

Appendix C3: Evidence gathered from survey of Sporting Bodies in Dartmouth.

Play Facilities (LAPs, LEAP, NEAP).

There is greater provision in the Townstal area than the old town, which is appropriate given the demographics of these 2 wards.

(<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/ward2011/1140853003/report.aspx?pc=TQ6> and <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/localarea?compare=E04003143> .

The Play areas in Collingwood Road (NEAP) and Victoria Road (LEAP) owned by SHDC, in Britannia Avenue/Davis Road (LEAP) owned by LiveWest, and in Coronation Park (NEAP) owned by DTC, are well used, suitably equipped and well maintained. However, the play area in Victory Road is derelict and in an unsuitable location for this purpose. It is temporarily fenced off by agreement between SHDC and DTC but it is still accessible for antisocial activities. It should be permanently re-purposed. Unfortunately the closure of this area has resulted in a lack of access to such facilities in the eastern area of Townstal, Rock Park, Churchfields and Victoria Heights. Alternative provision is required.

There is a dearth of provision generally for LAPs and sites for such provision should be explored.

Dartmouth RFC Evidence gathered in a 'phone conversation with the President of the club, and in response to a call from the Press Officer who is also Sponsorship Secretary. The latter subsequently sent the following statement:

Attention of Peter Goldstraw, Dartmouth Neighbourhood Planning Steering Group
Re: Norton Fields being included in the Neighbourhood Plan.

History: Dartmouth Rugby Football Club.

Dartmouth Rugby Football Club have been part of the community since around 1882 and are the second oldest sporting club in the town. The club was formerly known as Dartmouth Athletic RFC. At one stage, DRFC , ran two senior teams and a successful mini rugby section. We currently just run a first XV.

The Club have played at Norton Field since it was in the hands of M.O.D, B.R.N.C and now South Hams District Council.

We have currently, over 70 first team playing members signed on the Club's books. We also have a strong mixed group of 20 Walking Rugby members, aged mid teens to mid 70s which include disabled persons.

The Club are supported by a committee of 12 , who are from all walks of life and they guide the Club forward so that it will be there for future generations .

DRFC currently play in Division one of the Devon League and are past winners of the Devon Junior Cup, Devon League and Havill Plate.

Present facilities:

Dartmouth RFC are currently without a Clubhouse of their own, as their old Club which was in Roseville Street, was sold some years ago for Development.

We now use various hostelrys in Dartmouth to meet after a game to feed and entertain visiting teams. There are 2 pitches on the field, but one has become waterlogged due to a breakage in drainage pipes, so only one pitch is playable.

The club pay Dartmouth Leisure Centre for the use of their changing rooms and shower facilities.

The only facilities pitch side, are a temporary wooden stand to keep supporters dry from the prevailing elements and a storage container, for rugby kit etc.

There is nowhere to obtain any food or drink or keep warm. Toilet facilities are limited.

The club cover a lot of the maintenance costs, such as line painting and erecting and supplying their own posts.

Under normal circumstances the field is used by DRFC between the months of July and May for Saturday games and outdoor training evenings.

* In Summer months the field is also used by Dartmouth Athletic Club. (see further notes.)

There are a lack of open green(flat) sports facilities in Dartmouth.

Improvements required:

1. To obtain a long lease from South Hams District Council, so that the DRFC can apply for financial grants from various organisations in order to build a pitch side clubhouse, which can be used by all sports associations who currently use Norton Field.

The club can then be used for a meeting place after games to both feed and entertain visiting sides.

2. To replace the broken drainage on the waterlogged lower pitch which at present is the responsibility of SHDC. This would mean that the club could hold inter club competitions and Rugby festivals.

3. The club are in desperate need of some sort of pitch side fencing, as before each game, the pitch has to be checked for dog faeces. This is an on going problem and has been highlighted in the media and taken up with SHDC. This remains an ongoing problem.

The fencing would also allow additional revenue for the club via advertising sponsorship.

DRFC are in discussions with SHDC, but to date, have only been offered a 3 year licence, with a view to a longer lease.

Without a long term lease, DRFC are unable to make long term commitments for pitch and Clubhouse improvements which will take the club forward for future generations.

However, our neighbours, Totnes RFC, who are in a similar position to DRFC have just been granted a 40 year lease from SHDC.

Ideal requirement:

A permanent stand to be erected pitch side to protect supporters from the elements.

