

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 5TH JUNE 2025 AT 6:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

PRESENT: Cllrs: T Butt Philip, D Denis, S Powell, G Robbins

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: H Wilkins
Outside Spaces Officer: M Johnson
L Agabani (Mayor)
WCC Staff: C Hobbs
8 members of the public

25/01/OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cllrs: S Eden, D Orrett (Chair)

In the absence of the Cllr D Orrett (Chair), Cllr D Denis nominated Cllr G Robbins to chair the meeting.

25/02/OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

Cllr T Butt Philip expressed an interest due to his role as Councillor of the Somerset Unitary Authority.

25/03/OS APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

Cllr S Powell nominated Cllr G Robbins for the position of Vice Chair of the Open Spaces Committee. Cllr D Denis seconded the nomination.

There were no other nominations. Cllr G Robbins accepted the role of Vice Chair.

**25/04/OS ACTIONS FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 3RD APRIL 2025**

No actions other than those included on the agenda.

Cllr D Denis made reference to the proposal for the community garden at the Portway Annexe.

The Town Clerk updated the meeting that after public consultation, there had been a little interest from three residents, but that Charis, already operating from the Portway Annexe had expressed support of the garden at the location. We are engaging with Charis to enable displaced families might support the community garden and the Town Clerk will report back at the next meeting.

Cllr D Denis asked that the three residents who'd expressed an interest, be written to, to thank them for their interest.

**25/05/OS MINUTES FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES & ESTATES COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON 3RD APRIL 2025**

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Vice-Chair.

25/06/OS MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

L Pedley, resident of Ash Grove spoke on behalf of herself and fellow residents of Ash Grove and Ash Lane. There are concerns due to inconsiderate parking and how this impacts on the safety of the area. After consulting and receiving support from Ash Grove residents L Pedley is asking Somerset Council to add double yellow lines on the junctions with support from Wells City Council.

The matter is on the agenda for discussion.

C Simons spoke of concerns when with regard to market trader vehicle movements.

C Simons spoke of his disapproval of the numbers of A-boards on pavements in the High Street with regards to them being an obstruction. He suggested businesses might have names added to hanging baskets as advertising space rather than the A-boards.

The Town Clerk advised that that a written response had already been provided to Mr Symons associated with traffic management, and that relevant risk assessments were in place for the function. Equally, current temporary traffic regulation order (TTRO) will cease soon with a replacement order being sought as previously advised to council and signage alter in line with this. The Town Clerk reported that in conjunction with Somerset colleagues, solutions to the A board issue are being sought.

Mr Hornidge spoke of his displeasure of South Street Car park being utilised for filming, noting the inconvenience for residents. He asked if Wells City Council were consulted. The Town Clerk advised that WCC were aware of the car park changes and notified residents as soon as they became aware. It is believed that any future filming arrangements would look to take into consideration the views of residents where possible and alternative locations/arrangements. The Town Clerk referenced that consideration should also be given to the significant income, and opportunity that filming can offer also and the wider economy of Wells benefits from their presence. Cllr T Butt-Philip referenced that Somerset Council is aware of the concerns and that mitigations would be applied for future instances of filming wherever possible.

C Winter offered the support of the Civic Society to Wells City Council for any current or future projects.

25/07/OS TRAFFIC UPDATE AND PARISH PROPOSALS

The Town Clerk presented the report and the consultation feedback which has been circulated to committee members.

The paper before committee sought agreement to the applications of double yellow lines at the entrance to Ash Grove/Ash Lane to mitigate the noted concerns.

The Town Clerk explained that Wells City Council is required to recommend any improvements or alterations for traffic measures to Somerset Council, and as such, Traffic would now be a standing item on the Outside Spaces Agenda.

Cllr D Denis asked that the proposals be accepted, Cllr S Powell seconded the proposal.

All Councillors voted in favour of the proposal.

25/08/OS WELLS IN BLOOM REVIEW

The Outside Spaces Officer spoke that he hoped the report would offer clarity in terms of income versus costs for the function, following an internal review of process and procedure. Costs are noted between £18,000-£20,000 with income of £10,000 offset against this.

Councillors discussed the current sponsorship scheme.

Cllr D Denis informed the meeting that the volunteer group previously delivering the function has now disbanded but there may be the potential to grow the group again to assist with planting in certain areas. Cllr D Denis suggested that perhaps pollinator-friendly plants in some areas but perhaps more traditional displays in the tourist, central areas.

Cllr L Agabani asked how M Johnson would manage the situation with the monies allocated. M Johnson replied that the planters needed to define the centre of town with planting rather than locations being in some areas dispersed across the city. He mentioned that there may be the potential to include the schools in the competition in a different way to previous years.

Cllr T Butt Philip suggested that planters be re located to address the issue of inappropriate parking through the High Street.

Action: The Town Clerk will determine an action plan which will be brought back to a future meeting for consideration for both sponsorship and planting locations, this will be applicable from 2026-27, with planting needs being determined for ordering in September 2025.

25/09/OS GRASS CUTTING IN TOR HILL LANE

Cllr D Denis reported that the land at Torr Hill Lane continues to belong to Somerset Council but that Wells City Council support Sustainable Wells through the change in contractors to ensure the environmental work continues at the location.

Action – Town Clerk to contact Somerset Council to ensure smooth transition to new team.

25/10/OS ECO WEEK/WELLS ENVIRONMENT NETWORK

Cllr Denis proposed that Wells City Council support the cross parish working group to form an event alongside other third-party representation to support delivery of local response for active travel on Saturday 18th October 2025.

