

National Football Museum and Sowerth Play House, besides participation in the annual Shoreditch Festival. There is a Homework Club, which does just what its name suggests, by helping members with their homework three nights a week. There are IT classes. With its kaleidoscopic ethnic membership, the Club has organized English lessons for Kurdish and Turkish boys. Next year, in response to demand, the Club will be offering French and Spanish lessons.

Perhaps the greatest single achievement of the Club in recent years in the field of youth work has been the US Scholarship Programme. Currently the Club has six boys playing football and studying at US universities, in what is only the second year of a programme to assist boys into such US university places. Some of these boys have far surpassed the expectations of their schools – and indeed of themselves – in order to pass the tough exams necessary to gain entry, and have expressed their huge gratitude to the Club for its assistance.

None of those activities and successes would happen without the Club's most essential asset, its staff. The Club has been very fortunate in its modern day successors to the Llewellyn Smith brothers as Club Leaders, or Managers, with Richard Allen holding that post for nearly 20 years, until his departure two years ago to join Tottenham Hotspur's Football Academy, and now Frank Shillingford, himself a Crown and Manor 'veteran' with over 20 years' service. Frank is supported by 15 or so part-time or voluntary workers, from Alf Camps MBE, who has been with the Club longer than almost anyone younger than Methuselah can remember, through Frank's wife Lisa, who is a stalwart organizer of the Club's less athletic activities, to young up-and-coming football coaches like Mark Julian.

All of that makes for a flourishing, vibrant Club, with every prospect of a rosy future. Indeed, when Hackney Borough Council wants to show outsiders how a successful youth club is run, it is often the Club Manager who gets the call and the Crown and Manor Club which is put on show. Private sector, boys only, structured and disciplined, and arguably 'old fashioned' and far from 'politically correct', especially in

Hackney – but the formula works. Not only does it work, but there is no-one else in Hackney providing this sort of facility: it really is a crucial local asset.

