Whaley Bridge inspired by Olympic Legacy

Whaley Bridge’s vision for upgrading facilities at the fast-improving ‘sports village’ was given a tremendous boost in April with an award from Sport England’s Inspired Facilities Fund (part of Places People Play Olympic legacy funding). The £38,980 award went towards replacing the hard surface at the multi-use games area off Park Road with high quality artificial grass, among the best in the country.

The project has also delivered other features such as new fencing and improved disability access to the adjoining pavilion, as well as the renovation of floodlighting for the playing pitch. All of these improved measures has helped to boost the number of people using the facility.

Whaley Bridge Town Council, working in partnership with Whaley Bridge Football Club was the lead applicant for the grants totalling £155,000. Cllr Goldfinch said “It has taken just under three years of hard effort to get to this point, but every second of that effort has been worth it. We are incredibly grateful to those who have made this project possible, in particular the Football Foundation who have contributed £97,000, Sport England’s £38,980 and Whaley Bridge Football Club who raised £8,000. Generations of children will benefit and Whaley Bridge can be proud to have one of the best artificial grass surfaces you can get. This has been a really good year for Whaley Bridge.”

In addition the Town Council contributed £5K, Derbyshire County Council £5K thanks to Cllr Barrie Taylor contributing £4K of his DCC grant and £1K from DCC’s Community Action Grant, The friends of Whaley Bridge Memorial Park £1K and Cllr Jon Goldfinch, Chair of WBTC, donated his £300 Chairs allowance and made a further matched contribution.

For further details and booking information please contact the Town Clerk on 01663 733068 or via a new web booking system at: www.whaleybridge.com
Concern over funding is usually the key barrier to developing new projects and is the topic I am most frequently asked about. The need to make improvements to sport, recreational and play facilities is often high on the agenda in local communities yet we all are aware that funding is particularly hard to secure. Despite austerity, the two major events taking place in 2012, The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee and the Olympic and Paralympic Games, provide some exciting funding and legacy opportunities for a limited period which are there for the grabs.

The Queen Elizabeth 11 Fields Challenge has been widely featured in past editions of this newsletter. I make no apology for raising this opportunity again as designated QE11 Fields can access exclusive SITA Trust funding. The Challenge aims to protect 2012 outdoor recreational spaces in communities such as pitches, woodlands, children’s play areas, gardens, bicycle trails, parks, etc, all across the country as a permanent living legacy of the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee in 2012.

SITA Trust’s QE11 Field Major Works fund closed on 23 July and I hope some Derbyshire projects managed to submit bids before this deadline. However, it is not too late to apply for The QE11 Volunteer Support Fund but you will need to hurry as the last round closed on 19 October. This small grant can award up to a maximum of £5,000 for projects where it can be demonstrated that volunteers will be extensively involved in the delivery of a project to physically improve a QEII Field. This could include site clearance, planting, fencing to make the field more healthy and sustainable or even materials to allow volunteers to make improvements to existing community buildings such as refurbishing or creating better access. For further details: http://www.sitatrust.org.uk/qe2-fields

Why not consider taking the opportunity to enhance the landscape of your playing field project with the planting of new trees. Million Trees Derbyshire, as featured on page 23, offers to work alongside any designated QE11 Field or SITA funded project as they aim to double the number of trees planted from 2,000 trees last winter to 4,000 this coming winter. They will of course work with all kinds of projects across the county that are appropriate for planting and 50% of the costs are met by the project.

Don’t forget Sport England’s Olympic legacy funding. You have already read in the cover article, how an ‘Inspired Facilities’ award has transformed sport facilities in Whaley Bridge. Community and voluntary organisations, including parish and town councils can apply for grants worth between £20,000 and £50,000. Inspired Facilities awards up to £10 million at each round and applications for Round 3 are open from 23 July 2012 and closes 17 September 2012. Rounds 4 & 5 will take place in 2013/14 and dates will be announced following the Olympic and Paralympic 2012 Games.

Full details and guidance, including a Workshop Video to make the application process easier, are available on Sport England’s website at: http://www.sportengland.org/about_us/places_people_play/inspired_facilities.aspx. Good luck with your applications!
Radical Changes for Youth Football

FA Shareholders have voted in new Youth Development proposals by an overwhelming 87 per cent majority. The Shareholders, at the FA’s AGM at Wembley, voted to bring in a new player pathway for football to include a mandatory 5v5 format for football for U7s and U8s and a 9v9 format for U11 and U12s to be phased in by season 2014-15.

The changes passed have been developed over a number of years, with research and over two years of consultation across the game. Nick Levett, National Development Manager, said: “After 138 roadshows nationwide it was fantastic to get the endorsement of the majority of the grassroots football community.

“These changes are a massive step forward for the future of children’s football in this country.”

Introducing 5v5 for U7s and U8s, with progression to 7v7 and then 9v9, allows the children to play on appropriate size pitches and with appropriate size goals.

The smaller pitch and number of players allows greater number of touches of the ball and involvement in the game, helping develop greater technical skills at a lower age.

The move will also bring a more child friendly approach to competition, breaking up the eight-month long adult based season into smaller periods of competition which encourage increased learning.

The proposed changes to the player pathway and competition framework if approved go hand in hand with the FA Coaching philosophy, as outlined in the FA Future Game, which gives clear guidance on how the game should be played and coached, this philosophy is embedded in The FA coaching courses, and in the FA Tesco skills coaching programme.

The FA’s Facilities and Investment team will shortly be issuing detailed guidance for clubs and leagues seeking advice regarding facilities.

