



A PLACE
TO PLAY
SPORT
FOREVER



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CHAIRMAN AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S MESSAGE



Reaching our 125th Anniversary is a magnificent achievement and it is testament to the many people who have served and supported the charity over the years. All of them have been driven by the playing field cause and an acknowledgement that the benefits of playing sport extend well beyond the pitches on which they are played.

Our Victorian founders realised that in protecting and preserving green space for sport they were investing in the future physical and social health of the capital. They knew that without access to pitches to play on there was no sport: and that is why after laying the first cricket pitches at Chingford and Wanstead Flats in 1890 they made arrangements with the Great Eastern Railway for discounted travel for participants.

Removing barriers to participation has been a key factor in our enduring success especially in our projects which are targeted at groups who have been historically denied access to sporting opportunities. Whilst cost is usually the biggest obstacle, low self esteem and lack of confidence come a close second. This was clearly demonstrated by the Active Angels Too project that was launched in 2015. The studio and gym based initiative is aimed at visually impaired teenage girls where the goal is about giving them the confidence to use a community sports facility. The project, which became an instant hit with the girls, was funded by money raised at the Foundation's 2014 Gala Dinner featuring Clare Balding.

We are also pleased to report that our Coping Through Football project won another award, this time at the prestigious London Football Awards hosted by The Willow Foundation. Whilst football is the main activity of this ground breaking scheme, the real outcomes are about engendering active lifestyles, increasing confidence, reducing

alcohol and drug misuse and improving interactive skills. Helping those with long term mental health issues to get their lives back on track means less reliance on acute care services and this represents a fantastic return on the investment made by Dr Mortimer and Theresa Sackler Foundation and Wembley National Stadium Trust who generously funded the project.

The contention that playing fields and the sport played on them can have wider health and social benefits had not been tested until we commissioned Substance to produce the Fields of Dreams report. This piece of research, the first of its kind on playing fields, feels like a line in the sand moment and we hope that it informs and inspires other providers to follow the LPFF model. The report found that over a 12 month period the organisations using Douglas Eyre Sports Centre delivered an annual minimum cost saving to the public purse of £4.8million. This is a staggering sum and one that we hope will cause those thinking of selling off their playing fields to reconsider.

This theme of focusing on sport's wider benefits is clearly seen in the Government's new sports strategy Sporting Future. Guided by five key outcomes of physical health, mental health, individual development, social and community development and economic development, its vision is clear and simple. Reassuringly, it also acknowledges that "playing fields are a vital part of the sporting infrastructure". With the new lucrative Premier League

television deal the investment in grass roots facilities is likely to be significantly increased over the next three years and the Foundation is very keen to assist The Football Association in the implementation of its Parklife programme in London. The Foundation has decades of experience in operating football hub sites and is grateful to the Premier League and FA Facilities Fund and London Marathon Charitable Trust for their investment in the new 3G artificial turf pitch at Peter May Sports Centre.

We would like to thank those of you who attended our 125th Anniversary events during the year particularly the spectacular reception at City Hall graced by the Minister for Sport. Your support means so much to us. We are also very fortunate to have a team of truly dedicated and energetic Trustees who, along with our groundsmen and Head Office staff, do so much to deliver our charitable objectives.



Cadogan

**THE RT HON
THE EARL CADOGAN
KBE DL**
Chairman



Alex Welsh

ALEX WELSH
Chief Executive

WHAT WE DO

Our vision is to create a happier, healthier, more cohesive London by encouraging more people to play sport on affordable, accessible and attractive playing fields. We believe that playing fields are more than expanses of open space and are places where lives can be improved. We do this in a number of ways.

OUR CONTRIBUTION TO HEALTH

We know from experience that sport and the fields on which it is played can encourage local communities to live more active lives and reduce the chances of dying early from preventable illnesses. Society is becoming increasingly sedentary, and with a third of London children being overweight or obese, this problem requires urgent preventative action. Well managed, fully used playing fields and the activity they generate can ensure that the current generation of young people does not die before its time.

