

Friday 5 September 2025

To Councillors – John Reynolds (Chair), Chris Bloor, Danny Bonnett, Christine Carter, Chris Davies, Fiona Deas, Gil Gilroy, James Murray, Phil O'Rourke, Chris Rowe, Emma Shepherd, Chris Woodhouse

Please take notice that a meeting of the **Open Spaces Committee** of Thornbury Town Council will be held in the **Council Chamber of the Town Hall** on **Tuesday 16 September 2025 at 7.30pm**.

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



Wendy Sydenham, Deputy Town Clerk

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

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

Emergency Evacuation Procedure: please familiarise yourself with the emergency evacuation procedure on display in the Council Chamber and acquaint yourself with the nearest emergency exit. The assembly point, in the event of any evacuation, is next to the Town Council Noticeboard on the opposite side of the High Street.
If you would not be physically able to use the stairs in the event of a fire, please inform us of your intention to attend this meeting no later than 9.00am on the Monday before, so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

AGENDA

1. To receive any apologies for absence
2. To receive any members' declarations of interest
3. To receive any representations from the public relating to items on the agenda
4. To approve and sign the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 22 July 2025 (paper attached)
5. To consider feedback on the consultation on possible changes to the patch on tarmac near Larkspur Avenue and agree next steps (paper attached)
6. To consider a request from Thornbury In Bloom for an alternative location for the third bench on Rock Street Garden (paper attached)

- 7. To consider a recommendation from the Climate & Nature Committee for wildflower planting on the Mundy Playing Fields (paper attached)**
- 8. To ratify an officer decision regarding allowing plaques on public graves at Thornbury Cemetery (paper attached)**
- 9. To consider proceeding with entering the Mundy Playing Fields into the Green Flag Awards and delegate authority for any associated expenditure (paper attached)**
- 10. To consider a request to allow adoption of an existing bench as a memorial bench (paper attached)**
- 11. To note that the deadline for submission of items to the Deputy Clerk for inclusion in the next agenda is Wednesday 5 November 2025**
- 12. To note the date of the next meeting – Tuesday 18 November 2025**

END OF AGENDA

Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Spaces Committee
held on 22 July 2025 at 7:30pm
in the Council Chamber, Town Hall

Councillors present: Cllr John Reynolds (Chair)
Cllr Chris Bloor
Cllr Fiona Deas
Cllr Chris Davies
Cllr Danny Bonnett
Cllr Christine Carter
Cllr Chris Rowe
Cllr James Murray

Officers present: Wendy Sydenham (Deputy Clerk)

Councillors absent: Cllr Phil O'Rourke
Cllr Gil Gilroy
Cllr Chris Woodhouse
Cllr Emma Shepherd

There were no members of the public present

OS2526.21 TO CONSIDER ANY APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Phil O'Rourke, Gil Gilroy, Chris Woodhouse and Emma Shepherd.

OS2526.22 TO RECEIVE ANY MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no member's declarations of interest.

OS2526.23 TO RECEIVE ANY REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no members of the public present.

OS2526.24 TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 27 MAY 2025

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the minutes of the Open Spaces Committee Meeting held on 27 May 2025, and they were then signed by the Chair.

OS2526.25 TO CONSIDER REQUESTS RECEIVED FROM THORNBURY TOWN FOOTBALL CLUB AND TO CONSIDER ANY RESULTING RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE MUNDY PLAYING FIELDS TRUST

In relation to the requests from Thornbury Town Football Club, the following was **RESOLVED** unanimously:

- In relation to the request to install a food serving structure, concerns were noted regarding the suitability of that structure for its intended purpose and officers were requested to have further discussions with the Club regarding this.

