

# Knutsford Town Council

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## COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY PROJECT PROPOSAL

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <b>Applicant Organisation</b> | Toft Cricket Club                                     |
| <b>Organisation Type</b>      | Community Amateur Sports Club (CASC) (unincorporated) |
| <b>Project Name</b>           | Replacement Pavilion                                  |
| <b>Status</b>                 | Submitted to CIL Advisory Committee                   |

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### Project Overview

#### **Project Description**

*Describe the project. What will it achieve and why is it needed?*

Toft Cricket Club was founded in 1928. By 1938 Toft CC had found its current home with a pitch and pavilion building within the grounds of Norbury Booths Hall. The 86 years old pavilion building still forms the main function space of the current clubhouse, with a Changing Room/WC extension added in the late 20th Century, and occasional upgrading of building fabric and facilities over the years. However, the facilities provided by the existing building are no longer fit for purpose and do not provide a sustainable future for the club.

The current building, although attractive in its setting, is dilapidated and in need of serious structural and fabric updating and refurbishment to provide a safe and comfortable environment for club members, and users from the wider community, for years to come. It no longer provides adequate facilities such as toilets and changing rooms to cater for the growth in numbers and diversity of playing groups – such as the recent rapid growth in numbers of youngsters who take part in coaching and playing sessions at the club, and the very welcome introduction of women's and girls' teams, which are also flourishing but placing new demands on the facilities. In 2023 over 400 members aged 8-80 played cricket!

With its Centenary approaching in 2028, the club has set out its vision for the future; this has 4 key objectives:

- to further develop the Club's place at the centre of the local community by providing an open, engaging, and welcoming environment for players, visitors and other users;
- to position Toft CC as a leading exemplar for sports clubs locally, and across Cheshire, by working towards a sustainable model for our operations and programmes of activity, in line with the ECB's published "Environmental Sustainability Plan for Cricket";
- to continue to provide a high quality, safe, nurturing environment in which to develop the cricketing talents of our young members.
- to encourage cricket participation among as diverse a group as possible, given the demographics of our catchment area, and to continue to provide opportunities to play competitive cricket at the highest level available to a Club side.

In seeking to take this vision forward, Toft CC recognises that, whilst the playing area and grounds are maintained to a high standard, the clubhouse/pavilion is no longer fit for purpose. For instance, the facilities are inadequate to accommodate the rapid growth in women's/girls' cricket, and the structure itself is dilapidated and in need of serious structural and fabric updating and refurbishment to provide safe and comfortable environment for club members, and users from the wider community, for years to come.

Accordingly, the club has decided to seek permission and funding for the removal of the existing building and construction of a replacement facility. The new pavilion will provide a sporting home that the club can be proud of, providing high quality accessible accommodation for the club members and a flexible function/meeting space for the wider community into the future.

The need for a new pavilion at Toft is recognised in the Cheshire East Playing Pitch Strategy Document<sup>1</sup> and supported by the Knutsford Sports Vision Action Plan<sup>2</sup>. The design meets ECB/Sport England requirements for sporting facilities.

Aside from cricket, the pavilion is also the focal point for Toft's engagement with other groups in the local community such as Knutsford Rugby Club and Knutsford Hockey Club, who use the building on a regular basis, and for the charity work carried out by the Toft Taverners (for details see below under "Demonstrating Community Support" and again in Appendix 1).

Accordingly, the Club is pursuing a vigorous, multi-strand, fund-raising strategy in order to raise the £750k sum needed to bring the project to fruition. Sponsorships, corporate and individual donor schemes, and special fund-raising events, as well as researching and applying for grants and interest free loans, comprise the fund-raising strands being undertaken.

### **Project Benefits**

*Please provide a clear statement as to the benefits this project will have for Knutsford.*

The playing area (the square, outfield, and practice facilities) are already recognised as being amongst the best in the county: Toft's senior teams play in the elite Cheshire Premier League; the ground regularly hosts Cheshire County matches and last year hosted a festival for the Lancashire Thunder and Southern Vipers under-19 ladies' teams. In cricketing terms, the new pavilion will provide first class changing facilities for players, enabling Toft to at last provide off-field facilities that are commensurate in quality with the high on-field standards and continue to make Toft a favoured choice for high level cricket.

Visiting teams and their supporters will benefit from the improved social facilities and welcoming ethos of the Club. We can encourage them to explore the local area, with potential benefits in terms of footfall in the town centre and trading for local retailers. The new "Discover Knutsford" branding materials can be made available for visitors to the Club thereby encouraging visitors to explore the locale.

The new pavilion will offer improved facilities for those local community groups who already use the current building, and encourage new users to benefit, in health and well-being terms, from the opportunities for social interaction it will support. The new building will also be more accessible to meet the needs of a more diverse range of users.

The modern design and materials of the new building will provide a lower carbon footprint and reduce running costs by being more energy efficient, making it more economical to run. Better sound proofing will reduce noise pollution.

The new building maintains the sylvan feel of the existing structure and will enhance the appearance of the Booths Hall ground and the wider park area.

As referenced above, the need for a new pavilion at Toft is written into the Cheshire East Playing Pitch Strategy.

### **Project Finances**

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Total Project Cost</b>                 | £ 750,000 |
| <b>Contribution form own funds</b>        | £ 550,000 |
| <b>Contribution form external funding</b> | £ 150,000 |
| <b>CIL Funding Requested</b>              | £ 50,000  |

### **Own Funds**

*Provide details of use of own funds. Do you have them available/when will they be available?*

Own fund raising / funds comes from the following:

- Individual donations / pledges - ~£350k
- Events - £200k

### **External Funds**

*Provide an overview of where external funding will come from. What is the status of this funding?*

External funding comes from the following:

- ECB interest free loan of up to ~£75k (application in progress)
- Crowdfunding / Sport England - ~£25k
- Corporate funding - ~£50k

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## **Project Deliverability**

### **Permissions**

*Are any external/third party permissions required? What is the status of these?*

The original planning application (Ref 21/0260M) approved in June 2021 has expired and a revised plan is about to be submitted. As such, we have contacted all local neighbours, Cheshire East Cllrs, Knutsford Town Council, Local community groups (e.g., SKRG) as well as the ~70 people who supported the initial application to let them know of our status.

