# Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 1st September 2025

# Attendees

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Susan Pallet | Ben Prior  | Amberley Diamond | Joanna Hart | Gavin Wood | Liz Pattison | MariaMartin | Jo Walshe | Laura Haigh | GillianGolding |
|  | SP | BP | AD | JH | GW | LP | MM | JW | LH | GG |
| Role |  |  |  | PC | Chair | Bookings |  | Treasurer |  |  |
| Present? | NO | YES | YES | YES | YES | YES | Yes | YES | YES | YES |

Held in person at the Rec

A very warm welcome to our new member Maria

# 2025 Meeting Schedule

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec |
| - | 03 | 03 | 07 | 12 | 02 | 30 (June) | -- | 01 | 06 | 03 | 01 |

Previous minutes of 30th June 2025 were approved.

Terms of reference were signed by all present

# Health and Safety Issues

BP has instructed Fawns to fix swing and zip wire – will take place in September.

RoSPA check completed and report circulated shortly ahead of the meeting.

The Committee undertook an initial review of the ROSPA report. A further review will be undertaken after a site inspection on 6th September by AD/LH/GW

Initial comments

1. In general most areas in report are green with a few areas highlighted for further review/remedial work
2. Rotten fencing – **BP contact Tom Coates and get quote to replace**
3. Zip way – being repaired w/c 1st September which will address all highlighted issues
4. Mullti-play area. Will review decayed timber
5. Slide – welding crack to be inspected
6. Trim Trail – will remove decayed timber steps and fill in holes **Action – GW**
7. Tunnel and area – will inspect in association with report and agree next steps

PAT test are booked.

# Financial Matters

**Current balance** is £18,738.77 (£19,075.45) on 31st July 2025

Including:

Payments out:

* Amanda Porter, July cleaning: £150.00
* Playsafety, playground inspection: £144.0o
* Bank service charge: £4.25
* Grundon bins: £38.03
* British Gas, gas to 8th July: £26.28
* British Gas, electricity to 8th July*:* £80.58
* Everflow water: £97.54

Payments in:

* Hire, Rosemary Pini: £60.00

Payments pending

* Connect Installation replace heating timer and 3 lights in main hall: approx. £309.34
* VAT total has been submitted to the PC to be reclaimed: £3,299.85

Meter Readings 08/07/2025: GAS: 76785 (76767)Electricity: 5627 (5382)

These readings were taken by smart meter and confirmed onsite.

**Current balance** is £17,387.96 (£18,738.77) on 31st August 2025

Including:

Payments out:

* Amanda Porter, August cleaning: £120.00
* Playsafety, playground inspection: £144.00
* Bank service charge: £4.25
* Grundon bins: £15.49
* British Gas, gas to 10th August: £40.34
* British Gas, electricity to 10th August*:* £66.72
* Everflow water: £720.01

Payments in:

* None

Payments pending

* Jeremy Imbush, work and materials for August: £189.33
* Connect Installation replace heating timer and 3 lights in main hall: approx. £309.34
* VAT total has been submitted to the PC to be reclaimed: £3,299.85

Meter Readings 10/08/2025: GAS: 76815 (76785)Electricity: 5818 (5627)

These readings were taken by smart meter and confirmed onsite.

Future Financial Management at ARC: The Internal Auditor for the PC has noted:

*Local Government Act 1972 section 151 requires that a Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) is appointed to administer and have responsibility for all financial activities of the Council. This is usually the Clerk in smaller Councils, as is the case for this Council (confirmed at May 2024 Annual Parish Council meeting). The Council’s Financial Regulations specifically state: “5. BANKING ARRANGEMENTS AND AUTHORISATION OF PAYMENTS 5.1. The council's banking arrangements, including the bank mandate, shall be made by the RFO and approved by the council; banking arrangements may not be delegated to a committee. They shall be regularly reviewed for safety and efficiency”. Part of the Council’s AGAR Accounting Statement includes a bank account and transactions in the name of a sub-committee “The Astons Recreation Committee” (ARC) which is administered independently of the Council and issues its own payments and keeps its own accounts. There are detailed Terms of Reference agreed (see website policies) which permit delegated expenditure up to £500, with Parish Council authorisation for expenditure above that amount. However, I would recommend that the Council obtains sector-specific legal advice from NALC via OALC and/or SLCC regarding whether or not the ARC accounts should be included with the PC’s accounts on the AGAR, and if so, then considers administering the bank account and associated cashbook itself, named to reflect the PC as well as the ARC, to comply with its Financial Regulations and Standing Order (4(b)).*

This topic was discussed again and the same concerns were raised about moving all the financial management to the PC. These included:

* Practicalities of paying bills for events, in particular concerns that there would be timely payments to villagers that require reimbursement for outlays ahead of events.
* Whether villagers may be more reluctant to contribute to fundraising if the money goes to a general PC account, which is already fairly full, rather than being able to see that it is for ARC to manage and use solely in the interests of the Pavilion and Recreation Ground. Noted that the PC could keep a separate ARC bank account
* Whether the move would disenfranchise ARC members to continue contributing their time if it is felt every small spend item has to be put to the PC.

