

MINUTES OF THE WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE COMMITTEE HELD AT UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL ON TUESDAY 20 SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 4.00 PM

Present: Councillor M McGuffie (Chairman)
Councillors M Barr, C Booth and M Lithgow

In attendance: David Farrow (Town Clerk)
Amy Kemmish Project Manager Heritage at Risk, Somerset Council for agenda item 5
Steve Saunders, Footpath Liaison Officer for agenda item 7
Charles Biscoe for agenda item 11

243 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillors K Canham, C Govier and K Wheatley

244 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

245 MINUTES

RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 18 July 2023. It was noted that a request had been received to move the timing of the meetings to 6.00pm to allow better attendance of councillors. The Town Clerk agreed to review this.

246 QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

No members of the public were present.

247 HERITAGE UPDATE

Amy Kemmish, Project Manager - Heritage at Risk, Somerset Council presented her report had been circulated with the agenda and was noted. Councillors sought clarification in relation to action being taken at the Rockwell Green water towers and raised concerns about the presence of Japanese knotweed on the site. Ms Kemmish advised that they whilst they were aware of the issue it fell outside the Heritage notice that had been served but they were monitoring the situation.

At this point Ms Kemmish left the meeting.

248 SOMERSET COUNCIL TREE STRATEGY

Due to the change of date James Chapman, Somerset Council Tree Strategist was unable to attend the meeting. The Town Clerk reported that he had agreed with Mr Chapman that he would arrange a tour of the Green Corridor for him to be followed by a meeting to discuss how the Town Council Tree Strategy could complement the Somerset Council Strategy.

249 FOOTPATH UPDATE

Steve Saunders presented his report that had been circulated with the agenda. Councillors thanked Steve and the volunteers for all the work that they did.

Councillor McGuffie noted that following the recent heavy rain the surface of the footpath from Crosslands to Thomas Fox Close was now severely damaged. Steve Saunders to report to the County Footpaths Team.

The Town Clerk reported that he hoped that a ramp would soon be installed on the footbridge between The Basins and Rockwell Green.

250 GREEN CORRIDOR ADVISORY BOARD

The notes of the Advisory Board Meeting held on 6 September 2023 had been circulated prior to the meeting.

(i) **Tree Survey**

The Committee **RESOLVED to** authorise officers to agree works identified in the Tree Survey as being required within 6 months to a value of £2,410 plus VAT from Chris Groves Associates subject (a) to officers being satisfied that identified trees are on Green Corridor Land or Crown Estate and (b) agreeing the detailed work required.

(ii) **Fox's Field**

The Committee considered a written representation from a member of the public regarding concerns about Fox's Field. It also considered a response from Transition Town Wellington. It was **RESOLVED** that the Chair would respond in writing to the member of the public.

251 BASINS ALLOTMENTS ADVISORY BOARD

The notes of the first meeting of the Basins Allotments Advisory Board held on the 1 September 2023 had been circulated prior to the meeting and were noted.

252 GAY CLOSE PLAY AREA

A proposal from Councillor Booth for how the area could be improved was tabled at the meeting. He advised that he had been in discussion with the Somerset Council Open Spaces Team and was hopeful that agreement would soon be forthcoming for the Town Council to lease the play area land on a long term basis for a peppercorn rent. Until the lease arrangements were agreed no work could be carried out. Councillor Booth will meet with Town Council staff to begin to plan the work.

253 GRAND WESTERN GREENWAY

Charles Biscoe made a presentation to the Committee setting out a proposal to establish a greenway using the route of the Grand Western Canal. Copy of the presentation is attached to the minutes. It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Town Council that:

- (i) It supports the principle of establishing a Greenway Route to Taunton utilising the route of the Grand Western Canal and
- (ii) The Council demonstrates that support by setting aside a sum of money in future years budgets to support the development of the Greenway recognising the health and environmental benefits that it would bring to the Wellington community.

254 GENERAL UPDATES

(i) Tree Strategy

The Town Clerk reported that the Fruit Tree Offer agreed at the August Council meeting was being progressed and would be being advertised in the Wellington Weekly and Around Wellington that week. He also advised that he had had discussions with Somerset Council Open Spaces Team about tree planting on Somerset Council land in the town and that their view was that there weren't many spaces that would be suitable although they would be planting a number of trees in Wardleworth Way

(ii) Committee Work Plan

Committee Work Plans were being developed utilising Microsoft Office software and would be available by the next meeting.

