



ELSWICK VILLAGE HALL GARDENS



ELSWICK VILLAGE HALL GARDENS

MANAGEMENT PLAN

CONTENTS

Section	Page Number
Foreword	
Section 1 Management Plan	
1.1 Acknowledgements	6
1.2 Purpose of the Management Plan	6
1.3 Responsibility of the Plan	6
1.4 Parish Council Policy	6
1.5 History of the Site	7
1.6 Site Details	9
1.7 Management of Facilities	10
1.8 Accountability	14
1.9 Resources	14
1.10 Educational Value	15
1.11 Context of the plan within the structure framework	16
1.12 The process of compiling the plan	17
Section 2 A Welcoming Place	
2.1 General	17
2.2 Good and Safe Access	17
2.3 Signage	18
Section 3 Healthy Safe and Secure	
3.1 Personal Safety	19
3.2 Inspections	19
3.3 Health and Safety	20
3.4 Dog Policy	22
Section 4 Clean and Well Maintained	
4.1 Litter and Waste Management	22
4.2 Grounds Maintenance	

4.3	Horticulture	24
4.4	Building and Equipment Maintenance	24
4.5	Vandalism and Graffiti	26
Section 5 Sustainability		
5.1	General	27
5.2	Waste Minimisation	28
5.3	Pesticide Use	28
5.4	Arboricultural Management	28
5.5	Village Hall	29
Section 6 Conservation and Heritage		30
Section 7 Community Involvement		33
Section 8 Marketing		36
Section 9 Summary		37
<u>Appendices</u>		
Appendix 1	Map Showing Location of Village Hall Gardens	
Appendix 2	Plan of Village Hall Gardens	
Appendix 3	Aerial Photograph of Village Hall Gardens	
Appendix 4	Diagram of Village Hall Gardens Management Structure	
Appendix 5	Display Panel at Entrance to Wildflower/Wildlife Meadow	
Appendix 6	Display Panel at Entrance to Community Orchard	
Appendix 7	Details of Areas of Councillors and Contractors Responsibility	
Appendix 8	Village Hall Gardens 2026 Action Plan	
Appendix 9	Village Hall Gardens 2026 Action Plan	
Appendix 10	Special Events Planned in the Park in 2026	

FORWARD

Elswick is a small village with a population of 1200 (855 on the electoral roll) and is situated in the heart of the rural Fylde plain, midway between the towns of Blackpool and Preston. The village is known locally as the 'Village of the Flowers' and competes every year in the North West in Bloom and Lancashire Best Kept Competitions. In the former competition, the village has been judged the Best Village in the North West of England on eleven consecutive occasions and has received the top Gold award fourteen times. In 2011, 2013, 2014, 2016 and 2022 Elswick was chosen by the North West in Bloom Committee to represent the region in the National Britain in Bloom finals, achieving the Silver Gilt award in 2011 and 2013 and the top gold award in 2014, 2016 and 2022. In 2016 the village shared the title of Best Britain in Bloom Village with Castle Caulfield in Northern Ireland but our proudest moment was in 2017 when The Royal Horticultural Society acknowledged the village's sustained year on year improvement in the Britain in Bloom competition by inviting us to compete in the top Champion of Champions category. Despite competing against Harrogate, Aberdeen, St Peter Port, Portishead, Oldham and Hillsborough in Northern Ireland, the village actually won this most prestigious title. In 2022 we were again successful in the national final receiving a Gold award and being judged the best in Bloom Village in Britain for a second time.

The village has achieved similar success in the Lancashire Best Village Competition winning the Medium Village category in 2010 and 2016 and being judged the overall Best Kept village in Lancashire, winning the Champion of Champions title, in 2018 and again in 2023. Last year 2025 the village was the runner up in the competition narrowly being beaten by Bretherton in the final. The village was also named as the cleanest place in the North West of England in 2010 and 2011, winning the North West in Bloom Clean Sweep award.

The jewel in the crown in the village is undoubtedly the Village Hall Gardens. The gardens and other facilities in the village are owned and managed by Elswick Parish Council but following our success in these competitions we were recommended to seek Green Flag status for the Gardens by the Head of Parks and Gardens at Fylde Borough Council Mark Wilde who is also a Green Flag judge. The Parish Council took up Mark's suggestion in 2014 and was successful with our first application. We are extremely grateful to Mark for his help and support over the years.

The Village Hall and Gardens provide enjoyment and recreation for many thousands of people throughout the year. This document has been produced with the help of all organisations that use the facilities and sets out a comprehensive plan for the site for

the next five years. It acknowledges previous studies and pulls together these and current issues and priorities arising from community consultation.

The management of the Village Hall Gardens is geared wherever possible towards self- management of the facilities by the user groups. This document records this and will remain live throughout the next five years, during which it will be reviewed at least annually in consultation with the user groups.

We strive to improve every year and since our last full inspection we have met most of our objectives listed in our 2024/25 plan including agreeing a lease with the junior club and providing a similar lease with the bowling club to enable them to rebuild their bowling hut. We have also replaced all the lighting at the bowling green and Multi User Games Area with LED lighting and rebuilt the bowling green surrounds. Much work has also been concentrated on our new Village Green which is proving to be extremely popular. Sadly, having gone years without any vandalism we are now facing some serious occurrences and we have, as yet, still to finalise the purchase of the six acres of; land which we intend to develop into an ecology friendly area with the assistance of the Lancashire County Council Treescape team who have already negotiated carbon offset funding for the project. The delay is due to the fact that the site has not yet to be finalised by the developer and this has had a knock on effect, delaying not only our planned fauna and flora pamphlet but also our plans for a permissive footpath linking the Village Hall site to the Village Green and the new six acre site .It is hoped that all three areas will in future be included in the Green Flag assessment.

Our village expanded greatly in the 1960s to accommodate the families for the nearby Weeton Army camp and although the army families have now left the village our village is continuing to change and expand with a number of new housing estates under construction. This constant change dictates the need for new facilities and priorities and challenges the Parish Council in its commitment to continually improve. In our quest we are grateful to the Green Flag inspectors for help and advice over the years and we try wherever possible to incorporate their ideas into our management plan.

Paul Hayhurst

Chairman Elswick Parish Council

SECTION1 MANAGEMENT PLAN

1.1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In compiling this plan thanks must go to the following for their valuable contributions.

Clerk to Elswick Parish Council
Head of Parks and Gardens Fylde Borough Council
Fylde Borough Council
Lancashire County Council
Elswick Village Hall Committee
Friends of Elswick Village Hall
Elswick in Bloom Committee
Elswick Community Projects Fund Committee
Lancashire Environmental Fund
Lancashire Greater Manchester and North Merseyside Wildlife Trust
Elswick Community Garden
Elswick Bowling Club
Elswick and Inskip Junior Football Club.
Fylde Bird Club
Blackpool Hedgehog Rescue Centre

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The objective of the plan is to sustain the continual improvement of the site. The plan sets out in detail the improvements that are needed and how these will be delivered over the next five years. It also provides a framework for the various user groups to continue to work together for the benefit of all.

1.3 RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PLAN

The overall responsibility for the plan is the Parish Council's although regular consultation meetings are held with user and other community groups throughout the year to ensure that the plan is delivered and to enable future needs to be discussed and priorities agreed. (see 2026 Action Plan at Appendix 8)

1.4 PARISH COUNCIL POLICY

The Council is committed to encouraging the self- management of facilities by user and other community groups wherever this is possible. This provides the following benefits:-

- The development of a sense of pride through a feeling that it is their facility.
- Further reduction in costs arising from self- help arrangements
- Greater care taken with the facility resulting in lower maintenance costs.
- Environmental improvements with user groups looking after 'their' facilities'.

- User groups having a greater input and influence in how the facility develops.
- Encouraging user groups to self- fund improvements to 'their' facilities.
- Deterring vandalism.

This arrangement has worked extremely well over many years and has allowed a small Parish Council with a limited budget to operate and continually improve facilities which are the envy of many surrounding villages and urban areas. The level of community involvement has been a major asset in securing grants from various organisations over the years.

The Council's pledge is to provide good quality facilities for the benefit of all at a reasonable cost both to the user and the council tax payer, whilst continually updating and improving the facilities in accordance with the needs of the community and the environment. Standards are maintained on the site by each member of the Parish Council having responsibility for overseeing an area of the gardens. (see Appendix 7)

1.5 HISTORY OF THE SITE

Most parks seem to have been created in enlightened Victorian times when house building was proceeding at a rapid rate to keep pace with the industrial revolution. Houses were often built close to places of employment with little or no gardens but large parks to compensate.

Elswick Village Hall gardens is a much more modern concept. In the 1960s the village expanded considerably in order to provide married quarters for army personnel based at nearby Weeton camp. More than one hundred new homes were built in Elswick for the married quarters for the barracks, doubling the size of the village almost overnight. The age of the new families moving to the village meant that there was a sudden influx of young children and inevitably the request was made at the Annual Parish Assembly for a playground for the children.

In those days things seemed to move much slower as it took the Parish Council several years to proceed with the request before the new playground was eventually opened on the current site in 1971. One problem was that the adjoining land was leased by the Council to a tenant farmer and it was only when the farm house on the site was condemned by the District Council health inspector that the farmer decided to relinquish his lease.

The land had earlier passed to the Parish Council in 1929 by Act of Parliament following the dissolution of the Poor Law. The village Tithe map of 1839, held in the Lancashire County Archives, records that the land at that time was owned by the Overseers of the Poor for the benefit of the poor of the Parish. It seems fitting that the land which helped to feed the people of the village over several centuries is now catering for the recreational and conservational needs of the village.

There was little further development of the site until the 1980s when the village approached Fylde Borough Council for a village hall to be built under the Community Programme Scheme. The purpose of the scheme was to get unemployed people back to work through learning new skills whilst working on the construction of community projects. The Borough Council agreed to the request and provided the bulk of the funding. The project nearly floundered when the original site fell through and was only rescued when the Parish Council agreed to allow the hall to be built on the site of the children's playground, with the play equipment being moved to one side of the hall.

The new hall opened in December 1984 and was an instant success, quickly becoming the village focal point that it is today. Soon the call came for a bowling green and Fylde Borough Council again agreed to mainly fund the project and construct it under the Community Programme scheme. A bit of luck was that the Borough Council was getting rid of two bowling greens in St Anne's and had the turf available. The green opened in 1988 and a bowling club was formed from the outset with over one hundred members.

In 1993 an application was made to the Sports Council for a grant towards a Multi User Games Area. (MUGA) The bid was partially supported by a sale by the Borough Council of a number of assets and the distribution of the proceeds of the sale in a windfall grant to Parish Councils. Unfortunately, the bid was unsuccessful as at that time the Sports Council had a policy of only assisting bids with a population greater than 7000.

Following the failure of the bid the Parish Council made representations to the Sports Council pointing out that their population requirement discriminated against rural communities and suggested that it should be amended so that assistance could be provided for projects in rural areas which would benefit clusters of villages where the total population exceeded the population limits. The following year the Sports Council amended its rules, as suggested by the Parish Council, and Elswick was subsequently named as the venue for further support, being the centre of a wide rural area. The bid for a grant for the MUGA was resubmitted and approved and the facility was opened in 1995.

The new MUGA generated a great deal of interest and use and in 1997 the Sports Lottery Fund provided a grant of £30000 to construct a new football pitch and changing rooms. The latter was built by the Borough Council using the successor to the Community Programme scheme.

In 2004 the village received a grant from Community Futures to produce a Parish Plan which resulted in a number of public meetings being held in the village and questionnaires issued to every household. Almost 50 % of the questionnaires were returned and the responses indicated that there was considerable support to improve the facilities on the children's playground and to introduce environmentally friendly projects.

In 2005 a Children's Playground Appeal was launched in the village and £6000 was raised in just a few weeks. A subsequent bid to SITA secured a grant of £40000 and the new playground opened in 2006 at a cost of £47000.

Elswick used to be famous for its orchards but now sadly none remain. Following a public meeting in 2010 it was agreed to examine the feasibility of planting a community orchard and a wildflower/wildlife meadow at the village hall site. Assistance was sought from the Lancashire County Council Countryside team who planned the orchard and provided a small grant for the Lancashire Wildlife Trust to plan the meadow. The team undertook considerable research to identify the types of fruit trees that would have been common in Elswick at the turn of the 20th century and sourced the trees for the village. A successful application for funding was made to The Lancashire Environmental Fund and the work on both projects was undertaken by the Lancashire Wildlife Trust and completed in 2012.

The fencing for the MUGA (Multi User Games Area) was also replaced in 2013 with grants of £23000 from Sport England's Inspired Facilities Fund and £5000 from the Local Strategic partnership.

