



STOKE GIFFORD
PARISH COUNCIL

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STOKE GIFFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE RECREATION & LEISURE MEETING

Held on Tuesday, 21st April 2026

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE:

In the event of a fire all those present should leave the building calmly, breaking a fire alarm panel on the way out, and assemble on the far side of the car park at the assembly point.

Attendees are reminded to either switch off or make silent their mobile phones.

PRESENT:

S Bandcroft, M Brown, J Brunwin, M Gallagher, K Marsden, P Richardson, and A Shore.

Also, the Parish Clerk, M Rendell, A Slade, a representative from FACE, the new Southern Brooks Community Development Coordinator and eight residents.

1	Welcome and apologies for absence The Chair, Councillor Penny Richardson, welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Clerk informed members Councillor Jan Brunwin has a prior engagement and will join the meeting shortly after 13:00, also apologies received from Councillor Tony Hyde and Caretaker (Jon Welsh).	ACTION
2	To receive notification of any members' personal or prejudicial interest Councillor Sue Bandcroft asked the Clerk to remove Friends of 40 Acres from her Declaration of Interests, as the group is being dissolved and will no longer run.	
3	To approve the last Recreation & Leisure meeting Minutes dated 20th January 2026 <i>Councillor Jan Brunwin arrived at this point in the meeting</i> Councillor Sue Bandcroft proposed acceptance of the Minutes of the last Recreation & Leisure meeting dated 20 th January 2026, seconded by Councillor Max Gallagher, a vote was taken, 6 for, 1 abstention, proposal carried.	

	The minutes were duly signed by the Chair as a correct record. The Chair, Councillor Penny Richardson, informed members the next two committee meetings in July and October will take place at Brooklands Park Community Hall.	
4	PUBLIC SESSION [3 MINUTES PER PERSON WITH A MAXIMUM OF 15 MINUTES PER SESSION] – eight residents were in attendance. A resident informed the Chair, Councillor Penny Richardson, that following some points raised at the 2025 October Committee meeting on some maintenance carried out at Little Stoke Park, they are disappointed with the response but hope to see the Parish Council ensure all maintenance is undertaken in a professional manner and signed off going forward, including all sites managed by the Council. The resident will no longer raise the concerns and regards the issue as now resolved. A resident was unhappy the recent Tree Planting Survey consultation was approved by the Chair of Council with limited information within it. The resident felt more information should have been included within the survey including any financial impact on the Council.	
5	Update from Youth Provider. A representative from FACE was present to talk through the report: <i>Open Access Monday Youth Club at Scout Hut – the youth work team have been supporting a core group of young people, who are currently transitioning out of the sessions due to age and other factors. They all achieved their South Glos Award, and some of them attended the youth awards night at BAWA Filton in February. One will be starting to volunteer in another youth centre in the next few months. The team have been out recruiting new members and building relationships, and they hope to have a new, younger cohort accessing the sessions soon.</i> <i>Brooklands mobile DORIS sessions – these sessions have continued across the winter months and have gained lots of new members. The team have been working in partnership with the Residents’ Association, which has helped promote the sessions. These sessions will be phased out, once the youth project sessions start up in the new building.</i> <i>Brooklands Community Centre – The team have been very excited about the opening of the new facility and have been planning a new project with local young people. From after the Easter holidays, the project sessions will take place on Tuesday evenings, and will involve young people in a creative arts project, to showcase in the local area. The youth-led sessions will involve planning and developing projects that will be fun for young people and encourage them to become more involved in their local community.</i> <i>Abbeywood School – the team will be delivering weekly sessions during lunchtime at the school for youth work support and well-being.</i> <i>Staffing – The new trainee Youth Development Worker is now in post and will be more involved in the planning and development of the youth sessions and engagement across Stoke Gifford.</i>	

