



30<sup>th</sup> July 2025

The meeting of the **SERVICES COMMITTEE** will be held in Unit 2, Forest Industrial Park, Crosbie Grove, Kidderminster, DY11 7FX at **6:00 PM on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> August.**

Yours Sincerely,

Adam Stockhall  
Operational Services Manager

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Membership: Councillors: J.Beckingham (Chair), H.Dyke (Vice Chair), G.Connolly, N.Gale, S.Miah, L.Carroll, V.Caulfield

## **SERVICES COMMITTEE AGENDA – WEDNESDAY 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024**

### **1. Apologies for absence**

### **2. Declarations of interest.**

To receive declarations under consideration on this agenda in accordance with the Localism Act 2011 s32 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012.

Members are reminded that should you declare a pecuniary interest at a meeting, it is your responsibility to inform the Monitoring officer.

### **3. Public Question Time.**

In accordance with Standing Order 3(c), to allow members of the public to make representations, ask questions, and give evidence at a meeting which they are entitled to attend in respect of the business on the agenda.

### **4. Minutes. (Appendix 1)**

To approve the minutes of the meeting of Services Committee held on Wednesday 2nd July 2025.

### **5. St Georges Paddling Pool Report. (Appendix 2)**

To receive a positional update report and consider recommendations regarding St Georges paddling pool.

Expression of Interest – Paddling Pool Lease. **(Appendix 2a)**  
Lease & Operational Responsibilities. **(Appendix 2b)**  
Friends of St Georges Response. **(Appendix 2c)**

## **6. Mitchell Wall & Waterfall Report. (Appendix 3)**

To receive a report and consider recommendations regarding Waterfall.

Kidderminster Bill Mitchell Design. (Appendix 3a)

Mitchell Wall advertisement approval. (Appendix 3b)

Planning Application. (Appendix 3c)

**KIDDERMINSTER TOWN COUNCIL  
OPERATIONAL SERVICES COMMITTEE  
Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2025  
Held in Unit 2 Forest Industrial Park at 6pm**

**Present:**

Councillors:

Councillor J. Beckingham (Chair)

Councillor H. Dyke (Vice Chair)

Councillor G. Connolly

Councillor N. Gale

Councillor S. Miah

Councillor L. Carroll

Councillor V. Caulfield

**In attendance:**

Mr. A. Stockhall – Public Realm and Operations Manager

Mr. R. Beeston – Public Realm and Operations Officer (PROO)

**1. Apologies for Absence**

None

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None

**3. MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Services Committee meeting held on Monday 2nd June 2025 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

None received.

**5. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee noted its Terms of Reference as approved by Full Council on 16th April 2025.

**6. PUBLIC REALM AND OPERATIONS UPDATE**

The PROO provided an update on current operations within the Public Realm and Open Space settings, including routine maintenance, seasonal planting, and site inspections.

RESOLVED: That the update be noted.

**7. OPERATIONAL BUSINESS CONTINUITY**

The Committee considered the draft Operations Business Continuity Plan provided by the PROM. The plan outlined procedures to ensure continuity of core services in the event of emergencies or disruptions.

RESOLVED: That the Operations Business Continuity Plan be approved.

## **8. WATERFALL**

The PROO presented a report on the town centre waterfall feature, highlighting the current condition, maintenance history, and available options for refurbishment or decommissioning.

RESOLVED: That the PROM obtains quotes for refurbishment and explores potential partnership opportunities, with a progress report to be brought to the next Committee meeting.

## **9. REVIEW OF OPERATIONAL SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENTS WITH WYRE FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

The Committee considered a report reviewing existing Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with Wyre Forest District Council and opportunities for revision or renegotiation.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Committee supports entering discussions with Wyre Forest District Council regarding potential revisions to SLAs to better reflect service expectations.

## **10. IMPLEMENTATION OF A HEALTH AND SAFETY SYSTEM FOR OPERATIONAL SERVICES**

The Committee considered a proposal to implement a formalised Health and Safety system across Operational Services, including training, risk assessments, and reporting protocols.

RESOLVED:

1. That the PROM should produce a report to the Overview and Finance Committee detailing costing for the whole council in adopting a Health and Safety system across the whole council.

## **11. TO REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS FOR PUBLIC ACCESS TO THE TENNIS COURTS AT BAXTER GARDENS**

The Committee considered the current arrangements for public access to the tennis courts at Baxter Gardens, noting concerns regarding the visibility and clarity of the existing pay and play booking system. It was acknowledged that improved public awareness and accessibility are required to ensure the courts are fully utilised.