This guidance will include recommended pitch/goalpost dimensions, line marking advice and further details regarding access to funding support for the purchase of suitable goalposts through the Football Foundation.
Many towns and villages now have a hard surfaced enclosed ball court area that can be used for a variety of sports and activities including tennis, basketball and football. Multi Use Games Areas or MUGAs are not cheap but the Playground Inspector invariably finds such facilities poorly maintained and frequently with hazards likely to cause serious injury leading to potentially expensive claims for compensation. Yet looking after ball courts, free-standing goal units and MUGAs is straightforward requiring very little specialist knowledge but lots of common-sense.

Gateways and access

Many enclosed ball courts feature open access entry points but the ground at such places is often worn and uneven leading to trip hazards. These are easily dealt with by re-instating level surfaces.

Where gates are fitted there should be a minimum gap of 15mm between the gate and the gatepost particularly at the hinged side. This reduces the danger of finger entrapment (as can be seen in this photograph) and possible crushing or severing of fingers as many ball court gates are very heavy.

Ideally there should be a ground clearance at the gate between 60mm and 110mm to reduce the likelihood of foot entrapment. If the gate scrapes along the ground then clearly it needs to be re-hung to avoid long term damage to the gate and surface.

The Playground Inspector believes it is much better not to lock the gates of MUGAs and enclosed ball court areas to encourage greater communal use and less damage through unauthorized forced entry.

Essential signage at each entrance

At each entrance it is good practice to have a sign stating the owner of the facility and their contact details in case of damage or vandalism along with a location address, post code or even a GSP reference in case of an emergency requiring an ambulance. Additional information can be added such as times and conditions of use.

Perimeter fencing and goal stability

The Playground Inspector believes a rubber mallet to be an invaluable tool when checking the structural integrity of the surrounding ball court or MUGA fencing. By walking on the inside of the fencing it is easier to spot loose or missing fittings by tapping the panels with the mallet and listening for any subsequent rattle or noise.

Fittings can work loose resulting in damaged panels. Regular inspection will prevent this and is not difficult to carry out at least once a month or weekly if the facility is well used. Special attention is needed at goal ends where the impact of footballs striking the panels can lead to damage particularly to the cheaper wire-mesh fencing.

Such damage must be repaired as a matter of urgency. Protruding wire snags can be extremely hazardous.
Bolts and fixings used to secure signage on the perimeter fencing (as seen below) can also be dangerous and remedial action should be taken quickly to reduce any likelihood of harm to people using the ball court.

Any damage to the basketball backboard and hoop should be attended to quickly and any damaged nets hanging from the hoop should be removed as soon as possible. Basketball nets are not essential to the sport but there have been many injuries through ring-fingers being caught in damaged nets and dangling ropes.

**The Playing Surface**

The majority of communal ball court facilities feature tarmacadam playing surfaces that can be easily inspected for damage or break up by simply walking firstly the perimeter edge - looking for weeds and debris and then walking from corner to corner diagonally checking that any tennis net post caps for example are in place and that the surface is in good order.

MUGAs are frequently used for a range of different sports and all ground markings should be clear and intact.

If puddles appear after rain there may be an issue with drainage and these should be reported to the surface installer particularly with a new facility. Standing water will lead to break up and deterioration of the surface especially if it freezes in winter calling for expensive repairs.

**Damage from trees**

Apart from the damage caused by the roots of nearby trees many ball court surfaces become very slippery and even dangerous through algae and moss forming from over-hanging trees.

Algae and leaf fall in the autumn should be treated on a regular basis and removed as quickly as possible. If left to rot down the leaves and other debris will damage synthetic playing surfaces like artificial grass carpet. To repair such modern-day surfaces is not cheap and the ball court will be out of action until repairs are carried out.

How long does it take to remove leaves and weeds from a ball court? Yet permanent damage from leaves and weeds is frequently seen by the Playground Inspector which is disappointing considering the cost of providing ball courts and MUGAs and how little it costs to maintain them - if carried out on a regular basis.

**Free standing goal units**

Where space does not permit an enclosed ball court but a simple kick about area and target/rebound wall are required free standing goal units in timber or metal can be very useful. Looking after these items is just the same as for ball courts but takes less time.

The main issue is the wear and tear to grass. It is a good idea to have tarmacadam surface to one side and grass to the other. Avoid using synthetic surfaces when the grass wears out. Trip hazards are created and it is expensive to install. Much better to re-turf the area from turf - usually freely available in the playing field - and requiring just some hard work perhaps twice a year?
Solar Panels for Sports Clubs

In the Spring edition of The Playing Field we reported on the innovative scheme by Stocksfield Cricket Club to harvest rain water for their own use. Moving from water to electricity here are three examples of cricket clubs installing solar panels on their pavilions to save money and help the environment.

Uppingham Cricket Club located in the county of Rutland is the first example of a cricket club embracing green energy by installing solar panels on the roof of its pavilion.

It has been a busy time at the club as in 2011 they moved home from Newtown Road to a brand new site at Castle Hill. As well as boasting excellent playing facilities the new ground has a very impressive new pavilion upon which they have installed a 10KW PV system on the SW facing roof. The solar panels used are black which are a perfect match for the colour of the roof tiles.

The club has a 3 phase supply of electricity making such a connection into the National Grid possible.

The panels were fitted by local firm Navitron of Oakham who gave a very competitive price, and the installation cost was partly by some local funding.

Commenting on the project, Charlie Scott, Chairman said:

"With the combined income from the FIT and the savings on our electricity bill the club is forecast to save over £2000 annually. With the scheme being government backed and index linked for 25 years, the long term savings for the club will be significant. So far the panels have been generating for nearly 8 weeks and their performance has been greater than expected.

The second example sees a return to the North East where at the end of 2011 Bywell-based Green Energy Doctor helped Stocksfield Cricket Club gain much-needed income by fitting solar panels to the clubhouse. Despite the wet weather the club has earned over £500 from the feed-in tariff since the start of the year.

The total installation cost was in the region of £12,500 and to meet this the club successfully applied for grants from various bodies. In total they were successful in raising nearly £11,000 in grants which meant the club only had to fund approx £1500 from their own sources.

