

Environment Committee Clerk's Report

4th January 2021

MAINTENANCE OF VILLAGE ASSETS AND AMENITIES

Street Lights – repairs up to date.

General Grounds Maintenance – winter tidying work is in progress.

Churchyard – ivy has now been removed from the walls at the front. The wall at the rear of the Churchyard has partially collapsed into Mr. Bucknell's field. This isn't causing a problem at the moment but an assessment will be needed and quotes obtained as this wall appeared to be in a reasonable condition following repairs carried out prior to hand over to HPC, so work has not been anticipated. The work to the walls will be prioritised in the coming months.

Tree work – we are still waiting for revised quotes for the leylandii hedge at Sheerstock, and some other work. It may be necessary to obtain additional quotes to get the work done before nesting season.

Pond Maintenance

The logistics of installing an aeration fountain and bricks at Banks Pond are more complicated than originally envisioned and estimated costs are increasing, as well as time needed to ensure everything is in place as specified. The power supply requires additional work that isn't included in the UKPN quote, the purchase and installation of a specified box, and cabling to be carried out by another electrician, as well as installation of a meter by an energy supplier. Once all the details are in place the committee will need to reconsider the revised cost.

The recommendation to plan for dredging and relining of Church End Pond within the next four years, at considerable cost, will also have to be considered by the Council.

PLAY AREAS

All playgrounds have been categorised as low risk and all faults are showing as low risk. Aspire have been asked to quote for a long list of minor repairs needed, there has been a discussion about what if any, of these should be included within the contract.

In order to make quicker progress with the Woodways Improvement project, I suggest a small working group is set up to make design decisions.

CLIMATE EMERGENCY

reLeaf Proposal:

We are pleased that the reaction to the proposals for tree planting various Sheerstock areas was so positive. We would like to make progress with planting these after Christmas, and before March.

1. We made suggestions of potential trees for each of the Sheerstock areas - as there was no feedback on the specific trees HPC prefer, can we assume that any of those we listed would be acceptable? I have attached the proposals again just for ease of reference.

2. In the Sheerstock play area there was no intention to plant amongst the play equipment but to add to the existing trees on the ridge in the middle.
3. We intend to promote the tree planting events to houses near each area by delivering an invitation and also to anyone that's interested by advertising online. We will have to get people to book for these and will follow whatever Covid rules are in place at the time.
4. We also hope to get volunteer tree waterers to look after a tree for its first 2 years.

See separate maps.

Solar Streets Project

This is an initiative that we became aware of via the Thame Green Living Plan, and after contacting the company it has been agreed that the project could be extended to include Haddenham. A zoom presentation has been arranged by ZCH for 21st January to publicise in Haddenham. See separate flyer used to publicise in Thame as an example and take a look at the website for more details: <https://www.iddea.co.uk/what-is-solar-streets/>
Diccon Proctor will attend the meeting and explain more about the project.

PARKING RESTRICTIONS

See separate report

ACTIVE TRAVEL

Permissive Footpaths

Brian Bowman has taken over the role of footpath inspections on behalf of the Ramblers and has made the following requests for funding repairs and improved signage to permissive paths in the village.

The following repairs to be carried out by Bill Piers and his team on a voluntary basis:

1. Where PP alongside Station Road reaches Miller's Way. The fence has deliberately been broken down. Cyclists/horse riders seeking access might be the cause?
2. The gate from the PP alongside the railway line from Station Road to Thame Road at the Station end needs attention.
3. The gates on the airfield where the PP crosses Pegasus Way also require attention.

Bill is costing the materials to carry out the repairs – suggest we agree a budget

The PC has also been asked if Ben Phillips ever entered into a Permissive Path Agreement for the much used footpath from Station Road to Thame Road alongside the railway line and to consider entering into an agreement with him if not.

Temporary Cycle Lane Thame Road

A second meeting has been held with HPC, HaddSWCG and BC representatives to discuss the temporary cycle path. The number of complaints has reduced since it was first installed and it is felt that drivers are becoming more used to it. The 20mph speed limit is the most popular thing about it, and there are still concerns about safety. There was a consensus that as a standalone initiative this did little to improve things and that the wider assessment of driving, walking and cycling routes through village that will form the Streetscape Project will be more beneficial. The trial runs until February and

another meeting will be held before the end of the trial to consider if with improvements the cycle lane, or some aspects of it, can become permanent.