

Surrey Playing Fields Newsletter

Changing Faces

Our New President



For many years SPF have had the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey as our President. We are delighted that Michael More-Molyneux has agreed to continue with the tradition. He has lived in the county all his life; his family has been here for five centuries. Michael More-Molyneux lives at Loseley with his wife Sarah. They have two surviving sons and a daughter.

He is a former Chair of Visit Surrey and President of the Surrey County Agricultural Society and has supported many organisations in the county for many years.

Following his appointment as Lord-Lieutenant by HM The Queen, he said: "I look forward to carrying on the work and commitment of Dame Sarah Goad over the past 18 years and to continue to develop a good atmosphere of cooperation and encouragement to the voluntary services, benevolent organisations, industrial, business and social life of the county. All the people of Surrey will, I'm sure, wish to join me in thanking Dame Sarah and her husband Tim for the tremendous support they have given to the county."

His family have a strong background in sport and we look forward to working with him as our President.



Our New Treasurer

At the Annual General Meeting, in November, Bill Braid retired as Honorary Treasurer. We thanked Mike Hughes for taking this post. Mike has a background in banking and has spent a few months working on the hand over from Bill.

Mike has been with us for a couple of years as the Borough Development Officer for Reigate and Banstead. He will continue in this role until we find a volunteer to replace him.

Like most of us he has had many years' experience as a volunteer in sport and leisure. He plays table tennis, hockey and golf. He is the secretary of at least one table tennis club and has worked as a committee member at a hockey club. I know that he is also a hockey umpire. Now he has retired, he is playing more golf. His contact details are on our web site.

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It also receives funding from Sports Clubs and individuals. Details are in our Annual Report.

We thank them all.

Organisations on SCPFA Advisory Committee

Surrey County Athletic Association

Surrey County Council

Surrey County Football Association

Surrey County Lawn Tennis Association

Surrey County Rugby Football Union

Surrey Cricket Board

Surrey Sports Board

Active Surrey

Surrey Community Action

We are grateful for their support and wise counsel.

The inclusion of any products or services in this newsletter implies no endorsement by the SPF.

Whilst every care is taken with the content, no responsibility can be accepted for errors or admissions made in good faith.

From the County Sec's Desk

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Treasurer's Retirement

Bill Braid joined as Treasurer in 1998. He has been a most efficient Treasurer. When he retired from work he was given a cartoon of him at his desk. Alongside the desk was hockey kit – most appropriate for a man who played for Old Cranleighans. On the desk was a computer covered in cobwebs, whilst Bill worked away with a pen. Working with us must have had some effect. He has moved our accounts on to a modern computer system which provides the Trustees with accurate information for managing the charity.

However, we are not going to lose his expertise. The members of Surrey Playing



Fields elected him a Vice President. The photograph shows our Chairman, Gerry Ceaser, presenting Bill with a Surrey Playing Fields Certificate.

I do not think will have much time to help us. He obviously likes to be kept busy. His local church have elected him as their churchwarden.

Thank you Bill, for all your work as Treasurer and wise Trustee.

Annual General Meeting

We thank Reigate & Banstead Borough Council for allowing us to hold the meeting at the old Council Chamber. As usual it was well attended. Once the formal business was completed we made a presentation to the Council team who won the Fair Play Award at P&G Surrey Youth Games. This year the certificate and a cheque for £250 went to Elmbridge Borough Council.

David Kingsmill and Lucy Donavon, from the Surrey Cricket Foundation, then explained how clubs should go about fund raising. The talks were informative, challenging and yet relaxed. Raising funds needs as much thought and planning as does the identified project. An innovative approach can help; there should be an element of fun when working with ones' supporters. It should then be possible to keep people involved when carrying out the relevant project.



Gerry Ceaser, Chairman of Surrey Playing Fields, presenting the "Fair Play Certificate" to Councillor Jan Fuller, Mayor of Elmbridge.

The cheque for £250, which was also handed over, will be used for sports equipment for young people.

Those of us fortunate enough to attend the AGM, were treated to a passionate and utterly inspiring talk from David Kingsmill and Lucy Donovan. This was directly connected with our decision to celebrate the impending 90th anniversary of the first meeting of Surrey County Playing Fields, by raising a substantial amount of money for the benefit of Sport in Surrey.

