

## Maintenance Report

July 2024

### Grass Cutting

The Maintenance Team are now fully dedicated to regular grass cutting. It has been a challenge keeping up with the grass cutting schedule due to the warm / wet weather conditions over the last couple of months which provided ideal conditions for grass to grow. Areas identified to cultivate greener / wildflower meadow areas continue to be managed with a late cut planned for September. Volunteers from Thame Green Living have carried out the annual survey, data from which will be presented at the next Committee meeting.

### Litter Picking

Litter picking of all the main recreation grounds, memorial gardens and play areas is now being undertaken seven days a week with the work being done on a rota basis by the Maintenance Team.

### Cuttle Brook Nature Reserve

Footpaths are cut regularly through the nature reserve and woodland. Within the nature reserve ditches and stream continue to be checked and cleared of debris following any flood alerts that are issued by the Environment Agency.

A contractor carried out work to a drainage ditch (watercourse 1) which runs parallel to Cox's Wood to help alleviate flooding to residential properties in Cedar Crescent. The work was carried out in consultation with SODC Flood Alleviation Department.

A cracked willow tree which fell during the winter storms and landed across the Brook and partly into the field next adjacent to Fish Ponds has been removed and cut into logs and left in the reserve to form natural wildlife habitats. Emergency tree work was undertaken on 25 February 2024 to remove limbs from two trees overhanging Spring path.

The Maintenance Team removed and disposed of a noticeboard at the entrance to the reserve.

The annual grant of £2,000 is due to be paid to the Cuttle Brook Conservation Volunteers (CBCV). The meadow areas are programmed to be cut for hay during late July / August by a specialist contractor. Dependent on timing of the work to construct the path in Rycote Meadow the hay cut within this meadow may not take place this year.

### Ham Wood

The Maintenance Team assisted volunteers with hazel coppicing in Ham Wood. Further coppicing will take place in the winter.

The old rotten wooden access gate to the wood has been removed. The access moved slightly to the left to ease vehicle ingress and egress and a new gate fitted.

### **Summer Bedding**

46 hanging baskets have been planted and reinstalled in the Town Centre. The Millennium Circle, the Town Hall, Elms Park, the entrance planters and the flowerbeds in the Memorial Gardens and North Street have also been planted. Watering is undertaken by the Maintenance Team early morning and at regular intervals dependant on weather conditions. Thanks to volunteers and councillors who helped plant the memorial gardens ready for the Royal Visit in June.

### **Town Hall**

One of two annual visits to service the automatic door on the main entrance to the Information Centre has taken place.

### **Southern Road Recreation Ground (SRRG)**

The cesspit serving the changing rooms and Scout building has been emptied and three road gullies cleared within the car park.

A yoga group used open space at SRRG for an open-air yoga class on 21 June 2024 to celebrate National Yoga Day.

The running track has been marked out for St Joseph's School sport's day.

### **St Mary's Church**

The Maintenance Team continue to cut the grass on a regular basis in line with the specification for maintenance of the churchyard. The last cut has proved challenging with the Torro mower being out of action, resulting in the team having to use hand mowers to cut the whole area.

### **Play Areas & Skate Park**

All play area surfaces within the six play areas have been jet washed.

**Skate Park** – A report has been received of repairs to the skate park that have been undertaken without the knowledge or approval of the Town Council. The Operations Manager will seek quotes from a qualified contractor to undertake the necessary repairs to restore the surfaces.

Volunteers have planted hedging along the boundary of the skate park and football club.

**Elms Park** – The play park has been successfully refurbished and is being used and appreciated by residents and visitors to Thame. The boundary fence to the front the play area has been replaced by green wire mesh fencing (to match existing boundary fencing) and two metal soft close pedestrian gates installed. Volunteers have planting hedging along the two sides of the play park boundary. The running track has been marked out for John Hampden's School sport's day.

### **Memorial Gardens**

One of the planting beds (Youth Memorial end of the gardens) has been planted with pollinator plants by a group of volunteers. Signage will be displayed to identify wildlife that the plants will attract and information on how people can create their own pollinator beds.

### **Youth Memorial**

Maintenance Team provided equipment support during the recent refurbishment of the Youth Memorial Garden.

### **Benches**

A new memorial bench dedicated to Charlie Jones has been installed on the High Street, in line with the Memorial Policy after the original bench was vandalised.

The new U3A bench has been installed outside Thame Museum.

### **Dog Waste Bins**

A new dog waste bin has been installed at the junction of Moreton Lane and the Phoenix Trail

### **Tree Works**

- Skippon Road – crown reduction
- Hopton Road – Robinia tree crown reduction & thinning

### **Event Support**

The Maintenance Team provided assistance with operations for the following events:

- Tuesday market – including equipment for community stalls for Music in the Park on 30.04.24 and Mayor & Deputy on 28.05.24
- World Village Market 8-10 March
- StrEAT food event 19 April
- Scout's St George's Day Parade
- Music in The Park
- Unveiling of additional plaques on Thame War Memorial
- Thame Carnival – along with the usual support to the carnival, an electric RTV for the Town Council float was loaned by a local supplier.
- Healthy Thame Fayre
- Romanian Fayre

### **Health & Safety**

All fire extinguishers within the Council's buildings and vehicles have been serviced.

The Maintenance Team have completed PAT testing on electrical equipment at the Town Hall and Depot according to the testing schedule.