



**PITCHPOWER**

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Football Foundation**

# ***FOOTBALL ASSESSMENT REPORT***

## **ARLESEY ROAD PLAYING FIELDS**

**Bedfordshire FA**

**Active Places Site ID**

30010837

**Report ID**

14532



This report has been compiled for STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL and Bedfordshire FA to provide information on the standard of the football pitches and outlines recommendations on how to improve the quality and maintenance of these pitches.

Inspection Window

**1 NOV 2023 / 31 MAR 2024**

Inspection Reason

**EXISTING FOOTBALL FOUNDATION GRANT**

Report Completion Date

**2 APR 2024**

This report looks solely at the Football pitches for STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL to see how support can be offered in improving the standard of Football pitches and level of maintenance across the area. Please note these recommendations are based on the information obtained and/or provided and are for guidance purposes only. Any works undertaken are the responsibility of the club/organisation.

Site report:

**ARLESEY ROAD PLAYING FIELDS**





## ARLESEY ROAD PLAYING FIELDS

Site ID: 30010837



Date inspection submitted

**22/03/24**

Inspection submitted by

**[pitchpower@footballfoundation.org.uk](mailto:pitchpower@footballfoundation.org.uk)**

Next available inspection window

**1 Apr 2024 / 30 Jun 2024**

# Overview



Map Key	Pitch Name	PQS Score
1	PITCH 1	● Good - 68%
2	PITCH 2	● Basic - 66%
3	PITCH 3	● Good - 70%
4	PITCH 4	● Basic - 66%
5	PITCH 5	● Good - 68%
6	PITCH 6	● Good - 66%
7	PITCH 7	● Good - 68%
8	PITCH 8	● Basic - 59%



Please be mindful that the recommendations made in this report are based on the condition of the pitches at the time of the inspection. Pitch quality was variable depending on the levels of weed coverage and exposure of the drainage runs. Whilst there was generally reasonable groundcover a moderate to high percentage of this was weeds, Daisy and Clover seemed particularly problematic and require control. Ongoing remedial work to the drainage runs will need to be carefully monitored to ensure grass establishes within them and that surface levels are retained (further over-seeding is likely to be required). Another notable area for improvement is the health of the grass with visible grass stress which can happen on drained pitches when they are not adequately fertilised as drained pitches tend to leach nutrients more quickly. The soils are very compacted and deep spiking and slitting will be important both to maintain connectivity between the pitch surface and drains but also to improve root depth and density which in turn will improve grass health. With the ground cover measured from 100% where bare ground and/or weed coverage make up more than 29% the grass coverage cannot attain the 71% required to constitute a GOOD graded pitch at the time the inspections took place, 5/8 pitches met the required standard which is encouraging, however, many were borderline between BASIC and GOOD and weeds really need controlling to get on top of the problematic weed population which is jeopardising the number of GOOD rated pitches. Two approaches to pitch renovation can be considered. A traditional end of season renovation (scarify, sand dress, disc seed, deep spike) will generally be appropriate in areas of the country with adequate rainfall during growing season or for pitches with irrigation. On sites largely or entirely reliant on natural rainfall where an end of season approach can be hit and miss, light touch renovations in the spring and autumn may provide better outcomes than a traditional end of season maintenance approach and would typically include light scarification (spring and autumn), sand dressing (if budgets allow; please ensure other critical works are carried out first before spending large amounts of money on sports sand) followed by half rate disc seeding and granular fertilisation (spring and autumn) and deep spiking of the pitches (spring and autumn). These works can take place while the pitches are in use and grass seed should germinate and establish in all but the highest use areas such as goal mouths which may require regular repairs during the season and more significant repairs when not in use. The rationale to the above is that even some seed establishment lost to wear is less of a risk than the potential for drought and a failed renovation during the hotter, drier months. Selective weed control will be required later in the year as part of an Integrated Weed Management programme once vigorous growth resumes and may be again in future if cultural practices (scarification, surface grooming, over-seeding) are not effective in



adequately controlling the weed coverage within or below the acceptable threshold (6-10% weed cover) but while this should take place during the growing season it should not take place during drought periods. Slitting in the autumn and early winter (providing it's dry enough) would improve the soil structure and drainage potential of the pitches but no later than this so it does not contribute to any potential for surface cracking that can be more of a risk during summer months as the soil dries.

Senior Regional Pitch Advisor contact  
jmorris@thegma.org.uk  
07519103040

## Maintenance

Attention required in these areas:

[Mowing >](#)

[Line marking >](#)

[Decompaction >](#)

[Goal Mouth repairs \(In season\) >](#)

[Application of fertiliser >](#)

[Surface Grooming >](#)

[Top Dressing \(Renovation\) >](#)

[Overseeding \(In Season\) >](#)

[Application of selective herbicide \(weed treatment\) >](#)

[Deep Slitting >](#)












## Equipment


Attention required in these areas:

No Equipment to show

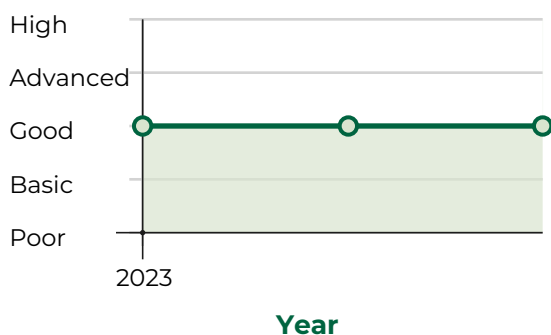
## Pitch 1 Football - Mini Soccer 5v5

**CURRENT PQS SCORE: Good - 68%**

AREA			PQS GRADE
Grass height	25 	25 	4 
Grass coverage	70% 	75% 	2 
Weed coverage	33% 	17% 	0 
Surface debris	Above Standard 	Above Standard 	4 
Topsoil depth	200mm 	200mm 	4 
Thatch depth	1mm 	3mm 	4 
Root depth	150mm 	150mm 	4 
Drainage Following Rainfall	Free draining 		4 
Line markings	Standard 		1 
Surface evenness	Standard 		2 
Goalposts	Compliant 		1 










 Grass coverage cap: You received a score of Good therefore your overall PQS has been capped at Good


### Overall pitch PQS tracked over time



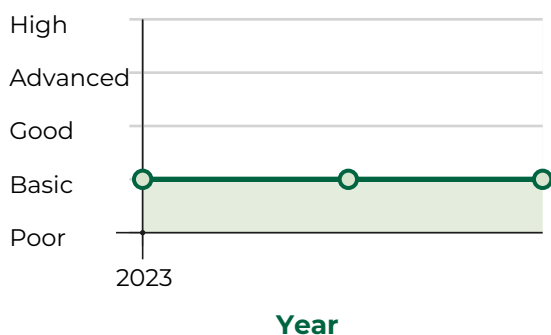
## Pitch 2 Football - Mini Soccer 5v5

**CURRENT PQS SCORE: Basic - 66%**

AREA			PQS GRADE
Grass height	25 	25 	4 
Grass coverage	67% 	70% 	1 
Weed coverage	33% 	24% 	0 
Surface debris	Above Standard 	Above Standard 	4 
Topsoil depth	200mm 	100mm 	4 
Thatch depth	1mm 	1mm 	4 
Root depth	150mm 	100mm 	4 
Drainage Following Rainfall	Free draining 		4 
Line markings	Standard 		1 
Surface evenness	Standard 		2 
Goalposts	Compliant 		1 


 Grass coverage cap: You received a score of Basic therefore your overall PQS has been capped at Basic


### Overall pitch PQS tracked over time



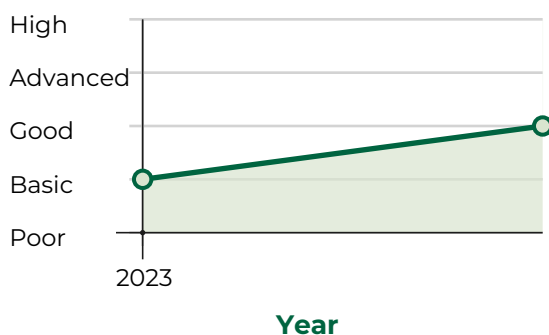
## Pitch 3 Football - Mini Soccer 7v7

**CURRENT PQS SCORE: Good - 70%**

AREA			PQS GRADE
Grass height	25 	40 	3 
Grass coverage	70% 	79% 	2 
Weed coverage	10% 	13% 	2 
Surface debris	Above Standard 	Above Standard 	4 
Topsoil depth	200mm 	200mm 	4 
Thatch depth	1mm 	1mm 	4 
Root depth	150mm 	150mm 	4 
Drainage Following Rainfall	Free draining 		4 
Line markings	Standard 		1 
Surface evenness	Standard 		2 
Goalposts	Compliant 		1 

 Grass coverage cap: You received a score of Good therefore your overall PQS has been capped at Good

