



# Witchford Neighbourhood Plan Local Green Space Designations Report May 2019

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been produced to accompany the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan and provides the evidence related to the policy to designate Local Green Spaces (LGS). These designations are in policy WNP-GI2.
- 1.2 It is based on the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (February 2019) criteria related to the designation of Local Green Spaces in Neighbourhood Plans.
- 1.3 Paragraph 99 of the NPPF sets out the parameters as:

*‘The designation of land as Local Green Space through local and neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as Local Green Space should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period’.*

- 1.4 Paragraph 100 of the NPPF states that LGS designation should only be used where the green space is:

*‘a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;  
b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and  
c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land’.*

## 2.0 Methodology and community consultation

- 2.1 This report considers the appropriateness of specific spaces within the Neighbourhood Plan Area for designation as LGS when assessed against paragraphs 99 and 100 of the NPPF. Witchford Parish Council has reviewed each site and has considered whether the designation would meet the basic conditions required of Neighbourhood Plans.
- 2.2 During 2016-19 Witchford Parish Council, in tandem with the Witchford community, developed the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan. A Neighbourhood Plan Committee was set up with the remit to undertake a programme of consultations with village residents.
- 2.3 An initial village-wide consultation was carried out in November 2016 to establish what were the key areas of concern for residents. This showed that protection of the village open spaces was a high priority for residents.
- 2.4 During the summer of 2017 the Neighbourhood Plan Committee attended the village fete, the school fete and the village festival with maps of Witchford to get evidence on what particular areas of land were most prized by residents. A drop-in session was also held in February 2018. The evidence collected at these events showed that Sandpit Drove and the areas of open space to the south of the village, accessed from Main Street, were particularly special to the local community.

- 2.5 A second village-wide consultation in February 2018 included focussed questions on green space to gauge support for protecting them. The particular questions and responses are:

Q2 Sandpit Drove/Broadway must remain an area of green common land.

Response – Strongly Agree 81.64%, Slightly Agree 11.41%, Slightly Disagree 4.22%, Strongly Disagree 2.73%

Q5 Paths and open green spaces in and around the village should keep their rural character.

Response – Strongly Agree 91.40%, Slightly Agree 6.14%, Slightly Disagree 1.47%, Strongly Disagree 0.98%

- 2.6 The following further evidence was gathered during 2018:

i) Paper survey of users of the open space south of Main and Sandpit Drove in order to gain direct evidence from residents about the use and public perception of the land. Blank survey forms were left in a protected folder on the land for two weeks in August 2018, for users to collect when passing and return when completed to members of the Neighbourhood Plan Committee.

The surveys show that the public greatly appreciate these areas, for dog walking, exercise and to appreciate the countryside, tranquillity, peace and quiet, and wildlife and nature, with many references to how the areas are so easily accessible from the village and bring the countryside into the village

ii) A dedicated Facebook page was set up in June 2018 to collect posts about how people use and enjoy the proposed Local Green Space sites in Witchford. A transcript of all the posts is included in the Neighbourhood Plan Consultation Statement.

iii) A report from the Witchford Open Spaces Group on the conservation and wildlife value of these sites. The Open Spaces Group is a group of Witchford residents who carry out maintenance and conservation tasks on open spaces throughout the village, including leading well-attended guided walks. This report also included data from the Cambridge and Peterborough Environmental Records Centre.

iv) A Landscape Character Assessment for the whole of the parish of Witchford was commissioned by Witchford Parish Council in July 2018 from an independent landscape architect. The Neighbourhood Plan Committee requested that the LCA specifically include an independent assessment of the suitability of Sandpit Drove and the land south of Main Street for LGS designation.



- 2.7 The evidence base underpinning the recommendations for LGS designation in the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan is listed in Annex 1 '*LGS Supporting Documents*' and the individual documents are included as separate appendices.
- 2.8 Each of the proposed sites has been mapped against the NPPF criteria. The Parish Council has analysed each site against the NPPF criteria and its recommendations are included in Section 3

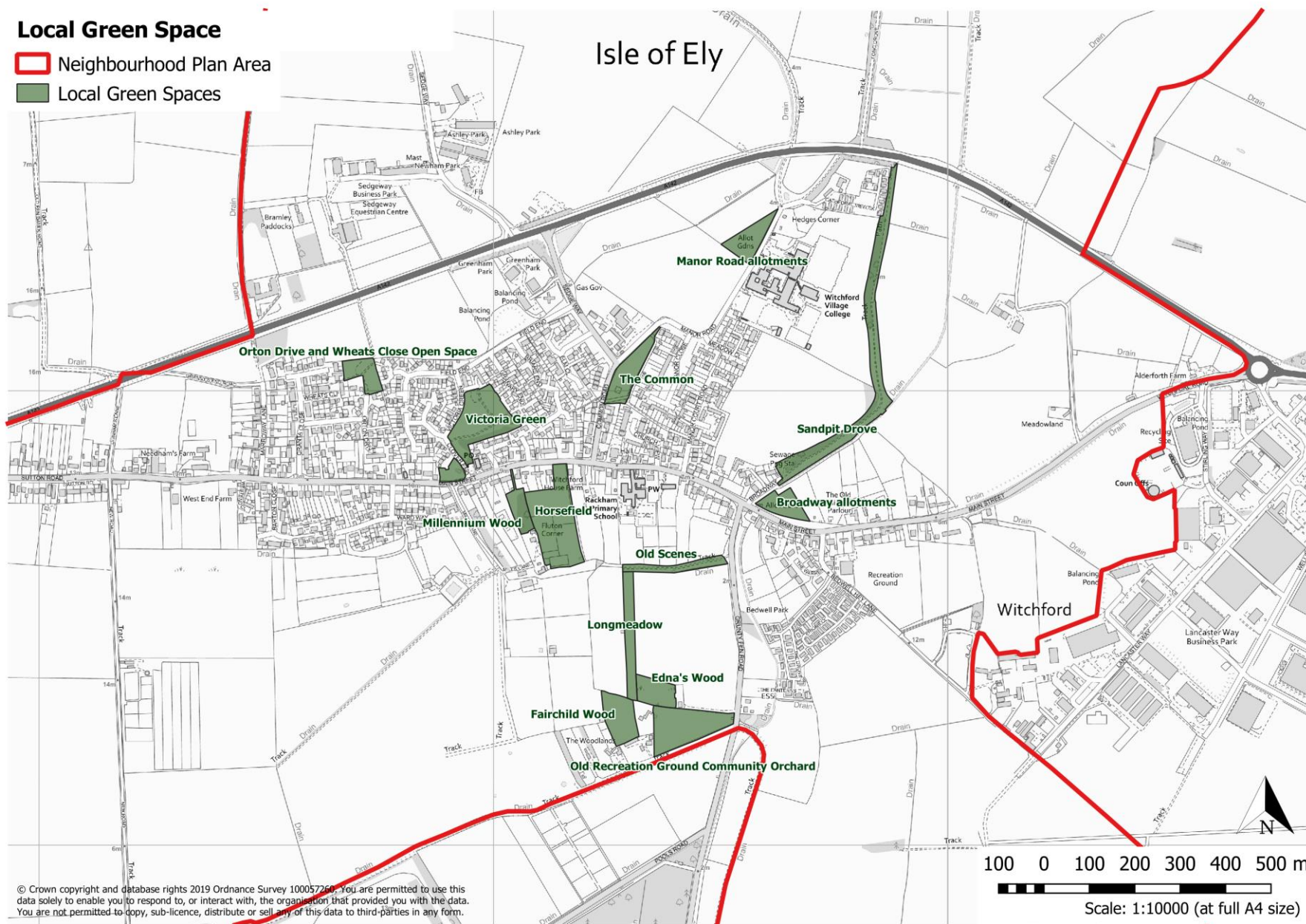
### 3.0 Designations

- 3.1 Witchford Parish Council agreed that the following sites should be included in the Regulation 14 Draft of the Witchford Neighbourhood Plan as Local Green Space. Each site is shown on the map below.

