

# Marlborough Town Council

---



8 October 2024

To: Councillors serving on the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee – Councillors Mark Cooper (Chair), Kelvyn Shantry (Vice Chair), Lisa Farrell, Mark Lusson, Susannah O'Brien, Andrew Ross, James Sheppard, Emily Trow and the Town Mayor Councillor Kym-Marie Cleasby

Dear Councillor

## Amenities & Open Spaces Committee

You are **summoned** to attend the next meeting of the **Amenities and Open Spaces Committee** which will be held in the **Council Chamber, Marlborough Town Hall** on **Monday, 14 October 2024** at **7.00pm**.

Yours sincerely

*Richard Spencer-Williams*

Richard Spencer-Williams, PSLCC

**Town Clerk**

---

If members of the public wish to attend and ask a question they should notify the Town Clerk of this by noon on the day of the meeting and provide their question in writing at the same time.

If members of the public wish to ask a question, but not attend, they can provide the question in writing to the Town Clerk by noon on the day of the meeting, and a written response will be provided.

---

## PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

In accordance with Standing Order 3(f), members of the public may ask questions of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee. The time allocated for this should not exceed 10 minutes and be limited to one question per person unless directed otherwise by the Chair. A full response may not be possible without further research, and the Chair may direct that a written or oral response be given.

## AGENDA

- 1. Apologies for Absence**
- 2. Declarations of Interest**  
To receive any declarations of interest or requests for dispensation
- 3. Chair's Announcements**
- 4. Minutes**  
To approve and sign the minutes of the meetings held 17 June and 15 July 2024
- 5. Action Log**  
To receive an update on the Action Log
- 6. Stonebridge Meadow**  
To review the Stonebridge Meadow agreement
- 7. College Fields and Barton Park Bench Request**  
To consider a proposal to plant trees received from College Fields and Barton Park Residents Association
- 8. Grounds Manager's Report**  
To note and consider the Grounds Manager's Report
- 9. Tree Report**  
To note the report on the Council's trees
- 10. Workshop Extension**  
To receive a verbal update on the workshop extension
- 11. Cemetery Extension**  
To receive an update on the consultation plan
- 12. Biodiversity Report and Plan**  
To note and consider the Biodiversity Plan for the Council's estate
- 13. Victorian Cemetery Project**  
To note and consider the project plan for the Victorian Cemetery and Arboretum
- 14. Finance Report**  
To note and consider the Committees Finance Report for month 5

**15. Budget 2025 26**

To consider the Committee's priorities and budget requirements for 2025 26

**16. Allotments**

To consider the Town Clerk's report on Stonebridge Allotments, and receive a verbal update report from Cllr Luson

**17. Cemetery Report**

- i. To note any Grants of Exclusive Rights of Burial issued
- ii. To note any recently approved Memorials and Inscriptions

**18. Memorial Benches**

To consider requests for memorial benches

To approve and sign the minutes of the meetings held 17 June and 15 July 2024

## Marlborough Town Council



### Amenities and Open Spaces Committee

Minutes of a meeting of the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee held Monday, 17 June 2024 in the Council Chamber, Marlborough Town Hall at 7pm

---

<b>PRESENT</b>	Councillor Mark Cooper	Chair
	Councillor Kym-Marie Cleasby	Town Mayor
	Councillor Andrew Ross	
	Councillor Lisa Farrell	
	Councillor Mark Luson	
	Councillor Susannah O'Brien	
	Councillor Kelvyn Shantry	
	Richard Spencer-Williams	Town Clerk
	Dawn Whitehall	Corporate Services Officer
<b>ALSO</b>		
<b>PRESENT</b>	Neil Goodwin	Marlborough.News
	Anna Forbes	Action for the River Kennet (ARK)
	Eleven members of the public	

---

The Chair welcomed all those present to the first meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces (A&OS) Committee of 2024-25.

#### PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

**Stewart Dobson (resident and former Councillor)** asked whether the Chair intended to suspend Standing Orders at agenda item 6 (Stonebridge Meadow) so that interested members of the public could comment. The **Chair** confirmed that he would.

**Neil Goodwin (Marlborough.News)** – referred to an agreement from February 2021 to use Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funds for the creation of a new footpath joining Salisbury Road to the Old Railway Path via the 'sheep ramp' which was now very overgrown. He asked for an update on funding and plans. The **Town Clerk** would investigate and reply as appropriate.

**Sue Round (resident)** – a nearby resident of Stonebridge Meadow (Sue emphasised that she was not representing Marlborough.News or asking as a dog-walker or a member of ARK). Her question was why there was a question over how

Stonebridge Meadow was being managed to provide “open access amenity land”? From her point of view this prize-winning area was used extensively by people of all ages, including visitors to the town. The Town Council and ARK were doing a good job in facilitating this and the status quo should continue. She would like the Town Council to take the following into account in their deliberations:

The meadow is a water meadow and is soggy and marshy for much of the year – so not suitable for ball games. The football field and designated Elcot Lane village green area is adjacent and the Recreation Ground not far away for these activities

There are already benches, wheelchair accessible riverside board walk, beach areas (used extensively by families in the summer), seating areas on logs, defined walks, paths cut through long grass in summer, snakes head fritillaries in the spring, bird feeders with screen to watch and identify them ARK encourage many different groups to use the area and educate us about wildlife – 2,000+ children last year, bat and moth walks, over 400 volunteers The area provides habitat for many rare and declining species e.g. water voles,

harvest mice

Picnic tables would not be in keeping with the area and would encourage graffiti and litter. Closely mown grass would destroy valuable wildlife habitats

Let’s remember this is a prize-winning nature reserve, a haven for nature with proven wellbeing effects for us. We need to keep it as such, not try to turn it into a sterile park. The **Chair** thanked her for the question. Her comments would be taken into consideration when Members discussed agenda item 6.

**Val Compton (resident)** - Within, and on the doorstep of Marlborough, there are no less than 10 places where you can play, picnic or just be. Do we really need to sacrifice even one inch of the thriving, much loved and beautiful water meadow that we know as Stonebridge Wild River Reserve? By this council showing respect and genuinely valuing the river, the meadow and all the creatures living there, they could lead the way on the importance of protecting nature. Residents of Marlborough, many of whom access Stonebridge regularly, will then see that this council, alongside ARK, are prepared to be the guardians of such wild treasure. Our future generations will hopefully take notice and also learn how to respect and love nature, which in these times, is such an important lesson. She therefore asked again “ Do we really need to sacrifice even one inch of the thriving, much loved and beautiful water meadow that we know as Stonebridge Wild River Reserve?”

The **Chair** thanked her for the question. Her comments would be taken into consideration when Members discussed agenda item 6.

**Bronwyn Brown (Allotment Association)** asked whether members would discuss the Stonebridge allotment site at the meeting. The **Chair** appreciated there were issues at that site: while there was a general update about allotments on the

agenda, a specific discussion about the Stonebridge site was not. He agreed that an agenda item would be added to the next meeting.

**59/24 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence had been received from **Councillors Sheppard** and **Trow**.

**60/24 DECLARATIONS**

**Councillors Cooper** and **Luson** – agenda item 14 (Allotments) – non-pecuniary.

**61/24 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The **Chair** referred to a recent incident where a driver leaving the car park at the Community & Youth Centre car park had smashed into and damaged a wall. The police had made a positive identification and would be conducting an interview with the driver. This reinforced the Committee's decision to install a car park barrier.

**62/24 MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the meeting held 15 April 2024 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair

**63/24 ACTION LOG**

Members noted the updated action log.

**Councillor Farrell** asked whether the CCTV cameras at the Community & Youth Centre required renewal or cleaning, and whether police were able to use the images to identify car registrations or individuals. The **Town Clerk** confirmed that the police had used it to gather the details of a recent incident where a vehicle had damaged a wall; he would check whether the cameras required cleaning. Better CCTV coverage, possibly in liaison with the police, could be considered as part of the work arising from a decision by Members at the previous meeting to review the entire CCTV system.

A partnership meeting had taken place earlier in the day with Wiltshire Police; it had been agreed that they would be keyholders for the new Community & Youth Centre car park barrier for their use as/if required. Members also noted arrangements being put in place to communicate with local residents about the change in parking arrangements once the barrier was installed after the wall had been repaired. A non-confrontational approach coupled with clear signage and ongoing communication would be adopted.

**64/24 STONEBRIDGE MEADOW**

The **Chair** appreciated that people felt passionate about Stonebridge Meadow and so, prior to Members discussing the agenda item, he invited all interested attendees to speak and asked everyone to listen respectfully to others who may have different views.

During a Suspension of Standing Orders attendees put forward their points of view:

**Marian Hannaford Dobson (resident and former Councillor)** read out a letter she had submitted prior to the meeting:

“While congratulating ARK on the management of the river Kennet and their work with local school children invited to the river, I do have some concerns about the meadow. Please, when you are debating the Agreement with ARK could you bear in mind that Marlborough Town Council own 51% of the meadow and ARK the other 49%. Marlborough Town Council invested over £75,000 of its resident’s money to buy their share of the meadow with the precise aim to provide Amenity Land for the inhabitants of Marlborough and also contributes £5,000 per year towards the upkeep of the meadow.

ARK produce a Management Plan each year which I know the Town Council scrutinise and sometimes make minor changes to. Sadly, it would seem that for many years the objectives and vision that has gone forward is almost all those of ARK. I am not criticising Town Councillors for this, with so many other Town issues to consider it is easy to “Rubber Stamp” a Plan. As a former Town Councillor myself I know how this can happen.

I feel the issue which must be addressed is very clear. There are at least fifteen acres at Stonebridge Meadow. Currently it seems that ARK has total control of each and every section of the meadow. Surely this is a little one-sided? Marlborough Town Council on behalf of the residents of Marlborough are 51% partners in the control and management of the meadow and must put forward their own vision and objectives.

When the purchase of Stonebridge Meadow was first considered by the Town Council in 2011 lots of ideas were put forward to persuade Councillors to contribute to the cost of the land. The overriding point made was that it would provide Amenity Land that would enable residents to enjoy seats for the elderly and infirm to look at the river, picnic tables for families, grass areas for parents to play ball games, a games field and importantly an extended river walk for everyone to enjoy. Sadly, to date this has not happened. Not even a disabled entrance to the meadow. (It was interesting to note that the recent Neighbourhood Plan highlighted the lack of playing fields in the town.) Instead, we have a Wetland on the Amenity Land where the children’s play area should be. The elderly and infirm are not catered for and it is impossible for anyone using a wheelchair or walking aid to enter the meadow. There is nothing to facilitate or encourage young families to make individual visits to the meadow. It is also impossible to see most of the river as it has been fenced off on most of the meadow with often massive thickets of brambles and undergrowth sometimes up to twenty metre wide. What good is it being told that the river is beautiful and teeming with wildlife if nobody can see it?

I do feel that the residents of Marlborough are being short changed and not getting value for their initial investment of £75,000 and the ongoing maintenance cost of £5,000. Added together over the last fourteen years it amounts to a considerable sum.

Surely with fifteen acres of land at Stonebridge Meadow there must be room for a balance between meeting the aims and objectives of ARK and the need and responsibilities of the Town Council to provide the Amenity Land which was the reason why the Town Council made their 51% contribution in the first place and is clearly shown on the original Deed of Trust.

I believe this is what a Partnership should mean.”

**Richard Pitts (resident and former Councillor)** rejected Mrs Hannaford-Dobson’s points about disabled access, stating that there were areas with access points for the disabled and wheelchair users at both sides of the meadow to allow disabled persons to enjoy the amenity. Also:

When buying the land, one of the drivers had initially been to prevent further building which was a potential possibility long before the climate crisis which now gives the potential for flooding in all parts of the town

One of the ways of dealing with the potential of flooding is to have natural wetland areas such as Stonebridge Meadow which can accommodate floodwater and prevent it causing further damage to the town

As a member of the community, he was delighted to see the way the Town Council works with ARK in an agreed management plan that looks after Stonebridge Meadow on everyone’s behalf

When he was a Councillor it had been understood that the Council’s slightly bigger percentage ownership he recalled was put in place to ensure that, should ARK unfortunately close, the council would have a controlling interest and so be able to retain the open space for the town and the ARK share did not get sold to a developer

He wanted to set the record quite straight, saying that we have plenty of play areas, plenty of picnic areas and there was nothing to prevent people laying a picnic blanket down and enjoying a picnic at Stonebridge Meadow and the seats that had been put in were a very adequate alternative for people who were not able to sit on the ground – he believed the balance was right.

**Stewart Dobson:**

Like Mr Pitts, he had also been involved at the time of the purchase. The deed of trust clearly states the purpose for ARK to further its charitable objectives, which is fine. The trouble is that they have done that over the whole 15 acres. It also says that it is for the Town Council (which had put forward its £75,000) to provide much needed amenity land and sadly if you look at the definition of amenity land it doesn’t fit quite with what is there. He found it hard to understand why, when we’ve got 15 acres, the balance seems to be ARK doing what it set out to do which they were entitled to, certainly in the deed of trust in their 49% but he didn’t think they were able



to do that in the 51% without the agreement of the Town Council. He urged the Town Council to look at its responsibility (very different to ARK) and respectfully suggested it had not been meeting its requirement to provide amenity land.

A member of the public had already said they were quite happy with the land as it was at the moment. He would say there are people in the town who were not necessarily as happy and he urged Members to look at this and try to meet, as best they could, what everyone would like to see there. He would hate to see it come to a state where ARK had to take its 49% and the Town Council its 51%

He asked Members to consider setting up a user group to feed in information to the Town Council to discuss with ARK. It had worked well in Mr Dobson's time for Marlborough Common

Over the last 14 years he felt the original intention to provide amenity land had not happened and hoped a compromise could be found

### **Anna Forbes (ARK):**

Reminded everyone that the Stonebridge Meadow Management plan is a joint plan, it is not ARK's management plan. The plan was a collaboration between ARK and the Town Council. There may be more ideas in it from ARK, but the Council agreed with those ideas, and nothing has been railroaded through.

There has been a Stonebridge Meadow Management Committee (SMMC) in place since the beginning. The deed of trust says there should be 2 representatives from each party (at one point that had risen to 3 each). Meetings are held quarterly, planned from one meeting to the next to make sure everyone is free to put the date in their diary and aim for full attendance

The above means there are equal partners in a multi award-winning, successful project

It is not about ARK taking control – every significant new feature is agreed.

- For example, the wetland area is a significant feature, and it had to be agreed by the Town Council before it was put in, and the wetland area is, in itself, an amenity for the public. She appreciated that 20 people might like it, 20 might not... but it isn't taking anything away, it something that people of all ages can enjoy.

By putting the wetland in, ARK had installed recycled boardwalk (all from ARK funding) to create accessible entry; other examples of ARK significant funding were that its volunteers had recently added two ramps to make the entry more friendly to people with mobility aids or with buggies. It was doing what it could to be as inclusive as possible within the constraints of the site being a water meadow. When the meadow dries out it is far more accessible to all.

There are benches that had been put in specifically because elderly residents asked for benches with backs and arms; the most recent one was installed over the winter

There was now far more accessible access than at the time of purchase.

There is less riverside fencing than when the land was purchased.  
When **Mrs Forbes** was on site last week she could still see the river.  
Access points had been created by ARK's volunteers for people to be able to get into and experience the river

The reason we have Britain's fastest declining mammal, the water vole, thriving in the Kennet at Cooper's Meadow and at Stonebridge – which we as a town should be proud of, and which is extinct in other parts of the country - is because of the bankside vegetation

Regular free events are arranged for children and for adults

Out of the 400 volunteers now with ARK, over 200 volunteers regularly contribute to looking after Stonebridge, which saves ARK and the council a huge amount. Many are very skilled, carrying out maintenance and other tasks, for example extending the boardwalk that is far into the meadow, putting in ramps and notice boards. The volunteers, adults, are very much part of this community and get a great deal of pleasure from looking after and nurturing the area.

**Sue Round** added some comments to those raised earlier in the meeting:

Her neighbours have several young children, and they spend a lot of time there especially in the summer; paddling in the river, having picnics by the river

Every time she walks round there are often parents or grandchildren there

There are other outside activities other than ball games. A space like that is very exciting for young children – imaginative, adventurous play such as hide and seek. There are lots of things young children can do other than play with balls

There is a boardwalk running all along the river where you get a clear view of it

**Mrs Hannaford-Dobson** asked why we are not allowed to look at our own river. If you go to any other town (e.g. Trowbridge, Oxford, Hungerford) you see seats beside the river. Here people were not allowed to go and look at their own river. She refuted **Sue Round's** response, pointing out the boardwalk that runs alongside the river on the allotment side, because it is on land ARK leases is not within the Stonebridge Meadow site, was therefore nothing to do with this meeting; it belongs to someone else.

**Judy Pitts (resident)** also emphasised that people could still walk along the boardwalk and see the river; people could admire the river from the bridge. She reminded people that there used to be seating at the end of the boardwalk on the allotment side of the river. There was a lot of antisocial behaviour and vandalism – the bench was even set on fire. It had to be removed because young people were using the area unacceptably. Prior to this people could walk along the river and use a nice quiet seating area beside the river but unfortunately it had to be removed.

**Anna Forbes:** although people say it isn't part of this discussion, the boardwalk is only the other side of the river so although it is a piece of land ARK leases, most people who are not on the Council or from ARK view the whole area as one and the same, collectively known as Stonebridge Wild River Reserve which is what was agreed by the Council on the plans. ARK invests three times (*as much money*) in the whole area; sadly, benches had to be recycled because of vandalism but ARK had invested a lot of money in them.

**Stewart Dobson** felt that many years ago the river had been far more accessible. His point was that the Town Council obligations were different to those of ARK; the Town Council has a responsibility to the general public – ARK has a responsibility to its members.