	Future plans – • <i>Recruit 2 assistants for the youth work sessions and promote volunteering opportunities for local people.</i> • <i>Weekly sessions at Abbeywood School</i> • <i>Apply for funding to deliver a HAF (Holiday activity and food) programme in the area for families on free school meals – targeted at older secondary school ages – 2 x summer 3-day camps in July and August</i> • <i>FACE Team training day 20th June</i> Councillor Andrew Shore thanked the Youth Work Manager for the update and raised concern over the group running regular sessions at Brooklands Park and asked for confirmation over the supervision and management of the sessions ensuring the upkeep of the building is always paramount. Following outreach work held within the Brooklands Park estate, the Youth Work Manager highlighted the need for youth provision locally and the group booked into the building are undertaking specialist project sessions supervised by staff. The Youth Work Manager is mindful of the proximity between the community building and neighboring properties and will closely monitor the noise levels, especially when entering and leaving the building, or taking any projects out into the garden area. The Youth Work Manager asked members if the facility on the Trust Ground might be a suitable venue to hold youth sessions at, going forward. Members agreed the location would work but are unsure of the exact requirements of the youth group. The Youth Manager will liaise with Councillor Dave Addison.	
6	Balfour Beatty path rectification - 40 Acres The Chair, Councillor Penny Richardson, contacted Network Rail to raise concerns over the time it was taking Balfour Beatty to rectify the pathway in Forty Acres following the emergency works to repair the landslip on the embankment in 2025/ 26. Balfour Beatty has since contacted the Clerk and met him on site, along with the Head Groundsman, to look at and talk through the outstanding work. This work has been scheduled in towards the end of June. Balfour Beatty has apologised for the delay and assured the Council the works will take place in June. The tarmac area and grass verge on the front of the field gate will also be included within the scope of work.	Clerk/ Head Groundsman to continue linking with contractor
7	Update from Grounds Team. Both Head and Deputy Head Groundsman were present to report to members. Since the January report, the following works have been undertaken: <u>Little Stoke Park</u> The sports pitches have been verti-drained to improve soil aeration and drainage	

Pitches have been Quadra-played to enhance surface condition and playability Seasonal grass cutting has commenced across all maintained areas A memorial tree for a resident has been organised and planted Planting works are ongoing along the pathway Hedge cutting operations are continuing as part of routine maintenance Three dead trees, two opposite the Community Centre and one on Clay Lane have been removed to ensure public safety The red robin hedge has been weeded and mulched to support heathy growth Ongoing organisation and tidying of the Maintenance shed is in progress Weed spraying around buildings and bus stops Wildflower seed, sowing Dugouts repainted. <u>Royal Park and 40 Acres</u> Willow copse has been pollarded with cuttings reused for gap filling around the site A memorial tree has been planted in Royal Park Brush cutting has been carried out behind the newly planted memorial tree The triangle planter has been weeded and supplemented with new planting Dead trees along the pathway at the rear of 40 Acres have been felled A previously obscured tree has been uncovered from bramble growth at the rear of 40 Acres Damaged limbs have been removed from two willow trees in 40 Acres A Poplar tree in Royal Park has been felled for safety reasons <u>Meade Park</u> The Cerimon Close entrance has been brush cut and hedges trimmed to improve access and appearance Selected boulders have been repositioned to improve efficiency and safety during grass cutting operations The timber snake bench is in good condition following remedial works carried out by the original contractor Repairs to wooden edging surrounding play area	
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	<u>Additional works to continue</u> Weed spraying pathways around parks Seeding pitches Wind damaged trees to be cleared/ chipped Cleaning debris from North Road	
8	Update from Caretaker The Clerk presented an update from the Caretaker with a list of jobs carried out since the last Recreation & Leisure meeting Caretaker: Little Stoke Community Report Since recently joining the team at Stoke Gifford Parish Council I have undertaken various tasks that have been required. The replacement of the Council noticeboard at Ratcliffe Drive is now complete, with the intention to use any appropriate parts to repair the board in Wrington Close. The Community Hall and meeting rooms are in constant use with the range and diversity of users increasing. Maintaining the fabric of the building has been important with toilet systems needing repair, scuffs and marks needing painting or removing, as well as keeping the building's surroundings clean and tidy and a welcoming place for all. The MUGA pitch and attached changing rooms are very well used and their wear and tear needs to be monitored and reviewed weekly. Additional work to assess the fire escape doors to the Kingfisher room will be undertaken in April and PAT testing of electrical equipment is scheduled to be completed shortly.	
9	Live Labs 2 (Greenprint) project update A report was tabled by the Clerk from Chris Harris (SGC) <i>As you know, over the past three years, we have been taking a different approach to managing selected grass verges and green spaces at specific sites across South Gloucestershire as part of the Live Labs 2 (Greenprint) project.</i> <i>The participation of your Parish in the project is massively appreciated and has contributed towards achieving the project goals and learning a great deal about new approaches to verge management and carbon reduction.</i> <i>Greenprint is part of ADEPT Live Labs 2: Decarbonising Local Roads in the UK, which is a three-year, UK-wide £30 million programme funded by the Department for Transport, (DfT), aiming to decarbonise the local highway network.</i> <i>We set out to investigate how collecting grass cuttings, rather than leaving them on the ground as traditionally done, has several benefits:</i>	

- *Reduces carbon emissions from decomposing cuttings*
- *Increases carbon capture within the soil*
- *Enhances the biodiversity of the verges and green spaces*

Greenprint has showcased the power of innovation and collaboration in addressing environmental challenges. Through experimentation and investigation, the project has paved the way for a more sustainable future in highway verge maintenance.

