

Parks Report: RLA 31 March 2016

- Swanscombe Park:

Preparations and renovations to the Town Green are well underway and the efforts to make up for time lost in the autumn should result in a satisfactory surface. It would be wise to consider a full renovation and levelling of the surface next autumn, as year by year it becomes harder to renovate to the required standard due to many years of heavy usage.

Having been treated for moss and algae, the Tennis Courts were opened for the start of the Easter holidays.

A section of the wooden play equipment has been vandalised and we are getting quotes for repairs.

A large branch broke off from a Cedar tree, there is no obvious underlying problem with the tree.

- Manor Park:

Eroded areas have been top dressed with seed and soil.

The ancient Yew tree within the Churchyard has been pruned and a brace has been fitted to help support it (part of the tree survey work).

- Broomfield:

Contractors have now completed the work to replace the hard surfacing in the play area.

The work arising from the tree survey has been completed.

Parks staff have erected the new permanent goal.

Pruning and thinning work in the Neptune Park shrub beds has been undertaken over the last two months.

The football pitches continue to play well and are in excellent condition for the run in to the end of the season.

Preparations for the coming cricket season are underway.

- Knockhall:

Work arising from the tree survey has been completed and the lifting of the crowns of the conifers has opened up the whole area.

Painting of play equipment is now complete.

Eroded areas have been top dressed with seed and soil.

Football pitches are playing well and as we get to the end of the season any outstanding fixtures will take place at Knockhall during May.

- Heritage Park:

The Annual Easter Egg Hunt is scheduled to take place on 26 March.

Two sections of wooden play equipment have been vandalised and we are in the process of getting quotes for repairs.

- Spring Vale:

Fly tipping and the dumping of household and garden rubbish are a problem and staff have had to clear large amounts of rubbish at times.

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- Valley View/Saxon Court:

Hard surfaces and safety surfaces have been treated with moss killer.

- Equipment:

Both vans have passed their MOT.

The first of the new cylinder mowers has been delivered, we await delivery of the second mower.

- Miscellaneous.

The contractor is due to resume the gang mowing contract at the end of March.

The Annual Playground Inspection has been completed and we have received the report.

All works arising from the Tree Survey have been completed.

**PROPOSED CHILDREN'S SUMMER ENTERTAINMENT
DURING SCHOOL SUMMER HOLIDAYS 2016 £2000 budget**

AGENDA ITEM
26/3/16

Option 1:

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Entertainment	Venue	Duration	Price
Circus Sensible	Swanscombe Park	3	£450
Kick up Sports	Broomfield Recreation Ground	2	£300
Mrs Back to Front	Heritage Park	1	£110
Oreo & Friends	Knockhall Recreation Ground	2	£350
Kickup Sports	Knockhall Recreation Ground	2	£300
Sublime Science	Broomfield Recreation Ground	2	£375
Mrs Roundabout	Swanscombe Park	1.5	£110
Total of 7 events			
Total Cost for Option 1		13.5	£1,995

Option 2:

Entertainment	Venue	Duration	Price
Marc Lemeezma Magic	Swanscombe Park	2	£310
Beezerak Circus	Knockhall Recreation Ground	3	£490
Kickup Sports	Broomfield Recreation Ground	2	£300
Mrs Roundabout	Heritage Park	1	£90
Science Boffins	Broomfield Recreation Ground	3	£545
Animal Magic	Knockhall Recreation Ground	2	£350
Total of 6 events			
Total Cost for Option 2		13	£2,085

Option 3:

Entertainment	Venue	Duration	Price
Xtreme Vortex	Broomfield Recreation Ground	4	£650
Amazing Animal Encounters	Knockhall Recreation Ground	2	£165
Circus Sensible	Swanscombe Park	3	£450
Mad Science	Knockhall Recreation Ground	2	£370
Simply Smiley	Swanscombe Park	2	£450
Total of 5 events			
Total Cost for Option 3		13	£2,085

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Descriptions of Options

Mrs Back to Front - Mrs Back to Front who will come to your party and bring a ray of sunshine into your children's lives. She gets into a muddle and often wear my clothes back to front, she never know whether she is coming or going and often make the children laugh so much that it takes a week for them to stop smiling. Also provides Games - Magic - Puppets - Story Telling - Junior Punch & Judy Theatre. Songs and Dances.

Mrs Roundabout - Games - Magic - Puppets - Story Telling - Junior Punch & Judy Theatre. Songs and Dances.

Circus Sensible & Beezerak - Everyone will have the opportunity to learn a selection of circus skills, including diabolo, juggling balls/clubs, poi, stilts and spinning plates. Circus Time also carries out fire dance performances, make-and-do workshops and can provide stilt-walkers, as well as having contacts with a wide variety of other entertainers.

Marc Lemezma Magic - Marc Lemezma believes that magic is for everyone! Different audiences need different types of magic. Marc offers a rare combination of magical talent, being able to entertain adults as well as children. His friendly alter ego Marli The Magician performs at children's parties as well as at family functions. He offers a comedy magic show, balloon modelling and even party games to make your child's event a real success.

