

PITCH TOGETHER FUND

Old Loughtonians utilises the Pitch Together Fund to resurface pitches



THE NEED

Based in Chigwell, Essex, Old Loughtonians Hockey Club (OLHC) is a large, well-established club, providing a range of opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to participate, from free children's coaching through to adult social hockey. The club had previously had two new pitches installed for the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and when these pitches needed replacing the club applied for a £250,000 investment from the Pitch Together Fund. This investment has enabled the installation of two high-quality pitches, securing the club's future and providing first-class facilities for both members and the wider community.

THE PROCESS

Old Loughtonians expressed an interest in being a pilot club, in late 2024, and worked with Sporting Assets and England Hockey to develop their application over a number of months.

THE DETAILS

The Pitch Together Fund provided a blended package of support to OLHC, including:

- £250,000 loan at 6% interest to enable the resurfacing of two artificial grass pitches.
- 8 year repayment period (6-month capital repayment holiday)
- A grant was provided to recycle and reuse the existing pitches.
- Ongoing guidance and support throughout the application, business planning and due-diligence process.
- Independent review of OLHC's financial forecast, undertaken by Sporting Assets.

THE IMPACT

As part of the application process for the loan OLHC, with support from England Hockey, developed an Impact Plan to outline how the facility investment will drive genuine community impact, widen participation, and create long-term sustainable opportunities for local people to be more active. The resurfaced pitches have created:

- Sustainable, long-lasting facilities suitable for high-volume use.
- Capacity for multi-sport and community programming, supporting wider physical activity needs.
- A platform for greater inclusion and accessibility, enabling more people to enjoy the benefits of being active.
- Stronger delivery of OLHC's social impact objectives, including:
 - Expanding school engagement through free taster sessions, PE support and holiday camps for local state and SEN schools.
 - Expanding community engagement and broadening inclusivity and participation in entry-level and inclusive formats such as Mavericks (free coaching for children), Back to Hockey sessions for adults returning to the sport, and Walking Hockey providing a low-impact, social format for older adults and those managing long-term health conditions.

Together, the improved facilities and the social impact plan position OLHC as an important community anchor, committed to inclusion, accessibility and lifelong participation.