The new planning application is very similar to the previously approved plan but is for a slightly smaller building (375m<sup>2</sup> vs. the currently approved 400m<sup>2</sup>) and thus we believe, will find favour with the planners, as there are no other material changes. We are also meeting the Police to discuss how we ensure it is “secure by design” when we come to the construction of the building, as well as planting more trees than we originally planned in the first application.

The building has a licence for the bar issued by Cheshire East. We foresee no changes to this licence. Toft CC is an accredited Clubmark side as approved by the ECB.

### **Timescale**

*When would the project be ready to be delivered? Are there any deadlines/known timescales that effect deliverability?*

Toft CC celebrates its centenary in 2028. The current plan is to commence construction at the end of the 2026 season with a view to moving into the new facility in time for the start of the 2027 season (i.e. by April 2028).

### **Deliverability**

*Is there anything else affecting the deliverability of this project?*

- **Inflation** - in the initial stages of the project this was a key risk. However inflationary pressures have eased.
- **Key personnel** - in the initial stages of the project, the Toft CC Chairman could be considered a key/necessary champion for the project to succeed. Toft is confident that the current team taking the project forward is well-enough developed to ensure it can be taken to completion.
- **Failing to meet funding target** – the club’s pavilion fund currently stands at just over £500k with any additional routes such as grants and interest free loans (via ECB), still being developed. We are in constant dialogue with ECB for comment on the latest plans (through their local agents the Cheshire Cricket Board). ECB have agreed that the proposals meet the recommended design criteria (given planning constraints) and have indicated that the proposals would therefore be considered for grants and funding that might be available in order to bring the scheme to fruition. Given the above, we believe that, with support from KTC/CIL funds, we will be in an excellent position to meet the target of £750k.
- **Failure of revised planning application** (about to be submitted) - given the main change to the earlier (approved) design is an overall reduction in the footprint of the building, this is felt to be a low risk factor.

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## **CIL Funding Priorities**

*Explain how this project meets the four CIL priorities as set out in the CIL Framework*

### **Demonstrating value for money**

While £50k represents only 7% of the total project budget, it will nevertheless be a key contributor to the project achieving its funding target. By helping to bridge the gap between the target of £750k and the current status of the pavilion fund (approx. £500k) the CIL funding would encourage other funding agencies to support the project.

The design meets ECB/Sport England design criteria and has been costed accordingly.

### **Mitigating Detrimental effects of development**

Energy - the new building retains the essential character of the existing pavilion but will benefit from the latest design and materials to produce an energy efficient structure. New build will contribute over its lifetime to a significant reduction in carbon emissions.

Mature and Protected trees - Toft has worked with arboricultural experts and Cheshire East Tree Officers to minimise the impact on Mature trees and preserve the parkland setting. Removal of a small number of mature trees proved unavoidable however and their loss is being mitigated by sympathetic new planting. (Taken from the 2020 planning application doc).

### **Delivering long-term tangible benefits to the community**

The new building will provide a first-class facility for the club and for users from the wider community for at least 50 years. Toft Cricket Club currently runs on a “break even” model. The modern design and materials used in the new pavilion will lead to reduced operating costs for the Club in terms of utilities and general maintenance and it will provide a high-quality and attractive venue which will encourage use by the local community. Both factors are expected to increase the Club’s revenue income, thereby helping to sustain the club economically and cementing the long term viability of the Club itself. For visitors to the Club from outside the area, whether coming for matches or other functions, but otherwise might not consider visiting Knutsford, the favourable impression created by a first-class ground and facilities has the potential to encourage further exploration of the local area with potential knock-on opportunities for local businesses.

### **Demonstrating Community Support**

Toft CC hosts a wide range of events for local residents and the wider community e.g. birthday parties, anniversaries, corporate days and activities, wakes, Christenings, fitness classes, meetings and training courses. Knutsford Rugby Club and Knutsford Hockey Club use the Pavilion on a regular basis (See Appendix 1).

Around 30 local businesses support the club through sponsorship.

More than 80 individuals and families have donated to the club’s “Just Giving” page.

#### *Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan and evidence of consultation with the community*

The need for a new Clubhouse is evidenced in the Knutsford Sports Vision Action Plan (see ref 2).

Evidence of consultation appears in the 21/026M Planning Application Document where the Club stated that it “has consulted with Neighbours, Town Council, Local residents’ groups, sporting bodies, etc to ensure proposals are supported and feasible.” This is confirmed in evidence provided by D Jamison, Resident Lead, Sports & Leisure Knutsford Neighbourhood Plan<sup>3</sup>. Furthermore over 50 statements of support for the proposed new pavilion were submitted to Cheshire East by local residents and community groups (including South Knutsford Residents Group etc...) during the Planning Application Process. These submissions include a statement of support from Bruntwood, the Club’s landlords and may be viewed on line at <https://planning.cheshireeast.gov.uk> (planning ref 21/026M).

The Town Council might also be aware of the positive, verbal feedback provided when representatives of Toft CC met with the Community Committee (29 April 2023), during the Q&A session several members of the committee spoke favourably of the impact of the Club in community

matters. Indeed, the then Mayor, suggested our presentation had understated our impact on the community.

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