



MINUTES OF MEETING OF WHITCHURCH-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL
At the Village Hall at 20:00 Thursday, January 13, 2022

Members Present

Chairman	Jim Donahue
Members	Nick Brazil Katherine Higley Paul O'Grady Diana Smith – Vice Chair

Officers Present:

Clerk	Jane Yamamoto
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Public and Press: 2 residents, Henley Standard, Cllr Dragonetti

The meeting started at 20:00.

- 1 **Apologies for absence & Mission Statement** 20:00
No apologies were made.

- 2 Motion to advertise for a councillor vacancy – Clerk seconded by Cllr Donahue
2.1 **Resolution:** The Councillors voted to approve the advertisement of the vacancy.
Applications due by the end of February 2022 in order for the council to review applications at the March 2022 meeting.

3 **Declaration of Interests**

- 3.1 Cllrs Higley and Leadbeater-Hart declared an interest in the allotments.

- 4 Public Forum - an opportunity for members of the public to express their point of view on any item on the agenda.

- 5 Chairman's Announcements 20:10
20 mph update

You will have seen the article I put on the website on background on the 20mph in the village.

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) Highways team has confirmed they have secured the budget for the change of signs and road markings in the village along with a formal public consultation that will likely happen for 4-week period in January or February. Depending on the results of the consultation, the change could happen as early as March or April.

The reason this is happening now is due to a change in policy from OCC promoting a reduction in speed from 30mph to 20mph in built up residential areas. The OCC policy states:

- *The main reason for promoting 20mph is to help enhance and create an environment that is more appropriate for our active neighbourhoods: promoting lower vehicle speeds, encouraging more walking and cycling, and supporting a sense of a community place.*

Villages in Oxfordshire have been invited to apply to the new scheme which has selection criteria to prioritise requests.

- Whitchurch-on-Thame has been selected ahead of this scheme as we have been pushing for this for some time and have met the criteria.

- This will be a popular programme and many other villages across the county will be applying to become part of the first tranche of rollout for next fiscal year.
- The budget for this includes 'signs only' changes and will not require traffic calming measures as a pre-requisite or include budget for subsequent traffic calming measures.

This would apply to all streets in the centre of the village including the High Street, Manor Road, Eastfield Lane, Hillside and the portion of Hardwick Road before the village entrance sign. OCC provided a map showing the 3 main village entrance signs that would change. There will be more details of smaller intermediate signs and road markings in the consultation.

We expect the results of the consultation to be overwhelmingly positive as this is something that residents have been asking for, at least since 2009:

- The 2009 Village plan stated that 85% of residents cited traffic speed as the single most important issue in the village
- 2019 Village Plan recommended the move to 20mph following a similar village survey in which 90% of respondents supported it
- Feedback from the September 2021 TAPWG survey again shows speeding as a top concern

Pavilion

The Whitchurch Cricket Club (WCC) have responded that they support in principle the idea of PC support for the refurbishment of the pavilion in exchange for making certain aspects of it available for community functions. The tea hut would not be upgrade and be removed. I have asked the WCC for further details on their plans for the pavilion and how public access to the upgraded pavilion would work.

Muddy Lane

The Green team are investigation options to reduce muddy areas on Muddy Lane. Their budget for next years includes a nominal budget of for scalpings assuming volunteers could spread it and tamp it down. I have asked them to seek advice on what the best approach for doing this and on the types of scalpings to be used and present it to a Parish Council meeting for review before going ahead with this due to the risks that changes to the land surface could cause, even if it is intended to be an improvement.

They have now asked Dan Hazel for professional advice. He is going to come back with a quote for improving it using workers and equipment from his company, potentially at a significant discount.

A councillor recommended that the landowner, possibly SODC, be consulted before any changes were done.

Residents Issues:

- A resident requested support to have the pavements by the Toll Bridge cleaned as they thought it was slippery with the leaves and they were recovering from surgery.