Our biggest project to date, a Village Green and pond, was opened in July 2022. Following the opening of the Green we have been working with the Fylde Bird Club to provide new nesting sites for birds and with the Fylde Borough Council Ranger team, the Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside Wildlife Trust and other environmental groups to establish wild life habitats. In 2016 bee hives were successfully introduced in the orchard in a project led by a lottery funded organisation by the name of Urban Organics but sadly the bee keeper withdrew the hives at the start of the Covid pandemic. New hives were established in 2024 but sadly they were vandalised in 2025, It is hoped to re-establish the hives this year

The success of the Green has led the Parish Council to negotiate the purchase of a further six acres of land from a developer for £1. Whilst the purchase has been agreed, ownership of the land will not be passed to the council until the development is completed. This land is opposite the new Green and will provide a green corridor around approximately one third of the village. The developer has agreed to land scape the land and the council has set up a group of environmentalists to advise on providing habitats for wildlife on the land.

Whilst the Green is a few hundred metres away from the Village Hall Gardens the two areas will complement each other and it is planned to operate them together. Following a suggestion from the previous Green Flag judge we have held talks with the elders of Elswick United Reform Church who own the land adjoining the village hall and we intend to open a permissory walk way between the two sites and the new ecology area, when ownership of the latter passes to the parish council.

1.6 SITE DETAILS

1.6.1 Location

Elswick Village Hall Gardens are located on the southern edge of the village on the

Road to Roseacre and Treales. The OS Grid Reference is SD422380 GB Grid and the area of the site 1.82 Hectares. The full address is Elswick Village Hall Gardens, Roseacre Road, Elswick, Preston (see map, site plan and aerial photograph at Appendices 1, 2 and 3).

1.6.2 Attractions Available in the Gardens (see plan at Appendix 2)

- 1) Children's Playground
- 2) Village Hall
- 3) Car park and Gardens
- 4) Crown Green Bowling green
- 5) Multi User Games Area
- 6) Football Pitch
- 7) Community Orchard
- 8) Wildflower/Wildlife Meadow
- 9) Community Garden
- 10) Village Green

1.7 MANAGEMENT OF FACILITIES

There are seven members of the parish council, five of whom have a responsibility for a particular area of the park, overseeing any work undertaken and ensuring that standards are maintained. (see Appendix 7) The policy of the Council, as previously stated, is to manage the facilities on the site with the help of users and community groups wherever possible. This provides many permutations and variances in the management of the site (see Appendix 4) which are detailed as follows:-

- **Children's Playground**

The children's playground is directly managed by the Parish Council and maintained through a contract which the Council has with Fylde Borough Council's Parks Department. Under the terms of this contract the play equipment and surfacing is inspected monthly by qualified parks department staff and a report forwarded to the Parish Council after every visit. Many minor repairs are undertaken by the parks department staff who have the authority to close any items of equipment which are considered dangerous or which cannot be repaired during the team's visit. Any such items are immediately reported to the Clerk of the Council for urgent consideration. Despite the equipment being over 20 years old the children's playground won the Best Kept Playground in Lancashire award in 2023.



- **Village Hall**

The land on which the village hall stands is rented from the Parish Council by the Village Hall Committee at an annual peppercorn rent. The village hall is

managed and maintained by the committee which is made up mainly of representatives from the hall user groups including the Parish Council. Under the constitution of the hall (which is a standard model approved both by the Association of Village Halls and the Charity Commissioners) the committee also has a minority of elected members. The Parish Council has no involvement with the management of the hall other than through its representative on the Committee. The village hall received the Best Kept Public Building Award in Lancashire 2023.



- Car Park and Gardens

Whilst the village hall building is managed by the hall committee the land surrounding the building, including the car park and gardens, is the responsibility of the Parish Council. The herbaceous border fronting the village hall and flower beds surrounding the car park are planted, managed and maintained by Elswick in Bloom volunteers. The parish council employs a lengthsman to cut the grass around the hall and bowling green and keep the grounds swept and tidy. The Elswick in Bloom Group undertakes periodic inspections with the Parish Council and identifies projects which can be undertaken by the group. This includes painting benches and railings and doors on the store room and changing rooms. Every year a plan is produced following an inspection in October and this forms the work schedule for the following year and which is updated after each inspection. (see Appendix 8)



- Crown Green Bowling Green.

Every three years the Parish Council tenders for a green keeper and makes the eventual appointment with the assistance and input of the Bowling Club. (see contract at Appendix 12) Day to day management of the green keeper is then undertaken by the Bowling Club with any major problems reported to the Parish Council.

The cost of the green keeper is split evenly between the Parish Council and the Club and the Club then recoups its share of the fee through an annual membership fee from its members. A condition of this arrangement is that the Club does not have exclusive use of the green but allows casual users who are non-members to pay an hourly daily rate. Casual fees are collected by the Club and passed to the Parish Council at the end of the year with the Club's share of the green keeper's fee. The Club also maintains the flower beds and furniture around the green and the bowling hut. The arrangement is reviewed every year at an annual meeting between the Parish Council and members of the Club Committee.

The toilets in the changing room block are mainly used by bowlers and as such are operated by bowling club members who are responsible for opening and closing the toilets on a daily basis and cleaning them. The bowlers are at the green most days from mid-morning till dusk and are therefore ideally placed to oversee the use of the facilities. The agreement has many other advantages particularly keeping costs to a minimum,

The small bowling club pavilion is entirely managed and maintained by the bowling club who have refurbished the building in the last two years. The bowling green was judged the runner up in the Lancashire Best Kept Village bowling green category in 2023. The parish council is currently holding talks with the club with a view to the club taking over future maintenance of the green and to accommodate this the greenkeeper contract will be renewed this year for just one year.

- Multi User Games Area (MUGA)

The surface of the MUGA is constructed with a special fine rubberised sports tarmac which aids the bounce of balls. In the past two years the MUGA has been free to use but has encountered problems with moss.

Unfortunately, in heavy rainfall the facility floods from the football pitch and the agricultural land behind the changing rooms. We have attempted to install new drainage to cope with water from the agricultural land but it has not cured the problem and moss is a serious issue, necessitating the closure of the facility from November to March. The Council has purchased an industrial high duty washer and we are grateful for volunteers who clean the surface every spring. Further investigations are taking place to try to deal with the drainage but the surface of the MUGA is over twenty years old and is starting to crack. It will almost certainly require resurfacing over the next five years. (see Appendix 9) and the council is currently researching types and costs.



- Football Pitch

The football pitch is under the direct management of the Parish Council with a contractor appointed by the Council to maintain the pitch and cut the grass. Use of the pitch is leased to the local junior football team which undertakes some of the work such as fertilizing and lining the pitch as well as additional grass cutting for matches. The main grass cutting contract for the pitch is based on the grass not exceeding a specified height and grass cutting is scheduled, where possible, to align with team's fixtures. (see contract at Appendix 13) The pitch has suffered from drainage problems and used to have to be closed between November and March but this has improved considerably since the junior football club received £15000 in grants and with the help of volunteers drained the pitch last year. The parish council provided a grant of £4000 towards the project and the club continues to use self help labour to improve the playing area. All the hard work is paying off as

the club is an amazing success as it currently has one hundred and fifty eight members (girls and boys) and has eleven teams The football pitch was judged the runner up in the Lancashire Best Kept Village playing fields category in 2023. The opening of a dog exercise area a few years ago at the suggestion of a Green Flag judge has greatly assisted pitch maintenance.

- Community Orchard

The orchard (see photograph) opened thirteen years ago and one of our priorities this year is to restore the orchard which will be undertaken by Elswick volunteers. This will include restoring the path, introducing a new path and possibly replacing some of the trees. We also hope to continue the regular training sessions undertaken by Steve Edward a Lancashire County Council Countryside Officer. In addition we will be adding to the wild flower areas in the orchard and grass cutting will be undertaken in Spring and Autumn by the Village lengthsman, who is employed to keep the village hall site tidy.



- Wildflower/Wildlife Meadow.

Sadly, it has been a battle to maintain the wildflower meadow and unfortunately we have to admit defeat. Despite cutting back the meadow in Spring and in Autumn and repeatedly reseeding, couch grass has largely regained the territory. We do still have some wildflowers in the meadow and it remains a popular walk but we have now stopped trying to reseed it. An environmentalist judge from North West in Bloom suggested it would be idea to let the area go back to nature and this is what we are experimenting with, albeit in a managed way, keeping the pathway cut. In many ways the meadow is no longer required as we have introduced large wildflower areas in the new Village Green and we expect to do similar in the new six acre site. We are monitoring the back to nature experiment and will in due course consider the meadows future.

- Village Green

This is a new addition to our village facilities as it only opened in 2022 and it is hoped that it can be included in the Green Flag assessment when the permissory footpath between the Green and Village Hall Gardens is opened. The Green is owned by the parish council on land leased from the Elswick United Reformed church and is proving very popular. It was made possible by grants of £60000 from Fylde Borough Council and £30000 from the

Lancashire Environmental Fund. It includes a village pond and wildflower areas. The Council is working with several environmental groups such as Fylde Bird Club, Fylde Borough Council Countryside Rangers, The Lancashire Manchester and North Merseyside Wildlife Trust and a local environment committee to plan wild life habitats and future maintenance of the site. Grass cutting on the green is undertaken by the same Council contractor that cuts the football pitch

1.8 ACCOUNTABILITY

There are no local or central government organisations or bodies which are as accountable as Parish Councils. Each Parish Council must by law hold an annual Parish Assembly at which all electors in the Parish are able to propose propositions and vote. A Parish Council must also make its accounts available at the annual meeting and allow them to be inspected by any elector. They must also be approved by both internal and external auditors. Fifteen minutes are allocated at each meeting for residents of the parish to address the council and Elswick Parish Council goes even further with the management of the Village Hall Gardens. The Council meets with all community and user groups at least annually. The Council also regularly distributes a Parish Council newsletter (The Elswickian) to every household in the Parish and publishes articles and updates in a monthly community magazine (InFocus). A Parish Plan was compiled in 2005 from returned questionnaires which had been distributed to all householders and this was updated in 2015. This document recorded an 83% satisfaction rating for the park and provides a clear insight into the support for further leisure requirements in Elswick such as the proposed new green which was supported by 62% of respondents in 2005 and 68% in 2015. It is intended to update the plan again in 2026.

1.9 RESOURCES

The clear community involvement and ownership has proved to be a major asset over the years in attracting the grant funding for many projects in the Gardens as outlined in this document. The Parish Council assists with capital projects and provides the revenue funding for the maintenance of the Gardens with the exception of the Village Hall building and the bowling pavilion which are self-funded. The self-help schemes previously mentioned, and the support from community groups, are invaluable in keeping the revenue costs for the site to just £7000 p.a. This amount is approximately a fifth of the amount collected in the Council annual precept and equates to an average of £14 per household.

The overwhelming view in the village is that the Village Hall Gardens are well managed and a credit to the village. (83% satisfaction rate in 2015 Parish Plan update) Villagers enthusiastically endorse the Britain in Bloom efforts and provide generous support for fund raising efforts when money needs to be raised for new

projects in the Gardens. We are fortunate that Elswick is a very affluent village with an average household income above that of most other areas in both Fylde Borough and Lancashire.

1.10 EDUCATIONAL VALUE

The important addition of the community orchard and wildflower/wildlife meadow thirteen years ago catered for many needs, the more obvious being heritage and environmental. It also provided an opportunity to assist with the education of young people in these subjects. Although Elswick does not have its own school the village shares a school with its near neighbour Great Eccleston in Copp, a small hamlet 800 yards outside the village boundary. Copp School was one of the first European Eco Schools and has won many Green Flag Awards.

Sadly, COVID has changed many aspects of our life and whilst the school used to use the orchard and meadow for occasional lessons (see photographs) this has now stopped. Transport being one of the problems



All is not lost however in that a new group by the name Elswick Community Garden has started a community garden at The Village Hall park and holds events during the summer months, many of which are for the benefit of children. These have included a bee keeping demonstration, Christmas crafts for kids, a Christmas Wreath making demonstration, a Sunflower competition, a composting session, a bug hunt, a wild flower survey and a Garden Bird watch.

Stephen Edwards from Lancashire County Council has also held classes on how to prune fruit trees with some sessions involving students from the Myrescough Agricultural College. See photographs on the next page.



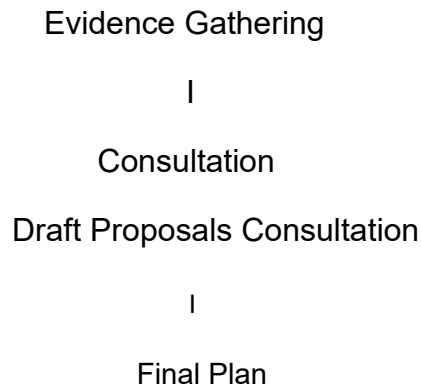
1.11 CONTEXT OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN WITHIN THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Although Fylde Borough Council does not make any financial contribution to the maintenance of the park and has no involvement in the management of the Village Hall Gardens, Elswick Parish Council works closely with the Borough Council and is consulted on Borough Council policies, notably the Local Plan and the Community Plan.