Site	Landowner
Sandpit Drove	Witchford Parish Council
Old Scenes Drove	Witchford Parish Council
Long Meadow	Mrs D Field
Edna's Wood	Mrs D Field
Fairchild Wood	Mrs D Field
Old Recreation Ground and Community Orchard	Witchford Parish Council
Victoria Green	East Cambridgeshire District Council
Millennium Wood	Witchford Parish Council
Manor Road Allotments	Mr R Everitt
The Common	Witchford Parish Council
Orton Drive and Wheats Close Open Space	East Cambridgeshire District Council
Broadway Allotments	Church Commissioners
Land East of Millennium Wood (known locally as 'the horsefield').	Mr M Seymour and Mr P Seymour

## Local Green Space

-  Neighbourhood Plan Area
-  Local Green Spaces



### 3.2 Sandpit Drove



#### Description of site

Starting approximately north-east of Main Street, Sandpit Drove runs north-easterly and then generally northerly to a point approximately 11m south of the A142 Witchford bypass. The drove comprises a green lane running between clearly defined boundaries, variously ditches, hedges and fences. At a point approximately 370m north-east of Main Street, there is a pond and seating area (photograph 2.) with attractive views south-east over paddocks and north-east towards Ely Cathedral. Along the western side of the drove a footpath runs through a narrow, wooded area (photographs 1. and 3.) to give an alternative to walking along the open drove. From the pond, the drove runs as a wide grassed area which has been sown with wildflower seeds (photograph 4.). The whole of the drove and woodland path is maintained by village conservation volunteers. The whole area of the drove and wooded path is open for public use and enjoyment at all times. At the northern end of the drove, public access continues on foot via a path along the south side of the A142 to link into the north end of public byway No11.

#### Area

2.03 Ha.

#### Is site reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?

Yes. Starts on Main Street and runs alongside the edge of the village, immediately accessible from residential areas at both ends of the LGS

**Is it demonstrably special to a local community and does it hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife?**

Yes. The site is specifically highlighted in the Witchford Landscape Appraisal (WLA) for its important views *'from the initial length of the drove alongside the Grunty Fen Drain, there are views out to the wider shallow valley landscape which separates the Isle of Ely from Witchford island. In these views the tower of Ely Cathedral can be seen and adds to local distinctiveness and enjoyment'*. The WLA describes the site as *'an enclosed and intimate experience which is in contrast to so many experiences of the wider landscape surrounding the village'*.

The site is described in the WLA as *'an old drove way/green corridor defined by mature hedgerows and hedgerow trees and containing a linear swathe of grassland and pond. These linear drove route landscapes are typical of the fen landscape (as highlighted in the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines)'*.

The site is specifically recommended for LGS designation in the WLA.

The February 2018 village-wide Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire included the question *'Sandpit Drove/Broadway must remain an area of green common land'*. The responses were 81.64% strongly agree and 11.41% slightly agree.

26 LGS survey forms give direct testimonial from residents on how important Sandpit Drove is for recreation and well-being (tranquillity).

The Open Spaces Group report details the exceptional wildlife value of Sandpit Drove, including flora, mammals, lepidoptera, amphibians and birdlife. CPERC data is included, demonstrating the wildlife value of the site.

There has been a long tradition of community participation in the management of the drove. In 1992 Open Spaces Group (OSG) volunteers, working with Witchford Scouts, cut back vegetation to improve access to the drove and organised the restoration of the pond. In 2010 part of the site was planted as a wildflower meadow. A path through the woodland (Sparrowhawk Way) was created by volunteers in 2005, with help from the county council who provided a footbridge over a ditch.

Sandpit Drove is directly referenced in posts from residents on the Witchford Green Space Facebook page, demonstrating how the site is valued by the local community.

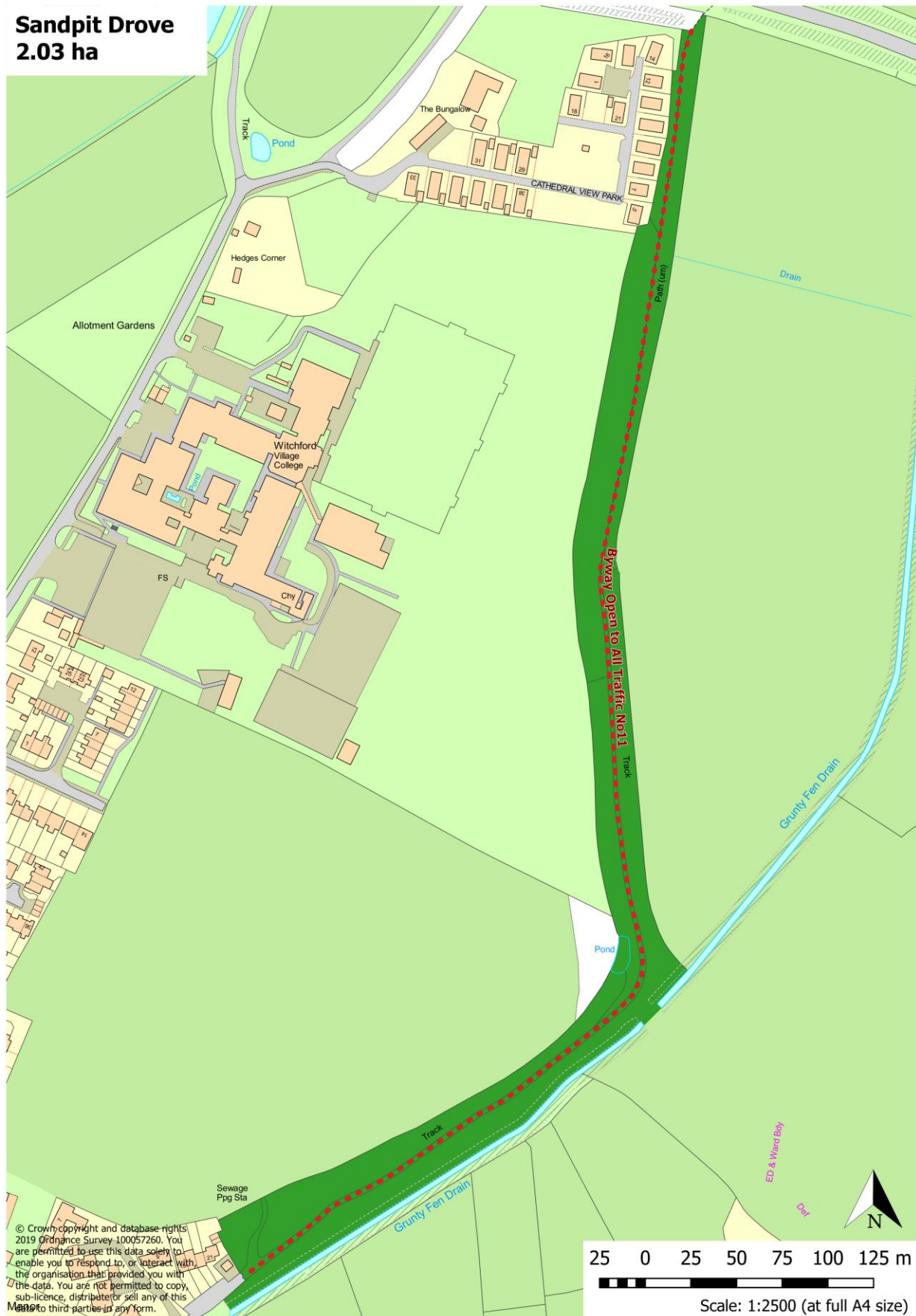
2014 TRO support letters give good evidence of use of the site and how much it means to residents, for instance Witchford Brownies who use the site for nature study.