**Richard Pitts** reiterated that there was a management plan in place, a management committee with two members from each party: a joint partnership in managing the meadow, which was how it should be controlled, by agreement in that meeting, and anything else was irrelevant. If people understand ecology they will know that you have to have vegetation margins to make water vole habitat viable.

**Neil Goodwin:** raised practical questions

Water meadows have a purpose. Luckily there are water meadows further upstream (e.g. Lockeridge, East Kennet) that took a lot of the water in the recent floods – without them Marlborough would have been hit far harder. If you try to build water meadows into something else, where will the water go?

Questioned what might happen to picnic tables or amenity furniture if they were installed. The area wasn't overlooked by houses – it was an area where antisocial behaviour could thrive, with a risk of the same type of behaviour that resulted in the removal of the seating area from the opposite bank of the river.

**Val Compton** asked Members to bear in mind that they should not just be thinking about a small amenity area; the whole 15 acres is an amenity for the general public and visitors to the town. It is well used: an amenity for the public that was enjoyed by the public. She had looked up all the definitions of 'amenity' before the meeting: we have a 15-acre amenity that is accessible to anybody at any time of the day.

**Stewart Dobson** did not like to correct Mr Goodwin, but his view was that water meadows were called water meadows because they were flooded twice a year to allow grazing by animals; taking flood water was secondary

*Some people took issue with this comment: the Chair asked them to agree to differ*

It was important that there has been a SMMC, but he wondered whether perhaps it had not always been arranged as well as it could be. For example, he believed it had originally been agreed that the Chair of SMMC should be a Town

Councillor. The Town Council's two representatives have a duty to make sure the views of residents are taken into account, and he hoped his suggestion of a user group would be considered.

**The Chair** thanked everyone for the questions, their comments and their courtesy in listening to those who may have different views from themselves. The amount of people present was testimony to how many people cared about our open spaces albeit they may have different views, which was always a positive way to move forward.

After Standing Orders were reinstated the Chair gave Members the opportunity to comment before moving on to debate the **Town Clerk's** report and recommendation (*summarised here*):

*"Background: At the last Committee meeting the Stonebridge Meadow Management Agreement was reviewed. At this meeting the Committee resolved to:*

*(i) to ask the Town Council's representatives at the Stonebridge Meadow Management Committee to take forward the A&OS Committee's request for an increase in recreational space and a better view of the river*

*"The Committee is asked to consider the matter, with specific attention to the Amenity aspect of the agreement and meadow itself, i.e. the definition and land use; and what or how the 'amenity area' (the area between the wetland and the conservation grazing area) at Stonebridge might be managed in addition to what is currently agreed and practiced, as requested by the SMC"*

**Councillor Ross** was generally satisfied with the status quo. Mr and Mrs Dobson had put forward their views very strongly and the Town Council's representatives to SMMC had heard the discussion and had every guidance they would require. He was happy that the SMMC should be charged with responding, to see what tweaking could be done to the amenity area, bearing in mind it was part of a conservation project

**Councillor Shantry** declared that he was a member and keen supporter of ARK and a volunteer for ARK; he also sits on the SMMC. He wanted to add clarity to what he believed was an extremely modest proposal:

- All agreed on the wonderful work ARK was doing to benefit the river and its abundant wildlife
- He did not believe the proposal would damage the flood plain
- In context to the whole 15-acre site, there would be no change to the scrub or two beautiful flower meadows
- The noticeboard on site has a plan which refers to the 'mown area' as an informal recreation area. It is a very small part of the reserve (probably about 5%?) and is where two benches are in place
- Today, nothing was mown in the mown area apart from a couple of narrow tracks leading to the benches and a path alongside the river
- There was not a mown circle

- There were many examples further along the Kennet of closely mown riverbanks – this was *not* what was being proposed
- What was being requested was an area probably about 30 sq yards that could be mown closely so that children can wander, plus a couple of picnic benches. Organised school parties could use these for breaks – all in line with the intent stated on the notice board
- The track that runs the length of the reserve alongside the river provides no view of the river or chance to get close to the river until you reach the bridge upstream
- What was being proposed is for a mown area with a 3-5m margin of vegetation retained for the benefit of the water voles, but somewhere where people can get close to the river on the Stonebridge Meadow side of the reserve
- He personally requested a small pond built into the mown area for children to go pond dipping
- He didn't think anyone would be playing ball games there
- If there was antisocial behaviour or vandalism, the benches would be removed
- It was a modest request allowing the people of Marlborough to enjoy the facility in line with the original agreement and he was confident that Marlborough residents would support it

**Councillor Farrell** agreed with some of Councillor Shantry's points, especially regarding the size of the mown area and seating areas. She wondered whether all people's views were being taken into account, whether it would help to canvass the whole community on their views. The **Town Mayor, Councillor Cleasby** had no objections to the points raised by Councillor Shantry and agreed that it would be nice to have somewhere to sit at the meadow. She cautioned all to look at the request in the round: Stonebridge Meadow was not the only amenity space in Marlborough: there are other places where people can have picnics and get near the river, as well as defined play areas. In reaching agreement she didn't want to lose focus on the fact that Marlborough has an extraordinary area that as a town we are and should be proud of and we should recognise that has been achieved in partnership with ARK. She stressed that it was a partnership, and not about which party had how many acres and it should continue as a partnership: what was agreed together should be implemented. Proposals should be taken to the management meeting, and she was confident the Town Council representatives were more than capable of representing those views. She didn't agree about consulting the wider community – any solution would not please all the people all the time and it may even cause more upset. Council has delegated responsibility to the SMMC, and that body should take the decision looking at the request in terms of all the open spaces available across the town. She didn't think it was necessary to implement the same approach to every area.

**Councillor Luson** worried about the impact of even a moderate amount of clearance given what had happened in the flood. The whole area at Stonebridge, including the allotments, had been largely unusable since Christmas. He worried whether any attempt to clear vegetation would damage biodiversity to reap some reward for the sake of a few weeks or months in the summer and for that reason erred more to the side of keeping the area as it is currently, conscious of the fact that the town does have Priory Gardens, Coopers Meadow, and The Common with a large area of open space where people can play. He agreed that the proposal should be considered against the wider picture of the town and everything it has to offer, but maintaining Stonebridge Meadow as it is. He pointed out that one of the very few mandates of a Town Council is to protect the environment and increase biodiversity.

**Councillor Ross** questioned why the proposal had been brought to this Committee rather than to take a decision at the SMMC. He would prefer to see the proposal discussed at the SMMC so it could be agreed with ARK.

**Councillor Farrell** asked whether the proposal (*a request raised by members of the public at the previous A&OS Committee, for discussion at the SMMC*) had been discussed at the last meeting of the SMMC.

**Councillor O'Brien** confirmed that it had been. She felt the request had not been properly discussed or agreed at the SMMC, so the Town Council representatives had therefore referred it back to this Committee.

**Councillor Shantry** agreed with Councillor Luson that the area would probably only be used 3 or 4 months a year. The mown area is about 50 yards from the river and probably couldn't be mown until May or June; but it would provide a nice area to use in the summer holidays. He wanted to keep a 3-5m margin so didn't believe it would affect wildlife and did not see any issue with meeting the request.

The **Town Mayor** pointed out that when the original agreement was put together to manage the meadow it had been a different time; since that time as a society, we have recognised more the importance of conservation and biodiversity. The original vision for the site therefore may not necessarily be the same today – everything changes with time. Additionally, in this joint venture we do have experts on biodiversity, and we should listen to their views; not necessarily just to accept what they say but to consider their expert view.

The **Chair** thanked Members for their comments. He recognised that partnerships could be tricky at times, in all aspects of life, but ultimately it was all about working together. He stated that we are all incredibly proud of what ARK has achieved. He believed that as a Town Council we also needed to get more involved; by requesting things we want we can make sure they are properly considered. The passion shown (*at this meeting*) demonstrates a common cause and that we can all work together; as Councillors this can be a difficult job because we have to try to please everyone. Separate to the SMMC, perhaps the Committee could debate the merits of a user group at a future meeting. Members now needed to agree a proposal about the mown area and benches to

be taken back to the SMMC. Views on the impact on ecology should be part of that. Risks about antisocial behaviour should also be considered. Perhaps a short trial might be a way to move forward.

A proposal by **Councillor Ross** seconded by **Councillor Luson** to keep the status quo (i.e. that the SMMC have been made aware of feelings expressed this evening and should be empowered to recognise this and come to an agreement, aware of expert opinions on wildlife, and report their decision back to this committee, but that SMMC, not the A&OS Committee, should make the decision) received 3 votes for with 4 against, therefore was not carried.

The **Town Clerk** and **Councillor O'Brien** clarified that the outcome of the last SMMC was not a refusal of the original request, but that Town Council representatives were asked to come back to the A&OS Committee to gather views and a clear Town Council proposal to take back to the SMMC for decision and action.

**RESOLVED:** (i) that the views expressed at this meeting regarding the request for picnic benches and a mown area be taken back to the SMMC for a meaningful discussion, including consideration of any ecological impact, and to recommend a solution for agreement at this Committee

**RESOLVED:** (ii) to add a discussion about whether to create a Stonebridge Meadow user group to a future agenda

*Nine members of the public left the meeting*

#### **65/24      GROUNDS MANAGER'S REPORT**

Members noted the Grounds Manager's report and all expressed dismay that watering cans had been stolen (again) from Marlborough Cemetery. Members debated this, including:

- whether to provide any water carrying equipment at all
- whether to provide undesirable but practical vessels such as milk cartons
- whether to put up signage to discourage further theft
- whether to ask for donated vessels
- whether to replace them with brightly painted and easily identifiable watering cans, together with an obvious location for their storage and return after use by patrons, and at the same time to post photographs of them to raise awareness and discourage their removal

**RESOLVED:** to provide distinctive, easily identifiable watering cans for the Cemetery with hooks or stands

#### **66/24      TREE REPORT**

Members noted the report on the management of the Council's trees.

**RESOLVED:** that work to trees at Stonebridge Meadow is agreed at a cost of £4,122 + VAT (50% of the total cost, with the remainder being paid by ARK)

## 67/24 FINANCE REPORT

Members noted the A&OS finance report for month 2.

**Councillor Ross** queried the projects budget, which showed at 218% spend against budget. The **Town Clerk** agreed to provide an email response to clarify payments regarding projects, which included the new barrier for the Community & Youth Centre.

## 68/24 GROUNDS TEAM CAPACITY AND SICKNESS COVER

Members considered the need for ensuring service delivery by the Grounds Team in the event of loss of capacity through sickness or unplanned external demand:

In recent weeks the team had been reduced to 50% capacity, hampering the completion of routine tasks such as grass cutting and tending the Cemetery as well as contributing to project work. This had led to a number of complaints by members of the public

Whether Councillors were aware of the impact of project work on the team's workload

Whether, when Councillors agree new actions, they discussed staff availability with either the Town Clerk or Grounds Manager to check capacity and/or staff impact

That decisions about the deployment of staff should always be made by the Town Clerk or Grounds Manager rather than directed by projects

Whether to use temporary or contract services to cover short periods of absence

Whether to recruit or identify local people who might be interested in providing short term cover

That core services, especially those areas that had a wide public impact such as grass cutting, emptying bins, and looking after the Cemetery, should always be prioritised over project work

Should there be a future period where staff capacity was significantly reduced, to pro-actively share this information with the public to ask them to bear with us and explain why some routine tasks may take a little longer

Whether any decision should be considered/ratified by the Staffing Committee

**RESOLVED:** that in periods of Grounds Team staff absences, core tasks should be prioritised ahead of project work and that a staff sickness contingency be requested as part of the 2025-26 budget setting process

**ACTION:** add to a Staffing Committee agenda to provide more detail ahead of the budget-setting round

## 69/24 WORKSHOP EXTENSION

The Town Clerk gave a verbal update on the project:

The new barn was now complete, secure, alarmed and looking good



Parking and landscaping were complete

A tender process for the next stage could begin once plans and a specification had been drawn up

**RESOLVED:** to delegate a decision on the tender process to the Town Clerk, Chair of A&OS, Chair of Property and Grounds Manager and the Town Council's agent

**70/24 CEMETERY EXTENSION**

Members noted the Town Clerk's report, and he provided a verbal update. The consultation timeline had been agreed at the last meeting but would be delayed due to the anticipated land handover from GreenSquare Accord not having yet been achieved. The play equipment had not yet been installed and there were still access and landscaping works outstanding before it could be transferred.

**71/24 CEMETERY REPORT**

- (i) Members noted Grants of Exclusive Rights of Burial that had been issued for the period 22 March to 3 June 2024
- (ii) Members noted inscriptions that had been approved for the period 22 March 3 June 2024

**72/24 ALLOTMENTS**

**Councillor Lusson** provided a verbal update:

The minutes of the most recent meeting of the Allotment Association (AA) were available

The AA had renewed a T H White loyalty scheme for its members

Surplus produce was being shared via the Community Fridge and Love Marlborough Kids Meals

Elcot Lane : allotment holders were arranging delivery of compost; issues with rats were being addressed

St Johns Close : still seeking a mower for the community garden, although storage may be an issue

Stonebridge : AA had been disappointed at the 50% fee reduction hoping it would be waived entirely, although several allotment holders had signed up.

Of those who had renewed, some were not maintaining their plots as requested, and they were becoming overgrown

Whether a future meeting could consider a programme of work for more preventive action that could help in future, e.g. working with partners to clear drainage ditches etc to help ensure the site won't suffer the same level of flooding in future years

**73/24 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** that, under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

## **74/24 TRACTOR CLUTCH**

As some quotations were still expected the Committee was not in a position to take a decision at the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** to delegate a decision on the Iseki Tg5470 tractor clutch repair to the Town Clerk, Chair of A&OS and Grounds Manager after receipt of further quotations

The meeting closed at 9.12 pm

---

## **Marlborough Town Council**



### **Amenities and Open Spaces Committee**

**Minutes of an extraordinary meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held Monday, 15 July 2024 in the Court Room, Marlborough Town Hall at 7.50pm**

---

<b>PRESENT</b>	Councillor Mark Cooper	Chair
	Councillor Andrew Ross	
	Councillor James Sheppard	
	Councillor Mark Luson	
	Councillor Emily Trow	
	Richard Spencer-Williams	Town Clerk
	Dawn Whitehall	Corporate Services Officer
<b>ALSO</b>		
<b>PRESENT</b>	Councillor Mervyn Hall	
	Neil Goodwin	Marlborough.News

### **PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

There were no members of the public present.

### **113/24 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from **Councillors Farrell, Shantry, O’Brien** and the **Town Mayor, Councillor Kym-Marie Cleasby**

### **114/24 DECLARATIONS**

**Councillors Cooper and Sheppard** – agenda item 4 – non-pecuniary.

### **115/24 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED:** that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, members of the public and representatives of the press and broadcast media be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of

business as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

*Mr Goodwin left the meeting*

*Councillors Cooper and Hall did not vote on the following item*

**116/24 RENT REVIEW**

Members considered a report by the Town Clerk and

**RESOLVED:** that the proposal was agreed as written

The meeting closed at 8.04 pm

**ITEM 5**

**ACTION LOG**

To receive an update on the Action Log

Ref	Action	Min No	Owner	Status	Meeting date	Notes
188	Add CCTV coverage at MC&YC	253/23	Town Clerk	In Progress	09 October 2023	<b>In discussions with Police re: CCTV review for town. Mapping process begun. Review to be informed by 'Shopwatch' initiative led by Police - initial meeting on 1 10 24 at Town Hall; with aim to develop partnership with business sector and key stakeholders.</b>
209	Check whether there is adequate and prominent dog fouling signage at the Common	392/23	Town Clerk	In Progress	15 January 2024	<b>There are dog fouling signs on The Common attached to other signs regarding use of The Common</b>
210	Add a review of Stonebridge Management Agreement to April agenda	392/23	Town Clerk	Complete	15 January 2024	<b>On agenda for 15 4 23</b>
231	Reply to Neil Goodwin about CIL Fund status and plans for joining up railway	PQT	Town Clerk	Complete	17 June 2024	<b>24 9 24 RSW emailed NG to clarify CIL fund allocation; no MTC allocation; suggestion there may have been an historical allocation of</b>

Ref	Action	Min No	Owner	Status	Meeting date	Notes
	path to Salisbury Road					<b>s106 funds/ ( defer to WC?)</b>
232	Add Stonebridge Allotments to a future A&OS agenda	PQT	Town Clerk	Complete	17 June 2024	<b>On agenda 7 19 24</b>
233	Add Grounds Team capacity and sickness cover to a Staffing Committee agenda	68/24	Town Clerk	Complete	17 June 2024	<b>Staffing Committee met 9 9 24 and resolved to support the proposal for £5k contingency funds in 2025 26 budget to help ensure the grounds team capacity.</b>

## ITEM 6

## STONEBRIDGE MEADOW

### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to appraise Members of the progress in respect of the Committee's resolutions regarding the Stonebridge Meadow Management Agreement at the last Committee meeting, and to ask the Committee to further consider the matter with specific attention to:

The suggestion to form a user group  
and

The budget requirements as provisionally agreed at the Stonebridge Meadow Management Committee (SMMC) with a view to informing the Committee's budget request for 2025 26.

### Background

This Committee reviewed the Stonebridge Meadow Management Agreement at its meeting on 17 June where it resolved (*Min. No. 64/24*):

*(i) that the views expressed at this meeting regarding the request for picnic benches and a mown area be taken back to the SMMC for a meaningful discussion, including consideration of any ecological impact, and to recommend a solution for agreement at this Committee*

*(ii) to add a discussion about whether to create a Stonebridge Meadow user group to a future agenda*

### Status

The progress made in respect of the resolutions made at the Committee meeting on 17 June is as follows:

## **Mown picnic ‘pods’ with benches**

At a SMMC meeting on 25 July it was proposed and agreed that 3 picnic ‘pods’ (mown circular areas with a picnic table) could be created and trialled in the amenity area.

