

BPC Amenities Working Group, Thursday 4th June 2026

Councillors Forward, Walker, Downing and Elliss-Brookes

Funding for amenities

Discussion about the issue of how the Parish Council is not eligible to apply for lots of funding. Talked about how a group separate from the Council would have access to a greater number of funding options e.g. how Holcombe secured funding for their playpark renovation.

An option is to set up an independent charitable trust to manage the parish amenities which would have a separate board of trustees. South Zeal recreation ground charitable trust was given as an example.

There are a number of considerations - Need to check the process for the transfer assets to a charitable trust along with legal implications. How would costs be handled, could on be viable if volunteers came forward, what would the involvement of the Parish Council look like?

Other examples given of similar arrangements are CHAT (church housing) the climbing wall in the old community centre in Tiverton and the Ayshford trust.

The proposal from the Amenities Working Group to take to the next Parish council meeting is a recommendation to do some discovery work on how this might work in our community. Look to groups that have done this before for examples of best practice and check if DALC has any guidance.

Also noted that the planning application to Mid Devon for the BMX track on the ORL is still on the portal and that the facility did get permission with some conditions.

Burlescombe & Westleigh Village Hall

Discussion about how important an asset this is for our community with regards to emergency planning and being a “front door” to information sharing with residents. Talked about how we would welcome the opportunity to strengthen the working relationship between the hall committee and the parish council and mentioned how it worked in other Parishes, e.g. Uffculme where nominated parish councillors form part of the committee.

The proposal from the Amenities Working Group is to reach out to the Village Hall committee to discuss further.

Fence in Westleigh play park

Fence down the middle of the play park was identified in the ROSPA safety report as needing repair. It wasn't replaced during the last works due to funding restraints.

The proposal from the Amenties Working Group is to ask the Clerk to instigate the procurement process. Query raised if procedurally we could use the same contractor? Clerk to advise, and if not obtain three quotes for a like for like replacement.

Buddleia growing in the Tar Plant walls, ORL - next steps

Issues to be managed – roots of the plant undermining the industrial heritage asset, and any remedial action needs to comply with our health and safety obligations.

The proposal from the Amenities Working Group is to ask the Clerk to ask Holcim if they will remove it for us. If not, look to obtain a quote for stump grinding as part of the leylandii removal works.

AOB

Filling the hole in the bank on the ORL – Cllr Downing mentioned she had some logs that could be suitable following the recommendation from Holcim Biodiversity expert. To be considered as an activity for the Summer Clean Up Day