

PROTECTION FOR GREEN SPACES WITH FIELDS IN TRUST

Background

An article in October 2017 edition of the CALC Circular mentioned that Fields in Trust (FIT) protection is far less susceptible to development and ensures green spaces in perpetuity. CALC was tasked with finding out what that actually meant.

How does FIT protect?

Quoting from the FIT website (www.fieldsintrust.org), it protects through Deeds of Dedication, which are “robust yet flexible” “legally binding documents.”

What does FIT protect?

Playing fields, play space, recreation grounds, nature reserves and other green spaces.

What is the process of a Deed of Dedication?

Only the landowner of the site (whether a local authority, sports club or private individual) can apply to protect it by contacting FIT. The landowner downloads the application form from the FIT website and then sends the completed form to: info@fieldsintrust.org (020 74272110). Next, a FIT manager visits the space for a site check. Unless the landowner hears otherwise, the space is accepted. The landowner then works with FIT to draw up a draft deed, which is signed by both FIT and the landowner.

What are the minimum criteria?

- Landowner of the site completes the application form
- Evidence of ownership – either register of title from the Land Registry, or for unregistered land root of title
- Public access
- Accessible re. location and affordability for the local community
- Local manager – responsible for the quality of the facilities, maintenance and development, improving participation, financial and operational sustainability

Helpful guidance

There are links on the FIT website to both FIT Guide to Protecting Land and Joint Guidance (from FIT and Sport England) on Protecting Land.

Should parishes go for FIT protection or registered Town Village

Green status?

Taking advice from FLD Policy Officer, Jan Darrall (experienced in open space protection and management), she believes that the two are not incompatible.