

RENTAL POLICY RECOMMENDATION

CFUG PAPER FOR CORAM'S FIELDS TRUSTEES AND MANAGEMENT



PURPOSE

This paper provides a set of recommendations in relation to the ongoing review of the "Rental Policy" by Coram's Fields Trustees and Management.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Coram's Fields currently does not have an explicit "Rental policy" which can be directly commented on for the purpose of the "Review". Therefore, this CFUG 'Rental policy recommendation' is based on:

- Current actual rental situation in Coram's Fields.
- Assessment of the rental changes over the last 4 years.
- Experiences and feedback by CFUG members and users in general.
- Our analysis of the relevant facts, including Coram's Fields accounts.
- Rental pricing and conditions in Camden and Islington.

This CFUG recommendation is intended to provide a fair and reasonable general rental policy, which truly respects the Trust Deed, whilst still allowing Coram's Fields to collect significant revenues that can support its development.

Rental policy recommendations are to be found on pages 4 to 8 of this paper. Rental policy recommendations deal with the following:

I. **Rental of Sport facilities, Day operating hours (Section 2.1, Page 4):**

We seek to encourage appropriate rental to children sports and other organisations. We seek to encourage rental to and partnerships with schools, charities and teenagers, so to maximise the use of the facilities by children and youth.

II. **Rental of Sport facilities to Adults, Evening operating hours (Section 2.2, p. 5)**

We seek to limit rental to adults solely to out of operation hours, after park's closure to the general public.

III. **Rental of Coram's Fields Grounds (Section 3, Page 6)**

We seek to limit rental of Coram's Fields grounds solely to activities intended for children, under appropriate conditions.

IV. **Rental revenue restrictions (Section 5, Page 8)**

We seek to ensure appropriate incentives for the use of Rental Revenues.

INTRODUCTION

Coram's Fields is a park dedicated to children. It is situated on the grounds of the former Foundling Hospital (1739-1926). Coram's Fields was established in 1936 following a public subscription, led by local residents.

Clause 1 of the Trust Deed, key governing document, states: "*Coram's Fields is to be preserved, developed and maintained in perpetuity as an open space for the welfare of children and young people*". Adults are not allowed in the park unless accompanied by a child.

In the period 2014-18, however, Coram's Fields charity has significantly increased rental to adults. Estimated additional¹ 40,000 single adults per year² are now allowed in Coram's Fields, during normal day hour operation, when children are present.

The other rental significantly impacting all children, and the nature of the park, is the annual Christmas period rental to a Corporate marquee.

Excessive rental to adults and private functions were amongst the key areas of objection by local residents in early 2015. This protest and a petition by local residents preceded the creation of the Coram's Fields User Group in September 2015.

Here we propose what we believe is an acceptable and a reasonable rental policy. Such a policy would allow Coram's Fields to retain significant income from rental, whilst remaining true to the Trust Deed and the Objects of the Charity: to preserve and develop the land for the use by children.

Key Considerations

In proposing these policies we have considered the following key areas of concern:

1. Direct impact on children;
2. Health and safety;
3. Safeguarding;
4. Structural damage;
5. Contractual issues;
6. Investment, development and maintenance incentives.

¹ "Adult Lunch-time football league", was not considered for the purposes of this estimate.

² See Appendix 1 for estimates (from Coram's Fields Annual Reports 2014-2017).

RENTAL POLICY RECOMMENDATION

Our policy recommendation differentiates between:

- *School hours (9am-3.30pm) - Monday to Friday, when children are in schools;*
- *Afternoon hours (4pm-8pm) - After school hours when children are in the park;*
- *Evening hours (from park closure to 10pm);*
- *Weekends.*

Key hours required for free play are those times when children are in Coram's Fields and all its facilities are in significant use. These are Afternoon hours on Monday to Friday (est. 4pm to 6pm in winter; 4pm to 8pm in summer); and Weekends (Saturday and Sunday), 9am to closing.

