

Item

Environmental Improvement Programme Project Submission Summary Report (2023) for Discussion

To: WestCentral Area Committee: 24 November 2022

Report by:

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Wards affected:

Castle, Market and Newnham

Key Decision: No

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report details the Environmental Improvement (EIP) applications and ideas received for 2023 funding for projects in the West / Central Area. The Area Committee can comment on the applications and make recommendations. The area-based recommendations made by all the area committees and those put forward for city-wide strategic funding will be included in an overall recommendations report to be considered by the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces, Food Justice and Community Development, for an out of cycle decision on behalf of the Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee.

- 1.2 The report provides information on eligibility, funding criteria and funding budgets for the Environmental Improvement Programme.

2. Recommendations

The West/ Central Area Committee is recommended to:

- i. To note the EIP budget allocation for West / Central Area for 2022/23 and for Strategic EIP see 3.4,
- ii. To consider the new EIP ideas and project submitted for West / Central Area, against the EIP Funding availability and the eligibility criteria (Appendix A),
- iii. Consider the recommendations made in Appendix B, discuss, and clearly outline the committees' priorities in line with the available area EIP funding and additionally allocate projects to a prioritised reserve list, should other area funds be under allocated, for consideration by the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces, Food Justice and Community Development.

3. Background

- 3.1. The Council's Environmental Improvement Programme (EIP) has been operating as a rolling programme since 2004. The programme budget, which has been £170,000 per annum for the most recent period up to 2020/21. In 2020/21, Committee approved restructuring the programme budget, allocating £100,000 pa to a Strategic programme (which all Area Committees can bid towards) with the decision on Area and Strategic bids devolved to Executive Councillor for Open Spaces, Food Justice and Community Development; and £70,000 pa devolved between the four Area Committees (on a per capita basis) for Local project bids. The current EIP eligibility criteria are set out along with the programme application form in **Appendix A**.
- 3.2 The programme has been subject to periodic review to improve flexibility, ensure good value and help speed up project delivery. That said, there have been delivery difficulties with much of the programme was put on hold for 2020/21 and 2021/22, due to the impact of the Covid pandemic and the need to redirect resources towards Covid response and recovery.

3.3 As referred to in 3.1 above, there are now two forms of EIP funding:

- **Local Area:** With a budget of £100,000 pa, which is devolved and divided between the four Area Committees (South, East, West/Central and North), in proportion to the size of each Area's population. Committees consider which projects in their area they recommend for funding, up to a project value of £5,000 (or £10,000 if strongly supported).
- **Strategic:** With a budget of £70,000 pa, this element of the programme is dedicated to priorities the Council has identified as being important across all areas of the city and which are aligned to the Corporate Plan and supporting strategies including Tree / Biodiversity / herbicide reduction plan, long grass policy etc. This includes making better use of roadside verges, enhancing tree canopy, improving biodiversity, benches (that promote community/ social interaction) and providing free public drinking water points.

3.4 Based on the devolved Area Committee Local budget, there is a total of £20,197 available for West/ Central Area as a proportion to the size of its population and £70,000 for citywide Strategic EIP.

3.5 An open application process for project bids within the city was started on the 21st September 2022 and closed on the 28th October 2022. The opportunity to submit project bids was advertised on the Council's website through the current consultations page with links through to Citizenlab (the Council's new community consultation and engagement platform).

3.6 West/ Central Area Committee members are asked to consider the projects included in Appendix B and after considering the funding parameters, eligibility and known public support (indicated from the Citizenlan platform) to make clear recommendations on priority projects for the area EIP funding and to make a reserve list, to be considered by the Executive Councillor.

3.7 Priority recommendations will be included in the final recommendation report and include both EIP Local area funded projects and Strategic projects.

