

Leisure & Recreation Committee

Report: Sports Field Remedial Works Update

Date: 4th June 2026

Report Author: Andrew Briggs – Head of Operations

1. Purpose of Report

This report provides Members with an update on the Council's ongoing grass pitch enhancement programme, including:

- Completion of scarification and weed treatment works;
- Progress of the previously approved Verti-Drain programme;
- Upcoming grass seed and fertiliser applications; and
- Planned end-of-season maintenance operations.

2. Background

In April 2026 Members approved a structured programme of grass pitch improvement works aligned with Football Foundation and PitchPower recommendations.

This programme forms part of the Council's wider commitment to improving natural turf pitch quality across:

- Mannington Recreation Ground
- Seven Fields
- Southbrook Recreation Ground
- Moredon Sporting Hub

The programme is supported through a combination of:

- Council budget provision; and
- Football Foundation funding secured in partnership with the Swindon Saturday and Sunday Football Leagues.

3. Progress Update

3.1 Verti-Drain and Verti-Quake Works

As previously reported:

- Verti-Drain works have now been completed across all four sites.
- Verti-Quake deep decompaction works remain scheduled for Autumn 2026, aligning with best practice seasonal timing.

These works have addressed key compaction and drainage issues identified through PitchPower inspections.

3.2 Scarification Works

Scarification works have now been completed across the relevant football pitches.

These works involved removal of organic matter (thatch) and surface debris to:

- improve air and water movement within the surface profile;
- support seed establishment; and
- improve overall turf health and surface quality.

The works have formed part of the next stage of the Council's structured pitch recovery programme following completion of aeration works.

Seven Fields



Southbrook



3.3 Weed Treatment

Selective herbicide treatment has also now been completed as part of the Council's annual weed management programme delivered through Idverde.

This treatment supports:

- control of broadleaf weeds;
- improved turf quality; and
- reduction in competition against new grass establishment.

4. Upcoming Works Programme

4.1 Grass Seed and Fertiliser Application

Grass seed and fertiliser application works are scheduled for completion during the week commencing:

25th May 2026

These works will support:

- turf recovery following scarification;
- restoration of grass coverage;
- improved turf density; and
- overall pitch resilience heading into the next playing season.

Members should note that fertilisation and overseeding will likely result in temporary accelerated grass growth during the establishment period. This is expected and supports long-term pitch improvement.

4.2 Goal Post Removal and End-of-Season Works

Goal posts are scheduled to be removed for the season by the end of May 2026.

Following removal of the posts, standard post-season renovation works will commence, including:

- goal mouth repairs;
- localised overseeding;
- surface recovery works; and
- ongoing maintenance preparation ahead of the 2026/27 season.

5. Operational Considerations

Members should note:

- Grass establishment and fertiliser application will temporarily increase mowing requirements over the coming weeks.
- Scarification arisings have been managed on site in agreed locations where appropriate, with officers retaining discretion to remove material where required to protect public amenity or pitch quality.
- Weather conditions remain an important factor in successful seed establishment and turf recovery.

6. Financial Position

The grass pitch enhancement programme remains within the approved budget allocation and continues to be supported through anticipated Football Foundation maintenance funding in partnership with the Swindon Saturday and Sunday Football Leagues.

6.1 Confirmed and Scheduled Costs

Work Item	Status	Cost
Verti-Drain and Verti-Quake works – Merrett Services	Verti-Drain completed / Verti-Quake scheduled Autumn 2026	£8,500
Scarification works – Idverde	Completed	£6,842
Weed spraying – Idverde	Completed	£2,176
Grass seed	Scheduled w/c 25 May 2026	£6,992
Fertiliser application	Scheduled w/c 25 May 2026	£4,048
Total committed / scheduled programme cost		£28,558

6.2 Budget Context

The Council has approved:

Funding Source	Amount
Grass Pitch Enhancement Budget 2026/27	£30,000
Additional Moredon Sporting Hub grass pitch allocation	£7,452
Total Council budget provision	£37,452

The total committed and scheduled programme cost is currently **£28,558**, leaving an estimated remaining Council budget balance of:

£8,894

In addition, anticipated Football Foundation funding of approximately **£15,000** is expected across the relevant sites, which will help offset the Council's net expenditure on these works.

7. Strategic Benefits

The works undertaken form part of a structured, phased improvement programme and are intended to:

- improve pitch quality and resilience;
- support Football Foundation compliance;
- reduce cancellations and drainage issues;
- improve player experience and safety; and
- protect the Council's long-term sports pitch assets.



Hi Andrew,

Great news! 🇬🇧 We've received your PitchPower inspection(s).

The experts at the Grounds Management Association will get to work on your bespoke assessment report with the advice and recommendations you need to get your grass pitch match fit.

We plan to get your assessment report to you within 21 days. If you haven't heard from us within that time, please email

8. Recommendation

Members are requested to:

1. **NOTE** the completion of scarification and weed treatment works across the Council's football pitches.
2. **NOTE** that grass seed and fertiliser applications are scheduled for the week commencing 25th May 2026.
3. **NOTE** that goal posts will be removed by the end of May 2026 to allow standard post season renovation works to commence.
4. **NOTE** the continued progress of the Council's structured grass pitch enhancement programme.