

Great Waltham Parish Council

The Pavilion, South Street, Great Waltham. CM3 1DF

Clerk, W J Adshead-Grant,

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Minutes of the meeting of the Recreation Committee held on Monday 02nd February 2026 at The Pavilion, South Street , Great Waltham at 7.30pm.

1. Chair's Welcome.

Chair: Martin.

Cllrs: Jackson, Stephenson, Taylor, Gilbert and Bradley.

2. Apologies for Absence.

Cllr. Jenkins.

3. Declarations of interests (existence and nature) regarding items on the agenda and to consider any dispensations required to transact the business on the agenda.

No declarations were made.

4. Public Participation session with respect to items on the agenda or any items that they wish to bring to the Councils attention.

No members of the public attended.

5. Update on available plots on Brook Mead and Bury Lane - (Clerk).

It was noted that there were no changes since the last committee meeting report.

VACANT ALLOTMENTS

Brookmead

Site	Allotment Name	Size
Brookmead	001	2.06 Rods
Brookmead	002	2.3 Rods
Brookmead	007	2.55 Rods
Brookmead	010A	1.32 Rods
Brookmead	010B	1.32 Rods
Brookmead	016B	1.25 Rods
Brookmead	017	2.35 Rods
Brookmead	018B	2.31 Rods
Brookmead	025A	3.31 Rods
Brookmead	31c	3 Rods

Total number of vacant allotments on this site = 10

Bury

Site	Allotment Name	Size
Bury	002A	1.2 Rods
Bury	002B	1.9 Rods
Bury	002C	1.1 Rods
Bury	011b	0.9 Rods
Bury	012A	1.1 Rods

Total number of vacant allotments on this site = 5

6. Report on Playground Inspections - (Cllr Stephenson & Clerk).

Due to a software issue with one of the inspection tablets, that the software provider is resolving, a temporary return to a hardcopy report is required for Ford End and Howe Street play areas.

The Great Waltham playground report highlighted a variety of minor issues most of which will be cleared when the toddler area playground work takes place week commencing 16th February.

7. Report from Allotments Supervisor - (Cllr Taylor).

The last inspection was carried out in December. The next inspection using the inspection tablet will take place this month.

Vacant plots will be tidied up, weeded and covered in advance of the growing season following lessons learnt from last year. The occupancy list provided by the Clerk will be used as the worksheet for the contractor and will be actioned this week.

Allotment plot markers will be produced using slate and wooden paling slats following approval of expenditure at full council in December. Cllr Taylor to procure and obtain materials and will be reimbursed by the Clerk. A working group will to be organised thereafter to number the slates and produce the markers.

With regards to strategic task 7E, a plot holder's focus group to be established in March ahead of the growing season.

8. Updates on the Action Tracker - (All).

The Tracker was reviewed and several items have been updated and others closed as complete.

9. Review the 2025 annual play area inspection spreadsheet and confirm defects cleared since the last meeting.

A variety of low-level repairs have been undertaken and closed. The Clerk and handyman will consider arranging a working party of volunteers to clear any defects before the May statutory inspection.

10. To receive an update from the Great Waltham Recreation Ground Play Area Working Group on progress and agree with the next steps.

A Phase 1 pre-start meeting was held with HAGS in January and an action list has been created to cover the Phase 1 work which, weather permitting will commence on the 16th February.

A fenced off compound for contractors use will be created in the car park and apart from restricted parking users of the Pavilion should not be affected.

The next Play Area Working Group Meeting will take place on 11th Feb. The GoFundMe donation page is still open but no funds have been received so far in 2026. The February edition of Parish News contained an update article. In relation to grants received the £10,000 Rural England Fund grant will be used in Phase 1. The outcome of the CIF grant bid for fencing is yet to be announced and the Tom Amos funds will be requested when the equipment is installed.

It was reported that the HAGS equipment pricing is currently stable. It is envisioned that with sponsors, Council reserves and future precept income the full project should be completed in one or two more phases.

