

**LONDON COLNEY PARISH  
COUNCIL**

**MORRIS RECREATION GROUND  
MANAGEMENT PLAN**



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## Introduction

London Colney Parish Council is responsible for the management of the majority of the recreational facilities situated within the parish boundaries. The largest of these sites is Morris Recreation Ground, White Horse Lane which offers a variety of recreational facilities for residents.

### London Colney Parish Council

The Parish Council was formed in 1947 and apart from some small changes to the boundaries, has remained virtually unchanged since its inception. It covers the village of London Colney, including the development on the site of the former Middlesex County Asylum in Napsbury. London Colney has nearly 10,000 residents and is represented by 9 councillors, across four committees who are supported by a team of 10 staff (see appendices 1 and 2).

London Colney is located to the south of St Albans District. It is delineated by the M25 in the south, A1081 to the eastern boundary, the Midland Mainline railway to the west and the A414 to the north.



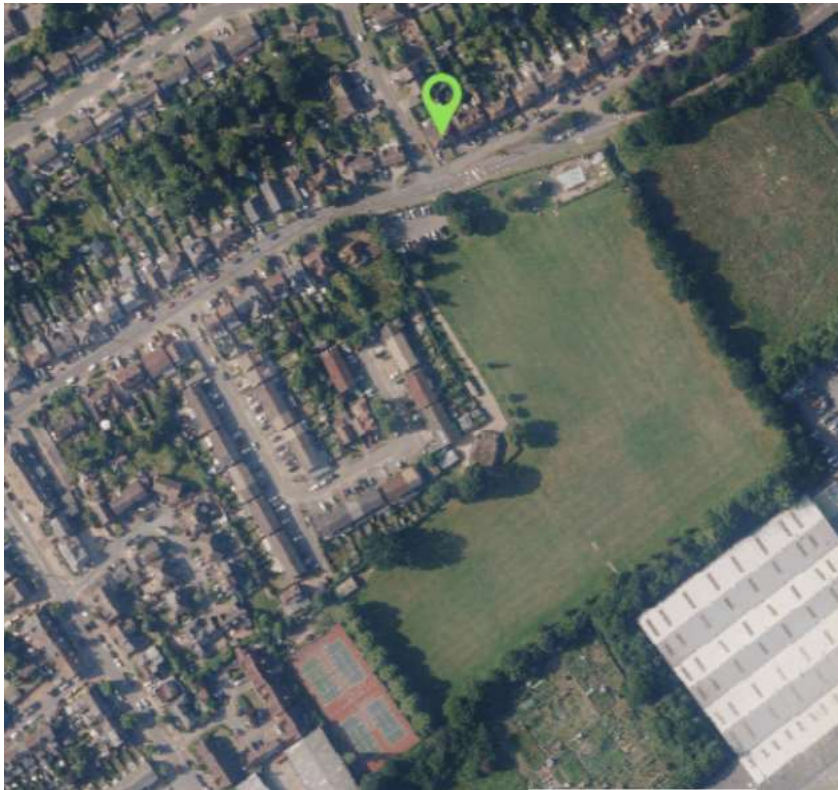
### *Map of Parish*

The day-to-day management of Morris Recreation Ground is overseen by the Grounds Maintenance Manager and his team of staff. This team is responsible for the maintenance of all the recreational facilities and open spaces owned or managed by the Parish Council.



## Site description

Morris Recreation Ground is the jewel in the crown of the Parish Council's recreation facilities. It is the home of the Parish Council's popular programme of events including the annual firework display, which raises thousands of pounds for local organisations and Picnic in the Park, a family friendly event for residents to enjoy. In 2023, it will become the home of Larks in the Park, a music-based family event which is part of a district wide series of events organised in conjunction with St Albans District Council.



*Aerial view of Morris Recreation Ground*

In 2022, the Parish Council was immensely proud to open The Watersplash, a state-of-the-art water park on the site of the previous 30-year-old paddling pool. This also included a container café, offering refreshments to people attending the splash park and park.



