

Horsham YMCA FC's Gorings Mead Artificial Grass Pitch

Community Benefits Summary



Gorings Mead Artificial Grass Pitch (GMAGP) Overview

This document has been prepared to provide the reader with an understanding of the benefits associated with the Gorings Mead Artificial Grass Pitch.

Focused on football and wider sporting activity in a high quality, family-oriented environment, at Gorings Mead. The facility will be open to the whole community, and we plan to offer affordable hire rates for the AGP and the hall, meeting room and other facilities.

The importance of providing sporting facilities is increasingly recognised and is one of the priorities embedded within Horsham District Council's Corporate Objectives. Making provision for sporting facilities and driving greater sporting activity within the local population is highlighted as a priority to improve overall health and wellbeing in the area.

As such sport and recreation is not about winning, it's about helping build stronger, healthier, happier, and safer communities, the GMAGP will be a hub to enable this within Horsham's town centre.

The benefits of the GM AGP to the local community include:

- ▶ Sustaining a historic site for football and other sports making it fit for the future, and retaining the green space
- ▶ A facility that can be used year-round by people of all ages
- ▶ A place to meet with revitalised bar and food offering, open more regularly
- ▶ Physical and mental health benefits for all participants
- ▶ Function spaces, hall, and bar to rent for events
- ▶ Landscaping and biodiversity making the site more attractive to visit and walk around
- ▶ New LED flood lights which are more focused and environmentally friendly
- ▶ Secure bicycle storage for users and visitors

About Horsham YMCA FC

Horsham YMCA Football Club was established in 1898 and has been playing at the Gorings Mead ground since 1928.

Through-out its 125 years of existence 'YM' has been affiliated to the YMCA Charity organisation and played football at a non-league level, currently we are in the Southern Combination Football league Premier Division.



Today, we do not require players to be a member of the YMCA organisation but we view ourselves as a family orientated club, adhering to the ethos of the YMCA movement and supporting their charity aims and purposes, in particular with how we aim to develop young people to reach their full potential.

The football club operate a successful Youth Pathway for youngsters in the Horsham area to develop their football skills and progress to the highest level their ability will take them. In the same manner our goal is that the club play at the highest level possible within the F.A.'s Football Pyramid.

By working to replace the existing playing surface at the Gorings Mead ground with an artificial 3G pitch, we aim to be able to make the facility available for the whole community to use and thus provide a high quality local sporting and activity experience for Horsham's town centre.

In tandem this this we hope to enable the club to continue to develop and thrive in the centre of Horsham for another 125 years!

About YMCA DownsLink Group

YMCA DownsLink Group (YMCA DLG) is a charity working to transform the lives of vulnerable young people across Sussex and Surrey. YMCA DLG works to prevent youth homelessness and provide a home to 763 young people every night. They reach a further 10,000 young people and their families through their other key services, such as counselling, support and advice, mediation and youth work, so that all young people can belong, contribute and thrive.

YMCA is the largest and oldest youth movement in the world operating in 120 countries and providing vital services for over 65 million people. YMCA DownsLink Group is a formation of local YMCAs across Sussex and Surrey. YMCA DownsLink Group has its main centres in Brighton & Hove, Guildford, Horsham, Crawley, Eastbourne, Hastings and Worthing. In 2019 YMCA DLG celebrated its 100th anniversary which coincided with YMCAs 175th anniversary.

Children, young people and families are at the heart of YMCA DLG with a particular focus on the needs of young people who find themselves on the fringes of society and need support.

YMCA DLG is committed to transforming local communities so that all children, young people and families truly belong, contribute and thrive.

The GM AGP facility will offer:

- ▶ Home ground for a range of local adult men & women's football teams plus number of youth teams from football clubs and other organisations in the Horsham area.
- ▶ Structured youth pathway for talented footballers to progress within their chosen sport
- ▶ Indoor facilities including:
 - Full licenced Bar & Catering Facilities
 - Adult and young people's groups may rent space for meetings and activities
 - Indoor sporting activities (boxing, badminton, snooker, pilates etc).
 - Wedding, birthday parties and other events
- ▶ Staff that focus on providing an excellent, friendly service
- ▶ Convenient hours of operation

What will set GMAGP apart from the competition is the commitment to provide all these services in one convenient location.

