

HAVING APPROPRIATE AND SUSTAINABLE FACILITIES

How a strong partnership with their facility provider has enabled Yeovil & Sherborne HC make hockey more sustainable



UNLOCKING OPPORTUNITIES

Sports clubs play a vital role in fostering community engagement, promoting physical activity, and enhancing the overall wellbeing of individuals. Access to appropriate and sustainable facilities is crucial for clubs to thrive and serve their communities effectively. Hockey has faced great pressure over recent years as more publicly owned sand based artificial grass pitches around the country are being replaced by '3G' surfaces.

Yeovil & Sherborne Hockey Club based on the Somerset and Dorset border has forged strategic links with South Somerset District Council (now Somerset Council) and established and more recently, renewed a Community Use Agreement (CUA) which secures them access to hockey facilities and a sustainable future for their club.

ESTABLISHING A HOME FOR HOCKEY

Historically, the club has played at wide variety of venues in Yeovil and then later Sherborne due to the lack of suitable facilities within their hometown. In 2013, the club moved back to Yeovil when the new artificial pitch at Yeovil Recreation Ground was opened. Now, in 2023, at the end of their tenth season playing hockey at Yeovil Recreation Centre the club has signed a new 10-year Community Use Agreement with South Somerset District Council and England Hockey to secure the future sustainability of their club and hockey as a sport in the area.

Part of a much bigger initiative, The Recreation Ground was originally destined to be part of the £22 million 'Sport Zone' project, but when this fell through the new pitch was created as a standalone facility bringing a much-needed new multi-use artificial pitch to the community and creating a home for Yeovil and Sherborne Hockey Club.

The new facility not only boasts a well maintained playing surface, but on site changing facilities, a café, team dug outs and a great social space which doubles up as a clubhouse to entertain club members and visiting teams.

All of this has been made possible through strong partnership working and the development of a Community Use Agreement, which allows the club to have:

- Priority access to the pitch for hockey
- Clubhouse facilities within the Pavilion for the club in support of its activities
- Regular communication between all parties through the Facility Programme Management Group meetings which occur twice per year
- A sink fund is in place to put aside funds for any future need such as repairs, replacement equipment and eventually carpet replacement

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY USE AGREEMENT?

When a facility provider, such as a local authority or education establishment decides that its sports facilities will be available for wider community use, it's valuable to formalise this with a Community Use Agreement (CUA).

This should be developed in consultation with all key parties and sets out the hour of availability, management arrangements and pricing policy that are reflective of local need.

Working in partnership to develop a robust agreement will help support sustainable, thriving facilities for the community to use and be proud of.

“

"I was delighted to be able to sign the Community Use Agreement on behalf of the Club. Having enjoyed playing hockey at Yeovil Recreation Centre – and the unwavering support of the Council – for the last 10 years, the recent further development of the facilities will help further establish it as a hockey centre.

South Somerset Council has always been forward thinking; rarely waiting for us to ask, the proactive staff offer proposals and solutions to problems and issues. As a Club we find ourselves 'pushing at an open door' when it comes to the management and development of the facilities. Committing to the Agreement means that all parties can now work together to further improve the facilities and the hockey 'offer', particularly for state school students.

Furthermore, we can (collectively) start to plan the inevitably refurbishment of the pitch."

Barrie Izard

Chair

Yeovil & Sherborne Hockey Club

”

BENEFITS OF A COMMUNITY USE AGREEMENT

Enhanced Facility Access

- Provides the club with reliable and consistent access to facilities
- Enables the club to plan and organise activities effectively

Community Engagement and Development

- Strengthens the club's ties with the local community
- Promotes inclusivity and encourages community members to participate in sports and recreational activities

Cost Savings

- Reduces financial burden on the club by offering access to facilities without the need for expensive rentals

Facility Improvement Opportunities

- Opens avenues for collaboration on facility upgrades and maintenance, benefiting both the club and the local community

Long-Term Sustainability

- Establishes a stable foundation for the club's long-term existence
- The club have established a 'home' venue with pitch and pavilion
- Provides a framework for ongoing collaboration and adaptation to changing needs.

COULD YOUR CLUB BENEFIT?

Establishing the Community Use Agreement with the local council has been a proactive step for Yeovil & Sherborne Hockey Club not only does it secure access to facilities and ensure long-term sustainability, but it means the club and key parties are committed and invested in the future upkeep and development of the facility in the future.

Follow the steps and guidance below or contact your Club Development Manager to get started.



“

“SSDC (now Somerset Council) are delighted to be renewing the Community Use Agreement with Yeovil & Sherborne Hockey Club for facility use at Yeovil Recreation Centre.

Since the construction of the AGP, the Club have become an anchor tenant at the recreation ground, providing stability to the facility and demonstrating delivery of high-quality club sport.

Having survived the recent years of Covid19 we are particularly pleased to embark on a new chapter with the Club, confirming access to the new inside club facilities to enhance the offer of the Club and the overall viability of the multi-sport facility.

As we become Somerset Council in 2023 we look forward to continuing the relationship and supporting achievement and engagement with hockey.”

Katy Menday
Leisure & Recreation Manager,
Somerset Council

”

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE AT YOUR CLUB...

Identify Needs and Objectives

- Clearly define the club's requirements and objectives for facility use
- Determine the frequency, duration, and nature of activities the club wishes to undertake

Engage with Local Council

- Initiate communication and build personal relationships
- Present a compelling case for the club's positive impact on the community and articulate the benefits of a CUA for all

Flexibility and Adaptability

- Be open to negotiation and willing to adapt to changing circumstances
- Consider periodic reviews to ensure the agreement remains relevant

Negotiate Terms and Conditions

- Establish mutually agreeable terms and conditions
- Discuss scheduling, maintenance responsibilities, and any financial contributions required

The Community Use Agreement

- Work with legal professionals (if required) to draft a detailed CUA outlining all agreed-upon terms. Include provisions for renewal, termination, and dispute resolution
- Ensure all parties involved have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities