ASTONS RECREATION COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

7 September 2026 | Microsoft Teams

Meeting detail	Record
Chair	Gillian
Minutes prepared from	Teams transcript and meeting agenda
Previous minutes	Approved subject to correcting Gillian's key allocation to the main door and kitchen only

PURPOSE OF THESE MINUTES

A concise formal record of the discussion, decisions and agreed actions. Informal conversation has been omitted, and transcript wording has been normalised for clarity.

Attendees

Name	Susan Pallet	Amberley Diamond	Joanna Hart	Liz Pattison	Maria Martin	Jo Walshe	Laura Haigh	Gillian Golding	Sarah Munro	Adam Bere
	SP	AD	JH	LP	MM	JW	LH	GG	SM	AB
Role		Events & Fundraising	PC	Joint Chair & Bookings	Play areas & meters	Treasurer (to July 2026)	Treasurer (from July 2026)	Joint Chair & Maintenance	PC	ACC rep
Present	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

2026 Meeting Schedule

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	02	02	13	11	01	6	--	07	12	02	07

1. Executive summary

- The committee authorised replacement of the playground gate at a total cost of £250 and agreed to obtain a quotation for the flying fox finger guard and basket servicing.
- The committee's current preference is not to establish ARC as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. The preferred direction is to retain the existing community-led model, accept tighter Parish Council financial oversight and consider a revised advisory or delivery group status or name.
- Draft fire safety, playground safety and hire documents will be finalised after a further one-week review period. The current draft may be issued to the two immediate hirers.
- The next meeting was moved from 5 October to 12 October 2026 and will be held on Teams, enabling transcription and preparation of minutes.

2. Previous minutes

- Gillian clarified that she holds keys for the main door and kitchen only, rather than a full set. Liz will amend the previous minutes.

✓ **DECISION:** Previous minutes accepted subject to the key-allocation correction.

3. Financial update

ARC Finances for July 2026

Current balance is £20,390.88 (£17,927.42) on 31 July 2026

Including:

Payments out:

- Astonbury payment items: £3,815.95
- JK Carpenter, playground repair: £125.00
- Bouchier Fencing, replacement post for playground: £70.00
- Grundon bins and skip for clearing bonfire waste: £1,190.70
- Bank service charge: £4.25
- British Gas, gas to 8 July: £41.60
- British Gas, electricity to 8 July: £106.08
- Andy Monk, removal of spoil heap: £450.00
- JK Carpenter, playground repair and post replacement: £212.00
- Everflow water: £286.83

£6,302.41

Payments in:

- Astonbury payments in: £9,145.70

£9,145.70

Payments pending:

- Bonfire waste - skip hire and disposal: £979.00 ex VAT

Deposits pending:

- VAT reclaim to be reimbursed by PC for 2025-26: £1,927.08

Meter readings 08/07/2026: GAS: 77484 (77452) Electricity: 7953 (7613)
These readings were taken by smart meter and confirmed onsite.

ARC Finances for August 2026

Current balance is £19,955.03 (£20,390.88) on 31 August 2026

Including:

Payments out:

- Amanda Porter, June/July cleaning: £120.00
- Gillian Golding, maintenance items: £142.48
- Play Safety, RoSPA playground check: £147.60
- Bank service charge: £4.25
- Grundon bins and Astonbury bin emptying: £114.20
- British Gas, gas to 8 August: £8.49
- British Gas, electricity to 8 August: £58.83

£595.85

Payments in:

- Amberley Diamond, Ladies Summer Supper: £160.00

£160.00

Payments pending:

- MHL Ltd, boiler service: £480.00
- Jeremy Imbush, work carried out over the summer: £150.00

Deposits pending:

- VAT reclaim to be reimbursed by PC for 2025-26: £1,927.08

Meter readings 08/08/2026: GAS: 77484 (77452) Electricity: 8117 (7953)
These readings were taken by smart meter and confirmed onsite.

- No questions were raised about Jo's financial information; the figures were accepted for processing.
- Astonbury generated a profit of £4,782 before any potential VAT reclaim. A 15% donation equates to £717.43 and the committee supported rounding this to £720 for Style Acre.
- Because the payment exceeds £500, Joanna will arrange for it to be placed on the Parish Council agenda for approval and will ensure the basis of the donation is communicated clearly.

✓ **DECISION:** Recommend a £720 donation to Style Acre, subject to Parish Council approval.

4. Health, safety and maintenance

4.1 Routine checks and planned servicing

- The smoke alarms had been checked on 31 August 2026 and were working.
- Emergency lighting, PAT testing, and five-year fixed electrical testing were being coordinated, with the intention of aligning the visit with the boiler service on 18 September.
- The playground check was completed on 26 August 2026. The gate latch was not working, and items highlighted in the RoSPA report still needed to be addressed (see below).
- Tree contractors were due to inspect the lime tree on 8 September and provide a quotation for any further work, likely to be considered before the financial year end.

4.2 RoSPA playground report

- Several minor remedial items had already been completed, including smoothing repaired timber edges, addressing a finger-trap issue at the ramp and filing a protruding bolt end.
- The existing gate continued to present a finger-trap and closure issue. Tom quoted £200 for a replacement gate plus £50 installation.

✓ **DECISION:** Authorise the replacement playground gate at a total cost of £250.

- Wicksteed will be asked to quote for installing the missing flying fox finger guard and servicing/checking the basket, including its bearings and corroded bolts.
- The committee noted that the flying fox was installed in 2012 without the current finger guard requirement. The historical position and the committee's response should be clearly recorded in the minutes. The quotation will be reviewed for proportionality.
- Low-risk recommendations will be considered pragmatically. The committee did not support adding a large under-three warning sign to the basketball hoop because it could introduce its own hazard and appeared disproportionate.

4.3 Insurance and liability

- Joanna confirmed that the recreation ground, pavilion and committee activities, including Bonfire Night, are covered through Parish Council insurance.
- Insurance depends on suitable risk assessments, regular checks, and reasonable action in response to identified risks. The committee therefore emphasised maintaining records and responding proportionately to the RoSPA findings.

4.4Multi-use surface

- Adam had obtained a quotation of approximately £9,000 for an updated acrylic surface. Optional fencing was quoted at approximately a further £8,000.
- A previous grant deadline had passed. Adam is monitoring future grant opportunities and will circulate the quotation to the committee.

5. Safety documents, hire arrangements and fire response

5.1 Document review

- Members were asked to review the draft fire safety, playground safety, and hire documents and submit final comments within one week.
- Maria's comment on recovering the cost of damage exceeding the damage deposit will be incorporated into the hire agreement.
- Liz had updated the hire terms and conditions to reflect the new fire procedure without duplicating the full procedure. Members were content with the approach and agreed the draft could be issued to the two hirers for the coming weekend.

✓ **DECISION:** If no further comments are received within one week, the documents will be treated as agreed, finalised and uploaded to the village website.

5.2 Fire briefing and video

- The committee agreed that a short practical video would be useful to brief hirers on locks, the emergency procedure, emergency lighting and the assembly point, reducing the need for an in-person handover for every hire.
- Adam will prepare a script from the latest document, circulate it for review and then make a draft video.

5.3 Fire alarm response and contacts

- Discussion highlighted the need for committee members and key holders to understand how to respond to a false alarm or system malfunction, including how the system is reset. However, the only "system" is the smoke alarm, rather than a glass-fronted fire alarm. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that the smoke alarms will malfunction and continue ringing. They are more likely to malfunction by failing to sound when smoke is present. Their operation is checked monthly.
- For a genuine fire, hirers should follow the emergency procedure and call the Fire and Rescue Service. For a smoke alarm malfunction, the committee will seek clear practical instructions rather than relying on a single named person to remain on call when an event is taking place.
- Gillian will raise the question with the relevant fire safety provider, potentially Red Box, during the next fire-extinguisher visit. Maria will ask the village hall how it handles equivalent situations.

6. Recreation ground and pavilion bookings

- There were no confirmed new bookings to report. Three recent enquiries about teenage parties had not progressed after the terms and conditions or village-residency questions were raised.

7. Fundraising and social events

- Safari Supper arrangements were in place for 85 attendees, including sufficient desserts. Half of the profits will go to the Food Bank, with the remaining allocation to be confirmed after the event.
- The Bonfire Night fireworks have been ordered, and the required fireworks safety training will take place before Bonfire Night. The training was planned for the week after the Safari Supper, but the supplier cancelled it. The supplier is arranging a new date, which is to be confirmed. Susan will remain at the bar; Nick Isaac will manage the bonfire; Kate Hobanis expected to manage food; Joanna will oversee finance.

- A volunteer is still needed to manage the children's stall, including purchasing and organising a rota. Susan will publish a clearer volunteer request through the social media accounts and may approach Annika. The committee will also use the Safari Supper to seek support.

8.AOB

Future operating model for ARC

Drivers and options

- The review was prompted by insurance and internal audit concerns that Parish Councillors must demonstrate sufficient control over activities covered by Parish Council insurance.
- The options discussed were to establish ARC as a CIO; increase Parish Councillor membership so that ARC can remain a formal subcommittee; or retain the community-led group as an advisory or delivery group with tighter Parish Council financial control.

CIO discussion

- A CIO could provide a clearer long-term link between responsibility, fundraising, events and operational control, with its own insurance and formal trustee structure.
- Members were concerned about trustee responsibilities, bureaucracy, recruitment and succession if volunteer numbers were to fall. Maria and Gillian did not favour taking on additional formal responsibility; Laura wished to continue supporting events but not take on greater governance responsibilities.