## **View of the river**

Additionally, it was agreed that a section of the hedgerow in the amenity area would be cut lower to enable a better view of the river.

## **Budget revision and agreement**

Following the meeting on 17 June, Councillors Shantry and O’Brien, Anna Forbes (ARK), the Grounds Manager and Town Clerk met on 10 and 23 September and agreed a clarified and updated proposed budget for 2025/26 (please refer to Appendix 1)

## **User Group**

Following the previous resolution the Committee may want to consider establishing a Stonebridge Meadow ‘user group’ comprising of interested residents. In doing so the Committee may want to consider:

The purpose of the group?

What mandate will be afforded the group? (i.e. will its views be referred to when making policy decisions?)

By whom, and how should residents be invited?

How many people would make up the group?

Who will lead on organising the group, and how will the group be facilitated? (Will the group essentially be led and supported by Marlborough Town Council with the primary purpose of feeding into the AOS Committee deliberations?)

---

## **Considerations**

### **Governance**

ARK owns 49.333%

The Town Council owns 50.667%

The agreement has a shared aim to:

*‘Further the charitable objects of ARK and to provide open access amenity land for the benefit of the inhabitants of the Borough of Marlborough’*

The partnership agrees a management plan for Stonebridge Meadow each year  
ARK has the casting vote on any matters falling under their responsibility in the annual management plan

The Council has the casting vote on any matters falling under its responsibility in the annual management plan

There is no casting vote in the event of disagreement on any other matter

## Financial

There is currently a specific annual allocated budget for 2024 25 of £1,000, which has been the case for at least the past four years.

There is currently an EMR for Stonebridge Meadow of £4,822.

Additional picnic benches will need maintaining. Each costs circa. £535.

[Wheelchair Access Picnic Table | Plastecowood](#)

---

## Proposal

The Committee is asked to note the progress made, and consider the proposal:

- A. to form a user group
- B. to adopt the budget as provisionally agreement with SMMC with a view to informing the Committees budget request for 2025 26. (Agenda item 15).

---

## Recommendation

Members are asked to consider the proposals and instruct the Town Clerk accordingly.

**Town Clerk 25 9 24**

## ITEM 7 BARTON PARK AND COLLEGE FIELDS BENCH REQUEST

### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to ask the Committee to consider the College Fields and Barton Park Residents Association's (CF&BPRA) request to plant trees in agreed locations.

---

### Background

In response to CF&BPRA's request on 11 July 2022, the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee agreed to a number of trees and benches being planted and installed (please refer to link for original report [Agenda for Amenities & Open Spaces Committee Meeting on 11 July 2022 \(marlborough-tc.gov.uk\)](#)).

The Committee resolved:

*that the Committee supports the request with the offer of:*

- i. Professional advice and town council labour to assist with tree planting*
- ii. To cover the cost of the purchase of trees if no sponsor can be found for the tree at the same time as the bench, with the latter being the preferred outcome*
- iii. To add the locations for benches to the Council's 'memorial bench' list, and to work with and support CF&BPRA in identifying possible sponsors*
- iv. To support the CF&BPRA request and liaise with Wiltshire Council in respect of this endeavouring to secure their relevant permissions*
- v. To assume ongoing maintenance for the trees*

- vi. *To assume ongoing maintenance for the benches in line with the Council's existing practice for memorial benches*

CF&BPRA were informed of this resolution on 13 July 2022.

---

## Status & Considerations

On 18 June 2024 CF&BPRA contacted the Council to inform the Town Clerk they had sponsors interested in funding the trees and benches and were in a position to proceed.

### Benches

We are in liaison with CF&BPRA to install the benches. Wiltshire Council (WC) has informed us they will issue licences for the benches. The Council is waiting for confirmation from CF&BPRA that they are in a position to purchase the benches before ordering (last correspondence was 19 8 24).

### Trees

Since the original Council resolution in 2022, Wiltshire Council has changed its policy on community tree planting on their land.

Now if someone wants to plant a tree, they have to apply, via the Town or Parish Council, to Wiltshire Council and the former has to be prepared to take on the land asset under WC's devolution policy. i.e. all the surrounding land parcels for the trees would become MTC's maintenance responsibility and liability (and not just the immediate area around the tree as was the case).

Also to complicate matters the Community Orchard went ahead and planted some of the trees CF&BPRA requested without either agreement or support from the Council or Wiltshire Council.

This matter has been considered previously by the committee (please see item 11 of AOS agenda 15 1 24), particularly Appendix 1 [Amenities & Open Spaces Committee Agenda - 15 January 2024 \(marlborough-tc.gov.uk\)](#) and link to minutes [Minutes of a meeting of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee held 15 January 2024 \(marlborough-tc.gov.uk\)](#)

At this time, it was resolved:

*'that Marlborough Town Council does not support the application to plant 8 Wiltshire varieties of apple tree at locations in Barton Park and College Fields as the actions already taken prevented the Town Council from following policy regarding financial commitments. Members noted the decision had been taken because of the lack of the correct process being followed and the associated implications about devolved workload and financial implications. The Town Council would of course continue to consider tree applications, taking each one on its own merit.'*

---

## Proposal

The Committee is asked to reconsider this request due to the resource implications for us, and with this the principal consideration of the impact of Wiltshire Council's devolution policy if the Council were to proceed. If the Committee agrees to support this, they will also need to refer this matter to the Finance and Policy Committee and/or Full Council due to the devolution policy and resource implications.

Members are asked to consider the request to plant trees and instruct the Town Clerk accordingly.

---

## Recommendation

The request should only be supported by the Committee if it is supported with the necessary Grounds Team resource and Full Council ratification.

**Town Clerk 25 9 24**

---

## ITEM 8

## GROUND'S MANAGER'S REPORT

To note and consider the Grounds Manager's Report

---

### General Workload

This summer has been and gone, and Autumn has now arrived. Last year I was writing this report saying that I have never known a season like it for cutting grass. This year was certainly not as hot as last year, and definitely not as wet. The grass slowed down to almost a complete standstill before it flushed again after a little bit of rain. The weeds still have kept growing but we are making steady progress working our way through the beds and borders. With the dry summer we have spent a fair amount of time watering and dead heading our floral displays twice a week in the hottest times.

### Bedding displays

The bedding displays have again looked great this year with numerous compliments from members of the public. A regular watering, feeding, and dead heading routine has helped keep the planters looking good. I have looked at the displays now they are established and have decided to change a few of the plants for next year's order to include the begonias again. The winter bedding order has been placed and should be delivered in the next couple of weeks.

### Play equipment

The play areas continue to be well used around the town with monthly health and safety inspections recorded.

### Football

We have set out and marked 5 football pitches that will require weekly cuts and line marking. The youth football has arranged for the pitches to be vertidraind in the coming weeks.



## **Machinery**

We have had a good season with very few machinery issues. We did discover some cracks on the mower deck on the Wessex mower. This was collected from us and taken to TH White for repair.

---

## **Site Specific**

### **Salisbury Road Recreation Ground**

This area was well used throughout the summer and the skate park is in almost constant use. I have noticed there are a few more children riding push bikes this year and making a jump off the edge of the skate park. I would like to look into the possibility of creating a bike/BMX track at the rear of the skate park. The play equipment is well used. Litter over this summer has been a slight issue, requiring three bin runs each week and daily checks.

### **St Mary's Church**

This area has improved over the last few years due to regular maintenance and this is also having an effect on the users of this area who are making use of the litter bins provided. Dog fouling is a slight issue in this area. There is a collapsed grave at the back of the church which has been reported to Wiltshire Council.

### **The Green**

The Epicormic growth on the base of the Lime trees across The Green was trimmed back. This will be done again in the next couple of months. The trees closest to the traffic lights have had regular checks to prevent the traffic light heads from being covered by new growth. The posts around the edge of The Green could do with some cleaning up and treating, and we will aim to do this in January.

### **War Memorials**

The roses on the Wiltshire regiment memorial have not done very well this year this is probably due to the wet ground conditions last year. I think that it is time that these roses are replaced. I would like to recommend putting in a strip of poppies: these can be sown from seed and will reseed themselves each year.

### **The Cemetery**

Summer has made the ground dry and hard, and this has been a challenge when it comes to digging graves. We have made regular visits to the cemetery through the summer months and have cut the grass as and when necessary. The bins have been checked and emptied every other day.

### **Old Cemetery**

Regular grass cuts every two to three weeks have helped to keep the cemetery going. Regular visits from the Friends of the Victorian Cemetery who meet at least once a month have made vast improvements to the cemetery. A joint effort between the Town Council Grounds Team and the Friends Group is underway to give the cemetery a thorough cut. Weed control on invasive weeds will be carried out on the regrowth after everything has been cut and cleared

away. Japanese knotweed control is working and had definitely reduced the number of plants showing this year.

## **Priory Gardens**

The Priory has been well used through the summer months. Regular maintenance visits to water the bedding plants and dead head the bedding and roses. Bins and litter in this area has been done on a daily basis. I am currently looking at the idea of a wildflower border along the eastern wall.

## **Coopers Meadow**

This area again has been well used over the summer months. The sheep have added to the appeal to visit the meadow. The sheep have now gone back home for the winter, but I am hoping that they will return next year. Regular grass cutting and strimming has been carried out throughout the summer. ARK have scheduled their tree and leaf maintenance programme for mid-October this year.

## **The Common**

The Common has been used steadily over the summer months with a various range of sporting and leisure events. The training area has finally been installed, with the ground levelled and re seeded. The recent rain will definitely help the seeds to grow. We have done some additional work to the traveller defences on the cemetery side of the Common.

## **Manton - Jubilee Field**

Grass cutting and strimming has been done. Hedge cutting is due to be done in the coming months. The wall along the front edge of the Jubilee Field needs some repair I have asked a couple of local builders to quote for this work. The play area fence has had some damage: we have removed any dangers, and this will be sorted in the next month.

## **Wye House Gardens & Play Area**

Regular maintenance visits have raised the standards in the garden at Wye House. The herbaceous plants that we divided and moved earlier this year have been successful - this garden has improved considerably over the last few years. We have the materials to install a new bridge in the garden and this will be done during the winter months.

## **Elcot Rec**

This area is used by dog walkers and for sporting events. The football pitch has been set out and marked and this will require over marking weekly.

## **Stonebridge Meadow**

The grass cutting was carried out regularly this year every three/four weeks weather and ground conditions allowing. The footpath along the side of the river needs a cut with any encroaching brambles cut back. Bins and litter are checked regularly. We are hoping to get the tree works done this year in November, but it will depend on the ground conditions.

## Proposal

The Committee is asked to note the report and consider the proposal to replace the roses with poppies at the London Road War Memorial and instruct the Town Clerk accordingly.

Grounds Manager/Town Clerk 24 9 24

## ITEM 9

## TREE REPORT

To note and consider the report on the Council's trees

### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to appraise the Committee of what tree works have been progressed or that are needed within the Council's estate, and in an advisory priority order.

### Status

The table below outlines the key tree work required:

Priority	Location	Tree	Status	Implementation	Cost
1	Frees Avenue	All roadside trees	Reassessing for vehicle height due to insurance claim	Tree surgeon	£950 plus VAT Done
2	Victorian Cemetery	X3 large limes	Height risk (neighbouring property/require pollarding)	August / actioned	£1700 Done
3	The Common	Beech	– to be felled due to rotted base	Tree surgeon	£195+VAT Done
		Horse Chestnut	– to be felled due to safety reasons	Tree surgeon	£795+VAT Done
		Beech	– as above and poor condition	Tree surgeon	£395+VAT Done
4	Coopers Meadow	X2 Ash Trees (George Lane border)	Require removal due to ash die back	Tree surgeon	£595+VAT Done

Priority	Location	Tree	Status	Implementation	Cost
		X1 Ash tree (by toilet block)	As above	Tree surgeon	£595+VAT Done
		X3 Lime trees	Need felling due to integrity of tree and safety		£250+VAT Done
5	Priory Gardens	Yew Tree	Felled	MTC Grounds team	MTC Staff Winter works
		Larch	Felled	Tree surgeon	Done
6	Stonebridge Meadow	Black Poplars  Deadwood removal	Reduce height	Tree surgeon This work was requested for September but due to work demand is now scheduled for November	Quote for 5 trees £5250 plus VAT Two additional trees £2995 plus VAT
7	The Cemetery	Field Maple	Collapsed tree/needs removal	Tree surgeon due to size	<b>This can be done in house by grounds manager</b>
8	Churchill Court		Tree husbandry required	MTC Grounds team	MTC Staff Winter works
9	Elcot Lane	Silver Birch	Require removal of secondary leader	MTC Grounds team	MTC Staff Winter works
10	Jubilee Field Manton	  Ash	Tree husbandry required  Higher canopy work Severe signs of Ash die back	MTC Grounds team  Tree surgeon Tree surgeon quoting awaiting price	MTC Staff Winter works
11	Plume of Feathers		Tree husbandry required	MTC Grounds team	MTC Staff

Priority	Location	Tree	Status	Implementation	Cost
			<b>Higher canopy work</b>	<b>Tree surgeon</b>	<b>Winter works</b>
12	Priory Gardens		Tree husbandry required  Higher canopy work	MTC Grounds team  Tree surgeon	MTC Staff Winter works
13	Salisbury Rd Recreation Ground		Tree husbandry required  Higher canopy work	MTC Grounds team  Tree surgeon	MTC Staff Winter works
14	The Green	Cherry trees	Maintain canopy height	MTC Grounds team	MTC Staff Winter works
15	Wye House Garden/Play area	Dawn redwood	Low level tree husbandry  Hung up damaged branch	MTC Grounds team  Tree surgeon quoted	MTC Staff Winter works  £295.00 plus VAT

## Proposal

Members are asked to note the above.

**Grounds Manager 25.09.24**

## ITEM 10

## WORKSHOP EXTENSION

To receive a verbal update on the workshop extension

**To receive an update on the consultation plan**

---

**Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to appraise the Committee of the status of the Cemetery Extension.

---

**Status****Land at Rabley View**

The land at Rabley View is yet to be handed over to the Council by GreenSquareAccord. This has been slowed because the play area is yet to be installed, although some progress has been made. The footpath and gate arrangement has been essentially completed. Once the play equipment is installed GreenSquare also need to get Wiltshire Council to 'sign off' all the final landscaping work, and the play equipment will need ROSPA approval prior to handover.

**Consultation Preparation**

In readiness for the consultation process:

- Over the summer the Corporate Services Officer did some informative filming with Councillors Cooper and Hall; the former explaining the challenge with the current cemetery, and the latter explaining the proposal to extend onto the Common as outlined in the Marlborough Area Neighbourhood Plan and explaining the proposed land swap.
  - A third film will be done as soon as we are in receipt of the land parcel explaining the benefits of making the larger area into Common land.
  - The Cemetery Administrator has familiarised herself with the Parish register, and preliminarily prepared a 'polling list'.
- 

**Recommendation**

Members are asked to note the report.

**Town Clerk 25 9 24**

**To note and consider the Biodiversity Plan for the Council's estate**

---

**Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to update and appraise the Committee about the Biodiversity audit carried out on the Councils Estate over the past 12 months, and for the Committee to consider the proposed action plan for implementation in 2025 26.

**Background**

Following a Committee and Full Council resolution and tendering process, an external service was commissioned to carry out a 'biodiversity audit' of the Council's estate. The audit brief

was to audit 22 sites (Council owned land parcels) and make recommendations on how biodiversity could be enhanced at these locations.

The Chosen provider was *Nature Bureau*, who carried out the audit in two phases.

**Phase 1** was a desktop exercise pulling together information from online data sources, local plans and records held in Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Record Centre.

**Phase 2** involved an onsite / walkaround survey of the estate to assess the status of protected habitats and notable species, and to collate more local habitat detail.

---

## Status

Phase 1 was completed in December 2023, and phase 2 was completed in May 2024. The final report was received end of July. Please see Appendix 2 for the full report.

## Considerations

Following receipt of the report the Grounds Manager, Deputy Town Clerk and Town Clerk met and agreed an action plan based on the audit's recommendations. The action plan balanced the recommendations with practicality, deliverability, compatibility with other council projects and the general desired aesthetics of the town, and cost.

---

## Proposal

It is proposed that the following land sites (**as detailed in the audit report**) are cultivated and planted with a wildflower mix and have wildlife boxes installed.

### Wildflower beds

Site Number:

# 1 Flowerbed – main section

# 2 Flowerbed – front/southerly corner section

# 3 Flowerbed – earth bed

# 5 Bath Road verge – with planter removed

# 10 Wye House Gardens – some wildflowers to be added in the back borders

# 13 Jubilee Field – section to rear of picnic area

NB

All created beds will have 1-1.5-meter mown borders

Stonebridge Meadow was not included in the action plan as it has its own dedicated management plan

The Green was not included in the action plan as it was considered to have its own distinct character

Cherry Orchard Play Area was omitted as it was considered the clear space was easier to maintain and also more suitable for small children

The allotment sites were omitted in the plan as it was considered they have their own functions

Coopers Meadow was considered to offer a range of conservation aspects whilst balancing its range of amenity functions

Salisbury Road Recreation Ground and Elcot Playing Field were omitted as it was considered their primary functions were recreational activity

Tin Pit was omitted as it was recognised this may have its own plan in the future, and essentially acts as a wildlife corridor (although this may be enhanced)

The Common was omitted for now but may be revisited once other pending projects have been completed

### Wildlife boxes

# 10 Wye House Gardens – bat and hedgehog box/s

# 14 The Priory – bat box

# 20 Victorian Cemetery – refer to project plan

### Cost

External gardening services	£
Bed cultivation and seeding (estimate)	3,000
Seeds	1,600
Wildlife boxes	400
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,000</b>

It is proposed this cost is met via the AOS Projects budget in 2025 26, with an implementation target time of September 2025.

