

## PRESS NOTICE

6 MARCH 2019



### EXCITING PLANS FOR NEW 3G ARTIFICIAL GRASS FOOTBALL PITCH IN SAFFRON WALDEN

Saffron Walden Community FC and Saffron Walden County High School have reached agreement on proposed construction of a new high quality 3G artificial grass pitch (3G AGP) at the High School. The Essex FA has been working closely with the parties on the proposal, has done a number of visits to the site, and has indicated it will support a huge injection of funding by the Football Foundation into the town, as long as local funding and planning support is delivered.

The youth football club and High School are today launching a local fund raising campaign – known as '#mycommunity3G' - to support the funding package envisaged from the Football Foundation. They will now move ahead in the coming weeks to seek planning permission from Uttlesford District Council. The partners hope to have the new 3G AGP facility in place by Spring 2020.

Saffron Walden Community FC is a Charter Standard Community Club, and was named 'Essex FA Club of the Year' in 2018. The club now has 42 teams and a thriving mini soccer school. The club's sister club Saffron Walden PSG (for girls' football) has a further 10 teams. In total the clubs currently have around 800 young players registered from Saffron Walden and across Uttlesford.

**Martin Johnson, SWCFC Chairman,** said:

*'Our club is growing every month and our young players need and deserve good facilities. Week in week out we travel to away matches and see fantastic 3G football pitches. Getting this quality of facility in Saffron Walden itself is long overdue.'*

*The County High School is committed to the scheme, and the Essex FA is supporting us, subject to gaining the local support we need. Together we can deliver a very significant financial investment in our town. So many volunteers contribute brilliantly to the club – both on the coaching and on the administration side. This new facility will enable us to expand and improve on that amazing work. Delivering a 3G will also allow us to expand into new areas like disability football.'*



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*We are launching our fund raising campaign today and setting an initial target of £100,000 to be raised by our club, along with our sister club Saffron Walden PSG, with support from the County High School. We will do this locally over the next six months, and this funding will sit alongside that we intend to seek from the Football Foundation and we hope, other local partners’.*

**Polly Lankester, Saffron Walden County High School Associate Head Teacher,** said:

*‘SWCHS is really excited to be part of this project, which will deliver a great new facility and bring huge benefits to people across Saffron Walden and the wider Uttlesford District. The Board of Governors is very much behind this 3G scheme, and we hope to deliver it as soon as possible, working with SWCFC, the Essex FA and local authorities’.*

**Matt Clare, Chairman of Saffron Walden PSG (Girls’ club) and Vice-Chairman of SWCFC** said:

*‘As well as being a huge asset to the community, this exciting 3G Artificial Grass Pitch plan will really help us develop our provision for girls’ football in the town, building on the big strides we have taken since Saffron Walden PSG was formed. It will also allow us to develop disability football – something I have personally been working on with the Essex FA on for some time, and which they are very positive about us doing. We can’t take this forward effectively without delivering this new 3G facility’.*

**Derek Jones Leader of Saffron Walden Organisations for Sport and Chair of WaldenTRI and Walden Track and Field** said:

*‘A 3G facility will bring an exciting new dimension to the town’s sporting capability and SWCFC should be congratulated on their resilience in making this happen. The local sports clubs have been very proactive in recent years, working together in attempting to deliver modern high quality sports facilities for the town and surrounding area. There is still much to be done and positive discussions are regularly underway with both SWTC and UDC’.*

