



# Northampton TOWN COUNCIL

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – 12<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2024 – 18:00**

**To: Members of the Environmental Services Committee:**

Councillors Stevens, (Chair), Kilbride (Deputy Chair), Ashraf, Brown, Choudary, Fuchshuber, Haque, Joyce, Meredith, Miah, Soan, and Tarasiewicz

Distributed electronically to all other councillors for information.

**You are summoned to attend the meeting of Environmental Services Committee of Northampton Town Council to be held at the Committee Room, Northampton Town Council Offices, Guildhall on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024 at 18.00.**

Public participation is in accordance with the Town Council's public participation policy. Members of public will need to contact the Town Clerk in advance if they wish to speak on any agenda item, except for item 3.

**Stuart Carter**  
Town Clerk  
6<sup>th</sup> February 2024

**Guildhall**  
**Northampton**  
**NN1 1DE**

## **A G E N D A**

- 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
- 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 3. TO AUTHORISE THE CHAIR TO SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 13<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2023**

*Pages 3-7*

- 4. TO REVIEW AND PROVIDE A DECISION ON THE FOLLOWING CLIMATE CHANGE GRANT APPLICATIONS**

- a. C2C SOCIAL ACTION – CCGS3  
*Democratic Services Officer's Report Attached*

*Pages 9-15*

- b. ROWEN AND CLARENCE AVEVENUE TREE PLANTING PROJECT – CCGS4  
*Democratic Services Officer's Report Attached*

*Pages 17-20*

**5. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON NORTHAMPTON IN BLOOM 2024**

*Events and Project Officers Report Attached*

*Pages 21-22*

**6. TO CONSIDER THE TOWN COUNCIL'S POSITION ON BIODIVERSITY**

*Chair's Verbal Report*

**7. TO RECEIVE AN UPDATE ON THE CLIMATE CHANGE FORUM'S ACTIVITY INCLUDING A REQUEST FOR FUNDING FOR THE PROJECTS OUTLINED IN THE REPORT**

*Chair's Report Attached*

*Pages 23-25*

**8. TO DISCUSS AND CONSIDER PARTICIPATION IN UNIVERSITY OF NORTHAMPTON'S SUSTAINABILITY, LOCAL INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP AGENDA HUB (SLIPAH)**

*Chair's Verbal Report*

**9. TO CONSIDER THE FUTURE MANAGEMENT OPTIONS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL'S EIGHT ALLOTMENT SITES**

*Chair's Verbal Report*

**10. GENERAL ALLOTMENTS UPDATE**

*Town Clerk's Verbal Report & See the Attached*

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## **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE – 13<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023**

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 13<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2023 AT 6PM IN THE TOWN COUNCIL'S COMMITTEE ROOM LOCATED IN THE GUILDHALL, NORTHAMPTON.

**PRESENT:** Councillors Stevens (Chair), Kilbride (Deputy Chair), Ashraf, Birch, Fuchshuber, Haque, Holland-Delamere, Joyce, Meredith and Miah.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** MS Ruth Austen (Assistant Director of Regulatory, West Northamptonshire Council), Ms Fiona Unett (Deputy Director of Waste and Recycling Services) & three members of the public.

**OFFICERS PRESENT:** Mr S Carter (Town Clerk) and Miss F Barford (Democratic Services Officer)

### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None were submitted.

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

No declarations were submitted.

### **3. BRIEFING ON WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL'S NORTHAMPTON TOWN CENTRE WASTE AND RECYCLING POLICY**

- Ms Austen stated they were hoping to address the key issues presented in the Town centre relating to waste and recycling. Proliferation of waste bins and the associated spillages, obstructions, smells and vermin.
- Neighbourhood wardens and the Northampton BID have assisted with reporting waste issues.
- Campaign has been in action across West Northants promoting communications, enforcement activities, ways to report and there has been some funding from the Police, Fire and Crime commissioner has released some funding to tackle fly-tipping on private land.
- Dog fouling has come into force and operation.
- Targeted pilots in mix of residential and commercial residents that can pose an issue as businesses were responsible for their own waste collection.
- Commercial waste has been a topic affecting many areas and other Local authorities for example South End, Southampton and East Riding authorities have implemented policies to ensure the town looks cleaner.
- There has been work with a discovery phase, engagement with local stakeholders, agree draft policy content and hope to present consultation responses in Spring 2024 and then a soft launch with 3education in Summer 2024 and then full implementation in Autumn 2024.
- Wardens would be sent out across town to gain data on how commercial businesses manage their waste a recycling and residents views as part of the consultation.

- Challenges have been posed where properties have no on-site waste and recycling storage available to them especially, with the change in composition with a larger mix of commercial and residential properties.
- Planning to engage with the main commercial waste collection services providers within the Town Centre.
- Proposed grant funding that can help achieve solutions to prevent fly-tipping that could potentially provide bin stores for areas where no on-site bin storage.

A Councillor asked what were the current enforcement operations for dog fouling as it does not appear to be enforced. In response, Ms Austen stated the Council were hoping to incorporate dog fouling fixed penalty notices within the private contract to assist with the Public Safety Protection Order.

In response to a question posed by a Councillor, Ms Austen stated the Wellingborough Road was not considered as part of the Town Centre Policy however, this initial policy would be a pilot and could be implemented on the Wellingborough Road and Kingsley Park Terrace once completed.

A Councillor commented that majority of bins were not locked when not-in-use and there was a lack signage stating who the commercial waste bin belongs too.

A Councillor raised concerns about units being redeveloped from commercial to residential in the Town Centre and the volume of waste produced. A Councillor added that these issues were prominent especially with the pre-existing residential units around the Market Square. Ms Unett stated if a planning application for 'Change of Use' has been submitted it's difficult for the Waste and Recycling team to be made aware of this and they were generally only notified when a resident complains on the overflow of waste. She added that education was needed as some units have a high-turnover of tenants as this can pose some difficulty.

