



**ENGLEFIELD GREEN COMMITTEE**

**24 JUNE 2008**

**APPENDICES**

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Runnymede Borough CouncilAPPENDIX 'A'ENGLEFIELD GREEN COMMITTEE27 February 2008 at 7.00 pm

Members of the Committee Present      Councillors P I Roberts (Chairman), M T Kusneraitis (Vice-Chairman),  
D R Hamilton, Miss M N Heath and J W C Perschke

Residents' Representatives: Mrs M E J Bairstow and Mr A E Panter

Members of the Committee absent:      The Mayor, Councillor H W V Meares

547. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 21 November 2007 were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

548. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from the Mayor, Councillor Meares.

549. EVENTS ON THE GREEN

The Committee considered requests to hold the following events on Englefield Green in 2008:

- 12 to 19 May - Beach's Fair - open 15 to 18 only (southern end of Green)
- 14 June - Englefield Green Village Residents Association Annual Village Fair
- 30 September to 7 October - Carters Steam Fair - open 4 and 5 October only (northern end of Green).

The Committee was agreeable to the requests subject to the usual conditions to protect the Green and its environment. The operation of the fairs would be reviewed and a report made to a future meeting.

**RESOLVED that -**

- i) **approval be given to Beach's fair for use of the southern end of the Green 12 - 19 May 2008 (open 15 - 18 only) subject to appropriate conditions;**
- ii) **approval be given to Englefield Green Village Residents Association for use of the Green for the Annual Village Fair (14 June) subject to appropriate conditions;**
- iii) **approval be given to Carters Steam Fair for use of the northern end of the Green 30 September - 7 October (open 4 and 5 October only) subject to appropriate conditions; and**
- iv) **the operation of the fairs in 2008 be reviewed and a report thereon be made to a future meeting.**

550. PLAY AREA - UPDATE

The Committee was updated on the current position regarding the Play Area scheme.

Progress had been made in agreeing the type of lighting to be used in and around the play area and the best position of these lights to minimise light spillage. The location of planting around the play area was shown to Members. The design, size and location of the CCTV cameras had been agreed. This would be an 8 metre column with brackets capable of taking three cameras. Initially housing two infra-red cameras covering the play area, the third bracket would be available for an additional camera to cover the cricket pavilion. The column would have an integral cabinet in its base which would house the recording equipment. Officers would inform Members of the area covered by the cameras and ensure they would be compatible for future linkage with the Safer Runnymede Control Room.

A planning application had been submitted and was expected to be heard in April. The application for Commons Consent had also been submitted and would require the agreement of English Heritage, Natural England and the Open Spaces Society. A public notice of the proposal would be published in the local newspaper next week and displayed on site.

The approval of the Crown Estate had been sought under the Council's lease of the Green.

The application to AIR for funding was subject to securing all the various permissions. A progress report would be made to the next meeting on 24 June.

551. MANAGEMENT AND MAINTENANCE OF THE GREEN

The Committee was informed that the Council was endeavouring to recover the cost of replacing some timber fencing from the owner of a vehicle which had caused damage on the edge of the Green near St Jude's Road.

It was noted that an agreement was now in place which permitted ground staff from the Castle Hill Estate to cut the grass and tidy the part of the Green immediately in front of the entrance to the estate. They had been doing this work for several years, but this agreement, formalised this arrangement, and required that they were adequately insured and a process was now in place to check their insurance periodically. The agreement also protected both the Council as lessee and the Crown as freeholder from any claim they may wish to make over the land in the future. The Crown Estate had been informed accordingly.

In accordance with the wishes of the Committee at the last meeting, the Parks and Amenities Manager had investigated whether the bus shelter overlooking the Green could be painted or stained a more suitable colour which was more in keeping with its environs. The response from the Council's Technical Services Department was that the shelter had a natural wood finish which would tone down in time and there were no plans to paint or stain it.

Finally, the Chairman requested that Officers liaise with the grass cutting contractor to ensure that the grass cutting did not adversely affect the cricket pitch in view of problems which had occurred last year.

