

# WEST MONKTON ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

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25<sup>th</sup> March 2025 at 7pm

# Welcome

- Welcome, introductions and apologies
- Overview of the meeting:
  - Maidenbrook Country Park and The Somerset Wood
  - Youth Provision in our Community
  - Sports Pitches update
  - Poppy of Honour Fundraising Update
  - Questions and close

Maidenbrook  
Country Park and  
The Somerset Wood



# Overview of Lottery Project

Project Aim: To enable the much-loved community asset that is Maidenbrook Country Park to be a more well used community space that is accessible to all of our community and that enables our community to come together and build strong relationships.

## **Volunteers**

Supporting, training and enabling volunteers to manage and maintain the Country Park.

## **Accessibility**

Clear signage at the entrances, sufficient disabled car parking, accessible pathways and publicity.

## **Facilities**

Benches and picnic benches, toilets for use by members of the community and volunteers, litter bins and improvements to grassed area for Community Events.

# Progress so far

- £188803.33 of lottery funding secured, £40000.00 of match funding secured and grant applications for further match funding submitted. Total project cost £285383.33
- Recruitment of our Volunteer Coordinator, Candy Sully
- Training of our volunteers and volunteer coordinator in First Aid, Tree Maintenance, Operation of Strimmer and Ride on lawnmower. Further training planned.
- Uniforms / jackets for our volunteers
- Logo created.
- Facebook page created.
- Website created ([www.maidenbrookcountrypark.org.uk](http://www.maidenbrookcountrypark.org.uk))
- Entrance signage designed and advertising consent application submitted.
- Community events area reseeded.



# What's planned

As soon as planning permission is obtained:

- Volunteer hub – including toilets
- CCTV
- Additional equipment for the volunteers (additional ride on lawnmower, trailer and tools)
- Accessible pathways throughout the Country Park
- Disabled parking area at Maidenbrook Lane entrance
- Installation of signage
- Picnic area with benches (near pond)
- Benches around the park.
- Waste bins around the park.

# Volunteer Coordinator: Role Overview

## Volunteer recruitment and support

- Recruitment
  - Volunteer outreach (posters, social media, online publications, events)
  - Engagement with external volunteer programs (Duke of Edinburgh)
- Support
  - Provision of necessary equipment and training
  - Coordinating of tasks for core volunteer team and ad hoc group works parties
    - Routine ongoing maintenance tasks
    - Planting/hedging projects
    - Events preparation work

## Community engagement

- Source of contact for queries and concerns
- Development of engagement activities (Lottery Open Week, Nature Trail)

# Volunteer Coordinator: News Update

## Breaking news at the Maidenbrook Country Park

- Taunton High Sheriff visit
- Hedge planting
  - Secondary hedgerow for birds and wildlife
  - Deadhedge near pond
- Forest School
  - Seating reinstalled and tic-tac-toe
- Duke of Edinburgh
  - Expanding program with plenty of opportunities to get involved
- Lottery Open Week
  - Wildflower seed giveaway, coffee morning & community engagement
- Great Tommy Sleep Out
  - Supporting homeless veterans





# Upcoming Events

April	2025
Easter Egg Hunt	19th April

May	2025
VE Day 80th Anniversary	8th May
Somerset Picnic Day	10th May
Falklands Remembrance	24th May

July	2025
FunFest	12th July

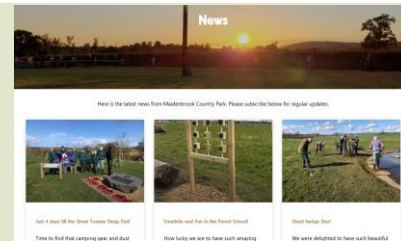
August	2025
St Giles Dog Show	10th August
VJ Day 80th Anniversary	15th August



# Get in touch

[www.maidenbrookcountrypark.org.uk](http://www.maidenbrookcountrypark.org.uk)

