



Report

Officer: Trevor Parfitt – DLF Supervisor
Date: 04th March 2024
Meeting: Town Council – 19th March 2024

DLF and Environmental Update Report

Background and Update

We currently have four full time positions:

- 1 x DLF Supervisor
- 3 x Operatives

There are currently three vacancies within the DLF team.

Hanging Baskets

The hanging baskets this year has been reduced to 180, the amount of bedding plants has been reduced and replaced with perennials.

In 2022, the weight testing on the hanging basket poles was carried out after one fell from the Town Hall. The previous Property and Grounds Manager organised the testing on the Town hall and clock tower only, with an outside contractor. The remainder of the hanging basket poles have not yet been tested. Load testing quotes are being obtained and will be brought to a future Town Council meeting for consideration.

Play Area

Due to the age and heavy use of the play equipment, the inspections both internally and by ROSPA are highlighting many pieces of equipment needing immediate repairs as well as long term changes. This will have an impact on the budget. It has been identified that over the last few years repairs to the play equipment has been kept to a minimum due to the insufficient budget.

It has been identified that the Town Council may be required to make decisions regarding play equipment and if equipment fails this would be to

(a) remove the piece of equipment

(b) replace this piece of equipment

(c) repair but note that spare parts are required to be purchased from the manufacturer which can result in being costly.



There are pieces of equipment on Severn Park play area, which are supported by bark for the safety of the users. This piece of equipment is within the flood plain which means we have to replace the play grade bark at a cost of £130 per tonne. This is completed twice a year.

There will be a requirement this year for all the play grade bark to be fully replaced due to the age and settlement due to the high usage.

In previous years when it has flooded, the play grade bark has not been removed or replaced, only topped off with new bark. Going forward the Town Council may wish to consider the removal of the spider's web, and have it reinstalled at another play area which will eliminate the need to reinstall bark each time the above area floods.

The Fitness Equipment within Severn Park was installed in the flood plain area also. This has resulted in the equipment starting to rust and break. The fitness equipment will need a greater number of replacement parts, and this will become more frequent as the equipment ages. A future report will be submitted on all play areas by the DLF Supervisor.

Tractor

The tractor is used to cut all the large areas around Bridgnorth including Well Meadow/Crown Meadow/Severn Park.

The Tractor is eighteen years old and has had several repairs carried out on this vehicle in the last five years due to its age.

Unfortunately, the tractor is now off the road due to an oil light indicator on the control panel. Two contractors have looked into this problem, and they have both done an oil test on the vehicle, which concluded the tractor is no longer holding oil pressure. Due to this problem the tractor cannot be used and is now in the compound until an action plan can be put together to resolve this problem.

Three quotes have been sought for the repairs to the tractor. Unfortunately, one contractor is no longer in the position where he can take on the repairs. Without this tractor the grass areas listed above will not be cut.

Three quotes obtained with pricing below:

<i>Supplier</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>work</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Quote- 1	£500+vat	Work to £500 budget to investigate / report back with findings and proceed if instructed to carry on.	(No longer able to carry out this work for us
Quate-2	£8030+vat	Haulage £300. Labour £2600. Engine over Houl kit £22750. Fluids £80. Head repair £800. Block boring £1250. Crank grind £250. Total £8030 +vat	Worst case scenario hopefully crank and head are ok and will reduce the amount substantially.



Quote- 3	Port ex for our Tractor £7000. Price of their Tractor £51,433	(No work to be carried out by	The quote is for /part ex price for our tractor and purchase of second-hand tractor
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Recommendation: For members to proceed with quote two as quote number one is no longer in a position to carry out the work.

Ride on Mower and Trailer

Following the break in at the Cemetery in December, one of the rides on mowers and the trailer was stolen. Due to the amount of grass cutting, which is undertaken in all areas around the Town, a new ride on mower is important for the DLF to function correctly. The insurance company has been contacted with all the relevant information details but may take several weeks to be resolved. Now that grass cutting season is here Could the Town Council purchase these items in advance of the insurance claim being resolved so day to day activities can function correctly. In order for the DLF to presume with maintenance works, a new mower and trailer are required.

Three quotes for a replacement mower:

<i>Supplier</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Quote 1	Iseki SXG324 £11,995+ VAT	Brand new mower.
Quote 2	Iseki TXG5 24 £13,500+VAT £591+vat mulch deck	Brand new mower.
Quote 3	£10,030.00 +vat £303 5-year warranty.	Brand new mower.

Recommendation: Members are to consider purchasing a replacement mower, with quote three at the cost of £10,030.00.

Trailer

Three quotes for a replacement trailer:

<i>Supplier</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Quote 1	£4,734+ vat	Plant trailer for ride on mower (new)
Quote 2	£3,870 + hitch lock £99 + vat	Plant trailer for ride on mower (new)
Quote 3	<u>Awaiting</u>	Awaiting

Recommendation: Members are to consider proceeding with quote two. The trailer in quote two has the same specification as the one stolen and covers all requirements to take the weight of any machinery we need to transport.



