

# Robert Courts MP



## HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr. Bill Oddy  
Commercial Development, Group Manager  
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Council Offices  
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Friday, 1st October 2022  
Ref: ZC/RC51474

Dear Bill,

I am writing with regard to the issues facing the Witney Vikings and other local teams due to a lack of football pitches in Witney.

Steven Bott, Chair of the Witney Vikings Youth Football Club has been in touch with my office on a number of occasions to raise his concerns regarding the difficulties he has been experiencing finding training facilities for his football club in Witney. Following this, I recently attended one of the Vikings' training sessions, where I was able to get a further understanding of the challenges they have been facing.

Following the success of the Lionesses, Witney Vikings Football Club has been inundated with increased sign-ups from girls and boys wanting to play football. However, as you are aware, the lack of suitable training facilities available has greatly impacted the club's ability to train and cater for their high demand.

Steve has therefore asked me to raise the following points with you:

1.) There is a desperate need in Witney for a new AstroTurf Pitch to enable local teams to train in bad weather and dark nights. I understand the funds were earmarked for this project 4 years ago but the question of where this pitch should go remains undecided.

One option that has been discussed is at Woodgreen School, alongside the old pitch. Woodgreen has confirmed they would be supportive of this, however, nothing further appears to have happened to move this option forward.

**I would be most grateful if you could set out the District Council's position on this potential solution and, more broadly, if you could set out a clear timeline of how you will work with Witney Town Council to deliver this much-needed ATP in Witney?**

2). Steve Bott and the football club as a whole feel they have had very little positive engagement with either the Town Council or the District Council. They feel they have on a number of occasions raised their concerns regarding the lack of training facilities and that these have not been fully addressed.

Please understand that I am not interested in apportioning blame, pointing fingers and playing politics. My priority is to ensure that youth football teams in Witney have safe and accessible pitches on which to play.

*From the Member of Parliament for the constituency of Witney in West Oxfordshire  
including Bampton, Burford, Carterton, Charlbury, Chipping Norton, Eynsham, Witney and Woodstock.*



What matters is the present, and delivering a solution for young people in Witney, and this requires the District Council and Town Council to work closely together.

To ensure that this constructive work takes place without further delay, I would like to formally request that the District Council and Town Council meet with Steven Bott and I to discuss urgent solutions. I will be writing to the Town Council separately. I would be grateful if you could email [zoe.churchill@parliament.uk](mailto:zoe.churchill@parliament.uk) to arrange a suitable date.

I look forward to meeting with you soon to establish a positive way forward which ensures that all children who wish to have a place to play in Witney.

*You really,*  
*Robert*

**Robert Courts MP**