

Notice of a meeting of the

Environment and Climate Committee

Monday 11th March 2024 at 7.30pm

All Saints Room, Civic Hall



Members of the Environment and Climate Committee are summoned to attend a meeting on Monday 11th March 2024 at 7.30pm.

Admission of the public and media

The Council welcomes members of the public to its meetings in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meeting) Act 1960.

Reports and minutes

We add reports and minutes to our website.

Recording, photographs, and filming

The press or public may audio-record, photograph or film meetings, or report from the meeting using social media. As such members of the public may be recorded or photographed during the meeting.

We ask that anyone wishing to record or photograph the meeting notifies the Town Clerk before the start of the meeting.

Public participation

The Council welcomes the public's involvement in meetings, which must be in accordance with our rules (Standing Orders 30 - 32 on a matter before the Council).

At the relevant time during the meeting, the Chair will invite members of the public to present their questions, statements, or petitions.

To find out about participation, please email the Deputy Town Clerk at lblake@didcot.gov.uk

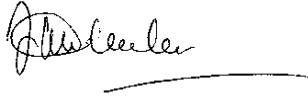
Agenda

1. To receive apologies
2. To receive declarations of interests
Members are reminded to declare any interests they may have on any item on this agenda in accordance with Didcot Town Council's Code of Conduct
3. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 15th January 2024 as a true and correct record **(attached)**
4. Questions on the minutes and review the progress report **(attached)**
5. To note the External Income and Expenditure to date for external works, as updated on 5th March 2024 (to follow on 6th March 2024)
6. To note the Outdoor Services Manager's report and recommendations to the Committee **(attached)**
7. To consider the report on a new three-year Tree Inspection Contract and the recommendations to the Committee **(attached)**
8. To note the update on the 'bollards' at Stubbings Field **(attached)**
9. To consider the request from Didcot Town Youth Football Club to install fencing at Edmonds Park **(attached)**
10. To consider Expressions of interest for SODC's Community Infrastructure Levy Pilot Grant Fund **(attached)**
11. To note the update on the GWP allotment sites report and recommendations to the Committee **(attached)**
12. To note the agreed notes from the Ladygrove Management Working Group meeting held on 21st September 2023 and the draft meeting notes from the meeting held on 25th January 2024 **(attached)**
13. To note the draft meeting notes from the Allotment Liaison Group meeting held on 22nd February 2024 and recommendations to the Committee **(attached)**

EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

Pursuant to Section 1 of the Public Bodies [Admission to Meetings] Act 1960 the committee will be asked to exclude the press and public from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

14. To consider the report regarding a memorial in the Kynaston Road Cemetery



Janet Wheeler
Town Clerk
5th March 2024

Voting members:

Cllr Gavin Roberts (Chair)
Cllr Kelly Morrison (Deputy Chair)
Cllr Stephen Cole
Cllr Andrew Jones
Cllr Anthony Hudson
Cllr James Broadbent
Cllr Luke Hislop

Nominated Substitute Members:

Cllr Chris Jennings
Cllr David Aragao
Cllr Hugh Macdonald
Cllr Zia Mohammed
Cllr Denise Macdonald
Cllr Mocky Khan
Cllr George Ryall

Didcot Town Council

Environment & Climate Committee
Monday 15th January 2024 at 7.30pm
All Saints Room, Civic Hall



DRAFT Minutes

Note: These minutes are subject to approval as a true and correct record by the next meeting of this committee.

PRESENT

Councillors:

Cllr G Roberts (Chair)
Cllr K Morrison (Deputy Chair)
Cllr A Hudson
Cllr A Jones
Cllr L Hislop
Cllr J Broadbent
Cllr D Aragao

Officers:

Mrs L Blake (Deputy Town Clerk [minutes])
Mr M Blake (Outdoor Services Manager - OSM)

53. To receive apologies

Apologies were tendered from the Town Clerk and Cllr S Cole. Cllr D Aragao attended as substitute.

54. To receive declarations of interest

No declarations of interest were received.

55. To agree the minutes of the meeting held on 13th November 2023 as a true and correct record

It was proposed by Cllr A Hudson, seconded by Cllr K Morrison, and **RESOLVED** to **APPROVE** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting, and note them as such.

All members agreed.

56. Questions on the minutes and review the progress report

The Committee noted the progress report – shown on the next page.

Cllr A Hudson asked about the progress of investigating installed bollards in Stubbings Land. The Deputy Town Clerk informed members that the developer had been contacted to ask about financial contributions but had not yet responded. Construction companies had also been contacted for quotes, but no responses had been received. The Deputy Town Clerk would contact SODC and OCC to see what companies they used for this type of project – this would be added to the next agenda.

Cllr A Jones asked about tree work and what size of trees the outdoor team could safely work with. The OSM explained that certain members of the team are qualified to fell smaller trees but can crosscut any size tree if it had already fallen. The size depended on the width of the tree. No members of the outdoor team are qualified to work on ropes.

Cllr G Roberts asked for an update on the outdoor team's vehicle. The OSM explained that the Ford Ranger is no longer used by the team due to the lease expiring and a new Ford Transit 350 Leader and been leased for three years and would be delivered on 17th January 2024.

There were no other questions.

Action	Responsible	Rating	Meeting 13.11.2023	Meeting 15.01.2024
Tidying up of the noticeboards	Officers	Amber	Due to staffing issues and holidays, work on tidying up the boards had stalled.	Two new members had joined the team in January 2024 so work on this would start.
Smokefree play park signs	Officers	Amber	Awaiting on new Facilities Officer to be appointed.	OCC had been contacted again at the beginning of January 2024. Schools would be contacted again to see if there was any more interest.
'Sow & Grow' – Community Planting project at New Road allotments	Officers	Amber	Ground preparation would commence w/c 27 th November 2023.	The ground preparations had been delayed due to staffing issues. Two new members had now started working for DTC so the work would commence shortly.
Zip wire inspections	Officers	Green	Awaiting quotes for some remedial works.	Still awaiting quotes – this would be chased up.
Bus shelter cleaning	Officers	Green	Accepted quote to clean the 6 shelters, once before the end of 2023, and twice in 2024.	5 of the 6 Town Council owned shelters were cleaned on 27 th November 2023 – noted at agenda item 7.
Install two benches in Loyd Rec	Officers	Green	Resolved to install 2 benches along the fence line at Loyd Rec.	The benches were installed on 14 th November 2023.
Repair the roundabout in Smallbone Rec	Officers	Green	Resolved to accept the quote from Infinity Playgrounds for the work.	Completed.
Replace springy, repair safety surface, and dismantle and re-grease the basket swing – Ladygrove Park	Officers	Green	Resolved to accept quote from Infinity Playgrounds for these works.	Completed.
Investigate costs to install chicanes/bollards at Stubbings Land	Officers	Amber	Resolved to investigate costs to install chicanes/bollards at this location	The Developer was contacted on 30 th November 2023 to ask if they could financially contribute. No response had been received. Companies had been contacted to quote for this work.

57. To note the External Income and Expenditure to date for external works, as updated on 10th January 2024 – emailed to members 11th January 2024

The Committee noted the updated figures, as of 10th January 2024.

58. To consider the Outdoor Services Manager's report

The Committee noted the Outdoor Services Manager's report and considered the recommendations.

Edmonds Park

23. The Committee was asked to consider whether to accept the second quote of £2,016.00 (inc VAT) to repair the roundabout and rehang the basket swing.

24. The Committee was also asked to approve the £1,280 quote to 'lift' the trees at the proposed Splash Park location, prior to any work commencing.

It was proposed by Cllr A Hudson, seconded by Cllr K Morrison, and **RESOLVED** to accept the quote from Infinity Playgrounds Ltd to repair the roundabout and rehang the basket swing in Edmonds Park and to also 'lift' the trees in Edmonds. The tree work would be carried out by Scoffell Landscapes Ltd at a cost of £1,280 (ex VAT).

All members agreed.

Ladygrove Lakes

32. The Committee discussed the Willow trees at the lakes and the proposed works to manage them in the future.

It was proposed by Cllr J Broadbent, seconded by Cllr K Morrison, and **RESOLVED** to accept the quote of £1,940 (ex VAT) for the work to 'cut back' the trees over hanging the pathway at the lakes. This would be taken from cost centre 310/3158 'Trees' and the work carried out by Scoffell Landscapes Ltd.

All members agreed.

Events

Edmonds Park

32. Achieve Oxfordshire Community Event – Saturday 15th June 2024, 9am-5pm

- Free to attend family event for the community

33. Oxfordshire Play Association Family Fun Day – Saturday 22nd June 2024, 9am – 4pm

- Free to attend family fun day

It was proposed by Cllr G Roberts, seconded by Cllr K Morrison, and **RESOLVED** to approve the dates for these events. There would be no charge for these events.

All members agreed.

