

# PENYGELLI FIELDS (THE BIG PARK)

**Wellbeing at the Heart of our Community**



FEASIBILITY STUDY, ASSET TRANSFER PROPOSAL  
AND THREE-YEAR BUSINESS PLAN

FINAL REPORT FOR: COEDPOETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL. NOVEMBER 2021

CYNLAS CYF, IN ASSOCIATION WITH DEWIS ARCHITECTURE

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*Cyllidwyd y prosiect hwn drwy Cymunedau Gwledig Llywodraeth Cymru - Rhaglen Datblygu Gwledig Cymru 2014-2020, a ariennir gan Lywodraeth Cymru a'r Gronfa Amaethyddol Ewrop ar gyfer Datblygu Gwledig.*

*This project has received funding through the Welsh Government Rural Communities - Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the Welsh Government.*



## Executive Summary

This report was commissioned by Coedpoeth Community Council, in partnership with Coedpoeth United, Coedpoeth Playable Places Group and other community organisations, and was funded with support from Cadwyn Clwyd through the Rural Development Programme.

This report considers proposals to redevelop Penygelli Fields, known to many as The Big Park, and consider to consider issues of improving the main pitch and smaller practice pitches, a new clubhouse and changing rooms, dog exercise and play areas, as well as other community needs.

One of the primary objectives of the study is to determine the viability of assuming the asset on behalf of the community. The partners involved wish to secure the whole site as an asset transfer from Wrexham County Borough Council, with a view to revitalising the Big Park, and transforming it into a sustainable community for all the residents of Coedpoeth. This report is therefore also a key document in support of a formal application to the Local Authority to facilitate the transfer of the asset.

The report encompasses a three-year financial plan, which incorporates an initial assessment of the costs, as well as grant funding and income generating activities. The estimated cost is some £418k over three years and the financial forecasts indicate that the development and sustainable management of the Big Park is feasible and realistic.

The vision is for a space that offers a range of facilities in one single location. The redeveloped Big Park will contribute to the wellbeing, health, and prosperity of village residents, and be an amenity for all ages within the community, for the physically active, and those who are less abled or infirm who just want to enjoy the outside.

The Pandemic resulted in some delay to the outcome of the study, but ironically, the COVID-19 has reinforced and illuminated the arguments for investing in the Big Park. The last eighteen (18) months and more have shown how important green spaces, physical activity and community facilities are. Penygelli Fields offers all of this and symbolises a collective effort by the people of Coedpoeth to take the village forward sustainably, cohesively and effectively.

The report has also been the subject of significant engagement with the community, including the schools, and there is a solid foundation upon which to take the project forward.

There is both capacity and commitment amongst the key partners in Coedpoeth to take the project forward. Playable Places, Coedpoeth United FC and the Community Council have worked tirelessly with other stakeholders to make this project happen, and it is their combined efforts that will see the transformation of the Big Park realised.

This report offers an initial plan for achieving the ambitions of the partners set out above and offers the validation of the proposals put forward by the community. It should also provide Wrexham County Borough Council with the assurance that the transfer of the asset is sustainable, viable and strategically in line with its corporate objectives.

In recommending the transfer of Penygelli Fields to the Community Council, we have also emphasised the need to consider establishing a separate legal entity to run the park as a community social enterprise., taking on a long lease from the Council. This community enterprise would include the key partners, as well as other members of the community, and would be responsible for the development and refurbishment of the Big Park, as well as the operation of the facilities post completion.

This report is merely the precursor to much more detailed work that will need to be undertaken over the next 3-5 years by the parties involved. But it is a positive, clear, and cogent plan, that should serve to allow Coedpoeth Community Council and its partners to now move ahead with expediency.

## 1. Introduction

1.1 This report was commissioned by Coedpoeth Community Council, in partnership with Coedpoeth United, Coedpoeth Playable Places Group and other community organisations, and was funded with support from Cadwyn Clwyd through the Rural Development Programme.

1.2 The intention was to undertake a detailed study to determine whether the plans to develop Penygelli Fields, known to many as The Big Park, and home to Coedpoeth United, were feasible. The study would need to consider issues of improving the main pitch and smaller practice pitches, a new clubhouse and changing rooms, dog exercise and play areas, as well as other community needs.

Intrinsic to this study was a requirement to undertake Topographical Survey, however it quickly became apparent that the main priority at this stage, was a survey of the soil conditions and drainage; therefore this element was changed and a separate correlated exercise utilising sports pitch consultants was also completed. The findings of that exercise have been incorporated into this report.

1.3 The Study was also expected to include significant community consultation, and a three-year financial plan, which incorporated a source and application of funding assessment, identifying costs and potential grant funding opportunities.

1.4 The eventual report would also need to be usable as a project plan capable of use in achieving a Community Asset Transfer from Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC).

1.5 The vision is for a space that offers a range of facilities in one single location. The redeveloped “Big Park” will contribute to the wellbeing, health and prosperity of village residents, and be an amenity for all ages within the community, for the physically active, and those who are less abled or infirm who just want to enjoy the outside.

1.6 The work commenced in November 2019, but primarily due to COVID-19 there were significant delays in completing the report. Fortunately, the main consultation was undertaken in the early months of 2020, prior to the initial Lockdown, meaning that we were able to draw upon significant, robust and detailed feedback in developing the report and plan.

1.7 Despite the delays incurred by COVID-19, the Pandemic has, ironically, further solidified the arguments for improved facilities at Penygelli Fields. The last eighteen (18) months and more have shown how important green spaces, physical activity and community facilities are. Penygelli Fields offers all of this and symbolises a collective effort by the people of Coedpoeth to take the village forward; sustainably, cohesively and effectively.

1.8 This report offers an initial plan for achieving the ambitions of the partners, and hopefully offers the basis for further deliberations with Wrexham County Borough Council on the transfer of the fields. However, it is only the precursor to much more detailed work that will need to be undertaken over the next 3-5 years by the parties involved. But it is a positive, clear, and cogent plan, that should serve to allow Coedpoeth Community Council and its partners to now move ahead with expediency.

## 2. Penygelli Fields/The Big Park

2.1 Penygelli Fields can be found on the side of the A525 Wrexham to Ruthin road, as you enter Coedpoeth.

Locally, the fields are also known, and probably, more well known as The Big Park.



Figure 1 – Penygelli Fields / The Big Park (Source: Google Maps)

The fields are home to Coedpoeth United FC, one of a number of teams that have played under the name Coedpoeth going back to the 1899, and the club remains a key component of any solution for the playing fields.

2.2 The fields are owned jointly by Wrexham County Borough Council and Coedpoeth Community Council with the Community Council portion leased to back to the Local Authority. The site is currently managed by Wrexham Council, but the maintenance of the two play areas is paid for by Coedpoeth Community Council. The Football Club pays Wrexham Council for use of the football pitches and changing rooms. The changing rooms and toilets are only permitted to be open on match days when a Wrexham Council employee must be on site.

The main pitch currently meets Football Association of Wales standards for senior football at Coedpoeth's level (North-East Wales Football League Premier Division). However, the playing surface has suffered significantly in recent years, primarily due to severe drainage problems. This makes the pitch unplayable for most of the season, and the senior team now plays the vast majority of its home matches as Lex, which is 3.5 miles away. This costs the club £200 for each home match.

There is also a second pitch, but this is not big enough for 11 a side, and is currently



used for Under 12s 9 a side football & Under 11 mini football.

*Figure 2 - Tearoom at Coedpoeth United FC*



The Football Club is the primary user of Penygelli Fields at present, and currently has some 60 people volunteering at various levels.

The club is growing each other, with 280+ players now registered, and in addition a popular and successful Walking Football Team. Next season it is planned to have two additional girls teams (under 11 and under 13) and it is also hoped to have and Under 19s team playing as well.

This is all very positive, but the facilities are woefully inadequate, and the increasing number of participants puts further pressure on the fields and amenities. Due to the limitations the club has to continually an increasingly rely on a number of other facilities in the wider Wrexham area to fulfil all its footballing obligations.

The changing room facilities are completely inadequate and are in need of significant investment if they are to meet the needs of the football club in the future. There are toilets above the changing rooms, which are on street level, but these were closed by the Local Authority many years ago. There are also two toilets and one urinal inside the changing rooms.

The club has use of two storage units on the field one of which is used as a simple kiosk for teas, coffees, cold drinks and snacks on match days. The other unit is used for storage. t present, Coedpoeth United FC is the major user of Penygelli Fields providing football in the community for all age groups in the village.

2.3 There is also a Skate Park on the site and is in a satisfactory condition. It is well used and is a popular destination for older children in the community. However, the play facilities are now poor, and there are only a few pieces of equipment left.

The fields are also used by local dog walkers.

There is also a small car park, this is used by field users, but also adjacent businesses on the other side of the A525. However, the car park is small, and the surface is currently in a very bad condition and considered dangerous due to the increasing number of large potholes.

Due to the limitations of the car park, many people park in adjacent streets, causing disruption and consternation for residents.

2.4 The vision of the partners, as described in the original Invitation to Quote, includes:

*“an ‘outdoor leisure centre’ set in a picturesque rural setting providing constructive play for the whole community and health and well-being for future generations whilst also tackling the 21st century issues of social isolation / inclusion and obesity. This project will provide investment in a ‘sense of place’ within the rural community of Coedpoeth and may also help combat many mental health problems by actively encouraging exercise in fresh air. Since the fields are used by people of all ages it is very important to be aware of the possible conflicts of interest and fulfil the undoubted potential of the area.”*

The intention is for the Community Council to have the fields transferred to them from Wrexham Council.

Figure 3 - Current Land Ownership Position - Penygelli Fields



As shown on the plan below, and previously described, the current ownership arrangement is cumbersome and restrictive, making it very difficult for the community to take the project forward. By bringing the area into community ownership it will allow the site to be developed unfettered and should allow for an easier and clearer route for funding new developments.

It is clear that significant investment is now required. Since the field is already well used there are many different groups willing and able to unite for the benefit of the village and work together towards the new vision.

2.5 The original brief offered a range of ideas and suggestions; these have been built upon over the course of this work, thanks to the contributions of key partners, most notably Coedpoeth United FC, the Playable Places Group, the Community Council, Wrexham's Play Team, and the local schools. The consultation undertaken further enriched those considerations, giving a solid foundation for the development of a masterplan. A masterplan that will meet the objectives of the original brief, that being a project that will:

*"...support an open spaces policy, improve the life of village residents and promote health and wellbeing within our community. Facilities will be designed for young and old, those who are active and those requiring just an area to sit, relax and reflect; it will provide access for all"*

However, all the above is predicated on having a playing surface that can accommodate regular senior football, junior football and allow for community events and activities when required. But, as is known, the current playing surface is in a very poor state. As a result, in correlation with this study, a report was commissioned to review the pitches, and to consider the options for remediation.