As well as saving money on their electricity bill by feeding back into the grid the club has also benefitted from a sponsorship deal with the supplier Green Energy Doctor. For every new customer that installs a system based on the recommendation of the club they will receive a cash bonus.

Meanwhile down in Garden of England county of Kent, Sherwood Cricket Club has installed thirty-six solar panels at its ground with the help of solar energy firm, Freetricity. The solar array was installed as part of the club’s ongoing programme to become more energy efficient and reduce utility bills.

So if you are a sports club with a spare roof then installing solar panels can not only be good for the environment but it could save a lot a money.
The Playing Fields Legacy Fund was launched on 20th May when a Lunch was held in the grounds of Eyford House in the Cotswolds to which 250 people, all with good connections in the City in Banking, Industry and Charities attended. They were asked to supply the fund organisers with as many of their contacts as possible.

The objective of the Fund is to provide funding, mainly of a revenue nature, to the many voluntary groups who work to support our playing fields in the cities, towns and villages across the UK. The Fund will work alongside Fields in Trust (FIT), the London Playing Fields Foundation, and the County Playing Fields Associations, and will hope to support those parts of the Country where there are no County Associations and in particular the Inner Cities.

The current Trustees are:
- John Sword (Member FIT Advisory Group)
- Sir Philip Otton (Chairman FIT Advisory Group)
- Angus Irvine (Member FIT Advisory Group)
- David Elleray (Retired Premier League Referee)
- Alison Moore-Gwyn (CEO - FIT)
- Alex Welsh (CEO London Playing Fields Foundation)
- Robert Smith (Essex Playing Fields Association)

The administration of the Fund will be handled by FIT under the direction of the Trustees. The Fund has limited resources at this stage but hopes and expects to grow. Grants will be made to the local voluntary groups and sports clubs as follows:

- To provide training for Leaders of these groups and clubs.
- To create alliances with local sports bodies (e.g. County Football Assns. County Cricket Boards, etc.)
- Prepare and implement grant applications for these groups.
- Set up or advise voluntary groups in areas of the Country where none exist, particularly in inner cities.
- Provide seed money to kick start new investment, and partial match funding to help unlock funding from other sources such as the Lottery, UK Sport, Sport England, and County Sports Partnerships.

One of the main aims of the Legacy Fund is to exploit the willingness of many businesses/charities to support playing fields and voluntary clubs local to them.

The fund is seeking suggestions of any companies or charities who might be prepared to help in this way, and to pass their name to them so as to link them up with projects needing help and support. For further information and a copy of the appeal letter, please contact Edward Sale

Email: edward.sale@btinternet.com
Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge

Helen Griffiths, Director of Communications and the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge at Fields in Trust here reports on the continuing success of the programme and also reminds us that there is still time to make your application.

“Fields in Trust, I know, is very dear to my grandparents’ hearts, as it is to mine”

If you’ve been following our progress since early 2011 you may remember the wonderful event on the first Queen Elizabeth II Field in Blackburn attended by The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge just before they got married. We’re delighted that on 13 June, an even more exciting milestone was reached for the Challenge when The Queen and The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge all attended a Have a Field Day event on Vernon Park in Nottingham. The Duke of Cambridge dedicated the Challenge as a Diamond Jubilee legacy programme to Her Majesty and thanked the Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh for what they have done “to protect these vital outdoor places for the Nation”. The Queen has been the Patron of Fields in Trust for as long as she has been Queen; and the Duke of Edinburgh has been President for even longer – 64 years! As part of this ceremony The Queen unveiled the QEII Fields Challenge plaque, which each field receives to indicate it’s status and commented that it was “very nice”

The Duke started the Diamond Jubilee Dash, with school kids running and jumping through an obstacle race as they tried to win in front of their very special audience and The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge even joined in with the athletics events in the javelin throwing competition.

It was a fantastic day and one where the people of Nottingham, and beyond, could really appreciate the role the Challenge plays in ensuring that green spaces will always be there for fun days like this; and also the unwavering and invaluable support the Royal family has given to Fields in Trust since its foundation in 1925.

The community gathering and activities on Vernon Park on the 13th were typical of a Field Day; and there have been over 250 Have a Field Days across the UK so far this summer.

“The Fun Day was a resounding success attracting a large number of Moulton families and those from the surrounding villages and was certainly one of the most well supported events ever hosted in Moulton. We estimate that over 1000 people were present to participate in the Queen’s 60th anniversary celebrations and for the unveiling of the very special Fields in Trust plaque in recognition of the QEII Diamond Jubilee accreditation of Moulton’s playing field. “

So why not hold a Have a Field Day yourself this summer? You’ll get a toolkit of suggestions, as well as a goodie box of items such as bunting, flags and slap bands which have been highly popular! You can register them online at the QEII Fields Challenge website.
And if you’re looking for something to keep yourself or the family busy over the coming weeks, pop your postcode into the website and look for the little balloon icon which will show you Field Days happening near you!

Taking stock

The Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge is aiming to protect 2,012 outdoor recreational spaces. With 6 months left, we have 1300 QEII Fields so far. So, well over halfway! The range of spaces that have been nominated by their owners so far is fantastic. But we need your help to make 2,012. Don’t forget – all sites that join the Challenge can access funding available especially for QEII Fields. Already, wildflower meadows have been planted; playgrounds made more accessible; football pitch drainages improved with funding made available through the Challenge.

If you’d like more information then please have a look at our website www.qe2fields.com or find us on facebook: http://www.facebook.com/QE2Fields#

Or twitter: @fieldsintrust

Or good old email: kathryn.cook@fieldsintrust.org or helen.griffiths@fieldsintrust.org

Help us save our green spaces for future generations to enjoy!
One space. So many ways to play... MultiActive is transforming community spaces.