### Overall pitch PQS tracked over time



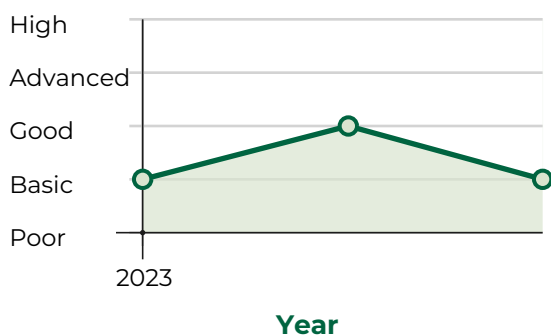
## Pitch 4 Football - Junior Football 11v11

**CURRENT PQS SCORE: Basic - 66%**

AREA				PQS GRADE
Grass height	30	35	25	4
Grass coverage	80%	65%	64%	1
Weed coverage	13%	25%	31%	0
Surface debris	Above Standard	Above Standard	Above Standard	4
Topsoil depth	200mm	200mm	200mm	4
Thatch depth	1mm	1mm	1mm	4
Root depth	150mm	150mm	150mm	4
Drainage Following Rainfall	Free draining			4
Line markings	Standard			1
Surface evenness	Standard			2
Goalposts	Compliant			1


Grass coverage cap: You received a score of Basic therefore your overall PQS has been capped at Basic


### Overall pitch PQS tracked over time



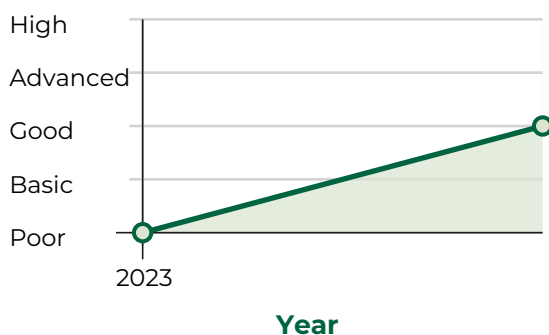
## Pitch 5 Football - Mini Soccer 7v7

**CURRENT PQS SCORE: Good - 68%**

AREA			PQS GRADE
Grass height	25 	35 	3 
Grass coverage	71% 	74% 	2 
Weed coverage	9% 	16% 	1 
Surface debris	Above Standard 	Above Standard 	4 
Topsoil depth	130mm 	200mm 	4 
Thatch depth	1mm 	1mm 	4 
Root depth	120mm 	180mm 	4 
Drainage Following Rainfall	Free draining 		4 
Line markings	Standard 		1 
Surface evenness	Standard 		2 
Goalposts	Compliant 		1 
































 Grass coverage cap: You received a score of Good therefore your overall PQS has been capped at Good


### Overall pitch PQS tracked over time



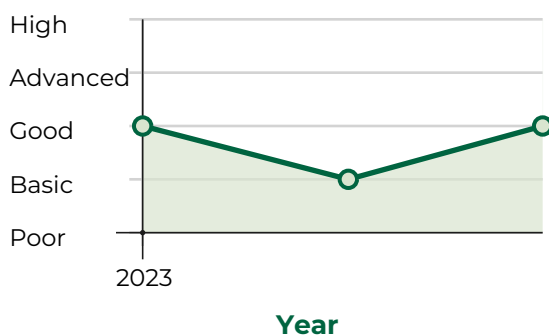
## Pitch 6 Football - Mini Soccer 7v7

**CURRENT PQS SCORE: Good - 66%**

AREA			PQS GRADE
Grass height	40 	30 	3 
Grass coverage	71% 	72% 	2 
Weed coverage	16% 	20% 	0 
Surface debris	Above Standard 	Above Standard 	4 
Topsoil depth	180mm 	190mm 	4 
Thatch depth	5mm 	5mm 	4 
Root depth	175mm 	90mm 	4 
Drainage Following Rainfall	Free draining 		4 
Line markings	Standard 		1 
Surface evenness	Standard 		2 
Goalposts	Compliant 		1 

 Grass coverage cap: You received a score of Good therefore your overall PQS has been capped at Good

### Overall pitch PQS tracked over time



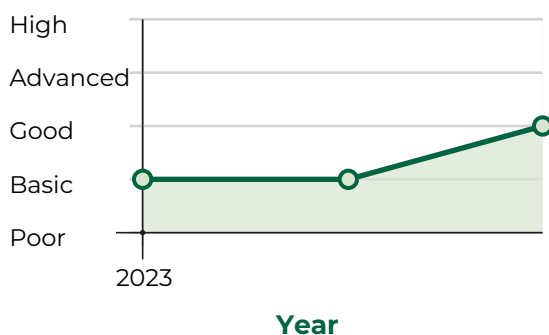
## Pitch 7 Football - Junior Football 11v11

**CURRENT PQS SCORE: Good - 68%**

AREA				PQS GRADE
Grass height	30	35	30	4
Grass coverage	73%	72%	65%	2
Weed coverage	15%	19%	30%	1
Surface debris	Above Standard	Above Standard	Above Standard	4
Topsoil depth	150mm	150mm	200mm	3
Thatch depth	5mm	1mm	1mm	4
Root depth	170mm	150mm	200mm	4
Drainage Following Rainfall	Free draining			4
Line markings	Standard			1
Surface evenness	Standard			2
Goalposts	Compliant			1

Grass coverage cap: You received a score of Good therefore your overall PQS has been capped at Good

### Overall pitch PQS tracked over time



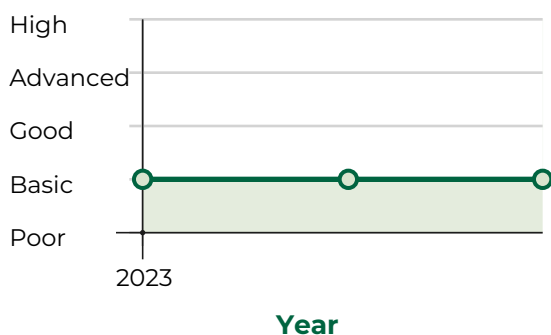
## Pitch 8 Football - Adult Football

**CURRENT PQS SCORE: Basic - 59%**

AREA				PQS GRADE
Grass height	40	25	35	3
Grass coverage	63%	62%	60%	1
Weed coverage	33%	11%	33%	0
Surface debris	Above Standard	Above Standard	Above Standard	4
Topsoil depth	200mm	90mm	160mm	3
Thatch depth	1mm	1mm	1mm	4
Root depth	210mm	70mm	120mm	3
Drainage Following Rainfall	Free draining			4
Line markings	Standard			1
Surface evenness	Standard			2
Goalposts	Compliant			1

Grass coverage cap: You received a score of Basic therefore your overall PQS has been capped at Basic

### Overall pitch PQS tracked over time





# MAINTENANCE

These recommendations are in priority order

## MOWING

### Frequency:

Weekly

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

The playing area should be maintained at a playing height between 30-35mm during the growing season and increased to between 35-45mm during the autumn and winter months. There are exceptions to this, during drought periods height of cut should be increased to reduce stress on the plant and cutting avoided all together if growth has ceased. To minimise build-up of surface debris careful consideration should be given as to the conditions in which mowing takes place. Quality of cut will be maximised if cutting can take place when the grass leaf is dry, however cutting should not take place during the heat of a warm day as this will cause stress to the turf. No more than a third of the grass leaf should be mown during any one operation to minimise turf stress and reduce the build-up of grass clippings on the surface.

PLEASE NOTE: The indicative budget outlined in the report does not include mowing costs.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT MOWING >](#)



## LINE MARKING

**Frequency:**

Weekly

**Recommended for:**

Whole Ground

Lines should be marked to the appropriate dimensions with a suitable line marking paint. Strings should be used to straighten lines when possible. On multi pitch sites the use of GPS line marking technology to mark pitches out initially and periodically restraighen lines could be considered.

PLEASE NOTE: The indicative budget outlined in the report does not include line marking costs.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT LINE MARKING >](#)



## DECOMPACTION

### Frequencies:

January: N/A  
February: N/A  
March: N/A  
April: Once  
May: N/A  
June: N/A  
July: N/A  
August: N/A  
September: Once  
October: N/A  
November: N/A  
December: N/A

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£3000

Decompaction operations are essential to allow air, water and nutrients to pass into and through the soil profile increasing drainage and root depth/density and improving the breakdown of organic matter (Thatch). Deep spiking should be carried out at least once annually but ideally twice, spring and autumn using 18-24mm tines at 100mm spacings to maximum achievable depth. If funds permit conduct further linear aeration and decompaction operations during the autumn/winter month's dependent on ground conditions.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT DECOMPACTION >](#)



## GOAL MOUTH REPAIRS (IN SEASON)

**Frequency:**

Monthly

**Recommended for:**

Whole Ground

**Est Cost:**

£1920

Hand fork the goalmouths and gently apply heave to the fork to relieve compaction, if the area is bare scratching the top soil with a landscaping rake (plastic) to create a fine tilth. Top dress using a pan shovel with a suitable material (sports sand or sand/soil mix) to return the area to desired surface level, work the dressing into the surface as you go by brushing or raking, taking care not to smother any grass cover. If conditions are suitable add some grass seed, irrigate as required and cover with germination sheeting or scaffold netting if available.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT GOAL MOUTH REPAIRS  
\(IN SEASON\) >](#)



