

PARKS UPDATE REPORT

AGENDA ITEM No. 9

MEETING: RECREATION COMMITTEE

DATE: 8th JULY 2026

REPORT BY: WORKS AND ENVIRONMENT MANAGER

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to bring Members up to date with issues relating to the parks.

2.0 Current Situation

2.1 St Oswald's Park

All annual beds have now been planted and hanging baskets are in place.

The grass within Sheila's Garden has been scarified to get rid of excessive moss.

2.2 Moore Lane Park

Phallic graffiti symbols have been removed from the safety surfacing within the infant play area on 30th June.

Overseeding of the sports pitch has been completed, with additional bags of seed, as grass coverage was significantly depleted last summer due to drought conditions.

Damaged birds mouth fencing has been removed from between the car park and neighbouring housing on the 1st July. Officers are to consider whether replacement is necessary and if so, what is the appropriate proportionate solution.

2.3 Simpasture Park

Drainage around the car park has been cleared and a new downcomer from the building installed to eliminate ongoing issues with water blockages.

The main football pitch has been over seeded and now looks in the best condition for many years.

Officers have met with Durham County Council Youth Engagement Officers to discuss the possibility of their service offering free outreach sessions from various locations, with Simpasture being the prime location as it has sports fields, multi-use games area, and tennis courts. At this stage, summer sessions this year might be too short notice but this will certainly be something to be pursued for future years.

2.4 Town Park

Officers have met with a grieving family who have requested a memorial plaque be added to one of the stainless-steel benches around the garden area.

It has been agreed by officers that this is an appropriate location, and the family have been advised that this will be acceptable, as the daughter made many happy memories within the park.

However, officers have confirmed that the plaque will be the only addition, and no additional family and friends' additions such as flowers, cards, toys etc will be acceptable in this location. If such additions are noted parks staff will remove them.

WCCTV have completed a number of resets and remote tests with the assistance of the Council's Maintenance Technicians in an attempt to get the re-deployable CCTV camera working. This has been unsuccessful. It has been confirmed that power is being received to the control box and power is available to the camera. However, despite all attempts the camera is not producing any live feed or power within the camera. The camera has therefore been removed by Council Operatives and has been sent back to WCCTV for further investigation and repair under warranty.

All annual beds have been planted up within the park and perennial beds will be planted up during the week commencing 6th July.

2.5 West Park

Several dead ducks and seagulls have recently been recovered from the lakes with signs of trauma. This was reported on the 30th of June /1st July. It is known that youths have previously been seen shooting catapults within West Park and its suspected this may well be the cause. This information has previously been reported to the police.

The same youths have been banned from the Town Park for other incidents.

2.6 Woodham Park

All areas around the park have been cut back, including around the BMX track.

2.7 Aycliffe Village Play Area

Officers are in discussions with the play equipment supplier, HAGS, who have recently provided and installed the infant play equipment. Whilst the equipment is of good standard, there are a few installation defects which officers are not satisfied with and they will continue to pursue this until a satisfactory conclusion can be achieved.

Once everything has been rectified to an agreeable standard an official opening will be organised with local children.

3.0 Recommendations

3.1 It is recommended that Members: -

- i) Receive the report for information.

Contact Officer: Steve Cooper