

MURRELL'S FIELD IMPROVEMENT WORKS

EVOLUTION OF THE FIELD

History of Improvements at Murrell's Field

On the 31st January 2001, a 100-year lease was granted by WSCC to Barnham Parish Council for use of Murrell's Field as a public open space.

Between 1999 and 2008, £58,183 was raised to support a group of volunteers who cleared the area of vast amounts of glass rubble and scrap from old buildings, cleared old trees brambles and scrub, rabbit proofed the Field and planted circa 300 new trees and shrubs. In 2006, a gravel car park was finished and new gates installed.

In 2010, the Community was awarded £99,958 by The Lottery to build the Trim Trail, Children's Play Area, and Picnic Area. This was match funded with £23,200 by the Parish Council and community fundraising.

In 2011, a £50,000 grant was secured from Sita Trust to build the MUGA. This was match funded with £19,600 by the Parish Council and community fundraising.

In 2011 (amended in 2014), a development application for Angels and Hyde Nurseries was successful and a S106 contribution was agreed (£1,000/dwelling) for the improvement of Murrell's Field. It took 13 years for this agreement to deliver.

In 2013, Barnham Community Hall was completed at a total cost of £1.47m. This was funded by the Parish Council (£1.0m – Land sales and Public Works Loan), grants (£250,000), Community Fundraising (£45,167) and more than 10,120 hours of volunteering.

In 2018, WSCC Operation Watershed awarded a grant of £55,840 for the redevelopment of the carpark as a SuDS component. This was match funded with £18,500 by the Parish Council and community fundraising.

In 2024, the S106 monies (just over £200,000) were finally paid to Barnham and Eastergate Parish Council effectively ring-fenced to undertake drainage and levelling works to improve Murrell's Field. This is the last major item to be completed from the Community Scheme envisioned in the late 1990's and tonight's exhibition is presenting the proposal and the project timeline.

At this time, it is appropriate to thank the many volunteers and staff who have been involved over the last 25 years, particularly a group called Barnham Leisure Amenities Development Executive (BLADE).

Many of the original volunteers are still involved although there are many more new supporters. They have left a significant legacy which is continued to this day.

