STOKE GIFFORD
PARISH COUNCIL

Community Hall, Little Stoke Lane, Little Stoke
Bristol, BS34 6HR
Tel: 01454 865202
Email: clerk@stokegifford.org.uk
Web: www.stokegifford.org.uk

STOKE GIFFORD PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE RECREATION & LEISURE MEETING

Held on Tuesday, 20th October 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, P Richardson, and A Shore.
Also, the Parish Clerk, PC Jack Bowen, PCSO Romaric Mebenga Ngah, M Rendell, A Slade, J Welsh and three residents**.**

1	**Welcome and apologies for absence** The Chair, Councillor Penny Richardson, welcomed everyone to the meeting. The Clerk informed members apologies were received from Councillor Tony Hyde Keiron Marsden and Caretaker C Kingscott.	**ACTION**
2	**To receive notification of any members' personal or prejudicial interest** None.	
3	**To approve the last Recreation & Leisure meeting Minutes dated 21st July 2026** Councillor Andrew Shore proposed acceptance of the Minutes of the last Recreation & Leisure meeting dated 21st July 2026, seconded by Councillor Jan Brunwin, proposal unanimously carried. The minutes were duly signed by the Chair as a correct record.	
4	**PUBLIC SESSION [3 MINUTES PER PERSON WITH A MAXIMUM OF 15 MINUTES PER SESSION] – three residents were in attendance.**	Councillor

	Orchard in 40 Acres – a resident reported the orchard planted in 2024 needs maintenance/ care as its looking unkept and overgrown. The Chair, Councillor Penny Richardson will contact the SGC Tree Officer, Neil Gazzard and ask them to maintain the area. Shared cycle path in 40 Acres – large cracks are appearing in the tarmac at various locations on the shared cycle path in 40 Acres. SGC are aware and the Chair asked the Clerk to chase. Police powers for illegal encampments – following the illegal encampments on Parish Council sites during the summer months a resident would like to know what powers the Police have when dealing with travellers. The Chair, Councillor Penny Richardson confirmed the Police are present and will update later on the agenda. Hedges on Hatchet Road – a resident praised the work recently carried out on the hedges along Hatchet Road (Meade Park) but asked if the SGPC staff could cut some stray branches and overhanging tree branches to keep the tree branches and hedge separate. This would also improve the outlook further from the road. The Head Groundsman acknowledged the work recently carried out by contractors and confirmed the low tree branches do not interfere with the work carried out, however, for anything in the way will be removed right away. The grounds team will carry out tree removal (Ash Dieback) and brush cutting along the hedge (40 Acres side) on their planned schedule. Tree planting on 40 Acres – a resident raised concerns about brambles near the planting site in 40 Acres next to 100 Bush Avenue. The resident was keen to ensure a gap in the hedge remained for the tractor to carry out the ongoing maintenance.	Penny Richardson contact Neil Gazzard Clerk chase SGC Head Groundsman will arrange the work.
5	**Update from the Police** PC Jack Bowen was present to update the committee on the Police powers and actions taken during August when various illegal encampments took place on grounds owned and managed by Stoke Gifford Parish Council. *There are limited Police powers that can be put in place to be able to remove those who have set up an unauthorised encampment. However, again, the public must understand that the law is not as "black and white" as people think. As I have tried to allude to prior to now, there are lots of elements that need to be taken into consideration prior to enforcing a Police power. Police powers to deal with unauthorised encampments are primarily contained within the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. Section 61 allows an Inspector to direct trespassers to leave where damage, disruption or distress is caused. Section 62A allows removal where suitable alternative sites are available. The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 introduced Sections 60C to 60E, creating the offence of residing on land without consent in or with a vehicle, giving police powers of arrest and vehicle seizure where significant damage, disruption or distress is caused.* *One of the most important lessons from these incidents is the importance of reporting. The use of police powers relating to unauthorised encampments is governed by strict legislation and requires senior officers to assess whether legal thresholds have been met. This assessment is heavily informed by the volume and nature of reports received from the public. The initial reports we receive when the travelling community get onto*	

