

Committee Report on the Assessment of Recreation Ground Pitches

Date: Sept 5th, 2024

To: Leisure & Recreation Committee

From: Andrew Briggs – Ops Manager

Subject: Summary of pitch inspections assessments.

Council Priority: To provide a high standard of services & facilities. To protect and improve our environment.

1. Recommendation

- 1.1 Members to NOTE the summary for each rec site.
- 1.2 Members NOTE the allocation of resources required, to meet the conditions of the FF grant funding and as per the recommended maintenance activities.
- 1.3 Members to CONSIDER the instruction of enhancement works through Merrett Services for Mannington Rec, with retrospective reconciliation once Football Foundation funding for the site is released.

2. Introduction

This report consolidates the findings from inspections conducted at three recreation grounds: Mannington, Penhill, and Southbrook.

The pitches were assessed based on the Pitch Quality Standard (PQS), which examines various factors such as grass coverage, surface evenness, drainage, and the condition of goalposts.

The inspections were carried out by the Wiltshire FA and CSNPC/IDV to evaluate the condition of the football pitches and recommend necessary maintenance and improvements.

The inspections aim to ensure that the pitches meet the required standards for grassroots football, providing safe and playable surfaces for the local teams.

3. Detail

2.1 Mannington Assessment Report:



AG7b. 15662-Swindon-Sunday-Football-League-MANNINGTON-REC.pdf

The inspection was conducted on 21st June 2024, with a specific focus on evaluating the condition of the football pitches at Mannington Recreation Ground.

Pitch Quality Scores

The overall condition of the pitches at Mannington Recreation Ground has been rated as "Good," with individual pitch PQS scores as follows:

- **Pitch 1:** 48%
- **Pitch 2:** 50%
- **Pitch 3:** 45%
- **Pitch 4:** 48%
- **Pitch 5:** 50%

Despite these positive scores, there are areas identified where maintenance is necessary to sustain or improve the quality of these pitches.

Maintenance Recommendations

1. Decompaction:

- **Frequency:** Twice per year
- **Cost Estimate:** £5,000
- **Purpose:** To enhance drainage, root depth, and nutrient absorption. Recommended during spring and autumn.

2. Surface Grooming:

- **Frequency:** Fortnightly
- **Purpose:** To alleviate worm casts, thatch build-up, and surface debris. Regular brushing and raking are recommended to maintain pitch quality.

3. Fertiliser Application:

- **Frequency:** Twice per year
- **Cost Estimate:** £6,500
- **Purpose:** To provide a slow release of nutrients to maintain healthy grass growth, particularly in spring and autumn.

4. Overseeding (In Season):

- **Frequency:** Once per year
- **Cost Estimate:** £7,000
- **Purpose:** To ensure consistent grass coverage, especially in high-traffic areas such as goal mouths.

5. Selective Herbicide Application:

- **Frequency:** Once per year (if necessary)
- **Cost Estimate:** £1,750
- **Purpose:** To manage weed growth within acceptable limits, maintaining the aesthetic and functional quality of the pitches.

6. Goal Mouth Repairs (In Season):

- **Frequency:** As needed
- **Cost Estimate:** £100
- **Purpose:** To repair high-wear areas like goal mouths, ensuring they remain safe and playable.

7. Slitting:

- **Frequency:** Monthly during playing season
- **Purpose:** To keep the soil profile open and improve root growth and nutrient uptake. This complements decompaction efforts.

The inspection results indicate that the pitches at Mannington Recreation Ground are in generally good condition. However, to maintain and potentially enhance the quality of these pitches, a structured maintenance plan following the outlined recommendations is essential.

The estimated budget for these maintenance activities is approximately £20,350 PA.

Implementing these measures will help ensure the pitches remain suitable for use in grassroots football and may support future grant applications.

2.2 Penhill Assessment Report:

AG7b. 15719-Swindon--District-Football-League-PENHILL-RECREATION-GROUND.pdf

Inspection Overview:

The inspection of Penhill Recreation Ground was carried out on 21st June 2024.

Pitch Quality Scores:

- **Pitch 1:** 56% (Basic)
- **Pitch 2:** 54% (Basic)
- **Pitch 3:** 52% (Basic)

The scores for the Penhill Recreation Ground pitches indicate that they are in basic condition, meaning they are functional but show signs of wear that need to be addressed. The overall grade for the pitches at Penhill Recreation Ground is "Basic."