RESOLVED:

1. That officers work with Kidderminster Tennis Club, as leaseholders of the courts, to improve signage and visibility of the pay and play booking system with a progress report to be brought to the next Committee meeting.
2. That the PROO prepares a report detailing the current lease arrangements and outlining potential alternative delivery models for consideration.

### Kidderminster Town Council

#### **Report Title:** St Georges Paddling Pool Update

- **Meeting:** Operational Services Committee
- **Date of Meeting:** 13 August 2025
- **Author(s):** Adam Stockhall
- **Date of report** 29/07/2025

**1. Summary:** To provide Operational Services Committee with an update on the position and progress regarding St George's paddling pool and to make recommendations for Full Council to consider.

**2. Background:** Following below the agreed actions from the Operational Services Committee, held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June,

- a. For the Operational Services Manager to develop and submit a structured series of questions to The Friends of St George's, with the purpose of gaining greater clarity on their proposal to assume a long-term lease of the paddling pool. The questions should aim to explore key areas such as governance, funding, maintenance plans, public access, liability, and long-term sustainability.
  - b. For the PROM to prepare and circulate a structured series of questions through email to Members of the Operational Services Committee for review. The purpose is to ensure alignment and transparency before seeking formal approval to share the questions with The Friends of St George's. This process will help ensure that the Committee is fully informed and supportive of the approach being taken to assess the proposal for a long-term lease of the paddling pool
  - c. For the PROM to explore the scheduling of an additional meeting of the Operational Services Committee at the earliest opportunity, with the purpose of reviewing the responses received from The Friends of St George's to the structured questions. This meeting would provide a dedicated forum for in-depth discussion, evaluation of the proposal, and consideration of any implications. The outcome of this meeting should be a formal recommendation to be presented to the October Full Council for a decision on the proposed long-term future of the paddling pool.
- 3. Current Situation:** As instructed, a series of questions were compiled and circulated to all Service Committee Members for comment. The finalised version was subsequently sent to the Friends of St George's Park via email on Friday, 20 June 2025. A copy of the email and the questions is attached for reference.

The Operational Services Manager has since received a response on Tuesday 8 July 2025 from the group, also attached. In summary, the response indicates that the Friends of St George's Park would not be in a position to support a lease under the terms currently proposed.

- 4. Expected Outcomes:** The Operational Services Committee acknowledge the response provided by the Friends of St George's. The outcome should include a formal recommendation to be presented to the Full Council in October, regarding the proposed long-term future of the paddling pool.
- 5. Conclusion and Recommendation(s):** St George's Paddling Pool was closed in 2023 due to health and safety concerns. Over the subsequent two-year period, significant resources and funding were allocated to explore all viable options for reopening the facility and ensuring it meets modern standards.

Key actions and progress to date include:

- a) **External Inspections**
  - Commissioned independent assessments to evaluate the condition and safety of the paddling pool.
- b) **Governance and Oversight**
  - Regular updates provided through formal committee reports.
  - A dedicated Kidderminster Town Council working group was established to oversee the project.
- c) **Funding and Financial Planning**
  - Appointed a fundraising consultant to identify and pursue funding opportunities.
  - Submitted applications for external grant funding.
  - Explored alternative funding mechanisms.
  - Prepared detailed financial information regarding precept and loan requirements for both operational and capital refurbishment costs.
- d) **Maintenance and Preservation During Closure**
  - Carried out minor works to maintain the facility and prevent deterioration while out of use.
- e) **Procurement and Contractor Engagement**
  - Conducted a national procurement process for the refurbishment and upgrade of the pool.
  - Held meetings with potential contractors to discuss project scope and feasibility.
- f) **Community Engagement**
  - Undertook public consultation, including specific input on the future of the paddling pool.
  - Explored alternative ownership models with Friends of St George's.

Further details, including reports and documentation, are available on the [Kidderminster Town Council website](#).

After thorough exploration of all available options, the Operational Officer has concluded that the only remaining viable avenues are:

- a) Raising the necessary funding through an increase in the precept and or a business loan.