- o FixMy Street said we needed to raise to SODC. I escalated to SODC Councillor Peter Dragonetti who accepted that it was SODC's responsibility.
- o This can be closed as SODC Biffa street cleaners have done the work. Peter Dragonetti suggested we use grant money for a leaf blower
- A resident asked that we contact to Bridge Company about repairing the streetlight that was flickering on the Pangbourne side of the toll bridge.
 - o The Bridge company responded that they are working on this and say they are having trouble getting parts.
- Two residents have highlighted the decayed Thames path sign to the Church by the Mill house. We have the following response from the Thames Path Team:
 - o National Trails Volunteers have programmed the caution signs by the steps installation works for February, and they will also install a new waymarking post to replace the rotten one at the same time.
 - o A separate team – OCC Countryside Access Casework is meant to fix the bent post in January. They say it was delayed due to higher priority work being done last year.

6 To approve minutes of the meeting of December 9, 2021. 20:15

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the minutes with minor changes.

7 Planning Applications – to discuss and agree Council's response to the following: 20:20

7.1 P21/S4225/HH

The White House, High Street, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7HA

Two storey side and front extensions and alterations including installation of 25 solar panels on the flat roofs of the existing property (as show in amended plans received December 2, 2021).

Resolution: The Council voted to support the application.

7.2 P21/S5271/HH

Woodlea, Hardwick Road, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7HW

Single-storey side/rear extension and two-storey front extension, with pitched roof tiled to match existing light timber cladding to first floor and render to ground floor throughout and sections of the upper levels, fenestration changes and internal reconfigurations throughout.

Resolution: The Council voted to support this application.

8 To receive reports from the representatives of Oxfordshire County Council and South Oxfordshire District Council

8.1 SODC District Councillor Report – Cllr Dragonetti (Attachment 1)

9 **Finance:** 20:30

9.1 To approve the payment schedule for January:

Payment	Amount
Clerk salary (January 2022)	TBC
Rialtas (annual software support and maintenance)	£148.80

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the payments.

9.2 Bank reconciliations and reports

Resolution: The Council voted to approve the reports.

10 Motion to put in place preventative measures to reflect ICO decision in March 2021 20:35
specifically: - that each Councillor on becoming a Parish Councillor confirms that they will abide by both the GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018;

-to remind members of the Council that it is a criminal offence under section 170 of the Data Protection Act 2018 for an employee to obtain or disclose personal data without the consent of the data controller;

-that each Parish Councillor carries out training on data protection issues annually and that this is added to the Standing Orders;

-that for each survey/consultation a specific Privacy Notice is issued (this is in addition to the general Privacy Notice on the website). Cllr Higley seconded by Cllr Donahue

The Clerk offered to circulate an annual form to ask if councillors had each carried out GDPR training and/or would like her to organise training for them.

Resolution: The Council voted to support the motion.

11 Motion to approve a request from the Pre-school to put in a gate to allow access from the school directly onto their allotment site. The Pre-school have pledged to fund the new access and reinstate the fencing should they give up the allotment site at a future date. Cllr Higley seconded by Cllr Donahue. 20:45

Resolution: The Council voted to approve this motion.

12 Motion: to approve the plan for six heritage apple trees presented by the Green Team for the Polish Church Memorial site. Cllr Higley seconded by Cllr Smith (Attachment 2 and 3) 20:50

Resolution: The Council to approve the motion.

13 Motion: To amend Standing Order 'Number 27 Standing Orders' generally by inserting the following words: "The Parish Council will consider each motion and ensure that any decision (except planning permissions) they take is scrutinized in terms of its sustainability, the amount of waste created and its contribution to a zero-carbon future' Cllr Higley seconded by Cllr Brazil, third by Cllr Smith. 20:55

Resolution: The Council voted to approve this motion.

14 To discuss the following documents from Standing Order 21: 21:00

-Policy and procedure to respond to an individual exercising statutory rights concerning their personal data

-Policy in place for responding to and managing a personal data breach;

-Record of all personal data breaches comprising the facts relating to the personal data breach, its effects and the remedial action taken;

-Written record of all its processing activities (to be maintained by all Councillors) – Cllr Higley

Action 183 - Cllr Higley will draft a form to record processing activities to circulate and to be approved by the council.