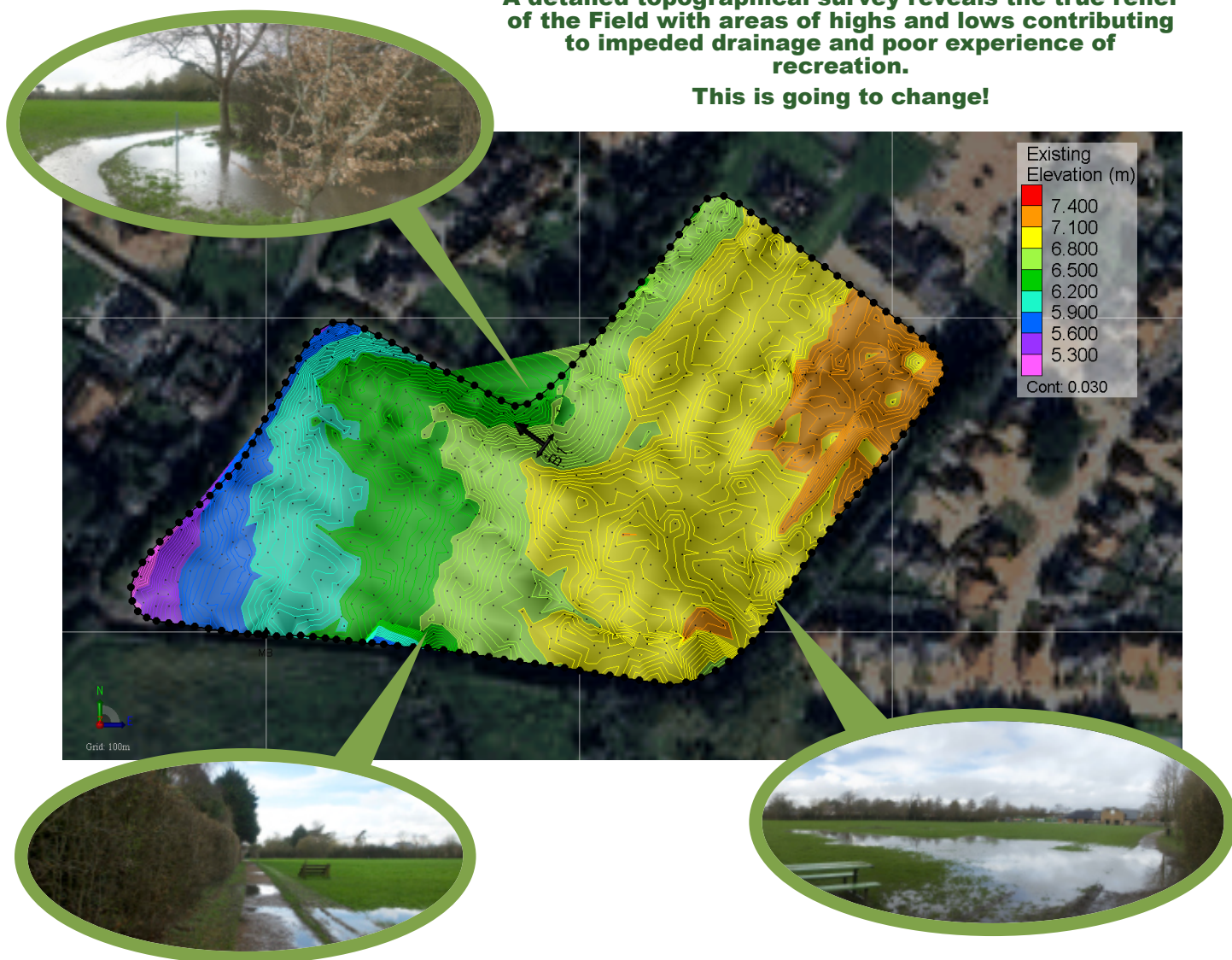


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A detailed topographical survey reveals the true relief of the Field with areas of highs and lows contributing to impeded drainage and poor experience of recreation.

This is going to change!



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PROJECT OVERVIEW

Field Improvement Works Project

In early 2024, the Parish Council established a project team. The original plan assumed the installation of a subsoil drainage system draining to the existing surface water drainage and pipework systems; grading and levelling the whole Field; reseeding; setting out pitches for a wide range of sports and creation of an access path from the former Angels Nursery development to the recreation ground. Given sports facilities elsewhere in the villages and the BEW Strategic Allocation, the original intent to set out formal sports pitches was dropped many years ago.

In terms of the drainage and following engagement with Arun District Council, the original plan required a fundamental rethink to overcome some serious constraints associated with the local drainage conditions and to stay within the budget.

Scope of Works

The scheme is designed to improve the evenness of the surface and minimise pools of water after periods of wet weather. This will improve the safety of the park when used as a general amenity, for informal sports and major events. The scope of works comprises:

✓ **Levelling the Field**

The surface will be stripped of grass and graded to achieve free-flowing contours. Modern technology will follow the major topography and minimise the cut and fill interventions which is more cost-effective and better for the soil structure.

✓ **Improving water storage capacity**

The soil will be improved with sand to facilitate drainage and grass growth.

A 300 mm pipe will be installed in a gravel-filled trench overlain with permeable soil along the western edge of the Field and the surface will be profiled to create a very shallow grassy swale to capture surface runoff and hold more water than the soil on its own.