OUR CONTRIBUTION TO COMMUNITIES

In addition to health benefits, playing fields can bring communities together by reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and social isolation, increasing feelings of self-worth and creating a sense of identity. We want to get young people off the streets and into teams not gangs, using sport as a means of engendering responsible behaviour and raising aspirations.

OUR CONTRIBUTION TO SPORT

Without a pitch to play on there is no sport. Playing fields are where sport starts and for the gifted few they are where careers start. There is a golden thread running from grassroots facilities to iconic venues such as Wembley, Twickenham and Lord's. We provide a home for many schools and clubs so that they can play and practise the sport they love and in doing so widen, increase and sustain participation.

OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE PRESERVATION OF PLAYING FIELDS

Running parallel to our sports developmental role is the strategic contribution we make to playing field protection in the capital. Through our highly successful Fields at Risk Register we have helped safeguard the long term future of over twenty sites under threat from commercial or residential development. We are the "go to" organisation that community groups contact when local sports pitches are in danger of being lost to development.

“WELL MANAGED, FULLY USED PLAYING FIELDS AND THE ACTIVITY THEY GENERATE CAN ENSURE THAT THE CURRENT GENERATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE DOES NOT DIE BEFORE ITS TIME”



125th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

CITY HALL RECEPTION

The Foundation kicked off its 125th Anniversary celebrations on 21st January with a reception at City Hall attended by the then Sports Minister Helen Grant MP and LPFF President Kate Hoey MP. The event was a huge success and greatly enjoyed by an audience comprising users of the Foundation's grounds, partners from governing bodies of sport and supporters.

One of the special guests was former Arsenal player and PFA Coach Educator Paul Davis who explained to the large gathering how his football career would never have started had it not been for access to playing fields in south London where he was able to hone his skills and develop his talent.



It was a pleasure to attend the 125th Anniversary of the London Playing Fields Foundation. The charity does fantastic work in encouraging participation in sport and outdoor recreation as well as playing a vital role in ensuring that playing fields stay protected. I wish all connected with the charity the very best of luck for the future.

Helen Grant, MP



Below: Summer tournaments



Above: Wanstead Flats

Above: City Hall Reception

WANSTEAD FLATS

As the Foundation was responsible for laying the first pitches on Wanstead Flats in 1890 we were delighted to be special guests of the City of London Corporation at a celebration of 125 years of football at the site.

2015 marked a milestone for both organisations and we were delighted to be part of this commemorative occasion and talk about our shared history. A range of local school teams were invited to take part in a tournament and former Tottenham Hotspur player Ledley King, who grew up playing on Wanstead Flats, was on hand to present the trophies.

Following the presentation Alex Welsh reminded the audience of the special relationship between London Playing Fields Foundation and City of London Corporation and the importance of providing places to play sport forever.

SUMMER TOURNAMENTS

During the summer we held a football tournament for our long standing user clubs at Douglas Eyre Sports Centre and a cricket and seven-a-side tournament for our professional advisers across our adjoining grounds at Fairlop Oak. The aim of both events was to thank them for their support over the years and raise awareness of our wider social inclusion and playing field protection work.

Teams from Savills, Hoare & Co, Bircham Dyson Bell, Saffery Champness and Deacon and Jones took part in the afternoon event at Fairlop. The football and cricket competitions were hotly contested but played in great spirit.

Thirteen teams from across the Foundation's playing fields took part in the London Playing Fields Foundation club tournament on Saturday 6th June. Clubs from our north east grounds including Westhamians FC, Old Parmiterians FC and Egbertians FC enjoyed the tournament on the 3G pitch at Douglas Eyre Sports Centre.

To kick off the football season at London Marathon Playing Field Greenwich on 12th September we delivered a series of 5-a-side, 7-a-side and 9-a-side tournaments featuring 130 local teams.

DURING THE SUMMER WE HELD FOOTBALL AND CRICKET TOURNAMENTS FOR OUR PROFESSIONAL ADVISORS AT FAIRLOP OAK PLAYING FIELD

HISTORY

How can we ensure that London's green spaces are preserved for sport for current and future generations and not be swallowed up by an insatiable appetite for more homes?

