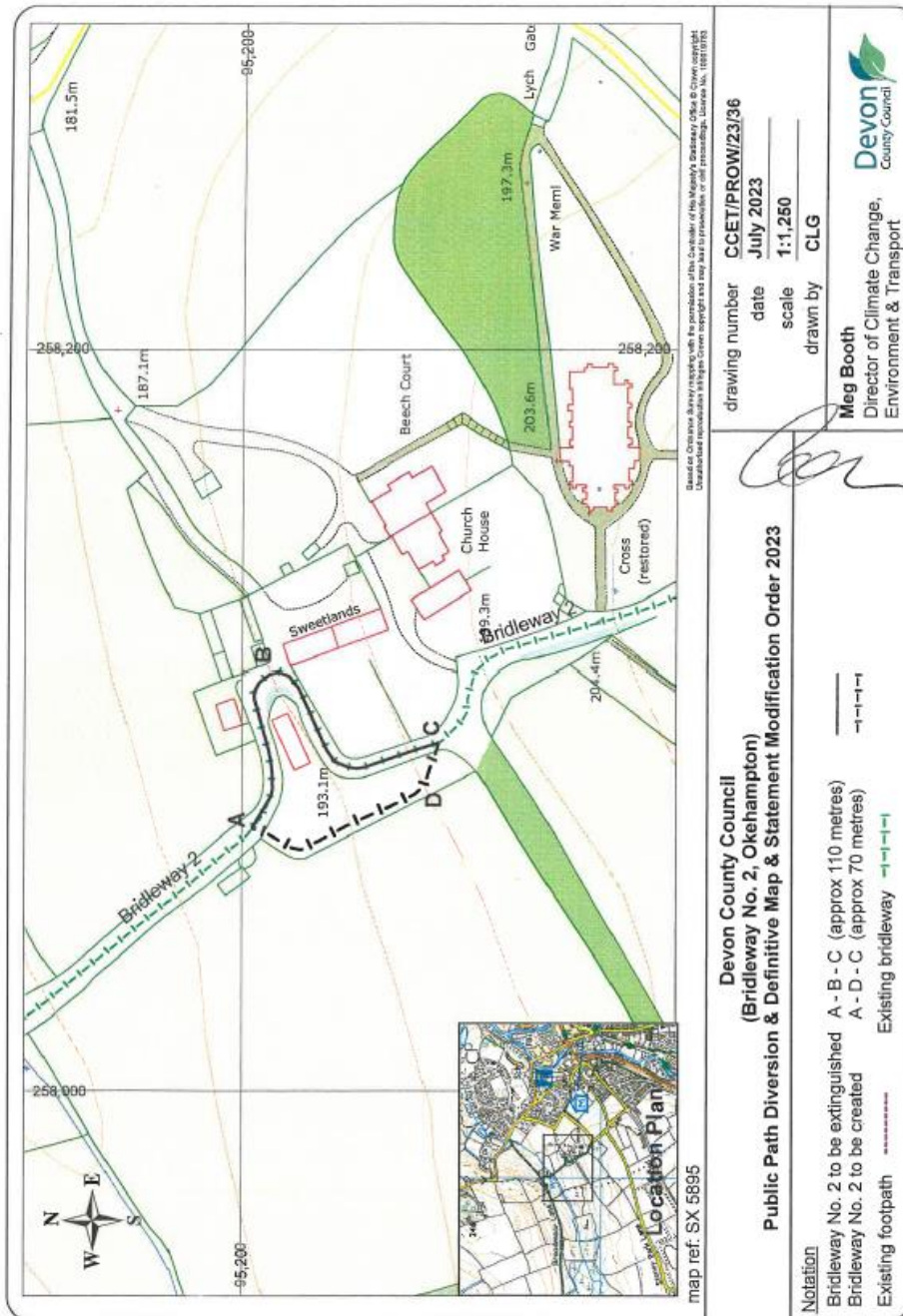


Okehampton Town Council Parks Committee Meeting 4th September 2023 Meeting Report

Date:	24 th August 2023
Name:	Emma James

Reports and Updates –

Bridleway No 2 – A Modification Order amending the route of the Bridleway which is in the vicinity of All Saints Church has been confirmed by DCC.



Parks Bookings –

To note the following events that have either taken place or are scheduled to take place in Simmons Park, subject to receipt of the necessary paperwork:

30 th August	Wren Music	Junk Music Session in the Skate Park
31 st August	OCRA	Park Run Test event
15 th -23 rd October	Anderton and Rowland Amusements	
25 th October	Wren Music	Rescheduled Junk Music Session
10 th December	PTFA	Santa Run
24 th February 2024	Wren Music	Okehampton Lanterns Finale
16 th Jun 2024	PTFA	Circus

Simmons Park Carpark –

Motorcycle Parking Bay and Cycle Rack Locations - To resolve the location of a motorcycle parking bay and for a cycle rack

Recommended locations are as identified on the following plan:



Simmons Park

River Extraction Licence – To consider making changes to the Licence which resulting in the reduction of water extraction permitted resulting in no future fees being payable.

The current licence fee is £115 p/annum.

The Licence (No 14/50/007/0066) dated 12/07/1984 permits the following extraction of water from the East Okement River:

- 1) Filling paddling pool
- 2) Spray irrigation of Bowling Green

The quantities authorised to be abstracted are:

- 1) 81.8 cubic metres (18,000 gallons) per day, with a total of 1,791 cubic metres (394,000 gallons) per annum
- 2) 9.1 cubic metres (2,000 gallons) per day with a total of 188 cubic metres (26,000 gallons) per year

The Paddling Pool has not been in existence for a number of years and therefore this use could be removed from the licence. Following an enquiry about removal of this use, correspondence received is as follows:

Licence Number: 14/50/007/0066

Thank you for your email. I apologise that unfortunately the information you have been provided with is incorrect, as you cannot hold a licence where the daily rate is 20 cubic metres or less. I will ensure that feedback is provided on this.

I can only re-emphasise what was detailed in my previous email, that if you do not need to abstract more than 20 cubic metres of water per day, then you should complete and submit a WR4 application form to revoke (cancel) your licence. There is no application fee and once your licence is revoked you would no longer be billed for it. Additionally, where there is no licence in place, you are able to abstract a maximum of 20 cubic metres of water each day, and therefore a maximum of 7,300 cubic metres of water in a year, for any purpose.

Alternatively, if you wish to alter the quantities on your licence to remove the purpose of 'filling paddling pool' and its associated quantities, and increase the amount of water you can abstract for the purpose of spray irrigation, you should apply for a normal or substantial variation to your licence. There is a charge for these types of applications.

You can read about both of these types of licence changes here: [Change, revoke or transfer a water abstraction or impoundment licence - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/change-revoke-transfer-a-water-abstraction-or-impoundment-l licence).

