

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

Greenacre Centre, Valerian Way, Stotfold, SG5 4HG
01462 730064 enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk



10 October 2024

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

You are hereby summoned to attend the **Public Realm Committee Meeting** to be held in the **Stotfold Town Council Chamber, Greenacre Centre, Valerian Way, Stotfold, SG5 4HG; Stotfold Council Chamber** on **16 October 2024 at 7.00pm** for the purpose of transacting business detailed in the agenda.

Central Bedfordshire Council Ward Members, representative of the press and electorates of Stotfold, for information.

E Payne
Town Clerk

Members of the public:

In addition to attendance in person, 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 are 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 speak in 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).



IN COLLABORATION WITH SLCC, NALC, OVW, COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

The seven principles of public life

Selflessness | Integrity | Objectivity | Accountability | Openness | Honesty | Leadership

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To receive and accept apologies for absence from Members.

2. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

Members are reminded of their obligations to declare interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct. The Town Clerk will report any dispensation requests received. Where a matter arises at a meeting which relates to a Councillor's interest, the Councillor has the responsibility to declare that interest in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.

- a. To receive Member's declarations of interest in items on the agenda.
- b. To consider any requests for dispensations.

3. PUBLIC SECTION

Members of the public to speak are entitled to be at this meeting in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, Section 1, extended by the Local Government Act 1972, Section 100 unless precluded by the Council by resolution during the whole or part of the proceedings. 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 THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Members are asked to resolve that the Minutes of the Public Realm Committee meeting held on 11th September 2024 are a correct record.

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

6. REPORTS TO COMMITTEE

6.1 Tree Survey

To consider quotations to undertake a Tree Survey in accordance with the newly adopted Tree Policy.

6.2 Parking on verges and pavements

To consider a verbal report from Cllrs Anderson, Bendell & Miller regarding parking on verges & pavements.

6.3 Open Space Hiring Policy

To review the policy on future bookings of open spaces.

6.4 Ranger Facilities and Relocation

To receive a report on a proposed new location for the Rangers and PR tools and materials.

6.5 Memorials Policy

To review the Policy for memorials including benches, trees and memorial stones.

6.6 Location of Bench in Upper Garden of Rest

To consider the location of a bench at the Upper Garden of Rest.

- 6.7 Exhumation Document and Costings**
To consider the document and associated costs.
- 6.8 Allotment Task and Finish Group**
To review the outcomes of the Task & Finish Group meetings.
- 6.9 Beekeeping at Norton Road on Allotments**
To consider a request to keep bees at Norton Road allotments and a policy for their management.
- 6.10 Allotment Toilets**
To receive an update on the funding for the allotment toilets.
- 7. HIGHWAYS REPORT**
To receive a report from Cllr Smith.
- 8. WORK PROGRAMME**
To receive the work programme.
- 9. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES, RELEVANT TO THIS COMMITTEE ONLY**
- 10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**
Wednesday 16th October 2024.
- 11. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS**
That in accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, and as extended by Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public, including the press, be excluded from the meeting because of the confidential nature of the following business to be transacted.
- 11.1 Prince Charles Fence**
To consider a report on the joint liability of fencing.



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PUBLIC REALM COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL OFFICES, GREENACRE CENTRE, VALERIAN WAY, STOTFOLD, SG5 4HG ON 11 SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 19:00.

Present:

Cllr Mary Cooper (Chairperson) Cllr Liz Anderson (Vice Chairperson), Cllr Steve Buck, Cllr Steve Hayes, Cllr Jos Headington, Cllr Brian Saunders, Cllr Brian Saunders, Cllr Jon Smith, Cllr John Talbot, Cllr Bryony Woods

Also Present:

Adam Leadbeater – Public Realm Manager
Helen Child – Public Realm Officer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllr Jane Hyde. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Accept the apologies.

2. DISCLOSURES OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were none.

3. PUBLIC SECTION

There were no members of the public present.

4. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

It was **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Public Realm Committee Meeting held on 3rd July 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

The report was noted.

6. REPORTS

6.1 Review of Fees and Charges: 2025 - 2026

Members reviewed the fees and charges proposal for the 2025 to 2026 period. Amendments to the fees were discussed and agreed and it was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND TO GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES** to:

Adopt the amended fees and charges for 2025 to 2026.

6.2 Budget 2025 - 2026

Members received a proposed budget for the Public Realm Committee. Members considered various cost centres which were updated. It was **RESOLVED** to **RECOMMEND TO GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES** to:

Adopt the updated budget as proposed for 2025 to 2026.

6.3 Drainage at Riverside Car Park

It was **RESOLVED** to:

Accept quote A from Kiteley Construction to the value of £11,350.00 to be taken from the open spaces budget subject to permission being granted by IDB.

6.4 Riverside Noise Complaint

Members received a report regarding a complaint received about noise from the MUGA. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Continue with planned routine maintenance of the MUGA fencing. No additional noise reduction intervention was felt necessary.

6.5 Request to Trade in Riverside Car Park on Match Days

Members received a request from a resident to trade at Riverside when Stotfold Juniors FC are playing. Members considered that the best location to trade was inside the inner car park on the hard standing to mitigate pedestrian queues and vehicle movement. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Approve a trial period of one season 2024/25 at a cost of £15.00 per trading day.

6.6 No Mow May

Members received a report on No Mow May, a campaign to help pollinators by allowing wildflowers and other vegetation to grow longer.

It was **RESOLVED** that:

Stotfold Town Council will observe the principles of No Mow May in all non-sports pitch grass areas.

6.7 Annual Play Area Inspections

Members received the annual play area inspections and noted there were no urgent items.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

Note the Annual Play Area Inspections have been completed.

6.8 Bottle Fill Station

Members discussed options provided for a water filling station at Greenacre Centre.

It was **RESOLVED** to:

Obtain two additional quotes and investigate the option of wall mounted fountains in addition to that reported.

6.9 Mural in Underpass

Members received a report on a potential mural in one of the underpasses to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the formation of Stotfold Town Council. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Obtain costs for this Committee's consideration.

6.10 Notice Board Location Report

Members received an updated on the project to replace notice boards in the town centre. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Approve installation of notice boards at the following locations:

- ***Memorial Hall – Option 3***
- ***The Green – Option 1***
- ***Brook Street Toilets – Option 2***
- ***Norton Road Allotments – Remove existing timber fencing and replace with palisade on which the notice board will be mounted.***

6.11 Use of Millennium Green

Members received a request from Stotfold Mill to use The Green for parking during the Steam Fair weekend. It was **RESOLVED** to:

- a) ***Approve permission for the use of Millenium Green on 5th/6th October 2024 as overflow parking for The Mill's Steam Fair Event.***
- b) ***Delegate future decisions related to use of the Millennium Green to The Town Clerk.***

6.12 Memorial Inspections

Members received a report outlining the regime for Memorial Inspections by the Cemetery & Allotments Officer. It was **RESOLVED** to:

Note the Cemetery & Allotments Officer is suitably qualified to undertake memorial inspections.

6.13 Use of The Green for a Circus

Members received a request from a circus operator to use The Green. It was **RESOLVED** to:

- a) ***Approve the hire of The Green for the operation of a circus on 17-21 October 2024.***
- b) ***That a policy for the hiring of Open Spaces will be considered by this Committee at a future date which will enable Officers to confirm future bookings without the need for this Committee's consideration.***

7. HIGHWAYS REPORT

Cllr Jon Smith updated the Committee on recent highways issues in Stotfold.

8. WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme was noted.

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

Cllr Saunders reported alcohol being used on The Green during Eat Feast and The Car Show is in contravention with the Public Space Protection Order. This was noted.

Cllr Anderson questioned the progress of the installation of a personnel access and egress from Arlesey Road Car Park. It was advised that this work will be carried out when EV charging points are installed, however a temporary solution will be adopted immediately.

Cllr Anderson questioned the replacement of the Jubilee Oak tree at Prince Charles Avenue. The Contractor JLES have verbally agreed the replacement of this tree.

Cllr Anderson reported that one of the two Jubilee Lime trees on The Green was looking unwell, this was noted and will be investigated.

Cllr Cooper requested we sought advice for a TPO to be placed on the maple tree in the vicinity of the Memorial Hall from CBC Tree Officer.

Cllr Talbot reported the Ivel Old Brook grate is blocked with debris and requires clearing. Officers will report this to IDB.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 16th October 2024.

SIGNED BY CHAIRMAN:

MINUTES APPROVED (date):

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM

DATE: 16 OCTOBER 2024

SUBJECT: CLERK'S REPORT

1. Replacement planters to be located outside the shops on the High Street have been ordered. Countrywide are prepared to set them up with winter planting as soon as possible post installation. The anticipated delivery is a 3-week window.
2. Following a spot check in September by Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue, Officers can report that we received a score of less than 10 at the GAC and Memorial Hall out of a possible noncompliance score of 100.
3. Tree at risk. The requested notification has been sent to the CBC Tree Office regarding the Maple Tree on Hallworth Drive. No response back from this has been received to date.
4. The new Memorial Bench has now been installed in the Cemetery at the War Memorial.
5. Rock salt has been ordered from CBC - a split delivery has been arranged in advance of winter.
6. We are awaiting licence approval following our IDB application to commence the Riverside Dog steps and Carpark works. The form and process has changed since our previous application, so this is taking time to gain.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM MEETING

DATE: 16 OCTOBER 2024

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: HELEN CHILD, PUBLIC REALM OFFICER

SUBJECT: TREE SURVEY QUOTATIONS

1. SUMMARY

1.1 Following the adoption of the Tree Policy by the Public Realm Committee in July 2024, the Council are asked to consider proposals from two suppliers to conduct a Tree Survey, across our Open Spaces, in accordance with the revised conditions, as set out in the Policy.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are asked to consider the quotes contained in the report and advise the Clerk which contractor they prefer.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Historically the Town Council's tree surveys has been carried out every three years by a contractor, who has recently retired. Of the four suppliers that were contacted, only two submitted proposals.