*Cllr Malcolm MacMillan, Chairman of the Parish Council and Deputy Lieutenant Mrs Marion Brown at the opening of The Watersplash*

The recreation ground is home to several football teams including one who has been playing at the recreation ground for more than twenty years. The tennis courts were refurbished in 2016 with funding from La Farge Landfill Trust.



*Royston Rangers*

The sports pavilion was originally built in 1963 and is used primarily for sports teams as changing rooms. During the week it is used for community activities including exercise classes like Pilates and yoga; toddler activities and a monthly chiropody clinic is held for elderly residents to ensure good foot health is maintained. The pavilion has been extensively refurbished during 2022 with works to the showers, new lady's toilet facilities, internal and external redecoration, and new soft furnishings. The next work to be undertaken is the refurbishment of the small kitchen area to make it more attractive to hirers.

## Historical Context

The Recreation Ground was gifted to the Parish Council in 1920 by Charles Morris Esq.

He was a local landowner (Highfield House), who philanthropically gifted pieces of land around the area including The London Colney Village Club, the village hall in Tyttenhanger Green and the recreation ground for 'a better land fit for the returning heroes. This generous gift enabled a cricket team to relocate from a nearby farm and the village football team from their adjacent site.

A scout hut was also later erected on what is now the current car park and the parish council took over the running of the site in 1935. The Parish Council are custodian Trustees for the site, which is registered with the Charities Commission.



## Facilities

Morris Recreation Ground is located in White Horse Lane, London Colney. It is 38,263 sq. m and comprises of

- Three senior football pitches
- One junior football pitch
- Sports pavilion
- Grounds Maintenance workshop
- Four all weather surface tennis courts
- Play Area
- Splash Park

## Budgets

The Environment and Neighbourhood Committee of the Parish Council oversee the management of the site. There is a dedicated budget for Morris Recreation Ground as well as the events which are held here.

Officers have delegated powers to spend within budget and every October/November, the Environment & Neighbourhood Committee consider these budgets, along with identified new budget items, to go forward to be included in the budget for the following year.

Tree work comes from a central budget which includes all sites. The Parish Council undertakes a triennial tree survey of high-risk areas, with all trees tagged and a condition report produced to undertake management of the tree stock.

LONDON COLNEY PARISH COUNCIL BUDGET 2023-24 V3

			2022-23			2023-24		
			BUDGET			BUDGET		
			Predicted Income	Predicted Expenditure	Variance	Income	Expenditure	Variance
100	Central Operations		£308,268	£192,152	£116,116	£322,950	£193,860	£129,090
110	Civic and Democratic			£0	£0		£0	£0
120	Grants		£0	£2,500	-£2,500	£0	£4,100	-£4,100
200	Morris Way Pavilion/Recreation Ground		£6,800	£21,234	-£14,434	£7,000	£7,480	-£480
210	Grounds Maintenance Department		£11,569	£119,978	-£108,409	£5,613	£132,122	£126,509
220	Shenley Lane		£1,500	£2,530	-£1,030	£1,500	£1,330	£170
230	Caledon Community Centre		£45,000	£47,257	-£2,257	£55,000	£49,435	£5,565
240	Napsbury Park Pavilion/Recreation Ground		£8,600	£7,700	£900	£8,400	£9,700	-£1,300
300	Larks in the Parks		£0	£0	£0	£2,600	£7,441	-£4,841
320	Fireworks		£1,450	£9,550	-£8,100	£5,500	£7,146	-£1,646
340	Remembrance Sunday			£2,071	-£2,071		£2,154	-£2,154
370	Lunch Club		£6,870	£18,000	-£11,130	£9,600	£18,000	-£8,400
400	General Events Costs		£0	£6,856	-£6,856	£2,400	£4,156	-£1,756
420	Halloween Disco		£400	£494	-£94	£400	£544	-£144
430	Christmas Lights Switch On		£1,080	£3,663	-£2,583	£1,080	£3,420	-£2,340
460	Picnic in the Park		£3,063	£2,577	£486	£3,278	£3,068	£210
			<b>£394,600</b>	<b>£436,563</b>	<b>-£41,963</b>	<b>£425,321</b>	<b>£443,956</b>	<b>-£18,635</b>