11. Discuss registering all the Green spaces that the Parish Council owns using the Voluntary registry as Village greens under the Commons Act 2006, S.15(8). (This is for areas not already registered as Village Green or Common Land). – (Clerk).

- Great Waltham Recreation Ground – Hatchfields end.
- Great Waltham Children's Play Area.
- Ford End Play Area.

The advantages and disadvantages of voluntarily registering green spaces owned by the Council as village greens was discussed and at this stage it was decided that more research was required before recommending any action to the Council.

The subject of green spaces in the Parish owned by CCC and ECC was also discussed and whether it would be favourable for the Council to assume ownership of some of them.

Resolution: **Clerk to investigate the costs for land registry for recording all owned land on to the Land Registry.**

Resolution: **Cllr Gilbert to contact Chelmsford Association of Local Councils for advice and possible support regarding the process to assume ownership of some CCC green spaces.**

12. Review the 2026 Writtle Forest Consultancy report on the trees and agree next steps.

The inspection is undertaken every 2 years to highlight any tree works that are needed to continue good stewardship of the trees on land owned or leased by the Council. The report makes recommendations for work that should be completed within 6 months and 12 months. This inspection follows on from recent complaints by two residents whose gardens adjacent to Great Waltham recreation ground are shaded by tall trees at certain times of the day. The consultancy report did not provide advice on the shading issue.

Resolution: **Share the Writtle Tree Consultancy report with JCM for a quote on the work recommended in the report including trees numbered 550 and 558 and quote separately to reduce the height of the trees at the Hatchfields end of Great Waltham recreation ground by 4-5 meters.**

Resolution: **Clerk to contact the two parishioners who raised the issue of reduced light into their gardens and update them on the outcome of the report and the committee's next steps.**

13. Review the quotes for refurbishment/removal of the Horticultural Societies hut at Brook Mead allotment site and agree next steps.

Requested quotes on the asbestos roof removal have not been received. Clerk to chase.

Resolution: **The Committee recommends that the building is removed/demolished by the Horticultural Society as the Council has no use for the building.**

14. Review the meeting held in December 2025 between Cllrs and the Chelmsford City Council Senior Parks Officer in relation to Strategic Plan tasks allocated to Recreation Committee members and agree next steps.

It was reported that two Cllrs and the Clerk met with the Parks Officer to discuss the condition of the trees and grassland at Ford End recreation ground. The officer stated that the area was developing nicely, that they would continue to carry out monitoring visits and that no further actions was required at this time. Further advice was received regarding the recreation related strategic plan tasks and the action plan will be updated accordingly. Members were encouraged to identify areas suitable for development and to make any funding recommendations to the Council.

15. Discuss whether any Council assets should be disposed of, and if so, agree on the next steps.

The Council has a large asset list of insured items. Many items are of low value, a level below which the Council is unlikely to make a claim in the event of loss or damage. It was agreed that the Clerk would discuss raising the excess with the insurers and gauge any impact on the annual premium.

It was agreed that some unused assets should be reviewed to decide whether they should be retained or disposed of, this included some of the telephone kiosks, notice-boards, the maypole and the public address system. It was agreed that we would consider one asset class at a time to understand the needs of the Parish currently and in the future.

Resolution: **Cllr Gilbert will prepare some survey questions for the unused telephone kiosks.**

Resolution: **The Clerk will discuss the impact of raising our excess level with our insurers.**

16. Receive a report from the Clerk regarding cleaning duties at the Pavilion and agree next steps.

Following the resignation of the Pavilion cleaner the Clerk has completed the cleaning and reported no concerns carrying out the role. The one hour a week allowance is sufficient due to the recent change in floor cleaning equipment.

Resolution: **No further action.**

Members – Gilbert, Martin, Jenkins, Taylor, Jackson, Bradley and Stephenson.

Meeting closed:21.48
Will Adshead-Grant
Clerk to the Council.