- In relation to the request to install a storage shed, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Committee were supportive of the request in principle but with the following conditions:
 - the Club should make a pre-planning application to ascertain whether the structure would require planning permission and report this back to the Committee
 - officers would need time to establish whether the installation of the structure would have any negative impact on any current or future planning applications that the Town Council may make in relation to the Pavilion buildings and surrounding land, noting that it may be necessary to turn down or put on hold the Club's request, should a potential negative impact be established
 - this resolution was being made in the form of a recommendation to the Mundy Playing Fields Trust for their consideration
- In relation to the request to use an area of the Mundy Playing Fields as an additional grass pitch (the flat land behind pitch two), it was **RESOLVED** unanimously that the Committee were supportive of the request with the following conditions:
 - the Club would be given details by officers of what land was available for them to use, which would be whatever land was left once the MUGA and the seating bund were taken into consideration (it was noted that should a pitch of 37m x 27m be used, part of that would be on sloped land)
 - the Club would be responsible for marking out the pitch as and when needed, but could use Town Council equipment for this
 - no additional pitch treatments would be carried out in that area
 - the Town Council reserved the right to withdraw this permission or change the available space, should the location of the MUGA and/or seating bund need to be altered
- In relation to the additional grass pitch, it was **RESOLVED** with one abstention to ask the Finance & General Purpose Committee to agree on an appropriate fee for to charge for use of that land on a per match basis.

OS2526.26 TO CONSIDER POTENTIAL LOCATIONS FOR MORE SEATING ON TOWN COUNCIL LAND

In relation to locations for more seating on Town Council sites, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to install new seats as set out below, at a total cost of c£6200 to come from Open Spaces/Street Furniture (130/4595):

- x6 new benches on the Mundy Playing Fields, style as indicated in the officer report, at c£800 per bench (x1 by the tennis courts, x2 by the allotments, x1 by pitch two, x1 by the wildflower area in Poulterbrook, x1 by the entrance to Poulterbrook)
- x1 new bench on Chantry Road Play, style as indicated in the officer report, at c£400 (to be located alongside the basketball court)
- x1 new bench on Rock Street Garden, to replace the remembrance bench when it is moved, to match the other benches on site, supplier to be confirmed, with £1000 allocated

OS2526.27 TO CONSIDER INSTRUCTING OFFICERS TO BEGIN A PHASED REVIEW OF SIGNAGE IN TOWN COUNCIL GREEN SPACES

In relation to the review of signage on Town Council green spaces, the following was **RESOLVED** unanimously:

- officers should progress phase one of the review of signage, as outlined in the officer report, and bring back to a future Committee meeting suggestions for designs and

locations, and costings/quotes, with the intention of using the same supplier/style across all types of signage and all sites during later phases.

- quotes/suggested designs should be sought from suppliers who can provide more natural looking signs and focus on the green colours in our Town Council branding
- signage relating to wayfinding from the Mundy Playing Fields out onto recognised/established paths, walks, routes, should be included in this project
- signage providing information on climate and nature related changes to our open spaces e.g. wildflower meadows, tall grassland, etc, should be included in this project
- the intention would be for funding to be included within the 2026/2027 budget

OS2526.28 TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO THE INSTALLATION OF A MULTI-USE GAMES AREA

- **To consider the colour of the fencing around the MUGA**
- **To ratify decisions made out of meeting regarding the orientation of the MUGA and the height of the fencing around the MUGA**

In relation to the installation of a Multi-Use Games Area at the Mundy Playing Fields, the following was **RESOLVED** unanimously:

- that the planning application should include that the colour of the fencing surround will be dark green
- to ratify decisions made out of meeting in relation to the orientation of the MUGA within the space and the fencing heights, as detailed in the officer report

OS2526.29 TO CONSIDER EXTENDING REDUCED RATES TENNIS COURT BOOKING TO FULL TIME STUDENTS

In relation to the request to extend reduced rates for tennis court bookings to full time students, the following was **RESOLVED** unanimously:

- a recommendation would be made to the Finance & General Purpose Committee to allow all court users in full time education (both children and adults) to pay the reduced rate
- officers would establish appropriate and straightforward ways for those people to evidence their status to allow them to pay the reduced rates
- assuming the F&GP Committee agree to the proposed changes, they would be made with immediate effect, but that a widely publicised “launch” of the changes would take place in Spring 2026, along with some associated “offers” e.g. periods of free court use – officers would bring back full proposals on this to a future Committee meeting for consideration
- officers would review the existing “recognised benefits” on the reduced rates application form to ensure they were still relevant and appropriate

