

Sandridge Parish Council



Simon Thwaites
Parish Clerk

Marshalswick Community Centre,
The Ridgeway, St. Albans,
Herts, AL4 9TU

Tel: 01727 831871

Email: clerk@sandridge-pc.gov.uk

12th June 2025

www.sandridge-pc.gov.uk

TO: MEMBERS OF THE SPORTS AND RECREATION GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Councillors: Graham Leonard (Chair), Carol Chalkley, Mike White, Adam Twidell, James Lambert, Raihanna Ahmed

Public members: Jez Cox, Chris Cooke

Officers: Rebecca Pannese; Project, Amenities and Community Engagement (PACE) Officer
Simon Thwaites; Parish Clerk

A meeting of the Sports and Recreation Grounds Committee is to be held on Wednesday 18th June 2025 at 7.30pm at Marshalswick Community Centre

A G E N D A

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Disclosures of Interest and Dispensations**
To receive declarations of interest from Members on items on the agenda and to receive written requests for dispensations for declarable interests.
- 3. Election of Chair**
- 4. Election of Vice Chair**
- 5. Review and approve the Terms of Reference for the forthcoming year**
- 6. To approve the minutes of the Sports and Recreation Grounds Committee meeting held on the 17th March 2025**

7. 2025/26 Capital Works Update

Harness Way Open Space

The two new inground trampolines are due to be installed in the coming weeks, along with the wetpour surfacing around the entrance gate (the latter being from the 2024/25 budget).

St Leonard's

The wooden panels on the slide have now been replaced and new swing seats installed (both from the 2024/25 budget).

Following on from the committee decision on the 4th April this year, a new table tennis has been installed, replacing the dilapidated one that was beyond repair. The cost of the new table along with installation was £3,495. The Committee is asked to ratify this expenditure.

It is therefore:

RECOMMENDED

That the Committee ratify spend of £3,495 on a replacement outdoor table tennis table for St Leonard's Open Space, funds having been vired from the Spencer Meadow Playground budget following a decision not to proceed with the climbing frame upgrade.

Spencer Meadow Carpark

Repairs have now been carried out on the car park, with the total cost being £2,590. There is a saving on budget of £11,410.

Reminder of the committee capital budget for 2025/26

Harness Way - £12,000

Jersey Farm Adventure Playground - £10,000

Spencer Meadow Playground - £17,500

Spencer Meadow carpark - £14,000

Total - £53,500

Spend so far;

£21,085

8. William Bell Playground – Replacement Swing Set

Following on from the playground safety inspections, the following notification was received:

"This notification is being made in the interest of safety. Wicksteed "BallTop" Swings with single stud head castings produced between 1947 and 1964 are now beyond the end of their service life. Wicksteed Leisure recommends that these swings be removed from service as soon as reasonably possible and replaced with a modern equivalent. It is no longer possible to source replacement parts and the effects of corrosion within the structure of these swings cannot be accurately assessed. Therefore the only viable safe option is to remove these swings from service."

A quote has been obtained to replace the swing set with two options;

Option A

1 cradle seat and 1 You and Me seat (The You & Me swing seat encourages play and interaction between different generations) – **£5435.00**

Option B

2 cradle seats (replacing like for like) - **£4635.00**

It is therefore;

RECOMMENDED

To proceed with either option A or option B at the earliest opportunity, with funds being vired from the Spencer Meadow capital budget.

9. Second Mini Football Goal at Sherwood Park

Following installation of the new mini goal in 2024, observations have been made seeing groups playing football with the goal at one end and bags/jumpers at the other. The cost of an additional goal is IRO £3000. Given the savings on capital budgets so far, and the success of the existing goal, it is therefore:

RECOMMENDED

To proceed with the installation of a second mini goal at Sherwood Avenue Open Space, using vired funds remaining in the Spencer Meadow capital budget.

10. Spencer Meadow MUGA entry system

The PACE Officer has been further researching the process of changing the current booking system for the MUGA's, following the decision at the previous committee meeting to carry out further investigations. Please see the attached report.

It is therefore:

RECOMMENDED

To formally note the report and its viability in context of item 11 on the agenda.

11. Padel Court request

The Parish Council have been approached by a representative of "One Padel" (who initially contacted the Cricket Club in Sandridge) requesting that it considers the possibility of installing two Padel Courts at Spencer Meadow, replacing the tennis court in Court 1. Padel is described as;

"Padel is a racket sport that is always played in doubles on an enclosed court. It is much like a cross between tennis and squash where the ball can bounce off the glass wall or metallic mesh that surrounds the court. A padel game is usually played outdoors. Padel is a sport which combines action with fun and social interaction. It's a great sport for players of all ages and skills, as it is both quick and easy to pick up. Most players get the basics within the first half an hour of playing so that they can enjoy the game.