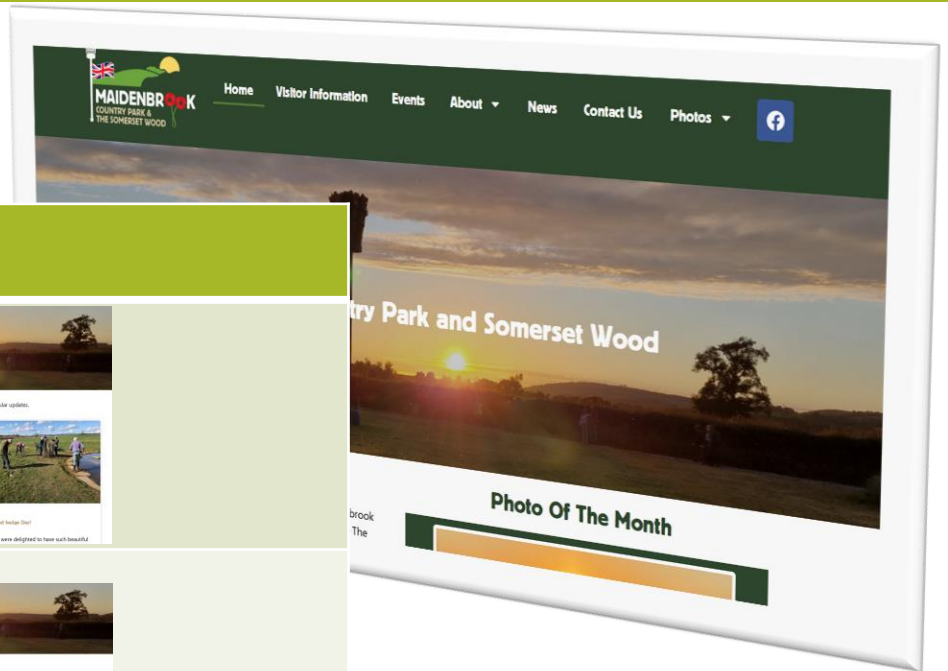
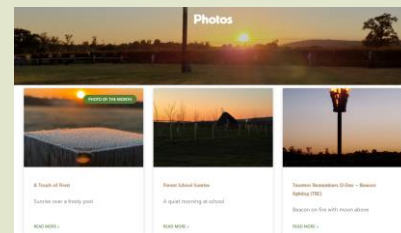
Subscribe for regular news and events



Contact with queries or for info



Photo of the month



Find us on Facebook

# Calling all new volunteers...

## Volunteer opportunities

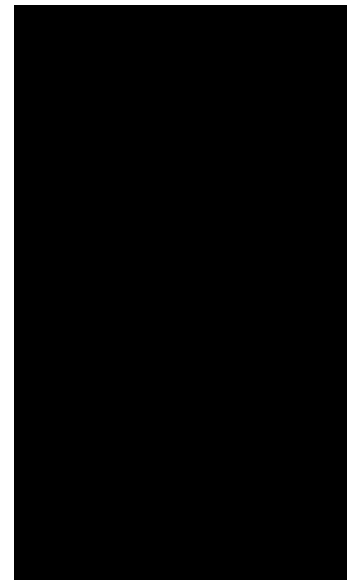
- Litter picking, weeding, grass cutting
- Tree/hedge/shrub planting and maintenance
- Practical habitat management
- Species surveying
- Social media, article writing and blogging
- Photography
- Event support

## Contact:

Candy Sully

*Volunteer Coordinator*

[maidenbrookcountrypark@westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:maidenbrookcountrypark@westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk)







# Development of Youth Provision 2024/25

Kate Welsh

Assistant Clerk (Community)



# Feb to July 24

Worked with a group of students of Monkton Wood Academy once a week.



**Monkton  
Wood  
Academy**

# Summer Food Project 2024

- We developed a project for young people over the summer
- Using food from the Community Fridge and Garden to provide meals at the Youth Café.
- Young people learnt to cook and bake.
- Initially this was for young people but some families also attended.