- **Local Plan**
The Local Plan provides an important framework for the future development of the Borough. The importance of the Village Hall Gardens and Village Green are recognised in the Plan which designates the site as an open space thus protecting it against any alternative use. There are several policies within the plan which have a direct effect on the site and which have helped to frame this plan the most notable being nature conservation and recreation.
- **Community Plan**
The Community Plan defines the Borough's corporate objectives and is divided into six themes namely inclusive community, enterprise and employment, promoting community safety, protecting and enhancing the environment, lifetime learning and health and social wellbeing. Each of these aspects has been considered in formulating this plan to ensure that the plan is complimentary to the Borough Council's objectives.

1.12 THE PROCESS OF COMPILING THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The process of compiling this plan has been a lengthy one involving all user groups of the Gardens and community groups. The process has been modelled on other similar exercises elsewhere in the Borough and is best summarised in the following flowchart.



SECTION 2 - A WELCOMING PLACE

2.1 GENERAL

Elswick Village Hall Gardens has a natural welcoming feel when entering the Gardens. The layout when entering the site gives the impression of openness and good planning with the children's playground to the left and the bowling green to the right of the village hall which is set back from the car park and is fronted by a beautiful herbaceous border. Instantly anyone entering the gardens is presented with a feeling of community pride as the standard of maintenance of the facilities and the lack of litter and graffiti are immediately evident. Visitors from other villages and towns often say that the gardens are just what their community needs.

2.2 GOOD AND SAFE ACCESS

The Gardens are within a few hundred yards from the village crossroads which is the centre of the village and where the new Green is located. The site is easily accessible by either pedestrians or motorists with a large car park catering for the latter. All the facilities are easily accessible to all including disabled users with the entrance to the village hall ramped from the car park for wheelchair and pushchair users. There are also disabled parking places on the car park adjacent to the ramps. The car park is well lit with a central light and there is lighting to the bowling green and multi games area. A cycle rack has been added following a previous Green Flag recommendation.

Much of the site has now been operating for over 40 years and many of the pathways are starting to need relaying with paving flags having settled. A programme was introduced several years ago to relay flags and this has now developed into a continuous operation with sections re-laid every year. Paving flags in front of the village hall have been re-laid together with those on the side of the bowling green adjacent to the bowling cabin and in front of the changing rooms and the MUGA. Particular emphasis is placed on ensuring good and safe access when the Parish council undertakes site inspections and such work is prioritised with any serious problems undertaken immediately.

2.3 SIGNAGE

Until the opening of the community orchard and wildflower/wildlife meadow the signage on the village hall site was reasonably adequate. All the facilities on the site were visible on entering the gardens and most people visiting the site were locals or from neighbouring villages. The addition of the meadow and orchard necessitated a rethink as they are remote from the village hall car park and are generating a number of visitors.

To remedy this the parish council has erected a sign at the village crossroads directing people to the village hall and gardens. In the gardens the council also erected a new notice board and directional signs for the meadow/community orchard. The orchard and meadow are already well served by excellent information signs at their respective entrances. (see Appendices 5 and 6)

The notice board provides details of contact details for the bowling green and other facilities on the site. It also contains information regarding organisations that use the facilities and is used to advertise special events (see 2026 events plan at Appendix 10) Following a recommendation from a previous Green Flag



inspection a further noticeboard has been erected on the wall of the pavilion opposite the MUGA and contains information about the Green Flag award. There are numerous seats scattered around the Village Hall



Gardens strategically sited to enable people to follow the bowling, keep an eye on their children on the playground or simply watch the world go by.

These are all maintained on an annual basis by volunteers organised by the Parish Council. (see photographs of renovating benches around the bowling green).

SECTION 3 HEALTHY SAFE AND SECURE

3.1 PERSONAL SAFETY IN THE GARDENS

We are very fortunate that Elswick is a very low crime area with only one or two minor crimes reported every year. The Village Hall Gardens are even safer with just one recorded crime (a drug user) in the past eighteen years. The self-management policy on the site is clearly a major factor in achieving this safe environment as people take a pride and ownership of the facilities and are less inclined to turn a blind eye to anti- social activity. Nevertheless, we cannot be complacent. Before the self- management arrangements were introduced the site suffered vandalism problems with vandalism costing the community £3000+ in the village in the early 1990s. CCTV cameras were installed at the time and had a beneficial effect but it was only when the self- management policies were introduced that the problems were eliminated. The CCTV cameras are still operating on the site and have recently been refurbished and updated but are not monitored and are very rarely accessed. The regular meetings that the Parish Council holds with users and community groups enables potential problems to be foreseen and eliminated before they become real issues. The police rarely attend parish council meetings as there is nothing that concerns them as it is several years since a crime has been reported to them.

Byelaws are in place on the site to protect the personal safety of users by ensuring that dangerous practices such as climbing trees and fences, playing ball games in the car park and riding bikes on footpaths are prohibited. Members of the Parish Council regularly monitor this and issue warnings to occasional offenders.

Toilets are available on site and open most hours. They are mainly used by bowlers who are responsible for opening them up and cleaning them and locking them at night. A defibrillator maintained by volunteers is affixed to the village hall in full view of anyone using the site and emergency numbers are listed in the noticeboard.

3.2 INSPECTIONS

The Parish Council as a body undertakes two inspections of the site each year and has completed risk assessments for each all of the facilities. (see example risk assessment for the new green at appendix 11) These are regularly reviewed. The Council has no technical staff or technical expertise and therefore has a contract with

Fylde Borough Council under which the Borough Council parks staff are responsible for inspecting and carrying out minor repairs to the Multi User Games Area and the play equipment on the children's playground. Following each visit the parks staff prepare a report which is considered by the Parish Council at its next meeting. If any urgent repairs are required, that cannot be completed by the parks staff, the item of equipment is taken out of use.

3.3 HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Parish Council employs no direct labour on the site other than the village lengthsman who empties the bins. All other work on the site is undertaken by contractors who must tender for the work. In tendering for the work contractors must provide the Council with a copy of their Public Liability insurance, risk assessments for the work to be undertaken and method statements. Successful contractors must also provide their own equipment and personal protection equipment and ensure that their personnel are trained in its use. The contractor must employ a safe system of working, bearing in mind that by definition the work will entail working in a public area and will also involve members of the public going about their normal routines.

Specific terms of the contract which contractors must agree to are -:

- I) The Contractor must promptly notify the Council of any health and safety hazards which may arise
- ii) While on the premises, the Contractor must comply with any health and safety measures implemented by the Council in respect of Staff and other persons working there.
- iii) The Contractor must notify the Council immediately in the event of any incident occurring in the performance of its obligations under the Contract on the premises where that incident causes any personal injury or damage to property which could give rise to personal injury.
- iv) The Contractor must comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and any other acts, orders, regulations and codes of practice relating to health and safety, which may apply to Staff and other persons working on the premises in the performance of its obligations under the contract.

Whilst the Council does not exercise any formal inspections of contractors, members of the Council and the Clerk are frequent visitors to the site and any non-adherence compliance of these conditions would be reported to the clerk who would require the contractor to provide an immediate satisfactory explanation failing which the contract would be suspended.

Volunteers working on the site are all given Health and Safety instructions as part of their training before working on the site and the Parish Council holds public liability insurance and insurance covering any injuries to the volunteers.

3.4 Dog Policy

Dog walking is a popular activity within the Gardens. Dogs are allowed to be walked in all areas except the meadow and orchard subject to dog owners removing any faeces. All dogs must be on a lead and owners are encouraged to use the dog exercise area. Talks have been held with the Borough Council's environmental health officers and it is intended that dog exclusion orders will be introduced for the football pitch when the new land is made available to the Council following the construction of the housing estate opposite to the Green.

Dog waste bins are provided and emptied regularly by the village lengthsman. Dog fouling is not a problem in the Gardens as dog owners like all other users treat the Gardens with respect and there have even been reports of some dog owners cleaning up after other less responsible dog owners. If dog fouling ever becomes a problem the Borough Council Dog Welfare Officers will be brought in to deal with the situation.

The dog welfare service is very active within many other parks and open spaces in the Borough. In the event of members of the public reporting dog fouling issues the Borough Council aims to remove the faeces within 24hrs of notification. The Dog Welfare Officer then investigates the issue. Luckily this service has never been required in the Village Hall Gardens although bylaws are in place if failure to remove faeces becomes a problem.

Dogs are excluded from the orchard and wildflower/wildlife meadow in order to protect and encourage wildlife and for this purpose these two areas have been fenced and gated.

SECTION 4 - CLEAN AND WELL MAINTAINED

4.1 LITTER AND WASTE MANAGEMENT

Elswick takes great pride in the fact that the village was judged the cleanest place in the North West of England, winning the Clean Sweep Award in the North West in Bloom Competition in successive years 2010 and 2011. A great deal of the success, and that in the Lancashire Best Kept Village Competition, with the village having won the title twice in the past seven years (2018 and 2023) and being runner up in 2025, is due to the Village Hall Gardens where the judges could find no litter.

The Parish Council has an agency agreement with Fylde Borough Council under which the Borough Council provides a grant each year to the Parish Council for Amenity Cleaning within the Parish. This arrangement has operated for over twenty years and works extremely well. It enables the Parish Council to employ a local lengthsman to undertake the work and manage it locally without the on costs which the Borough Council incurs. The result is more money is spent on litter picking and sweeping rather than manager's salaries, ensuring a cleaner environment at a lower cost to the Borough Council and Council Tax payer. In Elswick our lengthsman is so keen and, takes a real pride in his work with a passion for keeping the village clean which is respected by all and has a real positive effect on everyone in the community. So much so that we have had to abandon our annual community litter picks as we don't find any litter.

A few years ago, we built a second compost heap which was constructed on the site following recommendations by the previous Green Flag judge. Apart from the village compost heaps there are no recycling facilities on the site and the Village Hall Committee therefore requires users to take their litter home to recycle it. This works well and reduces the cost of trade waste collections. The Parish Council's litter bins on the site double as dog fouling receptacles. These are inspected daily and emptied as required.



The management of the green waste and arising's is described in the sustainability section. All green waste is kept on site, composted and used as soil conditioner in the beds. One innovative recycling initiative which the parish council undertakes each year is the collection of Christmas trees in January. These are planted out' in the dunes at St Anne's by volunteers to stabilise the dunes and to protect the flora and fauna. (see photograph).

4.2 GROUNDS MAINTENANCE

As already outlined in the management plan grounds maintenance on the site is undertaken by contractors. Rather than appointing one overall contractor our experience is that splitting the work ensures that contracts can be taken up by individuals rather than companies. This keeps costs down and produces better results. It is also self- policing as the work undertaken on the site can be seen by everyone including Parish Council members who frequently use the village hall and Council offices for meetings. Any problems with any contracts are dealt with by the Council Clerk and reported to the next meeting of the Parish Council.

The following are the contracts currently operating on the site-:

Grass cutting – football pitch (see Appendix 13)

Bowling Green maintenance (see Appendix 12)

Equipment Maintenance – children's playground and MUGA (Fylde Borough Council)

Septic Tank Maintenance

Most of these contracts have provision for quality and timing requirements. I.e. the grass cutting contracts specify the maximum height that must not be exceeded before the grass is cut. The success of the village in both the Best Kept Village and Britain in Bloom competitions over many years is testimony to the standards achieved as the Village Hall Gardens are an integral part of the village's entry in both competitions. All contracts are subject to tender and operate for limited periods with none of them exceeding three years in duration although the Council is able to extend the contract periods where required. Copies of all the contracts are held by the Clerk of the Council.