Chairman

(The meeting ended at 7.27pm)

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Campaign to Protect  
Rural England  
SURREY

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The Institute  
67 High Street  
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E: cpre.surrey@btconnect.com

The Planning Inspectorate  
Room 4/05, Kite Wing  
Temple Quay House  
2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6PN

14<sup>th</sup> March 2008

Dear Sir or Madam,

**ENGLEFIELD GREEN COMMON  
RUNNYMEDE PLANNING APPLICATION RU/08/0244 dated 5th March 2008**

CPRE Surrey has visited this site and is familiar with its location and setting. It is our view that the playground and its proposed extension cannot be considered as falling within permitted development rights as the cumulative area involved exceeds 200 cubic metres. We maintain, therefore, that a fuller planning application should have been submitted covering more than just the CCTV and lighting installation.

CPRE Surrey objects to this application on the following grounds:

1. We believe that the site is part of a registered village green and is therefore subject to village green legislation.
2. The site falls within the Metropolitan Green Belt and so Policy Planning Guidance 2 applies.
3. The existing development on this site affects openness and its further extension will additionally infringe this requirement of PPG2.
4. The development will harm the Conservation Area and not preserve or enhance its heritage environment and distinctive character and setting.
5. The CCTV camera installation is an unattractive and obtrusive feature, and the proposal for its provision indicates that fears about security at the site are considered well-founded.
6. It is undesirable and unnecessary to light a play area which is presumably provided for the enjoyment of children during daylight hours.
7. The effect of the lighting proposed will be to 'suburbanise' an area of natural surroundings that it is desirable to maintain.



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- 8. Light pollution and energy waste will result from the installation of extra lighting that will only be illuminated after dark when there is no justification for its provision.**
- 9. By providing lighting in the manner proposed, it is likely that the playground and adjacent car park facility will be used by people other than children of the age groups specified as a meeting point leading to potential for vandalism and other anti social behaviour. If the whole area is left unlit, the security issue will be reduced rather than increased.**
- 10. The lamp columns will be obtrusive and reduce the attractiveness of the green at all times of the year, and affect the amenity of the cricket field during the summer months.**
- 11. The original enclosure and works associated with the playground and toilet facilities may be an infringement of common land and village green legislation. It is apparent that the playground has been enclosed because of the presence of free ranging dogs on the green for much of the year and the nuisance they cause. Nevertheless, the development does affect the openness of the Green Belt and the case for its extension will increase this problem and adversely affect the cricket field setting.**
- 12. The playground is in our view inconveniently located away from the centre of the community at a substantial walking distance from where most of the children go to school or live. This is a major disadvantage as it will lead to additional car traffic when children are driven to the playground, and road safety concerns if children walk or ride bicycles there, with or without accompanying adults. It also raises the question as to whether this location issue is a reason why the playground is underutilised and its viability uncertain.**
- 13. The landscaping of the car park and playground is problematic as it will not be overlooked by any residential buildings, and screening that offers seclusion will make unaccompanied children more vulnerable to undesirable approaches from members of the public, rather than providing a secure environment in which to play. An ill frequented playground with few children present is more dangerous in this context than one that is busy with children and accompanying adults.**
- 14. In the proposal for the playground extension, it is admitted that currently it is underused. CPRE believes that the reasons why this is should be explored further by an objective survey. It is claimed that catering for a wider age group and providing more equipment will make all the difference. Is there**



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**any real evidence of this? In our view it would be an error of judgement to spend funds on an extension, if the playground is likely to continue to be underused because of its relatively inconvenient location, especially in the light of the additional objections advanced in this letter. Regardless of the source of the funding, any available money should be directed for use where it will incontrovertibly have a positive community benefit, and not spent on development with an uncertain outcome.**

**15. We are aware that a petition appears to have been an influential factor in justifying the proposal made for extending this playground. Placing too much reliance on a document of this kind is often unhelpful when assessing planning policy issues that should be considered on the basis of their material weight rather than on external lobbying pressure.**

**CPRE Surrey, therefore, urges that this application be rejected and the concept of an extension to the playground abandoned. Consideration should also be given as to the long term viability of the existing playground, and its future, since it has been implemented in our view without the necessary planning permission, and has been shown to be unsuitable for purpose on security and other grounds.**

Yours sincerely,

**Tim Harrold - Chairman CPRE Surrey**



## Englefield Green CC – Advisory Visit - 17/03/2008

Also present – D. de Ville; Chairman Englefield Green CC

Weather – Fair,

**Purpose of visit;** – To access with a neutral overview, the current condition of the site area dedicated to cricket and to evaluate the arrangements for post annual fun fair placement with regard to acceptable safe playing conditions thereafter.