[Facebook](#)



# Snack & Chat

After School on Wednesdays at the BACH, next  
to West Monkton Primary School until 5.30pm

Chill with Friends

OUR Youth Café

From Y7 to Y11  
only

Music

Tuck Shop

Bring £1

Free Entry



Safe space

Plus free  
snack and  
drink

Contact: Kate Welsh - 07505 984006

[community@westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:community@westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

West Monkton  
Youth Café  
September 2024

from 3.30pm to 5.30pm

# After School Youth Cafe

- Donations from the Community Fridge shared with young people after school
- Hot chocolate/drink
- Approx 40 young people call in for a snack and drink
- Between 15 and 25 stay each week for games/activities or to just hang out with friends.
- All young people are well mannered and respectfully.





# Youth Café Volunteers

## Mandy Cooper

Completed Level 2 Youth Work accredited training – over 40 hours of session time as well as much more independent study. Mandy's work has been instrumental in ensuring we have the correct policies and strategies in place in line with National Youth Agency work.

## Mary Onukem

D'LOUMMMIES CIC - We are Raising Trauma Awareness and Promoting Pathways to Emotional Health and Wellbeing

## Matt Bowler

Youth Volunteer

# HESTERCOMBE LCN

## CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE (CYP) GROUP

10/01/25

# What's the Problem with Youth Work across Somerset?

- Lack of appropriately designed, resourced and joined-up youth provision for young people in Somerset.
- The youth work sector in Somerset has faced significant challenges since local government funding for youth work was cut over ten years ago and this has left patchy and uncoordinated groups across this large rural county
- Exacerbated by the pandemic and resulting mental health issues

# OUR AIM

To improve the life chances of young people across the LCN, offering them opportunities to build resilience, enjoy informal learning and keep them safe, healthy and well-supported into adulthood

# Our Approach - Research

- Establish and protect current provision
- Establish the barriers to Youth Work provision
- Identify the barriers to young people participating
- Identify gaps in provision – by activity and geography
- by listening to the member councils and the voice of young people
- Consider cross-LCN demographics
- Consider possible cross-LCN solutions
- Look at funding models

# Where Are We?

## Research

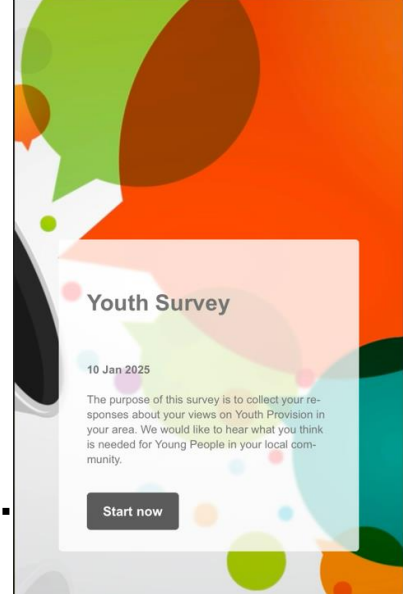
- ✓ SALC Seed Grant awarded to complete the initial research
- ✓ Survey
- ✓ Focus group consultations – KSM, West Monkton Youth Café..
- ✓ Schools: Drama sessions with Somerset Youth Theatre

