THE FRANK MONTGOMERY PLAYING FIELD TRUST MEETING HELD ON 08 SEPTEMBER 2026 AT 7.30PM IN WICKHAMBREAUX VILLAGE HALL, WICKHAMBREAUX

Present: Caroline Rees (C.Rees)
Linda Lodge
Charles Rees (CH. Rees)
Elizabeth Stewart
Paul Mills
John Cotton
Tracy Harris
Mary
Oscar (from 8.04pm)
Oban

Chenice Howard-Sparkes (Secretary)

Roger Lithgow, KCC Community Warden

16 Members of the Public

1. **CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
C. Rees thanked everyone for attending. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from T. Archer, who joined the meeting remotely via Whatsapp to listen to the discussion.

2. **FEEDBACK RECEIVED AND OUTCOME OF THE SUMMER 2025 AND 2026 MONITORING SINCE THE FOOTBALL GOAL AND BASKETBALL HOOP WERE INSTALLED**
C. Rees provided a brief overview of how the meeting will operate to ensure everybody present was provided with the opportunity to speak.

Chenice gave an overview of the complaints/concerns received to date. A visual overview of these can be found in Appendix I at the end of the document.

A member of the public enquired as to approximate footfall. Mary and J. Cotton advised that footfall generally varies in the playing field, very weather dependent and commonly higher on weekends.

A summary of the points raised, both during the meeting and via email received in advance, are as follows:

<u>Positive Comments:</u>
- The playing field is a wonderful and beautifully maintained resource.
- Fortunate that the level of anti-social behaviour is low.
- Been very well used by families of all ages.
- Shared activity that families can enjoy together, helping young people build confidence and friendships.
- Likely to reduce anti-social behaviour around the parish.
- The football goal encourages children to be active, healthy, and outdoors – beneficial for both physical and mental health, reduces stress, important for social interaction and for learning.
- Simple facility, but it gives young people a focus and encourages spontaneous outdoor activity without requiring membership of a club, payment of fees, transport or advance organisation
- Gets young people away from television, phones and computer games.
- Creates a natural meeting point for families, strengthening the sense of community
- User takes his autistic brother there consistently – he loves this space due to the fact it's peaceful, local and away from noisy towns and anti-social behaviour.

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- Number of football incidents after 7pm have reduced since the community balls were removed. However, J. Cotton advised the number of balls entering his garden has increased.

Negative Comments:

- Since football goal was installed, it has encouraged late playing of football after the playing field closing time. This didn't appear to be an issue before the installation.
- Goal is felt to be located too near residential properties causing noise disturbance.
- Height of the goal is too high and the behind the goal netting is located too far behind the goal to capture the majority of the balls that are entering resident garden.
- Priority consideration should be given to children of primary school age and younger – size is more suitable for a large park and older users.
- There seems to be little encouragement now of quieter activities for children, which was one of the main drives for the nature area.

General Comments:

- Gratitude is owed to members of the local community who have maintained, raised funds and improved the field over the years – they have a created a real asset for the village and should be proud of this.
- Thanks to residents who border the playing field who have made adaptions to better co-exist with users of the playing field. For example, installing higher fencing, adjusting garden seating areas, etc.
- Reasonable enjoyment of community facilities should be balanced with residents' expectations, particularly during the lighter summer evenings when many families are only able to use the field after work and school commitments.
- Removing the football goal could result in makeshift goals closer to residential boundaries.
- Removing the football goal would add time, inconvenience and storage considerations to volunteers, whilst determined youngsters will likely continue to have a kick around with makeshift goals.
- Comments received that the basketball hoop would likely be used more often if it had hardstanding to bounce balls. However, hardstanding was originally ruled out by the Committee to minimise noise disturbance to residents.
- While most people have respected the 7pm cut off time for ball games, a minority have not.
- Would object to the cut off time being any later than 7pm for ball games for noise reasons. It is usually teenagers or young adults who play early evening, and they are more likely to play noisier games.
- No ball games after 7pm is unenforceable. Residents bordering the playing field have found it useful as a talking point to ask users to stop ball games after 7pm, which has had some success. It also provides a buffer before the park closing time. Users would prefer to have this restriction removed in recognition of working families, especially in the summer months.

