

10.3 Recreation / Sport / Community

At enclosure in 1839 4½ acres of land was allotted as a recreation ground. This was at the top of Barton Hill opposite Horizon Park. However this wasn't used to its' full potential and the parish rented a field, predominantly for football, just across the parish boundary in Toft. Therefore, the parish recreation land and another piece from the disused village gravel pit was sold in 1927. The money was used to compulsory purchase a piece of land called Pennies Close (the site of the present recreation ground). In 1938 the recreation ground had tennis courts and a bowling green. The first sports pavilion was built in 1940 and lasted until it was burnt down in 1992. The recreation ground was slightly extending in the late 1960's with land given by the developers, Janes.

Comberton has always had a strong community life and this has been reflected in the churches and village hall. The Old Village Hall was officially opened on Shrove Tuesday in 1921, the villagers had worked hard to raise the money to purchase the building from the armed services. By the kind co-operation of the farmers and tradesmen of the village the cartage of the hut from Duxford was given freely. The villagers enjoyed using the hall for dances, plays, pantomimes, harvest suppers, billiards and table tennis.

Our historical involvement in agriculture is again reflected in the annual events of the village, Plough Monday celebrations and Molly dancing at the crossroads.

10.3.1 Existing Infrastructure and Facilities

The parish owns 3 main assets: the recreation ground, the village hall and the pavilion. These are described now. Comberton Village College is also responsible for running 'dual-use' facilities and a youth club available to children attending both from Comberton and other villages in its catchment. Other facilities are noted at the end of this section.

10.3.1.1 Recreation Ground



1

The current recreation ground consists of 2.7 hectares of land centrally located in the village. It forms part of the Cambridge green belt in which development is specifically precluded as part of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan. Most of this land is given over to playing fields with dedicated areas for one football pitch and one cricket pitch. These areas overlap. The parish also maintains play equipment for young children on the recreation ground and owns the

¹ Aerial view of Comberton recreation ground

tennis playing area, for which it funds regular maintenance through the Comberton Tennis Club. Land is also given over to the bowls club. Both these clubs continue to thrive with their memberships going up, especially in the case of tennis (about 70 adult and 50 child members). The tennis courts were resurfaced this year and replacement fencing has also been provided so that the facility is currently in a very high standard of repair.



Although the recreation ground is now predominantly used for sporting activities, it is also occasionally used by the local Horler and Meridian schools for outdoor education purposes.

Major village social activities have also been mounted here including celebrations for the Jubilees in 1977 and 2002 supported by Parish Councillors and local clubs seeking to raise funds. However, not all village/community events take place in the recreation ground as noted later. The recreation ground is also an informal meeting place mainly young



people, It also serves as a place for dog-walking and provides an off-road connection between the Janes estate and the centre of the village. This allows people to avoid Barton Rd which is a very busy B road.

The playing fields of the Meridian school abut the recreation ground and outdoor public activities often take place here rather than on the recreation ground making use of the school kitchen, hall and toilets.



² Slide

³ Tennis courts

⁴ Football match

10.3.1.2 The Pavilion



This building is located at the western end of the recreation ground adjacent to a large car park. The building was constructed in 1991 after an earlier building burnt down. It consists of shower and change facilities, a separate large room and a small office. It also has a patio. It is used by football and cricket teams, mainly at weekends and on

Thursday evenings outside the winter months.



6



7

10.3.1.3 Village Hall

There are two village hall buildings sited between Green End and Hines Lane with their own car parking. The larger village hall (c 1940's) has an approximate capacity of 100. The purpose of the two buildings is essentially to provide a meeting place for a wide variety of groups and clubs such as WI and Weightwatchers as well as public meetings. Organized activities are also occasionally held here such as quiz nights or jumble sales of local groups and also private functions, including parties. The small hall (c 1921) tends to be used by small groups including the Parish Council.

The entire site, including the leased commercial premises fronting Green End, is owned by the parish. Trustees are however fully responsible for the site with the Parish Council acting as a 'landlord'. Day-to-day running and fund-raising are the responsibility of the Village Hall Committee that report to

⁵ Pavilion

⁶ Pavilion main room

⁷ Pavilion changing room

the trustees. Commercial income and that from the hall lettings ensures the financial viability of the site. Most income comes from the commercial leases. A substantial lettings income is boosted by groups outside Comberton, who are attracted because letting costs are reasonable and because of Comberton's rather central location for surrounding villages.

The existing village hall requires substantial renovation or replacement. The kitchen in the main hall is of a very poor standard and the building is not efficiently heated. The building also does not provide adequate disabled access to meet incoming statutory guidelines; nor does it provide adequate facilities for existing user groups, thereby restricting future development.



10.3.1.4 Comberton Village College (CVC)

CVC has a current role of 1100 of which about 250 reside in Comberton. It has undergone considerable expansion over the last few years brought about by the development of a new large village at Cambourne with extra classrooms being provided for them to attend. Current sports facilities comprise:

- Playing fields of moderate quality
- Four badminton court sports hall
- Gymnasium, including cardio-vascular equipment, used for keep-fit classes and individual workouts
- Hard play area accommodating 4 tennis courts with lighting
- Three squash courts
- Swimming pool jointly run by the college and a swimming club

9



The school premises, including meeting rooms are also used by local groups for meetings and for extra-curricular education during the evening and weekends. The gym has been improved over recent years with new fitness equipment being added as part of a 'dual-use' agreement with South Cambridgeshire District Council which funds community-use

⁸ Village Hall site

⁹ Comberton squash courts

facilities like this. The football field has been regularly used by local football teams. The stage at the main hall at CVC is also used by the Meridian Theatre group to put on several productions per year. The squash courts are also used by the Comberton squash club.

10.3.1.5 Other Facilities

Other facilities in the village provide additional recreational and sports activities in the village. The Meridian School makes available its hall and grounds for social/community activities including regular keep fit sessions, the Comberton Show and summer picnic events put on by the Parish Council.

An outdoor heated swimming pool is sited on the CVC grounds. It is run by Comberton swimming club for their members and for school use during the summer season. The pool is well used by a wide section of the community, but especially families and children. Many members reside in surrounding villages and their support ensures the viability of the club. The club has no plans to develop into an all-year-round facility due to the costs involved.

10.3.2 Known Plans for the Future

10.3.2.1 Village Hall

The large hall requires substantial renovation or replacement. The kitchen in the main hall is of a very poor standard and the building is not efficiently heated. The building also does not provide adequate disabled access to meet incoming statutory guidelines.

In 2002 a Village Hall Steering Group was set up by the village hall trustees to plan a replacement to the existing main building, to draw up architects plans, secure funding and carry out the works. The new building is due to be commissioned late 2004, in line with the enforcement of disabilities regulations. The remit of the Group is solely to provide a replacement structure to continue serving as a self-financing central meeting place.

Funding for the replacement village hall will come from various sources including: the Community Fund, Comberton Parish Council, South Cambridgeshire District Council, revenue from business lettings via the trustees and local fund raising. The total cost is expected to be about

10



¹⁰ Comberton Village Hall

£350,000. Funding from the Community Fund is conditional on wide and continued consultation with the community.

It is currently envisaged that the replacement building will consist of one large meeting hall, one other smaller meeting room where small groups can meet, a kitchen and cloaks storage. However, the planned new building is not simply a replacement structure because it will also include a new (permanent) stage. The hall will accommodate drama productions, including those of the Meridian Theatre group; existing user groups; public meetings; indoor bowls and that light activity groups may also use the hall. Much of the existing Design Brief is aimed at future uses in accordance with the Community Funds guidelines for funding. One of these could be the introduction of film shows providing entertainment for a wide spectrum of the community.

There are other potential users of the site, especially concerning youth and the youth council discussed below, who could use the building both formally and informally as required. The steering group is keen to provide for the needs of youth in the village and hope to take into account the results of a detailed youth consultation exercise in the village recommended below. The stage will be well suited for film shows and through the intended inclusion of a sprung floor it is hoped that dance and music groups will be attracted. Overall, it is hoped that because of its relatively small size, its central location and good parking the new village hall will provide a convivial, informal and welcoming environment that should be able to serve a wide range of needs, including those of creative arts groups. Finally, the new village hall is intended to remain financially competitive for community members with regards to hiring costs. This in turn will make it a more attractive alternative to other village facilities, in particular shoe-string volunteer groups such as those aimed at young people.

10.3.2.2 Comberton Village College

A number of new facilities are currently being developed with the granting of Specialist Sports College Status to the College in conjunction with substantial grant-aiding by South Cambs. District Council and 'developers' contributions from Cambourne. The new facilities that will be in place by summer 2003 are:

- High quality playing fields
- Refurbished sports hall
- Refurbished gymnasium
- New gymnasium
- New dance studio
- New, enlarged fitness suite



¹¹ Statue outside Comberton Village College

- New hard play area that will include provision for four tennis courts plus lighting
- New astro-turf pitch

In addition CVC and the Tennis Club have just been awarded a grant of £30,000 towards the cost of 4 additional tennis courts to be sited at CVC. This will give 8 courts in total that will double up as netball courts. An interest free loan from the Lawn Tennis Association will fund the outstanding amount to allow the work to proceed. Upon completion, expected late next summer, the tennis club will relocate most of their activity from their present location in the recreation ground. It is also planned to appoint a tennis coach to coach pupils and club members. It is not yet decided what level of access will be provided for casual use, nor the scale of charges will operate at the new courts. Any increases will be minimised by increasing membership as much as possible. It is felt that providing much improved facilities offers the best chance of the club being successful in the long-term.

At present South Cambs District Council are negotiating an Access Policy for the public use of the new gym/fitness suite at CVC. This policy is a condition for grant aid from South Cambs District Council of £300,000. It is intended to allow local people to use the sports facilities primarily in the evenings and weekends. This policy will set the hours of access and the level of charges.

10.3.3 Planned Growth and Projection Patterns

According to the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, new housing in Comberton is to be restricted to groups of no more than eight houses on one site. Future development in the district is to be mainly concentrated in a few settlements, the first of which is Cambourne which is due to be completed in the next 3-4 years with a total of 1000 houses.

