



## NORTHAM TOWN COUNCIL

Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam EX39 1BY

Acting Town Clerk: Guy Langton (CiLCA, PSLCC)

Telephone: 01237/474976

[admin@northamtowncouncil.gov.uk](mailto:admin@northamtowncouncil.gov.uk)

[www.northamtowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.northamtowncouncil.gov.uk)

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### To all members of the Council:

You are hereby summoned to attend the **PARKS and RECREATION COMMITTEE** meeting on

**Wednesday 21st January 2026 at 6:30pm**

at The Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam for the transaction of the business listed on the agenda below.

### Membership:

Cllrs Jeremy Bell, Barry Edwards, Peter Hames, Claire Hodson, Sam Newman-McKie, Niki Tait, Jane Whittaker Plus the Mayor, Cllr Louis Bach (ex-officio).

### Questions by the public

There will be a period for questions by the public. In accordance with Standing Order 3, members of the public may make representations, ask questions and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of any Council business at Full Council, and at Committee meetings in respect of business on the agenda.

Anyone wishing to ask questions is requested to notify the Town Clerk prior to the meeting.

### Recording, photographs and filming

In accordance with the Council's policy on filming and recording of Local Council and Committee meetings (available to read in the Chamber) and arising from the *Local Government and Accountability Act 2014* the press or public may audio-record, photograph or film meetings, or report from the meeting using social media. As such, members of the public may be recorded or photographed during the meeting. Anyone wishing to record or photograph the meeting must notify the Town Clerk before the commencement of the meeting.

### Public attendance at Council and committee meetings

As a public body, Northam Town Council understands the need for transparency and accountability. The Council will therefore seek to conduct meetings using practices and procedures set out within the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, which states:

*Subject to subsection (2)\* below, any meeting of a body exercising public functions, being a body to which this Act applies, shall be open to the public.*

Subsection (2) states:

*Where a meeting is open to the public, a body may, by resolution exclude the public from the meeting (whether during the whole or part of the proceedings) whenever publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons stated in the resolution and arising from the nature of that business or of the proceedings; and where such a resolution is passed, this Act shall not require the meeting to be open to the public during proceedings to which the resolution applies.*

Therefore, the Council's policy is to allow public access to meetings unless the business being transacted is confidential or there are 'other special reasons' to exclude the public.

*Guy Langton*

Guy Langton, Town Clerk & RFO

Date of issue: 15th January 2026

## **AGENDA**

- 1 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)** *All apologies must be notified to the Town Council offices by 5pm on the day of the meeting.*
- 2 Chair's announcements**
- 3 To receive any dispensations and disclosable pecuniary or other interests** *Members are reminded that all interests must be declared prior to the item being discussed.*
- 4 To agree the agenda as published.**
- 5 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Parks and Recreation Committee held on 19th November 2025 (p3-p6)**
- 6 Public Participation** *Members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. Each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 4 minutes. The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing orders shall not exceed 20 minutes.*
- 7 To receive an update on actions (p7)**
- 8 To receive a report from the chair of FOTWHOP (p9, verbal)**
- 9 To update members on the MUGA Project at Westward Ho! (p9, verbal)**
- 10 To update members on the community orchard and wildflower area in Anchor Park, Appledore 2511/458 (p9)**
- 11 To connect the Tarmac/wetpour path to the play area at Lords Meadow (p9)**
- 12 To replace damaged and diseased Silver Birch trees at Lords Meadow p10)**
- 13 To hire a temporary PumpTrack for Lords Meadow (p10)**
- 14 To agree a location for a permanent Concrete or fibre glass Pumptrack within the Parish. (p10)**
- 15 To lay (Devon Style) and refill the gaps within the Hegde line at Lords Meadow (p11)**

**Northam Town Council – Minutes of the Parks and Recreation committee meeting held 19<sup>th</sup> November 2025 at 6.30pm in the Town Hall, Windmill Lane, Northam.**

Present: Cllrs Peter Hames (Chair), Jeremy Bell, Barry Edwards, Claire Hodson, Sam Newman-McKie, Niki Tait, Jane Whittaker Plus the Mayor, Cllr Louis Bach (ex-officio).

