

**A Review of the Management of Comberton Pavilion and
Recreation Ground**

November 2002

Comberton Pavilion



Comberton Pavilion and Recreation Ground

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1. Introduction

1.1 Consultants Brief

As part of the development of the Comberton Parish Plan the Parish Council agreed to appoint a leisure consultant to prepare a report covering the following:

□ **Comberton Pavilion**

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.

□ **Recreation Ground – sports, recreational and social use**

An assessment of the background and current position relating to the condition of the land, pattern of bookings, demand, management and funding. Recommendations for the short term and longer term including consideration of the option to extend the amount of land available for recreational use and the needs of existing and potential users.

□ **Wider Issues**

The following issues are also to be reviewed:

- The introduction of proposed youth facilities (skateboard park, youth shelter and half basketball court) on the recreation ground
- Implications of neighbouring Comberton Village College sports provision
- The proposals for a new village hall in Comberton

1.2 About Comberton

Comberton is situated in the district of South Cambridgeshire. According to the 1991 Census Profile of Comberton Parish it has a population of 2,311 (in 2001 Cambridgeshire County Council estimated its population to be 2,210) and is the 16th largest of the 101 villages in the district in terms of population. The village is located approximately five miles to the west of Cambridge.

Residents By Age	1991 Male	1991 Female	Total	% of Total
0-4	74	69	143	6.2
5-15	173	155	328	14.2
16-29	231	222	453	19.6
30-44	273	289	562	24.3
45-59	258	237	495	21.4
60-74	96	127	223	9.6
75 and over	40	67	107	4.6
Total Residents – 1991	1145	1166	2311	100.0

1.3 Location of Recreation Ground and Pavilion



Comberton Pavilion and Recreation Ground



2. Review of Current Recreation Provision

2.1 An Audit of Parish Council Recreation Provision

□ **Recreation Ground**

The existing recreation ground is approximately 2.66 hectares in area. Most of this land is taken by a football pitch (110yds x 75yds). Ideally the pitch would be 80 yards wide but this is not possible due to its inter relationship with the cricket pitch. In the summer the same pitch is used for cricket.

The main users of the pitches on the recreation ground are Comberton United FC and Comberton Cricket Club.

At present **Comberton United FC** have three teams, the first team playing in the Kershaw Senior League. The first and second team play in excess of 40 games at the Recreation Ground between August and May and the third team have to play their home matches at nearby Coton.

The pressure on the playing surface results in games being postponed and the condition of the pitch suffers due to overuse. The pitch is an Old Saxon field and is gradually returning to an undulating form.

Comberton Crusaders, the youth football club, use the pitch on an occasional basis (during the 2001/02 season they used the recreation ground for 21 matches) but the provision is not ideal as they need more pitches to accommodate their teams and a permanent mini soccer pitch. They also use the recreation ground for informal sessions throughout the year, this is difficult to quantify exactly as they do not make use of the pavilion.

Comberton Cricket Club is the other main user of the recreation ground. The problem facing the club is the deterioration of the cricket pitch and square due to its proximity to the football pitch which is used all winter and therefore has divots and ruts which can potentially cause serious injury. The club use the recreation ground from May to September mainly on Saturday afternoons and Wednesday evenings for the two senior teams. They are also hoping to develop another team and a youth team in the near future which would potentially put more pressure on the pitches.

There is **informal use** of the recreation ground throughout the year. This includes casual use by sports clubs, dog walkers and people undertaking a wide variety of recreational activities including golf practice and kite flying. This is almost impossible to quantify as there is no mechanism in place for measuring this use.

The **National Playing Fields Association (NPFA)** recommends a minimum standard for the provision of outdoor playing space of 2.43 hectares of land for every thousand people. "Outdoor playing space is not the same as public open space. It is space that is safely accessible and available to the general public, and of a suitable size and nature, for sport, active recreation or children's play. It is a

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significant component, but not the only form, of open space.”¹ This standard gives a minimum requirement of 5.37 hectares for the parish of Comberton. Comberton is presently under provided for with circa 2.66 ha, a shortfall of 2.71 hectares for a population of 2,210. This excludes the facilities of **Comberton Village College** which, although offering public use of facilities, are primarily for educational purposes.

□ **Playground – open access**

The playground is located on the east side of the Recreation Ground site. The facility consists of:

- Metal climber
- 2 cradle swings
- Big digger climber
- 4 junior swings
- Seesaw
- Wagon slide
- Rocking horse
- Mound slide
- Sandpit
- Seats
- Litter bins
- Fencing

□ **Tennis Courts – club use only**

The facility consists of:

- Two grass tennis courts
- Two hard surface tennis courts

This facility is managed and maintained by the Tennis Club and the land is owned by the Parish Council. The Parish Council has funded the refurbishment of the hard court surface in 2002 and in previous years since their construction in 1972.

□ **Bowls Green**

This consists of a bowls green and small pavilion. This facility is managed and maintained by the Bowls Club. The Parish Council has made improvements in 2002 to the perimeter fencing.

□ **Car Parking**

There is on site car parking adjacent to the pavilion and recreation ground. Although parking spaces are not formally marked out it is estimated there are approximately 25 spaces.

