



Box Parish Council

22nd July 2026

MINUTES of the OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE – Monday 20th July 2026, 7pm at the Pavilion Box

Present:

Cllr M Tye (Chair)	Cllr R Haslett
Cllr R Davies	Cllr B Walton
Cllr R Duncan	Cllr T Walton
Clerk – S Vickery	

In Attendance as Representatives:

D Wright (Bowls and CVW)
S Murphy (Lower Common)
J Feasby (Tennis Courts)

1. **Apologies.** To receive any apologies (and acceptance) for absence. Cllrs I Johnston and N Ingledew sent apologies. Cllr P Suchley was absent.
2. **Public Question Time.** There were no members of public present.
3. **Declarations** of interest relating to items on the Agenda. Nil.
4. **Previous Minutes.** The Minutes of the previous Open Spaces Committee on 13th April 2026 were read and signed a sa true record.
5. **Election of Vice Chair.** Cllr B Walton was unanimously voted as the Vice Chair.
6. **Playing Fields.**
 - a. **Bowls Club.** Update from representative. 2 risks on the Risk Register. Surface of the road on Valens Terrace and one sycamore tree spreading its branches. Tree Parts have been asked to investigate.
 - b. **CVW - Hazlebury Estate.** 2000 hours of labour on the Hazlebury Manor estate. DW will brief Full Council on 30th July for information.
 - c. **Cricket Club.** Update from representative. No rep present but a good dialogue established. The club must return the Annex by 10th August or propose new wording on pitch renovations.
Action: Clerk to inform Cricket Club of timeline for new Annex.
 - d. **Tennis Courts** Update from representative. JF reported:

- i. The use of the free app for court bookings.
- ii. There is a house membership scheme (35 families) and over 130 people have accessed the courts.
- iii. The club Bank balance is healthy.
- iv. The club will provide a written report annually and a verbal report quarterly.
- v. There is a timeframe for ongoing maintenance.
- vi. The new proposal for an Agreement was discussed.

Action: To sign-off at the Autumn meeting.

- e. **Football pitch.** Proposal to replace goalposts with moveable FA standard was considered; (via Football Foundation grant with recommended suppliers) at a cost £3,676.45 with a grant of £1,440, therefore cost is £2,236.45 (within the budget).

- i. The proposal would be expanded to include an option for fixed 'all year round' goalposts.
- ii. Motor cycle quality chain and security system is required if the mobile option is selected.
- iii. Paused until the August Full Council for further options.

Action: Clerk to provide further options and security consideration for August FC.

- f. **Allotments.** Update from representative. Completed the hand rail and all plots now allocated.
- g. **Lower Common group.** Update from representative. Successful grant application – sycamore reduction and wild flower planting is ongoing. Now need hemp pulling and targeted effort. Requested to trim / stop growth on stumps.
- h. **Play Areas.** Update from Play Group. There is a desire to further improve the Lower Play Area. With the failure of the GWR grant, quotes will be obtained (considered in Nov 26) for the wooden train and station surround, possibly drawing on EMRs.

7. Cemetery Grounds.

- a. Cemetery Working Group (CMG). A proposal to set up a CMG was **approved**.
- b. Interpretation Boards. The original Notice boards were considerably over-budget, so an alternative is being sourced. Ongoing.

8. Boxhill and Rudloe.

- a. Rudloe Estate 'green space' initiatives. The aspiration for a mix of allotments, wild flower and orchard areas and a Community Garden – initial quote of £10k has yet to be received from JR Tree and Landscapes. The Chair reported back on the meeting. Grants and contributions were being investigated. The Rudloe Group are opening a bank account at the moment.

9. Common to all Open Spaces.

- a. Parish-wide tree survey.
 - i. **Approved** - Thoday and Lower Common should now be included in the survey (omitted in error) at a cost of £1,674 incl VAT (not in budget, but taken from tree survey EMRs). This is within the Committee's delegated budget.
 - ii. Tree Parts briefed on the survey work to date around the Parish, including the Alcombe tree, Rec trees and Lower Common sycamores. Tree Parts would provide a quote to water and mulch the fruit trees on the Lower Common mulching and watering.
Action: Clerk to obtain TP quote for water and mulching plan.
- b. Parish-wide meadow grass plan. An update on the recently agreed plans. Draft has been written. Ongoing.
- c. CPRE Best Kept Village. To note the report – not yet received. Clerk will chase Danny Austin again.
- d. Open Spaces equipment purchase. The purchase of additional batteries and jet washer (highest priority new purchase) at £982.50 +VAT was **approved**, with the sale of the petrol washer.
- e. Neighbourhood Plan. Local Green Space recognition. The Committee recognised the work done by the Parish Steering group and understood the need to recognise public Green Spaces. There were other proposals that might be submitted.
Action: Cllrs to email Martyn Thomas with further suggestions.

10. Review of Policies

- a. Climate Action Plan – to review. The Chair will lead work on the next iteration drawing down from the Government Environmental Policy. Ongoing.

11. Items for Discussion.

- a. Climate Action film. Now scheduled for 28th September 2026 at Selwyn Hall.
- b. Wardens' Meadow. Should the site be reserved as a cemetery over-flow or converted to meadow? This will be a topic for the CWG. The lease with J Gilbert will be reviewed in Nov 26.
Action: Clerk to add to Nov 26 agenda.
- c. Gardening Service. Vine Court and Bassets x 12 hours was the focus. Budget for next year, a figure of £500, during the autumn budget process.

12. Correspondence. Urgent correspondence was received:

- a. Wessex Water (WW) project 2028-30. Outline proposals now received and were noted. It will be key to monitor the surface at Valens Terrace (WW wish to widen), the basketball court refurbishment, access to the Lovar and how the Grounds team access the compost area.

- b. Upper Common correspondence received on the mowing plan. No further action.
- c. Cemetery maintenance letter(s) in no mow May. J H Jones to be reminded (again) about the Garden of Remembrance 'narrow' pathway.
- d. Open Space Society. There is a zoom meeting this Thursday 23rd July at 1pm to discuss next steps with Middlehill House car area and respecting PRow.

13. **Forward Plan.** The latest Forward Plan, including the Policy matrix and Risk Assessments was reviewed.

- a. Fly-tipping on the Upper Common should be reported.
- b. Albion Terrace, Cricket and Football should be added to the Plan.

14. **Future Agenda and General reports.** There were no items to note.

15. **Date of next meeting** – 7pm on Monday 9th November 2026. The Committee closed at 9.07pm.

Signed and dated by the Chair.....