

Thursday 16 July 2026

To Councillors – Danny Bonnett (Chair), Chris Bloor, Christine Carter, Chris Davies, Fiona Deas, Gil Gilroy, Chris Rowe, 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 21 July 2026 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 minutes of the meeting of the Open Spaces Committee on 19 May 2026
5. To note an update from South Gloucestershire Council on the Streamside Walk project (paper to follow)
6. To agree to replace the pipe within the culvert by the tennis courts and to agree funding to come from Open Spaces/Maintenance 130/4150 (paper attached)

7. To consider matters relating to Thornbury Cemetery
 - 7.1 To consider a request made regarding allowing dogs in the Cemetery (paper attached)
 - 7.2 To consider a request made regarding cutting less frequently in some parts of the Cemetery (paper attached)
8. To further consider options for the Grovesend roundabout (as discussed at meeting on 19 May 2026 – OS2526.115)
9. To agree key points from the meeting to be publicised via social media/website
10. To note that the deadline for submission of items to the Deputy Clerk for inclusion in the next agenda is Wednesday 2 September 2026
11. To note the date of the next meeting – Tuesday 15 September 2026

END OF AGENDA

Minutes of the Meeting of the Open Spaces Committee
held on Tuesday 19 May 2026 at 7:30pm
in the Council Chamber, Town Hall

Councillors present: Cllr Danny Bonnett (Chair)
Cllr Chris Bloor
Cllr Christine Carter
Cllr Chris Davies
Cllr Fiona Deas
Cllr Gil Gilroy
Cllr Chris Rowe
Cllr Chris Woodhouse

Officers present: Wendy Sydenham (Deputy Clerk)

OS2526.104 TO CONSIDER ANY APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None received.

OS2526.105 TO RECEIVE ANY MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no members' declarations of interest.

OS2526.106 TO ELECT A VICE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE

There was one nomination for the position of Vice Chair. It was **RESOLVED** to elect Cllr Chris Bloor as Vice Chair of the Committee.

OS2526.107 TO RECEIVE ANY REPRESENTATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC RELATING TO ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were no members of the public present.

OS2526.108 TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE FOLLOWING OPEN SPACES COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- **Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 17 March 2026**
- **Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 2 April 2026**
- **Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 13 April 2026**
- **Open Spaces Committee meeting held on 30 April 2026**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to approve the above sets of minutes of the Open Spaces Committee Meeting, and they were signed by the Chair.

OS2526.109 TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO THE REFURBISHMENT OF STREAMLEAZE PLAY AREA

- **To note the results of the public consultation, including votes for play equipment options and any general comments**
The Committee noted the results of the public consultation as set out in the officer report.

- **To agree the final design for the play area including play equipment choices and any other changes resulting from the comment received**

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to proceed with including in the design the items of equipment which received the most votes during the public consultation, as outlined in the officer report. In response to the general comments received during the consultation, it was **RESOLVED** unanimously to swap the flat swing for a baby swing.

OS2526.110 TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON WORKS TO STRUCTURES AT ST MARYS CHURCHYARD AND AGREE ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURE

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to agree to additional expenditure of £6,995.00 on the works, as an extension to the existing contract with Cliveden Conservation, carrying out specialist work, with funds coming partly from 130/4490 (Open Spaces/St Marys Churchyard) and partly from 130/4150 (Open Spaces/Maintenance). It was further **RESOLVED** to request that Cliveden Conservation insert supports to monument 383, rather than laying the headstone flat.

OS2526.111 TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE CULVERT RUNNING ALONGSIDE OAKLEAZE GREEN AND AGREE ANY ACTIONS

The Deputy Clerk updated the Committee on the results of the recent camera examination of the culvert at Oakleaze Green. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to agree to expenditure of up to the value of the one quote received so far for works to the culvert, with delegated authority to officers to select the contractor from additional quotes/estimates received.

OS2526.112 TO NOTE THE FINDINGS OF THE ANNUAL EXTERNAL PLAY AREA INSPECTIONS AND OFFICER PROPOSALS TO ADDRESS THE RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The Committee noted the findings of the annual external play area inspections and officer proposals to address recommended actions, as set out in the officer report.

OS2526.113 TO NOTE COMPLETION OF THE TREE WORKS IDENTIFIED IN THE MOST RECENT FULL TREE SURVEY

The Committee noted the completion of tree works identified in the most recent full tree survey, as set out in the supporting paper. It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to take advantage of any opportunities in the future to use trunks of fallen trees as natural seating, where this could be done safely and appropriately.

OS2526.114 TO NOTE THE AMENDED TREE MANAGEMENT POLICY (APPROVED AT THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSE COMMITTEE MEETING ON 14 APRIL 2026)

The Committee noted the amended Tree Management Policy which had been approved at the Finance and General Purpose Committee meeting on 14 April 2026.

