

I am writing in response to the proposal for the installation of a shipping container at the Recreation Ground, Horndean Road. I received a letter today advising that any comments must be submitted in writing by 16th August - please confirm upon receipt of this email whether this counts as 'in writing'.

I believe the installation of a shipping container on the Recreation Grounds is a fitting compromise and solid solution to the sudden backtracking by the local Council to allow a longstanding exercise organisation to operate from the park.

As is evident in the news and through the NHS, the increase in obesity and mental health problems across the country is incredibly problematic. The operator of these classes offers an accessible, sociable and consistent opportunity for people of all fitness levels to come out and improve their overall health and wellbeing. The classes are for all ages, including children, and offer a mum and baby class so new mothers can continue to have access to fitness classes, without losing their whole identity.

There have been concerns raised by locals about the container being vandalised. The classes run operate from 6.15am through to 7.30pm. In anything, the classes and instructors offer a year round vigilant watch of any behaviours in the park. Indeed, the instructors have supported locals by contacting the police when there was clear anti social behaviour ongoing.

The container does not need water or electricity to run to it, therefore once installed the container will be self sufficient and can nestle into the environment.

The state of the park has benefited greatly from the charity Verity's Gift associated with the owner of Innovations Fitness- those bemoaning the aesthetic of the container only have the new park because of fundraising efforts of the owner, as well as members of the fitness organisation.

The Council has an obligation to all members of the community. I, for one, will suffer immeasurably from the loss of the classes should permission not be granted. Living alone, the classes offer continuous opportunities to socialise beyond the monotony of work at a Hampshire School. The placement of the container will not impact the use of the park, nor its accessibility to other park users. It is as discreet as possible.

The stripping back of access to open spaces, such as the locking of the tennis courts, is a steady and visible decline in the Council's consideration for locals. By disallowing the container, the council is openly embracing obesity and all the issues which come with it.