



# Box Parish Council

12<sup>th</sup> November 2025

## Minutes of the Box Parish Open Spaces Committee meeting held at 7pm on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at The Parish Office, Box, SN13 8NX

1. **Present:**

Cllr M Tye (Chair)	
Cllr R Davies	
Cllr R Haslett	
Cllr H Parker (Vice Chair)	
Cllr S Roche	
Cllr B Walton	
Cllr T Walton	
S J Vickery	Clerk and RFO

**Additional Representatives:**

Kevin Derby	Bowls Club
Julian Feasby	Tennis Club
Gillian Potts	Allotment Rep

2. **Apologies:** Apologies were received as follows. The Committee was quorate.

Cllr I Johnston
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3. **Absence:** Nil

4. **Public Question Time:** There was one members of the public present. He wished to make 4 observations:

- Congratulate the Parish on its CPRE Award of Runners Up, noting that the village was well-cared for.
- That the u7s play area should be revamped, in particular the wooden train, which could – subject to copyright – adopt the theme of Thomas of the Tank.
- That engagement with the owners of Middlehill House might bring about an explanation as to why the parking space near the Middlehill Common is now out of use.
- Encouraged Membership of the Open Spaces Society.

5. **Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest.

6. **Previous Minutes:** The Minutes of the of the previous Committee meetings for **Cemetery Management (1<sup>st</sup> September 2025), Playing Fields Management (4<sup>th</sup> August 2025) and Boxhill and Rudloe Open (18<sup>th</sup> August)** were read and signed as a true record, with minor amendments:

- a. to Cemetery minutes (Item 8b should read that it was the Council policy and not the Chair's policy and Item 6b should reflect that the 5 year quote and maintenance from James Long was discounted in favour of yearly checks).
- b. to Playing Field minutes (Item 5e had a typo on bench).

## 7. **Playing Fields.**

### a. **Bowls Club.**

- i. Kevin Derby (KD) gave an end of season update; pleasingly new members and new groups had shown an interest and used the facility. There was a new working group at the Club who had engaged with the Clerk to discuss arrangements for 2026; there would be a pre-season meeting between the Council and Club.
- ii. Councillors raised the issue of the Club becoming a Community Amateur Sports Club and thereby gaining independence from the the Council. After some discussion, it was proposed and recommended (6 votes in favour, zero against with one abstention) that the Council would cease to administer the current maintenace contract from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026. The Clerk would draft a letter to this effect for KD and the Club Chair.

**Action: Clerk to draft an end of adminstration letter.**

- b. **Cricket Club.** There was no representative from the Club. The recent end of season renovation of the grass square was discussed, in particular the use of non-permitted chemicals. To improve communications and to reinforce the point about seeking permissions, the Clerk would re-draft the current Licence.

**Action: Clerk to redraft the Cricket Club Licence.**

- c. **Tennis Courts.** Julian Feasby updated on the the progress of the new booking system and the major acheivement of raising funds for the second court refurbishment. There was some discussion on whether some booking fees should be entirely attributable to the Club or Council. Councillors made the point that a fund does need to be generated to re-surface in future years. Additionally, the time taken to dismantle and erect the posts for netball would be monitored.

- d. **Football pitch.** The football pitch has now generated almost £500 of income, with more expected post New Year. The Clerk observed that new goalposts would be required, ideally mobile to help protect the grass goal areas. The cost, with a Football Foundation grant would still be £3,500. It was agreed to consider this costs at the next budget-setting meeting.

- e. **Allotments.** The representative, Gilly Potts spoke on a number of issues:

- i. Sadly, Plots 9b and 10a were looking unkempt and a warning letter should be sent by the Clerk. In addition, the Clerk was to ensure that the Plot list was accurate.

**Action: Clerk to issue letters and update Plot List.**

- ii. New rental charges (an uplft of 4%) were agreed wef 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026 with a 50% reduction for 'concessions'.
- iii. Tree Parts would be asked for 10 new Beech whips to plug gaps in the fence.

- iv. The revised Policy was endorsed with the **recommendation** to delete paragraph 21 on 'no alcohol'.
- f. **Play Areas.** The Chair updated the Committee on the excellent progress made by the working group:
  - i. The major project to revamp the u7s Play Area would commence shortly. There would be a Phase 2, the Railway Phase, under consideration very shortly.
  - ii. The Group wanted to establish a bank account using the Recreation Ground Charity number and also to apply for various grants. on plans for the u7s redevelopment, repairs to main play area and to consider 'Phase 2'.
  - iii. To improve accessibility, there was a discussion on extending the Recreation Ground perimeter footpath; this remains an aspiration.
  - iv. The ROSPA 2025 were noted and would be uploaded to the website shortly.
- g. **Lovar.**
  - i. CPRE Centenary bridge. Councillors unanimously **recommended** the case to commission a new bridge, the 'Centenary' bridge at a cost of £1,100; there was a chance that the CPRE would offer a grant; Cllr Parker would check with the CPRE and also check that this price was the 'installed' cost.
  - ii. The Gabion trial in the By Brook was noted and would be assessed at the next walkaround. Iris plants could also be planted in the gabions. Councillors discussed the importance of Pond management at the Lovar.
  - iii. The need to fence off the historic rubbish area (and remove rubbish) was noted.
  - iv. The Lovar coppice work was noted as on the task list.
- h. **Trees and Hedges.**
  - i. The Chair thanked the CVW for their hard work on the new fence and hedgerow at Path 79 at the Cemetery boundary. There would be a new gate and permissive path behind the Chapel. There would be a discussion with the CVW and Tree Parts on how best to manage the weeds within the new hedge.
  - ii. The Clerk will follow up with Mark Taylor on cutting the Mill Lane Rec hedge.

