

GROUNDS ANNUAL REPORT.

Grounds team.

Cllr Ian Thompson Lead Member.

Cllr Denny Loveridge Deputy Lead Member.

Cllr Andrew Clemens.

This past year has been challenging, with the major projects withheld relative to the tail of Covid restrictions and the difficulty of obtaining quotations containing labour and materials, also key members of the team being temporarily side-lined with illness and covid, reducing our working capacity. Support for getting some of the observable requirements for the village has rested with the Parish Office staff and our term contractors. Dean Smith, Datchet Handyman, contractor, stepped up to help as Grounds assistant to help cover team member illnesses/ recovery and keep necessary work progressing.

Currently major projects are on hold relative to the workload being generated within the Parish Office especially with regard to organising the Queen's Jubilee event and catching up with the backlog of post covid issues.

As noted at our budget meeting the advised increased cost projection for everything has come about, which will affect what we can achieve but not what we aspire to achieve, unfortunately the Council did not respond to raising our precept accordingly.

Equipment.

The damaged Etesia mower was scrapped, the trailer was stolen together with the hedge cutter, the cutter is being replaced. Old scarifying equipment fixing to the previous Case tractor has been scrapped as non-compatible with other plant. The Kioti tractor and stealth mower have been sold, a full report is in the Parish Office. Replacement with a Kubota RTV is on order, expected May 22. Four RTV types and makes have been tested. Again, reports are available in the Parish Office. A water tank has been purchased for tree watering and riverfront jet cleaning, fitting compatible to the RTV.

Tractor Shed.

Safety equipment has been installed to comply with workplace standards and compliance, remaining items re Fuel Storage, and safety lighting are ongoing. Rainwater ingress is being addressed. 50% complete to date.

A mobile work bench has been constructed to enable painting and servicing of all posts, banner poles, and seat slats, also safe welding support.

Background heating is in place to prevent metal equipment rusting during winter.

All minor tools and equipment have now been located safely in secure racking.

Village Maintenance.

All central Greens grass areas are mulch cut to contain the grass nutrient and improve weather resilience, also the weed reduction treatment continues. The riverfront chains have been installed which has reduced the Canada Geese damage to the grass at present, subject to monitoring. Mulch cut is continuing on the Sabatini land and the recreation Ground. Again, a visible increase in grass condition. The football pitches are continuing to be marked. Hedges on Green Lane ha ha have been squared off level.

Dog bin and litter picking have continued and new bases for litter bins are in construction to take the new litter bins.

Damage has occurred to a number of Greens posts, these will be rectified and cleaned now that the weather has changed.

The tennis courts have been resurfaced, some play equipment has been subject to repair, and work is being placed for replacement items.

Extended CCTV has been installed around the Village Hall complex.

Flower Baskets, and flower beds, flower colours to suit the Jubilee, have been ordered.

Major Projects.

The following Major Grounds Projects are either proceeding on a sectional basis or currently frozen with work already progressed until the Parish Office has cleared their backlog as previously noted.

Rec. Ditch Culvert proposal.

Meetings between Maydencroft, our consultant, and possible contractors, has taken place to establish which modern materials that can now be used within the construction. Current info recorded.

Riverside Jetties.

Meetings with Maydencroft have been fruitful relevant to new materials being available, which meet with Borough and EA. Approval, these "green" materials have been used in conjunction with projects under HM The Queen. And an unexpected cost saving. Current info recorded.

Recreation Ground Pathways replacement.

This project has received a quotation another is awaited, as it is in two sections it may be possible to progress this in this way. Subject to PO agreement.

Village Greens Perimeters

A further Quotation is awaited, again this project may have to be sectionalised relative to materials availability, uncontrolled cost increases as previously noted. Subject to PO agreement.

New Works.

20 new oak saplings have been planted by Wild About Datchet and our Scout Group on the Rec. The old grass and rubbish pile has been cleared ready for new flower planting. Three new Oak trees have been planted on the village greens, one on Memorial Green, two on the Cut replacing dead trees. Rectification of Memorial Green damage by an unauthorised contractor has been repaired, again further damage has occurred by another unauthorised incursion. Ongoing issue. Fencing around the Parish Yard has been temporarily replaced following the Break in.

Current Work in Progress,

Quotations requested: - Refurbishment of the central Greens peripheral areas. Replacement of damaged Recreation Ground pathways.

New lighting strings on the riverside garden, Ordered.

New Christmas lighting extension Horton Rd. Ordered.

Fence repaints on Riverside Garden. In Progress.

Refurbishment /clean of Jubilee memorial. Ordered.

Red telephone box ordered.

New play equipment. Quotes received and short list prepared

New wild flower seeds. Delivered for Wild About Datchet to sow.

Survey of all DPC trees. Ordered.

Cemetery.

A survey of all trees has been completed, the outcome is that overgrowth has been cut back and removed.

The fence between Cemetery Lodge and the Cemetery which includes gates, the posts supporting the Gates will be replaced in galvanised steel, we await delivery from the blacksmith. Meanwhile a temporary fence has been installed.

Pathways between graves have been cleared and improved.

The mowing strategy as last year continues. Again, a cost increase.

Costs relating removing the contents of the Grundon Bins has increased, this was expected at budget setting, unfortunately no precept increase was voted by the DPC.

Work outstanding.

Make off electrical feeds to old telephone box for its removal and make new base/install.

Lighting at the War Memorial.

Safety lighting in tractor shed.

May I take the opportunity to thank all involved on Grounds this year and appreciate their supportive efforts, which for various reasons has not been straightforward.

Cllr Ian Thompson Lead Member for Grounds.