## 6. Financial Overview

Refurbishment Quotes:

- UK Diveworks (April 2024): Pool - £113,712, Plant Room - £42,210
- The Splash Company (March 2025): £313,000 – £340,000

Estimated Annual Running Costs:

- Electricity: £1000
- Water: £500
- Repairs & Maintenance: £5,000 – £10,000
- Contractor Services: £40-50,000

## 5. Precept/Loan Information

- £155,922 Refurbishment = 15% increase to Precept
- £340,000 Refurbishment = 35% increase to Precept
- £43,000 annual running costs (water management) = Increase of approx. Just over 4% to the Precept.
- £10,000 repairs and maintenance = Increase of approx. 1% to the Precept.
- Alternatively, a loan; for guidance, £300,000 borrowed would add 3% approx. to the Precept, over 10 years (the estimated life of the asset.)  
**With a loan, the estimated costs per annum in the region of £37K per annum.**
- **Pool opens 15 weeks of the year (May – Sep), weekly costs of £6,000, almost £1,000 per day of operation.**

## 7. The Council's Vision 2025-2029

It is the stated aim of the Council to “Provide outstanding parks, playgrounds and public spaces” and it is acknowledged that the provision of the paddling pool is in line with this objective. However, this must be weighed against the aim to “ Provide value for money services for the communities we serve, by maximising income and controlling costs.”

In the circumstances, it is suggested that the costs of re-opening, maintain and running the paddling pool, as outlined above, do not represent best value for money for all the people of Kidderminster.

## 8. Recommendation

### Options:

- a) The Operational Services Committee recommends to Full Council that the paddling pool be permanently closed, and that appropriate arrangements be made to reinstate the area in a manner that is in keeping with the surrounding landscape.

- b) The Operational Services Committee recommends to Full Council that the annual precept be increased to fully fund the required repairs and upgrades, as well as to cover the ongoing annual running and maintenance costs.
- c) The Operational Services Committee recommends that Full Council approve and fund the refurbishment programme by securing a loan.

The Operational Services Team is of the opinion that recommendation (a) is the preferred option.

## **6. Appendices**

2a Expression of Interest – Paddling Pool Lease

2b Lease and Operational Responsibilities

2c Friends of St Georges response



Expression of Interest – Paddling Pool Lease.

Names extracted.

Appendix 2a.

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your recent email expressing an interest in the potential lease of the paddling pool.

The matter was discussed at the Kidderminster Town Council Operational Services Committee meeting held on Tuesday, 3rd June. The Council welcomed your request and is pleased to support your interest in this opportunity.

Following the meeting, a number of questions have been prepared to support your enquiry—these are attached for your consideration. We understand that the information may appear extensive, and we appreciate that there is much to review. Please be assured that I am available to offer guidance where possible, should you require it.

To allow sufficient time for discussion with relevant group members and legal representation, we have set a deadline of **11th August** for your response.

Once again, thank you for your interest. We look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Kind regards,

## Subject: Lease and Operational Responsibilities for St Georges Paddling Pool

Dear Friends of St Georges,

Thank you for your expression of interest in exploring — and potentially taking on — the lease of the paddling pool at St George's. We also acknowledge your request for further information regarding a long-term lease arrangement.

Further to our ongoing discussions about the potential lease and community-led management of the paddling pool, the Operational Services Committee of Kidderminster Town Council remains committed to ensuring that any future arrangements meet the highest standards of public safety, operational competence, and governance accountability.

The Committee has recommended that, should a lease be agreed, the Friends of St George's would assume full responsibility for the paddling pool and its enclosure for the duration of the lease. This would include — but not be limited to — securing relevant funding, day-to-day operational management, repairs and maintenance, insurance and liability, health and safety compliance, water management, risk assessments and incident management, safeguarding, and the provision of appropriate staffing and resources.

With regard to funding, we understand you have expressed interest in applying to the **Biffa Award Scheme**. Please note the following key terms of that scheme:

- The **application value must be between £10,000 and £75,000**.
- The **total project cost, including VAT, must not exceed £200,000**.
- **Standalone elements** of a wider project costing less than £200,000 are **not eligible**.

We would advise ensuring that any proposal for funding — or phased project plan — is aligned with these requirements. Additionally, we highlight for your reference (as shown in red in the attached documentation) both the **previous expenditure relating to water quality management** and the **anticipated future costs** that will need to be considered as part of your operational planning.

To support our assessment and planning process, we would be grateful for your responses to the following areas of concern and operational readiness:

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### 1. Grant Funding and Refurbishment

- The project will cost at least £200,000; how will you meet the shortfall?
- How would you access grant funding opportunities to support the refurbishment or improvement of the paddling pool, if you are unable to secure partial funding from Biffa?
- Are there specific funding bodies or programmes you intend to target?
- What governance arrangements will be in place to manage and report on the use of such funds?

