



Essex County Council

Great Notley Country Park Joint Venture Partnership Board

14:00	Monday, 15 July 2019	Conference Room Great Notley Country Park Discovery Centre Braintree CM77 7FS,
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For information about the meeting please ask for:

Andrew Seaman, Democratic Services Officer

Telephone: 03330 322 177

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7 Urgent Business

To consider any matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered in public by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

Exempt Items

(During consideration of these items the meeting is not likely to be open to the press and public)

The following items of business have not been published on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Part I of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972. Members are asked to consider whether or not the press and public should be excluded during the consideration of these items. If so it will be necessary for the meeting to pass a formal resolution:

That the press and public are excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the remaining items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information falling within Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972, the specific paragraph(s) of Schedule 12A engaged being set out in the report or appendix relating to that item of business.

8 Urgent Exempt Business

To consider in private any other matter which in the opinion of the Chairman should be considered by reason of special circumstances (to be specified) as a matter of urgency.

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Agenda item 1

Committee: Great Notley Country Park Joint Venture Partnership Board

Enquiries to: Andrew Seaman, Democratic Services Officer

Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

Recommendations:

To note

1. Membership as shown below
2. Apologies and substitutions
3. Declarations of interest to be made by Members in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct

Membership

(Quorum: One Member from each Council)

Representing

Councillor M Platt
Councillor S Walsh
Councillor G Butland
Councillor W Schmitt

Essex County Council
Essex County Council
Braintree District Council
Braintree District Council

Minutes of the meeting of the Great Notley Country Park Joint Venture Partnership Board held at Cressing Temple, on Tuesday 4 December 2018.

Present:

Councillors:

S Walsh (Chairman)	Essex County Council
M Steptoe	Essex County Council
G Butland	Braintree District Council

The following officers and advisors were also present in support:

Laura Boreham	Business Development Lead, Culture and Green Spaces
Claire Bunn	Park Manager, Great Notley Country Park
Dee O'Rourke	Head of Culture and Green Spaces
Samir Pandya	Strategy & Policy Manager, Braintree District Council
Paul Partridge	Head of Operations, Braintree District Council
Cherie Root	Corporate Director and Head of Business Solutions
Sophie Campion	Senior Democratic Services Officer

1. Membership, Apologies, Substitutions and Declarations of Interest

The Board received the report on Membership, Apologies and Declarations and it was noted that:

1. The membership of the Board was as shown in the report.
2. Apologies had been received from Cllr Wendy Schmitt, Braintree District Council.
3. There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Great Notley Country Park Joint Venture Partnership Board held on 31 May 2018 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

3. Site Report

The Board received report (GTP/04/18) from Claire Bunn, Park Manager.

The following points were highlighted from the report:

- It was likely that the new member of staff would be starting in January 2019.
- Maintaining the Play Equipment was an on-going task. Ideas for improvements to the Water Play area for next year were being considered as it was showing signs of wear and tear.
- Visitor numbers were slightly down across all of the country parks and this was consistent with the particularly hot weather during the summer and the limited shady areas at the Park.

- The Zip Wire would no longer be situated at Great Notley Country Park due to refusal of the planning application by the Planning Committee.
- There were a number of events held at the Park and there would be an Events team next year.
- Building Developments along the Flitch Way were being monitored regarding any potential mitigating effects or incursions on the land.

During consideration of the report the following points were made:

- A question was raised regarding the litter collection policy at the Park, particularly at the Lake end of the Park. In response it was reported that the general policy across the country parks was to limit the number of bins, due to the issues caused by wasps and birds, and encourage people to take their litter home. Along the main play trail litter was collected daily, however at the Lake end this was done weekly, although collections were more frequent during peak periods. Concern was raised regarding the weekly collection and it was requested that this be considered further by the Chairman.
- With regard to possible land encroachments along the Flitch Way due to developments, it was reported that this could be reported to the Land Registry and noted for future searches on those particular properties.