¹ The Six Acre Standard – Minimum standards for outdoor playing space (NPFA, 2001)

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This is a relatively new facility built in 1992 following a fire to the old building. The facility consists of:

- Two team changing areas and shower facilities
- Officials changing room including shower
- Equipment store cupboard
- Office
- Kitchen area
- Meeting room

Despite the relative youth of the facility the following issues have been identified:

- It suffers from vandalism including graffiti and damage to the guttering
- The roof tiles are easily and regularly damaged by footballs hitting the roof
- The heating is inadequate in winter, particularly if considering use by a wider range of groups
- The officials room no longer meets the requirements of Comberton United FC who need three officials for matches and appropriate changing provision
- There are no fire doors
- The car park surface is not suitable for disabled users as it is very uneven. The entrance to the pavilion is also difficult to access using a wheelchair, the slope is quite steep and the entrance very narrow with heavy doors. It is unlikely that the pavilion will meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Disability Discrimination Act

On 1st October 2004, the final stage of the Disability Discrimination Act will come into force, and the aim is to ensure that disabled people have access to services that other people take for granted.

The new duties will apply to businesses and other providers of services to the public where physical features make access to their services impossible or unreasonably difficult for people with disabilities.

- The building requires redecoration and also a detailed clean
- The kitchen requires refurbishing and updating
- The shutters need replacing
- The office space is rarely used

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The facility is mainly used by the cricket and football clubs for changing and refreshments at the weekends and weekday use appears to be virtually non-existent, apart from some occasional club meetings.

The facility was managed by the Pavilion Management Committee which was established when the new pavilion was built. The agreement was signed on the 5th October 1992. The full agreement is detailed at Appendix A.

The Committee consisted of:

- Parish Council representatives x 2
- Comberton United representative
- Comberton Cricket Club

The main responsibilities were:

- Repair and maintenance of the main structure internally and externally including decoration from time to time
- Day to day management of the building including security and hiring
- Financial accounting and associated matters

The Booking Clerk administered the hire of the pavilion and the committee arranged for it to be cleaned once a week.

Grounds maintenance is undertaken by a private contractor on behalf of the Parish Council. The contract covers the main pitch and recreation area and not the Bowls Club or the tennis courts.

On 21st February 2002 at a meeting of the Comberton Pavilion Management Committee it was unanimously agreed to disband and under Clause 5 of the agreement hand back responsibility for the pavilion to the Parish Council on 31st March 2002.

Clause 5 Ultimate Parish Council Responsibility: "Should the Management Committee, at any time, cease to exist or fail to carry out its responsibilities the Parish Council reserves the right to determine what action to take in the circumstances."

This was formally accepted by Comberton Parish Council on 13th March 2002.

It was also agreed that two members of the original Management Committee would continue to manage the pavilion on behalf of the Parish Council, as a temporary measure, until the production and implementation of this report.

Other Recreation Provision in Comberton

□ Comberton Village College

Comberton Village College (CVC) has recently gained Specialist Sports College Status.

Their current facilities are:

- Playing fields of moderate quality
- Four badminton court sports hall
- Gymnasium
- Fitness room
- Hard play area – 3 tennis courts

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 fitness suite
- New hard play area – four tennis court size
- New half size astro - turf pitch

□ Meridian Primary School

The School is located next to the recreation ground. The school has a play area, hall and also a sports pitch which is subject to a Cambridgeshire New Opportunities for PE and Sport application for improvements to drainage and the changing rooms.

The school uses the recreation ground for some of their PE sessions including athletics and cross country.

3. Summary of Consultation Findings

In order to gain an accurate picture of usage of the current Parish Council recreation facilities and issues for users and potential users a series of individual meetings were held with key stakeholders and are summarised below along with the key findings from the Comberton Village Plan Questionnaire:

3.1 Issues arising from the Comberton Village Plan Questionnaire

This survey was conducted in September 2001 and a questionnaire distributed to all houses in Comberton with a response rate of 80%.

□ **Household Information**

23% of respondents are retired and their recreational needs should be taken into account.

6% of people are unwaged

□ **Community, Employment and Transport**

A significant number (369 out of 1179) want “more sports facilities” which broadly equates to better swimming and football facilities.

658 out of 760 wanted an indoor swimming pool.

□ **Housing, Health and Services**

“More activities for the young” was cited as the third most important solution to combat problems of crime and anti-social behaviour.

□ **Retail, Sports and Social**

The most popular activity that people attend outside Comberton is swimming followed by fitness.

In the village, swimming and fitness are the most popular but the response is smaller than for activities outside Comberton.

□ **The Village**

There was strong support for a variety of environmental improvements including local nature reserves, ponds and woodland. This could improve usage of the Recreation Ground.

3.2 Current use and management of the Pavilion and Recreation Ground and Key Stakeholders

□ **Recreation Committee Members**

Following the building of the new Pavilion in 1992 a Management Committee was formed. The Committee included a Parish Council representative and representatives from the users. The role of the Committee is detailed at Appendix A.

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The facility was managed by the committee which included bookings, cleaning and general maintenance of the pavilion.

□ **Football and Cricket Clubs**

The main users of the Pavilion and Recreation Ground pitches are Comberton United, Comberton Cricket Club and Comberton Crusaders Youth Football Club. The main issues raised by the clubs were:

- The Pavilion does not fully meet the needs of clubs in terms of adequate changing facilities
- There is no bar facility in the pavilion
- Kitchen is not adequate – food is brought in for after matches
- A veranda would be good for watching sport
- The pressure on pitch space means that games have to be cancelled because the pitch becomes unfit through over use rather than the weather conditions
- With the overlap between the football and cricket seasons there is potential for both sports to need the same space at the same time
- Damage to the cricket outfield caused by football can mean that the outfield becomes dangerous
- The pitch is gradually returning to an undulating form
- The lack of space restricts use of the ground by junior football teams and the existing clubs have to use other pitches outside the village
- The quality of the cricket square is deteriorating
- An artificial wicket or cricket nets would be beneficial in helping the club to develop
- Lack of training facilities is a problem for all three clubs
- The cost of hiring the pavilion over a season is a significant financial burden for the clubs
- Vandalism of pitches and equipment is also a major issue

The option of grants from the Football Association and Football Foundation should be explored by the Parish Council and football club to develop the pavilion. See Appendix C for grant aid contacts.

