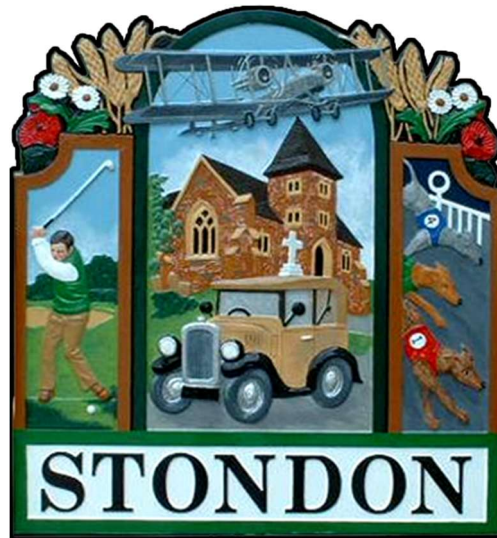




OPEN SPACES HIRING POLICY THE PASTURES

As adopted at a meeting of Stondon Parish Council on 29th April 2026

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

Organisation	Stondon Parish Council
Title	SPC Open Spaces Hiring Policy
Creator	Sian van der Merwe – Parish Clerk
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DOCUMENT AMENDMENT HISTORY

Revision No.	Originator of change	Date of change	Change Description
V1.0	Clerk	Apr 2026	New Policy creation

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Stondon Parish Council (SPC or the Council) encourages the hire of outdoor open spaces, pitches, play areas and the MUGA, recognising the contribution that all events make to the vibrant community and cultural life of the parish and, in the case of larger events, to attracting visitors to enjoy the area's many attractions and contribute to its economic vitality.
- 1.2. This Policy provides advice and guidance on the Council's approach to hiring and outdoors, Council-owned Recreation Ground or open space and can be used for all events regardless of size, although some parts may not be relevant for smaller events.
- 1.3. The Policy gives general advice that should be used when arranging any type of event, while recognising that events can be very diverse, ranging from a football match to a large village fete. It is likely that additional guidance will be required for specialist events and larger scale activities. This Policy sets out the terms under which the Recreation Ground at The Pastures ("the Site") may be hired or used for organised activities and events.
- 1.4. This Open Spaces Policy is updated to comply with the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 (Martyn's Law). The Council is committed to enhancing public safety by assessing and mitigating risks from terrorism in our open spaces, particularly during hosted events or in designated secured areas.
- 1.5. The aim is to:
 - Protect the Council as landowner and liability holder
 - Ensure safe and appropriate use of the Site
 - Maintain the quality of the playing surface and surrounding environment
 - Clearly distinguish responsibilities between Stondon Parish Council ("the Council") and the Stondon Village Hall Management Committee ("SVHMC").

2. KEY LEGISLATION & GUIDANCE GOVERNING OPEN SPACE USE & HIRE

- 2.1. **Local Government Act 2003:** The Council will have regard (a) to such guidance as the Secretary of State may issue, and (b) to such other guidance as the Secretary of State may by regulations specify.
- 2.2. **Local Government Act 1972:** The Parish Council powers related to:
 - Section 9 & 111 - general administrative powers
 - Section 145 - provision of entertainment and events
- 2.3. **Public Health Act 1875:** Section 164 → power to provide and maintain public open spaces and recreation grounds.
- 2.4. **Open Spaces Act 1906:** Specific powers to acquire and manage land for public recreation and requires land to be held "in trust" for public use.
- 2.5. **Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976:** Allows Councils to charge for use of facilities.
- 2.6. **Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974:** To ensure, *so far as reasonably practicable*, the safety of users and other affected.
- 2.7. **Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999:** Requires risk assessments for public use.
- 2.8. **Occupiers' Liability Act 1957:** Duty of care to lawful visitors.
- 2.9. **Occupiers' Liability Act 1984:** Limited duty even to trespassers.
- 2.10. **Licensing Act 2003:** Regulation relating to alcohol provision for events.

- 2.11. **Safety Advisory Group**: Best practice and oversight for event planning to ensure compliance.
- 2.12. **Environmental Protection Act 1990**: Noise, waste and statutory nuisance.
- 2.13. **Insurance & Liability Practice**: The Parish Council as Insurance & Public Liability Insurance holder.
- 2.14. **Children Act 1989 and Children Act 2004**: related to safeguarding of children.
- 2.15. **Working Time Regulations 1998**: related to rest periods for works, employees or volunteers.
- 2.16. **Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025**: related to protecting the public during events.

3. OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL

- 3.1 Stondon Parish Council owns a number of outdoor spaces and recreation grounds and retains full control, authority and liability at all times.
- 3.2 The Council is the final decision-maker on all matters relating to the use of any of its outdoor spaces.
- 3.3 No hire or use of the site may take place without the prior written approval of the Council or its delegated Officer.
- 3.4 Any existing agreement with the Stondon Village Hall Management Committee (SVHMC) for management of the Community Centre at The Pastures does not transfer control or liability of the open space, MUGA, play area or pitch to the SVHMC.

4. PRE-PLANNING AN EVENT

- 4.1. Detailed pre-planning is essential to ensure any event is successful. The following should be considered at this stage:
 - 4.1.1. **Where** - Make sure our open space is suitable and adequate for the proposed event. Consider the impact on the local community, how easy it will be for people to get to the site and will car parking facilities be sufficient. Consider any existing hazards which may be on the site. Consider whether or not emergency routes will be adequate.
 - 4.1.2. **When** - Consider the time of year, including the consequences of extreme weather conditions at an outside event. The day of the week and time will also need consideration regarding the nature of the event, noise and ease of travel etc. There may be a need to arrange lighting for an evening function. **Liaise with the Council to ensure the open space is available for hire on your proposed date and complete your booking request.**
 - 4.1.3. **Who** - Identify the aims of the event. Are particular groups or types of people to be targeted, such as young children, teenagers, the elderly or disabled? If so, specific facilities may be required to accommodate them or additional stewards to ensure adequate safety standards are maintained.
 - 4.1.4. **What** - Decide on the type of activities to be held. Will activities result in specific hazards or does the use of equipment pose any specific hazards? Will a particular activity need barriers etc? See the Risk Assessment section of this policy.

- 4.1.5. **Code of practice** - For larger events there will be a need to comply with guidance particularly the Code of Practice for Outdoor Events published by the National Outdoor Events Association <http://www.noea.org.uk/default.asp?pageId=47> which gives advice on structures, marquees, tents and electrical matters. The HSE website also contains useful information at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/eventsafety/health-safety-topics.htm> , as does <https://www.protectuk.police.uk/martyns-law> and <https://homeofficemedia.blog.gov.uk/2025/04/03/martyns-law-factsheet/> that specifically refer to Martyn's Law.
- 4.1.6. **Welfare arrangements** - The Hirer must estimate the number of attendees to the event and consider its duration. Toilet and first aid requirements should be based on these estimations. Hire of welfare services at the Stondon Community Centre must be arranged separately with the Stondon Village Hall Management Committee. Temporary and any permanent toilets should be checked for adequacy and maintained during the event. The provision of drinking water will be necessary. Depending upon the scale of the event, refreshments and other facilities may be required. Provision also needs to be made for lost children, missing persons, baby changing and lost property.
- 4.1.7. **Special permission** - A Premises licence or Temporary Event Notice (TEN) may be needed if the event consists of music, dancing, singing or similar, or if it includes a display or exhibition of boxing, wrestling, judo, karate or similar sport. Any sale of alcohol will also require a licence or TEN. Contact the Licensing Team at Central Bedfordshire Council https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/59/licensing/36/alcohol_and_entertainment_licensing/9 for further details.
- 4.1.8. **Insurance** - All events will require public liability insurance (a copy of which must be provided to the Council prior to hire). All contractors and performers will also need their own public liability cover with a £5 million minimum Limit of Indemnity. Depending upon the nature of the organisation and the proposed event other insurances may also be required.
- 4.1.9. **Timescale** - Set out the proposed timescale and allow as much time as possible to organise the event. Larger events need as much as 9 to 12 months planning.
- 4.1.10. **Training** - In accordance with Martyn's Law, all event management plans for public spaces must include procedures for Evacuation, Invacuation, and Lockdown. Event staff must be trained to recognize and respond to potential threats
- 4.1.11. **Event plan** - This should include all health and safety arrangements. Once all the issues referred to above have been addressed, keep records of the proposals as a formal plan for the event. This will help organisers when carrying out risk assessments.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 5.1. Hirers and organisers of events have a legal responsibility to ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare of any employees, volunteer helpers or contractors involved in arranging the event and to the public and participants attending. This should be ensured by carrying out a detailed risk assessment. All hazards associated with the event should be identified, the level of risk assessed, and appropriate action taken

to reduce these risks to an acceptable level. All events must comply with recognised safety standards and organisers must take all reasonable precautions to ensure the event takes place safely.

