



FAQs – June 2024

This document is intended to capture the themes, questions and comments received before, during and after the public meeting held on Thursday 13th June 2024. Many of the questions were very similar and we have grouped them into sections to aid coherence of the document.

We are not able to answer questions on behalf of the Parish Council or Sports Clubs.

More information will be shared in the coming weeks and months as the position develops and we remain completely committed to keeping the village informed and engaged.

The sub-lease

What are the benefits of the Parish Council granting a sub-lease to the charity?

We think there a number of significant benefits, including:

- The charity can access grants and funding not available to the Parish Council. The sub-lease provides confidence to funders that any significant investment will return benefit for the long term
- Improved maintenance of the Village Green as a single focus of the charity
- Allows the Parish Council to concentrate on other significant priorities
- Provides stability and certainty for sports clubs
- Building a modest pavilion will enhance opportunity for other clubs to prosper
- Provides budgeting consistency to Parish Council in relation to Village Green costs
- Builds volunteer capacity in the village to spread the load of responsibility
- Village Green and pavilion ceases to be a perennial matter of contention
- Proposal is complimentary of existing village assets; Village Hall, Pubs, Shop & Primary School
- Sub lease will include appropriate safeguards and insurances to ensure this crucial village asset is protected

The pre school has sub-leased its building from the school for more than 10 years. It is a straight forward process and has worked well.

Why is a sub-lease proposed and not a memorandum of understanding or licence? Can it be for a shorter period?

The head lease contains a clause specifically to enable a sub-lease to the charity so the mechanism is straightforward and inexpensive.

It will provide security to the sports clubs and village and enable better access to the necessary funds to build a pavilion. Appropriate clauses will be included to provide robust protections and the sub-lease would be prepared by solicitors of both parties (at minimal cost) if Heads of Terms are agreed.

Some grants require a longer term lease. Larger grant value = longer the term required.

The proposed length of the sub lease, matches the head lease minus one day. This is in line with the provisions set out in the head lease when the sports clubs relinquished their previous fields, to enable the green to be located more centrally for all users.

The issue of the 20k figure that has circulated regarding proposed ongoing costs associated with Village Green maintenance.

No decisions have been reached about the appropriate contribution from the Parish Council towards ongoing Village Green maintenance. An average spend over 5 years is being considered as a starting point. The principle is agreed that the charity should receive a reasonable sum to cover annual costs associated with grass cutting, public access liability insurance, path and fence maintenance and other associated costs currently incurred by the Parish Council and no more.

What was the chronology in relation to discussions and decisions about the sub-lease?

The charity gave the same presentation (as given in the public meeting on 13th June) to the PC open spaces committee on the 22nd April. On May 8th the Parish Council resolved to form a working party with representation from the Parish Council and Charity to consider areas to be included as part of draft Heads of Terms that could inform a sub-lease.

A member of the parish, not part of either group also attended. The Parish Council also agreed on the 22nd April that it would be helpful for the charity to give the same presentation at a public meeting. An invitation to a public meeting on Thursday 13th June was advertised by the charity on 13th May.

Clearly, it is not for the charity to comment on Parish Council decision-making, but perhaps simply to say that the current Parish Council was elected just over a year ago with significant voter numbers to act and take decisions on behalf of the Parish.

What additional costs are likely to be incurred by the Parish Council in order to hand the Village Green over in a good state of repair?

This is another area being discussed between the two parties. Like any other tenant taking on a property, the charity should not pick up the burden of any maintenance that has not been kept up to date in preceding years. The charity should receive the Village Green with a clean bill of health.

The Pavilion

I didn't realise planning permission for a pavilion was in place; why hasn't been built?

Yes, planning permission for a pavilion, dating back more than 10 years remains live as enabling works were commenced by a previous Parish Council.

There are various reasons historically why the Pavilion has not been built, and this is in part why it may be helpful for the Village Green to be managed by an independent body within the village. Also building the pavilion will be expensive and need significant efforts to raise the funds, which we have the capacity and experience to achieve.

