

# **-GUILSBOROUGH PLAYING FIELD ASSOCIATION**

## **REPORT ON ACTIVITIES FOR 2023**

Meetings Organised		Meetings attended.
<b>Trustees:</b>		
Hugh Lowther	1. AGM	0
John McCall		1
Sarah Edwards		1
<b>General Committee</b>		
	1. 4 Committee Meetings	
<b>TOTAL 6</b>		
Freddie de Lisle	Chairman	5
Mike Edwards	Vice-Chairman	3
Graham Byars	Secretary	5
Milly Plant	Treasurer	3
<b>Members</b>		
Jim Houghton	Haddon Cricket Club, Senior& Junior, Chairman Fundraising.	5
Marc Garret	West Haddon Junior Football Club	4
Katie Fulcher	Publicity Officer	3
Gary Wakelin	Health & Safety Officer	1
Simon Caldwell	Guilsborough Parish Council Representative	1
Simon Cottle	General Committee Member	1
Mark Webster	General Committee Member (Corresponding )	0
Stephen O'Connor	General Committee Member (Corresponding )	0
Kit Woolridge	Guilsborough Academy School (Corresponding )	0
Steve McGlasson	General Committee Member (Corresponding )	0
Sam Darbyshire	Fundraising General Committee Member (Corresponding)	0

### **1.Summary**

The GPFA welcomed the new Chairman, Freddie de Lisle, and thanked Simon Smith for his 4 years as Chairman and stewardship, especially his golf fund-raising event for the GPFA. The GPFA also welcomed A) Simon Caldwell as the new Parish Council representative, and B) Simon Cottle as a General Committee Member; both live in Guilsborough. The long-term need and demand for the Field has been established by the arrangements with Haddon Cricket Club and West Haddon Junior Football Club who are the primary Field users. The relationship with both clubs provides sporting activities for juniors and adults from Guilsborough and surrounding villages.

In addition, the Field, provides frequent informal use by juniors and adults for sporting practices and recreational uses. The Football Foundation grant enables improvements to the playing surfaces over the next 6 years, although a GPFA contribution is required in the last 4 years. However, regular sources of funds are needed for fixed costs, and consequently the GPFA embarked on a fundraising appeal to parishioners and others; however the response was disappointing.

The GPFA participated in Christmas Tree Festival in St. Etheldreda's.

The GPFA website has been updated by Jim Houghton. Jim after 13 years as Head Coach and organiser of Haddon CC Junior section, has handed the role to Jim Hardwick who lives in Guilsborough. `--+

The GPFA Website is being updated to include a short history of how it came to being, to explain that it is private property and not a public place, and users do so with the agreement of the GPFA.

The GPFA is an organisation that depends very heavily on the willingness of members to give up their time to commit to its' activities. The General Committee welcome more onto its General Committee to organise events, fundraise, maintain and develop the facilities.

## **2. Health & Safety, & Security**

- No accidents occurred or were reported in 2023.
- Gary Wakelin monitored Health & Safety at the Field.
- The rodent/pest control regime by George Lawton continued.
- The distressed state of the footway to the Playing Field, was once more raised with the Guilsborough Parish Council (GPC); a meeting was convened in February 2023 to review the parking from the Academy to the Playing Field, attended by Northants Highways, The Academy, The Guilsborough Parish Council, West Northants Council (WNC), the Police. WNC would not progress any improvements unless contacted by the GPC. The GPFA's view was that the state of the footway was not their responsibility to resolve. A concerned parishioner is to contact FixMystreet about the state of the footway.
- No acts of vandalism were reported, possibly because of the deterrent effect of the 4-camera CCTV system.

## **2. Activities at the Playing Field in 2023**

- A) The demand for local cricket and football is growing, evidenced below, but it is also good to see many juniors from Guilsborough and surrounding villages, training and using the field for practices.