Draw on reserves

£20,000

£1,365

## Management Plan – Key Themes

The management ethos of the site covers the following areas:

- An Accessible Place
- Healthy, Safe and Secure
- A place to Remember Loved Ones
- Clean and Well Maintained

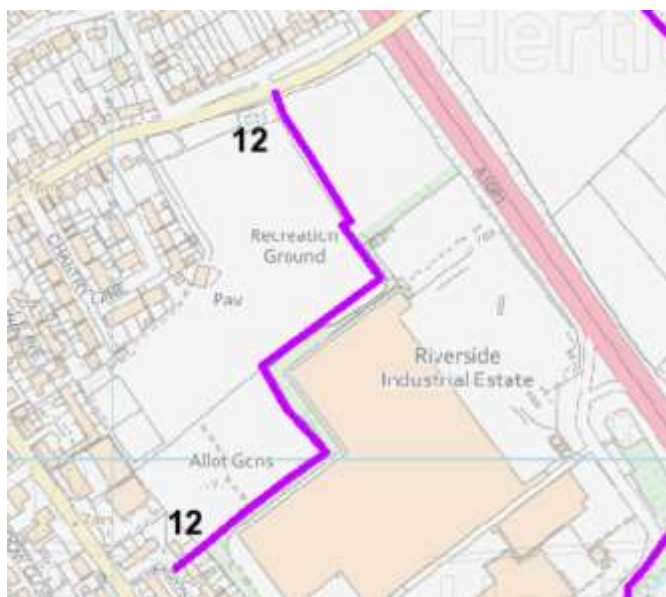
### An Accessible Place

The Parish Council is committed to ensuring that all of its sites are fully accessible to all residents.

The main entrance is off White Horse Lane and is adjacent to the recreation ground's car park, which is open 24 hours for parking. The site is gated, to prevent unauthorised access and pedestrians can access the site at all times. Accessibility is important which is one of the reasons for installing the splash park, which is fully accessible. Future developments will improve accessibility including installing an all-weather path to the splash park and fully accessible play equipment.

New signage was installed in 2021 and further improvements are planned with the introduction of new information board. This will also include a new board welcoming visitors to the site including contact details for the Parish Council. It will include a What 3 Words for the emergency services.

There is a second pedestrian entrance which is accessible from Richardson Close, past the Parish Council's Glebe allotment site. This entrance also forms part of HCC's footpath network. Footpath 12 travels past the allotment site, and follows the route shown below to White Horse Lane.



Dogs and their owners are frequent visitors to the recreation ground. The Parish Council provides dog and rubbish bins around the site, which are emptied twice a week (winter) and three times a week during peak season.

### Healthy, Safe and Secure

The Parish Council collaborates with visitors, employees, and contractors to ensure that the recreation ground is a safe place to visit and enjoy. The delivery of health and safety within the Parish Council is the responsibility of the Grounds Maintenance Manager. This policy was drawn up by an independent health and safety consultant, who reviewed all the Parish Council's activities, drawing up risk assessments and reviewing current working practices.

The management of Health and Safety (H&S) across the site relies upon numerous processes and procedures, including the following:

- Risk and COSHH assessments
- Safety training details of staff (including contractors)
- Accident or near miss reporting systems
- Safety inspections
- Testing of equipment for vibration related issues
- PAT testing of electrical equipment
- Independent audit and inspection
- Lone Working Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

Health and safety is important to the Parish Council and formalised in its Risk Management Strategy and Health and Safety Policy. The safety of staff and visitors is important to the Parish Council, and this is maintained by regular inspections by qualified staff including weekly checks of infrastructure. As the Grounds Maintenance Team is based at the recreation ground, staff are frequently on site. They are recognisable in uniforms and are first aid trained. Any issues identified by staff are reported to the relevant Manager.

The car park is covered by CCTV which is maintained and operated by St Albans District Council. The Parish Council has an excellent working relationship with the St Albans Police Safer Neighbourhood Team and any public safety issues are raised with the team who have been responsive to requests for additional patrols to the site.

Contact numbers for the Parish Council will be on the new notice board.