Revolutionise your recreation area with Monster Play’s MultiActive system. Multiple activities, games and sport. Plenty of fun for all.

- Engaging game choices regardless of gender, age or ability
- Keep healthy and stay active, while having fun
- Play and compete with friends and family
- Practise ball skills, improve coordination and fitness
- A space for dynamic play and social meeting
- Unique activities, in and around a single structure

The MultiActive range is durable, flexible and offers something for everyone. So why not talk to us about transforming your existing area with a multi-activity zone?

To find out how MultiActive would work in your area, call 01923 236627 or visit www.monsterplay.co.uk

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- Email - sales@hags.co.uk
- Tel - 01258 817981 or Fax - 01258 817523
Is a child safer in bed or on a play area? The answer — on a play area. Believe it or not, statistics show that there are fewer visits by children to A&E as a result of accidents on play areas than there are for accidents involving beds. RoSPA has long been at the forefront of ensuring that play areas are as safe as they need to be (not as safe as possible). This has led to an environment where it is possible to have a play area which is both exciting and safe.

Of course it is not possible to completely eliminate injuries but, over the last twenty years, regular RoSPA inspections of play areas, combined with RoSPA input into the safety standards, has helped to reduce these to a minimum. Safer surfacing has also contributed to a reduction in serious head injuries and RoSPA has been involved with research to make these surfaces even safer.

Play is essential to the development of a healthy well balanced child. Equipment and play area design is becoming both more exciting and safer. However, regular inspections and maintenance are needed to ensure safety. Areas where children play should be as safe as necessary, not as safe as possible. Without play areas to excite them, children will play elsewhere in potentially hazardous locations. RoSPA will continue to inspect areas where children play to ensure a requisite level of safety and will also continue to encourage exciting and stimulating play. Local authorities should encourage parents to let their children play outside as much as possible and attractive areas for play will help to encourage this.

The Olympics are raising interest in sporting activities and now is the time to encourage children to get out more and be active. It is important to ensure that all sporting and recreational facilities are in good condition, especially wheeled sports and BMX facilities. Make sure that you include these in your inspection regime.

Some of you will already have received your RoSPA inspection reports. Hopefully electronically. Electronic reports are more environmentally friendly, easier to store, and also to circulate to all interested members. RoSPA can only provide electronic reports where they have been provided with an up to date email address. If you haven't provided one, or your email address has changed in the last year, please update RoSPA by email to info@rospaplaysafety.co.uk remembering to give the name of your organisation.

RoSPA has always only recommended action in its inspection reports where it believes that it will make a measurable difference to safety and are happy to make no recommendations for action for standard failures (the standard is not mandatory) where action will not make any real difference to the safety of the user. RoSPA does not believe in site operators spending money for the sake of it.

Whilst on the subject of spending money, one of the most frequent queries RoSPA receive is regarding fencing. Sometimes the provision of fencing is a condition of a grant but is fencing always necessary? The answer is simple. Fencing is only necessary where it fulfills a useful function. The main examples of this are to keep children in where there is a nearby hazard, such as a busy road or open water, to keep dogs out where dogs and dog fouling are a problem, and also to keep stray balls out where the area is near a sports pitch. Otherwise consider if you really need a fence which might be an unnecessary cost and if damaged become a hazard to users of the area.

Hopefully we will have a scorching summer, although so far this has been far from the case. However if do get one, then remember that some metal equipment can become very hot, particularly slide run outs that face due south. If you have such a slide monitor it to prevent excessive heat build up.
When a few playworkers in London started a campaign in 1987 to celebrate children’s play none of us dreamed that over the next 25 years thousands of people would make it a reality for millions of children in their neighbourhoods and communities.

We called a meeting because we were worried about the effect of potential cuts to adventure playgrounds and holiday playschemes. Nobody else came, so we went to the pub to drown our sorrows and think about how we could create interest in the campaign. We knew that people and organisations were doing wonderful children’s play events and activities in play projects, parks and the streets where they lived and we decided that we should celebrate this somehow rather than try to organise a protest or large central event.

We knew that by sheer coincidence play events were planned for the same August Wednesday in a few London boroughs. We had a lightbulb moment - why not build on that as a day for play? We cheekily asked the organisers if they would be happy for us to promote their events as being part of something called Playday and to our relief and eternal gratitude they all said yes.

Over the next 25 years Playday became a London-wide and then a national campaign, with up to a million children taking part in hundreds of locally organised events across the UK each year. So, what were the things that make it such a success?

• It is a simple idea that people can understand straight away – you don’t need to organise a large event – just celebrate what you already do wherever you are. Playday could be anything from a few children playing with friends in a garden to a huge event in a park for 10,000 children or anything in between.
• Families love it because local activities on the day are free or very cheap and they feel there is a real sense of community at their local event.
• Funding bodies like the fact that a little money goes a long way! Some of the most successful Playday events have been run on less than £500 - by building partnerships across communities and using natural and scrap materials to enhance children’s play, Playday celebrations don’t have to cost the earth.
• The national play organisations in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales enthusiastically supported the campaign and Play England has dedicated significant central resources, funded through the Big Lottery and corporate sponsorship, over the past five years. The campaign is backed by research with children and families on play issues. The Playday polls have been popular with the media and government policy makers – to this day government ministers quote the statistics we have gathered.

Children, families and whole communities can get out and play for the day! What better way to raise awareness about the importance of play in children’s lives?

Playday 2012 will be on Wednesday 1 August, to find out how you can join in the fun, visit www.playday.org.uk
Make sure your local community is part of the Diamond Jubilee!

The Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge is the flagship programme from Fields in Trust which will create a living legacy to the big events of 2012, with your help.

Why should you get involved?

