

Facilities Committee Clerk's Report

June 2021

Street Lights

Eldridges continues with their monthly repairs.

We continue the update of the Inventory with six replacement lanterns ordered and a planned replacement of one column, as recommended by Eldridges, with the aim of a gradual replacement of all the old inefficient lamps, and if necessary the columns, to achieve 100% low energy output.

Benches

A dilapidated bench at Church End scheduled to be removed and family will be replacing with a new bench and plaque, following the bench policy guidelines.

Dog bins

We have entered the summer schedule of two collections per week, Tuesday and Thursday.

- 2 new dog bins have been installed at Green Lane and on Stanbridge Road / Glebe footpath junction. They are already being well used and have been added to the emptying schedule.
- The Tibbs Road recreation ground currently has 2 dog bins which have been added to the emptying schedule. A further bin has been removed and stored waiting reinstalling once the access for council collection is in place.
- We are also installing a replacement dog bin that disappeared from Pegasus Way.

St Mary's Churchyard

The grounds maintenance was put out to tender and has been awarded to the current contractor.

The Council is working with the Conservation architect to get the necessary engineer assessments, specialists and diocese permissions to proceed with the repairs and rebuilding of the Witchert walls at the rear of the churchyard.

The remaining section of Witchert wall at the rear of the Churchyard on the boundary has partially collapsed into Mr. Bucknell's field. The rest of the wall was partially replaced in the 1970's with breeze blocks and a large access gate by the Bucknells. The recommendation is to replace this whole boundary with a one-metre-high Witchert style wall and to repair and edge the remaining Witchert wall section that abuts the farm outbuilding. The surplus Witchert will then be collected and stored for use on the school entrance Witchert wall which will be built traditionally to a recommended lower height.

The work to the walls will be prioritised in the coming months.

Church End Green

After a recent meeting with TFB the council awaits a quote for the installation of the Granite Sets to edge the village green.

Woodways Pitch Maintenance

Some seasonal maintenance has been carried out on the football pitches in preparation for the football season.

Discussions with the Playing Field Management committee are ongoing to finalise rental agreements and terms of use for the playing fields.

Tree work

The work on Sheerstock footpath began on the 31st March.

Three sections of the footpath were scheduled.

The first section of H4 (nearest Thame Road) was reduced, crowned and side backed, the second section adjacent to the open amenity land was cut down followed by stump grinding and clearing ground ready for new planting in the autumn. The third section is the area behind Haddenham Motorist Centre, which was minimally reduced and side backed. We have requested a more comprehensive continuation of this work.

We wait quotes for further work on the remaining sections.

Tree work has been carried out on two trees on the allotment site behind 63 Wyckham Gate. Also two trees on Sheerstock recreation ground to the rear of 132 Sheerstock.

Planned Tree Work

Old Mill Close- Mixed Veteran hedge- to reduce to approx. 6ft, reduce faces on both sides to grass line. Remove dead items leaving all healthy trees.

Allotments-Prunus- reduce group of trees by 30% to contain and allow more compact crowns. Also to reduce large overhanging prunus by 20% removing apical and lateral growth.

H2 Section of Sheerstock Footpath- To reduce Leylandii to 18ft and side back on the footpath, reduce face as much as possible on the property side while retaining the green.

The owner of Waterslade House has told the PC that he plans to carry out some tree work on his side of the boundary, this may have a significant impact on the overgrown trees if he cuts back to the boundary as he has a right to do. We still wait any action on his part.

Pond Maintenance

- The Committee approved the cost of installing the fountain at Banks Parade based on the quote from Complete Aquatics and UKPN £5,300. After further research the additional costs for purchasing a housing cabinet, labour to install, installing an electrical meter and employing an electrician to install a consumer box would increase the overall cost to at least £7,500. Plus, the regular maintenance cost that would still be required.
Before embarking on this costly venture, we put out an invite to tender for a regular maintenance contract for all three ponds as a possible alternative to solve the ongoing problems.

- The tender process proved to be unsuccessful as none of the companies that received our specification and met with us to view the ponds, believed the budget to be sufficient to provide a regular maintenance service.
- One of the Pond specialists recommends that we keep the minor pond work within our grounds work contract. (clearing the outlets, removing blanket weed with nets etc.). Then call in the Pond specialists maybe once or twice a year, depending on conditions, to test and clear excess debris and vegetation.
- An inspection and assessment of the Church End Pond silt resulted in some ball park figures for desilting works. In summary to remove 1ft of silt over the whole area of the pond would be in the region of £7,565 plus vat, this figure is proportionate to the amount of silt removed, so to remove 2ft the cost would be approx. double etc. This cost only relates to the silt removal, the costs increase considerable in order to remove the silt from the site and disposal. If the silt is analysed and proves to be high in nitrates and low in pollutants it could be deposited on local farmland to the benefit of the land, but If the silt is low quality it will have to be removed to land fill and that would be very expensive, price would rise to a possible £21,000.
- We are arranging silt testing to get a true picture of the disposal costs.
- It is common practise to remove silt in phases a year at a time with a negligible impact on the wildlife and a sensible way to manage the costs. We await a full assessment of the total depth of the silt.