the sites wouldn't just automatically prompt the Police to use the above powers, as this part of the incident is what happens during most of the unauthorised encampments. The Police will measure disruption and distress caused by the number of reports they are receiving because of the continued ASB and crime from the travelling community whilst they are in the area. During the first two encampments at Little Stoke Playing Fields and the Mike Gallivan Field, relatively few reports were submitted (following their initial entries) regarding ongoing crime, ASB, or community impact. While concerns were clearly being discussed locally and online, the level of formal reporting did not provide sufficient evidence of significant disruption or distress to support the use of additional powers. When the encampment moved to Meade Park, reporting levels increased significantly. This provided a clearer picture of the impact on the community and led senior officers to authorise the potential use of additional powers should the group attempt to relocate elsewhere within the local area. On 24/08 (the day the travellers left Meade Park), I personally attended Meade Park and informed members of the travelling community that Avon and Somerset Police would be using relevant powers if they remained in the area following their planned eviction. Preparations were being made to support this response if required. Fortunately, this was not necessary, and the group moved on. While the encampments have now left the area, there is always the possibility of similar incidents occurring in the future. Any future encampments would be assessed on their own circumstances, but I am confident that the lessons learned from recent events will help all agencies respond as effectively as possible.

Finally, I would like to address some of the criticism directed at Stoke Gifford Parish Council. Residents are entirely justified in feeling frustrated by what happened, but it is important to recognise that efforts were made to prevent access to the sites. The Parish Council worked closely with local police officers and South Gloucestershire Council daily, investing in additional locks and other security measures. Unfortunately, many of these measures were damaged when entry was forced. The Parish Council also faced the challenge of balancing site security with the need for legitimate access by maintenance staff and contractors. Predicting exactly when or where an encampment might occur is not possible, and decisions around further security measures involve practical and financial considerations. While no solution could guarantee prevention, every reasonable effort was made to protect the sites. As with any significant incident, there will be lessons learned. The Parish Council, local policing teams, and partner agencies will review what has happened and consider what improvements can be made for the future. We all share the same goal: keeping our community safe and protecting local spaces. Achieving that requires continued communication, understanding, and cooperation between residents, Councils, and the Police. Most importantly, please continue to report incidents through the appropriate channels. Accurate reporting helps us understand community concerns, build evidence, and make informed decisions about the action that can be taken. Working together gives us the best opportunity to respond effectively when issues arise.

A discussion followed between Councillors and members of the public who shared frustrations on the encampments and in particular the access being granted into Mike Gallivan Fields where the Police requested the Parish Council staff open the field gate and drop down barrier. This ensured a number of vehicles gained access to the site that were waiting on the grass verges of surrounding streets.

A question was asked by a councillor to PC Jack Bowen regarding the checking of motor vehicles in the Mike Gallivan Fields to see if they are taxed and roadworthy. PC Jack

