

Meeting	Parks and Open Spaces Committee
Date	5 November 2024
Report Title	Community Plot, Goodearl
Agenda Reference	11
Author	Jo Newman, Memory Café Co Ordinator Laura Cutter, Deputy Clerk & Services Manager

Officers Recommendation:

- To approve the cost of £450.00 for rotavating and flattening the ground on the Community Plot and seeding with grass to be met from the Community Choices budget 4629/402.**

Background

In late summer, the Memory Cafe Co Ordinator secured a valuable plot of land at Goodearl Leisure Garden Site, conveniently located next to the already established Sensory Garden.

The cost of the plot was met from the Community Choices fund, to be another initiative that will aim to reduce loneliness and isolation, bringing people together that share the same interests. This space represents an excellent opportunity as a community plot for the Council.

The location would be perfect for various activities, particularly for preschool children and childminders, who could use it for:

- Planting activities
- Story time and reading sessions
- Summer craft projects
- Nature education
- Gardening Club (Community Choices)

The plot is designed to be low maintenance and already comes equipped with:

- Table and chairs (donated)
- Sun umbrella (donated)
- A bench (which has been donated, but needs minor restoration)
- A raised bed area suitable for growing:
 - Fruits and vegetables
 - Sunflowers
 - Other plants

This ready-to-use space offers an ideal outdoor learning and community engagement environment and being next to the Sensory Garden can be a vibrant community hub for all needs and ages.

Most items on the Sensory Garden and the Community Plot have been donated, but there are some costs associated in the beginning to make the area safe.



Maintenance

Some artificial grass was donated for the plot, but to secure this the cost of digging and laying of the subbase and sand is very expensive. The artificial grass may be used for other projects or re-donated elsewhere.

For the plot to operate effectively and safely, the ground needs to be flattened and sewn with grass seed. This will also mean that the plot is lower maintenance. The cost of this is likely to be in the remit of £450.00 and includes the cost of hiring a digger.

The Parks & Open Spaces Team have been enjoying helping on the odd occasion with de-weeding the plot and helping with installations, this has been a good team building opportunity and will likely be strengthened when the Team move back to the Grounds Maintenance Facility and have some spare time on breaks etc. The Parks & Projects Team also currently do leisure garden maintenance throughout the peak season so may be able to strim/mow this area when conducting those visits.

The Memory Café Co Ordinator is also actively recruiting volunteers to help and is joining forces with the Office Administrator who oversees volunteers and the leisure garden sites. Councillors too are welcome to join in with the project.

