



## WELLS CITY COUNCIL

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A MEETING OF THE OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE,  
WHICH MEMBERS ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND,  
WILL BE HELD AT WELLS TOWN HALL  
ON THURSDAY 5<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2025 AT **6:00PM****

*Please note this meeting will be recorded for the purpose of minute-taking.*

Haylee Wilkins  
Town Clerk

29<sup>th</sup> May 2025

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Haylee Wilkins', written over a horizontal line.

Town Hall  
Market Place  
Wells BA5 2RB  
01749 673091  
e-mail: townclerk@wells.gov.uk

Committee Members:

Cllrs: T Butt-Philip, D Denis, S Eden,  
D Orrett (Chair), S Powell, G Robbins

### **AGENDA**

Wells City Council has declared a climate emergency. Each agenda item must consider the impact on any policy and decision.

- 1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**
- 2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct adopted 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022.
- 3 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR**
- 4 ACTIONS FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3<sup>rd</sup> APRIL 2025**
- 5 MINUTES FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 3<sup>rd</sup> APRIL 2025**  
To approve and sign the minutes of the previous meeting.
- 6 MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**  
Public speaking time is normally restricted to 15 minutes in total, at the discretion of the Chair.
- 7 TRAFFIC UPDATE AND PARISH PROPOSALS (to follow)**
- 8 WELLS IN BLOOM REVIEW (attached page 3 - 6)**  
Outside Spaces Officer to present report

**9 GRASS CUTTING IN TOR HILL LANE**

Request to consider license agreement with Wells Environment Network

**10 ECO WEEK/WELLS ENVIRONMENT NETWORK**

Cllr Denis to provide an update following a meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup> May 2025

**11 ACT TO ADAPT (attached to email)**

Cllr Denis to provide an update on the Draft Plan for future Full City Council consideration

**12 FORWARD PLAN**

Item	Proposed date for consideration
Devolution Update and land confirmation	June 2025
TTRO for Market Place - Update	July 2025
Allotment Review	July 2025
Events of Council Land	September 2025
Climate Strategy	September 2025
Recreation Ground Trust AGM feedback	September 2025

**13 ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT**

**14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025, 6pm in Wells Town Hall**

**EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

**Note:** If it is necessary for matters to be considered in confidence it will be proposed by the Chairman that a resolution be passed under the provisions of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended, excluding the press and public, in order that confidential items can be discussed.



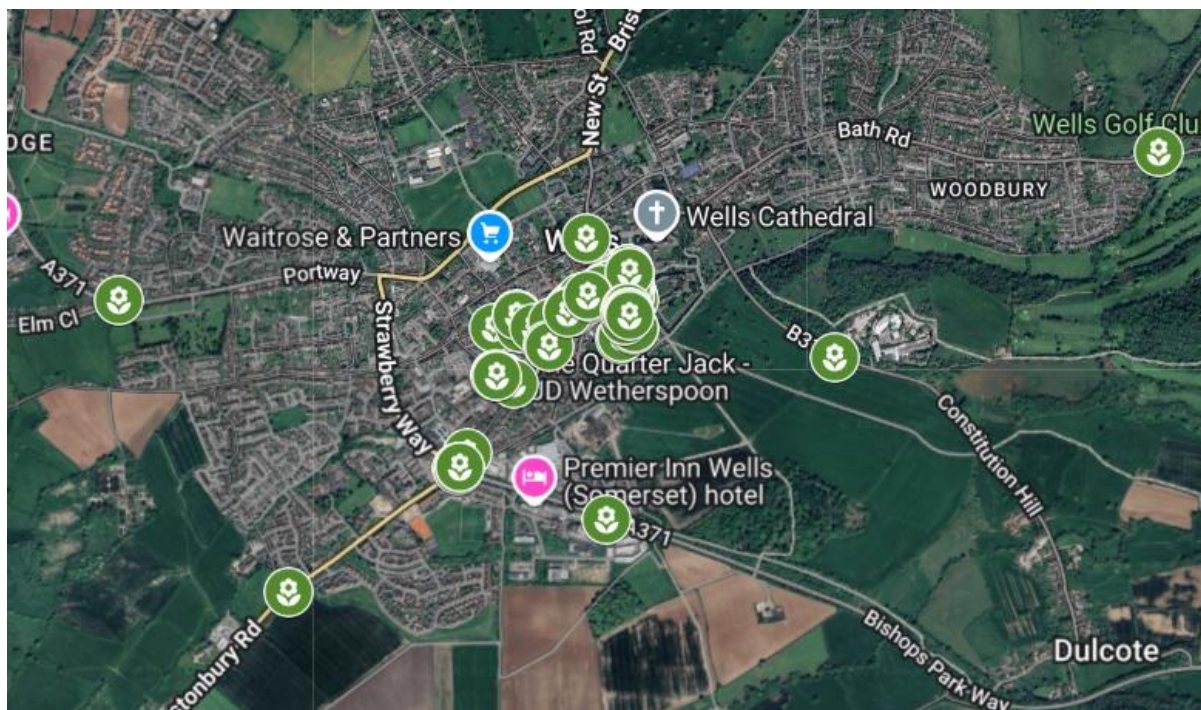
## ITEM 8

# Wells City Council

<b>Author</b>	Matt Johnson
<b>Presented By (if different)</b>	Matt Johnson
<b>Subject</b>	Wells In Bloom Review
<b>Date of report</b>	28.05.2025
<b>For consideration at</b>	Outside Spaces and Environment Committee
<b>Date of consideration</b>	05.06.2025

