



New Milton Rugby Club Presentation

Matt Wale of New Milton Rugby Club and Kieran Spencer from Rugby Football Union (RFU) gave a joint [presentation](#) outlining proposals for improvements to facilities and future club vision at Ashley Recreation Ground, including the installation of floodlights and perimeter fencing. An example of the proposed fencing was provided for members to view.

Details were provided of an estimated £100k investment, with funding support from the RFU, New Milton Rugby Club, and potential additional funding sources. It was explained that the proposals would improve safety and enable the hosting of matches, finals and festivals currently held elsewhere.

Following the presentation, The Chairman outlined that Ashley Recreation Ground is a recreation ground for public use, as opposed to areas such as Fawcetts Field and Fernhill, which are sports grounds.

It was noted that both the Town football and cricket clubs previously played on recreation grounds but, as they grew, moved to the sports grounds they now occupy.

The Town Clerk advised there is a shortage of rugby pitches and facilities within the New Forest district, partly due to the district's protected rural status and demand for community space. It was noted that district councils often use playing pitch audits to identify demand and based on the findings, allocate land or earmark development for larger sports hubs, noting the Rugby Club at Ashley serves a wide range of age groups, sometimes at capacity.

Members were then invited to ask questions and make comments.

Following a Member question regarding timescales, it was advised that an application for floodlighting is underway with the RFU, subject to planning approval and Town Council permission, with quotes received for fencing. Subject to approval, they would move quickly to begin fundraising.

Funding arrangements were outlined, including RFU contributions and anticipated income from advertising, with the Rugby Club responsible for ongoing maintenance and utility costs. They hope to see a return on investment in relation to the fencing in three years through advertising, which would be displayed during matches only.

Further discussion covered:

- The distinction between recreation grounds and sports grounds, including maintenance and legal considerations
- The proportion of land affected and retention of space for wider public use
- Potential economic benefits to the local area, with one member noting feedback from a local shop that footfall increases on match days and events
- Options for permanent or temporary fencing, including colour
- The need for public consultation

These matters will require further discussion and consideration of legal aspects especially.

4. APOLOGIES

Cllr M Craze

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

NONE

The Chairman asked the Town Clerk to read out the Terms of Reference of the Amenities Committee.

“The Amenities Committee shall: -

- a) Promote leisure activities and facilities which shall include maintenance of public recreation grounds, parks, sports fields, open spaces, allotment sites, flower/shrub beds, bus shelters and similar areas which are the responsibility of the Council.**
- b) As appropriate, monitor, liaise, advise and where necessary arrange activities or functions connected with powers relating to entertainment, the arts, welfare services, public library, and tourism. This shall include recommendations for financial assistance.**
- c) Decision to allow or refuse events on the War Memorial Recreation Ground in Whitefield Road (specifically) is delegated to the Amenities Chairman (or Deputy) and the Town Clerk (or Assistant) if there is no meeting in a reasonable timescale.**
- d) Monitor the provision and maintenance of all outdoor recreational sports and similar amenity services in the town area and make recommendations on these aspects as appropriate, to the Council or other responsible authority.**
- e) Be responsible for the provision of street markets and all aspects associated with it, together with Car Boot sales.**
- f) Be responsible for the provision and/or maintenance of public seats, litter bins and footpaths which are the recognised responsibility of the Council.**
- g) Arrange and publish its own programme of meetings.**
- h) Whenever possible meet on a Monday evening two weeks prior to the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.”**

6. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Chairman responded to Julia Stamper that providing specific footpath locations would be helpful. He advised that planters are currently being updated and that proposed updates to the Ballard Nature Reserve entrance are on hold pending further consultation with the Friends of Ballard Water Meadow. He also noted the support expressed for the Rugby Club proposals.

In response to Mandy Hayes, the Estates & Facilities Manager confirmed that the Town Estates and Facilities Team will assist with watering railway station containers. The Mayor, Cllr D Rice-Mundy, confirmed that he will attend the Meadows Day opening on 20 June and cut the ribbon. The Chairman added that the tree felling at the Hazlewood Avenue entrance to Ballard Nature Reserve will be investigated.

7. MINUTES

The Chairman referred to the previous Committee minutes of 14 April & 11 May 2026.

It was,

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meetings held on 14 April & 11 May 2026, previously circulated, be signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

The minutes were duly signed.

8. MATTERS ARISING

The Chairman reviewed the action points from the Committee Meeting held on 14 April 2026.