## Funding

- ✓ Councils' commitment – 5% of precept
- ✓ SALC Full Grant £35K awarded

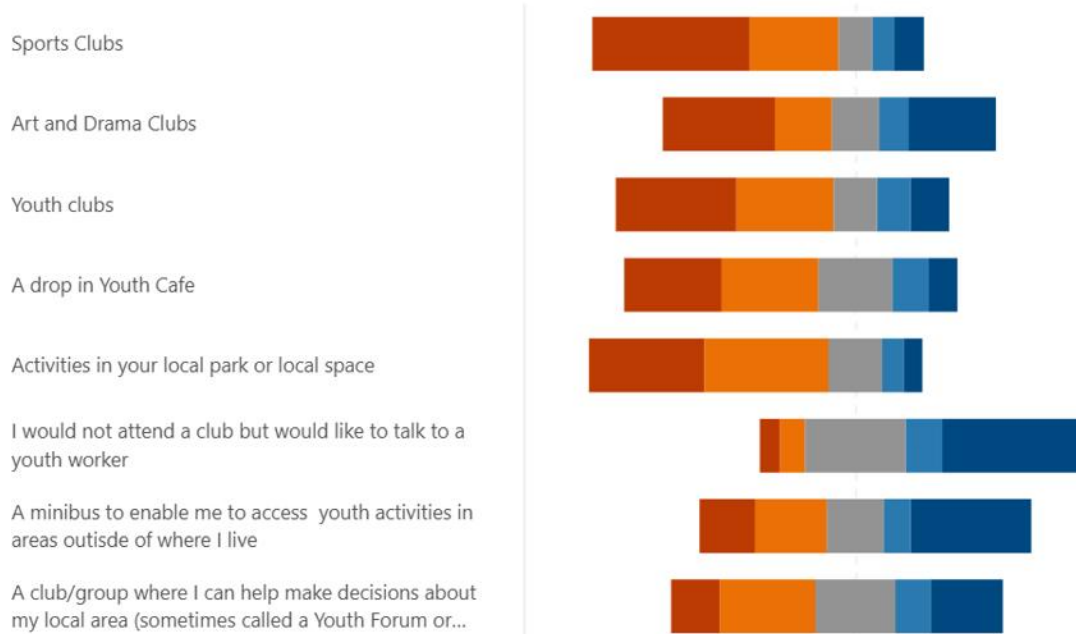
## In co-operation with:

Somerset Youth Theatre; Somerset Youth Work Alliance;  
Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership (SASP); SALC; other LCNs;  
.....



7. If there was an opportunity to attend other activities, what would you like to see provided and how likely would you be to attend?

Very likely   Somewhat likely   Neither likely nor unlikely   Somewhat unlikely   Very unlikely



1. What is your gender?

Female	46
Male	35
Non-binary	1
Prefer not to say	23



2. You need to be over 10 years to complete this form, what age group are you?

Age 10-11	21
Age 12-13	51
Age 14-16	24
Age 16-18	6
Age 18-25	3



## Drama-Llama workshop with SYT

We asked students at our last workshop to give us one word that sums up their workshop experience. This is what they said...

*As a teacher, it was amazing to see certain children being coated out of their comfort zones & have a fun time. I can not speak highly enough of the workshop & leaders. Mr. K. - KS2*

**A Funded workshop using Drama games & skills, to:**

- Build confidence
- Improve speaking & listening skills
- Have fun
- Improve well-being
- Give young people a more active voice in their community

info@somersetyt.com

coooooo

the-most-fun-it-could-ever-be

Great job!

joyful :)

fab

unique

excited

fantastic

curiosity

Hilarious

Extremely fun

so enjoyable

terrific

amazing

Epic!

awesome



# Proposal

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# Surveys – Young People

What YP say they would like:	%age Responses
Activities organised in my local park/community	72
A (multi) sport group	74
Arts & Drama Clubs	52
Youth Club	66
Drop in Youth Cafe	58
Sessions to learn life skills	34
A club/group where I can help make decisions about my local area	45
I don't need a club but it would be nice to talk to a youth worker outside of school	14
A minibus/van to visit my village so a youth worker can run activities near me	39

# What's Next

Continue the research through the Boombox, and through schools

Working with **sports, music, art and drama** organisations alongside youth workers to test the findings:

- establish a cycle of varied activities that attract YP on an ongoing and sustainable basis over time
- inclusion of YP that otherwise find access to group activities challenging or inaccessible
- by overcoming their barriers to involvement
- taking activities to the YP or taking the YP to the activities.

Hopefully this will prove to be a way for councils across the LCN(s) to collaborate in addressing areas of concern - in our case to deliver youth provision, based on evidence of the needs of our young people, **to benefit all our young people, beyond the life of the grant.**

# Sports Pitches Update





## Progress so far:

- Groundworks to install drainage and seed the pitches took place during 2024.
- Application to vary planning permission submitted in July 2024, determination / outcome awaited.