In attendance: Ian Rawle – Parks & Buildings Manager.  
Christine Hutchins – Friends of Westward Ho! Park (FOTWHOP).

**2511/445 To receive and approve apologies for absence, in accordance with Local Government Act 1972 s85(1)**

There were none

**2511/446 Chair's Announcements**

The Chair made no announcements.

The Parks and Buildings Manager updated the Committee on the following matters:

**1. Installation of CCTV at Westward Ho!**

The installation of CCTV in Westward Ho! is scheduled for 15th and 16th December.

**2. Appledore School Hedging Project**

Appledore School will be planting a 100m strip of native hedging within the school grounds on 28th November.

Northam Town Council will support the project by providing three members of the Maintenance Team to assist on the day, along with any councillors who wish to volunteer and show support for the school's environmental initiative.

**3. Funding Approval for the MUGA at Westward Ho!**

Torrige District Council has approved funding for the MUGA following the C&R Committee meeting last night.

The Council's application was agreed in full, with £58,949 awarded toward the MUGA (estimated cost: £68,949).

An additional £14,000 has been approved to cover 10 years of maintenance.

Northam Town Council has already allocated £22,500 in the 2025–26 budget for the MUGA and for future park maintenance reserves.

**2511/447 To receive any dispensations and disclosable pecuniary or other interests**

Members were reminded that all interests must be declared prior to the item being discussed.

**2511/448 To agree the agenda as published**

It was **resolved** to agree the agenda as published.

**Proposed** Cllr Bach, Seconded Cllr Bell (all in favour)

**2511/449 To confirm as a correct record and sign the minutes of the Parks and Recreation Committee held on 17<sup>th</sup> September 2025**

It was **resolved** that to approve the minutes as a true and correct record, which were signed by the Chair.

**Proposed** Cllr Bach, Seconded Cllr Bell (majority in favour, 3 abstain – not present at the meeting).

**2511/450 Public Participation**

*Members of the public are permitted to make representations, answer questions and give evidence in respect of any item of business included in the agenda. Each member of the public is entitled to speak once only in respect of business itemised on the agenda and shall not speak for more than 4 minutes. The period of time which is designated for public participation in accordance with standing orders shall not exceed 20 minutes.*

There were no members of the public present other than Christine Hutchins (FOTWHOP), who would be invited to contribute at the relevant time.

**2511/451 To receive an update on actions**

The Action table is presented below, councillors requested 2 further points added.

1. To install wooden post fencing around the grass area/boat (behind St Marys Church) on the Churchfield Road, this is to stop car parking on the grassed area.
2. To seek legal advice regarding installation of a step at Blackies (Ref: 2507/194 Construction of Steps and improvement of 'desire line' surface at Blackies Footpath)

**Action Point: To add the two above action points to the list**

1	Actions arising from Play Inspection Reports			On the agenda ONGOING	Works to all Parks continue
2	Schedule Play Inspection Reports for 2025-26			Scheduled for January/February 2026 COMPLETE	Keep on agenda to roll through 26 - 27
3	The installation of CCTV at Westward Ho! Park within the Northam Town Councils grounds.	The Parks & Recreation Manager is currently looking into costings and suitable locations for the installation. ONGOING	The Parks & Recreation Manager is currently looking into costings and suitable locations for the installation. ONGOING	Awaiting quote from contractor. ONGOING	Awaiting camera location conformation from M&E alarms
4	The volunteer gardeners asked the Council to help recruit volunteers through its communication channels. Further discussion with the Town Clerk and Community Engagement Officer is needed.	Not started. INCOMPLETE	Not started. INCOMPLETE	Started. An email has been sent to Barbara asking whether the Council should design a poster or if there is an existing one we can use for social media promotion.	Facebook has been used to publish recruitment posters. It is <b>suggested</b> that these are reposted every six weeks to maintain visibility and engagement.