Sandpit Drove is publicised as part of the Witchford Walks series, in a leaflet supported by Witchford Parish Council (also now online). Part of walk Nos 2 and 4.

**Is it local in character and not an extensive tract of land?**

Yes. Discrete area of land with clear boundaries and defined entrances at both ends.

**Sandpit Drove**  
**2.03 ha**



### 3.3 Old Scenes Drove (also known as Holts End)



#### Description of site

Starting on Grunty Fen Road, the site comprises a green land clearly bounded by a ditch and hedge (photograph 1.). The drove runs in an east-west direction. At its western end the path meets the Longmeadow Local Green Space site. Public footpath No1 crosses the western end of the drove linking this Local Green Space site into the Horsefield Local Green Space site and back to Main Street in the centre of the village. A permissive footpath is waymarked along the drove (photograph 2.)

#### Area

0.4 Ha.

#### Is site reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?

Yes. 205m south of Main Street, centre of village, directly accessed via public footpath. Leads to Grunty Fen Road and from there back to Main Street via the pavement, forming an attractive short circular walk.

#### Is it demonstrably special to a local community and does it hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife?

The site forms part of the 'Green Space to South of Witchford' area specifically recommended for LGS designation in the Witchford Landscape Appraisal (WLA).

The February 2018 village-wide Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire included the question Q5 '*Paths and open green spaces in and around the village should keep their rural character*'. Response – Strongly Agree 91.40%, Slightly Agree 6.14%, Slightly Disagree 1.47%, Strongly Disagree 0.98%

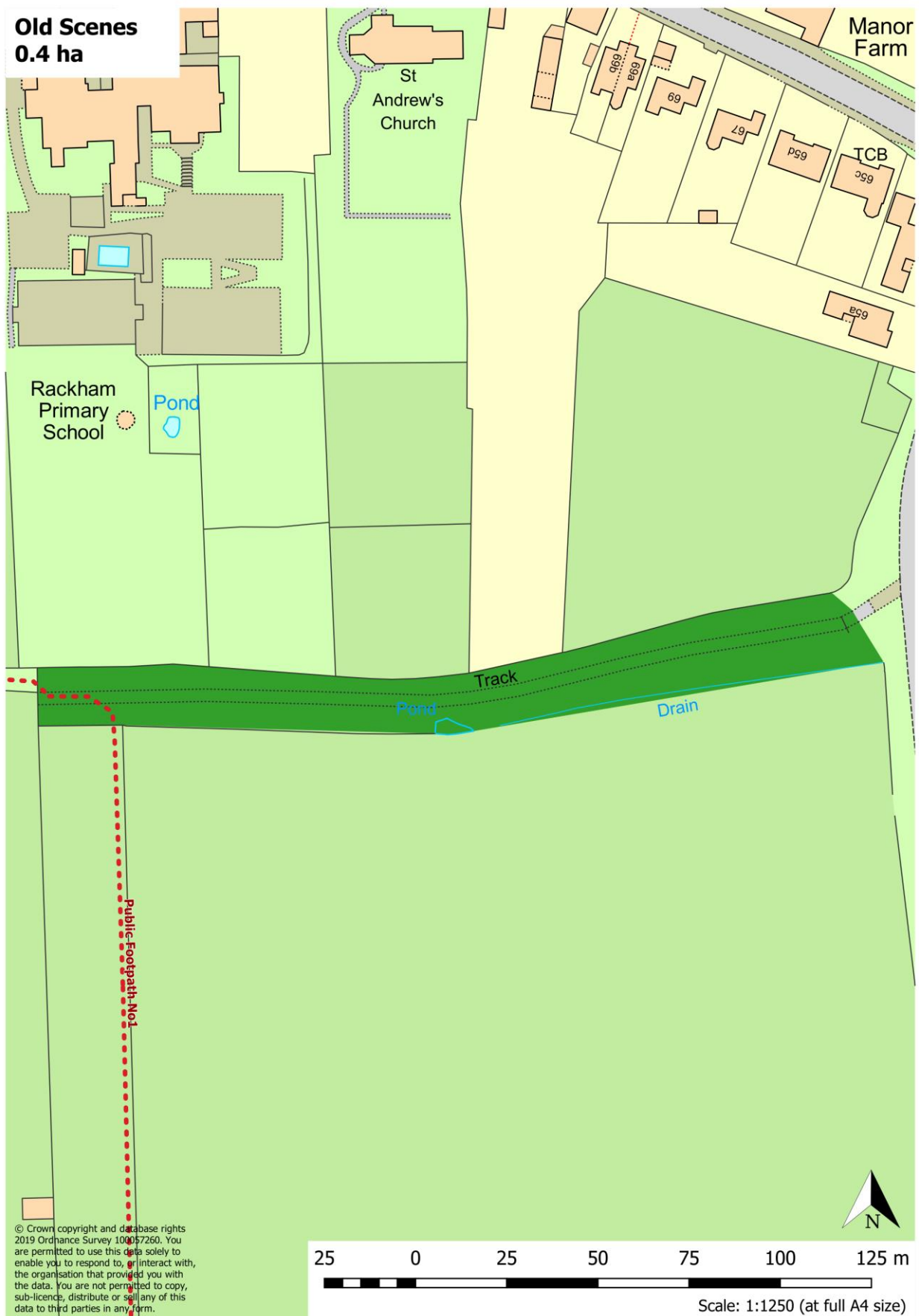
17 LGS survey forms give direct testimonial from residents on how important the open space south of Main Street is for recreation and well-being (tranquillity).

The Open Spaces Group report emphasises the importance of the site as a link in circular walks around Witchford, as part of the much-used connection between the Horse Field (100 m distant) and

Grunty Fen Road on the one hand and the Old Recreation Ground and Community Orchard on the other.

**Is it local in character and not an extensive tract of land?**

Yes. Discrete area of land with clear boundaries and defined entrances at both ends.



### 3.4 Long Meadow



#### Description of site

This Local Green Space comprises a wide grassed meadow (photograph 2.) running in a north-south direction linking from its junction with the Old Scenes Local Green Space (photograph No1.), and running to Edna's Wood, Fairchild Wood and the Old Recreation Ground Community Orchard Local Green Spaces. Public footpath No1 runs along the whole length of the eastern side of the Local Green Space. A bench at the north end of the site allows for a peaceful break in your walk (photograph 3.).

#### Area

0.62 Ha.

#### Is site reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?

Yes. 220m south of Main Street, centre of village, directly accessed via public footpath. Essential link to other areas of public open space to south.

#### Is it demonstrably special to a local community and does it hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife?

Site forms part of the 'Green Space to South of Witchford' area specifically recommended for LGS designation in the Witchford Landscape Appraisal (WLA).

