

New sports coalition backs plans

SPORTS clubs have joined forces to form a coalition group to support plans for a sports village and 'intrinsically linked community stadium'.

Wycombe Sports Village Group (WSVG) says it can see the potential of the scheme and is concerned negative publicity and pressure groups may overshadow the positive benefits a sports village would bring.

National sports governing bodies could invest in the proposed scheme and early talks have already been held with Wycombe District Council and Wycombe Sports Development Ltd, the group revealed.

WSVG was created last week, with members including High Wycombe Hockey club, Wycombe Badminton Centre and High Wycombe Cycling club.

But it stressed the group had not

been set up to 'rival or stir' protest organisations such as GASP and "fully understands" the concerns of residents.

Jeff Brydon, spokesman for WSVG and chair of Wycombe Badminton Centre, said: "The group shares the same vision of an all-encompassing, world class sporting facility and all the benefits it would undoubtedly bring to the area.

"But we are concerned that negative publicity and local pressure groups may overshadow the many positive benefits that combined sports in a sports village will bring to Wycombe and the community.

"We understand residents' concerns but I think a lot of the concerns focus on the stadium and are taking away from the wider issue.

"And that is the great financial,



HIGH HOPES: Members of the council and sports clubs which launched the stadium proposal back in March

social and sporting benefits a centralised, top class sports village would bring to High Wycombe and the area."

WSVG said other clubs and sporting organisations had expressed an interest in joining the group. Anyone else interested can contact Colin James via c.james555@btinternet.com

Mike Brooks from Wycombe Sports Developments Ltd, the company set up by Wycombe

Wanderers and London Wasps to oversee the project, welcomed the creation of the group.

He said: "We have always maintained the benefits of a new community stadium and sports village would be enormous and we are delighted so many sports organisations are recognising this."

GASP said it is "wholly sympathetic to the clubs' desire to see better facilities" but stressed:

"It is impossible to speculate whether a sports village would be a better use of council funds than offering support to existing clubs in their local areas."

The group added that it would be "happy to work with any other groups to ensure that whatever the council eventually decides upon, it is for the benefit of the whole community".

WDC will publish results of the public consultation in January.

Why is the council risking this money?

RE: Proposed stadium at Wycombe Air Park, Booker.

MAY I be allowed to respond to the article by James Nadal in Friday's newspaper, "Use law to force poll on stadium"?

The Marlow Group's suggestion, in our letter dated 14 November 2010, was not for one poll but for several separate parish polls of the affected parishes.

As we pointed out, these are simple to organise and cheap to run and remove the doubts that surround the integrity of public consultations.

Councillor Guy pointed out that Booker is 'unparished', but the law provides for the formation of new parishes which may be known alternatively as a 'community', 'village' or 'neighbourhood' councils.

Forming such a new community council would undoubtedly take some time, however. There is no reason why existing parishes such as Lane End or Great Marlow could not call their own polls immediately. In its excoriating letter of objection to the proposed Booker stadium, the Marlow Society has pointed out, amongst other things, that the identification of a sports stadium site should follow, not precede, proper consultation with all sections of the community, rather than just with sports clubs.

The council's consultants, Grant Thornton, make it absolutely clear that, given the current economic circumstances, no funding would be possible from commercial sources.

So why is the council risking large amounts of taxpayers' money in the hope of future property deals?

Are there not enough

bankrupt property developers already?

Mike Post, Bisham Road, Marlow

They should box

RE: Letters on climate change from Anthony Weeden and Eric Alexander.

MONTH in, month out, you have allowed two old men to out-do each other on global warming letters in your paper.

If they were younger men, I would ask them to settle their debate, as we did in the Royal Navy. We boxed three-minute rounds under Queensbury Rules.

The winner - the man left standing at the end. This made the captain happy. As he said, a good ship is a happy ship.

They could settle it, Mr Editor, in your office, with you acting as referee. Sitting opposite each other at the table - you ring the bell and battle commences with arm wrestling. The man with the most put-downs will win.

While Rome burns, these two fiddle as the consultation [on the community stadium] by WDC gets on to the back burner - giving outsiders a voice on a stadium in our area.

Rex G Pawley, Chestnut Lane, Hazlemere

It will be unbearable

YOU say "Prime Minister has to listen over HS2" (*Comment, December 3*) to local Conservatives. Unfortunately, David Cameron also has to listen to Chris Huhne, the Liberal Democrat Secretary of State in the Cabinet for Energy and Climate Change. Life will be unbearable and food supplies at risk if average world temperatures continue to rise.

Also petrol is running out.

Alternatives to the internal combustion engine are essential.

Jim Whitehead, Belmont Road, Chesham