



UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

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Town Clerk – Holly Goring

Meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** to be held on
Wednesday 28 September 2022 at 7.00pm
in the Council Chambers, Civic Centre, Uckfield

AGENDA

Under The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, members of the public are able to film or record during a committee meeting.

1.0. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and Officers are reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on this Agenda. Should any Member consider that they require a dispensation in relation to any prejudicial interest that they may have, they are asked to make a written application to the Clerk well in advance of the meeting.

Notice should be given at this part of the meeting of any intended declaration. The nature of the interest should then be declared later at the commencement of the item or when the interest becomes apparent.

2.0. STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON MATTERS ON THE AGENDA AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

4.0. MINUTES

- 4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on 27 June 2022
- 4.2. Action list – for information only
- 4.3. Project Monitoring List – for information only

5.0. FINANCE

- 5.1. To note bills paid
- 5.2. To note the Income and Expenditure report up to 31 July 2022

6.0. ADMINISTRATION

- 6.1 To note draft minutes from the Strengthening Local Relations (SLR) Meeting on 13 July 2022
- 6.2 Update on Allotment Competition 2022

7.0. ENVIRONMENT

- 7.1. To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates
- 7.2 To consider five-year management plan for Hempstead Meadows LNR
- 7.3 To note temporary bench removal – Hempstead Meadows LNR (anti-social behaviour)
- 7.4 To consider street light repairs

8.0. LEISURE

- 8.1 To consider proposals for the reconfiguration of West Park Football Pitches
- 8.2 To re-consider cricket net repairs

9.0. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

- 9.1 Update from the Sports Facilities Working Group – reviewing fees and charges

10.0. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

- 10.1. Active Uckfield
- 10.2. Age Concern
- 10.3. All Weather Pitch Operational Group
- 10.4. Conservators of Ashdown Forest (attached)
- 10.5. West Park LNR and Hempstead Meadows LNR – Supporters Group
- 10.6. Luxford Centre Management Committee (attached)
- 10.7. Uckfield and District Twinning Association
- 10.8. Uckfield Festival Association
- 10.9. Uckfield Parkrun Board
- 10.10. Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee (attached)
- 10.11. Uckfield Youth Club Board
- 10.12. Wealden Bus Alliance/Weald Link

11.0. CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

12.0. CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

To consider whether to **RESOLVE** to exclude the press and public (pursuant to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960) during consideration of the following confidential business to be conducted: -

- 12.1. To consider a report on the Marketing programme



Town Clerk

22 September 2022

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the **Environment and Leisure Committee** held on
Monday 27 June 2022 at 7.00pm
in the Weald Hall, Civic Centre

PRESENT:

Cllr. S. Mayhew (Chair)
Cllr. K. Bedwell
Cllr. D. Bennett
Cllr. J. Edwards
Cllr. D. Ward

Cllr. A. Smith (Deputy Chair)
Cllr. J. Beesley
Cllr. B. Cox
Cllr. D French

IN ATTENDANCE:

Councillor C. Macve
Two members of the public

Rachel Newton – Senior Administrative Officer
Minutes taken by Rachel Newton

1.0. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members and officers were reminded to make any declarations of personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have in relation to items on the agenda. No declarations of interest were announced.

2.0. STATEMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC ON MATTERS ON THE AGENDA AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

EL03.06.22 It was **RESOLVED** to suspend standing orders to enable Cllr. C. Macve to speak in relation to item 7.2 on the agenda.

Cllr C. Macve fully supported the proposal for a new Queen's Platinum Jubilee Sign on the beacon at Victoria Pleasure Ground since there was already a commemorative sign on the other side of the beacon to commemorate the royal occasion of the Diamond Jubilee in 2012.

EL04.06.22 Members **RESOLVED** to reinstate standing orders.

3.0. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

4.0. MINUTES

4.1. Minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 16th May 2022

The Senior Administrative Officer advised that there was a small typo in the previous minutes under item 8.1 regarding the idea of the provision of suitable parking for motorhomes to attract tourism into town. One of the car park ideas was Bell Walk car park (not Fairwarp car park). The minutes had been amended accordingly.

EL.05.06.22 It was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee held on the 16th May 2022 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

4.2. Action list

Members considered the action list which had been previously circulated and agreed to remove the following items which had been completed:

EL.43.01.20 – To receive an update on the ecological report on the Town Council's Land at Bellbrook

The Town Council's Solicitors had been asked to arrange an update with Land Registry. The Estates and Facilities Manager had chased the solicitor for an update on 28 April 2022. HM Land Registry had rejected the original approach on the basis they were overwhelmed with applications and were only dealing with certain types. Since the Land Registry system was taking up to twelve months to deal with some applications, the Estates team would check their policy on this. At the Land Registry (Title Number ESX22093) the land was merely described as land south of Bell Lane, Uckfield. So far as the Town Council records are concerned, council members could name this area as they wished (decision had already been resolved on this matter).

EL.18.07.21 – To consider options to review the gate access to Ridgewood Recreation Ground off New Road

Work had not yet been carried out as a result although no issues had been reported since July 2021.

EL.31.09.21 – To consider opportunities to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee event took place on Thurs 2 June 2022 (from 6pm).

4.3. Project Monitoring List – For information only

Members noted the report and agreed to remove the following item:

FC82.01.22 – Platinum Jubilee Celebrations

This project had now been completed and a review of expenditure would be incorporated into the income and expenditure report at the next committee meeting.

5.0. FINANCE

5.1. To note bills paid

Members noted the report.

5.2. To note the Income and Expenditure report

(No income and expenditure reports were available due to year end processes)

6.0. ADMINISTRATION

6.1 To request any items for Strengthening Local Relations meeting on 13 July 2022

A compiled list of items was read out that had already been provided from councillors and local residents, and members were asked if there were any additional items before the agenda items would be circulated to committee members the following day.

All items included:

Church Street - a local resident had made a request for a crossing system (bleeper system) for disabled pavement users;

Also, along Church Street a local resident had advised that there were some pailing fence panels damaged on the fence line raised up on the footpath;

Weeds and vegetation - Hospital Approach

The Clerk was advised that there were weeds and vegetation in drains, on roads and pavements (and some areas along Framfield Road) which needed to be cleared;

Burst pipe - Framfield Road

A councillor reported a burst pipe (not been fixed by South East Water yet) which had been causing a steady stream of water to flow down the hill from outside the front of terraced houses numbered 167 Framfield Road to the gulley outside 183 Framfield Road. If this continued not to be repaired, this could potentially cause a serious ice risk in winter;

Another item was raised concerning overgrown vegetation along the twitten between Selby Close and Selby Rise. This would be reported separately to the Rights of Way department at East Sussex County Council to request that their team schedules a time to carry out clearance of any surface vegetation (typically brambles and nettles) obstructing the footpath.

EL06.06.22 Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to:

(i) agree all agenda items for the Clerk to raise at the next Strengthening Local Relations meeting with East Sussex Highways on 13th July 2022.

6.2 To appoint members to the Outside body – Local Nature Reserve Supporters Group

Interest was put forward by Councillor D. French prior to the meeting and Councillor H. Firth (noted as a reserve) at the meeting

EL07.06.22 Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to:

(i) agree to appoint Councillor D. French and Councillor H. Firth (reserve) as Uckfield Town Council representatives to the Local Nature Reserve Supporters Group.

7.0 **ENVIRONMENT**

7.1 To note the current position of the Town Council's Estates

Members noted the report.

7.2 To consider proposal for a Queen's Platinum Jubilee Sign at Victoria Pleasure Ground

Having been involved in the location and erection of the beacon in the first instance, Cllr. D. Bennett believed this would be a wonderful idea.

Cllr. D. Ward remarked upon the success of the Platinum Jubilee celebrations and questioned whether it would be prudent to get costings first. In principal, Cllr Ward agreed to having an additional sign as the Queen was indeed, a remarkable lady.

Cllr. S. Mayhew proposed that other events could be celebrated, such as any tributes and local events by having smaller signs attached to the beacon.

Cllr. B. Cox stated that most people would probably never see something like this again (Platinum Jubilee) and that this recognition of the Queen would probably never be replicated.

All members (except one member who abstained from voting) were in favour of the following proposals:

- EL08.06.22** With eight members voting in favour, and one abstaining, members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to:
- (i) task the Clerk with obtaining costings for a matching sign on the opposite side of the beacon at Victoria Pleasure Ground to commemorate The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and;
 - (ii) rejuvenating the current Diamond Jubilee sign, and;
 - (iii) the possibility of having smaller signs attached for other tributes and beacon lighting events.

7.3 To consider removal of a litter bin on Hunters Way

Members agreed that the litter bin located on Hunters Way, which was frequently overflowing with surplus used nappies, was unsightly and could lead to health issues.

Members did not think that the recent bin strike was the cause, nor acceptable, and one member suggested that this may have been happening over a longer period of time.

Since this was household waste and not meant to be placed in litter bins, the groundstaff also needed to be protected from emptying the litter bins of unpleasant hygiene waste items. Otherwise, members agreed that there would be no other option but to remove the litter bin if this continued.

Cllr. S. Mayhew proposed for the grounds staff to monitor the situation for a short time, rather than removing the bin, since this might then happen elsewhere instead, effectively just moving it around.

Members agreed since there had been litter bins installed around the town for residents to dispose of general litter (including dog poo bags), so it would have been counterproductive to remove litter bin straight away rather than try to resolve the issue.

Cllr. D. French also added to see if this was a residential or industrial issue and if this continued after the bin strike and also, for a sign to be placed on the bin with wording to the effect that the bin was currently being monitored by Uckfield Town Council on account of inappropriate waste disposal, and if this continued the bin would have to be removed.

The next Environment and Leisure meeting was not being held until September, so the grounds staff would also be asked to report any changes in behaviour between now and then. If there continued to be an issue, this would be reported to Full Council on 25 July 2022. .

One member also indicated that it might be worth changing the day on which the grounds staff emptied the litter bin and to monitor the following day, just to see if this had any effect (to see if this was a local business or residential problem).

- EL09.06.22** Members noted the report and **RESOLVED** to:
- (i) agree to ask grounds staff to monitor the litter bin on Hunters Way to see if the problem with sanitary waste disposal continued (after the bin strike), and;
 - (ii) to place a sign on the bin with wording to the effect that the litter bin would be removed if misused, and;

(iii) to report any change in behaviour to members at the next appropriate council meeting.

8.0 LEISURE

(nothing to report)

9.0 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

9.1 Update from Climate Change working group

Members noted the report.

9.2 Update from the Allotment Working Group

Members noted the report.

10.0 REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE ORGANISATIONS

10.1 Active Uckfield

Nothing to report at this time.

10.2 Age Concern

Nothing to report at this time.

10.3 All Weather Pitch Operational Group

Nothing to report at this time.

10.4 Conservators of Ashdown Forest

Nothing to report at this time.

10.5 West Park LNR and Hempstead Meadows LNR – Supporters Group

Nothing to report at this time.

10.6 Luxford Centre Management Committee

Members noted the report.

10.7 Uckfield and District Twinning Association

Nothing to report at this time.

10.8 Uckfield Festival Association

Nothing to report - there will be a poster coming out soon with a line-up of events.

10.9 Uckfield Parkrun Board

Nothing to report at this time.

10.10 Uckfield Railway Line Parishes Committee

Members noted the report.

10.11 Uckfield Youth Club Board

Nothing to report at this time.

10.12 Wealden Bus Alliance/Weald Link

Nothing to report at this time.

11.0 CHAIRMANS ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman had no announcements to make.

12.0 CONFIDENTIAL BUSINESS

EL.10.06.22 It was **RESOLVED** that pursuant to Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted it was advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they were instructed to withdraw.

- 12.1 To consider a report on the Marketing programme
Members noted the report.

The meeting finished at 19:27pm

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

ACTION LIST - FOR INFORMATION ONLY Environment and Leisure Committee

Please note no resolutions can be made from the action list and is for information only.

