



## WELLS CITY COUNCIL

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A MEETING OF THE OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE,  
WHICH MEMBERS ARE SUMMONED TO ATTEND, WILL BE HELD IN  
WELLS TOWN HALL ON THURSDAY 4<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2026, 7PM**

Haylee Wilkins  
Town Clerk

28<sup>th</sup> May 2026

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

Committee Members:  
Cllrs: T Butt Philip, D Denis, J Edmonds,  
K Kinshaw, T Kolizeras, D Orrett (Chair),  
S Powell, G Robbins

### AGENDA

The Council has declared a Climate Emergency. All reports should include climate implications alongside financial, legal, and community impacts to support informed decision-making and minimise adverse effects.

Members are asked to consider whether recommendations align with the Council's corporate priorities, climate emergency declaration, resource constraints, and financial implications.

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

#### **1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

To receive any apologies for absence.

#### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive Councillors' Declarations of Interests, made under the Council's Code of Conduct as adopted 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022.

#### **3 MINUTES FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2026**

To be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.



#### 4 ACTIONS FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2026

Open actions not on the agenda are listed below:

Date Raised	Description of Action
30.04.2026	Confirm the placement of the table tennis table within the recreation ground
30.04.2026	To provide details of pollinators within the 2027 planting of the city.
30.04.2026	Confirmation of the removal of the map board posts outside the Town Hall.
30.04.2026	Town Clerk to review the “red circles” marked on trees in the recreation ground.

#### 5 MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Public speaking time is normally restricted to 15 minutes in total, at the discretion of the Chair.

If you wish to speak at the meeting, you are encouraged to contact [reception@wells.gov.uk](mailto:reception@wells.gov.uk) to advise in advance, to aid the management of time.

#### 6 REPORT FROM OUTSIDE SPACES MANAGER

To receive written report of action within the period (attached)

#### 7 TRAFFIC UPDATES

To receive verbal updates from Town Clerk.

#### 8 POLICE AND CRIME UPDATES

To receive update from the officers of the council and receive any supporting update from Avon and Somerset Constabulary (attached)

#### 9 RECREATION GROUND TRUST (WRGT)

To receive updates from the AGM of 03.06.2026 and updates from Working Group Members.

#### 10 PUBLICATION OF POLLINATORS INFORMATION

To receive update of the pollinators publications (attached).

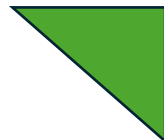
#### 11 PROPOSAL TO CREATE A MANAGED FORAGING AREA AT TORR HILL WOODS

To receive report with recommendations (attached)

#### 12 FORWARD PLAN

Topic	Month
Operational Land Classification	September 2026
Christmas Light Update	September 2026
Leisure & Play Strategy	September 2026
Knapp Hill Project Update	September 2026
Dog Fouling policy and Publication	September 2026
Police and crime updates	Every Month

Traffic updates	Every Month
Recreation Ground Trust (WRGT)	Every Month



### 13 ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

### 14 DATE OF NEXT MEETING: Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2026 at 7pm, Wells Town Hall

#### EXCLUDE THE PRESS AND PUBLIC STATEMENT

Note: If it is necessary for matters to be considered in confidence it will be proposed by the Chair 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. In that instance the following statement is relevant:

#### Exclusion of Press and Public

*The committee are required to consider passing a resolution under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and pursuant to Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information. (Note the agenda item number and name). Where possible, reference the specific paragraph from Schedule 12A:*

*Personal information - This report contains information relating to an individual and is therefore exempt by virtue of Paragraph 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.*

*Financial/business affairs (individuals) - This report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of an individual and is therefore exempt by virtue of Paragraph 2 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.*

*Commercially sensitive information - This report contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information) and is therefore exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.*

## **Agenda Item 6 - Open Spaces Monthly Update May 2026**

The Open Spaces Team has been firmly in the main cutting season this month, with grass growth now requiring regular attention across Council-managed sites. The team has continued to balance planned seasonal work, day-to-day operational duties and additional value tasks where capacity has allowed.