Morris Recreation Ground is home to over 100 trees, which are inspected on a triennial basis. In addition, after high winds (exceeding 40mph), Parish Council staff undertake a visual inspection of trees in the event of any damage, which in turn will be reported, with remedial works undertaken by a qualified tree surgeon.

The majority of the trees are mature specimens. The Parish Council has a [Tree Policy](#) which promotes a conservative approach to tree management which includes the type of work that will be undertaken on trees.

The site is home to a publicly accessible defibrillator, which was funded by the County Council. It is registered with The Circuit, who administers defibrillators around the UK, giving out the code when requested by the East of England Ambulance Service.





### A place to Remember Loved Ones

The Parish Council has a [Memorial Policy](#) which includes the planting of trees and installing benches at the recreation ground and other sites which the Parish Council is responsible for.

Memorial benches and trees are being introduced to Morris Recreation Ground, with a rolling programme of replacing existing benches with new Memorial Benches, which are sponsored for ten years.

### Clean and Well Maintained

The park is well equipped with litter bins, which can be used for dog waste. The park is regularly litter picked, especially after events, with volunteers and grounds staff ensuring that the park is returned to the condition it was before the event was held. All sports hirers are encouraged to tidy up after games, with their deposit forfeit for transgressions

The infrastructure on site is inspected regularly, and any issues are reported to the Grounds Maintenance Manager, who either actions the necessary repairs or reports to the Environment & Neighbourhood Committee if the repairs cannot be met from existing budgets. This committee also consider new budget items during the year, which are then considered for inclusion in the following year's budget. There is a rolling programme of maintenance for all the facilities and a maintenance budget. The Parish Council has adopted an [Asset Management Policy](#), to ensure that their buildings are well maintained and that there is an adequate budget available.

The play area, adjacent to the park, is inspected weekly by the Grounds Maintenance Manager, who is qualified to undertake inspections by [Register of Play Inspectors International](#). These reports are stored for 21 years for insurance purposes. There is a budget for play area maintenance and upgrades are considered using funding available from

the District Council, through Section 106 developer's contributions. In addition to weekly checks, an independent annual inspection is undertaken, and these reports can be found on our [website](#).

Any graffiti or vandalism is noticed and dealt with quickly, as the Grounds Maintenance team are based on site. Minor repairs are undertaken in house, with major repairs or works undertaken by external contractors.

## A Premium Recreation Venue

### Football

Football has been played at the site over 50 years, In the early days, Saturday afternoon football was regularly active at grassroots level and both adult pitches were in use every week by teams playing in the Mid Herts League (now defunct), the West Herts League (now defunct) and now the Herts Senior County League. We only have one adult side playing alternate weeks on Saturdays-Global FC who have been with us for 5/6 seasons or more.

Sunday Football has always been a much more active presence with two adult clubs playing on the two adult pitches every week. They are clubs in the Herts Advertiser Sunday League (formerly known as the Review Sunday League and before that the St Albans Sunday League). Phoenix have been with us for over 20 years and Royston Rangers 8/9 years.

We also have a Youth pitch and a small sided mini pitch used by London Colney Colts & Cougars who cater for all age groups and who have hired pitches from us for many years now. They have exclusive use of one of our other sites, Shenley Lane Recreation Ground, with junior pitches marked out.

All our pitches on all our sites now have the modern aluminium slot in goalposts which are lighter to manage and maintenance free. Being all the same style means that fittings are common to all size of goalposts so we stock enough spares which can be used on them all. We were only able to afford these super new goalposts/nets with the aid of a grant from The Football Foundation (FA) and Section 106 developer's funding.

Our pitches are rated as some of the best in the area because of the continual maintenance and hard work of our small ground staff team. Marking every week and cutting-slitting-chain harrowing as appropriate to keep all our pitches in the best possible condition. Often in as good a shape at the end of the season as the beginning of the season.

### Tennis

We have four tennis courts which are in constant use all the year round. In the height of the summer there are often people waiting for a court to become vacant so they can take their turn to play. The courts were refurbished in 2016 courtesy of funding from Tarmac which included a new surface, fencing and nets.

This area of the recreation ground is not well known to residents, and promotion of this facility will be included in the action plan.



