

MINUTES OF THE WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT THE UNITED REFORMED CHURCH HALL, WEDNESDAY 19 NOVEMBER 2025 AT 7.00 PM

Present: Councillor C Booth (Chair)
Councillors M Lithgow, J Lloyd, M McGuffie and S Pringle-Kosikowsky

In attendance: Dave Farrow – Town Clerk/CEO
Darren Hill – Open Spaces Manager
Wasif Choudhury – Democratic Services and Finance Officer
Steven Saunders – Footpath Volunteer Coordinator
One member of the press
One member of the public

342. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

343. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

344. MINUTES

It was **RESOLVED** to approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 22 October 2025.

345. QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

None.

346. FOOTPATH UPDATE

Steve Saunders confirmed that checks are being undertaken to ensure that all signposts on footpaths are clear and legible. He wanted to thank the Basins Volunteer Group for their efforts in clearing the footpaths around the Basins area.

347. OPEN SPACES MANAGER REPORT

The report had been circulated in advance of the meeting which was noted.

It was noted that the risk assessment of the Green Corridor has taken place and that the recommendations made will be shared with councillors following this meeting.

It was noted that Somerset Council have been informed that road sweeping had not been undertaken by IDVerde despite assurances that these would take place on a fortnightly basis. A meeting has been arranged with the contract manager which will take place in a fortnight and will be attended by the Open Spaces Manager, the Town Clerk and Councillor M Lithgow.

At this juncture, Councillor M McGuffie and Town Clerk, Dave Farrow joined the meeting.

The Open Spaces Manager confirmed that he will contact Lidl regarding their section 106 obligation to maintain hedgerows on its site.

348. OPEN SPACES MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

The papers circulated with the agenda were considered.

It was **RESOLVED** to approve delegated spend request of up to £10,000 for Play Area repairs funded through the PA Responsive Maintenance budget line.

349. PLAYING FIELD PATHS

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council that this project is initiated as soon as possible

350. PUMP TRACK

A progress report was circulated and noted. A verbal update was provided by the CEO/Town Clerk which was noted.

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council the following:

1. To proceed with this project now that viability has been confirmed.
2. To proceed with a formal request to Somerset Council to allocate S106 Funds of £48,710.30 to the project.
3. To proceed with grant and funding applications for the balance of the cost.
4. To seek competitive tenders for the construction of the Pump Track and to ensure that it is built using sustainable methods and materials to reduce the impact on the local environment.
5. To seek quotations to improve footpath access from the entrance to the Recreation Ground to the play area and then on to Pump Track site as part of the project.

351. MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING - TRANSITION TOWN WELLINGTON

It was **RESOLVED** to recommend to Full Council that is adopts the proposed Memorandum of Understanding with Transition Town Wellington.

352. WESTFORD STREAM NATURAL FLOOD MANAGEMENT STATEMENT

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the statement of support for the Natural Flood Management scheme in Westford.

353. BUDGETS

The budget report was circulated in advance of the meeting and noted.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 19:29pm

Sign.....

Date.....



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|---------------------------------|---|
| Title | Open Space Managers Report January 2026 |
| Meeting | Environment Meeting |
| Date of meeting | 22/01/26 |
| Action Required | Noting |
| Report Author and email address | Darren Hill Open Spaces Manager darren@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk |

1. The team has been focused on the winter works, such as vegetation clearance and stream clearing keeping the park tidy and finishing planting the bulb. They were also involved in installing the Christmas Trees and the road closure for the Christmas light switch on.
2. CCTV has been installed in Wellington Park and is fully operational, we will be painting the bracket and the edges of the solar panel black to soften the appearance as well as planting Ivy around the base to grow up the pole.
3. Health and Safety update, the repairs to the play equipment in the Rec, have now been completed and everything is operational. It is looking likely that the surf-rocker play frame in the Rec will need to be removed as we are unable to get a part. If this happens, we will consult with the public about what we replace it with.
4. A full Risk Assessment of the Green Corridor has been shared with the committee and most of the requests have been undertaken. We have all the What3Words information needed to make signs for all entrances now. We also have undertaken the fencing repair at the Oaken Ground entrance. The tractor Flailing works has been complete.
5. I have been in contact with Somerset Council, and we now have an 8-week schedule of the mechanical sweeper in the Town, I will ask Rebecca to share this maybe have an option on our webpage to view this information.

