



**WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE AMENITIES, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE
HELD AT 32 WATERLOO STREET ON
MONDAY 11th NOVEMBER 2025**

Meeting Commenced: 7.00 pm

Meeting Concluded: 8.45 pm

PRESENT: Councillors Owen James (C), Ray Armstrong, Roger Bailey, Annabelle Chard, Peter Crew, John Crockford-Hawley, Simon-Harrison-Morse, Caroline Reynolds, Robert Skeen and John Standfield.

ALSO, IN ATTENDANCE: Sarah Pearse (CEO/Town Clerk), Helen Morton (Director of Finance and Resources/RFO), Samantha Bishop (Democratic Services Manager, Warren Parker-Mills (Communications and Marketing Manager), Sally Kingston (member of the public) and 5 (other members of the public).

Sally Kingston was invited to address the meeting in relation Padel Tennis Provision in Weston super Mare. It was noted that a briefing note had been circulated to the committee in advance of the meeting.

Weston needed an indoor padel tennis facility (minimum 6 courts) serving the local area from Portishead to Taunton. Padel was a rapidly expanding, social, and inclusive racket sport that promotes physical activity and mental wellbeing for all ages and abilities. There was currently no indoor provision in the town or county; residents travelled and spend outside the area to play. An indoor, year-round venue with club facilities would retain local spending, increase community participation in sport, and deliver social, health and economic benefits. It was therefore requested that Weston Town Council and North Somerset Council collaborate on moving the project forward.

The Chair thanked Sally for her address and advised that that only the items on the agenda, could be discussed, unless the Chair of the meeting allowed this in accordance with Standing Orders.

It was therefore

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew

SECONDED BY: Councillor Caroline Reynolds

A vote was taken and **carried**. Accordingly.

RESOLVED: To suspend Standing Orders at 19.06 pm in order to discuss and item that was not on the agenda.

A question and answer session then ensued.

The committee advised that whilst the town council did not have the facilities or remit to help with the request, it would be more than happy to lobby North Somerset Council and support with a feasibility study

The Chair thanked Sally and supporting members of the public for their address, who left the meeting at 19.14 pm.

Standing Orders were then resumed at 19.15 pm

213	Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes There were no apologies for absence received.
214	Declarations of Interest Councillor Roger Bailey declared a non-pecuniary interest as an allotment plot holder.
215	To agree the accuracy of the previous Amenities, Culture and Leisure Committee Minutes held on 15th September 2025 The minutes of the Amenities Culture and Leisure Committee had been previously circulated. PROPOSED BY: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley SECONDED BY: Councillor Simon Harrison-Morse A vote was taken and carried . Accordingly. RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Amenities Culture and Leisure Committee be signed and approved.
216	Budget Considerations 2026/2027 The report of the Director of Finance and Resources had been previously circulated which outlined budget areas reviewed as part of the first draft review for the 2026/2027 budget and identified income and expenditure that needed consideration against the budgets that were set in 2025/2026. Proposals had been tailored to achieved the councils requirements (F & GP) to have a standstill budget plus CPI for the year 2026/2027. PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew SECONDED BY: Councillor ?? A vote was taken and carried . Accordingly. RECOMMENDED: That all of the costs and income identified within the budget holders' reports be included in the draft budget for 2026/2027.

217	<p>Committee Forward Plan for the year 2025/26</p> <p>Due to technical difficulties, the Forward Plan could not be viewed at the meeting.</p> <p>The Democratic Services Officer apologised for the inconvenience and would circulate this to members the following day. It was noted that the Forward Plan had been viewed at both the July and September meetings and was inclusive of all suggestions made at the previous meeting, as approved in the minutes.</p> <p>RESOLVED: Noted.</p>
218	<p><u>AMENITIES</u></p> <p>To receive the Notes of the (DRAFT) Allotments Community Consultative Group held on 2nd October 2025</p> <p>The Notes had been previously circulated.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Notes of the (DRAFT) Allotments Community Consultative Group held on 2nd October 2025 be received.</p>
219	<p><u>CULTURE</u></p> <p>To receive the (DRAFT) Notes of the FINAL Old Town Quarry, Start and Finish Group meeting held on the 30th September 2025 (attached) ()</p> <p>The Notes had been previously circulated.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew SECONDED BY: Councillor Annabelle Chard</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Notes of the Old Town Quarry, Start and Finish Group meetings held on the 30th September 2025 be received.</p> <p>It was noted that as the Quarry project was now complete and therefore, operational. It would now fall under the remit of and report to this committee.</p>
220	<p>To receive the (DRAFT) Notes of the Heritage Arts and Culture Community Consultative Group held on the 9th October 2025</p> <p>The Notes had been previously circulated.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Notes of the Heritage Arts and Culture Community Consultative Group held on the 9th October 2025 be received.</p>
221	<p>Old Town Quarry</p> <p>The Community Ownership Fund and Project evaluation summary report of the Senior Development Officer for noting, had been previously circulated.</p> <p>It was noted that:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall project figures of £1,067,349, consisted of only £142,358 investment by WSMTC. • That there were delays in receiving the grant funding, National grid connection, covid ramifications, increasing costs of materials and structural reports which had delayed the project. It was initially hoping to open in the summer, which moved to September and the actual opening in October. Also there were delays. • It would be useful to evaluate how WSMTC could learn from the process, identifying where there were overspends. <p>RESOLVED: That the report be received and noted.</p>
222	<p>Blue Plaque</p> <p>The report of the Civic Officer and PA to the Town Clerk/CEO had been previously circulated, recommending to consider the purchase and fitting of a blue plaque as requested for Major P.D. O'Connell by a member of the public.</p> <p>Discussion ensued and councillors were not enthused about the concept of singling individuals out from many serving in the war for commemoration.</p> <p>It was noted that the costs associated with erecting a blue plaque were £800-1k.</p> <p>It was suggested that a smaller working group be formed to look at the concept of Blue Plaques in the future to include the exploration of blue plaques on buildings.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley SECONDED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly. (noting 1x abstention).</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To decline the request for a Blue Plaque. 2. To reestablish a working group to consider the concept of blue plaques for 2026/27.
223	<p>Weston Wallz – proposal for 2026/2027</p> <p>The proposal from Weston Wallz for members to consider and approve for inclusion with the existing Grants Event Budget level proposals as per previous years, had been previously circulated.</p> <p>The Town Clerk clarified the proposal included two options as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tier One: (£32,000 total Funding of which £25,000 from WSMTC) • Tier Two: (£68,000 total Funding of which £25,000 from WSMTC) <p><i>A member of the public left the meeting at 19.57 pm</i></p> <p>Discussion ensued regarding the lack of local artist involvement in the project, regardless of the Town Councils previous expectations made.</p>

	<p>Concerns were raised regarding some of the artwork and the need to balance quality over quality.</p> <p>It was agreed that where possible local artists should be used, however standards did need to be maintained. Local artists could get involved in other ways rather than just the artwork.</p> <p>The white wall in spider lane had been highlighted to a Councillor for use in the project.</p> <p>The Town Clerk confirmed that the council suggest walls for use, however explained that all walls were subject to owners and planning (conservation) permissions.</p> <p>The Town Clerk advised that Upfest upscaled and upskilled where possible and that wall owners did like to be involved in the artwork design.</p> <p>Discussion ensued regrading sector speak and in particular, social media, artists reach and coverage.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Simon Harrison-Morse SECONDED BY: Councillor Robert Skeen</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly. (noting 5for; 2against; 1abstention)</p> <p>RESOLVED: To approve the Weston Wallz proposal (Tier Two: (£68,000 total Funding of which £25,000 from WSMTC) for 2026/2027 for inclusion with the existing Grants Event Budget level proposals as per previous years.</p>
224	<p><u>LEISURE</u></p> <p>Play Area Capital Works Programme 2025-2026</p> <p>The report of the Town Clerk/CEO and Senior Development Officer had been previously circulated.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor John Crockford-Hawley SECONDED BY: Councillor Peter Crew</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly.</p> <p>RESOLVED: To receive the Play Area Capital Works Programme 2025-2026.</p>
225	<p>20.17 pm</p> <p><i>To resolve under the Public Bodies (Admissions of Meeting) Act 1960 to exclude the public and press for the following item by reasons of the confidential nature of the business.</i></p>
	<p>A member raised his disappointment that his previous request to receive a future report regarding Visit Weston partners packages, had not yet been received by the committee and requested that it be submitted at a future meeting.</p>

To appoint the Visit Weston website contactor

The tender analysis report of the Senior Development Officer had been previously circulated, which provided an analysis of the tenders submitted in response to a concession advert which went live October 2025 for the procurement of a Design & Build Contractor to support the creation of the Visit Weston Website, with ongoing maintenance.

In summary, 14 submissions were received across the two tender options. The tenders had been assessed using a weighting of 60% to the technical evaluation (including social value for Option A only), and 40% to the interview. The final scores were outlined within the report which recommended the following:

1. To consider the outcomes of the scoring and procurement process and appoint a contractor to undertake the Visit Weston Website requirements, (noting the highest scoring overall was for Plaster with a overall score of 95. The next highest score went to Squarebird (93)). The Council did not have to appoint the highest scoring but should have regard for the process that had been undertaken and was advertised within this procurement exercise.
2. If 1 was agreed, recommend to full Town Council on the 24th November 2025, that the order for the works could be raised, whilst recognising that the budget provision for the works had been included within the 2026/2027 budget setting process to allow the build to commence and be completed prior to the current website contract ceasing 31/03/26

Discussion ensued and it was noted that all suppliers could build a good product, however the two recommended within the report had the edge from a profile perspective.

One of the two's professionalism really came through in the interviews, whereas the other's enthusiasm really came through and it was noted that their employees were local.

It was clarified that the reason for options A&B was to try and recover some costs and that as the process had transpired, Shopify was not required.

It was agreed that the committee should trust and endorse the recommendations generated from the council's agreed tender process as outlined within the report.

