

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Court Fields School Secures Green Light for State-of-the-Art 3G Pitch

Court Fields School is thrilled to announce the formal approval of plans to construct a cutting-edge, all-weather 3G pitch on its premises. The development has received planning consent and a £737k grant from the Premier League, The FA and Government's Football Foundation, in what is a major sporting boost for both the school and the local community.

The Headteacher, Mrs. Polly Matthews, expressed her delight at the green light from the Football Foundation and planners, stating, "We were absolutely thrilled that, following the support from our local community, planning consent was granted at the end of 2023. I'm especially grateful to all the sports groups, parents, and community members who took the time to submit letters of support for the application."

Mrs Matthews said "The next step in the process was obtaining final approval from the Football Foundation, and I am thrilled to announce that this was signed off last week. This facility will have a significant impact on the quality and quantity of sports and recreational provision in the Wellington community, helping us to develop and improve the sports skills, health, and wellbeing of all ages, as they benefit from a much-needed facility in the area."

Mrs. Matthews highlighted the positive impact of the proposed 3G pitch, explaining, "This all-weather 3G pitch will allow us to cater for the physical educational needs, sports training and recreation of our students and community all-year-round. While the primary goal of the 3G pitch is to increase grassroots football and rugby, it will allow children, young people, and those of all ages and abilities to enjoy a wide range of participation opportunities."

The £1.1 million project has secured funding from various sources, including the Football Foundation, Somerset Council, the Bishop Fox's Educational Foundation, Wellington Town Council, and capital expenditure from the school. The comprehensive budget covers the construction of the multi-use pitch, equipment for ongoing care, and maintenance machinery for the school's grass pitches.

Mrs. Matthews emphasised the broader impact of the facility, stating, "The facility is integral to the area's playing pitch strategy and will be available for use during the school day, for sports tournaments and festivals, as well as evenings and weekends for lettings, training, and community events. It will help us to not only support children's educational needs but promote a healthy lifestyle and encourage a wider demographic to take full advantage of this fantastic facility, including increasing female, disability, and over 55s participation. I'd like to thank those in the school, the Blackdown Education Partnership, the community and in those external organisations who have worked with us to make this exciting project a reality."

Work on the 3G pitch is expected to commence quickly in Spring 2024, with an anticipated opening in the Autumn, marking a significant milestone for Court Fields School and the Wellington community.

Robert Sullivan, Chief Executive of the Football Foundation, said: *“The Football Foundation is working closely with our partners – the Premier League, The FA and Government – to transform the quality of grassroots facilities in England by delivering projects like this across the country.*

“Good quality playing facilities have a transformative impact on physical and mental health and play an important role in bringing people together and strengthening local communities.

“This grant award to Court Fields School towards developing a new 3G pitch at the site is fantastic news for the local community and will help give more people access to a great place to play.”

ENDS

Notes to editors

About the Football Foundation

The Football Foundation is the Premier League, The FA and Government’s charity that delivers outstanding grassroots facilities, more and better places to play, transforming lives and communities where it is needed most.

The Foundation’s goal is to unlock the power of pitches ensuring everyone has a great place to play regardless of gender, race, disability or place.

Since its creation in 2000, the Foundation has invested more than £1 billion to improve grassroots facilities across the country – including 1,100 3G football turf pitches, 12,000 grass pitches and 1,400 changing rooms. This has attracted an additional £1.3 billion of partnership funding – totalling over £2 billion investment in grassroots football so far.

In partnership with local authorities, County FAs and other community stakeholders, the Foundation has created Local Football Facility Plans for every local authority in England. These Plans act as a blueprint for providing the grassroots football facility improvements that each community needs and deserves across the country.

Visit footballfoundation.org.uk for more information on the Foundation and view the Plan for your local area.




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