



Thursday 12 January 2023

To Councillors – Cllr Guy Rawlinson (Chair), Cllr Chris Davies, Cllr Bob Griffin, Cllr Paul Le Riche, Cllr James Murray, Cllr Clive Parkinson, Cllr Pam Shipp, Cllr Jayne Stansfield, Cllr Angela Symonds

Please take notice that a meeting of the **Open Spaces Committee** of Thornbury Town Council will be held in the **Council Chamber of the Town Hall** on **Tuesday 17 January 2023 at 7.30pm**.

All above named Councillors are hereby **summoned** to attend the above meeting for the purpose of considering and resolving upon the business to be transacted at the meeting as set out hereunder.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'W Sydenham'.

Wendy Sydenham, Deputy Town Clerk

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities (race, gender, sexual orientation, marital status and any disability), Crime & Disorder, Health & Safety, Human Rights and the need to conserve biodiversity.

Public participation: Please note that this meeting is open to the public. Please take note of the guidance notes for public participation [provided](#).

AGENDA

1. To consider any apologies for absence
2. To receive any members declarations of interest
3. To receive any representations from the public
4. To approve the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 15.11.22 and to receive an update on any operational issues or matters arising from the report not considered elsewhere on the agenda (paper attached)
5. To receive a general report on St Marys Closed Churchyard
6. To receive a general report from the Tree Warden and a presentation on the tree database
7. To receive an update on proposals around the tennis courts at the Mundy Playing Fields
8. To consider a request to use the public tennis courts as part of the Avon Tennis Spring Tournament, and if agreed, delegate authorisation to agree appropriate fee (paper attached)
9. To discuss concerns raised by Councillor Symonds regarding the use of footpaths by horse riders (paper attached)

- 10. To receive ecological survey reports on Town Council's green spaces and consider the next steps (papers attached)**
- 11. To consider correspondence previously received regarding additional seating on the Mundy Playing Fields (deferred from previous meeting while awaiting environmental report on Mundy Playing Fields) (paper attached)**
- 12. To consider a request to install a new litter bin by a new bus stop on the junction of Primrose Drive and Morton Way (paper attached)**
- 13. To receive an update on actions from the most recent RoSPA reports on Town Council's play areas (paper attached)**
- 14. To receive an update on development of the Eastland Avenue Play Area and agree a date for a consultation event in March/April**
- 15. To note date of next meeting – Tuesday 21 March 2023**

Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Spaces Committee
held on 15 November 2022 at 7.30pm
in the Council Chamber, Town Hall

Councillors present: Cllr Guy Rawlinson (Chair)
Cllr Chris Davies
Cllr Bob Griffin
Cllr Clive Parkinson
Cllr Angela Symonds

Officers present: Wendy Sydenham (Deputy Clerk)

Non-Councillors present: Mike Elcock (St Mary's Churchyard)

Absent: Cllr Helen Harrison
Cllr Paul Le Riche
Cllr Pam Shipp
Cllr James Murray
Cllr Jayne Stansfield

OS2223.42 TO CONSIDER ANY APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Murray, Harrison and Stansfield.

OS2223.43 TO RECEIVE ANY MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Parkinson declared an interest in items 18 and 19, as a resident of a property adjacent to the green space being discussed.

OS2223.44 TO RECEIVE ANY REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no members of the public present.

OS2223.45 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 27.09.22 AND TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON ANY OPERATIONAL ISSUES OR MATTERS ARISING FROM THE REPORT NOT CONSIDERED ELSEWHERE ON THE AGENDA

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes.

OS2223.46 TO CONSIDER ISSUES RELATED TO ST MARYS CLOSED CHURCHYARD

- **To receive a general report on St. Marys Closed Churchyard**
- **To consider turning off the floodlights due to energy concerns**

Mike Elcock updated the Committee on matters relating to the churchyard. It was **RESOLVED** to change the bulbs in the floodlights to LED bulbs, to alter the timings so that the lights came on at dusk and went off at 11pm, and to review the situation again should

blackouts become more of a possibility. It was further **RESOLVED** that this plan was subject to the agreement of the Church and should they not be happy with it, the matter should be referred to Full Council for consideration.

OS2223.47 TO CONSIDER ISSUES RELATING TO TREE PLANTING

- **To receive a report from the Tree Warden**

The Tree Warden updated the Committee on matters relating to Tree planting in Thornbury.

- **To consider a draft Memorial Tree and Memorial Bench Policy**

It was **RESOLVED** to agree the draft policy, with one amendment to the costs, and to recommend to the Finance & General Purpose Committee that the policy should be adopted.

- **To consider issues relating to Ash Dieback in trees on Town Council land**

The Committee noted the communication from South Glos Council with regard to Ash Dieback in trees on Town Council land.

- **To note additional spend on tree works**

The Committee noted the recent additional spend on tree works following storm damage.

OS2223.48 TO NOTE OFFICER DECISIONS MADE UNDER DELEGATED POWERS

The Committee noted the decisions.

OS2223.49 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE 2023 HANGING BASKET SCHEME

It was **RESOLVED** to place an order for 25 of the self watering baskets to be filled, with the aim of them being hung on “columns” in the centre of town (it was noted that this hanging option was not certain at this point which is why the Committee were only ordering 25 of the baskets to be filled, rather than all 50 of them). It was **RESOLVED** that the option of installing brackets/baskets on individual properties was not feasible due to the costs involved.

OS2223.50 TO CONSIDER CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FROM THORNBURY IN BLOOM

The Committee noted the correspondence and asked for its thanks to be passed onto Thornbury In Bloom along with a request for an update following its AGM later this month.

OS2223.51 TO CONSIDER ISSUES RELATING TO SEATING ON TOWN COUNCIL LAND

- **To consider responses received from the consultation on a new seat on Oakleaze Green**

In light of responses received during the consultation, it was **RESOLVED** that a seat would not be installed on Oakleaze Green at this time.

- To consider correspondence received regarding additional seating on the Mundy Playing Fields

It was **RESOLVED** to carry forward this request to the next Committee meeting at which time the environmental reports on all green spaces would be available and this request could be considered in light of the recommendations for the Mundy Playing Fields.

OS2223.52 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE MANAGEMENT OF THE MEDIEVAL FISHPONDS AND CONSIDER A RESPONSE

The Committee noted the situation and agreed that Full Council should consider the issue of withdrawing from its role on the CIC in light of new circumstances.

W

OS2223.53 TO RECEIVE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS ON TOWN COUNCIL'S GREEN SPACES AND CONSIDER THE NEXT STEPS

As the reports were not available, this agenda item was deferred to the next Committee meeting.

OS2223.54 TO NOTE CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED REGARDING BIODIVERSITY ON TOWN COUNCIL LAND

The Committee noted the correspondence and agreed with the Clerk's response.

OS2223.55 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM THE MOST RECENT ROSPA REPORTS ON TOWN COUNCIL'S PLAY AREAS

The Committee noted the progress against actions.

OS2223.56 TO CONSIDER AGAIN A REQUEST FROM THORNBURY TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB TO INSTALL A STORAGE SHED AT THE MUNDY PLAYING FIELDS

It was **RESOLVED** that the request could not be allowed as there was still no decision made regarding the relocation of the workshop.

OS2223.57 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON PROGRESS WITH THE EASTLAND AVENUE PLAY AREA

The Committee noted that the funding source for the play area would be discussed at the next Finance and General Purpose Committee meeting.

OS2223.58 TO CONSIDER AN OFFER FROM THE COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVES COMMISSION TO INSTALL SIGNAGE AT THORNBURY CEMETERY

It was **RESOLVED** to agree to the installation of signage at Thornbury Cemetery.

OS2223.59 TO CONSIDER A REQUEST TO HOLD AN EVENT ON CHANTRY PLAYING FIELD

It was **RESOLVED** that the Chantry Playing Field was not suitable for this event, but that alternatives would be suggested.

OS2223.60 TO CONSIDER A REQUEST TO HOLD EVENTS ON TOWN COUNCIL LAND

It was **RESOLVED** that the Deputy Clerk's initial response should be confirmed.

OS2223.61 TO IDENTIFY ADDITIONAL ITEMS RELATED TO OPEN SPACES TO BE CONSIDERED FOR THE 2023/2024 BUDGET

It was **RESOLVED** that there were no further items that the Committee would like considered for the budget, other than those that had already been highlighted.

OS2223.62 TO RESOLVE UNDER THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 THAT THE PUBLIC AND PRESS BE EXCLUDED FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF BUSINESS AS PUBLICITY WOULD BE PREJUDICIAL TO THE PUBLIC INTEREST BECAUSE OF THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

It was **RESOLVED** to pass the exclusion.

OS2223.63 TO CONSIDER QUOTES FOR THE INSTALLATION OF FURTHER BOLLARDS ON OAKLEAZE GREEN

It was **RESOLVED** to proceed with the purchase and installation of 25 further bollards on Oakleaze Green as per the quote.

OS2223.64 TO CONSIDER REVISED QUOTES FOR WORKS TO GATES AT THORNBURY CEMETERY

It was **RESOLVED** to agree to the increase in the price of the works due to change in the position of one of the gates and a slight increase in the overall quote due to the delay in proceeding.

OS2223.65 TO NOTE THE DATE OF NEXT MEETING: TO BE CONFIRMED

The Schedule of meeting dates for 2023 would be issued as soon as possible.

OS2223.66 Additional correspondence – an additional item related to the Tennis Courts was tabled and noted by the Committee.

Email – Request to use public tennis courts as part of Avon Tennis Spring Tournament

From: Carol Weeks

Sent: 31 December 2022 15:58

To: Kath MacConnachie <Clerk@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk>

Subject: [External] Thornbury Town Council tennis court hire

I am Competition Organiser for Avon Tennis. The Avon Tennis Spring Tournament is a prestigious Grade 3 junior tennis tournament which has been held for many years at Lansdown Tennis Club. It attracts entries from other Counties in the south of England and is very well subscribed.

In the Spring of 2023 Lansdown are replacing their floodlights and this gives us the opportunity to relocate this tournament to the western part of the Avon Tennis region. I have written to Thornbury Tennis Club to ask whether they would consider staging this tournament. It is a 6-day event and runs from Monday 10th April [Easter Monday] to Saturday 15th April. Courts are required from 9am – 6/7pm daily. We would require 8 courts in total and hence my enquiry to ask if you would allow the use of the 2 Council courts next door. A fee for court hire will be discussed with you.

I am having a meeting with the Chair and several of the committee at Thornbury Tennis Club on Thursday 12th January as it is essential that we secure a venue for this event asap. I am sure you will have some questions and would be very happy to talk this through with you. It would be a great opportunity to highlight Thornbury on the tennis calendar and I hope very much that you will agree to join forces to stage this event.

With best wishes
Carol Weeks
Avon Tennis
07803 003621

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**From:** Wendy Sydenham <[w.sydenham@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:w.sydenham@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 09 January 2023 13:18

**To:** Carol Weeks

**Cc:** Claire Hawkins

**Subject:** RE: Thornbury Town Council tennis court hire

Hi Carol,

Thanks for your email regarding this tournament. The first step will be for me to take this to the Open Spaces Committee for them to consider. Luckily, there is a meeting of the Committee quite soon – Tuesday 17 January 2023. Leave this with me for now and I will be back in touch following that meeting.

With kind regards.

Wendy

**Wendy Sydenham**

**Deputy Clerk – Thornbury Town Council**

**Tel: 01454 412103**

## Emails – Horse Riders Using Footpaths

**From:** Wendy Sydenham [<mailto:w.sydenham@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk>]  
**Sent:** 09 January 2023 16:07  
**To:** Lindsay Saunders <[Lindsay.Saunders@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:Lindsay.Saunders@southglos.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Guy Rawlinson <[G.Rawlinson@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:G.Rawlinson@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Horses Using Footpaths

Hi Lindsay,

I wonder whether I could ask for some information from you? We have received complaints from one of our own Councillors about horses using footpaths in Thornbury. The particular footpath in this instance is part of the Streamside Walk. Could I ask the following:-

- We are assuming horses should not use public footpaths under any circumstances – is that correct?
- Is there anything that can be done about the issue?

This is going to be discussed at a future Committee meeting and it would be useful to have this information in advance of the meeting, if possible.

With thanks and kind regards.

Wendy

**From:** Lindsay Saunders <[Lindsay.Saunders@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:Lindsay.Saunders@southglos.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 09 January 2023 16:30  
**To:** Wendy Sydenham <[w.sydenham@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:w.sydenham@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: [External] Horses Using Footpaths

Hi Wendy

There is no real reason why horses cannot use footpaths – it is trespass against the landowner in the same way that cycle use is. Whether they can be stopped on safety grounds because people are being mown down I don't know but then I guess you would have to stop cyclists too? What is the actual problem? Just someone doesn't like it?

Kind regards

Lindsay

**From:** Wendy Sydenham [<mailto:w.sydenham@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk>]  
**Sent:** 09 January 2023 16:58  
**To:** Lindsay Saunders <[Lindsay.Saunders@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:Lindsay.Saunders@southglos.gov.uk)>  
**Cc:** Guy Rawlinson <[G.Rawlinson@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:G.Rawlinson@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** RE: [External] Horses Using Footpaths

Thanks Lindsay. Can I double check that I am understanding you correctly – if it is trespass then doesn't that mean that they shouldn't use it (you say below there is no reason they cannot use them)?



The problem is that the horses are fouling the footpaths which are then used by lots of children who walk in the mess and elderly people using mobility scooters cannot avoid it as the path is not very wide. Compared to dog mess, horse mess is a just larger! One of our members of staff is a horse rider and has said it is her understanding that footpaths shouldn't be used and that actually most horse riders are annoyed by the few that do because it tars them all with the same brush.

The Councillor who has complained has tried several times to politely talk to the horse riders concerned but they have either been rude to her or said that it is too dangerous to ride on roads so they use the footpath instead.

I am assuming that the main problem is that there is no real way of enforcing this?

Thank you.

Wendy

**From:** Lindsay Saunders <[Lindsay.Saunders@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:Lindsay.Saunders@southglos.gov.uk)>

**Sent:** 09 January 2023 17:23

**To:** Wendy Sydenham <[w.sydenham@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:w.sydenham@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: [External] Horses Using Footpaths

Hi Wendy

Trespass is a civil offence so not unlawful. Even on the adopted parts I doubt SGC would take any action unless it was dangerous. Horse mess isn't toxic or dangerous like dog mess and I am not sure why children can't avoid walking through it though I get your point about mobility scooters (though they probably go through worse on their travels!). I find that there is quite a strong feeling amongst horseriders that they should be able to go where cyclists go and that they always seem to be overlooked – and there is no doubt that the roads are getting busier and therefore less safe. The Morton Way/Butt Lane/Gloucester road junction is far busier than it ever was.

Ultimately you are correct that there is no way of enforcing it unless there was a byelaw. Interesting fact though – did you know that when Milton Keynes was built a lot of horse routes were put in through the estates to compensate for the loss of bridleways and link roads..... We are trying to do the same in the newer developments where there is an equestrian presence in the area.

Kind regards

Lindsay

**From:** Wendy Sydenham

**Sent:** 10 January 2023 09:41

**To:** 'Lindsay Saunders' <[Lindsay.Saunders@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:Lindsay.Saunders@southglos.gov.uk)>

**Cc:** Guy Rawlinson <[G.Rawlinson@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:G.Rawlinson@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** RE: [External] Horses Using Footpaths

Hi Lindsay,

Thanks for your comments. This will be really useful in informing the discussion at the meeting.

With kind regards.

Wendy



THORNBURY TOWN COUNCIL

**OFFICER BRIEFING FOR OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE ON 17.01.23**

**Ecological Surveys on Thornbury Town Council Green Spaces – Recommended Way Forward**

Thornbury Town Council, through the Open Spaces Committee, commissioned the production of ecological surveys on all of the green spaces which is its responsible for managing. The aim was to look at how the areas could best be managed to increase biodiversity and address climate change issues as much as possible, whilst also ensuring that the spaces could continue to be used by the public.

The survey reports are now complete and have been circulated with the papers for the Open Spaces Committee meeting on 17 January 2023.

The reports include many recommendations which may feature in the Local Nature Action Plan. In addition to this, the following way forward is recommended:-

1. Officers review and action the recommendations in each report, taking into account any operational factors/constraints. Progress to be reported back to the Open Spaces Committee.
2. Officers develop draft biodiversity policies (such as grassland management, pesticide use, tree planting, etc) taking into account the recommendations of the survey reports.

Wendy Sydenham  
Deputy Clerk  
12.01.23

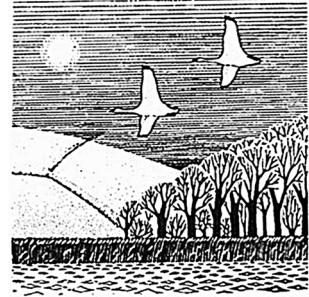
# *Wessex Ecological Consultancy*

*28 Egerton Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8HL*

*Tel: 0117 9441034*

*Email: dawn or rupert@wessexeco.co.uk*

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## **THORNBURY GREEN SPACES**

## **ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT PLANS**

**SUMMER 2022**

**For**

**THORNBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**OAKLEAZE GREEN**

# OAKLEAZE GREEN

## ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT PLAN

### 1 INTRODUCTION

This plan is one of a series commissioned by Thornbury Town Council with the aim of identifying measures by which the biodiversity interest of green spaces in the town might be enhanced, whilst maintaining their value for both formal and informal recreation.