Suggestions:

- Remove the football goal.
- Reduce the height of the goal.
- Adjust the position of the back netting to reduce the likelihood of balls entering resident garden.
- Remove the football goal and basketball hoop from May to September.
- Remove no ball games restriction after 7pm.
- Move the football goal toward the roadside of the park, away from the residential properties, which could reduce ball impacts and noise near homes while still keeping the facility fully open and accessible for local children.
- Engage with users of the football goal and basketball to ask that they be more mindful and respectful of residents bordering the field.
- Additional signage asking users to be more mindful and respectful of residents bordering the field.

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- Goal and hoop remain in place under the current arrangements, with no balls provided and the existing time restriction maintained. This appears to strike a reasonable balance between providing a valuable facility for local children and protecting the wellbeing of nearby residents.

Committee Resolutions:
P. Mills proposed and L. Lodge seconded, and all voted in favour, that any decisions be deferred to a future meeting to allow members time to consider all the feedback and views raised. In addition, P. Mills proposed and E. Stewart seconded, and all voted in favour, that the meeting be a closed committee meeting (not open to members of the public).

3. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**
None.

4. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
The next Committee meeting will be held on 06 October 2026 at 5.30pm, which will be a closed meeting.

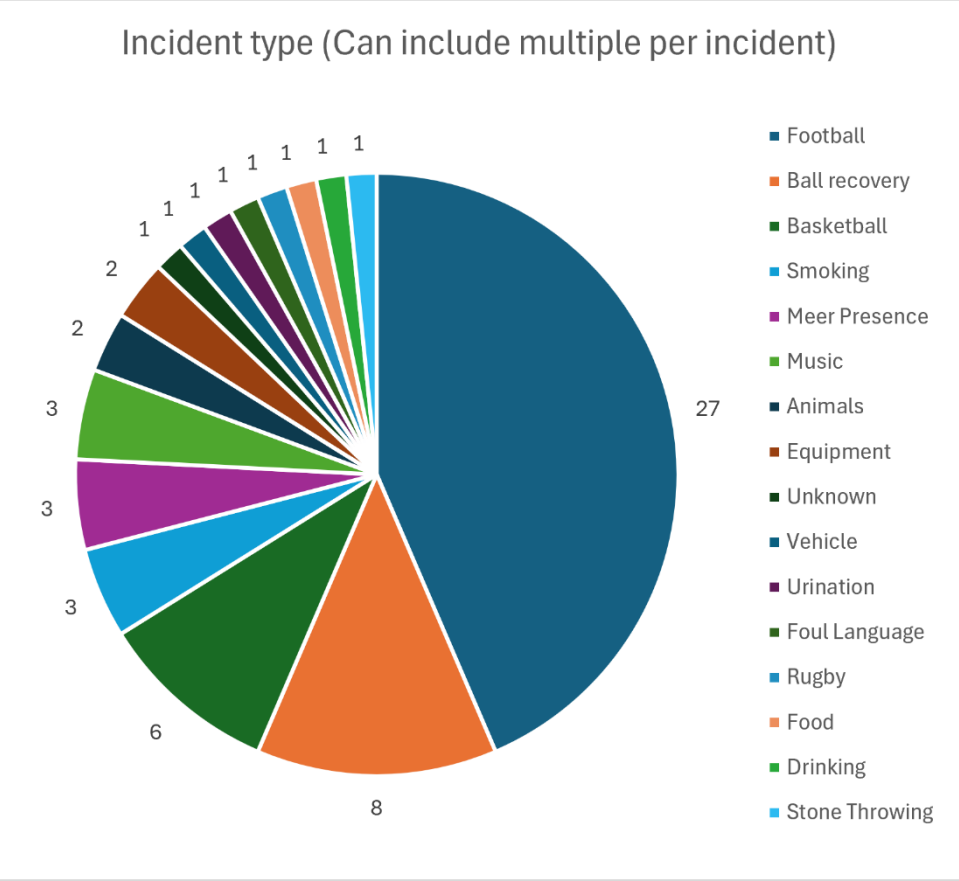
The meeting closed at 8.52pm

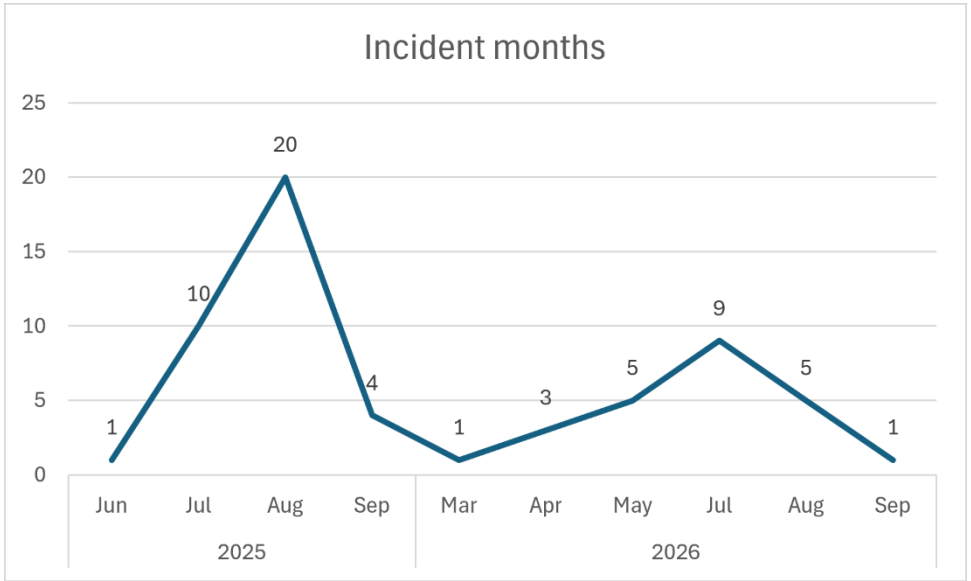
Signed……..... (Chairman)

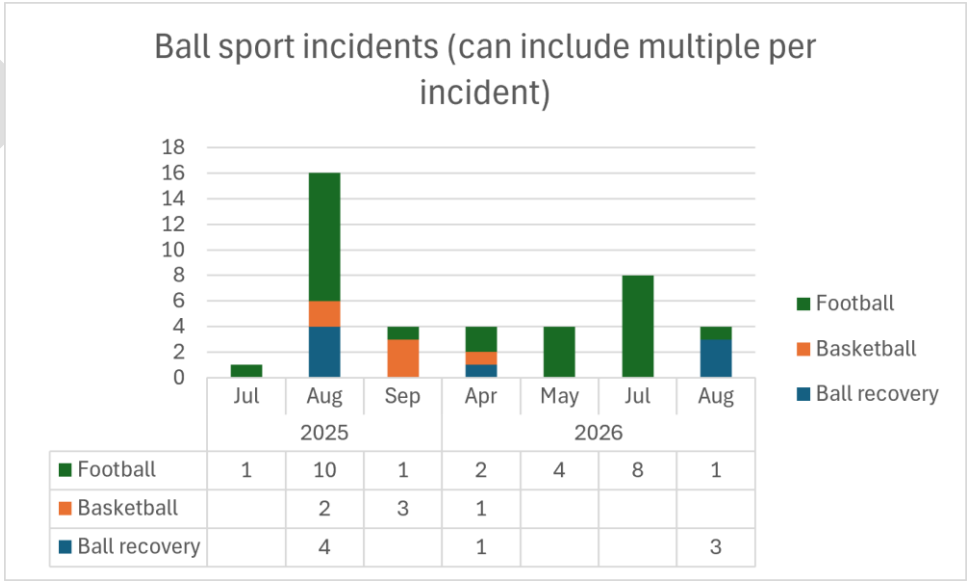
Date…….....

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Appendix I – Visual Representations of Comments/Complaints Received







	Jul	Aug	Sep	Apr	May	Jul	Aug
Football	1	10	1	2	4	8	1
Basketball		2	3	1			
Ball recovery		4		1			3