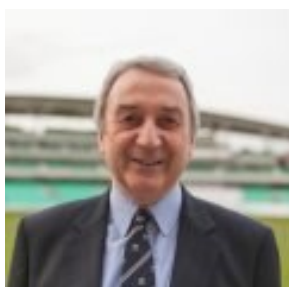
Much has happened in and around Sport and Politics during the intervening time. All Surrey Members of Parliament were on board in that first group – a connection we have largely lost during the intervening years. The various groups of Trustees over time have done an amazing job in making the best use of the money available for grass-roots sporting clubs in Surrey whilst trying to maintain a healthy balance from which to draw. Unfortunately if an inflation rate of 3.17% annually is applied to £500,000 available in 1927, the value is more than £15,000,000 in today's money.

We have decided to make a concerted effort to do something to address this seeming slide but it represents a big ask for us all. During the last 10 years, we have made more than £1,500,000 available to local clubs and organisations through our grants and loans. Most of this was to clubs who simply did not qualify for financial aid from elsewhere. We know that many would, quite simply, not still be in existence at all let alone be the viable and sustainable operation that they are today.

With our extremely low operating costs, largely as a direct result of our exclusively volunteer officers and helpers, we have been too intent on actually helping where we can, and have not spent much time at all in telling people what we do or what we could achieve in the wake of greater public awareness and a higher profile. The opportunity to address some of these issues is also combined with the 90th plans. In a recent professionally conducted survey, even our best friends and partners were not completely aware of precisely what we did, the advice we freely offer on matters of planning, maintenance or operation and the significant financial help we can represent.

Our image is closely aligned to that of our Secretary, Jim Faulkner. Like him, we are under-stated and interested only in helping legitimate operators help themselves. Jim has been the back-bone of SPF for approaching 40 years. A quiet and modest man, he has far more intimate knowledge of Surrey sports clubs, their history, their successes and limitations than anyone else I know. Jim has stated he wants to stand down soon – possibly coinciding with 2017. It is no surprise that we are struggling to find someone to replace him and give him the retirement he so richly deserves, as anyone who knows him and his work will quite simply be scared to even try and fill his famous boots. But we will have to recruit someone and it would be far better to enable someone to work with Jim during his inimitable full swing.

It is our hope that an enhanced fund-raising campaign combined with the necessary increase in publicity will raise the profile enough to help address this issue too. Please help all you can. There are over one million people in Surrey. If we can persuade everyone to give us just 25p we will be in clover!



David Kingsmill



Lucy Donovan

Article provided by Barry Hitchcock

County Development Officer Surrey Playing Fields

With the ever increasing interest in the 'greening' of our environment, children's playgrounds provide a highly visible and tactile link for communities and their young families. What better way than to grow your own playground and use equipment that is directly connected with plants – greener playgrounds and wooden equipment.

Create foot spirals or mazes by low and high grass cutting and, where space allows, banish the gang mowers and allow our native 'weeds' to grow. Does everything need to be manicured to regulation height; let the buttercups and dandelions grow, let children discover what many have lost. Additionally with the greatest part of many playgrounds, especially rural ones, being open grassed space, the playgrounds' boundaries provide many opportunities for natural 'greening' plantings.

Thankfully many equipment manufacturers use wood and enable nature's touch to be retained, even within our most urban environments. New strategies promoting longevity rather than the dreaded rot are happily becoming more understood and these include well thought through designs and the use of timber species naturally resistant to decay, such as oak and robinia. For many wooden playgrounds however the use of 'softwoods' remains dominant and it is essential to ensure that all the necessary preservative treatments (as advised to meet the playground standard BSEN1176) are fully undertaken. It is always advised that the equipment provider contractually takes responsibility for the installation of the equipment and provides a written guarantee on its minimum lifespan.

Issues of structural strength and rot, due to timber growth issues, regrettably do sometimes occur, particularly at that crucial ground level zone. So it is well worth looking for manufacturers that go that one step further. Why put timber directly into concrete with its acknowledged difficulties that can result in rot? Many manufacturers bypass ground rot problems altogether by fixing the timber post above ground level in a metal 'shoe'. Others use an advanced 'blanket' coating or more penetrating chemical preservation by drill or spike measures. Importantly, as part of the operators' responsibilities, advised by the equipment manufacturer, do check on the need for any dismantling or excavating inspections that are required and that the necessary competencies are held. Trees with their natural growth can have hidden imperfections. Unless you have been granted super human x ray vision, one cannot guarantee that there are no internal defects. So some manufacturers go that one step further and use wood that has been laminated, enabling each timber layer to be checked during construction.

