



The Parish Office
Uplands Lane, Four Marks, GU34 5AF
Tel: (01420) 768284
Email: admin@fourmarksparishcouncil.gov.uk
www.fourmarksparishcouncil.gov.uk

Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Space Committee held at Benians Pavilion on Wednesday 2nd September 2026 at 7.00pm

Members' Present: Cllrs Thomson, Gebbett, Coulson and M Pullen

In attendance: Jo Tsigarides (Clerk), Victoria Ursulean (Assistant Clerk) and one member of the public

Apologies: Cllr Medhurst

26.86 OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr Medhurst sent apologies due to work commitments.

26.87 OS OPEN SESSION – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A member of the Angling Club spoke about the effects of the hot weather on Swelling Hill Pond and requested ideas on future proofing it. Investigations had taken place into the well which was previously thought to have a natural spring below it. However, it was discovered that there is a tank below the well which didn't have much water in it. Ideas were discussed in preventing the loss of water during hot weather including creating a secondary pond in the shade, and possible removal of some trees which use up a lot of water and also drop leaves into the pond.

End of public session: 7.16pm

26.88 OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

26.89 OS COMMITTEE MINUTES

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen, which was seconded by Cllr Gebbett, and with all Councillors in agreement, it was: **RESOLVED to approve the Minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on the 5th August 2026** with one small amendment to minute 26.81.4.

26.90 OS ITEMS FOR REVIEW

26.90.1 To review the Swelling Hill Pond policy and discuss possible tasks for a voluntary group.

A member of the Angling Club had sent a list of possible tasks for a working party to carry out including stabilising the banks from erosion, some replanting of reeds to help stabilization, cutting back overhanging trees and clearing leaves and debris.

The Swelling Hill Pond policy was considered to be a good representation of what was required but Cllrs would like a dry weather protocol included which will be reviewed at the next meeting.

26.91 OS ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

26.91.1 To consider work to the sleeper wall behind Oak Green Parade

Cllr Thomson explained that the wall behind Oak Green Parade had a structural report which showed that the large laurel hedge and fence should be removed and a structural wall placed within it to stabilise the structure. The plans showed that bricks should be used to future proof the wall. The owner of the hedge and fence is East Hants District Council; therefore a report had been forwarded to them. The removal of these must be authorised before quotations can be sought.

26.92 OS ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

26.92.1 To approve pitch maintenance contractor and to receive an update on the cricket feasibility study

Cllrs discussed the orientation of the wicket on the Feasibility Study and surmised that they would like to turn this ninety degrees in line with a quotation from Notts Sport whom they approved as the pitch maintenance contractor. The quotation was £13,363 for an ECB Approved NottsBase D System which includes:

- Double shockpad system (aka synthetic base)
- Constant pace and bounce in or after all weather conditions
- All synthetic components fully separated by non-degradable membrane – no contamination possible of the upper performance aggregate, proven to ensure future resurface is possible rather than full/partial base replacement
- No in-season rolling required

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Coulson, and with all Cllrs in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to approve Notts Sport as the pitch maintenance contractor for the cricket pitch and to orientate the pitch in a north-south direction.

26.92.2 To approve the purchase of a new Jubilee plaque

The plaque commemorating the Queen's Jubilee next to the Queen's Canopy trees, had been vandalised and completely lost. A new quotation was requested from the original supplier of the plaque. As this had not been received in time for the meeting, it was approved that this could be purchased under the delegated authority of the Clerk.

26.92.3 To approve the installation of a replacement picnic bench at Swelling Hill Pond

A picnic bench at Swelling Hill Pond had been removed due to health and safety concerns. Cllrs were provided with quotations for wooden and also recycled plastic benches as replacements. Whilst Cllrs felt the recycled plastic ones would last longer, they felt the wooden ones were more in character with the area and were also more cost effective. Cllrs chose a bench which was more accessible and larger than the one removed and suggested asking a local business to sponsor it. Cllrs also requested investigating grants for a second picnic bench.

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Gebbett and with all Cllrs in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the purchase of a wooden bench at the cost of £216.63.

26.92.4 To approve the cost to infill dips in the cemetery

In the cemetery, many of the plots require filling to provide a more even ground surface. Not only does this make it safer for passage, but also easier to carry out grounds maintenance. A quotation from a grave digger was £250 per day. The soil in the cemetery could be used but needed to be strimmed and turned which would cost £350. Cllrs requested that the worst affected plots be worked on and that we just book one day initially.

