

REPORT TO:	HOUSING AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE	AGENDA ITEM:6
DATE OF MEETING:	17 NOVEMBER 2022	CATEGORY:
		RECOMMENDED
REPORT FROM:	STRATEGIC DIRECTOR (CORPORATE RESOURCES)	OPEN
MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:	CHRIS WORMAN (Ex 5774) PARKS AND GREEN SPACES MANAGER	DOC:
SUBJECT:	SWADLINCOTE WOODLANDS UPDATE	REF:
WARD(S) AFFECTED:	ALL	TERMS OF REFERENCE: HCS

1.0 Recommendation

1.1 That members note that the Local Nature Reserve status for Swadlincote Woodlands has been granted and that the Committee approves protection of Swadlincote Woodlands with a Fields in Trust deed of dedication designation.

2.0 Purpose of the report

2.1 The report updates members on the progress on the Local Nature Reserve status for Swadlincote Woodlands and seeks members approval to protect the site with Fields in Trust

3.0 Executive Summary

3.1 This report highlights the progress being made on improvements to Swadlincote Woodlands and seeks approval to protect the site with Fields in Trust .

4.0 Detail

4.1 Local Nature Reserve (LNR) status for Swadlincote Woodlands has been approved by Natural England and has also been declared by the Council through formal notices on-site and in the local papers. Natural England are in the process of updating their on-line public register with the LNR boundary and site details. We expect this to be completed by early December.

4.2 In respect to the capital grant funding to prepare for LNR status, we have awarded an external contract following tendering for the design and full replacement of all directional signs, pathmarkers and entrance boards throughout Swadlincote Woodlands. Several internal designs reviews have taken place and we now have final designs for these elements. The new entrance boards will significantly improve the advertisement of the Woodlands at vehicle and pedestrian entrances, particularly to visitors unfamiliar with the

area. Planning permission is required for the entrance boards and this has now been submitted. We expect a decision hopefully in the beginning of the new year.

4.3 We are also in the early stages of designing new interpretation boards for the Woodlands, to provide visitors with information on the industrial history of the site and its development into the Woodlands, its wildlife, position within the National Forest and also a new and refreshed visitors map. We are working with Active Communities to develop a new fitness trail for the Woodlands. We were successful in our match funding bid to The National Forest for the interpretation boards (£3000) and are also negotiating a contribution for their branding on our other signage.

We hope to have all of the new signage installed early within the New Year, subject to planning consent on the entrance boards.

4.4 At the September meeting members agreed to protect Cadley Park and Eureka Park with a Fields in Trust designation and expressed a wish to protect Swadlincote Woodlands with the same designation. Therefore members are asked to approve the submission of Swadlincote Woods for protection with Fields in Trust.

5.0 Financial Implications

5.1 There are no direct financial implications for the Council seeking protection with Fields in Trust although having a protected designation has proved to be an advantage when seeking external funding opportunities

5.2 Improvement works are being funded from the approved capital budget for Swadlincote Woodlands.

6.0 Corporate Implications

Employment Implications

6.1 Not applicable.

Legal Implications

6.2 Once completed the restriction within the Deed is registered with the Land Registry, meaning any check that is made on the land will highlight the protection that is on it and prevent disposal, generally meaning sale or lease, without the consent of Fields in Trust. A Deed can either be charitable or non-charitable. If it is the former then both Fields in Trust and charity law will ensure the protection, whilst if it is the latter then Fields in Trust will ensure the protection.

Corporate Plan Implications

6.3 The works at Swadlincote Woodlands, and its legal designations contribute to all the priority areas in the Council's Corporate Plan, contributing to Our Environment, Our People and Our Future through protecting and supporting investment, independent living, leisure, and cultural activity and focus on the community as residents and customers.

7.0 Community Impact

Consultations

7.1 Consultations have been carried out with internal identified stakeholders who have no objections.

Equality and Diversity Impact

7.2 Green Spaces support community cohesion and the improvements at Swadlincote Woodlands and the Fields in Trust protection allows access for all members of our community.

Social Value Impact

7.3 Green spaces are used by all members of our communities and are a key element of supporting healthy, sustainable and liveable communities.

Environmental Sustainability

7.4 The granting of Local Nature Reserve status for Swadlincote Woodlands supports the sustainable management of the woodlands.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 That the Committee note the granting of Local Nature Reserve status for Swadlincote Woodlands and approve the protection of Swadlincote Woodlands with a Fields in Trust deed of dedication designation

9.0 Background Papers

Appendix 1 Map of Swadlincote Woodlands

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