OS2526.30 TO CONSIDER A REQUEST FOR A MEMORIAL TREE OUTSIDE OF THE EXISTING MEMORIAL TREE POLICY

In relation to a request for a memorial tree outside of the terms of existing memorial tree policy (specifically to “adopt” an existing tree rather than purchase a new tree), the following was **RESOLVED** unanimously:

- the Committee supported the request in principle
- the appropriate draft changes to the memorial tree policy would be made by officers and referred to the Finance & General Purpose Committee for agreement
- an associated request would be made to the Finance & General Purpose Committee to set the fee for this new service, with a recommendation from the Open Spaces Committee that the fee be set at £200 and any income from this would be allocated to the planting of new trees

OS2526.31 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE NEW PICNIC AREA/NEW WATER PLAY FACILITIES AT THE MUNDY PLAYING FIELDS

The Deputy Clerk provided a verbal update on the new temporary picnic area and planned new water play facilities at the Mundy Playing Fields. It was noted that lots of information was available on the Town Council website in relation to this and that the tender has gone out for new water play facilities.

OS2526.32 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE PREMISES/RESIDENCES BACKING ONTO THE MUNDY PLAYING FIELDS, SPECIFICALLY ACCESS POINTS AND VISIBLE BUSINESS ADVERTISING

The Deputy Clerk provided a verbal update on matters relating to premises/residences backing onto the Mundy Playing Fields who had access points onto that green space. It was noted that officers were obtaining advice regarding those access points and regarding business advertising that was visible from the Mundy Playing Fields. The Committee would be updated further in due course.

OS2526.33 TO CONSIDER QUOTES FOR TREE WORKS IDENTIFIED IN THE MAY 2025 TREE SURVEY

Quotes for tree works were considered and it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to proceed with engaging Oldown Tree Surgeons to carry out the works on the basis of their quote for £2350 + VAT.

OS2526.34 TO RECEIVE QUOTES FOR GROUND WATER ASSESSMENTS OF THORNBURY CEMETERY

Quotes for a ground water assessment of Thornbury Cemetery were considered and it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to proceed with engaging The CDS Group to carry out the works on the basis of their quote for £6245 + VAT.

OS2526.35 TO CONSIDER THE ADOPTION OF GEOCACHING GUIDELINES FOR TOWN COUNCIL GREEN SPACES

In relation to Geocaching on Town Council land, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to adopt the Geocaching guidelines as detailed in the supporting paper.

OS2526.36 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE FROM CLLR CHRIS BLOOR ON CREATING NEW THORNBURY WALKS

Cllr Bloor provided an update to the Committee on progress with creating new walks around Thornbury. It was noted that this project had been taken on by Thornbury Wayfinders and progress had been made with a number of walks. Suggestions were made regarding accessing the walks online and methods for distribution of printed copies of the walks. It was agreed that Cllr Bloor would continue to progress this through the Thornbury Wayfinders and come back to the Town Council in due course to discuss possible ways of assisting with the funding of printing costs.

OS2526.37 TO NOTE OFFICER'S DECISIONS MADE OUT OF MEETING

The Committee noted officer decisions made out of meeting on expenditure relating to the purchase of two new trampoline beds (£3,334.27 + VAT), as detailed in the supporting paper.

OS2526.38 TO NOTE THAT THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF ITEMS TO THE DEPUTY CLERK FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEXT AGENDA IS MONDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2025

The deadline for submission of items to the Clerk/Deputy Clerk for inclusion in the next agenda was noted to be Monday 1 September 2025.

OS2526.39 TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – TUESDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2025

The date of the next meeting was noted to be Tuesday 16 September 2025.

The meeting closed at 21.45.

