

Mulbarton Wanderers CIC

Good evening, all. I would like to thank the parish council for inviting me to speak on behalf of Mulbarton Wanderers CIC.

In the last year the old football club voted unanimously to become a community interest club. This would enable us to become a sustainable business with access to numerous funding sources and an attractive proposition to future investors. Based on this we were able to achieve our long-term goal of securing the future of the football club in the village by signing a long-term lease with the parish council. This has helped the CIC to access large funding opportunities from the Fa stadia fund and the national Fa for grass roots funding.

We as a club have grown yet again this year and moving into next season, we will be looking to run 34 teams. 28 of those teams will be youth teams made up of both boys and girls, with the remaining being a new men's team, a new women's team, giving a clearer pathway for our youngsters to continue their journeys into adult football.

At the start of the new year, we entered into a discussion with our local FA who are keen to support the CIC in our wish for a new modern ground including the latest 3G pitch, new lights and the latest in equipment to maintain the site to the highest possible standard. We are currently in the feasibility stage of our journey and are hoping that if successful we would be able to bring all our teams back to the village for training at the very least. This would enable the club to make savings in the region of £30k that we currently pay to a 3G facility in Norwich and boost the businesses in the village with trade we currently take elsewhere.

In the near future we will be looking to invest in the region of £50k on new machinery to enable us to maintain our own pitches, to spend extra time tending and improving the pitches we currently have on Orchard Park as well as our main pitch on Mulberry. We would like to be able to invest money on improving the drainage on Orchard Park to make it a more usable space all year round. Looking after the pitches on a more regular basis should help this in the meantime.

The biggest issue the club has currently is changing facilities. For the 6 adult teams currently playing in the village, we have 2 unsuitable changing rooms. We as a business would like to try and access funding to build a purpose-built sports facility between Mulberry and Orchard. We would like to encourage all sports and leisure groups in the village to join us on that journey. We would like to gain 6 changing rooms, a large hall for gymnastics and climbing and all the other groups we are currently having to turn away, 2 large rooms purpose built for the scouting community to allow them to grow in size.

We would like an upstairs bar and viewing area to watch football and cricket all year round on both Orchard and Mulberry. We would like rooms and units within the building to allow for sport and leisure specific businesses to operate and bring more trade into our village, all this whilst allowing the village hall to continue to use the space within their building for the groups that currently use it as their home.

For too long we have had a village growing in size and an infrastructure that has stood still. We as a village have outgrown many of the facilities that were suitable 30 years ago and we risk losing not only youngsters but adults to areas that are improving their amenities and I feel that would turn what should be a thriving community into a ghost town.

Duane James
Lead Director

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