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	Bowen confirmed officers were on site and took vehicle registrations.	
6	**Update from FACE Youth Provider** Trainee Youth Development Worker Charlie Siret was not present but submitted a report for members. **Stoke Gifford Youth Work report Aug – Oct 2026** **Summer** Over summer, we supported a group of young people who had not accessed FACE provision previously to play football on the astro with the Little Stoke club. In addition to continuing our Brooklands provision, our summer trip to go bowling was a great success, with young people forming friendships they maintain in school as well as through sessions and in their own time. We also did a few trips to West Country Water Park for the inflatable course and the go-karts, which were both enjoyed by all who attended! Some young people from Stoke Gifford also attended 'YouFest' in July, with face painting, music, football, and crafts, as well as stalls run by YPDAS (Young People's Drug and Alcohol Service) and the Police. We also had a successful camp with Do What Matters at Cwmffrwd Farm in the Brecon Beacons, where young people learnt bushcraft skills like starting fires with King's Alfred Cake fungi and did a walk barefoot through a stream. **Open Access club at Little Stoke - Mondays** Since the start of the new academic year, we have a few new groups of young people attending Little Stoke Mondays, around six young people who have not accessed FACE provision at all before. The young people have tried new games, crafts, and food, and we have been able to have some crucial conversations with them about boundaries, appropriate behaviour, and supportive friendships. The new young people have really settled in and built relationships with the staff. We have started sessions with a walk around the park which has helped us to maintain relationships with those who no longer attend the centre-based work and speak with them about e-bikes and e-scooters, as well as discussing healthy relationships and race. We have three members of staff at this session now, the two newest of whom have hit the ground running and are developing rapidly. **Art Club at Brooklands - Tuesday** With the end of last school year, a group of young people who were transitioning from year 6 to year 7 started attending; all these young people were new to FACE. At sessions, the young people have discussed important topics like neurodivergence, gender and race, and consideration for the Community. As a result of these conversations, one young person has started seeking an assessment for autism and ADHD with support from her parents. Our themes this term are 'Environment' and 'Global Communities;' so far, young people have made bird feeders using TetraPak cartons and dioramas of their ideal outdoor space using natural elements from the Brooklands estate. We have been working with Abbeywood school regarding one of the young people as she is currently experiencing a difficult time with grief and caring for her family. She is looking for a lot of support from other young people in the art club, as well as the staff at the session. We are in contact with members of the Brooklands Park Community Centre team to collaborate or present the Young People's artwork at an appropriate event – watch this space!	

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	Lunchtime sessions at Abbeywood school - Wednesdays The sessions run on Wednesday lunchtimes at Abbeywood to facilitate creative outlets for young people who do not attend any centre-based work, as well as providing alternative forms of contact for the young people we see regularly at Brooklands and Little Stoke sessions. As above, we have been working with the safeguarding team for a young person who is currently struggling, and we are forming contact with the new Safeguarding Lead at Abbeywood. **Future plans** • Gallery / presentation / collaboration of young people's art at / with Brooklands Park Community Centre • Build attendance at both centre-based sessions through primary schools • Continue to train and develop staff	
7	**Update from Southern Brooks Community Development Coordinator** The representative from Southern Brooks, Helen Rana is unable to attend the meeting in person and has sent the report to the Clerk. The Clerk tabled at the meeting. ***My Little Stoke*** *Thanks to a SGPC grant of £500, between now and February 2027 I will bring disparate individuals and groups across Little Stoke together to share their histories, perspectives and experiences in a history-based event or activity designed to encounter new ideas and conversations, enjoy thinking about how the local area has evolved over the years, and to learn from one another. The aim is to increase understanding and community cohesion.* ***Drop-off Drop-in*** *Listening to parents and carers at Little Stoke Primary School revealed that several feel lonely and, once they've dropped children off at school, go home and stay there alone for the rest of the day. They said they would like some sort of activity to meet other people and get out and about. During subsequent sessions talking to them outside the school I asked what sort of things they would like.* *Based on this feedback I have started a 'Drop-off Drop in' session every other Wednesday morning at Little Stoke Park, advertised directly to parents through the school's Dojo system. The aim is to increase health and wellbeing, reduce isolation, and open up new opportunities for friendship, employment and volunteering.* ***Give it a Go Day*** *Out and about meeting people in the Community I heard several comments about the lack of things to do in Little Stoke. On the other hand, I met lots of people who are busy with activities and groups. I am hoping to bring the two together by organising a 'Give it a Go Day', where people can showcase their hobbies and activities and share them with others.* *The aim is that people will find new things to do, get involved, and feel happier.* ***Little Stoke Primary School*** *I've shared a number of funding opportunities the school could consider, such as for outdoor activities, school library books and trips.*	