DRAFT

Officer Report to Thornbury Town Council Open Spaces Committee

Report Title: Results of Consultation of Possible Changes to Tarmacked Area Near Larkspur Avenue

Prepared By: Wendy Sydenham, Deputy Clerk

Meeting Date: 16 September 2025

Status: For Action



1. Background

At its meeting on 27 May 2025, the Open Spaces Committee considered a request from a member of the public to repurpose a patch of tarmacked land close to Larkspur Avenue.



It was resolved that officers should:

- (a) Carry out a targeted consultation with residences that back onto the land to ask their views on what the land is currently used for and what thoughts they may have regarding an alternative use.
- (b) Contact South Gloucestershire Council to confirm whether the land was theirs and whether some kind of change would be feasible in principle.

Targeted Consultation

A short questionnaire with a covering letter was sent to 90 households, who either back onto the space or are very close to it. We received 15 responses. A summary of the responses is appended to this report.

Current Land Ownership

South Gloucester Council have confirmed the following:

"It is common for open spaces to be adopted by SGC for maintenance/management, with overall land ownership being retained by the developer. In that situation, any material change would require both developer and SGC approval...As the adopted custodian of what appears to be a defunct ball court/play area, we can't "sublet" the land to the Town Council. This would require Crest Homes permission under lease/licence and then notice given to SGC Estates Team to relinquish maintenance duties and the necessary alterations made to our maintenance schedules/maps."

Officers have attempted to contact Crest Nicholson but have not been able to get a response yet. This will be pursued.

2. Implications

Legal/Environmental/Financial/Health and Safety/Reputational – there will be implications for each potential use of the area, which can be explored further by officers once the list is narrowed down.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Committee agree on a small shortlist of possible uses for officers to investigate further, or potentially just one.

APPENDIX – SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF TARGETED CONSULTATION

Question	Response	Number of times the suggestion was repeated
Which road do you live on?	Larkspur Close	6
	Kestrel Close	5
	Easton Hill Road	2
	Bluebell Close	2
TOTAL		15
Do you know what the land is currently used for?	Dog walking	4
	Cut through to the schools/ One Stop/ Primrose Drive	4
	Children occasionally learn to ride bikes on it	
	Children/teenagers ride bikes/skateboards	3
	Used in the evening/night for older kids to congregate and smoke	3
	Sometimes kids play football on tarmac	3
	Land presently vacant. It was a play park, but equipment was taken away due to vandalism and it's now an overgrown tump and tarmac	2
SUMMARY	The land is frequently used informally by locals especially for dog walking, as a shortcut and for activities by children and teenagers, not always in a positive way. Although the land was previously a play park, the removal of equipment due to vandalism has left it vacant.	
What could the land be used for?	New play area for children, the hill is perfect for a slide	6
	Sports Courts - basketball/ football/ cricket area	5
	Grassed over with trees and covered benches	4
	Leave it alone or take up tarmac and plant with grasses, wildflowers etc to encourage nature / Wildflower Meadow. Woodpeckers and birdlife noticed in the last couple of years so any help for them would be appreciated	4
	Adult exercise equipment (with QR code to track progress)	3
	Bungalows	1
	Get rid of shrubbery and tump and open it to the road so mums from Christ the King could sit and wait for school to finish.	1
	Lined for bikes/ scooters/ hopscotch	1
	Community garden with raised beds, maybe working with Thornbury in Bloom	1
	More bins	1
	Allotments	1
SUMMARY	The most favoured uses center around recreation for children and families, sports, and natural green spaces. There is also interest in community-focused and ecological initiatives like gardens and meadows.	

