



# Standon & Puckeridge Recreation Ground Charity

Station Road, Puckeridge, SG11 1TF

## ANNUAL REPORT

### Introduction:

Standon Parish Council took over running the community center in July 2023. Since then, it has attempted to fully establish the legal entity of the Charity and what needs to be included in the Charity Commission Annual Return. It has also reviewed options for management of the Community Centre. Previous management systems have failed in the long term.

### **REPORT:**

Standon Parish Council is the sole Trustee of the Recreation Ground Charity NUMBER 302467. The Charity previously had independent Trustees, and the Standon and Puckeridge Athletic Association ran the Charity on a day to day basis. Both the independent Trustees and the Athletics Association closed and the daily management of the Community Centre only was taken on by a group of volunteers, who did a sterling job for many years. Unfortunately, a lack of volunteers resulted in this group being disbanded in 2023, and management of the community center was transferred to the Parish Council.

The Recreation Ground Charity has limited income. Currently, Hares FC, Vets FC, and Westmill SP FC supply fees for pitch use. This does not cover grounds maintenance costs.

The Community Centre building is in need of a new roof as the current roof is leaking in several places, and inspection has found it is rotting from the inside due to condensation.

Income from the Community Centre only covers running costs but not maintenance.

The playground does not bring any income. It is open to all. Routine (weekly, monthly, and annually) safety inspections are undertaken. Maintenance has to be carried out to ensure safety of equipment is maintained.

Registered Charity number 302467

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No income for ground rent has been received from the Tennis or Bowls Clubs for many years. This situation needs to be resolved.

Standon Parish Council has been awarded a substantial Section 106 grant to install a multi-use games area for the benefit of the residents. A planning application is currently going through East Herts District Council process.

Standon Parish Council needs to decide what management scheme it wants to implement for the Charity, including the Community Centre.

Outgoings do not match income. Therefore, the Parish Council needs to assess what level of financial support it is willing to provide. Current recommendation is that the Parish Council pays for all grounds maintenance, with the respective football clubs ensuring the pitches are suitable for play and restored to an acceptable level at the end of season, all playground maintenance, and a portion of car park maintenance costs.

The main issue is the cost of maintenance of the Community Centre, and how this is to be funded.

The increasing cost of utilities is of great concern.

Hire fees were previously kept artificially low, which has resulted in objections to fee increases from some hirers.

Whilst the Parish Council is keen to ensure the building is fully utilised, it has to ensure that it is financially viable and not reliant on the public purse. The Parish Council cannot financially support private businesses, organisations, or clubs.

#### Summary:

Standon Parish Council is the sole trustee of the Recreation Ground Charity.

It has a fiduciary duty to ensure the Charity achieves an income which at least covers related expenditure.

The Parish Council as sole trustee needs to decide how it will manage the Charity going forward, and make representation to the Parish Council for suitable financial support. The Parish Council as sole trustee then needs to establish how any financial shortfall will be covered.

22 January 2026

## Recreation Ground Accounts 2024 2025

### Field Income

Football: Vets	590
Football Hares	200
	<u>790</u>

<u>Field Expenditure</u>	Net	VAT	Gross
Mowing & hedge cutting	5597.5	1024.5	6622
CC Car Park	1690	338	2028
			<u>8650</u>

Income	790
less expenditure	<u>8650</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b><u>-7860</u></b>

### Community Centre

Income from hire			50221.96
Expenditure	57975.37	6969.98	64945.35
			<u>-14723.4</u>

### Playground

Inspections	896	179.2	-1075.2
Maintenance	2860	572	-3432
			<u>-4507.2</u>

### **TOTAL LOSS**

**-27090.6**



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## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINATION OF THE ACCOUNTS: 2024 2025**

The Recreation Ground Charity accounts were included in the Standon Parish Council accounts in the financial year 2024 2025 as Standon Parish Council was in negotiation with the Charity Commission to close the charity from 2023. The Charity Commission did not accept the Parish Council opinion that the Charity related to management of the Charity and not land ownership. The Charity Commission has instructed that the Recreation Ground Charity must be managed as a separate entity. This formal advice was not received until November 2025.

These accounts were audited by PKF Littlejohn LLP as part of the Standon Parish Council accounts.

A separate examination will take place for the 2025 2026 accounts.