4.3 HORTICULTURE



The floral displays in the Village Hall Gardens are an important feature. Nine years ago, the council spent £5000 revamping the main village hall bed and creating a herbaceous border. The bed was designed by a member of the Lytham in Bloom committee Trevor Mackay, who we had met through our involvement in the Britain in Bloom competition. Trevor not only designed the bed but also supervised the planting which was undertaken by a dozen or so

Elswick in Bloom volunteers. The maintenance of the bed has since been taken over by the Women's Institute gardening club and some of the Elswick volunteers and has never looked better. (see photograph)



The bowling green gardens (see left) have been entirely planted and maintained by volunteers, largely recruited from the bowling club by a former Elswick in Bloom Committee member, Mr Russell Taylor who has used mainly permanent planting. (see photograph)

4.4 BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

The problem with many Parks and Gardens is that such facilities are often the first to suffer when budgets have to be cut. Lack of maintenance often reduces the life of facilities and then there is no money available to replace the items. In Elswick we have introduced a policy to safeguard against this. We have set up a sinking fund to enable facilities to be replaced when they reach the end of their useful life. An example of this is the fencing which was erected around the MUGA. The total cost (excluding VAT which is reclaimable by the Council) was £37000. The Council understands that the fencing should have a 30year life and therefore has committed itself to contributing one thirtieth of the cost to the fund each year. These payments are increased every year by the annual rate of inflation. Similar arrangements operate for the resurfacing of the car park, the flag paths around the site, resurfacing of the MUGA and the septic tank system for the changing rooms. These items incur the major costs on the site and exclude the Village Hall which is separately managed by the Village Hall Management Committee and is able to attract grants for renewals. Playground equipment and playground safety surfacing is also excluded as the Borough Council replaces these on a Borough wide basis when required. In addition to the sinking fund the Parish Council also operates a planned renewals budget and a non-budgeted repairs contingency fund. The former amount is determined each year following an annual inspection undertaken by the members of the Council.

Special mention should be made of the invaluable maintenance work undertaken around the gardens by volunteers throughout the year, keeping costs down and ensuring that the gardens look immaculate at all times. Elswick in Bloom members with help from other organisations complete a number of tasks such as painting benches, railings and changing room doors.

4.5 VANDALISM AND GRAFFITI

We have been fortunate for many years that vandalism has never been a problem. We have found that keeping the area clean and tidy and litter free and the self-management policies promoted by the Parish Council has instilled a sense of pride in people. A feeling of ownership of their park has meant that people have chosen not to turn a blind eye to any anti-social behaviour and the site has remained vandalism and graffiti free.

Sadly, this state of utopia was probably always bound to fail. In the past two years we have had two very serious bouts of vandalism. The first to suffer was the bridge connecting the orchard to the meadow with the hand rails kicked off. This was followed a few weeks later with the bee hives being pushed over and smashed. Both incidents occurred in remote areas of the site and after dark.

We are now left with a bridge that despite the damage is still safe to use but the Parish Council is considering erecting a metal bridge. The future of the bees is also uncertain as the bee keeper is obviously reluctant to return to the orchard and is contemplating moving the hives to the new six acre ecology site. Unfortunately although the Council's CCTV system was upgraded last year it doesn't reach as far as the orchard. The Council is therefore considering battery operated cameras in the hope that the bees can return.

Five years ago, the Parish Council set up a vandalism and graffiti policy following recommendation from a Green Flag inspector and as such the incidents were immediately reported to the police. Thankfully the village does not suffer from any graffiti but if any should occur the Parish Council policy is to immediately remove it / Improvement

SECTION 5 – SUSTAINABILITY

5.1 General

The Parish Council is committed to reducing demand on natural resources and uses recycled products wherever possible. An example is the children's playground at the village hall. This was provided after a fund raising campaign in the village (which raised twice the money needed) and a grant from the SITA Trust. In putting out tenders for the work the Parish Council asked contractors to specify the percentage of recycled materials in the project and subsequently chose the company quoting the highest.

Similar consideration has been given to other projects in the village with stone setts used for flower beds and the meadow/orchard scheme where the setts have been used for much of the site furniture. These setts were rescued a few years ago by an

alert member of the Council who in his employment as an HGV driver visited Liverpool docks one day and saw them being ripped up to make way for a new development. He was told that the setts which had probably stood for hundreds of years were simply being dumped. He asked the relevant authorities if we could have them and they agreed, if we would take them away. The Council therefore hired a wagon and several volunteers converged on Liverpool docks and spent the day handballing them into the wagon. It is a sobering thought when walking through the meadow or the High St that these setts may have been walked on by slaves or emigrants to the colonies in the 19th century

The Council is committed to providing sustainable planting in the Village Hall Gardens where possible (i.e. the herbaceous bed and the bowling green surrounds) but still has to use bedding plants in some locations (i.e. along the perimeter fence). All such plants are bought in from an external supplier. The bedding tender document stipulates that peat must not be used. Other initiatives include overwintering of cordylines and canna lilies and the use of natural primroses instead of polyanthus in spring bedding in the village with the plants replanted in the orchard by volunteers after flowering. (see photographs)

Volunteers digging up natural primroses from one of the beds in the village after flowering



Volunteers replanting the natural primroses in the orchard

5.2 WASTE MINIMISATION.

Just as important as recycling is waste minimization. Elswick Parish Council operates two very popular compost heaps at the village hall site. (see photographs – old compost heap left and new facility right).

The original compost heap proved so popular that a second compost heap was built by volunteers two years ago. This follows recommendations by the previous Green Flag inspector that the original compost heap should be enlarged.



All green waste from the site is recycled here and the compost is used to fertilize the beds around the village and the Village Hall site. Whilst the compost heap is mainly intended for gardening waste from the Gardens, anyone in the village is free to use it and many do.

5.3 PESTICIDE USE

It is the Council's policy to only use pesticides where absolutely necessary. Where possible manual activities have replaced the use of chemicals e.g. hand weeding by volunteers instead of spot treating, and using mulches to prevent weeds growing. The latter practice has particularly been used in the orchard where it has the added beneficial effect of reducing possible damage from strimming.

5.4 ARBORICULTURAL MANAGEMENT

As a rural open space trees are extremely important to the Village Hall Gardens. Elswick Parish Council is committed to the preservation of all trees wherever possible and the replacement and addition of trees where needed. Most of the trees around the village hall building are comparatively young but those in the meadow are more mature. As the public constantly use the park it is important that the risk from falling branches etc. is assessed and action taken to minimize the hazard. Every five years the Borough Council's tree officer undertakes a full survey of site and also provides advice in the intervening period if any possible tree problems are identified. This survey is used to identify which trees need replacing or sites for new trees.

Sixteen semi mature trees have been planted in the Green and it is planned to plant several hundred more in the newly acquired land from the developer. The bulk of these are likely to be alder and limes as the ground conditions tend to be quite wet.

Over the past few years, the Parish Council has encouraged a number of tree planting initiatives around the village with semi mature trees purchased by the Council and others supplied by the Woodland Trust. As part of this initiative a number of semi mature trees have been planted by volunteers alongside the length of the football pitch to replace trees lost when the football pitch was widened twenty years ago (see photographs) Hedging has also been planted alongside the fences for the dog enclosure area and alongside the orchard fence. An additional sixty metres of hedging have been planted as part of the Village Green project and more is planned for the land acquired from the developer.



5.5 VILLAGE HALL

Elswick Village Hall was built 41 years ago under the Community Programme scheme and as such was built to 1984 standards, using the cheapest materials possible. The Village Hall Committee has therefore found itself in a catch-up situation over the years replacing materials and trying to become more energy efficient.

The hall, as has been mentioned earlier, is independent of the Parish Council being self- managed and funded. The land upon which the hall sits however is owned by and leased from the Parish Council. The permission of the Parish Council must therefore be obtained before any development is undertaken outside the hall.

Relations are excellent between the two organizations and the Parish Council is represented on the management committee. The original 40year lease for the hall expired in December 2023 and has now been renewed for a further 40 years at the same peppercorn rent terms of £5 per annum

Over the years the Village Hall Committee has received a number of grants from the Lottery fund and The Lancashire Environmental Fund which have been used to



refurbish the hall and to make it more environmentally friendly. These latter measures have included insulating the hall to current standards, replacing the lighting, fitting a more efficient gas boiler and double glazing and replacing the original urinal flush systems in the gent's toilets with a dual flush water saving system, which operates by means of an infrared sensor rather than a timer. These measures have considerably reduced the water and

energy use at the hall. The hall committee also encourages recycling by having no bins at the hall. Users are required to take any rubbish home and recycle any rubbish in their domestic recycling facilities. This works extremely well.

SECTION 6 - CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

Almost 100 years ago in 1916 a local author Allan Clarke rode on his bike through the Fylde plain and wrote a book about his tour which he named Windmill Land, as at that time virtually every town and village had its own windmill. The book is a celebrated account of what the Fylde looked like a century ago when agriculture was still labour intensive and life in the villages was just starting to change with industrialisation and the effects of the First World War. The book and a 1980's reprint are now much sought after collector's items.

One of the villages Allan Clarke passed through was Elswick which he described as a very pretty village with beautiful orchards. He also describes on his journey passing through lovely meadows as he meandered through the Fylde. Following the response to the Village Parish Plan which was compiled in 2005, the Parish Council decided to turn a piece of wasteland, which it owned at the southern edge of the Village Hall site, into a Community Orchard and Wildflower/Wildlife meadow. The intention was to try to recreate the sort of scene which Allan Clarke would have encountered on his travels and which has now all disappeared from the Fylde plain.

Gone are all the orchards which Elswick used to be famous for and all the farmland is intensively farmed with chemicals which has killed most of the wildflowers. Even most of the windmills in Fylde have long gone.

Whilst the Council knew what it wanted to achieve it didn't have a clue how to go about



it. After failing to secure a grant from the BBC'S Breathing Spaces Initiative the Council enlisted the aid of the experts and a number of meetings and site visits were held with Lancashire County Council's Ecology Department, The Lancashire Wildlife Trust, The Lancashire Environmental Trust and Copp School. Eventually it was agreed that the Lancashire Wildlife Trust would draw up plans for the proposed community orchard and

wildflower/wildlife meadow and that a bid for £15000 funding would be submitted to the Lancashire Environmental Fund with Lancashire County Council (£3000) and Elswick Parish Council (£5000) providing matching funding.

The plans were discussed, amended and finalised at a public meeting held in the village on March 2011 and we were notified at the end of the month that we had been successful. Tenders were sent out to contractors and the quote from the Lancashire Wildlife Trust was accepted. As wildflowers do not generally prosper in fertile land tons of top soil had to be removed. This proved useful in levelling the land for the adjacent orchard which required drainage work.

The meadow was seeded in autumn 2011 and proved to be very popular with users of the park from the outset. The council engaged the Lancashire Wildlife Trust to maintain the meadow for the first three years with a view to establishing a Friends of the Meadow group to take over from them at the end of this period. Sadly this arrangement was not a success. The council found that it repeatedly had to pester the Trust to comply with the terms of the contract in respect of cutting the meadow at the end of summer. The result



was that the meadow wasn't cut until the end of October each year and couch grass was therefore allowed to re-establish. Since then, the council working, with volunteers, has made many attempts to renovate and reseed the meadow but with



little success. Whilst we do still have several varieties of wildflowers in the meadow the profusion of plants that we had (see photographs) has largely disappeared and the decision has been made to experiment with the meadow being allowed to return to nature. This will, as previously mentioned, be a



managed experiment keeping the paths clear for the many walkers that visit the meadow and continuing our attempts to encourage wildlife. As well as the rescued rabbits we have seen foxes and deer in the meadow and following advice from the Fylde Bird Club have erected bird and bat boxes as well as two owl boxes. One in the dog exercise area and the other in the Village Green which produced three owlets last year.

Our volunteers have also started to create a spring meadow in the orchard having planted two thousand crocus bulbs. The council has assisted this project by replacing winter bedding polyanthus in the village with natural primroses. Each year in spring these are transplanted by the volunteers in the orchard and are starting to get established. In future years it is planned to add cowslips which are already present in the meadow.

In constructing the community orchard extensive work was undertaken with Lancashire County Council's Ecology Department to identify and track down suppliers of the types of apple, pear, and plum trees that used to grow in this area at the turn of the 20th century when the village was famous for its orchards.

Of particular help was Steve Edwards one of the County's Countryside Officers. Steve largely designed the orchard for us in the shape of an apple and we accepted his advice in incorporating a line of damson trees along the western boundary of the



site to protect the rest of the orchard from the prevailing winds. We understand that this was common practice in this area. Now that the orchard is established it is beginning to emulate the beautiful blossom display which Alan Clarke observed at the turn of the twentieth century.

Other heritage work which is being undertaken in the village by the Elswick in Bloom volunteers and the Parish Council is hedge planting. Two schemes are underway. The first is the replacement of ugly chain link fencing by hedging. Young trees are planted next to the fence and allowed to grow through the fence

eventually hiding the fence when mature. This is an on-going programme of work which was started a few years ago and which is now producing results in that hedging has now replaced the fence alongside the football pitch and at the village hall entrance in Roseacre Road.

Similar work is also being undertaken on the field side of the football pitch. This work is not simply designed to replace the chain link fencing but also to recreate the hedge that was there before the pitch was widened approximately 20 years ago. Further hedging (Beech and Hawthorn) has been planted along the fence surrounding the dog enclosure and alongside the fence between the orchard and the football pitch.

