

Warborough & Shillingford CC - Pavilion Restoration Project Proposal

Bottom line up front:

The cricket club is seeking the support of the Parish Council and the community to renovate the pavilion. The project is only achievable through grant funding for the bulk of costs, with contributions already secured in the form of individual donations from the community and from the cricket club itself. This document explains the background to the current situation, relevant arguments and the proposed solution.

Background information on the club:

Warborough and Shillingford Cricket Club has seen cricket played on Warborough Green for around 200 years. The club consists of a senior side who play friendly declaration cricket matches on Sundays from April to September and a vibrant junior set-up which takes children from as young as 5 up to Under 15s. The club is the only mass participation, competitive club in the village and provides recreation and exercise to willing players from 5 to 75 (or more). The cricket pitch forms the centrepiece of the picturesque village green and is an integral part of the history of the village of Warborough.

Children at W&SCC:

Last season, the club had over 100 children playing thanks to the injection of All Stars Cricket which brought 45 five to eight-year-olds into the club. Over the years the club has endeavoured to keep at the heart of its cricket the need to safeguard the young people taking part. This has involved ensuring that coaches are checked via the DBS and undertake safeguarding and first aid training. It is important that the club can reassure parents that their children will be safe playing cricket for the club.

Role of facilities in sports participation:

Those who play cricket at Warborough (or anywhere) need good ancillary facilities to support their pursuit of the game. The club has in recent years successfully fundraised to install practice nets, and to purchase better groundskeeping equipment. However, in stark contrast to this, the pavilion has fallen into severe disrepair and is unsuited to a club offering cricket both to juniors and to an increasing number of female participants. A beautiful building in the setting of the Green, on closer inspection it is falling apart at the seams.

Issues with current pavilion set-up:

The pavilion is owned by the Parish Council and W&SCC pay a rent each year to use it during the cricket season. internal set-up is geared towards adult, single-sex teams; there are two changing rooms, two toilet cubicles and two shower areas. There is an additional toilet/shower room accessible on the end of the pavilion which has been designated for "Ladies" and has generally been intended for use by female spectators. This loo is also available for use by the tennis club who lack any facilities at the courts, and for years also was in use by the car boot sale before it drew to a close.

Female participation and changing:

It is increasingly common for Warborough and our opponents to be fielding girls in their respective teams. Provision of a suitable changing facility for girls is becoming a pressing need which currently can only be addressed by designating the two changing rooms male and female rather than home and away which tends to leave the male changing room very overcrowded, or asking girls to change in the ladies loo. There is a major push at national level to increase the engagement of girls in cricket and last year's All Stars enrolments indicated that the sport is becoming ever more popular among girls (22% of All Stars in 2018 were girls)¹. Indeed, transforming women's and girls' cricket is one of six priorities within ECB's 'Inspiring Generations' strategy for 2020-2024.

Safeguarding junior cricketers:

Another more pressing need is the fact that where Under 18s are playing in adult cricket, male and female, they must now be allocated a separate changing area or else the team's room must be vacated while they change. Juniors and females playing for the senior (predominantly male) side has been a regular occurrence for many years but with the recent adoption by the club of the ECB Safe Hands Policy, we clearly will struggle to properly comply with these regulations.

Umpire changing:

When not in use for female or junior changing, a small third changing room would allow W&SCC to comply with ECB guidance on umpire changing: "umpires must have separate changing and shower facilities to the players."²

Importance of sports participation, especially in children:

The benefits of sport on health, well-being and personal development are well-documented and integrated into relevant Governmental policies. SODC's "Open Space, sport and recreation facility assessment" was collated with close reference to national, regional and district policies and makes the clear case for proper provision of sports facilities and the social benefit of increased participation in sports.

The pavilion as a Parish Council asset:

It is the duty of the Parish Council to maintain and update as appropriate, all of its assets. Significant funds have been invested on major projects in the Greet Hall in recent years. It is incumbent on the Parish Council to make efforts to maintain the pavilion too. Repair works required include repairs to windows and doors, treatment of damp on rear wall, re-plastering and redecoration. Upgrade works to bring into the correct century would be on top of these repairs; overhaul of the unsanitary loos and showers, overhaul of the kitchen, internal redecoration, provision of adequate changing areas, overhaul of aged fencing and uneven terrace.

The costs of different approaches:

If dealt with as single items and from the Parish Council's assets, the bill for repair would run into many thousands; the bill for upgrades, tens of thousands. Grant money can be sought to aid the PC, but this has previously unsuccessfully been applied for with a simple renovation in mind, with no changing provision alterations.

What is clear from knowledge of the significant available funding streams is that strongest funding chances correlate to a variety of factors about inclusion, provision of new facilities and extension of

¹ Transforming Women's & Girls' Cricket: An ECB Action Plan 2019 p.20

² ECB Guidance Note TS5 for Pavilions and Clubhouses p.33

services to under-represented groups. Added to this the recent ECB initiative to increase female participation in sport and their own safeguarding policies, the PC stands the greatest chance of securing significant funding for the works if they also include the provision of a third changing room. Naturally, these factors are also in and of themselves entirely worthy reasons to embark upon the contract, but finances are a key point to consider.

Possible solutions:

Various options have been explored with architects; the pavilion is already tight for space. Options including a second storey or an extension onto the front of the pavilion were considered but would struggle to be in keeping with the local vernacular of the village and its historic green and likely cause damage to the appearance of the pavilion and the entire vista on the Green.

Thus a solution has been arrived at; removing all storage and reallocating part of the existing 'home' showers, a small third changing room and showers can be produced within the existing footprint. In essence the club will be able to provide space for 3 or 4 juniors or female players to change, shower and use a WC, in a safe, totally enclosed and separately-accessed area.

The trade-off for this space is the requirement to build a small ancillary storage building in a relatively inconspicuous spot to the south of the pavilion and moved back past the rear building line, against the green fence, like a small garage of sorts built in keeping with the local style. This will house all the equipment previously stored in the pavilion areas now given over to the new changing area.

Explanation and mitigation of controversial elements:

The cricket club recognises that whilst probably none of the internal works will prove controversial, there will likely be some objections to the creation of the storage shed. The placement is designed to mitigate any visual aspects in terms of sight lines and impact will be minimal. The design is planned as a timber garage-style building, similar to several others around the village. Although this falls within permitted development and the club has closely studied the Neighbourhood Plan and produced a design we believe is in keeping. We aim to preserve and enhance the look of the green and its pavilion as well as support the community need, in this case, for appropriate recreation facilities.

In short, whilst falling under permitted development none of the Neighbourhood Plan or other planning considerations are applicable, the cricket club has endeavoured to come up with a proposal which fits in with village wishes and sensible design principles.

Summary:

In summary, the pavilion is in dire need of urgent attention and a continuation of the patchwork approach will no longer suffice and will end up less cost effective than a full overhaul. Not only is this historic village asset in danger of crumbling beyond economic repair, but its very condition is an active discouragement for people of all ages to play cricket at Warborough. The club cannot continue to safely provide cricket to females and to juniors without provision of a third changing room, and the best and most sympathetic option requires an internal re-jigging of space and moving of lots of equipment to a small adjacent storage facility.

The club hopes you will support it in this endeavour. The President of the Club, and Chairman of Junior Section, Colin Mercer & Chris Ward, will happily answer any questions you might have – colin.mercer@wandscc.org / chris.ward@wandscc.org