



# Morecambe Town Council

## Agenda Environment Committee

<b>Date</b>	27/03/2025
<b>Time</b>	19:00 - 20:00
<b>Location</b>	Morecambe Town Hall, Marine Road Morecambe Lancashire LA4 5AF
<b>Chair</b>	Clark Kent
<b>Explanation</b>	Dear Councillor,

Dated this 21st day of March 2025, you are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of Morecambe Town Council's Environment Committee to be held at 19:00 on the 27th day of March 2025.

The meeting will be held in Morecambe Town Hall, Marine Road East, Morecambe, LA4 5AF to transact business on the agenda.

### **Note to Councillors:**

If you are unable to attend the meeting, please notify the Proper Officer of your apologies.

### **Note to Public:**

*Electors of the town wishing to address the Council are advised to notify the Proper Officer before 10am on the day of the meeting. Permission to speak at the meeting will be at the discretion of the Chairman. Public participation session at a meeting shall not require response or debate and shall solely consist of matters relating to items on the agenda. If the representation made is considered outside the remit of Morecambe Town Council, electors will be referred to the principal authority or other appropriate body.*

Yours sincerely, Mr L Trevaskis, CiLCA, PSLCC.

Chief Executive

Committee members: Cllrs Clark Kent (Chairperson), Geoff Knight, Dan Blacow, Jackie Rogerson, Jason Slater, Claire Cozler, Joanne Ainscough, Paul Hart, John Livermore.

### **1 Apologies**

To receive apologies for absence and consider any reasons for acceptance.

([Local Government Act 1972, Section 85](#))

### **2 Declarations**

To record any declared interests relating to the business of the meeting and receive any dispensation requests from the Proper Officer.

([Localism Act 2011, Section 31](#))

**3 Minutes**

To approve the minutes of the last meeting.  
([Local Government Act 1972, Section 111](#))

**4 Public Participation**

To receive representations from electors that have requested to speak by 10am regarding a matter on the agenda.  
([Morecambe Town Council Standing Orders - Sections 1d-1l](#))

*Note: any electors addressing the Committee must not exceed a three minute time limit.*

**5 Spring Planting**

To receive an update.

**6 Community Gardens (Maylands Square and Mardale Avenue)**

To receive the results of the community surveys, consider ideas, and discuss next steps.

**7 Allotments**

**Ongoing Work with the Allotment Committee**

It is encouraging that the Allotment Committee established last year has continued into the present, providing much-needed continuity for the site and fostering a productive working relationship with the Town Council. The current committee is demonstrating commitment and diligence in managing the site effectively.

**Concerns Over the Future of the Site**

One persistent concern among plot holders is the fear that the Town Council may dispose of the land in the future. This ongoing uncertainty is causing undue distress and instability among those who rely on their plots, possibly dissuading additional investment. To provide definitive reassurance, it will be formally recorded in the minutes that there is no mandate, past or present, for the Town Council to sell or repurpose the allotment site. Clear communication of this position should help to alleviate worries and restore confidence among plot holders.

**Critical Health and Safety Issues**

Despite the Committee's efforts, three plots contain structures that present a significant health and safety hazard. Notices have been issued, and despite attempts to engage the plot holders, they have now surrendered their leases and abandoned the site. These unsafe structures pose a liability risk to the Council, as well as a potential danger to

individuals using the site. Town Rangers will dismantle and remove these structures next month to mitigate any risk of injury or structural collapse.

An even more pressing issue has emerged in the form of a severe rodent infestation. The site is overrun with vermin, posing not only a serious risk to public health but also the potential for damage to neighbouring properties. The current scale of the problem far exceeds the financial capacity of the Committee, which cannot afford the required frequency of pest control visits. Without urgent intervention, this issue will only escalate, resulting in further deterioration of the site and potential environmental health concerns. It is imperative that this is addressed to prevent the problem from spreading beyond the allotment boundaries.

### **Financial Management Challenges**

The Committee has struggled to recruit a new treasurer, and the current treasurer is uncertain how long they can continue in post. A major obstacle to recruitment has been the outdated, paper-based financial system, which places an excessive administrative burden on volunteers. Currently, rent collection, invoicing, and financial reporting are cumbersome and inefficient.

A practical solution is available and the Town Council's Finance Officer could digitise the Allotment Finance Records using the Scribe bolt-on system. This work, estimated to take approximately two days, would modernise record-keeping, streamline rent collection and reconciliations, and simplify the annual financial reporting process required by the Town Council. By reducing the workload, this would make the treasurer role more sustainable for volunteers while also ensuring that the Town Council has timely access to financial records should any issues arise.

### **Recommendations**

#### **1. Immediate Pest Control Intervention**

- Deploy bait traps across the site, managed by the Town Rangers, to bring the vermin infestation under control before it escalates further.

#### **2. Removal of Unsafe Structures**

- Proceed with the planned removal of hazardous structures next month to eliminate safety risks and prevent potential legal liabilities.

#### **3. Financial System Overhaul**

- Digitise the Allotment Finance Records using the Scribe bolt-on system, with implementation by the Town Council's Finance Officer.
- Provide necessary training and access to the Committee to ensure ongoing financial management is both efficient and sustainable.