

Pitch perfect – pupils join project partners to open ‘state of the art’ new sports facilities at Great Notley



Thousands of sports-happy children and adults can now reap the benefits of a £365,000 project to create a new ‘state of the art’, all weather synthetic turf football pitch and a multi-use games area at Great Notley Country Park, Braintree.

The new facilities were officially opened at Great Notley Country Park on 1st December when year 5 and 6 pupils from Notley Green School, Braintree were welcomed along to try out a range of sports under the supervision of Nacro.

They were joined by Councillors and representatives from the funding partners, including Cllr David Finch, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Community Wellbeing, Essex County Council; Cllr Roger Walters, Cabinet Member for Environment and Sustainability, BDC; Brendan Walshe of Essex Football Association representing the Football Foundation; Paul Prosser, Chairman Great Notley Football Club; Cllr Margaret Galione – BDC Chairman and Cllr Lady Patricia Newton, Cabinet Member for Well Being, BDC. Simon Wells, Managing Director, ETC Sports Surfaces and Steve Wilcockson, Managing Director Surfacing Standards Ltd also attended.

Cllr Roger Walters, said: “It’s a pleasure to welcome our first young players here today to get a taste of the many activities they can now enjoy at the Country Park. The third generation synthetic pitches, vast new games area, flood lighting and changing rooms make this one of the



best new training facilities in Essex and will benefit everyone from professional footballers to school pupils and family groups.”

Co-funded by Essex County Council, Braintree District Council, Great Notley Parish Council and the Football Foundation; and supported by Great Notley Football Club, the 61m x 43 m floodlit all weather pitch will serve the needs of Great Notley Football Club, alongside other clubs in the district. In addition, the 43m x 19m floodlit macadam Multi Use Games Area, which replaces a smaller hard court area, will be available for schools, youth groups and companies to use for football and other sports such as netball, basketball and tennis.

Paul Prosser, said: “The 3rd generation rubber compound base which makes up the larger All Weather Pitch will benefit not just Great Notley football club and the immediate local community but, with easy access from the A120 and A131, will draw others to a much needed facility in the area. We look forward to continuing to work with Braintree District Council and Essex County Council and other local clubs to raise the profile of youth football in the area. A special thanks to Mark Edwards (former VC of the club) who has pushed this project to completion with so much passion.”

Paul Thorogood, Chief Executive of the Football Foundation, said: “We warmly congratulate Braintree District and Essex County Councils alongside Great Notley Football Club and Essex County FA for their hard work and dedication in creating these new facilities. It is thanks to the funding from our partners the Premier League, The FA and Government that the Football Foundation exists to support this type of excellent project in Braintree.”

Cllr David Finch, said: “This has been an excellent partnership project which shows just what can be achieved when local communities, parish, district and county councils work together.”

Local schools, clubs and other organisations who would like to find out more about booking the all weather pitches, or multi-use games area can contact Braintree District Council on:01376 332326. Outside of bookings the games area will be available for casual use by visitors to the Country Park.

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For more press information or enquiries contact:

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Notes to Editors

The objectives of the new facilities at Great Notley Country Park are:

- To encourage and create opportunities for all players to participate in competitive football using skills they have learned in training sessions, and improving communication, team building and respect for others;
- To help to develop new coaches and to help clubs achieve the Football Association Charter Mark Accreditation Scheme through locally run football educational coach development courses and courses for clubs to develop their volunteers to assist in achieving Club Sx and Charter;
- To provide all year round football training within the catchment area;
- To meet growing demand in the Great Notley area for formal sports facilities that will complement the existing facilities;
- To raise the profile and reputation of the Country Park.

The Football Foundation, the country's largest sports charity, is dedicated to revitalising the grass roots of the game, constructing modern football facilities, developing football as a vehicle for education in communities throughout the country. The Foundation is funded by the Premier League, The FA and Government with an annual budget of £40m.

The Nacro Braintree Community Sports Project is a crime reduction charity dedicated to changing lives and creating opportunities for young people aged 10 – 19 years. The project is a partnership project with Braintree District Council which is funded through the Football Foundation and Braintree District Council. The project's aim is to develop football and sports based sessions that provide a diversionary activity away from anti social behaviour and engage young people into positive rewarding activities that address issues of self confidence, self-esteem, a feeling of self worth as well as general health and fitness.