Whilst this is undoubtedly a current issue it was in fact the challenge faced by our Victorian forefathers back in 1890 who were concerned about the rampant expansion of built development in the capital and the impact it would have on grassroots sport. The result was an almost unique coming together of open space societies, cricket, rugby and football clubs, leagues and associations, and education and religious bodies.

In an attempt to protect the existing stock of playing fields they undertook an audit of pitches within the Metropolitan area. A total of 117 sites were identified including 36 private sports grounds and 47 sites available for public use. A further 32 sites, including some of the Royal Parks, were identified as potential locations for sports pitches. Amongst this list there are some grounds that are still very familiar to us today such as The Surrey Tavern Ground (now the Kia Oval), Regent's Park, Wanstead Flats and Blackheath.



Those who provide and benefit from playing fields will increasingly have to be able to make the case for no net loss of pitches.

In 1890 the city covered 117 square miles and over the years its boundary expanded as outlying villages were subsumed into the London conurbation with the number of playing field sites in the capital subsequently increasing. Today Greater London covers 600 square miles and contains 1,500 playing fields but there is a great disparity in provision across the city. There are six Inner London boroughs that have less than ten playing field sites whereas the minimum number of sites available in Outer London boroughs is thirty.

During the charity's lifetime London has faced numerous challenges in retaining its recreational space. In the last five years, despite the promise of a lasting Olympic and Paralympic legacy and the urgent need to increase physical activity levels in order to address the obesity crisis, there has been increasing pressure on land from housing developments in the capital. In such a climate those who provide and benefit from playing fields will increasingly have to be able to make the case for no net loss of pitches.

In our 125th year the Foundation's role in London is as important as ever. In order to safeguard the city's playing fields we must be able to demonstrate the value of these 'green hearts' to the local community in terms of the benefits to public health, social cohesion and economic strength. We are committed to safeguarding, and where possible expanding and improving, the capital's playing pitch stock for use by current and future generations and in 2015 commissioned the "Fields of Dreams" report to prove their wider value.



FIELDS OF DREAMS REPORT



The full report can be accessed on our website:
www.lpff.org.uk/About/Reports/Fields-of-Dreams

We have always maintained that playing fields improve the quality of life of the communities they serve with the benefits extending beyond the sport played on our pitches.

However, we have not been able to provide hard evidence to prove this hypothesis. That is until 2015 when we commissioned Substance to provide an impact assessment of activities at Douglas Eyre Sports Centre in Walthamstow.

The report entitled Fields of Dreams, the first of its kind commissioned by a playing fields provider, demonstrates the social impact and cost savings attributed to the work of organisations using Douglas Eyre Sports Centre throughout 2014 and 2015.

In the twelve-month research period, between April 2014 and March 2015 a total of 38,843 people used the facilities; over 18,000 people used the full sized grass football pitches, over 16,000 the artificial turf pitch and nearly 1,000 used the cricket pitch. Sixteen football clubs with 32 teams and a number of local schools played over 600 football matches at the centre. In addition, 59 cricket matches were played during the research period. The artificial turf pitch was utilised during 93% of available slots at peak times during the football season. This demonstrates that the playing field is a vibrant community facility and is fulfilling its aim of ensuring more people are playing sport.

It was calculated that the organisations using the facilities at Douglas Eyre Sports Centre delivered an annual minimum cost saving to the public purse of £4,805,928. The biggest cost savings were attributed to the outcomes of reducing crime and anti-social behaviour and improving health and wellbeing.

This remarkable figure is probably an underestimation of the full cost savings achieved and the assessment has confined itself to those participants under the age of 25. Of the seven outcome areas which focused on community safety, physical health and well-being, educational attainment and economic regeneration, only reducing obesity in girls had an impact score below 10%.

The hope is that other playing field providers will be able to adopt this approach to make their own case for protecting these vital community assets and getting more people to play sport and be physically active.



The savings that well managed playing fields can make to the public purse are stunning and this report should make any school or local authority considering selling off their fields to think again.