### **Scheduled Work**

All parks have now been cut four times during the current cutting season, helping to keep the main public open spaces tidy, usable and welcoming as we move into the busier summer period.

A full cemetery strim has also been completed. This is always an important seasonal task due to the amount of detailed work required around memorials, paths and boundary areas. The closed churchyards for which the Council is responsible, including the areas on Cathedral Green and at St Cuthbert's Church, have also been included within the current programme of works.

All allotment sites have also been cut as part of the seasonal maintenance programme. At Palace Allotments, the door mechanism has now been changed, and keys have been replaced where plot holders had experienced issues. This should help improve access and resolve the recent problems reported at the site.

Seasonal planting has also been a focus this month. The front of the Town Hall was planted out early in preparation for Mayor Making, ahead of the main Wells in Bloom plant out. This ensured that the Town Hall frontage was looking its best for an important civic occasion. The wider Wells in Bloom plant out was then completed towards the end of the month, refreshing the city's floral displays for residents, businesses and visitors.

Essential hedge works have been carried out along the length of Lovers Walk, as well as at Whiting Way and Wookey Hole Road. Before any work was undertaken, the necessary checks were made for nesting birds. Where required, work was completed by hand rather than machinery to ensure that the maintenance was carried out sensitively and with appropriate care for wildlife.

At Torr Hill Woods, native trees have been replanted and watered in, with protective cages installed to give them the best chance of establishing successfully. Existing trees have also been checked, and where cages needed replacing or repairing, this has been done. This work supports the longer-term improvement of the woodland and helps protect the investment already made in tree planting.

A composting area has been installed at Black Dog Gardens, providing a practical way to manage suitable green waste on site and supporting a more sustainable approach to grounds maintenance.

Two pieces of play furniture have also been refreshed and returned to play areas. This includes the bear at Hawkers Road and the elephant at Bignal Rand Play Area. This is part of the team's ongoing approach to maintaining and refreshing existing play assets where it is safe and practical to do so.

### **Operational Work**

Alongside the scheduled seasonal works, the team has continued with its normal day-to-day duties. This includes daily play park checks, routine market support, reactive maintenance, watering, monitoring of open space assets and general public realm work.

At the beginning of May, the team also cleared and reinstated the Market Square bollards to support the Charter Fair, ensuring that the Market Square could be prepared for the event and returned to normal use afterwards.

### **Added Value Work**

The team has also supported Mendip Cemetery as an additional value task, completing two cuts there to help the site move into the summer in a better position. This sits outside the team's normal maintenance responsibilities, but the work was completed where capacity allowed.

Following discussions with the Chair of Open Spaces, the team also completed a cut of Moat Walk. This area appears to have fallen outside of any active maintenance schedule and is not part of the Council's formal maintenance responsibility. However, the work was agreed as an additional value task and completed to improve the appearance and accessibility of the area.

Overall, it has been a busy month for the Open Spaces Team, with the cutting season now fully underway alongside planting, cemetery work, allotment maintenance, hedge works, tree protection, play area improvements, market support and additional value works across the city.



## Agenda Item 8

# Wells City Council

<b>Author</b>	Haylee Wilkins
<b>Presented By (if different)</b>	
<b>Subject</b>	Police & Crime Update
<b>Date of report</b>	24.04.2026
<b>For consideration at</b>	Outside Spaces
<b>Date of consideration</b>	30.04.2026

### Background

Following recent discussions with the Police and Crime Commission, the Town Clerk has engaged with Rachel Clark and Andrew Pritchard, as well as ensuring regular engagement with the Neighbourhood Policing team.

Moving forward, this will be a standing item on the Outside Spaces committee agenda to allow for any issues to be raised and escalated/discussed with Police colleagues. Equally, it is the intension that Simon Lancey, will, where possible attend meetings regularly, therefore improving the overall communications between the city council, its community and the Police force.

