

# *The Playing Field*

The Humber Playing Fields Association Newsletter

## Humberactive's Second Year

Humberactive is the HPFA's Big Lottery Funded project which has just completed its second year. Humberactive has a further three years to run.

During Year Two, around £70,000 was committed to the project, of which around £6,000 was from the HPFA's reserves and the remainder from the Big Lottery Fund.

The project enables HPFA to employ a full time active recreation organiser, who works with groups in rural areas to set up activity sessions, and a half time post to advise groups on facility improvements and funding issues.

As is routine with grant funded projects, its performance is monitored and measured in terms of outcomes achieved and milestones reached on the way to achieving the outcomes. One important milestone is to consult stakeholders on our performance, to ask if we are making a positive difference and to request any suggestions or ideas for improving the project.

### Membership Fees

Please note that 2012/13 membership fees are now due. The fee remains a very reasonable £20. HPFA needs the funds to supplement the Big Lottery Fund income and continue providing a service for you.

**The HPFA would like to thank the Sir James Reckitt Charity and the Hull and East Riding Charitable Trust for their continuing support.**

During the year, HPFA  
-worked with 35 organisations  
-assisted 11 of them to improve their facilities.

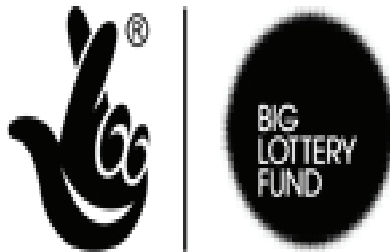
-Enabled 788 people at 35 locations or sessions to take part in regular active recreation sessions.

-Trained 22 volunteers to assist them to deliver services in or manage their rural community facilities.

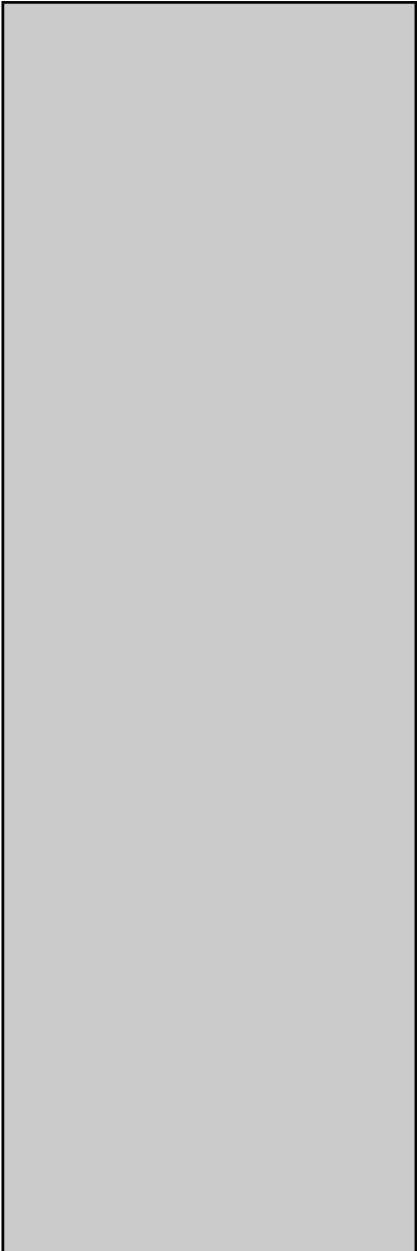
The only unexpected part of the outcomes is that organisations have not been asking for assistance with issues relating to organisational development such as charity law and leases. In the past, this has been a mainstay of HPFA's work.

The main weakness that we have been made aware of by stakeholders is poor use of information and communication technology. As a result, the website will be rebuilt during Year 3.

If you have any observations, comments or suggestions please contact HPFA. Your views, ideas and opinions are important.



**LOTTERY FUNDED**



**The Playing Field**  
is published quarterly by the  
Oxfordshire Playing Fields Assoc.  
for the  
...Humber Playing Fields Assoc.

## OFFICE GOSSIP

Well the summer holiday season is very nearly upon us. I don't know what you will be doing to entertain yourselves, but I will be taking time out to complete my inspirational journey as an Olympic volunteer. Since winter, I have been assessed, processed, trained, uniformed (large fries anyone?), accredited, oyster carded and am now ready to go. I even have my shift times and dates, which include a few early hours finishes and one overnigher. Don't know how I will cope with that one as I haven't worked nights since a previous holiday job at the steelworks, in the days when you could turn up at a car park at six in the morning, find the foreperson and say "gotta a job mate?". Actually, the early hours finishes may prove to be problematical too as I'm not sure that the public transport will be running to get me back to the floor I will be sleeping on. Suppose it will have to be a park bench somewhere for a few hours.

I am reasonably familiar with the location of park benches in central and parts of west London, but East London has always been a bit of a no reason to go area. That, I think, is changing, or has changed. The amount of development that has taken place since the 80's is staggering, reaching out on both sides of the River from the Tower, east to the Thames Barrier and City Airport. Actually, it may extend further than that, but that is as far as I have been. To give it a sense of scale, I would think that it covers an area larger than Hull. There are still plenty of scruffy vacant plots of land, railway arches, empty industrial buildings and so on, side by side with the apartment and office blocks. Ingredients, I suspect, for future growth and prosperity.