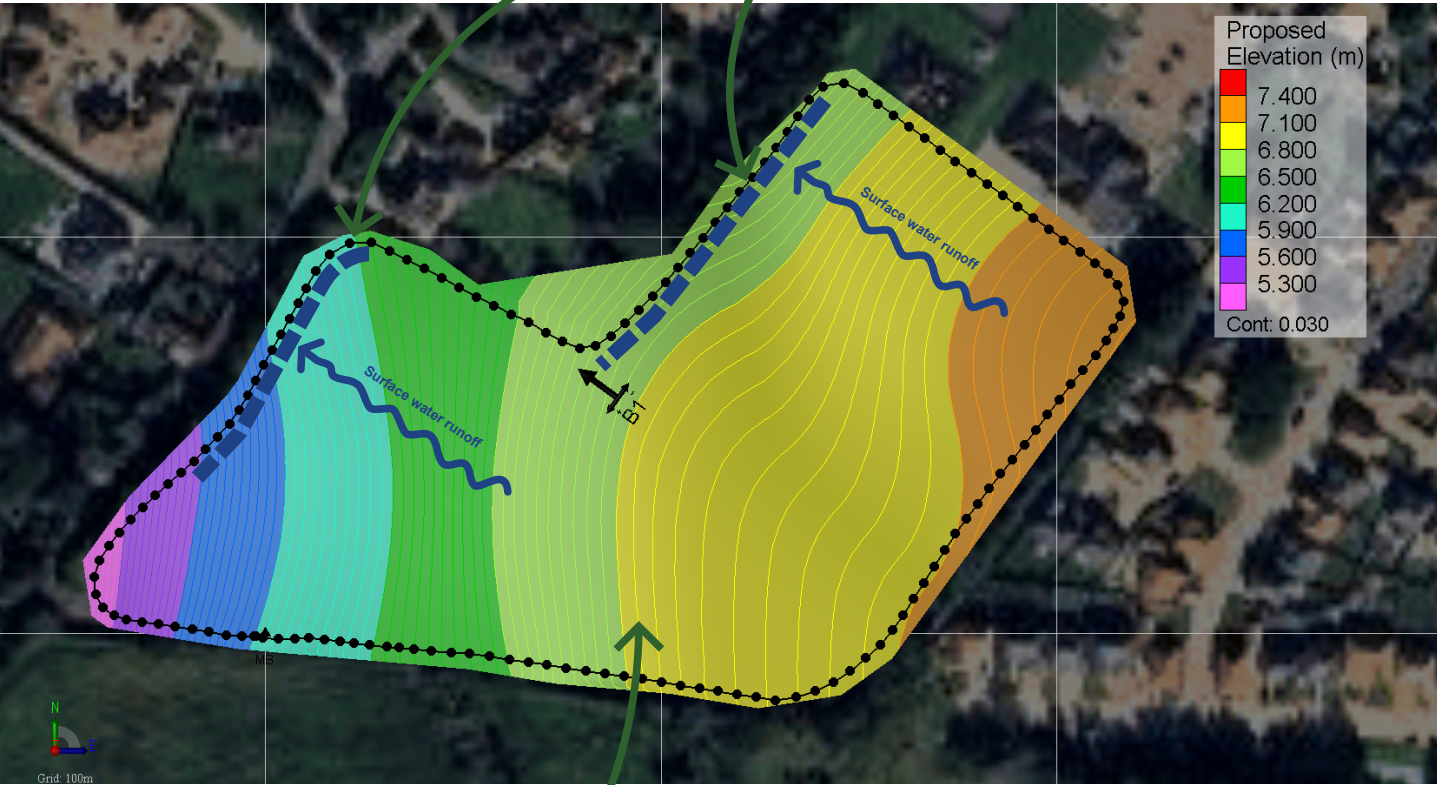
✓ **Recreating the sward**

Following the groundworks, the grass sward will be recreated from seed and maintained for at least six months to achieve optimal quality and condition.



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An underdrained swale will be installed here to catch the runoff at the lower edges of the Field.



The Field will be regraded to smooth and gentle gradients.