Resolution No.	Details	Date Raised	Action By	Date Complete
<u>EL.28.09.16</u>	<u>To consider revised byelaws for the Town Council's Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)</u> Members reviewed the amendments to the byelaws which still require Natural England and DEFRA's approval. It was RESOLVED to accept the revised byelaws.	05.09.16	HG	The Town Council has sealed and signed the byelaws. A public notice will be published soon to provide the public with an opportunity to view the byelaws, prior to their submission to the Secretary of State.
<u>EL.26.01.19</u>	It was RESOLVED that the Supporter Groups for both reserves be consulted with a view to shorten the byelaws in accordance with DEFRA's comments and report back to the Environment & Leisure committee.	28.01.19		
	<u>Harlands Farm Pond</u> The Ranger is to be asked for ideas to captivate children's interest whilst at the pond.	18.04.17	NM	The Ranger asked Harlands Primary School to see if they would like to add some input and maybe do a reptile survey there next year. The site would require some clearing to be usable for children. The Ranger said he's not sure there's a lot in the pond itself but could maybe do some dipping there.
	Harlands Farm Pond, VCT and Sussex Wildlife Trust are to be contacted to establish if they can assist with ideas etc. regarding children involvement in the pond.	30.04.18		
<u>EL35.10.21</u>	<u>To review fees and charges for Snatts Road Cemetery for 2022/23</u> Members noted the report and RESOLVED to: (i) agree to increase the fees and charges for Snatts Road Cemetery in 2022/23 by 1.5%, and; (ii) set up a working group to discuss the pricing structure, the rules and regulations and the future progress of the cemetery provision. Member volunteers included Cllr H. Firth, Cllr B. Cox and Cllr A. Smith.	18.10.21	RN/ HG	<i>Working group to be set up and first meeting tba. This work would ideally need to be completed by November but actually has limited impact on budget setting so needs to be completed by end of March 2023.</i>

<u>EL44.11.21</u>	<p><u>To review fees and charges for our sports facilities in 2022/23</u></p> <p>(i) agree to increase the fees and charges for the hire of sports facilities in 2022/23 by 4%, and;</p> <p>(ii) agree to set up a working group to discuss the pricing structure and the provision of sports facilities (member volunteers to be re-dressed about this at the Environment and Leisure meeting on 16 May 2022).</p>	15.11.21	RN/ HG	<p><i>First working group meeting was held on Monday 5 September 2022. An update report to be submitted at E&L meeting on 28 September. This work will feed into the annual review of fees and charges for 2023-24.</i></p>
<u>EL54.01.22</u>	<p><u>To consider if Uckfield Town Council wishes to hold an event which can be incorporated within Uckfield Festival week 2022</u></p> <p>Members noted the report and RESOLVED to:</p> <p>(i) agree to the Chairman's proposal to re-look at ideas and come up with any proposals this September for Uckfield Festival Week 2023.</p>	10.01.22	SM	<p>Ideas/proposals to be looked at September 2022 onwards.</p>
<u>EL72.05.22</u>	<p><u>To consider illegal tree works to Town Council trees</u></p> <p>Members noted the report and RESOLVED to:</p> <p>(i) agree that a strongly worded letter be sent to the resident requesting that they clear up the mess created at their own expense, and;</p> <p>(ii) donate to plants and new trees elsewhere, but if not carried out;</p> <p>(iii) pursue legal action as recommended by Wealden DC.</p>	16.05.22	RN	<p>A response was received from the resident, and solicitors have been instructed. No further update at this time.</p>
<u>EL73.05.22</u>	<p><u>To consider a number of improvements to direct tourism to Uckfield</u></p> <p>Members noted the report and RESOLVED to:</p> <p>(i) introduce the following ideas for improvements to direct tourism to Uckfield at the next infrastructure working group meeting: better parking facilities for motorhomes in town and improved signage, and to;</p> <p>(ii) consider if there is anything additional that should be explored to be discussed at that next meeting, and;</p> <p>(iii) for the Estates and Facilities Manager to explore those initiatives put forward already with the various responsible agencies, including any leverage through ES Highways for proper signage from developers.</p>	16.05.22	RN/ HG	<p>The Road Safety Team (ESCC) have responded - tourist signs are only provided where there is evidence of a traffic management need (not for advertisement or promotion). 'Welcome to Uckfield' signs were arranged back in 2017. An audit needs to be undertaken of what signs we do have in and around the town and what it is we want to replace them with.</p>

<u>EL08.06.22</u>	<p><u>To consider proposal for a Queen's Platinum Jubilee Sign at Victoria Pleasure Ground</u></p> <p>With eight members voting in favour, and one abstaining, members noted the report and RESOLVED to:</p> <p>(i) task the Clerk with obtaining costings for a matching sign on the opposite side of the beacon at Victoria Pleasure Ground to commemorate The Queen's Platinum Jubilee, and;</p> <p>(ii) rejuvenating the current Diamond Jubilee sign, and;</p> <p>(iii) the possibility of having smaller signs attached for other tributes and beacon lighting events.</p>		RN	Town Council will explore possible options available and costings involved.
<u>EL09.06.22</u>	<p><u>To consider removal of a litter bin on Hunters Way</u></p> <p>Members noted the report and RESOLVED to:</p> <p>(i) agree to ask grounds staff to monitor the litter bin on Hunters Way to see if the problem with sanitary waste disposal continued (after the bin strike), and;</p> <p>(ii) to place a sign on the bin with wording to the effect that the litter bin would be removed if misused, and;</p> <p>(iii) to report any change in behaviour to members at the next appropriate council meeting.</p>		RN	The Grounds staff have been carrying out a covert operation to monitor the bin on alternate days to their usual litter collections. This continues on random days and doesn't tie in with anything obvious, although the nappies are also different brands and sizes, so it is believed this is likely to be a commercial business. A sticker has been placed on the bin with a message to say not for commercial use. The Head Groundsman said that the area with the bin doesn't lead to or from a walkway and has been carrying on for several years.

UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
ENVIRONMENT & LEISURE COMMITTEE
PROJECT MONITORING FORM 2022/23

Projects in 2021/22 Budget – New Initiatives

Project Name	Green Projects plus £5,000 in earmarked reserves		Project Number	58
<u>FC.64.01.21</u>	£18,000 minus £1,800 =£16,200	18.01.21	Carbon footprint audit carried out £1,800.	

Projects in 2022/23 Budget – New Initiatives

Project Name	Replacement Ground tools and equipment		Project Number	68
<u>FC.82.01.22</u>	£2,000	17.01.22	Completed - NFA	

Project Name	Speed reduction initiative (already have £3,199.64 in earmarked reserves)		Project Number	69
<u>FC.82.01.22</u>	Plus £2,000 placed into budget in 2022/23	17.01.22	Will be utilised when further research has been undertaken into the various roadside initiatives available.	

Project Name	Purchase of more animal friendly bins		Project Number	71
<u>FC.82.01.22</u>	£1,500	17.01.22	In progress.	

Project Name	Tree for a tree planting programme		Project Number	72
<u>FC.82.01.22</u>	£2,000	17.01.22	Winter 2022/23.	

Environment Leisure Committee as at 31 July 2022

	Apr 22 Actuals £	May 22 Actuals £	Jun 22 Actuals £	Jul 22 Actuals £	Actuals at 31 Jul 22	Budgeted at 31 Jul 22	Aug 22 Budget £	Sep 22 Budget £	Oct 22 Budget £	Nov 22 Budget £	Dec 22 Budget £	Jan 23 Budget £	Feb 23 Budget £	Mar 23 Budget £	Total 2022/23	Budget 2022/23
Sales																
Contribution to Town Centre Security	0	0	0	575	575	575	0	45	0	0	0	0	0	0	620	620
Weald Hall Events	893	900	706	952	3,451	4,000	1,000	2,500	2,500	2,500	3,000	1,500	1,500	1,500	19,451	20,000
Allotments	111	125	34	160	430	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,100	6,530	6,100
Allotment Deposits	160	129	52	312	653	160	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	80	1,293	800
Playing Fields & Pitches, Sport Income	25	28	75	434	563	0	0	2,000	0	0	0	9,500	0	0	12,063	11,500
Playing Fields & Pitches, Event Income	0	365	26	105	496	500	0	2,000	0	0	2,000	0	0	1,000	5,496	5,500
WDC- WPark Culverts Agreement	0	0	0	0	0	0	400	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	400	400
Cemetery - Interments	1,257	1,390	1,611	4,740	8,998	12,500	3,125	3,125	3,125	3,125	3,125	3,125	3,125	3,125	33,998	37,500
Cemetery - Memorials	466	1,698	596	739	3,499	2,000	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	500	7,499	6,000
Cemetery - Sundry income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	200	200	200
Cemetery Maintenance Charge	299	398	498	299	1,493	1,400	400	400	300	300	300	300	300	300	4,093	4,000
Env Sundry Income	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	200	200	200
Litter/bus station	0	0	0	663	663	663	0	0	0	0	331	0	0	331	1,325	1,325
Road Safety Week/Eco EXPO	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	150
Roundabout income	0	0	0	864	864	850	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	864	850
Total Sales	3,210	5,033	3,598	9,842	21,683	22,648	5,505	10,650	6,505	6,505	9,336	15,005	5,505	13,336	94,031	95,145
Boxes highlighted are to be funded or part funded by earmarked reserves/set budgeted projects																
Purchases																
Clothing - Corp & Prot - Indoor staff	101	0	70	0	171	200	0	150	0	0	150	0	0	150	621	650
Street lights, New	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Street lights, supply & maintenance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11,000	11,000	11,000
Street light repairs	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6,500	0	0	6,500	13,000	13,000
Bus shelters	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	100
Allotments	0	96	2,322	0	2,418	0	0	1,000	0	0	500	0	0	0	3,918	1,500
Playing fields and pitches	838	798	9,329	1,034	11,998	15,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,000	14,998	18,000
Play Areas	359	145	0	85	590	750	0	0	750	0	0	750	0	750	2,840	3,000
Cemetery, grave digging	104	0	320	320	744	500	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	750	6,744	6,500
Cemetery, rates & water	186	190	190	190	756	800	200	200	200	200	200	200	0	0	1,956	2,000
Cemetery, litter	216	252	216	227	912	600	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	2,112	1,800
Cemetery, maintenance	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	400	400	400
General equipment repairs	150	110	236	876	1,372	500	0	500	0	0	500	0	0	500	2,872	2,000
New Equipment	517	12	811	1,512	2,852	2,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	500	3,352	2,500
Ground Maintenance Contract	0	0	4,242	0	4,242	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,242	0
Ground Maintenance General	24	106	45	0	175	500	0	500	0	0	500	0	0	500	1,675	2,000
Hire of Equipment	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	250	0	0	0	0	250	500	500
LNRS & Sites of Interest (Ranger)	1,966	1,966	1,966	1,966	7,864	9,317	2,329	2,329	2,329	2,329	2,329	2,329	2,329	2,329	26,498	27,952
LNRS & Sites of Interest (Working budget)	0	81	167	57	305	750	0	750	0	0	750	0	0	750	2,555	3,000
Transit	207	203	220	485	1,115	500	0	500	0	0	500	0	0	500	2,615	2,000
Ford Ranger	104	118	142	218	582	375	0	375	0	0	375	0	0	375	1,707	1,500
Tractor maintenance & running costs	0	0	147	48	195	375	0	375	0	0	375	0	0	375	1,320	1,500
Movana Vehicle	395	469	120	356	1,341	1,000	0	0	0	0	500	0	0	500	2,341	2,000
Fencing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	750	0	0	250	1,000	1,000
Trees	0	861	800	800	2,461	4,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	10,461	12,000
Graffiti removal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	50	50
Litter bins	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	750	0	0	250	1,000	1,000
Litter collection, open spaces	700	893	620	1,087	3,300	2,833	708	708	708	708	708	708	708	708	8,966	8,500
Horticulture	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	300	300	300
Roundabout expenditure	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	50	0	0	0	0	50	100	100
Weald Hall Events	34	128	2,355	80	2,596	2,850	0	2,000	2,150	2,000	2,000	2,000	1,000	1,000	14,746	15,000
Corp dev- signage outside areas	1,120	0	0	432	1,552	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,552	500
Groundsmen - salaries	5,095	6,648	5,627	7,725	25,095	34,380	8,595	8,595	8,595	8,595	8,595	8,595	8,595	8,595	93,855	103,140
Groundsmen - National insurance	425	544	505	706	2,180	2,247	650	650	650	650	650	650	650	650	7,380	7,447
Groundsmen - Pension	1,454	1,766	1,535	1,973	6,728	6,326	1,582	1,582	1,582	1,582	1,582	1,582	1,582	1,582	19,380	18,978
Town Security/CCTV	1,158	60	55	56	1,329	1,473	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	91	2,057	2,200
Floral displays	0	1,257	478	478	2,213	2,250	750	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	3,463	3,500
Repair and replace street furniture	560	416	0	464	1,440	0	0	1,000	0	0	0	0	0	500	2,940	1,500
Cleaning materials	0	53	0	0	53	50	0	0	25	0	0	25	0	0	103	100
Performing rights	0	0	0	272	272	250	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	272	250
Event Advertising Marketing	80	0	195	80	355	0	1,000	0	0	0	0	2,000	0	1,000	4,355	4,000
Weald on the Field	563	0	106	723	1,392	1,319	7,022	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8,414	3,000
Road safety week/Eco Expo	514	150	0	0	664	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	664	0
Parkway Mower running costs	157	161	0	59	377	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	377	0

Environment Leisure Committee as at 31 July 2022

	Apr 22 Actuals £	May 22 Actuals £	Jun 22 Actuals £	Jul 22 Actuals £	Actuals at 31 Jul 22	Budgeted at 31 Jul 22	Aug 22 Budget £	Sep 22 Budget £	Oct 22 Budget £	Nov 22 Budget £	Dec 22 Budget £	Jan 23 Budget £	Feb 23 Budget £	Mar 23 Budget £	Total 2022/23	Budget 2022/23
Repairs to Holy Cross Churchyard Path	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,389	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
HMLNR & WPLNR	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	500	500	500
Total Purchases	17,027	17,483	32,819	22,310	89,639	91,646	26,216	23,705	19,280	18,055	30,205	20,830	16,855	45,805	289,202	285,967

New initiatives 2022/23

Funding also available in revenue signage budget to cover this

NEW INITIATIVES 2022/23																	
Victoria and Ridgewood Signage	0	0	0	0	1,120	1,800	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,120	1,000
ESCC Grass Verge cutting	4,356	0	0	0	4,356	4,356	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4,356	4,356
Grasscutting/Ride On Mower	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9,000
Replacement ground tools and equipment	0	0	0	0	2,852	2,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,000
Speed reduction initiatives	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,000
Platinum Jubilee celebrations	0	446	434	0	880	500	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	500
Purchase of more animal friendly bins	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,500
Tree for a tree planting programme	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2,000
Total New Initiatives 2022/23	4,356	446	434	0	9,208	7,856	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5,476	22,356

Weald on the Field Sponsorship and 50% pitch fee income	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	2,312	900	0	0	0	0	0	0	N/A	N/A
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UCKFIELD TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the meeting of the Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR) Liaison Meeting
Via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 13 July 2022 at 8:45am

PRESENT: Cllr. Chris Dowling East Sussex County Council
Cllr. Claire Dowling East Sussex County Council
Corinne Black Customer Service Manager - (ES Highways - Central)
Kiera Buckwell Customer Service Manager - (ES Highways - West)
Ruby Brittle Stakeholder & Engagement Mgr
Ian Johnson Traffic & Safety Mgr
Gavin Spencer Highway Steward - (ES Highways)

IN ATTENDANCE:

Rachel Newton – Senior Administrative Officer, Uckfield Town Council
Minutes taken by Rachel Newton

1.0 APOLOGIES

None.

