

A BRIGHTER FUTURE FOR PACKSADDLE COMMUNITY FIELDS

Climate, Conservation, Community



People for
Packsaddle

www.peopleforpacksaddle.org

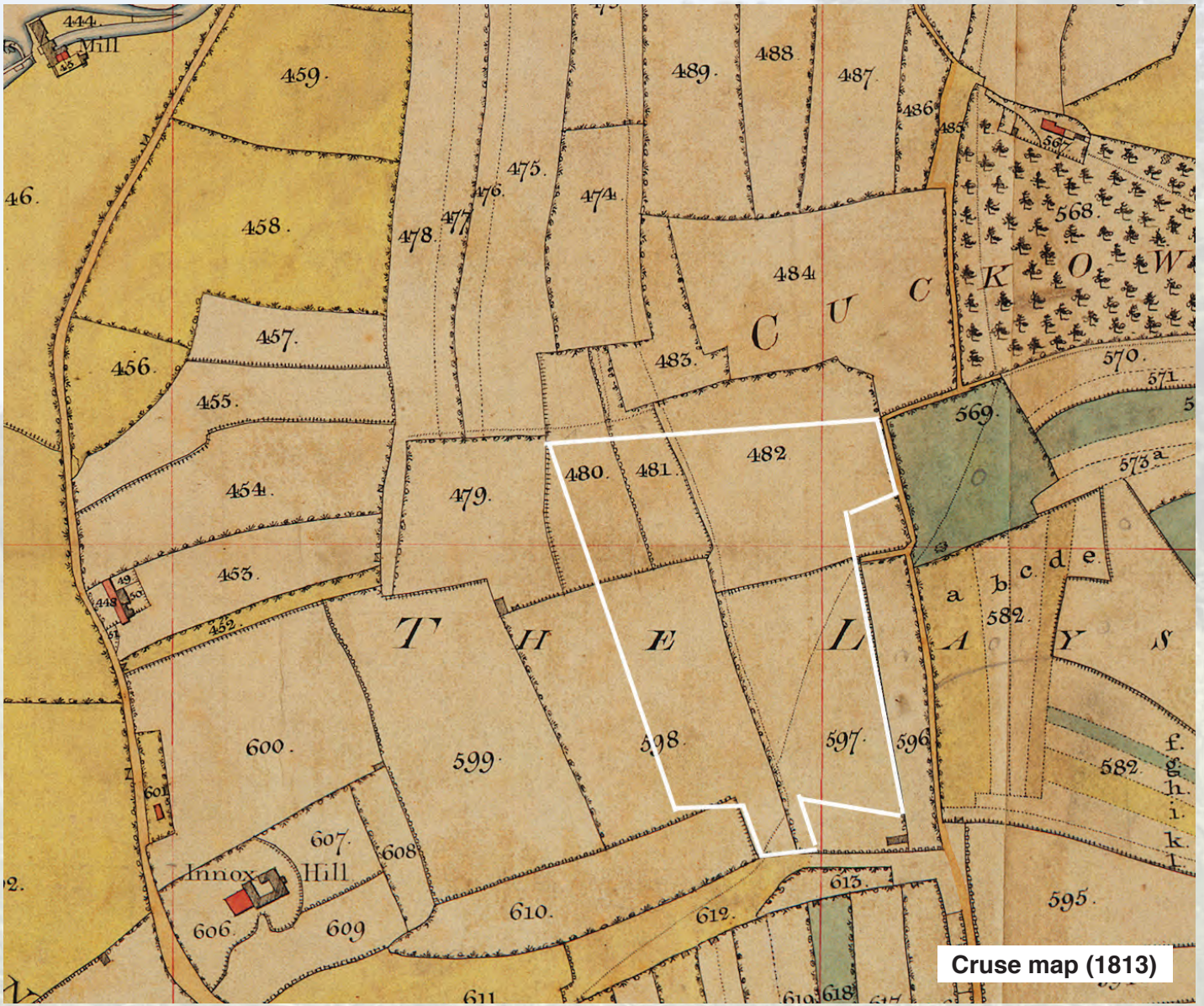


- A greener, more sustainable Somerset
- A fair, ambitious Somerset
- A flourishing and resilient Somerset
- A healthy and caring Somerset

Somerset Council's four strategic priorities, published in 2024

“Nature has its own value, and we have a responsibility to protect it. A healthy natural environment is also key to our own health and wellbeing. It is the foundation of a productive economy and provides us with food, water, carbon storage, flood control, attractive neighbourhoods, and great recreational and business opportunities.”

*Councillor Dixie Darch,
Lead Member for Environment and Climate Change,
Somerset Council*



Cruse map (1813)





Introduction

Frome's *Packsaddle Community Fields* – a registered '**Green Space**' and '**Asset of Community Value**' – are facing the imminent threat of development.

Situated on the town's northern boundary and covering nearly 9 acres, *Packsaddle Community Fields* are an accessible haven of tranquillity and abundant life. They are beautiful, wild and unusually rich in wildlife, having been left uncultivated for over 50 years, and are an established and cherished space for local residents, who have been visiting and enjoying them throughout that time.