In the meantime, whilst your licence remains in force, you must continue to abide by the current licence conditions, meaning you can only abstract 9.1 cubic metres per day and 118 cubic metres per year for the purpose of spray irrigation of bowling greens. The exemption limit of 20 cubic metres of water per day only applies where there is no licence in place for the whole site.

The Committee is requested to consider if it wishes to cancel the Licence with a saving of £115 p/annum.

Putting Improvements – To consider a draft business case that could be used for grant applications towards the cost of the project.

SIMMONS PARK ADVENTURE GOLF

BUSINESS CASE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 The aim of this business case is to outline the Putting Green Working Group's recommended future use of the putting green at Simmons Parks as an adventure golf course.

1.2 It will:

- (a) define the scope of the project;
- (b) outline how the proposal meets the Council's strategic objectives;
- (c) present a five-year financial forecast;
- (d) consider the risks in pursuing the project;
- (e) detail the other alternative uses for the site and other operating models; and
- (f) summarize the proposed timetable and specifications for the course.

1.3 It will recommend that an 18-hole adventure golf course be installed on the former putting green, themed around a tour of Okehampton, with twelve 'props' of Okehampton landmark features, such as the Town Hall, Okehampton Station, and All Saints Church.

1.4 It will outline how the adventure golf course represents best public value by repurposing a currently underutilized yet well-placed area of the very popular Simmons Parks to provide a new and exciting amenity for both residents and visitors to the town of all ages and demographics. At the same time, it will create a significant, sustainable, and low risk income stream for the Council, with a low overheads and minimal cost of sale. This income stream will support the Council's other services and amenities and reduce the burden on the local taxpayer,

What is adventure golf?

1.5 In recent years the sport of mini golf has seen a surge of popularity with a large number of new indoor and outdoor adventure golf courses appearing around the UK. Most people use the terms mini golf, crazy golf and adventure golf interchangeable. Mini golf is the umbrella term for the sport as a whole, and whilst traditional crazy golf has connotations of windmills and loop-the-loops, adventure golf is slightly different.

1.6 Adventure golf is designed to be a more immersive experience, with the course curated around a particular theme, in this case the history and heritage of Okehampton. Rather than relying on manmade obstacles placed on the course, instead the holes themselves are used to create dips, humps, and pitfalls. There are many more natural or natural-looking elements

– timber, rockwork, etc – incorporated within the courses and, with this course, the surrounding area will be landscaped with lots of horticultural interest. These new courses tend to be of a very high specification and robust, with accessibility a key consideration.

2. PROJECT SCOPE

2.1 Current situation

The putting green in Simmons Parks is situated between the Leisure Centre, Bowling Club and toddler playground and is currently run through the leisure centre but not used to its full potential for numerous reasons and has been used by members of the public for football, picnics, etc, as an extension of the existing park facilities. Retaining the site as a putting green is considered later in the business case.

The idea of transforming the space into a minigolf / adventure golf course was first considered by the Putting Green Working Group in July 2023 after a suggestion from the Park Keeper about how to better use the space and reduce the labour it takes to maintain it.

2.2 Objectives

The aim and objectives of the scheme are to maximize the public value of the Council's asset, both the financial return on the site, which then subsidizes the Council's other activities, and also to create more social value at the site with an activity that benefits local residents; supports the visitor economy and local businesses; and is accessible to all.

2.3 Deliverable

The project will result in the following:

An 18-hole adventure golf course themed around a tour of Okehampton, with twelve 'props' representing landmark features of Okehampton;

2.4 Exclusions

The business case is presented in the belief from the Putting Green Working Group that an adventure golf course provides the best possible value for the Council and community for the land available.

Other options have been identified, and these are laid out in brief later in the business case. However, it was not felt that any other option provided enough opportunity for a comparable level of return (either social or financial) to warrant a full investigation.

2.5 Constraints

The business case takes into account following limiting factors on the use of the putting green:

- (a) **Location.** The putting green is sited within a Fields In Trust park alongside the East Okement, and any development needs to be in keeping with its surroundings and acceptable in planning terms. The area is also within a flood plain.
- (b) **Budget and financial return.** Whilst the Council has reserves the putting green does not currently cover the staffing costs for its maintenance. It is difficult for it to justify upgrading the facility without applying for grant funding to assist.
- (c) **Size.** The putting green is constrained on all sides by the adventure playground, toddler playground, Leisure Centre and bowling green, meaning any use would need to fit inside the current footprint.

3. STRATEGIC CASE

3.1 The Council's strategic plan suggests the following values:

VALUE	HOW THIS PROJECT CONTRIBUTES
Tourism	
The Council is keen to develop the visitor economy in Okehampton, to support local business and tourist attractions	An additional attraction for visitors whilst also promoting other attractions through its Okehampton themed 'props'. It will compliment and augment the current visitor offer in Okehampton
Recreation	
The Council takes pride in offering a high standard of recreation facilities to residents and visitors	A new recreational facility to compliment the current offer, with affordable fees
Financial sustainability	
Rather than increase Council tax to support greater spending, the Council would first rather look to maximizing the potential revenue streams from its existing assets	Provides a substantial financial return, maximizing use of currently unused area and helping to subsidize other Council services and facilities and reduce burden on tax payer
Quality	
The Council strives to deliver a high level of service and quality	A modern, durable course sympathetic to its surrounds
Innovation	
The Council looks beyond the limited services usually provided by a town or parish council, often taking on those amenities and services usually operated by principal authorities	It is believed most Council-run adventure golf courses so far identified are run by principal authorities rather than town or parish councils.
Environment	

The Council is striving to create a more attractive market town landscape, enhance the pleasant rural surrounds, and celebrate its rich heritage	Celebrates the town's heritage through the themed props with links to information on each site. The design will compliment and enhance the current offer and landscape at Simmons Park
Serving the community	
The Council is keen to create a balance between the services it provides for the various parts of the community – especially in respect of both the old and young.	Inclusive recreational facilities suitable for all ages to play alongside each other, accessible for wheelchair users and those with pushchairs

