

**FOUR MARKS PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Spaces Committee  
Held on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026 commencing at 7.00pm at Benians Pavilion**

<b>MEMBERS PRESENT:</b>	<b>Cllrs Davies, Medhurst, Gebbett, M Pullen and Coulson</b>
<b>IN ATTENDANCE:</b>	<b>Victoria Ursulean Assistant Clerk</b>
	<b>No members of public</b>
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	<b>None</b>

**26.33 OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**  
None

**26.34 OS OPEN SESSION – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Correspondence had been received from a resident regarding footpath 2 (running through Fairfield Green). The resident felt that the ground was uneven and dangerous to those using walking aids. Cllr M Pullen had taken some photographs of the area, having viewed it in the afternoon. Cllrs felt that the path was not in bad condition but could do with a tidy up which the Assistant Clerk agreed to ask the Lengthsman to carry out. It was also noted that this path was not adopted by HCC and it was unclear who owns it.

An email had been received from the football club who play on the 9v9 pitch. They requested a pitch roll which the Assistant Clerk had looked into the cost of. The contractor who quoted for this did note that the ground is now too hard to roll, Cllrs also mentioned that there wasn't long left in the season now and that work will be carried out to the field in order to bring cricket back to the village.

With no further items raised, the Open Session ended at 7.25pm. Standing Orders were applied.

**26.35 OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
There were none.

**26.36 OS COMMITTEE MINUTES**

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with all Cllrs in agreement, it was: **RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> March 2026.**

**26.37 OS ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION**

**26.37.1 To consider installation of a smart meter for the allotments water supply**

The meter for the allotments water supply is located deep in the ground making it very difficult to read when required. A smart meter was investigated for this purpose. It would be £99 for a survey which would then provide information on the cost of installation.

On the proposal of Cllr Davies which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the cost of a survey to investigate the installation of a smart meter for the allotments.

**26.38 OS ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

**26.38.1 To discuss ideas for cemetery**

After a number of bench requests, Cllrs were concerned that the area would become too crowded. Therefore, Cllrs Gebbett and Medhurst visited the cemetery and compiled a report and provided a map to display their ideas. They explained that they would like to redistribute the benches currently in the semi-circle to the sides of the cemetery in front of the ashes plots and provide three larger benches in the middle which can have plaques added to them. There would possibly also be a board behind the benches for further plaques if requested. They also felt that the soil currently in the compost area could be better utilised by levelling the ground in front of block E and improving the earth bunds around the football field.

Cllrs requested that the Lengthsman tidy the compost area initially, and that the tree in front of block E have the dead wood removed to make it safe to sit below it. The Assistant Clerk had gained a quote for this at £780.

On the proposal of Cllr Davies which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst, and with all Cllrs in agreement it was **RESOLVED** to approve the cost of work to the trees in front of block E in the cemetery.

Cllrs also discussed work to Swelling Hill Pond and requested setting up a working party to carry out work there.

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst and with all Cllrs in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the setup of a Swelling Hill Pond working party.

**26.38.2 To discuss ideas for infrastructure projects**

Cllrs mentioned the cricket ground but had nothing new to add.

**26.38.3 To discuss meeting with the LTA**

The Assistant Clerk had a meeting with a contact at the LTA. Free Parks Tennis was discussed and it was recommended that an Activator was recruited either via social media or our list of current members. Currently, there has been one person who has shown interest in being an Activator and a young man who would like to aid an Activator.

Our current usage over 6 months has been 8%, we will be updated on statistics every quarter. It was advised that it can take up to two years to achieve the aim of 850 bookings per court. For January, we were at 427 and February was 442. It was suggested that the sinking fund we are accumulating will be for repainting in approximately five years and resurfacing in approximately ten years.

**26.38.4 To discuss bringing the cricket pitch up to a playable standard**

After a meeting with a cricket development manager last year, it was advised to install an artificial wicket on the cricket field so that play can resume as soon as possible. A grass wicket can be developed during this time should we wish.

Cllrs requested quotes so that they can be approved at the next Full Council meeting.

**26.39 OS ITEMS FOR APPROVAL**

**26.39.1 To approve the quotation for work to the walls either side of Oak Green Parade.**

Quotations to repair the sleeper walls in the rear car park of Oak Green Parade and small wall to the front of the shops were sought and distributed to Cllrs. Cllrs asked for further quotes for a brick and blockwork wall behind the car park as it was felt these would last longer.