The main impact on Comberton of this new growth is that the CVC role will increase from 1000 to a maximum of 1300. In addition to new sports developments described above, it will have a new 500 seat auditorium, an arts block and dance studio. These are all being built now. The new auditorium will become the venue for major events hosted by CVC. It does not appear that there will be much demand for use of these facilities by groups in Comberton. Many preferring a smaller venue such as the village hall project

The completion of the Dual-Use sports facilities at CVC in mid-2003 will represent the largest single investment by South Cambs District Council. No further significant dual-use development is expected for the foreseeable future. However the Council is concerned about the accessibility of CVC facilities to surrounding villages. Another condition of grant aiding CVC is that it has to draw up a local transport scheme to allow youngsters from its catchment to use its facilities out of hours and at the weekends. CVC has recently acquired two minibuses and it is likely that these will be used for this sort of purpose. Clearly, these minibuses could be potentially used by

Comberton residents – including young people - to reach facilities not located in Comberton such as swimming, local sailing clubs etc as well as city social facilities when buses are not running (see elsewhere in the report).

It is known that local sailing clubs are keen to increase their membership and the best way to do this is to attract young people to the sport. They carry out their own training at very reasonable rates for members.

The Countryside Agency is financing projects to overcome rural transport problems in South Cambridgeshire. It has not received any applications to date for its Vital Villages scheme. It appears that any new proposals stand a very high chance of being funded. Funding is initially for 3 years and can cover new vehicles, subsidised taxis, hire of drivers and so on. Grant aid from this source could be attractive to CVC by, for example, helping with the running costs of its vehicles and possibly by paying for a part-time driver. South Cambs District Council can provide input and advice on community transport.

It appears that grant aid for community development, including sport, from South Cambs District Council is likely to reduce significantly from 2003 due to financial pressures. One option is to scale down funding for dual-use activities - that have been heavily supported in the district over the last few years – and to concentrate on village improvements.

South Cambs District Council recently published its Sports Strategy. There are no plans to support more swimming facilities due to their cost. It is possible to envisage local community transport being used to transport children in from local villages and Comberton children out to reach facilities in the city and surrounds. Youth development is a crucial aspect with funding for talented individuals and coaching. It would seem that CVC is ideally placed to foster youth sports development in Comberton given the depth and breadth of its facilities. South Cambs District Council also continue to support new facilities and activities specifically targeted at reducing anti-social behaviour, e.g. youth shelters, as part of the South Cambs Crime and Disorder Partnership.

10.3.4 Summary of Issues Raised in the Comberton Village Appraisal

In all the following there is a clear emphasis on quality of life issues. Most of the issues can be thought to be about making Comberton a better place to live. Some things are easier to do than others but there will need to be for a commitment, most importantly additional voluntary effort including youth, from all parties to get things done. It shouldn't be left to the Parish Council. Voluntary activity needs encouraging, even if that means paid voluntary work so that, for example, we can draw in and develop the skills of the 6% unemployed in the village plus those only part-employed. Young mothers are a key group. An inclusive approach is also needed, e.g. CVC facilities. Good general physical access to all locations in the village and the surrounding countryside via cycle and foot is also desirable.

10.3.4.1 Background information

Questions 12: Age of respondents

- 23% of respondents are retired and their needs should be remembered. Very few elderly people, for example, use the recreation ground except for taking grandchildren to the swings and dog walking. The recreation ground/pavilion might be used more as a meeting place/community focus by this section of the community. The pavilion could become an informal/formal meeting place. Note the recreation ground. is not easily accessible from the east in school hours involving negotiation of a narrow, unfirm path unsuited to the elderly).

10.3.4.2 Community, Employment and Transport

Question 14: Reasons for liking Comberton

- Very positive response to the environment of Comberton
- Comberton benefits from its proximity to Cambridge with its sporting and recreational facilities, e.g. swimming
- Comberton residents benefit from its secondary schooling at CVC up to 16 with extra-curricular activities (mainly evening classes) 'dual-use' sports facilities that are being greatly expanded at present
- Sport is not cited but it is undoubtedly an increasingly popular pastime with younger people, especially football, increasingly tennis and also squash

Question 17: Employment status

- 6% of people are unwaged. They could become more involved in community voluntary schemes (possibly Youth Training Schemes)? Recycling credits could be used to get them to help run activities for young people and, perhaps, to carry out general 'maintenance' in the Rec. in conjunction with, say, a park warden and youth worker

Question 19: Should the following be encouraged in the village?

- Significant number (369 of 1179) want 'more sports facilities' which broadly equates to better swimming and football facilities but also tennis

Question 27: Roads/highways measures

- There is demand for more cycle routes, paths, streetlights and pedestrian crossings to make travel easier. This should be viewed as including travel within and not just outside of the village, including accessing its facilities such as the recreation ground and travel to CVC. Recreation such as walking and cycling are just as healthy as sport but comparatively little investment goes into these alternatives. Reducing

dangers from increasing traffic, fast traffic and pollution would help to justify the provision of alternative cycling and walking routes through the village, e.g. through the recreation ground. Additional lighting may be needed in many locations such as this.

10.3.4.3 Housing, Health and Services

Questions 37/38/39: Crime & anti-social behaviour

- “More activities for the young” is cited as the third most important means to combat problems. The pavilion is a major target for attack, perhaps reflecting sense of boredom and frustration of young people that there’s nowhere for them to go that they can ‘call their own’ or is welcoming to them. A youth shelter is one answer. However some ‘balance’ may be needed in recreation provision because high quality indoor recreation may be just as important to youth as outdoor activity.
- As well as preventative action on bad social behaviour of young people, more action may be needed to tackle other issues like obstructions to access caused by cars parking on pavements, e.g. installation of bollards. Lighting is also a very significant issue with problems tending to occur where it is poorest such as the pavilion. In turn, anti-social behaviour tends to make parents wary about allowing their children, especially young ones, use facilities like the recreation ground or just travelling through it. Clubs requiring funding could be encouraged to take up litter picking using credits from the District Council’s recycling scheme.

Question 41: Internet access

- 32% of respondents do not have access to the internet at work or at home. This should be considered a key part of any indoor communal facility along with audio/visual as part of an ‘all-in-one’ facility. The new village hall or a refurbished pavilion could provide dedicated space but there would be a need for people to easily come and go at all times to ensure usage is maximised.

Note: Meeting the needs of the community for a wide range of education, employment and entertainment purposes through internet provision will become increasingly important in a hi-tech economy. Companies might use a centrally-provided community facility during the day and the community at night. This might be done at the pavilion and generate much sought revenue. The community could donate used videos, high quality stereo and TV to create a welcoming, high quality facility, perhaps focussing on young people. Such a facility would encourage social mixing and social/educational support.

10.3.4.4 Retail, Sports and Social

Question 48: Which sports clubs/activities do you attend outside Comberton?

- By far the largest is swimming, then leisure/fitness and ‘other’.

Question 49: Which sports clubs/activities do you attend in Comberton?

- Swimming and fitness are popular but the response is much smaller than for activities pursued outside Comberton. Tennis is the third most popular with most people playing locally rather than elsewhere.
- Excluding leisure/fitness and swimming, most of the activities mentioned don't have any connection to CVC. This may suggest that CVC has, historically at least, not been greatly involved with wider development of sport in the community. Planned new 'dual-use' facilities at CVC (see elsewhere) may be very popular, especially for younger people and families.

Question 50: Which new sports clubs/activities would you attend in Comberton?

- Swimming is very popular with adults up to 59, but also ages 11-15. Roofing over the swimming pool may be popular but the running cost of running such a facility all-year-round is quite prohibitive. Swimming is under-provided for west of Cambridge. Would the community use organized community transport trips to the pool at Impington Village College. What about those who don't have cars/access to cars? Is going to Impington better than Parkside? Note that there is no Sunday transport and no buses back from city after 1845 until 2310!
- Answers to this question suggest there's not much demand for other sports facilities but it should be borne in mind that better facilities such as for tennis or a new fitness centre at CVC are bound to increase demand. This should be kept in mind when planning other new facilities in Comberton discussed later in this report. Neither does the question refer to football pitch under-provision and the poor drainage of the rec. pitch. A central football playing and training facility serving Comberton and surrounding villages may be desirable and achievable in the long run. CVC does not appear to be ideal location for improving football provision or providing other community provision except for tennis and a fitness suite.
- Pool/snooker and skateboarding are favourites after swimming. The former needs a central community meeting place, e.g. pavilion.

Question 51: Do you use the following at least once a month?

- Good use of CVC, presumably mainly for educational facilities rather than recreation, followed by village hall. This question confirms the very poor use of the pavilion and Meridian school, these being less well used than the Baptist hall! However there is negligible use of the village hall or Meridian school by under 25s. The Baptist hall appears to offer more to younger groups. CVC is the most popular place for youngsters but only the 11-15s. So older teenagers and younger children don't seem to have anywhere to go, again suggesting their needs are not being met.

Question 56: What would you use a new village hall for?

- Organized activities, including drama, are popular but so is a new youth club with 157/802 respondees. But is it practical to use the hall as a regular meeting place for a youth club if it doesn't have its own dedicated space? This is considered in detail elsewhere. The elderly would probably get quite a lot of benefit from a central social point, e.g. weekly lunch and social get-togethers.
- A facility for mums and pre-school children, day/evening classes, cyber café and cinema are all mentioned as other uses suggesting a latent demand for a central facility to cater for a variety of 'community' interests which cannot be served by CVC or, because of their basicness, the existing village halls. I would refer to this need for a community focus as being 'a place of our own' run in an inclusive way for the many. Flexibility appears crucial and the pavilion building could potentially help to meet many of these community needs, complimentary to the village hall. So the pavilion and village hall could potentially complement each other.

10.3.4.5 The Village

Question 64: Would you be willing to support the following initiatives in the village?

- This question found strong support for a variety of environmental improvements, many of which could be progressed as part of an improved/extended recreation ground. To this could be added more parkland. In other words, done properly, the amenity, community and environmental value of the recreation ground could all probably be considerably improved. But it should be remembered that if it is to become more of a meeting place it will need better facilities including a shelter for all weathers. The pavilion could be a meeting place and shelter in all weathers but it isn't. Hardly any elderly people seem to pass through the recreation ground, never mind socialize.

