

Seend Lye Recreation Field - Annual Parish Report May 2022

The SLRF continues to recover its former utilisation rates in what we hope will be the final stages of the global pandemic. Our cherished recreational facilities are currently supporting 16 regular user groups, including two football teams. Private bookings for the Pavilion are slowly returning and currently showing good summer interest. The online booking system continues to work well and proved to be particularly useful in compiling data for our Zurich Insurance claim concerning loss of business during the pandemic lockdown. Our insurance claim was one of many claims deemed to have no cover by the High Court in the Financial Control Authority class action.

As the Seend community knows, the whole Lye Field facility costs in excess of £25,000 per year to operate. That sum is generated from user hire income, including income from Seend Playgroup, the annual Seend Fete and Flower Show and small donations from hire of equipment. The pandemic created a challenging financial problem for the charity and it may not have survived without the COVID-19 Government recovery grants, for which we are very grateful. A further financial challenge was the demise of the aged field mower. Current thinking is that the mower may be replaced in 2023, after the current period of contract grass care, which we hope will include grass playing surface improvement. Again, the Lye Field charity is grateful for Seend Parish Council's commitment to provide a substantial precept contribution to the purchase price of a replacement mower.

One of the downsides of the protracted right of way litigation has been the deferment of investment in the Pavilion building, which is approaching its 50th anniversary in May 2023. A year ago, the Committee decided to pursue additional funding opportunities to invest in the fabric of the building to reduce carbon emissions, become more energy efficient and to improve both the user experience and the utilisation of the building. Spurred on by COP26, the committee decided to call the project Carbon Challenge 2023, how fortuitous was that in the current energy situation? During 2021 the charity mounted and unsuccessful funding bid for £10,000 from the special COP-26 National Lottery Climate Change Fund. Undeterred, the committee ploughed on with Carbon Challenge 2023 only to be faced with the further challenge of rising prices and a more daunting list of work required in the Pavilion. This issue meant that the

work required could only be met from multiple funding sources and the project had to be split into 2 phases. Phase 1, funded by Suez Communities Trust at £50,000 of the £53,350 total Phase 1 cost and the follow-on Phase 2 at £43,731 (currently) to be funded from a combination of charitable sources and Lye Field capital once the litigation previously referred to is settled.

Part of the ethos of the Suez Communities Trust organisation is that the projects funded by them, from landfill tax, must be supported by and involve the community in which the funds are allocated. This means both participation and support. The Lye Field organisation will be requesting volunteer manpower to excavate a 0.5m x 0.25m trench to accommodate renewal of the tack shed power supply cable. This trench runs the entire length of the children's play area and we want to limit the disruption to this important children's facility during June/July when the electrical work will be undertaken. We will need a sponsor for a very narrow mini-digger, or a gang with sharp spades. In addition, we will need help to internally redecorate the Pavilion building after the phase 1 work is complete. Interior designers step forward please.

If parishioners are interested in what is being done to their Pavilion they will be able to access the Carbon Challenge 2023 Project Delivery Plan via the web site: www.seendlyefield.org in the coming weeks.

Meanwhile, none of this work will affect the 2022 Seend Fete and Flower Show being headed up by the ubiquitous Richard Walker, our committed Lye Field Trustee and global news man. Richard needs volunteer help from the people of the parish to make the day the usual success. We will also need people with spare time to help with the setup in the days prior to the fete. The Lye Field rounds off its report by appealing for bric-a-brac for the most amazing white elephant stall at any fete in Wiltshire. Collection is entirely possible via LOTSW and their pick-up truck.