## APPLICATION OF FERTILISER

### Frequencies:

January: N/A  
February: N/A  
March: Once  
April: N/A  
May: N/A  
June: N/A  
July: N/A  
August: N/A  
September: Once  
October: N/A  
November: N/A  
December: N/A

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£3700

Experience has shown that where funds are limited and best value the principal concern application of a controlled or slow release granular fertiliser provides the best outcomes on pitches used for grassroots football. As a rough guide these types of fertiliser provide a slow “drip” feed of nutrients avoiding excessive grass growth that can be difficult to keep on top of and susceptible to disease. This release of nutrients can last for up to 4-5 months in certain products but more typically 3-4. Granular fertiliser has increased in cost in recent years so its really important to make sure that what you are applying to the area is appropriate and nothing is being wasted. A nutrient soil analysis that can usually be provided by your chosen supplier can help to make sure you’re using what’s most suitable for your site. Typically, whatever the preferred supplier a suitable fertiliser can be selected for spring/summer and autumn/winter. Approx. 12 x 20kg bags per full size pitch. One application per year would be considered the minimum in spring but ideally at least two with the second in late summer/early autumn.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT APPLICATION OF FERTILISER >](#)



## SURFACE GROOMING

### Frequency:

Fortnightly

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

Any presence of worm casts should be alleviated by regular brushing of the surface providing the soil is dry enough as the right conditions are important to disperse the casts effectively. Worm casts are unsightly and can smear and cover fine turfgrasses. This would also help with thatch build up, dew dispersal and help to break up any surface debris. If use of a combination grooming tool could be organised regular use of this to rake and brush the area during the growing season and then to use the brush and surface slitter during the autumn and winter if soil conditions allow will help to relieve surface compaction, improve surface drainage and manage organic matter levels which can contribute to numerous turf problems. These operations will also alleviate the conditions in which many weeds and diseases thrive.

PLEASE NOTE: The indicative budget outlined in the report does not include implementing a surface grooming regime.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT SURFACE GROOMING >](#)



## TOP DRESSING (RENOVATION)

### Frequency:

As Required

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£9550

As per Sport England guidance where drainage has been installed annual topdressing at 6mm should be reapplied as part of maintenance works in the close season. This process will be necessary for at least three to five years following installation but is likely to be required on an annual basis for the lifetime of the drained pitches to ensure the connectivity between the pitch surface and secondary drains linking into the permeable backfill of the pipe drainage system below. One drawback with sand bands is that they can be capped with topsoil more easily, so this annual dressing is essential. It is essential that any sand dressings applied are of a compatible grade to that used for the sand bands and pipe trenches. Incompatible materials can lead to issues with surface drainage and cause root breaks leading to an unstable surface. Any top dressing should be obtained from a reputable source and specifically for sports turf.

Soft, builders, beach or play sand is not recommended as these types of sand do not have the correct drainage characteristics for natural turf sport pitches. If the top dressing is of poor quality it may change soil pH and stunt grass growth. You can make sure any materials used are compatible with your



## TOP DRESSING (RENOVATION) CONTINUED

pitch construction by having a Particle Soil Distribution analysis undertaken by a suitable dressings supplier. Whilst sand bands are less susceptible to soil shrinkage problems than sand slits the need for potential top up dressings should be accounted for in any contingency budget.

If dressing localised areas (goal mouths) use a pan shovel to apply little and often is best practice and will avoid smothering the grass. Always keep dressing dry prior to and during application and brush/drag matt in when dry in several directions.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT TOP DRESSING  
\(RENOVATION\) >](#)



## OVERSEEDING (IN SEASON)

### Frequencies:

January: N/A  
February: N/A  
March: As Required  
April: As Required  
May: As Required  
June: N/A  
July: N/A  
August: N/A  
September: As Required  
October: As Required  
November: N/A  
December: N/A

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£8450

In season over-seeding can be a viable option on sites where access to water is limited. Seeding in early spring and early autumn when weather conditions are more helpful can help to mitigate the risks of poor germination often seen on sites without irrigation when renovations are left till end of season and the risk of drought is higher. If choosing this option use of a disc seeder is crucial to make sure the grass seed is drilled into the pitch surface as this gives it some protection from play during germination. High traffic areas such as goal mouths are likely to still require end of season repairs. Disc seed in 3 directions at a rate of 35 grams per square metre (approximately 10-12 x 20kg bags of Perennial Ryegrass seed for a full-size pitch) If budgets are limited and over-seeding spring and autumn this can be done at half rate 18 grams per square meter per pitch, with budgets constraints in mind you could also consider concentrating on the width of the box/es down the length of the pitch where most of the wear takes place.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT OVERSEEDING \(IN SEASON\) >](#)



## APPLICATION OF SELECTIVE HERBICIDE (WEED TREATMENT)

### Frequencies:

January: N/A  
February: N/A  
March: N/A  
April: N/A  
May: N/A  
June: As Required  
July: As Required  
August: N/A  
September: N/A  
October: N/A  
November: N/A  
December: N/A

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£2050

As part of an Integrated Weed Management programme application of a broad spectrum selective herbicide may be required once per year if cultural controls are not adequately controlling the population within the defined tolerances. By way of an example a GOOD score for weed cover is for the pitch to have no more than 6-10% weed coverage. Selective herbicides should be applied by a fully qualified professional with the appropriate equipment and paperwork. It should typically not be applied within 6-8 weeks prior to or after seeding (refer to product label) Typically mowing should not take place for 3 days before and 3 days after application. (Do not apply in drought conditions it may damage the turf and will not treat weeds effectively). Selective herbicides should be sprayed in the dry with little to no wind. Most selective herbicides are rain fast within 24 hours of application. If rain falls prior to this it could affect the success of weed control. Work with the contractor to ensure the selective herbicide chosen controls the weeds on site. Most good quality systemic selective herbicides should control common weeds such as Daisy, Dandelion, Greater Plantain, Clover etc.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT APPLICATION OF  
SELECTIVE HERBICIDE \(WEED TREATMENT\)>](#)



## DEEP SLITTING

### Frequencies:

January: Once  
February: N/A  
March: N/A  
April: N/A  
May: N/A  
June: N/A  
July: N/A  
August: N/A  
September: Once  
October: Once  
November: Once  
December: Once

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

As long as soil conditions allow (i.e. not too wet or too dry) slitting provides aeration in the soil encouraging improved water, air and nutrient circulation in the soil. It is a quicker and less invasive method of aeration in comparison to deep spiking or linear decompaction and should take place more routinely as part of a routine maintenance schedule. Typically slitting would take place to a depth of between 150-220mm soil conditions allowing. Due to the slits created it can be particularly useful in the autumn when trying to improve the drainage of the soil prior to the wetter winter months. However as it creates lines of weakness in the soil it is not recommended on clay soils beyond the winter due to the risk of encouraging cracking during drought periods.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT DEEP SLITTING >](#)

## ESTIMATED BUDGET TO CARRY OUT RECOMMENDATIONS

£28670

Please note, the costs provided above are indicative and may vary dependent on quantities and frequency. This estimated budget should be used to help plan and prioritise work, but is not linked to the amount of grant funding you may receive. Following the recommended works should help you achieve the **GOOD** pitch standard, or if already at that level, sustain it.



# TRAINING

As well as undertaking the maintenance activities as described above, we would also recommend attending the following training courses to further develop your skills and understanding of grass pitch maintenance.

[Click here for information on training courses.](#)

[VISIT TRAINING COURSES >](#)

## Recommended Training

### Organisation Training

#### Online Modules Level 1 - Football

[Read More >](#)

Required Completions: 2

#### Online Modules Level 2

[Read More >](#)

Required Completions: 2



WANT TO APPLY FOR FUNDING?

## FOOTBALL FOUNDATION FUNDING APPLICATION PORTAL

You could be eligible for a grant to help you carry out the recommendations in this report. Click 'Apply here' and you could be on your way to securing a grant and being a part of our mission to transform this country's grassroots game.

Report ID: **14532**

To apply for funding visit

[APPLY.FOOTBALLFOUNDATION.ORG.UK](https://apply.footballfoundation.org.uk)

### Training Courses



Further information on any training courses you're recommended to complete can be found on the Grounds Management Association website.

[Visit the GMA >](#)

### The Groundskeeping Community



Join the Football Foundation Groundskeeping Community to connect with groundskeepers across different levels of the game. You'll be able to ask questions and share best practice.

[Visit the Groundskeeping Community >](#)

## Find out more about the Football Foundation's plan to transform the country's grass pitches

Visit our website, which has lots of information about other resources and funding opportunities we're offering organisations involved in the grassroots game.

[FOOTBALLFOUNDATION.ORG.UK >](https://footballfoundation.org.uk)



**PITCHPOWER**

**Powered by  
Football Foundation**

# ***FOOTBALL ASSESSMENT REPORT***

## **HITCHIN ROAD RECREATION GROUND**

**Bedfordshire FA**

**Active Places Site ID**

6016976

**Report ID**

14566



This report has been compiled for STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL and Bedfordshire FA to provide information on the standard of the football pitches and outlines recommendations on how to improve the quality and maintenance of these pitches.