- 5.2. For events with a capacity of 200 or more, event organisers must complete a proportionate terrorism risk assessment, identifying vulnerabilities and implementing simple, effective protective measures. For events with a capacity of 800 or more event organisers must ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that enhanced security measures—such as Bag Searches, CCTV, or enhanced steward training—are implemented to mitigate risk.
- 5.3. Where the event consists of more than one attraction e.g., a summer fete, a written risk assessment will be required for each activity and vendor participating in the event. Any contractors involved in the event should also carry out their own risk assessments and the main organiser will provide copies of these to the Parish Council for their records.
- 5.4. A formal record should be kept of the risk assessments. **A copy of the risk assessments must be provided to the Council prior to hire.**
- 5.5. Guidance on running an event safely together with a template risk assessment is available on the Health and Safety Executive website at <https://www.hse.gov.uk/event-safety/running.htm>

6. ORGANISING THE EVENT

- 6.1. This section covers the detail of organising the event. During this stage the event plan should be kept up to date.

- 6.1.1 **Establish a planning and event management committee** - Identify specific responsibilities for all committee members. One person should be identified as the event manager and be responsible for liaison with other organisations, such as the Parish Council, Police or other emergency services. One person, with suitable experience, should be given responsibility for health and safety, and another person co-ordination and supervision of stewards.
- 6.1.2 **Liaison** – If the event expects to attract less than 500 people, contact the police, fire brigade, ambulance and first aid providers. Tell them about the event and ask for advice. Decide what additional information is required regarding specific activities.

For events where over 500 people are expected, the event will need to be reported to Central Bedfordshire Council's Safety Advisory Group (SAG) (https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/43/community_safety/146/safety_advisory_group). The report can be done via their online form. The SAG works in partnership with emergency and other services to support safety at events and in public places for large events. The application can be done online and you will need to provide plans, copies of arrangements, etc for them to review or give feedback on.

- 6.1.3. **Site plan** - Draw up a site plan identifying the position of all the intended attractions, vendors and facilities. Plan out and designate the entrance and exit points, circulation routes, vehicle access and emergency evacuation paths. The site plan must be provided to the Parish Council prior to hire.

- 6.1.4. **Emergency plan** - A formal plan should be established to deal with any emergency situations, which may arise during the event and provided to the Parish Council.
- 6.1.5. **Temporary structures** - Many events will require temporary structures such as staging, tents, marquees, gazebo's, stalls etc. Decide where this equipment is to be obtained, who will erect it and what safety checks will be required. The location of any such structures should be identified on the site plan. Consider whether barriers (and their specified safety loadings) will be required to protect the public against specific hazards such as moving machinery or vehicles, barbecues, vehicles, fires and any other dangerous displays etc.
- 6.1.6. **Catering** - Ensure any caterers have been licensed and that they will be sensibly positioned, such as away from children's activity areas and near to any water supplies if available etc. Adequate space should be left between catering facilities to prevent any risk of fire spread. Caterers should provide their own fire extinguishers for the event. Ask to see caterers' food hygiene certification, their menu and charges to ensure their prices are reasonable.
- 6.1.7. **Stewards** - Stewards at events must be fully briefed on all aspects of the event including crowd control and emergency arrangements. Written instructions, site plans and checklists should be provided to them. It is important that stewards can be easily identified by the public and that they can effectively communicate with each other, their supervisor, the person responsible for health and safety, and the event manager. All stewards should be properly trained and competent as they will need to be constantly on the lookout for hazards, which could develop during the event. They may also be required to guide vehicles, clear emergency exits, and sort out any behavioural problems. Specific training should be provided for basic first aid assistance and firefighting. Stewards may require personal protective clothing such as hats, boots, gloves or coats. For evening events, they may need to be issued with torches. At all day events, duty rotas will be required.
- 6.1.8 **Working Time** - Fatigue is a recognised risk factor in crowd management and safety roles. The HSE expects organisers of events to manage this under general duties in the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974—even for volunteers. Duty rotas must be designed to minimise fatigue and ensure adequate rest periods. This should include scheduled breaks away from duties, access to welfare facilities, and provision for rotation of roles where appropriate. Stewards should not be expected to work excessive hours without rest, particularly where their role involves safety-critical responsibilities such as crowd management, traffic control, or emergency response. Rest breaks must comply with the Working Time Regulations 1998, including a minimum uninterrupted break of 20 minutes where a shift exceeds six hours.
- 6.1.9 **Crowd control** - The type of event and the numbers attending will determine the measures needed. Consideration will need to be given to the number and positioning of barriers, and the provision of a public address system.
- 6.1.10 **Music** - Where music will be played, the event organiser must have the relevant music licence and will notify the residents of The Pastures, Recreation Avenue and Station Road, whose properties back directly onto The Pastures Recreation field, in writing, no later than two weeks before the date of the event. A copy of these documents must be provided to the hirer and

the Parish Council. Noise levels during the event must be monitored – see the relevant noise management section of this policy.