Animal Magic - Childrens entertainers based in East Sussex. We have built up a small collection of domestic and exotic animals that live with us as part of our family. We travel all over the South of England including Central London. We would describe our selves as a small travelling zoo. What started of as a hobby with one barn owl, a dog, a few rabbits and a pet rat some twenty years ago has now developed into something on a much larger scale with over thirty seven different species. With owls, parrots, South African Hedgehogs, Patagonian Maras, opossums, Meerkats, skunk. Lots and lots of domestic cute and cuddly for the little children. Snakes, lizards, insects, frogs, tortoises and crabs for the more adventurous The list just keeps growing.

We will come and visit you at the venue of your choice with as many or few animals as you would like to meet depending on the type of event you are holding.

Oreo and Friends – Would give a short talk which includes safety info then sit the children in a circle on the floor. Some of the animals are then put in the middle to run round , we put a mealworm path down and they follow that path and eat the mealworms, the children can reach out and stroke them and pick them up if they want to (meerkats, skunk, armadillos), then we pass tubs round with things like land snails and millipedes etc in, this needs no supervision and whilst that is happening we take around the snakes and lizards. After this we swap to mammals and again some can be passed round without supervision and others we take round such as the foxes, kinkajou, tenrecs. Oreo the raccoon will walk around the circle and take a tiny treat off anyone who would like to give him one, he is our superstar (Rocket Raccoons model in the Marvel film Guardians of the Galaxy) and our coati Hamish will happily walk around a circle of children who are standing up with arms outstretched.

Amazing Animal Encounters - The petting corner would be with two handlers. We would not be expecting for every child to handle every animal. Some animals they would be able to stroke with little additional supervision required. Over the course of two hours for an informal petting corner at an event with other attractions

Xtremem Vortex - What is LaserStorm? A LaserStorm is an electronic, interactive LaserTag game, utilizing the latest technology X-blaster laser guns. Players have an X-blaster laser gun each, and either individually or as a team use stealth and tactics to target the opposing players or teams, gain the most points and win the game.

The action takes place in a unique laser arena, on three themed deck levels with ramps, doorways, and other scenery to create a futuristic battle zone. This darkened, pulsating and misty arena has smoke and special light effects to add to the excitement! LaserStorm games are computer controlled and players download their scores at the end of the game to see who is top gun.

Kickup Sports Ltd – Coaches - We will be providing you with 6 FA qualified coaches that have experience with coaching various sports activities within schools and their communities. We are very strict with how we carry out our services and we have high expectations as a company for what coaches we employ. All our coaches will be able to coach kids of any age group, gender and background with enthusiasm, skill, creativity, professionalism and fun attributes. These attributes combined make a quality sports coach to be able to deliver both fun and exciting sessions/events to improve the health/wellbeing and participation in the young people.

Equipment - We will be providing full equipment on the day which will include equipment for various sports such as; Tag Rugby, Cricket, Football, Multi Sports and other fun games that we host. Our equipment is of high quality therefore we do have insurance if any of the equipment is damaged, losses or stolen. Therefore we will take full liability for the loss of our equipment.

Services - We will be providing a service for young people which we will provide a sports service run by experienced and qualified coaches. All our services with young people are to promote healthy lifestyle and to encourage the participation of all kids and young people of all abilities to get involved in sport.

Science Boffins/ Sublime Science / Mad Science - Science works really well at events and provides that “something different” that helps make your event memorable. In terms of what we actually do we start off with awesome demonstrations that really capture the children's imagination along with lots of cool stuff like...

- Fizzing Potions, Bubbles and Flying Giant Smoke Rings
- Wacky Noise and Air Experiments
- Gooney Slime-Making (which they can take away with them)
- Yummy Sweet Making (which they can eat) as well as tornado racing and other experiments too.
- Tornado Races, Flying Stuff and other crazy experiments!

Simply Smiley - What you need are our Incredibly Talented Professional Actors who will come along in a Spectacular costume of your choice and will provide Magic Tricks, Face Painting, Balloon Modelling, Puppets and Party Games. Or have us come and Dress the Room, provide dancefloors and lighting... build Santa's Grotto... and provide your audience with a Full scale show that will entertain up to 250 children. Our actors will come dressed in a variety of costumes: Fairy, Princess, Superhero, Clown, Pirate, Pixie or anything else you can dream up! We also provide seasonal characters at Easter, Christmas & Halloween.

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SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL

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AGENDA ITEM 7.3
PLA 31/3/16

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5 February 2016

Dear ██████████

USE OF FOOTBALL PITCHES AT KNOCKHALL RECREATION GROUND.

I am writing in regards to the use of the marked out areas at Knockhall Recreation Ground, Knockhall Road, Greenhithe, DA9 9HE. I have attached a copy of your letter to the MP, Gareth Johnson.

Unfortunately we do not appear to have any record of correspondence or communications received from you so I wanted to provide you with our contact details to enable you to contact us directly (these can be found on this letter).

