

# THE PLAYING FIELD

Newsletter of  
Surrey Playing Fields - March 2019



## Barry Hitchcock MBE

We are very sorry to have to report on the death of our County Development Officer aged 69. Barry joined Surrey Playing Fields as a Trustee in October 2012. He was a highly respected member of our team who brought a very professional approach to his voluntary work. He looked after the team of Borough Development Officers and ensured that they received the support, guidance and training needed.

Over the last 3 years of his life Barry lived with Parkinson's disease. His death from a stroke was a shock to everyone who knew him. We send our condolences to his widow, Elspeth, and all the family.

Barry Hitchcock spent 45 years in university sport, including his time as a full-time student, apart from a short period spent teaching physical education in a secondary school. He was Assistant Sports Director at Brunel University from 1972 until 1980; he then moved to Surrey and was appointed Sports Director at the University of Surrey in 1991. His life-long passion for sport has seen him play county rugby and athletics and play and coach in the National Basketball League for ten years.

During his professional life he worked closely with many National Governing Bodies of Sport, but especially golf and squash, as well as a steadily increasing involvement in providing worthwhile sporting opportunities for people with all kinds of disabilities. He was Chair of Universities and Colleges Sport (UCS) – the National body for physical recreation/education professionals. UCS later amalgamated with others to form British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS), the current organisation running British student sporting competitions and representation.

The culmination of his career was when work started on site for the Surrey Sports Park. This had been a 12 year-long project to sell the vision, produce an accepted feasibility plan, decide which sports to include and to what level, whilst working on the final building plans with the architects. It was completely appropriate that the celebration of his life was held at the Sports Park.

He came to the SCPFA as an accomplished sports player, coach and administrator. We soon learnt his method of working added an extra dimension to our Association. He was a skilled listener, a brilliant summariser of a discussion, a mentor to his team. He did this in such a quiet way that it was difficult to find suitable photographs of him for this tribute. Most show him at the back of groups where he had contributed much but did not wish to make it obvious. It was an honour to know him.

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Barry presenting a cheque towards  
Claygate scoreboard



Barry at the 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Dinner



The work of the Surrey County Playing Fields Association is funded by subscriptions from local authorities at county and district levels and parish and town councils. It also receives funding from Sports Clubs and individuals. Details are on our Website.

We thank them all.

## Organisations on SCPFA Advisory Committee

Surrey County Council  
Surrey County Football Association  
Surrey County Rugby Football Union  
Surrey Sports Board  
Surrey Community Action

Active Surrey  
Surrey County Lawn Tennis Association  
Surrey Cricket Foundation  
Surrey County Athletic Association  
Surrey County Netball Association

We are grateful for their support and wise counsel

## Recent Projects

### Ebbisham Sports Club

This is a friendly purpose-built Club, based in Epsom, with three dedicated courts each for badminton, squash & racketball and tennis. There is also a small warm-up gym area with a treadmill, indoor rower and a stationary bike. The Club has over 350 adult members and over 200 junior members drawn from all over the borough and beyond. It is a Club that SPF has supported for many years.



Andrew Tibble, the Surrey Playing Fields Borough Development Officer for Epsom and Ewell, is shown presenting Lorna from the office with a plaque to commemorate a recent generous £1,000 grant to the Club for the purchase of quality badminton posts and accessories.

### Sutton and Epsom RFC

This Club has a proud history dating back to 1881 and operates on two sites with flourishing Junior and Women's teams, as well as very successful Men's sides. The rules covering floodlit matches have been upgraded. This meant the lights at the Club had to be improved so that they could continue playing in their League. The project was to replace the bulbs and hoods to increase the output lumens. They thanked Surrey Playing Fields for the grant of £1,000.

Another success for Andrew. Other Development Officers have been equally successful, but appear to be too shy to provide details of their achievements.

# Surrey Playing Fields Website



[LATEST NEWSLETTER](#)

————— for sports help throughout Surrey! —————

For some years Surrey Playing Fields has maintained a website [www.surreyplayingfields.co.uk](http://www.surreyplayingfields.co.uk). It is a fairly standard website with sections such as: an introductory home page, an about us section, a grants and loans section, a small section on major projects, news and newsletters, useful links, contact us.

The “About Us” section contains “our objectives” where we outline our work. We cover a large range of activities. It is worth looking at this to see how we can assist your organisation.

The Grants and Loans section explains the criteria for providing financial support – this also includes bursaries for young coaches and competitors. It explains how to contact us and how we process enquiries. The documents that are needed to make applications can be downloaded from this section of the website.