### [The Watersplash](#)

Originally, the site was a paddling pool which was developed over thirty years ago and was enjoyed by generations of children. When it reached the end of its life, the parish council wanted to refresh its offering and plans were drawn up to replace the pool with a more inclusive facility. The Watersplash, named over a local hotel which had its own swimming pool, opened in August 2022 it is enjoyed by locals and visitors, who often spill out onto the surrounding grass.

### [Play Area](#)

The play area is home to a variety of play equipment. It is well used by residents as it covers a wide age range. It will soon be the home of a new swing which will be fully accessible for wheelchair users.



## Environmental Sustainability

The Parish Council has adopted a [Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan](#) which outlines how we will deal with issues relating to environmental sustainability. We have undertaken a programme to replace all petrol driven strimmers/leaf blowers with electric versions. We are also reducing the amount of herbicides and pesticides used on Parish Council owned sites. The Parish Council does not use peat-based compost at any of its sites and encourages its contractors to find alternative materials for bedding containers.

We have a commitment to reduce the amount of energy used at Parish Council assets and when the Watersplash was being developed, a grey water tank was installed to collect wastewater, which is used to clean equipment and irrigate.

We have banned the use of single use plastics at our events, asking caterers to invest in recyclable food containers.

All our waste is collected and disposed of using licensed waste contractors. We have a commitment to recycle where possible, which includes food and glass products. All green waste is composted or mulched for use at other sites. Any larger wood items are left in situ as habitat piles.

The Parish Council supports the local hedgehog rescue, who receive part of the collection from the firework display.



## Events

Morris Recreation Ground is home to the annual firework display, which is a charity fund raising event, raising thousands of pounds each year for local organisations including London Colney Scouts, St Peter's Church, The Peace Hospice and London Colney Hedgehog Rescue. Over 4,000 attendees enjoy the fireworks, at a minimal cost, with all proceeds going to charity.

In recent years, it has also been the home of Picnic in the Park, a low cost, family event for residents with young families to enjoy. A series of inflatables are available for unlimited use, following the purchase of a wristband. There are no food or drink vendors, and attendees are encouraged to bring their own picnics, to help keep the costs down.



2023 will see the addition to Larks in the Parks, which is a district wide initiative, held at sites with deprivation or multi race. The event is a family friendly, music and entertainment afternoon.