---

## Recommendation

The Committee is asked to consider the proposal and instruct the Town Clerk accordingly.

**Town Clerk 25 9 24**

## ITEM 13

## VICTORIAN CEMETERY PROJECT

**To note and consider the project plan for the Victorian Cemetery and Arboretum**

---

### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to appraise the Committee of a proposed project plan for the Victorian Cemetery.

---

### Background

The Victorian Cemetery has for some time benefitted from some dedicated volunteers who help keep the cemetery managed. This has been with the assistance of the Council's Grounds Team, with informal agreements on roles and responsibilities and the division of tasks such as strimming, grass cutting and tree work.

This project plan aims to clarify expectations by both parties, and more so, capitalise on achievement to date, offering a plan to maximise the potential for the community and in particular recognition of the 'arboretum' status as was originally intended.



“The Old Graveyard or Victorian Cemetery as it is locally known was opened in 1853. Funded by The Board of Guardians (consisting of representatives from St. Mary's Church, St. Peter's Church and the Council), the design and layout of the cemetery was influenced by the Louden's 1843 work titled 'On the laying out, planting and managing of Cemeteries'. All aspects of the cemetery from how the paths were orientated, the style of the chapel building to the choice of the trees is listed in the pamphlet. Although perhaps aimed at the larger cemeteries e.g. Highgate in London, Arnos Vale in Bristol or Cathays in Cardiff, echoes of Louden's influence can still be determined in the cemetery today. The most striking of these are the large, exotic, evergreen trees which were deliberately chosen and planted e.g. Cedar of Lebanon. Louden promoted Arboriculture and in particular evergreen trees as they produced less leaf litter than deciduous trees.”

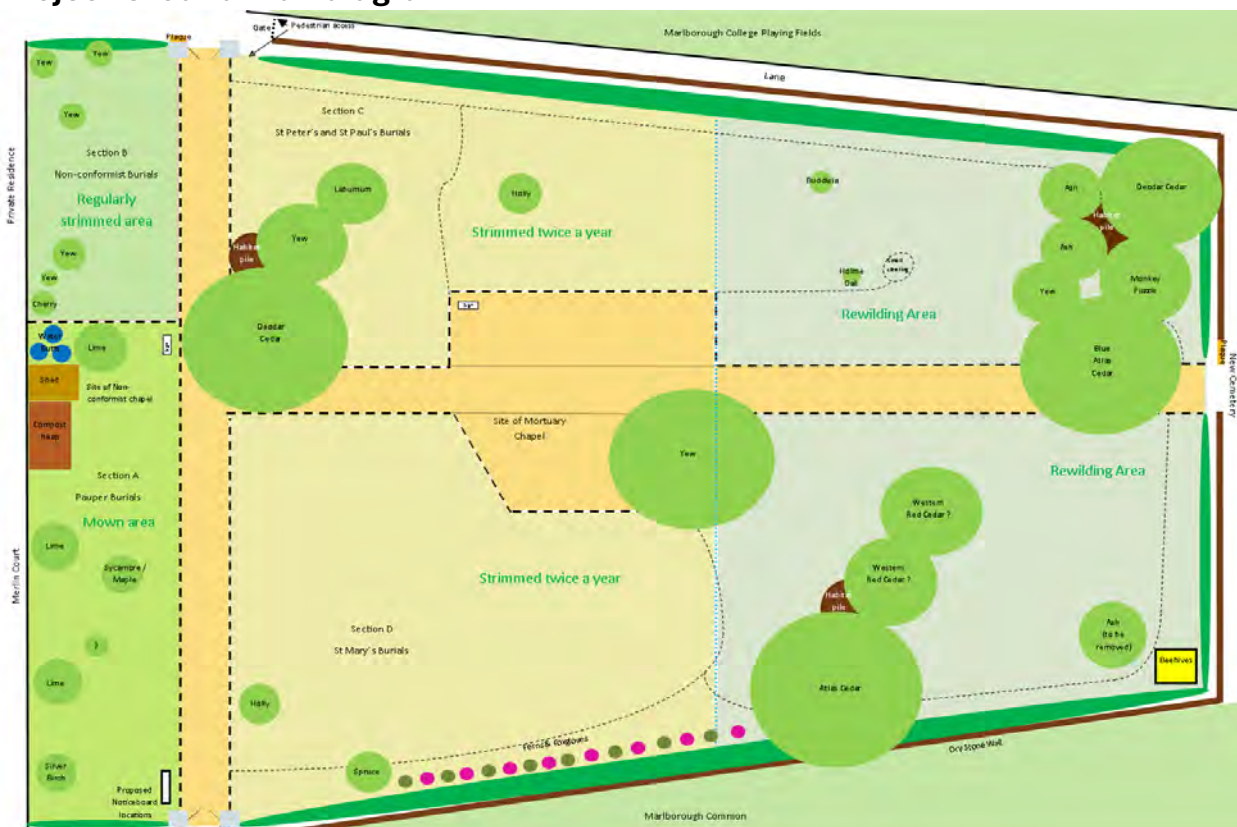
“If you fancy taking a look at the pamphlet which influenced so many of the churchyards and graveyards at the time then this link <https://iiif.wellcomecollection.org/pdf/b24401213> will take you to a scanned copy of Louden's pamphlet 'On the laying out, planting and managing of Cemeteries; and on the improvement of churchyards' .”

Kim Wakeham

## Status

A project Plan for ‘Marlborough Victorian Cemetery and Arboretum’ has been drawn up following several meetings of a project group (both on and off site) including resident volunteers, the Grounds Manager, Cemetery Administrator, Deputy Town Clerk, and Town Clerk.

## Project Ground Plan diagram



The project plan includes:

Clear cut border hedges

Mown areas

Strimmed areas

Rewilding areas

Green waste storage

Equipment storage (existing)

Masonry work to the gateway pillars

Restoration to the gate's ironmongery

Masonry restoration to the graves and headstones

Wildlife boxes

Defined paths and access

Enhancement of trees – to promote the area as an 'arboretum'; with educational signage

Visitor signage – to explain the site

---

## Considerations

This would involve some Grounds Team time for mowing and strimming; already required maintenance tasks.

The project would require some time commitment from relevant officers to help facilitate the project. The Victorian Cemetery volunteers have also offered to help with developmental time.

There is already a 'Victorian Cemetery' registered charity in place.

Grants would be sought to cover the cost of the heritage and conservation aspects where possible; with both the Council, and the Charitable status of the Victorian Cemetery held by the volunteers) capitalising on the ability to draw in funds

A small budget may be required to assist with material or equipment costs but this is not clear at this stage.

There is a budget allocation of £500 for the Victorian Cemetery.

---

## Proposal

The Committee is asked to note the report. Additionally, a volunteer Councillor is invited to join the project group. Members are asked to consider this invitation, and if agreed instruct the Town Clerk accordingly. NB The project group will meet approximately every four weeks for an hour.

**Town Clerk 25 9 24**

---

## ITEM 14

## FINANCE REPORT

**To note and consider the Committee's Finance Report for month 5**

Please refer to Appendix 3.

## To consider the Committee's priorities and budget requirements for 2025 26

### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with an overview of its current priorities and projects as agreed to date, in order for the Committee to review its priorities and projects for 2025-26 and to consider the budget requirements for 2025 26. (Please refer to Appendix 3)

### Priorities and Projects / Status

The agreed priorities for 2024 25 are:

1. Cemetery extension - ongoing
2. Workshop extension – Storage Barn phase 1 complete. Phase 2 (extension, staff quarters and greenhouse) expected October - February
3. Grounds works vehicle replacement – not progressed. Subject to negotiation with lease company.
4. Grounds staff PPE and protective workwear uniform - complete
5. Biodiversity management – report received. Proposed implementation plan for 2025 26 (see item 11)
6. Land at Tin Pit – requires improved fencing and path; awaiting outcome of Thames Water pipeline works; Thames may assist with fencing or other landscaping.
7. Parking arrangements at Marlborough Common – CIL funds agreed; implementation now planned for May 2025.
8. Salisbury Road Recreation Ground – CIL fund from Old Police Station sale now not available; awaiting outcome of further sale process.
9. Training area at Marlborough Common – complete.

### Proposed Priorities 2025 26

It is proposed that the Amenities and Open Spaces Committee agrees the following as its list of priorities for budgeting purposes for 2025 26:

1. **Workshop Extension** – complete phase 2 and greenhouse
2. **Grounds works vehicle replacement** – subject to agreement with lease company (possibly 2026 27 budget)
3. **Cemetery extension** (2022-27) – consultation and feasibility assessment (to be funded from Cemetery EMR and possible contribution from precept. Main project costs to be funded by Public Works Loan)
4. **Biodiversity Management** – see Item 11.
5. **Land at Rabley View (Hawthorn Meadow)/land at Tin Pit**
  - Hawthorn Meadow tree survey and commissioned tree works on receipt of land parcel (awaiting indicative quotes).
  - Create Land management plan for both sites.
6. **Parking arrangements on Marlborough Common** – policy and site management, installation and ground preparation (CIL funds agreed)
7. **Salisbury Road Recreation Ground** - subject to s106 funds confirmation/CIL funds
8. **Victorian Cemetery and Arboretum ( Item 12)**

Further to these it is proposed that the 2025-26 AOS smaller projects are agreed in July 2025 according to the need as presents at the time.

## Budget Considerations

Assumed **3.5% inflation oncost** where applicable on **provided services**.

**10% added** onto **hire costs** of open spaces (as 24 25)

**Purchase of Tipping Trailer** - for more effective operations (Victorian Cemetery/save on multiple mule runs for waste/tree works green waste/compost for allotments) – cost £5,200

Stonebridge Meadow (see Item 6) – provided for in existing budget

**Jubilee Field wall, Manton** – The wall at Jubilee Field requires significant remedial work to rebuild and repoint sections of the wall. The work will require a traffic management arrangement due to the width of the road and required access to the wall. It is hoped that this work can be done during the Easter Holidays in 2025 (to avoid compounding school run traffic congestions). **The EMR ‘Walls and Fences’ could fund this work when the cost is known; but consideration is needed on how to replenish this fund so, a sum should be planned for from the 2025 26 budget – suggested £10,000**

Rabley View (Hawthorn Meadow) tree works– external provider (quotes awaited); can be funded from existing tree work budget

**Biodiversity planned works**– (see Item 11). There is an EMR Climate Emergency Response £3,104 which could be used for this work; proposed **£1,896 additional funds from AOS ‘Projects’**.

**Staff contingency fund £5,000**

---

## Recommendation

Members are asked to consider and agree the Committee’s priorities and budget requirements for 2025 26 and instruct the Town Clerk accordingly.

Town Clerk 25 9 24

---

## ITEM 16

## ALLOTMENTS

**To consider the Town Clerk’s report on Stonebridge Allotments, and receive a verbal update report from Councillor Luson**

### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to appraise the Committee on the situation at Stonebridge Allotments (SAs).

---

### Background

On 28 June Councillor Luson (the Allotment Association designated Councillor representative) and the Town Clerk met with the SAs representative, on site, to assess and agree a set of shared actions that would help keep the site managed well and to a satisfactory standard. The site is prone to flooding and as such presents some challenges for the growing of produce such as building up the plots, digging and maintaining irrigation ditches, etc.

## Weather and site properties

The 'Wet' and 'dry' weather means the site can be either waterlogged, or very dry; and growing requires a different kind allotment 'approach'. The site is next to conservation area and this can restrict the gardening practices. Like the other allotment site SAs have been unusable for most of the year since the January flood.

---

## Status

Actions agreed were:

MTC to trim external boundary of Stonebridge allotment site (to prevent weeds and seeds encroaching into ARK land).

MTC to trim edges of drainage ditches and vacant plots (to enable Stonebridge Allotment community to conduct remedial action to ditches).

MTC to deposit any available surplus soil/compost to Stonebridge allotment to assist with raising growing bed levels. This will help to mitigate high water levels.

- SAs representative to report back to MTC on intentions of allotment holders whose plots are currently untended. According to a list which has since submitted to the Office Manager there are:
  - 40 plots in total (some half size)
  - 13 vacant
  - 1 plot holder is undecided as to whether to keep renting
  - 1 no reply

SAs representative to liaise with ARK regarding dredging of the 'settling ponds' just outside the boundary of Stonebridge allotment. (ARK has agreed to dig out the ponds on 16 October).

MTC to gift a strimmer for Stonebridge allotment (ready to pass on, pending some Allotment Association response about who and how this will be kept secure and managed).

MTC to investigate the use of plastic sheeting to suppress growth on vacant lots. Agreed since with the Grounds Manager the plots will be trimmed regularly as it was considered that large polyethene sheets could be a hazard in high winds.

Allotment association to consider any additional common investment aspirations which might be factored into next year's MTC budget submission.

---

## Considerations

- There is no dedicated budget for the allotments.
- The increase in rainfall due to climate change may present a bad risk to the Council in the future.
- There is waiting list of 19 for allotments, 4 have stipulated they don't want a plot at SAs.
- The other applicants are on hold until the plots become useable.

---

## Proposal

Members are asked to note and consider the matters raised in this report, and also refer to Cllr Lusson for elaboration.

**Town Clerk 25 9 24**

To note any Grants of Exclusive Rights of Burial issued and recently approved Memorials and Inscriptions

**CEMETERY INFORMATION**  
Period 03.06.2024 – 23.09.2024

**i) Exclusive Right of Burial/Notice of Interment/Purchase**

Name of deceased	Grave No.	Cemetery Section	Type of Burial	Funeral Director
Carmen Grace Barbara Black	121	H	New Child in a single grave	Claridge
Millie-Grace Davies-Stickland	121	H	Ashes in a coffin	Claridge
Joseph Anderson	101	G	Reopen burial	Claridge
Patricia Margaret Rogers	82	H	New Single	Swindon Coop
Audrey Jeanette Dancey	87	H	New Single	Johnson & Daltrey
Nancy Doreen Dzimitrowicz	42	H	Ashes on a double depth burial	N/A
Katie Gough	102	G	Ashes on a double depth burial	Dianne Mackinder
Linda Caroline Robinson	136	F	Reopen ashes	Claridge

**ii) Memorial Applications – Inscriptions and Additional Inscriptions**

Name of deceased	Stone	Grave No.	Section	Inscription to read -
Alan Leslie Chandler	Nabresina	83	H	In loving memory of a dear Husband, Dad and Grampy Alan Leslie Chandler Who passed away peacefully aged 68 years 01.07.1955 – 14.09.2023 Always in our thoughts, Forever in our hearts.

Name of deceased	Stone	Grave No.	Section	Inscription to read -
Monica Dolores Bryant	Additional Inscription	32	G	<p>MONICA DOLORES BRYANT A BELOVED MOTHER, GRANDMOTHER &amp; GREAT GRANDMOTHER 9<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 1942 25<sup>TH</sup> OCT. 2023 'May Angels Sing Thee to Thy Rest'</p>
Eileen & Barrie Lovelock	Additional inscription	27	G	<p>BARRIE LOVELOCK 1937-2023 Papa, simplemente el major Another light gone from our lives In life, soulmates, now together again for eternity We will forever love and miss you both Family and friends  Image of phoenix on reverse of headstone</p>
Anne Notton	Balmoral Red Granite	86	H	<p>Sacred to the memory of ANNE NOTTON 27 December 1947 – 23 April 2024 She made the world special</p>
Patricia Margaret Rogers	Star Galaxy Black Granite	82	H	<p>In Loving Memory of Patricia Margaret Rogers Born 16<sup>th</sup> October 1943 Passed away peacefully 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024 Loving Sister &amp; Auntie Forever in our Hearts Reunited with Mum &amp; Dad</p>
Michael Light	Light Grey Granite	256	B	<p>Michael Light 1937-1949</p>

Name of deceased	Stone	Grave No.	Section	Inscription to read -
Patricia Hayward	Mid Grey Granite	91	H	<p>CEHRISHED MEMORIES OF PATRICIA 'JANET' HAYWARD Nee CHIRGWIN 21<sup>ST</sup> FEBRUARY 1936 – 23<sup>RD</sup> OCTOBER 2023</p> <p>A MUCH-LOVED WIFE, MUM, GRANDMA, GREAT GRANDMA AND DEAR FRIENDS 'EYES THAT TWINKLED WITH JOY' MAY YOU REST IN PEACE NOW, REUNITED WITH NORMAN FOREVER IN OUR HEARTS</p>
David Bryant	Black Granite	40	J	<p>DAVID BRYANT 'TONY' 2.10.1935 – 3.7.2024</p>
Yvonne Hale	Additional Inscription	118	FFCR	<p>YVONNE HALE 07.04.1936 15.04.2024 TOGETHER FOREVER MUM &amp; DAD</p>
Max (Leonard) Booker	Polished Grey Granite	81	H	<p>MAX BOOKER 7.4.1935 – 30.8.2023 Very much loved and Sadly missed, wonderful Husband, Father and Grandfather</p>

## ITEM 18

## MEMORIAL BENCHES & PLAQUE

### To consider requests for memorial benches & plaque

1. Mrs Rosemary Cooper of Town Mill, Marlborough, has requested a 4-seater bench be installed near the entrance of the meadow at the Town Mill end, with a clear view of the river situated between the waste bin and gate; to remember the Cooper family, with a brass plaque and the inscription 'In memory of all the Coopers who loved Marlborough'.
2. Mr Geoff Taylor of Town Mill, Marlborough has requested a 3-seater bench be installed opposite Town Mill to the west of the most recently installed bench to remember his wife with the inscription 'In loving memory of Christine Taylor, 1939-2023. Always in our thoughts'
3. Mrs Jeanette Hancock of Baywater, Marlborough, has requested plaque be fixed to the second bench outside the Jubilee Day Centre; to remember Peter Norman Hancock



(1934-2022), with the inscription 'Forever in our Hearts'. Norman Hancock was a regular visitor to the Jubilee Day Centre.