It was **Agreed** that:

1. The Chairman, as Cabinet Member for Environment & Waste, would give further consideration to the issue raised regarding bins and litter collection at Great Notley Country Park.
2. The contact details of the officer at the Land Registry would be provided to the Country Parks Team.

The Board noted the report and update.

4. Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) and Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA)

The Board received report (GTP/05/18) from Steve Wilson, Street Scene and Parks Manager, Braintree District Council and an update from Samir Pandya, Strategy and Policy Manager, Braintree District Council.

The report provided Members with an update on usage and income from the Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) and Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at Great Notley Country Park covering the period from 1 April to 30 October 2018.

The following issues were noted during the update:

- The total number of bookings was over 1,000 but down overall on this period last year by 13%.
- There had been 29 different organisations who had regularly booked the facilities however, Braintree Town Football Academy and Great Notley Youth Football Club accounted for around 40% of the total bookings. The facility was well used at peak times in the evenings and weekends.

- The income generation from the facilities remained in line with the same period last year (5% lower) and if this trend continued the facility would achieve breakeven point.
- The Artificial Grass Pitch requires replacement in 2019/20 as it will be 10 years old. There is funding for this in a reserve fund and the work would be subject to a tender exercise. The work would be undertaken in the quieter period to minimise disruption.

During consideration of this item the following points were raised:

- In response to a question regarding usage and engagement, it was reported that there were still some difficulties getting Great Notley Youth Football Club engaged in the Strategy and this was a key issue as they were technically the home team and therefore there was an expectation by the Football Association that they would be engaged. It was hoped that a meeting with the Chairman of the Club would open discussions.
- There had been some anti-social behaviour during some of the evening booking which had resulted in one person being banned from the facility. This was an issue that staff were mindful of.
- It was noted that Braintree Town Football Club were looking for a new home.
- Concern was raised regarding flooding of the under-pass in wet weather conditions. This was a particular concern when groups of youths were crossing the dual-carriageway to access the facilities due to the under-pass being flooded across the entire width. This issue had been raised via Member Enquiries and via the Parish Council. The Chairman agreed to escalate this issue to the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure.

It was **Agreed** that:

1. The Chairman would raise the issue of flooding of the under-pass, blocking access to the Country Park and its facilities, with the Cabinet Member for Infrastructure.

The report and update were noted.

5. Date of Next Meeting

The Board agreed to meet on a six-monthly basis. The date of the next meeting would be agreed in due course.

The Chairman thanked the Democratic Services Officer for her support to the Board and wished her well for the future, as this would be her last meeting.

There being no urgent business the meeting closed at 3.22pm.

Chairman

		AGENDA ITEM 3
		GTP/01/19
Committee:	GREAT NOTLEY COUNTRY PARK JOINT VENTURE PARTNERSHIP BOARD	
Meeting Date:	15 July 2019	
Report:	SITE REPORT	
Enquiries to:	Steffanie Robertson and Harrison Ewan	

Staffing

Claire Bunn has now gone on maternity leave as of April and I am filling in for her until her return next year. My working days will be Thursday and Fridays and every second Sunday to ensure I get time with both rangers.

Frank, our part-time ranger has settled in well since he started in December. He pro-actively completes park tasks and has been shadowing Tom when he can on leading the volunteer group. He is booked in to attend a first aid course and a Brush cutting course in July and will be attending a “Dealing with aggressive customers” course in the near future.

Playtrail and the Park

We are awaiting some remedial works on a number of pieces of equipment and are working closely with our contractor to ensure all pieces are open and in full working order for the Summer holidays.

The waterplay area however, will unfortunately not be open for summer. The quote for repairs far exceeded our budget for play equipment repairs so I am liaising with our contractor to find out whether a full replacement would be better than replacing parts on to pieces that now have a limited lifespan.

We continue to ensure all pieces are checked daily and inspected monthly. We also have our annual independent inspection by the Play Inspection Company which has just been carried out.

