

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Greenacre Centre, Valerian Way, Stotfold, SG5 4HG
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27th June 2024

Members of the Public Realm Committee: Cllr M Cooper (Chairperson), Cllr L Anderson (Vice-Chairperson), Cllr S Buck, Cllr S Hayes, Cllr J Headington, Cllr J Hyde, Cllr B Saunders, Cllr J Smith, Cllr J Talbot, Cllr B Woods.

You are hereby summoned to attend the Public Realm Committee meeting to be held in the Council Chamber, Greenacre Centre, Stotfold on **Wednesday 3rd July 2024 at 19:00** for the purpose of transacting business detailed in the agenda.

E Payne
Town Clerk

Members of the public:

You are now able to observe our meetings by joining via MS Teams. Join on your computer or mobile app [Click here to join the meeting](#). Please note, our meetings may be recorded for minute taking purposes, and will be deleted after minutes are approved.

Members of the public are invited to observe the meeting and may participate at the 'public section' agenda item. As per Standing Orders, if you wish to speak, you must notify the Town Clerk of your intention prior to the start of the meeting (contact in advance enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk or 01462 730064 or you will be asked at the appropriate point in the agenda if unable to give prior indication).

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

- a) Members to declare interests in respect of any item on the Agenda.
- b) Proper Officer to consider written requests from members for dispensations.

Members are reminded that if at any time during the meeting they feel they have an interest in an item being discussed, they should declare it at that point.

3. PUBLIC SECTION (MAX. 15 MINUTES)

Members of the public may speak on matters of concern, ask questions or make statements (maximum of 3 minutes per speaker), after giving notice of their wish to do so to the Town Clerk prior to the meeting. Order of speakers will be in order of notification. [Public Participation Policy](#) applies.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Members are asked to resolve that the Minutes of the Public Realm Committee Meeting of Wednesday 5th June 2024 are a correct record.

5. CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES, FOR INFORMATION

Correspondence received and matters arising from previous Minutes, for information.

6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

6.1 Tree Management Policy

To review the Draft Tree Management Policy

6.2 Entrance Gate Signage

To receive a report on replacement entry signs.

6.3 Use of outdoor spaces

To receive an update on the use of outdoor spaces.

6.4 Hedges at The Green

To consider the planting of additional hedging at The Green.

6.5 Environmental Policy Task & Finish Group

To consider setting up a Task and Finish Group for an Environmental Policy.

6.6 Love Parks Week

To consider the promotion of this event.

6.7 Stotfold Juniors – Use of Riverside

To receive a request to install goal post secure fittings at Riverside.

6.8 Parking on Verges and Pavements

To receive a verbal report from Cllr Anderson that the Town Council investigates protection of grass verges from parking.

6.9 Box Hedges

To receive an update on the box hedges at the Cemetery.

6.10 Memorial Safety Policy

To consider a policy for the testing of cemetery memorials.

6.11 Friends of the Stotfold Cemetery

To consider the formation of a Friends of the Cemetery Group.

6.12 Interment Request

To consider waiving triple fees in special circumstances.

6.13 Allotment Fees

To review the allotment fees.

6.14 CCTV at Riverside

To receive a report on the upgrading of CCTV at Riverside to counteract anti-social behaviour.

7. HIGHWAYS REPORT

To receive a report from Councillor Smith, Highways Representative.

8. WORK PROGRAMME

To receive this Committee's Work Programme.

9. PUBLIC REALM WORKS

Members are reminded that matters for Central Beds Council can be reported via <https://www.fixmystreet.com> and if they have any matters that are to be reported to other parties or are general repair or maintenance work for the council, these should not be held until the next committee meeting but should be reported to the office.

10. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 11th September 2024.



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PUBLIC REALM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5TH JUNE 2024 IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, GREENACRE CENTRE, VALERIAN WAY, STOTFOLD, SG5 4HG AT 19:00

Committee Members present:

Cllr M Cooper (Chair), Cllr L Anderson (Vice-Chair), Cllr S Buck, Cllr J Headington, Cllr J Hyde, Cllr J Smith, Cllr J Talbot, Cllr S Hayes, Cllr B Woods.

Also present:

E. Payne – Town Clerk (virtual)
H. Childs – Public Realm Officer
S. van der Merwe – Democratic Services Manager
Member of Public – 1

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Saunders.

It was **RESOLVED** to accept Cllr Saunders' apologies for absence.

2. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Cllrs Headington and Talbot requested dispensation regarding item 6.3 on the Agenda as they are allotment tenants, and Cllrs Hyde and Hayes as they are Trustees for the Eleemosynary Charity which owns the land on which the Common Road Allotment is sited.

Cllr Hyde declared an interest in item 5.4 as the tenant farmer undertakes work for her.

3. PUBLIC SECTION

There was no comment from the member of public present.

4. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Public Realm Committee Meeting held on 8th May 2024 were **ADOPTED** as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

5. CLERK'S REPORT, CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED AND MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES, FOR INFORMATION

5.1 Prince Charles Avenue Roadworks: The Town Clerk has permitted the roadworks company working at Prince Charles Avenue to use Town Council land at Queen Street for equipment storage and a site cabin.

5.2 Riverside Culvert: One of the sandbags was reported at the Public Realm Meeting on 5th May 2024 as needing replacement and this has now been replaced.

5.3 Prince Charles Avenue: The Town Clerk updated the Committee on another piece of land at Prince Charles Avenue where the developer has been undertaking works to make this fit for adoption by Central Bedfordshire Council. The Clerk has requested the contractor's Public Liability Insurance Certificate and Risk Assessment, as well as a timeline of works. Town Council staff will inspect the land before commencement of the works to ensure the

land is returned to the state it was in at the end of the planned project. The Town Clerk has requested that the contractor write to all adjacent residents regarding the works.

- 5.4 **Barn on Unnamed Road leading to Pix Brook Academy:** The farmer tenant will have space in his barn for additional storage of Town Council equipment later in the year. Central Bedfordshire Council as landowner have approved the arrangement and a licence will be drawn up to formalise the arrangement.

Cllr Hyde requested the Town Council write to Central Bedfordshire Council to notify them that the road has historically been called "Stone Road". Cllr Cooper requested this be brought to a future Planning Committee Agenda.

6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

6.1 Land at Pix Road and Hazel Grove

Members received a report regarding complaints received from a resident regarding the Grounds Maintenance contractors and the performance of their duties on land adjacent to the resident's property.

It was **RESOLVED** to write to the resident to ask her if she would like to adopt the cutting of the land on the triangular section. The Town Council will continue to cut the grass on the rectangular section along the left of the property.

6.2 Erosion of riverbank at Riverside

Members were asked to review two quotes to restore eroded sections of the riverbank.

The Public Realm Officer noted that the section near the bridge is steep and poses a hazard to children. Members noted that the section near the bridge is a well-known point where residents can access the river and that the Town Council leases the section near the ford point from Central Bedfordshire Council.

It was **RESOLVED** to defer this meeting to 3rd July 2024 meeting to allow officers to obtain like-for-like quotes and to obtain quotes for dog steps.

6.3 Allotment toilet and funding

The Town Clerk advised Members that the Cemeteries and Allotments Officer will submit a report to the next Eleemosynary Charity Trustees Meeting of 24th June 2024. The Town Council will prepare a short questionnaire to allotment holders to be sent after the Trustee Meeting to demonstrate that allotment holders are in support of the request for a compostable toilet.

Members noted that the Town Council should take advice on the VAT issue related to the Common Road allotment toilet.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council carry out a site survey to determine if the toilet can be sited within the boundaries of Common Road.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council send a short questionnaire to allotment holders on both sites after the Trustees' meeting on 24th June 2024.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk has delegated authority to make an application for match funding from the UKSPF if the Trustees agree with the project.

6.4 Land registration of the Lower Part of the Cemetery

Members received a report advising the Town Council that part of the cemetery is not registered with the Land Registry and the affect that this is having on extending the lease for the chapel lease.

Members **NOTED** the actions of the Town Clerk in the registration of the Lower Part of the Cemetery.

6.5 Complaint regarding use of Hitchin Road

Members received a report with a complaint from a resident regarding the use of Hitchin Road by football clubs.

Members requested that the Town Council send a letter to Stotfold Junior Football Club to ask them to include a map with information on areas where parking should be avoided when they issue their match day notice to visiting clubs.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council purchase and install a 2-metre boot cleaner on the wall at the changing rooms.

6.6 D-Day Commemorative Bench

Members received a report outlining a proposed commemorative bench to be installed adjacent to the War Memorial.

It was **RESOLVED** that the Town Council purchase Option 1 without reference to a battalion, with a back plate and to add the wording "Installed by the grateful residents of Stotfold" on the plaque.

6.7 Planned work to football pitches

Members reviewed an update on the football pitches maintenance works and discussed the plan for the 2024 – 2025 year.

It was **RESOLVED** not to proceed with overseeding and spraying for this financial year, but to meet the cost of the rest of the expense for the remainder of planned works.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to consider sports pitch specialist for Arlesey Road pitches for the Ground Maintenance Contract once the contract is completed.

10. HIGHWAYS REPORT

Members discussed roadworks currently underway on Queen Street and Regent Street.

11. WORKS PROGRAMME

The report was **NOTED**.

12. PUBLIC REALM WORKS

There were no comments.

13. ITEMS FOR INFFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY

Cllr Talbot commented on trees on Hitchin Road Recreation Ground that would require crowning. Cllr Cooper pointed out that tree works for this financial year's contracts include works to those trees in the Autumn.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 3rd July 2024.

The meeting closed at 20:47

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN: _____

MINUTES APPROVED (date): _____

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM

DATE: 3RD JULY 2024

SUBJECT: TOWN CLERK'S REPORT

1. Height Barrier – Arlesey Road

In collaboration with a local farmer, the Football Club and a local engineering company, repairs to the height barrier have now been carried out and the barrier has been reinstated.

2. Riverside Culvert

Despite the remedial actions carried out by the Contractor, involving pinning of the sandbags at Riverside Culvert, one of the bags has become loose again, which we believe to be caused by vandalism. The contractor has agreed to rectify this at no additional costs to STC.

3. Painting of Tractor Shed

Painting of three of the exterior walls of the tractor at Hitchin Road Recreation Ground were completed this week in preparation for the graphic artist to spray the Squirrel Taverners logo on the side of the building.

4. Bench Proposal

An alternative Memorial bench design and costing has been submitted by a local company, the specification for which is as follows:

Welded together from mild steel with a rectangular brass plaque which would be engraved

Stainless steel plates on the bottom of the bench that touches the floor, that way if the underneath is scratched it won't rust or bubble under the paint if water touches it.

The whole bench, to be black and the poppy heads in red.

Total costing - **£1325.00**

This is opposed to the original price quoted of **£1,850**.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: RECREATION COMMITTEE
DATE: 3rd JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: HELEN CHILD – PUBLIC REALM OFFICER
SUBJECT: REVIEW OF TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Town Council ratified the Tree Management Policy in 2021. This Policy is due for a review by this Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to review the updated Tree Management Policy and recommend its adoption to Full Council.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A Town Council needs a robust tree management policy for several important reasons:

- a) **Environmental Benefits:**
Trees help to improve air quality by absorbing pollutants and producing oxygen, providing shade and sequester carbon dioxide. They provide habitats for various species of birds, insects, and other wildlife, promoting biodiversity.
- b) **Safety and Risk Management:**
A tree management policy helps ensure that trees are regularly inspected and maintained to prevent accidents caused by falling branches or uprooted trees. Proper management prevents tree roots from damaging pavements, roads, and utilities.
- c) **Aesthetics and Quality of Life:**
Trees enhance the visual appeal of areas, making them more attractive for residents and visitors. Green spaces with trees provide areas for recreation and relaxation, contributing to the mental well-being of the community.
- d) **Legislation:**
There are laws regarding tree conservation, protection of endangered species, and environmental impact assessments. A tree management policy helps ensure compliance with these regulations. Having a policy in place can reduce the Council's liability by demonstrating a proactive approach to managing potential hazards associated with trees.
- e) **Resource Maintenance:**
It helps in the efficient allocation of resources for tree planting, care, and removal, ensuring that budget and manpower are used effectively.