In terms of maintenance of the respective pitches Comberton United mark the football pitch, set up the goals and rope off the pitch for matches. The grass cutting is contracted out by the Parish Council, although it requires a more regular cut than the current contract allows for. Additional cuts are paid for by the clubs.

Comberton Cricket Club maintains the cricket square, but the cutting of the outfield grass is undertaken by Parish Council contractors.

□ **Tennis Club**

The Tennis Club is located at the north end of the recreation ground. There are four tennis courts that are for the sole use of the Tennis Club. The two hard courts have recently been resurfaced with the cost being split between the club and Parish Council. The Parish Council has paid for the fencing to be improved. The courts are maintained by the Tennis Club.

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The current location of the hard tennis courts is not ideal as they are under large oak trees and acorns fall on the courts.

The Tennis Club has supported the Comberton Village College application for extra courts and is proposing to move to the new facility when it is operational.

The club has a membership of 63 adults (51 from Comberton) and 51 juniors (42 from Comberton). The total membership is 114 of which 93 live in Comberton.

□ **Bowls Club**

The Bowls Club is self contained and has a small pavilion which is maintained by the club. In agreement with the Parish Council the club must always make available one rink for public use.

3.3 Non Users and Potential Users

There is significant interest within the village in providing recreational facilities for young people.

□ **Consultation undertaken by Cambridgeshire Association of Youth Clubs**

CAYC undertook consultation with local young people in early 2002 to find out what they would like to see in their village. The group consisted of mainly Year 9 students. The issues that were raised included better lighting on the Recreation Ground, updating the play equipment and provision of a skateboard ramp and youth shelter.

□ **Comberton Skateboard Park Group**

A group has been established, independent of the Parish Council, to try and develop a skateboard facility on the recreation ground. Although no formal consultation has been carried out the need for the facility has been identified through informal discussions with local children and young people. It also follows a number of incidents with skateboarders and pedestrians and cars and use of inappropriate residential areas.

The Parish Council has allocated a site for the proposed new facility. The site is on the north side of the recreation ground, to the west of the garage against the hedge. The site on offer is a maximum of 24m x 7m.

Detailed diagrams of the proposed Street Course have been produced and the estimated cost is £16,000 including the groundwork.

Fundraising is currently underway and is likely to come from the Parish Council for the groundwork, a grant from South Cambridgeshire District Council and fundraising events.

□ **Meridian Primary School**

The main issues for the school in relation to local recreation provision are:

- As part of their Safer Routes to School (SRS) Plan they would ideally like a path that is located along the south end of the recreation ground, therefore

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providing a link from the pavilion car park to the entrance at the rear of the school. This would be on the perimeter of the recreation ground next to the farmer's field.

- Use of the tennis courts on the recreation ground as part of PE sessions would be beneficial to the school
- Exploration of a partnership with the Parish Council to provide a nature area on the recreation ground, perhaps behind the play area, or on the school site with a public access arrangement
- Consideration of the feasibility of the school using the recreation ground play area for supervised sessions

These issues are still subject to consultation by the Head Teacher with the School Governors.

□ **Comberton Village College**

The achievement of Specialist Sports College Status means that as well as having key aims for the school it also has stated **Community Aims** which are:

- To develop links with primary and partner schools
- To promote excellence in the teachers of the future by working closely with teacher training establishments
- To work with clubs and parents to expand sports provision across the community

This status will mean enhanced sports facilities on the college site that will be available for use by the local community. Funding for the new facilities will come from the DfES, Cambourne development, Cambridgeshire County Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The college are committed to the Henry Morris vision that the Village College should be a centre for education and social activity in the local community.

They will operate a flexible pricing policy (prices not yet available) for its new sports facilities (listed on page 7) that offers preferential rates for affiliated clubs and local community groups and commercial rates for corporate users. The new prices have not yet been agreed.

The College has submitted a bid to the Lawn Tennis Association (LTA) to develop four high quality tennis courts. Comberton Tennis Club is a partner in that bid and it is highly likely that they will move to the new facility if the bid is successful. It is anticipated that the courts will be ready for use in summer 2003.

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A Sports Manager will be employed to oversee the community use of the facilities and an increase in community use of the facilities is anticipated as a result of the new provision. They will be appointed in January 2003.

Comberton Village College is very supportive about local consultation with young people in Comberton and will be happy to help with this work.

The facilities that will be provided by the Village College will serve both Comberton and other surrounding villages including Toft. The new provision will create valuable community facilities but these do not cater for all the requirements of the local cricket and football clubs (particularly matches), informal provision for young people, play space and casual open recreation space which the Parish Council still needs to provide.

□ **Comberton Village Hall Steering Group**

A Steering Group has been established to oversee the development of a new village hall in Comberton. The current facility does not meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act and has inadequate facilities to meet the needs of the user groups.

It is anticipated that the new village hall will cost in the region of £300,000 and will cater for a range of users including dinners, fundraising events, provision for local young people, wedding receptions, meetings, drama productions etc. The village hall will provide a complimentary provision to that of the pavilion. The pavilion is required to provide a service to local clubs and recreation ground users.

