

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 2nd February 2026

Attendees

Name	Susan Pallet	Amberley Diamond	Joanna Hart	Gavin Wood	Liz Pattison	Maria Martin	Jo Walshe	Laura Haigh	Gillian Golding	Sarah Munro
	SP	AD	JH	GW	LP	MM	JW	LH	GG	SM
Role			PC	Chair	Bookings		Treasurer			PC
Present?	NO	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES

Held online.

Gavin has tendered his resignation due to work commitments. ARC thanked Gavin for all his hard work in the Chair role over the last 5 years. He took on the role at a challenging time for ARC and successfully guided it to be a far stronger group today with structure and importantly many more members. A significant achievement.

2026 Meeting Schedule

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
-	02	02	13	11	01	6	--	07	05	02	07

Previous minutes of 1st December were approved.

Roles & Responsibilities

As Gavin has stepped down from ARC, the Chair role is vacant. Options were considered. GG and LP kindly offered to trial Co-Chairing. All supported this.

Health and Safety Issues & Maintenance

1. Fire extinguishers were checked on 4th December 2025
2. Zip wire now working (December 2025)
3. Need to have a fire risk assessment? See email below sent to ARC in Dec 2025
Your fire risk assessment may be in need of review.
Current fire safety legislation requires the responsible person to *regularly* review their fire risk assessment.
Competency of Fire Risk Assessors
Please note that recently introduced fire safety legislation requires that:
'If you use a third-party fire risk assessor it is now your duty to ensure they are competent to provide the service.'
Our team of 3 fire risk assessors are all appropriately qualified ex-local authority fire officers each with 30 years of fire safety and operational experience.
If you'd like to receive a quote for a fire risk assessment please contact our lead fire risk assessor:
Neil Carter MiFireE
nc@redboxfire.co.uk

ACTION: Agreed that GG will contact Red Box for a quote for a fire risk assessment, with a view to a professional review every 3-5 years and ARC conducting the interim years. LH will also contact an alternative provider for a quote.

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4. Goal repairs – as agreed at last meeting, Jeremy is doing a fantastic job of maintaining the goals and keeping usable. ARC approved £80-100 to mend 4 goals. (Work still ongoing) **ACTION: GG to follow up with Jeremy**

5. Pavilion Central heating controller: the central heating system in the pavilion is complicated and is therefore sometimes accidentally left on. In short the boiler starts up as soon as a radiator is turned on, and continues working until the radiator(s) is turned off, even if the timer is used. The boiler is linked to the frost protection system in the attic [because the attic has no roof insulation and it gets below freezing in winter]. Following discussion, as there are limited bookings in the winter, it was agreed to not progress this at this point, but monitor how significant an issue it is over the next few months. **ACTION: GG to follow up with Jeremy**

- Insulating the attic roof might also be a consideration: following discussion it was agreed not to pursue this at this point

6. Bonfire detritus removal

Discussions with Jeremy have highlighted that the heavy and wet material collected from the bonfires over the years is now very difficult to get rid of due to disposal regulation changes. Now bonfire detritus is considered “contaminated waste”, so the usual ‘grabber’ will not collect. Exploring options, perhaps including how to improve the way the nature of the material is described. **ACTION: JW to approach Blewbury Bonfire Team to see what they do.**

7. Tree maintenance

Tom Cottrell quote:

1) POLLARD 1 X horsechestnut (by children's park gate)

- Limbs have started to fail
- High risk area
- Has bleeding canker

2) Remove all major deadwood from all chestnuts and sycamores along the track opposite house. **(NOTE previous tree survey (years ago) suggested we sought clarification about who owns/who has responsibility for these trees - do we know for sure?)**

- High Risk

3) Raise trees over the building to allow 2M clearance.

- Low risk

All cuttings to be chipped up and removed from the site.

Reminder to your working party to sever Ivy at the base of all trees belonging to the park.

Clear grass cuttings from the base of the lime tree. ACTION: GG to ask Jeremy to inform Cricket Club not to leave cuttings there.

2 X days work for the tree surgery team.

Cost £1,900.00 + VAT

Works to be completed by the end of March.

Quote from Jamie Johnson & Rachael Johnson, First Class Tree Surgeons booked for 10th Feb 2026

8. ROSPA

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- Mound - major issue with sharp edges on slide and generally falling apart. Fawns cannot help with remedial work (they don't do mounds) but they can supply replacement equipment. Do we need to "condemn" and prevent its use before somehow dismantling it? The mound was built using the debris from the construction of the pavilion. It was agreed that this needs attention, perhaps removing slide and fort, but leaving mound. Will review whether this is feasible at the Spring Workday. **ACTION: GG & AD to explore options for remedial works in the first instance**
- Quote to have fence posts firmed up around small playground (next to Boules pitch). **ACTION: GG to call Luke & Tom for quotes**
- Do we need a formal review of the "basket" as bearing should be replaced every 5 years? Agreed not as still works ok.
- New signage around the play equipment (some are broken and some areas do not have signs and were advised on the ROSPA report). Will review on the Spring Work day.
- Who is responsible for sweeping basketball court/kickwall free of loose gravel/debris and that the loose play equipment (tyres and rocking horses etc) are not encroaching on the fixed equipment pieces? Will add as an action for the Spring Work Day.
- Bark chippings need ordering - date? To use previous supplier. Will need a bigger order than last time. **ACTION: JW to share details with GG.**
- Maintenance day: agreed Saturday 18 April. **ACTION: GG to advertise in VN. March meeting to bring list together. GW to ask if Cricket Club can support.**

Financial Matters

ARC Finances for December 2025

Current balance is £22,366.97 (£15,163.31) on 31st December 2025

Including:

Payments out:

- Jeremy Imbush, materials and work to 1st Dec: £40.45
- Wendy Keeble (Justin), deposit return: £100.00
- Bank service charge: £4.25
- Red Box - fire extinguisher service: £111.78
- Grundon bins: £38.03
- British Gas, gas to 8th December: £109.91
- British Gas, electricity to 8th December: £54.19
- Everflow, water: £97.54

Payments in:

- Bonfire payments received (Sumup): £7,759.81

Payments pending - none

Meter Readings 08/12/2025: GAS: 76966 (76867) Electricity: 6509 (6359) These readings were taken by smart meter and confirmed onsite.