The report was undertaken by Oolong Sports Pitch Consultants, and the main findings are summarised below. A copy of the full report is attached as Appendix I

The assessment was based on the Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG) Performance Quality Standards table (PQS) which provides a minimum quality standard for the construction and maintenance of grass sports pitches.

- The study focused on the drainage situation, the ground surface levels (topography), soil conditions and grass health. Soil assessment investigations were undertaken to determine soil depths and conditions.
- Historical information about the site was gained via conversations with staff on the day of the visit.

- Recommendations and outline costings for improvements take into account the potential future use of the playing surfaces and requirements of Coedpoeth United FC as outlined by club staff and community members on the day of the site visit.
- The ground suffers from wet surface conditions caused by the poor structure of the soils and lack of active drainage. The pitch has acceptable slopes with a slightly undulating surface (it is not flat). The grass coverage is good but plant health needs improving.
- Both pitches have similar gradients and slope from NW to SE. The approximate pitch gradients are shown below and indicate that pitch slopes are not excessive. There are minor local undulations on the surface of the pitches but these are not excessive.

*Figure 4 - Gradient of the pitches*



- Ariel photographs suggest that the primary drainage system was visible in 2006 indicating that the existing system was installed over 15 years ago and is unlikely to function now. This is apparent from the condition of the grass surface and soil conditions encountered.
- Unstable and muddy surface conditions arise when the upper soils become saturated, and the ground is unable to drain sufficiently after rainfall events. In this particular case the nature and structure of the soils, the lack of a functioning field drainage system and the limited maintenance operations undertaken are the main reason for the wet ground conditions encountered.
- Currently only limited pitch maintenance work is undertaken which includes grass cutting and line marking. Grass clippings are not removed after cutting

and remain on the pitch.

- Proper pitch management practices are vital in fulfilling the true potential of any capital works. Inadequate ongoing maintenance operations will lead to poor surface performance and in turn will not repay the capital invested. A full maintenance programme should be provided with any specifications for improvement works.

The conclusions:

- Both pitches show the characteristics of surface drainage problems which are a consequence of the existing ground conditions, soil characteristics and inadequate maintenance.
- The ground is compacted and lacks any structure and is a component cause of waterlogged conditions in this case.
- The grass density is good with few bare patches and vegetation coverage as high as 95% in isolated areas.
- The pitches slopes in a NW to SE direction and are within the mid PQS category for pitch slopes. The depth of topsoil (rootzone material) within the senior pitch at 150mm has a mid PQS.
- Currently the senior pitch is marked at 61m wide and there is little scope to increase this due to the size of the terrace. The site has a discharge point for a field drainage scheme.
- Addressing the pitch drainage would dramatically improve play and increase the reliability of fixtures. It is also fundamental in promoting a healthy grass sward and an improved playing surface.

Recommendations:

- The movement of surface water through the profile needs to be improved by the installation of a comprehensive drainage system.
- The soil chemistry status and grass plant health need to be addressed during surface establishment operations and subsequent maintenance operations.
- Key actions:

- Install a new drainage system comprising primary underdrainage pipework at 5m centres in conjunction with a form of secondary drainage
- Remove the surface undulations with cultivation operations
- Undertake surface establishment of a suitable grass sward
- Address the issues with the soil chemistry
- Include an annual maintenance programme

2.6 The above masterplan and pitch report combined, together with the outcome of the consultation (see section 5) bring together a programme of work that can be used by the partners involved in the Big Park as the basis for moving forward.

### 3. Coedpoeth and the Community

3.1 As recently as 1832, what is now Coedpoeth was instead four small separate hamlets. But with the rapid development of industry in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the four hamlets grew, and by the 1860s, the village was named Coed Poeth, and this form of the name remained until the 1940s when it began to be known as Coedpoeth.

The late 20<sup>th</sup> century saw a decline in the area's traditional industries of coal and lead mining. Despite this, there are a small number of significant employers, and there is a vibrant village centre. With a population at the last census of 4,702, it is larger than many towns in North-West Wales, including Llanrwst (3,323) in Conwy and Pwllheli (4,076) in Gwynedd, and there are still many small businesses in the village centre along the high street.

In 2021 Coedpoeth still boasts over 40 retailers and businesses, as well as three GP surgeries, a dental surgery, opticians and main Post Office branch which provides the full PO range of services.

There a range of historic buildings and places across the village, including the Grade 2 listed Memorial Gardens and Carnegie Library.

3.2 The 1972 Local Government Act, saw Coedpoeth established as an electoral entity (having previously been within Bersham), and the Community Council was established. By now, it is also one of the County Borough Council's largest communities, being the fifth highest population amongst the 47 electoral wards across Wrexham.

As an electoral ward Coedpoeth currently elects two county councillors to serve on Wrexham County Borough Council, and also has a maximum of fourteen community councillors are elected or co-opted to serve on Coedpoeth Community Council.

The Community Council has led this initiative, and provided both the administrative support, and financial match funding to enable this piece of work.

3.3 Coedpoeth has two vibrant primary schools: Ysgol Penygelli and Ysgol Bryn Tabor, which is a Welsh-medium school. There is also a very popular and much used Community Hub, Plas Pentwyn.

3.4 There has been a library since 1904, the original library was the Carnegie Library, built in 1904 as Coedpoeth Free Library and one of the many libraries funded across the UK by Andrew Carnegie, the Scottish-American steel magnate. In recent years a new library was established in Plas Pentwyn, and now the old Carnegie Library is solely home to Coedpoeth Community Council.

Plas Pentwyn itself is a focal point for the community. Opened in 2008, the centre provides a range of activities, services and facilities for the people of Coedpoeth it is designated as an Enterprise & Lifelong Learning Centre, run by Wrexham's Economic Development department.

3.5 It is also important to note that Coedpoeth has a cohesive relationship with the contiguous ward of Minera. This adjacent community is integrally linked with the village, and in many senses the two wards are part of the same social fabric. Brought together, the two communities represent one of the largest population settlements in Wrexham.

3.6 The energy behind the Big Park project has emanated from three main sources, these being the Coedpoeth United FC, the Playable Places Group and the Community Council.

In 2016, the Local Authority transferred responsibility for the maintenance of Coedpoeth's four unstaffed play areas to the Community Council. Alongside this, Wrexham's Play Development and Planning Departments had been looking at ways of delivering a more emphatic programme of play, utilising spaces effectively, an optimising their play value, natural resources and relationship with the community.

In the context of Coedpoeth this led to the formation of the Coedpoeth Playable Places Group, and they have played a pivotal role in the development of play and green spaces in the village since that time, undertaking significant consultation and developing a masterplan for the development of a range of places and green spaces in the village.

The Big Park/Penygelli Fields has been identified as one of four key spaces for play by the Group and Wrexham, and following the successful redevelopment of the memorial park, the Big Park is now a key priority.

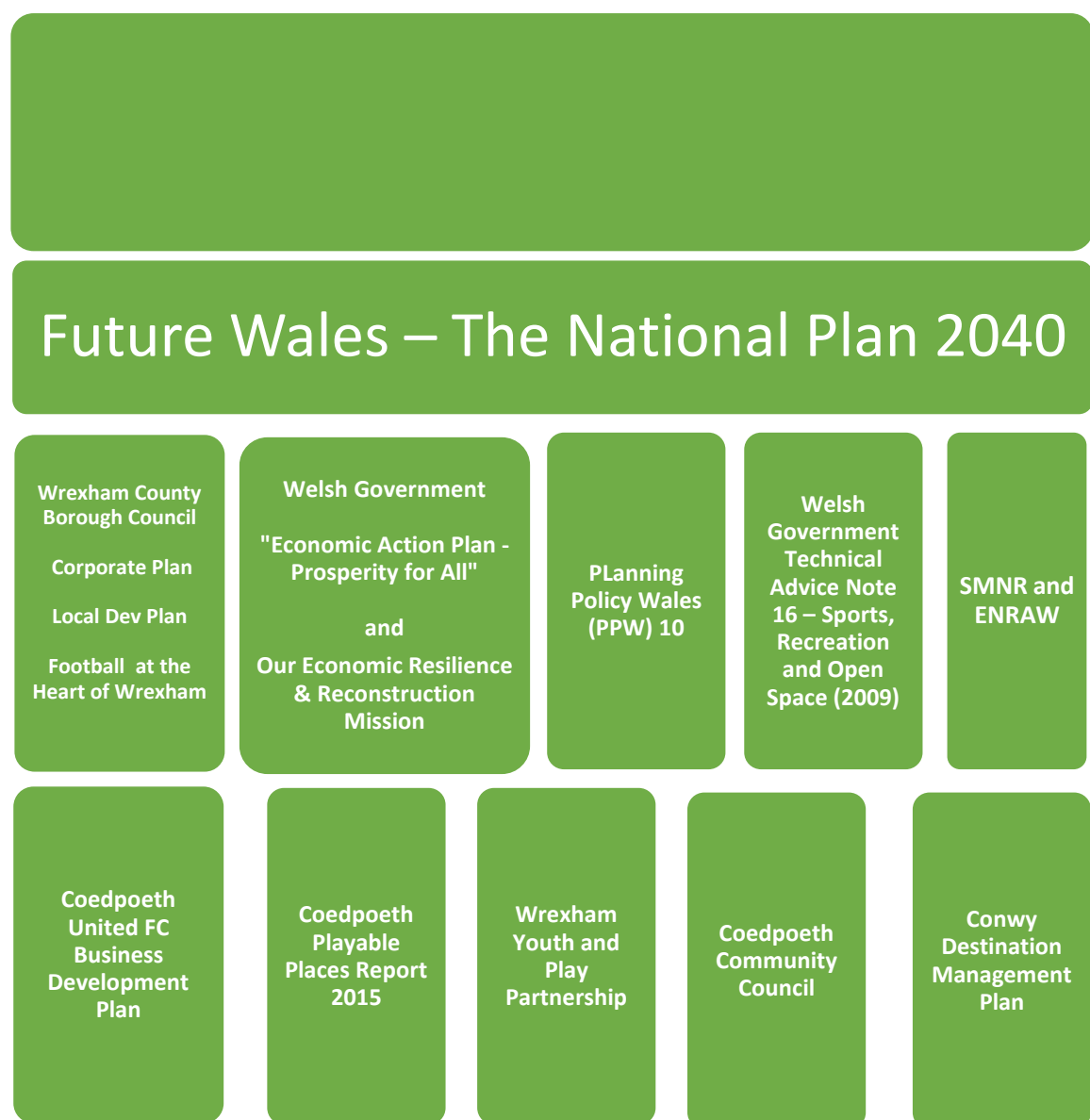
3.7 The triumvirate of the Football Club, the Playable Places Team and the Community Council offer a robust and forward-looking group that has the vision, wherewithal and commitment to take the Big Park Project forward.