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	Elderly residents *I've continued reaching out to more elderly residents, by door knocking and by attending Little Stoke Baptist Church on a Thursday morning for their coffee mornings.* ***Volunteering 65+*** *I have taken on an additional six-month role to increase volunteering in people aged 65 in Little Stoke and the wider Stoke Gifford area.*	
8	**Update from Grounds Team** The Head Groundsman and Deputy Head Groundsman were both present to update members on the work carried out since the last committee meeting. *Firstly, we'd like to welcome Haydon to the team, he will be working 10 hours a week, helping to keep parks and recreation spaces clean and tidy. He began training on the 10th August and has settled in very quickly.* *His arrival has helped to free up a member of groundstaff to start a planting project at the entrance to Little Stoke Park. Giving a lift to the main entrance in a busy area.* *Moving forward this will help us to improve key areas around the Parish that need updating and repair.* ***Little Stoke Park*** *We have added a nice sleeper bench to the top of the BMX track for people to use.* *This added bench has helped prevent the other two benches in the area from being constantly moved.* *Marking of pitches throughout the summer.* *Preparing for the annual dog show.* *Seed/soil pitches to help recovery after dry summer.* *Some much-needed repairs to football dugouts.* *Rugby posts have been inspected, sanded and treated for rust where needed.* *Car park hedge and ditch strimmed, trimmed and tidied.* *Raised beds in main car park tidied and replanted, giving a lift to the main entrance.* *Unauthorised encampment - Little Stoke Park* *Despite the three padlocks on the gates and the pick-up truck being parked in front of the field gate, the travellers gained entry by breaking the locks and moving the truck.* *To try and help with clear up we litter picked the camp daily and provided them with*	

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some Biffa bins.

With the site needing access for maintenance, emergency services and bookings I'm not sure there is much more we could've done. Although I have organised for a fabricator to come and strengthen the padlock areas of the gate to hopefully prevent future illegal entry.

Mike Gallivan Field

• Hedges strim and hedge cutting along pathways.

• Marking out pitches.

• Seed/soil pitches to help recovery after another dry summer.

Unauthorised encampment – Mike Gallivan Field

Unfortunately, despite our efforts replacing a rotten post in the Gallivan back-field, filling gaps with boulders and tonne bags of soil, Travellers gained entry over a pedestrian pathway, opposite Little Stoke Park entrance. Moving boulders, an old bollard and bags of soil to get in.

Following their departure there was considerably more rubbish than at Little Stoke Park for the grounds team and some local volunteers to get rid of.

With reports that local residents were adding their own household rubbish to the piles.

We will be looking to add several metal bollards and hopefully some trees to the back-field and near corner where they entered the field to give some added security in the future.

Meade Park

Hatchet road strimming and hedge cutting around entrances and bus stops.

Once flail cutting is complete a further tidy to areas that couldn't be reached.

Removing tree guards where no longer needed within Meade Park.

With damage to wet pour and unsafe surfaces, we have made the decision to keep gates closed until park is safe to use.

Unauthorised encampment – Meade Park

Travellers entered Meade Park after cutting three padlocks to gain entry leaving behind another large clear-up for the Grounds staff.

As emergency services and Groundstaff always need access to the site. I don't think there is much more we could do to stop them getting in.

I'm currently working with a local fabricator on some extra protection for the padlocks.

