

PITCHPOWER

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FOOTBALL ASSESSMENT REPORT

THE FETE FIELD

Derbyshire FA

Active Places Site ID 6021205 Report ID 9850









This report has been compiled for TANSLEY JUNIORS FC and Derbyshire FA to provide information on the standard of the football pitches and outlines recommendations on how to improve the quality and maintenance of these pitches.

Inspection Window

1 APR 2023 / 30 JUN 2023

Inspection Reason

GENERAL PITCH MAINTENANCE ADVICE

Report Completion Date

22 MAY 2023

This report looks solely at the Football pitches for TANSLEY JUNIORS FC to see how support can be offered in improving the standard of Football pitches and level of maintenance across the area. Please note these recommendations are based on the information obtained and/or provided and are for guidance purposes only. Any works undertaken are the responsibility of the club/organisation.



Site report:

THE FETE FIELD





THE FETE FIELD

Site ID: 6021205



Map Key	Pitch Name	PQS Score
1	PITCH 1	 Advanced - 73%
2	PITCH 2	• Good - 73%

Date inspection submitted 13/04/23

Inspection submitted by ralph.emmerson@sky.com

Next available inspection window 1 Jul 2023 / 31 Oct 2023













Report produced by: KDuffill@thegma.org.uk

Many thanks for taking the time to complete the PitchPower (PP) submission for your site which is the second for the site (the first was undertaken inOctober 2020).

In overall terms, the pitches were assessed as 'ADVANCED/GOOD' which compares very favourably with the previous submission (October 2020) where the pitches were graded as 'GOOD/ADVANCED'. It should be noted that 2 PP assessments per year are required for recipients of GPMF. One of which should be between November and March.

The pitch grades reflect the current pitch maintenance regime in place and also the impact of GPMF. There would be benefit if future submissions contained more details in terms of the pitch maintenance work undertaken.

It should be noted however that, the major factor in determining pitch grade relates to levels of grass cover, other factors may need to be considered. These include; where the assessments were undertaken, levels of utilization and in some cases limited or no use, a relatively favourable 2021/2022 winter in terms of rainfall and weather conditions generally, followed by a very long, hot and dry summer. Therefore, pitch grades may be over or understated depending on these factors. As the assessments highlight, there has been some loss of grass cover in some high wear areas. In order for the pitches to continue to attain a pitch grade that is 'GOOD' or above on a consistent basis, some adjustments to the current pitch maintenance regime are needed and ideally a more intensive end of season renovation plan developed which should include: scarifying, vertical deep aeration, top dressing (given the presence of a piped drainage system), goalmouth/high wear area repairs, wide area overseeding (which should be split), and weed control 4-6 weeks before or after

grass establishment. Ideally, this should be combined with a liquid feed in order to maximise any available budget.

The pitch(es) should also be linear deep aerated in the autumn before the onset of poor weather. If there is only sufficient budget for one deep aeration, then the priority would be the autumn. Ideally, the pitches would also be aerated (slitting) and groomed during the playing season. Depending on the levels of utilisation this is likely to be fortnightly.

A number of equipment recommendations have also been made, please refer to the Equipment Section of this report.

Please Note: The maintenance budget figure in this report does not relate to any potential current or future grant award. It is an approximate budget to carry out all the listed tasks each season to the ideal frequency. Any funding awarded would help subsidise the cost of delivering the full recommendations;

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Maintenance

Attention required in these areas:

Mowing >

Decompaction >

Application of selective herbicide (weed treatment) >

Overseeding (Out of season renovation) >

Application of fertiliser >

Goal Mouth repairs (Renovation) >

Surface Grooming >

Slitting >

Goal mouth repairs (In season) >

Scarification >

Top Dressing (Renovation) >

Equipment

Attention required in these areas:

Compact tractor >

Mowing equipment >

Combination turf grooming tool >

Slitter >

Line marker >

Soil Sampler >



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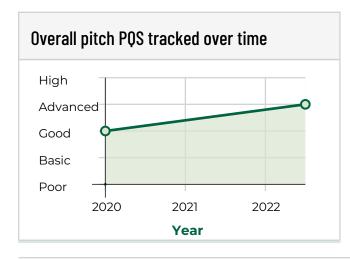