4. RISK EVALUATION

Risk	Evaluation
Lack of support	There is the possibility that there will not enough support within the community for the proposal. This will be assessed by conducting by consultation prior to any build being approved, targeting current Simmons Park users directly. The public will be presented with the designs and business case, including costings and projected financial return, to ensure a high quality of responses. It is believed that there will be good community support once the project and its benefits is clearly communicated.
Lack of demand	It is difficult to predict the demand for the adventure golf but if with the new course maintenance costs are reduced dramatically then it should not require a large amount of footfall to cover the cost. If the demand is higher, it can be put aside as a sink fund to replace elements of the course as needed.
Lack of parking	Whilst the car park is still extremely busy during the summer, the adventure golf should only have a marginal impact. Nevertheless, the increased parking revenue to the Town Council, could see an increase in parking income as well as drive more tourism to the town, thereby increasing the overall visitor spend. The Council is also looking at ways of reducing car usage and encouraging the use of sustainable transport.
Vandalism	As with many of the facilities in Okehampton's public parks, the course will be vulnerable to vandalism. To counter this, we will maintain the existing boundary hedge. We will also ensure that as much of the course as possible is vandal-resistant and robust.
High maintenance	We have allowed for a high level of maintenance (taking into account the costs stated by other local authorities) as well as a sinking fund for more major refurbishment. This will ensure that the course remains fresh throughout its life. We will also ensure that we receive sufficient warranties on all of the materials and workmanship, to minimize the ongoing cost.
Unexpected closures / adverse weather	As we have seen during the current pandemic, there may be times when the course will be unable to operate. The greatest risks are from poor weather during peak periods. However, the ongoing costs are low; the course can be closed when bad weather is expected.

	<p>There is a concern that the nature of a mini golf course may not be in keeping with the image of Okehampton, taking into account examples of poor quality or ageing courses, or designs unsympathetic to their surrounds. However, there are good examples, such as Putt in the Park (www.puttinthepark.com), of very popular but more natural courses. The specifications to the designers have emphasized that the course must be sympathetic to the surroundings, and this is reflected in the designs included with this business case. The designs include 'props' themed around, and emphasizing the culture of, Okehampton. There are also allowances in the budget for a high level of maintenance, and care has been taken to ensure the courses are constructed of high-quality materials. It is also recommended that a professional contracts administrator is employed to oversee the build, to ensure the Council's high standards are met.</p>
Poor quality	<p>There is a concern that the nature of a mini golf course may not be in keeping with the image of Okehampton, taking into account examples of poor quality or ageing courses, or designs unsympathetic to their surrounds. However, there are good examples, such as Putt in the Park (www.puttinthepark.com), of very popular but more natural courses. The specifications to the designers have emphasized that the course must be sympathetic to the surroundings, and this is reflected in the designs included with this business case. The designs include 'props' themed around, and emphasizing the culture of, Okehampton. There are also allowances in the budget for a high level of maintenance, and care has been taken to ensure the courses are constructed of high-quality materials. It is also recommended that a professional contracts administrator is employed to oversee the build, to ensure the Council's high standards are met.</p>

5. ALTERNATIVES EVALUATION

5.1 The following other potential uses have been considered:

Do nothing & retain as a putting green	<p>At present the costs and time required for the upkeep of the site are high. However, it also provides very little public value. However, historically, the income has only be c.£300 per year This income could undoubtedly be increased with better marketing, and some investment into the area. However, it was felt that this would not deliver best value or provide the broader appeal of adventure golf.</p>
Forest school	<p>The suggestion was that a forest school be incorporated into the final adventure golf scheme. However, it was noted that space within the area would likely be limited and that there were many other areas nearby that would provide a much more natural and ecologically diverse setting.</p>
Community space	<p>The suggestion was that an outdoor community space could be incorporated into the final adventure golf scheme. However, it was felt that there was already a large amount of open green space in the immediate area available for community use and that there was little evidence of need for a separate small and enclosed space.</p>
Ball games area	<p>This, along with the other suggestions below, were suggested by members of the public. Whilst it appears the area is used for occasional kick abouts, there is a lot of open green space for informal games available in Simmons Parks, with the football club very close by.</p>

Splash park	<p>It was suggested that a splash park be installed in the area instead. Whilst these are popular facilities, they are extremely expensive to install and maintain, and are usually subsidized rather than profit-making; the appeal is mainly for young children and families, making it less inclusive than adventure golf; and their use will primarily be during school holidays in the warmer summer months.</p>
Barbecue area and flexible hireable space	<p>It has been suggested that the site could be an area for picnics and barbecues. Whilst this may be possible, there is doubtful there would be sufficient demand, as there is ample picnicking space in Simmons Parks with attractive views of the river, and additional picnic tables could be provided elsewhere.</p> <p>As barbecues aren't permitted on Simmons Parks, there may be demand for a dedicated area. There is a precedent for this (e.g. Frimley Lodge Park in Surrey) where barbecue stands are available for hire for c.£40 for up to 25 people. However, this would limit the amount of social benefit the space can provide and it isn't believed to have the same widespread appeal that adventure golf could provide. As an example, the Frimley Lodge Park barbecue stands generate only £68k income per year – 150-200 uses in total with c.2000 customers against 22,300 predicted visitors per annum for the adventure golf course.</p> <p>Whilst there may be some demand for a hireable space, informal gatherings can be held for free within Simmons Parks, and private hires can usually be accommodated within the main park. Whilst some private functions may benefit from having a fenced-off discrete area, the benefit to the broader community would likely not be very great.</p>

5.2 Alternative operating model – leasing the land

5.2.1 The business case is based on the Council both building and operating the course. However, elsewhere local authorities have let land out on a long lease to an external operator, who has then built and operated their own course, and paid the Council a flat rate or a profit share.

Flat rate

5.2.4 The main benefits of this option would be:

A fixed income to the Council;

- (a) Low financial risk to the Council;
- (b) No capital investment required; and
- (c) Reduced administration time for Council officers.

5.2.5 The main drawbacks of this option are:

Passing over control of the operation of the course;

- (a) The tenant may be unwilling to build a course to the Council's high specification;
- (b) A potentially much lower financial return;

- (c) The tenant would need to sell refreshments rather than rely on solely on green fees, in competition with other nearby outlets, including another Council tenant;

Profit share

5.2.7 This option shares the same benefits to the Council as the flat rate proposal of reduced administration time and no capital investment required. The Council could potentially benefit from a higher income.

5.2.8 This option also has the same drawbacks as the flat rate proposal, and there is also the risk that the operator will not declare their actual gross revenue, requiring regular audits, as has happened with one of the other local authority sites.

