

RLA – 21 SEPTEMBER 2016  
Parks Report

- Swanscombe Park

Some of the play equipment and benches are suffering the effects of the school summer holidays and the parks staff are sourcing parts and making repairs. The Town Councils Programme of Summer Entertainment has been very popular again this year.

Despite the level of damage to the Town Bowls Green, mainly caused by foxes, the club report that it has played very well this season. The possibility of installing a low voltage electric fence around the Green to deter foxes has been raised by Istead Rise Bowls Club. If such a fence was to work successfully it **could save a lot of man-hours** and result in a better playing surface.

A group of students from Dartford Science and Technology College came in as part of their Community Day and painted the outside of the old toilet block. The female students didn't seem to mind getting covered in paint and were hardworking and a credit to their school.

- Manor Park

We are still collecting a disproportionate amount of litter in this area as well as encountering some minor damage to play equipment.

- Broomfield:

The cricket season has finished and both home teams have said that they were very happy with the playing surface that the staff had produced.

The football pitches have all been laid out for the new season, which has just got underway. Two motor scooters were set alight on the field during the summer and a small area of pitch 1 has been damaged and will take a while to recover.

Paving slabs that had become uneven on the footpath to the Pavilion have been re-laid by the Parks Staff.

- Heritage Park

The damaged play equipment has been repaired.

Unfortunately there have been a number of fires in both the meadow area and the Skull Site area in recent weeks.

- Knockhall

The permanent goal has been damaged and has been taken down and will be replaced in the next few weeks.

A hinge on the vehicle access gate snapped and new hinges have been fitted. The cover/lid on the meter box, behind the changing rooms, has been replaced.

- Spring Vale

Work to trees at the top of the bank has been completed.

A large branch that had fallen on/in to the road and was quickly cut up and cleared.

RLA – 21 SEPTEMBER 2016  
Parks Report

- Valley View

There has been a large increase in the amount of litter and debris in the park and local residents have complained of anti-social behaviour from a group of youths at night (this has been reported to the KCC Community Warden).

- Equipment

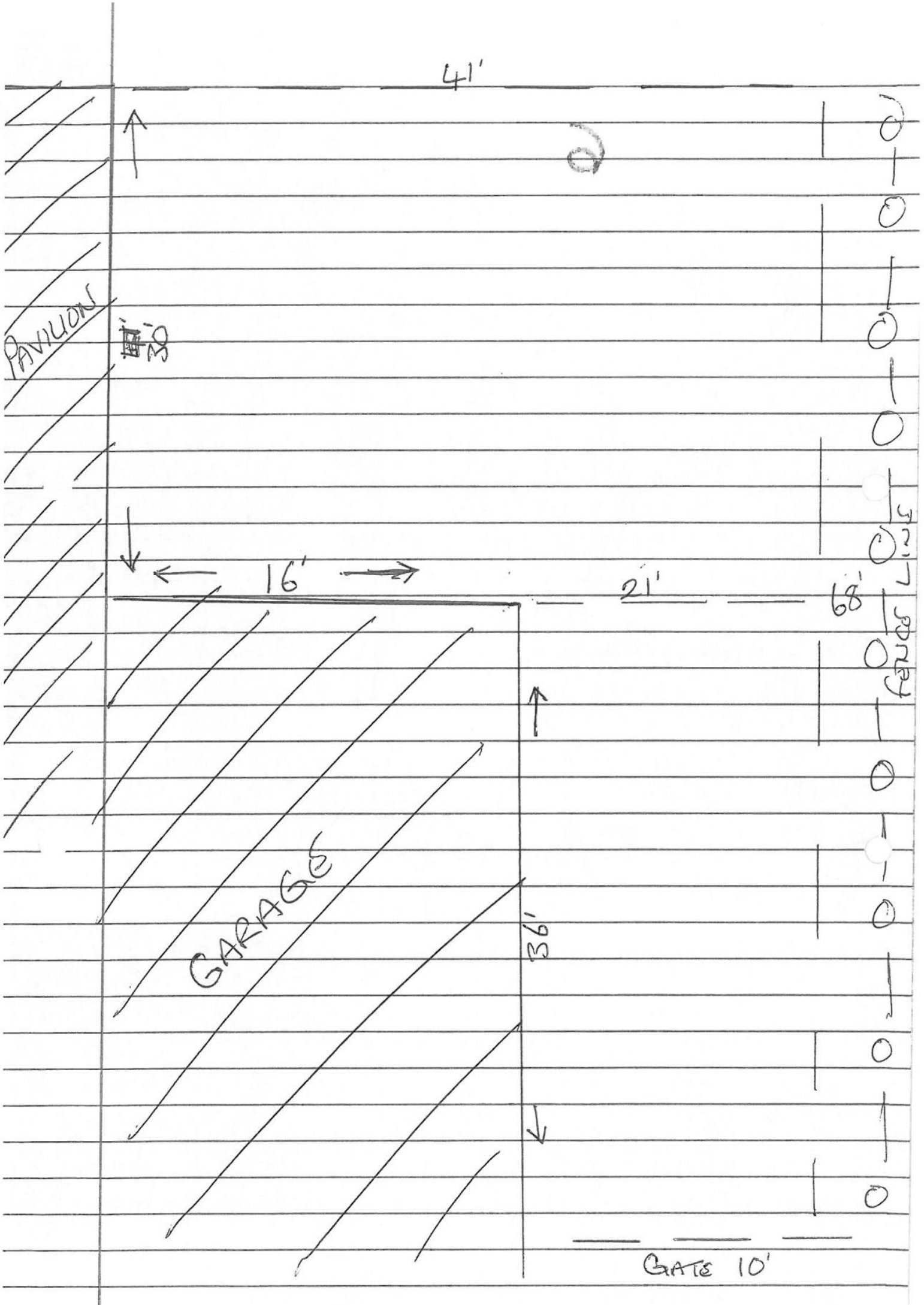
The bowls mower has had some mechanical issues this year and has required repairs on a few occasions. Although it isn't necessary to consider replacing it at this stage, an allowance for an increase in maintenance costs should be made.