2.0 APPROVE MINUTES FROM THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last SLR meeting held on the 22 February 2022 be taken as read, confirmed as a correct record.

3.0. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MEETING

a) Poor road surface still in Downsvie Crescent and Southview Drive

The road surfaces in Downsvie Crescent and Southview Drive were still in a very poor condition and not been rectified.

The developer had already admitted the survey in December 2021 had not taken place, and confirmed that they would undertake a survey in May/June 2022 (once the rugby pitches were completed and all HGV movement from the construction had ceased) with any damage caused by them rectified.

The Customer Service Manager had already contacted the Transport Development Control division for an update but was still waiting for a response.

ES Highways would seek to find out when the works would be carried out by the developers. It had been previously suggested that the local planning authority (Wealden District Council) be approached to understand whether this would fall under the planning conditions and if action could be progressed through that route.

The Highway Steward would continue to inspect and report any safety defects, however this matter needed to be looked into as a priority.

b) Spring Meadow – Pipework damage

The drainage works had begun on Monday 11th June and were due to be completed on Friday 22nd July (weather permitting). Councillor C. Macve had been in touch with the Town Council this week to say that he was pleased to see that those works had begun and hoped that the problem would be resolved soon.

c) Cedars Close – Street lamp out

The Street Lighting Team had ordered the parts to carry out the repairs and the works had been scheduled in to be completed next week.

4.0. CHURCH STREET – CROSSING SYSTEM (BLEEPER SYSTEM) FOR DISABLED PAVEMENT USERS

A local resident of Church Coombe Estate had enquired to find out if there could be a pelican crossing or beeper system installed (rather than just traffic lights) at the top of Church Street. The resident had asked this question on behalf of her disabled partner, whom she said was partially sighted and that it was difficult for them to try to work out when traffic was moving from which direction.

The Traffic and Safety Manager provided a brief recall of what he understood about beeper systems generally and said that they would normally only be used on a single carriageway. He also advised that with a puffin or pedestrian crossing (where pedestrians would cross from one side to the other), this might sound straight forward, but with additional junctions such as at the top of Church Street, this would be confusing for some pedestrians who may have difficulty knowing where the sound signals were coming from.

Also, since there were no pedestrian bays near those particular traffic signals, it would be expensive and difficult to install a brand new design.

Also, in terms of traffic lights, if this area required major alterations and to include a pedestrian phase in the future (re access roads under phase 4 of the new developments) this would have to be formally considered before even considering beepers, so this was not a layout that would be suitable.

Another suggestion had been made to maybe remove the 'keep clear' markings at the junction with Belmont Road and install in a pelican/zebra crossing here instead. However, as there was no footway on one side of the road (there was only one footway on the north side but nothing at all on the Church side or hope of fitting one in) this would incur heavy costs.

It was not to say that a more formal application could not be submitted on behalf of the Town Council, nor that this could not be assessed elsewhere further along that section of the road, just not in that particular location.

Historically, there had been issues raised about coming out onto the footway through the narrowing in the pathway, but no previous request for a crossing due to safety issues. There was also a 20mph limit on this road.

This road may also be considered as one of the access roads coming into town and it could be that the traffic lights at Church Road are tied up in the same response.

5.0 CHURCH STREET – PAILING FENCE PANELS DAMAGED ON FENCE LINE RAISED UP ON FOOTPATH

The Customer Service Manager confirmed that this area was well maintained by ES Highways and that there were defects raised for this awaiting approval and expenditure. The Highways Steward had been on site to provide measurements to a specialised contractor to carry out the works. The Stakeholder and Engagement Manager would speak with the Commercial Team to push this along as it remained a safety issue.

6.0 HOSPITAL APPROACH – WEEDS AND VEGETATION IN DRAINS, ON ROAD AND PAVEMENTS

This item had been raised by two local residents with concern about weeds and vegetation in the drainage gulleys being completely full to the brim and needing digging out and jetting, on Hospital Approach.

This had been raised previously at a site meeting with local developers. The Senior Administrative Officer would liaise with the developers for this to be cleared as soon as possible, as this could cause a flood risk as well as destroy pavements and the roads with weeds pushing through. This was even more important now due to the amount of heavy construction traffic using the road and the mud that has been washed down from it.

7.0 BURST PIPE ON FRAMFIELD ROAD

The Highway Steward had been to have a look and noticed that the water in the gully pipe (which emanated from in front of 167 Framfield Road, causing a steady stream to flow down the hill to the gully outside of 183 Framfield Road) appeared to have been from a water metre inspection cover, but he could not be sure due to the height of it above the road surface. He advised that he would monitor this and if the problem continued he would raise this issue with South East Water.

8.0 GRASS VERGES

This item was raised at the meeting to ask if there had been any issues raised with grass verges. The third cut for the urban grass had started on 20th June and had not quite finished, and the first rural cut took place at the end of May and the next one was due between 5th September and 1st October. In the meantime, ES Highways said that if there were any issues or concerns about visibility at any particular junctions or elsewhere, to raise them.

9.0 HIGHWAYS UPDATE

There had been 564 safety defects reported in Uckfield since the last meeting in February. A breakdown of those figures would be provided at a later stage.

10.0 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Speed restrictions in Rocks Road (historical request)

Councillor Chris Dowling asked if there was an update on this request to the Traffic and Safety Manager about evidence of any speed restrictions on Rocks Road. The Traffic & Safety Manager advised that this was something he had started investigating, but that it had proved to be more time consuming than he had anticipated and that there would be no quick answer, especially since as this may have been during the pre-digital era.

Weed spraying

Councillor Claire Dowling asked when the weed spray would be happening. The Customer Service Manager confirmed that the weed spraying was completed on 22nd June and should take ten to fourteen days (as there were herbicide restrictions) but if there were any further issues to contact ES Highways.

Faulty streetlight on Pudding Cake Lane

This had been raised again with the Street Lighting Team since the streetlight was still badly covered in vegetation and had stopped working. It was making the first section of the footpath (Pudding Cake Lane) very dark and unsafe after dark and going into the Autumn, this would be a concern for pedestrian safety.

The Highway Steward would attend the location and deal with this issue.

Pavement defects – Lashbrooks Road

Councillor Claire Dowling requested an update (on behalf of a local resident) about works to be carried out on Lashbrooks Road re cracks and general condition of

pavements. The Highway Steward was asked if he could feedback the status regarding some additional areas also agreed, so that the resident could be updated.

11.0 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING
Tuesday 17th January 2023 at 9:00am.
Meeting ended at 09:20am

DRAFT

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Wednesday 28 September 2022

Agenda Item 6.2

UPDATE ON THE ALLOTMENT COMPETITION 2022

1.0 Update on Allotment Competition for 2022

- 1.1 The judging took place in the first week of July as they felt this was a better time to judge all the produce being cultivated (even if they were not fully mature).
- 1.2 Two experienced judges from Staverton's Nursery, Phil Cottingham and Mark Woodhams, carefully selected the winners in each category for Best Kept Allotment (on each site), Ecological Award, Children's Award and Overall Winner.
- 1.3 We worked with the judges to introduce some changes to the categories this year and retained the entry form for both adults and children's awards. An entry form was completed by those allotment holders who wished to be included in the competition which was communicated via an e-newsletter and notices and information was also provided in the April edition of Uckfield Matters. In a change to the competition this year we introduced a new rule where anyone who had won a category in the previous two allotment competitions would be unable to enter that category. This is similar to the RHS approach at its flower shows and we hoped this would allow new or novice allotment holders to feel they may have had a chance of winning.
- 1.4 Also, the entry form included a request to include a personal statement so that the judges were able to make their judgment based on a better understanding of what those tenants who entered the competition were trying to do on their allotments. Allotment holders were able to expand on what they were growing and why - the judges were impressed by some of the ways in which tenants encouraged wildlife and made use of recycled materials as well as various measures taken to conserve water using a number of water butts on each plot.
- 1.5 ***Winners in each category had been initially notified by post and the winners' certificates and vouchers would be presented at the Allotment Conference due to be held on Wednesday 12 October 2022 at 7pm.***
- 1.6 For those entrants and winner for the Children's Awards category, their certificate and gift voucher will be posted to them as any presentation would normally be during school term time.

2.0 Recap of the prizes

2.1 Best Kept Allotment

We retained the Best Kept Allotment award for each of the five sites. The judging criteria included the condition of plot, good workmanship, quality of crops, flowers, fruit and vegetables and plants, water conservation, encouragement of insects and wildlife, use of recycled materials and condition of paths and garden buildings.

Three winners would each receive £25 in garden vouchers

£75

2.2 Best Kept (Runner up)

The results were so close on the Bell Lane allotment site so the judges decided to agree a runner up award this year.

One winner would receive a £10 garden voucher **£10**

2.3 Overall Winner

The overall winner was chosen from the five best kept allotment winners and their name has been added to the plaque held at the Civic Centre.

2.4 Ecological Award

This new award was to allow the judges to focus on the principles of Reuse, Reduce and Recycle and included looking at:-

- *How the plot holder reused items such as plastic pots*
- *The efforts made to conserve water (rainwater harvesting if possible) and reduce the use of water by using mulch or growing varieties requiring less water.*
- *Encouraging insects and wildlife to the plot. Natural or organic approaches to pest control.*
- *The entry form allowed the allotment holder to make an ecological statement explaining what he/she had done to try to meet the items above.*

One winner would receive a £25 in garden vouchers **£25**

2.5 Children's award (up to 12 years)

In a change to this award, the intention was to allow children to choose what they wanted to grow. There was a children's entry form for them to complete available online and in hard copy.

The entry form also allowed them to tell us what they liked about the allotment and what they had chosen to grow.

One winner would receive a £25 in garden voucher **£25**

3.0 **Recommendations**

3.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officers: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

Wednesday 28 September 2022

Agenda Item 7.1

TO NOTE THE CURRENT POSITION WITH THE COUNCIL'S ESTATES

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report sets out the current position with the Council's Estates.

Victoria Pleasure Ground and skatepark

Investigation required in dealing with drainage issues, awaiting the construction of the footpath to the Ridgewood development to incorporate at the same time.
Play area has had minor repairs and paintwork. Needs replacing in the next two to three years.

Hempstead Lane Play Area and Hempstead Meadows

Awaiting repairs for footpath, by East Sussex Rights of Way

Rocks Park Play Area

Nothing new to report.

Snatts Road Cemetery

Nothing new to report.

West Park Recreation ground and WPLNR

Nothing new to report.

Boothland Wood

Ash die-back works to take place winter 2022.

Equipment & Vehicles

New replacement strimmer's received
1x mower repaired.
Ride on mower repaired
Ford Ranger passed MOT in August.

Street Furniture & Lighting

See separate report on streetlighting.

Ridgewood Recreation Ground

Nothing new to report.

Elizabeth Gardens

Nothing new to report.

Luxfords field and play area.

Nothing new to report.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officers: Mark Francis

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Wednesday 28 September 2022

Agenda Item 7.2

TO CONSIDER FIVE-YEAR MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR HEMPSTEAD MEADOWS LNR

1.0 Overview and summary

- 1.1 The Ranger has produced a five-year management plan for Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve which would run until 31 December 2027. The Ranger would like to find a way of making take this local nature reserve to the next level and make it more inviting to visitors looking at areas by compartmentalization.
- 1.2 Since there are only four main tasks on the reserve which include pulling balsam, cutting two meadows and vegetation control on the main footpath (owned by East Sussex County Council) the Ranger said that this would not need a huge amount of co-ordination.
- 1.3 Presently, hand pulling the balsam is not providing adequate control except in very specific areas. The Ranger would like to look at chemical control next year. It is a fairly large area for hand pulling and is a task deeply unpopular with volunteers as the balsam grows in amongst brambles and nettles and becomes quite painful after a few hours.
- 1.4 The Ranger proposed options would be to re-dig the scrape. He has tried to get quotations to do this via Sussex Flow, and has also discovered that we wouldn't require EA approval to put bridges in at the eastern end of the meadow (pending confirmation from Wealden District Council).
- 1.5 This could be quite an expensive undertaking but would be a massive improvement on the current arrangement and the Ranger would look at seeking grant funding from the Forestry Commission to do this.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to read the attached report and appendices prepared by the Ranger and confirm if they are happy to agree with these proposals going forward.

Appendices: Appendix A: Report by the Countryside Ranger
 Appendix B: Map of Compartment 1
 Appendix C: Map of Compartment 2
 Appendix D: Map of Compartment 3
 Appendix E: Map of Compartment 4
 Appendix F: Overview Map of Hempstead Meadows LNR

Contact Officer: Mark Francis

A five year management plan for Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve Uckfield

This management plan was written by Uckfield Town Council Countryside Ranger Neal Matheson. The management plan was devised consulting the previous management plan, members of the public, ecological consultants, and outside conservation bodies. The management plan is valid until 31 December 2027 after which a revised plan should be devised for the period 2027-2032.