Conclusion

5.2.9 Whilst the option of leasing the land could be pursued further, it's believed that it would be highly unlikely to be the Council preferred course of action as:

- (a) Whilst there may be greater financial security, the return will like be very significantly lower;
- (b) Whilst no capital outlay would be required, it is unlikely that a tenant would be willing to make the same level of investment, and therefore the final course will not be of the high standard that the Council would expect;
- (c) The feedback from other authorities has been that the courses have been relatively straightforward to administer, and with some professional assistance to ensure our operational model is optimized, there will be little added value in giving it to an external operator

6 PROJECT PLAN

6.1 Timetable

1	Preferred contractor appointed for design work	
2	Design and specification phase	
3	Public consultation	
4	Amendments and final scheme approval	
5	Build start	
6	Build completion	
7	Opening	

6.2 Project specifications

6.2.1 Course specifications

- A British Minigolf Association-standard 18-hole adventure golf course.
- In keeping with the picturesque location.
- A high-quality visitor experience complimenting the other facilities.
- Featuring twelve bespoke Okehampton landmark feature ‘props’ (Town Hall, Simmons Park Gates, Sydney Simmons, All Saints Church, Water Mill, Army Camp, Meldon Viaduct, Victorian Arcade, Chalet Trelor, Red Lion Yard, Okehampton Castle & Okehampton Railway Station) including signage, QR codes or other ways to interact with local history.
- The course must be a mix of pars and suitable difficulty to appeal to all age groups.
- The course must be fully-accessible and Equality Act-compliant.
- The design must ensure low levels of ongoing maintenance.
- The course should be an entirely bespoke, innovative design.
- It should take into account the flow of people to reduce potential bottlenecks.
- It should allow for a range of obstacles with humps, bumps, depressions and other profiling to improve the game play experience.
- It should allow for the integration of materials such as timber, rocks and planting to dress the course.
- It should include all necessary signage including, a welcome sign, pricing, course plan board, and information boards.

6.2.2 Construction requirements

- A site survey should be undertaken prior to work commencing to ensure the suitability of the ground and identify any services.
- The current hedge perimeter of the site must be maintained save for any changes to entrances / exits.
- All surplus materials must be removed from site.
- Materials to be in keeping with the setting whilst being robust, durable and vandal-resistant.
- Materials should be locally-sourced where practicable.
- Paths shall be constructed of permeable and hard-wearing bound materials suitable for areas of high footfall, but should not be tarmac.
- There should be adequate site drainage, and all materials should be suitable for a site within a floodplain / high water table.
- Exact details, materials, quantities and measurements will be agreed with the appointed contractor following production of detailed designs.
- Care should be taken to avoid trip hazards and similar risks on the final course.
- Where any reinstatement of grass areas is required, this must be done to the specifications of the Council.

6.2.3 Contractor requirements

- To provide details designs of the course, including materials and construction methods.

- To work within any regulations set out by Okehampton Town Council as landowners.
- To ensure site security and insurance until practical completion has been achieved.
- To be responsible for all plant and materials being stored on site.
- A construction phase health and safety plan including method statements and risk assessments for the work.
- A finalized programme of works.
- To inform the Council of any potential unknown or unforeseen costs or delays not included within the quote.
- To attend all necessary site visits with Council representatives.
- To meet all requirements under the CDM 2015 regulations.
- To provide a minimum five-year guarantee for the works.
- The form of contract will be the JCT Design and Build Contract DB 2016.

Simmons Park Green Flag Application – To consider the draft application for the designation of Simmons Park as a Green Flag Park

The current application deadline is 31st January 2024

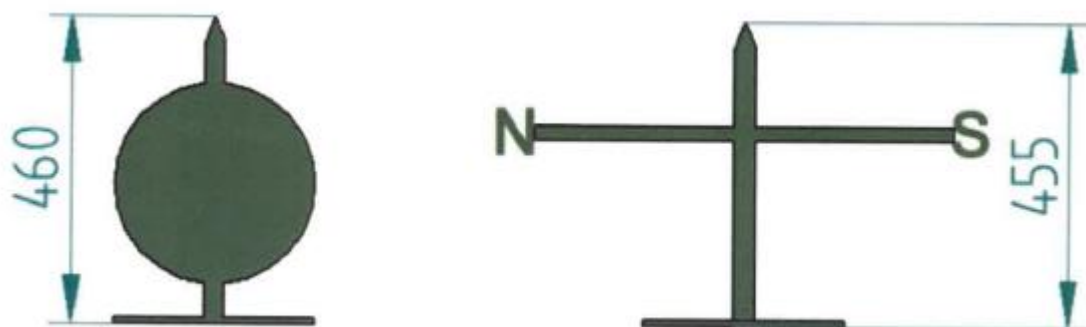
See attached document.

Bandstand – To consider the addition of a weathervane of similar to the top of the bandstand adjacent to Chalet Treloar

Cllr Mash has requested the Committee consider an addition of a weathervane or similar to the top of the new structure. The structure is within the size not needing planning consent to be sought. Any additional height will likely require planning approval.



Suggested designs are as follows:



Cemetery

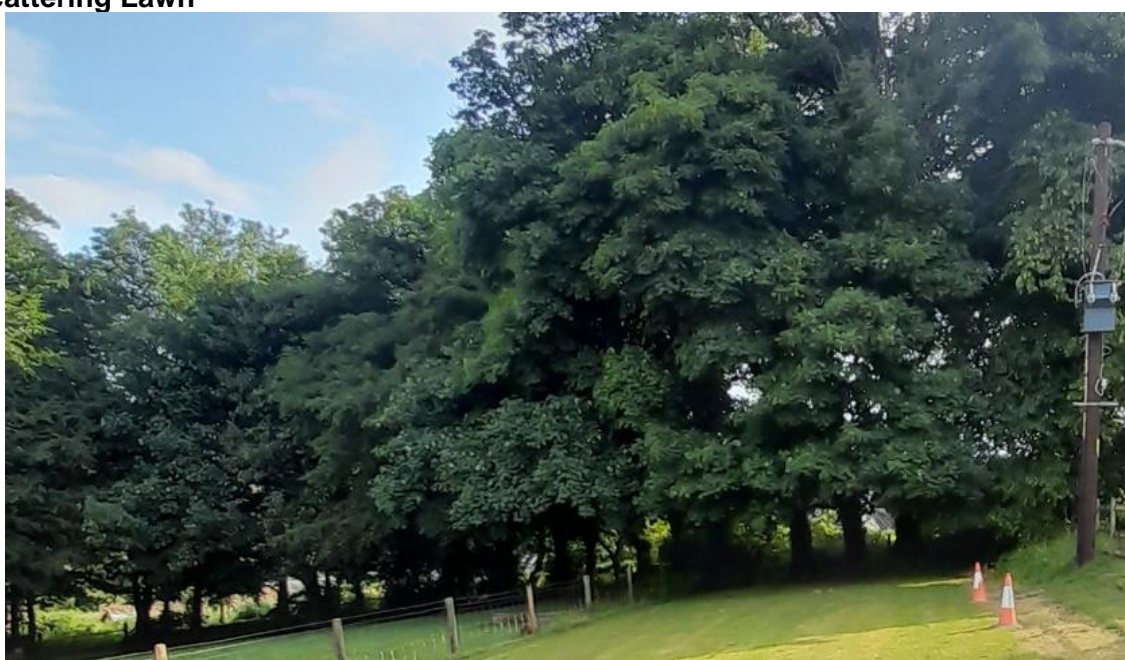
Burials - To note the summary of burials

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
New Burials	10	7	4 *
Reopening's	4	4	1
Ashes (within a grave)	0	1	1
Total	14	12	6
New Memorials			8*
Additional Inscriptions			3

- 2 burials are taking place on 15th September
- 5 more applications have been received for the erection of memorials

Scattering Lawn – To resolve to approve the creation of a scattering lawn for human cremated remains at the lower end of the existing Cemetery

Scattering Lawn



The bottom 10m of the cemetery from the track hedge can not be used for burials of either coffins or ashes due to planning restrictions. It is proposed the council use this area (marked on the picture by the cone nearest the telegraph pole) as a scattering lawn.

