

Chute Pavilion & Recreation Ground Report 15th May 2017

It has been a busy but extremely productive year as the Parish Council with the help of grants from BDBC, County Councillor Keith Chapman and Hampshire Playing Fields Association complete the work to upgrade the facilities.

The Tennis courts have been re-fenced with new playing surfaces that should last for many years.

The Pavilion itself has also had extensive work carried out to upgrade the facilities and to bring it up to current Health and Safety legislation; new floor covering and redecoration in 2015 and plumbing and electrical works during 2016/7. Not least of the improvements is the engagement of a Site Manager, Mr Terry Buller, to oversee the site on a regular basis throughout the year.

This has all come at considerable cost however I am happy to report that even with all the extra costs this year income has still been greater than expenditure – schedules are available for inspection. Hourly rates have not changed this year and will be reviewed next March 2018.

The Chute accounts show that they can support the continued engagement of a Site Manager. A sufficient reserve is held within the Parish Accounts for any unforeseen needs and going forward the income will create a good surplus over expenditure which can then be used to improve and maintain facilities in the future and hopefully increase facilities available for the parish.

The Pavilion is now used by a great variety of groups and local people to hold family parties – all of which add to the income.

I am at present applying for another grant to erect a smaller, but similar, storage unit to the one on the field to be placed next to the Pavilion as storage is a real issue on site.

While the Village Hall Committee has decided to charge for storage at their hall this is not appropriate income source at the Chute facility. As a sports and recreation facility – build using grants from sports bodies – the very nature of the people using it mean large items of various sports equipment – bowls & judo mats, football equipment & machines etc. Storage is implicit in these groups use of the facilities and the rentals they already pay.

I would remind all the Chute facilities are not run as a business – it is as such non profit making - hence the nil business rate from Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council. There is a delicate balance to be maintained – income to pay for expenditure, repairs and improvements to facilities. Loss of this status would mean large rates bills and inability to reclaim VAT. This would be catastrophic as it would mean all rental charges would have to be raised, beyond what people could pay, and would ultimately end in the closure of the facility.

I would like to take the opportunity to say thank you to Mr Buller for all his work to keep the area so well and to Mt John Edwards who has provided much needed cover during holiday times. Without their efforts the Recreation ground & Pavilion would not be the success it is.