- Safeguard outdoor space
- Increase participation in both physical activity and volunteering
- Access to improvement funds

“I’ve always thought of this initiative as an opportunity in a lifetime. I am pleased that I have been able to play a part in protecting Eastbourne’s valuable parks, gardens and recreation grounds for future generations.”

Gareth Williams – Parks and Gardens Manager, Eastbourne Borough Council

Why not Have a Field Day on your Queen Elizabeth II Field?

Get together for a Have a Field Day of community fun and celebration!

Fields in Trust will help you make it a great day with a toolkit full of tips & ideas.

Have a Field Day – be part of it
www.qe2fields.com/fieldday

To find out more about the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge, contact Fields in Trust on: 0207 427 2110 or haveafieldday@fieldsintrust.org

www.fieldsintrust.org  Charity No. 306070
Finding Facility Funding

Despite the economic downturn, there are still grants out there for facility projects. Karen Woolland of training and development company WCTD recently spoke at the SAPCA Sports Facility Show at Cheltenham Racecourse. Here she outlines the key issues affecting grant funding for facility projects and how to develop a structure for putting together a facility grant application.

Funding Landscape

Recent changes in economic climate, a change in Government and the comprehensive spending review have resulted in many funding programmes changing. Some funding pots have closed completely whilst others have reviewed and changed priorities and have less funding to distribute. There are only a couple of funders such as the BIG Lottery and the Heritage Lottery Fund that offer new and differing funding schemes and, surprisingly, on the odd occasion, increasing their maximum grant available.

In order to make your project a reality it is advisable to move away from the thinking of a traditional project of synthetic pitch and changing rooms for one main user group, the key is to work in partnership and link with as many community partners as viable. This partnership approach will help reduce running costs for core services, increase sustainability and profitability and will allow each partner to identify an achievable funding target to bring to the project.

With many funders offering smaller pots of money towards a project and asking applicants to exhaust all other avenues of funding before approaching them, it is important to have a joined up approach.

Successful Funding Applications

When considering applying for funding it is preparation that is key. Consider undertaking research on what grants are available, their funding criteria, timescales for application and decisions.

Understand what information is required for each application and when you are successful, what the terms and conditions are of the grant. Also important is the draw down process that will be operated to manage your cash flow during construction of your project, and do not forget that once the facility is complete funders usually put monitoring and evaluation requirements in place.

There are a number of “show stoppers” for a successful facility funding application:

- Evidence of strategic need, locally and through strategic partners’ strategies (i.e. National Governing Bodies, Local Councils)
- Strong sports development/community engagement plan
- Adequate security of tenure
- Correct Governing documentation/constitution and appropriate legal entity
- Financial information
- Business plan

In order to achieve success, Karen advises that each project has a steering group comprising of key officers in the lead organisation and then a number of representatives from key users groups plus the Local Authority, School Sports Partnership and National Governing Body. When approaching funders, it is also important that you have one identified contact in order to avoid miscommunication on the progress of your application.

Finding the Funds

Sport England

The ‘Places, People, Play’ programme has a number of different funding streams available with grants ranging from £10,000 to £3m. Each has its own different funding rounds, maximum grant and eligibility criteria. Check www.sportengland.org for more details.

Fields in Trust

The ‘Queen Elizabeth II’ programme which links with SITA Trust to offer landholders of local fields the opportunity funding for improvements for their green space which is under permanent protection.

Football Foundation

The UK’s biggest charity is running its ‘Build the Game’ programme for grants up to £50,000 and its Facilities
grants offer up to £500,000. There is also the long running Football Stadia Improvement Fund for ground grading requirements. See www.footballfoundation.org.uk for more details.

Heritage Lottery Fund
The ‘Parks for People’ programme provides grants from £250,000 to £5mn for major projects that regenerate green space.

Local Community Foundations
These offer small grants to local groups. See www.communityfoundations.org.uk to find yours. And www.cash-4-clubs.com offers small grants towards equipment and kit.

Fundraising and Donations
www.justgiving.com and www.localgiving.com provide organisations with the opportunity to raise awareness of their project and allow local donors the chance to contribute to their cause.

Potential Loans
National Governing Bodies and local charities offer interest-free/low interest loans towards projects, often mixed with a grant element as well.

Want to Know More?
SAPCA (The Sports and Play Construction Association) is holding a one-day event at Lee Valley Athletics Centre in London on 23 October 2012 for designers, buyers and operators of sports facilities. Attendance is free of charge. The Sports Facility Show, which includes free seminars, exhibitions and expert advice, will help “…avoid the hoops, hurdles and high jumps of sports facility funding, development, construction and management.”

For more details about SAPCA or the Lee Valley event, visit www.sapca.org.uk, email info@sapca.org.uk or call 024 7641 6316.
As part of its new website re-design, The Association of Play Industries has launched a new Community Hub website to give schools, parish councils, families and community groups the latest news on play funding and a host of resources to help them create new play opportunities in their area. Working alongside the API site, visitors will be able to learn more about the playground creating process and then explore the API directory to find member details and browse new innovations in play.

For many years, the API and its member companies have worked to promote the value of play and raise standards within the play industry. The Community Hub is a great opportunity for both companies and other members of the play sector to use their knowledge and experience to give communities the right information that will help them kick-start their own play projects.

The “Hub” is designed to be accessible for everyone and includes four key sections: API How-To Guides, The Value of Play, Play in Schools and the API Blog, all of which will be updated subject to the feedback we receive from communities using the site. Here is a brief breakdown of each section:

- **API How-To Guides**: a series of resources produced by the API to give communities information on how to go about creating a playground. These resources range from funding guidance to using social media to promote play projects. API How-To Guides are designed to be accessible and can all be downloaded as ready to print PDFs.

- **The Value of Play**: everyone from Government ministers to teachers and parents recognises that play is an important activity for children. And yet few of us can say why. Here we try to explore the many benefits of providing children with accessible playgrounds in their community. The immense value of play is simple to understand when you consider the social, health and wellbeing benefits it can bring, not just to children, but to whole communities.