10.3.4.6 Other Points:

- The very high response to the village plan consultation suggests that residents are very interested in the future of their community and this should be encouraged further by their active involvement in the decision-making process by putting on workshops and 'community planning' events
- Children and parents continue to be concerned greatly about local transport issues, including bus reliability, and these should be tackled to ensure as many people use public transport to reach social and sports facilities outside the village

10.3.5 Summary of Problems with Existing Facilities

10.3.5.1 Recreation Ground

The recreation ground is facing a number of challenges, including meeting the needs of an increasing number of flourishing football teams for children and young people of both sexes, and also for men. These are:

- Insufficient space for formal sporting activities, especially insufficient football pitches which prevents Comberton clubs playing many of their home fixtures in the village. Instead, they have to play elsewhere
- The existing pitch is poorly drained and overused causing loss of grass cover and cutting-up resulting in it becoming unplayable in very wet conditions
- Insufficient space for informal football and other games
- The rather old, but still functional, nature of the children's play equipment and the extra space needed for new children's equipment
- Lack of space for additional smaller football pitches for junior teams
- Lack of lighting for the pavilion and to allow evening training between mid-autumn and early spring
- The need not only to provide space for new activities, including a planned skate-park with a basketball court, but to correctly site these to ensure they are well-used, free from mud, accessible in all conditions and also well-lit to prevent vandalism
- The need to provide good all-year-round, all weather access through the recreation ground for other users including mothers so they can walk their children to school avoiding traffic and road dangers on the increasingly busy Barton Rd
- The need for a proper informal meeting place for older children with a need to site a youth shelter in a central village location
- The general lack of 'things to do' for teenagers, e.g. adventure playground, families or the elderly
- The quite bleak nature of the recreation ground. with the lack of trees and landscaping leaving it very exposed to winds from most directions.
- Lack of lighting of approaches and main route through the area
- Lack of a shelter from the rain, e.g. for the play area
- In the evenings and on weekdays outside of school holidays the area has a very lonely feel. At all times it is noticeable for its absence of elderly people
- Repeated vandalism, including the play equipment, and heavy littering especially at weekends and during summer holidays
- Poor access by cycle and foot, including the disabled, from the Jane's estate

- A possible complete relocation of the tennis club to new purpose-built facilities at CVC

Another challenge for the recreation ground. is to provide a quick and safe alternative walking and cycle route from the Janes estate to the centre of the village and beyond that avoids the need to use Barton Road. This road is becoming increasingly hazardous, both for cycling and crossing the road, due to increasing traffic.

Other issues relating to the recreation ground and the pavilion include lack of lighting, more youth activities, better shelter and accessibility. Many of these are noted shortly. It is clear the area has enormous potential for improvement of its facilities both for sport and recreational uses for all ages. Better patronage and improved and more varied facilities will, in turn, generate extra revenues that the Wall Report has identified as crucial to the long-term success of the site. For these reasons the best way forward appears to plan for the conversion of the recreation ground into a park.

The tennis club and CVC have been successful in obtaining funds for four additional courts to be located on the college site. These lit courts will be a 'dual use' facility used during the day by CVC and by the club in the evening and weekends. The facility is due for completion in late summer 2003. CVC has appointed a tennis coach who will also be available to the club and community education in general. The tennis club is considering its membership charges, which may have to increase above current levels. Increases will be kept down if membership increases. It is felt that providing much improved facilities offers the best chance of the club being successful in the long-term.

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The existing courts have no changing facility, are not lit, require more regular renewal due to their proximity to large trees, require sweeping before games due to leaf fall and branches breaking off. Although CVC could use the recreation ground courts for training and matches, this appears impractical because of the time needed to move people and equipment around and also to set up nets and sweep the courts. Courts at CVC will always be ready for use and CVC will fund maintenance.

¹² Tennis courts on Comberton recreation ground

13



The courts were recently relaid and they require replacement more frequently because of their location near to large trees. They have an expected lifetime of 7 years, instead of the normal 10, but deterioration will occur more quickly if they are not swept very frequently. Two additional grass courts are not currently used because of the unevenness of the surface.

10.3.5.2 Village Hall

The size and shape of the site where the village hall is located places major limitations on any additional development to that already being planned. In particular,

- New hall cannot be built anywhere else due to Green Belt and Conservation Area restrictions.
- Existing site narrow, hence limited space for any additional building
- Balance of locating footprint to give minimal impact on surrounding dwellings.
- The limited area occupied by the commercial premises reduces options for use of the site - compounded by their being built in a Conservation Area
- Prohibitive cost of greater floor area than already planned.
- Impracticality of building a taller structure because of dwellings being overlooked
- Loss of car parking space with any additional building, although latest Government initiative drives away from providing parking spaces in the interest of the environment.

Because the village hall is Comberton's main public building and because of space limitations of the site it will be difficult for the new building to provide dedicated space to groups. In particular, the opportunity for youth groups to create a place of their own, with sufficient flexibility, is very difficult without dedicated space. Management costs at this time, would also appear to make it difficult to create an internet café or a community learning/resource centre requiring daily access over extended periods. In terms of provision for young people, although the new village hall is ideal for things like film shows, and creative arts groups it also needs to be recognized that at weekends, especially Friday and Saturday, there may be greater demand for the new hall making it difficult to regularly reserve.

¹³ Grass tennis courts on Comberton recreation ground

It also seems unlikely that young people would be willing, or should even be expected, to be responsible for looking after a facility if they can't create their own space. Young people like to be able to come and go as they please in an informal way. General youth provision issues are discussed in the next section.

Is this needed at all? It appears to be speculative. Vandalism is no longer a problem on the current site and hence no longer an issue. It is well known that these waves of crime are generally temporary and as such is currently not an issue thus not required in the report.

10.3.5.3 Youth Provision

The village consultation, ensuing discussions with interested parties in the village and the views of a pre-Youth Council group made up of children from CVC have raised the following concerns with youth provision:

- No meeting place for 8-11 year olds, i.e. pre-CVC age, either for formal or informal social/recreational activities
- CVC youth clubs are limited to 1 night per week per school year leaving no flexibility
- No place that 8-18 year olds can 'call their own'
- The need for a village youth worker both to assist in organizing activities for young people and to provide social support
- Lack of weekend activities
- The need for easy access to youth facilities, including casual access during the day and night time
- No "one size fits all" solution can be provided to meet all needs, a flexible facility with room to grow being ideally required
- The village hall is heavily used and demand is likely to increase from groups within the village with a new facility. The cost of hiring the hall may be prohibitive to youth groups.
- Due to cost limitations, the village hall cannot include a dedicated room in the design at this time, e.g. for a full-size snooker table.
- Although the Three Horseshoes has some youth provision viz a snooker table it has limited space and many parents would not want their children to go there because it is a pub
- Parents of children and young teenagers expect good supervision and care of their children. They must feel able to go along and help and take part which for some purposes will be easier in a 'dedicated' facility
- The need for internet access/resources, possibly in a Cyber Café format

- Young people like to create noise and let off steam. They need space to do this but also problematic where other activities are going on in adjacent rooms as with the village hall. Equally, groups paying to use the village hall would expect a lack of disturbance
- CVC is not centrally located in the village and parents of younger children (under 12s) would be concerned about them walking long distances, especially during winter
- A significant number of young people in the village do not attend local schools whereas the youth club at CVC is intended specifically for those on the school role
- The Youth Council will need a regular and convenient meeting place, which could be the new village hall or the 'old village hall' at the west end of the site.
- A youth worker will need office space
- Parents are concerned about lack of things to do for teenagers and do not always want them going to town which often involves them ferrying children in cars
- Public transport to/from Cambridge in the evenings is poor and non-existent on Sundays
- A significant number of young people seem estranged from the village as reflected in persistent vandalism and littering

10.3.5.4 The Pavilion

Despite having a large meeting room and an outside patio, the pavilion is currently only used a very small amount of the time by match officials, sports players and their friends and family when football and cricket games are being played. The current clerk also does not use the office because it is not a secure place to work in. Currently, it is also only the clerk and sports club leaders that can gain access to the property. The Wall Report on the future of the recreation facilities make clear that the building is in need of redecoration and an additional changing room for match officials to meet Football Association requirements to be made 'fit for purpose'.

The remit of the Wall Report was to undertake:

“A detailed assessment of the background and current position relating to usage, management, bookings, demand, maintenance and security. Recommendations for the future, both long term and short term, including the financial implications and examples of best practice”.

While the report emphasises the under use of the pavilion the remit is not concerned with the provision of non-sporting needs including other community recreational and social uses. For example, it was not concerned with how the Pavilion could be used to extend youth provision. However the

report does recommend changes to the pavilion including internal alterations such as a bar for sports clubs to use for social activities following matches. These could be used by the wider community. The report also stresses the need to generate additional funds.

What is striking about the pavilion is that it is not currently used for any social or community purpose. It continues to require large subsidy from the parish. It has also been a target of repeated vandalism, partly stemming from its lack of use. Attempts to use the building for other uses have not been successful because of difficulties in keeping it clean and properly heated. The building may also not be sufficiently well-designed to allow it to be easily accessible by a large number of people at one time. It has not been used by youth groups, clubs such as the scouts or by after-school child care groups, although the latter has been attempted. Despite having a kitchen and toilet facilities, some smaller outdoor parish events like Sunday afternoon picnics with local musicians have been put on in the grounds of the Meridian rather than the pavilion. It has been said that this is because its siting is not attractive due to its relative remoteness, its access not being lit, a lack of good walking and cycle access and its exposed location. The building is also unattractive.

The absence of wider community use is a reflection of the recreation ground itself with its use being confined to rare, major events like Jubilee celebrations. Even at these times, Meridian school facilities were used alongside the recreation ground. Also, apart from Jubilee celebrations, no public fireworks displays have been held in the recreation ground. but rather in a much less accessible part of the village. As far as is known, no fund raising events have been held to specifically improve facilities in the recreation ground., including the children's playground. It is also worth noting that the Meridian School buildings are also used for social activities like the annual Comberton Show rather than, say, the pavilion.