Pitch 1 Football - Junior Football 11v11

CURRENT PQS SCORE: Advanced - 73%

AREA				PQS GRADE
Grass height	40 —	30 🛧	40 —	3 —
Grass coverage	68% —	78% 🛧	90% 🛧	3 🛧
Weed coverage	4% -	1% 🛧	0%	4 -
Surface debris	Above 🛧 standard	Above 🛧 standard	Above 🛧 standard	4 🛧
Topsoil depth	200mm 🛧	200mm -	230mm -	4 -
Thatch depth	0mm 🛧	0mm 🛧	0mm 🛧	4 🛧
Root depth	150mm <mark></mark>	200mm -	200mm -	4 -
Drainage Following Rainfall	Slow drainage 💳			2 -
Goal posts	Compliant —			1 —
Line markings	Standard 🖖			ו 🗸
Surface evenness	Standard 🗕			2 -



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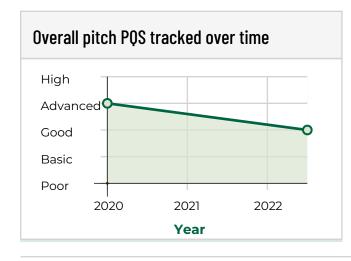




Pitch 2 Football - Junior Football 9v9

CURRENT POS SCORE: Good - 73% **0** 🖗 🖸 AREA POS GRADE **Grass height** 4 🛧 45 🔸 30 🛧 20 🔸 Grass coverage 80% -60% -65% 🔸 2 🔸 Weed coverage 0% -0% -1% ---4 🗕 Surface debris Above 🛧 Above 🛧 Above 🛧 4 🛧 standard standard standard **Topsoil depth** 270mm -200mm -200mm -4 🗕 Thatch depth 0mm 🛧 0mm 🛧 0mm 🛧 4 🛧 **Root depth** 230mm -200mm -150mm -4 🗕 **Drainage Following** Slow drainage -2 🗕 Rainfall **Goal posts** Compliant -1 — Line markings Standard -1 💻 Surface evenness Standard -2 🗖

Grass coverage cap: You received a score of Good therefore your overall PQS has been capped at Good













MAINTENANCE

These recommendations are in priority order

MOWING Frequency: Weekly	Mowing is undertaken 'in house' using a Stiga ride on rotary mower that is better suited to more domestic situations. The submission indicated a range of grass heights (20mm - 45mm), which probably reflects where the assessments were undertaken and some grass cover lost.
Recommended for: Whole Ground	In general terms, grass height is being broadly managed within the desired spectrum. It should also be noted that 2022 has seen a much warmer autumn which prolonged the growing season which was followed by a period of very cold (frosty) weather in early 2023 followed by the wettest March for 40 years and a wet mid-April which has impacted Spring mowing regimes.
	There does appear to be an established mowing regime in place and the guidance below is included for readers of the report who may not be familiar with the more important mowing principles. Mowing regimes should not be a fixed period, but rather in
	accordance with the pattern of growth, and should be frequent enough to maintain a density in the grass cover, which in periods of high growth can be as often as twice per week. (remove no more than 1/3 of the

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MOWING CONTINUED

leaf length in a single operation).

Approximate height of cut to be 35mm - 40mm to give the pitch some protection in the winter months when the grass is not growing. During the growing season maintain at 35mm, possibly reducing to 30mm for end of season renovation.

This will enable the roots to continue development and allow the top growth [leaves/stems] to thicken out and create a strong sward able to stand up to the rigors of the sport. Mowing should be carried out using a Rotary Roller Mower and the direction of cut alternated to encourage tillering (lateral growth).

This also will enable the quality of cut to be of a high standard and also allow for very light rolling to create a safe surface.

PLEASE NOTE: The indicative budget outlined in the report does not include mowing costs.

