

ELLISFIELD PARISH COUNCIL

RISK ASSESSMENT DOCUMENT

Current Version: 1.13 (11.05.2020)

Previous Versions: 1.12 (20.05.2019)
1.11 (14-05-2018)
1.10 (22-05-2017)

It is the policy of this Council to ensure that risk assessments of practices associated with the use and maintenance of the Council's assets and responsibilities are performed regularly. This version was reviewed by the Council on Monday 11th May 2020 and its acceptance will be documented in the Minutes.

Cllr Tim Guinness, Chairman

Cllr Gavin Park-Weir (Land & Property)

Notes: Deletions from the previous version are struck out.
Additions/Alterations to the previous version are highlighted in **RED**.

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Appendices:

- A: Copy of Ellisfield Volunteer Group's current Risk Assessment for Lower Common
- B: Copy of Ellisfield Volunteer Group's current Risk Assessment for Old Gravel Pits
- C: Copy of Ellisfield Volunteer Group's current Risk Assessment for Burial Ground
- D: Copy of Hill Farm Pond Water Safety Inspection and Risk Assessment
- E: Copy of Litter Collectors Conditions of Employment and Risk Assessment

1.00 Parish Land & Property

1.01 Lower Common

This land is situated at the junction of Green Lane and Furzen Lane at grid reference 635449.

The area to the north side of Furzen Lane comprises:

- an open area of grass with two small goal posts in the middle
- a children's swing and a bench
- 2 small pieces of low level, wooden children's play equipment
- a bench
- a wildflower strip
- an area of uncleared vegetation/woodland (the Chalk Pit)

On the south side is an area of (uncleared) vegetation/woodland. There are two balancing ponds dug to take excess water running off from the fields and Furzen Lane itself.

The maintenance contractor is the *Ellisfield Volunteer Group (EVG)*, under a renewing agreement running from April to March. There is a Schedule of Works which *EVG* has agreed to abide by. *EVG* has provided a copy of their £10m Public Liability insurance policy with the Zurich Insurance Company (as recommended by BTCV: British Trust for Conservation Volunteers), the terms of which have been checked to ensure that cover is provided for the work that the group has been asked to do.

EVG have compiled a Risk Assessment document for work done at the Lower Common. This Risk Assessment was updated following the purchase of a ride-on mower in 2005. (*see Appendix A*).

Risks to the public have been identified as follows:

<u>Items</u>	<u>Risk statement</u>
Two goalposts:	Although these metal five-a-side sized goalposts are removable, the posts are well sunk into the ground and stable. It takes a good deal of effort to lift the goalposts out of the ground (at least two men, one each side).
	Risk: Collision with posts or crossbar.
	Risk Level: LOW.
	Comments: Annual inspection recommended.
Ditch:	A ditch exists on the west (Green Lane) and south (Furzen Lane) sides of the common. When strimmed, the ditches are obvious. When not strimmed, the resultant verge flora is a natural barrier.
	Risk: Falling into ditch.
	Risk Level: LOW.
	Comments: As common land, the area cannot be fenced. The ditch creates a natural boundary that, in fact, prevents children from running into the road.

Timber "bridge":	<p>A timber "topping" has been laid over a pre-existing hardcore "bridge" so that pushchairs, prams, etc can be easily pushed from/to Furzen Lane from/to the swing area.</p> <p>Risk: Slipping into ditch. Risk Level: LOW. Comments: The sides of the timber are clearly seen. Annual inspection recommended.</p>
Two seats:	<p>Both wooden seats are stable.</p> <p>Risk: Collapse of seat. Risk Level: LOW. Comments: Annual inspection recommended.</p>
Swing:	<p>The children's swing, of wooden beam construction, has two seats - one open (for a child) and one enclosed (for an infant). There is a Dunlop "soft" surface. The swing is subject to an annual external formal expert inspection. It is also inspected at approximately weekly intervals by a representative of Basingstoke and Deane Parks Department.</p> <p>Risk: Injury to children due to collapse of frame, detachment of chain or breakage of swing seat. Risk Level: LOW. Comments: Swing inspected weekly by a representative of Basingstoke and Deane Parks Department and annually by an expert. Additional risks are what can be expected of any swing provided for the enjoyment of children.</p>
Low-level wooden climbing frames:	<p>The children's equipment of wooden beam construction has one open set of balance bars and a double A climbing frame.</p> <p>Risk: Injury to children due to collapse of frame. Risk Level: LOW.</p> <p>Comments: The equipment is subject to an annual external formal expert inspection. It is also inspected at approximately weekly intervals by a representative of Basingstoke and Deane Parks Department.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Additional risks are what can be expected of any low level climbing equipment provided for the enjoyment of children.</p>
Wild flower strip:	<p>The maintained (ie, cut down in the Autumn) wildflower strip is, during the Summer, dense and provides a very effective barrier in itself.</p> <p>Risk: There may be plants within the wildflower strip that are poisonous, especially to children. Risk Level: LOW. Comments: The wildflower plants here will be no different to those growing elsewhere in the open countryside.</p>

