

Subject:	Grass cutting in Charlbury 2023	
From:	Land and Nature Group	
Date:	14 October 2022	
For decision and action		
Summary of decisions or actions requested (including timing):		
<p>Comprehensive information about the areas of grass which need cutting within the town are listed in the attached report dated 13 October 2022 from the Land and Nature Group. The table shows the OCC reference (if their responsibility), the location, and a comment about how it is maintained in practice. Across the whole town, the responsibility falls with a wide range of landowners: OCC, WODC, Cottsway, various housing associations, various resident committees, as well as Charlbury Town Council.</p> <p>Even though OCC are responsible for mowing the majority of grass verges within the town, most of these are actually maintained by local residents, some are already maintained by CTC, and some are left uncut until the OCC mows them in October. In practice, in October, the OCC contractor does not recut the areas obviously already mown by others.</p> <p>In 2022, some areas that the OCC is responsible for were no longer mown regularly by residents and so were only cut in October by OCC and this led to various complaints from members of the public. Unfortunately there was no increased benefit to pollinating insects because the long grass swamped the wild flowers in the sward which might well have flowered between cuts in previous years. Equally, there were areas where spring and early summer flowers used to flourish in areas only cut in October and this year they were mown short by local residents.</p> <p>If CTC entered into an agreement with OCC to cut all their verges then the income would only be £842.50 (2021 prices) but they would then be responsible for cutting them all twice a year.</p> <p>Recommendation from the Land & Nature Group is for Charlbury Town Council to informally take over the maintenance of more of the significant OCC verges within the town and manage them to maximise the benefit for pollinating insects and flowering plants. In 2023, recommend taking on the mowing of currently unmown parts of Nine Acres Lane, The Slade, and Sturt Road including Five Ways junction. The recommended mowing regime would be to mow until the end of April, then again in July and finally October, this would minimise the bulk of the grass growth and allow the flora to flower in May, June and later on in August and September. Ideally the grass cuttings would be removed to avoid the build-up of thatch in the sward and also reduce the fertility of the soil but it might not be possible for the CTC contractor to do this. The roadside and pavement edges would need more frequent cutting for accessibility, safety and to show the areas are being cared for and not neglected.</p>		
Financial implications:		
Need to approach our regular contractor for an estimate of increased costs.		

GRASS AREAS IN CHARLBURY

Key:

OCC ref - based on old and new OCC grass cutting maps - cuts in October or more regularly for safety at junctions

Bold – sites already included in Charlbury Town Council mowing schedule

Italic – Private sites maintained by other agencies or residents

Ref	Name	Comments
	Grammar School Hill	
OCC-2	West side from bend past drives to Cornbury and Lee Place to Shilson Lane	Uncut until October
<i>Private</i>	Wide verges in front of Old Grammar School, Lee Cottage and Grammar School Cottage	<i>Maintained by local residents and Charlbury Pre-school allowing patches of wild flowers in the sward to flower</i>
OCC-3	East side between driveways into Brookfield and Rosevale	Mown regularly by local residents
OCC-4 old map	In front of St Diuma's House, Park Street	No longer relevant and not included on latest map
	Dyers Hill	
OCC-5	South side below Church Lane	Narrow strip of vegetation at foot of stone wall next to narrow pavement to station
OCC-6	Island at end of Church Lane	Grass and wild flowers below hornbeam tree and around the Women's Institute bench
OCC-7	South side above Church Lane to Forest Court	Narrow strip of vegetation below stone wall
OCC-8	North side alongside Victoria Terrace (A) and in front of Baptist Church (B)	(A) Managed by local residents for wild and garden flowers excellent for pollinators (B) Probably mown regularly by Baptist Church
	Pound Hill	
OCC-9	South side of Dairy Court corner northwards to The Firs	Partially managed by local residents, some protective bollards
OCC-10 CTC	Bottom of hill east side of bend	Grass alongside garden mown regularly by local resident, area alongside new permissive footpath mown by CTC contractor
CTC	Bottom of hill triangle with bench and trees and area next to Mill Stream	Managed by CTC for access and for wildlife, parts mown monthly and parts mown in April, July, October
OCC-11	Nine Acres Lane corner to frontage of stone boundary wall of the Cemetery	Hollyhocks near corner of Nine Acres
CTC	Cemetery	Managed by CTC both for access and for wildlife, rich limestone flora has been allowed to flower for many years, meadow saxifrage near the entrance needs protection
	Nine Acres Lane	
OCC-12	South side from Thames Street corner to Jeffs Terrace corner	Daffodils
<i>Cottsway</i>	South side wide verge in front of Jeff's Terrace	<i>Mown regularly by Cottsway, rich flora evident between cuts, buttercups, birds foot trefoil, plantains, yarrow, lady's bedstraw, self heal</i>