External funding is currently being sought for the project.

4. Case Studies

This section considers examples from other local Parish Councils with regard to funding and management of pavilions and recreation grounds.

As part of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Sports Development Strategy 2002-2004 a detailed audit of all Parish Council sports facilities was undertaken.

South Cambridgeshire District Council does not manage or own any sports facilities. The Parish Councils are therefore important providers of sport in villages and rural areas where access to towns and cities is not always easy and can be a major reason for non participation.

The aim of the audit was to assess the level of sporting facilities and activities being provided by the Parish Councils, identify areas of good practice and also areas for future development and support.

One of the key findings from the survey was that a significant number of Parish Councils are looking to upgrade or provide new facilities. The most popular new facilities are basketball posts and skateboard ramps. The facilities that the Parish Councils are most keen to upgrade are pavilions.

4.1 Bourn Parish Council

Bourn Parish Council is fully committed to providing sporting opportunities for the local community, particularly young people.

It provides a good example of involving young people in the planning, obtaining external funding and encouraging volunteers.

The Parish Council have established a Sports Club which is managed by volunteers to provide coaching opportunities in a range of sports for young people.

They have also provided the necessary links with clubs outside the village to ensure that young people have the opportunity to gain higher level competitive experience.

The Parish Council has also obtained funding from Sport England and WREN (Waste Recycling Landfill Tax) to provide a new sports hall alongside the existing pavilion. This will allow more coaching sessions to take place in the winter months and will be used solely for sport.

There was also a problem with vandalism and misuse of the recreation ground car park. This situation has been improved by the installation of CCTV cameras on the pavilion.

4.2 Girton Parish Council

In 1998 a decision was taken by the Parish Council to replace the almost derelict pavilion with a new one.

The total cost of the new one was £349,267.

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The project also included a multi use games area and an all weather cricket strip. The Parish Council also funded a balcony for the pavilion.

The scheme was funded from:

- Lottery Sports Fund
- Girton Parish Council
- South Cambridgeshire District Council
- Commitment from local clubs and schools
- Football Association
- Village fund raising
- Girton Town Charity

The building is nearly two years old and the facilities are used by local junior and senior football teams, over 60's keep fit, line dancing, judo, boxing, tennis and cricket as well as for meetings and small events.

The outdoor facilities include four football pitches (including one colts pitch) for which the charge is £23 per game, including use of the pavilion, but the clubs have to do their own line marking.

There is one cricket pitch which costs £14 per game to hire including use of the pavilion.

The facilities are run by the Parish Council who have established a Recreation Committee. In terms of the day to day operation of the site they employ a Bookings Clerk for 10 hours a week and a handyman for maintenance (and other jobs in the village as required).

The Parish Clerk and the Bookings Clerk are based at the pavilion.

4.3 Histon/Impington

The recreation ground is jointly run by the two Parish Councils. There are two senior football pitches, one junior pitch, cricket square, bowls green, pavilion and putting green.

Fees are as follows:

- Tennis club pay £1,100 per season (this includes total maintenance of 4 grass courts)
- Bowls club pay £1,500 per season
- The charge for use of the cricket pitch and pavilion is £43 per game if five or more games are booked or £50 for a single booking
- The charge for football is £38.25 for block bookings or £50 for a single booking
- Putting is £1 per round

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- The tennis courts are available for use at the weekends and it costs adults £2.00 per person for half an hour and juniors £1 (free with a paying adult)

There is a Management Committee that oversees the running of the facilities. The Parish Councils employ a full time groundsman on Spinal Level 12 (approx £13,000 per annum) and also provide rent free accommodation. An assistant is employed in the summer. There is also a contractor employed for the grass cutting.

The management of these facilities takes up the bulk of the Parish Council precept although precise figures are not available.

4.3 Hardwick Parish Council

The Parish Council manages the following recreation facilities:

- Floodlit Artificial Turf Pitch (ATP) for football, tennis and netball
- Two football pitches
- One cricket pitch on the same land as the football pitch
- Pavilion with bar, office (used by Parish Clerk), large room, small room and changing rooms with access from the exterior
- Skateboard park
- Five playgrounds in the village

The football club is charged £500 per year which includes use of the ATP and pavilion. The cricket club is charged £240 per year as they have a shorter season and don't use the ATP².

The bookings and invoicing are handled by the Parish Clerk. The building is cleaned every day by contract cleaners. For bookings the clubs and other users are given keys to let themselves into the facility.

The skateboard facility is still causing a number of problems in terms of the close proximity (three metres) to housing and associated noise and anti social behaviour. South Cambridgeshire District Council is currently investigating the noise issue. It may be that this facility has to be removed or relocated.

The Parish Council were unable to provide an immediate answer as to how much of the precept is used for recreation.

4.6 Summary

The above case studies show a variety of ways in which local recreation facilities can be managed and a wide range of prices dependant on the service and quality of facilities that are available.

² ATP's cost in the region of £100,000 if they are the size of two tennis courts, full size can cost in excess of £250,000

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Each facility is different in terms of size, age and management so direct like for like comparison with Comberton is difficult. However they provide useful examples of possible ways of managing local provision.

