

The Lee Parish Council

Risk Assessment and Management

History:

| Date | Version | Updated By | Status | Comment |
|----------------|---------|------------------|--------------------|--|
| Jan 2018 | 1 | | Adopted | |
| Jul 2018 | 2 | Cllr Colin Sully | Adopted | |
| May 2020 | 3 | Cllr Colin Sully | Adopted | |
| July 2021 | 4.4 | Cllr Ruth Fowler | Adopted | Approved for adoption 22/7/21 (revised responsibility structure) |
| September 2021 | 5.4 | Cllr Ruth Fowler | Adopted | Includes disclaimers for voluntary undertakings, approved for adoption 14/9/21 |
| July 2022 | 6.4 | Cllr Ruth Fowler | Adopted | New council cohort, risks and mitigation for online banking |
| September 2022 | 7.1 | Cllr Ruth Fowler | Draft for review | Following co-option of Cllr Wilkinson |
| October 2022 | 7.2 | Cllr Ruth Fowler | Draft for adoption | Clarification that benches installed by allotment holders are their responsibility |
| October 2022 | 7.3 | Cllr Ruth Fowler | Adopted | Adopted 13/10/22 |
| September 2023 | 8.1 | Cllr Colin Sully | Draft for review | Annual Review and reflects resignation of Cllr Fowler |
| September 2023 | 8.2 | Cllr Colin Sully | Adopted | Adopted 19/9/23 |
| December 2023 | 8.3 | Cllr Colin Sully | Draft for review | Updated to include Cllr Barrett-Mold (Not adopted) |
| January 2024 | 8.4 | Cllr Colin Sully | Draft for review | Updated to include revised section on the children's playground (Not adopted) |
| March 2024 | 8.5 | Cllr Colin Sully | Adopted | Updated further to include standardised method of assessment for all areas |

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Introduction

1. The Lee Parish Council (TLPC) manages the risks associated with its various activities and assets by assigning responsibility for monitoring these activities and assets to Councillors and the Clerk (see Annex 1) according to the risks assessed for each activity/asset (see Annex 2).
2. The risks are assessed by the responsible person and then reviewed by the Parish Council.
3. Responsible persons are expected to inform the Clerk as and when changes to this document are required.
4. The whole document will be reviewed at least once each year by the Council.
5. The responsibilities relating to TLPC assets in this risk assessment are:

| | Risk Area | Responsible Person |
|---|--|---------------------------|
| A | Playground Equipment, plus benches* and tables at the Lee Common Allotments and Playing Fields * any benches installed by allotment holders are specifically excluded | Cllr Chinnery |
| B | Grass, hedges, trees, boundaries, fencing and water troughs at the Lee Common Allotments and Playing Fields | Cllr Bunce |
| C | Allotments | Clerk and Cllr Bunce |
| D | Roadside Assets (road and lane side benches) | Cllr Chinnery |
| E | Financial | Clerk |
| F | Information | Cllr Sully and Clerk |
| G | Volunteer Task Force | Cllrs Chinnery and Sully |
| H | Listed monuments and noticeboard | Cllr Wilkinson |
| I | Lee Clump Pond | Cllr Sully |

6. In addition, the Parish Council responsibilities for liaising on issues for which The Lee Parish Council has no direct responsibility, ownership or decision making powers (such responsibility, ownership and/or decision making powers sitting with Buckinghamshire Council) are:

| Liaison Area | Responsible Person |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Planning | Cllr Little |
| Roads and public highways | Cllr Rose |
| Public Rights of Way | Cllr Chinnery |
| HS2 | Cllr Sully |

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7. RoSPA approved inspectors assess the risk of and report on each piece of equipment in the children's playground using the following method of assessment:

HIGH: Equipment needs taking out of use until repairs are completed

MEDIUM: Monitor use and make any repairs a.s.a.p.

LOW: Monitor use and make any repairs a.s.a.p.

VERY LOW: Monitor use; no action needed.

The Parish Council has now (2024) adopted this method of reporting for all areas.