PROPOSED BY: Councillor Peter Crew

SECONDED BY: Councillor Robert Skeen

A vote was taken and **carried**. Accordingly. (6for 1x abstention)

RESOLVED:

1. To **appoint** Plaster as the contractor to undertake the Visit Weston Website requirements (noting they were the highest scoring overall).
2. To **recommend** to full Town Council on the 24th November 2025, that the order for the works can be raised, whilst recognising that the budget provision for the works has been included within the 2026/2027 budget setting process

	to allow the build to commence and be completed prior to the current website contract ceasing 31/03/26
227	<p>Motion under Standing Order 11 - PROPOSED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey</p> <p>Proposed under Standing Orders 8.1–8.9 (Ordinary Motions)</p> <p>The Chair invited Councillor Roger Bailey to present his motion.</p> <p>PROPOSED BY: Councillor Roger Bailey SECONDED BY: Councillor Robert Skeen</p> <p>The Town Clerk provided assurances that the council had met with the Allotment Club to cooperate and support them with administering processes and advised the committee that the matter could not be discussed further without undermining another committee's resolution.</p> <p>A vote was taken and carried. Accordingly.</p> <p>RESOLVED:</p> <p>“That the Committee recognises and expresses its appreciation for the many years of service and commitment shown by the volunteers of the Weston-super-Mare Allotment Club in supporting the local management and maintenance of the town's allotment sites. The Council acknowledges the vital contribution that the Club's committee members and volunteers make in helping deliver an important community service which promotes social connection, food growing, and wellbeing among residents.</p> <p>The Committee further requests that officers continue to work collaboratively with the Allotment Club to strengthen communication, governance, and volunteer engagement, ensuring future management arrangements remain transparent, compliant with the Allotments Acts 1908–1950, and reflective of good practice in partnership working.”</p>
	<p>There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 8.45 pm</p> <p>Signed.....Dated</p> <p>Chair of the Amenities, Culture and Leisure Committee</p>



Amenities Culture & Leisure Committee 26th January 2026

Cemetery Walls update

Report from the Director of Finance & Resources

1. Purpose and Background of Report

To provide update information with regard to areas of wall which have collapsed in Milton Road Cemetery. And gain approval for emergency expenditure should it be required in the interim period whilst a full analysis and procurement exercise (including structural and build specifications) for the repairs are underway.

Wall 1 – Adjacent to the Memorial Garden

Wall 2 – K Section

As a result of heavy rainfall and storms, two areas of walling are now in need of substantial repair.

Wall 1 – This damage is thought to be a direct result of the storm and high winds over the Christmas period. The boundary wall backs onto neighbouring properties where there is a large tree close to the wall. The area has been secured off with Heras fencing and has had a visual inspection by the Councils building surveyor and arboriculturist surveyor to assess initial safety. We have gained written permission from the property owner to undertake a full survey on the tree to enable works to be specified and undertaken. This has now been completed and the report received (appendix a)

The cemetery walls are not covered under the council's insurance and as such costs will need to be met to repair this damage.

Wall 2 – This wall has been monitored for movement since it was first reported to council as a result of resolution passed in the last report of March 2025.

Following heavy rainfall this wall now has a section of collapse.



The council's professional teams are working to review previous structural engineer reports and are producing a specification for tender to repair the section working with the arboriculturist who is undertaking full tree surveys . The wall is on a split site on the old boundary wall of the original cemetery and again has significant trees adjacent to the area in question (appendix b)

Both of these projects now need to be costed and works entered into immediately working with both the Councils building surveyor and arboriculturist surveyor to move to completion.

2. Options for Council

n/a

3. Reason for Recommendation

The council has an EMR of £15,000 for Cemetery wall repairs and this will need to be utilised for the works required. It is unlikely that this value will cover the cost of both repairs.

4. Expected Benefits

Boundary walls made safe and public pathways reopened to allow full access to grave areas.

5. Implications

- Deterioration and further collapse if left
- No Access to grave areas (in K section)
- Tree surveys – may result in need to take down significant trees (Any action will be done in compliance with NSC Tree Officer)
- Works could exceed values in EMR budgets so will need to come from PPM

5.1. Legal

The Council has a legal obligation to maintain Health & Safety across all its assets.

5.2. Risks

Further Collapse



5.3. Financial Implications

Quotations will be sought following a design specification produced by the councils building surveyors at Currie Brown.

Approval of these works will be bought back to the Amenities, Culture and Leisure Committee or will go straight to Finance & General Purposes committee for approval.

From the meeting on 10th March 2025 (minute no 304), emergency works were approved that arose from the professional service reports that exceed the delegated £10,000 allowed. (This would only be used in emergency). In the absence of the CEO/Town Clerk (on leave) this delegation would be passed to the Director Finance & Resources (RFO).

5.4. Timescales

To be confirmed

5.5. Stakeholders

Professional services teams

WSMTC

Contractors

5.6. Contractors

TBC

5.7. Crime & Disorder (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

N/A

5.8. Biodiversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

The council will work with is Aboriculturist Consultant to ensure all impacts to Biodiversity have been considered.

5.9. Privacy Impact (consider Privacy Impact assessment)

N/A



WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL

5.10. Equality & Diversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

N/A

6. Appendices

- (a) Wall 1 tree report
- (b) Wall 2 tree report
- (c) Wall 2 structural survey

7. Members are recommended to:

Note the update report with regard to the cemetery walls x 2

Helen Morton

Director of Finance & Resources (RFO)

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12th March 2025

Dear Sarah,

Re: Milton Road Cemetery Boundary Wall Collapse above the Memorial Garden.

Further to your instruction to provide a report on the tree adjacent to the collapse of the boundary wall above the Memorial Garden in Milton Road Cemetery, I am writing to provide you with my provisional findings and recommendations.

Introduction

This report is restricted to arboricultural considerations relating to the Common ash *Fraxinus excelsior* that is immediately adjacent to the wall. The initial inspection took place on February 6th, 2025, when conditions were clear and dry, with a subsequent inspection from the neighbour's side on March 5th, 2025, when conditions were overcast and dry.

It is recommended that the wall is inspected by a structural engineer to determine how the condition of the wall influenced its failure. Any comments or observations made in this report about the condition of the wall in this report should be considered for accuracy by the structural engineer as this is beyond my normal area of working knowledge.

The Site

The east boundary wall, at the top of the slope, above the Memorial Garden is a stone-built wall approximately 2m high and 0.4m wide. It is ivy clad with trees growing immediately adjacent to it on either side of the boundary.

A section of the wall collapsed, and the area was fenced off with Heras fencing to prevent public access.

On the cemetery side of the wall are self-sown Sycamores and a line of Blackthorn, Holly, Ash and Sycamore saplings. On the neighbouring property is a small group of mature, predominantly Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* and ash, trees that form part of the garden. There are three significant trees that are adjacent to and overhanging the boundary.

The section of wall that has collapsed is approximately 10m in length and is immediately adjacent to the mature Common ash *Fraxinus excelsior* in the neighbouring garden.

The Tree



The Common ash *Fraxinus excelsior* is approx. 17.5m tall with a stem diameter of 0.45m. The stem forks at approx. 5m to give two main scaffold stems that support the crown. The crown is part of the joint canopy that created by the group of trees resulting in a crown asymmetry to the west, over the cemetery.

The stem has occluded wounds present at approx. 3.5 – 5m with more recent pruning wounds visible at approx. 10m. There is a lesion at approx. 4 – 4.5m on the north aspect of the stem, with bacterial flux exuding from the base of the lesion. There is major dead wood and apparent reduced vitality in the crown extremities which would indicate a possible Ash Dieback Disease *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* infection.

The tree in relation to the wall



The tree is situated immediately adjacent to the wall on land that is approx. 1m higher on the neighbour's side of the boundary compared to the ground level on the Memorial Garden side of the wall.

There are some girdling roots visible on the east aspect of the stem and between the stem and the wall on the west aspect of the stem. There is also a build of soil, stone and organic material between the base of the tree and the wall.

Minor excavations are visible around the base of the tree, but these appear to be the result of badger activity. There is no evidence of soil cracking or movement.

By running a tape between the upright sections of the wall it was determined that the wall would have been approx. 0.2m from the main stem of the tree at approx.

1.5m above ground level (agl) if the wall had been vertical. However, the gap between the base of the tree and the wall was measured at approx. 0.3m.

As shown in the above photograph, the wall has been deflected by the growth of the tree and physical pressure that will have exerted on it. The lower courses have bowed and appear to have leaned away from the tree, and the wall appears to have also been ivy clad. The change in angle of the lower courses and the freshly exposed stone appear to have resulted from the movement of the wall and its subsequent collapse.

On either side of the collapsed section of the wall it appears to return to near vertical.

Discussion

It is not possible to determine whether the collapse of the wall was caused by the tree moving in high winds. There does not appear to be any evidence of movement at the root plate, and it is not possible to conclude whether the stem would have moved with sufficient amplitude to impact the wall.

It would appear more likely that the pressure caused by the incremental growth of the tree's stem and its roots, along with the build-up of debris at the base of the tree will have caused the lower courses of the wall to deflect and bow around its stem. This, along with the condition of the wall, appears to have resulted in the wall leaning away from its original position, which with the weight of the ivy and any possible inclement weather conditions appear to have led to the wall failing.

The condition of the wall and the extent of its possible lean may have been noted in any recent and historic surveys of the cemetery's walls, which should be assessed for additional information.

In addition to the Common ash discussed in this report, there is a Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* to the south of the tree that is in decline and could impact the wall or users of the cemetery in the future. There is also another Common ash *Fraxinus excelsior* to the north of the collapsed section that appears to have an early ash Dieback infection and has a heavy lean over the boundary wall.

Conclusion

The boundary wall appears to have failed due to a combination of the physical pressure exerted on the wall by the adjacent ash tree, its movement away from the vertical, the condition of the wall, the weight of the ivy and possible inclement weather conditions.

It is recommended that the wall is inspected by a structural engineer to determine whether the observations on the wall's condition are accurate, as this is beyond my normal level of expertise.

Historic wall survey results should also be able to help determine the condition of the wall over recent years.

