



**Clerk:** Ann Lee, 3 Sparkford Road, Sparkford, Yeovil, BA22 7FA  
**Tel:** 07841392242 or 07702667083 **e-mail:** clerk@henstridge-pc.gov.uk

## Open Spaces Committee Meeting MINUTES 15 July 2026 at 6pm The Village Hall Lounge

1. **Present:** Cllr Steel (Acting as Chair), Cllr Smith, Cllr Courtenay, Cllr Graham, Cllr Petheram
2. **In attendance:** Ann Lee Clerk. No residents present.
3. **Absent:** Cllr Thompson
4. **Apologies for Absence:** To receive and approve apologies for absence including reasons given (Local Government Act 1972 s85 (1). **Cllr Scard on holiday, Cllr Finch on holiday.**
5. **Declarations of Interest.** (Members are reminded of their obligation to declare any Pecuniary or Other interests they may have under the Localism Act 2011 and the Council's Code of Conduct).  
**None declared**
6. **To approve as a correct record the minutes of the minutes of the Open Spaces Meeting held on the 23 April 2026** (Local Government Act 1972 Sch 12). **Approved as accurate record by Cllr Steel, seconded by Cllr Courtenay, unanimously carried.**
7. **To note the Actions from the 23 April 2026 meeting and discuss any matters arising.**

| Minute Reference | Item                                                 | Action                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Outcome                        |
|------------------|------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 23 April 2026    | Oak Vale Flood                                       | On going monitoring of flood risk to be undertaken as part of consideration for Phase 2 work if required.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | On-going flood risk monitoring |
|                  | Instigation of path edging with logs to define route | <b>ACTION</b> Logs to be used to edge pathways to support the ecological balance and create natural edges to walkways. Cllrs reported that all the medium sized logs suitable for this process have been taken from the wood. No further action possible.<br>Fly tipping of tramway material on neighbours' property to be removed and reinstated in wood entrance | Completed<br><br>Cllr Thompson |

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| 15 7 26      | Burial Ground | <p>Clerk to provide Cllr Finch with the number of grave plots currently occupied and plot purchases and free capacity.</p> <p>Les Peters authorised to use additional hours to remove the ant hills and apply insect treatment in May. Cllr Graham reported that Les Peters is commencing the work now.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Four notices strategically placed in the cemetery indicating work has commenced. Action: Cllr Steel to distribute. Clerk to post notice on website and advise local funeral directors.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <p>Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Steel &amp; Clerk</p>                                                                             |
| 15.7.26      | Allotment     | <p>Existing allotment annual fees currently equate to £30 for a full plot and £15 for half a plot.</p> <p>Clerk has prepared a revised fee recommendation for 26/27 to take to the PC on the 1<sup>st</sup> September allowing time for invoicing all tenants on new fees and administration charges on the 30 September.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Clerk to prepare new tenancy agreements including plot prices, deposit, and operational annual administration costs.</p> <p>Clerk to write to 7 tenants 10.6.26 who are breaching the terms of the tenant obligations (3.1 a and b) Awaiting responses from tenants to either relinquish their plots or cultivate with immediate effect. 3 people waiting for plots.</p> <p>Clerk wrote to SALC (FODO) to negotiate redeployment of funds to accommodate alternative work. FODO urgently requires a brief report detailing spend to date and requested changes.</p> <p><b>ACTION</b> Cllr Steel and Clerk to send brief.</p> <p>Cllr Graham to contact Robert Brown to verify validity of the quantity of free plantings to cover the track or cost scalping's and purchase a strimmer.</p> <p>Cllr Steel to source purchase of a rotavator.</p> | <p>Minutes section</p> <p>Clerk</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Cllr Steel &amp; Clerk</p> <p>Cllr Graham</p> <p>Cllr Steel</p> |
| 21 Oct 25 5a | Footpaths     | <p>Footpath issues obstructed due to overgrowth.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> To use the Ranger to clear two prime (WN1226 and 1238) paths using allocated budget.</p> <p>Cllr Steel reported that the Ranger has undertaken work on the railway track and the path backing onto the church yard. Invoicing will be accounted for separately from maintenance budget. RFO aware</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Complete                                                                                                               |