- **Play in Schools**: much like adults at work, children spend a significant part of their day at school. And in this environment we expect children to learn and develop skills — play is an essential part of this development process. Children (and adults) often learn through experimentation, by trial and error; this is how our brain develops to evaluate risk and solve problems. Modern playground equipment provides children with a diverse set of learning challenges and research has shown that regular exposure to the outdoors and physical activity throughout the school day improves children’s ability to concentrate, both in and out of the classroom.

- **API Blog**: This is perhaps the most exciting feature of the community hub. The blog allows the API and its member companies, as well as other members of the play sector, to pass on direct advice to communities through interviews, columns and reports on the latest schemes and developments. This is an opportunity for people to visit our site and tell us how they think the playgrounds of the future should be and to post requests for new play resources!

The most important feature of the API’s new Community Hub is YOU, the community members who support play opportunities in their area and want to find out more about playgrounds and play. Visit the Community Hub at the address below, get in contact with us and tell us what you think about play!

www.api-play.org/community-hub
With over 250 exhibitors, a host of special feature areas and a not-to-be-missed Education programme, this year’s IOG SALTEx (Windsor Racecourse, 4th - 6th September) will be THE turf care and open space management show of the year.

As well as displaying thousands of products, many of them being launched/being shown in public for the first time (a host of them being demonstrated in a ‘live’ environment) and addressing the needs of the complete spectrum of the open space industry – from fine turf and sports surfaces through to turf maintenance, children’s outdoor play and safety surfacing, landscaping, contracting, commercial vehicles, outdoor leisure and facilities management, as well as software and security equipment – this year’s show will also feature a number of special attractions. For example:

A special display of turf machinery, tools and artefacts from the years 1908 and 1948 is being staged alongside their 2012 counterparts to commemorate the historic Olympic events – and perhaps jolt a few memories for some visitors!

Working closely with the Hall & Duck Trust – an international collection of 1,000 lawn mowers dating from the 1850s, plus home to an extensive material archive – IOG SALTEx will provide visitors with a range of mechanised and pedestrian-controlled machinery and tools, as well as a selection of interesting artefacts, photos and posters.

Included in the display will be a rare Ransomes 30 inch Patent Motor Mower of 1907 (a pedestrian machine), the like of which would have been used in 1908 for the Olympic events. The original owner was Somerset County Cricket Club and the machine is still in running order.

The aim of the display is to show comparative equipment from each of the years when the event was held in London, illustrating how the industry has changed over the 104-year period. Members of the Trust will be available for discussion.

About IOG SALTEx

Organised by The Institute of Groundsmanship, the first IOG exhibition was staged in 1938, the forerunner to today’s IOG SALTEx Sports, Amenity & Landscape Trade Exhibition.

Held annually at Windsor Racecourse, IOG SALTEx is the annual extravaganza for everyone who cares for and/or manages open spaces – including groundsmen, greenkeepers, contractors, local authority and leisure facility managers.

The Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG) is the leading membership organisation representing grounds managers, groundsmen, grounds maintenance managers, greenkeepers and all others involved in the management of sports pitches, landscape and amenity facilities in the UK.

For more information visit www.iog.org
Man Jailed For Illegal Inspections of Play Equipment

Jon Dalton from the Register of Play Inspectors details a recent case which highlights the importance of using properly qualified and recognised inspectors

A Chester man has been jailed for more than 14 months after repeatedly ignoring a legal order preventing him from inspecting inflatable play equipment.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) prosecuted Peter McCormack (previously known as Peter Coltilda and Peter John Morrell), of Garden Lane, Chester, for carrying out inspections of inflatables and issuing test certificates for them in contravention of a Prohibition Notice from HSE, and for carrying out unsafe seam repairs to one.

Caernarfon Crown Court heard that examples of wrongdoing by Mr McCormack, aged 77, included:

- An inspection of a pool inflatable at Poynton Leisure Centre, Cheshire, on 15 July 2010 and the issuing of the certificate two days later
- An inspection of a bouncy castle in Carterton, Oxfordshire, on 23 August 2010 and the issuing of the certificate a day later
- Another bouncy castle inspection at Abbey Leisure Centre in Selby, Yorkshire, on 19 August 2010
- One at Tadcaster, Yorkshire, on 3 August 2011
- One at Selby Park, Yorkshire, on 3 August 2011

He repaired one of the bouncy castles at Selby Park poorly on 3 August 2011, so there was a risk of children’s fingers and toes being trapped in the open seams.

The court also heard today that in these illegal inspections, Mr McCormack failed to spot defects, which could have caused injuries to children.

He pleaded guilty to seven breaches of Section 33(1)(g) of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and one of Section 3(2) of the Act and was sentenced to 62 weeks in prison. He has already served 78 days imposed at an earlier hearing for breaching bail conditions. Today the court ruled he must serve half of the remaining time before being released on licence.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE principal inspector Steve Flanagan said:

“Inflatable play equipment must be properly maintained and inspected to make sure it is safe for children to use. HSE served the initial Prohibition Notice in 2008 because Peter McCormack’s work was substandard and unsafe.

By breaching that Prohibition Notice repeatedly - and even ignoring a direct order from a judge at Shrewsbury Crown Court in 2010 - Mr McCormack has shown that he never had any intention to stop illegally inspecting inflatables.

He has shown utter disregard for the safety of children and for the law and has cheated the companies he issued the certificates for, by taking their money when he shouldn’t have done the work.

If people who carry out illicit or poor inspections of inflatables are not stopped, it’s only a matter of time before a child suffers a serious injury.”

Mr McCormack has changed his name by deed poll. He was previously known as Peter Coltilda, and before that as Peter John Morrell. The court also heard that Mr McCormack is also now known by the name Paul Armstrong.

