

MINUTES of the SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING of the SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL held on WEDNESDAY 17 JANUARY 2024 at 7.35 pm

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Harman – Town Mayor
Councillor Ann Duke – Deputy Town Mayor
Councillor Emma Ben Moussa
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Peter Harris
Councillor Lesley Howes
Councillor Dawn Johnston
Councillor Hazel Stephens

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – ATC/RFO

ABSENT: Councillor Richard Lees

385/23-24. ARRANGEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS REGARDING FILMING OR RECORDING THE MEETING.

The Town Mayor explained the arrangements and constraints relating to the filming or recording of the meeting.

386/23-24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Anita Barham, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Claire Pearce, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Alan Reach, due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Elizabeth Wickham, due to other commitments.

RESOLVED:

That the reason/s for absence, for the above Town Councillors, be formally accepted and approved.

387/23-24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

As per Standing Order 34 c) the Chairman adjourned the meeting at this point to allow members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business being transacted at the meeting.

388/23-24. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 11 JANUARY 2024

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Special Town Council Meeting held on 11 January 2024 be confirmed as a true record and be signed.

389/23-24. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE TOWN MAYOR / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

390/23-24. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 11 JANUARY 2024.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting held 11 January 2024 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

391/23-24. MINUTES OF THE HERITAGE SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 9 JANUARY 2024.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Heritage Sub-Committee Meeting held on 9 January 2024 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

392/23-24. PAVILION PROJECT –UPDATE.

Further to minute 372/23-24 Members were provided with an update report and a detailed verbal update on the project.

After lengthy discussion it was proposed, duly seconded, and unanimously agreed:

RESOLVED:

That the outcome of the meeting with the Youth Investment Fund (YIF) on 12 January 2024 be noted and the commissioning of the initial design works with the modular/prefabricated building contractor be endorsed.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 7.50 pm.

Signed: _____

(Chairman)

Date: _____

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MINUTES of the MEETING of the RECREATION, LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on WEDNESDAY 17 JANUARY 2024 at 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor Peter Harman – Chairman
Councillor Emma Ben Moussa – Vice – Chairman
Councillor Lorna Cross
Councillor Ann Duke
Councillor Peter Harris
Councillor Lesley Howes
Councillor Dawn Johnston

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Hazel Stephens
x1 Member of the public
Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk/RFO

ABSENT: There were none

373/23-24. ARRANGEMENTS AND CONSTRAINTS REGARDING FILMING OR RECORDING THE MEETING.

The arrangements and constraints relating to the filming or recording of the meeting were explained.

374/23-24. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Elizabeth Wickham due to other commitments.

An apology for absence was received from the Senior Groundsman/Gardener due to other commitments.

RESOLVED:

That the reason for absence, for the above Town Councillor/s, be formally accepted and approved.

375/23-24. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

376/23-24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

As per Standing Order 34 c) the Chairman adjourned the meeting at this point to allow members of the public to address the meeting in relation to the business being transacted at the meeting.

377/23-24. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

The Town Clerk advised members of the following:

1. On behalf of the community groups the Town Council had successfully applied to the British Heart Foundation Defibrillator Scheme and a new defibrillator (in an unlocked heated external cabinet), would soon be delivered, and installed in Swanscombe Park.
2. Further to minute 460/22-23 and in accordance with Financial Regulation 11.1 (iv) (and in consultation with the Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee) a continuation contract for gang mowing in 2024 had been signed.

378/23-24. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 NOVEMBER 2023

Recommended: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 November 2023 were approved and signed as a true record.

379/23-24. SENIOR GROUNDSMAN /GARDENER'S REPORT.

Members were provided with a copy of the report which updated members on the work undertaken, by the Parks Department and the work planned which included:

Broomfield Park, Heritage Park, Knockhall Park, Manor Park, Swanscombe Park, Equipment/ Staffing and Miscellaneous.

Recommended: That the report be noted.

TOWN CLERK AND RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER'S REPORT.

380/23-24. TREES AT ST PAULS CLOSE, SWANSCOMBE.

Further to minute 287/23-24 the x3 Horse Chestnut Trees were surveyed and confirmed to be dead and required felling as soon as practical. The Planning Authority were informed, under a 5-day notice, and agreed for the trees to be felled *"as an exemption in order to remove a risk of serious harm under Section 14 of the current tree regulations."*

After having liaised with the Chairman and a representative from the church, and having obtained x3 quotations, the works were successfully undertaken on the 19 December 2023 at a cost of £1,600.00.

