

## Agenda Item 6

For information - An update on the town's parks and green spaces

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### Summary

This report provides a summary of what's happening in the town's parks and green spaces.

It's a list-based update for the committee and the town: something that's concise and that's quick to read and reference.

The first part of the report focuses on projects and discrete pieces of work - meaning work with clearly identifiable end points.

This work is split into three categories:

- Recently completed
- Ongoing
- Coming soon

Projects and work listed in the **Coming soon** category are expected to be completed between Council Matters meetings. Naturally, weather and ground conditions can get in the way of this. And there are also times that we have to react to things that have happened and to new opportunities that appear.

The second part of the report notes the day-to-day work that is being completed at the present time and the essential maintenance and upkeep that happens whatever the weather. This is mentioned for completeness, but also for context. Necessarily, we balance how much time we spend on upkeep with time spent on improvements.



The new wildlife pond by the Roundhouse – designed and created with Froglife

### Recently completed

- With lots of community support, we planted Frome's first Tiny Forest at Egford Lane

- Hedge planting around the play area at the Showfield – filling some gaps; adding a greater variety of native species; and creating a hedge that will be thicker and even better for wildlife in the future
- The town’s speed indicator device (SID) has already been put up on Marston Road; and in the town centre – on the bridge  
The SID moves every two weeks – and is currently up on Culverhill (by the Dippy)
- The Christmas tree and town centre lights have been taken down
- Making bird and bat boxes  
Some of these have gone straight into the green spaces that we look after; others are for community groups that we’re working with – including The Wild Bunch – and these will be put up in people’s gardens
- Making hedgehog homes too – another step supporting our wildlife
- Together with Froglife and FROGS, we’ve created a wildlife pond next to the Roundhouse (see picture above)

### Ongoing

- Sharing the data coming from the SID with Community Speedwatch for analysis  
As well as data on vehicle speeds, the SID also collects traffic volume data – which could also be useful for project planning in the future
- Discussions with MDC about the possible transfer of some more green spaces to FTC  
The next step for this is more detailed site checks: looking at ideas and opportunities – and also assessing the operational challenges and current condition of each space
- Updating the plan for Egford Lane ahead of some more community engagement in spring
- Reviewing the safe working practices for the Rangers – including coronavirus risk assessments
- Re-checking and re-filling the grit bins – and reviewing requests for new grit bins
- Conversations with the camper at the Dippy
- Working with FORF on the Adderwell/Edmund Park bridge project  
The next step for this project is some more detailed and technical conversations with Network Rail and the Environment Agency; including discussing the height the bridge will need to be above the water level



One of the new hedgehog houses that’s been made by the Rangers

### Coming soon

- The construction of the tennis club's new pavilion starts soon – and we've agreed vehicle access across Mary Baily to help the club with the first part of the project  
NB. This work will have started on Monday 7 February - between this report going out and the meeting
- More tree and hedge planting as part of the Wild about Trees project
- Community engagement at the Showfield (with more detail on this below)

### Day to day

- Park checks and play checks
- Play repairs, upkeep and TLC
- Hedge cutting and tree works
- Leaf clearance
- Reviewing the paperwork for the events and regular activities already happening in the parks; and supporting proposals for new events and activities as they're put forward

### A strategic pause for our management and improvement plans

We recently paused the reviews of our management and improvement plans.

This was to allow for further work on the town's play strategy – which has now been adopted - and for more detailed discussions about the declared climate and ecological emergencies – which are ongoing.

As such, we'll start bringing updated management plans back to Council Matters for discussion and review from the next committee meeting on 4 May 2022.

The plans currently set to come to the May meeting are those for New Road; North Parade, Packsaddle and the Roundhouse.

### Community engagement at the Showfield

Before the next review of the management plan for the Showfield, we'll be giving people the opportunity to have their say on the space – welcoming opinions, questions and ideas.

We'll be discussing some particular ideas and proposals as part of this:

- The Collegians' proposal for a toilet block building next to the football pitch
- A Healing Garden project – working with the medical practice
- A Tiny Forest at the Showfield

And talking in detail about play at the Showfield – reflecting the findings and recommendations in the Play Strategy.



Play opportunities can include creative grass cuts to encourage things like racing, jumping and rolling

This work will happen in Spring – with full information beforehand, including when we’ll be in the Showfield for people to talk to us.

#### Improving the toilets in Victoria Park

##### Current steps

We’ve received a quote for CCTV options for the toilets – but more importantly some practical design advice too.

Indeed, although the cost of the cameras and the necessary setup is going to be a relatively small sum in the overall project, ensuring the cameras are sensibly positioned is essential.

We’re also reviewing the quotes for the refurbishment/demolition asbestos survey of the current building.

With this survey, we’ll be in a position to update the project brief; ahead of conversations with the design and build companies that specialise in public toilets.



## The Boyle Cross fountain

The fountain is switched off at the moment; but we're planning to have it running again this month.

One of the reasons it has been switched off is that we have been exploring options for the expert checks and maintenance of the fountain that are required in addition to the Rangers' operational checks.

These expert checks – and the associated upkeep and repairs – have been completed by a company called Ocmis to date.

However, we're now finalising a planned preventative maintenance contract with a new contractor and once this contract is signed, we'll have the fountain running again.

