



THE UPDATED RECREATION STRATEGY FOR CRINGLEFORD PARISH

NOVEMBER 2025

Cringleford is an attractive area for housing to many people. It is close to employment opportunities in Norwich, the Norfolk and Norwich Hospital, UEA and nearby scientific institutes. It is no longer a separate village and is part of the Norwich urban fringe. It does, however, retain several attractive characteristics of its rural past and residents value these highly. Cringleford's population is continuing to expand with several hundred new homes scheduled to be completed within the next few years, that will add substantially to increased demand for recreational opportunities. The Parish Council wants to ensure that sufficient and appropriate recreational opportunities are provided alongside the housing developments.

The Council first agreed a Recreation Strategy in 2021. This document is an updating of that original work and looks forward to the next five to ten years in terms of provision and needs for recreational and amenity facilities.

The 2021 Strategy has proved a significant success with considerable additional planned recreational facilities provided to the parish. The original plan for St Giles Park included provision of an area for football together with a small changing facility. Funding was sourced, using the strategy, to create a new sports hall, The Jubilee Centre (TJC). There is a woodland walk with play options accessible to disabled children at The Willow Centre (TWC) field, and the attractive Jubilee Garden (TJG) on Lobelia Lane. Outstanding projects to be completed are a proposed pump track requested by young parishioners and a multi-use games area (MUGA), both to be sited near TWC. The pump track is due for installation during 2026. Funding for the potential MUGA is to be sourced.

1. A statement of the aims, objectives and scope of the strategy

The overall objective of the strategy is to support widespread participation in sporting and outdoor activities by the community.

Within this overall objective, specific activities are defined which will need the Parish Council to continue to work with the Local Community, South Norfolk Council (SNC) Planning, and with various developers to ensure that adequate access is made available as the community expands.

The scope of this strategy covers:

- Formal team sports: field sports: cricket, tennis, football etc; court sports: netball, basketball etc.
- Individual competitive sports: competition and club cycling and running
- Individual outdoor activities: walking, recreational cycling, play areas

- Adventure activities: orienteering, nature walks (linked to our evolving Environment Strategy), scouting/guiding
- Indoor activities for all ages: to include dancing, self-defence and indoor ball and racquet sports.

2. Current use of recreation and amenity facilities

The Parish Council has in place a wide range of recreational facilities which have been built up over the years. With respect to team sporting activities, football has well developed playing fields and changing rooms at the St Giles Park and the Recreation Ground (RG), where tennis has an active club, along with cricket and football. TWC and the Pavilion are widely used by a range of clubs and groups. TJC caters for badminton, pickleball, 5-a-side and group interests such as dance. The recreation ground (RG) and the green area around TWC are well used for dog walking (and leisure walking), cycling for young children, and general ball games. A proposed pump track will add safe but interesting active cycling options for all ages. All the new developments have modest playgrounds for children.

St Giles Park will include a significant area which will not be used for housing. Current plans from the developer include landscaping, footpaths and a community orchard. Other developers have provided modest sites for community orchards, but limited provision for allotments or significant areas for walking. Plans for Phase Two Cringleford Heights include green space, orchards, and play space.

3. Existing and Programmed Recreation and Amenity Facilities

1. Cringleford Heights

- An orchard – transferred to CPC management 2025
- A 20-plot allotment – transferred to CPC management 2025
- A 'green corridor' under the power cables
- Three play areas, adopted by CPC 2025
- A further allotment space (with approx. 20 plots) and play area towards the A47 end of the development
- A circular walk around the development's perimeter

2. Roundhouse Gate

- Four Local Area Play spaces
- One Local Equipment Area Play space
- A 'green corridor' under the power cables

3. Cringleford Woods and Marshes, Gurney Lane

Plans to develop a green recreation space; a woodland board walk to the River Yare; and an additional bridge over the River Yare. These plans are currently on hold pending clarification of site purchase and funding

4. Roundhouse Park

- Three fenced play areas: Dragonfly Lane; The Pines; Almond Drive
- Tree lined walkway – Oriole Drive/Holly Walk
- Open spaces: Holly Walk; Dragonfly Lane; Fern Drive
- TJG – a small climate-resilient reflection garden with seating on Lobelia Lane
- Dragonfly Lane exercise and play areas inc. table tennis
- Four ‘planters’

5. The Willow Centre (Roundhouse Park)

- Four quadrant spaces available for hire for classes, events and meetings
- Bistro area and kitchen
- Bike repair station
- EV charging points (run by NCC)

6. The Willow Centre Field

- Woodland walk & part-accessible activity trail
- One Play area including
- Zip wire
- Three open air seats
- One roofed open air seating area
- Pump track due to be installed, pending planning permission
- Potential space for a MUGA