How large is the proposed pavilion?

Approximately 190sqm – it is a modest building that will incorporate changing rooms, toilets, showers a hall space and kitchen. It will look appropriate in setting and will provide a wonderful focal point for positive, healthy activity at the green. The intended footprint with dimensions is below.

What benefit will it provide beyond football and cricket?

So many opportunities for other clubs to develop with volunteer support; pétanque, dog walkers, wildlife enhancement, trim trail, HBO runners, tennis, netball, table tennis, youth activities.....all ideas welcome!

How much will the Pavilion cost and how will it be funded?

The estimated outline cost to build the pavilion is in excess of £500k. As with all build projects there are numerous details that will influence the final cost.

Capital works will be entirely paid for by grant funding and fundraising. The maintenance will be funded by clubs, further fundraising and volunteering.

Why do we need a pavilion?

Currently, there is no provision for users of the Village Green to change, shower, use the toilet (beyond a single portalo), seek shelter, source fresh water or refreshments. This would be of benefit to all users of the green; sports participants of all ages, spectators, dog walkers or visitors. And what a great race HQ it would be for the 10k!

Proper facilities, beyond the beautiful setting will allow existing and new clubs to generate more income and contribute more financially.

Will the storage containers remain at the Village Green?

The pavilion proposed would not provide sufficient storage capacity to enable removal of the containers. It would however be sensible to review the location of the containers in order to screen them more from view as part of the overall Village Green management strategy moving forwards.

What about security?

The pavilion would have a full cctv system and be built with robust but attractive building materials to ensure minimal maintenance and the highest levels of security. Optimising usage of the Village Green will ensure increased vigilance.

When could the Pavilion be built?

If we agree a sub-lease with the Parish Council, we would look to start raising funds immediately. Once the necessary funds are raised, it is a straightforward build and could be constructed in less than a year.

What about the ongoing annual costs for the Village Green and Pavilion if built?

The intention is that the Parish Council will continue to contribute a reasonable sum (TBA) towards annual maintenance of the Village Green in line with their average spend the last 5 years. The Pavilion will be maintained through sports club contributions. Once a pavilion is in place, higher fees can be justified to the sports clubs.

Will there be parking included in the scheme?

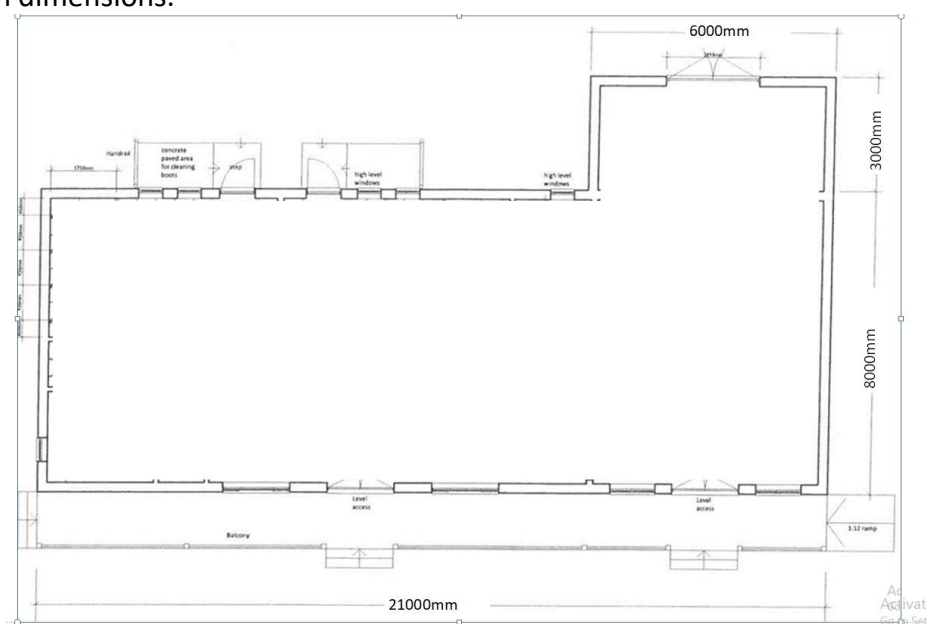
The current planning scheme includes modest provision for car parking (approximately 40 spaces) during sports events. This would be to the far side of the chestnut trees, adjacent to the pavilion and used to alleviate parking issues on the high street during sports matches and events. The intention would be that any hard standing would be grass grid to ensure no visual impairment to the setting.