1. CORAM'S FIELDS - WHAT IS BEING RENTED?

- 1.1. Coram's Fields park consists of 7 acres of land dedicated to children. Coram's Fields has been developed for play by toddlers and very young children (sand pits); younger children (swings, adventure playgrounds, playground equipment), free play (grass areas, paddling pool) and older children and teenagers (sport facilities for football, basketball, table tennis, tennis).
- 1.2. This rental policy will apply to rental of any portion of the seven acres of Coram's Fields, all of it developed for the use by children.

2. SPORT FACILITIES

Sports facilities are a key park area for all children and youth (7+). The football area (the very site of the demolished buildings of the Founding hospital) has been developed with this in mind - to provide an outlet in the park for older children and teenagers. Coram's Fields belongs to children, and has been developed for the health and education for children of all ages. In renting, these same children are being displaced as users, by paying adults. To all of us aware of living conditions in central London and the issues affecting our children, it is doubly clear that current generations of youth and teenagers need this safe area to protect them against obesity and the waves of knife crime currently affecting young generations in central London.

2.1. Rental during Day operating hours and Weekends:

2.1.1. Rental of sporting facilities in Coram's Fields in the Day hours shall be fully based on activities for children, schools, youth sport clubs and other children related sports and activities.

2.1.1.1. **Local state schools:** Local authority schools will be able to use sporting facilities for free and will have a priority in booking.

2.1.1.2. **Independent Schools:** Schools will have a priority in renting all sport facilities during day hours 9am-3.30pm, Monday to Friday. Schools will be given an option to contract annually at a negotiated fee. Schools will have a flexibility in renting one or more pitches, and block bookings will not be required.

2.1.1.3. **Sport clubs:** Children sport clubs will have a priority in renting all sports facilities in the afternoons, evenings and on weekends, provided there always remains a free sport area for all children. Sport clubs will be offered suitable discounted prices and flexible options that encourage uptake.

(For example, a reasonable price for the football pitch would be £40/hour the entire pitch, £20 half the pitch; £50/h Evenings).³

2.1.1.4. **Charities:** Partner charities providing services to children and youth, which substitute or complement Coram's Fields services, will be given access to sports facilities at substantially the same conditions as Coram's Fields. Example organisations include Scouts and Brownies.

2.1.1.5. **School holiday rental:** Coram's Fields sports facilities will be rented to youth sports clubs solely in the hours of low demand such as early morning hours (9am - all 12 noon). Coram's will ensure that in holiday time the majority of play areas remain available for free play during key hours.

2.1.1.6. **Rental to Teenagers (13-18 year olds):** Teenagers will be given an opportunity to secure time slots for organised group play, at nominal prices (e.g. £20/h). This should apply in the afternoons

³ See Appendix 2 for further detail.

Monday to Sunday, as well as during school holidays. This will ensure organised play by teenagers, otherwise lost to commercial operations.

2.2. Rental to Adults (Evening hours):

- 2.2.1. Rental of sports facilities in the Evening relates to seasonal time when the park is closed for children and visitors, up until 10 pm.
- 2.2.2. Sports facilities will be rented to adults solely in the Evening operating hours, after the general park closure for visitors (seasonal times).
- 2.2.3. In renting, Coram's will ensure that one pitch always remains available to older children and teenagers.
- 2.2.4. Rental to adults will be at appropriate market prices (applicable to central areas of London).⁴
- 2.2.5. Rental to "Adult Football League" on Monday to Friday Lunch hours will occur solely if the use of Coram's Fields by schools is not impacted. In other words, schools will have a clear priority to book Coram's Fields in advance, ahead of any adult football activities.

