

## Cliffe and Cliffe Woods Parish Council

17 Graveney Close, Cliffe Woods, Rochester, Kent ME3 8LB

☎ 01634 566166

✉ [clerk@cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk)

Clerk/PO Mrs Alex Jack and Clerk/RFO Mrs Helen Symmons

To Committee Members, you are summoned to attend the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting starting at **7:30pm** to be held on **Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June 2026 at St Helen's House, Cliffe, ME3 7QP**

### F&GP AGENDA

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest:** Disclosable Pecuniary Interests under the Code of Conduct for Parish Councils.  
*A councillor declaring a pecuniary interest may not participate in discussion or vote on the matter. If an interest is not declared at the outset of the meeting, it should be disclosed as soon as the interest becomes apparent. Dispensation may be requested in writing to the Clerk (Proper Officer) who under certain circumstances will allow a councillor to speak and vote on the matter.*
3. **Public Representation:** Members of the public can put questions and raise issues to the Committee in relation to business on the agenda. Maximum 10 minutes per person, total maximum adjournment of 30 minutes.
4. **Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2026**
5. **Finance and General Purposes**
  - a. **Month End Reports**  
April 2026 Bank Reconciliations
  - b. **Payments for Approval**  
To review payments that are outside the scope of delegation/contractual arrangements
  - c. **PAYE Payments for Authorisation**  
To review PAYE payments & authorise payment
  - d. **Other Financial Matters**
    - i) Receipts and Payments May 2026
    - ii) Reports for proposed Tender for CW Car Park Refurbishment & Public Works Loan funding
    - iii) HMRC increased mileage rates from April 2026 from £0.45 to £0.55 per mile
  - e. **Advisory Matters for Council decisions**
    - i) Handover of Cliffe Woods allotment site from Redrow Homes (South East) Limited to the Parish Council
    - ii) Six Bells car show event
    - iii) Renewal of annual NSALG membership £70 + VAT
    - iv) Cliffe Recreation Ground – RU Assessment Report for Cliffe Crusaders RFC

*In view of the confidential nature of Personnel Matters, any attending members of the public and press may be excluded from the meeting for the duration, or part thereof, of the following item.*
6. **Personnel Matters**
  - i) Staff appraisals

**All Councillors and public are welcome to attend, however only committee members may vote.**



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Clerk/PO Mrs Alex Jack, Clerk/RFO Mrs Helen Symmons  
and Assistant Clerk Mrs Parveen Comparat

Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on **Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2026 at 7.30pm at St Helen's House, Cliffe, ME3 7QP**

### F&GP MINUTES

**Councillors Present:** Robert Wyatt (Chair). Jim Wenban. Harry Johnson. Joan Darwell. Barry Dibble.

**Council Staff Present:** Alex Jack. Helen Symmons. Parveen Comparat.

- 1 **Apologies for Absence:** Ray Letheren sent apologies. Ken Kentell was absent.
- 2 **Declarations of Interest**  
Cllr J Darwell – Cliffe Memorial Hall
- 3 **Public Representation:** None
- 4 **Approval of Minutes of Meeting held on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2026.**  
It was proposed by J Wenban, seconded by H Johnson to accept the Minutes, all in favour. The Minutes were signed by the Chair.
- 5 **Finance and General Purposes**
  - a. **Month End Reports** March Bank reconciliation - **proposed by Cllr H Johnson, seconded by Cllr B Dibble. All agreed**
  - b. **Payments for Approval:**
    - Annual Audit Fee to Lionel Robbins for the sum of £210.00
    - Urgent repair of the Rec park gate to Structural Steel for the sum of £502.92 - **proposed by Cllr J Wenban, seconded by Cllr H Johnson. All agreed**
  - c. **PAYE Payments for Authorisation** – April payroll payments - **proposed by Cllr B Dibble, seconded by Cllr H Johnson. All agreed**
  - d. **Other Financial Matters**
    - i) Receipts and Payments April 2026 - **proposed by Cllr B Dibble, seconded by Cllr J Wenban. All agreed**
    - ii) 2025/26 Financial Statement - **proposed by Cllr H Johnson, seconded by Cllr B Dibble. All agreed. NOTED**
    - iii) Recommendation to transfer £38,000 to CCLA account - It was recommended to Full Council **proposed by Cllr B Dibble, seconded by Cllr H Johnson. All agreed**
    - iv) Internal Auditor report – Cllr B Dibble commented that the report was a very good year for the parish council - **proposed by Cllr B Dibble, seconded by Cllr H Johnson. All agreed**
    - v) Renewal of litter picking and groundworks contract – The clerk reported that she met with NORSE and discussed concerns of retaining the contract of work for the recreation grounds. The clerk was assured that Norse would continue to clear the recreation ground as past practice.

vi) Revision to Standing Orders, it was recommended to Full Council **proposed by Cllr R Wyatt, seconded by Cllr H Johnson. All agreed** Financial Regulations **proposed by Cllr B Dibble, seconded by Cllr H Johnson. All agreed** and Financial Regulations TOR **proposed by Cllr H Johnson, seconded by Cllr J Wenban. All agreed**

vii) Proposal for full Council summer break in August - It was recommended to Full Council **proposed by Cllr B Dibble, seconded by Cllr H Johnson. 1 Abstain and 4 in favour.**

viii) Proposal to buy a Field Maple Hedge for the Memorial Hall Grounds – Cllr R Wyatt has recommended to buy a hedge for the benefit of the environment and aesthetics. It was recommended to Full Council. **proposed by Cllr H Johnson, seconded by Cllr B Dibble. All agreed**

*In view of the confidential nature of Personnel Matters, any attending members of the public and press may be excluded from the meeting for the duration, or part thereof, of the following item.*

**6**

**Personnel Matters**

i) Staff appraisals – Staff members Clerk/PO Alex Jack and RFO Helen Symmons will be having their appraisals in the coming month.

The meeting closed at 8:12pm and the Chair thanked everyone for attending.

Parveen Comparat, Assistant clerk, 13/05/2026

**Signed as a true record of proceedings:**

**Chair** ..... **Date** .....

**Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 05/05/2026  
for Cashbook 1 - Current/Reserve Account**

<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>	<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
Current Account 55081592	05/05/2026		300.00
Reserve Account 56850409	05/05/2026		109,429.89
			<hr/> 109,729.89
<u>Unpresented Payments (Minus)</u>		<u>Amount</u>	
		0.00	
			<hr/> 0.00
			109,729.89
<u>Unpresented Receipts (Plus)</u>			
		0.00	
			<hr/> 0.00
			109,729.89
		<b>Balance per Cash Book is :-</b>	<b>109,729.89</b>
		<b>Difference is :-</b>	<b>0.00</b>

**Signatory 1:**

Name .....Signed .....Date .....