### Who's Who

#### Team members



**Rachel Clark**  
Neighbourhood Inspector



**Simon Lancey**  
Neighbourhood Sergeant



**Alice George**  
Neighbourhood Constable



**Darren Pearson**  
Neighbourhood Constable



**Dan Williams**  
Neighbourhood Constable



**Jason Wyatt**  
PCSO Supervisor



**Ben Newbury**  
PCSO



**Melanie Rowlands**  
PCSO

## Resources Available

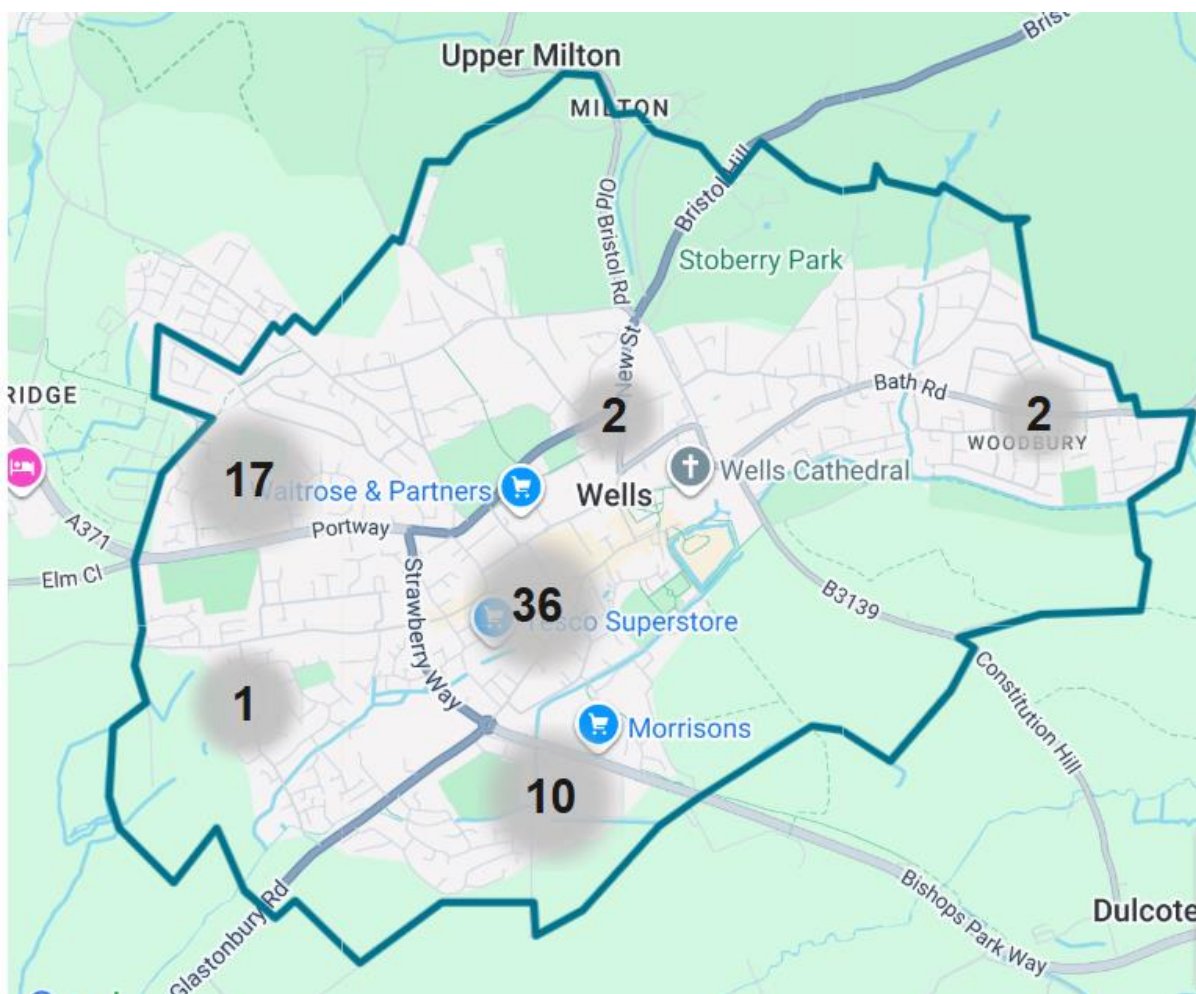
<https://www.police.uk/your-area/avon-somerset-constabulary/wells-city> Offers insight into the issues being monitored and explored by the Police service. Details of incidents, local theses, based on postcode are noted as are the police priorities.