NOTE: Adults entering the park. *At present, renting adults who enter Coram's Fields without children are not controlled. Adults are able to enter and exit from both sides of the park, and are rarely, if ever, challenged by staff. Prior to rental increases, a member of staff was permanently present at the gate. The changed approach is affecting Coram's Fields promise of safety. It creates safeguarding issues, as well as misinforms. In the immediate term we expect Coram's Fields to clarify it's policy and instructions to staff with respect to adult presence, related health and safety, safeguarding. Coram's needs to inform all visitors, how are safeguarding procedures applied. As soon as possible we expect this rental practice to adults to be discontinued. Coram's Fields was created to belongs to children, and it needs to continue exist so, in perpetuity.*

3. RENTAL OF CORAM'S FIELDS GROUNDS

- 3.1. Rental of Coram's Fields grounds will be subject to the particular activity being suitable, open, accessible and focused on children.
(Examples of a suitable child focused rental would be: Children festival; Sports

⁴ See Appendix 2 for further detail.

festival; Fairground; Ice rink; Winter wonderland, etc. Examples of an unsuitable rental include: Corporate marquee; Private wedding; Private functions.)

- 3.2. Any rental of the Coram's grounds would need to fulfill the following additional tests/requirements:
 - 3.2.1. Rental of Coram's grounds will not involve unreasonable pollution that can impact children (e.g. diesel generators).
 - 3.2.2. Rental will not involve damage to Coram's Fields property⁵ unless this is well understood in advance, fully and professionally estimated and costed, insured, contractually regulated, and fully and immediately repaired and paid for by the rentee (e.g. lawn, tarmac, buildings).
 - 3.2.3. Rental of the grounds will not impact the use of any other section of the park, nor can it be allowed to substantially change the nature of the park for any significant period⁶. Rental of more than 1/3 of the Coram's open space will be considered invasive and not acceptable.
 - 3.2.4. Rental of the grounds will not cause the closure of the entire park.
 - 3.2.5. Rental of the grounds will not be allowed to create perverse development and investment incentives⁷. If the requirement or an implicit incentive created by the rental of the grounds is for Coram's Fields not to continue to develop the grounds for the beneficial use by children, Coram's Fields will seek to replace given rental activity with another.

4. RENTAL CONTRACTS, PRIVATE AND STATE SCHOOLS

- 4.1. All long term rental contracts (over 1 year) will be achieved through a transparent process and competitive bidding. Coram's Fields will ensure competitive and transparent bidding process. Bilateral negotiations with select partners will be considered a bad practice⁸.

⁵ Documented in the CFUG Marquee Position Paper, December 2017.

⁶ Documented in the CFUG Marquee Position Paper, December 2017.

⁷ Western tarmac and lawn areas appear not to be part of development plans due to the annual Corporate Marquee rental, and remain dilapidated.

⁸ Corporate Marquee rental in 2017 by another [3 or 5 years?] was achieved via non transparent direct negotiations. Consequently, the Marquee has taken an enlarged park area; significant damage to Coram's Fields property is ignored; users were not consulted in relation to the extension.

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- 4.2. Coram's Fields will partner with, encourage and help local state schools use its facilities. At present, local state schools appear not to use Coram's Fields sufficiently, despite it being free. Local schools will be supported in bringing kids for sports.
 - 4.3. Coram's Fields will seek to establish commercial partnerships with independent schools. For example, Coram's Fields will offer continuous and flexible access to sports facilities to independent schools, on negotiated commercial terms.
 - 4.4. All schools will be consulted and aided in using Coram's Fields, including by allowing them use of additional facilities and equipment, as may be needed (e.g. equipment placement, minibus parking).
 - 4.5. Coram's Fields will seek the opinions and consult with all schools, in relation to the use of its facilities, and its rental policy.

5. RENTAL REVENUE RESTRICTIONS

- 5.1. Rental revenue will be treated as a restricted income.
- 5.2. Rental revenue will be reinvested in the park facilities and infrastructure.
- 5.3. Rental revenue will not be used for management costs or to pay for Coram's Fields services.