The costs will be met by those making the requests.

---

## **Recommendation**

Members are asked to consider the requests and instruct the Town Clerk accordingly.

**Town Clerk 24 9 24**

	ARK £	MTC £	
Wetland maintenance	250	250	Agreed annual set aside should be 250.00 p/a from each organisation to allow for the approximately four yearly £2k costing.
Bird food	170		
Fence maintenance	100		
Boardwalk maintenance	100		
Snakeshead fritillary bulbs	340		
Stonebridge fold out guides	450		
Dog poo bags	30		
Volunteer costs	250		
Essential tree work	0	2,666	This is an estimate of what MTC should set aside annually and carry over until required. Figure based on recent costings following on from tree survey.
Boardwalk new (north bank)			ARK will be working up a project and applying for funding in 2025, estimate 20,000.00 materials and auger hire.
Beach maintenance	1,100		
signage	60		
Bin bags	50		
In river tree work - contingency	500	500	This is a contingency budget, in case of emergency in river work. ARK has always had the capabilities for dealing with fallen trees and contacts for using chainsaws in the river but this budget line is a precautionary measure.
Fuel & oils	100	400	
Machinery maintenance		150	
Mowing			MTC staff time
Strimming	50		ARK cost for trimmer cords for maintaining scrub area footpath and wooden boardwalk access
Running volunteer tasks for maintenance and conservation			ARK staff time

Running River Schools and wider community educational outreach sessions and events			ARK staff time
Conservation grazing	500		Usually, a small amount of ARK staff time is the only cost as Grove Farm provide the cattle at no charge, this contingency figure is purely to cover costings if cattle have to leave early and there is a need to cut and cart or top.
Bench		600	The most recent bench was paid for by ARK, the other bench was a 50/50 split. Two wooden benches, no longer in situ were paid for by ARK. £600 is estimated as a one off cost for one new recycled plastic picnic bench. After purchase this line can be removed for the next year budget as no maintenance costs for these benches.
Total	4,050	4,566	



naturebureau

# Marlborough Town Council: Biodiversity Audit

## Phase Two

July 2024



Votec Centre 2c,  
Hambridge Lane,  
Newbury RG14 5TN  
United Kingdom

Registered in England and Wales No. 2369556  
VAT GB 537 590618

+44 (0)1635 550380

[post@naturebureau.co.uk](mailto:post@naturebureau.co.uk)  
[www.naturebureau.co.uk](http://www.naturebureau.co.uk)

Established in 1990

Independent ecological consultancy, project management, nature conservation, communication materials, design and wildlife book publisher.



## Marlborough Town Council: Biodiversity Audit Phase Two

### REPORT DETAILS

**Site Name:** Marlborough Town

**Site Location:** Various

**Reference Number:** Eco23-17

**Report Version:** 001

**Status:** Draft

### CLIENT DETAILS

**Name:** Clare Harris, on behalf of Marlborough Town Council

**Address:** 5 High Street, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 1AA

**Email:** [charris@marlborough-tc.gov.uk](mailto:charris@marlborough-tc.gov.uk)

**Telephone:** 07395 793018

### QUALITY ASSURANCE

**Author(s):** Kristina Wood M.Res., Terrestrial Ecologist, ACIEEM, CL17

**Contact details:** Tel: 07948907389 Email: [Kristina@naturebureau.co.uk](mailto:Kristina@naturebureau.co.uk)

**Technical Reviewer(s):** Paul Goriup, MSc, CEcol, CEnv, FCIEEM

**Date of Review:** 19 July 2024

### DISCLAIMER

The contents of this report are confidential and may contain information regarding protected species of a sensitive nature.

This report has been prepared by NatureBureau Ltd. for the sole use of the client and in connection with the development project described. The findings of this report are valid for a maximum of 18 months from the final review date.

This is a technical report and does not represent legal advice/opinion.

## CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	6
2	METHODS	7
2.1	Desk Study	7
2.2	Habitat Surveys	7
2.3	Species Surveys	8
2.4	Mapping	8
2.5	Limitations	8
3	RESULTS	9
3.1	Small Site Surveys: Sites 1-10	9
3.1.1	Flowerbed 1	9
3.1.2	Flowerbed 2	9
3.1.3	Flowerbed 3	10
3.1.4	War Memorial	10
3.1.5	Bath Road Grassed Area	11
3.1.6	Orchard Close Play Area	11
3.1.7	The Green - east	12
3.1.8	The Green - west	12
3.1.9	St. John's Close Allotments	13
3.1.10	Wye House Gardens	13
3.2	Sites 11 – 22: Large Sites	14
3.2.1	Stonebridge Meadow 1	14
3.2.2	Stonebridge Meadow 2	15
3.2.3	Bridge Street Recreation Ground	16
3.2.4	The Priory	17
3.2.5	Cooper's Meadow	18
3.2.6	Salisbury Road Recreation Ground	19
3.2.7	Elcot Lane	20
3.2.8	Tin Pit	21
3.2.9	Existing Cemetery	22
3.2.10	Victorian Cemetery	23
3.2.11	The Common 1	24
3.2.12	The Common 2	25
4	EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	27

4.1	Small Sites	27
4.2	Large Sites	28
4.3	Planting for Pollinators	31
4.4	Grassland Reseeding for Birds	32
4.5	Bat Boxes	32
4.6	Long-term Monitoring	33
5	APPENDICES	34
5.1	The 22 sites and their designated numbers	34
5.1.1	Key	34
5.2	Site Maps and Photos	35
5.2.1	Sites 1 – 4	35
5.2.2	Site 5	35
5.2.3	Site 6	36
5.2.4	Sites 7, 8 and 10	36
5.2.5	Site 9	37
5.2.6	Sites 11 and 12	37
5.2.7	Site 13	38
5.2.8	Sites 14 and 15	38
5.2.9	Site 16	39
5.2.10	Site 17	39
5.2.11	Site 18	40
5.2.12	Sites 19 and 20	40
5.2.13	Sites 21 and 22	41
5.3	Relevant Guidelines and Legislation	41



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

NatureBureau Ltd was commissioned by Marlborough Town Council to undertake a preliminary biodiversity assessment of 22 predetermined sites within the Marlborough Town municipal boundary. Phase One of this work utilised online datasets, Local Plans and records from the Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Record Centre to gather information on species, habitats and relevant site designations within a defined boundary, inclusive of these 22 sites. Phase One was completed in December 2023, and the activities were used to inform Phase Two, comprising further survey efforts to assess the status of protected habitats and notable species in and around the town of Marlborough and gather more detail about the habitat and ecological features present at each site.

Each of the 22 sites was visited on at least one occasion during May 2024. During these visits, some sites were identified for additional surveying, with a focus on invertebrate species. During June, an invertebrate expert visited three of the sites. After compiling species lists and defining habitat types according to the UK Habitats Classification, this information was mapped into QGIS.

Finally, the data gathered during both phases of this study were combined to inform recommendations for enhancing the biodiversity value of each site. These recommendations focus heavily on enhancement for pollinators, as this will have positive impacts on local bats and birds. Further recommendations related to enhancing grassland for birds, and the addition of bat boxes to suitable sites. Some consideration is given to creating ecological corridors, public engagement and Protected Species habitat enhancement, where relevant.

Two of the sites, comprising the north and south sides of Stonebridge Meadows, were found to be a Nature Reserve which is already subject to intensive management by a consortium of competent partners. For this reason, Stonebridge Meadows was omitted from detailed survey efforts and no recommendations were made for these sites. The main limitation for this study was the limited species list compiled, which is restricted due to the seasonal variation in flora and fauna. To address this issue, a survey schedule has been suggested.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

NatureBureau Ltd was commissioned by Marlborough Town Council to undertake a preliminary biodiversity assessment of 22 predetermined sites within the Marlborough Town municipal boundary. The 22 sites, varying in size (see Table 6), are all situated within 1.5 kilometres (km) of Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SU 18408 69033. The local landscape is characterised by moderate-density residential and industrial buildings and mature treelines, set within a wider landscape of mature deciduous woodland, and wood pasture and parkland, with some agricultural areas.

Following the Phase One assessment undertaken during 2023, Phase Two surveys were undertaken to assess the status of protected habitats and species in and around the predetermined site, resulting in site-specific recommendations which could be used to inform a future biodiversity plan.

**Figure 1: The 22 sites included in the biodiversity assessment**

NB: A numbered site map can be found in the Appendices

(Image source: Google Earth, 2021)



## 2 METHODS

The work, analysis and reporting were undertaken in line with the Code of Professional Conduct of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and other relevant guidelines and legislation as listed in Section 5.5 of this report.

### 2.1 Desk Study

Desk studies (also known as Phase One study) were carried out by NatureBureau during December 2023.

**Table 1: Summary of resources used during the desk study**

Resource	Information assessed
Google Earth Pro	Assessment of the local landscape, with the latest image date from July 2021.
MAGIC website <sup>1</sup>	Records of licences issued by Natural England for works affecting protected animal species within 5 km of the project centre; any relevant site designations within 5 km of the project centre; Special Areas of Conservation designated for bat interest within 10 km of the project centre
National Biodiversity Network (NBN) Atlas <sup>2</sup>	Records of species observations within a 2 - 5 km radius of the project centre
Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre (WSBRC) <sup>3</sup>	Records of species and notified sites within a 2 km radius of the project centre
Wiltshire Council Local Plan <sup>4</sup> and Wiltshire Local Plan <sup>5</sup>	Whether the sites are included in any aspect of the Local Plan and/or other additional relevant information related to conservation in Marlborough

### 2.2 Habitat Surveys

Visits to each of the 22 sites were undertaken on the 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024. The surveys were carried out by Kristina Wood (M.Res., ACIEEM) and Paul Goriup (M.Sc., CEcol, FCIEEM). Kristina is a terrestrial ecologist regularly involved in landscape surveying for the purposes of ecological assessments. Kristina also specialises in bat surveying and holds a Natural England bat class 1 survey licence registration (2024-11935-CL17-BAT). Paul is a Director of NatureBureau Ltd and a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management, with over 35 years' experience in the ecology sector. Paul specialises in bird surveys, having worked in bird conservation work throughout North Africa, the Middle East and Asia on behalf of IUCN and WWF following his joint honours degree (BSc) in Botany and Zoology, and an MSc in Conservation Science.

<sup>1</sup> [Magic Map Application \(defra.gov.uk\)](https://magic.defra.gov.uk/)

<sup>2</sup> [Explore Your Area | NBN Atlas](https://www.nbn.org.uk/explore-your-area/)

<sup>3</sup> [Wiltshire & Swindon Biological Records Centre \(wsbrc.org\)](https://www.wsbrc.org/)

<sup>4</sup> [WLP Market Town Planning for Marlborough FINAL.pdf \(wiltshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/WLP-Market-Town-Planning-for-Marlborough-FINAL.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> [Planning for Marlborough September2023.pdf \(wiltshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Planning-for-Marlborough-September2023.pdf)

Habitat surveys consisted of a site walkover to identify the plants and habitats present according to the UK Habitats Classification System (UKHabs) and identify any sites that would be suitable for further surveying for insect and mammal fauna.

During the Phase One study, each of the 22 sites were assigned a number. These numerical designations corresponded approximately to the increasing area of each site in metres squared (m<sup>2</sup>), but with some numbers assigned with consideration also to their proximity to other sites. This grouping of neighbouring sites enabled faster surveying and easier reporting. Each site and their designated numbers can be found in the Appendices.

## 2.3 Species Surveys

Following the habitat surveys, the sites identified as having the highest biodiversity potential were selected for additional survey efforts. These sites included Victorian Cemetery, The Common 2 and Cooper's Meadow. On 19<sup>th</sup> June 2024, these sites were surveyed for invertebrates by Peter Creed. Peter has been a Creative Director for NatureBureau since 1990 and has managed the design and publishing of many invertebrate books such as Life Cycles of British Butterflies, The Bumblebee Book and Insects of the New Forest.

None of the sites demonstrated that they would benefit from additional mammal surveys, as either the site habitat was unsuitable for Protected Species (i.e. badgers, bats), or records of these species already exist in the area and additional surveys would not add anything further to that data.

## 2.4 Mapping

Site boundaries and broad habitat types were mapped used QGIS. The files were saved as geopackage and provided alongside this report. Geopackage files are compatible with Pear Technology software<sup>6</sup>

## 2.5 Limitations

Data gathered during surveys reflects the presence of species at a specific date and time. An absence of species records does not equate to the absence of a species.

All site visits were carried out during May and June. There are monthly variations in plants and insects and therefore the species lists will not be exhaustive. For more detailed species lists, further surveys would need to be carried out at other times of the year. See Section 4.6 for more information.

---

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.peartechnology.co.uk/>

### 3 RESULTS

Site maps can be found in the Appendices.

#### 3.1 Small Site Surveys: Sites 1-10

Site numbers 1 – 10 are considered the ‘small sites’ as their areas are between 11 m<sup>2</sup> and 2,400 m<sup>2</sup>.

##### 3.1.1 Flowerbed 1

Site number: 1

Area: 15m<sup>2</sup>

UKHabs code: g4 modified grassland

Biodiversity value: low

A small triangle of grass between a residential property and the road. Slightly sloped down to the west. Tyre marks show it is regularly used for parking.

##### Flora recorded at Flowerbed 1 during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Common plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Ryegrass	<i>Lolium sp.</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>



##### 3.1.2 Flowerbed 2

Site number: 2

Area: 19m<sup>2</sup>

UKHabs code: g4 modified grassland

Biodiversity value: low

Grassland with ornamental planting (shrubs and flowers). Used for parking on the north side.

##### Flora recorded at Flowerbed 2 during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Black medick	<i>Medicago lupulina</i>
Common plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>
Ryegrass	<i>Lolium sp.</i>
Self-heal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>



### 3.1.3 Flowerbed 3

Site number: 3

Area: 11m<sup>2</sup>

UKHabs code: g4 modified grassland

Biodiversity value: low

#### Flora recorded at Flowerbed 3 during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Rose	Rosa sp.
Ryegrass	Lolium sp.



Two small patches of mown grassland situated in front of two benches. To the side of each bench is a rose bush flowerbed. The roses are in poor condition and there is a lot of bare ground.

### 3.1.4 War Memorial

Site number: 4

Area: 270m<sup>2</sup>

UKHabs code: g4 modified grassland

Biodiversity value: low

Two areas of grassland with a monument situated centrally between them. The monument and its associated gravel floor are encompassed by a privet hedge and four yew shrubs in good condition. There is a flowerbed along the south boundary of the plot which has some planting (poor condition roses) but is mostly sparse.

#### Flora recorded at War Memorial during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Black medick	<i>Medicago lupulina</i>
Common plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>
Ryegrass	<i>Lolium sp.</i>
Self-heal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>



### 3.1.5 Bath Road Grassed Area

Site number: 5

Area: 121m<sup>2</sup>

UKHabs code: g4 modified grassland

Biodiversity value: low

A triangle of grass between the road and footpath, featuring a (disused) planter and litter bin.

#### Flora recorded at Bath Road during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Common plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>
Groundsel	<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>
Ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>
Ryegrass	<i>Lolium sp.</i>
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>



### 3.1.6 Orchard Close Play Area

Site number: 6

Area: 273m<sup>2</sup>

UKHabs code: g4 modified grassland

Biodiversity value: low

A fenced area of grassland divided centrally by a footpath. On the east is a recreational park. The west side slopes down from west to east and hosts more diverse grassland species, with a cut hedgerow on the fence boundary. The northwest corner is overgrown with scrub and features a mature hazel tree. There are some patches of poor condition grassland on the south of the site.

#### Flora recorded at Orchard Close during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>
Common plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>
Hedge bindweed	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>
Ivy-leaved speedwell	<i>Veronica hederifolia</i>
Lords and Ladies	<i>Arum maculatum</i>
Nipplewort	<i>Lapsana communis</i>
Ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>
Rye-grass	<i>Lolium sp.</i>
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Stinging nettle	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>



### 3.1.7 The Green - east

Site number: 7

Area: 1,100m<sup>2</sup>

UKHabs code: g4 modified grassland

Biodiversity value: low

A large area of grassland (of unknown use) surrounded by road on all four sides, sloping downwards from east to west.

#### Flora recorded at The Green (east) during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Common chickweed	<i>Stellaria media</i>
Common plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Rye-grass	<i>Lolium sp.</i>
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>



### 3.1.8 The Green - west

Site number: 8

Area: 2,100m<sup>2</sup>

UKHabs code: g4 modified grassland

Biodiversity value: low

A large area of grassland divided by a footpath that runs from west to east. The path is lined by lime trees on each side which have recently undergone pollarding. The site slopes southward. On the south side there is a cherry laurel shrub, one young cherry tree and one young birch tree. A mature cherry tree on the far south side creates shade for species not found elsewhere on site, such as cow parsley, daffodils and bluebells.