In response to a question from a Councillor on the implications of adverse weather due to Climate Change, Ms Austen stated that this would need to be considered in the writing of this policy however, it would be down to the commercial waste operator.

In response to a question, Ms Austen stated recommendations have been made on commercial developments via the planning consultation process and request that planning approval only be granted dependent on adequate storage was included within the plans however, this may be overlooked during the Planning Committee or Officer review.

It was explained in response to a question Ms Austen stated during the education campaigns they intend to communicate as clearly as possible and were reviewing how to incorporate translations.

Ms Austen stated the Town Centre Policy was considered as a pilot scheme and recognise that the issue of waste and recycling was a widespread issue across West Northants. She continued

the Town Centre Policy would act as a learning exercise and if successful be implemented elsewhere across West Northants.

Ms Austen stated they have been working in cooperation with the CCTV team so it could be used for enforcement purposes and monitor fly-tipping hotspots. She continued that enforcement action has also been taken from the contents such as letter or witnesses who were prepared to provide a statement.

A Councillor requested whether streets could be high pressured hosing could be done weekly and incorporated in future plans. In response Ms Austen stated the enhanced street cleansing programme was done regularly in the early mornings to prevent disruption.

In response to a question, Ms Unett stated that this policy mainly focused on commercial waste.

#### **4. TO AUTHORISE THE CHAIR TO SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 4<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2023**

**RESOLVED:** The Chair was authorised to sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2023 as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

#### **5. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES BUDGET**

##### **ADVERTISING & MARKETING**

The Chair stated there was a summary included within the Chair's report and thought it would be beneficial to review the forward budget developed by the Finance Officer (FO). The Town Clerk advised that the forward budget was an exercise based on variables and therefore a simulation. He added the FO proposed that each Committee should have an advertising and marketing budget to enable greater transparency.

A Councillor raised that £2,000 may not be a sufficient amount for advertising and marketing budget as cost could easily increase. A Councillor stated that Waste and Recycling was the responsibility of West Northamptonshire Council and if leafleting was to be done then it could be done via local groups and organisations and funded via Environmental Grants.

**RECOMENDATION:** It was agreed that a General Environmental Services' Advertising and Marketing Budget be allocated £2,000 for Financial Year 24-25.

##### **URBAN TREE PLANTING**

The Chair stated a protocol could be developed for Urban Tree planting in the Town Council's wards. A Councillor echoed his sentiments as street trees have been in decline and believe further work can be done on this issue. A Councillor stated that there was no tree planting policy at West Northants Council until recently and this document outlines the type of trees suitable with process involved to do this was straight forward. The Councillor added that they had worked with Keir, West Northants and local residents to get trees planted.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Environmental Projects be allotted £25,000 for Financial Year 24-25

**RECOMMENDATION:** That Environmental Grants be allotted £25,000 for Financial Year 24-25.

### **ALLOTMENTS**

The Town Clerk stated that overall water costs have totalled to £30,000 across the eight sites however, this does not include any infrastructure, maintenance or repairs thereby the large increase in the forward budget.

A Councillor stated that the income from allotments was small in comparison to the overall costs and posed whether some of these costs could be passed onto the allotment users. The Town Clerk explained the law surrounding allotments and charges was heavily regulated within Government legislation and service users could only be charged within a certain amount.

In response to a question, it was explained by the Town Clerk that it was a statutory requirement for parish councils to be responsible for allotments. In response to a question, the Town Council stated that in theory providing water to allotment was not a statutory requirement from his experience. The Town Clerk added that the Town Council was on budget for water usage however, risks were posed by maintenance and infrastructure costs. It was commented by a Councillor that Allotments be a standing item on the agenda.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Allotments Repairs and Maintenance budget be increased to £60,000 and any underspend be transferred into an earmarked reserve.

## **6. BLOOM UPDATE**

The Town Clerk stated Mrs Hanam-Jones (Events and Projects Officer) completed a report on the Northampton in Bloom budget and proposed an increase as outlined within the report to maintain the level of service despite increasing costs due to inflation. He added that these figures included the associated costs of watering, bracket testing.

A Councillor posed that additional funds be added to the proposed budget as outlined by Mrs Hanam-Jones as a contingency. The Chair responded whether a Bloom contingency could be earmarked in General Reserves and funds for smaller environmental project such as the St Katherine's Garden project completed in 2023.

A Councillor stated the £23,000 that had been provided from West Northamptonshire Council would cease from 2023 and therefore more funds would be required from the Town Council to mitigate that shortfall. The Town Clerk stated there has been earmarked reserves since the Town Council's inception to make-up the shortfall of the Bloom Grant.

In response to a question, the Town Clerk stated Mrs Hanam-Jones had utilised her experiences on the costs needed to maintain the current level of service without any enhancements. It was clarified by the Town Clerk that the Bloom Grant received from West Northamptonshire Council was incorporated within the overall budget.

A Councillor posed whether the reserves could be used towards the Northampton in Bloom budget. The Chair stated he had hoped the funds within reserves could be maintained and then used for an Anti-Fly tipping campaign as suggested by a fellow councillor.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Northampton in Bloom be increased to £87,172 for Financial Year 2024-25 as outlined within the report and an additional XYZ

**7. TO DISCUSS PARTICIPATION IN THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTHAMPTON'S SUSTAINABILITY, LOCAL INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP AGENDA HUB (SILPAH)**

The Chair explained that was a variety of organisations involved and pledged to be part of SILPAH which does incur some benefits. He added that Northampton General Hospital and West Northamptonshire Council had recently signed up to SILPAH.