The February 2018 village-wide Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire included the question Q5 'Paths and open green spaces in and around the village should keep their rural character'. Response – Strongly Agree 91.40%, Slightly Agree 6.14%, Slightly Disagree 1.47%, Strongly Disagree 0.98%

17 LGS survey forms give direct testimonial from residents on how important the open space south of Main Street is for recreation and well-being (tranquillity).

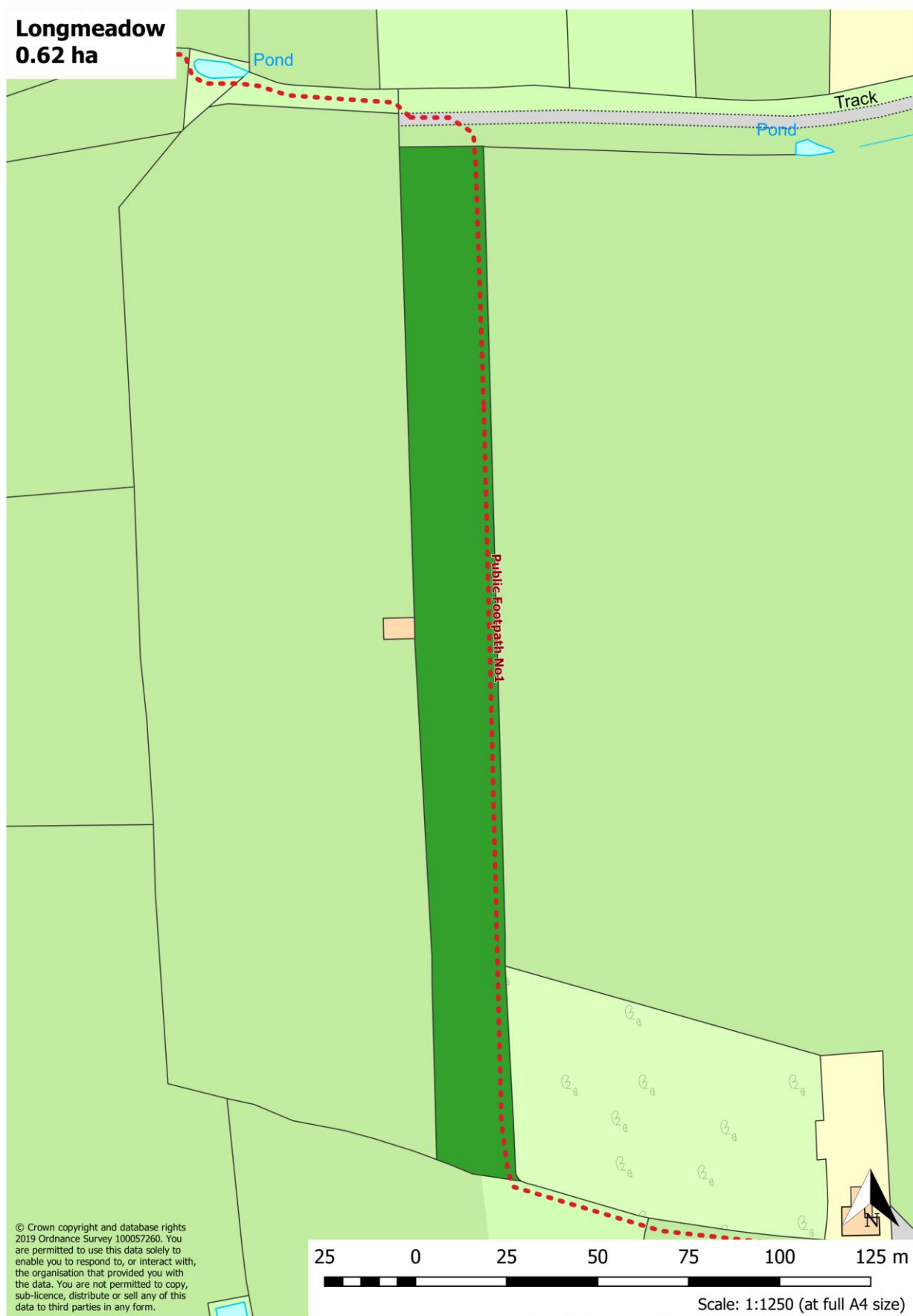
The Open Spaces Group report emphasises the importance of the site as a link in circular walks around Witchford and lists the historical, recreational and wildlife importance of the site.

Longmeadow is directly referenced in posts from residents on the Witchford Green Space Facebook page, demonstrating how the site is valued by the local community for its contribution to well-being. Site is enjoyed by dog-walkers as it has secure boundaries.

Part of Witchford Walk Nos 1 and 5.

**Is it local in character and not an extensive tract of land?**

Yes. Discrete area of land with clear boundaries and defined entrances at both ends.



### 3.5 Edna's Wood



#### Description of site

Entered via a handgate off Longmeadow Local Green Space, this Local Green Space is a field planted as a mixed woodland with a path through the middle of the wooded area (photograph 1.) leading to another handgate out into the Old Recreation Ground Community Orchard. A bench by the Open Spaces Group Memorial Tree invites users to sit and enjoy expansive views back towards St Andrew's Church (photograph 3.). This Local Green Space is maintained by village conservation volunteers.

#### Area

0.48 Ha.

#### Is site reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?

Yes. 470m south of Main Street, centre of village, directly accessed via public footpath.

#### Is it demonstrably special to a local community and does it hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife?

Site forms part of the 'Green Space to South of Witchford' area specifically recommended for LGS designation in the Witchford Landscape Appraisal (WLA). Site has particularly attractive views back towards village Historic Core and St Andrew's Church (see Fig.4 in Witchford Neighbourhood Plan).

The February 2018 village-wide Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire included the question Q5 'Paths and open green spaces in and around the village should keep their rural character'. Response – Strongly Agree 91.40%, Slightly Agree 6.14%, Slightly Disagree 1.47%, Strongly Disagree 0.98%

17 LGS survey forms give direct testimonial from residents on how important the open space south of Main Street is for recreation and well-being (tranquillity).

The Open Spaces Group report emphasises the importance of the site as a link in a circular route from the Old Rec back to Long Meadow, and lists the historical, recreational and wildlife importance of the site. Volunteers carry out tree management and mow the path through the site.

Edna's Wood is directly referenced in posts from residents on the Witchford Green Space Facebook page, demonstrating how the site is valued by the local community for its contribution to well-being. A bench in the Wood is placed specifically to allow users to enjoy the view back towards St Andrew's Church in the village.

The woodland at the site has been planted by a local landowner for the purpose of creating a nature reserve and providing access to the countryside for residents. A bench provides an opportunity to sit and enjoy the view towards Witchford's village church.

**Is it local in character and not an extensive tract of land?**

Yes. Discrete area of land with clear boundaries and defined entrances



### 3.6 Fairchild Wood



#### Description of site

Entered via a handgate from Longmeadow Local Green Space site, this site is a field planted as a mixed woodland with a path that circles around the wooded area (photograph 1.).

#### Area

0.67 Ha.

#### Is site reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?

Yes. 510m south of Main Street, centre of village, directly accessed via public footpath.

#### Is it demonstrably special to a local community and does it hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife?

Site forms part of the 'Green Space to South of Witchford' area specifically recommended for LGS designation in the Witchford Landscape Appraisal (WLA).