The proposal is that the event will take over the Bishops Barn and Recreation area and working in conjunction with St Cuthbert Out parish council, volunteer groups and cycle groups.

Cllr T Butt Philip seconded the proposal and suggested that approval of officer time be discussed with the Town Clerk.

Cllr L Agabani (Mayor) asked if St Cuthbert Out were contributing financially to the event. Cllr D Denis reassured that St Cuthbert Out had contributed a great deal of officer time.

All Councillors voted in favour of the proposal.

25/11/OS ACT TO ADAPT

Cllr Denis to provide an update on the Draft Plan for future Full City Council consideration. The final plan will be released once public consultation has been analysed. This will take approximately 2 months and will be launched at Wells Eco Week. The draft plan will go to Full Council on 19th June 2025.

25/12/OS 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

25/13/OS ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

Cllr D Denis asked a question about allotments which are uncultivated and how many existed in this manner at present. The Outside Spaces officer advised that the Council has one plot which is being managed through process and procedure at present.

Cllr T Butt Philip asked how grass cutting had progressed.

The Outside Spaces officer responded that new staff had been TUPED over and that the grass cutting in areas in the cutting plans are being worked through.

Cllr T Butt Philip stressed that it important to maintain open areas where children play but which may not be deemed official playgrounds.

Cllr D Denis asked how Staff and public will know which authority is responsible for a particular location.

The Town Clerk reassured the meeting that there is a plan which can be seen on request but that there will be a map produced to explain more clearly, the areas that Wells City Council are responsible for, verses those remaining with Somerset council.

25/14/OS DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 3rd July 2025, 6pm, Wells Town Hall

Minutes signed by The Chair: Date:

WEN Notes from 24/3/25

Apologies: C Johnson, G Witor, G Robins, E Lewis, S Nash, S Goodwin, S Crocker, C Charles

Present: D Denis, L Sorenson, M Milnes, D Orrett, G Braga, S Powell, J Mochrie,

B McCartney, B Fletcher, S Whitby

Projects offered so far:

Bishops' Palace- James Cross will lead a garden tour on Tuesday 14 October and Siobhan will set up a nature activity trail to run during the week. Denise and Siobhan to liaise re publicity and bookings.

Vicars Close- TBA

WDWG- Victoria Hillman could offer a talk on 11/10- Attracting Wildlife to Your Garden. Fungus Foray in Stockhill Woods TBA.

Stewart Crocker- can offer a Talk/Debate- The impact of food choices on the health of the environment- What have our choices got to do with farming practices, health of our soils, landscapes, carbon, emissions, our health and food security.

Tor Hill Lane-will showcase on Saturday 11/10. Also, MM is working with B Lakin and Dr Alex Grundy to run Nature Walks during Eco week for mindfulness and identification of plants and animals and invertebrates.

Charlie Bighams-DD and MM to visit the Quarry 26/3 and meet Gavin Hares to discuss opportunities.

St Thomas Church-MM has contacted Judy Penhaligon (churchwarden) who is keen to work on projects and have Harvest Service 5/10. She hopes the church and congregation can develop environmental approach within the Church and the church yard and would then draw this all together at the service on 12/10.

St Cuthbert's Church- DD has contacted Antonia Gwyn (churchwarden) who has offered to develop ideas as the church is very keen to be involved. They will be celebrating Harvest and may set up an exhibition.

3 Wells City Junior Schools and Wells Blue School- DD has written to all and then made a follow up phone call. Hoping that this might provide some interest but not sure.

Cathedral School- BM will try and get information and involvement from all levels of the school. SP offered to liaise with the current Student Environment Captain and see what projects would work and be of interest to carry forward into next school year when a new Student Captain is appointed. Bob offered Cedar's Hall/Quilters Hall as venues available for events if WEN required.

Scouts- TBA

Somerset Wildlife Team Wilder- Can offer support in many ways in the summer months and lead up to the Autumn. GB will contact Pippa Rayner re Churchyards in rural parishes- and Wells. He offered to work with Cathedral School to be a catalyst in set up for a schools' event in Eco week.

Other ideas could be to develop a corridor with Council and communities and DD suggested the this needs a meeting with Outside Spaces officer and Town Clerk- DD to arrange.

Deborah Orrett- offered to do a high-profile litter pick and suggested the Mosaic Project could be presented on the Saturday as a completed and ready for a site centrally. She feels it strongly reflects the environment in the mosaic.

Sustainable Wells- Would like to set up a pop-up repair café manned by volunteers over 5/6 days. The location would need to be central. DD to ask Town Clerk if the Bus Station Information Kiosk would be suitable. Also, Fixy Bus would like to do the event again like last year.

Jamie Mochrie- would be happy to run another cycle maintenance workshop. Discussion on merits of holding a cycle rally and the need to ensure all risks and assessments and responsibilities. DD to check with Town Clerk.

Strawberry Line- No input yet, but everyone agreed this would be a very valuable addition to events of Eco week.

Westbury Community Tree Nursery- Buffy Fletcher offered to run a presentation/talk on growing the right trees in the right place- facts and tips and GB suggested this could link to the Somerset Tree Strategy.

Publicity- posters and banners are good from last year. We will need to redesign A4 posters for shops/ display boards and stands at events. DD advised we need a central tel.no for people to contact if not able to use WIFI/internet. DD/MM to meet with C Lee.

Finance- Currently £569 .25 in Lloyds Community Account.

Future Dates

Monday 28 April 5pm. Parkes Room Town Hall

Wednesday 28 May 5pm. Parkes Room at Town Hall.