

PARKS REPORT
RLA – 20 JULY 2021

Unfortunately, the Parks Dept have experienced long periods of being short staffed this summer due to unforeseen periods of absences which, combined with the unusual weather conditions have made it a challenging time.

From 19 July all Covid restrictions will end in our play areas and the swing seats that were previously removed will be re-instated.

As Members are aware there is a busy programme of children's entertainment planned for the summer holidays as well as our annual cinema events.

- **Broomfield:**

The football pitch reparations have been undertaken.

As members are aware, a new bench was installed outside the play area recently, unfortunately, the bench was attempted to be moved by persons unknown and has had to be re-installed by parks staff.

A kissing gate into Broomfield has been repeatedly breached by motorbike users resulting in some damage to the field and the cricket square. The gate has been temporarily locked until it can be re-enforced.

There have been some inconsistencies with the cricket square this season which we plan to try to improve during the autumn.

The usual fertilizer and weed treatment have been scheduled to be applied to the field.

- **Heritage Park:**

Overhanging shrubs are due to be cut back from the footpaths.

A fallen tree has been cut up and removed.

- **Knockhall:**

Due to the very late finish to the season, only limited pitch reparations have been possible.

The usual fertilizer and weed treatment have been scheduled to be applied to the field.

- **Swanscombe Park:**

There was an overnight break-in to one of our storage containers recently and all the power tools were stolen. These were subsequently retrieved by the Police and have been returned, the required repairs to the container are in hand.

Work on the picnic area and community garden are gradually progressing.

The perimeter wall damaged by the tree that fell in the recent storms has been repaired by contractors and the railings have been replaced.

The war memorial beds have been planted with summer bedding.

A new manhole cover was fitted adjacent to the old toilet block.

- **Saxon Court:**

We are waiting for the replacement post and fittings for the swinging plank to be installed by the contractor.

- **Valley View:**

As previously agreed, the additional set of play equipment for younger children has now been installed.

- **Equipment:**

The ride-on mower has been out of action more and more in recent months due to various component failures and a major fault has recently been discovered. The down time is having a significant impact on cutting operations and we are looking into the best way to proceed which looks to be the replacement of the ride-on mower rather than continuous, expensive repairs.

Recommended:

To note.

RLA 20/7/21

7.2. HERITAGE PARK UPDATE (p).

Further to minute 152/20-21 the following information is an update on the progress of the works to reinstate the pond within the Heritage Park.

Pond Liner

In March of this year a contractor was instructed through North West Kent Countryside Partnership to install a puddled clay liner to the pond within the Heritage Park. This included re-shaping the banks, surrounding areas and reinstating the pathway.



This left the remainder of the site ready for the fencing, decking and planting to be undertaken.

Unfortunately it has become apparent that the liner is not retaining the water in the correct way and arrangements are being made to bring the contractor back to site to rectify any issues.

Fencing & Gate

In May 2021 North West Kent Countryside Partnership attended site with a team of volunteers to install the new fencing and gate. This is fitted as a natural barrier around the pond and has mesh across the bottom section as a deterrent from dogs entering the water.



Planting

Whilst installing the fence gate in May North West Kent Countryside Partnership laid down a seed mix around the far bank of the pond. This is specific grass and vegetation that thrives around water. Early indications are that this is establishing well.

The specification and supplier for the larger plants has been set and will be ordered once the issue of water retention has been resolved.

Decking and Seating

The last part of the project was to have a decking area extending from the pathway around the fence line to provide a safe viewing platform for the wildlife.

Officers contacted Construction Youth Trust, who assisted with the redecoration of the changing rooms at the Pavilion as a community skills project, to see if they could assist with resources or materials for this project.

Following a site visit and negotiations two building contractors have agreed to supply the labour and materials to deliver this project free of charge. The skilled labourers will be working with secondary school children to show them construction techniques and provide an opportunity to gain experience in carpentry.

The new decking will be constructed out of recycled decking boards and will include non-slip tread. This is hoped to be delivered in August 2021.

Recommended: To note.