

Stibbard Playground Annual Report

Reporting Period: April 2024 - March 2025

Usage and Community Value

The playground continues to serve as a valuable community asset for Stibbard village. Regular users include:

- School children (particularly between 3-4pm on weekdays)
- Dog walkers and recreational walkers
- Residents enjoying leisure time and social gatherings

The "No Dogs" signage in the small playground area has proven effective in maintaining this as a dog-free zone.

Maintenance and Operations

Regular Maintenance

- **Safety Inspections:** Fortnightly checks currently conducted by the clerk due to volunteer shortage
- **Grounds Maintenance:** Ongoing service provided by Tops Garden Services (represents a significant portion of the parish council's budget)
- **Seasonal Work:** Trees and hedges were trimmed in October 2024, significantly improving the appearance of these areas

Equipment Condition

- £250 has been allocated for steam cleaning the playground equipment, following successful trials during the war memorial cleaning
- The annual ROSPA safety inspection is scheduled for June 2025

Ongoing Challenges

Hedge Development

The hedges planted around the small playground by Natural Gardens (initially in 2019, with supplementary planting from grant funding) have unfortunately not thrived. The temporary fencing remains in place but is showing signs of deterioration.

Recommendation: Secure funding for a permanent fencing solution within the next 12-24 months.

Boundary Security Concerns

Despite multiple communications with the Diocese of Norwich, the fencing adjacent to the Old School House remains uninstalled. This presents two significant concerns:

1. Safety risk to playground users
2. Unauthorized vehicle access to the middle field through the unsecured gate

Despite the parish council's repeated expressions of concern over the past three years, progress has been limited. The Diocese has contacted the homeowner without result and has requested parish council intervention. However, as tenants rather than landowners, the parish council has limited enforcement authority in this matter.

Looking Ahead

Key priorities for the upcoming year include:

1. Resolving the boundary security issue with the Diocese and adjacent property owner
2. Implementing permanent fencing around the small playground
3. Maintaining equipment safety standards following the June 2025 ROSPA inspection
4. Exploring options for volunteer recruitment to assist with playground oversight

Report submitted by: Bill Aldridge, chairman

Kind regards,

Bill Aldridge

Chairman

On behalf of Stibbard Parish Council