

BODIAM PARISH COUNCIL

The future of the sports pavilion

This flyer was delivered to all homes in Bodiam in December 2023. Results of the survey have now been added.

As many of you know the sports pavilion on our recreation ground is in extremely poor condition. It has recently become unusable following several break-ins. Perhaps finding nothing worth stealing, vandals have contented themselves by causing extensive (and expensive) damage to the interior.

Currently, there is no regular football or cricket team and the pavilion is used only for annual events including the Primary School Fun Day and Sports Day. Even so, each year the pavilion still costs the Parish a significant amount of money in insurance, up-keep, maintenance, and utility bills. It is also an unfortunate fact of Rother life that the pavilion, although several feet above ground level, is regularly flooded. This causes increased concern regarding health and safety and has meant that we are unable to provide full kitchen facilities.



Whilst the future of our pavilion has always been on our minds, the recent increase in vandalism has escalated the need for the village to find a resolution.

Therefore, we would like to seek the public opinion of our community – residents and families who have, perhaps, used the facilities. Perhaps one of you can come up with an inspired idea about its future! However, when considering these options, please also consider how often it is likely to be used. Aside from the few events listed earlier, the reality is that there is little demand from both event organisers and sports clubs. For those who have never been inside the pavilion, it has showers, lavatories, basic catering facilities as well as sports changing rooms.

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The Parish Council has drawn up a shortlist of possible options (in approximate order of increasing expense) as follows. The votes received from the survey have been added.

1. De-commission the pavilion altogether or pay to have it taken down.
10 Votes
2. Strip the interior fittings including the kitchen and showers leaving just the lavatories and storage. **1 Vote**
3. Repair the damage in full and improve security with vandal-proof door and window covers, security lighting and intruder alarm system. **3 Votes**

A quote has been provided by a local builder for 3 UPVC windows, 3 doors and exterior repairs for £9638. This does not include interior repairs or additional security.

4. Replace or rebuild, perhaps in part of the recreation ground which does not flood. Please note we are restricted to the top end of the field. **5 Votes**
 - a) Conventional timber framed pavilion. **1 Vote**

This would be impossible to fund as a Parish Council. Funding may be accessible via a combination of grants and fund-raising activities, but with an estimated investment required between £150,000 to £250,000, would not be easy or quick to achieve.

- b) Reused shipping container. **4 Votes**

An option currently being considered by the well-resourced Northiam Parish Council is to create a replacement pavilion from several inter-linked steel shipping containers. Sidley Cricket Club has also recently acquired a reused container which provides a reasonable changing area and washroom facilities. Whilst costs vary significantly from supplier to supplier, our brief research suggests that we could acquire a small cabin with washroom facilities for between £7,500 to £20,000 plus installation costs.



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People provided these suggestions supporting their vote:

- The building needs to be moved more towards the gate/Roadside.
- The ageing recreational facilities in Levetts Lane are a better choice of investment than the pavilion.
- Could something like the Herdman Pavilion in Ewhurst work - if a dry area on site could be found and planning permission attainable.
- the lack of regular use and the flooding makes the pavilion untenable and should be removed.
- a place for the elderly to meet up, around mid-day and rented out in the evenings, for classes, like Yoga, fitness, etc.
- Do Claremont require full size pitches for their sporting events? Do the primary school have any grassed recreation areas?
- Consider hiring a portable toilet for the school sports day and the fun day. No vandalism, no flooding issues and if flooding gets worse no concerns about costly infrastructure.

There are many pots of money available, usually on a 20% match funding basis, to help finance community and sporting projects. For example, Rother District Council Community Grant, the Biffa Award, the Garfield Weston Foundation, the Morrison Foundation, and the Football Foundation (not in fact limited to football). In fact, Northiam's football team hopes to tap Sports England and the Lottery for money. However, in the absence of regular sports, Bodiam is perhaps in a weak position to apply. Also, possible funders might also be looking to support projects in districts with more than the 300 or so residents in Bodiam!

To help us make the right decision for the village, we would appreciate your thoughts and feedback this evening.

The questionnaire can still be completed electronically by scanning the QR code:

