



**MAGHULL  
TOWN  
COUNCIL**

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**Dated this 17<sup>th</sup> Day of February 2021**

**You are hereby summoned to attend a Remote Meeting of Amenities Committee which will be held on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021 at 6.30pm to transact the business detailed below.**

**Note: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – If a Member requires advice on any item involving a possible declaration of interest which could affect his/her ability to speak and/or vote, he/she is advised to contact the Town Clerk at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.**

**This meeting will be open to the press and public to view via the following link: <https://youtu.be/u-15tSXs8bM>**

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

1	Apologies for Absence
2	Declarations of Interest
3	Public Participation due to the Covid 19 pandemic public participation will be dealt with via the submission of comments or questions to the committee prior to the meeting commencing. Anyone wishing to submit a comment or a question to the committee must do so by 5pm on 23 <sup>rd</sup> February 2021
4	<b>To confirm the Minutes of Amenities Committee held 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020</b> Members are asked to consider Draft Minutes (Pages 1 to 6)
5	<b>Amenities Manager Update – Committee Resolutions</b> Members are asked to consider the report (Pages 7 to 12)
6	<b>Review of 2020/21 Grounds Maintenance Operations and Proposed 2021/22 Grounds Maintenance Operations</b> Members are asked to consider the report (Pages 13 to 31)
7	<b>Management of play areas during the Covid-19 Pandemic</b> Members are asked to consider the report (Pages 32 to 36)
8	<b>Proposed Rollout of Bird Boxes within Parks and Open Spaces owned/managed by Maghull Town Council</b> Members are asked to consider the report (Pages 37 to 42)
	<b>PTO</b>

9	<b>Proposed Tree Planting Schemes at Pimbley Playing Field and Hall Lane Park</b> Members are asked to consider the report (Pages 43 to 57)
10	<b>Chair's Report</b> Verbal report for noting only.



Miss A. McIntyre FSLCC  
**Town Clerk**

**MAGHULL TOWN COUNCIL**  
**AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**HELD 18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2020**  
**VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM**

**PRESENT** - Councillor Y. Sayers (In the Chair) and Councillors (Cllrs): Desmond, K. Hughes, McKinley and J. Sayers.

**ALSO PRESENT** –A. Spencer (Amenities Manager) and S. Larking (Minutes)

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** – Apologies received from Cllr Carr
2. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS** – The Amenities Manager advised that all Cllrs, as precept payers, declare an interest in the agenda item about the budget.

NOTE: 6:35pm: Standing Orders suspended while Officers tried to resolve a technical issue to allow live streaming. Unable to resolve issue so meeting continued from 6:40pm. The meeting was recorded and will be made available to view.

3. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** – No requests received
4. **MINUTES OF AMENITIES COMMITTEE 23<sup>rd</sup> SEPTEMBER 2020.**

Cllr K. Hughes asked for it to be noted that the group of volunteers referred to at agenda item 9 (page 4) was not party political. All volunteers welcome.

**RESOLVED that the Minutes of Amenities Committee held on 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020 were approved as a correct record. Note: Minutes to be signed at the next opportunity.**

5. **AMENITIES MANAGER UPDATE – COMMITTEE RESOLUTIONS**

The Amenities Manager reported on resolutions in progress (highlighted in grey in report) as follows:

- Mersey Forest: Officers continue to work with Mersey Forest. Applying for grant funding. Progress to be reported at next meeting
- Council's Vehicles/Fleet: Procurement Policy and Service Level Agreement (SLA) now in place with Knowsley Council. Work on fleet is one of several projects that will now be progressed
- Judo Hut: Building demolished. Winterburns of Rochdale had done an excellent job.
- Alternative Legal Provision: This had not been progressed to date
- Bid Writer: This had not been progressed due to capacity issues
- Grounds Maintenance Operations 2020/21: Work on appraisals ongoing. 3 completed including training and development needs identified; 3 in progress
- "Friends Of" Groups: Update on projects circulated with papers Projects will complement Council's work in parks. Further discussion at Agenda item 7.

Cllrs Mckinley noted that information had been put on social media about the use of Whinneybrook Playing Field on Saturday mornings for football coaching. He said the Council would be happy to support free coaching if relevant insurance and safeguarding policies were in place. He didn't believe that information on social media was sufficient. He asked for further investigation. The Amenities Manager reported that legal advice had been sought from Sefton. The advice was that Maghull Town Council did not have enforcement powers to stop usage unless it was for illegal activities.

Other key points noted:

- Issue is about income/profit. Welcome that someone is giving up their time to coach young people. However, if they are making a profit by using Council land free of charge that's a different issue. Reported that the coach runs sessions in a local school and pays rent
- Liability/insurance an issue
- There is a precedent. Room hire charged for Maghull Art Group as tutor was charging for classes
- Exercise class held in Old Hall Park since first lockdown
- Council is committed to supporting Community Groups; offers grant funding
- Maghull residents are paying for the upkeep of parks; someone running a business should not be able to use the park for free
- The Council need to exploit its assets
- Officers to contact Football Coach and check that they are DBS cleared, have safeguarding policies and relevant coaching qualifications, and are insured

On the point about insurance/liability the Amenities Manger reported that the Council must ensure that parks/open spaces it owns and maintains are free from hazardous and safe to use.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1. Officers to contact the coach using Whinneybrook Playing Field on Saturdays**
- 2. The report be noted**

**6. UPDATE ON THE REFURBISHMENT OF CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA AT GLENN PARK PROPOSED 2020/21**

The Amenities Manager provided a short verbal report. Major works to the park had been completed. Some minor works to be completed including installation of bins. It looks good. Play area has been expanded to the green gym. New fencing with 2 access gates at either end. The site is muddy after the works. No immediate plans to reopen the park as need to reseed some areas and allow time for grass to grow. There's an area of the park that looks sparse. Maghull in Bloom are considering planting options. Positive feedback from residents. Residents want to know when park will reopen. Would like to keep closed for the next 4 weeks if Cllrs agree.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1. Glenn Park to remain closed for a further 4 weeks to complete all works and allow for reseeding**

## **2. Verbal report be noted**

## **7. UPDATE ON THE ROLE OF "FRIENDS OF" MAGHULL GROPS**

The Amenities Manager ran through the proposed community projects including planning, creation of flower beds, tree planting and a rockery/wall.

Projects as follows:

- KGV Park: Replant flower beds in former rose garden to create a community picnic area
- Dodds Park: Build wall around memorial at entrance to park with support
- Mersey Avenue: Plant 5 flower beds
- South Meade Park: Replant a flower bed
- Old Hall Park: Plant trees from Mersey Forest scheme
- Pimbley Field: Plant trees from Mersey Forest scheme

Database of Community Members set up. Amenities Manager working with Community Services Manager to set up and progress groups. Some projects require procurement.

Cllrs noted that it was good to see progress.

### **RESOLVED that**

- 1. The report be noted**

## **8. PROPOSED AMENITIES SERVICE BUDGET 2021/22**

The Amenities Manager ran through the context of the report:

- Each Committee had an opportunity to consider budget proposals and financial implications in advance of Finance and General Purposes Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> December
- Proposals will be presented to Full Council in January 2021
- Amenities Budget is in 2 parts
  - Operation costs
  - Asset Maintenance. 5-year plan agreed by Cllrs.
- Tax Base: Expect to remain same for 2021/22. Maybe an increase due to house building. Final figures will available from Sefton in next few weeks
- Rental income: Income from football/bowling likely to be the same for 2021/22 – 2 football clubs and 2 bowling clubs. There may be a third bowling club, but this is to be confirmed
- Income from assets (ATC and Bowling Pavilion): expected to be the same for 2021/22
- Income: Will be reduced. No further funding from Sefton for Bobby's Wood and Old Hall Park and unclear if any income for hire of Tennis Pavilion and courts. Discussion with Tennis Club ongoing about outstanding hire charges
- Staff costs: Assume pay rise of 2% and covers pay increments for some staff.

In summary, under the proposed budget there is a shortfall of £22,072 for Operation Costs. This would require an increase in precept of £3 to meet the shortfall.

#### Points raised by Cllrs:

- Breakdown of nominal code 5204 (Parks Management) requested. Noted that this includes planting, playground equipment and benches
- What discussions have been held with those who hire Council's assets about continuing to hire next year. Noted that no discussion held but expect the RAF/ATC and Scrummies to continue to hire assets
- Need to review/refresh how the Council raises money. Concerns that response to deficit is to put up Precept. Need to look at how the Council can be more creative in generating income rather than putting the burden on rate payers
- Funded Town Clerk to achieve a qualification (CiLCA) which gives Councils powers under the General Power of Competence to raise funds. Little evidence
- Council has two elements – core functions (e.g. running costs and parks) and events. Appointed a Community Services Manager to add social value/capital. The idea was that the post would try and generate income and not be a drain on Council business.
- Need to evaluate external grant aid and milk Council's assets. Consider external expertise to support this work – noted that Cllr Sharp has secured £60,000 for works in Bobby's Wood. Consider what was achieved previously e.g. Arm's Length Company received £100,000 from external funding. Funding used to set up Maghull Radio and a business incubator.

In response the Amenities Manager noted the request for a financial refresh. He reported that the Community Services Manager was working with community groups and Sefton CVS on funding options. External funding under pressure with limited opportunities. It was unlikely the gap in funding could be met by grants.

The Amenities Manager moved on to discuss the Asset Maintenance Plan:

#### Key points:

- Bigger gap in budget if deliver the approved Asset Maintenance Plan
- Want to avoid managing decline in parks if unable to replace play equipment
- Recommend increasing precept as risks of using reserves. Needed if any unforeseen circumstances e.g. a death in service
- Covid pandemic has had an impact on income
- Agree that there should not be an automatic call on raising the precept. However, need to be clear what the financial situation is

#### Key comments by Cllrs:

- Lydiate have secured grant funding for changing rooms
- Concern about impact on rate payers as proposals are for Amenities only
- Clarification need on limits on reserves. Could keep 20%
- Need to consider cuts to some maintenance projects – e.g. flooring for Town Hall and air conditioning for radio station. Is this required if broadcasting from home?
- Residents use parks. Concerns about time taken to replace play equipment, works get pushed back
- Review plan for year 2 works to making savings. Some projects to be put on hold. Works to parks should not slide because of works to the Town Hall

- Capital items to be refunded from reserves

In response the Amenities Manager noted the following:

- Clerks network and share skills and experience. Happy to work with Lydiate and draw on their expertise
- Need to present a balanced budget to Full Council
- Page 26 of the report set out the agreed asset maintenance plan for year 1 (2020/21).
  - Demolition of the Judo Hut had been completed. Some additional costs incurred (approx. £900 due to ground works)
  - Cemetery Risk Assessment to be completed by St Andrews not Maghull Town Council. Saving of £3,000
  - Bins for Parks. Costs to be met from s106 funding. Saving of £6,069
  - Some project delayed as Procurement Policy only recently agreed
- Noted that current level of reserves is £546,580. Advice from SLCC and NALC is that councils should hold reserves for 6-9 months operating costs. The Council's annual running costs are £769,710.
- Can replace some items of play equipment quickly but can take longer to replace others. Procurement policy should help. Also issues about surface when replacing play equipment which increases costs

Cllrs agreed a revised plan for Year 2 works as follows:

Works	Estimated Cost (£)	Rationale
Install new electricity meter at Whinneybrook (Pump)	3,000.00	Required
CCTV at Glenn Park	4,000.00	Important to protect investment in park
Demolish Pavilion Whinneybrook	5,000.00	Demolish rather than refurbish as not used
Replacement play equipment for parks as per ROSPA report	30,000.00	Important to maintain parks
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>42,000</b>	

The following works to be moved to Year 3:

Works	Estimated Cost (£)
Reflooring Town Hall	5,000.00
More CCTV around Town Hall and overflow car park etc	1,600.00
Repaint indoors at Town Hall to improve appearance	7,000.00
Shutters to Town Hall Main entrance	7,000.00
<b>Sub Total Two</b>	<b>20,600</b>

Work (£5,000) to separate Electricity supply to outside buildings identified as a saving. Air conditioning works be completed in Year 1 (2020/21).

The Amenities Manager reported that the revised plan would leave a budget shortfall of around £30,000. This would require a precept increase of £4.52. The total proposed precept increase was £7.78 (£3.26 for Amenities Team and £4.52 for revised Asset plan.) This is a 3% increase on 2020/21. The proposed Precept increase for the Town Hall as £9.78

Summary of closing comments made by Cllrs:

- Concerns about affordability of Precept increase for residents, particularly those not in work. Need to consider other options
- Concerns that Police, Fire and Sefton Council are likely to increase their Precepts.
- Precept increase should be a last resort
- Any increase should be as low as possible and less than £10.00 across all budgets
- Understand that need to pay wages, pensions etc but concerns that may need to review staffing in the future
- Propose Precept increase of £3.00 to cover amenities costs
- Revised Asset Maintenance Plan to be reviewed by Finance and General Purposes Committee
- Financial refresh to be arranged as soon as possible
- All funding options to be explored

**RESOLVED that**

- 1. Undertake a financial refresh**
- 2. Recommend a raise in precept of £3.00 to cover the core running costs of the Amenities Service**
- 3. Revised Asset Plan to be reviewed by Finance and General Purposes Committee**
- 4. Consider use of reserves for capital items**
- 5. The report be noted**

## 9. CHAIRS REPORT

No report given

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CHAIRMAN



**Report to:** Amenities Committee  
**Date of Meeting:** 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021  
**Agenda Item Number** 5  
**Subject:** Amenities Manager Update – Committee Resolutions  
**Report of:** Amenities Manager  
**Exempt / Confidential Report:** No

## Summary

To update Members on the progression of resolutions made during meetings of Amenities Committee in September and November 2020.

