

THURSTON PARISH COUNCIL – Open Space & Leisure Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Open Space & Leisure Committee held on Wednesday 17th September 2025 at 7.30pm in the Community Library, Norton Road.

In attendance: Cllrs. B Rainbow (Chair), J Allen, Y Hamel-Cooke, P Marsh, D Millett, B Morris, M Moy and P Smith.

Also in attendance: Mrs. P Gladwell (Deputy Clerk) no members of public.

1. **Chair's Welcome** - the Chair opened the meeting advising all that the Protocol adopted by the Parish Council for reporting at Parish Council Meetings, would be enacted for this meeting. A copy of the Protocol is available from the Clerk or can be downloaded from the website: <https://thurstonparishcouncil.uk/parish-council/policies-procedures-and-strategy/>
2. **Apologies:**
 - a) To receive apologies for absence – None
 - b) To consent to accept apologies received – None
3. **Declarations of pecuniary and local non-pecuniary interests:**
 - a) To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary interests and other registerable interests and non-registerable interests as detailed in Appendix B of the LGA Model Code of Conduct – None received.
 - b) To note the determination of requests for dispensations in accordance with council's Dispensation Policy – None received.
4. **To consider and approve the minutes of the previous meeting of 16th July 2025** - approval of the minutes as an accurate record of the meeting that took place was given by all present, aif. The Chair signed the minutes in accordance with legislation.
5. **To receive comments from the members of the public present:**
 - a) On the agenda under discussion – no members of the public present.
 - b) On any other matters relating to recreational matters within the village of Thurston – no members of the public present
6. **To receive and consider matters relating to the Monthly Risk Assessments Reports:**
 - a) To receive updates on previous works highlighted in the Monthly Risk Assessments for action.
 - **Heath Road Play area:** Multiplay, ramp chain ordered, step block in place. Bark redistributed. Bird deterrent added to top of swings.
 - **Thedwastre Play Park Area:** Bird deterrent refixed. Fencing checks for missing fixings, none found.
 - **New Green Open Space:** Graffiti on Youth Shelter, scratched not paint, will need repainting, RAL 2008, added to ranger work list. Multiplay in Thurst Café garden, damaged fixings assess and repair, still to be investigated.
 - **Recreation Ground Play Area:** No new actions

b) To consider matters on the Monthly Risk Assessment Reports for the following and agree appropriate actions arising:

- **Heath Road Play Area:** Molehills reappearing, manmade holes appearing – Ranger to address one with the other. Far corner fence broken, ranger to assess and repair. Bird spikes ripped off, noted this deterrent is not working, remaining spikes to be removed and regular cleaning to be put in place. Gap evident between surfacing and grass, ranger to infill. Ramp chain is missing, on order to be installed. Broken glass bottles on Multiplay, cleared by litter picker and deputy clerk. Reassessed for risk, confirmed low following clearing, equipment remained open.
- **Thedwastre Play Area:** Kompan Operational Inspection of 1st Sept 2025 noted and matters raised considered including Surfacing lifting, ranger to assess and infill where necessary. Gates, fencing and benches paint flaking and rust evident, to be added to ranger work list. Multiplay junior, slightly loose in foundations, monitor. Multiplay senior, ropes/nets worn, monitor. Springer, inaccessible fixings loose, monitor and add to any additional work required by outside contractors. Swings, algae, to be cleaned. Sign, some graffiti, ranger to remove.
- **New Green Open Space:** Signage on Monkey bars torn, monitor. Graffiti on Youth Shelter, scratched not paint, to be repainted. Multiplay in garden, potential finger trap, monitor. Goal nets not secured at the back, spiked fixings for these not recommended agreed to leave loose. Kompan Operational Inspection of 1st Sept 2025 noted and matters raised considered including Muga inaccessible fixings loose, monitor and await any additional work required by outside contractor. Graffiti on signs and youth shelter, remove.
- **Recreation Ground Play Area:** Holes where goal posts removed, TFC informed and holes covered. Damaged drain cover, post meeting has been repaired. Benches, dirty need cleaning. Conker debris on surfacing, needs clearing. Swings, bird deterrent loose and broken, noted this deterrent is not working, remaining spikes to be removed and regular cleaning to be put in place. Dug outs, noted these have been removed.