- 6.1.11 **Numbers attending** - The maximum number of people the event can safely hold must be established. This may be reduced depending upon the activities being planned. The numbers of people attending the event may have to be counted to prevent overcrowding. The number attending may also dictate the type of licence needed.
- 6.1.12 **Provision for disabled people** - Specific arrangements should be made to ensure disabled visitors have adequate facilities, parking and specific viewing areas and can safely enjoy the event.
- 6.1.13 **Security** - Depending upon the nature of the event, specific security arrangements may be necessary, including arrangements for securing property overnight.
- 6.1.14 **On-site traffic** - Contractors and/or performers vehicles and other traffic should be carefully managed to ensure segregation from pedestrians. It may be necessary to only permit vehicular access at specific times and not during the event itself. Car parking facilities will be required at most events, and these will have to be stewarded. Consider where such facilities should be situated.
- 6.1.145 **Off-site traffic** - Unplanned and uncontrolled access and egress both inside and outside the site can result in a serious accident. Adequate signs and directions should be provided in prominent positions on the approaches to the entrances. If road closures, signs on the highway, traffic diversions and/or the placement of cones are required then an application must be made for a traffic regulation order and/or approval from the highway team at Central Bedfordshire Council for a street closure notice.
- 6.1.16 **Car Parking** - No parking is allowed on Pollards Way open space. For events planned for The Pastures Recreation Centre, event attendees should be encouraged to car share to reduce the number of vehicles using the Community Centre car park. As only limited car parking facilities are provided in the Community Centre car park, the Hirer should encourage event attendees parking on the overflow car park adjacent to the site, and in other areas of the parish to park sensibly and with due consideration for other road users, pedestrians and residents.

The immediate area outside of The Pastures' Community Centre car park is residential. Please:

- Respect and have consideration for those who reside in these areas.
- Do not obstruct, block or park over driveways.
- Do not obstruct the road where it will cause accident or injury or access for emergency services.
- Do not obstruct the field entrances which require access by emergency services.

- 6.1.17 **Contractors** - All contractors should be vetted to ensure they are competent to undertake the tasks required of them. Ask contractors for a copy of their safety policy, risk assessments, method statements and their public liability insurance certificate, which should provide a limit of indemnity of at least £5 million. Provide contractors with a copy of the event plan and arrange liaison meetings to ensure they will work within the specified parameters.

- 6.1.18 **Performers** - All performers should have their own insurances and risk assessments, and the same considerations will apply as for contractors. Where amateur performers are being used, discuss detailed requirements with them and ensure they will comply with the health and safety rules and event plan.
- 6.1.19 **Noise Management** – The Hirer is responsible for ensuring that noise generated by their event is appropriately managed and does not cause unreasonable disturbance to nearby residents, businesses, or other users of the open space. As a general guide, amplified sound should not normally take place before 09:00 or continue beyond 22:00 unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Parish Council. This consideration must be included in the Risk Assessment, especially for larger events or those involving amplified music. The Event Manager should be monitoring noise levels throughout the event and should respond promptly to any complaints or concerns raised.
- 6.1.20 **Facilities and utilities** - Where electricity is required for an event at The Pastures, arrangements must be made with the Stondon Community Centre who have discretion to provide access to electricity at the MUGA, which would incur a cost as determined by them for that use. The Stondon Village Hall Management Committee Trustees may request that:
- All portable electrical appliances including extension leads etc. should be tested for electrical safety and records kept.
 - Any hired equipment should come with a certificate of electrical safety.
 - Where events are taking place outside, residual current circuit breakers should be used and if possible, the power supply stepped down to 110 volts.
 - All cables must be safely channelled to eliminate any electrical and tripping hazards.
 - Potential hazards due to extreme weather should be considered for outside events.
 - Portable gas supplies for cooking should be kept to a minimum in designated areas away from the general public. The same should apply to any fuel supplies items such as portable generators etc. Generators should be suitably fenced or barriered to prevent access from public areas. All these arrangements should be clearly shown on the site plan.
- 6.1.21 **Contingency plans** - Consider the implications on the event of extreme weather conditions. Will the event be cancelled, or could the event be moved to an alternative location e.g.: inside the Village Hall? There could also be other scenarios, which should be planned for.
- 6.1.22 **Clearing up** - Arrangements will be required for waste disposal and litter clearance both during and after the event. Individuals should be assigned specific responsibilities for emptying bins and clearing the site. The site must be returned to the Council in a litter free, undamaged condition at the conclusion of the event – any and all damages will be charged for.
- 6.1.23 **Risk assessments** - The risk assessment should be updated continually during this stage. Any remedial action with timescales should be specified in the updated event plan.