By implementing a Tree Management Policy, the Town Council can ensure that the benefits of trees are maximized while minimizing potential risks and costs associated with their maintenance.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 There would be no additional associated costs to Stotfold Town Council to implement this Policy.
- 4.2 Costs would be incurred for carrying out tree surveys and remedial tree work where this is recommended following the tree survey. Costs would also be incurred if damage to trees is incurred, requiring remedial work to be carried out.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	Health and Safety
Risk Management	Identifying risks to public health and arboriculture health
Legals:	Meets legal requirement for managing risks
Resources/Stakeholders:	None for reviewing the policy, tree surgeon for implementation
Contracts/Financial:	To be agreed by Committee
Crime & Disorder:	n/a
Equalities:	n/a
Biodiversity:	Low risk to biodiversity impact
Privacy Impact:	n/a

**STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL
TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY**

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1. Policy statement

1.1. About this Policy

Stotfold Town Council has the following policy with regard to trees under their management: Trees are important landscape features that contribute to the character and appearance of Stotfold as well as improving the health and well-being of the people that live locally. Trees are integral to carbon sequestration and also provide valuable habitat for wildlife. To uphold our duty of care, we also have an obligation to protect people and property from hazardous trees so far as is reasonably practicable. This policy aims to accord with the `Common Sense Risk of the management of trees` - guidance on trees and public safety in the UK for owners, managers and advisors - 2011 as published by the National Tree Safety Group (NTSG). [FCMS024.pdf \(ntsgroup.org.uk\)](#)

1.2. Town Council Duty

The Town Council has a duty to inspect these trees and ensure it meets all legal obligations which include maintaining public safety knowing the location and condition of the trees for which it is responsible.

- 1.3. Arboricultural Health
- The fundamental principle of public tree management is to maintain a tree population that is safe, healthy and diverse in terms of species and age.
2. Council’s legal responsibilities
- 2.1 Duty
- As the owner and manager of trees, Stotfold Town Council has a legal duty of care to take all reasonable steps to ensure that any foreseeable hazards can be identified and made safe. This duty is laid down in the Occupiers Liability Act 1984 and the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 Section 3.
- 2.2 Governance
- Breaches of this duty may give rise to a claim of negligence. It is not possible to eliminate all risks from trees however there are often indications that a tree may be in decline. The council will carry out regular inspections to identify foreseeable hazards and specify the works needed to reduce these risks to an acceptable level.
3. Tree Risk Management
- 3.1 The Fundamental Approach
- In order to keep tree risk management work proportionate to the level of risk that trees represent the tree survey methodology has been designed so that most resources are directed to areas where there is potentially most risk to people and property. In order to do this the land is periodically surveyed by a qualified arboricultural consultant using the Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) methodology at appendix C. If any risks are observed, they are assessed using a standard methodology called Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA)
- The arboricultural consultant will specify management works if their assessment finds that a tree represents a significant risk of harm to people or property.
- Stotfold Town Council will then arrange for these management works to be carried out within an appropriate time-frame. Stotfold Town Council’s programme of tree risk management inspections is undertaken by an independent and professional arboriculturist. The survey records information on council owned trees and identifies any which pose a risk to health and safety. Remedial action is undertaken on any tree which pose a risk on a timescale recommended by inspectors.
- 3.2 Target Zoning
- With knowledge of site use different areas can be categorised into target zones according to their level of use. The system of categorisation that has been used for zoning the area is detailed in Table 1. A Zone Plan (ZP-1) has been drawn to indicate the three areas of zoning, the plan is provided at the rear of the document. The plan will be used to dictate which areas are included in annual tree surveys as explained in section 2.3 (but this may be refined by further judgement during the tree survey).

Table 1: The system used for target zoning at the site.

Targeted Zone	Map Colour	Description	Frequency
High risk (Zone 1)	Red	Areas of high use where veteran/mature trees are in falling distance of roads, footpaths, car parks and play areas.	Every 2 Years

Medium risk (Zone 2)	Blue	Area of medium use pedestrian and vehicle use including estate roads and green spaces, allotments, major woodland paths,	Every 4 Years
Low-Medium risk (Zone 3)	Green	Areas of low use away. Areas where only young/early mature/ regularly pollarded trees are located.	Every 6 years

3.3 Frequency and type of inspection.

The land managed by Stotfold Town Council is extensive and it would be excessive to carry out a survey of every tree each year. Therefore, in order to concentrate attention where it is most required, the land has been divided into three risk zones. Trees in Zone 1 will be surveyed every 2 years, trees in Zone 2 will be surveyed every 4 years, and trees in zone 3 every 6 years. These time intervals are detailed in Appendix B. But it should be noted that there may be

situations when there is concern for a tree that is in Zone 2 or 3 and may recommend it for a more regular inspection than the other trees in that zone.

4. Tree Surveys

4.1 The Survey Approach

The tree survey will include every tree in the relevant zone, but trees forming cohesive arboricultural features (visually, culturally or aerodynamically) will be assessed as a group where appropriate. During the survey each individual tree surveyed will be tagged and its location added to the tree plan.

A condition assessment will be carried out and recorded for each tree that is tagged. The data should include the date when the survey was made, the name of the tree surveyor, the tag number, the species of tree, a simple assessment of the height of the tree, its age class, its physiological condition, notes on its structural condition and any relevant site features. If the surveyor does decide to survey a tree from a group, that tree will be tagged and its location added to the tree plan.

When carrying out repeat tree surveys each of the trees that have been tagged in previous years must be given an individual tree assessment. Any trees of safety concern will be surveyed using a simple version of the Quantified Tree Risk Assessment (QTRA) methodology³. QTRA applies established and accepted risk management principles to tree safety management. The outcome of the QTRA assessment is a score and this value can be used to prioritise management works. If the tree is assessed to have a significant risk of harm, then appropriate management recommendations should be prescribed.

Appropriate management will fall into three broad categories:

- 1. The risk is assessed as low and so no works are required;
- 2. Management works are prescribed;
- 3. A visual assessment is inconclusive and further investigation is required.

Further investigation would be appropriate if:

- 1. The tree is high value such as for amenity or wildlife, and you believe that it cannot be made safe without significantly reducing its value;

2. The symptoms are inconclusive, e.g. the extent of trunk decay is unclear;
3. Investigation of the hazard requires specialist knowledge and experience;
4. An aerial inspection of a tree is advised following a visual assessment from the ground.

4.2 **Prioritising recommended works**

The risk assessments will produce a probability of harm (within the next year), and these figures will be used to prioritise recommended tree works. The system used is based on the quantified tree risk assessment (QTRA) and the tolerability of risk framework and detailed in Table 2. Accordingly, tree risk management works that are identified to have a risk of harm greater than 1/100 will be treated immediately and without any delay, and trees calculated to have a risk score between 1/100 and 1 in 10,000 will be carried out as soon as reasonably practicable, but in any event in no more than 8 weeks. Risks that are between 1 in 10,000 and 1 in 1,000,000 will be programmed into annual works schedules.

There will be standard tree maintenance works appropriate for some trees such as the lifting of low crowns or the removal of ivy or epicormic growth. These works will be specified as part of the tree survey as ‘advisory’ works. During tree risk assessments features within the falling distance of the tree (targets) can be people, property or road traffic. When considering the risks posed by the tree the inspection considered the usage of the target zone, the size of the part that could impact the target, and the likelihood of that part failing.

Table 2: The system for prioritising recommended tree work

Level of Risk	Probability of Harm	Work Priority	Timescale
Very High	1 – 1/1000	Urgent	Immediately, without delay
High	1/1000 – 1/10,000	High	As soon as reasonably practicable
Moderate	1/10,000 – 1/1,000,000	Non-urgent	In order of priority and funds permitting
Acceptable	<1/1,000,000	N/A	N/A
None	-	Advisory	N/A

4.3 **Use of appropriate contractors**

Tree work is inherently dangerous and so only experienced contractors/arborists will be used. All staff must be suitably trained, certificated and insured for the necessary operations. Tree work good practice is set out in British Standard BS3998:2010 - Recommendations for Tree Work

4.4 **Nature conservation and tree works**

Any arborist working at the site must comply with all statutory requirements concerning flora, fauna and habitat in accordance with relevant nature conservation legislation. The arborist should make sure that they are familiar with current best working practices to minimize disturbance to flora and fauna. The arborist must consider the risk of impacting protected species prior to carrying out arboricultural works, especially when dealing with trees that have veteran characteristics. Natural England must be notified if there is reason to believe that arboricultural operations may disturb bats because a licence for the works may be required.

If nesting birds are found to be present then the tree work must not commence, or if the tree surgery has already started and nesting birds are then discovered then the work must stop immediately and be re-scheduled for later in the year.

The responsibility for protecting wildlife will be held by the contractor but Stotfold Town Council accepts that this is a necessary constraint to tree works. Stotfold Town Council also

understands that the need to protect wildlife may result in some works being delayed, and this requirement may also result in increased costs for tree management.

4.5 Tree Protection Orders

Tree Protection Order/Tree Conservation Area: Tree Protection Orders (TPO's) are administered by the Local Planning Authority, Central Bedfordshire Council, and are made to protect trees that bring significant amenity benefit to the local area. All types of trees, but not hedges, bushes or shrubs can be protected, and a TPO can protect anything from a single tree to all trees within a defined area or woodland. Any species can be protected, but no species is automatically protected by a tree preservation order.

A TPO is a written order, which in general, makes it a criminal offence to cut down, top, lop, uproot, wilfully damage or wilfully destroy a tree protected by that order, or to cause or permit such actions, without the authority's permission. Trees not protected by a TPO may be in a tree conservation area. Stotfold Town Council must give written notice to Central Bedfordshire Council of any proposed work, describing what we want to do, at least six weeks before the work starts.

This is called a 'section 211 notice' and it gives Central Bedfordshire Council an opportunity to consider protecting the tree with a TPO. Stotfold Town Council does not need to give notice of work on a tree in a conservation area less than 7.5 centimetres in diameter, measured 1.5 metres above the ground (or 10 centimetres if thinning to help the growth of other trees).

5. Natural occurrences

5.1 Tree litter

The council is not legally responsible for fallen leaves, seeds, fruit, pollen, blossom or cones onto private property or any damage that this may cause. Pruning does not alleviate these problems and we would not carry out works to prevent these arisings.

Where gutters are regularly blocked by fallen leaves gutter guards may be fitted to provide a low maintenance solution at the property owner's expense.

5.2 Wildlife

The council does not accept responsibility for cleaning up of animal or insect droppings such as bird droppings and aphid honeydew onto private property.

5.3 Pests and diseases

The council will take a responsible approach towards pests and disease and will be proactive in planning for any new threats that are posed to the council's tree population.

5.4 Shade

There is no legal right to light therefore the council has no legal obligation to abate this nuisance. Pruning will often have negligible impact on the amount of light reaching a house and can have the adverse effect of accelerating additional growth. Therefore, under normal circumstances tree works is not considered. We will not prune or fell a tree in our ownership to improve natural light to a solar panel as trees are an important asset in tackling climate change.

5.5 Bird nesting

All wild birds at the nest are protected by the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. It is an offence to intentionally take, damage or destroy the nest of any wild birds whilst it is in use or being built. It is also an

offence to intentionally or recklessly disturb any wild bird listed on Schedule 1 while it is nesting, or at a nest containing eggs or young, or disturb the dependent young of such birds.

The council carries out tree, hedge and shrub removals or substantial renovations outside of the nesting period where possible (Sept to March); exceptions will include works undertaken for health and safety reasons and trees proven to be damaging property.

At times formally grown shrubs and hedges require containment pruning within the nesting season to remove the current season's growth. The works will be carried out in a manner causing minimum disturbance to birds and wildlife.

Where works are required within the nesting season a preliminary inspection will be undertaken to check for the presence of protected species. Should a protected species be present or in the area surrounding, including active bird nests (one being built, in use or containing eggs), works will not be undertaken unless to alleviate a dangerous condition in which case advice is sought from the RSPB.

