

EXMINSTER PARISH COUNCIL

Green Spaces Group

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Green Spaces Group ('the Group') is a working party of Exminster Parish Council ('the Council'). The aim of the Group is to enhance the green spaces in and around the village of Exminster in accordance with good environmental practices.

1. Membership

The Group shall consist of at least one member of the Council and at least four community members. The Council will appoint its own members at its Annual General Meeting, to include a Lead Councillor for Green Spaces, from among its members. The Community Members shall be appointed every year at the Annual Parish Meeting.

The Group may also recruit any number of Volunteers who may attend meetings, participate in organised activities and contribute ideas.

2. Leader

A Leader will be appointed by the members of the Group at the first meeting following the Annual Parish Council meeting each year. The Leader may be a Councillor or a Community Member.

The Leader will be the main point of contact for the Group and will convene and chair meetings.

3. Meetings

Meetings will be held on an ad-hoc basis, as required. There is no requirement for meetings to be clerked, although notes will be taken and distributed by email to the Members, Volunteers and to the Parish Clerk.

Any five (5) Members of the Group, including at least one Council Member and one Community Member, shall constitute a quorum of the Group. If the number of Members present falls below the required quorum, the meeting shall be adjourned and business not transacted shall be transacted at the next meeting or on such other day as the Leader may arrange.

4. Decision making

On matters requiring a decision, the Group will discuss matters with a view to reaching consensus. If this cannot be achieved, the differing views will be recorded in writing and communicated to the Parish Council.

5. Purpose and scope

To consider matters associated with the enhancement of green spaces in the village of Exminster for the benefit of both residents and the natural environment.

Such green spaces shall not be limited to land owned or leased by the Council but may, by permission of the landowner, include any open space within the village of Exminster.

The management of trees on land owned by the Council – other than those planted in the community orchard at Townfield – is out of scope as they are maintained by a contractor. The Group may make recommendations to the Council concerning trees from time to time.

The Victory Hall gardens and the planter at the north junction of the village are out of scope as they are maintained by a contractor.

6. Responsibilities

The Group shall be responsible for:

- Developing and implementing plans for enhancing sites identified as being worthy of improvement for the benefit of the village and/or the natural environment, such plans to be approved by the Council;
- Supporting the Council in developing a management plan for green spaces in the village;
- Identifying new green spaces with potential for enhancement;
- Liaising with outside agencies, such as the RSPB, Woodland Trust and other conservation groups;
- Coordinating the work of the volunteers, completing risk assessments and ensuring that appropriate health and safety measures are taken;
- Communicating with the general public through the Exminster Green Spaces Facebook page and other channels;
- Advising the Council on any matter relating to the management of green spaces in the village of Exminster.

7. Work Sessions

The Group may organise any number of work sessions in line with the purpose and scope of the Group, such sessions to be covered by the Council's Public Liability insurance. A risk assessment shall be completed by a member of the Group for each work session.

For insurance purposes, any person taking part in a work session must sign an attendance sheet giving their full name and telephone number and confirming that they have read and understood the risk assessment.

Completed risk assessments and sign-in sheets should be retained for three years.

8. Powers

Working parties cannot make decisions or speak on behalf of the Parish Council. Any recommendations made by the Group will be subject to approval by the Council or by delegated authority to the Clerk/Deputy Clerk.

The Group shall have an annual budget of £250, to be exercised through delegated authority to the Clerk/Deputy Clerk. Any additional expenditure should be agreed at a Full Council meeting.

In all cases, Financial Regulations will be applied.

9. Reporting

The Clerk/Deputy Clerk will update the Council through the reporting of delegated authority used.

The Group will keep residents informed of its activities by reporting at the Annual Parish Meeting and by providing updates at Council Meetings through the Lead Councillor from time to time.

10. Life of the Green Spaces Group

The Group shall continue until deemed unnecessary by the Council or until such time as the Group members determine.

11. Review

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually in June.