As part of the permission to fell the trees, which were covered by a TPO, the Town Council *"are under a duty to plant x3 replacement trees the details of which are to be agreed in writing with the local authority"*.

Recommended:

1. That the decision be noted, and the actions taken be endorsed.

2. That the x3 replacement trees be planted in the grass area situated between Swanscombe Street and the play area.

381/23-24. TREE AT SPRING VALE.

After the storm on Tuesday 2 January 2024 one of the trees at Spring Vale split with the section that fell damaging one of the garages at the rear of the houses. Members were issued with supporting documents to confirm the actions taken by Officers.

The Town Clerk advised members of the correspondences received, since the incident, from x3 residents living in that area. After discussion it was agreed to await the result of the tree survey due to be carried out this year before any further action/s were considered.

Recommended: That the decision be noted, and the actions taken be endorsed.

382/23-24. REQUEST TO USE KNOCKHALL RECREATION GROUND – FUNFAIR.

Members considered the request to hold a Funfair at Knockhall Recreation Ground and, after discussion it was agreed that Knockhall Recreation Ground was not suitable for funfairs and that the Policy (minute 90, 31 May 2007) should be revised to read "Knockhall Park should not be used by Funfairs".

Recommended:

1. That the request to use Knockhall Recreation Ground for a Funfair be declined.
2. That the Policy should be that Knockhall Recreation Ground should not be used by Funfairs.

383/23-24. RECREATIONAL FACILITY CHARGES 2024 – 2025.

Members considered the proposed price increases which had been increased by 2.5% overall and rounded up appropriately. As previously agreed, the allotments had been increased by 10% to include the staged recovery of the administration costs of the Allotment Association.

****** These figures had been considered when members previously agreed the Estimates for the forthcoming 2024 – 2025 financial year (minute 360/23-24 Finance and General Purposes Committee and minute 368/23-24 Special Full Council, 11 January 2024).

Recommended: That the Recreation Facility Charges 2024 – 2025 be endorsed.

384/23-24. INGRESS PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE – UPDATE.

Further to the update provided to all Members at the full council meeting on 7 December 2023 (minute 321/23-24) a response had been received from Gareth Johnson MP.

The Major Projects Team Leader (DBC) had arranged a Teams meeting on 4 January 2024 between Senior Officers, the Environmental Protection Officer (DBC), Crest Technical Director and Crest Acoustic Consultant. Topics discussed at this meeting, and requiring action from Crest, included:

- **Internal Acoustics** (Conditions 10 and 11 of planning permission for DA/12/00233/FUL).
- **Noise limiting device** (Conditions 10 and 11 of planning permission for DA/12/00233/FUL).
- **Bike / Bin Store** (Conditions 14 and 15 of planning permission DA/12/00233/FUL).
- **Additional Car Park.**
- **Letter from Development Director, Crest Nicholson Eastern, dated 20 April 2017.**

Members discussed the update and Councillor Peter Harris requested that he be involved in the issues regarding internal acoustics.

Recommended: That the update be noted.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 7.35 pm.

Signed: _____
(Chairman)

Date: _____

Tree Safety Survey Inspection Report for Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council

Date of inspection: 29th January 2024

The Survey is a tree safety survey within the wooded strip at Spring Vale. Trees with significant problems outside the area that may impact on public safety may also be listed as necessary to enable the Council to alert the tree owner.

Other works may be listed that may be classed as prudent works to limit future problems.

Trees are plotted on a map to assist locating the trees. The tree sizes and locations on the map are to be taken as indicative to aid identification.

Where trees may be in large groups or woodland, they may be shown as groups on the map and only trees of direct interest to the survey shown within the group.

Tree locations may be listed as High Risk to Low Risk as appropriate. Normally in Council owned properties, wherever the public may access will be classed as High Risk unless otherwise stated.

Particular care is required alongside roads, outside schools, play areas and places where the public congregate.

Particular care is required for trees in these areas, especially after storms or other serious weather events. It is recommended that trees in High Risk areas be checked after such events and any remedial action taken as necessary.

In case of any doubt as to the safety of any trees, it is advisable to have the trees inspected by a professional who can advise on a course of action if required.

The inspection assesses the trees on the basis of a Visual Tree Inspection, taking into account the root area, the base of the trunk, structure and condition of the trunk and main scaffold of the tree. Other features such as buds, leaf density of the canopy and any defects visible will be noted.

