

## Place and Assets Working Group – Meeting notes

Time and place : 2025-05-16 11:00 Tilia House, Goring  
(re-arranged from original planned date of 2025-05-07)

Present: Cllr Toby Thurston, Cllr Robin Williamson, Cllr David Bermingham  
(Mr Roger Wood had updated Cllr Thurston the day before)

### 1 Review of previous actions

- clean key public signs (RWil and TT with support from RWoo)  
done partly, but carry forward as a possible volunteering action day
- ~~draw up a list of signs in the village, with notes on who is responsible for each~~  
TT has completed a list with assistance from DB.
- draw up a log of the maintenance state of GPC buildings (RWoo) – **carry forward**
- investigate long-term contracts for small works maintenance (RWoo)  
**carry forward** – the initial focus is to re-instate the contract for electrical inspection and maintenance work at the two pavilions. The previous contractor has ceased trading, so we need to find a replacement. Annual contract value is likely to exceed the small works limit, so we need to find three quotations and present them to council for acceptance. RNW has one quotation, and is working on finding alternative suppliers. DB to provide contact details of contractors who have recently worked for him.
- ~~meet with Clerk to review IT priorities and budgets (TT)~~  
**carry forward** – TT has drawn up an outline of IT requirements for the council and reviewed it in detail with the Clerk, Cllr Emerson (Finance Committee), and Cllr Lofthouse (Chair). Some updates needed from review, and to incorporate newly issued IT policy guidelines from NALC.
- ~~review street light upgrade costs with Finance Committee and Clerk, and agree timing for each tranche within the constraints of EMR funding (TT, DB)~~  
All tranches are now approved by council and covered by an extended EMR; first four tranches are in progress, remaining three to be initiated over the summer, with target completion in September 2025.
- survey street lamp columns for damage (TT, RWoo) – **carry forward**, planned date 1 July
- ~~agree a plan of action for load tests of bridge lamp posts (TT, RWoo)~~  
After some discussion about what was possible, we agreed that the most sensible initial step would be to invite James Freeman from OCC Bridge team to visit Goring so that we can discuss what testing if any would enable us to establish the strength of the lamp columns on the bridge. Initial contact made on 19 May, date to be agreed.
- organize WEEE disposal of old IT assets in OJFS (TT) – **carry forward**
- ~~investigate SODC support for leaf clearance litter pick in autumn (RWil)~~  
Robin reported that SODC will support a leaf clearance exercise, and will provide hi-vis and bin-bags, and will collect the full bags afterwards. We agreed that a date in November would be suitable.
- make a plan for weeding in key village locations (DB) – **carry forward**

- ~~draft an initial design for a welcome sign at Bourdillon Field, with a view to making similar signs for the other open spaces (TT) – in review with Playgrounds Committee~~
- ~~Remind users of Gardiner Field (Cricket club and Goring-in-Bloom) to manage green waste properly (TT, via Clerk) – follow up meeting is planned for 21 May to discuss a green waste disposal scheme using locked bins and collected by M&C.~~
- ~~assist Clerk with a No Mow May plan (TT) – plans agreed with Clerk and implemented for May. At council in May it was agreed to extend the no-mowing of the four areas for the rest of the summer. Some signage and a poster for the village meeting will be required.~~

## **2 Discussion**

In addition to the progress on actions noted above, we discussed the following topics.

### **2.1 Litter bins**

The collection frequency of the bins managed for us by Shield is to be increased from two days a week to three days a week between Easter and the end of August. Robin has also contacted SODC to ask them to get their contractor also to increase the collection frequency for their bins. New bins for Gardiner are on back order with the supplier.

### **2.2 Clearance of OJFS**

We agreed a date of 19 July for the yard sale at OJFS. David suggested that we also contact the school to see if they can use any of the materials left over from Summer of Play. RWoo to organize a skip for anything not sold. Detailed plan for yard sale to be agreed at next P&A meeting.