## Wells Incidents:

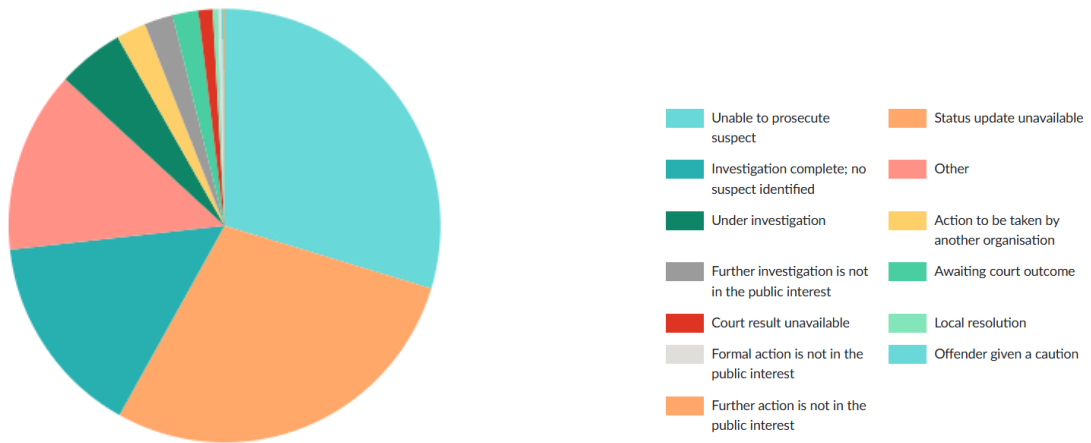
Dec 24	Jan 25	Feb 25	Mar 25	Apr 25	May 25	Jun 25	Jul 25	Aug 25	Sept 25	Oct 25	Nov 25	Dec 25	Jan 26	Feb 26	Mar 26
76	66	64	72	94	82	81	78	118	55	80	108	101	97	68	

Most commonly reported crimes are in (not in order):