On the proposal of Cllr Gebbett which was seconded by Cllr Coulson, and with all Cllrs in agreement it was **RESOLVED** to approve one days work to infill dips in the cemetery and the preparation of the soil.

26.92.5 To approve the cost of Christmas decorations

All Cllrs felt that the Christmas decorations were a good display last year.

On the proposal of Cllr Gebbett which was seconded by Cllr Thomson and with all Cllrs in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the installation of the Christmas lights at £2,815.

26.92.6 To approve the cost to remove graffiti on bus stops

Some of the bus stops along the A31 had been sprayed with red paint. A quotation was received for £470 to have it removed. The insurance policy was looked at and this could be claimed, however there is an excess fee of £250. The Clerk suggested asking the company who clean the bus stops if they can also remove the graffiti.

The meeting was temporarily suspended due to anti-social activity which was reported to the PCSO.

26.92.7 To approve the cost to repair benches at Swelling Hill pond

Two benches at Swelling Hill pond are in bad repair and need to have slats replaced. We received a quotation for £580 and due to health and safety issues, Cllrs felt this was an important task.

On the proposal of Cllr M Pullen which was seconded by Cllr Gebbett, and with all Cllrs in agreement, it was **RESOLVED** to approve the cost of £580 to repair benches at Swelling Hill pond.

26.92.8 To approve a written letter to the Secretary of State regarding a new path

There is a plan for a new path alongside the allotments. This was discussed in depth at the preceding Planning committee meeting, where it was agreed that it would be presented at Full Council on the 16th September 2026.

26.93 OS AREA UPDATE AND REPORTS**26.93.1 To receive oral update from Clerk**

The Assistant Clerk noted that the football foundation goalpost grant application had been resubmitted, there had been enquiries made into the bus shelter grant application and quotations had been received. A number of complaints had been received from residents which were noted and shared with Cllrs. The new grounds person for Oak Green Parade has now started. Highways have told us that work to the footpath from Gradwell Lane will start in early November. The solar lights are being installed in the bus stops this week.

LOCATION	ACTION REQUIRED	STATUS	NOTES
Badger Close	Badger Orchard	Ongoing	Cllr to install nature cameras
	Badger run upkeep	Ongoing	Tree work to review
Cemetery	Inspection	Ongoing	Annual inspection to take place August 2026
		Ongoing	Bench placement/memorial opportunities.
Lymington Bottom Green		In progress	Planting in memorium
Oakgreen Parade	Flower bed maintenance	Ongoing	New gardener started March 2026
	Sleeper wall in car park	Agenda	Structural Engineer appointed
	Groundsman	Ongoing	New groundsman starting 01/09/26
	Repainting of parking spaces	Ongoing	To review spacing and repainting – future meeting
Recreation Ground	Containers	Ongoing	Removal of items to be decided- Volunteers?
	Football clubs/pitch	Ongoing	Ongoing liaison with clubs
	Water refill point	Ongoing	Next service due 01/01/27
	Artificial cricket pitch	Agenda	Feasibility study received
	Allotment water meter	Ongoing	Quote to install smart meter?
Swelling Hill Pond	Car park remedial works	Complete	
	Steps	Complete	
	Pathway	Complete	
	Well	Ongoing	Angling Society investigating
Kingswood Copse	Ongoing maintenance for nature and wildlife	Ongoing	
Climate change mitigation	Parish trees		
	Bus stop maintenance	Ongoing	New grant application being made
	Bus stop solar lights	IN PROGRESS	To be completed early September 2026

26.93.2 Play area

Cllr M Pullen explained that there is a meeting regarding the Pavilion extension on Friday 4th September 2026, during which it will be discussed whether the play area will be worked on before the extension works or afterwards. A working party meeting will be arranged so that the equipment can be decided upon.

26.93.3 Social media

Cllr Thomson mentioned that she would like to corroborate with the Assistant Clerk to create a post detailing the activities of the committee during August. The committee would also like to show their appreciation for the time given by a member of the Angling Club.

26.94 OS NEXT MEETING – 7th October 2026

26.95 OS Meeting Closed at 8.27pm.