Signage was recently painted and grass has been mown on a regular basis given the time of year and level of growth. We are trialling a different solution as an alternative to glyphosate to kill the weeds. An area of shade has been created on the playtrail by cutting back an area of thicket and crown lifting a number of trees, allowing a nice natural area for people to sit in the shade. The lakes and ponds will also be worked on over the coming months with some clearance of litter and pond weed around the fishing swims, algae and willow cleared from the ponds and some

areas cut back to allow better views from the West end of the lake.. Our tree survey was carried out in March, with identified works carried out in the advised time scale.

We were approached by Gigaclear, who will be installing a community cabinet for Bocking West and a related cable will be put down across the park and under/over the A120. During a site meeting, directional drilling was discussed with Gigaclear and a route for this agreed in order to minimise any disruption to park users and avoid destroying any tree roots.

To increase visitor numbers and enhance our visitor's experience, a programme of smaller events has been created by myself and Harri. This is in draft form at the minute but includes Archery, Campfire nights, Skyropes under the stars, trails, Night Safaris, BBQ evening event, Art gallery pop ups and potential TEDx or café scientific events. Larger events are also being held at the park which include Outdoor Cinema screenings in June and September.

Flitch Way

The friends of the flitch way continue to work once a week undertaking light maintenance tasks with the rangers such as clearance and repair work. This however will stop during the busy summer holiday period at the park.

I'm also happy to report that Stanley Davies (of the FOFW volunteers) has been awarded a BEM (British Empire Medal) in the Queens Birthday Honours for services to the community in Braintree. This is for his dedication and tireless work for the FOFW and the Braintree Lions Club. We have passed on our congratulations to Stan and have thanked him, and all the volunteers, for the hard work they put in to maintain the Flitch Way.

Marketing

We are working closely with our Marketing and PR Lead to increase our following on social media as well as our event advertising both on and off site.

Visitor Numbers and Income

We had a busy Easter period with 8450 cars coming to site, and an estimate of 22815 visitors. This compares to 2018 when we had 4246 cars and 11464 visitors. A 99% increase, however this reflects the fair weather we had compared to the not so favourable weather we endured last Easter. Takings were also up, reaching £39,797, compared with £14725 last year. A 170% increase on 2018. Again this reflects the type of weather at this time.

		AGENDA ITEM 4
		GTP/02/19
Committee:	GREAT NOTLEY COUNTRY PARK JOINT VENTURE PARTNERSHIP BOARD	
Meeting Date:	15 July 2019	
Report:	ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCH AND MULTI-USE GAMES AREA	
Enquiries to:	Samir Pandya Strategy and Policy Manager, Braintree District Council	