**AGENDA ITEM**

RLA 21/a/16

**6**





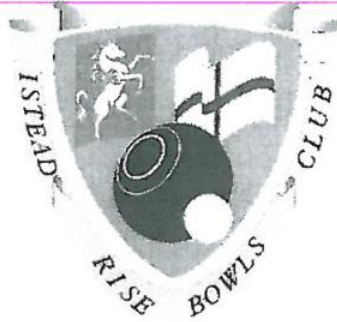
<b>Swanscombe Park</b>	4
1 by play area	
1 top right corner	
1 top gate	
1 rose beds	
<b>Manor Park</b>	1
1 on railings	
<b>Broomfield Park (anti clock from main gate)</b>	6
1 by bottom kissing gate	
1 kissing gate under poplars	
1 by Broomfield Road car park	
1 by kissing gate by block of garages	
1 kissing gate next to RDR	
1 by pavilion	
<b>Neptune Park</b>	2
1 by left of footpath	
1 by right of footpath	
<b>Knockhall Park</b>	3
1 under conifers	
1 far right corner of football pitch	
1 under poplars	
1 at end of DS6 in grounds of Ingress Gardens	
<b>Heritage Park</b>	3
1 main gate	
1 by kissing gate adj to play area	
1 back steps leading to Childs Crescent	
<b>Pacific Close</b>	1
1 opp Leisure Centre	
<b>Footpath DS6</b>	
Footpath DS6 (Craylands to Knockhall)	1
<b>Saxon Court/Alkerden Lane</b>	1
On strip of land by bus stop	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>

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# AGENDA ITEM 7.2

21/9/16

Chairman : Alistair Boyland  
Hon Secretary : Colin Cross  
Treasurer : Margaret Couchman  
Captain : Peter Hopkins



Colin Cross  
[REDACTED]  
Istead Rise  
GRAVESEND  
DA13 9JG

Tel : 01474 [REDACTED]  
: [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]@[REDACTED]

Affiliated to ECB

Date : ...4<sup>th</sup> July 2016

Graham,

The Bowls Club Committee have asked me to write to you as we have serious concerns with the condition of the Bowling Green.

We are under almost constant attack from urban Foxes. The head greenkeeper (Danny Usher) is in agreement with our concerns as he is unable to keep up with the repairs, as fast as he repairs some damage the next day there is more damage to contend with. If you liaise with Danny I understand that he has some photographic evidence for you to see.

I know that I asked you once before to consider some low voltage fencing around the green which was refused on reasonable grounds at that time. As we are now in a situation whereby the problem is worsening I wonder if you and your colleagues at Dartford Council would be prepared to reconsider.

If you know of any other ways we can prevent this kind of damage we are open to your suggestions.

I would like to say that Danny does a good job and I feel we should support him all we can in his endeavour to give us the best surface for our club Matches.

Regards

Colin Cross  
Istead Rise Bowls Club

S.F

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## Graham Blew

---

**From:** Colin Cross <colincross43@swanscombeandgreenhithe.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 22 July 2016 09:49  
**To:** Graham Blew  
**Subject:** RE: Reply: Reply : Bowling Green Concerns  
**Attachments:** Electric Fence.jpg; Electrtic Fence.pdf

**Importance:** High

Graham, thanks for the note. It's not forgotten but I have been trying to gather information. However I can attach a brochure that I have recently received for your perusal. It is my intention to visit other Bowling Greens have already installed a similar system so that I can evaluate what exactly needs to be done and at what cost. Furthermore a good point was made by Danny Usher which is that the system only needs to be powered when the Park is closed which prevents any danger to the public. Will be in touch again when I can gather more information.

Regards Colin Cross

---

**From:** Graham Blew [mailto:graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithe.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 21, 2016 3:27 PM  
**To:** 'colincross43@swanscombeandgreenhithe.gov.uk'  
**Cc:** Martin Harding  
**Subject:** Reply: Reply : Bowling Green Concerns  
**Importance:** High

Colin

I do not appear to have received a response from you to my previous enquiry (below). Could provide me with the specification of the low voltage fencing you are suggesting and details of how this would be maintained and when you would be thinking of installing such equipment were the Town Council to agree to this request

Yours sincerely,

Graham Blew  
Town Clerk

SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL  
Council Offices | The Grove | Swanscombe | Kent | DA10 0GA.  
Tel: 01322 385513 | Fax: 01322 385849  
[www.swanscombeandgreenhithe.gov.uk](http://www.swanscombeandgreenhithe.gov.uk)

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**From:** Graham Blew  
**Sent:** 05 July 2016 10:33  
**To:** 'colincross43@swanscombeandgreenhithe.gov.uk' <colincross43@swanscombeandgreenhithe.gov.uk>  
**Cc:** Martin Harding <[rfo@swanscombeandgreenhithe.gov.uk](mailto:rfo@swanscombeandgreenhithe.gov.uk)>



# 'Bowling Green Protector Kit'

## 208100

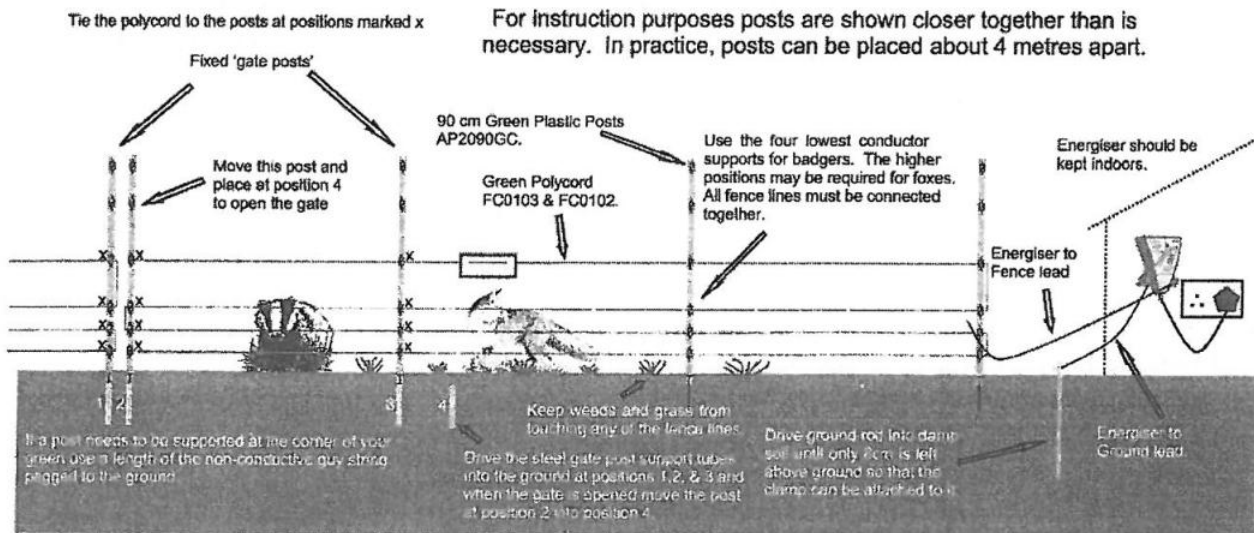
### Setup Instructions

Your Bowling Green Protector Kit includes the following items:

- 40x green 90cm plastic posts
- 750m of green polycord
- 1x PR05 Mains/Battery Powered Fence Energiser
- 1x Energiser to fence lead
- 1x Energiser to ground lead
- 1x Grounding rod & clamp
- 4x Warning signs
- 4x Steel Gate Pipes
- 4x Ground Pegs

For extra posts order part no. AP2090GC.  
 For extra polycord order part no. FC0103.  
 If your mains socket is further than 5m from your fence then you will need to use a longer lead out cable. These are available in 20, 50 and 100m rolls, part numbers are AAC020, AAC050 and AAC100 respectively. You may wish to control your energiser using mains timer part no. ES0040.