## 4. Green Spaces, Wellbeing and the Strategic Context.

4.1 This report was commissioned pre COVID-19; however the transformational societal impact of the Pandemic has arguably offered further strategic justification for investment in the Big Park. Even prior to COVID there was a host of evidence that confirmed the need for green spaces and play parks. From local level work, the vision of Wrexham County Borough Council, Welsh Government, business, and academia to the United Nations, the justification for investment in parks and green spaces has been in abundance. This is clearly shown in the infographic below:

Figure 5 - Strategic Context



4.2 The commissioning of this report comes at a time of transformational societal change; partly but not solely driven by COVID-19. Welsh Government has recently published two key documents that have a bearing on this work: namely Future Wales – the National Plan 2040, setting out Planning Policy for the next two decades; and the economic strategy for emerging from the Pandemic – “Welsh Government – Our Economic Resilience and Reconstruction Mission”

4.3 The National Plan offers a high-level overview of the approach to Planning for the future. As noted by the Minister, Julie James in the introduction to the document:

*“Future Wales is a framework for planning the change and development our country will need over the next two decades”*

Within it there is clear relevance to this project, including:

*“..... the use of innovative nature-based solutions should form part of strategies for urban growth and regeneration. Through Green Infrastructure Assessments, specific opportunities should be identified to ensure that green infrastructure is fully integrated”*

and

*“Providing locally accessible, high quality green spaces and corridors helps to maintain and enhance the strategic functioning of our natural resources and ecological networks and address physical and mental well-being. Local green infrastructure assets such as public rights of way, common land, parks, village greens and allotments can all make a cumulative contribution towards wider national scale ecological connectivity.”*

4.4 Welsh Government’s Overarching Economic Strategy - **“Prosperity for All: the national strategy Taking Wales Forward”** was published in 2017. This sets out its vision for economic development and includes specific references to the importance of green space:

“We will:

*work with communities to help maintain local facilities that bring people together, including pubs, libraries, museums, green spaces, arts centres and leisure centres, helping communities take ownership of assets in their local area”*

and

*“The contribution made by the environment to good health cannot be overstated. Air quality, good housing, access to green spaces and energy efficiency schemes each*

*have a part to play in creating the right conditions for better health, well-being, and greater physical activity.”*

- 4.5 In response to COVID-19’s devastating impact on the economy of Wales, the government published **“Welsh Government – Our Economic Resilience and Reconstruction Mission”**. This focuses on three objectives or areas of ambition, namely: Prosperous, Green and Equal; setting out a holistic strategy that entwines the three complementary areas to achieve a “wellbeing economy”.

This new strategy further elaborates on the importance of green spaces, and how they can play a key role in sustaining and supporting communities. This project resonates with the new plan in many aspects, including:

*“A **greener economy** which demands high levels of circularity, where resources are kept in use adding economic value and where waste is avoided. This can create jobs and skills opportunities in new industries from renewables to repair.”*

*“This economy is integral to a low carbon society, so we will **invest in low-carbon and climate resilient infrastructure, nature-based solutions, renewable energy projects and sustainable homes**”*

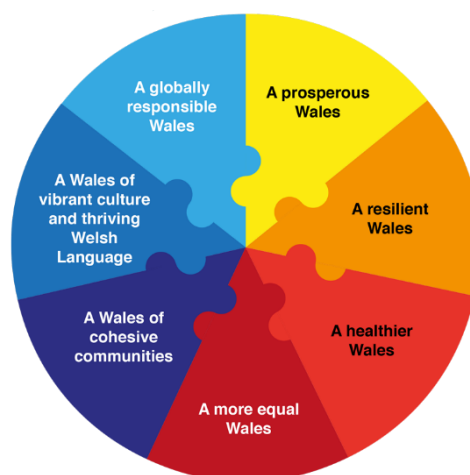
*“Creating greener spaces with improved urban air quality within ‘walkable neighbourhoods’ will help the Foundational Economy thrive and ensure community needs are met locally.”*

*“Town centres of tomorrow must be green and clean – places which are attractive to work, visit and live.”*

- 4.6 All current Welsh Government policies are underpinned by the **Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**.

This core policy of Welsh Government sets out 7 Wellbeing Objectives and governs how public bodies should work in future. Of these objectives, three are of key relevance (although all seven resonate with the project):

- 4.7 **A Resilient Wales:** A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the



*Figure 6 - Wellbeing of Future Generation Act (Wales) 2015*

capacity to adapt to change.

**A Healthier Wales:** A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood.

**A Wales of Cohesive Communities:** Attractive, safe, viable and well-connected.

4.8 In reviewing national level policies we also considered **Welsh Government Technical Advice Note 16 – Sports, Recreation and Open Space (2009)**.

This subordinate Planning Technical Advice Note (TAN) is especially important in the context of this report. Whilst lengthy, it is considered appropriate to include a number of sections in the guidance note due their relevance:

*“3.21. It is vital that children and young people, including those who are disabled, can access areas for casual and more formal organised uses, which provide safe, secure opportunities to socialise and play. While formal, equipped play areas provide opportunities, particularly for young children within communities, these are not the only forms of provision which should be offered.*

*“Wheeled play areas, ball game areas, ‘playable spaces’, community woodland and informal areas for ‘environmental play’ can provide opportunities for children to interact and gain the social, health and well-being benefits which come from opportunities for active, physical play”.*

*“3.22 The integration of play areas into the built and natural environment, avoiding the creation of artificial boundaries, can help provide safe and accessible areas for play and socialising - usually linked to housing. The design of new streets, and traffic management of existing streets can help create safer spaces for play in residential areas. Providing well lit, overlooked spaces, can promote the more effective, safer use of streets, with reduced speed limits.*

*Ideally, they should be community led, with full and effective involvement of children, families and older people in their design. Although not usually traffic free, and with parked cars, streets can provide for a range of play and recreation activities. The type and range of spaces, surfaces, and equipment provided will vary to reflect, for example, the character of the street, community preferences and resources”*

*“3.23 Involving children and young people in planning provision is essential, particularly in providing advice about the location and design of formal and informal play areas for new housing developments. Local planning authorities should seek to involve them from the outset, when preparing development plans, design briefs,*

*supplementary planning guidance, and local play strategies.”*

#### 4.9 Wales Environment Act 2016, SMNR and ENRaW

the Environment (Wales) Act sets out the legislative framework to ensure natural resources and ecosystems are resilient and able to provide benefits (ecosystem services) now, and for the future, through the ‘sustainable management of natural resources’. Primarily applying to the new way of working for Natural Resources Wales (NRW), the implications for green infrastructure and green spaces reach out into every community within Wales.

The ENRaW Programme is a European funded grants programme, has been administered by Welsh Government, and has SMNR principles embedded. The vision underpinning the programme is for businesses, organisations, and communities to work together under the umbrella of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act to increase their resilience by tackling issues such as:

- Poverty
- Financial sustainability
- Climate change
- Environment / local environment quality
- Social exclusion

With a clear fit to national priorities as set out in Prosperity for All, Natural Resources Policy and any relevant issue-specific and local strategies and plans.

ENRaW predominantly supports projects that make improvements in residential areas by delivering benefits for people, businesses, and their communities. It focuses on pilot and demonstration projects at the right scale, promoting cooperation and collaboration to address the following three themes of action:

- Developing, regenerating, and broadening access to sustainable green infrastructure through nature-based solutions.
- Improving the quality of the urban and rural built environment.
- Developing resilient ecological networks and nature- based solutions.

#### 4.10 Wrexham’s current Corporate Plan notes the following relevant objective:

*“The connections between communities will remain our focus with opportunities that are maximised, balancing looking after our green spaces, habitats and natural environment. In particular we will work with rural communities to ensure post pandemic we maintain strong rural communities. We will continue to work in*

*collaboration with partners other local authorities across the region and Welsh Government to ensure that our environment is well supported"*

- 4.11 Wrexham County Borough Council also has a clear policy on play provision, this is underpinned by the by Article 31 of the United Nations Conventions of the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) on the 30th of September 2013.

This recognised the need to:

*"Create time and space for spontaneous play, recreation and creativity, and the promotion of societal attitudes that support and encourage such activity."*

Wrexham CBC policy on play, adopted since 2009, states that:

"Play encompasses children's behaviour which is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. It is performed for no external goal or reward and is a fundamental and integral part of healthy development – not only individual children, but also for the society in which they live" This is derived from Welsh Assembly Government policy from 2002."

- 4.12 Football at the Heart of Wrexham.

In October 2021 it was announced that Wrexham County had been shortlisted for the next City of Culture. It was the only destination in Wales shortlisted, and the submission from the Local Authority and its partners premised its bid on a range of cultural assets. Integral this submission was the county's rich footballing heritage, and the important role played by Wrexham Football Club and the wider area in the development and continued importance of the game in the region.

The bid itself built upon earlier work by Wrexham County Borough Council to develop the county as a footballing destination. Its report, Football at the Heart of Wrexham noted:

*"There are more than double the number of football participants in Wrexham than any other Local Authority in North Wales including over 3,300 adults and over 4,500 young people playing in over 53 senior and junior football clubs."*

The strategy is to build upon Wrexham's heritage and current strengths in relation to football, and to use football as a means of developing the county as a whole by transforming the landscape of the "beautiful game". Asserting its position as "the spiritual home of football in Wales", there are four interrelated strands to the strategy:

- *Develop outstanding facilities to serve all elements of the game.*
- *Develop stronger football clubs enabling junior and adult teams to thrive and women and girls to become active participants.*
- *Provide learning, employment and work experience opportunities to develop a workforce that supports all aspects of the game.*
- *Improve the visitor experience and perception of Wrexham County Borough as a competitive destination and build Wrexham's capacity to deliver well-managed and sustainable high profile events of national significance.*

#### 4.13 Other relevant reports.

##### 4.13.1 RICS – WORLD BUILT ENVIRONMENT FORUM June 2020.

This report examined the role of green space in London's COVID-19 recovery.

*"Urban green space in London has huge value for people's physical and mental health, creating £950m savings for the National Health Service. It supports community cohesion, and boosts climate resilience whilst supporting local wildlife. Access to green space during COVID-19 has been critical, but there is insufficient and unequal access to public green space. This can be addressed by enhancing local amenity spaces, improving the connectivity between existing parks and greening parts of the built environment and wider public realm to augment the parks network. Participatory design methods can build community ownership".*

Whilst this refers specifically to London, the principles remain true at even the smallest of settlement levels. As it notes, "Access to green space.... has been critical", and this has been as relevant in Coedpoeth as it has in Camden. The value and appreciation of parks and green space has been reinforced as a result of the Pandemic, and Coedpoeth will be much the stronger and more cohesive for having parks and green spaces appropriate for all its residents.