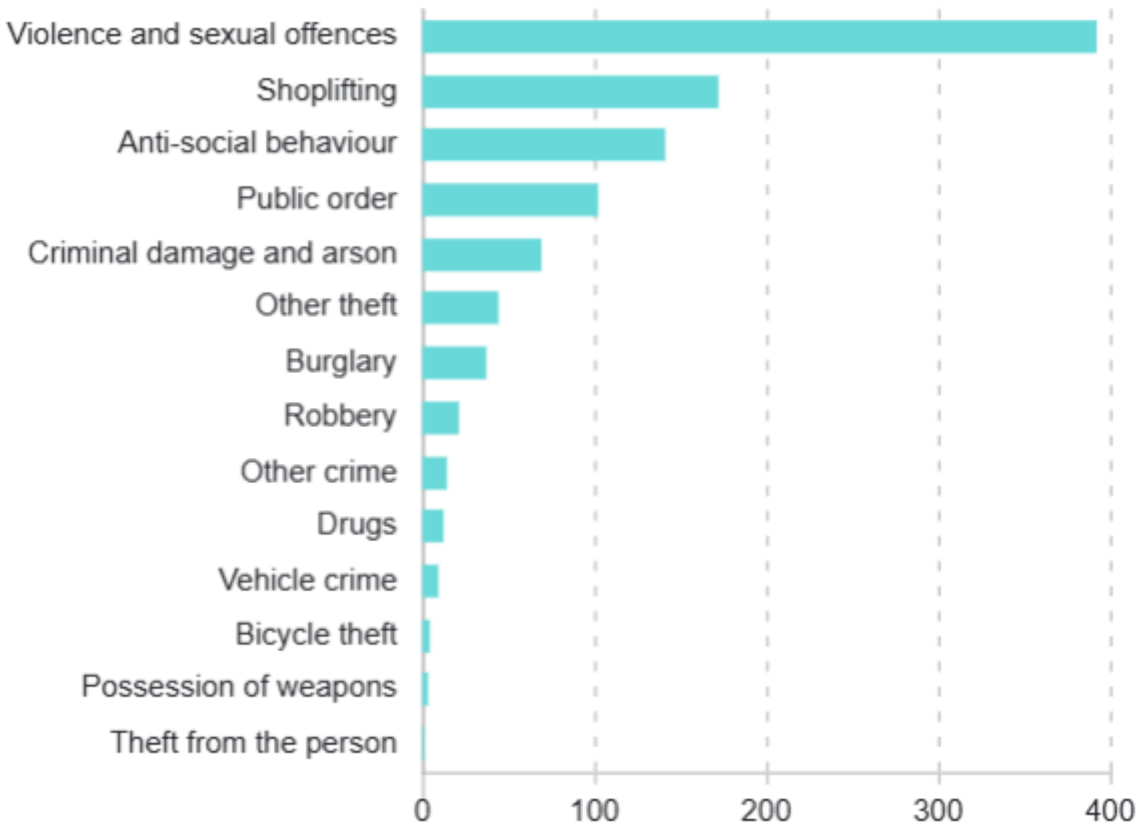
1. Violence and Sexual offenses (23) down from 41 the month previous
2. Shop lifting (11) down from 14 the month previous
3. Anti-Social Behaviour (10) up by 2 the month previous
4. Public Order (9) down by 2 from the month previous



**Crimes by outcome (last 12 months):**



**Crimes by type description (last 12 months):**



**Next Community Meeting dates:**

Wells City Council are now hosting the Police in the vestibule of the Town Hall on the first Saturday of each month. This is in place for the next 12 months. We will continue to work on joint publication of this drop in resource.

There are additional surgeries at Tesco and Boots, all details of which can be found on the meetings and events page of the website.

### **Recommendations**

Council is asked to:

1. Note the content of the report.
2. Actively support the use and distribution of <https://www.police.uk/pu/your-area/avon-somerset-constabulary/wells-city>, to aid local understanding of the police services within Wells and officers engagement with the City Council.

# Helping Native Pollinators Thrive on Wells City Council Land

*Why Wells City Council is changing how some land is managed*



Wells City  
Council

Native pollinators - including bumblebees, solitary bees, butterflies, moths, hoverflies and beetles are essential to a healthy environment. By moving pollen from flower to flower, they support wildflowers, trees and the wider food chain. Wells City Council is therefore managing some land differently to help restore and support them.



*Native pollinators rely on flower-rich habitats to thrive.*

## Why this matters:

Across the UK, many pollinator species have declined due to habitat loss, climate change, pollution, pesticide use and changes in land management. Supporting pollinators helps strengthen local ecosystems and improves the ecological value of council-owned land.

## The environmental benefits:

- Greater biodiversity across council-owned land
- Better support for bees, butterflies and insects
- Healthier plant communities and stronger local ecosystems
- Improved habitat for birds and other wildlife that depend on insects
- A practical contribution to nature recovery and climate resilience in Wells

## What Wells City Council is doing:

- Encouraging native wildflowers and flowering plants
- Creating and protecting flower-rich areas that provide nectar and pollen
- Adjusting mowing in selected spaces so some areas are cut less often
- Managing land to provide food, shelter and habitat through the growing season
- Building a stronger network of nature-friendly spaces across parks, verges and open areas

## What residents may notice:

- Longer grass in selected locations
- More wildflowers and flowering plants
- A more natural appearance in some areas
- Explanatory signs where appropriate
- A visible difference between formal areas and biodiversity-focused areas

## A shared commitment

This work forms part of Wells City Council's wider commitment to good land management, biodiversity recovery and environmental stewardship. By making thoughtful changes to how some land is managed, the Council can help ensure that public spaces do more for wildlife, the environment and future generations.