1. Position your fence energiser indoors so that it is protected from direct rain. Leave unplugged until your fence is erected.
2. Drive the grounding rod into the ground until about 8cm is left exposed, then attach the clamp. Attach the stripped end of the green and yellow earth lead under the middle screw and the other end to the ground terminal (green) on the energiser.
3. Push the plastic posts into the ground about 4 metres apart, closer if you have spare posts. At the corners you may need to tie the posts to a secure object such as a wooden fence or guy string them to the ground using the string and pegs provided.
4. Tie one end of the polycord to the lowest conductor support at a post, continue the polycord through the next post's conductor support and so on until you reach the other end of the fence. At the final post bring the polycord up to the next conductor support and then back along to the beginning again. Repeat until you have four horizontal lines of polycord all made from one long piece and finally tie the end to the final support. Join the two rolls of cord with a simple reef knot. Before completing the top line thread the polycord through the two holes in the warning signs so that it hangs in a clearly visible position, one for each side of the green.
5. Many players will be able to simply step over the fence (make sure it is switched off), but your kit is supplied with the components to make a simply entry gate.
6. Connect the 5m lead out cable to the fence terminal (red) on the energiser and the other end to the fence polycord using the crocodile clip. Your fence is now ready to plug in and switch on.



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[www.countrystoredirect.com](http://www.countrystoredirect.com)  
 or call 01233 712948

PREVIOUS SIMILAR REQUEST

**FILING**

14 March 2008

[REDACTED]  
Secretary  
Swanscombe Downs Bowls Club  
[REDACTED]  
Swanscombe  
Kent. DA10 0AS

**REQUEST TO TOWN COUNCIL FOR THE ERECTION OF AN  
"ELECTRIC" FENCE AROUND THE BOWKLS GREEN.**

Dear [REDACTED],

Further to my previous letter, dated 1 February 2008, the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee met last night and agreed the following:

The Council, having received advice which was less than positive regarding the use of "electronic" fences in public spaces, are not willing, at the present time, to proceed with the Bowls Club request. If you are able to supply any further information or details then the Council would welcome any future proposals and suggestions.

I realise this is not the response you were hoping for but please do not hesitate to contact me if any further clarification on the Committee's decision is required.

Many thanks.

Yours sincerely

Graham Blew  
Town Clerk

**Certified COPY**

**Graham Blew**

**From:** Eric Davis [Eric.Davis@dartford.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** 13 February 2008 11:03  
**To:** Graham Blew  
**Cc:** Chris Amey  
**Subject:**

**AGENDA ITEM****(1.1)**

I give below the views of our safety officer

"The response of using electric fencing may be suitable for agricultural work, but not in my opinion suitable for the urban area where persons who might be susceptible to harm are likely to be present i.e. pacemakers or heart problems.  
 I am assuming that the proposal is for either 12v battery or stepped down transformer to 12v. My experience is that foxes will happily take a 12v zap. Gamekeepers traditionally used a single wire mounted about 2 to 3 inches above the ground to give the smelling snout a zap, but again not a true deterrent.

Best suggestion is to consider trapping (not really a realistic option) or the bio treatments - better still remove the food source, or offer a sacrificial loosely dug cache area

Sorry not to have more positive views"

I am sorry if this is more in the way of guidance and not quoting any "chapter and verse". I and my team have additional concerns of child safety, bad publicity and vandalism. Additionally to have to put up warning signs in a public park does not exactly give a good image.

Eric Davis

**From:** Graham Blew [mailto:graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** 12 February 2008 09:42  
**To:** Eric Davis  
**Subject:**  
**Importance:** High

Eric

Thank you.

Graham



Town Clerk at Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council  
<http://www.swanscombeandgreenhithe.tknp.parishes.gov.uk>  
 Tel: 01322 385513, Fax: 01322 385849

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The Town Council would encourage you to consider the environment - do you really need to print this email?

**From:** Eric Davis [mailto:Eric.Davis@dartford.gov.uk]

13/02/2008

**Certified COPY**

# SWANSCOMBEDOWNS BOWLS CLUB

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
SWANSCOMBE  
KENT  
DA10 OAS  
TEL 01322 [REDACTED]  
SECRETARY

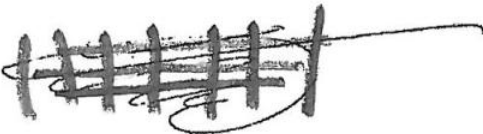
RECEIVED  
20 NOV 2007

20th November 2007

Dear Graham.

We are having some problems with foxes digging holes in the bowling green this year & would like the council permission to erect a 12 volt fence around the perimeter of the bowling green. Also we would like to position a 10 ft container along the front of the garage in the public bowls area to store our top dressing, seed, mowers & other tools etc. Also I note there is no progress in a water heater for the men's toilets being fitted, since a request in April this year.

Yours faithfully



[REDACTED]  
Secretary

**Certified COPY**

11. CLERK'S REPORT

11.1 Swanscombedowns Bowls Club – Facilities Requests

Further to minute 599, a request to erect an "electric" fence round the bowls green, Dartford Borough Council Safety Officer's response is attached.

The Bowls Club were asked to supply a specification or example of the type of fence they were wishing to erect but no response has been received.

**Recommendation:** Members to discuss and advise accordingly.

11.2 Safety Inspection of Playground Equipment

Please find attached the results of our annual playground safety inspection. The items identified as High Risk will be discussed with the Park's Foreman to decide the most appropriate way they can be resolved. The items that Wicksteed have quoted to remedy will be carried out by them and will cost £1631.94 which is a budgeted expense.