A site survey was carried out on 24th August 2022. It covered vegetation types and plant species, insects and birds. Potential for other groups of plants and animals was assessed.

### 2 SITE DESCRIPTION

#### 2.1 Summary

Oakleaze Green is dominated by close mown grassland with small group of trees providing some variety.

The site is surrounded by housing, but in a wider context it provides a stepping-stone between sites in the northern parts of Thornbury, including Chantry Playing Fields, sites in the southern part of the town, including Streamleaze Park.

#### 2.2 Vegetation

The areas described below are shown on the attached map.

The majority of the site has close mown grassland, which is dominated by perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), with other grass species including creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*) and cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*). The frequency of herbs within the sward is rather low. Frequent species include dandelion (*Taraxacum vulgare* agg), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), autumn hawksbeard (*Scorzoneroideis autumnalis*) and creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*). Those present in smaller quantity include yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*) and creeping cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*).

There are two semi-mature bird cherry (*Prunus padus*) trees in the north-western part of the site, a small clump of trees including immature silver birch (*Betula pendula*), Italian alder (*Alnus cordata*) and walnut (*Juglans regia*) in the south-western part of the site, with small, planted cherries (*Prunus* sp) trees elsewhere.

A hedge, which includes hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), silver birch and rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*). The other site boundaries are fences and lack any vegetation.

## **2.3 Fauna**

The only bird species recorded on the site were jackdaw, robin and wood pigeon.

Hawthorn shield-bug (*Acanthosoma haemorrhoidale*) was found in the bird cherry trees, and alder leaf-beetle (*Agelastica alni*) was present in the tree clump in the south-western part of the site.

## **2.4 Amenity**

The surfaced footpath linking Oakleaze Road and Elmdale Crescent is very well-used.

# **3 EVALUATION**

## **3.1 Introduction**

Various criteria are used in assessing the biodiversity value of sites. These include rarity, in terms of either habitats or species, which can be viewed in a range of contexts from international to local and also degree of threat: some species remain widespread but are of conservation concern because their populations have declined rapidly. Some habitats take many centuries, or require very specialised conditions, to develop their full diversity and those that cannot be recreated are more highly valued than those that can be readily created. The extent and connectivity of habitats is of importance, since many species rely on large areas of habitat or on having access to different habitat types at different stages in their life cycle. This can be particularly important in urban areas, where species can be lost from small and isolated areas of habitat, even if these remain in good condition. Conversely, sites can have value in a wider context if, for example, they allow wildlife to colonise gardens and other sites in the surrounding area or if they allow wildlife to move into and across otherwise inhospitable areas. In accessible urban areas the public appeal or visibility of wildlife is also a factor in contributing to public enjoyment and wellbeing.

Guidance on site evaluation is given in various documents, including the South Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, and has been followed here.

## **3.2 Habitats**

The grassland that dominates the site has been intensively managed and the use of fertilisers in particular has excluded all but the most tolerant species of plant. Frequent mowing means that the grassland is not of significant value for invertebrates, or for other animals.

The grassland across the site is of minimal nature conservation value.

The trees and hedge provide some habitat for birds and insects and are of nature conservation value in a local context.

### **3.3 Protected and Invasive Species**

No signs of any protected species were seen on or around the site and it has very little potential for any such species.

No scheduled invasive species were recorded on the site.

### **3.4 Summary**

| Area            | Scale of Interest | Features of Interest     |
|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Main grassland  | Minimal           |                          |
| Trees and hedge | Local context     | Use by birds and insects |

## **4 MANAGEMENT**

### **4.1 Aims**

To maximise the biodiversity interest of the site whilst maintaining its value for amenity and other interests.

### **4.2 Objectives**

To manage parts of the site as tall grassland.

To provide additional areas of tree planting on the site.

To plant hedges on the boundaries of the site.

### **4.3 Constraints**

The main constraints on management for biodiversity here is the need to maintain the value of the site for amenity, meaning that close mown grassland should be retained along a corridor adjacent to the footpath.

There are practical constraints on some potential measures. Initiatives such as the creation of beds of wildflower planting would be worth consideration if there is support and enthusiasm for such measures but have not been recommended here because they require a commitment to relatively intensive management if they are to be maintained in the long term.

### **4.4 Rationale**

The soils here are too fertile to allow the successful creation of wildflower meadow, but there would be ecological benefit in allowing areas of grass to grow longer. This would provide habitat for insects and therefore for insectivorous animals such as bats and birds.

There are good opportunities to plant further hedges along site boundaries, and also to plant trees in small parts of the site. Fruit trees would be suitable due to their community value, as well as high attractiveness to wildlife.

## 4.5 Management Proposals

- 1 Avoid fertiliser use on any grassland.
- 2 In the areas shown on the attached map, leave the grass unmown until August, then mow and, if possible, remove the arisings.
- 3 In the areas shown on the attached map, cut the grass once a month over the growing season, in order to create a sward of intermediate height.
- 4 Manage the remainder of the grassland using an amenity cut, as at present.
- 5 Plant hedges along the boundaries of the site using the following mix:

|                |                           |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Field maple    | <i>Acer campestre</i>     |
| Dogwood        | <i>Cornus sanguinea</i>   |
| Hazel          | <i>Corylus avellana</i>   |
| Hawthorn       | <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> |
| Spindle        | <i>Euonymus europaea</i>  |
| Wayfaring tree | <i>Viburnum lantana</i>   |

- 6 Plant trees in the areas shown on the attached map. The following is a suggested planting list:

|       |                         |
|-------|-------------------------|
| Apple | <i>Malus domestica</i>  |
| Plum  | <i>Prunus domestica</i> |
| Pear  | <i>Pyrus communis</i>   |
| Rowan | <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> |

- 4 Install bug hotels at the locations shown. Suitable designs are given at the links below:

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/nature-on-your-doorstep/garden-activities/build-a-bug-hotel/>

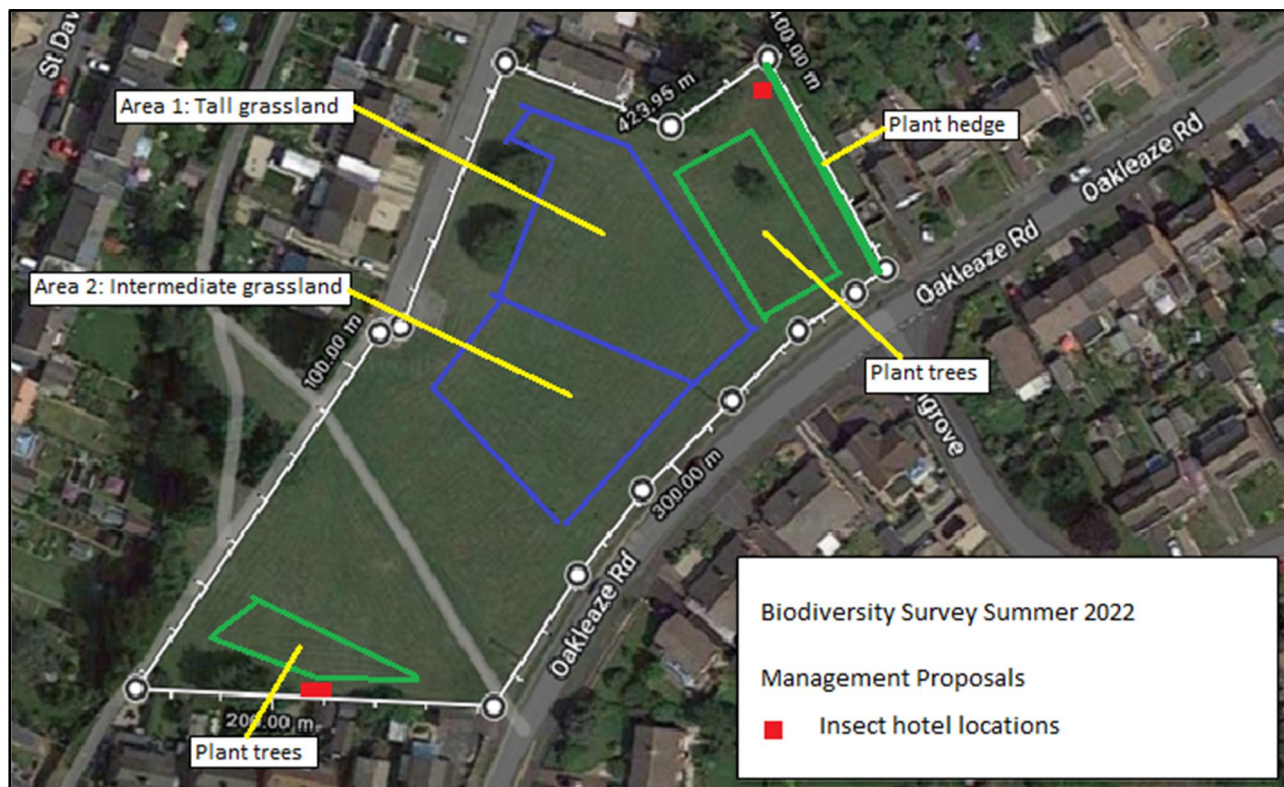
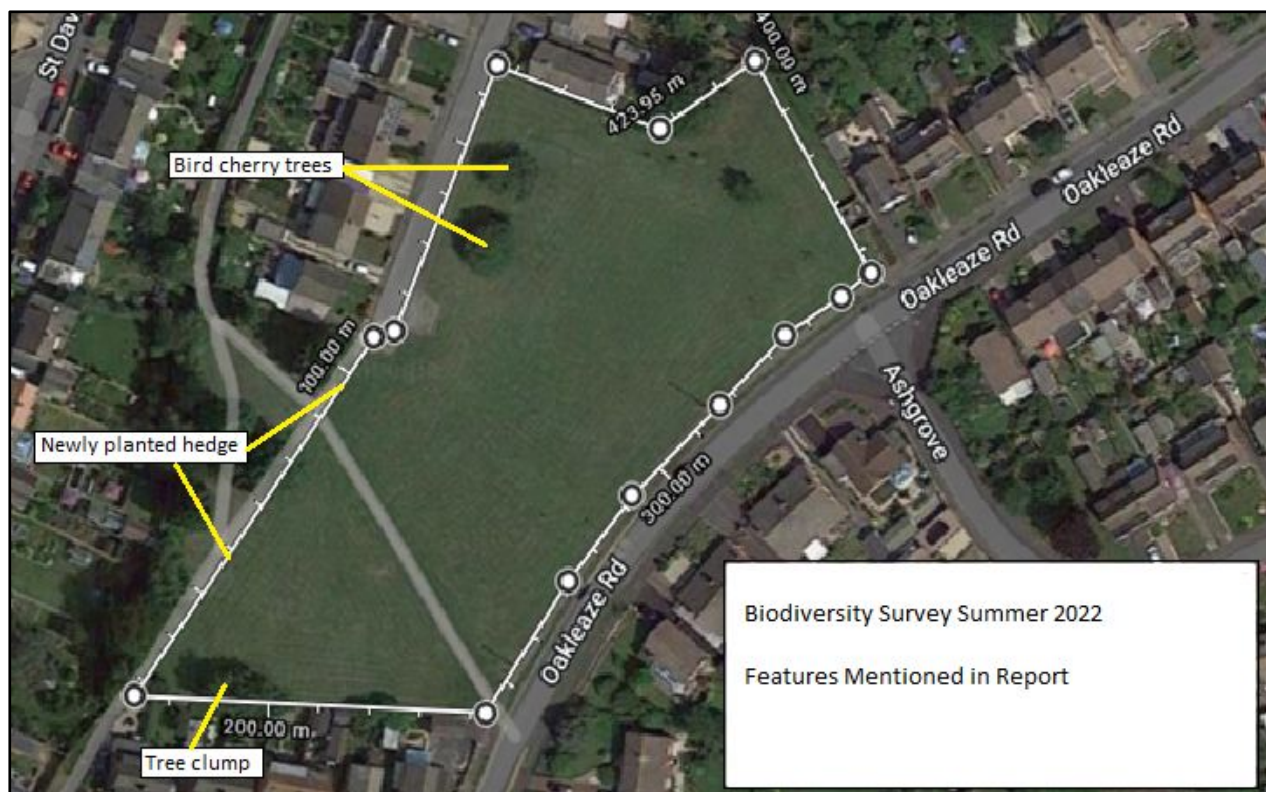
<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/Resources/Project/Make-a-bug-hotel>

Measures such as drilling holes in wooden posts can also provide nest sites for solitary bees – fence posts on the boundaries of the site may provide suitable locations.

#### 4.6 Work Planner

| Task                                                 | Year 1     | Year 2       | Year 3       | Year 4       | Year 5       |
|------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Mow grassland area 1, gather and remove arisings     | August     | August       | August       | August       | August       |
| Mow grassland area 2 once a month                    | April-Sept | April-Sept   | April-Sept   | April-Sept   | April-Sept   |
| Maintain amenity grassland, avoid use of fertilisers | Throughout | Throughout   | Throughout   | Throughout   | Throughout   |
| Plant hedges                                         | Oct-Feb    | Oct-Feb      |              |              |              |
| Plant trees                                          |            | Oct-Feb      |              |              |              |
| Install bug hotels                                   |            | Feb          |              |              |              |
| Maintain bug hotels                                  |            | As necessary | As necessary | As necessary | As necessary |







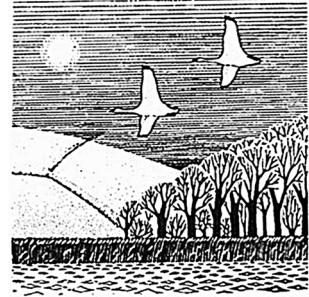
# *Wessex Ecological Consultancy*

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## **THORNBURY GREEN SPACES**

## **ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT PLANS**

**SUMMER 2022**

**For**

**THORNBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD**

# ST MARY'S CHURCHYARD

## ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT PLAN

### 1 INTRODUCTION

This plan is one of a series commissioned by Thornbury Town Council with the aim of identifying measures by which the biodiversity interest of green spaces in the town might be enhanced, whilst maintaining their value for both formal and informal recreation.

A site survey was carried out on 7th September 2022. It covered vegetation types and plant species, insects and birds, and potential for other groups was assessed.

### 2 SITE DESCRIPTION

#### 2.1 Summary

The churchyard consists largely of mown grassland between graves; the composition of the grassland varies between different areas of the churchyard but most areas are at least moderately species-rich. There are also scattered trees, with more continuous lines of woody vegetation on the site boundaries.

The churchyard is close to the north-western edge of Thornbury and provides a link between habitats around the castle and in the open countryside and more urban sites, including the playing fields at Chantry Road and around The Castle School and Oakleaze Green and St Mary's Primary School.

#### 2.2 Vegetation

The areas described below are shown on the attached map.

##### Area 1

The grassland between the graves is dominated red fescue (*Festuca rubra*) with other grass species including creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*) and smooth meadow grass (*Poa pratensis*). Herb species make up a high proportion of the sward, with frequent species including common catsear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), common daisy (*Bellis perennis*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) and mouse-ear hawkweed (*Pilosella officinarum*), as well as the moss *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus*. Less frequent species include hoary plantain (*Plantago media*), black knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), lesser hawkbit (*Leontodon saxatilis*) and rough hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*).

Most of the graves are open but a few are overgrown with scrub, most commonly ivy (*Hedera helix*) and dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*). Most of the headstones and tombs support a good growth of lichens: frequent species include *Caloplaca flavescens*, *Caloplaca saxicola* and *Aspicilia caesiocinerea*; less frequent species include *Opegrapha gyrocarpa* and *Melanelixia fuliginosa*.

Mature and semi-mature trees are scattered through the area. Species include lime (*Tilia x vulgaris*), Montpellier maple (*Acer monspessullanum*) and various whitebeams (*Sorbus spp*). There are heavy growths of mistletoe (*Viscum album*) on some of the whitebeams.

#### Area 2

A small patch of taller grassland by the church door has some additional herb species, including yellow rattle (*Rhinanthus minor*) and ox-eye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*).

#### Area 3

The grass is taller in the western part of the churchyard. False oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*) is frequent here with other grass species including red fescue and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*). Herb species in this area include ribwort plantain, common catsear and germander speedwell, with patches of tall herb vegetation dominated by rosebay willowherb (*Chamaenerion angustifolium*). Scrub is encroaching across parts of the area, the most frequent species being bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg*), buddleia (*Buddleja davidii*) and holly (*Ilex aquifolium*).

A small part of the area, close to the bird feeders, is more diverse with additional species here including wild carrot (*Daucus carota*), black knapweed, ox-eye daisy, bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), hedge bedstraw (*Galium album*) and salad burnet (*Poterium sanguisorba*).

Another small area has been planted with a pollinator mix; plants surviving from this include California poppy (*Eschscholzia californica*) and radish (*Raphanus raphanistrum*), with associated ruderals including spear thistle (*Cirsium vulgare*) and hoary willowherb (*Epilobium parviflorum*).