- 3.8 Following consideration by the Executive Councillor for Open Spaces, Food Justice and Community Development of the final recommendation report the approved bids will be published in early 2023.
- 3.9 Following publication of approved projects, project delivery will commence through the Environmental Services - Project Delivery Team throughout 2023, in liaison with project proposers and local ward councillors.
- 3.10 Those unsuccessful Local project bids, along with any Strategic project bids, supported by Area Committees but unable to be afforded this year, might be considered in any further available funding round in 2023 (subject to annual budget setting/ any available budget underspends), alongside any new applications received.
- 3.11 Note, current status of EIP projects, already approved in the West / Central Area and other area programmes can be viewed at [link](#).

4. Implications

(a) Financial Implications

The current EIP has an approved capital budget allocation of £170,000 per annum from 2021/22 (funding re-phasing from 2021/22 and 2022/23 to 2023/24 subject to annual budget setting).

(b) Staffing Implications

Historically a small number of projects have proven difficult to develop and deliver and have had a disproportionate impact on staffing resource in comparison with other programme work. The programme needs to be managed and delivered within the existing funded EIP programme management staffing resource (2 FTE).

(c) Equality and Poverty Implications

EIP project bids have historically been prioritised across all areas proportionate to population and in accordance with locally identified need. The impact of all EIP projects on Equality Act ‘protected groups’ is assessed at the design/planning stage of each approved project. All hard infrastructure schemes are

designed to national standards to accommodate the needs of those with physical impairments, including mobility, sight and hearing. The overall impact of the programme is considered positive.

(d) Environmental Implications

The programme aims to preserve and improve the quality of the natural and built public realm environment across Cambridge, in a manner that does not contribute towards climate change and leaves a positive legacy for future generations. The Council has declared both a Climate and Biodiversity Emergency and there is increased focus on climate change mitigation and adaptation and biodiversity protection and net gain. The overall impact of the programme on the environment within Cambridge is therefore rated as +M (positive; Medium).

(e) Procurement Implications

The programme projects are either delivered in-house, utilising existing internal resource within Environmental Services, or externally, via existing framework contract arrangements. To ensure value for money, the larger Strategic programme schemes may be delivered through competitive tender processes.

(f) Community Safety Implications

The programme is designed to deliver local public realm environmental improvements and foster increased pride of place and community cohesion. Several local area projects have been delivered in association with local community and voluntary groups. As a result, the programme is considered to have a positive impact on community safety.

5. Consultation and communication considerations

The Citizenlab engagement tool has been used to canvass local people directly and further involve and engage all sections of the public in the Council's decision making processes. All the programme's projects are consulted on at the planning/ design stage, with the level/ type of consultation determined by and proportionate to the nature, scale, and scope of the proposed project. With much of the programme being small-scale projects, it is imperative that the proportionate principle continues to be followed.

6. Background papers

- Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee Agenda and Minutes 21st March 2019.
<https://democracy.cambridge.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=476&MId=3566&Ver=4>
- Current Status of EIP funded projects:
<https://www.cambridge.gov.uk/media/11531/environmental-improvement-project-summary-2022-23.pdf>

7. Appendices

Appendix A – EIP application form and eligibility criteria,

Appendix B – EIP project submissions and recommendation for 2023 West/Central Area.

8. Inspection of papers

To inspect the background papers or if you have a query on this update report please contact:

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Appendix A

Environmental Improvement Programme (EIP) 2023 Year Project Ideas

Proposal/ideas are open from the 21st of September 2022, the earlier you submit them the sooner we can post them on Citizenlab and once on their the greater the chance others may support. Submission ideas are unlikely to be accepted following the 28 October 2022.

First Name

Surname

Email Address
(not to be shared
with public) so
we can contact
you for more
project details if
your idea is
supported

Location of suggested
Environmental Improvement -
Street/Greenspace name or
nearest postcode

Title - What: Issue/Problem/Improvement – please give a title to idea and what your idea is likely to achieve:

Description - How: Suggested Solution – please outline how you feel your objectives might be best met e.g., improve biodiversity on Joe Street – Plant wildflower grasses on greenspace on corner outside number 1 Joe Street and change grass cutting regime:

Outcomes - Why: Joe Street is part of an important Local Nature network corridor, it will help with health and wellbeing of local people, improve the environment, contribute towards secure nature species for the future.

Who: Please outline who or which Group is proposing the project or whether local Councillors support?