OS2526.115 TO NOTE THAT SOUTH GLOUCESTERSHIRE COUNCIL ARE NO LONGER CARRYING OUT SPECIFIED WORKS TO THE GREEN SPACE ADJACENT TO ROCK STREET CAR PARK OR TO THE GROVESEND ROUNDABOUT AND HAVE REDUCED OUR "LOCALISM" CHARGES ACCORDINGLY

The Committee noted that South Gloucestershire Council are no longer carrying out specified works to the green space adjacent to Rock Street Car Park or to the Grovesend roundabout and have reduced our "localism" charges accordingly. The Committee discussed possibly installing some kind of feature on the Grovesend roundabout and agreed to discuss this further at a future meeting.

OS2526.116 TO PASS A RESOLUTION TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS FOR THE REMAINING AGENDA ITEMS DUE TO THE COMMERCIALLY SENSITIVE NATURE OF THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

There being no public or press present at the meeting, the Committee moved on to the next agenda item.

OS2526.117 TO CONSIDER MATTERS RELATING TO THE INSTALLATION OF A MULTI-USE GAMES AREA (MUGA) IN THE MUNDY PLAYING FIELDS

- **To note the tender evaluation panel's findings and recommendations**
The Committee noted the tender evaluation panel's findings and recommendations as set out in the confidential officer report.
- **To agree the award of the contract for the MUGA installation**
It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to award the contract for the installation of the MUGA to Play Innovation for £109,801.00 (excluding VAT).
- **To consider whether to paint the tarmacked surface of the MUGA**
It was **RESOLVED** unanimously **not** to paint the tarmacked surface of the MUGA.
- **To agree to delegate authority to officers to use funds allocated to the project for any expenditure required to discharge planning conditions**
It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to delegate authority to officers to use funds allocated to the project for any expenditure required to discharge planning conditions, on the basis that the requirements of the Financial Regulations will be met e.g. obtaining quotes, that overall expenditure will not exceed that allocated to the project, and that any unexpected or significant expenditure will be taken to an appropriate Committee for agreement.
- **To agree to refer this award to Full Council to ratify as it exceeds £100,000 (in line with Financial Regulations and the Delegation Scheme)**
It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to refer the award of the contract for the installation of the MUGA to Full Council to ratify as it exceeds £100,000 (in line with Financial Regulations and the Delegation Scheme).

OS2526.118 TO AGREE KEY POINTS FROM THE MEETING TO BE PUBLICISED VIA SOCIAL MEDIA/WEBSITE

It was **RESOLVED** unanimously to publicise the results of the Streamleaze play area public consultation and the restoration works in St Marys Churchyard.

OS2526.119 TO NOTE THAT THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF ITEMS TO THE DEPUTY CLERK FOR INCLUSION IN THE NEXT AGENDA IS WEDNESDAY 8 JULY 2026

The deadline for submission of items to the Deputy Clerk for inclusion in the next agenda was noted to be Wednesday 8 July 2026.

OS2526.120 TO NOTE THE DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING – TUESDAY 21 JULY 2026

The date of the next meeting was noted to be Tuesday 21 July 2026.

The meeting closed at 20.10.

Officer Report to Thornbury Town Council Open Spaces Committee

Report Title: Replacement of Pipe Within the Culvert by the Tennis Courts, Including Funding

Prepared By: Wendy Sydenham, Deputy Clerk

Date: 21 July 2026

Status: For Action



1. Background

Officers arranged for a CCTV inspection in 2024 of the pipe contained within the culvert/ tarmacked bridge by the public tennis courts at the Mundy Playing Fields. The inspection found some fractures and sections of roots in the line. The pipe was resurveyed in June 2026 which found that the situation had deteriorated – *“the culvert is in poor structural condition...the crown of the pipe is severely deformed, and there are numerous displaced joints throughout its length, indicating significant structural deterioration...repair or replacement of the culvert should be considered”*.

Officers recommend prompt replacement of the pipe, particularly as flood events are becoming more prevalent in this area and the increasing amount of the water passing through the pipe will hasten the deterioration.

Officers have obtained indicative estimates for the work at around £3700 which can be covered by the Open Spaces/Maintenance budget.



2. Implications

- Increased risk of flooding of the space, and potentially the Tennis Club, due to:
 - (a) continuing deterioration of the pipe leading to more blockages and therefore more water overflowing, not able to be contained by the existing bund and wider stream banks
 - (b) general increase in the number and severity of flood events
- Potentially some longer term risk to the bridge structure.
- Financial:
 - (a) there are sufficient funds in the Open Spaces/Maintenance budget and therefore it would be prudent to address this risk now.

(b) deferring may increase the cost of future repairs if the supporting structure starts to deteriorate as well.