News and Newsletters – contains what it says. Major current news pertaining to SPF is in this section. It is also possible to download the last 4 year’s newsletters. They do contain interesting and useful information.

Contact Us is a very important section. It shows who to contact for advice and financial assistance. There are details of Borough Development Officers; we have one or more in each Borough or District. They are the major contacts. There is someone to look after county projects. There is information on all the positions you would expect to see in a voluntary charity.

I have left “Useful Links” to last. Surrey Playing Fields works with partners. Some of these are formal partners, others are organisations whose work has areas of common interest. We use some of their work as references, in other cases we need to know the latest news so that, if appropriate, it can influence our thinking. This information has been available to our volunteers and used when assisting with projects and finance. We decided to put useful links in one place to save people time searching the web when working in areas which are outside their normal areas of expertise. In most cases you can access all the information in a linked site. In some cases, where we are formal partners, SPF has access to private areas. If you contact us, we can usually provide appropriate information from these members’ areas.

The following is a list and short description of the sites currently linked.

## Active Surrey

Active Surrey is the nationally recognised strategic, local sports development agency for Surrey. They are a partner-funded organisation and work with them, and other stakeholders, to ensure Surrey is an active county. They can guide people and organisations on where to obtain funding. They assist organisations with improving their administration.

## Surrey Cricket Foundation

They provide many services. These include: ground inspection and advice, funding for facilities and equipment, training for groundsmen.

## Surrey Football Association

They provide many services. These include: ground inspection and advice, funding for facilities and equipment, training for groundsmen, advice on leases and ground rental.

## Surrey Rugby

They can assist with funding and advice on standards for clubs.

# Surrey Playing Fields Website

(continued)

## Fields in Trust

FIT was previously known as the National Playing Fields Association. Their new trading name describes their main purpose. They hold the details of fields which have been placed in trust to secure their use as a leisure facility. Their website contains some standards for maintaining playing fields and securing them. It has some information on small sums available for use secured fields. There is information on the location of play areas and playing fields which can be used when dealing with planning proposals.

## Sports and Play Construction Association

This is a trade body for contractors in the leisure business. Companies who belong to this body must meet quality standards. It is worth looking at this site to identify good companies. The site also includes a number of standards for sport and play. This site has a members' area which SPF can access.

## Sports and Recreation Alliance

They bring together the sport and recreation sector and support their members to tackle the challenges and take advantage of opportunities. They are the voice of the sector with Government, policy makers and the media. They help get the nation active at the grassroots by providing advice, support and guidance.

In addition, we can access a site set up for County Playing Fields to see the projects they have and initiatives they have been involved in. Although each county has different challenges and priorities, we do like to learn from others' experiences.

Surrey Playing Fields is here to help. Please contact us as appropriate. Our website should make it easier for you to prepare your ideas before we discuss with you what support we can provide.

## Thanks to the Retiring Editor



Don Raffin decided that the December 2018 Newsletter would be his last.

He produced 12 issues over the last three years. During his tenure he improved the format significantly and helped with changing our method of distribution. Don was one of those volunteers who was able to give valuable time to the Association until it was time to move on. We thank him for his contribution.



## Future of SPF communication

In the short term, Jim Faulkner will return to editing the newsletter. We will continue with our website and intend to improve it.

We do need a new editor – maybe more than an editor. Don has pointed out that he felt “that in these days of the growing use of social media, one source for all such Marketing and PR activity is essential”.

Preferably we need a consistent approach/strategy encompassing the use of website, newsletter, Facebook, Twitter and other social media. It is not just implementing these channels we need to be secure. If anyone is interested in assisting us in these areas, please contact our Hon Secretary, Heather Dean, whose details are on the back page of this newsletter.

# Never mind the children, can you maintain their playground equipment

At last the time has come, the ability to push the button for new playground equipment or, for the fortunate few, a completely new playground.

As expected, there is still a final check that needs to be made; it is whether the provision is suitable in the long term. Are we fully aware of the maintenance and service implications, indeed has the operator got the skills and finance to manage and maintain the new items?

Regular checking and servicing of the items will be needed which, at the most basic level, will be a litter pick and a check for broken or vandalised elements through the operator's 'routine' daily/weekly inspections.

However, all can go seriously and expensively wrong if the items are not serviced at the regular intervals as advised by the manufacturer and an element fails, particularly if it results in an injury.

Examples that present servicing issues can include:

- Accessing high level swing bearings such as in very high single point suspension swings, that may need a dismantling check every 1 to 2 months,
- Replacing sealed non-maintainable parts at set frequencies or tolerances,
- Cableways where the traveller mechanism and cable may need an annual complete removal for checking,
- Inground timber, where excavation to foundation is regularly needed, for example every 6 months or annually,
- Topping up and cleaning of sand pits and Loose Impact Attenuating Safety Surfaces, such as woodchip.