3.2 Both suppliers are arboriculture consultants, with vast experience in their field.

4. QUOTES RECEIVED

4.1 Contractor A

In accordance with the council's tree management policy requirements, Contractor A will tag and record approximately 400no. trees at various locations and will carry out a Visual Tree Assessment (VTA) from ground level.

A schedule of trees will be provided in Excel format, along with a summary report to detail the trees that require action for risk mitigation purposes. Maps will be produced in pdf format, to show the approximate location of the trees. In areas such as the cemetery, we would, where appropriate, group trees of similar species/size, where they exist as linear features. The QTRA system will be adopted only in cases where we consider the risk requires evaluation, and if this equates to a risk rating of greater than 1/1M, it will be recorded as such i.e. Moderate, High or Very High.

Our proposed fee is **£2,380.00** + Vat (allowance for cost of tree tags included)

4.2 Contractor B

The format of the report would be simple. It would not be an inventory (i.e. a list of all trees present, which would be hugely expensive, and is also cumbersome to maintain), but would instead aim to identify trees in need of work.

The work would within the report to the Council be graded as to urgency using a 'traffic light system' for ease of reading (red, amber, green) Such trees would typically be marked on site

with biodegradable temporary spray paint, usually with a red dot where felling is required, or with a yellow dot where the tree requires pruning or other maintenance measures.

The approximate location of the tree would appear on a sketch plan, which may not be to scale, but would provide enough detail for a contractor to provide a quotation.

The survey will be based initially on a ground level external inspection. Please note that at least the lowest 1m of the trunks of the trees to be inspected must be reasonably clear of ivy or other climbing plants or other obstructions prior to my inspection. I don't mind a few strands of ivy but if a thick mat is present, it will prevent inspection.

It will be assumed that all boundaries are 'in the field' marked clearly by fences or other boundary markers. If the ownership of trees cannot be determined in a reasonably straightforward fashion 'on the ground', this may occasion an adjusted fee and/or lead to an incomplete assessment of risk.

Binoculars will be used where required but climbing inspection (extra) is sometimes essential (albeit rarely)

The trees will not typically be tagged or numbered on site. The selected trees will be indicated by marking the given number on a plan, showing indicative tree positions, and/or in a KML file, and the trees will be listed by name and number in a schedule, all in .pdf format. (The tree data can be supplied on request in Excel format.)

As noted above, the survey will not be an inventory. Trees less than 150mm in trunk diameter at 1.2m at ground level will not be surveyed although if we see on the estate a significant defect in any smaller tree that amounts to a significant hazard, we will of course mention this in the report.

The schedule will outline required work in sufficient detail to allow contractors to provide quotations. Our standard company procedure, formulated following recent legal advice, is to provide and record acceptance of our latest terms and conditions on every instruction. We therefore attach a copy, which we request that you read carefully and indicate your acceptance of by return of email or post.

£1675 +VAT. (for travel, visit, office time)

5. FINANCIAL

5.1 There is a budget for tree works (Cemetery Tree Work – 41/409). From a budget of £10,000 there is £9,600 remaining in this budget (as of 2/9/2024)

5.2 The quotes received adhere to the Financial Regulations (item 5.9).

6. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A
Risk Management	Identifying risk to public health and arboriculture health. Contractors will provide PLI and relevant RAMS
Legals	Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
Resources/Stakeholders	The services of a tree surgeon for implementation of works identified in the Survey
Contracts/Financial	Budget in situ.
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	Low risk to biodiversity impact

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM MEETING

DATE: 16 OCTOBER 2024

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: ADAM LEADBEATER, PUBLIC REALM MANAGER

SUBJECT: POLICY FOR OPEN SPACE HIRING

1. SUMMARY

1.1 Following the meeting of 11th September 2024 a policy for the hire of open spaces was requested to allow Officers to confirm new hires without the need for Committee under normal circumstances.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to consider this report and policy for adoption.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Currently, all new hires for the Stotfold Town Council Open Spaces must be reviewed and approved by this Committee. This process is time-consuming and can cause delays in last-minute hires, which may reduce the utilisation of our open spaces and the potential revenue from their rental.

3.2 The policy to be considered is attached to this report.

4. FINANCIAL

4.1 Members are asked to consider if they would like to consider a bond payment to cover any damages caused by larger or high-risk events. This bond would be in addition to the booking deposit currently set at £250 which is due at the time of booking.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	N/A
Risk Management:	Reduces the hire risk of open spaces
Legals:	More robust Terms and Conditions
Resources/Stakeholder:	STC & Hirers
Contracts/Finance:	Potential income generation or lost.
Crime & Disorder:	Terms and conditions assist in this being reduced
Equalities:	Helps hire with equality considerations
Biodiversity:	Helps hire with biodiverse considerations



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

POLICY FOR THE USE OF PARKS AND OPEN SPACES FOR EVENTS

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Stotfold Town Council recognises the value and benefit which a culturally diverse and well-designed events programme in its parks and open spaces can bring to both residents of the town but also to draw in visitors, which may also result in extended benefits. This Policy is provided to assist the decision-making process behind building a sustainable and varied programme of events for the town. It also seeks to protect the community and the Council's parks and open space's infrastructure from any negative impacts, which events may cause.
- 1.2 The policy aims to guide:
 - The number of events that can be held in each park and open space
 - The size of events that can be held in each park and open space
 - The nature of events that can be held in each park and open space
- 1.3 This policy also aims to communicate the obligations, responsibilities, and limitations, which all event organisers have in relation to staging an event in any park or open space managed by Stotfold Town Council.
- 1.4 Stotfold Town Council is permitted to hold events under section 145 of the Local Government Act, 1972, which gives power to authorities to allow entertainment events in parks. Section 44 of the Public Health Amendment Act 1890 permits certain entertainments in parks, although subject to a limit on the duration of the event. Both acts provide slightly different, though overlapping, powers, and Stotfold Town Council is entitled to pick which one it wants to use for the purpose.
- 1.5 Local authorities are sometimes challenged by certain stakeholders when a large percentage of the park is used to hold an event, especially when a large percentage of the park being used excludes the public from their everyday use. Section 145 of the Local Government Act, 1972, speaks of "enclosure," and does permit the public to be excluded if the open space has been hired and an event is taking place.

2. Key Objectives

- 2.1 The key objectives of this Policy are to:
 - Ensure all events are run effectively and comply with relevant legislation;
 - Ensure the health and safety for event attendees, the wider public and for those working at the event;
 - Protect the reputation and promote a positive image of Stotfold Town Council;
 - Ensure that events are only approved if organisers can clearly demonstrate they are able to deliver effective planning of an event which is robust and safety-focused;
 - Encourage and initiate events which involve localised community participation and delivery;

- Ensure protection of the natural environment by communicating clear environmental, biodiversity, and sustainability policies;
- Ensure that every effort is made to avoid damage to the park or open space and its contents and that, should damage occur, this is mitigated at the soonest possible opportunity at the expense of the event provider;
- Ensure that all pre-event communications with key stakeholders are carried out in a timely and considered manner and accounting for local views as far as permissible
- Encourage and support an annual programme of quality, culturally diverse and sustainable events;
- Encourage a culturally diverse range of community and commercial orientated events, which have wide appeal for the residents of Stotfold as well as tourists and visitors;
- Minimise and mitigate disruption to local residents and businesses.

3. Event Types

- 3.1 A community event must always be offered with no entrance fees to the public. They will not provide significant advertising or other commercial benefit opportunities to a profit-making business or organisation. The organiser may be asked to provide proof that they are not profiting from allowing third-party contractors, e.g. commercial stallholders to attend their event. Entrance fees, where levied for community and third-sector stallholders, will be set at an affordable and accessible level, and agreed with the Town Council during the event process.
- 3.2 Charity events should be for the sole benefit of a Registered Charity and not for profit. Applications must be received from the charity themselves or include a signed letter of endorsement from the charity. The charity will be responsible for the event. Not-for-profit and/or charitable organisations must be able to provide a UK charity number and also demonstrate that all proceeds (over and above costs) will be for the charity.

