



GLOUCESTERSHIRE PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT 2023-2024



Blakeney Recreation Ground. Photo: K Lillington

**Working to Improve Sport and Play Facilities
in Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire**

Established 1926 - Registered Charity No. 314301
Registered address: 31 Cheltenham Road, Gloucester, GL2 0JF

Chair's Report



I am pleased to be able to give my second annual report as Chair of the Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association.

The past year has once again been a busy and active one for the Association, as we have been able to award a number of grants and provide advice and support to many excellent sport and play projects being undertaken throughout the county. We are always happy to assist the hardworking staff and volunteers of our member organisations, to help them bring their plans to completion.

I would like to thank Kay, our advice officer, for her hard work on behalf of the Association, as well as the members of the GPFA committee. I would also like to pay tribute to our previous Chair, the late Ron Harrison. I worked with Ron for over twenty years in conjunction with the GPFA and attended many outside meetings with him. I hope I am able to carry knowledge of his expertise forward, especially with regard to the celebration of the centenary of the Association in 2026. Rest in Peace Ron.

Thanks also to Andrew Ellis our Treasurer, for his continued diligence in overseeing our finances, and to Pat, the Vice-Chair who is moving away, so will not be standing for re-election. I wish her well. All of these people have made my life as chair much easier.

Thank you, and best wishes for 2025.

Nigel

Nigel Thick

GPFA Chair, December 2024



Officers of the Association and Committee Members as of 30 June 2024

Registered with the Charity Commission as
The Gloucestershire County Playing Fields Association, charity number 314301.

President:

Sybil Ruscoe DL

Vice Presidents:

Earl of Wemyss and March DL

Sir Henry Elwes KCVO KStJ DL

Officers of the Association:

Chair: Mr N Thick

Hon Treasurer: Mr A Ellis

Vice Chair: Ms P Bailey

**Independent
Examiner:** Mr P Broekman

Secretary/Advice Officer: Ms K Lillington

Management Committee (Trustees)

Ex-Officio Members:

Chairman

Vice Chairman

Hon Treasurer

Secretary

Members:

Mr T Haines

Cllr J Jones

Cllr D Brown

Mr B Morris

Mr R Harrison

Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association

Main Activities

To advise and assist in the provision of good quality playing fields and playgrounds.

■

To provide technical advice & information on playgrounds, outdoor youth facilities & playing fields.

■

To encourage and develop the playing of outdoor games, sports, and play.

■

To promote that the fullest use is made of all playing fields in the county.

■

To extend the benefits of playgrounds, playing fields and open spaces to all.

■

To advocate for outdoor sport and play and co-operate in saving threatened recreational facilities.

■

To support the provision of out of school play facilities to serve the needs of children, young people and the disabled, including practical guidance on a range of safety issues.

■

To raise funds for the furtherance of the Association's aims and objectives.

■

To co-operate with local authorities in the county and all statutory and other bodies for the furtherance of the Association's objectives.

■

To give financial aid to approved projects where possible.

Services to Members

- General advice and guidance on all aspects of play, outdoor sport and playing fields.
- Advice on sources of funding and fundraising.
- Advice on purchase and setting up of recreational areas/playgrounds.
- Advice on refurbishing play areas.
- Advice on suitability of play equipment, safety surfaces and their installation.
- Regular newsletter 'The Playing Field' and sharing of other relevant information.
- Access to grants and loans towards the provision of play and recreational facilities.
- Advice on Trustee and Committee areas of responsibility for play areas.
- Reduced fees for GPFA training events.
- Liaison with all the councils in Gloucestershire to save playing fields in the county from development.
- The GPFA Honourable Company of Gloucestershire Award for talented young sporting stars.
- Provide advice via the GPFA Playing Field and Playground Assessment scheme.



GPFA GRANT FUNDING

HELPING OUR COMMUNITIES

Grants and Loans

Grants and/or loans may be awarded to subscribing member organisations from our grant funds. These funds were established to help organisations within the county with projects benefiting playgrounds, playing fields and the playing of sports.

The following awards were made to GPFA members during our financial year **1 July 2023 - 30 June 2024**.

Grants & award amount	£	Purpose
Worrall Hill Recreation Ground	1,700	Replacement play equipment
Cirencester RFC	2,000	Floodlighting to 3 rd rugby pitch
Moreton in Marsh Croquet Club	2,000	Toilet facilities in new clubhouse
Northway Parish Council	2,000	New concrete skate facility
Nailsworth Town Council	500	Replacement wobble log play bridge
Whitminster V. Hall and Playing Field	2,000	Replacement sports pavilion
Fairford Town Council	2,000	Replacement toddler play area
Bisley with Lypiatt Parish Council	600	Cricket boundary ballstop netting
Hinton Parish Council	2,000	Skate ramp replacement
Dursley Town Council	2,000	New pavilion toilets and machinery store
Ashleworth Parish Council	2,000	Replacement play area

When completed, the cumulative total of the GPFA members' projects listed above, will have resulted in over

£980,000

of new investment in community playing fields, sport and play facilities.