The Town Clerk advised, in relation to Minute 111 (Street Market Meeting), that a meeting with Paul Lewis of Southern Market Traders will be held on Thursday 28 May, along with the Estates & Facilities Manager.

The Town Clerk advised that Minute 112b) would be addressed under Item 10.

All remaining action points had been addressed.



Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
111	Street Market Meeting	On-going	Town Clerk
112a)	Swifts Pop Up Exhibition	20.04.26	Comms Officer
112b)	Fencing/ Netting Bowls Club	ASAP	Estates Manager
113)	Sea Scouts – St. George’s	26.04.26	Comms Officer
117)	Tree Work Policy	ASAP	Asst Town Clerk
119a)	Dementia Allotment Event	19.05.26	Comms Officer
121)	Xmas Lights Contract	27.04.26	F&GP

9. CORRESPONDENCE

The Town Clerk referred to the following items of correspondence:

- a) A letter received from an investment company seeking to acquire land in the area, specifically Barton Common, with the Town Clerk clarifying that the land is not for sale.
- b) A reminder that New Milton Town Robins Football Tournament, previously agreed, will take place at Fawcetts Field on 27 and 28 June.
- c) An email from New Forest District Council (NFDC) regarding CIL funding was received, noting that in December 2025 the NFDC Cabinet approved funding for 25 successful projects, marking its third consecutive funding round, and agreed to open the Local Infrastructure bid window (for applications of up to £100k) for the 2027/28 financial year for a two-month period in Spring 2026. It was further noted that £42k of CIL monies had recently been received, following £47k received six months previously.
- d) A request was received for permission to install a “Legend on the Bench” suicide prevention bench at Barton on Sea clifftop, providing 24/7 crisis support information. The bench would differ from existing ones, being constructed of solid African hardwood and incorporating lighting. This item is for information only, with further details awaited.
- e) A letter of thanks was received following the Flash Mob dance held on Saturday 2 May at Mallard Court and the Performance Pavilion, noting that the event has so far raised £385 for the Line Dance Foundation and New Milton Community Centre.

10. LAND USE REQUESTSa) Tea in the Community Garden – Saturday 15 August 2026 2pm to 4pm

A request from Angela Jackson, representing New Milton Community Garden:

“The event will be the culmination of the Arts Trail being organised by Friends of New Milton Station. I met with them and the new President of Barton Bees to discuss an afternoon tea in the garden.

The plan would be to erect two gazebos, and the WI will make and serve cakes, tea & coffee for attendees. There will be some acoustic music played and artists and those businesses that have displayed artists’ work will be invited, along with the artists themselves and the Mayor. Funding will either come from NMCG, or we will charge a small sum for food and drink or look for some sponsorship”

RESOLVED: That New Milton Community Garden be permitted to hold an Afternoon Tea in the Garden at the Community Garden, Moore Close on Saturday 15 August 2026, from 2pm to 4pm, subject to usual terms and conditions of use.

b) Community Garden, Moore Close Wildflower Meadow

A request from Angela Jackson, representing New Milton Community Garden:

“We were wondering whether the piece of land to the north of the community garden next to the Moore Close houses and fence, might be available to plant a wildflower meadow that we could manage?” “A path for Moore Close residents could be kept free so they can enter Fawcetts through their gate” “It would start from the north boundary of our garden and extend along the grassed area to the end of the straight part of the fence and back towards the gravel path.”

RESOLVED: That New Milton Community Garden be permitted to plant and manage a wildflower meadow to the north of the Community Garden, adjacent to the Moore Close houses and fence, provided that a path is retained for Moore Close residents to access Fawcetts Field.

c) Proposed Christmas Show & More at Moore Close 1 to 24 December 2026

A request from Firefly Events to host a family friendly, ticketed Christmas show at Moore Close, Fawcetts Field, across multiple days between 1 and 24 December, with two or more performances daily. The proposal includes the potential use of a tent for evening events and an open access market area for non-ticket holders. Exact operating dates, show times and details are to be confirmed.