Pitch side floodlights in order that the club can play evening games and train during the winter months.

Dartmouth Academy use of Norton Field.

Response from a Sports Teacher appended to the above statement from DRFC.

The School did use Norton Field for a football match. However due to the waterlogged pitch and the amounts of dog faeces on the pitch, the visiting School made a complaint and the pitch was never used again.

If the drainage problem was solved and the playing pitches fenced off, the Academy would consider re using Norton Field.

There are insufficient flat open green spaces in Dartmouth which can be used for Sports facilities and Norton Field is one of these open green spaces.

Dartmouth AFC Contacted the President/Manager who submitted the following email statement:

"We currently have about 150 members, in previous years, there would have been junior, senior, and oap, memberships, as well as family membership, now it's just senior and oap. Football is one of many activities that have suffered due to indoor games consoles, we have talked on many occasions in committee meetings about a youth policy, but, in today's society it is far more complex than it used to be. We currently have two teams, both in men's football, our 2nd team play in a local league, run under the heading of the South Devon league. The 1st team joined a new league 12 months ago, under the heading of The Peninsula league. It ranges from Dartmouth in the south, Torrington North, Axminster East, and Torpoint in the west. It is at step 6 of the football league, and has a long list of standards, including ground grading. These include floodlights, changing facilities for men and women, a covered standing area, facilities for the disabled. We are currently in the process of building new changing rooms to comply with the changing facilities that are needed, as are current changing rooms for players and officials, are not good enough. It is taking time to build, as we are trying to complete the build without financial funding, relying on free labour, and free help from some skilled trades, materials have to be bought, the money to cover these cost are coming from

sponsorship and bar takings, but it's a slow process at times. The ground in the past has been used, by the clubs cricket team, playing in a local league, and currently we have allowed the Southampton saints youth football academy, ranging from 6 - 12, to train on the pitch, once a week, at no charge, as we feel it is a way for the club to help youngsters to progress. There is always improvements and up keep needed, the pitch and surrounds need constant attention, a ride on grass machine has made the job a lot easier, although it's gone past its prime. The floodlights are 15 years old now, and need up grading, the lux levels need checking, and more lights on the centre poles would be a great leap forward. The current stand has so much history, it would be devastating to knock it down, but it does have some serious renovating needed. We currently train at the Britannia Royal Navy College, which is a fantastic facility, but it comes at a cost. Having a training area, with lights close to the ground and clubhouse would be far easier. Finally moving on to our clubhouse, again it has seen many good times, and could tell a story or two, but it needs up grading.

We have dreams of a function room on top of the current building, which would support the community and contribute towards the up keep, and help the senior team's, and in the future help support and fund youth teams, which in turn would see more healthy children getting the exercise they need to grow up into strong individuals “.

Having informally inspected the club the following observations were made. Dartmouth AFC has its own private facility, a well tended pitch with floodlights, adequate changing and shower facilities and an active social club. Whilst a thriving club it could do more to help develop the sport in Dartmouth. The management of the club are anxious to encourage youth participation and the enhanced facilities on Norton Field could assist these efforts. Informal groups use the football pitch in Norton Field but the ground is severely waterlogged in places and the goal posts need replacement. It is difficult to assess this under provision but given the local demographics it is likely to be significant. Requirement:

A much improved football pitch is needed on Norton Field, preferably an all weather surface.

Changing and shower facilities are required on site.

Fencing around the pitch is necessary to control dogs being exercised in the field.

Dartmouth Hockey Club Provision of a floodlit all weather pitch for hockey was recommended in the MCTi 2004 report. The following conclusions resulted from a 'phone conversation with the Captain of the club.

There is no suitable 3G all weather pitch in the Parish and the club has to travel to Kingsbridge for “home” matches. They train on the 4G all weather pitch at BRNC (presently closed due to Covid) but this is unsuited to competitive games and training for female members is limited to those over 16 years of age. This limitation is severely inhibiting the opportunities for youth involvement and hence the development of this sport in Dartmouth. The club has shared social events with Dartmouth RFC.

Requirements:

An all weather 3G hockey pitch is required.

Changing and shower facilities for separate genders are needed on site.

Dartmouth Amateur Athletics Club

Response received via D&DSA and via DRFC from Secretary of DAAC.