##### 4.13.2 "Space to Thrive" January 2020". National Lottery Community Fund.

A review of the benefits parks and green spaces have for people and communities. This was conducted by Sheffield Hallam and the University of Sheffield and funded by the National Lottery Community Fund.

Based on 385 peer papers over the previous decade, the key findings were:

- Access to and use of parks and green spaces enhance physical health, mental wellbeing, and life satisfaction.
- Parks can create important opportunities for social integration
- Parks provide opportunities for community engagement
- Parks and green spaces highlight inequalities in society
- Parks and green spaces enable people to connect with nature, which enhances their sense of wellbeing.

The report recommended that parks should be seen as part of the social fabric, not physical infrastructure of communities, that they should be used and managed to support health and wellbeing and utilised as a means of encouraging connections with nature.

#### 4.13.3 Coedpoeth United FC Business Development Plan (2019)

This ambitious plan sets out the Football Club's aims and objectives, with a primary focus on the infrastructure that can deliver a more prosperous and successful future at all levels for Coedpoeth FC.

At its heart is a philosophy that balances the technical excellence of the game, with the social and community benefits football can bring:

*"The club aims to provide football and high-quality coaching for all in the community, seeking development not only for technical and physical aspects of football, but socially by educating those affiliated to the club in team work and respect, amongst others.*

*The vision of the club is to further increase inclusion by introducing more girls and disability football and improve the facilities at Penygelli Fields, mindful of the community groups which could also maximise use of any improvements, and to encourage social use by introducing a green gym and safe cycle track on the perimeter of the Penygelli plot.*

Coedpoeth FC is facing an increasing dilemma with the number of playing field options within the village severely limited, and the popularity of the club increasing month on month. At present many teams within the umbrella of the club are having to play at other destinations, which is not suitable or conducive to community cohesion. Significant improvements to Penygelli



Fields would significantly improve that position, and also support the wider Wrexham County Borough vision for football in the county.

#### 4.13.4 Coedpoeth Playable Places – Final Report September 2015.

This report pulled together work undertaken by the Playable Places team over a period of some 12 months and included significant consultation and engagement with key stakeholders.

In response to the challenge of the transfer of play places from Wrexham CBC to the Community Council the Playable Places group developed a cohesive and cogent masterplan for the development of four main play areas, with plans for further development in other parts of the village.

The report remains as valid today as ever, and likely more so considering the number of policy developments and COVID-19 over the last 3-4 years.

The vision is to:

*“....enhance the play value, naturalness and connectivity of public open spaces in Coedpoeth and to foster greater community cohesion through increasing people’s use of these areas. .... the group intends to help make Coedpoeth a place where children and young people independently access and make use of a broad range of spaces for play across their community without causing other residents undue cause for concern.”*

- 4.14 As can be seen there is significant strategic and policy justification for investment in redeveloping and redefining the Big Park /Penygelli Fields. Further, there is sufficient local impetus, supported by empirical evidence, to argue a significantly robust case for its development, most particularly through the collective work of the Football Club, Community Council and the Playable Places group.

## 5 Consultation

5.1 To ensure that the project was as reflective as possible of the community's needs, a number of consultation exercises were undertaken. These included:

- One to one consultation with key stakeholders, including the Community Council, Wrexham County Borough Council, community representatives and members of the Football Club and Playable Places team.
- A community consultation event held at Plas Pentwyn in February 2020.
- Online survey with residents, facilitated by Wrexham County Borough Council.
- Engagement with the local schools to ensure that the voices of the children and young people of Coedpoeth and its environs were captured.

5.2 The community consultation event included Coedpoeth Community Council was very much focused on parents and children, and involved Coedpoeth Utd Football Club, Playable Places, The Youth and Play Development Team at Wrexham County Borough Council (WCBC), North Wales Police Community Safety and Horse Watch, Glyndwr Techniquet and Wisdom of Equus, a local charity that offers mental health support in the community. Senedd yr Ifanc (Young Parliament) and Groundwork Trust were also invited as guests to have a presence on the day and although both were very keen, they were unavailable.

Prior to the event, we also engaged with the three local Primary schools; Ysgol Bryn Tabor, Penygelli and Minera to run a poster competition so local children could offer their creative ideas for "The BIG Park". The original intention was to show the entries from all the schools digitally at the event but only one school collected and returned before the half-term holidays. Arrangements were made with the other schools to collect their submissions after the half term break.

This resulted in a fantastic return with nearly 200 entries (Ysgol Bryn Tabor 70+, Penygelli 110, Minera being collected March 2nd) and a testament of how local children have a key interest in the future of the Big Park. (examples of the work produced can be found as Appendix II

We also held a Youth Workshop with Key Stage 3, Year 7 pupils at Ysgol Clywedog which was facilitated by the Youth and Play Development Team in Wrexham County Borough Council.

To advertise the event over 50 posters were put in public spaces, places of worship

and in some of the businesses in and around Coedpoeth / Minera. Over 480 flyers were sent home with the children through the three Primary Schools, Meithrin at Bryn Tabor, Happy Days and one or two of the Youth Teams of CUFC. In addition to this 70+ flyers were posted through the doors of the residents most affected by the BIG Park (Penygellin Ave, Poplar Close, Heol Maelor residents between these points including Grosvenor Crescent).

Key visits made to Dant-y-Coed Dental Practice to put the consultation on their radar - they were happy to display posters and flyers as were the Health Centre, Smithy Road. It was disappointing however, that the Post Office, Rowlands the Chemist and Bryn Darland Surgery would not display posters/flyers as they felt the subject matter was “not health related”.

Social media was also used to full effect with all partners/Agencies involved in the day being asked to share the event on their Social Media platforms

Attendance records for the event captured 69 names but children were not expected to sign so numbers of children were noted on the registration document against the parents/guardians which resulted in over 90+ people attending the event. We would estimate an additional 10 adults and children attended, but their names were not captured..

The results and outcomes from the day included the following:

*Table 1 - Children's preferred activities when playing out.*

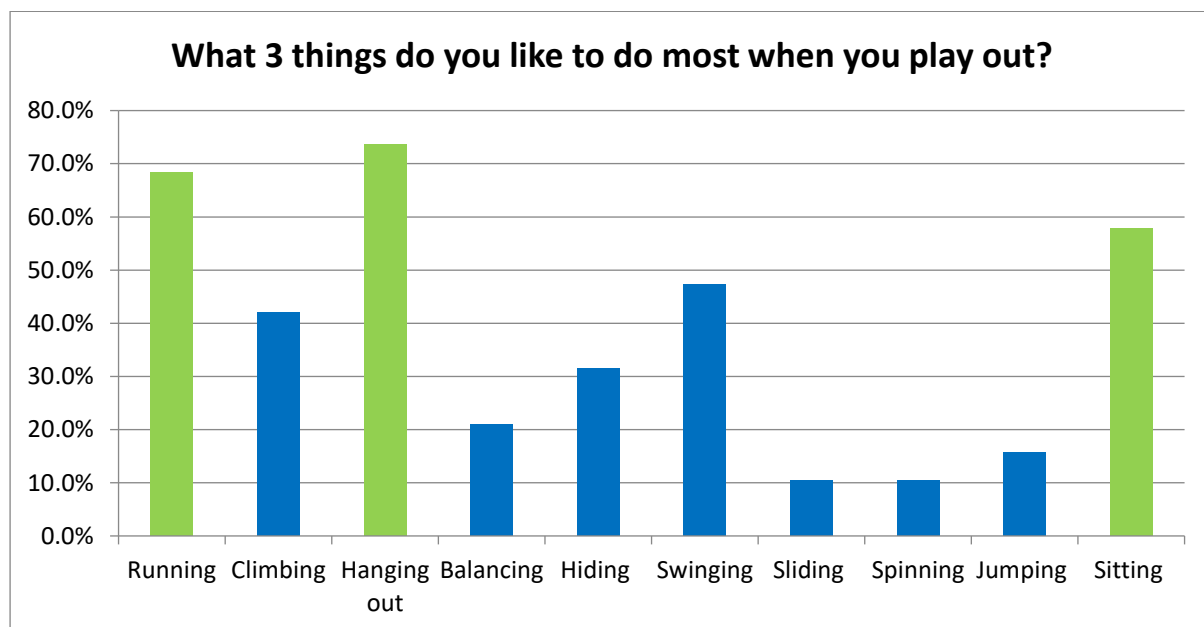
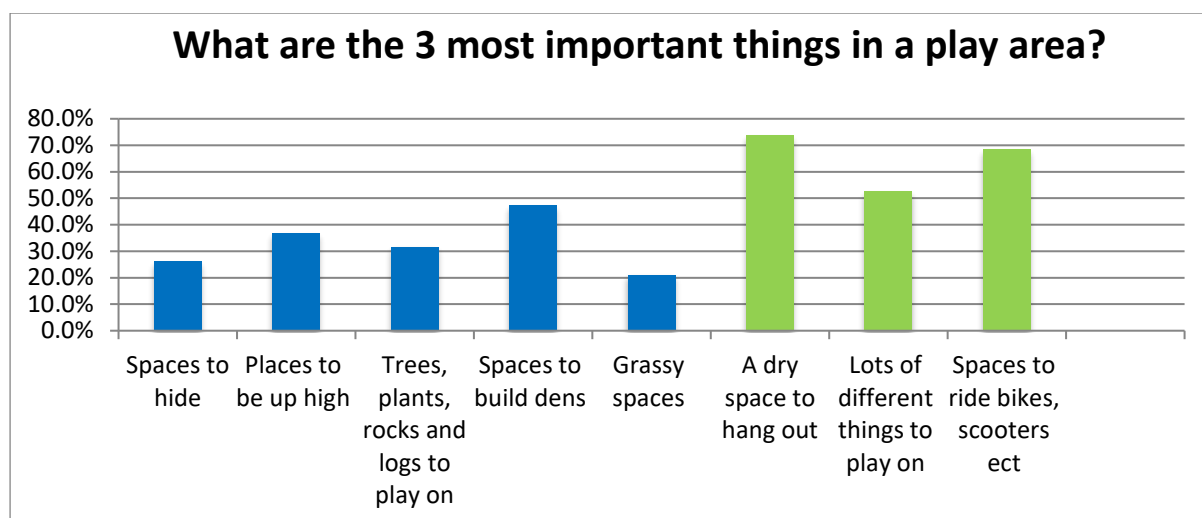