Groups & Organisations that have expressed an interest in using the GM AGP Facility

Horsham YMCA FC: First team, under 23s and under 18s

Southwater Royals FC: First & second team, U10-U18 boys and girls

Sparrows FC: Women's Football, Youth Football, Mini Football

Tigers FC: Youth Football, Mini Football

Hill Farm Roffey Vets: Veterans football

Chesworth Rovers FC: Youth Football

AFC Acorns: Women's football team

YMCA DownsLink Group: Residents from Horsham Y Centre and Crawley Foyer

Usage

We expect the use of the pitch will increase from 10-14 hrs/week currently to 25-35 hrs/week for football. We also expect the site will continue to be used by other organisations like NHS blood donors and local groups like slimming, snooker, and pigeon clubs. This will provide a valuable new playing field facility in the Horsham area and make an vital contribution to the sustainability of YMCA Horsahm Football Club and the wellbeing of local YMCA DLG residents.

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Multi-sport site, other Sports at Gorings Mead

In keeping with YMCA Downslink Group inclusivity policies we are keen to encourage the site to be used for other sports. We envisage the 3G pitch may be used for sports other than football, including lacrosse or ultimate frisby. With the additon of storage facilities, the Club House Hall can also be used for sports such as boxing, judo, or pilates.



Healthier Community

By providing a facility where sporting and other physical activities can be staged and used by the community, this will enable better health outcomes for those who participate. There is a widespread consensus about the general links between physical activity and health. It is accepted that regular physical activity can contribute to a reduction many common ailments and diseases.

Sport in the Community

Sport has a unique way of making a positive social and cultural impact in communities across the country

Horsham YMCA Fc recognise that community engagement is pivotal to the long term running an effective and sustainable club. It is important to take a step back from the day to day running of our club to think about the “bigger picture”: Take the time to understand, build and maintain effective relationships; recognise gaps in the community that you could fill; have flexibility to deal with challenges and be creative in finding solutions to community issues.

As a result we have looked at expanding our facilities to be available to the wider Horsham community and we recognise that it is our community will help us to identify potential new members, volunteers and projects that club club can get involved with; ranging from coaching education programmes to celebrating ethnic, gender and ability diversity in sport.

We also recognise that funders are increasingly looking for a wide range of capabilities and rather than supporting a particular club or group, funders are increasingly looking to support projects that benefit or involve the wider community, such as creating welcoming and accessible open spaces.