Hempstead Meadows is a long and thin area of public open space owned by Uckfield Town Council that runs east from the town centre, near the High Street, between the railway to the south and houses to the north eastwards to open countryside on Uckfield's eastern fringe. This area is low lying and is part of the flood plain of the River Uck that runs through the town and before the construction of the railway it would have been open directly onto it.

Starting in the west, behind Waitrose carpark, it consists of a wet meadow, that frequently floods, known as Phillips' Field¹, which merges into permanent wet fenland. This fenland is too wet for human access, but on the north side there is a long, thin, wooded bank with a path running along the lower edge of the slope that ends at the public recreation ground known as Usbourne Field. Although this playing field cuts into the LNR from the north, it continues along the boundary of the railway track as dense, impenetrable, wet scrub that widens out after a few hundred metres to a final section. This part is accessed in the south east corner of the playing field and consists of a long, narrow, dry grassy bank with patches of scrub that runs behind the houses to the north and a seasonally wet hollow that runs parallel with the railway track and is dominated by nationally rare, wet woodland (alder *Alnus glabra*) carr). Public access from the eastern end of this section is currently difficult, especially in the winter due to muddy ground conditions. However, there is an access via Roman Way².

Thus, the LNR has a wide variety of habitats for its size and considering how close it is to the built environment. This is reflected in the extensive list of species found in two earlier surveys.

The conservation value of Hempstead Meadows LNR

In terms of its wider geographical setting, the reserve sits alongside the River Uck, which is a principal tributary of the River Ouse, and is part of one of the main river catchments of Sussex. The Uck flows from the lower Cretaceous sandstone High Weald generally southwards to join the Ouse in the mainly clay strata of the Low Weald before dissecting the greensand and chalk of the South Downs to flow into the Channel at Newhaven. As such the flood plain sedimentary silts of much of the reserve are held within the mildly acidic sand rock cutting of the river valley. As well as the permanently wet fen, there are numerous springs and a network of ditches feeding into the reserve including one along the western end of the northern boundary behind Olives Meadow. This ditch carrying persistent spring water is used by European eels (*Anguilla anguilla*) as a growing site prior to their return to the Sargasso Sea where they breed. Three spined sticklebacks (*Gasterosteus aculeatus*), common kingfishers (*Alcedo atthis*) and little egret (*Egretta garzetta*) also use this stream

¹ Named after the original owner.

² According to Magic maps this area is not designated as a Local Nature Reserve.

and the permanent water of the wet fen.

The documented history shows that there has been no known cultivation on the site since the Second World War and therefore the site has likely never been cultivated, but has certainly been used as a grazing meadow for livestock, and probably the harvesting of hay when it was part of Sunnybrook Farm previously owned by the Phillips family. Most of the site is classified as lowland wet grassland i.e. those grasslands found below 200 m above sea level and includes not only the flood plain grassland found here but also wash lands, coastal grazing marshes and poorly drained grasslands. This type of habitat is nationally scarce due to inappropriate management over the last one hundred years, including no management at all so that it reverts to scrub, or intensive drainage schemes to agriculturally improve it. Thus, where it is still found in good condition it is a precious asset to nature conservation.

Hempstead Meadows LNR is a mosaic of vegetation types that range from very wet fenland, through tussocky damp grass land to damp grassland meadow and eventually drier grass. There are also patches of brambles and thorn scrub, both perennially wet and drier, as well as willow and alder carr woodland.

The species found in the surveys of 2004 and 2009 are typical of wet grassland communities and as such sympathetic management will not only help to maintain this but will probably increase the abundance and variety of native species. This will help to meet Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) targets for this type of habitat. This will, of course include animal species of all taxa.

Due to the undisturbed damp nature of parts of the site a number of bird species have been found. Those recorded by Dr M Stenning include sparrowhawk (*Accipiter nisus*) gold and greenfinch (*Carduelis carduelis* and *Carduelis chloris*), garden warbler (*Sylvia borin*) mistle thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*), tawny owl (*Strix aluco*), little egret (*Egretta garzetta*), Eurasian kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) and snipe (*Gallinago gallinago*). More recently, there have also been seen chiffchaff (*Phylloscopus collybita*) black cap (*Sylvia atricapilla*) redwing (*Turdus iliacus*) and siskin (*Carduelis spinus*) many of the small birds mentioned rely on alder as a food source in winter and spring. All are more likely to flourish if the undisturbed areas can be maintained as such, especially in the key spring nesting season. An ecological and natural capital report³ noted few species records for the site. It is necessary that more of the constituent species are recorded with the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre at Henfield as well as on-line using 'IRECORD'.

Visitor facilities

The meadows feature two benches⁴ within Phillips' field as well as interpretation boards at the Western entrance and the entrance off from Usbourne field. A notice board can also be found at the Usbourne field entrance. The notice board by the Waitrose entrance was removed due to anti-social behaviour. The interpretation boards are understated and informative. They are showing some signs of weathering now and will need to be replaced in this management cycle. Signs explaining the site's byelaws to be reinstated within this management cycle.

³ SLNP & SDNPA Greenspaces Project. (2022). Hempstead Meadows LNR Ecological and Natural Capital Assessment Technical Report, p3.

⁴ The bench is currently being repositioned

Access

Access to Hempstead meadows is via a vehicle and pedestrian gate by the Waitrose car park, via Olives Meadow, through Usbourne Field and for the sure footed, by Roman's Way. The gate at Olives Meadow was removed to allow for wheelchair access, the gate by the Waitrose car park was redesigned to the same end⁵. Vehicle access to the western end of the reserve is possible through the vehicle gate at the western entrance. The meadows are impassable to vehicles in wet weather and over the winter months.

Footpaths

The footpath from the western entrance to Usbourne field is managed and maintained by rangers from East Sussex County Council Rights of Way though vegetation control falls to Uckfield Town Council. The informal footpath on the eastern side of the reserve is maintained by Uckfield Town Council. This can be cut by brush cutter, or by DR hand tractor. Access to the reserve via Roman way is precarious in wet weather. Access could be improved by construction of a sleeper bridge. Consideration should be given to the desirability of opening up this route to more traffic as a little used area is of greater ecological benefit. The area is also prone to flooding but the works do not require consent from the Environment Agency⁶.

Boundaries

The Boundary to the South of the reserve is the responsibility of Network Rail. All issues with the boundary should be addressed to that company. There are stretches of chestnut palings by the Usbourne Meadow entrance. This was considered to be temporary and growing vegetation has taken over from this fencing making the fencing now largely superfluous. The wire fence on the western boundary is intact and largely obscured by vegetation. The boundary fence along the northern boundary up to Osbourne field is a mix of wire fencing both installed by the council and by residents. Residents have been observed cutting and dumping vegetation along this property boundary, activities that require monitoring and prevention in this hard to access area. Residents often have strong views about woodland management and the removal of vegetation along property boundaries which requires individual management. In general the presumption is against vegetation or tree removal in line with UTC's tree policy. Along the strip of woodland the boundary is a mixture of close board fencing and post and rail installed by the property developers. It is my understanding that this remains the concern of the residents and that our boundary is demarcated by a length of chestnut palings. Residents appear to appreciate the privacy afforded by the dense understory and shrub layer and there are no incursions into the reserve along this length. The northern strip leading from Usbourne field to the eastern end of the reserve consists of a close board fence. Vegetation should be cut away from this fence line twice a year with additional vegetation removal considered upon request.

Trees

Trees are dealt with in the UK forestry standard woodland management plan. The high voltage power lines greatly restrict the scope of tree work that can be conducted over large parts of the reserve. The ranger must liaise with UK Power networks to facilitate utility tree works. Hazardous trees are reported to UKPWR who also conduct their own surveys. Tree preservation orders affect the area of woodland to the north of the ESCC footpath. Coppicing and tree thinning of areas may be conducted as part of normal woodland management, to improve structural diversity, light levels and so on. Health and safety tree work will also be

⁵ The latch of this gate has been removed by person's unknown.

⁶ Confirmed by NM August 2022

conducted though presumption must always be in favour of tree retention. Trees or large limbs which have failed are to be left in situ as valuable dead/semi dead habitat. As with all conservation woodland management the urge to “tidy up” should be resisted. The fenced enclosures set up to retain brash from being swept up in flood water are no longer adequate being rather full. They almost certainly make fine habitats in and of themselves and should be allowed to rot down naturally. Arisings from further tree work should be chipped onto the reserve. Larger diameter wood (firewood according to UKPWR) is left on site by utilities contractors; this should be removed as it presents a flooding risk. Ideally felled trees will be left intact on the floor of the woodland/reserve. Large diameter deadwood has high ecological value and such wood should resist flow of water in flooding incidents. The ranger is to liaise with Network Rail to help them manage their diseased ash trees which border the reserve.

New trees

The strips of new woodland planted as natural flood mitigation with funding from both the Woodland Trust and the Sussex Flow Initiative will require the re application of wood chip mulches in the spring and the removal of competitive vegetation and meadow ants from within the mesh tree guards at regular intervals over the growing season. Tree losses are to be removed as they occur and sites monitored for anti-social behaviour. It may be necessary to water young trees in periods of drought. At the end of this cycle of the management plan all three areas may need to be thinned by up to 10-20% of trees depending on losses. Mesh guards to be removed as necessary. Competitive bramble is to be cut with the DR hand tractor with grass surrounding the trees cut on an occasional basis in the late summer after the summer solstice. Cut grass is much more competitive for water and nutrients than grass left longer.

Vegetation

It is the Ranger’s responsibility to cut back vegetation away from footpaths and to ensure that grass foot paths are mowed with the DR hand tractor over summer months. Upkeep of mown paths will help ease the spread of ground compaction issues in open areas by ensuring an easier, clearly demarcated path to walk upon. There will be no attempt to “tidy up” areas of bramble or scrub outside of clearly defined ecological management.

Phillips’ Field

Phillips’ Field was used for many, many years as a field to hold cattle when Uckfield had a cattle market. The entire field is routinely inundated with standing water pockets of which can last many months. A drain/spring-fed stream runs along the north and west boundaries. An ecological report noted a possible decline in certain species of plant and the previous ranger had undertaken management to increase biodiversity given the species poor nature of the meadow. Hay was cut, baled and stored on site. The presence of dogs means the hay is unsaleable. The ecological report recommended re-instituting this regime. This is a standard management prescription for wildflower meadows as it removes fertility from the land which creates greater competition and biodiversity. However, this does not account for the specific history of this site, which, as a primeval floodplain will mean that the land has a very high starting fertility with up to 2 metres in depth of fertile flood-washed sediment, and the propensity for further annual flooding which will add additional fertility from river silt up to several times a year. This means that Phillips’ Field will always have high fertility and only support competitive vigorous species of plant. Consequently, this field will have a tendency towards ecological succession and will have low diversity of non-competitive meadow plants, but will require regular mowing to prevent it succeeding to woodland. However, there are

good areas of scrub and bramble that provide refuges for small mammals, birds, reptiles⁷ and amphibians.

Phillips' Field will be cut in late summer after grass and plants have set their seed using the council's tractor with flail mower. This will be to prevent succession and retain the site as a grassy meadow.

A scrape on the extreme western boundary of the reserve is to be re-dug in this management cycle to create an ephemeral water feature and to increase the water holding capacity of the meadow in line with the natural flood mitigation methods of the Sussex flow initiative.

Martyn's meadow

This is small area directly to the east of Usbourne field identified as an ancient meadow. It is species rich. Without a cutting regimen the meadow is reverting to scrub. This area will come back into the cutting regimen and is to be cut late August/early September or as late as is practicable with the DR hand tractor initially. Garden escapees are to be removed as well as some naturally regenerating woody species which may be removed or coppiced. Access to the site is limited and removal of cuttings will need to be considered though will most likely be conducted with rakes and wheel barrows initially. The work will likely be conducted with sickle bar cutter on the BCS hand tractor in future years. The cutting regime could be extended along the Eastern side of the site according to results.

NNIS

The invasive Himalayan balsam *Impatiens glandulifera* is widespread on the reserve. This is to be removed across the site. Total eradication of this plant is doubtful but its presence and spread may be checked by hand pulling and repeated cutting. This plant has been located on other sites in Uckfield along the Uck to which we have no right of access. This is an ongoing activity across the summer months, ending after the plants have set seed. The plant should be removed by volunteer groups wherever it is found with attention paid to the alder carr to the East of the reserve where it is especially prolific but access is limited.

NNS

Garden escapees should be removed as a matter of course wherever found and if practicable to do so. There are a number of Norway spruce *Picea abies*⁸ on the reserve which appear to be old Christmas trees planted by residents. These are trees of limited ecological value which can cast considerable shade. Removal of these trees may be controversial as there may be sentimental attachments to the trees, the trees may also provide screening and privacy to residents. If it can be demonstrated that the trees are diminishing the reserve they must be removed. If the trees are producing viable offspring (which is quite unlikely) they must be removed. Otherwise some degree of consultation with residents may be advisable if arguments and ill-feeling are to be avoided.

Antisocial behaviour

Given the site's location in the centre of the town the reserve has sometimes seen antisocial behaviour. Signs have been vandalised and there has been damage to the recently planted

⁷ Adder *Vivipera berus* is recorded as present on site, Slow worms *Anguis fragilis* are regularly encountered by the current ranger.