(iii) Climate Change Strategy

Unfortunately, the Project Officer had been away from work for most of the time since the last meeting so no progress had been made on further developing an action plan to support the Strategy. The Town Clerk was looking at alternative ways of delivering this piece of work.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 6.00 pm

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Councillor M McGuffie
Chairman



BASINS ALLOMENTS ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES
Council Chamber, Wellington Town Council, 28 Fore Street, Wellington TA21
8AQ

Thursday 2nd November 2023 at 6pm

Advisory Board Present:

Cllr Janet Lloyd (Chair)– Town Council (JL)
Cllr Catherine Govier – Town Council (CG)
David Lee – Plot 77
Annette Kirk- Town Council Assets & Events Officer (AK)

Tenants:

David Cappel (DC)

1. Welcome

2. Apologies

No apologies

3. To Approve The Appointment of Tenants To Join Advisory Board.

Applications were received from:

David Lee – Plot 77

Mary Bradford – Plots 25 and 26

Both Applications were approved. David Lee and Mary Bradford were appointed as members of the Advisory Board.

- Councillor Janet Lloyd asked that a reminder is sent to tenants in January 2024 inviting two tenants to join the Advisory Board.

4. Plots Available

- a. Plots 24, 48, 55, 65 and 79 have been relet. Plots now available are Plots 19b, 20, 51, 52, 84, 88 and 96.
- b. Community Warden started to clear the rubbish and strim available plots – The Board agreed that a lockable skip would be more suitable.

5. Maintenance and Repairs

- a. 7 plots available on the 2nd November 2023.
- b. Tracks and Hedgerows: The Community Warden is now cutting back the verges along the tracks and main track hedgerow leading to the car park.

6. Inspections

Advisory board agreed that during the Winter months only is to concentrate on the untidy plots. To contact the tenants and if necessary, issue a warning letter.

Future inspections will be carried out by the Assets and Events Officer or Community Warden and one advisory board member.

7. AOB

- a. Assets & Events Officer asked on behalf of the tenant at Plot 1 and 2 if the Town Council would consider contributing towards the cost of replacing the shed roof. The advisory board agreed that they would not support this request.
- b. Advisory Board agreed to make a recommendation to the Environment & Heritage Committee for the Town Council to offer a charged service to tenants to remove rubbish from their plots. To charge a minimum amount of £25.00 for 2 compost bags of rubbish. Anything more to be inspected by a Council Officer and quoted accordingly. Tenants to pay up front. A day once a month to be allocated for the Community Warden to collect.

8. Date of Next Meeting:

Monday 19th February 2024 at 6pm. Council Chamber, Wellington Town Council, 28 Fore Street.

Meeting closed: 6.35pm

Longforth Farm Allotments

July 2020 Full Council Minute number: 12

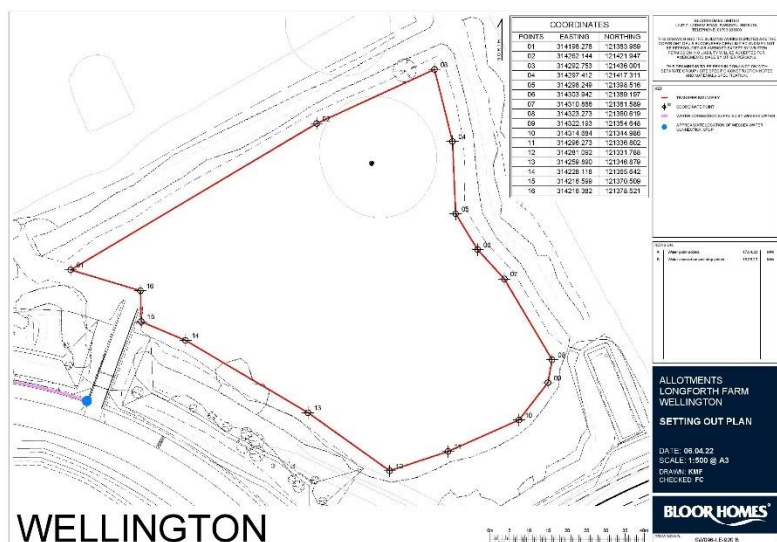
TO DISCUSS THE MANAGEMENT OF FUTURE LONGFORTH FARM ALLOTMENTS

There was a lengthy discussion regarding the new allotment site. The Town Clerk read an e-mail received from Transition Town Wellington who are advocates of allotment provision and have conducted surveys relating to the issue. Councillors discussed the rental charges for allotments and would like information regarding the increase of fees.