<i>Cottsway</i>	North side wide verge in front of Evenlode Close	<i>Mown regularly by Cottsway (different contractor to the south side), grape hyacinths allowed to flower</i>
<i>Scouts</i>	Side verge to Evenlode Close and frontage to Scout Hut	<i>Managed by Scouts organisers for access and for wildlife, part next to Wigwell boundary left for wildlife</i>
OCC-13	South side foot of the wall around Nine Acres to the bend	Uncut until October, daffodils at foot of wall, wider verge opposite Nine Acres Close always produces a show of wild flowers whenever the soil is disturbed by utility companies
OCC-14	North side from Nine Acres Close to Enstone Road crossroads	Mown regularly by local resident, but birds foot trefoil and toadflax are both growing there and are sometimes able to flower
OCC-18A	West of vehicle gate into Nine Acres recreation ground	Short stakes prevent parking, regularly mown by local residents but potentially good flora, with meadow cranesbill flowering at the uncut end nearest the letterbox, 30 years ago the rare meadow clary plant was found flowering there
	Banbury Hill	
OCC-15	West side from Hazeldean to end of Nine Acres Close gardens	Stretch to the allotments entrance worn short by regular walking, rest left uncut until October
OCC-16	East side from Oxpens Barn to same extent as other side	Grass alongside Oxpens Barn mown regularly by local resident, rest left uncut until October
OCC-17A	East side from Tollgate Cottage to Hundley Way	Most mown regularly by local residents
	Enstone Road	
OCC-18B	North side alongside Nine Acres recreation ground just south of crossroads	Short stakes prevent parking, regularly mown by local residents and planted up with hollyhocks
OCC-19	North side between driveways in front of houses	Mown regularly by local residents
OCC-20	Footpath from Enstone Road to Nine Acres Lane (route amended since construction of community centre)	(A) Tall growing ivy on the walls is very beneficial to wildlife and provides a good visual screen but width of it needs cutting back regularly to allow people to walk along the path easily (B) Steps from Enstone Road up to old footpath route alongside Nine Acres that is now redundant - would provide a good wildlife habitat, currently blocked by temporary fences
OCC-21	South side from The Old Bakehouse to Wychwood Paddocks corner	Lots of planted daffodils and a patch of birds foot trefoil at foot of wall below school playing field
OCC-22	Wychwood Paddocks verge at foot of hedgerow around school playing field	Maintained by local residents, planted up with cowslips, cyclamen and other wild flowers
OCC-23A	Wychwood Paddocks corner to the crossroads	Grass around entrance to Wychwood House mown by local residents. Bank between Wychwood Paddocks and Wychwood House rich with bluebells, daffodils and cow parsley. Area between bus stop, notice board and crossroads left uncut until October.
	The Slade	
OCC-17B	North side of The Slade from Tollgate Cottage to the alleyway	Rich flora in spring and early summer - green alkanet, red campion, cow parsley – but local resident mowed it regularly in 2022 so there was minimal value to wildlife