8. All lead councillors must advise support councillors if they are unable to fulfil their responsibilities temporarily. They must additionally advise the Chair and the Clerk if they are unable to fulfil their responsibilities on a permanent basis.

9. The Lee Parish Council has no statutory obligation to monitor the state of roads, highways and public rights of way maintained by Buckinghamshire Council, but has elected to use its reasonable endeavours to do so out of a sense of civic pride; any such monitoring will be carried out in line with the procedures outlined in this document and supplementary published procedural documents. Residents and members of the public are encouraged to report any defects directly to Buckinghamshire Council and not to rely on The Lee Parish Council to do so on their behalf.

10. Whilst actively engaging with HS2 Ltd and their contractors in the interest of residents, all planning, highways, environmental and rights of way matters relating to the construction of HS2 are the responsibility of Buckinghamshire Council. Making residents aware of forthcoming works, along with any road closures and associated diversions, is the responsibility of HS2 Ltd and their contractors.

Notwithstanding the above, TLPC will use its reasonable endeavours to influence decision making processes between HS2 Ltd, their contractors and Buckinghamshire Council, to hold them to account and to publish reminders of short-term road closures and other works to residents. Residents and members of the public are encouraged to raise issues with the HS2 Helpdesk and to review the latest Advance Works Notices on the HS2 Commonplace website.

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Annex 1: Parish Council Allocation of Responsibilities

| Task | Lead | Lead Responsibility | Support responsibility | Records and reporting |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|--|--|--|
| Finance and governance | Cllr Sully | Support Clerk as Responsible Financial Officer in preparation of financial and governance statements. Preparation of budgets, policy and governance documents for review by full council; oversight of banking relationships including online banking, and any resultant change in financial controls and procedures. | Sub-group comprising Cllrs Barrett-Mold , Chinnery, Rose and Sully and the Clerk | Sub-group to report to PC meeting. Clerk to maintain records |
| HS2 | Cllr Sully | Main point of contact for Buckinghamshire Council (BC), other Parish Councils, CRAG, residents and contractors. Responsible for public communications on the forum, website and in the newsletter; presentations to BC and others; attend regular and ad hoc meetings with HS2, contractors, other councils and interested parties such as the Chiltern Society and Chiltern Conservation Board; keep HS2 and contractors on their toes. | Sub-group comprising Cllrs Chinnery, Bunce and Clerk | Lead to maintain records and report to PC |
| Planning (new applications) | Allocated by Clerk | Review application in line with Planning Procedures; circulate draft response for discussion and agreement; finalise agreed response. | Clerk to allocate a lead for each application as it comes in. | Clerk to submit response to the Planning Authority |

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| Task | Lead | Lead Responsibility | Support responsibility | Records and reporting |
|--|---------------|--|--|---|
| Planning (all other issues) | Cllr Little | Review, summarise and recommend response to local plan; respond to and progress any ad hoc queries / planning issues / concerns not linked to a specific planning application allocated to a councillor; prepare and manage guidance for councillors on new legislation; recommend any changes to current PC planning procedures; mentor new councillors on management of planning applications; liaise with BC on any appeals / call ins / enforcements as appropriate. | Cllr Sully | Lead to report to PC meeting. Clerk to submit any TLPC comments to the Planning Authority |
| PROW Footpaths, bridleways, road and lane side benches | Cllr Chinnery | Main point of PROW contact with BC; liaise with Chiltern Society and landowners as appropriate and required. Support allocated tasks and ensure actions are taken. As and when appropriate, post details of road closures to the forum. | Sub-group comprising Cllrs Barrett-Mold , Bunce, Rose, Sully and Wilkinson. Survey paths and furniture annually or as found appropriate. Report defects and ROW differences on BC website. Advise lead of actions. | Lead to report to PC meeting and maintain records copied to clerk |

