Holford Parish Council – Agenda Motion Form

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| *Motion to be added to Agenda:*  ***To review the Environment Management Plan for Holford Village including the maintenance of green spaces within the village***  Words to put on the agenda, needs to be an action such as ‘to agree’ ‘to approve’ | *Meeting Date:* 11th September 2023 |
| *The situation to be addressed:* In May 2021 Holford Parish Council agreed to conduct an experiment in ‘wilding’ of the Parish grass verges as promoted by Plantlife. The aim being to encourage wild plants and provide a haven for bees and other pollinators. Details Agreed below:   * BOWLING GREEN Strim around perimeter posts and furniture. Leave a 1 meter border next to the property hedge on the bowling green and cut all grass within the rest of the boundary. * DODINGTON FOUNTAIN and NEARBY ISLAND Strim around fountain, post box and animal warning sign. Spray with weed killer the area immediately surrounding the fountain up to the warning sign. Clear undergrowth and mow/strim as practicable to achieve a tidy appearance. * ISLAND WHERE STOWEY LANE JOINS THE A39 Strim around the posts to a distance where a mower would be able to approach to ensure continuity of cut grass. Cut grass over the island. * GRASS AREA ADJACENT TO A39 OPPOSITE FORD COTTAGE Cut grass and strim around base of tree. * VERGES EITHER SIDE of A39 FROM LAY BY to VILLAGE HALL Both Uncut, opposite side to the Cricket Ground to have a path by the hedge up to the Layby. * DOG POUND Keep tidy the surrounding area. (Spray weed killer on top of the walls). * BUS SHELTER Keep tidy. * TRIANGLE Uncut * GREEN CLOSE NOTICEBOARD GRASS AREA Cut grass and keep tidy.   In Sept 2021 – it was agreed that some signage would be useful to explain what was happening and why the areas were not being cut. Agreed to purchase the signs in Jan 2022.  In 2023 the maintenance contract was extended (as per terms and conditions) with the amendment that the A39 layby be cut monthly May to Sept and the small triangle left wild until Sept. Unfortunately, due to a misunderstanding, the small triangle was cut and the A39 wasn’t!  In July 2023, the following were noted as being present on the A39 triangle before it was cut: *Wildflowers*  *Cut leafed crane’s bill*  *Red clover*  *Greater knapweed*  *Black knapweed*  *Common cat’s ear*  *Common sow-thistle*  *Hogweed*  *Broad leaved dock*  *Butterflies:*  *Red admiral*  *meadow brown*  *Gatekeeper*  *Large white*  *Marbled white*  *Grasses*  *Colonial bent*  *Yorkshire fog*  *Tall oat grass*  *Orchard grass*  *Perennial rye grass*  *Sweet vernal grass*  *Not to mention the grasshoppers, crickets and the large number of pollinating bees, flies and bugs on the flowers.*  This has led to a small number of complaints from residents who feel that we are surrounded by countryside and that it would be better for the Village to look neat and tidy. The clerk has also received a couple of emails along similar lines.  Holford Parish Council has a duty to support the initiatives of Somerset Council where at all possible.  Somerset Council (under Environment Act 2021) has a statutory duty to produce a Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Somerset West and Taunton produced an Ecological Emergency vision with the vision of *“Our vision is a district where the needs of wildlife, people, and our local economies are integrated in a way that enables nature and communities to thrive now and in the future.”*  There is a wealth of information at: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/environment-and-food-safety/climate-and-ecological-emergency/natural-environment/>  Obviously, we need to agree an ongoing strategy for the Village taking into account the views of the village and the environment needs.  The maintenance agreement needs to go out to tender towards the end of this year/early 2024 if we are to get a revised list of requirements agreed. | |
| *Your solution (if applicable):*  The Bowling Green maintenance and the other grass verges do not appear to cause any issues.  The proposal is to cut a 2m wide strip (for visibility) on the whole of the circumference of the A39 layby triangle monthly May to August, leaving the cuttings in place, then cut the entire triangle in September with the collection of cuttings.  The small triangle should be mowed monthly May to September, the wall strimmed and the grass cuttings collected. | |
| *Benefits:* | *Disadvantages:* |
| *Costs (if known):* | *Are these costs actual or an estimate? If actual, we require 3 quotes.*  *Has opportunities for funding been explored?* |
| *Next Steps:* | |
| For completion after the meeting: Motion passed Yes/No  Agreed next steps: | |