

Kimpton Bench Working Party Report to Parish Council

18th November 2020 to 20th January 2021

Summary

Mostly shut away with Covid precautions so less progress than normal in the last two months.

Some highlights though – one is about when we were working in the churchyard before Christmas (before the latest lockdown). We had been raising a buried grave surround, (perhaps a couple of tons in weight) and afterwards we were visited by a couple of policemen. A resident had reported us for not following government guidelines – it takes 3 to 6 people, three crowbars and three scaffolding poles to lift the stones. So we would have been too close. We explained to the policemen what we had been doing and they went away, smiling. They just remarked that perhaps we could restrict the numbers to three working on a grave! There were two separate feeds on the Kimpton Face Book page about it, with the best part of 100 comments. The vast majority of which were very complimentary of the work we do which was gratifying but I think we were probably in the wrong.

Another interesting event was, while planting trees for Andrew Manning at the top of Claggy Road, (do go and look, right hand side and around the corner up Holt Lane), a group of young people from a Centre near St Paul's Walden joined the group. These young people had all been excluded from school multiple times, and the Centre attempts to get them to learn to work and socialise with people mostly by them working with horses and other animals. Their experience while working with us was such that the leaders have asked if they could join the BWP in future on some of our Wednesday mornings. We have discussed it on one of our weekly Zoom meetings and we feel it is worth trying. I think it could be quite rewarding – and I think most of the BWP think the same.

Parish Council

All the salt bins have been checked and found to be full. The new delivery of salt is stored behind the Memorial Hall and we will top up the bins if required. The field gate at the entrance to the cricket pitch was adjusted so it closes properly now.

Community

We put Christmas lights in several places – Coopers Hill, the School, Church Lane, The Green, and the 'Upper Green'. Most of them are still on the trees because the job of removing them is not (yet) classed as "important". The electricity supply at the school is no longer fit for the purpose and Jon Marsh has installed a temporary simpler method. This needs sorting permanently before next Christmas.

We helped with the installation of the superb Advent Calendar near the Corner Stores and helped remove it as well.

The bench that was in front of the Corner Stores has been moved to behind the Dacre Rooms until the building work is complete.

We helped Andrew Manning plant about 2,000 trees at the top of Claggy to form a new hedge.

Churchyard

We raised a few gravestones and swept up leaves. Andy Morton did a superb solo job (due to Covid separation rules) of planting 7 prunus trees along the church path to the South Door. All the trees were sponsored by residents of the parish, and he had twice as many offers of donations as he needed.

Memorial Hall

The car park and surrounding areas have been kept clean and we engaged a commercial firm to add some paving slabs to the pathway at the side of the Hall – the one that leads to the Parish Room.

Bob Finch January 2021