## 8. Cemetery Grounds.

- a. Burial Costs & Streamlining process. The Committee agreed the recommendation of new for costs wef 1<sup>st</sup> April 2026.
- b. Preparations for grass meadows. The w/c 10<sup>th</sup> November was identified for the preparation of Harvey's meadow, Brunel meadow and the Garden of Remembrance. A further limited spend on wild flower seed was agreed.
- c. Headstone repairs.
  - i. The original high priority 6 graves were **recommended** for repair by James Long at a cost of £850 +VAT.
  - ii. The remaining high priority repairs identified would be included in a subsequent phase of repair work.

- iii. There was a discussion on tracing owners of graves; it was agreed that the interment forms should capture NOK details.
  - iv. The Cemetery Policy could be more clear on the balance of repair v costs; it was agreed to spend more time to consider the whole Policy.
- d. Cemetery Path. It was **recommended** to accept the Chippenham Paving quote of £3,938+VAT (within budget) for the Cemetery path repair from Bench to the compost bin.
- e. Interpretation Boards (inside and outside). It was agreed to mount the information sheets on the Notice board in the Chapel Porch and on easels or tables inside the Chapel. The Chair would also consider what board was required at the standpipe.

## 9. Boxhill and Rudloe.

- a. Commons management plan. The use of Payback team at the Lower Common was noted. The 2<sup>nd</sup> visit is this Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> November. Councillors asked for early sight of visit dates to help coordinate the Payback team.
- b. Rudloe Estate 'green space' initiatives. In order to consider the aspiration for a Rudloe allotment, tree and meadow planting area, the Committee would undertake a walkaround before the 12<sup>th</sup> January 2026.
- c. Albion Terrace wall and encroachments on to Middle Common.
  - i. The Grounds team would ensure that vegetation is cut back from the new wall. Replacing other parts of the Albion wall were not a high priority but a reserve fund would be useful to accumulate funds for the future.
  - ii. The recent letter to residents about refraining from fly-tipping had failed. The Council agreed that the licence to use the Common should now be rescinded and residents reported to Wiltshire Council if fly-tipping persisted. This position was **recommended** unanimously.
- d. Improved litter bins for Rudloe playing field. It was agreed to purchase new recycle and waste bins for the Green at the RCC (within budget). This does mean additional litter bin work for the OSW, which should be monitored.

## 10. Common to all Open Spaces.

- a. Parish-wide tree survey. It was agreed that further advice from Tree Parts should be sought on the tender document and that the reference to budget should be removed. It was suggested that a former survey template (Price) could be added to guide tenderers on the type of submission required. It was agreed to re-consider the Tree survey tender document in the New Year. The Clerk was also asked to contact Tree Parts to discuss the minimum maintenance plan to the Alcombe Veteran Tree.
- b. Parish-wide meadow grass plan. This was noted by the Chair as ongoing work.
- c. Recycling working group. This was noted as ongoing work.

- d. Historic rubbish removal. A second pahse of skip removal was anticipated in the near future.
- e. Asset stickers to report faults. The Clerk has the QR asset sticker code on the task list.

#### 11. Review of Policies

- a. Allotment Policy. See Item 7e.
- b. Cemetery, Tree and Climate Action Policies. It was agreed to pause endorsement of these 3 policies as further work was required to make revisions.

#### 12. Items for Discussion. There were no more specific items to discuss.

#### 13. Correspondence. Urgent correspondence was noted:

- a. After sending a note to the owners of Middlehill Common, asking for a re-consideration of the car park closure, the owners have agreed to brief the Council on their stance on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2025. The Council Chair will give some thought to the mechanics of how to have a discussion at the meeting.

**Action: Council Chair to give direction.**

- b. The Box School fun run on 16<sup>th</sup> November is approved.
- c. The request from AFC Corsham for a letter of support to the Leafy Lane 3G football project. Councillors had yet to see the planning application to assure that ecological considerations had been fully addressed. It is anticipated that the Project Manager from AFC Corsham will brief the Council on 27<sup>th</sup> November.
- d. It was agreed to for the Council to become a member of the Open Spaces Society - £45.

#### 14. Forward Plan. To review and to note the latest Forward Plan, including the Policy matrix and Risk Assessments – Plan is under consruction.

#### 15. Future Agenda and General reports. Items of report and future Agenda items:

- a. To note the Cemetery working party on 16<sup>th</sup> November. There was a discussion on a longer notice period for working party dates.
- b. It was confirmed that the replacement bench for Quarry Hill had been received.
- c. In the next edition of the Parish magazine, there will be an advert to join the Parish Climate Action group.

#### 16. Date of next meeting – 7pm on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> January 2025.

*The Committee ended at 9.25pm*

*Signed by Chair*