Note: ARC has 100-150 transactions a year, although 30-50 of these are Direct Debits.

Jo and Laura will attend the Parish Council meeting on 17th September to discuss these concerns.

# Fundraising and Social

Safari Supper - 11th October confirmed. Over 100 people are attending.

Boules Day is confirmed for 6th September. PC will be covering costs of Boules pitch upgrade led by village volunteers. A huge vote of thanks was noted for Guy Liverton and everyone else involved in tidying up the boules courts. They are (both Guy and team and the courts) a wonderful asset for the village

Bonfire Night – Saturday 8th November is confirmed.

Budget for fireworks (approved by PC) is £3,000 excluding VAT

We are very grateful that Andrew Golding and Christian Royston-Airey have stepped forward to act as fireworks co-ordinators and this year will be a year of hand over from Richard Cox.

Amberely is undertaking the risk assessment and TENS which will be reviewed at the next meeting

Other preparations for the bonfire are progressing well supported by Amberely and the core team.

# Maintenance

Still seeking quotes on tree surgeon to complete the work that was started by Arbocare. **Action : BP**

**Action : BP to ask Tom Cottrell or another tree surgeon for a quote for the remaining work (**[**www.tomcottrelllandscapes.com/tree-surgery.html**](http://www.tomcottrelllandscapes.com/tree-surgery.html) **or in the VN** [**www.firstclasstreesurgeons.co.uk**](http://www.firstclasstreesurgeons.co.uk)

Shutters to garage side door and main entrance to the pavilion increasingly difficult to use; consider replacing. Continually being fixed (£500) but problem keeps re-emerging. Agree we should probably progress the idea of a replacement (circa £2000) but get another two quotes. **BP to action**

Wood rot – present in the barge board on the left side of the Downs end gable-end, and has deteriorated further. Barge boards on the right hand side of the veranda gable-end from the front) are also rotten. If not treated it will eventually spread along the boards, and make it too difficult to repair for one person. The rot really needs to be addressed this spring/summer. **Action – BP secure quotes**

Wood bark – more is required, but not urgent and can be done at the Spring Work Dat.

Agreed that it would be prudent to compile a list of key contractors – LP to pull together in discussion with JW Action – LP / JW

# Monthly Tasks / Jobs Calendar

The jobs calendar was reviewed. PAT & RoSPA booked.

# Any Other Business

The cricket nets and are could do with refurbishment. The committee discussed whether this is something that the cricket club might take on with the ARC providing finances and support.  **ACTION: GW to discuss with ACC**

The first aid kits were inspected and need replenishing. **ACTION JW but new first aid kits**

# Jobs Calendar

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Month | Health & Safety | Process | Social |
| January | Playground checks Fire extinguisher check | Meter Readings |  |
| February | Playground checks | Meter Readings |  |
| March | Playground checks (inc. ROSPA checklist) | Ensure payments up to dateFinal VAT return before mid-MarchVisual Inspection of Pavilion and facilities in recreation ground.Meter Readings |  |
| April | Playground checks | Prepare FY accountsWeed & feed grassMeter Readings |  |
| May | Playground checks | Internal Audit Meter Readings |  |
| June | Playground checks (inc. ROSPA checklist) | AGMMeter Readings | Astonbury |
| July | Playground checksRoSPA playground checkArrange & carry out PAT test  | Review recreation ground risk assessment.Meter Readings |  |
| August | Playground checks | Meter Readings |  |
| September | Playground checks (inc. ROSPA checklist) | Prepare budget for next year Meter ReadingsReview Gas & Electricity contracts (expire end October 2026) | Autumn Work Day |
| October | Playground checks | Present budget to PCMeter Readings | Safari Supper |
| November | Playground checksBoiler Service | Meter Readings | Bonfire Night |
| December | Playground checks (inc. ROSPA checklist) | Fire Extinguisher checksMeter Readings |  |