

Meeting	Parks & Open Spaces Committee
Date	Tuesday 21 st February 2023
Report Title	Tadpole Field Report
Agenda Reference	14
Author	Dave Hunt, Head of Parks & Open Spaces and Mark Weaving, Technical Officer

Officer's Recommendation.

1. To consider whether public access is permitted into the field.
2. To consider potential maintenance to the site, subject to costs.

Background

The Parks & Projects Team has conducted site visits to Tadpole Field frequently to ensure that this is secure and there is no evidence of fly tipping, which has occurred previously.

The field attracts local wildlife and evidence of foxes, deer, moles, kingfishers, kites, buzzards, mice, river rats, crickets (when long grass is there) and other insects have been spotted there due to its peaceful location.

Trees for Climate

During Autumn / Winter the Council carried out whip planting funded by Swindon Great Western Community Forest "Trees for Climate" initiative. Funding has been supplied for the initial planting and ongoing maintenance for the following 5 years.

Replants required have amounted to approximately 30% in year one and the Head of Parks & Open Spaces estimate was 20% failure. This larger percent can partly be attributed to the hot summer. The funding is secured, and a full replant program will take place winter 2023/24.

Access

Public access to the whole site is mainly via the fence line leading from residential housing in Boatman Close. There is evidence of dog walkers using the area with access being gained by an area of broken-down fencing on the Tadpole Field / Boatman Close boundary. Overall, ten of the tree shelters have been damaged or removed and there is evidence that these have been chewed by dogs or other wildlife. Consideration to secure this boundary is subject to discussion.

Access is also available from our gated vehicle entrance. There is no obvious vehicle parking here, or pedestrian access due to roadway having no pedestrian footways.

On a safety note, it is important to remember there is a nearby railway line and the River Ray adjacent to the field, which could be accessed by children.



Maintenance Suggestions

- Plant some trees in the gaps of the fences; to be in keeping with natural surroundings
- Litter pick the rubbish along the fence line and rebuild the damaged parts
- Strim around the trees and cut the grass at Tadpole Field up to three times per annum

There are occasions when fisherman fish the river from the bank that forms our boundary.

There is also evidence of sheep wool stuck in the barb wire fences from the sheep grazing in the neighbouring fields and Cliffords Meadow SSSI.