#### Area 4

The eastern boundary has a line of trees, which include lime (*Tilia x vulgaris*) and laburnum (*Laburnum anagyroides*), over a ground flora dominated by ivy with some stinking iris (*Iris foetidissima*).

### **2.3 Fauna**

Signs of badger and fox activity were seen in the north-eastern corner of the churchyard.

The following bird species were recorded: blue tit, chiffchaff, great tit, long-tailed tit, jackdaw, magpie and wood pigeon.

The insect species recorded were: speckled wood butterfly; common carder bee; and *Coreus marginatus* and *Pinalitus viscicola* bugs.

### **2.4 Amenity**

The southern part of the churchyard forms part of the approach to St Mary's Church, which is in active use. The rest of the churchyard also appears to be well visited; it

offers opportunities for quiet recreation, access to historic gravestones and views over part of the Thornbury Castle.

### **3 EVALUATION**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

Various criteria are used in assessing the biodiversity value of sites. These include rarity, in terms of either habitats or species, which can be viewed in a range of contexts from international to local and also degree of threat: some species remain widespread but are of conservation concern because their populations have declined rapidly. Some habitats take many centuries, or require very specialised conditions, to develop their full diversity and those that cannot be recreated are more highly valued than those that can be readily created. The extent and connectivity of habitats is of importance, since many species rely on large areas of habitat or on having access to different habitat types at different stages in their life cycle. This can be particularly important in urban areas, where species can be lost from small and isolated areas of habitat, even if these remain in good condition. Conversely, sites can have value in a wider context if, for example, they allow wildlife to colonise gardens and other sites in the surrounding area or if they allow wildlife to move into and across otherwise inhospitable areas. In accessible urban areas the public appeal or visibility of wildlife is also a factor in contributing to public enjoyment and wellbeing.

Guidance on site evaluation is given in various publications, including the South Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, and has been followed here.

#### **3.2 Habitats**

The grassland across almost all of the churchyard is moderately diverse. The plants present here include several species that are indicative of unimproved grassland, a habitat type that has undergone serious declines, largely as a result of agricultural intensification and is recognised as a priority for conservation in BAPs and the NERC Act. The indicator species recorded widely across the churchyard include black knapweed, hoary plantain, mouse-ear hawkweed, lesser hawkbit and rough hawkbit; species that are more localised within the churchyard include ox-eye daisy, yellow rattle, bird's-foot trefoil, salad burnet and wild carrot. The diversity of micro-habitats within the site, provided by grassland of different lengths, graves, trees and shrubs, suggests that the grassland is likely to be of some value for invertebrates.

Gravestones within the churchyard support a reasonable quantity and diversity of lichens and a full survey may reveal species of interest.

The bug *Pinalitus viscicola*, which is associated with mistletoe, has not been recorded previously in South Gloucestershire (or elsewhere in the former County of Avon) although this may in part be due to the difficulty of sampling mistletoe plants high in trees.





*Pinalitus viscicola*

The churchyard is of nature conservation value in a South Gloucestershire context.

### 3.3 Protected and Invasive Species

The only protected species recorded was badger: foraging signs were seen near the north-eastern corner of the churchyard.

It is likely that bats use the churchyard, especially the tree line on the eastern boundary, for foraging and commuting.

The churchyard has suitable habitat for reptiles, in particular slow worm.

No scheduled invasive species were recorded on the site.

### 3.4 Summary

| Feature   | Scale of Interest               | Features of Interest                                                    |
|-----------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Grassland | South Gloucestershire context   | Diverse vegetation, including indicator species of unimproved grassland |
| Monuments | Local context, possibly greater | Lichen populations                                                      |
| Trees     | South Gloucestershire context   | Bug species associated with mistletoe                                   |

## 4 MANAGEMENT

### 4.1 Aims

To maximise the biodiversity interest of the site whilst maintaining its role as a churchyard.

### 4.2 Objectives

To maintain species-rich grassland on the site.

To maintain graves and monuments in a suitable condition for lichen growth.

To retain a mix of grassland sward length.

### **4.3 Constraints**

The main constraints on management for biodiversity here are the need to agree any changes in management with the church and to ensure the good condition of the monuments, some of which have listed status. For these and general amenity reasons it is appropriate to maintain the grassland around most of the site in a fairly formal condition.

### **4.4 Rationale**

The churchyard is currently of high interest for biodiversity and significant changes to existing management practices are not recommended.

The main biodiversity objective here is to ensure that species-rich grassland survives in the churchyard. This requires management of the grassland, which is normally in the form of either grazing or mowing. Grazing is not possible here so a mowing regime should continue.

There are at present two approaches to grassland management employed on the churchyard. Most of the area is mown fairly frequently to maintain a short sward but the western part of the churchyard has been allowed to grow taller; plant diversity, including the diversity of indicator species of unimproved grassland, is higher in the area that is mown frequently. It is not possible to say whether this is due to differences in the management regime or whether other factors such as differences in soil fertility are responsible. It is likely, however, that the shorter turf favours species such as mouse-ear hawkweed, hoary plantain and lesser hawkbit. On the other hand, some species such as wild carrot and ox-eye daisy are favoured by a taller sward. The longer sward probably supports a greater diversity of invertebrates than does the shorter sward, but the latter is probably of value for groups such as solitary bees.

The shorter sward also keeps monuments in better condition by discouraging vegetation growth across stones and by allowing access to stones for management. This has benefits for lichen populations, as well as for heritage and amenity reasons.

In summary, both approaches to grassland management have benefits but at this site there are probably more benefits associated with maintaining a shorter sward. It is important, whatever approach to mowing is taken, that the fertility of the grassland is kept low.

Parts of the grassland is threatened by scrub encroachment and, whilst scrub has some value for wildlife, scrub should be controlled in order to reverse this trend.

The churchyard has a good balance of trees and open habitats, and this should be maintained – additional tree planting is not recommended but any lost trees should be replaced. Retention of mistletoe should allow the population of *Pinalitus viscicola* to survive.

Several measures have been taken to enhance the site for biodiversity in recent years. These include provision of a bug hotel, sowing a small area with flowers for pollinators, and possibly measures to enhance area 2.

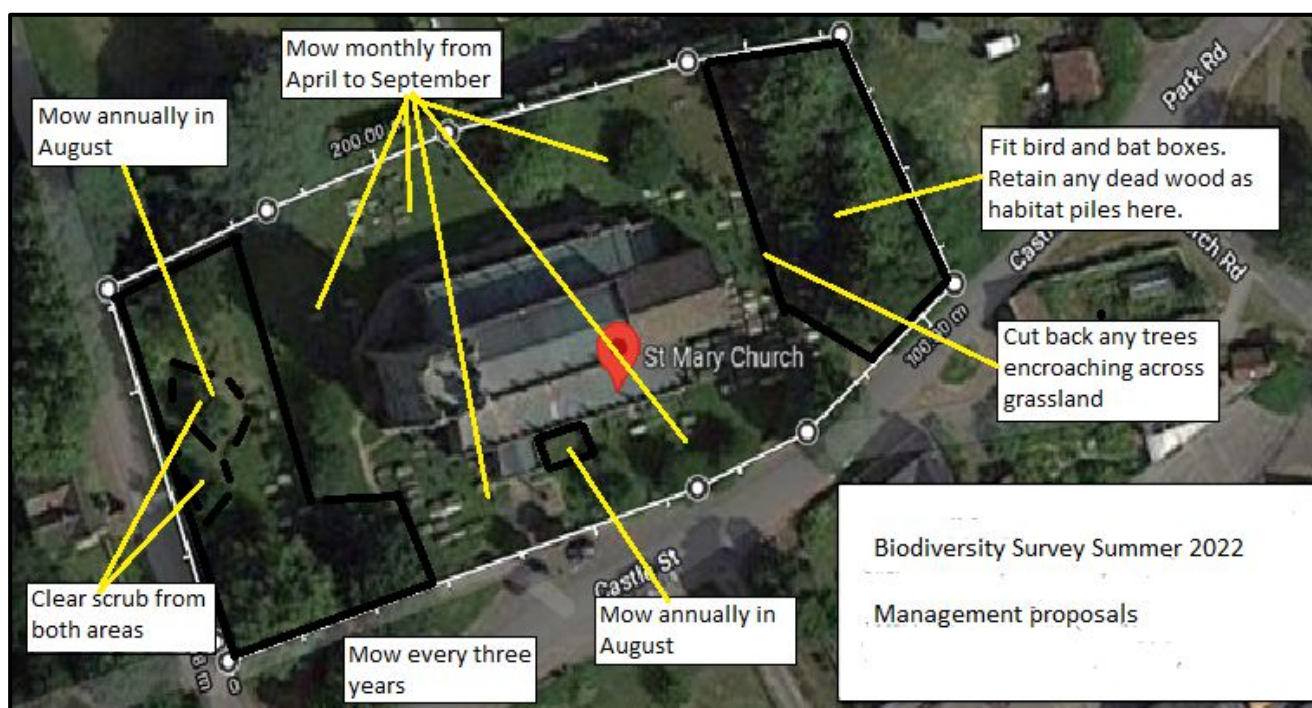


#### **4.5 Management Proposals**

- 1 No fertilisers or herbicides of any kind should be used on any area of grassland.
- 2 Continue grassland mowing across area 1. In order to allow low-growing plants to flower, whilst maintaining a formal appearance and protecting graves, mow once a month from April to September.
- 3 Continue to keep monuments clear of scrub and ivy.
- 4 Mow area 2 once a year in August. Gather and remove arisings.
- 5 Clear bramble and other scrub from area 3 as shown on the map below.
- 6 Mow the more diverse part of area 3, as shown below on the map and on photograph 5, annually in August. Gather and remove arisings.
- 7 If possible, mow the remainder of area 3 every three years in August. Gather and remove arisings.
- 8 Trim back trees on the edge of area 4 where these are encroaching across grassland and tombs.
- 9 Fit bird and bat boxes to trees in area 4, the eastern part of the site. Boxes can be either purchased commercially or made by the local community or schools.
- 10 Maintain bug hotel and bird and bat boxes as necessary.
- 11 Retain any dead wood as a habitat feature, place in partial shade in area 4. Logs should be kept in as large sections as possible, because this makes them difficult to move and also provides optimal habitat for wildlife.

## 4.6 Work Planner

| Task                                                   | Year 1                         | Year 2                         | Year 3                         | Year 4                         | Year 5                         |
|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Mow area 1                                             | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              |
| Keep monuments clear of ivy and scrub                  | As necessary                   | As necessary                   | As necessary                   | As necessary                   | As necessary                   |
| Mow area 2, gather and remove arisings                 | August                         | August                         | August                         | August                         | August                         |
| Clear scrub in area 3                                  | Sept-Feb                       |                                | Sept-Feb                       |                                | Sept-Feb                       |
| Mow diverse part of area 3, gather and remove arisings | August                         | August                         | August                         | August                         | August                         |
| Mow remainder of area 3, gather and remove arisings    | Aug                            |                                |                                | Aug                            |                                |
| Trim back trees on edge of area 4                      | Nov-Jan                        |                                | Nov-Jan                        |                                | Nov-Jan                        |
| Fit bird and bat boxes to trees in area 4              | January                        | January                        |                                |                                |                                |
| Check bird and bat boxes, and replace as necessary     |                                |                                | January                        | January                        | January                        |
| Maintain bug hotel                                     | As necessary                   | As necessary                   | As necessary                   | As necessary                   | As necessary                   |
| Create dead wood piles in area 4                       | As dead wood becomes available | As dead wood becomes available | As dead wood becomes available | As dead wood becomes available | As dead wood becomes available |







Photograph 1: Part of area 1 with the taller grassland in area 3 visible in the background



Photograph 2: Part of area 1.





Photograph 3: Part of area 1. Ivy should be kept off the monuments, which are of value for lichens. Tree growth on the edge of area 4 should be controlled.



Photograph 4: Area 2.



Photograph 5: Part of area 1. The more diverse part of area 3 (marked by frequent wild carrot seedheads), bird feeder in foreground.

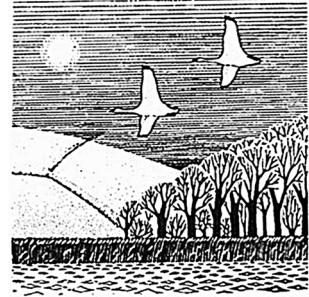
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## **THORNBURY GREEN SPACES**

## **ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT PLANS**

**SUMMER 2022**

**For**

**THORNBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**CHANTRY ROAD PLAY AREA**

# CHANTRY ROAD PLAY AREA

## ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT PLAN

### 1 INTRODUCTION

This plan is one of a series commissioned by Thornbury Town Council with the aim of identifying measures by which the biodiversity interest of green spaces in the town might be enhanced, whilst maintaining their value for both formal and informal recreation.

A site survey was carried out on 5th September 2022. It covered vegetation types and plant species, insects and birds, and potential for other groups was assessed.

### 2 SITE DESCRIPTION

#### 2.1 Summary

Chantry Road Play Area is dominated by close mown grassland with other vegetation at present limited to a small group of trees.

The Play Area is rather isolated from other green spaces within an area of housing, but it provides a stepping stone between Chantry Playing Fields and the grounds of The Castle School.

#### 2.2 Vegetation

The areas described below are shown on the attached map.

The majority of the site has close mown grassland, which is dominated by perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), with other grass species including creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*) and rough-stalked meadow grass (*Poa trivialis*). The frequency of herb species within the sward is low. The species present are dandelion (*Taraxacum vulgare* agg), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), common daisy (*Bellis perennis*), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*) and autumn hawksbeard (*Scorzoneroidea autumnalis*).

There is a small group of Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*) trees in the western corner of the site. The largest tree supports a growth of mistletoe (*Viscum album*).

The site boundaries are fences and lack any vegetation.

#### 2.3 Fauna

No birds were present on the site; the following species were recorded in the surrounding area: lesser black-backed gull, carrion crow; magpie, robin and wood pigeon.

The only insect species recorded was *Episyrphus balteatus* fly.



## **2.4 Amenity**

The site has very well used and maintained children's play equipment.

## **3 EVALUATION**

### **3.1 Introduction**

Various criteria are used in assessing the biodiversity value of sites. These include rarity, in terms of either habitats or species, which can be viewed in a range of contexts from international to local and also degree of threat: some species remain widespread but are of conservation concern because their populations have declined rapidly. Some habitats take many centuries, or require very specialised conditions, to develop their full diversity and those that cannot be recreated are more highly valued than those that can be readily created. The extent and connectivity of habitats is of importance, since many species rely on large areas of habitat or on having access to different habitat types at different stages in their life cycle. This can be particularly important in urban areas, where species can be lost from small and isolated areas of habitat, even if these remain in good condition. Conversely, sites can have value in a wider context if, for example, they allow wildlife to colonise gardens and other sites in the surrounding area or if they allow wildlife to move into and across otherwise inhospitable areas. In accessible urban areas the public appeal or visibility of wildlife is also a factor in contributing to public enjoyment and wellbeing.

Guidance on site evaluation is given in various documents, including the South Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, and has been followed here.

### **3.2 Habitats**

The grassland that dominates the site has been intensively managed and the use of fertilisers in particular has excluded all but the most tolerant species of plant. Frequent mowing means that the grassland is not of significant value for invertebrates, or for other animals.

The grassland across the site is of minimal nature conservation value.

The population of mistletoe associated with the Norway maple tree is of some interest, although this species is fairly widespread in and around Thornbury.

The population of Norway maple is of nature conservation value in a local context.

### **3.3 Protected and Invasive Species**

No signs of any protected species were seen on or around the site and it has very little potential for any such species.

No scheduled invasive species were recorded on the site.

### 3.4 Summary

| Area           | Scale of Interest | Features of Interest |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------------|
| Main grassland | Minimal           |                      |
| Norway maple   | Local context     | Mistletoe            |

## 4 MANAGEMENT

### 4.1 Aims

To maximise the biodiversity interest of the site whilst maintaining its value for amenity and other interests.

### 4.2 Objectives

To provide small areas of tree planting on the site.

To plant hedges on the boundaries of the site.

### 4.3 Constraints

The main constraints on management for biodiversity here is the need to maintain the value of the site for amenity, including retention of the play equipment and a surrounding area of close mown grassland.

There are practical constraints on some potential measures. Initiatives such as the creation of beds of wildflower planting would be worth consideration if there is support and enthusiasm for such measures but have not been recommended here because they require a commitment to relatively intensive management if they are to be maintained in the long term.

### 4.4 Rationale

The potential to enhance the biodiversity value of this site is limited by its small size and the need to retain formal play opportunities across most of the area. There are good opportunities to plant hedges along site boundaries, and also to plant trees in small parts of the site. Fruit trees would be suitable due to their community value, as well as high attractiveness to wildlife.