Do you want to tell us anything else?	MUST NOT BE BUILT ON!	
	Only big enough to allow seating in a green, quiet space	
	Always covered in glass so pointless being a play area	
	Fear that if a new play area was put in it would be vandalised like the old one as it is an area that is not overlooked	
	Lots of litter and smashed bottles even though there is a bin	
	Seating would encourage ASB	
	In the past, youths hanging around it and what looked like drop off for drugs but haven't seen this recently	
	Don't cut down the trees and hedgerows, we look over this area and see a lot of birdlife	
	We hope that there will be no easy access from the road allowing travellers to park	
	Glad to see it used and stop it from becoming more houses	
	As the original play area was vandalised, reluctant to refit with another play area	
	It's very dark and spooky at night. Walking past and down the alley, I don't always feel safe	
	There are a lot of young children in the area who are currently not using it but if changes were made... ?	
SUMMARY	The feedback reflects concerns related to the history of anti-social behaviour. However, there's also acknowledgment that well-considered, safe, and nature-friendly improvements might be welcomed.	

Officer Report to Thornbury Town Council Open Spaces Committee

Report Title: Request from Thornbury In Bloom
Regarding Alternative Location for Third
Rock Street Garden Bench

Prepared By: Wendy Sydenham, Deputy Clerk

Meeting Date: 16 September 2025

Status: For Action



1. Background

The Committee has already resolved to replace the Remembrance Bench at the Rock Street Garden with a bench very similar in style to the other two existing benches in that location. The intention was to put this third bench in the same position at the Remembrance Bench. (As Committee members will be aware, the Remembrance Bench is due to be moved to its new location some time in the Autumn.)

Thornbury In Bloom has requested that the Committee consider an alternative location for the new third bench, as they feel the viewpoint from an alternative location may be better and it would make more sense in terms of the overall layout of the area. The image below includes the three existing benches and their suggestion is to locate the new bench in the area marked with a red box. The concreted area under the existing Remembrance Bench would be removed and returned to lawn.



2. Implications

Environmental – there would be additional concrete used for the new base.

Financial – the only additional cost would be staff time to remove old concrete base and to build the new base.

3. Recommendations

Officers do not have a recommendation on this matter. Although there is more work involved with installation in a different location, staff would be able to carry out the work. They do not envisage any ongoing operational difficulties with the suggested alternative location.

Officer Report to Thornbury Town Council Open Spaces Committee

Report Title: Recommendation from Climate & Nature Committee Regarding Wildflower Planting at the Mundy Playing Fields

Prepared By: Wendy Sydenham, Deputy Clerk
Sharon Gardham, Climate & Nature Officer

Meeting Date: 16 September 2025

Status: For Action



1. Background

The Committee is asked to consider a recommendation from the Climate & Nature Committee regarding wildflower planting at the Mundy Playing Fields. Below are extracts from a Climate & Nature Officer paper which provides full background to this recommendation:

In 2022 TTC commissioned a series of ecological surveys of its sites, which included suggestions for improving the areas for biodiversity. A good number of these changes have been made, including in Mundy Playing Fields, where an area has been left to develop as a 'hay meadow' and annual wildflowers have been sown. Following on from these changes, a management regime has been discussed and established to ensure the continuation of wildflowers in the areas already planted.

As part of this review, officers discussed the possibility of extending wildflower planting in Mundy Playing Fields to include conversion of the 'hay meadow' area (which has relatively low biodiversity) to wildflowers and the planting of wildflowers on hard-to-maintain slopes adjacent to the playground.



The options outlined above use perennial wildflower seeds, which should self-seed if managed correctly. Therefore, in subsequent years, extensive resowing is not anticipated, although some patch filling may be needed. The maintenance of the existing areas outlined above is necessary to replace previously sown annuals with perennials. Remaining stocks of annuals would be included in a planting mix of the new areas to act as a nurse for the perennial mixture.

While the extension of wildflower planting at Mundy Playing Field is not explicitly mentioned in the Local Climate and Nature Action Plan (LCNAP), it is in line with the recommendation made in the ecological enhancement report of 2022 to maximise the biodiversity interest of the site whilst maintaining its role as an important resource for both formal and informal recreation.

The 'hay meadow' area and slopes are not primary sites for recreation; one being already left for longer grasses to develop and the other being relatively inaccessible. The hay meadow would continue to have paths cleared through it to enable access. Planting the 'hay meadow' and slopes in addition to the existing wildflower areas would provide another approximately 3200 m² of species-rich grassland habitat in addition to the approximately 1000 m² already planted.