Table 2 - Three most important things in a play area for children



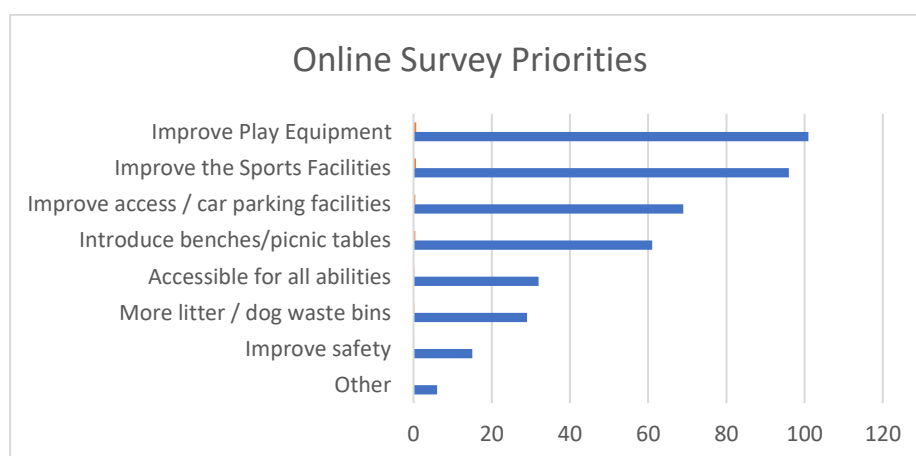
As can be seen, “hanging out” topped the list of things to do. What is also interesting is the that things to play on comes lower down the list than spaces and places to hang out.

Such responses are consistent with other evidence gathered by Wrexham’s Play Team elsewhere in the county, and other play teams across the region, most especially Conwy County Borough Council (who worked closely with Wrexham CBC on a number of projects).

5.3 The online survey produced valuable and insightful information on people’s perspectives on the Big Park, and what was most needed to make the fields fit for purpose for the community.

A total of 160 people accessed the survey and provided the following responses:

Table 3 - Online Survey - Priorities for Penygelli Fields

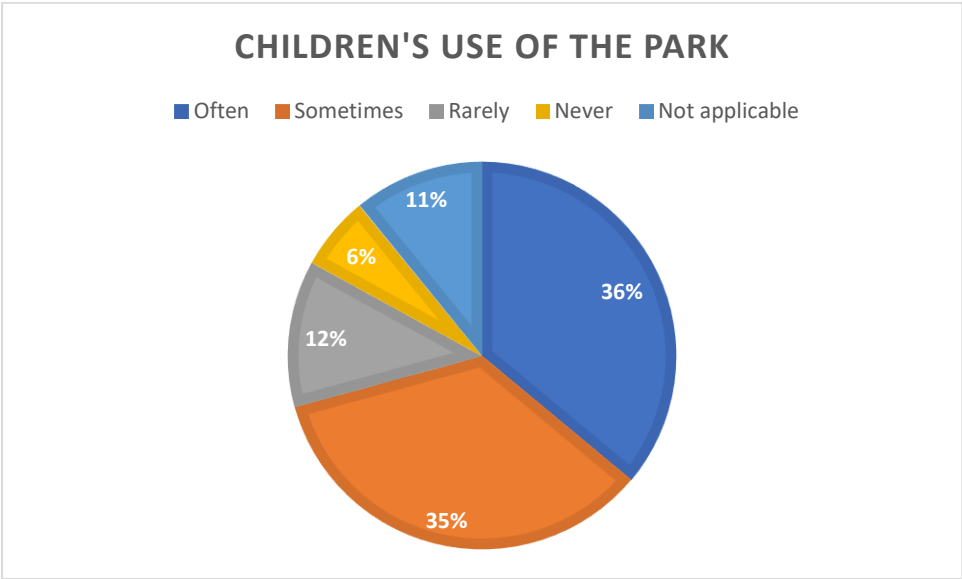


5.4

The above clearly shows priority given to improving the play facilities on site, with improvements to the playing surface / sports facilities also scoring highly.

Those respondents with children were asked about the frequency of their use of the Big Park.

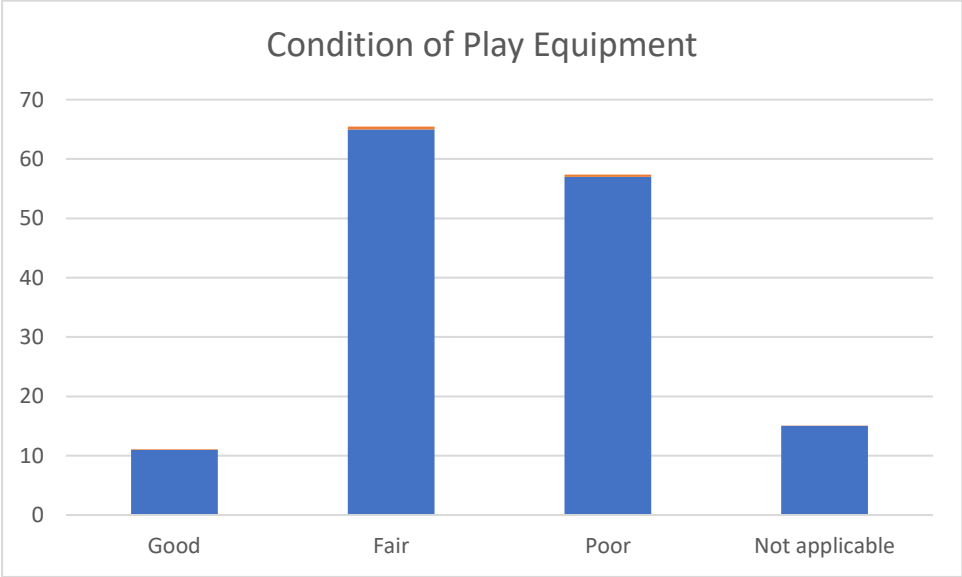
Table 4 - Online Survey - Frequency of use of Penygelli Fields



A strong percentage either used the park often or sometimes, suggesting that it is a park that is seen as a facility for children.

A hundred and forty-eight respondents (148) also offered their views on the condition of the play equipment. The chart below suggests that the vast majority felt that the current facilities needed improvement.

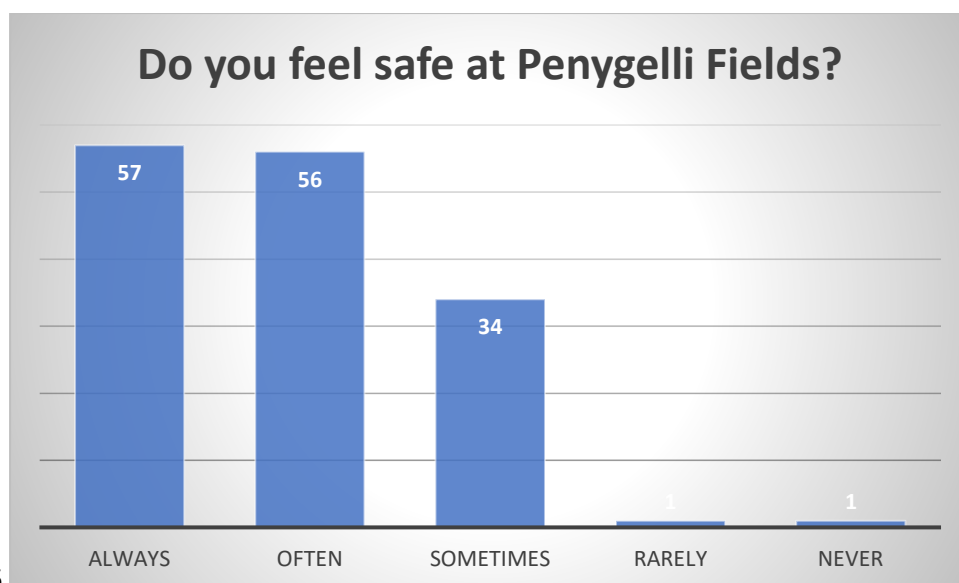
Table 5 - Online Survey - Perceptions of the Condition of Play Equipment



5.5

The survey also asked respondents asked how safe they felt when visiting the Big Park. The results suggest that as a park, it is perceived as relatively safe.

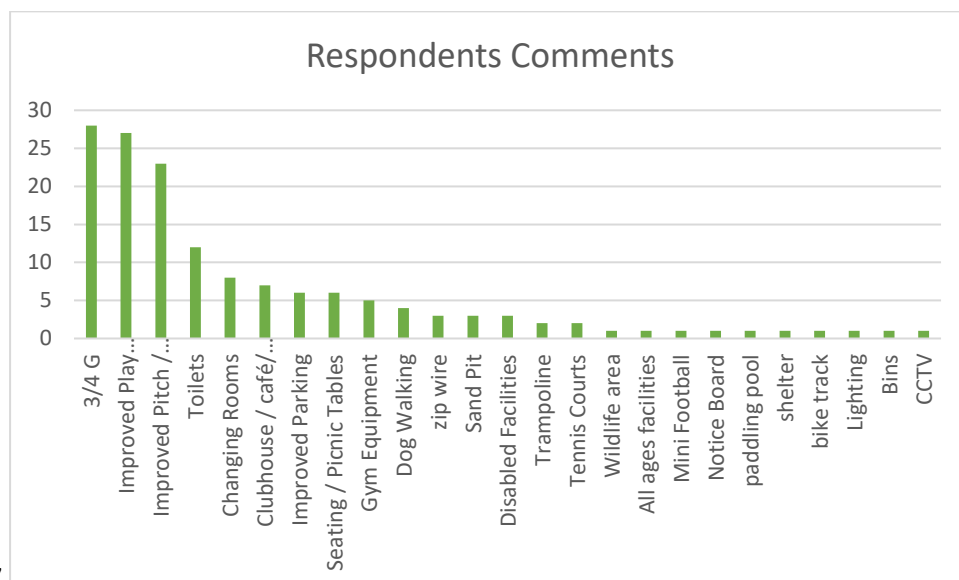
Table 6 - Online Survey - Safety Perception



5.6

Respondents were also given the opportunity to offer additional comments, and a wide range of ideas, suggestions and thoughts were offered. The full details are available as Appendix III to this report, however we also analysed the comments and categorised. The results suggest that despite respondents identifying Play Equipment as the highest priority, when it came to free from questions, the playing surface of the existing pitch and a 3G/4G facility were considered of most importance.