Maintenance Recommendations:**1. Decompaction:**

- **Frequency:** Twice per year
- **Cost Estimate:** £4,500
- **Purpose:** Decompaction is necessary to address issues related to poor drainage and compacted soil, which can hinder grass growth and lead to uneven surfaces. Regular decompaction will improve the pitch's resilience to wear and tear.

2. Surface Grooming:

- **Frequency:** Fortnightly
- **Purpose:** Surface grooming, which includes brushing and raking, is important for maintaining an even playing surface. It helps remove debris and manage thatch build-up, which can negatively impact both the safety and quality of the pitches.

3. Fertiliser Application:

- **Frequency:** Twice per year
- **Cost Estimate:** £5,000
- **Purpose:** Fertilising the pitches will provide the necessary nutrients to sustain healthy grass growth, especially during periods of high use. This will help maintain an attractive and functional playing surface throughout the season.

4. Overseeding:

- **Frequency:** Once per year
- **Cost Estimate:** £6,500
- **Purpose:** Overseeding is crucial for repairing worn areas and ensuring a dense grass cover. This process will help improve the overall quality and durability of the pitches, making them more resilient to heavy use.

5. Goal Mouth Repairs:

- **Frequency:** As needed
- **Cost Estimate:** £150
- **Purpose:** Regular repairs to goal mouths are necessary to prevent these high-traffic areas from becoming unsafe or unplayable. This small but vital maintenance task helps ensure the pitches remain in good condition throughout the season.

6. Drainage Improvement:

- **Frequency:** As needed
- **Purpose:** Although not costed, improvements to the drainage system are recommended to address any issues related to waterlogging, which can negatively impact pitch quality and usability.

Conclusion:

The pitches at Penhill Recreation Ground are currently in basic condition, with signs of wear that need to be addressed to prevent further deterioration. By implementing the recommended maintenance activities, which have an estimated budget of £16,150, the pitches can be improved to provide a better playing experience for local teams.

2.3 Southbrook Assessment Report:



AG7b. 15718-Swindon-Sunday-Football-League-SOUTHBROOK-RECREATION-GROUND.pdf

Inspection Overview:

Southbrook Recreation Ground was inspected on 21st June 2024.

Pitch Quality Scores:

- **Main Pitch:** 61% (Advanced)

The score for the main pitch at Southbrook Recreation Ground reflects its advanced condition, indicating that the previous improvements have been successful in creating a high-quality playing surface. However, ongoing maintenance is necessary to sustain this level of quality.

Maintenance Recommendations:

1. Decompaction:

- **Frequency:** Twice per year
- **Cost Estimate:** £1,000
- **Purpose:** Decompaction will help maintain the pitch's excellent drainage and root development, ensuring that the grass remains healthy and the surface stays even and playable.

2. Surface Grooming:

- **Frequency:** Fortnightly
- **Purpose:** Regular surface grooming is essential for keeping the pitch free from debris and thatch, which can compromise the playing surface. This maintenance activity will help preserve the pitch's advanced quality.

3. Fertiliser Application:

- **Frequency:** Twice per year
- **Cost Estimate:** £1,300
- **Purpose:** Applying fertiliser will sustain the pitch's high level of grass coverage, providing the necessary nutrients to support healthy growth, particularly during periods of heavy use.

4. Overseeding (Out of Season):

- **Frequency:** Once per year
- **Cost Estimate:** £1,400
- **Purpose:** Overseeding during the off-season will help repair any wear and tear from the playing season, ensuring the pitch remains in top condition. This will help maintain the pitch's advanced status.

5. Top Dressing (Renovation):

- **Frequency:** Once per year
- **Cost Estimate:** £1,600
- **Purpose:** Top dressing is recommended as part of the annual renovation process to improve surface evenness and promote healthy grass growth. This will enhance the overall playability of the pitch and maintain its high standard.

Conclusion:

The main pitch at Southbrook Recreation Ground is currently in advanced condition, reflecting the positive impact of previous maintenance efforts.

To maintain this standard, it is essential to continue with the recommended maintenance activities, which have an estimated budget of £5,300.