Minimal use of the recreation ground and Pavilion for social activities of sports clubs or other community events has resulted in it not being able to self-generate the funding needed for much needed improvements. There is both large reliance on the parish for finance and considerable reliance by the community on non-parish facilities. It would appear, however, that the recreation ground and pavilion have the potential to host many community events, social activities and private functions in order to generate revenue specifically for the parish.

The recreation ground. and pavilion have their own car parking that is at least as good as at the Meridian school and which has the potential for expansion. The pavilion has the potential to be used as an alternative meeting place to the



¹⁴ Pavilion kitchen

increasingly heavily subscribed main village hall.

15



There are thus some fundamental reasons why the pavilion, along with the recreation ground, is so underused by the community as whole with, as a consequence, its greater reliance on other facilities and locations and the associated diversion of voluntary fund-raising effort. The Wall Report highlights other problems such as not enough toilets, the sub-standard kitchen, lack of decoration, poor disabled access. Regular vandalism (including graffiti at one stage) would also be off-putting for visitors and make parents warn their children to stay away from the area. Note that there is also no public toilet available for the recreation ground, which would usually be provided at a pavilion.

10.3.5.5 Comberton Village College

There are a number of issues concerning the Village College that have a direct bearing on future sports and recreation provision in the village, including ones already mentioned. The key issues are:

- Use of the youth club is restricted to one night per week for each of the five years (see above)
- A significant number of CVC pupils of all ages do not use the youth club suggesting they may want other, less structured or more varied facilities
- Doubts exist about whether Comberton football teams will be able to afford charges for using the playing fields and, in particular, the lit all weather pitch for weekly training on winter evenings
- CVC will currently not permit football training on the new astro-turf court because the fencing is not strong enough
- The relocation of the tennis club to CVC will require the Parish Council to take over day-to-day running of the courts at the recreation ground if the tennis club no longer require them
- The popular outdoor pool at the Village College run by a local swimming club is only open during summer but the new building works

¹⁵ Pavilion kitchen

at the College will effectively prevent this facility being further developed. In particular, it will not be possible to install a new roof and other facilities that could potentially provide all-year-round swimming in the village

- No further swimming pools are to be supported by South Cambs District Council as part of its dual-use sports policy. The very high cost of running indoor pools all-year-round (at least £100K p.a.) requires continuous subsidy and large amounts of voluntary effort

Gaps in provision for young people are reflected in pupils frequently 'hanging out' in the recreation ground and Meridian primary school grounds creating much litter and occasional vandalism. The children's playing area continuously suffers very badly from littering, including glass.

CVC has sought to tackle some of the youth problems in the village by working with others. In particular, a youth worker based at CVC carried out some groundwork involving year 9 pupils in late 2001 and earlier this year. A number of ideas were brought forward and an initial meeting was held with the Parish Council on their ideas and how to take them forward. The group itself highlighted the problem of disruptive young people caused by a lack of things to do and a proper place to meet. Two ideas came out from these initial deliberations:

- The need for additional facilities where young people could informally meet like youth shelters and a skate park
- The need to establish a Youth Council, working in conjunction with and supported by the Parish Council, in which young people could take action to meet their needs

Unfortunately, this work at the Village College has yet to be followed up, mainly due to the loss of a youth worker. However, it would appear that the suggested new facilities would go a long way to reducing boredom and the resulting damage and littering in the recreation ground. and primary school grounds.

CVC are being encouraged to develop an inclusive approach to sports provision by SCDC to ensure all those living in the school catchment have access to its facilities. e.g. community transport pick up one night a week. This could be combined with picking up people to go to football activities at Comberton park and taking people from Comberton to Impington on, say, Thursday (football training night) and Saturday (football match day). Instead of parents driving kids to football using private cars, they could be driving a community transport vehicle. SCDC and the Countryside Agency might want to part-fund such a proposal if it led to improved usage and wider participation in improved sports facilities, including the recreation ground, in Comberton. A small investment in organized transport (including Comberton to Cambourne via Hardwick and Toft) would improve efficiency of use. This also goes for new facilities like fitness centre at CVC. A win-win situation could be achieved provided that transport always turned up on schedule.

10.3.5.6 Lighting and access in Comberton Park

Details of complimentary improvements to lighting and access for the pavilion, park and approach routes are set out in the final section of this report.

10.3.6 Plan of Suggested Future Developments

10.3.6.1 Sports Projects Including Access

Project	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources	Funding
Implement Wall report Including land purchase and relaying existing football pitch	Up to 3 years	Parish Council and sports clubs, CPSG	See Wall Report	P.C, Sport England, Football Assoc. SCDC, National Lottery, National Playing Fields Assoc.
Review the future use of tennis courts on the recreation ground., including 1] use of grass courts, 2] public hire and 3] part-use for tennis coaching	12-15 months but try to make the courts publicly available ASAP	P.C, Tennis Club, CPSG, CVC	Bookings and part-time supervised access by warden* Tennis coach: £1-2K p.a	P.C.
Investigate community transport, subsidised taxi access, use of existing CVC school busses or use of CVC minibuses to local swimming facilities, e.g. Impington Village College and city social events. Approach Countryside Agency for funding, e.g. for drivers.	12-18 months	Parish Council CVC	£2-3 K p.a but may be cheaper if part of a wider village transport scheme	Parish Council, SCDC, Countryside Agency

Negotiate the level of access & times when clubs can use all weather pitches at CVC	6 months	Parish Council Football clubs, CVC, SCDC (ask SCDC to investigate)	This should be minimal if included in the Dual Use agreement	Parish Council
Parish Council, CVC and SCDC to draw up a memorandum of understanding over access and charges for use of all weather facility and playing fields for use by football teams				
Investigate the need, practicality, potential & cost of lighting for winter training in the park or the Meridian school playing field	3-4 years	Football clubs and, possibly, Meridian school reporting to Parish Council	£10-20 K	P.C, Sport England, Football Assoc. SCDC, Meridian School
Investigate other opportunities for sporting activities not currently being provided for, e.g. swimming and sailing, possibly in conjunction with other village colleges and clubs. Weekend activities should also be considered	12-18 months	CVC, youth worker, SCDC	N/A	SCDC, CVC, National Lottery
Investigate ways to help children access sports facilities not located in Comberton, including possible use of CVC minibuses and voluntary drivers	12-18 months	CVC, youth worker, SCDC	£2-3 K per year	Countryside Agency
Investigate providing changing space in the pavilion for public casual use, e.g. for players using the courts on the recreation ground	1 year	Parish Council	N/A	N/A

Given the high level of demand for football pitches in Comberton as confirmed by the Wall Report, it is reasonable to expect that demand will exceed the existing and planned provision of pitches provided by the parish. The Parish Council should work with CVC to ensure their pitches are made available as much as possible at reasonable cost. Access to as many high quality pitches as possible within Comberton should ensure the long-term patronage and financial viability of Comberton football clubs. Maximising patronage of the pavilion will ensure it generates the greatest revenue possible.

The tennis club is considering whether it will continue to use its existing courts. These could be used for coaching children from the Meridian and for 'pay and play' by members of the public. If the parish employs a village warden this will allow the courts to be kept in good condition but the warden would also have to supervise the facility, collect payments and make necessary repairs. It would seem desirable to have some public access courts since those at CVC have now been removed. An improved pavilion with public changing facilities may also increase the attractiveness of these courts. The courts have the advantage of being centrally located in the village.

The tennis courts in the Rec. could be used for coaching children from the Meridian and for 'pay and play' by members of the public. If the parish employs a village warden this will allow the courts to be kept in good condition but the warden would also have to supervise the facility, collect payments and make necessary repairs. It would seem desirable to have some public access courts since those at CVC have now been removed. An improved pavilion with public changing facilities may also increase the attractiveness of these courts. The courts have the advantage of being centrally located in the village.

The parish will have to decide how to meet the long-term costs of replacing the courts given that 'pay and play', for example, may not raise enough revenue. The tennis club is unlikely to be able to fund raise because they will have to raise considerable amounts of money to repay a long-term loan for their new facility. Even if they do continue to have a presence at the Rec., it seems likely they would rely on a warden to carry out the routine tasks mentioned above.

Lastly, the parish should seek to ensure that the tennis club courts on the existing recreation ground pay their way as far as possible. These should become a 'pay and play' facility. Other opportunities like hiring out for private use and functions should also be considered. Coaching sessions for the young people should be provided to increase interest by using some of the proceeds from lettings. For the longer term, consideration should be given to relocating the hard courts away from the large trees, possibly to where the grass courts are situated. Alternatively, the site could be relocated as part of the development of Comberton Park discussed below.

The parish will have to decide how to meet the long-term costs of replacing the courts given that 'pay and play', for example, may not raise enough revenue. If the tennis club were to continue using the existing courts they are unlikely to be in a position to fund raise. This is because they will have to raise considerable amounts of money to repay a long-term loan for their new facility. Even if they do continue to have a presence at the recreation ground, it seems likely they would rely on a warden to carry out the routine tasks mentioned above.

It is recommended that the Parish Council discuss options with the tennis club to secure the best outcome for the village. Account should be taken of improved changing facilities at the pavilion that may make the recreation ground courts more attractive for players. For the longer term, consideration should be given to relocating the hard courts away from the large trees, possibly to where the grass courts are situated. Alternatively, the site could be relocated as part of the development of Comberton Park. This should be borne in mind by CPSG.