#### Flora recorded at The Green (west) during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Bluebell (Spanish)	<i>Hyacinthoides hispanica</i>
Common chickweed	<i>Stellaria media</i>
Common plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
Daffodil	<i>Narcissus pseudonarcissus</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>
Lime tree	<i>Tilia europaea</i>
Ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>
Rye-grass	<i>Lolium sp.</i>
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>





### 3.1.9 St. John's Close Allotments

Site number: 9

Area: 1,600m<sup>2</sup>

UKHabs code: g4 modified grassland with small areas of gc3 other neutral grassland

Biodiversity value: low

An allotment made up of many privately owned/rented plots used for vegetable planting, between which are areas of unmanaged grassland. On the west is a mature hedgerow containing beech, holly and field maple. There was an 'insect hotel' on one of the plots.

#### Flora recorded at St. John's Allotments during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Bramble	<i>Rubus sp.</i>
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Common ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Common plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Creeping bent	<i>Agrostis stolonifera</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Field maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Herb robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Ryegrass	<i>Lolium sp.</i>
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>



### 3.1.10 Wye House Gardens

Site number: 10

Area: 2,400m<sup>2</sup>

UKHabs code: g4 modified grassland

Biodiversity value: low

The west of Wye House gardens is highly ornamental, comprising an intensively managed lawn area and large Sequoia tree, with borders of ornamental planting.

On the north there is a line of lime trees above large areas of further ornamental planting, including many non-native species. Moving east along the northern border the native flora becomes more dominant on the approach to the large natural pond located on the east of the site. To the north of the pond is a dense area of shrubs and trees where several species of birds were observed perching (wood pigeon, blackbird, blue tit).

Along the east side of the pond is a gravel path, and a large flowerbed along the eastern boundary of the site. The flowerbed is sparse, featuring few species and mostly presenting bare earth. The pond itself presents with the expected associated flora and is bordered by barberry. A moorhen was observed on the lake.

#### Flora recorded at Wye House Gardens during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Common comfrey	<i>Symphytum officinale</i>
Common ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Dogwood	<i>Cornus sanguinea</i>
Forget me not	<i>Myosotis sylvatica</i>
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>
Herb robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Rye-grass	<i>Lolium sp.</i>
Wood cranesbill	<i>Geranium sylvaticum</i>
Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>



Image: Wye House Gardens from the west



Image: The lake on the east of Wye House Gardens

## 3.2 Sites 11 – 22: Large Sites

Site numbers 11 – 22 are considered the ‘large sites’ as their areas are between 6,100 m<sup>2</sup> and 200,000 m<sup>2</sup>.

### 3.2.1 Stonebridge Meadow 1

**Site number:** 11

**Area:** 6,100m<sup>2</sup>

**UKHabs code:** Various: not surveyed at this level

**Biodiversity value:** high

The north side of the River Kennet. To the north of the site is an allotment.

There is a small beach giving access to the River Kennet. A boardwalk runs alongside the river, giving access across the northern site towards the east where willows and alder encroachment creates a scarce habitat highly suited for birds. Much of the site could not be surveyed as access was limited to this walkway. However, as Stonebridge Meadow is already well surveyed and intensively managed as a Nature Reserve<sup>7</sup>, this is not considered a limitation as exhaustive records are likely held for this site.

A plant list was not compiled, but a combined bird list for Sites 11 and 12 was compiled and can be found below in Section 3.2.2.



Image: A beach on the bank of the River Kennet



Image: Access to the habitat is restricted to a boardwalk

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.riverkennet.org/uploads/files/documents/Stonebridge\\_A4\\_Fold\\_2023.pdf](https://www.riverkennet.org/uploads/files/documents/Stonebridge_A4_Fold_2023.pdf)

### 3.2.2 Stonebridge Meadow 2

**Site number:** 12

**Area:** 61,794m<sup>2</sup>

**UKHabs code:** Various: not surveyed at this level

**Biodiversity value:** high

The south side of the River Kennet. A site walkover showed that the original map boundaries provided for the Phase One survey work were incorrect and did not include the east third of the site, so the maps have been updated since Phase One.

On the west, the site comprises wetland with boardwalk overlaying marshy reedbeds. Moving east, the site features species-rich grasslands across an area used for cattle grazing. To the far east there is a large area of scrub. Surrounding the site there are treelines and hedgerows, (including the increasingly rare black poplar), and many areas of scrub throughout. Tall grass and herb margins are also present.

Surveyors identified scat on top of old wood which was determined to most likely be from an otter. Fox scat and rabbit droppings were also identified on site. A wandering pond snail was identified on reeds on the riverbank.

Stonebridge Meadow was not subjected to a detailed survey as the site is already well surveyed and intensively managed as a Nature Reserve<sup>8</sup>, and therefore exhaustive records are likely held for this site. However, a bird list was compiled.

**The following bird species were recorded at Stonebridge Meadow (combined 1 and 2) during May 2024**

Common Name	Latin Name
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Canada goose	<i>Branta canadensis</i>
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>
Chiffchaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>
Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>
Kingfisher	<i>Alcedo atthis</i>
Mallard	<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>
Pheasant	<i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
Reed bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Sedge warbler	<i>Acrocephalus schoenobaenus</i>
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>



Image: Otter Scat by the River Kennet



Image: Ragged robin

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.riverkennet.org/uploads/files/documents/Stonebridge\\_A4\\_Fold\\_2023.pdf](https://www.riverkennet.org/uploads/files/documents/Stonebridge_A4_Fold_2023.pdf)

### 3.2.3 Bridge Street Recreation Ground

**Site number:** 13

**Area:** 7,400m<sup>2</sup>

**UKHabs code:** g4 modified grassland

**Biodiversity value:** low

An area of modified grassland featuring a children’s play park which undergoes regular mowing, leaving some unmown borders.

The River Kennet borders the site on the north, along with a mixed-age treeline. There are planted fruit trees on the east side (potentially part of a community orchard), and a mixed-species hedgerow (i.e. field maple, privet and wayfaring-tree, amongst others) around the boundary. A significant number of corvids suggest there is a rookery nearby.

#### Flora recorded at Bridge Street Recreation Ground during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Apple	<i>Malus</i> sp.
Bracken	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>
Cherry Laurel	<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>
Common ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Common reed	<i>Phragmites australis</i>
Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Field maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Great willowherb	<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Herb robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>
Privet	<i>Ligustrum</i> sp.
Rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>
Ryegrass	<i>Lolium</i> sp.
Stinging nettle	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
Wayfaring-tree	<i>Viburnum lantana</i>
White bluebells	<i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta alba</i>
Willow	<i>Salix</i> sp.
Wood dock	<i>Rumex sanguineus</i>



Image: The site is regularly mown



Image: Hedgerow and trees to the northwest corner



Image: A park is present on site

### 3.2.4 The Priory

**Site number:** 14

**Area:** 6,200m<sup>2</sup>

**UKHabs code:** g4 modified grassland

**Biodiversity value:** low

#### Flora recorded at The Priory during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Annual grass	<i>Poa annua</i>
Apple	<i>Malus</i> sp.
Bluebell (Spanish)	<i>Hyacinthoides hispanica</i>
Borage	<i>Borago officinalis</i>
Common plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Common sow-thistle	<i>Sonchus oleraceus</i>
Copper beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica purpurea</i>
Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Forget me not	<i>Myosotis sylvatica</i>
Foxglove	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>
Garlic mustard	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>
Green Alkanet	<i>Pentaglottis sempervirens</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Hedge bindweed	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>
Herb robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Horse chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>
Larch	<i>Larix decidua</i>
Mint	<i>Mentha</i> sp.
Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>
Pencilled cranesbill	<i>Geranium versicolor</i>
Privet	<i>Ligustrum</i> sp.
Rose	<i>Rosa</i> sp.
Ryegrass	<i>Lolium</i> sp.
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Stinging nettle	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
Walnut	<i>Juglans regia</i>
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
Willow	<i>Salix</i> sp.



Image: Most of the site is highly managed grassland

A small public park with some mature oak, horse chestnut and copper beech trees. Some of the horse chestnut trees presented with potential bat roosting features. To the northwest of the site there is a willow tree in poor condition. On the southwest border there are some ash trees which comprise part of a rookery. A grey squirrel was also observed foraging on site.

Towards the back (northwest) there is a significant flowerbed with ornamental planting, including species such as ornamental onion and elephants' ears, amongst native flowers such as pencilled cranesbill and borage. The flowerbed was popular with honeybees.

On the north side there is more ornamental (non-native) planting, such as silk tassel (*Garrya elliptica*) and roses. Overall, the site presents a mosaic of mown and unmown grassy areas.

The site is bordered on the east by the River Kennet.

#### Birds recorded at The Priory during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>
Jackdaw	<i>Coloeus monedula</i>
Long-tailed tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Nuthatch	<i>Sitta europaea</i>
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>



Image: A flowerbed at the rear of the site is popular with pollinators

### 3.2.5 Cooper's Meadow

**Site number:** 15

**Area:** 11,200m<sup>2</sup>

**UKHabs code:** g4 modified grassland and g3a lowland meadow

**Biodiversity value:** moderate

This site is situated between the Kennet and River Og. There is a children's play park on to the west, located within a managed area of modified grassland. The south is fenced off and presents a much more species rich grassland and floodplain meadow to the southwest of the site. Within this area there were some notable species such as wild angelica and pyramidal orchid.

Some horse chestnut trees on site presented with potential bat roosting features. There were some mammal tracks through the site akin to the size of a badger, deer or dog. A wren was seen nesting on site.

#### Flora recorded at Cooper's Meadow during May and June 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Alder	<i>Alnus glutinosa</i>
Common agrimony	<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>
Common bistort	<i>Bistorta officinalis</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
False watercress	<i>Apium nodiflorum</i>
Horse chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>
Lime tree	<i>Tilia cordata</i>
Meadowsweet	<i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>
Pyramidal orchid	<i>Anacamptis pyramidalis</i>
Reed sweet-grass	<i>Glyceria maxima</i>
Silverweed	<i>Potentilla anserina</i>
Stinging nettle	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
Water dropwort	<i>Oenanthe crocata</i>
Water forget-me-not	<i>Myosotis scorpioides</i>
Water iris	<i>Iris laevigata</i>
Wild angelica	<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>
Wild garlic	<i>Allium ursinum</i>
Willow	<i>Salix</i> sp.

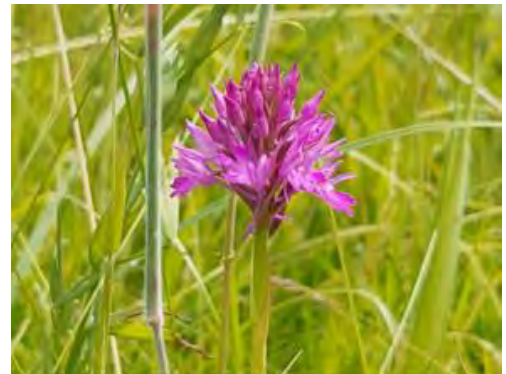


Image: Pyramidal orchid seen in June



Image: Floodplain to the west of the River Kennet

#### Invertebrates recorded at Cooper's Meadow during June 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Drone fly	<i>Eristali</i> sp.
Hover fly	<i>Syrphidae</i> sp.
Honeybee	<i>Apis mellifera</i>
Swollen thighed beetle	<i>Oedemera nobilis</i>



Image: g4 modified grassland separated from the floodplain via a fence

### 3.2.6 Salisbury Road Recreation Ground

**Site number:** 16

**Area:** 18,400m<sup>2</sup>

**UKHabs code:** g4 modified grassland

**Biodiversity value:** low

This site comprises a highly managed sports field, small play park, youth centre and skate park. The only flowering species are found around the small (<1m) margins of the site. There are scattered trees throughout.

A blue tit and wood pigeon were recorded nesting on site.

#### Flora recorded at Salisbury Road Recreation Ground during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>
Birch tree	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus sp.</i>
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Common plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Copper beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica purpurea</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Dove's foot cranesbill	<i>Geranium molle</i>
Hedge bindweed	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>
Herb robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Horse chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Stinging nettle	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>



Image: A skate park on the east side



Image: Grassy margins on the far east side

### 3.2.7 Elcot Lane

**Site number:** 17

**Area:** 18,600m<sup>2</sup>

**UKHabs code:** g4 modified grassland

**Biodiversity value:** low

The site consists of a large area of highly managed grassland. To the west there is an allotment, separated from the grassland by a line of juvenile trees – some of which were dead. There was a line of mature trees to the south, where a herb-rich margin was present.

A house martin was recorded on site.

#### Flora recorded at Elcot Lane during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Annual grass	<i>Poa annua</i>
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>
Birch tree	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Cherry Laurel	<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>
Corn speedwell	<i>Veronica arvensis</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Field maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>
Lawson cypress	<i>Chamaecyparis lawsoniana</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>



Image: Elcot Lane



Image: Allotments to the west



### 3.2.8 Tin Pit

**Site number:** 18

**Area:** 45,300m<sup>2</sup>

**UKhab code:** g3c other neutral grassland

**Biodiversity value:** low

The northern most area of the site has been cleared and presumably prepared for development.

South of the development area is a horse grazed floodplain meadow, situated immediately west of the (chalk stream) River Og. The meadow features common neutral grassland species. On the south side of Tin Pit there is a fenced area that slopes upwards in a southern direction. This area features large patches of nettles and is bordered on the south by a mature deciduous treeline which hosts some ash trees with bat roosting potential. Similarly to above, the grassland features common species and is of low biodiversity value.

Immediately north of the site is Bay Meadows Nature Reserve.

#### Flora recorded at Tin Pit during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
Broad-leaved willowherb	<i>Epilobium montanum</i>
Cocks foot grass	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
Common chickweed	<i>Stellaria media</i>
Common plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>
Ground ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Herb Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
Meadow cranes bill	<i>Geranium pratense</i>
Poplar	<i>Populus sp.</i>
Red clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>
Silverweed	<i>Potentilla anserina</i>
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Stinging nettle	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>



Image: Grazed flood meadow to the left (north) and sloped fenced area to the left (south) – separated by a path



Image: Stood south, facing north across Tin Pit. The River Og is on the right.



Image: Ash tree on the south of Tin Pit has potential bat roosting features present

### 3.2.9 Existing Cemetery

**Site number:** 19

**Area:** 12,300m<sup>2</sup>

**UKHabs code:** g4 modified grassland

**Biodiversity value:** low

The site comprises a used cemetery, which is highly managed (mown) – leaving some grassy margins and patches throughout which support some woodland species. The site is bordered on the south by young hedge species like holly, hawthorn and privet. A large beech tree on the southwest shades woodland species such as bluebells, wood dock and lesser celandine. The beech hedgerow along the west also includes woodland species such as wood avens and red campion. There is a large oak tree on the far north of the site, and a line of lime trees through the centre of the site from west to east.

#### Flora recorded at Existing Cemetery during May 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Annual grass	<i>Poa annua</i>
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>
Bluebell (Spanish)	<i>Hyacinthoides hispanica</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus sp.</i>
Bristly oxtongue	<i>Helminthotheca echioides</i>
Cleavers	<i>Galium aparine</i>
Common chickweed	<i>Stellaria media</i>
Common ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Common plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Elderflower	<i>Sambucus niger</i>
Field maple	<i>Acer campestre</i>
Forget me not	<i>Myosotis sylvatica</i>
Garlic mustard	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>
Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>
Greater celandine	<i>Chelidonium majus</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Herb robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Lesser celandine	<i>Ficaria verna</i>
Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>
Pinnate coralroot	<i>Cardamine heptaphylla</i>
Privet	<i>Ligustrum sp.</i>
Ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>
Red campion	<i>Silene dioica</i>
Rosebay willowherb	<i>Chamerion angustifolium</i>
Rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>
Spear thistle	<i>Cirsium vulgare</i>
Spotted medick	<i>Medicago arabica</i>
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
Wood avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>
Wood dock	<i>Rumex sanguineus</i>
Wood spurge	<i>Euphorbia amygdaloides</i>



Image: Highly managed grassland within the existing cemetery



Image: Oak tree and margins on the north of the site



Image: Existing cemetery bordered by mature trees

### 3.2.10 Victorian Cemetery

**Site number:** 20

**Area:** 9,300m<sup>2</sup>

**UKHabs code:** g4 modified grassland and g3c other neutral grassland

**Biodiversity value:** low to medium

#### Flora recorded at Victorian Cemetery during May and June 2024

Common Name	Latin Name
Bittersweet	<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>
Bluebell (Spanish)	<i>Hyacinthoides hispanica</i>
Bracken	<i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>
Bramble	<i>Rubus sp.</i>
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Bugle	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>
Cedar of Lebanon	<i>Cedrus libani</i>
Cherry Laurel	<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>
Cocks foot grass	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
Common ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Enchanters nightshade	<i>Circaea lutetiana</i>
Forget me not	<i>Myosotis sylvatica</i>
Foxglove	<i>Digitalis purpurea</i>
Foxtail grass	<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>
Garlic mustard	<i>Alliaria petiolata</i>
Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>
Green Alkanet	<i>Pentaglottis sempervirens</i>
Hart's tongue fern	<i>Asplenium scolopendrium</i>
Hedge woundwort	<i>Stachys sylvatica</i>
Hemlock water dropwort	<i>Oenanthe crocata</i>
Herb Robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Lady phacelia	<i>Phacelia tanacetifolia</i>
Lime tree	<i>Tilia cordata</i>
Meadow cranes bill	<i>Geranium pratense</i>
Ox-eye daisy	<i>Leucanthemum vulgare</i>
Prickly sow thistle	<i>Sonchus asper</i>
Privet	<i>Ligustrum sp.</i>
Rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>
Silver birch	<i>Betula pendula</i>
Sterile brome grass	<i>Anisantha sterilis</i>
Stinging nettle	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
Timothy grass	<i>Phleum pratense</i>
Water figwort	<i>Scrophularia auriculata</i>
Wood avens	<i>Geum urbanum</i>
Yew	<i>Taxus baccata</i>

A significant area of tall, herb rich neutral grassland - with large unmown areas separated by mown pathways. Some grave plots featured wildflower seed sowing where pollinators were observed feeding on *Phacelia tanacetifolia*.

