

Meeting	Parks & Open Spaces Committee
Date	May 13 th 2025
Report Title	Parks & Projects Report
Agenda Reference	14
Author	Mark Weaving (Technical Officer)

Officer's Recommendations

1. To purchase 2 x replacement basket swings & fixings for Basil Close Play Area and Voyager Drive Play Area at a cost of £1,051.00 + VAT to be met from 4305/302.
2. To consider the purchase of a Play Area Safety Inspection iPad at a cost of £534.20 plus VAT and the app £525.00 per year (£21.87 per site).
3. To recommend the above funds are vired from the Play Area Repairs 4305/302 budget into the Play Area Inspections 4306/302 budget. *The first year of managed support is free with the purchase of the iPad.*
4. To note the cost of the app after the first year is £525.00 per year (£21.87 per site) and the managed support cost after the first year is £62.00 per year to be built into the budget for 2026/2027.

Background

The team continues to assist in other areas of the Parks & Open Spaces Team with the emptying of public litter and dog waste bins and Graffiti. The team continue to help the Office Team with any care taking work and set up Memory Cafe at the Bowls Club every other Wednesday.

The team has now taken ownership of the Community Garden, Leisure Gardens and the grass area outside the Parish Council Office. The team has cut all areas twice so far this season and this will be kept up to standard throughout the year. The team will keep an eye on the grass in case there is a growth spurt.

Capesthorpe Play Area has been put on hold for a few weeks due to other planned events the team helped with, these included the events that took place in the Play Areas such as the Easter Egg Hunts at King George V Play Area and White Eagle Play Area and the Outdoor Art Event at Luna Close Play Area.

Paperless Reporting System

The team has been investigating options for an app to conduct the inspections on. The company that does the external annual inspections has recently provided a demonstration to parishes in Swindon. There are several advantages to the app that will build a history of logs and costs, sharpen up the record keeping, report any issues, monitor the progress and schedule the work for the team, marking when complete. Currently there are several different processes and personnel to ensure that all the above happens. The app can print the reports for Committee updates too.

The app is built in with all the data and assets collected from the external inspections and the annual external inspections can be updated to the app. The app can be updated with any assets and includes bins and hedges within the play area perimeter – this can be extended but the POS Reporting System developed by Councillor V Manro is supporting this field.

The iPad must be a version 15 to be adequate for the app. The data is included in the cost of the support, but it is recommended that synchronization is done when there is wi-fi at the premises rather than out in the play areas.



Other app options do not have all the features included within this application and the data input from the information stored will be of great benefit to mean the team is ready to use the app straight from purchase.

Dog Play Area

The team has been measuring the size of the area opposite Goodearl and costing up some fencing. These costs have been passed to Councillor V Manro who is liaising with a potential sponsor and planning advice. There are funds also allocated from the Community Choices budget for this project. Once these costs have been finalised a proposal will be brought to Council.

Works Completed

Location	Work Completed, March/April	Date Completed
Various	Getting hand mowers repaired, dropping bus off at garage and collecting it again, preparing the play panels for Capes thorn, building compost bin for Ventnor allotments, adjusting bins, cutting and strimming allotments, church, office and basil play Area	March/April 2025
Village Green Play Area	Removed old seesaw from Village green and fitted new on with repairing surface.	03/03/25 -14/03/25
Capesthorpe Play Area	Removed x2 items from area and repaired surface, fitted new swings. Dug holes for play panel and fitted it Two more panel have been fitted since.	20/03/25 21/03/25 24/03/25-27/03/25 01/04/25-11/04/25
Ventnor allotments	Fitting of the first compost area built with pallets in top carpark.	30/04/25
Dog bins	Reduce the height of dog bins to help prevent back strain lifting bags out. X25 bins reduced so far and trying to do one per week or possibly more	March / April 2025 x 24 finished
Bus stop opposite Morrisons	Cut hedge away and remove ivy	26/03/25

Working Towards

A schedule has been drawn up to allow the Officers to progress with their priorities to put the team in good stead for the projects to be conducted in 2025/2026

Location	Working towards	Time Scale
Capes thorn Play Area	To prepare surface and fit play panel and spinning bowl. Paint equipment and clean surface	May 2025 June 2025
Dog bins	To reduce Height of the rest of the dog bins	May / June 2025
Ventnor allotments	To build another compost area at the bottom gate	May / June 2025
Play Areas	To start tidying up hedges around the fences of Play Areas.	May to September 2025