The Climate & Nature Committee are recommending to the Open Spaces Committee that it agrees to proceed with the wildflower planting.

2. Implications

Financial – the Climate & Nature Committee would cover the cost of the wildflower seed. Staff time would be used for preparing the ground and planting the seed, but the purchase of the Amazone machine, with scarifier attachments, reduces the time this will take. The existing wildflower areas would need maintaining and supplementing anyway, and the mix recommended by the Climate & Nature Committee should reduce future maintenance and reseeded requirements.

Environmental – as outlined above, this recommendation is directly in line the Town Council stated ecological objectives. The benefits are outlined in full above.

Health and Safety – there are no significant health and safety risks associated with this proposal. Very small markers will be put in the ground when the planting takes place but would not constitute a significant trip hazard and will be removed as soon as possible. Continuing to leave sloped area uncut reduces risks associated with using heaving machinery on sloped terrain.

Public Enjoyment of the Space – the Town Council recognises the importance of allowing members of the public to enjoy its open spaces, and this proposal should not significantly affect that. The areas on the slope are the only areas not included in the original ecologist recommendations. The sloped areas are commonly used as a route through from the car park and children often play on them. However, the staff have left large gaps between the unmown areas and there is plenty of sloped space to the sides. They have reported that people naturally gravitate to the sides of the unmown areas, for walking through and for playing. The wildflower areas should provide more colour and diversity to the space, which will enhance users' experience.

3. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to consider the request from the Climate & Nature Committee to proceed with the planting of the wildflower seed as outlined above. Officers would recommend proceeding.

Officer Report to Thornbury Town Council Open Spaces Committee

Report Title: Ratify Officer Decision Regarding
Allowing Plaques on Public Graves at
Thornbury Cemetery

Prepared By: Wendy Sydenham, Deputy Clerk
Hannah Cornford, Officer

Meeting Date: 16 September 2025

Status: For Action



1. Background

Historically, we allowed the interment of coffins into unpurchased graves, sometimes referred to as 'public graves', 'communal graves' or 'paupers plots'. We no longer allow this and insist on the purchase of the Exclusive Right of Burial for new plots. In these public graves, there could be three or four people buried together, with no relation to each other. Many of these people will have no family, but some will have been buried this way out of choice (because it was cheaper), or because they could not afford any other type of burial. These people may still have surviving relatives who visit the grave, or who come across it when researching their family history.

Generally, there are no memorials on these plots, and they are unmarked. Our current procedure does not allow people to place memorials on graves where they are not the holder of the Exclusive Right of Burial. We have received a request from a relative of a deceased person interred in one of these graves to be allowed to mark the grave in some way.

The ICCM (Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management) has advised:

"The Town Council could grant a right to erect a memorial on the understanding that a similar right would be granted to any relative of unrelated deceased persons also buried in the grave, should any relative come forward with a similar request. This grant in no way implies any other rights to the grave."

Other Councils and Cemeteries have differing approaches to this situation, with some allowing memorials and some not.

Officers will be responding to these requests going forward by allowing small plaques to be installed on graves. They will be simple bronze plaques, the same as those used on cremated remains plots, and will be paid for by the requester. These require virtually no maintenance from staff. The bronze plaque will contain only a name and date, to avoid any potential disputes from other family members regarding the wording on plaques. The plaques are small enough that multiple plaques could easily fit onto the same plot, should relatives of other people interred in that plot request it. The arrangement will include no rights to that plot other than to have the plaque installed.

2. Implications

Financial – the requester would pay the normal bronze plaque fee which covers all costs associated with its production, installation, recording and any potential future maintenance.

Health and Safety – officers have purposefully not allowed the installation of a full memorial stone as these need ongoing safety testing by our staff, which confirms their inherent risk. The very small and flat bronze plaques have no significant health and safety risks.