⁸ This is a species currently host to the notifiable pathogen *Ips typographus* This beetle is subject to the Plant Health (*Ips typographus*) (England) Order 2019 which gives the Forestry Commission power to compel control if present. Movement of the wood of *P. abies* is prohibited in East Sussex.

trees both at Phillips' field and Usbourne field. At present anti-social behaviour is sporadic and occasional. Liaison between local police and residents will be required if anti-social behaviour intensifies over summer months, as it is mostly a summer phenomenon. In recent years prolonged instances of anti-social behaviour on the reserves were effectively dealt with by local police and the problem now appears random and occasional. Requests have been made to reposition or move the benches which may act as a draw to drinkers and groups of young people which would require consideration and consent from councillors. The ranger notes that the benches are often used by young families and workers from nearby businesses for their lunch breaks but that people consuming alcohol can be encountered at any time of day. It would seem that removing the benches would be a diminishment of local services. These benches were donated by Uckfield Rotary Club.

Management prescriptions per compartment

The site is divided into four compartments to reflect the diversity of ecology on site and the differing site use.

The management plan is divided into:

Monitor: Things that need to be monitored as to their condition. Actions may or not be required

Liaise: Any outside bodies that will need to be cooperated with and to whom issues may be communicated.

Routines: Routine tasks that need to be carried out for at least the cycle of this management plan.

Future tasks: Planned future tasks to be conducted in the compartment.

Constraints: Constraints that will need to be considered concerning the management of the compartment

Opportunities: Opportunities that the unique features of the compartment offer.

We will need to need to liaise with UK Power networks, the Forestry Commission and Network Rail in all compartments, these statutory bodies will not be mentioned in individual compartment plans.

Compartment one.

An area encompassing the western most boundary and stretching up to the second of the benches.

Monitor:

The boundary fences should be monitored, as well as the gates and internal infrastructure. Frequency, type and intensity of anti-social behaviour will need to be monitored. The condition of the trees within falling distance of residential properties will need to be monitored. Fly tipping of garden waste needs to be monitored.

Liaise:

We need to liaise with the Environment agency in this compartment due to the proximity of the river.

Routines:

Paths to be kept clear of vegetation and mowed with DR hand tractor as required.

Flail mow field in August, cutting may be alternated to increase sward structural diversity.

Himalayan balsam to be removed beginning late April.

Maintain new tree plantings as discussed above.

Future tasks:

A scrape on the western edge of the reserve will be re dug offering excellent habitat for amphibians

Constraints:

Area impassable in wet weather and in winter months.

The concerns of residents can affect works being conducted, blocking of light, privacy, concerns about safety etc.

Dog fouling and litter can be marked at times despite ample provision of signage, bins and dog bags.

Anti-social behaviour limits infrastructure provision.

Opportunities:

There is less access to much of the compartment allowing a minimum intervention approach especially in relation to tree safety. A very popular site offering fantastic access to “un-manicured” nature within a town centre.

Compartment two.

The compartment runs from the electrical substation to the bridge which crosses the drain at the start of the wet fen area.

Monitor:

The condition of the willow trees over the footpath needs to be monitored and stems removed as necessary. Monitor the condition of the boundary fence and watch for garden escapees and the fly-tipping of garden waste.

Liaise:

It will be necessary to liaise with ESCC Rights of Way rangers about the condition of the footpath, and arranging access to the site.

Routines:

Himalayan balsam to be removed from late April.

Vegetation will need to be cut back from the footpath.

Future tasks:

If grazing is to be reintroduced the fence across the reserve will need to be reinstituted.

Constraints:

Access is difficult over much of the compartment. Underfoot conditions in wet weather can be treacherous.

Mot aggregate from ESCC footpath washes into reserve at this point.

Access is restricted by ground conditions. Transport of materials in or out is constrained to summer months.

In wetter weather desire lines are often made off the footpath and onto the reserve causing disturbance and compaction.

Opportunities :

Lack of accessibility ensures minimum interference from humans and dogs in the local ecosystem.

Compartment three.

Compartment three comprises the fen area and strip of woodland leading from the ESCC bridge to Usbourne Field.

Monitor:

The footpath conditions should be monitored. The condition of trees along the footpath and along the residential boundary should be monitored. Fly-tipping of garden waste and the condition of boundaries should also be monitored.

Liaise:

ESCC Rights of way will need to be contacted in the event of damage or worsening conditions on their footpath.

Routines:

Vegetation should be cut back off the path.

Himalayan balsam will need to be removed from late April.

Future Tasks:

In general the woodland can be minimally managed with some thinning of willow and alder to create a diverse structure and to allow light infiltration.

The Owl box to be replaced and others considered.

The reptile rocks should be cleared of vegetation. Consideration given to moving them to a more secluded site in light of results from West Park LNR reptile surveys.

Consideration should be given to placing a sign at this entrance

Constraints:

There are three separate woodland Tree preservation orders in the woodland. The United Kingdom Forestry Standard Woodland Management plan supersedes this for UTC operations but not for residents wanting to perform their own works. Tree preservation orders supercede common law rights.

Powerlines constrain tree work activity for much of the length of this compartment.

The fen is largely impassable.

Opportunities:

Much of the woodland is inaccessible resulting in an undisturbed space for flora and fauna

Wet woodland as much of this site is nationally rare. Alder carr is a vital winter habitat for many bird species.

Compartment 4:

Monitor:

Monitor unauthorised and amateurish tree work on property boundary.

Liaise:

Routines:

Clear fence line of vegetation.

Clear path vegetation.

Cut permissive footpath with DR hand tractor.

Begin removing Himalayan balsam from the end of April.

Future Plans:

Consider creating a bridge to improve access to the site from Romans' way.

Begin cutting Martyn's Meadow as described above.

Constraints:

Due to flooding the Environment agency will need to be consulted before any works can be performed.

Cannot influence management of upstream sites for flood mitigation or Himalayan balsam control.

Opportunities:

There are opportunities to improve access to the reserve.

The area in compartment four can be concentrated on in order to control Himalayan balsam as it is a source of the plant for the reserve.

Opportunities to conserve an ancient meadow habitat and increase biodiversity.

Future 2027 and beyond

Constraints:

The increasing population of Uckfield will likely put further pressure on the nature reserve.

Alder are currently under threat from plant pathogens (*Phytophthora spp.*) which may be brought onto site by utility companies. The loss of alder would be a catastrophic ecological loss to the reserve.

Mink *Neovison vison* have been spotted on the reserve; we may consider these an analogue for otter *Lutra lutra* at present but if otter move into the Uck catchment mink will be displaced.

Increased dog fouling (from an increasing population) will cause eutrophication on site.

Increased and often hydrologically ill-advised housing developments may increase rate and severity of flooding episodes.

Opportunities:

The implementation of a woodland management plan has given scope for grant applications.

Increased population may result in an increased pool of volunteers.

Further planning developments could result in section 106 and community infrastructure levy funded infrastructure projects removing pressure on the reserve.

Aspirations.

One natural process that is not occurring on the reserve is the occasional action of large ruminants. Re-implementation of large herbivore grazing to be considered.

The creation of otter holts on the Uck (at Bluebell wood) or the reserve to provide ready-made habitat for that species which is already present in the catchment.

To facilitate the recolonization of the reserve by black poplar an endangered species present on the reserve.

To link up the reserve to upper stretches of the Uck and its tributaries

To have the reserve assessed as a candidate for beaver reintroduction.

To conduct formal ecological surveys on site, as records are sporadic.

Replace interpretation boards.

Uckfield Town Council

Council Offices, Uckfield Civic Centre, Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 1AE
townclerk@uckfieldtc.gov.uk

Hempstead Meadows - Compartment 1

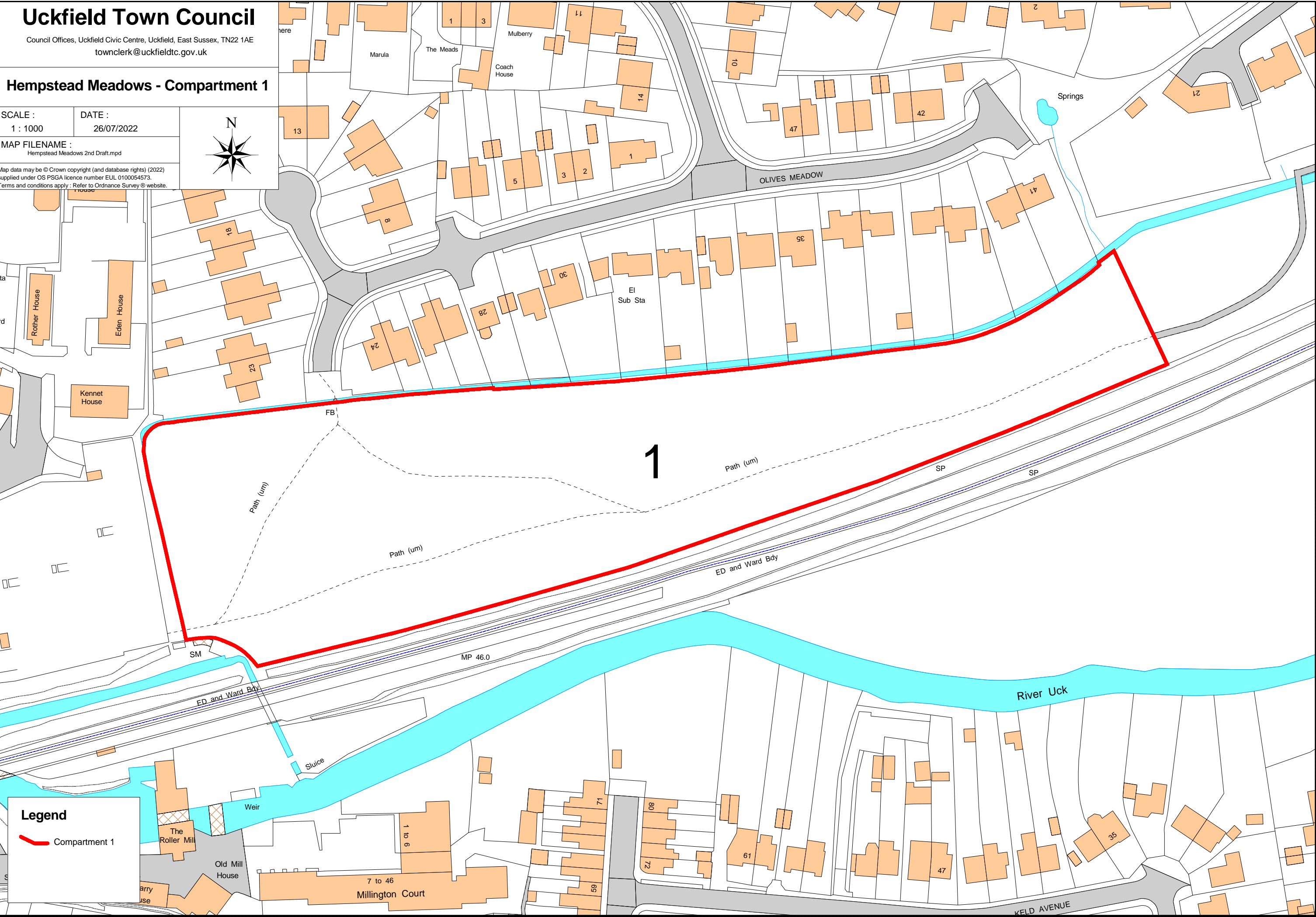
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Legend

Compartment 1

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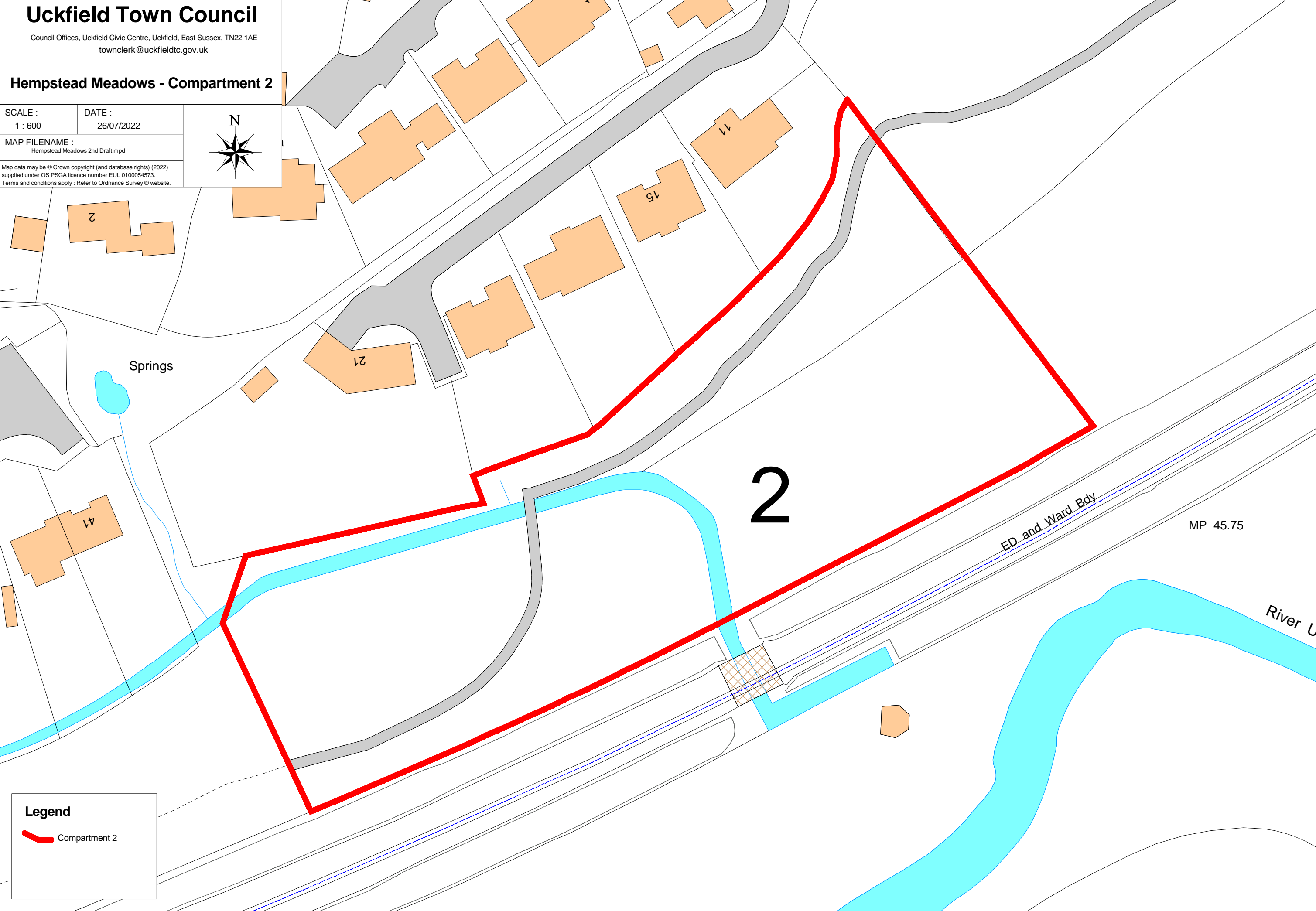
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 Compartment 2