34. It was noted by the Committee that two new starters were joining the outdoor team in January 2024, bringing the team back to full capacity.

59. To note that the cleaning of the Town Council's owned bus shelters was carried out on 27th November 2023

The Committee noted the report and the fact that the shelter opposite the Civic could not be cleaned due to the road closure - this would be done in April 2024.

60. To consider the Teen Play Provision for Edmonds Park report and the recommendations to the Committee

The Committee considered the report and the recommendations.

It was proposed by Cllr A Hudson, seconded by Cllr K Morrison, and **RESOLVED** to allow Officers to draft an 'invite to tender' document to be circulated to members before adding to the Government's Contract Finders website. This would ask companies to quote to install teen provision in Edmonds Park. It was also **RESOLVED** to allow Officers to apply for s106 monies to cover this project.

The meeting closed at 8.00pm

Signed: _____ (Chair)

Date: _____

Environment & Climate Committee Meeting 11.03.2024
Agenda Item 4- Progress Report

Action	Responsible	Rating	Meeting 15.01.2024	Meeting 11.03.2024
Tidying up of the noticeboards	Officers	Amber	2 new staff members had joined the team so work to tidy the boards would start asap.	Boards have been measured and new backing boards have been ordered.
Smokefree play park signs	Officers	Amber	OCC had been contacted again at the beginning of January 2024. Schools would be contacted again to see if there was any more interest.	No more interest has been received.
'Sow & Grow' – Community Planting project at New Road allotments	Officers	Amber	The ground preparations had been delayed due to staffing issues. Two new members had since started working for DTC so the work was due to commence.	Construction of the polytunnel is well underway. The frame is up and the access road/path has been completed. A talk was held on 28 th February at the Civic Hall to encourage people to 'sign up'.
Zip wire inspections	Officers	Green	OSM was still awaiting quotes.	Completed.
Investigate costs to install chicanes/bollards at Stubbings Land	Officers	Amber	The Developer was contacted on 30 th November 2023 to ask if they could financially contribute. No response was received. Companies had been contacted to quote for this work.	On the agenda for discussion.

08/03/2024

Didcot Town Council

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Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 08/03/2024

Month No: 11

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
301 External Works-Central Costs							
3101 Salaries - Works	183,900	209,789	232,000	22,211		22,211	90.4%
3102 Salaries - Works Er's NI	16,994	18,651	16,800	(1,851)		(1,851)	111.0%
3103 Salaries - Works Er's Superann	36,469	45,188	36,100	(9,088)		(9,088)	125.2%
3104 Events Staffing	0	0	2,200	2,200		2,200	0.0%
3105 Agency Staffing	0	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%
3108 Staff Travel	1,189	1,331	2,370	1,039		1,039	56.1%
3120 Protective Clothing	1,318	1,882	2,000	118		118	94.1%
3124 Telephone-Works	0	0	1,000	1,000		1,000	0.0%
3127 Subscriptions	100	55	150	95		95	36.7%
3140 Vehicle Insurance	2,993	3,008	2,932	(76)		(76)	102.6%
3141 Vehicle Fuel	7,898	6,019	6,000	(19)		(19)	100.3%
3144 Equipment & Small Tools	0	72	0	(72)		(72)	0.0%
3145 Machinery Costs	3,307	4,504	10,000	5,496		5,496	45.0%
3154 Maintenance	3,668	1,573	2,000	427		427	78.7%
9034 Ford Ranger Pick Up	3,229	907	3,863	2,956		2,956	23.5%
9039 Ransomes HR300 Rotary	6,332	3,397	5,110	1,713		1,713	66.5%
9045 Ransomes Parkway 3	3,814	1,539	1,200	(339)		(339)	128.3%
9062 John Deere Gator	7,123	5,194	2,000	(3,194)		(3,194)	259.7%
9063 ALKE ATX 340 ED	3,552	570	1,000	430		430	57.0%
9064 Ford Transit 350 - HW70NPK	0	545	0	(545)		(545)	0.0%
99160 Tfr from EMR Grounds Equip	(350)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
External Works-Central Costs :- Indirect Expenditure	281,537	304,225	327,725	23,500	0	23,500	92.8%
Net Expenditure	(281,537)	(304,225)	(327,725)	(23,500)			
302 Allotments							
3282 Allotment Rents	13,327	22,618	14,500	(8,118)			156.0%
32581 Grant Received	0	1,000	0	(1,000)			0.0%
Allotments :- Income	13,327	23,618	14,500	(9,118)			162.9%
3151 Water Charges	4,037	2,005	2,500	495		495	80.2%
3154 Maintenance	1,364	0	0	0		0	0.0%
3233 Allotment Competition	150	0	350	350		350	0.0%
3244 Allotment Maintenance	3,694	3,094	4,000	906		906	77.4%
3250 Allotment -Polytunnel	0	1,800	0	(1,800)		(1,800)	0.0%
Allotments :- Indirect Expenditure	9,245	6,899	6,850	(49)	0	(49)	100.7%
Net Income over Expenditure	4,082	16,719	7,650	(9,069)			

Continued over page

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 08/03/2024

Month No: 11

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
303 Cemetery							
3383 Cemetery Fees	18,070	23,714	18,000	(5,714)			131.7%
Cemetery :- Income	18,070	23,714	18,000	(5,714)			131.7%
3151 Water Charges	172	94	1,000	906		906	9.4%
3154 Maintenance	583	2,630	0	(2,630)		(2,630)	0.0%
3340 Rates - Cemetery	848	1,448	600	(848)		(848)	241.4%
99121 Tfr from EMR Cemetery Fund	(150)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
Cemetery :- Indirect Expenditure	1,454	4,172	1,600	(2,572)	0	(2,572)	260.8%
Net Income over Expenditure	16,616	19,542	16,400	(3,142)			
304 Edmonds Park							
3151 Water Charges	148	787	1,200	413		413	65.6%
3152 Electricity	972	6,776	1,800	(4,976)		(4,976)	376.4%
3154 Maintenance	11,087	8,772	10,000	1,228		1,228	87.7%
3155 Security	5,878	776	6,000	5,224		5,224	12.9%
3170 Waste Recycling	8,252	7,726	9,500	1,774		1,774	81.3%
3387 Pre-fab Toilets	19,531	0	0	0		0	0.0%
99137 Tfr from EMR Pre-Fab Toilet	(8,378)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
Edmonds Park :- Indirect Expenditure	37,491	24,836	28,500	3,664	0	3,664	87.1%
Net Expenditure	(37,491)	(24,836)	(28,500)	(3,664)			
305 Ladygrove Park							
3183 Lady Grove Park Income	4,602	200	3,000	2,800			6.7%
3185 Ladygrove Lakes Income	3,429	2,188	3,000	813			72.9%
Ladygrove Park :- Income	8,031	2,388	6,000	3,613			39.8%
3152 Electricity	0	(43)	0	43		43	0.0%
3154 Maintenance	7,563	7,252	7,000	(252)		(252)	103.6%
3163 Sandpit & Train	5,185	0	0	0		0	0.0%
3165 Ladygrove Lakes	9,249	8,088	0	(8,088)		(8,088)	0.0%
99025 Tfr to EMR Ladygrove Park	182	0	0	0		0	0.0%
99124 Tfr from EMR Ladygrove Lakes	(4,754)	(3,328)	0	3,328		3,328	0.0%
99126 Tfr from EMR L'grove Staging	0	(1,800)	0	1,800		1,800	0.0%
Ladygrove Park :- Indirect Expenditure	17,425	10,168	7,000	(3,168)	0	(3,168)	145.3%
Net Income over Expenditure	(9,394)	(7,780)	(1,000)	6,780			