**Recommendation:** To note the Safety Inspection of Play Equipment and approve the remedial actions, as indicated in the report, to be carried out.

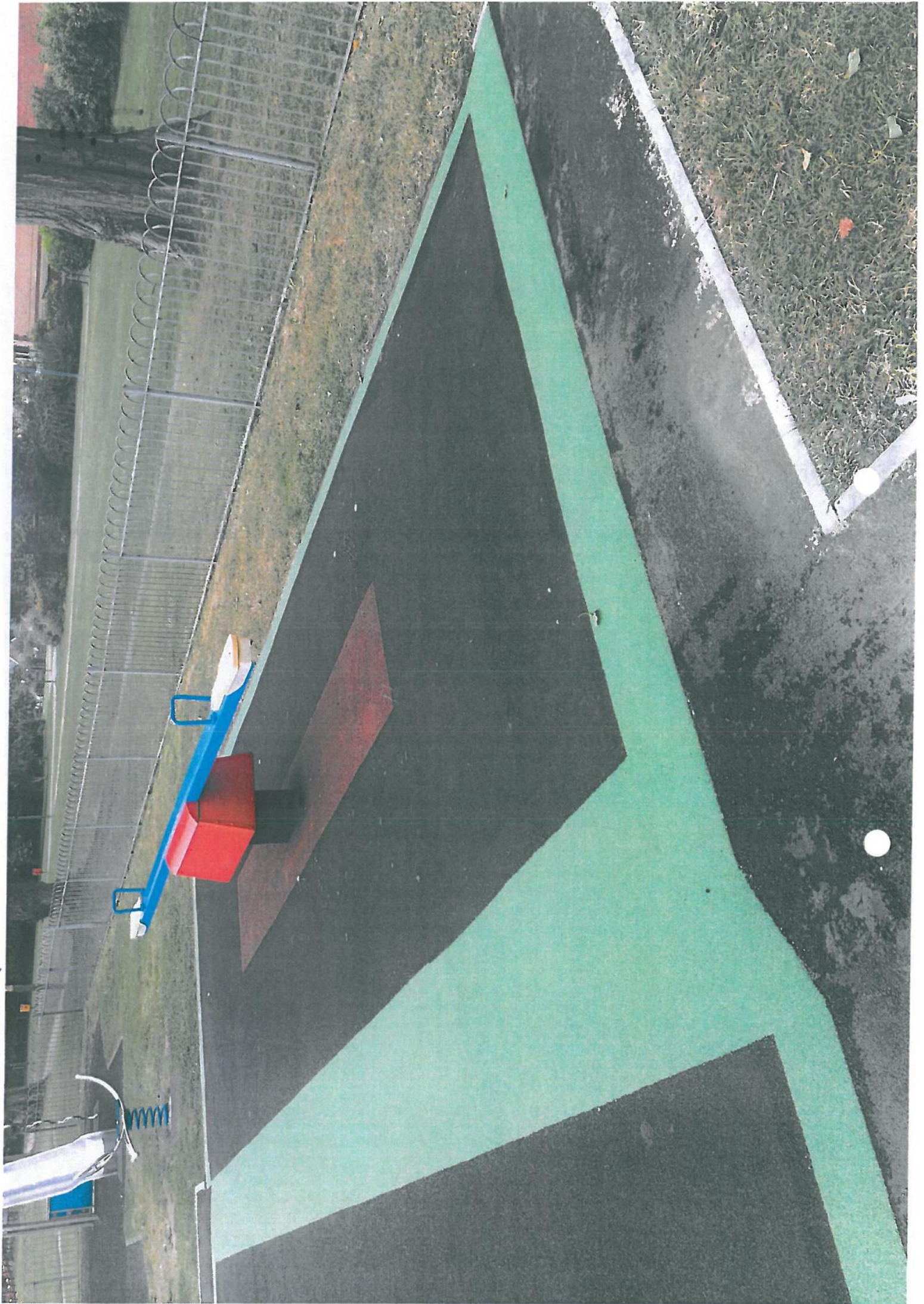
**Certified COPY**

AGENDA ITEM

7.4.

ALA 21/19/16









(x) (100m) 1500m

1st repair 150003



lot repair



ist repair

Woomfield Park 02-04-15



Original Condition

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AGENDA ITEM

RLA 2/9/16

7.5







Graham Blew

From: [redacted]@btinternet.com>  
Sent: 15 August 2016 09:34  
To: Graham Blew  
Subject: FW: St Peter & St Pauls,



From: [redacted] [mailto:[redacted]@btinternet.com]  
Sent: 15 August 2016 9:12 AM  
To: [redacted]@btinternet.com  
Subject: St Peter & St Pauls,

Dear Graham,

Further to you recent enquiry for replacement stone paving at the above.  
We have tried in vain to source the stone sizes in a salvaged stone to match the original pattern on site at present.  
Unfortunately we cannot find stone of this size and so we have had to quote based upon a replacement stone being of smaller sizes which will change the current jointing pattern. We will of course provide the largest stones available to reduce this effect to the minimum.

Therefore our price to replace the stone will be £1950.00 plus vat.

Kindest Regards

Total Control Panel

To: [graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk) [Remove this sender from my allow list](#)

[Login](#)

Fr

Yo

*our allow list.*

d.f



Daniel Usher  
Swanscombe and Greenhithe  
Town Council  
Council Offices  
The Grove  
Swanscombe  
Kent DA10 0GA

Quotation	→ Site Address	Swanscombe Street	→ Date	10/05/2016
	→ Works	Church paving repairs	→ Quotation No	

ITEM

- 1.0 Erect safety barriers to protect public.
- 1.1 Excavate existing slabs 6no small slabs, 6no ex-large slabs, dig out 100mm and remove spoil from site.
- 1.2 Compact ground and lay 75mm hard standing sub base
- 1.3 Relay new slab work with mortar pointing. Client to decide on slabs to be used.