SECTION 7 - COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Wherever you go in Elswick the pride people take in their village and the community involvement is obvious. The fact that the net annual budget for maintaining the Village Hall Gardens is just £7000 speaks for itself. Costs are kept down and standards continually raised by a combination of self-management, assistance from village volunteers and organisations and community pride. Undoubtedly the village's success in Britain in Bloom and the Lancashire Best Kept Village competitions has done much to foster this as it has woken people up to the environment that they live in. When one person has volunteered to help, the next time they have brought a friend or neighbour and within a short period a small army of volunteers has grown. A public meeting was held on 31st October 2023 to assess whether the village wanted to continue with its volunteering initiatives and entering competitions such as North West in Bloom and the Lancashire Best Kept Village. The meeting was packed

and the decision to continue was unanimous with a further twelve people stepping forward to volunteer. Last year, with age creeping up on some of our volunteers, a similar meeting was held and a further thirty- two volunteers were recruited with the majority from the two new housing estates that have been constructed in the village,

Help is also provided by the following groups -:

Elswick in Bloom Volunteers
Elswick Village Hall Committee
Friends of Elswick Village Hall
Elswick WI
Elswick Bowling Club
Elswick Community Projects Fund

Many of the activities undertaken by community groups on the site have been documented in this plan. Physical evidence of the huge community involvement in Elswick is provided by the condition of the facilities available on the Village Hall Gardens site. The site is maintained at a very high standard on a shoestring budget thanks to the self- help of the many voluntary groups. In awarding the village the top national Champion of Champions title in 2017 the Chairman of the Royal Horticultural Society Britain in Bloom judge said that we had pipped our rivals to the post by our "can do attitude" and he continued "If I could bottle it, I could sell it because it's that sort of feel good factor. At this level you have basically got to be perfect and it was so near perfect an entry as you can get. It's clear that for the people of Elswick, Britain in Bloom is not only a competition but a way of life. The group's entry was fantastic, very well thought through and of the highest standard. To be awarded Champion of Champions is a tremendous achievement. Elswick in Bloom's many volunteers should be applauded for how they have turned their village round into somewhere that is clean, green, beautiful and a source of pride for the whole community".

All this community effort is managed by the Parish Council and the Elswick in Bloom Volunteers who meet regularly to coordinate and plan these activities. The lead parish council members also hold meetings with the other community groups throughout the year.

Keeping in touch with the requirements of users of the Gardens is not an issue in small parishes such as Elswick. Parish Councils do not suffer from the remoteness of decision makers from users that is often the case in large towns or cities. Elswick Parish Council meets every month and publicises its meetings in the village notice board, the online web site, the Village Hall and a monthly community newsletter InFocus. All members of the public are welcome to attend meetings and a time is set aside at the start of all meetings for members of the public to speak and bring issues or ideas to the Council. Once a year the Council is required to hold a Parish

Assembly at which all electors are able to take part proposing and voting on any notices of motion. At such meetings copies of the annual accounts of the Parish Council are made available for inspection.

Despite all this the Parish Council meets frequently with the groups using the gardens and encourages self-management of the facilities wherever possible. The Council monitors use of its facilities at its monthly meetings and is always open to



suggestions as to how facilities can be improved, used more widely or new features added. Examples of the latter are the meadow and orchard which were proposed at a public meeting following the publication of the Community Plan and the basketball nets on the MUGA which were requested by young people who met with the Council members on their annual inspection. The Council also holds public meetings when new projects are proposed (i.e. the new

Green) and operates stalls with the Elswick in Bloom Committee at events such as Great Eccleston Agricultural Show and the Artisans Markets which are held at the village hall (see photograph)

The numerous ways that the council consults with the community means that the Council is constantly listening and receiving feedback. Testimony as to the success of this process is not only provided by the village's achievements in the Britain in Bloom and Best Kept Village competitions but also by the number of organisations that have chosen to work with the village and in most cases also provide grants. These include

Lancashire County Council
Fylde Borough Council
The Fylde Strategic Partnership
The Lancashire Environmental Fund
Sport England
The Lancashire Wildlife Fund
The National Lottery
Tesco Bags of Help scheme

SECTION 8 - MARKETING

Elswick is a small rural village which is not on the tourist trail and marketing of the Village Hall Gardens must therefore be considered in this context. The Parish Council is however conscious of the fact that at one time The Sports Council provided grants for the Village Hall Gardens as it recognised that Elswick is located in the centre of a wide rural area with little or no leisure facilities. The village and approximately a dozen surrounding villages is served by an excellent monthly community magazine InFocus which is circulated to 6000+ households in the area. Traditionally the Council and other village organisations have recognised the circulation area of InFocus as the catchment area for the Gardens and have used the magazine as the means of publicising event and other activities. The magazine has been supplemented by regular articles and notices in the Parish newsletter The

Elswickian, the parish council web site and social media (Blooming Elswick) and by Parish and Britain in Bloom stalls at events such as The Great Ecclestone Show and Artisan's markets.

Whilst these vehicles will probably continue as the main means of publicising the Gardens and events the Council just two miles from the Gardens occurring. The Villages success in Britain in Bloom and the resulting publicity (see magazine articles) has prompted an influx of visitors who have come to see the horticultural displays

Elswick has also received national publicity during the last few years due to the



controversial method of gas extraction known as fracking. A proposed drilling site just two miles from the Gardens was refused planning permission in the next village of Roseacre and the government has since put an end to drilling for shale gas.

Following the announcement that Elswick had been judged Champion of Champions in October 2017 the village was featured in the national press and in both regional and national television.



Local radio also descended on the village for a number of three hour outside broadcasts and the Royal Horticultural Society has featured the village in several RHS publications. This has created a surge of interest in the village and prior to Covid we had numerous enquiries from people wishing to run coach trips to the village.

Although not a tourist destination, as such, the village has always enjoyed a steady stream of visitors due to being the home of Bonds ice cream which was renowned throughout Lancashire. The Council has for several years intended to work with volunteer groups to produce a heritage/horticulture trail leaflet in the village which would have been available from several outlets but primarily Bonds which served over 1000 customers on Sundays in mid- summer. Unfortunately, whilst the leaflet was in preparation it was announced that Bonds was closing with plans for a housing estate on the site. It was decided to postpone the leaflet until both the new Village Green becomes established and the ecology area, which is planned for the six acre site. The latter is an exciting ecological project which will add greatly to the leaflet. The agreement with the developer is that the Parish Council will take over the ownership of the land when the area is landscaped in accordance with the planning permission. The problem is though that the development has been beset with many delays and publication of the leaflet is now not likely until Spring 2027.

Elswick has a rich history dating back to the Domesday book so the problem is how much information can be crammed into a small leaflet. Elswick Historical Society is assisting with the project and it may be necessary to produce separate leaflets for flora and heritage. It is intended that this leaflet will be available at Tourist Information centres across the North West.

The Council is always seeking means of increasing the use of the facilities and particularly promoting sport for young people. The big success story in the past two years has been the formation of a new junior football club which has over one hundred and fifty eight members, both girls and boys and operates eleven teams and which clearly demonstrates that providing good quality facilities sells itself/.

Summary

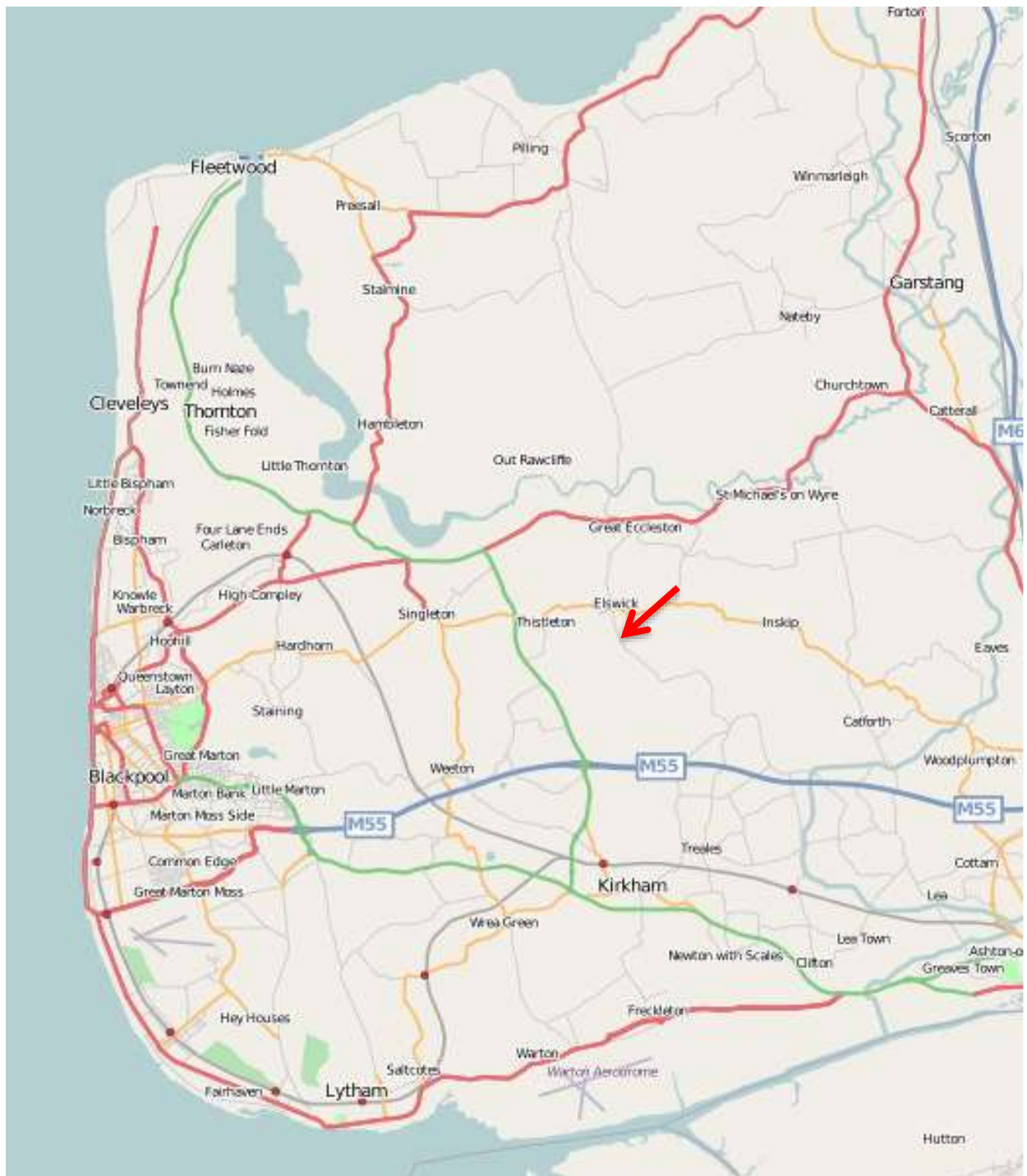
We recognise that the way that we operate is probably unconventional compared to other Green Flag locations. The way that we organise our activities however works for us and produces amazing results which keeps costs down through voluntary help and users taking a pride and ownership of the facilities. Our aim over the next five years (see Appendix 9) is to maintain this position whilst at the same time continually striving to improve. Our programme over the next five years will be updated annually but will include the following:-