This is where a family pay a small amount to scatter the ashes in a m² area but can not put a stone or flowers on the grass. The grass area is used in turn so that ashes are not sprinkled on the same area again and again allowing the grass to recover. The council would use a grid system to record where the ashes were scattered in the burial register. Having spoken to both undertakers in the town they suggest there is a demand for it as people do not know where to scatter their loved ones.

A division between the the scattering lawn and the other areas of the cemetery would need to be constructed. There would also need to be somewhere where people could have plaques attached which could be purchased through Okehampton Town Council. This could be attached to the dividing wall, on benches which could also make up the dividing wall or on a memorial tree.
















Policies and Documents -To consider the following documents and make recommendation to the Policy & Resources Committee:

- Cemetery Fees for 2024-25
- Cemetery Rules and Regulations Policies
- Outdoor Area Inspection Policy
- Simmons Park Memorial Management Policy
- Snow and Ice Management Policy

 Okehampton Town Council	<h2 style="margin: 0;">Okehampton Town Council</h2> <h3 style="margin: 0;">Cemetery Schedule of Fees and Payments – April 2024</h3>
--	---

FEES AND PAYMENTS are settled under Section 34 of the Burial Act by Okehampton Town Council, effective on and from 1st April 2024. Cheques are to be made payable to Okehampton Town Council.

1.	INTERMENTS	Resident	Non-Resident
a.	For interment of a coffin in an earthen plot, at single or double depth	£200.00	£400.00
b.	For interment of a coffin in an earthen plot, at single or double depth, for a person whose age at time of death did not exceed 18 years	No charge	£50.00

c.	For interment of cremated human remains in a burial plot If cremated remains are interred into a full grave space, no further coffin burials can ever take place within that plot	£120.00	£300.00
d	For interment of cremated human remains in a cremation plot	£100	£200
e	Scattering of ashes in the Garden of Remembrance	£40	£80
The fees cover Okehampton Town Council's administration and associated costs. They do not include any excavation work which should be arranged and paid for through the undertaker, or service fees.			

2.	EXCLUSIVE RIGHTS OF BURIAL IN EARTHEN GRAVES	Resident	Non-Resident
a.	Purchase of single plot (up to two burials deep)	£500.00	£1,225.00
b.	Purchase of a single plot (up to two burials deep) for a person whose age at time of death did not exceed 18 years	£0.00	£50.00
c.	Purchase of a plot for person who age at the time of death did not exceed 12 months	£0.00	£50.00
d.	Purchase of a cremation plot (up to two cremations deep)	£200.00	£400.00
e.	Extension of Grant for a further 10 years	£170.00	£808.00
f.	Assignment to second party	£75.00	£188.00
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The purchase of a plot means that you purchase the exclusive right of burial of a grave but do not actually buy the land that the grave occupies. Purchase means that no burials can take place in that plot without your permission and it gives you the right to purchase a permit to place a memorial on the grave. You may purchase a grave in Okehampton Cemetery for a period of 30 years. At the end of the lease the rights to the grave will revert to the Council, and any memorial on the grave may be removed. Leases may be extended during their lifetime but can only be extended back to the original 30 years. The fee shall be applicable to the residency applying at the time the extension is applied for, not the residency at the time of the original application. In the case of the person being under the age of 18 years at the time of death, as at b. and c., the full fee for an extension of the grant applies. A grave can be purchased for the reservation of future burials Fees include the charge for the Certificate of Grant. The Council cannot guarantee the suitability of a plot to be used for multiple interments. 			

3.	MEMORIAL STONES AND INSCRIPTIONS	Resident	Non-Resident
a.	Memorial Stone or Scroll Book (not exceeding 0.91m high x 0.61m wide (3ft x 2ft))	£140.00	£350.00
b.	Tablet (not exceeding 0.48m x 0.48m (1½ ft x 1½ ft))	£60.00	£150.00
c.	Removal of memorial stone for the reopening of a grave or addition of a subscription	£0.00	£0.00
d.	Plaque for Garden of Remembrance (provided by OTC)	£30	£60
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fees include the first and subsequent inscriptions which are to be arranged by the purchaser Memorial stones and scrolls are not permitted to be placed on cremation plots. Memorial stones on a child's plot must not exceed 0.61m high x 0.48m wide (2ft x 1½ ft) Tablets must lie flush with the grass In order to apply for a permit to place a memorial on a grave, exclusive right of burial must have been purchased Permission must be sought from the Council for removal of the memorial stone for any purpose 			

4.	OTHER CHARGES	Resident	Non-Resident
a.	Search Fees (for burials within Okehampton Town Council's Cemetery only)	£10.00	£25.00
Records prior to 1 st April 2021 are provided from information recorded in the Burial Register by Northmoor Team Ministry who were responsible for the burials prior to that date			

5.	DEFINITIONS AND NOTES
----	-----------------------

a.	A Resident is someone who pays their council tax in the civil parish of Okehampton Town (not necessarily those who have an Okehampton postcode) unless they have moved to a Residential/Nursing Home indefinitely from an Okehampton Town address, in that case that they are a parishioner until death. Proof of previous address may be requested.
b.	Coffins made from biodegradable materials only are accepted. Non-standard coffins may incur an additional fee.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Okehampton Town Council
Town Hall
Fore Street
Okehampton
EX20 1AA

01837 53179

cemetery@okehampton.gov.uk

www.okehampton.gov.uk



Okehampton Town Council

Okehampton Town Council Cemetery Rules and Regulations

Okehampton Town Council welcomes visitors to the Cemetery at All Saints Church and asks that visitors respect the peace and dignity of the facilities as well as other users. This is a communal space for quiet reflection and remembering loved ones. We thank you in advance for your consideration.

Please make yourself familiar with the regulations and ask a member of Council staff if there is any aspect on which you require further clarification. Through the rules and regulations, we aim to provide a balance between individual rights and information and the need to regulate for a safe, tidy and dignified environment with respect for the bereaved and visitors to the Cemetery. Please be aware that the ground surface can be uneven and we ask for your safety that you wear appropriate footwear when visiting. This is a burial area with only one hard standing path and has no hand rails or mobility aids provided and so visitors should recognise that they need to take care on uneven and possibly muddy or slippery ground. The cemetery is uneven in places and those with wheelchairs and mobility aids may find it a little difficult to move freely around the burial locations.