Kate Hoey MP, LPFF President

2015 HIGHLIGHTS



Above: Active Angels Too

COPING THROUGH FOOTBALL

In February Coping Through Football won London Community Project of the Year at the prestigious London Football Awards hosted by the Willow Foundation. We were in august company with Eden Hazard winning Player of the Year and Harry Kane (who grew up on our fields) being voted Young Player of the Year. The award highlighted the importance of multi-agency partnerships in improving the quality of community mental health services.

To further demonstrate its commitment to using sport to promote improved mental health and wellbeing, the Foundation signed up to the Mental Health Charter for Sport and Recreation. Through promoting the Coping Through Football project we want to raise awareness of the positive benefits of physical activity on mental wellbeing and to tackle the stigma surrounding mental health.

Leyton Orient Trust, a key partner in the project, provided some great moments for our service users including the opportunity to play a match on the pitch at the Matchroom Stadium and to be presented with the London Football Award during half time at a League Two match. Players Ollie Palmer and Sean Clohessy, refereed matches during our five-a-side competition to commemorate World Mental Health Day in October.

Thanks to project funders Wembley National Stadium Trust, we were able to provide ten service users with free tickets to the England v France match at Wembley Stadium in November.

One service user said:

"I was feeling quite anxious ahead of the game, a combination of fear of another Paris like attack, and my usual social anxiety, but this wouldn't stop me going. I felt that this game represented far more than football, and it would be an honour to be there... My anxiety about who was around me and who I might converse with eased and I started to focus more and more on the present moment, occasionally feeling anxious, but not lasting long enough to spoil my evening."

The year was concluded with a visit from Coping Through Football GP Lead Dr Imtiaz Ahmad, Tottenham Hotspur Club Doctor, who made a presentation to the group on the importance of maintaining a healthy diet.

ACTIVE ANGELS TOO

At the 2014 Gala Dinner Clare Balding made an impassioned plea to get more girls playing sport with the pledges collected helping to fund Active Angels Too. This innovative project provides a range of gym and studio based activities at a community sports facility to visually impaired teenage girls with the intention of building their confidence and self-esteem so that they can start to develop a sporting habit for life. The reaction of the girls has been fantastic and, with their newly found confidence, they are having a great time.



Above: 3G pitch replacement



Above: Saracens collection
Left: London Football Award



CURRY IN THE CITY EVENT

In May seventy guests enjoyed a special evening with Saracens players at our Curry in the City event at Café Spice Namaste. Saracens and England legend Hugh Vyvyan was the MC and he entertained the audience throughout with his humorous and charming style. He also spoke passionately about the ethos of Saracens before leading a highly informative question and answer session with Duncan Taylor, Nils Mordt and Aaron Morris.

The players chatted engagingly about their careers, season highlights and life behind the scenes at Saracens before answering questions from the audience on a range of subjects including the Rugby World Cup, overseas players and how to get the best from your team.

SARACENS

The Foundation is a nominated charity of Saracens who share our view that protecting playing fields to provide better sporting opportunities can improve the lives of local communities. As part of our ongoing relationship with the club we were offered a number of matches at which we could exclusively promote the charity. The Saracens vs Leicester Tigers match on 11th April was such an occasion and we were therefore delighted to get our message out to 10,000 fans who attended the match.

PETER MAY SPORTS CENTRE ATP

As part of our modernisation programme, work started on the new ATP at Peter May Sports Centre at the end of September. Thanks to funding from the Football Foundation, London Marathon Charitable Trust and our own sinking fund, the former worn sand filled pitch will be replaced with a full size state-of-the art 3G surface. The pitch will also benefit from new floodlights, new fencing and the creation of a spectator area similar to Douglas Eyre Sports Centre.

OAKFIELD PLAYING FIELD

During the year LPFF has worked with the Save Oakfield Playing Fields Group in orchestrating a local campaign against Redbridge Council's intention to remove the Green Belt (MOL) designation and build 1,000 homes on this well used sports ground. The 24 hectare site comprises four cricket squares and eleven football pitches all of high quality and is of huge significance to our two national sports.