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| Task | Lead | Lead Responsibility | Support responsibility | Records and reporting |
|---|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| BC maintained roads including road surface, drainage, signs, verges and hedges. | Cllr Rose / Clerk | Carry out a regular drive through all roads, more frequently following bad weather. Check for potholes, overgrown roadside hedges and verges, drainage /flooding, flytipping; report and monitor problems. Carry out regular reviews of roads with Local Area technician. Liaise with BC Highways as appropriate. Evaluate and progress options for control of speeding on Chesham Lane. Evaluate and progress options for control of inconsiderate parking. | Cllrs Sully to support all tasks. All councillors to report any defects noticed on FixMyStreet and advise lead | Lead to report to PC meeting |
| Local Public Transport | Cllr Rose | Lead to attend relevant meetings, keep up with local provision. | None | Lead to report to PC meeting |
| Newsletter | Chair / Clerk | Collate PC information and submit articles to Newsletter | All councillors to advise lead /clerk of any articles. | None |
| Playground equipment including fort, benches* and tables in the Lee Common Allotments and Playing Fields. *specifically excludes any benches installed by and for use of allotment holders | Cllr Chinnery / Clerk | Monitor state of equipment, recommend remedial action based on own surveys, Clerk's reports and any formal inspections. Clerk to inspect at least fortnightly and report to lead councillor; liaise with inspectors, contractors etc. for regular works and as directed by the lead councillor. This responsibility only extends to those benches installed by the Parish Council and commemorative benches installed with the permission of the Parish Council. | Cllr Bunce. All councillors to advise lead of any matters arising. | Lead and Clerk to report to PC meeting |

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| Task | Lead | Lead Responsibility | Support responsibility | Records and reporting |
|---|------------------------|--|--|---|
| Trees, hedges, grass, fencing*, gates and signage in allotments/playground area * specifically excludes any fencing installed by allotment holders | Cllr Bunce / Clerk | Ensure that hedges, trees, grassed areas, fences and gates plus benches and tables are in good condition; recommend any improvements / remedial action. Ensure any signs are fixed properly and in good condition; recommend / resource any additional signs that are needed. Clerk to inspect at least fortnightly and report to lead councillor; liaise with contractors etc. for regular works and as directed by the lead councillor. | Cllr Chinnery. All councillors to advise lead of any matters arising. | Lead and Clerk to report to PC meeting |
| Allotments | Cllr Bunce / Clerk | Clerk to act as point of contact for allotment holders, both current and potential; maintain allotment inventory; ensure regular checks of both allotments and water tanks/supply; bring any requests/recommendations to Council. Clerk to inspect at least fortnightly and report to lead councillor; liaise with water company, contractors etc. for regular works and as directed by the lead councillor; liaise with allotment holders in all contractual matters. | Cllr Chinnery. All councillors to advise lead of any matters arising. | Lead and Clerk to report to PC meeting. Clerk manages allotment rents and inventory. |
| Notice Boards | Cllr Wilkinson / Clerk | Inspection, initiating maintenance and repair | All councillors to advise lead of any matters arising | Lead to report to PC meeting |
| Jubilee Well, war memorial | Cllr Wilkinson / Clerk | Inspection at least two-monthly to ensure that the Jubilee Well and War Memorial are in good condition; ensure other checks in line with insurance requirements; | All councillors to advise lead of any matters arising. Clerk to check well fortnightly to ensure all padlocks are in place. | Lead to report to PC meeting. Clerk to maintain well inspection record. |