To repair the wall, it will be necessary to fell the tree and grind out the stump, to allow new footings to be built along the original boundary line.

It will also be necessary to remove the self-sown specimens on the memorial Garden side of the wall to allow the repairs to take place.

The tree is within the Greater Weston Conservation Area and approval for the tree's removal will need to be given by the Local Planning Authority through a Section 211 Notification.

It is recommended that the ivy is stripped from the rest of the wall to allow a full inspection of the wall's condition and to allow any additional repairs that may be recommended.

The neighbour should be informed of the likely impact of the adjacent declining Sycamore and leaning ash on the wall in future.

I trust that the above is acceptable. Please feel free to contact me with any further queries.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stephen Clark', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Stephen Clark

MICFor, MARborA

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13th March 2025

Dear Sarah,

Re: Milton Road Cemetery 'K' Section Internal Wall Collapse.

Further to your instruction to provide a report on the trees adjacent to the collapse of the retaining wall above 'K' Section in Milton Road Cemetery, I am writing to provide you with an update on my findings and recommendations.

Summary

A section of the retaining wall, approximately 5 – 6m in length, above 'K' section of Milton Road Cemetery collapsed overnight on the 5th – 6th February 2025. The debris including sections of the wall, loose stone from the wall and some backfill of loose stone and soil, fell onto the graves below the wall creating a debris field that extends towards the footpath.

A void was created immediately below the root plate of the English Yew *Taxus bacatta* T309 with fibrous roots from the tree, Ivy *Hedera helix* and the adjacent Bay Tree *Laurus nobilis* hanging down into the newly created space. At the east end of the void, there are also some anchor roots extending from the Bay tree and appear to be making some ingress in the lower courses of the wall.

It is possible that the pressure exerted by the anchor roots at the base of the wall and the fibrous roots at the top of the wall may have been a contributing factor to the wall's condition and eventual failure. However, this needs to be considered in relation to the construction and condition of the wall itself and the ongoing concern about its stability.

Despite the collapse, the Yew tree has remained in situ, and while there appears to have been some minor movement in the organic matter above the north aspect of the tree's stem, there does not appear to be any significant sign of movement on that side of the root plate. However, during the ongoing inspections and discussions, it became clear that the backfill under the root plate is not stable and there are minor voids visible. It would therefore not be possible to guarantee the safety of the workforce repairing the wall or the stability of the tree after the wall has been repaired, and it was decided to remove the tree under a 5 Day Notice.

The cemetery is situated in the Great Weston Conservation Area and North Somerset Council's Tree Officer has agreed to the removal of the tree, under a 5 Day Notice, subject to the planting of a replacement tree in the future.

Introduction

On February 6th, 2025, I was instructed by the WSMTC Grounds Manager, Sharon Miles, to attend Milton Road Cemetery and assess the Yew tree T309's condition and stability in relation to the collapse of the retaining wall above 'K' Section.

This report is restricted to arboricultural considerations relating to T309 an English Yew *Taxus baccata* that is immediately above the section of wall that collapsed. The initial inspections took place on February 6th and 9th, 2025, when conditions were clear and dry, with subsequent inspections on March 5th and 7th, 2025, when conditions were overcast and dry.

It is recommended that the wall is inspected by a structural engineer to determine how the condition of the wall influenced its failure. Any comments or observations made in this report about the condition of the wall should be considered for accuracy by the structural engineer as this is beyond my normal area of working knowledge.

The collapse took place immediately below T309 and in a section of the wall that had been fenced off due to ongoing concern about the condition of the wall, its stability and the impact of the trees above it. Initial concerns were raised in 2021, and three trees were removed to facilitate repair and/or rebuilding of the wall.

Due to financial constraints, the works were put on hold and a system of monitoring/inspection initiated, but the wall has subsequently collapsed before the works could be initiated. The wall now needs to be rebuilt and the retention of the trees behind it considered in relation to current safety, and the proposed design and construction methods required to rebuild the wall.

Timeline

April 8th, 2021 – Email discussions to determine the construction of the retaining wall adjacent to the main drive.

October 12th, 2021 – letter from SJ Surveyors Ltd to Sarah Pearse – identifies 'K' Section retaining wall as being unstable. The letter states that the wall is being pushed out of alignment by four trees on the upper level of the cemetery and is in danger of collapse. It recommends the removal of four trees to allow the wall to be repaired.

T 308 Holm Oak, T310 Holm Oak & T312 Sycamore were felled, and the grinding of the stumps was put on hold while the stability of the wall was assessed further.

April 2022 – DHD Structures – Foundation Plan – Drawing 1196-S-101 P3 – shows proposed foundations for new wall extending under T309.

July 4th, 2022 – DHD Structures provided 3 options for rebuilding the wall with foundations ranging from 2.05m wide to approx. 1m wide – option 3 least invasive option was preferred. Drawing P3 – shows extent of proposed foundations

August 22nd, 2022 – DHD Structures provided a report – Milton Road Cemetery Internal Retaining Wall Rebuild – Structural Calculations. These calculations and an approximate cost were subsequently discussed, and Sarah took to the P&F Committee for consideration.

October 21st, 2022 – email from Sarah Pearse informing of decision by Policy & Finance Committee that due to budget constraints they requested that the wall is fenced off and its condition monitored.

I was asked to liaise with Duncan Hill to arrange a suitable inspection regime. However, in 2023 a new structural surveyor was engaged, who subsequently left the council's employ before this could take place.

November 11th, 2022 – email from DHD Structures discussing WSMTC's inability to fund the recommended repairs and reiterating their recommendations to install barriers around the retaining wall until repairs are carried out.

November 2022 – Heras fencing with warning signs installed to prevent access to graves below the retaining wall.

October 2024 – T316, T317 & T318 felled to north and northwest of T309.

December 6th – 7th 2024 – Storm Darragh. Walk-over inspection.

January 24th – 25th, 2025 – Storm Éowyn. Walk-over inspection.

February 4th - 5th 2025 – retaining wall failed. Weather was light rain and light winds.

February 6th & 9th 2025 – inspections to determine the impact on the tree and its stability.

February 19th, 2025 - inspection took place with the North Somerset Council Tree Officer. It was decided that a further assessment of the root plate's stability was required prior to determining whether the tree can be retained or not.

March 5th, 2025 – inspection of the root plate took place to assess the stability of the root plate.

March 7th, 2025 - inspection took place with the tree surgery contractor to assess safety concerns and the safe removal of the tree.

Inspection Notes

The Wall

A section of the retaining wall, approximately 5-6m in length, above 'K' section of Milton Road Cemetery, and below the Yew tree T309 collapsed overnight, on February 4th – 5th, dropping down onto the graves below it and creating a debris field of wall remnants and backfill consisting of stone and soil from behind the wall. The weather conditions were reasonably benign, but light rain had fallen overnight.

The retaining wall is approximately 1.9m tall and 0.42m wide at the point of collapse. It demarcates the boundary of the original cemetery and its extension, and starts out as a low wall, approx. 5 courses in height, at its eastern origin, by the engine house and Yew tree T314. As the wall progresses westwards, the slope of the land drops away and the wall becomes taller to address the difference in levels between the upper and lower sections of the cemetery.

Immediately to the west of T309, there appears to have been an historic landslip, which along with a change in the slope results in the wall being reduced in height to approximately 0.85m.



Figure 1: Collapsed wall below T309.

The construction of the wall also appears to differ over its length, with what appears to be an older wall acting as a foundation and/or base for the upper section that appears to have a different construction method and appears to be more thoroughly cemented in place when constructed.

Whether the upper section is newer, or had a more thorough repair of the original wall may be revealed in the cemetery's records. However, the significance is that the wall appears to have collapsed from the base creating a debris field while significant sections of the upper wall remain intact and fall away from their original location to differing extents.

The three sections that have remained mostly intact have the following dimensions:

- The central section is approx. 2.12m in length, 1.12m in height and 0.42m wide.
- The smaller east section is approx. 0.4m in length, 0.78m in height and 0.42m wide
- The west section is approx. 1.09m in length, 0.74m in height and 0.42m wide.

The west section rolled away from the wall and came to rest against an adjacent grave. The central section dropped down with its distal end approx. 1.5m from the original wall and the near end approx. 0.6m from its original location. The east section has fallen into the void on its rear face with its lower face on the debris field that extends approx. 1.5m from the wall.



Figure 2: Collapsed wall with root ingress.

Behind the wall is stone infill and dry soil with some grave goods remnants that has fallen away to create a void. This extends approx. 0.4m beyond the rear face of the wall under the root plate of T309.

The void has revealed extensive fibrous rooting that extends down from the soil layer into the void, which appears to mix of Yew and Ivy roots

There are also some anchor roots present that appear to originate from the adjacent Bay tree. One of these roots appears to ingress between the courses of the lower section of the wall.

To the west of the collapsed section is an area where the slope appears to have slipped at some point in the past, and the wall steps down to a lower level approx. 0.85m above ground level.

There appears to have been some more recent pointing work carried out in this section, but there are cracks that extend into the apparently younger mortar.

The Tree



The Yew tree T309 is situated on the bank above the wall. It is a mature specimen that is part of a linear group. However, it is located below the crest of the slope where the other trees in the linear group are planted. It is not clear whether this is its original location, as there is a section of the slope immediately to the west that does not follow the line or structure of the slope and may have resulted from an historic land slip.

The Yew tree has a slight lean and crown asymmetry to the south, with a low crown above the 'K' section. This appears to have resulted from its position in the linear canopy and the recent crown suppression of the adjacent trees. This is also evidenced by the dense nature of the crown in its southern quadrant, as opposed to the sparser nature of the crown where adjacent trees have been removed adjacent to its west

and north quadrants.

The tree does not appear to have moved significantly during this event. The ground is covered in ivy around the base of the tree, and while there appears to have been a very slight disturbance in the organic matter that built up on the north side of the stem's base, there does not appear to be any cracking or movement of the soil or debris on the slope.