The newest Cemetery area at All Saints Church was purchased by Okehampton Town Council in 2004 and managed by the Northmoor Team Ministry until 1st April 2021 when it was brought in-house and run by Okehampton Town Council under the Local Authorities Cemeteries Order 1977.

These Regulations have been approved by the Town Council in respect of the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order (LACO) 1977 and will subsequently be updated as required. Copies may be obtained from the Town Council Office, Town Hall, Fore Street, Okehampton, EX20 1AA, or from the Town Council website at www.okehampton.gov.uk

Okehampton Town Council is committed to providing excellent customer care and maintenance standards. Our professional, committed and dedicated staff are more than pleased to assist, you need only ask.

Hours of Opening

The Cemetery will be open to the public daily throughout the year however, please be aware that at certain times access to individual graves may be restricted, for instance when an adjacent grave is being dug. Any disturbance will be kept to a minimum. Okehampton Town Council reserves the right to close all or part of the Cemetery at any time and without prior notice in the interest of public safety. Such closures will be published on the noticeboard situated at the entrance to the Cemetery and on the Council website, www.okehampton.gov.uk.

Office Hours

Okehampton Town Council Officers are available to assist you between 9.30am and 4.00pm Monday to Thursday, or by appointment outside of these hours.

Appointments can be made by calling 01837 53179 or alternatively by email to cemetery@okehampton.gov.uk

Hours of Interment

Interments may only take place Monday to Friday between the hours of 10am and 4pm, this being the time the last interment at the grave side must be concluded.

The time arranged for the interment is the time it commences at the graveside. If there is to be a service before the interment, sufficient time should be allowed for its duration and the journey to the Cemetery.

Notice of Interment

A provisional telephone booking followed by a written Notice of Interment form, provided by the Town Council, must be submitted to the Town Council at least 4 working days prior to an interment (exclusive of weekends, Public Holidays and the day of interment itself), except when an immediate interment under exceptional circumstances is required. **All information provided must be clear and completed on the Notice of Interment form in order to avoid delays or errors on the day of interment.**

The certificate of burial or cremation or the Coroner's Order for Burial and the appropriate fee must be submitted with the Notice of Interment form wherever possible. The burial may be postponed or delayed if the certificate or Coroner's Order is not delivered prior to the arranged time for the burial.

Fees

The list of burial fees and charges is available from the Town Council and by visiting www.okehampton.gov.uk. All fees and charges must be paid upon submitting the Notice of Interment. Fees are payable either via card payment (in person only), BACS or by cheque, made payable to Okehampton Town Council. Receipts for all payments will be given to the account holder.

Grave Spaces

The depth of every grave is controlled by the Town Council. No grave shall be deepened after the first interment. All coffins or other receptacles are interred in accordance with Part 1 Schedule 2 of the Local Authorities Cemetery Order (LACO), 1977.

No grave shall be excavated until verified and a grid identifying the location has been provided by a member of Town Council staff. Contracted grave diggers organised by funeral directors shall adhere to the Town Council's Code of Safe Working Practice which is

available from the Council Office or via the Town Council's website. Funeral directors must notify the Town Council of all arranged grave digging.

Grave Rights

A Grant of Exclusive Right of Burial (EROB) may be purchased at any time. An Exclusive Right of Burial is currently granted for a period not exceeding 30 years from the date of purchase.

The Exclusive Right of Burial can be issued in the names of up to three people.

A deed for the Exclusive Right of Burial will be issued to the purchaser/s of the grave upon payment of the appropriate fee. The Town Council's records contain the details of the registered grave owners; however, it is important that the grave owners keep safe their Exclusive Right of Burial deed. Possession of the deed does not in itself signify ownership of the Exclusive Rights.

When an interment is not that of the deed holder, consent in writing¹ from the deed holder(s) is required on the Notice of Internment form prior to the interment taking place.

Ownership of the Exclusive Right of Burial can be transferred either during the owner's lifetime or after their death. Transfer of the Exclusive Right of Burial from the living owner(s) to another individual(s) is done so upon completion of an Assignment Form.

The Exclusive Right of Burial may be transferred on the death of the registered owner to the person or persons entitled to it. In order to establish grave ownership, the person or persons wishing to take up ownership must be able to produce a Grant of Probate or Letters of Administration. If these legal documents have not been applied for or issued, then ownership may be transferred to the executor by Statutory Declaration.

A transferred Exclusive Right of Burial is only valid if it has been registered and acknowledged by the Town Council.

Where no Exclusive Right of Burial exists the Town Council has the right to use unpurchased graves, that have sufficient depth, for further interments. No previous interments will be disturbed in such circumstances.

Funerals

The conduct of all funerals within the Cemetery is subject to the control of the Town Council. Coffins made from biodegradable materials only are accepted. Non-standard coffins may incur an additional fee.

After the interment the grave will be backfilled and any floral tributes will be respectfully placed on the grave.

The Town Council reserves the right to place soil on the graves next to those which are being opened without any prior notice. The soil will be removed immediately after the interment and the grave will be restored to its previous condition. Any work completed will be done in a respectful and sensitive manner.

Cremated Remains

Scattering of ashes is only permitted on the scattering lawn at the far end of the Cemetery. Please do not scatter ashes in other areas of the cemetery or attempt to bury them yourself.

¹ In writing must include a "wet" signature, consent by email or with an electronic signature will be rejected.

Cremated remains left at a graveside or scattered without consent may be removed without notice. We are keen to ensure that the burial ground remains true to its ethos and it is important that the scattering lawn can be enjoyed as a place of peace and quiet reflection for the bereaved and future generations. As with all interments the location of the grave is recorded on the cemetery plans, and in the Register of Burials in Okehampton Town Council accordance with the Registration of Burials Act 1864, Births and Deaths Registration Act 1926 and 1953, Registration of Births and Deaths Regulations 1987. The placing of flowers and memorials on the scattering lawn is not permitted. The lawn itself is a natural memorial for all to appreciate. If you would like to have a memorial arranged, please contact Okehampton Town Council.

Exhumation

Once human remains or ashes have been interred, they can only be removed with the permission of the Town Council and a licence granted by the Secretary of State. Any disturbance of buried remains is deemed to be an exhumation.

Memorials

No memorial of any description may be placed on unpurchased graves².

Only the deed holder/s may place a memorial on a grave.

No memorial may be placed on a grave without the approval of the Town Council. Memorials must be placed in accordance with British Standard 8415. The maximum size permitted is 0.91m (3ft) in height x 0.61m (2ft) in width, see the Schedule of Fees and Payments for more information.