Detailed Income & Expenditure by Budget Heading 08/03/2024

Month No: 11

Cost Centre Report

	Actual Last Year	Actual Year To Date	Current Annual Bud	Variance Annual Total	Committed Expenditure	Funds Available	% Spent
306 Loyd Park							
1195 Miscellaneous Income	10	0	0	0			0.0%
Loyd Park :- Income	<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>			
3151 Water Charges	(314)	(1,289)	550	1,839		1,839	(234.3%)
3152 Electricity	462	423	350	(73)		(73)	121.0%
3154 Maintenance	3,301	44,121	0	(44,121)		(44,121)	0.0%
99120 Tfr from EMR Building Repair	0	(43,450)	0	43,450		43,450	0.0%
99138 Tfr from EMR Play Areas	(1,246)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
Loyd Park :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>2,203</u>	<u>(194)</u>	<u>900</u>	<u>1,094</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1,094</u>	<u>(21.6%)</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(2,193)</u>	<u>194</u>	<u>(900)</u>	<u>(1,094)</u>			
308 Other Parks & Recreation Areas							
3179 Carbon Return Income	0	2	0	(2)			0.0%
Other Parks & Recreation Areas :- Income	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(2)</u>			
3154 Maintenance	22,729	3,100	5,500	2,400		2,400	56.4%
3166 Millennium Wood Upkeep	514	2,985	3,000	15		15	99.5%
99134 Tfr from EMR Community Project	(3,695)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
Other Parks & Recreation Areas :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>19,548</u>	<u>6,085</u>	<u>8,500</u>	<u>2,415</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2,415</u>	<u>71.6%</u>
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(19,548)</u>	<u>(6,083)</u>	<u>(8,500)</u>	<u>(2,417)</u>			
309 Play Areas							
3149 Bark Top-up	2,084	1,033	3,000	1,967		1,967	34.4%
3153 Play Equipment Maintenance	29,357	28,898	25,000	(3,898)		(3,898)	115.6%
99128 Tfr from EMR CiL	(7,132)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
99134 Tfr from EMR Community Project	(3,287)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
99138 Tfr from EMR Play Areas	(11,647)	0	0	0		0	0.0%
Play Areas :- Indirect Expenditure	<u>9,374</u>	<u>29,931</u>	<u>28,000</u>	<u>(1,931)</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>(1,931)</u>	<u>106.9%</u>
Net Expenditure	<u>(9,374)</u>	<u>(29,931)</u>	<u>(28,000)</u>	<u>1,931</u>			
Grand Totals:- Income	39,438	49,722	38,500	(11,222)			129.1%
Expenditure	378,278	386,121	409,075	22,954	0	22,954	94.4%
Net Income over Expenditure	<u>(338,840)</u>	<u>(336,400)</u>	<u>(370,575)</u>	<u>(34,175)</u>			
Movement to/(from) Gen Reserve	<u>(338,840)</u>	<u>(336,400)</u>					

Didcot Town Council

Environment and Climate Committee

11th March 2024 at 7.30pm

Report author: Mike Blake



Outdoor Services Manager's Report

Introduction

1. This report updates the Committee on all matters regarding the Outdoor Services.

Recommendation

2. The Committee is asked to review the report, note any updates, and consider decisions and actions to be made, where required.

Allotments – General

3. Allotment liaison group met on the 22nd February 2024. Notes from this meeting will be discussed later at agenda item 13.

New Road allotments

4. The Polytunnel is now completely constructed, after a lot of hard work by the outdoor team. Please see photos on next page. We decided to go with a fully accessible pathway rather than rubber matting. The path edges were made by using the trees that had to be felled last year in Millennium Woods. We decided to recycle this wood as the team felt it would be more in keeping with the area and gives the site a bit of character. The polytunnel will be used to grow future plants and flowers.



Cockcroft allotments

5. The fence at this site was damaged in the strong winds at the beginning of the year. This was fixed in house by the outdoor team rather than getting a contractor in to carry out this work. The cost of the replacement post and materials to do this came in under £500 which is under the Outdoor Services Manager's spending powers.



6. Two new troughs have been installed on this site due to tenants having issues accessing water for the top corner for a couple of years now. This was installed and plumbed in by the outdoor team and came under the OSM's spending power.

Cemetery

7. There have been five full burials and one cremated remains interments since the last meeting of the Environment and Climate Committee.
8. Emergency tree work was required in the cemetery, this again was down to strong winds. A branch had snapped and was too high for the outdoor team to deal with. The public footpath ran alongside the school - so we had to act this was done on the grounds of health and safety.

9. The maintenance of the cemetery has commenced we wanted to get this looking good for Mothering Sunday. Maintenance is planned every 2-3 weeks going forward.

Civic Hall

10. The Civic Hall held an open day for a volunteer gardening group, the idea behind this is for this group to use the polytunnel to grow plants from seed to help enhance areas of Didcot.

Parks – General

11. Grass cutting and maintenance should start last week of March this is obviously weather depending as we are struggling to get vehicles on certain areas.

Smallbone Rec

12. A replacement panel has had to be purchased at a cost of £688.00 + VAT, for the damaged panel in the park. We have gone for a slightly different panel to what was there originally as the panel has been vandalised twice before. To replace like for like would have cost between £1,500-£1,800 + VAT.



Loyd Rec

13. Didcot Casuals have taken over the weekly pitch marking at Loyd Rec. The Outdoor team will continue to do the initial pitch marking at the beginning of each season for the duration of the usage agreement.

Great Western Park Drive

14. Unfortunately, this park has suffered a bit of vandalism with the remaining springy being snapped. I have met with a playground company to come up with different ideas to replace this piece of equipment. Quotes will be shared once received.

Edmonds Park

15. Emergency tree work had to take place on one of the London planes in the carpark due to being damaged in the strong winds. The tree was caught on another tree, so this had to be dealt with under health and safety at a cost of £1,200.00 + Vat.
16. The tender for teen play should have been uploaded on the Government's Contract Finder website, by the time this meeting is held. There is £33,000 of s106 monies allocated for this project and the Council resolved to increase this cost by additional £17,000 at their meeting on 4th March 2024. This now means that DTC has a budget of £50,000 to create a new and exciting teen area in Edmonds Park.
17. The Outdoor planted 60 Photinia Red Robin shrubs along the mound on Park Road. These will eventually grow into a hedge and help mask the lights at the new pavilion for the adjacent residents.
18. The Conifer Hedge along the tennis courts was removed late last year. A bunding was put in place ready for wildflower seed planting. However, it was felt that the view of the building adjacent to the tennis court was a bit overpowering. The decision has been made to put some more Photinia Red Robins along the top this which will match those already planting along Park Road. The rest of the mound will be planted up will seasonal planting, so residents will be able to enjoy the flowers at different times of the year.
19. The tennis courts have been power washed and treated for moss. Comments have been received of how good they look. A new net has been installed, as has new basketball hoops. The court lines will be repainted once the paint has been purchased.

Ladygrove Park

20. The bark play areas in Ladygrove need topping up. I have received a quote of £1,324.80 (inc VAT) for 20 tonnes of play grade bark. This will be taken from cost centre 309/3149 'Bark Top-up'. There is currently £1,967 remaining in this budget.

Recommendation

21. The Committee should consider accepting the quote for 20 tonne of play grade bark at a cost of £1,324.80 (inc VAT).

Ladygrove Lakes

22. Work has continued at Ladygrove Lakes this year. One of the paths have been relayed, this was kindly paid for by the Fishing Club. The overgrowth around the lakes has also been cut back. The big lake has had 5 swims replaced leaving only a few left to do. The small lake has had the old staging removed leaving a platform for the ducks to sit on - human access to this has been removed. There are also two new duck houses installed on the islands of the small lake, one of which has been named

Duckingham Palace. There was also a steel railing removed from the platform which the team have reinstalled on the other side of the lake as a safety barrier.

23. The water levels of both lakes are looking good, this is the highest I have seen the lakes. Water testing has continued, and levels look to be good.
24. The Canadian Geese are back at the lakes and continuing to cause a nuisance. I have recently had an email from a concerned resident of Ladygrove who has pointed out that the Geese's anti-social behaviour continues to be a problem. I responded to the resident and promised we would discuss options of deterring them at the E&C meeting.

Recommendation

25. The Committee is asked to consider options of deterring geese at Ladygrove Lakes, due to complaints being received by residents.

Events

Edmonds Park

26. SODC Xplorer Orienteering Event – Wednesday 3rd April 2024, 9am – 1pm
- Free to attend family event for the community.
27. SODC Xplorer Orienteering Event – Tuesday 20th August 2024, 9am – 1pm
- Free to attend family event for the community.

Ladygrove Park

28. Didcot 5 mile run and 2-mile fun run – Sunday 7th July 2024 – 7am – 12.00 midday
- Didcot 5-mile road race and 2-mile fun run organised by the Didcot Runners – participants pay to attend. This will be the sixteenth year of the race.
 - The E&C Committee resolved to charge Didcot Runners £200 for this event in 2023 (minute 51 of the 13th March 2023 meeting) provided that they could supply DTC with a statement confirming all proceeds from the event would go to registered charities. The Town Clerk also suggested that the organisers apply for Grant Aid to cover the charges.
29. SODC Xplorer Orienteering Event – Tuesday 6th August 2024, 9am – 1pm
- Free to attend family event for the community.

Ladygrove Lakes

30. Wildlife Trusts – Saturday 13th and Sunday 14th April 2024 – 10am – 4pm
- "In the past" DTC have apparently allowed The Wildlife Trusts to visit the lakes with their pop-up displays to promote the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trusts.
 - Their stall will promote the work of the Trusts and supply information on wildlife

gardening, Children's Wildlife Watch Club, volunteering, and membership with the Trust.

Update on other events

31. Elite Youth which were due to hold a primary school football tournament at Edmonds Park earlier in the year have had to re-arrange for the 14th March 2024 due to adverse weather.
32. Due to unforeseen circumstances, Lowland Rescue Oxfordshire have had to postpone their training session at the lakes. This will be re-arranged for later in the year.