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| Task | Lead | Lead Responsibility | Support responsibility | Records and reporting |
|--|--------------------------|---|---|---|
| | | recommend any improvements / remedial action; light up the well at Christmas. | | |
| Roadside benches | Cllr Chinnery | Inspection; recommend any improvements / remedial action for benches at Swan Bottom and Field End. Ensure actions are taken. | Sub-group comprising Cllrs Bunce, Rose and Sully to check as part of footpath checks. Clerk to obtain and manage quotes for any ad hoc work on benches. All councillors to advise lead of any matters arising. | Lead to report to PC meeting. |
| Management of volunteer Task Force | Cllrs Chinnery and Sully | Manage health and safety risk assessment. Induct and register volunteers | Councillors to brief action and location issues to volunteers on work required and monitor, record and update lead | Lead to provide and maintain records to Clerk |
| BMKALC | Cllr Rose / Clerk | Liaise with BMKALC, and attend meetings as appropriate | None | Leads to report to PC meeting |
| Chesham & Rural Villages Community Board | Cllr Sully / Clerk | Liaise with Community Board, and attend meetings as appropriate | None | Leads to report to PC meeting |
| The Lee website including forum and emails | Cllrs Sully and Clerk | Update and maintain all website areas other than those that are the responsibility of the Clerk. Technical liaison with hosting company | Clerk: update Parish Council minutes, agendas, accounts, governance documents etc. Move towards taking over responsibility for email accounts and website backups/updates. Administrative liaison with hosting company | Leads to report to PC meeting |
| Lee Clump Pond | Cllr Sully / Clerk | (a) Monitor the site (b) Progress the resolution of the issues of ownership, access, maintenance and drying-out. | Cllrs Chinnery and Little | Lead to report to PC meeting |

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Annex 2 Risk Assessments

| A. PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT, BENCHES AND TABLES IN THE LEE COMMON ALLOTMENTS AND PLAYING FIELDS | | | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------|--|
| RISK | HAZARD DETAILS | RISK GROUP | ACTIONS TAKEN TO MANAGE RISK | RISK LEVEL | REMARKS / ACTIONS PLANNED |
| The Fort | a) Structural failure b) Other injury from structure c) Falling/tripping | Members of the public (esp. children) | Regular inspections by Council, playground specialists and RoSPA approved inspectors. Maintenance programme. Notices regarding safety. | LOW | No equipment was rated HIGH risk by RoSPA inspectors in 2023/24. Areas currently (March 2024) being monitored include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the banks to the fort • some of the playground matting • the multi-play climbing frame • parts of the Trim Trail. Remedial work in each area being planned. |
| Other Playground Equipment | a) Structural failure b) Other injury from structure c) Falling/tripping | Members of the public (esp. children) | Regular inspections by Council, playground specialists and RoSPA approved inspectors. Maintenance programme. Notices regarding safety. | LOW / MEDIUM | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some of the playground matting • the multi-play climbing frame • parts of the Trim Trail. Remedial work in each area being planned. |
| Benches, tables and seating areas | a) Structural failure b) Other injury from structure | Members of the public | Regular inspections Maintenance programme | Low | √ Change of location with ground fixings being considered for some benches |

Coronavirus Notes:

1. In April 2020, in line with Government advice during the Coronavirus crisis, the Council announced the 'closure' of the Children's playground and posted notices to that effect. However, in light of the co-incident access to the adjacent open spaces and to the allotments, and the Public Footpath through the area, Council decided not to cordon-off the playground, rather to monitor the situation and ask residents to respect the closure and contact the Council if they saw any over-crowding. Councillors also regularly walk the Public Footpath through the area.
2. In June 2020, the Government announced that playgrounds could be reopened on 4th July, provided owners carried out a risk assessment within the framework of the guidelines issued on 29th June 2020. Having reviewed this document and inspected the playground, Council decided to reopen on 4th July within the framework of 'Playground2020' – a document posted to The Lee website and summarised in notices around the playground and in online postings to the village Forum. The framework was then reviewed by Council on a regular basis.
3. Early in 2021, the Parish Council announced that:
 - a. It would not be cleaning or sanitising the playground equipment
 - b. The playground is not a supervised play area
 - c. Allowing children to use playground equipment is, in this respect, done at their parent or guardian's risk
 - d. Visitors must follow and adhere to all current government advice, and are expected to comply with all current Covid restrictions