There were 5.3 hectares to cut and collect (each cut) in Stoke Gifford

During 2024, we collected 377 tonnes of grass from across 36 hectares of Council maintained grassland in South Gloucestershire - equivalent to over 50 football pitches.

Last summer, in the final year of the project this figure fell to 192 tonnes due to the very dry weather – March to August rainfall in 2025 was less than 50% of normal in many parts of southern England.

The table below shows the weight of cut grass collected during the 2024 and 2025 seasons:

Parish	Grass collected 2024 (tonnes)	Grass collected 2025 (tonnes)	Total grass collected (tonnes)
Bradley Stoke	65.0	23.7	88.7
Kingswood, Staple Hill & Mangotsfield	67.6	24.7	92.3
Patchway	56.2	28.5	84.7
Stoke Gifford	56.0	31.4	87.4
Thornbury	20.8	16.4	37.2
Yate	111.2	67.3	178.5
TOTAL	376.8	192.0	568.8

According to our carbon modelling, which has measured tonnes of CO2 saved per 1000m2 of grass subject to cut and collect, the following reductions in carbon emissions have been observed in our trials:

Parish	Hectares subject to cut and collect	Total area cut and collected 2025 & 2025 (8 cuts)	Total CO2e saved (tonnes)

Bradley Stoke	3.8	30.4	10.50
Kingswood, Staple Hill & Mangotsfield	3.7	29.6	10.23
Patchway	3.5	28	9.67
Stoke Gifford	5.3	42.4	14.65
Thornbury	7.6	60.8	21.01
Yate	12.9	103.2	35.66
TOTAL	36.8	294.4	101.72

As part of the project, we investigated converting the cuttings into energy to generate valuable resources such as biofuel, biomethane, and biochar - turning waste into wealth.

South Gloucestershire Council disposed of the cuttings via anaerobic digestion, (AD), and measured the carbon emissions associated with cutting and collecting the grass through to the processing via AD. Our project partner authority West Sussex Council processed cuttings via pyrolysis to produce biochar, which was tested in trials as a road surfacing additive.

A key goal of Greenprint is to create a scalable system toolkit, or 'green print,' that other local authorities can use to implement this carbon-negative green infrastructure management model in their areas, paving the way for a more sustainable future in highway verge maintenance.

The project reports that explain this and document our findings have now been published on the ADEPT website.

The trials produced very clear evidential data concerning the financial cost and carbon emissions of the cut and collect operational process versus the traditional cut and leave method:

- Cut and collect is more expensive than BAU (Business as Usual), cut and leave.*
- Collecting and processing cut grass via AD generates significantly less carbon emissions overall than BAU, (cut and leave).*
- Reducing the frequency of cuts saves operational costs and carbon emissions.*
- Reducing the frequency of cutting and removing the arisings has positive effects on biodiversity.*

Following the project closure from 31st March 2026 both Councils will continue to investigate ways to integrate our learnings into Business as Usual, (BAU):

- Cut-and-collect will continue within Yate Parish funded by the SGC Climate and Nature Emergency Team. All cuttings will be initially delivered to Charlton Park*

