

## Copythorne Parish Council – Tuesday December 10<sup>th</sup> 2019

### Item 17 – Chairman’s Report

The report below was presented to the November meeting of the Parish Hall Committee by Cllr. Lucas in his role as our representative on the Parish Hall Committee

#### COPYTHORNE PARISH HALL - DEALING WITH THE CURRENT ENTRANCE TO THE UPPER FIELD - ACCESS

##### INTRODUCTION

The current access arrangement for the upper field centres, for pedestrian users, on the gap between the hedge / fence adjacent to and in front of the football wall area. A second area is at the top of the hedge / fence run and is mainly for vehicle access.

Currently, the ground wears significantly in this area. Observation reveals that it is not the use of the football wall which causes the issue as most of the football users stand well away from the entrance, as would be expected if they are using the rear of the wall. Usual distance away from the wall by football users is between 4 and 8 metres depending on the activity. The cause is the high traffic flow / footfall passing through what is an unprepared gap (i.e. the ground is not reinforced in the gap to take the heavier wear). This is exemplified by the heavy footfall during, for example, the fireworks evening.

The ground level in the gap in front of the football wall is falling and causing significant ponding as a result of the heavy access traffic and a solution is needed to deal with this and prevent further damage. Short term solutions have very short term effect (e.g. filling the ponding area with sharp sand). A longer term solution is needed.

##### DETAIL

The football wall is now the responsibility of the Parish Council, having been installed after community fund-raising. The Parish Council recognises that it may have a role in assisting with the solution to the poor condition of the access and is willing to work with the PHC on any resultant actions. However, access to the upper field and the damage to the gap would have occurred whether the football wall was there or not and observations of use reinforce this. Thus, any solution would need to be ‘led’ by the PHC.

Clearly, any solution needs to address the ground conditions and also make for a more appropriate access to the upper field.

##### PROPOSED ACTIONS

It is proposed that the following is a possible solution:

1. Create ‘anti-cycling bar’ restrictions either side of the football wall to prevent its use by cyclists. This is already listed in a possible plan of action for the Parish Council as a result of safety concerns around the wall.
2. Infill the ponded area and reinforce with underground level matting (it is not advisable to use hard-core or similar here). This is where the Parish Council would be happy to work in partnership with the PHC to address the issue. In respect of any financial contribution, this would have to be agreed by the Parish Council if PHC wishes to proceed.
3. Create a new gated entrance to the upper field with appropriately reinforced (scalpings on matting covered in chippings or cinder) for pedestrian users; install a double gate of suitable design so that either a single or both gates can be opened depending on the volume of people at the event. The position for this would involve a new gap being created in the hedge / fence. See the image above for a proposed location. This would be a Parish Hall Committee item.



The work does need to be undertaken as a priority and the Parish Council is looking to deal with the anti-cycling bars installation in the early spring as it is highlighted in our ongoing asset maintenance programme.