

Agenda item 4

For information - Review of Nurture Open Spaces Work Programme

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The work programme is on track – see table below. Key highlights:

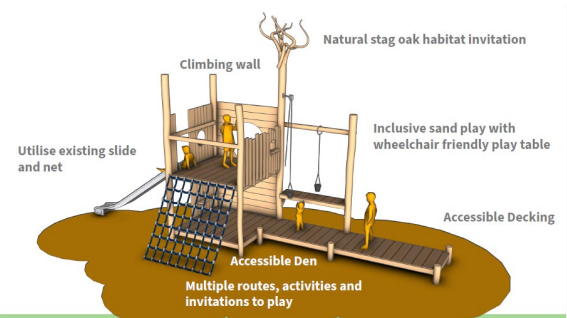
- Egford – the Play Area has had a makeover and is much enjoyed by the local community
- Welshmill – Preparations for a new tower are underway and this will take place from 27 March
- Henley Way – Review of options taking place at this oversight meeting
- Milk St – After much consultation, a wholesale makeover of the site has taken place based on a design from the community
- Management Plans for Mary Baily and Victoria Park are being considered at this Oversight report
- Skatepark – Project identified in new location in Mary Baily, this will be tested with the public in May and a community lead project proposal will be brought to full council possibly in June
- Weylands – hedge has been laid, as well as Wassail event
- Ranger base – refurbishment works have been finished
- Community Woodland site at Spring Gardens – Direct talks with horse owner underway with a view to horses being removed imminently
- Adderwell Water Meadow – Money has been raised by the community, Final legals are being reviewed, delays due to requests explicitly excluded from the Heads of Terms being included
- Devolution – FTC is working closely to complete the legals on Depot by end March and on Open Spaces by end May. Aim is to complete dilapidation works to the depot with a view to being in full working order before the land is transferred. The 2nd ride on mower (Grillo) has been ordered and once delivered will stored here



Mary Baily Management Plan



Skatepark Options



Open Spaces Programme:

Project	Update	Status
Convene people who use our open spaces to ensure existing groups are represented but also to reach out to other users whom we have not yet engaged	Mgmt. Plans for Mary Baily and Vic Park brought to March 25 Oversight Community lead Skatepark project being reviewed before being brought to full council Co-design project with young people for Mary Baily brought to March 25 Oversight	
Work with the forum to consider resident involvement in the maintenance and development of open spaces	Ditto above	
Identify open spaces that we want to take on during the creation of the new Unitary	Devolution: HoT for land and Depot being actively reviewed with a view to transfer by March 25 for Depot and May 25 for land	
Consider how FTC would service and maintain a growing number of open spaces	Dilapidations works to depot to be undertaken before land transfer in May 25. 2 nd Grillo purchased. Review whether extra ranger(s) needed, if so business case will be brought to Oversight	
Work with housing and planning to agree which open spaces should be maintained and which could be made available for housing	Ongoing	
Ensure our parks and open spaces are places that people value highly to enjoy, are accessible and inclusive, and support a wide range of outdoor activities and bio-diversity	Review of management plans to ensure inclusivity (see above for MB/VP) Broadway Community Garden – Path works now complete, next step is removal of non-FTC installations from lower land area Milk Street – site has now been transformed Biodiversity management plan being produced – update at March 25 Oversight Town Centre Ranger – street sweeper in use March 25 Henley Way – Review of options Oversight March 25	
Other - Collaboration with partner agencies on land, works and maintenance across Open Spaces and the town	Ongoing as discussions arise Working with Frome Medical Practice Community woodland site – Actively reviewing removal or horses Purchase of land at Adderwell – Awaiting final legal details to be confirmed	

In addition to reviewing the Open Spaces we will also be presenting an update on the development of a plan as a response to the nature emergency the council has declared.

Frome Nature Recovery Plan

Frome Town Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019, followed by the publication of a Climate Emergency Strategy in 2020, which incorporated community-driven recommendations on energy, transport, and waste.

Recognising the interconnection between climate change and biodiversity loss, FTC declared an Ecological Emergency in 2021. In January 2022, the Resilience Team provided an update on actions taken against the strategy and invited the community to review, prioritise, and contribute new actions for the following year. Since then, the Resilience and the Environment teams continued to deliver climate and biodiversity related projects, but no further updates or community consultations have taken place.



In 2025, the newly appointed Climate Action Lead Matt Mellen in collaboration with the Resilience Team secured a spot on Somerset Wildlife Trusts (SWT) [Act To Adapt programme](#) (funded by Somerset Rivers Authority). Over the rest of the year, Matt will work alongside SWT to engage communities in Frome around climate change adaptation and co-create an adaptation plan filled with practical actions we can take together to build our resilience as a town to the changing climate. Many of the outputs from climate adaptation planning are nature-based solutions such as creating new habitats to protect against flooding. Jo Morris will also be working on this plan and leading on the Nature Recovery section as we reimagine how Frome operates in a warmer world.

A core element of preparing this plan will be an adaptation workshop at Frome Town Hall on - Tue 13 May 2025 - 19.00 - 21.00. [Free tickets can be booked here](#).

Nature Recovery Plan Preparation – the process

- April – May: Stakeholder mapping, biodiversity data collection, and ecological analysis.
- May 13th: Community workshop.
- May – June: Public consultation, including promotion during Great Big Green Week (June 7-15).
- July – September: Data analysis, plan development, funding exploration, and alignment with Somerset's Nature Recovery Strategy (which is being launched in July 2025).
- September – October: Draft plan launch and community consultation.
- October – December: Final plan established and working groups formed.
- 2026: Implementation phase begins.

Examples of possible outcomes

- Short-Term (0-2 years):
 - Community led actions - Establish Pocket Meadows that community groups and individuals can adopt and expand tree planting & rewilding projects.
 - Expand community-led initiatives and events promoting wildlife friendly gardening and habitat creation (bird/bat boxes, hibernaculums, ponds) in partnership with Frome Wild Bunch and other biodiversity groups.
 - Educational initiatives on soil health, health of the river, and local organic food production.
 - Support Toad & Frog Patrol, install wildlife road signage, and maintain pesticide-free practices.
- Long-Term (3-10 years):
 - Strengthen partnerships with farmers & landowners for regenerative practices.
 - Develop a town-wide biodiversity net gain policy for new developments.
 - Expand green jobs & nature-based skills training in local schools.



Roll Out – Spring 2026

Once the draft plan has been developed, reviewed with the local community, and adopted the key next stage will be to roll this out to communities with workshops in local venues to enable as many people to engage as possible, as the plan can only succeed if it influences the attitudes and actions of the wider community. This will be an important and high profile work stream and is likely to happen from spring 2026.