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## 2. Lease Structure and Governance

- How do you envisage the lease agreement with the Town Council being structured?
  - What governance or management framework will you adopt to ensure appropriate oversight and compliance?
- 

## 3. Health and Safety Compliance

- What steps will be taken to ensure compliance with relevant health and safety legislation, especially for recreational water facilities?
  - What funding provisions are in place for essential staff training?
- 

## 4. Water Quality Management

- Who will be responsible for managing water hygiene, chemical dosing, and filtration?
- What technical training and qualifications will be sought for individuals managing water safety?
- What protocols will be followed for regular testing and responding to adverse results?

**To note for reference,**

Kidderminster Town Council utilised a third party to carry out water testing, 2022-23 £13,000 ( To note, manual water testing, and was for a six-week period only)

The expectation for a qualified operator, would be estimated to charge in the region of £40,000, for approx. 3 months operating.

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## 5. Risk Assessments and Incident Management

- How will you undertake and record risk assessments for the facility?
  - What systems will be in place for responding to incidents such as injuries or contamination?
  - Who will be responsible for managing and documenting such responses?
- 

## 6. Supervision and Safeguarding

- What safeguarding policies and procedures will be adopted for the facility?
- How will risks related to unsupervised children or vulnerable users be mitigated?
- What signage and on-site support will be provided?

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## 7. Maintenance and Operational Capacity

- What is your planned schedule for cleaning, maintenance, and inspections?
  - Do you have access to skilled personnel or contractors for these tasks?
  - Will maintenance be supported by internal staff or external service providers?
- 

## 8. Resources and Staffing

- Given the identified operational gap, how do you propose to provide sufficient staffing or volunteer support?
  - **Would you be open to discussing the possibility of establishing a dedicated support officer from Kidderminster Town Council, along with exploring any additional forms of support that may be available?** This could help ensure consistent communication, streamline coordination for local initiatives, and provide a direct point of contact for ongoing or future projects. We'd welcome the opportunity to collaborate more closely to enhance community impact and responsiveness.
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## 9. Insurance and Liability

- What insurance cover will be put in place for public liability, accidents, and damage?
  - How will you ensure all personnel are properly trained and documented to demonstrate due diligence in case of incident?
- 

We appreciate your commitment to enhancing community access to this facility and your cooperation in addressing these important areas. We kindly request a written response by Monday 11<sup>th</sup> August, after which we would be pleased to arrange a follow-up meeting to discuss the next steps.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any queries or require clarification on any point.

Kind regards,

Public Realm and Operations Manager

## Appendix 2c

### Email Extract, Friends of St Georges.

Hi [REDACTED] in response to your resent email regarding the paddling pool lease the position of the friends group has not changed, as you will be aware we are not in a position to take legal, financial or physical responsibility of the paddling pool. We have appointed [REDACTED] as our paddling pool manager to work with [REDACTED] Biffa and K.T.C. to see how our constitution can be used to secure the required funds. But as chairman of the group I am not prepared to put our hard working volunteers and their successors in such a position of responsibility, a position that paid officer and elected representative of the council don't seem to be prepared to take on either.

Chairman

### Kidderminster Town Council

**Report Title:** Kidderminster Ring Road William Mitchell Wall & Waterfall – Interpretation Board

- **Meeting:** Operational Services Committee
- **Date of Meeting:** 13 August 2025
- **Author(s):** Adam Stockhall
- **Date of report** 31/07/2025

1. **Summary:** To provide Operational Services Committee with an update and present the interpretation board for installation.
2. **Background:** In response to recent issues with the water supply, Operational Services Officers have been exploring alternatives to enhance the area surrounding the waterfall both aesthetically and functionally. This includes consideration of an interpretation board. However, the Operational Committee noted that the waterfall should not be identified or described as a Covid memorial in any way.
3. **Current Situation:** Operational Services Officers have been contacted by the Kidderminster Civic Society regarding the William Mitchell Wall and waterfall which had been previously discussed at an Operational Services Committee meeting. The Society which to my knowledge hadn't consulted Kidderminster Town Council officers on the description to the waterfall and has since been manufactured and awaiting installation, the total cost exceeding £2,000. Kidderminster Civic Society obtained planning consent for the installation of an interpretation board (see Appendix 2). Kidderminster Town Council raised no objections to the proposal, as noted in the planning officer's report.

