MINUTES OF MEETING OF AMENITIES COMMITTEE
09 February 2026
14:30, Woolton Hill Church Hall

Chairman:	**Cllr Rand (Chair)**
Present:	**Cllr Hurst, Cllr Cooper, Cllr Roots, Cllr Blakeway**
In attendance:	**Andy Midwinter**
Clerk:	**Amy White**

1. **Welcome and apologies**
   None.

2. **Declarations of Interest**
   None.

3. **To Agree Minutes of Previous Meeting**
   The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2025 were agreed and signed by the Chairman, Cllr Rand.

4. **To update on actions from previous meeting of 11 November 2025**
   Action: Cllr Hurst to write back to the school to thank them for the offer of the equipment but that EWPC will decline- Actioned.
   Action: Clerk to follow up on trim trail removal quotes- in action with Kevin Tooze.
   Action: Clerk to follow up with Dick Randall Services for playground repairs- in action (still chasing for reply).
   Action: Cllr Hurst to write up the consultation regarding the HE recreation ground- Actioned.
   Action: Cllrs will walk both HE and WH grounds to confirm boundaries as part of the voluntary registration process- Actioned.
   Action: Clerk to accept quote from Greentips for tree work at Brownies Corner- Actioned. Trees were cut in December.
   Action: Cllr Rand to reply positively to the offer of the elm trees- Actioned.
   Action: Cllr Rand to write an article on our Annual Maintenance Agreement with Scofell (Deadline 07 December for January edition) - Actioned.
   Action: Clerk to add all Spectrum articles for 2025 onto the EWPC website- Actioned.

5. **Drone Footage**
   Andy Midwinter, whose drone footage the council has been really grateful for, attended the meeting. He explained about his licence (EWPC has a copy), restrictions and privacy (regarding private properties etc). The committee discussed how having an overview of the HE recreation ground would be really useful for the potential project (see item 7). Cllr

Hurst asked whether Andy could take further drone footage of the Watermill Bridge development (prior to starting), Oakley Farm (currently identified in the BDBC Local Plan update) and the parish field with the elm trees that have been recently planted.
Action: Andy Midwinter to take extra drone footage of the parish field, Watermill Bridge and Oakley Farm areas for EWPC.

6. Footpaths

Cllr Blakeway reported that footpaths are in a reasonable state considering the current very wet weather.
There are two trees down on the footpath at the Chalkpit on the steps. However, it is navigable, and there is no urgency for removal at this point.

The new Hampshire Ranger, Alison Hellyer, will meet with Cllr Blakeway and the Clerk in April. One project Cllr Blakeway will discuss with Alison is whether EWP might be able to apply for grant funding to improve Footpath 10/1 (Fullers Lane to Heath End).
Cllr Blakeway will also write an article on the boardwalk to send to Henry Oliver of NWDNL.
Action: Cllr Blakeway to write an article on the boardwalk to send to Henry Oliver of NWDNL.

The committee discussed whether and how to improve the now outdated walking pamphlet for East Woodhay, especially how to promote the local walks. Drone footage/pictures would be used to place on Spectrum/website etc. The discussion led to a consideration of working with Highclere Parish Council.
Action: Clerk to discuss working with Highclere Parish Council on footpath promotion at their meeting on 10 February.

7. Recreation Grounds

Kevin Tooze is yet to complete some repairs on the WH playground. The Clerk is liaising with him. Other repairs will require Dick Randall Services- the Clerk has been chasing them for a reply but has not heard back.
The Clerk has received a quote from Scofell for pressure washing both recreation ground equipment and playground equipment to remove algae/dirt. The quote received was £764 excl VAT. It was agreed to go ahead with this in the Spring.
Action: Clerk to approve quote from Scofell for jetwashing play equipment in both recreation grounds.
Action: Clerk to ask Kevin Tooze to quote to repair scramble net in WH playground identified by the BDBC play inspector.

HE Recreation ground:
Cllr Hurst had previously reported on the feedback received from the Scouts and other community members on the future use of the HE recreation ground. His latest report is at the end of the Minutes.
Currently, the boundary between the ground and the land at the back of the village hall is very overgrown. Cllr Titcomb will walk the boundary from the village hall side to work out where the best place for an entrance would be to join both areas of land. Then the hedging/overgrowth can be reduced to help clear the area and get a better understanding of the land available for a new landscaping project. The CIL earmarked reserve would be

used for the digging and removal of the trim trail, old fencing etc. The Scribbens Reserve would be used for the planting/benches etc.
Cllr Hurst is happy to lead this project, with support from Cllr Rand and Cllr Roots.
Action: Cllrs Rand and Hurst to ask to meet Kevin Tooze on site at HE recreation ground to discuss the fencing/hedging.

As per the full council minutes of 26 January, the elm trees and approx. 90m of hedging that Cllr Rand received grant funding for from the Hampshire Hedging Partnership, have been planted in the parish field. The NWN published an article on the day.
Action: Clerk to ask Kevin Tooze to plant stakes to protect the elm trees in the parish field.

BT Building- the committee is yet to find someone to discuss the planting of hedging to around the building. Cllr Hurst spoke about linking this hedging opportunity to creating a hedging/wildlife corridor in WH and a wonderful way to promote nature.
Action: Clerk to place a notice on the door of the BT building on Mount Road to ask the next person there to contact EWPC.

