
CLIMATE CHANGE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

NOTICE AND AGENDA

For a meeting to be held on Wednesday, 24 June 2026 at 7.30 pm at Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth.

Members of the Climate Change and Leisure Committee:-

Councillors:

Chris Lloyd (Chair)
Andrea Fraser
Raj Khiroya
Kerry Milliken
Chris Mitchell

Aidan Bentley (Vice-Chair)
Mike Sims
Jon Tankard
Kavan Trivedi

*Joanne Wagstaffe, Chief Executive
Tuesday, 16 June 2026*

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. MINUTES

(Pages 5 - 10)

To confirm, as being a correct record, the minutes of the Climate Change & Leisure Committee, held on 11 March 2026.

3. NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS

Items of other business notified under Council Procedure Rule 30 to be announced, together with the special circumstances that justify their consideration as a matter of urgency. The Chair to rule on the admission of such items.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest.

5. Leisure Facilities Management Annual Report

(Pages 11 - 48)

Appendix A details the annual report from April 2025 – March 2026 from the council's leisure facilities management contractor, Sports and Leisure Management (SLM). The annual report shares a reflection on the previous 12 months'

work and outlines the work programme for the coming year.

Recommendation

- That the April 2025 – March 2026 annual report from Sports and Leisure Management is noted.
- That public access to the report be immediate.
- That public access to the decision be immediate.

6. Pond Wood Management Plan 2026-36

(Pages 49 - 104)

A new ten-year management plan has been developed for Pond Wood, South Oxhey. The new plan contains management actions for the woodland over the next ten years from financial year 2026/27 until 2036/37. The detailed actions relate to woodland management for biodiversity and improvements to public access and interpretation. The plan has a focus on the long-term management of numerous veteran Hornbeam trees which are a particular feature of Pond Wood. These veteran trees require careful, phased management to ensure they continue to thrive and do not go into decline. The aim of the plan is also to identify younger Hornbeam trees, which are suitable to start as new pollards.

Recommendation

That:

That the Climate Change and Leisure Committee:

- Adopt the new 10-year Management Plan for Pond Wood
- Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance to enter into a contract or funding agreement above the value of £25,000, subject to securing external funding to facilitate works to support the implementation of the Management Plans.

7. Rickmansworth Aquadrome Programme

(Pages 105 - 126)

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Rickmansworth Aquadrome Programme, including funding progress and opportunities.

Recommendation

That the Climate Change and Leisure Committee:

- Note the content of the report
- Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance to enter into contracts or funding agreements above the value of £25,000, subject to securing external funding, or where a project is in existing/agreed budgets providing that the purpose of such is in line with the approved Aquadrome Management Plan and actions proposed within this report.

8. Revocation of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) at junction 18 of M25, Chorleywood (Pages 127 - 142)

AQMAs are required to be designated where the air quality fails to meet the prescribed standards for certain pollutants. This is done through an order, made under the Environment Act 1995. Since the 2 remaining AQMAs in Three Rivers were designated in 2001, the air quality has improved and the improvements have been sustained such that the air quality now complies with the required standards. For this reason, Junction 18 of the M25 and its surrounds no longer need to be designated as AQMAs and the revocation of the orders is being recommended, in line with Government guidance.

This report provides further details and seeks clarification on the relevant revocation process.

Recommendation

That the report and its recommendations are discussed and noted with the agreed Officer recommendations progressed:

- i) To agree the revocation of the 2 AQMAs at junction 18 of the M25 in accordance with DEFRA guidance/legislative provisions under the Environment Act 1995 following stakeholder and public consultation.
- ii) The final decision to revoke the 2 AQMAs at junction 18 of the M25 is delegated to the Director of Finance in consultation with the relevant Lead Member following consideration of any responses received to the consultation. If any material objections are

9. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 143 - 144)

To receive the Committee's work programme.

10. OTHER BUSINESS - if approved under item 3 above

General Enquiries: Please contact the Committee Team at committeeteam@threerivers.gov.uk

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public on agenda items at the Climate Change and Leisure Committee meetings. Details of the procedure are provided below:

For those wishing to speak:

Members of the public are entitled to register and identify which item(s) they wish to speak on from the published agenda for the meeting. Those who wish to register to speak are asked to register on the night of the meeting from 7pm. Please note that contributions will be limited to one person speaking for and one against each item for not more than three minutes.

In the event of registering your interest to speak on an agenda item but not taking up that right because the item is deferred, you will be given the right to speak on that item at the next meeting of the Committee.

Those wishing to observe the meeting are requested to arrive from 7pm.

In accordance with The Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014 any matters considered under Part I business only of the meeting may be filmed, recorded, photographed, broadcast or reported via social media by any person.

Recording and reporting the Council's meetings is subject to the law and it is the responsibility of those doing the recording and reporting to ensure compliance. This will include the Human Rights Act, the Data Protection Legislation and the laws of libel and defamation.

The meeting may be livestreamed and an audio recording of the meeting will be made.



Three Rivers House
Northway
Rickmansworth
Herts WD3 1RL

Climate Change and Leisure Committee MINUTES

Of a meeting held in the Penn Chamber, Three Rivers House, Rickmansworth, on Wednesday, 11 March 2026 from 7.30 pm - 8.53 pm.

Present: Councillors

Chris Lloyd (Co-Chair in the Chair), Jon Tankard (Co-Chair), Raj Khiroya, Reena Ranger OBE, Mike Sims, Cheryl Stungo, Christopher Alley (In place of Abbas Merali), Louise Price (In place of Tom Smith)

Also in Attendance:

Councillor Chris Mitchell

Officers in Attendance:

Charlotte Gomes, Head of Leisure and Natural Infrastructure
Joanna Hewitson, Climate Change & Sustainability Strategy Officer
Emma Sheridan, Associate Director for Environment
Anita Hibbs, Committee Officer

36 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Abbas Merali (Substitute Councillor Christopher Alley) , Tom Smith (Substitute Councillor Louise Price) and Joan King.

37 MINUTES

The minutes of the Climate Change & Leisure Committee held on 14 January 2026 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair of the meeting.

38 NOTICE OF OTHER BUSINESS

There were no items of other business.

39 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Mike Sims declared a non-pecuniary interest in agenda item 4 – To Receive a petition under council procedure rule 18, as a member of the Rickmansworth and District Residents' Association.

40 TO RECEIVE A PETITION UNDER COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 18

The Chair outlined the process for petition presentation, specifying that the presenter will have three minutes to speak. The Committee Officer confirmed to time the presenter. The Chair

emphasised that after the presentation and subsequent response, no further discussion on the petition will occur.

Mr. Paul Harding presented the petition, which requested the reopening of the Ebury Playground.

The Chair clarified that assumptions and statements made by the petitioner were inaccurate.

The Chair and Lead Member, Councillor Chris Lloyd's response was as follows:

"Thank you for your petition.

This matter is of importance to all of us Officers and Councillors and myself. Officers are working very hard to resolve the complex matter. Council staff and contractors have been out on-site last week and this week.

We are at the final stages of complex negotiations to get the issues resolved and start work as soon as possible to get the site opened. We expect to provide a detailed update and hopefully a timeline well before the end of the month. Due to legal and contractual constraints, I regret that I cannot give any more details at this stage.

It is a play area I have known since childhood, and I look forward it reopening and taking my grandson."

The Chair reiterated that there will be no debate on the petition at this time. It was noted that the petition had been received, and updates will be provided when more information becomes available.

The Chair advised that he was changing the order of the agenda and requested that the Climate Change & Sustainability Strategy Officer prepare to present the Climate Change and Sustainability Action Plan Update, and the Budget Management Report will follow after.

41 BUDGET MANAGEMENT REPORT P10 - CC&L

The Associate Director for Environment introduced the report.

Members raised concerns about the possibility of Watersmeet benefiting from mandatory charitable business rates relief, highlighting that similar theatres transferred to charitable trusts have saved significant costs. The rising operational expenses, particularly due to increased gas and electricity costs and aging equipment are emphasised. The officer acknowledged the complexity of business rates relief and advised that they will refer to the Director of Finance for a detailed response. They also noted that Watersmeet's profitability has improved post-COVID. The Chair expressed strong commitment to maintaining Watersmeet for local residents and praised the team's efforts despite venue challenges.

Members also enquired about the reasons behind the £20,000 overspend and projected £50,000 overspend on the Aquadrome budget. The officer explained that overspends often related to health and safety investments and emergency works, authorised under budget monitoring protocols by senior officers. Some costs may be offset by external funding, and all expenditures are monitored carefully.

Members expressed concern over the Council's spending, noting that the current expenditure of £104,000 exceeds the approved budget of £64,000, and emphasised the need for Council approval on expenditures and requested a detailed breakdown of the budget to understand the overspending. The officer responded by explaining that the majority of the excess spending is due to utilities costs for the buildings at the Aquadrome, which are unavoidable and outside their control, as these utility bills must be paid.

In response to a request regarding National Lottery funding information, the Head of Leisure and Natural Infrastructure provided detailed amounts, stating that £736,500 has been received for the current stage, with an additional £180,000 received previously. Furthermore, an additional half a million pounds received from the HS2 Additional Mitigation Panel.

Councillor Chris Lloyd moved the recommendation as set out in the report.

The Committee noted and commented on the report.

RESOLVED:

That members note and comment on the contents of the report.

42 CLIMATE EMERGENCY AND SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Climate Change & Sustainability Strategy Officer presented the report.

Members raised concerns about the quality and longevity of cavity wall insulation, emphasising the need for proper installation to avoid costly removals. Officers responded by explaining the building control regulations and maintenance requirements to ensure insulation effectiveness, and mentioned insurer involvement to align with their recommendations. Members also highlighted challenges related to project viability, capacity constraints, and the need for cost-benefit analysis to ensure taxpayer value. In response, officers spoke about ongoing collaboration with Hertfordshire Climate Change and Sustainability Partnership (HCCSP), sharing best practices, data standardisation efforts, and the importance of regional cooperation. The conversation also covered the success of community engagement events like the Careers Fair, and the feasibility of solar canopy projects, with financial and practical constraints limiting implementation, but new technologies and grants offering potential. The committee discussed the Hertfordshire Retrofit Strategy, including tools like the Fairer Warmth app for residents and funding secured to support retrofit workforce development. In addition, the view on achieving net zero by 2045 was addressed, with emphasis on the decarbonisation of the electricity grid, the promotion of solar energy and air source heat pumps, and the critical move away from gas to meet emissions targets.

The Chair requested that paragraphs 3.13 to 3.17 from the report be listed under the recommendation, and also proposed an amendment to paragraph 3.17 as follows: *“We will continue to work with Watford Borough Council on future careers event.”*

Members highlighted significant progress in sustainability projects over the past year, focusing on community benefits. Key achievements include the installation of solar panels on sport centres that are self-sustaining and help maintain affordable access for lower-income groups. The success of these projects has inspired other organisations, such as the Sea Scouts in Rickmansworth, to pursue similar initiatives using grants like the warm homes grant. Efforts to promote these grants through healthcare channels have increased uptake, including among small businesses, helping stabilise their operational costs. The discussion also covered detailed technical considerations around insulation, fire safety, and building design to ensure social housing remains habitable and efficient.

Further discussion included the need for detailed cost breakdowns for each policy and project within the climate change strategy. Councillor Christopher Alley, seconded by Councillor Reena Ranger, proposed an amendment to the recommendation requiring cost estimates for policies and projects and potential financial impacts on residents or businesses exceeding £50,000. Officers responded by explaining that cost information is already provided through annual budgets, business cases and committee reports, highlighting that some funds come from external sources beyond taxpayers. The Chair explained that without a written amendment submitted in advance, the proposed amendment will not be accepted during the meeting.

The Chair emphasised the importance of air quality strategies, and encouraged Members to participate in related consultations.

Members expressed concern about resource limitations affecting the completion of initiatives, particularly emphasising the importance of recycling food waste from flats, which is expected to increase over the next decade. Members enquired why food waste collection from flats has not progressed as planned since May 2024. Officers responded by confirming that food waste collection from flats does take place in the district, noting that communal collections did experience logistical difficulties but that service provided in Three Rivers was advanced compared to other Hertfordshire local authorities. Some challenges remain in participation and managing collections effectively in flats. Regarding capacity, officers acknowledged limited staff and budget resources, explaining that project timelines are flexible and can be adjusted based on external funding opportunities. The team has effectively utilised recent increases in capacity to accelerate projects and secure external funding.

Councillor Chris Lloyd moved the recommendation with the proposed amendment to 3.17 of the report; *“We will continue to work with Watford Borough Council on future careers event.”*

On being put to the committee, the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being For: 6, Against: 0, Abstention: 2.

RESOLVED:

That the Committee:

- i. Notes the progress made in delivering the strategy.
- ii. Agrees to the addition of new actions as outlined at paragraph 3.13 to 3.17.

3.13 Work with Grand Union Community Energy to offer Sustainable Streets to residents as a means of supporting sustainable behavioural change.

3.14 The Environmental Forum has now been renamed as the Environmental Network and new Terms Of Reference was recommended by CCLC 14 January 2026 to 6 progress to Full Council 24 February 2026. The March meeting took place in South Oxhey with a focus on energy. The next meeting is scheduled to take place on 28 March 2026, the time and location is to be decided, with transport the planned topic of discussion.

3.15 Draft net-zero policies for new build energy efficiency standards above current Building Regulations were incorporated into the Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation in Summer 2025. These draft policies aim to secure highly energy efficient new housing which is more closely aligned with net zero targets than current Building Regulations under the Future Homes Standard.

3.16 Three Rivers District Council have worked closely with local community energy group, Grand Union Community Energy (GUCE), to explore the feasibility of major decarbonisation initiatives such as heat networks fed by aquifers and data centres, and solar canopies in council-owned car parks, as well as delivering projects such as Transition Streets under Fast Followers. The council's collaborative approach to joint projects with GUCE was recognised and Highly Commended by Community Energy England at the Community Energy Awards in November 2025.

3.17 We will continue to work with Watford Borough Council on future careers event.

The Head of Leisure and Natural Infrastructure introduced the report.

Members enquired about the upper limit of the delegation and expressed concern about the need for oversight or committee review even for third-party funded projects. A suggestion was made to amend the recommendation to ensure committee or leadership oversight. The Associate Director for Environment stated that this recommendation has been discussed at the Committee multiple times, and explained that contracts over £100,000 require Full Council approval as per Council Constitution. Procurements over £25,000 are discussed with relevant Lead Members based on project types (leisure, open spaces, finance). Regular scrutiny is provided through the Joint Leadership Team meetings and bi-monthly budget monitoring reports.

Members emphasised the role of Lead Members and Ward Councillors in ongoing communication and oversight, especially for projects like the Aquadrome, where funding often comes with specific conditions, such as National Lottery grants that restrict fund usage to certain community groups. The officer clarified that National Lottery funding must be used as specified, but it is not the sole funding source for projects. Other funding sources allow flexibility beyond grant conditions. Furthermore, relevant Ward Councillors are also briefed on funding opportunities and procurement activities related to management plans.

The Chair suggested background training for Members of the Committee to understand funding and project context.

The conversation also acknowledged challenges in public consultation response rates and the Council's efforts to better promote biodiversity and park activities through improved communications and Member support in sharing information.

Councillor Chris Lloyd moved the recommendation as set out in the report.

On being put to the committee, the motion was declared CARRIED by the Chair, the voting being For: 6, Against: 0, Abstention: 2.

RESOLVED:

That the Climate Change and Leisure Committee:

- i. Adopt the new ten-year Management Plan for Prestwick Road Meadows.
- ii. Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance to enter into a contract or funding agreement above the value of £25,000, subject to securing external funding to facilitate works to support the implementation of the Management Plans.
- iii. That public access to the report be immediate.
- iv. That public access to the decision be immediate.

44 WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair requested that the next meeting include a comprehensive work programme for the year, similar to previous reports before the use of Mod.gov. The Associate Director for Environment agreed and explained that the work plan for next year is being clarified, now that the council budget had been approved.

The conversation also covered the item 'Parking on the Green', which is currently listed as 'to be confirmed', due to the lack of communication from the Croxley Green Parish Council. Members felt that the title of this item is unclear and suggested it should be more specific. The officer acknowledged that the phrasing of the item could be improved and agreed that it could be revised to reflect "control of parking on the green", and emphasised that they do not want

to imply support for parking on the green. The Chair agreed that the item will be rephrased as a result of the discussion.

Councillor Mike Sims requested the addition of two items to the work programme; signage to inform the public about alternative play facilities due to the closure of the Ebury Play area, and an update on the Woodland walk. He emphasised the importance of clear signage to prevent families from arriving unaware of the closure, particularly during the Easter holiday. The officer responded that the signage is already being prepared, with approval in the final stages and installation planned before Easter. The signage will provide directions to nearby alternative play areas like Scottsbridge Mill, information on Easter holiday activities at the Aquadrome, and other children's events at Watersmeet. Additionally, the officer also advised that an update report on the Aquadrome programme which includes the Woodland walk is already scheduled for the committee meeting in June.

The Committee received and noted the work programme.

RESOLVED:

To receive the Committee's work programme.

45 OTHER BUSINESS - IF APPROVED UNDER ITEM 3 ABOVE

None

CHAIR

**CLIMATE
CHANGE &
LEISURE
COMMITTEE
24/06/2026**

**CLIMATE CHANGE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2026**

PART I

**Leisure Facilities Management Annual Report
ADE**

1 Summary

- 1.1 Appendix A details the annual report from April 2025 – March 2026 from the council's leisure facilities management contractor, Sports and Leisure Management (SLM). The annual report shares a reflection on the previous 12 months' work and outlines the work programme for the coming year.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the April 2025 – March 2026 annual report from Sports and Leisure Management is noted.
- 2.2 That public access to the report be immediate.
- 2.3 That public access to the decision be immediate.

Report prepared by: Kelly Barnard, Leisure Assets Manager

3 Details

- 3.1 The Council's three leisure venues, William Penn Leisure Centre, South Oxhey Leisure Centre and Rickmansworth Golf Course are all managed by Sports and Leisure Management (SLM).
- 3.2 The Council enjoys a good working relationship with Sports and Leisure Management (SLM) and regularly measures their performance against the specification through both formal meetings involving senior managers and day to day liaison between our dedicated Leisure Contracts and Commercial Operations Officer and venue managers.
- 3.3 Sports and Leisure Management (SLM) contract started on 1 July 2018.

4 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.
- 4.1.1 Officers monitor the Leisure facilities management contract with Sports and Leisure Management (SLM) in a variety of ways, including the Leisure industry quality standard known as QUEST and regular site monitoring.

5 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 5.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets.

Financial, Legal, Equal Opportunities, Staffing, Environmental, Community Safety, Public Health, Customer Services Centre, Communications & Website, Risk Management and Health & Safety Implications

None specific.

Background Papers

APPENDIX A - SLM Annual Report 2025 – 2026



Everyone Active Annual Report

April 2025 – March 2026



I. Executive Summary

South Oxhey & William Penn collected donations of Easter Eggs for our local food banks at Mill End Baptist Church, and South Oxhey Methodist Church. Both were very well received and a brilliant response from the local communities. William Penn were also invited to a coffee morning at the Shepherd Centre to promote the various activities and facilities available across the centres.



The Teams across the contract wanted to have focus on the community, with William Penn launching our Health Walks, and both sites hosting an afternoon tea session and raising over £200 for Breast Cancer now. Colleagues across the contract also attended a Dementia workshop and how we can continue to support those affected within our communities. Our Contract Fitness Manager was crowned as our Colleague Champion within Everyone Active for her brilliant work, and dedication.



South Oxhey & William Penn both hosted 'Wear it Pink' for Breast Cancer Awareness across Thursday 23rd & Friday 24th October. We had customers and colleagues support the wonderful cause and flooded social media pages to raise awareness. William Penn also hosted 'CoppaFeel' to raise awareness and support for a member completing a trek across the Saharan Desert. The event raised over £2,000 towards the members target.



Both leisure centres hosted 'Restart a Heart Day' which were very well received and attended. It was great to see all ages attend the sessions and learn a life saving skill. The sessions were delivered by our Trainer Assessor colleagues. We are also looking to deliver an additional session in the new year.



August 2024 saw Quest Annual assessments at both William Penn Leisure Centre and South Oxhey Leisure Centres. Both centres achieved a rating of 'Very Good'.



Cllr Stephen King, Cllr Sarah Nelmes & Cllr Chris Lloyd kindly visited South Oxhey Leisure Centre and cut the ribbon to mark the £400K gym refurbishment works which had been recently completed. The investment has transformed the gym and studio spaces with brand-new equipment, modern design and improved accessibility for users of all abilities.



In partnership with Three Rivers District Council, and as part of the decarbonisation project, 320 Canadian 455w Canadian Solar panels were installed. The project went incredibly smooth with little, to no operational issues. The project handover was completed on 28/01/26 with Geo Green using the Solar Edge platform.



William Penn launched it's first ever Mindful Morning on Sunday 22nd February. Which hosted 4 hours of calm and tranquillity. It was a morning of mindfulness, body balance, CIRCL, Shapes, Yoga, Breathing Space and a deeply restorative Sound Bath. Both sites also announced the member of the months within the classes, and brought South Oxhey's member, Paul to tears. Both sites hosted their personal training launch days with record appointments and delivery.



William Penn & South Oxhey both hosted Swimathon events to raise money and awareness for Cancer Research UK & Marie Curie. We had over 50 participants partake and a team enter at South Oxhey. South Oxhey have also added additional ladies only swimming sessions on to the scheme.



2. Attendance Summaries

Total Attendance	2024/25	2025/26	Variance	% Variance
William Penn Leisure Centre	452,501	482,559	30,058	7%
South Oxhey	342,923	357,008	14,085	4%
Rickmansworth Golf Course	53,827	58,813	4,986	9%
Contract Total	849,251	898,380	49,129	6%

Adult Attendance	2024/25	2025/26	Variance	% Variance
William Penn Leisure Centre	347,370	374,575	27,205	8%
South Oxhey	227,370	244,060	16,690	7%
Rickmansworth Golf Course	51,351	56,491	5,140	10%
Contract Total	626,091	675,126	49,035	8%

Junior Attendance	2024/25	2025/26	Variance	% Variance
William Penn Leisure Centre	105,131	107,984	2,853	3%
South Oxhey	115,553	112,948	-2,605	-2%
Rickmansworth Golf Course	2,476	2,322	-154	-6%
Contract Total	223,160	223,254	94	0%

In the 2025/26 period, total attendance across all facilities increased by 6%, driven primarily by a strong rise in adult participation, which grew by 8%. William Penn Leisure Centre led the growth, showing notable gains in both total (+8%) and adult (+3%) attendance. South Oxhey also saw excellent increase amongst adult use but a 2% drop in junior use. Rickmansworth Golf Course experienced a bounce back year, after declining use in 2024/25, the centre experienced a 9% increase in total use.

Declining junior use at South Oxhey Leisure Centre was predominantly due to a drop in the number of people joining the swimming lessons. There hasn't been an immediate trend identified for the reduction in attendees however the centre and support teams are working tirelessly to try and the number of attendees back above 1,500 weekly users. Another contributing factor has been the sudden stop of the full day holiday camp provision. Unfortunately Ofsted accreditation was not approved due to the lack of external activity space. This has meant the centre has had to run shorter sports activities during the holiday periods and therefore usage has not been as great.

Rickmansworth Golf Course also experienced a decline in junior use. After the huge increase in 2024/25 which was due to the implementation of the HaF Camps, it was difficult to maintain these numbers. There was a bit of a switch in approach which hasn't helped, where by the HaF camp sessions have been split to accommodate more SEN users. This has reduced the capacity numbers and led to a decline in junior use. Junior golf participation has however stayed strong in comparison.

2.1 Membership statistics

Fitness Membership

	March 2025	March 2026	Variance
William Penn LC	3,282	3,720	+438
South Oxhey LC	2,722	2,848	+126
Total	6,004	6,568	+564

Swimming Lessons

	March 2025	March 2026	Variance
William Penn LC	953	896	-57
South Oxhey LC	1,471	1,375	-96
Total	2,424	2,271	-153

Fitness memberships have grown over the previous twelve months. William Penn has gone from strength to strength since the gym and studio refurbishments in late 2024. South Oxhey Leisure Centre is also now seeing growth since the gym and studio refurbishments in late 2025. This is a positive sign when reflecting on the growth experienced at William Penn.

Swimming Lessons numbers have plateaued at William Penn, with the scheme size hovering around 900 weekly users for the last few years. South Oxhey has reduced slightly year on year as explained within the attendance reports section of the report.

3 Environment

3.1 Environmental and Energy Management Plan Progress Updates

Following on from the 500 solar PV panels that were installed at William Penn Leisure Centre in November 2024, South Oxhey Leisure Centre followed with a 320 solar PV panel installation in January 2026. The installation was funded by Three Rivers Council and SLM are paying the council for the energy used by the centre.

The solar PV system has been operational since the 21st January 2026 and has produced 30.5Mwh of electricity up to May 2026 with the centre utilising 20Mwh of this.

	Energy Generated kwh	Fed to Grid kwh	Centre Use %
January	748	748	0%
February	3,710	40	99%
March	10,200	860	92%
Total	14,658	1,648	89%

The William Penn Solar array continues to perform well generating 196MWH in 2025/26. Of this energy created, 85% was utilised by William Penn Leisure Centre with only 15% going to grid.