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IMPROVEMENT WORKS - STEP BY STEP

- Step 1** The first action will be to spray existing grass with Roundup to kill it off. This will make it more manageable when it comes to its removal. Spraying will be carried out during the week commencing the 11th of August as it needs to be done prior to the start of works. After spraying the Field will be closed for the general public and fenced off. Spraying will only happen if the weather is dry and not too windy so the timing may change slightly.
- Step 2** On the 18th of August, the re-levelling works will start.
- Step 3** The week commencing the 18th August, a site utilities search will be conducted to check the depth and location of services.
- Step 4** The first site operation after spraying will be to scarify the Field to remove the thatch. It should take one day to complete.
- Step 5** The next process will be to rotovate the ground ready for grading. This will be done the same day as scarifying. All the operations above need to be done when the weather is forecasted to be dry for a few days.
- Step 6** The middle of the first week, grading of the playing Field will start with a grader to achieve the new levels. This will remove the highs and lows to prevent water from ponding and to improve drainage of the Field.
- Step 7** During the second week, sand will be applied onto the playing field area and worked into the soil profile to improve surface drainage.
- Step 8** Next will be to remove the compaction created by the grading and levelling process using a 5 leg subsoiler.
- Step 9** Next will be to power harrow the ground ready for stone burying.
- Step 10** A stoneburier will bury the stones that are bigger than 20 mm under the ground.
- Step 11** The ground will be rolled down using the tractor wheels to firm it ready for final trim by a rotor rake.
- Step 12** The ground will be lightly firmed and levelled with the rotor rake.
- Step 13** A perimeter drain will be installed in a shallow swale along the western edge of the Field.
- Step 14** Grass seed will be sown and fertiliser applied.
- Step 15** The construction phase is expected to be completed by mid September 2025, weather permitting.
- Step 16** The safety fencing will be moved so that the north-west path can be opened for the public.
- Step 17** The Field will have a 6-month maintenance programme which consists of mowing, overseeding, fertilising, decompaction work and selective weed control spray.
- Step 18** Handover will be around April/ May 2026 which should allow enough time for the grass to grow in properly. The grass will also be assessed for quality and to see if it is ready for the playing Field to be reopened for the public.



MURRELL'S FIELD IMPROVEMENT WORKS

JARGON BUSTER

A quick guide to some technical terms used:

SuDS (Sustainable Drainage System) – It is an approach to stormwater management that addresses not only the volume (quantity) of water, but also its quality (level of pollution), creates opportunities for wildlife and public amenity. The system can be built from various components, such as water butts, rain gardens, swales, underground tanks or permeable paving, to name a few.

Rotovation – Mechanically breaking up and loosening soil to prepare it for planting or seeding.

Grader - A four metre blade which is pulled behind the tractor. The operation is controlled by GPS which moves the blade up or down automatically to achieve the new levels.

Contours - Lines on a map that connect points of equal elevation, helping to visualize the shape of the land.

Soil amelioration – Improving soil health and structure, often by adding organic material or sand to support healthy plant growth.

Subsoiler – A machine that breaks up compacted layers of soil deep below the surface to improve drainage and root growth. It has heavy, vertical tines called legs attached to the frame that extend down into the soil to break up the compacted layers.

Rotary rake - a machine that uses rotating arms with tines to lift and move hay or to prepare a seed bed for sowing.

Underdrained swale – A shallow, planted channel that helps manage surface water. Hidden pipes underneath help drain excess water slowly and sustainably.

Power harrow – A tool that finely breaks up the top layer of soil, creating an even surface for sowing grass or wildflower seed.