5.6 Bat roosts

Bats are a European Protected Species and are protected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Causing damage to or destroying a roost site is a criminal offence which can lead to imprisonment or fine. Trees with suitable features such as holes, cracks, crevices and dense ivy will be risk assessed for their ability to support bats. Trees in Stotfold Town Council ownership displaying signs of roosting bats will be referred to an external bat consultant before any work commences. Any trees supporting roosting bats will not be worked on until Natural England is consulted.

6. Damage from trees

6.1 Root ingress in gardens

- 6.1.1 The council is unable to prevent root ingress within adjacent gardens, it is not considered actionable nuisance and therefore we do not undertake root removal where this has occurred. Reduction or removal of some tree species which regenerate through shoots from their buried roots can often exacerbate the problem as it stimulates them to produce more roots.
- 6.1.2 The council will not accept responsibility for tree roots that have gained access to drains or services as a consequence of these services being unfit for purpose. Tree roots do not generally break drainage pipes but may be attracted by the moisture of a leaking pipe and enter. The onus is on the owner to get the drain repaired at their own expense.
- 6.1.3 Where tree roots have caused minor damage to non-supporting structures such as garden walls the council will not take any action. It is the responsibility of the property owner to rebuild or repair garden walls and fences to take account of adjacent trees. This can be achieved in a number of ways (for example, installing a section of railing or bridging foundations around the base of a tree).
- 6.1.4 If a damaged wall or fence was constructed after planting of the tree, it may mean that the design or construction has failed to take the presence of nearby trees into account.
- 6.1.5 The council will not accept responsibility for tree roots damaging hard paving on adjacent land. The onus is on the owner to repair paths, drives and patios, etc, to take account of adjacent trees and tree roots.

6.2 Damage from overhanging branches

- 6.2.1 The council will cut back tree branches from a dwellinghouse and garage where they touch windows, walls, roofs or gutters. This will ensure that damage to a dwellinghouse and

garage such as tiles or gutters is avoided. We endeavour to maintain a 1.5m clearance from these structures.

- 6.2.2 Overhanging branches not causing damage to a dwellinghouse, garage, fence or wall will not be pruned back, and it is the onus of the property owner to cut them back to their boundary if they perceive these to be a nuisance.
- 6.2.3 If branches from a tree on council owned land is found to be causing damage to a boundary wall we will investigate and take action if appropriate. The usual course would be to remove low branches up to a maximum height of 3m.
- 6.2.4 We will consider tree removal if the walls or fence is irreplaceable and of exceptional importance, e.g. a retaining wall or of historical interest, if there is a risk to public health or if other tree works are not appropriate.

6.3 Damage to paths and patios

- 6.3.1 It is often possible to repair paths to take account of adjacent trees and tree roots. Where roots protrude, they can be root pruned up to the boundary, or the path re-laid around the tree with flexible materials such as asphalt to provide a smooth surface. Where trees are considered to be causing damage to paths or footpaths, we will not normally consider tree removal except where there is a risk to public health which cannot otherwise be mitigated.

6.4 Subsidence

- 6.4.1 The council will rigorously identify and defend any claims which are presumed to be false.

7. Other tree related issues

7.1 Telephone wires

- 7.1.1 We will not prune or fell a tree in our ownership to prevent or reduce interference with telephone wires. We would recommend contacting the telephone service provider in such circumstances.
- 7.1.2 It is the telephone service providers' responsibility to maintain your service. Several options are available to the utility company that do not require pruning of a tree to maintain the service. Often pruning is a temporary solution and the problem may reoccur when branches grow back.
- 7.1.3 For example, the cable can be sheathed at points of high friction; the lines can also be redirected through the tree canopy. It may be that the telephone service provider is able to suggest an alternative solution to the problem of trees affecting telephone wires.

8. Adjacent Landowners

8.1 Permitted works to Town Council owned trees

- 8.1.1 Property owners have a common law right to make private arrangements to prune back council owned tree branches overhanging their property, as long as the tree is not subject to a Tree Preservation Order, within a Conservation Area or have any planning restrictions attached to them.
- 8.1.2 The cutting back should only be up to the fence or boundary line. Should works be required beyond the boundary line in order to cut back to suitable pruning points, approval must be sought from the Town Council. The Town Council will need to meet the contractor to agree the works, see proof of insurance, qualifications, professional membership and site risk assessment before they are allowed to carry out work on council owned land.

8.1.3 Cuttings must be disposed of in an appropriate manner – the council does not require these to be returned. Any cuttings left on council owned property will be deemed as fly tipping and will be subject to appropriate enforcement action.

8.1.4 Any works undertaken to council owned trees must be carried out to the relevant industry standards as set out in BS 3998. It is recommended that works are undertaken by a suitably trained professional tree surgeon carrying the relevant levels of Public Liability Insurance unless the works are such that you could carry them out with hand secateurs or similar. The person undertaking these works would be liable for any works which injury/damage or result in the death of the tree as a result of poor practices.

8.2 Criminal damage

8.2.1 Any felling or heavy pruning of council trees on council land is deemed as criminal damage. The perpetrator will be investigated and under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing act 2014 a Community Protection Notice may be issued, breach of which would result in a fine of up to £2,500 for an individual and £20,000 for a body.

9. Hedges

9.1 Hedges on council land

9.1.1 Hedges will be retained on council land wherever possible, managed in a healthy condition in the interest of local amenity and wildlife.

9.2 High hedges

9.2.1 If natural light is being blocked by growth of a hedge, then action may be taken to reduce the problem under the High Hedges Act Part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. Central Bedfordshire Council is the authority who have the power to intervene in matters involving high hedge disputes.

10. Project Management

10.1 Management responsibilities

The Public Realm Officer is responsible for maintaining records and ensuring that tree surveys are carried out at the right time. It is also the Public Realm Officers responsibility to communicate the tree risk management policy to the Town Rangers.

The Public Realm Officer will be responsible for ensuring that the necessary tree management works are carried out. The Public Realm Officer must also make sure that a professional arboriculturist is consulted for any tree related hazards that have been reported by members of staff or the public (if a check reveals that the defects are outside of the knowledge or experience of grounds management staff).

Following the tree survey any trees that are considered to have a very high risk of harm will require immediate arboricultural works. The Public Realm Officer must ensure that there are systems in place to ensure that these works are carried out as soon as possible. High priority tree works must be carried out as soon as reasonably practicable, but in any event within 8 weeks. Remaining works will be addressed in order of priority and as funds allow.

10.2 Tree Planting and Young Tree Maintenance:

From time-to-time trees have to be felled. However, these trees need to be replaced or the tree population will continue to decline. Replanting trees is essential to maintain and help the urban tree population grow.

It is important to ensure that for every tree felled, at least one tree is planted and is properly cared for. The size, scale and location of replacement planting should reflect both the trees removed and the situation.

It's the Council's aim to replant in the same area where a tree has been removed however, sometimes this may not be possible, either through lack of support from residents or due to the circumstances of the site for instance, nearby drains, powerlines, services or a general lack of space for a tree to thrive. In this instance, a tree will be planted as close to the site as possible on Council owned/controlled land in a suitable location.

Trees in urban areas are usually present either because a conscious decision was made to plant them or because they self-seeded in parks and gardens and were allowed to grow and mature.

10.3 **Objectives of Tree Planting:**

Retention: Ensuring the retention, wherever practicable or desirable, of trees on Council land.

Enhancement: To increase the tree cover and species diversity in those areas of the Town that are lacking in trees

Continuous Tree Cover: To undertake the management of the existing stock ensuring that there is a continuous programme of tree replacement throughout the Town, ensuring that there is a mixed range of age and species.

Species Selection: Planting, where appropriate, large indigenous or exotic species to create skyline features.

Lowering pollution levels: Selecting trees and hedging plants suitable for absorbing carbon dioxide and air pollutants across the Town.

Conservation: Encourage nature conservation through tree planting so that across the Town there is a measurable increase in the conditions suitable for wildlife to colonise areas where before it had limited foothold opportunities.

Publicity and Promotion: Increase the level of public awareness of the tree resource by encouraging public involvement in decision making and planting schemes.

Sponsorship: To encourage members of the public, businesses and other groups to sponsor trees via the introduction of a Tree Donation Scheme.

10.4 **Monitoring Tree Contractors:**

The Council will regularly monitor contractors to ensure standards of work and health and safety are being maintained. An annual review of all Contractors will take place to ensure that they have adequate insurance in place, standards of health and safety have been achieved and that staff are adequately trained for the work in which they are engaged.

All contractors are required to comply with the following, when working on the public highway:

- New Roads and Street Works Act 1991
- Street Works and Road Works Code of Practice

10.5 **Maintaining records:**

Records must be kept for the following:

1. Annual tree reports including details of when the survey was carried out, who surveyed the trees, and notes on tree condition;
2. A prioritised list of recommended management works;
3. A record of risk management operations undertaken including all contractor related documentation such as contracts, invoices, conservation area consents etc;
4. Records of all other reported faults from staff or members of the public;
5. Records of any other remedial actions and follow on observations;
6. A record of existing Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) with map **add**;
7. All records will be kept for a minimum of 5 years in case a claim is made against the Stotfold Town Council. This is to ensure that there is a clear evidence trail that can be referred to following an incident.

11. Alternative formats

- 11.1 Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.
- 11.2 Copies of this document in large print (A3 format) or larger font size, or any tables contained within this document in a screen reader accessible format can be made available on request from the council office or by telephoning 01462 730064 or by emailing the Clerk's office enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk.

This Policy was amended for consideration by the Public Realm Committee **3rd July 2024** and will be reviewed in one year or as required.

Appendix A

Tree Preservation Orders in Stotfold

Preservation Number	Location	Date Issued	Details
	Brook Street/Coppice Mead	1968	1 Chesnut, 1 Lime
1961	The Bury	1962	Many
?	Astwick Road	1966	Silver Birch
1	The Crofts	1971	Chesnut
2	Rook Tree Lane	1971	
4	Murrell Lane/High Street	1971	
6	High Street	1973	Ash
?	St Olives, Hitchin Road	1975	
5	The Gardens	1978	Sycamore
7	Regent Street	1978	
5	The Mixies	1989	
6	Queen Street	1989	Yew x 2
12	The Avenue	1996	
4	Heron Way	1998	
12	Queen Street	1998	Sycamore
1	Fairfield Hospital	1999	Many
2	71 & 73 The Green	02/05/00	Chestnut
3	Malthouse Lane	02/05/00	Chesnuts in fields
5	Walnut Close	02/05/00	Lime
6	The Old Vicarage	02/05/00	Beech
9	65 The Green	31/03/00	Yew
10	St Mary's Church Hall	03/04/00	Chesnut
11	High Street	19/05/00	Limes, Chesnut
12	2 trees, 90 & 92 High Street	12/05/00	Maple, Chesnut
To be verified against the Central Bedfordshire TPO Register			

Appendix B - Tree Inspection Matrix

Tree Risk Zone	Informal Inspection Frequency	Formal Inspection Frequency	Detailed Inspection Frequency
High	Weekly	2 years	As required
Medium	Monthly	4 years	As required
Low	Quarterly	6 years	As required
	<p>Informal observations of trees contribute to wider management and tree safety. They are essentially those day-to-day observations of trees made by employees who have a good local knowledge of the trees and location and see them during the course of their working day.</p> <p>May be undertaken by: People with good local knowledge and familiarity with local trees who are not tree specialists, but rather those closely associated with a site, such as the parks team, who understands the way the site is used (areas most and least frequented) and the extent of the danger, should a tree be found that is clearly failing Reports of problems by staff or members of the public are a fundamental part of our risk management process.</p>	<p>Formal inspection of a tree is when a specific visit to a tree or group of trees is made with the sole purpose of performing an inspection that is not incidental to other activities. From Stotfold Town Council's perspective the formal inspection process would assess the overall condition of the tree's it provides a useful, cost-effective means of inspecting our tree stock which is an important means of identifying when further action is needed, including tree surgery or further detailed inspection.</p> <p>May be undertaken by: People who have a good general knowledge of trees and the ability to recognise normal and abnormal appearance and growth for the locality. This includes an ability to recognise obviously visible signs of serious ill health or significant structural problems were tree failure, could result in serious harm. They also need to know when to request a detailed inspection.</p>	<p>Detailed inspection of a tree should be applied for individual, high-value trees giving high-priority concern in well-used zones. The detailed inspection is normally prioritised according to the level of safety concern. Detailed inspections are therefore reserved for trees valued for their heritage, amenity or habitat and which are suspected of posing a high level of risk, as already identified through a previous formal or informal assessment.</p> <p>May be undertaken by: An appropriately competent person, experienced in the field of arboricultural investigation. The inspector must be suitably qualified and experienced and carry appropriate professional indemnity and public liability insurance.</p>

