

**ADDINGTON RECREATION GROUND COMMITTEE
(CHARITY REGISTERED NO 302668)**

Chairman
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Secretary
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Trustees
Andy Rimmer
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February 2023

Annual Report 2022

Objectives and Activities

- Preamble and Background

The Lease & Trust Deed for the establishment and ongoing management of the Recreation Ground was signed in 1968 and for a term of 99 years. Subsequent to the issue of the Lease the facility was vested with the Charity Commission under registered number 302668 with the stated objective of :-

“Provision of inclusive structured sport, free play and recreational opportunities for all levels of ability in the community and for the widest spectrum of the population demographics and cultural backgrounds.”

Note also that we are also a registered Environmental Body with ENTRUST (Reg no 518927)

- Objectives

Essentially from this stated objective the Recreation Ground facility has always been managed by past and current Trustees for the benefit of the inhabitants of Addington as a green open space for all kinds of community recreation, structured team sports, free play and social cohesion for more than 50 years at minimum revenue cost to the Addington community.

In more recent decades the vision of ***Bone Sane Vicini*** (Jolly Good Neighbours) has been adopted as a mantra to manage the relationship with the wider community including organisations like the Village Hall, the Golf Club, the Sand Quarry, Kent Cricket Groundsman's Association, the Association of Cricket Umpires and Scorers and other like minded bodies where mutual benefits can be realised.

Our portfolio of activities have developed to include high quality grassland management and skills training, tree and hedge planting and maintenance, countryside alignment which all now make a significant contribution to climate change mitigation and carbon sequestration with at the same time providing opportunities for health, fitness and access to the open spaces and fresh air. The Recreation Ground represents a significant carbon sink in Addington and similarly the Golf Club.

It is very important to stress that all these activities and benefits are provided by community volunteers with little or no cost to the public purse. Without the motivation to identify, engage and encourage community volunteers and manage successions this strategy carries the biggest risk to our future. Our challenge must be to hand over the baton to younger community leaders

We now have a new Team of volunteer Trustees. New Trustees - Andy Rimmer, Peter McDermott, Peter Cavender and myself.

- **Recognisable Achievements but also Challenges**
 - The ongoing contribution of volunteers
 - Provision of facilities at cost independent of the public purse
 - Volunteer succession planning investing in People
 - Protecting the Environmental and leadership on Climate Change mitigation.

Key Issues & Challenges:-

Current:-

- Revenue losses from the pandemic restrictions, resulting low activity and loss of the Bridge Club rent income unless we can replace the income stream from other hirers and organisations
- Poor pandemic financial support from Sport England and the England & Wales Cricket Board!
- The risk remains of losing the 20% discretionary Business rate charge by T&M BC remains an ongoing issue but we were once again successful in receiving zero rating until 2023?
(IF this claim is lost and an annual charge is made then the basis for rental charges will increase which may result in a challenge to the survival of some of our member clubs, societies and community organisations)
- The modernisation and upgrade of the electrical reticulation will become a priority going forward as these systems get older. SMART meters have been installed to allow better monitoring of loads and the investigation of a solar generation with battery storage project required.
- The Playground RoSPA inspection confirmed all risk issues were low.
- WMGC ongoing support
- The investment in the replacement of perimeter fencing, maintenance on trees & hedges, additional planting and security landscaping will probably suffice for the next few years with anticipated minimum spend.

Future Risks

Our contingency funds have now been spent with little or no reserves left.

The new energy contract with BG Lite is the best that could be negotiated in the present crisis and we are rigorously monitoring consumption, making savings where possible with conversion to LED lighting and changing conservation behaviours.

However the conclusion is that a significant solar with battery storage project will be a vital contribution going forward and needed probably by 2024?

Due to pandemic grant funding we have been able to progress the renewal and replacement of some key ground maintenance machinery and equipment but we continue to rely on our old Ford tractor and towed gang mowers. This is a significant risk and needs replacing and not the least to improve our carbon footprint as this machine is a relatively high polluter. We continue to rely on the good will of WM Golf Club for borrowing professional equipment and also the availability of modern mowing machinery from the Kent Groundsman's Association but this is a high risk solution and will require an ongoing financial contribution?

Financial Review and Accounts analysis

The normal expected revenue generation from activities has been severely affected over the last two years by the Covid pandemic and low activity levels in all our member clubs and societies.

Ground maintenance costs are increasing with equipment age and unreliability. Renewals and replacements with more reliable and modern equipment priority is increasingly becoming a priority. The aspiration for grant funding for such renewals has stalled due to both lack of revenue generation from activity and withdrawal of leisure and sports sector grants. These equipment and machinery renewals are also key to encouraging our prospective volunteers

Significant support was given to AVCC in square maintenance material cost support, specialist machinery hire, machinery servicing, The Club have suffered significant revenue loss from two seasons of reduced playing schedules and activity. The normal annual Autumn renovation programme on the square haven't been done for three years resulting in poor pitch performance and player experiences. This is not a sustainable strategy even though we rely so much on their volunteer base.

This support was justified as the Club members continue to be the key community volunteer base to sustain the facility and minimise maintenance and development costs.

Fixed cost projections - Projected fixed cost analysis for 2023to 2024

The sustainability of the organisation over the next few years will be a significant challenge and there is a possibility that the management of this community facility may have to be handed back to the PC as costs may be unsustainable?

- Insurance - £2,000 (currently shared 50/50 with AVCC)
- Energy - £500 (security & lighting/ kitchen - ***net of meter revenue***)
- Business Rates - nil at the moment/ potentially £450 @ 20% rate
- Water/ Waste - £350 (benefits from rainwater harvesting system and assuming supply issues and leakages have now been resolved and won't repeat but subject to the old reticulation?)
- Mowing - £500 (depends on volunteer contribution and equipment availability)
- Pavilion mtce @ minimum - £200 (***assuming continued support from AVCC volunteer base and avoiding labour charges!***)
- Compliance - RoSPA/ Fire/ PAT - £300
- Fuel - £500 – loss of red diesel option!!!

Total - say £3,500 to £4,500

Realistic expectations for rent contribution increases - Training income (£1,000); AVCC (£1,000); WM&DHS (£500) - shortfall up to £1,000. ***These rents were increased by 40% in 2022.***

Facility Development Plans to mitigate risks to the future

Volunteer base and succession planning

Replace the tractor and outfield mowing equipment

Revenue generation

Access and identification of both established and new Grant funding streams

Fixed cost challenge to sustainability – utilities, security, insurance, volunteer base, climate change

Utility inflation

WMGC relationship

Peter Robinson

Chair of Trustees

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