**Signatory 2:**

Name .....Signed .....Date .....

**Bank Reconciliation up to 05/05/2026 for Cashbook No 1 - Current/Reserve Account**

<u>Date</u>	<u>Cheque/Ref</u>	<u>Amnt Paid</u>	<u>Amnt Banked</u>	<u>Stat Amnt</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>Cleared</u>	<u>Payee Name or Description</u>
01/04/2026	DDR	16.77		16.77		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Vonage
01/04/2026	Allotments		254.00	254.00		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Receipt(s) Banked
02/04/2026	DDR	13.20		13.20		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Iris Software Ltd
02/04/2026	Allotment		47.00	47.00		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Receipt(s) Banked
07/04/2026	DC	8.99		8.99		R <input type="checkbox"/>	AMAZON
07/04/2026	DC	23.99		23.99		R <input type="checkbox"/>	AMAZON
07/04/2026	DC	48.00		48.00		R <input type="checkbox"/>	KALC
07/04/2026	DC	48.00		48.00		R <input type="checkbox"/>	KALC
08/04/2026	DDR	122.14		122.14		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Northstar IT
09/04/2026	DC	10.39		10.39		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Morrisons
09/04/2026	Allotments		57.00	57.00		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Receipt(s) Banked
10/04/2026	Allotments		124.00	124.00		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Receipt(s) Banked
10/04/2026	VAT refund		2,325.52	2,325.52		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Receipt(s) Banked
13/04/2026	Allotments		181.00	181.00		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Receipt(s) Banked
15/04/2026	BACS	1,736.61		1,736.61		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Staff Payment
15/04/2026	BACS	1,696.80		1,696.80		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Rialtas Business Solutions Ltd
15/04/2026	BACS	0.01		0.01		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Staff Payment
16/04/2026	DDR	122.04		122.04		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Nest Pensions
16/04/2026	DDR	58.66		58.66		R <input type="checkbox"/>	EDF Ennergy
17/04/2026	Precept		97,290.00	97,290.00		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Receipt(s) Banked
23/04/2026	DDR	1,360.14		1,360.14		R <input type="checkbox"/>	HMRC PAYE
30/04/2026	Interest		41.83	41.83		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Receipt(s) Banked
01/05/2026	BACS	2,239.15		2,239.15		R <input type="checkbox"/>	KALC
01/05/2026	BACS	1,344.00		1,344.00		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Safeplay
01/05/2026	DDR	14.93		14.93		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Vonage
01/05/2026	DDR	13.20		13.20		R <input type="checkbox"/>	Iris Software Ltd
		<u>8,877.02</u>	<u>100,320.35</u>				

**Signatory 1:**

Name .....Signed .....Date .....

**Signatory 2:**

Name .....Signed .....Date .....

Bank Reconciliation Statement as at 30/04/2026  
for Cashbook 5 - CCLA PSDF

<u>Bank Statement Account Name (s)</u>	<u>Statement Date</u>	<u>Page No</u>	<u>Balances</u>
CCLA PSDF	30/04/2026		76,827.77
			<u>76,827.77</u>
<u>Unpresented Payments (Minus)</u>		<u>Amount</u>	
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			76,827.77
<u>Unpresented Receipts (Plus)</u>			
		0.00	
			<u>0.00</u>
			76,827.77
		<b>Balance per Cash Book is :-</b>	<b>76,827.77</b>
		<b>Difference is :-</b>	<b>0.00</b>

**Signatory 1:**

Name .....Signed .....Date .....

**Signatory 2:**

Name .....Signed .....Date .....

Bank Reconciliation up to 30/04/2026 for Cashbook No 5 - CCLA PSDF

<u>Date</u>	<u>Cheque/Ref</u>	<u>Amnt Paid</u>	<u>Amnt Banked</u>	<u>Stat Amnt</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>Cleared</u>	<u>Payee Name or Description</u>
02/04/2026	Reinvestmt		243.47	243.47		R <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Receipt(s) Banked
		<u>0.00</u>	<u>243.47</u>				

**Signatory 1:**

Name .....Signed .....Date .....

**Signatory 2:**

Name .....Signed .....Date .....

Account Code Report

	Actual Year to Date	Current Annual Bud	Budget Variance	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
<b>Receipts</b>						
VAT Refunds	2,326	0	(2,326)			0.0%
Income Allotment Rents	633	4,417	3,784			14.3%
Income Football Pitch Rents	0	1,700	1,700			0.0%
Income Allotment Key Deposits	30	0	(30)			0.0%
Precept	97,290	97,290	0			100.0%
Bank Interest	581	3,000	2,419			19.4%
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>100,860</b>	<b>106,407</b>	<b>5,547</b>			<b>94.8%</b>
<b>Overhead Payments</b>						
VAT on Payments	1,671	0	(1,671)		(1,671)	0.0%
Salaries & Wages	3,206	27,214	24,008		24,008	11.8%
PAYE & NI - HMRC	974	0	(974)		(974)	0.0%
Emp'er 3% Emp'ee 5% Pension	233	1,000	767		767	23.3%
Home Allowance	224	950	726		726	23.6%
Staff Costs - other	22	500	478		478	4.4%
Mileage Claims	109	500	391		391	21.8%
Travelling Expenses	0	100	100		100	0.0%
Telephone Expenses	26	125	99		99	21.1%
Training Expenses	80	1,000	920		920	8.0%
Staff Professional Body Fees	0	500	500		500	0.0%
Chairman's Allowance	18	200	182		182	8.8%
Employer NI	387	1,600	1,213		1,213	24.2%
Insurance	0	1,700	1,700		1,700	0.0%
Audit Fees	210	800	590		590	26.2%
Professional Fees	0	500	500		500	0.0%
Stationery/Printing	67	700	633		633	9.6%
Computer/IT Expenses	1,618	3,750	2,132		2,132	43.1%
Postages	0	50	50		50	0.0%
Subscriptions	1,866	1,750	(116)		(116)	106.6%
Utilities	126	3,000	2,874		2,874	4.2%
Storage	0	700	700		700	0.0%
Salt bins & Salt	0	100	100		100	0.0%
Repairs & Maintenance	419	9,775	9,356		9,356	4.3%
CCTV	0	525	525		525	0.0%
Noticeboards	0	525	525		525	0.0%
Allotments Expenditure	0	3,000	3,000		3,000	0.0%
Play Park & Rec Grounds	493	1,250	758		758	39.4%
Changing Rooms expenditure	103	1,250	1,147		1,147	8.2%
Buttway	70	1,000	930		930	7.0%
Village Improvements	2,524	4,000	1,476		1,476	63.1%