7. FINAL PREPARATIONS

- 7.1 Just prior to the event a detailed safety check will need to be carried out, to include the following:
- 7.1.1. **Routes** - Ensure clear access and exit routes and adequate circulation within the site. Pay particular attention to emergency routes
 - 7.1.2. **Inspections** - A walk-through inspection of the site should be carried out immediately prior to, during and after the event to identify any potential hazards and to check out communications are working. All defects should be noted along with the remedial action taken. These checklists should be retained.
 - 7.1.3. **Siting** - Make sure that all facilities and attractions are correctly sited as per the site plan. Be certain that the first aid facilities and fire extinguishers are in place. Check waste bins are in their correct locations. The marking out of areas can be achieved using small flag markers.
 - 7.1.4. **Signage** - Ensure adequate signage is displayed where necessary. This should include emergency exits, first aid points, information and lost children points and other welfare facilities such as toilets and drinking water.
 - 7.1.5. **Vehicles** - Check that all contractors, performers and exhibitors vehicles have been removed from the site or parked in the designated area before the public are permitted to enter.
 - 7.1.6. **Structures** - Ensure all staging, seating, marquees and lighting structures have been erected safely and that certification has been obtained from the relevant contractors as a record of this.
 - 7.1.7. **Barriers** - Check that all barriers and other protection against hazards are securely in place.
 - 7.1.8. **Stewards** - Make sure that all stewards have arrived, are in their correct location and are wearing the correct clothing for easy identification.
 - 7.1.9. **Public information** - Make sure that the public address system is working and can be heard in all areas.
 - 7.1.10. **Briefing** - Check that all stewards and staff have been fully briefed and understand their responsibilities.
 - 7.1.11 **Relevant legislation governing the event** - The hirers attention is drawn to the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and other health and safety legislation including the Management of Health and Safety at Work regulations 1999, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999 and Electricity at Work Regulations 1989. It is the responsibility of the hirer to comply with all relevant legislation during the event.

8. DURING THE EVENT

- 8.1 Policies - Copies of the policies relevant to the management of this event, together with the event management plan, countersigned risk assessments will be available for any member of the public and the Parish Clerk to view.

- 8.2 Accidents and Emergency – In the event of a major or long-term injury or a death at the event, the hirer must comply with RIDDOR (the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013). For more information see the following website link: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/riddor/> or call the Health & Safety Executives Incident Contact Centre (ICC) on 0845 300 9923.

9. AFTER THE EVENT

- 9.1. After the event consider the following:
- 9.1.1 **Site condition** - After the event, another inspection should be carried out to make sure nothing has been left on the site which could be hazardous to future users. This inspection should identify any damage which has been caused during the event. Structures should only be left overnight with the full agreement of the Council and they must be left in a safe condition and safe from vandalism etc. Specific security arrangements must be put in place.
 - 9.1.2 **Accidents** - If an accident occurs, the names and addresses of witnesses should be obtained, photographs taken and a report made by the organisers. An accident report should be completed by the organiser and a copy sent to the Parish Council Clerk. A sample accident reporting form can be found in Appendix 1 of this Policy. Organisers will also need to advise their insurance company. If any accident or dangerous occurrence is reported, action must be taken to prevent any further incidents taking place.
 - 9.1.3 **Claims** - Should any person declare an intention to make a claim following an alleged incident associated with the event, organisers should contact their insurers immediately.
 - 9.1.4 **Noise Control** - No noise is to be made, whether by loudspeaker or musical instruments etc. after the hours of 10:30pm.

10. CATERING, BBQ'S AND NAKED FLAMES

- 10.1 It is commonplace for outdoor events to provide some food facilities. These may vary from a low risk provision such as drinks and cakes; through to higher risk provisions such as barbecues.
- 10.2 **Who has Legal responsibility for the food safety at an event?** If the organiser is directly employing persons to provide food, whether they are paid or volunteers, the event itself will be classed as the food business under the Food Safety Act 1990. If the organisers contract with a food business to undertake the catering arrangements, they will be classed as the food business under the Food Safety Act 1990 and will require the relevant registration as a food business with their Local Authority. However, the organisers of the event are still likely to have some civil law liability if they do not ensure that the person, they have contracted is carrying out matters in a safe fashion.
- 10.3 **Why is food safety important?** Some types of food poisoning organism can kill susceptible people. A food poisoning outbreak and/or significant breaches of food safety legislation can result in a prosecution, the penalties for which include heavy fines and even imprisonment. (In a Crown Court the fine is unlimited and the imprisonment term is up to 2 years.) Organisers should therefore ensure

that food operations for the day are carried out in a hygienic fashion by ensuring that they or their contractor(s) comply with the requirements of the following:

- Food Safety (General Food Hygiene) Regulations 1995; and
- Food Safety (Temperature Control) Regulations 1995.