OCC-23B	South side of The Slade from crossroads to Wychwood Close	Uncut until October, end nearest the crossroads has rich flora in spring and summer, the end nearest Wychwood Close has strong growing grass with some wild flowers mallow, plantains, mignonette, but has potential for introducing more local wild flower seed
OCC-24	East side from Ditchley Road corner to Highfield House driveway	Uncut until October, strong growing grass but has potential for introducing local wild flower seed and managing it for pollinating insects
WODC	Wide area with walnut trees in front of houses 1 & 3 Ticnell Piece Road	<i>WODC contractor cuts April, July and October and the edges more frequently, rich flora on the corner of Ticknell Piece Road, lady's smock and pyramidal orchids under the walnut trees</i>
OCC-29	East side from Ticknell Lane between driveways down the hill to the bottom of the dip	Mown regularly by local residents
OCC-30 CTC	West side from Crawborough down the hill to just beyond Hill Close	Narrow border below wall managed for wild flowers by local resident includes greater celandine, this is the boundary wall of the original road prior to realignment in the 1960s. Narrow verge beyond Hill Close was uncut but eventually cut by a local resident. In 2022, the wide verge mown by CTC contractor in April, July and October, edges done monthly. Previously the contractor had mown it regularly as a local resident.
OCC-32A CTC	West side up the hill on corner of Dancers Hill	In 2022, mown by CTC contractor
	Sturt Road	
OCC-34	East side from Woody Lane to verge beyond Lees Heights	Uncut until October
OCC-35 CTC	West side from Dancers Hill to verge beyond Lee Close	In 2022, edges and around the bench mown regularly by CTC contractor and the area at the back cut in April, July and October
OCC-36	East side on both sides of the entrance to the Fire Station	Uncut until October
OCC-37	East side south of Hughes Close	Uncut until October
OCC-38	East side of Five Ways junction	Partially mown regularly by local residents. In 2022 the largest area was left to OCC so was not cut until October. Large patch of primroses opposite Fawler Road but the strong growing grasses swamped the wild flowers that would have flowered well if the grass had been cut in April, July and October.
	Woodstock Road	
OCC-39	North side between driveways	Mown regularly by local residents apart from the verge affected by the construction of Wilkins Court, which now has rank growth, and was uncut until October. The rest of the verges have rich flora in the sward that is evident between cuts, including birds foot trefoil, lady's bedstraw, hoary plantain, ribwort plantain, yarrow, hawkbits, mouse-eared hawkweed, germander speedwell, field madder, hedge geranium, rest harrow, ribbed melilot, black medic, self-heal
OCC-40	South side between driveways	Mown regularly by local residents, sward probably contains similar flora to the north side

OCC-41	South side of Five Ways junction	Area alongside entrance to Hydac has similar flora to the north side – this is visible because it is mown more frequently (by Hydac?) than the rest of this verge which is swamped by long grass uncut until October
OCC-1	West side of Five Ways junction along to opposite Wellington Cottages	Uncut until October
	Ditchley Road	
OCC-25	South side between driveways in front of houses	Mown regularly by local residents, wide verge alongside ancient route to Woodstock and evidence of rich flora in the sward
OCC-27	North side from the bend alongside Small Acres	Mown by local residents
OCC-28	West side from Quarry lane between driveways to the bend before Small Acres	Mown by local residents
	The Green	
OCC-26 old map crossed off	North east end in front of house numbers 49-63 The Green	On original map from OCC but crossed off, narrowest part mown regularly by local residents but the wider part at the eastern end hasn't been cut for very many years and is now very tussocky with strong growing grass but has potential for introducing local wild flower seed as long as it is cut in April, July and October
	Ticknell Piece Road	
WODC	North of the road in front of house numbers 21-61	<i>Under CTC discussion - good flora alongside road on south side of the bank</i>
WODC	South of road in front of house numbers 22-30	<i>Under CTC discussion – lots of cherry tree suckers require regular mowing</i>
HA	North side opposite entrance to Bowls Club	<i>Small area mown regularly by housing association</i>
HA	South side alongside entrance to Bowls Club	<i>Small area mown regularly by housing association</i>
HA	Corner of the cul-de-sac leading to the last phase of housing	<i>Large area mown regularly by housing association but the wide herbaceous border has been sown with annual wild flowers and has a colourful display including yellow rattle and corncockle</i>
<i>Bowls Club</i>	Overflow car parking area between Ticknell Piece Road and the entrance to the Bowls Club	<i>Leased by CTC but managed by the Bowls Club, gravelled area with very little vegetation which looks very neglected, great potential for sowing with annual wild flowers for pollinators like the previous entry, the western boundary is also an historic hedgerow which is likely to have limestone flora in the ground around it.</i>
	Little Lees	
SOHA	North side of Little Lees	<i>Maintained by Soha Housing Association, suffered from introduction of unwanted weed species during the construction phase. Includes ancient boundary hedgerow, the ground around which used to be a stronghold for glow-worms in Charlbury</i>
	Hughes Close	