For the sum of:  
Excluding Vat

-----  
£964.00

Signed on behalf of





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Graham Blew

**From:** Graham Blew  
**Sent:** 15 August 2016 16:08  
**To:** 'karen melbourne-dowse'  
**Subject:** Reply : Reply: Funday request - Sunday 28 May 2017  
**Importance:** High

Karen

I will ensure the Council consider this request at their next meeting and respond with their decision.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Blew  
Town Clerk

SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL  
Council Offices | The Grove | Swanscombe | Kent | DA10 0GA.  
Tel: 01322 385513 | Fax: 01322 385849  
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**From:** karen melbourne-dowse [mailto:[thepavilion2013@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:thepavilion2013@hotmail.co.uk)]  
**Sent:** 15 August 2016 14:29  
**To:** Graham Blew <[graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: Reply: Funday request - Sunday 28 May 2017  
**Importance:** High

Hi Graham , yes we do and will  
Regards  
Karen

---

**From:** [graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk)  
**To:** [thepavilion2013@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:thepavilion2013@hotmail.co.uk)  
**Subject:** Reply: Funday request - Sunday 28 May 2017  
**Date:** Mon, 15 Aug 2016 12:29:09 +0000

Karen

Before I submit your request for consideration by the Town Council can you ensure the Pavilion Committee considers the following conditions and confirms their agreement to them:

1. ~~None~~ of the Town Councils sports facility hirers are to be disturbed or inconvenienced by this event in any way;
2. The area designated by the Town Council to be used is agreed and, if required, marked out;
3. A named representative of the Pavilion to be designated to take responsibility for the event both **prior** to, during and after its completion;
4. The Pavilion to assume all liability for, and attached to, the event and to obtain and supply the council with all the required insurance covers for the event and for any/all of the equipment to be used during the event;
5. The Pavilion to be responsible for all medical, safety and security arrangements for the event and to provide confirmation, **prior** to the event, that all the relevant Health & Safety, Fire and permissions have been obtained for the event;
6. The Pavilion to acknowledge the Town Councils support in all advertisement materials used for the event;
7. Advertisement/publicity for the event to be appropriate with all permissions/licenses required obtained;
8. The Pavilion to carry out and supply all the appropriate Risk Assessments **prior** to the event;
9. The Pavilion to be responsible for any/all damage caused as a result of the event and that this includes any cost incurred by the Town Council as a result of the event;
10. The Town Council's decision on whether the event goes ahead due to weather conditions be final and not challenged;
11. Access to the park to be at the absolute discretion of the Town Council;
12. Only the activities/facilities agreed with the Town Council **prior** to the event are to take place;
13. The Pavilion be responsible for clearing any litter etc. resulting from the event and this is to be done immediately after the event and to the satisfaction of the Town Council.
14. The Terms and Conditions of the Lease for the Pavilion are adhered to for the activities taking place on the designated area of the park (specifically 4.32.1 to 4.32.8)

In your response could you also advise of the times the park is being requested to be used fall between. Previously it has been 12.30 till 4.30 pm

Yours sincerely,

Graham Blew  
**Town Clerk**

SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL  
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Tel: 01322 385513 | Fax: 01322 385849  
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**From:** karen melbourne-dowse [<mailto:thepavilion2013@hotmail.co.uk>]

**Sent:** 13 August 2016 22:24

**To:** Graham Blew <[graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** Funday request - Sunday 28 May 2017

Hi Graham

We would like to do a fun day again next May bank holiday weekend ,Sunday 28th. We would like to request the use of the park area we have been allowed before. We want to start planning ASAP to ensure it happens next year as it was missed this year by many. I would be grateful if you can let me know if this is OK

Thank you

Karen

---

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[graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk)

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RLA 21/9/16

**Graham Blew**

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**From:** Graham Blew  
**Sent:** 11 August 2016 07:47  
**To:** 'Keith Frenchum'  
**Subject:** Confirmation : Imposition of Court fees when seeking removal orders against unlawful traveller encampments.

**Importance:** High

Keith

I am more than happy to supply written assurance that if DBC is asked or required to act on behalf of the Town Council in relation to UTE's, we will appropriately reimburse the requisite Court costs as indicated (£205.00).

Yours sincerely,

Graham Blew  
Town Clerk

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**From:** Keith Frenchum [mailto:Keith.Frenchum@dartford.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** 10 August 2016 15:12  
**To:** Bean Parish Council (beanparishcouncil@btinternet.com) <beanparishcouncil@btinternet.com>; keithpc@btinternet.com; longfieldparishcouncil@btconnect.com; clerk@southfleetpc.kentparishes.gov.uk; clerk@stoneparishcouncil.com; Graham Blew <graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk>; clerk-wilmingtonpc@tiscali.co.uk; palminder.sandher@kent.gov.uk; bill.forrester@kent.gov.uk; 'kathryn-sahpc@dsi.pipex.com' <kathryn-sahpc@dsi.pipex.com>  
**Cc:** Mark Salisbury <Mark.Salisbury@dartford.gov.uk>; Richard Cherry <Richard.Cherry@dartford.gov.uk>; Stephen Perkins <Stephen.Perkins@dartford.gov.uk>; Allan Thompson <Allan.Thompson@dartford.gov.uk>; Martin Smith <Martin.Smith@dartford.gov.uk>; Lewis Kirnon <Lewis.Kirnon@dartford.gov.uk>; Stephen Whitehead <Stephen.Whitehead@dartford.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Imposition of Court fees when seeking removal orders against unlawful traveller encampments.  
**Importance:** High

Dear Councillors, Parish Clerks, Sir, Madam.

I wish to draw to your attention an important (and unfortunate) development relating to Court costs and fees now being attached to the applications made by Officers when undertaking duties in relation to Unauthorised Traveller Encampments (UTE's).

There has been ongoing correspondence between the Clerk of Medway Magistrates Court and Dartford Borough Council Solicitors regarding the validity of these charges. The final result being that it is now incumbent upon the respective Local Authorities, Parish Councils and Landowners, such as Kent County Council and the Highways Authority, to pay fees for any appearance at Magistrates Court when seeking removal orders against unlawful encampments.

The paragraph below is a short excerpt of the correspondence and the justification for this fee now being charged.

'A fee is payable under The Magistrates' Courts Fees (Amendment) Order 2014 as s78 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. The application is made under a civil complaint. The £205.00 is payable from now for all applications for removal of property, persons or vehicles from land'

Obviously, this has budgetary implications for the relevant Parish Councils and landowners who, in the past, have relied on Dartford Borough Council Enforcement Officers to effect the removal of UTE's on their behalf for which, to date, no costs have been imposed . It would be unreasonable to expect Dartford Borough Council to meet these costs when acting on behalf of another interested party, therefore I wish to seek your written assurances that if DBC is asked or required to act on your behalf in relation to UTE's, you will appropriately reimburse the requisite Court costs.

I'm sorry to have to bring this to your attention and can confirm that this is a national instruction from the courts service.

Yours sincerely, Keith M Frenchum.  
Licensing Enforcement Officer.