	Energy Generated kwh	Fed to Grid kwh	Centre Use %
April	27,244	6,250	77%
May	27,743	6,283	77%

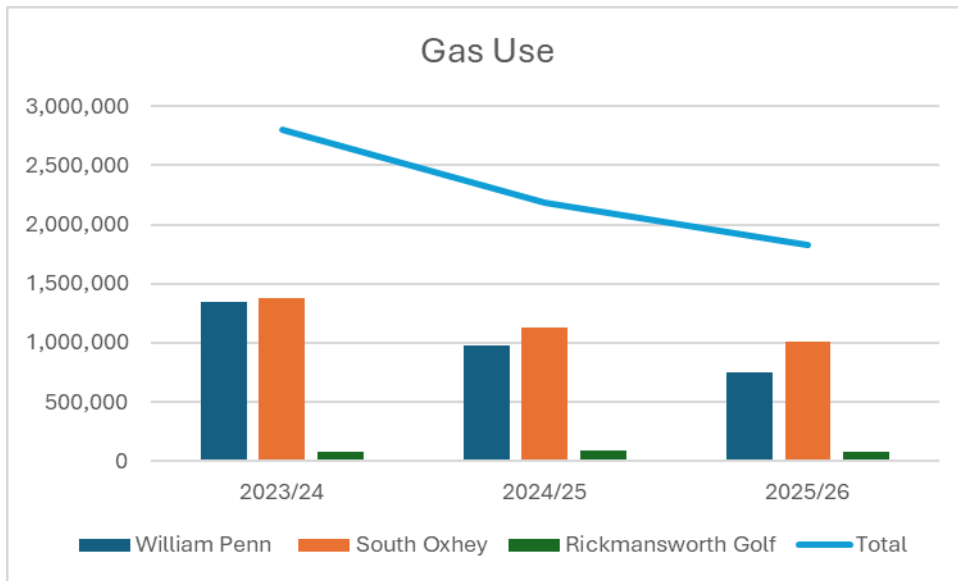
June	31,695	6,193	80%
July	28,100	4,229	85%
August	24,370	3,130	87%
September	16,897	1,831	89%
October	8,120	114	99%
November	4,614	0	100%
December	2,948	0	100%
January	3,693	0	100%
February	5,685	52	99%
March	14,963	1,155	92%
Total	196,072	29,237	85%

3.2 Utility Consumption

Month	Centre Name	Electricity (Kwh)	Gas (Kwh)
April	Rickmansworth GC	5,368	6,617
	South Oxhey	34,805	91,514
	William Penn	28,219	85,410
May	Rickmansworth GC	5,646	5,020
	South Oxhey	34,474	116,641
	William Penn	29,960	82,743
June	Rickmansworth GC	6,881	2,155
	South Oxhey	34,159	62,140
	William Penn	47,919	51,372
July	Rickmansworth GC	6,886	2,171
	South Oxhey	39,047	59,550
	William Penn	33,693	27,509
August	Rickmansworth GC	8,385	2,212
	South Oxhey	34,153	42,666
	William Penn	35,240	34,056
September	Rickmansworth GC	5,762	2,732
	South Oxhey	36,065	47,173
	William Penn	35,516	35,980
October	Rickmansworth GC	6,031	3,002
	South Oxhey	38,896	90,055
	William Penn	44,629	67,212
November	Rickmansworth GC	6,426	3,972
	South Oxhey	38,615	94,782
	William Penn	46,704	62,825
December	Rickmansworth GC	5,276	11,696
	South Oxhey	38,310	102,645
	William Penn	49,090	2,843
January	Rickmansworth GC	10,758	15,069
	South Oxhey	25,701	106,215
	William Penn	34,361	90,116
February	Rickmansworth GC	10,718	9,574
	South Oxhey	33,154	92,091
	William Penn	45,355	102,894
March	Rickmansworth GC	8,987	10,831

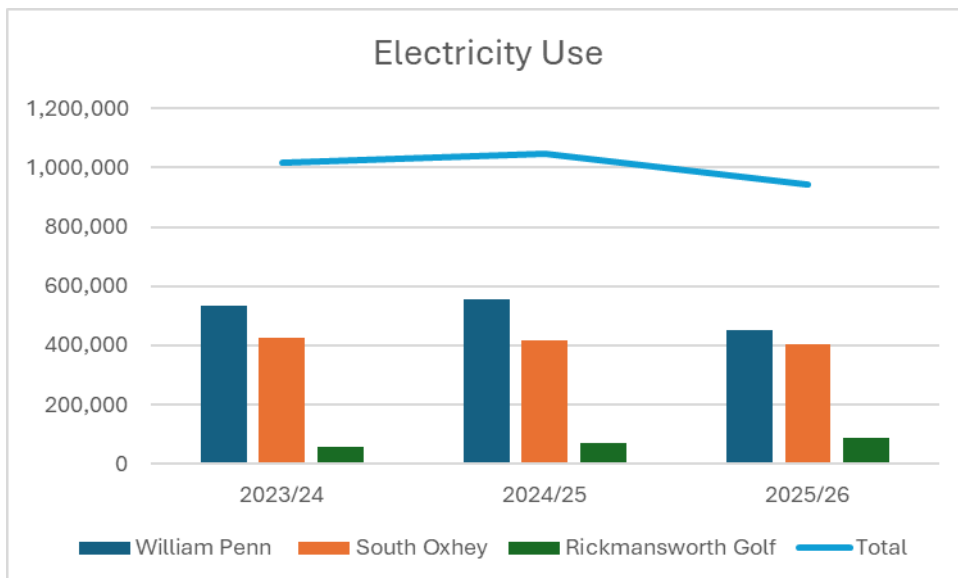
	South Oxhey	15,942	100,888
	William Penn	22,521	103,582

3.3 Utility Comparison Year on Year



Gas	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Variance	Variance %
William Penn	1,347,142	973,774	746,542	-227,232	-23%
South Oxhey	1,379,737	1,124,707	1,006,360	-118,347	-11%
Rickmansworth Golf	76,682	90,692	75,051	-15,641	-17%
Total	2,803,561	2,189,173	1,827,953	-361,220	-17%

Gas used across the three facilities has decreased by 27% year on year. Boiler efficiency works have been completed at William Penn Leisure Centre and amendments to variable speed drive programmes at both sites have been the contributing factors in this decrease.



Electricity	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	Variance	Variance %
William Penn	533,894	557,037	453,207	-103,830	-19%
South Oxhey	427,415	417,685	403,321	-14,364	-3%
Rickmansworth Golf	55,769	71,978	87,124	15,146	21%
Total	1,017,078	1,046,700	943,652	-103,048	-10%

Electricity usage has decreased year on year across the facilities in total. This year has seen a 21% increase however at Rickmansworth Golf Course. This increase is linked to increased use of Buggies across the year due to the introduction of the paths allowing buggy use all year round.

William Penn continued their strong performance from last year and continue to see the benefits of the solar install, especially with a full year of usage now available. South Oxhey are also showing positive signs with decreased consumption since the more recent solar install.

4 Customer Forum Summaries

Customer Forums were held at all three facilities in each quarter of 2025/26 with attendance from users of the facilities being consistent across the year. Feedback regarding the facilities and activities on offer was positive and feedback regarding the colleagues was especially pleasing to hear.

Club forums were also held at all three facilities specifically for local clubs and block bookers of activities. Feedback was very good with some minor points for improvement.

5 Partnership Working

MacMillan Coffee mornings were hosted across all sites and the teams and customers done an amazing job, raising over £700. In a new approach, the site teams emailed target groups and local community groups invitations to the day which was well attended and received.



On 4th November, South Oxhey & William Penn both hosted 'Purple Tuesday' in partnership with Three Rivers District Council, with colleagues and customers wearing purple in support, and to raise funds for the scheme that is dedicated to improving customer experiences for disabled people and their families. We had customers and colleagues support the wonderful cause and flooded social media pages to raise awareness.



South Oxhey have 'adopted' St Josephs Primary School offering free swimming to all of its pupils, and two weeks free fitness memberships to its parents and staff. William Penn attended St Clement Danes to promote the facilities.



William Penn & South Oxhey had a real focus on community activities in March. Both sites celebrated International Women's Day with a range of activities and classes. William Penn also offered a female only Health Suite session and pool session. We had over 60 participants attend the sessions across both sites.



South Oxhey has partnered with Pinewood Lodge Care Home, and have been delivering a weekly Zumba classes since 19th March with Amy & Saz going in to complete. The South Oxhey Team also hosted it's own bake-off to raise awareness for cancer research. William Penn launched its Family Hub Coffee Morning, and also hosted a Dementia Information Day on the 5th March which was very well attended.



6 Social Value

Social value is a measurement of the benefits of the work companies do, the services they provide and the programmes they deliver for people and communities. It allows companies to measure the social and environmental impact of the work they do through improvements to an individual's well-being.

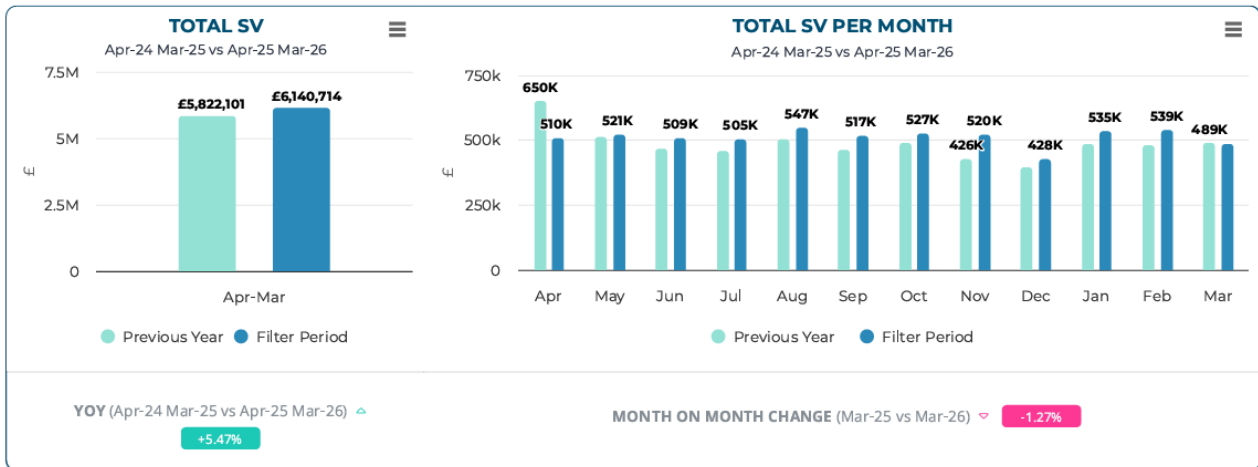
Using evidence based academic research, undertaken by Sheffield Hallam University, and funded by the Department for Culture, Media, Sport and Sport England, Social Value Calculator (SVC) gives operators the ability to accurately measure and value the impacts of sports and physical activity they offer.

Using the operator's current data and sector-wide benchmarks, SVC gives insight to the value in community savings generated across four key areas: Health care, Education, Wellbeing and Crime.

The benefit of monitoring this information includes.

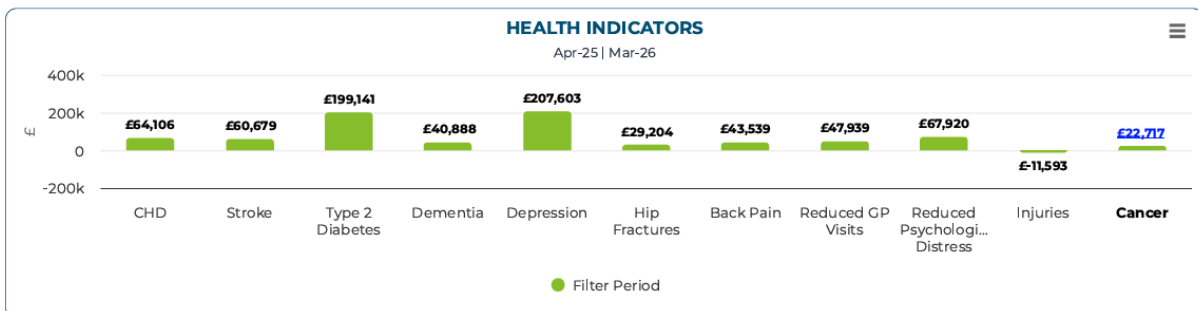
- Gives stakeholders an indication of the social value created from investment in sport and physical activity.
- Supports funding applications and programme commissioning while identifying areas with high social value potential through targeted activity.
- Transparent evidencing of community impact of your programme or facility to align savings to specific social areas.
- Using local socio-economic and lifestyle data to profile participants, the model is appreciative of local contexts e.g. areas of high deprivation.

The graphic below shows a breakdown of the social value KPIs across the facilities within Three Rivers. As you can see the total social value has increased by 5.47% and £318,613 year on year.



The graphic below shows how this is broken down into the 4 key indicators.

INDICATORS



PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

14 health outcomes (reduced risk of various health conditions) are valued by estimating the number of reduced cases resulting from participation in sport and physical activity multiplied by the associated average annual direct (healthcare) and indirect (social and informal care) cost per case for each health outcome.

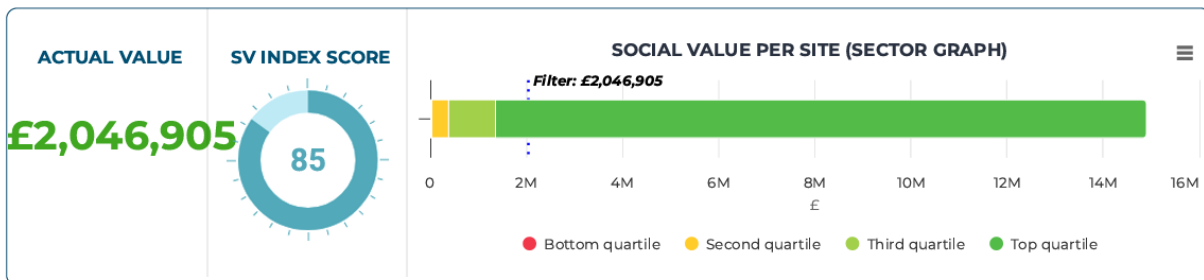
INDIVIDUAL WELLBEING: This outcome is calculated by multiplying the value of the increase in life satisfaction associated with sport and physical activity participation (using the guidance on wellbeing valuation approach) by the number of adults (aged 16+) and children (aged 11-16) meeting a specific threshold of participation.

As you can see from the above graphic, the work detailed within this report delivered by the teams at the centres is having a very positive effect on reducing the impact of Type 2 Diabetes, Dementia and other health related factors affecting our communities. It is also showing improvement in educational attainment leading to higher salary employment and reducing the crime rates in the local communities based on improved networks, trust and reciprocity.



3 - BENCHMARKING

This section provides comparisons for the selected KPIs (social value per site, social value per person and social value growth) against the sector benchmarks. For each KPI, you can see the Actual Value, the Index Score and the Sector Graph, which groups all individual sites from the sector into four quartiles based on their performance in the selected KPI.



SOCIAL VALUE PER SITE

The average social value generated by each site within the selected time period is calculated by the division of the total social value generated by the operator by the number of sites in the filter. This value is then benchmarked with all sites across the sector.

Actual Value: The actual social value delivered by the operator (or the selected sites) within the selected time period.

Index Score: The percentage score (1 to 100) given to the operator (or the site) based on their performance against the rest of the sector – a higher score represents better performance (i.e. 100 is the best performing site/ operator).

Sector Graph: The graph with all sites from the sector matching the selected filters grouped into four quartiles based on their performance – i.e. Top Quartile includes the best performing 25% of the sites in the sector and Bottom Quartile included the worst performing 25% of the sites in the sector for the selected KPI

Through the benchmarking tool, we can also see that Three Rivers leisure facilities are performing in the top quartile when compared to the rest of the country's facilities, with an index score of 85% and average of £2m of social value delivered per site. This is an increase from last years 81% and £1.2m per site. A score of 100% would be the best performing area in the country.

7 12-month work programme

Exercise on Referral

Increasing participation in the Exercise on Referral schemes at William Penn Leisure Centre and South Oxhey Leisure Centre will be a key focus over the next 12 months. Although both centres continue to provide valuable health and wellbeing opportunities for residents, referral numbers have remained lower than expected during the past year, and further work is required to strengthen awareness, accessibility and referral pathways.

A new referral process has recently been trialled using QR codes within local GP surgeries, creating a simpler and more direct route for healthcare professionals and residents to access the programme. Over the coming year, this approach will be expanded further, with a focus on engaging Healthy Hubs, social prescribers and other local health partners to increase visibility of the scheme and improve the number of appropriate referrals into the centres.

Alongside this, the local teams will continue to review the customer journey from referral through to participation, ensuring that residents feel supported, welcomed and confident when accessing the facilities. The aim is to build a stronger connection between leisure, health and community services, helping more residents use physical activity as a positive tool to improve long-term health and wellbeing.

Community Health and Wellbeing Programmes

A key area of focus for the next 12 months will be the continued development of community health and wellbeing programmes across the Three Rivers contract. Both William Penn Leisure Centre and South Oxhey Leisure Centre play an important role in supporting residents who may not traditionally access leisure facilities, particularly those facing barriers linked to confidence, health, cost, age or social isolation.

The contract will continue to explore opportunities to work with local partners, community groups and health organisations to develop targeted programmes that support wider council priorities around prevention, inclusion and active lifestyles. This will include reviewing existing activities, identifying gaps in provision and creating clearer pathways into the leisure centres for residents who may benefit most from structured support.

By strengthening links with local organisations and making better use of the facilities as community wellbeing hubs, the aim is to increase participation from underrepresented groups and ensure the centres continue to support both physical and mental wellbeing across the district.

Decarbonisation of Leisure Facilities

Continuing to explore opportunities to decarbonise the leisure facilities will remain a key priority over the next 12 months. Both William Penn Leisure Centre and South Oxhey Leisure Centre have already maximised the available roof space for solar arrays, which has supported reductions in electricity consumption and strengthened the contract's contribution towards wider environmental targets.

Building on this progress, Everyone Active will continue to work closely with Three Rivers District Council to review further opportunities to reduce carbon emissions across the centres, including the potential for solar canopies, heat pump technology and other energy-efficient plant improvements. These projects will require careful feasibility work, funding review and operational planning, but remain important long-term opportunities to support the council's decarbonisation ambitions while ensuring the leisure facilities remain sustainable, efficient and fit for the future.

Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment (EIA)

EIAs make services better for everyone and support value for money by getting services right first time.

EIAs enable us to consider all the information about a service, policy or strategy from an equalities perspective and then action plan to get the best outcomes for staff and service-users¹.

They analyse how all our work as a council might impact differently on different groups².

They help us make good decisions and evidence how we have reached these decisions³.

See end notes for full guidance.

For further support or advice please contact Community Partnerships

1. Equality Impact and Outcomes Assessment (EIA) Template

First, consider whether you need to complete an EIA, or if there is another way to evidence assessment of impacts, or that an EIA is not needed⁴.

Title of EIA⁵	Leisure Venues – William Penn Leisure Centre, South Oxhey Leisure Centre and Rickmansworth Golf Course	ID No.⁶	
Team/Service ⁷			
Focus of EIA⁸			

2. Update on previous EIA and outcomes of previous actions ⁹

What actions did you plan last time? (List them from the previous EIA)	What improved as a result? What outcomes have these actions achieved?	What <u>further</u> actions do you need to take? (add these to the Action plan below)
Improve the health and wellbeing of the population through self sustainable programmes, both in and out of the centre	An 8% increase in participation across the facilities. 7% in adults and 1% in juniors.	
Improve the health and wellbeing of the population through working with external partners	We attended 10+ events and activities outside of the leisure venues providing sport and physical activity for the communities in their local venues.	
Increase number of events in the centre to promote health and wellbeing and improve experiences for Children and Young People	5 events completed throughout the year	

3. Review of information, equality analysis and potential actions

Protected characteristics groups from the Equality Act 2010	What do you know ¹⁰ ? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you ¹¹ ? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean ¹² ? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do ¹³ ? All potential actions to: • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
Age ¹⁴	<i>Service users vary in age from 1-90 years</i>	<i>Feedback on the facilities is very good with minor cleaning complaints received</i>		<i>Continue outreach work to local community groups to increase usage in Children and older adults.</i>
Disability ¹⁵	Many varying disability users attend the facilities using all sort of activity space and equipment	Feedback is very good and also audit scores returned are very good. Recent audit completed through Quest and the Inclusive Fitness Initiative.	Whilst some very specific equipment could further improve the offering, we have a lot of inclusive equipment within the fitness facilities and changing places facilities.	
Gender reassignment ¹⁶	Not many users at present	No feedback received	Due to changes in law we are awaiting further updates from UK Active in regards to specific processes. At present we utilise unisex toilet spaces and cubicled changing villages.	
Pregnancy and maternity ¹⁷	Not currently tracked in terms of usage.	No feedback received.	N/A	No issues highlighted with current offerings.
Race/ethnicity ¹⁸ Including migrants, refugees and asylum seekers	We have all data regarding the ethnicity of our users.	No specific feedback but we do operate ladies only activities to cater for the demographics of the facilities.	No negative impacts identified.	

Protected characteristics groups from the Equality Act 2010	What do you know¹⁰? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you¹¹? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean¹²? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do¹³? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
Religion or belief¹⁹	We do collect our users religious beliefs but this not a required field for data entry and so information levels are low.	N/A	N/A	N/A
Sex/Gender²⁰	This is a required field when registering to use the facilities and we can see we have a 49-51% split between make and female users.	Again no specific feedback has been received regarding sex/gender.	N/A	N/A
Sexual orientation²¹	Again not a required field so data on our users is minimal.	No specific feedback received	N/A	N/A
Marriage and civil partnership²²	Again not a required field so data on our users is minimal.	No specific feedback received	N/A	N/A
Community Cohesion²³	Again not a required field so data on our users is minimal.	No specific feedback received	N/A	N/A
Other relevant groups²⁴	Again not a required field so data on our users is minimal.	No specific feedback received	N/A	N/A
Cumulative impact²⁵	Again not a required field so data on our users is minimal.	No specific feedback received	N/A	N/A

Protected characteristics groups from the Equality Act 2010	What do you know¹⁰? Summary of data about your service-users and/or staff	What do people tell you¹¹? Summary of service-user and/or staff feedback	What does this mean¹²? Impacts identified from data and feedback (actual and potential)	What can you do¹³? All potential actions to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • advance equality of opportunity, • eliminate discrimination, and • foster good relations
Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations²⁶				
<p><i>We collect a lot of data from our users regarding protected characteristics and use this to tailor our activities and facilities to meet the demands of the communities we serve.</i></p>				

4. List detailed data and/or community feedback that informed your EIA

Title (of data, research or engagement)	Date	Gaps in data	Actions to fill these gaps: who else do you need to engage with? (add these to the Action Plan below, with a timeframe)
Customer Feedback	Ongoing	Regularly reviewed to ensure the facilities and activities meet the needs of the community.	Ongoing reviews of the data presented.

5. Prioritised Action Plan²⁷

Impact identified and group(s) affected	Action planned (Action Owner)	Expected outcome	Measure of success	Timeframe
NB: These actions must now be transferred to service plans and/or PDRs and monitored to ensure they achieve the outcomes identified.				
Under 5s	Active Antz – fun soft play, arts and crafts and interactive sessions for children under 5 Baby group – weekly session for babies and parents under 1 to explore sensory play Coffee morning – free drop in sessions for first time parents to chat and learn	Increased social interaction with under 5s Improved physical and sensory skills Chance for families to meet and connect	AA sessions and Baby Group going well with steady numbers. Coffee morning starting in late Jan	Ongoing
CYP from low income families	HAPpy camps – free camps at RGC for families on benefits related free school meals HCF junior memberships – offering free junior memberships over holiday periods to kids on FSM	Chance for children to meet and socialise Children to try new sports and learn new skills Respite for parents	HAPpy camps running every holiday with good funding coming in Memberships steady across summer period	Ongoing
Older adults	Senior drop in sessions – senior racket sessions at WP and SO for 55+ Art group – low cost art session at SO for older adults	Chance for people to meet and socialise Increased physical skills, reducing chances of conditions and falls	All sessions well attended across both sites	Ongoing
Women and girls	Buggies and Bands – exercise sessions for mums to work out with	Chance for families to meet and connect	B+B and girls football to start this year	Ongoing

	<p>their babies</p> <p>Girls football – low cost FA sessions for girls under 12</p> <p>Walking Netball and Back2Netball – low cost England Netball sessions</p>	<p>Girls to try football in safe and inclusive environment</p>	<p>Netball sessions always well attended</p>	
MSK conditions	<p>GoodBoost – tailored sessions for people with MSK conditions in the pool</p>	<p>Reduced risk of falls, increased strength in older adults</p> <p>Chance to exercise for people new / worried</p>	<p>Sessions run at both sites with steady numbers</p>	Ongoing
Adults in quiet centre times	<p>Pickleball – a variety of adult pickleball sessions across daytime</p>	<p>Learning new sport, increased socialisation and good utilisation of sports hall in quiet times</p>	<p>All sessions well attended in both sites</p>	Ongoing
Older adults	<p>Shape Up – football sessions ran by Watford for older adults with high BMI</p> <p>Swim after Stroke – programme for stroke survivors to learn to swim</p>	<p>Increase health and wellbeing for older adults</p> <p>Reduced chance of illness in future, reducing LTHC risk</p>	<p>Shape Up steady numbers</p> <p>Swim After Stroke fully booked for each block of sessions</p>	Ongoing
Parkinsons	<p>Parkinsons Table Tennis – ran with Community Champion, free sessions for people with Parkinsons</p> <p>Parkinsons Golf – low cost sessions for people with Parkinsons, funded by Parkinsons UK</p> <p>Parkinsons Dance – Dance sessions run by JK dance for people with Parkinsons</p>	<p>Increased cognitive and motor function</p> <p>Increased socialisation</p> <p>Respite for carers</p>	<p>All sessions well attended and good feedback received</p>	Ongoing

Older adults	World Health Day – running event on 7 April to bring together health partners and showcase things on offer	Showcase what we / local partners have to help people in terms of health and wellbeing	Partners confirming for 7 April	Ongoing
CYP	Holiday Parties – running christmas, easter and summer parties for kids at low cost	Promote parties and other kids sessions we have Kids have experience with bouncy castle and soft play	Ran Xmas and Halloween parties, all with great feedback	Ongoing
Under 5s	Christmas Grotto – chance for kids to meet Santa, get a present and take part in Xmas arts and crafts	Promote other offers we have for under 5s	Ran for first time this Christmas and plans to do again for next Christmas	Ongoing
Adults	Pickleball festival – all day event for pickleball players to play, take part in raffle, win prizes etc Glow events – ran glow in the dark pickleball	Good income for site, and can promote all of our sessions	Plans to run 1 or 2 in 2026, with other events at other sites too Plans for other glow events soon – junior tennis etc	Ongoing

Page 37

EIA sign-off:

Staff member competing Equality Impact Assessment:

Date:

Head of Service

Date:

TRDC Equality lead:

Date:

Guidance end-notes

¹ The following principles, drawn from case law, explain what we must do to fulfil our duties under the Equality Act:

- **Knowledge:** everyone working for the council must be aware of our equality duties and apply them appropriately in their work.
- **Timeliness:** the duty applies at the time of considering policy options and/or before a final decision is taken – not afterwards.
- **Real Consideration:** the duty must be an integral and rigorous part of your decision-making and influence the process.
- **Sufficient Information:** you must assess what information you have and what is needed to give proper consideration.
- **No delegation:** the council is responsible for ensuring that any contracted services which provide services on our behalf can comply with the duty, are required in contracts to comply with it, and do comply in practice. It is a duty that cannot be delegated.
- **Review:** the equality duty is a continuing duty. It applies when a policy is developed/agreed, and when it is implemented/reviewed.
- **Proper Record Keeping:** to show that we have fulfilled our duties we must keep records of the process and the impacts identified.

