



Hinckley & Bosworth  
Borough Council

## Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Hinckley Area Committee 3 November 2021

### Wards affected: Hinckley wards

## **Update on capital projects, Ashby Road Cemetery - Drainage works, Argents Mead Moat – Renovations works & Tree Planting Schemes**

## Report of Director (Environment & Planning)

## **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To inform and update members on projects to install new drainage at Ashby Road Cemetery, improvements to the moat area at Argents Mead and tree planting schemes for sites within Hinckley.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That members endorse the budget of £25,000 agreed by SLT for the drainage works at Ashby Road Cemetery and note the contents of the report and proposals for progressing these projects.

### **3. Background to the report**

- ### 3.1 New drainage Ashby Road Cemetery.

After very wet weather last winter there were issues with water lying in and around graves in the new cemetery extension. This caused a lot of distress to relatives visiting the graves and commitments were made to carry out appropriate drainage works during this summer to help alleviate this issues for the following Autumn/winter period.

In order to ensure that this section is drained in the best way possible the Green Spaces team have commissioned a consultant (TGMS Cemetery Development) to draw up a drainage scheme specifically for the site. The works will involve clearing and reinstating the French drains (gravel drains) that run around the edges of the burial sections, to install a series of lateral drains in between the rows of the graves from the top of the section to the bottom and carrying out sand slitting (this is putting in a narrow channel filled with gravel and sand) between graves. Unfortunately we cannot do the sand

slitting where we have already put in graves because the machine needed to do with would cause too much damage.

All of the drains are linked to a catch pit at the bottom of the site and to drains which will take the water off site.

All of these measures will help to ensure surface water is able to drain off the site more quickly preventing it from sitting on the surface after heavy rain fall. It is important to remember that the drainage works being carried out will help to prevent waterlogging of the ground between the grave plots but some standing water particularly after heavy rain may still lie directly on top of newly interred graves.

The drainage design has been done for the whole of the cemetery extension area but based on cost estimates for the scheme, a budget of £25,000 has been secured with funding from Hinckley Area Committee reserves (after a report to SLT and agreement from the Council Leader) which has allowed us to carry out works to the sections currently being used for burials ensuring good quality burial land for an estimated 10 – 15 years. Further works using the same design can be carried out in the future when other sections are required and when budgets are available, possibly utilising s106 monies.

### 3.2 Argents Mead Moat

A budget of a £150k was agreed by Council for some major renovations works to the moat area at Argents Mead, after a survey carried out by a specialist company (Aquaserve Ltd) identified a number of issues including the large build up of silt and undercutting of banks which if not dealt with would lead to the further decline of the area in future years.

The moat is within the area of Argents Mead designated as a scheduled monument and as such consent from Historic England is required before any works are able to take place. On-site discussions have taken place with Historic England and the consultants who carried out the survey works to establish an overall plan to renovate the pond which will include desilting works, bank stabilisation work, tree works and the planting of marginal vegetation. Consent for the works has also been applied for and approved by Historic England but with a number of conditions including carrying out further archaeological surveys to establish the significance of any silt deposits before any silt is removed, further specifications and method statements for carrying out all aspects of the works and a written scheme of investigation carried out by an archaeologist prior to each stage of the work.

The next stage of the project is to engage an archaeologist to carry out some survey works on the silt deposits. This will determine to what depth any silt extraction can go to and will allow for consultants to draw up some more concise designs and specifications in order to tender for the works.

It is hoped that the main works can take place over the winter months when the site is less busy and outside of the main breeding season, however this

will be dependent on carrying out the necessary archaeological surveys, drawing up final plans and tendering for the works over the next few months.

### 3.3 Tree planting schemes

#### Local Authority Tree Fund

We have had confirmation from the County Council that they have been successful in a bid for funding from the Forestry Commission's Local Authority Tree Fund for tree planting throughout the County. After a bid from ourselves for an allocation of this funding we have a total grant of £26,055.78 to plant and maintain 600 whips (plus protection), 40 standard trees and additional costs of £1,014.18 for difficult sites.

The funding is broken down into 4 years as follows:

Year 1 - £11,571.78 (Supply and planting of trees)

Year 2 – £4,828 (Maintenance of trees)

Year 3 – £4,828 (Maintenance of trees)

Year 4 - £4,828 (maintenance of trees)

#### Tiny Forests Scheme

Members of Hinckley Area Committee will be aware of the Tiny Forest scheme after recent correspondence from Caroline Roffey. In summary, a tiny forest is a dense fast growing native woodland the size of a tennis court based on an established forest management method developed in Japan.