### 4.5 Management Proposals

1 Maintain management of amenity grassland as at present over most site but avoid fertiliser use on the grassland.

2 Plant hedges along the boundaries of the site using the following mix:

|                |                           |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Field maple    | <i>Acer campestre</i>     |
| Dogwood        | <i>Cornus sanguinea</i>   |
| Hazel          | <i>Corylus avellana</i>   |
| Hawthorn       | <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> |
| Spindle        | <i>Euonymus europaea</i>  |
| Wayfaring tree | <i>Viburnum lantana</i>   |

3 Plant trees and shrubs in the areas shown on the attached map. The following is a suggested planting list:

|       |                         |
|-------|-------------------------|
| Apple | <i>Malus domestica</i>  |
| Plum  | <i>Prunus domestica</i> |
| Pear  | <i>Pyrus communis</i>   |
| Rowan | <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> |

4 Install bug hotels at the locations shown. Suitable designs are given at the links below:

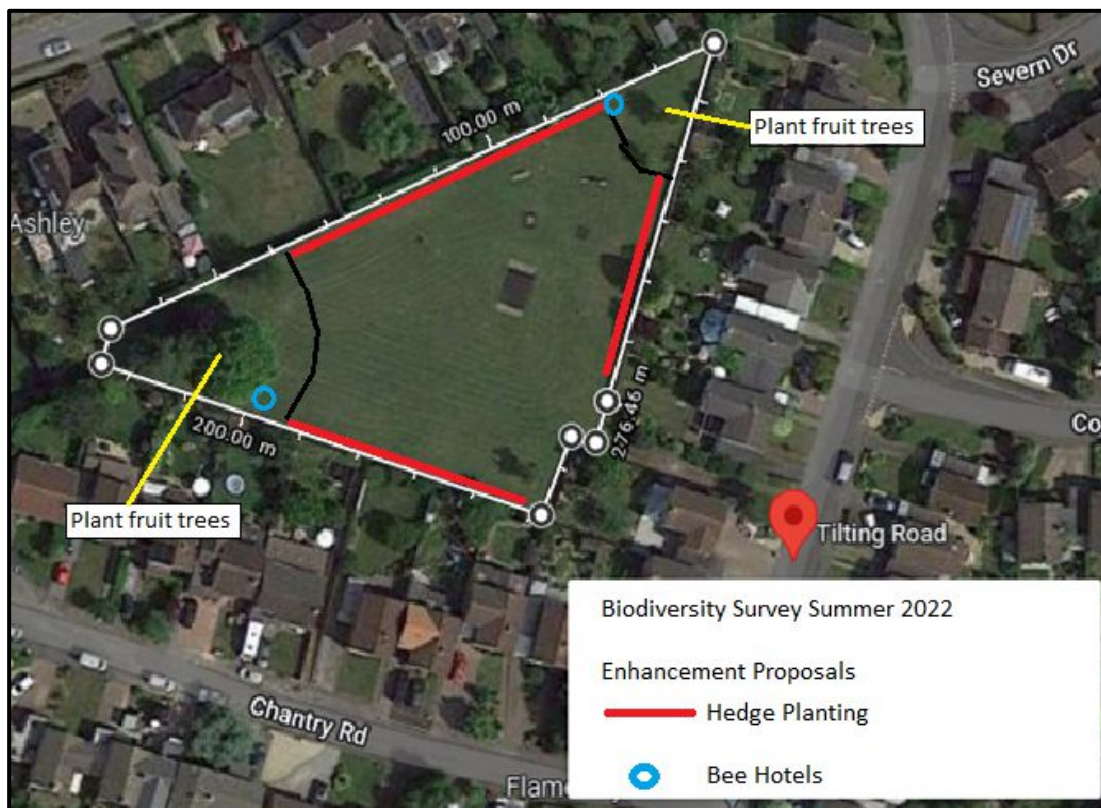
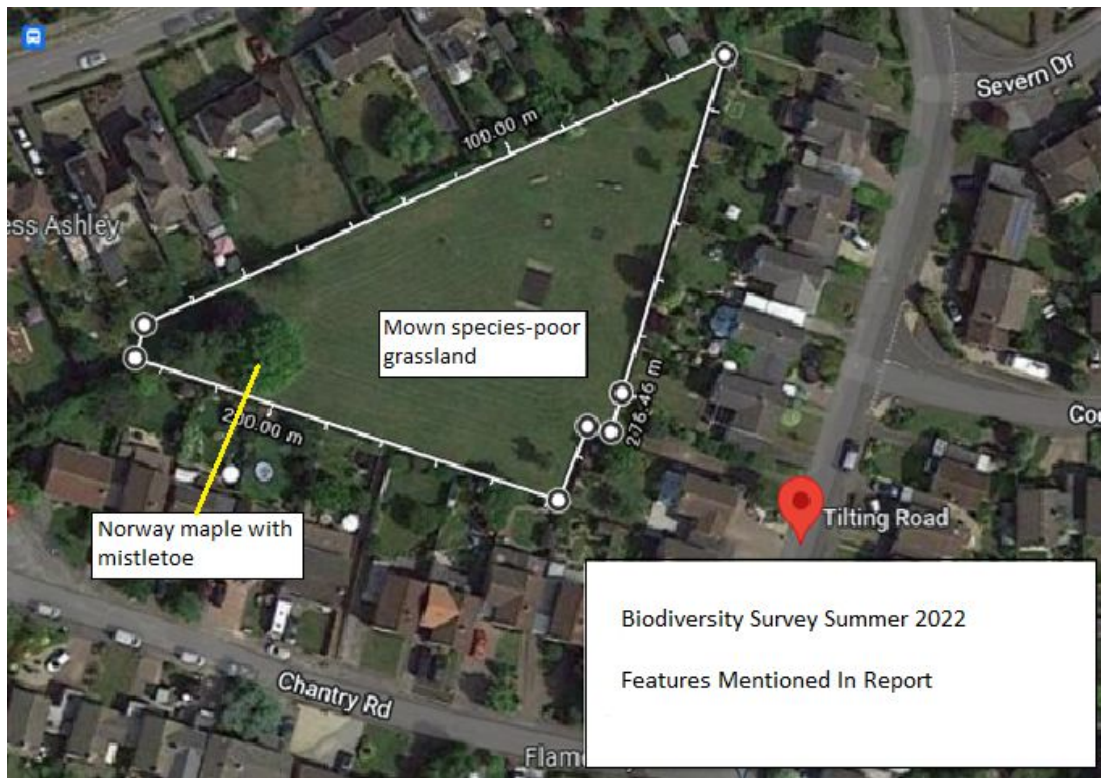
<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/nature-on-your-doorstep/garden-activities/build-a-bug-hotel/>

<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/Resources/Project/Make-a-bug-hotel/>

Measures such as drilling holes in wooden posts can also provide nest sites for solitary bees – fence posts on the boundaries of the site may provide suitable locations.

#### 4.6 Work Planner

| Task                                                 | Year 1     | Year 2       | Year 3       | Year 4       | Year 5       |
|------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Maintain amenity grassland, avoid use of fertilisers | Throughout | Throughout   | Throughout   | Throughout   | Throughout   |
| Plant hedges                                         |            | Oct-Feb      | Oct-Feb      |              |              |
| Plant trees and shrubs                               |            |              | Oct-Feb      |              |              |
| Install bug hotels                                   |            | Feb          |              |              |              |
| Maintain bug hotels                                  |            | As necessary | As necessary | As necessary | As necessary |







Photograph 1: The main grassland



Photograph 2: Fences suitable for hedge planting

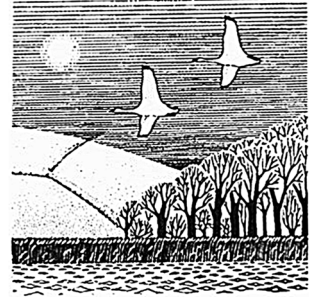
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## **THORNBURY GREEN SPACES**

## **ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT PLANS**

**SUMMER 2022**

**For**

**THORNBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**CHANTRY PLAYING FIELDS**

# CHANTRY PLAYING FIELDS

## ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT PLAN

### 1 INTRODUCTION

This plan is one of a series commissioned by Thornbury Town Council with the aim of identifying measures by which the biodiversity interest of green spaces in the town might be enhanced, whilst maintaining their value for both formal and informal recreation.

A site survey was carried out on 5th September 2022. It covered vegetation types and plant species, insects and birds, and potential for other groups was assessed.

### 2 SITE DESCRIPTION

#### 2.1 Summary

Chantry Playing Fields is dominated by two rugby pitches, which together with the rest of the grassland across the site are regularly mown. There is a continuous hedge, with semi-mature trees, along the Church Road boundary on the northern edge of the sites and the western boundary has a line of trees. Other boundaries have walls and fences with gappy vegetation.

The Playing Fields form part of a chain of green spaces in northern Thornbury, lying between the playing fields of The Castle School and Oakleaze Green to the south-east, and the grounds of St Mary's Primary School and St Mary's Churchyard to the north-west. Beyond these sites are the grounds of Thornbury Castle and open countryside.

#### 2.2 Vegetation

The areas described below are shown on the attached map.

##### Area 1

The majority of the site has close mown grassland, which is dominated by perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), with other grass species including creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*) and cockfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*). There is not a high diversity of herb species within the sward but species present include dandelion (*Taraxacum vulgare* agg), common catsear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) and smooth hawksbeard (*Crepis capillaris*).

The herb component is higher, but not more diverse, on small banks in the southern part of the site.

##### Area 1 a)

There is little variation in the composition of the sward across the grassland area, but it is slightly more diverse in the south-eastern part of the site. Additional species here

include fiddle dock (*Rumex pulcher*), field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*) and germander speedwell (*Veronica chamaedrys*).

#### Area 2

This is the boundary hedge along Church Road. It is narrow – approximately 1 metre wide – and tall – approximately 2.5 metres. It has a mix of native shrub species: hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), field maple (*Acer campestre*), dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), English elm (*Ulmus procera*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and dog rose (*Rosa canina*). Several semi-mature trees – lime (*Tilia x vulgaris*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), crack willow (*Salix x fragilis*), grey poplar (*Populus x canescens*) and false-acacia (*Robinia pseudo-acacia*) – have been planted on the southern side of the hedge. Ground flora species associated with the hedge include black horehound (*Ballota nigra*) and cyclamen (*Cyclamen hederifolium*).

#### Area 3

The eastern boundary of the site has a wall with some exotic planting nearby. The wall supports a moderately diverse growth of lichens.

#### Area 4

The southern boundary of the site abuts domestic gardens and has sections of wall and fence. A strip alongside the boundary has been left unmown. This has tall grassland dominated by false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*) with frequent bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg) and cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*). Other plant species here include stinking iris (*Iris foetidissima*), wood avens (*Geum urbanum*) and black horehound, with encroaching scrub species including elder (*Sambucus nigra*), English elm and stag's-horn sumach (*Rhus typhina*).

#### Area 5

The western boundary has an open line of trees, which include lime, sycamore, grey poplar, horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), walnut (*Juglans regia*) and cypress (*Cupressus macrocarpa*). Several smaller trees, which include pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*) and rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*), have recently been planted here. The ground flora below the trees is dominated by false oat-grass and also includes cyclamen, French crane's-bill (*Geranium endressii*), musk mallow (*Malva moschata*), hollyhock (*Alcea rosea*), teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*) and stinking iris.

### **2.3 Fauna**

The following bird species were recorded:

Area 1 (grassland): Carrion crow;

Area 2 (Church Road boundary): Wood pigeon;

Area 5 (western boundary): blue tit, wood pigeon.

The following insect species were recorded:

Area 2 (Church Road boundary): *Lyonetia clerkella*, *Parornix devoniella*, *Stigmella plagicolella* moths.



Area 4 (southern boundary): Red admiral butterfly; hornet, ivy bee, buff-tailed bumblebee; *Eristalis tenax*, *Eristalis pertinax*, *Myathropa florea*, *Volucella inanis*, *Volucella zonaria* flies;

Area 5 (western boundary): *Aspidapion radiolus* beetle.

## **2.4 Amenity**

The rugby pitches are the dominant amenity provision on the site. Otherwise, it is well used for informal recreation. An unofficial and unsurfaced path across the eastern side of the park is well used, particularly by students from The Castle School.

# **3 EVALUATION**

## **3.1 Introduction**

Various criteria are used in assessing the biodiversity value of sites. These include rarity, in terms of either habitats or species, which can be viewed in a range of contexts from international to local and also degree of threat: some species remain widespread but are of conservation concern because their populations have declined rapidly. Some habitats take many centuries, or require very specialised conditions, to develop their full diversity and those that cannot be recreated are more highly valued than those that can be readily created. The extent and connectivity of habitats is of importance, since many species rely on large areas of habitat or on having access to different habitat types at different stages in their life cycle. This can be particularly important in urban areas, where species can be lost from small and isolated areas of habitat, even if these remain in good condition. Conversely, sites can have value in a wider context if, for example, they allow wildlife to colonise gardens and other sites in the surrounding area or if they allow wildlife to move into and across otherwise inhospitable areas. In accessible urban areas the public appeal or visibility of wildlife is also a factor in contributing to public enjoyment and wellbeing.

Guidance on site evaluation is given by various sources, including the South Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, and has been followed here.

## **3.2 Habitats**

The grassland that dominates the site has been intensively managed and the use of fertilisers in particular has excluded all but the most tolerant species of plant. Frequent mowing means that the grassland is not of significant value for invertebrates, or for other animals.

The grassland across most of the site is of minimal nature conservation value.

The grassland in the south-eastern corner of the site is only slightly more diverse, but it does include germander speedwell, a plant that is associated with species-rich grasslands. Fiddle dock, which was found here, is an uncommon plant that has been recorder from fewer than ten sites in South Gloucestershire, and from only three others

since 2000. It had not been recorded in Thornbury previously (it was also found at Mundy Playing Fields during these surveys).

The grassland here is of nature conservation value in a local context.

The hedge at area 2 is moderately diverse in woody species and the proximity of standard trees adds to its potential for birds and other wildlife. The presence of a strip of tall grassland alongside the hedge adds to its value for wildlife, in particular for invertebrates.

The hedge is of nature conservation value in a local context.

The strip of vegetation at area 4, on the southern edge of the site, is of some value for invertebrates. A large plant of flowering ivy here was attracting very large numbers of insects at the time of survey. These include ivy bee (*Colletes hederæ*), which is a recent colonist of Britain, as well as hornet and two hoverflies that mimic this species: *Volucella inanis* and *Volucella zonaria*, both of which are scarce in South Gloucestershire, with only two previous records of the former (one of them in Thornbury).

The vegetation here is of nature conservation value in a local context.

The western boundary of the site (area 5) is of interest for its mix of tree species and the associated tall grassland. Although species such as hollyhock are not native they add interest to the site. The associated beetle, *Aspidapion radiolus*, has not been recorded from South Gloucestershire previously but this is more likely to be due to the unobtrusive nature of this small weevil than genuine rarity.

The vegetation along this boundary is of nature conservation value in a local context.

### **3.3 Protected and Invasive Species**

No signs of any protected species were seen on or around the site. It is likely that bats use the tree lines on the edge of the site for foraging and commuting and there are potential roosting opportunities in the trees at area 5, on the western edge of the site.

The grassland is mown too frequently to be used by groups such as reptiles. No scheduled invasive species were recorded on the site.

### 3.4 Summary

| Area                                | Scale of Interest | Features of Interest                                                  |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1 (main grassland)                  | Minimal           |                                                                       |
| 1 (south-eastern corner)            | Local context     | Fiddle dock (locally uncommon plant)                                  |
| 2 (hedge on northern boundary)      | Local context     | Value for birds and insects, potentially foraging bats                |
| 4 (vegetation on southern boundary) | Local context     | Value for insects                                                     |
| 5 (western boundary)                | Local context     | Value for birds and insects, potential for foraging and roosting bats |

## 4 MANAGEMENT

### 4.1 Aims

To maximise the biodiversity interest of the site whilst maintaining its value for amenity and other interests.

### 4.2 Objectives

To extend the area of tall grassland on the site.

To extend the area of wooded habitats on the site.

### 4.3 Constraints

The main constraint on management for biodiversity here is the need to retain rugby pitches on the site, together with short grass around the margins of the pitches. This means that no changes to management can be proposed for a large area in the centre of the site. It is also important to maintain the appeal of the site for informal recreation and to ensure that the informal path across the south-eastern corner of the site.

There are ecological constraints on enhancement opportunities. Most importantly, the soil across most of the site is very fertile (as revealed by the composition of the existing vegetation) and this means that measures such as the creation of wildflower meadows are impractical without drastic interventions to change the soil chemistry.

There are also practical constraints on some potential measures. Initiatives such as the creation of beds of wildflower planting would be worth consideration if there is support and enthusiasm for such measures but have not been recommended here because they require a commitment to relatively intensive management if they are to be maintained in the long term.

### 4.4 Rationale

The valuable habitats that can be created here in the most sustainable fashion are tall grassland, flowering lawn and new areas of tree/shrub cover.

Tall grassland is of value for groups such as small mammals, as terrestrial habitat for amphibians, and for invertebrates. It is of most value when it contains flowering plants,

which can include “weeds” such as thistles and ragwort and non-native species (such as hollyhock here), scattered shrubs and when seed heads and similar features are allowed to overwinter. Tall grassland does require some intervention, in the form of occasional mowing, in order to stop it becoming completely overgrown by scrub.