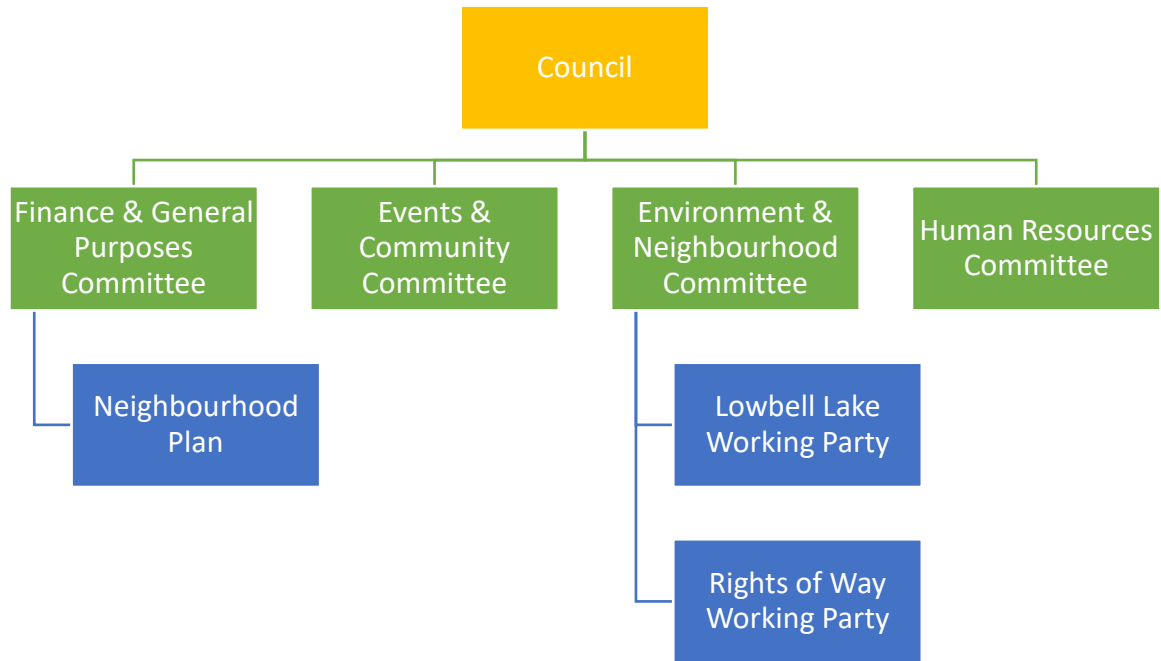
## Marketing and Promotion

### Website and Social Media

Morris Recreation Ground has its own page on the parish council's website. All events are promoted via the Parish Council's website or social media with regular features in the quarterly newsletter, [London Colney News](#)

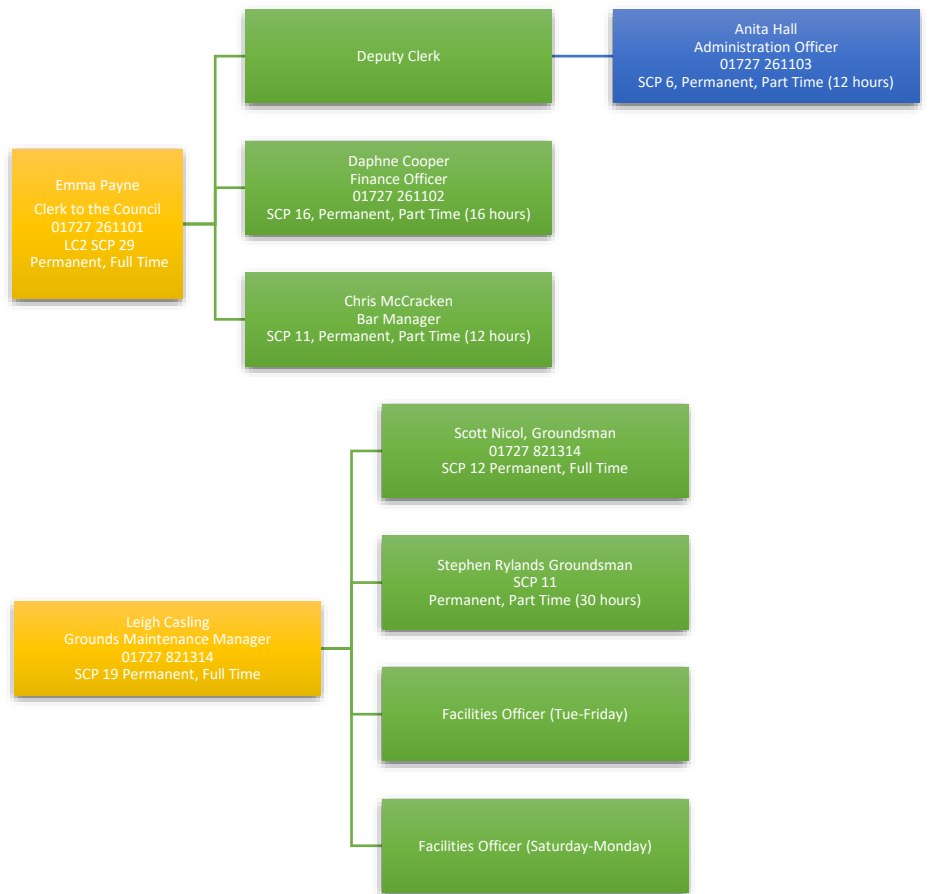
# Appendices

## Appendix 1 - London Colney Parish Council – Committee Structure





## Appendix 2 - Staff Structure



## Appendix 3 - Environment & Neighbourhood Committee Terms of Reference

### Membership

- a) Four Parish Council Members of the Environment and Neighbourhood Committee are established at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council (as per Standing Orders).
- b) Up to two Co-opted members of the public may join during year if authorised by Parish Council. These persons do not have the right to vote or to move or second a motion on matters relating to the management of land.
- c) The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council are ex-officio members of all committees and have voting rights as per Standing Orders.
- d) Three members shall constitute a quorum for meetings. If there are insufficient numbers of elected Members then the meeting will continue as a working party, with all recommendations to be ratified by Council.