7. Clerks report –

a) Update on the installation of picnic benches at New Green – Sites have been agreed with New Green Management and the order placed, it was noted that a discount had been negotiated and costs would come in with a saving of £114 on the CIL grant agreed. Delivery is expected this week and the ranger will install onto concrete slabs.

8. To receive an update from councillors on any visits undertaken to other local play facilities – Cllr Hamel-Cooke reported on Norton play area. Cllr Millest had visited Bardwell and Marham Park. Cllr Rainbow was awaiting information on funding and equipment for the Abbey Gardens and Nowton Park. It was generally noted that most newly installed playgrounds were of a wooden style with a more natural aesthetic. It was suggested that the look would need to be weighed against life span for any new equipment commissioned. Cllrs were asked to continue to investigate other playgrounds and report back on any exceptional or unique designs seen.

9. To arrange the Autumn work party for the Wildlife Garden and consider any further management proposals - it was agreed that a work party in November would be preferable to coincide with National Tree Planting Week. Various pruning and clearing is required together with the planting of at least three trees on New Green open space in replacement of those felled

earlier in the year. Cllr Morris has two Field Maple and one Wild Cherry together with guards and locations will be confirmed before planting. Work Party confirmed for Wednesday 19th November 2025 member available to meet at 10am.

10. **To consider an update of residents aspirations for leisure facilities and to note the agreed format of the consultation survey** – It was noted that the drafted survey will be placed in the October newsletter which is delivered to all properties in the village as a centre page removable hardcopy. The survey will also be available to download from the website and advertised on notice boards and social media. Hard copies will be available from the parish council office, the Library and Thurst Café at New Green Community Centre. The closing date for responses is 31st October 2025 and results of the consultation will be published following analysis of the feedback.
11. **To consider any examples and suggestions coming forth for the provision of totem style information signage utilizing the coppiced tree stumps on New Green Open Space** – there were no designs suggested however it was agreed that the provision of signage showing directions to the wildlife garden, play areas and community facilities would be a project that brings a unique feature to the village. It was suggested that the design process could involve a community competition bringing residents together to produce a creative artwork incorporated into an information signpost. It was agreed that further consideration of design, commissioning and funding should be undertaken.
12. **To note the updated 0-3 year goals for open space and leisure and consider any actions** –
 - a) To receive an update on promised facilities on new developments – the deputy clerk outlined all expected play facilities on each new development where provision has been made within planning permissions. It was noted that any open space and leisure facilities that have been transferred to a management company should have all issues and complaints regarding those facilities referred to the relevant management company. Transfer to a management company is designated for College Park, Grange Park, Thurston Park and Thurston Grove. It was noted that the play facilities and woodland at Cavendish View are designated to be transferred to the parish council in due course and that the College Park play equipment is due to be upgraded under the planning permission granted for Hakewell Mews. There is no provision for play equipment at The Hedgerows. The open space at St Peter's Chase is designated to be offered to the District Council or their nominated body in due course.
 - b) To identify and consider future community events – A review of previous events was undertaken, it was agreed that a lack of interest and high ticket prices for the outdoor theatre event suggested that this should not be repeated again this year. The High Street Safari was under subscribed for the high cost of putting on the event and therefore should not be repeated again. Past events thought to be successful included the Big Weekend and Cars on the Green. Various suggestions for future community events included a Bonfire night event, 10k/5k runs, Art Show or Craft Fayre, Food Festival, Dog Show. It was noted that any event organised would need extensive social media advertising. Members were encouraged to bring forward suggestions for other suitable events.

- 13. Date of next meeting** – 26th November 2025 commencing at tbc in the Thurston Community Library.
- 14. Close of meeting** – there being no further business to transact the Chair closed the meeting at 8.30pm.

To be signed by the chair at the meeting of 19th November 2025.....