There is a gap that can be observed between the upper crown of T309 and T310. However, the internal growth in T310 shows good colour and vitality which would suggest that the gap is not a recent event and is more likely to be related to the removal of an adjacent Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*. Likewise, there is a slight gap or step between the crowns in the south quadrant, but this also does not appear to be particularly recent and may be attributed to the removal of the Holm Oak T312 in 2021.

The organic matter built up at the base of the north aspect of T309's stem had a very slight gap in it, approx. 0.3m from the stem. However, further investigation appears to suggest that there is no evidence of significant movement or cracking in the substrate. To determine this more accurately would require the removal of the ground cover from around the tree.

To the north and west of T309 a Holm oak and two Sycamore were removed to reduce the amount of crown/light suppression T309 was experiencing.

Discussion

The stability of this retaining wall and the impact of the trees on it has been the subject of ongoing discussions and monitoring from before October 2021. During the works to repair the retaining wall adjacent to the main drive, a site meeting between myself and Steve Matthews

identified the risk posed by the wall's stability and SJ Surveyors recommended the removal of four trees to facilitate remedial work to a 30m section of the wall (letter Sarah 12-10-21).

These trees were removed, but as the assessment of the situation continued, DHD Structures provided 3 options all of which involved dismantling the wall and then rebuilding on a variety of foundations from a 2.05m wide foundation (option 1) to a more conventional rebuild on a 1m wide foundation with an 830mm wide wall (option 3). In an email on 28-06-22, Steve Matthews identified that options 1&2 would require the removal of the Yews and suggested that he and Sarah were more in favour of option 3.

The report written by Clark Bond in September 2023, identifies the proximity of the trees as the reason for the bulge in the wall, and recommended the less intrusive repair of installing ground anchors, having concluded that a rebuild was not a cost-effective way to proceed.

The email from Currie Brown on 10/02/2025 notes that that 'the wall had been affected by vegetation with invasive roots getting into the cracks', which is true to a certain extent. It is possible that pressure on the top of the wall may have pushed it out of true, as is evident on other sections of the wall, and there is evidence that some anchor roots from the adjacent Bay tree that have grown between the stone courses in the lower wall. However, the ingress of these roots should be considered a contributing factor in addition to the condition of the wall.

Unfortunately, that is a moot point now, and the Currie Brown recommendation to take the wall down and rebuild is the only option. It is intended to demolish a section of the wall on either side of the collapse and dig new foundations and rebuild by hand. It will be necessary to ensure that the stability of the tree is considered with the safety of the operatives and sanctity of the graves as paramount importance.

It was considered that without significant remedial work and support, it is unlikely that T309 could be successfully retained during this process.

At a subsequent meeting with North Somerset Council's Tree Officer the condition of the tree and its stability was discussed, and it was requested that further investigation into the stability of the slope was carried out before deciding on the most appropriate course of action.

However, during the additional assessment, further cracks in the organic matter above the tree's stem were discovered and more backfill fell away to reveal the loose nature of the substrate and some minor voids. As a result, it was concluded that it would not be possible to guarantee the stability of the tree during the repair work or after the wall had been rebuilt, and a 5 Day Notice to fell the tree was submitted to NSC.

The cemetery is situated within the Great Weston Conservation Area, and under a 5 Day Notification, which was approved, it is a requirement that a replacement tree is planted as specified in the email confirming consent to fell the tree.

Conclusion

The safety barriers and access restrictions should remain in place until the site has been made safe.

After the meeting with the Tree Officer and subsequent stability assessment it was decided to fell the tree, T309, under a 5 Day Notice, due the lack of stability in the substrate beneath the

Yew's root plate. Consent was provided by email, and tree surgeons have been engaged to remove the tree at the earliest opportunity to address the safety concerns and allow the repair work to take place at the earliest opportunity.

It is recommended that the wall is inspected by a structural engineer to determine whether the observations on the wall's condition are accurate, as this is beyond my normal level of expertise.

Historic wall survey results should also be able to help determine the condition of the wall over recent years.

The design of the wall and the construction method should be confirmed by Currie Brown to enable an accurate assessment of the potential impact on the other trees associated with the retaining wall.

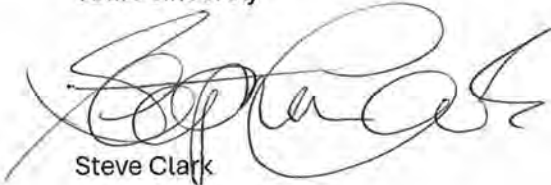
The location of graves on either side of the wall should be accurately identified or confirmed as those shown in the DHD Structures drawings.

The above details may be required in an arboricultural impact assessment or arboricultural method statement that may be required to determine which trees can be retained and how they will be protected during the demolition and construction process. The design should also consider where and how replacement trees will be planted to re-establish the linear group landscape feature while ensuring the safety of the wall in future.

This report should be considered as a preliminary assessment and will be a live document that will be edited and revised as further discussions and assessments that are held to resolve this situation successfully.

Please feel free to contact me with any queries or any additional relevant information.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Steve Clark', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

Steve Clark

MICFor, MArborA

Structural Inspection of Existing Wall

Milton Cemetery, Weston-Super-Mare



B06346-CLK-XX-XX-RP-S-0001

Weston-Super-Mare Town Council

Report No.	Date.
B06346-CLK-XX-XX-RP-S-0001	21/09/23

Project
Milton Cemetery Retaining Wall

Client Name
Weston-Super-Mare Town Council

Issue Date	Revision	Status	Description of Amendments
21/09/23	P1	S2-Information	Issued for Information

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Structural Comments and Assessment.....	7

Introduction

Clarkebond UK Ltd. have been instructed by Weston-Super-Mare Town Council to undertake an inspection of an existing retaining wall structure at Milton Cemetery.

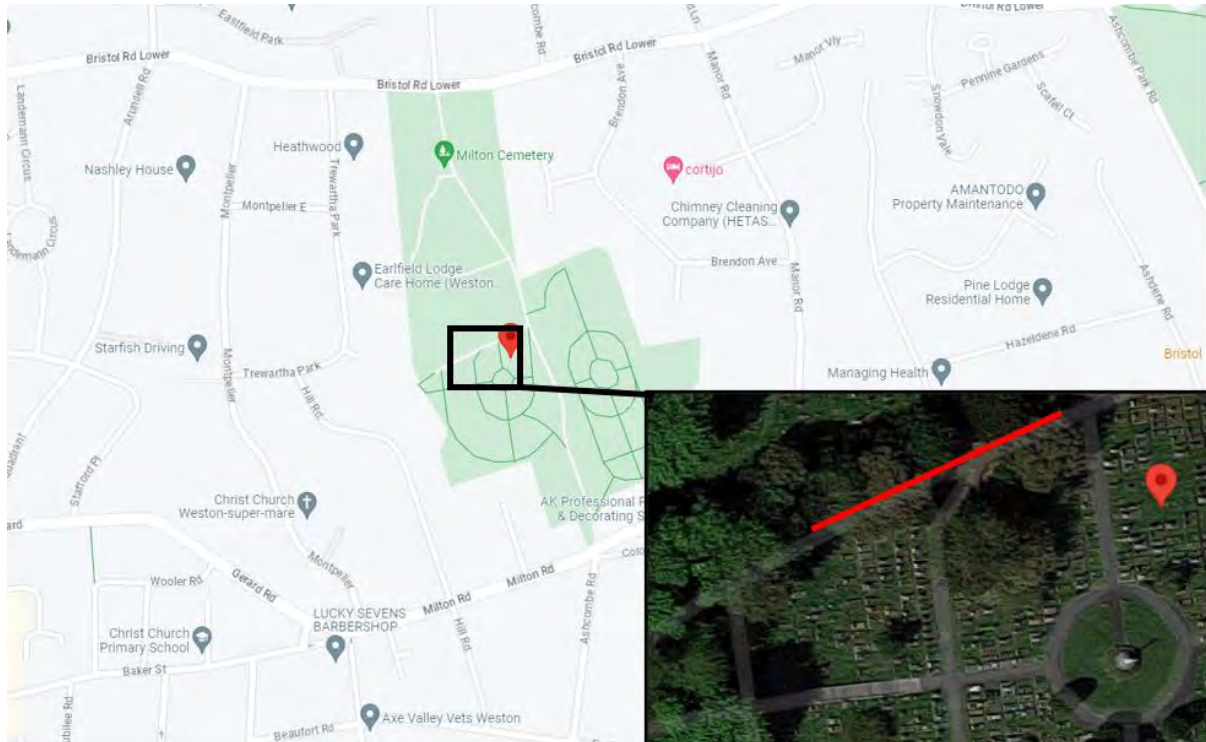


Figure 1: Location of retaining wall on satellite imagery with location of the wall highlighted in red (Google Earth).

A structural inspection of the site was conducted on 17th August 2023. Fencing and graves situated around and in front of the wall meant access close to the wall wasn't possible.

Site inspection

Upon inspection of the site in August 2023, Clarkebond assessed the wall to understand the conditions which lead to its failure. At the higher level behind the retaining wall, it was noted that there were multiple semi-mature trees and large amounts of vegetation. There are graves situated in front of the wall, which separate the wall and the path.

The wall is pre-twentieth century and pre-dates any kind of formal design standard. It is a masonry wall which is very unlikely to have a footing.



Figure 2: Photograph to show the wall and fencing in context.