<b>Maghull Town Council Priority</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>
1. Development and Protect the Community	Yes
2. Develop Parks and Green Spaces	Yes
3. Value for Money and Enterprising Council	Yes
4. Develop Leisure and Activity for All	Yes
5. Develop/support Community Services and Groups	Yes
6. Support Culture and Heritage	Yes
7. Health and Wellbeing Programme	Yes
8. Statutory Requirement	No

## Recommendation(s)

Amenities Committee is requested to:-

1. Note the contents of this report.

## Reasons for Recommendation(s)

Members have requested that an update on resolutions previously agreed by committee members is reported at each meeting.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

## What will it cost and how will it be financed?

### (A) Revenue

All costs associated with the maintenance of parks, open spaces and facilities are met by 2020/21 Facilities Service Budget.

### (B) Capital

None

**Implications of Recommendations:**

<b>Financial Implications</b>	All costs associated with the maintenance of parks, open spaces and facilities are met by 2020/21 Facilities Service Budget.
<b>Resource Implications</b>	Officer time for the maintenance of parks, open spaces and facilities.
<b>Legal Implications</b>	None.
<b>Equality &amp; Diversity Implications</b>	None.

**Implementation Date for Decision**

Immediately following the conclusion of Amenities Committee.

**Appendices**

1. Amenities Committee Resolution Log for the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

**Background Papers**

1. Amenities Committee Papers, 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020.
2. Amenities Committee Papers, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

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## **1. Background**

This report has been produced to better inform Members of progress made against resolutions of each committee meeting and to introduce more officer accountability.

Members have resolved that this report is a standing agenda item for each committee meeting.

### **Recommendation(s):-**

#### **Amenities Committee is requested to:-**

1. Note the contents of this report.

**Appendix One: Amenities Committee Resolution Log for the 2020/21 Municipal Year**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Resolution</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Progress</b>
23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020	7	Additional works approved for the 2020/21 autumn/winter operations window	Amenities Manager	<b>Completed:</b> Grounds Maintenance Operatives are completing additional works as directed by Amenities Manager
23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020	8	Update on "Friends Of" Groups for next meeting.	Amenities Manager	<b>Completed:</b> Members have received a briefing on projects which the Amenities Manager and Community Services Manager are progressing
23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020	10	One pitch is made available to Sefton District Schoolboys Under 15's Football Club.	Amenities Manager	<b>Completed:</b> Amenities Manager has contacted the football club and made them aware that football pitch is available for the 2020/21 season.
23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020	10.	The reopened second pitch is made available to Sefton District School Girls Football Club.	Amenities Manager	<b>Completed:</b> Amenities Manager has contacted the football club and made them aware that football pitch is available for the 2020/21 season.
23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020	10	Officers to explore use of Whinneybrook Playing Field on Saturday mornings and issue message on social media that Council has not agreed the hire and that insurance may not be valid	Town Clerk	<b>Completed:</b> Town Clerk has put information on social media platforms regarding the use of Whinneybrook Playing Field
23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020	11	The former Judo hut is demolished by Winterburns of Rochdale Ltd and electricity disconnected	Amenities Manager	<b>Completed:</b> The former judo hut was successfully demolished in November 2020 by Winterburns of Rochdale.
23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020	13	Funding of £95.00 agreed for Friends of Maghull and District to purchase crowd funding signs to be installed at Bobby's Wood	Amenities Manager	<b>Completed:</b> Two signs have been installed at Bobby's Wood to support the Friends of Maghull & District.

## Appendix One: Amenities Committee Resolution Log for the 2020/21 Municipal Year

Date of Meeting	Item	Resolution	Lead	Progress
23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020	16	The Town Clerk should write a letter to the resident explaining the resolution of members (not to plant hedging to read of property)	Town Clerk	<b>Completed:</b> The Town Clerk has sent a letter to the resident concerned outlining the resolution of committee members.
18 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	5	Officers to contact the coach using Whinneybrook Playing Field on Saturdays	Amenities Manager	<b>In Progress:</b> This has not been completed owing to the second covid-19 national lockdown. The Amenities Manager has on two separate occasions visited Whinneybrook Playing Field to discuss with football coach during lockdown. However, Whinneybrook Playing was not being used during these visits.
18 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	6	Glenn Park to remain closed for a further 4 weeks to complete all works and allow for reseeded	Amenities Manager	<b>In Progress:</b> The newly refurbished play area at Glenn Park continues to remain closed owing to grass continuing to recover. However, members will discuss potential reopening at its meeting on 24 <sup>th</sup> February 2021.
18 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	8	Undertake a financial refresh	Town Clerk	<b>In Progress:</b> This work forms part of the budget setting process and will be reported to councillors in April 2021.
18 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	8	Recommend a raise in precept of £3.00 to cover the core running costs of the Amenities Service	Town Clerk	<b>Completed:</b> This resolution was discussed and completed at Full Council (Budget Setting) on 27 <sup>th</sup> January 2021.
18 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	8	Revised Asset Plan to be reviewed by Finance and General Purposes Committee	Town Clerk	<b>In Progress:</b> This resolution was discussed by Full Council (Budget Setting) on 27 <sup>th</sup> January 2021. Full Council resolved to make £100,000.00 of reserves available for asset improvement and asked officers to provide a revised and costed asset maintenance plan for the next full meeting of Council in April 2021.

**Appendix One: Amenities Committee Resolution Log for the 2020/21 Municipal Year**

Date of Meeting	Item	Resolution	Lead	Progress
18 <sup>th</sup> November 2020	8	Consider use of reserves for capital items	Town Clerk	<p><b>In Progress:</b> This resolution was discussed by Full Council (Budget Setting) on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021. Full Council resolved to make £100,000.00 of reserves available for asset improvement and asked officers to provide a revised and costed asset maintenance plan for the next full meeting of Council in April 2021.</p>

**Report to:** Amenities Committee  
**Date of Meeting:** 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021  
**Agenda Item Number** 6  
**Subject:** Review of 2020/21 Grounds Maintenance Operations and Proposed 2021/22 Grounds Maintenance Operations  
**Report of:** Amenities Manager  
**Exempt / Confidential Report:** No

### Summary

To provide Members with a review of 2020/21 Grounds Maintenance Operations and to seek Members' approval of proposed 2021/22 Grounds Maintenance Operations.

Maghull Town Council Priority	Yes/No
1. Development and Protect the Community	Yes
2. Develop Parks and Green Spaces	Yes
3. Value for Money and Enterprising Council	Yes
4. Develop Leisure and Activity for All	Yes
5. Develop/support Community Services and Groups	Yes
6. Support Culture and Heritage	Yes
7. Health and Wellbeing Programme	Yes
8. Statutory Requirement	No

### Recommendation(s)

Amenities Committee is requested to:-

1. Review 2020/21 Grounds Maintenance Operations
2. Approve proposed 2021/22 Grounds Maintenance Operations
3. Note the contents of this report.

### Reasons for Recommendation(s)

At its meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020, Amenities Committee members approved proposals for 2020/21 Grounds Maintenance Operations.

At the heart of these proposals was an ambition to enhance parks and open spaces - to not simply maintain as in previous years - but to build on the good work of our grounds maintenance operatives by planting flower beds, edging areas, removing overgrowth and/or repainting assets. This work was typified by proposed "enhancement weeks" as set out within the report.

The Covid-19 pandemic significantly impeded this ambition and forced officers to prioritise work in order to regain pre-lockdown standards. However, since returning to work in May 2020, pre-lockdown standards have been surpassed and there has been a heavy focus upon improving assets whilst the majority of play areas remain closed to the public in accordance with government guidance.

A revised autumn/winter operations window with a heavy focus on asset improvement e.g. repainting of playground equipment, has ensured a good foothold for 2021/22 spring/summer operations.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

None

**What will it cost and how will it be financed?**

**(A) Revenue**

All costs associated with the maintenance of parks, open spaces and facilities will be met by 2021/22 Facilities Service Budget.

**(B) Capital**

Capital investment will be met through a combination of:-

- 2021/22 Facilities Service Budget
- Utilisation of council reserves as resolved by Full Council (Budget Setting) on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021.
- External funding (to be identified through Financial Refresh to be reported to Full Council in April 2021)
- Where possible, S.106 funding held by Sefton Council

**Implications of Recommendations:**

<b>Financial Implications</b>	All costs associated with the maintenance of parks, open spaces and facilities will be met by 2021/22 Facilities Service Budget.  Where capital funding is required, this will be met through a combination of 2021/22 Facilities Service Budget, Council reserves, external funding (to be identified) and S.106 funding held by Sefton Council.
<b>Resource Implications</b>	Officer time for the maintenance of parks, open spaces and facilities.
<b>Legal Implications</b>	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
<b>Equality &amp; Diversity Implications</b>	None.

**Implementation Date for Decision**

Immediately following the conclusion of Amenities Committee.



## Appendices

1. Presentation 2020/21 Grounds Maintenance Operations.

### Background Papers

1. Amenities Committee Papers, 4<sup>th</sup> March 2020
2. Amenities Committee Papers, 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020
3. Amenities Committee Papers, 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

<b>Contact Officer</b>	Alex Spencer – Amenities Manager
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## 1. Background

During the 2020/21 municipal year, Amenities Committee members agreed a number of resolutions which have shaped grounds maintenance operations.

These resolutions have ranged from service standards in parks & open spaces to where investment in playgrounds should be made.

In addition, Grounds Maintenance Supervisors and Operatives have been consulted during team meetings to determine what level of maintenance is realistically achievable as we move into 2021/22.

The Covid-19 pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges in all walks of life. Maghull Town Council has however responded to these challenges – changing the way officers work, making facilities Covid-19 secure to reduce the risk of virus transmission and altering grounds maintenance operations in light of changing government guidance.

It is against this landscape that ground maintenance operations move into 2021/22.

## 2. Review of 2020/21 Grounds Maintenance Operations

Grounds maintenance operations were significantly affected by the first Covid-19 National Lockdown with officers absent from work until May 2020.

With officers returning to work in May 2020, in agreement with the Leader and Deputy Leader of Council and as reported to Amenities Committee in September 2020, grounds maintenance operations focussed on achieving pre-lockdown standards and maintenance thereafter and did not concentrate upon asset improvement as previously resolved.

As reported to Members in September 2020, the majority of grounds maintenance standards were either equalled or surpassed at the time of reporting – testament to the hard work of our Grounds Maintenance Supervisors and Operatives.

As a result of this, post September 2020 operations focussed on the improvement of physical assets such as play equipment, bowling facilities and park assets e.g. pavilions. Officers would also complete annual tree and hedge work whilst outside the recognised bird nesting season.

The following table shows autumn/winter works as agreed by Members in September 2020, with a comment regarding progression of works.

<b>Work during window</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Playgrounds, surrounding areas and playing fields will be cut periodically, following review by the Amenities Manager.	<b>Completed:</b> Despite most play areas being closed to the public, grass and surrounding areas continued to be cut to ensure standards did not slip and there was a good foothold for 2021 operations.

<b>Work during window</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Multi-use bins will be emptied weekly	<b>Completed:</b> Bins were emptied weekly, with operations being supported by Maghull in Bloom Volunteers at Glenn Park.
Multi-use bins will be washed monthly	<b>Completed:</b> Officers have cleaned down bins, signs and noticeboards during autumn/winter operations.
Bowling greens will be prepared for the spring/summer playing season.	<b>In progress:</b> Bowling greens have been scarified and spiked in preparation for the season. However, in light of current government guidance regarding Covid-19, no top-dressing or overseeding has taken place due to considerable costs involved and uncertainty about whether season will go ahead. This has been communicated to bowling teams who use greens.
Football pitches will be marked as required by the hiring football team	<b>Completed:</b> Owing to Covid-19 Government Guidance regarding amateur football, football pitches at Pimbley Playing Field have not been extensively used. However, where football was played pre-national lockdown, pitches were marked by officers.
Hedges will be cut twice and to a height of circa 4ft, at the beginning and end of autumn/winter operations.	<b>Completed:</b> All hedges have been cut town wide and will receive a further cut before the beginning of the recognised bird nesting season in March.
Playground inspections will be completed once a month as a minimum.	<b>Completed:</b> Our Maintenance Officer continues to inspect play equipment to ensure it is safe.
Removal of play equipment identified as posing a danger to health and safety as per annual ROSPA inspection.	<b>Completed:</b> All play equipment identified by ROSPA as being unsafe and requiring removal has been removed from site.
Repainting of play equipment and assets (pavilions, entrance barriers and park signs)	<b>In Progress:</b> The majority of play equipment in parks has been repainted and officers continue to repaint assets such as access gates. This work will be rolled into spring/summer operations until completion.

