

Congleton Chronicle



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Pitch issues flag up shortage of sport facilities in the town

The shortage of sports facilities in Congleton was flagged up this week after a friends' football team claimed to have been booted off Congleton High School's pitches.

The players accused the school of treating its sport centre as a "piggy bank" because football teams that had used the community pitches "for years" said they could no longer secure their slots.

One player claimed the school had shown "disregard" by prioritising bookings for Congleton Town FC's teams and others.

But a spokesperson for Congleton Town's junior section — formerly Congleton Rovers — said that the club had had a contract with the school for 10 years and while it got first pick of all slots, it tried its best to work with the school.

Eaton Bank High School is also hard to book, its slots taken up by Congleton Vale, which was

instrumental in getting the new all-weather pitch at the school and gets first pick of slots there. Congleton Leisure Centre is closed.

The Chronicle was contacted by player Rick Bate, who said he had enjoyed weekly games on Tuesday evenings for 20 years at the sports centre, playing with a team originally formed by workers at Airbags in Congleton.

Mr Bate said: "Last week we were told by the high school that our money is not good enough any more, as it wants to give our slot to somebody else. This has been devastating news for me and the lads after so many years."

"Unfortunately, this is not the first time this has happened. The high school kicked off Friday night and Wednesday night football groups and changed Monday night football groups to another night for Junior Premier League money. This time it's for Congleton Town."

Numerous posts online echoed Mr Bate's concerns. One said: "Twelve of us have played for over 20 years and we were moved off a Tuesday night slot to make way for Soccer 6s but given a



The AJ Bell Tour of Britain raced through the area on Thursday. For a full page of pictures and a report, please turn to page 10. Above, the crowds turned out in Holmes Chapel for the race. (Photo: Mr and Mrs Sumpter).

Wednesday night slot instead, then moved back an hour to a rubbish time of 8.45-9.45. The final knife in the back came last week when we were told we can no longer have that slot either, as they need it for Congleton Town."

Another said: "They kicked

us off on a Friday night for JPL (Junior Premier League). We had a meeting with them, but they wouldn't budge. JPL didn't even use the pitch at our time slot. We've got a pitch at Eaton Bank now."

— Turn to page 22

Covid latest: The covid figures remained largely unchanged in the seven days to 9th September. Congleton Town stayed in the high "maroon" band, with 33 new cases and a rolling rate of 461/100k people. Buglawton fared worse, with 35 new cases and a rate of 486, with Hightown, Mossley &

Timbersbrook at 18 new cases, rolling rate 334, in a lower band. The Cranage and Goostrey zone, which includes the rural area round Congleton, stood at 21 cases, rate 310. Between 8th and 14th September, there were 9 deaths from covid in Cheshire East, up from five.

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Lancaster flying over town this Sunday

By Joe Yates

The official dedication of Congleton's redeveloped cenotaph will be marked on Sunday with a flypast by a Lancaster Bomber.

The dedication service will follow the same format as Remembrance Sunday but will include the iconic flypast.

To be preceded by a parade, the service will recognise the improved war memorial and its surroundings on Lawton Street, which now contain just over 600 names.

Parade members will gather at West Street Car Park at 1.30pm before setting off at 2.10pm. Those who are not in the parade will take up positions at the cenotaph at 2.15pm.

The parade will arrive at the cenotaph at 2.30pm, followed by the service with the Lancaster flypast ending proceedings at 3.10pm.

Rector of Congleton the Rev

Ian Enticott will lead the service, which will feature ex-servicemen speakers, a poem read by a Scout, and Rode Hall Silver Band performing the Last Post, which will be followed by a minute's silence.

Refreshments will be served afterwards in a reception at the town hall where there will also be a display.

The dedication service has been organised by Congleton Town Council and Congleton Partnership, with the Lancaster Bomber flypast arranged by Cenotaph Working Group volunteers.

Congleton Town Council's marketing officer Martha Hayes said: "We genuinely really are looking forward to it, especially the Lancaster Bomber as I've never seen anything like that!"

A rolling road closure will be in place during the parade while Lawton Street will be closed from 1pm to 4pm.

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