Table 7 - Online Survey - Analysis of Comments



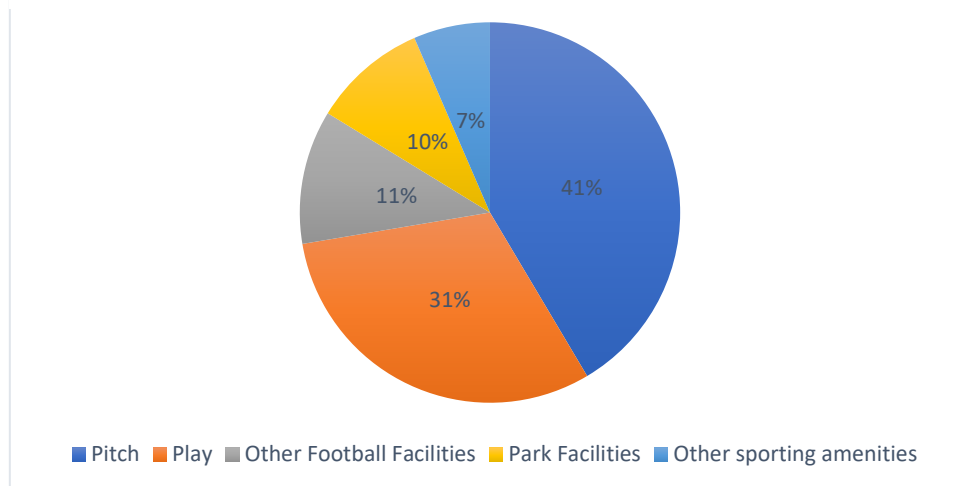
5.7

The chart on the next page has brought the comments together into key categories, namely:

- Pitch Issues / Playing Surface
- Other Football Facilities

- Play Park and Amenities
- Other sporting facilities.

Table 8 - Online Survey - Priority Summaries based on Comments



In slight contrast to the responses given when specific questions were set, the freeform comments section suggested that the condition of the pitch and other football related matters, when brought together, were of overriding concern.

5.8 The analysis of the above has been fully considered, and following engagement with all stakeholders a master plan has been drawn up, and considers the wider strategic and policy context, and also takes on board information and feedback collected during the consultation period. This is set out in the next section.

## 6 The Proposal

6.1 The proposals below have been prepared with full appreciation of the outcomes the consultation, as well as current policy thinking, and local plans already mooted.

The proposals below summarise the plans and proposals:

6.2 A full-size football pitch has been proposed and 2 smaller 7 a side pitches for younger children. These pitches are to Sport Wales Standards. The intention is to ensure all pitches are drained adequately and a strict maintenance regime is held to ensure the sustainability of the pitches. All pitches have been located on the most level areas of the site. We would encourage integrating seating for spectators within the bank to the left of the largest football pitch.

6.3 The plan includes a multi-use games area which can be used throughout the year. 4 smaller pitches have been proposed which when opened could be used as a larger football pitch, hockey, tennis, netball or even for less formal sports such as learning to ride a bike or playing with remote control cars.

The multi-use games area is accessible, but well screened from the main thoroughfares. This helps encourage participation from a range of vulnerable and disabled groups; providing a safe and convivial haven for children and adults who want to participate but feel less confident or need the encouragement and support of others.

6.4 Finally, the entrance into the park needs attention, it currently looks unloved, and the proposed investment in the park needs to be reflected in a new, attractive, and welcoming gateway into the park. This could include new signage, minor environmental enhancements, and planting.

6.5 Based on our surveys, and feedback from consultation, the existing play park needs significant upgrade. It is located too close to the road which many parents have raised their concerns.

The car park too has seen better days and needs resurfacing and parking bays painted to highlight disabled parking and spaces. The proposed plan will see the car park capacity increased to comfortably fit 70 cars, including cycle storage to encourage fitter active travel. By doing this a new play area can be located further back away from the busy main road. In addition to this would be to propose road calming measures and a crossing point.

What to include within the play park will come down to cost, but ample space has been provided to encourage outdoor play. Possibly outdoor fitness equipment., trampolines, an agility course, sand pit. This could be aimed at children and adults, or maybe have a separate area for adults. All new equipment is to comply with the 'Equality Act' and be accessible to all.



- 6.6 The Skatepark is popular with older children and youths and is as much as place to congregate as it is a place to participate. Therefore it has been retained in its current position. The Skatepark is in a reasonable condition, but regular review of its fabric, safety and usage is recommended.
- 6.7 We acknowledged the use of the Park as a place for dog walking for some. To avoid having fences around the football pitches, a dog park has been proposed to enable dogs to roam free in an enclosed space. Dogs will be permitted on leads at all other times. This follows onto the woodland walk proposed around the perimeter of the park. This is to encourage walking, running, cycling etc. Seating will be provided along the path, including picnic benches. All footpaths have been made wider and level to accommodate push chairs, wheelchairs, and bikes. This park is to be fully inclusive to all.
- 6.8 The application of sustainable resources in the design will introduce more ecologically sound and more maintenance efficient solutions to the landscape, but also offer more varied and interesting play aspects. This is in line with Welsh Government's SMNR (Sustainable Management of Natural Resources) approach, set out in legislation. This that is embedded within many Local Authority programmes, as well as programmes delivered by Housing Associations and other social enterprises.
- 6.9 Although the vast majority of consultees felt that the Big Park environment was safe, social behaviour is commonplace in parks. To deter this, proposals to improve the lighting and CCTV coverage is encouraged.
- 6.10 Shelter from the elements was another request from stakeholders, this could be in the form of one large shelter, or several smaller shelters dependent on use and popularity.
- 6.11 Next to the car park we have shown a proposal for new changing rooms and a café. This footprint will accommodate 2 team changing rooms, 2 referee changing rooms, disabled toilet, first aid room and storage with an upper level dedicated to a café which overlooks the football pitches and could include a seating stand. The community café would be accessed at road level.
- 6.12 Maintenance and durability are essential to the success of these proposals. Its vital materials chosen are long lasting and as natural as possible.
- 6.13 The Masterplan is shown as Appendix IV.

## 7 Costs, Budget, and Timetable.

7.1 The costs below are preliminary, and it is recommended that more detailed costings are obtained as the project progresses.

<b>Penygelli Fields Project</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>Estimated Net Cost</b>
Park Entrance		5000		5000
Drainage and Pitch Improvements*	45000			45000
MUGA		20000	40000	60000
Play Park Improvements		20000	30000	50000
Car Park		40000		40000
Skatepark			5000	5000
Dog Walking Area		2500	2500	5000
General Landscaping (Hard and Soft)		15000	5000	20000
Shelter		15000	5000	20000
CCTV			4000	4000
Changing Rooms			70000	70000
Café			20000	20000
Annual Maintenance (All aspects)	12000	12000	12000	36000
Professional Fees	18812.5	18812.5		37625
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>75812.5</b>	<b>148312.5</b>	<b>193500</b>	<b>417625</b>

Table 9 - Estimated Capital Cost - Three Years

\* Based on actual costs identified by the Sports Pitch Consultants. See also Appendix I

7.2 There are a range of funding options available to the group, and some of main sources are set out below.

### 7.2.1 Community Facilities Programme.

Welsh Government's Community Facilities Programme is a potential route for funding. This long-term community funding programme offers two levels of funding:

Up to £25k for smaller projects.

Up to £250k for larger scale more significant projects.

The current guidelines set out the following:

*"Grants can be used to improve community facilities which are useful to, and well used by, people in the community."*

*The Programme is open to community and voluntary sector organisations, including social enterprises. The focus of the programme is on increasing opportunity, creating prosperity for all and developing resilient communities where people are engaged and empowered. All applicants are expected to work with partners which can come from the public, private or the third sectors."*

However, please note that this programme excludes applications from community councils (although the guidelines do stipulate that "they can be partners in any project where the application is led by a community or voluntary sector organisation or social enterprise").

<https://gov.wales/community-facilities-programme>

#### **7.2.2 National Lottery.**

The National Lottery has been a primary source of community funding over the years, although funds are becoming increasingly competitive.

In addition to funding applied through Sports, the Arts and Heritage, the National Lottery also delivers community grants in Wales at three levels:

##### National Lottery Awards for All

£300–£10,000

For grassroots and community activity that aims to improve life for local people and neighbourhoods.

##### People and Places: Medium grants

£10,001–£100,000

Grants for voluntary or community groups. Funding for both revenue and capital, lasting up to five years.

##### People and Places: Large grants

£100,001–£500,000

Grants for voluntary or community groups. Funding for both revenue and capital, lasting up to five years.

<https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/wales>

### 7.2.3 Community Ownership Fund.

UK Government recently launched the UK wide Community Ownership Fund, with the first recipients in Wales being announced in late October 2021. This fund (capital only) is part of a package of support being rolled out partly to respond to societal impact of COVID-19 and partly to replace European Structural Funds.

At the time of the launch, the following initial guidance was offered:

*"From summer 2021 community groups will be able to bid for up to £250,000 matched-funding to help them buy or take over local community assets at risk of being lost, to run as community-owned businesses."*

*"The Community Ownership Fund will help ensure that important parts of the social fabric, .... can continue to play a central role in towns and villages across the UK. This will form part of the UK government's levelling up agenda, helping support recovery and building opportunity, with funding weighted towards places where community assets can make the most difference"*

*"Projects should be focused on place-based assets or amenities, which are important to the local community, build connections between people and foster a sense of pride in the local area - but are at risk of being lost without community intervention. There will be an emphasis on ensuring the asset or amenity can be sustainable in community ownership."*

We believe that an argument could be put forward for Penygelli Fields as the continued deterioration of the fields is presenting a significant risk, and there is likelihood that football pitches could be lost if remedial work is not undertaken with immediacy.

The fund will provide pound for pound match funding for eligible projects, and therefore could only be considered as part of a package of funding where at least 50% of the cost had been identified/secured from other sources.

There have been some questions asked as to whether Welsh Government funding e.g. Community Facilities Fund, could be used as match, particularly as both are ostensibly Government funds. Most indications thus far suggest that Welsh Government funding can be included. The guidance from UK Government states that the following match funding sources are eligible:

- Public bodies
- Charitable trusts
- lottery funders

- Community shares
- Social investors
- Other lenders.

The following 'in-kind' match funding (otherwise known as 'non-cash' match funding) will also count as an eligible source of match funding:

- Donations of goods
- Buildings or professional services, including from:
- individuals
- community groups
- funders

Although in principle an eligible project, a very robust and cogent proposal would need to be made.

<https://www.communityownershipfund.co.uk/>

#### 7.2.4 **Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA).**

The WCVA administers several funding programmes which supports the community and voluntary sector, including, it's Social Investment Wales (SIC) programme. It also has an extremely useful and up to date aligned interactive portal (Funding Wales) which can be accessed via the main site. Both links below.