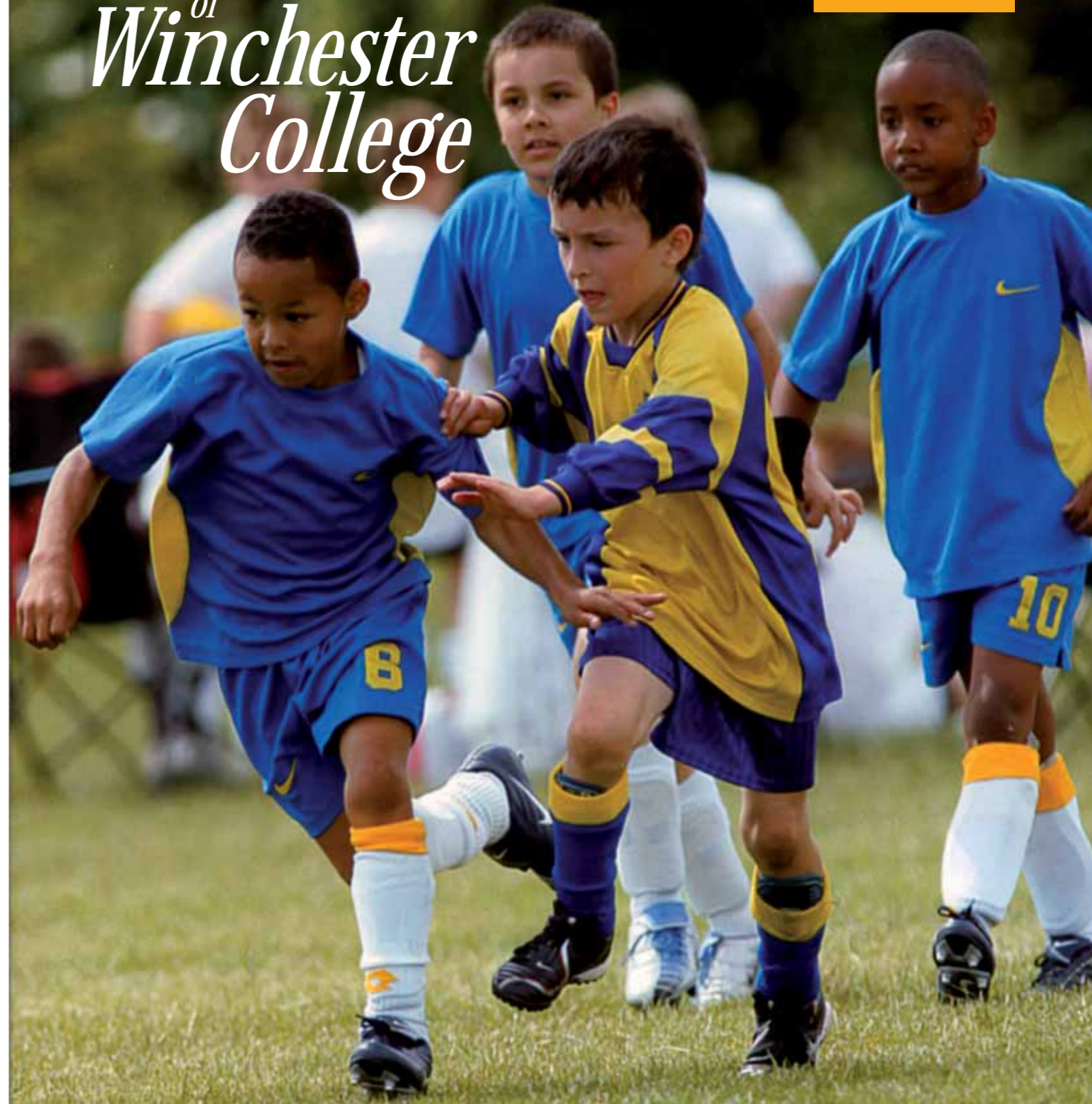
There are two flies in today's ointment. The first is the club building: it is 80-odd years old, and showing its age, and the costs of maintenance – or rather, of more substantial repair – are becoming ever more expensive. And the second is money. The Club continues to be handsomely supported by the Wykeham Crown and Manor Trust, and by a number of other less regular private funding sources, but its block grant income from Hackney Borough Council has fallen steadily from over £90,000 a decade ago to under £20,000 today, while the annual running costs have moved steadily in the opposite direction, and now exceed £200,000. Indeed, such grants as are still available from Hackney are almost all 'project-oriented' (for race awareness, drugs prevention, and so on), and therefore while the Club performs a vital public service, increasingly the only funds available are from the private sector and the begging bowl.

The solution which the Club is trying to achieve to both those problems lies in the redevelopment of the Club premises. The project, which has been in train since 2002, involves the building of a new medium-rise residential development on the site, with new club facilities at basement and ground levels, thereby providing the Club with both a modern up-to-date home and a substantial addition to its income-producing endowment. The Club has entered into a development agreement with a well-known residential developer, Countryside Properties, and the planning process is well under way.

At a superficial level, this is an institution which is far, far removed from Winchester College. The differences of geography, money, background, and privilege are only too obvious. Yet from a more discerning viewpoint, Club and College have more in common: traditions, standards, success, an unequivocal ethos for the education and improvement of boys and young men. Given the resources, the Club will continue to be a major force for good in the Hoxton community for many years to come.



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Crown and Manor Club

Crown and Manor Club

The Crown and Manor Club's name may suggest a suburban golf club or a regimental association – unlikely bodies, readers may think, to be involved with Winchester College. But names can mislead, and the truth is rather different.