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ARC Finances for January 2026

Current balance is £21,933.99 (£22,366.97) on 31st January 2026

Including:

Payments out:

- Rustic Management, rec tidy October: £50.00
- Wendy Keeble (Justin), deposit return: £100.00
- Bank service charge: £42.63
- Grundon bins: £38.30
- British Gas, gas to 8th January: £179.43
- British Gas, electricity to 8th January: £55.19
- Everflow, water: £87.43

Payments in:

- Justin Keeble, hire: £120.00

Payments pending - none

Meter Readings 08/01/2026: GAS: 77132 (76966) Electricity: 6509 (6359) These readings were taken by smart meter and confirmed onsite.

VAT reclaim: **ACTION: JW to send info to Parish Clerk**

Future Financial Management at ARC:

JH to change the name of the bank account to 'Astons Parish Council – ARC'.

Recreation Ground Users

14 & 28 February: Blewbury Amazons

19 April: Cricket Club season starts

Fundraising and Social

Astonbury: Saturday 27 June

Meetings to organise have already started. Organising team is 14 people and is split into sub-groups for different areas, to replicate structure for Bonfire Night.

Headline act (Big Cheese) confirmed. Aiming for a greater number of bands with shorter slots.

Considering extending to 11:30pm with DJ near end.

ACTION: AD to confirm maximum costs for next meeting.

Monthly Tasks / Jobs Calendar

The jobs calendar was reviewed.

Any Other Business

LP/JW to review Cricket Club task list for when they are hosting games.

LP/JW have reviewed and revised Pavilion Booking form and Hire Conditions. These have been circulated for review by the ARC. Please provide any edits or comments to LP/JW. Discussed whether there should be some additional T&C's to ensure that the Parish Council cannot be sued by hirers. **ACTION: JH to ask Parish Clerk to ask OALC if there are any standard T&C's for hiring.**

One idea for upgrading rec equipment is to add outdoor gym equipment. **ACTION: SP to explore**

Budget: (Approved in November)

Notes:

- Water bill: recently a lot higher (due to watering cricket square and a leaky loo) so increased. Monitoring water closely.
- Electricity / gas: reviewing contract, believe there could be a saving.
- Bins: May drop frequency to 8 weeks after bonfire night (will organize an extra bin emptying for bonfire night)
- Health & Safety costs: covered by PC so no longer separately listed
- Ladies Summer Supper: May not happen due to Astonbury taking place in 2026 (contributed £350 last year)
- Expenditure greater than income due to the tree surgery expected that the PC has already contributed to.

Budget for April 2026- March 2027



	Budget Year to 31.3.27	Budget Year to 31.3.26	Actual Year to 31.3.25 £	Budget Year to 31.3.25
<u>INCOME</u>				
Donations & hire	1000	1000	1590.00	1000
<u>Fund Raising</u>	-	-		
Astonbury	3000	-	3,360.74	3000
Fireworks	3000	3500	5784.61	3000
Safari Supper	600	600	419.38	550
Ladies Summer Supper		550		
Astonathlon/	900	900	850.00	
Total income	8500	6550	12004.73	7550
<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	-	-		
<u>Ground</u>	-	-		
Mowing & Strimming	250	250	180.00	250
Hire of rollers and other matters	225	225	223.46	225
Maintenance	2500	2500	1555.56	2500
Tree surgery	3000			3000
<u>Machinery & Equipment</u>	-	-		
Service & Diesel/Repair	500	400	180.16	250
<u>Pavilion</u>	-	-		
Water	1000	600	535.97	700
Gas	900	1000	783.11	1000

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Electricity	1000	1300	935.82	1300
Grundon bins	360	350	300.11	350
Cleaning costs	500	500	424.65	500
Consumables	200	150	323.84	100
Servicing		150		
Bank service charges	60		4.25	
<u>Playground</u>	-	-		
Fixed Assets - Pavillion	700	750	361.67	800
	11195	8175	5808.60	10975

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 date Final VAT return before mid-March Visual Inspection of Pavilion and facilities in recreation ground. Meter Readings	
April	Playground checks	Prepare FY accounts Weed & feed grass Meter Readings	
May	Playground checks	Internal Audit Meter Readings	
June	Playground checks (inc. ROSPA checklist)	AGM Meter Readings	Astonbury
July	Playground checks RoSPA playground check Arrange & carry out PAT test	Review recreation ground risk assessment. Meter Readings	
August	Playground checks	Meter Readings	
September	Playground checks (inc. ROSPA checklist) Boiler Service	Prepare budget for next year Meter Readings Review Gas & Electricity contracts (expire end October 2026)	Autumn Work Day
October	Playground checks	Present budget to PC Meter Readings	Safari Supper

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November	Playground checks	Meter Readings	Bonfire Night
December	Playground checks (inc. ROSPA checklist)	Fire Extinguisher checks Meter Readings	