LEARN MORE ABOUT MOWING >













DECOMPACTION

Frequency: 2 x per year	control and turf nutrition. In many respects, deep aeration should be seen as the most important operation to undertake during the season.
Recommended for: Whole Ground Est Cost: £1700	There are also a number of references to poor surface drainage/standing water together with postponements (5), which are likely to be the result of a compacted soil profile. The submission did not make any reference to any deep aeration being undertaken, which should be seen as a priority given that the club was awarded GPMF in March 2020.
	Linear deep aeration should be undertaken in the autumn before the onset of poor weather - this method creates 'channels' that help to disperse surface water more quickly. If the linear approach is not possible then undertake vertical deep aeration. Timing of this operation is critical in order to deliver maximum benefit. Ground conditions need to be such that there is some moisture in the profile but not excessive to the point where there is standing water.
	Ideally, vertical deep aeration should be undertaken at the end of the 2022/2023 season which could be combined with top dressing. Using a vertical action machine equipped with 18- 24mm solid tines, at no more than 100mm spacing's to the maximum achievable depth no shallower than 180mm.
	Linear deep aeration is not recommended

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Deep aeration/Decompaction should be seen as one of the main

pitch maintenance priorities along with overseeding, weed control and turf nutrition. In many respects, deep aeration







DECOMPACTION CONTINUED

in the spring due to the risk of the ground cracking – especially with heavy clay soils. If budgets are limited then the priority would be to deep aerate in the autumn.

This operation is essential for aeration to allow air, water and nutrients to pass into and through the soil profile, increase drainage and improve the breakdown of organic matter (thatch). This will increase the infiltration of water through the soil profile.

The priority would be to undertake the autumn deep aeration/decompaction.

LEARN MORE ABOUT DECOMPACTION >



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APPLICATION OF SELECTIVE HERBICIDE (WEED TREATMENT)

Frequency:

1 x per year

Recommended for:

Whole Ground

Est Cost:

£650

Weed presence in the submission for all pitches was minimal (1% - 4%), and may well reflect the undertaking of weed control on an annual basis referred to in the submission, which is likely to be linked to the GPMF received by the club.

Weed control is an important factor in pitch quality and should be undertaken annually, ideally at the end of each season. Therefore May/June for 2023 and this could also be combined with a liquid feed e.g. Seaweed.

Ensure that any overseeding is undertaken either 4-6 weeks before or after any weed control has been undertaken. For example, overseeding can take place 4 weeks after application of weedkillers with the active ingredients 144g/L fluroxypyr, 80g/L clopyralid and 2.5g/L florasulam. Others are around 6-8 weeks, for example.

Weeds will tend to die back in the autumn resulting in a loss of ground cover and an increased risk of postponed games.

Selective herbicide should be applied by a fully qualified professional with the appropriate equipment and paperwork. It should not be applied any sooner than 4-6 weeks before or after seeding. This will depend on the product used and product details should be referred to.

Typically mowing should not take place for 3 days before and 3 days after application. Do not apply in drought conditions it may damage the turf and will not treat weeds effectively. Selective herbicides should be

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APPLICATION OF SELECTIVE HERBICIDE (WEED TREATMENT) CONTINUED

sprayed in the dry with little to no wind. Most selective herbicides are rain fast within 24 hours of application. If rain falls prior to this it could affect the success of weed control.

To reduce costs and increase effectiveness this operation is usually limited to one application in late May once new grasses have established and all annual weeds germinated. There may also be benefit in combining this operation with a liquid feed which would be both cost effective and provide the pitch with a short term boost during the growing season.

> LEARN MORE ABOUT APPLICATION OF Selective Herbicide (weed treatment) >



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OVERSEEDING (OUT OF SEASON RENOVATION)

Frequency:

1 x per year

Recommended for:

Whole Ground

Est Cost: £2500 Generally, the best approach in terms of overseeding would be to 'split' this into two operations – end of season and late summer e.g. August/September/early October for the reasons outlined below. Undertaking any overseeding in a single operation is unlikely to be effective. It may be that depending on the nature of Spring in any given year, consideration should be given to the late summer approach.

