Trowbridge Town Council

Working for your Community

Greener Strategy

UPDATE TIMELINE

Reference Number	Version	Owner	Approval Date	Review Date
55	V1	Director of Estates, Assets & Operational Services	November 2025	November 2028

Greener Strategy

A Sustainable Green Space Strategy for Trowbridge 2023 – 2028

Adopted: 2025
Review Date: 2028

What is a Greenspace Strategy?

‘A greenspace strategy sets out an authority’s vision for using its green space, and the goals it wants to achieve, plus the resources, methods and time needed to meet these goals’.

(CABE Space, Greenspace Strategies: A good practice guide).

The Greener Trowbridge strategy has been developed to with a particular focus on the needs and aspirations of Trowbridge, its

existing greenspaces and the forthcoming service delegation from Wiltshire Council to Trowbridge Council.
There are a range of issues to be considered as part of the Greener Trowbridge Strategy including:

- The different types of open spaces such as parks, woodlands and play areas
- Community engagement
- Staff development
- Making Trowbridge a more attractive town for residents, businesses and visitors to enjoy

Contents

Objective of Greener Trowbridge Strategy

Introduction

Why is a strategy needed?

Context

Scope of Strategy

Related projects and strategies

Issues raised by residents

Categories of green spaces
- Parks and Gardens
- Informal open space
- Outdoor sports facilities
- Natural green spaces
- Children and young people's space

Related projects and strategies to be considered in implementation of strategy

- Future High Streets Fund – Wiltshire Council https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/fhsf-trowbridge#:~:text=The%20Future%20High%20Streets%20Fund,and%20ensures%20a%20sustainable%20future.

- Green and Blue Infrastructure – Wiltshire Council https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/3853/Green-and-blue-infrastructure

- Nature Recovery Network – Wiltshire Wildlife Trust https://www.wiltshirewildlife.org/pages/category/the-nature-recovery-network

- Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy https://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/media/8861/Trowbridge-Bat-Mitigation-Strategy-summary-document-of-TBMS-for-planners-and-public/pdf/TBMS_summary_document_rev03.pdf?m=637842476566570000

- Trowbridge Recreation Strategy file:///C:/Users/m.jacob/Downloads/02%20Trowbridge%20Recreation%20Strategy%20and%20Visitor%20Surveys.pdf

References

- Leicester Green Space Strategy Greenspace strategy (leicester.gov.uk)

- Cheltenham Council – Sustainable planting Sustainable bedding scheme | Urban greening | Cheltenham Borough Council

- Grey to Green – Sheffield - https://www.greytogreen.org.uk/

- RHS In Bloom - https://www.rhs.org.uk/get-involved/britain-in-bloom

Objectives of Greener Trowbridge Strategy 2023

Objective 1: To develop a hierarchy of parks and green spaces, with a framework for prioritisation and resource allocation for their management and improvement.

Objective 2: To understand and meet the needs of the community in providing green spaces in the town.

Objective 3: To agree standards of green space provision which can be implemented across the town following the service delegation in April 2023

Objective 4: To ensure each ward in Trowbridge has access to local green spaces and play areas.

Objective 5: To identify ways in which Trowbridge Town Council can be more sustainable and environmentally friendly in its operations.

Introduction

All our residents need places where they can go to relax, walk, play with their children, take part in sport, experience nature, enjoy leisure activities or simply somewhere to go and sit to chat with friends. Trowbridge has a wealth of green space that includes parks, gardens, country parks, nature areas, woodlands, riverside walks, play areas, sports facilities, and allotments.

This Greener Trowbridge Strategy is an important step towards protecting and improving Trowbridge's green spaces and supports the Town's overall strategy of making Trowbridge a Greener, More Vibrant and Active Town.

The Greener Trowbridge Strategy was developed to prepare for the service delegation from Wiltshire Council to Trowbridge Town Council in April 2023, with a view to ensure that the management of green spaces is improved, and developed in a sustainable way, for all its residents.

Trowbridge offers a diverse array of green spaces and recreational amenities. These include the established Town Park and various equipped play areas, alongside nature-rich areas such as Biss Meadows, Paxcroft Brook Open Space, and Broadmead Pond. The town also features numerous informal open spaces and three dedicated allotment sites. While the existing range of sports pitches and facilities is utilized, efforts are underway to expand our provision of outdoor sports spaces and equipped play facilities. Looking ahead, the new Trowbridge Sports Centre, announced by Wiltshire Council in 2022, is anticipated to significantly enhance the available leisure facilities.

There is also unevenness in the quality of provision around the town. We want to ensure that all parts of Trowbridge have access to quality green spaces for both leisure, sport and for wildlife. To this end surveys of all wards needs to take place with consultation with residents and councillors to develop long term plans for all parts of the town.