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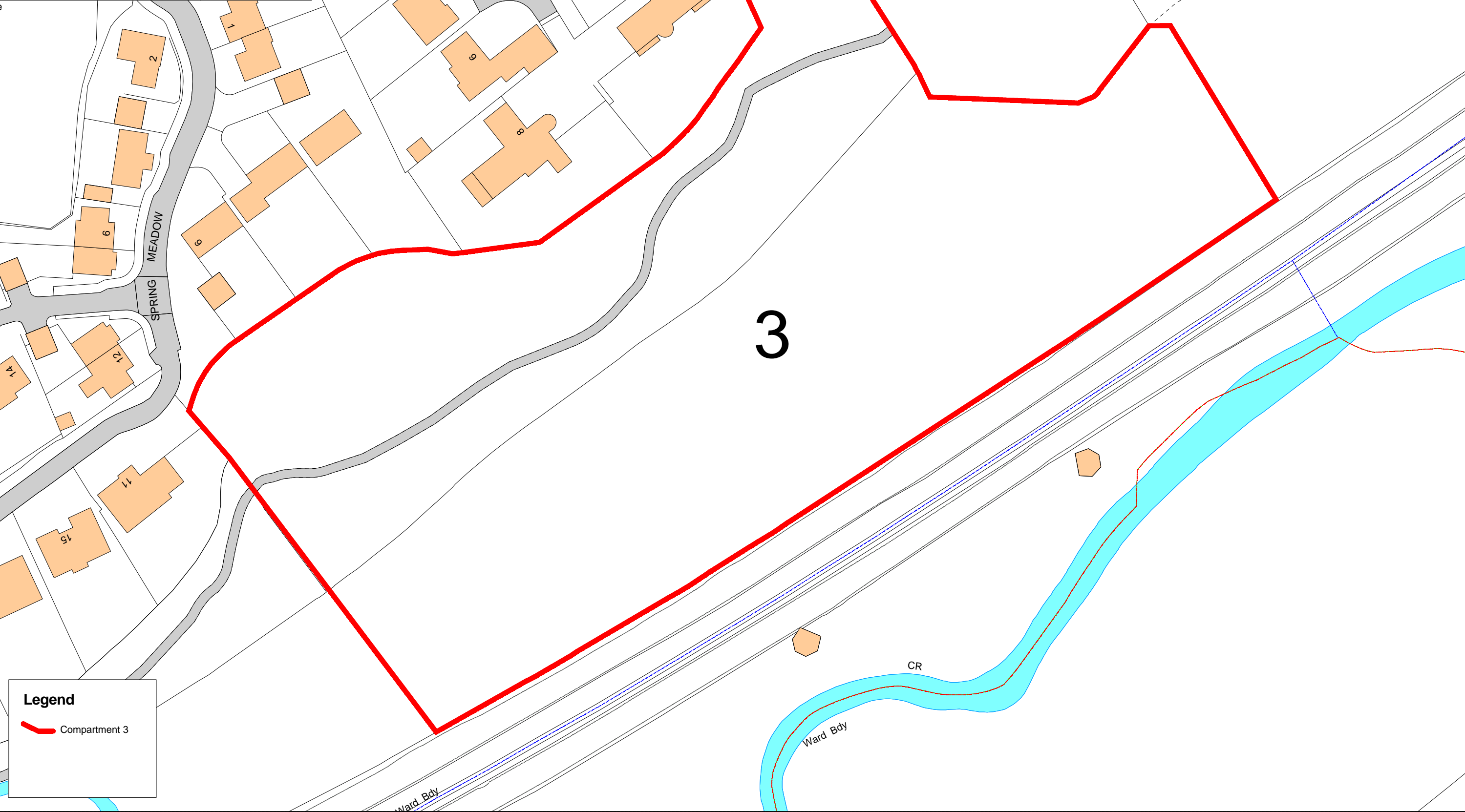
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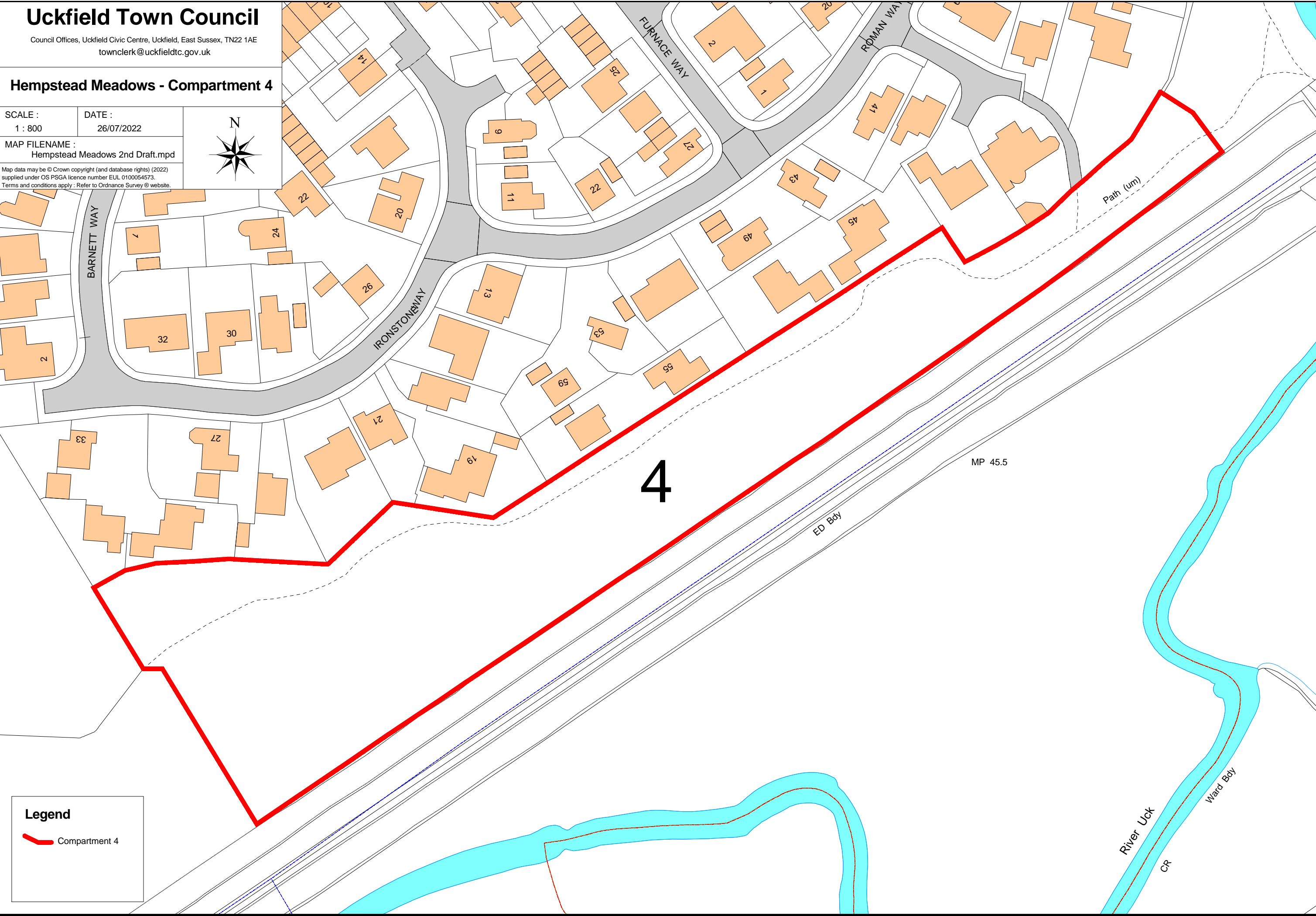
Hempstead Meadows - Compartment 4

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 Compartment 4

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Hempstead Meadows Local Nature Reserve

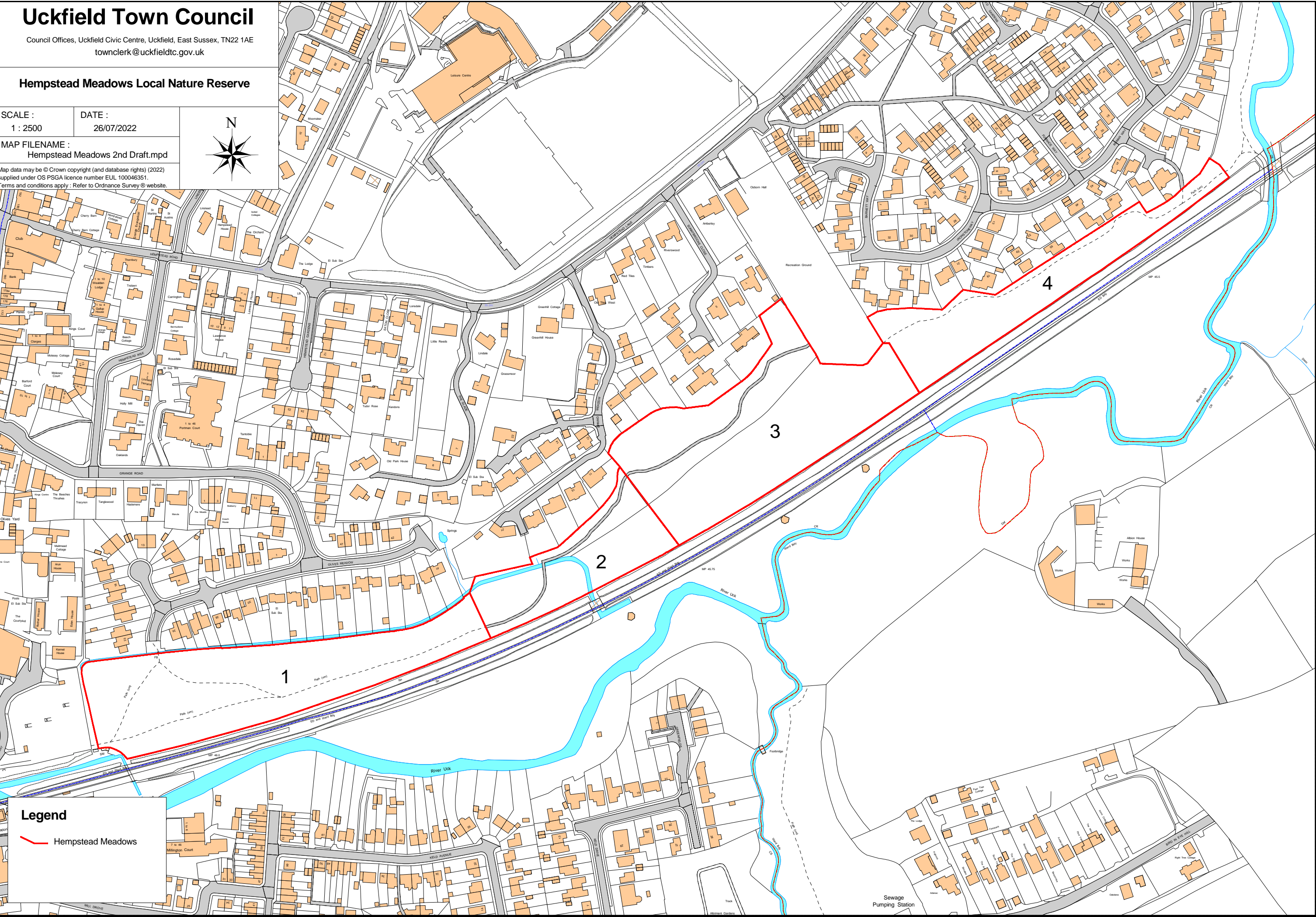
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Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Wednesday 28 September 2022

Agenda Item 7.3

TO NOTE TEMPORARY BENCH REMOVAL – HEMPSTEAD MEADOWS (ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR)

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Following an enquiry from a local resident in June regarding incidents of anti-social behaviour near the entrance to Hempstead Meadows Nature Reserve, the closest bench to the Waitrose car park was temporarily removed (at that time) to prevent any further concerns during the summer months.