Appendix C - Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) Methodology

The partial stages of the VTA-method

1. Symptom detection

Body language of trees
Growth defects
Appearance of the bark
Crown and leaves
Fungal fruiting bodies and their body language
Local environment of the tree

2. Confirmation of defects and measurement

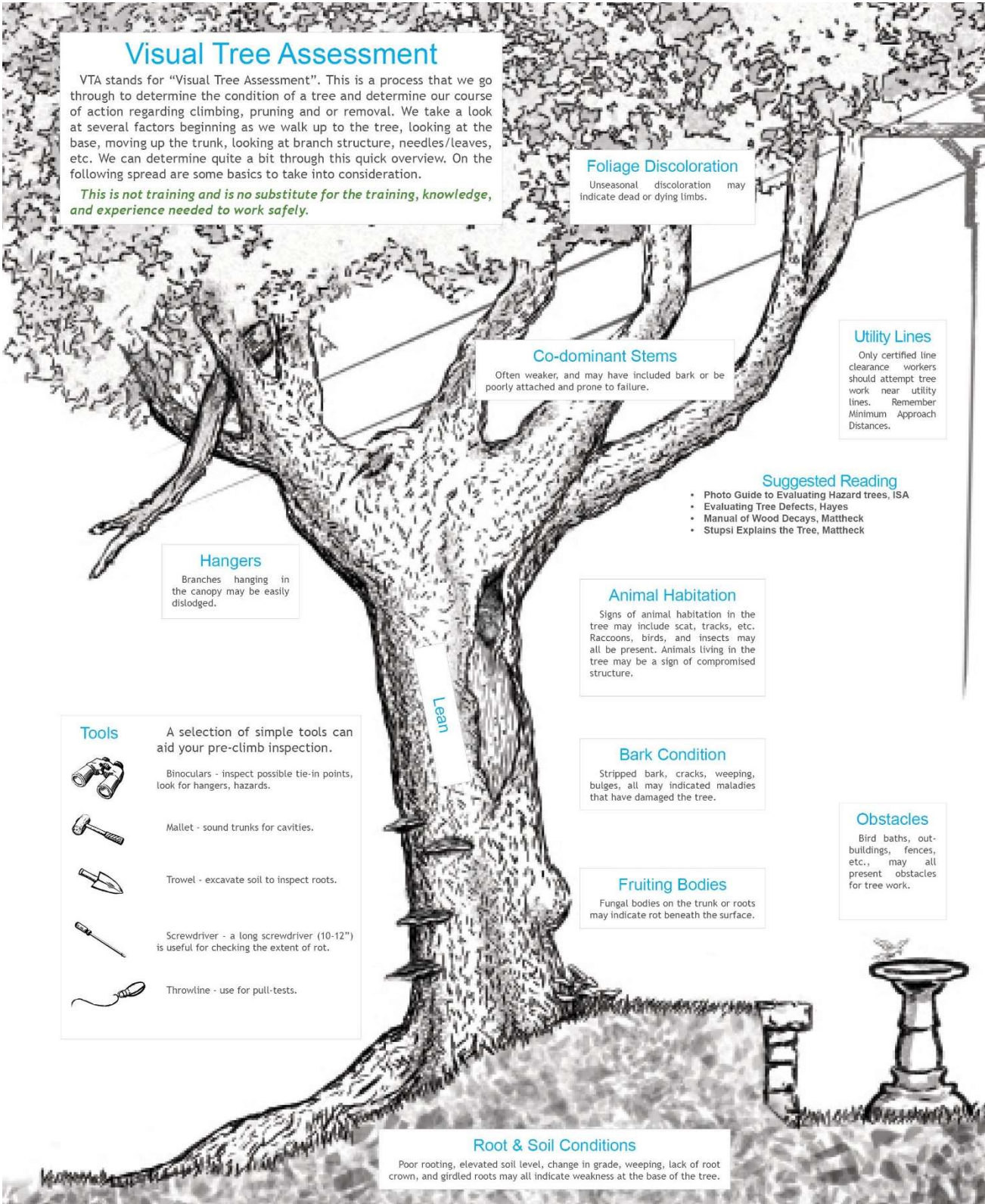
Drilling Resistance Measurement (IML-RESI Systems)
Sound velocity measurement (IML Micro Hammer)
Measurement of the wood strength (Fractometer)
Annual ring analysis (IML Measuring Table)

3. Assessment of the defect

Criteria of failure for hollow or decayed trees
Criteria of failure for root damages
Criteria of failure for trees that are healthy but high trees (H/D ratio!)

4. Determination of further actions

Pruning
Mechanical aid (crow securing system, stilts,...)
Replacement of the tree



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM COMMITTEE

DATE: 3rd JULY 2024

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK

SUBJECT: ENTRANCE GATES TO TOWN

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 As part of the Town Council's 50th anniversary celebrations, it has been suggested that the new artwork commissioned as part of the celebrations, is repurposed for new entrance signs.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the proposal outlined in the report and advise the Clerk if they wish to proceed with this.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Town Council installed signs at various entry points to Stotfold which over time have become damaged and worn (see below).





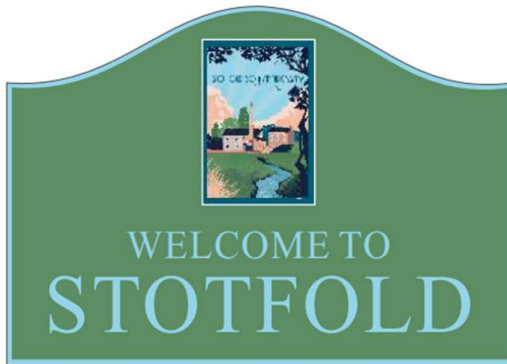
- 3.2 There are various companies who offer 'village entrance' gates and some potential designs are below.
- 3.4 Members may want to consider the locations of these signs as there are three designs, which could be twice each meaning 6 'entrance gates.'

4. FINANCIAL

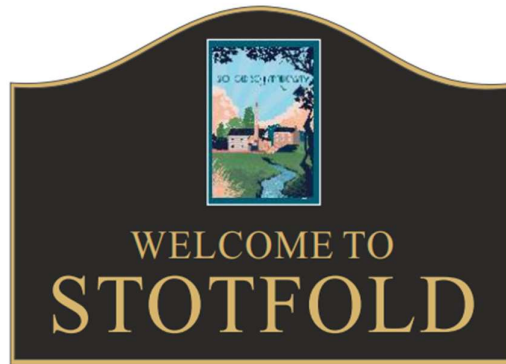
- 4.1 Once a potential design is agreed, confirmed costs will be reported to this committee.
- 4.2 Costs would be met from the 50th Anniversary Budget.

5. IMPLICATIONS

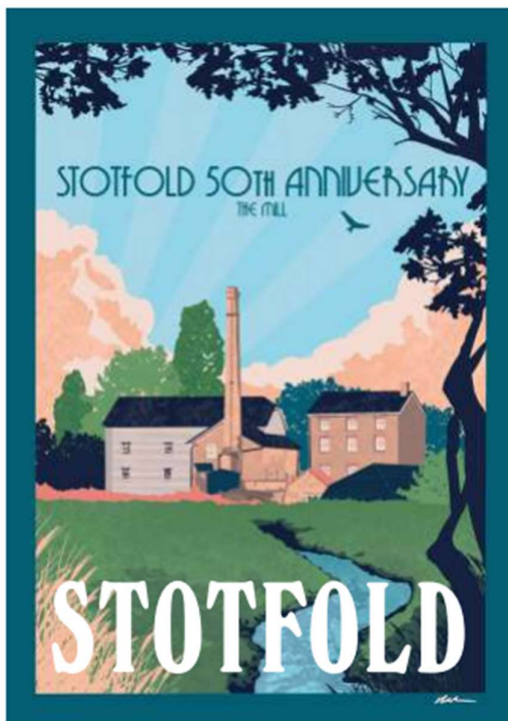
Strategic Plan:	Community Engagement
Risk Management	Vandalism
Legals:	n/a
Resources/Stakeholders:	Third party contractor to manufacture and install.
Contracts/Financial:	Cost to purchase and install the product.
Crime & Disorder:	Risk of vandalism.
Equalities:	n/a
Biodiversity:	Low risk to biodiversity impact.
Privacy Impact:	n/a



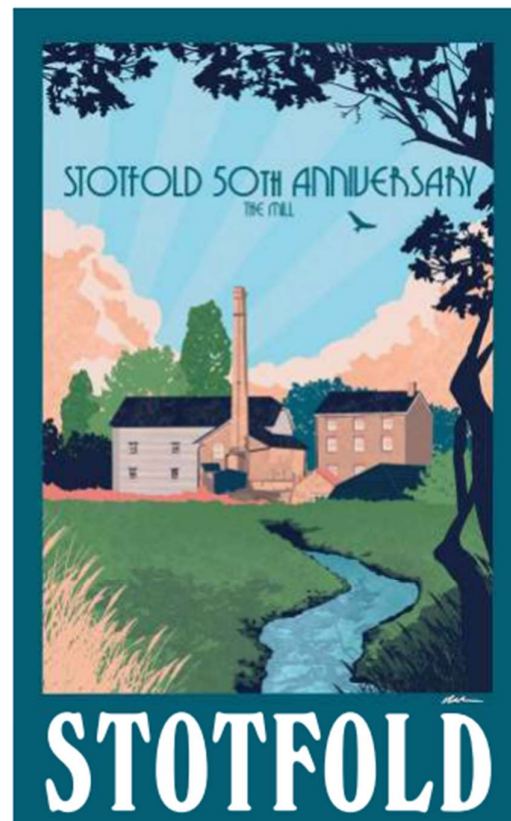
1200 x 850mm



1200 x 850mm

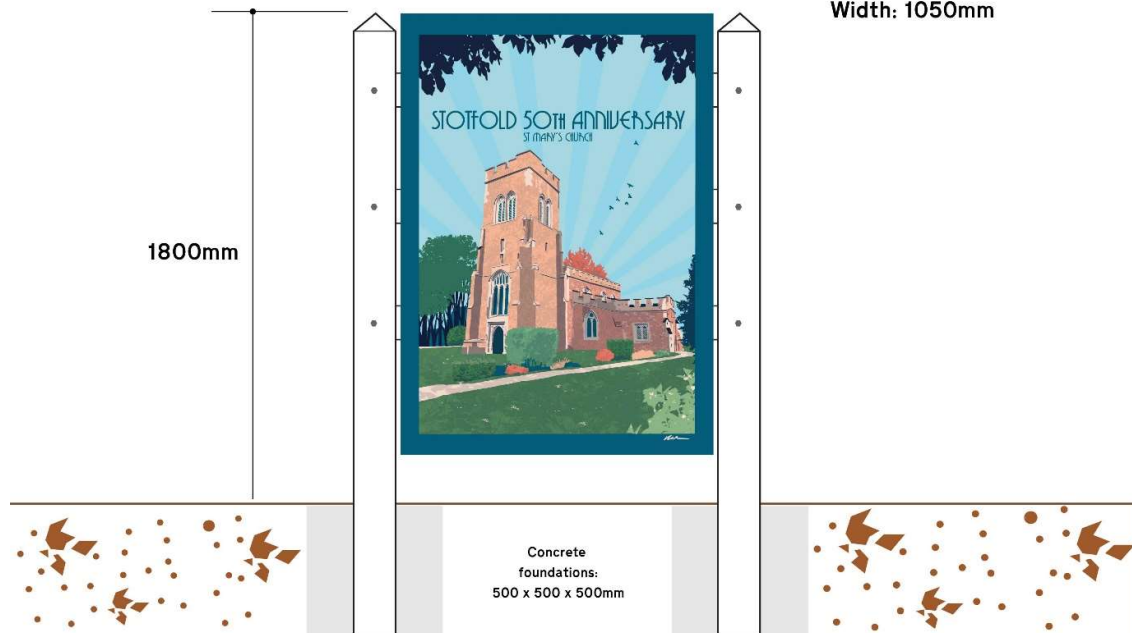


850 x 1200mm



850 x 1350mm

Scale 1:14



Gateway overall dimensions:
Height: 2300mm
Width: 1500mm

Sign overall dimensions:
Height: 1627mm
Width: 1050mm

Scale 1:14



Gateway overall dimensions:

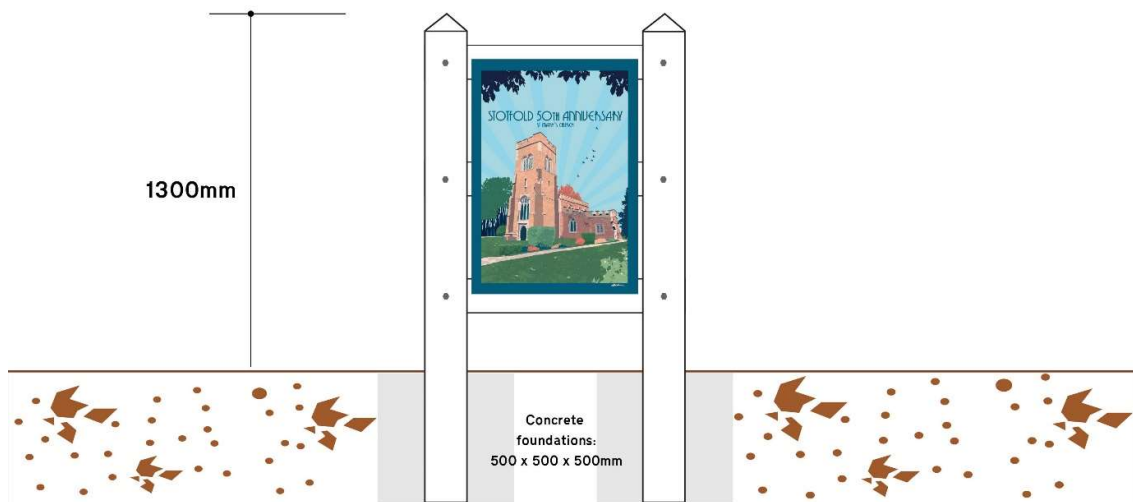
Height: 1800mm

Width: 960mm

Sign overall dimensions:

Height: 863mm

Width: 610mm



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: RECREATION COMMITTEE
DATE: 3rd JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: HELEN CHILD – PUBLIC REALM OFFICER
SUBJECT: REVIEW OF USE OF OUTDOOR SPACES

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 At the meeting of this committee held on 5th June 2024, Members discussed the use of the Town Council's open spaces and the lack of damage deposits requested from hirers.
- 1.2 It was **RESOLVED** to **DEFER** this item to a future Public Realm Committee Meeting in order to allow for creation of a Policy governing event hire of outdoor spaces.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the attached draft Conditions and Hire Agreement for All hireable Open Spaces.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Members and officers suggested that consideration when hiring the space that would take into account:
- a) payment of a damage deposit;
 - b) limit use of the Green to summer – after April and before the start of the football season;
 - c) restricting hires to a maximum/set time period;
 - d) there being an inspection of the Green's ground conditions the day before a hire starts;
 - e) event hire being subject to weather conditions for the duration of the hire.
- 3.2 The open space hire agreement has been updated to reflect those considerations.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 Taking a deposit would mitigate any costs relating to rectifying damage caused by hirers.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	Community Engagement
Risk Management	Mitigation of damage to open spaces & turf management
Legals:	n/a
Resources/Stakeholders:	Officers/Hirers
Contracts/Financial:	None
Crime & Disorder:	
Equalities:	n/a
Biodiversity:	
Privacy Impact:	n/a

HIRING AGREEMENT

OUTSIDE SPACES

THIS AGREEMENT is made on the date **(8)** and between Stotfold Town Council **(1)** and the Hirer **(2)** detailed below whereby in consideration of the sums mentioned **(7)**. **STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL** agrees to permit **THE HIRER** to use the premises and facilities **(4)** for the purpose **(3)** and for the period(s) **(5)** all described below:

1. Stotfold Town Council	Town Clerk: Town Council Offices, The Greenacre Centre, Valerian Way, Stotfold, SG5 4HG Tel: 01462 730064
--------------------------	---

2. Full name of Hirer:	
Name of Organisation (if applicable)	
Address:	
Telephone number:	
E mail:	

3. Purpose of hire:	
3a. Estimated number of persons attending:	
3b. Will those attending be charged an entry fee?	

4. Outdoor space required (The Green/Hitchin Rd Rec/Arlesey Rd/Greenacre Park/Riverside Pl. Field)	
--	--

5. Day(s) and Date(s) of hire/Ongoing	
Hours:	From: To:

6. Hire Fee – Total payable (to be settled no later than 14 days before Hire date)	£
--	---

7. AS WITNESS the hands of the parties hereto on the date of:

Signed by THE HIRER the person named at (2) above	Signed by the person named at (1) above on behalf of STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL
---	--

***ANY ACCIDENTS OCCURING DURING THE HIRE PERIOD MUST BE REPORTED TO THE TOWN COUNCIL WITHIN 24 HOURS**

PAYMENT DETAILS

Stotfold Town Council can accept payment via bank transfer, card, cash or cheque.

Bank transfer

If making a payment via bank transfer, please ensure that the name of the hirer and date of hire are given as a reference and inform Stotfold Town Council as soon as you have made the payment.

Account name: Stotfold Town Council
Account No: 20354862
Sort Code: 60-83-01

Cheque

Cheques should be made payable to STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

OFFICE USE ONLY	COPY OBTAINED
PUBLIC LIAB. INS.	
RISK ASSESS.	
DATE FULL PYMT RCVD	
RECEIPT NO.	
COPY DOCS TO HIRER	



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

CONDITIONS AND HIRE AGREEMENT

HITCHIN ROAD RECREATION GROUND, THE GREEN, RIVERSIDE PLAYING FIELD, ARLESEY ROAD AND GREENACRE PARK

1. The Green (SG5 4AN), Hitchin Road Recreation Ground (SG5 4JT), Riverside Playing Field (SG5 4AN), Arlesey Road (SG5 4HB) and ~~Greenacre Park (SG5 4HG)~~ may all be used for community events/bookings (according to the Council's policy on letting of each area), provided that permission is obtained well in advance from the Town Council, and giving full details of the proposed event. No charge will be made for single community events where no funds are raised or where such funds benefit the local community. Other usage may be chargeable, according to the Council's relevant charging policy.
 2. Free public access is to be retained throughout the entire hire period, and safe and unrestricted public access to all play equipment must be guaranteed.
 3. The Town Council accepts no liability for any damage to vehicles or persons using the Riverside Playing Fields, The Green, Hitchin Road Recreation Ground, Arlesey Road or Greenacre Park or for any items that may be lost by persons using these areas or lost from any vehicles using these areas.
 4. The Town Council also accepts no liability for any injury that may be caused to people using the Riverside Playing Fields, The Green, Hitchin Road Recreation Ground, Arlesey Road or Greenacre Park during the time of hire.
 5. The combination code to the padlock will be given prior to the hire. ~~Keys may be made available to allow access to the grounds, by request. Charges will be made if these are not returned.~~ All gates/barriers must be secured at the end of an event.
 6. Toilets **and changing facilities** may be made available at the Hitchin Road Recreation Ground, by request at the time of booking. The toilets must be left in a clean and tidy condition at the end of the hire period. Toilet facilities are available at Arlesey Road, which do not require booking.
 - ~~7. Special licences may be required for some types of events, and it is the hirer's responsibility to obtain the appropriate licence. Please note that some applications require a lead time of several weeks.~~
- Stotfold Town Council will need to see confirmation from the issuing body that the licence has been granted.
~~from Central Bedfordshire Council.~~
- ~~8. *Before any goes ahead, the* Certain events will require Town Council will need to see confirmation from CBC that the event organiser has applied to the Safety Advisory Group. NB There is a ?? week lead in time for an application to SAG.~~
 9. The hirer is responsible for taking out appropriate public liability insurance, and the Town Council will seek evidence of appropriate insurance cover from the hirer.
 10. The hirer is responsible for carrying out their own risk assessment for the hiring period, ensuring their event/hire period is properly stewarded and that a first aid kit is available. A risk assessment pro-forma and guidance is attached for use by the hirer, and the completed form is to be returned to the Council offices in good time prior to the event.
 - ~~11. Hirers are responsible for ensuring that a mobile phone is available for use in emergencies.~~

12. Under no circumstances are motorised vehicles allowed onto Riverside Playing Fields, Hitchin Road Recreation Ground, The Green, or Arlesey Road or Greenacre Park without prior agreement by the Council, and this use may be restricted to limited areas only. The permission to take motorised vehicles onto the grounds may be withdrawn at short notice and is subject to suitable weather conditions.

If the weather/ground conditions deteriorate during the hire, the Town Council reserves the right to ask the hirer to move on. In such instances, a representative of the Town Council will make the final decision and advise the organisers as soon as possible.

13. **A damage deposit of £250 will be taken at the time of booking.**

- ~~14. Care should be taken to ensure that those attending the event by car do not block adjacent roads or damage grass verges.~~

15. Noise levels must not be such as to unduly disturb nearby residents. ***Do we need to add a cut off time?***

16. Any temporary structures erected on the grounds of the Riverside Playing Field, Hitchin Road Recreation Ground, The Green, Arlesey Road and Greenacre Park may only be erected by permission from the Council and must be suitable for purpose and comply with relevant safety conditions. They must be fitted with suitable load spreading base plates. This includes marquees, tents, stands, and inflatable devices such as bouncy castles.

- ~~17. Bonfires and BBQs are not permitted on any of the grounds. Council and must be kept off the ground. Barbecues will be permitted.~~ Bonfires will be permitted

18. Any damage to land, equipment, buildings, trees, hedges or fences shall be repaired or otherwise made good at the hirer's expense *and deducted from the deposit.*

MOVE TO AFTER NO 13

19. If any part of the Riverside Playing Fields, The Green, Hitchin Road Recreation Ground, Arlesey Road or **Greenacre Park** are damaged or left in an unsatisfactory state, e.g. any rubbish, then further bookings will not be permitted, and a charge will be levied for any damage caused.

20. Suitable arrangements must be made for the disposal of all refuse immediately after the event, and all advertisement flyers are to be removed from the grounds and surrounding areas in Stotfold before leaving.

21. The hiring fee, where appropriate, is to be paid in advance.

22. The hirer must confirm the start and finish times for events, at the time of booking.

- ~~23. Please note that football games take place on some of these open spaces throughout the year. Details of fixtures can be obtained from the office.~~

24. The hirer and event must not contravene laws relating to betting, gaming and lotteries.

25. The grounds must not be used for any other purpose than that in this Agreement.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: RECREATION COMMITTEE
DATE: 3rd JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: HELEN CHILD – PUBLIC REALM OFFICER
SUBJECT: PLANTING OF ADDITIONAL HEDGING AT THE GREEN

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 There is good evidence to suggest that the air quality near children's play areas is improved with the addition of plants in the vicinity of the site.