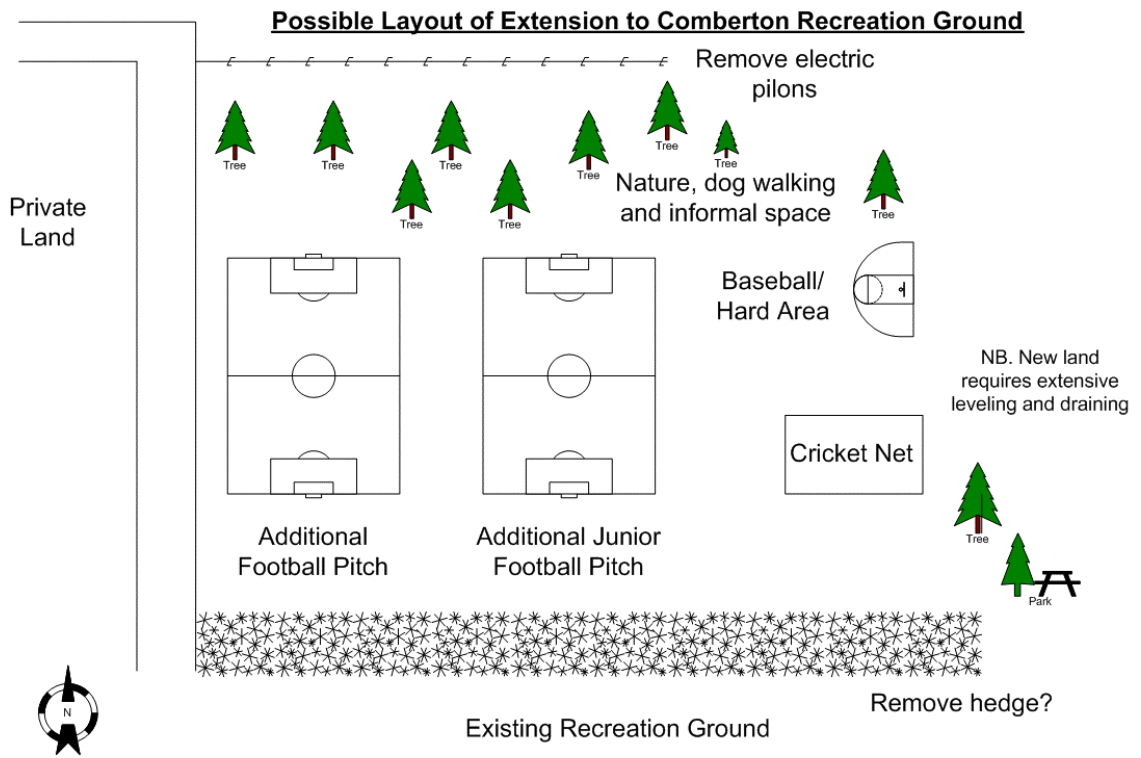
Floodlighting for football training on winter evenings should be considered a desirable goal for the medium or long-term. However the football clubs will need to agree between them how far they are willing to raise funding towards this. In the short term it is of greater importance to put the sports management structure in place and to ensure that the pavilion is a well-used, viable concern so as to ensure a long-term revenue stream. This would then help to fund additional facilities. Alternatively, if the costs of new lighting are high the parish and CPSG should consider subsidizing the cost of using facilities at the Village College.

It must be stressed that the setting of priorities and implementing additional sports facilities in the park, including lighting, should properly rest with the CPSG. Moreover, more use of the recreation ground and Pavilion should allow additional facilities to be paid for without raising playing fees significantly, especially if fund raising is successful.

10.3.6.2 Comberton Park Developments

Comberton is lacking in a well-designed, purpose-made and publicly accessible facility for outdoor formal and informal village gatherings. A theme of this report is the need for places for people to gather and where both young and old can feel a sense of community. There also needs to be some fixed focus of historical continuity where the community expresses and forges its values, interests and pastimes. There is a need for the village to be able to hand on these community values and, in particular, a sense of place both for present and future generations. In the past the parish church or a village green would have provided such an outdoor amenity. Unfortunately, the land on which the original village green stood near the crossroads has been developed and is no longer publicly accessible. Church patronage has greatly declined and, unlike many villages, St Mary's is not centrally located.

16



17



For schematic of proposed changes in layout of the existing Rec. for the new Comberton Park see the report by Tim Wall later in this section

¹⁶ Possible layout for recreation ground extension
¹⁷ Land sought for the recreation ground extension

It is proposed that the site on which the Rec currently stands should be improved and developed into a park for the use of all ages with provision for a greater range of activities, both formal and informal. Key to the success of such a venture, including the need to attract far greater patronage to ensure the viability of activities such as those listed below, will be the need to ensure that the park becomes identified as the central focus of the village for all formal and informal activities. The parish is making strides to enhance public spaces such as around the pond, Swaynes Lane/Barton Rd junction and the green on Harbour Avenue. Unfortunately, however, these are all small pockets of land.

Most important of all, it is recommended that a new village green is developed in the eastern part of the existing Rec (see map) to form a new fixed focal point. If there is a 'central' place at present for both formal and informal social gathering it is here and in the adjoining Meridian school playing field. In very many ways this area is already one of the most attractive parts of the village with mature trees and hedges providing some shelter. It can be a quite lively place with lots of small children and their parents, partly because it is very safe for them to play with no cars. The Meridian school also provides an important sense of community and continuity and the school has recently improved its environment considerably. Latterly, the importance and centrality of this setting has been reinforced by the parish council with its holding of events on the Meridian school playing field that is a natural extension of the area. Unfortunately, however, the school field is not publicly accessible and cannot form a fixed, regular meeting point.

The overall purpose of the new green would thus be to serve as a combined social gathering and informal recreation area for young and old alike where people feel safe and can shelter, and which is easily, quickly and safely accessible by all regardless of where they live. Its effect it would be to reconnect the old with the new that is so sorely lacking at present. As noted below this report also recommends much better access by foot and by bike to this area from all points in the village. There is good access by car. For the Millennium many new greens have been created across the country, including undeveloped pieces of land in established housing estates. Often they have included small gardens and seating areas as a central focus. These have often been grant-aided by the Countryside Agency.

The ideal location is in the part of the existing Rec. south of the tennis courts and east of the sandpit, possibly incorporating the area where the swings are presently located. This green is indicated as a circle on the sketch map showing the proposed new layout of the Rec. It should be a well-drained, grassed area to accommodate large gatherings. A proper perimeter boundary should be created using low-level plantings, shrubs, hedges, e.g box, and small trees. Seating should be provided on the green. Some lighting should also be provided, not least to deter vandalism. Swings, sandpits and any other equipment should all probably be located on the perimeter along

with a shelter doubling up as a greenkeeper's / warden's hut. A small central feature should be considered to provide a focus.

Villagers and businesses should be encouraged to be involved with planning, development and maintenance as done with greens elsewhere. A design competition could be run but there should be an emphasis on simplicity and low maintenance. The green should be seen as something that develops and changes over time. This could include more planting, possibly including a formal planted area and a wild garden around the periphery. A sturdy shelter belt will also be required on the western side of the green including a larger hedge and medium-sized trees. Public art should be another focus. Local business should be invited to contribute financially.

It is suggested that the parish council invite the formation of an action group to bring forward proposals for the village green and carry them out. The action group should work closely with the Comberton Park Steering Group. The action group should probably work closely with and involve the Meridian school as it will have many educational benefits. Schoolchildren could research a history project of the original green and incorporate some of its elements. The project could also provide some outdoor display boards to show some of their findings and allow the community to become better informed. The project would also tap into their valuable experience with 'learning through landscapes' that has greatly improved the school environment. The school has also already been involved with a major village public art project. A children's garden is another possible element of the new green.

This high profile project will be crucial for winning public support and participation in the other planned improvements for Comberton Park noted below. It should help to provide momentum for these improvements that has been very difficult to achieve with some other recent community projects. Consequently, the parish should provide 'seedcorn' funding as required for the project. One of the main costs will be new street furniture but part of this should be recoverable from the section 106 monies secured from the new housing in Barton Rd that are intended to go toward improved play facilities.

A key benefit of manageable, relatively small projects like this is that it will give younger members of the community a sense of challenge, purpose and pride. Because of the much greater number of people that the green will attract to this part of the village (helped by much improved lighting and other facilities noted below), it will greatly deter vandalism and littering that has blighted this part of the Rec. over so many years. The parish should institute annual awards for the best new ideas and achievements arising from this (and other) village projects. These would be targeted both to individuals and groups and awards could be made at the annual parish meeting or at an outdoor event on the green.

It is stressed that this new green can be developed without additional land being acquired. The likely initial cost of the new green and associated

facilities will be around £5-6K. It should have a very high priority for the reasons stated.

A list of additional improvements to amenities in the existing Rec. is now given together with others that could be brought forward when additional land becomes available. All the ideas outlined for developing Comberton Park will complement the new green. Some of these ideas are indicated on the map.

Project	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources	Funding Sources
Employ a part-time Park/Pavilion warden (possibly doubling up as a village handyman) as per the Wall Report	6 months	Parish Council	£7.5 K p.a	Parish Council.
Adopt the concept of a Comberton Park	6 months	Parish Council	N/A	N/A
Establish a Comberton Park Steering Group (CPSG) to oversee planning of all future facilities (CPSG)*	1 year	Parish Council to consider and consult with all stakeholders and hold a public meeting. CPSG to make Recommendations to Parish Council	Provide administrative support and seedcorn funding (see previous section)	Parish Council
Implement the Wall Report 'masterplan' for grounds improvements but seek additional specialist advice on drainage and landscaping as needed	12 months	CPSG & Parish Council	Less than £1000	Cambs Police Architecture Liaison Officer, SCDC, NPFA
Provide integrated skateboard and basketball area with priority for the first if funds are short	9-12 months	CPSG & Parish Council	£10K (5K outstanding). Other funding sources to be pursued.	Parish Council, South Cambs Crime & Disorder Partnership, NPFA UK Community Kitty Awards. Parish Council to underwrite the skateboard facility to ensure early completion

Carry out extensive planting, including north side of existing land and around children's playground	4 years but 1-1.5 yrs for the playground	CPSG & Parish Council	£3-4 K	County Council for trees, local businesses, Parish Council
Provide a warden-controlled putt-putt and/or miniature golf to generate revenue and provide a family pursuit	3-4 years	CPSG & Parish Council	£5-8 K	Parish Council, NPFA, local businesses, SCDC, UK Community Kitty Awards
Consider relocating a part of the children's playground westwards if land is needed to turn the Meridian school field round and to accommodate a cycle link from the park to the Janes estate.	1-2 years to allow new cycle and footpath from Janes Estate to proceed	CPSG Parish Council Meridian school County Council	£3-4 K	Parish Council, Limited finance from County Council Safer Routes to School follow-on project, NPFA as part of bid for improved play facilities (see Section 10.5 Environment), UK Community Kitty Awards
Provide good lighting for all access routes to the park, including Hines Lane and the path from Hillfield Rd to Harbour Avenue east of the Meridian school	2 years	Parish Council CPSG Meridian school County Council	£10 K	Parish Council, Limited finance from County Council Safer Routes to School follow-on project, NPFA as part of bid for improved play facilities (see Section 10.5 Environment)

10.3.6.3 The Pavilion

It is clear that the community will now need to reach informed decisions about the future of the Pavilion, alongside the recreation ground.