- Our priority is to complete the purchase of the six acre site from the

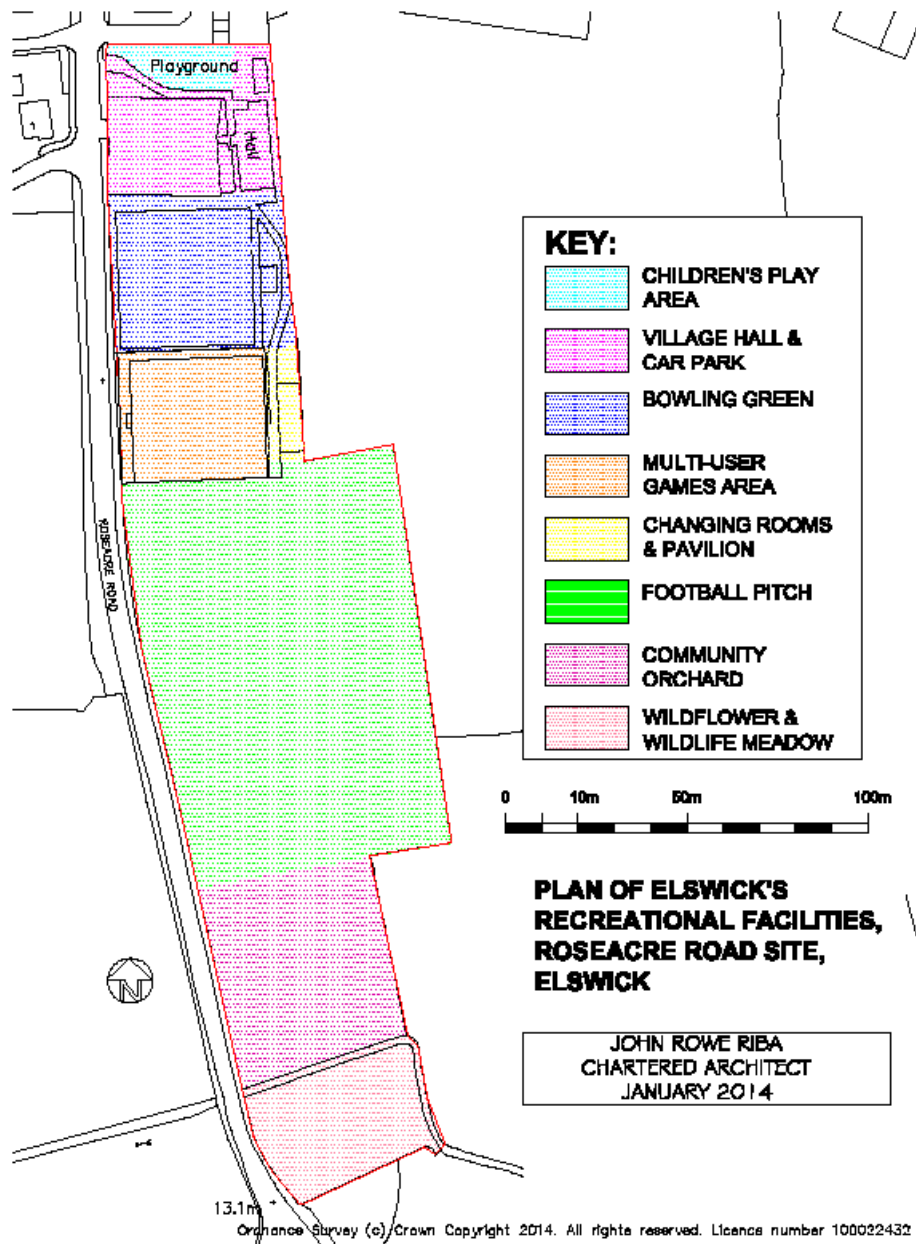
- developers and to work with the Lancashire County Council Treescape department to develop an ecology area and to work with other agencies such as the Lancashire Manchester and North Merseyside Wildlife Trust to plan and implement a management plan with the introduction of wildlife habitats.
- to publish the heritage/flora/fauna pamphlet.
- to continue the work to provide a spring wildflower meadow in the orchard
- to continue to seek ways of enhancing the wildlife in the meadow and the Green, improving environmental aspects of the site.
- to refurbish the orchard
- to assess the feasibility of resurfacing the MUGA

A few of these objectives will be achieved within the next twelve months (2026), others will be of a continuing nature and some will be more long term projects. They have been identified following full consultation with the community and many will be completed with the help of the various volunteer groups. Progress will be monitored and updated at least half yearly.

