



W E S T B E R G H O L T P A R I S H C O U N C I L

Dear Resident,

Application to Amend the Multi User Games Area Operating Hours

The MUGA is owned by the Charitable Trust of the Lorkin Daniell Playing Field and the ultimate management control comes under the Parish Council in its Trustee role. The day to day operation of the MUGA is currently given over to the West Bergholt Millennium Sports Club under a lease agreement. The hours of use and operation of the MUGA is very tightly controlled by a Planning Consent order implemented by Colchester Borough Council when approval was first granted to construct the MUGA.

The MUGA has been in operation since 2004 and during this time it has operated successfully from a financial perspective and provides a quality recreational facility for all village residents. The recently launched Parish Plan highlighted the desire by village residents to improve the recreational facilities for village residents as a whole and in particular to explore areas that could be improved for the youth of the community.

In the spring of 2008 the Bergholt Youth Group (BYG) was formed as a means to provide additional activities for younger members of our community to help promote positive involvement within our village. Whilst adult volunteers are involved in establishing the group most of the drive for its success will come from the youths themselves helping to make BYG an ongoing success. Many adult volunteers have come forward offering their services in the form of tennis and basketball coaching. In addition we have had commitment from Essex County Council to supply a Youth Bus and associated youth leaders to compliment other youth related activities over the next 12 months. The Parish Council would like to increase the use of the MUGA for additional youth activities

To make more effective use of the MUGA it is necessary to alter the original planning consent to allow the MUGA to be used more than is currently permitted. In addition the type of activities that can be accommodated by the MUGA needs to be slightly broadened to accommodate activities other than just ball games etc. and to reflect the changes that can be expected from a thriving village community.

To assist in the above, it will be necessary to submit a planning request to make the times of use of the MUGA more flexible for all members of the community. This will mean, for example that the Parish Council will have the powers to determine the days of the week and the times the MUGA can be used and which would be similar to the powers the Parish Council currently has as Trustees in successfully managing the affairs of the Orpen and John Lampon Halls over many years.

The Parish Council wish to assure you that if its application is successful it will not be an "open all hours policy" but a situation where operating hours can be more flexible and where planned and acceptable ad hoc events can be held which currently are not allowable under the existing planning consent.

The Parish Council is aware that when the MUGA was first introduced, some residents were concerned with its financial viability and the impact the MUGA would have for residents when in use. Prior to applying for changes to the existing planning consent, the Parish Council would like to give residents the opportunity to ask questions on this matter and understand the Parish Council plans to make more use of the existing amenities within the village. To this end you are invited to attend an open session in the John Lampon Hall on 22nd October at 7pm

I hope you can find the time to meet with your Parish Council on this matter.

Yours sincerely,

John Gili-Ross