15 Treescape update – Cllr Higley 21:10

15.1 Cllr Higley updated on the Treescape report which she will circulate.

One of the interesting facts that came up was that the village used to have many more hedgerows.

It was suggested that a hedgerow be planted on the village green boundary. One councillor said that there were landowners who were opposed to this idea and that a hedgerow may encroach upon the cricket field.

- 16 Conservation Area Appraisal update – Cllr Higley 21:15
- 16.1 Cllr Higley advised that because the Conservation Area Appraisal (CAA) was a statutory process, the draft appraisal should only be circulated to the Parish Council and not placed in the public domain as it may not be the final draft that will be consulted upon. SODC have a large backlog of CAAs and our village may not be able to be reviewed until 2023. SODC will contact us when they are ready to commence the consultation process.
- 17 Playground Update – Cllrs Leadbeater-Hart and O’Grady 21:25
- 17.1 The councillors will raise a motion for the WG’s ToR once it had been drafted. The Councillors updated their actions which included:
- a paper survey to Manor Road and school and online to all other residents by the end of February;
 - to investigate grant funding;
 - to ensure that consideration be made on the survey for the council’s concern for sustainability;
 - that SODC advice be taken into account regarding the trees and surfaces;
 - that the ToR include an action to identify high priority, short-term maintenance actions that could be done in parallel with longer term activities on purchasing any new equipment
- 18 To review progress on any open actions from previous Parish Council meetings and agree any revision of actions on the action list. 21:55
- 19 To confirm the date and time of the next meeting on Thursday, February 10, 2022 at 20:00.
- 20 Confidential discussion for thank you notes from the Parish Council
- 21 Meeting closed. 22:00

Attachment 1

Report to Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council January 2022

Council Operations

Homelessness in South Oxfordshire

The Council's housing team worked intensively in the weeks up to Christmas to ensure households at risk of homelessness had sustainable accommodation

It is pleasing to report that the number of rough sleepers recorded as of 31 December 2021 was zero for both South and Vale. This is the first time since 2013 there has been no rough sleeping recorded across both Districts, and is testament to the success of the Councils' strategy of preventing homelessness. South Oxfordshire was the first council in Oxfordshire to adopt the ground breaking Housing First approach to preventing homelessness, a system that has since been adopted across the county

Vouchers for residents struggling

With the cost of living crisis impacting families across the country, a reminder that the Council is supporting residents struggling to afford household essentials.

Using money from the Government's Household Support Fund, we are helping pay for vulnerable households' food, energy, and water bills and other essential household costs.

The funds are not restricted to people who receive benefits, and a range of factors are taken into consideration when assessing applications. The scheme ends in March 2022. Please see details on our website: [Household Support Fund - South Oxfordshire District Council \(southoxon.gov.uk\)](https://southoxon.gov.uk)

Planning Enforcement

The updated **Planning Enforcement Statement** has been approved by Council. The statement sets out the new approach to the triage and handling of complaints to improve efficiency and transparency and to help address the large backlog of complaints that has built up since the start of the pandemic. The team currently has some 700 live investigations with 241 matters still unallocated across the two Councils. The Planning Enforcement Statement was previously been updated in 2016. The new Enforcement Statement and approach will be subject to quarterly appraisal as part of the Council's ongoing performance review process and the Statement itself will be reviewed after 12 months.

[Microsoft Word - 2021-12-17- Enforcement Statement Final \(southandvale.gov.uk\)](#)

Local Government Finance Settlement

The government announced its provisional local government finance settlement on 16 December, the fourth consecutive one-year settlement. It amounts to a real-term cut in council funding for SODC and for many other councils around the country. While government has claimed the settlement amounts to a 4% increase in funding, just 1% of this is government funding, the rest requires local authorities to increase council tax by the maximum allowable without a referendum.