- 2511/452 To receive a report from the chair of FOTWHOP**  
Barbara reported, through the Parks and Buildings Manager, that the volunteers were very disappointed by the recent theft and vandalism in the Park.  
Thanks, were also given to Cllr Bach for his contribution towards the replacement roses.  
Report by Christine Hutchins  
**200 Club**
- Participation numbers: 130
- Gardeners' Hours**
- September: 81.5 hours
  - October: 88 hours
  - 8 gardeners attended during the above months
- This was **noted** by the Council.
- 2511/453 To note the training provided by Jeremy Weiss at Burrough Farm**  
The Parks and Buildings Manager reported that a two-day course on Devon-style traditional hedge laying was attended by the Maintenance Team. The training helps to improve wildlife habitats and supports local biodiversity.  
Professionally laid hedges create stronger, healthier boundaries that regenerate from the base, providing long-term management benefits and maintaining a traditional rural appearance. Hedge laying also promotes dense growth, offering valuable shelter and nesting sites for birds and other wildlife while helping to maintain and enhance local biodiversity.  
This was **noted** by the Council.
- 2511/454 To note the works completed by Steve McCulloch hedge at Burrough Farm (Traditional Devon Style)**  
The Parks and Buildings Manager reported that works have been completed by Steve McCulloch on the hedge at Burrough Farm, carried out in the traditional Devon style. The hedges had become excessively tall and wide and have now been laid to rejuvenate their condition and restore them to a more manageable size.  
This was **noted** by the Council.
- 2511/455 To purchase Beech and Hazel trees (whips) to re-establish the Hedge line/row at Burrough Farm**  
The Parks and Buildings Manager reported that it is proposed to purchase 20 Beech and 20 Hazel whips to re-establish the hedge line at Burrough Farm. This initiative aims to restore the natural boundary and enhance biodiversity in the area, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the hedge row.  
The Council **agreed** to purchase the whips or apply to the Woodland Trust for the new whips.  
**Proposed** Cllr Hodson, Seconded Cllr Whittaker (all in favour)  
**Action Point : Purchase the whips or apply to the Woodland Trust.**
- 2511/456 To replace the existing entrance at Lords Meadow**  
The Parks and Buildings Manager reported that the wooden entrance on Diddywell Lane leading to Lords Meadow Park is showing significant signs of rot and movement. It was recommended that the Council resolves to replace the existing entrance with a new one, to be built and installed by the Maintenance Team.  
The Council **agreed** to replace the gates at a cost not exceeding £500.  
**Proposed** Cllr Whittaker, Seconded Cllr Bach (all in favour)  
**Action Point: To replace the gates**

2511/457

**To upgrade the North entrance gates (access and pedestrian) at Anchor Park**

It was **agreed** to repair the current gates and to investigate other options, including replacement or commissioning new gates for the park.

**Proposed** Cllr Bach, Seconded Cllr Whittaker (all in favour)

**Action Point: to repair the current gates and to investigate other options, including replacement or commissioning new gates for the park.**

2511/458

**To consider a proposal from Councillor Jeremy Bell**

Cllr Bell briefed the Council on a project to create a community orchard and wildflower area in Anchor Park, Appledore. The initiative aims to enhance biodiversity, support pollinators, and provide an educational and recreational green space for local residents and schools.

The Project Form for the Anchor Park planting scheme was received and **noted** by the Council.

Key benefits include:

- Planting of fruit trees, herbs, and pollinator-friendly wildflowers
- Hands-on involvement from local schoolchildren and volunteers
- Long-term maintenance by the Town Council team, with no additional financial impact

The total project cost is £2,853.95, to be funded jointly by Northam Town Council and the Councillor's Localities Budget.

The Council **agreed** to **proceed** with the project in accordance with the submitted Project Form.

**Proposed** Cllr Edwards, Seconded Cllr Tait (all in favour)

There being no further business the meeting closed at 19:11pm.

Signed.....Dated.....

**Item 7**

Action		January 2025	March 2025	May 2025	September 2025	November 2025	January 2026
1	The installation of CCTV at Westward Ho! Park within the Northam Town Councils grounds.	The Parks & Recreation Manager is currently looking into costings and suitable locations for the installation. ONGOING	The Parks & Recreation Manager is currently looking into costings and suitable locations for the installation. ONGOING	Awaiting quote from contractor. ONGOING	Awaiting camera location conformation from M&E alarms	Awaiting date of installation by M&E alarms	COMPLETE
2	The WWHo! volunteer gardeners asked the Council to help recruit volunteers through its communication channels. Further discussion with the Town Clerk and Community Engagement Officer is needed.	Not started. INCOMPLETE	Not started. INCOMPLETE	Started. An email has been sent to Barbara asking whether the Council should design a poster or if there is an existing one we can use for social media promotion.	Facebook has been used to publish recruitment posters. It is <b>suggested</b> that these are reposted every six weeks to maintain visibility and engagement.	A Facebook post for Volunteers to be posted 20 <sup>th</sup> November.	COMPLETE