<b>Work during window</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Installation of multi-use bins as part of phase two of bin replacement programme.	<b>In Progress:</b> Multi-use bins have been placed on order and our supplier is expected to deliver before 1 <sup>st</sup> March 2020. A sub-contractor has been appointed to install all bins – thereby enabling grounds maintenance operatives to focus solely on spring/summer operations.
Installation of benches under Council's Celebration Bench Scheme.	<b>Completed:</b> To date, one bench has been installed within Old Hall Park. Further promotion of this scheme will be needed in 2020/21.

In short, our officers have worked tirelessly since returning to work in May to ensure that pre-lockdown standards have been met and often surpassed, that physical assets have been markedly improved and that a strong foothold has been gained for 2021/22 spring/summer operations. Some work areas will require completion during spring/summer operations and officers will be allocated to ensure that is the case.

### **3. Proposed 2021/22 Grounds Maintenance Operations**

It is proposed that the following arrangements apply for Grounds Maintenance Operations in 2021/22:-

#### **Spring/Summer Operations**

- i. The window for spring/summer operations will be from Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February 2021 to Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021.
- ii. During this window
  - o Sanitisation of opened play areas in accordance with government guidance.
  - o Playgrounds, surrounding areas and playing fields will be cut weekly
  - o Multi-use bins will be emptied weekly
  - o Multi-use bins will be washed monthly
  - o Bowling greens will be cut weekly
  - o Football pitches will be marked as required by the hiring football team
  - o Prior to the commencement of the tennis season, tennis courts will receive one deep clean, after which, officers will inspect regularly to remove detritus.
  - o Prior to the commencement of the bird nesting season, hedges will be cut once and to a height of circa 4ft.
  - o Playground inspections will be completed once a month as a minimum – (though with the recruitment of 1 x Maintenance Officer and training of

- Grounds Maintenance Operatives/Supervisors, weekly inspections can be achieved)
  - Playgrounds equipment and physical assets will continue to be painted to completion.
  - Tree planting will be undertaken as part of proposed works with Mersey Forest
  - Flower bed planting will be undertaken, though this work is reliant upon Knowsley MBC undertaking procurement
- iii. Grounds maintenance operations will continue to implement a “Needs based” working model.
- iv. As a result of achieving a good foothold during the 2020/21 autumn/winter operations window, a “one visit, do it all” approach will be implemented in 2021/22. This will result in all works – cutting, strimming, blowing, emptying bins, sweeping areas e.g. multi-use games areas, edging and asset inspections, being completed in a single visit. Naturally this will result in Grounds Maintenance Operatives spending more time on site to ensure all tasks are completed. As part of this approach some services e.g. bin emptying, will be duplicated, however this will only enhance the park overall.
- v. To assist the “one visit, do it all” approach, a numbered system for parks will be introduced whereby Grounds Maintenance Operatives work through a list of parks (each allocated a number). This approach will overcome issues such as missing scheduled park visits due to poor weather, as operatives will complete the allocated park before moving to the next on the list.
- vi. Grounds Maintenance Operatives using ride-on mowers will progress their own weekly list owing to them being able to visit, cut and leave site more quickly than operatives working in parks. However, these lists will join up as far as possible to ensure that tasks such as blowing paths happen whilst both are on site on the same day.

### **Autumn/Winter Operations**

- i. The window for Autumn/winter operations will be from Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021 to Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February 2022.
- ii. During this window, the following service standards will apply:-
  - a. Playgrounds, surrounding areas and playing fields will be cut periodically, following review by the Amenities Manager.
  - b. Multi-use bins will be emptied weekly
  - c. Multi-use bins will be washed monthly
  - d. Bowling greens will be prepared for the spring/summer playing season.
  - e. Football pitches will be marked as required by the hiring football team
  - f. Hedges will be cut twice and to a height of circa 4ft, at the beginning and end of autumn/winter operations.
  - g. Playground inspections will be completed once a month as a minimum.
  - h. Playground equipment and other assets will be repainted.

#### **4. Proposed Further Areas of Work During 2021/22**

- i. The Amenities Manager and Community Services Manager will continue to work together to develop "Friends of" groups to help support our operations in parks and open spaces. The benefit of this work has already been seen by Maghull in Bloom supporting litter picking operations in Glenn Park.
- ii. To pursue Green Flag Status for King George V Playing Field.
- iii. Commissioning of tree survey to ensure trees in parks & open spaces are as healthy as possible, and do not present a danger to the public.
- iv. Finalisation of Asset Maintenance Plan in light of Full Council's resolution to make £100,000.00 available for capital expenditure.
- v. Closer working with Merseyside Police and Sefton Council to help reduce anti-social behaviour in parks and open spaces, with a desire to safeguard play equipment and asset.
- vi. Working with Knowsley Council, the procurement of a new vehicle fleet.

#### **Recommendation(s):-**

#### **Amenities Committee is requested to:-**

1. Review 2020/21 Grounds Maintenance Operations
2. Approve proposed 2021/22 Grounds Maintenance Operations
3. Note the contents of this report.

# 2020/21 Grounds Maintenance Operations

Amenities Committee

24<sup>th</sup> February 2021

## Grounds Maintenance Staff

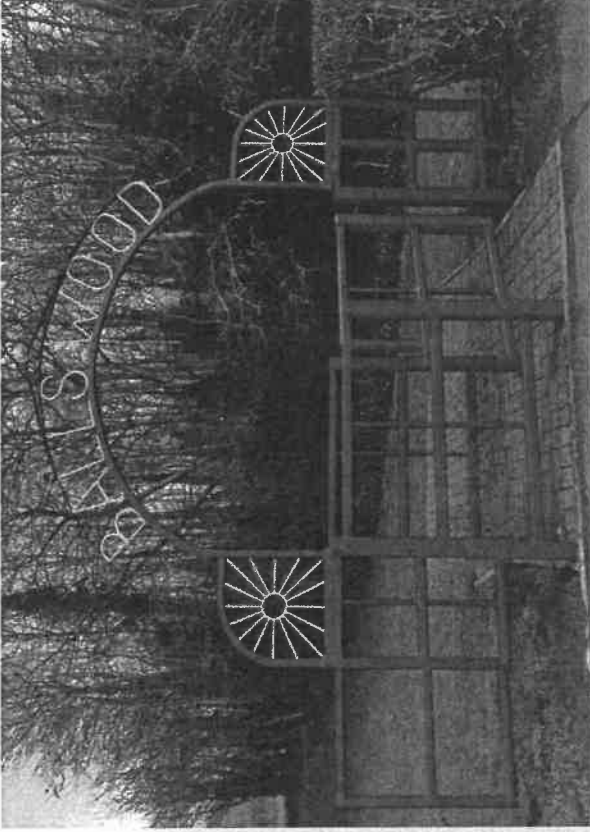
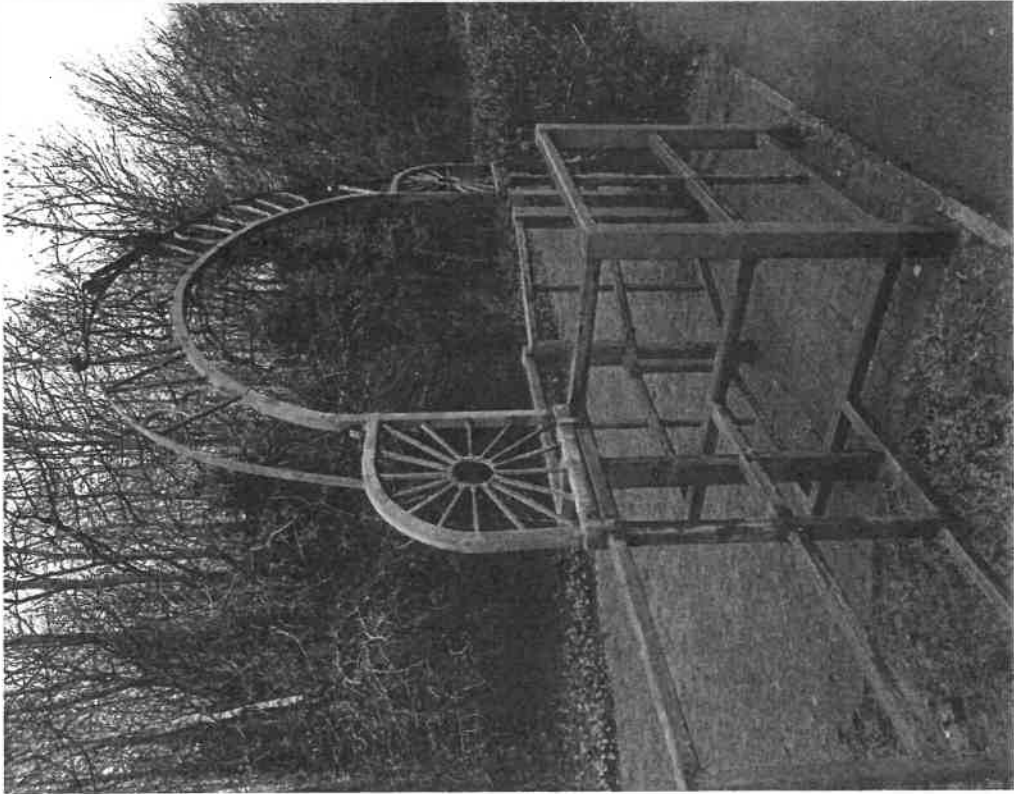
- 1 x Amenities Manager
- 2 x Grounds Maintenance Supervisors
- 4 x Grounds Maintenance Operatives
- 2 x Maintenance Officers (1 Vacant)





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# Ballswood: Repainting of Entrance Gates



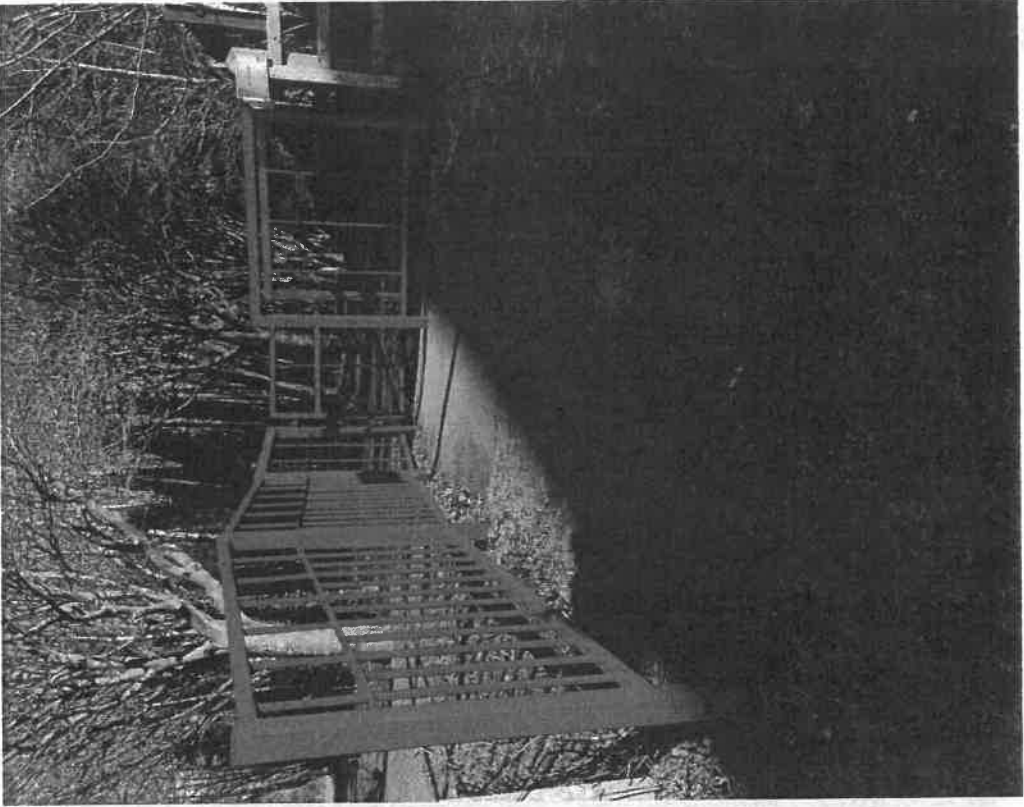
On 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021, a resident living near to Ballswood called Maghull Town Council and said :

***"Thank you for all the work you have done at Ballswood. The park is transformed, the team does not stop working and you've made me feel really happy in these sad times."***



