



HADDENHAM Parish Council

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Facilities Committee Clerk's Report 8th August 2022

Agenda Items

Events

The Summerfest event held at the Airfield was very successful and it is hoped to be able to hold it there again next year. Concerns raised in advance by residents were addressed. One complaint about noise was received from a resident on Dollicott.

The Beerfestival Committee are starting to plan for Winterfest and are considering a different approach involving more community organisations and holding the event at Church End. Something that expands on the small event held in conjunction with the Church last year during the pandemic. A road closure would be needed which could be arranged by HPC in the same way the Fete one is arranged. Would the PC be willing to allow this to go ahead? Saturday 10th December is the proposed date.

Grounds Maintenance

See monthly and quarterly reports from Aspire and minutes of the quarterly contract review meeting.

The results and feedback from the Best Kept Village have been circulated.

Street Lights

The Bi annual survey is in progress, conducted by Eldridges. This has started to uncover quite a few columns and or lanterns that are old and not fit for purpose. We are currently on a programme to replace these columns and lanterns. We have replaced nine of the columns to date and will be arranging the connection jointing with our new service provider. There are also another seven awaiting replacement.

So far we have also a list of eleven faulty connections in columns that require UKPN to attend and fix. This is quite time consuming to upload onto the new UKPN online reporting form.

Ponds

Due to the very dry and hot conditions the ponds at Rudds and Banks Parade have been very depleted. Residents raised concerns on the condition and growth of algae and their concern for the ducks.

The ponds are naturally fed from the run-off from the surrounding fields and roads.

When tested in the past they have shown a high chlorine level so topping up with chlorinated mains water will make this worse. There is no demonstrable benefit to local wild life we are aware of, and a detrimental impact on the quality of the water.

The many hundreds of pounds that unauthorised topping up has cost the Parish in the past and also the current water shortages mean this is not an option.

In the Autumn we have the annual maintenance and the ponds are cleared of excess foliage, algae and debris, this is scheduled for early September and is the best time for the wildlife. The quote for this work is £2,500.

Once the average rainfall resumes the pond volumes will return to normal and the algae will be naturally removed in the water flow.

Church End pond

Although we have received the commissioned laboratory results on the silt and the approximated volumes of water and silt that would need to be removed, as the silt has a high volume of nitrates it would be very cost effective to remove and deposit on local land. We await the result of these discussions before we can move forward with putting the contract out to tender.

Trees

The extreme heat and dry weather has had a negative impact on our recently planted trees at Woodways and Sheerstock footpath. Even with daily watering during the extreme heat and watering four times a week since, they are not looking as healthy as we would like. While we persevere we haven't lost any yet and all will recover when we get some proper rain.

We await a quote for the next section of Sheerstock footpath Leylandii to be removed and to stump grind and then we can replace with native trees and hedges.

The tree survey has been carried out of all 306 trees on PC owned land. An 80-page report has been received. Work that now needs to be carried out to 24 of the trees has been summarised and circulated and will be scheduled to be carried out, the majority is required within 12 months. Work to another 102 trees is recommended if the budget allows and will be reviewed.

Play Areas

Inspections and maintenance

One high-risk fault was reported at Tibbs Road and several medium-risk faults were found across the playgrounds, with the majority found at Woodways. Wicksteed have been approached regarding the faults at Woodways as it is disappointing to see so many in a playground less than a year old. Quotes are being obtained for the other repairs.

Woodways New Equipment

The installation of the new equipment and the standard of the equipment has been really disappointing. We have spoken with the Managing Director and Operations Director of Wicksteed to repair the faults which have been identified.

The wet pour edging needed redoing and we are having a further repair to the wet pour under the swing.

Most concerning is 90% of the stainless feet of the wooden equipment has rusted. Wicksteed has sent out a representative and they have agreed that all the wooden equipment needs to be lifted out, the stainless steel feet treated and then the equipment put back in. This is going to be major operation, which at some point will need the playground to be closed. We are waiting for a date to undertake this work after the school holidays.

Wicksteed have also agreed to replace the section of metal work by the slide (on the accessible multiplay unit) which is rusting.

The mound has eroded in an area where children are using it as a cut through from the slide to other equipment. As it has been very dry and the grass just hasn't been able to regenerate and cope with amount of 'traffic' using this section. The area has eroded to such an extent that children are actively digging there and playing in it. We now feel this section needs to be removed. We are waiting on quotes for this to be done.

Unfortunately, this playground seems to have one problem after another and we have confirmed the guarantees and warranty's as sadly we suspect there will be future issues.

Redrow Playground (Land West of Churchway)

Redrow homes submitted plans for their provision of a new NEAP in the new development. From looking at the plans, the play equipment was a little unimaginative and didn't have items for wheelchairs or other disabilities. It also transpired the play equipment company selected didn't, themselves, have API status which is a requirement from Bucks Council.

We made contact with Redrow and had a productive meeting with the Senior Planning Manager who was receptive to using our preferred playground provider and to creating a better more accessible play facility. We have agreed to have further discussions on a revised scheme in September.