1. INTRODUCTION

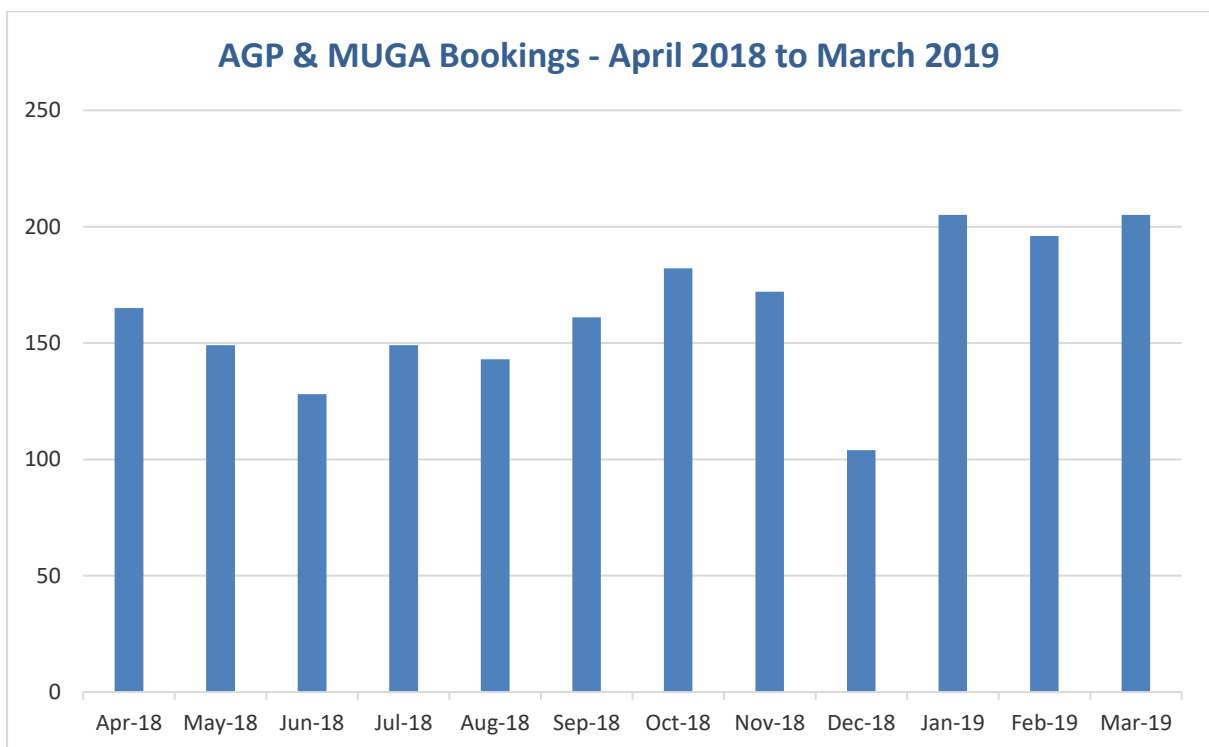
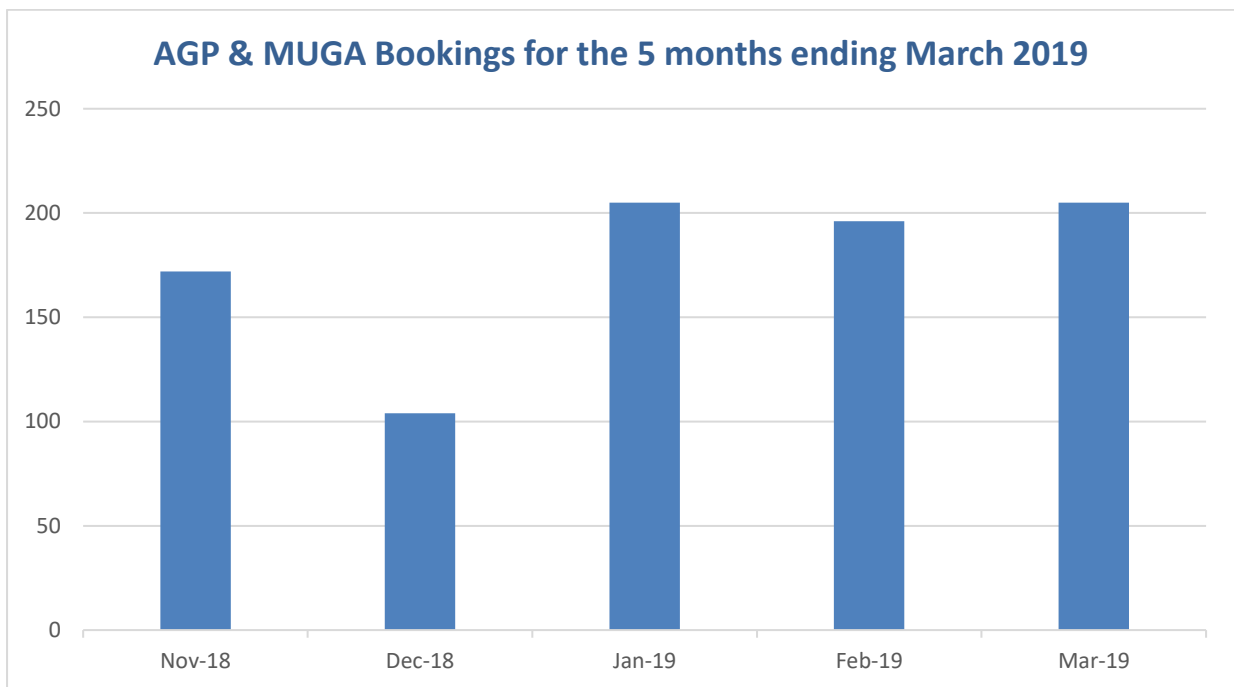
This report provides Members with an update on usage and income from the Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) and Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at Great Notley Country Park. It covers a 5-month period from 1 November 2018 to 31 March 2019.