### ***Introduction:***

Englefield Green represents a traditional quintessentially English village green cricket club of a 125 year standing from formation. It is alleged that cricket has been played for nigh on 200 years on the common land owned by the Crown Estate with a 99 year lease with Runnymede Borough Council (50 years to run and currently under re-negotiation) who are currently responsible for the general maintenance of all the outfield areas. There is a long-standing bi-annual arrangement for staging a Fun Fair on the common within the vicinity of the cricket playing area.

The club support approximately 85 days of cricket in the season both on Saturdays and Sundays with occasional 2<sup>nd</sup> X1 matches and are progressively seeking to develop a junior section with the provision of a Non Turf Pitch, with grant aid assistance, to accommodate an additional safe, junior playing facility on the square.

The club house/pavilion is sited across the road at the western boundary at a 45° angle facing the location of the original square at the southern end of the common. The square was recently re-sited at the northern end after a children's play area was installed in 1999 adjacent to the club house. The social element of the club is supportive of the local residential environment.

A ditch that was constructed approximately 30 years ago to prevent travellers inhabiting the site, was extended 10 or 15 years ago along the full western boundary.

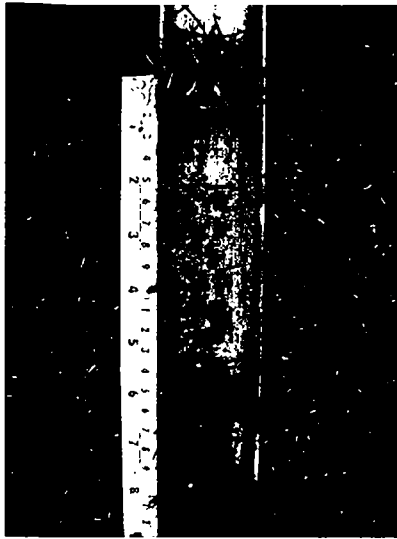
### ***Observations of the Square & Outfield (At the time of the visit).***

For the time of year and given the recent prevailing cold and damp weather, the new cricket square was in quite a good condition.

The table measures 95 x 95ft (28.95 x 28.95mt) supporting 9 ½ X 10ft pitches. (A preferable size would be 100ft x 75ft – 30.38 x 22.86mt). It is sited east – west which is not the recommended orientation due to the setting sun causing a sight hazard for players at certain times in the season. There is an option to play north-south if desired as the table is an exact square although the mid-wicket boundary to the adjacent road is relatively short to a pulled hit, hook or cross-shot.

The grass sward was a reasonably healthy and even 80% coverage consisting of a Perennial Ryegrass mixture recommended for cricket squares. There was some worm casting on the surface although not enough to damage surface smoothness. The levels were even with no discernable depressions. The grass height was 20mm – the recommended length of cut for the time of year.

A soil profile removed revealed that the square was laid professionally and efficiently with an even depth of 150mm (5in) of consolidated proprietary cricket loam overlaying the indigenous black soil.



← 50 x 200mm depth soil profile taken from the centre of the square.

Fig. 1

The outfield areas were as the rest of the common with grass height alternating between 15mm (5/8<sup>th</sup> inch) in areas of poor growth and 120mm (5 inch) particularly pronounced where lime in previously marked football pitch lines had promoted a flush of strong grass growth.

There were visual signs of compacted areas of poor grass growth adjacent and to the side of the square that correlate to photographs provided of the fun fare units in situ.



Fig.2: Facing NE corner.