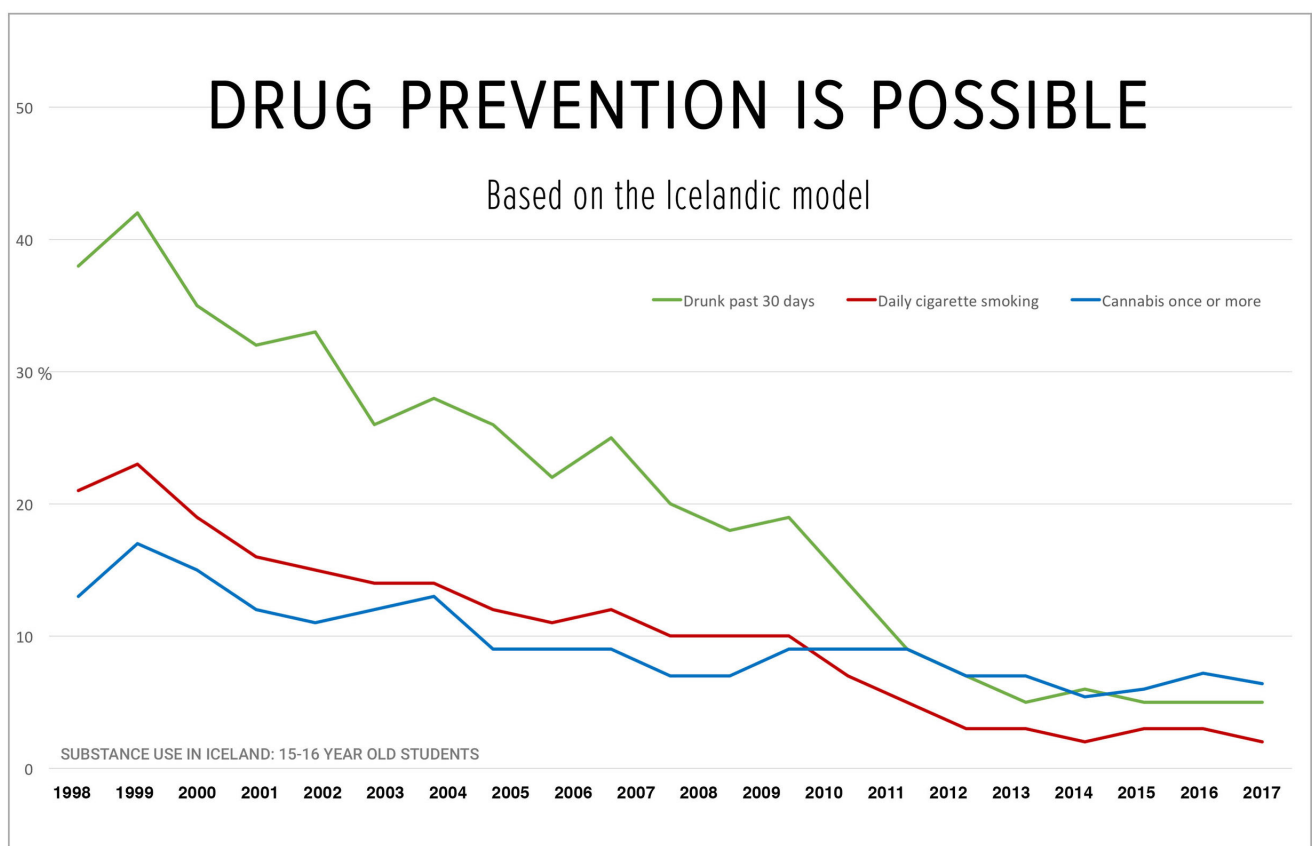
Recognising the positive benefits that our 3G facility is contributing towards getting the community involved in our club will make a significant difference; be it volunteering to coach youth, or support with sustaining club members. As the club engages with members of our local community, we anticipate a number of potential benefits for all that we'll be contributing towards.

As we are able to recognise the benefits of community engagement of sport in the short and long term, this will likely promote wider reductions in anti-social behaviour and economic benefits for the community in the longer term such as:

- ▶ Promoting lifelong learning and supporting disadvantaged communities to gain specific educational outcomes through sport
- ▶ Encouraging crime reduction and community safety by reducing risk of offenses
- ▶ Engaging communities to strengthen their social network and sense of community identity

Lessons from Iceland in reducing alcohol and other substance miss-use in teenagers

There are multiple authoritative recent reports in newspapers and research papers describing the success Iceland has had over 20 years in reducing alcohol abuse and substance miss-use by young people. They have gone from the bottom of the European League table to the top for alcohol and other addictions by providing out of school facilities for your people including youth clubs and sports facilities. See Attachment 2 for further references.



*Source: Iceland Succeeds at Reversing Teenage Substance Abuse the U.S. Should Follow Suit, H.B.Milkman Ph.D.

Town Centre Location and Greener Site

The GM AGP will be located just 0.5 miles from the centre of Horsham close to transport links (bus and rail) and shopping and leisure facilities. We plan to install a covered bike rack on the site and encourage our users to walk, cycle, or take public transport when they visit the facility. This will help to make the site more sustainable.

We also plan to continue to recover rain water from the Club House Roof for use on the pitch and around the site. New landscaping including the planting of additional native hard word trees will compenate for the loss of some existing trees, shrubes, and vegetation and encourage wildlife, wildflowers, and planting additional English Oak, Hornbeam, Maple, and Lime trees making the site a more attractive greener place for local residents to visit, walk around and use for relaxation and general leisure activities.

Opportunity for Horsham

The proposal to convert the grass pitch at Gorings Mead to a new 3G AGP represents a golden oppportunity for the Horsham Community to create a badly needed new playing facility.

The capital cost of ~£900,000 would be funded by a unique partnership of the Football Foundation, YMCA DownsLink Group and particpating club fund raising / donations. We have a contractor McArdle Sport Tec from the Football Foundation Framework supported by a capable and willing team of mostly volunteers prepared to help deliver the project for the community.