On the proposal of Cllr Medhurst which was seconded by Cllr Gebbett and with all Cllrs in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to approve contractor 2 to rebuild the sleeper wall in front of the shops at Oak Green Parade.

**26.39.2 To approve the quotation for work to trees along the allotment hedge line.**

Quotations for priority three tree works were requested; this included five trees along the allotment hedge line.

On the proposal of Cllr Davies which was seconded by Cllr Medhurst and with all Cllrs in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to approve Contractor One to carry out work the trees along the allotment hedge line.

**26.40 OS AREA UPDATE AND REPORTS**

**26.40.1 To note area update**

The Assistant Clerk noted that the ROSPA inspection is booked for May, the lengthsman had been and taken some of the leaf mulch from the parking areas along Uplands Lane, the bus shelter grant had been approved, the new contract gardener has started and planted the new tulip tree, and a contact at HCC had been to look at the footpath entrance at Gradwell Lane to devise a plan to make it safer.

Open Space committee	Area Update	April-26
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LOCATION	ACTION REQUIRED	STATUS	NOTES
Badger Close	Boundary encroachment	In progress	Clerk to research further

	Badger Orchard	Ongoing	Cllr to install nature cameras
	Badger run upkeep	Ongoing	
<b>Cemetery</b>	Inspection	Ongoing	Carried out on 29/09/25
		Agenda item	Remedial works to area in front of Block E
		Ongoing	New memorial bench application
<b>Lymington Bottom Green</b>			
<b>Oak Green Parade</b>	Flower bed maintenance	Ongoing	New Gardener to start March 2026
	Replacement of sleepers in the car park	In progress	Quotes being obtained
	Repainting of parking spaces	To do	To review spacing and repainting – future meeting
<b>Recreation Ground</b>	Containers	To do	Removal of items to be decided
	Football clubs/pitch	Ongoing	Ongoing liaison with clubs
	Water refill point	Ongoing	Last service - Feb '25
	Tulip tree	Complete	New Tulip tree planted on Jubilee Green – Mar '26
<b>Swelling Hill Pond</b>	South of pond/car park area	Ongoing	Adverse possession claims
	Steps	In progress	Quotes being obtained
	Pathway	Complete	Angling club laid gravel to pathway Dec 2025
	Well	In progress	Quotes being obtained
	Car park remedial works	In progress	Contractor accepted
<b>Kingswood Copse</b>	Ongoing maintenance for nature and wildlife.	In progress	Plan decided at meeting – Clerk to follow up. Hedge whips planted by gardener in January 2026.
<b>Climate change mitigation</b>	Solar Panels at Benians Pavilion	In progress	Awaiting information from Benians Committee Chairman following site visit
	Parish trees	Complete	Priority two tree works to be carried out Jan '26.
	Bus stop maintenance	Ongoing	Clean booked for May 2026.
	Bus stop solar lights	In progress	Grant application approved.

#### **26.40.2 To receive an update from the Playground working party**

Cllrs M Pullen and Davies had a meeting to discuss placement of equipment in the new play area. This was sent to an independent play inspector to check falling distances and spacing, he has not yet responded.

Cllr M Pullen said that moving the table tennis table to the skate park had also been discussed along with providing an honesty box with bats and balls.

#### **26.40.3 Badger Close update**

Nothing new to add.

#### **26.40.4 Kingswood Copse update**

The volunteer who managed this area had mentioned that he was happy with the current state of the area.

#### **26.40.5 Footpath working party**

Nothing new to add.

#### **26.40.6 To receive an update on meeting with the school**

Cllr Coulson had a meeting with the school to discuss several things; the litter pick, the village picnic, the archaeological dig at Swelling Hill Pond, and to offer free use of the tennis courts once per week. We are awaiting a response.

**26.41 OS EVENTS**

**26.41.1 Village picnic**

A current list of attendees was distributed to Cllrs, and a draft plot plan was shared. Cllr Coulson stated that someone had offered use of an agility course for the dog show, and a local business had offered to provide prizes for first placed dogs.

**26.41.2 Great British Spring Clean**

The litter pick had taken place on the 28<sup>th</sup> March and had been well attended.

**26.42 OS NEXT MEETING: 6<sup>th</sup> May 2026**

**26.43 OS Meeting closed: 9.02pm**

**Signature**

**Date**