Flowering lawn is used here to mean grassland that is allowed to grow taller than in the case of amenity turf but is still mown several times through the growing season. This allows low-growing plants to flower and provides habitat for some insects but avoids issues associated with taller meadow grass, such as the disposal of arisings. The area proposed for this treatment here is distant from the rugby pitches, so will not interfere with their use, and has a higher frequency of herb species than other areas of grassland across the site.

Tree and shrub planting is an excellent way to add ecological diversity. Biodiversity gain is maximised if native species are used but closely related non-native species, such as fruit trees, often have similar benefits. Species that produce flowers attractive to pollinating insects and bear fruit are valuable. Shrubs are usually more valuable for nesting birds than are trees, since they provide dense cover that trees usually lack until they reach maturity.

Single large blocks of habitat are usually of greater value for wildlife than small isolated patches, and the proximity of other habitat types can be very important: many insects that as larvae feed on trees feed as adults on flowers in open habitats, for example.

#### **4.5 Management Proposals**

1 Maintain management as at present over most site but avoid fertiliser use on any area not within the rugby pitches.

2 In the area shown on the attached map relax mowing regime, so grassland is cut once a month from May to September, with mower blades set at 70 mm.

3 In the areas shown on the attached map allow tall grassland to develop: cut each area once every three years but otherwise leave uncut.

4 Plant trees and shrubs in the areas shown on the attached map. The following is a suggested planting list, but it can be varied in line with local wishes:

##### **Trees**

|                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Field maple     | <i>Acer campestre</i>   |
| Silver birch    | <i>Betula pendula</i>   |
| Apple           | <i>Malus domestica</i>  |
| Crab apple      | <i>Malus sylvestris</i> |
| Pear            | <i>Pyrus communis</i>   |
| Pedunculate oak | <i>Quercus robur</i>    |
| Rowan           | <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> |

##### **Shrubs**

|                |                            |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| Hazel          | <i>Corylus avellana</i>    |
| Hawthorn       | <i>Crataegus monogyna</i>  |
| Spindle        | <i>Euonymus europaea</i>   |
| Buckthorn      | <i>Rhamnus catharticus</i> |
| Blackcurrant   | <i>Ribes nigra</i>         |
| Raspberry      | <i>Rubus idaeus</i>        |
| Wayfaring tree | <i>Viburnum lantana</i>    |

5 Fit bird and bat boxes to trees in area 5, the western boundary of the site. Boxes can be either purchased commercially or made by the local community or schools.

6 Install bug hotels at the locations shown. Suitable designs are given at the links below:

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/nature-on-your-doorstep/garden-activities/build-a-bug-hotel/>

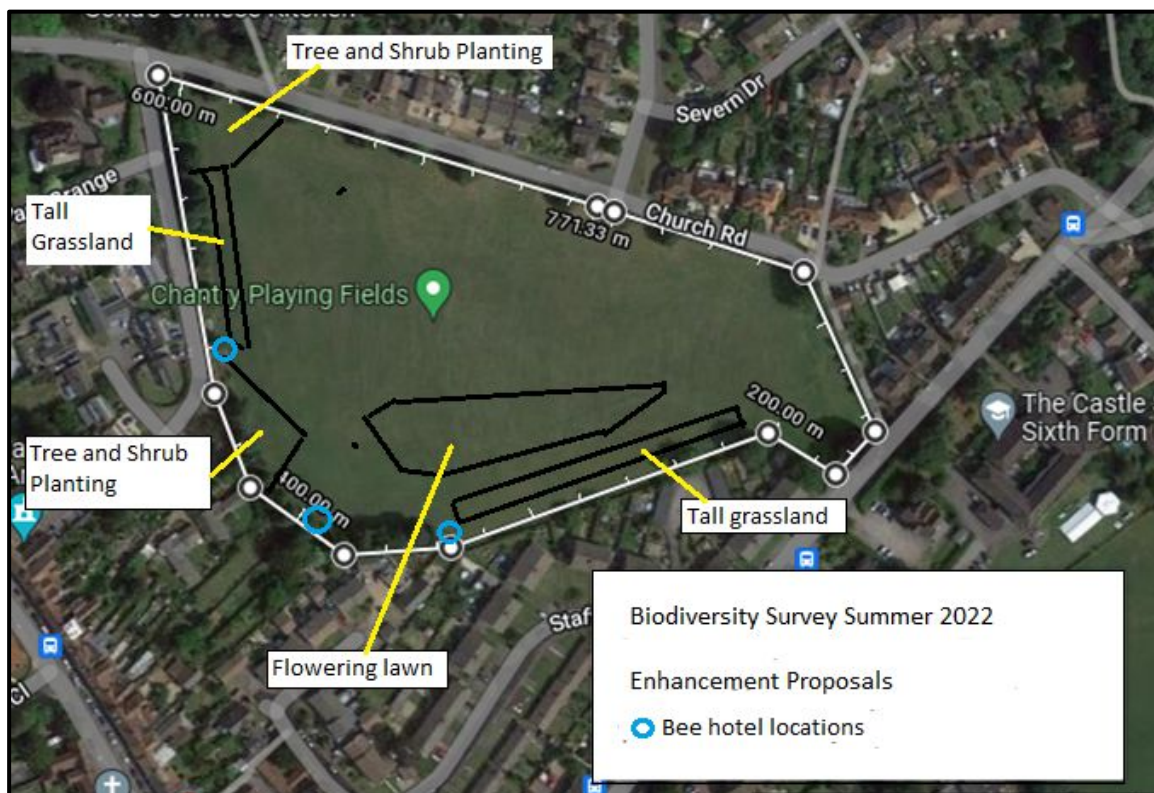
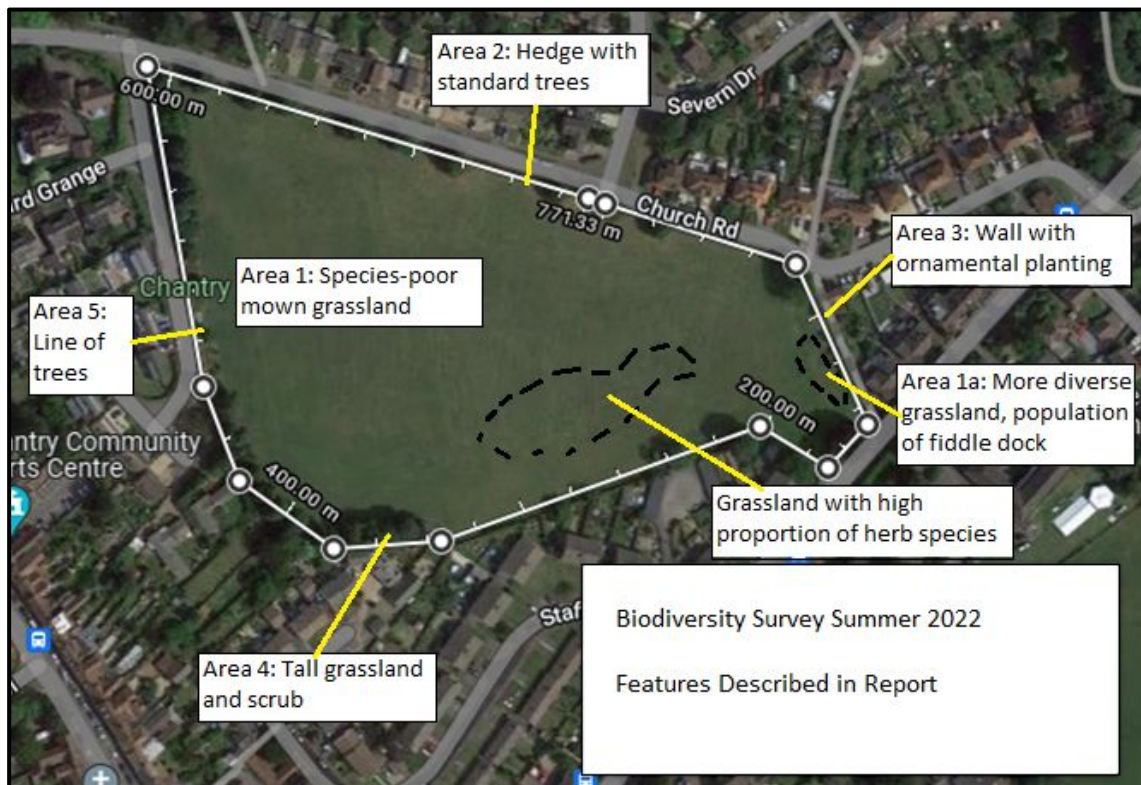
<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/Resources/Project/Make-a-bug-hotel>

Measures such as drilling holes in wooden posts can also provide nest sites for solitary bees.

7 Retain any dead wood as a habitat feature, place in partial shade in area 5. Logs should be kept in as large sections as possible, because this makes them difficult to move and also provides optimal habitat for wildlife.

#### 4.6 Work Planner

| Task                                                                                             | Year 1        | Year 2        | Year 3        | Year 4        | Year 5        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Maintain amenity grassland over most of site, avoid use of fertilisers                           | Throughout    | Throughout    | Throughout    | Throughout    | Throughout    |
| Mow herb-rich grassland, set mower blades at 70mm                                                | May-Sept      | May-Sept      | May-Sept      | May-Sept      | May-Sept      |
| Mow one-third of tall grassland strips on a rotation, so each area is cut once every three years |               | Sept          | Sept          | Sept          | Sept          |
| Plant trees and shrubs                                                                           |               | Oct-Feb       |               |               |               |
| Install bug hotels                                                                               |               | Feb           |               |               |               |
| Maintain bug hotels                                                                              |               | As necessary  | As necessary  | As necessary  | As necessary  |
| Create dead wood piles in area 5                                                                 | When possible | When possible | When possible | When possible | When possible |







Photograph 1: Part of area 1 – area 4 along wall



Photograph 2: Area 4, tall grassland and scrub, area 3 in background



Photograph 3: Ivy in area 4 was attracting large numbers of pollinating insects



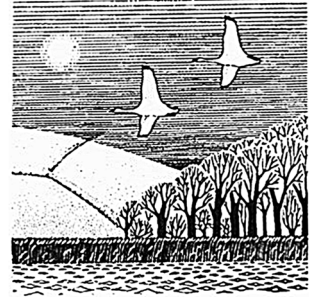
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## **THORNBURY GREEN SPACES**

## **ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT PLANS**

**SUMMER 2022**

**For**

**THORNBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**MUNDY PLAYING FIELDS**

# MUNDY PLAYING FIELDS

## ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT PLAN

### 1 INTRODUCTION

This plan is one of a series commissioned by Thornbury Town Council with the aim of identifying measures by which the biodiversity interest of green spaces in the town might be enhanced, whilst maintaining their value for both formal and informal recreation.

A site survey was carried out on 18th August 2022. It covered vegetation types and plant species, insects and birds, and potential for other groups was assessed.

### 2 SITE DESCRIPTION

#### 2.1 Summary

The site is dominated by large areas of mown grass, some of which is used as football pitches and some for informal play, with smaller areas of tree and shrub cover, which include lengths of species-rich hedge, and a stretch of stream.

The site is on the western edge of Thornbury, between the town and open countryside, so has the potential to contribute to the ecological connectivity of both public spaces and private gardens in that part of the town.

#### 2.2 Vegetation

The areas described below are shown on the attached map.

##### 2.2.1 Grassland

###### Area A

The grassland across most of the site is dominated by perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*) with other grass species including creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), cocksfoot (*Dactylis glomerata*) and rough-stalked meadow-grass (*Poa trivialis*). The diversity of herb species is low, with the most frequent being dandelion (*Taraxacum vulgare*), white clover (*Trifolium repens*) and creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*).

The following areas are broadly similar but have a slightly higher diversity:

Ai): The frequency of herbs is higher here, with species in reasonable quantity including ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), bulbous buttercup (*Ranunculus bulbosus*), autumnal hawkbit (*Scorzoneroidea autumnalis*) and self-heal (*Prunella vulgaris*).

Aii): The frequency of creeping bent and red fescue (*Festuca rubra*) is higher here, and the frequency of perennial rye-grass lower, than in the main grassland. Common catsear (*Hypochaeris radicata*) is reasonably frequent.

Aiii) Herbs make up a high proportion of the sward here, and include yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), lesser trefoil (*Trifolium dubium*) and self-heal.

Aiv) Herb species across this area include yarrow, common catsear, ribwort plantain and fiddle dock (*Rumex pulcher*).

Av) Herb species here include yarrow, common castear, ribwort plantain, red clover and fiddle dock.

## Area B

The grassland on the banks around the play area and to the south is significantly more diverse than that elsewhere on the site.

The west-facing and south-facing banks have very sparse grassland around small rock outcrops and patches of bare soil, with large quantities of sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*) in a sward dominated by common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*). Other species here include grey sedge (*Carex divulsa*), black knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*) and fiddle dock as well as the mosses *Ceratodon purpureus* and *Brachythecium rutabulum*.

The north-facing banks have a grass-dominated sward, without bare earth, but herbs are fairly frequent and include common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), glaucous sedge (*Carex flacca*) and burnet saxifrage (*Pimpinella saxifraga*).

### 2.2.2 Hedges

There are several stretches of hedge on and around the site, as follows:

#### Hedge 1

This is a section of low ivy (*Hedera helix*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus agg*), rather than a true hedge. There is a small area of ornamental planting, which includes feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*) and iceplant (*Hylotelephium spectabile*), adjacent to the hedge.

#### Hedge 2

The hedge here is low and dominated by hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and English elm (*Ulmus procera*). Trees, which include sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), cherry (*Prunus mahaleb*) and pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*), have been planted alongside the hedge.

There is a strip of tall grassland alongside the hedge for much of its length. This strip is dominated by false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), with associated species including hogweed (*Heracleum sphondylium*) and ribwort plantain.

The southern part of the hedge runs alongside a ditch. This held little water at the time of survey, but had fairly well-developed wetland vegetation, including water mint

(*Mentha aquatica*), brook-lime (*Veronica beccabunga*), water figwort (*Scrophularia auriculata*), fool's water-cress (*Helosciadicum nodiflorum*), soft rush (*Juncus effusus*), pendulous sedge (*Carex pendula*) and flote-grass (*Glyceria plicata*).

### Hedge 3

A dense hedge of laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*).

### Hedge 4

This boundary runs along the eastern side of a green lane. Several rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) trees have been planted along the edge of the playing field.

The hedge on the western side of the green lane is tall and diverse, having a mix of hawthorn, field maple (*Acer campestre*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), willow (*Salix x reichardtii*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*), dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), spindle (*Euonymus europaea*) and dog rose (*Rosa canina*), with semi-mature ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) trees.

### Hedge 5

This is a low hedge with two semi-mature ash trees. It is diverse and contains hawthorn, field maple, elder, English elm, willow, dogwood, blackthorn and dogwood. Associated ground flora includes red campion (*Silene dioica*) and wood avens (*Geum urbanum*).

A ditch that runs along the northern side of the hedge is dry but supports hard rush (*Juncus inflexus*) and angelica (*Angelica sylvestris*).

### Hedge 6

The hedge between the playing field and the green lane is low and supports a good diversity of woody species: hawthorn, hazel, field maple, elder, ash, spindle, sycamore, holly (*Ilex aquifolium*) and dog rose. It becomes taller to the south, where there are several semi-mature field maple trees and a large pollarded ash. Associated ground flora includes dog's mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*), black bryony (*Tamus communis*), hart's-tongue fern (*Asplenium scolopendrium*) and hedge woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*). Species in the grassland adjacent to the hedge include common fleabane (*Pulicaria dysenterica*) and common bent.

There is a species-rich hedge on the western side of the green lane.

### Hedge 7

This is a tall and leggy hedge of ash, field maple, hazel, dogwood, English elm and sycamore, with associated ground flora species including dog's mercury, hart's-tongue fern, wood dock (*Rumex sanguineus*) and male fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas*).

A line of pedunculate oak trees has been planted parallel to the hedge.

### Hedge 8

This hedge is a continuation of hedge 7 but is dominated by tall trees of crack willow (*Salix x fragilis*), with smaller quantities of hazel and grey willow (*Salix cinerea*). The hedge's ground flora includes hart's-tongue fern, male fern and dog's mercury, and species associated with a small ditch include yellow flag (*Iris pseudacorus*), hemlock water dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata*) and greater pond sedge (*Carex riparia*).

### Hedge 9

A low hedge with immature field maple and horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) trees and a mature pedunculate oak. Shrubby species in the hedge are field maple, hawthorn, elder and English elm. At the eastern end of the boundary there is a small copse of hazel, pedunculate oak and dogwood.

### Hedge 10

A wide and dense hedge running along a section of the stream, with hawthorn, English elm, field maple and elder.

### Hedge 11

A low hedge of hawthorn, hazel and blackthorn, with a semi-mature willow and associated tree planting including field maple, silver birch (*Betula pendula*), holly and Corsican pine (*Pinus nigra*).

## 2.2.3 Wetlands

As well as the ditches associated with hedges, described above, the following wetland habitats are present:

### Area 12

An open ditch with water mint (*Mentha aquatica*), fool's water-cress, angelica and square-stemmed willow herb (*Epilobium tetragonum*).