4. Event Applications

- 4.1 Event applications must be received no later than 4 weeks prior to the event date to allow officers to complete the required event consultations and full application process. Should applications not be received within these lead times, event proposals may be declined.
- 4.2 No more than one event will normally be approved on the same day in each park or open space (exceptions may be made for smaller/private events which do not adversely impact the daily recreational use of remaining space). Should multiple applications be received for the same park or open space on the same date, one or both of the organisers may be offered an alternative date or park.
- 4.3 Events which would not be granted permission are those which are deemed to be inappropriate, contravene any conditions set out in the Terms and Conditions of Park and Open Space Hire, or are considered to have a detrimental impact on the “normal day-to-day recreational use” of the park or open space. Failure to comply with Terms and Conditions will prejudice future event applications. Specific attention is drawn to the potential for noise nuisance as a result of amplified music.
- 4.4 Further reasons for refusal may include:

- Any event which is likely to have an unacceptable impact on the infrastructure and biodiversity of the selected site.
 - Any event which does not provide adequate documentation or certification and cannot demonstrate through this process that it should progress to the next stage of the application process.
 - Any event which discriminates against any individual or group on the grounds of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or disability.
 - Any event that does not agree to and sign the set terms and conditions of hire prior to the event.
 - Any event to which the Council has previously experienced undue, late or non-payment of fees as agreed or where other conditions were not adhered to.
- 4.5 Event organisers will be asked to sign and return their application no later than 14 days prior to the proposed occupation of the site. Failure to return this document prior to this date will mean that the event cannot proceed. Compliance with the conditions (some may contain specific conditions tailored to a specific event) will be monitored, and failure to comply will prejudice future event applications and may result in corresponding legal action.

5. Hiring a Park or Open Space Terms and Conditions

- 5.1 Applications for events will only be considered if submitted within a reasonable time of the proposed event relative to the size of the event i.e. not later than 6 months for major events and 1 month for small events. The Hirer must submit full details of the proposed event for approval. Details to include arrangements for catering, refuse collection and disposal, toilets, general activity to be staged, anticipated attendance figures and health & safety information as appropriate. A booking fee of £250 will be required at the time of submission which will be deducted from any final balance due.
- 5.2 No part of the park is to be used for any other purpose other than the Purpose of the Hire.
- 5.3 The Hirer must conduct their own risk assessment undertaken by competent people, a written copy of which must be lodged with the Stotfold Town Council Clerk at least four weeks before the date of the event. This document will be referred to in the event of any claim arising. The Council may review the risk assessment; however, it cannot be held responsible for any errors or emissions.
- 5.4 The Hirer hires the area indicated on the Hirer's site plan and agreed by the Council. The Hirer does not hire the whole park or site for the Hirer's exclusive use unless requested and agreed by the Town Council.
- 5.5 Where a temporary electrical installation is being used, a temporary electrical installation report by a registered electrician or a certificate of compliance with BS7909 must be available upon request.
- 5.6 The Hirer's attention is drawn to the requirements of the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974 and other health & safety legislation including the Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations 1999, Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 1999, and Electricity at Work Regulations 1989. It is the responsibility of the Hirer to comply with all relevant legislation. If appropriate, the Town Council will provide the Hirer with any information required by health & safety legislation.

- 5.7 Bouncy Castles and other inflatables – see HSE safety advice and guidance. It is the responsibility of the Hirer to comply with all guidance and relevant legislation. HSE Inflatable Safety Guidance
- 5.8 The Hirer shall indemnify and keep indemnified the Town Council from and against all actions, claims, suits, costs, expenses, losses, injuries, damage, and liability howsoever arising out of or by reason or in consequence of the agreement hereby granted (other than actions, claims, suits, costs, expenses, losses, injuries, damage, and liability resulting from any negligent act of the Town Council, its servants or agents). The Hirer shall affect a third-party policy of insurance to a minimum of £5,000,000 per event.
- 5.9 The Hirer will be required to produce written evidence of the existence of public liability insurance at such a level as required by the Council in respect of any exhibitor, ground entertainer, sub-contractor, caterer which the Hirer has authorised to appear at the event.
- 5.10 The Hirer is responsible for adequate fire precautions and for the maintenance of clear exits for emergency vehicles and for ensuring that none of the footpaths are blocked.
- 5.11 The Hirer is responsible for the reinstatement of the site allocated, including the clearance of litter, the separation and collection of recyclable materials, and the removal of all advertising. The clearance must be undertaken within 24 hours after the completion of the event and reinstatement of land within 48 hours after the completion of the event. If the Hirer fails to perform these obligations, the Council reserves the right to perform any such obligations, and any costs incurred shall be borne by the Hirer.
- 5.12 Should the Hirer cancel after written confirmation of a firm booking has been given, the Hirer will be liable for cancellation charges. See the separate 'Fees & Charges' guide for current prices. Cancellations must be in writing (email, fax, or letter) or the full hire charge will be payable.
- 5.13 The property of the Hirer and Hirer's agents must be removed at the end of the period of hire. The Council accepts no responsibility for any property left on the venue before, during, or after the hire period.
- 5.14 The Hirer must ensure that first aid equipment is provided and all precautions taken against the risk of fire and electric shock, and inform the Town Council of the arrangements intended for an electrical supply to be provided for the event and arrange for the meter to be read and for any other advice which may be necessary.
- 5.15 In the event of a major or long-term injury or a death at the event, the Hirer must comply with RIDDOR (the Reporting of Injuries Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013). For more information see the following website link: HSE RIDDOR Guidance or call the Health and Safety Executives Incident Contact Centre (ICC) on 0845 300 9923.
- 5.16 The Food Safety Act 1990 and a number of regulations and codes of practice govern the sale of food. These are enforced within the County by the Environmental Health & Licensing Services. The regulations require any food outlets to be registered. The Hirer must notify the Environmental Health & Licensing Services at least 2 months before the event.
- 5.17 The Hirer must ensure that adequate parking arrangements are made for vehicles. Parking is restricted to areas set aside within the site plan and with the prior approval of Parks & Leisure Services. Any parking in highway areas is covered by traffic regulations and may result in parking fines as directed by law.
- 5.18 The Hirer is required to comply with the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992, whereby unauthorised advertising, including "fly posting", is an offence and therefore strictly forbidden.

- 5.19 No posters, boards, signs, flags, or other emblems or advertisements are to be displayed inside or outside any part of the Park without the previous consent of the Council.
- 5.20 The Hirer is responsible at all times for the organisation and smooth running of the event.
- 5.21 Temporary structures must be constructed of sound materials and be suitable for their purpose and must be approved. See HSE guidance and information to help those organising events manage the safe erection, use, and deconstruction of temporary demountable structures (TDS). HSE TDS Guidance The Hirer will be responsible at all times (day and night) for the security and supervision of these structures. The use of floodlighting, other than for security purposes, may require planning permission; the Hirer must notify Environmental Health and Licensing Services at least 2 months before the event.
- 5.22 The Hirer must ensure that the bylaws applicable to the park or open space in which the event is to be held are complied with at all times.
- 5.23 Hire may be subject to payment of a fee or bond, the amount of which to be determined by Stotfold Town Council. The bond must be received at least one week before the event is due to take place.
- 5.24 No noise is to be made, whether by loudspeakers or musical instruments, etc., after the hour of 10:30 pm unless prior agreement has been obtained.
- 5.25 No public address system is to be used without the approval of Stotfold Town Council.
- 5.26 The Hirer must comply with the direction of Stotfold Town Council at all times.
- 5.27 The Hirer must obtain all necessary clearances from and comply with all requirements of the Civil Aviation Authority and/or any other relevant body.
- 5.28 The Hirer must comply with any supplementary requirements made by the Stotfold Town Council Public Ream Manager in respect of this booking.

Revision History

Date Adopted	[October 2024]
Date Reviewed	

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/Riverside Playing Field)	
5. Day(s) and Date(s) of hire/Ongoing	
Hours:	From: To:
6. Hire Fee – Total payable (to be settled no later than 7 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, OR NEAR MISSES 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

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM MEETING

DATE: 16TH OCTOBER 2024

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: ADAM LEADBEATER, PUBLIC REALM MANAGER

SUBJECT: RELOCATION OF THE TOWN RANGERS

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The Town Rangers, along with their equipment, vehicles, and storage, are currently displaced due to the Tractor Shed's inaccessibility in adverse weather conditions. This situation will soon be exacerbated by the GAC carpark being utilised by library and café staff and customers. Additionally, the Town Rangers' current welfare area at the GAC will be permanently lost once the Library and Café works commence. This report outlines the current arrangements and proposes a more suitable solution that offers better utility for both the present and the future.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are asked to consider the following:

- a) Hiring a larger space with all-season vehicle access.
- b) Relocating tools, vehicles, and equipment storage to the new location.
- c) Providing welfare facilities at the new location.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 The Current Provision

Welfare Facilities: Currently provided at the GAC kitchen, which will become the café. This area allows for heating and cold storage of lunch, drying of clothing, and storing a minimal amount of personal or business equipment.

Vehicle Parking: Town Ranger vehicles are parked at the GAC in an open carpark behind a light security barrier. No protection from vandalism or weather is provided.

Waste Management and Storage: Waste management skips and external storage are located at the barn yard on Arlesey / Stone Road.

Tools and Equipment: These are stored in the Tractor Shed at the Hitchen Road Recreation Ground, which lacks year-round vehicle access and has minimal security.

3.2 The Tractor Shed

The Tractor Shed is currently used for storing tools, equipment, and materials needed for the Town Rangers' daily tasks. The building offers basic welfare facilities, which require upgrades to meet current health and safety standards. Upgrades would include, but are not limited to:

- Kitchenette with meal heating and cold storage.
- Seating for rest periods with chairs and table.
- Suitable vehicle access to reduce unnecessary manual handling.