CCTV

Earlier this year a quote was received from Crimewave Security Consultancy to provide CCTV monitoring and reporting service at Banks Park following two arson incidents at the Scout and Guide Centre. At the time there had been a few reports of other anti-social behaviour in the village but we weren't sure the cost was justified. In the last few weeks since the Sports and Social Club at Woodways was re-launched as The Whistler the PC has received complaints of unacceptable noise as drinkers are leaving the club, and the committee have said they are considering putting up a camera. There has been graffiti at the orchard and vandalism of play equipment by attempting to set fire to it at Woodways. The PC may want to consider signing up for a year to the Crimewave Service to find out if it can be of help reducing these issues. There is currently no budget for CCTV so a review of other budgets would be needed to find the money and perhaps the cost could be shared.

Sports Facilities

Woodways Pavilion

The SSC club has now been rebranded and re-launched as The Whistler. The exterior of the SSC side of the Pavilion has been re-painted and the inside has been refurbished and re-decorated. A new patio area has been approved and is being installed by side double doors which opens up onto the recreation ground.

The toilets in the Pavilion are causing concern. There seems to be a water leak and a problem with water pressure which is resulting in blocked toilets.

The SSC would like to continue redecorating the interior by painting the function room and have also suggested continuing with the wood panelling along the kitchen wall to match in with the bar, as well as a lowered ceiling and new lighting. A quote has been provided by Decorare and another one is being obtained for comparison. The function room definitely needs painting but a view will be needed on the extras.

Tibbs Road Pavilion

The Pavilion build is progressing with the aim to being fully water tight by the end of the month. Internal fixtures, colour schemes have been decided and we have been in meetings with an AV firm to ensure the function room is equipped adequately. The Pavilion is due to be finished in November and we continue to have monthly meetings to monitor progress and the budget!

Community Orchard

The opening ceremony for the path improvements was held on Saturday 9th July and was attended by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire, Countess Lady Howe. Improvements include a new accessible gate at the Mallard Croft entrance, hard surface paths to allow access in all weather, and raised beds to form a sensory garden that can be maintained by those with reduced mobility. After feedback from users some improvements are in progress, reducing the height of the edging, expanding the section of path at the cross section to allow a better turning area for wheelchairs and scooters and removing edging from in front of the two benches. Due to the extreme hot weather the aggregate forming the path has not bonded as it should, leaving a pebbly surface that is difficult to navigate if in a wheelchair. We are now looking at bonding solutions that will solve this issue. While there has unfortunately already been an incident of vandalism on the swing gate at Mallards Croft this has now been repaired.

Allotments

Allotment inspections have taken place. Several plot holders have been written to regarding the condition of their plots. A skip is being arranged for plot holders to dispose of waste that has been left from previous tenants.

St Marys Churchyard

Maintenance

No issues arising with the general maintenance.

The annual topple testing of the grave stones has been carried out and some stones had to be laid down. A notice to this effect has been posted in the lichgate.

Wychert Walls

Although we received revised planning permission for the works on the southern boundary of the churchyard we still await the Faculty permission, which is purported to be imminent before we can start the works.

We await an update on whether C. Bowler will be able to do the work on the School Wychert wall.

Work to repair the wall on the owners' side of Church Farm has recently been carried out. Fairly urgent repairs are needed to the Churchyard side to clear the grumplings to prevent damp penetration and to repair blown render. The process of obtaining permissions will need to be started soon.

The land west of Churchway development site has a fairly large area wychert that will be dug out so residents and the Parish Council are in discussion with Redrow Homes to obtain and store a supply for use in the village.

Snakemoor

A bench was reported as broken and is in the process of being repaired.

Correspondence

A complaint has been received on the dumping of waste in the verge on Stanbridge Road opposite Bradmoor Farm. Residents backing onto the verge have been written to about fly-tipping and the waste has been reported to Buckinghamshire Council.

The PC has received three complaints about the work to the linden tree at Townsend Green that have been circulated to Councillors. To answer four specific questions asked

- a. Who raised the safety issue and on what grounds
- b. When the Committee discussed and approved the butchering of this tree
- c. How many of the Committee visited the site to see the situation for themselves
- d. Where on the Bucks Council website is the Arboriculturist's report

To respond to these comments:

- a) The need for the work to the tree was identified by officers of the Council when visiting the Community Orchard. Any tree in a public space is considered to be potentially hazardous for insurance purposes and requires regular inspection. In this case the lower branches of the tree were below head height in very close proximity to the pedestrian access to the orchard from Townsend Green which was considered to be a safety risk. Below are photographs taken from either side of the entrance showing the branches prior to the work being carried out.



- b) The Council sets a budget and delegates to its officers to arrange for tree works as deemed necessary by them. The Facilities Committee doesn't discuss in detail any routine work to trees but receives reports on planned and completed work. It was reported to the Committee in November 2021 that quotes for the work were being obtained.
- c) It isn't usual for committee members to inspect trees in advance of carrying out routine tree work.
- d) An application for work to the tree was made to Bucks Council and work was carried out as permitted to crown lift to 2.5m the application reference is 22/00116/ATC.

There were also complaints from residents of Mallard Croft about the tree work carried out to the trees on their boundary with the orchard. The work was carried out after several requests from residents. The resident most affected was contacted about the work but not the whole close who felt they should have been warned due to vehicles parking in their private road. The Parish Council does have the same rights of access as the residents, but for any future work it has been noted to alert all the homes as a courtesy. There were also concerns about the work being carried out during nesting season. The tree surgeons did carry out a survey for nests prior to starting work, but it has also been noted that the policy should be to avoid any routine work during nesting season.