# Why Some Grass Areas Will Be Managed as Meadow

*How Wells City Council is managing land for greater biodiversity*

In selected locations, Wells City Council will manage some grassed areas as meadow rather than cutting every part to a short formal finish throughout the growing season. A clear cut swathe will be maintained around the perimeter, while the central area will be left to grow and cut later under a meadow management approach.



*A cut perimeter swathe keeps areas tidy while the centre is managed as meadow.*

## Why this approach is being used

Traditional close mowing creates a neat appearance, but it can limit the ability of grasses and flowering plants to complete their natural cycle. Allowing selected central areas to grow for longer creates better conditions for wildflowers to emerge, flower and set seed naturally.

## What residents will see:

- A neatly cut perimeter swathe around the edge of the space
- A taller central area left to grow during the season
- More grasses and naturally occurring wildflowers
- A clear distinction between formal spaces and biodiversity-focused areas

## Safety and visibility

Sight lines will be kept clear at junctions, access points and other locations where visibility is required. The meadow approach will be applied carefully and appropriately, with public safety and access remaining a priority at all times.

## Why not cut everything short?

Not all land needs to be managed in the same way. Formal areas used for recreation, access, events or visual presentation will continue to receive normal cutting regimes. Meadow management will be used only where it is suitable and where it can provide a clear biodiversity benefit.

## The environmental benefits

- Greater biodiversity through a wider range of grasses and flowering plants
- Improved support for pollinators and other invertebrates
- Natural seeding and regeneration over time
- More varied and resilient green spaces across council-owned land
- A balanced approach that supports both people and nature



## Agenda Item 11

# Wells City Council

<b>Author</b>	Matt Johnson, Open Spaces Manager
<b>Subject</b>	<b>Proposal to Create a Managed Foraging Area at Torr Hill Woods</b>
<b>Date of report</b>	27/05/26
<b>For consideration at</b>	Open Spaces Committee
<b>Date of consideration</b>	04/06/2026

### Sign Off

<b>Chair of the Committee</b>	Signed off	
<b>Town Clerk</b>	Signed off	
<b>Have you considered the following within your decision</b>	<b>Financial Implications</b>	Yes - limited associated costs only; no direct cost for saplings.
	<b>Legal Implications</b>	Yes - Council-owned land; responsible foraging guidance and access safety required.
	<b>Climate Implications</b>	Yes - positive biodiversity, pollinator and habitat benefits.
	<b>Consultation &amp; Community Engagement</b>	Yes - public interpretation, communications and potential volunteer involvement.

### Introduction

Wells City Council has successfully applied to the Woodland Trust and has been awarded a Wild Harvest Pack containing 105 native saplings. The pack includes hawthorn, rowan, elder, blackthorn, hazel and wild cherry. These species provide a strong foundation for a managed foraging area, with benefits for fruit, nuts, blossom, pollinators, birds, habitat structure and public education.

It is proposed that the saplings are used to create a managed foraging area within Torr Hill Woods on land wholly owned by Wells City Council. All planting will be kept within the Council land boundary. The project would be supported by additional wild garlic planting and, where appropriate, other suitable native edible species such as dog rose, crab apple, wild strawberry, managed bramble/native raspberry and a small managed nettle area away from main paths.

The saplings are due to be delivered in November. Officers propose to pot them on and overwinter them in a managed nursery arrangement before planting them out in spring. This will allow the plants to be monitored, protected and checked for viability, while giving officers time to prepare the final planting layout and associated public information.

The project should be presented as a long-term biodiversity and community engagement project rather than an immediate food production scheme. Wild garlic may provide early public interest, but the trees and shrubs will take several years to establish and longer to provide meaningful harvestable crops.