Packsaddle Community Fields are a patchwork of five interconnected grasslands, each bordered by mature trees, dense scrub and ancient hedgerows, creating an ideal, varied habitat for an array of wildlife. The stone walls testify to the area's rich agricultural heritage, and the fields are imbued with rural charm and character.

People for Packsaddle (PfP) was formed to represent the views of this community, which wants to save these much-loved fields for future generations. We are committed to the protection of this vibrant, verdant, vital resource, now and in the future.

All of the pictures in this document were taken in *Packsaddle Community Fields* or at PfP campaign events. The next two pages (pages 6 & 7) contain just a few heartfelt testimonies from local residents about what the Fields mean to them.



“I am a resident of Lewis Crescent in Frome, and have lived in Frome for 22 years now. I have been a lone parent of 2 autistic, ADHD children and we have been regular daily users of the fields and footpaths around Packsaddle. We have engaged in wildlife spotting and seen red kites, field mice, hedgehogs, rabbits, and a wide variety of birds. The flora and fauna have also been invaluable for teaching the children about the natural world around us.”

“I walk in these fields everyday. I meander and wind my way through and around. As someone who struggles with depression, it brings me great peace to have these fields close to my home at Over Innox.”



“I think the fields have played a huge role in forging the Packsaddle community spirit which is so often, so proudly, so rightly referred to. Geographically and emotionally, they're at the very centre of this community.”

“I have lived on Packsaddle estate for more than 40yrs. We took our children to the fields to play & now take our grandkids to do the same. Dog walks, blackberry picking, climbing trees.”

“These fields give people with an interest in wildlife a real boost and the area is therefore in my opinion a vital space as it provides a place where the soul is refreshed. There is nowhere like it within walking distance.”

“Everyone I speak to about the fields has stories to tell about them. I go into the fields most days regardless of how long the grass is, or how muddy the ground is. I really can't imagine my life without this amazing space.”

“As a child I was regularly taken to these fields for a picnic with my mum and brother and we would watch the sunset over the breathtaking view of Orchardleigh. Ever since I have visited friends in these fields and have many memories of enjoying the green space with them. I am now 20, and suffer with various mental illnesses therefore I enjoy regularly walking my dog in these fields, and often see children enjoying the space as I did when I was younger. I take great pride in showing people the views from this natural space when coming to visit Frome and would be distraught if this was brought to a end.”

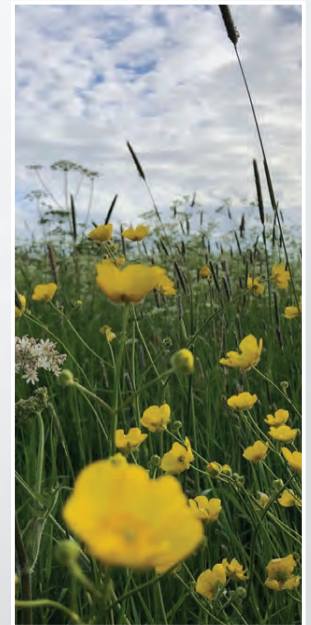
“I live at Packsaddle Way and often use the field for walks, exploring and watching the wildlife. It is a local patch of land frequented not only by families and walkers but a social meeting point which allows many older people to cross paths and make new friends while enjoying the fresh air and countryside without having to travel.”



“There are community groups in Frome working hard to help with elderly people’s sense of isolation and at Packsaddle that work is carried out by these fields in an informal un-pressured way - in my opinion it contributes hugely to the happy atmosphere of the area.”

“Since the morning of my husband’s death I have walked those fields twice maybe three times a day. And in those darkest times, the connections I made on those fields and the support and humanity I got from the people have been invaluable to me in helping me to ‘get on with it’.”

“Our children are adopted and had a traumatic start in life which causes them ongoing issues with anxiety and depression. Spending time outdoors in nature at Packsaddle fields really helps to calm their anxiety and boosts their mood. Furthermore, it’s pretty much the only place where our children feel safe enough to go on their own without us.”



“I have used Packsaddle Fields since I was 15 when we moved to the area. We, as a family, have spent plenty of time in the fields at all times of day and evening looking for various wildlife - birds, moths, bats etc. I have just finished a degree in wildlife conservation, and I think that these fields and their wildlife helped me to choose this direction for my future career.”

“Having moved to the Packsaddle estate just over 2 years ago I can’t count the number of times that the fields have been a place of solace for myself and my partner. We have both previously lived on housing estates lacking in green areas, and were so thrilled to discover the fields just on our doorstep.”



“At a time where health is so important, is it wise to be removing an open space that provides such an important education to our future generations?”

“I walk these fields. They are my peaceful stress-free refuge from tarmac, pavements, traffic, pollution and the world’s problems. I am no longer young, it also keeps me active. There is never any occasion, even in the rain, when I do not meet a neighbour and converse - problems shared, comfort given.”

“I have lived in Lewis Crescent and Park Hill Drive since 1964, I have used the fields daily since I was a child. I played there as a child. My children played up there and now my grand children also live in this area, love to play and walk the dogs in their green space.”