The costs (including labour) can further increase if the replacement frequency and part costs are unknown and turn out to be expensive. Where regular vandalism occurs, replacement costs of, say swing seats, should also be factored in.

Awareness before proceeding is advisable and may result in reappraising the equipment selection. Knowledge of the anticipated and guaranteed lifespan of the item, excluding vandalism and with correct maintenance, would also be useful, before pressing the buy button. The adage 'let the buyer beware' remains well founded. Most important however, is to ensure that the operator and their staff or helpers, have the training, ability, and climbing agility, if the equipment is of a significant height, to regularly inspect the equipment for any issues. Inspections it is advised, need inspectors of certificated competence, such as by the RPII for the routine, daily/weekly, operational, 1-3 monthly and annual main inspections.

It is worthwhile, in addition to holding the BS EN 1176 certificate of compliance for the items manufacture and having an Independent Post Installation Inspection undertaken, checking the following:

- Manufacturers' longevity warranty, subject to adhering to the manufacturers' servicing requirements and no vandalism,
- The detail of the manufacturers' servicing instructions, servicing intervals, servicing actions, parts costs, particularly for equipment of a significant height or servicing needing dismantling or excavation,
- Height of item and the ability for inspectors to fully inspect,
- Purchase and labour costs of replacing parts due to wear or vandalism.

And when that's all done, press that button and you, your team, and especially the children, will be able to enjoy it all for years without too many surprises.

Jean Wenger - Surrey Playing Fields Play Advisor - March 2019





## Robust SAFETY Inspections

### Play & Sports areas, Parks, Ponds, Schools & Gyms

- Detailed reports inspecting to approved UK & EU Standards
- Risk Benefit Assessment & Guidance for prioritising actions
- Identifying photographs & advice on problems found
- Quality 'Seal' RPII Annual Play Inspectors
- Independent of any manufacturer or maintenance company
- Training courses & RPII Exam Qualifications
- Surrey County PFA Children's Play Advisor
- Institute of Expert Witnesses – full member 

**Contact Today** – Active Risk Management Services Ltd.  
**07970 764 804** [info@ActiveRMS.org](mailto:info@ActiveRMS.org)



# Surrey Playing Field Contacts

We have a contact for each council area in Surrey. We have one officer who looks after county wide projects; he can also put you in touch with the officer who is appropriate for your request.

The details are shown below:

## **County Development Officer**

Mr Mike Armitage, Tel: 07930 405788, email: mike.j.armitage@btinternet.com

## **Borough Development Officers**

**Elmbridge** Mr Mike Armitage, Tel: 07930 405788, email: mike.j.armitage@btinternet.com

**Epsom & Ewell** Mr Andrew Tibble, Tel: 07773 149755, email: atibble@hotmail.co.uk

**Guildford** Mr. Nick Wildman, Tel: 01483 831200, email: nickwildman@hotmail.com

**Mole Valley** Mr Bob Higson, Tel: 01306 886043, email: r1hgn@higsonweb.com

**Reigate & Banstead** Mr Mike Hughes, Tel: 0208 668 3314, email: mikehhughes60@gmail.com

**Runnymede** Mr Alan Greig, Tel: 01784 741022, email: a.greig3@ntlworld.com

**Spelthorne** Mrs Shirley Winson, email: shirleywinson21@gmail.com

**Surrey Heath** Grant Simmons - email: grant24simmons@gmail.com

**Tandridge** Mr Denham Earl, Tel: 020 8660 6621, email: dm\_laearl@hotmail.com

**Waverley - Eastern** Mr Martin Maybrey BEM, Tel: 01483 893209,

email: martin.maybrey@btinternet.com

**Waverley - Western** Mr Brian Greig, Tel: 01252 793762, email: briangreig@fsmail.net

**Woking** Cllr Ian Eastwood, Tel: 01483 481864, email: cllrian.eastwood@woking.gov.uk

Other Officers you may need to contact are:

**Honorary Secretary** Mrs Heather Dean, Tel:01483 535283, email: surreyplayingfields@gmail.com

**Children's Play Provision** Mr Jean Wenger MIEW RPII<sub>AM</sub>,  
50 Hurst Park Road, Twyford, RG10 0EY. Tel: 07970 764 804,  
email: jeanwenger@activerms.org

**Webmaster** Mr Alex Gear, Tel: 07532 741653, email: alexander.gear@gmail.com

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*For sports help throughout Surrey*  
**Affiliated to the National Playing Fields Association**