
Agenda Item:	Winter Preparations
Meeting Date:	Monday 21 September 2026
Contact Officer:	Committee Clerk

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on winter preparations and to invite Members to identify locations where additional grit bins may be required.

Background

The Town Council works in partnership with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) regarding the provision of grit bins. Requests for new bins are submitted to OCC, who assess the suitability of proposed locations.

Where approved, the Town Council funds the purchase of the grit bin, whilst OCC arranges installation and subsequent refilling as required. OCC is also responsible for replacing damaged bins where appropriate.

Current Situation

Grit bins are already located at many key locations throughout Witney, including the majority of Town Council-owned sites. In addition, the Town Council maintains a supply of salt to enable its team to undertake limited gritting activities during periods of icy weather.

A map showing the current locations of grit bins in the town is attached as **Appendix A**. Members are encouraged to review the existing provision and as part of preparations for the forthcoming winter season, Members are invited to consider whether there are locations within their wards where the provision of an additional grit bin would improve safety for residents.

Members may wish to consider locations such as:

- Steep inclines, steps or footpaths prone to icy conditions.
- Routes frequently used vulnerable residents.
- Areas providing access to community facilities, schools, shops or public transport.
- Locations where concerns or requests have been raised by residents during previous winters.

Any suggested locations will be reviewed by officers, taking account of existing grit bin provision shown in Appendix A, before being referred to Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) for assessment and approval prior to their submission deadline of 31 October.

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:

2. An Engaged & Supported Community

Supporting measures that help residents to safely access services, facilities and public spaces during adverse winter weather.

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** - Additional grit bins can help improve accessibility and safety for all users, particularly older residents and those with mobility difficulties.
- b) **Biodiversity** - No significant impact identified.
- c) **Crime & Disorder** - No significant impact identified.
- d) **Environment & Climate Emergency** - No significant impact identified.

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.

Failure to identify locations where additional grit bins may be beneficial could result in missed opportunities to improve public safety during periods of severe winter weather.

Any new installations will be subject to budget availability and approval by OCC

Social Value

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

The provision of grit bins supports community safety and resilience by helping residents manage icy conditions and maintain access to local amenities and public spaces

Financial implications

The current cost of a grit bin is approximately £300 excluding VAT, subject to confirmation by OCC.

Any approved installations would be funded from the appropriate budget provision. The street furniture budget (4200/402) current spend is £411, with a £5,000 budget. *It should be noted that the Council usually only considers a maximum of two bins per year.*

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and identify potential locations where additional grit bins may be beneficial.