

Chair of Community Assets and Open Spaces Committee: Graham Overbury

Report to Annual Parish Council 2025

Allotments

Permission was granted for a temporary wildlife camera to be sited at the allotments as part of the National Hedgehog Monitoring Programme - the survey will continue for 2 years and the results will be shared with Wroughton Parish Council (WPC)

A rubbish skip will be sited at the allotments. This is an annual service provided for plot holders for 1 day. It proved to be very popular in 2024 and we have already agreed to repeat this in 2025 – strictly for allotment rubbish only, this is in part due to the increased restrictions on having bonfires at the allotments.

Tree Policy

Tree work on WPC owned trees has continued – especially the felling of ash trees affected by ash die back. Conscious of the reduction in trees due to the felling of diseased trees WPC applied for and was awarded a grant under the Trees for Climate initiative.

Work to replace native tree species lost at Belmont Green, Falkirk Road and the Secret Garden was completed in 2024. Funding for the ongoing maintenance of these sites has obtained, some maintenance will be carried out by our Grounds Team. Following a very kind offer by a resident, we are currently working with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust on a pilot scheme using a volunteer to look after the whips at Belmont Green.

Additional tree planting will take place in North Wroughton during 2025/26. It's hoped that these can be used to commemorate VE Day 80.

WPC worked with Swindon Borough Council to have the largest gaps in the Wharf Road hedge re-planted with hedgerow and tree whips. This will now be maintained by the Grounds Team.

Sports pitches

WPC continue to support Wroughton Wranglers Cricket Club with the costs of maintaining the Weir Field cricket wicket and the outfield. Discussions have begun with Hills about the new cricket pitch in North Wroughton, as work has begun on the site.

WPC continues to support both Wroughton Men's Football Club and Wroughton Youth Football Club by funding the cutting of the grass pitches in Maunsell Way, the Weir Field and North Wroughton, as well as the cleaning of the Weir Field Pavilion. We took the decision to ask our contractor to stop using weed killer on the pitches and under the hedges as this is harmful to wildlife.

During the past 12 months WPC have been liaising with the Wichelstowe Project Team about the playing pitches and pavilion that will be built in Middle Wichelstowe. A consultation was held by the Wichelstowe Project Team at the end of 2024 to identify what residents wanted. The results are being used by the project team to formulate a plan that will be discussed later in 2025.

Public Open Spaces

Public open spaces at Willow Brook Garden, Maunsell Way, the Weir Field, North Wroughton/ Belmont Green continue to be mowed by the WPC Grounds Team. We have reduced the amount of strimming, to encourage wildlife. Where strimming under hedges is required, staff check for hedgehogs before starting.

Willow Brook Gardens continues to be an area that is very popular with residents, especially families and we want to say a huge thankyou to Vision for Wroughton for keeping the flower beds looking beautiful for everyone to enjoy. Last year, the WPC increased the width of the path where it meets Barrett Way and installed a tarmac circle in front of the Millennium Wall to make it easier for everyone to get up close to the mosaic and to provide a hard standing for the Silver Band during the Christmas Lights switch on event.

Moat Pond

The work to improve the ground behind the board walk and footpath at the Moat Pond was completed in January 2025.

Footpaths

A 'Walk the Wroughton Footpaths Morning' was held in July 2024. Attendees logged the state of the footpaths. Since then, WPC has been liaising with SBC and landowners to ensure all the issues identified are remedied. This is an ongoing project.

Maunsell Way Pavilion

A lease to let the pavilion to the Swindon Model Railway club has been negotiated.

New security doors have been installed, and WPC also funded external access into the toilets so these can continue to be used by Wroughton Youth Football Club, the BMX Club, SMASH (the Parish Council's youth outreach) and other groups formally hiring Maunsell Way field.

Additional Storage SBC's workshop at St Andrews.

A lease has been agreed with SBC for WPC to use the St Andrews Garage site for additional storage. The site had been disused for some time and was overgrown with brambles, included an unused derelict storage container and had no electricity or water.

Over the last few months, a contractor has cleared the site, repaired the building, fitted additional security fencing, repaired the wall at the back of the site and made the premises fit for use by WPC.

Benches

A review of benches in the Parish has been undertaken, and those owned by WPC have been added to the maintenance schedule of the WPC Grounds team.

Barracuda Plane Seat

The renovated Barracuda Plane Seat was relocated next to the stone circle in Willow Brook Gardens. We would like to thank Swindon Men's Shed for repairing the seat with help and advice from the BBC Repair Shop. It's now fit for use as a seat again. A circular aeroplane seat base was installed, funded by WPC.

Road Sweeper:

The new road sweeper is continuing to clear the roads around the Parish. Additional staff training on the operation of the road sweeper has been undertaken.

Wichelstowe

A parish council noticeboard has been installed (adjacent to the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust noticeboard) in Wichelstowe to improve communication with the parish residents in the new development.

Responsibility for emptying and maintaining litter bins within this parish in Wichelstowe has been transferred to WPC - in addition to the 4 bins which WPC already emptied, an additional 7 bins which the Wichelstowe Project Team had installed in the Central Square in Mid-Wichel are now being emptied by WPC. In future, the siting and type of any new bins installed by the Wichelstowe Project Team will be after liaison with WPC.

Play areas

All play areas that WPC is responsible for are regularly inspected and maintenance undertaken, e.g. the broken self-closing gate at Thorney Park play area was repaired; new play bark was added to the play areas at North Wroughton and Maunsell Way; the defective bench part was removed and surfacing repairs were completed at Alexandra Park; pressure washing of all surfacing, equipment and the canopy at Alexandra Park teen area and Beranburh play area was completed.

As well as the inspections carried out by our Grounds Team, WPC also pays for an annual, independent safety report on all 7 play areas for which it's responsible, as well as the BMX pump track. Last year, we funded a complete refurbishment of the Weir Field play area, and a partial refurbishment of Badgers Brook play area. We hope your children and grandchildren enjoy using the new, improved play equipment.