

## Report from Stoke Utd:

- We continue to thrive with just under 300 children playing local football across 19 teams thanks in no small part to the continued support from the PC. The foundation years up to, and including, U10's play all their football matches on the Playing Field.
- The pitches have held up well this season in large part to a stroke of luck with regard to the pitch works last summer which were delayed. The grass seed went in quite late due a funding issue at National FA level. This meant the seed had not germinated when the drought hit. The net result was that when rain did arrive in September, the seed that had laid dormant in the ground germinated. All old grass has died, and what is now there is entirely the new sports grass. Nearly every other pitch which had works carried out lost all the new growth.
- We have THREE further years of Pitch Improvements programmed. The aim would be to re-seed and treat the goalmouth areas in the same way as last season around the end of April. There is no requirement to keep the public off or to fence it off. The Club will not play on it for a few weeks after that to allow the new growth to thrive.
- Our contractor Tim marks the pitches every two weeks, This could do with being co-ordinated with any grass cutting as it is obviously best to mark the pitches **AFTER** any cut.
- We are not aware of any other issues wrt the pitches beyond monitoring when they are cut. This year because it was so mild, the grass kept growing beyond the expected time. We would request that this provision is built into any contract for future grass cutting to ensure the grass is always playable.
- Sincere thanks to Sandy and anyone else who cut them by hand!