A new study led by Cambridge University confirms that planting hedges between roadsides and school playgrounds can dramatically reduce children's exposure to traffic-related particle pollution. Findings show that hedges can provide a simple, cheap and effective way to help reduce exposure to local sources of pollution

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider a request for additional hedging to be planted on The Green, along the side of Regent Street, between the bottle banks and notice board.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Green is a well-used recreation ground, which houses, a fenced off play area suitable for young children, additional play equipment for older children and a football pitch. Three of the four surrounding sides have mature hedging, with fencing along the fourth side (Regent Street).

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 There would be associated costs to Stotfold Town Council and funding for hedge plants may be available from CBC as in previous years.
- 4.2 There would be additional costs once the hedge matures in relation to grounds maintenance.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	N/A
Risk Management	Improved air quality
Legals:	n/a
Resources/Stakeholders:	Officers
Contracts/Financial:	None
Crime & Disorder:	Vandalism to young trees
Equalities:	n/a
Biodiversity:	Improving biodiversity for the town
Privacy Impact:	n/a

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM COMMITTEE

DATE: 3RD JULY 2024

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: SIAN VAN DER MERWE
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES MANAGER

SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY TASK & FINISH GROUP

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Town Council has a duty under the 2021 Environment Act to adopt a Biodiversity Policy which it has [Biodiversity Policy 2023.pdf \(stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk\)](#). All reports have an implications section, which lists the impact of the activity outlined in the report on Biodiversity.
- 1.2 The Town Council should recognise that a healthy environment is fundamental to the prosperity and wellbeing of the community and an overarching Environmental Policy would acknowledge the Council's activities and the effects it has on the environment.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the report and advise the Clerk if they wish to set up a Task and Finish Group to implement an Environmental Policy.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 An Environmental Policy helps ensure that the Council's activities comply with legal requirements including the Biodiversity Duty. It would guide the council in promoting sustainable activities and ensure that environmental considerations are integrated into all activities, highlighting decisions in relation to the policy when considering council activities.
- 3.2 An environmental policy will help councils manage resources more effectively. This includes water conservation, waste management, energy use, and protecting natural habitats, ensuring that resources are used efficiently and responsibly. Implementing sustainable practices can lead to cost savings for the council and the community. Energy efficiency measures, waste reduction, and sustainable procurement can reduce expenses and foster economic resilience.
- 3.3 An environmental policy demonstrates the council's commitment to environmental stewardship, which can enhance public trust. It also provides a framework for engaging with the community on environmental issues, encouraging public participation and education. A well-defined environmental policy allows for long-term planning and helps anticipate future environmental challenges. It ensures that environmental considerations are part of strategic decision-making processes.

- 3.4 Councils have a responsibility to lead by example. By adopting and implementing an environmental policy, councils can influence other organizations and individuals within the community to adopt more environmentally friendly practices.
- 3.5 Officers will incorporate information into the Environmental Policy covering a number of Public Realm responsibilities, for example, waste management, tree surveys and management and leisure space management.

4. FINANCIAL

There would be no associated costs.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	
Risk Management	Efficient review of policies and procedures
Legals:	Legal requirements for ensuring Health & Safety for workers and the public.
Resources/Stakeholders:	Officer resource
Contracts/Financial:	None
Crime & Disorder:	n/a
Equalities:	n/a
Biodiversity:	Biodiversity Duty

ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY TASK AND FINISH GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Membership of Committee

- Five Town Councillors appointed by the Public Realm Committee.
- Three Members shall constitute a quorum.
- The Mayor and Vice Mayor are ex-officio on all Committees and Task and Finish Groups.
- All non-Committee Members may attend Committee meetings and speak at the Chairman's discretion, but not vote.

Frequency of Meetings

- Quarterly until the Environmental Policy documentation is ratified by the Public Realm Committee.
- As this is a Task and Finish Group, the meetings will not be open to the public and can be held virtually.

Scope of Task and Finish Group

The purpose of the Task and Finish Group will be to formulate an overarching Environmental Policy to be adopted by Stotfold Town Council. This would include:

- All activities of the Town Council including waste management, grounds maintenance, tree management, utilities and procurement.
- Outline Town Council's environmental and objectives.
- Undertake further investigations, research and consultation in order to identify suitable projects supporting best environmental practice.
- To advise the Town Council on supporting best Environmental practice.
- Review the Council's services and make recommendations to the Public Realm Committee on ways the council can implement policies and practices that are environmentally friendly in the delivery of its services.
- To suggest new services and initiatives which the Council and its committees may consider in relation to their impact on the environment.
- To provide community leadership and raise awareness on environmental issues working with stakeholders, community groups and residents.

This Task and Finish Group has no delegated powers and may make recommendations to the Public Realm Committee for ratification.

Created June 2024

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM
DATE: 3RD JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT: LOVE PARKS WEEK 2024

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Love Parks Week is an annual event, running from 26 July to 2 August 2024. During the week, people across the country celebrate and appreciate the benefits of local parks and green spaces.
- 1.2 It is organised and promoted via the Keep Britain Tidy group [Sign up to hear more about Love Parks 2024 | Keep Britain Tidy](#)

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the promotion of Love Parks Week.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Stotfold Town Council is responsible for a number of open spaces which vary in their purpose. The proposal is to have a week long campaign of social media posts and an article in the Stotfold News about what parks/open spaces are available in the town to promote their use. This would be especially helpful for newer residents who may not be aware of these amenities.
- 3.2 It would also be a great opportunity to launch the Litter Angels scheme, previously agreed by this Committee.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 There are minimal financial implications apart from some printing of labels and stationary costs.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	All social media posts approved by Town Clerk
Legals	N/A
Resources/Stakeholders	Officer resource
Contracts/Financials	N/A
Crime & Disorder	Better use of open spaces may reduce ASB
Equalities	All spaces are accessible.
Biodiversity	Enhance our biodiversity awareness

I've been collected by a
Stotfold Litter Angel



Please call to notify us of
the location of this rubbish
01462 730064



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STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: RECREATION COMMITTEE
DATE: 3rd JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: HELEN CHILD – PUBLIC REALM OFFICER
SUBJECT: STOTFOLD JUNIORS – STORAGE OF GOALS

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Stotfold Juniors will be returning to Riverside for the new season and have requested permission to store their goals against the galvanised fence within the MUGA area. The goals would be securely chained to the fence, top and bottom, to prevent any possibility of them moving or falling over.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider a request from the Football Club to store their goal posts at Riverside Recreation Ground, from the end of August 2024.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Juniors will be using Riverside Recreation ground for regular weekend matches. They plan to mark out three five-a-side pitches, which they will use on a rotational basis to help maintain the standard of the pitches and prevent damage caused by over usage.



4. FINANCIAL

There would be no associated costs to Stotfold Town Council.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	Community Engagement
Risk Management	Vandalism
Legals:	n/a
Resources/Stakeholders:	Football Club
Contracts/Financial:	None
Crime & Disorder:	Risk of vandalism
Equalities:	n/a
Biodiversity:	Low risk to biodiversity impact
Privacy Impact:	n/a

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM
DATE: 3rd JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: SUE WARD
ALLOMENTS AND CEMETERIES OFFICER
SUBJECT: BOX HEDGES AT CEMETERY

1. SUMMARY

The Box hedging at the cemetery has some major damage evident as do several large box Shrubs, so the Town Council is asked to consider remediation or replacement of these hedges.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Remediation is very time consuming, costly and is not guaranteed to solve the issues, so Members are asked to consider proposals to replace the hedges later in Autumn / Winter.

3. BACKGROUND

Visual inspection of the damage indicates two possible causes of damage : Box Tree Caterpillars or Box Blight.

Control of Caterpillars: Control by hand removal is not applicable because of the numbers of plants. Biological control is not licensed for home use but by professionals only, and treatment needs to be repeated several times a season. Insectides are not as effective as biological treatment, and again multiple treatments are needed, they are also harmful to beneficial pollinators.

Control of Blight: Cut out infected areas, plus a generous area around it. If this doesn't work then cut the plants by half or cut them right back. We could cut right back to stumps to help save diseased box plants if needed, Blight severely weakens a plant however so this is labour intensive and not guaranteed to work.

Treatment carried out by Countrywide at the cemetery was for spraying of the hedges, however this has not worked.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 There is approx. 65 metres of box hedging at the cemetery.
- 4.2 Yew (*Taxus baccata*) is the replacement plant of choice for many head gardeners as it withstanding hard clipping and can be grown as a low hedge, slow to average growth 9 20-40cm a year. To buy at 15-30cm height, 5-7 plants per metre, approx. £20.94 per metre. Buy 20-40 cm height, 3-5 plants per metre, approx. £39.16 per metre.
- 4.3 Japanese holly (*Ilex crenata*) has small slightly glossy green leaves and is said to look the most like box, can have green or golden, and grows 12-20 cm each year To buy 15-25cm

at 5-7 plants per metre, approx. £21.60 per meter, taller plants at 40-50 cm , 3-4 per metre, £41.72 per metre.

- 4.4 Boxwood Honeysuckle (*Lonicera nitida*) has smaller leaves than box and grows more quickly at 40-60cm a year , to buy at 15-20cm , 5-7 plants per metre, approx. £29.94 pr metre, 30-50cm tall, at 4-5 per metre, £57.96 per metre.
- 4.5 An alternative is box leaved Honeysuckle (*Lonicera pileata*) this is similar to above and has purple berries popular with birds, 10-20cm pot grown, £33.95 per metre.

My recommendation would be either the holly or honeysuckle, both are used commonly around the Greenacre offices as hedging on the local estate and grows well on our soil. We already have significant yew edging and trees on site.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	Leisure and amenity provision
Risk Management	Effective disposal of damaged box hedging to prevent spread of blight or moth infestation.
Legals:	n/a
Resources/Stakeholders:	Town Rangers
Contracts/Financial:	Purchase of plants
Crime & Disorder:	Vandalism to new plants
Equalities:	n/a
Biodiversity:	Improving quality of arboricultural offer
Privacy Impact:	n/a

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: RECREATION COMMITTEE
DATE: 3rd JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: SUE WARD – CEMETERY & ALLOTMENTS OFFICER
SUBJECT: MEMORIAL INSPECTIONS POLICY

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Town Council does not currently have a Memorial Inspection Policy, and this is required in order to ensure safe and efficient cemetery management and to inform the public of actions within the cemetery.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the attached draft Memorial Policy and associated risk assessment and if, in agreement, recommend the adoption of the Policy to Full Council.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A Town Council needs a Memorials Inspection Policy for several important reasons:

- a) **Safety and Liability:** Memorials, such as headstones and monuments, can deteriorate over time due to weather, age, and vandalism. An inspection policy ensures regular checks to identify and repair any hazards, preventing accidents and injuries. This helps to mitigate the town council's liability in case of incidents involving damaged memorials.
- b) **Preservation of Heritage:** Memorials often have historical and cultural significance. Regular inspections help in the maintenance and preservation of these important landmarks, ensuring they remain intact for future generations.
- c) **Public Assurance:** A visible commitment to the upkeep and safety of memorials reassures the public that the town council is proactive and responsible. It shows respect for the memories and histories the memorials represent.
- d) **Efficient Resource Management:** An inspection policy allows for planned and systematic maintenance rather than reactive repairs. This can lead to more efficient use of resources and budget, as regular maintenance can prevent more costly repairs in the future.
- e) **Record Keeping:** A policy typically includes documentation and record-keeping procedures. This helps in tracking the condition of memorials over time, planning for future maintenance, and providing transparency and accountability in the council's activities.

- 3.2 In summary, a memorials inspection policy helps the Town Council ensure safety, preserve heritage, comply with regulations, reassure the public, manage resources efficiently, and maintain accurate records.

- 3.3 Stotfold Town Council, as the burial authority, has responsibilities under Health & Safety at Work Act (1974), Occupiers Liability Act 1957 to ensure the site is maintained in a safe condition.