Will someone be employed to run the pavilion?

There are no plans to employ anyone at the pavilion. Club volunteers are the backbone of clubs and associations across the country as they are in HBO. It is envisaged that the pavilion, like the existing and future clubs that will use it, will be run by volunteers.

Confirmation sought regarding the proposed location and floor plan of the pavilion shown at the meeting

The proposed pavilion location, with planning consent would be located in the elevated section of the green, to the left hand side (when entering from the pedestrian gate), set back from the path, looking over the cricket square. The footprint of the building is set out below with dimensions.



The footprint is approximately 190sqm - It is a modest building that will incorporate changing rooms, toilets, showers a hall space and kitchen.

There is a complex planning history relating to the Village Green dating back more than 10 years and the footprint above is what we are working towards.

Given the plans were designed more than 10 year ago, the detailed internal floor plan will need some amendment to conform to current regulations, including for safeguarding. In the event that the sub-lease moves forwards, the charity will hold a further public meeting to share an updated floor plan and take feedback during the period of fundraising.

Important clarification; a briefing paper was shared with the Parish Council during the presentation on April 22nd with an incorrect floor plan. This document has now been updated with the correct drawing and we apologise for any confusion this may have caused.

The HBOSCC Charity

What is the mission statement and status of HBOSCC?

A Charity established for the betterment of the sport, recreation and community provision for all residents, parishioners and visitors at the Village Green. HBOSCC charity has been revitalised in recent months with new Trustees to work with the Parish Council to progress potential plans for a pavilion, improved facilities and maintenance at the Village Green.

Current trustees:	Representing	Appointment date:
Chris Roberts – Chair	The village	3 rd October 2013
David Milne – Treasurer	Senior Football Club	27 th March 2014
Mark Strutt	The village	20 th March 2015
James Leighton	Kung FU Club	2 nd May 2014
Vanessa Ambler	The village	10 th May 2024
Steve Munday	The Cricket Club	27 th October 2023

Why would the PC relinquish control of the village green to HBOSCC?

The charity have access to funding streams not available to the Parish Council, which gives us a greater chance of raising funds. Also, the local political cycle and historical disagreement is in part why a pavilion wasn't built years ago. We believe the charity can provide the stability and leadership to ensure the Village Green thrives and existing and new clubs can flourish to the benefit of all.

The Village Green would be the single focus of the charity and its trustees are volunteers with significant experience in relevant fields. The Parish Council would retain some control in that the sub lease would provide appropriate protections and break clauses should standards not be maintained.

How will you communicate and engage with parishioners and be held accountable?

We will have open lines of communication in a variety of ways to ensure constant and clear communication with the village:

1. Via our email address: info@hbo-sports-community-club.co.uk
2. We will post regular updates on our Facebook Page and you can also message us there
3. We will post regular articles in the Parish Magazine
4. We will be accountable to the Parish Council and at least one charity trustee will attend the Parish Council meetings every month
5. We will hold a public meeting at least annually to offer the opportunity for discussion about all matters relating to the Village Green
6. We will produce an annual report and be measured against our objectives by the charity commission
7. The most important accountability will be to members of the community and we will see you in the village on a regular basis, so please do come and speak to us

Who are the HBOSCC charity trustees and what is your motivation?

Trustees: The trustees of the HBO Sports and Community Club have extensive experience running businesses and public sector organisations. They have a proven track record in fundraising. They are experienced in successfully running community events and community sports clubs.

