

Warnford Playground application for a grant from the Warnford Parish Meeting of November 2020

This application is for a grant of £450 from the Warnford Parish Meeting on 12th November 2020 for the year ending 5th April 2022.

Please find attached background information on the Playground, our most recent accounts and projected expenditure for 2021/22.

Warnford Playground, R.P. Chester Memorial Trust Co Ltd

The Charity was set up in 1974 to provide an area of play and open space for Warnford Village residents. It is located off Lippen Lane adjacent to the river Meon in an idyllic setting. The land was donated by the Chester family and is also a memorial to R.P. Chester, who was the first member of the family to live in the village, having purchased the Warnford Estate in the 1930s. He died in 1968. Since its birth, the Playground has been run by a group of unpaid trustees, who are traditionally members of the village, who administer the charity and who take on the responsibility for the upkeep of the Playground itself and the playground equipment that sits on the land. There are currently 4 trustees, all villagers. As well as being a registered charity, it is also a limited company.

As well as Warnford villagers, the Playground is used by many visitors, particularly in the summer months, where it is a favourite for family picnics and we believe that all would agree that the Playground is a great asset to the village.

Reasons for the Application

The Playground is a registered charity and has no regular income. It therefore relies on donations and goodwill to keep it running. We have limited, but very welcome, financial support from the Church via the village fete, held on the Playground, the Tom Coles Charity and the Christmas Market.

In the past, this small income has been 'topped up' with grants from the Parish Meeting and we ask that this continues. One of the major costs each year is the insurance which now exceeds £500. The upkeep and running of the machinery is another drain on resources, with the cost of fuel, oil and servicing usually amounting to over £100 per annum. We also need to regularly top up the bark chippings in the play areas and complete running repairs on the play equipment to adhere to the recommendations from the annual playground safety inspections, all of which comes at a cost.

Looking to the future

At some point we will have to replace climbing frames, which when purchased in the 1990s, cost in excess of £8000, and also the ride-on tractor, which cost £2200 some 8 years ago. Our strimmers, while still functional, are very old and we are investigating the possibility of a battery operated replacement.

The issue of ash dieback, which affects most, if not all, of the ash trees on the Playground will certainly have a severe impact on our resources in the near future. However, it does now seem that this may be tackled in piecemeal fashion over a number of years.

The Parish Meeting's previous support has helped considerably to keep the charity solvent.

We ask that serious consideration be given to this application and if granted, it will be used towards the payment of our yearly insurance premium.

Thank you.

The Playground Trustees,
Stephen Short, Phil Chadder, Alex Bennett and Robin Athawes.