- Efficient heating and drying facilities.
- Improved security.

3.3 The Yard

The yard is an outdoor space leased from a local landowner. The current cost is £0 under a goodwill agreement, which requires formalisation. It is used for:

- Storage of the Town waste skip.
- Storage of large, low-value items for reuse, such as fencing and tree timbers.

4. The Proposal

4.1 This proposal aims to collocate all necessary facilities for the Town Rangers, enhancing health and safety compliance and providing a more functional workspace:

- **Ceasing Use of the Tractor Shed:** To avoid the high cost and limitations of providing year-round vehicle access, the Tractor Shed would no longer be used for Town Rangers.
- **Leasing Additional Space:** Preliminary discussions with the Yard Landowner indicate additional barn space is available. Leasing this space would require a formal agreement, costing £650 per month (£400 for barn space and £250 for yard space). Power and water are available, with costs to be determined.
- **Welfare Facilities:** A purpose-built, vandal-proof welfare unit could be hired or purchased for the barn area. Purchase estimates are £12,000 for a new 20-foot unit or £7,000 for a used unit. Hiring costs are estimated at £1,200 per month. This would be located within the barn.
- **Security:** Basic security includes gates and a steel shutter. To enhance monitoring, CCTV would be installed, with costs estimated at £4,000, including a mobile broadband router for day-to-day use.
- **Tool and Vehicle Storage:** Tools would be secured in the anti-vandal cabin within the barn, while materials would be stored on a surface suitable for manual handling equipment. Town Ranger vehicles would be stored in the barn to prevent damage and facilitate preloading for the next day's work.
- **Health and Safety Compliance:** The new Town Ranger Base would consolidate functions from the current dislocated areas and can be upgraded to meet health and safety standards at a lower cost than renovating and providing vehicle access to the Tractor Shed.
- **Leasing Out the Tractor Shed:** Consider leasing the vacated Tractor Shed space to offset rental costs at the new location.

4. FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Item	Cost	Frequency	Notes
Barn and Yard Lease	£650	Per month	£400 for barn space, £250 for yard space.
Welfare Unit (Purchase)	£7,000 - £12,000	One-time	New unit at £12,000, used unit at £7,000.
Welfare Unit (Hire)	£1,200	Per month	Alternative to purchasing.

Item	Cost	Frequency	Notes
CCTV & Broadband Installation	£4,000	One-time	Includes mobile broadband router.
Monthly Power and Water (Estimation)	£100 - £200	Per month	Costs depend on usage, to be confirmed.
Tractor Shed Lease Income (Potential)	-£X (To be determined)	Per month	Income from leasing the Tractor Shed space to offset new lease costs.

4.1 Financial Estimates

- Estimated Initial Setup Costs (if purchasing unit): £11,000 - £16,000.
- Estimated Monthly Running Costs: £750 - £1,300 (includes lease, utilities, and welfare unit hire if applicable).
- Potential Offsetting Income: Depending on any lease agreement for the Tractor Shed.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan:	N/A.
Risk Management:	Financial risk balanced with improved H&S risk.
Legals:	Lease agreement to be drawn up if resolved.
Resources/Stakeholder :	STC, Town Rangers, potential landlord.
Contracts/Finance:	Lease and hire agreements.
Crime & Disorder:	Improved CCTV IVO Sone Road to combat ASB.
Equalities:	Providing more fit for purpose facilities.
Biodiversity:	No construction impact to the Hitchin Road Rec.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM MEETING

DATE: 16th OCTOBER 2024

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: SUE WARD, CEMETERY & ALLOTMENTS OFFICER

SUBJECT: POLICY REVIEW FOR MEMORIALS

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 A robust policy on purchase, installation and future maintenance of grave memorials including benches and trees, enables the Town Council to set out its expectations of what is and is not acceptable, reducing ambiguity and confusion.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to recommend to Full Council that the following policies are adopted:

- a) Memorials Policy
- b) Memorial Tree and Bench Policy

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 To acknowledge trends in memorials and remembrance, Members are asked to consider changes to our memorials policy as attached. There has been a growing demand for personalisation where families are asking to incorporate personal touches such as photographs, sculptures, engravings etc. there is also a growing interest in the use of alternative materials, beyond the traditional granite and marble, to encapsulate sustainable memorials with a focus on natural stone.

- 3.2 As the Cemetery owner we must focus on the health and safety implications of memorials, how they will last, and are they a potential hazard to future generations. Our memorial stone policy has been written based on recommendations from the ICCM and to consider the needs of the different locations in the cemetery. Additional wording has been added that spell out the legality of who can erect a memorial, and to ensure future tracking of the responsible mason in case of any problems arising.

- 3.3 The cemetery has seen several instances recently where planting on a grave space is taking place without a kerb set permit, glass being introduced on graves and even wicker lattice work being used around grave spaces. So, wording has been added to highlight this is not permitted in the cemetery as it hinders graves maintenance and is not fair to others who have applied for a permit.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 Memorial permits income in 2022/23 was £6,595.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan N/A

Risk Management	Updating documents in line with current legislation and identifying risks to the Town Council will form part of the risk management strategy and risk register.
Legals	Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.
Resources	Officers
Contracts	Memorial permits issued and charges levied.
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	N/A
Privacy Impact	N/A



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL MEMORIALS POLICY

1. Purpose of the Policy

Any memorial purchased and erected on a grave space is owned by the registered grave owner and it is that person who is ultimately responsible for its upkeep and maintenance. Stotfold Town Council has a responsibility to ensure the cemetery is a safe place for staff (including external contractors) to work in and for the public to visit.

The purpose of this policy is to define clear and measurable requirements for 'permanent' memorials whilst setting out a framework that covers the multiple diverse areas in Stotfold Cemetery.

We recognise our responsibility to ensure that all forms of memorialisation are both appropriate to their surroundings and also acceptable to the majority of cemetery users

2. Memorial Installation

Although responsibility for the safety and stability of memorials rests with the grave owners (assuming they can be traced), Stotfold Town Council has a Duty of Care to both it's staff and visitor.

Therefore, in order to minimise the risk to public safety, the Council requires that all memorials are installed by an approved monumental mason acting in accordance with the regulations surrounding memorial criteria.

All monumental masons wishing to carry out work within Stotfold Cemetery must be BRAMM (British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons) accredited, or NAMM (National Association of Memorial Masons) accredited, or both. They must employ licensed Fixers and maintain appropriate Public Liability and Employers Insurance Policies

3. Application process

Applications for memorials on burial plots must be made by owner of exclusive right of burial in that plot. If the owner has died, then transfer of ownership must take place before any application can be considered.

Memorials on earthen graves are not allowed until after 12 months of internment to allow the ground to settle.

The name of the memorial mason and grave number must be incised, or incised and inlaid, to match the main inscription, in figures up to 20mm high in a visible place on the memorial and, if present, on the corner of kerbing at the foot of the grave.

4. Burial Area Memorials

The following memorials are permitted:

- 4.1 New Section, Old Section, top part of the Lawn and Beacon Section of the cemetery
A headstone, gravestone or tombstone not exceeding four feet in height with or without kerb stones, and with or without flat stone. Kerb stones or a flat stone must not exceed seven feet in length, and in the case of a single plot, three feet in width, and in the case of neighbouring

plots requiring one memorial stone seven feet in width. In addition, a vase not exceeding an overall height of one foot six inches, marked with the grave number.

4.2 Lower part of Lawn Section

Flat plaque measuring twenty-four inches by eighteen inches, which must be inserted at ground level at the head of the grave on unmoved ground, downhill of the grave. Only a flat stone with space for a vase in it, if a vase is required, will be permitted. If no such provision is made, a vase will not be allowed. Nothing else is permitted to be placed within the grave space. Any first inspection thereon has to be arranged to enable a second inspection where necessary to be added.

4.3 Lower Garden of Rest (Mill Road boundary)

Flat plaque not exceeding twelve inches by nine inches (30.5cm x 22.8cm) which must be inserted at ground level, plaques in the shape of a wedge will be permitted. One vase (stone block or otherwise) is permitted with each plaque, but a non-stone vase must have a spike which can be secured in the ground. A non-stone vase is permitted only upon the conditions that wherever the Council's groundsman or contractor is carrying out maintenance in the Garden of Rest he removes the vase, and that the Council accepts no responsibility for any damage caused to a vase or for ensuring that it is replaced in its proper position after maintenance work. Muted coloured stones will be allowed around the plaques. No planting is permitted in the ground. Flowers, plant pots, ornaments or other items are not permitted to be sited on the walls surrounding the Garden of Rest.

4.4 Walled Garden of Rest (Beacon Section)

Flat plaque not exceeding twelve inches by nine inches (30.5cm x 22.8cm), which must be inserted at ground level, plaques in the shape of a wedge will be permitted. Smaller plaques or stone block vases with limited wording are also permitted. All memorabilia are to be contained within the plot. No planting is permitted. Flowers, plant pots, ornaments or other items are not permitted to be sited on the walls surrounding the Garden of Rest. Any such items will be removed by the Council and retained for collection. Stones are provided within the plot. If top-up of stones is required, the Council will supply the stones. Kerbs around the plot are not permitted.

