

**Regeneration Committee site visit to West Ham United FC at the Boleyn Ground,
Upton Park
02 September 2014**

Attendees

Assembly Members Gareth Bacon AM (Chairman), Navin Shah AM (Deputy Chair), Murad Qureshi AM

Assembly staff Jo Sloman, Adam Wildman, Martha Mingay

Visiting

West Ham United FC

Karren Brady CBE, Vice Chairman

Tara Warren, Marketing and Communications Director

Joseph Lyons, Head of Community, West Ham United Community Sports Trust

Sam Allardyce, Manager

Sophie Bradley, Corporate Communications

Michael Symons, Corporate Communications

London Borough of Newham

Kim Bromley-Derry, Chief Executive

Overview of visit

The Committee visited West Ham United at the Boleyn Ground to receive a briefing on the Club's plans to move to the Olympic Stadium in 2016 and the Club's work in the community. The Committee also heard about plans for the conversion of the Boleyn Ground for housing and retail.

Discussion topics

West Ham's move to the Olympic Stadium, and the role of the club and stadium in local regeneration

- West Ham's tenancy at the Olympic Stadium will create 720 jobs through a combination of full and part-time roles. 75 per cent of these are expected to go to local people.
- The club expressed its objective for the Stadium to be multi-purpose and used continually commenting that *"part of the responsibility of being in the stadium is sharing it."* West Ham's wider Memorandum of Understanding includes a commitment to sell tickets for UK Athletics events. It also aims to integrate usage of the Stadium with the wider Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, by participating in an integrated park-wide ticket scheme.
- Being at the Stadium, West Ham expects to attract broadcast rights and some limited naming rights. Other benefits include new infrastructure, 1 million visitor footfall and prospective customers annually. The club will open the stadium to different people from different cultures.

- A marketing destination group is being set up to market the Olympic Park; this will share data on the amounts people spend locally data, and enable joint marketing activity. This way, the club can get a good idea of the types of businesses that are attracted to the area. West Ham told the Committee that the board knows how to make the destination work. West Ham has given up the majority share venue naming rights and catering at the Olympic Stadium, but the stadium gives a platform to generate new revenue elsewhere.
- Fans are mainly positive about the move; there is only a small percentage that was not in favour.

The regeneration offer to local communities and West Ham United Community Sports Trust

- When the board took over in 2010, it developed 6 core values, putting the community at the heart of the club, which had previously been siloed. A new Community Manager started in post, with the aim to understand the needs of the local community. The club's intention is that the most vulnerable members of the community (for example, children in care) can benefit from the club's community schemes from age 7 through to graduation. West Ham also needed to engage with the community to move into the stadium. The club is focussing on engaging with local Asian communities. The club did an equalities assessment of the local area; it did not want to see a Canary Wharf scenario, where longstanding communities have been displaced.
- The club's upcoming move to the Olympic Stadium has given it a new purpose. The club already delivers a broad range of programmes and the capacity of the new stadium, which will act as a hub for activity, enhances the club's attraction for new partners. The platform at the Olympic Stadium will engage people to see matches. At Upton Park the club has a dedicated space for its community work but people want to see the stadium. A school will be built next to the community track at the Olympic Park.
- Newham council noted that schools outreach is an important part of the club's work locally. West Ham told the Committee that football clubs do great work, but they reach young people because of football. The club noted that through football, it can reach kids that no-one else can reach: *"The influence of football cannot be overestimated; it can be an incredibly powerful force."* It added that not all local authorities grasp the benefits that football can have. West Ham gains visibility in the community through the Trust's work
- The legacy of the club's move to the Olympic Stadium will not be limited to Newham. While the club has an obvious relationship with Newham, its outreach extends beyond (including to places such as Essex). Approximately £250,000 of its £1 million+ spend is allocated to Newham annually.

West Ham United Community Sports Trust activities

- Through its community work, WHUFC will be the one of only a handful of the Premiership's League Green Star-rated clubs. The Trust has committed to spending approximately £250,000 each year on community projects in the borough of Newham. In the last 3 years, the turnover of the club's community programmes has risen from £0.5m to £1.3m. It has aspirations to expand to £1.5 million over the next two football seasons, to increase opportunities provided by the West Ham United Community Sports Trust.
- The £1.3 million the Trust spends on community programmes is made up of over 20 strands of work. Members heard that at the Olympic Stadium, West Ham will be able to attract more funding for the Trust's community work (much of which comes through match funding). The Trust never turns down a discussion with a potential partner. For example, to attract more

- funding, the Trust may look to expand its Community Prescription Programme, working with the local clinical commissioning groups on issues including obesity and diabetes.
- West Ham United Sports Trust is part of the LLDC's Active People Active Park steering group with other partners in the Lea Valley (GLL etc). It has access to Premier League funding
 - Football clubs have agreements between themselves about which clubs engage with various local authority areas. The typical route for engagement with councils is through sport, but the club is looking at other routes, such as health and education.
 - The Club runs a learning zone for young people. A team of young people representing West Ham United recently won a competition run by the Premier League Enterprise Challenge.
 - There is a partnership between the local authority and the Community Trust employment scheme.
 - The club is aiming to improve social mobility, for example, through apprenticeships. Its apprenticeship scheme run in partnership with *Leadership Through Sport* provides opportunities for students to move into blue chip companies. Young people participating in the apprenticeship scheme are from backgrounds where they might typically move into low-skilled jobs, and the scheme provides the opportunity to meet professionals. Students study for AAT accountancy exams. Feedback from blue chip companies is that West Ham is helping such organisations improve their work on equality and diversity. Applicants come through an open day process (30-40 people). There is a 3:1 ratio of young people to staff. Young people need to be prepared to coach others. The club prepares young people over 15 months to be fully employable so that they reach level 4 (graduate level). There is 3 months' intensive training (1 day a week at West Ham, and 3 days at Newham College). A young person that the Committee met commented "I feel lucky to be part of [the scheme]." They had accessed the scheme through their support worker.

Regeneration at Upton Park

- There are low levels of economic activity around the Boleyn Ground. This is partly due to the recession but local trade has drained incrementally over 20 years. Several businesses around the Boleyn Ground have welcomed the club's announcement to move, due to the disruption caused on match days. On match days, many visitors arrive late, having already eaten; limiting the amount of time they may choose to spend in the area.
- WHUFC has appointed developer Galliard to develop its current ground. The redevelopment will provide new family housing, which will bring new residents to spend their money locally. There may be a supermarket, but West Ham told the Committee that the development will not be dominated by it. Local residents had concerns that a large supermarket would drain the area. West Ham selected the Galliard bid because of its commitment to legacy and housing even though it was not the most lucrative development offer.
- Alongside the redevelopment of the Boleyn Ground, Newham Council will be completing a road scheme on Green Street to support regeneration of the area.
- While there is little to do around the current stadium, the new Stadium will create 'dwell' time for visitors. The club aims to create a place at the new stadium which attracts whole families to spend the day. The club has engaged with small businesses, such as food businesses and local community and supporters' clubs involved in the local match day economy and it is encouraging them to explore opportunities for them to come with West Ham to the new stadium. It has also brokered relationships between local businesses and the LLDC, to explore options such as reduced rents. The club has also secured agreement with Galliard to engage businesses and residents around the Boleyn Ground.