There have been instances in recent years where very hot summers e.g. 2019 have significantly impacted overseeding, and increasingly a more flexible approach is likely to be needed. The summer of 2022 has reinforced this point.

The submission did not include any references to wide area overseeding, which given the award of GPMF in March 2020, is one of the most important areas to focus on (along with deep aeration, weed control and turf nutrition).

Essentially, it's important that the right approach to overseeding is undertaken - the seed requires 'seed to soil contact' - and 'broadcasting' will not be effective.

Currently, although there is a reasonable amount of grass cover away from the high wear areas (the assessments probably understate overall grass cover), improved grass sward quality would make a considerable difference to the quality of the pitch.

There would be benefit in overseeding the pitches in their entirety at least every couple of years at the end of each

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OVERSEEDING (OUT OF SEASON RENOVATION) CONTINUED

season, with a view to improving overall sward quality, although rising costs may require a more targeted approach to each pitch.

Whilst grass cover is currently quite high, the sward is likely to contain a high % of annual meadow grass which will 'die back' over the winter months and grass cover will reduce. The aim of overseeding therefore is to reduce the impact of this through the development of better grass sward quality.

In this case, grass sward quality does need to be improved, especially in the high wear areas where grass cover has been lost, and usage levels are high. 11-12 training/match hours per week per pitch.

By way of comparison, the average recommended use for a wellmaintained natural turf pitch is 4 hours per week. If usage is regularly exceeding this the wear will need to be mitigated by increased maintenance and input of resources to offset the extra hours of use, if not the club may expect a significant deterioration of the surfaces particularly during winter months.

In addition, the majority of pitches also experienced significant issues with 'Drypatch' following the very hot and dry summer of 2022 which resulted in the majority of recreational pitches starting the 2022/2023 season with less grass cover than usual.

Disc seed in 3 directions at a rate of 35 grams per square metre (approximately 10-12 x 20kg bags of Perennial Ryegrass seed for a

LEARN MORE ABOUT OVERSEEDING (OUT OF SEASON RENOVATION) >

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OVERSEEDING (OUT OF SEASON RENOVATION) CONTINUED

full-size pitch). To improve grass coverage and quality overseeding is required using a dwarf perennial ryegrass mix of at least three cultivars. This should be applied using either a disc seeder or drill seeder which sows the seed directly into the soil at a rate of 30-40gsm per square metre.

Timing of application is key, as seed will struggle to germinate in dry hot weather without irrigation. Consider over seeding during the late August early September timeframe as this will allow maximum time for germination and establishment to take place. Liaise with suitable consumables suppliers to identify the most suitable seed mixture given site specifics. However, it is important to consider that the highest rated cultivars require a higher input, i.e. irrigation and fertiliser etc.

There would also be benefit in undertaking limited overseeding of the high wear areas of the pitch before the onset of autumn. The priority would be to overseed the width of the six yard box through the length of the pitch.

> LEARN MORE ABOUT OVERSEEDING (OUT OF SEASON RENOVATION) >

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APPLICATION OF FERTILISER

Frequency:

2 x per year

Recommended for: Whole Ground

Est Cost: £2300 It is understood that the pitches received one application in 2022 which was undertaken by a local farmer. However, the details in terms of NPK formulation, application rate and whether conventional or controlled release are not known.

This is an area where a degree of review is needed, ideally following soil analysis. As outlined below, the cost of granular products is increasing significantly and it may be better to begin to think in terms of spring/summer liquid solutions (little and often), with a slow release granular application in the autumn.

Experience has shown that where funds are limited and best value the major concern, a controlled release product provides 20% immediate availability of nutrients and the remainder over 4-5 months offers the best combination of value and result.

This type of fertiliser provides a slow "drip" feed of nutrient avoiding excessive soft top growth susceptible to disease, encourages root and shoot development and avoids the common difficulty of increasing mowing regimes to keep up with the pace of growth even if only for a confined time period.

Ideally, two applications per year are required - Spring/Summer and Autumn/Winter. Soil analysis is advised before committing significant budget to granular fertilisers. There is a case for applying liquid feeds on a regular basis during spring and summer, and then a controlled granular

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APPLICATION OF FERTILISER CONTINUED

release in the autumn.