2. USAGE AND BOOKINGS

The tables below show the number of bookings taken in the second half of 2018-19 and the full year. There were 882 bookings in total over the five month period - an average of 176 per month; this was down by 195 bookings or an average of 39 per month compared to the same period in 2017-18. Total bookings for 2018-19 were 1,959 compared to 2,112 the previous year i.e. down by 153 bookings.

There have been 34 different organisations/individuals both in and outside of the Braintree District who have regularly booked the facility, ranging from adult and children's football clubs (including Braintree Town Football Academy and Great Notley Youth Football Club), other sporting clubs, a veterinary practice and a public house. Braintree Town Football Academy and Great Notley Youth Football Club account for some 46% of the total bookings.

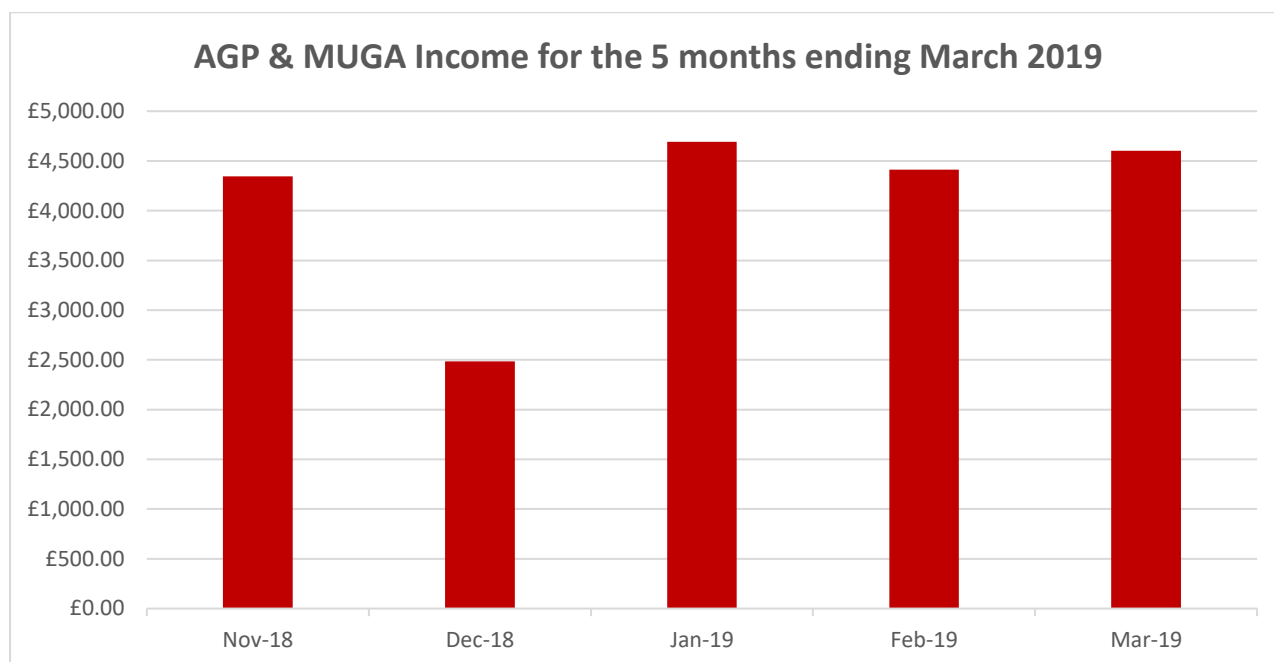
The facility continues to be well used during peak periods (evenings and weekends) when it is virtually full to capacity. This equates to 75% of all bookings, the remainder being made during the off-peak period (daytime Monday to Friday). Off-peak usage has and will continue to be a challenge in terms of the number of bookings.