There were areas of deadwood around the site which promotes insect activity, and the mature Cedar tree presents with high roosting suitability for bats. The site is bordered on all sides by mature hedgerows which promote ecological connectivity. The site is particularly suitable for nesting birds, hedgehogs and bats, but the presence of dominant grasses reduces the potential for flowering plants to thrive.



Image: The cedar tree has bat roosting potential



Image: Mown pathway

**Invertebrates recorded at Victorian Cemetery during June 2024**

Common Name	Latin Name
7 spotted lady beetle	<i>Coccinella septempunctata</i>
Common carder bee	<i>Bombus pascuorum</i>
Dagger fly	<i>Empidoidea sp.</i>
Dock bug	<i>Coreus marginatus</i>
Doli fly	<i>Dolichopus sp.</i>
Green bottle	<i>Lucilia sericata</i>
House fly	<i>Musca domestica</i>
Pollen beetle	<i>Meligethes species</i>
Swollen thighed beetle	<i>Oedemera nobilis</i>



Image: Deadwood under the large Cedar tree



Image: Carder bee collecting pollenating Lady phacelia



Image: Tall grasses & flowers around gravestones

**3.2.11 The Common 1**

**Site number:** 21

**Area:** 2,200m<sup>2</sup>

**UKHabs code:** g4 modified grassland and g3c other neutral grassland

**Biodiversity value:** low

The north end of the site comprises modified grassland with horse chestnut and lime trees, and a privet hedge on the west. Moving south towards the centre of the site, the grassland remains similar, with a slight increase in species diversity. There is a sports pitch approximately halfway down the site. South of the sports pitch the grass species diversify further. Along the east side, parallel to the road, mature horse chestnut trees and lime trees feature some potential bat roosting features such as split and lifted bark.

The southern third of the site is much richer in grassland species. There is an orchard featuring pear, apple and quince. Yellow rattle is also present. The treeline along the west, heading south, presents a cover for a large margin of unmanaged scrub, dominated by cow parsley and nettles. There are some ash trees on the southwest margin which appear to be unwell.

**Flora recorded at The Common 1 during May 2024**

Common Name	Latin Name
Apple	<i>Malus</i> sp.
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
Borage	<i>Borago officinalis</i>
Broad-leaved dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Bush vetch	<i>Vicia sepium</i>
Cherry Laurel	<i>Prunus laurocerasus</i>
Common ivy	<i>Hedera helix</i>
Common plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Dove's foot cranesbill	<i>Geranium molle</i>
Elderflower	<i>Sambucus niger</i>
Fern	<i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>
Foxtail grass	<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i>
Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>
Ground elder	<i>Aegopodium podagraria</i>
Hawkbit	<i>Leontodon</i> sp.
Hedge bindweed	<i>Calystegia sepium</i>
Holly	<i>Ilex aquifolium</i>
Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>
Horse chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>
Lime tree	<i>Tilia cordata</i>
Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
Pear	<i>Pyrus communis</i>
Privet	<i>Ligustrum</i> sp.
Quince	<i>Cydonia oblonga</i>
Rowan	<i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>
Ryegrass	<i>Lolium</i> sp.
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
Yellow rattle	<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>



Image: Northwest corner of the site, east of the existing cemetery



Image: Orchard on the south of the site



Image: Margins on the southwest

**3.2.12 The Common 2**

**Site number:** 22

**Area:** 200,000m<sup>2</sup>

**UKHabs code:** g4 modified grassland, g3a lowland meadows and g3c other neutral grassland

**Biodiversity value:** low to moderate

The Common 2 is a large area of public ground, comprised mostly of modified grassland, presenting with large patches of higher distinctiveness grassland. The site is bordered along the west with a line of mature horse chestnut trees, featuring some potential bat roosting features such as lifted bark and split limbs, with the occasional lime tree also present. Moving up the west side of the site, heading north, there is a rugby pitch. North of this pitch there is an area of rough grassland of previously disturbed ground, featuring unexpected species such as yellow rattle and pignut, amongst others. Further north there is a golf course.

Moving south along the east boundary there were wide paths cut through species rich grassland and some sycamore trees. Within some of these grasses there were common spotted orchids. Along the southern boundary is a line of trees, with a patch of goats' willow. Overall, the site is a mosaic of managed and unmanaged areas, with varying biodiversity value across the site, with the north side being more species rich.

A bluetit was recorded on site, and a kestrel was observed hovering over the site during the June survey.

**Flora recorded at The Common 2 during May and June 2024**

Common Name	Latin Name
Beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica</i>
Brome grass	<i>Bromus</i> sp.
Bush vetch	<i>Vicia sepium</i>
Common knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>
Common plantain	<i>Plantago major</i>
Common spotted orchid	<i>Dactylorhiza fuchsii</i>
Common vetch	<i>Vicia sativa</i>
Copper beech	<i>Fagus sylvatica purpurea</i>
Cow parsley	<i>Anthriscus sylvestris</i>
Crab apple	<i>Malus sylvestris</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Crested dogs tail	<i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>
Daisy	<i>Bellis perennis</i>
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Field woodrush	<i>Luzula campestris</i>
Germander speedwell	<i>Veronica chamaedrys</i>
Goat willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>
Gorse	<i>Ulex europaeus</i>
Hairy tare	<i>Vicia hirsuta</i>
Heath bedstraw	<i>Galium saxatile</i>
Herb robert	<i>Geranium robertianum</i>
Hogweed	<i>Heracleum sphondylium</i>
Hornbeam	<i>Carpinus betulus</i>
Horse chestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>
Lesser stitchwort	<i>Stellaria graminea</i>
Lime tree	<i>Tilia cordata</i>
Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
Oak	<i>Quercus robur</i>
Pignut	<i>Conopodium majus</i>
Ragwort	<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>
Red clover	<i>Trifolium pratense</i>
Ryegrass	<i>Lolium</i> sp.
Self heal	<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>
Sweet vernal grass	<i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>
Sycamore	<i>Acer pseudoplatanus</i>
Tormentil	<i>Potentilla erecta</i>
White clover	<i>Trifolium repens</i>
Yellow rattle	<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>
Yorkshire fog	<i>Holcus lanatus</i>



Image: Large mown area



Image: Unmown grassland



Image: Yellow rattle

**Invertebrates recorded at The Common 2 during June 2024**

Common Name	Latin Name
5 spot burnet moth	<i>Zygaena trifolii</i>
7 spotted lady beetle	<i>Coccinella septempunctata</i>
Broad centurion soldier fly	<i>Chloromyia Formosa</i>
Chimney sweeper moth	<i>Odezia atrata</i>
Common garden chafer	<i>Phyllopertha horticola</i>
Doli fly	<i>Dolichopus sp.</i>
Flesh fly	<i>Sarcophagidae</i>
Meadow brown butterfly	<i>Maniola jurtina</i>
Notch-horned cleg	<i>Haematopota pluvialis</i>
Roesel's bush cricket (nymph)	<i>Roeseliana roeselii</i>
Stripe-backed snailkiller	<i>Limnia unguicornis</i>
Swollen thighed beetle	<i>Oedemera nobilis</i>
Tan dance fly	<i>Empis livida</i>
Yellow shell moth	<i>Camptogramma bilineata</i>



Image: Common spotted orchid

## 4 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Marlborough Town, situated within the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, hosts various natural features and habitats that support a wide range of wildlife species, and has the potential to be enhanced for the benefit of animals, plants and humans alike.

The 22 sites assessed for this report vary greatly in size, location and features of interest. Below gives a summary of each of the sites biodiversity value and makes recommendations for each site, based on the Phase One and Phase Two works carried out between December 2023 and June 2024.

### 4.1 Small Sites

Sites 1 to 10 consist of small roadside verges, off-road grassy areas, or highly managed public gardens. All the sites comprise mostly g4 modified grassland and offer low biodiversity value.

Site 1-8 have the potential to be enhanced for insect species. Even the smallest of roadside verges can be enhanced with native planting via the creation of small flowerbeds or the use of wooden planters. The poor condition rose bushes currently planted on sites 3 and 4 could be replaced with native flower species. Sites 7 and 8 (The Green east and west) are relatively large areas and could be planted for pollinators and be enhanced with 'insect hotels' which could also add community interest. Being central to all the other Marlborough sites, planting on these sites could help build ecological connectivity across the town and create public engagement opportunities. For information on planting for pollinators see Section 4.3.

Site 9 (St. John's allotment) has limited planting capacity due to the land use. However, there are some plots on the southwest which appear to be unused and could be considered for planting for pollinators (see Section 4.3). Additionally, the Phase One study (NatureBureau, 2023) identified that slow worms have previously been recorded on the site. Slow worms can often be found in allotments and sites with tussocky grassland and woodland edges as they feed on invertebrates. Slow worms particularly like compost heaps

and log piles. The disused plots on site 9 could be utilised as an area for encouraging slow worm populations. The mature hedgerow here is of some value.

Site 10 (Wye House Gardens) is intensively managed and maintained on the west but has sparsely planted flowerbeds to the east which could be significantly enhanced with native planting (see Section 4.3). Additionally, the Phase One study (NatureBureau, 2023) identified that hedgehogs have been recorded on site. It is estimated that hedgehog populations have plummeted by around 80% in the past 50 years, so any opportunity to enhance the site for hedgehogs should be encouraged. Hedgehogs need shelter and security with places to rest and forage for food, preferring dense and low growing vegetation (i.e. small shrubs). The rear (north) of the site could be enhanced with nesting boxes which could be integrated into the earth and under logs to appear like natural burrows. Wye House Gardens is also situated near deciduous woodland – a habitat that is highly suited to bat roosting and foraging. The site could be enhanced for bats with the addition of bat boxes (see Section 4.5). Log piles and insect hotels would add interest and enhance biodiversity on the site.

## 4.2 Large Sites

Sites 11 and 12 (Stonebridge Meadow south and north) present with high biodiversity value and host notable flora and fauna. Stonebridge Meadows is intensively monitored and managed by a consortium of environmental partners and has won many awards for the activities and achievements related to this work, and therefore the sites are not given consideration for management and enhancement ideas within this report.

Site 13 (Bridge Street Recreation Ground) has little biodiversity value across the site. However, it is bordered on the north by the River Kennet, and the Phase One study (NatureBureau, 2023) identified that water voles have been recorded here. Although it is unlikely that this specific small stretch of the river is utilised by water voles (due to higher human disturbance), there are actions that can be taken to enhance river banks for water voles, including the creation of steep earth banks, encouraging dense growth of grasses and herbs on the banks and bank tops, the creation of tall, well-vegetated buffer strips to provide foraging habitat and refuge from predators, and the maintenance of bankside trees, hedges, reeds, and scrub patches to provide seasonal food and refuge habitat. The site is also bordered by deciduous woodland and is connected to the wider landscape via hedgerows and treelines – offering high value habitat for commuting bats. The site could be enhanced for bats with the addition of bat boxes (see Section 4.5). Additionally, the orchard could be maintained as a community orchard, with wildflower planting beneath the trees.

Site 14 (The Priory) was determined to be of low biodiversity value. However, there was a rookery identified on site, and the rear (northwest) flowerbed was particularly popular with honeybees. Additionally, the River Kennet borders the site on the east, and the Phase One study (NatureBureau, 2023) identified that brown/sea trout has previously been recorded here. The Priory would be suited to enhancement for pollinators and bats by planting up the flowerbeds with native flowering species, alongside the addition of log piles and insect hotels.



Image: A honeybee pollenating at The Priory



Site 15 (Cooper's Meadow) offers moderate biodiversity value. Continued grazing of the floodplain will help encourage flowering species and invertebrates, which leads to increased bat and bird activity. The Phase One study (NatureBureau, 2023) identified that water voles and hedgehogs have been recorded on site. Unlike Site 13, the river to the east of Site 15 is unlikely to be highly disturbed and may be more suited to enhancement for water voles. The site could be enhanced for bats with the addition of bat boxes (see Section 4.5).

Site 16 (Salisbury Road Recreation Ground) has very low biodiversity value and must remain highly managed to uphold its purpose as a recreation ground. However, the site could be enhanced via planting for pollinators. An area of the ground could be set aside and managed as a wildflower meadow (see Section 4.3). The Phase One study (NatureBureau, 2023) showed that hedgehogs have been recorded on or near the site, but the busy nature of the site would make it difficult to integrate hedgehog habitat unless an area to the east can be fenced off for dedicated enhancement for hedgehog foraging and nesting. Additionally, several bat species have been recorded on or near the site. The site could be enhanced for bats with the addition of bat boxes (see Section 4.5). Given its purpose as a recreational ground, biodiversity enhancement options could be considered that also further community engagement with the natural world.

Site 17 (Elcot Lane) also presents with low biodiversity value, but the proximity of Elcot Lane to Stonebridge Meadows means that the site should be considered of prime importance for biodiversity enhancement. Elcot Lane could be designed and divided into multiple areas (see below), a fenced area could be included to create a haven for wild mammals and birds as they utilise the site as a corridor between the northern Nature Reserve and surrounding residential areas. The dead trees should be replaced, with an appropriate watering regime implemented until they have established.

Figure 2 below gives a very basic idea of how Elcot Lane could be managed to introduce connectivity between the surrounding residential areas and Stonebridge Meadows via the creation of mature treelines and species-rich grassland areas. The northeast quarter of Elcot Lane would require fencing in to avoid disturbance to the site via pedestrians and dogs, but the fence could include small mammal ingress and egress opportunities via the installation of tunnels. The fenced area could be enhanced for harvest mice and hedgehogs in particular, as records for these species have been made locally (NatureBureau, 2023). The enhancement could also include sowing wildflowers for pollinators (see Section 4.3) and grassland reseeding for birds (see Section 4.4).

**Figure 2: Elcot Lane and its location in relation to Stonebridge Meadows. The design shows how the site could be enhanced with treelines (green) and grassland areas (yellow), creating ecological corridors and refuge for small mammals.**



Site 18 (Tin Pit) presents with low biodiversity habitat but is bordered on the east by the River Og and on the north by Bay Meadows Nature Reserve. Tin Pit is also connected to Stone Meadows Nature Reserve via the River Og and mature treelines. These factors mean that the site has the potential to act as a high value ecological corridor between Bay Meadows and Stone Meadows. Water voles, polecats and hedgehogs have been recorded on site (NatureBureau, 2023), whilst Bay Meadows notes the presence of otters, kingfishers and wild brown trout on their site, alongside bird species such as Blackcap, Corn bunting and Yellowhammer. The enhancement of Tin Pit for biodiversity is best carried out in partnership with the Wiltshire Wildlife Trust who will have intimate knowledge of the site and how species are using the local area.

Site 19 (Existing Cemetery) must continue to be managed for access and use, providing limited opportunity for enhancement. The treelines and hedgerows around the site give some biodiversity value and could be enhanced with the addition of bat boxes (see Section 4.5).

Site 20 (Victorian Cemetery) offers moderate biodiversity value, but has the potential for enhancement for invertebrates, bats and birds. The grassland areas which have not been managed for some time have resulted in grass species dominating. A rotational mowing scheme would result in these areas being cut back at different times so that flowering plants can establish themselves within the neutral grassland. The staggered approach means that the site could still provide some cover for ground mammals at all times, as the tall grass habitat is suitable for commuting species such as hedgehogs, badgers and amphibians. A mixture of mowing and wildflower sowing would greatly benefit invertebrate populations. The site could also be considered for grassland reseeding for birds (see Section 4.4). The site could also be enhanced for bats with the addition of bat boxes (see Section 4.5), and the deadwood piles should be kept in-situ.

Site 21 (The Common 1) has different biodiversity value from north to south. The north and centre are highly managed for public use (including a sports pitch), and there is very little potential for enhancement. The treeline along the east has some potential roosting features present and could be enhanced with the addition of bat boxes (see Section 4.5). The south of the site has been planted with an orchard and yellow rattle was present within the surrounding grassland. Yellow rattle can turn improved grassland into meadow by feeding off encroaching grasses and allowing more delicate, traditional species to push their way through. It is liked by pollinators and is recorded as a foodplant for a few insects, mostly moths, including the broad-bordered bee hawk-moth (*Hemaris fuciformis*) – a scarce moth, mainly of Central and Southern England. The south side of Site 21 could be sown with additional wildflower species to encourage pollinators (see Section 4.3).

The ash trees to the southwest of Site 21 appeared to be unwell and there should be an investigation to rule out ash die back, as remedial works may be required where there is public access if die back were to be the cause.

Site 22 (The Common 2) is the largest of all sites surveyed. It presents a mosaic of mown and unmown grassland and has the potential to be enhanced for invertebrates (and therefore bats and birds). The areas that present with notable flowers such as yellow rattle and pignut were popular with invertebrates. In fact, one of the species identified during June survey was the Chimney sweeper moth, which was likely only present as this species feeds on the flowers and seeds of pignut.

Similarly, the swollen-thighed beetle was present most likely due to the presence of umbellifers and ox-eye daisies and the Broad centurion soldier fly was present and known to favour the nectar of hogweed. Both of these species are prolific pollinators.



Image: Chimney sweeper moth (*Odezia atrata*) on the Common 2, July 2024

A rotational mowing scheme, like that recommended for Site 20 above, would decrease the domination of the site by rough grassland species and encourage native flowers. A mixture of mowing and wildflower sowing would greatly benefit the local biodiversity by providing increased habitat for pollinators. The site could also be enhanced for bats with the addition of bat boxes (see Section 4.5).

