

WELLS CITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE HELD ON THURSDAY 5TH FEBRUARY 2026 AT 6:00PM IN WELLS TOWN HALL

PRESENT: Cllrs: T Butt Philip, D Denis, J Edmonds, D Orrett (Chair)

IN ATTENDANCE: Town Clerk: H Wilkins
WCC Staff: S Glendinning
MP for Wells and Mendip Hills/Somerset Cllr for Wells: T Munt
5 members of the public

26/01/OS APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cllrs: S Eden, T Kolizeras, S Powell, G Robbins

Outside Spaces Officer: M Johnson

26/02/OS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

None declared.

26/03/OS MINUTES FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4TH DECEMBER 2025

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

26/04/OS ACTIONS FROM THE OUTSIDE SPACES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4TH DECEMBER 2025

25/73/OS Cllr Denis thanked WCC for arranging to move the dog waste bin in the Recreation Ground to the main footpath near to South Street car park. This will hopefully now reduce the footfall over the car park wall.

25/74/OS Cllr Denis asked for pollinator friendly/sustainable plants to be ordered for next year's winter planting. The Town Clerk agreed to consider this request.

The Town Clerk presented the Outside Spaces Officer's report (copy attached). Cllr Butt Philip stressed the need to advise the public what is being achieved. The Town Clerk explained a communication strategy will be put in place.

26/05/OS MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

A member of the public requested that consideration be given to cowslips at Tor Lane before mowing.

The Town Clerk explained that the team were already aware of the need for careful management in this area.

Children's play area was suggested to be used as an allotment area.

WCC are in the process of developing a leisure and play strategy for all green and open spaces in the city which will determine the best location for all activities for the benefit of all.

Shirley Gardiner was interested in finding out more about Black Dog Gardens and Tor Hill Lane & Gardens. The Town Clerk explained a 'Memorandum of Understanding' had recently been put in place with community groups to support those areas in a more managed way. Ms Gardiner has an allotment at the Bishop's Palace and has had trouble with being able to access and exit the main gate due to a faulty lock. The Town Clerk was aware of the issue and agreed to follow this up.



A member of the public raised an issue with the parking metres in Union St car park. They have had a sign on them to say they are not working and you should find another car park, he strongly felt this not to be acceptable. The Town Clerk agreed to contact Somerset Council.

Cllr Munt asked for WCC to consider a location for Wells Free-cycle for four Sundays each year, between 1pm – 3pm, each year. They have been using the car park close to the Good Earth but this was no longer available. The Market Place or Union St car park were put forward as suggested sites. The Town Clerk agreed to consider and report back.

26/06/OS BIG BRITISH SPRING CLEAN

The Town Clerk presented her report and members were asked to note the content of the report and agree to the sign up of the national scheme and look at how we can better link with our existing Wells Litter Pickers. All members were in agreement.

26/07/OS TRAFFIC, PARKING AND HIGHWAYS UPDATE

The Town Clerk presented her report and gave an overview of this month's updates. Cllr Denis queried who had made the request for additional disabled bays in Becket Place. Cllr Butt Philip confirmed he had done this. Members were asked to advise of any additional projects that had not been included in her report.

26/08/OS POLICE AND CRIME UPDATES- STANDING AGENDA ITEM

The Town Clerk explained this would be a standing agenda item going forward. There has been lots of conversation concerning local crime with a visit from the Police & Crime Commissioner at Full Council and engagement with Simon Lancey, Neighbourhood Sergeant. It has been agreed to improve the communication and therefore this monthly report will provide details of crime and disorder in the local area, give statistics and help to build a relationship with our local neighbourhood police team. Additionally the Town Clerk now meets with the Neighbourhood Inspector, Rachel Clark, on a quarterly basis. The Town Clerk invited members to visit the Avon & Somerset website page for Wells. Cllr Denis questioned the level of authority that a PCSO and a Special Constable has. The Town Clerk agreed to clarify. Cllr Orrett asked for contact telephone numbers, which the Town Clerk agreed to report back on as she wasn't aware if these were in the public domain and likely that reports should be logged to 101/999.

26/09/OS STRAWBERRY LINE SIGNAGE UPDATE

The Town Clerk presented her report which explained where Wells City Council have been asked to support improving the signage on the Strawberry Line.

26/10/OS ACT TO ADAPT AND SOMERSET WILD LIFE TRUST PLANTING SCHEME

The Town Clerk presented her report which detailed new planting in the Recreation Ground utilising the Act to Adapt funding of £1,000. Plants have been selected to create a drought garden. It was agreed to continue and use local groups to support the continued replanting or planting provision of the space.