Health and safety

Work has been completed following the Health & Safety Audit and all items in our chemical safe have now been professionally removed. We now only store one specific chemical (Roundup).

We are always working at better ways to improve our work surroundings.

Training

There are several pieces of equipment that require formal training to enable the DLF team to use the specific equipment.

There are currently some areas that need to be addressed for specific training needs. (this is referred to internally as a ticket).

Training required for specific equipment:

- Chainsaw – currently no qualified operatives. Cost Circa £850.00
- Spraying – requires two DLF operatives.
- Road assistance – requires one operative.
- Tractor - all staff need a refresher course on this as normally only one operative uses the tractor.
- Abrasive wheels – requires one DLF operative.

All members of staff are now ladder trained and competent in using the apparatus and identifying any problems. We are currently working on a Training Matrix Plan which will be presented to the committee at a future Town Council meeting.

Recommendation: For members to allow one DLF operative to obtain the chainsaw certificate at the cost of £850.00.

Removal of Rubbish

All green waste is taken directly to Shorthouse's by DLF operatives. This has made a massive difference in the way we work as there is no longer the need to have stockpiles at the Cemetery waiting to be burnt. This has allowed us to be more efficient in the way we work and allows us more time to carry out other task within the Town. Onsite burning of rubbish no longer takes place.

Is it suggested going forward that the general rubbish from all park areas could be disposed of in this same way. This would reduce the waste deposited in the large skip at the Cemetery which is often sat for long periods.



Additional Plant and Machinery

It has been identified that there is a requirement for additional machinery.

Items required are as listed below: (it is estimated the cost for this is circa £9,000)

- Small 110 generator for watering (this will reduce the manual handling issue and make watering more efficient and save on journeys to and from the cemetery circa £1000.00)
- 1 x petrol long handled hedge cutter.
- Chipper for clearing our woodland areas this will also require operative to be trained (Chipper £6000) (Training to operate £200)

Recommendations: Members are to consider the purchasing of the additional machinery as well as for one DLF operative to be trained to use the chipper.

Assets to be sold:

Asset	Valuation (Approximate)	Date last used
Takeuchi mini digger 2.5t	£8,000 to £10,000	2022 (Condition good for the hours on the clock)
Kubota Digger with loader	£2,000 / £2,500	2021 (condition old)

Recommendations: For members to consider selling the above assets and using the monies made to purchase the recommended additional machinery.

Future Projects

Detailed below are the list of future projects:

- Castle Grounds: rose borders to be removed and grass seeded over.
- Cemetery memorial garden steps.

Cemetery Compound Break In

More security measures have been made to improve the security at the Cemetery. Two new drop-down barriers have been positioned outside the compound gates as well as new locks for the chapel doors. Due to having no electricity up at the compound no CCTV cameras can be fitted in that area.

Adverse Weather Conditions

The heavy rainfall this year has caused the river to flood once. As a team we have reacted to this situation promptly by distributing sandbags to the affected areas before the river peaked. We have several pallets of sandbags on standby and ready to go if this should happen again.



DLF Staff

Two operatives retired in December 2023, there are now only three DLF members of staff and one DLF Supervisor. There is need for at least two new members of staff for the Town Council to consider employing due to the time of year. Once all the hanging baskets and bedding have been put out, it will take almost (40 hours for two operatives) to carry out the watering round which will include early starts.

Winter Work

Work to be concentrated on during the winter months will consist of cutting the hedges in all BTC maintained land, maintenance to all play areas and shrub beds. Ongoing maintenance and daily duties to carry on at the Castle Grounds and Cemetery.

Castle Grounds

Following retirement of two members of staff last year there is currently no need for someone to be employed in the Castle Grounds full time at present. However, this may change in the summer period.

The full length of the nature trail has been cleared out and we are looking to install some new wood carvings and reopen this area in the summertime. I have received a lot of positive comments regarding the Castle Grounds on how good the area is looking.

The bridge has deteriorated and has been removed for safety reasons. The maintenance team is working on this, and it should be replaced by Easter.

Tree Report 2024 (All Areas)

Shropshire Council have carried out half the tree report for Bridgnorth Town Council parks and woodland areas, they have highlighted a list of affected areas that require attention.

The list has been split into areas and the works has been highlighted, there is a lot of work that can be undertaken by the DLF Team, however, there are areas that will have to be completed by an outside contractor. Contractors will have to be contacted to obtain quotes once Town Council has approved.

DLF staff have carried out remedial works to the below areas and work has allocated into three areas:

- DLF to complete minor works.
- Watching Brief – Arboriculturist to monitor.
- Contractor to complete more complex maintenance.