The aim of the programme is to financially support social enterprises in Wales with a range of grants and loans. The focus is on investing in organisations that want to generate more income or expand their range of services, and organisations that have previously struggled to attract grant funding for new projects.

The guidelines state:

"Successful applicants will need to demonstrate how the funded activity will create a positive shift in social impact as well as a positive shift in income generation."

<https://wcva.cymru/>

<https://funding.cymru/>

#### **7.2.5 Sports Wales / FAW Trust.**

Sport Wales offers detailed advice and support, as well as funding opportunities. The range of sporting facilities that will potentially be provided at Penygelli Fields, and the ethos of equity of access could, in principle, unlock some grant support. Initial discussions with the Welsh Association of Football Trust (FAW Trust) suggests that there is good chance of accessing initial funding towards the cost of the drainage and pitch treatment work. The FAW as the governing body for football in Wales, is the lead agent for the Sports Wales in this respect.

However, the wider programme of activities and investments proposed may well open up other opportunities to work with both the FAW Trust and Sports Wales.

<https://www.sport.wales/>

<https://www.fawtrust.cymru/>

#### **7.2.6 Own Resources / Fund Raising**

A core element of the funding is the money raised or generated by the community itself. There are some significant opportunities to generate sponsorship for the development of the fields, and the potential for sponsorship on particular elements.

Similarly, the groups involved, particularly the Playable Places and Football Club, have strong teams of volunteers with a track record in fund raising and there a reasonable degree of confidence attached to this element.

It is important to emphasise that this element of fund raising is distinct from ongoing sponsorship to support the endeavours of individual groups, most particularly the football club. There is also a need to ensure that these efforts are coordinated and to agree a fund raising strategy that does not dilute current income streams for groups such as the football club.

7.3 The above list is not exhaustive, and a range of other funding options are potentially available, including several Trusts and Foundations. Social Business Wales, the WCVA and Community Foundation Wales provide guidance on other funding options, some less obvious and obscure, that could be of relevance.

### 7.3.1 Wrexham County Borough Council

The Local Authority operates advice and support programmes for the business community, including Business Line. Business Line provides information, most of which is free, for businesses and social enterprises.

<http://old.wrexham.gov.uk/english/business/businessline/index.cfm>

### 7.3.2 Community Foundation Wales

Community Foundation Wales has been established since 1999 and administers and awards grants to community groups on behalf a number of Trusts and Foundations. It has a useful portal that can identify less obvious but equally relevant funding from charities and trusts set up by wealthy individuals, families and larger organisations.

<https://communityfoundationwales.org.uk/>

### 7.3.3 Social Business Wales.

This arm of Business Wales is focused on supporting social businesses of all types across the country, offering a range of services, advice, and help. This also includes funding and is another extremely important resource that should be considered further when bringing the funding package together. The service is extremely important in supporting growing social enterprises who are growing, and in advising on governance matters for newer emerging groups.

<https://businesswales.gov.wales/socialbusinesswales/>

7.3.4 Avow is the Voluntary Services organisation for Wrexham. The organisation has significant relevance to this project, and can offer advice on a range of topics, including:

- Good governance
- Sustainable funding
- Engagement and influencing
- Funding Scenarios

<https://avow.org/>

7.4 Table 10 on the next page offers one possible funding scenario and is presented in this report only to illustrate that a funding package can be put together. Further discussion with the relevant organisations will be necessary to fully determine the

most appropriate and likely funding option.

It is a significant task ahead, but not an insurmountable one, and the concerted efforts of the Penygelli Fields team, and effective engagement with organisations such as AVOW, Wrexham Business Line and Social Business Wales can lead to a successful outcome.

We would also emphasise that the current grant funding landscape is in a state of "flux", and there are likely going to be changes in the range and type of funding opportunities available over the next few years. It is therefore vital to engage fully with these organisations, and others such as the FAW Trust, Sports Wales, and Community Foundation Wales to ensure that the understanding of the funding position is always current.

*Table 10 - Funding Scenario*

Element	Cost	CFP (WG)	Sports Lottery	COF	Fund Raising
Park Entrance	5000	5000			
Drainage and Pitch Improvements	45000		22500	22500	
MUGA	60000	25000	10000	15000	10000
Play Park Improvements	50000	20000		20000	10000
Car Park	40000	25000		15000	
Skatepark	5000	5000			
Dog Walking Area	5000	5000			
General Landscaping (Hard and Soft)	20000	10000		10000	
Shelter	20000	10000		10000	
CCTV	4000				4000
Changing Rooms	70000	35000		35000	
Café	20000	20000			
Annual Maintenance (All aspects)	36000	10000			26000
Professional Fees	37625		32500	5125	
	<b>417625</b>	<b>170000</b>	<b>65000</b>	<b>132625</b>	<b>50000</b>

## 7.5 Income and Operating Costs.

The current position is somewhat indeterminable, as there is much still to be agreed. However, we have offered an initial business assessment in Appendix VI. This assumes an unfettered freehold transfer of the asset from Wrexham and the ownership of that land through lease from Coedpoeth CC to a newly formed social enterprise.

It shows a model in which the new Trust generates income through various rental agreements and allows the Football Club, in particular, to have the latitude to generate its own separate income, which is then partly reinvested into further improvements in the



facilities and general maintenance of the Big Park.

Table 11 - Three Year Income Forecast

THE BIG PARK						
	Year 1	% of OI	Year 2	% of OI	Year 3	% of OI
Café Receipts	£ 11,910.00	25%	£ 14,887.50	25%	£ 15,631.88	23%
MUGA Hire	£ 4,500.00	9%	£ 5,625.00	9%	£ 5,906.25	9%
7 aside Hire	£ 4,500.00	9%	£ 5,625.00	9%	£ 5,906.25	9%
Full Pitch Hire	£ 3,000.00	6%	£ 3,750.00	6%	£ 4,687.50	7%
Café	£ 11,910.00	25%	£ 14,887.50	25%	£ 18,609.38	27%
Sponsorship	£ 5,200.00	11%	£ 6,500.00	11%	£ 8,125.00	12%
Fund Raising	£ 7,400.00	15.3%	£ 9,250.00	15.3%	£ 9,712.50	14.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 48,420.00</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>£ 60,525.00</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>£ 68,578.75</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>Cost of Goods</b>						
Food and Beverage	4,169		5,211		6,513	
<b>Total Cost of Goods Sold</b>	<b>£4,169</b>		<b>£5,211</b>		<b>£6,513</b>	
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>£44,252</b>		<b>£55,314</b>		<b>£62,065</b>	

The above forecasts are predicated on the following sales & income estimates:

Table 12 - Cafe Income

Café Sales Analysis	Games/Events	Spend	Spending Customers	Per Annum
First Team Home Matches	12	1.2	150	2160
First Team Cup Games	2	1.2	250	600
First Team Pre-season	3	1.2	250	900
U19s	10	1	40	400
Junior Football	26	2	50	2600
Football Tournament	2	2.5	400	2000
Weekend Hire of Facilities	20	1	50	1000
Other Events	3	2.5	300	2250
<b>Total</b>				<b>11910</b>

Table 13 - Sponsorship and Fund-Raising Income Forecasts

Sponsorship Opportunities		Fund Raising	
Stadium / Park	£2,500	Christmas Concert	400
Café	£400	Sponsored Walk / Run / Cycle	1000
MUGA	£400	Auction of Promises	1500
Event Sponsorship * 3 @ 500	£1,500	Fun Days and Events x 3	4500
Web and Social Media	£400	<b>Total</b>	<b>7400</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£5,200</b>		

Table 14 - Venue Hire Income Forecasts

Venue Hire			Number of days per year	
MUGA	full day	£150.00	30	£4,500.00
Small Pitch	full day	£150.00	30	£4,500.00
Main Pitch	full day	200	15	£3,000.00
				<b>£12,000.00</b>

The overhead costs are based on the following:

There is only one salaried post, this being the Park Coordinator. The post is proposed as pro-rate (20 hours) for the first two years but ramped up as full time (37.5 hours) by year 3.

There is an allocation for additional sub-contract staff for specific events and to run the café.

An allocation of £12,000 for general maintenance is included. This is considered the minimum cost required and should be reviewed once more detailed proposals and plans are obtained. The cost includes the maintenance of the pitches.

The forecasts do not include the capital costs of redeveloping the Park.

The forecast overheads and net profit are shown on the next page.

Table 15 - Forecast Operating Costs and Net Income

	Year 1		Year 2		Year 3		
Gross Profit	£44,252		£55,314		£62,065		
Overheads							
Salaries	£12,108	28.4%	£	12,350.27	28.4%	£ 18,636.80	35.8%
Event Costs	£1,500	3.5%	£	1,530.00	3.5%	£ 1,560.60	3.0%
Licences	£1,500	3.5%	£	1,530.00	3.5%	£ 1,560.60	3.0%
Insurance	£2,500	5.9%	£	2,550.00	5.9%	£ 2,601.00	5.0%
Telephony	£600	1.4%	£	612.00	1.4%	£ 624.24	1.2%
ICT	£600	1.4%	£	612.00	1.4%	£ 624.24	1.2%
Sundry Expenses	£500	1.2%	£	510.00	1.2%	£ 520.20	1.0%
Accountancy	£900	2.1%	£	918.00	2.1%	£ 936.36	1.8%
Training	£500	1.2%	£	510.00	1.2%	£ 520.20	1.0%
Subcontract Staff	£4,000	9.4%	£	4,080.00	9.4%	£ 5,712.00	11.0%
Administration and office costs	£4,500	10.5%	£	4,590.00	10.5%	£ 4,681.80	9.0%
Repairs and Maintenance	£12,000	28.1%	£	12,240.00	28.1%	£ 12,484.80	24.0%
Marketing and Promotion	£1,500	3.5%	£	1,530.00	3.5%	£ 1,560.60	3.0%
Total Operating Expenses	42,708			43,562		52,023	
Net Profit/Loss Before Taxes	£1,543			£11,752		£10,042	

7.6 In the next section we set out a proposed model to deliver the above.

## 8 Governance and Management

8.1 The capacity within the community to take this project forward is clear. Between the Community Council, Coedpoeth United FC and the Playable Places team there is a strong team, with the passion, vision and commitment to take this forward, and there is also tangible wider support from within the village and its environs.

8.2 However, to do this effectively will require a formalised structure, and one which we would suggest brings together the key players as a legal entity.

