

Maintenance Report

October 2020

Grass Cutting

The Maintenance Team have regularly cut approximately 102,924m² of grass within the parish boundary. Approx. 49,898m² grass is cut under contract for Oxfordshire County Council and this has been invoiced for £5,135.05 + VAT for the 2020 season.

COVID-19

Following closure of the Town Hall and Depot on 18 March the Maintenance team returned to work at the beginning of April following strict changes in working arrangements to allow safe working during the pandemic. Working arrangements continue to be regularly reviewed in line with the Town Council's COVID Risk Assessment and Disaster Recovery Plan.

Kubota's loan of a RTV to the Town Council during lockdown was gratefully received and allowed the team to continue to work effectively whilst observing COVID guidelines.

During lockdown the Maintenance Team collected food boxes and placed in storage ready for Sharing Life Trust to distribute.

All play areas including the skate park were closed and appropriate notices displayed. On the advice of Thames Valley Police fencing was hired and erected around the skate park. The Maintenance Team continued to litter pick and grass cut all areas during lockdown which was appreciated by those taking their 'once a day exercise' and the team received many compliments.

When lockdown restrictions eased appropriate risk assessments and equipment inspections were undertaken to allow play areas and the skate park to reopen. Appropriate signage is displayed and continues to be renewed as guidelines change.

The Maintenance Team received the Business Champion Award, one of the Thame Lockdown Love Awards, for keeping the town clean and tidy during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cuttle Brook and Ham Wood

Footpaths are cut regularly through the nature reserve and woodland. Within Cuttle Brook the ditches and stream continue to be checked and cleared of debris following any flood alerts issued by the Environment Agency.

The annual grant of £1,500 has been paid to the Cuttle Brook Volunteers (CBV).

A fallen Willow branch which came down across the path near the steps to the Phoenix trail in July was cut and made safe by the Maintenance Team. A further fallen Willow branch, this time across the path near Oxford Road Bridge, was cut and made safe after the unseasonal high winds in August.

Litter Picking

As lockdown eased unfortunately the amount of litter increased to beyond normal expected levels. Litter picking increased to 7 days per week on Southern Road Recreation Ground, Elms Park, QEC, Skate Park and the Memorial Gardens from July. Weekend litter picking will cease at the end of October at these sites.

Summer / Winter Planting

All 48 hanging baskets were installed in the Town Centre. The Millennium Circle, the Town Hall, Elms Park, the entrance planters and the flowerbeds in the Memorial Gardens, North Street, Pickenfield and Pearce Way were planted. Watering was undertaken by the Maintenance Team early in the morning and at regular intervals dependant on the weather conditions.

The summer bedding and hanging baskets have now been removed and replaced with winter bedding and baskets. Hanging baskets will be installed on floral standards once DigiTAL banners have been removed.

Southern Road Recreation Ground

The cesspit serving the changing rooms and Scout Hut has been emptied and three road gullies cleared within the car park.

South Pole Play Area - the old rotator bowl was removed and an inclusive roundabout installed in July. New footrests have been fitted to the double spring perch and new handles to the twin fly play equipment. The curved board to the 3-part play trail was vandalised and has been removed. A replacement has been ordered.

St Mary's Church

The Maintenance Team continue to cut the grass on a regular basis and in line with the specification for maintenance of the churchyard.

Elms Park

Smashed glass bottles have been cleared from the MUGA on a regular basis.

Skate Park

Repairs to cracks in the concrete have been undertaken, along with work to improve drainage problems as highlighted in 2019 RoSPA report.

Play Areas & Skate Park

The annual RoSPA play area and skate park safety inspections have been ordered and will be completed during October.

Barns Centre

Regular grass cut.

Museum

Following the very wet weather experienced over the weekend 3 & 4 October a roof contractor was engaged to clear the roof gulley, the contractor will also repair and replace roof tiles where necessary in the next few weeks.

Town Hall

The Information Centre was decorated by the Maintenance Team whilst the Town Hall was closed due to COVID-19 restrictions.

New hand sanitiser dispensers have been installed in various locations in the Town Hall and Depot. Various pieces of equipment / furniture removed and stored at the depot as part of overall strategy to ensure both premises are workplace compliant with COVID-19 working guidance.

Tree Works

An arboricultural contractor has undertaken the following tree works:

- Hopton Road – Robinia – 25% crown reduction and crown raise.
- QEC – Ash Tree – major limb removed (identified as urgent in tree survey).
- QEC – Sycamore Tree – cracked branch removed.

Street Furniture

The damaged floral standard outside Superdrug / Robert Dyas has been replaced.

OCC have installed temporary cycle racks at various locations within the town centre, funded through the Government's Active Travel initiative.

Maintenance Team removed very offensive graffiti which appeared on a lamp post on Kingsey Road rather than waiting for OCC Highways. Further offensive graffiti was removed from a road sign on Kingsey Road.

Event Support

The Maintenance Team have provided assistance with operations for the following events:

- Tuesday Market (extra equipment to allow the Market to operate safely during pandemic)
- 14 August 2020 - VJ Day Commemoration.

Maintenance Team

Mr Collingwood and Mr Truran successfully completed City & Guilds Level 2, 'Principles of Safe Handling and Application of Pesticides' Course and City & Guilds Level 2, 'Safe Application of Pesticides using Pedestrian Hand Held Equipment' Courses in June.

Health and Safety

All fire extinguishers within the Council's buildings and vehicles have been serviced.

Routine servicing has been undertaken by a specialist contractor of the fire alarm and emergency lighting at the Depot and Town Hall.