**DEFERRED**

**8. CLIMATE CHANGE FORUM UPDATE**

The Chair stated the Climate Change Forum continued and hoped to have further discussions on their work. A Councillor requested if there were any further details on the air quality within the Town Centre, especially on the Drapery. The Chair explained in response that West Northamptonshire Council had installed a number of air quality monitors across the Town and could be accessed via their website. A Councillor explained that Stage Coach had introduced two new electric buses to their fleet and welcomed these.

The Chair stated feedback had been received from South Court Environmental who had received from Climate Change Grant Scheme and circulated this within the Chair's report and some positive work had occurred as a result of the funding.

**MEETING CONCLUDED: 7:37PM**

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**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER REPORT  
CLIMATE CHANGE GRANT SCHEME - CCGS3 – C2C SOCIAL ACTION**

**PURPOSE:** To provide the Environmental Services Committee background on C2C Social Action’s Climate Change Grant Application and an overview of the discussion at the Grant Sub-Committee meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Environmental Service Committee review the application in accordance to the Climate Change Grant Scheme’s qualifying criteria and decide to whether application CCGS3 be approved or declined.

**BACKGROUND**

C2C Social Action submitted a CCGS application in October 2023 requesting £5,000 from Northampton Town Council for their ‘C2C Grows Project’.

C2C Social Action were contracted by the Ministry of Justice and by the National Health Service to provide rehabilitation services for those involved with the criminal justice system. C2C Social Action assist their service users by providing support with the intention to inspire and motivate them to progress and contribute positively to society.

C2C Grows Project was not covered within their pre-existing contract however, similar project in the past have previously received funding from West Northamptonshire Council and Awards for All. C2C Grows Project intends to offer wildlife gardening workshops to improve bio-diversity in their allotment and offer vulnerable people the opportunity to learn about nature and the importance of preserving and encouraging wildlife. Overall, C2C Grows Project if approved would enable up-to 40 women in Northampton to receive green skills via C2C Social Action’s wildlife conservation workshops.

**OVERVIEW OF THE GRANT SUB-COMMITTEE’S DISCUSSION  
C2C SOCIAL ACTION – CCGS3 - £5,000**

A Councillor commented that C2C Social Action complete great work at the Good Loaf assisting women who require support with re-entering society, experienced mental health issues and domestic violence. A Councillor stated the project will assist with participants overall well-being, learning new skill and enhancing the local bio-diversity.

**RECOMMENDED:** That this application be approved by the Environmental Service Committee to the sum of £5,000.

**ELIGIBILITY – AS ASSESSED BY THE CLIMATE CHANGE FORUM**

**1] The APPLICATION**

*Organisation:* C2C Social Action (application from C2C Chair) - Received 9/10/23

*Aims and objectives of your organisation:* C2C Social Action works with individuals at any stage of the criminal justice system. We support, inspire and motivate them to move forward with their lives, and contribute positively to society.

*Organisation's membership:* We are contracted by the Ministry of Justice and NHS to provide services to help to rehabilitate people involved in the criminal justice system, many of whom have poor mental health. We also take self-referrals, and referrals from the job centre, addiction services, social prescribers and other services. We cover the whole of Northamptonshire for women's services, and both men and women in Milton Keynes (NHS contract). We help people of all ages.

*Organisation's Management:* We have an excellent CEO, and a management team overseeing the staff and volunteers (34 staff; 20 volunteers). We also have a board of trustees.

*Total Project Cost:* 5000                      *Total requested from Northampton Town Council:* 5000

*Contributions from the other sources:* Our C2C Grows Project is not covered by our contracts. We received a grant of £5,000 from West Northamptonshire in April 2023, and £10,000 from Awards for All in May 2023, for the wider C2C work, not this Climate Change Project which is new and as yet unfunded.

*Please detail any non-financial 'in kind' support you have for your project:* We have the 3-plot allotment available for use for this project, the equipment and facilities on site, plus the volunteers who work alongside our Horticultural Therapist and Outdoor Support Worker who will lead this project.

*Does this project involve collaboration with other organisations?:* We will happily take referrals from other organisations, for example we offer support to people given a 'green prescription' by Social Prescribers, but we will deliver this project ourselves

*Please explain your project:* C2C Grows is a social and therapeutic gardening initiative run by the Northamptonshire-based charity C2C Social Action. We offer allotment-based, wellbeing gardening sessions for women, giving them the opportunity to access a safe green space. C2C Grows supports women who: may have been involved in the criminal justice system; are experiencing mental ill health; need support with substance and alcohol recovery; and may have experienced domestic violence and trauma. Funding is sought to offer a series of wildlife gardening workshops in 2024 to improve the biodiversity in our allotment and offer vulnerable members of the local community an opportunity to learn about nature and the importance of preserving and encouraging wildlife. The funding will be spent on running weekly seasonal wildlife-focused workshops which will include participants learning how to: plant an edible hedgerow; sow and maintain a wildflower patch for pollinators; introduce bird and bat boxes; and plant several heritage varieties of fruit tree, including medlar, apple and pear, which will all help to enhance the green space we offer.

The sessions will enable the women we support to learn a range of green skills, providing valuable education about climate change and how to care for the local environment, and the chance to access a peaceful green space.

*Please set out what outcomes you believe this project will achieve:* We believe our project will enable up to 40 women in Northampton town to receive green skills and education through attending our wildlife conservation workshops. An additional outcome will be that an edible hedgerow will be planted, which will increase, restore and enhance local biodiversity and wildlife. A wildflower patch will also be sown to support and encourage bees and other pollinating insects. Weekly gardening sessions will run in 6-week blocks x 4 (total of 24 weeks) with approx. 8 participants per block of 6 weeks = 32 participants. An estimated 10 more participants will also visit the allotment and benefit from the site. We expect the project to make a long-lasting impact on climate change, as year on year the hedgerow, trees and wildflower patch will continue to enhance local wildlife. And year on year, participants from across the town can attend the allotment project and benefit from it mentally and physically.