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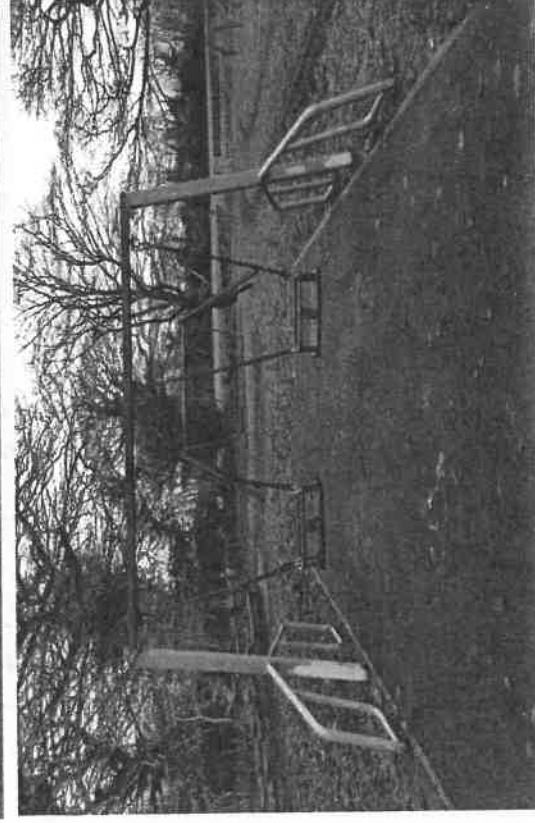
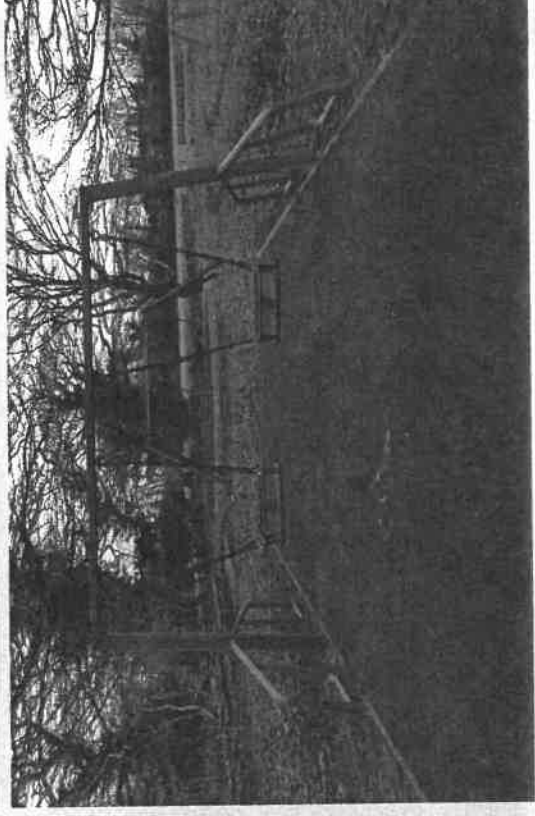
# Ballswood: Repainting of Access Gates





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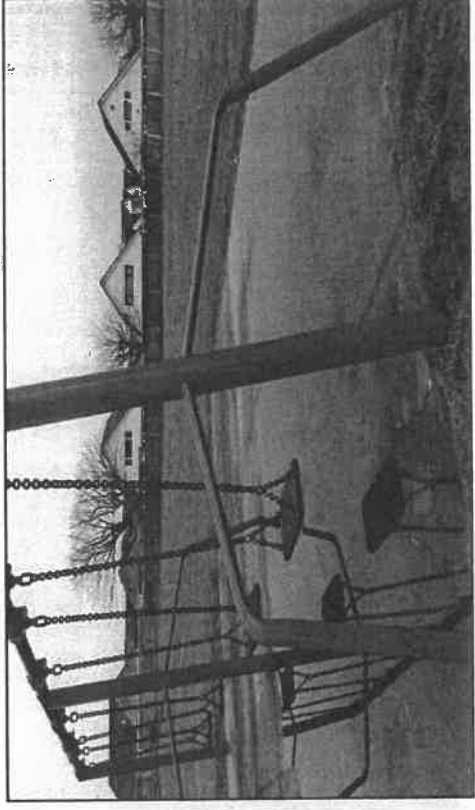
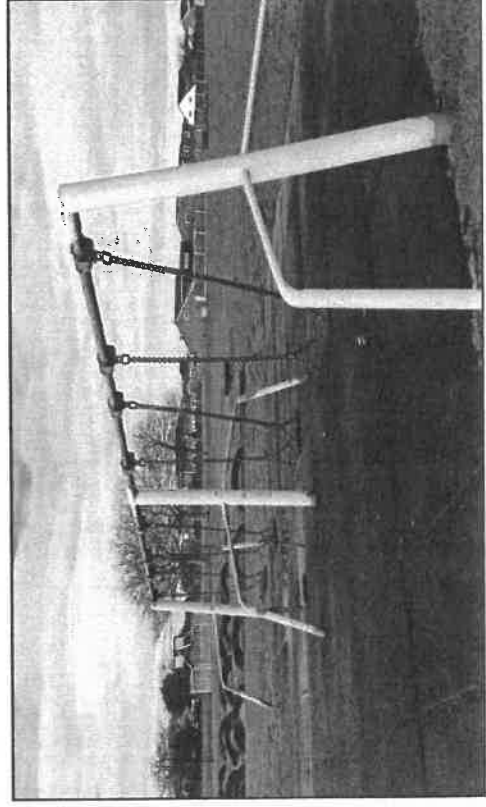
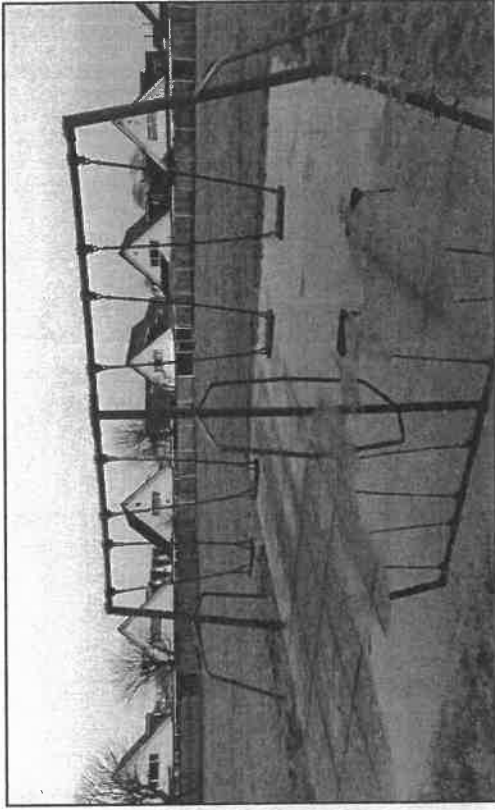
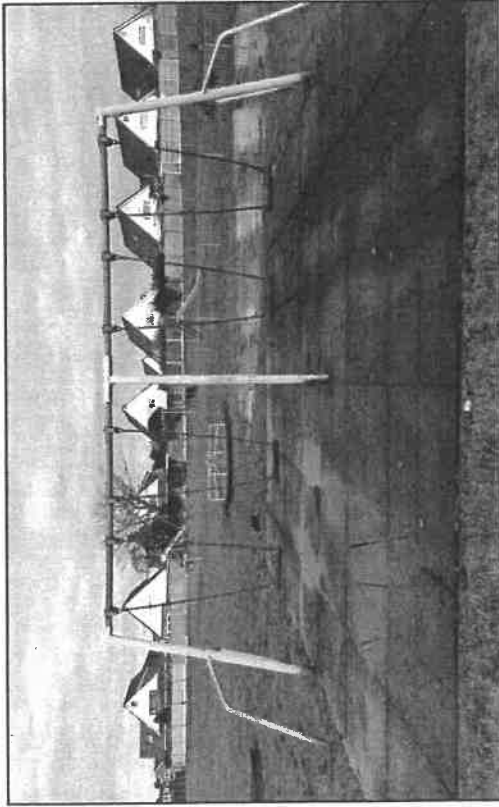
# Ballswood: Repainting Play Equipment





# Round Meade: Repainting Swings

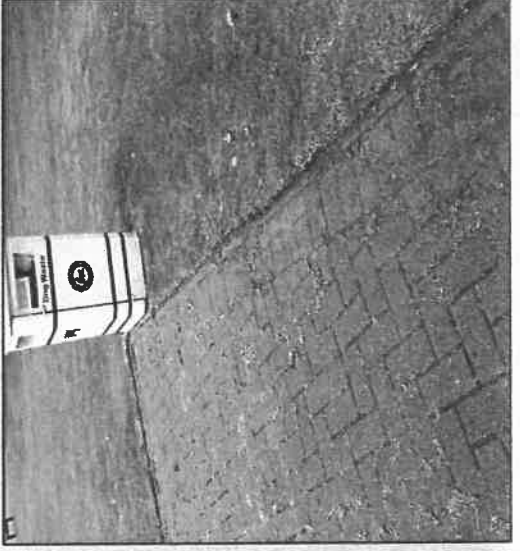
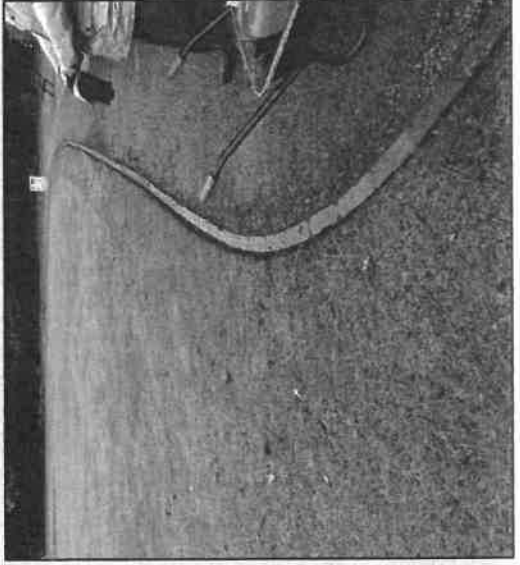
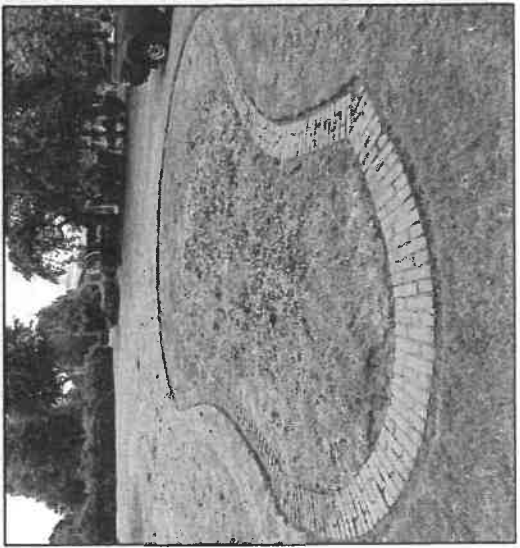
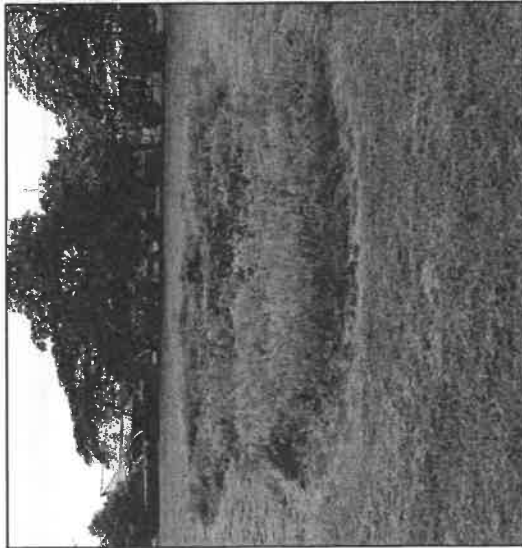
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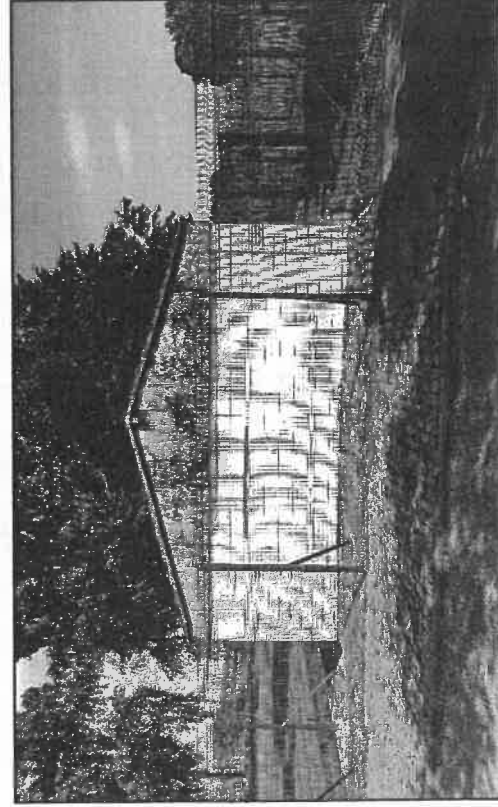
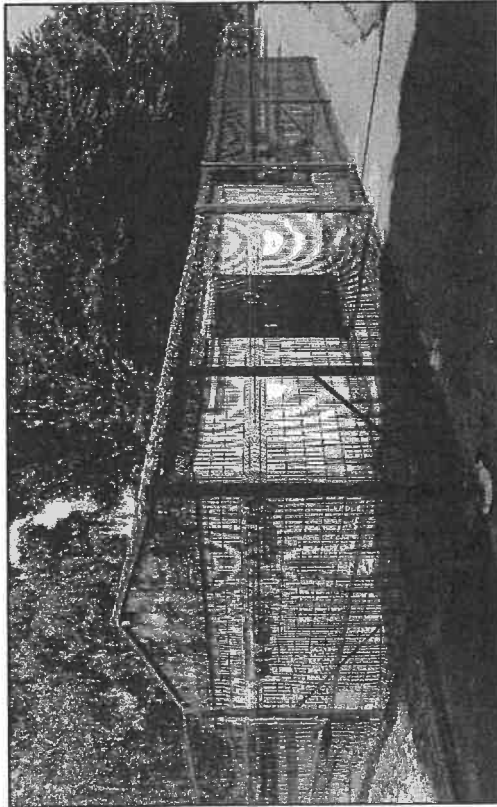
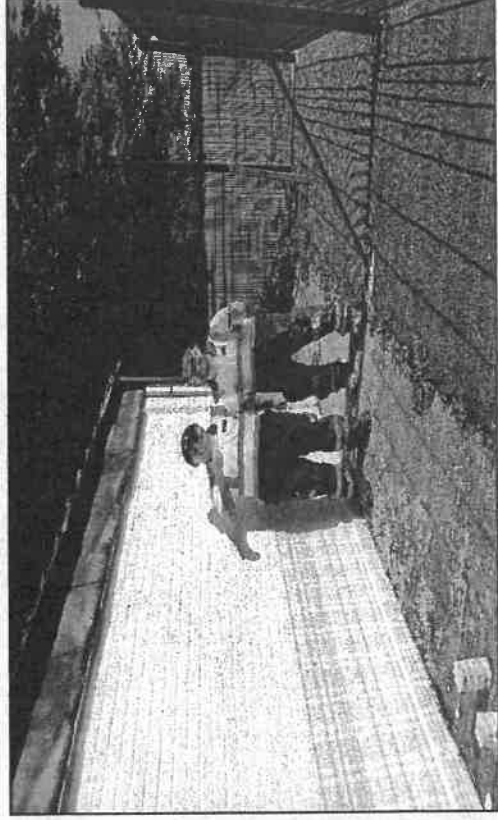
# King George V: Edging Pathways





