

Meeting	Community Development Committee
Date	1 st September 2026
Report Title	Community & Youth Development
Agenda Reference	10
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Recommendations

1. To note the report.

Background

The Community Development Team has been busy facilitating the regular events such as the Community Bus Trips, Craft & Connect, Yoga and Youth Activities, as well as ad hoc events from the Council's agreed events programme. The following update is of activities which have taken place since the previous committee meeting held on the 7th July 2026.

Community

1. Yoga - Term 5

- The summer term schedule was determined based on the weeks when attendance was highest, and participant fees were adjusted accordingly.
- Although current enrolment levels remain sustainable, securing two additional participants would further strengthen the programme's viability.
- To maintain affordability and encourage ongoing engagement, fees continue to be collected in six-week instalments.

2. Craft & Connect

The Craft and Connect group successfully completed its six-session summer programme on 9 July. The programme offered a variety of creative and community-focused activities designed to encourage participation, skill development and social connection.

Activities delivered throughout the programme included:

- Shadow painting
- Outdoor still-life art sessions at the Sensory Garden
- Creation of decorative hanging garden birds
- Paper craft poppies and flowers
- Macramé hanging basket making for the Leisure Garden Stall at the Summer Extravaganza

The sessions attracted both returning and new participants, providing valuable opportunities for residents to meet, develop new skills and contribute to community projects. A number of participants became particularly invested in activities that supported wider community initiatives, demonstrating a strong commitment to local engagement and volunteering.



The programme has generated significant enthusiasm among attendees, with many participants already contributing ideas and expressing an interest in supporting future initiatives, including the forthcoming Christmas Parcels Project. The continued growth of the group highlights the value of creative activities in fostering community connections and encouraging ongoing resident involvement.

3. Goodearl Dog Park Opening & Dog Show

The Grand Opening of Goodearl Dog Park and accompanying Dog Show was successfully held, attracting a strong turnout from local residents, dog owners and animal lovers from across the community.

Following the cancellation of the original event due to adverse weather conditions, the rescheduled event was blessed with favourable weather. The morning began with light rain before developing into ideal dog-walking conditions, with cooler temperatures giving way to warm sunshine as the event progressed.

The event commenced with an official ribbon-cutting ceremony led by Haydon Wick Parish Council Chairman, Councillor Vinay Manro, alongside Gina from Muddy Squad, whose generous donation made a significant contribution towards the installation of the new dog park. Their involvement helped mark the formal opening of this valuable community facility.

A highlight of the morning was the popular dog show, expertly judged by Janet Garrett of Janet's Puppy Skool, who generously volunteered her time and expertise. The competition featured a range of categories, including:

- Best Puppy
- Young Handler
- Golden Oldie
- Waggiest Tail

Janet's experience and enthusiasm helped create an enjoyable and inclusive atmosphere for all participants. Particular praise was received for her encouragement of young handlers and her thoughtful engagement with owners sharing their dogs' rescue and rehoming journeys.

The event was further enhanced by the attendance of a number of local traders and organisations, including:

- DungeonFae Face Painting
- Grooming Pawgeous
- Muttleigh
- Swindon's Animal Food Bank
- Mario's Ice Creams

Their participation helped create a vibrant community event and provided additional attractions for visitors throughout the morning.



The event was exceptionally well supported, with more than 30 dogs attending alongside their owners and families. Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, demonstrating strong community support for the new facility. Whether participating in the dog show, visiting stalls or simply enjoying the atmosphere, attendees contributed to a successful and memorable event.

The success of the Grand Opening highlights the value of community-focused events in bringing residents together and promoting the use of new local facilities. The Council extends its thanks to all volunteers, exhibitors, traders, sponsors, participants and visitors who helped make the event such a positive occasion.

Weymouth Community Trip

On the recommendations from last year, we hosted a single trip to Weymouth this year. This proved to be a popular destination, and the early bird offer helped to ensure that we sold out quickly. An updated payment system was also introduced, which significantly improved the administration process and made financial monitoring and record-keeping more efficient. Families accounted for just 15% of attendees. This lower level of family participation may have been influenced by the overall cost of the trip or the timing during the busy summer holiday period.

The trip was financially successful and did not incur a loss:

- **Total Costs:** £995.00
- **Total Income:** £1,080.00
- **Surplus:** £85.00

Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive. Participants thoroughly enjoyed the day, and the excellent weather contributed to the overall success of the trip.

Participant Feedback

"I had a wonderful day. Thank you for organising it. I lived there as a young girl, so it brought back many happy memories."

"Thank you for a fabulous day. Fish and chips, tea, ice cream and even a solar eclipse!"

"Great day out. Thank you to the team for organising it."

"It was so lovely to visit Weymouth again. We had a wonderful time."

Youth

Summer Parks & Play Areas Roadshow

Luna Park – Disney themed Family Picnic

The Council successfully launched its first Summer Parks & Play Areas Roadshow at Luna Play Area, welcoming 115 registered residents and delivering a highly successful family-focused community event.

The roadshow adopted a Disney-themed format, with families encouraged to bring picnics and attend dressed as their favourite Disney characters. Despite challenging windy conditions throughout the morning, attendance was excellent and participants engaged enthusiastically with the wide range of activities on offer.

The event programme included:

- Arts and crafts activities, including tiara and mask making



- Friendship bracelet creation
- Giant collaborative painting
- Games of Guess Who?
- Croquet and other informal play activities

The windy weather created some unexpected challenges, particularly during craft activities, with lightweight materials frequently being blown around the play area. However, this was taken in good humour by attendees and added to the day's memorable moments, with children enthusiastically retrieving runaway stickers and paper. A key learning point for future outdoor events is the need to ensure adequate storage solutions, clips and weights are available to secure lightweight resources and improve accessibility throughout the event.