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	Wessex Water emergency pipework *30th September* *Following another blockage to a sewage pipe beneath an area of woodland in Meade Park Wessex Water brought forward replacement pipework's to hopefully rectify the problem in the area.* *With the awkward location of the pipe, a number of trees had to be removed to be able to complete the work safely.* *A plan is in place to replant after the work is complete.* *Expecting another three weeks until completion (early November).* Head Groundsman, Martyn Rendell reported the timber bridge in 40 Acres is deteriorating and will need replacing in the coming months. Quotations are being sought and will take to Council. The bridge is in a very prominent place in the park used by hundreds of people each day.	
9	**Update from Caretaker (Brooklands Park & Little Stoke Park)** The Caretaker based at Brooklands Park, Craig Kingscott was not present at the meeting. The Clerk tabled a report. *Over the previous months we've had our challenges from the hot weather conditions as well as additional hirers with a wide range of events, occasions and nationalities with needs we have met to a high standard. Saying this, the community centre is continuously growing as well as the facilities being used for more than just a building or hall. Our in-house and external notice boards are blossoming with local businesses and support within and around the community drawing in even more people with interests etc. With the ever-growing numbers we have started looking towards getting aircon curtain units as well as portable units for each room to provide the public and hirers with a comfortable and warm/ cool place for any occasion.* *With much appreciation we have recently received funding/grant money so will be using this to finalise the EV chargers as well as signposts within the area and directions to the community centre.* *Over the past weeks we have also had the rear garden area levelled out, turfed and brick wall built for more privacy and security. This area is a possible site for our very own allotment area or storage area, but all ideas are being thrown out there!* The Caretaker based at Little Stoke Park was present and talked through his report. *After such a hot dry summer it was great to see the rain return and start to turn the parched earth at the park back to green. Due to the mild weather the park has been actively used from the early hours by people exercising, walking pets or travelling to work. The centre has also been busy with regular bookings throughout the week. However, with the increased temperatures the need for air conditioning in the*	

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	community centre rooms and offices is still a concern and should be considered. On the main building the temporary repairing of the felt roof seems to have stopped initial ceiling leaks into the Kingfisher Hall and all guttering and gullies have been cleared. There is still an issue with water seeping through a gully and entering the Kingfisher room when heavy rain falls. *Again, more recyclable waste is being deposited in the bins close to the centre and another green bin situated in the car park would be beneficial to reduce this waste from entering the general waste bins.* *The MUGA is reaching the end of its working life with extensive patches being inserted during the summer. However, the surface is disintegrating rapidly and needs to be replaced as soon as possible with further repairs not being cost effective.* *Jobs completed in the last few months include the painting of the ladies toilets, the overpainting of the water stains on the Kingfisher Hall ceiling, whitewashing of the car park bollards and railings surrounding Arietian's rugby pitch. Additionally, in the changing room a new boiler and descaled shower heads have meant improved facilities for the football players. Prior to next season it is intended to paint all the changing room floors.*	
10	**Update on Stoke Gifford Trust Ground** The Chair, Councillor Penny Richardson invited the Chair of the Stoke Gifford Trust Committee to report to committee members, with an update on the operation of the Trust Grounds. The Clerk tables the report. **Trust Hall Summary Report – July to September 2026** *Governance* *The Trust Committee has started the process of moving from an unincorporated charity to a charitable incorporated organisation.* *Discussions with the parish will take place at key stages of the process.* *Facilities and Grounds* *Summer heat caused shrinkage/ cracking on the field; new drainage channels have not fully settled. Repairs are underway as currently affecting usability.* *Temporary security measures were used during traveller encampment; car park closure lasted four weeks. Long-term options are being reviewed.* *Fire safety assessment report actions have been completed or scheduled.* *Hall and Pavilion Use* *Review in progress to identify gaps in regular bookings and attract new user groups.* *Publicity activity being increased to promote facilities and encourage wider community use.* *Current Projects* *Conversion of old changing rooms into both a lettable space and o□ice for the Trust, allowing installation of CCTV.* *Replacement of the machine shed on the field.* *Planned upgrade of pavilion utilities.* *Site wide maintenance review initiated (previous review was five years ago).* *Administrative processes are being modernised.*	