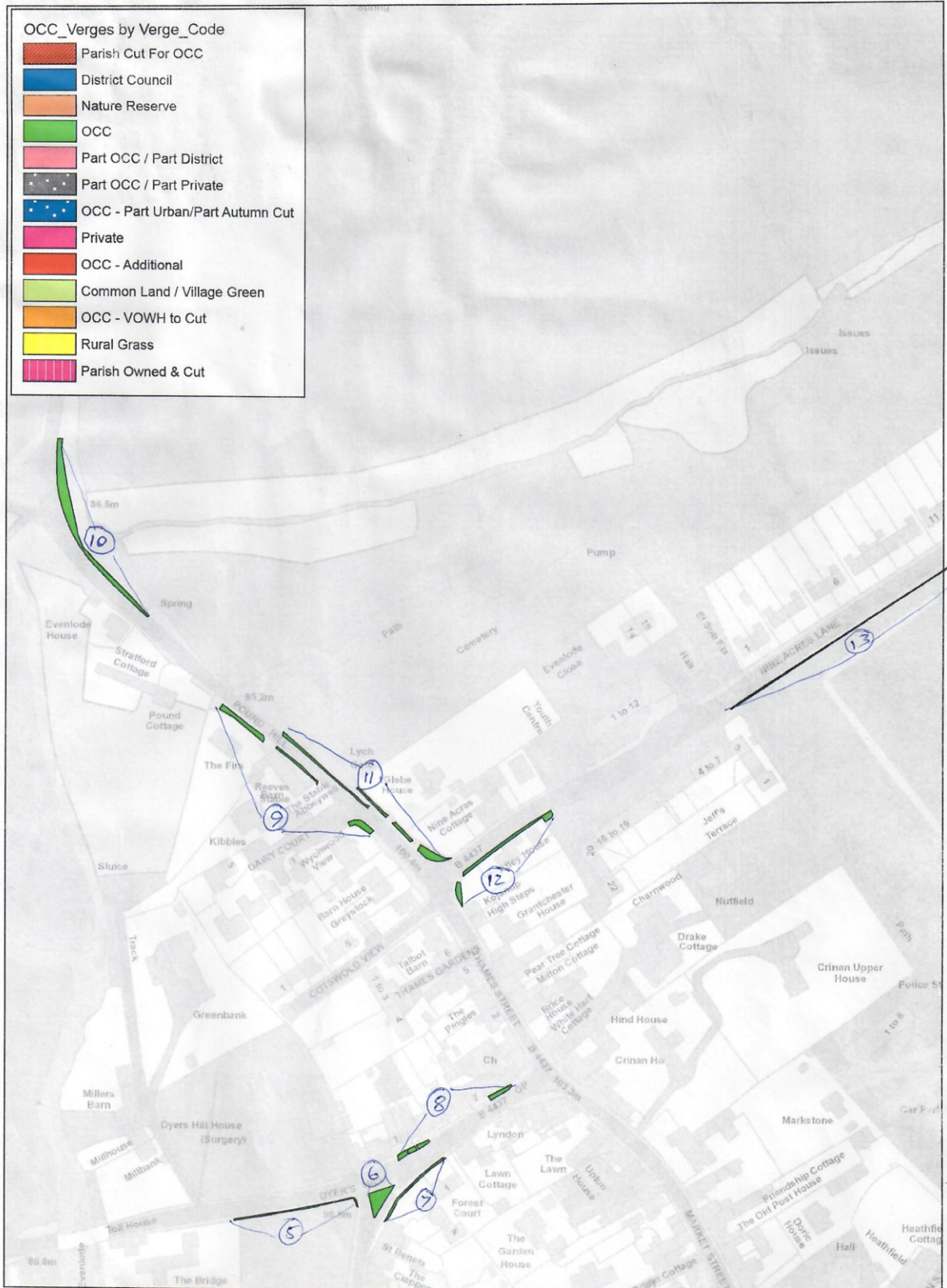
<i>Cottsway</i>	Both sides of entrance and in front of 34-39	<i>These three areas are mown regularly by Cottsway contractor</i>
	Hixet Wood	
OCC-49 old map	East side near Five Ways	Managed by local residents for wild and garden flowers excellent for pollinators
OCC-48	East side to Hixet Lodge on the bend	Managed by local residents for wild and garden flowers excellent for pollinators
OCC-47	East side from Hixet Lodge to Collinsons Row	Managed by local residents for wild and garden flowers excellent for pollinators
OCC-50	North side of entrance to Woodfield Drive from Hixet Wood	Managed by local residents for wild and garden flowers excellent for pollinators
OCC-46 CTC	Narrow Lane towards Dancers Hill	Mown by CTC contractor
CTC	Marlborough Place	Mown by CTC contractor, the flat area is mown regularly but the bank is cut in April, July and October to encourage the wild flowers
OCC-42	East side down hill to bottom of dip	Narrow strip of vegetation at foot of stone wall
OCC-43 old map	West side down hill to bottom of dip	No longer relevant
	Dancers Hill	
OCC-32B	North side just west of junction with The Slade	Very narrow strip of vegetation below hedge of house on the corner
<i>Private</i>	Alongside entrance and exit to Sandford Park garage court	<i>Maintained by contractor for local residents committee, part mown short and part left longer for wildlife</i>
