**District Dispatch**

I was delighted to recently attend the official opening of Chichester’s first full-size 3G artificial turf, which has been delivered by the council in partnership with Chichester City Football Club and the Football Foundation.

There’s been a huge demand for this new facility, which we know will not only meet the existing and future needs of our city’s premier football club but will also provide fantastic opportunities to grow participation in football — including amongst underrepresented groups, such as women and disabled people — as well as other health and wellbeing activities in the wider community.

To help deliver this amazing facility, the council allocated £300k of Section 106 money, which is funding collected from housing developers to spend on community improvements and facilities. Chichester City Football Club provided a generous contribution to the project, and we’re also very grateful for the technical support offered by the Football Foundation.

We look forward to supporting the football club as they use the pitch to develop their own activities, and we’ll also continue to work closely with our partners and the local community to deliver a wide and varied programme of competitive and non-competitive recreational football, leisure and wellbeing sessions.

The 3G pitch project forms part of the council’s commitment to continually improve the quality of sports and leisure facilities that are available for people to access across the Chichester District. This is really important because open spaces and sports facilities provide a hub for people to meet, socialise, exercise, and connect with their local environment, helping to promote the physical and mental wellbeing of our residents.

We manage a number of grass sports pitches within Chichester — all of which play a vital role in making a positive difference in our local communities. These pitches are used for a whole range of different activities, including rugby, football, American flag football, ultimate frisbee, bootcamp classes, softball and cricket. We also have tennis courts, which are managed by the Chichester Racquet and Fitness Club. All of these facilities can be booked or hired, and you can find all of the information that you need to do so on our website: [**www.chichester.gov.uk/sportspitchescourts**](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/sportspitchescourts)

One thing you may not be aware of is that Priory Park in Chichester is home to the oldest bowls club in Sussex, dating back to 1881 — records also show that the bowling green existed as far back as 1658! During the summer season, this bowling green is open daily and can also be booked by the public anytime other than on Chichester Bowls Club match days.

Our parks and gardens team keep the pitches in tip-top shape, from checking all of the goalposts and equipment, to carrying out grass cutting and marking lines, making sure that the pitches are ready for use.

As part of our commitment to supporting local clubs and growing participation in sports, our Sport and Leisure team are keen to work with local sports clubs to make our pitches home to as many teams, both youth and adult, as possible. If you’re a local team interested in finding out how our pitches could be used to meet your needs, our friendly Sport and Leisure team are keen to hear from you. You can contact them by emailing sport@chichester.gov.uk

If you’re looking to try a new sport, you can find a handy directory of the district’s many local sports clubs on our website at: [**www.chichester.gov.uk/sportsclubdirectory**](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/sportsclubdirectory)

Don’t forget that our three district leisure centres — located in Southbourne, Chichester and Midhurst, managed by Everyone Active — also offer first-class facilities. These include state-of-the-art fitness equipment, squash courts, sports halls, more than 80 different classes, plus the centre in Chichester has a swimming pool and toddler splash pad. For links to each of the centres, visit: [**www.chichester.gov.uk/leisurecentres**](http://www.chichester.gov.uk/leisurecentres)

Best Wishes

Cllr Jess Brown-Fuller

Cabinet Member for Culture and Events at Chichester District Council

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| A logo with text on it  Description automatically generated | **Terri Foster**Senior Communications OfficerCommunicationsChichester District Council |

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| Tel: 01243521226 | tfoster@chichester.gov.uk | Fax: 01243776766 | <https://www.chichester.gov.uk> |
| East Pallant House opening hours: 9am-4pm Monday to Friday |