“What do the fields mean to me? 25 years of freedom, escape, memories, release, walks, dogs, wildlife, green space, childhood, dens, family, friends.”

“My son is 35 and has autism, he loves to walk in these fields which is not only safe, but benefits his mental wellbeing, a place to escape when everyday life becomes too much.”

“Without the fields, we wouldn’t be nearly as connected to the people around us.”



Background & Context

Packsaddle Community Fields are a beautiful, nature-rich and communal space, visited daily by local residents, frequented by notable and protected species including greater horseshoe bats, hedgehogs and barn owls. **They are a registered Green Space and Asset of Community Value.**

The imminent threat facing the fields has led to local anxiety and action. 272 objections were submitted during the consultation period. There were no pledges of support. The plans were unanimously rejected by Frome Town Council, and objections registered by, among others, the Civic Society, the Council for the Protection of Rural England, Frome Area Community Land Trust, and the Somerset Wildlife Trust. There is a strong local feeling that the best way forward is for the fields to be brought into community ownership.

Our approach and plan have been informed by a thorough community consultation process, comprising two open public meetings and an online survey. There was input from over 150 local residents. 10 most popular features were identified which include a mini woodland, a pond, a wildflower grassland meadow, restoring ancient dry-stone walls and hedgerows, and adding paths and seating for community use.

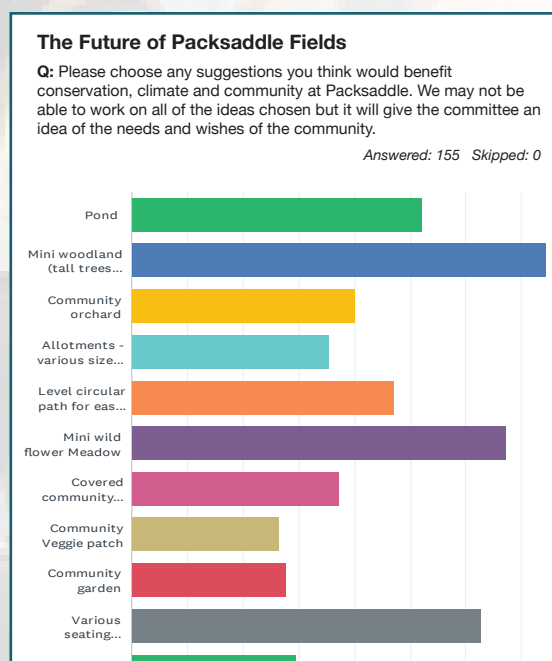
We have engaged the specialist ecological and conservation consultancy, First Ecology, to develop a Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy and Plan for the site. The Plan incorporates many of the community-identified features whilst being sensitive to the

existing habitats and character of the fields. This includes ensuring that any new planting, creation of habitats, or installation of infrastructure is discreet and enhances the feeling of *Packsaddle Community Fields* as a space primarily for nature.

There are many projects that can be undertaken to further enhance the ecological and environmental value of *Packsaddle Community Fields*. Many of these would also have a positive impact on the local community, offering educational opportunities – both formal and informal - and could contribute to scientific knowledge with long-term monitoring efforts.

A table of these activities is included at the end of this document, showing how they will contribute to Somerset Council's environmental strategies.

A copy of the full 40-page Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy is available upon request.





Our Vision

People for Packsaddle's vision is realistic and deliverable, with pledges already made to acquire the Fields amounting to hundreds of thousands of pounds.

Our vision is of a community-owned and managed *Urban Green Space*, benefitting wildlife, enhancing biodiversity, and continuing to provide local people with an essential connection to nature. We are focussed on three priorities – **Climate, Conservation and Community** – and believe that saving *Packsaddle Community Fields* would help Somerset Council meet targets it has set itself in each of these areas, both as part of the Climate Emergency that was declared by the Council in 2019, as well as its health-related and well-being strategies.

Climate. We will conserve and enhance existing habitats and create new ones which will help capture carbon. We will employ management techniques which will reduce the need for intervention, and therefore our carbon footprint. Not only can we sequester carbon but improve resilience to, and minimise the impacts of, climatic events. We will follow the professional advice of collaborators such as Somerset Wildlife Trust in any interventions.

Conservation. Preserving and protecting the Fields' habitats and enhancing them through sensitive management will provide bigger, better and more joined-up spaces for wildlife. This includes a number of listed and notable species and an internationally significant bat population already visiting the site. You will find a list of these on pages 18 - 19 of this document.

Community. Working with the community to manage and enhance the site will increase people's understanding of nature and the environment, build a sense of belonging and responsibility, and provide inestimable opportunities for formal and informal education.

The value of this space to residents' health and well-being cannot be overemphasised. This was evidenced in the personal testimonies of over 100 people which led to *Packsaddle Community Fields* being designated an *Asset of Community Value*.

In addition, by monitoring, recording, and reporting species using the site, we can contribute to the invaluable work of conservationists who rely on this data, helping provide a solid foundation for other similar projects elsewhere.