Inspection Window

**1 NOV 2023 / 31 MAR 2024**

Inspection Reason

**EXISTING FOOTBALL FOUNDATION GRANT**

Report Completion Date

**2 APR 2024**

This report looks solely at the Football pitches for STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL to see how support can be offered in improving the standard of Football pitches and level of maintenance across the area. Please note these recommendations are based on the information obtained and/or provided and are for guidance purposes only. Any works undertaken are the responsibility of the club/organisation.

Site report:

**HITCHIN ROAD RECREATION GROUND**





## HITCHIN ROAD RECREATION GROUND

Site ID: 6016976



Map Key	Pitch Name	PQS Score
1	<b>PITCH 1</b>	● Good - 70%

Date inspection submitted  
**22/03/24**

Inspection submitted by  
**[pitchpower@footballfoundation.org.uk](mailto:pitchpower@footballfoundation.org.uk)**

Next available inspection window  
**1 Apr 2024 / 30 Jun 2024**



Please be mindful that the recommendations made in this report are based on the condition of the pitch at the time of the inspection. Grass height was consistent and broadly appropriate for the time of year. Groundcover was generally pretty good with some more localised wear to goal areas and centre circles which is somewhat unavoidable given the winter we've had. Weed coverage varied but was generally within acceptable levels. The depth of measured debris free top soil was very good as was root depth, root density requires improvement. With the ground cover measured from 100% where bare ground and/or weed coverage make up more than 29% the grass coverage cannot attain the 71% required to constitute a GOOD graded pitch at the time the inspections took place, the pitch attained the required threshold. Two approaches to pitch renovation can be considered going forward. A traditional end of season renovation (scarify, sand dress, disc seed, deep spike) will generally be appropriate in areas of the country with adequate rainfall during growing season or for pitches with irrigation. On sites largely or entirely reliant on natural rainfall where an end of season approach can be hit and miss, light touch renovations in the spring and autumn may provide better outcomes than a traditional end of season maintenance approach and would typically include light scarification (spring and autumn), sand dressing (if budgets allow; please ensure other critical works are carried out first before spending large amounts of money on sports sand) followed by half rate disc seeding and granular fertilisation (spring and autumn) and deep spiking of the pitch (spring and autumn). These works can take place while the pitch is in use and grass seed should germinate and establish in all but the highest use areas such as goal mouths which may require regular repairs during the season and more significant repairs when not in use. The rationale to the above is that even some seed establishment lost to wear is less of a risk than the potential for drought and a failed renovation during the hotter, drier months. Selective weed control may be required later in the year as part of an Integrated Weed Management programme once active growth resumes and may be again in future if cultural practices (scarification, surface grooming, over-seeding) are not effective in adequately controlling the weed coverage within or below the acceptable threshold (6-10% weed cover) but while this should take place during the growing season it should not take place during drought periods. In future, slitting in the autumn and early winter (as long as it's not too wet) would improve the soil structure and drainage potential of the pitch but no later than this so it does not contribute to any potential for surface cracking that can be more of a risk during summer months as the soil dries.

Senior Regional Pitch Advisor contact  
jmorris@thegma.org.uk  
07519103040



## Maintenance

Attention required in these areas:

[Mowing >](#)

[Line marking >](#)

[Decompaction >](#)

[Goal Mouth repairs \(In season\) >](#)

[Application of fertiliser >](#)

[Surface Grooming >](#)

[Overseeding \(In Season\) >](#)

[Application of selective herbicide \(weed treatment\) >](#)

[Deep Slitting >](#)

## Equipment

Attention required in these areas:

No Equipment to show

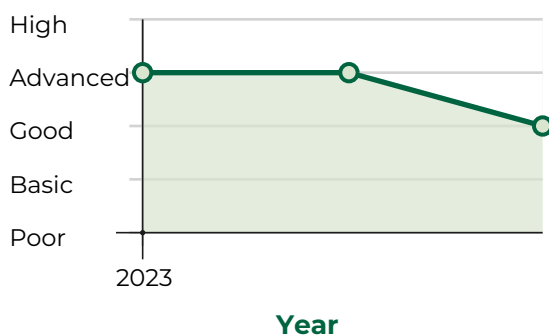
## Pitch 1 Football - Adult Football

**CURRENT PQS SCORE: Good - 70%**

AREA				PQS GRADE
Grass height	30	30	25	4
Grass coverage	89%	78%	75%	2
Weed coverage	6%	7%	12%	3
Surface debris	Above Standard	Above Standard	Above Standard	4
Topsoil depth	200mm	180mm	180mm	4
Thatch depth	1mm	1mm	1mm	4
Root depth	150mm	150mm	150mm	4
Drainage Following Rainfall	Slow drainage			2
Line markings	Standard			1
Surface evenness	Standard			2
Goalposts	Compliant			1

Grass coverage cap: You received a score of Good therefore your overall PQS has been capped at Good

### Overall pitch PQS tracked over time





# MAINTENANCE

These recommendations are in priority order

## MOWING

**Frequency:**

Weekly

**Recommended for:**

Whole Ground

The playing area should be maintained at a playing height between 30-35mm during the growing season and increased to between 35-45mm during the autumn and winter months. There are exceptions to this, during drought periods height of cut should be increased to reduce stress on the plant and cutting avoided all together if growth has ceased. To minimise build-up of surface debris careful consideration should be given as to the conditions in which mowing takes place. Quality of cut will be maximised if cutting can take place when the grass leaf is dry, however cutting should not take place during the heat of a warm day as this will cause stress to the turf. No more than a third of the grass leaf should be mown during any one operation to minimise turf stress and reduce the build-up of grass clippings on the surface.

PLEASE NOTE: The indicative budget outlined in the report does not include mowing costs.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT MOWING >](#)



## LINE MARKING

**Frequency:**

Weekly

**Recommended for:**

Whole Ground

Lines should be marked to the appropriate dimensions with a suitable line marking paint. Strings should be used to straighten lines when possible.

PLEASE NOTE: The indicative budget outlined in the report does not include line marking costs.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT LINE MARKING >](#)



## DECOMPACTION

### Frequencies:

January: N/A  
February: N/A  
March: N/A  
April: Once  
May: N/A  
June: N/A  
July: N/A  
August: N/A  
September: N/A  
October: Once  
November: N/A  
December: N/A

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£500

Decompaction operations are essential to allow air, water and nutrients to pass into and through the soil profile increasing drainage and root depth/density and improving the breakdown of organic matter (Thatch). Deep spiking should be carried out at least once annually but ideally twice, spring and autumn using 18-24mm tines at 100mm spacings to maximum achievable depth. If funds permit conduct further linear aeration and decompaction operations during the autumn/winter month's dependent on ground conditions.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT DECOMPACTION >](#)



## GOAL MOUTH REPAIRS (IN SEASON)

**Frequency:**

Monthly

**Recommended for:**

Whole Ground

**Est Cost:**

£240

Hand fork the goalmouths and gently apply heave to the fork to relieve compaction, if the area is bare scratching the top soil with a landscaping rake (plastic) to create a fine tilth. Top dress using a pan shovel with a suitable material (sports sand or sand/soil mix) to return the area to desired surface level, work the dressing into the surface as you go by brushing or raking, taking care not to smother any grass cover. If conditions are suitable add some grass seed, irrigate as required and cover with germination sheeting or scaffold netting if available.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT GOAL MOUTH REPAIRS  
\(IN SEASON\) >](#)



## APPLICATION OF FERTILISER

### Frequencies:

January: N/A  
February: N/A  
March: N/A  
April: Once  
May: N/A  
June: N/A  
July: N/A  
August: N/A  
September: Once  
October: N/A  
November: N/A  
December: N/A

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£650

Experience has shown that where funds are limited and best value the principal concern application of a controlled or slow release granular fertiliser provides the best outcomes on pitches used for grassroots football. As a rough guide these types of fertiliser provide a slow “drip” feed of nutrients avoiding excessive grass growth that can be difficult to keep on top of and susceptible to disease. This release of nutrients can last for up to 4-5 months in certain products but more typically 3-4. Granular fertiliser has increased in cost in recent years so its really important to make sure that what you are applying to the area is appropriate and nothing is being wasted. A nutrient soil analysis that can usually be provided by your chosen supplier can help to make sure you’re using what’s most suitable for your site. Typically, whatever the preferred supplier a suitable fertiliser can be selected for spring/summer and autumn/winter. Approx. 12 x 20kg bags per full size pitch. One application per year would be considered the minimum in spring but ideally at least two with the second in late summer/early autumn.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT APPLICATION OF FERTILISER >](#)



## SURFACE GROOMING

### Frequency:

Fortnightly

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

Any presence of worm casts should be alleviated by regular brushing of the surface providing the soil is dry enough as the right conditions are important to disperse the casts effectively. Worm casts are unsightly and can smear and cover fine turfgrasses. This would also help with thatch build up, dew dispersal and help to break up any surface debris. If use of a combination grooming tool could be organised regular use of this to rake and brush the area during the growing season and then to use the brush and surface slitter during the autumn and winter if soil conditions allow will help to relieve surface compaction, improve surface drainage and manage organic matter levels which can contribute to numerous turf problems. These operations will also alleviate the conditions in which many weeds and diseases thrive.