Appendix 1 Map Showing Location of Elswick Village Hall Gardens



Appendix 2 Plan of Elswick Village Hall Gardens

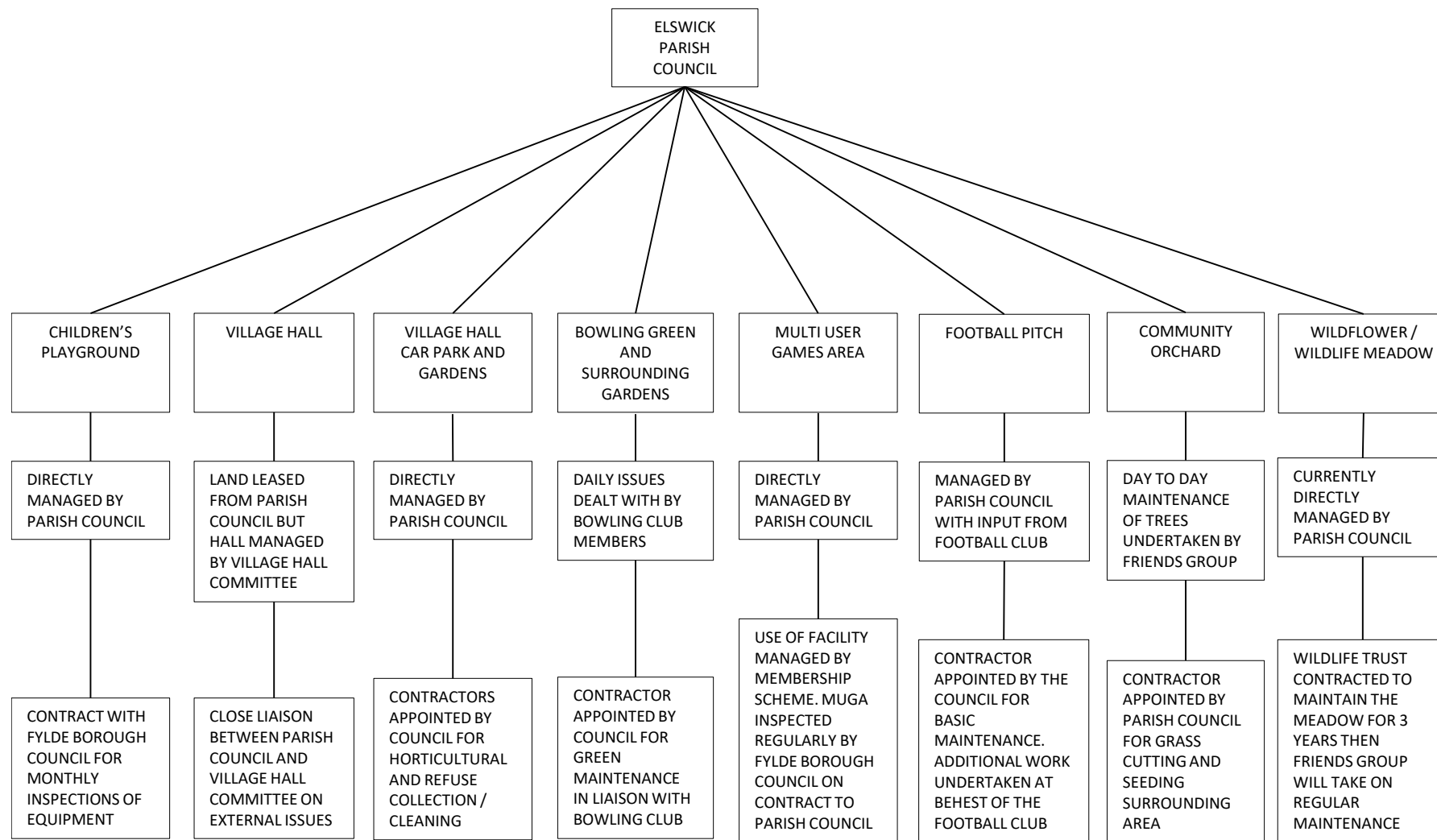


Appendix 3 Aerial Photograph of Elswick Village Hall Gardens

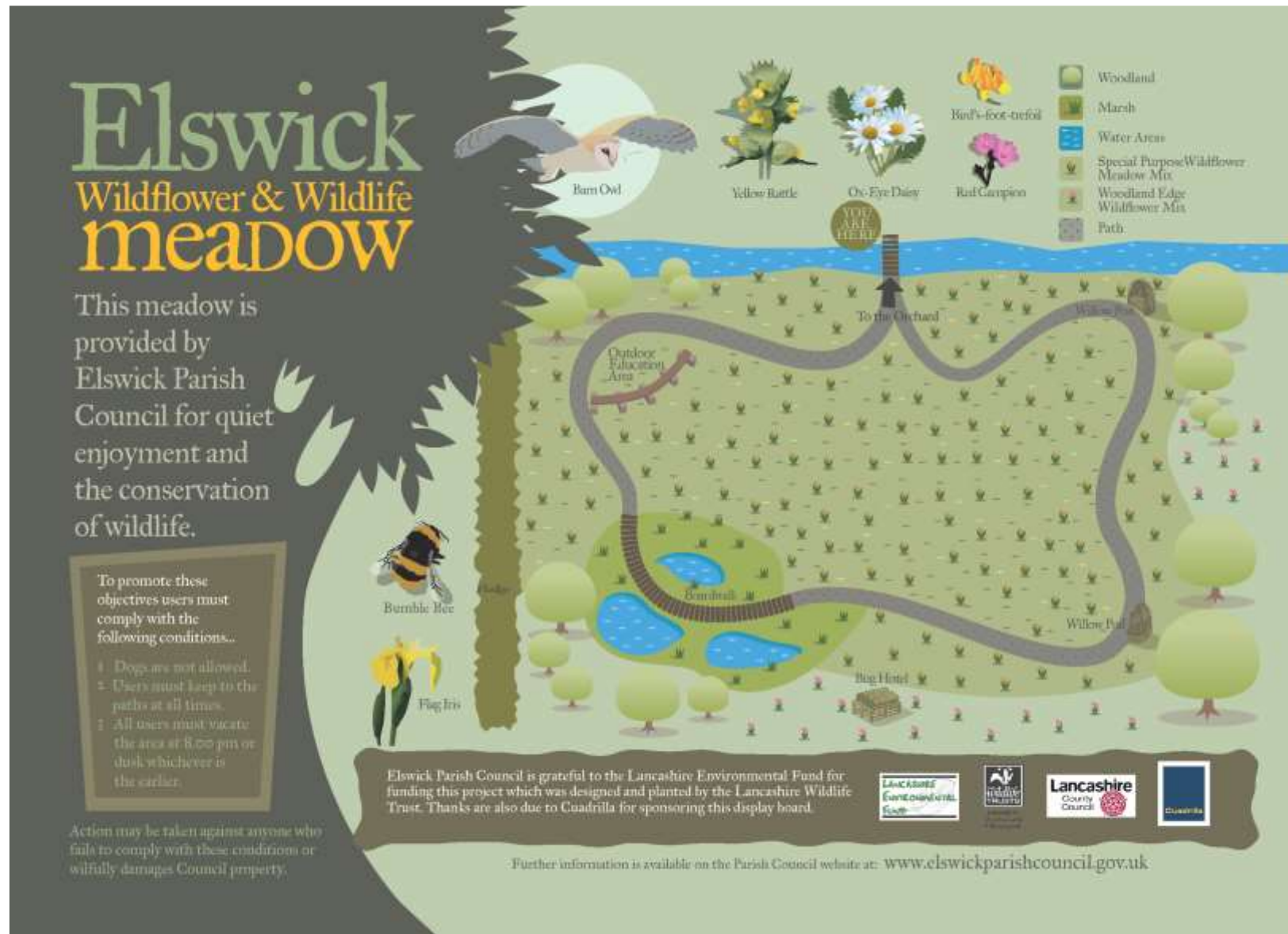


Appendix 4

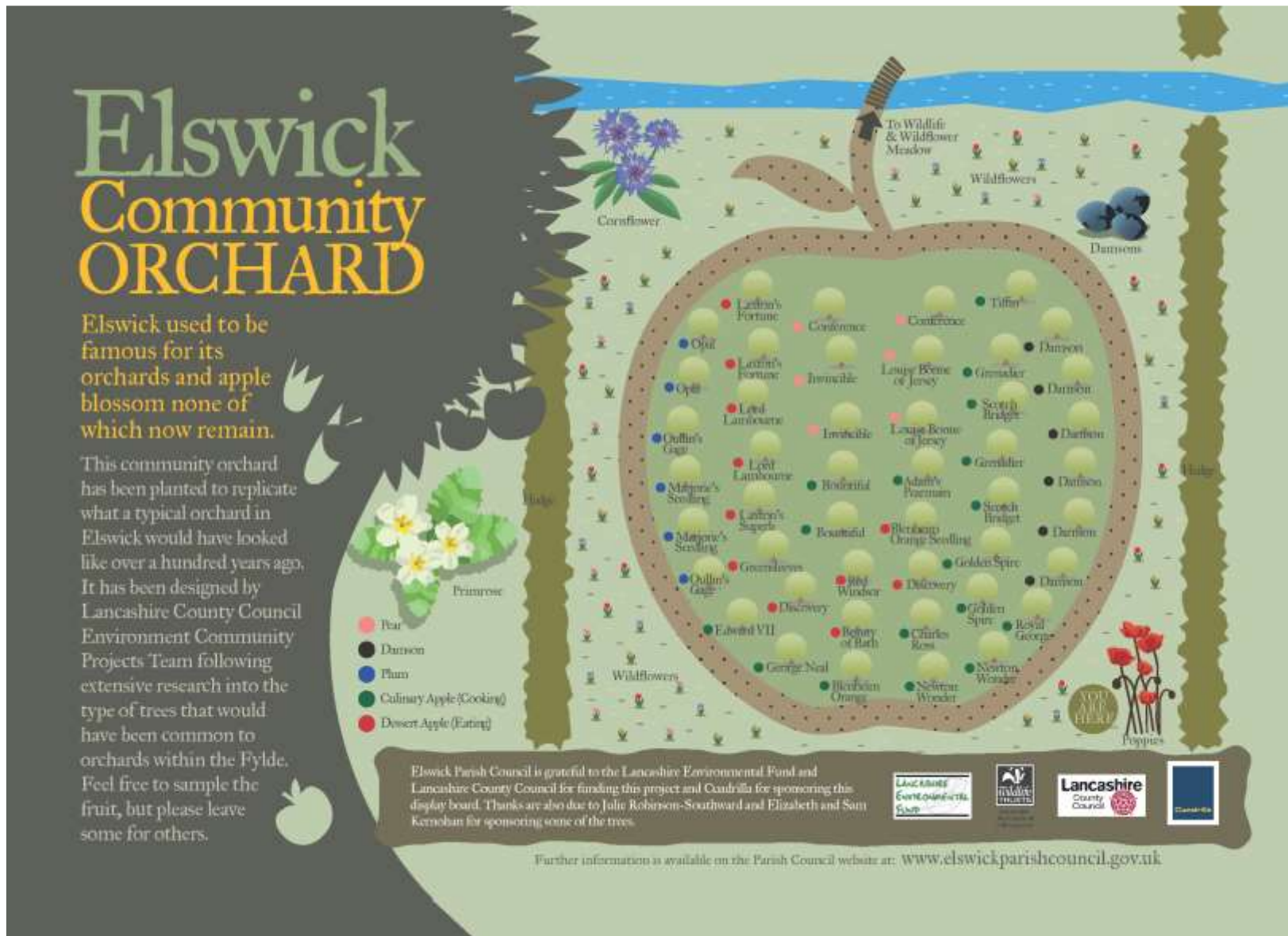
ELSWICK VILLAGE HALL GARDENS - MANAGEMENT PLAN



Appendix 5 Display panel at the entrance to the Wildflower/ Wildlife Meadow



Appendix 6 Display panel at the entrance to the Community Orchard



Appendix 7**Details of Areas of Councillors Responsibility and Contractors**

<u>Area</u>	<u>Councillor responsible</u>	<u>Contractor</u>	<u>Renew Date</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Bowling Green	Paul Hayhurst	Karl Mayson	Mar-26	
Football Pitch	Paul Hayhurst	Brian Armstrong	Mar-26	
Children's Playground	Mark Reed	Fylde Borough Council	Ongoing	
Grass Cutting	Paul Hayhurst	Brian Armstrong	Mar- 26	
MUGA	Neil Hudson	Volunteers		
Orchard	Paul Metcalf	Volunteers/Tudor Turf		Grass cutting twice a year by lengthsman
Meadow	Mike Emmington	Volunteers/Tudor Turf		Grass cutting twice a year by lengthsman
Flowers	Paul Hayhurst	Volunteers	Nov-26	Supplier Laburnum nursery
Amenity Cleaning	Mike Emmington	Village Lengthsman	Ongoing	

Appendix 8**Village Hall****Gardens****2025/26 Action Sheet**

<u>Month</u>	<u>Work /action required</u>	<u>Cllr responsible</u>	<u>Date completed</u>	<u>Comments</u>
October	Lancashire Best Kept Village presentation	P Hayhurst	13/10/2025 19/10/25	
	Elswick in Bloom meeting	P Hayhurst		
November	Clear flower beds	Paul Hayhurst	9/11/2025	
	Action any playground issues	M Reed	26/11/25	None
	Parish Council meeting	Clerk	26/11/2025	
	Plan flower beds for 2026	Paul Hayhurst	30/11/2025	
December	Let flower contract for 2026	Paul Hayhurst	21/12/2025	Laburnum
January 2026	Christmas Tree collection	Paul Hayhurst	13/1/2026	40+ trees
	Inspect Meadow and Orchard	Mike Emmington	25/1/2026	
	Meeting with Bowling Club	Paul Hayhurst	6/1/2026	
	Prepare Green Flag application	Paul Hayhurst	28/1/2026	
	Meeting with Junior football club	Paul Hayhurst		
February	Arrange for rescued Hedgehog arrivals	Mike Emmington		
	Arrange Orchard restoration	Paul Metcalf		
	Action any playground issues	M Reed		
	Parish Council meeting	Clerk		
March	Prune apple/pear trees	Paul Metcalf		
	Hold open day	All		

April	Meet with volunteer group	Paul Hayhurst
	Full inspection	All
	Action any playground issues	M Reed
	Parish Council meeting	Clerk
	Repair meadow bridge	M Emmington
	Meet with summer footballers	P Metcalf
	Arrange inspection of Muga	
	sweep Muga	N Hudson
	Arrange grass cutting	
	and bowling green	
	tenders	Clerk
	Cut back Village Hall bed	Paul Hayhurst
	Examine drainage around MUGA	Neil Hudson
	Action any playground issues	M Reed
May	Parish Council inspection	All
	Rehouse hedgehogs	M Emmington
	Seed wildflower areas in village	Paul Hayhurst
	Replant primroses	Paul Hayhurst
	Reopen MUGA	N Hudson
	Hold in Bloom meeting	Paul Hayhurst
	Prepare beds for planting	Paul Hayhurst
	Repair and paint seats	Paul Hayhurst
	Action any playground issues	M Reed
	Parish Council meeting	Clerk
June	Replenish village hall bed	Paul Hayhurst
	Plant flower beds	Paul Hayhurst
	Prune fruit trees	Paul Metcalf
	Clean/paint benches	Paul Hayhurst
	Action any playground issues	M Reed
	Parish Council meeting	Clerk
	Watering of plants	Neil Hudson

July	Action any playground issues	M Reed
	Parish Council meeting	Clerk
	Prune plums/damsons	Paul Metcalf
	Watering of plants	Neil Hudson
August	Deadheading/Tidying beds	Paul Hayhurst
	Action any playground issues	M Reed
	Watering of plants	Neil Hudson
September	Deadheading/Tidying beds	Paul Hayhurst
	Action any playground issues	M Reed
	Parish Council meeting	Clerk
	Cutting of meadow	M Emmington
	Village inspection	Clerk
October	Meeting with Bowling Club	Paul Hayhurst
	Meeting with Junior Football Team	Paul Hayhurst
	Action any playground issues	M Reed
	Parish Council meeting	Clerk
	Arrange Christmas tree collection	Paul Hayhurst
	Action any playground issues	M Reed
	Parish Council meeting	Clerk
	Elswick Volunteers meeting	Paul Hayhurst
November	Strip Flowerbed	Paul Hayhurst
	Plan Flower beds for 2027	Paul Hayhurst
	Let flower contract	
December	2027	Paul Hayhurst

Appendix 9

Elswick Village Hall Five Year Plan

Year	Project	Comments
2026	Continue drainage work around the MUGA	
	Refurbishment of the orchard	
	Continue moss control of MUGA	
	Environmental planning for land from developers	
	Complete conveyancing of land from developers	
	Adopt and maintain land from developers	Issue tenders for contractors
	Arrange for the wildlife trust to maintain the ponds	Agree duties and contract
2027	Publication of flora and fauna pamphlet	
	Work with Treescape to complete treeplanting on ecology land	
	Arrange audit of flora and fauna by NW Environmental Trust	
	Painting of all buildings	
	Hold further talks with the church to arrange for a permissary path linking up all three areas	
2028	Prepare a management plan for the green corridor around the village	Green Flag application

Explore grants for re-surfacing of MUGA

2029 Determine the future of the MUGA

2030 Install a new bridge between the orchard and the meadow.

Appendix 10 Village Hall Gardens - Special Events Planned in 2026

<u>Month</u>	<u>Event</u>
February	Apple and Pear Tree Pruning training session in the Orchard
March	Willow weaving training in the meadow Development of wildlife habitats – dead hedging and hedgehog boxes
April	Village Hall Open Day
May	End of month Village planting sessions
June	Junior Footballers end of season Presentation afternoon
July	Stoned fruit training session Village Dog show

August	Bowling club Presidents day
September	Apple Day
October	Soup day – Harvest celebration
November	In Bloom Open Day with results of competitions.

Several Artisan markets and coffee mornings will be held throughout the year at the Village Hall

Appendix 11

GENERIC RISK ASSESSMENT FORM

		Site: Elswick new public pond area		Reference No ELS01
Activity: General public use of the new pond area		People at Risk: All those accessing the pond area		
Assessor(s): R. Gill		J	Date: 16/06/25	Review Date: 15/06/26
Accidents / Incidents in Previous 12 months: None				

Hazard, Hazardous Event and Expected Consequence	Assessment of Risk Before Control Measures			Control Measures	Residual Risk After Control Measures			Additional Measures Required	Residual Risk After Additional Measures			Additional Measures Actioned
	L	C	R		L	C	R		L	C	R	
												YES / NO
Risk of drowning in the waters of the pond if a member of the public should fall or walk into the water. Known depth of 4-5 feet at the centre.	3	5	15	Full circumference the pond has shallow sloping edges allowing a person to escape from the water The edges of the pond are to be planted with aquatic plants which will deter entry into the waters. A lifebelt is to be installed adjacent to the pond to aid a person in escaping the waters. Open aspect of the grounds will deter horseplay around the pond; area is next to a well used local road and	2	5	10					

				shop, and overlooked by residential properties.								
Illness and skin irritation caused by exposure to blue-green algae (Cyanobacteria) that may develop in the pond water. Prevalent in still waters.	3	3	9	The depth of the pond inhibits growth of the algae as does the edge planting of aquatic plants. The pond is not shaded from natural light during the daytime.	2	3	6	Observations of the water condition during warm weather when the algae could form. If the algae does form signs to keep children and pets away must be placed around the pond to warn the public of the hazard until it is cleared. Follow recommended methods of clearing the algae from a reputable source.	1	3	3	
Sickness caused by exposure to Leptospirosis (Weil's disease)	3	4	12	Leptospirosis is caused by the waters becoming contaminated by rodent and dog urine. The edge planting will deter dogs	1	4	4					

[illegible]

Additional Measures Required	Responsibility	Completion Date	Completed	Communicated to Staff
Installation of a Lifebelt in a prominent position				
Develop methods of observation of water condition during warm weather				
Prepare control methods for removal of toxic algae				

Likelihood 1 - Very Unlikely 2 – Unlikely 3 - Fairly Likely 4 – Likely 5- Very Likely

Consequences 1 - No injury 2 -Minor Injury 3 -Moderate Injury 4 - Major Injury 5 – Death

Risk Ratings 1 – 8 Low Risk 9 – 15 Medium Risk 16 -25 High Risk

ELSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Clerk to the Council

@elswickparishcouncil.gov.uk

BOWLING GREEN – ROSEACRE ROAD, ELSWICK

Elswick Parish Council invites suitably experienced contractors to tender for the above contract. Contractors are required to work in partnership with the Parish Council in order to deliver an efficient and effective service

CONTRACT PERIOD

1. To run from 1st April 2026 to 31st March 2027

2. The contract initially to be for one year and then reviewed. If re-allocated at the end of the first year, the contract will be subject to a maximum of three years when tenders will again be invited. If renewal is awarded for a subsequent year or two years a review will be carried out every twelve months and the same prices will apply as tendered for the first year.

Completed submissions should be forwarded to the Clerk's address which can be found at the beginning of this tender and are required on or before 1st March 2026

Short listed applicants will be asked to provide the following information.

- 1) Public liability insurance.
- 2) Risk assessments.
- 3) Method statements.

Payment will either be on submission of a monthly invoice or take place throughout the contract period by monthly Standing Order.

A. WORK DETAILS DURING CONTRACT PERIOD

- 1) The successful contractor will provide their own mowing equipment and PPE and will ensure that their personnel are trained in its use. The successful contractor will also employ a safe system of work bearing in mind that by definition the work will entail working in a public area and will also involve members of the public going about their normal routines.

2) TURF MAINTENANCE

2.1 MOWING SPECIFICATION

The grass shall not be cut shorter than 5mm (increased to 8mm in drought conditions) at any time. During late summer and early autumn as grass growth begins to decline the height of the cut should be gradually increased to 8mm and maintained throughout the close season. The grass must never be allowed to grow taller than 15mm at any time of the year.