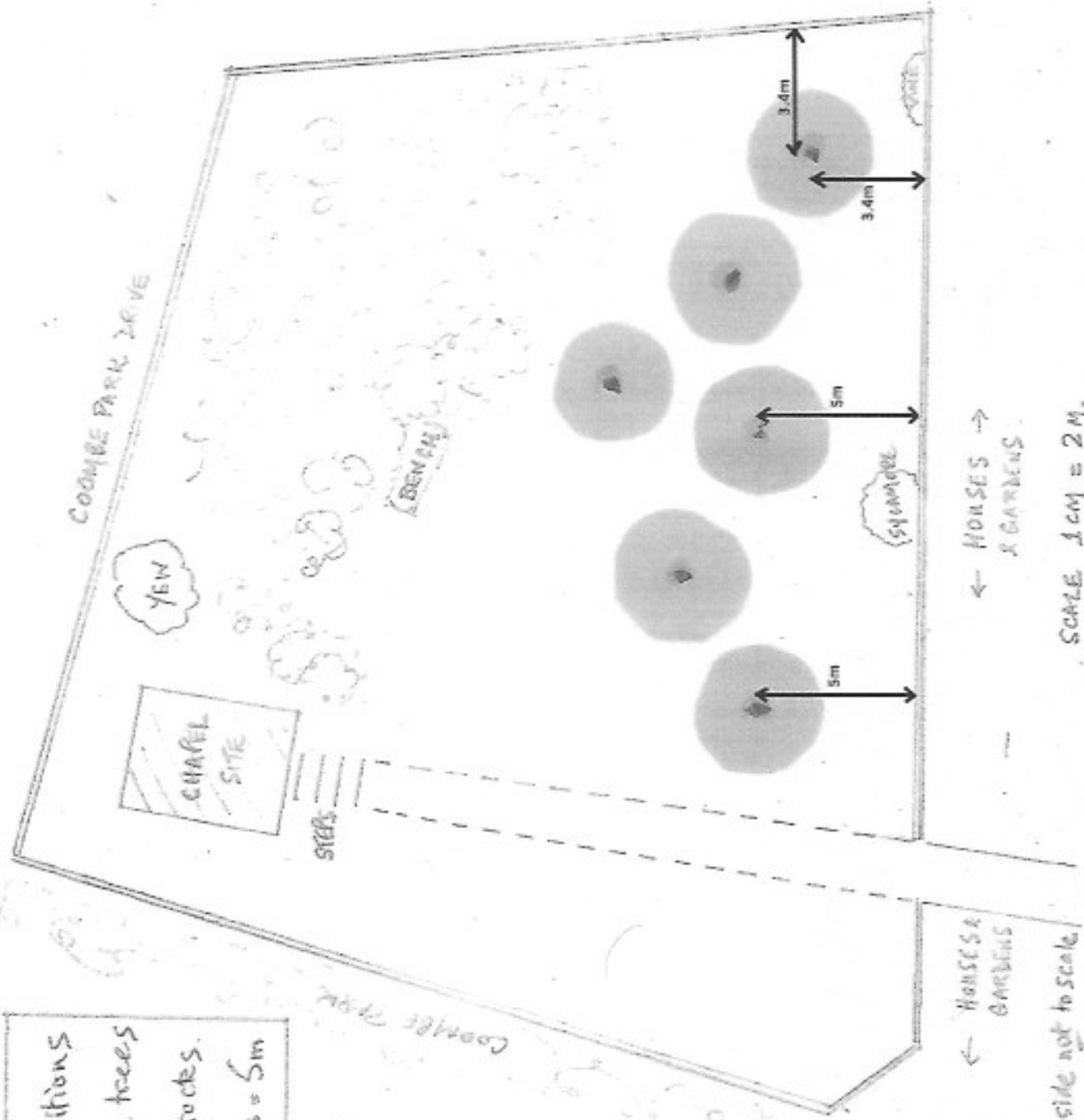
New Gambling Policy

At Full Council on 6 December, Council also agreed a new gambling policy. A key change is the passing of a "No Casino" resolution meaning that applications for casinos will not be considered in the District. This was agreed on the basis that the district is not a suitable location for a casino, that casinos bring the potential for criminal exploitation and money laundering and that casinos expose the vulnerable to the risk of gambling harm and problem gambling.