PLEASE NOTE: The indicative budget outlined in the report does not include implementing a surface grooming regime.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT SURFACE GROOMING >](#)



## OVERSEEDING (IN SEASON)

### Frequencies:

January: N/A  
February: N/A  
March: As Required  
April: As Required  
May: As Required  
June: N/A  
July: N/A  
August: N/A  
September: As Required  
October: As Required  
November: N/A  
December: N/A

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£1400

In season over-seeding can be a viable option on sites where access to water is limited. Seeding in early spring and early autumn when weather conditions are more helpful can help to mitigate the risks of poor germination often seen on sites without irrigation when renovations are left till end of season and the risk of drought is higher. If choosing this option use of a disc seeder is crucial to make sure the grass seed is drilled into the pitch surface as this gives it some protection from play during germination. High traffic areas such as goal mouths are likely to still require end of season repairs. Disc seed in 3 directions at a rate of 35 grams per square metre (approximately 10-12 x 20kg bags of Perennial Ryegrass seed for a full-size pitch) If budgets are limited and over-seeding spring and autumn this can be done at half rate 18 grams per square meter per pitch, with budgets constraints in mind you could also consider concentrating on the width of the box/es down the length of the pitch where most of the wear takes place.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT OVERSEEDING \(IN SEASON\) >](#)



## APPLICATION OF SELECTIVE HERBICIDE (WEED TREATMENT)

### Frequencies:

January: N/A  
February: N/A  
March: N/A  
April: N/A  
May: N/A  
June: As Required  
July: As Required  
August: N/A  
September: N/A  
October: N/A  
November: N/A  
December: N/A

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£350

As part of an Integrated Weed Management programme application of a broad spectrum selective herbicide may be required once per year if cultural controls are not adequately controlling the population within the defined tolerances. By way of an example a GOOD score for weed cover is for the pitch to have no more than 6-10% weed coverage. Selective herbicides should be applied by a fully qualified professional with the appropriate equipment and paperwork. It should typically not be applied within 6-8 weeks prior to or after seeding (refer to product label) Typically mowing should not take place for 3 days before and 3 days after application. (Do not apply in drought conditions it may damage the turf and will not treat weeds effectively). Selective herbicides should be sprayed in the dry with little to no wind. Most selective herbicides are rain fast within 24 hours of application. If rain falls prior to this it could affect the success of weed control. Work with the contractor to ensure the selective herbicide chosen controls the weeds on site. Most good quality systemic selective herbicides should control common weeds such as Daisy, Dandelion, Greater Plantain, Clover etc.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT APPLICATION OF  
SELECTIVE HERBICIDE \(WEED TREATMENT\)>](#)



## DEEP SLITTING

### Frequencies:

January: Once  
February: N/A  
March: N/A  
April: N/A  
May: N/A  
June: N/A  
July: N/A  
August: N/A  
September: Once  
October: Once  
November: Once  
December: Once

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

As long as soil conditions allow (i.e. not too wet or too dry) slitting provides aeration in the soil encouraging improved water, air and nutrient circulation in the soil. It is a quicker and less invasive method of aeration in comparison to deep spiking or linear decompaction and should take place more routinely as part of a routine maintenance schedule. Typically slitting would take place to a depth of between 150-220mm soil conditions allowing. Due to the slits created it can be particularly useful in the autumn when trying to improve the drainage of the soil prior to the wetter winter months. However as it creates lines of weakness in the soil it is not recommended on clay soils beyond the winter due to the risk of encouraging cracking during drought periods.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT DEEP SLITTING >](#)

## ESTIMATED BUDGET TO CARRY OUT RECOMMENDATIONS

£3140

Please note, the costs provided above are indicative and may vary dependent on quantities and frequency. This estimated budget should be used to help plan and prioritise work, but is not linked to the amount of grant funding you may receive. Following the recommended works should help you achieve the **GOOD** pitch standard, or if already at that level, sustain it.



# TRAINING

As well as undertaking the maintenance activities as described above, we would also recommend attending the following training courses to further develop your skills and understanding of grass pitch maintenance.

[Click here for information on training courses.](#)

[VISIT TRAINING COURSES >](#)

## Recommended Training

### Organisation Training

#### Online Modules Level 1 - Football

[Read More >](#)

Required Completions: 2

#### Online Modules Level 2

[Read More >](#)

Required Completions: 2



WANT TO APPLY FOR FUNDING?

## FOOTBALL FOUNDATION FUNDING APPLICATION PORTAL

You could be eligible for a grant to help you carry out the recommendations in this report. Click 'Apply here' and you could be on your way to securing a grant and being a part of our mission to transform this country's grassroots game.

Report ID: **14566**

To apply for funding visit

[APPLY.FOOTBALLFOUNDATION.ORG.UK](https://apply.footballfoundation.org.uk)

### Training Courses



Further information on any training courses you're recommended to complete can be found on the Grounds Management Association website.

[Visit the GMA >](#)

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Join the Football Foundation Groundskeeping Community to connect with groundskeepers across different levels of the game. You'll be able to ask questions and share best practice.

[Visit the Groundskeeping Community >](#)

## Find out more about the Football Foundation's plan to transform the country's grass pitches

Visit our website, which has lots of information about other resources and funding opportunities we're offering organisations involved in the grassroots game.

[FOOTBALLFOUNDATION.ORG.UK >](https://footballfoundation.org.uk)



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# ***FOOTBALL ASSESSMENT REPORT***

## **RIVERSIDE PLAYING FIELDS**

**Bedfordshire FA**

**Active Places Site ID**

1038940

**Report ID**

14565



This report has been compiled for STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL and Bedfordshire FA to provide information on the standard of the football pitches and outlines recommendations on how to improve the quality and maintenance of these pitches.

Inspection Window

**1 NOV 2023 / 31 MAR 2024**

Inspection Reason

**EXISTING FOOTBALL FOUNDATION GRANT**

Report Completion Date

**31 MAR 2024**

This report looks solely at the Football pitches for STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL to see how support can be offered in improving the standard of Football pitches and level of maintenance across the area. Please note these recommendations are based on the information obtained and/or provided and are for guidance purposes only. Any works undertaken are the responsibility of the club/organisation.

Site report:

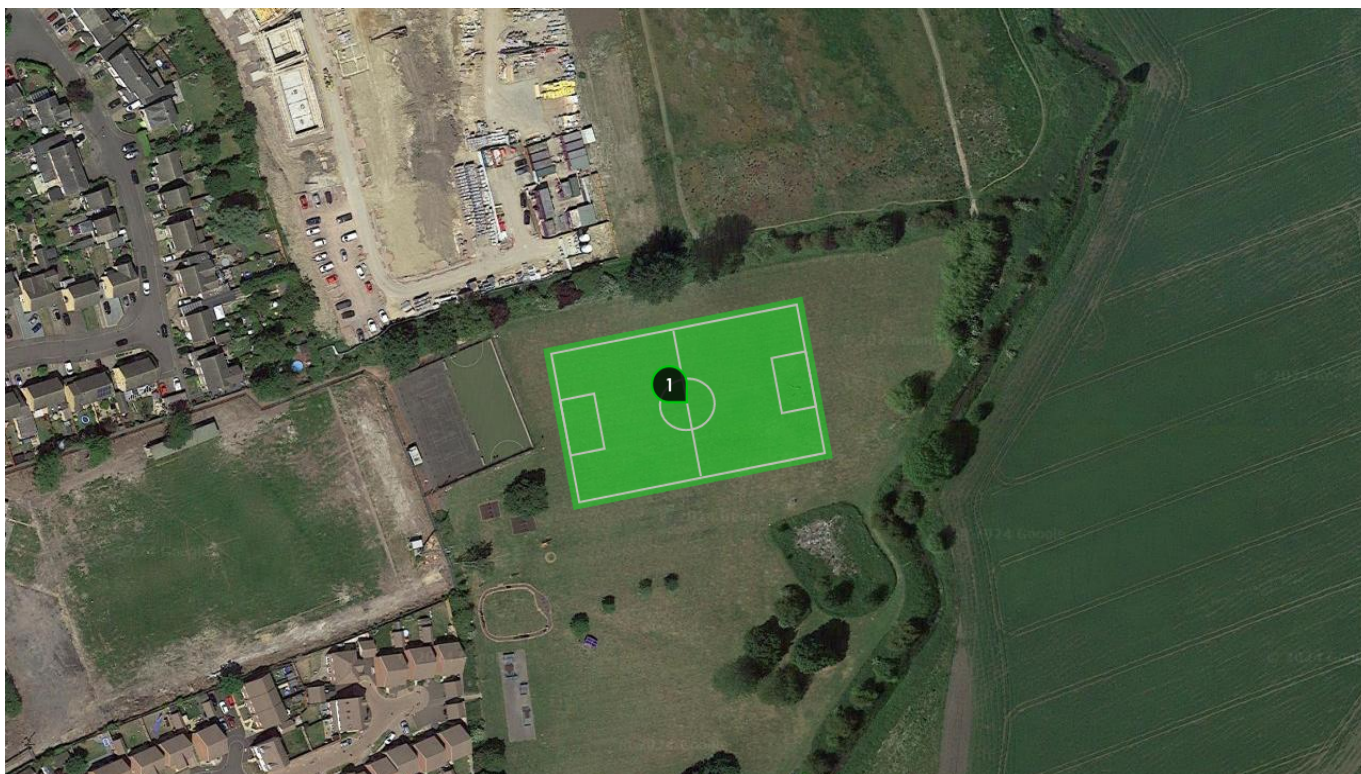
**RIVERSIDE PLAYING FIELDS**





## RIVERSIDE PLAYING FIELDS

Site ID: 1038940



Map Key	Pitch Name	PQS Score
1	<b>PITCH 1</b>	● Advanced - 68%

Date inspection submitted  
**22/03/24**

Inspection submitted by  
**[pitchpower@footballfoundation.org.uk](mailto:pitchpower@footballfoundation.org.uk)**