### Area 13

The small stream has limited wetland vegetation, but small quantities of water figwort and hemlock water dropwort are present. The streamside has scattered trees of hybrid poplar, white willow (*Salix alba*) and Italian alder, which support a moderate growth of bryophytes including the liverwort *Radulua complana* and the moss *Orthotrichum affine*.

## 2.3 Fauna

The following bird species were recorded:

Hedge 6. Wood pigeon.

Hedge 8: Robin, wood pigeon and wren.

Hedge 9: Blue tit, chiffchaff, robin, treecreeper, wood pigeon and wren

Hedge 10: Blackcap, chiffchaff, dunnock and goldfinch.

Other species present across the site were greenfinch, green woodpecker, jackdaw and magpie, with house martin feeding overhead.

The following insect species were recorded:

Hedge 6: *Stigmella plagicolella* moth.

Hedge 7: *Phyllonorycter coryli*, *Phyllonorycter nicellii*, *Stigmella micotheriella*, *Stigmella floslactella*, *Parornix devoniella* and *Celypha lacunana* moths.

Hedge 10: *Phyllonorycter coryfoliella* moth.

## **2.4 Amenity**

The playing field provides a major resource for the population of Thornbury, which includes providing formal children's play, football pitches and areas for informal recreation.

# **3 EVALUATION**

## **3.1 Introduction**

Various criteria are used in assessing the biodiversity value of sites. These include rarity, in terms of either habitats or species, which can be viewed in a range of contexts from international to local and also degree of threat: some species remain widespread but are of conservation concern because their populations have declined rapidly. Some habitats take many centuries, or require very specialised conditions, to develop their full diversity and those that cannot be recreated are more highly valued than those that can be readily created. The extent and connectivity of habitats is of importance, since many species rely on large areas of habitat or on having access to different habitat types at different stages in their life cycle. This can be particularly important in urban areas, where species can be lost from small and isolated areas of habitat, even if these remain in good condition. Conversely, sites can have value in a wider context if, for example, they allow wildlife to colonise gardens and other sites in the surrounding area or if they allow wildlife to move into and across otherwise inhospitable areas. In accessible urban areas the public appeal or visibility of wildlife is also a factor in contributing to public enjoyment and wellbeing.

Guidance on site evaluation is given by various sources, including the South Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, and has been followed here.

## **3.2 Habitats**

### Grasslands

The most interesting area of grassland is at Area B, on the banks around the playground and to the east of the stream. The plants present here include several species that are indicative of unimproved grassland, a habitat type that has undergone serious declines, largely as a result of agricultural intensification, and is recognised as a priority for conservation in BAPs and the NERC Act. The indicator species recorded here include sheep's sorrel, burnet saxifrage and glaucous sedge. Sheep's sorrel is

indicative of soils with a low pH, which are rare in most of South Gloucestershire, and is therefore locally uncommon. Grasslands of this type frequently support plants that appear only in spring and it is possible that further uncommon species might be present here. The grassland is frequently mown, which limits its potential for invertebrates, but there are suitable areas for species such as burrowing bees, which also appear in spring, on the west-facing banks.

Area B is of high nature conservation value in a local context; spring survey might show it to be of value in a South Gloucestershire context.

Other grasslands are of lower nature conservation value. They lack any plants associated with unimproved grassland and the overall diversity of species is low.

Most of Area A is of minimal nature conservation value.

Fiddle dock was found in two areas, Aiv and Av. This species is an uncommon plant that has been recorded from fewer than ten sites in South Gloucestershire, and from only three others since 2000. It had not been recorded in Thornbury previously (it was also found at Chantry Playing Fields during these surveys).

The populations of fiddle dock are of nature conservation value in a local context.

### Hedges and Trees

Hedges 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8 qualify as Important Hedgerows under the 1997 Hedgerow Regulations, largely due to the diversity of woody species that they support. This diversity indicates that the hedges are likely to be historic features. They may also support notable ground flora species, which would not have been visible at the time of survey.

These hedges are of nature conservation value in a local context.

There are notable trees associated with some of the hedges; the most valuable of these are in hedges 4, 6, 8 and 9. As well as contributing to the nature conservation value of the hedges these trees are of ecological value in their own right.

### Wetlands

Ditches and streams provide wetland habitat in parts of the site.

The ditches are small, but they support a reasonable diversity of wetland plant species. The most diverse are those along hedges 2 and 8 and at area 12. None of the plant species recorded is uncommon but they add diversity to the site and the ditches are likely to be of value for a range of insect species.

The stream has limited amounts of wetland vegetation but there is potential for the development of more extensive stands, which would be of value for invertebrates and

birds. The poplar and willow trees associated with the stream provide habitat for a range of invertebrates and are a valuable feature in their own right.

These wetland features are of nature conservation value in a local context.

### **3.3 Protected and Invasive Species**

No sign of any protected species recorded was seen.

Bats may use habitats across the site, particularly the hedges, tree lines and the stream, for foraging and there are potential bat roosts in trees on the boundaries of the playing fields and along the stream.

No scheduled invasive species were recorded on the site.

### **3.4 Summary**

| Area                     | Feature          | Scale of Interest             | Features of Interest                                                                                 |
|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| B                        | Grassland        | South Gloucestershire context | Diverse vegetation, including indicator species of unimproved grassland and locally uncommon plants. |
| Aiv and v                | Grassland        | Local context                 | Populations of fiddle dock.                                                                          |
| Hedges 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8    | Important hedges | Local context                 | Diverse woody species, historic and cultural interest                                                |
| Hedges 4, 6, 8 and 9     | Standard trees   | Local context                 | Intrinsic value, and potential for birds, insects and other wildlife                                 |
| Hedges 2 & 8 and area 12 | Wetland          | Local context                 | Plant populations. Potential for invertebrates                                                       |
| Whole site               | Amenity          | Local context                 | Formal and informal recreation                                                                       |

## **4 MANAGEMENT**

### **4.1 Aims**

To maximise the biodiversity interest of the site whilst maintaining its role as an important resource for both formal and informal recreation.

### **4.2 Objectives**

To maintain species-rich grassland on the site.

To maintain and enhance hedges.

To maintain and enhance wetlands.

### **4.3 Constraints**

The main constraint on management for biodiversity is the need to maintain the value of the site for recreation. The formal play and sports areas should be maintained as at present and short grassland should be retained across other areas of the site, where it is important for informal recreation.



#### 4.4 Rationale

Biodiversity objectives relate to the maintenance of existing features of interest and to further enhancement of certain areas.

The species-rich grassland in area B will survive under the existing management regime. The plant species recorded are tolerant of mowing and the over-riding requirement is that fertilisers should not be used in any part of the area. The plants of interest present on the south-facing banks are favoured by frequent mowing and a short sward, and a change in the management regime is not recommended here. The west and north-facing parts of the area (i.e. the banks above the stream) support plants that would benefit from a relaxation in the mowing regime.

The populations of fiddle dock should persist under the current management regime.

The hedges and trees will maintain much of their nature conservation value as long as they are retained in their current state. There are opportunities to enhance the value of some hedges, which are discussed below.

The wetlands should maintain their existing value as long as inputs of clean water are maintained and the ditches are kept clear of encroaching scrub and are cleared of silt as necessary. The ditch along hedge 2 would benefit from sensitive clearance in the near future. There are opportunities for enhancement, which are discussed below.

There are opportunities for enhancement on the site. Some measures have already been undertaken, notably tree-planting along hedges 2, 4, 7 and 11. This tree planting will be of significant value as it matures, for instance providing additional habitat for birds and invertebrates and sheltered corridors for foraging bats.

There are enhancement measures that could be targeted at relatively small areas but as a general principle the greatest benefits are achieved where relatively large areas of habitat are created in close proximity. Mundy Playing Fields offers greater potential for measures of this kind than do the other sites surveyed, due to its larger size and ability to support wildlife habitats without compromising other amenity interests. It is therefore proposed that most enhancement activities are concentrated in the north-eastern part of the site. In this area there is the potential to build on the biodiversity interest currently provided by the stream and the grassland in Area B. There are also patches of grassland here that are slightly richer in herb species than those across most of the site and are therefore suitable for management as flowering lawn, where the sward is allowed to grow slightly taller so that low-growing plants can flower, which would have benefits for insects. Arisings should be gathered and removed in order to keep soil nutrient levels low. Meadow-length grassland, would provide habitats for insects and other wildlife, could be provided in small areas – this would require an annual cut, with the arisings removed. Paths following desire lines through areas of taller grassland should be mown regularly to maintain public access through the area. The value of the stream could be enhanced by relaxing mowing regimes to allow more significant areas of wetland vegetation to develop.

Elsewhere on the site, there is the potential to achieve enhancement by, for example, relaxing some hedge cutting regimes, planting further trees and allowing strips of tall grassland to develop along hedgerows.

Mundy Playing Fields is a particularly suitable site for the provision of bird and bat boxes as it has offers good feeding habitat for both groups and has connections to further areas of habitat in the wider countryside.

#### **4.5 Management Proposals**

1 No fertilisers or herbicides of any kind should be used on any area of grassland.

2 Continue grassland mowing as at present across the most of site

3 Manage the areas shown on the attached map too allow low-growing plants to flower, whilst maintaining a formal appearance. mow once a month from April to September set mower blades to 100mm, remove arisings as possible.

4 Manage the areas shown on the attached map as hay meadow: leave unmown between May and August, then cut and remove arisings.

5 Allow tall grassland to develop as shown on the map below. Keep clear of encroaching scrub as necessary.

6 Allow the hedges shown on the map below to grow taller, cut every other year in February.

7 Plant trees alongside hedges as indicated on the map below, using the following species:

|                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| Field maple     | <i>Acer campestre</i>   |
| Silver birch    | <i>Betula pendula</i>   |
| Crab apple      | <i>Malus sylvestris</i> |
| Pedunculate oak | <i>Quercus robur</i>    |
| Rowan           | <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> |

8 Remove vegetation and silt from ditch at hedges 2, 5 and 12; leave undisturbed patches of vegetation as refuge areas.

9 Leave sections of stream at area 13 unmanaged.

10 Fit bird and bat boxes to trees. Boxes can be either purchased commercially or made by the local community or schools.

11 Retain any dead wood as a habitat feature, place in partial shade on the eastern boundary of the cemetery. Logs should be kept in as large sections as possible, because this makes them difficult for the public to move and also provides optimal habitat for wildlife.

## 4.6 Work Planner

| Task                                               | Year 1                         | Year 2                         | Year 3                         | Year 4                         | Year 5                         |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Mow wildflower lawns                               | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              |
| Mow hay meadow; gather and remove arisings         | August                         | August                         | August                         | August                         | August                         |
| Remove encroaching scrub from tall grasslands      |                                |                                | February                       | February                       | February                       |
| Cut hedge 5                                        |                                |                                | February                       |                                | February                       |
| Plant trees                                        | As resources allow             | As resources allow             | As resources allow             | As resources allow             | As resources allow             |
| Clear out ditch along hedge 5                      | August                         |                                |                                | August                         |                                |
| Clear out ditch along hedge 2                      |                                |                                | August                         |                                |                                |
| Fit bird and bat boxes to trees                    | January                        | January                        |                                |                                |                                |
| Check bird and bat boxes, and replace as necessary |                                |                                | January                        | January                        | January                        |
| Create dead wood piles                             | As dead wood becomes available | As dead wood becomes available | As dead wood becomes available | As dead wood becomes available | As dead wood becomes available |



Photograph 1: Area B, south-facing banks – the brown area is droughted stony grassland that supports uncommon species



Photograph 2: The west-facing banks of Area B, which are less immediately obvious than the south-facing banks.



Map 1: Existing features





Map 2: Management proposals.

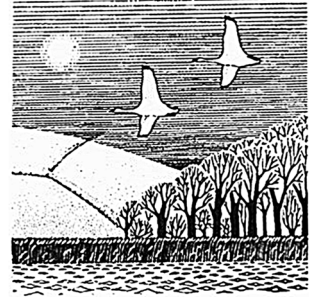
# *Wessex Ecological Consultancy*

*28 Egerton Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 8HL*

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## **THORNBURY GREEN SPACES**

## **ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT PLANS**

**SUMMER 2022**

**For**

**THORNBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**THICKET WALK**



# THICKET WALK

## ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT PLAN

### 1 INTRODUCTION

This plan is one of a series commissioned by Thornbury Town Council with the aim of identifying measures by which the biodiversity interest of green spaces in the town might be enhanced, whilst maintaining their value for both formal and informal recreation.

A site survey was carried out on 24th August 2022. It covered vegetation types and plant species, insects and birds. Potential for other groups of plants and animals was assessed.

### 2 SITE DESCRIPTION

#### 2.1 Summary

The open space at Ticket Walk is dominated by close mown grassland with small group of trees providing some variety.

The site is surrounded by housing and is rather isolated from any other area of open space.

#### 2.2 Vegetation

The areas described below are shown on the attached map.

The majority of the site has close mown grassland, which is dominated by perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), with other grass species including creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*) and rough-stalked meadow grass (*Poa trivialis*), with wall barley (*Hordeum murinum*) in disturbed areas. Herbs are not frequent within the sward. Widespread species include dandelion (*Taraxacum vulgare* agg), white clover (*Trifolium repens*), creeping buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) and common catsear (*Hypochaeris radicata*). Silverweed (*Potentilla anserina*) is locally frequent to the south of the path leading to Oakleaze Road.

The following small areas of woody vegetation are present on the site:

1: A small hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) bush.

2: A pollarded mature ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) tree.

3: Two semi-mature sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) trees. Both support a good growth of epiphytes. These include the mosses *Cryphaea heteromalla* and *Orthotrichum affine*; the liverwort *Radula complana*; and the lichens *Parmelia sulcata*, *Parmelia saxatilis*, *Physcia aipolia*, *Phaeophyscia orbicularis* and *Lecanora polytropa*.

4: A small patch of low scrub, comprising hawthorn, holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), red currant (*Ribes rubrum*), field rose (*Rosa arvensis*) and firethorn (*Pyracantha coccinea*).

5: A very small patch of bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg) and associated tall herb species including pendulous sedge (*Carex pendula*) and hairy willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*).

6: A hedge of hawthorn, field maple (*Acer campestre*), hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) and plum (*Prunus domestica*).

The following trees are just outside the site boundaries:

7: A small clump of three Scot's pines (*Pinus sylvestris*).

8: A single horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*).

## **2.3 Fauna**

The only bird species recorded on the site was blue tit, in the hedge at area 6.

The following insect species were recorded:

Grassland (north-west corner): Small copper butterfly.

Area 4: *Epiphyas postvittana* and *Phyllonorycter leucographella* moths.

Area 6: *Stigmella floslactella* and *Lyonetia clerkella* moths.

## **2.4 Amenity**

The surfaced footpath linking Oakleaze Road and Pine Close is very well-used; the access point from Thicket Walk does not have a surfaced path and is less well-used..

# **3 EVALUATION**

## **3.1 Introduction**

Various criteria are used in assessing the biodiversity value of sites. These include rarity, in terms of either habitats or species, which can be viewed in a range of contexts from international to local and also degree of threat: some species remain widespread but are of conservation concern because their populations have declined rapidly. Some habitats take many centuries, or require very specialised conditions, to develop their full diversity and those that cannot be recreated are more highly valued than those that can be readily created. The extent and connectivity of habitats is of importance, since many species rely on large areas of habitat or on having access to different habitat types at different stages in their life cycle. This can be particularly important in urban areas, where species can be lost from small and isolated areas of habitat, even if these remain in good condition. Conversely, sites can have value in a wider context if, for example, they allow wildlife to colonise gardens and other sites in the surrounding area or if they allow wildlife to move into and across otherwise

inhospitable areas. In accessible urban areas the public appeal or visibility of wildlife is also a factor in contributing to public enjoyment and wellbeing.

Guidance on site evaluation is given in various documents, including the South Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, and has been followed here.

### **3.2 Habitats**

The grassland that dominates the site has been intensively managed and the use of fertilisers in particular has excluded all but the most tolerant species of plant. Frequent mowing means that the grassland is not of significant value for invertebrates, or for other animals.

The grassland across the site is of minimal nature conservation value.

The sycamore trees are of some value for epiphytes; and the ash tree is of interest as a mature specimen that is, as of now, showing no signs of ash die-back. The trees, scrub and hedge provide some habitat for birds and insects. They are of nature conservation value in a local context.

### **3.3 Protected and Invasive Species**

No signs of any protected species were seen on or around the site. The pollarded ash trees has holes and crevices that could be used by roosting bats.

No scheduled invasive species were recorded on the site.

### **3.4 Summary**

| Area                   | Scale of Interest | Features of Interest     |
|------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| Main grassland         | Minimal           |                          |
| Trees, scrub and hedge | Local context     | Use by birds and insects |
| Pollard ash            | Local context     | Potential bat roost      |

## **4 MANAGEMENT**

### **4.1 Aims**

To maximise the biodiversity interest of the site whilst maintaining its value for amenity and other interests.

### **4.2 Objectives**

To manage parts of the site as tall grassland.

To provide additional trees on the site.

To plant hedges on the boundaries of the site.

### 4.3 Constraints

The main constraints on management for biodiversity here is the need to maintain the value of the site for amenity, meaning that close mown grassland should be retained along a corridor adjacent to the surfaced footpath, and also that the entrance from Thicket Walk should be kept accessible as short grassland.