As stated above, consideration could also be given to liquid forms of turf nutrition e.g. Seaweed, given a) rising cost and supply of granular products and b) the need to identify more sustainable approaches. There is however, a trade off in terms of relatively low cost and reduced longevity compared to granular products.

> LEARN MORE ABOUT APPLICATION OF FERTILISER >











GOAL MOUTH REPAIRS (RENOVATION)

Frequency:

1 x per year

Recommended for: Whole Ground

Est Cost:

£1400

The submission did make reference to the repair of high wear areas such as goalmouths at the end of the season. The approach below should be followed as far as possible.

In areas devoid of vegetation cultivate to create a tilth and relieve compaction before incorporating a sand/soil 50/50 or 70/30 rootzone. Firm and restore levels prior to a further light raking and seeding. If possible cover with germination or protection netting (scaffold debris netting will do) and irrigate to keep the soil moist.

> LEARN MORE ABOUT GOAL MOUTH REPAIRS (RENOVATION) >

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SURFACE GROOMING

Frequency: Fortnightly

Recommended for: Whole Ground Ideally, this is an operation that would be undertaken by the club/council but obviously requires the necessary equipment. See Equipment section.

Any presence of worm casts should be alleviated by weekly brushing of the surface. Worm casts are unsightly and can smear and cover fine turfgrasses. This would also help with thatch build up, dew dispersal and help to break up any surface debris.

Once the growing season slows, ideally a grass care combination system should be used which will enable brushing, slitting and light rolling to be undertaken in one operation.

PLEASE NOTE: The indicative budget outlined in the report does not include implementing a surface grooming regime.

LEARN MORE ABOUT SURFACE GROOMING >

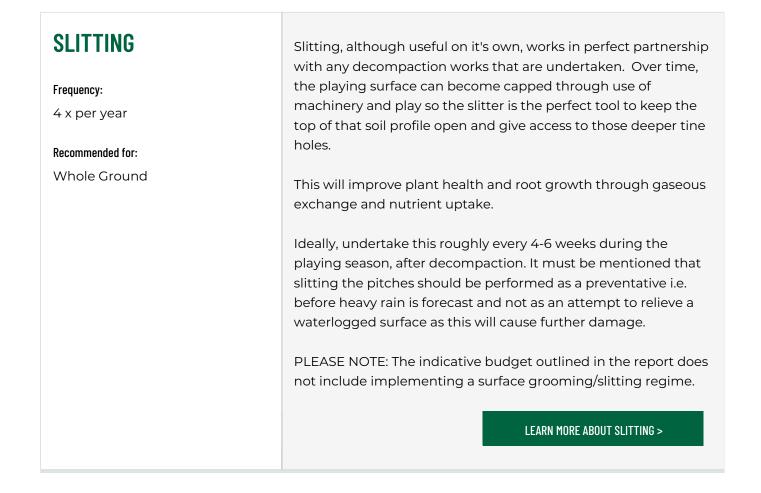
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GOAL MOUTH REPAIRS (IN SEASON)

Frequency:

3 x per year

Recommended for:

Whole Ground

Est Cost:

£120

Hand fork the goalmouth and gently apply heave to the fork to relieve compaction, if the area is bare scratching the top soil with a landscaping rake (plastic) to create a fine tilth.

Top dress using a pan shovel with a suitable material (sports sand or sand/soil mix) to return the area to desired surface level, work the dressing into the surface as you go by brushing or raking, taking care not to smother any grass cover. If conditions are suitable add some grass seed, irrigate as required and cover with germination sheeting or scaffold netting if available.

> LEARN MORE ABOUT GOAL MOUTH REPAIRS (IN SEASON) >

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SCARIFICATION

Frequency: 1 x per year Recommended for: Whole Ground Est Cost: £650 Levels of thatch presence were assessed as minimal, which may reflect where the assessments were undertaken and any thatch 'kicked out' - levels of grass cover were quite low in the assessment areas.

