

# Graffiti plague

OFFICIALS have blasted youth in the area after a 'plague' of vandalism and graffiti at Holmfirth Cricket Club.

It's just not cricket!

The Bridge Fold outfield, which operates in the District League, has been a regular target for some over the past 12 months.

Now committee members have appealed to the people of Holmfirth to help catch offenders—and community policeman Pz Ross Gordon has been approached.

The latest incident has seen graffiti—between six and 12-foot high—sprayed on a brick boundary wall, which borders one side of the ground. The stone wall on the railway bank side has also been targeted.

"It is incredibly frustrating," said league and cricket secretary Denis Marshall.

"There are 10 of us spending long hours to keep the ground and pavilion tidy and also raising finance voluntarily so that our two club teams and their youth sides can enjoy six months of sport in the summer."

"Some 25 players enjoy a competitive game of cricket each week. With coaching

and practice sessions, we have to employ a part-time groundsman to ensure the wicket is fit to play on", he said.

"In all this hard work is being undermined by a minority of youth in the area."

The catalogue of damage over the past 12 months includes: small rubble dumped in the street; rubbish broken into and number board damaged; tool shed broken into; clubhouse burgled twice; wood decking damaged and concrete supports broken; pavilion windows smashed; bottles

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(From page 1)

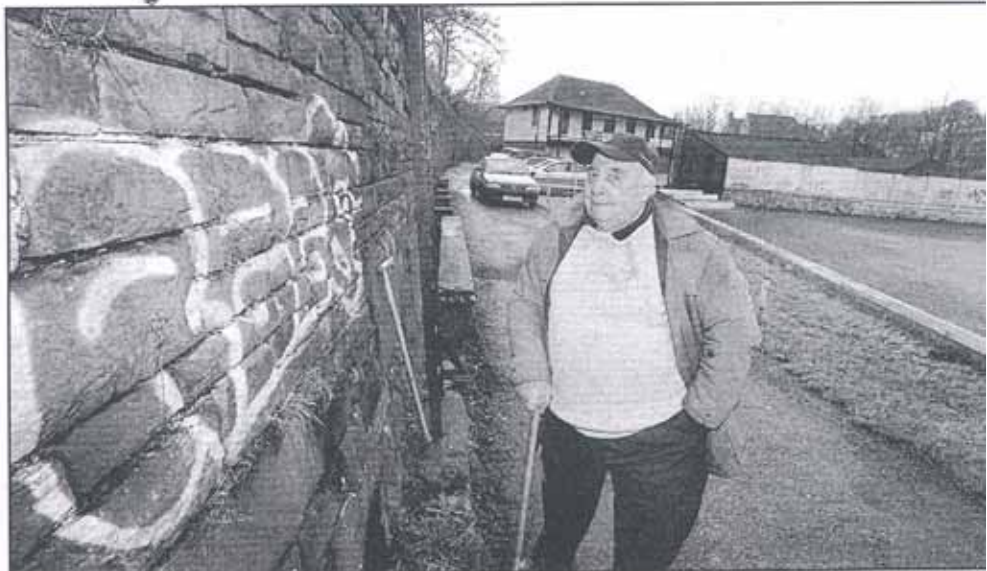
broken; pavilion windows smashed; bottles and barrels smashed. It cannot surely be an excuse that young people have nothing else to do, with the Sands site having been developed. It is a sad state of affairs when young people resort to this sort of behaviour for amusement."

Officials have remonstrated with groups of teenagers, but have faced a torrent of abuse.

"We know it is only a minority of young people—most are courteous and helpful—but these mindless few are ruining facilities for everyone else," said Mr Marshall. "The club appeals for people of Holmfirth to help catch offenders".

The Bridge Fold ground is also plagued by dog owners walking their pets on the field. The club warns that offending owners will be prosecuted.

This spate of petty crime and abuse is a far cry from the halcyon days of Holmfirth CC. When the Sykes Cup was first won in 1927 public subscription



WHAT A MESS: Holmfirth Cricket Club secretary Denis Marshall inspects some of the graffiti on the walls of the vandal hit ground  
Picture by Andy Catchpool (500a/1/02)