7. Newmarket Road/Village Green

- The Church Hall [not a CPC facility]: available for hire for community events, clubs/societies such as pre-school group, and luncheon club for older people. Seating up to approximately 60 with kitchen
- The Patteson Rooms [not a CPC facility]: a member’s club for snooker and outdoor bowls; a room for hire for classes/adult parties. Seating up to 80; kitchen
- Village Green: Village sign and two outdoor seats

8. The Ridings

- Small grassed open space with trees

9. The Recreation Ground

- A 10-acre open space mostly mowed grass area with woodland to the boundaries. The woodland to the North and East overlooks the Yare Valley, abundant with wildlife & biodiversity.
- An unmetalled track access to the Scouts hut
- The Pavillion – an indoor space available for hire from CPC for groups/events/parties. Can accommodate up to 60 seated. Changing rooms. Kitchen
- Tennis courts – space for tennis courts are leased to Cringleford Tennis Club from CPC. Four hard courts and a small club house are available for members. Non-members can book courts if not being already reserved by members.

- The Scout Hut – leased from CPC to 1st Cringleford Scout Group. A club house and additional open space enclosed by a wire fence and locked gates for Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Explorers and Guides
- Car Parking for approximately 50 cars including some reserved permit parking
- Fenced off play area for younger children
- Three football pitches
- One basketball hoop with hard standing ‘bounce’ area
- Seven open air seats – two by the tennis courts
- A zip wire through the wooded area adjacent to the Scout Hut

10. The Jubilee Centre and associated playing fields

- Two bookable indoor courts for badminton, netball, basketball and pickle ball
- Changing rooms and kitchen
- Junior football pitches
- Cringleford Crackerjacks Nursery
- Fenced play area
- EV charging points (run by CPC)

11. St Giles Park

- Small play area
- Orchard
- Footpaths, green space planting – grasses, shrubs, trees

12. Armitage Close

- Small grassed open space with trees

4. Expressed Demand for additional or enhanced facilities through the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation

The Parish Council has been updating the Local Neighbourhood Plan. The consultation with the community with respect to the plan shows the following priorities:

- Preservation of green spaces in Cringleford (rated as important by 95% of respondents – 118 responses of a total of 124)
- Improved infrastructure to encourage safe walking, cycling and use of public transport (rated as important by 94% of respondents – 117 of 124)
- Development that is environmentally sustainable (rated as important by 88% of respondents – 109 of 124).
- Four of the top five priorities for the future, were recreation and amenity issues
 - Improvements for wildlife
 - New/improved footpaths
 - Children’s play area and equipment
 - Maintaining existing sports facilities and/or providing more

The top three options in order of preference for use of Community Infrastructure Levy were:

1. Road safety improvements e.g. pedestrian crossing points
2. Improvements for wildlife
3. New/improved footpaths

The preceding review shows that Cringleford now has a good range of sports and club facilities which are popular and well used. Beyond a programme of careful maintenance (and improvements where necessary) of existing recreational infrastructure, and completing the planned pump track and MUGA, no further major development of formal sporting facilities is envisioned in this strategy.

There is a major unmet demand for **allotments** which is not adequately catered for within Cringleford. On the other hand, more allotments will intrude further into the limited green space available (and for which there is also a significant demand). The strategy will discuss options for addressing this dilemma.

The overall standard of **children's playgrounds** is mixed. We will suggest enhanced requirements for playgrounds based on actual examples in developments within Norwich and elsewhere. These may be introduced as equipment in existing playgrounds is replaced and serve as models for discussion with future developers.

The existing green sites within Cringleford are evidently attractive and widely used. They also serve to preserve aspects of the rural heritage of Cringleford. Perhaps within areas zoned for housing the council could define pockets of 'heritage sites' (clumps of old trees, hedges, old ponds and wet sites). Working with agencies such as Norfolk Wildlife Trust and the Yare Valley Society will be essential.

This strategy is linked to, and informed by, the council's Road Safety Strategy, the evolving Environment Strategy and renewed Neighbourhood Plan for defined and safe walking and cycling routes both within Cringleford and the wider regional walking and cycling network.

Section 5. Proposed Action Items

- Completion of the 2021 strategy
This will involve primarily the completion of the proposed pump track and MUGA
- Allotments and Orchards
Options will be explored for both increasing availability of allotments to alleviate the evident shortage and to use these facilities to enhance interaction between the parish council and the overall community.
- Play areas
There is a significant consensus that the existing play areas are not particularly interesting to children and that fairly modest changes to their design would improve

their attractiveness to children and reduce vandalism. Options will be suggested to introduce such improvements in existing and future play areas.

- Maintenance of, and improvements to, existing sports facilities
Resources will need to be devoted to keeping, and where necessary, enhancing the standard of those sporting venues which have been created.
- Green space management and development
Close liaison with planners and developers is needed to try to preserve **green spaces** for nature and for informal recreation. This will include creating niches for wildlife in new and existing buildings and infrastructure.

Recreation and Amenities Group
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