The initial inspection is carried out from the ground only with basic tools such as a metal probe, plastic sounding hammer and binoculars. Cavities that are accessible from the ground may be probed where necessary and a sounding hammer used to assess the extent of the cavity.

No climbing aerial inspections or ground excavations are done on the initial survey.

Further inspection methods from climbing to specialist Tomography may be recommended as a result of the initial survey.

There are suggestions following the failure of T2 that all the trees should be topped to stop this happening.

Topping, while temporarily reducing the risk of wind throw later on potentially increases the risk of failure due to the wounding of the tree allowing disease to enter that may cause unexpected failure in later years.

Regular inspections will assist in maintaining a level of safety that is generally considered acceptable. The interval between Inspections can range from annual in high risk areas to 3 or even 5 years in the lowest risk areas.

In the case of T2, a small broken branch in the fork allowed the establishment of a fungus that caused a weakness in the fork that in the case of an exceptional adverse weather was at greater probability of failure.

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Email:

office@alltreeconsultancy.co.uk

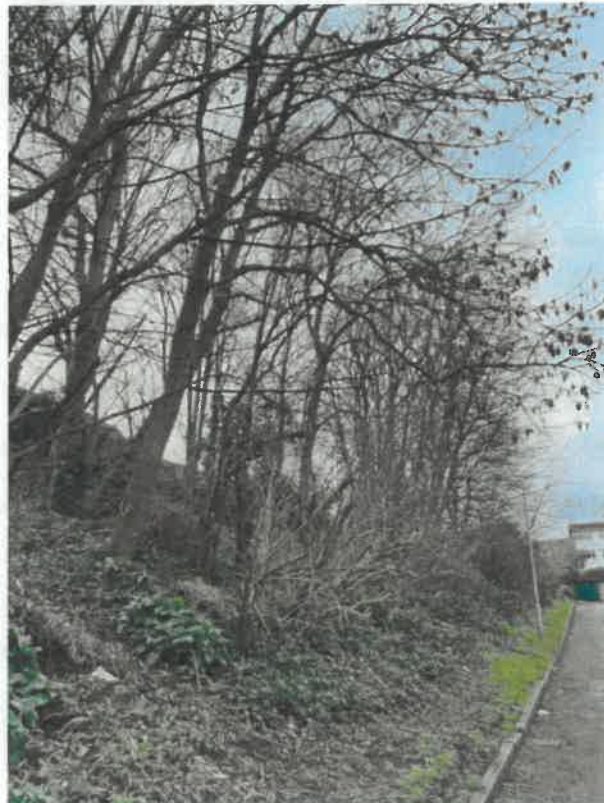
Customer No: SWANS01
Report No: 800979
30/01/2024

Mr Graham Blew
Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council
The Grove
Swanscombe
Kent
DA10 0GA

Tree Inspection Report

Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council
January 2024

Conducted by
Steve Launchbury Dip.Hort. (Kew)
R.F.S.Cert Arb. Tech. Cert. (Arbor A.)
TechArbor A





Email:

office@alltreeconsultancy.co.uk

It is worth noting that no tree can ever be declared entirely safe. Trees are living organisms, reacting to their surroundings, actions of others and the environment. Factors such as weather, pests and diseases and human activities all will influence the safety as well as the health of the tree.

It is not practical to take all possible eventualities and exclude or prevent them from happening. However, regular inspections and prudent works will reduce these risks to a very low level.

Trees are identified by location on a map, a photograph and (usually) a paint spot. Trees in this report are marked with a yellow paint spot.

For this report, only the trees requiring works are listed.

Comments and recommendations are then made as to what may be wrong and what works are required.

These works are given a priority ranging from immediate (the Council will be notified even before the report is completed if works are required immediately), within one month, to usually 3, 6 or 12 months.

All works recommended default to within 3 months from the date of the survey unless otherwise detailed.

Treeworks should be undertaken by trained, insured operatives to BS3998:2010

The report is valid for one year unless otherwise expressly stated. This does not take into account the effect of outside agencies – storms, mechanical damage, eg a vehicle damage, or other non foreseeable incidents.

It is recommended that the works identified in the report be carried out to maintain as safe an environment as practical for the public.

An annual inspection is recommended in high risk areas to monitor changes and early signs of problems in the trees.

Intervals of up to a maximum of 5 years may be deemed acceptable in low risk areas.