There appear to be two main options:

Option 1: The status quo with things left much as they are now with a basic minimum upgrade and refurbishment of the building, including minimal new changing facilities, principally so that football teams can continue to function.

Other facilities like a bar would be ruled out and the kitchen would be left as is. This would leave facilities for public social events being catered for elsewhere. It is likely that there would be a continued, and perhaps even greater, reliance on the Meridian school and its school fields over time. Opportunities for extra income for improvements to the pavilion and recreation ground would be lost.

Without a major refurbishment and, eventually, an extension it is unlikely the Pavilion could become a fully-fledged alternative youth, social and recreational meeting point. In particular, without significant refurbishment and some interior redesign, the current building could not provide a high quality youth facility. Without a substantial upgrade its potential income generating will be minimal. Like now, the parish would not be able to recoup any more expenses for upkeep and repair and these will probably increase as the pavilion building ages. Revenue-raising options like private hire for functions or extending the existing building for commercial use would not be forthcoming, not least because the unattractive building is in need of a 'facelift'.

Importantly, the potential of the pavilion to become the focus of the new extended park with its additional facilities catering for all ages would be lost. In other words, it would not become an integral part of either the park or the community. This would likely have a knock-on effect in terms of reducing potential usage of the park. For example, vandalism would likely continue if usage remains low. The successful development of Comberton park may thus depend on successful redevelopment of the Pavilion.

Option 2A: A high quality major refurbishment and extension of the building, likely funded in stages, through public investment to provide an additional communal, recreational and social facility for the village and for 'paying' customers. The development all to be carefully worked out with a full strategy so that it pays its way. Enhancements to include an extended social and recreational area including a bar and a veranda with a shelter (see the Wall Report) that would, along with the pavilion itself, provide an all-weather facility for the holding of many and varied village events. These could potentially include the Comberton Show. The shelter should include public seating for general use.

Option 2B: As 2A but either sell or lease the entire building/site to a commercial or local developer for redevelopment in exchange for a new purpose built extension or stand-alone building on the existing site dedicated to community and sports use. This would quickly generate a large amount of capital towards a proper, high quality and up-to-date facility for the community.

The demand for a commercially-based pavilion is unclear because there is excess available floor space in Cambridge at present. However, as noted above, there may be particular attractions to small local businesses relocating to the pavilion (and possibly the village hall site also) if rents are competitive. Some local businesses may also want to expand a small

amount. So providing a range of sizes of premises in the village may be desirable. In effect, a redevelopment of the pavilion could be tailored to local needs, whether it be one large unit or two smaller ones. Proximity to Cambridge and the avoidance of congestion are other attractions for Comberton. The only proviso would be that the facility did not generate too much traffic. However, this should not be a problem if parking spaces can be provided at the village hall car park that has plenty of capacity during the day and has a separate access from Green End servicing the existing commercial premises.

For all options some landscaping would be required to improve the attractiveness and sheltering of the site, including trees. A public toilet should also be provided that is accessible when an attendant is on site. In all cases a portacabin should be provided either on a short- or long-term basis to serve as an 'annex.'

Option 2 may take place in a series of stages, as requirements become better defined and funds become available. It should be compatible with the minimal improvements to accommodation for sports officials in Option 1. Grants could be sought for solar water heating and insulation to reduce running costs. Commercial sponsorship would also need to be more actively sought.

Option 2 would not seek to produce another village hall or to produce a community centre, although the potential for the latter clearly exists. Rather, an improved Pavilion should be principally be:

- To compliment the new park with its increasing sport and recreational facilities and, in particular, serve as a social meeting point
- To support additional activities taking place in the Park including storage of materials/equipment and a public toilet
- To provide a secure, easily accessible and safe youth facility

Option 2 should not be seen as a 'grand project' to be undertaken all at once, especially 2A. Rather a financial plan should be devised where at the completion of each stage the development is able to 'pay its way' (this might involve cross-subsidy of loss-making elements by profit-making ones). The customer base would essentially be sports groups, young people and family groups from both within and outside the village. An active sports bias would create a quite different client group to the expected users of the Village Hall and the Pavilion would provide facilities that compliment and extend facilities provided elsewhere in the village. Income should be supplemented by lettings when a meeting place is not available elsewhere in the village. An agreement should be drawn up with the village hall trustees about the level of use that is desirable.

Progressing option 2 will critically depend on several things:

- Wide participation and involvement of all interest groups including sports groups, parents with children involved in the skatepark

- A Youth Council
- A well motivated youth worker
- Involvement and close liaison with local councils, especially South Cambs District Council
- 'Seedcorn' funding from the Parish Council for things like interior redesign, redecoration and veranda
- A design masterplan for the pavilion
- A well defined financial plan
- Successful resolution of related issues including safety, vandalism, provision of lighting and high quality foot and cycle access

All the above will take time to set up and things should not be rushed. Commitment and close working of all interested parties will be essential from the outset. Such an approach has proved to be a great success in providing new facilities for young people in other villages including Linton and Hardwick.

It is stressed that the potential for any future developments, including those envisaged in option 2, will be far easier to achieve on the site of the pavilion than the village hall for reasons stated above. In addition, the time scale for replacing the village hall is very short whereas that for any development on the pavilion is unrestricted allowing plenty of opportunities for fundraising over the years. Option 2 does not preclude option 1 taking place. However, it is essential that any 'bridging plan' to meet the urgent requirements in the Wall Report such as additional changing rooms becomes an integral part of the next phase of development of the site.

Alongside the creation of a new park, the redevelopment option would represent the village's only major infrastructure project once the village hall is replaced. It would be hoped that the new Village Hall would largely be able to pay its way from the outset as it does now and allow the Parish Council to fund new projects right from the outset. The commitment of the parish, including seedcorn funding, is vital for a 5-8 year project to succeed. Given the short time scale for completion of the village hall by end 2004, it may be realistic to start major structural improvements to the pavilion by 2005.

A well planned pavilion will maximise the potential use of an expanded recreation ground and park. For example, an increased number of matches should go substantially towards meeting its running costs. The consultants report refers to "the cost of hiring the pavilion over a season is a significant financial burden for the clubs". This suggests that income from clubs might go down rather than up over time. However the current perception would likely change considerably once a better facility was provided so that customers feel they are getting better value for money. They would also derive better value for money from improvements to playing surfaces. Increased use of the recreation ground would also help limit increases in hire costs.

It is surmised that a prerequisite for the long-term success of the pavilion will be a major upgrade of its facilities. This can only be done by adopting Option 2 and it is recommended that this is done and that the Parish Council support this option in principle.

Lastly, both options will require good lighting of the pavilion and approaches to it from the Janes estate, Green End and Hines Lane, including the car park. This should be done as soon as possible and in conjunction with a new walking and cycling route linking the centre of the village to the Meridian school and Janes estate. Lighting would also significantly deter vandalism. It is 7 times more effective than CCTV in reducing vandalism.

Prior to formal adoption of option 2A or 2B and any work being carried out on the Pavilion, including those recommended by the Wall report, it is recommended that all the following are required:

- A Youth Council and a Comberton Park Steering Group
- A detailed youth consultation
- A detailed consultation within the village on the future of the recreation ground and pavilion building on the findings of the Wall Report
- A Pavilion Masterplan has been drawn up and its relationship to facilities in Comberton park clearly specified

These are required because of the complexity of the issues surrounding the Pavilion inter alia the recreation ground and because a detailed consultation with Comberton youth, recommended by the Wall report, has not yet taken place (note the Wall report did not consider the concept of a Comberton Park).

The Comberton Park Steering Group should consist of a wide body of representatives keen to extend and improve facilities. These should be drawn from the Youth Council, both schools, school parents, sports groups, parents of skateboarders, other recreational users and the Parish Council. In order to ensure wide interest and participation, both in developing and implementing plans, it is strongly recommended that the Parish Council:

- award an annual block grant of not less than £2500 p.a. to Comberton Park Steering Group, made in quarterly instalments for at least 8 years towards a) refurbishment, decorating and other 'minor improvements' to the pavilion and b) for providing new facilities in the park as set down in the pavilion and park masterplans
- provide a basic level of administrative support of not less than £750 p.a. to assist Comberton Park Steering Group, the youth worker and other voluntary groups for grant applications to promote and foster new village sports and recreational facilities

Both sets of funding to be reviewed on an annual basis and subject to CPSP meeting agreed targets. A Comberton Park Trustees Board will need to be

set up for the transfer of funds in order to allow them to be accumulated. This will also ensure that the parish is not liable for rates charges for the pavilion of about £1800 pa. The appointment of a board of trustees to avoid payment of rates should be reflected in the block grant award.

It is vital that the masterplans and associated financial plans prioritise schemes to be brought forward by CPSG, subject to annual review. The first round of award should be made as soon as masterplans have been ratified by the Parish Council. The use of the awards should not be ring-fenced to specific items but subject to the agreement of the Parish Council and the CPSG. All projects should be made with the full consent of the Youth Council.

It is also recommended that the Parish Council:

- award a ring-fenced annual block grant of £500 p.a. to Comberton Youth Council, reviewed after 3 years
- employ a youth worker, possibly in conjunction with CVC, part-funded from other sources
- employ a warden to oversee the daily running of the park and pavilion

The vital distinction here is that CPSG, including formal advisers like youth workers, parish and district council representatives, develop policies and attract funds while a warden and youth worker manage and run activities. Day-to-day management is too great a task for volunteers to manage as the Wall Report stresses and is likely to put people off becoming volunteers as happens now. Awards will be subject to agreement of the parish and CPSG. The Youth Council will ensure that a representative attends all CPSG policy meetings. The Youth Council and youth worker will also have access to CPSG/Parish Council secretarial support as and when required.