10.5 Catering contractors/vendors will be required to have Public Liability Insurance for events up to £5 million.

10.6 Catering contractors/vendors should:

- avoid the use of naked flames wherever possible. Where unavoidable (e.g. BBQs or gas appliances), prior approval must be obtained from the Parish Council;
- ensure that all BBQs, gas stoves, or similar equipment are properly set up on stable, non-combustible surfaces and located well away from buildings, structures, trees, and with adequate space between the BBQ and publicly accessible areas;
- ensure that flames are adequately shielded and controlled at all times to prevent the spread of fire, particularly in windy conditions;
- maintain appropriate clearances around cooking areas and implement suitable measures (e.g. barriers) to prevent public access where there is a risk of burns or fire;
- provide suitable fire safety equipment at each catering point, such as fire extinguishers or fire blankets, and ensure staff are trained in their use;
- ensure that hot ashes, coals, or waste materials are fully extinguished and safely disposed of, and not left on site;
- comply with all relevant guidance, including that issued by the Health and Safety Executive and the local Fire and Rescue Service.

11. CHARGING POLICY

11.1 **Charities and not for profit hires** - The Council supports voluntary, charitable and not for profit hires of open spaces by making sites available free of charge under specific circumstance. Organisers still need to follow this Policy in organising their events and are required to submit the relevant booking forms and comply with all relevant national and local legislation and guidance.

11.2 **Commercial events** - The Council charges sufficient fees to cover its costs of administering the hire and will be decided by the Council on a case-by-case basis.

11.3 **Large events** - Large events require much more input from the Council and impact on local residents to a greater extent. Fees for large events will be negotiated directly with event organisers.

11.4 **Payment of all fees and charges must be made in full prior to the Due Date.** If payment is not received the Council shall have the right to cancel the booking immediately. The Hirer will be liable for the full cost of the provision of any services (where available), e.g., marking of pitches etc over and above the hire charge for the event.

11.5 **A deposit may be requested which must be paid to the Council 30 days prior to the Event which will be forfeited in the event of any damage or loss, including loss of keys in respect of drop-down bollards**

etc. or held as part payment of any necessary making good. The Hirer will be liable for the full costs of any damage, so should this exceed the deposit the Council will issue an invoice to the Hirer.

12. REFUSAL OF BOOKING & CANCELLATION

- 12.1. The Council reserves the right to refuse any application for the hiring of our open spaces, pitches and MUGA without being required to give any reason for such refusal. The Council reserves the right to withdraw permission to use our open spaces, pitches and MUGA. However, the Council will repay any deposits paid on cancelling a hiring but shall be under no liability for expenses incurred or loss sustained by the Hirer as a result of the cancellation. If the organiser wishes to cancel the hire, they shall be liable to the Council for the whole of the hire charge together with any additional expenses incurred by the Council, subject to the discretionary power of the Council to vary this provision in appropriate cases.
- 12.2. The Council reserves the right to cancel any booking forthwith in the event that the hired open space, pitch or MUGA is affected by an emergency of any kind - including severe adverse weather conditions or other exceptional circumstances in the Council's opinion. The Council will consider refunding part or all of any fees and charges paid and the amount shall be at the Council's sole discretion.

13. RELATIONSHIP WITH SVHMC

- 13.1 The Stondon Village Hall Management Committee ("SVHMC") will continue to manage bookings for the Village Hall and Community Centre building.
- 13.2 Any event extending onto the recreation ground, surrounding grassed areas, the mound next to the play area and around the play area, must be referred to the Parish Council for approval.
- 13.3 Joint events must clearly identify responsibilities, with the Council retaining responsibility for the land and associated risks during events.

14. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 14.1 The Parish Council Clerk is responsible for ensuring compliance with the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 for all booked events on council-managed land.
- 14.2 The Hirer / Organiser is responsible for the supervision and control of Event participants, officials, visitors and spectators. The organiser shall not interfere with or attach anything to any item of street furniture, recreation ground furniture, play equipment, fencing or trees.
- 14.3. Pedestrians should be allowed unrestricted access along any public footpath located near or within our open spaces unless a formal diversion order has been made. There is a requirement to maintain safe and unobstructed access to the Children's Play Area.
- 14.4 Specific conditions relate to Fun Fairs and organisers will supply full details of all side shows and rides and comply with and ensure that the operators of the rides comply with the guidance given in the publication Fairgrounds and Amusement Parks – Guidance on Safe Practice published by the Health and Safety Executive, and all other statutory requirements.