Robust SAFETY Inspections



Play & Sports areas, Parks, Ponds, Schools & Gyms

Detailed reports inspecting to approved UK & EU Standards
Risk Benefit Assessment & Guidance for prioritising actions
Identifying photographs & advice on problems found
Quality 'Seal' RPII Annual Play Inspectors
Independent of any manufacturer or maintenance company
Training courses for weekly & ¼ ly inspectors
30+ years' experience
Surrey County PFA Children's Play Advisor



Institute of Expert Witnesses – full member
Register of Play Inspectors International – Annual Inspector
RPII Examiner

Contact Today – Active Risk Management Services Ltd
07970 764 804
infor@activerms.org

Finally it is important to understand that for preserved timber installed directly into the ground, grass cutting machinery, such as strimmers should never be allowed to make contact with the timber. Most timber preservation methods only penetrate the timber by several millimetres and if this outer layer or protective envelope is breached, water can penetrate into the timber, transporting fungi. The natural result is rot, which can lead to structural failure.

So, happily, an environmentally tactile link is available with timber play equipment and the quality is available to introduce children to natural products. Keep to the necessary inspection regime, and above all keep the strimmers away from your timber.

Jean Wenger
Surrey Playing Field Play Advisor



Robin Elsdon-Dew Awards

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At the Annual General Meeting of Surrey Playing Fields in November 2014 we announced that our charity would like to support local sports councils at their Sports Awards. We would provide a trophy and a small sum of money to the Young Volunteer of the Year in each area. The trophies would be engraved with Robin Elsdon-Dew's name.

The cost of this would be met from a fund given to our organisation following Robin's death. Robin had held many positions on Surrey Playing Fields, including that of Director. He had often said that young people should assist with the running of their clubs.

This year was the first one where we offered the scheme and were pleased that a number of sports councils agreed to take part.

The winners of local awards were:

Farnham – Gemma Lee Ross, Spelthorne – Sam Chappell,
Woking – Simon Carr, Surrey Heath – Ebonoe Bridges,
Epsom & Ewell – Peter Harding.

Sport Godalming will not be making their presentation until next year.

Surrey Playing Fields also sponsor the County award for the Young Volunteer of the Year.



Robin Elsdon-Dew making a SportAid award in 2009



Gerry Ceaser presenting the County Young Volunteer Award in 2015

The County Award was won by Peter Harding from Wandgas FC in Epsom & Ewell. At the age of 15 Peter had an accident which resulted in him sustaining a brain injury which left him with physical disabilities. Fortunately, he discovered disability football and has since represented the South East in the National League. He became inspired by his return to football and now supports others with a disability to play football. He volunteers his time every Saturday morning to support the Special Education Needs players and has helped their enjoyment of football immensely.



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Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play Beyond the Six Acre Standard England

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On 5th November 2015, Fields in Trust created a bang at the House of Lords. No, they did not try to blow it up. Lord Coe announced the release of the new 6 Acre Standard. He said -

‘At first glance the similarities between toddlers playing in the local park and professional athletes competing at the highest level seem tenuous, but they both share one basic requirement: a need for outdoor recreational space. Parks, playgrounds and playing fields play a vital role in building healthy neighbourhoods contributing to the physical, mental and emotional well-being of local people. Without access to these spaces, the quality of life and wellbeing of residents is reduced.

Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play: Beyond the Six Acre Standard emphasises the need for a range of both formal and informal outdoor spaces to meet our recreational needs and the practical tools to guarantee sufficient space is available.

Outdoor recreational spaces are the foundation stone for an active, healthy nation. Fields in Trust’s expert advice ensures provision of these spaces is part of the fabric of our communities.

I welcome this updated guide which councils and neighbourhood planning groups may find helpful when they consider planning for open space’.

HRH The Duke of Cambridge, President, Fields in Trust said -

‘Since the 1930s, Fields in Trust has provided guidance on the provision of outdoor space for sport, play and recreation that is both respected and valued across the sector. This new publication recognises the need for people to have access to a wide range of outdoor spaces for recreational purposes and the intrinsic value these important spaces bring to the health and well-being of our communities.’

Fields in Trust’s benchmark standards, or local guidance derived from them, were widely used by local authorities for many years and they were referred to by other bodies, including Sport England, who used to refer to them for benchmarking purposes.

