

## **Datchet Parish Council Takes Action to Ensure Proper Governance of the Datchet Recreation Centre Charitable Trust (DRCCT) and Safeguard Staff Welfare.**

Datchet Parish Council (DPC), in its legal capacity as the sole managing trustee of the Datchet Recreation Centre Charitable Trust (DRCCT), has taken the necessary and considered decision to dissolve the current DRCCT Committee. This action has been taken with the paramount objective of ensuring the proper governance of the charity and, crucially, to safeguard the welfare of Datchet Parish Council staff.

This difficult decision to dissolve the current DRCCT Committee has been necessitated by serious concerns regarding the behaviour of certain individuals within the former committee, which has had a detrimental impact on Datchet Parish Council staff. The DPC has a fundamental duty of care to its employees and is committed to ensuring a safe and respectful working environment. An investigation by the DPC's staffing committee upheld a complaint of bullying and harassment against a member of the DRCCT Committee (Monica Davies) arising from their communications with a DPC staff member. Furthermore, there have been other instances of concerning behaviour towards DPC staff by two members of the DRCCT Committee (Monica Davies and Ewan Larcombe), creating an unacceptable and intimidating environment.

*"We have a fundamental duty of care to ensure a safe and respectful working environment for everyone, and we will take firm action to protect them from any form of bullying or abusive behaviour, regardless of its origin"* – David Buckley DPC Chairman.

Given its legal responsibility as the sole managing trustee, Datchet Parish Council must take all necessary steps to protect its staff and ensure the effective governance of the DRCCT in accordance with its objectives. Consequently, the Council has had to dissolve the current DRCCT Committee.

The DPC will now move swiftly to establish a new DRCCT Committee comprised of individuals committed to the charity's aims and able to work collaboratively and respectfully. This new committee will operate under the understanding that the Datchet Parish Council is the sole trustee and will maintain the independence and status of the DRCCT as a charity serving the community of Datchet.

We expect that the outgoing members of the DRCCT Committee will act in the best interests of the charity, the community, and the village by ensuring a smooth and efficient handover of all relevant information, documentation and administration processes to the newly formed committee. This cooperation is vital to ensure a seamless transition and no disruption to the running of the Village Hall and other buildings within the complex, which provide important services and facilities for the residents of Datchet.

## **Background**

The Datchet Recreation Centre Charitable Trust was established in 1967 and it purchased the land known as the Sabatini Land with the aim of promoting the social, moral, and physical wellbeing of the people resident in the village of Datchet and the surrounding district. The Sabatini Land is legally owned by the DRCCT, and whatever is on the land belongs to the charity, including the Village Hall complex.

## **Comments**

Ian Bacon who is the new interim Chairman of the DRCCT Management Committee said – *"It is a privilege to step in as Interim Chairman during this transition, and my immediate focus will be on ensuring the smooth running of the Village Hall and its facilities for the benefit of the entire Datchet community."*

DPC Chairman David Buckley said – *"Datchet Parish Council remains committed to the objectives of the Datchet Recreation Centre Charitable Trust and to ensuring that the Sabatini Land and its facilities continue to benefit the community for which they were intended."*

These are the DPC members that voted for this action – Chairman David Buckley, Lead for Properties – Darren Sanders, Lead for Cemetery – Caroline Wise, Lead for Events – Andrew Clemens, Cllr Glover, Cllr Young, Cllr Bacon, Cllr Loveridge and Cllr Whelan