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Fw: Thanington Recreation Ground

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From: Lisa Ashdown [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, October 8, 2025 10:31 am
To: Mel Dawkins [REDACTED]
Subject: Thanington Recreation Ground

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I am writing to you today to impart my views on the plans to destroy Thanington recreational ground to use it as a park and ride site.

I'm sure you're already aware that the recreation ground has been in situ for 95 years. I'm sure you're also aware that the recreation ground is the only green space amenity in the parish. I'm sure that you're aware of its popularity, it's very high frequency of use and of its natural beauty.

What you may not be aware of is its heart.

To anyone driving past, its just a playing field, a children's play area and a community centre. It could just as easily be a concrete car park. I'm going to try and explain to you, through my own experiences and first hand knowledge, exactly what this area means to me and the community it belongs to.

I think its important to impart now that I have never lived in Thanington. I grew up in Chartham and now live in Whitstable but the Thanington Resource Centre, the recreation ground and the Thanington community have been a part of my life for the last 20 years.

For 10 years, I was a volunteer dog training instructor on the recreation grounds. Every Sunday morning, I would train owners and their dogs from the local community and beyond. The impact of this was far reaching. I won't go into all the benefits of a well trained dog within a community, that is pretty self explanatory. However, I will tell you how this benefited the owners.

Many dog owners attend training because they cannot control their dog. They are anxious, stressed, fearful of consequences etc and training is often the final option before giving up their pet.

Do you know what they found when they first arrived at the recreation ground?

A beautiful, green, open space surrounded by trees and hedgerow. A community centre providing seating, tea and coffee.

They found a large group of people smiling, laughing, socialising and supporting each other. They were welcomed as if they have always belonged there.

They got to train their dogs in the most beautiful, safe setting whilst making new friends.

I also volunteered for a local dog rescue for over 10 years and the recreation ground provided a safe place for the dogs in my care.