### How often meetings are held.

- a) A minimum of five meetings in each full municipal year.

### Decision/Delegated Powers

- a) Management of the parish council's land assets including sports and leisure facilities.
- b) To maintain the War Memorial.
- c) To oversee the maintenance of the Millennium Clock.
- d) To consider matters relating to footpaths and consult with partners and stakeholders.
- e) A transfer of relevant environmental projects from Council or other committees
- f) Management of the Council's allotment sites including the review of allotment rents.
- g) Consideration of local impact on any environmental issues proposed by the statutory agencies or commercial organisations.
- h) The bi-annual review of the village flood strategy
- i) The management and refurbishment of all play areas including the use of S106 funding for improvements (to be approved by F&GP)
- j) The formulation of new Council policies relating to the environment and the review of any existing policies to be ratified by Council.
- k) The Committee is authorised to establish time expired sub-committees and working groups, and to appoint advisers as and when necessary to assist in its work.
- l) Consultation documents as appropriate to the committee.
- m) To incur expenditure within its own budget and to recommend to the Finance, Policy & Administration Committee such other expenditures and carry overs as the Committee considers appropriate.

Appendix 4 - Action Plan

Outcome	Action	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resources	Monitoring
<b>An Accessible Place</b>					
More Information on Site	New notice board advertising events and who to contact about hiring for sports/management issues	Annually	Grounds & Maintenance Manager	New budget item for 2024/25	
A programme of events are held to promote the facility	Events are throughout the year	Annually	Events Officer  Grounds Maintenance Manager	Officer time to plan events	Public feedback at events
Promote facilities to users	Use social media and website to inform residents about facilities on site	Regularly	Events Officer	Officer time to plan promotional activities	
	Register for Love Parks Week and hold event to celebrate the facility	Annually	Events Officer  Grounds Maintenance Manager	Officer time to plan event	Public feedback at events.
Increase use of tennis courts	Consider using free online tennis booking system provided by Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) to promote the tennis courts	Quarterly	Grounds Maintenance Manager	Officer time to promote the facility	Increase usage

**Healthy, Safe and Secure**

Measures in place to mitigate risk to users	Risk assessments for the site are reviewed regularly	Annually	Grounds Maintenance Manager	Officers have time to prepare and review risk assessments	Accidents and incidents in the park are monitored Risk assessments are part of the Council's risk register
Policies for pesticide and herbicide use are in place, COSHH, safeguarding and tree management	Policies are reviewed bi-annually unless more frequently required.  Staff and hirers adhere to these policies	Annually	Grounds Maintenance Manager	Officers have time to prepare and review policies	Policies are reviewed by the relevant committee and are available to Members of the Public via the Council website
Crime and anti-social behaviour issues are reported immediately to the authority when discovered	Councillors attending Police Priority Setting Forum Meetings, held quarterly	Quarterly	Members  Grounds Maintenance Manager	External authorities to act when necessary	
Infrastructure is kept in good working order and any breakages/vandalism repaired or replaced within a suitable timescale	Regular checks conducted and reported.	Quarterly	Grounds Maintenance Manager	Officers have sufficient time to inspect and complete checks on site and action any repairs if necessary	Clerk undertakes spot checks
Park furniture is regularly inspected and maintained	Regular checks conducted and reported Programme of replacing old style benches with newer	Annually	Grounds Maintenance Manager	Included in Grounds Maintenance schedule	Spot checks conducted