### **2.3 Oxfordshire Together**

We discussed the OCC scheme for encouraging volunteers to help with routine maintenance. Their website explains how they can support volunteer action, for various projects on highways and roads, including: cutting back vegetation, controlling weeds, cleaning signs, maintaining public rights of way, managing salt bins, clearing leaves, and maintaining cycleways.

The idea is that OCC provide a method statement and a limited range of equipment. The equipment available includes high-vis jackets but not much else. They make suggestions of what is needed from volunteers. The scheme documentation is slightly ambiguous about insurance, but on closer inspection of the detailed method statements it appears likely that we would have to cover teams of volunteers with the Parish Council's own public liability insurance. ~~TT to discuss this with the Clerk.~~ *Clerk has confirmed that our insurance does cover organized teams of volunteers.* Work can only be done on highways (for example we can't cut privately-owned hedges) and is limited to roads with a speed limit of 30 mph or lower.

We agreed that we would try out the method statements for our next road sign cleaning session.

## **2.4 Green waste on Gardiner**

Scattering grass clippings under the hedges has not been a success – the volume of clippings is too much, and the volunteers producing them have not engaged with the process. It is now proposed that we provide a set of lockable bins – one for GiB, one for the croquet club, and probably two for the cricket club – and that we charge the clubs a small fee for getting M&C to empty them regularly. TT to attend a meeting with the clubs on Weds 21 May to present the scheme.

## **2.5 Benches policy and maintenance**

TT reported that he has drawn up a list of the benches in the village with locations and records of the inscriptions on those that have them. He has also reviewed the benches policy that currently forms part of the WHBG policy. He is in discussion with the burial ground clerk about which of the benches are covered by maintenance donations. It was agreed that we should propose to full council that (a) the benches policy should be made into a separate policy document and publicised to encourage new donations, and (b) we should establish a fund for future maintenance and replacement of benches. TT to discuss with Clerk.

## **2.6 Problem hedges**

On advice from the Assistant Clerk, it appears that hedges obstructing pavements and roads are in the scope of this working group. As a first step to managing this properly we will need to do a survey of the village and make a list of whom we have contacted and when. TT to ask Assistant Clerk for a list of recent correspondence, and TT and RWoo to conduct the survey on 2025-07-01.

## **2.7 Emergency planning**

At full council in May it was agreed to add emergency planning to the remit of PAWG. TT to present a short review of existing planning documentation at the next meeting, with a view to agreeing what needs to be updated and who is going to update it.

## **2.8 Posters for village meeting**

TT has produced four posters for display at the village meeting covering street lamp upgrades, litter bin improvements, benches policy, and volunteering for highways maintenance. Robin agreed to make sure that they were displayed properly at the village meeting on 31 May.

### **3 Actions – May 2025**

- Organize a road / public sign cleaning day using Oxfordshire Together method (RWil and TT)
- Draw up a log of the maintenance state of GPC buildings (RWoo)
- Find alternative suppliers for electrical maintenance contract (DB, RWoo)
- Continue to develop IT strategy and agree with Clerk (TT)
- Survey street lamp columns for damage and nuisance hedges (TT, RWoo)  
planned for 2025-07-01
- Ask Assistant Clerk for list of recent hedge correspondence (TT)
- Organize WEEE disposal of old IT assets in OJFS (TT)
- Organize a volunteer leaf clearing day in November with support from SODC (RWil)
- Organize a volunteer weeding day in June or July and/or agree spraying plan with Clerk (DB)
- Draw up a slide for village meeting to explain No Mow May (TT)
- Contact local schools to see if they want anything from OJFS (DB)
- Organize OJFS yard sale for 19 July (all)
- Book a skip for OJFS waste (RWoo, in coordination with Clerk)
- ~~Investigate GPC insurance cover for volunteer exercises under Oxfordshire Together scheme (TT)~~
- Discuss benches policy with Clerk and draw up proposal to establish a maintenance budget to be presented to Full Council (TT)