Date: 19/04/2026
Name of council: Walton Parish Council
Name of lead contact: Cllr Damian Harvey
Role in council: Councillor
Contact email address: damian.harvey@waltonsomerset-pc.gov.uk
Contact telephone number: 07551 909771

Name of Project: Walton Nature-based Learning Project
Funding Requested from Community Health and Wellbeing: £1,000.00
Please state the minute evidencing approval of this project by full council: March 13th 2026: 2025.26.196 - G and H.
Project start date: 21/06/2026
Project end date: 31/08/2026

1) **Brief overview of, identified need for and council involvement with the project (max 300 words):**

This project aims to establish a dedicated outdoor learning and wellbeing space in Walton Hills, led by local resident Zina Roche in partnership with landowner Harriet Hall and supported by Walton Parish Council. The initiative will create a long-term community resource centred around nature-based learning, including the development of a Tree Trail and seasonal outdoor activities.

The need for the project arises from limited access to informal outdoor learning spaces in Walton, particularly as new housing developments often lack adequate garden space. There is also a growing demand for accessible, family-friendly outdoor activities, alongside a recognised need for inclusive learning opportunities, especially for Neurodivergent children. Initial engagement with Walton C of E Primary School, as well as strong attendance at the first event (approximately 20 participants), demonstrates clear community interest. Ongoing feedback from participants and collaboration with the school will help inform future activities and development.

The project will be supported within Walton Parish Council by Councillor Damian Harvey, who is currently leading council involvement, with plans to involve an additional councillor. Councillor Harvey has already contributed to the project through attending and supporting the first event in April 2026 and helping to present the project at the Walton Open Evening on 24th April. A small committee, including Zina Roche, Harriet Hall, and Councillor Harvey, has been formed to oversee planning and delivery, meeting quarterly.

The project also involves collaboration with local landowners, Walton Primary School and the wider community. Activities will include guided and self-led sessions such as tree identification, insect surveys and various arts events centred around the turning seasons. Local residents, including families and children, will be actively involved through participation, co-design opportunities (such as contributing to the Tree Trail), and community-led events, fostering engagement, wellbeing, and environmental awareness.

2) **Practical support required from Community Health and Wellbeing team (max 200 words)**

No need for any additional help from the Community Health and Wellbeing team.

Budget - broad categories of outcome and expenditure; detail others sources of funding

Income description	**Amount**
Donations through Walton Fun Day fundraising event in the summer	TBC
Health and Wellbeing Small Grant	£1,000.00
Walton Parish Council Funding	£1,000.00
Total:	**£ 2,000.00**

Costings from SALC grant (time and tree trail)

Expenditure description	**Amount**
Designing tree trails (x2) map and assets (time)	£300.00
Discs, ties, printing and lamination of tree trail	£100.00
Skool Beanz event - summer holidays children's activities (mid-summer, 21 June)	£300.00
Skool Beanz event - summer holidays children's activities (August bank holiday)	£300.00
Total:	**£1000.00**

Costings from Walton PC grant (procuring, delivering and installing kissing gate)

Expenditure description	**Amount**
Gate	£800.00
Labour and materials to install gate	£200.00
Total:	**£1000.00**

Budget explanation and elaboration:

SALC expenditures: The SALC funding would cover time spent by experienced tree trail designer, Carl McClean from Keep Britain Tidy, to make the tree trail map and trail cards (digital and print). The funding from this would go to Friends of Sydney Gardens, which Carl McClean helps to run as the former chair and current secretary. The funding would also cover the cost of discs to mark the trees and the time of Lara Honor of Skool Beanz to run two all-day activities at the site during the summer holidays, free of charge for Walton residents to attend.

Walton Parish Council costs: It has been determined that a gate is needed at one of the entrances to replace the barbed wire that is currently in place. This has fallen down and is an ineffective security measure to keep some animals and unwanted people out. Having the gate would help increase the security of the land and reduce harm from outside wildlife and peoples misuse.

3) **Future (max 200 words):**

Future plans for the project focus on increasing community access, strengthening local partnerships, and creating more opportunities for nature-based learning and engagement. There is a long-term ambition to open the land more widely to residents, encouraging people to explore and enjoy the site in a sustainable and responsible way. The project also hopes to welcome local groups, such as Scouts and wildlife watch groups, to use the land for educational and community events where appropriate and in coordination with the landowners.

The council will continue to play an active supporting role by promoting the project through local events and fundraising opportunities, including Walton Fun Day and the Walton Opening Evening event. Volunteers from Reimagining the Levels may also support future activities, including tree planting, plug planting, and helping to develop and maintain the tree trail.

The Walton Nature-based Learning Steering Group currently includes a council representative, a community member, and the landowner. Moving forward, the project aims to strengthen links with Walton C of E Primary School and involve the school's PTA more closely. The school has already helped promote recent events, and there are aspirations to develop regular field trips and outdoor learning opportunities in partnership with the new head teacher, Mr Upham.

4) **Understanding the risks (max 150 words):**

Risk	**Impact**	**Risk Management/Mitigating actions**	**Warning signs**
Poor weather conditions	Events may need to be canceled or	Flexible scheduling, suitable clothing guidance, sheltered events	Weather warnings or heavy rain forecast

	rescheduled		
Drought	The land could suffer wildfires	Fire risk management, effective fire prevention measures, regular checks for fire starters	Weather warnings of a heatwave
Low participant attendance	Reduced community engagement	Promotion, use of community networks, expressions of interest	Low interaction with posts, voiced apologies of not attending
Minor injuries	Unable to continue activities	First aid kit on site, suitable clothing guidance, supervision, transportation available at notice	Unsafe ground conditions, participants struggling physically

Key risks include weather disruption, wear-and-tear, and ensuring safe supervision during children's activities. These will be mitigated by:

- scheduling flexibility
- safe siting and installation of assets
- appropriate adult supervision at events
- clear signage and simple guidance for self-led trail use

5) **Evaluating your progress (max 200 words):**
Consider the overall number of recipients as well as specific benefits to individuals or the wider community.

The project is already delivering positive benefits for a wide range of people within the Walton community. The nature trail and associated activities are designed to be accessible to all ages, from young children through to older residents, creating opportunities for families, volunteers, community groups, and visitors to engage with the local environment. The project also supports local landowners and wider environmental understanding through stewardship and community involvement.

The first community event, held on 26 April, was attended by more than 20 Walton residents, including around 10 children, demonstrating strong early interest and engagement. Feedback and participation showed clear enthusiasm for outdoor learning, gentle physical activity, and opportunities to connect with others in the village.

In the longer term, the project is expected to increase use of local outdoor spaces, improve wellbeing through nature-based activity, and strengthen community cohesion through shared volunteering and events. It will also help children develop a greater understanding of trees,

insects, and biodiversity through hands-on experiences. By establishing a sustainable programme of seasonal events and activities, the project aims to create lasting social and environmental benefits for the Walton community year after year.

Any additional information in support of application:

- Enclose newsletter article
- Enclose photos from recent event

Send application to:

Fodo H at: HWBSupport@somerset-alc-.org.uk
07932265419