“You can’t make an omlette without breaking eggs…...!”

Well, that’s fairly obvious but it was never more appropriate than now at the Ponthir Sports and Community Club where we are in the middle of a £200,000 remodeling of the Oaklands Sportsground to provide much improved and increased sports pitches. The work which is being carried out by South Wales Sports Grounds Limited includes:

* Removal, diversion, and burial of 11,000-volt overhead power lines
* Reshaping of the bank overlooking the cricket square (The benches WILL be put back!)
* Levelling of the main football pitch
* Creation of a full-size football pitch on the Top Field
* New dugouts and spectator rails around Main and Top Pitches
* Creation of a level site between the Main and Top Field pitches to accommodate a 20m x 40m caged and floodlit all weather pitch to be used as a Multi User Games Area (“MUGA”)
* Creation of an unfenced full size football pitch between the cricket square and the Station Road drainage ditch
* Installation of new land drainage in all sports pitches including the cricket outfield.

After much delay due to the very wet weather we had in January and February, SWSG are now forging ahead and expect to complete the work by early Autumn followed by ongoing maintenance of the newly seeded areas. All parts of the sportsground will be open to the public and the miles of safety fencing will be removed to reveal:

* A fully drained, enlarged, and levelled cricket pitch that can be used for the whole season April to September.
* Three football pitches set out over three tiers of the remodeled sportsground, and space for a much-needed MUGA.

A site plan is attached.

**What about the non-sporting users of the fields, how will they benefit?**

All parts of the sportsground will be open to the public at all times, but the most noticeable thing will be much less waterlogging of the field making walking a more pleasant and less messy experience!

And the work being carried out is just phase one of a program of work which we want to carry out to improve accessibility to, and around the grounds, and to reduce the adverse impact we have on the environment and fast disappearing natural habitats. With that in mind the club, together with the community council, will be applying for a “Local Places For Nature” (LP4N) grant to enable the setting out of a perimeter path suitable for walkers, joggers, cyclists, pushchairs and wheelchairs which will give access to all pitches, and importantly to “eco points” and “fitness frames” where depending upon your preference you will be able to sit and take in the local flora and fauna in the new habitats we hope to create, or, indulge in some exercises on the frames! The LP4N proposal will also include the creation of marginal wetland areas much loved by a wide range of plants and animals as well as a traditional village pond (yes, probably with some ducks!)

**And the clubhouse?**

We need to revamp the clubhouse and have plans to do so, but they are dependent upon the club obtaining funding to build an extension or separate building alongside to contain four new changing rooms. When that is done, we can turn our attention to remodeling the interior of the clubhouse to make better use of the space within for sporting and non-sporting activities and improving facilities such as the toilets and kitchen facilities. Increasing and improving parking will also be on the action list.

**The Ultimate Aim?**

***“To make the clubhouse and sportsground “fit for purpose” for the foreseeable future.”***

To make it a destination of choice for all local sports participants, and a “Hub” for the community at large. We are very conscious that we are the temporary custodians of the only publicly accessible open space between Caerleon and Cwmbran and want to make it attractive to all in the community. We have NO intention of turning it into an entertainment venue, though there will be periodic events that hopefully will raise the funds needed to keep the club going and keep the sportsground out of the hands of the developers who would no doubt swoop on it for house building should the club fail, and the land reverts back to Torfaen CBC

**Membership?**

Is open to everyone. £7 for a single adult or £12 for a couple. We even offer members a loyalty card for £25 a couple and that gets you 10% off all bar purchases for the year! You can join at the club bar, or online at [www.ponthirscc.co.uk](http://www.ponthirscc.co.uk)

**AND FINALLY….**

Don’t forget to get your tickets for the Club’s Starlight Garden Party event on **Jubilee Bank Holiday Thursday 2nd June** featuring local singer Ben Jenkins and international nine-piece band “ELO Light Years”. Tickets at the club bar or via [www.ponthirscc.co.uk](http://www.ponthirscc.co.uk)