An earlier inspection may be required after adverse weather or other unforeseen events.

For clarity works are prioritized in months from the date of the report, or if not safety critical listed 'As required' or 'Advisory'.

TPO's etc

There are no Tree Preservation Orders or Conservation Area listed on the Dartford Borough Council web site

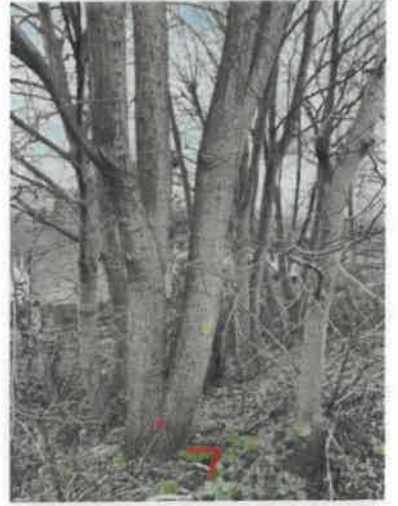
<https://dbc.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=3a1e244bdb144b218d1a004fd041c7c1> for Spring Vale.

A Treeworks map is provided at the end of this report.

Tree Survey Data

Tree no	Species	Comment	Recommendations	Priority months
1	Ash	Very large ash tree alongside the footpath overhanging the derelict building site, the large branches across the path all have dead undersides. The bark has all died off due to the fire some years ago. Significant deadwood (consisting of large dead branches) are located above the footpath. Resting against the tree is a fallen Ivy clad Ash, a small diameter tree that also overhangs the footpath.	Remove any significant deadwood. Reduce the branches with significant bark die back on the underside by approximately 50%. Fell to ground level. The small diameter Ash tree lodged against the trunk of tree number one.	3
2	Maple	Large Maple that originally had a fork at just above 3m. The fork failed during a recent storm leading to the stem hitting a garage nearby. Investigation of the tree has shown a shadow mark just below the fork left by <i>Innonotus hispidus</i> . The old fruiting body was found on the ground below the decay which affected the structural integrity of the fork, allowing the storm wind to split the fork.	Fell the remainder of the tree	ASAP
3	Ash	The lowest main branch is overextended towards the road and streetlight, and is likely to be at risk of failure. Some significant Deadwood is present throughout the crown, but as it is well into the woodland edge, it represents a low risk.	Reduce the large limb heading to the road by approximately 3 m to reduce the risk of failure. While the climate is in the tree, remove the significant Remove the significant deadwood as a matter of habit while climbing.	3
4	Ash	Ash tree adjacent to T3 also has a large limb over extended to the roadway.	Reduce the large limb heading to the road by approximately 3 m to reduce the risk of failure. While the climate is in the tree, remove the significant Remove the significant deadwood as a matter of habit while climbing.	3
5	Hawthorn	Small dead tree within almost falling range of the road	Fell	3

Tree no	Species	Comment	Recommendations	Priority months
6	Sycamore	<p>Large twin stem tree close to the roadside. A crown reduction has been carried out in the past. Regrowth is plentiful but appears to be subject to squirrel damage (stripping the bark and causing death or breakages of the weakened stems). At the time of the inspection, at least two branches are broken and hanging near the roadway edge.</p>	<p>Climb check and remove the squirrel damaged branches and any broken or damaged branches.</p> <p>If the squirrel damage looks to be severe during the removal of the damaged branches, a prudent course of action will be to reduce the crown to the vicinity of the previous reduction.</p>	<p>ASAP</p> <p>6</p>
7	Wych Elm	<p>A large tree growing near the top of the bank adjacent to the garage adjacent the end house. The tree is relatively fast growing and presents a tight included fork at the base of the main fork. The same formation of a tight fork is at approximately 3m. These tight forks with included bark are notoriously weak and may be subject to windblow. The crown is very tall and is now above the average tree line. Given the propensity for stronger winds, both weak forks are likely to fail, maybe towards the building.</p>	<p>The prudent option is to reduce the height of all three main stems by approximately 4 m to reduce the wind sail.</p>	6
8	Sycamore	<p>Trees by the gable end of the nearby house. One stem closest to the house has extensive bark loss, possibly due to canker at approximately 3m above ground level. The stem with the bark defect is at risk of failure.</p>	<p>Remove the stem damaged with canker</p>	3
9	Sycamore	<p>Relatively small dead stem from about 2m height. If it were to fail, there is the potential to possibly reach the fence</p>	<p>Remove the dead stem at the fork.</p>	3
10	Sycamore	<p>Large stem originating at approximately 2m on the side facing to the garages. The majority of the bark around the base has died and fallen off. The stem is likely to fail towards the garages.</p>	<p>Remove the affected stem</p>	ASAP