Chris Roberts - Chair of the HBO Sports & Community Club, was CEO of Van Hage Garden Centre group for 25 years and has extensive business knowledge and experience. Has held various volunteer roles in the parish 10K Race committee member and PTA. He has also been a Governor of St Mary's School and Bishop's Stortford High School including during the Jobbers Wood Sports Grounds project. He also supported the Hertfordshire Olympic Project at Lea Valley Water Park. Chris has lived in Hatfield Broad Oak for over 35 years.

'I am passionate about Sport and creating a Pavilion on the Green whilst maintaining its natural beauty and horticulture.'

Vanessa Ambler - CEO and owner of We Care 4 Air Ltd, working with governments to reduce air pollution worldwide. Former Chair of the HBO PC, Race Director of the HBO 10K for over 10 years and Former Chair of St Marys C of E Primary school PTA. In addition to her village fundraising activities, Vanessa has significant grant funding experience and success to her name.

'I am honoured to be a Trustee and am very passionate about improving sports, leisure and nature at the Village Green. Having been Race Director for the 10k for many years, I know just how important a pavilion would be for the future of the race, which is an incredible opportunity for the entire village to raise funds. I believe the Village Green should be available and accessible for all, and am very happy to dedicate my time and efforts to improve facilities for future generations.'

James Leighton - former HR Director of The Uniter Group and Major Account Director Sales at FLS Limited. Owner of JDL Services in the landscape gardening industry, James has relevant experience and knowledge that is hugely beneficial for the village green. Chairman and Chief Instructor of the Hatfield Broad Oak Ch'uan Chang Do Kung Fu Club for over 30 years.

David Milne - Is a local Farmer with 35 years local experience. David owns a number of companies including two Estate Agencies/Property Lettings and a Property Development Company with local site open market and Social Housing Projects. David brings a wealth of construction knowledge to the team. He is a founding member of the HBO Football Club.

'My reason for being involved as a trustee is to give back some of what the village and sport have given me. I believe we can help provide and maintain a pavilion and green space that will enable younger people to make the same lifetime memories and friends that I have.'

Mark Strutt - Managing Director of Broad Oak Consultants. Chair of HBO PC and councillor for over 12 years. Chair of HBO Youth FC, Secretary of HBO Ch'uan Chang Do Kung Fu Club. Long term Member of the Flower Festival Committee and Friends of St Marys organisers of the village bonfire event. Former Governor at St Marys C of E Primary School, Vice Chair of the Pre School and member of the PTA. Mark has lived in Hatfield Broad Oak for over 56 years and his passion for the village is second to none and demonstrated by the many hours of his spare time he gives up every week.

'Open spaces and outdoor activities are a passion of mine and I work very hard to enable others to enjoy the benefits of sports. I have for a long time championed all activities at the Village Green, whilst recognising the historic connections to football and cricket of the village sports pitches'

Steve Munday - CEO of a Multi-Academy Trust operating 3 secondary schools and 3 primary schools, educating more than 4500 pupils, and managing more than 50 acres of sports fields. Steve brings extensive educational and operational experience. He is also a committee member of HBO Cricket Club.

'I have two young children who are a big part of the reason we moved to HBO 6 years ago. I spend a lot of time at the Village Green playing with my children, walking the dog, helping maintain the cricket square and limited time batting on it! Prior to my current role, I was the Headteacher of a large secondary school and sports college, and understand acutely, the positive impact of sport and recreation on communities, including for those not participating'

How are trustees decided? The articles of association appear to be out of date?

The charity has effectively been dormant for a number of years. Two new Trustees have been appointed in the last 12 months to support a fresh look at the Village Green question and proposal to the Parish Council for maintenance. The charity appoints Trustees as a company would in line with its articles, which are being updated with guidance from a senior partner at Browne Jacobson solicitors.

