

Bench Working Party Report

14th July to 15th September 2021

Parish Council

We removed a large quantity of scrubby growth from the bases of the trees at the East boundary of Parkfield Rec and took it to Park House for disposal (courtesy Simon). The (Tennis Club) picnic bench at the tennis courts was rebuilt and painted. The remaining loose posts in the fence on the north of Parkfield Rec were replaced. A few of us helped with the installation of the table tennis table. The field gate at the entrance to Parkfield Rec was jammed against the banging post and has been raised. If it drops again, we might have to replace the fixings. The lump in the roadway between Hitchin Road and the car park has been made safer (we hope). It has been touching the undercarriage of vehicles.

We installed the new double size dog poo bin at Parkfield Rec car park and moved the smaller one to the Hitchin Road entrance to the roadway.

We washed the bus shelter by the school inside and out and cleaned around generally.

At the school we made the electricity supply for the Xmas lights work.

We renovated the Peters Green Bus shelter, removed growth around it, cleaned inside, replaced some of the wood cladding and painted it.

At the Recreation ground we refilled and turfed the hole left after the aborted table tennis site was dug out. On the driveway up the west of the football pitch, we filled in the area around an exposed drain cover with cold tarmac and road scrapings. We hammered in the wedges that stop one of the picnic tables wobbling. We have started to replace the lower cladding on the rear of the Football Pavilion.

We started to refurbish the Blackmore End bus stop. We stopped work when it became apparent that the ingress of soil on the sides had rotted the wooden cladding and exposed cement board which might contain asbestos. The board needs testing to see if it contains anything dangerous before we continue.

We did some siding out along Church Path but the ground was very hard, so we await some wet weather to continue. We did some siding out along the High Street pavements, from Hall Lane down to the Hitchin Road, both sides. This being on hard surfaces is easier. It looks much better now.

We relocated the (Xmas Fair) gas heaters from Neil's garage to the Porters End store.

We have steadily painted and repaired the benches and wooden waste bins around the parish, nearly all done now ready for winter.

Community

Jon Marsh organized some BWP members to run some Friday coffee mornings at the Dacre Rooms In the absence of the normal groups that run it.

For the Church we took a four drawer filing cabinet from the Vicarage to the vestry, took a broken three drawer one to our scrap metal store behind the Memorial Hall, and took another three drawer one from Church House to the Vicarage. All using brute strength and the trailer.

We collected the kit needed by the Horse Show from the container and the Porters End barn. At the Horse Show we managed the gate and the parking of horse boxes and cars. We erected and removed the Horse Show banners at each end of the High Street.

We took two trailer loads of road scrapings to fill depressions in the kissing gates above Bibbs Hall farm. We replaced two footpath signposts, one just up from the allotments the other at the top of Hall Lane.

At the junction of Lawn Avenue and Claggy Road we cleared a fallen tree and cut hedge growth from around the post box and Parish notice board. We tried to chip the hedge growth with a generator and chipper and then mains electricity and the chipper but both plans failed. We took the six one-ton bags of arisings to the top of the Rec (eastern side). This is not a permanent option. Back to the drawing board on disposing of arisings – probably another chipper and mains electricity.

The Bright Star, as a 'thank you' for the work we do, entertained us to a free lunchtime drink at the pub.

We had a special BWP bowls evening, courtesy of the bowls club and also took part in an afternoon competition between the Bright star, the Boot, the Church, and ourselves. Lots of beer provided by the Bright Star. (We came second).

Memorial Hall

The direction sign at the bottom of Hall Lane was fixed correctly (again).

The garden outside the lounge was cleared and tidied, the Garden Club normally do this but due to Covid it had not been touched for 18 months or so. The hedges up Hall Lane, the pedestrian path, and the car park were cut back. Much of the moss covering the edges of the car park was scraped up.

The gutters were cleaned out and the drain pipe S bends repaired.

The Marquee lining was taken out (not having been used for 18 months or so) to check for rodent and moth activity. It was fine. With Roger Nash we have checked the catenary wires that are used to suspend it.

With help from Andy the organist we tested the two sound loops (for people with the appropriate hearing aids to use), all OK.

We set out the tables and chairs for the County WI annual strawberry tea.

The benches in the garden were moved from under trees to a more open space, and free to be moved as users wish.

Weeds from the perimeter of the building were cleared away.

Churchyard

Pat Dyer's grave was levelled and turfed, the Eastern hedge of the churchyard was cut and the arisings taken to Ben Cole's farm The Harding Gate (the SE one) was removed, refurbished, and stained. This included re-cutting out the incised lettering and painting it.

Bob Finch 15th September 2021