GALA DINNER

Thursday 12th November saw the LPFF's 125th Anniversary Gala Fundraising Dinner take place at The Savoy Hotel.

Thursday 12th November, 2015 saw the LPFF's 125th Anniversary Gala Fundraising Dinner take place at The Savoy Hotel. Three hundred and twenty guests attended the event which was hosted by Martin Bayfield. A long-term supporter of London Playing Fields Foundation, former Prime Minister Sir John Major, spoke passionately about his love for cricket, and running around as a child on open ground in south London that no longer exists.

The following are extracts from Sir John's speech:

POWER OF SPORT

"Sport is for everyone. It helps form memories you never lose. Boys and girls should be given the same chance to create such memories – and this is the reason we should be saving our playing fields."

"Sport is a joy; a love for life. It is a love that lasts beyond our capacity to play – or indeed our ability to play at all. And in terms of bringing communities together, sport is the greatest unifying force I know."

CONTRIBUTION OF PLAYING FIELDS TO THE FUTURE HEALTH OF THE NATION

"Research shows that playing fields contribute to huge savings in health and social expenditure. Now that obesity is such a problem, it is illogical to allow further playing fields to be lost. The importance of sport is sometimes underestimated by officialdom, but it should not be."

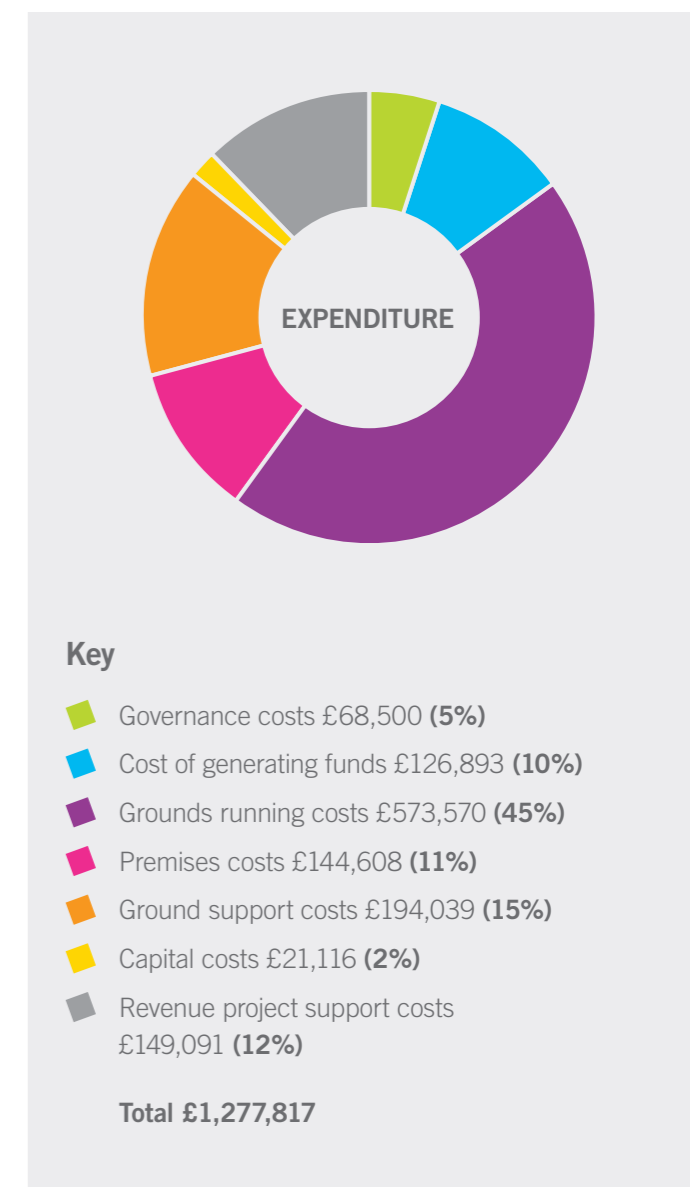
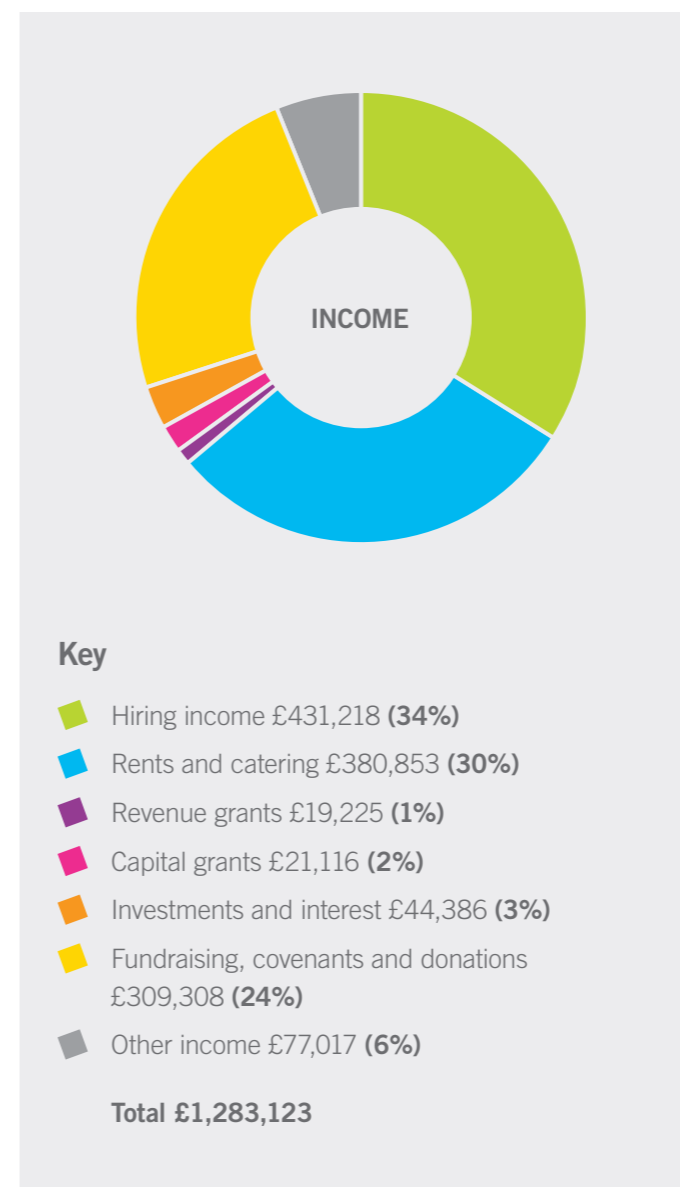
"As a non-statutory service, our playing fields are an easy target when there is a need to cut running costs. We need to campaign to make sport a statutory service, then playing fields will be safe... not for the short-term, but forever."