In this context, the Olympic Park sits very well. It is big, but not in comparison with the new east London. It will be part of the scene, the accommodation will become apartments, the open space a park, most of the sport venues will remain in community and national use and the stadium will be occupied, I predict, by West Ham. No problem then with the physical side of Olympic legacy. The other aspects of legacy are more difficult to predict or envisage: that is what will happen this summer and how will people be affected in the longer term.

It will be surprising if GB don't do well in terms of medals, as individual men and women and their supporting organisations are clearly responding to the challenge. I remember being impressed by a newspaper article several years ago about the Hull boxer Luke Campbell, and his plans for the 2012 Olympics, which included putting on hold the option of turning pro. Good luck Luke and well done St Pauls ABC and its volunteers for supporting him, the City Council for providing cheap premises, the ABA, etc etc.

The point makes itself really. To achieve just about anything worthwhile requires co-operation, and this is more important in my view than competition although I suppose that competition often provides the incentive to co-operate. This is where the third aspect of legacy, achieving a longer term positive impact on people, comes in. This is also where HPFA members have a role. For sure we are co-operative people, volunteers all, working as part of community organisations, but let us see if we cannot co-operate just a little more. Provide those facilities, support and opportunities and we will have played our part in generating an Olympic legacy. Go that extra mile; my goodness, it sounds like I have been on an inspirational journey. Oh, and while it is in my mind, a bit of hopefully useful advice for anyone thinking of buying a new car this summer. Hang on until September and there may well be a large number (3,000) of nearly new BMW's for sale somewhere. The cars should be in good order, but the sat navs are a bit dodgy. Some Munich system which keeps sending you round and around London.

## EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TREES : PART FIVE.

In parts 1 to 4, the reasons that trees grow tall, conifers, broadleaves and British forestry were described. Part 5 deals with trees in the landscape, how it used to look, why it looks like it does now and what it may look like in the future. Obviously trees do not form a landscape, the topography does that in one way or another, but they do clothe it, adding relief, splitting it into visual bites and sometimes defining it by their absence.

A good place to start is the post-glacial period, when at the peak of tree growth and before the intervention of people, approximately 60% of the land was covered by trees. That is just about everywhere except for the mountain tops and marshes. So what would the Humber area have looked like? Well the tree line in Britain is around 1500 feet, well below the height of the Wolds, so all of our hills would have been covered. Much of the rest of the area would have been very wet, which would have restricted trees to a few drier areas and the species mostly to willows and alder. Much of the area surrounding the Humber, Spalding Moor, Axholme and large parts of Holderness were probably too wet to support proper woodland growth. Elsewhere in the region, most of the North York Moors, Pennines and Dales would have been tree covered.

Nowadays, tree cover is around 11% nationally and even less at 9% in the Humber area. So when was the forest felled? Quite early on as it happens; the Domesday Book recorded woodland and reveals that around 15% of England was tree covered in the eleventh century. So the pattern of local small woodland areas used for fuel and building materials, with occasional forest areas used for hunting and large timbers was established early, presumably progressively as land was permanently settled for agriculture. All gone before the Romans arrived probably.

In that far off past, there was no tarmac, little concrete and few towns, so pro-rata, the countryside may have more trees now than it had then. Perhaps it is a reasonable guess that since Domesday, rural areas have pretty well maintained their number of trees, but that they have been removed where urbanisation has taken place?

So what changed post Domesday? Well the biggest factor up until the introduction of foreign species and modern forestry was enclosure, a process rather than an event which proceeded from late medieval times until well into the nineteenth century. Scots may understand its social impact if it were to be described as the English land clearances. Before that, trees would have been grown in the small woodlands, which would probably have been on natural or political boundaries or on areas of soil too poor for agriculture. The countryside would have looked similar to parts

Denmark and other northern countries today. The introduction of enclosed fields and the planting of hedgerows including trees changed the look of the land, introducing the famed English "pocket handkerchief" landscape.

This of course is now changing again. As fields are enlarged to accommodate modern farm machinery, hedgerows are being removed and the trees replaced on margins and boundaries. To an extent, we are going back to what the countryside once looked like. Plus ca change.

The impact of the introduction of foreign species and modern forestry is fairly clear. Parts of the national uplands have been forested with conifers and significant parts of local woodland are coniferous. Is this likely to develop further? Certainly it would be possible to forest much of our uplands creating a significant forest industry along with associated engineering and wood processing industries. This has not happened so far because the land has been used for sheep farming, later on for grouse shooting and later still, for public recreation. So tradition, land ownership issues and political pressure from interest groups will restrain change, even though hill farming and grouse shooting are now, by all accounts, fairly marginal. Any large scale change will have to be politically driven : who knows what will happen. One of Britain's national governments may decide one day that large scale forestation would be a good long term investment.

