

Maintenance Report

January 2017

Grass Cutting

The Maintenance Team continued grass cutting until mid-November. All grass cutting machinery is now being serviced in preparation of the commencement of the 2017 grass cutting season in March.

Seasonal Bedding

The summer bedding was removed late autumn from all flower beds and winter bedding planted at the town entrance planters, Elms Park, the Millennium Circle and Town Hall planters. Resources this season permitted the installation of 32 winter/spring hanging baskets within the town.

Remembrance Sunday

The War Memorial and grounds at Thame and Moreton were tidied for the Remembrance Service. The Maintenance Team undertook numerous operational tasks for the Remembrance Service in Thame including road closures and operating the PA system.

Christmas Event

Numerous operational tasks were undertaken throughout the day including traffic control, road closures, provision of lighting and sound and assisting with the lights switch-on and crowd control.

Christmas Tree

The Maintenance Team assisted the supplier with the installation of the Christmas tree by providing traffic and pedestrian control. Sponsorship banners were hung for the duration of the Christmas period around the wooden barrier fencing. The tree was removed following the lights switch-off and wood chipped and distributed as a weed suppressant to hedge bases at Ham Wood.

Christmas Lights

The Council is within season three of the five year contract with Blachere Illumination for the Christmas Lighting Scheme. The scheme had initial issues following switch-on with problems with timers and infrastructure within lighting columns but these were rectified quickly by the contractor. A number of mounting brackets had also been removed from properties that had undertaken building/decorating works through the year and these were replaced by the contractor. Unfortunately this work is outside of the contract and a cost will be payable by the Council of £323.25 + VAT. Sadly the lights on the Christmas tree were subject to vandalism between 27 – 28 December and required a callout by the contractor to remedy the issue. This work is also outside of the contract and a cost will be payable by the Council of £287.50 + VAT.

All lights have been switched off and the scheme removed to the contractor's storage facility.

Senior Citizens Christmas Tea Party

The Maintenance Team delivered crockery and assisted with setting up and removal of tables and chairs for the event.

Continental Market

The Maintenance Team removed/replaced litter bins and provided road closure signage and barriers for the operation of the French Market.

Cuttle Brook

The ditches and stream have been cleared of debris and continue to be checked. The weather forecast is monitored and the area is checked when flood alerts are issued.

Hedge Cutting, Shrub Bed Maintenance and Tree Work

The programme of hedge cutting and shrub bed maintenance on Council owned land has commenced and will be completed over the winter months. Low tree branches and basal growth will be removed from trees where required.

Upper High Street - Car Park

The Maintenance Team provided assistance with signing and coning for the weekly market during the footway improvement, car park drainage and surface repair work undertaken recently by Oxfordshire County Council.

Play Areas

The annual RoSPA play area safety inspection reports have been undertaken on all play areas including the skate park. The minor defects listed within the reports have been completed by the Maintenance Team. Repairs have been completed by a specialist contractor to fitness equipment at Queen Elizabeth Circle. Repairs to safety surfacing are being sought from specialist contractors for remedial work required at Queen Elizabeth Circle.

Southern Road Recreation Ground

A metal bench has been removed following an arson attack on 30 November. The seat area was badly damaged and unrepairable.

A metal bin has been removed due to vandalism on 30 December. The bin was badly damaged and is unrepairable.

Town Hall

Christmas decorations and lights were installed within the Information Centre and Council Chamber for the festive season.

During the Christmas close down of the building the ground floor carpets were cleaned and public areas deep cleaned.

The boiler for the central heating system has been repaired twice during January with different faults occurring. Portable heating units were used to ensure staff had adequate heating whilst waiting for repairs to be undertaken.

Problems with the Upper Chamber wooden floor have been experienced during mid-January. A section of the centre floor area has lifted. A dehumidifier is operating continuously and presently requires emptying on a daily basis.

Lupton Road Depot

Electrical wire testing was completed at the depot by a specialist electrical contractor on 12 December.

Tree Works

Tree works have been completed by the Council's arboricultural contractor at the following sites:

- Southern Road Recreation Ground – boundary with Coombe Hill Crescent – 7 x Lime trees - crown reduced by 25%.
- Southern Road Recreation Ground – boundary with Moreton Lane – 2 x Lime trees – dead wood removed.

St Mary's Churchyard

Grounds maintenance contractors have now completed the grass cutting for this season. Officers are in the process of re-letting the grass cutting contract for this year.

The Maintenance Team assisted Church volunteers with the annual winter tidy up on 8 December.

Health and Safety Reviews

Annual fire risk assessment reviews have been undertaken at Lupton Road Depot, Southern Road Recreation Ground Changing Rooms and the Town Hall.

The annual COSHH review on substances and materials used by the Council has also been completed.

Winter Preparation

The salt spreader has been serviced and the operational unit has been fitted within the tractor for use if required for gritting. Approximately fourteen tonnes of road salt is still in stock, provided free of charge by Oxfordshire County Council for use if required by the Council. The quantity held in stock has grown over the past few years due to the mild weather conditions.