

## Grant to Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council (Executive Decision)

*Director:* Martin Woods, Service Delivery  
*Manager / Lead Specialist:* Tim Cook, Locality Manager  
*Lead Officer:* Mary Ostler, Neighbourhood Development Officer (North)  
Adrian Moore, Locality Officer  
*Contact Details:* [mary.ostler@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:mary.ostler@southsomerset.gov.uk) or 01935 462123  
[adrian.moore@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:adrian.moore@southsomerset.gov.uk) or 01935 462409

### Purpose of the Report

Councillors are asked to consider the awarding of a grant of £11,586 towards the costs of creating the Stoke Adventure and Activity Hub on the village recreation field.

### Public Interest

Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council has applied to the Area North community grants programme for financial assistance with the costs of landscaping and purchase and installation of equipment to create the Stoke Adventure and Activity Hub on the recreation field at West Street, TA14 6QE.

The hub will have three elements: an Outdoor Gym; Balance and Agility Trail; and an Adventure Play Area, installed on an area of the field adjacent to the football pitches and skate park. In addition to the installation of the equipment, the ground will be landscaped, with safety matting or chippings provided around the equipment.

The application has been assessed by the Neighbourhood Development Officer / Locality Officer who is submitting this report to enable the Area North Committee to make an informed decision about the application.

### Recommendation

It is recommended that Councillors award a grant of £11,586 to Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council, the grant to be allocated from the Area North capital programme (Local Priority Projects) and subject to SSDC standard conditions for community grants (appendix A) and the following special condition:

- Access review of the Stoke Sports & Recreation Trust's new five-year plan for the site.

### Application Details

Name of applicant:	Stoke sub Hamdon Parish Council
Project:	Stoke Adventure & Activity Hub
Total project cost:	£117,615
Amount requested from SSDC:	£11,586 (9.8%)
Recommended special conditions:	Access review of the new Stoke Sports & Recreation Trust five-year plan
Application assessed by:	Mary Ostler / Adrian Moore

## Community Grants Assessment Score

The table below shows the grant scoring for this application. Applications must meet the minimum score of 22 to be considered for SSDC funding under Community Grants policies.

Category	Actual score	Maximum score possible
A Eligibility	Y	Y/N
B Equalities Impact	4	7
C Need for project	4	5
D Capacity of organisation	14	15
E Financial need	6	7
F Innovation	3	3
<b>Grand total</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>37</b>

## Parish information

Parish*	Stoke sub Hamdon
Parish population	1,968
No. of dwellings	905

\*Taken from the 2011 census profile

## Background

### Village context

Stoke sub Hamdon has a diverse population of approximately 2000 residents. Within this figure, the numbers of 10 to 15 year olds, and of people aged 65+, are higher than the national average. The numbers of unemployed people in both the 16 to 24 and 50+ age groups are higher than the national average and the number of people aged 16 to 64 whose day to day activities are limited a lot, is higher than the Somerset average.

Similar to other villages in the locality, there are pockets of deprivation and areas of high wealth. The number of social rented properties is higher than the county average and there is limited public transport which affects, in particular, young people and the older generation who are less likely to be able to travel independently.

Stoke is a growing community. Within the District Council Local Plan, 51 new homes were proposed for the village, alongside a minimum of 1.09 hectares of employment land to be developed. In reality 74 new houses have already been developed or are currently being built and other potential sites are being looked at.

These developments are significantly impacting the size of the village and the demand for services, infrastructure and facilities, which are under strain.

The District Council's Infrastructure Delivery Plan also shows that the development proposed for Stoke sub Hamdon in the Local Plan generates the need for additional open space and outdoor play space. This is on top of the existing Council Summary of Needs Assessment, which identifies a shortfall of

2,378 sq.m. of equipped play areas for Stoke sub Hamdon, being the 5th highest deficiency in Area North.

## **Research into need**

In 2005, a Village Plan was published providing a five year rolling plan for developments within the parish, based on the issues which had arisen through community consultation events and activities. The issues included lack of amenities for young people and the need for improved facilities for recreation.

In 2012, a comprehensive survey was carried out with young people in the village by Hamdons Youth Group and this identified a desire from young people for additional, free-to-use, recreational facilities.

A village-wide community consultation took place in 2013 to identify local requirements for sports and recreation facilities and amenities. This echoed the Youth Group survey, showing that local people of all ages wanted additional free-to-access sports and play facilities which would make the recreation ground a more inclusive area providing opportunities for all residents. The main facilities identified were an outdoor gym and more adventurous activity and play equipment for older young people.

An additional open consultation was held to look specifically at equipment options and led to the development of a preferred equipment list in early 2016 and ultimately into the final project, the Activity and Adventure Hub.

