

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

Chairman
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Trustees
Andy Rimmer
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February 2024

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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 from 1966. 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)

There is a current discussion and negotiation with the Parish Council on the modernisation, update and conditions of the Lease including the definition of "ownership" of the buildings on site following an updating of the registration of the facility with the Land Registry around 2010.

- 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 a zero 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 Parish Council, the Village Hall, local businesses like the Golf Club, SE Watr and the Ferns 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 and a strategic rural Green Belt countryside alignment all of which make a significant contribution to climate change mitigation, carbon capture and sequestration with at the same time providing opportunities for health, fitness and access to the open spaces and fresh air. The Recreation Ground now represents a significant carbon sink in Addington and similarly for the Golf Club area.

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 existing and new volunteer Trustees - Andy Rimmer, Peter McDermott, Neil Burnop, Peter Cavender and myself.

- **Recognisable Achievements but also Challenges**

- The ongoing contribution of volunteers
- Provision of facilities at minimum cost independent of the public purse
- Volunteer succession planning and investing in People
- Protecting the Environmental and leadership on Climate Change mitigation and carbon literacy.

Key Issues & Challenges:-

Current:-

- The risk remains of losing the 20% discretionary Business rate charge by T&M BC as an ongoing challenge 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 volunteer base and survival of some of our member clubs, societies and community organisations)***
- The modernisation and upgrade of the electrical reticulation remains a priority going forward as the existing protection systems gets older. Although SMART meters were installed a few years ago to facilitate better monitoring and management of consumption the efficiency of telemetry in such a rural location remains marginal.
- The investigation of a solar generation with battery storage project continues with the ongoing investigations of finance and funding opportunities. The PC provided a letter of support to these enquiries.
- The Playground RoSPA inspection confirmed all risk issues were low.
- Successful ongoing WMGC ongoing support
- The one year energy contract negotiated at the time of the very high unit cost market in December 2022 resulted in a best available rate of 65p/ unit and 45p Standing Charge. This had a significant cost implication on the Rec budget but we just about survived the increased cost burden due to two Parish Council grant contributions for a Pavilion function room LED lighting upgrade and covering the RoSPA Playground compliance inspection plus previous year rebates from contract terminations together with continued and very generous support from the Cricket Club on building and ground maintenance contributions for building and ground maintenance costs and their volunteer efforts..

Future Risks

Our contingency funds remain very low with little or no reserves left for any extra ordinary expenditure.

At year end 2023 we remain optimistic of attracting grant funding for a significant solar micro-generation with battery storage project in 2024. PC support may be critical in landing matched funding contributions.

We continue to rely on the good will of both the Golf Club and the Kent Cricket Groundsman's Association for borrowing / hiring of modern mowing and sports turf maintenance machinery - but this is a high risk and unsustainable solution which will require ongoing and future financial challenges.

Financial Review and Accounts analysis

There has been a significant volunteer effort in renovating existing owned ground maintenance machinery by the Cricket Club to buy some time before renewals and replacements become more critical and we are able to procure more reliable and modern equipment.. Equipment and machinery renewals are also key to enthuse existing and encouraging future prospective volunteers.

AVCC support and their contribution to shared building and ground square maintenance costs have been exceptional in getting through the cost challenges. Cricket 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 2024 thro' 2026

The sustainability of the organisation over the next few years remains a significant challenge to sustaining the current minimum cost management strategy using the volunteer base culture and behaviours.

- Insurance - (currently shared 50/50 with AVCC) but the full replacement cost valuation is under discussion.
- Energy costs - *net of meter revenue* – solar project critical to the future!
- Business Rates - nil at the moment but potentially up to £500 @ 20% rate if T&MBC apply the discretionary charge.
- Water & Waste - continued benefits from rainwater harvesting system and also assumes supply issues and leakages have now been resolved and won't repeat - but still a risk and subject to the condition of the old reticulation!
- Mowing - depends on volunteer contribution and equipment availability, maintenance and borrowing?
- Pavilion mtce - *assuming continued support from the AVCC volunteer base and avoiding labour charges!*
- Compliance - RoSPA/ Fire/ PAT/ hygiene/ licence to operate/ DBS accreditation
- Fuel – cost increase due to loss of red diesel discount?

Current projections show a potential net loss of £1000 to £2,000 pa unless additional revenue can be generated!

Facility Development Plans to mitigate risks to the future

Volunteer base and succession planning

Replace the tractor and outfield mowing equipment

Additional revenue generation – potential pre-school from 4Q24

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

Rev 2 02/24