



MEMBERS OF THE SPORTS & RECREATION GROUNDS COMMITTEE

Met on Wednesday 17th March at 7.30pm 2025 at Marshalswick Community Centre
(Rescheduled from 5th March)

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

Public Member: Jez Cox

APOLOGIES: Councillor: Raihaanah Ahmed
Public Member: Chris Cooke

OFFICERS: Simon Thwaites, Clerk, Rebecca Pannese
Project, Amenities & Community Engagement Officer

ABSENT: -

619 Disclosures of Interest and Dispensations

There was none.

620 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Sports and Recreation Ground Committee held on 4th December 2024 having been previously circulated, were reviewed before it was unanimously:

Resolved

That the minutes be approved and signed as a correct record.

621 2025/26 Capital Works

Harness Way

At the December meeting it was agreed for the PACE Officer to investigate the possibilities of replacing the “spider unit” in the Harness Way Playground with either a single in-ground trampoline or several smaller ones. Meetings with contractors ensued and various options were discussed, with some contractors only able to install one and some with quotations significantly over budget. Two options that most closely reflected the committee’s preference were outlined and following discussion the Committee:

RESOLVED:

To proceed with the installation of two in-ground trampolines, both of which will be 1.24m x 1.25m, with wet pour surround replacing the current spider climbing unit.

Spencer Meadow

The PACE Officer researched the possibility of changing the current booking system for the MUGA's. Presently, hirers book through the Village Stores in Sandridge and pay when collecting the key fob, returning it after use. A newer, more up-to-date system would enable users to book through the website and obtain access using a code that will be automatically emailed to them upon receiving payment. At the entrance and exits to both courts would be a keypad into which hirers input the code that releases the gates.

Following lengthy discussion on all the individual components of the system it was unanimously:

RESOLVED:

To proceed with the upgrade to an access code system with an integrated website booking facility, with funding being drawn from the Spencer Meadow Playground budget. A detailed plan will be presented at the June meeting (including a solution to the issues of users paying for floodlights) with implementation being aimed at the end of the year.

622 Spencer Meadow Astroturf

The astroturf surface was installed in 2021 and since then has had low level maintenance such as removing leaves and any large debris on the court. The recommendation when it was installed was to undertake periodic specialist maintenance to ensure the lifespan of the surface. Following discussion the Committee unanimously:

RESOLVED:

To proceed with the maintenance of the astroturf in 2025/26 with funding being drawn from the general playground expenses. The works will include;

- A high pressure clean, injecting water into the base of the synthetic grass and removing all debris from surface
- Spray apply a moss chemical treatment
- Supply and the application of 1 ton of 2EW (dried silica sand) evenly across whole court area

623 Graffiti Artwork to the Skate Ramp

The Clerk and the PACE Officer met with street artist Mandy Johnson to explore options available to complete the artwork on the skate ramp. Three options were included with the agenda outlining costs ranging from £600 to £1,725. Also included were examples of Mandy's work. Funding for these would come in part from the Skate Ramp maintenance budget and part from General Expenses (both within Sports and Recreation).

Following discussion, it was unanimously:

RESOLVED:

To proceed with a full mural painting (one end and both sides), and co-design with local residents and involve the community in the painting. The Clerk will investigate further the possibility of external grant funding to contribute towards the final cost.

623 Duke of Edinburgh Park Ranger Scheme

A verbal update of the scheme was given by Councillor Adam Twidell. The Committee expressed thanks to those students from the original cohort who have been enthusiastic in their role and who have produced very valuable data for the parish on both playgrounds and the natural environment.

624 Brainstorming for a 5 year plan

At the previous meeting, the committee discussed initial ideas for how best to create a five-year plan for capital installations across the parish playgrounds and sports facilities. It was decided that the committee wanted to hear the opinions of local residents who not only use the playgrounds in the parish but have wider experience of other facilities outside of the area and for their feedback to help guide decisions on future projects. Following the meeting, the PACE Officer used Sandridge Parish Council's Facebook page to engage with the public and the comments were included with the agenda papers.

Subsequent to the agenda being circulated, Councillor Lambert met with the School Council at Wheatfields Junior School and its members filled out questionnaires on the parish facilities. The data from the meeting will be shared with the committee in due course.

In addition to feedback from the Wheatfields Council, Councillor Leonard will seek to circulate the questionnaire to a second primary school in the parish for their views.

625 Matters of Note

- The dilapidated basketball boards in the astro court at Spencer Meadow have been removed and new ones will be erected on the adjacent tarmac court.
- 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 were carried out in January and the reports are due imminently.
- Tree works have been carried out following receipt of the tree safety survey from Tim Moya Arboriculturists (commissioned by SADC). Works have been carried out in Skyswood, Sherwood, Harness Way and Spencer Meadow Open Space.
- The picnic benches (two in Harness Way Open Space and one in St Leonard's Open Space) have now been installed.
- Volunteers have planted a new native hedgerow in Harness Way Open Space, adjacent to the new footpath. Volunteers also had a session working around the pond, with hedge laying and general maintenance taking place.
- Cllr Chalkley and two other regular volunteers undertook a "tidy up" of the Harness Way playground, removing piles of leaves and debris and creating a more inviting space.

626 Any other business

Councillor Chalkley informed the committee that she and other volunteers will be at the Harness Way playground on Wednesday 19th March to do maintenance work on the existing access path.

Public member Jez Cox expressed concern at a gully that's appeared next to the access path on JFOS. The PACE Officer has informed St Albans District Council.

627 Matters Arising Since the Circulation of the Agenda
There was none.

628 Suggestions for Future Meetings
Update on the five year plan

There being no further business the meeting concluded at 8:43pm.

Date of next meeting – 7:30pm Wednesday 18th June 2025 at Marshalswick Community Centre

Chair

Date.....