

VERWOOD MEMORIAL RECREATION GROUND TRUST

Charity No. 1055101

C/o Verwood Town Council Office, 28 Vicarage Road, Verwood BH31 6DW

Meeting held Tuesday, 28th April 2009 8.20pm
at Verwood Town Council Office following a Full Town Council Meeting

Present : Messrs Michael Dolan (Chair), Vic Redpath, Boyd Mortimer, Michael Daymond, Alan Dedden, Peter Baker, Alec Nicholls, Michael Simper, Simon Gibson; Mesdames Jean Hazel, Angela Daymond (Minutes), Lindsey Dedden, Jane Russell, Lesley Nicholls, Toni Coombs, Gillian Belcher, Lucy Clark.

3 members of the public.

Apologies : Peter Richardson

1. **Public Contribution**

The Chairman thought it would be helpful if the public contribution was put at the top of the agenda; a member of the public addressed the Trustees with her views on the Recreation Ground and its uses.

Action

2. **Previous Meeting**

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 28th October 2008 had not been circulated. There were no matters arising.

3. **Comments by the Town Council Amenities Committee on Ground Usage**

The Chair of the Amenities Committee reported on ad hoc use by Rossgarth Youth Football Club for training, noting that the Recreation Ground is not a sports ground per se, but an area for general use and picnics.

Comments by Trustees included : the original concept was for recreation; the area is not a park; it was a gift to the town. Recently there was informal cricket and picnickers and previously the Youth Club had a water slide there; it was a green lung.

4. **MUGA Project**

a) Request

A representative of AGFA (Active Games for All) reported on the current situation of the MUGA project. This had previously been agreed in principle for informal play in the north-west corner of the Recreation Ground. He reported on the public display and consultation held at the Memorial Hall on Saturday, 4th April – some Trustees were present. He estimated that approx. 200 people had attended and the forms completed on the day were currently being analysed by Dorset Community Action. There had been little negative response and most queries were able to be answered to the questioners' satisfaction.

In addition, on display outside the hall there had been items of fitness equipment which proved extremely popular with all age groups – from children to pensioners.

A letter from the Chair of the AGFA group was circulated to all those present. The letter asked for confirmation of the area allocated in 2005 for a MUGA and asked for additional space for fitness equipment (described in an attached document) in an area between the MUGA and the Memorial Hall.

One Trustee was not happy that the consultation had covered a wide enough cross-section of the population, but the AGFA representative felt that if people had concerns, then they would have come and expressed them.

The AGFA group were confident that they could get grants from various revenue streams. The fitness items were quoted at approx £2,000 each by the demonstrator on the day of the consultation.

Concern was expressed that there were no questionnaires elsewhere in the parish, but it was suggested that additional consultation could appear in the Town Council newsletter "Verwood Vista". It was felt that the proper forum to develop this facility would have been through a Town Plan, but this project had only just been started and would take some time.

One Trustee commented that he had attended the consultation and having seen the area clearly marked out, his concerns had been allayed.

The Chair reported that at the recent PACT meeting the police had been very enthusiastic about the project.

Trustees reaffirmed the allocation of the land for the MUGA ; the 5 items of fitness equipment were proposed by Simon Gibson, 2nd Lindsey Dedden and agreed in principle to be between the MUGA and the Memorial Hall.

b) **Procedure**

The procedure would be for a representative from the AGFA group to have informal discussions with the E Dorset Planning Department with regard to what the process should be. Detailed plans would be needed for this meeting.

AGFA

If formal planning permission was required, then AGFA would need to ask the Town Council to carry this out on their behalf. There was already in existence a Memorandum of Understanding relating to the existing play area – the Trust would write to the Town Council asking for the Memorandum of Understanding to be extended to the maintenance of the proposed new equipment.

Trust

The Chairman said he felt invigorated and encouraged by the project team and the progress made so far.

5. **Footpath**

There had been a request to the Town Council for a footpath to be installed around the Recreation Ground to provide access to Moorlands Road from Ringwood Road on the grounds that not to do so would be a failure to comply with the Disabilities Discrimination Act. Points raised included the fact that it is a recreation ground and not a park and there could be danger to pedestrians using a footpath during active play by footballers, etc.; it is not the duty of the Trustees of the Recreation Ground to provide access paths to facilities outside the Ground.

There were also concerns that a footpath as a "public right of way" opened up wider issues of public liability and this needed further investigation.

Trust

The Town Clerk had obtained an approximate price for a path all round the Ground – £51,000 for a standard path 463m long, surfaced in tarmac with timber edges; if it was deemed that lighting was required, this would be another £20,000. Plus there would be associated maintenance costs.

AGFA had felt the need for an access path to be installed between the Memorial Hall tarmac and the MUGA; it was felt by Trustees that a path should also link the MUGA with Moorlands Road as it was a shorter distance for the less able to gain access. AGFA had had ballpark quotes of between £5,000 and £13,500 for a path from the Memorial Hall to the MUGA, but do not expect to fund the cost of any paths.

A Trustee suggested it was the responsibility of the Trust to consider Disability Discrimination and that Trustees should meet with a group of disabled people on site. However, it was pointed out that this was a Town Council matter and the Town Council had carried out DDA work on the Recreation Ground. The Chairman of Amenities pointed out that there was now disability access to the Ground using a radar key which is available to all those who are disabled. He noted that DDA does not apply to parents with prams.

The Trust Chairman suggested that the Trustee who raised the matter could gather together some volunteers to assess access to the Ground and carry out a Town Survey if he wished. Meanwhile the Trustees would write to the Town Clerk to clarify the matter of DDA responsibility. It was suggested that the Clerk could contact NALC and DAPTC for guidance.

Trustee
Trust

6. **Items of Report and matters for future agendas**

- a) The AGM would be held on 27th October after the Full Council meeting.
- b) A special meeting will be arranged, if required, to take the MUGA project forward.
- c) Future agenda : footpath

Meeting closed at 9.20pm