

# History of the Recreation Ground and Sports Centre

\*Prior to the Recreation Ground, Chilham Football Club and Old Wives Lees Cricket Club played on grounds provided by local farmers.

\*Although a public recreation ground was mooted as far back as 1947, things only started moving ahead in 1966 following local complaints to the Playing Fields Association about a lack of facilities for children.

\*The Parish Council became involved but finding land was difficult, and progress was not helped by the apparent reluctance of Kent County Estates Department. Following a petition KCC became involved.

\*The turning point was In 1970 when a public meeting was held in the Village Hall and as a result the Chilham Parish Recreation Ground Trust was formed in 1971.

\*May Fayres began in 1972 as the main source of income.

\*The Recreation Ground was subsequently purchased.

\*A small wooden pavilion, Children's Play Area and Tennis Courts followed.

\*Football and cricket was first played on the ground in 1974.

\*The 100 plus club was introduced in 1989 as an additional source of income.

\*During the 1980's and 1990's funds were built up to fund a new permanent replacement Pavilion.

\*In 1996 the Trust were fortunate to obtain a lottery grant of £172,000 towards a new pavilion/sports hall with showers, changing rooms, meeting room and kitchen.

\*The new facility was opened in 1998 at a cost of £265,000.

\* In 2006 the Play Area was refurbished

\* The following years saw a period of general improvements - Alarm security, Access Control systems, Solar Panels, new equipment , better use of technology improved heating and lighting etc.

\* As a result of grants from Section 106 funding and additional grants given by Viridor Credits, Ashford Council and local Councillors, 2018 to 2020 saw considerable improvements - a new relocated Children's Play Area, a third Tennis court and Pavilion, a floodlit Multi Use Games Area, a resurfaced Car Park and new Pathways linking Branch Road with all facilities.