4.4 Beacon Garden of Rest (flat Beacon Section)

Flat plaque not exceeding twelve inches by nine inches (30.5cm x 22.8cm), which must be inserted at ground level, plaques in the shape of a wedge will be permitted. One stone block vase is permitted with each plaque, within the grave space. Other vases may be permitted but must have a spike which can be secured in the ground. A non-stone vase is permitted only upon the conditions that whenever the Council's groundsman or contractor is carrying out maintenance in the Garden of Rest, he removes the vase and that the Council accepts no responsibility for any damage caused to a vase or for ensuring that it is replaced in its proper position after maintenance work. Stones are provided within the plot. If top-up of stones is required, the Council will supply the stones. Kerbs around the plot are not permitted.

4.5 Baby Section

Headstones and flower vases which must be placed near the headstone end of the plot. Headstones must not exceed two feet three inches and fifteen inches in width and must be made of stone or similar material. Kerb stones are not permitted.

5. Memorials – Materials

In addition to where referred to above:

Memorials may not be made of Bath, Caen or other soft stone. Kerbing must be of a similar material to the memorial. Kerbing and memorials must be installed by a monumental mason, and be constructed and installed in accordance with the BRAMM/NAMM standards. The materials and workmanship must be to the satisfaction of the Council.

Wooden crosses are only allowed as a temporary memorial prior to a permanent memorial being erected. Temporary memorials are permitted for a period of three years from the date the temporary memorial was put in place. After three years they will be removed by the Council and returned to the family.

6. Memorials - Installation

Applications for erection, re-erection and removal of memorials (temporary or permanent) have to be made to Stotfold Town Council.

Three days' notice in writing must be given to the Cemetery Officer before any work relating to memorials is carried out at the cemetery.

Memorials and all materials for placing them and materials for removal or performing any work upon them at the cemetery must be assembled and made ready before the admission of the contractors to the cemetery. Contractors must provide their own tools, planks and other equipment required by them. Workmen must not be present at the cemetery before 9am or after 4pm and not at all on Sundays, Christmas Day, Good Friday and Bank Holidays. All work must be performed as expeditiously as possible. All soil resulting from placement of a memorial must be removed by the contractor. Contractors must remove their tools, and all other equipment brought to the cemetery forthwith upon completion of the work.

All damage to Council's property or to other monuments caused by the bringing in, use of or taking out of materials or equipment by a contractor or other person or by his negligence or that of his workmen, must be made good.

The Council will not be responsible in any way howsoever for damage to or loss of memorials.

Whenever an existing grave space needs to be re-opened for a further burial to take place, the Council reserves the right to place removed earth on an adjacent plot or grave. The Council will ensure that the earth is removed as soon as possible after the burial.

Any person to whom a right to place and maintain a memorial or a right to put an additional inscription on a memorial has been granted must:

- At his expense before the memorial is placed in the Cemetery cause to be cut, embossed or marked thereon in a visible position in not less than one-inch numbers the number of the grave space where it is to be placed – the number is to be found on the plan of the cemetery at the Council's offices.
- At his expense and that of his estate thereafter maintain the memorial in a safe and secure condition and indemnify the Council against all claims, demands, proceedings of persons injured because of the unsafe condition of the memorial.

7. Memorials – general

The Council reserves the right to remove faded flowers, vases, bottles or any other objects which in their opinion are objectionable or unsightly. The public must deposit all litter or faded

flowers in the receptacles provided for the purpose. Memorials such as wreaths added at Xmas are allowed on a temporary basis but should be removed within three months.

No planting of trees, shrubs or other large perennial plants will be permitted on grave plots.

Planting of flowers or the additional of small adornments will only be permitted within the kerbing where a full memorial has been registered and installed.

Where a headstone only memorial has been registered and installed, then no additional planting or adornments beyond that will be permitted other than within the confines of the memorial baseplate.

Nothing else is permitted to be placed on or in the ground that has not been authorised in writing by the Council. The Council reserves the right to remove all extra grave adornments, and unauthorised items that do not conform to the regulations. For the avoidance of doubt this includes edging stones, trellis, lattice or fencing of any type Stone chippings, pebbles or gravel may not be used on graves without a kerb set in place.

For safety reasons glass vases are not allowed in the cemetery and will be removed.

Memorials added during Xmas are allowed on a temporary basis but should be removed within three months.

The Council has powers under the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977 to take action which is necessary to remove danger which arises by reason of the condition of a memorial or deal with it in any way to ensure the proper management regulation and control of the cemetery.

Note: The Council, as Burial Authority, has further powers relating to gravestones and other memorials under the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977

8. Alternative formats

8.1 Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.

8.2 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.

Revision History

Date Adopted:	September 2021
Date Reviewed	October 2024 Updated to comply with current legislation



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

MEMORIAL BENCH & TREE POLICY

1. SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 1.1 When loved ones die, their friends and relatives will often want to commemorate them with a lasting memorial. This can initially be within the cemetery as a memorial on the grave space to remember that person but also this will be in the form of a tree or bench which not only honours their memory but provides a beautiful and functional improvement to the local environment.
- 1.2 Stotfold is fortunate enough to have numerous parks and open spaces, as well as Stotfold Cemetery these are mostly owned and managed by Stotfold Town Council. This policy sets out how we approve memorial benches and trees; who is responsible for their upkeep; and what is expected from the donor and the council.
- 1.3 The Town Council will always endeavour to be respectful, sympathetic, and fair towards those donating trees and benches; to balance the needs of facility users; and to maintain the high quality of its open spaces.

2. WHAT AND WHO IS COVERED BY THE POLICY

- 2.1 The policy covers any memorial bench, tree, or other lasting item (excluding those sited at Stotfold Cemetery) placed on Stotfold Town Council-owned property and is relevant to anyone who has commissioned, or is thinking of commissioning, a memorial tree or bench.
- 2.2 Stotfold Town Council-owned property includes: The Green, Riverside Playing Field, Hitchin Road Recreation Ground, Centenary Wood, Pix Brook Play Area, Greenacre Park, Arlesey Road and Stotfold Cemetery on Mill Lane.

3. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 The planting of trees or installation of benches on land as memorials, is a private arrangement between the friends and relatives commissioning the memorial, and the landowner. As such, the Town Council can only approve memorials and trees on Town Council-owned land. The Town Council may support applications for benches placed on the public highway, but permission is required from the local highways' authority, Central Bedfordshire Council.
- 3.2 Generally speaking, installing trees and benches will not be subject to planning permission, restrictive covenants, or other restrictions. However, there may be cases where the Town Council is unable to install benches for such reasons.
- 3.3 Under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, the Town Council must consider the effect of its decisions on crime and disorder. It may deem a location unsuitable, if it may attract antisocial behaviour.

- 3.4 When the Town Council agrees to install a bench or tree, they are bought by the friends and family and donated to the Town Council. The tree or bench then becomes the property of the Town Council, and the donor does not retain any right to determine its future management. The Town Council will nevertheless endeavour to ensure it is properly maintained and cared for.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

4.1 Determining requests

- 4.1.1 Enquiries for a memorial bench or tree should be made by emailing enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk. The requests will be reviewed and approved by the Public Realm Committee.
- 4.1.2 The Town Council will endeavour to accommodate any reasonable requests for the planting of memorial trees or installation of memorial benches on Town Council-owned property only. Requests may not be able to be fulfilled if the location is unsuitable due to the risk of vandalism, antisocial behaviour, over-population of trees or benches, or any other material factors.
- 4.1.3 Benches are always Brown Countryside seat, with fixings below ground



<https://uk.glasdon.com/countryside-tm-seat>

Memorial Trees are always Yew trees in the cemetery

- 4.1.4 Bench Plaques are a size 150mm x 50mm and made of stainless steel, Tree plaques in the Cemetery are stainless steel, with a light oak finish back base, and size 200mm x 150mm

4.1.5 The exact location of the tree or bench will be agreed during a site visit with Town Council staff. It is the donor's responsibility to ensure that the location (and orientation in the case of a bench) is well-communicated to the Town Council and confirmed in writing, by letter or email, with an accompanying sketch. In the case of the Cemetery, the Town Council reserves the right to choose a location, to maintain layout of the cemetery for future burials.

4.1.7 Memorial benches and trees will only be considered from people that can demonstrate a close tie with the person being commemorated. The Town Council reserves the right to refuse a memorial bench, or tree should it have any grounds to believe it would be contrary to the wishes of the commemorated person's next of kin.

4.2. Costs

4.2.1 The cost of the tree or bench will include any plaques/inscription, delivery, and planting/installation costs (e.g. fixings, tree guard, paving or base around the bench).

4.2.2 A further one-off surcharge of 20% will be added on top of the cost for the continuing and future maintenance of the tree or bench.

4.3 Installing and planting

4.3.1 The arrangements for ordering and installing the bench or tree will be made directly by the Town Council, once a specification has been agreed with the donor, and once the financial donation has been made.

4.3.2 Tree planting will usually only be permitted between late autumn and early spring, in line with the tree-planting season.

4.3.3 Trees will normally be planted by the Town Council's Contractor. However, donors are welcome to be present at the tree planting and carry out a small ceremony if they wish.