To ensure that your inspections are carried out by suitably qualified people and to the appropriate levels please visit the RPII Website (www.playinspectors.com). The RPII provides accreditation and certification for indoor, outdoor and inflatable playground inspectors.
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In recent times Local Authorities, Parish and Town Councils have been let down by their own procurement bodies in so far as the phrase “the most viable, economic proposal would be chosen” is concerned. For the most part that has meant the cheapest.

On many occasions in the past three years, when finances have been tight, there have been situations whereby the delivered product of some suppliers has failed, the works were not completed or the winning organisation has gone into liquidation rendering the warranties useless.

In our sector, the old adage “Buy Cheap, Buy Twice” is often a reality.

The following is a guide to the areas for consideration that responsible purchasing organisations should consider:

**Price**

Price is important, but it shouldn’t be the only reason you choose a supplier. Lower prices may reflect poorer quality goods, materials and services which, in the long run, may not be the most cost-effective option. As noted above, the lowest price is not always the best value for money. If you want reliability and quality from your supplier, you’ll have to decide how much you’re willing to pay for your project and the balance you want to strike between cost, reliability, quality and service.

**Comparing “Apples with Apples”**

Wherever possible, meet potential suppliers face to face and compare samples and construction methods to ensure you are comparing “apples with apples” e.g. not all suppliers galvanise the steel before powder coating; not all suppliers incorporate safety features such as top/bottom rails etc.; not all suppliers weld all joints; and some suppliers skimp on the construction of the playing surface, all of which not only compromises safety but means that the facility will not endure the usage for which it is intended.

**Warranties**

Be confident that your supplier’s price is commercially viable. It’s always worth checking that your supplier is financially secure to ensure that they can deliver what you want when you need it and to be certain of the usefulness of any warranties.

**Preliminaries**

Some contractors include “preliminaries” within their quotations with a value per day should the project exceed the anticipated duration for installation. It is good practice to ensure that your chosen supplier is quoting for a “price for the project” rather than against timescales that can slip for a variety of reasons not necessarily within the purchaser’s control.

**Contingencies**

Quite often contractors include within their quotation a contingency to cover unforeseen circumstances that is expressed as a percentage of the project value. This could be anything from 5% to 10%. Once the contract has been let this could be used as way to increase the project value by the amount of the contingency, whether it is really necessary or not.

**Project Creep**

It is not uncommon for some suppliers to submit a cheap quotation compared to other bidders but once they have been given the “go ahead” by the client and installation starts it then becomes apparent that certain requirements have not been included, that extra charges are to be applied for technical drawings/
design, etc., and/or that the quality of the materials/or their specification in reality is not what was assumed by the client. This is a practice used by some organisations to win projects against competition that then results in increased project costs (sometimes even doubling the original quotation). The end result can be the delivery of an over-priced and lower quality facility that has a relatively short lifespan, underwriting the old adage “buy cheap, buy twice”.

Who will do the installation?

Check whether your supplier will be outsourcing any work to subcontractors – if so, understand how they will deliver the project on time and to the required standards and quality.

References

When selecting a supplier the one key element, apart from viewing samples of the steel mesh fencing side by side, is that the decision makers should visit a nearby equivalent site, view the finished works and discuss with that client the performance of the supplier’s team and their observations on the finished works.

SUMMARY:

Good suppliers should be able to demonstrate that they can offer you the following:

- Value for money
- Detailed bill of materials with supporting specifications
- Quality and reliability – track record and reputation
- Experience – how long have they been established
- Speed and flexibility
- Strong service and clear communication
- Delivery of what you want, when you want it
- References: Do you know anyone who has used and can recommend the supplier? Ask for details of similar work done and references.

Purchasing a multi use games area is a substantial investment and as such you should take all of the possible measures to ensure that you really do get value for money.
It's something the play industry anticipates with great interest—the latest Wicksteed Playscapes product book!

Full of inspirational products, playscape designs and professional advice on the creation of exciting play spaces, the 2012 issue will soon be hitting the shelves!

Eye-catching graphics, action-packed photographs, customer testimonials and details of the full range of the extensive services Wicksteed offers fill the pages of the awesome book. With play products ranging from inspiring and exciting, multi-play systems to test and challenge toddlers to teens; right through to outdoor gym equipment to keep everyone fit whatever the age, there's something for everyone here.

Wicksteed's creativity and flexibility allows very special bespoke items to be commissioned and play areas can be themed and colour co-ordinated as desired. There are really no boundaries as to what it is possible to achieve.

Electronic play has become a big part of Wicksteed's portfolio over the last few years and this new phenomenon within the world of play is represented in the addition of PlayAlive and SportACTIV game systems. Competitiveness, along with bleeping noises and flashing lights are almost as much a part of the play experience as are the continued pleasures of swinging, sliding and whizzing round in Wicksteed's multi-directional roundabouts!

Look out for a collection of some of these dazzling new products actually on show at SALTEX held on Windsor Racecourse in September.

To reserve a copy of the latest fabulous product book contact 01536 517028, log on to www.wicksteed.co.uk or email sales@wicksteed.co.uk

In this Diamond Jubilee year, there is plenty to celebrate in the UK and Wicksteed Playscapes is a prime example of a company able to promote the very best of British. Wicksteed Playscapes is famous for its huge range of exciting play and sports equipment and this award-winning company is pleased to announce the launch of a comprehensive, eye-catching and informative product book containing a vast array of innovative new products!
**Derbyshire 2012 Event Fund**

More than 40 local groups have received grants of up to £250 each from Derbyshire’s Community Sports Trust as part of a nationwide Community Games project, funded through the government’s Social Action Fund.

The funds were snapped up within a few weeks of the fund being announced in early May. The money will help local community organisations, clubs and parish/town councils across the County run events with a sporting theme this summer.