Overall Summary

The inspections reveal that while the pitches across all three recreation grounds are generally in good to advanced condition, there is a clear need for regular maintenance to prevent deterioration.

Implementing the recommended maintenance activities, with an estimated combined budget of £41,800, will ensure these pitches remain at the standard required for grassroots football and support potential future funding opportunities.

Foundation Grant Funding

On 5th July, the foundation raised a few OS matters to the Parish in regard to release of the next tranche of grant funding.

Email:

G106332 – Mannington Rec:

1. Based on our records and the invoices you have provided for Claims 2 and 3 your project currently shows an underspend of £4,270. Please see the attached spreadsheet that outlines your evidenced spend vs your required spend. I have also attached a folder containing all of the invoices we have received from you so far.

Due to a recent change in our T&Cs, we are no longer able to pay out claims if there is an outstanding underspend on the project. We will therefore require you to clear the underspend before we can release the third payment.

Please could you send me any additional invoices you have dated from July 2021 to now that we can use to evidence your spend and clear the underspend. If you have not so far spent the cost required, and do not have any further invoices, we can keep the current claim on hold for now, to allow you more time to reach the required project spend on eligible works.

2. Could you please also provide proof of payment for all of the invoices you provided for claim 3 (attached). This can be a copy of the club's bank statement that shows the transactions for the invoices.
3. Could you please also send over a bank statement that is dated within the last 3 months and shows account name, number, and sort code, that I can attach to your claim as we are unable to accept the currently attached bank document as bank evidence.

G106333 – Southbrook Recreation Ground:

1. Similar to the above, this project currently shows an underspend of £5,312. Please see the attached spreadsheet that outlines your evidenced spend vs your required spend. I have also attached a folder containing all of the invoices we have received from you so far.

Please could you send me any additional invoices you have dated from July 2021 to now that we can use to evidence your spend and clear the underspend.

2. Could you please also provide proof of payment for all of the invoices you provided for claim 3 (attached). This can be a copy of the club's bank statement that shows the transactions for the invoices.

Please let me know if you have any queries or questions.

Many thanks,

Takunda Ndadzungira

Grant Support Executive

A Briggs response (18.07.2024):

Hello Takunda,

Sorry for the delay in coming back to you. I have been trying to look into this and find out what's happened / whether anything has been missed.

Initially, I have found 1 invoice that appears to have been missed from May 22, and in May 24 we completed Verti draining (both attached). This is broken down to an additional sum (per site) of:

Mannington - £3,087.50 +VAT

Southbrook - £637.50 +VAT.

Reducing the underspend to:

Mannington - £0

Southbrook - £4,678.67

I cannot seem to find any other associated invoices for Southbrook. Therefore, assume that must be correct. In light of this I will arrange necessary works as to ensure we clear the underspend. Having read the most recent pitch assessment reports, I plan to do so by undertaking the following:

Southbrook:

Vertiquake - £350.00

Fertiliser - £650.00

Overseeding - £1,500

Top Dressing - £1,600

*All costs estimated

I will aim to complete all during the autumn, between August - Oct 24.

Can I ask whether this is acceptable?

@Michael Waldron will be able to provide the leagues bank statement showing any payments made to CSNPC for these amounts, or I assume a bank rec statement. Further, also provide the proof of their account details (you will need the leagues / not ours as they are the custodians of the monies).

I can show payments CSNPC made to the suppliers from our accounts system for those claim 3 invoice, and I attach that for your information. Please note we pay our Idverde invoices in bulk, so all the small amounts are included within the total overall sum, as shown in the example below. All dates of payment within the table.

Awaiting response, I sent a chasing email on 22.08.24. However, received notification that Takunda had now left the foundation. As a result, there is current an outstanding sum of grant monies released for Mannington Recreation.

Members will need to consider approval of enhancement works (as per attached quote), pending the release of the foundation support funding.



Quote QU1249.pdf

Works for Southbrook and Seven Fields (below). Will be completed with existing available grant monies (in full or part) and paid directly by the Leagues.

Seven Fields:



Quote QU1248.pdf

League Funding - £6,832.92

Parish Contribution - £2,035.32

Southbrook:



Quote QU1250.pdf

League Funding - £2,533.20

Parish Contribution - £0