Legal – the ICCM advice covers this process. In reality, we receive very few of these requests and should there be any kind of unforeseen dispute around this, the bronze plaques can be very easily removed until the dispute is resolved. Officers do not anticipate any such disputes. (We will not be entering into lengthy processes to confirm that the requester is actually a relative of the deceased, as the work involved in this would be disproportionate to the risk e.g. “real” relatives coming to light who dispute the rights of the person who requested the plaque. However, there is a theoretical risk associated with this.)

Reputational – although it would be a reasonable response to refuse these requests, it would seem morally sound to allow for some kind of marker.

Environmental – there are no environmental risks in addition to our normal practice of allowing bronze plaques on cremated remains plots. This change in procedure is unlikely to lead to the use of resources in the production of many more plaques.

3. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to ratify the change in practice that officers are now working under.

Officer Report to Thornbury Town Council Open Spaces Committee

Report Title: Entering the Mundy Playing Fields into the Green Flag Awards

Prepared By: Wendy Sydenham, Deputy Clerk

Meeting Date: 16 September 2025

Status: For Action



1. Background

At the last Full Council meeting, the Clerk outlined the option of developing Land Management Plans for Town Council open spaces. One of the aims of this would be to clarify and work towards best practice for these spaces.

The Green Flag Awards is a well-respected award scheme that sets out a framework for achieving best practice in the management of green spaces. The guidance document for the awards has been provided as a supporting paper, which includes full details of the standards.

The Committee is asked to consider the standards within the award scheme and highlight if there is any part that it finds objectionable. The Town Council could choose to enter the awards at some point in the future, but at this stage it would be helpful to officers to be guided by the standards in the award scheme as they continue their scoping work on possible Land Management Plans for Town Council open spaces.

Many of the aims and objectives of the awards align with the Council's own priorities, particularly around environmental management and biodiversity. It would also directly link with ongoing work on projects such as the improvement of signage for our open spaces, the implementation of the Local Climate & Nature Action Plan, etc.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to consider the standards within the Green Flag Awards scheme and highlight any areas that it finds objectionable.

Officer Report to Thornbury Town Council Open Spaces Committee

Report Title: Request to Allow Adoption of an Existing Bench as a Memorial Bench

Prepared By: Wendy Sydenham, Deputy Clerk

Meeting Date: 16 September 2025

Status: For Action



1. Background

We have received a request from a member of the public to adopt an existing bench in Thornbury Cemetery as a memorial bench. At present, the Town Council's policy on memorial benches allows only for the purchase of a new memorial bench with a plaque (fee - £2191.61), or the purchase of a plaque on a shared memorial bench (which would be a bench that had been purchased with the intention of being a shared memorial bench and would therefore always be relatively new, fee - £646.92). The request to adopt an existing bench has been made because the bench in question is very near to the interment plot of their relative.

2. Implications

- A similar request was made recently to adopt an existing tree as a memorial tree and this was allowed by the Committee. However, the memorial tree policy does not have two options at two different price points. There are already two options in place for memorial benches, one of which is much less expensive.
- The existing benches on our land, which could potentially be adopted, are of various ages and in various states of repair (although all are functional and well maintained). It would be difficult to give any sort of guarantee of the lifetime of an existing bench. (The Committee's decision to allow adoption of existing trees as memorial trees did not carry the same risk, assuming there were no obvious issues with the tree in question.)
- Ecologically, less resources would be used in the production of new benches if the Council were to allow the adoption of existing benches. This may be a minimal benefit however, as there are a limited number of existing benches on our sites, and we have sold only six new memorial benches since the new policy was introduced in 2022.
- If this request is allowed, the Committee would need to consider the price for this new option. This would either need to be in the form of a recommended fee for consideration by the Finance & General Purpose Committee or as a request to them to decide on a fee.

3. Recommendations

Officers do not have any recommendation regarding this request but would highlight that there is a risk associated with requests to adopt existing benches of various ages and in various states of repair. Also, the existing policy provides two good options at two different price points.

If the Committee decides to support the request, it will need to do so in the form of a recommendation to the Finance & General Purpose Committee, both as an amendment to an existing policy and as a request to agree a fee for this service.