

FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Spaces Committee Held on 5th February 2025 commencing at 6pm at Benians Pavilion

MEMBERS PRESENT:	Cllrs Gebbett, Coulson, M Pullen, R Pullen and Medhurst
IN ATTENDANCE:	Victoria Ursulean Assistant Clerk
	One member of public
APOLOGIES:	Cllr Rymer

25.01 OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Rymer sent apologies which were duly accepted by the Committee.

25.02 OS OPEN SESSION – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Resident one was in attendance for item 5.2 and requested it be discussed at Cllrs first opportunity.

Cllr R Pullen had been provided with some issues of a local resident who wished to raise a number of points. The first being a question over grants provided for portable dugouts and goals, Cllr R Pullen mentioned that a Football Foundation grant could possibly be obtained for portable goals. He also questioned the progression of installing a hard standing on the football pitch, and if a secure compound could be created around the current storage facility for football equipment. Cllr's Gebbett and Medhurst mentioned that a small storage container might serve the purpose better and that this should be added to next month's agenda.

With no further items raised, the open session was closed at 6.05pm

25.03 OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

25.04 OS COMMITTEE MINUTES

On the proposal of Cllr Gebbett which was seconded by Cllr Coulson, and with one abstention, it was: **RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on the 18th December 2024.**

25.05 OS ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION/REVIEW

25.05.01 To consider signage from Brislands Lane to the recreation ground.

As per the resident's request, Cllrs agreed to move item 5.2 forward.

It was proposed to install signs from Brislands Lane along the footpath in the Meadowbrook estate to the recreation ground, which would mean residents avoiding the road where there is no pavement. The principle being to provide safer transition for residents. Cllrs queried asking Hampshire Highways to extend the footpath along Brislands Lane, and contacting the landowner for permission to install signs.

25.05.02 To discuss installing lights at bus stops following resident request.

Cllr Gebbett had done some research into lighting for the bus shelters and created a document which had been distributed to Councillors. In it he looked at the possibility of wiring the Bus Shelter lighting to the street lights and/or the sustainability for solar panels. He suggested that the street lighting wiring would be very expensive but the Solar on a few shelters could work, but ultimately most of the shelters may be too shaded. As a way forward Cllr Gebbett suggested contacting a couple of companies specialising in Bus Shelter Solar lighting for advice and quotes. Cllr Gebbett also suggested contacting HCC to discuss the possibility of hard wiring or increased street lighting at key points in the village, but pointed out that consideration for residents who may suffer light pollution was paramount. It was noted that the street lights stay on all night along the A31, so the bus service always operates while the lights are on, although the light levels are very low at some Bus Shelters. . It was mentioned and noted that we need to be respectful of the dark skies policy, so any possible solutions must follow this guidance

The meeting was closed at 6.24pm in order to hear from the resident. He thanked the councillors for their efforts but said that the PC has a responsibility and that the low light levels make people feel vulnerable, which is made worse when the weather is bad. Cllr Medhurst supported a wired solution saying that it would be more reliable, and all Cllrs approved any future Bus Shelter lighting being on timers and having PIR sensors.

25.05.03 To consider new arrangements for Christmas lights.

Cllr Gebbett and the Assistant Clerk had met with the current contractor to discuss options for next year's Christmas lights. It had been suggested to cover the bus shelter in netted lights, white lights for the Christmas tree and wrapping the oak tree on the lower limbs in white lights. The motifs on the sides of the shops were considered dated and councillors agreed that we should dispense with these in the future. Councillors were still awaiting a quotation from the current provider, but did suggest that as the cost of storing the lights was particularly high, they could look into local electrical contractors and others potential providers. Cllr R Pullen said that the Village Hall had acquired a grant to purchase their Christmas lights and this was something we could investigate. Cllr Medhurst pointed out that a three-year hire agreement now should conclude with the completion of the new Pavilion building, meaning that there would be ample space to store the lights there in the future. Cllr M Pullen suggested asking a local resident for their help as they were well experienced, and he agreed to make contact with them.

25.05.04 To consider the appointment of a tennis coach for February half term and the summer.

On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with all Councilors in agreement it was **RESOLVED** to appoint a tennis coach for February half term and the summer.