Ground Maintenance Contract

In the process of appointing the new contractor issues arose which be reported confidentially prior to a final decision being made. It has been agreed that Aspire will continue until 30th June to allow time to resolve matters.

Play Areas

Quarterly inspections took place in March. Unfortunately, several pieces of equipment at the Aspen Park playground, which we took over from Cala earlier this year, were found to have high-risk faults and have been closed whilst repairs are arranged. Several medium-risk faults were also found, for which repairs have also been arranged. It was disappointing to discover such a large number of faults with the playground so soon after taking it over but Cala has agreed to cover the cost of the repairs to the medium and high-risk faults. There has been a delay in receiving the parts needed to carry out the work required with the parts that Cala ordered taking many weeks to arrive. Sadly, the parts Cala ordered were not sufficient for the repairs needed and we await a delivery date for the second delivery of parts as ordered by the playground repairs company who will carry out the work.

A new large litter bin has been ordered for installation in the Aspen Park playground to help deal with the volume of litter accumulating in the area.

Woodways Refurbishment

The tender for the refurbishment was awarded to Wickstead at the meeting of the Full Council on 26th April. Work was due to begin later this month, however, due to delays

affecting the construction industry, it is now likely that work will not begin until later in the Summer. A site visit has been arranged for 9th June, after which we will have more information on the revised timetable for the works.

Sheerstock Recreation Ground Path

After receiving two reports of people tripping and falling on the uneven concrete path that runs through the Sheerstock recreation area, we have received a quote on the options for repair. Tree root are lifting sections of the path. We are also getting some comparative quotes before presenting to the committee for consideration.

Tree planting

A socially distanced meeting was held with ReLeaf volunteers following the clearance at Woodways and consultation of the sports clubs with a view to autumn planting.

This was to assess the tree planting required and a plan for providing areas of interest and contemplation on the edge of the playing fields.

Recommendations for species of trees were agreed and ReLeaf are applying for funding from Buckinghamshire Council for the saplings

The proposals for tree planting on the Sheerstock footpath to replace the felled conifers was discussed and ReLeaf will research the most suitable trees to plant in the Autumn.

A meeting was held to discuss replanting the cleared area beside Rudd's Pond. Someone has already planted a crab apple tree without discussion with the PC, this will be retained and small planting will occur with the required permission of the resident who owns the party fence and wall. Wild flower and grass seeding has also been discussed with Aspire.

Temporary Cycle Lane Thame Road

The Pilot scheme is still in place as is the 20 miles per hour speed limit. The scheme remains under review with the next meeting scheduled for 9th June.

Litter Picking

The Parish Council continues to support any volunteers who wish to litter pick by providing litter pickers, High Vis waistcoats, bin bags and arranging for the disposal of the collected litter. The Parish Council will provide and fund additional equipment as required.

Woodways Playing Field Management

The management agreements for the pavilion and playing field have now ended so some informal discussions have been arranged by the Clerk and Mr Truesdale, to sound out the users on their views about future arrangements.

We met with Ian Bamford to discuss the future of the Sports and Social Club. The club has been closed during the majority of the last year due to the pandemic and there is a significant cost associated with restocking to reopen. Serious consideration has been given to the viability of the club as numbers using the facility have been falling even before the pandemic. We reassured Ian that there are no plans to carry out major work to the pavilion in the next 5

years or so as other projects are higher priority, so if the Social Club wishes to continue it could do so under a new arrangement for a reasonable period of time. Ian has subsequently confirmed that the SSC has met and agreed to start up again when the European Football tournament is on to attract people back in.

We also met with Rod Aitken to discuss the sports pavilion area and pitches. Rod and Ian were both supportive of the Parish Council taking over the day to day management of the building and the finances and setting up a user group committee under the PC's Facilities Committee to ensure the pavilion users are involved in the running.

Recommendations:

- To hold a meeting of the old Playing Field Management Committee to wind it up and then
- hold a meeting of the new Playing Fields Committee as soon as possible to agree on a new arrangement.
- To co-opt the sports clubs' representatives to the new committee.
- To discuss a new occupational arrangement to run the Sports and Social Club

Tibbs Road Pitches

A draft hiring agreement for HYFC has been prepared and reviewed by a solicitor. We have met with Andy Roff the Chairman and discussed the way he uses the pitches at the moment and how he plans to in the future. CALA have not charged HYFC for the use of the pitches but HPC will have to make some charge to contribute towards the maintenance costs. HYFC are not putting up their membership fees this year due to loss of match playing time during the pandemic, but can afford to pay something for the Tibbs Road pitches and have factored this in. HYFC use 2 senior and 2 9 aside pitches at Tibbs Road, 5 mini pitches at Woodways and also used Cuddington pitch. They also prefer to use the pavilion at Cuddington for events as it is easier to use (previous conflicts with use of the social club side at Woodways at the same time).

Allotments Lease

The Parochial Charities did not want to sign the new lease that included the dispute resolution clauses for the rent reviews, with amendments suggested by the Parish Council. Alan Rose has now resigned as Chairman of the Parochial Charities Trustees so no further progress has been made. The remaining trustees, two of whom are Parish Councillors would like to work with the charity commission to modernise the charities. Therefore, the proposal is that no new lease is signed until the review of the charities themselves has completed and the existing lease rolls over.