*How do you intend to measure the impact of this project?:* We have evaluation forms for participants to provide feedback. We will survey bird, butterfly and bee activity before and after implementing the planned improvements to the site.

*When do you intend for this project to start?:* March 2024

*Item Description 1: Materials:*

4 metres of hedgerow to plant: 5 x £20 thornless blackberry = £100; 5 x £20 cob nut tree = £100

Tree planting: 2 x medlar trees; 2 x pear trees; 2 x cherry trees; £30 each x 8 trees = £240

Wildflower seed mix = £60

Cost : 500

*Item Description 2: Equipment for each wildlife session:* 8 x gloves, 5 x hand tools, 5 x pruning tools, 3x spades, 3x forks, 2 x rakes, 4 x watering cans, 2 x wheelbarrows, 10 x bags of compost, 3 x bird boxes and 2 x bat boxes. Binoculars for bird watching.

Cost : 500

*Item Description 3: Instructor fees:* costs to plan, set up, run, support client group, promote and advertise sessions and work with partnership organisations to take referrals for 24 x wildlife gardening workshops - 4 hours per workshop @ £40 per hour, Total: £3,840.00

Cost: 3840

*Item Description 4: Supervision Cost: 160*

## **2] CCF's members' Assessment of CCGS APPLICATION: C2C Social Action**

**Applicant:** C2C Social Action **Assessor:** Andrew Stevens & overview by Clare Robertson-Marriot

***This application meets 3 of the 6 main eligibility Criteria in Para 2.2 of the Guidelines – that is:***

a. **IN A SMALL-MODERATE WAY:** to Contribute to reducing carbon emissions (*eg plant an edible hedgerow; and plant several heritage varieties of fruit tree, including medlar, apple and pear*)

d. **IN A SMALL WAY:** to Increase, restore or enhance local biodiversity and wildlife (*eg sow and maintain a wildflower patch for pollinators; introduce bird and bat boxes*)

e. **IN A SMALL WAY:** to Increase local sustainable production of food (*eg planting berry bushes, fruit and nut trees, plus their routine community-involved veg growing projects*)

***AND, this application also meets 4 of the 6 secondary eligibility Considerations in Para 2.3 of the Guidelines – that is:***

g. **IN A MODERATE WAY:** by Increasing awareness & education on climate change, and support behaviour change towards cleaner, greener ways of living (*eg via both the intended 40 users, and as some will go on to influence others. A no. of past users have gone on to cultivate their own previously untouched gardens, and offered advice to neighbours and family.*)

i. **IN A SMALL-MODERATE WAY:** the project does Promote a wider community involvement and active engagement in environmentally aware behaviour change (*eg. see g. above*)

j. **IN A MODERATE to possibly a LARGE WAY for individual clients:** improved personal physical health and/or psychological well-being (*eg C2C Grows supports women who: may have been involved in the criminal justice system; are experiencing mental ill health; need support with substance and alcohol recovery; and may have experienced domestic violence and trauma*)

k. **IN A SMALL or MODERATE WAY:** there are Potential longer term, environmental benefits from the project (*eg. if the work on the site is continued with other groups of clients over subsequent years, though this may take more trained supporter funding, unless a skilled volunteer group develops from the initial courses*)

**OTHER Aspects.** The application includes 2 staff, who are 'salaried and part of the permanent workforce of C2C' (info from C2C Chair). I have spoken to the Horticultural Therapist who provided this extra info: the project has been developed at Kingsthorpe Park allotments adjacent to Thornton Park, Kingsthorpe in NTC's area, over the last 3 years. They've won an award from The National Garden Society for establishing this organic and biodiversity-informed site, and will open to the public next summer (i.e. listed in the yellow NGS booklet). In school holidays they run sessions for school children teaching how to grow vegetables and cook a meal on site with some of the produce. Many of their service users live in flats without gardens, and they come from across the town including Spring Boroughs and Semilong.

**Assessor's Conclusion.** VERY MUCH IN FAVOUR of supporting this application. As well as the match with the Grants Scheme's criteria, I think NTC needs to support, and hopefully then work with Northampton organisations who have a good pedigree as charity or

community organisation, have an ethos that includes a reasonably sized environmental section in the projects they deliver, and are likely to be around to work with over the longer term. CCF's links with C2C via this horticultural project could develop in a number of ways in the future – food growing, educating users and community about biodiversity nurturing, possibly providing a 'tree nursery' for street tree projects

## **C2C SOCIAL ACTION'S APPLICATION FORM**

Organisation Type : Registered Charity  
Name of Your Organisation : C2C Social Action  
Position in Organisation: :Chair

What are the aims and objectives of your organisation? :

C2C Social Action (commonly known as C2C) works with individuals at any stage of the criminal justice system. We support, inspire and motivate them to move forward with their lives, and contribute positively to society.

Please provide details of your organisation's membership :

We are contracted by the Ministry of Justice and by the NHS to provide services to help to rehabilitate people involved in the criminal justice system, many of whom have poor mental health. We also take self-referrals, and referrals from the job centre, addiction services, social prescribers and other services. We cover the whole of Northamptonshire for women's services, and both men and women in Milton Keynes (NHS contract). We help people of all ages.

How is Your Organisation Managed? :

We have an excellent CEO, Michelle Shaw, and a management team overseeing the staff and volunteers (34 staff; 20 volunteers). We also have a board of trustees: myself as founder and Chair; who is a CEO of a similar organisation; an Accountant.