There are practical constraints on some potential measures. Initiatives such as the creation of beds of wildflower planting would be worth consideration if there is support and enthusiasm for such measures but have not been recommended here because they require a commitment to relatively intensive management if they are to be maintained in the long term.

### 4.4 Rationale

The soils here are too fertile to allow the successful creation of wildflower meadow, but there would be ecological benefit in allowing areas of grass to grow longer. This would provide habitat for insects and therefore for insectivorous animals such as bats and birds.

There are good opportunities to plant further hedges along site boundaries, and also to plant trees in small parts of the site. Fruit trees would be suitable due to their community value, as well as high attractiveness to wildlife.

### 4.5 Management Proposals

- 1 Avoid fertiliser use on any grassland.
- 2 In the areas shown on the attached map, cut the grass once a month over the growing season, in order to create a sward of a height intermediate between the present short turf and tall grassland.
- 3 Manage the remainder of the grassland using an amenity cut, as at present.
- 4 Plant hedges along the boundaries of the site using the following mix:

|                |                           |
|----------------|---------------------------|
| Field maple    | <i>Acer campestre</i>     |
| Dogwood        | <i>Cornus sanguinea</i>   |
| Hazel          | <i>Corylus avellana</i>   |
| Hawthorn       | <i>Crataegus monogyna</i> |
| Spindle        | <i>Euonymus europaea</i>  |
| Wayfaring tree | <i>Viburnum lantana</i>   |

- 5 Plant trees in the areas shown on the attached map. The following is a suggested planting list:

|       |                         |
|-------|-------------------------|
| Apple | <i>Malus domestica</i>  |
| Plum  | <i>Prunus domestica</i> |
| Pear  | <i>Pyrus communis</i>   |
| Rowan | <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> |

- 6 Install bug hotels at the locations shown. Suitable designs are given at the links below:

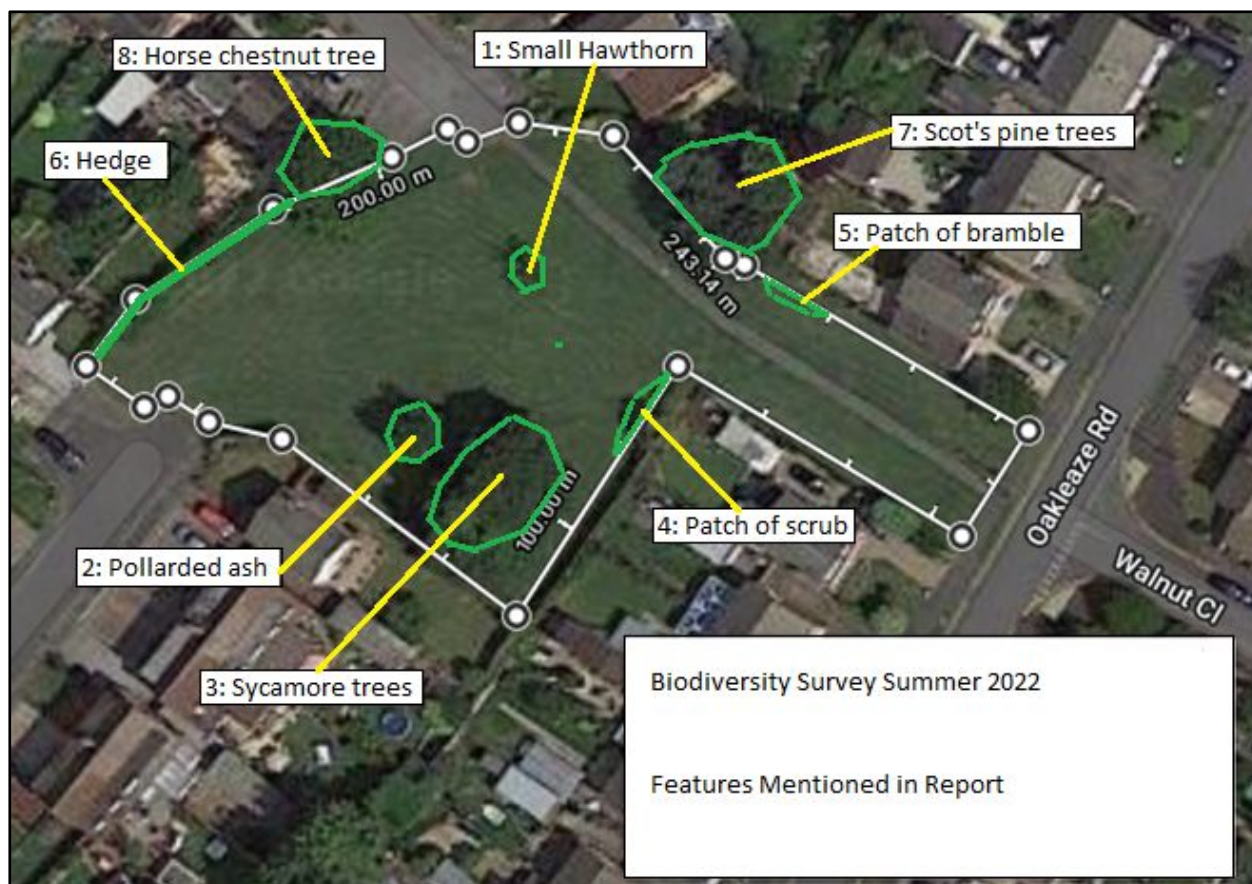
<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/nature-on-your-doorstep/garden-activities/build-a-bug-hotel/>

<https://schoolgardening.rhs.org.uk/Resources/Project/Make-a-bug-hotel>

Measures such as drilling holes in wooden posts can also provide nest sites for solitary bees – fence posts on the boundaries of the site may provide suitable locations.

#### 4.6 Work Planner

| Task                                                 | Year 1     | Year 2       | Year 3       | Year 4       | Year 5       |
|------------------------------------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Mow grassland area 1 once a month                    | April-Sept | April-Sept   | April-Sept   | April-Sept   | April-Sept   |
| Maintain amenity grassland, avoid use of fertilisers | Throughout | Throughout   | Throughout   | Throughout   | Throughout   |
| Plant hedges                                         | Oct-Feb    |              |              |              |              |
| Plant trees                                          |            | Oct-Feb      |              |              |              |
| Install bug hotels                                   |            | Feb          |              |              |              |
| Maintain bug hotels                                  |            | As necessary | As necessary | As necessary | As necessary |







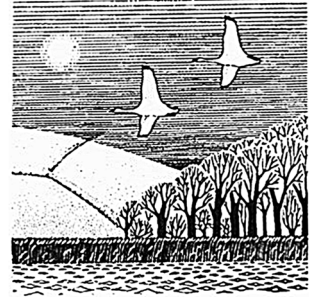
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## **THORNBURY GREEN SPACES**

## **ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT PLANS**

**SUMMER 2022**

**For**

**THORNBURY TOWN COUNCIL**

**THORNBURY CEMETERY**

# THORNBURY CEMETERY

## ECOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENT PLAN

### 1 INTRODUCTION

This plan is one of a series commissioned by Thornbury Town Council with the aim of identifying measures by which the biodiversity interest of green spaces in the town might be enhanced, whilst maintaining their value for both formal and informal recreation.

A site survey was carried out on 18th August 2022. It covered vegetation types and plant species, insects and birds, and potential for other groups was assessed.

### 2 SITE DESCRIPTION

#### 2.1 Summary

The cemetery consists largely of mown grassland between graves; the composition of the grassland varies between different areas of the site, with species-rich grassland concentrated in the western parts of the site and less diverse areas to the east. There are scattered trees throughout the cemetery and hedges on some of the boundaries.

The cemetery is within open countryside just to the north-west of Thornbury.

#### 2.2 Vegetation

The areas described below are shown on the attached map.

##### Area 1

The grassland between the graves is dominated red fescue (*Festuca rubra*) with other grass species including common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*) and yellow-oat grass (*Trisetum flavescens*). Herb species make up a high proportion of the sward, with species present including mouse-ear hawkweed (*Pilosella officinarum*), lesser hawkbit (*Leontodon saxatilis*), rough hawkbit (*Leontodon hispidus*), bird's-foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*), hedge bedstraw (*Galium album*) and glaucous sedge (*Carex flacca*). The mosses *Rhytidiadelphus squarrosus* and *Kindbergia praelonga* are locally frequent.

Mature and semi-mature trees, most of them conifers are scattered through the area.

Gravestones in the area support a reasonable range of lichens, which include *Parmelia saxatilis*, *Melanelixia fuliginosa*, *Tephromela atra* and *Acarospora fuscata*.

Disturbed ground on graves and elsewhere in the area supports a variety of ruderal species of plant, which include many-seeded goosefoot (*Lipandra polysperma*) and broad-leaved warty spurge (*Euphorbia platyphyllos*). More established vegetation on graves includes woodland species such as common dog violet (*Viola riviniana*), wild strawberry (*Fragaria vesca*) and barren strawberry (*Potentilla sterilis*).

### Area 2

The grassland here is less diverse and perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*) frequent. Herb species include yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), ribwort plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*) and autumnal hawkbit (*Scorzoneroide autumnalis*).

### Area 3

The sward across this area is less diverse than in area 1 but more diverse than in area 2. Herb species in this area include mouse-ear hawkweed, lesser hawkbit, common catsear (*Hypochaeris radicata*) and red clover (*Trifolium pratense*).

### Area 4

This is a clump of horse chestnut trees, with a single pedunculate oak.

### Area 5

This area comprises a larger clump of trees, which include copper beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) and red oak (*Quercus ruber*).

### Area 6

There is a well-developed hedge on the north-western boundary of the site, which includes two mature pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*) trees, but woody species are otherwise limited to hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*).

### Area 7

The northern boundary of the cemetery has a low hedge of English elm (*Ulmus procera*), hawthorn, dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*) and elder (*Sambucus nigra*). Trees, which include Italian alder (*Alnus cordata*), rowan (*Sorbus aucuparia*) and horse chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), have been planted adjacent to the hedge.

### Area 8

The eastern boundary of the cemetery has a tall line of trees, which include horse chestnut, ornamental cherry (*Prunus mahaleb*) and pedunculate oak, together with various conifers. An associated hedge has English elm, hawthorn, hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and dog rose (*Rosa canina*).

## **2.3 Fauna**

The following bird species were recorded: blue tit, chiffchaff, goldcrest, goldfinch, great tit, long-tailed tit, robin, wood pigeon and wren.

The insect species recorded were: rush veneer and *Agriphila tristella* moths; buff-tailed bumblebee and *Lasioglossum calceatum* bee; and *Syrphus vitripennis* fly.

## **2.4 Amenity**

The cemetery remains in active use and the maintenance of a suitable environment for funeral attendees and for visitors to graves is a prime consideration in site management.

## 3 EVALUATION

### 3.1 Introduction

Various criteria are used in assessing the biodiversity value of sites. These include rarity, in terms of either habitats or species, which can be viewed in a range of contexts from international to local and also degree of threat: some species remain widespread but are of conservation concern because their populations have declined rapidly. Some habitats take many centuries, or require very specialised conditions, to develop their full diversity and those that cannot be recreated are more highly valued than those that can be readily created. The extent and connectivity of habitats is of importance, since many species rely on large areas of habitat or on having access to different habitat types at different stages in their life cycle. This can be particularly important in urban areas, where species can be lost from small and isolated areas of habitat, even if these remain in good condition. Conversely, sites can have value in a wider context if, for example, they allow wildlife to colonise gardens and other sites in the surrounding area or if they allow wildlife to move into and across otherwise inhospitable areas. In accessible urban areas the public appeal or visibility of wildlife is also a factor in contributing to public enjoyment and wellbeing.

Guidance on site evaluation is given in various publications, including the South Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) and the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, and has been followed here.

### 3.2 Habitats

The grassland across the western part of the cemetery, which also has the oldest tombs, is moderately diverse. The plants present here include several species that are indicative of unimproved grassland, a habitat type that has undergone serious declines, largely as a result of agricultural intensification and is recognised as a priority for conservation in BAPs and the NERC Act. The indicator species recorded here include mouse-ear hawkweed, lesser hawkbit, rough hawkbit, ox-eye daisy, bird's-foot trefoil and glaucous sedge. The grassland is frequently mown, which limits its potential for invertebrates, but there may be species of interest associated with features such as the edges of graves.

Gravestones within the cemetery support a reasonable quantity and diversity of lichens. The BRERC (Bristol Regional Environmental Records Centre) has very few records of some of the species recorded – with none in South Gloucestershire for *Melanelixia fuliginosa*, *Tephromela atra* and *Acarospora fuscata* – but this may be due to under-recording. A full lichen survey would probably reveal species of interest – there is a good range of monuments here and air quality is reasonably high.

The western part of the cemetery is of nature conservation value in a South Gloucestershire context.

Other parts of the cemetery are of lower nature conservation value.

The grassland at area 2, across much of the eastern part of the cemetery, which has recent burials and is in active use, lacks any plant species associated with unimproved grassland.

This area is of minimal nature conservation value.

Area 3, in the south-western part of the cemetery, supports some species of unimproved grassland, notably mouse-ear hawkweed, but the diversity of these species is lower than in area 1.

This area is of nature conservation value in a local context.

The oaks in the hedge at area 4 are the most valuable of the trees and shrubs on the site. The hedges are not outstandingly diverse and their potential for birds and other wildlife is limited by their low height and narrow width. The trees within the cemetery are largely non-native, but they provide habitat for birds.

The trees and shrubs across the cemetery are of nature conservation value in a local context.

### **3.3 Protected and Invasive Species**

No sign of any protected species recorded was seen.

Bats may use habitats across the cemetery for foraging.

The cemetery lacks habitat suitable for any other protected species.

No scheduled invasive species were recorded on the site.

### **3.4 Summary**

| Area | Feature   | Scale of Interest               | Features of Interest                                                    |
|------|-----------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1    | Grassland | South Gloucestershire context   | Diverse vegetation, including indicator species of unimproved grassland |
| 1    | Monuments | Local context, possibly greater | Lichen populations                                                      |
| 3    | Grassland | Local context                   | Small populations of unimproved grassland indicator species             |
| 6    | Oak trees | Local context                   |                                                                         |
| All  | Trees     | South Gloucestershire context   |                                                                         |

## **4 MANAGEMENT**

### **4.1 Aims**

To maximise the biodiversity interest of the site whilst maintaining its role as a cemetery

### **4.2 Objectives**

To maintain species-rich grassland on the site.

To maintain graves and monuments in a suitable condition for lichen growth.

To enhance site boundaries.

### **4.3 Constraints**

The main constraint on management for biodiversity here is the need to ensure the good condition of the monuments. For these and general amenity reasons it is appropriate to maintain the grassland around most of the site in a fairly formal condition.

### **4.4 Rationale**

The cemetery is currently of high interest for biodiversity and significant changes to existing management practices are not recommended.

The main biodiversity objective here is to ensure that species-rich grassland survives in the cemetery. This requires management of the grassland, which is normally in the form of either grazing or mowing. Grazing is not possible here so a mowing regime should continue. The lower diversity and therefore limited nature conservation value in parts of the cemetery is due to high levels of fertility in the soil, probably a consequence of former agricultural management. There is very little that can be done to lower nutrient levels, but in the long term continues mowing without any further inputs of fertiliser would lead to a gradual increase in diversity.

The grassland is at present mown frequently to maintain a short sward. This regime allows most grassland plant species, which are perennial, to survive but not to flower. The current management has maintained the nature conservation value, but there would be some gain if the grassland was allowed to grow slightly taller so that low-growing plants could flower, which would have benefits for insects. Arisings should be gathered and removed in order to keep soil nutrient levels low and to protect populations of fungi. Meadow-length grassland would be harder to manage and might not be welcomed by site-users.

The shorter sward also keeps monuments in better condition by discouraging vegetation growth across stones and by allowing access to stones for management. This has benefits for lichen populations, as well as for heritage and amenity reasons.

There may, however, be potential for allowing narrow strips of grassland to grow tall alongside some of the site boundaries. This would create additional habitat for insects and for insectivorous wildlife such as birds and bats. Allowing hedges to grow taller and additional tree planting along boundaries would also benefit biodiversity.

The cemetery has a good balance of trees and open habitats, and this should be maintained – additional tree planting away from the boundaries is not recommended but any lost trees should be replaced.