75% of Local Planning Authorities in a survey commissioned by Fields in Trust in 2014 use the PDOSP or guidance that promotes equivalent levels of provision, demonstrating the continuing relevance of Fields in Trust’s Benchmark Guidelines.

The 2015 guidance backed up by research retains the same headline rates of provision, but draws out new recommendations for accessibility, the application of standards and the minimum dimensions of formal outdoor space.

The standards also no longer differentiate between urban and rural areas. Using this current guidance will help to ensure that the provision of outdoor sport, play and informal open space is of a sufficient size to enable effective use; is located in an accessible location and in close proximity to dwellings; and of a quality to maintain longevity and to encourage its continued use.

If you wish to learn more or use the standard, please go to <http://www.fieldsintrust.org/guidance>.

Surrey Playing Fields, in conjunction with Fields in Trust, will be running a course on the new standard in 2016.



Surrey Playing Field Contacts

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We have a contact for each council area in Surrey. We have one officer who looks after county wide projects; he can also put you in touch with the officer who is appropriate for your request. The details are shown below.

County Development Officer

Mr Barry Hitchcock, MBE, Tel: 01483 410165 email: barry.hitchcock@gmx.co.uk

Borough Development Officers

Elmbridge	Mr Mike Armitage, Tel: 07930 405788, email: mike.j.armitage@btinternet.com
Epsom & Ewell	Mr William Eve, Tel: 01372 725310, email: helen.howlett@ramhouse.co.uk
Guildford	Dr Mike Clark, Tel: 01483 574024, email: mikemclark@btinternet.com
Mole Valley	Mr Bob Higson, Tel: 01306 886043, email: bob@higsonweb.com
Reigate & Banstead	Mr Mike Hughes, Tel: 0208 668 3314, email: mikehhughes60@gmail.com
Runnymede	Mr Keith Heal, Tel: 01784 435423, email: wkheal@sky.com
Spelthorne	Mrs Shirley Winson, email: s.winson@care4free.net
Surrey Heath	Mr Grant Simmons, email: gsimmons@ravenscote.surrey.sch.uk
Tandridge	Mr Denham Earl, Tel: 020 8660 6621, email: dm_laearl@hotmail.com
Waverley - Eastern	Mr Martin Maybrey BEM, Tel: 01483 893209, email: martin.maybrey@btinternet.com
Waverley - Western	Mr Brian Greig, Tel: 01252 793762, email: briangreig@fsmail.net
Woking	Cllr Ian Eastwood, Tel 01483 481864, email: cllrrian.eastwood@woking.gov.uk

Other Officers you may need to contact are:

Director Mr David Gill, Tel: 07798 667662, email: dandcgill@sky.com

Honorary Planning Officer Mr Paul Garber Dip TP, Dairy House, The Street, Capel, Dorking RH5 5ER
Tel: 01306 711015, email: pgarber@btinternet.com

Children's Play Provision and Safety Advisor Mr Jean Wenger MIEW RPIAM,
50 Hurst Park Road, Twyford, RG10 0EY. Tel. 07970 764 804, email: jeanwenger@activerms.org

Sport England — New Strategy

On the day I was finalising this newsletter, a new Government strategy was announced which aims to help children as young as five get active. This will be done by investing in community sport in England. Sport England wants to create a nation of fitter people and its plans include more funding going directly to charities as well as to support Olympians and Paralympians.

It is difficult to find out what this means. Our Trustees will look at this at our meeting in January 2016. We have heard that, as part of the fitness agenda, they wish to start people on an active life at 5 and ensure that they continue being active into old age. They have also stated that there was little legacy from the 2012 Olympics.

Surrey Playing Fields will be interested to see how this initiative progresses via an organisation which certainly does not understand our county. We, like many other counties in England, do have a 2012 legacy. These are Queen Elizabeth II Fields, which were not only secured as a legacy of the Diamond Jubilee, but also as a legacy of the Olympics. As many families cannot afford expensive indoor facilities, I hope that Sport England consider how best to make use of outdoor leisure facilities.

Perhaps SPF was too early in setting our objectives. A major objective is to ensure that playing fields be suitable for people of all ages. We do look for specific help for those with a disability. We understand why the Government are asking them to start with children of 5 years old and upwards. However, we consider that outdoor play, either on play equipment or free play, should start earlier than that.

It is natural for children to want to run around. Playgroups can find it helpful to take children to an outside area which is secure and supervised. Many children develop coordination and ball sense when they are very young.

Please give them a chance to develop the habit of exercising when they are very young.