



## WOODSIDE SCHOOL: RUNNING TRACK PROPOSAL

Members of the committee (Andy Wiseall, Trevor Davies and Steve Perkin) have, been in discussion with Woodside School, Mitchell Walk, Amersham HP6 6NW, about their aspiration to build a running track on their grounds. Immediately after the CHAC AGM on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March there will be an opportunity to hear from both Tom Dixon, who is chair of Woodside School PTA, and Andy Wiseall who has been leading discussions with the school on behalf of the committee.

The proposal at present is as follows:

- To build a 200m, 4 lane, synthetic, running track in the grounds of the school. (This is the maximum size possible)
- Users of the track would be able to access toilets and changing facilities.
- There is an existing small sheltered area that would be suitable for viewing / storing clothing etc.
- There is limited parking on site but there is potential to use the playground to park cars.
- There would, initially, not be lighting at the track on the grounds of cost.

The school has some funds available but requires a significant fund-raising effort to meet the total costs of the track which stand at over £100k (without lighting). They have approached us to help fund the project by way of a one off, charitable, donation of £20k.

The committee have been looking to put funds towards a running track for many years and this represents the most significant opportunity to meet that aspiration. We have discussed this at length and recognise that there are potential large short and long-term benefits for the club in having a track facility so close to our base membership.

There are some clear limitations to the proposal though. We feel that it is important to engage with members ahead of the AGM and will set aside some time at the AGM to discuss this further.

- A 200m track has a limited capacity and can, realistically accommodate up to 30 people training at a time. The track would therefore not replace any of the existing training facilities at the club's disposal but would be an alternate venue.
- The lack of lighting would be a significant barrier for use by our members. It is in the wintertime when our need for a track is most acute, especially for our junior members.
- The donation would not grant the club any formal access preferences, nor would it guarantee that the track would be secure as an asset on the school grounds in the long term.
  - Alternative ways of providing funding, such as a lease agreement, have been ruled out by the school on legal grounds.
  - The club would gain early access to bookings compared to other users in the area, in recognition of the contribution, but would not gain a discount on the hourly rate.

At present, the committee would like some more assurances on lighting. Ten 6m high lighting structures are currently proposed and these have prohibitive costs, as well as likely challenges at planning permission. There is more research required in alternatives that are suitable for a school playing field. Any ideas on this would be very much welcomed by both sides.

The committee would also like to explore with the school options that give more security to this investment.

So, at the AGM, you'll have the opportunity to hear from both Tom and Andy on this and for them to answer any questions you might have. We very much welcome discussion on this though, either at training or via our various social media platforms.

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