NB: Filling out this EIA in itself does not meet the requirements of the equality duty. All the requirements above must be fulfilled or the EIA (and any decision based on it) may be open to challenge. Properly used, an EIA can be a tool to help us comply with our equality duty and as a record that to demonstrate that we have done so.

Page 38

² Our duties in the Equality Act 2010

As a public sector organisation, we have a legal duty (under the Equality Act 2010) to show that we have identified and considered the impact and potential impact of our activities on all people with 'protected characteristics' (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership).

This applies to policies, services (including commissioned services), and our employees. The level of detail of this consideration will depend on what you are assessing, who it might affect, those groups' vulnerability, and how serious any potential impacts might be. We use this EIA template to complete this process and evidence our consideration.

The following are the duties in the Act. You must give 'due regard' (pay conscious attention) to the need to:

- **avoid, reduce or minimise negative impact** (if you identify unlawful discrimination, including victimisation and harassment, you must stop the action and take advice immediately).
- **promote equality of opportunity.** This means the need to:
 - Remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by equality groups
 - Take steps to meet the needs of equality groups
 - Encourage equality groups to participate in public life or any other activity where participation is disproportionately low
 - Consider if there is a need to treat disabled people differently, including more favourable treatment where necessary
- **foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.** This means:
 - Tackle prejudice
 - Promote understanding

³ EIAs are always proportionate to:

- The size of the service or scope of the policy/strategy
- The resources involved
- The numbers of people affected
- The size of the likely impact
- The vulnerability of the people affected

The greater the potential adverse impact of the proposed policy on a protected group (e.g. disabled people), the more vulnerable the group in the context being considered, the more thorough and demanding the process required by the Act will be.

⁴ **When to complete an EIA:**

- When planning or developing a new service, policy or strategy
- When reviewing an existing service, policy or strategy
- When ending or substantially changing a service, policy or strategy
- When there is an important change in the service, policy or strategy, or in the city (eg: a change in population), or at a national level (eg: a change of legislation)

Page 39

Assessment of equality impact can be evidenced as part of the process of reviewing or needs assessment or strategy development or consultation or planning. It does not have to be on this template, but must be documented. Wherever possible, build the EIA into your usual planning/review processes.

Do you need to complete an EIA? Consider:

- Is the policy, decision or service likely to be relevant to any people because of their protected characteristics?
- How many people is it likely to affect?
- How significant are its impacts?
- Does it relate to an area where there are known inequalities?
- How vulnerable are the people (potentially) affected?

If there are potential impacts on people but you decide not to complete an EIA it is usually sensible to document why.

⁵ **Title of EIA:** This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing

⁶ **ID no:** The unique reference for this EIA.

⁷ **Team/Department:** Main team responsible for the policy, practice, service or function being assessed

⁸ **Focus of EIA:** A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section. Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time - eg: 'Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)'

This section should explain what you are assessing:

- What are the main aims or purpose of the policy, practice, service or function?
- Who implements, carries out or delivers the policy, practice, service or function? Please state where this is more than one person/team/body and where other organisations deliver under procurement or partnership arrangements.
- How does it fit with other services?
- Who is affected by the policy, practice, service or function, or by how it is delivered? Who are the external and internal service-users, groups, or communities?
- What outcomes do you want to achieve, why and for whom? Eg: what do you want to provide, what changes or improvements, and what should the benefits be?
- What do existing or previous inspections of the policy, practice, service or function tell you?
- What is the reason for the proposal or change (financial, service, legal etc)? The Act requires us to make these clear.

⁹ **Previous actions:** If there is no previous EIA or this assessment is of a new service, then simply write 'not applicable'.

¹⁰ **Data:** Make sure you have enough data to inform your EIA.

- What data relevant to the impact on protected groups of the policy/decision/service is available?¹⁰
- What further evidence is needed and how can you get it? (Eg: further research or engagement with the affected groups).
- What do you already know about needs, access and outcomes? Focus on each of the protected characteristics in turn. Eg: who uses the service? Who doesn't and why? Are there differences in outcomes? Why?
- Have there been any important demographic changes or trends locally? What might they mean for the service or function?
- Does data/monitoring show that any policies or practices create particular problems or difficulties for any groups?
- Do any equality objectives already exist? What is current performance like against them?
- Is the service having a positive or negative effect on particular people in the community, or particular groups or communities?
- Use local sources of data (eg: JSNA: and Herts Insight <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/herts-insight/home.aspx>) and national ones where they are relevant.

¹¹ **Engagement:** You must engage appropriately with those likely to be affected to fulfil the equality duty.

- What do people tell you about the services?
- Are there patterns or differences in what people from different groups tell you?
- What information or data will you need from communities?
- How should people be consulted? Consider:
 - (a) consult when proposals are still at a formative stage;
 - (b) explain what is proposed and why, to allow intelligent consideration and response;
 - (c) allow enough time for consultation;
 - (d) make sure what people tell you is properly considered in the final decision.

-
- Try to consult in ways that ensure all perspectives can be considered.
 - Identify any gaps in who has been consulted and identify ways to address this.

¹² Your EIA must get to grips fully and properly with actual and potential impacts.

- The equality duty does not stop decisions or changes, but means we must conscientiously and deliberately confront the anticipated impacts on people.
- Be realistic: don't exaggerate speculative risks and negative impacts.
- Be detailed and specific so decision-makers have a concrete sense of potential effects. Instead of "the policy is likely to disadvantage older women", say how many or what percentage are likely to be affected, how, and to what extent.
- Questions to ask when assessing impacts depend on the context. Examples:
 - Are one or more protected groups affected differently and/or disadvantaged? How, and to what extent?
 - Is there evidence of higher/lower uptake among different groups? Which, and to what extent?
 - If there are likely to be different impacts on different groups, is that consistent with the overall objective?
 - If there is negative differential impact, how can you minimise that while taking into account your overall aims
 - Do the effects amount to unlawful discrimination? If so the plan must be modified.
 - Does the proposal advance equality of opportunity and/or foster good relations? If not, could it?

¹³ Consider all three aims of the Act: removing barriers, and also identifying positive actions we can take.

- Where you have identified impacts you must state what actions will be taken to remove, reduce or avoid any negative impacts and maximise any positive impacts or advance equality of opportunity.
- Be specific and detailed and explain how far these actions are expected to improve the negative impacts.
- If mitigating measures are contemplated, explain clearly what the measures are, and the extent to which they can be expected to reduce / remove the adverse effects identified.
- An EIA which has attempted to airbrush the facts is an EIA that is vulnerable to challenge.

¹⁴ **Age:** People of all ages

¹⁵ **Disability:** A person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The definition includes: sensory impairments, impairments with fluctuating or recurring effects, progressive, organ specific, developmental, learning difficulties, mental health conditions and mental illnesses, produced by injury to the body or brain. Persons with cancer, multiple sclerosis or HIV infection are all now deemed to be disabled persons from the point of diagnosis.

¹⁶ **Gender Reassignment:** In the Act a transgender person is someone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his or her gender. A person does not need to be under medical supervision to be protected

¹⁷ **Pregnancy and Maternity:** Protection is during pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which the woman is entitled.

¹⁸ **Race/Ethnicity:** This includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality, and includes refugees and migrants, and Gypsies and Travellers. Refugees and migrants means people whose intention is to stay in the UK for at least twelve months (excluding visitors, short term students or tourists). This definition includes asylum seekers; voluntary and involuntary migrants; people who are undocumented; and the children of migrants, even if they were born in the UK.

¹⁹ **Religion and Belief:** Religion includes any religion with a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious or philosophical belief. The Act also covers lack of religion or belief.

²⁰ **Sex/Gender:** Males and Females are covered under the Act. The Equality Act has some exceptions that allow employers or organisations to discriminate because of your sex

²¹ **Sexual Orientation:** Whether a person's sexual attraction is towards their own sex, the opposite sex or to both sexes. There are a small number of circumstances when being treated differently due to sexual orientation is lawful.

²² **Marriage and Civil Partnership:** Only in relation to due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination.

²³ **Community Cohesion:** What must happen in all communities to enable different groups of people to get on well together.

²⁴ **Other relevant groups:** eg: Carers, people experiencing domestic and/or sexual violence, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children, ex-armed forces personnel, people on the Autistic spectrum etc

²⁵ **Cumulative Impact:** This is an impact that appears when you consider services or activities together. A change or activity in one area may create an impact somewhere else

²⁶ **Assessment of overall impacts and any further recommendations**

- Make a frank and realistic assessment of the overall extent to which the negative impacts can be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures. Explain what positive impacts will result from the actions and how you can make the most of these.
- Countervailing considerations: These may include the reasons behind the formulation of the policy, the benefits it is expected to deliver, budget reductions, the need to avert a graver crisis by introducing a policy now and not later, and so on. The weight of these factors in favour of implementing the policy must then be measured against the weight of any evidence as to the potential negative equality impacts of the policy.
- Are there any further recommendations? Is further engagement needed? Is more research or monitoring needed? Does there need to be a change in the proposal itself?

²⁷ **Action Planning:** The Equality Duty is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard' to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further equality assessment and consultation are needed.

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's climate/sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Guidance for use

Please answer all questions from the drop-down options in the 'impact' column (C), including 'not applicable' as needed. Then provide Justification (Column E) to explain your score.

Please email your completed copy of the form to climate.change@threeivers.gov.uk.

Key to the colour coding of answers is given at the top of the page.

NB: "Not applicable" scores do not count towards the average score.

Name of project/policy/procurement and date		Leisure Venues
Brief description of project/policy/procurement (1-2 sentences):		William Penn Leisure Centre South Oxhey Leisure Centre Rickmansworth Golf Course

Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy			
Question	Impact (select from list)	Score (1 to 4)	Justification or mitigation
1 Will this project increase overall energy use (electricity or other fuels)?	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	
2 Does this project directly use fossil fuels such as gas, petrol, diesel, oil?	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	
3 Does this project further maximise the use of existing building space? <i>E.g. co-locating services; bringing under-used space into use; using buildings out-of-hours</i>	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Utilising Roof Space for Solar Installations
4 Will any new building constructed or refurbished be highly energy efficient in use? <i>e.g. high levels of insulation, low energy demand per m2, no fossil fuel heating, EPC rating "A" or BREAM "excellent".</i>	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Increased the energy efficiency at William Penn and South Oxhey due to solar installation
5 Does this make use of sustainable materials / inputs in your project? <i>e.g. re-used or recycled construction materials; timber in place of concrete</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
6 Will this increase the supply of renewable energy? <i>e.g. installing solar panels; switching to a renewable energy tariff</i>	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	Use of solar power to reduce demand on grid dependency
7 Are any appliances or electrical equipment to be used highly energy efficient? <i>e.g. Energy rating label A-G</i>	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	
Average Score		3.67	

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Insulate buildings to a high standard.
- Include energy efficiency measures during renovations
- Replace gas boilers with low-carbon heating, such as heat pumps. Consider enabling connection to future District Heat Networks, where possible.
- Construct new buildings to Passivhaus standard and seek to reduce the embodied energy of the construction.
- Design and deliver buildings and infrastructure with lower-carbon materials, such as recycled material, wool- or hemp-based insulation, and timber frames.
- Use construction methods that reduce overall energy use, such as modular, factory-built components, or use of electrical plant on-site.
- Install solar panels or other renewable energy technologies, and consider including battery storage.
- Switch to a certified renewable energy provider e.g. utilise power purchase agreements (PPA)
- Use energy-efficient appliances. For more information: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/advice/home-appliances/>
- Install low-energy LED lighting.
- Install measures to help manage building energy demand, such as smart meters, timers on lighting, or building management systems.

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's climate/sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Travel			
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation
8 Will this project increase overall private vehicle use?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
9 Will this project purchase new zero-emission vehicles, or lower-emission vehicle models (compared to alternatives)?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
10 Will this project support people to use active or lower-emission transport? <i>E.g. cycling, walking, switching to electric transport</i>	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Cycle to Work Scheme in place with green travel plans
11 Will the project be easily accessible for all by foot, bike, or public transport, including for disabled people?	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	Facilities are easily accessible by public transport and foot.
12 Will the project provide or enhance infrastructure for bikes, public transport or zero-emission vehicles? <i>e.g. secure bike storage, EV charging points etc.</i>	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.	4	EV chargers have been installed at SOLC. WP is in process. Working with colleagues regarding bike schemes and is currently at consultation stage
13 Has the project taken steps to reduce traffic? <i>e.g. Hosting event online, car-sharing, using e-cargo bikes, timing activities or deliveries to be outside peak congestion times</i>	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	
Average Score		3.50	

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Reduce the need to travel e.g. through remote meetings, or rationalising routes and rounds.
- Share vehicles or substitute different modes of travel, rather than procuring new vehicles.
- Specify electric, hybrid, or most fuel efficient vehicles for new fleet or for services involving transport.
- Support users and staff to walk, cycle, or use public transport e.g. with cycle parking, training, incentives.
- Use zero-emission deliveries
- Model and mitigate the project's effect on traffic and congestion e.g. retiming the service or deliveries

Goods and Consumption			
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation
14 Will Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) criteria be included in the procurement evaluation framework? (See TRDC Procurement Policy here: https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/services/your-council/our-policies-and-plans)	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	
15 Will the project procure goods or services from a certified B Corporation or business with other industry-recognised environmental accreditations? <i>e.g. FSC certified wood products, organic produce, Fairtrade, ISO14001 etc.</i>	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	
16 Will this project reuse existing goods and materials to the greatest extent possible, instead of acquiring newly manufactured ones? <i>e.g. re-purpose natural materials found on-site, using refurbished electronic goods etc.</i>	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Recycling in place across the facilities including trainers, clothing and batteries
17 Does the project include maintenance, repair, or leasing to extend the longevity of the product and reduce reliance on buying newly manufactured goods? <i>E.g. repair and re-use; sharing and lending goods between services or people; leasing or product-as-a-service rather than ownership</i>	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	
18 Does the project use products and resources that are re-used, recycled, or renewable?	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Benefiting from solar power and also sell many products made from recycled materials.
19 Does the project enable others to make sustainable choices within their lifestyles, or engage people about this? <i>e.g. promote re-use, repair or sharing</i>	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Examples - Reduced price in beverages if using own reusable cup

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Procure goods through sharing, leasing, or product-as-a-service models rather than ownership.
- Use pre-owned and reconditioned goods, and reduce reliance on procuring new goods.
- Use recycled materials, and procure items that can be reconditioned or recycled at end-of-life.
- Use lifecycle costing in business cases to capture the full cost of operation, repair and disposal of an item.
- Ensure meat and dairy is high-quality, high-welfare.
- Design waste, including food waste, out of business models e.g. separating (and composting) food waste; replacing single-use items with reusable items.
- Use contact points with residents, community groups and businesses to engage and enable them to adopt low-waste, low-carbon behaviours.

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation		
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.		
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.		
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.		
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's climate/sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.		
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.		
20	Is the material used able to be re-used, re-purposed, or recycled at end of its life? <i>e.g. recyclable materials, donation of old equipment/objects</i>	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3
21	Has the project taken steps to ensure any food and associated packaging is more sustainable? <i>E.g. recyclable/compostable packaging (non single use plastic), less and high-quality (high welfare) meat and dairy; minimises food waste; seasonal produce; locally sourced.</i>	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3 Reduced packaging, regular review waste levels to ensure stock ordering is not too much
Average Score			3.00

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment

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Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's climate/sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Biodiversity & Nature

Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation
<p><u>Examples for guidance:</u></p> <p>1. Negative impact: reduced variety of species, reduced number of trees and/or reduced area of habitat. No plans/resources for future management.</p> <p>2. Some negative impact: reduced variety of species</p> <p>3. Overall neutral impact</p> <p>4. Some positive impact: increased variety of species</p> <p>5. Positive impact: increase variety of species, increased number of trees and/or area of habitat. Plans and resources available for future positive management.</p>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
<p>22 Does the project include a management plan to ensure the biodiversity benefits are sustained over time?</p> <p><u>Examples for guidance:</u></p> <p>1. Negative impact: there is no plan or resource available for any future management</p> <p>2. Some negative impact: there is a plan for management but no resource</p> <p>3. Overall neutral impact: interventions have minimal management</p> <p>4. Some positive impact: there is a plan for short term management</p> <p>5. Positive management: there is a plan for long term (over 5 years) management</p>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
<p>24 What effect does this project have on the quality of non-amenity green/blue space i.e. woodland, grassland, wetland, gardens, lakes, rivers, ponds etc.?</p> <p><u>Examples for guidance:</u></p> <p>1. Negative impact: pesticides are used as management practice, amenity grass cutting regimes used</p> <p>2. Some negative impact: reduced variety of species planted, management with amenity focus</p> <p>3. Overall neutral impact</p> <p>4. Some positive impact: increased variety of species planted with appropriate management</p> <p>5. Positive impact: appropriate planting and management with a local focus (i.e. pollinator friendly planting, improving connectivity corridors)</p>	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	
<p>25 Does your project benefit priority species or habitats as identified in the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)?</p> <p>Priority Species include: Nightingales, Swifts, Pasqueflower, Water Vole, White Admiral, rare arable plants.</p>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
<p>26 Does the project help people understand the value of biodiversity, and encourage residents to support it in their private and community spaces?</p>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
Average Score		3	

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon: (Seek advice from Landscapes Team if required)

- Avoid converting green space to hard surfacing.
- Use underutilised space for planting, such as green roofs and walls.
- Plant native plants and perennials, rather than non-native ornamental species, to encourage biodiversity.
- Reduce trimming of grass and hedges, and avoid use of synthetic pesticides.
- Provide space for animals e.g. long grass areas, bird boxes, bat boxes, 'insect hotels', ponds, hedgehog hides and passages, log piles
- Consider the ecological impacts from manufacture and use of procured goods, e.g. water pollution; water consumption; land use change for farming; pesticide use; organic/regenerative farming methods
- For more information on priority species and habitats please see: <https://preview-hcc.cloud.contensis.com/about-the-council/how-the-council-works/partnerships/herts-nature-recovery-partnership/local-nature-recovery-strategy.aspx>

Adaptation

Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation
<p>27 Does any planned project, construction or building include measures to reduce water usage?</p>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	
<p>28 Does any planned infrastructure or building work ensure soft, permeable surfacing to reduce flood risk? e.g. landscaped soakaway areas, de-paving areas, green roofs, ponds, swales, or permeable materials</p>	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Drainage improvements made across the golf course to aid with water flow from the course

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Install water-saving devices in taps, showers and toilets
- Re-use grey water in new developments
- Capture and re-use rainwater where possible e.g. water butts for use in car washing, watering garden, toilets
- Ensure all new building or refurbishment (especially of homes) models and mitigates future overheating risk, with adequate ventilation and shading
- Avoid increasing areas of hard surfacing.
- Convert hard surfacing to green and permeable surfacing where possible, and install Sustainable Drainage systems (SuDS)

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment

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Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's climate/sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

29	Has the project or service considered ways to reduce the impact of extreme weather i.e. extreme heat, fire, flooding, and drought? <i>e.g. changing ways of working to reduce risk, reflective materials to reduce heat-gain, drought-tolerant planting, planting for shade and flood mitigation, insulation and ventilation, fans etc.</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		possible, and install Sustainable Drainage systems (SUDS). - Plant drought-tolerant plants and mulch landscapes to avoid water loss through evaporation.
Average Score			3.0		

Engagement and Influence					
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation		
30	Does this project raise awareness and understanding of climate change, biodiversity, and sustainability, and the steps that people can take to live more sustainably?	Some positive impact for climate/sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Regularly highlight to customers ways to improve their effect on the environment either through travel, recycling and general consumption	Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon: - 'Make every contact count', by using contact points with residents, businesses and community groups to promote understanding of the climate emergency.
Average Score			3		
Total Overall Average Score			3.19		

Now the assessment is complete, copy and paste the box below into your business case or committee report (under environmental implications 6). The full assessment document can be attached as an appendix to your report. Procurement bidders must submit completed assessment with their tender.

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	3.67
Travel	3.50
Goods and Consumption	3.00
Biodiversity & Nature	3.00
Adaptation	3.00
Engagement and Influence	3
Total Overall Average Score	3.2

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**CLIMATE
CHANGE &
LEISURE
COMMITTEE
24/06/2026**

CLIMATE CHANGE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

24th JUNE 2026 7.30PM

PART I

POND WOOD TEN YEAR MANGEMENT PLAN 2026 - 2036 (ADE)

1 Summary

- 1.1 A new ten-year management plan has been developed for Pond Wood, South Oxhey.
- 1.2 The new plan contains management actions for the woodland over the next ten years from financial year 2026/27 until 2036/37. The detailed actions relate to woodland management for biodiversity and improvements to public access and interpretation.
- 1.3 The plan has a focus on the long-term management of numerous veteran Hornbeam trees which are a particular feature of Pond Wood.
- 1.4 These veteran trees require careful, phased management to ensure they continue to thrive and do not go into decline. The aim of the plan is also to identify younger Hornbeam trees, which are suitable to start as new pollards.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That:

That the Climate Change and Leisure Committee:

Adopt the new 10-year Management Plan for Pond Wood

Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance to enter into a contract or funding agreement above the value of £25,000, subject to securing external funding to facilitate works to support the implementation of the Management Plans.

Report prepared by: Alex Laurie, Principal Trees and Woodlands Officer

3 Details

Plan development process:

- 3.1 The plan was developed and produced by Countryside Management Service (CMS), part of Hertfordshire County Council, who are commissioned by Three Rivers District Council (TRDC) to assist with the management of TRDC Open Space.
- 3.2 An initial consultation was held between the 1st and 22nd of September 2025. The aim was to inform stakeholders and residents that Three Rivers District Council was about to prepare a management plan for Pond Wood and to invite ideas for what might feature in the new plan. An opportunity to speak to CMS and TRDC staff was also held, on site, on 16th September 2025.

- 3.3 Once a draft management plan had been completed, a second session of public consultation on the draft plan was held between 2nd February and 28th February 2026.
- 3.4 Despite the various consultation opportunities, stakeholder and public engagement with the plan was very low. Four people responded to the initial briefing document; but only one person attended the meeting on-site; and only one person made comments on the draft plan.
- 3.5 This is most likely due to the small size of the site (less than 2 hectares), which mainly functions as a pedestrian cut through between Seacroft Drive and Northwick Road, and occasional use by dog walkers.
- 3.6 The feedback received and discussions on site with officers was predominantly positive and supportive regarding proposed works to manage the veteran trees and other works aimed at conserving the wildlife value of the site. There was a suggestion to surface the main path through the site to improve the occasionally muddy condition of some sections in the winter.
- 3.7 However, officers are concerned this could be damaging to the roots of the veteran trees in the wood and the cost versus benefit would not justify it. However, woodchip from tree works will be spread across parts of the path where needed to improve conditions.

The Management Plan:

- 3.8 The key actions within the Pond Wood Management Plan relate to woodland management for biodiversity, particularly the large numbers of veteran Hornbeam trees throughout the wood.
- 3.9 Veteran trees are those which have reached an age well beyond what would be normal for a particular species. Due to their age, they can support a wide diversity of rare and/or protected wildlife, that younger trees cannot. They may also have important historical or cultural significance and amenity value.
- 3.10 Unusually the management plan for Pond Wood covers a ten-year period. This is to ensure that the veteran trees receive a continuity of management over two or three cycles of crown reduction work.
- 3.11 Some of these actions will be subject to securing external funding, they include:
 - 3.11.1 The phased crown reduction of veteran Hornbeam trees – These will be gradual reductions over several cycles to reduce the risk of trees collapsing or uprooting, helping to extend their longevity.
 - 3.11.2 Halo thinning around veteran trees – removing and cutting back smaller trees around veteran specimens to allow more light in, helping them to regenerate.
 - 3.11.3 Starting new pollards – younger Hornbeams in the wood will be identified and be pollarded for the first time to ensure there are replacements for the long term.
 - 3.11.4 Clearing non-native invasive species - such as Laurel, Rhododendron and variegated archangel to prevent their spread through the wood.
 - 3.11.5 Cutting back trees and vegetation from footpath edges and clearing litter and fly tipping – to make entrances and access points to the wood safer and more welcoming.

4 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The officer recommendation is that the management plan for Pond Wood is formally adopted by the Council.
- 4.2 Officers will then begin implementing the actions within the plans, subject to the availability of funding where necessary.
- 4.3 If the plans are not approved by the committee, maintenance of the wood will continue at a minimum level, but no additional improvements for biodiversity or public access will be undertaken.

5 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 5.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets. The relevant policies are the Tree Strategy agreed in 2022, and Nature Recovery Strategy agreed in 2023.
- 5.2 The recommendations in this report relate to and support the achievement of the following objectives within the Council Plan 2026 – 2029:
 - 5.2.1 Focus on restoring nature, boosting biodiversity, protecting trees and woodlands and key habitats
 - 5.2.2 Continue to invest in and improve our parks, open spaces and walking routes
 - 5.2.3 .

6 Financial Implications

- 6.1 Work outlined within the Management Plans will be completed within existing budgets or be subject to external funding.
- 6.2 Work to trees for safety will be facilitated utilising the tree management budget; Ash trees suffering from Ash Die Back (ADB) will be facilitated utilising the existing ADB budget. Works to management the veteran Hornbeams will be completed using existing management plan budgets, or via external funding, where possible, subject to adoption of the Management Plan.

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 All proposed works and equipment will be tendered within the Council's constitution and contract procedure rules and any other permissions obtained (for example planning) where required.
- 7.2 Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, updated by the Environment Act 2021, places a legal responsibility on public authorities in England to have due regard for habitats and species of the greatest conservation importance, whilst protecting all biodiversity.

- 7.3 Section 40(1) states that a “public authority which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective.”
- 7.4 The accompanying footnote to this part of the Act states that the aim of the biodiversity objective is to provide for the enhancement or improvement of biodiversity, not just its maintenance in its current state. Gone is the former ‘have regard’ element in respect of conserving biodiversity, and this has been replaced by a proactive duty (new section 40(1)) to “from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective”.
- 7.5 Under the Council Constitution, Committee approval is required to enter into any contracts above the value of £25,000.

