

Agenda Item 6

For information - An update on the town's parks and green spaces

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Summary

This report provides a summary of what's happening in the town's parks and green spaces.

It's a list-based update for the committee and the town: something that's concise and that's quick to read and reference.

The first part of the report focuses on projects and discrete pieces of work (meaning work with clearly identifiable end points)

This work is split into three categories:

- Recently completed
- Ongoing
- Coming soon

Projects and work listed in the **Coming soon** category are expected to be completed between Council Matters meetings. Naturally, weather and ground conditions can get in the way of this; more so over winter. The pandemic is currently having less of an impact on our work outdoors although the increase in local confirmed cases could result in more staff isolating over the coming months.

The second part of the report notes the day-to-day work that is being completed at the present time and the essential maintenance and upkeep that happens whatever the weather. This is mentioned for completeness, but also for context. Necessarily, we balance how much time we spend on upkeep with time spent on improvements.



Recently completed

- Preparations for Glow in the Park, the Halloween event at the Showfield
- Planted the blossom circles at the Showfield

- Final steps ahead of planting the Tiny Forest at Egford Lane
- New bins around the town (supplied by us; and checked and emptied by MDC)
- New Ranger-made benches at North Parade
- Repaired the basket swing at Mary Baily
- Fenced the hedgerow around the tennis courts at Mary Baily (to protect the plants)
- Bag dispensers for dog owners and dog walkers (just in case)
- A meeting with the Police ahead of the three town events this winter (Glow in the Park; the remembrance parade and service; and the Christmas lights switch-on)

Ongoing

- Putting out the town's speed indicator (SID) having agreed a set of locations with SCC
- Carrying on the community conversations about ideas for Egford Lane
- Working with the Police on the possibility of CCTV for Victoria Park and Mary Baily
- Looking at the possibilities for adding festive lights to Palmer Street
- Reviewing the safe working practices for the Rangers
- Obtaining quotes and estimates to inform the budget-setting process
Including quotes for: a new roundabout at Mary Baily; general play surfacing improvements; a new riding surface for the pump track; and new solar lights for paths
- Discussions about weeds and weed management across the town



Coming soon

- Tree and hedge planting season
- The town centre Christmas tree and Christmas lights
- A review of our winter plan (in case of snow and icy conditions)

Day to day

- Grass cutting – with one or two more cuts expected while the weather is still mild
- Watering – flowers and trees
- Park checks and play checks
- Play repairs, upkeep and TLC
- The start of hedge cutting season
- The start of leaf clearance



A strategic pause for our management and improvement plans

We've chosen to pause the reviews of our management and improvement plans for the moment.

This is to allow for further work on the town's play strategy; and for discussion about the declared climate and ecological emergencies; all of which are expected to have important impacts and implications for how we choose to look after the town's parks and green spaces going forward.

Improving the toilets in Victoria Park

Current steps

We have meetings in November to:

- Discuss CCTV options for the toilets
- Obtain quotes for Refurbishment/Demolition asbestos surveys for the current building

The CCTV discussions will be important for decisions about the placement of doors in and out of the building (and also the landscaping around the building)

The asbestos surveys will be important in identifying any difficulties and limitations for the internal refurbishment (and especially any structural works that are part of the project)

We're also planning to talk to Reclaim the Streets Frome to inform design ideas for the building and the surrounding area(s) – with the aim of ensuring that the refurbished toilets feel safe, comfortable and welcoming.