### Options for consideration:

#### **Option 1 - Do nothing**

The Council could decline to progress the project and either not use the saplings or plant them without a defined purpose. This would avoid any additional work but would miss the opportunity to create a visible biodiversity and community education asset.

#### **Option 2 - Plant the saplings directly on arrival in November**

The Council could plant the saplings immediately on receipt. This would be quicker, but it would provide less time for site preparation, boundary confirmation, layout planning and establishment checks. It may increase the risk of losses if conditions are unsuitable or if the site is not fully prepared.

#### **Option 3 - Recommended option: pot on, overwinter and plant out in spring as a managed foraging area**

The Council pots on the saplings after delivery in November, overwinters them under managed conditions, prepares the site over winter, and plants out in spring. The planting would be designed as a woodland-edge and glade-edge foraging area, augmented with wild garlic and

appropriate native edible species. This option gives the plants the best chance of taking hold and creates the strongest long-term public and ecological benefit.

#### Options for consideration

##### Option 1 - Do nothing

The Council could decline to progress the project and either not use the saplings or plant them without a defined purpose. This would avoid any additional work but would miss the opportunity to create a visible biodiversity and community education asset.

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#### Risk and opportunities summary

Option	Opportunities	Risks / issues
1. Do nothing	No additional officer time or material costs.	Missed opportunity; grant value not fully realised; no new biodiversity or public engagement benefit.
2. Plant directly in November	Quick delivery and immediate use of saplings.	Less planning time; potential higher failure rate; weaker interpretation and layout.
3. Recommended staged project	Better establishment; stronger site planning; public engagement; long-term biodiversity and foraging value.	Requires limited officer time, pots/compost, monitoring and aftercare.

## Financial Implications:

The 105 saplings have been awarded by the Woodland Trust at no direct cost to the Council. The project can therefore be delivered as a low-cost enhancement using existing Open Spaces resources.

Limited associated costs may include:

- Pots and compost for overwintering the saplings.
- Wild garlic bulbs or plug plants.
- Additional native edible species if approved and suitable.
- Mulch.
- Tree guards, stakes or biodegradable protection where required.
- Signage or interpretation.
- Officer time for potting, site preparation, planting and aftercare.

Volunteer involvement, partnership support or local sponsorship could be explored where appropriate. The recommended option should not create a significant new revenue pressure, provided the scheme is designed as a low-input native planting project rather than a formal garden or orchard.

## Committee is recommended to:

1. Approve the creation of a managed foraging area at Torr Hill Woods on land wholly owned by Wells City Council.
2. Note that Wells City Council has been awarded a Woodland Trust Wild Harvest Pack containing 105 saplings.
3. Support the proposed approach of potting on and overwintering the saplings following delivery in November, before planting them out in spring to improve establishment success.
4. Support the augmentation of the area with wild garlic and other suitable native edible species, subject to site suitability and ecological considerations.
5. Authorise officers to prepare the final planting plan, confirm the final layout within the Council land boundary, develop an aftercare programme and produce appropriate public interpretation and responsible foraging guidance.
6. Note that the project should be publicised as a biodiversity, wellbeing and community education initiative, rather than as an immediate harvest scheme.

Nomination of decision:

Secunder of decision:

## Appendices:

- Appendix A - Woodland Trust Wild Harvest Pack Species Mix
- Appendix B - Establishment, Planting and Aftercare Plan
- Appendix C - Risk and Mitigation Register
- Appendix D - Suggested Public Interpretation and Communications

## Appendix A - Woodland Trust Wild Harvest Pack Species Mix

The Woodland Trust Wild Harvest Pack awarded to Wells City Council contains 105 native saplings. The mix provides a broad seasonal structure of blossom, fruit, berries, nuts and habitat value.

