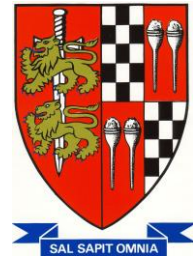


# Droitwich Spa Town Council

10<sup>th</sup> May 2024

## PRESS STATEMENT



Town of Wich  
Otherwise  
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## The Natural Networks Programme

The Natural Networks Programme is a Worcestershire - wide scheme offering grants and advice to projects which aim to create or restore wildlife rich habitats. The Programme is a partnership between Worcestershire County Council and the Worcestershire Wildlife Trust. This offers free professional Biodiversity surveys carried out by the partner- Worcestershire Wildlife Trust, who assess project sites and make professional recommendations on how to create or enhance the land to maximise habitats and potential for wildlife. The Programme aim is to create a natural network of wildlife rich habitats across Worcestershire that will enhance the quality of blue and green infrastructure.

Grants of £1000 to £15,000 are available for up to 70% of the total project cost. Public sector organisations are expected to match fund at least 30% of the project costs.

Droitwich Spa Town Council initiated collaboration with Natural Networks in the autumn of 2023 and assessed various owned land holdings in the period to January 2024. Focus has been on the areas of Spring Meadow and Copcut Park to enhance wildlife and provide diverse, natural and enjoyable outdoor spaces for the Community. The Town Council have successfully bid for a grant contribution which has been awarded for the maximum £15,000 threshold. Additional capital investment will enable improvement works to be completed simultaneously for the footpaths network through Copcut Park between Worcester Road and Celvestune Way.

At Spring Meadow additional and replacement native blossom and fruit trees will be planted, together with sowing a wild flower meadow area. This will support pollinators, create further natural habitat and boost floral diversity. Other features include a new insect/bug hotel structure, additional park benches, spring bulb planting and two new formal planting raised bed sections. This is conducive towards residents, park users and visitors enjoying the natural environment.

At Copcut Park the aforementioned pathways will be redefined and resurfaced in natural compacted stone. This work will return some of the existing pathways surface area back to natural habitat as a positive net gain. The pathway surfacing will be permeable and non-sealed, benefiting the ecology, accessibility for all users and ease of maintenance. A variety of spring bulbs will be planted in the woodland and amenity grassland areas including wild garlic and English bluebells. Other features for this location includes bird & bat boxes, an insect/bug hotel structure and some replacement tree planting.

The Working Group Delegation of the Town Council which leads on the project comprises Councillors Mrs CA Bowden, S Brazier, PD Clements, DI Davidson and RJ Morris. Councillor Mrs Bowden – Chairman of the Town Council Community & Amenities Committee has said,

*“Droitwich Spa Town Council has benefitted from the maximum eligible grant towards this project. We are very excited to be leading on this initiative working with our partners through Natural Networks. We are proud of the benefits and improvements that this opportunity will bring for these Community Green Space assets. Care for the environment and supporting our wildlife remain key priorities. Works are anticipated to begin shortly continuing on a phased basis until expected full completion by December 2024”.*