Padel is not as dominated by strength, technique and serve as it happens in Tennis and therefore is an ideal game for men, women and youth to compete together. An important skill is match-craft, as points are won rather by strategy than by sheer strength and power."

Please see the attached report and accompanying illustration which outlines the recommendations from One Padel should the Committee be minded to pursue with the project. It is therefore:

RECOMMENDED

That should the committee be interested in pursuing the project, a working party be created to further research the impact to the community of changing the facilities, and report back to the committee its findings.

12. Graffiti Artwork to the Skate Ramp Update

Following the decision at the last committee meeting to proceed with a full mural painting and co-design with local residents and involve the community in the painting, Parish Officers met with Mandy Johnson to arrange the timeline of the project. The timeline is as follows;

- Design workshop at Jersey Farm Community Centre was held on the 29th May
- Feedback on the proposed design was held on the 5th June at Jersey Farm Community Centre
- Painting of the ramp is scheduled to commence Saturday 5th July (time tbc), with a second date of 12th July should it be required.

The Deputy Clerk submitted a grant application to the National Lottery Community Fund for this project but unfortunately it did not meet their criteria.

13. External Funding of Spencer Meadow Pitch Improvements

The Clerk is in correspondence with the Chair of Sandridge Rovers Football Club regarding potential external funding of specialist pitch maintenance over a six year period. Clarification has been sought on a number of points and a report will be made to the Committee in due course. One question is in respect of the timing of implementing any grant funded initiative – if necessary the Clerk will contact the Committee Chair with a view to holding an extraordinary meeting before September (there are considerations around joint funding).

14. Duke of Edinburgh Park Ranger Scheme

Please see below from Councillor Adam Twidell.

“Last year, as part of a trial initiative, we introduced a Duke of Edinburgh (DofE) volunteering opportunity focused on helping our teenage participants contribute to the upkeep and monitoring of our local play parks and open spaces. We were pleased to welcome eight volunteers at the start of the year and grateful for the enthusiasm and time they brought.

Over the course of the year, we found that only two participants remained consistently engaged. The project relied on the teenagers organising themselves to visit sites independently, and we have now learnt that this self-directed approach does not work well for this age group. Feedback suggests that young people respond better when provided with set times, locations, and supervised activities, rather than being left to structure the work themselves.

While the feedback gathered on the play areas was welcome, the Parish Council was not always in a position to act promptly on suggestions. This may have contributed to some volunteers feeling their efforts lacked immediate impact or recognition. In addition, for this type of project to be successful, it would require a dedicated adult volunteer to act as the DofE lead—providing guidance, maintaining momentum, and attending visits.

We believe it was a worthwhile and well-intentioned initiative and appreciate those who took part. However, we recommend that the project is not continued in its current form next year. That said, we remain open to revisiting the idea in the future—should a more structured and better-supported opportunity arise.”

It is therefore:

RECOMMENDED

To put on hold the Duke of Edinburgh Park Ranger scheme until such a time that the Committee (or wider Council) decide on revisiting the idea.

15. 5 year plan

The Committee is asked to reflect on the feedback from the Wheatfields Council Questionnaires (as circulated by Cllr Lambert) and the Facebook feedback discussed at the previous meeting regarding the facilities in the parish.

16. Matters of Note

- The surface of the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) in Sherwood Park adjacent to the tennis courts has been painted and has new, clear lines for basketball and football.
- A new graphic has been ordered to replace the current damaged one on the “Welcome to William Bell Open Space” sign.
- The annual play inspections have been completed, and the reports are due imminently.
- Two new dual recycling bins are due to be installed in Sherwood Park and Spencer Meadow. These will replace “landfill only” refuse bins and will be collected by John O’Conner and the recyclables taken by Veolia.
- Repair work has been carried out on the skate ramp ahead of the painting. Two Skatelite panels have been replaced, and new side panels have been installed.
- Two new basketball boards have been installed in Court 1 (tennis court) in Spencer Meadow.
- Two new football nets have been installed on the goal posts in Harness Way Open Space.

17. Any other Business

18. Matters Arising Since the Circulation of the Agenda

19. Suggestions for Future Meetings

Date of next meeting – 7:30pm Wednesday 17th September 2025 at Marshalswick Community Centre