Total Project Cost :

5000

Contributions From Other Sources :

0

Total requested from Northampton Town Council :

5000

Please details any contributions from the other sources :

Our C2C Grows Project is not covered by our contracts. We received a grant of £5,000 from West Northamptonshire in April 2023, and £10,000 from Awards for All in May 2023, for the wider C2C work, not this Climate Change Project which is new and as yet unfunded.

Please detail any non-financial 'in kind' support you have for your project :

We have the 3-plot allotment available for use for this project, the equipment and facilities on site, plus the volunteers who work alongside our Horticultural Therapist and Outdoor Support Worker who will lead this project.

Does this project involve collaboration with other organisations? :

We will happily take referrals from other organisations, for example we offer support to people given a 'green prescription' by Social Prescribers, but we will deliver this project ourselves

Please explain your project :

C2C Grows is a social and therapeutic gardening initiative run by the Northamptonshire-based charity C2C Social Action. We offer allotment-based, wellbeing gardening sessions for women, giving them the opportunity to access a safe green space. C2C Grows supports women who: may have been involved in the criminal justice system; are experiencing mental ill health; need support with substance and alcohol recovery; and may have experienced domestic violence and trauma. Funding is sought to offer a series of wildlife gardening workshops in 2024 to improve the biodiversity in our allotment and offer vulnerable members of the local community an opportunity to learn about nature and the importance of preserving and encouraging wildlife. The funding will be spent on running weekly seasonal wildlife-focused workshops which will include participants learning how to: plant an edible hedgerow; sow and maintain a wildflower patch for pollinators; introduce bird and bat boxes; and plant several heritage varieties of fruit tree, including medlar, apple and pear, which will all help to enhance the green space we offer. The sessions will enable the women we support to learn a range of green skills, providing valuable education about climate change and how to care for the local environment, and the chance to access a peaceful green space. This is vital for wellbeing, as many of the women who attend the allotment live in housing without access to green space.

Please set out what outcomes you believe this project will achieve :

We believe our project will enable up to 40 women in Northampton town to receive green skills and education through attending our wildlife conservation workshops. An additional outcome will be that an edible hedgerow will be planted, which will increase, restore and enhance local biodiversity and wildlife. A wildflower patch will also be sown to support and encourage bees and other pollinating insects. Weekly gardening sessions will run in 6-week blocks x 4 (total of 24 weeks) with approx. 8 participants per block of 6 weeks = 32 participants. An estimated 10 more participants will also visit the allotment and benefit from the site. We expect the project to make a long-lasting impact on climate change, as year on year the hedgerow, trees and wildflower patch will continue to enhance local wildlife. And year on year, participants from across the town can attend the allotment project and benefit from it mentally and physically.

How do you intend to measure the impact of this project? :

We have evaluation forms for participants to provide feedback. We will survey bird, butterfly and bee activity before and after implementing the planned improvements to the site.

When do you intend for this project to start? :

March 2024

Item Description 1 :

Materials:

4 metres of hedgerow to plant:

5 x £20 thornless blackberry = £100.

5 x £20 cob nut tree = £100

Tree planting:

2 x medlar trees

2 x pear trees

2 x cherry trees

£30 each x 8 trees = £240

Wildflower seed mix = £60

Cost :

500

Item Description 2 :

Equipment for each wildlife session: 8 x gloves, 5 x hand tools, 5 x pruning tools, 3x spades, 3x forks, 2 x rakes, 4 x watering cans, 2 x wheelbarrows, 10 x bags of compost, 3 x bird boxes and 2 x bat boxes. Binoculars for bird watching.

Cost :

500

Item Description 3 :

Instructor fees: costs to plan, set up, run, support client group, promote and advertise sessions and work with partnership organisations to take referrals for 24 x wildlife gardening workshops - 4 hours per workshop @ £40 per hour, Total: £3,840.00

Cost :

3840

Item Description 4 :

Supervision

Cost :

160

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**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER REPORT  
CLIMATE CHANGE GRANT SCHEME – CCGS4 – ROWAN AVENUE & CLARENCE AVENUE RESIDENTS**

**PURPOSE:** To provide the Environmental Services Committee background on Rowan Avenue & Clarence Avenue Resident’s Climate Change Grant Application and an overview of the discussion at the Grant Sub-Committee meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023.

**RECOMMENDATION:** The Environmental Service Committee review the application in accordance to the Climate Change Grant Scheme’s qualifying criteria and decide to whether application CCGS4 be approved or declined.

**BACKGROUND**

Councillors Birch and Hallam supported Rowan Avenue & Clarence Avenue Residents with this application which was submitted in October 2023. The application requested the sum of £5,000 from Northampton Town Council to re-instate removed street trees.

The project worked in conjunction with West Northamptonshire Council, Veolia, Idverde and the residents to re-instate the street trees that has been removed over the years to improve the street scene and the local environment.

**OVERVIEW OF THE GRANT SUB-COMMITTEE’S DISCUSSION**

**ROWEN & CLARENCE AVENUE RESIDENTS – CCGS4 – Tree Replacement Project - £5,000**

A Councillor welcomed the initiative of local residents for collaborating and replacing the street trees on Rowen and Clarence avenue. Another Councillor commented the trees would contribute to bio-diversity and improving the street scene.