The February 2018 village-wide Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire included the question Q5 'Paths and open green spaces in and around the village should keep their rural character'. Response – Strongly Agree 91.40%, Slightly Agree 6.14%, Slightly Disagree 1.47%, Strongly Disagree 0.98%. 17 LGS survey forms give direct testimonial from residents on how important the open space south of Main Street is for recreation and well-being (tranquillity).

The Open Spaces Group report emphasises the historical, recreational and wildlife importance of the site. A barn owl box in the wood was successfully adopted by kestrels who reared two young. Volunteers carry out hedge planting, tree management and mow the path through the site.

The woodland at the site has been planted by a local landowner for the purpose of creating a nature reserve and providing access to the countryside for residents. Site has a memorial bench in a tranquil spot, well away from the noise of traffic (photograph 2).

#### Is it local in character and not an extensive tract of land?

Yes. Discrete area of land with clear boundaries and defined entrances.

**Fairchild Wood**  
**0.67 ha**



### 3.7 Old Recreation Ground and Community Orchard



#### Description of site

This site is a large grass field, with three entrance points via handgates (from the public road at Grunty Fen Road, from public footpath No 1 at the north-west corner of the site, and from Edna's Wood on the north side of the site). There is a bench next to a small pond (photograph 1.), an information board (photograph 2.) and young orchard trees (apples, pears and nuts) planted in 2013. This Local Green Space is managed by village conservation volunteers.

#### Area

1.2 Ha.

#### Is site reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?

Yes. 510m south of Main Street at centre of village. Together with other open spaces (Fairchild Wood, Edna's Wood, Long Meadow, Old Scenes Drove), the Old Recreation Ground is accessed very easily from the village via a footpath and along Grunty Fen Road, providing a popular circular route.

#### Is it demonstrably special to a local community and does it hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife?

Site is owned by Witchford Parish Council and is maintained on behalf of the Parish Council by Open Spaces Group (village conservation volunteers). Site is planted as a community orchard, planted in 2013 by more than 40 Witchford residents. Site has a seating area, information board and pond.

Site was awarded to Witchford parish in the Grunty Fen Inclosure Award 1861 as 'The Witchford Recreation Ground ... that piece or parcel of Land ...to be held in trust as a place for Exercise and Recreation for the Inhabitants of the said Parish and neighbourhood'.

Site forms part of the 'Green Space to South of Witchford' area specifically recommended for LGS designation in the Witchford Landscape Appraisal (WLA).

The February 2018 village-wide Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire included the question Q5 'Paths and open green spaces in and around the village should keep their rural character'. Response – Strongly Agree 91.40%, Slightly Agree 6.14%, Slightly Disagree 1.47%, Strongly Disagree 0.98%

17 LGS survey forms give direct testimonial from residents on how important the open space south of Main Street is for recreation and well-being (tranquillity).

Site provides several habitats for a diverse range of wildlife and flora as set out in the Open Spaces Report in Appendix 1.

**Is it local in character and not an extensive tract of land?**

Yes. Discrete area of land with clear boundaries and defined entrances.

# **Old Recreation Ground Community Orchard** **1.2 ha**



### 3.8 Victoria Green



#### Description of site

Two grassed areas on the north side of Main Street in the centre of the village. There is a small pond with a bench (photograph 1.) on the smaller grassed area, and a play area for children up to 7 years of age on the larger grassed area (photograph 3.). Witchford Christmas celebrations are being organised by residents on this site, with a Christmas tree being provided by the Parish Council.

#### Area

1.54 Ha.

#### Is site reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?

Site is in the centre of the village.

#### Is it demonstrably special to a local community and does it hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife?

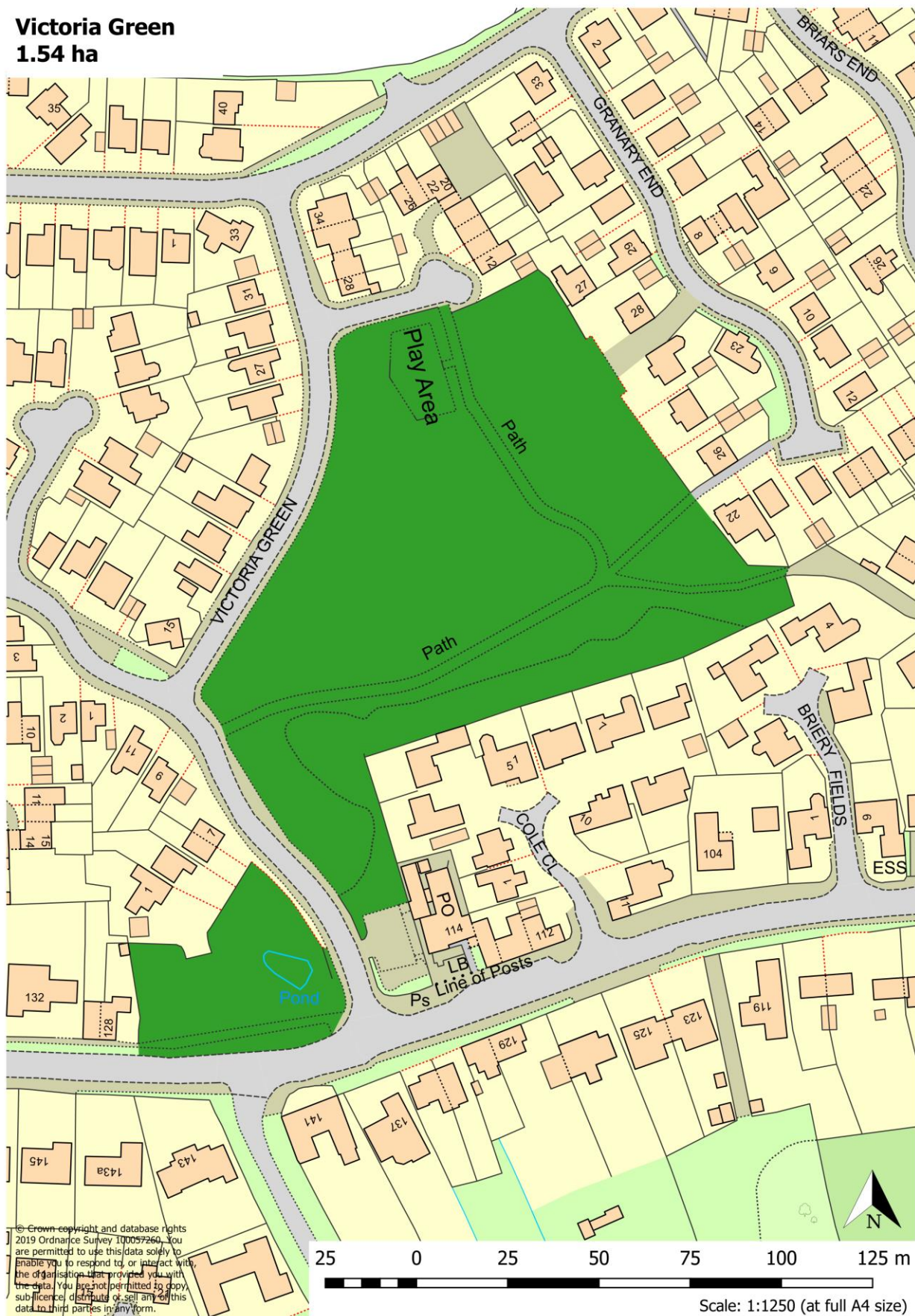
Site is a designated public open space under the terms of the planning permission for the Victoria Green housing development, and maintained by East Cambridgeshire District Council .