# Next Steps:

- Work planned to commence imminently to roll pitches, apply a controlled release fertilizer, verti-drain field – all designs to increase grass growth and complete the cricket square.
- Access road and utility connections by Persimmon.
- Upon planning permission being obtained work to secure site (fencing / gates).
- Grant applications to be submitted for pavilion and other elements of the proposal.



# Poppy of Honour Fundraising Update



[https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/g5ityef1uget9wtvl74zy/23-55-Poppy-of-Honour-Presentation-Video\\_5.mp4?rlkey=9j5aqj6gop62meggzvghv3nu7&dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/g5ityef1uget9wtvl74zy/23-55-Poppy-of-Honour-Presentation-Video_5.mp4?rlkey=9j5aqj6gop62meggzvghv3nu7&dl=0)

## Progress so far:

- Planning approval for the pavilion has been obtained.
- Cost to construct the Pavilion in the region of £100-£140k
- Operation Tribute launched. Plaques and merchandise available.
- Poppy of Honour is going on tour to help raise awareness and help with the fundraising efforts.

# Operation Tribute – Poppy of Honour

## THE GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING

### THINKING OF A UNIQUE GIFT FOR YOURSELF OR A LOVED ONE!

We are seeking donations in order that a Pavilion can be erected to house the POPPY OF HONOUR at Somerset Wood in the Maidenbrook Country Park in Taunton. When built it will become an official National and Commonwealth War Memorial. Visitors will be able to view Free of Charge.

The POPPY holds 1,117,635 individual remembrance poppies inside its encasement, representing the number of British and Commonwealth servicemen and servicewomen listed by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission as 'Killed In Action' or 'Missing In Action' together with those 'Shot at Dawn' then later pardoned and those who died from their wounds after the Armistice in WW1.

You will have the unique opportunity to have yours or a loved one's name on a plaque. Businesses can also contribute. These will be placed near to the Pavilion for all to view for **perpetuity**. Details of the plaque options are below. This operation will continue until funding is complete.



<https://westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk/operation-tribute-poppy-of-honour/>

#### Plaque purchase options:

##### Small Plaque: £25.00

Small tribute with name only.

10cm x 2.5cm

Up to 36 characters.

<https://collectcheckout.com/r/ki6y20fkrbzkmp7fy5s5i1p5i7cch6>

Colonel Thomas Matthews  
10cm x 2.5cm (36 characters max) £25



## Dame Joanna Lumley becomes patron of Somerset war memorial

Dame Joanna said: "When I was invited to become a patron of the Poppy of Honour I accepted with pride and humility.

"As a daughter of the regiment, the memory of those lost in war, who made the final sacrifice, is particularly poignant.

"Two of my great-uncles were lost in the battlefields of France when barely out of their teens; and as strife continues around the world it is comforting to know that there is a memorial to all those who lost their lives where one can sit and remember and reflect, and maybe even pray."

Cllr Carol Cronshaw said: "We want you to be one of the heroes who joins the Poppy of Honour family. It's supporters like you that will help us to 'bring the Poppy Home' to its final resting place.

"Let's work together to make this special memorial something for everyone and complete this mission. In the midst of what is a massive fundraising challenge, it is marvellous to have received such a heartwarming endorsement from Dame Joanna."

Dame Joanna added: "We all need more time to be at peace with our thoughts and to honour the dead, and I urge you to join me in supporting this cause that is so dear to me and to so many hundreds of thousands across the land."



# Poppy of Honour National and Commonwealth War Memorial Pavilion



Fundraising QR Code:



Thank you

**Contact details for the Parish Council:**

Amy Shepherd, Clerk –  
[clerk@westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Kate Welsh, Assistant Clerk Community –  
[community@westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:community@westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

Candy Sully, Country Park Volunteer Coordinator -  
[maidenbrookcountrypark@westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:maidenbrookcountrypark@westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk)

**Website:**

[www.westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk](http://www.westmonktonparishcouncil.gov.uk)