8 Equal Opportunities Implications

8.1 Relevance Test

Has a relevance test been completed for Equality Impact?	Yes
Did the relevance test conclude a full impact assessment was required?	No

A short Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment is included at Appendix 4. The Management Plan does not propose substantial changes to Pond wood but aims to make them more accessible to a wider range of people.

This includes physical access by cutting back vegetation from paths and removing barriers and obstacles. It also aims to remove psychological barriers by making entrances more welcoming to visitors.

9 Staffing Implications

- 9.1 Officers within Leisure and Natural Infrastructure, and Trees and Woodlands, will manage implementation of the plan over its lifetime.

10 Environmental Implications

- 10.1 The new management prescriptions for the wood will conserve the veteran trees over the longer term and enable a varied and diverse range of habitats, which will have a positive impact on the flora and fauna across the district.

10.2

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	0.00
Travel	0.00

Goods and Consumption	0.00
Ecology	3.00
Adaptation	0.00
Engagement and Influence	0
Total Overall Average Score	3.0

11 Community Safety Implications

- 11.1 Making entrances to the woods more welcoming and cutting back vegetation to make paths more accessible will hopefully give visitors more confidence to use the woods and feel safer when doing so.

12 Public Health implications

- 12.1 Trees and greenery may boost lifespan, this has been studied for 8 years by Harvard researchers and published in April Environmental Health Perspectives.

(<https://health.usnews.com/wellness/articles/2016-12-09/the-many-health-benefits-of-trees>)

13 Customer Services Centre Implications

None specific.

14 Communications and Website Implications

- 14.1 Implementation of the new management plans may require occasional external and website communications to advise residents and site users when works are taking place on site.

- 14.2 Good news stories will be circulated and shared via the Communications team, including across a range of social media channels.

15 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

- 15.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>.

- 15.2 In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

- 15.3 The subject of this report is covered by the Landscape and Leisure service plan(s). Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

- 15.4 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.
- 15.5 The subject of this report is covered by the service plan(s). Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

Nature of Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response <i>(tolerate, treat, terminate, transfer)</i>	Risk Rating <i>(combination of likelihood and impact)</i>
Actions within the Management Plans are not implemented due to a lack of resources	Reputational damage to the Council	Implementation of the plans is monitored and reported to highlight any issues at an early stage	tolerate	Low 4

- 15.6 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

Very Likely ----- Likelihood ----- ▼ Remote	Low 4	High 8	Very High 12	Very High 16
	Low 3	Medium 6	High 9	Very High 12
	Low 2	Low 4	Medium 6	High 8
	Low 1	Low 2	Low 3	Low 4
Impact Low -----► Unacceptable				

Impact Score
 4 (Catastrophic)
 3 (Critical)
 2 (Significant)
 1 (Marginal)

Likelihood Score
 4 (Very Likely (≥80%))
 3 (Likely (21-79%))
 2 (Unlikely (6-20%))
 1 (Remote (≤5%))

- 15.7 In the officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.
- 15.8 The remainder are therefore operational risks. Progress against the treatment plans for strategic risks is reported to the Policy and Resources Committee quarterly. The effectiveness of all treatment plans are reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

Background Papers

Appendix 1 – Pond Wood Management Plan 2026-2036

Appendix 2 – Short Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment

Appendix 3 – Environmental Impact Assessment

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POND WOOD MANAGEMENT PLAN

2026-2036

OVERVIEW

Greenspace Action Plans

Greenspace Actions Plans (GAPs) are map-based management plans which specify activities that should take place on a site over a stated period; these activities will help to deliver the agreed aspirations which the site managers and stakeholders have identified for that site. The plan is set out sequentially, first providing background information on the site (Site Description) and an assessment of its condition and opportunities for improvement (Analysis and Evaluation). This is developed into Aims and Objectives for the site, a set of Action Plans which identify how these objectives will be achieved, and detailed specifications for the work to complete the actions. All actions within the plan are aspirational, are not guaranteed to take place within the specified year and may be subject to external funding.

Public Engagement

Engagement with stakeholders is at the centre of effective management planning on any site. An initial engagement period was held for 3 weeks in November 2025, to establish core aims and objectives for the site; these are reflected in Section 3. A second stage of engagement was carried out in February 2026 to enable stakeholders to comment on the proposed management actions for the site. An engagement summary included as an appendix to this plan details the engagement process and summarises the comments received and any amendments made to the plan as a result.

Version Control

Version	Issue Date	Details	Author	Reviewed	Approved

Contents

Overview	ii
Greenspace Action Plans	ii
Public Engagement.....	ii
Version Control	ii
1.0 Welcome & Introduction	1
1.1 Vision Statement.....	1
1.2 Introduction	1
2.0 Site Description	2
2.1 Site Summary.....	2
2.2 Site Designations	1
2.3 Geology and Hydrology.....	1
2.4 Landscape Character	1
2.5 History and Archaeology	2
2.6 Habitats and Wildlife	2
2.6.1 Habitats.....	2
2.6.2 Species	4
2.7 Access, Facilities and Infrastructure.....	5
2.8 Community and Events	6
2.9 Site Management and Sustainability	6
2.9.1 Site Management.....	6
2.9.2 Health and Safety	7
3.0 Analysis & Evaluation	8
3.1 A Welcoming Place	8
3.2 Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage.....	8
3.2.1 Woodland.....	8
3.2.2 Removal of invasive non-native species	9
3.2.3 Seasonal stream.....	9
3.3 Community Involvement and Communication	10
4.0 Aim & Objectives	11
4.1 Aim.....	11
4.2 Objectives	11
5.0 Action Plans and Maps	14
5.1 Annual and Regular Actions.....	14

5.2	Year 1 - 10 Actions 2026-36	17
6.0	Specifications	22
7.0	Appendices	24
7.1	Engagement Summary	24
7.1.1	Introduction	24
7.1.2	Engagement feedback	24
7.2	Policy Context	24
7.2.1	Three Rivers District Council Strategies	24
7.2.2	Hertfordshire County Council Strategies	25
7.3	Byelaws	26
8.0	Glossary	27

1.0 WELCOME & INTRODUCTION

1.1 Vision Statement

Pond Wood will be a welcoming and accessible woodland, where the local community can connect with and enjoy their local environment. It will be proactively managed, with a particular focus on ensuring its notable hornbeam pollards are brought back into active management and preserved into the future.

1.2 Introduction

Pond Wood is a small (1.5ha), isolated block of ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW) in South Oxhey, surrounded by residential areas. The site is fairly flat with a low valley containing a stream and a wet flush to the north.

The wood is designated as a Local Wildlife Site due to its ancient woodland status. It contains large remnant pedunculate oak standards with hornbeam coppice and notably hornbeam pollards. Some ash and sycamore are also present, together with hazel coppice, elder and hornbeam in the understorey.

The ground flora supports several woodland indicators, in particular bluebell, with previous records of other species including broad buckler-fern, enchanter's nightshade and three-nerved sandwort. Pendulous sedge and wood sedge occur in the wetter areas. Ground flora is generally suppressed by shading from the mature trees, including the hornbeam pollards.

The woodland is heavily used for recreation, including dog walking and children on bicycles, through a network of informal footpaths. A large pit has previously been used for fly-tipping.

2.0 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Site Summary

Site Name: Pond Wood

Site Address: Seacroft Gardens, South Oxhey, WD19 6AQ

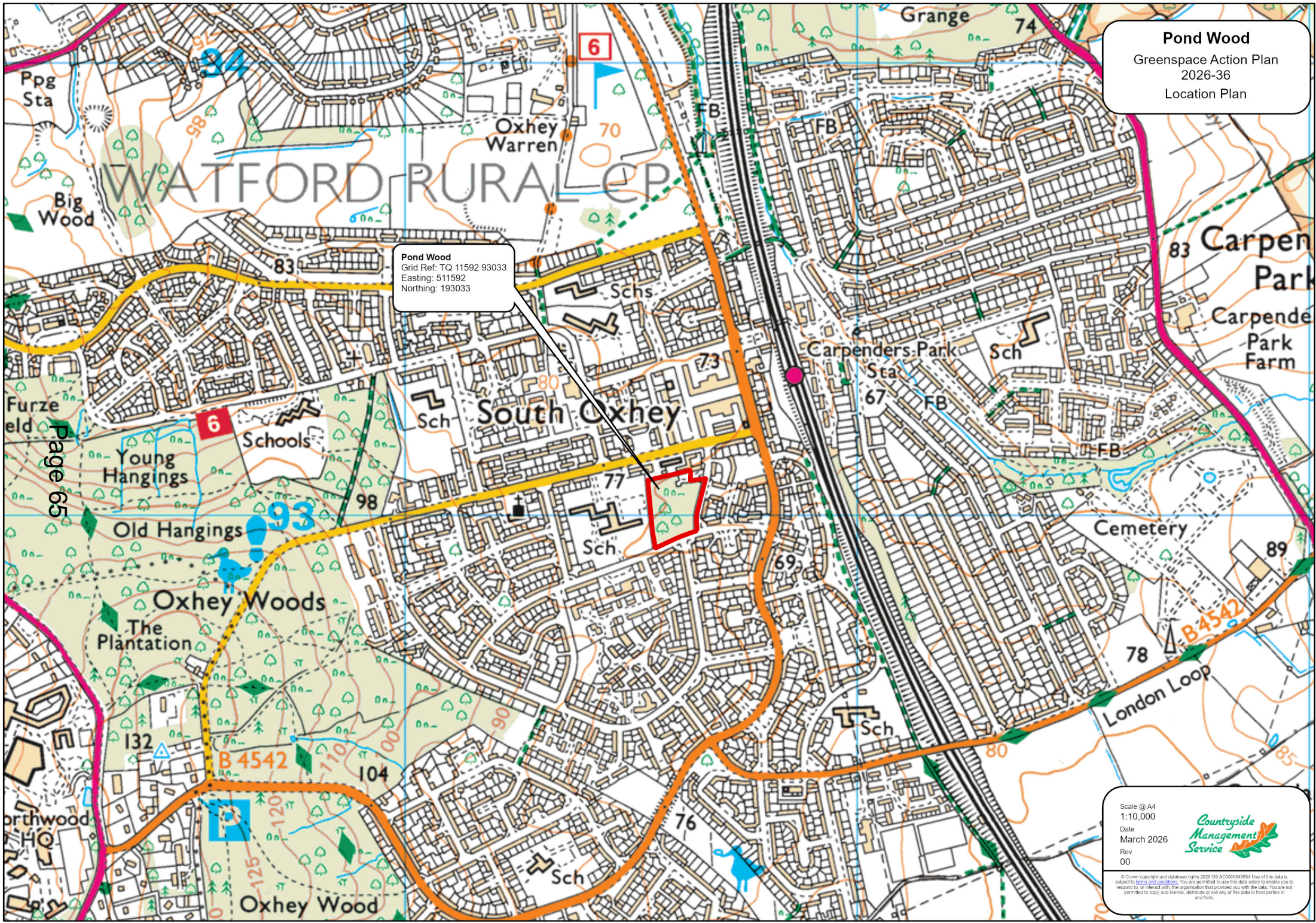
Grid Reference: TQ11592 93033

Size: 1.5ha

Designations: Local Wildlife Site (Pond Wood – 90/010)
Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland

Owner: Three Rivers District Council


Pond Wood
Greenspace Action Plan
2026-36
Location Plan



Pond Wood
Grid Ref: TQ 11592 93033
Easting: 511592
Northing: 193033

Page 65

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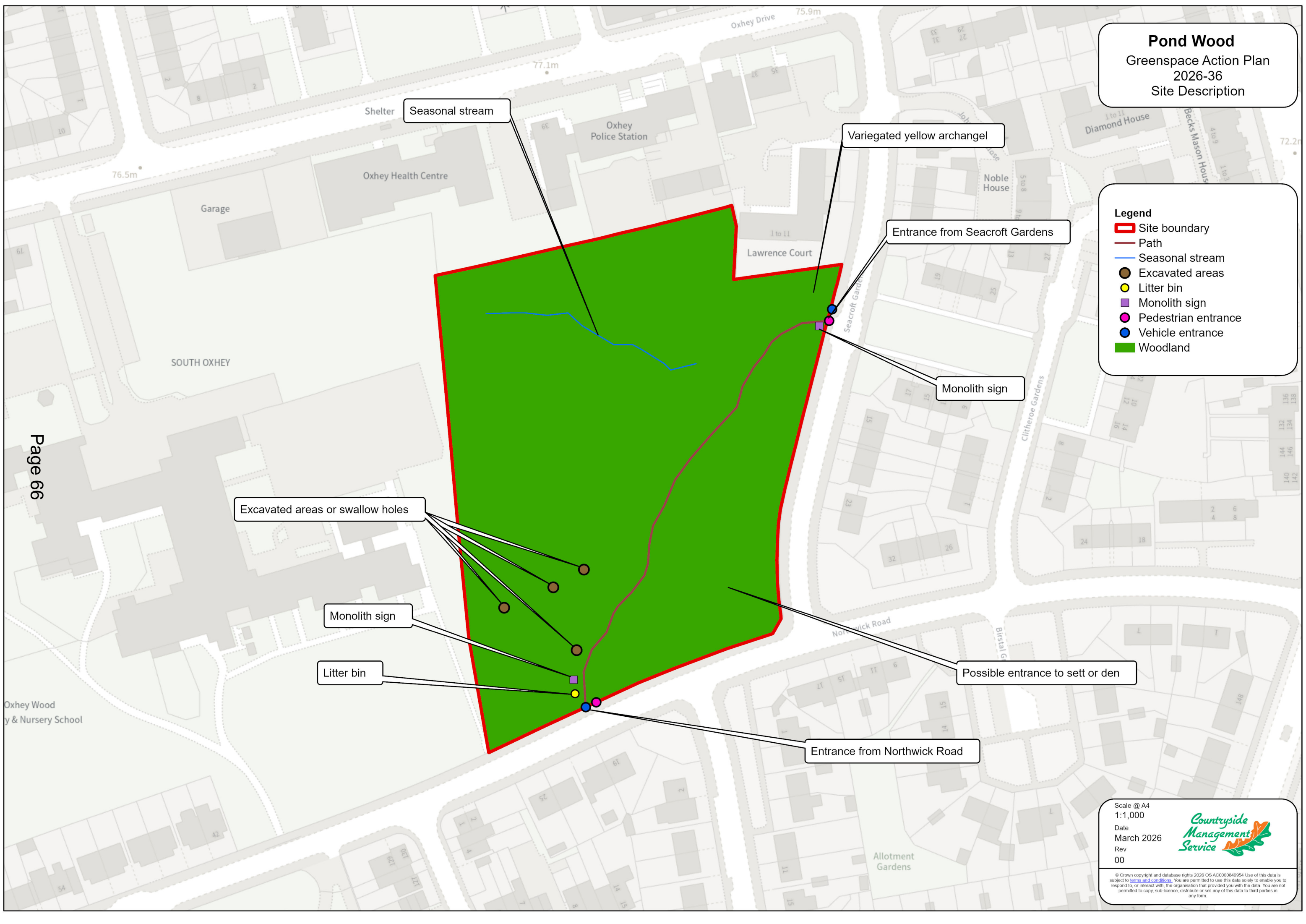
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Pond Wood

Greenspace Action Plan
2026-36
Site Description

Legend

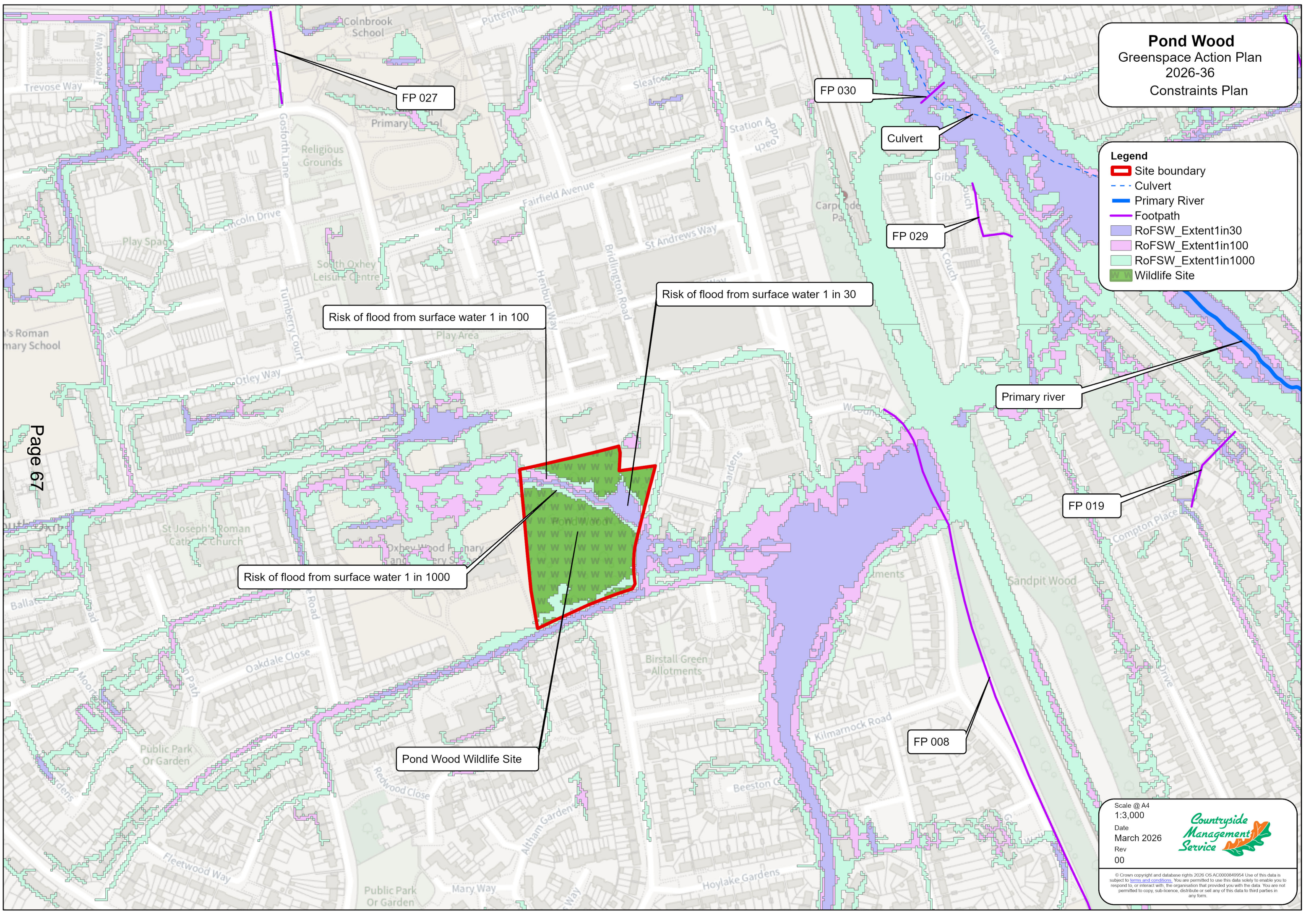
- Site boundary
- Path
- Seasonal stream
- Excavated areas
- Litter bin
- Monolith sign
- Pedestrian entrance
- Vehicle entrance
- Woodland



Pond Wood
 Greenspace Action Plan
 2026-36
 Constraints Plan

Legend

- ▬ Site boundary
- - - Culvert
- ▬ Primary River
- ▬ Footpath
- RoFSW_Extent1in30
- RoFSW_Extent1in100
- RoFSW_Extent1in1000
- Wildlife Site



Risk of flood from surface water 1 in 100

Risk of flood from surface water 1 in 30

Risk of flood from surface water 1 in 1000

Pond Wood Wildlife Site

Page 67

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2.2 Site Designations

The site is designated as a Local Wildlife Site (Pond Wood – 90/010) and is also considered to be Ancient Semi-Natural Woodland.

The Local Wildlife Site description is as follows:

Ancient semi-natural Pedunculate Oak (*Quercus robur*)/Hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*) coppice-with-standards woodland with an area of Pedunculate Oak and Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) standards in the northern half. Large Pedunculate Oak standards are frequent throughout the wood with old Hornbeam coppice and pollards. The shrub layer contains Sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) coppice. The ground flora supports several woodland indicators, mainly Bluebell (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) plus species such as Broad Buckler-fern (*Dryopteris dilatata*), Enchanter's Nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*) and Three-nerved Sandwort (*Moehringia trinervia*). Pendulous Sedge (*Carex pendula*) and Wood Sedge (*Carex sylvatica*) have been recorded in wet ground adjacent to an internal ditch. Bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*) is present on the south-east side. Several old shallow pits in the south-west corner add to the habitat diversity. Wildlife Site criteria: Ancient woodland with a semi-natural canopy and field evidence suggesting an ancient origin; shown on Bryant's map (1822); woodland indicators.

2.3 Geology and Hydrology

The area's geology consists of Tertiary clay, which is overlain by slowly permeable soils that are seasonally waterlogged.

There is a seasonal watercourse at the northern end of the wood. This is on a surface water flow route and associated with surface water flood risk in the local area.

2.4 Landscape Character

Pond Wood is a small surviving fragment of ancient semi-natural woodland within the urban landscape of South Oxhey. Beyond the housing lie larger areas of woodland,

in particular Oxhey Woods, 500m to the west, but also within South Oxhey Playing Fields, 1km to the north-west.

2.5 History and Archaeology

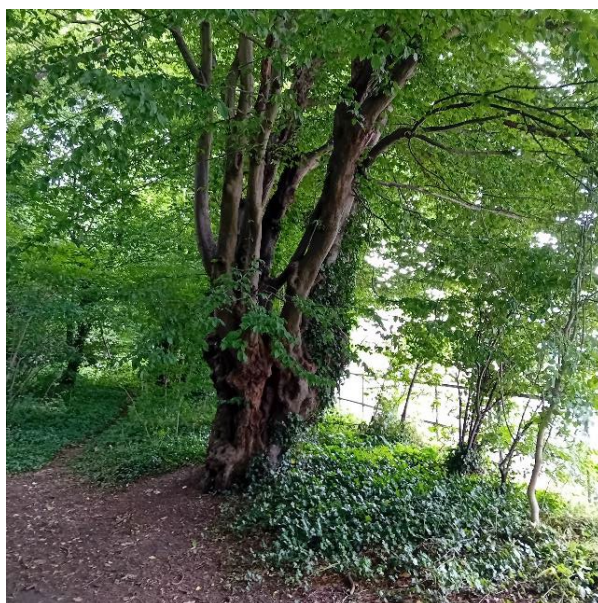
Pond Wood is within the former grounds of Oxhey Place, a 17th Century mansion which was demolished in 1799, and its Victorian successor. The land was acquired by compulsory purchase for the development of the South Oxhey estate after the Second World War.

Attached to the north-west corner of Pond Wood, within the area now occupied by Oxhey Wood Primary and Nursery School, there are records of a post-medieval rectangular ditched enclosure, once water filled. This could have been a fishpond and/or a reservoir for Oxhey Place and is the reason for the woodland's name.

2.6 Habitats and Wildlife

2.6.1 Habitats

The woodland contains mostly large mature oaks and hornbeam pollards as well as ash, sycamore, hazel and elder, and is heavily shaded. The hornbeams were previously managed by pollarding, to provide a sustainable source of firewood, building materials and fodder for animals. However, this operation has not been carried out for a long time in most of them. They are called “lapsed pollards”.



Hornbeam pollard

The seasonal stream vegetation includes pendulous sedge and wood sedge and there are records of broad buckler-fern, enchanter's nightshade, three-nerved sandwort and bluebell.



Seasonal stream

Standing and fallen deadwood are valuable habitats for wildlife. They allow fungi to grow and provide habitat for the larvae of saproxylic beetles and therefore food for birds such as woodpeckers. Crevices or rot holes are also great for roosting bats. There are a few examples of large standing deadwood and limited fallen deadwood within the wood.



Deadwood

There are non-native Cherry Laurel and Variegated Yellow Archangel in the woodland.



Cherry Laurel



Variegated Yellow Archangel

2.6.2 Species

In the southwest corner of the woodlands there are several holes in the ground. They might be the entrance of badger setts or fox dens.



Possible entrance to sett or den

2.7 Access, Facilities and Infrastructure

The site has access from the east at Seacroft Gardens and from the south at Northwick Road. Both have dated entrance structures, and the entrance at Seacroft Gardens is too narrow to be fully accessible. There is also an informal entrance on the northern boundary between the Manor View Practice and South Oxhey Police Station. Timber monoliths have recently been installed at the two main entrances, and there is a bin at the Northcroft Road entrance.



Entrance from Northcroft Road



Entrance from Seacroft Gardens

The internal path is unsurfaced and therefore becomes muddy in some places during the winter months.



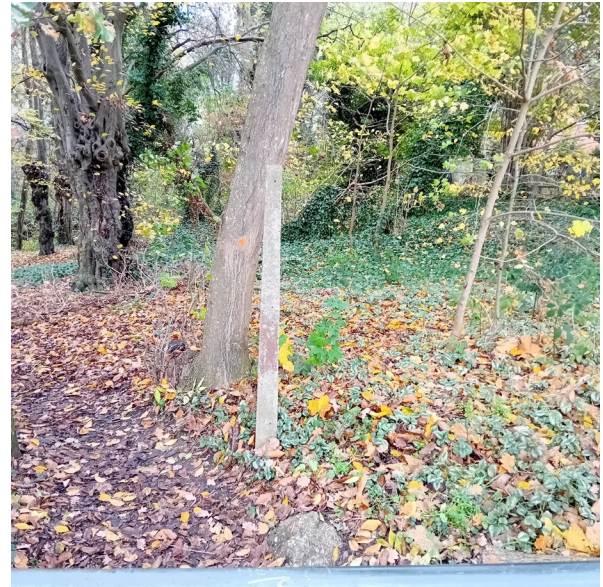
Path through the woodland

The metal fence by the large mature oak tree in Seacroft Gardens is touching the stem of the tree.

The concrete post by the entrance at Seacroft Garden is redundant.



Fence close to oak tree



Concrete Post

2.8 Community and Events

There are no organised community events or regular volunteering on the site. Local Countryside Management Service practical conservation volunteers are available to work on the site and installed the entrance monoliths.

2.9 Site Management and Sustainability

2.9.1 Site Management

Pond Wood does not currently have a site-specific management plan. It is included in a ten-year Forestry Commission Woodland Management Plan encompassing twelve small woodlands owned by Three Rivers District Council, covering the period from 2020-30. This plan only contains generic management recommendations for Pond Wood.

