



— Tangled Bank (Ocean Strip) —

Full Council Briefing Note – 28 September 2026

Prepared by Town Clerk/RFO

1. OUTLINE

- 1.1. The Tangled Bank is a proposed community eco-art installation planned for the area in front of the derelict Ocean Hotel in Sandown. The location is significant because Sandown's bid links the site with Charles Darwin's work on *On the Origin of Species*.
- 1.2. The name comes from Darwin's famous image of a "tangled bank": an ecosystem containing many different plants and animals which appear separate but are interconnected. Sandown uses that idea as a metaphor for the town itself — nature, people, history, science and culture all interacting and evolving together.
- 1.3. The installation would be created collaboratively by an eco-artist and local Green Town Volunteers, so it isn't intended simply as a sculpture or monument. It would be a living ecological artwork, simultaneously celebrating Sandown's natural environment and its connection with Darwin.
- 1.4. Darwin ends on an optimistic and almost poetic idea: from very simple beginnings, these processes have produced the enormous diversity and complexity of life on Earth — what he famously describes as "endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful."
- 1.5. This is particularly relevant to Sandown's "Tangled Bank" idea: the metaphor isn't simply about biodiversity. It's about different forms of life being interconnected and continually changing, which can also be extended metaphorically to people, communities and places.
- 1.6. More broadly, it fits Sandown's Town of Culture theme of "Tide Turners." The bid openly acknowledges the town's decline and proposes using culture to help regenerate it. Its programme combines heritage, science, ecology, art and community participation, including a Tree of Life art trail, university fieldwork residencies and a Tide Turner festival organised around Origin, Curiosity, Wonder and Adaptation.

2. LEGISLATION

- 2.1. The council holds the General Power of Competence provided by the Localism Act 2011 (Chapter 1, Sections 1 – 8)¹
- 2.2. Any matters pertaining to Equality and Diversity legislation would be considered during the design of the space.
- 2.3. Any matters pertaining to Crime and Disorder legislation would be considered during the design and operation of the space.

¹ [Localism Act 2011 - Explanatory Notes](#)

- 2.4. The Tangled Bank complements the principles and objectives of biodiversity legislation and local nature recovery.^{2 3}

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.5. There are no direct financial implications to agreeing to the Tangled Bank theme.
- 2.6. Development of the site will still be subject to agreed budgets and procurement practices.

² [Environment Act 2021](#)

³ [ukpga_20060016_en.pdf](#)