

HEDGE END TOWN COUNCIL
Operations Manager Report
November 2023
Recreation and Amenities

1. Albert Road Cemetery

- Since last R and A the Grounds Team have carried out 6 burials; 2 full burials, 1 full burial (reopen) and 3 interment of Ashes.
- Graves are dug throughout the year, sometimes in very challenging conditions. HETC staff always deliver to a high standard. This is an incredible service that we provide at the most difficult of times.

2. Allotments

- There are currently 0 empty plots and a waiting list of 47,15 of which are requests for second plots.
- We no longer take second plot requests until such time as we have spare vacant plots.
- This month we will be carrying out hedge cutting and will continue grass cutting as weather allows.

3. Bowling Green

- The 2023 season has now ended and the HETC team have been busy carrying out the autumn restorative works, this includes scarification, aeration, top dressing with a specialist sand/ compost mix and overseeding.
- The clubs lease expires in March 2024 and lease negotiations have been ongoing. It is hoped that this can be concluded in time for next year's season.

4. Conservation Volunteers

- October's session took place in Wildern Moor within Wildern Local Nature Reserve. Wildern Moor is a unique habitat for Hedge End and is a biodiversity hotspot. Unfortunately without natural grazing animals to keep the trees/ vegetation in check, these plants would overwhelm the Moor and turn it into woodland. Woodland is a wonderful habitat and important for nature conservation, but it doesn't support the variety of plants and wildlife that can be found on a site like this.
The volunteers spent the morning cutting down (coppicing) the unwanted tree saplings and also some of the larger Willows and used the arisings to form a 'dead hedge' which will in turn provide important habitat.
- Unfortunately November's session has been cancelled due to bad weather and we are hoping to reschedule later in the month.
- If you wish to attend a CV session, please ensure you register with the office prior to attending.

5. Cricket

- Autumn maintenance has begun with scarification and aeration. Unfortunately the wet weather has made it impossible to spread the top dressing, and it is looking increasingly likely this will now be postponed until spring 2024

6. Football

- The football season has started well, although we are undersubscribed this year due to one of the teams pulling out at the last minute. We are still host to Hedge End Town and Hedge End United.

7. Graffiti and Vandilism

- There is still an ongoing issue with dog poo in Rodaway Play Area.
- A newly planted tree at St. John appears to have been deliberately mauled by a dog, whilst the damage is significant, we are hopeful the tree will survive. We have put a wire cage around the tree to try and protect it from any further damage.



- The main shutter switch at Turnpike Pavilion was damaged but has now been repaired.
- There have been repeated attempts to break into the Post room at Turnpike Pavilion causing damage to the door.
- We still have some graffiti issues, but we continue to remove all instances as we find them.
- Drummond Community Centre has seen an increase in ASB, this includes youths entering the building during hire and causing disruption. We are asking hirers to ensure any incidents are reported to the Police.

8. Local Nature Reserve

- As you'll be aware we could not find suitable grazing for Wildern Moor during 2023, but following discussion with a local farmer, we are hopeful grazing will return in 2024.
- Friends of Wildern Local Nature Reserve continue in their amazing efforts to record flora and fauna within the reserve. Their species count is now in excess 1300 different species which is quite outstanding. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/2030431683870743>

9. Paddling Pool

- Closed – no issues

10. Play Areas

- Ongoing repair and maintenance are still taking place across all 11 play areas following summers ROSPA inspections.

11. Open Spaces

- Unfortunately the grass continues to grow but the parks are so sodden that access is difficult. We will (weather permitting) continue to cut grass right through November.

- Our Grounds team are now in full swing cutting hedges and clearing leaves. In addition, at this time of year we look at areas that require a bit more work to bring them up to standard, current projects include Pomeroy Crescent verges and the southern end of Lebburn Meadows in Dowds Farm.
- Our work to remove Poplar saplings and fly tipping on the strip of land adjacent Terrier Close is almost complete. The area looks cared for now and the increased visibility has so far stopped the constant fly tipping.



- SSE will be carrying out essential line clearance work over the coming months to clear the Power Lines that run from Gammon Close to Herald Rd Industrial Estate. The works will include coppicing all vegetation below the lines. Whilst the initial impact will be initially quite severe, it will quickly recover through 2024.



- This year we are trialling adding Yellow Rattle seed to some of our wildflower areas in line with the Pollinator Action Plan. We have chosen 8 sites across the town and will monitor how it impacts these areas. Yellow Rattle is a parasitic species of wildflower that attaches to the root systems of several grass species, slowing down their rate of growth. It cannot survive without a grass host. It benefits the wildflowers by reducing the competition from the more vigorous grasses. If this proves successful we will harvest some of the seed and increase the trial areas next year. The 8 sites are located at Goodalls Meadow, Coltsfoot Pond, 2000 Centre (rear building), St. Johns Rec. (northern end), Turnpike Car Park, Albert Road Cemetery, Dowds Farm, Bridget Mary Gardens and Westward Road



12. Other news

- 3 of the Grounds team passed their excavator and Grave preparation tests last month, so we now have a full compliment of staff who can prepare graves.

- We are still down on the number of Groundstaff since Cyril retired and this does have an impact on the day to day service.
- Rubbish continues to be fly tipped at the Rodaway recycling compound, adding extra burden to the Groundstaff and extra waste to arrange disposal of.



If there are any specific items that you would like more information on or would like me to include any other areas, please let me know.

Many thanks
Brett Athow
Operations Manager