While some aspects of the strategy needed to be implemented as soon as the service delegation took place some of the improvements in green spaces will take time, particularly in these challenging economic times.

Improving Trowbridge's green spaces will also require the support and commitment of the whole community, from the Town Council to community groups and individual residents. The Greener Trowbridge Strategy commits to a sustainable approach and a long-term commitment to providing the range of green spaces that all residents deserve.

Why is a strategy needed?

Parks and green spaces are integral to life in our town for a number of reasons:

- People pass by green spaces, walk through them on the way to work or the shops, or stop to enjoy them, offering places to relax and enjoy the natural environment away from the stresses of everyday life.
- They are places for children to play, and for sport and recreation.
- Parks and green spaces are one of the few free facilities available for residents.
- The significant health benefits of parks and green spaces are well documented - they provide an environment, which has been proven to improve mental well-being.
- Trees and woodlands help to reduce the effects of pollution
- Allotments provide the opportunity for more sustainable and organic living.
- Well managed good quality green spaces greatly improve the perception of an area can help bring visitors to the town and help attract investment from the relocation of businesses
- They can make residents feel good and have pride in where they live.
- Parks and green spaces offer an important environment for children to learn through play and social interaction, and they can offer an education resource to schools.
- Greenspace and green corridors provide habitats for a range of species, enabling a rich diversity of wildlife to thrive and enabling people to experience and engage with the natural environment.

Context

Trowbridge Town Council manages over 80 hectares of green space. To successfully manage the green space portfolio, it will be essential to review the strategy and management plans annually to ensure that future plans and budgets meet the needs of the town.

Wiltshire Council has historically managed the majority of the green spaces in the Town with the Town Park moving to the Town Council's responsibility in 2015. Wiltshire Council started a planned transfer of assets and services in 2017. Trowbridge Town Council proposed that rather than use a contractor they would take the opportunity to operate an in-house service with the intention of improving the service and make it more responsive to residents' needs.

Plans to move the management of green spaces to Trowbridge Town Council in December 2022 were delayed and should now move across in a service transfer from 1st April 2023. The Down Cemetery was also part of this service transfer but with a later date of 1 April 2024. The cemetery was then asset transferred to the Town Council in October 2025.

This strategy recognises that the delivery of this additional service by the Town Council will require action and additional funding to enable this additional service to be delivered. Some of these actions have already been taken.

- Increase in precept to cover additional costs of equipment and staffing
- Skills audit of staff to ensure sufficient horticulture and conservation knowledge
- Recruitment and training of additional staff to undertake greenspace management.
- Purchases of equipment in order to provide these new services.
- Consultation with residents about development and management of green spaces e.g. areas for wildlife, sport etc.
- Consultation with community groups to understand issues and develop management plans for key areas like Biss Meadows Country Park, Paxcroft Brook Open Space and others.
- Work with other partners to develop the areas around the River Biss and Town Centre – e.g. Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and Wiltshire Council Future Highstreet Fund.
- Work with community groups, local businesses and the Trowbridge Chamber of Commerce to develop the town centre into an attractive greenspace for visitors and residents to spend time.

- Audit and plan for litter and dog waste bin provision across the town (locations)
- Audit of play areas across the town and development of management plans.
- Audit of areas for possible new planting across the town e.g. spaces for tree planting, urban greening, etc.
- Request for biological records from Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Centre to understand what species are in our green spaces and how to manage area for them

Scope of the strategy

The Greener Trowbridge Strategy covers the whole of Trowbridge, and includes all publicly owned, accessible green space including allotments.

Trowbridge Town Council will manage some 80 plus hectares of publicly accessible open space across the town, including the following: (detail in appendix 1)

1 Town Park (including bowls club, tennis courts, mini golf, Basketball courts, pond)

4 Allotment sites

24 Play areas

1 Cemetery (from April 2024)

4 Local Nature Reserves/country parks

The River Biss runs through Trowbridge, and this provides a valuable green corridor through the heart of the town but needs development as some areas have been left unmanaged for a long period of time. The Future High Streets Fund project will restore and develop one section of the river to enhance the town centre.

The town also includes tracts of woodland, amenity areas, highway verges and 23 schools with grounds – consideration of how these contribution to Greener Trowbridge needs to take place and identification of how they can be supported to thrive and grow.

Once service delegation has taken place then a bi-annual review of this strategy with partners will be needed for the first 2-3 years.

Funding for green space development needs to be considered carefully as this will be key to achieving the improvements and benefits for the town. Sources of funding will include:

- TTC Budget
- Section 106 money
- Grants for sustainable planting and community projects to improve greenspaces. Officer time should be dedicated to grant search to help support this aspect of the strategy.