Recommendation

33. The Committee is asked to consider and approve the dates for the events. Four of the applications are free to attend and should not incur a fee. However, members should consider what charges, if any, should be payable for the Didcot 5 event (*the charges from 1st April 2024 for land hire is up to £300 for Charities and £360 for Commercial hire per day*).

Staffing

34. Four members of the outdoor team including myself completed a welding course at the end of January. All members of the team will complete their 'Working at Heights' refresher on 6th March 2024 and some staff members that need it are doing their first aid courses and refreshers w/c 11th March 2024.
35. One member of the team is due to do his tree felling course.
36. Three members of the team are attending a Memorial Management course in April. The practical side of this course will be taking place in our cemetery.

Machinery

37. The outdoor team has purchased some new machinery which includes two new mulching mowers and two new strimmers. Some of the equipment it is replacing is over 5 years old. Any parts we can keep we will and use them as spares. This equipment came at a cost of £2,460.00 + VAT.
38. Both ride on mowers have had their annual services and the tractor has been booked in for its service, the date of which will be confirmed.
39. The Alke had its service and work was needed this was authorised and came at a cost

of, £2130.77 + VAT.

40. As four members of the team have completed the welding course, we are now looking at getting some better welding equipment. We already have a basic welding gun which will do a small weld, however, there is a welding machine that would cover all the welding the team need to cover in house.

The machine is a Kemppi Minarcmig 200, which is gasless but comes at a cost of between £1,200-£1,500. In addition to this, the team would need to purchase a breathable mask. These range in price but are roughly £500.

Recommendation

41. The Committee should consider this purchase so that the outdoor team can repair and weld more items in house. It is my recommendation for the Committee to approve a purchase of up to £2,000 on the new equipment and relevant PPE. This cost would be taken from cost centre EMR 360 'Groundskeeping Equipment' (current balance £5,006.17).

Environment and Climate Committee

11th March 2024

Report Author: Lucy Blake



Tree Management Contract

Introduction

1. This report asks the Committee to consider entering a new 3-year contract with ODS to carry out the inspections of all Town Council owned and managed trees.

Background

2. Didcot Town Council contracts out the main inspections of all trees to an outside specialist, to ensure the trees are thoroughly inspected. This then allows the Council to keep accurate and up to date data on all Town Council owned and managed trees.
3. There are a few members of the outside team who are trained to carry out visual, basic tree inspections but their knowledge does not allow them to carry out the in-depth assessments which is needed to ensure the safety of all the trees.
4. The Town Council's most recent tree specialist who carried out the tree inspections, has now retired and the Council needs to arrange another contractor to carry out these vital inspections.
5. Oxford Direct Services (ODS) is a limited company who specialises in building homes and maintaining streets, parks, and properties. They work with local authorities, businesses, schools, universities, and residents across the county.
6. ODS provided the Town Council with a quote to carry out the Tree Management over a 3-year period. This would include inspecting all the trees owned and managed by Didcot Town Council and creating an asset database with all the details onto Ezytreev management system.
7. The quote for the whole 3-year period is shown on the next page.

To consider entering a new 3-year contract for Tree Management

SERVICE	DESCRIPTION	PRICE
Tree Management	Tree survey day rate (excluding VAT)	£300.00
Tree Management	Estimated 25 days to upload and record asset details onto Ezytreev management system (ex VAT)	£7,500.00
SUBTOTAL		£7,800.00
VAT		£0.00
TOTAL		£7,800.00

8. This works out at £2,600 per year ex VAT. The information collated by ODS would be made available to DTC - any issues would be highlighted.
9. Depending on the severity of any immediate issues, the work could be undertaken by the Town Council's outdoor team, or ODS. This would obviously attract an additional fee should the work be above what the team is qualified to do.
10. As the inspection of the trees are done over a 3-year cycle, some trees are due to be inspected this year. A new contract needs to be entered into in the very near future.

Legal Implications

11. Didcot Town Council has a legal duty to ensure all trees are inspected and properly managed, to minimise any risks to members of the public.

Financial Implications

12. The Town Council has historically allowed £5,000 per year (cost centre 325/9031 Tree Management – Contract) to cover the cost of the tree inspection contract and any remedial works resulting from it.
13. The Town Council has agreed a £5,000 Tree Management budget for the 2024-2025 financial year.
14. The proposed contract works out at £2,600 per annum, meaning there would be £2,400 remaining each year to cover any additional work needed to be done to the trees, resulting from these inspections.

Risk Implications

15. Didcot Town Council have a duty to ensure all trees are regularly inspected and kept safe.

To consider entering a new 3-year contract for Tree Management

Recommendation

16. The Committee should consider this quote and decide whether to enter a new 3-year contract with ODS at a cost of £7,800 ex VAT.

Environment and Climate Committee

11th March 2024



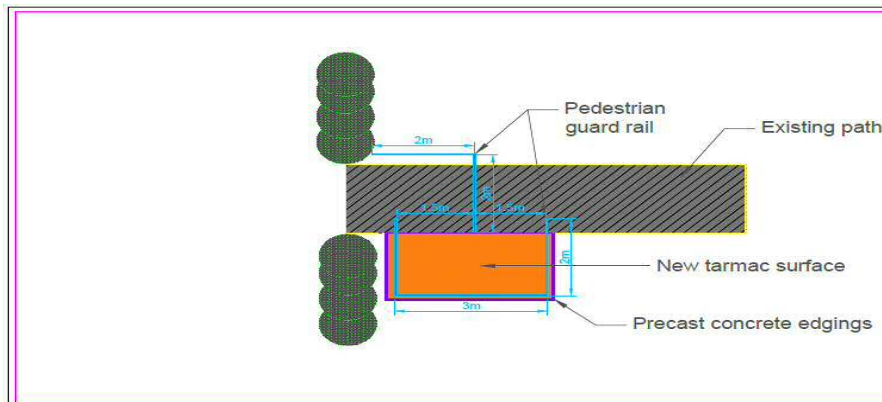
Report Author: Lucy Blake

Bollards at Stubbings Land - update

Update

- Officers were asked at the last meeting of the Environment and Climate Committee to update members on the progress of investigating the cost to install bollards at the entrance to Stubbings Land (also known as Three Fields) from Bluebell Lane, to slow down cyclists and minimise risks to pedestrians in the area.
- Officers met with a representative from one company on Friday 9th February 2024 where they discussed the issues. A quote to install a pedestrian barrier and to create a 1.5m path (which could be extended to 2m) was provided on 21st February 2024:

Description	Total
Install new section of tarmac path	£4,798.65
Supply & install pedestrian barrier to create a 1.5m path (can be extended to 2m)	



General Arrangements		SCALE 1:100
Date: 20/02/2024	Project: Three Fields Path	

- Other companies have been contacted and quotes have been requested. Members will be updated once the quotes have been received and a full report on this will be presented at the next Environment and Climate Committee meeting.

Outdoor Services Manager

Tel: 01235 812637

Email: mblake@didcot.gov.uk



Didcot Town Council contact details: 01235 812637 / council@didcot.gov.uk / www.didcot.gov.uk

Didcot Civic Hall contact details: 01235 512436 / civichall@didcot.gov.uk /



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From:

Sent: Monday, February 19, 2024 8:51 PM

To: Mike Blake <mblake@didcot.gov.uk>

Subject: Fwd: Fencing at Edmonds park

Hi Mike,

See below from the fencing contractor that I met last week at the park.

I'll do you a quick diagram to go with this as well, so it's clear what's happening, but it's as we discussed.

A&G are happy to provide there public liability insurance etc as well.

Many thanks

Sent from [Outlook for iOS](#)

From:

Sent: Monday, February 19, 2024 3:55 pm

To:

Subject: Fencing at Edmonds park

Price includes materials, labour and waste removal.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Many thanks

--



South Oxfordshire District Council Community Infrastructure Levy Pilot Grant Fund

Expression of interest guidance notes

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recognised that that council alone cannot fulfil all of the requirements across the district and to support in this the council allocates some of the infrastructure proportion to Oxfordshire County Council and to public healthcare infrastructure schemes supported by the Integrated Care Board (ICB).

The CIL Regulations set out that authorities must apply CIL funding for the provision, improvement or replacement of infrastructure to support development of its area and this can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure such as transport, education, cultural and leisure facilities, play areas, parks, green infrastructure and flood alleviation schemes.

This flexibility gives local authorities the opportunity to determine which infrastructure they need to deliver, providing that it supports the development in their area. For the purposes of this grant fund, the levy can be used to deliver new physical infrastructure and also to increase the capacity or reach of existing infrastructure, but is not able to cover costs for scoping or pre-planning of projects.

As part of the 2023/24 budget setting process, South Oxfordshire District Council has allocated £750,000 from the infrastructure proportion towards a CIL grant fund pilot scheme to support other eligible organisations to deliver projects for provision, expansion or improvement of infrastructure to support the growth the district.