Next available inspection window  
**1 Apr 2024 / 30 Jun 2024**



Please be mindful that the recommendations made in this report are based on the condition of the pitch at the time of the inspection. Grass height was much too long in relation to acceptable heights for play. Groundcover was excellent throughout. Weed coverage was minimal. The depth of measured debris free top soil was good, root depth varied and root density requires improvement. There were no pitch markings and given the overall condition of the pitch it would appear it has seen little use, certainly recently. If required two approaches to pitch renovation can be considered going forward. A traditional end of season renovation (scarify, sand dress, disc seed, deep spike) will generally be appropriate in areas of the country with adequate rainfall during growing season or for pitches with irrigation. On sites largely or entirely reliant on natural rainfall where an end of season approach can be hit and miss, light touch renovations in the spring and autumn may provide better outcomes than a traditional end of season maintenance approach and would typically include light scarification (spring and autumn), sand dressing (if budgets allow; please ensure other critical works are carried out first before spending large amounts of money on sports sand) followed by half rate disc seeding and granular fertilisation (spring and autumn) and deep spiking of the pitch (spring and autumn). These works can take place while the pitch is in use and grass seed should germinate and establish in all but the highest use areas such as goal mouths which may require regular repairs during the season and more significant repairs when not in use. The rationale to the above is that even some seed establishment lost to wear is less of a risk than the potential for drought and a failed renovation during the hotter, drier months. Selective weed control may be required later in the year as part of an Integrated Weed Management programme once active growth resumes and may be again in future if cultural practices (scarification, surface grooming, over-seeding) are not effective in adequately controlling the weed coverage within or below the acceptable threshold (6-10% weed cover) but while this should take place during the growing season it should not take place during drought periods. In future, slitting in the autumn and early winter (as long as it's not too wet) would improve the soil structure and drainage potential of the pitch but no later than this so it does not contribute to any potential for surface cracking that can be more of a risk during summer months as the soil dries.

Senior Regional Pitch Advisor contact.

[jmorris@thegma.org.uk](mailto:jmorris@thegma.org.uk)

07519103040



## Maintenance

Attention required in these areas:

Mowing >

Line marking >

Decompaction >

Surface Grooming >

Application of fertiliser >

Overseeding (In Season) >

Application of selective herbicide (weed treatment) >

Deep Slitting >

## Equipment

Attention required in these areas:

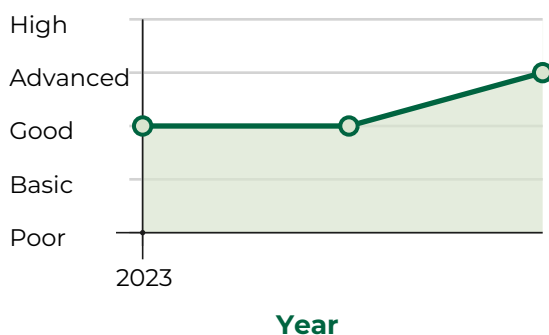
No Equipment to show

## Pitch 1 Football - Junior Football 11v11

**CURRENT PQS SCORE: Advanced - 68%**

AREA				PQS GRADE
<b>Grass height</b>	60	70	80	1
<b>Grass coverage</b>	99%	100%	98%	4
<b>Weed coverage</b>	1%	0%	2%	4
<b>Surface debris</b>	Above Standard	Above Standard	Above Standard	4
<b>Topsoil depth</b>	180mm	180mm	170mm	4
<b>Thatch depth</b>	5mm	5mm	5mm	4
<b>Root depth</b>	155mm	90mm	150mm	4
<b>Drainage Following Rainfall</b>	Slow drainage			2
<b>Line markings</b>	Below standard			0
<b>Surface evenness</b>	Standard			2
<b>Goalposts</b>	Compliant			1

### Overall pitch PQS tracked over time





# MAINTENANCE

These recommendations are in priority order

## MOWING

**Frequency:**

Weekly

**Recommended for:**

Whole Ground

The playing area should be maintained at a playing height between 30-35mm during the growing season and increased to between 35-45mm during the autumn and winter months. There are exceptions to this, during drought periods height of cut should be increased to reduce stress on the plant and cutting avoided all together if growth has ceased. To minimise build-up of surface debris careful consideration should be given as to the conditions in which mowing takes place. Quality of cut will be maximised if cutting can take place when the grass leaf is dry, however cutting should not take place during the heat of a warm day as this will cause stress to the turf. No more than a third of the grass leaf should be mown during any one operation to minimise turf stress and reduce the build-up of grass clippings on the surface.

PLEASE NOTE: The indicative budget outlined in the report does not include mowing costs.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT MOWING >](#)



## LINE MARKING

**Frequency:**

Weekly

**Recommended for:**

Whole Ground

Lines should be marked to the appropriate dimensions with a suitable line marking paint. Strings should be used to straighten lines when possible.

PLEASE NOTE: The indicative budget outlined in the report does not include line marking costs.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT LINE MARKING >](#)



## DECOMPACTION

### Frequencies:

January: N/A  
February: N/A  
March: N/A  
April: Once  
May: N/A  
June: N/A  
July: N/A  
August: N/A  
September: N/A  
October: Once  
November: N/A  
December: N/A

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£500

Decompaction operations are essential to allow air, water and nutrients to pass into and through the soil profile increasing drainage and root depth/density and improving the breakdown of organic matter (Thatch). Deep spiking should be carried out at least once annually but ideally twice, spring and autumn using 18-24mm tines at 100mm spacings to maximum achievable depth. If funds permit conduct further linear aeration and decompaction operations during the autumn/winter month's dependent on ground conditions.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT DECOMPACTION >](#)



## SURFACE GROOMING

### Frequency:

Fortnightly

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

Any presence of worm casts should be alleviated by regular brushing of the surface providing the soil is dry enough as the right conditions are important to disperse the casts effectively. Worm casts are unsightly and can smear and cover fine turfgrasses. This would also help with thatch build up, dew dispersal and help to break up any surface debris. If use of a combination grooming tool could be organised regular use of this to rake and brush the area during the growing season and then to use the brush and surface slitter during the autumn and winter if soil conditions allow will help to relieve surface compaction, improve surface drainage and manage organic matter levels which can contribute to numerous turf problems. These operations will also alleviate the conditions in which many weeds and diseases thrive.

PLEASE NOTE: The indicative budget outlined in the report does not include implementing a surface grooming regime.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT SURFACE GROOMING >](#)



## APPLICATION OF FERTILISER

### Frequencies:

January: N/A  
February: N/A  
March: N/A  
April: Once  
May: N/A  
June: N/A  
July: N/A  
August: N/A  
September: Once  
October: N/A  
November: N/A  
December: N/A

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£650

Experience has shown that where funds are limited and best value the principal concern application of a controlled or slow release granular fertiliser provides the best outcomes on pitches used for grassroots football. As a rough guide these types of fertiliser provide a slow “drip” feed of nutrients avoiding excessive grass growth that can be difficult to keep on top of and susceptible to disease. This release of nutrients can last for up to 4-5 months in certain products but more typically 3-4. Granular fertiliser has increased in cost in recent years so its really important to make sure that what you are applying to the area is appropriate and nothing is being wasted. A nutrient soil analysis that can usually be provided by your chosen supplier can help to make sure you’re using what’s most suitable for your site. Typically, whatever the preferred supplier a suitable fertiliser can be selected for spring/summer and autumn/winter. Approx. 12 x 20kg bags per full size pitch. One application per year would be considered the minimum in spring but ideally at least two with the second in late summer/early autumn.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT APPLICATION OF FERTILISER >](#)



## OVERSEEDING (IN SEASON)

### Frequency:

As Required

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£1400

In season over-seeding can be a viable option on sites where access to water is limited. Seeding in early spring and early autumn when weather conditions are more helpful can help to mitigate the risks of poor germination often seen on sites without irrigation when renovations are left till end of season and the risk of drought is higher. If choosing this option use of a disc seeder is crucial to make sure the grass seed is drilled into the pitch surface as this gives it some protection from play during germination. High traffic areas such as goal mouths are likely to still require end of season repairs. Disc seed in 3 directions at a rate of 35 grams per square metre (approximately 10-12 x 20kg bags of Perennial Ryegrass seed for a full-size pitch) If budgets are limited and over-seeding spring and autumn this can be done at half rate 18 grams per square meter per pitch, with budgets constraints in mind you could also consider concentrating on the width of the box/es down the length of the pitch where most of the wear takes place.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT OVERSEEDING \(IN SEASON\) >](#)