## Receipts &amp; Payments by Budget 31/05/2026

## Account Code Report

	Actual Year to Date	Current Annual Bud	Budget Variance	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
De-fibs	0	525	525		525	0.0%
Skate park Maintenance	1,120	1,000	(120)		(120)	112.0%
Other Expenses	0	525	525		525	0.0%
Village Event donations	1,500	3,000	1,500		1,500	50.0%
Grants S137	0	2,500	2,500		2,500	0.0%
Cliffe Woods Comm Centre Grant	0	5,000	5,000		5,000	0.0%
Cliffe Memorial Hall Grant	0	5,000	5,000		5,000	0.0%
St Helen's Churchyd Maint Gran	0	1,500	1,500		1,500	0.0%
Emmanuel Centre Grant	0	1,500	1,500		1,500	0.0%
Car Park Refurbishment	0	20,000	20,000		20,000	0.0%
<b>Total Overhead</b>	<b>17,064</b>	<b>108,614</b>	<b>91,550</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>91,550</b>	<b>15.7%</b>
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>100,860</b>	<b>106,407</b>	<b>5,547</b>			<b>94.8%</b>
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b>17,064</b>	<b>108,614</b>	<b>91,550</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>91,550</b>	<b>15.7%</b>
<b>Net Receipts over Payments</b>	<b>83,796</b>	<b>(2,207)</b>	<b>(86,003)</b>			
plus Transfer from EMR	0	0	0			
less Transfer to EMR	30	0	(30)			
<b>Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve</b>	<b>83,766</b>	<b>(2,207)</b>	<b>(85,973)</b>			

## Agenda item 5c

<b>SALARIES RE MAY HOURS 2026</b>		Gross	£ 2,021.19
<b>Clerk/PO - hours</b>	40.75	bh/hol 25.7 hrs	
<b>Assistant Clerk - hours</b>	13.75	bh/hol 12.06 hrs	
<b>RFO - hours</b>	20.5		
<b>TOTAL MILEAGE</b>	4010		£106.70
<b>TOTAL HOME ALLOWANCES</b>	4003		£112.00
<b>SALARIES To pay June 2026</b>	4000	NET	£1,812.90
HMRC Payment	Employer/ Employee DD	£475.58	
Nest Pensions	Employer/ Employee DD	£108.23	
<b>MONTHLY COST TO COUNCIL</b>		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£2,396.71</b>

## List of Payments made between 01/05/2026 and 31/05/2026

<u>Date Paid</u>	<u>Payee Name</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Amount Paid</u>	<u>Authorised Ref</u>	<u>Transaction Detail</u>
01/05/2026	KALC	BACS	2,239.15	F&GP April	Annual Subscription
01/05/2026	Safeplay	BACS	1,344.00	F&GP April	Repairs & renewals
01/05/2026	Vonage	DDR	14.93	Contractual	April phone
01/05/2026	Iris Software Ltd	DDR	13.20	Contractual	April payroll admin
07/05/2026	Cliffe Memorial Hall	BACS	1,500.00	F&GP April Min 5dv	Event donation
07/05/2026	Ray-Dor	BACS	591.00	F&GP April Min 5diii	Signs for rec & playground
07/05/2026	EK Fire Protection Ltd	BACS	123.12	F&GP April min 5dv	Extinguishers service
07/05/2026	Northstar IT	DDR	122.14	Contractual	Monthly commitment
12/05/2026	Toner Giant	DC	52.14	Delegated - Clerk	Print cartridges
14/05/2026	CCLA PSDF	F&GP May	38,000.00		Additional deposit to PSDF
14/05/2026	Structural Steel Cons	BACS	502.92	F&GP May 2026	Repair hydraulic gate
14/05/2026	Lionel Robbins	BACS	210.00	F&GP May 26	25-26 Internal Audit
14/05/2026	Signs by Ian	BACS	70.00	F&GP Apr min5diii	Buttway signs
15/05/2026	Staff Payment	BACS	1,802.31	F&GP May	May salaries (April hrs)
15/05/2026	Nest Pensions	DDR	111.32	Contractual	May (April hrs)
20/05/2026	EDF Engergy	DDR	73.29	Contractual	May Electricity
29/05/2026	Structural Steel Cons	BACS	3,028.71	Min 338 a vi	Height gate Buttway
<b>Total Payments</b>			<u>49,798.23</u>		

Current/Reserve Account

Cash Received between 01/05/2026 and 31/05/2026

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Cash Received from</u>	<u>Receipt No</u>	<u>Receipt Description</u>	<u>Receipt Total</u>
29/05/2026	NatWest	Interest	May interest	58.58
<b>Total Receipts</b>				<b>58.58</b>

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09:13

## CCLA PSDF

## Cash Received between 01/05/2026 and 31/05/2026

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Cash Received from</u>	<u>Receipt No</u>	<u>Receipt Description</u>	<u>Receipt Total</u>
05/05/2026	CCLA PSDF	Reinvest	Reinvestment income	237.38
14/05/2026	Current/Reserve Account	F&GP May	Additional deposit to PSDF	38,000.00
<b>Total Receipts</b>				<b><u>38,237.38</u></b>

## **Proposed Tender for Car Park Refurbishment Works**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

To seek Council approval to commence a formal procurement process for the refurbishment of the Cliffe Woods Council car park, following preliminary engagement which indicates that the works are likely to cost in the region of £250,000.

The proposed works are expected to involve the replacement of the full car park surface and associated works required to bring the car park up to an appropriate standard.

### **2. Recommendations**

#### ***Council is asked to resolve:***

- a) To approve the commencement of a formal tender process for the car park refurbishment works.
- b) To note that the estimated value of the works is currently in the region of £250,000, based on preliminary market engagement.
- c) To note that the contract is expected to be a regulated below-threshold works contract under the Procurement Act 2023, as the estimated value is below the current works threshold of £5,193,000 including VAT, but above the £30,000 notifiable below-threshold level.
- d) To approve the publication of a below-threshold tender notice on the Central Digital Platform / Find a Tender.gov.uk before the opportunity is advertised elsewhere (e.g. website, facebook etc), if the Council decides to advertise the tender publicly.
- e) To delegate authority to the Clerk and RFO, in consultation with the F&GP Committee, to finalise the tender documentation, specification, timetable and evaluation criteria.
- f) To agree that the final award decision shall be brought back to Council.
- g) To approve the inclusion of a suitable contingency within the project budget, subject to Council's overall financial position and available reserves.

### **3. Background**

The Cliffe Woods Council's car park surface has reached a condition where full replacement is now considered necessary. The works are expected to involve the replacement of the whole surface, rather than isolated repairs or patching.

Preliminary engagement has been undertaken to understand the likely scope and cost of the project. This initial engagement suggests that the works are likely to cost approximately £250,000. This figure is indicative at this stage and will need to be tested through a formal tender process.

Given the estimated value, the Council must ensure that the procurement is undertaken transparently, competitively and in accordance with the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and applicable procurement legislation.