### Current situation

Wells in Bloom summer plant out is currently undertaken in June to provide a consistent showing of colour for the summer season. It consists of 106 individual planted elements across the City of Wells with the main focus being the market square and the high street, however it also spreads out to the welcome to wells signs on constitution hill, strawberry way, and the portway. (See below)



All of the locations during the summer season are visited daily Monday to Friday to have a condition check as well as watering if required. The watering route takes approximately 6 hours a day for one staff member or reduced to two hours if completed by two staff (4 hours total). In addition to watering our own baskets we water the baskets that are hung by the traders in queen street.

The full plant out is completed by a team of four in approximately 2 days and removed at the end of the summer season (Beginning of October) in a similar time frame.

In October historically we have removed all summer plants and then re-bedded out with winter species to create a constant but more reduced colour spread for the winter months that require little to no watering or maintenance.

Since I took over the scheme when I joined, we have focused on keeping costs as low as possible and reducing the number of staff hours to ensure that the planters are maintained in a cost effective manner.

Our feed routines have equally been adjusted to allow the plants to grow more naturally and put on a decent root mass which then allows the plants to last longer and remain healthier for a far longer period.

## **Income**

Income is split between sponsorship for town centre locations and direct payment for the service.

Direct payment is received from Wells Film Centre, and Carlton Mews as well as one member of the public that has been included in the scheme as well as The Crown in prior years.

Sponsorship is requested via invoice from many small sponsors as a donation, however given it is a donation there is no guarantee of payment. Where donations haven't been received there has been no active re-selling of spare spaces.

I could not find any income regarding the baskets in queen street (we do not provide) however they are watered as part of the scheme.

The income generated for wells in bloom last year via this process was £8370

## **Costs**

In 2024 the annual costs for wells in bloom are as follows.

Fuel, Plants and equipment £9457.61

Staff Hours £9037

Total £18494.41

The plants, fuel and equipment are as per the accounts whereas the costs for staff hours are approximate but within a reasonable tolerance.

One cost that I haven't included is that one vehicle is attributed to wells in bloom for the duration of the summer plant out, given that it has been taken out of service for this period it should ideally be cross charged to wells in bloom and would therefore increase costs accordingly.

2024 is a year in which we did plant out a full winter scheme and as such the costs will be higher than we will see this year as we have reduced the winter plant out. This will be for the front of the town hall only to reduce costs and is planted sustainably to endure longevity. This winter baskets on the town hall were a trial that were put out in October and are still going strong as we speak this will be the scheme for the town hall next winter given it has proved its longevity.

## **Summary:**

### **Sponsorship**

Wells in Bloom in conclusion needs to be given some clarity and thought as to its future direction within the city of wells. At the present moment we plant out to make the town look presentable and appealing however we do this at a loss of £9036.80 given the high costs and limited income that we receive.

I recommend that we need to move away from the sponsorship model that we are using where it is an optional payment and have a realistic look at how we either partner with a key headline sponsor or we look at a few commercial businesses to support the scheme in key areas to guarantee income as well as cover our costs.

To aid the councils ability to look for different income opportunities I think we need to look at what we are trying to achieve with the scheme, we are in the lucky position where given the location of the planters that we have in town we offer access to town centre advertising that is rarely available in a historic city such as this, which I believe is something that would be attractive to bigger businesses should we decide to move in that direction.

Another option open to us would be to look at awards for the plant out scheme however the national awards that judge plant outs are for community-based groups to which we wouldn't have access as a purely council based scheme. Looking as some sort of community scheme for the plant out would allow it to qualify as well as reduce our costs given we would not be providing the manpower.

### **Sustainability**

Wells in Bloom needs to be more sustainable, we have trialed drought resistant planting which does work in the summer however struggles in the winter given the high volumes of water. Whilst it requires less water in the summer it requires more maintenance in the winter period.

We have trialed this winter a more perennial scheme on the front of the town hall which while not drought resistant have required less maintenance and have lasted for an extended period from October through until may and our aim is to keep them on the front of the town hall for the summer season.

When considering sustainability, we need to look at the scheme as a whole, simply looking at watering alone only looks at one aspect of the scheme.

There are some simple solutions that would allow us to make the scheme more sustainable in 2026.

More of a perennial planting scheme that is augmented with summer planting would mean there is less planting and less plant wastage at the end of the season.

Switching to all reservoir planters would allow us to maintain good quality planting without the need to water and maintain daily. Not only will it reduce the maintenance need but it will also reduce fuel usage and staff hours significantly. In this case you could reduce watering to 3 times a week rather than the 5 days a week that we currently have to water for.

## **Conclusion**

Wells in bloom is a planting scheme that needs a specific focus so we can look to market it in a way that appeals to businesses and would allow us to at least be cost neutral if not generate income for WCC.

If we wish to go for national awards the scheme will have to return to a volunteer led status to qualify.

Investing in better planters will reduce the amount of watering and maintenance cost as well as improving the schemes overall sustainability.

Delivering a more perennial-based planting scheme will reduce costs as well as allow the scheme to be more sustainable through reduced wastage.