Our Plan

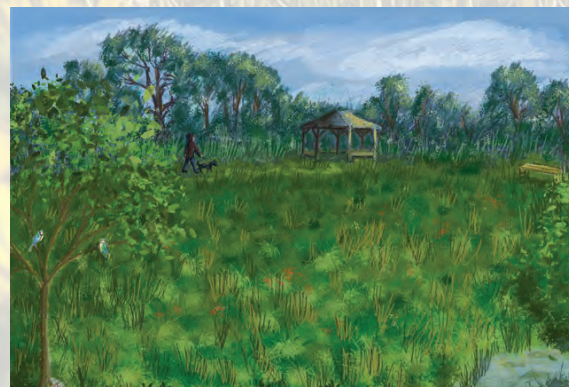
Inspired by their existing character and by PfP's three founding priorities - **Climate, Conservation and Community** – we are passionate about delivering a future for *Packsaddle Community Fields* which protects them in perpetuity, and which maximises their vast potential. We have developed a plan with the expert guidance of First Ecology and a specially commissioned Biodiversity Enhancement Strategy.

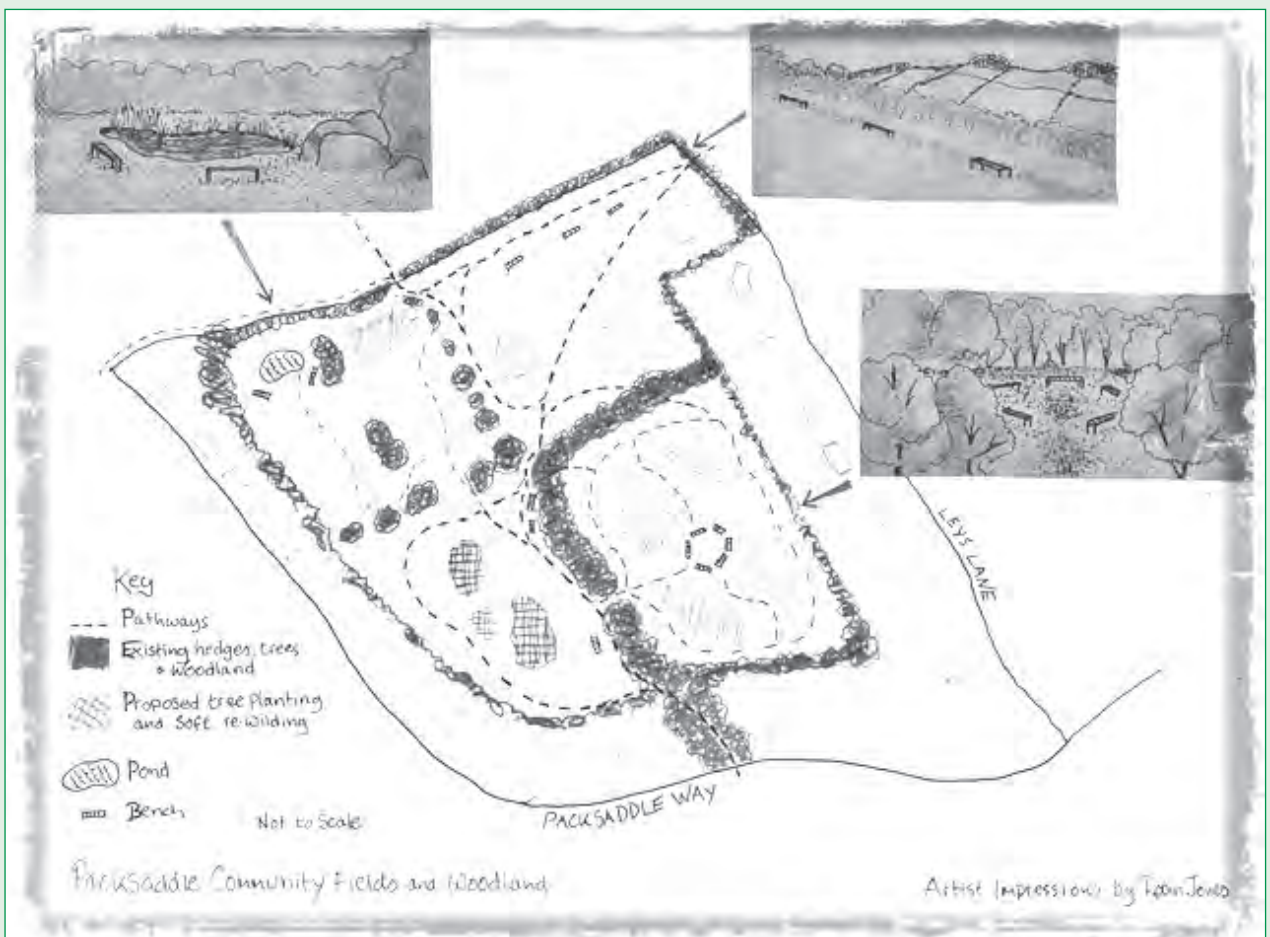
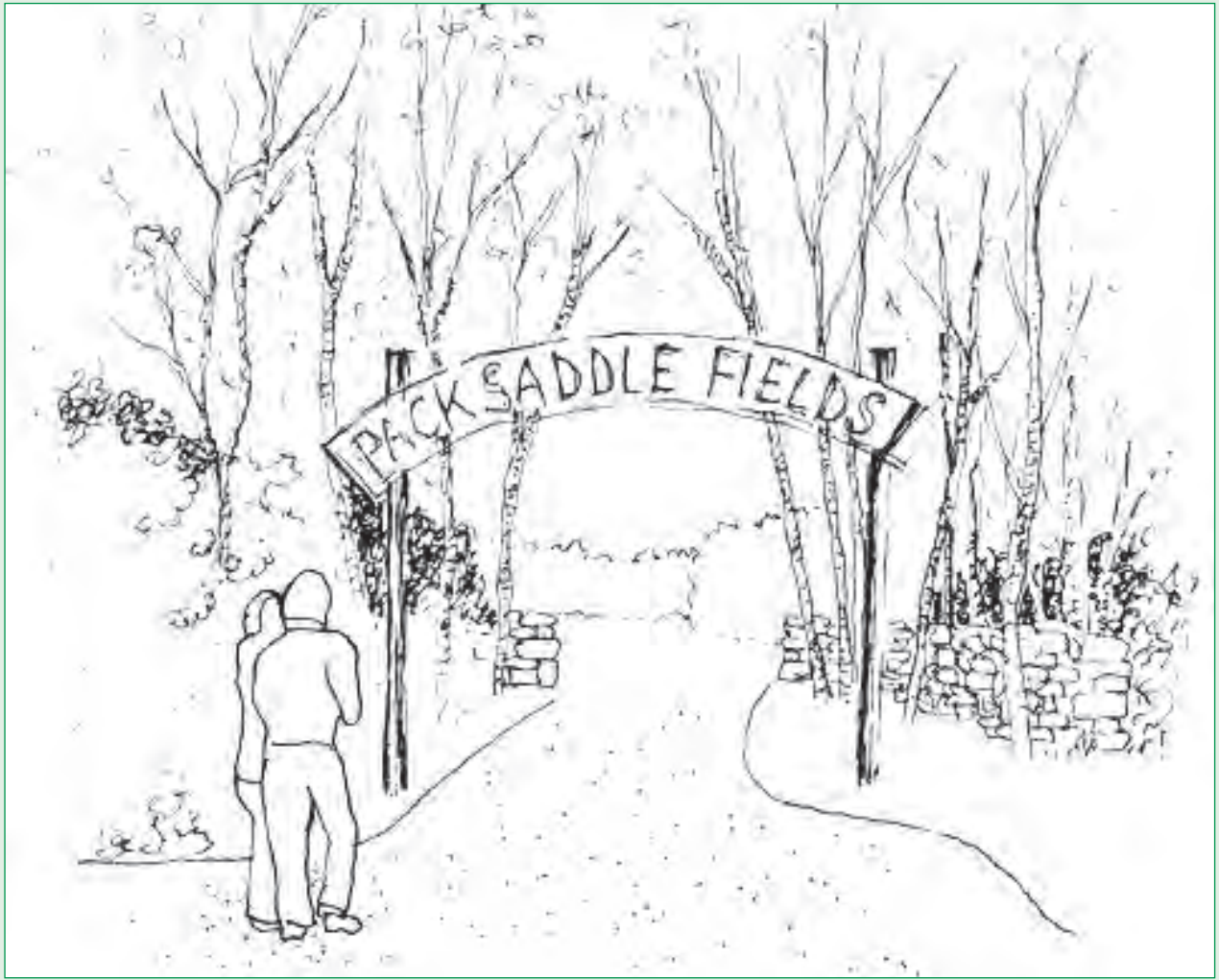
Community Woodland. Plant trees to create a mixed, native species woodland, and manage it to encourage a diversity of habitats. Diversity provides a variety of niches for wildlife and are more resilient to pests and diseases. Trees help to capture and store carbon and assist with reduction in airborne pollutants. Establishment of a woodland would contribute to Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy; Somerset Tree Strategy, the Biodiversity Benchmark (developed by the Wildlife Trusts for landowners); and Building with Nature (The UK's first green infrastructure benchmark). Our Plan would retain all healthy trees.