Thatch layers can often result in a very saturated upper 25mm of the soil profile after prolonged rainfall where the profile at a depth of 100mm can be relatively dry. Surface water therefore, is often retained by any presence of thatch and most recreational pitches have thatch layers of 10mm-15mm.

End of 2022/2023 season to reduce thatch levels and some prioritisation of pitches may be needed. Ideally a tractor mounted scarifier should be used. An alternative would be the use of a spring rake although consideration would need to be given to collecting the arisings.

HIgh levels of thatch will contribute significantly to waterlogging during the winter months as the thatch tends to act as a 'sponge'. The underlying soil profile can often be quite dry at a depth of for example - 150mm.

LEARN MORE ABOUT SCARIFICATION >

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TOP DRESSING (RENOVATION)

Frequency: 1 x per year Recommended for: Whole Ground Est Cost: £2850 This operation is most effectively undertaken at the end of the season. Any top dressing undertaken 'in season' should be relatively low e.g. 20-30 tonnes and it is essential that top dressing is undertaken in dry conditions. Ideally the pitch would be deep aerated (vertical method – 'vertidrain') first, and then the sand worked into the profile with a drag mat.

Given the presence of piped drainage systems for both pitches (2005), it is important that annual top dressing is undertaken in order to maintain the 'hydraulic connection' between the playing surface and the piped drainage system. Therefore, ideally 30-60 tonnes per full size pitch – medium grade sand, and some prioritisation may be needed based on utilisation and levels of wear.

Should budgets/funding permit – ideally 30-60 tonnes per full size pitch – medium grade sand, and some prioritisation may be needed based on utilisation and levels of wear.

Remedial work should be undertaken to sand and seed any bare and undulated areas on the pitches particularly goal mouths and centre spots. The priority should be the width of the penalty area through the length of the pitch.

The top dressing should be compatible with the existing soil as incompatible materials can lead to issues with surface drainage and cause root breaks leading to an unstable surface. Any top dressing should be obtained from a reputable source and

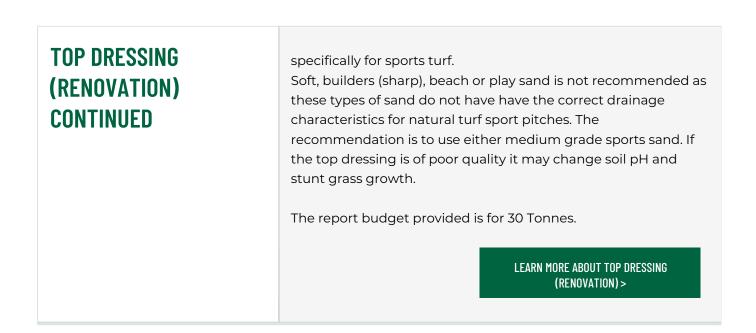
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ESTIMATED BUDGET TO CARRY OUT RECOMMENDATIONS

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£12170

Please note, the costs provided above are indicative and may vary dependent on quantities and frequency. This estimated budget should be used to help plan and prioritise work, but is not linked to the amount of grant funding you may receive. Following the recommended works should help you achieve the GOOD pitch standard, or if already at that level, sustain it.

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EQUIPMENT

To carry out the maintenance specified above, we recommend the following equipment to carry out the activities.

COMPACT TRACTOR	The Stiga ride on rotary mower used for mowing the pitches is relatively limited and better suited to smaller, more domestic situations. A compact tractor offers much greater flexibility. Multiple implements can be used given a three point linkage and PTO.	
	 25 - 30 horsepower A cutting deck could also be considered. Turf tread tyres ROPS (Ride On Protection System) PTO (Power Take Off) Three point linkage Front weights Secure storage may also need to be considered. 	
	LEARN MORE ABOUT COMPACT TRACTOR >	



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GROUNDS Management

ASSOCIATION



MOWING EQUIPMENT A compact tractor with a cutting deck could also be considered. Rotary Roller Mower - recommended. Whilst there is a degree of compromise in cutting quality, rotary units are more easily maintained than cylinder mowers, service costs are less and heights of cut more easily adjusted. • Tractor mounted via three point linkage and PTO • Working width minimum 180cm • Large diameter front and rear rollers • Sealed roller bearings. As outlined above, the benefits over cylinder equipment are a) less expensive to maintain b) easier height of cut adjustment c) more flexible in terms of mowing conditions and d) high quality finish on a consistent basis.