GPFA is proud to play a small part in the success of the fantastic efforts by all of these organisations, their members and supporters.

Photos of some of the projects completed in 2023-24

All projects shown received GPFA funding support



New pavilion at Moreton-in-Marsh Croquet Club



Construction of new skatepark at Northway (Photo: Maverick Skateparks)



New toddler play area at Fairford (Photo: Fairford Town Council)

Gloucester City Council Pitch Improvement Grant Scheme

GPFA has been the administrator for this grant scheme since it was first set up in 2019, with a budget of £100,000. The initial phase ran from 2019-2022, with the programme extended by the city council for a further two years (2023-2024). GPFA continued as the fund administrator, with a further £100,000 of S.106 funding added to the pot.

The scheme has been used to distribute funding to local sports clubs who play on pitches located on council-owned public open space in the city of Gloucester. The funding is generated as part of the town planning system, through Section 106 legal agreements, whereby some housing developers pay 'off-site' contributions to improve formal sports provision in existing open spaces, in place of providing this on their development sites.

With the increasing number of residents in the city, the existing sports infrastructure comes under pressure, often leading to over-use of grass pitches and associated facilities, many of which are also long overdue for investment and upgrade. The city council is committed to working with community sports clubs to provide pitches and facilities which are fit for use, now and into the future. Clubs also invest huge amounts of time, energy and their own funds into maintaining their pitches and facilities, so the added value the city council receives is notable.

As the grant administrator, the GPFA Advice Officer is able to offer the clubs technical guidance and support for their applications, which are then submitted to the city council for final approval.



Recent works to pitches have included verti-draining, sand-banding pitches, to improve drainage, as well as purchasing new goalposts, ballstop netting and maintenance machinery.

The current programme has now been fully expended (to Oct 2024) and the city council has once again allocated further S.106 funding to the grant pot. GPFA is in the process of agreeing to continue with administration duties for the fund.

Membership

We are delighted to have a wide range of community groups, sports clubs, individuals and local government organisations as members of our Association. In 2023-24, we supported a membership of over 160, half of which are Town and Parish councils.

Our member organisations are located across all six districts of Gloucestershire, plus a number in South Gloucestershire, and one just across the border in Worcestershire. Although many have been generously supporting our work over a long period, and a few since our inception in 1926, we are always happy to welcome new members and learn about new parks and playing fields.

Membership information is available on the GPFA website, www.glospfa.org.uk, or from The Secretary.

The Honourable Company of Gloucestershire Awards



At the November 2023 GPFA Annual General Meeting, the four winners of the GPFA Honourable Company of Gloucestershire Award for talented young sports persons were presented with a framed certificate and cheque for £250 by the Honourable Company Warden, Andrew Tabor.

These awards have been set up to celebrate the achievements of talented young sportspersons, aged 15-19, who live in the Gloucestershire and South Gloucestershire area.

Ten nominations for the awards were received, along with a letter of support from a coach or club official. Once again, the nominations were of an exceptionally high standard, with four outstanding winners selected.

Pictured above, with HCG Warden Andrew Tabor (centre), are the four award winners (L-R):

- Chloe Sheppard, 17, from Pamington, for rowing,
- Finley Williamson, 16, from Longford, for bowls,
- Ivan Barritt, 17, from Gloucester, for flatwater racing kayaking, and
- Caitlin Thompson, 15, from Cheltenham, for hockey.

The awards were paused for 2024 and will return in 2025.

Community Achievement Award

The GPFA recognises the incredible efforts of all community organisations and individuals across Gloucestershire. At our November 2023 AGM we presented a Community Achievement Award to a very deserving recipient, Jane Bolton, for her work at the Fretherne and Saul Playing Field and playground. GPFA President Sybil Ruscoe presented Jane with the award and a cheque for £200 (*pictured, right*).

Until recently moving away from the village, Jane was Fretherne and Saul's Play Champion, and creator of the charming, inclusive and accessible children's playground and



facilities at the Saul playing field. Jane's commitment to improving her local community has been immense and made over many years. One of the trustees of the playing field charity, Emma Greenwood, provided a testimonial, to outline Jane's community achievements over the years.

Jane initially secured funding for the play area back in 2010, and in the intervening years, along with other village volunteers, raised thousands of pounds, to continue to develop the playing field facilities, as well as running numerous other community wellbeing events and activities for all ages. She worked with Fields in Trust to ensure that the playing field is protected from future development.