Species	Quantity	Foraging value	Wildlife / landscape value
Hawthorn	10	Haws; traditional hedgerow fruit use where properly identified.	Blossom, pollinator value, bird food and habitat structure.
Rowan	5	Berries can be used when properly prepared and confidently identified.	Berries for birds and strong seasonal interest.
Elder	15	Elderflower and elderberries; high public recognition.	Pollinator value and quick establishment in woodland-edge conditions.
Blackthorn	30	Sloes; strong traditional foraging value.	Early blossom, dense habitat and nesting value.
Hazel	15	Hazelnuts once established.	Coppice value, structure and wildlife shelter.
Wild cherry	30	Cherries for wildlife and limited responsible foraging once mature.	Spring blossom, bird food and pollinator value.

## Appendix B - Establishment, Planting and Aftercare Plan

The project should be managed as a staged establishment process to maximise the chance of successful planting and reduce avoidable plant loss.

### November delivery and overwintering

- Receive the saplings in November and check condition on arrival.
- Pot on the saplings in suitable compost and store in a managed nursery arrangement.
- Check regularly for watering, drainage, frost, wind rock and browsing damage.
- Retain a simple record of losses or weak plants before final planting.

### Winter preparation

- Confirm the final planting layout within the Council land boundary.
- Identify access routes, desire lines and any areas to be avoided.
- Locate thorny species away from main paths and pinch points.
- Identify shaded and damp areas suitable for wild garlic.
- Prepare mulch, guards, stakes or biodegradable protection as required.

### **Spring planting and establishment**

- Plant out the overwintered saplings in spring once the site is ready.
- Mulch around new planting to retain moisture and reduce competition.
- Water during prolonged dry conditions in the first establishment years.
- Inspect annually, replacing failed plants where necessary.
- Monitor wild garlic spread and manage bramble, nettle or other beneficial foraging species where retained.

### **Appendix C - Risk and Mitigation Register**

Risk	Mitigation	Residual position
Planting extends beyond the intended Council-owned area.	Confirm the final planting layout before works are undertaken and ensure all planting remains within Council land boundaries.	Low, once layout is confirmed.
Saplings fail before planting out.	Pot on after delivery, overwinter under managed conditions, monitor watering and drainage, and plant out only once the site is prepared.	Reduced by staged establishment.
Spring planting coincides with dry conditions.	Mulch at planting, water during prolonged dry periods, and prioritise early establishment checks.	Manageable through aftercare.
Public expectation of immediate harvesting.	Publicise the project as a long-term establishment scheme and explain that meaningful harvesting will take several years.	Low with clear messaging.
Over-foraging once plants establish.	Provide responsible foraging guidance and encourage small-scale personal use only.	Manageable through interpretation.

Risk	Mitigation	Residual position
Misidentification of edible plants.	Include safety wording making clear people should only consume plants they can identify with confidence.	Reduced by cautious communications.
Wild garlic spreads too strongly.	Plant wild garlic in defined areas only and monitor spread.	Manageable through routine checks.
Thorny species create access issues.	Keep blackthorn, hawthorn and dog rose away from main paths, pinch points and desire lines.	Low with good layout.
Damage to existing sensitive habitat.	Carry out a site check before planting and avoid areas with existing valuable ground flora or sensitive features.	Reduced by site assessment.
Long-term maintenance burden.	Design as a low-input native planting scheme with annual checks rather than a formal garden or orchard.	Low if expectations are managed.

## Appendix D - Suggested Public Interpretation and Communications

The project should be framed as a managed native foraging and biodiversity initiative. Public messaging should focus on responsible foraging, safe identification, wildlife benefit and the long-term establishment of the area.

### Suggested interpretation wording

*This area is being developed by Wells City Council as a native foraging and wildlife area. Please forage responsibly: only take small amounts for personal use, never uproot plants, leave plenty for wildlife, and only eat plants you can identify with confidence.*

### Potential public engagement

- A spring wild garlic post or seasonal update.
- An autumn berries and nuts feature.
- A volunteer planting day where appropriate.
- A children's nature trail or simple seasonal activity.
- Social media updates showing the plants establishing over time.