5. Key Findings and Issues

5.1 Future Management Arrangements for the Pavilion and Recreation Ground

With the Recreation Committee no longer in existence and the management of the Pavilion and Recreation Ground being undertaken by volunteers on a short term basis this needs to be addressed as a priority. The options are:

- Form a new Recreation Committee to manage the facilities under the overall direction of the Parish Council
- The Parish Council to manage the facilities and appoint a volunteer for the role
- Employ a member of staff on a part time basis to manage the Pavilion and Recreation Ground. This person would manage bookings, cleaning and maintenance of the pavilion and monitor existing grounds maintenance of the Recreation Ground as well as preparing pitches for matches and project managing new developments. This person could also operate on a similar basis for the new village hall as well as undertaking general handyman duties around the village including small repair and maintenance works
- The Parish Clerk assumes responsibility for the management of the facilities

5.2 Priorities for the Pavilion and Recreation Ground

There are a number of issues that need to be addressed in terms of improving the Pavilion facility both in the short and long term:

Short Term:

- The facility would benefit from a deep clean by a specialist firm
- The refurbishment and improvement of the kitchen area would improve the facility
- Obtain quotations for upgrading the heating system in the pavilion which would allow more general bookings to be taken e.g. after school groups and meetings
- Explore the possibility of obtaining a grant from South Cambridgeshire District Council to fund investigations into drainage issues on the pitches
- Ensure more appropriate fencing on the southern boundary of the recreation ground; this would benefit the land owner and also the users of the recreation ground. This may require the land owner to put in place suitable fencing for the animals and the Parish Council to install fencing that is safe for recreational users

Long Term:

- The Parish Council to work in partnership with the local clubs to try and attract Football Foundation grants to provide improved facilities in the Pavilion e.g. Officials Changing facilities – an outline of possible new provision is detailed at Appendix E
- Consider providing an artificial wicket to assist the development of Comberton Cricket Club
- Consider the extension of the pavilion to the north to provide additional changing facilities and storage
- Provide lighting in the car park and also around the pavilion to improve security and provide a more welcoming environment
- Improve the car park surface and mark out spaces

5.3 Review of Booking and Payment Arrangements for Clubs

- To consult with the clubs over proposed new charges if a member of staff is to be employed and an improved service is delivered
- To develop a standard procedure for hiring and charging of the Pavilion and Recreation Ground and invoice the users on a monthly basis

5.4 Bowls and Tennis Facilities

Tennis

At present the four tennis courts are for use by the club only and are maintained by the tennis club.

If the club relocate to Comberton Village College then the Parish Council will need to assume the management, maintenance and operation of the facility. There will be a need to open up the facility for public use and devise a pricing system for adults and juniors. Public access will be mainly weekends and summer evenings plus school use and can be managed by the new member of staff. This will be expensive for the Parish Council with a comparatively small return.

If the club decide to remain at the facility then it would be advisable to maintain the existing agreement with a clause that allows Meridian Primary School use of the facility during the day and some public access at weekends and evenings (one court) for which the club administer the charge and keep the fees (set by the Parish Council).

Bowls

This should stay the same but public availability should be advertised.

5.5 Additional Land Requirements

There are the following pressures on the existing Recreation Ground:

- There is a 2.71ha shortfall in playing field space based on the NPFA Six Acre Standard
- The football and cricket pitches overlap causing damage through overuse
- There is no space to provide for mini soccer
- There is a need for informal recreation provision for local people i.e. basketball, youth shelter, skateboard facility and areas for walking, sitting and other informal recreation. Although informal use is difficult to quantify there is evidence from the recent survey undertaken by the Parish Council that open space for this purpose is highly valued by local people

These issues could be addressed if additional land to the north of the Recreation Ground was purchased by the Parish Council. The additional land is 3.04 hectares which would cover the 2.71 hectare shortfall.



Proposed New Land

If additional land is purchased the pavilion and recreation ground usage will increase significantly which will make it necessary for an agreement to be reached for users to be able to park at the proposed new village hall which is a very short walk from the recreation ground.

5.6 Implication of CVC Provision

The development of new facilities at the Village College raises two key issues:

- A successful bid to the LTA is likely to result in Comberton Tennis Club leaving their current facility at the Recreation Ground. If the Parish Council decides to keep the tennis courts then they need to be maintained and opened up for public use
- The new sports facilities at the College are mostly complimentary to those provided by the Parish Council in that they can be used for training by the football clubs and they provide facilities not available on the recreation ground. There is no indication at this stage that prices will exclude local people from using the facilities

5.7 Provision of Facilities for Young People

There is a need to provide indoor and outdoor informal recreation facilities and activities for young people in Comberton. At present there are no informal recreation facilities for teenagers on the recreation ground.

The fact that the Pavilion is located away from housing and has no exterior lighting provides a focal point for local young people wanting to hang around away from adults. There is evidence of alcohol being consumed in the area and bottles being left lying around. There appears to be some very minor vandalism but nothing of any major consequence.

The following needs to be taken into account:

- When considering provision, particularly for the 11-16 age groups it is vital to involve the young people in the planning of such facilities as well as consulting with residents in close proximity to the recreation ground³. Any skateboard facility should be 100m from the perimeter of the nearest residential property. There are a vast range of “youth shelters” available which are very popular with the 11-16 age group and this might be a suitable addition to a skateboard facility
- The consultation process should involve experienced youth workers and CVC and involve face to face meetings and questionnaires
- The land currently allocated for a skateboard facility will need reviewing as part of the consultation process.

³ Thames Valley Police – Youth Shelters and Sports Systems – A Good Practice Guide by Roger Hampshire and Mark Wilkinson (www.thamesvalley.police.uk)

- The consultation about facilities on the Recreation Ground needs to be linked to consultation about indoor provision that could involve the new village hall. This would ensure a wide range of complimentary indoor and outdoor provision

5.8 Local Demand for Swimming and Fitness Facilities

The Comberton Village Plan Questionnaire highlighted that a significant number of respondents go swimming and use fitness facilities outside of the village. And that they are the most popular activities.