Several walkers had to navigate past this area with trepidation and it was reported to the local PSCO on one occasion. The resident was also asked if they could keep reporting any further incidents to the police so they can accurately carry out patrols in the area.

If the Town Council receives a request to reinstate the bench this will be brought back to the committee for consideration.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Wednesday 28 September 2022

Agenda Item 7.4

TO CONSIDER STREET LIGHTING REPAIRS

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report sets out an update regarding street lighting repairs.

2.0 Jobs that require approval for the financial year 2022/23

2.1	Column 8 Keld Avenue	£2,740.85
	Column 12 Snatts Road	£590.68
	Column 8 Church Street	£2,303.00
	Column 4 Keld Avenue	£2,740.85
	Column 4 Selby Road	£2,206.23
	Column 1 Selby Close	£638.30
	Columns 2, 3 and 5 Hempstead Road	£6,737.90
	Total costs	£17,957.81
	20% Contingency	£3,591.56
	Overall total for approval	<u>£21,600.00</u> (Rounded up).

3.0 Change of Contract

3.1 The Estates and Finance Manager met with the Highways Street Lighting Officer of East Sussex County Council on 6 September 2022. With the advice received, East Sussex County Council street lighting contract was due for renewal, with a new contractor to commence on 1 May 2023. The new contractor will be known mid-October. However, this will mean prices quoted above will vary and it is recommended adding a contingency of 20% in case of price increases. There will also be delays for quotations and repairs between now and May 2023, whilst the new contractor takes over the contract.

4.0 New jobs awaiting quotes.

4.1 Column 6 Lealands Drive
Column 5 Lealands Drive
Column 3 Lealands Drive
Column 2 Linden Close
Column 1 Keld Drive
Column 21 London Road

5.0 Available funding

5.1 Uckfield Town Council set out in its 2022-23 budget the following amounts to cover street lighting annual maintenance and repairs:

Supply and Maintenance – 11,000 (£3.4k has been spent to date and we usually receive an invoice each March for annual maintenance charges of £9-10k so this revenue budget needs to remain untouched.)

Repairs – a budget was set of £13k for 2022-23. A total of £25,084.70 has been spent already this year but this was already approved by members in 2021 and agreed to be funded by CIL funding. This means that we have a total of £13k

available to cover the above works, so any surplus would need to be covered by CIL monies available within our earmarked reserves.

- 5.2 We currently have a total of £41,907.39 in CIL monies in earmarked reserves. There is therefore sufficient funds to cover any surplus of expenditure for streetlighting repairs.

6.0 Recommendation

- 6.1 Members are asked to:

- (i) note the report;
- (ii) confirm if they are happy to authorise the works (to be funded part revenue budget, part CIL monies from earmarked reserves), and;
- (iii) to accept where there is the lack of a lighting design, accept responsibility for the risks associated with the authorisation of these works.

Contact Officer: Mark Francis

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Wednesday 28 September 2022

Agenda Item 8.1

TO CONSIDER PROPOSALS FOR THE RECONFIGURATION OF WEST PARK PITCH FOOTBALL PITCHES

1.0 Overview

- 1.1 There have been a number of changes over the past couple of years to the way in which the pitches are used, and we continue to receive an increase in enquiries to use the football pitches from various football clubs, including Uckfield Grasshoppers, Uckfield United FC and Uckfield Town FC.
- 1.2 We are conscious that the pitches can only take so much wear and tear, so the Town Council arranged a joint meeting with those football club representatives, to discuss the four main pitches of Harlands, New Barn, Victoria and West Park and how we can work together to support their fixtures, and look after the pitches at the same time for the next season.
- 1.3 This was also an opportunity to discuss future requirements, so we could better understand with developer contributions or similar, how the pitches could be improved to support football within Uckfield into the future.

2.0 Pitches at West Park

- 2.1 Uckfield Grasshoppers would like to work with the Town Council to look at the layout of the pitches with a specific proposal to reconfigure the pitch layout at West Park Recreation Ground (see diagrams below). They have agreed with the Head Groundsman that this alternative layout is achievable and would require very little work, that it would be easy to implement and allow enough space between pitches whilst maximising the playing time available to them. They believe that having more pitches would assist them as they continue to grow as a club with more teams and players along with the club planning to invest significantly in the pavilion once the lease has been agreed.
- 2.2 A working group was set up within the club to look at pitches and how they could increase playing time and maximise revenue into the club, without having a detrimental effect on the pitches and the local residents. There were currently two pitches with (goals facing north and south). Last year was one of their better playing years in terms of games due to a fewer number of games being called off for waterlogged pitches. One area of concern was the run off from the bank. This was the same every year, but if the council agreed, they would be willing to help financially with a drainage ditch along that area with increased and better signage for Grasshoppers match day parking. They would also look at putting a soakaway in at the bottom of the bank to divert the water.

3.0 Proposal put forward by Uckfield Grasshoppers

- 3.1 By moving the 11v11 pitch to the doctors' surgery end (running north to south) and then having two 9v9 pitches at the pavilion end (running east to west), the mini football pitches could then be spaced out within the new layout in the areas that would cause minimal damage (i.e. away from historical wet areas and goal mouths).

The closest pitch to the pavilion would be slightly smaller and would be supported by pop up goals (when required), whilst the middle pitch would be slightly bigger and have permanent goals.

- 3.2 To minimise impact, the smaller pitch would be used as an overflow pitch and would be used by the younger children, reducing the risk of footballs being kicked far. It may be worth mentioning too that the goal would be 25m further down the field, therefore a greater distance from the properties and less chance of footballs hitting the fence. The goal would actually be further than the currently 7v7 goal location. If it became a problem, the football club could look at purchasing a net to put up behind the goal during match times.

The 11v11 pitches would be no closer to the play area than the current pitch, so there would be no impact to that side.

4.0 Timescales

- 4.1 If members agreed to these proposals, the reconfiguration works could be carried out during the October half term as there was a break in football fixtures then. They would obviously need to work with the Head Groundsman to confirm exact pitch sizes and the space between pitches, although the relevant FA guide to pitch dimensions had already been discussed (see diagrams below).
- 4.2 There was some concern that with the new layouts of pitches 1 and 2, balls would be aimed at the nearby houses on the boundary. After discussing this with Uckfield Grasshoppers, they have confirmed they will place nets behind the goals to limit this.



Diagram 1: Pitch set up - West Park. 2 x 9v9 pitches & 1 x 11v11 pitch

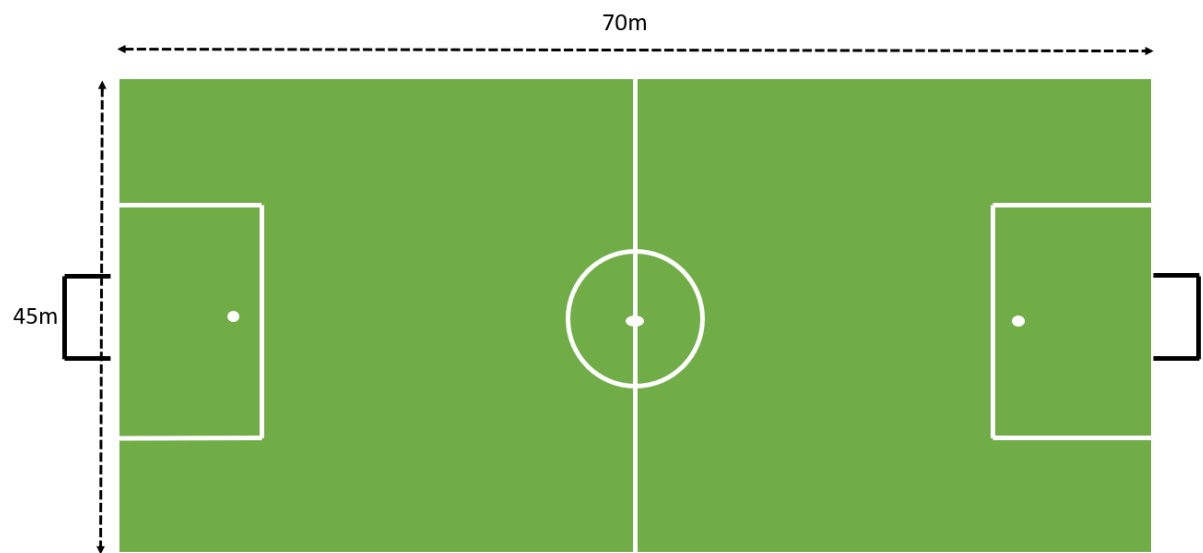


Diagram 2: Pitches 1 & 2 layout (9 a side)

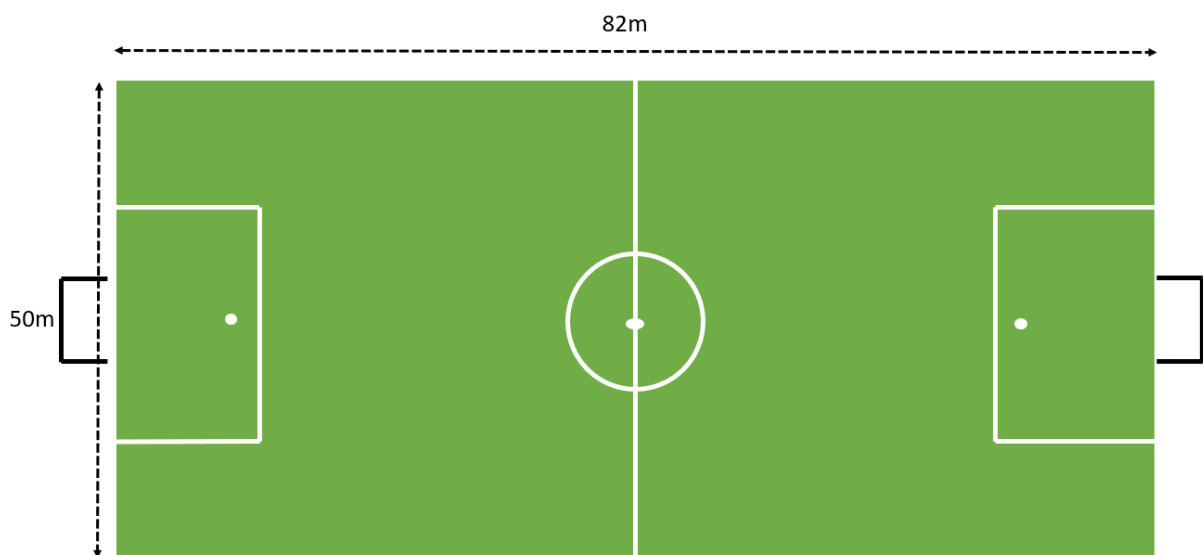


Diagram 3: Pitch 3 layout (11 a side)