## **The Project**

### **Site & development**

The recreation ground land is owned by the Duchy of Cornwall and leased to Stoke Parish Council on a renewable lease currently running to 2031. The Duchy is being fully informed and consulted about development of the Hub.

The Hub project is being developed by the Stoke Sports and Recreation Trust, a voluntary organisation and registered charity (number 1063874) formed in 1997 to develop, support and provide sport and recreation facilities for the Stoke sub Hamdon area.

The Trust manages the recreation ground through a contract of service with the Parish Council and has accomplished a number of successful projects including a new sports pavilion; a new football pitch; the purchase of grounds maintenance equipment; portable floodlights; a BMX track; skateboard park; boules court and picnic tables.

The Trust operates the Stoke Charity Shop and organises the village May Fayre and, since 2011, has provided over £75,000 in funding to the community, through grants to organisations, individuals and projects. It has also raised over £70,000 to cover maintenance, repair and upkeep of the existing facilities on the Recreation Ground.

The Trust has carried out consultation for the Hub project, liaising with SSDC and other local partners, developing the final specification and plans, obtaining planning permission, tendering and procuring a preferred supplier and securing a large proportion of the partnership funding. Attracting the level of funding needed for the project has been a challenge and Trust members have worked with dedication to achieve this.

The Parish Council is fully supportive of the Trust's role and work and the Trust will continue to lead on the project, on behalf of the Parish Council, by acting as project managers. Long-term the Trust will also

be responsible for promoting the new facilities, whilst the Parish Council and the Trust will be responsible for insurance and maintenance costs.

## **The Hub**

There will be three main elements:

### **Outdoor Gym:**

Eight pieces of steel construction equipment including an Air Walker, a Ski Stepper and an Air Skier which improve both flexibility and strength in the legs and hips as well as giving the user a lower body workout. The nature of the equipment means that anyone can use it safely with little previous knowledge, using his or her own body weight as resistance. There are no age limits and no limits on ability – it can be used by both able bodied and people with disabilities, young and old, mobile and those who are a little unsteady and those who have used gym equipment before, alongside complete novices.

### **Balance and Agility Trail:**

A series of five pieces of wooden equipment to build balance and agility within safe boundaries. The Trail will create a unique facility for young people aged 8+ that will challenge them physically and mentally. It will be located with the Adventure Play Equipment.

### **Adventure Play Equipment:**

A mixture of five pieces of wooden and steel equipment designed to challenge, help develop gross motor skills, aid development and promote fitness and core body strength.

## **Promotion**

The Hub concept is already well known within the local area having been in development over a period of time and discussed at parish council meetings and in the monthly village newsletter. There is detailed information on the Sports and Recreation Trust webpages including copies of the plans and designs.

When installation is completed, the Trust intends to hold an open event with local organisations at the recreation ground. The supplier of the equipment will provide clear usage instructions on all the equipment and discussions are underway about running introductory sessions for the Outdoor Gym, to help people familiarise themselves with the equipment so that they use it safely and for maximum benefit.

## **Project costs**

<b>Project costs</b>	<b>Cost £</b>
Outdoor gym	13,115
Balance and agility trail	4,660
Adventure play area	99,840
<b>Total</b>	<b>117,615</b>

## Funding plan

Funding source	Secured or pending	%	Amount £
Anonymous grant	Secured	6.8	8,000
Battens Trust Fund	Secured	0.5	200
Leonard Laity Stoate Charitable Trust	Secured	1.0	1,195
National Lottery Awards for All	Secured	8.5	10,000
Stoke Parish Council	Secured	8.5	10,000
Stoke Sports and Recreation Trust	Secured	20.8	24,580
SSDC Community Health & Leisure	Secured	8.5	10,000
Section 106 funding	Secured	18.9	22,230
Yarlington Housing	Secured	1.2	1,500
Other applications awaiting decision	Pending	15.5	18,324
SSDC Community Grant	Pending	9.8	11,586
<b>Total</b>		<b>100</b>	<b>117,615</b>

## Financial implications

The balance in the Local Priority Projects – enhancing facilities and services budget - is £152,321. If the recommended grant of £11,586 is awarded, £140,735 will remain.

## Council Plan Implications

The project supports:  
Focus Five: Health & Communities

Area North priorities  
Self-help and community facilities

## Carbon Emissions and Climate Change Implications

People who are fit and healthy are more likely to travel by bicycle or on foot with subsequent reductions in carbon emissions from car use.

## Equality and Diversity Implications

The project aims to provide for people across all age and interest groups in the local community.

## Background Papers

None

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