#### **4. Procurement Position**

The Procurement Act 2023 applies to public authorities, including parish and town councils, when procuring goods, services and works. Current thresholds from 1 January 2026 set the works contract threshold at £5,193,000 including VAT. A car park resurfacing/refurbishment contract estimated at around £250,000 is therefore not expected to be an above-threshold public works contract, but it is still a significant public works procurement.

The contract is likely to be a regulated below-threshold contract. For contracting authorities other than central government, a contract with a value of £30,000 or more including VAT is a notifiable below-threshold contract. If the Council intends to advertise the opportunity, it must first publish a below-threshold tender notice on the Central Digital Platform.

Once the contract is awarded, the Council will also be required to publish a contract details notice as soon as reasonably practicable after entering into the contract. For authorities other than central government, government guidance indicates this will usually mean within 90 days of entering into the contract.

Although the below-threshold regime provides greater flexibility than above-threshold procurement, the Council must still demonstrate that it has acted fairly, proportionately and in the public interest, securing value for money and maintaining a clear audit trail.

#### **5. Recommended Procurement Route**

Given the value, visibility and nature of the works, it is recommended that the Council undertakes a formal tender process rather than relying on informal quotations.

The proposed route is:

- Prepare a clear works specification, including surface requirements, drainage, markings, access arrangements, health and safety requirements, reinstatement, defects period and any associated works.
- Prepare tender documents, including instructions to tenderers, pricing schedule, evaluation criteria, draft contract terms, insurance requirements, references/experience requirements and programme expectations.
- Publish a below-threshold tender notice on the Central Digital Platform / Find a Tender if the opportunity is to be openly advertised.
- Make the tender pack available to interested contractors.
- Allow a reasonable tender period.

- Evaluate tenders using pre-agreed criteria.
- Present the tender evaluation outcome and recommendation back to Council/F&GP if delegated, for approval before contract award.
- Publish the required contract details notice following award.

## 6. Proposed Evaluation Criteria

It is recommended that tenders are assessed on both price and quality. A price-only assessment would not be advisable for a project of this nature, as poor workmanship could create future repair costs, drainage issues, safety concerns and reputational risk.

A suggested evaluation model is:

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Suggested Weighting</b>
Price	60%
Quality / Method Statement	20%
Relevant Experience and References	10%
Programme, Mobilisation and Disruption Management	5%
Health & Safety / Risk Management	5%

The Council may wish to adjust these weightings before the tender is issued. The key point is that the criteria should be agreed in advance and included in the tender documentation.

## 7. Financial Implications

The current estimated project value is approximately £250,000, based on preliminary engagement. This should be treated as an indicative estimate only until formal tenders are received.

The Council should also consider whether a contingency is required, particularly if the works may involve drainage issues, excavation, sub-base failure, kerbing, line marking, accessibility improvements or unforeseen ground conditions.

A suggested approach would be to set a project budget comprising:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Indicative Amount</b>
Main resurfacing/refurbishment works	£250,000
Contingency, suggested 10%	£25,000
Possible professional/technical advice, if required	To be confirmed
<b>Total indicative project minimum cost</b>	<b>£275,000</b> <i>(plus any professional fees)</i>

At present the Council has the following funds available:

EMR	£84,378
26/27 budget	£20,000
General reserve	£20,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>£124,378</b>

Other funding will have to be obtained from external avenues e.g. Public Works Loan.

If the tender returns exceed the available budget, the matter will be brought back to Council before any contract is awarded.

### 8. Need for Technical Support

Given the estimated value and the nature of the works, Council may wish to consider whether external technical support is required to prepare the specification, review tender submissions, inspect works and certify completion.

This may include a highways engineer, quantity surveyor, project manager or other suitably qualified professional. While this may add cost, it may reduce the risk of an inadequate specification, poor contractor performance, future defects or disputes over quality.

### 9. Risk Assessment

Risk	Mitigation
Tender process not compliant with procurement rules	Follow Procurement Act 2023 below-threshold requirements, Council Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.
Insufficient or unclear specification	Prepare a detailed specification before tender issue; consider technical advice.
Cost exceeds available budget	Include contingency; bring award decision back to Council if tenders exceed budget.
Poor quality works	Use quality criteria, references, method statements, appropriate contract terms and defects period.
Lack of audit trail	Record all decisions, tender documents, evaluation scores, declarations of interest and award decision.
Disruption to users/residents	Require contractors to submit traffic/access management and communication proposals.
Health and safety issues	Require risk assessments, method statements, insurance and compliance with CDM/construction requirements where applicable.

## 10. Governance and Audit Trail

The Council should ensure that:

- the decision to tender is clearly minuted;
- the estimated value and procurement route are recorded;
- tender documentation is approved before issue;
- all tenderers receive the same information;
- any clarifications are shared consistently;
- evaluation is undertaken against pre-agreed criteria;
- conflicts of interest are declared and managed;
- the award decision is clearly recorded;
- the required procurement notices are published;
- the contract is retained with the Council's records.

This will support transparency, demonstrate value for money and provide a clear audit trail for internal and external audit purposes.

## 11. Timetable Example

Stage	Indicative Timing
Council approval to tender	June 2026
Finalise specification and tender documents	By end July 2026
Publish below-threshold tender notice / issue tender	August 2026
Tender period	Suggested 4–6 weeks
Tender evaluation	End of September 2026
Report award recommendation to Council	October 2026
Contract award and mobilisation	End October 2026
Works commence	November 2026
Works completion	Tbc

## 12. Conclusion

The replacement of the car park surface is a significant capital project for the Council. Preliminary engagement indicates that the works are likely to cost in the region of £250,000, meaning a formal and well-documented procurement process is required.

Although the estimated value is below the statutory works threshold for an above-threshold procurement, it is above the notifiable below-threshold level and should be managed through a transparent tender process. This will help the Council demonstrate compliance, secure value for money and reduce the risk of challenge, poor workmanship or inadequate project control.

**Council is therefore asked to approve the commencement of the tender process and to agree the proposed governance arrangements set out in this report.**

## **Public Works Loan Funding for Car Park Refurbishment**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

To consider whether the Council should consult residents on the proposed use of Public Works Loan Board borrowing to part-fund the refurbishment of the Council's car park.

The current estimated cost of the car park refurbishment works is approximately £275,000. It is proposed that the Council considers borrowing up to £150,000, potentially over a period of 10 years, with the remaining cost to be met from Council resources as identified in the Tender report.

No final decision to apply for borrowing approval should be made until the Council has considered affordability, the impact on the precept and the outcome of resident consultation.