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COMBINATION TURF GROOMING TOOL

The club do have a slitter which is trailed behind the Stiga ride on mower..

Grass Care Combination System – for which a three point linkage is required. This equipment enables up to four operations to be undertaken in a single pass.

- Carrier Frame
- Slitter
- Brush
- Rake
- \cdot Light Roller
- Minimum working width circa 180cm.

LEARN MORE ABOUT COMBINATION TURF Grooming tool >

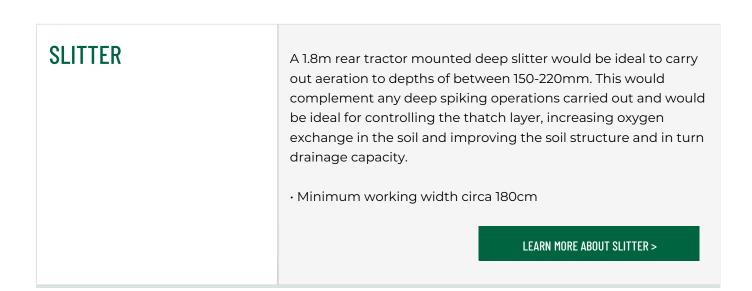
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FOR FOOTBA





The club's current line marker is 20 years old and may well require replacement.		
• Sprayjet marker – recommended.		
• Transfer wheel – for back up.		
 Setting out equipment – as required. 		
Sprayjet markers achieve very good grass leaf contact, and generally use less paint than a transfer wheel machine. That said, nozzles need to be cleaned consistently, and the battery needs to be recharged after use (with large sites).		
There would be benefit in having both a xfer wheel and sprayjet marker.		
LEARN MORE ABOUT LINE MARKER >		

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SOIL SAMPLER	Due to the need for regular soil sampling (GPMF requires two submissions per year), it is recommended that the club considers the purchase of a suitable soil sampler.
	The club may be eligible through the Football Foundation to use it's new or existing grant to contribute towards the cost of a Soil Sampler. Please contact your County FA for more details.
	LEARN MORE ABOUT SOIL SAMPLER >







TRAINING

As well as undertaking the maintenance activities as described above, we would also recommend attending the following training courses to further develop your skills and understanding of grass pitch maintenance.

Click here for information on training courses.

VISIT TRAINING COURSES >

Recommended Training

Ralph

Online Modules Level 1 -Football

Read More >

Dave Toplis

Online Modules Level 1 -Football

Read More >









WANT TO APPLY FOR FUNDING?

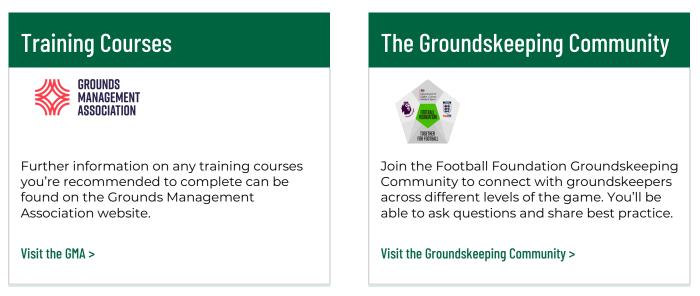
FOOTBALL FOUNDATION FUNDING APPLICATION PORTAL

You could be eligible for a grant to help you carry out the recommendations in this report. Click 'Apply here' and you could be on your way to securing a grant and being a part of our mission to transform this country's grassroots game.

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To apply for funding visit

APPLY.FOOTBALLFOUNDATION.ORG.UK



Find out more about the Football Foundation's plan to transform the country's grass pitches

Visit our website, which has lots of information about other resources and funding opportunities we're offering organisations involved in the grassroots game.

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