- 14.5 Noise nuisance is a particular concern for nearby residents and organisers should ensure that no noise nuisance shall be caused to occupiers of properties surrounding Pollards Way and The Pastures or users of the immediate surrounding area of other open spaces.
- 14.6 All outdoor events must cease at 22.30 hours and all clearing up operations must be completed by 23.00 hours. The Council reserves the right to set earlier closure times for individual events where appropriate.
- 14.7 The sale of alcohol is strictly prohibited unless the relevant licence or permission has been obtained from the Local Authority and the Parish Council has agreed to it.
- 14.8 The organiser will not allow at the Event any exhibition, performance or entertainment in which animals are or might be involved unless agreed by the Council in advance.
- 14.9 The organiser will not permit the operation or release of any high-flying object. 10.10. The Hirer shall not bring into our open spaces, pitches or MUGA any article of an inflammable or explosive character or that produces an offensive smell, or CFC or any oil, electrical, gas or other apparatus without the written approval of the Council.
- 14.11 The use of any public address system at the Event must be agreed by the Council and must be operated so as not to cause a noise nuisance. Any necessary licences must be obtained by the Hirer.
- 14.12 The Council does not allow balloon or lantern releases from any of our sites.
- 14.13 Any contravention of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 or any amendments or variation thereto may be deemed a reason for the cancellation of a hiring or series of hiring. If there shall be any contravention of these requirements the organiser will reimburse the Council the cost of removing any such unauthorised or illicit advertisements or advertising material. No flyposting is permitted.
- 14.14 The Council is not responsible and will not accept liability for any loss, damage, injury or death howsoever, and by whomsoever caused, whether to property or person(s) sustained by any person in our open spaces, pitch or MUGA. The Hirer will indemnify the Council against all claims, actions, demands, proceedings, cost or awards in respect of any loss, damage, injury or death to persons or property engaged by or assisting the Hirer.
- 14.15 The Hirer must take out Public Liability Insurance Cover or Third-Party Risks [including products liability where appropriate] for a minimum of £5 million (five million pounds).
- 14.16 No collections, games of chance, sweep stakes, lotteries or betting of any kind may be conducted at out open spaces, pitches or MUGA unless agreed by the Council.
- 14.17 For certain events and in particular the hire of pitches or the MUGA the organiser will be expected to enter into a legal agreement.

15. PROTECTION OF THE PITCH AND GROUNDS

- 15.1 Pitches are a community-use surface and must not be used in a way that causes excessive wear or damage.

- 15.2 Due to the presence of wildlife and their effects on ground stability:
- The surfaces may be uneven;
 - Hirers use the pitch at their own risk;
 - Activities must be adapted and formally risk assessed accordingly.
- 15.3 The Council reserves the right to:
- Close the pitch at any time (e.g. weather, damage, safety concerns);
 - Restrict use or cancel events in order to protect ground conditions.
- 15.4 No vehicles are permitted on the pitch without prior written consent.
- 15.5 Care is to be given to the grass when erecting gazebos and other equipment.
- 15.6 The grass in open space areas must not be damaged by use of sprays, chemicals or by cutting/digging by hirers. These actions are prohibited.

16. PITCH & MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area) HIRE

16.1 Use of Pitches

- a. Pitches for regular use on will be allocated annually (in June for football pitches) for a twelve month period (June to May inclusive for football). Teams wishing to use a pitch must apply before the 30th March to the Council, giving details of the preferred day of play/hire, with a fixture list if possible. If not available at the time, a fixture list must be presented before the first match of the season. Any matches which are not shown on the fixture list are not authorised and will need to be booked as a casual hiring (see paragraph 14.1.e below).
- b. If there are more teams than available pitches applicants will be added to a waiting list. Under no circumstances should a team attempt to secure use of a pitch ahead of their turn. Pitches will be allocated in the following order: 1. Existing hirers i.e., those who have held the pitch for the previous 12 months. 2. New applicants based in Stondon who are on the waiting list. 3. New applicants from out of the area who are on the waiting list.
- c. The pitches shall not be used for any purpose other than their intended use and the Hirer shall not sub-hire or use the pitch or allow the pitch to be used for any unlawful purpose or in any unlawful way nor do anything that may endanger the same or render invalid any insurance policies in respect thereof.
- d. No team may use the pitch without authorisation from the Parish Council Clerk. The use of a pitch may NOT be assigned. Individual teams must obtain separate authorisation even when they are part of the same club. e. Any application to use the pitches for one-off matches or charity matches must be made in writing via the Parish Council Clerk. Application forms can be downloaded from the website www.stondon-pc.gov.uk. Applications will NOT be accepted at less than 48 hours' notice.