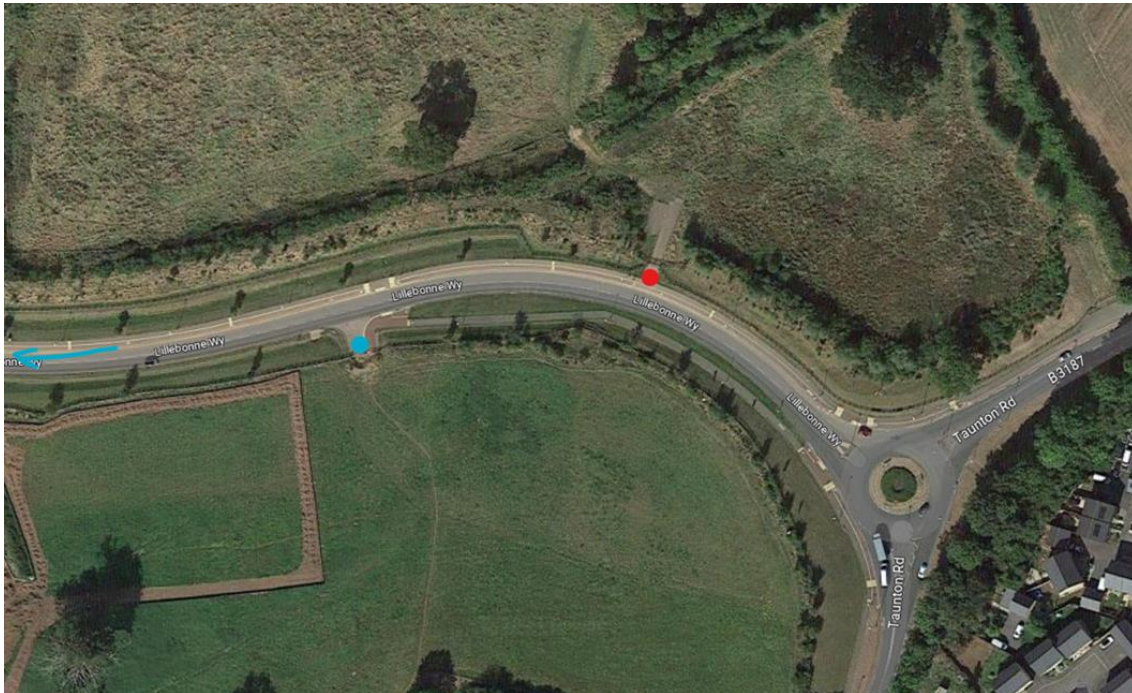
RESOLVED to progress the matter of taking on the new allotments with Bloor Homes and SWT in principle. The particulars of any agreement will be brought back to Council for approval once established.

Over the past three years, discussions have been ongoing between Town Council Officers and Somerset West and Taunton District Council (Somerset Council) regarding the work to be completed by Bloor Home Developments under their obligations set out in the Section 106 Agreement. Somerset Council have confirmed work is now complete and Bloor Homes South West would like to serve notice on Wellington Town Council (as required by the S106) that the allotments are ready for transfer.

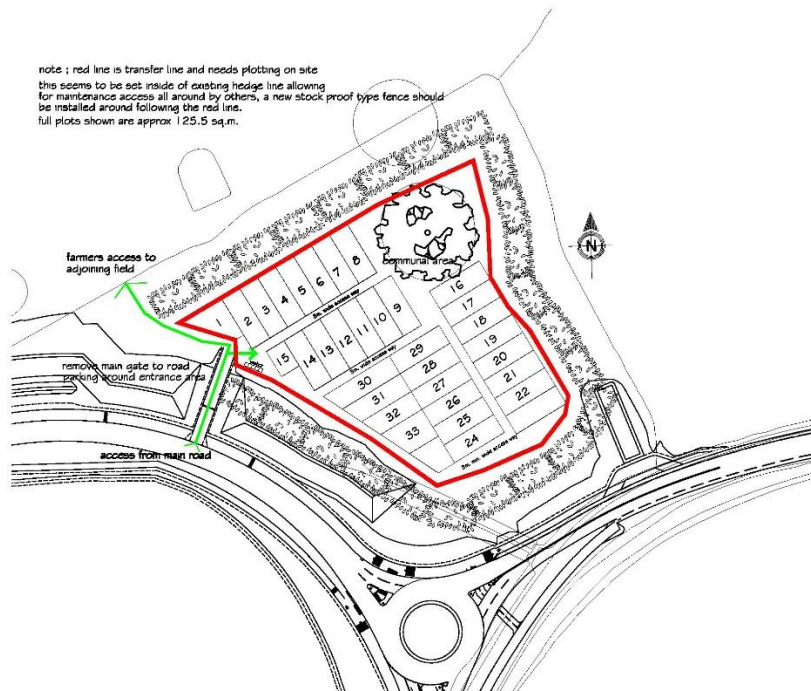
Section 8 of the S106 Agreement required the developers to install water to the allotment land. Wessex Water completed the water connection – blue spot on the plan below:



The management of the surrounding bund and entrance area from Lillebonne Way will be carried out by Firstport Management. See photo below.