- 3.4 The Memorial Mason is legally liable under the Consumer Protection Act 1987 under the Sale of Goods Act 1979, General Product Safety Regulations 2005 and Directive on Liability for Defective Products 2003, but only for a period of 6 years after installation. Outside of this 6 year period, the grave owner is responsible for the safety of the memorial but they cannot be forced to make any repairs. In instances where the grave owner refuses to undertake corrective works, under LACO Article 3 *“A burial authority may do all things they consider necessary for the proper management, regulation and control of a cemetery”*. This would usually involve laying the stone flat on the grave plot.
- 3.5 The Town Council is therefore still responsible for ensuring the sites are safe for staff to work in and people to visit including all of its infrastructure.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 Officers will investigate the cost of engaging a professional contractor to undertake memorial inspections on a 5-year cyclical term and/or remedial works to be carried out. This was discussed when reviewing the Terms of Reference at the Public Realm Meeting of 5th May 2024. A professional firm would have the correct liability insurance and guarantees on any work completed. The quotes will be brought to the Public Realm Meeting in September 2024.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	n/a
Risk Management	Mitigation of risk to Health and Safety
Legals:	Legal duties as above.
Resources/Stakeholders:	Memorial Masons / Grave owners
Contracts/Financial:	Liable for inspection fees. 5-yearly cyclical term.
Crime & Disorder:	Vandalism to memorials.
Equalities:	n/a
Biodiversity:	n/a
Privacy Impact:	n/a

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

MEMORIAL INSPECTION POLICY

1. Introduction

The intention of this policy is to set out how Stotfold Town Council will undertake the management of any significant risks from memorials, within its cemetery in a sensible and appropriate manner. However, since the general risk can be deemed low it is not the intention of this policy to cause any unnecessary concern, only to provide guidance to any questions that may arise by any concerned party and to provide an assurance that memorials are properly managed.

Stotfold Town Council is duty bound under the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations Act 1974 to assess reasonably foreseeable risks from its activities and to put in place control measures that will reduce the risks – so far as is reasonably practicable.

It is the Town Councils intention to follow the latest guidance from the Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM) on memorial safety and the Ministry of Justice – ‘Managing the safety of Burial Ground Memorials’ (2009). It will take appropriate action to any memorial deemed unsafe within the cemetery.

Memorials within the cemetery which after testing are found to be unsafe, dangerous or in poor condition will be **cordoned off**. Every effort will be made by the Town Council to contact any concerned parties before any further action is taken. (Priority will always be given to making safe, higher risk memorials).

2. Background

In recent years the safety of memorials has become a focus of much attention and debate. The most recent guidance from the Ministry of Justice (2009) states that over the last 30 years eight people in the UK have been killed when a memorial has fallen on them. Given the number of memorials and the number of visitors to burial grounds in any one year, the risk of any injury is “extremely low.” Action to manage risks in burial grounds, therefore, needs to be sensible, proportionate and undertaken in a sensitive way.

Statistics from the ICCM indicate that there have been many serious injuries caused by unsafe memorials. They also highlight the instances where local authorities have been investigated by the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) and improvement notices issued. In the most serious cases the HSE has threatened prosecution.

The Council is bound by the conditions of the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977. It has a legal duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and Occupiers Liability Act 1957 to ensure that its burial grounds are safe places to work and visit.

Managing memorial safety, therefore, is an essential part of controlling the risks to health and safety.

Date of adoption:
Date of review:

3. Stotfold Town Council Policy

The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's position in all areas of memorial management including what procedures have been adopted for the treatment of memorials that are found to be unsafe. No part of this policy will replace the Council's responsibilities and duties under health and safety legislation or other legislation covering burial grounds.

3.1 New Memorials. All new memorials must conform to maximum size criteria as set out in the Council's rules and regulations. Details of specific restrictions are available from the Council on request or on the Council's website.

3.2 Carrying Out Memorial Safety Inspections. Prior to commencing memorial safety inspections, the Council will follow the notification procedure as set out under the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order (LACO) 1974. This includes a notice in the cemetery and in local papers (CPC press report).

The Council will carry out safety inspections on all memorials in the cemetery every five years. All memorial safety inspections will be carried out by suitably trained persons in accordance with ICCM and Ministry of Justice guidelines. A record of all memorial inspections and the results of these inspections will be kept by the Council.

For each memorial inspected a Risk Assessment will be completed. This assessment will provide a hazard rating (severity of outcome) and likelihood rating (probability of outcome), which will in turn be used to calculate the risk associated with the memorial and whether or not further action to control that risk is required. This will consider age, size, deterioration, numbers of visitors to the area, vicinity to roads or paths and ground topography.

The inspection will include both a visual check and a hand test. The hand test will be used to determine stability of the memorial. Even where a visual check reveals no sign of defects the hand test will be used to confirm that the memorial is stable. The hand test will be carried out by standing to one side of the memorial and applying a firm but steady pressure in different directions. This will be used to determine if or to what degree the memorial is unstable.

The Council acknowledges that memorials fitted with a ground anchor may move when tested. Inspectors are trained to identify when a ground anchor has been fitted and, therefore, would not fail the memorial for movement at the base to foundation joint, as the memorial will 'lock' on the ground anchor. Mechanical force measuring equipment will not be routinely used to test the stability of memorials. Such equipment will only be used if the safety of a memorial is under dispute. In these circumstances mechanical force measuring equipment may be used to confirm that the memorial is unable to withstand a force approximating 25kg or less and is, therefore, an 'immediate danger'.

3.3 Procedure for Contacting Memorial Owners

At least 28 days prior to starting memorial safety inspections a notice will be displayed in the cemetery. This notice will detail what is being done, when it will be done and how people can obtain further information.

If a memorial is found to require maintenance every effort will be made to contact the memorial owner to undertake repairs. The methods of contact will be:

1. A notice attached to the unsafe memorial.
2. A letter to the last known address of the memorial owner.
3. The Council website.

If the Council receives no response a further letter will be sent after three-months. It will inform the owner that their memorial has been found to be unsafe and details of the action needed to be taken. If there is no response a third and final letter will be sent after six months.

If there is no response the Council will take the necessary steps to permanently make safe the memorial. This will also apply to memorials where the memorial owners have been contacted and they are unwilling or unable to undertake a repair. The timescale for the Council to permanently make safe memorials is dependent on the level of risk from the memorial. High risk memorials will be made safe after six months, medium risk after one year and low risk after two years.

The Council will keep an up-to-date record of all memorial owners' contact information.

3.4 Dealing with Unsafe Memorials

Different identified levels of risk will result in the following action.

Low risk memorials – Inspect on 5-year cycle.

Medium risk memorials – Inspect on a 2-year cycle.

High risk memorials – Ministry of Justice advice states 'only when the memorial poses a significant risk, such as imminent collapse in a way that could lead to serious injury, does immediate action need to be taken to control the risk'.

Based on this advice when a memorial poses a significant risk one or more of the following actions will be taken:

- i) A Safety Notice informing people that the memorial has found to be unsafe and the action to be taken by the owner will be displayed on or near to the memorial.
- ii) A temporary Make Safe Structural Support will be used to secure unsafe memorials whilst the memorial owner is contacted, and repair arranged. These supports will be used for a maximum of six months.
- iii) Fencing/Cordoning Off unsafe memorials may be necessary under some circumstances e.g. for very large memorials or where a significant number of memorials are unsafe within a specific area.
- iv) Memorials will be Laid Flat if there is no other practical means of making the memorial safe or where the memorial owner has requested it.

Temporary make safe structural supports will be used on memorials that pose an immediate risk to safety whilst the memorial owner is contacted. Where a memorial poses only a low risk a safety notice will be placed on the memorial and the memorial owner notified.

Where after at least six months from being found to be unsafe the Council has been unable to contact the memorial owner a decision will be taken as to how to make the memorial safe. Under these circumstances the memorial will be partially buried in the ground, permanently laid flat or repaired. Where the memorial owner has been contacted but is unwilling or unable to have the memorial repaired, the owner will be given the choice to have the memorial partially buried or permanently laid flat.

If no memorial owner can be found but a memorial is determined to be of heritage or amenity value, the Council may decide to repair a memorial. In these circumstances any relative being found in the future would be requested to pay the cost of the repair. The Council will make no charge for applications from memorial masons to carry out repairs to an existing memorial.

3.5 Records relating to the inspection of memorials

All memorials will be inspected on a 5-year cycle and a record kept of the inspection. Records will include information that will assist in locating memorials in future inspections, information on the visual and hand tests, an assessment of the priority and any action taken.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL RISK ASSESSMENT - CEMETERY MEMORIAL INSPECTION					
Name of Assessor:	Sue Ward, Cemetery & Allotments Officer	Date of Assessment:	June 2024	Date for Review:	June 2025
Activity	Hazards /Risks Think about the areas where contact takes place	Persons Affected Think of anyone who comes into contact	Risk Rating Low Medium High Priority	Reducing Risk Think of which prevention strategy that could be used in each scenario.	Action Plan What needs to be done and by whom?
Grass Cutting	Accidents from moving vehicles	Injury to operatives or members of the public	Low	Close Cemetery to contractors or vehicles	Contractors responsible for their own Risk Assessment to protect them and the public
Operation of equipment such as mechanised diggers and pulley systems	Fire or operating accidents	Injury from memorial /diggers	Low	Contractors employed should be reliable and competent, stone masons should be registered NAMM or BRAMM	Contractors responsible for their own Risk Assessment to protect them and the public
Memorial Inspection	Cuts, bruises, or crush injuries	Injury to staff or councillors, and members of the public, also funeral director staff	Medium	Memorials to be hand checked a minimum or once every 5 years	Town Council will only allow councillors and staff who have attended the ICCM Memorial Inspection Training to undertake inspections. Alternatively, supervision should be by trained personnel
Visual Inspection of the memorial	Tripping, crushing from memorial falling	Injury to staff or councillors, and members of the public	Low	Inspectors to check the ground and surrounding area prior to visual inspection	Inspectors to have undergone ICCM training or be supervised by someone who has attended training. Consider Age, Size, Deterioration Consider No's of Visitors to the Site or Section, Vicinity to Roads and Paths Ground Conditions and Topography

Physical Inspection of the memorial	Tripping, crushing from memorial falling	Injury to staff or councillors, and members of the public	Medium	Memorial inspection programme in place. Regular checks of memorials prior to internment by the relevant officer. Loose materials staked and banded where possible	Inspectors to have undergone ICCM training or be supervised by someone who has attended training. Wear PPE-steel toe caps
Manual handling	Muscle / Back Strain	Injury to staff or councillors, and members of the public	Medium	Remember to carry out visual inspection first, if it looks unsafe then work in pairs for physical inspection	Inspectors to have undergone ICCM training or be supervised by someone who has attended training.
Repair /Remedial measures	Tripping, Back Strain	Injury to staff or councillors, and members of the public	Medium	Look out for uneven ground, use pulley system to mitigate back strain, work in pairs	Ensure correct remedial tools are available, stakes, tape, signs etc
Temporary Measures	Tripping, Injury	Injury to members of the public	Low	Make safe, Cordon area, Lay flat if needed Signs to be visible and appropriate stakes to be used	Town Council to keep to timeline for remedial action, liaise with grave owners and have policy for non-identification

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM

DATE: 3rd JULY 2024

**OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: SUE WARD
ALLOMENTS AND CEMETERIES OFFICER**

SUBJECT: FRIENDS OF STOTFOLD CEMETERY GROUP

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 As a means of encouraging preservation of the history, landscape and natural history of the cemetery, the Town Council is asked to consider supporting the establishment of the Friends of Stotfold Cemetery.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to a) consider approving a request to form a Friends of the Stotfold Cemetery group, with engagement with residents to understand perceptions about the cemetery and how they would describe it, to understand what the cemetery currently provides and what they would like to see; and b) to join the National Federation of Cemetery Friends.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Forming this group would involve engaging with potential volunteers interested in biodiversity, wildlife and preserving the cemetery. We want to actively support environmental volunteer action and we value community involvement.
- 3.2 Cemeteries provide around 4% of accessible greenspace in the UK, they have the potential to deliver ecosystem services and form an important component of green infrastructure networks. The role of the cemetery as a public garden allows it to contribute to climate change mitigation and quality of life for the local population. The walled nature of the cemetery offers a sense of calm and enclosure, contemplation and respite.
- 3.3 Stotfold has grown substantially in the last 20 years and the location of the cemetery is becoming more accessible to the population who may not be aware of it's location. The cemetery has diverse vegetation, with mature trees, hedging and shrubs visible throughout, we have a problem with Box Tree Moth, and need to consider future needs of the residents as well as planting environmentally to encourage wildlife.
- 3.4 Joint guidance from English Heritage and Natural England (2007) as well as Historic England (2020) discusses some of the ways cemeteries can be managed for nature and for heritage.
- 3.5 Regulation and maintenance concerns ecosystem services such as mediation of wastes, including degradation, nuisances (e.g., smell, noise, and visual impacts), protection from storms and floods, habitat protection (e.g., pollination and seed dispersal), regulating soil and air quality, and temperature. Cemeteries are likely to provide some regulation and

maintenance services, such as flood risk management, climate regulation and air quality improvement, by virtue of their high vegetation cover and permeable surfaces