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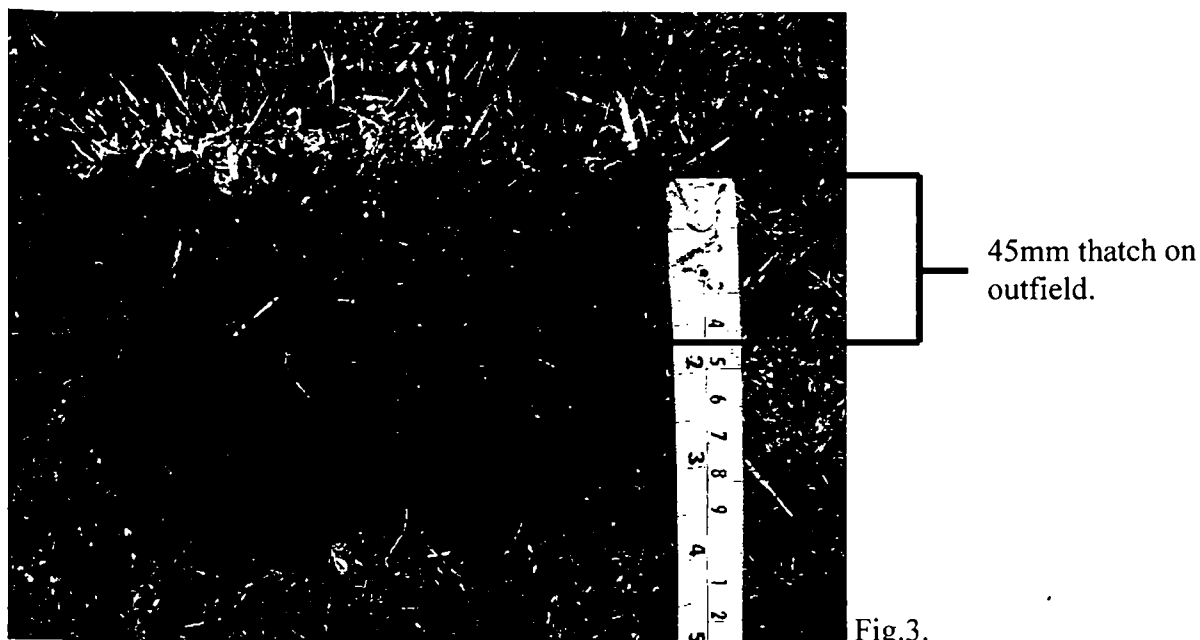
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Soil Profile samples removed from 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the distance between the square and the boundary revealed almost a 50mm (2inch) depth of thatch overlaying the dark native soil



Thatch is a build-up over time of dead organic material especially prevalent where grass clippings are continually returned to the surface (i.e. gang mowing) without remedial measures such as scarification. This lends towards a sponge like surface that holds excessive moisture when wet yet preventing water permeating down through the profile. The result is a patchy, shallow rooting poor playing surface that is susceptible to drought conditions in summer and a winter surface prone to moss infestation. The underlying soil can become acidic in pH which is probably why the lime content in the pitch marking compound over the years has broken down the thatch and promoted a more favourable environment for grass growth.

### ***Conclusions:***

With regard to the observations of the square and given sound management practices, there should be no reason why pitches of a good standard cannot be produced although consideration might be undertaken to play in a north-south orientation if the setting sun raises issues of a player's safety although as aforementioned the small boundary distance to the road is also of consideration.

It does appear that the site position of the new square does not maximise the potential maximum boundaries on the common. (The laws of the game state a recommended minimum boundary of 50yards from the centre of any designated pitch and ideally from a league cricket perspective, from the centre stump). From an overhead image (see Fig 4.) this is clearly demonstrated. The clubhouse now appears strangely miss-orientated towards the direction of play and the ditch that runs across the western edge adjacent to the road, is very close to the edge of the square and could constitute a hazard towards any player chasing or attempting to catch the ball if not aware.

It is understood that the new position was chosen with the infant play area in mind to minimise the risk of injury to children when in use. Maybe thought could be given towards

provision of protective fencing with a "living" screen in front of suitable shrubs/bushes to maintain an aesthetic appearance and visible white markers/posts to define the proximity of the ditch line.