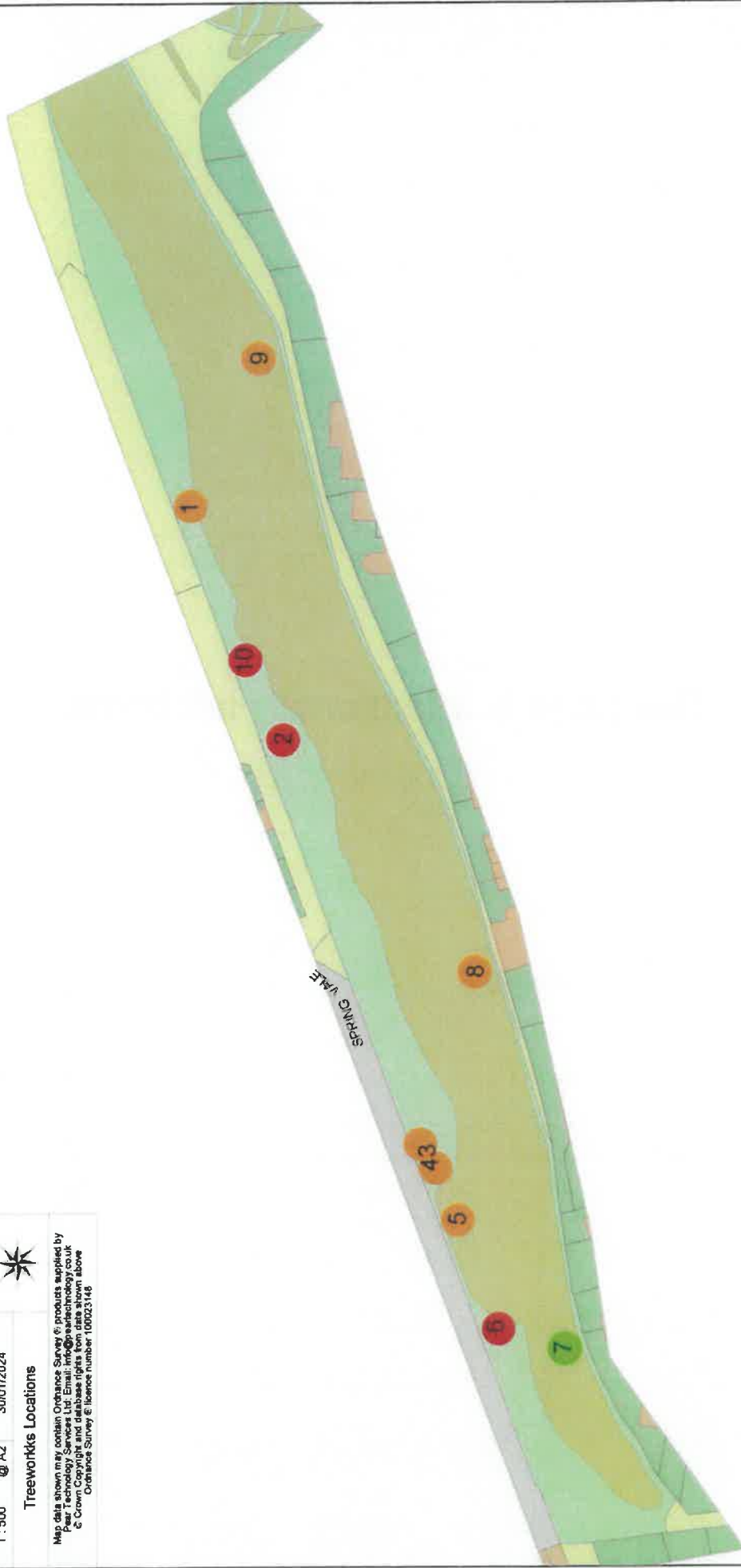
Spring Vale, Greenhithe

SCALE: @ A2 DATE 30/01/2024



Treeworks Locations

Map data shown in grey, certain Ordnance Survey © products supplied by
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Works Priority

- ASAP
- 3 Month
- 6 Month / Advisory

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