#### **4.5 Management Proposals**

- 1 No fertilisers or herbicides of any kind should be used on any area of grassland.
- 2 Continue grassland mowing across the cemetery. In order to allow low-growing plants to flower, whilst maintaining a formal appearance and protecting graves, mow once a month from April to September set mower blades to 100mm. Gather and remove arisings from at least the more species-rich parts of the cemetery (area 1).
- 3 Mow north-eastern part of cemetery (area 2) annually in August, gather and remove arisings.
- 4 Continue to keep monuments clear of scrub and ivy.
- 5 Allow tall grassland to develop as shown on the map below. Keep clear of encroaching scrub as necessary.
- 6 Allow the hedges on the north-western and northern boundaries of the cemetery to grow taller.
- 7 Plant trees alongside hedges as indicated on the map below, using the following species:

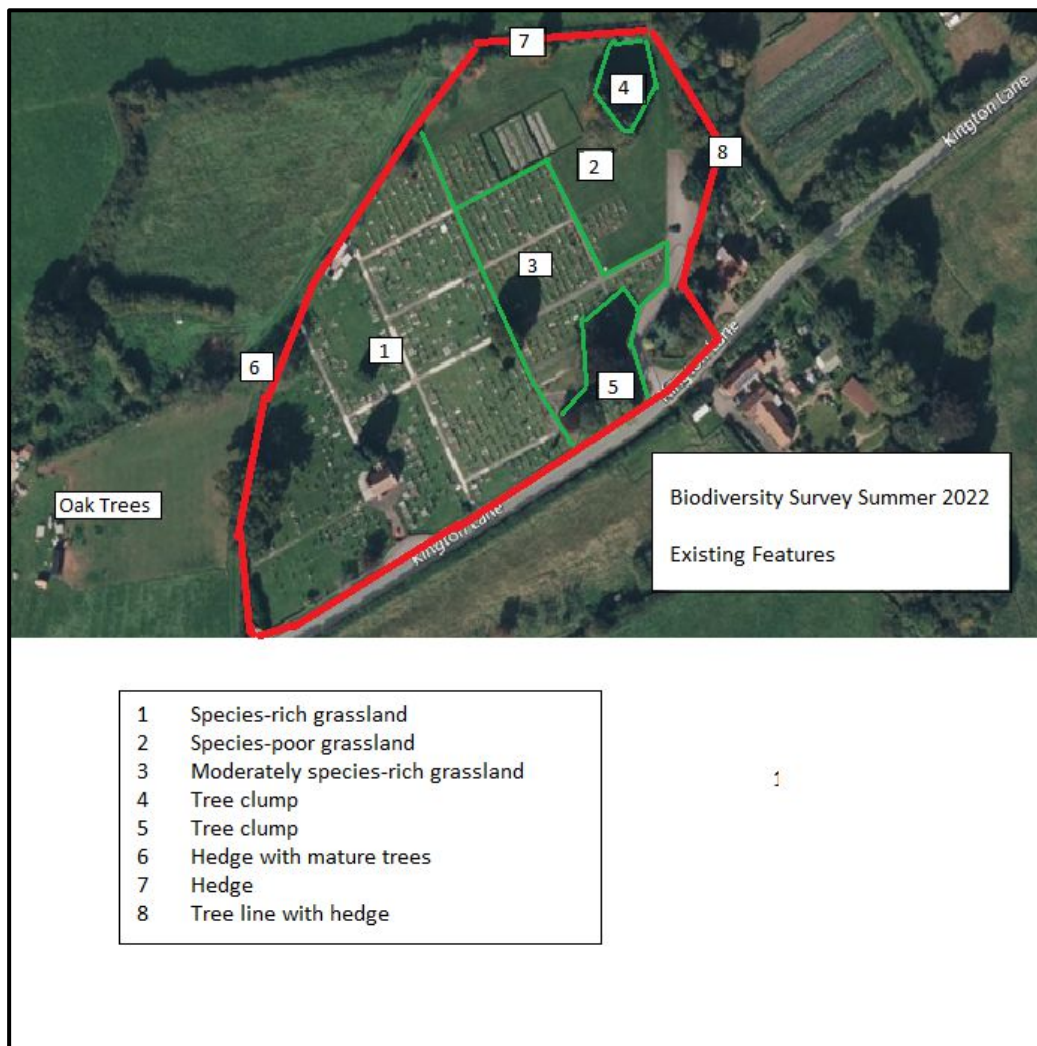
|              |                         |
|--------------|-------------------------|
| Field maple  | <i>Acer campestre</i>   |
| Silver birch | <i>Betula pendula</i>   |
| Crab apple   | <i>Malus sylvestris</i> |
| Rowan        | <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> |

- 8 Fit bird and bat boxes to trees. Boxes can be either purchased commercially or made by the local community or schools.
- 9 Retain any dead wood as a habitat feature, place in partial shade on the eastern boundary of the cemetery. Logs should be kept in as large sections as possible, because this makes them difficult to move and also provides optimal habitat for wildlife.



## 4.6 Work Planner

| Task                                               | Year 1                         | Year 2                         | Year 3                         | Year 4                         | Year 5                         |
|----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Mow area 1, gather and remove arisings             | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              |
| Keep monuments clear of ivy and scrub              | As necessary                   | As necessary                   | As necessary                   | As necessary                   | As necessary                   |
| Mow area 2, gather and remove arisings             | August                         | August                         | August                         | August                         | August                         |
| Clear scrub in area 3                              | Sept-Feb                       |                                | Sept-Feb                       |                                | Sept-Feb                       |
| Mow area 3                                         | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              | Monthly, Apr-Sept              |
| Trim back trees on edge of area 4                  | Nov-Jan                        |                                | Nov-Jan                        |                                | Nov-Jan                        |
| Fit bird and bat boxes to trees in area 4          | January                        | January                        |                                |                                |                                |
| Check bird and bat boxes, and replace as necessary |                                |                                | January                        | January                        | January                        |
| Maintain bug hotel                                 | As necessary                   | As necessary                   | As necessary                   | As necessary                   | As necessary                   |
| Create dead wood piles in area 4                   | As dead wood becomes available | As dead wood becomes available | As dead wood becomes available | As dead wood becomes available | As dead wood becomes available |









Photograph 1: Part of area 1, with tree in area 6 in background



Photograph 2: Diverse grassland between monuments, providing a rich habitat for plants of fungi



Photograph 3: Species-poor grassland in area 2

**Correspondence – Additional Seating on Mundy Playing Fields**

**From:** XXX

**Sent:** 08 October 2022 15:12

**To:** Thornbury TC - Info <[info@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:info@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk)>

**Subject:** [External] Benches at Mundy Playing Field

Good afternoon

As Thornbury residents my husband and I often take our young daughters to Mundy Playing Field and have noticed a lack of seating. It's very difficult to get anywhere to sit on busy days and for such a big park there's a definite lack of benches.

It would be better for older visitors and residents too (like my 90 year old Grandmother) if they knew there was definitely a seat available for them when visiting the park. More benches would increase inclusivity and use of the space across generations too.

Please could you ask the Chairman of the Town Council to add this to the next appropriate agenda? I wonder if any CIL money could be allocated to seating?

I look forward to hearing the Town Council's thoughts.

Best wishes

XXX

**From:** Hayley Brock <[Hayley.Brock@southglos.gov.uk](mailto:Hayley.Brock@southglos.gov.uk)>  
**Sent:** 15 November 2022 16:24  
**To:** Thornbury TC - Info <[info@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:info@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** [External] Request for New Bin

Good Afternoon

We have received the following request, we do not currently have any resource available to install new bins, and wondered if you would consider the request?

Email sent 11.11.22 When the new bus stop o/s 1 Primrose Drive, Thornbury on Morton Way, was planned for, we asked that a waste bin could be installed to stop people waiting at the bus stop from throwing waste into our garden. This did not happen. Rubbish is regularly thrown in our garden directly by the bus stop. There is currently a towel, a bottle, sweets wrappers, food wrappers. This is now a continuous problem for us as well as there being rubbish dropped on the pavement and left in the shelter. A waste bin would alleviate this issue. Please can the council consider installing one? Thank you. -- OS 1 Primrose Dr on Morton Way, Thornbury.

Thanks  
Hayley

Hayley Brock

Cleansing Operations Manager  
Design & Operations  
Place Operations (StreetCare)  
Department for Place

Tel: 07585706969

[www.southglos.gov.uk](http://www.southglos.gov.uk)



**ROSPA – Play Safety Inspection Reports – April 2002**  
**Summary of Findings/Remedial Actions Required**

High Risk  
Medium Risk  
Low Risk

THERE ARE NO HIGH RISK FINDINGS IN ANY OF THE 2022 REPORTS

| AREA                                                        | FINDING/REMEDIAL ACTION                                                                                                                      | ACTION TAKEN/PLANNED                                                                                               | COMPLETE |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Mundy Playing Fields<br>Play Area<br><br>(18 Very Low Risk) | Cableway – dismantle and inspect supporting components.                                                                                      | Contractors have dismantled and completed inspection.                                                              | COMPLETE |
|                                                             | Climber/Pyramid – dismantle and inspect supporting components.                                                                               | Contractors have dismantled and completed inspection.                                                              | COMPLETE |
|                                                             | Seating – replace missing cap and repair worn areas where ground erosion present.                                                            |                                                                                                                    |          |
|                                                             | Signage in fitness area – repair damaged sign and update existing signage.                                                                   | New signage ordered and fitted.                                                                                    | COMPLETE |
|                                                             | Carousel/Accessible – monitor insufficient protective surfacing.                                                                             |                                                                                                                    | MONITOR  |
|                                                             | Carousel/Whirl Bird – refit surfacing tiles – gaps have opened up between tiles causing trip hazard. Repair damaged tile.                    | Advice/quote being sought regarding new surfacing – contractor has attended site/awaiting advice/quote.            |          |
|                                                             | Splash Pad fencing – cut off/file down projecting bolt thread or use correct length of bolt, tighten bolts, minor repairs needed to fencing. | Parts ordered to replace all bolts – staff working through the replacements.                                       |          |
|                                                             | Slide/Embankment – repair worn areas due to ground erosion.                                                                                  | Contractor has laid new surfacing.                                                                                 | COMPLETE |
|                                                             | Multiplay/Toddler – ground erosion, consider adding grass matting to prevent wear.                                                           |                                                                                                                    |          |
|                                                             | Swing/Accessible – dismantle supporting components and check for wear, tighten connecting nuts on swing seat eye-bolts.                      | Note – the unit has been dismantled and checked, but the nuts have not been fully tightened as they should not be. | COMPLETE |
|                                                             | Carousel/Flush – replace worn bearings.                                                                                                      | Worn bearings replaced.                                                                                            | COMPLETE |
|                                                             | Trampoline – make good uneven surface, monitor insufficient protective surfacing.                                                            |                                                                                                                    |          |
|                                                             | Rocker/Gyro Spiral – repair area of worn surfacing.                                                                                          |                                                                                                                    |          |
|                                                             | Fitness/Power Push – ground erosion present, consider adding grass matting to prevent wear.                                                  |                                                                                                                    |          |

High Risk  
Medium Risk  
Low Risk

| AREA                                | FINDING/REMEDIAL ACTION                                                   | ACTION TAKEN/PLANNED                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | COMPLETE |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Skate Park<br><br>(3 Very Low Risk) | Half Pipe – plates lifting, repair.                                       | Contractor had been instructed in 2021 to complete all skatepark repairs (funds in place/agreed) – works partially completed before contractor became unwell. Agreed with contractor that if not able to progress by early 2023, then another contractor would be sought. |          |
|                                     | Litter Bin – replace missing cap.                                         | “ “                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |          |
|                                     | Half Pipe – item has corrosion, treat and repair.                         | “ “                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |          |
|                                     | Quarter Pipe/Flat Bank – item has corrosion, treat and repair.            | “ “                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |          |
|                                     | Quarter Pipe/Flat Bank – plates lifting, repair.                          | “ “                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |          |
|                                     | Quarter Pipe/900mm – plates lifting, repair.                              | “ “                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |          |
|                                     | Quarter Pipe/900mm – there is significant corrosion on this item, repair. | “ “                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |          |

| AREA                                           | FINDING/REMEDIAL TASK                                                                            | ACTION TAKEN/PLANNED                                                                                 | COMPLETE |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Streamleaze Play Area<br><br>(5 Very Low Risk) | Swing/Junior – remove shackle bolt and check bush and shackle pin wear on supporting components. | Completed – new seat/chains have been ordered as a result of the inspection and will be fitted asap. | COMPLETE |
|                                                | Gates – loose in ground, reset.                                                                  |                                                                                                      |          |
|                                                | Gates – make level trip points on surface, make good worn ground areas.                          |                                                                                                      |          |
|                                                | Seating – make good worn ground areas.                                                           |                                                                                                      |          |
|                                                | Signage – replace damaged sign.                                                                  | Sign replaced.                                                                                       | COMPLETE |
|                                                | Basketball Post – treat and repair corrosion, fit appropriate warning sign.                      | Warning sign fitted.                                                                                 | COMPLETE |
|                                                | Swing/Junior – replace worn links and shackles on swing seat.                                    | New seat ordered – to be fitted asap.                                                                | COMPLETE |
|                                                | Swing/Junior – repair worn surfacing.                                                            |                                                                                                      |          |
|                                                | Trampoline – make good worn ground areas.                                                        |                                                                                                      |          |
|                                                | Swing/Basket – repair worn surface.                                                              |                                                                                                      |          |

High Risk  
Medium Risk  
Low Risk

| AREA                                      | FINDING/REMEDIAL ACTION                                                                                                                                    | ACTION TAKEN/PLANNED | COMPLETE |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Osprey Play Area<br><br>(2 Very Low Risk) | Slide/Embankment – two areas of ground erosion/one with rock exposed, consider adding grass matting to prevent wear and repair area of existing surfacing. |                      |          |

| AREA                                        | FINDING/REMEDIAL ACTION                                                                             | ACTION TAKEN/PLANNED                                                           | COMPLETE |
|---------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Eastland Play Area<br><br>(6 Very Low Risk) | Boulders – should be removed from site or arranged and installed as natural play boulders.          | They will be moved soon – currently deciding on best location to move them to. |          |
|                                             | Gate – repair damage.                                                                               | Planned replacement in 2023 – low risk actions.                                |          |
|                                             | Pathways – moderate repairs needed.                                                                 | “ “                                                                            |          |
|                                             | Gate – cut off and file down projecting bolt thread or use correct length of bolt.                  | “ “                                                                            |          |
|                                             | Slides/Embankment – tighten/replace loose/missing bolts.                                            | “ “                                                                            |          |
|                                             | Slides/Embankment – drill holes present in run out, monitor to ensure items aren't placed in holes. | “ “                                                                            |          |
|                                             | Slides/Embankment – replace decaying timber.                                                        | “ “                                                                            |          |

| AREA                                        | FINDING/REMEDIAL ACTION                                                                                                | ACTION TAKEN/PLANNED                            | COMPLETE |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Chantry Play Area*<br><br>(0 Very Low Risk) | Multiplay – barrier top rail has dislodged.                                                                            | The play equipment provider has now fixed this. | COMPLETE |
|                                             | Multiplay – finger entrapment.                                                                                         | The play equipment provider has now fixed this. | COMPLETE |
|                                             | Multiplay – there are crushing points for the user between moving and/or stationary parts of the equipment during use. | The play equipment provider has now fixed this. | COMPLETE |

\* Inspected later due to asbestos situation – inspection carried out in September 2022

The following areas need only be surveyed every four years – the findings/actions below are from the 2021 survey and are carried forward onto this report so that they can continue to be monitored by the Committee.

High Risk  
Medium Risk  
Low Risk

| AREA                                | FINDING/REMEDIAL ACTION                     | ACTION TAKEN/PLANNED | COMPLETE |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Oakleaze Green<br>(1 Very Low Risk) | Pathways/Internal – repair cracked surface. |                      |          |
|                                     | Signage – treat and repair corrosion.       |                      |          |

| AREA                              | FINDING/REMEDIAL ACTION                                                                          | ACTION TAKEN/PLANNED | COMPLETE |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Thicket Walk<br>(0 Very Low Risk) | Dog Waste Bin – treat and repair corrosion.                                                      |                      |          |
|                                   | General Surface/Grass – remove tree stump.                                                       |                      |          |
|                                   | Fencing/Chain Link – clear debris by area of wooden fencing. Minor repairs needed to chain link. |                      |          |

| AREA                                                         | FINDING/REMEDIAL ACTION                                                             | ACTION TAKEN/PLANNED | COMPLETE |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|----------|
| Area by Stream,<br>Mundy Playing Fields<br>(2 Very Low Risk) | Stream – ground erosion present, repair worn areas.                                 |                      |          |
|                                                              | Stone Foot Bridge – repair trip points on surface.                                  |                      |          |
|                                                              | Footpath – remove damaged fencing. Remove fallen vegetation. Replace dog waste bin. |                      |          |

| AREA                                        | FINDING/REMEDIAL ACTION                                                      | ACTION TAKEN/PLANNED                                                                                                                                                               | COMPLETE |
|---------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Chantry Playing Fields<br>(0 Very Low Risk) | Rugby Posts – dismantle and inspect to check condition of in-ground fixings. | Annual post inspection (separate to RoSPA) has indicated that the posts need to be replaced. In light of RoSPA identifying this as high risk, immediate removal of posts arranged. | COMPLETE |
|                                             | General Surface/Grass – remove fallen tree.                                  | Tree made safe, branches removed, placed across bund as barrier/home for wildlife.                                                                                                 | COMPLETE |
|                                             | Fencing/Chain Link – loose in ground, reset. Moderate repairs needed.        |                                                                                                                                                                                    |          |
|                                             | Kissing Gates – surface is uneven, make good.                                |                                                                                                                                                                                    |          |
|                                             | Boot Brushes – at end of serviceable life, remove or make good.              |                                                                                                                                                                                    |          |
|                                             | Gates – minor repairs are needed. Surface is uneven, make good.              |                                                                                                                                                                                    |          |