RESOLVED: That Firefly Events be permitted to host a Christmas show/ event at Moore Close between 1 and 24 December 2026, subject to confirmation of dates, times and full event details, and subject to usual terms and conditions of use.

d) **Great Crested Newt Survey – Danewood**

A request from Freshwater Habitats Trust New Forest team to undertake a “*great crested newt eDNA survey as part of a national mapping and modelling project, to better understand the great crested newt populations*” asking permission “*to sample the pond at Brockhill (Danewood) Woodland SINc. The survey involves taking a small sample consisting of 20 x subsamples from the pond and sending these to the lab for analysis for great crested newt DNA*”

RESOLVED: That Freshwater Habitats Trust New Forest be permitted to conduct a Great Crested Newt survey at Danewood.

e) **Wipeout World Moore Close, Fawcetts Field 6 to 20 July 2026**

A request from Wipeout World to host “Kids World” at Moore Close, Fawcetts Field on 11, 12, 18 and 19 July, with set-up from 6 July and off the site on 20 July.

RESOLVED: That Wipeout World be permitted to use Moore Close to host “Kids World” between 6 and 20 July 2026, with operating days on 11, 12, 18 and 19 July, subject to the usual terms and conditions of use.

11. **RECREATION GROUND TREES**

The Chairman referred to Appendix 1, a draft proposal for the illumination of trees at the War Memorial Recreation Ground. Members were supportive of the suggestion, noting that it would provide a link between the existing trees, with clarification that the proposal is to illuminate every other tree.

The Chairman proposed that £11k be allocated from CIL funding for the works, seconded by Cllr V Schooling. With Members in agreement, it was

RECOMMENDED: That £11k be allocated from CIL funding for the works, to be endorsed by F&GP for Town Council approval.

12. **ARTS TRAIL AROUND NEW MILTON**

The Chairman referred to Appendix 2 regarding an Arts Trail in New Milton from 1 to 15 August 2026, during which local shops and venues are invited to display artwork by local artists, either in shop windows or within their premises. The Chairman advised that an installation could be displayed within the Town Hall, and it was suggested that shops with vacant windows could also be approached. Members were supportive of the Arts Trail. Artists and venues to be registered online by 31 May.



13. FENCING ON THE REC

The Chairman referred to the Estates & Facilities Manager for an update, who advised that a permanent high-level weld mesh fence is proposed, which would blend in with the surroundings and be approximately 6 metres in height. A visual representation of the proposed fence was shown to Members on screen. He confirmed that, following discussions with a fencing contractor, the installation could be completed within one week. It was noted that planning permission would need to be considered. Councillor A D O'Sullivan seconded the proposal.

In response to questions from Members, the Estates & Facilities Manager confirmed that the estimated cost is £12.5k, that the fence would be green in colour, and that the top would be cranked. With Members in agreement, it was

RECOMMENDED: That, subject to planning considerations, the proposal be endorsed by F&GP for approval by the Town Council.

14. STATION ROAD STREETSCENE

The Chairman noted that this item would be deferred to a future meeting pending further information from NFDC.

15. STREET TRADING MARKET

The Town Clerk confirmed that a meeting with Paul Lewis of Southern Market Traders will be held on Thursday 28 May, along with the Estates & Facilities Manager.

The Chairman noted that, at this stage, a road closure is not being considered due to the potential impact on local businesses, and the intention is to retain the current arrangement of keeping the road open with traders positioned on the footpath. Members were supportive of this approach, and the Town Clerk advised that an estimated 15 stalls could be accommodated on the pavement.

16. CHAIRMAN'S UPDATES

The Chairman referred to Cllr B Murrow, who commented on the Dementia Chatty Caravan event held earlier in the day at the Dementia Allotment, noting that it had been a very successful event with many attendees chatting and enjoying ice cream. Positive feedback was received on the allotment, including the newly painted sheds. He thanked all those who attended, including Members and the Mayor.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 06 July 2026 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Ashley Road, New Milton.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7:51pm.

CHAIRMAN _____ DATE _____

SUMMARY OF ACTION POINTS

Minute	Action Points	Action by date	To be actioned by
8	Meeting with Paul Lewis, SMT	28.05.26	Town Clerk/ Estates
10	Land Use Requests	ASAP	Comms Officer
11	Illuminate Rec Trees £11k	ASAP	Asst. Town Clerk
12	Arts Trail in New Milton	31.05.26	Mandy Hayes
13	Fencing on the Rec £12.5k	15.06.26	F&GP
14	Station Road Streetscene	06.07.26	Estates Manager
15	Street Trading Market	28.05.26	SMT

Distribution:

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 Estates & Facilities Manager
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 District Councillor J L Cleary
 County Councillors J Vigor, D Poole, and F Carpenter
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