### **2.1 Haddon CC.**

A) Haddon Cricket Club (formed from West & East Haddon, and Guilsborough CCs), who play from 3 grounds (East & West Haddon and Guilsborough). The facilities, specifically the Guilsborough cricket square are essential for Haddon CC junior and ladies sections to play regular cricket. They support 21 children and ladies in Guilsborough/West Haddon to participate in competitive and social sport that otherwise would not be possible. The facility also allows the 3rd and 4th men's teams to play regular Saturday fixtures in the Northamptonshire cricket league, where diverse ethnicities and genders participate together, adding to the social cohesion and fabric of West Northamptonshire. The facilities enable the junior section to run 15-18 matches p.a., providing the opportunity for over 300 players participation.

- B) There are over 50 junior Haddon CC members under 16.;

C) 12 - U11s

D) 14 -U13

E) 28 U15s & U14s.

- F) The ground, other than fixtures, provides the facility to run 48 junior training sessions throughout the summer plus countless informal practices.

G) The square enable the 12 member Ladies to participate in the Northamptonshire ladies mid week league, hosting 6 home games p.a. creating 96 participation opportunities, with regular practice sessions between April and July.

H) The Field is regularly used by many juniors to informally practice their football and cricket skills, as; A) the football goals, and B) the practice cricket nets can both be used all day.

I) The area population is growing, that will require more use of existing grounds for Cricket and Football.

J) Guilsborough Parish Council's Neighborhood Plan, submitted to West Northants Council, details how the Parish could grow and where, and amenities needed; it records support by parishioners for the Playing Field...

**2.2 West Haddon Football Club.** The new season got underway on 16/17 September at Guilsborough Playing Field. This season three junior teams with players from Guilsborough and surrounding villages will play at Guilsborough for West Haddon Junior Football, Under 11s playing on Saturday morning, Under 12s on Sunday morning, and Under 15s Sunday afternoon. In the last 12 months, a grant of £6,000 from the Football Foundation has been spent improving the 2 pitches, involving, aeration, vertidrainage, overseeding and fertilising, which has already improved the playing surfaces.

### **2.3 Other Users**

- **Guilsborough Primary School** used the Field for their Sports Day.
- **Guilsborough joggers, walkers and keep-fit enthusiasts**, used the Field and the sports fitness equipment.
- **Guilsborough fathers, sons and daughters**, and local young teenage cricketers used the cricket nets, hopefully following guidelines relating to the virus that were erected..
- **St. Michael's Cricket Club**, played 10 home games at the Field and contributed £1400.
- **Northants Sports** used the Field on 5 occasions for school sports events.

#### **4. Maintenance & Development of the Buildings, Ground & equipment**

- R&G Grounds from Creaton maintained the playing surfaces and surroundings. The mowing, vertidrainage, fertilising, perimeter maintenance and killing weeds on the field & gravelled areas cost ~£3,000, even though R&G had been asked to only complete essential maintenance.
- An alternative quotation for the cricket square maintenance was provided by the contractor used by Haddon CC, was similar to that of Thompson Ground Care of Guilsborough, who have provided a good service for many years. The decision was not to change contractors. Thompson Groundcare completed the end-of-season, winter and spring maintenance, costing ~£2000. West Haddon Mowers serviced the specialised Allett mower, cost £470.
- Jim Pye supervised the wicket preparation, with Alfie Herschell (14) for his Duke of Edinburgh social work scheme. Archie Houghton prepared many wicket on his own and he and Jim had been thanked and remunerated.
- Other maintenance jobs were completed in 2023, including, service contracts for fire/security alarms, CCTV, electrical and mechanical services. These are all recorded in the minutes of the General Committee minutes.
- In 2023, Helping Hands from Market Harborough cleaned the pavilion (~£300), and Cathedral Hygiene removed sanitary waste (~£470) that the GPFA is required by law to arrange.
- The Football Foundation grant for pitch improvements at Guilsborough and awarded to West Haddon Junior Football grants over 6 years, continued in 2023, with £6,000 spent to date of the Football Foundation grant, that provides £23,044, with the GPFA contributing a further £11,520 over 6 years, with the GPFA contributing none over the first 2 years, so total expenditure is £34,560. The GPFA contributes £1920 in years 3&4, £3840 in years 5&6. The funding in years 1 to 4 does not appear in the GPFA accounts; payments and grants appear in the WHJFC accounts.
- A new control cable for the automatic irrigation of the cricket square is needed, as only 3 of the 4 rotating sprinklers work; it will cost about £800.
- Stuart Watts has started work on several maintenance jobs at the pavilion/Field, e.g. window wood treatment, rehanging internal door that does not close, replacing carpark posts, inserting “Hedgehogs” in gutters to prevent them overflowing, cutting-up bent gutters from wicket covers so they can be transported to Brixworth Tip, felling diseased tree.
- Steve McGlasson installed an automatic vent in loft so it can be drained for Legionella treatment. Another one is to be fitted in 2024.
- New shelving was purchased and installed for cricket equipment.
- The Tractor Shed was tidied.