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	<u>Financial Snapshot (Oct 2025 – Sep 2026)</u> *Draft figures only* *Total income slightly decreased (2%) from 2024-25.* *Hall income increased by 4%.* *Field and court income decreased by 15% due to field being unusable while drainage installed and reduced court usage during heatwaves.* *Grant received to cover drainage works.* *Utilities costs increased by 12% (review to be undertaken).* *Maintenance costs similar to previous year.* *Net position improved compared with previous year.* Members thanked the Chair, Councillor Penny Richardson for obtaining the report and following discussion asked the Clerk to add the item to the Full Council meeting in November. It is felt the item would be best placed in front of all councillors for information. As the Stoke Gifford Parish Council representative on the Trust Committee, it was suggested that Councillor Dave Addison report back to members at Full Council.	Clerk add to Full Council agenda in November
11	**Update on 40 Acres Tree planting –Water Contractor Info (FOAT)** The Chair, Councillor Penny Richardson tabled a letter that the Chair will email to local contractors to invite them to tender for the job of watering the newly planted trees and whips in 2027. The costs of the watering work will be funded by the FOAT programme. Water quality in the brook – the Chair, Councillor Penny Richardson, informed members the Environmental Agency are monitoring the water quality. Results and feedback will be updated to members as and when received. Councillor Andrew Shore has concerns over the positioning of the whips in the far corner of the 40 Acres field. The proposed area for planting appears to be very close to a large area full of brambles. The Chair, Councillor Penny Richardson, noted the concerns by Councillor Andrew Shore and will be ensuring the whips are an appropriate distance away from the brambles. The Chair, Councillor Penny Richardson confirmed as part of the project, they will be putting out an appeal to local volunteers from the Parish, UWE, and the Forest of Avon Trust, who will be helping with the installation of the mulch mats, tree guards and stakes. The specimen trees will be installed in November and whips in December. It was noted by members that any newly planted specimen tree and whips would need to be sufficiently watered, and the summer of 2027 is essential to the health of the trees.	
12	**Grant Aid application form** At the recent Full Council meeting members agreed for the Recreation & Leisure committee to look through the Grant Aid form and make some amendments to the	

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	policy, to include some questions regularly asked by members to the representatives on presentation of each Grant Aid application. The main factors were to include a breakdown of the Parish wards where the residents benefitting from the application are from, and whether the applicant had approached any other local Parish or Town Councils as well as Stoke Gifford Parish Council. The Grant Aid Form was then duly updated.	Clerk to update form and add to website
13	**Update on Local Nature Action Plan (SGC)** Councillor Sue Bandcroft confirmed the Friends of 40 Acres group has now officially closed down. Any surplus money left in the kitty will be going directly to the Friends of Splatts Abbeywood. BART stream clearance will be taking place in 40 Acres this weekend and everyone is welcome to attend.	
14	**Any Other Business** Councillor Andrew Shore appreciated the update from the Police earlier on the agenda, but it was lengthy and took up a lot of time designated to all aspects covered by this committee and some item discussions felt rushed. Councillor Andrew Shore also wondered if the agenda can be adjusted to ensure the Grounds staff item is earlier on the agenda, they can then be present for any discussions about related items and give their input. Representatives from FACE and Southern Brooks are also invited to attend the meeting to present their report and leave shortly after causing the agenda item to be quite rushed. A possible earlier start time was also mentioned. The Chair, Councillor Penny Richardson will liaise with the Clerk on setting future agendas. Councillor Sue Bandcroft recently met with Henry from Sovereign to discuss collaborative working between local councils and Sovereign Housing going forward. Councillor Sue Bandcroft hopes to see the fete back up and running in 2027 following the cancellation in 2026 due to major drainage improvements to the Trust Ground fields. Ownership of the annual fete was questioned, and whether it is fully managed by members of the Trust Committee. The SGPC representative, Councillor Dave Addison will inform the Parish Council about the plan for the event.	Cllr Dave Addison to provide feedback
15	**Date of next meeting** 19th January 2026	
16	**CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS - To resolve, by the nature of the sensitivity of items, to exclude the press and public [Public Bodies Admissions to Meeting]**	

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Meeting closed 16:15

Signed: _____ Date: _____

P Richardson (Chair)
On behalf of Stoke Gifford Parish Council

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