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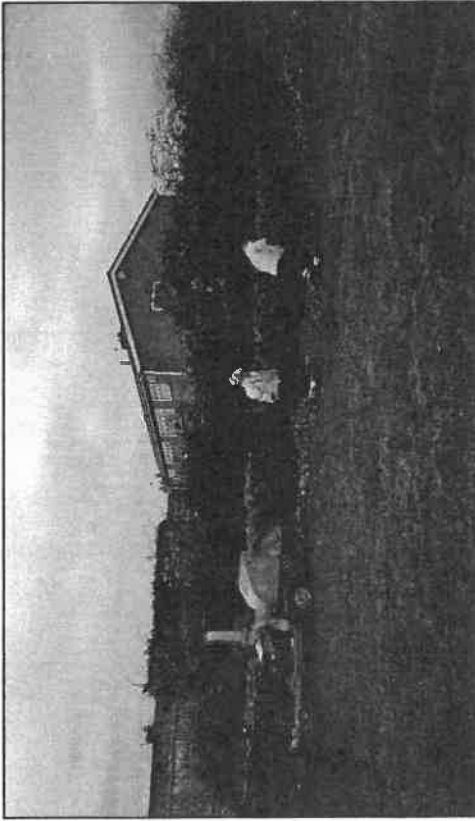
# Glenn Park: Repainting Pavilion





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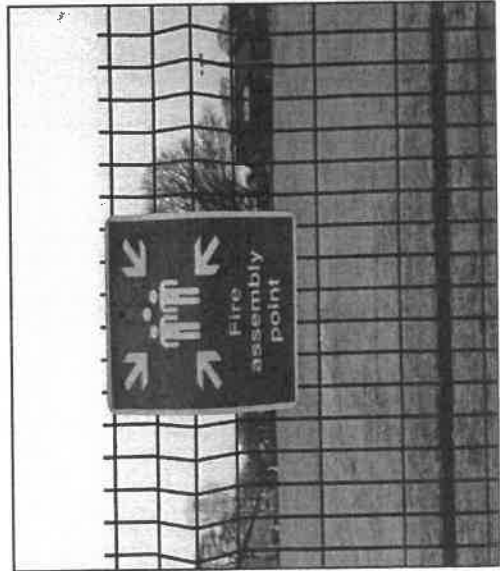
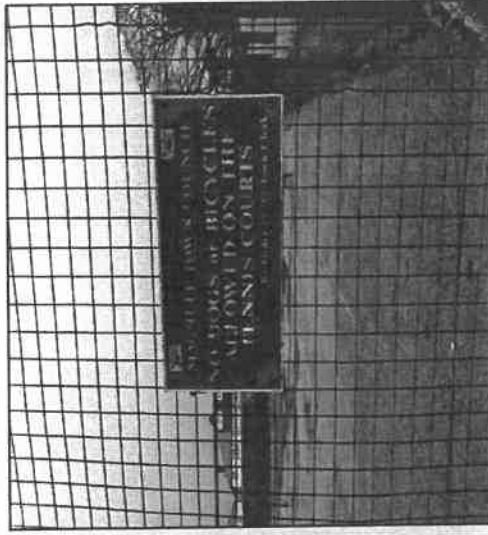
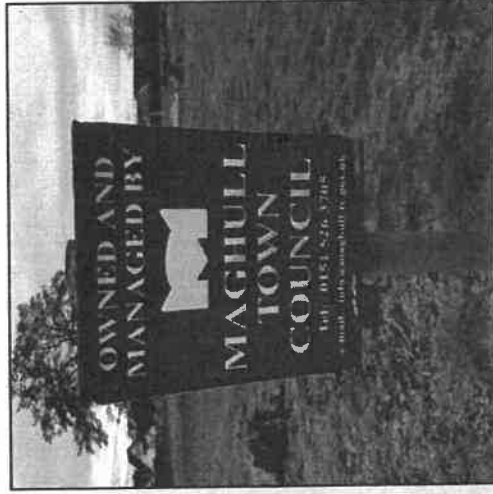
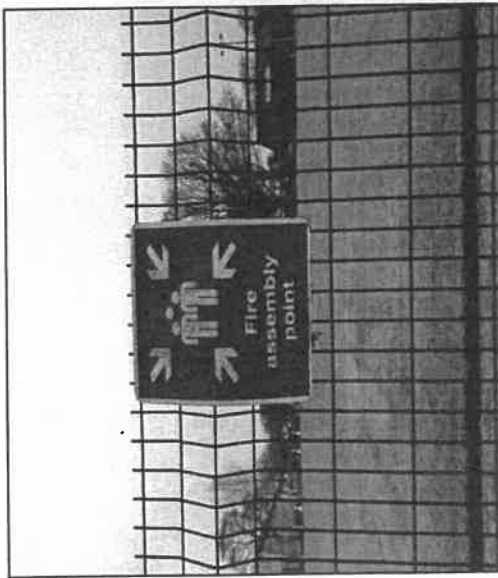
# Town-wide Hedge Cutting & Tree Felling





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# Town-wide Sign Cleaning

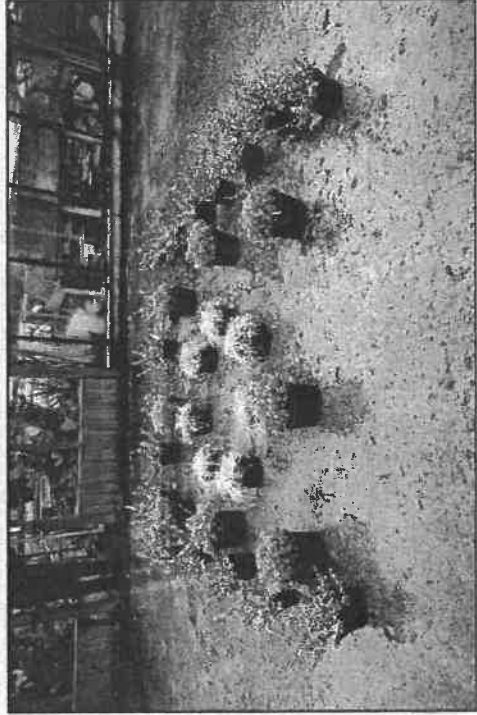
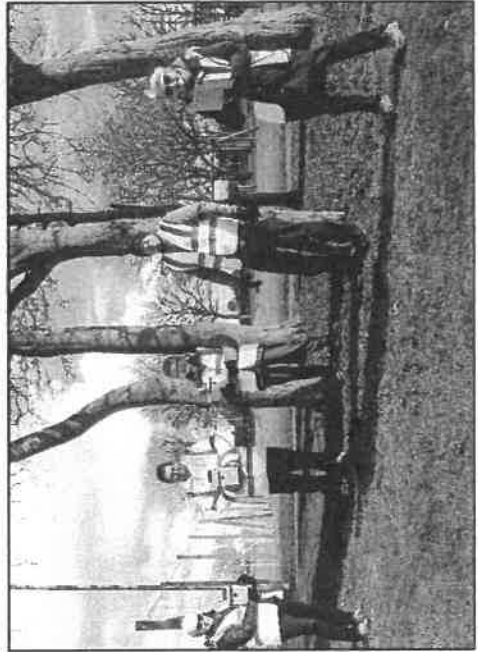






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# Working with the Community



**Report to:** Amenities Committee  
**Date of Meeting:** 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021  
**Agenda Item Number** 7  
**Subject:** Management of play areas during Covid-19 Pandemic.  
**Report of:** Amenities Manager  
**Exempt / Confidential Report:** No

## Summary

To seek member approval of proposals for the management of play areas during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Maghull Town Council Priority	Yes/No
1. Development and Protect the Community	Yes
2. Develop Parks and Green Spaces	Yes
3. Value for Money and Enterprising Council	Yes
4. Develop Leisure and Activity for All	Yes
5. Develop/support Community Services and Groups	Yes
6. Support Culture and Heritage	Yes
7. Health and Wellbeing Programme	Yes
8. Statutory Requirement	No

## Recommendation(s)

Amenities Committee is requested to:-

1. Approve proposals for the management of play areas during the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. Note the contents of this report.

## Reasons for Recommendation(s)

The UK Government has issued guidance to all local authorities and parish/town councils with responsibility for managing parks, play areas and facilities with the overriding aim of managing areas safely and in ways which reduces the risk of Covid-19 transmission.

Against a fluid landscape where Government guidance changes to respond to the pandemic, and in light of calls from our community to have all play areas reopened, clear measures for the management of reopened play areas are required and must be approved by Members.

## Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

## What will it cost and how will it be financed?

### (A) Revenue

All costs associated with the maintenance of parks, open spaces and facilities will be met by 2021/22 Facilities Service Budget.

### (B) Capital

None

## Implications of Recommendations:

<b>Financial Implications</b>	All costs associated with maintenance of parks and open spaces will be met by 2020/21 Facilities Service Budget.
<b>Resource Implications</b>	Officer time for the maintenance of parks, open spaces, and facilities.
<b>Legal Implications</b>	UK Government Guidance regarding the management of playgrounds and outdoor gyms  Covid-19 Secure guidelines and associated risk assessment(s).
<b>Equality &amp; Diversity Implications</b>	None.

## Implementation Date for Decision

Immediately following the conclusion of Amenities Committee.

## Appendices

### Background Papers

1. UK Government Guidance for the management of playgrounds and outdoor gyms

<b>Contact Officer</b>	Alex Spencer – Amenities Manager
<b>Telephone Number</b>	0151 526 3705
<b>Email Address</b>	Alex.spencer@maghull-tc.gov.uk

## **1. Background and National Picture**

Maghull Town Council owes a duty of care to residents of and visitors to the town who visit its parks and use play equipment therein.

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the UK Government has issued guidance for all local authorities and parish/town councils with responsibility for managing parks, open spaces and play areas. The overriding purpose of this guidance is to ensure that parks and play areas are managed safely and in ways which reduce the risk of Covid-19 transmission.

Despite government guidance changing frequently, council officers keep as up-to-date as possible. These changes are fed into ground maintenance operations such as the sanitisation of high traffic contact points within play areas, decommissioning of play equipment or complete playground closure.

In short, the current landscape is an ever changing one and officers have been as responsive as possible to implement government guidance expediently.

The latest UK Government Guidance is available to view at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-playgrounds-and-outdoor-gyms/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-playgrounds-and-outdoor-gyms>

Organisations including the National Association of Local Councils (NALC), Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), Association for Public Sector Excellence (APSE) and Northwest Play Officer Group Forum have expressed concerns regarding this guidance – all of whom contend that some measures are impractical and cannot be implemented e.g. booking systems for the use of playground equipment.

In addition, there is a consensus between organisations that there should be a greater onus on the playground user to ensure their personal safety and the safety of others i.e. adhering to social distancing principles and/or cleaning high traffic contact points such as access gates or benches; rather than relying on playground providers to sanitise playgrounds which can (in theory) become contaminated after a single use.

There is growing research focussing on the physical and mental impact of playground closures – not only focussing on children but also parents and carers. Early findings from this research indicate that there is a detrimental effect on the physical, mental and social development of children as a result of being unable to use play areas. The wellbeing of parents and carers is also detrimentally affected.

