

Maintenance Report

July 2021

Grass Cutting

The Maintenance Team are now fully dedicated to regular grass cutting.

The management of identified areas where grass cuts have been reduced to two per annum (an early and late cut) to cultivate greener / wildflower meadow areas has begun. A site visit of all the areas took place in early spring with members of Thame Green Living whose volunteers will monitor the project.

It has become clear a mower with a 'cut and collect' facility will be required to undertake the grass cuts to these areas. A machine has been demonstrated to members of the Maintenance Team, Asset Manager and Deputy Mayor and a proposal to lease a cut and collect mower put to Community, Leisure & Recreation Committee for consideration.

COVID-19

Working arrangements continue to be regularly reviewed in line with the Town Council's COVID Risk Assessment and Disaster Recovery Plan.

Appropriate signage is displayed in play areas and the skate park and continues to be renewed as guidelines change.

Litter Picking

Litter picking of all the main recreation grounds, memorial gardens and play areas is now being undertaken seven days a week with the work undertaken on a rota basis by the Maintenance Team.

Cuttle Brook

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 that are issued by the Environment Agency.

The annual grant of £1,500 is due to be paid shortly to the Cuttle Brook Volunteers (CBV).

Ham Wood

The Maintenance Team have cleared what appeared to be a camp on a couple of occasions and the site is being monitored regularly.

Summer Bedding

46 hanging baskets have been planted and reinstalled 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 have also been planted. Watering is undertaken by the Maintenance Team early morning and at regular intervals dependant on weather conditions.

Town Hall

One of two annual visits to service the automatic door on the main entrance to Information Centre took place in April.

Southern Road Recreation Ground (SRRG)

SRRG and the play area was one of a number of locations across the district chosen by Officers at South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) to run a Litter Bug Detective trail during May half term week.

The project consisted of a trail of A3 laminated posters featuring waste and litter-themed questions with the answers as an anagram. Posters were located close to or next to litter bins due to the anti-litter nature of the trail. Primary school aged children were encouraged to complete the questions and send their answers to SODC to gain a certificate. SODC reported the event had been pretty successful and will roll it out to other parishes in the Summer holidays.

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

The football pitch has been regularly hired by a local youth football team who played their last game at the beginning of June (the season being extended due to COVID restrictions). Minor maintenance work to the goal areas and goalposts will take place before the new football season begins. The team have indicated a wish to hire the pitch for the new season.

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. The Asset Manager and Maintenance Supervisor accompanied a member of St Mary's PCC and a tree specialist who will survey all the trees in the churchyard and produce a report.

Play Areas & Skate Park

The climbing board in the small play area in Queen Elizabeth Circle has been replaced. Replacement parts for the gyrospral in SRRG play area have been received and it is hoped to have it back up and running shortly.

Museum

A contractor conducted a site visit to assess the roof in March and a specialist lead contractor in April. Further quotations for the lead / zinc work are being progressed and a quotation for the whole project is expected shortly.

Memorial Gardens

The refurbishment of the ponds and the fountain took place in early May, all works within the agreed budget. The area continues to be a popular spot for residents, workers and visitors to the town.

Triangle (nr sewage works)

Paths continue to be cut through the area and the remainder left to 'wild' as part of the greening project. The gate nearest the skate park has been opened to provide walkers with a safer route to and from Lea Park. Part of the area, nearest the boundary of the sewage works is being used as a composting area. The arisings from the late cut of all the greening areas will be composted and the compost produced used on planting areas through the parish.

Bus Shelter – Oxford Road

A damaged polycarbonate panel has been replaced.

Tree Works

- Work to remove the oak tree in the corner of Elms Park close to John Hampden school and the footpath linking Elms Road and Chowns Close took place on 10 May 2021. A dead limb overhanging the path at the rear of the Park was removed.
- Emergency work to fell a Silver Birch in Brookside following vandalism / criminal damage to the trunk making it safe. A dead Hawthorn tree next to the Silver Birch was removed.
- Reduction work to a beech tree overhanging the boundary of Queen Elizabeth Circle and Roundhead Drive.

Event Support

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

- Tuesday Market (extra equipment to allow the Market to operate safely during the pandemic).

Health & Safety

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

The bi-annual Legionella Risk Assessment & Water Hygiene Survey was carried out in April. at the Town Hall and Depot. The report highlighted areas of concern and remedial action is being taken.