(c) any potential insurance claims as a result of flood damage e.g. to the Tennis Club, may be unpaid due to a lack of proper maintenance of our facilities, particularly as the Council is aware of the poor condition of the pipe.

3. Officer Requests/Recommendations

- The Committee agrees to carry out the repair before the Winter.
- The Committee delegates authority to officers to engage a contractor to carry out the works (officers will seek three quotes, in line with the Financial Regulations).
- The Committee delegates authority to officers to spend up to £3800 on these works to come from the Open Spaces/Maintenance budget 130/4150.

Note: Officers are planning to assess potential upstream interventions within the Mundy Playing Fields that could help reduce the impact of future flooding. This work reflects the growing expectation that extreme weather and flooding events will occur more frequently and with greater severity in the future.

Officer Report to Thornbury Town Council Open Spaces Committee

Report Title: Review of Permitted Dog Access in Thornbury Cemetery

Prepared By: Wendy Sydenham, Deputy Clerk

Date: 21 July 2026

Status: For Action



1. Background

Officers have received a request regarding dogs being allowed in Thornbury Cemetery. The request made two points – (1) that the signage is inconsistent and inadequate and (2) that dogs should not be allowed at all in the Cemetery. Unfortunately, on one occasion, the complainant had noticed dog mess left near her relative's plot but also felt generally that it was not appropriate nor respectful for dogs to be allowed in that space.

There are three signs in the Cemetery itself that say that dogs are allowed but must be kept on a lead. There is one sign on the footpath immediately adjacent, and going into, the side of the Cemetery that says that dogs are allowed on leads on the footpath but are not allowed at all in the Cemetery. This inconsistent signage has not been noticed before. As far back as existing staff and officers can remember, dogs have been allowed on leads in the Cemetery.

In light of the complaint, the inconsistency in the signage and the upcoming signage review, officers would welcome the Committee considering and confirming the Town Council's position regarding dog access to the Cemetery.

(Staff would, of course, clear up any dog mess that is found, and it is unfortunate that on this occasion it was missed, but this is not a common occurrence. There are no dog waste bins within the main Cemetery space itself, but there are two bins along the footpath.)

Across other Town Council green spaces there are varying rules regarding dog access, dependent on how the space is generally used. The Cemetery is a distinctly different space but also has a public footpath running within its footprint, to the side of the car park, which is frequently used by dog walkers. Staff report that many visitors to graves bring dogs with them. There are bye laws in place regarding dog access for some Town Council green spaces, but none for the Cemetery.

From online research, where information is available, roughly 70% of council-operated cemeteries in England allow dogs provided they are kept on a lead.

2. Officer Recommendation

On balance, officers would recommend that the current practice of allowing dogs on leads in the Cemetery be confirmed and continued, in line with practice in the majority of other council-run cemeteries. We do not generally receive complaints regarding dog mess or dog nuisance in the Cemetery, and staff report many visitors having dogs with them. A total ban would also bring enforcement challenges. Officers can easily rectify the inconsistent signage.

Officer Report to Thornbury Town Council Open Spaces Committee

Report Title: To Consider a Request Made Regarding the Current Less Frequent Cutting in Some Sections of the Cemetery

Prepared By: Wendy Sydenham, Deputy Clerk

Date: 21 July 2026

Status: For Action



1. Request Received

Officers have received a request regarding the sections of Thornbury Cemetery currently being left uncut for longer periods – see the exchange of emails below (in italics):

Contact Form Submitted from Website

Message:

Today I visited my father's grave in the older part of the Cemetery and I was horrified to see the state of the long grass. A few years ago you had a problem with the mower and I was promised this was a one-off occasion and the grass would be kept short the same as in the rest of the Cemetery. You are discriminating against people who attend the older part and the grass should be the same height around all of the graves in the cemetery. I trust this will be rectified as soon as possible for the people who attend their loved ones without being discriminated against. Please have some respect and stop leaving the grass high around the gravestones, which is also a health and safety issue. Thank you

On 14 Jul 2026, at 13:20, Wendy Sydenham <w.sydenham@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk> wrote:

Dear XXX

Thank you for contacting the Town Council regarding this matter. We appreciate you taking the time to share your concerns, and we understand how important it is for you to be able to visit and access the grave comfortably. As you point out, a little while back we had experienced some issues with equipment which led to some of the grass being left unmown. However, since then the Council has made the conscious decision to leave some areas to grow for longer periods.

The Council is committed to ensuring that the cemetery remains a respectful and peaceful place for visitors while also managing all their sites responsibly for future generations. As part of this commitment, one of the Council's key objectives is to enhance biodiversity across the land that we manage. The older section of the cemetery has been identified as the most suitable area for this approach, as it is generally less frequently visited than the newer sections and therefore offers the best opportunity to support wildlife without significantly impacting visitors.

