kirkley Park – so that future generations of Tyneside youngsters can be given access to a modern environment equivalent to what previous generations enjoyed.





#### **TYPES OF ACTIVITIES & SERVICES OFFERED**

Various consultations have taken place and there is a strong strategic case and local need for the hub, which will enable WBC to expand the programmes and services offered to the local community.

Together with the AGP, these two facilities will improve WBC's sustainability, enhance its social impact and position it as a key youth delivery body on Tyneside.

The hub will have a focus on activities for younger people, but will cater for everyone in the community. A summary of the groups who have been identified, and typical activities to be offered, includes:

- Youth sport and fitness: Table tennis, boxing, martial arts, etc.
- Youth health and wellbeing: Structured activities such as arts and culture, GP prescribed physical activity, creative cooking, etc.
- Young people alternative education: For school aged children not in mainstream schools - WBC could host sports-themed provision at the pavilion facility. Apprenticeships for those not going onto Further Education.
- Adult sport and fitness: Boxercise, martial arts, zumba, etc.
- Adult health and wellbeing: Pilates, yoga, GP prescribed exercise, etc.
- Older people: Computer class to enhance skills and access to online services, gentle yoga, programmes aimed at tackling social isolation such as "men in sheds", Bowling with our neighbours at Kirkley Park, etc.
- Parents and toddlers: Toddler gymnastics, music and movement, etc.
- Disability: Inclusive sporting and social activity days for people with disabilities.

#### **DESIGNS AND LAYOUT**

The building that provides WBC's 6 changing rooms will be redeveloped to add the community hub area on the first floor and new, reconfigured spaces on the ground floor.

# The floorplan for the remodelled ground floor is shown below, with facilities including:

- Kitchen and servery
- Changing rooms and bathrooms for WBC customers and officials
- Physiotherapy/treatment room
- Classroom with flexibility to open out into larger space (Youth Zone)
- Office and meeting room



#### THE AGP AND COMMUNITY HUB WILL IMPROVE WBC'S SUSTAINABILITY, ENHANCE ITS SOCIAL IMPACT AND POSITION IT AS A KEY YOUTH DELIVERY BODY IN NORTH TYNESIDE.

WBC has an excellent track record of delivery and an attractive profile for youn people in the local community, however since the loss of the old facility the youth work team has reduced from 6 to 1 and key service contracts have been missed out on.

The completion of the AGP will give WBC increased pitch time to deliver a range of community sports, and the community hub will give WBC a base to recommence delivery of youth services and activities.



### The floorplan for the new first floor is shown below, with facilities including:

- Multi use room, measuring 12m x 15m in its smallest configuration, based on Sport England guidelines for multi-purpose studio space for movement classes for average sized groups
- Studio, with semi-sprung flooring and mirrored wall, measuring 9m x 10m, based on Sport England guidelines for dance studio practice space for small classes (12 to 15 people)
- Spectator seating areas, one leading onto the balcony overlooking the full size AGP
- Generous storage space for equipment
- Kitchen and servery



WHAT ARE OUR PLANS FOR THE COMMUNITY HUB

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OUR YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACHIEVEMENTS...

MORE

have gone on to be good citizens and canny footballers!

THAN



1 has represented New Zealand



have gone on to play International Football

have gone on to play Professional Football

#### **HOW CAN YOU HELP?**

The trustees and staff of Wallsend Boys Club will be focussed on raising the external funds to build the community hub but we continue to need more help from local businesses to grow the club, provide more opportunities for young people and build on its reputation as a great community asset.

That's where you come in... Can you help by sponsoring any of our representative teams, events tournaments or activities. Any contribution will help maintain our reputation and put us in great shape as we put all our energies into turning Kirkley Park into a place where all members of our local community can get involved in a range of sport and physical activities which make them healthier and improve their lives.



If you would like to discuss any of the above possibilities the contact is John Percival, Head of Facilities and Programmes on email **johnp.wallsendboysclub@gmail.com** or phone **0191 263 9490** 



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