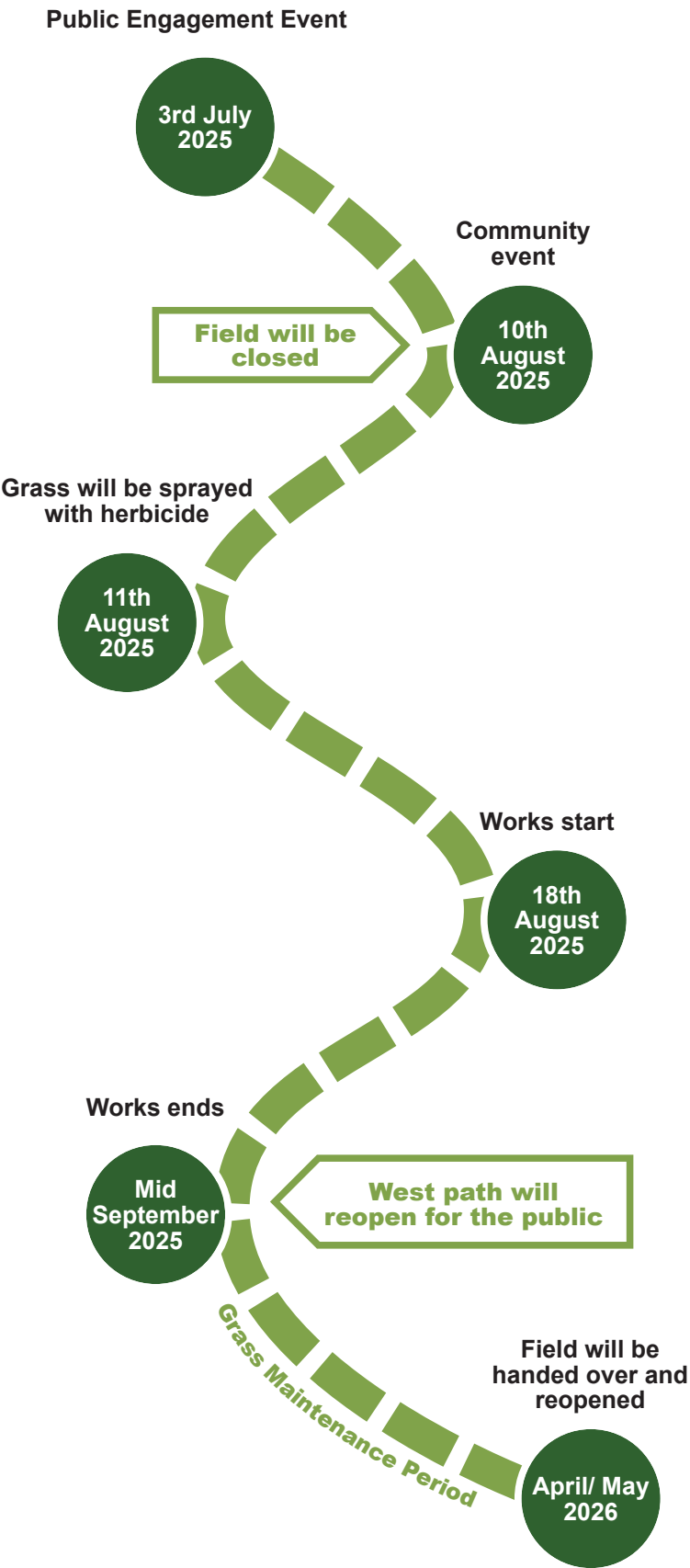
Stoneburier – Equipment that buries stones and debris below the soil surface, creating a clean top layer for planting or turfing.

Overseeding – Spreading new grass seed over existing grassland to improve coverage and biodiversity.



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PROJECT TIMELINE



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MECHANICAL POWER IN ACTION



Grader levelling the ground



Sand spreading to improve drainage



Burying stones to create safe surface



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FIELD CLOSURE ARRANGEMENTS FROM 10TH AUGUST 2025 UNTIL COMPLETION OF GROUNDWORKS

The Field will be closed to all members of the public for several months.

This phase of works may cause a little disruption, but it's an important investment in the long-term future of the village — especially for our younger residents and future generations.



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**FIELD ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS
BETWEEN SEPTEMBER 2025 AND APRIL/ MAY 2026**