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Proposed Budget - Not compulsory - But may outline items required, and possibly an approximate cost of these giving an approx. budget requirement - note Officers with experience may add in estimate costs or change any costs inputted based on experience of delivering projects.

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Eligibility Criteria for Environmental Improvements

Please indicate which of these criteria would be met by your application:

Essential Criteria	Desirable Criteria	tick
Projects have a direct, lasting and noticeable improvement to the appearance of a street or area	The project will benefit a large number of local people	
Projects should publicly visible and accessible	Ease and simplicity of implementation	
Should the scheme be on private land, the owners' permission must be granted – unless there are exceptional circumstances by which the Area Committee may wish to act unilaterally, with full knowledge and responsibility for the implication of such action.	It features the active involvement of local people	
Projects must ensure low future maintenance costs.	It meets one/more key policy objectives (e.g. improves biodiversity, community safety or contributes to equal opportunities)	
	There is potential for inclusion of employment training opportunities	
	Additional 'partnership' funding is available.	

Ineligible for funding:

- Projects costing more than £10,000; without Area Committee authority
- Where an available alternative source of funding is available
- Revenue projects (i.e. management and maintenance of existing facilities)

- Schemes that have already received Council funding (unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this would not be 'top up' funding)
- Works that the City or County Council are under an immediate obligation to carry out (e.g. repair of dangerous footways)
- Play areas (S106 funding should pay for these facilities).

Other Information:

The following categories of work were agreed as being eligible for funding by the Area Committees:

- Works in areas of predominately council owned housing

Appendix B – EIP project submissions and recommendation for 2023 West/Central Area,

Please consider that the funding available is £20,197 and the 15 project submissions just for the Area EIP are estimated to cost £50,000, as set out in the table 1 below. With 2 submissions for the area fitting into the EIP Strategic programme with an estimated value of £20,000.

Prior to the committee the project list and details were sent out to ward councillors for the West / Central Area with the advice that Councillors consider the projects put forward giving an opportunity to indicatively prioritise which ones they would wish to proceed. Within the Table below there is an Officer Funding suggestion based on Officer comments and analysis. However, this is to be discussed with the final recommendation for project funding approval coming from Area Committee Board Members. Where applicants have estimated costs of works, or not included, Officers have added or adjusted to appropriate estimated amounts.

Table 1 - Summarised project submissions for West / Central Area:

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Proposed by	Ward	Est. Cost £	Cost Deliverability Eligible Rating	Persons in Support	Officer Funding suggestion
WC1 - 2023	Tree Protection at the end of Skaters Meadow Roadway	Idea is installation of laid down telegraph poles pegged in place to reduce damage cars are doing to the Trees and vegetation on the edge of the roadway, however a more biodiverse solution could be use of large deadwood tree trunks/branches.	Local Residents	Newnham	2k	Amber	Thumbs up 5	Unclear – Use of Statutory powers to deliver on unregistered land
WC2 - 2023	Biodiversity Improvements - Woodlark Rd, Hoadley Rd, Sherlock Rd & Eachard Rd	Wildflower planting along the verges around the area (square of 1930s housing). This will improve biodiversity and the environment at a local level in the established housing area and makes increased use of their green assets to address the climate emergency. Local consultation of the 135 properties, 49 support the wildflowers, 34 wish to retain the grass verges and 52 have not responded.	Cllr C Payne	Castle	5k	Green / Amber	Thumbs up 29 Thumbs Down 8	Yes - but needs sensitive local consultation
WC3 - 2023	Plant hedgerow on road border of Midsummer Common	Plant a hedgerow on the border of Midsummer Common with Victoria Road and Maids Causeway. Hedgerow would provide protection for children and dogs on the common, shelter from traffic noise and pollution, and food and habitat for birds and insects.	Local Resident	Market	5k	Green / Amber	Thumbs up 15 Thumbs Down 2	Yes - Sections greening up boundary, likely to require more funding.