Town Council Officers have been in discussions with National Allotments Representatives and Somerset Council to start work on how the allotment site will look. Draft 1 Plot Layout plan below:



Planned Schedule of Works following completion of the transfer:

February 2024 – To secure the site

Installation of:

Boundary Fence – Stock Fencing with wooden posts and rail

Site Gates - Main gate

Note: Budget 2023/24 – £10,000 set aside for Longforth Allotments. On estimates received, an approximate cost to secure the site as detailed above would be in the region of £8,000 to £10,000.

Groundwork:

Two options to consider:

Option 1:

Foliage/grass/brambles to be cut.

Plough in what was flailed so water can drain.

Tracks: Dig, lay membrane and then apply crushed concrete recycle materials as a subbase. Topping it off with scalpings.

Paths: Dig and fill with recycled stone and topped with scalpings

Plots to be pegged out by string.

Option 2:

Foliage/grass/brambles cut very tight to ground surface

Plots pegged out with string

Footpaths to be formed by footfall. Mowed when needed.

Car Park Area – to the left of entrance for approx. 6 cars. To take out Plots 1, 2 and 15.

Tenants will harvest their own water.

Funding Options to consider on completion of the transfer:

Legal Costs, Groundwork and setting up plots in the current financial year.

Two options to consider:

- 1) Funding to be drawn down from general funds.
- 2) To make an expression of interest for £42,510.30 from S106 funds available for outdoor recreation – land adjoining North Street Car park

Groundwork and setting up plots in the 2024/2025 financial year – Budget £50,000 to cover ground work and setting up of plots.

Somerset Council have indicated they do not want the land and should Wellington Town Council not take ownership then after five years the land will be returned for development.

We currently hold a list of 40 people who wish to take a plot.

TONEDALE / RICHARDS CLOSE PLAY AREA

1. Path Options.

The committee had previously considered a compacted stone path with edging from the Milverton Road entrance to meet the new play surfaces. This was previously quoted at £3,331.82.

Another option would be a Conipave path like the one installed with the improvement project at the Richards Close entrance. This is quoted at £12,360.

Due to tree roots coming above ground near the garages, options for path constriction is somewhat limited. The roots are likely to cause the surface to crack or the base would have to be built up to clear the roots, therefore causing a tripping hazard at the edges. There is also a risk of causing damage to the roots of the trees.

The railings at the Milverton Road entrance need adjustment. At present, there is a direct opening onto the pavement and road. Railings in this instance should be staggered to mitigate the risk of a child running straight out into the highway. Indicative costs for this are £900.

2. Monkey Bar Steps

An e-mail has been received from a member of the public, requesting that some steps be installed near the monkey bars. As the ground there is not level, the beginning of the bars is a little too high off the ground for some children. A picture submitted on the e-mail is reproduced below.



The suppliers of the equipment can provide rubber step posts as shown in the 2nd image at a cost of £145 each. Install can be done locally at a cost of £100.

3. Artwork Update

The Deputy Clerk met with Sam from Aerosol Art to discuss options for adding mural artwork to the garage wall. His e-mail is reproduced below. The committee are asked to consider how they wish to proceed.

Hi Alice,

Thanks for meeting us last week. We have put together an idea of costings for the Tonedale play area. We estimate that it will be a couple of weeks' painting = £400 (day rate) x 10. Plus materials and design time, it might be a good idea to request up to £5,500 from your budget.

The survey needs to be aimed at children & young people using the play area, and their parents.

As discussed - it would be make sense to separate the mural with the Monument in the middle, to tick the box of your original survey - 'Wellington-related items'. With this in mind, we are looking at two halves which don't necessarily have to be linked. The left-hand side, aimed towards the under-5s, could have links to learning. Example - Numberblocks characters, or Alphablocks, something fun and educational. The right-hand side of the mural to be aimed towards older children/teenagers, to make the park an appealing place to hang out and exercise. This may lend itself to a slightly more funky/urban street-art theme, with some stylised writing of the park name (tbc) and cool characters.

We need to harvest information from the local schools, to find out what the youth of the community call the play area and how they identify with the space. We feel this is important, so the young people have ownership and respect for the space.

The current budget has an expenditure line for Tone Play Area of £5,000 with a current underspend balance of £3,357.86.