

27 JULY 2011: LATEST NEWS ON WORK IN THE PARK

Work continues on the tree programme in the park with tree surgeon Dave Budden.

As everyone who has walked through the Park will be able to see, the majority of the first wave of work on the trees has been completed. We are focusing exclusively at present on trees which have been identified as presenting a potential or actual danger to public safety through disease, rot or neglect, and these have been felled. Here are a couple of examples 'before' and 'after', clearly showing the weaknesses inside the trees.



Here is tree 1405, familiar to walkers through the Park; before its felling, showing the long twisted crack in the trunk, and after, showing how far the crack had weakened the interior of the tree.



And here is tree 1388, one of the row of holm oaks by the churchyard wall; before its felling, showing how the disease inside the tree was visible from outside, and after, showing how the interior of the trunk was riddled and weakened.



The past few days have seen the tidying up of the 'brash', or left-over leaves and small branches. Alan Jupe brought in a special wood chipper and the branches have been turned into chippings which have been spread in the grounds as



mulch. The volume of brash is so great that it has been necessary to have small controlled burns behind the



Community Hall, with the ash being spread on the compost heap to add nutrients. If anyone would like to help themselves from the piles of chippings you are very welcome – bring a sack and take some away, but please keep it tidy!

We have also received permission to carry out ongoing 'crown lifting' throughout the Park, so you may see our tree surgeon here and there in the trees doing this work. This means removing or pruning the lower branches of our special trees; heavy trailing branches reaching down to the ground which will ultimately break under the weight of foliage and damage the tree.

In addition there has been some pruning of invasive laurel and bay trees from around the base of many of the trees on the top side of the park near to the Community Hall and behind the War Memorial (many of the bushy areas were found to contain drinks cans and bottles). This now provides a much more open look to the park and enables walkers in the park to see through the trees and also provides for greater safety and security as well as letting in light to the grass. This programme will continue over the next few weeks.

The top bed of the House lawns has been dug over in readiness for planting low-maintenance shrubs as it is a very dry area beneath the trees which of course absorb a lot of the water from the soil. A wasps' nest was identified by the Baring Road steps and has been dealt with.

On Saturday 23 July we were fortunate to have the help of a group of young people from Bessel Green Baptist Church in Sevenoaks, Kent, who had come to the Island for a few days 'Community Spirit' work and spent a day helping in the Park.



They cleared the whole of one of the rose beds of weeds, swept up piles of leaves and helped clear some of the brash generated by the tree work. Every contribution by our volunteer supporters helps to make the park more open and safer for everyone and we are very grateful for their help.

And here they are, taking a well-earned breather after their hard work.



At the last Green Gym visit, volunteers helped to clear part of the front garden of Church Lodge which is tenanted by an elderly lady and has become overgrown. Many positive comments have been received about the work being done in the Park which will be continued so that everyone can enjoy the fine surroundings.