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| B. TREES, HEDGES, GRASS, FENCING, GATES AND WATER BUTTS IN THE LEE COMMON ALLOTMENTS AND PLAYING FIELDS | | | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|-------------|--|
| Risk | Hazard Details | Risk Group | Actions taken to manage risk | Risk Level | Remarks / actions planned |
| General risks in open spaces | a) Dogs: fouling & out of control b) Trees, hedges, fences c) Public footpath crosses playground/allotment area | Members of the public (esp. children) | a) Dogs on leads policy in whole area agreed b) & c) Regular inspection and maintenance | MEDIUM ⓧ | ✓ Poor state of hedge between allotments and playground after recent cutting being monitored and action planned (March 2024) The Oxford St gates were replaced in Summer 2021 |
| Vehicles entering site | Collision with pedestrians | Members of the public (esp. children) | a) Maintenance vehicles are made aware of the risks. b) Allotment-holder vehicles are banned from the area, except in exceptional circumstances which have to be pre-authorised and supervised | ⓧ LOW | ✓ Cars can be driven on to the allotment site with prior permission of TLPC, such permission to apply to a specific date only; open-ended permission to drive onsite will not be granted. |
| Inappropriate behaviour | Inappropriate behaviour due to missing signs | Members of the public | Ensure warning signs are appropriate, conspicuous and properly displayed | ⓧ LOW | ✓ |
| Water Butts | Drowning | Members of the public (esp. children) | Water butts are covered with wooden covers. Regular inspections | ⓧ LOW | ✓ New covers installed in 2019/20 Reminder sent to allotment holders to replace lids (May 2020). |

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| C. ALLOTMENTS | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---------------------------------------|---|------------|--------|---------------------------|--|
| RISK | HAZARD DETAILS | RISK GROUP | ACTIONS TAKEN TO MANAGE RISK | RISK LEVEL | | REMARKS / ACTIONS PLANNED | |
| Tools and equipment left at site | Children accessing tools and equipment | Children | Allotment-holders are instructed not to leave tools and equipment on site. | ? | LOW | √ ? | Terms and Conditions for allotment holders updated and small sheds now permitted. (See note below) |
| Products grown on allotments | Poisons and other hazardous materials | Members of the public (esp. children) | Allotment-holders are instructed not to grow poisonous or other hazardous plants. Potential hazardous materials e.g. weed killers and fertilisers must be removed from the site after use. | ? | LOW | √ ? | Reminder sent to allotment holders not to store inflammable or dangerous chemicals on site. (See note below) |
| Use of power equipment (e.g. strimmer; rotavator) on-site | Stones and other material injuring passers by | Members of the public (esp. children) | Until now, The Parish Council has relied on parents, allotment holders present on site and the children themselves to manage this risk. | ? | LOW | √ ? | (see note below) |
| General risk to children as a result of proximity to playground | Most of the allotments are unfenced. Children can enter / walk through / play in the allotment areas and thereby expose themselves to the above risks. | Children | Until now, we have relied on parents, allotment holders present on site and the children themselves to manage this risk. | ? | MEDIUM | √ ? ? | (See note below) |

NOTE (2023): In 2023 the Parish Council introduced a more structured approach to allotment inspections, with individual plot feedback being given to tenants. Adherence to the Terms and Conditions of the tenancies has been emphasised, including such issues as: tools and equipment and chemicals on site; fencing of plots; products grown. Some improvements have been seen and the more structured inspections will now continue.

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| D. ROADSIDE ASSETS (BENCHES) | | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| RISK | HAZARD DETAILS | RISK GROUP | ACTIONS TAKEN TO MANAGE RISK | RISK LEVEL | REMARKS / ACTIONS PLANNED |
| Other benches & seating areas | a) Structural failure b) Other injury from structure | Members of the public | Regular inspections Maintenance programme | Low <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ✓ | Additional supports added to bench at Swan Bottom in May 2021. |