## **2. Local Picture**

Since the first national lockdown in March 2020, Maghull Town Council has followed government guidance regarding the management of parks, play areas and facilities.

As per government guidance, our first response was the official closure of all play areas, outdoor gyms and sports facilities.

However as national restrictions were lifted, officers – in line with government guidance and following the advice of our insurers, reopened play areas at King George V Playing Field and Glenn Park (subsequently closed for refurbishment, with Moss Park re-opening).

At the time of writing, only play areas at King George V Playing Field and Moss Park have reopened to the public and are regularly sanitised by council officers.

Unofficially, officers are aware that all play areas are being accessed by children and parents/carers. Where this is observed, officers approach users and outline the risks of Covid-19 transmission and encourage them to use another play area where play equipment which has been sanitised.

Having undertaken sanitisation at two play areas over a number of months, officers have calculated that 9.0 working hours are lost per week, if two play areas are sanitised three times per week.

Despite Maghull Town Council officially opening two play areas, officers have received numerous contacts regarding the reopening of all play areas. There has been a frustration that children are being deprived an opportunity to play and “escape” from lockdown and a feeling that it should be the responsibility of parents/carers to ensure that risks of covid-19 transmission are mitigated not council officers.

### **3. Proposals for the Management of Play Areas During the Covid-19 Pandemic**

In line with current government guidance, in accordance with advice provided by our insurers and having due regard to council resources, officers propose the following measures for managing play areas during the Covid-19 pandemic:-

- a. The continued opening of play areas at King George V Playing Field and Moss Park.
- b. The reopening of play areas at Glenn Park, Mersey Avenue Park and Round Meade Park.
- c. Sanitisation of play areas twice per week – resulting in 15 working hours lost per week.
- d. Installation of signage on gates at all reopened sites stating:-
  - Adherence to social distancing rules
  - Need for sanitisation before and after using play equipment
  - Maximum number of users within play area
  - No food or drink allowed within play area
  - Closure of play area whilst officers undertake sanitisation

**Recommendation(s):-**

**Amenities Committee is requested to:-**

1. Approve proposals for the management of play areas during the Covid-19 pandemic.
2. Note the contents of this report.

**Report to:** Amenities Committee  
**Date of Meeting:** 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021  
**Agenda Item Number** 8  
**Subject:** Proposed Rollout of Bird Boxes within Parks and Open Spaces owned/managed by Maghull Town Council.  
**Report of:** Amenities Manager  
**Exempt / Confidential Report:** No

## Summary

To update members of a birdbox project initiated by Maghull in Bloom and not-for-profit charity Bootle Tool Shed (Registered Charity Number 1170924).

To propose the purchase of 200 birdboxes and roll out in parks and open spaces owned/managed by Maghull Town Council.

Maghull Town Council Priority	Yes/No
1. Development and Protect the Community	Yes
2. Develop Parks and Green Spaces	Yes
3. Value for Money and Enterprising Council	Yes
4. Develop Leisure and Activity for All	Yes
5. Develop/support Community Services and Groups	Yes
6. Support Culture and Heritage	Yes
7. Health and Wellbeing Programme	Yes
8. Statutory Requirement	No

## Recommendation(s)

Amenities Committee is requested to:-

1. Resolve that 40 birdboxes already purchased by Maghull in Bloom should be installed in Glenn Park by our Grounds Maintenance Operatives.
2. Resolve that the birdbox project initiated by Maghull in Bloom and Bootle Tool Shed is rolled out across all parks and open spaces owned/managed by Maghull Town Council.
3. To enable project rollout, to resolve the purchase of 200 bird boxes at cost of £5.00 each from Bootle Tool Shed.
4. Note the contents of this report.

## Reasons for Recommendation(s)

Priority Two, Action Ten of Maghull Town Council's Business Plan 2019-23 commits council to *secure more biodiverse habitats in our green spaces*.

The purchasing and installation of birdboxes across parks and open spaces directly contributes towards this priority.

In addition, resolution to purchase 200 birdboxes will support a local, not-for-profit registered charity which has several members from the Maghull and Lydiate areas.

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

None

**What will it cost and how will it be financed?**

**(A) Revenue**

All costs associated with the future maintenance of birdboxes will be met by 2021/22 Facilities Service Budget.

**(B) Capital**

All costs associated with the purchase and installation of birdboxes will be met by 2020/21 Facilities Service Budget.

**Implications of Recommendations:**

<b>Financial Implications</b>	All costs associated with the purchase and installation of birdboxes will be met by 2020/21 Facilities Service Budget.  Future maintenance costs will be met by 2021/22 Facilities Service Budget.
<b>Resource Implications</b>	Officer time for the maintenance of parks, open spaces, and facilities.
<b>Legal Implications</b>	None.
<b>Equality &amp; Diversity Implications</b>	None.

**Implementation Date for Decision**

Immediately following the conclusion of Amenities Committee.

**Appendices**

1. Appendix One: Photograph showing birdbox made by Bootle Tool Shed.
2. Appendix Two: Proposed distribution of birdboxes in parks and open spaces owned/managed by Maghull Town Council



## Background Papers

### 1. Maghull Town Council Business Plan 2019-2023

<b>Contact Officer</b>	Alex Spencer – Amenities Manager
<b>Telephone Number</b>	0151 526 3705
<b>Email Address</b>	<a href="mailto:Alex.spencer@maghull-tc.gov.uk">Alex.spencer@maghull-tc.gov.uk</a>

## **1. Background**

In December 2020, representatives of Maghull in Bloom contacted council officers regarding a birdbox project which they sought to initiate with Bootle Tool Shed – a not-for-profit registered charity (Registered Charity Number 1170924).

The purpose of the project was to increase local biodiversity by installing birdboxes in Glenn Park.

Working alongside Bootle Tool Shed, 40 birdboxes were purchased by Maghull in Bloom at a cost of £5.00 each.

Members' resolution is now sought to have purchased bird boxes installed in Glenn Park by our Grounds Maintenance Operatives.

Within Maghull Town Council's 2019-23 Business Plan, under Priority Two, Action Ten, there is a commitment to *secure more biodiverse habitats in our green spaces*.

It is therefore the recommendation of officers that members resolve to purchase 200 birdboxes to be installed in all parks and open spaces owned and/or managed by Maghull Town Council. This purchase would not only adhere to the agreed priority of the 2019-23 Business Plan, but would provide an opportunity for residents and/or visitors to become more engaged with the work of the council – for example, forming volunteer groups to install/maintain bird boxes.

Purchase and installation costs will be met from the 2020/21 Facilities Service Budget. Future maintenance costs (if so required) will be met by future Facilities Service Budget.

### **Recommendation(s):-**

#### **Amenities Committee is requested to:-**

1. Resolve that 40 birdboxes already purchased by Maghull in Bloom should be installed in Glenn Park by our Grounds Maintenance Operatives.
2. Resolve that the birdbox project initiated by Maghull in Bloom and Bootle Tool Shed is rolled out across all parks and open spaces owned/managed by Maghull Town Council.
3. To enable project rollout, to resolve the purchase of 200 bird boxes at cost of £5.00 each from Bootle Tool Shed.
4. Note the contents of this report.

**Appendix One: Photograph showing birdbox made by Bootle Tool Shed**



## Appendix Two: Proposed Distribution of Birdboxes in Parks and Open Spaces Owned/Managed by Maghull Town Council

Name of Park / Open Space	Number of Trees	Proposed Number of Birdboxes	% of Trees with Birdbox Installed	Comments
Ballswood	500+	46	Estimated 9%	
Bobby's Wood	26	10	38%	
Dodd's Park	35	15	43%	
Glenn Park	200+	40	Estimated 20%	Birdboxes already purchased by Maghull in Bloom
Hall Lane Park	400+	46	12%	
King George V Playing Field	100	25	25%	
Latham Gardens	1	1	100%	
Mersey Avenue Park	9	5	56%	
Moorhey Park	5	3	60%	
Moss Park	19	10	53%	
Old Hall Playing Fields	55	20	36%	
Pimbley Playing Field	0	0	0%	
Round Meade Park	12	6	50%	
South Meade Park	5	3	60%	
Whinneybrook Playing Field	19	10	52%	

NB : If the total number of trees were added together and the proposed number of birdboxes (240) were installed, this would give a % of trees with birdbox installed figure of 17%. Therefore, if birdboxes were distributed as proposed above, the vast majority of parks and open spaces would have a % of trees with birdbox installed far higher than the 17% across all sites.

**Report to:** Amenities Committee  
**Date of Meeting:** 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021  
**Agenda Item Number** 9  
**Subject:** Proposed Tree Planting Schemes at Pimbley Playing Field and Hall Lane Park  
**Report of:** Amenities Manager  
**Exempt / Confidential Report:** No

## Summary

To update members on proposed tree planting schemes at Pimbley Playing Field and Hall Lane Park.

Maghull Town Council Priority	Yes/No
1. Development and Protect the Community	Yes
2. Develop Parks and Green Spaces	Yes
3. Value for Money and Enterprising Council	Yes
4. Develop Leisure and Activity for All	Yes
5. Develop/support Community Services and Groups	Yes
6. Support Culture and Heritage	Yes
7. Health and Wellbeing Programme	Yes
8. Statutory Requirement	No

## Recommendation(s)

Amenities Committee is requested to:-

1. As shown at appendix two, approve proposed tree planting scheme to the top of Pimbley Playing Field.
2. As shown at appendix three, reject proposed tree planting scheme to the rear of properties on Bridge Road.
3. As shown at appendix four, approve proposed tree planting scheme at the boundary of Hall Lane Park and the Leeds-Liverpool Canal.
4. As shown at appendix five, approve proposed tree planting scheme at the boundary of Hall Lane, adjacent to children's play area
5. As shown at appendix six, approve proposed tree planting scheme at the boundary of Hall Lane, adjacent to park entrance on Old Hall Road.

## Reasons for Recommendation(s)

At a meeting of Amenities Committee in September 2020, Members resolved that officers should continue to work with Mersey Forest in the development of town-wide tree planting schemes.

Since this meeting officers, working alongside Cllr Sharp and Mersey Forest, have developed several tree planting schemes for Pimbley Playing Field and Hall Lane Park which now require Member approval.

Approval of tree planting schemes will enable £9,300.00 of grant funding to be transferred from Mersey Forest before the end of the 2020/21 financial year. This grant will cover costs associated with ground preparation and fencing. In addition, Mersey Forest will make 1,200 trees available (free of charge) – to be planted before the end of March 2021.

Following engagement with residents and objections raised thereto, it is the recommendation of officers that the tree planting scheme proposed to the rear of properties on Bridge Road is rejected (appendix three), in preference for a scheme at the boundary of Hall Lane adjacent to the park entrance on Old Hall Road (appendix six)

**Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

None

**What will it cost and how will it be financed?**

**(A) Revenue**

All costs associated with the future maintenance of ground works, fencing and trees will be met by Facilities Service Budgets.

**(B) Capital**

Costs associated with ground works, installation of fencing and provision of trees at both sites will be met by Mersey Forest in the form of a £9,300.00 grant payable to Maghull Town Council within the 2020/21 financial year.

**Implications of Recommendations:**

<b>Financial Implications</b>	As part of this project, Mersey Forest will make a £9,300.00 grant available to Maghull Town Council transferred before the end of the 2020/21 financial year.  All future maintenance associated with fencing and/or trees will be met by future facilities service budgets i.e. weed spraying, fence repair in the event of vandalism.
<b>Resource Implications</b>	Officer time with respect to ground preparation. Maintenance work as indicated by Mersey Forest maintenance schedule e.g. weed spraying, pedestrian mowing and fencing repair if required.
<b>Legal Implications</b>	None.
<b>Equality &amp; Diversity Implications</b>	None.

## Implementation Date for Decision

Immediately following the conclusion of Amenities Committee.

## Appendices

- Appendix One: Consultation Letter Sent to Residents on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021  
Appendix Two: Proposed Tree Planting Scheme – Pimbley Playing Field  
Appendix Three: Proposed Tree Planting Scheme – Rear of Properties on Bridge Road.  
Appendix Four: Proposed Tree Planting Scheme – Boundary of Hall Lane Park and Leeds-Liverpool Canal  
Appendix Five: Proposed Tree Planting Scheme – Boundary of Hall Lane – Adjacent to Children’s Play Area  
Appendix Six: Alternative Tree Planting Scheme – Boundary of Hall Lane – Adjacent to entrance point on Old Hall Road

## Background Papers

1. Amenities Committee Papers – 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020
2. Amenities Committee Papers – 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020
3. Maghull Town Council Business Plan 2019-2023

<b>Contact Officer</b>	Alex Spencer – Amenities Manager
<b>Telephone Number</b>	0151 526 3705
<b>Email Address</b>	<a href="mailto:Alex.spencer@maghull-tc.gov.uk">Alex.spencer@maghull-tc.gov.uk</a>

## **1. Background**

At a meeting of Amenities Committee in September 2020, Members received a report from officers and representatives from Mersey Forest which proposed several town-wide tree planting schemes.

At this meeting, Members resolved that both organisations should continue to work together to develop tree planting schemes so that Members could review at future meetings.

