



# NEW COMMUNITY FACILITY AT CHARLES HILL

Update for the residents of Heanor and Loscoe

## Dear residents of Heanor and Loscoe.

This newsletter has been produced to keep you informed on the developments that will be taking place on Charles Hill Playing Fields.

### History of Charles Hill

As many of you know, the site has been used for community sport and physical activity since the mid-1950s when part of the land was kindly gifted for the residents of Loscoe by Charles Lawley Hill, a local farmer.

The remaining land on the site was acquired from the coal board (in two parcels, also in the 1950s). Extensive groundworks were undertaken to create three terraced areas to accommodate the sports pitches which at that time incorporated football, hockey and cricket. Over the years the site has also been used for festivals, carnivals and other community events that many of you have enjoyed being a part of.

The original 1950s building comprised a small sports hall, community room and kitchen and changing rooms. The sports hall was demolished in 2010 due to its poor condition and high running costs. The remaining changing rooms serving the sports pitches were demolished in 2016. The site has had little formal use over the last four years and is therefore an under-utilised asset for the Borough and specifically for the local community, including Loscoe Primary School which is adjacent to the site.

### Who's involved in the current development?

Key stakeholders involved in the current developments include Heanor & Loscoe Town Council, Amber Valley Borough Council, Amber Valley CVS, local sports clubs and members of Charles Hill CIC.

Significant funding has already been secured or committed by the above organisations. Additional funding will still need to be raised to secure the start of the project and the fit out of the building.

### Charles Hill CIC

**The Charles Hill Community Interest Company (CIC)** was formed to drive forwards the new community facility and deliver a wider vision for the development and use of Charles Hill. The Company comprises key representatives from the area including Friends of Red River Group and local residents. The CIC is being supported by Amber Valley CVS. The Company also operates in partnership with existing sports clubs currently using the site such as Heanor Juniors Football Club and Loscoe AFC.

Charles Hill CIC was first set up in 2012 with the aim to promote the development, provision, management and operation of the site to include a new community centre, improve the playing pitches, children's play-ground and facilities along with promoting the open green space and environmental areas. Recently a multi-use games area was installed with support from the CIC & local councils.

The CIC aims for the site to benefit the local community as much as possible and welcomes your views and opinions. Share your thoughts by email to [kirstybarker@avcvs.org](mailto:kirstybarker@avcvs.org).

## Existing Facilities

At present the site has 3 senior football pitches, 2 youth football pitches, a cricket pitch, multi use games area, children's playground and car park for approx 150 cars.



## Proposed Plans

The proposed developments will see a new community facility built, bringing the site back to life. Many of you have shared wonderful stories about events and activities that have taken place at Charles Hill's community centre in the past and we know you are keen to see a community building to help new memories like these to be made. This building will create a 'hub' for the local community and a home site for a number of youth football clubs in the local area as well as giving a space for new activity .

The new building will be placed on the footprint of the original and immediate surrounding areas.

**Phase One** of the build project includes:

- Main entrance area and reception area
- Male and female toilets and disabled toilet
- Large open plan community room with storage space
- Kitchen area
- Refreshments servery
- Two officials changing rooms (one of which will be fully accessible for disabled users)
- Outdoor hard surface patio

In addition to those partners already mentioned, Derbyshire FA & the Football Foundation are supporting the project and envisage that the site will be utilised as a hub to deliver mini soccer and youth football based on the national youth strategy.

Purpose designed changing facilities are planned for **phase two** of the development. However the large community space has been designed to cater for changing needs should these be required in the interim period.

The space will also be available to hire providing a venue for a wide range of activities, both indoors and outdoors.

## Timescales

A planning application has been submitted and work is in progress to appoint a main building contractor. It is hoped that the new facility will be open for the summer of 2021.

## What it will look like...



The image above is inside the community room, which can be split into two separate rooms via a sliding wall.

Below is the proposed floorplan for the community building.



## Charles Hill CIC—Our work with the Friends of Red River group

Red River is a Local Nature Reserve owned by the Town Council, adjoining Charles Hill, next to St Luke's Church. The 'Red River' flows through the woodlands, with a small pond and reed bed. This site is environmentally important for a wide variety of native species including the very rare Great Crested Newt.

The Charles Hill CIC as a collective in partnership with local stakeholders will seek funding to create a footpath around the Charles Hill site, linking the car park to the local school and extending the walk route to Red River environmental area so that local school children, parents and members of the public can be more physically active.

The CIC has additionally sought to work in partnership with local non-sporting interests. For example, our consultation highlighted a concern for the Great Crested Newt and the impacts of any work on the adjacent Red River nature reserve. As a result, plans have been revised and a major priority is to ensure that appropriate drainage is installed to protect this environmentally sensitive area and 'open up' other areas of land within the Charles Hill site for environmental projects.



For more information on the Friends of Red river group please follow the link below:

<https://www.heanorloscoetowncouncil.gov.uk/red-river.html>

## We Need You

Charles Hill CIC are looking for volunteers to take on a director role within the organisation.

If you feel you have the skills to develop the business plan, raise funds to expand activity on the site, or give time to help develop this rewarding project please contact us. You may just want to volunteer some of your spare time for specific events, all offers of involvement will be greatly appreciated.

To discuss opportunities for involvement please contact Kirsty Barker on [kirstybarker@avcvs.org](mailto:kirstybarker@avcvs.org) or call Amber Valley CVS on 01773 512076



Working in partnership to develop Charles Hill