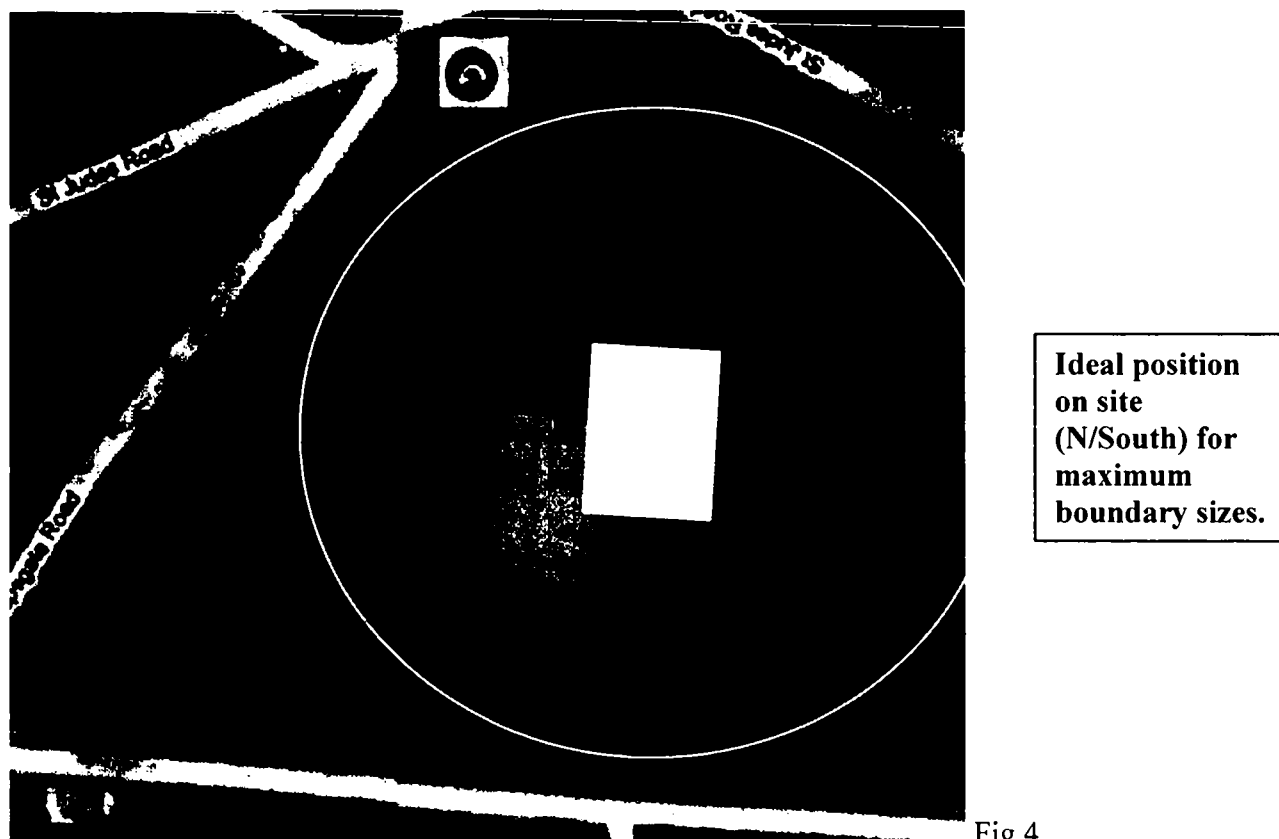


Fig 4.

With regard to the present condition of the outfield no maintenance appeared to have been undertaken since the late autumn or at least the end of the previous growing season.

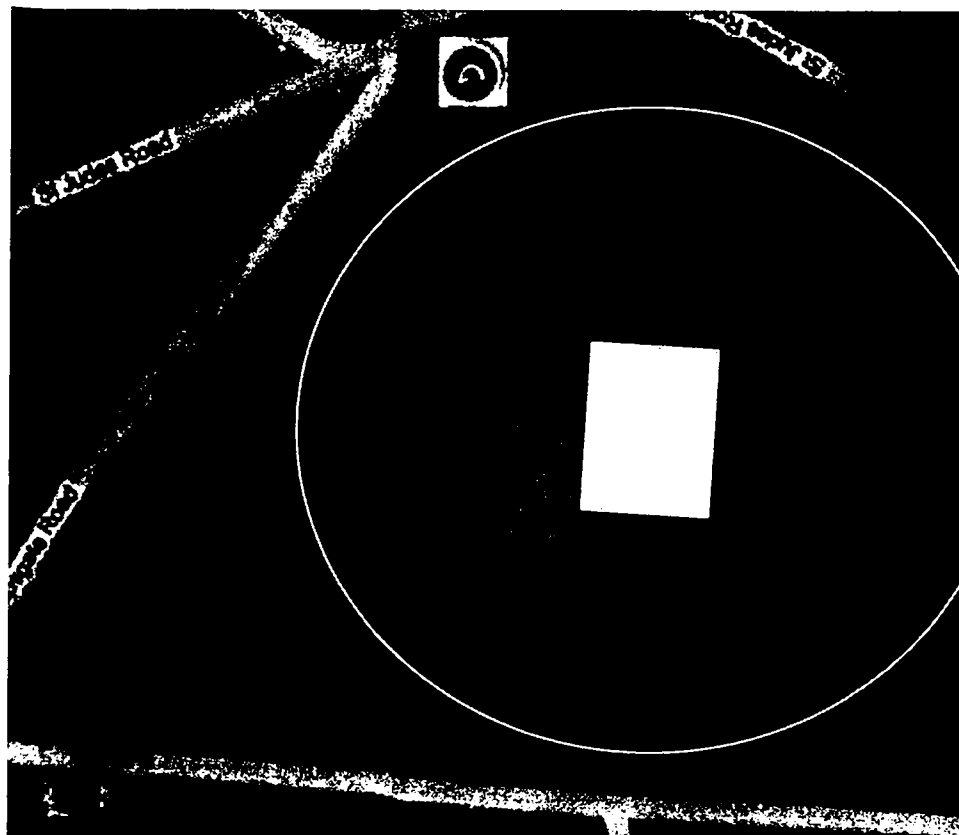
Visual images have been supplied of the fun fair when on site around the roped off perimeters of the cricket square including post-site damage that is communal on such occasions, ( the severity of course often dependent on prevailing weather conditions at the time). Features such as deep rutting from narrow wheeled and heavy vehicles, sinkage from support pads of rides etc., grass die-back from areas under periods of total cover and from hydro-carbon contamination deposits (oils/diesel/ petrol spills) and dropped hardened / sharp objects. All the aforementioned contribute towards compromising the cricketer's expectations of a good standard and above all player's safety, even more significant if a junior section is under formation.