Recent management has been mainly reactive, including tree risk surveying and tree works. Wooden monoliths were installed at both entrances to the site by volunteers from Countryside Management Service (CMS) in November 2024.

TRDC maintenance involves cutting back vegetation on pathways when needed, and a weekly litter pick and bin emptying. There is an ongoing problem with frequent littering and fly tipping on the site.

Management of Pond Wood is guided by all relevant TRDC policies and strategies. See Appendix 7.2 for more information.

All actions within the plan are aspirational, are not guaranteed to take place within the specified year and may be subject to external funding.

2.9.2 Health and Safety

Tree risk surveys are undertaken in accordance with the TRDC Tree Strategy, and inspections are recorded in a computerised database (Ezytreev). Works identified are then prioritised and completed, as necessary.

Risk assessments are completed by TRDC, grounds maintenance teams, CRoW staff and contractors to ensure all works and activities carried out on site are completed in a safe manner and training delivered where appropriate.

TRDC staff will undertake regular site inspections and will investigate and respond promptly to reports of misuse of the site.

3.0 ANALYSIS & EVALUATION

3.1 A Welcoming Place

The two entrances are not very welcoming and could be enhanced in a number of ways. Clearing vegetation around the entrances and carrying out woodland thinning close to the entrances would make these entrances more open and lighter, and therefore more inviting, the vehicle gates should be replaced or removed.

The metal fences close to the oak tree by Seacroft Gardens should be cut to protect the tree from damage in the near future.

There are no interpretation boards on site. It would be beneficial to add an interpretation board to explain the hornbeam pollard restoration work, other site features and aspects of the history of the site.

3.2 Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

3.2.1 Woodland

There has been no recent active management of the woodland, which has resulted in a woodland dominated by large mature trees, particularly hornbeam pollards and oaks, and heavily shaded. By bringing the woodland into management through pollarding and thinning, its diversity can be increased in a variety of ways. Increased light levels will promote regeneration and increase the range of age classes of trees and shrubs, while also benefiting ground flora and invertebrates. Thinning will also benefit the mature trees which are retained, reducing competition and maximising their longevity. Hornbeam pollard restoration will extend the life of these locally important trees while also maintaining a wide range of microhabitats.

Hornbeam pollard restoration areas have been divided into a 10-year rotation, starting with hornbeams close to the boundaries and the path, followed by the remaining areas as per the hornbeam pollard restoration map on page 21.

In addition, the woodland edge is mature with no transitional habitats. Creating some scallops on the southern edge by Northfield Road and to the west by the school, by removing and coppicing some trees such as elder, holly and hazel, would create ecotones, increasing the biodiversity of the site as per the scallops map on page 22.

Dead wood is also a valuable woodland habitat and should be maintained or increased where possible. Where there is no safety issue, dead trees should either be retained, maintained as monoliths and/or fenced with appropriate warning signs,

with continuing regular inspection in accordance with the tree strategy. Some felled material should also be left staked in habitat piles close to where it was felled, retaining large volume material to minimise the risk of it being removed from the woodland.

3.2.2 Removal of invasive non-native species

Several non-native plant species occur at Pond Wood. Sustained efforts to weaken plants and suppress regeneration through manual techniques (such as cutting or pulling) will be effective in controlling spread and eventually eradicating these species. This includes cherry laurel and cultivated yellow archangel.

Cultivated yellow archangel can propagate from seed and vegetatively from stem and root fragments. Methods of control must therefore ensure that plant material is not dispersed across the site or to new locations outside the site. Plants are shallow rooted and can therefore be uprooted by hand when soil is moist. All plant material must be lifted from the control area and disposed as household waste off-site or composted on-site at a single location which will not be disturbed. Avoid strimming or mowing as this could cause viable stem fragments to be spread across a wider area of the site causing the species to spread.

Laurel, a woody shrub, can be controlled by uprooting, or for larger plants by stem injection with a suitable herbicide. Treatment areas will need to be revisited to monitor and control stump regrowth and pull seedlings. Laurel arisings should be removed from site.

The site is within the established zone for oak processionary moth (OPM), and OPM may be present on site. OPM is an invasive non-native species whose nests and caterpillars are a hazard to human and animal health, and which can also weaken oak trees, leaving them vulnerable to other threats. In the established zone, OPM control is the responsibility of the landowner and follow a risk-based approach.

3.2.3 Seasonal stream

A 2024 feasibility study commissioned by Hertfordshire County Council to investigate the potential for using a combination of SuDS and Natural Flood Management (NFM) measures to reduce the risk of overland flooding in Eastbury and South Oxhey identifies an opportunity for a series of three leaky woody dams on the seasonal stream within Pond Wood. This would slow the flow in heavy rain events and have a minor benefit in reducing flooding, in combination with other leaky woody dams already constructed in Oxhey Woods.

3.3 Community Involvement and Communication

Three Rivers District Council should promote opportunities for the local community to become involved in the management of the site, in particular through the Countryside Management Service practical conservation volunteer groups.

Successful works on site, in particular ongoing restoration of the hornbeam pollards, should be celebrated through promotional activity including TRDC social media.

4.0 AIM & OBJECTIVES

The aim and objectives of the GAP are as follows:

4.1 Aim

Pond Wood's valuable ancient woodland habitat will be protected and enhanced, with a focus on ensuring its notable hornbeam pollards are brought back into active management and preserved into the future. It will be welcoming and accessible for the local community, providing opportunities for visitors to connect with and enjoy their local environment.

4.2 Objectives

A. A Welcoming Place - To provide a welcoming green space for the enjoyment of regular users and visitors

A1 Improve public access into and around the woodland, ensuring pathways and entrances are kept clear and open and maintaining clear sight lines.

A2 Provide information on the importance of the wood and the hornbeam pollard restoration through site interpretation.

B. Healthy, Safe and Secure – To provide and maintain clear and safe public access onto and around Pond Wood

B1 Carry out tree risk surveys in line with TRDC [tree strategy](#) and reactive tree works to address safety issues

B2 Respond promptly to reports of misuse of the site

C. Well Maintained and Clean – To ensure that all aspects of Pond Wood are kept clean and well maintained

C1 Manage and maintain paths, access infrastructure and signage

C2 Undertake regular litter picking, and carry out small scale vegetation management along access routes

C3 Ensure a good standard of general site maintenance is upheld through grounds maintenance operations

D. *Environmental Management – To ensure all aspects of site management are undertaken with sustainability as a guiding principle*

D1 Ensure all site activities adhere to relevant TRDC policies and strategies, including all work undertaken by contractors

D2 Ensure ongoing maintenance costs are financially sustainable

D3 Seek external funding to ensure the viability of capital works

D4 Ensure impacts of climate change are considered in management decisions

D5 Carry out management according to environmental best practice, including a presumption against the use of herbicide

D6 Monitor results of delivery to evaluate the success of management activities

E. *Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage – To conserve and enhance the key habitats of Pond Wood*

E1 Undertake a sensitive and structured programme of restoration of veteran hornbeam pollards, in consultation with experts in this field

E2 Recognise the value of mature and veteran trees and provide optimum conditions for their longevity.

E3 Remove invasive species

E4 Protect and celebrate heritage features, and conserve the historic landscape character of the site and its relationship with the wider landscape, including further developing heritage interpretation on site

E5 Implement sustainable woodland management including thinning and scalloping to enhance value for biodiversity and people

E6 Explore opportunities for natural flood management within the woodland

F. Community Involvement – To ensure engagement and involvement of local communities

F1 Support volunteer activity and ensure all involved operate towards achievement of the Management and Maintenance Plan

G. Marketing and Communication – To promote awareness and interest in Pond Wood

G1 Promote the site and project delivery through TRDC and CMS websites and social media

5.0 ACTION PLANS AND MAPS

5.1 Annual and Regular Actions

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
Habitat Maintenance									
0.1	Undertake a sensitive and structured programme of restoration of veteran hornbeam pollards	E1	Annual, winter	TRDC	Contractor	TRDC Budget			
0.2	Up-root cultivated yellow archangel by hand, bag all arisings (roots and stem) and dispose as household waste	E3	May	CMS	Volunteers	Officer Time			
Site Maintenance									
0.3	Respond promptly to reports of misuse of the site	B2	Ongoing	TRDC	GM	TRDC Budget			
0.4	Manage and maintain paths, access infrastructure and signage	C1	Ongoing	TRDC	GM	TRDC Budget			
0.5	Undertake weekly litter picking, bin emptying and carry out small scale vegetation clearance when needed	C2	Ongoing	TRDC	GM	TRDC Budget			

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
0.6	Ensure a good standard of general site maintenance is upheld through grounds maintenance operations	C3	Ongoing	TRDC	GM	TRDC Budget			
0.7	Support volunteer activity, such as CMS volunteer conservation tasks, and ensure all involved operate towards achievement of the Management and Maintenance Plan	F1	Ongoing	TRDC & CMS	CMS	Officer Time			
Health & Safety									
0.8	Carry out tree risk surveys in line with TRDC tree strategy and reactive tree works to address safety issues	B1	As per TRDC policy	TRDC	TRDC	TRDC Budget			

- Task Responsibility**
- District led) Officer/ Contractor delivered
 - CMS led)
 - District led) Volunteer delivered
 - CMS led)

Pond Wood
 Greenspace Action Plan
 2026-36
 Annual & Regular Actions

- Legend**
- Site boundary
 - Path
 - Seasonal stream
 - Woodland

Control variegated yellow archangel:
 - pull-up shallow roots by hand
 - all arisings bagged and disposed as household waste

Restoration of veteran hornbeam pollards

- Annual management**
- Site Management**
- Respond promptly to reports of misuse of the site
 - Manage and maintain paths, access infrastructure and signage
 - Undertake weekly litter picking, bin emptying and carry out small scale vegetation when needed
 - Ensure a good standard of general site maintenance is upheld through grounds maintenance operations
- Health & Safety**
- Carry out tree risk surveys in line with TRDC tree strategy and reactive tree works to address safety issues



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5.2 Year 1 - 10 Actions 2026-36

All actions within this section are aspirational, are not guaranteed to take place within the specified year and may be subject to external funding.

Page 84

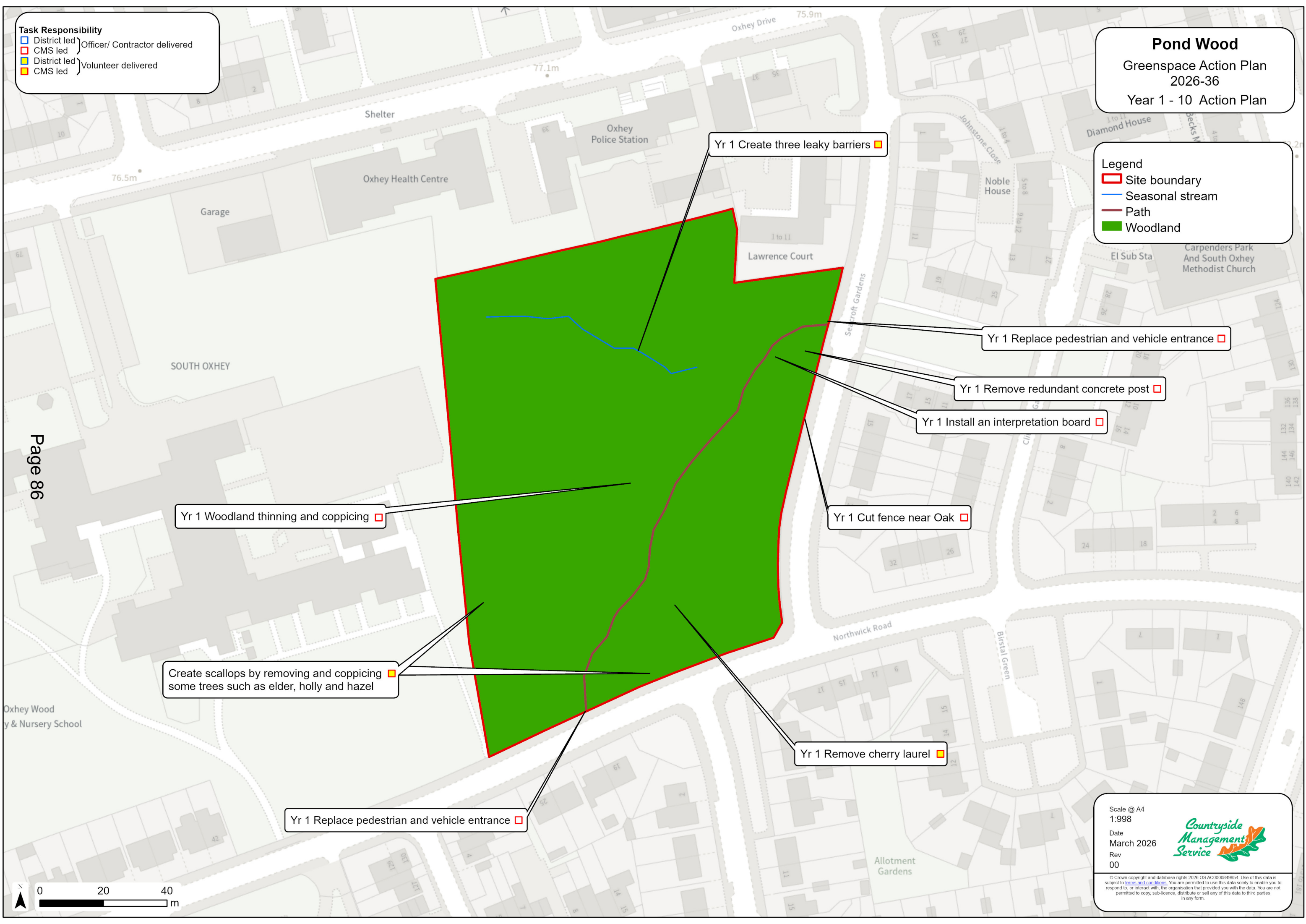
Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
Habitat Management									
0.1	Remove non-native invasive cherry laurel and treat stumps with stem injection with a suitable herbicide	E3	Year 1 Nov - Feb	CMS	Volunteers	Officer Time			
0.3	Woodland thinning and coppicing by removing selected oak, ash, hornbeam and hazel trees	E5	Year 1, Winter 2026/2027	CMS	Contractor	TRDC budget			
0.4	Create scallops on the southern edge by Northfield Road and to the west by the school, by removing and coppicing some trees such as elder, holly and hazel	E5	Year 1-5, Sep-Feb	CMS	Volunteers	Officer Time			
0.5	Create three leaky barriers for natural flood management within the woodland	E6	Year 1	CMS	CMS	Officer time			

Ref. no.	Action	Obj. Ref.	When	Lead	Delivery	Funding	Est. Cost	Spec. Ref.	Status
Site Maintenance									
0.6	Protect and celebrate heritage features, and conserve the historic landscape character of the site and its relationship with the wider landscape, including developing heritage interpretation on site	E4	Year 1	CMS	Contractor	TRDC budget			
0.7	Cut fence in Seacroft Gardens near the oak tree	C1	Year 1	CMS	Contractor	TRDC budget			
0.8	Remove redundant concrete post	C1	Year 1	CMS	Contractor	TRDC budget			
0.9	Produce a story map with interpretation about the veteran trees	E4	Year 1	TRDC	TRDC	Officer Time			
1.0	Remove dilapidated vehicle gates and replace with new barriers	C1	Year 2	CMS	Contractor	TRDC budget			

- Task Responsibility**
- District led) Officer/ Contractor delivered
 - CMS led)
 - District led) Volunteer delivered
 - CMS led)

Pond Wood
 Greenspace Action Plan
 2026-36
 Year 1 - 10 Action Plan

- Legend**
- Site boundary
 - Seasonal stream
 - Path
 - Woodland



Yr 1 Create three leaky barriers ■

Yr 1 Replace pedestrian and vehicle entrance ■

Yr 1 Remove redundant concrete post ■

Yr 1 Install an interpretation board ■

Yr 1 Cut fence near Oak ■

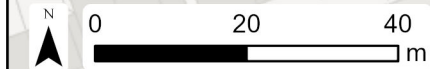
Yr 1 Woodland thinning and coppicing ■

Create scallops by removing and coppicing some trees such as elder, holly and hazel ■

Yr 1 Remove cherry laurel ■

Yr 1 Replace pedestrian and vehicle entrance ■

Oxhey Wood
 y & Nursery School



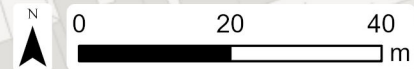
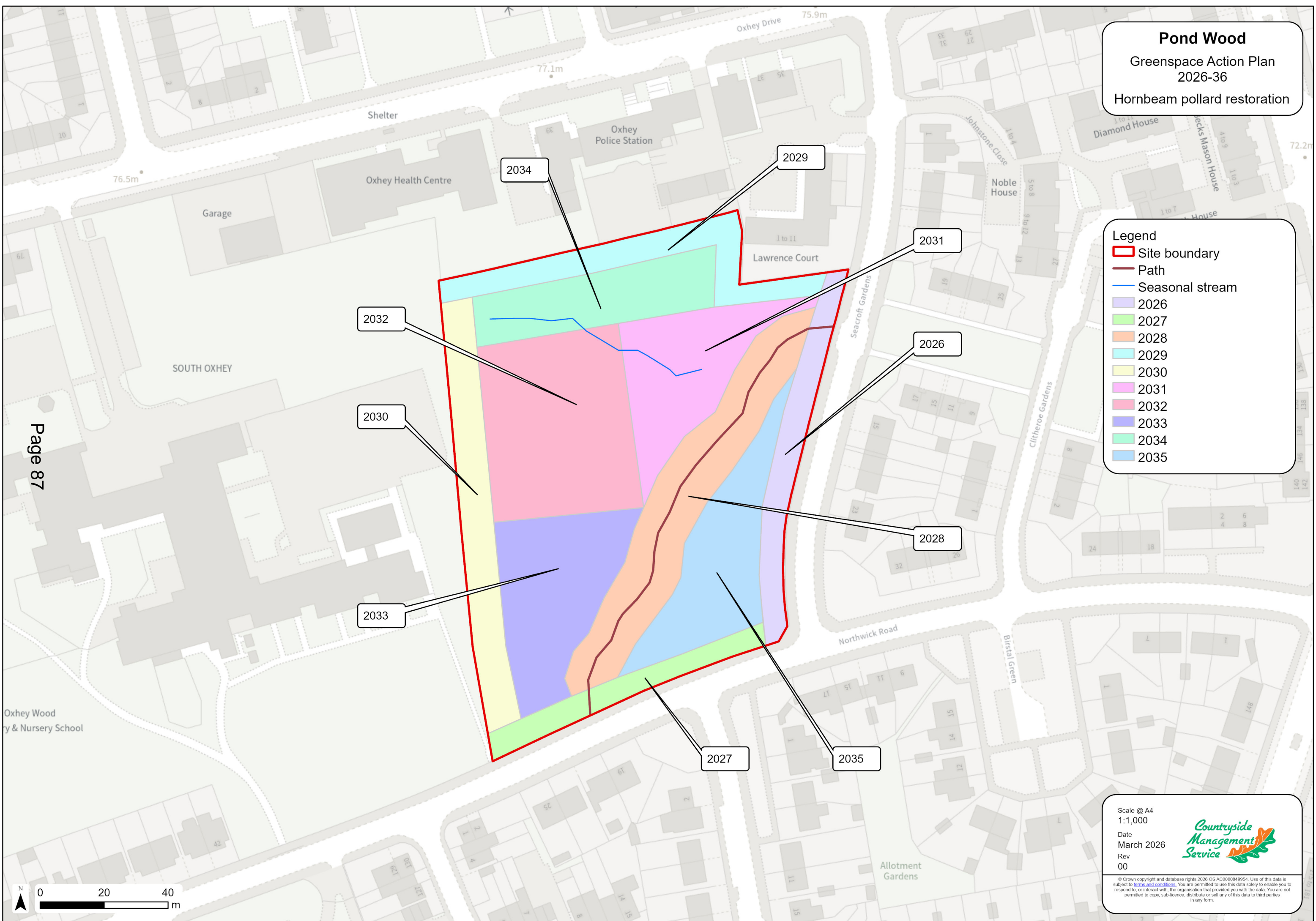
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Pond Wood
 Greenspace Action Plan
 2026-36
 Hornbeam pollard restoration

Legend

- Site boundary
- Path
- Seasonal stream
- 2026
- 2027
- 2028
- 2029
- 2030
- 2031
- 2032
- 2033
- 2034
- 2035



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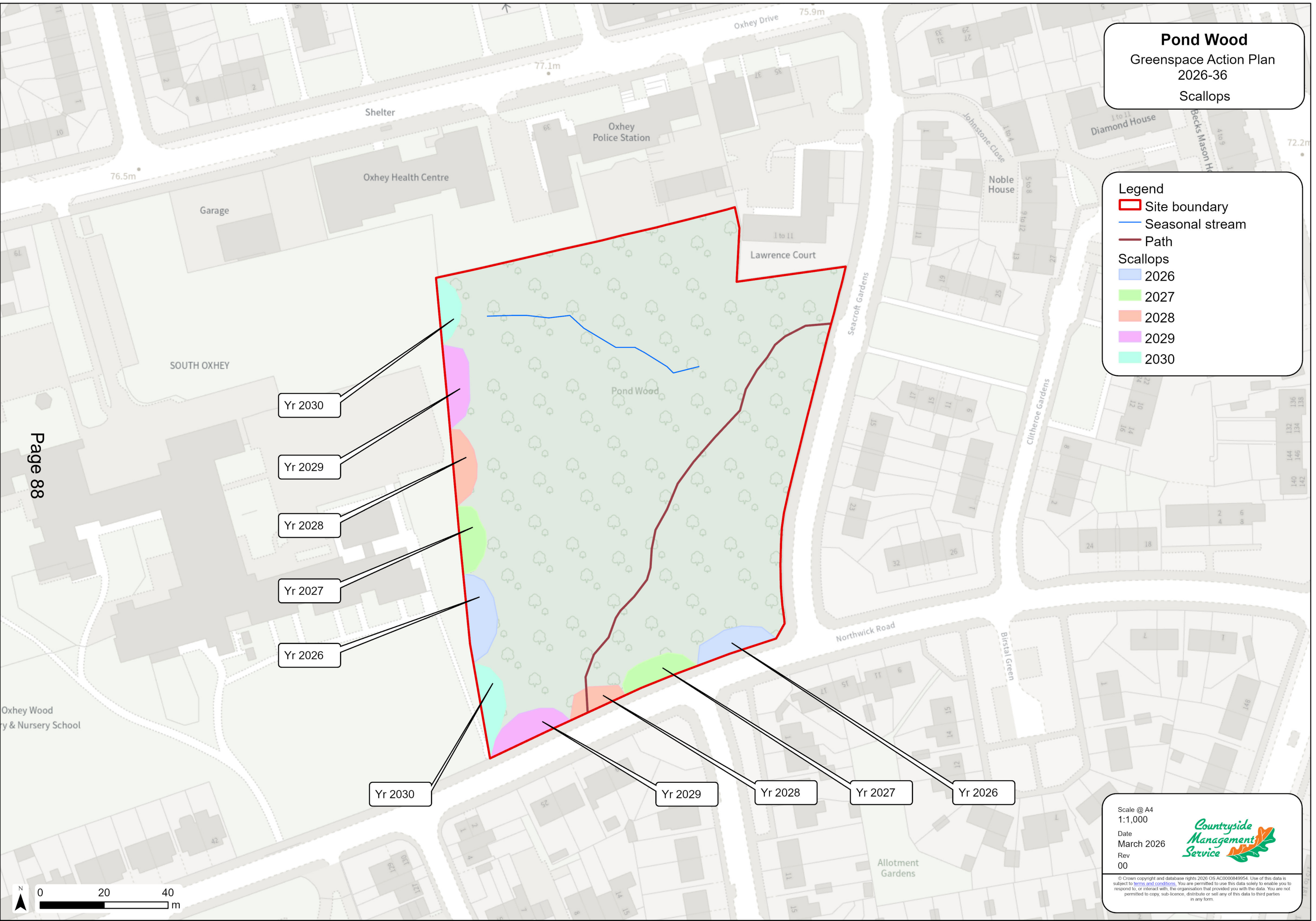
Pond Wood
 Greenspace Action Plan
 2026-36
 Scallops

Legend

- Site boundary
- Seasonal stream
- Path

Scallops

- 2026
- 2027
- 2028
- 2029
- 2030



Yr 2030

Yr 2029

Yr 2028

Yr 2027

Yr 2026

Yr 2030

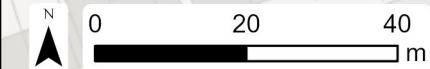
Yr 2029

Yr 2028

Yr 2027

Yr 2026

Oxhey Wood
 & Nursery School



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6.0 SPECIFICATIONS

Control non-native invasive plants with minimal reliance on herbicide

Variegated Yellow Archangel

A patch of cultivated yellow archangel is established in the woodland in the west of the site. This garden escape spreads by shallow rooted runners and creeping stems which root at the nodes. Small areas can be controlled manually by up-rooting in the spring when the soil is still damp. All arisings (roots and stems) should be bagged up and taken off site for disposal as household waste. As the site is public access composting risks spreading viable plant material to new locations. Cultivated yellow archangel is listed as a schedule 9 species in the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981 making it an offence to cause to spread. The plant produces viable seeds and therefore it may be necessary to up-root seedlings for successive years. Persistent seedbanks can be suppressed by a thick layer (3-4 inches) of sheet mulch or bark chip. The native form of yellow archangel, also found in woodland, lacks the variegated leaf pattern.



Variegated Yellow Archangel

Cherry Laurel

Laurel is an invasive non-native species which can invade native woodland. As an evergreen shrub the plant is densely shading and can suppress native woodland ground flora. Laurel can be mechanically uprooted where practical. For mature shrubs, manual control is unlikely to be practical. It is recommended that large shrubs are controlled by stem injection. Treatment areas should be revisited to pull seedlings and control regrowth.



Cherry laurel

Hornbeam Pollard restoration

The hornbeams will be pollarded in rotation over the 10-year Greenspace Action Plan, prioritising areas near the boundary and areas close to the footpath.

It is important that an initial assessment of the trees should be carried out before deciding the amount of pruning to be carried out.

As a general rule pollards should be taken above the original bolling point to reduce the amount of leaf area reduced at once.

This operation could be carried out in rotation by reducing the crown of the tree in stages based on regrowth and vitality of the trees.