4.3.4 The Scattering of Ashes is permitted only around the Central Lime Trees behind the Chapel in the Cemetery and permission should be requested from the Town Council. It is not permitted on a family grave or around a family Memorial Tree. Burial of ashes under a tree will not be permitted. Scattering of Pet Ashes or Internment of these is prohibited on Stotfold Town Council property.

4.4 Plaques

4.4.1 Commemorative plaques can be affixed to a memorial bench, subject to agreeing a size, wording and specification with the Town Council and obtaining written permission once agreement has been reached. Plaques for trees are not recommended unless in the Cemetery due to the increased risk of vandalism. No plaque may be affixed to a tree itself.

4.4.2 Commemorative plaques may be affixed to existing benches, where there is no other visible sign of it being a memorial bench. The fee for this will be the cost of the plaque and installation, plus 50% of the estimated cost of a like-for-like replacement bench. Note, only one plaque will be affixed to any one bench.

4.5 Maintenance

- 4.5.1 The Town Council will only source high quality/durable benches and will endeavour to maintain and care for the memorial bench or tree. However, it cannot guarantee their condition. If the bench is badly damaged or unusable after ten years, the Town Council can dispose of it and the family will be given the choice of either purchasing another one, as per the council's memorial bench policy, or the space will be made vacant for another family's memorial bench. If the family is not contactable, the council will take appropriate action deemed necessary at the time.
- 4.5.2 Donors should also be aware that benches or young trees in public areas may be subject to vandalism, and the Town Council will not be held responsible for any costs in replacing them.
- 4.5.3 The Town Council shall endeavour to maintain and care for a memorial tree and bench for as long as possible and any necessary tree maintenance and monitoring will form part of the Town Council's ongoing schedule of works. However, it reserves the right to re-site or remove any tree or bench that it deems to be unsafe, unrepairable, or other reasons.

Should the tree die within the first year then the Town Council will take responsibility for replacement of the tree, should it die after the first year then an application to replace the tree will need to be made to the Town Council.

- 4.5.4 No placing of flowers or other objects at memorials will be permitted, except with the permission of the Town Council.

5. ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

- 5.1 Disability Discrimination Act 2005, Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Bodies (Websites and Mobile Applications) (No. 2) Accessibility Regulations 2018.
- 5.2 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 Town Council office or by telephoning 01462 730064 or by emailing enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk

Revision History

Date Adopted	11 November 2020
Date Reviewed	16 October 2024 Updates relating to scattering/interment of pet ashes, condition and maintenance of benches, location of benches to be installed, tree longevity and update to Committee name.



APPLICATION FOR THE PURCHASE, INSTALLATION AND SITING OF A SEAT IN STOTFOLD CEMETERY

To: The Clerk, Stotfold Town Council, The Greenacre Centre, Valerian Way, Stotfold, Hitchin, Herts SG5 4HG

Request for the purchase of a bench within Stotfold Cemetery

Name:

Address:
.....
.....
.....

Telephone Number:

Name, Grave No. and Section of deceased person(s)

.....

'Countryside – Enviropol in Brown Seat with fixings 'Countryside'- Enviropol in Brown Seat With fixings + Plaque (plaque 150 x 50mm)	Price on Application
---	-----------------------------

Wording required:

Signature:

Date:



TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF SITING A SEAT WITHIN STOTFOLD CEMETERY

1. The Town Council will purchase and install the bench, plaque and all associated requirements upon request of purchase.
2. Unlike the purchase of a plot the requested bench is the memorial.
3. Other than a memorial plaque, there should be no additional memorials including planting, vases and other objects around the bench. Stotfold Town Council will remove any such items.
4. The Town Council is responsible for the maintenance and repair of memorial benches, and can dispose of them at their discretion if they are damaged beyond repair, for the first ten years.

Thereafter, it is the responsibility of the family to pay for repairs. If the bench is badly damaged or unusable after ten years the Town Council can dispose of it and the family will be given the choice of either purchasing another one, as per the Council's memorial bench policy, or the space will be made vacant for another family's memorial bench. If the family is not contactable we will take appropriate action deemed necessary at the time.

These regulations will apply to benches already in place, starting from 24th September 2008, and also to future benches placed in the Cemetery.

Acceptance of these conditions:

Signature.....

Date.....

Stotfold Town Council
The Greenacre Centre
Valerian Way
Stotfold
Hitchin
Herts
SG5 4HG

Tel 01462 730064
Email:enquires@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM MEETING

DATE: 16TH OCTOBER 2024

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: SUE WARD

SUBJECT: MEMORIAL BENCH POSITION IN UPPER GARDEN OF REST

1. SUMMARY

1.1 Following some remediation work in the cemetery concerning box tree hedging, the council are asked to consider the location of potential future memorial benches in the upper garden of rest.

1.2 The areas highlighted for flower beds are not planned areas for future burials but can be reused.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 Members are asked to identify area available for future bench installations

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Historically benches have been installed at various locations around the cemetery, we have five which are against the beech hedging surrounding the Lower Garden of Rest and allow for contemplation near loved ones once they have been interred in that section. The flat Upper Garden of Rest, GOR C is at the top of the Central Roadway, and looks down over Beacon E which is unused, and across to the walled Garden of Rest GOR B.



3.2 There is an opportunity to locate several benches within those areas, photographs 1,2 are in the walled GOR.



This is looking down from the top (near the Mast) above the Walled GOR and would be a very contemplative view. There are 3 large box bushes there which aren't in good condition and could be taken out to be replaced with two benches that maybe could be next to a small lavender bed in line with the planting in the Walled GOR

- 3.3 This is the Flat Upper GOR, view from the side towards the beacon, showing where some benches have already been installed one at the top of the road facing towards Beacon C, and one in line with the baby yew trees looking down the hill toward the chapel. There's a large space in front of it which I've tried to show and although there is lots of space for several benches to be placed on the grass verge next to the Beacon Road, it's not that close to the Flat GOR so I think it's a little remote, however if we were to plant a small floral bed in that area with several benches framing it then it would be a more fitting place of solace and remembrance This area isn't earmarked for further development yet but in the future potentially could be a site for a columbaria or a plaque monument for ashes scattered.



4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 Options 1 and 2 would be paid for by the family, with the Town Rangers installing this. Options 3 and 4 would require some input to remove the grass if planting up a small bed, and the cost of annual planting

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	Improving relations with local people as users of the Town Council's services. Improving the management of the Council's assets.
Risk Management	N/A
Legals	N?A
Resources/Stakeholders	Officer resources.
Contracts/Financial	Payment received from cemetery bench memorials
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	Biodiversity impact in planting in proposed beds
Privacy Impact	N/A

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM MEETING

DATE: 16th OCTOBER 2024

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: SUE WARD, CEMETERY & ALLOTMENTS OFFICER

SUBJECT: EXHUMATION DOCUMENT AND COSTINGS

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Town Council was recently requested to allow an exhumation of ashes from the Lower Garden of Rest at the Cemetery. A review of the procedures we followed resulted in the current policy document being drawn up to aid future actions in this situation by the Town Council, together with an internal view of documentation recorded on both our IT Cemetery system, Rialtas, and Burial / Disinterment Registers.
- 1.2 There has been a marked increase in requests for exhumations across the UK, particularly in unconsecrated cemeteries, as people move and want to take loved ones with them. Fees for exhumations have previously been agreed with Council but didn't taken into account the work involved in processing the exhumation request and attendance at the event.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members are asked to
 - a) Consider the tasks involved in such a request and review our prices charged to the lessee of the grave space for the exhumation administration and attendance;
 - b) Review the Exhumation Policy and recommend its adoption to Full Council;
 - c) review and approve the Exhumation Procedure Note.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Town Council's records show only 7 exhumations have taken place since 2000, all in the Lower Garden of Rest, the last being in August 2022. With no policy on record, we had to investigate current process and procedures, as well as establish who needed to be involved on the day, any health and safety requirements, whilst trying to be sensitive to the family's wishes and liaise with their Funeral Director.
- 3.2 The attached draft Procedural Note lists the actions needed for both the family and the Town Council, culminating in a minimum of three members of staff to be present at the event. This is necessary to ensure that all gates are locked and the Cemetery Officer is able to oversee the onsite operation, to ensure the correct plot is identified and that H&S is maintained during the event.
- 3.3 As the Landowner we are responsible for ensuring due respect is shown to the deceased person and to adjoining grave, the ICCM recommend commencing at 6.am, with appropriate screening of the grave for maximum privacy. Our Duty of Care includes ensuring the area is properly disinfected and that all human remains and original coffin or casket have been placed in the new coffin or casket, properly sealed and identified.

