

PRESENT DAY

In **1998**, due to Council spending cuts, the Education department no longer had the budget to provide transport to get pupils down to Ward Road. School gym facilities across the City had been improved to the extent that there was no longer a real need to bus children into this city centre gym. Council budget constraints also saw the withdrawal of the gym caretaker around this time. It was agreed at a meeting with the Council in August, that Dundee & District Table Tennis Association would administer and let the gym.

In August 2001 the Council intimated that they intended to sell the gym but alternative accommodation would be found for the sports clubs who continued to use the facility. No suitable alternative venue/venues could be found. On **18th May 2002** notification was received from Dundee City Council (Economic Development) that the building was to be sold and that all equipment must be removed and keys returned by 30th June. The threatened closure of the building brought a strong response from the various groups who had continued to use the facilities in the evenings. Although there had been no heating in the building for around 6 years the venue was being utilised 5 nights each week by a variety of sports (mainly Badminton, Netball and Table Tennis). Over the next few months numerous meetings were held with senior members of Dundee City Council in an effort to avoid the loss of this city centre sports hall.

A Charitable Company, Ward Road Gym Sports Development (Dundee) Co. Ltd. was formed on **9th December 2002** to save and regenerate the building. A major upgrade was required to get the building to a standard which would meet current Health & Safety regulations. There was also a need to provide new heating, lighting, toilets, disabled access and facilities. A lot of hard work was put in by our Charitable Company and Dundee City Council officials to put together refurbishment proposals which would see the gym facilities remain available to clubs and sports organisations for the years to come.

A 25-year lease of the building was signed early in 2005 and a works contract valued at £335,000 was agreed. The refurbishment work started in April 2005 and was completed by the contractors (Mansell) on **22nd September 2005**. The building re-opened its' doors on 26th September 2005.

The "Official Opening" of Ward Road Gym took place on Saturday **25th March 2006** and was carried out by the Leader of Dundee City Council; Councillor Jill Shimi.