Site has an attractive pond and forms a vital green lung at the centre of the village, providing an attractive visual break in the built-up landscape. The green is located close to the primary school and the play area on the green is very popular opportunity for the children after school, as well as being a popular destination for families with younger children during the day. Witchford Parish Council has provided a basketball hoop and trim trail equipment.

**Is it local in character and not an extensive tract of land?**

Site is a defined area on a housing estate.

## Victoria Green 1.54 ha



### 3.9 Millennium Wood



#### Description of site

This Local Green Space site is situated in the centre of the village leading off Main Street. The site is mainly wooded, with a small meadow area at its northern end with an information board and picnic benches (photograph 1.). A fire circle with designated firepit is well used by organised groups and families. The second entrance to the Wood is via a handgate into the Horsefield Local Green Space.

#### Area

0.37 Ha

#### Is site reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?

Site is in centre of village.

#### Is it demonstrably special to a local community and does it hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife?

This land is owned by Witchford Parish Council. It was purchased in 1999 expressly for the purpose of providing a Community wood and sold by the previous landowner with a restriction that the land should not be built on.

It is an important green lung providing opportunities for everyone to enjoy nature. The land is now managed as a community woodland, covered by a management plan developed by local volunteers (the Woodland Group) in liaison with Witchford Parish Council. The wood is well used by community groups such as the scouts who camp-out in the wood. Other community events include the annual meadow-mow and barbecue, and the January Wassail-in-the-Wood.

There is an information board, bench and picnic bench as well as the campfire area.

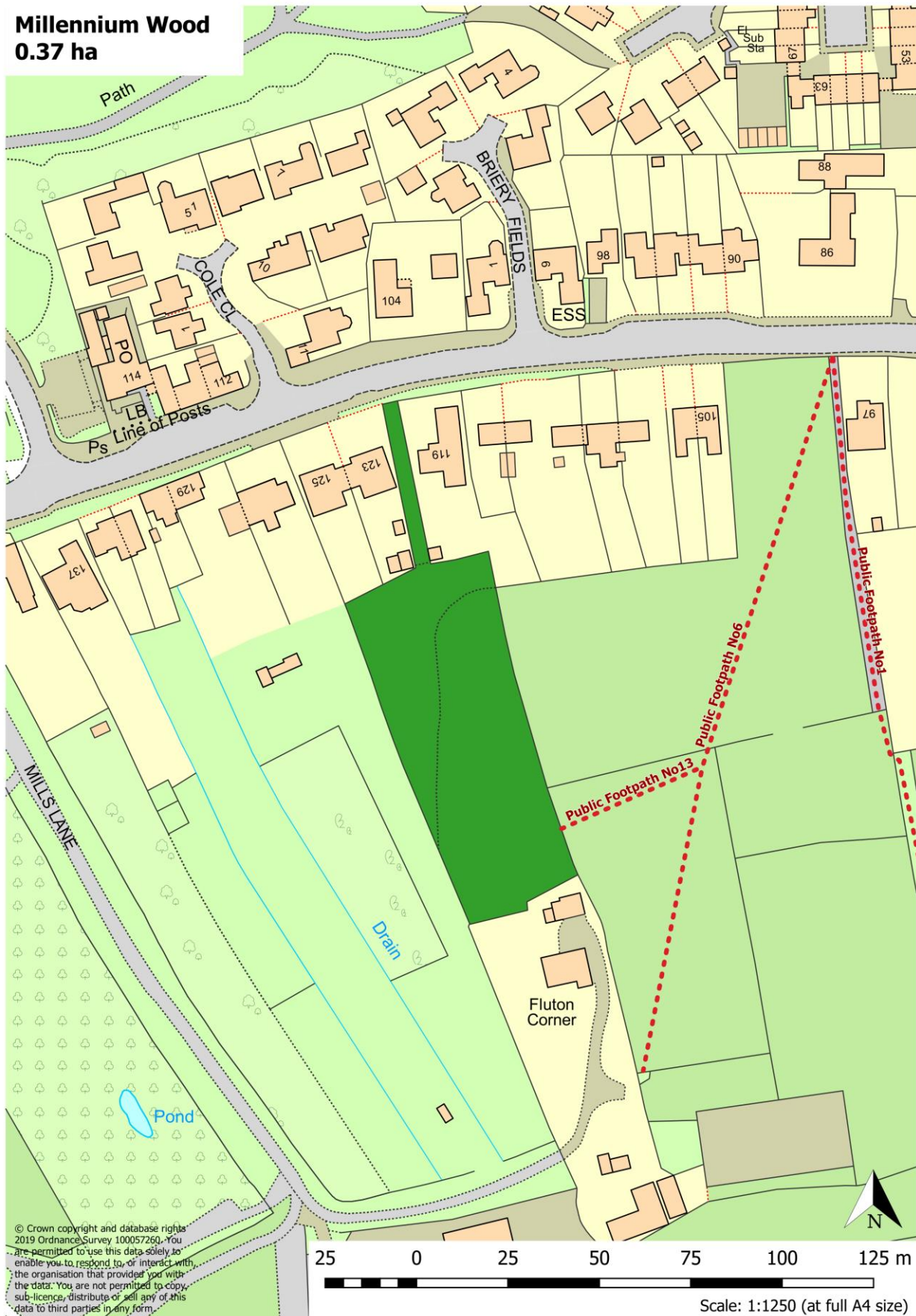
The trees in the wood were planted by villagers in the year 2000. Community volunteer maintenance days are held throughout the year and reported in the village magazine and on

the village website. Along with a public footpath leading directly from the wood, this forms a short and very attractive circular walk in the village centre suitable for families and those with reduced mobility.

**Is it local in character and not an extensive tract of land?**

Yes. Discrete area of land with clear boundaries and defined entrances.

**Millennium Wood**  
**0.37 ha**



### 3.10 Manor Road allotments



1.

#### **Description of site**

Very busy village allotments

#### **Area**

0.54 Ha.

#### **Is site reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?**

On northern side of built up area of village.

**Is it demonstrably special to a local community and does it hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife?**

Land used as village allotments. Very popular and productive site with active allotments association. When allotments originally set out there were 20 5-pole plots but this has been increased to 30 5-pole plots owing to demand.

#### **Is it local in character and not an extensive tract of land?**

Yes. Discrete area of land with clear boundaries and defined entrances.

**Manor Road allotments**  
**0.54 ha**



### 3.11 The Common, Common Road



#### **Description of site**

Open grassed area (photograph 2.) with children's play area and picnic benches (photograph 1.).

#### **Area**

0.67 Ha.

#### **Is site reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?**

In centre of village.