If the Parish Council would like to enable those activities to take place in Comberton then the most effective solution is to work with Comberton Village College to ensure the new fitness facilities are affordable for local people.

In terms of swimming, the current open air pool is for use only by Comberton Community Swimming Club. It may be possible to consider extending this to public use at certain times although the health and safety issues may prove onerous and prohibitive.

The Parish Council may wish to consider arranging transport from the village to local swimming facilities such as Cambridge Parkside Pools. The Parish Council may also be able to negotiate a discounted rate with the facility. It is necessary to consider the following before undertaking this venture:

- Is there sufficient demand?
- When is the best time of day to operate the scheme?
- How much will it cost the Parish Council?
- Will the transport be provided directly by the Parish Council or contracted out?
- What insurance, if any, is required?

6. Recommendations/Timescales

6.1 Management Arrangements for Pavilion and Recreation Ground

Recommendation One:

That the Parish Council appoints a part time paid member of staff to manage the recreation facilities and establishes a sub committee to oversee this work (although the member of staff will need to have a point of contact for day to day issues – which could be the Parish Clerk). The grounds maintenance should still be contracted out to a specialist firm, although there will be a reduction in spending on miscellaneous contractors who do minor works on an ad hoc basis as some of this work can be carried out by the new member of staff.

Although this report is not able to produce a formal person specification and job description the following elements are important:

- Ability to work unsupervised and outdoors in all weathers
- Knowledge of ground maintenance
- Strong interpersonal skills
- Able to keep accurate records
- Undertake weekend and evening work

The new member of staff would have to undertake the following work:

- To clean the building after use
- To oversee the work of the grounds maintenance contractor including playground
- To ensure the pitches are marked and roped off for use on match days and the pavilion is open and ready for use
- To be responsible for pavilion maintenance
- To take booking for use of pavilion and pitches and send out invoices
- To litter pick the site
- To be a point of contact for local residents using the recreation facilities
- To oversee the implementation of new facilities e.g. skate park and pavilion improvements
- To manage public access to the tennis courts

This is also a good way to try and reduce vandalism and youth nuisance on the site. If there is a person available on site that gets to know local people then the area is likely to develop a more welcoming feel.

It will become an increasingly important role if new land is purchased and new pitches and youth facilities are created and if the tennis courts return to Parish Council management.

The Parish Council will also have to develop a Contingency Plan to cover for holidays and sickness. This may mean having casual cover available at short notice to cover the key duties.

It is possible that this post could be upgraded to a full time position to cover the management of the village hall. The tasks would include:

Comberton Pavilion and Recreation Ground

- Management of bookings and payments
- Ensuring building is clean and ready for use
- Responsibility for maintenance and security

Performance should be monitored by the Parish Clerk and feedback from users. The Management Structure could be as follows:

- **Parish Council**

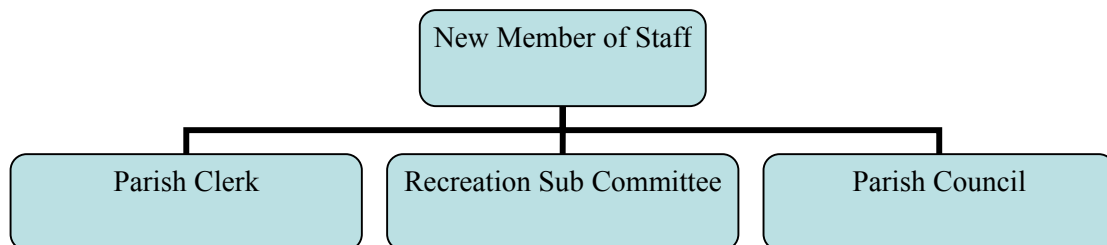
This organisation will have overall responsibility for the pavilion and recreation ground as owners of the land and employers of staff and contractors.

- **Parish Clerk**

The Parish Clerk will be the point of contact on a day to day basis for the new member of staff. This person will in effect be the Line Manager.

- **Recreation Sub Committee**

It is proposed that the Parish Council create a Recreation Sub Committee which would oversee the management of the pavilion and recreation ground and receive quarterly reports from the new member of staff relating to income, expenditure and other management issues. This committee should consist of Parish Council representatives and invited guests from local users to give their feedback on the new arrangements.



Financial Implications

The new post would involve the following estimated costs:

- **Salary - £6.00 per hour x 20 hours = £120 per week/£6,240 per annum**
- **Current Total Income: £1,165**
- **Current Expenditure: £3,465**

Projected Expenditure

Staffing	£6,240.00
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Comberton Pavilion and Recreation Ground

Cleaning	Nil
Electricity and Water	£500.00
Alarm Maintenance	£100.00
Fire Extinguisher Maintenance	£50.00
General Repairs and Renewals	£1,110
Total	£8,000

Scenario One

In order to recover all the above expenditure from existing users the amounts required from each user are as follows:

Organisation	Number of Bookings	Fee	Total Income
Comberton United Matches	33	£140 per game	£4,620
Comberton United Training	5	£35 per session	£175.00
Three Horseshoes Football Team	9	£140 per game	£1,260.00
Comberton Crusaders Youth Football	21	£35 per game	£735.00
Comberton Cricket Club	19	£70 per game	£1,330.00
Other Income – Horlers	1	£35 per booking	£35.00
Total			£8,155.00

This scenario is clearly unworkable but serves to clearly highlight the issue.