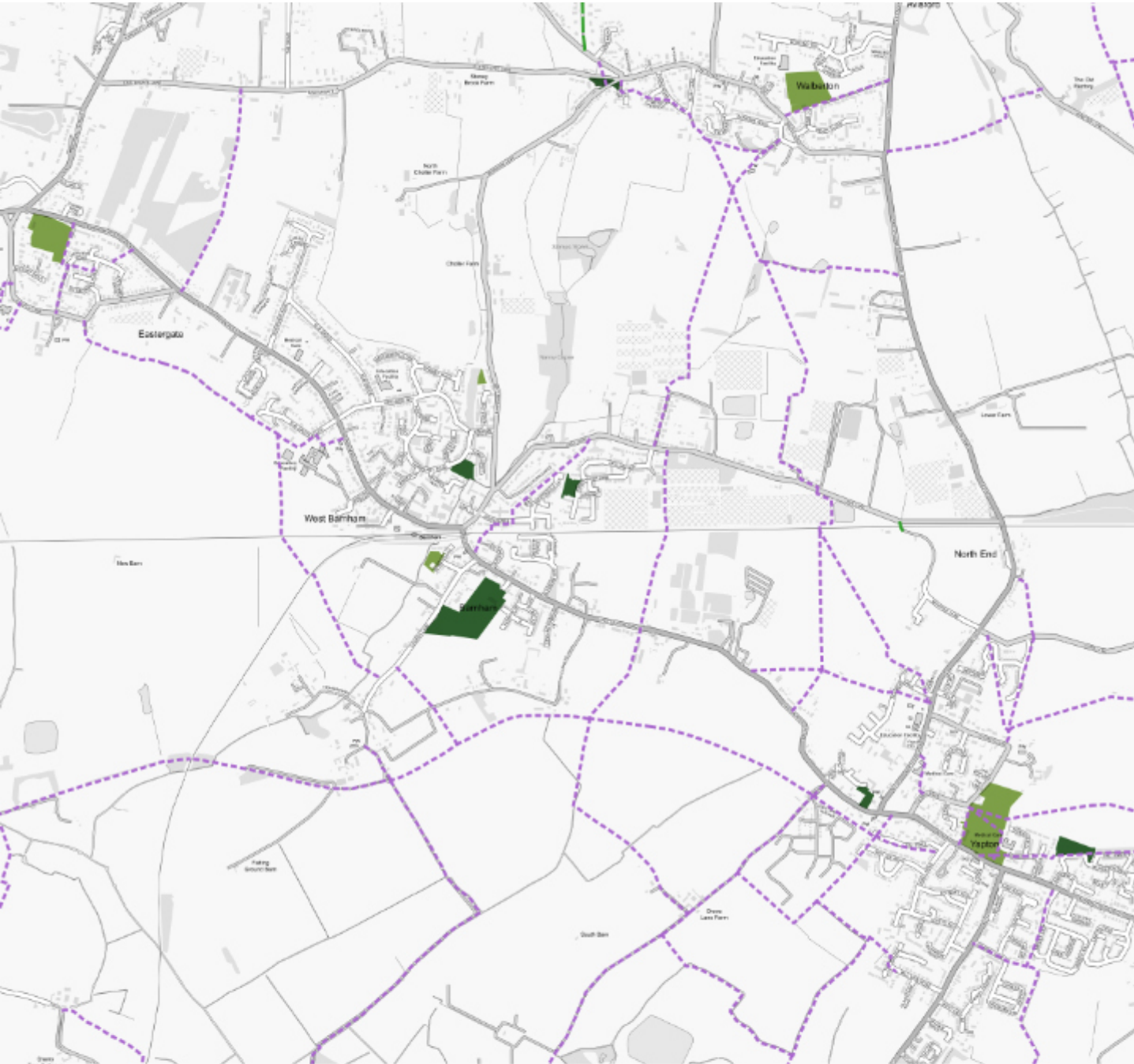


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Local Public Green Spaces and Rights of Way

Alternative walks and opportunities for recreation are at Eastergate Playing Field, Yapton Recreation Ground as well as along the local footpaths and other Public Rights of Way.



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Legend

Public Rights of Way

- BRIDLEWAY
- FOOTPATH

Green Spaces

- Playing Field
- Public Park or Garden



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LET'S STAY IN TOUCH

When the Field reopens, we're committed to making the most of it. A programme of community events is already being planned for 2026, including the Mayfair, MAMF, a summer community event and relaxed summer evenings on a hopefully refurbished patio area. We're also in the early stages of planning for new outdoor gym equipment, following feedback from local users.

There are plenty of exciting ideas already in motion - but there is still room to get involved. If you are interested in helping out with events or supporting future recreational activities, we would love to hear from you.

If you would like to lend a hand in the future use of the Field, leave your contact details or speak to a member of the Parish Team today.



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