### **2. Recommendations**

Council is asked to resolve:

- a) To note that the car park refurbishment works are currently estimated to cost approximately £275,000.
- b) To note that the Council may need to borrow up to £150,000 to support delivery of the project.
- c) To agree in principle that a Public Works Loan Board loan be explored as a potential funding option, subject to resident consultation, affordability assessment and formal borrowing approval.
- d) To approve public consultation with residents on:
  - the proposed car park refurbishment project;
  - the Council's intention to borrow up to £150,000;
  - the proposed loan term, currently modelled at 10 years;
  - the likely annual repayment cost; and
  - the potential impact on the Council's precept and Band D council tax charge.
- e) To instruct the Clerk/RFO to prepare a further report following consultation, setting out:
  - the consultation responses received;
  - the final estimated borrowing requirement;
  - the proposed repayment period;
  - the annual repayment cost;
  - the impact on the precept;

- the impact on reserves; and
- a recommendation on whether to proceed with an application for borrowing approval.

g) To note that any formal application for borrowing approval must be authorised by Full Council and submitted through the Kent Association of Local Councils.

### **3. Background**

The Council is currently considering the refurbishment of the Council car park. The whole surface requires replacement and preliminary engagement suggests that the works are likely to cost in the region of £275,000 (including a contingency amount).

The Council is separately considering a formal procurement process for the works. However, before the project can be progressed, the Council must determine how the works will be funded.

Given the scale of the project, it is proposed that the Council considers using a combination of existing funds and borrowing. At this stage, an indicative borrowing requirement of £150,000 has been identified.

A Public Works Loan Board loan may provide a suitable way of spreading the cost of the project over a number of years, rather than funding the full cost from reserves and a single-year precept increase.

### **4. Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) Borrowing**

The Public Works Loan Board lending facility is operated by the UK Debt Management Office (DMO) on behalf of HM Treasury and provides loans to local authorities and other specified bodies from the National Loans Fund. The DMO guidance states that this borrowing is mainly for capital projects, and that loans may be made to finance capital payments for which a council has formal borrowing approval.

For parish and town councils in England, the Council must obtain borrowing approval from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) before applying for PWLB loan funds. The initial approach should be made through the Kent Association of Local Councils. Once borrowing approval is received, the Council can apply to the PWLB using Form LC1.

The borrowing approval will usually specify the purpose of the loan, the amount that may be borrowed and the maximum period over which the loan may be taken. Borrowed funds must therefore be used only for the approved purpose unless further consent is obtained.

## 5. Need for Resident Consultation

Resident consultation is an important part of the borrowing approval process.

NALC guidance states that parish councils should be open and transparent with residents when considering borrowing. Details of the project, the proposed borrowing and the repayment arrangements should be available to residents from an early stage. Evidence of this will be taken into account when considering whether borrowing approval should be given. Where the precept is to be increased to fund borrowing, evidence of public support for the precept increase will be required.

The guidance also makes clear that simply including the matter on a Council agenda is not sufficient evidence of consultation. Residents should be given accessible information about the project, the borrowing proposal and the likely financial impact, with a clear opportunity to respond.

***It is therefore recommended that the Council consults residents before making a formal borrowing application.***

## 6. Proposed Consultation Approach

The consultation should be proportionate but sufficiently clear to evidence that residents have been properly informed.

It is recommended that the consultation explains:

- why the car park works are required;
- the estimated project cost;
- the amount the Council proposes to borrow;
- the proposed loan period;
- the estimated annual repayment;
- how the remaining project cost would be funded;
- whether the precept would need to increase;
- the estimated Band D impact;
- what would happen if the Council does not proceed with the works; and
- how residents can respond.

The consultation could be published through the Council website, noticeboards, social media and, if appropriate, a direct leaflet or survey. The Council may also wish to hold a public meeting or consultation session.

A suggested consultation question would be:

“Do you support the Council applying for Public Works Loan Board borrowing of up to £150,000 to help fund the refurbishment of the Council car park, with repayments

spread over an estimated 10-year period and funded through the Council's budget/precept?"

If the borrowing requires a precept increase, the question should be more explicit:

"Do you support the Council increasing the precept by approximately £xxx per year, equivalent to approximately £xxx per Band D household per year, to fund repayments on a Public Works Loan of up to £150,000 for the car park refurbishment project?"

## 7. Financial Implications

The current indicative project cost is approximately:

Item	Estimated Amount
Car park refurbishment works	£275,000
Proposed PWLB borrowing	£150,000
Balance to be funded from reserves / grants / other Council funds	£125,000

The final funding mix will need to be confirmed once the tender process has been completed and the actual project cost is known.

PWLB interest rates change regularly. The DMO publishes fixed interest rates twice daily, and the final rate will not be confirmed until the loan terms are agreed close to the date of advance.

For illustration only, a £150,000 fixed rate loan on an Annuity basis would cost approximately:

Term	Illustrative Interest Rate	Approx. Annual Repayment	Approx. Total Repaid
5 years	5.29%	£31,790	£174,839
10 years	5.51%	£19,004	£199,553
15 years	5.8%	£14,800	£229,420

These are only indicative figures. The actual cost will depend on the interest rate available at the time the loan is taken out, the loan structure selected and the repayment method.

PWLB loans to parish, town and community councils may use either an annuity repayment method, where each half-yearly payment is a constant amount inclusive of principal and interest, or equal instalments of principal, where principal repayments are constant and interest reduces over time.

## 8. Precept Impact

The key issue for Council is whether the loan repayments can be met from:

- existing budget provision;
- reductions elsewhere in the budget;
- additional income;
- earmarked reserves;
- an increase in the precept; or
- a combination of these.

If the Council funds the full annual repayment through the precept, the Band D impact will depend on the Council Tax Base.

A budget figure of £20,000 was included in the current 2026/27 budget for the car park project and had minimal impact on the precept.

Using the illustrative annual repayment of £19,004 for 10 years, there would be no Band D impact as the budget would just swap the £20,000 funding for the car park to the repayment figure.

Based on the tax base of 2208.14 in 2026/27, the amount of precept allocated to repaying the loan would be £8.61 per household.

Annual loan repayment ÷ Council Tax Base = estimated Band D impact

As highlighted, if the Council uses an existing budget provision to meet the repayment, the precept impact would not change.

## 9. Affordability Considerations

Before making any borrowing application, Council should be satisfied that the loan is affordable and sustainable over the full repayment period.

The borrowing approval guidance expects the Council's report to demonstrate the affordability of the loan charges and any other revenue costs arising from the project. It should include annual costs, whether these will be met from the precept or other sources, the monetary and percentage impact of any precept increase, and any risks or uncertainties affecting the project's financing.

The Council should therefore consider:

- whether a 10-year term is appropriate;
- whether a shorter or longer term would be more suitable;
- whether the asset life of the car park surface justifies the repayment period;

- whether the Council can afford the repayments without creating pressure elsewhere;
- whether any precept increase is reasonable and publicly supported;
- whether the project creates any additional ongoing maintenance costs; and
- whether the Council has sufficient reserves after contributing to the project.

## 10. Risk Assessment

Risk	Mitigation
Borrowing approval not granted	Consult residents properly, demonstrate affordability and submit a complete application through the County Association.
Insufficient evidence of resident support	Run a clear consultation and keep full records of responses, publicity and Council decisions.
Precept impact is not affordable or supported	Model 5, 10 and 15-year options and consider use of reserves or phased delivery.
Final tender price exceeds current estimate	Do not finalise borrowing amount until tender outcome is known.
Interest rates change before loan is drawn down	Use indicative figures only and obtain updated rates before final decision.
Council borrows more than required	Confirm final project cost and funding gap before applying.
Long-term pressure on revenue budget	Build repayments into the Medium-Term Financial Plan and annual budget.
Project costs increase during delivery	Include contingency and ensure contract management arrangements are in place.

## 11. Proposed Next Steps

Stage	Action
1	Council agrees whether to consult residents on proposed borrowing.
2	Clerk/RFO obtains further indicative PWLB repayment figures for different loan terms.
3	Consultation material is prepared and published.
4	Residents are consulted on the project, borrowing and precept impact.
5	Tender process for car park works progresses to confirm actual cost.
6	Consultation responses and tender outcome are reported back to Council.
7	Council decides whether to apply for borrowing approval.
8	If approved, application is submitted via the County Association.
9	Once borrowing approval is obtained, the Council applies to the PWLB using Form LC1.
10	Loan is drawn down only when required and in accordance with the approval.

## **12. Conclusion**

The car park refurbishment is a significant capital project and preliminary estimates indicate that the Council may need to borrow a minimum of £150,000 to support delivery.

A Public Works Loan would allow the Council to spread the cost over a number of years, but the Council must first demonstrate that the borrowing is necessary, affordable and supported by appropriate resident consultation.

**It is therefore recommended that Council should approve a resident consultation exercise and request further financial modelling so that a fully informed decision can be made once the consultation results and final project costs are known.**

Mrs Alex Jack  
17 Graveney Close  
Cliffe Woods  
Rochester  
Kent  
ME3 8LB

**Cliffe & Cliffe Woods Parish Council**  
**Membership No: S4323A**  
**Website Username:**  
clerk@cliffeandcliffewoods-pc.gov.uk  
**Membership Renewal Date:** 26 Jun 2026  
**Email address:** clerk@cliffeandcliffewoods-  
pc.gov.uk  
**Tel No:** 01634 566 166

30 May 2026

**Membership Renewal**

Dear Member

Membership number	S4323A
Affiliation fees due 26 Jun 2026	£70.00
VAT @ 20%	£14.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£84.00</b>

Thank you so much for being a valued member over the past year. Your support really makes a difference. It helps us continue to protect, preserve and promote allotments; while funding the benefits you enjoy as part of the National Allotment Society.

Your membership will shortly be due for renewal, and we invite you to log in, renew and continue enjoying all your member benefits.

Please log in to your members area to update your membership details and make a payment:

[thenas.org.uk/login](https://thenas.org.uk/login)

- Your login is your email address plus the password you created.
- If it's your first time logging in, click '**Forgot your password**', enter your email, and select '**Remind me**' - you'll then receive a link to set up a new password.
- If you see the message '*There are multiple accounts with this email address*', please email us at [contact@thenas.org.uk](mailto:contact@thenas.org.uk) and we'll be happy to help.

Please make payment by one of the following methods:

- **Card Payment** (available online only in the members area)
- **Bank Transfer**
  - Bank Name: The Co-Operative Bank
  - Account name: NSALG
  - Account number: 67270048
  - Sort code: 08 92 99
  - Reference: **Membership No: S4323A**

Cont overleaf

- **Cheque** (payable to NSALG Ltd) quote **Membership No: S4323A** on the reverse.

It is important that when making any payments or corresponding with the Society that your membership number is quoted. **Membership No: S4323A**

### **Your Membership**

As a Co-operative Society, we may be audited by the Financial Conduct Authority and therefore be obliged to provide details to them of our members. All information provided will be for our records only and will not be disclosed to a third party.

The NAS will not share your data with any third party not listed in the data protection policy - Please see our website for full details. <https://www.thenas.org.uk/dataprotection>

Should you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

The NAS Administration Team



PITCHPOWER

## RUGBY UNION ASSESSMENT REPORT

# CLIFFE RECREATION GROUND

 Medway

### Active Places Site ID

30005983

### Report ID

26254

This report has been compiled for CLIFFE CRUSADERS RFC to provide information on the standard of the rugby union pitches and outlines recommendations on how to improve the quality and maintenance of these pitches.

### Inspection Window

1 Jan 2026 / 4 Jun 2026

### Inspection Reason

General Maintenance Advice

### Report Completion Date

22 May 2026

This report looks solely at the Rugby Union pitches for CLIFFE CRUSADERS RFC to see how support can be offered to improve the standard of Rugby Union pitches and level of maintenance across the area. Please note these recommendations are based on the information obtained and/or provided and are for guidance purposes only. Any works undertaken are the responsibility of the club/organisation.



# CLIFFE RECREATION GROUND

Site ID: 30005983

Date inspection submitted: 20/05/2026



Map Key	Pitch Name	PQS Score
1	<a href="#">Pitch 1 &gt;</a>	● Basic - 63%



## Ground Overview

Cliffe Crusaders RFC Pitch has been graded as Basic due to a lack of grass coverage due to the amount of weeds present.

**grounds management framework - grounds management association** This web address will explain the grading system.

The pitch is doing well considering the time of year.

With a few tweaks to your Maintenance Plan, you could see further improvements.

If you are able to have a application of selective herbicide that will helpful as the grass won't completing with the weeds for nutrients and water which help the grass to be stronger.

There are further recommendations listed in this report.

