

Stoke St Michael community field. REVIEW OF THE YEAR. 23/24

This last year has seen a continuation of the success of hosting junior soccer. There has been progress with repairs required by the Somerset Playing Field Association and constructive moves that will lead to the removal of the old tennis court. Cookswood staff have helped with the repair of ramps and slides.

Boys and girls football teams have played on our field all season, using both the senior and junior pitches. This has meant a lot of work week by week to keep the pavilion, the grass, goal mouths and lines as tidy as possible. My thanks to Keith Hambly who has helped measure and mark all year long. Pitch hire is an income stream but mowing and rolling the field is a major cost running into thousands. Annual insurance has gone up, EDF charge us more and the cost of running repairs and maintenance is up. The refuse company who empty our bins say the playground bin is inadequate and should be replaced with a modern unit. At least we haven't paid for the mole catcher this season!

The management group and the trustees must be thanked for the time they give to running the field and the weekly safety checks. They oversee a busy and well used community field. My thanks to Amanda Taylor for all the work as our secretary. She manages to find crucial funding year after year. Everything from planting hedgerows and fruit trees to running dog shows are masterminded by her.

The SPFA safety report highlighted important issues. The major concern is again the old tennis court and we should be getting help from engineers at Cookswood quarries to remove the whole structure this summer.

Our outlook will change in 2025 with the proposed estate of almost 80 houses on the cow's field over our northern boundary. Discussions have taken place about footpath access from the Stonewood site to the village.

With the likelihood of major housebuilding in the parish we hope that "106 open space contributions for community resources" may mean we could look at much improved facilities on the village field in the near future.

John Johnston. Chairman
15/4/24