7.0 APPENDICES

7.1 Engagement Summary

7.1.1 Introduction

An initial engagement period was held for 3 weeks in September 2025, to establish core aims and objectives for the site; these are reflected in Section 3. A second stage of engagement was carried out in February 2026 to enable stakeholders to comment on the proposed management actions for the site.

7.1.2 Engagement feedback

Stakeholders' comments focus on preserving the woods by managing the woodland edges, coppicing, allowing the understory flora to grow by thinning and pollarding some of the trees, and installing a crushed granite path to improve accessibility. The habitat-related comments have been incorporated in the plan. While path surfacing is not supported, vegetation works around the entrances and wider woodland management should make the path more open and lighter. There is also a comment about reviewing the external lighting around the woods, but this is outside the scope of this plan.

7.2 Policy Context

7.2.1 Three Rivers District Council Strategies

7.2.1.1 Corporate Framework

Each year, Three Rivers District Council updates its Strategic Plan. This is a document that brings together our high level, medium- to long-term objectives which, following consultation and analysis of data, the Council considers to be its priorities for the District.

It focuses on those areas where the Council has a lead role or can play a key part in delivering or influencing the outcomes. Its purpose is to guide the Council in its annual consultation, planning, resource allocation and performance management process. [Corporate Framework \(threerivers.gov.uk\)](https://www.threerivers.gov.uk/corporate-framework)

7.2.1.2 Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy

Three Rivers declared a climate emergency and is committed to achieving net-zero emissions by 2030 for their own emissions and by 2045 for the District.

The [Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy](#) sets out how the Council can improve and lead by example in our own operations. It also sets out how they will work with and assist the residents, businesses, and other stakeholders in the area to reduce their impact on the environment, improve sustainability and also adapt to and build resilience to a changing climate.

7.2.1.3 Nature Recovery Strategy 2023-28

The [Three Rivers Nature Recovery Strategy](#) specifically addresses the Council's approach to protection of the natural world within the District. At the heart of the strategy is a 5-year Action Plan, which identifies and prioritises actions to be undertaken for the benefit of Biodiversity.

The strategy also recognises the rich diversity of wildlife already present within the District, both within protected nature reserves as well as public open space, residential gardens, grass verges, and more.

7.2.1.4 Pesticide Strategy

This strategy sets out how TRDC will reduce the unnecessary use of harmful chemicals.

7.2.1.5 Tree Strategy

The [Tree Strategy](#) sets out TRDC's approach to a whole range of tree issues and identifies a number of specific and deliverable actions for TRDC to achieve over the five-year period of 2022-2027. These actions are intended to address many of the aims of TRDC's Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy and serve as a 'road map' towards the sustainability goals of TRDC.

7.2.1.6 Local Plan

The current [Local Plan](#) for the district was published in 2014. Three Rivers District Council is preparing a [new Local Plan](#) that will set out a vision and policy framework for the future levels of growth within the district until 2041. These documents include policies which relate to nature conservation.

7.2.2 Hertfordshire County Council Strategies

7.2.2.1 Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy (2022, revised March 2023)

Hertfordshire County Council declared a climate emergency in July 2019 and have since committed to make Hertfordshire cleaner, greener and more sustainable.

HCC want to:

1. Lead in their own operations
2. Enable sustainability with their programmes, policies and decisions
3. Inspire businesses and residents to take action

The ambitions of the [Sustainable Hertfordshire Strategy](#) include achieving net zero greenhouse gas emissions before 2050, ensuring communities are ready for future climates and improve wildlife in our land and water by 20% by 2050.

7.2.2.2 *Tree and Woodland Strategy (2022-30)*

The Tree and Woodland Strategy sets out ambitions for Hertfordshire's treescapes until 2030:

- Supporting the establishment of at least 1.8 million new trees across Hertfordshire, including at least 1.2 million trees, one for every resident of Hertfordshire, and at least 100km of hedgerows, equating to 600,000 hedgerow trees.
- Promoting and supporting the development of woodland management plans to help ensure woodlands provide a range of benefits to their owners, wildlife and local communities, while remaining resilient to pressures on tree health.
- Facilitating and enabling residents and businesses to support tree and woodland establishment and enhancement initiatives in Hertfordshire.

7.3 Byelaws

The Byelaws for Pleasure Grounds, Public Walks and Open Spaces dated 05-10-2020 apply to Pond Wood: [Byelaws | Three Rivers District Council](#)

8.0 GLOSSARY

- Pollarding: Pruning technique involving the removal of the upper branches and central leader of the tree.
- Bolling point: Previous pollard points in the tree.
- Coppice: Traditional woodland management technique used in certain species where the tree is repeatedly cut down to ground level to encourage new shoots to grow from the stump.
- Scallops: Removal of vegetation within a semi-circular or D-shaped area to increase biodiversity to the woodland,
- Ecotone: Transitional area between two plant communities.
- Monolith tree: Standing decaying tree reduced to its main stem.
- Leaky dam: Natural flood management structure built with natural woody materials such as logs and branches.

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Guidance for use

Please answer all questions from the drop-down options in the 'impact' column (C), including 'not applicable' as needed.

Please email your completed copy of the form to
Joanna.Hewitson@threeivers.gov.uk.

Key to the colour coding of answers is given at the top of the page.

New 10-year management plan (2026-2036) for Pond Wood, South Oxhey

A new ten-year management plan has been developed for Pond Wood, South Oxhey. The new plan contains management actions for the woodland over the next ten years from financial year 2026/27 until 2036/31. The detailed actions relate to woodland management for biodiversity and improvements to public access and

Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy					
Question	Impact (select from list)	Score (1 to 4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (1-4)
1 What effect will this project have on overall energy use (electricity or other fuels) e.g. in buildings, appliances or machinery?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
2 What effect will this project have on the direct use of fossil fuels such as gas, petrol, diesel, oil?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
3 Does this project further maximise the use of existing building space? E.g. co-locating services; bringing under-used space into use; using buildings out-of-hours	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
4 Will any new building constructed or refurbished be highly energy efficient in use? (e.g. high levels of insulation, low energy demand per sq. m., no servicing with fossil fuels such as gas heating, EPC "A" or BREAM "excellent").	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
5 Does this make use of sustainable materials / inputs in your project? E.g. re-used or recycled construction materials; timber in place of concrete	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
6 Does this use more sustainable processes in the creation of the project? E.g. modular and off-site construction; use of electrical plant instead of petrol/diesel,	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
7 Will this increase the supply of renewable energy? e.g. installing solar panels; switching to a renewable energy tariff	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
8 Do any appliances or electrical equipment to be used have high energy efficiency ratings?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
Average Score		#DIV/0!			#DIV/0!

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Insulate buildings to a high standard.
- Include energy efficiency measures when carrying
- Replace gas boilers with renewable heating, such as heat pumps. Consider District Heat Networks where appropriate.
- Construct new buildings to Passivhaus standard.
- Design and deliver buildings and infrastructure with lower-carbon materials, such as recycled material, wool- or hemp-based insulation, and timber frames.
- Use construction methods that reduce overall energy use, such as modular, factory-built components, or use of electrical plant on-site.
- Install solar panels or other renewable energy generation, and consider including battery storage.
- Switch to a certified renewable energy provider e.g. utilise power purchase agreements (PPA)
- Use energy-efficient appliances.
- Install low-energy LED lighting.
- Install measures to help manage building energy demand, such as smart meters, timers on lighting, or building management systems.

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Travel					
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
9 Reducing travel: what effect will this project have on overall vehicle use?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
10 Will this project use petrol or diesel vehicles or EV, hybrid?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
11 Will this support people to use active or low-carbon transport? <i>E.g. cycling, walking, switching to electric transport</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
12 Will it be easily accessible for all by foot, bike, or public transport, including for disabled people?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
13 Has the project taken steps to reduce traffic? <i>Using e-cargo bikes; timing activities or deliveries to be outside peak congestion times</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
Average Score		#DIV/0!			#DIV/0!

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Reduce the need to travel e.g. through remote meetings, or rationalising routes and rounds.
- Share vehicles or substitute different modes of travel, rather than procuring new fleet.
- Specify electric, hybrid, or most fuel efficient vehicles for new fleet or for services involving transport.
- Support users and staff to walk, cycle, or use public transport e.g. with cycle parking, training, incentives.
- Use zero-emission deliveries
- Model and mitigate the project's effect on traffic and congestion e.g. retiming the service or deliveries

Goods and Consumption					
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
14 Has this project considered ways to reuse existing goods and materials to the greatest extent possible, before acquiring newly manufactured ones?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
15 Does it reduce reliance on buying newly manufactured goods? <i>E.g. repair and re-use; sharing and lending goods between services or people; leasing or product-as-a-service rather than ownership</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
16 Does it use products and resources that are re-used, recycled, or renewable?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
17 Does it enable others to make sustainable choices within their lifestyles, or engage people about this?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
18 Is there a plan to reduce waste sent to landfill in manufacture?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
19 Is the material used able to be re-used, re-purposed, or recycled at end of its life?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
20 Has it taken steps to ensure any food it offers is more sustainable? <i>E.g. less and high-quality (high welfare) meat and dairy; minimises food waste; seasonal produce; locally sourced.</i>	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
Average Score		#DIV/0!			#DIV/0!

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Procure goods through sharing, leasing, or product-as-a-service models rather than ownership.
- Use pre-owned and reconditioned goods, and reduce reliance on procuring new goods.
- Use recycled materials, and procure items that can be reconditioned or recycled at end-of-life.
- Use lifecycle costing in business cases to capture the full cost of operation, repair and disposal of an item.
- Ensure meat and dairy is high-quality, high-welfare.
- Design waste, including food waste, out of business models e.g. separating (and composting) food waste; replacing single-use items with reusable items.
- Use contact points with residents, community groups and businesses to engage and enable them to adopt low-waste, low-carbon behaviours.

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment

Score / Colour Code	Impact and Recommendation
Dark green (4)	Strong positive impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to proceed as is with this aspect.
Light green (3)	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.
Yellow (2)	Some possible negative impacts for sustainability. Recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations where possible.
Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Ecology					
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
21 What effect does this project have on total area of non-amenity green/blue space? (Amenity green space = playing fields, play areas, sporting lakes etc. Non-amenity= e.g. woodland, grassland, wetland,	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
22 Does the project create more habitat for nature? E.g. native plants, trees, and flowers	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where possible and proceed.	3	Woodland management works will result in some habitat improvements	Some positive impact for sustainability. Recommendation to further enhance this aspect where	3
23 Does it make changes to existing habitats and have a negative impact on nature? E.g. use of pesticides, reduced extent and variety of plants, planting non-native species	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
24 Does it help people understand the value of biodiversity, and encourage residents to support it in their private and community spaces?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
Average Score		3			3

**Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:
(Seek advice from Landscapes Team if required)**

- Avoid converting green space to hard surfacing.
- Use underutilised space for planting, such as green roofs and walls.
- Plant native plants and perennials, rather than non-native ornamental species, to encourage biodiversity.
- Reduce trimming of grass and hedges, and avoid use of synthetic pesticides.
- Provide space for animals e.g. long grass areas, bird boxes, bat boxes, 'insect hotels', ponds, hedgehog hides and passages, log piles
- Consider the ecological impacts from manufacture

Adaptation					
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
25 Does any planned project, construction or building use include measures to conserve water?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
26 Does anythe project , consider how to sustainably protect people from extreme weather?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
27 Has any planned building work or infrastructure considered how to mitigate flood risk? E.g. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS); de-paving areas; green roofs	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
28 Does any planned infrastructure or building work increase the overall footprint of hard surfacing? (as opposed to green or permeable surfacing)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
29 Has the project considered its own resilience to future extreme heat, flood risk, or water shortage?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0	Not applicable	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this	0
Average Score		#DIV/0!			#DIV/0!

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- Install water-saving devices in taps, showers and toilets
- Re-use grey water in new developments
- Capture and re-use rainwater where possible e.g. water butts for use in car washing, watering garden, toilets
- Ensure all new building or refurbishment (especially of homes) models and mitigates future overheating risk, with adequate ventilation and shading
- Avoid increasing areas of hard surfacing.
- Convert hard surfacing to green and permeable surfacing where possible, and install Sustainable Drainage systems (SUDS).
- Plant drought-tolerant plants and mulch landscapes to avoid water loss through evaporation.

Engagement and Influence					
Question	Impact	Score (0-4)	Justification or mitigation	Impact (select from list)	Revised Score (0-4)
30 Does this project raise awareness and understanding of the climate and ecological emergency, and the steps that people can take?	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0		Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.	0
Average Score		#DIV/0!			#DIV/0!

Ways to optimise sustainability and work towards net zero carbon:

- 'Make every contact count', by using contact points with residents, businesses and community groups to promote understanding of the climate emergency.

Total Overall Average Score

3.00

3.0

Now assesment is compelete copy and paste box into your business case, committee report. (under environmental implications 6).Whole assesment can be an appendix. Procurement tenders are expected to submit complete report with application.

Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment Summary	
Homes, buildings, infrastructure, equipment and energy	0.00
Travel	0.00
Goods and Consumption	0.00
Ecology	3.00
Adaptation	0.00
Engagement and Influence	0
Total Overall Average Score	3.0

TRDC Climate and Sustainability Impact Assessment

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Red (1)	Considerable inconsistency with the council's sustainability objectives. Strong recommendation to review these aspects and find mitigations.
Grey (0)	Neutral or not applicable. Recommendation to consider how benefits could be achieved in this area, but otherwise proceed.

Equality impact Assessment

Project Information	
Project Name <i>This should clearly explain what service / policy / strategy / change you are assessing</i>	<i>A new ten-year management plan for Pond Wood, South Oxhey.</i>
Service Area <i>Main team responsible for the policy, practice, service or function being assessed</i>	<i>Trees and Woodlands</i>
EIA Author <i>Name and Job Title</i>	<i>Alex Laurie Principal Trees and Woodlands Officer</i>
Date EIA drafted	<i>07/05/2026</i>
ID number <i>This will be added by the Strategy and Partnerships Team</i>	<i>LL014</i>

Executive summary	
Focus of EIA <i>A member of the public should have a good understanding of the policy or service and any proposals after reading this section.</i> <i>Please use plain English and write any acronyms in full first time - eg: 'Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)'</i> <i>This section should explain what you are assessing:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>If the EIA is attached to a report, summarise the report.</i> <i>Provide information on whether any of the following communities could be affected by the policy, practice, service or function, or by how it is delivered?</i> <i>(age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, and marriage and civil partnership) in addition, TRDC recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children, (ex) armed forces personnel.</i> 	<p>A new ten-year management plan has been developed for Pond Wood, South Oxhey.</p> <p>The new plan contains management actions for the woodland over the next ten years from financial year 2026/27 until 2036/31. The detailed actions relate to woodland management for biodiversity and improvements to public access and interpretation.</p> <p>The plan has a focus on the long-term management of numerous veteran Hornbeam trees which are a particular feature of Pond Wood.</p> <p>These veteran trees require careful, phased management to ensure they continue to thrive and do not go into decline. The aim of the plan is also to identify younger Hornbeam trees, which are suitable to start as new pollards.</p>

Mitigations		
Protected Characteristic	Potential Issue <i>Against each protected characteristics, make a frank and realistic assessment of what issues may or do occur</i>	Mitigating Actions <i>How can the negative impacts be reduced or avoided by the mitigating measures? Is further engagement with specific communities needed? Is more research or monitoring needed? Does there need to be a change in the proposal itself?</i>
Age	No issue identified	Not applicable
Disability	Less physically able users may avoid using the path through the wood and the entrances and path can be overgrown at times	Cutting back trees and scrub will make the path more inviting and visible.
Gender reassignment (or affirmation)	No issue identified	Not applicable
Pregnancy or maternity	No issue identified	Not applicable
Race	No issue identified	Not applicable
Religion or belief	No issue identified	Not applicable
Sex	No issue identified	Not applicable
Sexual Orientation	No issue identified	Not applicable

Marriage and Civil Partnership	No issue identified	Not applicable
The council recognises other communities may be vulnerable to disadvantage, this includes carers, people experiencing domestic abuse, substance misusers, homeless people, looked after children and care leavers, (ex) armed forces personnel.	No issue identified	Not applicable

Actions Planned
<p><i>In this section you can add information on additional or proactive steps you are taking that enhance equity, engagement or equality of access to services, as well as those mitigating actions identified in the section above that will be undertaken.</i></p> <p><i>The Equality Duty is an ongoing duty: policies must be kept under review, continuing to give 'due regard' to the duty. If an assessment of a broad proposal leads to more specific proposals, then further equality assessment and consultation are needed.</i></p> <p><i>The Management Plan does not propose substantial changes to Pond wood but aims to make it more accessible to a wider range of people.</i></p> <p><i>This includes physical access by cutting back vegetation from paths and removing barriers and obstacles.</i></p> <p><i>It also aims to remove psychological barriers by making entrances more welcoming to visitors, giving them more confidence to use the woods and feel safer when doing so.</i></p>

Additional Information
<i>Not applicable</i>

Sign off:

Equalities Lead Officer	Date
Shivani Davé	20/05/2026



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**RICKMANSWORTH
AQUADROME
UPDATE REPORT
24/06/2026**

CLIMATE CHANGE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
24 JUNE 2026

PART I

**RICKMANSWORTH AQUADROME PROGRAMME UPDATE
(ADE)**

1 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the Rickmansworth Aquadrome Programme, including funding progress and opportunities.

2 Recommendation

That the Climate Change and Leisure Committee:

- 2.1 Note the content of the report
- 2.2 Give delegated authority to the Director of Finance to enter into contracts or funding agreements above the value of £25,000, subject to securing external funding, or where a project is in existing/agreed budgets providing that the purpose of such is in line with the approved Aquadrome Management Plan and actions proposed within this report.

3 Details

Project Overview

- 3.1 The [Rickmansworth Aquadrome Management Plan 2022 – 2027](#) is an ambitious and far-reaching plan. As a result of the Plan, the [Rickmansworth Aquadrome Programme](#) was established to support its delivery.

National Lottery Heritage Fund

- 3.2 The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) is a 3-stage process. Three Rivers has successfully progressed through Stage 1, the initial Expression of Interest, has been accepted and funded by NLHF for Stage 2, the Development Phase, and is preparing to bid for funding under Stage 3, the Delivery Phase. The final, third, phase is when capital works (physical improvements on site) will be delivered.
- 3.3 The table below provides an overview the approved purposes for the NLHF Development Phase. This phase is largely preparatory and focuses on developing project proposals and working them up into more detailed designs. This funding phase does not include any physical works on site.

National Lottery Heritage Fund Approved Purposes	Timescales
Ensure high visibility acknowledgement of the National Lottery Heritage Fund onsite, online and in activities, as well as using your project to thank National Lottery players.	Throughout the Development phase
Deliver small-scale activity programme including nature-based activities, workshops and citizen science surveys to engage and inform.	Throughout the Development phase

Creation of a site wide Masterplan encompassing all environmental and landscape elements including a tree and vegetation strategy and action plan.	September 2025 – July 2026
Phase 2 of the hydrological study producing specifications and documents to achieve improvements.	September 2025 - May 2026
Complete an accessibility audit across the site.	September 2025 – December 2025
Procure and appoint consultant team.	September 2025 – August 2026
Complete asbestos assessments and other surveys reviewing capital project sites to inform risk assessments and method statements.	October 2025 – March 2026
Consultation and engagement with community, stakeholders and steering group.	2025: October, November 2026: February, March, May, July
Develop detailed designs for all aspects of proposals including interpretative and access improvements, tender package documentation and gain relevant consents.	January 2026 – May 2026
Develop activity plan for delivery phase.	May 2026 – July 2026
Evaluation of development phase.	July 2026 – August 2026
Appoint 3 new development phase posts: Project Support Officer, Natural Infrastructure Projects Officer and Community Engagement Officer extending hours of existing staff post.	July 2025 – September 2026
To provide a delivery phase application and the delivery phase supporting documents (e.g. Tender Packages, Activity Plan, full Cost Breakdown)	September 2026 - November 2026

Site Wide Masterplan and Public Engagement

- 3.4 [RIBA Stage 2 designs](#) have been widely publicised, and the community have engaged with the outline plans. Public engagement has been offered both through online and in person concerning the masterplan.
- 3.5 Residents along Uxbridge Road, who live adjacent to the River Colne received letters to invite them to take part in the engagement period, along with advertising on social media, onsite posters, website and details circulated to all councillors.
- 3.6 Online consultation ran from 12 February 2026 to 17 March 2026. There were 157 responses to the survey, with 1635 people viewing the pages and 641 document downloads.

- 3.7 Face to face engagement was provided informally by officers on site and supported by a well-publicised full day of public face to face engagement on Saturday 7 March attended by council staff and the full range of external specialists working on the programme. Upwards of 160 people attended, with approximately 30-40 people spending 30 minutes or more discussing the plans. A total of 80 people actively participated in the interactive engagement activity, prioritising interpretation themes and key wildlife and heritage features. A number of residents with property backing onto the River Colne attended to discuss river restoration proposals. It is worth noting that on this day staff were subjected to a significant amount of verbal abuse and aggression from residents. This will impact risk assessment of any future in person engagement activity.
- 3.8 Engagement feedback:
- 3.8.1 Most people would like to find out information via onsite notice boards, followed by online information Support was demonstrated for improvements to and introduction of new information boards explaining the presence and importance of the habitats and wildlife present on site on the provision that this did not lead to the site feeling cluttered with such.
- 3.8.2 Respondents were not supportive of the introduction of an arts trail on the site preferring to see the sites natural environment prioritised. As such the proposal for an arts trail will not be progressed
- 3.8.3 Concerns were raised about dog behaviour at the site, whilst others wanted to ensure dogs could be kept off leads in relation to the dog enrichment zone
- 3.8.4 Concerns were raised around the closures of the Ebury play area and the Woodland Path
- 3.8.5 The majority of respondents were either supportive or very supportive of the following proposed enhancements:
- Visitor Hub (67%),
 - Bury Point (70%),
 - Natural Play & Discovery Zone (69%),
 - Meadow (74%)
 - Car park one way system (68%)

Accessibility Audit

- 3.9 An audit was undertaken by Inclusion & Accessibility UK who considered the site from arrival, access, toilet provision and interpretation/signage, spending two full days on site. The audit was supported by an online survey which received 46 responses.
- 3.10 The audit recommendations include:
- Accessible information at the visitor hub (written, audio and tactile)
 - Improved signage, wayfinding & interpretation
 - Inclusion of handrails and a tapping rail for mobility canes on proposed boardwalks
 - Introduction of a Changing Places facility
 - Seating which allows easy transfer and use for a range of needs
 - Promotion of site accessibility on the website & social media channels
 - Increased locations for shelter in inclement weather

- Increase capacity for disabled parking

3.11 These key recommendations are being incorporated into the RIBA Stage 3 designs and improvements have been made to the website to enable greater advance planning for visitors with disabilities.

Hydrological Study – Floodplain Connectivity, Lakeside Habitat Management and River Restoration

3.12 In Autumn/Winter 2025, the council and its contractor were granted access to the Environment Agency’s (EA) updated Upper Colne model, allowed work to complete on the [hydrological study](#) for Rickmansworth Aquadrome.

3.13 The hydrological study considered the key complexities of the Rickmansworth area:

- Complex hydrology that can lead to complicated water level information
- Overland flood water from kilometres upstream
- A mixture of water from the rivers Chess, Colne, Gade and the canal which each have different flows, water levels and interactions
- Overtopping of water from adjacent lakes

3.14 Building on this, detailed local information was gathered on the topography (study of forms and features of land surfaces) and bathymetry (study and measurement of underwater depth in lakes, rivers, and oceans) of the Aquadrome. Upon this, flood modelling was conducted using highly technical computer programmes to replicate the existing situation. The model was then subjected to a range of flooding scenarios to gain insight into the consequences and how the landscape can be expected to react. The modelling yielded interesting and invaluable information on the anticipated extent of future flooding – this has directly fed into and strongly influenced the design process.

3.15 The concept designs for the Aquadrome Project will deliver a coordinated package of measures to restore natural chalk stream processes, improve ecological connectivity, enhance wet woodland hydrology, and maintain safe public access. These include:

- a) Weir removal and regrading of the channel bed
- b) Installation of berms within the river channel to either narrow the channel increasing flow or protect the riverbanks
- c) Floodplain habitat creation within two areas of wet grassland
- d) Riverbank management of trees to introduce more light to the channel
- e) Creation of water flow pathways and lowering of the embankment increasing connectivity and facilitating the flow of water through the Aquadrome
- f) Footpath improvements to facilitate safe access around the Aquadrome when in flood
- g) Bank protection

3.16 The mill stream is a section of the River Colne designated main river as attributed by the Environment Agency who are the appropriate authority for permitting work on/near main rivers regulated by The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations, 2016. A Flood Risk Activity Permit (FRAP) is only granted by the EA where they are satisfied that any works near rivers and floodplains do not adversely affect flood risk or the environment; this would include the risk of impeding flow. The removal of Bury Weir would require a

FRAP to be granted; meaning that if granted the Environment Agency would not consider the works to present an adverse impact on flood risk.

- 3.17 While the removal of Bury Weir is being proposed within the Aquadrome Project, it is also independently ear-marked for removal by the Environment Agency within the Water Framework Directive measures to improve the condition of the River Colne. Further to this, when the weir partially collapsed in August 2025 and guidance was sought from the EA it was confirmed that it was not viewed as a flood risk concern and that there is ecological benefit to this which would be furthered by its removal.
- 3.18 Within the [Technical Design note](#) section 2.4 outlines the proposed design which includes the removal of Bury weir and the subsequent regrading of the existing channel bed. Implementing this design will result in improved ecological connectivity, restored natural river processes, and contribute to long-term geomorphic recovery downstream. Wier removal will be supported by careful and precise regrading of the riverbed both upstream and downstream of the weir location to deliver a smooth transition as the section will no longer be impounded. The works will be carefully calculated to ensure flows are distributed appropriately, maintaining hydraulic continuity and chalk stream characteristics.
- 3.19 To address the deteriorating condition of the lake banks, a lakeside habitat management plan is in development. This recognises that both lakes exhibit varying levels of erosion influenced by recreation, hydraulics, vegetation management and historic bank protection. The lakeshore design seeks to:
- Stabilise eroding lake edge
 - Enhance ecological condition
 - Address dominant erosion pressures
 - Protect and enhance public amenity
 - Support long-term climate resilience
- 3.20 Through preventative measures, nature-based (bioengineering) solutions and engineered interventions protection and enhancement of the lake banks is proposed where the right option is selected for the appropriate location. Interventions include:
- Prevention Measures: Retention of fallen trees and exclusion fencing
 - Nature-based solutions: planting of live willow, marginal berm creation, installation of offshore large woody material
 - Engineered solutions: rock mattresses (stone filled mesh units along the lower banks provide an armouring layer) and aqua-rock bags (geotextile mesh bags filled with stone provide stabilisation against wave wash)

Woodland Walk and Pinetum

- 3.21 The outcome of the hydrology design work recommends several floodplain connectivity points along the River Colne, adjacent to the wet woodland. These connectivity points are approximately 3-4m in length and up to 500mm in dept and aim to support controlled flow into the wet woodland.
- 3.22 Proposals for the formal route through the pinetum and wet woodland have been developed in accordance with the hydrology recommendations to ensure safe accessibility during high flows. Two bridges over the connectivity points are proposed along the woodland path with a natural material installed as the

formal pathway surface. The Environment Agency have confirmed that they would object to the use of tarmac adjacent to the River Colne at this location (negating a like for like repair/replacement of the existing path) and as a result, a loose fill, natural material (e.g. hoggin) will be used.

