

Community, Leisure & Recreation Committee

Title: Report - External Organisations**Date:** 20 July 2021**a) Cuttle Brook Management Committee (Cllr Jones)**

Work by volunteers has recommenced since the easing of restrictions. Many paths are still muddy and over-wide due to over-use during the 2 lockdowns.

The council officers and some councillors made a site visit on 30 June 2021 where they received an update on an overview of the state of the reserve. Trees in Cox's Wood and near the rope swing have been marked for felling due to disease once a felling licence has been approved. The brook banks are continuing to be eroded due to dogs entering and exiting the stream. The flower meadows seem to be less 'flowery' due to an increase in the growth of grasses due to a wet spring. The pond, however, has completely recovered from its near drainage 5 years ago due to water now being fed in from natural springs coming from under Coombe Hill. It is also home to a pair of nesting moorhens and to a Cetti's warbler. The recently built fish refuges have increased the presence of small fry in the river and introduction of gravel near the crossing of the Phoenix Trail has had a similar effect on stocks of invertebrates. The presence of the otters seems to have had caused a welcome reduction of American crayfish. The Watkin's Bridge has been re-decked using recyclable and long lasting planking.

b) Friends of Elms Park (Cllr Champken-Woods)

Not much to report Thame Concert Band will be playing in the Park on the 1st of August. Negotiations with Sealed Knot are ongoing for 2022.

Twelfth Night touring Thame and Henley cricket clubs –

https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/local_offers/food_drink_offers/19421292.twelfth-night-touring-thame-henley-cricket-clubs/

c) Thame Carnival Committee (Cllr Emery)

Subject to the pandemic the next carnival is planned for 2022. The last meeting was held on the 4th February 2020. The theme in 2021 was "Heart of Thame".

Sue Martin-Downhill after running the Carnival events for the previous five years resigned her role. We are currently without a Carnival Chairperson.

We still have a group of individuals who are loyal and prepared to help at future events. We will be seeking a new Chairperson and additional volunteers to join the committee.

The Queens Platinum Jubilee will take place in 2022.

d) Thame Football Partnership (TFP) (Cllr Dyer)

A somewhat longer report than usual, but all of it good news. Thame Football Partnership is thriving on every front.

Membership: The club now has 590 members, most of them playing or coaching the game, and has a total of 43 teams ranging from under 6's through to over 50's and including eight girl's teams and one ladies team.

Financial: The club has never been in a better position financially. The surplus for the 2019/20 financial year was £ 66,000 (three times budget) despite the Covid lockdown from mid-March onwards, and the 2020/21 financial year has been even better despite very few matches and limited trading opportunities. Both income and expenditure were significantly down against budget but Covid support grants and extension of the Travelodge contract have more than compensated and a surplus of £ 90,000 is currently predicted.

Investment: In addition to the AGP (funded by S106, Football Foundation grant, and a contribution from TFP) the club have invested in facilities including new stands for the main pitch and pitch 4, floodlights on pitch 4, and a player tunnel. They have also upgraded lighting in the car park, replaced the barrier around the main pitch, budgeted for a new pathway around pitch 4, and implemented further coaching and development infrastructure.

AGP: The recently commissioned AGP is filling up, with regular hires from Princes Risborough, Long Crendon and Chinnor, and TFP have been hosting Friday night football for juniors at just £ 1.00. AGP highlights have included an adult six-a-side tournament attended by 24 teams, and a mini junior festival for 96 teams last weekend.

One Club: Thame Football Partnership was initially a joint venture between Thame United and Thame Boys and it had always been an ambition to bring the two together under a single identity, but this was constantly frustrated by internal politics, so the many teams have been playing under different names (Thame United, Thame Boys, Thame Rangers, Thame Vets, Thame Ladies, and more), each with their own playing strip and sponsorship. Following determined negotiations it was finally agreed unanimously at the AGM in May that all of the teams will now play under the Thame United name and will all wear the same red and black strip. It is hoped that this should lead to a one club culture, a higher profile, increased commercial and sponsorship opportunities, and a clear pathway for players to progress through the team structure (and beyond). This is seen as a major breakthrough and a coming of age for Thame Football Partnership.