## Maintenance

### Attention required in these areas:

- Application of selective herbicide (weed treatment) >
- End of Season Renovation >
- Application of Fertiliser >
- Decompaction (Deep-tine) >
- Slitting >
- Overseeding >

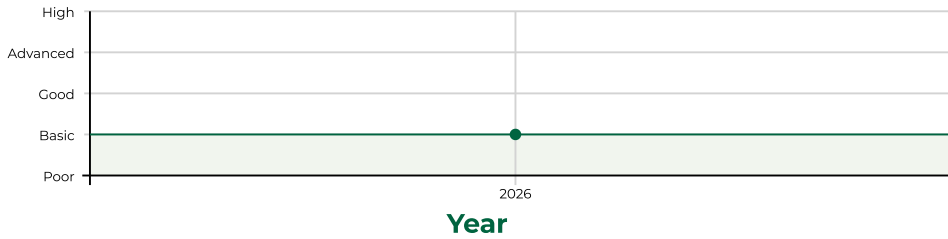
## PITCH 1 ADULT SIZE

**Current PQS Score:** ● Basic - 63%

Area				PQS Grade
Thatch depth	5	0	0	4
Root depth	145	135	170	4
Grass	80	60	60	1
Average grass height	40	45	30	4
Weed coverage	20	40	40	0
Topsoil depth	150	150	170	3
Compaction	Slow draining			2
Surface evenness	Standard			2
Surface debris	Above standard			4
Line markings	Below standard			0

**Grass cap:** You received a score of Basic therefore your overall PQS has been capped at Basic

### Overall pitch PQS tracked over time





# MAINTENANCE

These recommendations are in priority order

## Application of selective herbicide (weed treatment)

### Frequency:

1 x per year

### Recommended for:

- Whole Ground

Selective herbicide management on grassroots rugby pitches focuses on controlling weeds while minimising harm to the desired grass species, within the pitch. Choosing the correct selective herbicide for the specific weeds present and applying it correctly is crucial. You must consider factors such as weather conditions and grass health before applying a selective herbicide. Never apply during times of drought or grass plant stress, as this can damage the turf and reduce the effectiveness of weed control. Selective herbicides are rainfast within 24 hours of application; rain before this period can compromise the effectiveness of the weed control.

Applying a selective herbicide annually is good practice to maintain the pitch to its optimum condition, both aesthetically and to maintain grass sward quality. It might be necessary to apply a selective herbicide twice annually in heavily infested grass swards, as weeds compete with the grass plants for nutrients, light, and water, and don't withstand wear as well. Spraying should only be undertaken when the grass is actively growing, and at least 6 weeks post-germination of newly seeded pitches, or at least 6 weeks before seeding of the pitch, and only in calm weather. Mowing should be avoided for 3 days before and after application. Regular mowing and aeration also play a crucial role in maintaining a healthy sward and minimising weed issues. Overseeding should be done after applying the selective herbicide to restore grass cover unless overseeding has already been carried out prior. Selective herbicides must only be applied by a qualified contractor or person with all the appropriate spraying certificates and following the manufacturer's instructions, a site-specific risk assessment, and COSHH best practices.

The following are also helpful in the prevention and management of weeds. **Correctly identify Weeds: Select the Right Herbicide: Follow Application Instructions: Consider Environmental Factors: Timing is Key, when weeds are actively growing:**

**Good Practice as follows: Regular Mowing: Aeration: Fertilising, Overseeding:**

**LEARN MORE ABOUT APPLICATION OF SELECTIVE HERBICIDE (WEED TREATMENT)** ➤

## End of Season Renovation

### Frequency:

1 x per year

### Recommended for:

- Whole Ground

End-of-season renovations for grassroots rugby union pitches are crucial for maintaining playing quality and ensuring the pitch is ready for the next season. Key activities can include scarification, aeration, overseeding, and topdressing, all aimed at improving drainage, encouraging healthy grass growth, root development, root density, and levelling the surface. By implementing the following into your end-of-season renovations, you can significantly improve the health and playability of your rugby pitch, ensuring it is in top condition for the next season.

Detailed Renovation Steps:

### Scarification:

This process removes thatch (dead grass and debris) from the surface, improving air and water penetration to the soil. It also helps to reduce the presence of unwanted grasses like *Poa annua*. All risings from scarification must be collected and composted away from any watercourse.

### Aeration:

Aeration involves deep tine aeration or hollow coring, creating large holes 19 mm to 22 mm in diameter in the soil profile to relieve compaction and improve drainage. Deep tine aeration using an air injection aeration machine can be employed.

### Overseeding:

After scarification and aeration, overseeding with a suitable amenity Winter sports pitch grass seed mix containing at least three Rye grass cultivars helps to establish a healthy and dense sward, which is crucial for preventing weed and moss invasion.

### Topdressing:

Topdressing involves applying a layer of sports sand or sports sand/loam mix to level the surface, improve drainage, and create a good seedbed for the new grass.

### Fertilising:

A slow-release fertiliser application helps the grass recover from the season's wear and tear and encourages new growth.

**Timing:**

Renovations should ideally be completed 8-10 weeks before the start of the new season to allow the new grass to establish. Consider your budget when planning renovations and prioritise the most important tasks. For example, you may need to adjust the intensity or frequency of some treatments based on your resources. If you are unsure about any aspect of the renovation process, consult with a professional grounds maintenance company or contact your Regional Pitch Advisor from the Grounds Management Association

**[LEARN MORE ABOUT END OF SEASON RENOVATION >](#)**

## Application of Fertiliser

### Frequency:

2 x per year

### Recommended for:

- Whole Ground

For community rugby union pitches, a balanced fertiliser application is key to promoting healthy grass growth and root development, which is essential for a good playable surface. A good starting point is a slow-release (controlled release NPK) nitrogen-based fertiliser with an analysis recommended for spring and summer growth in the spring and an autumn/winter controlled release fertiliser at the start of the season. Always apply at the rate specified by the manufacturer's recommendations and product label.

Understanding Fertiliser Ratios:

- **Nitrogen (N):** Promotes leaf growth and overall greenness.
- **Phosphorus (P):** Essential for root development and early growth.
- **Potassium (K):** Strengthens cell walls and improves disease resistance.
- The numbers in a fertiliser ratio (e.g., 18-3.5-8) represent the percentage of Nitrogen, Phosphorus, and Potassium, respectively.

Timing and Application:

- **Spring/Summer (April/May onwards):** Use a controlled-release fertiliser like 18-3.5-8 to encourage growth after winter and help repair damage from play.
- **August/September:** A second application can help maintain growth and sward density, particularly if the pitch has been heavily used.
- **Autumn/Winter:** Focus on low nitrogen, high phosphorus and potassium fertilisers (e.g., 4-12-12) to strengthen roots and cell walls, aiding the grass plant through the colder months.
- Avoid applying fertiliser before frost or in very cold weather

Always have your soil tested to see what analysis is best for your pitches.

The following are also helpful in the management of Fertiliser Application: **Regular Soil Testing: Regular Mowing to encourage a dense sward: Weed and Disease Control: Consult Experts Fertiliser Supplier: Environmental Considerations, Avoid over-application:**

[LEARN MORE ABOUT APPLICATION OF FERTILISER ›](#)

## Decompaction (Deep-tine)

### Frequency:

2 x per year

### Recommended for:

- Whole Ground

Deep tine aeration is a crucial maintenance technique for grass roots rugby pitches to alleviate soil compaction and improve drainage. It involves using specialised machinery to create deep channels in the soil, allowing air, water, and nutrients to reach the root zone more effectively. Compaction has a detrimental effect on surface drainage, root health, growth, and density; it also affects the overall soil structure with reduced pore spaces between the soil particles.