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Proposed by	Ward	Est. Cost £	Cost Deliverability Eligible Rating	Persons in Support	Officer Funding suggestion
WC5 - 2023	Benches on Christ's pieces, New Square, and Parker's piece.	Request is for provision of more benches on Christ's pieces, New Square, and Parker's piece. Many of the local residents are aged over 60 and would value benches from which to contemplate the splendid green spaces in our area.	Local Resident	Market	5k	Green / Amber	Thumbs up 7	Yes - assessment of need for locations
WC6 - 2023	Display boards for the Ascension Burial Ground	The Ascension Burial Ground at the end of All Souls Lane is one of Cambridge's hidden treasures. It provides a peaceful place of beauty for public benefit. It is not an easy site to understand on the ground. Display boards can record new discoveries, wildlife activity and seasonal changes enhancing appreciation of the site for many visitors.	Friends of Ascension Burial Ground	Castle	2.5k	Green	Thumbs up 23	Yes – Dependent upon area funding availability
WC7 - 2023	Planting on existing pavement islands, Norwich Street	Planting on Norwich Street would greatly enhance the atmosphere, environment, and aesthetics of the street. There are two adjacent small pavement islands midway down the street which would easily take suitable planting of small bushes or shrubs.	Local Resident	Market	3k	Green / Amber	Thumbs up 11	Yes - dependent upon area priorities.
WC9 - 2023	Community Noticeboards in Newnham, Castle and Market to promote community Cohesion.	3 or 4 Community noticeboards boards to be installed in appropriate locations for their purpose across Newnham, Castle and Market to help promote community cohesion and engagement. The noticeboards can become a vital community 'traditional' hub for information and a place where everyone can post important information (not political or business advertisement), requests for help, and offers of support.	Cllr Holloway	Newnh am, Castle and Market	4.5k	Green	Thumbs up 6	Yes - Consider budget reduction if funding pot low?
WC 10 - 2023	Increase Biodiversity – Eachard Road	Plant wildflower grasses on the greenspaces to increase the biodiversity spaces for insects and birds and improve the well-being for those who walk and exercise in the area.	Local Resident	Castle	2k	Amber	Thumbs up 3	No - Covered by duplicate project WC2

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Proposed by	Ward	Est. Cost £	Cost Deliverability Eligible Rating	Persons in Support	Officer Funding suggestion
WC 11 - 2023	Plant bulbs and wildflowers at Fen Causeway/Newnham Road roundabout	This current rather plain and bleak roundabout could be a beautiful, welcoming entrance to the area. Succession-planting of bulbs and wildflowers create an attractive low cost alternative to past treatments and promote biodiversity.	Local Resident	Newnham	2k	Green / Amber	Thumbs up 11	Yes - if maintenance regime viable
WC 12 - 2023	Wildflower planting on the Barton Road verges for well-being and biodiversity.	Roadside verges can be important 'wildlife corridors' for plants, flowers, butterflies and other insects as well as helping to reduce air pollution. More wildflowers could be planted to improve biodiversity for this key route into and out of the city.	Newnham Croft RA	Newnham	5k	Amber / Red	Thumbs up 13	Unclear - need to audit verge composition before can consider assigning funding
WC 13 - 2023	Bins around Gough Way	Two waste bins, largely to manage the issue of dog waste. One bin on the lane running along Bin Brook between Barton Rd and the sluice gate. One bin would be at the west end of Cranmer Road, by the entrance to the footpath.	Residents Gough Way estate	Newnham	1k	Green	Thumbs up 2 down 1	Yes - Dependent upon area funding availability
WC 14 - 2023	Planting to screen Lammas Land from traffic and reduce air pollution in the park	To have planting that protects Lammas Land from the sight, sound and pollution from passing traffic on the busy Newnham Road. Planting a 'vegetation barrier' could reduce air pollution in Lammas Land by as much as 50%. The new Lammas Land Management Plan proposes replanting the Newnham Road boundary.	Local Resident	Newnham	5k	Green	Thumbs up 6	Yes - Dependent upon area funding availability
WC 15 - 2023	Improve a bench in Newnham	The current much is much used by walkers and shoppers unfortunately it needs refurbishment. It was built some years ago around the trunk of a beautiful mature tree, it needs a new design with an extension or a new bench, as the tree roots create a slip hazard.	Local Resident	Newnham	2k	Green	Thumbs up 2	Yes -