Related projects and strategies:

The Nature Recovery Network is in development through Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, and this strategy will be informed by this existing and proposed network of green spaces across the town to improve the interconnectivity of these spaces.

The Wiltshire Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy provide a framework against which the Greener Trowbridge Strategy can be developed.

The Trowbridge Bat Mitigation Strategy also provides an important reference document for development of green spaces around the town.

Key issues raised by residents include:

- The local importance attached to the provision of a variety of open spaces and sports facilities.
- The value attached to informal and natural green space for wildlife.
- Dissatisfaction with the levels of maintenance for open spaces, particularly in relation to cleanliness, litter, graffiti and dog fouling.
- Cleaning and maintenance of Bus Shelters
- Anxiety from local people about safety and security in both accessing and using facilities.
- Ease of access by foot/cycle for children and young people to community spaces and sports facilities
- The need for improved provision for children and young people, in particular for the older age range.
- The importance of a good network of footpaths and cycleways.
- Demand for increased and improved/wider range of sporting facilities in the town.

Categories of green spaces

Spaces across the town can be divided into 5 categories (see below) and we should ensure that we have areas in each category in all areas of the town (Sheffield City Council, 2006). These can be seen in the maps in Appendix 1 and the list in Appendix 3

- Parks & Gardens
- Informal open space
- Equipped play space
- Outdoor sport
- Natural greenspace

With the limited resources of the Parks and Green Spaces Service, not all open spaces can be of the highest quality, therefore, priorities and difficult choices will have to be made.

The easiest way to improve the quality of green spaces across the Town is to spend more money on them. However, the likelihood of additional resources from existing budgets is extremely unlikely in the current financial climate. The precept has already been increased in April 2022 to raise increased funds for supporting the green space management – this generates approximately £XXX per annum.

This strategy identifies priority areas - ‘jewels’ of the town - for investment and other areas that can be managed with the support of community groups.

Parks and gardens

The Town Council has managed the Town Park for several years and this includes a range of sports and leisure facilities. There is a need to upgrade some of these e.g. the pond and the mini golf to make them attractive to residents and visitors to the town. The renovation of the Bandstand and kiosk are key projects that will improve the park. The replacement of toilets was carried out in 2025.

As a ‘jewel’ in the town the park should be prioritised for investment and a management plan put in place to ensure that investment is made in ensuring the park has high quality mixed planting giving all year-round interest.

The town pond needs significant investment, and consideration needs to be given to options for pond in the future.

Safety and security concerns need to be reviewed and possibility of staff with specific responsibility for the park evaluated.

There is an established programme of events that bring people into the park – this can be considered alongside the development of the planting programme and other improvements detailed above.

Informal open space

There are many verges and informal spaces in housing areas, which also provide visual amenity, but may also be used for informal play or 'kickabouts'. Whilst these areas can provide visual and recreational value, their management and maintenance can be resource heavy. Where safe and practicable we are committed to leaving these areas as long grass to create habitats for wildlife and reduce burden of maintenance.

We are committed to identifying these areas in consultation with residents to ensure that informal play areas are not lost where safe for this purpose.

In some areas work with community groups can develop these areas as projects to create floral displays such as that on Leap Gate – Jubilee Meadow.

In others a natural and native meadow can be developed – this needs management over a few years for diversity of species to develop e.g. Paxcroft Brook Open Space.

Outdoor sports facilities

Maintenance and repair schedules of existing sports facilities should be reviewed to ensure that they are undertaken in a sustainable way.

Sports facilities and any construction projects should, where possible include sustainable energy and water sources and planting for wildlife.

- Wiltshire Council are currently building a new leisure centre for the town.
- Housing developments in East Trowbridge also show 3 sports pitches - these pitches need to have sustainable construction and maintenance plans to ensure they meet the council's aspirations for a Greener Trowbridge.

Natural greenspace

Many of the natural green spaces in the town are supported by community groups or other organisations. Trowbridge Town council should seek to coordinate the work of community groups around the town to ensure that the Greener Trowbridge strategy is achieved. Work with partners like Wiltshire Wildlife Trust is also vital for the maintenance of and management of areas such as Green Lane Nature Reserve.

Support by the town council for community groups needs to be in place as overreliance on community groups could bring interruptions to maintenance or variance in quality. TTC should work with these groups to develop agreed maintenance plans. The Town Council should have oversight of their activities. Groups may need support with equipment to carry out their work.

Development of the Greener Trowbridge committee, which brings together key organisations in the town, to co-ordinate an approach to nature conservation and delivery of Greener Trowbridge Strategy. The GTWP will give these groups and organisations a voice.