As the council already allocates a significant amount of its CIL collection to Oxfordshire County Council for education, transport, libraries and household recycling centres and to public healthcare infrastructure supported by the ICB, applications from the county council or the ICB will not be eligible for funding under the pilot CIL grant fund scheme.

The CIL grant fund is a pilot scheme which will be open to town and parish councils, constituted community groups and not for profit organisations. Applicants will be able to submit a bid for a minimum of £75,000 and a maximum of £250,000 and will be required to show what percentage of the overall costs the CIL contribution will represent. In exceptional circumstances, where a project can demonstrate significant benefits to the community, consideration may be given to funding

will not be accepted.

- ii) Assessment of EOIs will be undertaken by the Infrastructure Obligations Team to ensure the applicant and project eligibility criteria are met.
- iii) Outcomes of the EOI submissions will be communicated with the applicants within 15 working days of the submission deadline. Applicants will be told they have either been unsuccessful and are not able to proceed further, or that they have been successful and are therefore invited to submit a full application.
- iv) Full Application stage – Applicants successful at the EOI stage will be invited to submit a full application and provided with an application form and guidance. Applicants will have six weeks to submit their application.
- v) Assessment of applications will be undertaken by the Infrastructure Obligations Team using an agreed set of criteria which will be set out in the application guidance. Applications will be scored against the criteria and recommended for approval in consideration of their score and the overall amount of funding being sought from the CIL Fund.
- vi) The final decision on award of funding will be made by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Property Assets and is subject to a scrutiny call-in period. It is anticipated that applicants will be advised on whether their projects have been awarded in September, however, this may be delayed should the application decisions be called-in. Successful applicants will be required to formally accept the award within four weeks of the offer date.
- vii) A funding agreement will be entered into between South Oxfordshire District Council and each successful applicant, and this will set out reporting requirements and agreed timeframes for fund payments.

The following information is to provide further guidance with completing the EOI form. **Expressions of Interest must be submitted by 5pm on the deadline date.** Applications should be completed through the online form provided. However, other formats can be requested from infrastructureobligations@southandvale.gov.uk.

If you have any questions about your project, completing the EOI form, or if your organisation has a project(s) for provision of infrastructure required to support growth in the district but does not meet the other criteria of the scheme i.e. the funding required is lesser or greater than the thresholds or the project cannot meet the required timeframes, please contact the Infrastructure Obligations Team at infrastructureobligations@southandvale.gov.uk or telephone 01235 422576 for guidance.

1. Applicant Details

Applicant eligibility

The scheme is only open to infrastructure projects that are to be delivered in the South Oxfordshire District Council area

Please provide all the details requested. It is essential that we have the contact details of an appropriate representative of the applicant organisation in order to advise the outcome of the EOI submission.

Please note that individuals cannot apply for CIL Funding. EOI's, and subsequent full applications, will only be accepted from Town and Parish Councils, constituted community groups and not for profit organisations. Applicants must be able to develop and deliver proposed projects themselves as South Oxfordshire District Council is not able to provide the resource to support groups to do this.

Who is not eligible?

- Oxfordshire County Council
- Integrated Care Board
- Profit based businesses
- Projects for residential buildings
- Groups who raise funds on behalf of or will improve/create facilities that will predominately benefit an ineligible organisation (for example PTA's?)
- Individuals (this includes making any payments to individuals on behalf of community groups)

Applicants who successfully bid for CIL funding will be expected to enter into a legal funding agreement with the council to ensure the money awarded is spent in accordance with the approved project proposal.

Applicants that are a community group or not for profit organisation will need to provide a copy of their constitution or equivalent governing documents with the EOI form.

2. Key Criteria

Project eligibility

Infrastructure requirement

Whilst the grant fund can only support projects that are for the provision, improvement or replacement of physical infrastructure that is required to support development of the district, qualifying applications can be for the delivery of a wide variety of infrastructure types. Examples of the type of projects that may and may not qualify are provided below.

PLEASE NOTE: Projects must demonstrate how they are supporting the demands of new development and, in some instances, eligibility for similar projects in different locations may differ.

Community Facilities (community centres, leisure and cultural facilities etc)

Eligible projects:

- Expansion of a facility
- Reconfiguration of a facility to allow alternative uses
- Delivery of a new facility
- Replacement of a facility that has reached the end of its useable life.

Ineligible projects:

- Maintenance and operation
- Installation of energy saving equipment such as solar panels*
- Works that will improve the facility but not provide additional capacity.

*Whilst provision of equipment such as solar panels would not qualify as a project in isolation, equipment of this nature can be included as part of a project that would increase the capacity of a facility.

Green Infrastructure (public open space, footpaths, play areas etc)

Eligible projects:

- Provision of new, or improvement of access to existing publicly accessible open space
- Enhancement of existing publicly accessible open space to provide alternative provision
- Provision of, or improved accessibility to active transport routes
- Flood alleviation schemes
- Provision of outdoor gym or accessible play equipment.

Ineligible projects:

- Environmental mitigation projects that do not provide additional or improved access to, or alternative provision of open space
- Maintenance and like-for-like replacement of equipment situated on public open space, such as play apparatus.

Additional guidance on eligibility

Applicants will need to demonstrate their project will increase the capacity or replace existing infrastructure if that is necessary to support development. The scheme cannot fund solutions to existing issues, unless these would be exacerbated as a result of new development.

The funding is to be spent on capital projects delivered in the South Oxfordshire District Council area, although revenue costs, such as project management costs or architects' fees, that can be capitalised as part of the delivery of the project are also permissible. However, funding requests for preliminary or other revenue costs that are not part of an identified and deliverable project cannot be considered for the fund.

Funding for projects can be supported in parishes that have not experienced development directly within their boundary, providing it can be clearly demonstrated that the provision of the infrastructure is required to support development of the surrounding areas or wider district.

CIL is not a suitable funding source to fulfil environmental planning conditions or obligations and as such, projects with this as their main target are unlikely to be able to be supported. However, projects that achieve similar benefits will be prioritised as part of the scheme, such as:

- creation or enhancement of active travel routes (e.g. walking and cycling)
- improved access to additional open space or enhancement of publicly accessible green infrastructure in or around areas of development.
- construction projects that source sustainable materials and include environmental initiatives such as solar panels or rainwater harvesting systems.

Corporate priorities and key scheme eligibilities

In addition to the CIL spending requirements as set out in the regulations, the council will prioritise projects for funding that can demonstrate support of its [corporate priorities](#) which are set out in the EOI form.

Additional key criteria have also been identified, again as set out in the EOI form, in order to ensure that funding is allocated towards the projects that fulfil the CIL spending requirements and can also demonstrate deliverability, sustainability, inclusivity and consideration towards the climate and ecological impacts of the scheme.

Details of links to the council's corporate priorities and other key criteria should be expanded on in the EOI form.

3. Project Delivery

CIL must be used for the provision, improvement or replacement of infrastructure to support development of its area. Therefore, only projects that can demonstrate that they meet this requirement and are deliverable can be considered for funding.

Details of the planning permission status of the project is required. Please note, if planning permission is required for the project, this needs to be in place prior to the full application being submitted.

All EOI's must be accompanied by evidence of land ownership, lease or formal landowner permission to deliver the project and have planning permission (if required). If the land is not in direct ownership of the applicant, there must be a minimum of ten years remaining on the lease.

4. Project detail and costs

We need to ensure that the funds we award will be spent in a way that achieves the best outcomes and that the project is deliverable. The information provided in this section will enable us to determine if your project would fit the funding parameters and will help us to understand the impact that CIL funding would have on the project and the community. Please note that the scheme allows for a minimum of £75,000 and a maximum of £250,000 to be applied for, this is to encourage projects of a sufficient scale to deliver wider benefits to the district rather than support more localised schemes. However, in exceptional circumstances, where a project can demonstrate significant benefits to the community, consideration may be given to funding requests above or below the funding thresholds, subject to prior approval by the relevant head of service.

It would be favourable if projects submitted for funding have been identified in the council's local plan or in a neighbourhood plan, thus demonstrating a clear link to support of new development. However, this is not an essential requirement.

Please provide details of other funding you have applied for or secured for the project, how much you have requested and whether it has been confirmed, i.e., whether a funding offer letter has been issued to you. You will be able to provide an update on any other funding applied for if invited to submit a full application.

More detail on costs and other funding sources will be required at full application stage, including a breakdown of project costs, a minimum of two quotes or professional estimates for project costs or details of procurement process used, evidence of other funding and whether your group/organisation are VAT registered. An assessment of the project against subsidy control regulations will also be required.

Project name and location

Tell us what the project is called and where it is located. This should be something that makes it clear what the project is about. A map can be submitted with the EOI form to show the location of the scheme. Only projects to be delivered in the South Oxfordshire District Council area are eligible for the scheme.

