

Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Parks and Recreation committee meeting held 17th September 2025 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.

Present: Cllrs Bach, Hames, Edwards, Tait and Bell.

In attendance: Ian Rawle – Parks & Buildings Manager.

Christine Hutchins – Friends of Westward Ho! Park (FOTWHOP).

Barbara Potts – Volunteer Gardeners (Westward Ho! Park).

2509/307 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)

Cllr Hodson, Cllr Newman McKie and Cllr Whittaker tendered there apologies, the reasons for which were accepted.

2509/308 Chair's Announcements

The Chair made no announcements.

2509/309 To receive any dispensations and disclosable pecuniary or other interests

Members were reminded that all interests must be declared prior to the item being discussed.

2509/310 To agree the agenda as published

It was **resolved** to agree the agenda as published.

Proposed Cllr Bach, Seconded Cllr Bell (all in favour)

2509/311 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Parks and Recreation Committee held on 16th July 2025

It was **resolved** that to approve the minutes as a true and correct record, which were signed by the Chair.

Proposed Cllr Bell, Seconded Cllr Hames (majority in favour, 1 abstention – not present at the meeting).

2509/312 Public Participation

Members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. Each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 4 minutes. The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing orders shall not exceed 20 minutes.

There were no members of the public present other than Christine Hutchins (FOTWHOP), who would be invited to contribute at the relevant time.

2509/313 To receive an update on actions

The Action table is presented overleaf.

The council has agreed to remove the following action points from the agenda for the next meeting: **Action Points 2, 3, 4, and 5.**

Action		January 2025	March 2025	May 2025	September 2025
1	Replacement of the ball fencing at Lords Meadow, a substantial sum has been included in the budget for work required at Lords Meadow for next year.	The damp weather has caused some issues. The contractor is being reminded the work needs completing. ONGOING	The contractor will undertake the works in April 25. Date TBC ONGOING	The contractor will undertake the works in April 25. Date TBC ONGOING	No Change
2	To consult the community on the use of outdoor gym.		INCOMPLETE	The committee has decided to remove the gym equipment due to safety concerns regarding its current condition COMPLETE	Consider removing
3	Churchfields Skate Park – paint and ‘graffiti’.	The Parks & Recreation Manager has been in discussion with a graffiti artist ONGOING		This committee agreed it would remain as painted now until it is next refurbished. COMPLETE	Consider removing
4	Tennis Court gate – quality of work	The matter has been raised with the LTA directly and the Surveying Firm overseeing the work. The gate installer has advised the Surveyor that the replacement parts will be installed. No date for the work has yet been advised. ONGOING		The work has been completed by the installer. The condition will continue to be monitored. COMPLETE	Consider removing
5	Reinstall sign bee friendly planting at Anchor Park	The sign has not yet been reinstated. The Council is advised to wait until the new work is undertaken to establish wildflower swathes at the Park. ONGOING		The work has been completed by the Maintenance Team. COMPLETE	Consider removing

6	Actions arising from Play Inspection Reports			On the agenda ONGOING	Works to all Parks continue
7	Schedule Play Inspection Reports for 2025-26			Scheduled for January/February 2026 COMPLETE	Keep on agenda to roll through 26 - 27
8	The installation of CCTV at Westward Ho! Park within the Northam Town Councils grounds.	The Parks & Recreation Manager is currently looking into costings and suitable locations for the installation. ONGOING	The Parks & Recreation Manager is currently looking into costings and suitable locations for the installation. ONGOING	Awaiting quote from contractor. ONGOING	Awaiting camera location conformation from M&E alarms
9	The volunteer gardeners asked the Council to help recruit volunteers through its communication channels. Further discussion with the Town Clerk and Community Engagement Officer is needed.	Not started. INCOMPLETE	Not started. INCOMPLETE	Started. An email has been sent to Barbara asking whether the Council should design a poster or if there is an existing one we can use for social media promotion.	Facebook has been used to publish recruitment posters. It is suggested that these are reposted every six weeks to maintain visibility and engagement.