**RECOMMENDED:** That this application be approved by the Environmental Service Committee to the sum of £5,000.

**APPLICATION FORM**

**About Your Organisation**

*(Please complete if applicable)*

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Organisation type: | Community Organisation<br>School or Educational Setting<br>Registered Charity<br>Community Interest Company (CIC) |
|--------------------|---|

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Please state the name of your organisation: | Rowan Avenue and Clarence Avenue Residents |
|---|--|

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| Position in organisation: | Local Councillor – Community & Residents Representative |
|---------------------------|---|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| What are the aims and objectives of your organisation? | To re-instate street trees that have been removed over the years to help improve the look, feel and environmental benefits of trees in a street scene environment |
|--|---|

|   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Please provide details of your organisation's membership<br><br><i>(This should include the geographical area, age groups etc.)</i> | Residents that live in the street |
|---|-----------------------------------|

|                                   |               |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| How is your organisation managed? | By volunteers |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|

### About Your Project

|                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| Total Project Cost | £10,875.53 (made up of £6,258.66 – Rowan and £4,616.87 Clarence) |
|--------------------|--|

|                                 |                                     |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Contribution from other sources | £5,875.53 (WNC and Veolia/ID Verde) |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------------|

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| Total requested from Northampton Town Council | £5,000.00 |
|---|-----------|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Please details any contributions from the other sources<br><br><i>This would include grants from other bodies, use of own funds etc.</i> | Remainder will be funded by WNC and their contractor Veolia/ID Verde |
|--|--|

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Please detail any non-financial 'in kind' support you have for your project<br><br><i>This would include time given by volunteers, donations of good/services etc.</i> | Volunteers (residents) will be watering the trees once planted and overseeing their successful growth! |
|--|--|

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p>Does this project involve collaboration with other organisations? Please detail their involvement.</p>  | <p>Their has been input from Veolia/ID Verde tree specialists, WNC and initial input in the Rowan Avenue project from Save Our Street Trees Northampton and The Woodland Trust</p>                        |
| <p>Please explain your project</p> <p><i>This should include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How you anticipate your project would make a difference with mitigating the effects of climate change.</i></li> <li>• <i>The proposed method of implementation: for example, a description of tasks involved and who will do these tasks.</i></li> </ul>   | <p>To re-instate previously removed street trees to enhance the environment and street scene in Rowan Avenue in Boothville and Clarence Avenue in Trinity.</p>  |
| <p>Please set out what outcomes you believe this project will achieve</p> <p><i>Some examples could be:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Approximate total reduction in CO2+ emissions</i></li> <li>• <i>Increased local resilience to the effects of Climate Change, and how this would occur</i></li> <li>• <i>How much of an increase in local biodiversity the project would produce</i></li> </ul> | <p>Street trees have a significant benefit in reduction of CO2s and emission reductions as well increasing biodiversity and the overall positive feel that they bring from a street scene perspective</p> |
| <p>How do you intend to measure the impact of this project?</p>  | <p>Direct feedback from residents</p>   |
| <p>When do you intend for this project to start?</p>   | <p>Nov-2023</p>   |

## How Will the Grant Be Spent?

*Please be as detailed as possible. The sum of the items should match the amount requested from the Town Council. For any expenditure on a single item over £500 you must demonstrate that best value has been sought, normally by submitting quotations.*

|   |
|---|
| Tree purchase, planting and advice plus initial maintenance |
|---|

|        |
|--------|
| £5,000 |
|--------|

**Environmental Services Committee 13 November 2023**  
**Northampton in Bloom**  
**Report by Louise Hannam-Jones, Events and Projects Officer**

**Purpose of report:** To update on the Northampton in Bloom project for 2024- 2025.

**Recommended:** That subject to any comments, the committee note the report. Officers will work with Northampton in Bloom Working party, keeping them informed as the project progresses.

**IYN- It's your Neighbourhood Awards**

Our new Communities Officer has contacted a number of community groups, inviting them to enter the It's Your Neighbourhood Awards, with the hope that more groups will be involved this year with potentially a larger awards ceremony in the Autumn. This will assist the Community element of East Midlands in Bloom that is judged from July 24-July 25. A press release and social media posts have also been publicised to encourage more local groups to get involved this year. The deadline for entry dates is the end of May and judging normally takes place in July/August.

**Budgets**

**2023-2024**

£59,174.00 has been allocated from this year's £60,000 budget, leaving £826.00 within the budget. An income of £972.00 also came in from Far Cotton for keeping 10 barrier baskets in their area and maintaining/watering them, which leaves £1798.00 left to spend this year.

It is proposed that £850 of this money is to be paid for 40 more 'Northampton in Bloom provided by Northampton Town Council' hanging signs to be suspended from the hanging baskets in the town centre as the original 40 did not make much of an impact due to the number of baskets without a sign.

This would mean 80 x hanging baskets would have a sign and would make more of a visual impact, thus getting the message out that Northampton Town Council provide the floral displays for Northampton each year.

**2024-2025**

£87,172 has been agreed for the Bloom budget in the next financial year. Initial quotations for floral orders, watering and maintenance total £66,413. Extra monies have been budgeted for the It's Your Neighbourhood Awards and to assist with preparation for the East Midlands in Bloom Awards which will be judged in July 2025 (financial year 2025-26) but consider work undertaken from July 24 (this financial year).

**Sustainable Planting**

There are currently 6 x sustainable planters in Northampton which are located:

- Coronation Planter outside VandB/ Top of Guildhall Rd
- Abington Street
- Gladstone Road shops, Dallington ward
- 3 x St Katherine's Gardens

Unfortunately, the plants have not weathered well and the Abington St planter is constantly affected by anti-social behaviour due to its location. Northampton BID have a budget to replace the plants in St Katherine's Gardens so we are in discussions with two members of the Working Group Party, Mark Mullen, the BID and Tony Le-Britton from Not Another Jungle to look at the suitability of plants and perhaps to obtain plants from Workbridge to replace the currently planting scheme. There would be a cost for 3 planters for us and 3 planters for the BID. An operation to move the Abington Street

planter to the All Saints' plaza (permissions pending) is under discussion, but this would entail emptying the planter first. Volunteers for this would be most welcome.