POLISH CHURCH MEMORIAL GARDEN

ATTACHMENT 2

Proposed planting positions
for six Heritage Apple trees
Grafted on M111 rootstocks.
Distance between trees = 5m



Designed by
Mrs Cotgreave,
Miss Durston,
Woolhouse
27/10/2021

NOTE: This L.H. side not to scale.

SCALE 1cm = 2m.

ATTACHMENT 3

YOUR ORGANISATION

1.1 Name of organisation proposing the project:
Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council

1.2 Contact name and position in organisation:
Jane Yamamoto – Parish Clerk

1.3 Telephone No (landline): NA Mobile No: 07876714906

E-mail: parishclerk.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com

Website: <https://whitchurchonthames.com/council.html>

1.4 Preferred address for correspondence:

Whitchurch-on-Thames Parish Council, c/o 11 Hillside, Hardwick Road, Whitchurch-on-Thames, RG8 7HL

1.5 Please provide details about the status of your organisation, e.g. is it a registered charity, parish council or a community group?

Parish Council

Do you have a formal constitution? NO

If your organisation is a charity, please provide the charity number;

Do you have a set of rules governing your organisation? YES

If YES, please provide a copy.

Attachment of Standing Orders

1.6 Please provide some background information about your organisation, its aims, when was it established and say how your proposals contribute to the aims of our Corporate Plan? [Vale Corporate Plan](#) [South Corporate Plan](#)

Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council - A project is running to rejuvenate and maintain the Polish Church Memorial Garden off Manor Road.

Contributes to the South Corporate plan aim to Protect and restore our natural world by planting trees and to improve access to green spaces in and around our towns, reinforcing access to nature as a priority for community wellbeing.

- 1.7 What insurance cover does your organisation have? (e.g. public liability insurance). Please include detail of all cover.

Attachment of insurance certificate

- 1.8 Does your organisation have policies in place for the following: the safety of children and vulnerable adults, working with volunteers and health and safety? *Community groups undertaking tree planting projects on Council owned land will be required to be appropriately insured and have policies or procedures in place to ensure the safety of their volunteers and all users of the site.*

Attachment of Policy

Your proposed planting site and how you will maintain it

- 2.1 What is the address and post code of site? Please give the area or dimensions of the proposed planting site.

0.26 Acre site to the rear of 49 – 54 Manor Road, Whitchurch on Thames, RG8 7EU

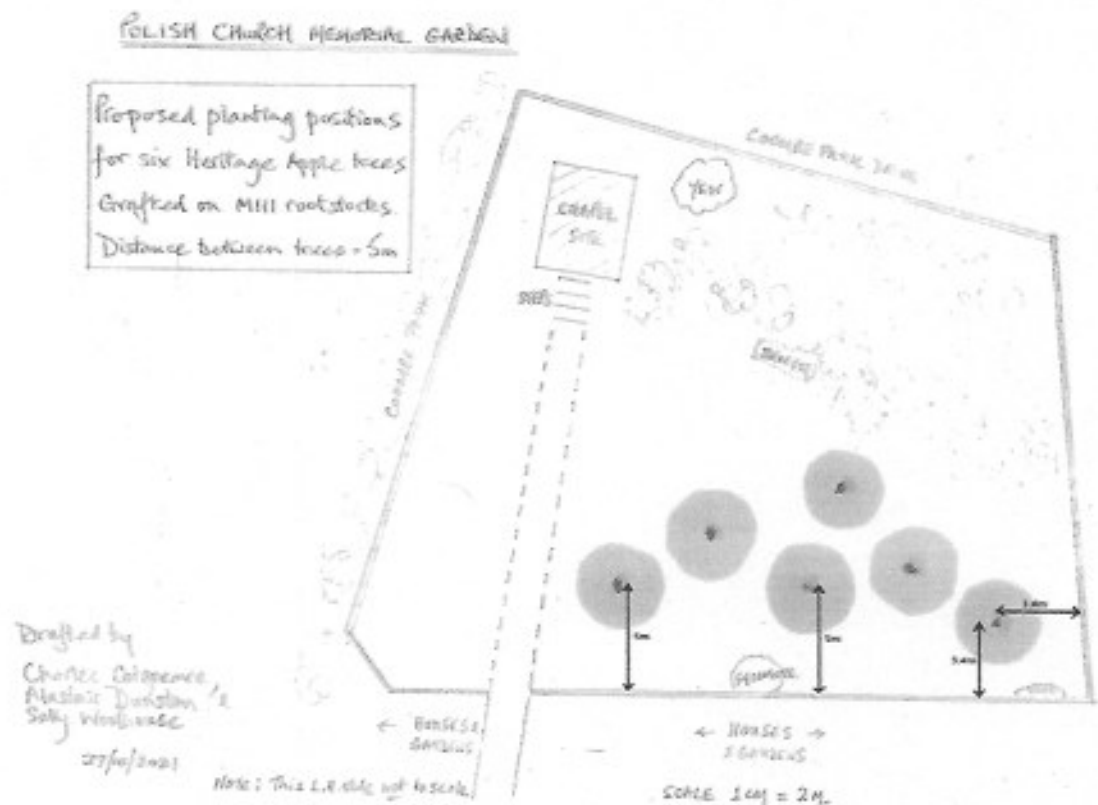
Location of Polish Church Memorial Garden coloured purple on plan below:



2.2 What is the current use of the land?

Polish Church memorial garden – occupied by Whitchurch on Thames Parish Council under licence agreement dated 25 January 2017. The area is primarily laid to grass, with a small section of woodland. The site of the chapel is marked by a raised platform with steps and planters.

2.3 Please provide a Tree Planting Plan clearly showing the location and layout of the planting proposals (i.e. locations for the individual trees to be planted and/or the spacings if woodland planting).



2.4 Please provide details of the type of planting proposed, including species choice, numbers of trees, size of planting stock and type of tree stakes and guards proposed?

6 heritage apple trees planted at 5m intervals. M111 semi-vigorous root stock, with grafts from local heritage apple trees, ultimate height 4-5m. Machine-rounded 1.5m vertical natural wood stakes. Tubex Fruitwrap protection from vandals and animals.

- 2.5 Please provide a Maintenance Plan giving details of how you intend to maintain the planting for a minimum of three seasons following the planting to ensure successful establishment? For some types of planting the Council may require a longer maintenance period.

Every summer and winter, check for diseases. Prune in winter and if necessary in summer, to maintain good open growth. First winter, cut back to 24". Second winter, select up to 4 leaders, shortening to a half to two-thirds, to outward pointing buds. Third and subsequent winters, shorten leaders according to growth, to maintain overall shape.

- 2.6 Please provide details of how your planting project is being funded and any conditions attached to that funding?

Solely by the Parish Council and voluntary contributions.

- 2.7 Please provide details of the source of the tree stock to be planted?

M111 rootstock from certified fruit nursery. Grafts locally sourced from established gardens.

Other details about your project

- 3.1 Please outline if / how you consulted the local community about this proposal and how any potential conflicts been addressed?

Surveys of local opinion and detailed consultation with residents of immediately adjacent properties. Publicised open days and involvement of Parish Councillors. No conflicts identified.

- 3.2 How will the local community benefit from and engage with the project?

The garden is open to all. The local community will benefit from the enhancement of the space and engagement through volunteers and residents. A heritage orchard will add a visual and productive asset, and increase biodiversity.

- 3.3 Who is involved with the project? What experience, skills and resources does your group offer?

A local volunteer heritage-tree expert, who has successfully grafted a number of heritage trees; the Green Team, which has several years experience of maintaining green spaces throughout the village; and WotHabs (the Whitchurch-on-Thames Habitat Study Group) which is concerned with environmental issues.

- 3.4 Proposed timetable of work.

Anticipated start date: Feb/March 2022

Anticipated completion date: Feb/March 2023

- 3.5 Could the weather or other factors affect this timetable (i.e. availability of funding, flooding, availability of volunteers etc)?

Possible, but unlikely. It may take some time to achieve successful grafts of all trees. The aim would be to mark out and perhaps dig all planting holes initially, including placing stakes, and to plant at least three trees in the first year.