#### **5. Fund Raising.**

- As the Parish Council has declined so far to financially support the GPFA’s operational costs, despite several requests over the last few years, a new initiative to raise funds was commenced in 2023; it was a direct appeal to parishioners and businesses to contribute either a single payment or monthly through “Localgiving”. A core of General Committee members and others organised the Appeal, delivering Appeal letters to all Guilsborough houses, and was launched in the Spring of 2023. Its main request was for each household to contribute £20 annually. The result was disappointing: It resulted in £560 one-off payments, and £37 new monthly payments. The GPFA had previously been receiving £23 monthly payments that are continuing from a scheme started 4 years ago. A further Appeal is being considered in the Spring 2024. Those that had donated had been thanked.
- Again, no progress was made for someone to lead Fundraising & Sponsorship for the GPFA. There is an opportunity to raise substantial sums from sponsorship (e.g. advertising boards outside & inside the ground) which would lessen the need for fundraising events.

#### **6. Funding the GPFA**

- £18,500 is in the GPFA’s accounts at the end of 2023. The Bottle Stall at Hollowell Steam raised £1610 and Hollowell Steam donated £3,000 to the GPFA, as Hugh Lowther’s field was used, and he requested that a donation be given to the GPFA for its use. Bottle donations from Haddon & St. Michaels CCs, West Haddon Football Club, and Guilsborough parishioners were received.
- £2,000 was received from the Sudborough Foundation thanks to Hugh Lowther.

- A £500 grant from Localgiving was received that the GPFA Secretary had applied for.
- ~£12,000 p.a. was again needed for fixed costs, e.g. Field mowing & strimming/cricket square treatments & wicket preparation, Field treatments (vertidrainage, slitting, weedkilling), tree inspections & maintenance, insurance, utilities, security, cleaning, equipment .
- The clubs and other Field users contribute ~45% of the Fixed costs. The contributions are in-line with charges made by other clubs and Northants Council for the use of their facilities.
- A new Powerroll for wicket preparations is needed, costing £11,000; grant applications are being made.
- A £3,500 grant application to Northants Community Foundation was made for a contribution to fixed costs. It was not successful. The NCF informed the GPFA that the assessors considered the GPFA had sufficient funds, and that it needed to explain and give more emphasis to disadvantage individuals/communities and benefits to the community. A grant application to NCF is to be made in early 2024 for a new Powerroll with more emphasis on the response suggested from the NCF/assessors.

#### **7. Marketing & Publicity (Increased activity at the Field)**

- Regular articles in the VillageLink, that promote the GPFA as an umbrella organisation for all the clubs/organisation that use the Field, was organised by Katie Fulcher. She was thanked.

**8. Succession** A succession plan for some of the elderly GPFA officials is still needed. As reported earlier, the GPFA has a new Chairman in 2023, Freddie de Lisle. The GPFA would welcome individuals to “Shadow” the roles of some, with the intention to take-on these roles at a later date. In addition, a new Events Fundraiser is needed.

#### **9. Insurance**

Mike Edwards organised insurance costing £1312, down from ~£2,000 3 years ago, for the GPFA and is thanked for not applying a brokerage charge.

#### **10. Trustees**

The GPFA General Committee thank the Trustees for their continuing support.

Written by: Graham Byars

**APPROVED BY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Freddie de Lisle : Chairman:** **DATE** \_\_\_\_\_