Brief Project Description

In no more than 250 words, use this section to explain what your project is, what it will deliver and how this meets the criteria of the scheme and the CIL spending requirements. Try to be as concise as possible, you will have the opportunity to expand on this and provide more detail if invited to submit a full application.

When completing this section think about what the project is trying to achieve in the context of how your infrastructure scheme will support the demands of development in the area. The project needs to have a genuine focus on providing the infrastructure needed as a result of development and demonstration of this is the first factor that will be considered when assessing if an application is able to progress.

Let us know what stage of development the project is at, for example is the project ready to commence subject to funding, or does it still need some work before it can commence. Please note that the project must be able to demonstrate that, with the funding requested, that it will commence within 24 months and is deliverable. Projects needing planning permission are required to have this in place prior to submission of a full application.

5. Declaration

Please ensure that this section of the form is signed by an appropriate representative of the applicant group/organisation. By signing the declaration, this is also agreeing to the terms of the Privacy Statement.

More information

Information about the Community Infrastructure Levy can be found on the [council's website](#)

If you would like this information in another format or language please contact:

South Oxfordshire District Council

Telephone: 01235 422576

Email: infrastructureobligations@southandvale.gov.uk

Environment and Climate Committee

11th March 2024

Report Author: Lucy Blake



GWP Allotment sites

Introduction

1. This report updates the Committee on the Great Western Park allotment site due to be handed over to DTC.

Background

2. Allotment plot 40 includes an orchard and falls within the Didcot Parish boundary. It consists of 14 allotment plots, two parking spaces, a cycle stand, one info and one disabled parking sign, two water points, three bins and two benches.
3. Plot 44 falls within the East Hagbourne Parish boundary and consists of 42 allotment plots, 30 parking spaces (inc 4 accessible spaces), six water points, one bin and one bench.
4. The cemetery managed by the Town Council at Kynaston Road, Didcot, probably has between 4-7 years of space left.
5. Didcot Town Council currently manage over 420 plots, across five sites.

Legal Implications

6. Didcot Town Council has the power to provide allotments and a duty to provide allotment gardens if demand is unsatisfied – Small Holdings Allotments Act 1908 ss23, 26 and 42.
7. DTC will have a duty to accept plot 40.

Financial Implications

8. There would be a commuted sum (index linked) transferred to Town Council for taking on allotment site 40 - the over sum is not known at the present time.
9. Should the Council resolve to adopt plot 44, there would be financial implications with this. A commuted sum would probably be granted should the land be used as an allotment site. However, if DTC were able to take on the land and use it as a cemetery, it is unknown whether any sum would be transferred.
10. There would be on-going maintenance costs for these sites. However, these sites will also generate an income due to allotment rents. There would be questions on how to manage plot 44, should it have to be an allotment site: Hagbourne Parish residents would probably need first refusal on the plots.

Risk Implications

11. The s106 agreement stipulates the sites are to be used for allotment gardens. Hagbourne Parish Council have indicated that they are not in a position to take on plot 44. Due to it being stipulated that the land is to be used as an allotment, it may not be possible to use this land as a cemetery. East Hagbourne Parish Council would need to be contacted to see if they would support this possible change of use, as would the developer.

Recommendation

12. The Committee is asked to consider whether they believe the Town Council should adopt plot 44 in East Hagbourne and if so, whether they want it to remain an allotment, or whether they wish to investigate if this land could potentially be used as a cemetery.

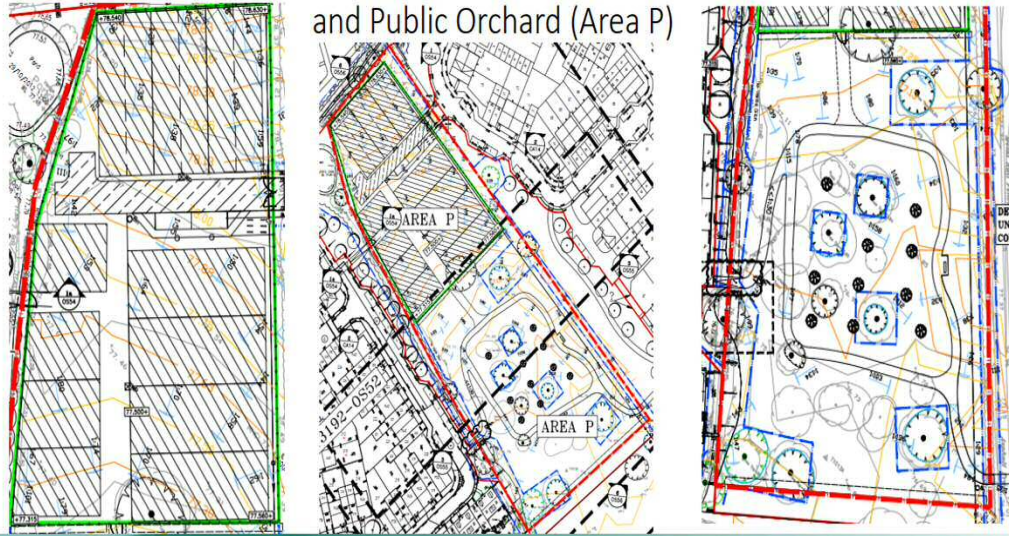
Allotment 40 & Orchard – P18/S2356/RM Application for Approval of Reserved Matters for Allotments and Public Orchard (Area P)

In the Parish of Didcot



Allotment 40 & Orchard – P18/S2356/RM

Application for Approval of Reserved Matters for Allotments and Public Orchard (Area P)



Allotment 40 & Orchard – P18/S2356/RM

Application for Approval of Reserved Matters for Allotments and Public Orchard (Area P)

GUIDANCE	ALLOTMENT 40
Number of plots & size 250m ²	14 in total 4 x 254m ² , 6 x 120m ² , 3 x 133m ² , 1 x 156m ²
Perimeter – fencing, gates	Euroguard fence and gate
Vehicles - access & parking	2 Parking spaces & cycle stand
Paths between – 1.2-1.8m width for wheelchair	2-5m wide around the edge and in between each row
Plots – demarcated and numbered	Not clarified
Water – mains supply, water tanks	2 water points
Toilets – in vicinity or on site	Not on site
Hard Landscaping – bins, seats, signs etc.	1 info & 1 disabled parking sign - 3 bins & 2 benches
Quality of top soil	In accordance with BS3882 as stated in S106

Ladygrove Management Working Group
Thursday 21st September 2023
7pm All Saints Room, Civic Hall



Meeting notes

Working Group Members Present:

Councillor J Broadbent
Councillor D Rouane
Councillor C Jennings
Mr P Davies – Ladygrove Resident's Association representative
Mr N Thompson – Ladygrove Fishing Association representative

Officers:

L Blake (Deputy Town Clerk - DC)
M Blake (Outdoor Services Manager - OSM)
D Furby (Outdoor Services Supervisor – OSS)

1. Apologies

Apologies were tendered from the Environment Agency representative and Cllrs K Morrison, T Worgan, and Z Mohammed.
Cllr O Glover was absent.

2. To agree the notes from the meeting held on 3rd August 2023

The group agreed the meeting notes.

3. Questions on the meeting notes and review of the progress report

The group reviewed the progress report.

4. Update from the Outdoor Services Manager/Supervisor on recent progress and issues

Both the Outdoor Services Manager (OSM) and the Outdoor Services Supervisor (OSS) spoke regarding the following items:

a. Machinery

The outdoor team had attended a trade show where they saw a demonstration of a Ventrac 4520 Tractor, cutting grass up and over hilly terrain. The machine would cost approximately £40,000 and there were finance options available. The OSM and the OSS explained that purchasing this type of machine would enable the team to cut the mounds 'in house' and could also be used to cut other open green spaces. Various attachments could be purchased to ensure the machine could be used at its full potential.

Cllr J Broadbent suggested a costing report be presented to the Finance and General Purposes Committee for consideration, after the Environment and Climate Committee had discussed it. Cllr C Jennings advised Officers to investigate what capital expenditure could potentially be used for a purchase like this.

b. Playpark

The replacement of the two park gates had been approved by the Environment and Climate Committee at their meeting on 11th September 2023.

Cllr C Jennings suggested the OSM look at basic welding courses for members of the outdoor team.

c. Benches

Locations for benches in the open green space at Ladygrove were considered. Mr P Davies suggested Officers liaise with Didcot Park Run before installation so as not to cause obstruction on their route.

d. Sign

The new skate park sign had been delivered and displayed whilst SODC were running their summer skate sessions. It was then removed until a more permanent solution could be reached as to ensuring it was as anti-theft proof as possible.

e. Trees

A tree surgeon had been contacted and asked to quote for work to 'cut back' the willow trees. Discussions were had as to how much water Willow trees absorb.

f. Small lake

The group liked the idea of making the smaller lake a more 'visitor friendly' area. Installing benches would encourage visitor to the small lake, and if they were to feed the ducks, it wouldn't make too much of an issue to the water, as there are no fish in it.

g. Siltex treatment

The OSM and OSS informed the group of a potential Siltex treatment for the lakes. The treatment is usually undertaken in two stages, and a full report would be presented to the Environment and Climate Committee for consideration. Cllrs

J Broadbent and C Jennings advised the Officers to seek advice from the Environment Agency representative at a future sit meeting.