25.05.05 To consider cricket pitch maintenance

In light of enhancing the Pavilion, Cllr M Pullen suggested that the Cricket square be reinstated as soon as possible as it could take up to twelve months to achieve the required standard. Cllr R Pullen noted that a pitch assessment by the Hampshire Cricket Board (HCB) had already been sought. This would be a cost of £150 and was endorsed by R W Sport. Cllrs were aware that there is a need for cricket squares and pitches within Hampshire and felt this would be of great benefit to youth players. It was agreed to wait for the assessment.

25.05.06 To consider new trees for community spaces.

A local resident had created an area within the fence line of Kingswood Copse to lay hedging. A hedge pack from the Woodland Trust had been planted but the whips were very small and something more robust was required. Cllr M Pullen suggested spending £150 on bare root hedging plants. He had looked into the Woodland Trust packs, Hampshire Forest Partnership and PCAN.

He also proposed a community orchard and that this could be decided upon next January.

25.05.07 To discuss the overall appearance of open space areas

Cllrs discussed ways to enhance what we already have within the community green spaces. Cllr Gebbett asked Cllr M Pullen if he could put together a proposal for any ways in which he thinks the areas could be improved. This proposal can then be added to a future OS agenda and discussed.

25.06 OS ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

25.06.01 To consider appointment of new Open Space contractor following review of quotations.

Cllrs had received two quotations and were awaiting a further two. Due to the cost, it was agreed to defer this agenda item until the next Full Council meeting.

25.06.02 To review accessibility to tennis courts and MUGA along with any associated costs.

In view of the community building works, it was advised to defer this item until all of the plans have been agreed.

25.06.03 To review quotations for repainting the skate park ramps

The Cllrs felt that as this is a well used facility, it would be worth carrying out the work. However, due to the cost it would have to be taken to Full Council.

25.06.04 To review quotation for tennis court lights

On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Coulson, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the quotation for LED lights at the tennis courts.

25.06.05 To ratify the cost of a new spring for the see saw in the playground.

It was brought to our attention that the spring on the see saw had broken and quotations were sought. This was booked in as soon as possible so a quotation was accepted before the meeting which amounted to £618. On the proposal of Cllr R Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with all Councillors in agreement it was **RESOLVED** to ratify the cost of a new spring for the see saw in the playground.

25.07 OS AREA UPDATE AND REPORTS

25.07.01 To note area update.

Location	Action Required	Status	Notes
Badger Close	Boundary Encroachment	In progress	Clerk to research further.
	Badger Orchard	In progress	Water bags removed – to agree bramble treatment.
	Badger Run upkeep	In progress	Hedge cut 25/09/2024.
Cemetery	Cemetery inspection		Completed.
Lymington Bottom Green	New bench – FM Care.	Complete	Installed 04/10/2024
Oak parade Green	Flower bed maintenance	Ongoing	Awaiting signage.
	Repainting of car parking spaces.	To do.	To review spacing and repainting – future meeting.
Recreation Ground	Containers	In progress	Site meeting to be arranged.
	Skate Park	Pending	Area to be repainted.
	Tennis courts	Completed	
	Football pitch/club	Ongoing	Ongoing Liaison with Club regarding use.
	Footway along football pitch	Ongoing	
	Water refill point	In progress	Awaiting future costs following request to reduce or replace.
Climate change mitigation	Solar Panels at Benians Pavilion	Pending	Awaiting information from Benians Committee Chairman following site visit
	Nature boxes	Pending	Placed – awaiting EHDC promotional video.
	Parish Trees	Completed	Interim inspection 12 th July 2024.
	Bus stop maintenance	In progress	New panels for Gospel Hall installed w/c 23/9/2024. Clean booked 10/24.

Swelling Pond Hill	Silt removal project	Completed.	
	South of pond/car park area.	In progress	Adverse possession claims in progress
	Fencing replacement and small pond fencing.	Completed	
	Car park remedial works.	In progress	Contractor accepted.
Kingswood Copse	Ongoing maintenance for nature and wildlife.	In progress	Plan decided at meeting – Clerk to follow up.

25.07.02 Update on LED project.

New LEDs had been installed on the football pitch.

25.08 OS EVENTS

25.08.01 To agree a date for the litter pick

The Great British Litter Pick runs from 21st March until 6th April.

It was decided to carry out our litter pick on 29th March 2025.

25.08.02 To agree a date for the Summer Picnic

Dates suggested were the 22nd or 29th June 2025 and the Scouts are able to accommodate either date.

It was unanimously agreed to do the 29th June 2025.

25.09 Meeting closed: 7.18pm

25.10 Next meeting: 5TH MARCH 2025