Chalk pit area: This totally unmaintained woodland area, behind the maintained wildflower strip, is still common land and is not fenced. There is no footpath and there is no obvious entry point. Following Flood Resilience works carried out by HCC (contractor R & W Civil Engineering) in this area in Spring 2017, risk associated with this area were reviewed, including consultation with local families with children who play on Lower Common. This area was also monitored in heavy rain. Water flowed freely through the newly dug channel and drains quickly. The land at the back of the drainage pond was not disturbed during recent works and has a slope of similar incline as excavated area. Vegetation regrowth will soon restrict access.

Risk: The ground is, as one would expect, uneven and falls could occur. There may be plants that are poisonous, especially to children.

Risk Level: Remains LOW.

Comments: The terrain and plants here are no different to the terrain and plants anywhere else in the countryside.

Balancing ponds: These two banked areas are designed to temporarily catch floodwater coming off the fields and from Furzen Lane. The maximum depth of floodwater is approximately 1 foot (1/3rd of a metre). This area also benefited from Flood Resilience works carried out by HCC (contractor R & W Civil Engineering) in this area in Spring 2017, This area was also monitored in heavy rain. Water drained quickly.

Risk: Drowning.

Risk Level: Remains LOW.

Comments: The risk is really only to very young children who should not be unaccompanied.

1.02 Old Gravel Pits

This land is situated at the junction of Green Lane and Berrydown Lane at grid reference 634441. It comprises woodland with a maintained central grass area. There is a wildflower strip to the west and south of the grassed area. There is a drainage ditch to the east (along Green Lane), south and west (within the woodland).

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EVG have compiled a Risk Assessment document for work done at the Old Gravel Pits (*see Appendix B*).

Risks to the public have been identified as follows:

<u>Items</u>	<u>Risk statement</u>
Two seats:	Both wooden seats are stable. Risk: Collapse of seat. Risk Level: LOW. Comments: Annual inspection recommended.
Ditch:	Risk: Falling into ditch. Risk Level: LOW. Comments:
Wild flower strip:	The maintained (ie, cut down in the Autumn) wildflower strip is, during the Summer, dense and provides a very effective barrier in itself. Risk: There may be plants within the wildflower strip that are poisonous, especially to children. Risk Level: LOW. Comments: The wildflower plants here will be no different to those growing elsewhere in the open countryside.

1.03 Burial Ground

This land is situated in the grounds of St Martin's Church, Church Lane, at grid reference 638459.

The maintenance contractor is the *Ellisfield Volunteer Group (EVG)*, under a renewing agreement running from April to March. There is a Schedule of Works which *EVG* has agreed to abide by. *EVG* has provided a copy of their £10m Public Liability insurance policy with the Zurich Insurance Company (as recommended by BTCV: British Trust for Conservation Volunteers), the terms of which have been checked to ensure that cover is provided for the work that the group has been asked to do.

EVG have compiled a Risk Assessment document for work done at the Burial Ground (*see Appendix C*).

Risks to the public have been identified as follows:

<u>Items</u>	<u>Risk statement</u>
2 Seats:	One seat is 25 years old and its condition needs to be monitored on an annual basis. The other is new. Risk: Collapse of seat. Risk Level: LOW Comments: The seat was repaired by the Ellisfield Volunteer Group in 2003 and is now considered safe.

Grave digging:	Risk: Risk Level: Comments:	Falling into an open grave. LOW. Grave digging is only undertaken by properly authorised persons, employed by the Undertakers. It is the gravediggers responsibility to ensure the safety of the public. However, it is recommended that the Parish Council ensures that each undertaker follows proper safety procedures and has sufficient public liability insurance.
Grass slope:	Risk: Risk Level: Comments:	The grass slope from the Church to the Burial Ground can be slippery when wet and there is a risk of falling, especially for coffin carriers. LOW. The grass slope is actually part of St Martin's Church Graveyard and, as such, is NOT the responsibility of the Parish Council. There are steps (to the rear of the Church) that can be used. All undertakers should be formally made aware of this risk and informed that they should use the steps.