2509/314 To receive a report from the chair of FOTWHOP**Report by Christinne Hutchins****200 Club**

- Participation numbers lower than previous year (125 numbers sold as of August).
- Healthy bank account maintained.
- Application submitted to Burrows Charity for a sensory garden bench (recycled plastic, wheelchair accessible).
- Plans in place for bird feeding stations, funded from existing finances.

Westward Ho! Residents' Association

- Attendance remains poor, reflecting wider community engagement issues.
- New Chair appointed, bringing fresh ideas.
- Publicity efforts underway to encourage participation, including use of Nextdoor app and local notice boards.

Gardeners' Hours

- June: 97 hours.
- July: 112 hours.
- August: 97.5 hours.
- Annual return submitted to the Charity Commission.
- Charity AGM takes place in May.

Noticeboards

- New noticeboard created by Men's Shed and installed in the sensory garden.
- Existing noticeboard remains in place on the building side.

This was **noted** by the Council.

2509/315 a) To note the popularity of, and positive feedback from the community regarding, the temporary pump track at Lords Meadow Park**Verbal Report – Pump Track Feedback**

Provided by the Parks and Building Manager

- The temporary pump track was very well received by the public.
- Many residents contacted the Council via email and social media to express the need for a permanent pump track in Northam.
- The temporary pump track was the Council's most viewed and liked content on social media.
- Community feedback highlighted that the current track is too small for teenagers, but ideal for ages 3–10.

This was **noted** by the Council.

b) To resolve to instruct a pump track specialist to provide advice and costings for the potential installation of a permanent pump track, either at Lords Meadow Park or Burrough Farm.

It was **resolved to instruct a pump track specialist** to provide advice and costings for the potential installation of a permanent pump track, either at Lord's Meadow Park or Burrough Farm.

- **Sites considered:** Lord's Meadow (preferred due to accessibility and popularity) and Burrough Farm (less favoured due to location).
- **Plan:** Obtain expert opinion and cost estimate.
- **Next steps:** If feasible and locations are suitable, seek Full Council approval and proceed to tender.
- **Funding opportunities:** Sports Lottery and Section 106 and other funding to be explored.

- **Design considerations:** Track to be suitable for all ages, with potential for outer/inner loops to accommodate different user groups.

Proposed Cllr Bach, Seconded Cllr Bell (all in favour)

2509/316 To consider and approve the planting plan for Anchor Park, Lords Meadow and Westward Ho!

It was **resolved** to approve the planting plans for Anchor Park, Lord's Meadow, and Westward Ho! Park, as presented by the Parks and Buildings Manager.

Planting scheme to include daffodils, bluebells, crocuses, and snowdrops to ensure an extended blooming season.

Proposed Cllr Edwards, Seconded Cllr Tait (all in favour)

2509/317 To note and acknowledge the completion of essential repair works at Appledore Skatepark

It was **noted** that repairs and essential works had been completed at Churchill Skatepark, as reported by the Parks and Buildings Manager.

- Discovery of dry rot and the need for improved ventilation.
- Works completed in two days without requiring park closure, resulting in substantial cost savings by undertaking the work in-house.
- Plan in place to check and improve ventilation to prevent future rot.

2509/318 Proposal for Resident-Inclusive Committee at Anchor Park

A proposal was received regarding the formation of a resident-inclusive committee at Anchor Park.

- Letter received from a resident/proposer seeking to form a community group.
- Council noted that working groups for each park have been encouraged to allow community input and volunteer coordination, without creating direct committee membership.
- Emphasis on ensuring Anchor Park remains a community resource, not dominated by any single group (e.g., schools).
- Council to contact the resident/proposer for further details regarding vision, group size, proposed activities, and level of commitment.

A clearer understanding of these points will assist the Committee in determining how this proposal could work alongside the Council.

Proposed Cllr Hames, Seconded Cllr Tait (all in favour)

There being no further business the meeting closed at 19:17pm.

Signed.....Dated.....