



The Parish Centre,
50 Gerald's Way,
Chalford,
Stroud,
Gloucestershire,
GL6 8FJ

Chalford Valley Playing Field to reopen 28th August

Chalford Parish Council has now been formally advised that site investigations of the playing field are complete. We are relieved and delighted to report that the conclusions state that the human health risk to users is very low. We intend to reopen the playing field to the public once necessary work is complete. This should be on 28th August.

The investigation results have been reviewed under Part 2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 by the Stroud District Council Environmental Health Team. The Council has determined that the site is 'Category 4', the lowest level of risk. Consequently, their inspection and assessment of the site have ceased.

The closure of the field during these lengthy investigations has been frustrating. After many years of doubt and supposition about the presence of asbestos and associated risks, we are now in a position of certainty. We know that asbestos containing material from Fibrecrete was used to level the site in 1946. Chrysotile (white), crocidolite (blue) and amosite (brown) asbestos lie beneath the surface. Chrysotile is present at the surface in molehills but the level of fibre release is of no significant risk of significant harm. A climate risk assessment has concluded that climate change does not significantly change the risk evaluation.

To maintain the low level of risk, it is important to maintain vegetation and hard cover. The amount of bare earth must also be minimised.

Chalford Parish Council's Grounds Team are responsible for maintaining the playing field. They could be exposed to higher levels of exposure than the public for short periods of time especially during mowing. The Council must take reasonable action to reduce these risks under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Control of Asbestos Regulations. Any future work to the field that disturbs or digs into the surface will also carry these risks. Anticipating this outcome the Council has been preparing. We have bought a new mower that will reduce levels of airborne fibres during mowing and hopefully displace mole activity. We have completed statutory assessments for non-licenced working with asbestos. The Groundsman is following statutory training. We are finalising a Management Plan and Risk Assessments.

Once these measures are complete the Grounds Team can do the work needed to reopen the Playing Field. This work is expected during the week of 24th August and the Playing Field to reopen to the public by Friday 28th August. The play equipment may not initially be available for use until statutory safety inspections have been completed. We are pressing for this to be completed as a matter of priority.

We will hold a Public Consultation Meeting in early September. At this we will discuss further the reports and the future management and use of the Playing Field.