8. Parish Field and biodiversity update

The field is incredibly wet after 6 weeks of rain. Cllr Rand asked the committee to consider how the path can best be kept dry during periods of heavy rain. The current drainage pipes appear to be working well to take the water away from the path. Adding further drainage pipes will be investigated.
Action: Clerk to work with Cllr Rand to obtain further quotes from Lampards for more drainage pipes in the parish field.

Lectern: This idea had been discussed a few years ago, with one placed at the entrance at Brownies Corner. Now that there is much more activity in the field, Cllr Rand will create some wording and the Clerk will contact the company previously used for the Boules court lectern to obtain a quote.
Action: Cllr Rand and Clerk to work on wording/quote for lectern in parish field.

9. Spectrum

Cllr Rand has written two articles for Spectrum, one on the precept and one on the elm tree planting.
A decision for the April edition will be confirmed at a later date.

10. ASB on EWPC property

There is a small amount of graffiti on the wooden play equipment, but not bad enough to do anything about until the equipment is sprayed in the spring.

11. General Maintenance

Nothing else reported.

12. Items to take to next meeting:

Usual items.

Next meeting: Tuesday 17 March 2026, 9:30am.

Actions from February meeting

Action: Andy Midwinter to take extra drone footage of the parish field, Watermill Bridge and Oakley Farm areas for EWPC.
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Action: Clerk to discuss working with Highclere Parish Council on footpath promotion at their meeting on 10 February.
Action: Clerk to approve quote from Scofell for jetwashing play equipment in both recreation grounds.
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Cllr Hurst Report on Heath End- update:

The following is the summary of three consultations carried out with the community through 2025 on the subject of the Heath End Recreation Ground, with focus on the future of the "trim trail". The results of the consultation should be used to inform the use of the Scribbens legacy. The consultations consisted of specific questions to members of the community on their use of the recreation ground and views on the area that has the trim trail (to rear of tennis court).
Three consultations were carried out:
St Martins Fete, this had 51 interviews
East Woodhay Flower Show, this had 67 interviews
EWVH Craftex event, this had 30 - 35 interviews (lost count as doing car parking at same time).

Other ad hoc conversations with the community have also been included.

Summary of comments:
Usage
A large majority responding said their children do not use the trim trail or had not used it in the past.
Five families indicated their children had used the trim trail (all in the past).
Only one family whose children used the trim trail at present.
Most families used the tennis courts and the play equipment adjacent to the courts. This area was highly valued by users.
The combined family use of the tennis court with the playground was by far the most common usage. This was especially true in the summer months.

Many people indicated their children use the equipment when they are at an event in the hall (typical usage is one parent goes to the hall event, the other takes the children to the playground).

General comments on the recreation ground
The space was valued by the majority of the people interviewed.
The things people valued about the space included.....

- safe for children, being open and fenced
- open space, people can see their children while playing tennis
- peaceful
- felt it was a family space

Potential usage of the area to the rear of the tennis courts
Majority of people wished to have more picnic benches close to the play area (so they can watch their children)
People liked the idea of the benches being on the hard standing area directly to the rear of the courts ("can see the whole recreation area").

People were specifically asked if they would support an open community area to replace the trim trail. In later interviews people were also asked what to do with the picket fence.

- the majority of people supported the removal of the trim trail equipment and creating an open community area
- in later interviews there were more ideas on the usage of an open area
- initial ideas suggested the area be used for community groups such as the scouts, beavers, etc
- later ideas included support for the area to be used in conjunction with community events at the hall. For example for the flower show (suggestion to use it as a bouncy castle area)
- most people commented that rules for use of the area would need to be clear and it should be for all the parish community organisations and not just specific groups.
- initially people were ambivalent on the removal of the picket fence, however in later discussions on the usage people felt the picket fence should be removed to create a true open area (especially for a bouncy castle)
- comments if the picket fence is removed the fencing area to the ditch at the rear must be maintained for safety

Other considerations:
A number of families commented that they would like to see some modern play equipment in the play area adjacent to the tennis courts.

The present trim trail is reaching the end of its life and is starting to deteriorate, so a decision would have to be made soon on the use of this area. When this was outlined to people in later interviews there was much stronger support for removal and keeping the area open.

When discussed with organisations to use the area in combination with the hall then people raised the point of easy access to and from the hall grounds. On a recent review of the boundary between the hall and the trim trail it was noticeable that the buffer zone has grown substantially. This could be made a narrower zone and a gap created with a gated entrance to the hall grounds to make access easier.

In speaking to people during the interviews it is clear there will need to be good communication on why the trim trail is being removed and the creation of the community space combined with guidelines for usage. It needs to be communicated as a wholistic project.

Conclusion
Overall strong support for .....

- removal of the trim trail (especially when the end of life of equipment is understood).
- creation of an open space for the use by community groups, especially in combination with hall use.
- removal of picket fence to create a totally open space (and bouncy castle use)
- installation of benches on the hard standing area

We should also consider.....

- reduction in the size of the buffer zone between the potential open area and the hall, creating a larger open area. A gap through this to the hall grounds.
- in future putting some additional modern play equipment into the play area.