The Town Council currently maintains 2 football pitches at Knockhall Recreation Ground which it hires for use and these areas are clearly marked out (*Section 56 (5) of the Public Health Act 1925 and Section 19 of the Local Government (Misc. Provisions) Act 1976*).

Whilst the Town Council has no objection to the use of the park for the health and therapeutic benefits that result from regular exercise we would like to respectfully request your co-operation in ensuring that you do not play within the areas that are marked out and maintained for hirers of the facilities. You have indicated that you only use a small area of the ground which, provided remains outside of the marked out areas, should be able to be accommodated, however if you do wish to use the areas that are marked out please be aware that the cost of hire is £80.00 per game (*this increases from April 2016*) and that arrangements for hire/payment can be made via the council offices.

Thank you again for your co-operation in this matter.

Yours sincerely

Graham Blew
Town Clerk

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I am writing on behalf of a few working professionals resident in Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

We wish to make our grievances known to higher authorities in this council regarding the recent treatment meted out to us while enjoying public services available to us as residents.

We have occasionally sought to make use of public services legally entitled to us as residents, in particular, we would like to be able to entertain ourselves on weekends and receive the health and therapeutic benefits that go with regular exercise, and this had not been a problem for about 18 months, however, over the past 6 months, we have found our efforts frustrated by persistent reappearance of an individual who claims to represent the Swanscombe and Greenhithe town council.

While occasionally trying to enjoy some casual football on Saturdays in the Knockhall Park, we are regularly approached and ordered to change our playing location without being given full and clear reasons. In the initial stages, the instructions delivered to us by a young man, who arrives in a council vehicle was that we had to offer some monetary consideration to the council to make use of the park, which we happily agreed to but our efforts to make payments have been thwarted giving one excuse after the other i.e. payments can only be made at specific times of the year. We have visited the council website for more information but there is no mention of payment of the use of the park.

The next excuse was that a certain part of the field was reserved for 'children'; despite some of us having children who would also like to run around with us on Saturdays, we complied and moved to another section of the grounds. Again this was not good enough as we are now being told that the pitch has been reserved and we are not allowed to play there as well. On the average we are usually about 10-12 persons and cannot occupy a full pitch, we only play in a small area which we come out for ourselves.

I would like to reiterate the point that we are 'not' a professional team, nor authorized by any football association in the country, we all work full time jobs, are family men and some of us can not even make it every weekend due to job commitments. When we arrive on Saturday morning; there is acres of space for everyone wanting to use the grounds, we have never disrupted any activity taking place, we have never made any trouble or given anyone reason to believe the we are constituting a nuisance, it has been almost 2 years since we started using the park and till date there has not been damage to any property or reports of unruly behaviour. This leads me to believe that this persistent harassment is being fuelled by something else, I wonder if the fact that most of us are of ethnic minority background has anything to do with this. We are fully aware that other residents in the area are entitled to use public services, and we are strongly aggrieved over the impression that as residents, we are excluded from enjoying the same public services as others. I have attached a letter hand delivered to my colleagues on the 17/01/2015 indicating that we can submit a formal request to hire the facilities; however over the last one year or so we have made several attempts to do this but as earlier stated there is always an excuse why this is not possible again leading us to believe that we are not welcome there.

We write to you in good faith and would appreciate your investigation into the matter to guarantee us our public rights and identify all those who seek to deprive us of these services by bullying us off the premises.

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**GUIDANCE NOTE FOR THE PARISH AND TOWN COUNCIL CAPACITY
BUILDING FUND 2016/17**

At the budget meeting the Council has earmarked a further allocation of £50,000 in 2016/17 for grants to parish and town councils.

The system for allocation of the grants seems to have worked well last year and been appreciated by Parish Councils so we propose to follow the same approach for 2016/17.

There are no strict criteria for awarding grants except that grants are not designed to simply replace reduced section 136 contributions or ongoing costs.

The Council particularly wishes to encourage joint and innovative working between parish and town councils, or projects that will make a real difference to the local community and/or will build the capacity of the Parish to continue to do so in the future.

It is not essential that the grant is match funded by the applicant but it would be an advantage.

Normally grants will be for maximum of £6,000 but £10,000 could be available for a joint or exceptional application.

Applications are invited (in your own format) explaining what is proposed, the estimated cost and the amount of grant requested.

Please ensure that all proposals are fully developed and costed and note that a condition of the funding is that Dartford Borough Council will be given, on request, evidence that funds are spent in accordance with the purpose that they were awarded for.

It is intended that applications will be reviewed by a panel consisting of the Leader and Deputy Leader of Dartford Borough Council and two Parish or Town Council members. The Council is content for the previous panel members Richard Lees and Noreen Salway to continue on the panel but would welcome input from Parish and Town Councils on the panel makeup. Parish and Town Council Members would not be able to consider applications from their own parish.

The panel will make recommendations to the Managing Director for final decision.

Please start working up proposals so that applications can be submitted by the deadline date of 30th April 2016. ←

Please send them by e-mail to Tim Sams (Financial Services Manager) at tim.sams@dartford.gov.uk. We will then aim for the panel to meet in May.

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