One of the most popular activities was the collaborative painting project, which encouraged children to use their imagination to transform simple painted shapes into unique creations. The finished artwork featured a wide variety of imaginative designs, including animals, flowers and space rockets, highlighting the creativity of those attending.

At midday, attendees were joined by special guests Ariel and Rapunzel, who proved to be the highlight of the event. The princesses spent time meeting children, posing for photographs and participating in activities. Rapunzel captivated audiences by reading a story to the children, while both characters joined in with crafting activities, taught curtsying and twirling techniques, and led princess-themed dancing. Their theatrical departure allowed activities to continue seamlessly whilst creating a memorable experience for attendees.

A Best Costume Competition was also held, with Councillors Vinay Manro and Leigh Jackson undertaking the difficult task of selecting winners from a large number of high-quality entries. The competition was well received and generated significant enthusiasm among participating families.

The event also provided an excellent opportunity for children to socialise, make new friends and take part in shared creative activities. Friendship bracelet making proved particularly popular, giving children a keepsake to remember the day.

Overall, the first Parks & Play Areas Roadshow was considered a significant success, demonstrating strong community demand for accessible, free family activities within local parks and open spaces. Feedback from attendees was overwhelmingly positive, and the event has provided valuable learning opportunities for future roadshows.

Sk8Jam

We had 30 attendees for our Summer Skate Jam, hosted by ATB Skate Shop.

Skaters were encouraged to compete in a fun and friendly atmosphere for prizes provided by ATB. It was an opportunity for everyone to learn, improve and share tricks, tips and skills. The event lasted 2 hours, with lots of new faces added to our skater community. It was lovely to see younger children being encouraged and coached by their peers.

Trent Road – Sports Themes Family Picnic – Cancelled due to extreme heat

Mouldon Hill Country Park – Nature Explorers Family Picnic

The latest Parks & Play Areas Roadshow was a successful, nature-themed event that welcomed 50 registered residents, providing families with an engaging morning of outdoor learning, creativity and exploration.



The event commenced with a brief safety talk before families participated in a range of nature-based activities designed to encourage curiosity, teamwork and environmental awareness.

Activities included:

- Nature Texture Printing, allowing children to explore patterns and textures found in the natural environment.
- Cress Hedgehog Making, providing a hands-on craft activity with a gardening element.
- Scavenger Hunt Challenge, where children tested their observation skills, completed challenges and earned points throughout the session.

The scavenger hunt proved particularly popular, encouraging families to explore the surrounding area whilst working together to solve clues and complete tasks.

Participants demonstrated excellent enthusiasm and teamwork throughout the morning. A picnic lunch break provided families with an opportunity to relax, socialise and enjoy the outdoor setting.

The afternoon concluded with a storytelling session and Explorer Bingo, which reinforced the event's nature and discovery theme whilst providing a calm and engaging end to the day. All participating children received certificates and stickers in recognition of their achievements and enthusiasm throughout the event.

The roadshow successfully combined learning, play and community engagement, providing opportunities for children to develop new skills, build confidence, make friends and connect with nature. The event also highlighted the value of outdoor activities in bringing local families together and encouraging the use of community green spaces.

The positive feedback received demonstrates the continuing popularity of the Parks & Play Areas Roadshow programme and its role in supporting family engagement within the community.

Heaton Close – Summer Party – Family Picnic

Date: 26 August 2026

Location: Heaton Play Area

The Summer Party Family Picnic was a fun and successful end-of-summer event, welcoming residents to Heaton Play Area.

Although the weather was cooler than some of our previous summer events, families enjoyed a fantastic morning of crafts, music, party games and outdoor fun. Children particularly enjoyed the games and the chance to win prizes, with plenty of energy and laughter throughout the event.



A highlight of the day was a surprise visit from Wicky the Frog at 1pm. Perfectly timed for our game of Musical Lily Pads, Wicky joined in the fun but was knocked out of the game quite quickly, much to the amusement of the children.

The event provided a great opportunity for families to come together, enjoy activities in their local community and celebrate the final days of the summer holidays. Overall, it was a well-attended and enjoyable event, with positive engagement from residents throughout.

Bus Shelter Refurbishments

The first mural installation on Thames Avenue will be painted by the Marketing & Events Co Ordinator and the Community & Office Administrator on Thursday 27th and Friday 28th August. This timetable will ensure the artwork is in place for local school children to see on their return to school. The refurbishment of the second bus shelter consultation at The Brow is scheduled to commence in the autumn ready for delivery in the spring.

Coming up:

Macmillan Coffee Morning – Friday 25th September 2026 10am – 12pm

Community Litter Pick – Sunday 20th September 2026

October Half Term Programme

Upcoming September & October Activities

When	What	Where
Community Bus Trip	Wed 2 nd September	Thatcham Garden Centre
MC Abba Afternoon	10th September	Bowls Club
Community Litter Pick	Sunday 20 th September	Taw Hill
Leisure Garden Social	Wednesday 23 rd September	Goodearl Site
MacMillan Coffee Morning	Friday 25 th September	Parish Offices
Annual Plot Holders Meeting	Monday 5 th October	Parish Offices
MC Fish & Chip Friday	9 th October	Parish Office
Tricks, Treat & Pumpkins	Friday 30 th October	Parish Offices
BEST Event	TBC	GLL