	style memorial benches				
<b>A Place to Remember Loved Ones</b>					
Promote memorial benches and trees	Social media and article in newsletter	Annually	Events Officer	Admin Officer writes article for newsletter	Increase in memorial bench subscriptions
<b>Clean and Well Maintained</b>					
The park is regularly litter picked and bins are emptied regularly	Regular litter picks and bins emptied twice weekly (more frequently during seasons of high use). Additional bins provided during summer for container café	Daily	Grounds Maintenance Manager	Part of specification for Grounds Maintenance Staff	Spot checks
Grass is kept to suitable length for users of facilities	Grass cutting is completed on a regular basis, along with pitch marking	As and when required	Grounds Maintenance Manager	Included in Grounds Maintenance Schedule	Spot checks conducted
Perimeter hedges are maintained to a suitable height and to prevent encroachment into the grassland areas	Hedges are trimmed before February and after September to avoid bird nesting seasons	Twice a year	Grounds Maintenance Manager	Included in Grounds Maintenance Schedule	Spot checks conducted
Fencing along entrance to recreation ground, parallel with White Horse Mews is replaced	New budget item for 2024/25	Annually	Grounds Maintenance Manager	Included as new budget item	

Appendix 5 - Events Calendar 2023

EVENTS 2023

	JANUARY	FEBRUARY	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	OCTOBER	NOVEMBER	DECEMBER
Mon					1 Bank Holiday							
Tue					2			1				
Wed		1	1		3			2			1	
Thu		2	2 St David's Day Lunch		4	1		3			2	
Fri		3 COPY DEADLINE	3		5	2		4 COPY DEADLINE	1		3 COPY DEADLINE	1 LCN DISTRIBUTION
Sat		4	4	1	6	3	1	5	2		4	2
Sun	1 New Years Day	5	5	2	7	4	2	6	3	1	5	3
Mon	2 Bank Holiday	6	6 LCN DISTRIBUTION	3	8 Bank Holiday	5 LCN DISTRIBUTION	3	7	4 LCN DISTRIBUTION	2	6	4
Tue	3	7	7	4	9	6	4	8	5	3	7	5
Wed	4	8	8	5	10	7	5	9	6	4	8	6
Thu	5	9	9	6	11	8	6	10	7	5	9	7
Fri	6	10	10	7	12 Bank Holiday	9	7	11	8	6	10	8
Sat	7	11	11	8	13	10	8	12	9	7	11	9
Sun	8	12	12	9	14	11	9	13	10	8	12	10
Mon	9	13	13	10	15 Bank Holiday	12	10	14	11	9	13	11
Tue	10	14	14	11	16	13	11	15	12	10	14	12
Wed	11	15	15	12	17	14	12	16	13	11	15	13
Thu	12	16	16 St. Patrick's Day Lunch	13	18	15	13	17	14	12	16	14
Fri	13	17 PRINT DEADLINE	17	14	19	16	14	18 PRINT DEADLINE	15	13	17 PRINT DEADLINE	15
Sat	14	18	18	15	20	17	15	19	16	14	18	16
Sun	15	19	19	16	21	18	16	20	17	15	19	17
Mon	16	20	20	17	22	19	17	21	18	16	20	18
Tue	17	21 Parade Day	21	18	23	20	18	22	19	17	21	19
Wed	18	22	22	19	24	21	19	23	20	18	22	20
Thu	19	23	23	20	25	22	20	24	21	19	23	21
Fri	20	24	24	21	26 PRINT DEADLINE	23	21	25	22	20	24	22
Sat	21	25	25	22	27	24	22	26	23	21	25	23
Sun	22	26	26	23	28	25	23	27	24	22	26	24
Mon	23	27	27	24	29 BANK HOLIDAY	26	24	28 BANK HOLIDAY	25	23	27	25
Tue	24	28	28	25	30 St. George's Day Lunch	27	25	29	26	24	28	26
Wed	25		29	26	31	28	26	30	27	25	29	27
Thu	26		30	27		29	27	31	28	26	30	28
Fri	27		31	28		30	28		29	27		29
Sat	28			29		31	29		30	28		30
Sun	29			30			30			29		31
Mon	30						31			30		
Tue	31									31		

## Appendix 6 – Other Support Documentation available on request

- Tree Policy
- Climate Change and Biodiversity Plan
- Memorial and Tree Policy
- Risk Assessment Examples
- Play Area Inspections
- Corporate Risk Management Strategy
- Lone Working Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Safeguarding Policy