1.04 Allotments

There are two allotments, one situated up the track which runs behind the Fox Inn on Green Lane (at grid reference 631451) and the other situated in the woodlands near the bottom of Green Lane itself (at grid reference 623448).

Risk: There are no known risks.

1.05 Bus Shelters

There are two bus shelters.

1. Green Lane, just below the junction with Church Lane (grid reference 636461)
 2. Green Lane, just above the junction with Berrydown Lane (grid reference 635441)
- A handrail and steps were installed in 2011 to improve access as slope was considered slippery in very cold weather.

Risk: There are no known risks.

1.06 Notice Boards

The Parish Council owns four notice boards:

1. Lower Common, junction of Green Lane and Furzen Lane. This is a recycled plastic notice board, with two hinged panes. The left hand pane is used only for Parish Council notices.
2. By the bus shelter located in Green Lane just below the junction with Church Lane. A recycled plastic notice board, with one hinged pane.

3. By the bus shelter located in Green Lane just above the junction with Berrydown Lane. A recycled plastic notice board, with one hinged pane.

4. College Lane, at the junction with Bell Lane. Wooden frame with two hinged openings with perspex panels. The right hand side is lockable and for Parish Council notices only.

Risk: When gaining access to the noticeboard at the bus shelter it is necessary to step back onto the lane to allow the hinged access to open fully. Low risk. Remaining three: there are no known risks.

1.07 Signpost

Only one of Ellisfield's signposts is the responsibility of the Parish Council. It is situated on the Axford Road, at the junction with College Lane. Although owned by Hampshire County Council, the Parish Council is, with HCC's formal agreement, responsible for the sign's maintenance (normally just repainting).

Risk: Personal injury from passing traffic whilst repainting the signpost.

Risk level: **HIGH**

Comments: This work, if undertaken by a Parish Councillor, is insured under the Parish Council's third party cover.

>>>>>>> **However, it is recommended that no further maintenance work is undertaken without a separate Risk Assessment for this function being undertaken. It is especially important that the area around the sign be cordoned off with cones, that proper "man at work" signs be displayed and that the parish councillor(s) wear high visibility vests.**

1.08 Hill Farm Pond

Risk: Personal injury from falling into water

Risk Level: Medium: Probability of accident - unlikely but foreseeable
- severity of outcome – Moderate risk

See separate Risk Assessment Appendix D

1.09 Litter Collectors

Risk: Personal injury from contaminated litter/passing traffic

Risk Level: Medium: Probability of accident - unlikely but foreseeable
- severity of outcome – Moderate risk

See separate Risk Assessment Appendix E

2.00 Parish Council Address

The "formal" address of the Parish Council is the Clerk's private home address. It must be emphasised that it is purely an address for the service of official documents. The Parish Council do not have offices and no-one has a right of entry to the Clerk's private home on Parish Council business. If they are granted entry, that permission is by personal invitation of the householder.

Risk: N/A.

3.00 Litter Collectors

Two litter collectors are employed, currently:

Tom Frankham
Oak Dene
College Lane, RG25 2QG

Alex Hellewell
Woodside
Axford Road, RG25 2QG.

Each work for 1.5 hours a week. Both collectors have been given a Conditions of Employment document and have had the risk assessment read through with them. Copies of all documentation is in *Appendix E*.

4.00 Council Meetings

The Parish Council's public meetings are held in Ellisfield's Memorial Hall, situated in Church Lane RG25 2QR (at grid reference 639459) **or in St Martins Church, in Church Lane, when the Hall is not available .**

Risk: Ill-health or injury to a councillor or member of the public.

Risk level: **LOW**

Comments: There is a First Aid box in the kitchen of the Hall **and also in the Church.**

>>>>>>>>> **As there is no fixed phone at the Memorial Hall, it is recommended that a fully charged cellular phone - known to be able to send/receive calls from the Hall - be available at all public meetings.**

5.00 Coronavirus Pandemic

During the period of "lock-down" as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic, meetings are held virtually using Zoom. All those "attending", councillors, joint clerks and members of the public, are in their own homes.

Risk: Ill-health or injury to a councillor or member of the public in their own home.

Risk level: **LOW**

5.01 The joint clerks should ensure that they socially distance themselves when conducting any necessary business on behalf of the council.

END