

**TAVERHAM PARISH COUNCIL
WOODLANDS COMMITTEE – BUDGET PICTURE 21ST APRIL 2026 - 2025/26**

EXPENDITURE

<u>Heading</u>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Spent</u>	<u>Expected</u>	<u>Y/E Balance</u>
Running Costs				
Insurance	£435.00	£0.00	£0.00	£435.00
Insurance – Volunteers	£175.00	£0.00	£0.00	£175.00
Fido Bin Contract	£1,895.00	£1,482.00	£0.00	£413.00
Woodlands "Events"	£100.00	£0.00	£0.00	£100.00
Volunteers Materials	£300.00	£291.66	£0.00	£8.34
Surgery/Felling/Replanting	£7,000.00	£0.00	£4,740.00	£2,260.00
Maintenance Contract	£4,080.00	£3,740.00	£340.00	£0.00
Horticultural Contract	£1,085.00	£977.24	£88.84	£18.92
Fencing	£200.00	£0.00	£0.00	£200.00
Pathways	£550.00	£0.00	£0.00	£550.00
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	£15,820.00	£6,490.90	£5,168.84	£4,160.26
Projects	£1,000.00	£77.50	£0.00	£922.50
Contingency	£1,500.00	£308.33	£0.00	£1,191.67
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COMMITTEE TOTALS	£18,320.00	£6,876.73	£5,168.84	£6,274.43

This is the final Woodland Budget Picture for the financial year ending 31st March 2026

RFO
21st April 2026

To consider request to site a memorial bench in Ghosthill Wood

I am writing to you to ask how I could go about gaining permission for a Memorial Bench in Ghost Hill Woods for my late Wife, Louise Plunkett. Louise was known to some of the Councillors through her local connections and volunteering work, and we have lived near the woods for well over 20 years, bringing up our family in the area. Caroline would be familiar with her role as a volunteer with Vision Norfolk, where she worked with the children and young people's group (Louise was visually impaired herself, using a cane for navigation), while Sandra may know of Louise as she lives just down the road from us and Geoff taught Louise (and me) at Taverham High School. Stuart Clancy also knows the family well, as I was his "Management Trainee" at the start of my career and we have stayed in touch. As mentioned above, Louise had very long standing connections with Taverham, having attended Taverham High, with both our sons also attending local schools where Louise volunteered with "Friends of Ghost Hill School" on their committee for several years. Louise has lots of friends in the area, as she was a popular person who always found time to help others, and they would often meet for a walk in the woods.

Louise really loved the woods, with both our homes in Taverham very close by (Cameron Green, then Dryden Road), especially as her Visual Impairment meant venturing further afield was more of a challenge and it was a safe option for her to introduce our boys to nature when they were younger. Louise found joy there in all seasons, but particularly loved bluebell time, and I have 100's of photos of her there. During her battle with Cancer it was a place we could easily access with her oxygen cylinder to connect with trees and nature. One of her dying wishes was that she would like to be remembered in this way, as somewhere her family and friends could go and reflect, and be able to continue to provide support to other people by giving a place to rest a while.

As background, Louise had a very rare and aggressive type of cancer, which remained undetected until she had to have an emergency hysterectomy for what had presented as a very large Fibroid. Subsequent biopsies showed that it was a malignant growth, which unfortunately does not show markers on blood tests, with following investigations showing that she had stage 4 cancer as it had already spread to her lungs. This was most unfair as Louise never smoked, and led a healthy lifestyle, with an emphasis on helping other people which she did until the day before she died aged 46. She was diagnosed on 21st August and passed away on 29th November. She attempted the treatment that was offered, however the cancer was too aggressive for chemotherapy to be effective, spending her last few weeks in Priscilla Bacon Lodge

Louise had so many achievements, from swimming with British Swimming for the blind (nearly became a paralympian, only didn't because of an illness), to representing visually impaired people at No 10 Downing Street with the Prime Minister a little over a year ago. She lived life with a smile and a positive attitude, despite her disability, so I am really hoping we can commemorate her with a local tribute. I am more than willing to fund the costs involved, provide the bench itself and commit to its upkeep into the future.

I would be grateful if you could share this with the councillors on my behalf and for them/you to advise on how I can make this a reality.

To consider request in principle to scatter ashes in Ghosthill Wood

The Parish Council has received an enquiry from a family seeking guidance on whether it would be possible to scatter a relative's ashes within Ghost Hill Wood, which was a place of personal significance to him. At this stage the family are exploring options and have asked what permissions or processes would apply.

The Council has not previously received requests of this nature and does not currently have an adopted policy for the scattering of ashes within the woodland. Should the Committee wish to consider the request, members may wish to identify whether a particular area of the wood would be appropriate, taking into account ecological sensitivity and the potential impact of the mineral content of ashes on soil conditions.

The Committee may also wish to note that the number of requests for memorials and memorial benches within the wood has increased. It is likely that further permissions for benches or similar installations will need to be limited to avoid visual clutter and to preserve the natural character of the site. A commemorative tree planting may be a more suitable option for families seeking a lasting tribute.