The frequent use of The Common 2 by dog walkers and public access from all aspects limits the potential to enhance the site for ground mammals. The site is not intimately linked to other sites in the area as the trees and treelines present are not continuous.

### 4.3 Planting for Pollinators

In the UK, traditional wildflower meadows have declined by more than 97% since the 1930s and there has been an estimated 60% decline in insects over the last 20 years. A wildflower meadow is a nature-friendly feature which is of great benefit to many pollinators and other wildlife, offering a rich mix of flowers for pollinators, grasses for butterflies and moths to lay their eggs on, and shelter for anything from grasshoppers and crickets, beetles, hedgehogs, and amphibians. In turn, the greater density of insects in a wildflower meadow provides food for birds and bats.

On the appropriate sites, wildflowers should be sown or planted among perennial grasses ready for spring/summer. This is then cut in late summer and kept short until early spring. Most meadow flowers are long-lived perennials such as red and white clover, ox-eye daisy, greater knapweed, cowslip, primrose, and bird's-foot trefoil, with some annual species like yellow rattle. Night-scented flowers (such as evening primrose, honeysuckle and jasmine) will help attract bat foodstuff, whilst growing plants that flower early and late in the season will support bats over spring and summer. Even the smallest bats can eat up to 3,000

insects in one evening, which means bats are drawn towards areas where insect populations are thriving. Where planting for pollinators is implemented, bat boxes should be considered too.

Rotational sowing/mowing (or grazing) will leave some of the site with tall grassy areas which can be important for small mammals. Importantly, pesticides should be avoided.

Other features that can be introduced around sites to encourage a growth in local invertebrate populations include log piles, ponds, and compost heaps.

#### 4.4 Grassland Reseeding for Birds

An effective way to rapidly improve grassland areas for birds would be to sow (by hand-broadcasting) areas of native bird food plants. Native wildflowers can be utilised to create a variety of different grassland habitats to support birds such as finches, sparrows and buntings. They will have the additional benefit of increasing invertebrate activity on the site, which will also help support local insectivorous birds and bats.

The addition of some non-invasive grain-bearing plants such as linseed, sunflower and quinoa can also provide an important food source for wild birds through the winter. Suitable seed mixtures and advice on management of them (which will depend on the mixture chosen) can be obtained from suppliers such as Brightseeds<sup>9</sup> who supply the Great Bustard Reintroduction project on Salisbury Plain.

#### 4.5 Bat Boxes

When a woodland is lacking in natural roost features (such as lifted bark, woodpecker holes, cracks, ivy cover etc.), bat roosting can be encouraged by mounting bat boxes on appropriate trees. It can take some time for bats to start using new boxes (particularly where there are plenty of roosting opportunities in the area), but the type of box used and its positioning can increase the chance of successful uptake by bats.

In general, bats prefer warm, dry spaces in the summer for rearing young, and cooler damper spaces in the winter for hibernation. Bat boxes should be draught proof and made from a thermally stable material such as untreated wood, ecostyrocete, woodcrete, brick or stone. There are many box designs available, but some of the most commonly used by Bat Group projects include:

Schwegler 1FF: Used by various bats, including Leisler's

Schwegler 1FD: Popular with noctules, Nathusius pipistrelles and brown long-eared bats'

Schwegler 2F: Popular with pipistrelle and Daubenton's bats

Vincent Pro Bat Box: Proven with at least seven species: barbastelle, Leisler's, common & soprano pipistrelle, brown long-eared, Natterer's, whiskered (confirmed), and possibly Brandt's

The orientation and location of mounted boxes are also important, and it is always best to provide several different options so that bats can choose the most appropriate temperature for their requirements. This often involved grouping several boxes around one tree, on different aspects. The Bat Conservation Trust offer detailed advice on bat box placement

Although lighting can be associated to increased invertebrate activity, many bat species are highly disturbed by artificial lighting – both at the roost and during feeding. The slower-flying, broad winged bat species have been shown to avoid commuting and foraging routes illuminated with a variety of different street luminaires such as long-eared bats, Myotis species bats (including Brandt's, whiskered, Daubenton's,

---

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.brightseeds.co.uk/>

Natterer’s and Bechstein’s), barbastelle bats and both horseshoe bat species. Consequently, these bat species are less able to forage successfully and efficiently, which may have an impact upon fitness and breeding success of some of Britain’s rarest bats. Whilst the fast-flying bat species (such as noctule bats, Leisler’s bats, serotine bats and pipistrelle bats) might forage more easily around light sources, the lighting depletes the surrounding dark areas of prey, and puts the bats at risk of predation

Any bat boxes (and areas planted for pollinators) should be away from sources of artificial lighting, insofar as possible.

#### 4.6 Long-term Monitoring

The main limitation to this study was the limited species lists obtained during the months of May and June. At other times of year, additional flora and fauna would likely be recorded. Table 2 below recommends a survey schedule which would allow the sites to be sufficiently monitored for improved management.

**Table 2: Survey Schedule aimed at building significant site data**

Month of Survey	Survey Type
May	Habitat Survey: flowering plants Survey for amphibians, birds, ground mammals, invertebrates and reptiles Ground Level Tree Assessment for bats
July	Habitat Survey: Flowering plants Survey for amphibians, birds, ground mammals, invertebrates and reptiles Bat Nighttime Activity survey
September/October	Habitat survey: Fungi; late flowering plants Survey for invertebrates
December/January	Habitat survey Wintering bird survey

## 5 APPENDICES

### 5.1 The 22 sites and their designated numbers

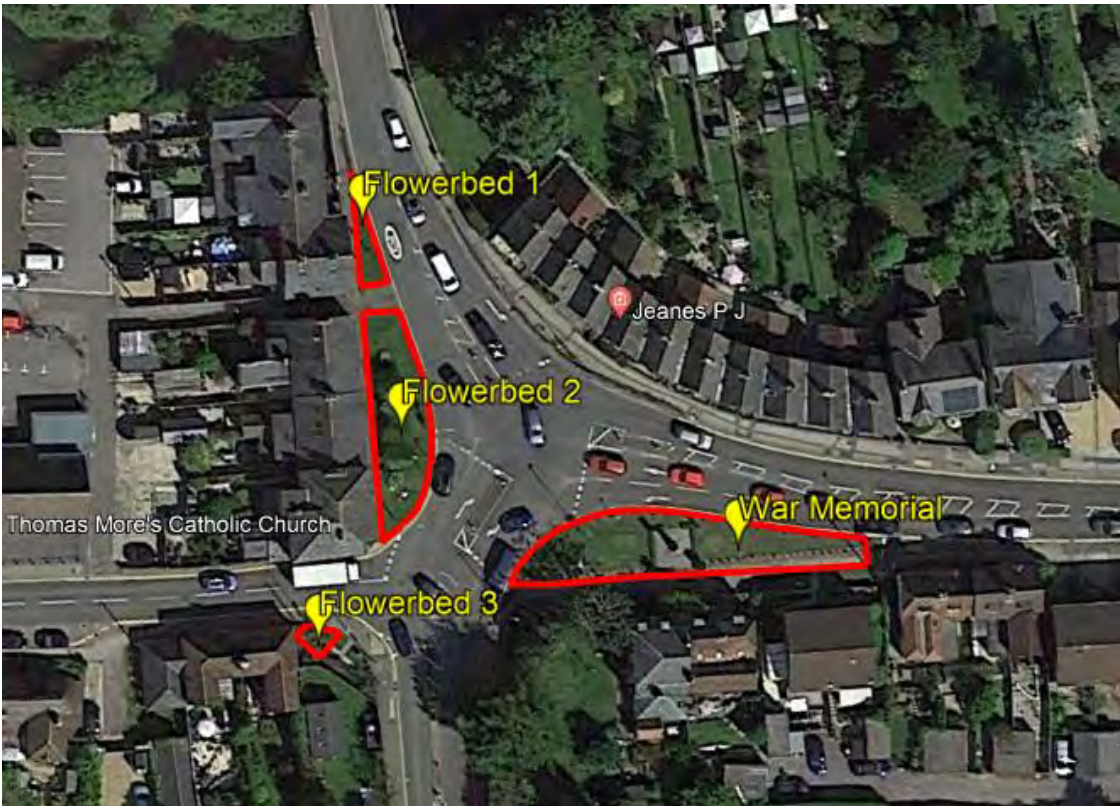


#### 5.1.1 Key

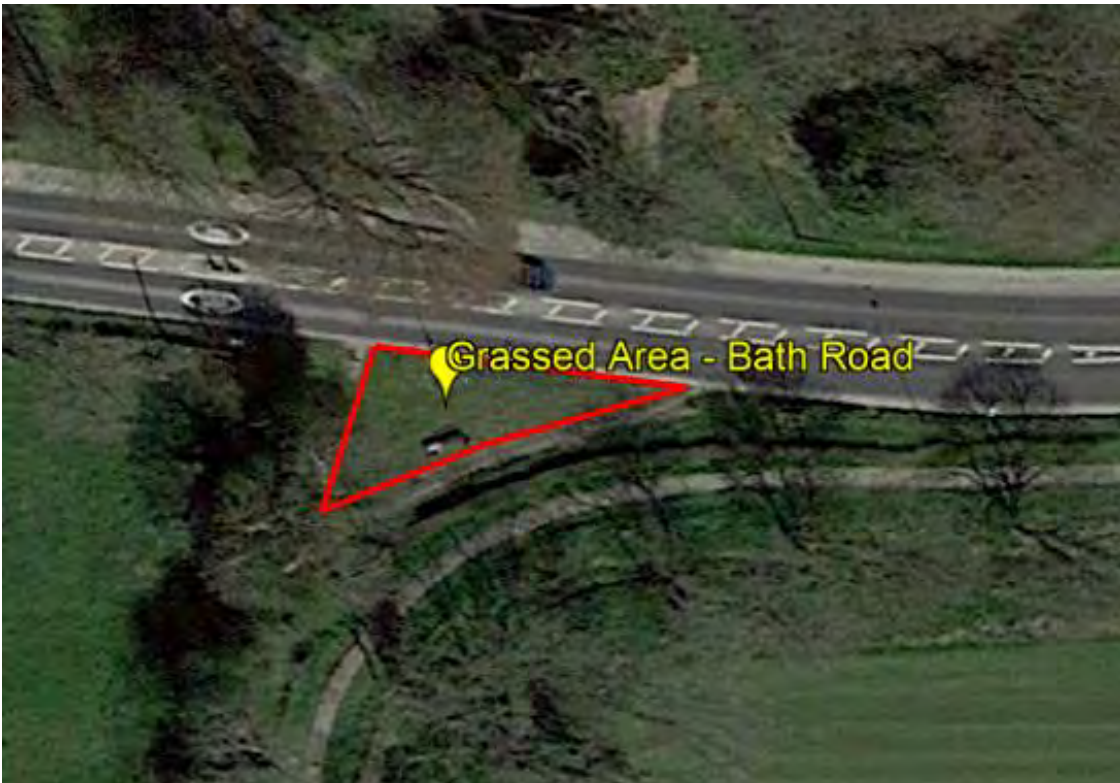
Number	Site Name
1, 2 and 3	Flowerbeds
4	War Memorial
5	Grassed Area – Bath Road
6	Orchard Close Play Area
7	The Green - East
8	The Green - West
9	St. John's Allotments
10	Wye House Gardens
11	Stonebridge Meadow 1
12	Stonebridge Meadow 2
13	The Recreation Ground – Bridge Street
14	The Priory
15	Cooper's Meadow
16	The Recreation Ground – Salisbury Road
17	Elcot Lane
18	Tin Pit
19	Existing Cemetery
20	Victorian Cemetery
21	The Common 1
22	The Common 2

## 5.2 Site Maps and Photos

### 5.2.1 Sites 1 – 4



### 5.2.2 Site 5



5.2.3 Site 6



5.2.4 Sites 7, 8 and 10





5.2.5 Site 9



5.2.6 Sites 11 and 12



5.2.7 Site 13



5.2.8 Sites 14 and 15



5.2.9 Site 16



5.2.10 Site 17



5.2.11 Site 18



5.2.12 Sites 19 and 20



### 5.2.13 Sites 21 and 22



## 5.3 Relevant Guidelines and Legislation

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines for Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. 2nd edition.

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2017). Guidelines on Ecological report Writing.

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2020). Guidelines for Accessing, Using and Sharing Biodiversity Data in the UK. 2nd edition.

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (2022). Code of Professional Conduct.

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017)

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/1012/contents/made>

National Planning Policy framework (2021) National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK ([www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 ([legislation.gov.uk](http://legislation.gov.uk))

Marlborough Town Council 2024/2025  
Amenities and Open Spaces Budget Report - Month 5

Good  
Bad  
Neutral

	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Budget	Variance Annual Total	Funds Available	% Spent	2025 26 proposed	Transfer to/from EMR	NOTES
<b>INCOME</b>								
1101 INCOME-CEMETERY	£8,344	£15,880	£7,536		52.5%	£15,880		
1100 INCOME-ALLOTMENTS	£86	£1,391	£1,305		6.2%	£750		Viability?
1102 INCOME-GOLF CLUB	£9,375	£22,500	£13,125		41.7%	£28,447		
1103 INCOME OPEN SPACES	£2,023	£9,075	£7,052		22.3%	£9,982		25/26 10% increase
1106 INCOME - SHOWMENS GUILD	£0	£2,438	£2,438		0.0%	£2,438		
1111 INCOME - RUGBY CLUB	£578	£578	(0)		100.0%	£578		
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>								
<b>CEMETERY</b>								
4036 OLD CEMETERY	£144	£500	£356	£356	28.8%	£500		
<b>ALLOTMENTS</b>								
4006 ST JOHNS TRUST	£250	£250	£0	£0	100.0%	£250		
<b>204 WORKSHOP</b>								
4027 INTRUDER ALARM	£339	£2,100	£1,761	£1,761	16.2%	£2,174		25/26 3.5%
4042 PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT	£98	£1,000	£902	£902	9.8%	£1,000		£380 order pending
4043 PICK-UP LEASE	£445	£600	£155	£155	74.1%	£600		
4044 VEHICLE TAX/INS.	£335	£400	£65	£65	83.8%	£415		25/26 3.5%
4045 VEHICLE PETROL/DERV	£3,386	£9,000	£5,614	£5,614	37.6%	£9,315		25/26 3.5%
4047 WORKSHOP TOOLS ETC	£1,953	£3,000	£1,047	£1,047	65.1%	£3,000		
4048 VEHICLE MAINTENANCE	£7,099	£12,000	£4,901	£4,901	59.2%	£12,420		
4050 WORKSHOP MISC	£553	£1,000	£447	£447	55.3%	£1,000		
4315 REFUSE COLLECTION	£2,056	£4,000	£1,944	£1,944	51.4%	£4,140		25/26 3.5%
4320 MOWER	£1,024	£4,200	£3,176	£3,176	24.4%	£4,200		
4323 MISTUBISHI LEASE	£941	£2,400	£1,459	£1,459	39.2%	£2,400		
4332 WESSEX MOWER LEASE	£2,756	£7,000	£4,244	£4,244	39.4%	£7,000		
4339 ISEKI TRACTOR LEASE 2023	£4,366	£10,000	£5,634	£5,634	43.7%	£10,000		
<b>210 OPEN SPACES</b>								
4038 MAINTENANCE	£2,375	£9,000	£6,625	£6,625	26.4%	£9,000		
4220 OPEN SPACES PLANTS	£2,558	£4,800	£2,242	£2,242	53.3%	£5,300		3.5% plus some perrenials need replacing
4223 PLAY EQUIP/MAINT/REPLACEMENT	£115	£3,500	£3,385	£3,385	3.3%	£3,500		
4314 AOS PROJECTS	£24,286	£10,000	(14,286)	(14,286)	242.9%	£10,000		19256 EMR Transfer Wye Hs Play area;actual Project spend £5095 Barrier/top soil/boulders/car park signs
4318 TREE SURVEY & WORKS	£1,385	£17,500	£16,115	£16,115	7.9%	£17,500		Treeworks order pending Manton, S.Meadow
4324 RTV/Husqvana	£1,665	£3,500	£1,835	£1,835	47.6%	£3,500		
4325 STONEBRIDGE MEADOWS	£0	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	0.0%	£1,000		
4327 ISEKI TRACTOR TG6490	£1,652	£7,000	£5,348	£5,348	23.6%	£7,000		
4330 MULTI PURPOSE MOWER	£624	£3,100	£2,476	£2,476	20.1%	£3,100		
4331 FRONT LOADER/BACK HOE LEASE	£1,048	£3,200	£2,152	£2,152	32.8%	£3,200		
4335 FREES AVENUE TREES	£0	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	0.0%	£1,000		2025 26 change to tree Planting
4337 SKATE PARK LIGHTING	£0	£500	£500	£500	0.0%	£500		
4401 NEW WORKSHOP	£27,319	£0	(27,319)	(27,319)	0.0%			27319 Workshop extension phase one ( in part).
4402 ISEKI RIDE-ON MOWER	£2,078	£3,000	£922	£922	69.3%	£3,000		
4403 KAWASAKI MULE 24	£2,269	£5,360	£3,091	£3,091	42.3%	£5,360		
4404 TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT	£0	£1,500	£1,500	£1,500	0.0%	£1,500		Barriers on order
<b>NEW</b>								
TRAILER						£5,200		
JUBILEE FIELD WALL						£10,000		
BIODIVERSITY WORK						£0		£1896 from 25/26 Projects
STAFF CONTINGENCY						£5,000		
<b>Income</b>	£20,406	£51,862	£31,456		39.3%	£58,075		
<b>Expenditure</b>	£93,120	£131,410	£38,290	£38,290	70.9%	£153,074		