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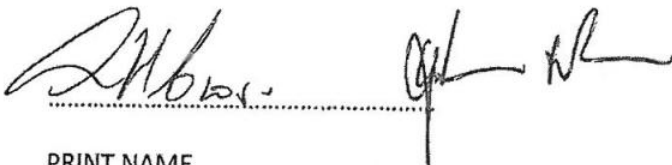
DA1 1DR

We, the undersigned, authorise Dartford Borough Council to instigate legal action on our behalf in relation to the unlawful occupation of land, when it occurs, within our respective Parish boundaries, on land within our ownership

Legal action is defined as action taken under Section 77 and 78 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1998, for the removal of illegal encampments

The Parish/Town Council shown below indemnify Dartford Borough Council against any reasonable costs incurred whilst carrying out this action

Signed



PRINT NAME

CLERK. L.M. CROSS

TOWN MAYOR G. BUES (TOWN CLERK)

SWANCOMBE AND GREENHITHE Town/Parish Council

05-11-13

Minute 290/13-14  
T/Council 19-12-13

25 OCT 2013

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Councillor Lorna Cross  
Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council  
The Grove  
Swanscombe  
Kent  
DA10 0GA

Please ask for:

Direct Line: 01322 ~~xxxxxx~~

Direct Fax: 01322 ~~xxxxxx~~

E-mail:

Your Ref:

Our Ref: Illegal encampments

Date: 23 October 2013

Dear Councillor Cross

**Re:** Section 77-78 Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1998

On 8<sup>th</sup> October 2013, the Community Safety Unit, gave a presentation regarding illegal encampments at the Borough and Parish Council Forum

Although over the years, Dartford Borough Council has provided assistance to the Parish Councils when illegal encampments have taken up residence on Parish land

The assistance has in the past, taken the form of an informal arrangement between the Council's and there has never been a formal arrangement in place to carry enforcement action on land not within our ownership

I am aware that this could be open to legal challenge when we apply for a removal order under Section 78 of the above act at Magistrates Court, on your behalf. As Dartford Magistrates Court are applying restricted hours as from November 2013, it is likely that we will have to use the services of Medway Magistrates Court to obtain such an order, which could create difficulty

Therefore, it was proposed and agreed at the Forum that we would seek to place the arrangement on that formal footing

Clearly, some Parish Councils have never needed our assistance; however others have used us on several occasions

All landowners need to ensure that their own land is secure to prevent incursion in the first instance and over recent years, security measures have been taken to greatly reduce the number of illegal encampments across the Borough on both Council and Private land, however it is an on-going concern and we cannot be complacent

Dartford Borough Council is happy to help in this regard and I have attached a formal agreement form for your perusal, agreement, signature and return

Yours sincerely



Colin Newmarch  
Enforcement Manager

123/16-17. REPORTS OF OUTSIDE REPRESENTATIVES.

Members were advised that this item provided an opportunity for Members' appointed as representatives on outside bodies to provide a report at the meeting.

Bluewater Forum (BF).

The Town Mayor or agreed substitute is the Town Councils representative on the BF. As previously agreed the minutes for the 17 March and 26 May 2016 meetings were available in the Chamber for inspection.

Ingress Park Greenhithe Management Limited (IPGM).

IPGM had indicated that, although unable to provide documentation, they would like to submit verbal updates to the Town Council.

Councillor P M Harman and Mr P C Harris are the Town Council's representatives on IPGM.

Mr P C Harris had submitted an update which included:

*It has been a turbulent period for IPGM with another Development Manager resigning along with his deputy. The builder, Crest Nicholson who were responsible for employing First Port to manage the development have been so concerned that they recently initiated a meeting with First Port Senior Management to express their grave doubts as to their ability to manage Ingress Park. During this meeting First Port acknowledged that their poor performance has been well below acceptable standards, but reported that a new, more dynamic team from Regional Manager downwards had been recruited and are currently developing plans to improve.*

*The much awaited Community Centre is forecast to be completed within the next 2 months, after which the second exit should become available for Fastrack.*

There ensued a considerable discussion regarding the management of the development by First Port and the possible future management of the open spaces and it was agreed:

RESOLVED:

1. That the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee be asked to consider the possibilities for the future management of Open Spaces within Ingress Park.
2. That the Planning, Major Developments, Transportation & the Environment Committee be asked to consider how the Town Council can pro-actively approach new developments and developers in the future.



P.F

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From: Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member – Environment & Transport  
Roger Wilkin, Interim Director Highways, Transportation and Waste

To: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee – 4 December 2015

Subject: Kent County Council Highways, Transportation & Waste Soft  
Landscape Works - Service Review 2018/19

Non-Key decision

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: N/A

Future Pathway of Paper: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee March 2016.

Electoral Division: County Wide

**Summary:** One of the objectives included in the KCC Business Plan is to review the soft landscape works service from 2018/19, after current contracts expire. A number of options for the future service have been identified and require development. This report seeks cabinet approval to engage an Member Task and Finish Group to review and identify the priority outcomes for the service. The recommendations from the Group will be reported back to Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee for final decision in March 2016.

**Recommendation:**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to set up an Member Task and Finish Group to inform and identify the priority outcomes for the future of the service.

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Highway Operations Soft Landscaping Team are responsible for the management of trees and vegetation within the highway boundary in urban and rural areas (8,500km of road network). The service is delivered through a balance of arrangements with districts and parishes and through publicly procured contracts with SME contractors. An earlier review of the service determined that co-termination of works contracts in 2017/18 would provide an opportunity to review the future service delivery of the works element.
- 1.2 The lead-in time to replace existing works arrangements, including procurement requirements, negotiations and mobilisation periods means that an executive decision on the preferred option is required by the end of March 2016. A timeline is attached as Appendix 2.

## 2. Background, Options and Objectives

- 2.1 A list of the soft landscape procured contracts is attached at Appendix 1. The current annual cost of soft landscape works is £2.6m. Notably reductions of £1.1m (30%) were made in 2011/12. The MTFP targeted savings of £385k

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(15%) are proposed for 2018/19. The MTFP savings will result in reduced service levels.