- 3.23 To ensure the project remains viable from a sustainable and financial perspective, the formal route has been revised to provide access through the pinetum, turning north-east along the River Colne to re-join the main footpath network at Batchworth Lake. The remaining section from the Bury Lake entrance will see the pathway returned to a natural surface with the existing end of life tarmac removed.
- 3.24 Chestnut fencing and gates will be installed at the main entrances to the Pinetum Path and Woodland Walk, so that in the event of significant flooding it can be closed temporarily to protect public safety until the flooding has receded.

Visitor and Welcome Area

- 3.25 The newly designed area will create a welcome hub and orientation place for visitors. Attractive pathways, low mounds, fixed seating and tree planting are proposed for the area outside the café .
- 3.26 The welcome area will provide a fixed point of information (interpretation boards) through which visitors can understand the layout of the site, its important social and natural history and hydrology of the Aquadrome. A tactile site map has been included in the plans to support those with visual impairments but is also expected to have wide appeal.
- 3.27 A Changing Places facility (a bespoke changing facility for users with special needs who may require a hoist, shower, adapted toilet and space for carers), has been incorporated next to the toilet block between the block and the cafe.
- 3.28 The existing concrete apron grounds maintenance depot access will be screened to create a more attractive visual for visitors whilst ensuring operational access remains.

Bury Point

- 3.29 Proposals include a new shelter in the Bury Point area on the southern shore of Bury Lake. This will support all-weather use and resilience for this facility and the various groups using Bury Lake.

Natural Play

- 3.30 Natural play enhancements are proposed to complement the wild play area in the dog free zone. The improvements include willow tunnels and balance beams, additional seating with paths leading to the seating and retention of the area as amenity grass.

Meadow and Lakeside Platforms

- 3.31 The area from the café towards both lakes has been designated as Meadow. And is proposed to incorporate a “scrape” designed to hold excess water, preventing the flow of the water across the path. A small, raised area is

proposed to provide attractive landscaping with much of the space left to amenity grassland.

- 3.32 To further connect the visitor to the lakes, it is proposed that Bury Lake will have lakeside platforms in a similar style to those already installed on Batchworth Lake. One platform will replace the existing bird feeding area, and a further platform would be erected directly opposite a newly installed pedestrian bridge from the café. In addition, three picnic platforms are proposed at the locations where currently concrete pads enter the water.
- 3.33 The council receives a number of requests for the installation of memorial benches and plaques at Rickmansworth Aquadrome. Under the current Memorial Bench Policy, the Aquadrome does not have any capacity for additional memorial benches. Programme proposals include the replacement and upgrading of existing benches. To facilitate the increasing request for memorials at the Aquadrome, it is proposed to offer the opportunity for plaques to be installed on the mid-rail of the new “lakeside platforms” on both Bury Lake and Batchworth Lake. The full details of this offer will be developed as part of the scheduled review of the council’s Memorial Bench policy towards the end of 2026.

Tree and Vegetation Management Strategy

- 3.34 Work on the Tree & Vegetation Strategy and Action Plan for the Aquadrome is currently being developed with survey work underway across the site to assess: the presence of non-native invasive species, tree work requirements, new tree and shrub planting opportunities and the scope for habitat enhancement and management works.

Activity Plan

- 3.35 The creation of an Activity Plan is part of Development Phase with implementation following in the Delivery Phase alongside the capital works programme.
- 3.36 NLHF have approved an activity plan focus on reaching more diverse underrepresented local groups over the usual aim to increase overall footfall. In addition, the plan focuses on changing visitor behaviour to engender respect for the nature reserve and to nurture a sense of stewardship of place.
- 3.37 The activity plan will include focus on:
- Targeted Children and Young People – Specifically young carers, children on pupil premium, the councils ACE Scheme and those in lower economic areas.
 - People with a disability – specifically those with autism spectrum disorder, ADHD, visually impaired and long-term physical/mental health
 - Age 65+ visitors- specifically isolated adults, care homes
 - Special interests- specifically Three Rivers Museum, Colne Valley Regional Park, U3A and Woodoaks Farm
 - Adults demonstrating anti-social behaviour – specifically around dog control, attitudes to litter and care for the environment
 - Educational research and development – specifically GCSE/A Level, home school communities
 - Support those who are NEET (not in education, employment or training) – specifically through a green skills training programme and apprenticeship
 - Ethnically Diverse Audience engagement – specifically underrepresented groups

- 3.38 A key feature of the activity plan will be use of and building upon the site wide interpretation boards and opportunities to celebrate the social and natural heritage of the site. This will include key habitats and changing use of the Aquadrome and River Colne over time, working in partnership with the Three Rivers Museum and other professional stakeholders.

National Lottery Heritage Fund – Delivery Phase

- 3.39 Following the completion of the Development Phase officer anticipate the following timeline:

Milestone	Timescales
Submission of the delivery phase application	November 2026
Anticipated outcome of Delivery Phase application	April 2027
Commencement of Delivery Phase	April/May 2027
Completion of the Delivery Phase	March 2030

- 3.40 The delivery phase of the programme and associated timelines are subject to a number of potential restrictions. These include but may not be limited to:
- The success of the delivery phase application
 - Consents for work, including Planning and Flood Risk Activity Permit (FRAP) applications
 - Environmental conditions experienced through the programme (for example flooding)

Ebury Play Area

- 3.41 Remediation works to safely remove the Japanese Knotweed and other invasive weeds at the play area began on Wednesday 18 March 2026 and are on course to complete no later than Wednesday 8th July 2026. Weekly updates are shared on the council’s website and reported directly to Ward Councillors.

Marketing and Communications: November 2025– May 2026

- 3.42 The programme’s communications plan continues to make use of onsite Storyboards, copies of which are also accessible on the council website. Currently the site displays information boards on the Woodland walk, Ebury Play Area and the National Lottery funding phases. Over Easter, the site also displayed a board promoting local play opportunities and holiday activities.
- 3.43 The Aquadrome programme has been widely communicated to the community and other stakeholders through a variety of media channels as part of a NLHF approved Communications Plan.
- 3.44 Website - The [dedicated website pages](#) are regularly refreshed to reflect the progress of the programme. Website visitor details for the period November 2025 to May 2026 were 2670, significantly higher than in previous recording periods.

- 3.45 Following a recommendation from the site Accessibility Audit [a new tab](#) has been added to the website to enable people to plan their visit, using better information and imagery.
- 3.46 Have your Say - The council's dedicated consultation platform was used successfully for public engagement for both the RIBA Stage 2 engagement and the Accessibility Audit. The RIBA engagement has 60 survey submissions and 304 documents downloaded.
- 3.47 Press Release/videos - This period saw 10 News Stories published covering topics relating to the woodland path, the Masterplan and Ebury Play Area. A video is in production that documents the development of the masterplan over the year.
- 3.48 YouTube coverage - Three videos have been produced to enhance press release publications. The most recent being the video of the Leader of the council explaining the process of the Development phase. This gained 63 visits with 321 impressions. <https://youtu.be/jupYxJ9WSuM> (published 20 Jan 2026)
- 3.49 MyNews- Monthly editorial articles are submitted to the My Ricky Newspaper, a hyperlocal media publication. Each month the article covers a topic related to the programme. In the period since the last Committee report topics have included:

November 2025	The Master Plan for the Aquadrome
December 2025	Appointment of RSK and their role
January 2026	Engagement officer – Have your Say
February 2026	Come and meet the RSK Experts
March 2026	Woodland walk and Path
April 2026	Remediation works to Ebury Play Area
May 2026	Public Engagement feedback on RIBA Stage 2

- 3.50 Future articles will include content on the planning process for the project as the plans at RIBA Stage 3 will be subjected to planning approval as part of the NLHF requirements.
- 3.51 Social media – Regular social media posts continue to be issued across all the council's platforms to share details of the Aquadrome programme; the activities visitors can and can't participate in at the site, as well educate about the wildlife that the site provides a home for. Press releases and videos have also been shared on all council social media platforms as well as proactive messaging encouraging participation on the wide variety of engagement activities that have been available in this period. A total of 113 posts across 3 platforms have been posted in this period with a total reach of 159,253.
- 3.52 Social media and Have Your Say have also been used reactively to answer direct questions received from residents and visitors regarding aspects of the project.

Tree Management – September 2025 to May 2026

- 3.53 Tree works for safety, the prevention of damage and visitor access across the site are separated into 3 categories: Emergency works; High Priority works; and Routine works. Works to trees may also be carried out occasionally to

facilitate the construction of new or replacement structures or facilities, or for habitat management to benefit biodiversity.

- 3.54 The following works have been completed since the previous Committee report:

Emergency works

- 3.54.1 An American Elm on the avenue leading up to Batchworth Lake Young Mariners (BLYM) was felled.
- 3.54.2 A willow on the Avenue leading up BLYM was re-pollarded.
- 3.54.3 Two partially failed willows, close to a footpath opposite the cafe, were felled and pollarded respectively.

High Priority works

- 3.54.4 Two of the veteran oak trees in the dog-free play area were crown reduced during this period, following internal decay testing.
- 3.54.5 An ash to the rear of the toilet block was monolithed
- 3.54.6 A sallow on the bank of Bury Lake was re-pollarded
- 3.54.7 A limb from a partially failed willow on the bank of Bury Lake was reduced
- 3.54.8 No routine, facilitation or habitat management tree works were carried out during this period..

Inspections

- 3.55 In January 2026 the 12-monthly inspection of the main footpaths at the Aquadrome was carried out by Tree officers with the 18-monthly inspection of higher risk areas at the Aquadrome carried out by external consultants taking place in February 2026

Pest and Diseases

- 3.56 No reports of Oak Processionary Moth at the Aquadrome have been received to date in 2026. Any reports of its presence will be inspected, risk assessed, and any nests, and any caterpillars, may depending on location, be removed and destroyed by a pest control contractor.

Footpath Improvements

- 3.57 In December 2025 patch repairs were undertaken on the section known as FP65 and the causeway between Bury Lake and Stockers Lake. Repairs were completed using a type 1 crush.
- 3.58 In March 2026 footpath repairs were made to the area around the sluice gate in the western corner of Bury Lake and at the access to the disabled swim around Batchworth Lake

Bury Lake Young Mariners

- 3.59 Officers have been working with Bury Lake Young Mariners (BLYM) to support the development of a new Business Plan, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding application and identify other funding sources to support their desire to

develop the dry-side facility for which Planning approval was granted in June 2024 and will expire on the 17 June 2027. BLYM are expected to submit their CIL funding application in the current application window which opened on 1 June 2026.

Glade Bridge

- 3.60 The wooden bridge, which spans the river, from an area known as the Glade onto the Canal towpath, is reaching end of life. Several repairs have been carried out to the bridge in recent years, but these have only aided in keeping the bridge open to provide an alternative route whilst the Aquadrome Bridge was replaced and whilst a more permanent solution could be planned.
- 3.61 A structural survey was last carried out in May 2025 and officers undertake regular checks on the bridge to ensure it remains safe for public use.
- 3.62 A FRAP application for replacement works was submitted in July 2025 and approved in October 2025.
- 3.63 A planning application was submitted but rejected by the Environment Agency (EA) who requested changes to the design of the replacement bridge. Following further correspondence with the EA, their objection has now been lifted and the plans are scheduled to go before Planning Committee on 18th June 2026.
- 3.64 Exact costs for the replacement bridge are being finalised. It is hoped that the project will be eligible for grant funding from Veolia, however, it is expected that the council will need to also provide funds as certain elements of the project cannot be funded under the Veolia fund criteria including HCC permits for work from HCC as the access to the bridge is via their land.

Automatic Site Vehicle Access Gate

- 3.65 The vehicle access gate at the entrance of the Rickmansworth Aquadrome site, has reached end of life and no longer working on an automatic basis resulting in manual opening which restricts its practical use and efficiency in granting vehicle access to those who need it (site tenants, TDC staff) whilst deterring those who should not be accessing the site other than on foot.
- 3.66 The current gate when functioning normally allows access via swipe card which is open to abuse where individuals share the card beyond permitted users and the issuing and recording of access card is an administrative burden that would, with an alternative gate solution, be unnecessary.
- 3.67 Options for a replacement gate with ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) functionality are being investigated by officers.

4 Options and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 To note the content of the report and to agree delegation in relation to contracts and funding to permit works to continue.

5 Policy/Budget Reference and Implications

- 5.1 The recommendations in this report are within the Council's agreed policy and budgets. The proposals also relate to securing additional, external, funding, as outlined within the report.

5.2 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following performance indicators for the Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Service Plan 2026- 2029.

- LNI04 - External Funding secured to support Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Projects and Activities.
- LNI05 - Year on year increase in the area of land owned by Three Rivers District Council, being managed for biodiversity benefit.
- LNI06 - Percentage of vulnerable participants who take part in leisure activities.

5.3 The recommendations in this report relate to the achievement of the following Corporate Framework Objectives:

- **A Well-Run Council** - a key part of the Development phase of the NLHF projects, will be to continue to engage and consult with the local community about the project. In addition, the Steering Group, consisting of 15 external organisations, several Lead and Ward Councillors, and officers across many Services acts as a critical friend, steering the direction of the project. The project will focus on securing significant external funding, reducing pressures on Council budgets and enabling the council's effective stewardship of this important asset.
- **A Prosperous and Vibrant District** – the Aquadrome is a visitor destination and this programme will further enhance this, whilst ensuring the balance between people and nature. A number of community organisations and businesses operate from the Aquadrome and it is anticipated that the benefits realised through this programme will in turn, benefit and support them.
- **Healthy, Safe and Thriving Communities** – the Aquadrome project will look to enhance the current leisure and cultural offer to visitors to the Aquadrome. This will include engagement activities and volunteer opportunities. A full activity programme is being developed as part of the NLHF Development phase. This is being carefully balanced against a desire to not significantly increase visitor numbers. Focusing rather on audience diversification and on-site engagement to improve health and wellbeing.
- **A Green and Sustainable Future** – the initial focus of the programme has been to ensure an improved understanding of the movement of water across the site to better facilitate the essential natural dynamics of the flood plain. This will support the resilience of site to the impacts of severe weather, wider climate change and ensure it can continue to protect the town of Rickmansworth from flood events. Significant enhancements to the biodiversity of the site will improve the condition and scope of the in, several instances rare, habitats present.

6 Financial Implications

6.1 The total anticipated cost for the entire programme at this stage is at this stage undefined. Works will only be undertaken when funds have been secured to deliver them. To date officers have secured £2,849,761 of external funding to support the programme.

6.2 The table below shows external funding secured and future applications where known:

Amount	Funder	Secured Applied For/
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		Future App
£216,691	NLHF - Recovery and Resilience	Secured Project complete
£100,000	UK Shared Prosperity Fund (Fishing Swims)	Secured Project complete
£1,286,092	CIL and UKSPF (Replacement Bridge, landscaping and play area)	Secured
£510,463	HS2 Colne Valley Additional Mitigation Plan (AMP) - £22,000 Recovery & Resilience Project - £32,000 Hydrological Study - £50,000 Match funding NLHF Dev Phase	Secured
£736,515	NLHF Development Phase	Secured
£TBC	Affinity Water	Future App
£4,146,114 (estimated)	National Lottery Heritage Fund - Delivery Phase	Future App
£TBC	TOTAL	

Future Funding

- 6.3 During the NLHF Development Phase costs for the NLHF Delivery Phase application will be established through detailed designs and tender. Currently this is estimated to be approximately £5,446,563, made up of £4,146,114 from the NLHF and the remaining using match funding (required by NLHF) from the AMP and a planned application to Affinity Water through their Water Industry National Environment Programme (WINEP).
- 6.4 Hertfordshire County Council currently hold S106 funding of £34,862 in relation to the public right of way – Footpath 65. Officers have been advised that there is the potential, subject to formal approval, to utilise this funding towards the programme.
- 6.5 Officers propose to allocate £25,000 from the existing council Open Spaces Access Improvement budget per annum over the 3-year delivery period towards the match funding requirements of the National Lottery Heritage Fund. This option will only be used should the 10% total not be reached from external funders

7 Legal Implications

- 7.1 Under the Council Constitution, Committee approval is required to enter into any contracts above the value of £25,000.
- 7.2 All proposed works and equipment will be tendered within the Council's constitution and procurement procedures and any other permissions obtained (for example planning) where required.
- 7.3 Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006, updated by the Environment Act 2021, places a legal responsibility on public authorities in England to have due regard for habitats and species of the greatest conservation importance, whilst protecting all biodiversity. Section 40(1) states that a "public authority which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective." The accompanying footnote to this

part of the Act states that the aim of the biodiversity objective is to provide for the enhancement or improvement of biodiversity, not just its maintenance in its current state. Gone is the former 'have regard' element in respect of conserving biodiversity, and this has been replaced by a proactive duty (new section 40(1)) to "from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective".

- 7.4 The Aquadrome Programme outlines a number of actions: within the Management plan with particular reference to 5.1 Creating Biodiverse and Sustainable Environments (Woodlands and Grasslands) and 5.2 Creating Biodiverse and Sustainable Environments (Lakes and Watercourses) the associated actions all aim to increase, conserve and enhance the biodiversity value of the site.

8 Equal Opportunities Implications

- 8.1 A Short Equality Impact and Outcome Assessment is included at Appendix A. The assessment outlines the positive impact the Aquadrome is having and will continue to have on equal opportunities. Fully realising these positive impacts, however, remains dependent on securing the external funding highlighted within this report.
- 8.2 As part of the Approved Purposes of the NLHF Development Phase Project an Accessibility Audit was conducted. This raised a series of recommendations as detailed earlier. Where possible these have been incorporated into the RIBA stage 3 designs and included in the funding application, for example a Changing Places facility and tactile map.

9 Staffing Implications

- 9.1 The Aquadrome programme is being delivered by the Programme Development Manager, along with several Officers within the Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Service, including the Natural Infrastructure Programme Manager, Leisure Services Manager, Principal Trees and Woodlands Officer and Leisure Capital Projects Manager.
- 9.2 Development Phase funding has funded project specific posts, including a Project Support Officer and Natural Infrastructure Projects Officer to ensure the project is effectively delivered. Staffing will also be a core element of the NLHF Delivery Phase funding application.
- 9.3 The programme of improving the Aquadrome is led by the Leisure and Natural Infrastructure Service and is strongly supported by many other service teams throughout the council. These include the Communications team, supporting the delivery of the site's Communications Plan and showcasing the positive work across all forms of media. Grounds Maintenance are instrumental in not only providing guidance, advice and expertise, but in their undertaking of general daily maintenance of the site and any additional duties because of the external funding. Many other services are providing support to the programme, including Properties, Finance, Planning, Customer Service Centre, Legal and Environmental Protection. Their involvement has strengthened the work at the Aquadrome and helped in submitting successful funding bids, showcasing the way in which the council works together to support a successful outcome for the Aquadrome.

10 Environmental Implications

10.1 A Climate Change and Sustainability Impact Assessment has been completed giving this report a score of 3.7 out of 4 indicating strong positive impact for climate change and sustainability. (Appendix B).

11 Community Safety Implications

11.1 Officers will liaise with the community safety team to ensure that crime is designed out where possible during the development phase process of the project.

11.2 Officers have consulted the Police regarding the shelter at Bury Point and they have not raised objections to the proposals.

12 Public Health implications

12.1 Subject to securing external funding for the delivery phase of the project, there will be a diverse activity plan focused on enhancing health and wellbeing, protecting the environment and educating the local community. Successful examples of this during the Natural Heritage Networks project, included mindfulness walks, nature photography walks, creative writing, sessions with local schools and storytelling workshops.

Asbestos Management

12.2 The [Aquadrome Asbestos Management Plan](#) is fully embedded as part of business-as-usual management of the Aquadrome site.

12.3 As part of the NLHF Development Phase, works were procured to investigation into the potential presence of asbestos at key locations as part of the project plans for infrastructure improvements. The site investigations comprised of:

- 36 hand dug trial pits at a maximum depth of 1.2m
- Cone penetration testing at 14 locations to a maximum depth of 10m below ground level

12.4 The ground investigations and associated site walkovers identified 10 new Asbestos Containing Materials (ACM's) locations. One high risk, two medium risk and seven low risk areas were identified, of which four, including the high and a medium risk location, are within the vicinity of the Woodland Walk. The specialist consultants have recommended that access to this area remains restricted. Despite the existing closure of the Woodland Walk, continued non-compliance with on-site safety restrictions means that an unacceptable level of risk persists which has resulted in officers taking immediate action rather than wait for the delivery phase works. A surface pick of the ACMs was commissioned and took place over a two-week period in April and May 2026. Given the scale and nature of the asbestos in certain areas, complete removal is not considered viable and, as a result, it will be necessary to permanently restrict public access to such areas through permanent, secure, fencing. A secure access gate will be incorporated to accommodate staff and specialist contractor access for monitoring and maintenance such as tree works. The permanent containment of the high-risk area will not, in due course, negate the refurbishment of the woodland path itself nor will it preclude the planned reopening of the path as part of the Aquadrome Programme.

12.5 Details of all newly identified ACM locations where located in proximity to any of the planned capital delivery works, will be incorporated within the tender

specifications and contractor work under the Aquadrome Asbestos Management Plan.

13 Customer Services Centre Implications

13.1 None-Specific to this report.

14 Communications and Website Implications

14.1 As part of the ongoing communication for the Aquadrome programme the new site narrative developed through the Natural Heritage Networks project is at the forefront of all messaging and the updated brand guidelines are now fully implemented.

14.2 As part of the funding agreement with The NLHF, there are strict communication guidelines around all media relating to projects funded by them. These have been embraced by all officers and are evident throughout all relevant communications.

14.3 The council website is regularly updated to reflect developments and includes extended pages covering funding successes and project implementation such as public engagement over RIBA Stage 2 and the Have Your Say opportunities around engagement. A Frequently Asked Questions section has been developed which provides information to many of the questions that have either been asked through social media or raised directly through other channels. A new tab has been added to support visitors planning a visit to the site following a recommendation from the Accessibility Audit.

14.4 The Aquadrome Steering Group is regularly updated by email with project developments. At the March meeting project consultants from RSK and Haley Sharpe, led a workshop about the RIBA 2 designs and the interpretation for the site.

14.5 Storyboards have been used across the Aquadrome – a temporary update board that reflects what's happening in that immediate area. The current boards focus on information about the closure of the woodland path, remediation of Ebury Play area and explaining the funding from the national Lottery (Development and Delivery phases).

15 Risk and Health & Safety Implications

15.1 The Council has agreed its risk management strategy which can be found on the website at <http://www.threerivers.gov.uk>. In addition, the risks of the proposals in the report have also been assessed against the Council's duties under Health and Safety legislation relating to employees, visitors and persons affected by our operations. The risk management implications of this report are detailed below.

15.2 The subject of this report is covered by the Leisure and Natural Infrastructure service plan. Any risks resulting from this report will be included in the risk register and, if necessary, managed within this/these plan(s).

Risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response	Residual Risk Rating
Increase in	Insufficient	Ensure a 20%	Treat	4

delivery costs	project funding	contingency and inflation figure is included within the NLHF bid Procurement processes completed to assess value for money.		
Asbestos present in delivery locations	Increase in costs to manage asbestos Delay to work programme Risk to public health	Undertake surveying work in key locations during development phase Amend scope of works to reflect presence of asbestos Undertake appropriate removal and/or containment works where ACMs identified	Treat	4
Unable to secure Delivery funding for the National Lottery heritage fund implementation	Project vision and objectives will not be realised Public disappointment Reputational damage to the council	Evidence based funding applications Skilled staff employed to develop funding bids Building on success of securing the Development Phase National Lottery funding. Continue to identify, review and apply for variety of external funds	Treat	3
Unable to secure additional external funding	Project vision and objectives not fully realised.	Evidence based funding applications Skilled staff employed to develop funding	Treat	3

		bids Only seeking to match fund as able to use National Lottery funding.		
Unable to secure relevant permissions (including Planning Permission & Flood Risk Activity Permit)	Project vision and objectives not fully realised.	Evidence based applications from thorough and precise surveying. Close coordination with relevant authorities.	Treat	3
Local Government Reorganisation	Project vision and objectives not fully realised.	Contract novation will ensure continuity. Project flagged early in pre planning of LGR workstreams	Treat	3

15.3 The above risks are scored using the matrix below. The Council has determined its aversion to risk and is prepared to tolerate risks where the combination of impact and likelihood scores 6 or less.

15.4 In the officers' opinion none of the new risks above, were they to come about, would seriously prejudice the achievement of the Strategic Plan and are therefore operational risks. The effectiveness of the management of operational risks is reviewed by the Audit Committee annually.

