

Dear Councillors

We are urging you to reconsider the fencing off the majority of the recreation ground for the following reasons:

1. The recreation ground is for the use of ALL not just the football club.
2. This will be urbanisation of a rural setting.
3. There is one football player in the village (as evidenced by the 26 cars in the recreation ground last Wednesday), but over 50 dog walkers.
4. Dog walkers use the recreation ground daily, sometimes twice daily, but the football club uses it once a week, and twice at most in the football season.
5. The ban on dogs within the fence is unenforceable (as a ban on dog fouling is, otherwise there would be no dog fouling in the village at all) and will not stop foxes who can easily jump 1m, as can most dogs.
6. FIFA rules only that a barrier should be in place during matches, but not the type of barrier. Otterton use metal stakes and rope which is sufficient.
7. Using the precept in this way (our taxes) for a minority group over the majority is morally wrong. It does not appear the Parish Council has taken a democratic decision.
8. Your research is not exhaustive. You have not noted badger excrement is your survey, which is certainly present with occasional deer faeces. We therefore doubt that your survey is accurate, or that the person who completed the survey is able to differentiate between the species.
9. We walk around the field every day, and sometimes twice. We have seen fox and badger faeces, but rarely dog faeces.
10. Public Liability – we do know the Parish Council should have public liability insurance, but there are bound to be accidents. Children climb fences and swing on gates as they do in the village hall vicinity. Your Parish Clerk should be able to remind you of *Rodin v East Budleigh* with Bicton Parish Council.
11. A total dog ban is unenforceable and cannot be put into place due to the public path offering a legal right of way for walkers and their dogs across the ground.
12. As to your other proposals, Brenda Cobb spent a lot of time and effort to plant the trees that you are considering lopping and chopping. These trees are important to the rural setting and enhance the field.
13. We are shocked at the cost of the dog gloves as bags can be bought at Home Bargains for less than £1 per 100.

I would suggest that further less draconian actions could be put into place. At one time volunteers came forward to walk the field before matches, although the football club could easily organise this. There is also no mention of education, although we suspect there is no problem. There is no mention in the minutes of a problem of dog fouling from the dog forum or recreation committee. If there is a problem, which we doubt, this is a community that is brilliant at coming together, as can be seen by the Sir Walter Raleigh statue, the Community Shop and recently the Village Green project.

I have also been told that the July meeting was informed there was no correspondence for this item of the agenda. This is untrue as we emailed Judith Lumsden before the meeting and we are aware of at least one other person has done this. Judith told us that she had passed our email to the Chairman, so we assume none of you had seen it, hence we are sending this to you all individually.

We think the way forward is for a public meeting for this specific issue as this has created a large disgruntled number of parishioners who feel the Parish Council has not listened to their concerns and a public meeting would allow Councillors to appreciate the views of parishioners they are supposed to be representing.

John and Sally Tresidder

cc Lord Clinton

Cllrs Alan Dent, Steve Hall, Tom Wright