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| 15.7.2026 | Environmental Health report Station Gardens | Environmental health report there is no silt contamination. Cllr Petheram reported the vegetation, and putrid black sludge will be removed once insects have been allowed to return to their habitat. The smell is diminishing as the spoilt has dried out. Fresh topsoil will be banked up, and the area reseeded on the sides of the ditch. Arrangements have been made to remove a fallen tree. Cllr Petheram has reported other leaning specimens to him that are unstable and leaning on a neighbour's stable that require urgent treatment. For feedback at the PC meeting on the 1 <sup>st</sup> September. | Cllr Petheram and Cllr Finch         |
| 15.7.2026 | Playground Rocker broken                    | The Clerk contacted the insurance company and was advised cover of the equipment will only be paid if damage has been caused by vandalised. There is no evidence of this. HAGS warranty only covers 2 years on moving parts; no replacements are available. Cost of the repair is in excess of £900. Hazard safeguarding has been achieved with fixed cone over the equipment case circumference. Cllrs resolved not to replace the equipment at this stage and repair ground cover once removed. <b>ACTION</b> Cllr Graham to arrange the equipment base removal and playground floor repair.                     | Complete<br>Cllr Graham              |
| 15.7.2026 | Staff Contract                              | To revise the maintenance employees' contract to ensure that Statutory Sick pay is covered by the aggregated hours worked and to ensure that the hourly rate does not drop below the minimum wage.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Cllr Finch and Cllr Steel<br>ONGOING |

## 8. Open Spaces Matters

- a. To **RECEIVE** an **UPDATE** on the location of bins within the cemetery and provision of green waste signage following the provision of a compost heap to the left of the main gate with signs to direct the public to separate compostable waste from noncompostable waste. **Cllrs stated that the bin is being misused. Cllrs resolved to remove a dead flower bin repository and place a sign on the co-mingle bin directing the public to use a newly fashioned compost heap made from pallets.**  
Cllr Graham proposed the design of large signs directing the public to put vegetation waste in the compost heap and NOT in the co-mingle bin. This was seconded by Cllr Smith and unanimously carried. Cllr Steel and the Clerk to co-design a proposed sign, circulate it and seek a quote from Arien Signs for decision at the PC meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> of September.
- b. To **RECEIVE** an **UPDATE** on work undertaken by the Ranger on footway clearance for prime sites. Cllr Scard. Cllr Steel reported that she had instructed the Ranger to work on the

railway track footpath and the path backing onto the church yard. This work was a priority for Frazer Cooke. The work has been completed. Invoicing will be accounted for separately from maintenance budget. The RFO has been made aware of this by Cllr Steel.

- c. To **NOTE** work on the recreation ground in preparation for cricket events and football post the Village Fete event. **Cllr Graham**. Cllr Graham reported that reseeding has been undertaken in four areas of the recreation ground. Work has been delayed by one month to accommodate recreational ground events. Growth is slow due to weather conditions. Cllr Graham reported that the Football Club have been making the ground good and would like to have a longer contract with the PC to accommodate the opportunity to apply for grants to improve the pitches using support from FA grant making bodies. Cllr Graham proposed that the Clerk works with him to strengthen the longevity of the Gryphon contract. This was seconded by Cllr Petheram and unanimously carried. Clerk to supply Cllr Graham with Cllr Bakers details from Bruton Town Council to offer advice.
- d. To **AGREE** the **PLAN** to replace/repair the equipment that has broken in the children's playpark area and mitigate against the risk of trip hazards. **Cllr Graham** The Clerk reported that she had contacted the insurance company and advised cover of the equipment only paid if vandalised. No evidence of this. HAGS warranty only covers 2 years on moving parts, no replacements available. Cost of repair more than £900. Hazard safeguard with fixed cone. Equipment base to be removed. Cllrs resolved not to replace the equipment at this stage and repair any ground floor covering once removed. **ACTION** Cllr Graham to arrange the equipment base removal and playground floor repair.
- e. To **RECEIVE** a **RECOMMENDATION** to manage trees and large shrubs that require maintenance and remedial work in the recreation ground for in the autumn. **Cllr Petheram** Cllr Petheram and Cllr Steel presented a comprehensive plan of all trees and shrubs in the recreation area. They had produced a detailed maintenance plan including pruning guidance with timeframes for all trees and shrubs. They noted that a tree close to the pump track had a dead limb. Cllr Steel indicated that the Ranger could undertake this maintenance within his contracted hours.

Cllrs resolved to get this work costed in time for any budget rounds in October alongside a detailed budgetary estimation to include work on the allotments, cemetery, footways, recreational ground and contingency for urgent/emergency work. Action Cllr Petheram and Cllr Steel.

- f. To **RECEIVE** and **AGREE** the recommended volume of bark for the Jubilee boarder. **Cllr Steel** Cllr Steel reported that she had received two quotes for bark. However, she wanted to ensure that the estimated volume of between 3.5 and 4 inches of bark had been considered by both companies as the costs vs volumes appear to be calculated differently. **ACTION:**

Next meeting the 13 October 7 pm Village Hall.

Ann Lee Parish Clerk

Signed and dated