SUPPORTING LPFF

"The work of the LPFF is crucial and deserves support. Once playing fields are gone we may never get them back. We need to rekindle the philanthropic zeal of our Victorian forefathers, to ensure our children, their children and their children's children have safe places to play. We shouldn't hesitate to seek support from those who can help us achieve that."

The annual Gala Dinner at The Savoy is the Foundation's main fundraising event and is where we celebrated our coming of age and centenary anniversaries in 1911 and 1990. As well as providing a memorable event for all the guests, the evening presents an opportunity to raise much needed funds to support our charitable works, especially with disadvantaged groups.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE 2015



These figures do not include depreciation or investment gains or losses. For a full set of Audited Accounts for 2015 please contact Head Office.

THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS & DONORS

- Baer Charitable Trust
- Bernard Sunley Charitable Foundation
- Boden
- Cadogan Charity
- Dr Mortimer & Theresa Sackler Foundation
- Football Foundation
- Gunnersbury School
- JG Charitable Trust
- London Marathon Charitable Trust
- NELFT
- Quartet Community Foundation
- Sport England
- The Hedley Foundation
- Wates Foundation
- Wembley National Stadium Trust
- Worshipful Company of Gold & Silver Wyre Drawers

And all individual donors who wish to remain anonymous and all who supported the Gala Dinner.

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