The area to be cut shall be the whole area leaving no area uncut between the swathes. All mowings/arising must be collected in a grass box or similar device and removed from the site. The machine shall be used in such a manner as to ensure that all arisings are removed from the surface during cutting. Under normal circumstances seed heads should never develop, but in the event of seed heads appearing the Contractor will remove them as part of the normal maintenance at no additional cost.

Mowing machines shall only remain on grass surfaces during cutting operations. They shall be removed from the grass at all other times including such operations as re-setting and re-fuelling.

Mowing of the green shall be fully completed prior to any match. (by 1pm on every occasion it is mown.)

2.2 FREQUENCY

The aim is that the green shall be cut on three occasions per week but may vary according to growing conditions and usage i.e. requests for cutting prior to a match or tournament.

(Elswick Bowling Club will supply a list of dates for all matches/competitions).

2.3 WEED CONTROL

The Contractor shall control weed growth by hand-weeding or by chemical weed eradication. The Contractor shall ensure that no individual weed or patch of weed exceeds 50mm in any dimension at any time. If hormonal weed-killers are used, the contractor will take particular care to ensure the weather conditions are suitable and that weed-killer does not contaminate or reach any area outside the boundary of the green. The contractor shall be held liable for any damage caused by the application of weed-killer.

Chemical weed eradication means the destruction of weed growth by a chemical substance.

The use of chemicals for the eradication of weeds shall be in accordance with:

- (a) Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and all updates.
- (b) The Control of Pollution Act 1974 and all updates.
- (c) The Poisonous Substances in Agriculture Regulations.
- (d) The Food and Environmental Protection Act 1985 and all updates.
- (e) The Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986 and all updates.

The new European Directive listing banned herbicides and pesticides for horticultural use must be observed at all times.

2.4 MOSS CONTROL

The contractor shall control moss growth so that no patch or patches of moss exceed 50mm in any dimension at any time and that the sward is composed of healthy grasses of the desired species.

2.5 FERTILISER APPLICATION

The contractor shall ensure the fertility of the green so that grass swards are healthy. They must ensure that grass is evenly deep green in colour and vigorous in growth at all times during the period April to September, and healthy, evenly deep green in colour and hardy to prevailing weather conditions at all other times of the year. (If weather conditions are dry a liquid fertiliser is to be used.)

2.6 TREATMENT OF PESTS AND DISEASES

The contractor shall treat any infestation or occurrence of any pest or disease to ensure that the green is free from pests and disease at all times

2.7 SCARIFICATION

The contractor shall lightly scarify the green in the spring of each year during suitable weather and ground conditions. Light scarification shall involve the penetration of the grass sward to but not including root level. A heavier scarification shall be undertaken in the autumn of each year following the close of the playing season. Heavy scarification shall involve penetration of the grass sward and roots to a depth of 6mm-10mm. The contractor may in addition undertake regular routine scarification to the green during suitable weather and ground conditions as part of a moss control programme. No heavy scarification works shall be undertaken during the period 1st April to 30th September without the consent of the Parish Council.

2.8 BRUSHING

The contractor shall brush the green as required before each mowing during the whole period of the playing season to fully disperse dew, rainwater and worm-casts from the sward. Brushing must be fully completed before mowing takes place.

2.9 IRRIGATION

The contractor shall irrigate the green with sufficient water to ensure active grass growth at all times.

2.10 ROLLING

The contractor, if requested, shall roll the green with a light roller in late March of each year, after the frost has cleared, but before use of the green commences.

2.11 HOLLOW TINNING

The green shall be Top Dressed in the autumn of every third year following hollow tinning in suitable weather and ground conditions. Where top dressing takes place in association with Hollow Tinning the contractor shall ensure that the materials worked into the surface to fill the core holes in accordance with good horticultural practice. The top dressing shall be applied so as to ensure that at least half of the grass height remains visible above the top dressing.

2.12 SURFACE DEPRESSIONS

The contractor shall Top Dress the green with sufficient depth of material to ensure a true and even surface with no hollows or depressions. This work shall generally be undertaken during the renovation period but contractors may be required to undertake work during the playing season if depressions or hollows arise. Repeated applications of top dressing may be necessary to restore a true surface. The Top Dressing shall be applied so as to ensure that at least half the grass height remains visible above the top dressing applied to correct localised surface depressions.

2.13 SPIKING/SLITTING

Spiking/Slitting shall be carried out on two occasions between 1st November and 31st March.

2.14 RENOVATION

The contractor shall renovate all worn or damaged areas during the months of September and October when the playing season has finished so that by the third week in March the green has a full and healthy stand of grasses.

2.15 DISPOSAL OF ARISING

The contractor shall dispose of any and all arisings resulting from turf maintenance Operations.

2.16 CLEANING OF GUTTERS

The contractor shall ensure that gutters are kept clean and free of weeds at all times.

2.17 EXTENT OF WORK

Grassed areas will not be deemed to have been cut satisfactorily until the whole area, including the borders are edged/mown to the contract standard.

2.18 GROWTH RETARDANTS

No growth retardants shall be applied at any time during the contract period without written permission. In normal circumstances growth retardants will not be used.

2.19 COMPLETION TIME

The contractor shall ensure that all work does not cause significant inconvenience to users. (See 2.2).

B. GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. INDEMNITY AND INSURANCE

The contractor shall indemnify the Council against injury to or death to any person or loss or damage to any property which may arise out of the act of default or negligence of the contractor throughout the period of the contract. The contractor shall supply the Council immediately upon request, copies of all insurance policies, cover notes, premium receipts and other documents necessary to comply with this condition.

2. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- i) The Contractor shall promptly notify the Client of any health and safety hazards which may arise
- ii) While on the Premises, the Contractor shall comply with any health and safety measures implemented by the Client in respect of Staff and other persons working there.
- iii) The Contractor shall notify the Client immediately in the event of any incident occurring in the performance of its obligations under the Contract on the Premises where that incident causes any personal injury or damage to property which could give rise to personal injury.

- iv) The Contractor shall comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and any other acts, orders, regulations and codes of practice relating to health and safety, which may apply to Staff and other persons working on the Premises in the performance of its obligations under the Contract.

3. OPERATIONAL RECORDS

The contractor shall submit to The Clerk to the Council each month during the contract period an accurate schedule of work which shows:

- a) All work completed during the preceding month
- b) All work which should have been completed but was only partially completed.
- c) All work which should have been completed but was not attempted.
- d) All work planned for the coming month.

4. WORK IN DEFAULT

If work is not up to the contract standard the Council will investigate and if satisfied that the contractor has not performed adequately a Default Notice will be issued requiring the Contractors to remedy the failure within such reasonable time as the Council may determine. If the contractor fails to comply with the terms of the Default Notice the Council may employ and pay other persons to carry out the work and all costs and administrative charges will be deducted from monies due, or to become due to the contractor under the contract.

TENDERER’S DECLARATION

If awarded the contract I accept all conditions detailed in this tender document.

Signed.....

Full Name (In CAPITALS).....

Address.....

.....

.....

Tele. No:.....

Mobile Phone.....

E-Mail (If available).....

ELSWICK PARISH COUNCIL
GRASS CUTTING CONTRACT 2026 to 2029

TERMS OF CONTRACT

A. CONTRACT PERIOD

- 1. To run from 1st March to 28th February each year.**
- 2. The contract initially to be for one year and then reviewed. If re-allocated it will be reviewed at the end of the second year and will in any event be subject to a maximum of three years when tenders will again be invited. If renewal is awarded for a subsequent year or two years the same prices will apply as tendered for the first year.**
- 3. The contract covers two separate areas - see attachment 1 and Appendix 1 showing the areas to be included.**

B. WORK DETAILS DURING CONTRACT PERIOD

1. The successful contractor will provide their own mowing equipment and PPE and will ensure that their personnel are trained in its use. The successful contractor will also employ safe-systems of work bearing in mind that the work may entail working close to the highway and involve members of the public going about their normal routines.
2. GRASSED AREAS will be cut, edged and tidied throughout the contract period. The areas will be edged to the kerb, roadside, seats, flower tubs etc where applicable.

2.1 MOWING SPECIFICATION

Area 2

14 Cuts only throughout the growing season. One cut in March, then two a month up to the end of September, then one final cut in October.

The precise area of the field/football pitch (Roseacre Road) to be cut is shown in the enclosed map in shaded area. If a football team requires extra cuts, this is to be subject to separate negotiation between the football team and the contractor.

2.2 EDGING

The contractor shall edge all grass locations so that the grass edge does not invade the surrounding surface by more than 45mm at any time.

2.3 EXTENT OF WORK

Grassed areas will not be deemed to have been cut satisfactorily until the whole of each area including the boundaries are mown to the contract standard.

2.4 GROWTH RETARDANTS

No growth retardants shall be applied at any time during the contract period without written permission. In normal circumstances growth retardants will not be used.

3. DISPOSAL OF WASTE

The contractor shall make his own arrangements for the disposal of all waste materials generated by work performed under the terms of the contract. All waste material shall be disposed of outside the boundaries of the Parish as it arises and no temporary storage areas spoil heaps or the like will be permitted.

4. BEST KEPT VILLAGE / NORTH WEST IN BLOOM COMPETITIONS

A special effort will be made from the beginning of June to the end of August when judging for the Competitions will be in progress. The Clerk will keep the contractor updated on key dates for Elswick as and when known in advance.

5. TREES

To protect tree bases from damage by mowing machinery the contractor shall control weed growth within a radius of 300mm from the trunk of the tree. by chemical weed eradication in accordance with the conditions for Chemical Weed Eradication laid down by law at that moment in time. Tree bases must at all times be protected during spraying.

6. TELEGRAPH POLES, PLANT TUBS, and SEATS

The contractor shall control weed growth around obstacles on grassed areas to include telegraph poles, seats/benches, play equipment etc by either strimming on EACH mowing or by chemical weed eradication in accordance with conditions for Chemical Weed Eradication laid down by law at that moment in time.

Chemical Weed Eradication means the destruction of weed growth by a chemical substance.

The use of chemicals for the eradication of weeds shall be in accordance with:

- (a) Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and any subsequent revisions/amendments.
- (b) The Control of Pollution Act 1974 and any subsequent revisions/amendments.
- (c) The Poisonous Substances in Agriculture Regulations.
- (d) The Food and Environmental Protection Act 1985 and any subsequent revisions/amendments.
- (e) The Control of Pesticides Regulations 1986 and any subsequent revisions/amendments.

The new European Directive listing banned herbicides and pesticides for horticultural use must be observed at all times.

C. GENERAL CONDITIONS

1. INDEMNITY AND INSURANCE

The Contractor shall indemnify the Council against injury to or death to any person or loss or damage to any property that may arise out of the act of default or negligence of the Contractor throughout the period of the contract. The Contractor shall supply the Council immediately upon request, copies of all insurance policies, cover notes, premium receipts and other documents necessary to comply with this condition.

2. PAYMENT

The annual cost for the work will be split in to 12 equal payments and paid by cheque on the submission of a monthly invoice made out to Elswick Parish Council and submitted to the Clerk to the Council. Any cheques will be signed at the Council's monthly meetings which are held on the 4th Thursday of every month (unless otherwise advised).

3. OPERATIONAL RECORDS

The Contractor shall record on the invoice each month during the contract period:

- (a) All work completed during the preceding month and the dates the work completed.
- (b) All work which should have been completed but was only partially completed.
- (c) All work which should have been completed but was not attempted.

In the above respect, all areas will be regarded as of equal importance both in regard to the quality and laid regularity of work.

4. **WORK IN DEFAULT**

If work is not up to the contract standard the Council will investigate and if satisfied that the Contractor has not performed adequately a DEFAULT NOTICE will be issued requiring the Contractor to remedy the failure within reasonable time as the Council may determine. If the Contractor fails to comply with the terms of the DEFAULT NOTICE the Council may employ and pay other persons to carry out the work and all costs and administrative charges will be deducted from monies due, or become due to the contractor under the contract.

D. **TENDERER'S DECLARATION**

If awarded the contract I accept all conditions detailed in this tender document.

Signed.....

Full Name in Capitals.....

Address

.....

.....

.....

Tel. No:

Mobile No:.....

E-mail:

Appendix 1

ELSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

DETAILS OF GRASS CUTTING CONTRACT AREAS

Location & Area	Site Description / Requirements
<u>Area 2</u> LARBRECK AVENUE PLAY AREA	All to be Boxed off or Mulched. Grassed area
<u>Area 2</u> Football Pitch / Field	Grassed area (Full Field)

Appendix 2

ELSWICK PARISH COUNCIL

Tender Submission Grass Cutting Contract 2026 to 2029

Full Name in Capitals.....

Address

.....

.....

.....

Tel. No:

Mobile No:.....

E-mail:

I would like to tender by bid for the following areas of the Elswick Grass Cutting Contract.

Area 2	Tender Price
	£

Signed:-

Date:-