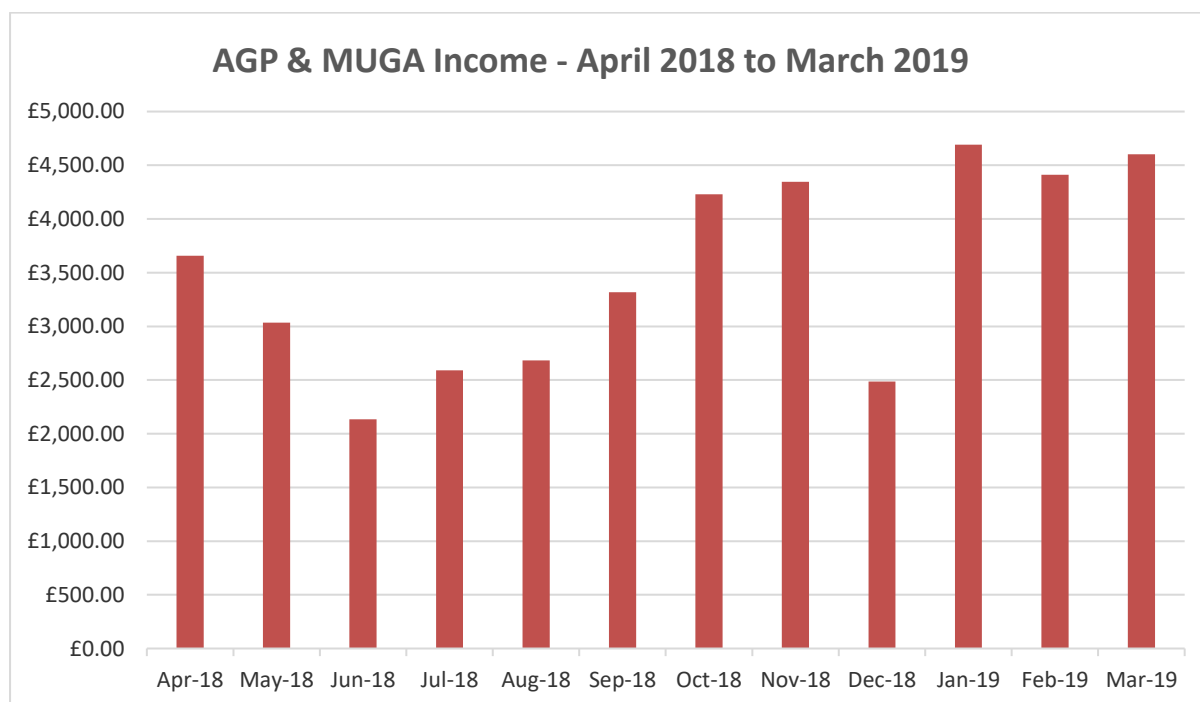
3. INCOME GENERATION

The income generated from the AGP and MUGA has more or less remained in line with the budget projection for 2018-19 and follows a similar trend to the previous year. At the end of the financial year we had received £42,184.08 which compares to £42,113.20 in 2017-18.

The tables below show the monthly income received.



As expected, there was an income drop during the summer months compared to that achieved during the Autumn/Winter which is the actual football season.



4. RENEWAL OF THE ARTIFICIAL GRASS PITCH

As mentioned at the last Board Meeting, the artificial grass pitch (carpet) is due to be replaced by the end of August 2019, as it will be 10 years old. Since the facility was opened back in 2009, BDC has received £1.5k p.a. from Great Notley Football Club and has itself contributed £18k p.a. to a reserve (sinking) fund. As at March 2019, the value of the reserve was £155k which will be used to replace the carpet and refurbish the facility. Tenders were invited in June and works are due to start on site in mid-July.