In addition to the £250 each group will get 5 t-shirts for volunteers, a pack of bunting, certificates and a toolkit folder with advice for organisers. They can also download event support material like scorecards, certificate templates, risk assessment templates from the Community Games and Village Games websites.

“We’re delighted to be able to support so many local volunteers across the whole county who have been inspired by London 2012 and have sporty plans for their summer carnivals, galas, fun runs and events”, said Hayley Lever, CST Chief Officer. “Volunteers work really hard year in year out, to make sure local people have a chance to get active and have fun, and they’re often on a shoestring budget. This money will help them to pay for equipment, medals, marketing and other resources that they need to put that extra little razzle dazzle into their event and bring the spirit of the 2012 Games to towns and villages across Derbyshire this summer.”

Hayfield Primary School held a Mini Olympics Sports Day on 28th May. They said: “Thank you so much for this. We are really pleased that we have been granted this funding. It will go towards making our Olympic Fortnight and our big Olympic Sports Day a big success! We have just launched the fortnight with a grand opening ceremony and an assembly presented by a local Olympian, Rob Hayles – so we’re off to a good start.”

And around 350 people took part in Chinley Village Games family decathlon on 19th May, run by 40 volunteers from Chinley Community Association.

Details of these events and many more across the county, can be found on the Community Games website http://www.communitygames.org.uk/

**Time to think about planting trees**

Now that the Jubilee celebrations and the Olympics are mainly over, you may wish for something else to look forward to. Why don’t you think about planting some trees – it is never too early to plan for activity this winter?

Million Trees Derbyshire, working with the government funded Big Tree Plant scheme, would like to hear from you, if you should wish to plant trees in Derbyshire between November 2012 and March 2013. Last year, they helped District and Parish Councils, Cricket Clubs, Rugby Clubs, community groups and schools to plant over 2000 trees in various locations from Chesterfield to Hilton. Next year, they hope to double that figure and work all over the county. They welcome interest from businesses who may wish to support tree planting in their local area.

Anthony Broderick, the local businessman who established MTD as a not for profit organisation in 2011 said: “It is fantastic that we have been able to help people to improve their environment and have fun at the same time with so many local people, young and old, involved in planting trees. We look forward to working with landowners, local communities, councils, and businesses in the coming year to help to make Derbyshire even greener.”

MTD usually supply native broadleaf trees (40 – 60 cm bare rooted transplants) along with a cane, spiral guard and mulch mat to maximise their growth potential and minimise maintenance. In most cases you will need to contribute around half to the cost of the trees (typically £180 for 100 trees – so you need to give £90). Some of your match funding can be in-kind, through site preparation and volunteer planting. MTD can also supply a limited number of larger trees. MTD can support schemes from 10 - 1000 trees and provides professional advice on planting – based on the principle of “The Right Tree in The Right Place.”

For further details, please contact Clive Keeble (ex. National Forest Company) at clive.keble@btopenworld.com or on 07815 950482. Or register your interest on MTD website www.milliontreesderbyshire.co.uk
**Five Pits Trail Among Britain’s Best**

One of Derbyshire County Council’s greenways has been voted among Britain’s best bike rides.

The Five Pits Trail, which runs from Grassmoor Country Park to Tibshelf Ponds, has been voted one of the top trails in Britain by The Guardian and The Observer newspapers and Sustrans charity.

Following the route of the old Great Central Railway, the greenway has been praised for its pleasant wildlife and woodland setting. And with plenty of information boards along the way giving insight into the local heritage and wildlife, users can also extend their journey further by taking a detour to explore Williamthorpe Ponds and Holmewood Woodlands, adding an extra two miles.

The route started out life as a trail in the 1980s when the county council began a huge regeneration scheme to turn the industrial pit tip into a multi-user path now enjoyed by thousands of people every year.

This scheme involved planting more than a million trees and surfacing the five and a half miles of trail.

Councillor Simon Spencer, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, said: "This is great news for The Five Pits trail."

"Grassmoor Country Park is a haven for wildlife, and there are wonderful views as you approach Tibshelf Ponds. With plenty of picnic spots on the way it’s a fantastic route that offers an enjoyable outing for walkers or cyclists."

Derbyshire has some of the most spectacular countryside on offer and with more than 200 miles of trails like this one across the county, it’s a haven for cyclists."

The trail is also suitable for walkers, horse riders, wheelchair users and pushchairs.

A leaflet giving full information on the Five Pits trail is available on the County Council’s website: [http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/access/walking/walks_and_trails/five_pits_trail/default.asp](http://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/leisure/countryside/access/walking/walks_and_trails/five_pits_trail/default.asp)

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**Enjoy Getting Fit at Elvaston Castle**

Fun and friendly activities inspiring people across South Derbyshire to get fit, healthy and active have been organised. The District Council has set up Nordic walking and over 50s cycling sessions at Elvaston Castle Country Park.

Nordic Walking, which burns up to 46 per cent more calories than normal walking, uses poles to boost the upper body while reducing the stresses on the lower limb joints. Meanwhile, the new cycling group is aimed at beginners. Friendly instructors will be on hand to inspire and motivate those who have not been on a bike for some time or have never learned to ride.

Lewis Adams, a Community Sports Coach at the District Council, said: “These two activities are very popular with adults and we are delighted to be rolling them out into the north of the District.

“Both Nordic walking and cycling are great for those hoping to introduce some gentle exercise into their routines. They also offer excellent opportunities to meet new people and learn new skills in scenic surroundings.”

The sessions take place every Wednesday from May 23, with Nordic Walking held from 10am to 11am and cycling between 11.30am and 12.30pm. Pole and bike hire is available, while booking is advised.

To book, or for further information, contact Lewis Adams on 07989 140980 or lewis.adams@south-derbyshire.gov.uk.