## APPLICATION OF SELECTIVE HERBICIDE (WEED TREATMENT)

**Frequency:**

As Required

**Recommended for:**

Whole Ground

**Est Cost:**

£350

As part of an Integrated Weed Management programme application of a broad spectrum selective herbicide may be required once per year if cultural controls are not adequately controlling the population within the defined tolerances. By way of an example a GOOD score for weed cover is for the pitch to have no more than 6-10% weed coverage. Selective herbicides should be applied by a fully qualified professional with the appropriate equipment and paperwork. It should typically not be applied within 6-8 weeks prior to or after seeding (refer to product label) Typically mowing should not take place for 3 days before and 3 days after application. (Do not apply in drought conditions it may damage the turf and will not treat weeds effectively). Selective herbicides should be sprayed in the dry with little to no wind. Most selective herbicides are rain fast within 24 hours of application. If rain falls prior to this it could affect the success of weed control. Work with the contractor to ensure the selective herbicide chosen controls the weeds on site. Most good quality systemic selective herbicides should control common weeds such as Daisy, Dandelion, Greater Plantain, Clover etc.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT APPLICATION OF  
SELECTIVE HERBICIDE \(WEED TREATMENT\) >](#)



## DEEP SLITTING

### Frequencies:

January: Once  
February: N/A  
March: N/A  
April: N/A  
May: N/A  
June: N/A  
July: N/A  
August: N/A  
September: Once  
October: Once  
November: Once  
December: Once

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

As long as soil conditions allow (i.e. not too wet or too dry) slitting provides aeration in the soil encouraging improved water, air and nutrient circulation in the soil. It is a quicker and less invasive method of aeration in comparison to deep spiking or linear decompaction and should take place more routinely as part of a routine maintenance schedule. Typically slitting would take place to a depth of between 150-220mm soil conditions allowing. Due to the slits created it can be particularly useful in the autumn when trying to improve the drainage of the soil prior to the wetter winter months. However as it creates lines of weakness in the soil it is not recommended on clay soils beyond the winter due to the risk of encouraging cracking during drought periods.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT DEEP SLITTING >](#)

## ESTIMATED BUDGET TO CARRY OUT RECOMMENDATIONS

£2900

Please note, the costs provided above are indicative and may vary dependent on quantities and frequency. This estimated budget should be used to help plan and prioritise work, but is not linked to the amount of grant funding you may receive. Following the recommended works should help you achieve the **GOOD** pitch standard, or if already at that level, sustain it.



# TRAINING

As well as undertaking the maintenance activities as described above, we would also recommend attending the following training courses to further develop your skills and understanding of grass pitch maintenance.

[Click here for information on training courses.](#)

[VISIT TRAINING COURSES >](#)

## Recommended Training

### Organisation Training

#### Online Modules Level 1 - Football

[Read More >](#)

Required Completions: 2

#### Online Modules Level 2

[Read More >](#)

Required Completions: 2



WANT TO APPLY FOR FUNDING?

## FOOTBALL FOUNDATION FUNDING APPLICATION PORTAL

You could be eligible for a grant to help you carry out the recommendations in this report. Click 'Apply here' and you could be on your way to securing a grant and being a part of our mission to transform this country's grassroots game.

Report ID: **14565**

To apply for funding visit

[APPLY.FOOTBALLFOUNDATION.ORG.UK](https://apply.footballfoundation.org.uk)

### Training Courses



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[Visit the GMA >](#)

### The Groundskeeping Community



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## Find out more about the Football Foundation's plan to transform the country's grass pitches

Visit our website, which has lots of information about other resources and funding opportunities we're offering organisations involved in the grassroots game.

[FOOTBALLFOUNDATION.ORG.UK >](https://footballfoundation.org.uk)



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# ***FOOTBALL ASSESSMENT REPORT***

## **THE GREEN (STOTFOLD)**

**Bedfordshire FA**

**Active Places Site ID**

30010138

**Report ID**

14562



This report has been compiled for STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL and Bedfordshire FA to provide information on the standard of the football pitches and outlines recommendations on how to improve the quality and maintenance of these pitches.

Inspection Window

**1 NOV 2023 / 31 MAR 2024**

Inspection Reason

**EXISTING FOOTBALL FOUNDATION GRANT**

Report Completion Date

**2 APR 2024**

This report looks solely at the Football pitches for STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL to see how support can be offered in improving the standard of Football pitches and level of maintenance across the area. Please note these recommendations are based on the information obtained and/or provided and are for guidance purposes only. Any works undertaken are the responsibility of the club/organisation.

Site report:

**THE GREEN (STOTFOLD)**





## THE GREEN (STOTFOLD)

Site ID: 30010138



Map Key	Pitch Name	PQS Score
1	<b>PITCH 1</b>	● Advanced - 70%

Date inspection submitted  
**22/03/24**

Inspection submitted by  
**[pitchpower@footballfoundation.org.uk](mailto:pitchpower@footballfoundation.org.uk)**

Next available inspection window  
**1 Apr 2024 / 30 Jun 2024**



Please be mindful that the recommendations made in this report are based on the condition of the pitch at the time of the inspection. Grass height was broadly consistent and appropriate for the time of year perhaps just a fraction long by 5mm-10mm or so. Groundcover was excellent in all areas inspected. Weed coverage was minimal. The depth of measured debris free top soil was very good as was root depth, root density requires improvement. Pitch markings were faint but appeared mostly straight. If required two approaches to pitch renovation can be considered going forward. A traditional end of season renovation (scarify, sand dress, disc seed, deep spike) will generally be appropriate in areas of the country with adequate rainfall during growing season or for pitches with irrigation. On sites largely or entirely reliant on natural rainfall where an end of season approach can be hit and miss, light touch renovations in the spring and autumn may provide better outcomes than a traditional end of season maintenance approach and would typically include light scarification (spring and autumn), sand dressing (if budgets allow; please ensure other critical works are carried out first before spending large amounts of money on sports sand) followed by half rate disc seeding and granular fertilisation (spring and autumn) and deep spiking of the pitch (spring and autumn). These works can take place while the pitch is in use and grass seed should germinate and establish in all but the highest use areas such as goal mouths which may require regular repairs during the season and more significant repairs when not in use. The rationale to the above is that even some seed establishment lost to wear is less of a risk than the potential for drought and a failed renovation during the hotter, drier months. Selective weed control may be required later in the year as part of an Integrated Weed Management programme once active growth resumes and may be again in future if cultural practices (scarification, surface grooming, over-seeding) are not effective in adequately controlling the weed coverage within or below the acceptable threshold (6-10% weed cover) but while this should take place during the growing season it should not take place during drought periods. In future, slitting in the autumn and early winter (as long as it's not too wet) would improve the soil structure and drainage potential of the pitch but no later than this so it does not contribute to any potential for surface cracking that can be more of a risk during summer months as the soil dries.

Senior Regional Pitch Advisor contact

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## Maintenance

Attention required in these areas:

[Mowing >](#)

[Line marking >](#)

[Decompaction >](#)

[Goal Mouth repairs \(In season\) >](#)

[Application of fertiliser >](#)

[Surface Grooming >](#)

[Overseeding \(In Season\) >](#)

[Application of selective herbicide \(weed treatment\) >](#)

[Deep Slitting >](#)

## Equipment

Attention required in these areas:

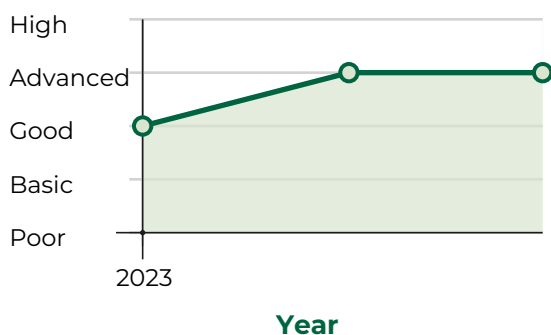
No Equipment to show

## Pitch 1 Football - Junior Football 9v9

CURRENT PQS SCORE: Advanced - 70%

AREA				PQS GRADE
Grass height	40	40	50	3
Grass coverage	90%	95%	93%	4
Weed coverage	2%	1%	1%	4
Surface debris	Above Standard	Above Standard	Above Standard	4
Topsoil depth	200mm	190mm	140mm	4
Thatch depth	1mm	1mm	1mm	4
Root depth	140mm	95mm	150mm	4
Drainage Following Rainfall	Slow drainage			2
Line markings	Standard			1
Surface evenness	Below standard			0
Goalposts	Compliant			1

### Overall pitch PQS tracked over time





# MAINTENANCE

These recommendations are in priority order

## MOWING

**Frequency:**

Weekly

**Recommended for:**

Whole Ground

The playing area should be maintained at a playing height between 30-35mm during the growing season and increased to between 35-45mm during the autumn and winter months. There are exceptions to this, during drought periods height of cut should be increased to reduce stress on the plant and cutting avoided all together if growth has ceased. To minimise build-up of surface debris careful consideration should be given as to the conditions in which mowing takes place. Quality of cut will be maximised if cutting can take place when the grass leaf is dry, however cutting should not take place during the heat of a warm day as this will cause stress to the turf. No more than a third of the grass leaf should be mown during any one operation to minimise turf stress and reduce the build-up of grass clippings on the surface.