**East Midlands in Bloom Awards: Northampton**

The Bloom working group party are currently working on a plan to meet the East Midlands in Bloom awards criteria – with the view to be ready for judging in 2025, when the town will have had all renovation work completed. A walking route around the town centre and a driving route (via a Northampton Transport Heritage vintage bus) into the town council wards has been agreed by members of the Bloom Working Group. A lunch will be paid for from the NTC Bloom budget which will thank all partners, volunteers, groups and judges for attending and taking part.

A portfolio from July 24-July 25 will also be created which will document the year of Northampton in Bloom and include and groups/ activities or places that couldn't be fitted into the route. This will be supported by the NTC Communications Officer, who previously worked on the Borough's portfolio.

## ESC-CCF Proposed Projects with Indicative Costs for February to March 2024

| Project &<br>(CCF Theme)   | Overview   | £     |
|--|--|-------|
| Bikes for young disadvantaged people.<br><br>(Active Travel: "Let's Ride")                 | <p>PROJECT: offer young disadvantaged people (initially possibly refugees, but accessible to other low income individuals) a refurbished and safe second hand bike plus hi-vis jacket, lock, lights, optional helmet to provide a free and sustainable mode of transport to support access to services and promote health and well being, and increasing NTC's contribution to Active Travel examples in the Town. Projects run by charities are already operating in London, Oxford, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Lancaster, Edinburgh, Glasgow and other cities and towns in the UK.</p> <p>Project partners: A new 'increasing bike access in Northampton' voluntary organisation, currently under discussion. Possible other partners: Umbrella Bike Workshop and /or Delapre Bike Doctor Workshop, and Northampton Town of Sanctuary. Options and details of operation of the scheme are still under discussion.</p> <p>Costs: c. approx £100 - 200 per bike including accessories, providing 30 – 40 bikes, premises rent for the proposed new accessible bikes voluntary organisation @ c. £500.</p> | £5500 |
| Water Butts for allotments<br><br>(Climate Change & Other Challenges: Building Resilience) | <p>PROJECT: Rainwater capture, irrigation of vegetable and fruit growing, potential reduction in councils water bills for allotment sites as well as reduction in use of water treated up to human consumption standards being used for horticultural irrigation.</p> <p>Providing 50 water butts, @ c £100 per butt, including bases and downpipe diverter kits to some or all of our eight allotment fields, allocated as to level of interest from field associations. More plots can have access to butts if some or all are shared between plots.</p>   | £5000 |
| Living Streets Walk to School week packs<br><br>(Active Travel: "Every journey matters")   | <p>PROJECT: provision of WtSW packs for up to 50 classes in up to 6 schools @ c. £20 per pack incl VAT and delivery.</p> <p>From LS Website: "This year's challenge will take pupils on a Walk with Wildlife, encouraging them to travel actively to school every day of the week. Meeting various animals along the way, they'll learn about the important reasons to walk and the difference it can make for individuals, communities and the planet! Classes will work together to make as many active journeys as possible across the week, tracking their progress as they go on the fun and interactive wallchart. Those that participate will receive daily stickers and an end of week reward!"</p>  | £1000 |
| Living Streets Walk To School  | <p>PROJECT: provision of WOW package to up to 4 schools. WOW is a year long pupil-led initiative where children self-report how they get to school every</p>   | £2000 |

|  |   |              |
|--|---|--------------|
| <p>Challenge<br/>(Active Travel:<br/>"Every journey<br/>matters")</p>  | <p>day using the interactive WOW Travel Tracker. If they travel sustainably (walk/wheel, cycle or scoot) once a week for a month, they get rewarded with a badge.</p> <p>LS Website: "It's simple to run and children love taking part. Each year, the collectable WOW badges are designed by pupils in our annual badge design competition. On average, WOW schools see a 30% reduction in car journeys taken to the school gate and a 23% increase in walking rates".</p>   |              |
| <p>'Square Metres<br/>for Bee-<br/>Feasters'<br/><br/>(Greening the<br/>Town: NN in<br/>Bloom &amp;<br/>Supporting<br/>Biodiversity)</p> | <p>PROJECT: Encourage residents to collect a promotional packet of pollinator friendly plant seed packets to sow in any square metre of solid they can get access to, such as front or back gardens 2-3 troughs in a back yard or patio, window boxes, etc.</p> <p>Seed packets can be collected at local shops (ideally at least 1 in each NTC ward). Residents can register their 'SMfBF' patch on an online map where a flag will show on each location.</p> <p>Participants can submit photos of their 'SMfBF' to the Council for our webpage, and a monthly voucher will be awarded to the one assessed as best 'SMfBF'.</p> <p>Cost details: 1000 packets @£1 each; 30 small desktop shop presentation 'stands' for the packets @ £5 each; 15 winners' reward vouchers @ £20 each; leaflet printing @ £100. Total £1550</p> | <p>£1500</p> |
| <p>UoN<br/>Sustainability<br/>Summit May<br/>2024<br/><br/>(Northampton<br/>Town Council's<br/>Net Zero Plan)</p>                        | <p>PROJECT: Facilitating a session at this event as invited by Dr Laryea, Chair of the Summit Planning Committee. CCF members (and ESC if interested) will devise 2-3 challenges that we would welcome innovative solutions for, and at the session, small student groups will 'pitch' their ideas to a 'panel of assessors'. The winner/s will receive a voucher for <u>perhaps</u> £100 or £200 as a prize (ESC members' views on an appropriate amount for a prize are welcomed).</p> <p>'Pitching' groups will have the option of proposing an implementation plan for their solution, and if deemed feasible by the CCF, and ESC possibly be commissioned to deliver. Any cost for this element will be presented to the 1<sup>st</sup> ESC after the Summit – ie financial year 2024-5 budget.</p>                          | <p>£400</p>  |
| <p>'Clean Air &amp;<br/>Climate<br/>Summit'<br/><br/>(Working with<br/>WNC on their<br/>Net Zero by<br/>2045 Plan)</p>                   | <p>PROJECT: This is an event announced by Cllr Nunn at WNC Full Council meeting November 2023 (after a suggestion by Cllr Joyce that such a summit be held), and that it would be jointly organised by 'WNC, NTC and larger Parish Councils'. Details and timing are under discussion, but to deliver NTC's contribution, some funds should be provisionally set aside.</p>   | <p>£1000</p> |