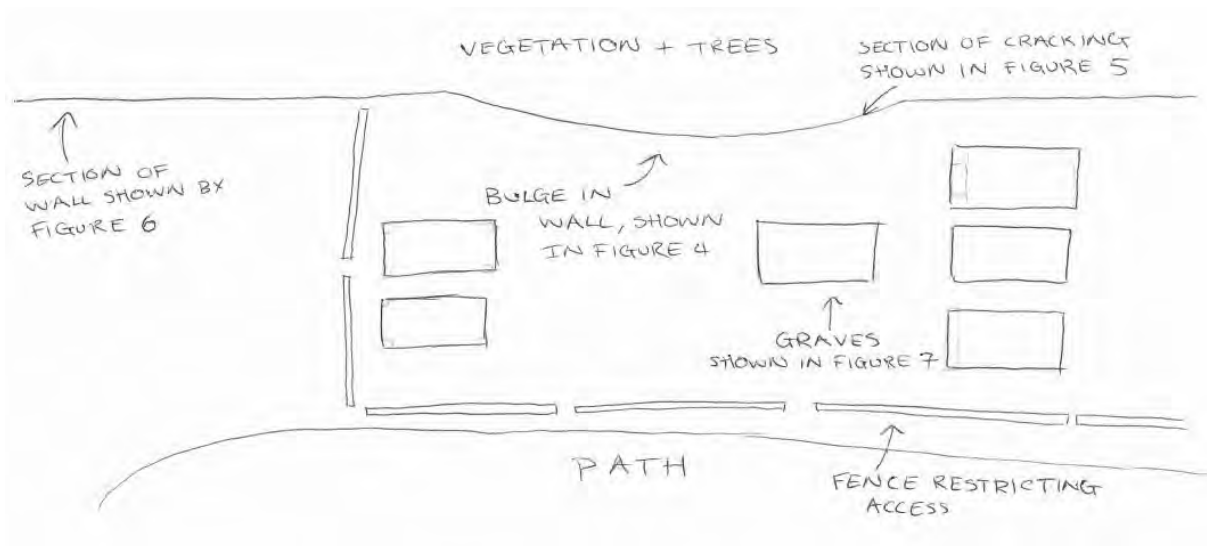


Figure 3: Plan sketch of the site, nts.



Figure 4: Section of the wall which is leaning.



Figure 5: Area of cracking, location shown in Figure 3.

It was noted that this area of cracking is located directly in line with the tree behind it. Only small cracks were found in the bulge in the wall, such as the one shown in Figure 4, however, this section is pulling the rest of the wall apart, which is causing cracking in other sections.



Figure 6: Section of wall with large crack, location shown in Figure 3.

It was noted that a large root was running through the crack shown in Figure 6.



Figure 7: Graves in front of the wall.

Structural Comments and Assessment

The failure of the wall is a result the large mass of vegetation and trees combined with the higher ground level behind the wall creating extra pressure which is pushing the wall over.

Due to the positioning of the large tree directly behind the bulge in the wall, it seems likely that its extra weight is the main cause of the displacement, with the large amounts of vegetation being a contributing factor but unlikely to be the main driver of movement. The trees being situated so close to the wall also implies that their root networks are very close to the wall, which could also be a contributing factor.

The graves being situated so close to the wall means that access to the wall for remedial works may be challenging, as any machinery used must stay on the path.

As the wall is relatively intact, we recommend that the wall is strengthened by installing ground anchors at discrete points along the wall. The location of the graves would need to be taken into consideration when deciding the distance between anchors, as installation directly over a grave may be challenging. A geotechnical survey and review by a ground anchor specialist would be needed if this strategy was pursued.

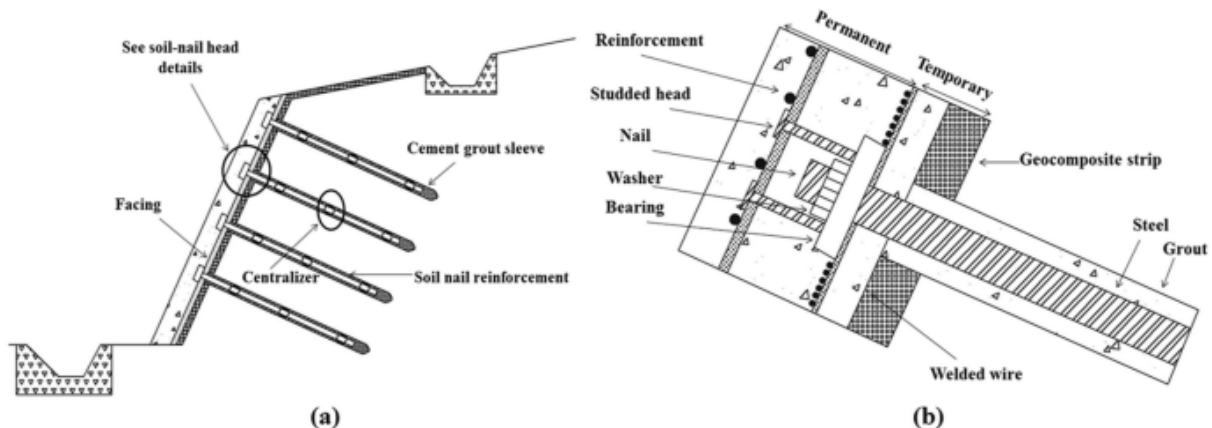


Figure 8: Indicative rock anchor arrangement

An alternative solution would be to rebuild the wall. This would be very complicated as the mass of vegetation and soil behind the wall would need to be removed and the graves behind the wall would have to be exhumed and reburied. We suggest that this is not a cost-effective way to proceed.

In addition to installing the ground anchors, we recommend that the whole wall is repointed to prevent the wall being damaged further by freeze-thaw action.



clarkebond

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Amenities, Culture and Leisure Committee 26th January 2026

Old Town Quarry Update

Report from the Community Operations and Resources Manager

1. Purpose and Background of Report

The purpose of this report is to give an update on the Old Town Quarry and highlight what has been planned for the coming year.

As part of our asset based community development approach, the license holders attended a series of meetings to discuss and create a community charter. This charter informs how the quarry will operate and more importantly, how the community in the quarry will work together towards to overall success of the quarry. The charter is now complete and has been signed by each of the license and lease holders based at the quarry and will be reviewed annually. A copy of the completed charter is attached for reference.

We are continuing to work collaboratively with the quarry community on an events programme for the quarry. As well as a schedule of wellbeing events facilitated by our Community and Wellbeing Officer such as regular yoga sessions which start in the Spring. Our license holders will hold a quarterly open day event starting in Easter. There are also ambitions for the café to hire the grass area for larger scale events such as open air cinemas, food and craft beer festivals. All of these events will only occur if they are in compliance with the terms set out in the ecology calendar.

As we continue to update the website, there is now a mechanic in place for the public to see when our bookable spaces are available and send enquiries directly to us. This has resulted in a variety of bookings so far including mosaic workshops, art exhibitions and art therapy session.

Our volunteer engagement is increasing at the quarry which is a positive sign that we are moving in the right direction to meet the aspiration of increasing the opening times at the shop.



2. Options for Council

To note the report.

3. Reason for Recommendation

To inform the committee that we are operating within the terms of the grant.

4. Expected Benefits

Greater community cohesion and development of a successful events programme.

5. Implications

The signed community charter ensures that we have an agreed structure for how the quarry is operated and structured.

5.1. Legal

The successful creation of an agreed community charter ensures that we are adhering to the terms and conditions set out within the grant funding for Quarry (COF Funding).

5.2. Risks

Not adhering to the charter may result in operational implications which could impact the success of the quarry project.

5.3. Financial Implications

Having a robust and collaboratively curated events programme will drive footfall and have a positive impact on revenue generation.

5.4. Timescales

Ongoing.

5.5. Stakeholders

The community of Weston, license and lease holders holder, community partners.

5.6. Contractors

N/A



5.7. Crime & Disorder (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

Any large scale events will have the appropriate level of management in place to reduce the impact of crime and disorder.

5.8. Biodiversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

Any and all works and events will be in compliance with our Landscape and Ecology Management Plan and ecology calendar.

5.9. Privacy Impact (consider Privacy Impact assessment)

Any data captured will be in compliance with our GDPR policy.

5.10. Equality & Diversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

All events and activities will be as accessible as is reasonably possible given the nature of the site.

6. Appendices

Final Community Charter Agreement (for reference)

7. Members are recommended to:

Note the report

Matt Hardy

Community Operations and Resources Manager

Drafted 16/1/26



Amenities Culture & Leisure Committee 26th January 2026

Old Town Quarry Application for the Construction of a Wood-Fired Kiln

Report from the CEO/Town Clerk

1. Purpose and Background of Report

To present an application received from Mr Simon Taylor to rent a small plot of land at Old Town Quarry for the purpose of constructing and operating a wood-fired Anagama kiln, and to seek a decision from the Amenities, Culture & Leisure Committee on whether the proposal should be approved.

Background

The applicant Mr Simon Taylor, a local ceramic artist and lecturer, seeking permission to rent a plot of land measuring approximately 4m x 8m at the rear of Old Town Quarry. Mr Taylor was a previous occupant at the Quarry prior to the council taking over the asset. He had previously had the Outside Kiln installed at the Quarry at a location near the main building. The proposal is for the construction and use of a wood-fired Anagama kiln. The applicant previously operated a kiln at Old Town Quarry between 2014 and 2022.

Proposal Details

The proposal includes renting a defined area of land, constructing a kiln, kiln shelter, and separate wood storage area, and operating the kiln up to two times per year. A site visit has taken place and a suitable location identified which does not have public access and is not expected to affect future development plans.

Strategic Context

The applicant has demonstrated alignment with the Town Council's Heritage, Arts and Culture strategy, the Old Town Quarry Management Objectives, and the Outdoor Artist Programme 10-Year Strategy.

2. Options for Council

Option 1 – Approve application (subject to all necessary considerations being met and being able to meet the LEMP for the site).

Option 2 – Decline application



3. Reason for Recommendation

To reinstate the Outdoor Kiln for use by a long Standing Quarry occupant.

To enhance Weston-Super-Mare Council's strategy to invest in local 'Heritage Arts and Culture

4. Expected Benefits

The proposal also focuses on Old Town Quarry Management Objectives which would contribute and develop the 'Outdoor Artist Programme' and 10-year strategy.

5. Implications

5.1. Legal

A licence agreement (on the same basis as the studios) would need to be issued for the use.

5.2. Risks

Health, Safety and Environmental Considerations

The proposal includes fire-rated construction materials, separation distances for fire safety, and risk assessment procedures including liaison with Fire and Rescue Services.

5.3. Financial Implications

All construction, operation, and removal costs would be met by the applicant. Any approval would be subject to agreed rental terms and a formal licence or lease.