Although the waterfall switch-on event made reference to Covid, I do not believe this implies the waterfall is intended as a longstanding memorial.

I recently met with a member of the Kidderminster Civic Society to discuss the matter and shared the concerns previously raised at the Operational Services Committee. During our conversation, I requested that any installation be delayed until after 13 August, to allow time for further discussion with the Committee.

Please see comments attached from a member of the Society, below,

*Good to meet you this afternoon. Thanks for explaining the position with the operation of the waterfall.*

*I have written to members of the group which has pulled this idea of the interpretive panel together explaining in confidence the position.*

*My proposal to them is that we will avoid any reference to the Covid memorial aspect of the waterfall reinstatement other than as a past event.*

*I also propose that in the event of any questions on future operation of the waterfall we will refer queries back to you at KTC - hope that's ok.*

*Will get back to you when I get this signed off in advance of your committee meeting on 13th.*

*If there were to be any advantages in my attending that meeting to explain our side of things, happy to do that.*

- 4. Expected Outcomes:** Note the content and agree its installation.
- 5. Risk Assessment:** No Health and Safety Concern, although It may come under scrutiny in terms of the content.
- 6. Financial and Resources-** No Financial cost to Kidderminster Town Council.
- 7. Conclusion and Recommendation(s)** It is noted that there was a lack of consultation with officers regarding the description. While we cannot prevent the installation, as the appropriate planning permission has been granted, it is important to highlight that Kidderminster Town Council is visually referenced on the interpretation board.

The following options are recommended for consideration:

- a) Acknowledge the description and support the installation.
- b) Request that the Kidderminster Civic Society remove any reference to Kidderminster Town Council.

## **8. Appendices:**

3a Kidderminster Bill Mitchell

3b Mitchell Wall – ADVERTISMENT APPROVAL

3c Planning Application – Officer Report



# William Mitchell (1925 – 2020)

## Sculptor, artist and designer



The Wall under construction Image www.whittlespublishing.com



Wall under Construction Image Robert Barber

Overall responsibility for the project fell to George Law Ltd a local company which had been involved in infrastructure work in Kidderminster for a century. The Wall demanded totally new approaches to the use of concrete



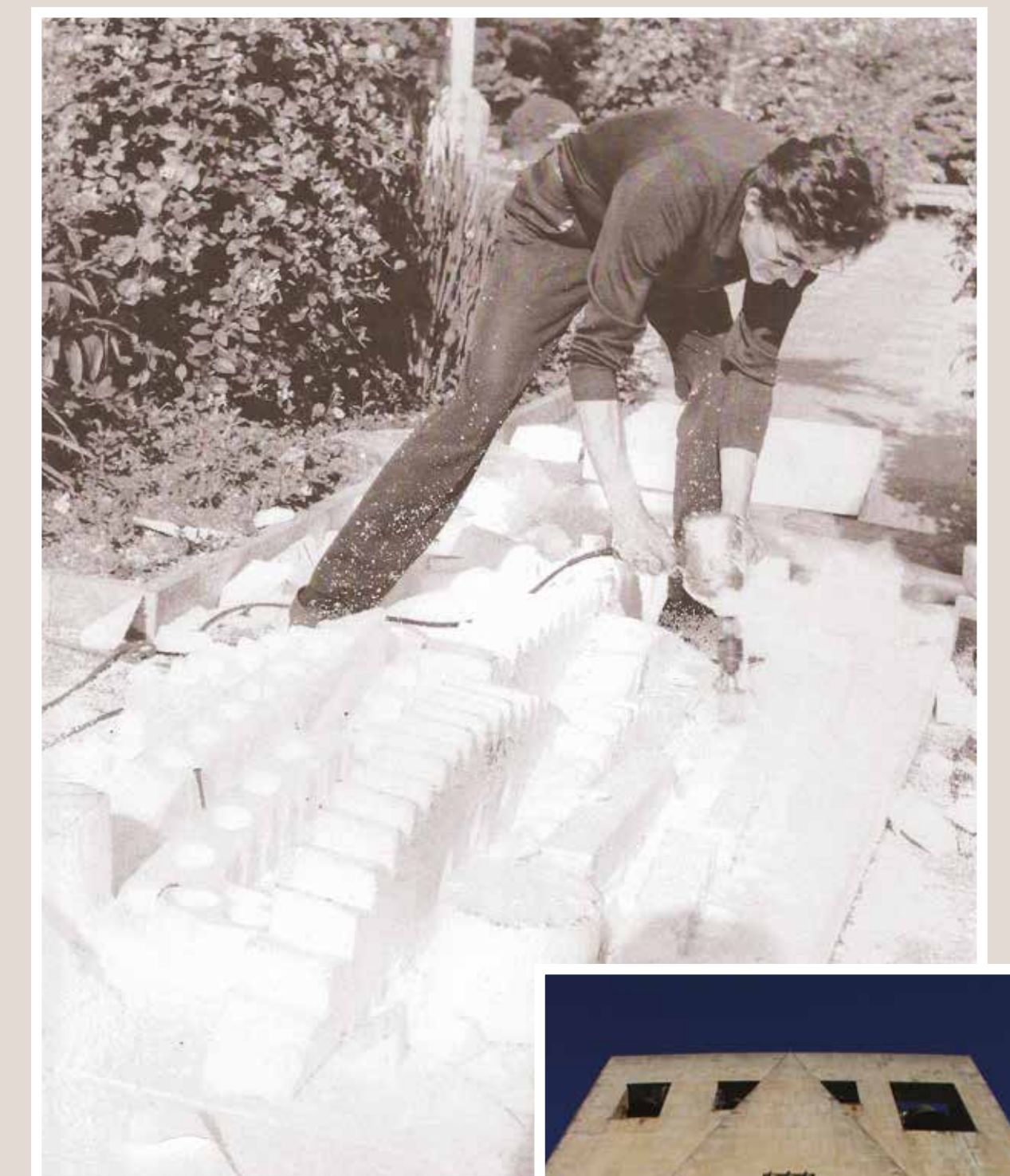
Young visitor to the Waterfall 1973 Image Robert Barber