'Crown and Manor' is in fact the name of an inner London boys' club, based in Hoxton at the City end of the Borough of Hackney. The origins of the Club go back to 1903, when The New North Road Boys' Club started life just round the corner from the Club's present premises in Wiltshire Row, adjoining the Grand Union Canal. In 1926 the Llewellyn Smith brothers, Arthur (who was also born in 1903) and Harold, and a number of fellow Old Wykehamists established another boys' club in premises at the back of The Crown Inn, off Kingsland Road; this, not surprisingly, they called The Crown Club. By this time, The New North Road Club was operating as 'Hoxton Manor' from the premises in Wiltshire Row. After the outbreak of war in 1939, the Hoxton Manor premises came on the market, and the Llewellyn Smiths

were able to effect what was pretty much a reverse take-over. The two clubs merged, and moved to Wiltshire Row together, into what were then still relatively new purpose-built club premises.

The Club has been there ever since, and has now had an unbroken association with Winchester College, of one sort or another, for over 80 years. From the initial inspiration and involvement of the Llewellyn Smiths, the Club progressed in the 1940's due to the financial support of the Winchester College Mission. The Mission's funds in turn have been subsumed in the present day Wykeham Crown and Manor Trust, with a current capital of nearly £700,000 under professional management; its trustees are successive generations of Wykehamists, with the Headmaster as an *ex officio* trustee. The Club itself is now established as a limited company and a registered charity: its board of directors – or Council, in the Club's parlance – comprises several Club 'old boys' and locals, but also a larger number of Wykehamists, including once again the Headmaster and the Director of the Friends. The Club's senior serving Wykehamist has now notched up over half a century of service to the Club. It is a strong and enduring connection, and indeed Winchester College is the only one of the great public schools still to maintain an involvement with an organization of this sort,



The Club President, Sir Jeremy Morse, and Neil Maitland, (previously Council Member) at the C & M City Lunch.

supporting boys and young men from such a different environment.

What does the Crown and Manor Club do? From the prosperity of Winchester in general and the privilege of Winchester College in particular, it may be difficult to imagine the inadequacies of the educational facilities of inner London and the size of the hole which the Club seeks to help to plug. Superficially, the Crown and Manor Club 'keeps kids off the street'; in reality, it does far more than that. The work that the Club does

with its members accords fully with what Hackney Borough Council asks of Voluntary Youth Service: namely, to provide opportunities that will enable the boys (and young men) to enjoy good physical and mental health, provided principally through an activities-based programme; and to involve them in the community instead of their being engaged in possible anti-social behaviour. It gives the members hope, purpose, occupation, improvement and, far from least, enjoyment. It provides facilities that are woefully lacking in the area. In a nutshell, it helps young men to be better equipped to get ahead in life.

Crown and Manor is strictly a boys' club: there is now occasional participation by girls in one or two of the activities, but very much as the rare exception to the general rule. It is an organized activities-based club, and not a social centre: it is a place for participating in specific sports and other programmes, and not just for loafing about. And it is entirely voluntary: the members (who pay a nominal contribution per visit, just to encourage the sense of proprietorship and belonging) come because they want to, and when they want to.



A quick resumé of the Club's numbers and recent activities will give a good idea of its vibrancy. The Club currently has a shade under 300 registered members. It is open every weekday evening (apart from holiday closures), and the average 'house' every evening is over 100. The sports activities are many and varied: in athletics, 54 gold medals at the 2006 London Youth Championships, and five more Golds at the National competition in Wales; rowing, and successful participation in London Youth's summer rowing course in the Royal Albert Docks; table tennis, karate and boxing are all heavily patronized on a weekly basis; football – endless football! – and a plethora of teams at all ages, participating with frequent success in the London leagues, and coming down every autumn to play against teams from Winchester College; a visit to London Youth's outdoor activity centre at Hindleap Warren; and a competitive night exercise organized by the Essex Association of Boys' Clubs for 30 teams, in which Crown and Manor achieved a commendable sixth place.

But this is not just a sporting club. On a more cerebral note, outside the club premises, the Club has organized visits to the British Museum, the