5.4. Timescales

TBC – but within 12 month period from approval

5.5. Stakeholders

WSMTC

Mr Taylor

5.6. Contractors

TBC

5.7. Crime & Disorder (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

N/A



5.8. Biodiversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

All installation, material and use of the kiln must have regard for the requirements within the Quarry's LEMP and environmental documents.

5.9. Privacy Impact (consider Privacy Impact assessment)

N/A

5.10. Equality & Diversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

N/A

6. Appendices

Appendix A – Application Proposal: Wood-Fired Anagama Kiln at Old Town Quarry
Appendix B – Covering Email from the Applicant

7. Members are recommended to:

The Committee is requested to:

1. consider and approve the application received
2. If approved , authorised the CEO/Town Clerk to work with Applicant, any professional services (Building Surveyor)to enable works to commence meeting all health & safety, environmental, legal and site considerations to do so, within agreed timescales (tbc).

Sarah Pearse

CEO/Town Clerk

07.01.2026



Appendix A

Application Proposal.

Applicant: Simon Taylor.

Proposal: to rent 4 X 8 m² land, at rear of the old town Quarry, to build a wood fired Anagama Kiln.

Request for Proposal: Sarah Pearce

Date: 22/06/2025

Proposal Contents

Introduction

Background.

Proposal Details.

Proposal Impact (working with the Town Council Strategy)

Proposed site and contents.

Resources and health and safety specifics.

Time scale

Conclusion

Introduction

This application sets out a proposal to rent land for the purpose of building a Wood fired Anagama Kiln in Weston Old Quarry. The vision for building a kiln aims to enhance Weston-Super-Mare Council's strategy to invest in local 'Heritage Arts and Culture'. The proposal also focuses on Old Town Quarry Management Objectives which would contribute and develop the 'Outdoor Artist Programme' and 10-year strategy.

Proposal details

The Application enquires to rent a plot of land 4 X 8 metred square located at rear of the old town Quarry and to the right of the large concrete platform, formerly demolished stone processing building. The rented land will enable a proposal to build an Anagama wood fired Kiln and Kiln Shelter. The Kiln will be a similar copy to the previous kiln that was located outside of the Artist studios in the Old Town Quarry (2014-22). The kiln will be of a tapered tunnel construction with dimensions of 3.5 meters long, 1.5 meters wide and 1.2 meters high. The Kiln Chimney will be 2.5 meters tall and will be located



outside of the Kiln shelter. The kiln will be fired 2 times a year. Access will be needed all year for maintenance, preparation of wood and making site good.

Background

I am a local Ceramicist and Art and Design Higher Education lecturer at Weston College. My practice stems from 35 years' experience in the creative industries. Within that time, I have used my industry knowledge to benefit my teaching by enriching student experiences and wellbeing in art and design. I have fired wood kilns for 40yrs starting in Diploma and Degree study to current status as a professional ceramicist supplying wood fired pots to Uk galleries.

My practice also involves assisting in firing as a crew member to the internationally known Potter Nic Collins. I am an active participant in UK's and global wood firing and arts educational community. This entails communications and awareness of other creative projects in action or in proposal stage over a national and international basis. My fascination with wood kilns stems from the unique aesthetic outcomes you can achieve using flame and ash, as well as my intrigue with the science involved with the process and how it benefits community and culture.

Proposal Impact

Working with the Town Council Strategy.

Weston View.

The Anagama is a rare style of wood fired kiln which originates from medieval period in Japan. There are records of only 8 in the UK. Having a kiln of this type would be an asset and an attraction for Weston Old Town Quarry's reputation and image. Reasons for the Anagamas limited number is due to their difficulty to fire and build due to their 2 curved catenary shape. This architectural structure is of interest to those involved in construction and engineering background. The Anagama produces highly unique glaze effects on the pots which results from the flame flashing and wood ash melting and are sort after products from collectors, curators of museums and gallery owners. There is also a wide-reaching global wood fired community that records and acknowledges this practiced craft.

Cleaner and greener.

My clay materials are indigenously sourced, or I purchase from local and Uk businesses. The kilns bricks are second-hand and salvaged from our past pottery industry. The wood used to fire the Kiln is sourced and recycled from local building trade that would otherwise be wasted in land-fill sites or by incineration. I belief in working in an ecologically responsible way creating a sustainable practice. This motive has an important directive to educate community and society with awareness and



knowledge that making products needs to aim at reducing and offsetting our carbon footprint. My use of local and national materials reduces fuel consumption in over sea shipping. Using recycled wood allows products to be fired instead of wood being disposed of without any personal or social and cultural gain. Recycling wood from local building merchants is welcomed from these businesses as my use of the wood is seen as a productive use of material as opposed to it being shipped out as waste.

Healthier and Happier

Making Pottery and firing it in a wood fired kiln has had a long-term recognition of offering many benefits, both physically, communally and supporting mental well-being. The firing of such a kiln needs a team of individuals to work together coordinating activities, performing roles and communicating in the complexity of wood firing. In the 10-yr outdoor strategy programme and via risk assessment procedures could allow audiences to view such an endangered craft activity. To contribute to the Quarry community and ABCD principles it is proposed that lecturers and seminars could offer educational, leisure and cultural values for local Weston community.

A brighter future

A wood fired Kiln in Weston Old town quarry will attract an audience varying from local residents, tourists, pottery enthusiasts, collectors, gallery curators and educationalists. The Quarry and its Kiln would be promoted through my social media channels, future web site, gallery curators and when I perform at national arts and crafts fairs. The visiting demographic will have a Cultural and Financial gain for the quarry and Weston economy.

Heritage Arts and Culture

Setting up a Pottery and wood fired Kiln site will contribute to community of artists at the old town quarry. My Teaching skills of planning, managing and collaborating will contribute and assist in the Quarry Community Charter. As a college lecturer at Weston College I can act as liaison offering graduate support through the future Quarry Charter enabling our creative talent to remain in Weston. As an artist, local and national visitors will gain opportunities to learn about my practice as potter and the rare craft of wood firing. With connections in Education there is a growing interest in old and endangered craft practices and therefore academic links could also be secured. My reputation as ceramicist and lecturer would bring an active audience to the quarry in person and via virtual means hence growing a local, national and global interest to the quarry.

Proposed site and contents.



The proposed site for rent is located at the rear of the quarry and to the right of the large concrete platform and former demolished stone processing building.

The site would cover 4 x 8 metre squared. Please refer to the site plan.

The area would consists of:

- Kiln.
- Kiln Shelter
- Separate wood shelter.

n.b. Visionary image of Shelter. Proposed Shelter will NOT have a chimney exit through the chimney roof, instead the chimney will be located outside the shelter.

Resources to be used and health and safety specifics.

- Hard Core, Mot type 1 (scalping) ensuring a level foundation to build from.
Fire bricks. All fire bricks are specified to fire to manufacturing specification regulated to fire to 1360C. codes BS 4729, ASTM C2.
HTI bricks. High Tech Insulation bricks are to manufacturing specification ASTM C1261.
Kiln Shelter timbers near kiln to be fire retardant manufacturing specification BS EN 13501-1 or BS 476 part 7 (Class 1) and BS 476 part 6 (Class 0)

and to be boxed in with British fire-retardant board or coded plaster board.

- Kiln shelter metal roof panels fire retardant to meet classification A2,s1-d0 and the BROOF(t4).
- Chimney to be lime rendered for structure expansion when heated.
Wood supply would be positioned 10 metres distance away from kiln to prevent against fire loading.
- Risk assessments are carried out on firing and all 'Fire and Rescue' services are always notified of the controlled Firing.

Budget.

All materials, equipment and tools will be supplied by the applicant and if granted removed from the Quarry when licence ends.

Time Scale. (to be adjusted upon approval).

September.

- Delivery of Hard core. Laying and levelling.
- Delivery of fire bricks.
- Delivery of timber for Wood kiln shelter.
- Kiln foundation laid. 2 months settlement.



November.

- Kiln Shelter build.

January.

- Kiln Build. Chamber, Chimney, Insulation.

April.

- Pre firing. Firing Kiln with empty contents to drive out residual waters and allow for settling.

July/August

- First firing

Conclusion.

I hope this application proposal for renting land for the purpose to build an Anagama wood fired kiln is viewed as an opportunity and developmental asset to the old town Quarry. I believe its benefits are inclusive and have direct value to develop the Quarry Community Charter's future in the 10-year strategy. And the rationale for such a kiln can be implemented in the wider framework of 'The Town Council Strategy'. The Kiln build will enable myself to return to my former practice at the quarry to work alongside fellow artists building the Quarry community, which would also entail partaking in the mentoring and supporting of other artists initiating their careers. Lectures, seminars regarding the kilns unique pots it produces, links to eco responsible practice can also support open day events and arts programme, enriching local culture and community. The wood fired kiln also has a wider attraction and outreach to national and globe audience in the gallery domain and education sector which are interested in the rare and near endangered wood firing craft practice.

I hope those involved will take this application proposal favourably and await costs and conditions and terms.

Appendix B

Email Received: 24.06.25

Dear Sarah Pearce and Sarah Jackson,

As requested, please find attached my Application Proposal to rent a plot of land at the Old Town Quarry for the purpose of building a wood fired Kiln.



The proposal is set out in relation to Town Council's strategy, Old Town Quarry Management Objectives and 'Outdoor Artist Programme' 10-year strategy.

I hope the proposal is appropriate to your Quarry vision and that we can work together to develop a potential asset and innovative opportunity for the Old Town Quarry.

I look forward to hearing from you on your decision.

Thanking you

Simon

This email has been scanned for spam & viruses. If you believe this email should have been stopped by our filters, [click here](#) to report it.

Application Proposal.

Applicant: Simon Taylor.

Proposal: to rent 4 X 8 m2 land, at rear of the old town Quarry, to build a wood fired Anagama Kiln.