Grassland. Implement a rotational cutting regime for grassland habitats. Fields can each be split into smaller sections, with each section cut at different times in

the season, or less frequently. Providing a variety of grassland habitat types for species will increase diversity of pollinators and will allow plants to set seed throughout the flowering season. Cutting grass irregularly can encourage the grass to put energy into its root systems rather than new top-growth which contributes to carbon capture and healthy soils. This would contribute to the Somerset Pollinator Action Plan; the Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy; the Biodiversity Benchmark and Building with Nature.

Pond. Create a pond and other wet-features, working with the existing damp areas on-site. Plant with native species or allow for natural colonisation. Ponds are an important habitat within their own right, but also provide homes for a variety of iconic species. Linked with a network of garden ponds which are already known to exist in the area, wet features could provide a valuable breeding corridor for amphibians and attract species such as grass snake. Ponds also provide animals with a source of water for drinking and bathing, which is increasingly important in the face of increasing drought. This would contribute to Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy; the Biodiversity Benchmark and Building with Nature.





Community Involvement

There are many ways the community can be involved in the management and enhancement of the fields, including project groups for planting, laying and maintaining hedges, repairing the dry-stone walls, managing the pond, installing benches, monitoring wildlife and inputting into Somerset environmental research, managing social media access and so on.

Monitoring. Establish a monitoring strategy, involving members of the community and carrying out annual 'BioBlitz' events. These events can provide a valuable opportunity to capture and monitor the biodiversity at the site. This will also engage the community and help to educate people on local biodiversity and encourage an interest in nature, as well as contributing to bodies like the *Somerset Environmental Records Centre*.

Provide sensitive natural seating areas.

These could be as simple as chopped logs. Community members have places to sit and enjoy nature. The more people interact with nature, the more likely they are to feel a sense of ownership and responsibility for protecting the environment.

Dry stone wall reparation. Like hedgerows, dry stone walls provide lots of opportunities for wildlife within the cool nooks and crannies between stones. Dry stone walling would provide an opportunity to partner with interest groups and to educate the community on a traditional enclosure technique.

Spending time outdoors and interacting with nature is known to benefit both mental and physical health, as acknowledged by mental health charity, MIND.





Funding for Purchase and Development of the Site

We currently have confirmed financial pledges from local donors amounting to hundreds of thousands of pounds.

We intend to raise any additional money required to purchase the land through a crowd-funded community purchase scheme, similar to the process used by Whatcombe Fields, Frome. It may also be possible, following early positive conversations and previous practice, to engage Frome Town Council in match-

funding a portion of the purchase costs. We have access to fundraising expertise that will enable future management of the land, and will be applying for grants and foundations once the potential for ownership is indicated. We are actively seeking partnerships with local bodies like Save Open Spaces Frome (the organisation behind the Whatcombe Fields community ownership) and the Somerset Wildlife Trust.

Ongoing Site Management

People for Packsaddle will be converted into either a Charity or a Community Interest Company. The key responsibilities for managing *Packsaddle Community Fields* will be fulfilled by a formal PfP Committee, overseeing a rotating roster of volunteers, organized into various Project Groups. PfP currently has around 30 signed up volunteers. We would also propose to offer 'conservation workdays', working with The Conservation Volunteers to provide opportunities to local organisations, businesses and other groups to be involved in environmental activities and projects.

Should Frome Town Council wish to be involved in the ongoing site management as part of their wider remit, any assistance will be gratefully received.



Appendix

Notable Species List

The review of data from *People for Packsaddle* revealed records of the following species within *Packsaddle Community Fields* and adjoining gardens and fields.

Common name	Scientific name	EU protected	EU priority	WACA 1981	Red list birds	Amber list birds	NERC Act 2006
Amphibians							
Common frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>			*			
Smooth newt	<i>Lissotriton vulgaris</i>			*			
Bats							
Brown long-eared bat	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	*		*			*
Common pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	*		*			
Greater horseshoe	<i>Rhinolophus ferrumequinum</i>	*		*			*
Lesser horseshoe	<i>Rhinolophus hipposideros</i>	*		*			*
Myotis species	<i>Myotis sp.</i>	*		*			*
Noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	*		*			*
Nyctalus species	<i>Nyctalus sp.</i>	*		*			*
Serotine	<i>Eptesicus serotinus</i>	*		*			
Soprano pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	*		*			*
Birds							
Barn owl	<i>Tyto alba</i>	*		*			
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>		*				
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>						
Blue tit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	*					
Buzzard	<i>Buteo buteo</i>	*					
Carrion crow	<i>Corvus corone</i>		*				
Chaffinch	<i>Fringilla coelebs</i>						
Coal tit	<i>Periparus ater</i>	*					
Collared dove	<i>Streptopelia decaocto</i>		*				
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	*				*	
Goldcrest	<i>Regulus regulus</i>	*					
Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis carduelis</i>	*					
Great spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos major</i>	*					
Great tit	<i>Parus major</i>	*					
Green woodpecker	<i>Picus viridis</i>	*					
Greenfinch	<i>Chloris chloris</i>	*					
Grey heron	<i>Ardea cinerea</i>	*					
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	*	*		*		
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>				*		*
Jackdaw	<i>Corvus monedula</i>						
Jay	<i>Garrulus glandarius</i>		*				
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>	*				*	

Appendix

Notable Species List cont'd.

Common name	Scientific name	EU protected	EU priority	WACA 1981	Red list birds	Amber list birds	NERC Act 2006
Long-tailed tit	<i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>						
Magpie	<i>Pica pica</i>		*				
Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>						
Red kite	<i>Milvus milvus</i>	*	*	*			
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	*					
Rook	<i>Corvus frugilegus</i>		*				
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>		*		*		
Sparrowhawk	<i>Accipiter nisus</i>	*					
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>		*		*		
Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	*					
Swift	<i>Apus apus</i>					*	
Tawny owl	<i>Strix aluco</i>	*				*	
Woodpigeon	<i>Columba palumbus</i>		*				
Wren	<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	*					
Mammals							
Brown rat	<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>						
Common shrew	<i>Sorex araneus</i>						
Field vole	<i>Microtus agrestis</i>						
Grey squirrel	<i>Sciurus carolinensis</i>						
Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>						*
Mole	<i>Talpa europaea</i>						
Pygmy shrew	<i>Sorex minutus</i>						
Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>						
Roe deer	<i>Capreolus capreolus</i>						
Wood mouse	<i>Apodemus sylvaticus</i>						
Reptiles							
Slow worm	<i>Anguis fragilis</i>			*			*

Appendix

A suggested action plan to achieve enhancement of *Packsaddle Community Fields* which demonstrates contribution to local strategies and good practice guidance (table continues).