5. FOOTBALL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) at Great Notley Country Park was installed by BDC using grant funding supplied by the Football Foundation (FF). As part of the conditions of the grant, the FF required an approved Football Development Plan.

For the 2019-20 season BDC has again entered into a Service Level Agreement with the Community Iron (CI); the community charity of Braintree Town FC, to help deliver the aim and objectives of the Football Development Plan for BDC.

The plan aims to provide additional opportunities for using the AGP. CI and BDC meet regularly to review the Plan. **Appendix 1** shows the progress report from CI up to April 2019.

6. RECOMMENDATION

That Members note the report.

Samir Pandya
Strategy and Policy Manager

2 July 2019

Progress Report - The Football Development Plan for the Great Notley AGP.



1. A little Background - The Partnership Agreement:

The Artificial Grass Pitch (AGP) at Great Notley Country Park was installed by Braintree District Council (BDC) using grant funding supplied by the Football Foundation (FF).

The FF require an approved Football Development Plan at all their funded locations.

Community Iron (CI) - the community charity of Braintree Town FC - devised and operates this Football Development Plan for BDC. The plan aims to provide additional opportunities for using the AGP.

CI and BDC meet regularly to review the Plan.

2. Football Development Plan activities at Great Notley AGP.

CI markets, administers, and delivers (using its own coaches and equipment) the following community sport activities at the Great Notley AGP, These aim to encourage young people to participate in sport.

For community sport initiatives, BDC supplies the facility free of charge.

The table below summarises the activities run by CI at Great Notley AGP during the year 1/4/18 to 31/3/19

Soccability

There have been 4 Soccability events with 70+ attendees; approx. 20 hours usage.

Soccability is football for young people with disabilities. Community Iron works with Essex Football Association to run Soccability festivals each year, inviting schools from Essex. CI coaches and Academy students run these sessions on behalf of Essex FA.



Progress Report - The Football Development Plan for the Great Notley AGP.

Holiday Soccer Camps

There have been 9 full day Soccer Camps with 120 attendees; approx. 45 hours usage.

Community Iron runs holiday Soccer Camps weekly during half terms, Easter & Summer school holidays. Up to 30 children attend and they receive mementoes and 'challenge' trophies. Community Iron coaches and students run the sessions.



Skill Development Sessions

There have been 70 development sessions with 440 attendees; approx. 105 hours usage.

Local budding young footballers from any (or no) club are welcome to come along and get specialist football coaching from Community Iron's coaches. There are 2 'twilight' sessions each week for different age groups

Community Iron organises mixed and girls-only football tournaments. CI coaches and students help the school teams and referee the matches.

Schools Tournaments

There have been 2 schools tournaments with 120 attendees; approx. 10 hours usage.

Progress Report - The Football Development Plan for the Great Notley AGP.

The CI / Braintree Town Academy

There are 35 students at the Academy using the facility 1 day per week; approx 140 hours usage.

The Academy is a sport-focused , full-time education programme free to local 16 to 18 year olds.

The Academy - run by CI - pays to use the AGP for daytime training.

Students have represented Braintree Town FC 1st team; Witham Town FC 1st team and the Academy's own sides during the current season.



Alfie Cerulli - Academy graduate scoring for Braintree Town this season.



Academy students in a match

Total:

85 'community events'; 750 attendees; 320 hours of off-peak usage, PLUS PAID Academy Usage: 35 days * 4 hours

5. Current Issues:

The Academy uses premises in Witham for its classrooms, has experienced extra local competition and decreased education funding have led to reduced student numbers. It therefore is unlikely to be practical for the Academy to travel to Great Notley AGP for training sessions in future.

Some activities - such as Walking Football - are much more suited to an indoor rather than outdoor venue. We have trialled them outside but moved them to other venues - such as Bramston Sports Centre.

The AWP is not full size. This precludes its use for adult 11 a side matches.