- 3.4 Health and Safety measures adopted for the event included: wearing of nitrile gloves, FFP3 respirators, Tyvek suits and steel capped boots. These apply to both a coffin and ashes being exhumed but are less arduous for ashes, as these are low risk for infection or memorial damage. All PPE apart from boots is now on site at Council Offices.
- 3.5 The disinfection of the soil was carried out by the grave digger using product fit for purpose.
- 3.6 The procedural note is to inform Council on specific actions that were required during the recent exhumation, the specific policy could be added to the Cemetery Handbook for future reference.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 In the latest exhumation our fee charged was £100, which is the same as current fees for transferring a grave plot, or an additional inscription on a memorial.
- 4.2 This didn't cover the cost of the work by staff, estimated time involved with this case was approx. 9-10 hours of preparation as well as the time on the actual day of 3 staff being present.
- 4.3 For future exhumations we estimate 3-4 hours of preparation, and 3 staff for approx. 2 hours (time to be given back rather than overtime claimed). Comparison with other cemetery owners is difficult as most offering this on their website will also dig the grave plot so can range from £350 to £ thousands depending on location.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A.
Risk Management	Establishing policy in line with current legislation and identifying risks to the Town Council will form part of the Town Council's Risk Management Strategy and Risk Register.
Legals	Statutory Cemetery Laws are various.
Resources/Stakeholders	Officer resources.
Contracts/Financial	Fee received applicants
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	Biodiversity impact on use of disinfection measures
Privacy Impact	N/A



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL EXHUMATION POLICY

1. Purpose

- 1.1 Exhumation relates to the removal of remains from a grave.
- 1.2 Exhumations are generally rare and can be traumatic for the bereaved family involved. Exhumations occur for several reasons, including:
- removal from the original grave site to a new grave acquired in the same or other cemetery;
 - transfer from a public grave to a family grave;
 - a Coroners instruction that requires further forensic examination of the deceased;
 - removal for cremation;
 - removal for burial in another cemetery.

The current law relating to the removal of individual buried human remains is contained within **Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857** which states that: -

“Except in the cases where a body is removed from one consecrated place of burial to another by faculty granted by the ordinary for that purpose, it shall not be lawful to remove any body, or the remains of any body, which may have been interred in any place of burial, without licence under the hand of one of Her Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, and with such precautions as such Secretary of State may prescribe as the condition of such licence.”

- 1.3 Therefore, any person wishing to exhume buried remain has to apply to the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) for a licence to permit it.
- 1.4 The MoJ will normally grant exhumation licences to the next of kin, subject to any other necessary consent, where the application is made for private family reasons.

2. The application form

- 2.1 The Exhumation Application Form can be found online on the Government Website at [Apply to exhume human remains - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/apply-to-exhume-human-remains)
- 2.2 This requires details of the applicant, the deceased and place of burial. The applicant should complete Part A and then send the form to Stotfold Town Council as the relevant Burial Authority who own Stotfold Cemetery, for completion of Part B.
- 2.3 Part C only needs to be completed if the death occurred between 1914 and 1947. In this case, the form will need to be sent to the Commonwealth War Grave Commission for their observations.
- 2.4 Stotfold Town Council's cemetery is non-consecrated ground and subsequently, additional consent will not be required from the Church of England.

3. Consents required

- 3.1 The application must be made with the consent of the Owner of the exclusive rights of burial relating to the grave and it is the applicant's responsibility to obtain this. Should unrelated remains be buried (if the grave is a public or common one) then the permission of any surviving relatives is also required.
- 3.2 The consent of all next of kin of the deceased are required. The priority given in accordance with that set out in the Administration of Estates Act 1925 or the Civil Partnerships Act 2004 (which provides civil partners will equal rights to spouses). This means that if the spouse or civil partner is alive, then this person is the next of kin. Thereafter it is defined that the deceased's mother and father, and thirdly, joint status would be given to the deceased's brothers and children, if any. sisters, grandparents and grandchildren.
- 3.3 Licences are unlikely to be issued without all of the required consents.
- 3.4 Applications will also be considered from any person, but it will be important to explain why the application is not being made by a relative.

4. Granting of Lawful permission

- 4.1 On receipt of lawful permission to exhume the body of a deceased person the Burial Authority will notify the Environmental Health Officer so that he/she can be present at the exhumation site. If the exhumation involves ashes only then the Environmental Health Officer is not required, the Cemetery Officer will be present at exhumation to ensure that respect for the deceased person is maintained and that public health, and health and safety regulations, are observed and protected.
- 4.2 The Officer will also ensure that:
- the correct grave is re-opened;
 - the exhumation commences as early as possible in the morning to ensure maximum privacy;
 - the grave is screened as appropriate for privacy;
 - health and safety of all workers is maintained, for example the use of protective clothing including masks and gloves, task lights and all other necessary equipment;
 - everyone present shows due respect to the deceased person and to adjoining grave sites;
 - the new coffin or casket has been approved;
 - all human remains and all the pieces of the original coffin or casket are placed in the new coffin or casket;
 - the new coffin or casket is properly sealed and identified;
 - the area of the exhumation is properly disinfected;
 - satisfactory arrangements are in place for the onward transmission of the remains.
 - If the conditions of the licence or faculty cannot be met, or there are public health or decency concerns, the exhumation will not be proceeded with.

5. Contact

Enquiries about licences should be made direct to the Ministry of Justice, information can be found online at <https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-an-exhumation-licence>

Revision History

Date Adopted	[October 2024]
Date Reviewed	



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

EXHUMATION PROCEDURE NOTE

1. Applicant to complete Ministry of Justice (MoJ) Form Part A and provide to STC.
2. STC will need to discuss with the grave owner their intentions with the grave plot following exhumation. If this is to be forfeited (given back), then see note further on regarding transferring ownership.
3. STC to check information against our systems (Rialtas and paper) and complete Part B and submit to the MoJ. This can be emailed to the address on the form.
4. MoJ can take up to 20 days to provide licence. This will have conditions that need to be met. Licence is typically valid for 12 months, but the expiry date will be provided on the licence. Retain copy Licence to access for filing.
5. Environmental Services Officer will need to be engaged if the exhumation is of a body as opposed to ashes. (Exact steps to do this are not known)
6. Exhumation will need to take place early in the morning and the cemetery closed for the exhumation. Would suggest 6am start.
7. Resident will need to engage a Funeral Director to carry out the Exhumation.
8. Funeral Director to provide a risk assessment and method statement to us for approval.
9. Funeral Director or Resident to pay STC fee for exhumation.
10. Establish if family are to be present. If so, consider limiting time of arrival or access to cemetery. Important to manage family expectations.
11. Grave to be identified and considered in line with the method statement to see if can be complied with. For example, the erection of the privacy screen without impacting surrounding plots.
12. Consider the Memorial in place, Funeral Directors will remove this but if this is a substantial memorial, then time will need to be given and arrangement made for its removal.
13. Chapel Lessee (if applicable) to be contacted to request access to the chapel, if required. If this is required arrange for Chapel to be cleaned prior to the exhumation.
14. Signs to be put up leading up to the exhumation to state the cemetery will be closed on X date. No further information to be provided and signs to be taken down immediately following the exhumation.
15. Arrange for appropriate PPE to be provided to staff present at the exhumation including, correct footwear, masks, gloves and coveralls.
16. Arrange for a minimum of three members of staff to be present for the exhumation:

17. 1 to be at the graveside with the funeral director and grave digger to ensure exhumation is carried out correctly with an interest in protecting the deceased and other plots
18. 1 to be stationed at the vehicular gates to prevent access.
19. 1 to be stationed at the pedestrian gate to prevent access.
20. One of the staff members present to bring paperwork for the exhumation. Included RAMS, map of the plot with it clearly detailed (would suggest obtaining names of deceased in plots surrounding the exhumation to confirm correct plot) and copy licence at a minimum.
21. Perhaps an additional member of staff to deal with family if they are present if considered necessary.
22. Following exhumation this is to be logged on:
23. Rialtas – See “Disinterment Instructions”
24. The electronic exhumation log;
25. The exhumation book;
26. The register of graves, index etc that contains details of the interment.
27. Note on the plot that this is a used grave. In the event the grave is purchased by someone else, they must be informed the grave has previously been used.
28. Transfer of Plot following Exhumation.
29. STC will need to buy this back at the purchase price less any admin fee. If this leads to the owner owing money to us, then do not charge and do not purchase the plot for any consideration. This will be done by way of a Deed of Assignment in the usual way.
30. The plot can then be re-sold but they must be notified that the plot was used previously.

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM MEETING

DATE: 16th OCTOBER 2024

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: SUE WARD, CEMETERY AND ALLOTMENTS OFFICER

SUBJECT: ALLOTMENT TASK AND FINISH PROJECT

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 After several review meetings all the tenants' rules and regulations have been amalgamated into a Handbook specific for each site and published on the website.
- 1.2 A thorough review of allotment legislation was taken into consideration when putting this together. The attached document shows the main items that were changed.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 The Task and Finish group agreed on all the changes during the review and this Committee are requested to adopt the documents as attached.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 It had been noted that new allotment legislation was passed in 2022, and in order to ensure our rules and regulations were fit for purpose, the Council agreed to convene a Task and Finish Group. Representation was sought from both sites and Mr Bernard Breslin joined on behalf of Norton Road.
- 3.2 Various documents were considered, a review of local allotment groups and councils documentation undertaken and the two Handbooks for the sites developed. These put all our rules together in one place and give guidance on what is permissible at each site and what our expectation of a tenant is. After each meeting the documents were revised and finally the current format was agreed on.
- 3.3 Risk assessments of each site are operational, and it was agreed with the Town Clerk that they don't form part of this project however they are being established and will be added to our risk register that is signed off by all councillors in due course.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 Refundable deposit information was added to all relevant documents and is kept ringfenced by the Finance Officer to cover any work needed to remedy poor allotment management when the tenant leaves.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A.
Risk Management	Updating documents in line with current legislation and identifying risks to the Town Council will form part of the Town Council's Risk Management Strategy and Risk Register.
Legals Statutory Resources/Stakeholders	Allotment Laws are various Officer/Allotment Holders

