

LONG BENNINGTON PLAYING FIELD MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
2024 ANNUAL REPORT

1. **INTRODUCTION**

1. 1 The Long Bennington Playing Field Management Committee (PFMC) is a voluntary body and Registered Charity, which operates under the auspices of the Long Bennington Parish Council (PC). It is charged with the maintenance and management of the Main Road Playing Field and its facilities. The PFMC is made up of: eleven members of the public; six representatives of organisations that use the facilities; two PC delegates. The PC is the owner of the Playing Field land, and all permanent buildings and facilities thereon; the PFMC is the occupier of the land and custodian of its buildings and facilities. The Committee has no employees, and with the exception of the Pavilion Booking Manager who is self-employed, all key roles, functions, and routine maintenance on the field and its facilities are undertaken by volunteers.

1.2 Over the last 40 years the PFMC has raised money from: Car Boots sales; facilities-hire; social events; one-off activities; Local Government, Lottery, and Development Grant Aid money in support of specific projects. Indeed, the PFMC, and its associated groups and members, has raised over 95% of the funds spent in creating the current facilities, which in total approaches £1M.

1.3. The Playing Field’s current extensive range of facilities include: a Pavilion with a hall, kitchen, toilets, storage, and changing rooms; 4 Football Pitches of various sizes; a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA); a Multi Sports Facility (MSF) which encompasses 2 tennis courts; a large range of Children’s Play Equipment.

2. **RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PARISH COUNCIL**

- 2.1 Following the purchase of the land for the Playing Field in the early 1970s, the PC relied on the PFMC to raise the funds both to develop and to run the site, allowing the Committee to work on a near-autonomous basis. More recently, with the demise of the Car Boot Sales, the PC has stepped in to fill the financial vacuum. The Playing Field and Facilities are now being run from a mix of Precept funding and Hire income. Further, the PC is also making provision for the future upgrade, or replacement, of all the major installations (Pavilion, Play Equipment (PE), Multi Sports Facility (MSF), and Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)), the level of which is under constant review. However, wherever possible, Grants will also be sought, as appropriate, as the prime means of funding major projects.

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3. **2024 Initial Objectives and Challenges**

Development of the new car park.
Development of the pavilion improvement project.
Increasing use and hire of the facilities.
Developing costing methods to reflect the true costs of using the facilities.

4. **A summary of 2024**

4.1 2024 has primarily seen the committee working towards the Pavilion regeneration project and a refresh of the play equipment.

4.2 In early 2024 a firm of consultants was contracted to produce a feasibility study for a pavilion refurbishment and redesign together with an artificial football surface. The study was funded by the football club. The study produced a preferred design of the pavilion improvements but the projected costs for the playing surface were seen as excessive and beyond the potential fund raising. The project was presented to the parish council and outline support was given for the project. However later on projected costs from the consultants grew to a point where the sub committee recommended a change in direction. The committee consulted local builders to scope a potential smaller scale project that would be more affordable and may attract grant funding for small scale projects. This would still look to roll onto the development of the car park.

4.3 The planned improvements to the play equipment were achieved. A new installation replaced one of the aging pieces of equipment and the hazardous sandpit was removed. A new inclusive , disabled friendly, roundabout was also installed. We have also decided to change our play equipment inspection contract to the installers Playdale. Thanks should be recorded for the work of Phil Owen and Lis Foat.

4.4 Damage to drainage for the playing fields was identified and this was contributing to flooding and an inability to use the main 11 aside football pitch. A scheme devised by Steve Rowley and funded by the football club has created a new drainage solution which is hoped will reduce the problems experienced.

4.5 The summer solstice run once again had a great evening with approximately 500 runners.

4.6 Unfortunately we were victims of a burglary and theft of the tractor from it’s secure storage. The crime remains undetected. An insurance claim has enabled purchase of a replacement tractor now temporarily stored off site . However we must seek alternative storage with increased security during the next year.

4.7 Margaret Butcher worked hard this year, supported by Ian Evans, to claim gift-aid on the generous donation from Mr Fearn. She has also arranged for on line banking to enable simpler payments between users and suppliers.

4.8 During 2024 Mr Iain Lyon stepped down from the committee. I would like to record my thanks for his help and support and for being that essential link between the committee and the parish council. He was replaced by parish councillor Jane Bell.

4.9 We have also completed a Legionella risk management audit . It is right that as part of our role in overseeing the safe use of the facilities we consider and address all potential risks, and I am grateful for the support of Dave Roberts in leading this work.

5. Future Challenges and objectives.

- 5.1 Development of the new car park.

5.2 Development of the pavilion improvement project.

5.3 Recruitment of committee members.

5.4 Increasing use and hire of the facilities.

5.5 Developing costing methods to reflect the true costs of using the facilities.

5.6 Delivering new secure storage of the tractor.

6. Closing remarks

This has been year with much focus and effort in shaping the proposed pavilion redevelopment . Many hours have been given by a number of our committee members and I am very grateful for their dedication , wisdom and patience.

The children of the village are now enjoying the new play equipment and this benefit comes from the parish councils efforts to obtain the sect 106 funds and the committees willingness to spend it wisely on behalf of the village.

I am once again grateful to all those who have found the time and energy to continue the collective efforts required to maintain the facilities, and attempt to provide opportunities for sport and recreation for the village. I am also grateful to those who were able to step in and chair meetings in my absence. I am excited by the projects 2025 may bring.

M. Manley

M Manley
Chairman, Long Bennington Playing Fields Management Committee.
23/4/25

Long Bennington Playing Field Management Committee

Income & Expenditure Account

For the year ended 31 December 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Income		
Summer Meal	1,125	1,990
Christmas Meal	1,622	1,750
Long Bennington JFC Pitch Usage	6,040	6,040
Bowls Club Contribution to Water Rates	99	112
Other Hire	4,679	4,412
Donation including Gift Aid	37,500	-
Interest Received	250	-
Total Income	<u>51,315</u>	<u>14,304</u>
Expenditure		
Summer Meal	910	1,540
Christmas Meal	1,311	1,295
Waste Disposal	938	845
Light & Heat	2,080	1,898
Ground Maintenance	1,355	250
Miscellaneous	118	324
Cleaning	3,182	2,806
Repairs & Renewals (Pavillion)	1,685	769
Water Rates	761	477
Parish Council- Contribution to Precept	4,000	0
Total Expenditure	<u>16,340</u>	<u>10,204</u>
Surplus for the Year	<u>34,975</u>	<u>4,100</u>

Long Bennington Playing Field Management Committee

Balance Sheet

At 31 December 2024

	2024 £	2023 £
Current Assets		
Debtors	200	6,191
Current Account	9,118	18,402
Savings Account	50,250	0
Total Current Assets	<u>59,568</u>	<u>24,593</u>
Current Liabilities		
Creditors	0	0
Total Current Liabilities	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Net Current Assets	<u>59,568</u>	<u>24,593</u>
Reserves		
Opening Balance	24,593	20,493
Surplus for the Year	34,975	4,100
	<u>59,568</u>	<u>24,593</u>

Accountants' Report

I have examined the above financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2024 and confirm that they are in accordance with the books and records maintained by the Treasurer.

SC Peck
Stephen Peck FCA 29/01/2025

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Margaret Butcher- Treasurer