OCC-33 CTC	East side of the bend	Mown around the bench by CTC contractor
	Hanover Close	
<i>Anchor Housing</i>	South side of entrance and alongside the Anchor Housing properties	<i>Maintained by contractor for Anchor Housing Association, majority mown short but the part alongside the steps left longer for wildlife at the request of local residents. Very rich flora including ox-eye daisies, birds foot trefoil, ladies bedstraw, pyramidal and bee orchid. Land was an old orchard before buildings constructed in the late 1960s.</i>
<i>Private</i>	North side of entrance	<i>Usually partially mown by local resident and part allowed to flower, very rich sward just like the area opposite alongside Anchor Housing</i>
	Pound Hill	
OCC-45	South side of corner into Fishers Lane and east side in front of Chimney Cottage	Narrow verge around salt box and street furniture on corner of Fishers Lane, narrow strip below stone wall in front of Chimney Cottage, uncut until October
	Spendlove & Playing Close	
	Charlbury Medical Centre	Grass area between Medical Centre and Community Centre newly managed by the Medical Centre for wild flowers and nearly 30 pyramidal orchids flowered in 2022. Grass area alongside the Enstone Road has lots of anemone blanda.
	Spendlove Offices	Managed by Paul Chaston Commercial Property
	Playing Close	Managed by Gifford Trust
	Community Centre	Managed by Gifford Trust