#### ***Recommendations:***

It is understood that arrangements are in place for an early season fun fair situated at the far southern end of the common and a September siting at the northern end around the square. This seems a sensible compromise if a long standing agreement to stage the fairs cannot be withdrawn for contractual or financial reasons. However there should be a duty of care and ring-fenced budget allocation in place for provision to re-instate any damage within the cricket playing area on immediate post fair vacation as suggested:-

- Scarify out any areas of dead grass.
- Relieve localised consolidated areas by heavy duty aeration (eg. Verti-drain).
- Lifting / filling any depressed areas of rutting / heavy vehicle wheel marks etc. with a suitable free draining top soil.

provision of protective fencing with a "living" screen in front of suitable shrubs/bushes to maintain an aesthetic appearance and visible white markers/posts to define the proximity of the ditch line.



Ideal position  
on site  
(N/South) for  
maximum  
boundary sizes.

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Visual images have been supplied of the fun fair when on site around the roped off perimeters of the cricket square including post-site damage that is communal on such occasions, ( the severity of course often dependent on prevailing weather conditions at the time). Features such as deep rutting from narrow-wheeled and heavy vehicles, sinkage from support pads of rides etc., grass die-back from areas under periods of total cover and from hydro-carbon contamination deposits (oils/diesel/ petrol spills) and dropped hardened / sharp objects. All the aforementioned contribute towards compromising the cricketer's expectations of a good standard and above all player's safety, even more significant if a junior section is under-formation.

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- Overseed where necessary.

At a very basic standard there should be no localised depressions of more than \*20mm under a 2m straight edge or 10mm under a 0.5 straight edge. Ideally for a high standard, no more than 10mm under 2m or 6mm under 0.5.

Without the benefit of knowledge of the present specification details/arrangements, attention might be considered towards a regular mowing regime where the grass height should be maintained in the growing season between no more than \*25-16mm (basic) to 20-12mm (standard). This regime may well warrant more than 1 cut per week when the grass is growing strongly. Some attention to reducing the thatch content, aeration, dispersal of worm casts (e.g. with a chain harrow) and the occasional winter cut in times when mild spells produce a growth flush would certainly improve both the playing conditions and general aesthetic appearance overall.

\*The above figures are from the Institute of Groundsmanship (IOG) Performance Quality Standards for cricket outfield and are taken against nationally recognised benchmark standards. Enclosed within this report is a copy for perusal.

### ***Summary:***

There are more junior cricketers, both boys and girls, playing the game at some form now than at any other time and is becoming ever more popular. Many schools do not possess the desired safe facilities to include in their sporting curriculum whereas many clubs in town and country do and by increasing their junior sections and providing the coaching the future of our national summer game is in good hands.

By maintaining good communication and dialogue there should be no reason why ongoing provision of a good playing surface for the end user – Englefield Green CC - and yet still undertake to stage the bi-annual fun fair should not continue for the sake of our traditional recreational activities for the benefit of the local community.

Chris Wood  
ECB Pitches Consultant