Rationale: *We believe it is vital to set up correct incentives in the use of all rental revenues. Such revenues ought to be reinvested, for the benefit of children and the long term health of the park. Park grounds and facilities ought not to be rented out in order to pay management cost and/or costs of services.*

6. RENTAL PROCEDURES

- 6.1. Rental policy will be transparent, accessible and available on Coram's Fields website.
- 6.2. All rental will be displayed on Coram's Fields website. Both booked and free play hours will be clearly displayed.
***NB** Currently children are unable to know when are the sports areas rented and when available. This leads to children visiting Coram's to be disappointed when pitches are occupied by adults.*
- 6.3. Teenagers and young people will be assisted and instructed how to simply book sports facilities via Coram's office, or Coram's Fields website.
- 6.4. All information about the rental prices, conditions, and methods for renting will be available on the information boards, as well as on the Coram's website.

EVIDENCE AND DOCUMENTATION

1. Coram's Fields Annual Report 2012/3
2. Coram's Fields Annual Report 2013/4
3. Coram's Fields Annual Report 2014/5
4. Coram's Fields Annual Report 2015/6
5. Coram's Fields Annual Report 2016/7
6. Coram's Fields Annual Report 2017/8
7. CFUG Position Paper: Communication, October 2017
8. CFUG Position Paper: Marquee rental, December 2017
9. CFUG User Survey: 2017
10. CFUG User Survey: 2018
11. Local resident petition - January 2015
12. Coram's Fields Trust Deed, 1935
13. Coram's Fields Articles of Association (Corporate Trustee) 2014
14. CFUG-Coram's Fields Meeting Notes - 2017/18

APPENDIX 1 - Financial Due Diligence & Responsibility

Table 1

- Rental to adults in the period 2013-17 has resulted in an estimated annual **40,000 adults** in the park. "Sports rental" revenue increased by **£220,000 in the period**.

Increase in adults in the park

Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Sport rental (£)	163,000	231,000	308,000	375,000	382,000
Rented hours (est.)	1600	2300	3010	3750	3820
Rental increase (h)*		700	1510	2150	2220
Adults in the park**	-	12,600	27,100	38,700	40,000

* Sports rental only. Each hour of football rental is used by 18+ adults.

** Day & weekend hours. Comparison to 2013 as a base year.

Table 2

- Total salary bill has increased by **£240,000** in the relevant period (2013 to 2017).

Coram's Fields Summary Financials - Coram's Fields Annual Reports 2013-2017

(In £)	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total income	1,181,357	1,594,990	1,607,000	1,610,000	1,530,000
Total expenditure	1,144,107	1,398,651	1,486,000	1,428,000	1,490,000
Salaries and wages	789,495	<i>888,009</i>	<i>987,602</i>	<i>982,000</i>	1,015,000
Management wage bill	<i>Not available</i>	<i>Not available</i>	<i>252,000</i>	<i>308,044</i>	352,000
Full time employees	26	29	27	28	28

Table 3

- Falling Endowment fund value (Land and Buildings).

Endowment fund (value of Land and Buildings) - Coram's Fields Annual Reports 2012-17

Year	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Land and buildings (£)	2,039,969	1,984,361	1,894,665	1,853,765	1,801,452	1,754,799
Investment	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Appendix 2: Rental pricing in Camden and Islington

Artificial grass - Youth and Adult pricing (as of July 2018)		
Talacre Community (NW5)⁹	7-a-side	-
Corporate block booking	£142	-
Youth sports block booking	£74	-
Southgate road (N1)	8-a-side	5-a-side
Adults	£85.90	£42.75
Children	£51.75	£21.20
Market road (N7)	11-a-side	5-a-side
Adults	£94.75	£75
Children	£57	£36.5
Whittington park (N19)	8-a-side	5-a-side
Adults	£94.75	£75
Children	£57	£36.5
Highbury (N6)	7-a-side	-
Adults	£75.70	-
Children	£36.5	-
Paradise park (N7)	7-a-side	-
Adults	£42.75	-
Children	£25.50	-
Castelhaven (NW1) - Low q.	9-a-side	5-a-side
Adults	-	£50
Children	-	£35

⁹ Based on quality and location, rental cost for adults, per person is relatively low in Coram's Fields, when compared to artificial pitches in Camden and Islington. Corporate block bookings in Talacre Community Centre (NW1), a high quality 7-a-side pitch, are priced significantly higher than at Coram's Fields, at £140/h +.