
Agenda Item: Lake and Country Park

Meeting Date: 19/05/2026

Contact Officer: Biodiversity and Green Spaces Officer

The purpose of this report is to update members on the work being carried out on the country park.

Background

The Lake and Country Park is managed to balance recreation and conservation, and provide a safe and interesting location for all to use.

Current Situation

Seven benches, part funded by OCC are to be installed in the park.

Duck Tubes are being created for the waterfowl on the lake to use as nest sites.

A new lectern at the entrance to Mill Meadow and panel for the noticeboard at the Avenue Two entrance are close to design completion.

The application for Green Flag status is continuing.

Water testing is still part of the regular management of the site.

The council have secured £4500 from various funds to support work within the Country Park.

The Council are in discussion with Synlos (<http://www.synolos.co.uk/>) about some of their clients volunteering within the Country Park.

The council is developing an area close to the Ave 2 entrance for the Kids Planet team to allow their kids an area to sit and play, it will have a layer of chippings and seats enclosed on 3 sides for safety.

The Council have been working with WODC, Lower Windrush Valley Project, and Wychwood Project to create 10 walks around Witney including the Country Park.

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

7. A Green & Resilient Town

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality –Equality in biodiversity in green spaces refers to the idea that all species regardless of their size, role, or ecological status should have the opportunity to thrive and be represented within urban and natural green spaces. Achieving equality in biodiversity involves not just conserving a wide variety of species but also ensuring that ecological systems are designed and managed in ways that support diverse species' needs. This can be applied to urban parks, nature reserves, forests, and other green spaces, aiming for a balance where no group of species is disproportionately favoured over others.
- b) Crime & Disorder –Green spaces such as Lakes and Parks can contribute to reducing urban crime by making spaces more inviting and safer for residents.
- c) Environment & Climate Emergency –This is deeply intertwined with both the protection of biodiversity and the fight against climate change. Both challenges require urgent and comprehensive action, as they not only affect the country's natural systems but also its economy, society, and future well-being.
- d) All aspects of this report are to action our responsibilities to this situation

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Financial implications

- All the costs for the signs and 5 benches for the Country Park have been met by funding that the Biodiversity and Green Spaces Officer has been awarded so far this year.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report.