- 2.2 In 2015/16 the majority of the soft landscape spend is on scheduled works for urban and rural grass cutting, shrub and hedge maintenance, tree works and weed control. Regular procurement has resulted in lowering prices. These prices are used to benchmark the current arrangements with districts and parishes. Due to the frequent testing of the market officers are confident the current prices reflect value for money.
- 2.3 Five districts (and several parishes) currently provide the service on our behalf. These districts are reimbursed at the benchmarked rates and provide enhanced services at their own cost to meet their local needs. However the districts have expressed concerns that any further reduction in either funding or service levels will force them to hand back the service.
- 2.4 Current works frequencies fall short of what the highways soft landscape asset requires for long term sustainability. Further reductions in the service will contribute to long-term degradation of the asset.
- 2.5 In line with the planned review of the service and the new commissioning procedures a draft Diagnostic Report has been prepared. The draft Diagnostic Report outlines five possible options for the future of the service:
  - **Option 1: Status Quo** – continue with existing works frequencies and deliver the service through a mix of publicly procured contracts and through agreements with districts and parishes. A small amount of savings could be achieved.
  - **Option 2: Reduced Service** – to accommodate MTFP targeted savings scheduled works will be cut. The savings could be spread among urban and rural areas, however some service frequencies are already at 1 annual maintenance visit and as a result a portion will receive no maintenance. This will result in fewer scheduled works and increased reactive safety critical works.
  - **Option 3: Engage With Districts, Town Councils & Parishes** – transfer the urban service to a combination of districts, town councils & parishes, with KCC retaining the rural services and tree works. This option supports localism and the combination of urban service providers would be able to enhance high profile tourist, business and town centres according to local priorities. It is unlikely all districts, town councils and parishes would sign up and those that did are likely to require a financial incentive.
  - **Option 4: Bring In-house** – this option could accommodate MTFP targeted savings if works frequencies were reduced as in Option 2. Initially there will be increased costs for staff resources (TUPE) or depots and equipment or both, depending on the model selected.
  - **Option 5: Statutory Minimum Service Only** – this would generate greater savings than Option 2. However, the focus would shift to reactive safety works, customer enquiries and complaints would increase, and assets would require a new mapping exercise to define works that are safety

critical. This approach would be reliant on the public's acceptance of greatly reduced service standards and a cultural shift in customer perception. Communities, volunteers and third sector groups may partially fill the service gap. However, financial incentives may be required to encourage a sustainable commitment.

The Member Task and Finish Group is asked to assist in the review to identify the priority outcomes for the future service.

2.7 The key objectives for the development of the future service options are to:

- contribute to the Council's Outcomes Framework;
- identify further saving efficiencies through commissioning, partnership working and challenging existing practices;
- maximise synergies between internal and external partners;
- build greater flexibility with regard to provision of soft landscape works to achieve quality, customer satisfaction and value for money;
- ensure KCC meets its environmental compliance and safety obligations;
- future proof service delivery for customers and other stakeholders;
- ensure the long-term needs of the asset are met;
- provide a transparent, accountable service; and
- provide equitable access to services for Kent residents and compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

### **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 Each of the future service options has a different financial impact and will be assessed to ensure financial viability.
- 3.2 The MTFP targeted savings figure for soft landscape works is currently set at £385k, (15%), beginning in 2018-19. This cannot be absorbed through procurement savings alone and will require reductions in service frequencies.

### **4. Legal implications**

- 4.1 There are statutory obligations required of a Highways Authority under the Highways Act 1980. These need to be taken into account when developing the options for the future service.

### **5. Equalities implications**

- 5.1 An initial EqIA screening has been prepared. New or full EqIAs will be conducted to understand positive and negative impacts upon customers as options are being developed.
- 5.2 Should public consultation be required, a separate EqIA will be prepared to inform the consultation approach and engagement across our customer and stakeholder base.

## 6. Other corporate implications

6.1 The Soft Landscape review will embed the principles and objectives of the following corporate and partnership strategies:

- KCC's Supporting Kent's physical and natural environment: Corporate Outcomes Framework 2015-19;
- KCC's Supporting business growth: Corporate Outcomes Framework 2015-19;
- KCC's Supporting residents with a good quality of life: Corporate Outcomes Framework 2015-19;
- KCC Commissioning Framework;
- Kent Environment Strategy; and
- KCC's Customer Service Policy 2015-17.

## 7. Governance

7.1 It is requested that a small, cross party Member Task and Finish Group, is established to support an officer options development group, led by Andrew Loosemore, Interim Deputy Director, Highways, Transportation and Waste, which in turn is accountable to the Growth Environment and Transport Portfolio Board and ultimately through to this Cabinet Committee.

7.2 Previously KCC have utilised Member Task and Finish Groups for a variety of differing scenarios. This has proved successful in the past with, one of the strengths of the process being the detailed and significant contribution of elected members.

7.3 The Member Task and Finish Group will inform and support the review of the soft landscape service and develop available options and draft recommendations to the Cabinet Committee. By using a Member Task and Finish Group, Members will be able to have confidence that the recommended service options will take into account issues of interest and concern for the communities they represent. It is anticipated that the Group will comprise six Member and meet up to five times. Draft terms of reference will be provided to the Group for consideration at the initial meeting.

## 8. Conclusions

8.1 It is proposed that an Member Task and Finish Group is established to identify outcomes and support development of options for the future soft landscape service.

8.2 A subsequent report with recommendations for decision will be presented to this Cabinet Committee for consideration in March 2016, prior to any public consultation, should it be required.

8.3 The process is subject to an outline timeframe that recognises the procurement and mobilisation periods required to provide new works arrangements in 2018.

**9. Recommendation:**

The Cabinet Committee is asked to set up an Member Task and Finish Group to inform and identify the priority outcomes for the future of the service.

**10. Background Documents**

10.1 Contracts List

10.2 Timeline

**11. Contact details**

<p>Report Author: Richard Diplock – Soft Landscape Asset Manager 03000 413603 <a href="mailto:richard.diplock@kent.gov.uk">richard.diplock@kent.gov.uk</a></p> <p>Andrew Loosemore – Interim Deputy Director Highways Transportation &amp; Waste 03000 411652 <a href="mailto:andrew.loosemore@kent.gov.uk">andrew.loosemore@kent.gov.uk</a></p>	<p>Relevant Director: Roger Wilkin Interim Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste 03000 413479 <a href="mailto:roger.wilkin@kent.gov.uk">roger.wilkin@kent.gov.uk</a></p>
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## Appendix 1