The tree species which are planted does appear to be changing with the increased use of native broadleaves both in the lowlands and uplands. Climate change may lead to the use of more drought tolerant species, for example more oak and fewer beech, but this is by no means certain. Regardless of this, the tree line is unlikely to change as it will always be windy which is the limiting factor for tree growth. Similarly, we are unlikely to move towards use of non frost tolerant trees as we will always have damaging early or late frosts; they are the ones that catch trees out. This is certainly a factor around the Wolds where the cold air drains down the hills and it is a problem with much of Lincolnshire, which in parts is a giant frost hollow. Conversely, perhaps one day we will use GM trees and will grow olives on the north side of wolds and vines in the south.

One thing is definitely changing though. It has already been pointed out that the number of trees in the countryside seems to have been stable over a long period. There were few trees in the new cities and urban areas of the nineteenth century despite the efforts of enlightened politicians and philanthropists to introduce street trees, parks, allotments and cottage garden estates. Nowadays the tree cover in London is 22%, that is to a pigeon flying from St Pauls or a passenger on a Jumbo, 22% of the ground will be obscured by tree canopies. 7% of this is woodland and 15% individual or small groups of trees. This is happening across the country. It seems that after a little over a hundred years of urban living, we are learning how to do it.

## WREN ACORN GRANTS

HPFA are now accepting applications for WREN Acorn grants. Applications will be considered at each of HPFA's quarterly meetings held in January, April, July and October. Completed forms should be returned at least two weeks before the meeting date to allow time for the application to be included on the agenda. Precise dates are available from the Secretary.

The grants, of between £250 and £2000 are available to community groups, playing field associations, parish councils, village halls, sports clubs who offer at least 2 sports and so on for projects within 10 mile of active Waste Recycling Group land-fill sites. These are at Immingham, Winterton and Holme on Spalding Moor, and outside the area at Hatfield and Gainsborough.

The grants may be used for small capital projects, for example, purchasing play equipment, refurbishing a building, landscaping and tree planting and purchasing equipment which is fixed or may be used at only one location. Routine maintenance and running costs are not eligible. Applicants are required to add 10% of the value of the grant themselves or from another source.

Application forms are available from the Secretary or on the website. Assistance is available from HPFA to complete the forms, or advice on alternative grant fund sources.

## BIG LOTTERY FUND AWARDS FOR ALL

For a limited period of only a few months, HPFA members have the opportunity to take advantage of an Awards for All pilot scheme. This is only available to groups within Yorkshire and the Humber and the West Midlands, so please take notice, it may have your name on it. The scheme is piloting the award of

Grants for repeat and ongoing costs such as running costs, hiring staff to run sessions and so on. The grants are available to groups with an income of less than £30,000 per year. The pilot has been introduced because of these hard times etc, and it is suspected, because of the low take up of Awards for All grants from in the Humber area.

## Something in the water in Sancton?

Congratulations to Sancton, a small village in the East Riding, which has achieved much for its community in a small space of time.

After many years as the focus of betting as to whether it would fall down in the next gale, the old wooden youth hall has been refurbished and re-opened as the Village Hall. Funding was obtained from WREN and other sources. HPFA are working with the Parish Council to organise activities in the Hall.

A small but bijou play area will be opening soon. The facility was designed and delivered by local organisation Playscape, using WREN and other funding. HPFA assisted with the consultation for the facility.

The previously largely uncultivated allotment site is now almost fully tenanted, has a new management committee and constitution and a new lease from East Riding Council. HPFA have been involved with the development of the scheme.

The Parish Council are negotiating with the Council to take on the lease of a field for use as a playing field. HPFA expect to be involved in the development of the field.

The Village has been assisted by the availability of grants from a nearby windfarm. It's an ill wind etc.

## David Davis MP a right winger?

That at least was the comment made about his play, and the fact that he always gave a good account of himself when he came off the bench, when he recently attended the opening of the Holme Rovers refurbished pavilion at Holme on Spalding Moor Village Hall.

Funding was from the Football Foundation, Awards for All, Hull and East Riding Trust, Joseph and Annie Cattle Trust commuted sums and local fundraising.

The scheme includes solar powered hot water: it's the future folks.

HPFA were involved in both funding advice and the design and project management of the scheme. Nick Evans, vice chair of the HPFA and Chair of the HOSM Village Hall is particularly pleased to see two years hard work by the Village come to fruition.

## Playground Inspection Training.

The next training course will be held on Saturday October 13th, 2012 at a venue to be decided. For the last two years most attendees have been from the South Bank, and if this is still the case, a venue in that area will be chosen, bearing in mind that Haven House in Barton is no longer available. Please let us know as soon as possible if you are interested so that venue options can be identified.

The training will be delivered by a ROSPA approved trainer and will enable participants to understand the legal and technical issues associated with managing play facilities, and to perform daily and periodic equipment inspections. A ROSPA certificate will be awarded. The course will run from 10am until 4pm approximately and will cost £10 per person. Please book through HPFA.