### Who was Bill Mitchell

William Mitchell (1925-2020) created arresting art work that now stands across Britain and the world and earned him the title the doyen of British muralists. Other work with which he was associated range from the Metropolitan Cathedral, Liverpool and this fantastic structure in Honolulu. This Wall was listed by Historic England in December 2020



Federal Building, Honolulu, Hawaii - image Dawn Pereira



Bill Mitchell at work Image www.whittlespublishing.com

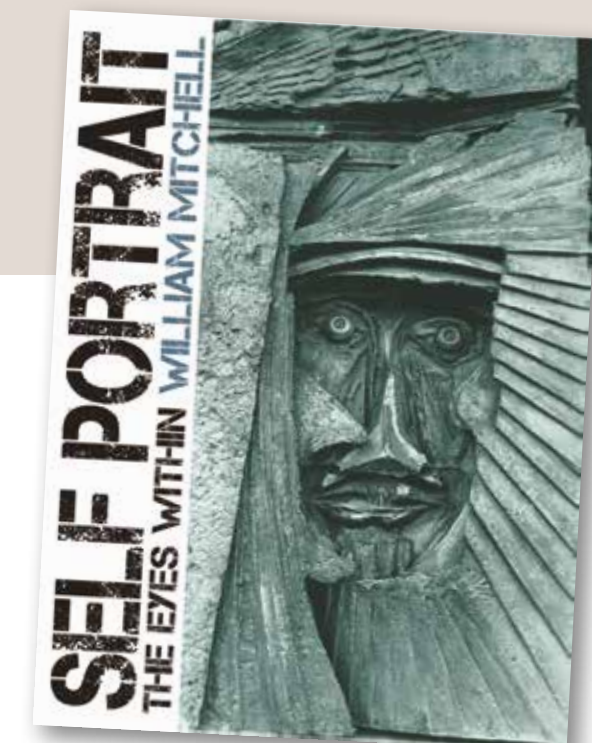


Image www.whittlespublishing.com



Liverpool Metropolitan Cathedral Image Neil Sayer Liverpool Archdiocesan Archivist

### Why a wall

The Mitchell Wall – formally the Kidderminster Stage Relief Road Retaining Wall was constructed in 1972/23. The road required a retaining wall to ensure ground stability.

The wall is 310 m long, 11 m tall at its highest point and comprises 2500 sq meters of concrete.

It was commissioned by Kidderminster Borough Council

The idea of cast concrete relief wall came from Douglas H Smith an architect advising Kidderminster council on the project.

Bill Mitchell developed this idea further with these fantastic, decorated panels that seem to be inspired by ideas from Aztec, Eastern or even pre-history art.

Take a walk under the wall and see how it can inspire - what you can conjure up from the shapes and images he created.