THE AGP carpet is due for replacement during June / July 2019. CI is working with BDC to develop a significant 'Relaunch Programme of Events' to publicise the facility and bring in a additional usage and revenue.

New initiatives such as a Business Football League for the Skyline 120 businesses will be trialled as part of the Relaunch event.

6 Who are Community Iron?

Community Iron (CI) is a registered charity associated with Braintree Town Football Club. It encourages wellness and sport, and community cohesion.

Progress Report - The Football Development Plan for the Great Notley AGP.

Apart from the Great Notley AGP community events summarised above, and its Academy education programme, CI works with partners such as Fusion and Premier League Primary Stars to offer:

Badminton for adults

Walking Football for 'older' adults.

Breakfast Sports Clubs

Regular PE and sports coaching in schools such as Beckers Green, Elm Hall, John Wray, Finch-
ingfield, Lyons Hall, St Michaels, White Notley

Alan Stuckey - Trustee: Community Iron

30/4/19

		AGENDA ITEM 5
		GTP/03/19
Committee:	GREAT NOTLEY COUNTRY PARK JOINT VENTURE PARTNERSHIP BOARD	
Meeting Date:	15 July 2019	
Report:	PROVISION OF ALLOTMENTS AT GREAT NOTLEY COUNTRY PARK	
Enquiries to:	Paul Partridge, Head of Operations	

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide Members with an update on proposed allotments within the boundary of Great Notley Country Park.

2. BACKGROUND

In February 2018, Braintree District Council (BDC) approved a recommendation to purchase a 65 acre (gross) area of allocated employment land (Horizon 120) in Great Notley as an effective means of delivering a major new employment site in accordance with its Corporate Strategy objectives.

The Council's vision for Horizon 120 is to create an exemplar business community attractive to a number of sectors including professional services companies, research, digital and development sectors and advanced manufacturing. The site is likely to be of particular interest to companies working with London Stansted Airport.

The original masterplan proposed by Countryside Limited and approved by BDC's Local Development Framework Sub-Committee back in February 2012, included provision for an allotment site within this development to be managed and operated by Great Notley Parish Council. Whilst the commitment is not legally binding, BDC (as land owner) is keen to see that it is honoured.

In the original adopted masterplan, the site earmarked for the allotments was in an area of land in the north-east corner of the site (Horizon 120) adjacent to the Country Park which, in the revised masterplan, is designated a wildlife area.

The original site would not have been available for up to 10 years under Countryside's proposals and had no vehicular access. In addition, an allotment site here would be visually incongruous with the architectural standards specified in the draft Local Development Order and would occupy approximately 1.5 acres with a developable value.

For these reasons it is not considered suitable to locate the allotments within this development and Great Notley Parish Council has confirmed its agreement to creating the allotments elsewhere within the village boundary, providing suitable land can be found.

3. CURRENT POSITION

Options for alternative sites for the allotments are limited. BDC has considered using a vacant piece of land between Skyline and the grass football pitches on the Country Park which does not form part of the land leased to Essex County Council. It is currently leased to 1st Great Notley Scouts until September 2019 who had plans to build a new Scouts Hut, but this was not progressed as the land has no vehicular access. It has only been used periodically by the Scouts for nature conservation activities and the Scout Leaders have confirmed that they are not looking to renew the lease when it expires.

Following a recent meeting between ECC and BDC officers, it transpired that the land in question is rich in wildlife and habitat: birds use it for nesting, it is abundant in wildflowers and protected species of newts have been relocated there. Whilst the option remains to redevelop it, officers jointly agreed that it would be preferable not to do so as there are other areas within the boundary of the Country Park that could potentially accommodate the new allotment site.

It was agreed that a site meeting would be convened to explore the other areas of land including surveys to assess their feasibility for use as allotments and how many half-size plots could be accommodated. In the meantime, BDC officers will continue to consider other potential land within the Great Notley catchment area should any be identified.

Members will receive further updates as they become available.

4. RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to note the report for information.

Paul Partridge
Head of Operations

1 July 2019