26/11/OS BARNES CLOSE ALLOTMENT CLOSURES FOR FACILITIES WORKS

The Town Clerk explained during 16th – 20th March essential electricity ground work is being carried out in the area of Barnes Close allotments and access will only be available on foot. Allotment holders have been informed, along with a close resident whose garage access is also affected.

26/12/OS UNAUTHORISED OCCUPATION OF COUNCIL LAND POLICY

The Town Clerk presented the Outside Spaces Officer's report which provides a policy for managing unauthorised camping on council owned land, drawn up in alignment with Somerset Council Homelessness Protocols.



Cllr Denis asked whether the Outside Spaces Team would be provided with the appropriate training to deal with such incidents. The Town Clerk confirmed this would be provided.

26/13/OS PROPOSAL FROM CLLR DENIS – TOR HILL LAND FIELD

Cllr Denis explained this was the replacement of ten trees at Tor Furlong Field near the Cathedral School playing fields, where the existing trees have died. Using trees from West Mendip tree nursery who use seeds from local seeds/soil. The only cost would be for the tree guards at £30. The trees would cost £10. Sustainable Wells have the funds to donate to this. It was agreed to proceed with this proposal.

26/14/OS CONSULTATION ON GREEN LANE PROPOSALS

Somerset Council have advised they are looking at possible changes to the road layout and access along Burcott Lane to improve access for people walking, cycling and horse riding. Changes would initially be put in place as a trial. Views on this are requested by 24th February.

It was agreed to ask :
how long would a proposed trial be in place for?
how would mitigation in a narrow lane be managed?

Two potential locations for an initial trial have been identified along Burcott Lane on either side of the junction with Gipsy Lane. It was Cllr Butt Philip's view that the location this side of Wells (Point B) would be his preferred option.

Cllr Munt asked how comments will be collated, who will be allowed to comment, what signage & where will be in place to warn motorists.

The Town Clerk agreed to prepare a response.

26/15/OS FORWARD PLAN

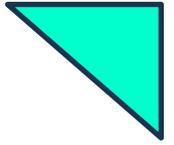
It was agreed to arrange a workshop to proceed with the forward plan.

26/16/OS ANY MATTERS OF URGENT REPORT

The were no matters of urgent report.

26/17/OS DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 5th March 2026, 6pm, Wells Town Hall

Minutes signed by The Chair: **Date:**



Wells City Council – Open Spaces Committee
Monthly Operational Update Report
Reporting Period: December – January (Christmas Period)

Overview

Over the Christmas period, the Open Spaces Team has continued to deliver core seasonal maintenance while placing additional focus on improving the overall tidiness and presentation of Wells. Alongside routine hedge management works, resources were directed toward renovation, cleaning, and asset improvements to enhance public spaces across the city.

Grounds and Environmental Maintenance

- All traffic islands across Wells have been cleaned, with weeds removed and general presentation improved to support a tidier streetscape.
- A city wide litter pick was also undertaken over the Christmas period, helping to improve cleanliness across key public areas following increased seasonal footfall. This is in addition to the regular litter picks completed by our own team as part of day to day process, and those of the wonderful volunteer group.
- Seasonal hedge maintenance has continued in line with the winter maintenance programme, ensuring areas remain safe and well managed.

Asset Renovation and Improvements

- Renovated benches have now been returned to the Recreation Ground following refurbishment works.
- Additional benches have been withdrawn from service and are currently undergoing a similar renovation process to extend their lifespan and improve visual appearance. This will continue on a rotation basis with comms being issued to advise the public accordingly. We are being careful not to remove too many from one location at the same time to ensure continuity of space to sit.
- A waste bin from the Recreation Ground has been removed to assess the feasibility of refurbishment, supporting a more sustainable approach to asset management.

Play Areas and Sports Equipment

- Essential play park maintenance works have been completed across sites, including the installation of new swings at Tor Furlong Play Park and Bignal Rand Play Park.
- The previously withdrawn net swing has been refurbished with new ropes and reinstated at Bignal Rand Play Park.
- Goal posts at Tor Furlong Play Park have been removed, cleaned, and repainted as part of planned maintenance and will be reinstalled shortly.

Equipment and Operational Updates

- Newly purchased gazebos have been delivered and assembled by the team.
- Trailers have been reconfigured to safely accommodate and transport the newer gazebo equipment, improving operational efficiency and supporting future events.

Summary

The team has maintained routine seasonal maintenance while delivering visible improvements to public spaces throughout the Christmas period. The focus on renovation, repair, reuse, and enhanced cleanliness reflects the Council's commitment to maintaining high standards within existing resources while enhancing the overall presentation of Wells.

Matt Johnson
Outside Spaces Officer
February 2026