League: Thame United first team play in Southern League Division One Central, which is at Step 4 in the National League structure and ranks them amongst the top 400 football clubs in England.

Football: In 2020/21 the first team were only able to play seven league games, plus early rounds of the FA Cup and FA Trophy, due to Covid, but are back in training and looking forward to the new season with confidence. A programme of pre-season games through July and early August includes friendlies against Oxford United on Tuesday 3rd August and AFC Rushden & Diamonds on Saturday 7th August.

e) Twinning Association (Cllr Emery)

Despite all the reciprocal visits being cancelled we ran many events on zoom including quiz nights, French films, virtual twinning week-end; the highlight being a “Meet and Greet” outside the Town Hall hosted by the Mayor, Paul Cowell.

We are financially solvent and have the ability to fund the French visit in May 2022.

f) Thame Good Neighbour Scheme (Cllr Midwinter)

We have had 46 job requests between the beginning of April and end of June, mostly for prescription collection and shopping. We are now starting to get requests for transport to hospital/GP/dentist appointments we have so far been able to fulfil. We had a delivery of free PPE for the TGNS (hand sanitiser, wipes, plastic car seat covers, plastic aprons and gloves) which are available for any volunteer to collect from the Town Hall.

g) Thame Town Cricket Club (Cllr Champken-Woods)

Not much new news really - we are on and off with the cricket and weather - next significant Cricket event is the Oxfordshire v Berkshire match on Sunday 15th -17th August. Thanks to Thame Wombles for putting a bin by the Waitrose roundabout.

h) Chinnor RFC (Cllr Bretherton)

Improvements are being made to the facilities and the ground. Work will start soon on the borehole project which will enable watering of more pitches and thus more rugby activity.

Whilst fitness and skill training can take place, they are still waiting information from the RFU as to when Rugby may restart.

i) Music in the Park (Cllr Jones)

They are planning to keep the event in the public eye through a presence at other festivals (banners, videos) if they take place. Other than that, nothing to report as the last chance of doing something this summer, with a stage at the Thame Town Music Festival, got scuppered.

j) Thame Sinaia Friendship Association (Cllr Bretherton)

The group continue to meet virtually for information and friendship often with members from Sinaia joining in.

Meetings are held monthly. There are no visits either way planned for the foreseeable future.

k) Thame Museum Trust (Cllrs Cowell & Emery)

The Museum reopened on Saturday 22nd May, some 60 people visited on the first day. Covid precautions were in place with the library closed and a one-way system in operation.

An Exhibition of Two Birds is the focus, with references to a local delicacy the Thame Tart a sophisticated classic jam tart recipe invented by John Fothergill owner of The Spreadeagle Hotel in central Thame in the 1930s

Due to ongoing government restrictions imposed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic the AGM was carried out using online remote Zoom meeting. Restrictions had been imposed during the year due to COVID-19 creating a difficult situation, and restricting the Museum opening to only 28 days during the year. Even so, the average daily attendance remained above 20, similar to the period prior to COVID-19. As a result of the limited opening time the sales revenue had been hit, but the Museum benefited from grants allowing the overall financial situation to be in a stronger financial position at the end of the year. They received a substantial grant from the government that has enabled them to survive. As the revised budget was set this will enable the Museum to balance revenue and expenditure.

The essential repairs on the roof are still ongoing.

The future for the museum is bright with a strong team.

l) Thame Town Music Festival (Cllr Wyse)

TTMF21 has unfortunately had to be cancelled again this year due to the pandemic.

At the present time the Glenn Miller Concert will still be taking place on 17th September at St Mary's.

m) Thame Shed (Cllr Wyse)

Preparation planning and work is ongoing. Agreement is still needed with the Agricultural Association to start clearing out the barn to allow alterations to take place.

n) Thame Sports Club (Cllr Jones)

It is slowly getting back to normal and the club house is open with social distancing strategies in place. They hope to have external groups back in the clubhouse again soon.