16 November 2021 – Email from Belinda Davies (AreaOperations.North@oxfordshire.gov.uk) about possibility of Charlbury Town Council entering into a grass cutting agreement with Oxfordshire County Council

2. The total highway grass (urban) for Charlbury is recorded as 8219.6 m²
3. A map is attached showing where the areas of grass are recorded (this may need updating)
4. Your annual payment would be calculated as 8219.6 x 10.25 pence = £842.50
5. You would be required to cut the grass a minimum of 2 times per year, with extra cuts at junctions as necessary
6. The annual payment would be made in April/May each year

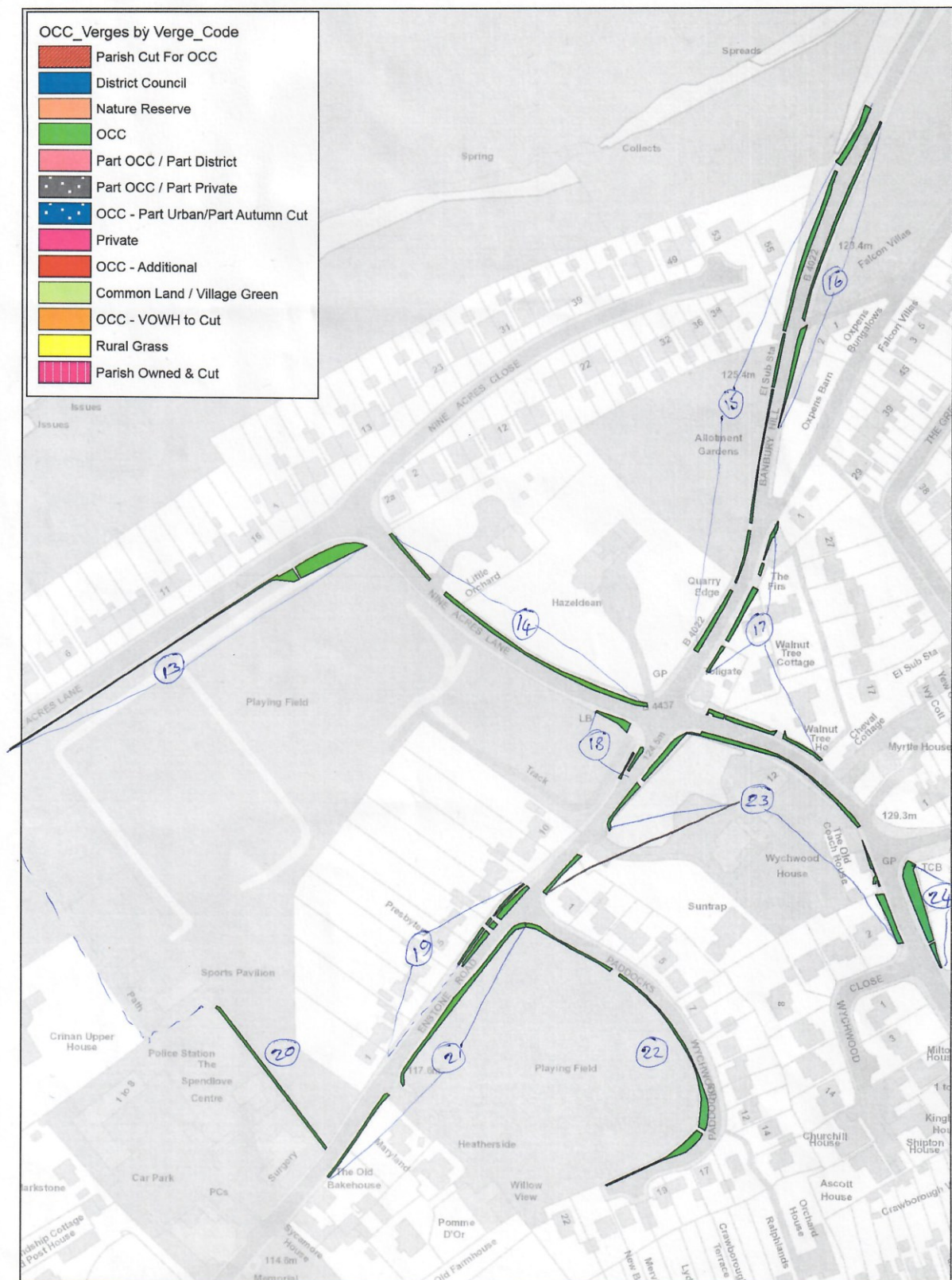
The following maps have been marked up with the numbers that had been used on the previous version of maps from OCC

Charlbury - Grass Cutting Locations - May 2016 - A



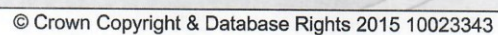
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Charlbury - Grass Cutting Locations - May 2016 - B