Request for Proposal: Sarah Pearce

Date: 22/06/2025

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Conclusion

Introduction

This application sets out a proposal to rent land for the purpose of building a Wood fired Anagama Kiln in Weston Old Quarry. The vision for building a kiln aims to enhance Weston-Super-Mare Council's strategy to invest in local 'Heritage Arts and Culture'. The proposal also focuses on Old Town Quarry Management Objectives which would contribute and develop the 'Outdoor Artist Programme' and 10-year strategy.

Proposal details

The Application enquires to rent a plot of land 4 X 8 metred square located at rear of the old town Quarry and to the right of the large concrete platform, formerly demolished stone processing building. The rented land will enable a proposal to build an Anagama wood fired Kiln and Kiln Shelter. The Kiln will be a similar copy to the previous kiln that was located outside of the Artist studios in the Old Town Quarry (2014-22). The kiln will be of a tapered tunnel construction with dimensions of 3.5 meters long, 1.5 meters wide and 1.2 meters high. The Kiln Chimney will be 2.5 meters tall and will be located outside of the Kiln shelter. The kiln will be fired 2 times a year. Access will be needed all year for maintenance, preparation of wood and making site good.

Background

I am a local Ceramicist and Art and Design Higher Education lecturer at Weston College. My practice stems from 35 years' experience in the creative industries. Within that time, I have used my industry knowledge to benefit my teaching by enriching student experiences and wellbeing in art and design. I have fired wood kilns for 40yrs starting in Diploma and Degree study to current status as a professional ceramicist supplying wood fired pots to Uk galleries.

My practice also involves assisting in firing as a crew member to the internationally known Potter Nic Collins. I am an active participant in UK's and global wood firing and arts educational community. This entails communications and awareness of other creative projects in action or in proposal stage over a national and international basis. My fascination with wood kilns stems from the unique aesthetic outcomes you can achieve using flame and ash, as well as my intrigue with the science involved with the process and how it benefits community and culture.

Proposal Impact

Working with the Town Council Strategy.

Weston View.

The Anagama is a rare style of wood fired kiln which originates from medieval period in Japan. There are records of only 8 in the UK. Having a kiln of this type would be an asset and an attraction for Weston Old Town Quarry's reputation and image. Reasons for the Anagamas limited number is due to their difficulty to fire and build due to their 2 curved catenary shape. This architectural structure is of interest to those involved in construction and engineering background. The Anagama produces highly unique glaze effects on the pots which results from the flame flashing and wood ash melting and are sort after products from collectors, curators of museums and gallery owners. There is also a wide-reaching global wood fired community that records and acknowledges this practiced craft.

Cleaner and greener.

My clay materials are indigenously sourced, or I purchase from local and UK businesses. The kilns bricks are second-hand and salvaged from our past pottery industry. The wood used to fire the Kiln is sourced and recycled from local building trade that would otherwise be wasted in land-fill sites or by incineration. I believe in working in an ecologically responsible way creating a sustainable practice. This motive has an important directive to educate community and society with awareness and knowledge that making products needs to aim at reducing and offsetting our carbon footprint. My use of local and national materials reduces fuel consumption in over sea shipping. Using recycled wood allows products to be fired instead of wood being disposed of without any personal or social and cultural gain. Recycling wood from local building merchants is welcomed from these businesses as my use of the wood is seen as a productive use of material as opposed to it being shipped out as waste.

Healthier and Happier

Making Pottery and firing it in a wood fired kiln has had a long-term recognition of offering many benefits, both physically, communally and supporting mental well-being. The firing of such a kiln needs a team of individuals to work together coordinating activities, performing roles and communicating in the complexity of wood firing. In the 10-yr outdoor strategy programme and via risk assessment procedures could allow audiences to view such an

endangered craft activity. To contribute to the Quarry community and ABCD principles it is proposed that lecturers and seminars could offer educational, leisure and cultural values for local Weston community.

A brighter future

A wood fired Kiln in Weston Old town quarry will attract an audience varying from local residents, tourists, pottery enthusiasts, collectors, gallery curators and educationalists. The Quarry and its Kiln would be promoted through my social media channels, future web site, gallery curators and when I perform at national arts and crafts fairs. The visiting demographic will have a Cultural and Financial gain for the quarry and Weston economy.

Heritage Arts and Culture

Setting up a Pottery and wood fired Kiln site will contribute to community of artists at the old town quarry. My Teaching skills of planning, managing and collaborating will contribute and assist in the Quarry Community Charter. As a college lecturer at Weston College I can act as liaison offering graduate support through the future Quarry Charter enabling our creative talent to remain in Weston. As an artist, local and national visitors will gain opportunities to learn about my practice as potter and the rare craft of wood firing. With connections in Education there is a growing interest in old and endangered craft practices and therefore academic links could also be secured. My reputation as ceramicist and lecturer would bring an active audience to the quarry in person and via virtual means hence growing a local, national and global interest to the quarry.

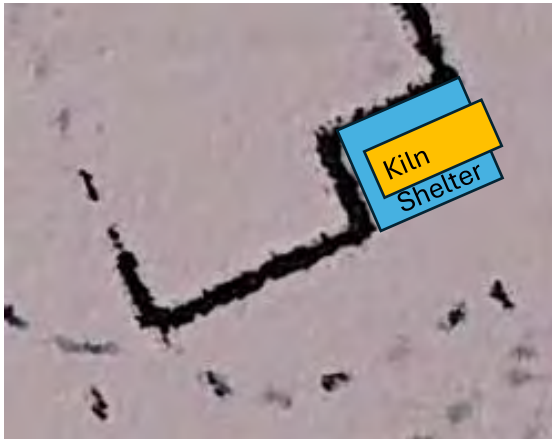
Proposed site and contents.

The proposed site for rent is located at the rear of the quarry and to the right of the large concrete platform and former demolished stone processing building. The site would cover 4 x 8 metre squared. Please refer to the site plan. ❌



The area would consist of:

- Kiln.
- Kiln Shelter
- Separate wood shelter.



n.b. Visionary image of Shelter. Proposed Shelter will NOT have a chimney exit through the chimney roof, instead the chimney will be located outside the shelter.

Resources to be used and health and safety specifics.

- Hard Core, Mot type 1 (scalping) ensuring a level foundation to build from.
- Fire bricks. All fire bricks are specified to fire to manufacturing specification regulated to fire to 1360C. codes BS 4729, ASTM C2.
- HTI bricks. High Tech Insulation bricks are to manufacturing specification ASTM C1261.
- Kiln Shelter timbers near kiln to be fire retardant manufacturing specification BS EN 13501-1 or BS 476 part 7 (Class 1) and BS 476 part 6 (Class 0) and to be boxed in with British fire-retardant board or coded plaster board.
- Kiln shelter metal roof panels fire retardant to meet classification A2,s1-d0 and the BROOF(t4).
- Chimney to be lime rendered for structure expansion when heated.
- Wood supply would be positioned 10 metres distance away from kiln to prevent against fire loading.

- Risk assessments are carried out on firing and all 'Fire and Rescue' services are always notified of the controlled Firing.

Budget.

All materials, equipment and tools will be supplied by the applicant and if granted removed from the Quarry when licence ends.

Time Scale.

September.

- Delivery of Hard core. Laying and levelling.
- Delivery of fire bricks.
- Delivery of timber for Wood kiln shelter.
- Kiln foundation laid. 2 months settlement.

November.

- Kiln Shelter build.

January.

- Kiln Build. Chamber, Chimney, Insulation.

April.

- Pre firing. Firing Kiln with empty contents to drive out residual waters and allow for settling.

July/August

- First firing

Conclusion.

I hope this application proposal for renting land for the purpose to build an Anagama wood fired kiln is viewed as an opportunity and developmental asset to the old town Quarry. I believe its benefits are inclusive and have direct value to develop the Quarry Community Charter's future in the 10-year strategy. And the rationale for such a kiln can be implemented in the wider framework of 'The Town Council Strategy'. The Kiln build will enable myself to return to my former practice at the quarry to work alongside fellow artists building the Quarry community, which would also entail partaking in the mentoring and supporting of other artists initiating their careers. Lectures, seminars regarding the kilns unique pots it produces, links to eco responsible practice can also support open day events and arts programme, enriching local culture and community. The wood fired kiln also has a wider attraction and outreach to national and globe audience in the gallery domain and education sector which are interested in the rare and near endangered wood firing craft practice.

I hope those involved will take this application proposal favourably and await costs and conditions and terms.



Amenities Culture & Leisure Committee 26th January 2026

Weston Wallz – Vandalism Incident Report (Post Office Lane)

Report from the CEO/Town Clerk

1. Purpose and Background of Report

To summarise recent vandalism to the Weston Wallz street art in Post Office Lane, outline correspondence with project partners, and set out the costs and options available for repair or interim management of the affected artworks.

Background

Weston Wallz street art was installed approximately four years ago as part of the town's cultural programme. The artworks in Post Office Lane have become a valued part of the street scene and are well regarded by the local community.

On 28 November 2025, Weston Town Council was made aware of vandalism to the murals in Post Office Lane, initially thought to affect one artwork but subsequently confirmed to involve at least three artworks, with additional red crosses painted along the length of the street.

Incident Details

Red crosses were painted over at least three murals, with further crosses applied to adjacent walls and along the street. Council officers attended site and painted over vandalism on adjacent masonry where possible, avoiding any interference with the artworks themselves. The incident has been reported to the Police and CCTV enquiries are underway.

Correspondence and Professional Advice

UPFEST has advised that there is a chance that one or two artworks may be repaired, subject to weather and availability. If repair is not viable, affected walls can be blanked ready for repainting in 2026.

Cost Estimate

Estimated cost for one day attendance by UPFEST crew including materials: £700 + VAT.



2. Options for Council

Option 1 – Attempt Repair (Preferred)

Option 2 – Blank affected areas

Option 3 – No immediate action (not recommended)

3. Reason for Recommendation

Opportunity to issue strong joint communications condemning vandalism and reinforcing zero tolerance to antisocial behaviour.

4. Expected Benefits

Opportunity to issue strong joint communications condemning vandalism and reinforcing zero tolerance to antisocial behaviour.