It is stressed that the guaranteed CPSG grant and related support should be looked on as 'seedcorn' funding to stimulate wide participation. It is vital to ensure the involvement of all parties over the long-term by 'making it worthwhile' in terms of delivering a viable set of projects meeting a wide range of needs with a fair degree of certainty over the course of, say, a 5 year period. The above framework should be put in place as soon as masterplans have been adopted so that projects can begin without delay. Any amounts paid by the parish should be in addition to parish financing of any major new permanent infrastructure, e.g. building extensions.

No plans should be finalised until full consultation and publicity has taken place within the village to ensure the proposals have maximum public support. It is recommended that once a draft masterplan has been produced that:

- A 'community planning' event is held with invitations to all Comberton residents
- A brief action plan setting out the way forward for 3-5 years is produced

The following key actions and projects for the Pavilion are summarized here:

Project	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources	Funding Sources
Pursue option 2B subject to extensive consultation and planning and establishment of youth council	1-1.5 years	Parish Council CPSG	See plans described elsewhere	Parish Council, SCDC, Sport England
Provide a new public toilet with key access controlled by park warden	1.5 years	Parish Council	£5000	Parish Council, SCDC, Sport England
Provide exterior lighting to the Pavilion and car park	12-18 months subject to an agreed masterplan for the building	Parish Council	£5000	Parish Council, SCDC, Sport England
Develop detailed Pavilion Action Plan with options for improving & extending the existing building to increase range of use for youth, family, sports & commercial uses. To include better heating, a new kitchen, interior re-design and Internet Café (with supervision by a youth/community worker)	1.5-2.5 years	Parish Council under advisement of CPSG and Youth Council, possibly as part of a joint business venture to provide capital	£500 p.a for admin support	Parish Council, SCDC, Sport England, private developer
Implement a Pavilion Action Plan	2-7 years	Parish Council CPSG	Unknown	Parish Council, SCDC, Sport England, private developer

Develop an Internet Café and train 1-2 interested young people, e.g. unemployed, in computer hardware and software maintenance to oversee the facility	2 to 5 years subject to Youth Council being set up	Comberton Youth Council reporting to Youth Worker, CPSG & Parish Council.	Part funded from seedcorn funding of £2500 p.a. according to priorities set out in Pavilion Action Plan	Parish Council, Local business, SCDC South Cambs Crime & Disorder Partnership
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10.3.6.4 Youth Provision

It is unlikely, and probably undesirable, to believe that existing facilities, including a new village hall, could meet all youth needs. There is a clear need for a place for a mixture of supervised structured activity and informal use for all ages. The needs of different ages vary so that a well-planned, flexible facility would appear essential. Internet access, video, film and, perhaps, internet-based learning and training facilities could all potentially be provided in a well-designed facility.

There is also a clear need for a place where people can just turn up and 'hang out' rather than being limited to just one day a week as at CVC. Organized activities on Friday and Saturday nights would probably be very popular especially for children not old enough or not wishing to go to town but who would like to be outside the house more (but not carrying out antisocial activities in the village!).

It appears the pavilion is the most practical and convenient facility to meet many of these needs. It appears to be an ideal location. In terms of supervising regular structured and unstructured activities, it is far easier to do this on a single site and, in particular, the same room because this could then purpose-designed. The site of the pavilion provides space to grow and develop new ideas whereas space is very limited at CVC and on the village hall site. Funds might not be forthcoming for quite some time to build an extension to the pavilion (see below for pavilion options). However extra space could be easily provided at little extra cost using one or perhaps two portakabins. At least one could be dedicated space for 'fun' activities including a snooker table.

Inevitably, there will be some extra running costs for lighting and heating but the major cost will be employing a youth worker. A youth worker will be essential to co-ordinate activities and also to ensure that a youth council becomes viable. In the long run the running costs of any new facilities could largely pay their way but this should not be the foremost consideration at the outset. Organized 'quality' activities like film shows should, however, make money and this should be used to offset other costs, including paying for a youth worker. The alleviation of boredom and the active involvement of youth

in a central location will help to reduce vandalism of the pavilion. The costs of bringing the room in the pavilion up to an acceptable initial standard should be allayed by getting young people, including Youth Council members, to decorate and partly furnish it themselves. Business sponsorship should also be explored by a youth worker.

The development of the Pavilion as a youth centre would, because of its central location, allow young to take advantage of complimentary facilities as development of Comberton park (see above) proceeds. This includes a skate park and basketball court, a youth shelter and adventure playground. Improved social facilities at the pavilion will also encourage members of sports clubs to interact with other young people and increase social cohesion and support. The running of all these recreational facilities will be a lot easier for a warden operating from the pavilion who could work alongside a youth worker.

Finally, consideration should be given to ensuring that the tennis club courts on the existing recreation ground pay their way as far as possible. These should become a 'pay and play' facility as found in other parks. Other opportunities like hiring out for private use and functions should also be considered. Coaching sessions for the young people should be provided to increase interest by using some of the proceeds from lettings.

Project	Timescale	Responsibility	Resources	Funding Sources
Set up a Young Peoples Council	6-9 months	Parish Council CVC SCDC CAYC Youth Worker	Administrative support from Parish Council via CPSG	Parish Council SCDC
Appoint a village young peoples worker	6-9 months	Develop and oversee a Youth Council and Internet Café, and work with Parish Council & CPSG to start making the Pavilion more accessible	£3-5K p.a.	Parish Council SCDC
Carry out an assessment of the needs of young people in Comberton and develop an Action Plan to include use of the pavilion and modifications to make it useable	12 months	Youth Worker working with Parish Council, CVC, Meridian, local clubs, SCDC and Cambs CC	£1K	Parish Council SCDC Countryside Agency

Young people to help fit out new facilities and redecorate the main room in the Pavilion as per pavilion action plan	1.5-2 years	Parish Council and youth council	From budget	CPSG	Parish Council SCDC Countryside Agency, UK Community Kitty Awards
Put on regular Youth events	12 months	Youth worker to organize 1-2 youth activities per month at the pavilion during winter subject to Youth & Parish Council agreement	£0.5-1K		Parish Council SCDC
Plan and provide a youth shelter, preferably in close proximity to the Pavilion	12-15 months	Parish Council	£7-8K		Parish Council SCDC Countryside Agency NPFA, UK Community Kitty Awards
Consider providing a Portacabin to be a casual meeting place for young people but seek specialist advice on the best approach in terms of the type of structure and internal layout. Consider siting on the north side of the Pavilion for ease of access	1 year	Youth Council- CPSG subject to Parish Council agreement	£4-5K	Use CPSG seedcorn funding as part of the pavilion action plan	Parish Council SCDC Countryside Agency, UK Community Kitty Awards

10.3.6.5 Access to Comberton Park

High quality and direct cycle and foot access is required from the Janes estate to the recreation ground and car park via the Meridian school. This should be done either as part of the Meridian Safer Routes to School project or a follow up. This to include low-level lighting along the entire route. A single project would reduce costs.

The best and most direct route (a direct route is important especially for longer journeys such as to CVC) from the Janes Estate would be via the existing bridge leading from Hillfield Rd across towards the back of the existing playground running across part of the existing school playing field. Practically, the route should pass toward the north end of the field but much less far than the existing perimeter fence. To accommodate the path, the Meridian playing field should be turned round through 90 degrees so that the path skirts the school playing area entirely. The Meridian should be recompensed by providing it with additional land from an extended Comberton park. This may involve relocating the existing playground, or part of it, westward. This work should be planned as part of the Comberton Park masterplan.

10.3.6.6 Funding

Although there is considerable scope for funding many initiatives, it is advised that the Parish Council keep in mind opportunities to generate funds from renewable energy. Working with other interested bodies, including local businesses, a multi-Parish Council consortium could be set up to build a small wind-farm in or near Comberton area that would derive income from the sale of electricity to the National Grid. Unfortunately, the energy market is very poor at the moment with little or no revenue return from investment. However the situation may be very different in a few years time.

Above all else, however, the Parish Council should keep in mind that Comberton is located in a comparatively wealthy area. This means there may be many local benefactors. It should also mean that if high quality facilities are provided these should generate their own demand, as will no doubt be the case with a new village hall and the new tennis courts at CVC. The village survey quoted above makes clear that people will choose to go elsewhere when local facilities are not provided with a loss of potential revenue to the village. This will then deprive the community, especially public assets, of much-needed investment. Every opportunity should also be taken to involve local businesses in supporting and publicising new developments. It is recommended that the parish closely involves local businesses in its planning of new facilities and infrastructure to achieve mutually beneficial outcomes.

10.3.7 Short-Term Projects for 2002 / 2003

Set out below is an outline of short-term projects that should be started or at least planned by the community within the next year. Cross-reference should be made to the previous section where the overall requirements are set out along with indicative costs. The Parish Council will have to prioritise any funding it sees fit to offer but some of the recommendations do not involve any immediate outlay. However, it is essential that administrative support is given to any new bodies (see below) as and when these are established. There are also a number of complimentary recommendations on Comberton

Park that will come forward from the environment group on environmental issues and the children's playground.

10.3.7.1 General

- The Parish Council should convene public meetings or a forum every 6 months to discuss key issues and plans affecting the village to encourage the widest possible involvement and direct participation of Comberton residents and stakeholders including schools, colleges, business and churches. Very close liaison should be sought with CVC on all sports-related matters.
- The parish should press the County Council for better public transport access to the surrounding countryside and local attractions at weekends, especially Sundays, so that people can go on more varied local trips e.g. Wimpole Hall, and enjoy the nearby countryside through walking (note that more people work on Sundays in Cambridge which would help underpin any new bus services)
- As much encouragement as possible needs to be given to voluntary activity to progress community development because it seems clear that people, rather than lack of funds, are the main driving force for change bringing new ideas, enthusiasm and leadership. Working parents are an important target group, especially mums. Evening child care should be trialled to allow young mums to be more involved in the community, e.g. helping run youth activities in evenings (see below). The Parish Council should use its community recycling credits (about £750 p.a.) to offset childcare costs and also the following action.
- The parish to fund administrative support of £750 p.a. for researching sources of grant-aid and submitting applications to secure funds for village facilities working in conjunction with SCDC, CPSG, the youth worker, schools and other groups. An attempt should be made to find someone with a fund-raising background (there may be someone in the village who may even want to volunteer).
- Parish Council to press the County Council to provide better bus transport to the city and surrounding villages to ensure that no one is disadvantaged by lack of private transport, especially teenagers and young adults but also the elderly. Sunday buses are urgently required.