Data Quality

Data sources:

- Natural Heritage Networks Evaluation and Ecological Surveying
- Aquadrome Management Plan
- Aquadrome Asbestos Management Plan
- Ezytreevs Tree Management System
- Inspection Reports
- RIBA Stage 2 Masterplan
- RIBA Stage 3 Report

Data checked by:

Jess Hodges

Jo Copley

Alex Laurie

Data rating:

1	Poor	
2	Sufficient	
3	High	X

Background Papers

Rickmansworth Aquadrome Management plan 2022 - 2027: [Rickmansworth Aquadrome | Three Rivers District Council](#)

Asbestos Management Plan 2023: [Rickmansworth Aquadrome | Three Rivers District Council](#)

12 March 2025 Rickmansworth Aquadrome Update Report: [Rickmansworth Aquadrome Project Update Report enc. 1.pdf](#)

15 October 2025 – Rickmansworth Aquadrome Update Report: [Rickmansworth Aquadrome Project Update Report](#)

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Equality Impact Assessment

Appendix B: Climate Change and Sustainability Impact Assessment Equality Impact Assessment

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**CLIMATE
CHANGE &
LEISURE
COMMITTEE
24/06/2026**

CLIMATE CHANGE & LEISURE COMMITTEE

24 June 2026

PART I

Revocation of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) at junction 18 of M25, Chorleywood (DoF)

1 Summary

- 1.1 AQMAs are required to be designated where the air quality fails to meet the prescribed standards for certain pollutants. This is done through an order, made under the Environment Act 1995. Since the 2 remaining AQMAs in Three Rivers were designated in 2001, the air quality has improved and the improvements have been sustained such that the air quality now complies with the required standards. For this reason Junction 18 of the M25 and its surrounds no longer need to be designated as AQMAs and the revocation of the orders is being recommended, in line with Government guidance.
- 1.2 This report provides further details and seeks clarification on the relevant revocation process.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the report and its recommendations are discussed and noted with the agreed Officer recommendations progressed:
- i) To agree the revocation of the 2 AQMAs at junction 18 of the M25 in accordance with DEFRA guidance/legislative provisions under the Environment Act 1995 following stakeholder and public consultation.
 - ii) The final decision to revoke the 2 AQMAs at junction 18 of the M25 is delegated to the Director of Finance in consultation with the relevant Lead Member following consideration of any responses received to the consultation. If any material objections are raised the matter will be reported back to the relevant Committee.

3 Details

3.1 Background

The Council are legally obliged to monitor air quality in the whole of the District and to review and report the data annually to DEFRA. The requirements for monitoring and reporting air quality are set out in Part IV of the Environment Act (1995), as amended by the Environment Act (2021), and detailed in the relevant Policy and Technical Guidance documents.

<https://laqm.defra.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/LAQM-Policy-Guidance-2022.pdf>

- 3.2 The Local Air Quality Management process places an obligation on all local authorities to regularly review and assess air quality in their area, and to determine whether or not the air quality objectives are likely to be achieved.
- 3.3 Annual status reports (ASRs) are undertaken by specialist officers to consider all monitored data, existing AQMAs, and any changes in the District since the last ASR such as new developments, infrastructure proposals, and polluting industry that could have an impact on air quality. Once DEFRA have formally agreed the returns the information is publicly available.
- 3.4 The national Air Quality Objectives and Air Quality Standards Regulations limit and target values with which the UK must comply. The Air Quality Objectives in England require TRDC to consider nitrogen dioxide, particulates and sulphur dioxide.
- 3.5 Sulphur dioxide is normally associated with heavy industry such as electricity generation, there are no known significant local sources of SO₂ and therefore this is not monitored by TRDC.
- 3.6 The main source of local pollution in TRDC is from vehicles, both nitrogen dioxide and particulates are released from vehicle sources. Estimated Background Air Pollution Maps for particulates (base year 2018), downloaded from <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/data/laqm-background-home> show that the estimated PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations within TRDC are significantly below the PM₁₀ objective level (40ug/m³) and PM_{2.5} target level (25ug/m³).
- 3.7 The Council currently report on Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) and Particulates (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) but with a resource focus on nitrogen dioxide where exceedances are more likely.
- 3.8 Where an exceedance of the national air quality objectives are considered likely the local authority must declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), carry out and prepare an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) (approval by DEFRA) setting out the measures it intends to put in place in order to achieve and maintain the objectives and the dates by which each measure will be carried out.
- 3.9 TRDC currently has 2 AQMAs which are co located in Chorleywood at Junction 18 of the M25, see plan at **Appendix A**. The AQMAs were both declared in April 2001. The NO₂ AQMA is an area along the M25 south of Junction 18 to just north of where the motorway crosses the River Chess. The PM₁₀ AQMA is a slightly narrower area from just north of Junction 18, along the M25 to just north of where the motorway crosses the River Chess.
- 3.10 The AQMAs were declared due to predicted exceedances of the National Air Quality Objectives for NO₂ and PM₁₀.
- 3.11 Current Monitoring:
- TRDC currently monitor Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) by diffusion tubes. The tube locations have been identified and sited in areas where it is most likely that the air quality objectives could be exceeded, Officers also need to consider relevant receptors i.e. dwellings, schools, care homes. Officers would normally decide the locations based on the annual monitoring and data such as traffic counts and queuing data. There is also monitoring at a limited number of locations where there is limited pollution to provide background measurements.

- 3.12 In 2021/22 Watford BC Environmental Health Officers reviewed the diffusion tube locations in Three Rivers to ensure they were located in areas of potentially highest pollution. The number of diffusion tubes was also increased (currently 26) in the District. Details of the locations are detailed in **Appendix B** and include the siting of diffusion tubes in the existing AQMA.
- 3.13 Due to the designation of an Air Quality Management Area in TRDC (at J18 M25/ Chorleywood Road) TRDC are also monitoring PM₁₀ particulates via Air Quality sensors. These particulates are a source of pollution from vehicles. Previous monitoring was limited due to a focus on NO₂ but mesh sensors were initially utilised in 2017, provided with HCC funding, but monitoring was sporadic and unreliable. However, new equipment was installed by HCC in 2024. This collects and reports data every 15 minutes.
- 3.14 In 2018, a detailed assessment was undertaken to determine whether the AQMAs in Chorleywood could be revoked. The modelling study indicated that there are no exceedances of the NO₂ and PM₁₀ annual mean objective at locations with relevant exposure in the area surrounding Junction 18 of the M25. The modelled PM₁₀ concentrations were lower than the 40 µg/m³ annual mean limit value, the maximum modelled PM₁₀ concentration at the discrete receptors was 18.4 µg/m³. The results indicated that annual mean NO₂ concentrations were close to the air quality objective of 40 µg/m³ at locations where relevant exposure may be present. At the time it was recommended that TRDC continue to measure NO₂ and PM₁₀ and not revoke the AQMA.
- 3.15 Revoking an AQMA:
- DEFRA guidance confirms the revocation of an AQMA should be considered following three consecutive years of compliance with the relevant objective as evidenced through monitoring.
- 3.16 Where NO₂ monitoring is completed using diffusion tubes, to account for the inherent uncertainty associated with the monitoring method, it is recommended that revocation of an AQMA should only be considered following three consecutive years of annual mean NO₂ concentrations being lower than 36µg/m³ (i.e. not within 10% of the annual mean NO₂ objective due to uncertainties and yearly variations).
- 3.17 Following declaration of AQMAs, the Council is required to produce an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) setting out measures to reduce polluting emissions and subsequently improve air quality within our AQMAs. The AQAP (2015-2020) (amended 2020/21) outlined the action to be taken to improve air quality in Three Rivers with specific focus on the AQMAs.
- 3.18 As identified in the AQAP, the 2019 TRDC Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) identified that measured concentrations of NO₂ continue to be below the air quality objectives within the current AQMAs. There has been a continued downward trend at the established monitoring sites and measured concentrations have been consistently below the annual objective for NO₂ for a number of years.
- 3.19 Table 1 forms part of the 2024/25 Annual Status Report details current data;

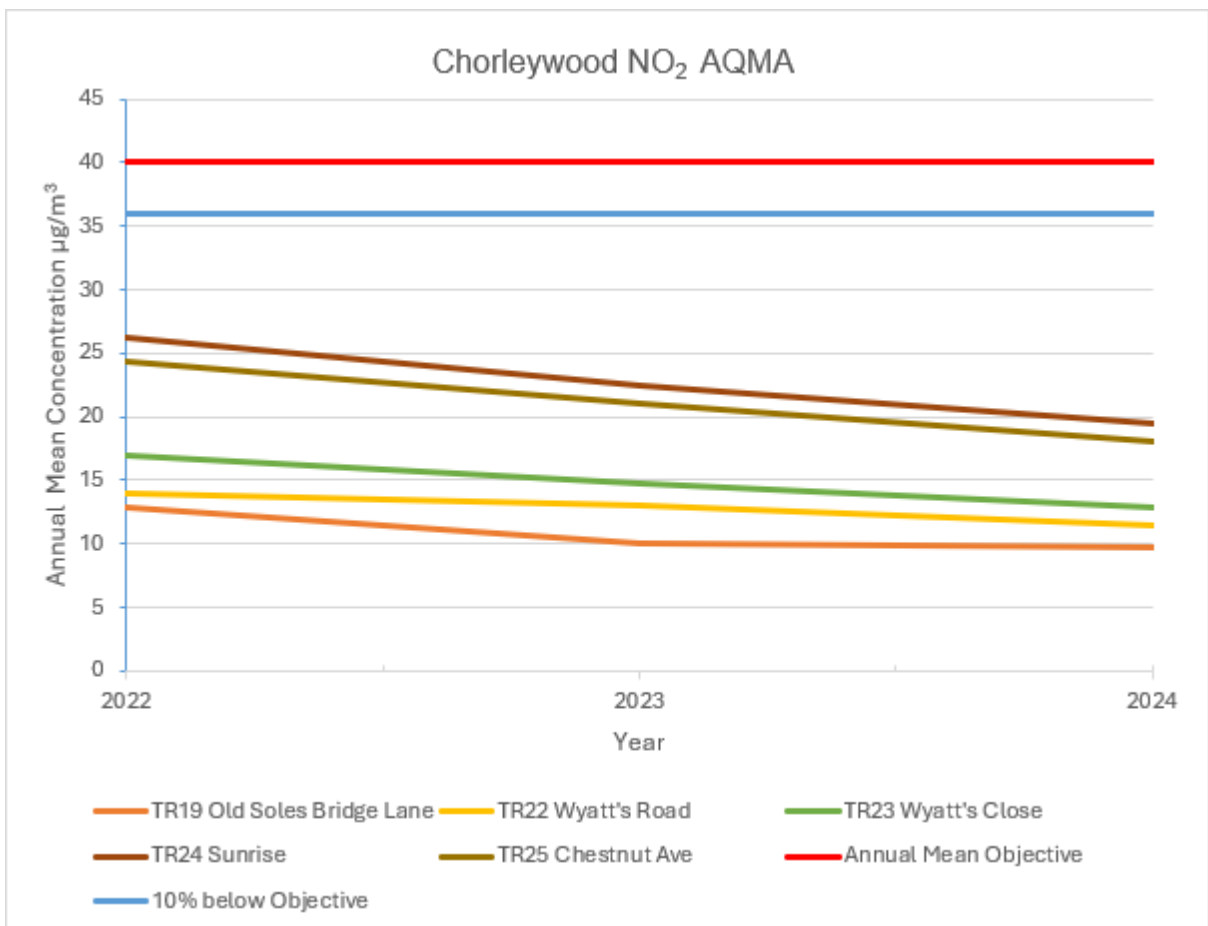
Table 1. - Declared Air Quality Management Areas

AQMA Name	Pollutants and Air Quality Objectives	Level of exceedance: Declaration *	Level of exceedance: Current Year **	Number of Years Compliant with Air Quality Objective
Chorleywood NO ₂ AQMA	NO ₂ Annual Mean	>40	22.5	Last 3 consecutive years
Chorleywood PM ₁₀ AQMA	PM ₁₀ 24 Hour Mean	>50, exceeded more than 35 times in a year	Two Airscan Units have been deployed with the AQMA. WBC are hoping to be able to report data from the sensor in next year's ASR.	PM ₁₀ concentrations have not been monitored at this location since 2017.

*this is the objective limits declared in our AQAP 2015-2020

** concentrations from current monitoring results

3.20 The annual mean concentration of NO₂ monitored in Chorleywood NO₂ AQMA have been comfortably below the 10% margin for error at all locations for a minimum of 3 consecutive years. As such, it is recommended, and agreed by DEFRA, that the AQMA for NO₂ should be revoked.

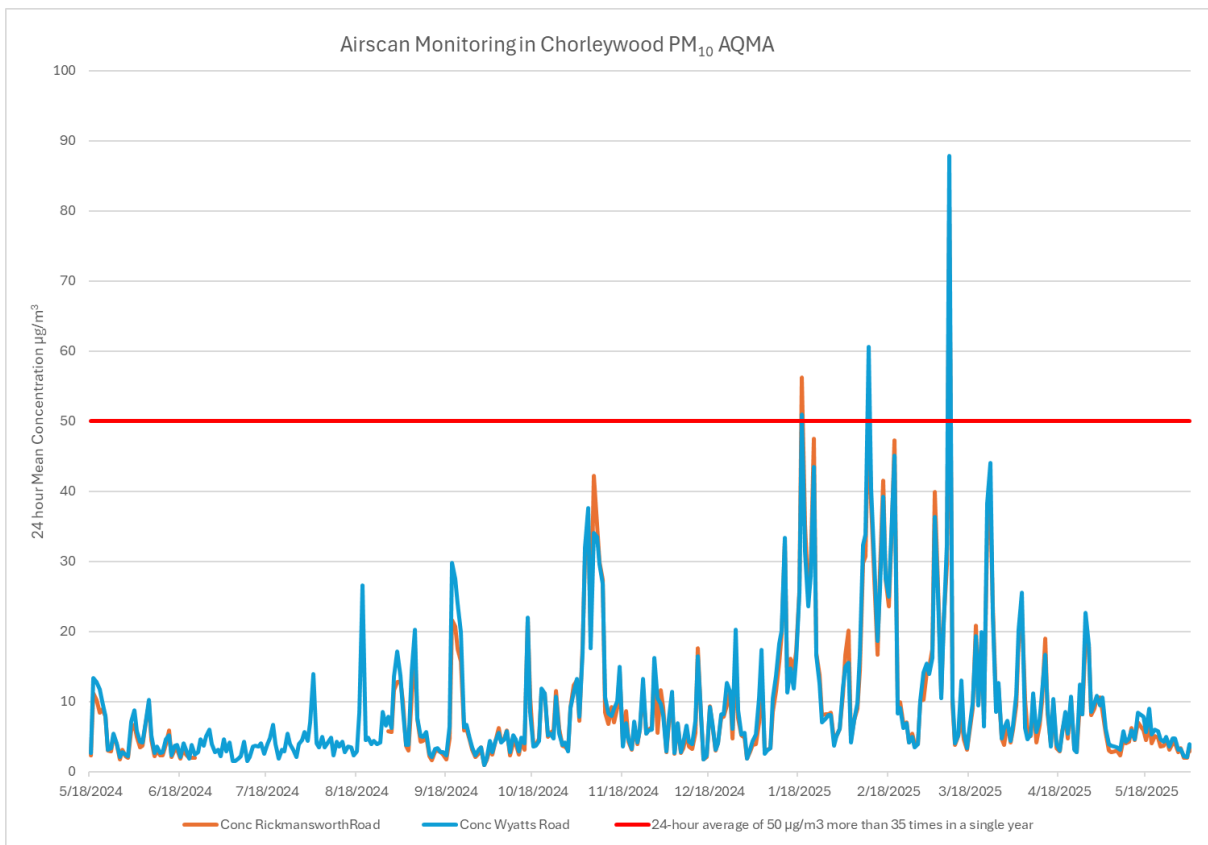


3.21 Since the declaration of the AQMA (PM₁₀) in 2001 there has been a significant reduction in PM₁₀ emissions particularly from road traffic. Evidence of this can be seen on the DEFRA website [Particulate matter \(PM10/PM2.5\) - GOV.UK](#). Many Local Authorities had declared AQMAs for PM₁₀ at stage 3 of the 1st round of review and assessment. In a subsequent Stage 4 assessment all AQMAs were remodelled using new emission factors published by DEFRA and a large percentage of the AQMAs were revoked at this time (early 2000s). Three Rivers District Council undertook all 4 stages of the review and assessment concluding in stage 4 that the Chorleywood PM₁₀ AQMA should be revoked. For some reason this was not done.

3.22 However as there hasn't been a monitoring station in the AQMA and a significant amount of time has passed since the modelling was undertaken it has been difficult to provide current evidence to DEFRA to justify its revocation.

3.23 Two Airscan Units (low-cost sensors provided by Iknai, funded by Hertfordshire County Council) were deployed in May 2024 in the PM₁₀ AQMA. One on Wyatts Road and the other on Rickmansworth Road. These instruments are usually not considered suitable for measuring PM₁₀ annual mean or the number of exceedances as they are not accurate enough to meet the expanded uncertainty requirements of equivalent instruments. However, based on the evidence outlined above DEFRA have given the council permission to use sensors in this case as it is likely that even when considering the margin of error, the monitoring results would be able to indicate compliance or not.

3.24 Recent monitoring results from both sensors can be seen in the chart below:



3.25 Both sensors are monitoring similar concentrations at the same time this is why at some points it is difficult to differentiate between the 2 lines on the

chart. During the summer of 2024 only data from the Wyatts Road sensor was available. The chart indicates that the AQMA is comfortably compliant with the 24-hour mean objective having exceeded $50\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ 3 times during the year.

- 3.26 Based on historic PM_{10} data and actions to reduce PM_{10} concentrations within this AQMA, in consultation with DEFRA during the submission of the ASR 2025 and draft revised AQAP, DEFRA has agreed with the approach of revoking the AQMA. They have stated,

“Both low-cost sensors monitored similar concentrations and during the summer of 2024 only data from the Wyatts Road sensor was available. The results indicate that the PM_{10} AQMA is comfortably compliant with the 24-hour PM_{10} mean objective having exceeded $50\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ 3 times during the year.

Due to this, the Council should consider revoking both the Chorleywood NO_2 AQMA and the Chorleywood PM_{10} AQMA in the next year. This will mean that TRDC will no longer have any AQMAs and an Air Quality Action Plan is not required, but TRDC will need to develop an Air Quality Strategy.”

- 3.27 It is therefore recommended the Council revoke both the Chorleywood NO_2 AQMA and Chorleywood PM_{10} AQMA. This will mean that Three Rivers District Council will no longer have any AQMAs and an Air Quality Action Plan is not required. Delivering the Climate Emergency & Sustainability Strategy 2023-2027 will enable Three Rivers Council to continue improving Air Quality across the district and not just focus on the areas near the M25 motorway.

- 3.28 If a local authority does not revoke an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) when air quality objectives are being met, it is considered to be in **breach of its statutory duties** under the Environment Act 1995.

- 3.29 Process for Revoking an AQMA:

DEFRA have provided guidance for local authorities to consult prior to revoking or amending AQMAs (Technical Guidance LAQM.TG22). Local authorities are therefore encouraged to consult on the decision to revoke or amend. However, there is no statutory requirement for a public consultation.

- 3.30 Relevant internal Council and HCC services (HCC Highways and Public Health, TPP, Climate Team, Planning Policy and Environmental Health) have been consulted on the revocation proposals. **No/Some comments were raised.**

- 3.31 Following the formal agreement to revoke the AQMAs, in accordance with DEFRA guidance, Ward members, stakeholders (HCC Highways, HCC Public Health, Bucks CC) and residents will be consulted to inform them of the proposed revocation. It is recommended that the final decision to revoke the AQMAs will be delegated to the Director of Finance, in consultation with the Lead Member, once this consultation exercise is completed.

- 3.32 Once the order is in place residents are notified and a copy of the revocation order is sent to DEFRA.

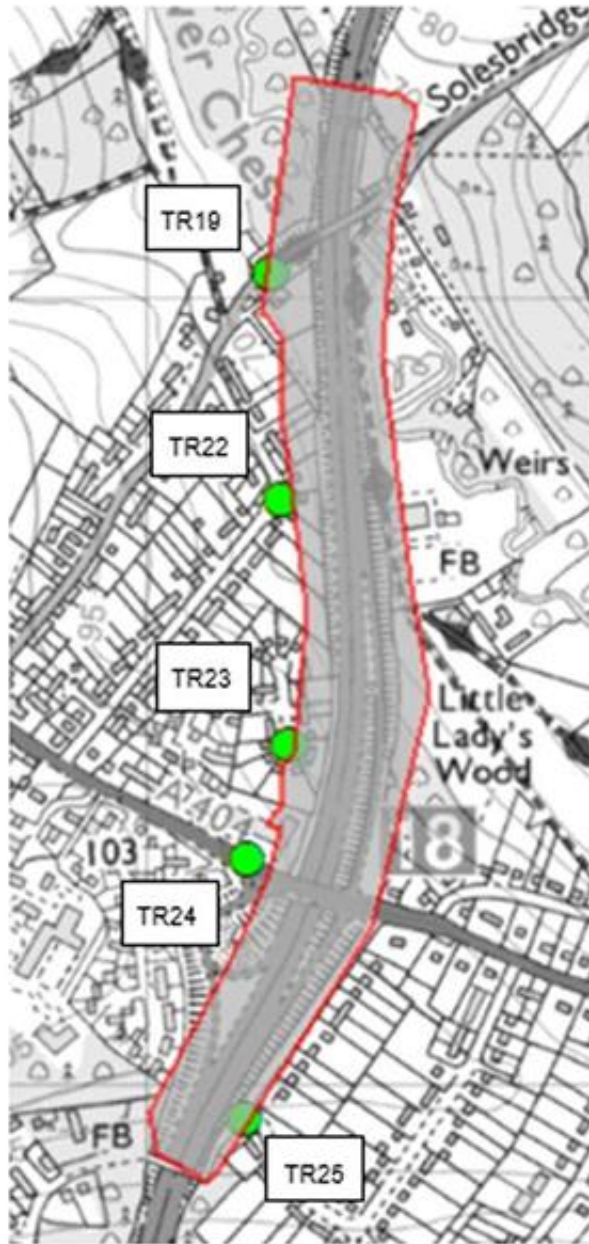
Report Written by: Kimberley Rowley, Head of Regulatory Services

Appendix A: Map of AQMA (NO_2 and PM_{10})

Appendix B: Map of diffusion tube sites

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Appendix A: Map of AQMA (N0₂)



Legend

-  Air Quality Monitoring Sites
-  AQMA_2019



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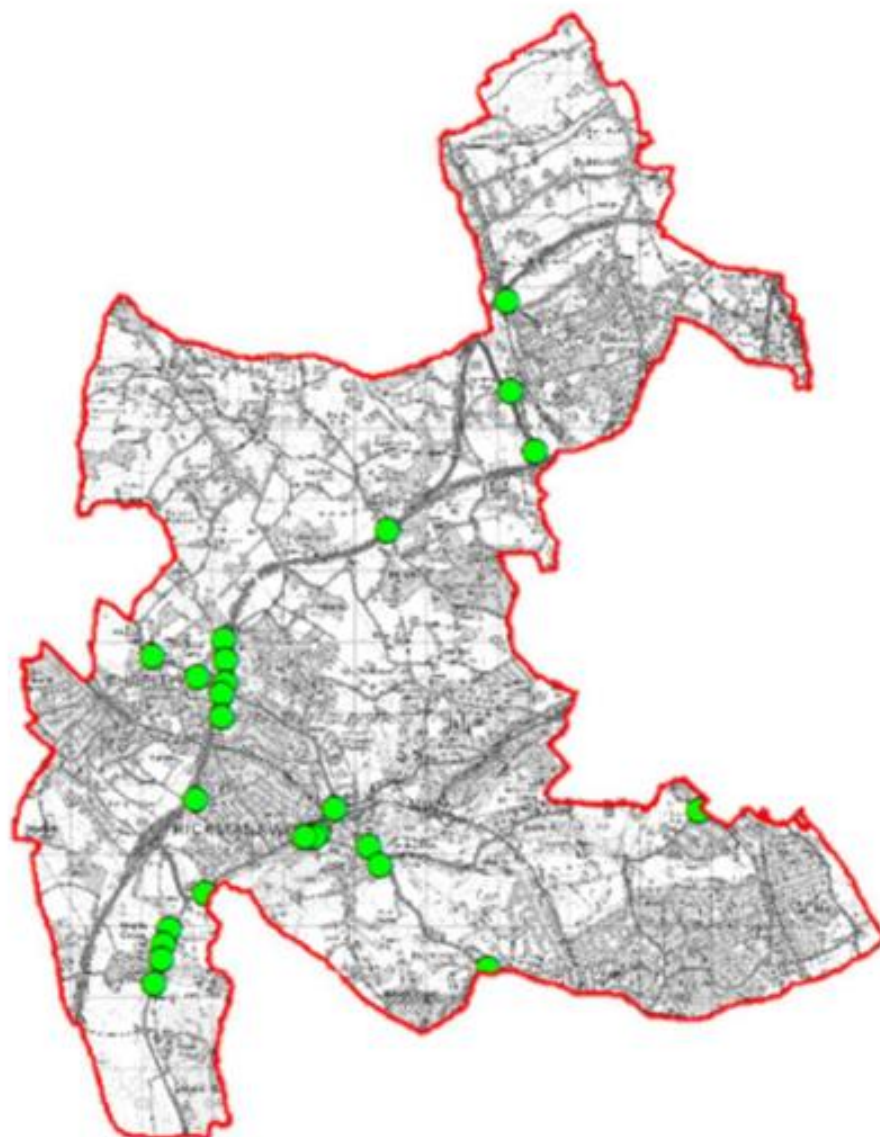


Appendix A: Map of AQMA (PM₁₀)



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Appendix B: Location of N₂ diffusion tube sites



Legend

- Air Quality Monitoring Sites



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CLIMATE CHANGE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME - 11/03/2026 - 18/11/2026
WORK PROGRAMME

No.	Items to be considered	Date of Next Meeting	Purpose of the Report	How the work will be done	Responsible Officer
1.	Control of parking on The Green	TBC			TBC
2.	Rickmansworth Aquadrome Programme	24 June 2026		Rickmansworth Aquadrome Programme	Emma Sheridan, Associate Director – Environment
3.	Update from Everyone Active, Sport and Physical Activity Strategy	24 June 2026		Presentation	Kelly Barnard, Leisure Assets Manager
4.	AQMA	24 June 2026		Report	Kimberley Rowley – Head of Regulatory Services
5.	Watersmeet Annual Review 2025/26	9 September 2026	A presentation on Watersmeet performance during 2025/26 financial year	Presentation	Josh Sills - Head of Communications, Customer & Culture
6.	Service Plans	18 November 2026		Presentation and report	Rebecca Young - Head of Strategy and Partnerships
7.	P3 Budget Monitoring Report	18 November 2026		Report	Sally Riley – Finance Business Partner
8.	P6 Budget Monitoring Report	3 February 2027		Report	Sally Riley – Finance Business Partner

Page 1 of 3

Agenda Item 9

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