5. Implications

5.1. Legal

N/A

5.2. Risks

Reputational, financial, community and operational risks exist if no action is taken. Prompt repair and communication mitigate these risks.

5.3. Financial Implications

The £700 + VAT cost is unbudgeted and would need to be met from existing budgets or contingency. Additional artist involvement would incur further costs subject to approval.

5.4. Timescales

Budget Approval – Identify and confirm availability of £700 + VAT

Budget Options: Community events Grants (Balance available £16,000)

Repair Scheduling – Subject to budget approval, liaise with UPFEST to confirm a suitable repair date, taking into account weather conditions and contractor availability, and agree scope of works. (Timescale: Within 5 working days of approval)

5.5. Stakeholders

Upfest



WSMTC

Community

5.6. Contractors

Upfest

5.7. Crime & Disorder (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

Review CCTV and Police updates as available.

5.8. Biodiversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

n/a

5.9. Privacy Impact (consider Privacy Impact assessment)

n/a

5.10. Equality & Diversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

n/a

6. Appendices

n/a

7. Members are recommended to:

Provide direction and consider Options 1-3 in Section 2.0 above

Approve use of Budget if required.

Sarah Pearse

CEO/Town Clerk

07.01.2026



Amenities Culture and Leisure 26th January 2026

Town of Culture 2028 – Competition Grant (DCMS application)

Report from the Senior Development Officer

1. Purpose and Background of Report

Purpose

To inform members of the Town of Culture 2028 Competition and gain approval for exploring an application.

Background

UK Town of Culture is a new competition launched by the Department for Culture, Media & Sport, and is attempting to mirror the success of the UK City of Culture Competition that took place in 2009.

The competition is open to all towns, with three size categories having been dictated (small, medium and large). Of the three finalists (one from each category), the winning bid will be awarded £3 million to deliver a cultural programme in 2028 for six months. The two finalists will receive £250,000 each to deliver the important elements of their bid. The Town size has been categorised as follows:

Category	Population Size
Small Town	Under 20,000 people
Medium Town	20,000 - 75,000
Large Town	Over 75,000

Within the prospectus provided, there is a focus on the benefits of bidding, irrespective of whether a town wins or not. They note that the previous City of Culture process brought communities together, and enabled them to better understand and access local heritage art and culture. They also offer the opportunity to develop, with development grants available of £60,000 to each of the shortlisted place who are invited to submit a full application, following the EOI process. The development funding is flexible and can be used for:

- Research & Development
- Consultation
- Human resources



- Data gathering
- Commercial expertise for capital plans

Initial aims and criteria have been provided:

Aims	Criteria
1. Your story: tell us about the unique story and culture of your town.	<p>1. Vision: A strong, compelling local story that uses culture to bring people together, reflecting place, pride, and contribution to the national story.</p> <p>2. Local Need: How your programme builds on local strengths while addressing specific local priorities.</p> <p>3. Empower: Commitment to involving communities, grassroots artists, creatives, and local leaders in shaping the bid, programme, and legacy, devolving decision-making where possible.</p>
2. Culture for Everyone: how you will design a cultural programme that provides visible, accessible culture and boosts your town's profile.	<p>5. Quality and Innovation: A high-quality, bold programme drawing on arts, heritage, and creative industries, demonstrating excellence, creativity, innovation, and use of technology to widen access.</p> <p>6. Opportunity: Expanding opportunities for those who currently do not access cultural infrastructure, especially young people, while creating new opportunities for existing participants.</p> <p>7. Accessibility: Ensuring the programme is accessible to all ages and underserved communities, providing a safe, supportive, non-discriminatory environment.</p> <p>8. Communication: A well-resourced communications plan that reaches multiple audiences and shines a spotlight on the town's contribution to national life.</p>
3. Making it happen: how you will deliver a successful programme.	<p>9. Partnerships: Strong, collaborative leadership with clear commitment from local authorities, community organisations, and cultural/heritage partners, including pursuit of new opportunities and lasting connections.</p> <p>10. Programme Management: Evidence of capacity, capability, and effective processes to deliver the programme successfully.</p>



WESTON-SUPER-MARE TOWN COUNCIL

	<p>11. Financial Management: A realistic, viable budget representing value for money, with clear monitoring processes and plans to attract appropriate funding.</p> <p>12. Monitoring, Evaluation & Legacy: A clear plan for evaluating impact (including environmental sustainability), sharing insights, and strengthening or rejuvenating cultural and heritage infrastructure with realistic expectations.</p>
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Importantly this is a partnership bid. Bids will need to specify a single organisation to be 'Lead applicant' for information and communication purposes during the competition process. The Lead applicant must be a formally constituted accountable organisation; they do not need to be a local authority, but the relevant local authority will need to be in a dedicated role in the bid partnership. We have already reached out to potential local partners including Super Culture, and plan to discuss this further via the Heritage Arts and Culture Consultative Group, of which a variety of cultural partners sit on.

The deadline for the EOI is 31st March 2026.

2. Options for Council

Explore the process further, working in partnership with community organisations.

3. Reason for Recommendation

To enable the exploration of the application and bid process.

The Town Council's adopted Strategy already places culture at the heart of Weston-super-Mare's future identity, economic resilience and civic pride. It commits the Council to growing opportunities for culture, heritage and the arts, attracting national attention and investment through cultural activity, and strengthening social cohesion through events and festivals. Engagement in the UK Town of Culture 2028 competition therefore represents a natural and strategic extension of existing policy, providing a nationally recognised framework to accelerate delivery of these agreed ambitions.

Extracts from the strategy:



“Weston’s future identity will be shaped by its rich cultural, heritage, arts, and tourism services, and the role of the Town Council will remain pivotal in defining and promoting that identity.”

“To work with local community and partners to ensure that the town of Weston-super-Mare has growing opportunity for Culture, Heritage and the Arts.”

“Attract interest in the town from the wider world, via culture and arts. This will enable us to share valued experiences whilst also attracting investment and spending.”

4. Expected Benefits

The potential to host a Cultural programme and gain recognition nationally as a Town of Culture.

5. Implications

5.1. Legal

The legal grant/competition framework has not been made available at this stage.

5.2. Risks

This is a low-risk high reward application process, with a light touch EOI ahead of shortlisting.

5.3. Financial Implications

Should any funding be awarded, either the development grant or full award, a fully costed programme would need to be created.

5.4. Timescales

Milestone	Dates
Expressions of Interest (EOI)	Opens: 14 Jan 2026 Deadline: 31 March 2026
Information event for bidders	21 January 2026
Shortlisted places announced	Spring 2026
Full application period	Spring 2026 – Autumn 2026
Panel visits	Autumn 2026
Finalists and winner announced	Early 2027
Delivery Period	2028

5.5. Stakeholders

Community partners including (non exhaustive):

- Super Culture



- Weston College
- North Somerset Council

5.6. Contractors

n/a

5.7. Crime & Disorder (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

n/a

5.8. Biodiversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

“Bids for UK Town of Culture 2028 should consider embedding environmentally sustainable practices into their plans, demonstrating contribution to the UK’s net zero and nature protection objectives, and promote and inspire environmental responsibility.”

5.9. Privacy Impact (consider Privacy Impact assessment)

n/a

5.10. Equality & Diversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

n/a

6. Appendices

n/a

7. Members are recommended to:

1. Give approval in principle for the Council, working in partnership, to apply for the Town of Culture 2028 competition, subject to grant conditions, with further information to be brought back to a future meeting.

Molly Matthews

Senior Development Officer

Drafted 16/01/2026



Amenities Culture and Leisure 26th January 2026

Play Area Procurement

Report from the Senior Development Officer

1. Purpose and Background of Report

Purpose

To nominate councillors to support ongoing procurement requirements

Background

There are currently four live procurement exercises which are:

- Coniston Green Toddler Play Area Refurbishment
- The Maltlands Play Area Refurbishment
- Public Toilets Management, Maintenance and Cleaning Contract
- Waterpark Cleaning

As per the Town Councils Standing Orders and Financial Regulations, there is a requirement of at least two councillors present for the tender opening. The tender opening dates are as follows:

6th February 2026:

- Coniston Green Toddler Play Area Refurbishment
- The Maltlands Play Area Refurbishment

20th February 2026:

- Public Toilets Management, Maintenance and Cleaning Contract
- Waterpark Cleaning

The play area procurement will also require councillors to form the interview panel. Interviews are currently scheduled for the Week commencing 23rd February 2026. Until the tenders are returned, we will not know the exact time required from councillors, but we envisage between 2-4 days. There may be some time saving available, as there may be some cross over of companies tendering for both projects. This would be confirmed week commencing 16th February.



Please note: you would need to hold the full week at this stage.

2. Options for Council

- Nominate two councillors for tender openings on the 6th February
- Nominate two councillors for tender openings on the 20th February
- Nominate three councillors for tender interviews week commencing 23rd February

3. Reason for Recommendation

To comply with Standing orders and financial regulations.

4. Expected Benefits

To enable the procurement processes listed above

5. Implications

5.1. Legal

This requirement forms part of the Town Council's governance.

5.2. Risks

Lack of nomination risks delays to the tender processes and therefore the commencement of capital works and contracts

5.3. Financial Implications

The above tender opportunities have been included within the budget setting process.

5.4. Timescales

A typical procurement timeline has been used for all four tenders. The final reports for each will be presented at Amenities Culture and Leisure on the 16th March 2026 for award.

5.5. Stakeholders

n/a

5.6. Contractors

Unknown at this stage



5.7. Crime & Disorder (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

n/a

5.8. Biodiversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

n/a

5.9. Privacy Impact (consider Privacy Impact assessment)

This is an ongoing procurement process with commercially sensitive company information.

5.10. Equality & Diversity (councils have a legal duty to consider impact)

n/a

6. Appendices

n/a

7. Members are recommended to:

1. Nominate two councillors for tender openings on the 6th February
2. Nominate two councillors for tender openings on the 20th February
3. Nominate three councillors for tender interviews week commencing 23rd February

Molly Matthews

Senior Development Officer

Drafted 16/01/2026