Mr P Davies informed the group that some refuse collection vehicles have been ruining the grass in the area due to driving on it.

5. To note the amended 'Ladygrove Management Plan – Ideas Document 2023'3

The group noted the amended document. Cllr J Broadbent suggested a smaller document be created as a 'Medium Term Plan' to include 'quick wins' for the site. All members agreed.

6. To note the meeting notes from the Public Art Delivery Group's meetings – 26th January 2023 and 13th February 2023

The group noted the notes of both the Public Art Delivery Group meetings and confirmed there were projects that the group would be interested in pursuing.

In addition to some of this projects, Cllr D Rouane suggested that functional signs could be displayed throughout the area, stating how far the town centre is, for example, and how many minutes it would take to walk/cycle there.

7. Update on the Fisheries Improvement Programme grant application

The Deputy Town Clerk (DC) updated the group on the progress of the application – it was submitted on 31st August 2023, any decision would be made by the end of October 2023.

8. Update from Thames Water

The DC informed the group that Thames Water had been in touch and had asked for the exact location of the culvert in question – *DTC had tried contacting them to obtain permission to pump from the culvert if/when needed.*

It was stated that a Thames Water representative would contact the DC by 28th September with an update.

Members discussed that if Thames Water confirms that the culvert is not theirs, Officers should request this in writing.

9. Discuss options for a water fountain with associated flow restricted water feed for the lake and/or water connection

Mr P Davies spoke regarding his idea of installing a drinking fountain at the lakes, it would mean that the Town Council would need to install a water supply and connection. The fountain could potentially supply the lakes with additional water during long, hot spells. Mr N Thompson explained that drinking water is high in

calcium and could potentially upset the chemical levels in the lakes. He also stated that he had hoped to use the smaller lake as a breeding pond in the future.

All members discussed installing a water fountain within the smaller lake and investigate fixing the connection between the two bodies of water.

Officers would investigate this further and bring the item back at the next meeting.

10. To arrange a 'Facilities Walk around'

Mr N Thompson had requested that the group arrange a facilities walk around so that members could visualise the site in its entirety. The Environment Agency representative had supplied the DC with his availability and the walk around has arranged for Thursday 12th October 2023 at 11am – the group would meet at the car park on Mersey Way.

11. To discuss control of overgrown vegetation in Ladygrove

Cllr D Rouane spoke regarding the complex issues of ownership throughout the whole of Ladygrove, and informed the group that some volunteers were willing to cut back areas if the Town Council could dispose of the waste.

The OSM confirmed that the Town Council managed areas are regularly maintained, however, disposing of extra green waste would be an additional charge to the Council as the Town Council's compost bays are full and a green waste skip would cost £270.

Cllrs J Broadbent, C Jennings, and D Rouane supported the idea of the Town, District and County Council's working in collaboration to cut back Ladygrove, twice a year.

Ideas on disposing the green waste was discussed and it was noted that the Ladygrove Management Working Group had no budget.

The Group would need to be clear on what it was they wanted the Environment and Climate Committee to consider so that a report could be presented.

12. Confirm the next meeting date

The meeting was arranged for Thursday 23rd November but later changed to **Thursday 30th November at 6.30pm** so that the Town Clerk could attend.

The meeting closed at 8.15pm.

Ladygrove Management Working Group
Thursday 25th January 2024
7pm All Saints Room, Civic Hall



Meeting notes

Working Group Members Present:

Councillor T Worgan
Councillor D Rouane
Councillor K Morrison
Councillor O Glover
Mr P Davies – Ladygrove Resident’s Association representative (Acting Chair)
Mr N Thompson – Ladygrove Fishing Association representative

Officers:

J Wheeler (Town Clerk – TC)
L Blake (Deputy Town Clerk - DC)
M Blake (Outdoor Services Manager - OSM)
D Furby (Outdoor Services Supervisor – OSS)

1. Apologies

Apologies were tendered from Cllrs C Jennings and J Broadbent.
Cllr Z Mohammed was absent.

2. To agree the notes from the meeting held on 21st September 2023

The group agreed the meeting notes.

3. Questions on the meeting notes and review of the progress report

The group reviewed the progress report. There were a few comments on the following:

- Item 11 – Green waste skips

Cllr D Rouane explained that he had tried to propose a motion at OCC regarding community green waste projects, but the Council had yet to hear it, due to meeting time constraints.

- Cutting of the mounds

Work on investigating this was on-going. It is unlikely that a machine would be purchased for this to be done in house, this financial year but Officers were meeting with a company who could potentially offer this service.

- Public Art

Mr P Davies informed the group that Didcot Garden Town has an open consultation on this at the present time.

He also explained that Public Art monies could be used for fencing around the lakes, as has previously been discussed by members of the Public Art Delivery Working Group.

- Water Fountain – small lake

Questions were raised regarding the type of fountain, whether this be drinking water, or aeration. Mr P Davies explained that originally his suggestion was for a drinking fountain as a mains water supply wasn't far away. Discussions at the last meeting resulted in the group talking about a water fountain (aeration type) for the small lake. Officers would investigate aeration fountains, possibly solar powered.

- Connecting Pipe

The OSM and OSS explained that the connecting pipe had collapsed. Mr Thompson confirmed it would be beneficial for this to be reinstated so it could be used to transfer water between the lakes and act as an overflow.

Mr Davies explained that should work progress on this, it should be done in the summer months when the water was lower. Officers would investigate this.

4. Update from the Outdoor Services Manager/Supervisor on recent progress and issues

Both the Outdoor Services Manager (OSM) and the Outdoor Services Supervisor (OSS) spoke regarding the following items:

a. The Mounds

The outdoor team had carried out some work at the top of the first mound and uncovered the 'Contemplation Path'. During this work it was noted that the bench would need replacing in the near future. It was suggested that Public Art monies could be used for this.

b. Didcot Town Football Club Firework Display

The Working Group saw the pictures of the parking chaos due to inconsiderate parking at this event. The group discussed ways to deter parking on the grass and decided the first action should be to contact the Football Club to see if they have suggestions on how to alleviate the parking issues and to minimise the damage to the grass.

c. Path and Duck Houses

The group were informed that the outdoor team had worked in conjunction with the Fishing Club to install a new inclusive path at the lakes. This was funded by the Club.

New duck houses had been made from old pallets so to encourage the birds to the smaller lake, away from the anglers. Cllr T Worgan asked for pictures of these works to be posted on social media.

Nathan expressed his thanks to the outdoor team for the amount of hard work they have put into the site.

Mr P Davies enquired about repaving the mounds – this was a subject which had been discussed previously, to ensure accessibility. Funding options would be investigated, such as Community Grants from SODC and District Councillor Community Grants.

The OSM informed the group that a rescue charity would be using the lakes to train on, in the evening on 30th January 2024. Residents would need to be informed so to not cause alarm. It is hoped that pictures could be sent to DTC so that it can be published on the website.

5. To note the most recent update from Thames Water dated 3rd October 2023

The group noted the update and the fact that Thames Water confirmed the culvert in question did not belong to them.

6. To note the first rounds of water testing results

The group noted the water testing results. Whilst the results show that both lakes are quite healthy, the results from the culvert are not as promising. The OSS would continue with the testing. The group thanked the OSS for the work he had put into this testing.

The Town Clerk explained that exploring the possibility of installing a borehole at the lakes had previously been looked at, but no definitive answer had been obtained. It was noted that Officers would contact the company who the previous OSM had been liaising with to arrange another site visit and revisit this potential project again.

7. To consider recommending a 'Standard Operating Procedure' to the Environment and Climate Committee to consider 'no planting within 2m of a pathway' on DTC owned and managed land

Whilst the group were generally supportive of the proposal, there were some concerns of a complete blanket 2m policy. Questions were raised about whether the issue was actually the overgrowth not being cut, or the type of planting being used – would low growing, ground plants be a better solution? This would be investigated.

8. Confirm the next meeting date

Dates were discussed and it was felt a meeting should be arranged for April. Dates would be circulated to the group for consideration.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm.