#### **Is it demonstrably special to a local community and does it hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife?**

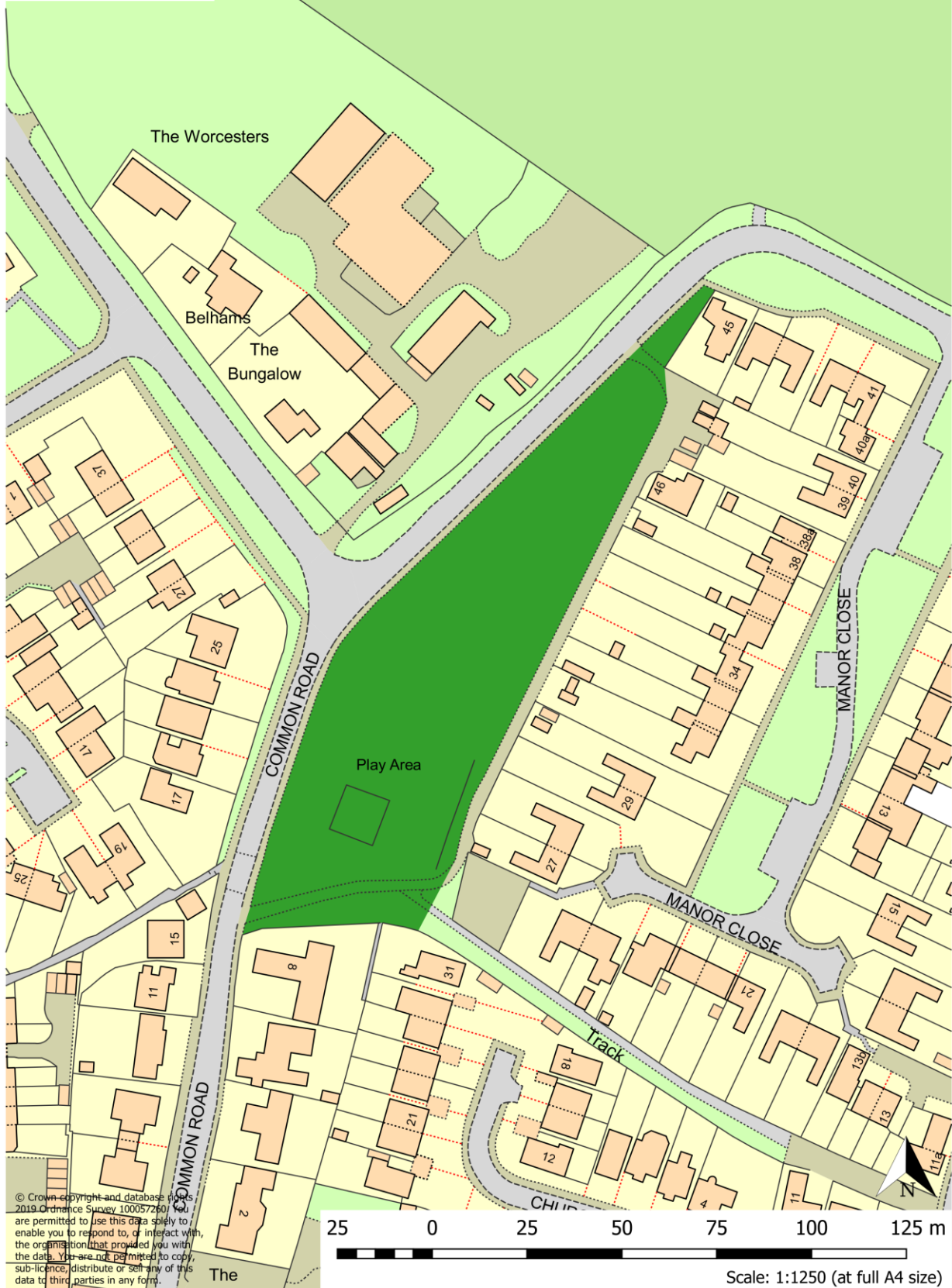
This is registered common land. It forms a vital green lung at the centre of the village, providing an attractive visual break in the built-up landscape. The Common is located close to the primary school and Witchford Village College and the play-area on the green is a very popular 'leg-stretching' opportunity for the children after school.

The common is used for the annual village fair. Village commemorations, such as the Diamond Jubilee tree, are located on the common

#### **Is it local in character and not an extensive tract of land?**

Yes. Defined area of land in residential area of village.

**The Common**  
**0.67 ha**



### 3.12 Orton Drive and Wheats Close Open Space



#### Description of site

Grassed area linking housing estates.

#### Area

0.43 Ha.

#### Is site reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?

In residential area of village.

**Is it demonstrably special to a local community and does it hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife?**

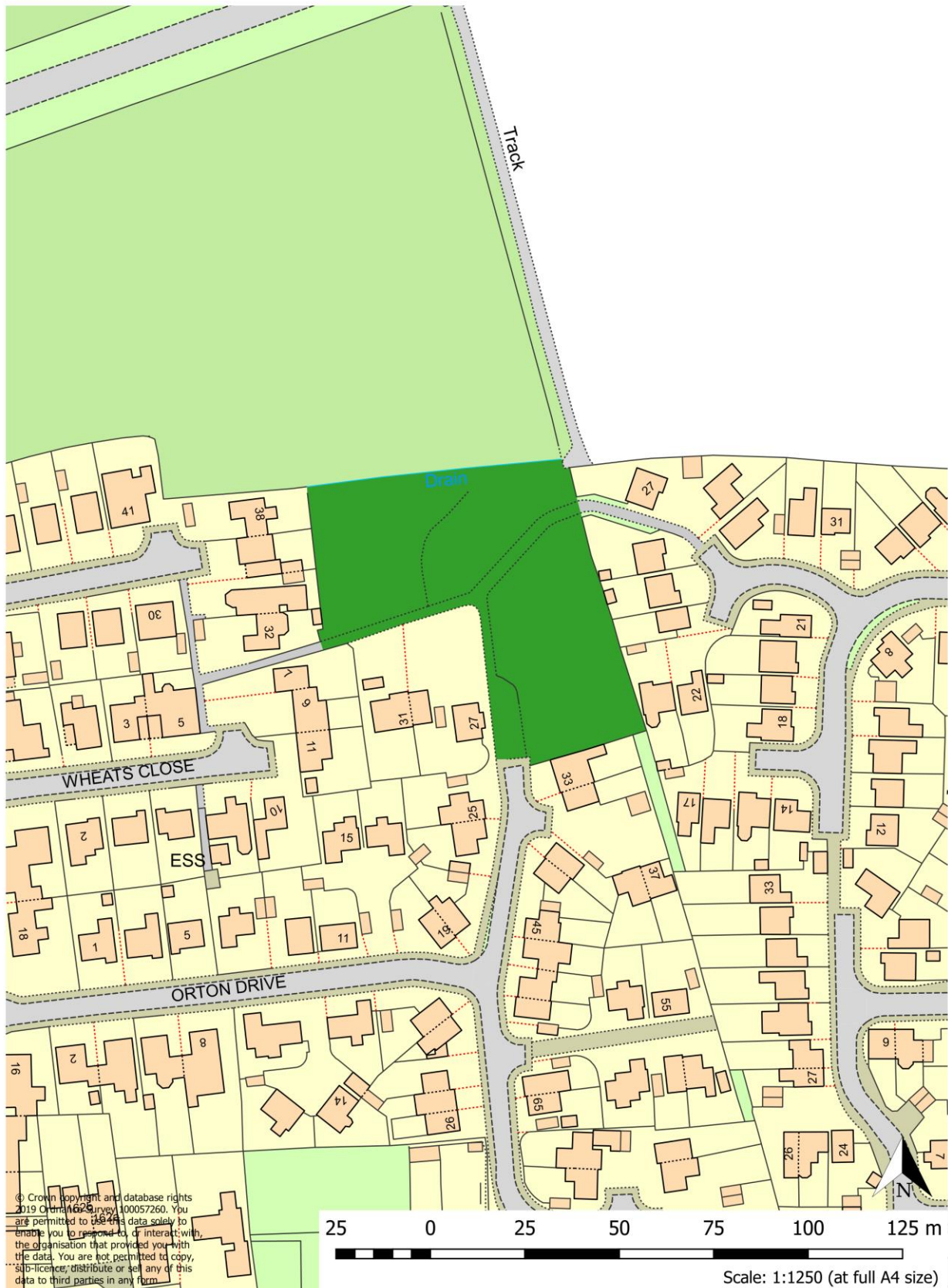
Site is designated public open space maintained by East Cambridgeshire District Council. It forms a vital green lung at the centre of the village, providing an attractive visual break in the built-up landscape.