An application for a Permit to Undertake Monumental Work will only be accepted from approved monumental masons. The appropriate fee must be submitted with the application form.

Memorials may not be placed on burial plots for 12 months from the date of interment, this includes second internments. This is to allow the earth to settle and prevent possible damage to memorials. The cremated remains section is exempt from the 12-month waiting period.

Temporary memorials may be placed on graves until a permanent memorial is placed. There is no fee required. A temporary memorial is defined as one that is provided by the undertaker.

Any unauthorised memorials placed on graves shall be removed in accordance with Article 14 of the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order (LACO), 1977 and the cost invoiced to the family.

All new memorials must have the corresponding grave space number and the name of the monumental mason placed conspicuously on the reverse of the memorial.

Kerbstones, border stones or any kind of boundary marking are not permitted in the Cemetery.

² Burials that took place before April 2021 were under ecclesiastical rules and Okehampton Town Council does not expect EROBs to be purchased for these graves before a headstone can be erected. A statutory declaration signed in front of a solicitor will be required instead.

When digging graves in certain areas of the Cemetery we may need to respectfully move memorials and flowers from surrounding graves without notice, to make room for equipment. We will replace memorials in their correct position as soon as possible after the burial.

Prior authorisation is required to be sought from the Town Council before any work is undertaken, including the move of a Memorial to allow the interment of a second burial.

Maintenance

It is the responsibility of the grave owner to maintain the grave and memorial. Should it become dilapidated or unkempt through neglect, the Town Council will take appropriate action in accordance with Article 16 (2) of Local Authorities Cemetery Order (LACO), 1977. This could mean the removal of the memorial.

Records

The location of individual graves is recorded on the Cemetery plans, and in the Register of Burials in accordance with the Registration of Burials Act 1864, Births and Deaths Registration Act 1926 and 1953, Registration of Births and Deaths Regulations 1987 and the Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order 1977. The records are available to view by appointment.

It should be noted that records, including the Burial Register prior to 1st April 2021 were the responsibility of the Northmoor Team Ministry.

General Regulations

All visitors to the Cemetery must give due consideration and respect to other visitors, ceremonies and services that may be taking place at the time of their visit.

Grave owners must keep the Town Council advised of any change of address in writing, such notices must be signed by the registered owner.

The entrance to the Cemetery shall be kept clear at all times to allow the entry and exit of emergency vehicles, funerals, and visitors.

For their own safety children under the age of 12 are not permitted to visit the Cemetery unless accompanied by a responsible adult. Children must be supervised at all times.

Bicycles, skateboards or similar equipment may not be ridden in the Cemetery.

Visitors shall not sit, stand or climb on any memorial, gate, fence, tree or hedge in the Cemetery. Visitors should stay well clear of any monuments marked with fluorescent tape as they may be unstable.

We recognise that you may wish to leave tributes, therefore we allow pot plants and suitable artefacts to be placed at the head of the grave where they are at less risk of damage by mowing. We reserve the right to remove any articles placed along the length of the grave and place them at the head of the grave or take them to the Council offices for collection. We ask that vases are made from non-breakable material, as glass or ceramic pots will shatter during winter due to the freezing of any water in them. Broken glass or pottery presents a danger to visitors, staff and wildlife in the cemetery and any such items found will be removed and disposed of by Town Council staff without notice or taken to the Council Offices. Plastic flowers and astro-turf, gravel or similar are not permitted.

The planting of bulbs only on graves is permitted. Any other planting will be removed by Town Council staff and disposed of without prior notification.

Okehampton Town Council reserves the right to remove flowers placed on graves as part of routine care and maintenance. When funeral flowers and wreaths become unsightly, they will be removed for disposal. To avoid undue distress, bereaved family members who wish to retain wreaths or the attached memorial cards are advised to remove these prior to the third week after the interment.

All Christmas wreaths will be removed by Town Council staff for disposal during the last week of January. Bereaved family members who wish to retain wreaths or the attached memorial cards are advised to remove these prior to the above date to avoid any undue distress.

Plastic wrapping must be removed from floral tributes before being placed on a grave.

The Council shall not be liable for personal property brought into the Cemetery or for any damage or loss of memorials or memorabilia.

Photography is allowed for personal genealogy use only. Permission for all filming and photography for other purposes must be obtained in advance from the Town Council.

No alcohol is to be consumed within the Cemetery grounds.

Dogs must be on leads.

Visitors shall not interfere with Town Council employees working in the Cemetery, nor employ them to execute any private work whatsoever. Employees are not permitted to accept gratuities.

Those visiting or carrying out work in the Cemetery are required to follow these Rules and Regulations and any instruction given by Town Council staff.

Offences

In accordance with Article 18 of Local Authorities' Cemeteries Order, 1977 it is an offence to:

- Wilfully create any disturbance in a Cemetery
- Commit any nuisance in a Cemetery
- Wilfully interfere with any burial taking place in a Cemetery
- Wilfully interfere with any grave, vault, tombstone or other memorial, or any plants or flowers
- Play any game or sport in a Cemetery
- Enter the Cemetery when closed to the public unless authorised to do so by a member of Town Council staff

Okehampton Town Council reserves the right to update and amend these Rules and Regulations as and when deemed appropriate. Significant changes to the policy will be communicated as soon as reasonably practicable.

The Town Council can assist or advise on queries relating to the Cemetery. Please contact:

Okehampton Town Council
Town Hall
Fore Street
Okehampton
EX20 1AA

Recommended in the recent Health & Safety Inspection report.



External areas belonging to the council will suffer degradation due to intended and unintended use and this can also be exacerbated by general weathering. It is important we, as a council, regularly inspect the areas under our control to ensure they remain safe for the public to use.

Okehampton Town Council will keep a record of areas which have been inspected and this policy will adapt following the outcome of these inspections. If considerable damage is found during each inspection it may be necessary to increase the frequency and likewise if there is little or no damage the frequency will reduce.

Play Areas – Simmons Park

- There is an annual independent play area inspection undertaken by an accredited company.
- Weekly play area inspection - documented.
- Daily litter pick

Pathways and Car Parks

- Monthly detailed inspection for wear and tear such as potholes – documented
- Daily walk of the park – not documented
- Car parks should be checked weekly for potholes, general visibility of road marking and car parking bays – documented within the weekly check sheet
- Traffic calming measures are regularly checked for wear and tear on a monthly basis - documented as part of the weekly car park check
- The following items are readily available for cold weather action:
 - Caution slippery surface signs
 - Rock salt and scoop
 - Shovels
 - Warm clothing
- In snowy or icy conditions the Council's Snow and Ice Management Policy should be referred to.

