

Gosforth Fields

GFSA Chairman's Statement for the 2015/2016 Season.

Dear Club Members,

And so another season has finished, the 11th for the committee of the GFSA as a team and the 5th full year of running what has now become a £240k+ business on your behalf.

The facility always looks busy at weekends and runs like a well-oiled machine, but behind the scenes a lot of work is undertaken by the committee, often unnoticed and seldom shouted about.

The GFSA Committee has to deal with the following, as well as their own club responsibilities, professional and private lives.

- Constant drainage issues
- Pitch maintenance and improvements
- Broken toilets and blocked drains
- Dog fouling
- Upkeep and routine maintenance of the ATP
- Meetings with police, council, neighbours, environmental officers and our funding bodies
- Producing accounts and arranging audits
- ATP banners sales, production and erection
- Dismantling, storage, inspection, replacement and erection of goalposts
- Traffic issues, marshalling and communicating with neighbours and road safety officers
- Liaising with caterers
- Preparing tenders and selection of ground works contractors
- Routine building and site maintenance
- Pitch inspections every weekend
- Pitch allocations and time slots
- Litter control, bin emptying and disposal
- Invoicing, cash collection and managing of funds to ensure bills are paid and cash is put aside for future maintenance
- Attending regular Committee meetings and sub-committee meetings in between
- Keeping the facility clean, functional and well stocked with drinks and snacks

Gosforth Fields Sports Association Ltd –
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➤ Preparation for special events, promoting and ensuring we have enough staff and stock

As you can see from this, the work this team does is endless and without them the facility would simply grind to a halt. I am sure you will all appreciate what they do and on behalf of you all I thank them for their commitment, dedication and enthusiasm.

Contrary to popular belief all of the Committee members are volunteers and do not get paid in any way shape or form, not even a free drink.

We operate as a not for profit Registered Charity and have to comply with their very strict rules and regulations as well as adhere to our funders conditions. We are audited by The Charities Commission, Sport England, The FA and our Accountants.

Overall we are very pleased with the financial performance of the facility. We were able to meet our obligations and put budgeted funds away for the future replacement of items such as the ATP carpet which needs to be replaced every ten years at a cost of around £200,000.

There currently appears to be an opinion that The GFSA is awash with cash, this is not the case.

Every year we budget to balance the books and allow for necessary facility and pitch maintenance and as mentioned above the carpet replacement.

The facility is now five years old and some of the original equipment installed requires overhauling or replacing including the furniture and decoration. We are assessing, prioritising and managing this as efficient and economically as we can but sometimes we have sudden unexpected costs which could not be foreseen and these have to be recovered from future budgets if we use our saved funds.

Pitch fee's and drinks prices are our main source of income and we try and set those as affordable as possible to the members whilst ensuring we can provide a top class facility.

This is your facility and is managed on your behalf by elected members from your committee, The GFSA is not a separate organisation with its own agenda.

Pitch fees are a very emotive subject and always complained about when we increase them, with reference to local council pitch costs.

You cannot compare a council pitch with the superb facility you have here at all, they are like chalk and cheese.

We budget, set and collect the fees on your behalf and spend the income on your behalf.

All of our visitors commend the three clubs for what they have achieved, often with a degree of envy, but they all leave with inspiration for what they can do for their own clubs which can only benefit communities as a whole across the region.

Thank you to you all for your support and contribution making this one of the best amateur sporting facilities in the region.

If you have any questions about The GFSA or a desire to be on the committee please contact your Club representatives.

Yours Sincerely

John Morris

Chairman.