Allowing the grass to grow for longer periods creates valuable habitat for a wide range of insects, including pollinators such as bees and butterflies, and supports a greater variety of wildflowers and other plant species. These changes contribute positively to local biodiversity and help create a richer and more sustainable natural environment within the cemetery grounds. Many cemeteries and churchyards are taking the same approach to managing their land.

We do appreciate, however, that this approach can impact on access in some areas. In response to your concerns, we would be happy to look into mowing another path from the nearest accessible route to the plot concerned, helping to improve access while still allowing the wider biodiversity area to be maintained. If you could let me have some details of the plot, I will look into this e.g. plot number if you have it, or name of the deceased.

I hope this explains the reasons behind the Council's management of the older section of the cemetery and reassures you that we are seeking to balance environmental benefits with the needs of visitors.

Thank you again for bringing your concerns to our attention.

With kind regards.

Wendy

Wendy Sydenham
Deputy Clerk – Thornbury Town Council
Tel: 01454 412103

From: XXX

Sent: 14 July 2026 14:47

To: Wendy Sydenham <w.sydenham@thornburytowncouncil.gov.uk>

Subject: Re: Website Contact Form Submitted

Hi Wendy,

Thank you for your reply.

I'm not in agreement with the Council's decision to leave the grass longer in the older section of the Cemetery for the reasons you have mentioned. I'm also aware of others who agree with me.

The Council should not be discriminating in areas such as a Cemetery, they need to reassess the situation and ensure all around the graves the grass is cut the same length. There are other areas of the cemetery away from the graves where the grass can be not cut.

Also, the fact that they have cut a path over the top of my father's grave is disrespectful and inconsiderate.

I'm happy to meet you there to find a resolution and a way forward as this situation needs to be reassessed.

In the meantime, it would be appreciated if the whole area (including other graves) around my father's grave is cut short and it's not obvious that the path is on top of his grave. My Father's name is XXX, the Council will have the plot number.

I'm also prepared to take this matter further if a resolution is not forthcoming.

Trust this can be resolved amicably.

Thank you

2. Considerations

The current cutting practices are in line with the Council's agreed grounds maintenance regimes, which were developed in light of recommendations received following the ecological surveys of Town Council's green spaces. There have been some slight adjustments made since the implementation of the new regimes, but the current practice is broadly in line with what was recommended and agreed.

In addition to the reasoning outlined in the response to the initial request, the Town Council's Climate & Nature Officer has provided the following information (in italics):

The area that houses the older graves also coincides with the most species-diverse and rare type of habitat on the site. The 2022 ecological survey tells us that 'the plants present here include several species that are indicative of unimproved grassland, a habitat type that has undergone serious declines, largely as a result of agricultural intensification and is recognised as a priority for conservation in Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) and the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act. The indicator species recorded here include mouse-ear hawkweed, lesser hawkbit, rough hawkbit, ox-eye daisy, bird's-foot trefoil and glaucous sedge.'

Unimproved grassland species such as these are more likely to be found in older areas of churchyards and cemeteries as these areas' pre-date agricultural intensification, which has destroyed 97% of this habitat type since the second world war. This level of destruction explains why the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 makes species-rich grasslands like this one a priority habitat. The NERC Act 'places a legal obligation on public bodies in England to have regard to particular living organisms and types of habitats which are of the greatest conservation importance whilst carrying out their functions, whilst also having a general regard for protecting all biodiversity'. Species-rich grassland habitats, such as that found in this particular area of the cemetery, are included in the priority habitats listed in the NERC Act.

Unfortunately, there is no other area of the cemetery which has the same level of species diversity as this area (in fact it is the only example of this type of habitat across any TTC-managed lands excepting some areas of St Mary's Churchyard, which we are also managing with nature in mind). Reducing the mowing regime in this area therefore provides a unique opportunity for TTC to support some of the species that have suffered devastating declines in the past 80 years and fulfil its duties under the NERC Act.

The current regime helps the Town Council to meet its stated aim of tackling the climate emergency. Officers' assessment of leaving the grass in some sections of the Cemetery is that it does not constitute a health and safety risk, nor an accessibility issue, partly because the grass is not allowed to grow very long (see image below).



Officers would be happy to work with the requester to change the location of paths marked through the longer grass so that it does not affect access to his plot, nor encourage other visitors to walk over the plot. Officers could offer this to any other plot owners in this section. Most of those plots are not regularly visited, so this would not be an onerous task.

3. Officer Recommendations

- That the current regime, involving leaving some of the older sections of the Cemetery uncut for longer periods, is continued.
- That officers work with the requester to increase access to his plot and to reroute the pathways cut through the longer grass to avoid other visitors walking over his plot.
- To offer the same service to any other plot owners/plot visitors.