Didcot Town Council

Allotment Liaison Group

Thursday 22nd February 2024 at 7pm

All Saints Room, Didcot Civic Hall



Minutes

Councillors:

Cllr A Jones (Chair)

Allotment Representatives:

Mr A Feest	Broadway
Mrs T Feest	Broadway
Ms N Lyons	Wantage Road
Ms M Samuels	Wantage Road
Ms A Pitts	Mereland Road
Mr T Morey	New Road
Mr T Bray	Cockcroft

Officers:

Mr M Blake	Outdoor Services Manager
Ms S Mallett	Horticultural Community Officer
Mrs T Tye	Mayor's Secretary & Admin Assistant

1. Apologies

Apologies were tendered from: -

Cllr Dave Rouane
Cllr Nick Hards

2. Agree the minutes of 21st September 2023

It was **AGREED** to **APPROVE** the minutes as a true and accurate record of the meeting and note them as such.

3. Questions from the minutes and matters arising

There was some confusion regarding the waiting lists. At the last meeting members believe it was confirmed that there was only one waiting list. Officers clarified that there is one waiting list for all GWP sites, and all other sites have a separate list. Applicants living outside the Didcot Parish boundary will be drawn off once the current lists have no more people outstanding.

Officers explained that the Council cannot close any waiting lists so will continue to add applications to them when received.

4. To note the progress report

The group noted the progress report.

The Outdoor Services Manager read through the progress report and explained each item. Everything is still in hand.

New Road green waste and communal composting - looking to get a screener to get some of the waste churned up and distributed soon to hopefully clear what is there – *costs and logistics are being investigated.*

Potential opportunities to improve biodiversity such as new hedgerows on Broadway, Mereland Road and Cockcroft, wildflowers on sites – Officers have been looking for suitable spots on all sites. One councillor approached the Outdoor Services Manager recently regarding a hedgerow on New Road to go one side - maybe a grant could be obtained, and the Council could potentially work with the Earth Trust. The Outdoor Services Manager will investigate this.

New Road wildflower area – discussions will be had with the NR reps. This will be arranged. Other sites could have wildflower areas placed on plots that are not suitable to use as 'working plots'.

5. To note the Outdoor Services report

The Outdoor Services Manager gave a brief update on the outdoor team, the current projects being undertaken, and key tasks of the team.

At present this year we have welcomed 18 new tenants since 1st October 2023:

- Broadway – 5 previously 10
- Mereland Road – 1 previously 10
- Cockcroft – 9 previously 5
- New Road – 0 previously 6
- Wantage Road – 3 previously 5

The following plots are available:

- Broadway – 6 – (1 not to be used)
- Mereland Road – 7 (2 need treatment for mares' tail & 1 not sure of location)
- Cockcroft – 11 (2 plots not to be used – unsuitable)
- New Road – 7
- Wantage Road – 0 (all plots taken)

We have the following people on the waiting list:

- Broadway – 58
- Mereland Road – 18 (1 co-tenant & 3 already have a plot)
- Cockcroft – 12 (5 already have a plot & 1 wants a specific plot)
- New Road – 51 (3 already have a plot)
- Wantage Road – 58

Plots with mare's tail will be treated before being given out.

The names on the lists are applicant's first choices. Andy Feest asked do the people know when applying the waiting list situation, currently they are not but going forward we will email them and advise them what number on the list they are.

We will investigate possibly changing the application form and updating the website to explain that the waiting lists are very long.

The group was advised that chasing the late payments had slowed down the process of offering plots out. More plots will be offered out very shortly.

6 To discuss the green waste for 2024

Everybody was happy with the waste collection but stated that it needed to be a bit clearer to inform tenants when and which plot to leave the green waste on for collection. It was suggested signs should be put up at least two weeks before the skips arrive.

It was suggested that only one collection should be arranged per year to save costs, and everybody agreed. The OSM will advise on dates. Tenants can ask for help if they need it.

Notice boards

The notice boards will be stripped back to make them more streamlined. The Tenancy Rules will be removed as each tenant has a copy when they take on a plot and they are also available on the website. A notice will be displayed to inform tenants on where they can find a copy (website) if they have misplaced theirs.

Reps and Officers will change the notice board up regularly to encourage people to read them.

If the Council has any events coming up, A Feest can advertise them in the DAS newsletter.

7. Rent invoices 2024

Invoice letters were not posted out in October 2023, due to the increased cost of postage (approx. £500). Suggestions were made to increase the allotment rent to pay for cost of postage/envelopes etc, but it was confirmed that it was too late to be added to 2024 rents as the price has already been set.

It was suggested that the invoices could be emailed to those who have an email address; however, some people do not receive the emails as they go into their spam folders.

The group agreed to put notices up in early July advising people that the annual rent will be due in October.

Tenants need to be encouraged to advise the Council if their details change, i.e. address, email, phone number. It was agreed that a notice be displayed to remind people to update their details with the Council.

A Feest suggested we take out in the rent invoice the line about not paying before beginning of October as it does not affect the financial year when the payment gets made now.

8. Numbering plots

It was suggested that all plots should have a number so people can identify each plot easier. The numbered pegs would be made from wood and have the number painted on it. Each peg will be cut at an angle with a sliced log on top, which will then be pushed into the ground. These will be ecofriendly and pushed into the ground so as not to cause a trip hazard.

The group agreed it was a good idea so the Outdoor Services Team will start to number each plot – starting with new tenants first. Eventually all plots on all sites will have a uniformed number system.

9. Awards criteria

It was decided that the Council need to come up with a new way of judging the allotments for the Annual Town Awards. For each category there should be a criterion to follow, such as what kind of behaviour you want people to follow i.e. maintain perfect paths and boundaries etc.

It was suggested that instead of attending the evening awards ceremony, a separate 'Mini Country' style show be held where plot holders show their produce etc. There could be a BBQ and awards given out for the best vegetables etc.

If this was to happen, the Council would need a clear criterion for each category and somebody to judge them – *there would also need to be confirmed budgets for this.*

S Mallet will investigate possibly arranging the 'mini show' instead of allotment tenants attending the awards night, subject to Council approval and financial queries answered.

Recommendation – to ask the E&C Committee to consider a separate Allotment Awards ceremony.

Plot inspections

The group suggested that the inspection period be extended for new plot owners because if people take on a plot in October, they won't be able to grow much over the winter months. It was suggested that inspections take place after six months, if taken on during the winter i.e. October to March and May to June.

Seasonal plot inspections

To be done in late spring, early summer depending on the weather.

10. New tenants (no strimming – unless they ask)

It was suggested that the Council would not strim new tenants' plots unless they specifically ask. Some people like to do the digging etc themselves. If a new tenant requests this work, the Council can arrange for it to be done - this will save Officer time.

It was also suggested that when a plot is offered to a prospective tenant their details should be passed onto the reps who can arrange to take the applicant around the site. If they want to accept the plot they will need to let the Admin Assistant know – this needs to be done within two weeks, otherwise the plot will be offered to the next applicant on the waiting list.

The reps will only show prospective tenants the plot number given to them by the Admin Assistant – they can't let the prospective tenant choose a different plot.

11. AOB

- **Adding structures to plots**

A tenant had installed a chicken coop on one of the allotment sites, which was very large, and other tenants were worried about the chicken's welfare. The site reps contacted the Council to ask whether permission had been granted for the structure – it had not.

Due to this, it was decided that going forward, the Admin Assistant should contact the site reps when a structure is approved on a plot, so they are aware that it has been agreed by the Town Council.

- **Drainage issue**

A tenant on New Road has a bad water issue on his plot, the drainage ditch adjacent to Restore needs clearing out near the entrance/path. This has obviously not helped with the water issue.

Reps asked if the ditch could be extended? The Outdoor Services Manager confirmed that he will arrange for the ditch to be cleared and ask the Environment and Climate Committee to consider extending the ditch, subject to the costs involved. If the Committee agree it was suggested that maybe a working party could be organised by other tenants on the site.

Recommendation – to ask E&C Committee to consider extending the drainage ditch, subject to costs.

- **Grass Cutting**

It was confirmed that the plan going forward is to cut the grass every 3 weeks depending on the weather. The OSM informed the group that the team have some new mulching mowers which should help.

The meeting ended at 8.23 pm.

Environment and Climate Committee

Allotment Liaison Group Report

Report author: Lucy Blake



Recommendations from Allotment Liaison Group meeting 22nd February 2024

1. Allotment Awards

The ALG members wanted the E&C Committee to consider holding a mini country style show, separate to the Didcot Town Council Awards, for the allotment tenants. This would mean altering the Council Awards to exclude any allotment categories.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to consider this option for future awards. It is too late for the 2024 awards night as everything has been organised.

At the present time there is £350 in the 'Allotment Competition' cost centre (302/3233). This is used to purchase all the allotment awards and prizes.

3. Drainage at New Road Allotment site

An allotment tenant is facing difficulties with water on their plot. The drainage ditch adjacent to Restore is filled with debris and needs clearing, although it is unclear where this debris originated from – this will be done.

4. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to consider extending this drainage ditch. There may be financial implications to this, but the OSM will investigate. It may be that all the work could be carried out 'in house' or, as suggested by the ALG members, a working group could be arranged with volunteers.