PLEASE NOTE: The indicative budget outlined in the report does not include mowing costs.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT MOWING >](#)



## LINE MARKING

### Frequency:

Weekly

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

Lines should be marked to the appropriate dimensions with a suitable line marking paint. Strings should be used to straighten lines when possible.

PLEASE NOTE: The indicative budget outlined in the report does not include line marking costs.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT LINE MARKING >](#)



## DECOMPACTION

### Frequencies:

January: N/A  
February: N/A  
March: N/A  
April: Once  
May: N/A  
June: N/A  
July: N/A  
August: N/A  
September: N/A  
October: Once  
November: N/A  
December: N/A

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£350

Decompaction operations are essential to allow air, water and nutrients to pass into and through the soil profile increasing drainage and root depth/density and improving the breakdown of organic matter (Thatch). Deep spiking should be carried out at least once annually but ideally twice, spring and autumn using 18-24mm tines at 100mm spacings to maximum achievable depth. If funds permit conduct further linear aeration and decompaction operations during the autumn/winter month's dependent on ground conditions.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT DECOMPACTION >](#)



## GOAL MOUTH REPAIRS (IN SEASON)

**Frequency:**

Monthly

**Recommended for:**

Whole Ground

**Est Cost:**

£240

Hand fork the goalmouths and gently apply heave to the fork to relieve compaction, if the area is bare scratching the top soil with a landscaping rake (plastic) to create a fine tilth. Top dress using a pan shovel with a suitable material (sports sand or sand/soil mix) to return the area to desired surface level, work the dressing into the surface as you go by brushing or raking, taking care not to smother any grass cover. If conditions are suitable add some grass seed, irrigate as required and cover with germination sheeting or scaffold netting if available.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT GOAL MOUTH REPAIRS  
\(IN SEASON\) >](#)



## APPLICATION OF FERTILISER

### Frequencies:

January: N/A  
February: N/A  
March: N/A  
April: Once  
May: N/A  
June: N/A  
July: N/A  
August: N/A  
September: Once  
October: N/A  
November: N/A  
December: N/A

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£500

Experience has shown that where funds are limited and best value the principal concern application of a controlled or slow release granular fertiliser provides the best outcomes on pitches used for grassroots football. As a rough guide these types of fertiliser provide a slow “drip” feed of nutrients avoiding excessive grass growth that can be difficult to keep on top of and susceptible to disease. This release of nutrients can last for up to 4-5 months in certain products but more typically 3-4. Granular fertiliser has increased in cost in recent years so its really important to make sure that what you are applying to the area is appropriate and nothing is being wasted. A nutrient soil analysis that can usually be provided by your chosen supplier can help to make sure you’re using what’s most suitable for your site. Typically, whatever the preferred supplier a suitable fertiliser can be selected for spring/summer and autumn/winter. Approx. 12 x 20kg bags per full size pitch. One application per year would be considered the minimum in spring but ideally at least two with the second in late summer/early autumn.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT APPLICATION OF FERTILISER >](#)



## SURFACE GROOMING

### Frequency:

Fortnightly

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

Any presence of worm casts should be alleviated by regular brushing of the surface providing the soil is dry enough as the right conditions are important to disperse the casts effectively. Worm casts are unsightly and can smear and cover fine turfgrasses. This would also help with thatch build up, dew dispersal and help to break up any surface debris. If use of a combination grooming tool could be organised regular use of this to rake and brush the area during the growing season and then to use the brush and surface slitter during the autumn and winter if soil conditions allow will help to relieve surface compaction, improve surface drainage and manage organic matter levels which can contribute to numerous turf problems. These operations will also alleviate the conditions in which many weeds and diseases thrive.

PLEASE NOTE: The indicative budget outlined in the report does not include implementing a surface grooming regime.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT SURFACE GROOMING >](#)



## OVERSEEDING (IN SEASON)

### Frequencies:

January: N/A  
February: N/A  
March: As Required  
April: As Required  
May: As Required  
June: N/A  
July: N/A  
August: N/A  
September: As Required  
October: As Required  
November: N/A  
December: N/A

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£1100

In season over-seeding can be a viable option on sites where access to water is limited. Seeding in early spring and early autumn when weather conditions are more helpful can help to mitigate the risks of poor germination often seen on sites without irrigation when renovations are left till end of season and the risk of drought is higher. If choosing this option use of a disc seeder is crucial to make sure the grass seed is drilled into the pitch surface as this gives it some protection from play during germination. High traffic areas such as goal mouths are likely to still require end of season repairs. Disc seed in 3 directions at a rate of 35 grams per square metre (approximately 10-12 x 20kg bags of Perennial Ryegrass seed for a full-size pitch) If budgets are limited and over-seeding spring and autumn this can be done at half rate 18 grams per square meter per pitch, with budgets constraints in mind you could also consider concentrating on the width of the box/es down the length of the pitch where most of the wear takes place.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT OVERSEEDING \(IN SEASON\) >](#)



## APPLICATION OF SELECTIVE HERBICIDE (WEED TREATMENT)

### Frequencies:

January: N/A  
February: N/A  
March: N/A  
April: N/A  
May: N/A  
June: As Required  
July: As Required  
August: N/A  
September: N/A  
October: N/A  
November: N/A  
December: N/A

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

### Est Cost:

£300

As part of an Integrated Weed Management programme application of a broad spectrum selective herbicide may be required once per year if cultural controls are not adequately controlling the population within the defined tolerances. By way of an example a GOOD score for weed cover is for the pitch to have no more than 6-10% weed coverage. Selective herbicides should be applied by a fully qualified professional with the appropriate equipment and paperwork. It should typically not be applied within 6-8 weeks prior to or after seeding (refer to product label) Typically mowing should not take place for 3 days before and 3 days after application. (Do not apply in drought conditions it may damage the turf and will not treat weeds effectively). Selective herbicides should be sprayed in the dry with little to no wind. Most selective herbicides are rain fast within 24 hours of application. If rain falls prior to this it could affect the success of weed control. Work with the contractor to ensure the selective herbicide chosen controls the weeds on site. Most good quality systemic selective herbicides should control common weeds such as Daisy, Dandelion, Greater Plantain, Clover etc.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT APPLICATION OF  
SELECTIVE HERBICIDE \(WEED TREATMENT\) >](#)



## DEEP SLITTING

### Frequencies:

January: Once  
February: N/A  
March: N/A  
April: N/A  
May: N/A  
June: N/A  
July: N/A  
August: N/A  
September: Once  
October: Once  
November: Once  
December: Once

### Recommended for:

Whole Ground

As long as soil conditions allow (i.e. not too wet or too dry) slitting provides aeration in the soil encouraging improved water, air and nutrient circulation in the soil. It is a quicker and less invasive method of aeration in comparison to deep spiking or linear decompaction and should take place more routinely as part of a routine maintenance schedule. Typically slitting would take place to a depth of between 150-220mm soil conditions allowing. Due to the slits created it can be particularly useful in the autumn when trying to improve the drainage of the soil prior to the wetter winter months. However as it creates lines of weakness in the soil it is not recommended on clay soils beyond the winter due to the risk of encouraging cracking during drought periods.

[LEARN MORE ABOUT DEEP SLITTING >](#)

## ESTIMATED BUDGET TO CARRY OUT RECOMMENDATIONS

£2490

Please note, the costs provided above are indicative and may vary dependent on quantities and frequency. This estimated budget should be used to help plan and prioritise work, but is not linked to the amount of grant funding you may receive. Following the recommended works should help you achieve the **GOOD** pitch standard, or if already at that level, sustain it.



# TRAINING

As well as undertaking the maintenance activities as described above, we would also recommend attending the following training courses to further develop your skills and understanding of grass pitch maintenance.

[Click here for information on training courses.](#)

[VISIT TRAINING COURSES >](#)

## Recommended Training

### Organisation Training

#### Online Modules Level 1 - Football

[Read More >](#)

Required Completions: 2

#### Online Modules Level 2

[Read More >](#)

Required Completions: 2



WANT TO APPLY FOR FUNDING?

## FOOTBALL FOUNDATION FUNDING APPLICATION PORTAL

You could be eligible for a grant to help you carry out the recommendations in this report. Click 'Apply here' and you could be on your way to securing a grant and being a part of our mission to transform this country's grassroots game.

Report ID: **14562**

To apply for funding visit

[APPLY.FOOTBALLFOUNDATION.ORG.UK](https://apply.footballfoundation.org.uk)

### Training Courses



Further information on any training courses you're recommended to complete can be found on the Grounds Management Association website.

[Visit the GMA >](#)

### The Groundskeeping Community



Join the Football Foundation Groundskeeping Community to connect with groundskeepers across different levels of the game. You'll be able to ask questions and share best practice.

[Visit the Groundskeeping Community >](#)

### Find out more about the Football Foundation's plan to transform the country's grass pitches

Visit our website, which has lots of information about other resources and funding opportunities we're offering organisations involved in the grassroots game.

[FOOTBALLFOUNDATION.ORG.UK >](https://footballfoundation.org.uk)