	<i>Biogas AD plant in Wiltshire, (as was done in 2025). Discussions are also being held with a proposed AD plant operator in the Severnside area of South Gloucestershire regarding terms for the disposal of council-maintained grass from beyond 2027. Operational costs are lowest in Yate because of its proximity to the main Street Care depot - via which cut grass is stored / processed.</i> ➤ <i>Data will continue to be recorded to further inform the understanding of where efficiencies can be achieved.</i> ➤ <i>All sample site verges identified by Plantlife and previously surveyed for soil carbon and biodiversity changes will continue to be subject to cut-and-collect, making further monitoring possible.</i> ➤ <i>The Council's ICan programme may include the Greenprint cut-and-collect option as a scheme that is available for sponsorship.</i> ➤ <i>Regional adoption of cut-and-collect solutions for the management of green spaces has been put forward by SGC for inclusion in the WECA Growth Strategy, to encourage scaling up of regional facilities for the biogenic processing of cuttings to displace fossil fuel consumption.</i> ➤ <i>SGC will participate in the FHRG Future Research Programme; to explore how local authorities can leverage green waste for local green energy generation and carbon sequestration.</i> ➤ <i>Project consultants Amey have been commissioned to produce a report on options for transitioning from the traditional cut and leave approach, (BAU), to a cut and collect model – a Business Case and Delivery Plan will be produced in May 2026. This will present options for permanently lowering carbon emissions and generating green energy over a wider area, placed in the context of the operational, regulatory, technical and financial challenges of doing so.</i> ➤ <i>Officers will participate in the ADEPT Live Labs 2 Year 4 externalisation programme where project learnings will be shared at selected events across the country and via the 5-year post-project monitoring and evaluation programme led by Arup.</i>	
10	Update on Tree Project at 40 Acres <i>At the Full Council meeting in April members agreed to discuss the Archaeological Report and associated costs at the Full Council meeting in May. Councillor Andrew Shore wished to share his thoughts with the Recreation & Leisure committee and presented a report.</i> <i>Following a recent visit to 40 Acres, Cllr Andrew Shore has put forward his views on the</i>	

	proposed planting scheme as follows: <u>Observations:</u> • There appear to be more trees / less open spaces than the map/plan indicates • Many of the existing ‘whips’ don’t seem to be growing well • Hawthorn/blackthorn is not a great choice • Some of proposed planting locations may make ash die-back tree removal difficult <u>Conclusions:</u> Cllr Andrew Shore believes there is already the right balance of open space/restricted space and doesn’t want to take away more of the open space. He is against planting in the 3 biggest proposed areas (the 2 largest proposed whip areas & the patch of 21 larger trees) because they are encroaching on the larger areas of remaining open space. Cllr Andrew Shore also feels that the 8 slightly larger trees towards the bottom of the plan should be re-positioned around the edge of that field. <u>Suggestions</u> • <i>Remove Ash dieback</i> • <i>A different choice of locations, with a reduced quantity of new trees, could perhaps be planted, reducing the impact on open space.</i> • <i>Plant species for waterlogged areas (e.g. Willow, Alder, Bald Cypress, River Birch, and Red Maple) into some of the waterlogged space and avoid prickly species.</i> • <i>Focus much less on branchless ‘whips’ and much more on the slightly more advanced trees (with some branching)</i> Cllr Andrew Shore also flagged up the number of ash trees around the perimeter of Meade Park which will likely need removal over coming years. He suggested we need to start thinking about how & when we can start replacing them (again, around the perimeter, where they are now). Cllr Andrew Shore also noted one of the residents suggested (at Full Council) some consideration be given to the Gallivan Field. Councillor Penny Richardson thanked Councillor Andrew Shore for his thoughts and members will discuss the Archaeological report at Full Council in May as nothing can be started without the results of this report. Once the report has taken place members can then look at the next stage, including location and type of trees installed Councillor Keiron Marsden feels that as a next step the Parish Council should have the Archaeological Report carried out ASAP so members can see the locations approved to plant on site.	
11	Update on Local Nature Action Plan (SGC) Councillor Sue Bandcroft mentioned the inactive 40 Acres group will soon be dissolved.	
12	Adoption of the South Glos Armed Forces Covenant The Clerk has received contact from the Armed Forces Community asking the Parish Council to consider signing the Armed Forces Covenant.	

	The Covenant is a simple but important commitment, that those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, along with their families, are treated fairly and are not disadvantaged in civilian life. In communities like ours, where many veterans and serving personnel choose to live, work, and raise families, that commitment really matters. For Councils, signing the Covenant is a practical way of showing support. It helps strengthen links with local veterans, cadet units, and the wider Armed Forces community, and demonstrates that each Council recognises the contribution they make. Following a discussion, Councillor Sue Bandcroft proposed Stoke Gifford Parish Council adopt the Covenant, seconded by Councillor Jan Brunwin, proposal unanimously carried. Councillor Andrew Shore then proposed to nominate Councillor Mike Brown to be included in any ongoing correspondence along with the Clerk, seconded by Councillor Max Gallagher, proposal unanimously carried.	
13	Any other business relevant to this committee None	
14	Date of next meeting 21st July 2026.	

Meeting closed 14:45

Signed: _____

Date: _____

P Richardson (Chair)

On behalf of Stoke Gifford Parish Council