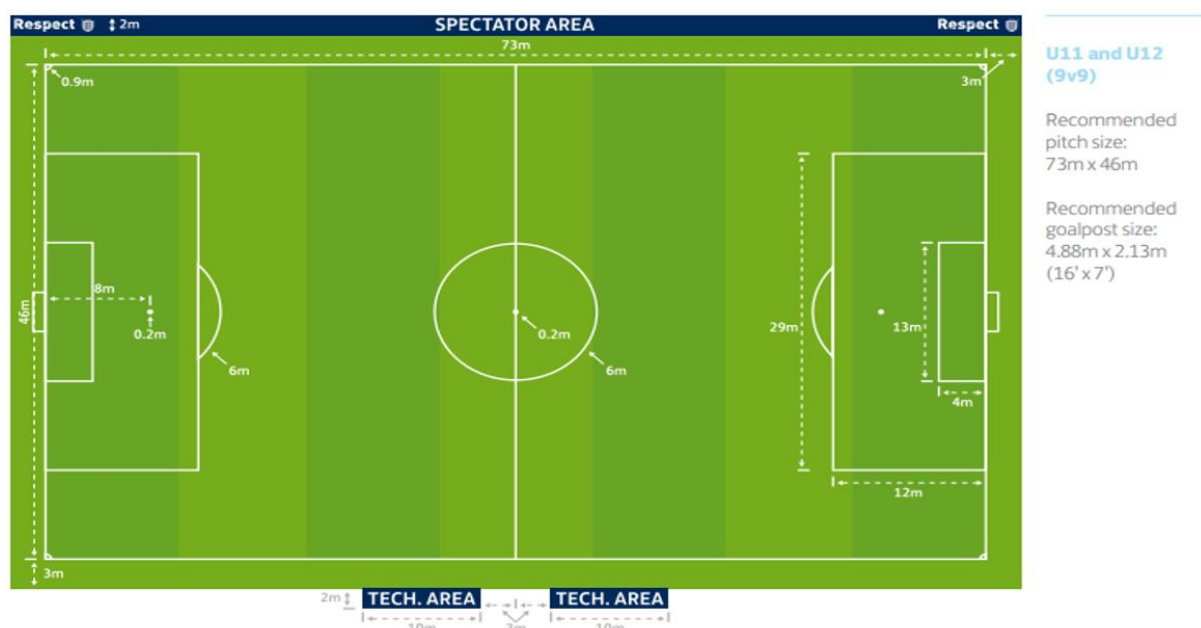


Diagram 4: FA recommended pitch size 9v9

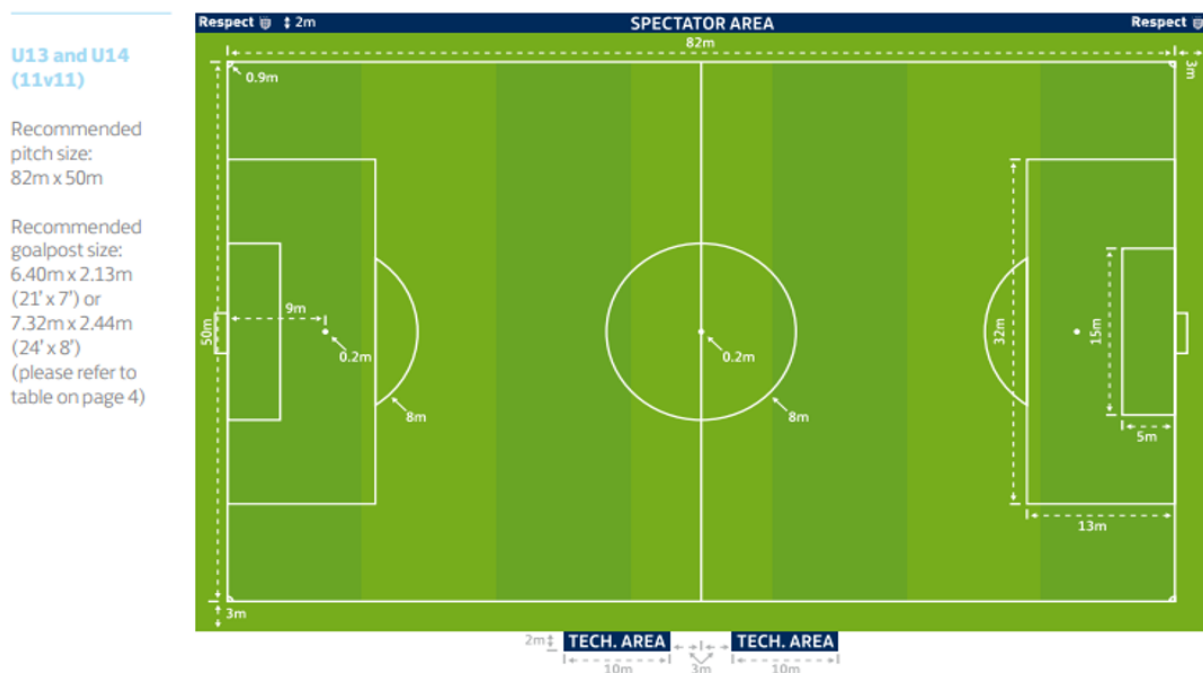


Diagram 5: FA recommended pitch size 11v11

5.0 Recommendations

5.1 Members are asked to:

- (i) note the report, and;
- (ii) decide if they agree to this proposal from Uckfield Grasshoppers Football Club to reconfigure the pitch layout at West Park.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee

Wednesday 28 September 2022

Agenda Item 8.2

TO RE-CONSIDER CRICKET NET REPAIRS

1.0 Background

The Chair of Anderida Cricket Club has provided the Town Clerk with information below for the repairs to the Cricket nets at Victoria Pleasure Ground and general maintenance of the pitch.

A decision was previously taken at Environment and Leisure Committee on 21 February 2022 with regards to covering the costs of the cricket net repairs. Members had agreed that there was no funding available to meet the request to contribute towards repairs to the cricket nets at Victoria Pleasure Ground, and to sign post them to suitable funding streams. Unfortunately the Town Council's Community Grant programme had already closed for applications and the matter was considered to be their responsibility.

The Cricket club have requested that if the Cricket club is to be responsible for the maintenance of this asset, then the cricket nets would have to be limit to use by their Cricket club members only. The Town Clerk happens to agree.

Also, if other clubs were offered the use of the net for paid coaching sessions and general training, the club does not feel that it is fair for the full cost to be borne by their Cricket club members. Consideration would then need to be given to hiring out these facilities, which are not that easy to observe and manage.

2.0 Issues and costs

- 2.1 The issues with the nets are that the surface has very variable bounce, meaning it stops becoming a useful practice facility, and the nets themselves have holes in them and during the session the ball can go through these holes at speed. The nets would need to be repaired by putting new ballast underneath the mat and to roll the surface.
- 2.2 The surface is now fairly aged, has suffered a very dry summer and previously wet summer in 2021, so quite varied seasons and weather fronts and this has affected its longevity. The Grounds staff have rolled the area which has helped a small amount but the surface bounce remains very variable.
- 2.3 For the surface repairs, the Cricket club have said that they can provide a percentage of this amount.

The original company that installed the net can offer the following:

(on the two 10m batting ends only) to improve the bounce:

- Lift the existing playing surfaces and pads
- Screed level, and compact the hard porous aggregate bases allowing a bulk bag of additional aggregate for topping up if required.
- Re fit the existing pads and playing surfaces

All for the sum of £1,970.00+vat

Lead time around four weeks subject to suitable ground conditions. Offered subject to the company's standard Terms and Conditions.

3.0 Benefits to Town Council and Cricket Club

- 3.1 The Chair of Anderida Cricket Club highlighted the benefits to the club are the ability for all their players, including juniors, can practice their skills, as well as enabling members of the public to give cricket a try in a safe environment.

All of that contributes to providing a family friendly sport every week during the summer in our town, attracting spectators and families.

- 3.2 The Cricket Club have said they have sixty juniors that will start to play league cricket so with the current charging structure this will mean an increased revenue stream for the council due to the number of teams that may well be entering the league from now on.

4.0 Available budget

- 4.1 It would be useful to have the nets repaired in time for the new season which will commence in April 2023. We could also look to obtain an audit of the pitch(es) by Sussex Cricket Foundation to assist us with renovations and maintenance plans for 2023 onwards.
- 4.2 There are funds under the title of 'Playing Fields and Pitches' earmarked reserve to the amount of £5,259.00. It is therefore advisable that the repairs are funded out of the revenue budget of 'Playing Fields and Pitches' during 2022-23, so the repairs can be undertaken before the new season in April 2023, and for any surplus/overspend to be covered by the same titled earmarked reserves.

5.0 Recommendation

- 5.1 Members are asked to provide their feedback to the Clerk and confirm if they are happy with the suggested way forward.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment and Leisure Committee
Wednesday 28 September 2022

Agenda Item 9.1

UPDATE FROM THE SPORTS FACILITIES WORKING GROUP – FEES AND CHARGES

1.0 Summary

1.1 At the Environment & Leisure Committee in November 2021, members agreed to set up a working group to discuss the pricing structure and the provision of sports facilities.

1.2 The first working group meeting took place on Monday 5 September to discuss the remit of the working group and intention to fully review fees and charges and consider if any changes needed to be recommended within the budget setting process.

2.0 Pricing structure for pitch useage (including off pitch hire)

2.1 Committee members were asked to consider the pricing structure of pitch hire, recognising the variety of hirers, as the office had been approached by various users for commercial use such as personal trainers/keep fit outdoor activities.

2.2 The office also received a number of enquiries prior to the start of the football season, which could fall under the terms of one-off friendly matches, training and full seasonal fixtures.

2.3 Members discussed if they wished to specify an hourly rate for use of the parks and open spaces since we did not currently have a price list for this. Also the terminology used by the office in past charging schedules differed to the terminology and types of fixtures by football clubs.

2.4 Grounds staff still had to prepare the grounds even for training so for 2023 onwards it was important to have a more robust structure of charging in place. The cost to maintain the pitches was also increasing year on year.

3.0 Actions

3.1 In preparation for the draft budget in early December, members suggested that a review of previous audits undertaken by the Sussex FA of the pitches would be helpful to understand and budget for the annual renovations costs. This could also be applied if an audit was carried out of the cricket pitch.

3.2 Members would then be in a position to consider the annual costs to the Town Council to maintain and prepare the pitches before setting the pricelist for 2023-24. From this a traffic light method could also be applied to understand the prioritise for renovations and maintenance each year over perhaps a three year period..

3.3 Football training and fixtures were a priority on the football pitches, so members were also asked to look into having a structured planner for football teams booking football.

4.0 Recommendation

4.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

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Wednesday 28 September 2022

Agenda Item 10.4

CONSERVATORS OF ASHDOWN FOREST COMMITTEE MEETING – 3 AUGUST 2022

1.0 Summary report

- 1.1 The group met on 3 August at The Ashdown Forest Education Centre with representatives from Fletching, Dane Hill and Chelwood Gate, Fairwarp, Withyham, West Hoathly, Forest Row and High Hurstwood.

James Adler, CEO of Ashdown Forest gave an interesting update on forest matters.

- 1.2 The main one being the introduction of car parking changes. The application for planning permission to erect notice boards in forty-four car parks was sent into Wealden DC the previous week (there were seven car parks which would not have notices displayed).

Also included in the application was for the installation of a cashless payment machine at the forest centre. This would be the only machine where payment could be made and there would also be availability to pay with cash or cashless at the forest office when this was open. All other payments were to be by phone or app. The system would be run and operated by Horizon Management Ltd who would be covering the car parks for seventy hours a week with two members of staff.

There would be a £70 penalty charge fine for non-payment of the charges and the system will be linked to vehicle registration numbers. The charges would be £80 per annum, £50 winter pass, £2 per hour, £2.50 for two hours, £4 half day and £5 per day. Concessions were available (see website for details).

- 1.3 The Night Jar and Dartford Warbler population were strong and improving.
- 1.4 There were six known Red Kite residents at present and these were expected to increase rapidly.
- 1.5 Following a drone survey there were approximately eight-hundred deer on the 'forest', two-hundred of which are on the forest proper and six-hundred on privately owned land (eating the land owners' assets).
- 1.6 The board of directors were liaising with all interested parties in the preparation of a management plan covering the next ten years.
- 1.7 The forest management were involved in the introduction of a fifty-mile wildlife corridor from Climping to The Ashdown Forest.
- 1.8 There were plans to organise future public presentations and discussion sessions at venues around the area during November.

- 1.9 The problem of fly tipping at the forest seemed to have reduced slightly and the rangers were always on the lookout for potential offenders.
At the end of May, Ashdown Forest Foundation organised a fundraising event at Crotchford Farm, former home of A. A. Milne, and raised in excess of £15,000. It was planned to hold future fundraising events to support the work of The Conservators.

Very good news - no serious fires yet this year.

The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 28th September 2022.

Councillor Chris Macve.

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the above report.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton

Meeting of the Environment & Leisure Committee

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Agenda Item 10.6

LUXFORD CENTRE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING UPDATE

1.0 Summary report

- 1.1 At the meeting held on 24 June 2022 the Chairman welcomed two new members to the executive committee, Mr Frank Phillips as the representative from Uckfield Lions Club – the constitution of the Centre has positions on the committee for a member of Uckfield Rotary Club and Uckfield Lions Club, and Mrs Joan Richards as Treasurer for the House Committee.
- 1.2 The Chairman of House Committee reported that there was an increase in membership numbers but this was still less than pre-covid. The outings programme was receiving members' support and special thanks were recorded to Uckfield Lions for the use of their minibus. There was a full schedule of events throughout the summer and early autumn.
- 1.3 It was agreed to accept the quotation for the redecoration of the Tyler Room and organise a suitable date around the current bookings.
- 1.4 During the summer the boiler had failed and the engineer reported that owing to its age the parts were no longer available, so instructions had been given to install a new boiler.
- 1.5 This was now complete and a Building Regulations Compliance Certificate received.
- 1.6 The quotations for the design and submission of drawings for planning permission of the proposed storage extension were considered and it was agreed to accept the offer from Mike Hill and instruct him accordingly.
- 1.7 Following discussions on general advertising and promotion of the Centre, it was agreed to prepare an article for Uckfield Matters in the August edition and continue with the interview on Ashdown Radio.
- 1.8 The general administrative matters were all in hand and up to date and the Annual Return to the Charity Commission could now be sent off.
- 1.9 The next meeting will be on 23 September 2022 at 09:30am.

Councillor Chris Macve

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

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Agenda Item 10.10

REPORTS FROM OUTSIDE BODIES: UCKFIELD RAILWAY LINE PARISHES COMMITTEE

1.0 Summary report

- 1.1 The July meeting was held at the revised time during the afternoon as it was hoped this would enable representatives from Southern to attend during their working day. However, on this occasion no-one was able to attend.
- 1.2 The meeting discussed at length the TFSE document and the recommendations contained within it. There was general agreement that the proposals to electrify the Uckfield Line from Hurst Green, to reconnect the Line from Uckfield to Lewes and to Tunbridge Wells were very welcome after all these years of canvassing and it was hoped that this time, these improvements would actually happen. It was agreed the Chairman would respond on the consultation accordingly.
- 1.3 Members were very disappointed at the continuation of the two-hourly service during the off-peak periods despite the previous indication that the hourly service would re-instated. They have now been told the two-hourly service would remain until September. It was felt that this was a missed opportunity for leisure travellers during the summer.
- 1.4 Concern was again raised on the number of cancellations and turn arounds at Crowborough. The Chairman would write to the GTR Managing Director and our MP Nusrat Ghani, expressing their concerns.
- 1.5 There was also worry on the position of rolling stock as up to four diesel units are being transferred to East Midlands and it is feared this will lead to a shortage and therefore peak-hour overcrowding.
- 1.6 The possibility of the closure of the ticket offices and unreliability of the ticket machines was also giving cause for worry and further discussions will be had with GTR.
- 1.7 The next meeting would take place on 14 September at 2:30pm at The Buxted Inn Hotel.

Councillor C. Macve

2.0 Recommendation

- 2.1 Members are asked to note the report.

Contact Officer: Rachel Newton