Bridges

- Bridges will **be inspected annually** by external consultants and their report will be promptly acted upon
- General bridge surfaces will be treated like any other pathway with a weekly documented inspection
- Slippery surfaces will be treated accordingly

Riverbanks

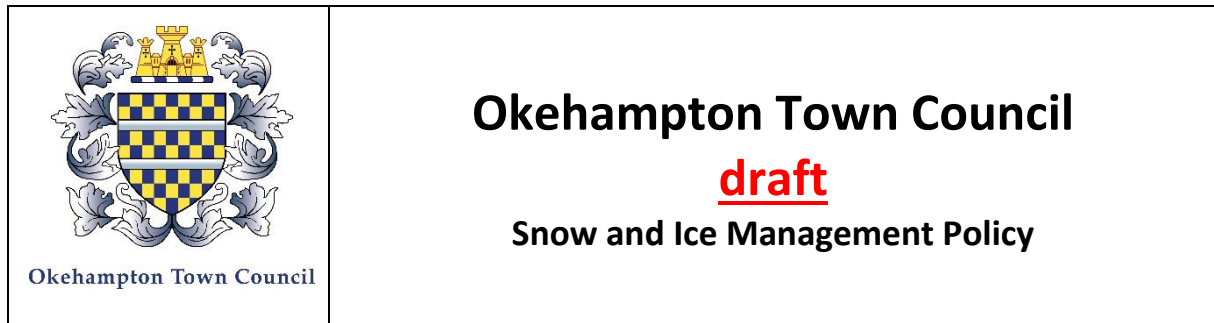
- Riverbank inspections are monthly and increasing to weekly during the summer months

Trees

- Daily inspections during windy conditions – not documented
- 3 yearly, or as advised, inspections by accredited persons - documented

Buildings, Benches and Bus Shelters

- Weekly inspections of buildings – documented
- Weekly inspections of benches within Simmons Park – documented
- Benches other than in Simmons Park inspected 3 monthly (quarterly) - documented
- Bus shelters when passing/or at least 3 monthly (quarterly) - documented.



In line with the resolution made by the Parks Committee on 11th February 2019 regarding the management of snow and ice within Simmons Park and other outdoor areas which are the responsibility of the council, this policy has been drawn up.

Simmons Park

Footpaths

On being advised of imminent snow/icy conditions temporary warning signage will be strategically placed at the pedestrian entrance, at both sides of the bridges and other prominent areas of the park, advising caution as paths may be slippery and untreated.

Being the area within the council's responsibility which has the highest footfall and most likely to be frequented by members of the public during periods of snow, the pathway from the pedestrian entrance gate to Chalet Treloar and across Jubilee Bridge into the car park will be cleared of snow and gritted, as much as reasonably possible and if members of staff are able to make their way safely to the site.

Grit spread on Jubilee Bridge will be kept to a minimum to reduce the risk of it washing into the river.

Carpark

If staff are able to safely attend the site, temporary warning signage will be strategically placed at the entrance to the carpark.

It will not be possible to clear snow or grit the carpark its access roadway due to staff numbers and if it is felt necessary the carpark will be closed. This being the decision of any member of staff who is able to make it to the site.

Clapps Wood

The pathway will not be cleared of snow or gritted as the council does not employ enough members of staff to undertake this.

On being advised of imminent snow/icy conditions temporary warning signage will be fixed to the gate at each end of the pathway through the woods.

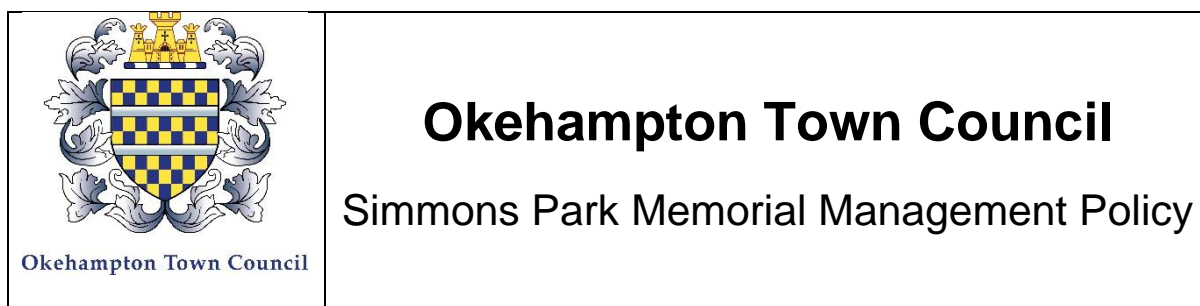
Fairplace Garden and Public Toilets

The pathway in front of and entrance to the public toilets at Fairplace and Market Street will be cleared of snow and gritted, as much as reasonably possible and if members of staff are able to make their way safely to the site.

On being advised of imminent snow/icy conditions temporary warning signage will be placed as near as possible to the entranceways.

Other Areas

It will not be possible to clear snow or grit, or place signage in other areas, including the skate park **and council parking area in Market Street**, that are the responsibility of the council, and these will be left untreated.



It is necessary to establish criteria for the permitting of the placing of memorials in Simmons Park in order to monitor donations so that the character and function of the park is not affected.

General Criteria

Applications for memorials must be made in writing to Okehampton Town Council, for **the** consideration **in accordance with this policy**, stating all relevant information regarding the form and type of memorial.

There are two types of memorial that will be considered; trees and benches:

Memorial Trees

- The species of tree must relate to the historical use of planting in the park not detract from the character and style of planting.
- There are a limited number of tree locations available in the park and only through replacements will new trees be planted.
- If a location becomes available a tree can be donated or a donation can be made to cover the cost of the tree and any other associated costs
- Requested donations of trees will be entered in a register and be permitted on a first come, first served basis when a suitable location becomes available
- Okehampton Town Council will maintain the tree for the first year to ensure successful establishment but cannot be held responsible if it is damaged or dies and would need to be replaced by the donor if so requested. If the tree is not replaced within 6 months, the location may be passed to the next donor on the list or replaced by Okehampton Town Council
- The donator must cover the cost of the plaque and method of fixing.

- All plaques must be made of bronze and fixed to the ground with an angle iron or similar fixing.
- Plaques should include the species name of the tree.

Benches

- Only existing benches can receive dedication plaques.
- Should a member of the public wish to dedicate a bench they must cover the cost of the plaque and the cost of the refurbishment of that bench, or another bench within Simmons Park that is in need of repair or replacement.
- All plaques must be made of bronze.
- Okehampton Town Council will be responsible for future maintenance and repair of the bench.

Staff Training – To consider Parks staff training requirements.

Course	No of Persons	Cost
Pesticides (PA1)	1	£160
Brushcutters/trimmers	2	£440
Chainsaw, Cross Cutting and felling	1????	£395
TOTAL		£995