Action	November 2025	January 2026
3. To install wooden post fencing around the grass area/boat (behind St Marys Church) on the Churchfield Road, this is to stop car parking on grassed area.	Added to actions	Cannot be completed – response from DCC - Any bollards or posts installed must be set at least 450mm back from the kerb, otherwise they risk blocking the footpath, which would be unlawful. If vehicles are obstructing the area, it is ultimately a police matter, regardless of existing restrictions.
4. To seek legal advice regarding installation of a step at Blackies (Ref: 2507/194 Construction of Steps and improvement of ‘desire line’ surface at Blackies Footpath)	Added to actions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advice from DCC - If you create access and steps and then encourage the public to use the steps, then you will be obliged to ensure they meet any required standard and regularly check them and maintain. You would be liable in the event of an incident if you failed to check/maintain or if you provide something unsuitable, ie not meeting safety standards etc.</li> <li>• Look at Public Liability Insurance.</li> <li>• Permission from the Landowner and also if exiting onto a road or Highway including a Public Pavement, you’d need permission from Highways. You would also need to check if Planning Permission was required re any structure.</li> </ul> <p>More investigation with insurers needed.</p>
5. To purchase Beech and Hazel trees (whips) to re-establish the Hegde line/row at Burrough Farm	Added to actions	Whips purchased awaiting delivery.
6. To replace existing entrance at Lords Meadow	Added to actions	Awaiting posts from supplier.
7. To repair the current gates at Anchor Park and to investigate other options, including replacement or new gates for the park.	Added to actions	Advice from Navantia UK (Applodore Shipyard). Awaiting parts from supplier.



**Item 10**

Members are advised that pupils from Appledore Primary School and St Margaret's School will be attending the event, with approximately 10 children from each school taking part. Appledore Primary School has requested that the date be moved from Thursday 22nd January to Friday 23rd January, due to prior commitments that they are unable to change. The proposed start time remains 10:00am.

Members are also informed that planters have now been put in position within the park, and the trees have been collected. In addition, donations have been received for planting, including herbs, blueberry plants, and strawberry plants, which will support the ongoing development of the community orchard and wildflower area.

**Item 11**

Members are advised that it is proposed to connect the existing tarmac/wetpour path to the play area at Lords Meadow at an estimated cost within £500. This will include the purchase of MOT Type 1 sub-base, concrete, and black wetpour.

The works will be undertaken in-house by the maintenance team.





**Item 12**

Members are advised that three Silver Birch trees are showing signs of disease or possible failure, including dead limbs and crown dieback, and it is recommended that these trees be removed and replaced.

In addition, the Silver Birch located at the Diddywell Lane entrance is confirmed to be dead and requires removal and replacement.

**Recommendation:**

It is **recommended** that replacement Silver Birch trees (4 trees) be purchased from Albion, with the cost to be confirmed.

**Item 13**

Members are advised that it is **proposed** to hire a temporary PumpTrack at Lords Meadow over the summer holidays, with the **proposed** hire period running from 3rd August to 28th August. The cost is currently being confirmed and is awaited from the contractor.

**Item 14**

Members are asked to **consider** whether they would like to progress with the installation of a permanent concrete or fibre-glass pump track within the Parish and, if so, to agree a suitable location.

**Item 15**

Members are advised that it is proposed to engage Steve McCulloch to carry out the laying of the Eastern hedgerow at the JH Taylor Estate.

Members are further advised that members of the maintenance team will join Steve McCulloch's workforce to assist with the works. The maintenance team have previously received hedge-laying training from Jeremy Weiss, ensuring they are familiar with the required techniques.

The cost for the works is currently being confirmed and is awaited from the contractor.

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that Members **approve** the engagement of Steve McCulloch to lay the hedgerow with support from the trained maintenance team.