There are opportunities to create new natural greenspaces and habitats in existing open spaces, particularly in wards where there is currently an under supply of natural greenspace. A survey of all wards should take place to identify areas where urban greening, pocket forests and other green spaces could be developed in a long-term plan (5-10 years).

The improvement of existing greenspaces is important. Consideration must be given to the need for:

- additional seating
- location and supply of bins (A policy around number, location and type needs to be developed)
- signage
- tree planting (where appropriate).

We should provide environmental education training to staff and develop an outreach programme with local schools and community groups.

Children &Young People's spaces

The development and maintenance of these spaces need to be linked to other work and strategies of the Town Council e.g. Active Trowbridge. The importance of providing areas for play whether in a playground, sports pitch or an open space for outdoor exploration is vital for children and young people.

This strategy makes a commitment to ensuring there is provision of a range of spaces and facilities aimed specifically at children and young people. Appendixes' 1 and 3 show the facilities within the town for children and young people.

In addition to the specific play areas and skate parks/BMX track, there are open spaces such as Green Lane Nature Reserve, Biss Meadows Country Park and Paxcroft Brook Open Space. However, there are a lack of spaces specifically aimed at teenagers, and their presence in some of the existing play areas can be seen as anti-social by other users. Most play areas are designed for children under the age of 11 and this can lead to conflicts with local residents when teenagers hang out in these play areas often inadvertently preventing access to that play equipment by the children that it is intended for. Often young people feel there is no provision for them in the town. Working with young people to identify need and solutions should be part of a medium-term plan, and future budgets should include planned investment in facilities for this age group.

A review of all the play areas in the town should take place with assessment of the quality and function of each area. Research has suggested that children and young people want activities that present challenge and risk, and this needs to be reflected in the development and design of new and existing play facilities.

A possible opportunity includes the removal of smaller areas of play equipment, with a focus on investment in fewer but higher quality larger play areas. This could reduce costs longer term. New play areas in housing developments might also be better as larger play spaces and creating larger areas than numerous small areas.

We should involve children and young people in the design and development of existing and new play spaces, particularly in relation to creating 'risky play'. This can be achieved through community focus groups in each ward.

Working with the community

Trowbridge Town Council works with a number of 'Friends Groups' from around the town, they are all different, ranging from small informal groups to larger long-established groups who are active in fund raising and community activities.

The Greener Trowbridge Committee will provide a forum giving these groups a voice and opportunity to comment on plans for development and maintenance of green spaces around the town.

These groups can bring considerable benefit to improving open spaces, but to be effective they can require considerable support from Officers. This support might be advice, equipment, physical support or community grants.

Existing grant schemes should continue and support community groups where their works supports the development and maintenance of green spaces around the town. Budget should continue be allocated to these grants to enable these groups to be effective in the future. Consideration should be given to ringfencing grant funding for groups that look after green spaces and to encourage environmental projects in the town.

An officer should have oversight of community groups, current and newly established needs to ensure that groups are properly constituted, have insurance and knowledge and understanding to undertake their project. These groups should also be required to have agreed maintenance plan with TTC and support to deliver this if necessary.

Established environmental community groups in the town include:

- Friends of Biss Meadows
- Friends of Sensory Gardens
- Friends of Broadmead pond
- Trowbridge Environmental Community
- The Big community Grow
- Friends of Paxcroft Brook Open Space
- Friends of the Down Cemetery
- Trowbridge Volunteer Gardeners

Staff recruitment and development

It is vital to have the right staff to take forward the strategy.

- Carry out an audit of the skills and identify skills gaps and training required
- Allocate resources to develop an apprenticeship scheme.
- Adopt a pro-active approach to engage BME and women to encourage participation.
- Horticultural training for key staff or recruitment of staff with horticultural background.
- Use of local gardeners and designers to support aspects of development work as contractors.
- Work with local nurseries to develop capacity for propagation of own plants to minimise costs/develop own site longer term?

Partnerships

Exploring opportunities to work with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust on projects around the town which could focus on key areas such as River Biss.

Looking for other partners that will support development of green spaces around the town.

Community involvement

It is vital that we engage with the community to support the ongoing development of the strategy and management of green spaces. This might include:

- Park users
- Disability representative groups
- Black Development Agency
- Young People
- Allotment holders and Associations

- Sports people and clubs
- Event organisers
- Heritage Lottery Fund
- Natural England (formerly the Countryside Agency and English Nature)
- English Heritage
- Environment Agency
- Housing developers
- Utility companies
- Sustrans
- Wiltshire College – Lackham
- Farmers – local landowners
- Canals and rivers trust
- Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre.
- Other local environmental charities