If the direction of travel is positive, the charity will enlist further trustees and launch a clear membership structure to include all relevant clubs and activities.

Isn't there a conflict of interest given the Chair of the Parish Council is also a trustee of HBOSCC?

It is not a secret that Mark Strutt is a major supporter of all things HBO and that clearly includes the Village Green. He spends an extraordinary amount of time invested in the maintenance of the pitches and general Village Green environment and is a significant reason for the growth of the sports clubs and the opportunities they enable for so many. It is pleasing that the capacity of those clubs is growing and is starting to lessen the load on one individual.

If you have attended a Parish Council meeting or read the minutes, you will see that he always declares an interest at the appropriate time in meetings and does not vote on matters relating to the Village Green.

All HBOSCC Trustees have declared any conflicts of interest to the Charity which is held on file and referred to at every meeting. The Trustees also hold each other to account robustly.

Other questions and comments for HBOSCC

Thankyou for all the time, effort and care that has been taken to set out the proposal so clearly.

Change can be challenging but the sooner it can be embraced, the sooner we can move forward to the benefit of the parish.

Would parishioners still be able to access the green if HBOSCC is granted a sub-lease?

Continued public access and the responsibilities of the charity will be clearly detailed and protected in the sub-lease. There will be no discernible difference in the access and usage of the Village Green.

We do expect however, that all the existing users, both human and canine will notice improvements in provision if the Village Green becomes the responsibility of the charity and our singular focus.

The Village have already invested significant funds to develop the green. Handing it over isn't fair.

We think that granting a sub-lease to the charity, with singular focus on the maintenance and enhancement of the space, with all the appropriate safeguards and accountability in place will mean that the historic investment in a significant village asset is protected for now and future generations.

Who will decide what happens at the Village Green / pavilion. Parish Council or charity?

The Charity (HBOSCC) will be responsible for the Village Green under the terms of the lease as the Parish Council are now.

It is absolutely our intention to consult with the village about any further improvements, beyond the pavilion (that already has Planning Permission).

Do any plans exist to include any tennis courts or padel tennis courts so we could have an HBO tennis club?

No plans currently exist for tennis courts at the Village Green, however, as above we would consult with village about any further enhancements or facilities that parishioners would like to see. We are completely committed to exploring a variety of new clubs and activities with volunteer support.

Will the pavilion be licensed and will it damage the trade at the village pubs?

Conversely, we would expect that a pavilion would support trade, not just for the pubs but for other businesses in the village as well.

When opposition cricket and football teams currently visit, or indeed players and their parents for weekly training, they have nowhere to shower and change and so more often than not, they leave straight after matches/training. The pavilion will provide a reason for more visitors to stay longer and enjoy everything HBO has to offer.

Any licensing will be done in partnership and discussion with the pubs and there are no plans for loud parties or anything that would upset the ambience of the setting or clash with the usage of the Village Hall.

Why don't the clubs pay pitch fees and what will they pay in the future?

Whilst the sports clubs don't currently pay distinct pitch fees, it is disingenuous to suggest they get free use of the pitches as they spend more than 800hrs a year completing maintenance and pay over £4K per year in additional maintenance costs for additional services and materials, such as verti-dripping, fertiliser, paint and top soil and loam.

Furthermore, in most examples a sports club fees are linked to a pitch with facilities; toilets, showers, changing rooms and fresh water. The sports clubs also contribute with significant funding towards assets like the tractor (26k contribution from sports funding)
Once a pavilion is in place, we would agree a new fee structure with the clubs.

Why are there so many football goals?

Football is the largest participation sport in the country by some distance for children. The HBO club membership has grown significantly in the last 5 yrs. Different age groups require different size goals for competition. The walking football club also use a set of the goals.

Who pays for the goals and other equipment?

All equipment for the sports clubs is paid for by the sports clubs. Either via their membership funds, grant applications or a combination of both.

Who gets to use the goals?

The Youth Football club allows use of the goals and nets by the wider community when not in use by the club.

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