|   |   |              |
|---|---|--------------|
| <p>Carbon literacy training<br/><i>(Our Community's Carbon Footprint)</i></p> | <p>PROJECT: Commission carbon literacy introductions for the public, including practice at calculating their own Footprint, and generate steps to reduce it as part of a town wide, empowering our communities campaign. This could also be a contribution and a prompt to WNC Sustainability Team's work in this area.</p>   | <p>£1000</p> |
| <p>Tree Planting<br/><i>('Greening the Town')</i></p>                         | <p>PROJECT: Promote tree planting in our Wards, using the ESC/CCF's guide on urban tree planting (streets and small green areas) for NTC Cllrs and residents. Consider the option of establishing a street tree nursery on an allotment field.</p> <p>Costs will depend on successfully planned individual project identifying funding – which WILL INVOLVE WORKING WITH WNC OFFICERS - some of which could be applied for via the Climate Change Grants Scheme – most probably in the 2024-5 financial year.</p> | <p>£?</p>    |

TOTAL: £17,400



## LEGAL MATTERS

# Managing allotments

by Tyler Harris, legal adviser, National Allotment Society

## Introduction

Recently, the National Allotment Society (NAS) has been contacted by quite a few of our local authority members and others regarding the need to increase the rent that they charge for allotment plots. The reasoning behind the increase can vary, from the fact that there has not been an increase for many years to the allotment plots being heavily subsidised by the taxpayers. Given the timing, it would seem that a big driving force behind the need for rent increases is the sharp rise in the cost of living that we all face. However, there are alternatives to simply increasing the rent that could save local authorities money, as well as offer positive benefits to the allotment holders. The alternatives being considered here are with regards to issuing some or all of the management responsibilities for the site to an allotment association on the site.

## Rents

Before considering the different management options available, it is important to understand the legal situation with rent increases, such as how increases can be implemented and what level can rents be set to. Firstly, it is good practice that when any rent increases or rule changes are being considered, the plot holders should be consulted on the change. This allows for any major concerns to be highlighted and dealt with at an early stage.

The level of rent being considered must be in line with section 10 of the Allotments Act 1950 and must therefore be a "reasonable" amount. Case law has shown that when considering what is a reasonable amount for the rent, the local authority should compare the rent to other sites in the nearby area, the rate of inflation, increases made to other leisure activities and other factors. It is important that all of the funds from the collected rents are being re-invested into the allotment site and not being used to prop up other areas for the council. Any excessive profits from the rent would likely show that the rent is set unreasonably high.

When introducing the rent increase itself, 12 months' notice of the increase must be given outside of the growing season (which runs from the 6 April to 29 September). This is in line with Section 1 of the Allotments Act 1922 (as amended by the 1950 Act). The only exception to this is where the tenancy agreement has a fair rent revision clause included that provides for a shorter period of time.

## Partially self-managed

Alternatively, councils could choose to share some or all of the site management responsibilities with an allotment association on the site. This will help save the council in administration costs as well as costs associated with some of the repairs and maintenance depending on what responsibilities are shared. The first alternative form of management to be considered is partial self-management. This is the simplest method to set up in that the council only needs to establish a simple management agreement, which could be as basic as a simple table where all the responsibilities are listed in the first column and then the next column marks out whether it is the council or the association that is expected to manage that responsibility. It is important to note,



Once the lease is signed, if the term is longer than seven years then it must be registered with the Land Registry. It would be best to clarify who's responsible for the registration of the lease during the negotiation stage. Following the registration if applicable, the association can then begin to perform the day-to-day management responsibilities set out in the lease.

The advantage for this style of management is that councils can see a more significant drop in administration fees and, provided the association runs well, the plot holders benefit by being able to directly influence how to improve the site. Provided that the agreement and the appropriate due diligence is performed, there should be few downsides to this approach other than it being less suited to associations that are perhaps less eager and have fewer members interested in volunteering to join the committee.

## Trustees

When signing a lease with an association for them to take on self-management, it is important to note what is the legal structure of the association. For starters, if the association is unincorporated, then they will need trustees to sign the lease agreement on behalf of all of the members. As part of the council performing its due diligence checks for such a group, the council should be looking to see if the group has rules within their constitution that relates to appointing trustees, their role and how a trustee can be removed. The lease will need two to four trustees to sign in order to be valid. If the lease is registered with the Land Registry, the registration will need to be updated each time that there is a change of trustees.

## Incorporation

In contrast, an association may be incorporated in some form or other such as a charitable incorporated organisation, a co-operative, or a community benefit society. If the group is incorporated, then the association itself is a legal entity that be a party to the lease agreement. This means that the association itself can be named on the agreement as opposed to naming trustees and then the association can have a couple of representatives to sign on behalf of the association.

## LEGAL MATTERS

It can be useful to encourage self-managing associations to consider incorporation if they have a reasonable number of members (the NAS suggest groups under 25 members are less suited for incorporation), because they will then fall under a regulator (Companies House, Financial Conduct Authority or the Charity Commission) that will act as another check and balance on how the association manages itself. This typically provides councils with more confidence in issuing a lease to an association for them to manage the allotment site.

Overall, the National Allotment Society would strongly recommend that councils should consider partial or full self-management if they are facing costs that is forcing them to consider increasing the rents. If managed correctly, both options can hugely benefit both the council and the association, as well as each of the individual plot holders.

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