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| E. FINANCIAL | | | | | |
|-----------------------|---|----------------|---|----------------------|--|
| RISK | HAZARD DETAILS | RISK GROUP | ACTIONS TAKEN TO MANAGE RISK | RISK LEVEL | REMARKS |
| Fraud | Fraudulent payments or transfers | Parish Council | Financial Controls in place Annually reviewed Independent Internal Audit Only the Clerk and Chair (in extremis) are authorised to create online payments. Two councillors must approve each payment before it is made, with Financial Procedures clearly stating who is eligible to approve. | ☒ VERY LOW ✓ | The Financial Controls regarding who is eligible to approve online payments, in conjunction with the bank imposed controls over separation of creation and approval of payments, mitigate against fraud. |
| Hacking bank accounts | Someone gains unauthorised access to our bank accounts | Parish Council | Only the Clerk and Chair (in extremis) are authorised to create payments. Two councillors must approve each payment before it is made, with Financial Procedures clearly stating who is eligible to approve. | VERY LOW ✓ ☒ | Even if one councillor's account is hacked, the requirement for three people to create and approve all payments provides additional security. |
| Solvency | Urgent unbudgeted costs (e.g. major asset failure) | Parish Council | Annually reviewed and monitored by regular meetings of the Finance Group | LOW ✓ | At the start of 2023/24, the General Reserve stood at slightly over 50% of the annual precept. It is planned to increase this over the next two years |
| Insurance | a) Adequacy of cover b) Inadequate record keeping of Task Force activities c) Inadequate inspection / record keeping of asset maintenance | Parish Council | Annually reviewed | VERY LOW ✓ | |

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| F. INFORMATION | | | | | | |
|--|--|----------------|---|------------|---|--|
| RISK | HAZARD DETAILS | RISK GROUP | ACTIONS TAKEN TO MANAGE RISK | RISK LEVEL | | REMARKS |
| Data Security | Compromise to Council data held on Clerk's and councillors' PCs, on commercial website and on files at Clerk's home. | Parish Council | The Clerk's PC runs with security protection and back-up. No 'original' information is held on the website. | ☒ LOW | ✓ | TO BE REVIEWED in 2024: * The Council will seek guidance from NALC on what evidence is needed that councillors have adequate computer virus protection on their home PCs. * All governance and significant other documents will be stored in the cloud area, which is password protected to be accessible only to the Clerk and councillors |
| Data Protection / Freedom of Information | a) Request by residents and other members of the public b) GDPR Compliance | Parish Council | Privacy Policy document approved | ☒ LOW | ✓ | The Council introduced bespoke email accounts for all councillors in 2019/20 |
| Website / The Lee Forum | a) Hacking b) Inappropriate postings by the public to the on-line Forum | Parish Council | a) Website hosted with secure domain on commercial server b) Administrative access to website and Forum restricted to lead councillors and Clerk c) All new Registrations manually checked d) Code of Practice for The Lee Forum | ☒ LOW | ✓ | |

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| H. LISTED MONUMENTS AND NOTICEBOARD | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|------------|---|
| Risk | Hazard Details | Risk Group | Actions taken to manage risk | Risk Level | Remarks / actions planned |
| War Memorial | a) Tripping b) Damage to memorial | Members of the public | Chain-link and posts delineate the area around the memorial Regular inspections | ☒ LOW | √ Pavement repointed with lime mortar May/June 2021 |
| The Well | a) Structure causing injury b) Falling in | Members of the public Contractors | Regular inspections Maintenance programme Cover over well Cog & Chain kept locked | ☒ LOW | √ |
| Notice Board at Parish Hall | Collapse | Members of the public | Regular inspections Maintenance programme | ☒ LOW | √ To be checked by Cllr Wilkinson and Clerk on a regular basis when posting notices. |

| I. LEE CLUMP POND | | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|--|---|------------|--|
| Risk | Hazard Details | Risk Group | Actions taken to manage risk | Risk Level | Remarks / actions planned |
| The pond area | (a) Drowning (b) Tripping and falling (c) Flooding | Members of the public | The pond is at present fenced-off from the public. Regular inspections | ☒ LOW | √ Cllr Sully to monitor until agreement reached on the future of the pond |
| Trees / Hedgerow / Fencing | (a) Falling trees / branches (b) Damage to fencing | Members of the public (including neighbours) | Regular inspections | ☒ LOW | √ Cllr Sully to monitor until agreement reached on the future of the pond |