6. The Open Space team has also taken on the two play areas in the Longforth Estate, we are now inspecting and maintaining them.
7. I am working on a plan with Somerset Council to install the Monument planter on the Longforth Farm roundabout. I have emailed to arrange a meeting with Somerset Council to discuss this.



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|---------------------------------|--|
| Title | Green Corridor Waterways and Basins Ponds |
| Meeting | Environment Committee |
| Date of meeting | 21 January 2026 |
| Action Required | Decision |
| Report Author and email address | Dave Farrow, Chief Executive/Town Clerk townclerk@wellingtontowncouncil.co.uk |

1. Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this paper is for the Committee to consider whether it wishes the Chief Executive to enter in to discussions with Mancraft Limited in relation to the possible transfer of ownership of the waterways running through the Green Corridor to Tonedale Mill, including the ponds at The Basins, to the Town Council with any final decision to be made by the Town Council on recommendation from the Committee.

2. Background

2.1 Councillors will be aware that Mancraft Ltd own the Tonedale Mills site. Mancraft also own the waterways that run through the Green Corridor to the Mills as shown on the attached land registry map.

2.2 At the beginning of January, one of the Directors of Mancraft contacted the Chief Executive to advise that he would be willing to consider transferring the ownership of the waterways to the Town Council on condition that the Council met any legal fees incurred by the company in doing so.

2.3 Bringing the waterways into the town councils ownership would be a further step in the direction of the Council being responsible for the whole of the Green Corridor and is consistent with its strategy of bringing well used public spaces under its control for example seeking to take ownership of land currently held by the Crown Estate.

2.4 However, with ownership comes responsibilities and costs both in terms of ongoing maintenance and liabilities arising from a likely lack of investment and ongoing maintenance in previous years. This is particularly relevant in relation to the need for the waterways to be properly maintained and possibly developed to mitigate the risk of flooding at, for example, Hilly Head and in Rockwell Green and on the Mill site itself where plans for flood mitigation are required before any development can take place.

2.5 That said the alternative argument is that it enables the Council to take control of mitigating those risks rather than relying on a third party. There are also opportunities to further enhance biodiversity in the area through appropriate management of the waterways. The Wellington Waterways Feasibility study commissioned by Somerset Council and published in March 2024 provides a template for how flood risks might be mitigated and how wider benefits could be accrued.

3 Links to Council Vision and Place Plan

Vision

- Proud and protective of our heritage, green spaces, and biodiversity
- Committed to becoming a net carbon neutral town
- A destination of choice for people to live and work and for businesses to be located.
- Connected with the Blackdown Hills National Landscape and surrounding communities

Wellington Place Plan

- Pride in Place: Culture, Heritage & Belonging
- A Healthy, Sustainable & Green Town

4 Financial Implications

4.1 At this stage the financial implications are unclear beyond knowing that Mancraft will ask for its legal costs to be covered hence the proposal for further work to be carried out before a final decision is made.

5 Risks

5.1 The current risks relate to not knowing what the immediate and ongoing costs and liabilities would be of taking ownership of the waterways. This would be mitigated by seeking specialist advice on likely ongoing maintenance costs, costs of addressing any shortfalls in previous maintenance regimes and costs of enhancing the waterways to promote biodiversity and mitigate against future flood risks before any final decision is made.

6 Considerations

6.1 The Committee is asked to consider whether it wishes the Chief Executive to progress work on assessing risks and costs to report back to a future Committee meeting with a proposal about how to proceed.

7. Background Papers (available from the report author on request)

Wellington Waterways Feasibility Study March 2024

This official copy issued on 27 March 2009 shows the state of this title plan on 27 March 2009 at 13:30:46. It is admissible in evidence to the same extent as the original (s.67 Land Registration Act 2002). This title plan shows the general position, not the exact line, of the boundaries. It may be subject to distortions in scale. Measurements scaled from this plan may not match measurements between the same points on the ground. See Land Registry Public Guide 19 - Title Plans and Boundaries.
This title is dealt with by Land Registry, Plymouth Office.