Preferred direction

- The emerging collective preference was to retain the current community-led approach rather than form a CIO, while accepting that financial controls will need to move closer to the Parish Council.
- Under tighter Parish Council control, invoices would normally need to be submitted before the monthly meeting and paid after approval. Event expenditure could be approved in advance as an overall budget to enable timely payments.
- The group may need to stop describing itself as a Parish Council subcommittee unless more Parish Councillors join. Alternative descriptions such as "advisory group" or "delivery group" will be explored, while retaining the ARC identity and village-focused ethos.

✓ **DECISION:** The current preference is not to pursue CIO status. Joanna will take this position back to the Parish Council and explore the governance, financial process and naming options.

9. Deferred items and next meeting

- Coordination of village events, regular group meetings, a combined Google calendar and a possible Christmas mince-pie event were deferred to the next meeting.
- The proposed meeting on 5 October was moved because of member availability. The next meeting will be held on Teams on 12 October 2026. Liz will set up the meeting.

✓ **DECISION:** Next meeting: 12 October 2026, Microsoft Teams.

10. Action register

Ref	Owner	Action	Timing/status
A01	Liz	Amend the previous minutes to record Gillian's keys as main door and kitchen only.	Next issue of minutes
A02	Gillian / Tom	Proceed with replacement playground gate.	Approved, £250 total
A03	Gillian	Obtain Wicksteed quotation for the flying fox finger guard and basket service/check.	Report back when received
A04	Adam	Circulate the multi-use surface quotation and continue monitoring grant opportunities.	Ongoing
A05	All members	Review the fire safety, playground safety and hire documents and submit final comments.	Within one week

Ref	Owner	Action	Timing/status
A06	Liz	Incorporate Maria's hire agreement comment on damage costs above the deposit; issue the current draft to the two immediate hirers.	Immediate; finalise after review
A07	Gillian	Finalise and upload the safety and hire documents if no further comments are received.	After one-week review
A08	Adam	Draft and circulate a fire-safety video script, then prepare a rough-cut video for review.	As soon as practicable
A09	Gillian	Ask the fire safety provider how to respond to and reset the system after a false alarm or malfunction.	At/around next provider contact
A10	Maria	Ask the village hall how it manages fire alarm response and reset arrangements.	Report back
A11	Joanna	Place the proposed £720 Style Acre donation on the Parish Council agenda for approval.	Next relevant PC agenda
A12	Susan	Publish a volunteer request for the Bonfire Night children's stall and consider a direct approach to Annika.	Within the next week
A13	Joanna	Report the group's preference not to pursue a CIO and explore alternative governance, finance and naming arrangements with the Parish Council.	September discussion; report back
A14	Liz	Set up the ARC Teams meeting for 12 October 2026 and enable transcription.	Before next meeting

Record note: These minutes are based on the meeting transcript and the agenda. Names are recorded where a speaker was identified in the transcript. The transcript confirms that the meeting was transcribed.

Jobs Calendar

Month	Health & Safety	Process	Social
January	Playground, smoke-alarm and emergency-lighting checks Fire extinguisher check	Meter readings	
February	Playground, smoke-alarm and emergency-lighting checks	Meter readings	
March	Playground, smoke-alarm and emergency-lighting checks (inc. ROSPA checklist) Review roles and responsibilities	Ensure payments up to date Final VAT return before mid-March Visual inspection of the pavilion and facilities at the recreation ground Meter readings	
April	Playground, smoke-alarm and emergency-lighting checks	Prepare FY accounts Weed and feed the grass Meter readings	
May	Playground, smoke-alarm and emergency-lighting checks	AGM Internal Audit Meter readings	
June	Playground, smoke-alarm and emergency-lighting checks (inc. ROSPA checklist)	Meter readings	Astonbury
July	Playground, smoke-alarm and emergency-lighting checks Annual RoSPA playground inspection Arrange and carry out PAT testing	Meter readings	
August	Playground inspections	Meter readings	
September	Playground, smoke-alarm and emergency-lighting checks (inc. ROSPA checklist) Boiler Service Full discharge test of emergency lighting	Review the recreation-ground risk assessment Prepare budget for next year Meter readings Review gas and electricity contracts (expire end October 2026)	AutumnWork Day
October	Playground, smoke-alarm and emergency-lighting checks	Present the budget to the PC Meter readings	Safari Supper
November	Playground, smoke-alarm and emergency-lighting checks	Meter readings	Bonfire Night
December	Playground, smoke-alarm and emergency-lighting checks (inc. ROSPA checklist)	Fire-extinguisher checks Meter readings	