

Streetscene report to A.L.P. committee

Thetford Town Council

1st December 2020

Kings Square /Performance Area

The new Planter at Kings Square has now been finished and planted to replace the water feature it has been made of oak sleepers and lined with black plastic and filed with topsoil and compost: the planting has been done to a Mediterranean planting.

The new two tier planters have been installed on the Kings Square and outside St Cuthbert's Church and have been planted with a selection of spring-flowering plants.

The Kings Square/Performance Area has been pressure washed and cleaned.

The new Thetford sign has been installed where the old clock was originally.

St Cuthbert's Church

A second bench has been installed outside St Cuthbert's Church with the new planter in-between.

Thomas Paine Statue

The Thomas Paine Statue has now been re-gilded, and the scaffold will be removed in the next couple of days.

Carnegie Planters

The Carnegie planters that are on the rails have been stripped out and re-planted with spring plants.

Christmas Lights

The town Christmas lights/decorations are being put up on the 24th Nov. The trees were delivered and are in the process of being prepped before being put up.

Dog Bins/Waste Bins

The two replacement bins have been installed along Haling Path and the Water Meadows also the ones that needed a clean have been cleaned. Chris Hensley is cleaning the benches and bins in Kings St and the Market Place and in Kings House Gardens.

There is a Dog Bin Application for Mallow Rd. I have been to have a look and I cannot see any reason this cannot go ahead: application on next page.

Rat Bait Stations Along River

This has not been done as I have only just found out about it - I will try and get some companies to come and give us quotes and advice as how to go about it.

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Type of bin requested | Dog Bin |
| Location for bin requested | Mallow Road Behind Busy Bees Nursery Between the creeks, Green Lane. |
| Reason for request | I often walk my dogs on green lane and have noticed not enough dog Bins especially the Busy Bees Nursery |
| Date of request | 30th / 10 / 2020 |

not
by
Thank you.

Countryside & Planning Officer's report to A.L.P. committee

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Please note that this report does not cover all my work – Planning issues are not covered, and matters connected with improving wildlife habitats on the Cemetery and Allotments are also omitted.

Ford Meadow / Nun's Bridges / Lady Gentle Meadow

The **new cordwood path** at the entrance to the large meadow near the footbridge seems to be working well in enabling people to access this part of the site despite the very wet conditions recently. **Repairs to the fence** have continued, volunteers removed the tree cages from around the avenue of Planes and we used some of them to help reinforce the fencing where the buffalo have been leaning over it. Others have been placed around the scraped area with the intention of using them for signs explaining about the rare Creeping Marshwort.

Volunteers also **re-installed the main site sign** which had been knocked down, and helped remove the worst of the mud along Spring Walk where large vehicles accessing Spring House had apparently churned it up – the rest was subsequently dealt with by a contractor employed by the owners of Spring House.

see photos on next page



Barnham Cross Common

The vegetation management of the car parks and the bunds outside the fences has now mostly been completed.

Company 3 - IDVerde – have now been selected to carry out the tree/scrub removal and removal of topsoil as agreed at the last meeting. I have met them on site and agreed exact areas to work on. This should be a really exciting development which will open up a large area that is currently completely devoid of ground flora, but we are leaving fringes of smaller trees around the edges of the areas to be cleared in order to reduce visual impact to a minimum. IDVerde intend to carry out the 'Year 1' work before Xmas, if this is completed to our satisfaction it would then enable them to complete the 'Year 2' and 'Year 3' work in January.

Company Unfortunately Company 1 declined to do the harrowing in the south-east corner of the site if they did not get the rest of the work as well. Given the budgetary situation and the fact that we will still be creating fairly significant areas of disturbed ground this year with the soil stripping mentioned above, my inclination is to perhaps leave this until next winter and seek a better deal then. As long as IDVerde are successful at the 'Year 1' work and we can thus get them to continue with 'Year 2' and 'Year 3' this winter, this should leave us with sufficient resources from our HLS and Rural Payment Scheme to carry out the necessary harrowing in Years 4 and 5 if not before.

Meanwhile our **volunteers** have continued to tackle gorse, birch and scrub oaks in the north-east quadrant of the site:



The photos on the previous page show a volunteer removing some of the lower branches of large oaks to improve the sightlines through the site, and a visit from Clare Whitelegg of the Rivers Trust with whom we will be working to research the sources of plastic and other litter entering the town's rivers.



Habitat works winter 2020-21: volunteers currently clearing scrub in the blue circle area; contractors will be clearing trees initially in the two darker red circle areas (before Xmas) and then – if all goes well - in the two lighter orange areas in January.

It is still unclear if I will be able to run a further series of guided walks before Xmas which would enable me to explain to local residents about the importance of the various habitats around the site, and the benefits of the ongoing tree and scrub removal. Further on site signage and social media posts will definitely go up nearer the times when tree and scrub removal will be taking place.

Melford Common and Castle Park

I have requested that Historic England meet us on site at Castle Park to discuss the Trim Trail, replacement play equipment (Viking Boat), and the fencing required to support grazing.

Ramsey Close

A volunteer task will take place this Wednesday 2nd December where our intention is to plant more trees and install a small pond with fence surround. This was previously agreed by the committee and the local residents' association and been consulted on locally, but has so far been lacking in funding. However I have now managed to get reused fence panels (found dumped at Lady Gentle Meadow), posts, a pond 'liner' (a water container from an abandoned allotment, which is fortunately about the same size as an existing hollow on the site) and gate hinges, so this can now be carried out almost cost-free.

Dane Close and Pine Close

I found another **flytip** at Dane Close – also with evidence of address – this has been reported to Breckland for enforcement action.



Frederick's Wood

The complaint about the tree overhanging a garden seems to have been resolved, and the new countryside code signs do not seem to have suffered any attacks. The autumn colours of the large beech trees on site have been great to see.

The local school are keen to be involved with further understorey tree planting on the site.

Maine Street Woods

No problems to report apart from one vandalised bird box (one of the many we have installed at the site). Kier construction have expressed an interest in providing us with both bird and bat boxes for the site (and possibly swift boxes for the cemetery).

BFER

Replies from artists interested in producing works for the sculpture trail are coming in and the next step will be for the working group to agree and time (and place, subject to restrictions) to sift through these and decide which to recommend to the committee to take forward.

Volunteer Group

Subject to government restrictions, I would like to be able to offer our volunteers some form of celebration to thank them for all their hard work as part of their last session before Xmas (the fish and chips over the summer went down very well, so some form of warm food from a covid-secure source might well be the best thing to do again.

Tree planting 2020-21

Tree deliveries are now expected any day now, so we expect to start planting in December – the earlier the better. Other measures to try to ensure as many as possible survive will include use of mulch mats and watering pipes in places, and planting them as deep as possible.

CGM have also offered to donate flowering fruit 35 trees of around 2m in height to celebrate their 35 years in business. I have a number of sites in mind – e.g. Dane Close, subject to consultation - but we may also be able to offer the public the chance to suggest locations around the town for them...this might include land not owned by the town council, such as school grounds.

Some Possible Dates for you Diaries

The volunteer group activities are continuing every Wednesday and Thursday at present.

Tree planting events will also be confirmed soon but are likely to be booking only due to limited numbers of tools (which we cannot share round).

Mark Webster, Countryside and Planning Officer, 07553 388 551.