### Soft Landscape Contracts at 01/10/2015

Aelt em No.	Contract Type	Districts Covered	Supplier	Start Date	End Date	Contract ID
1	Urban Grass, Shrubs and Hedges - Lot 1	Maidstone & Dartford	Grasstex Ltd	01/04/2013	31/12/2017	SS12 33
2	Urban Grass, Shrubs and Hedges - Lot 2	Canterbury & Thanet	Grasstex Ltd	01/04/2013	31/12/2017	SS12 33
3	Urban Grass, Shrubs and Hedges - Lot 3	Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling & Tunbridge Wells	Cleartrack (EvL) Ltd	01/04/2014	31/12/2017	SS13 82
4	Rural Swathe cutting & Visibility Lot 1	Dartford, Gravesham, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells	Grasstex Ltd	01/04/2015	31/03/2017	SS14 055
5	Rural Swathe cutting & Visibility Lot 2	Maidstone & Ashford	Grasstex Ltd	01/04/2015	31/03/2017	SS14 055
6	Rural Swathe cutting & Visibility Lot 3	Swale, Canterbury & Thanet	Grasstex Ltd	01/04/2015	31/03/2017	SS14 055
7	Weed control – Lot 1	Dartford, Gravesham, Sevenoaks and Tonbridge & Malling	LanGuard Ltd	01/05/2014	30/04/2016	SS13 75
8	Weed control – Lot 2	Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone and Ashford	Sussex Rail Ltd T/A SRL Environmental Management	01/05/2014	30/04/2016	SS13 75
9	Weed control – Lot 3	Swale, Canterbury & Thanet	LanGuard Ltd	01/05/2014	30/04/2016	SS13 75
10	Arboricultural Works Term Contract Lot 1	West Kent	City Suburban Tree Surgeons Ltd	01/09/2014	31/08/2017	SS13 76
11	Arboricultural Works Term Contract Lot 2	East Kent	City Suburban Tree Surgeons Ltd	01/09/2014	31/08/2017	SS13 76

**Appendix 2 - Timeline for Executive Decision - HTW Soft Landscape Works**

TASK	Nov-15	Dec-15	Jan-16	Feb-16	Mar-16	Apr-16	May-16	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16
Meet MB: Set terms of reference for ETCC/IMG; review Cabinet Committee Report	2nd Nov													
Submit Report to ETCC	9th Nov													
ETCC Meeting		4th Dec												
Set up IMG														
IMG Briefings														
Develop Soft Landscape Options														
Finalise IMG Option Recommendations; draft Executive Decision Rpt														
Finalise Executive Decision Rpt														
Executive Decision Meeting														
Feed Executive Decision into Category Plan														
Procurement Board														
Market engagement for new soft landscape contracts/arrangements							Swathe contracts				Tree works		Urban Grass, shrubs and hedges	



## SWANLEY TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE

9 June 2016

Swanley Town Council is currently in the process of handing back the grass cutting of certain areas to Kent County Council and Sevenoaks District Council. The grass verges on the highways are the responsibility of Kent County Council and these areas are now being cut by them.

Sevenoaks District Council will be taking back their responsibilities from mid July. We appreciate residents' patience during the handover period and the Council recognises that this may result in some delays in the usual schedules. If you wish to report areas which you feel require

attention please telephone **03000 41 81 81** or report the problem via the direct portal <http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem> Kent County Council are in the process of organising Land Registry searches for some areas in the town and in the next edition of the Town Crier we hope to be able to provide you with up to date information, together with a map which clearly shows whether the responsibility for the grass cutting belongs to Kent County Council, Sevenoaks District Council or Swanley Town Council.

# Stringer

Give us a tip: 01474 564327 email: [taecres@thekingroup.co.uk](mailto:taecres@thekingroup.co.uk)

## Can't see the signs for the trees

If you think the grass is getting long, you'd better get used to it if you live in Gravesham.

Grass verges, hedgerows alongside roads and roundabouts will be cut less from next year following Kent County Council budget cuts. Presently grass on KCC's highways land is cut eight times a year, and shrubs and hedges are cut annually.

However, from next year the contract to maintain the land is being reduced by 45% to £40,000 a year and the number of times the grass is mown could fall.

Most of the land on or next to highways belongs to KCC. Gravesham council's landscaping team has operated the "soft landscaping" contract on behalf of the county council but has decided it is no longer viable and the cabinet is being recommended to end the deal at its meeting on September 5. While it is unlikely that decision will face opposition there, another point was raised during a pre-cabinet meeting that should the council agree to the proposals, it would incur extra costs. With the grass being much longer, the council's landscaping team would need new equipment to mow it. Some years ago weed control spraying was reduced by KCC from three times to once a



Trees and weeds have been allowed to grow out of control in The Avenue, Gravesend

year. Deputy leader Cllr David Turner said: "We have actually tended some areas for the county council more frequently than specified in the contract - effectively subsidising KCC - but this change from County Hall is a cut too far and is not going to be affordable.

"The borough council will continue to look after its own parks and open spaces to the same standard as present but residents may notice a difference between highways verges and our land."

The county council will now have to look for a new contractor in Gravesham. A KCC spokesman said: "Due to ongoing financial pressures and reductions in central government funding, urban grass maintenance will get between five and



Dirty Dancing will be at the Orchard Theatre picture: Mishran Kenton

## I'll have the time of my life at show

Each week Stringer must fight to disguise his raw and rugged manly prowess.

So readers might be amazed to discover that the roving reporter is looking forward to Dirty Dancing, which begins at Dartford's Orchard Theatre tonight (Thursday). He's got Hungry Eyes for this 80s classic.

Reporter Lizzie Massey has tickets for the opening night, so if you haven't decided if you want to go yet, check out the What's On page on Kent Online for her review.

To book tickets visit [orchardtheatre.co.uk](http://orchardtheatre.co.uk) or call 01322 220090. The story of love and loyalty is on until Saturday, September 10.



Kate French with Cobham Hall head of PE Kelli Hooper

## Perfect picture could win rings

Talking of romance, a jeweller is giving away £2,000 wedding rings in exchange for the perfect proposal selfie.

Beaverbrooks, at Blunwater, wants couples to share a picture of their engagement to be in with the chance of winning the specially selected rings.

Manager Vicky Jones said: "Engagements are becoming almost as important as the big day itself.

"It's not only picking the perfect ring that counts for couples but also the location, atmosphere and little details that mean a lot to them that really make a proposal special." "The rise in social media means that proposals are

## Pupils cheer on our great Kate

Which leads Stringer nicely on to another winner.

Exams are important (just ask the pupils who appear in our results special later in the paper), but working hard is what delivers results.

And pupils at Cobham Hall were given a lesson in that when they tuned in to watch the Olympic games and cheer on one of its very own alumni.

Kate French, who came sixth in the modern pentathlon, is originally from Meopham, and was a sixth-former at the Gravesend school before heading to the Modern Pentathlon National Training Centre in Bath.

Head teacher Paul Mitchell said: "I am absolutely delighted and very pleased that all her hard work has paid off with such a wonderful result."

# CARPET TIME We want to know