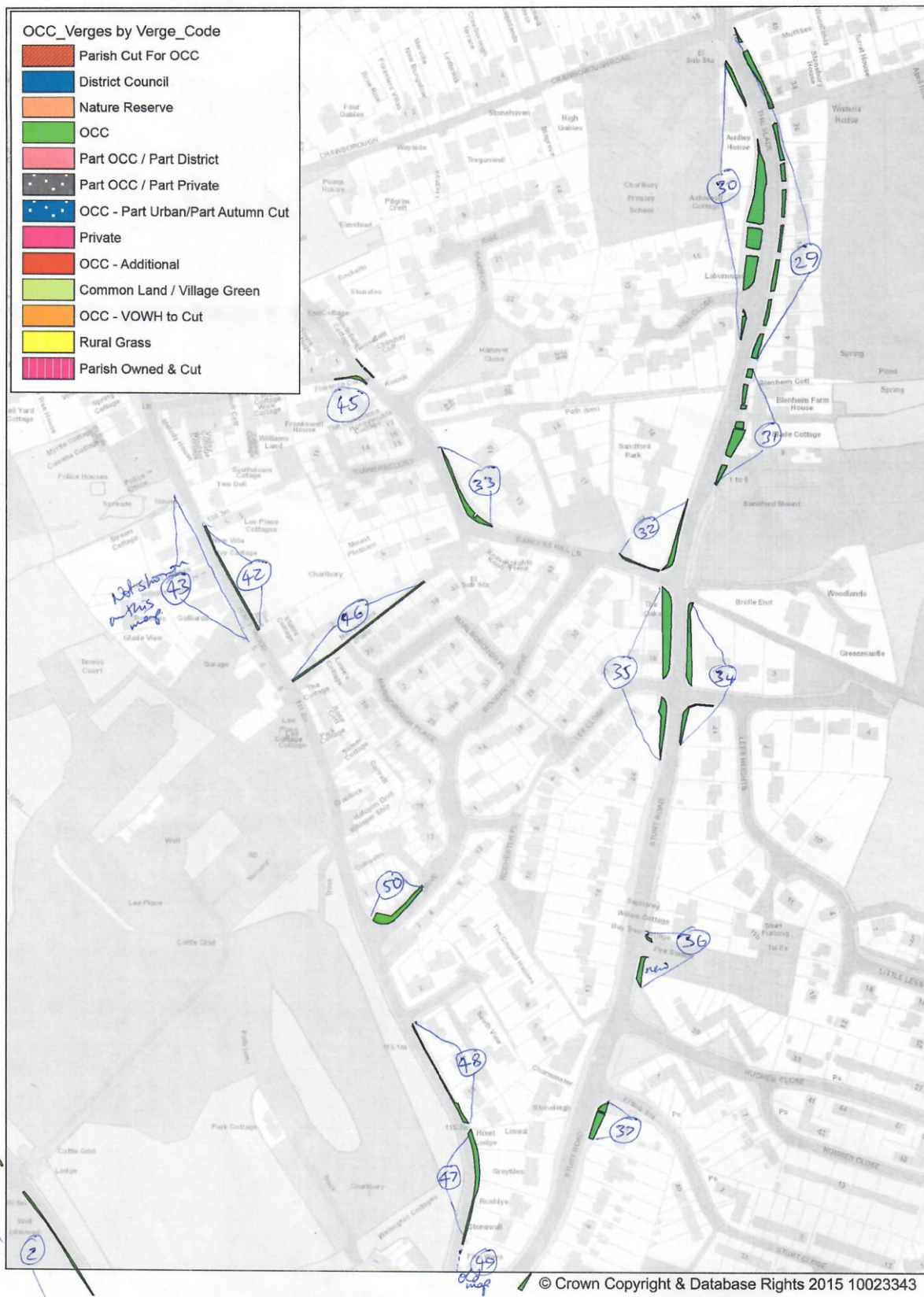


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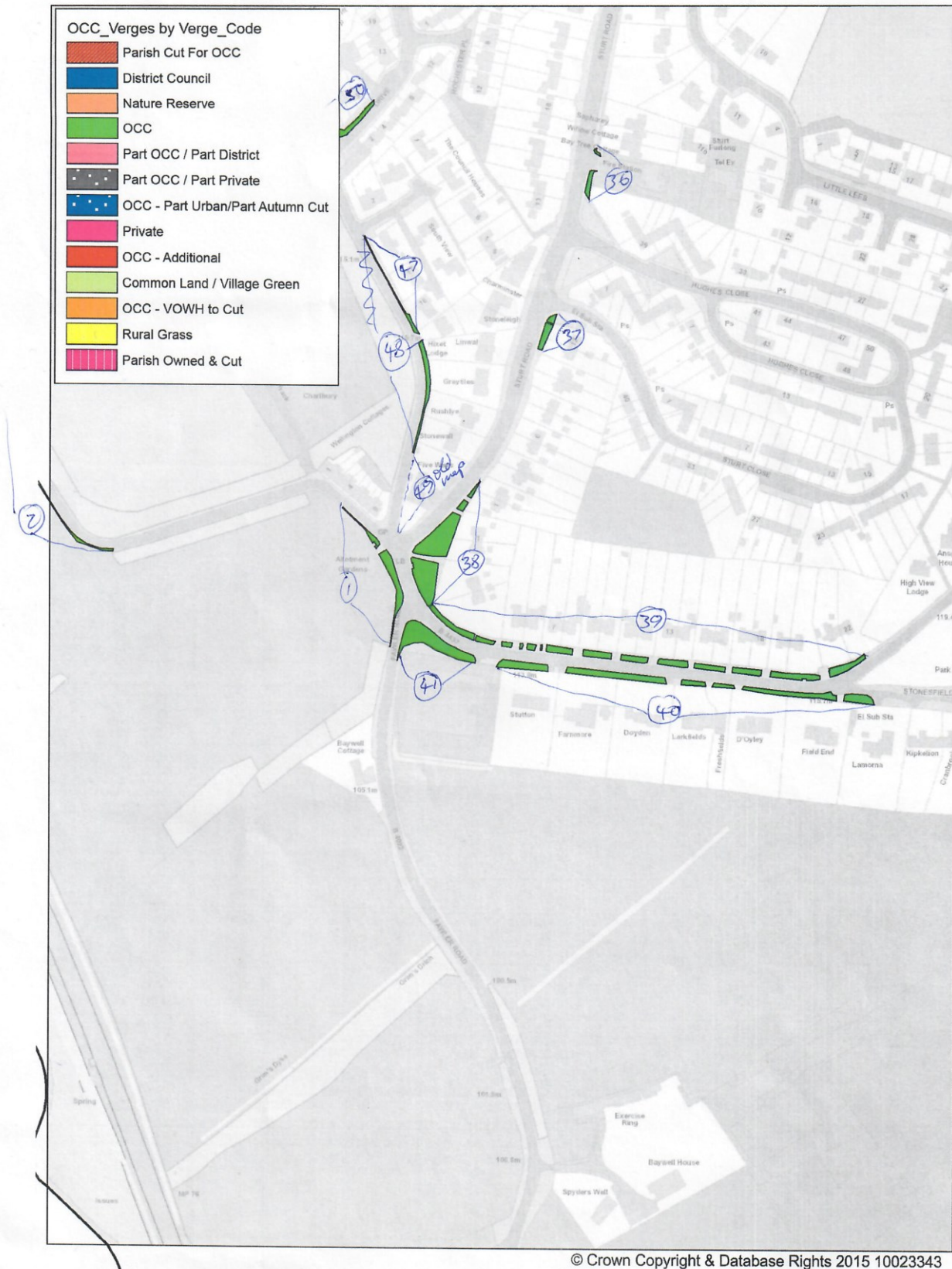
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ons - May 2016 - C & verge so very overgrown
good for invertebrate



Charlbury - Grass Cutting Locations - May 2016 - D



Charlbury - Grass Cutting Locations - May 2016 - E



Charlbury - Grass Cutting Locations - May 2016 - F