The charity Earthwatch are working with a number of funding bodies to cover the cost of these schemes which equates to £25,000 per woodland. We currently have applications with the following funders for the following sites:

Wykin Park – funding is potentially available from OVO Energy (a green energy company) for a tiny forest with an enhanced education package (worth an additional £12,000) linked to schools with higher numbers of free school meals. Wykin Park is being progressed for this bid with Battling Brook Primary and Redmoor Secondary Schools being the schools who will hopefully benefit from this project. **This funding is currently on hold as due to the current energy crisis OVO have delayed their decision on funding at this time.**

Queens Park – funding is potentially available from Yeo Valley on a similar basis to the OVO funding and being within the catchment of St Mary's C of E and St Peter's Catholic Primary Schools and Hinckley Academy Secondary school.

Severn Trent will also potentially fund another 2-5 sites this winter and Green spaces have put in applications for the following land already identified for tree planting in Hinckley to ensure we can maximise our chance of getting tiny forests:-

- Langdale Park
- Jellicoe way open space
- Burbage common extension (in area we are already planting up)
- Ashby Road cemetery
- Clifton way open space.

Assuming we are successful HBBC will then enter into a 10 year legal agreement that commits us to providing sites for 10 years, to assist by identifying 2 key volunteers for each forest who become the keeper team, maintain the site from years 2-10 (which will be minimal due to the small size of the trees). Beyond the agreement term although there is no legal agreement with Earth watch the trees will belong to HBBC and therefore must be maintained, inspected etc. It is envisaged that these costs should not be any greater than we would expect for the management of trees in the future.

#### **4. Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules**

4.1 This report will be taken in open session.

#### **5. Financial implications DS**

##### Capital

5.1 A budget for £150,000 was agreed by Council in February 2021 for the Moat improvement works.

5.2 A supplementary budget of £25,000 to be funded from Hinckley Area Committee Reserves was agreed for the Ashby Road Cemetery Drainage works.

#### **6. Legal implications MR**

6.1 None

#### **7. Corporate Plan implications**

7.1 The projects within this report help to achieve the following corporate aims:

- Protect and improve our parks and open spaces for everyone across the borough
- Keep our borough clean and green
- Support and celebrate our cultural and heritage facilities

#### **8. Consultation**

8.1 For the drainage improvement works at the cemetery a consultant who has experience of designing new cemeteries has been commissioned to draw up the drainage designs.

We have consulted with Historic England and a specialist consultant on the plans for the Moat restoration.

We have been in regular discussion with Earthwatch and the County Council with regards to the various tree planting schemes, as well as the schools within the catchments of the various sites for planting.

## 9. Risk implications

- 9.1 It is the council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.
- 9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.
- 9.3 The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) risks		
Risk description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Cemetery drainage works. Capacity for drainage is limited within an area used for burials. So impact of new drainage may not completely eradicate the issues.	A consultant has been commissioned to draw up a plan which will ensure drainage will be as effective as possible whilst still ensuring the site can be used as a working cemetery.	Paul Scragg
Moat restoration. Costs of Archaeological surveys could be high. Leaving less budget for the main works.  Further survey works will add more time to the project possibly leading to a delay in the completion of this project.	Based on cost estimates it is hoped that there will be enough budget to carry out all of the necessary works within budget. We will progress the project as quickly as possible whilst still ensuring that all the conditions from Historic England are met.	Paul Scragg
Tree Schemes Funding for the Tiny Forests has not yet been confirmed.	We have provided as much information as has been asked for by the funding bodies.	Paul Scragg/Ian Pinfold/Caroline Roffey

## 10. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications

- 10.1 The Cemetery drainage works are required to help improve the site for the relatives of the deceased.

The Moat works at Argents Mead will not only help to improve the look of the area to members of the public but as the banks deteriorate are also needed from a health and safety point of view.

The tree schemes will have a benefit to the public overall by creating a more green environment and helping with carbon offsetting, making the town a healthier more attractive place to live.

## **11. Climate implications**

- 11.1 The improved drainage at Ashby Road Cemetery is required due to the impact of climate change leading to wetter winters and to more flooding.

The moat works will help to improve the ecological quality of the pond at Argents Mead whilst also making the area more aesthetically pleasing.

The various tree schemes are obviously a benefit in terms of climate change and will help with carbon offsetting and the Council's climate crisis agenda.

## **12. Corporate implications**

- 12.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset management implications
- Procurement implications
- Human resources implications
- Planning implications
- Data protection implications
- Voluntary sector

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Background papers: None

Contact officer: Paul Scragg – Senior Green Space Officer  
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