Jane also set up a number of initiatives to support local nature and wildlife in and around Saul and Fretherne, including the renovation of the allotment pond, where there are great crested newts.



Storyteller's chair at Saul Playing Field

Playground Inspection Seminar

Many of our GPFA members manage and maintain play areas and equipment, and regular 'Routine' inspections are most often undertaken by volunteers or in-house staff. Our GPFA Routine Playground Inspection seminars provide an expert overview and highlight what to look for during a routine inspection on a wide range of play equipment, as well as answering any specific queries from delegates. The session includes a practical outdoor element at a nearby play area. GPFA members get a reduced rate to attend.

The seminar for 2024 was held in June, at the offices of Cainscross Town Council, located in Victory Park, with an attractive play area also set in the park.

The routine playground inspection workshop was once again run by Louisa Hill (PSS Ltd), who is a fully qualified RPII Outdoor Play Inspector with many years of experience and a huge level of knowledge around all aspects of play and parks management. The GPFA Advice Officer can also provide basic guidance on play inspections.



Above: Indoor and outdoor sessions at the GPFA playground inspection seminar in Cainscross



GPFA ADVISORY SERVICE

KNOWLEDGE AND SUPPORT

Advisory Service

GPFA members can call upon our free advisory and site visit service, to help deal with issues relating to their playing fields and playgrounds, project planning, advice on making planning applications as well as how to access various funding sources.

The GPFA Secretary/Advice Officer is a professional landscape architect, with extensive knowledge of parks and playground design, plus over 25 years of local authority experience, and is a qualified Green Flag Award judge. This year she has visited a number of sites and provided written advice and guidance to GPFA member organisations.

We offer any of our members, on request, a non-technical, easy-to-understand playing field and playground assessment or audit of their outdoor recreational facilities, including suggested areas for improvement.



Playground at Shipton Moyne

Gloucestershire Playing Fields Forum

Churchdown Pump Track



We are always happy to share information on the latest initiatives, ideas and opportunities for playing fields, parks and playgrounds, or be a sounding block for any members' issues or wider concerns.

If there is a specific topic of interest to our community groups, sports clubs or town and parish council members that they would like more information on, we can

assist with research and make contact with industry experts or facilitate site visits to tour round other successful projects in the area.

Further information from secretary@glospfa.org.uk
www.glospfa.org.uk

Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association
Accounts for the year ending 30 June 2024

The accounts were approved by the Management Committee on 26 September 2024
and signed on their behalf by Mr N Thick, GPFA Chair.

Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association
Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2024

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
<u>Assets</u>		
Bank Accounts		
Barclays Current	8,206	15,584
Virgin Money Deposit	28,595	28,300
Debtors	1,125	
Loans	<hr/>	<hr/>
	37,926	2,640
		46,524
<u>Represented by:</u>		
General Fund	37,926	43,908
Restricted Funds	<hr/>	<hr/>
	37,926	2,616
		46,524

Note: Grants totalling £16,600 have been approved to be paid in the future

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2024

1. Principal Accounting Policies

The financial statements of the Charity are prepared in accordance with The Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2000 and the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting and Reporting by Charities" issued in October 2000 ("SORP"), and with applicable accounting standards. These financial statements are drawn up on the historical cost accounting basis except that investment assets are carried at market value.

a) Incoming resources

The incoming resources are treated as either unrestricted or restricted depending on the source of the income and any specific requests by the donors.

b) Resources expended

Resources expended are accounted for on an accruals basis.

Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 30 June 2024

	<u>General</u>	<u>Fund</u>	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>Funds</u>
	Y/e	Y/e	Y/e	Y/e
	30/06/24	30/06/23	30/06/24	30/06/23
<u>Incoming Resources</u>				
Subscriptions and Donations	6,470	6,875		
Advisory Service Income	3,000	2,750		
Seminar	920	540		
Advertising	1,125	250		
Miscellaneous	75	75		
Deposit Interest	295	176		
	11,885	10,666		
<u>Resources Expended</u>				
Grants	9,854		2,616	18,820
Loan		832		
Secretarial and Advice Service	5,903	5,751		
Other Expenses	600	600		
Seminar	734	720		
AGM and Awards	385			
Travel	233	265		
Postages and Stationery		7		
Insurance	151	151		
Sundries	7	10		
	17,867	8,336	2,616	18,820
<u>Net Incoming/Outgoing Resources</u>	-5,982	2,330	2,616	-18,820
<u>Balance brought forward</u>	43,908	41,578	2,616	21,436
<u>Balance carried forward</u>	37,926	43,908		2,616

THANK YOU

To all our GPFA members and supporters. We look forward to making new connections and working with you on new projects in the coming year.

Further information from secretary@glospfa.org.uk
www.glospfa.org.uk