10.3.7.2 Sports Facilities

- Implement recommendations of the Wall Report but see recommendation on options for future development of the pavilion below
- Parish Council to acquire additional land for new football pitches

- Parish Council to set up a new steering group to advice on all new developments (such as the Comberton Park Steering Group discussed below) working with sports clubs.
- Parish Council to press CVC to provide affordable access to their all-weather training facilities, tennis courts and football pitch
- Investigate the possibility of establishing regular community transport or subsidised taxi-based transport to local swimming/sporting centres with potential funding from the Countryside Agency's Parish Transport grants (£5000 per annum). This to be investigated alongside establishing new daytime transport links between Comberton and the Madingley Rd Park & Ride that is now operating 7 days a week.
- Parish Council to continue discussions with the tennis club and CVC to determine the options for future tennis provision including good, affordable public access and coaching opportunities for children of both schools

10.3.7.3 Comberton Park Management

- Parish Council to adopt the concept of a Comberton Park and start implementing all proposals set out in the Wall Report for completion in 3 years
- Parish Council to invite and oversee the formation of a new Comberton Park Steering Group (CPSG) to prioritise and oversee all new developments/facilities for Comberton Park. The group to include representatives of the Parish Council, young people from local schools – including Youth Council members, sports clubs, Meridian School parents and other interested parties. Remit to cover the development of the new park, children/youth play facilities and sports facilities. Parish Council to provide annual seedcorn funding to CPSG of at least £2500 p.a.
- Awarding of grants for new facilities to be conditional on membership of CPSG including the Youth Council, sports clubs and other groups

10.3.7.4 Comberton Park Development

- CPSG and Parish Council to ensure that the Wall report's masterplan for the recreation ground is compatible with additional landscaping, accommodation of new paths, lighting, potential changes to the layout of the Meridian school field, associated redesign and relocation of the children's playground, new/improved foot and cycle access routes, additional provision for older youth, miniature golf or putt-putt. Particular attention to be given to access to new facilities and how these fit in with any changes to the pavilion. Specialist advice to be sought from SCDC, National Playing Fields Association and Police Architecture

Liaison officer on layout of facilities to maximise use & prevent vandalism

- CPSG to draw up a 3 year Comberton Park Action Plan for all new facilities prior to any monies being spent, including any major expenditure (greater than £5000) to the pavilion – see below
- CPSG and Parish Council to consider ‘fast-tracking’ a carefully located, new integrated skateboard area, probably located just north of the pavilion for good access (cost £10000 of which half already raised) with some lighting (£2000-3000). Fast-tracking needs consideration because a) there is an urgent need to meet the needs of many young people and b) it would draw in committed individuals (including mothers involved in planning the skateboard park) to create a ‘critical mass’ who would be enticed to serve on the Park Steering Group. CPSG seedcorn funding from the Parish Council should contribute to this project but be subject to a CPSG agreed list of priorities set out in the park Action Plan. It is strongly recommended that while CPSG and Parish Council may agree to some additional funding for fast-tracking this facility, the whole outstanding amount should not be grant-aided. Matching of funds acquired from other sources is probably the best way forward with funds being sought from other bodies like South Cambs Crime & Disorder Partnership, the National Playing Fields Association (that make awards for small and larger scale projects) and the UK Community Kitty Awards (www.ukvillages.co.uk). Priority should also be given to funding the skateboard facility. A half basketball court could be left to 2004/5.
- Parish Council to seek to minimise costs of acquisition and drainage of new land to provide as much funding for improvements to the recreation ground. and pavilion to allow the skateboard park (but perhaps not the half basketball court) to proceed quickly along with any ‘quick fix’ changes to the pavilion recommended by the Wall report. For example, drainage of the new land could perhaps be done in stages to spread the cost.
- CPSG to draw up plans for new playground equipment and for re-design/landscaping of the playground area (£8000 to be funded from Section 106 monies from Barton Rd housing development). This to include screening, a tree shelter belt and a few light columns. This to be subject to satisfactory locating of new cycle/foot path from Janes Estate to the Pavilion car park
- Begin planting trees around the existing recreation ground including the northern boundary and on the western side of the children’s play area. The County Council supply saplings free of charge.
- The Parish Council to employ a warden, initially part-time, to be responsible for the daily running of facilities as recommended by the Wall report.
- If at all possible, relocate the annual parish fireworks display to Comberton Park to help reinforce it as the new social gathering point.

10.3.7.5 Access and Lighting of Comberton Park

The Parish Council should investigate and begin planning for the following infrastructure improvements in conjunction with CPSG and the Meridian school:

- A new all weather footpath across Comberton Park to include a high quality, direct route for foot and cycle access from the Janes estate to the car park beside the Pavilion via the Meridian school in liaison with CPSG and the Meridian School (see previous sections)
- Improved access from Green End by providing a wider and level path and, in particular, the section close to Green End where the path is narrowest, possibly including a 'permissive path' or compulsory land purchase
- Extend the path from Green End to continue from where it currently enters the Rec. to the Pavilion car park and through it (along its eastern side) to Hines Lane
- Widen the path on Barton Rd on the exit from Hines Lane to the cross roads, provide a raised crossing across Green End to provide better and safer access to the park – funding from the County Council Minor Improvements Scheme
- Upgrade the current short section of footpath from Hines Lane to the recreation ground. that needs widening near the gate and/or cutting back of encroaching hedges
- 'Low-level' lighting for the new cycle and footpath from the Janes estate to the Pavilion car park to maximise all-year-round usage and provide some additional security that will also benefit the Meridian School. Part-funding may be secured as part of the Meridian's Safer Route to School project and the National Playing Fields Association The Parish Council to provide high quality lighting for the new skateboard park, possibly in conjunction with a bid for funds for the new cycle/foot access (note that there will be many children from the Janes Estate who will want to use the skate and basketball facility)
- The Parish Council to ensure that there is good disabled access from all approaches to Comberton Park
- The Parish Council to begin considering the issues of safe cycling access to Comberton Park from the centre of the village and as far west as the village college via Hines Lane
- All paths should be built to the highest standard and, where possible, allow disabled access
- Develop a detailed lighting plan for all other paths through and accessing the park, including Hines Lane and the path parallel to the eastern boundary of the Meridian school

- Ensure that advantage is taken of currently developing Safer Routes to School schemes to progress any of the above where possible

10.3.7.6 Pavilion

The Parish Council will need to take a fundamental decision on the future of the pavilion and associated amenities. Reaching a decision should involve the widest possible consultation in the village. The options, set out in the previous section, are summarised as:

Option 1

Minimal improvement to principally include new changing facilities for match officials and redecoration of the building. This is to ensure that football teams can continue to function.

Option 2A

Comprehensive refurbishment and extension of the building, possibly funded in stages and involving private investment, to provide an integrated communal, recreational and social facility for the village and for 'paying' customers. Enhancements to include an extended social, recreational area including a bar and a veranda with a shelter and seating (see the consultants report) that would, along with the pavilion itself, provide an all-weather facility for the holding of regular village events that would use both the interior and exterior of the building in much the same way as done with events currently held at the Meridian.

Option 2B

As 2A but involving a Parish Council-commercial partnership to finance/part-finance redevelopment

It is recommended that option 2B is adopted in principle within 3 months with 2A as a 'fall back'. Invitations to be sent out for either a redesigned building with a commercially activity or seeking business sponsorship for refurbishment and extension of the pavilion. It is stressed that options 2A and 2B are not incompatible with option 1 but careful planning will be needed to avoid wasting resources. Prior to invitations being sent out, preferably within 9 months, the Parish Council, CPSG and Youth Council to draw up an outline plan of requirements for a refurbished and/or redeveloped pavilion as input to the process. To inform the process the Parish Council should undertake short investigations to:

- Determine revenue generation potential including private catering, party and disco hire and other functions, Cyber café with high quality internet access and other computing resources
- Produce a brief for new social, youth (also see below), educational and sporting community use of the building including existing parish events, e.g. Comberton Show, private hire for entertainment

- Determine the level, if any, of cross-subsidy of the pavilion by the village hall in the long-term in the event that the village hall revenue significantly exceeds costs
- Dialogue with local business both to determine the extent of any commercial interest and to encourage them to fund new initiatives

The Parish Council should closely work with CPSG in the planning of the pavilion facilities from the outset because the future of the park and pavilion are inextricably linked, not least in terms of developing viable revenue streams. Prior to any work and fund raising, a business plan should be presented and agreed by all stakeholders (including business) and the wider community

Other requirements:

- Parish Council to plan a new public toilet to be built on to the existing building accessible at weekends with key access, obtainable from the warden
- Parish Council to plan lighting for the pavilion, possibly to be provided in conjunction with such provision for the skateboard park

10.3.7.7 Youth Provision

- Initiate a joint project between CVC, South Cambs District Council and Parish Council to establish a youth council to direct and oversee implementation of youth facility provision
- Parish Council to appoint a 'youth' worker to support the youth council and to help put on organized activities, initially 1 per month, working with volunteers
- Parish Council and CPSG to begin planning a dedicated, warden-supervised, multi-purpose 'young peoples' centre (youth designed) including IT for training/self-learning facilities (possibly an extension to Pavilion), games, videos and TV. It is recommended that this is a permanent, but mobile indoor facility consisting of one or two freight containers
- Parish Council to consider part-funding a youth shelter (£7000), ideally near Pavilion / skatepark for older youth as part of the Comberton Park masterplan OR a new portacabin (£3000) for youth provision to be run by a youth worker. This to be part of the Comberton Park facilities Action Plan of CPSG. Agreement to be reached within 6 months between Parish Council, Youth Council and the CPSG who should use some of their annual seedcorn funding and seek funds from South Cambs Crime & Disorder Partnership.
- Warden and youth-worker supervised Friday/Saturday night activities to be trailed in the existing Pavilion, initially just 1 or 2 events, following recommendations from the youth council, and catering for different ages

A Review of Comberton Pavilion and Recreation Ground November 2002
Tim Wall's Report