Scenario Two

A more realistic position is detailed below. This involves increasing club fees slightly if there is an improved service i.e. marking of pitches, improved pavilion etc

Organisation	Number of Bookings	Fee	Total
Comberton United - matches	33	£30.00	£990.00
Comberton United - training	5	£10.00	£50.00

Comberton Pavilion and Recreation Ground

Three Horseshoes Football Team	9	£30.00	£270.00
Comberton Crusaders	21	£10.00	£210.00
Comberton Cricket Club	19	£20.00	£380.00
Other Income – Horlers	1	£10.00	£10.00
Total			£1,910.00
Deficit			£6,090.00

The following need to be explored to help address the deficit:

- Increasing the Parish Council precept – a less controversial idea if new land is purchased and additional facilities are provided
- Installation of vending machines in the pavilion to raise revenue (drinks machines) and opening the kitchen to sell confectionary during matches
- Consider opening a bar facility or allowing a local public house to run a bar operation in exchange for a fee at busy times
- Advertise that the Pavilion is available for birthday parties and other functions
- Encourage small events and fetes etc to take place on the recreation ground to make it the hub of the local community
- Increased revenue from additional bookings if the new land is purchased and the pavilion is extended. The table below highlights how this may have an effect. It makes the assumption that the running costs will not differ significantly from those detailed above as it is difficult to anticipate at this stage. It is based on the purchase of new land being able to provide an extra senior and junior football pitch which would provide for Comberton United and Comberton Crusaders.

Organisation	Number of Bookings	Cost	Total
Comberton United - matches	33	£30 per game	£990.00
Comberton United - training	5	£10 per game	£50.00
Comberton Crusaders	21	£10 per game	£210.00

Comberton Pavilion and Recreation Ground

Total			£1,250.00
Deficit based on Scenario Two			£4,840

- Investigate if the Parish Council is getting the best possible deal from the electricity supplier or if it can be sourced cheaper elsewhere
- Increased usage in the week if the recommendations in 6.2 are implemented
Timescales: Immediate

Recommendation Two:

That the Parish Council ensures there is a standard facility booking form and invoicing system in place.

Timescales: Immediate

6.2 Action Plan for the Pavilion

Recommendation One:

That the Parish Council agrees to arrange the following works:

- Arrange a professional deep clean of all areas of the pavilion
- Improve the heating system
- Consult with the clubs on the exact requirements in terms of updating the facility to ensure new facilities meet local need (Appendix E)
- Ensure the pavilion complies with the Disability Discrimination Act including any new provision
- Improve security by the installation of CCTV cameras

Timescales: Immediate

Recommendation Two:

That the Parish Council considers extending the existing pavilion to accommodate increased use created by the purchase of any additional land. An extension of the existing pavilion would need to include two additional changing rooms with showers and toilets, additional storage space, officials changing area and increasing the meeting and kitchen space.

Timescales: Long term

6.3 Tennis and Bowls Provision

Recommendation One:

That if the Tennis Club moves to Comberton Village College the Parish Council should take over the management of the facility and develop appropriate systems (prices, management and maintenance) to allow for public use.

Recommendation Two

If the Tennis Club stays at the current facility then there should be public use at weekends and on summer evenings in agreement with the club. The fees should be agreed between the Parish Council and the Tennis Club. The management of public use should be handled by the club.

Recommendation Three

That the existing agreement between the Parish Council and the Bowls Club remains in place but that the availability of a rink for public use is advertised locally.

6.4 Purchase of Additional Land

Recommendation:

That the Parish Council purchases the land to the north of the recreation ground. This will allow the following developments to be realistically explored (See Appendix D):

- New provision for young people – skateboard park and youth shelter and reduce conflict with other users
- Increased space for informal recreation – dog walking, socialising, jogging, nature area etc
- Additional pitches for adult and junior football and the development of junior cricket, again reducing conflict with other sports and allowing the clubs to develop. It could then be possible to have the recreation ground used for two senior matches at the same time (when pavilion is redeveloped)
- Addressing the 2.66ha shortfall in playing field space in Comberton
- Improving income to the Parish Council through increased use of the recreation ground and pavilion

Timescales: Immediate

6.5 Partnerships

Recommendation One:

That the Parish Council explores potential sources of grant aid from South Cambridgeshire District Council with regard to professional advice on pitch condition and drainage.

Timescales: Immediate

Recommendation Two:

That the Parish Council works with CVC to ensure that access to sport and recreation provision is complimentary and that the College assist in the consultation with young people on new facilities.

Timescales: Immediate

Recommendation Three

That the Parish Council works with the local sports clubs to obtain external funding to improve the pavilion facilities through the **Football Foundation, Cambridgeshire Football Association and South Cambridgeshire District Council**

Timescales: Immediate

Recommendation Four:

That the Parish Council work with Meridian School to explore the options for developing a nature reserve either on the school site with public access or to the rear of the recreation ground play area.

That the Parish Council and Comberton Tennis Club allow the school access to the tennis courts during the school day.

That the Parish Council explore the options with the school and other recreation ground users for developing a Safer Routes to School using the recreation ground and its car park facility.

Timescales: Longer term issue

6.6 Facilities for Young People

Recommendation:

That the Parish Council in conjunction with South Cambridgeshire District Council, Comberton Village College, the village hall steering group, the skateboard group and Meridian School undertake structured consultation with local young people to ascertain the type of facilities and activities they would like to use in the village and the best locations for those facilities. It is likely that this will cover a range of ages and will make use of questionnaires and also face to face meetings with local young people.