Contracts/Financial	Rent received from tenants and service charge from managing CR allotments
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	Biodiversity impact in some of the practices that are currently being used on the allotments
Privacy Impact	N/A

Document to review
Allotment Rules & Regulations – adopted February 2021
Allotment Bonfire Regulations – adopted February 2019
Allotments Policy – Cultivation & Inspection – last reviewed February 2021
Water Usage Regulations – last reviewed December 2020
Allotment Application forms and requirements
Common Road Allotment Tenancy Agreement – last reviewed March 2021
Norton Road Allotment Tenancy Agreement – last reviewed March 2021
Risk Assessments – Various
Allotment Terms and Conditions
Allotment FAQ

2024 - All

Document 2024
Put into Handbook, for each site
Put into Handbook, for each site
Amalgamated in Handbook, for each site
Documents on file from Anglian Water inspection
Allotment Application form
Common Road tenancy Agreement 2024
Norton Road tenancy Agreement 2024
No formal documentation written
Included in Handbook for each site
Included in Handbook for each site

lotment Task & Finish Group

Comments
Biodiversity clause added, glass not allowed, if tenant is hospitalised or ill, or has issue of long term non-capability then the Town Council must be advised, email address added to section regarding giving notice. Parking for Norton Road to include keeping farm access clear at Norton Road,
Common Road don't allow bonfires. Norton Road handbook contains regulations.
Allotment tenants to let TC know they are unwell for dispensation again cultivation targets
Hose restrictions added to Handbook
Date added for clarity, age added, Priority discussed - Stotfold residents before Fairfield, non plot holders before plot holders. Common Road, where ecclesiastical boundaries are used includes Fairfield residents for priority purposes
remove occupation from witness signature, add bonfires not allowed, added paragraph regarding address location changing
remove occupation from witness signature, added paragraph regarding address location changing
operational concern to be covered after Sept training PR Manager issuing a Generic one to be used during inspections
Tenants to make an application for a fruit cage or polytunnel
No change

Actions outside of document review

Emergency Services to have copy of gate code and What3Words location, motion to ask CBC to add sign for allotments on Norton Road and notify postcode for the site.

Proof of address needed on signing Tenancy agreement

To be sent out to all tenants who for signature to sign new terms

To be sent out to all tenants who for signature to sign new terms

Risk assement review Sept 2024

All tenants to be asked to confirm current structures on site to maintain an accurate record

STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

COMMITTEE: PUBLIC REALM MEETING

DATE: 16th OCTOBER 2024

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: SUE WARD, CEMETERY & ALLOTMENTS OFFICER

SUBJECT: ALLOWING BEES ON NORTON ROAD ALLOTMENTS

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 A new tenant has requested being given permission to keep bees at Norton Road Allotments which is currently not allowed in the allotment rules. A Beekeeping policy has been drawn up and is presented alongside this report to inform Council.
- 1.2 Beekeeping contributes substantially to biodiversity, and we have had a number of tenants expressing an interest.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to:

- a) Consider this request
- b) If in agreement to grant permission, then consider the proposed policy for the management of bees and recommend its adoption to Full Council
- c) Delegate future requests for the keeping of bees to the Public Realm Manager in consultation with the Town Clerk

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The bee population in the UK is experiencing a dramatic decline, they are important pollinators and there is widespread interest in the UK to urge gardeners to plant more wildflowers and insect friendly plants to help encourage bees. Many councils already have implemented a process whereby they encourage applications and have established guidance on what is expected.
- 3.2 Initially members need to agree on what constitutes a suitable site for the position of a hive, any person wishing to keep bees should satisfy the council they have the appropriate qualifications from the British Beekeepers' Association or have close guidance from an experienced beekeeper and hold the relevant insurance documents. Training locally is available at [Bedfordshire Beekeepers Association - Bedfordshire Beekeepers Association \(bedsbka.org.uk\)](https://bedsbka.org.uk).
- 3.3 The beekeeper owes a duty of care to the public in the vicinity of a hive, other allotment gardeners working nearby and also any intruders, so a site near the turning circle, away from paths and most of the other plots or any public footpath may be a possibility, as would an area at the end of a plot near the boundary, again away from workers or the public.
- 3.4 There is adequate hedges to encourage the bees to fly high over neighbouring plot and we would recommend the tenant also allows for fine mesh fencing and the entrance to the hives to be angled to face away from tenants.

- 3.5 A consultation process is also recommended, to ensure tenants can voice any concerns, any objection based on allergy or medical grounds should result in refusal of the application.
- 3.6 An appropriate risk assessment should be carried out by the relevant officer. Sample policies are available.

4. FINANCIAL

- 4.1 All costs for installation of beehives to be born by beekeeper, who is also responsible for providing public liability insurance of £5-10M in case of any claims.

5. IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Plan	N/A.
Risk Management	Updated documents in line with current legislation and identifying risks to the Town Council which will form part of the Town Council's Risk Management Strategy and Risk Register.
Legals	H&S legislation, Bee Diseases and Pest Control Order, The Bees Act 1980
Resources/Stakeholders	Officer resources.
Contracts/Financial	N/A
Crime & Disorder	N/A
Equalities	N/A
Biodiversity	Impacting the Council's commitment to Biodiversity as Bees play a crucial role in pollination
Privacy Impact	N/A



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

BEE KEEPING POLICY

1. Conditions

- 1.1 Any person keeping bees on Norton Road allotment land must be an allotment tenant and bound by the Allotment Tenancy Agreement, and the special rules for beekeeping.
- 1.2 The Council reserves the right to review these conditions as required.
- 1.3 The Council will give notice to the beekeeper before any changes to these conditions are made.
- 1.3 The Tenancy Agreement for Norton Road and the Norton Road Handbook containing rules and regulations can be found online at [Allotments - Stotfold Town Council](#).
- 1.4 Permission must be obtained from Stotfold Town Council to keep bees on an allotment, and this can only be done at Norton Road, permission is based on a specific location of a hive or hives being agreed and the special rules below being followed.

2. Beekeeper

- 2.1 The beekeeper must have current registration and membership of a beekeeper's association affiliated to the British Beekeeper's Association (BBKA).
- 2.2 The beekeeper must have a BBKS Basic assessment certificate or must be mentored by a beekeeper who holds this certificate and be working towards their own assessment. The certificate or letter of support must be presented to the Council before permission can be given.
- 2.3 If being mentored at time of application, the beekeeper must pass the assessment within 24 months of application.
- 2.4 The beekeeper must provide the Council with details (name, telephone number and mobile telephone number) of standby arrangements to deal with emergencies such as swarming during any absence or unavailability of the beekeeper.
- 2.5 The back-up beekeeper must have passed certification as above.
- 2.6 A notice giving contact details of the beekeeper and a backup 24H contact in case of absence should be clearly displayed on the hive for use by Council officers, emergency service, RSPCA, or others, this should state.
 - Name of plot holder (beekeeper)
 - Phone number
 - Back up keeper
 - Phone number
- 2.7 The beekeeper is required to hold a current insurance policy providing specifically for beekeeping risks and Public Liability insurance of £5,000,000, which should be provided to the Council.

3. Management of Bees and Hives

- 3.1 Hives must be a suitable distance from any public road or path, or a jointly used path/road within the allotment site.
- 3.2 A notice should be put in place to discourage members of the public from approaching the hives.
- 3.3 The plot must have simple screening, such as is used for windbreaks, of fine mesh netting, dust screening, willow, hazel or maintained hedges of a minimum of 2M height to encourage the bees to fly high over neighbouring plots and to protect the hive from wind.
- 3.4 No more than 1 permanent hive and 1 temporary hive may be located on one designated plot. Temporary increase to control swarming is permitted but the number should be reduced by the end of summer at the latest.
- 3.5 The beekeeper should ensure only gentle strains of bees are kept and if they become aggressive or exhibit excessive 'following' tendency, then they should arrange to re-queen the colony or remove the colony until undesirable traits have been resolved.
- 3.6 Management and manipulations must be timed to minimise disturbance to other plot holders, and the beekeeper should liaise with neighbouring tenants about planned actions.
- 3.7 The hives should be registered with Beebase and open to inspection by the Regional Bee Inspector.

4. Consultation

The Council will carry out consultation with other plot holders on site before giving permission.

5. Risk Assessment

- 5.1 This will include and is not limited to:
 - Bee swarm in public;
 - Bee sting first aid advice;
 - Accidental or intentional intrusion by animals or humans;
 - Arrangements in times of temporary absence by plot holder.
- 5.2 The beekeeper must sign this and alert the Council and Committee if anything further should be added (medical conditions, allergies etc).

6. Duty of Care

- 6.1 The beekeeper owes a duty of care to:
 - The public in the vicinity of the hives;
 - Other allotment tenants working nearby;
 - Intruders (even if their intention is clear to disturb the colony).
- 6.2 A sign must be displayed on the apiary area stating that honey bees are kept there.

7. Inspections

7.1 The Council will investigate any complaints, in particular, those with health and nuisance elements, and the site will be inspected annually as part of the annual plot inspection. If necessary, permission to keep bees can be withdrawn by the issue of 40 days' notice to remove the bees.

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Date Reviewed	

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