The Club was formed in 1979 and also use the green open space at Norton Field during the summer months. They share the Field with Dartmouth RFC.

They are affiliated to England Athletics, UK Athletics and Run Britain and participate in track events, field events and road races both at home and across the country

They have some 74 competitive members whose ages range from 8 to 80 years.

This community based club is so popular, they have a waiting list for juniors

Each year, the club hold both Regatta races and the Pearson Cup, where junior teams from across Devon compete in events at Norton Field.

Such events, result in lots of family gatherings attending, followed by Club BBQs on the field.

The club also pay each year out of their own pockets for a 6 lane running track to be marked out on the field , plus a long jump, this assists members in training instead of travelling to Exeter.

Club members are from Dartmouth, Totnes, Kingsbridge and the surrounding area.

Present facilities:

They share Norton Field with Dartmouth RFC, although at different times of the season.

The Dartmouth AAA, have 2 storage containers on site which hold their sporting equipment.

The Club mark out and pay for the 6 lane running track and maintain the grass during the summer season.

No facilities to shelter from the elements or get hot drinks.

Improvements required.

1. Drainage on field to be repaired and replaced (responsibility at present SH Council)
2. Very poor parking facilities. A car park to be installed on part of Norton Field, which can be used by both Dartmouth AAA and Dartmouth RFC .
3. A sports club/ changing rooms on site which again can be used by all sports associations to entertain visiting teams, plus the supply of

Additional comment added. The club has a large junior section and a waiting list of other young people wishing to join. This aspect of the club's activities is particularly restricted by a lack of coaching provision and compliance with safeguarding requirements. This deficiency has been exacerbated by the lack of training facilities. Another club whose needs were recognised and supported in the MCTi 2004 document but were never fully implemented.

Dartmouth Bowling Club

'phone conversation with secretary led to 'phone conversation with President/Treasurer, Summary of conclusions:

This club has an all weather green with clubhouse facilities in Victoria road. There are issues with large Cypress trees in the adjacent play area which shed needles and twigs onto the green, and parking is an issue for out of town members and visiting teams. Appropriate pruning could mitigate the problem of detritus on the green. Whilst there have been talks with SHDC regarding new facilities on Norton Field this will only partly address these issues and may not receive the support of the majority of members.

Coronation Park Tennis courts

There are 4 all weather courts in Coronation Park. Two have adequate flood lighting. These are used by the Jubilee Tennis Club, the Sports Group of U3A and members of the public. Club members have fixed booking slots and can access the security code whilst the public makes reservations via the cafe.

Contracted Chair of Dart Valley U3A group who suggested contact with leader of the Sports Group (who also spoke for the Jubilee Tennis Club).

Comments received include:

There is a need for storage of equipment and cover for players during inclement weather. Flood lighting to the other 2 courts would increase available time slots.

Skate park

The existing area is poorly utilised and may be obsolete. It is not sited well for casual observation and some anti-social activities have been reported. This site should be repurposed as discussed above. The loss of this facility will be partly offset by the provision of a MUGA v.s. and there is scope to provide alternative site for a skate park elsewhere.

Dartmouth Club de Petanque

Founded over 30 years ago this vibrant club now based outside the Parish, uses purpose built terrain with 6 pistes on Stoke Fleming Village Green created with an enabling grant from Clarkes' Shoes Foundation in 2014. Membership of 35. Meet every Wednesday and Sunday throughout the year. Information from Martin Nutt, long standing member re: possible additional provision on Coronation park 15/5/21 elicited email 16/5/21 "nice idea as it would widen the appeal of the game, negative aspect might be losing people who play in Stoke Fleming to play in Dartmouth, overall worth a try I would say.". Phone conversation with Barry Coe, Captain 17/5/21 speaking personally he thought the practical issues would make this a failure as municipal piste did in Kingsbridge. Concerns over splitting of present membership.

Dartmouth and District Cricket Club

Founded December 2009. Founding Chairman Jon Pope. Previously held exhibition matches on Coronation Park. The square required renovation for each match as disrupted by other uses of park, especially Regatta parking. Only use soft ball for public safety concerns. Would like permanent pitch so that regular matches could be held at home.

Dartmouth Amateur Rowing Club.

Evidence received via D&DSA. This thriving club has actively engaged with schools and the families of young people through their "learn to row" programmes. This has done a great deal to increase the self confidence and fitness of these young people and re-engaged them with the river at the heart of their community. Their youth teams have had significant success in competitions. Requirements:

Training, changing and toilet provision needs improvements to comply with the latest guidance and regulation.