This service can be provided for little or no cost by the Community Education service at the Village College and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

This type of work will increase the likelihood of local young people gaining a sense of ownership and pride in the local community and therefore a reduction in vandalism.

Timescales: Immediate

6.7 Local Demand for Swimming

Recommendation:

That the Parish Council undertake follow up research with local residents to identify real need and demand for swimming and the viability of transporting local people to facilities outside the village

Timescales: Immediate

7. Conclusions

This report has produced the following:

□ An appraisal of the current position in terms of the management of the pavilion and recreation ground

□ Identification of the key issues that need to be addressed by the Parish Council along with timescales

The focus for the Parish Council needs to be on:

□ Establishing a replacement management structure for the Pavilion and Recreation Ground as set out in Recommendation 6.1

□ Funding the redevelopment of the existing pavilion to ensure it meets the needs of the users and in particular the DDA

□ Purchasing additional land for leisure and recreation to meet the needs of local residents – including both formal and informal recreation

The report provides the starting point for the Parish Council who now needs to consider and prioritise the work to be carried in line with the availability of resources (both time and money).

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Agreement for the Management of the Pavilion (OLD)

1. The main responsibilities are as follows:

- Repair and maintenance of main structure
- Day to day management of the building including security and hiring
- Financial accounting and associated matters

2. Repairs and Maintenance

- The Parish Council will be responsible for the main structure of the building including the roof and foundations together with the car parking facilities. The external decoration would also be included
- The Management Committee will be responsible for all internal fixtures and fittings including water and electricity supplies together with all internal decorations

3. Day to Day Management

- Cleaning and decoration – the Management Committee to be responsible for the periodic cleaning and decoration of the premises internally but including windows internally and externally. To this end a schedule of cleaning and decorating shall be agreed
- Security – the Management Committee to be responsible for the following:
 - Maintenance and Inspection of any security systems and associated telephone lines
 - Maintenance and Inspection of fire appliances
 - Ensuring that the premises are left secure at all times
 - All hiring and letting arrangements for the pavilion
 - Control of car parking within existing conditions governing car parking
 - Insurance of the pavilion as agreed and approved by the Parish Council

4. Financial Arrangements

- The Management Committee shall be responsible for recovering the operating costs of the new pavilion and within this broad outline they shall be free to set charges for the use of the pavilion as they consider appropriate in the circumstances
- The Management Committee shall submit a financial statement and audited balance sheet for each year ending 31st March to the Parish Council not later than 28 days after the end of the financial year

Comberton Pavilion and Recreation Ground

5. Ultimate Parish Council Responsibility

Should the Management Committee, at any time, cease to exist or fail to carry out its responsibilities then the Parish Council reserves the right to determine what action to take in the circumstances.

6. Agreement

This agreement between the Parish Council and a Management Committee shall be subject to review after 12 months and thereafter from time to time as circumstances dictate.

Appendix B – Comberton Pavilion Income 2001/02

Income:

Organisation	Number of bookings	Fee	Total Income	
Comberton United matches	33	£20	£660.00	
Comberton United training	5	£5	£25.00	
Three Horseshoes Football Team	9	£20	£180.00	
Comberton Crusaders Youth Football	21	£5	£105.00	
Comberton Cricket Club	19	£10	£190.00	
Other Income (Hurlers)		£5	£5	
Total	87		£1,165	

Expenditure:

Item	Cost
Cleaning	£693.00
Electricity/Water	£422.00
Alarm System	£450.00
Alarm Maintenance	£100.00
Fire Extinguishers	£50.00
Shower Repairs	£900.00

Comberton Pavilion and Recreation Ground

Pavilion Shutters	£750.00
Roof Repairs	£100.00
Total	£3,465

Deficit of £2,300 in 2001/02

Appendix C – Grant Aid Contacts

- **South Cambridgeshire District Council**

South Cambridgeshire District Council plays an enabling role in sport and recreation, offering advice and grant aid to Parish Councils, sports clubs, talented young sports performers and village colleges.

Sport and Recreation Grants

Capital grants are available to Parish Councils and sports clubs for new facilities or major improvements to existing sports facilities. These include pavilions and also improvements to pitches.

Youth Sport Initiative

Capital grants are available to Parish Councils for casually accessible sports facilities, for use mainly by young people.

Priority is given to projects where young people have actively been involved in planning and fund raising. Projects may include basketball courts and skateboard facilities.

The maximum grant is 50% of the total cost.

Sports Development Grants

Revenue grants are available for sports development initiatives such as a new junior club, coaching courses, new sports projects. Grants are available to Parish Councils, schools and sports clubs.

Contact: Jane Lampshire 01223 724149, email: jane.lampshire@scambs.gov.uk

- **Sport England Lottery Fund**

The helpline on 0845 7649649 provides details of the Sport England Lottery Fund, advice and application packs.

- **Sport England Awards for All**

Small grants (£500 - £5,000) are available for clubs and voluntary organisations. For an application pack tel: 0845 6002040

- **Sport Specific Advice**

Cricket

Cricket Development Officer, Russell Doel 01223 832244

Football

Cambridgeshire FA Development Officer, Jim Hill 01223 576770

Football Foundation Grants – include pavilions – 0800 0277766

Comberton Pavilion and Recreation Ground

Tennis

County Development Officer – Christine Sprowell – 01223 210111

Appendix D – Possible Developments on Proposed New Land