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Proposed by	Ward	Est. Cost £	Cost Deliverability Eligible Rating	Persons in Support	Officer Funding suggestion
WC 16 - 2023	Christs' Pieces - Provision of places for unsightly bins improving environment	Provision of a series of 3 'inlet bays' in the iron railings with hard standing, alongside the public path to the rear of King Street, for the commercial Eurobins that currently clutter these areas. Relocating the bins will help transform the pathway into a more welcoming and accessible area, improving safety and the environment.	Cllr T Bick	Market	3k	Green	Thumbs up 1	Yes – if any required permissions can be gained from adjoining private landowners
WC 17 - 2023	Improvements to shared use paths on Midsummer Common	Improvement of shared use for all users of pathways on Midsummer Common. Presently there is conflict between different users of the footpaths. Proposal is to pilot a series of awareness and design interventions, that may include physical awareness and design measures, particularly focusing on entry points and key pinch-points.	Cllr T Bick	Market	3k	Green	N/A	Yes - Dependent upon area funding availability

Submissions for Projects Strategic Area Funding; note sWC - 2023 project(s) that fall in West / Central Area.

No.	Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Proposed by	Ward	Est. Cost	Cost, Delv, elig,	Persons in Support	Officer Funding suggestion
sWC4 - 2023	Street Trees in Market Ward	Several locations may be conducive to planting of Street trees in this densely populated ward with many streets with no or very few street trees.	Officer	Market	10k	Amber	Thumbs up 4	Unclear - Other funding sources maybe available
sWC8 - 2023	Green roofs for bus stops	The planting of grass and wildflowers on top of bus stops in the West Central Area. To help enhance biodiversity on our streets, vital for the survival of small animals, such as bees, and of plants. Bus stops are accessible locations for people to enjoy. Green roofs would also provide shade, absorb heat, and improve air quality.	Cllr Holloway	Newnham, Castle & Market	10k	Amber / Red	Thumbs up 23	No – Deliverability (ownership) and very high level of time resource required.
City 1	Citywide Community Engagement led Biodiversity and Habitat Improvement Projects	Established volunteer work groups led by Environmental Services Community Engagement Team to work with residents to develop local community gardens and food growing spaces on works such as benches (to increase social interaction), local food production, wildflower meadows, trees, and invertebrate (bees) and wildflower bank(s)/features as well as projects that focus on Food Poverty by creating growing spaces – cultivating areas of green space several small scale projects – assisting groups cultivate farm and harvest land for social benefit, during the current national financial crisis.	Environment Services Community Engagement Team	All	circa 15k	Green	Thumbs up 2	Yes – Amount dependent on budget pressures
City 2	Genuine Biodiversity gain	Work with homeowners street by street, ward by ward, and offer to put green roofs on flat roof extensions, bring back front gardens with as much or as little planting the home owner will allow.	Local Resident	All		Amber/ Red	Thumbs up 6	Unclear - Deliverability other Council Teams could help delivery, very high time resource.

City 3	Environmental map of Cambridge	Wildlife need corridors to enable travel around the city. An environmental map would look at the City's open and closed spaces to highlight the spaces that are great for wild birds, reptiles, fish, insects, amphibians and mammals but also the spaces that are used for domesticated animals, pets and farm. It could identify the spaces of travel, for these creatures plus showing areas which may need more corridors created. Should be relatively easy to do from Google maps but the drill down to public and private, and reward private spaces that are havens.	Local Resident	All		Red	Thumbs up	No - ineligible
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Submissions of Project Ideas for Strategic EIP that more appropriately funded through Other Funding Such as LHI, S106, and or others.

Scheme Title	Scheme Description (Shortened)	Proposed by	Ward
Introduce electric auto rickshaws in Cambridge City	An Auto electric Rikshaw solution: People could use auto rikshaws to reach the boarding points for buses/railway stations.	Local Resident	Citywide