Our proposal for moving the project forward is as follows:

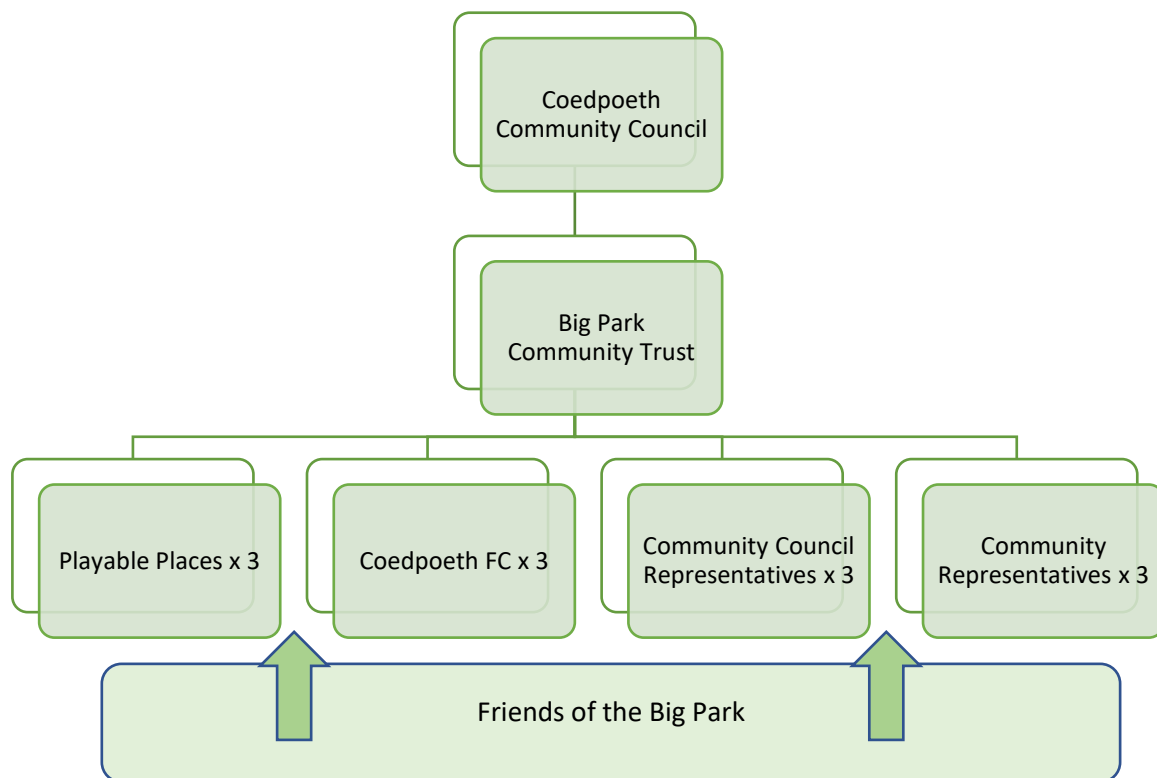
- 8.2.1 Coedpoeth Community Council to be responsible for submitting an application for the freehold transfer of Penygelli Fields in its totality from Wrexham County Borough Council, and to then take legal ownership of said fields.
- 8.2.2 An arms-length social enterprise to be set up to include members of the Community Council, Coedpoeth United FC, Playable Places and other representatives from the community. This social enterprise to be notionally known for now as The Big Park Community Trust to be responsible for then securing a long lease from the Community Council and taking the Big Park project forward in its entirety.

The establishment of an arms -length third sector company will allow it to be unfettered by Local Government processes, and also open up a much more significant window of funding opportunities (Community Councils often excluded from grant funding).

However, the company would have three members of the Community Council co-opted, and would be required to provide reports and data to the Council. This would ensure transparency and oversight.

- 8.2.3 The initial membership to include 3 members of each of the three constituent organisations, with three additional members recruited from different sections of the community; for example, Education, Health, and Social Care.
- 8.2.4 A wider “Friends of” society to be established. This could form part of the formal membership of the company or just aligned as a support organisation. It would ensure that the community’s voice continues to be properly captured, is a primary source for volunteers, and is a conduit for the recruitment of Directors/Trustees onto the Management Group.
- 8.2.5 The proposed structure governance structure is set out on the next page.

Figure 7 - Proposed Governance Structure



### 8.3 Delivery of the Project.

The project will need to be delivered in a number of phases. As an initial programme, we would recommend the following:

Penygelli Fields Programme Plan		2022/23				2023/24				2024/25			
Number	Action	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
1.1	Development of Asset Transfer Proposal												
1.2	Legal Agreement with Wrexham CBC												
2.1	Development of Mem and Arts of new company												
2.2	Recruitment of Directors/Trustees												
2.3	Establishment of Membership / Friends of The Big Park												
3.1	Appointment of Project Manager												
3.2	Commissioning of Designs and Full Costings												
3.3	Submission of any planning/regulatory requirements												
3.4	Further consultation with community												
4.1	Commencement of First Phase of Capital Work												
4.2	Second Phase												
4.3	Third Phase												
5.1	Appointment of Management Team / Park Manager												

Table 16 - Three Year Programme of Investment

Suggested within the Programme Plan is the appointment of two people or teams of people, the first to manage the process over the next three years (to the point of completion of the Plan), the second to be responsible for the administration, promotion, and oversight of the management of the facilities post completion. (a larger version of this programme plan is attached as Appendix V.

8.4 The financial forecasts prepared are based on the new legal entity's management of the redeveloped facility. These are shown as Appendix VI.

8.5 We believe that this is the most appropriate governance model, and offers the most transparent, efficient and equitable solution for taking the project forward, and recommend that discussions between the individual parties commences as soon as is feasible.

## 9 Conclusions and Recommendations

9.1 This report's findings suggest that the proposals for Penygelli Fields are sound, robust, and cogent. The suggested development meets with current policy thinking, but arguably more importantly, meets the needs and aspirations of the people of Coedpoeth and the organisations working on their behalf.

9.2 The redevelopment of the Fields would mark a new era for Coedpoeth FC, signal another successful step forward for the Playable Places Group, and reaffirm Coedpoeth Community Council's commitment to its residents to:

*"making a success of several projects to enhance and develop further the facilities available to local residents and to build the greater community of Coedpoeth".*

9.3 There are undoubtedly challenges ahead, most notably presenting a coherent and strategically sound proposal to Wrexham County Borough Council, obtaining the freehold of the land, successfully establishing an effective and transparent governance model, and securing the funding to realise the ambitions of the parties involved.

9.4 It is important that in doing so, the people involved ensure that they continue to take the people of Coedpoeth with them on the journey and provide the opportunity and facilities for the residents to help shape Penygelli Fields not just now, but in the decades to come.

9.5 There is a sizeable financial cost potentially involved, but effective project management, the utilisation of SMNR solutions where appropriate, successful funding applications and a phased process should mean that this challenge is not, by any means, insurmountable.

9.6 In order to realise these ambitions we would recommend that the Action Plan Timetable set out on Page 36 (Table ) is endorsed and used as the basis for moving forward.

To confirm these actions are:

9.6.1 **The development of Asset Transfer Proposal to Wrexham County Borough Council & Legal Agreement with Wrexham CBC.** We would recommend that early discussions are now had with the Authority to establish the formal process for taking this forward, and to establish what information and supporting documentation would be required in order to expedite matters.

9.6.2 **Development and Incorporation of New Social Enterprise.** As set out in the Governance section of the report, we would recommend that a new social enterprise model is established. We would further recommend that the parties involved, most especially the Community Council, Coedpoeth United FC and Playable Places seek to secure the advice of AVOW and Social Business Wales on appropriate governance models to help facilitate this.

- 9.6.3 **Recruitment of Directors/Trustees.** As we have already noted, there appears to be sufficient capacity within the community to take this project forward. However, discussions about the way in which the constituent groups nominate Directors/Trustees to the Board, as well as likely individual candidates, needs to be had early on in the process. The emerging board will then need to be considering recruiting the three other members of the Board who will be drawn from the wider community. Again, AVOW and Social Business Wales will be able to help in this area.
- 9.6.4 **Establishment of Membership / Friends of The Big Park,** This can come at a later stage, and only when the company has been formed, the membership of the Board agreed, the individuals comfortable in their roles, and the priorities that need to be addressed clearly identified.
- 9.6.5 **Appointment of Project Manager.** Whilst there is sufficient capacity within the team to take the overall project forward, there is not necessarily the professional background and time during the day to engage with all relevant stakeholders to make things happen in a timely and efficient fashion. We would therefore recommend that a part time Project Manager is appointed to work with the new organisation to take forward key elements of the project, including the commissioning of designs, engagement with stakeholders, and consideration of regulatory issues.
- 9.6.6 **Commissioning of Designs and Full Costings.** The design prepared for this report is a masterplan and does not have the detail and information necessary to inform the process moving forward. We have allocated a budget for this work within the overall programme and recommend that this issue is a primary objective over the next 12 months.
- 9.6.7 **Submission of any planning/regulatory requirements.** At this juncture we are not sure to what extent Planning and other regulatory issues will need to be considered, but there are number of elements that could, potentially require further consent, most notably changing rooms and a café. This, would be taken forward by the Project Manager.
- 9.6.8 **Further consultation with community.** The input from the community has been pivotal to this report. We have received very valuable and sound feedback from residents and users, and this has been used to help shape both the masterplan and the overall tenor and vision of the report. However, it is critical that the voice of the community continues to be captured, through the membership programme, through further consultation events and through regular updates on social media and through other communication media.

Funding from many bodies will partly depend on evidence of how you have ensured that the community plays a key role in shaping the direction and management of a project, and this offers a further layer of justification for doing this. Having reviewed the track record of the parties involved in this project, we are confident that this will



happen, but feel it appropriate to emphasise the point in this report.

- 9.6.9 **Commencement of Capital Works.** It is very important that some works are undertaken when feasible. We have set out the three-year phased programme, reflecting capacity, and funding availability. However, it is important to have a focus on beginning work in the next financial year, and in particular work relating to the Drainage. Without this, much of the other proposed works becomes redundant.

It also sends out a clear sign that progress is being made, both to the organisations involved, including the players at all levels of the football club, and to the wider community,

- 9.6.10 **Appointment of Management Team / Park Manager.** Within three years it is hoped that the majority of works will have been completed, and Penygelli Fields / The Big Park will be a new facility for the whole community. To ensure that the facility is operated effectively, to generate the income that will help sustain the Park and its facilities, and to coordinate usage between primary users, most especially Coedpoeth United FC, we recommend that a part time or full time Facilities Manager is appointed. Whilst volunteer support and input from the Board of the company will be essential, this will be a facility that requires a dedicated resource.

With the right business model, this post should be self-funding in the long term.

- 9.7 This report offers a clear way forward for the community, and we are confident that if the energies applied to date are now directed towards this next stage in the development of Penygelli Fields, by 2025 Coedpoeth will have a significant community facility that everyone in the village can be rightly proud of.