The rationale for this work was stated within Maghull Town Council's 2019-23 Business Plan, which, under Priority Two Action Three, committed council to replacing trees felled as part of the 2018 tree survey.

At the time of writing, tree planting schemes have been developed for two sites - Pimbley Playing Field and Hall Lane Park – with an overarching ambition to create woodland areas at both sites through the planting of 1,200 trees.

Mersey Forest have confirmed that trees will be provided free of charge given that the creation of woodland areas is a priority for the organisation and can be funded through grant funding. This grant – totalling £9,300.00 - would cover the cost of ground preparation works and installation of fencing to give newly planted trees the best chance of becoming established. However future expenditure in the form of tree maintenance, ground maintenance or fencing repair will need to be absorbed by Facilities Service Budget.

With regards to ground preparation (flailing) and fencing works, Cllr Sharp and officers have met with a number of contractors recommended by Mersey Forest to set out a specification for works. Quotations for works have been provided by each contractor and costs forwarded to Mersey Forest. Mersey Forest has then appointed the contractor and factored in quotation costs when calculating the amount of grant to be awarded.

Given grant funding criteria, Mersey Forest are eager to transfer funds before the end of the 2020/21 financial year. Although Mersey Forest would like all planting works to be completed by the same deadline – something which is achievable given contractors, trees and volunteers are in place to deliver each scheme – they have indicated that tree planting can be delayed until October/November 2021 when tree planting conditions are at their best.

## **2. Engagement with residents**

Officers were acutely aware that if Members were minded to approve proposed tree planting schemes, the amenity offer at both sites would be considerably changed.

Officers therefore felt obliged to engage with residents neighbouring each site to outline proposals and to provide an opportunity to feedback resident views. On 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021, officers posted a total of 50 letters to all properties on Bridge Road and Field Way and a further 10 letters to properties on Hornby Chase.



These letters outlined proposals for each tree planting scheme, in addition to requesting resident feedback no later than close of business on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

In response to receiving a letter, six residents contacted officers via email/telephone and a further one resident spoke with officers in person.

**a. *Email/Telephone Contacts***

Of the six residents who contacted via email/telephone:-

- Two were in favour of proposals commenting that trees were a useful way to improve habitats, soak up water given that both sites are prone to waterlogging and would improve the amenity offer at both sites.
- Two were against proposals citing a loss of habitats if brambles were removed and historical lack of maintenance for hedges at Pimbley Playing Field.
- Two were neither for nor against proposals but expressed concerns about potential increased anti-social behaviour and historical lack of maintenance of hedges at Pimbley Playing Field.

**b. *Contact in Person***

On 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021, a resident of Bridge Road purporting to represent the residents of Bridge Road and Hornby Chase, met with the Amenities Manager and submitted an unsigned letter on behalf of 25 residents outlining their opposition to the proposed tree planting scheme to the rear of Bridge Road. The submitted letter raised the following objections: -

- Proposed removal of brambles to the rear of properties on Bridge Road would significantly reduce homeowner security as residents regard brambles as an effective deterrent against burglaries.
- Proposed tree planting in proximity to the rear of properties on Bridge Road could reduce sunlight in gardens and bring about a loss of enjoyment for the property owner(s)
- Proposed tree planting in proximity to the rear of properties on Bridge Road would result in a loss of view onto Hall Lane Park once trees became established.
- There is a potential that established trees could result in a house price lowering owing to a loss of light / loss of view.

The same letter also purported to represent the views of Bridge Road residents outlining their opposition to proposed tree planting at the top of Pimbley Playing Field (near to Rutherford Road canal bridge). The submitted letter raised the following objections: -

- Drug misuse and crime already takes place in this area which could be made worse once trees become established.
- Established trees will remove light from the front of properties which can reduce home security.

Although the submitted letter purports to represent the residents of Bridge Road, Fieldway and Hornby Chase members are advised that it has been submitted unsigned and therefore carries little weight in terms of representing residents as stated.

Officers can confirm that whilst meeting with the resident on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2021 a signed and dated petition purporting to represent 23 residents of Bridge Road and 2 residents of Hornby Chase was produced. This petition stated that all residents were opposed to proposed tree planting to the rear of properties on Bridge Road.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the petition was not submitted by the resident and was taken away with a view to obtaining more signatures from Fieldway residents.

At the time of writing therefore, no signed petition has been submitted and members are therefore advised that this carries little weight in terms of representing residents as stated.

### **C. Amended Tree Planting Scheme following resident feedback**

Following receipt of resident feedback – particularly relating to objections regarding proposed tree planting to the rear of properties on Bridge Road, officers contacted Mersey Forest to develop an alternative scheme at Hall Lane Park.

Mersey Forest have developed a scheme of comparable size and cost to that originally proposed for the rear of properties on Bridge Road and have recommended planting near to the already existing wooded area adjacent to Hall Lane (appendix six)

Given that this scheme merely expands an already established wooded area within the confines of Hall Lane Park residents of nearby Hall Lane and Glentworth Close are not adversely affected if the new proposed scheme proceeds. Officers therefore advise that resident consultation is not required.

Members are reminded that the £9,300.00 grant calculated by Mersey Forest is inclusive of the proposed alternative scheme. If this scheme did not progress, the total grant awarded to Maghull Town Council would be circa £5,700.00.

**Recommendation(s):-**

**Amenities Committee is requested to:-**

1. As shown at appendix two, approve proposed tree planting scheme to the top of Pimbley Playing Field.
2. As shown at appendix three, reject proposed tree planting scheme to the rear of properties on Bridge Road.
3. As shown at appendix four, approve proposed tree planting scheme at the boundary of Hall Lane Park and the Leeds-Liverpool Canal.
4. As shown at appendix five, approve proposed tree planting scheme at the boundary of Hall Lane, adjacent to children's play area
5. As shown at appendix six, approve proposed tree planting scheme at the boundary of Hall Lane, adjacent to park entrance on Old Hall Road.



Alex Spencer  
Maghull Town Hall  
Hall Lane  
Maghull  
Merseyside L31 7BB

Date: 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021  
Our Ref:  
Your Ref:  
Tel: 0151 526 3705  
Fax: 0151 520 0253  
Email: [alex.spencer@maghull-tc.gov.uk](mailto:alex.spencer@maghull-tc.gov.uk)

### **Proposed Tree Planting Schemes at Pimbley Playing Field and Old Hall Park**

Dear resident,

#### **Background Information**

My name is Alex Spencer and I am the Amenities Manager at Maghull Town Council with responsibility for the maintenance of town council parks, open spaces and recreational facilities.

I am writing to inform you of plans for Maghull Town Council, working in partnership with Mersey Forest and Sefton Council, to undertake four tree planting schemes at Pimbley Playing Field and Old Hall Park.

Maghull Town Council officers have worked closely with Mersey Forest colleagues for a number of months to develop tree planting schemes across the town; the overall ambition of which is to improve the parks, greenspaces and amenities offer for residents of and visitors to Maghull.

Schemes developed to date are twofold.

Firstly, as proposed for the sites of Pimbley Playing Field and Old Hall Park, the creation of woodland areas through the scrubbing of land, erection of fencing and planting of native species trees. *(Please refer to Appendix One which shows photographs of Garston Park in South Liverpool, which has a similar scheme to that being proposed for Pimbley Playing Field and Old Hall Park.)*

Secondly, the planting of standard trees to both complement and enhance the current offer in a number of parks e.g. the planting of trees in parks which have small play areas but are surrounded by large grassed areas.

Proposed schemes are in accordance with priorities within Maghull Town Council's Business Plan. In addition, they further council's commitment to replace trees which required felling as identified under our 2018 tree survey.

Maghull Town Council is also committed to the green agenda – which through the planting of trees under these schemes, would greatly further the town’s biodiversity. At a meeting of Amenities Committee on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2020; officers reported what work had been completed to date. Having received reports from officers, Members resolved that officers should continue to work with Mersey Forest in order to develop tree planting schemes and to report back at the earliest opportunity.

The next meeting of Amenities Committee will be on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

Given that tree planting schemes have now been developed, councillors and officers feel it is important to engage with the public to not only outline what proposed tree planting schemes are, but to provide an opportunity for residents/visitors to feedback their views.

It is the intention of officers to report resident feedback to Amenities Committee members at its meeting on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021.

### **Proposed Tree Planting Schemes**

#### ***Pimbley Playing Field – 1 x Tree Planting Scheme (See Appendix Two)***

It is proposed that land will be grubbed up in preparation for the erection of fencing and the planting of trees at the top of Bridge Road, adjacent to the canal bridge linking Bridge Road and Rutherford Road.

As part of this proposal an area of 0.14 hectares will be cordoned off with fencing (with access gates for maintenance built in) and native species trees planted.

#### ***Old Hall Park – 3 x Tree Planting Schemes (See Appendices Three, Four and Five)***

##### ***Scheme One – Planting to the rear of properties on Bridge Road***

As part of this scheme, it is proposed that an proportion of brambles to the rear of properties on Bridge Road is removed (approximately 3m of brambles would remain to act as a buffer between properties and the park and would not contain any trees) to enable the erection of fencing and the planting of trees in the area.

The area to be fenced would be 0.19 hectares in size and would see 475 trees planted in total.

##### ***Scheme Two – Boundary of Hall Lane Park and the Leeds-Liverpool Canal***

As part of this scheme, it is proposed that an area of brambles - at its shortest point 9m and widest point 22m – which forms the boundary of Hall Lane Park and the Leeds-Liverpool Canal is cleared to enable the erection of fencing and the planting of trees in the area.

The area to be fenced would be 0.21 hectares in size and would see 525 trees planted in total.

##### ***Scheme Three – Planting near to the boundary of Hall Lane Park and Hall Lane, adjacent to children’s play area.***

As part of this scheme, it is proposed that fencing is erected to provide a boundary adjacent to the children's play area – the total size of which would be 0.1 hectares and would enable the planting of 250 trees.

**Engagement with residents and visitors**

Maghull Town Council is committed to informing and engaging with our community when we are making adaptations to our parks and open spaces.

I would therefore welcome your views regarding the schemes above by emailing [alex.spencer@maghull-tc.gov.uk](mailto:alex.spencer@maghull-tc.gov.uk) or by calling 0151 526 3705. If required, I will be more than happy to discuss/clarify the schemes outlines above.

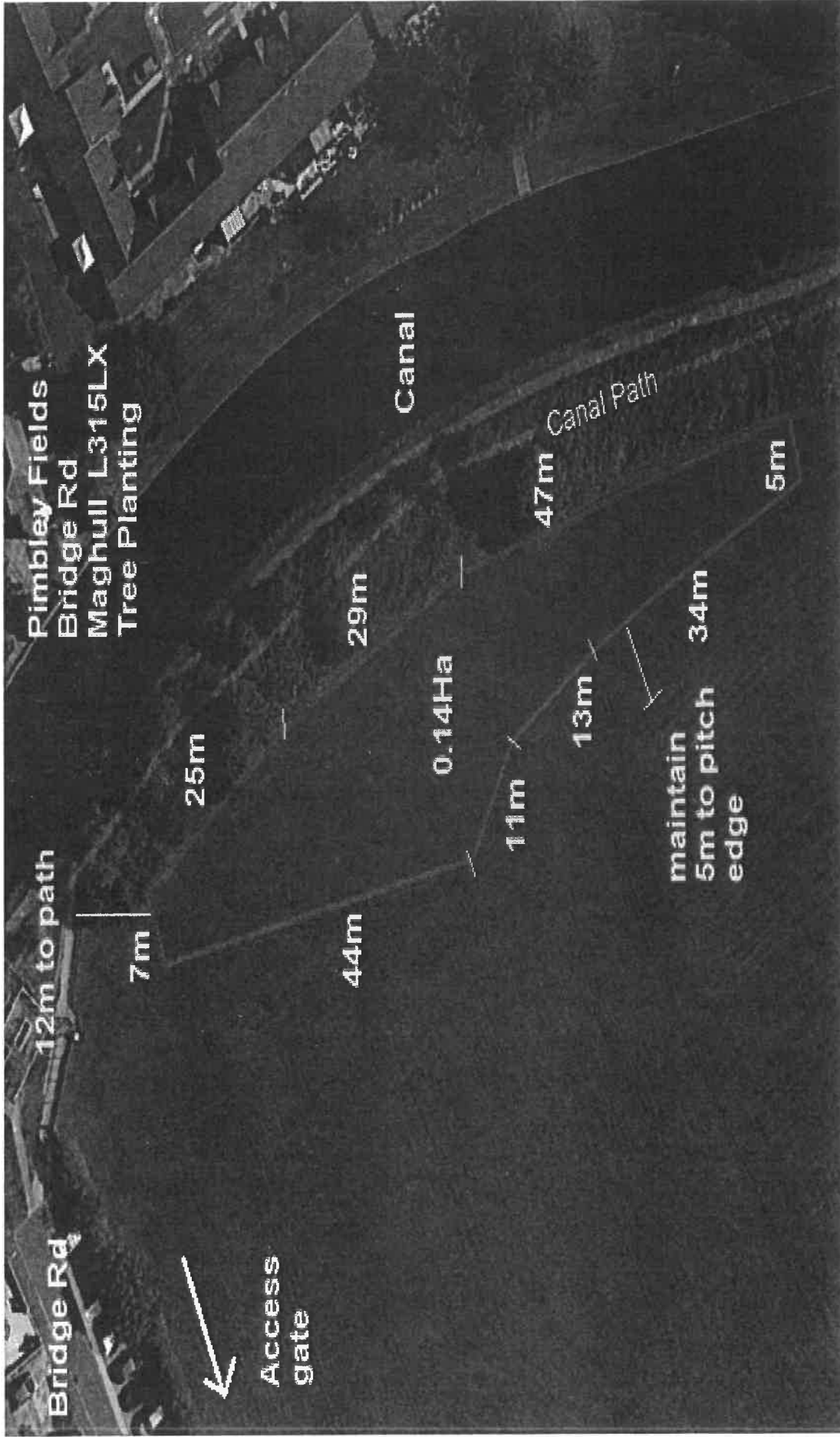
Given our intention to report resident feedback to Amenities Committee on 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021, **I would be grateful if you could respond no later than close of business on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021 with any views you may have.**