Dart Gig Club. Evidence received via D&DSA. A successful club with men's, women's and youth teams competing in local, regional and world events. Requirements:

These expensive boats require undercover storage and this is presently inadequate. Greater provision is presently being considered by DTC.

The club would benefit from a social space in a club house.

Cricket in Dartmouth. In the recent past informal cricket matches were organised on Coronation Park. Safety measures ensured that the public were little inconvenienced. Unfortunately there is no organised Club in Dartmouth and it is hence difficult to assess support for any such provision.

Wet sports. The indoor pool in the Leisure centre provides year round access to wet sports. This is supplemented in the peak summer months by the heated outdoor pool adjacent to the Dartmouth Academy. These two facilities provide Dartmouth with very different experiences and collectively there is adequate provision for wet sports.

Dartmouth Yacht Club

Comments received from Commodore:

I am setting out a number of issues which are of interest/concern to the Club which as you may know is a Community Sports and Social Club. The main issues for the Club obviously relate to water sports but we do also have a significant interest in the general well being of the town and its economic success which will have a major bearing on the future of the Club.

I know that you have already received a response from our Rear Commodore Kayaking which of course relates solely to the paddling element of the Clubs activities. The following relate to general Club issues.

1. The clubs current total membership is 1,286
2. For the benefit of the membership the Club operate kayaks, canoes, sailing dinghies and motor boats. The Club operate approved training courses in all these branches of water sport. We also operate training courses in first aid and VHF operation.
3. The Club owns and operates the Clubhouse on the Embankment which is a base for all social activities and the operation of water sports and training.
4. The Club is supported financially by a modest level of subscription payable by members and the profits derived from the bar and restaurant plus other minor sources of income.
5. The Club has this summer, as a result of Covid 19, enjoyed the benefit of space for external tables and chairs on the Embankment. This has proved a huge success for both members and visitors. I think it is fair to say that there have not been any complaints concerning the arrangements and the facilities have been universally approved. The Club has joined with all the other businesses using the Embankment to form the Embankment Business Group. The purpose of this group is to promote the wish of all members to continue offering the external facilities in the years to come and to invest in improving the offer both in terms of design and quality.
6. The Club use boat storage facilities in Coronation Park and we would like to see these both improved and extended as we see increasing demand for the use of sailing dinghies and kayaks. Our capacity is currently limited by availability.
7. Many members are owners of small boats of various types and there is great demand for small boat walk ashore moorings. The current shortage leads to a long waiting list of many years.
8. The Club try to offer shower and changing facilities to visiting yachtsman but there is a shortage of facilities in Dartmouth.
9. The current slipway is overly busy and too close to the Higher Ferry for safety and convenient use. We support the long standing proposal to provide a new slipway further south of the existing slip.

10. Car parking in Dartmouth is a long standing and difficult issue which needs to be addressed if the town is to reap the benefits of additional tourism. The provision of decked parking in the town centre is difficult so I would suggest that the solution must be to provide more and better out of town parking.

Response from Vice-Commodore, Canoe section:

Membership numbers and categories for your section. About 500 persons who are of the members of the yacht club paddle something at least once a year.

Meeting frequency and regular events. kayaks/paddleboards/canoes are used year round often by members often at times they choose there are regular sessions for some boat types eg sea kayaks usually with 4 paddles a week at the warmer months at present

Facilities used, their qualities and limitations. garage of yacht club houses 23 shorter kayaks plus 6 paddleboards, coronation park houses 15 sit on tops 11 sea kayaks and 2 canadian canoes. On the whole our facilities are adequate and well located near to the water

Improvements that you consider essential and those that would be ideal. Nothing essential but two items are ongoing issues at coronation park:- It would be fantastic if Dartmouth Town Council could provide an adequate visibility sightline at the point people have to cross the road to get to the water. Every year we ask for this and usually only one minor trim of plants is undertaken which is quickly rendered useless by further growth obstructing the view of cars approaching from the left. See photo attached (taken Sept 2020) A permanent solution with only low growing plants in the visibility splay is needed for safety. There is always water ponding when it rains in the stoned area adjacent to where the bricked entrance stops. It would be helpful if this were brick paved or tarmac used.