Site provides an easily accessible opportunity for residents to enjoy 'green' exercise.

#### Is it local in character and not an extensive tract of land?

Yes. Defined area of land in residential area of village.

## Orton Drive and Wheats Close Open Space 0.43 ha



### 3.13 Broadway Allotments



1.

#### **Description of site**

Busy village allotments in centre of village.

#### **Area**

0.44 Ha.

#### **Is site reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?**

In Witchford village.

**Is it demonstrably special to a local community and does it hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife?**

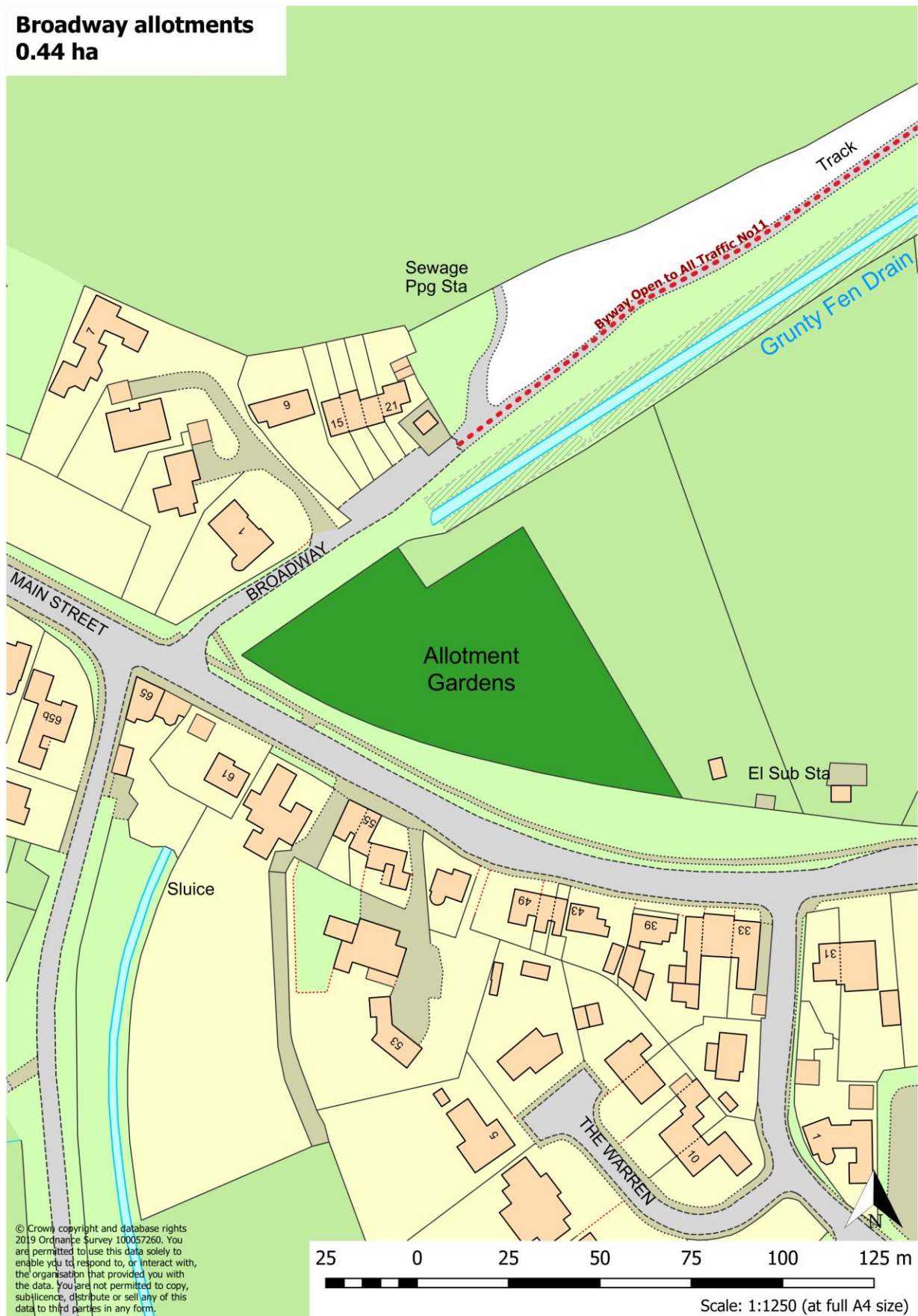
Land used as village allotments. Very popular and productive site.

Site is located at particularly scenic part of the village adjacent to Sandpit Drove with its wildflower meadow. Site forms integral part of open views both from village and from bench at open area on Sandpit Drove, which is itself a popular destination specifically because of the open view over the allotments.

#### **Is it local in character and not an extensive tract of land?**

Yes. Discrete area of land with clear boundaries and defined entrances.

**Broadway allotments**  
**0.44 ha**



3.14 Land East of Millennium Wood (known locally as 'the horsefield').



**Description of site**

In the centre of the village on the south side of Main Street (photograph 2.) this open grass field is currently used as a paddock. The field is crossed by public footpaths Nos6 and 13 (which leads into the Millennium Wood Local Green Space) and public footpath No1 runs along the eastern side of the Local Green Space (photograph 4.).

**Area**

1.73 Ha.

**Is site reasonably close proximity to the community it serves?**

In centre of village.

**Is it demonstrably special to a local community and does it hold a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife?**

Site is highly valued by the Witchford community as an area of true countryside reaching directly into the centre of the village, reinforcing Witchford's status as a rural community.

The February 2018 village-wide Neighbourhood Plan questionnaire included the question Q6 'The 'Horsefield' near the primary school between houses 97 – 105 Main Street must remain as a totally green space'. Response – Strongly Agree 73.41%, Slightly Agree 12.68%, Slightly Disagree 7.56%, Strongly Disagree 6.34%

Site forms part of the 'Green Space to South of Witchford' area specifically recommended for LGS designation in the Witchford Landscape Appraisal (WLA).

The site is highly valued by the local community as the last remaining gap in the built up area on the south side of Main Street, providing views to the south over the open fen. Referring to southerly views from Main Street the WLA at paragraph 4.2.3 states *'There are areas where the wider landscape setting of the settlement is readily perceived from within the built up area. In these locations the wider landscape can be said to penetrate the built form. These areas are particularly valued for helping to reinforce the small scale, rural character and location of the village and its historic origins'.*

Paragraph 5.2 of the WLA states *'The Horsefield is a meadow which connects the core of the village with the wider landscape and enables countryside to extend into the built up area. It offers an opportunity to view the wider fen landscape from Main Street, as such it reinforces the 'island' position of the village surrounded by fen and its rural 'village' character'.*

The site provides a direct link via public footpaths to a wider landscape of the Millennium Wood, permissive paths and public access land culminating in the Parish Council-owned community orchard (Old Recreation Ground) on Grunty Fen Road.

17 LGS survey forms give direct testimonial from residents on how important the open space south of Main Street is for recreation and well-being (tranquillity).

**Is it local in character and not an extensive tract of land?**

Yes. Discrete area of land with clear boundaries and defined entrances.