Yours faithfully,

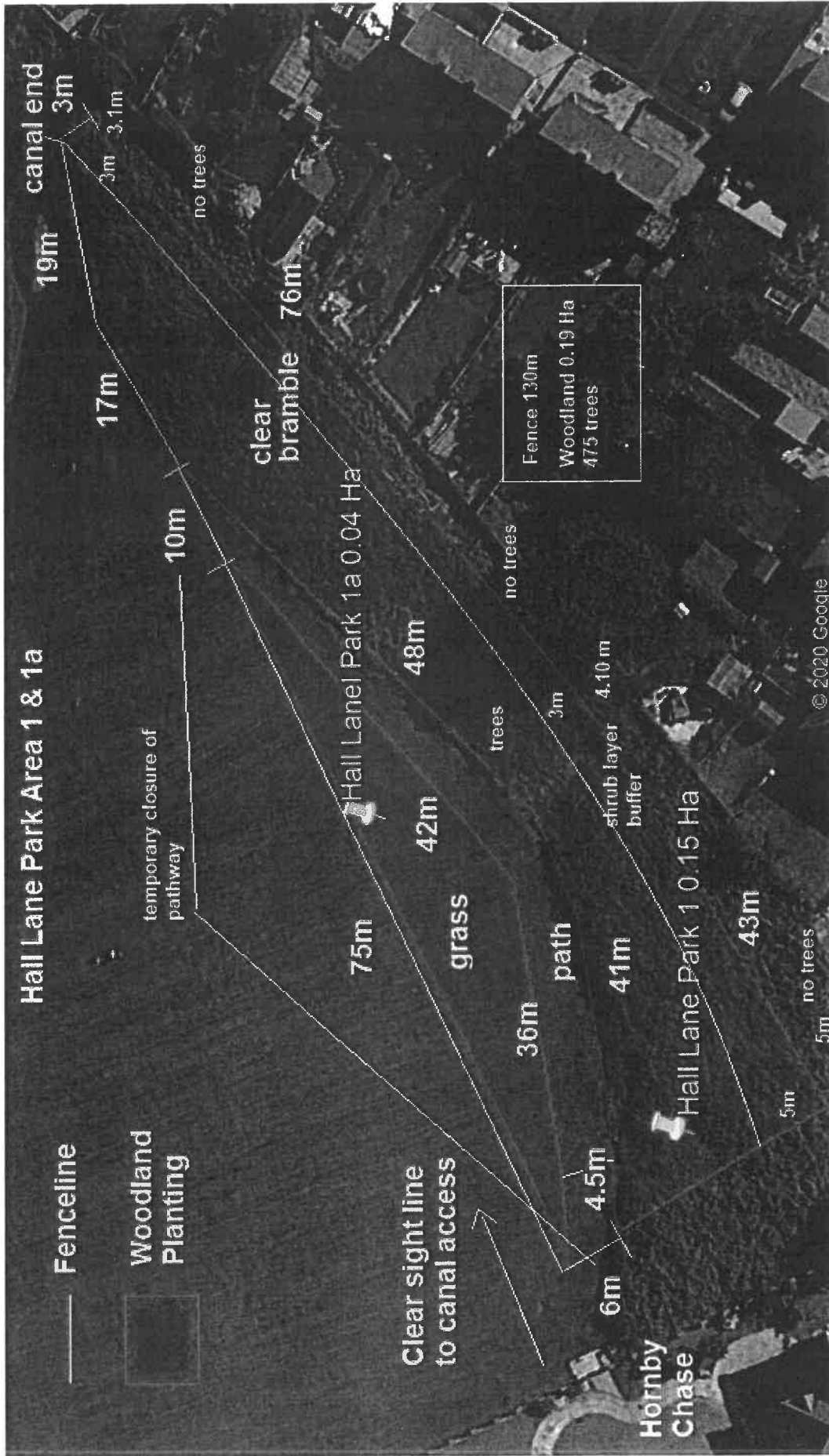
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alex Spencer', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Alex Spencer – Amenities Manager

Appendix Two: Proposed Tree Planting Scheme – Pimbley Playing Field

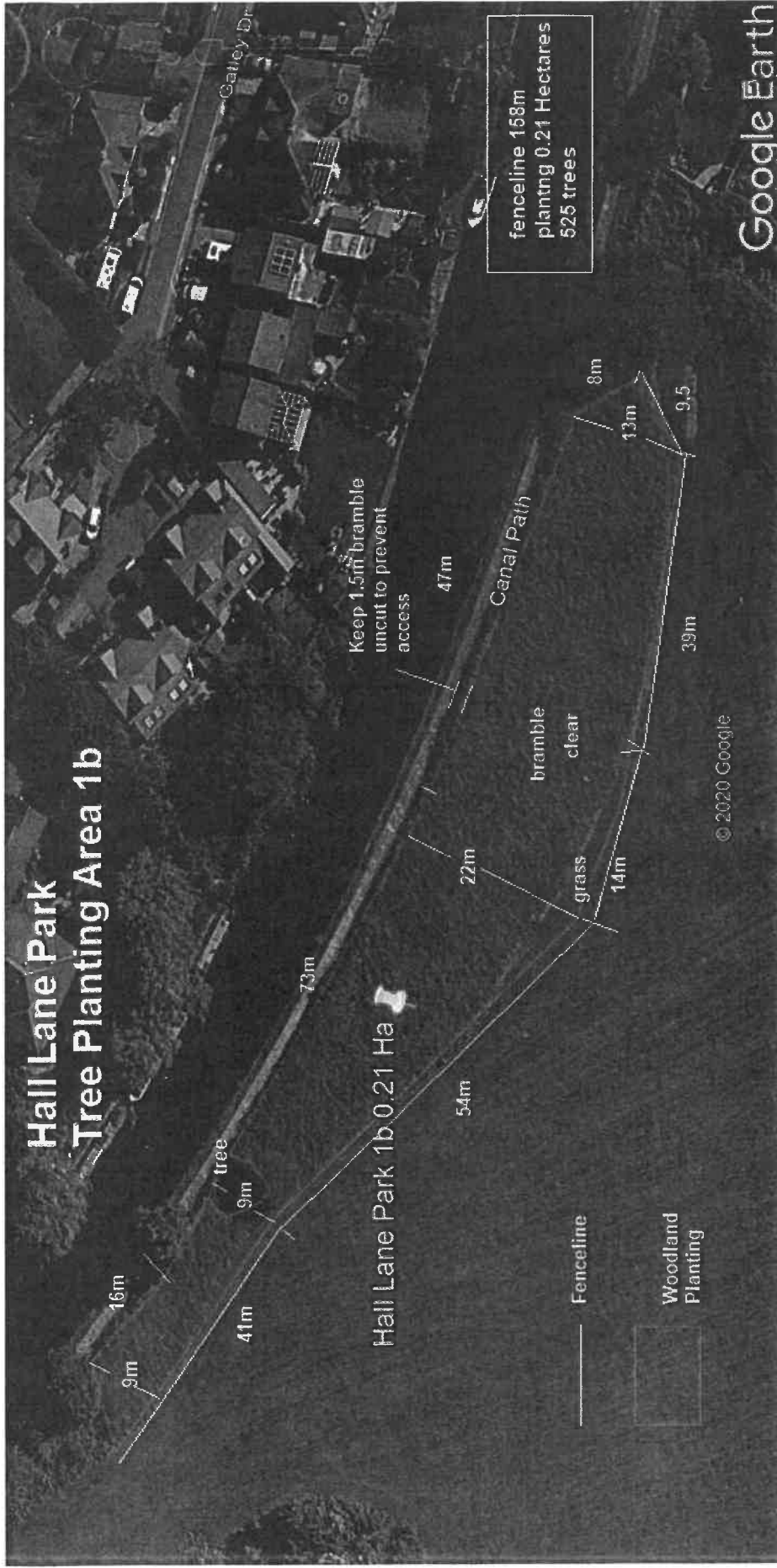


**Appendix Three: Proposed Tree Planting Scheme – Rear of Properties on Bridge Road**

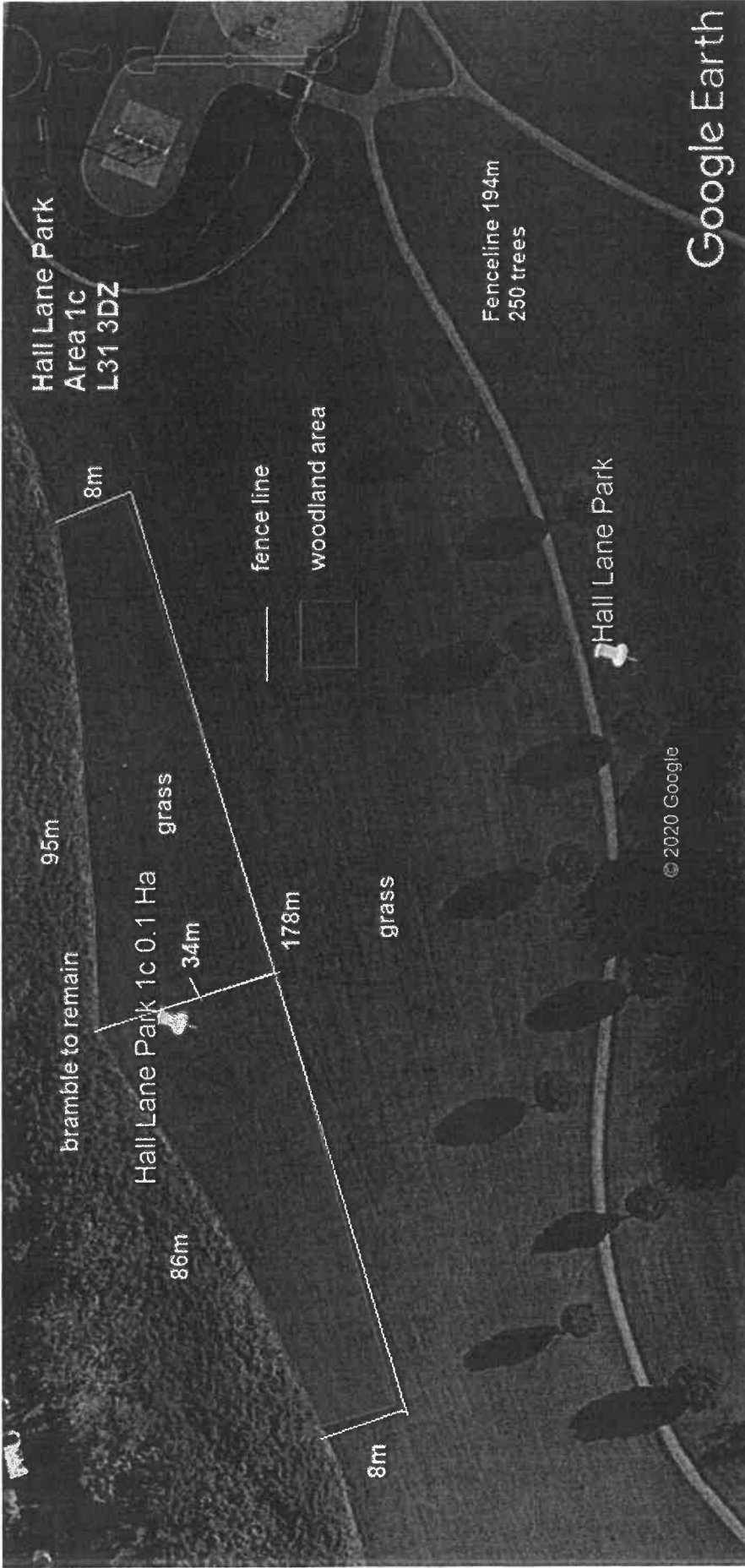




Appendix Four: Proposed Tree Planting Scheme – Boundary of Hall Lane Park and Leeds-Liverpool Canal



Appendix Five: Proposed Tree Planting Scheme – Boundary of Hall Lane – Adjacent to Children’s Play Area



Appendix Six: Alternative Tree Planting Scheme – Boundary of Hall Lane – Adjacent to entrance point on Old Hall Road