- 3.6 Joining the National Federation of Cemetery Friends offers the opportunity to “promote the understanding and appreciation of cemeteries and actively to encourage their preservation and conservation” as well as to “provide mutual help and support and the regular exchange of ideas, information and advice”.
- 3.7 Friends of Cemetery could look to establish education tours and workshops, conservation work for monuments, landscape etc, perhaps historical research on the Cemetery and its occupants, War Stories, landscape and buried stories. Bulb planting days, clear ups. Etc.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 There is a £10 charge to join the National Federation of Cemetery Friends as an associate member.
- 4.2 If implemented, there would be a minimal expenditure on hand tools.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	n/a
Risk Management	n/a
Legals:	n/a
Resources/Stakeholders:	Staff resource.
Contracts/Financial:	Annual Membership to a professional organisation.
Crime & Disorder:	n/a
Equalities:	n/a
Biodiversity:	Communication and engagement with members of the group to gain a better understanding of the biodiversity in the Cemetery.
Privacy Impact:	n/a

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM COMMITTEE

DATE: 3RD JULY 2024

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: COLIN ROGERS
ADMIN SUPPORT OFFICER

SUBJECT: WAIVER OF TRIPLE CEMETERY FEES FOR SPECIAL
CIRCUMSTANCES

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 Officers have been approached by a resident who wishes to inter her spouse's ashes in Stotfold Cemetery, despite not having been resident in Stotfold at the time of his death. They moved from Stotfold in December 2016, he passed away in April 2019 after which the resident has returned to live in Stotfold.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the request in line with our current policy regarding cemetery fees and asked if a special dispensation could be given in this instance given the nature of the work undertaken by the deceased and their relationship with the town.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The request from the surviving spouse is as follows:

"I am a Stotfold resident, and I would like to scatter my husband's ashes in Stotfold cemetery. He was an officer in the Intelligence Corps and had served 27 years and had spent a large part of his career based locally. We lived in our home in Stotfold before he was posted elsewhere, and we were required to move. We kept our home as we would be returning to Stotfold. Unfortunately, he was killed in an accident overseas and so I returned home. I have found being in the cemetery comforting and peaceful and would like his ashes to rest there. I have looked at the fees that are charged and would like to ask if you would consider waiving the triple fee in this instance.

[REDACTED] was 50 years old when he was killed in an RTA whilst working overseas. He had been a homeowner here since 2009 and enjoyed living here.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter."

- 3.2 Please note that also the requests to scatter the ashes, further conversations with the resident have confirmed that they wish to inter the ashes.

- 3.3 Our current rules relating to triple fees are as follows:

"Unless the person being buried, or the applicant in the case of the pre-purchase of a plot, has lived in Stotfold within two years of the application for burial, they will be charged treble fees. This means that:

- If the person lived in Stotfold when they died, single fees will be charged;
- If they moved out of Stotfold up to 2 years before they died, single fees will be charged;

- If they moved away more than 2 years before they died triple fees will be charged;
- If the person moved out of Stotfold into a care home, hospital or similar facility – direct from living in Stotfold, however long they have been living in that facility, single fees will be charged.”

4. FINANCIAL

Should Members agree to the special dispensation, then single fees would be charged for the interment and purchase of the plot and the placing of a memorial plaque, namely £350 for the purchase of the plot, £250 for the interment and £150 for the placing of a plaque.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	Personnel on site when ashes are interred or scattered
Legals	Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 (SI 1977 No 204)
Resources/Stakeholders	Officer resource
Contracts/Financials	Cemetery income
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	N/A

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM

DATE: 3RD July 2024

**OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: SUE WARD
ALLOTMENTS AND CEMETERIES OFFICER**

SUBJECT: ALLOTMENT FEES AND CHARGES

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report reviews current allotment fees and charges. The report is written in the context of the Audit Commission report “Positively Charged” published in January 2008.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider
- a) implementing concessions applicable to allotment fee charges to maximise the benefits of the Town Council run allotments,
 - b) to approve an annual increase for Sept 25-Sept 26.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Councils can use charging to influence individuals’ choices and behaviours, to bring other benefits to local communities, in this case to promote participation in allotment gardening by target groups to reduce health inequalities. In choosing how charges are used we make a political decision; which users should pay for which services and which services should be subsidised by taxpayers. The audit commission says that Councils should regularly review charges, engage with the public and help them understand the value of allotmenting (and other services)
- 3.2 The current make up of our allotment population is unknown, however market research shows a number of local allotment sites have already implemented discounts for the below groups at a variety of levels in relation to the plot cost, perhaps as a result of the recent Pandemic and economic climate.
- Pension age
 - Potentially on benefits
- 3.3 Concessions are normally reflected via age categories or via a determined need, e.g. Pensioners, disabled, on benefits (receipt of PIP or income support) or location (inside our boundaries or external).
- 3.4 Allotments are valuable community assets, boosting health and wellbeing, providing sustainable growing spaces and creating biodiverse green corridors,
- Other benefits include:
- Good physical exercise
 - Great stress reliever and a good way to relax
 - Opportunity to grow fresh tasty organic vegetables and beautiful flowers
 - You get to meet people with the same interests and gain valuable advice

- Your own space to create and develop new gardening ideas
- Improved health
- Greater biodiversity
- Greater social interaction and cohesion

3.5 The Pandemic and subsequent lockdowns meant that a great number of people working from home or confined during lockdown meant allotment waiting lists increased across the region, and at the same time the costs of inflation etc have meant that our waiting list has a number of people who applied in 2020 and 2021 who have deferred when offered plots. So the costs of allotments can be off putting to those with limited income.

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 The Town Council is obligated to give 12 months notice for any increase in rent.

4.2 The following information is relevant to the discussion around budget and expenses for allotments:

Current Budget	Actual expenditure 2023-2024	Income 2023 – 2024
£3,350	£7,541	£3,261

4.3 Charges were increased for 2024 by approx. 35% (full plot for 23/24 £52, for 24/25 £70).

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	Community Engagement, provision of leisure/amenity space.
Risk Management	Damage to reputation
Legals:	Legally requirement to notify price increase 12 months in advance
Resources/Stakeholders:	Eleemosynary Charitable Trust
Contracts/Financial:	None
Crime & Disorder:	n/a
Equalities:	provision of discounted rate for low income and pensioners
Biodiversity:	n/a
Privacy Impact:	n/a

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM COMMITTEE
DATE: 3rd JULY 2024
OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: EMMA PAYNE, TOWN CLERK
SUBJECT: CCTV at RIVERSIDE

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Town Clerk reported to Full Council on 26 June 2024 about a resident reporting on anti-social behaviour at Riverside.
- 1.2 This has been added as an item to this agenda in the event that quotations have been received to upgrade the current system.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the quotations and advise the Clerk if they wish to proceed with this option.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 A resident has reported an increased level of ASB at the Riverside MUGA, including using the facility late at night, smoking and drinking and smashing bottles within the MUGA. This is impacting their use and enjoyment of their property which backs on to the MUGA keeping her up at night. They have suggested on several occasions about locking the MUGA and securing it. Officers have explained that this is contrary to the Councillors' wishes as locking the MUGA only means that is repeatedly damaged and broken into.
- 3.2 Officers have been in contact with the resident encouraging them to report the incidences to the police and to Community Safety. The resident has been informed that we are working with Central Bedfordshire and Youth Engagement Schemes to try and address the issue directly with the young people in question. We are also approaching Trading Standards regarding the fact that these young people are acquiring alcohol, we assume locally.
- 3.3 Councillors are asked to consider any steps the Council could take to mitigate the ASB on the Riverside including, but not limited to, securing the MUGA in the evenings and confirming the Councillor's position on this matter so that this can be communicated to any residents moving forward.
- 3.4 The Public Realm team met with the installer of the MUGA CCTV to look at other solutions to combat the ASB. One of the recommendations was to install a tannoy system. This would be coupled by live monitoring with any incidents of use outside of the normal hours of operation (after 9pm when the lights are turned off). The operator monitoring the CCTV would then announce over the tannoy that the ASB has been filmed and that it would be reported to the police.

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 To be confirmed

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	n/a
Risk Management	Reduction of ASB and risk to the Town Council's reputation if they fail to deal with it.
Legals	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 S19
Resources/Stakeholders	Officer resource
Contracts/Financials	TBC
Crime & Disorder	Reduction in ASB
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	N/A

PUBLIC REALM COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2024-2025

Meeting Date	Agenda Item	Description	Officer
03/07/2024	Tree Management Policy	To review the draft Tree Management Policy	Public Realm & Facilities Manager
	Entrance gate signage	To receive a report on replacement entry signs	Town Clerk
	Use of outdoor spaces	To consider a report re future usage of Rec Grounds	Public Realm Officer
	Hedges at The Green	To consider the planting of additional hedging at The Green	Public Realm Officer
	Environmental Policy Task and Finish Group	To consider the formation of a Task and Finish Group to devise an Town Council Environmental Policy	Public Realm Manager and Public Realm Officer
	Love Parks	To review a report on Love Parks initiative - 22nd July to 2nd August	Town Clerk & Public Realm Officer
	Stotfold Juniors, use of Riverside	To receive a report re storage of goals at Riverside	Public Realm Officer
	Parking on Verges and pavements	To receive a proposal from Cllr Anderson about protection of verges	Town Clerk
	Box Hedges	To receive an update on the box hedges at the Cemetery.	Cemetery & Allotments Officer
	Memorial Safety Policy	To consider the adoption of a Memorial Policy for the cemetery	Cemetery & Allotments Officer
	Friends of the Stotfold Cemetery	To consider the formation of a Friends of the Cemetery Group	Cemetery & Allotments Officer
	Interment request	To receive a report re waving triple fees in special circumstances	Admin Officer
	Allotment Fees	To receive a report re waving triple fees in special circumstances	Admin Officer
11/09/2024	Fees Charges Review 2025 - 2026	Review fees and charges for football and cemetery (include comparisons with other local councils)	Town Clerk, Public Realm Manager, Cemetery & Allotments Officer
	Drainage at Riverside Car Park	To receive a report on the drainage issues at Riverside Car Park	Public Realm Officer
	Benches at Arlesley Road	To review the provision of benches at Arlesley Road and locations for new benches	Public Realm Officer
	No Mow May	To consider areas for No Mow May for 2025	Public Realm Officer
	Erosion of Riverbank at Riverside	To consider remedial works to the bank at Riverside	Public Realm Officer
	Annual Play Inspections	To receive the annual play area inspections, note any recommendations regarding maintenance	Public Realm Manager
	Memorial Inspections	To receive a report on memorial safety	Cemetery & Allotment Officer
	Memorial Bench and Tree Policy	To review the policy and recommend its adoption to Council	Democratic Services Manager
	Location of Bench in Upper Garden of Rest	To consider the location of a bench at the Upper Garden of Rest	Cemetery & Allotments Officer
	The Haven - Signage	To receive a report re design and location of signage	Public Realm Officer
	Noticeboards	To consider designs for new notice boards	Admin Support Officer
	Cemetery of the Year Award	For consideration in June 2025	Public Realm Manager/Cemetery & Allotments Officer