The DLF have completed all works on these reports. Where a contractor is required to complete works the DLF Supervisor will complete a procurement process and a report on costs will be brought to a future meeting.



BTC/60/2324



Bridgnorth Cemetery

Tree no.	Species	Tree location	Defect location	Defect type	Recommendation	Risk category
8001	Pine	On hillside	Main stem; approx. 6m.	Fungal fruiting bodies at old wound sites may be weakening structure. Possibly <i>Phellinus pini</i> or <i>Phaeolus schweinitzii</i>	If area around tree frequently used or sensitive, consider undertaking an aerial tree assessment (in accordance with professional practice - further guidance provided on request).	Moderate
8002	Cedar, deodar	Beside road	Stem base	Sapwood/bark damage	Site manager to monitor annually & report any significant changes regarding health/structure to Arboricultural Officer	Low
8003	Cedar, deodar	Beside track	Crown	Significant loss of foliage	Site manager to monitor annually & report any significant changes regarding health/structure to Arboricultural Officer	Low
8004	Oak	Offsite. On bank tag 0742	Crown	Weak forks at 2 to 3m	Site manager to monitor annually & report any significant changes regarding health/structure to Arboricultural Officer	Low



Lodge Lane Park

Tree no.	Species	Tree location	Defect location	Defect type	Recommendation	Risk category
8001	Mixed species group	Woodland area on open space next to play area (ash, sycamore, hawthorn, gorse, etc.)	Several saplings on top of hill	Newly planted trees struggling to establish	Adjust stakes and ties where necessary; remove and replace dead trees. Water saplings in dry summer periods for three years	Low
8001	Mixed species group	Woodland area on open space next to play area (ash, sycamore, hawthorn, gorse, etc.)	Trees beside road	Dense ivy	Sever ivy	Low

The Castle Grounds

Tree no.	Species	Tree location	Defect location	Defect type	Recommendation	Risk category
8001	Horse chestnut	Beside path	Crown	Lapsed pollard, stem decay at approx. 4m	Recollared back to established pollard heads. Cuts to be made immediately above the old pollard heads	Moderate



St Mary Magdalene's Churchyard

Tree no.	Species	Tree location	Defect location	Defect type	Recommendation	Risk category
8001	Ash, common	In corner of church yard, opposite Tower House	Crown	Almost touching buildings	Crown reduce tree height and spread by approximately 2m – annotated photograph provided on request	Moderate
8007	Yew, Irish	Against boundary hedge line of church yard	Base/crown	Dense ivy	To facilitate re-inspection, remove any vegetation, basal growth and ivy to 1.5m above ground level	Low

St Leonard's Church

Tree no.	Species	Tree location	Defect location	Defect type	Recommendation	Risk category
8001	Mixed species group	On lawn, mainly lime	Base	Sprouting	Remove basal growth annually	Low
8002	Mixed species group	On lawn	Yew tree beside church	Basal decay	Site manager to monitor annually & report any significant changes. regarding health/structure to tree officer	Low
8002	Mixed species group	On lawn	Several trees	Low branches	Crown lift branch tips to approx. 2.5m all round. Where possible avoid whole limb removals	Low
8003	Mixed species group	Two lime trees previously pollarded	Base	Sprouting	Remove basal growth annually	Low



Severn Park

Tree no.	Species	Tree location	Defect location	Defect type	Recommendation	Risk category
8001	Ash	Beside fence	Crown	Dead branches	Remove dead wood	Moderate
8002	Alder	Beside road	All	Hung-up and basal decay	Remove fallen tree/limb	Moderate
8003	Ash	Beside entrance	Base/crown	Dense ivy	Sever ivy all-round the base of the tree	Low
8004	Ash	In hedge	Root crown	Decay	Fell to ground level and plant a suitably sized replacement tree - Extra Heavy standard (12-14cm girth)	High
8005	Poplar	In hedge	Base/crown	Dense ivy	Sever ivy all-round the base of the tree. Inform Arboricultural Officer when ivy/vegetation has been cleared around base	Low
8006	Willow	Beside path	Base (multi-stemmed)	Stem split	Coppice at 1m	High
8007	Poplar	Beside path	Base/crown	Dense ivy	Sever ivy all-round the base of the tree. Inform Arboricultural Officer when ivy/vegetation has been cleared around base	Moderate
8008	Sycamore	Beside fence	Stem base	Decay	Site manager to monitor annually & report any significant changes regarding health/structure to Arboricultural Officer	Moderate
8009	Group of poplar	Beside road	Base/crown	Dense ivy	Sever ivy all-round the base of the tree	Moderate
8010	Poplar, Lombardy	Beside pay and display sign	Main stem at approximately 1.5m	Decay (with rotten fungal fruiting bodies)	Investigate strength loss using decay detection equipment. Please contact us to arrange this under a separate agreement or	Moderate



					consider removing the tree	
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