Pitch compaction occurs due to several factors, including heavy foot traffic/pitch usage. This can be from play/training, events, and gatherings (e.g., Bonfire night, festivals, camping). Flooding also increases compaction with one litre of water weighing 1kg; (for example, 1 inch of standing water across a rugby pitch equates to approximately 8.4 tonnes of standing water). Flooding also increases compaction by way of bringing the fines within the profile to the surface, causing a capped surface and reduced air/pore space. Compaction also affects the safety of the pitch. A compacted pitch is far more likely to contribute to player injuries, due to the hardness of the playing surface and no give.

The decompaction (Deep tine aeration) process helps to reduce surface hardness/tension, improves drainage, increases air/pore space within the profile, which enhances root growth/density, movement of water and increases nutrient uptake, ultimately leading to a healthier and more resilient playing surface, less prone to knock out of the turf during a scrum. A de-compacted playing surface is much safer for players, reducing the risk of injury.

A vertical deep tine aeration machine equipped with solid tines 18-24 mm in diameter and 110-250mm in length, with a forward spacing pattern equal to the spacing between the tines fitted to the machine, along with a correctly set heave will reach the maximum achievable depth, and de-compactions in one pass. This operation should be carried out a minimum of three times per year (with at least one spring and autumn). When carried out at the right time of year, it creates fissures within the profile and increases the air/pore space. This practice works hand in hand with regular slitting practices. Remember this:- The roots don't grow in the soil, they grow in the pore spaces between the

soil, so **Aeration, Aeration Aeration is Key, as oxygen is everything to everything that lives.**

The following are also helpful in the prevention and management of compacted pitches. Decompaction: -  
**Improves Drainage: Enhanced Root Growth: Reduced Surface Hardness: Increased Nutrient Uptake: Deep tine Regularly: Spring and Autumn at least twice: Adjustable Depth and Heave: Correct Tine Spacing and Depth:**

A contractor must assess the site before deep tine aeration.

**[LEARN MORE ABOUT DECOMPACTION \(DEEP-TINE\) ›](#)**

## Slitting

### Frequency:

Monthly

### Recommended for:

- Whole Ground

Slitting, also known as slit tine aeration, is a maintenance practice used on grassroots rugby union pitches to improve drainage and aeration. This involves creating narrow slits in the soil profile, typically with a machine, to allow for better water and air movement. It's a key part of maintaining a healthy and playable surface, especially during the wetter months. By implementing a proper slitting program throughout the playing season, grassroots rugby clubs can help ensure their pitches remain in good condition, providing a safe and enjoyable playing surface for players.

### Purpose:

Slitting helps to alleviate surface compaction and improve drainage by creating channels for water to escape. It also allows for better air circulation within the soil, which is vital for healthy root growth.

### How it's done:

Slitting is usually performed using a machine with blades or tines that cut into the soil. The depth and spacing of the slits can vary depending on the specific needs of the pitch and the type of soil.

### Frequency: Timing:

The frequency of slitting depends on factors like soil type, weather conditions, and pitch usage. Generally, it's recommended to slit pitches at least once or twice a month, with more frequent slitting during periods of heavy rainfall or high usage, particularly if the pitch is experiencing drainage issues. If using a Linear disc-type slitter, then twice a year is sufficient with this machine in the autumn and early spring, yet never in the drier summer months, due to excessive cracking.

**Depth:** Always slit as deeply as possible and in conjunction with other maintenance practices, in particular deep tine aeration to create a comprehensive approach to pitch care.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT SLITTING >](#)



## Overseeding

### Frequency:

1 x per year

### Recommended for:

- Whole Ground

Overseeding is the process of adding grass seed to an existing sports pitch playing surface, which is crucial for maintaining healthy and durable rugby union grounds, especially at the grassroots level. It helps fill in bare patches, improve sward density, and enhance overall turf quality, making it more resilient to the wear and tear of play. The preferred method of overseeding is a tractor-mounted disc seeder; this method forms shallow, sliced grooves into the playing surface. The grass seed is then dropped into the formed groove, and the machine then closes the groove over, making sure the grass seed is in full contact with the soil. The seed is protected from the birds because they are out of sight.

The overseeding rate depends on the surface's sparseness. Whilst the recommended rate is 35 grams per square meter, it can range from 15 to 50 grams per square meter for particularly bare areas. The seed supplier will supply you with the correct sowing rate for their seed. Overseeding in three directions at a rate of 35 grams per square meter will require approximately 10-12 bags (20 kg each) of perennial ryegrass seed per full-size pitch.

Applying seed by hand onto bare areas before a training session/game allows players to work the seed into the playing surface.

The following are also helpful in the management of overseeding: **Improved Wear Tolerance, Enhanced Density, Faster Pitch Recovery, Year-Round Playability.**

Timing **Autumn and Spring: Post-Season Renovations: Mid-Season Repairs:**

Use only **Rugby-Specific Seed Mixtures: Perennial Ryegrass: Consider mixtures containing creeping ryegrass. Watering is essential: Fertilise with a preseed, controlled-release fertiliser.**

[LEARN MORE ABOUT OVERSEEDING >](#)

## Estimated budget to carry out recommendations

Please note, the costs provided above are indicative and may vary dependent on quantities and frequency. This estimated budget should be used to help plan and prioritise work, but is not linked to the amount of grant funding you may receive. Following the recommended works should help you achieve the GOOD pitch standard, or if already at that level, sustain it.

## TRAINING

As well as undertaking the maintenance activities as described above, we would also recommend attending the following training courses to further develop your skills and understanding of grass pitch maintenance.

Learn more about our training courses at:  
<https://www.thegma.org.uk/learning/courses/>

### Recommended Training

#### Organisation Training

**Introduction to Rugby Union Pitch Maintenance**

[READ MORE >](#)

## Want to apply for funding?

# FOOTBALL FOUNDATION FUNDING APPLICATION PORTAL

You could be eligible for a grant to help you carry out the recommendations in this report. Click 'Apply here' and you could be on your way to securing a grant and being a part of our mission to transform this country's grassroots game.

Report ID: **26254**

To apply for funding visit

[apply.footballfoundation.org.uk](https://apply.footballfoundation.org.uk)

### Training Courses



Further information on any training courses you're recommended to complete can be found on the Grounds Management Association website.

[VISIT THE GMA ›](#)

### GMA Toolkit



**RFU**

Access the GMA resources including practical advice on methods and techniques; machinery, equipment and materials; and links to relevant training resources.

[VISIT THE TOOLKIT ›](#)

## Find out more about the Football Foundation's plan to transform the country's grass pitches

Visit our website, which has lots of information about other resources and funding opportunities we're offering organisations involved in the grassroots game.

[FOOTBALLFOUNDATION.ORG.UK ›](https://footballfoundation.org.uk)