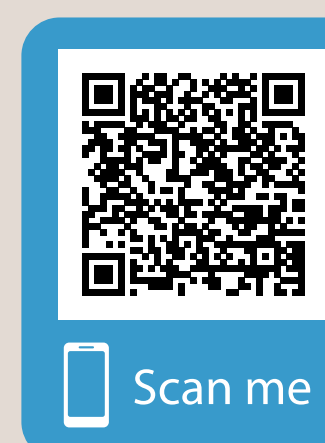


### Sitting in Nature

Mitchell himself was pleased that natural tree and shrub growth has been allowed to soften the impact of such a huge structure to the extent it has partially been absorbed into the landscape

### After Covid – a new purpose for the wall and waterfall

The Wall's waterfall feature was hugely popular but had been discontinued in the 1990s. It was reinstated in March 2021 to mark the positive community spirit that was evident in the town through the Covid Epidemic.



For more information on Civic Society web site and to see a video of the waterfall running



For more information on the Kidderminster Heritage Trail

Heritage Opportunities Group





Mr Nick Hughes  
Kidderminster Civic Society  
7 Church Street  
Kidderminster  
Worcs  
DY10 2AD  
UK

**APPLICATION REF: 24/0412/ADV**

*IMPORTANT – This communication affects your property*

## **CONSENT TO DISPLAY AN ADVERTISEMENT**

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)  
Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007  
Wyre Forest District Local Plan 2022  
National Planning Policy Framework 2023

In pursuance of its powers under the above mentioned Act and Order, and having regard to the Development Plan, Wyre Forest District Council, as Local Planning Authority, hereby **GRANTS** advertisement consent for:

**Freestanding information board  
Land At Os 383520 276369 The Ringway Kidderminster**

In accordance with the application received by the Council on 21st June 2024 subject to the following condition(s):

1) Any advertisements displayed, and any site used for the display of advertisements, shall be maintained in a clean and tidy condition to the reasonable satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority. Any structure or hoarding erected or used principally for the purpose of displaying advertisements shall be maintained in a safe condition. No advertisement is to be displayed without the permission of the owner of the site or any other person with an interest in the site entitled to grant permission.

### **Reason**

The above are standard conditions under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 2007.

2) The advertisement consent hereby granted shall expire at the end of 5 years from the date of this consent.

### **Reason**

Continued

In order to comply with Regulation 14(7) of the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007 and the National Planning Policy Framework.

3) The signage to be installed in accordance with the approved plans.

Plans	Ref BOARD WITH WALL	Received 21st June 2024
Plans	Ref MITCHELL PANEL INFO	Received 21st June 2024
Plans	Ref PROPOSED BOARD DIMENSION S	Received 21st June 2024

Reason

In order to define the consent.

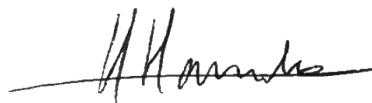
IN CONSIDERING THIS APPLICATION, THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY HAD PARTICULAR REGARD TO THE FOLLOWING POLICIES
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DM27
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### For your information

If you feel that the conditions are not acceptable you can appeal to the Secretary of State through the Planning Inspectorate. Please note that conditions 1-5 are standard conditions that accompany all advertisement consents. For this reason appealing against these conditions is unlikely to be successful. This appeal should be made within 8 weeks of you receiving this notice unless supported by special circumstances. The appropriate form and further information on how to appeal can be found online at <http://www.planningportal.co.uk/planning/appeals/advertappeals> or by contacting the Planning Inspectorate Customer Services Team on 0303 444 5000.

Date Notice Issued: 6th August 2024



Planning Manager

Continued

## OFFICER REPORT

**Application Number:** 24/0412/ADV

**Decision Due by:** 26th August 2024

**Proposal:** Freestanding information board

**Site Address:** Land At Os 383520 276369 The Ringway Kidderminster  
Worcestershire

**Ward:** Aggborough And Spennells

**Agent:** N/A

**Applicant:** Mr Nick Hughes

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### Policies:

DM27 - Advertisements

Wyre Forest Local Plan

### RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

App Number	Proposal	Status	Received Date	Decision Date
24/0412/ADV	Freestanding information board	APP	21.06.2024	06.08.2024

### SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Parish Council - No Comment Received.

1.0 Planning History1.1 No relevant planning history2.0 Consultations and Representations2.1 Kidderminster Town Council – No objection2.2 Conservation Officer – There would be no impact upon the listed wall, therefore I would have no comments or objections. 2.3 Neighbour/Site Notice Representations – No comments received. 3.0 Site Location and Description 3.1 The application relates to an existing retaining wall feature off the Ringway in the Kidderminster. The retaining wall and waterfall are Grade II Listed and were designed by William Mitchell, with construction in 1972/73 as a way of retaining the land for development above. The retaining wall is made up of a series of panels which are each individually crafted with abstract elements. The waterfall feature synonymous to Kidderminster was reinstated to working order in 2021. 3.2The surrounding area is predominantly highways with a public footpath leading adjacent the wall to residential properties on Hoo Road. 3.3 The proposal seeks planning permission for the erection of an information board displaying information and facts about the retaining wall and the architect. 3.4 The proposal will be 1.4 metres in overall height, and would be 0.85 metres in width. The board will be fixed to the ground by two wooden legs. 4.0 Officer Comments4.1 The main considerations for this application are:\* Amenity \* Public SafetyBACKGROUND INFORMATION4.2 The application site is a well known feature of Kidderminster and is located on a prominent ringway and pedestrian walkway. AMENITY 4.3 Paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy DM.24 of the Wyre Forest District

Local Plan state that all development will be expected to be of a high design quality. It will need to integrate effectively with its surroundings, in terms of form and function, reinforce local distinctiveness and conserve, and where appropriate, enhance cultural and heritage assets, landmarks and their settings. 4.4 Policy DM.27 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan states that proposals for advertisements must not have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the area or building in/on which they are displayed, not be prejudicial to public safety by reasons of their size, location, and content, not obstruct a highway or public right of way either directly or through maintenance requirements and not confuse users of highways. Proposals for large advertisement hoardings or groups of small hoardings will only be permitted within towns on large commercial sites or industrial areas. 4.5 The immediate surrounding area is predominant highways with Kidderminster Town centre some 100 metres away and Comberton Hill 50 metres away and relates to part of the town's ring road. This part of the ring road features a retaining wall that extends up to a significant height and supports the ground level difference between the ring road and Hoo Road which is elevated above the ring road and comprises mostly housing. There is also a tree lined pedestrian walkway that provides access up to Hoo Road to the subway under one of the ring roads roundabouts. 4.6 The Information board would be located in front of the retaining wall, to the side of the waterfall feature that has been designed into the retaining wall. 4.7 The retaining wall is Grade II Listed, Policy DM.23 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan serves to safeguard the Historic Environment by ensuring that proposals contribute to the setting and important vistas of Designated Heritage Assets. The proposed information board will be located away from the Heritage Asset on an area of grassland. Whilst there will be an element of change to the view of the retaining wall, the scale and design of the information board is such that little if any visual harm will result to the Heritage Asset and as such the proposal is deemed to accord with Policy DM.23 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan. 4.8

The Local Authorities Conservation Officer has noted that the retaining wall is Grade II Listed, however, they are of the opinion that due to the scale of the proposed information board, that there will be no impact upon the listed wall. Your officers are in agreement with the Conservation Officer and that there will be no harm resulting from the proposal. 4.9 The proposed information board although standalone, is considered to be of an acceptable scale and design as to not result in any undue harm to the surrounding amenity. This location of the sign receives a high amount of footfall and will be educational to pedestrians when walking to and from the town. It is therefore deemed to accord with Policy DM.27 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan, the Design Amenity and Shopfronts SPD and the National Planning Policy Framework. PUBLIC SAFETY 4.10 Policy DM.27 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan further goes on to say that advertisements must not be prejudicial to public safety by reasons of their size, location or content, not obstruct the highway or public right of way either directly or through maintenance requirements and not confuse users of the highway. 4.11 The information board is relatively small in size and set back from the carriageway, due to the location and size, it is unlikely that the proposed will result in any distraction to motorists and as such it is considered that the proposal accords with Policy DM.27 of the Wyre Forest District Local Plan which seeks to ensure no harm to highway safety. The signage would also not result in any anti-social behaviour issues due to its low height and location which is well overlooked, to cause a safety issue to pedestrians. 5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations 5.1 The proposed information board is considered to be acceptable in terms of amenity and public safety and would not result in any significant distraction to motorists. The proposal, due to the nature of the board will sit well within the setting and provide factual information to pedestrians. It is also concluded that the signage would conserve the significance of the Grade II retaining wall, a heritage asset. It is therefore considered that the proposal is in accordance with the Wyre Forest District Local Plan.

**Contact Officer:** Kelly Davies

**Date:** 6th August 2024