Key objectives	Action	Outcome	Suggested location	Contribution to strategies / alignment with good practice
Conservation	Where living hedges are not feasible, consider dead hedging (Photo 1) or natural willow or hazel hurdle fencing to direct footfall and minimise impacts of dogs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective dead hedging can help to protect areas of habitat from disturbance allowing more sensitive species with a place to thrive. Dead hedging will form a valuable habitat in itself for birds, invertebrates and small mammals. Dog mess can have negative effects on delicate ecosystems including grasslands. Limiting dog access will enable some areas to thrive. Limiting dog access to waterbodies and ponds is particularly critical to ensure water quality remains good and aquatic species are not disturbed. 	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Benchmark Building with Nature
Conservation	Identify and protect standing dead wood (Photo 2). Leave fallen deadwood in-situ where possible, or, gather this and add to log piles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standing deadwood is a hugely important resource for bats, birds, invertebrates and some small mammals. Fallen deadwood also provides important habitat for species group such as invertebrates and herpetofauna but is often 'tidied-up'. Changing attitudes to this in Packsaddle Fields could filter through to the wider community. 	Hedgerows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Benchmark Building with Nature
Conservation	Consider tactical thorny scrub planting, or allowing succession of thorny scrub species, to develop a patchwork of scrub thickets in some areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrub provides a key habitat for many species including nesting birds. Naturally regenerating (or suckering) scrub also provides valuable food sources for some notable and protected invertebrates and cover for seedling trees to establish. Thorny scrub will naturally discourage access to some areas and can provide birds, small mammals and herpetofauna with valuable places to shelter from cats. 	NE, NW, SW fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Benchmark Building with Nature
Conservation Climate	Plant trees to create a mixed, native species woodland. Manage woodland to encourage a diversity of habitats to include open glades, rides, a scrub understorey, coppice stands and canopy trees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A diverse native woodland will provide a variety of niches for wildlife including foraging, nesting, roosting and sheltering opportunities. Diverse habitats are more resilient to pests and diseases. Trees help to capture and store carbon and assist with reduction in airborne pollutants. 	SE field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Benchmark Building with Nature Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy Somerset Tree Strategy
Conservation Climate	Create a pond and/or other water feature (e.g. seasonally wet scrapes, bog gardens) (Photo 3). Plant with native species or allow for natural colonisation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ponds are an important habitat within their own right, but also provide homes for a variety of iconic species. Linked with a network of garden ponds (which are already known to exist in the area) wet features could provide a valuable breeding corridor for amphibians and attract species such as grass snake. Ponds also provide animals with a source of water for drinking and bathing, which is increasingly important in the face of increasing droughts. 	NE field in SE wetter corner and/or NW field in sheltered area adjacent to stone walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Benchmark Building with Nature Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy
Conservation Climate	Implement a rotational cutting regime for grassland habitats. Fields can each be split into smaller sections, with each section cut at different times in the season (or even less frequently). 'Mob grazing' techniques could be considered with correct infrastructure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing a variety of grassland habitat types for species will increase diversity of pollinators and will allow plants to set seed throughout the flowering season. Cutting grass irregularly can encourage the grass to put energy into its root systems rather than new top-growth which contributes to carbon capture and healthy soils. In association with the wider landscape of pasture, and particularly if grazing cattle could be introduced, Packsaddle Fields would provide important foraging habitat for bat species associated with the Mells Valley SAC which favour pastureland for foraging. 	SW and NE fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Benchmark Building with Nature Somerset Pollinator Action Plan Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy
Conservation Climate	Experiment with re-wilding. Choose an area of Packsaddle Fields and let nature take the lead. Ensure any management replicates natural processes of grazing, disturbing ground and occasional opening-up of any closed canopy habitats.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopting low-intervention management principles reduces carbon output from machinery. Mimicking the dynamic systems of nature will open up niches for wildlife and plants which may not otherwise use the site. 	NW field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Benchmark Building with Nature Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy

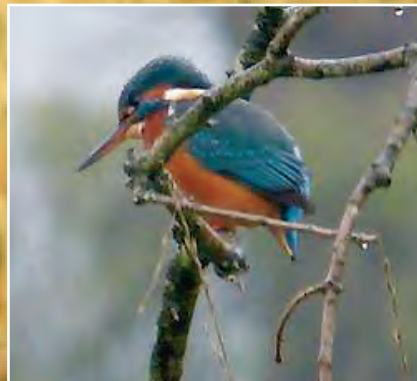
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Conservation Climate Community	Plant a community orchard using native, local provenance species (Photo 4). Allow the community to collect fruit during the harvest and manage extensively with limited pruning for a sustainable crop suitable for household use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit trees reach maturity at a faster rate than many other tree species and develop features for wildlife such as bats, birds and invertebrates (e.g. rot holes, deadwood). • When managed sustainably, fruit tree blossom and windfall is a valuable source of forage for a variety of wildlife including birds and pollinators. • A community orchard would provide opportunities for local residents to pick and use fruit to the benefit of health, wellbeing and sustainability. • Trees help to capture and store carbon. 	A small section of the SW or NE field	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity Benchmark • Building with Nature • Somerset Climate Emergency Strategy • Somerset Pollinator Action Plan • Somerset Tree Strategy
Conservation Community	Bring a portion of existing hedgerows back into active management using traditional techniques such as hedge laying (Photo 5), or, where this would be too disruptive, consider planting new native hedgerows and bringing them into positive management.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dense, laid hedges provide fantastic habitats for a variety of species including some of the species threatened in Somerset. • Laid hedges also provide stock-proof (and people-proof) boundaries and can encourage users to follow defined paths reducing impacts to sensitive areas. • Hedge laying would provide an opportunity to partner with interest groups and to educate the community on a traditional habitat management technique. • Hedgerows and the connections they provide are key to connectivity throughout the landscape. 	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity Benchmark • Building with Nature • Somerset Tree Strategy
Conservation Community	Repair areas of dry stone walls sensitively using traditional methods, or create new dry stone walls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like hedgerows, dry stone walls provide lots of opportunities for wildlife within the cool nooks and crannies between stones. • Dry stone walling would provide an opportunity partner with interest groups and to educate the community on a traditional enclosure technique. 	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity Benchmark • Building with Nature • Somerset Tree Strategy
Conservation Community	Encourage residents adjoining Packsaddle Fields to install hedgehog holes to create a 'hedgehog highway' (Photo 6).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hedgehog holes provide a critical way for hedgehogs to move between gardens and the wider landscape. • They also provide opportunities for other small mammals and herpetofauna to easily move between gardens. 	All boundaries shared with gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity Benchmark • Building with Nature
Conservation Community	Maintain mown pathways through Packsaddle Fields to guide pedestrian traffic (Photo 7).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having clear and easy to access pathways will encourage use of the site by the community to exercise and engage with nature which have benefits for health and wellbeing. • Clear pathways can reduce the temptation to stray into more sensitive habitats or those set-aside for wildlife. 	All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity Benchmark • Building with Nature
Conservation Community Monitoring	Build or buy and install bat boxes, bird boxes (Photo 8), bug hotels (Photo 9), horizontal log piles (Photo 10), vertical log piles for stag beetle (Photo 11) and hibernacula (Photo 12). Consider creating compost heaps.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This provides valuable new resting areas for targeted species groups. • Once installed, local species interest groups may be able to provide licenced surveyors (where necessary) to guide monitoring surveys of bat and/or bird boxes. • Installation and monitoring can involve the whole community, everyone can be involved in checking boxes are still in place and refreshing log piles. 	Across site, but particularly in sheltered areas in NW and SW fields	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity Benchmark • Building with Nature • Somerset Pollinator Action Plan
Community	Provide sensitive natural seating areas. These could be as simple as chopped logs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community members have places to sit and enjoy nature. • The more people interact with nature, the more likely they are to feel a sense of ownership and responsibility for protecting the environment. 	At interest points such as within woodland glades and in NE field at view points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity Benchmark • Building with Nature
Community	Consider installing well placed information boards and bins.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information boards play an important role in engaging and educating the community. They can also signpost to further information. • Information boards can also help to convey a message - for example, explaining the purpose of management techniques that may be considered 'untidy' by some. • Bins are an important element of infrastructure to consider and help to reduce impacts of dog-fouling which can be very detrimental to many ecosystems including grassland. 	At main access points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity Benchmark • Building with Nature

Appendix

Key objectives	Action	Outcome	Suggested location	Contribution to strategies / alignment with good practice
Community Monitoring	Implement a central and publicly accessible website/drive to share information on monitoring and news.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will help to engage the community and provide a place to organise surveys and/or management. Reporting monitoring results and efforts could help to inform other similar projects, further spreading the positive reach of the project. 	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Benchmark
Community Monitoring	Establish a monitoring strategy, where possible using members of the community and carrying out annual 'BioBlitz' events.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BioBlitz events can provide a valuable opportunity to capture and monitor the biodiversity at the site. This will also engage the community and help to educate people on local biodiversity and encourage an interest in nature. 	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Benchmark Building with Nature
Community Monitoring	Establish connections with other local groups. Share information, skills and equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This will engage the community on a wider scale and could spark similar projects. Partnering with similar groups and having a network for communication helps to share experiences and can save costs of hiring/buying equipment. 	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building with Nature
Monitoring	Share monitoring information with Somerset Environmental Records Centre.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing monitoring results helps to build a picture of nature within the county and would help to inform valuable projects such as future Somerset State of Nature reports. 	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Benchmark







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