16.2 Goal Posts / Tennis Nets / Basketball nets and other equipment

- a. If not using goal posts, tennis nets, basketball nets etc. in situ the team responsible for the pitch hire must erect and take down the posts, nets or other equipment required from the storage points identified by the Council. Anchor pins must be used to secure all posts into the ground. Any loss of parts or damage to equipment provided by the Council will be charged to the team. The team hiring the pitch has the responsibility for checking the safety of the posts and equipment prior to commencement of the match. If there is any doubt that equipment is unsafe, the query should initially be brought to the attention of the referee. If it is agreed that equipment is unsafe, the match should be abandoned. The Parish Council Clerk should be notified immediately on the morning following the match by telephone or by emailing clerk@stondon-pc.gov.uk.

16.3 Pitch line marking a. Football pitch line marking is the responsibility of the hirer and must be carried out by suitable trained staff or contractors, unless agreed otherwise with the Parish Clerk when a charge will be made for the service. Please contact the Clerk for line marking specifications. Under no circumstances should lines be burnt into the grass.

16.4 Insurance

- a. All teams must hold the relevant insurances.
- b. A copy of the appropriate insurance schedules must be provided to the Parish Council Clerk prior to commencement of the first match of each season.

16.5 Health and Safety

- a. Hirers should be aware of other users of Centenary Field and the adjacent Cemetery, and make reasonable efforts to ensure that spectators and players behave safely and responsibly. No alcohol is to be consumed in any part of Centenary Field at any time and urinating on site or in the hedgerows is strictly forbidden.
- b. In the event of an accident or emergency, the hirer should contact the emergency services. The emergency services should be advised that a key operated access is in place at Centenary Field and that the Hirer is not in possession of this key. The nearest defibrillator is situated on the wall at the front of the Village Hall.
- c. Any accident or dangerous occurrence must be reported to the Parish Council Clerk, as soon as is practicably possible. An accident record log is kept by the Parish Council Clerk which must be completed after any accident or dangerous occurrence leading to injury. The Accident Record Log is kept in accordance with the requirement of the Data Protection legislation. d. If an accident occurs, the names and addresses of witnesses should be obtained, photographs taken and a report made by the Hirer. An accident report should be completed and a copy sent to the Parish Council Clerk. A sample accident reporting form can be found in Appendix 1 of this policy. Hirers will also need to advise their insurance company. If any accident or dangerous occurrence is reported, action must be taken to prevent any further incidents taking place. e. Hirers who run activities involving children and young people using paid employees and volunteers are required to declare that they have a Child Protection / Safeguarding Policy in place and that they update their DBS checks on a regular basis.

16.6 Cancellation of Matches

- a. The Council reserves the right to cancel a match at any time. Every effort will be made to avoid this.
- b. The Council will not be liable to the Hirer in respect of expenses, costs or losses incurred directly or indirectly by the Hirer in relation to the termination.
- c. The Hirer may cancel a match at any time. Notification of cancelled matches must be made prior to the date of the match to the Parish Council Clerk.

16.7 Termination of Hire

- a. The Hirer may relinquish the right to use the allocated pitch and facilities at any time on presentation of written notice to the Parish Council Clerk together with payment for any outstanding invoices due. No refund can be made in respect of fees and charges already paid in relation to the hire.
- b. The Council reserves the right to terminate any agreement with the Hirer, including the right to use pitches and facilities, if the Hirer breaches any of these rules or defaults on the payment of any invoices due.

16.8 Liability

- a. The Hirer is responsible for all loss, damage and claims arising out of this agreement.
- b. It is the Hirer's responsibility to ensure that all players and spectators associated with their team, and those of their opponents at each match, are advised of the terms of conditions

17. FEES AND CHARGES

- 17.1 The Council will set and review fees for use of the Site, to be based on size and type of event.
- 17.2 Community use may be prioritised and subsidised at the Council's discretion.
- 17.3 Group bookings and organisations wishing to apply for free of charge use of the Recreation Ground, pitch or MUGA should contact the Council Parish Clerk.
- 17.4 All other bookings must contact the Council Parish Clerk for details.

18. REFUSAL, SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION

- 18.1 Use of the pitches is not guaranteed due to ground conditions or animal activity.
- 18.2 The Council may refuse or cancel any booking where:
 - There is risk to safety or the ground is saturated;
 - The activity is inappropriate;
 - Required documentation is not provided.

- 18.3 The Council may terminate use immediately if conditions are breached.
- 18.4 No vehicles will be permitted onto the field if the grounds are saturated.
- 18.5 The Council reserves the right to make variations to this Policy at any time. Any variations will be made available to the public via the Council's website.

19. COMPLAINTS

The Council wishes to be notified should you have any complaints or problems regarding the hire of open spaces and pitches, or facilities under their control. Please address all correspondence to:

The Parish Council Clerk
Stondon Parish Council
c/o Stondon Community Centre
The Pastures
Upper Stondon
SG16 6QB
Email: clerk@stondon-pc.gov.uk

Approved by Stondon Parish Council

29 April 2026