

UPDATE ON WORK IN THE PARK: JANUARY 2012



Throughout the summer the park has been kept in a very tidy and well-maintained state. This is thanks in large part to some dedicated stalwart volunteers who have helped not only by planting and maintaining the borders with dahlias, Canna lilies, geraniums, petunias, begonias, chrysanthemums, African marigolds and other border plants but also through regular maintenance – watering twice a week and dead-

heading. The herbaceous border was cut right back last autumn and this summer as a result it put on a wonderful show. It took two weekends' work again in November to cut it back with much help, several pairs of secateurs and many trailer-loads to take all the cuttings away. The large flower pots will have to be cleared soon and prepared for next season. Help would, as always, be very welcome.



The Trust has received many compliments on the lines of 'the Park has never been so tidy and clear of rubbish'. Thank you to those walkers and our EuroCarParks personnel who patrol the Park and put rubbish into the bins.

The Trust has a professional contract to mow the grass on an 'as-needed' basis, with the result that it has been a lush green throughout the summer despite the shortage of rain. Most of the hedge-cutting has been done this year on a voluntary basis but it is proving too great a task without buying expensive professional equipment such as cutters and strimmers, which wear out surprisingly quickly; so with effect from the New Year the grass-cutting contract has been extended to include all hedge-cutting and strimming all over the park, including the children's play area, around the old putting green, the Park Road car park and hedges along Ward Avenue.



Disappointingly, damage has been caused to the tennis nets and posts through weather and continuous use, and the Trustees may have to consider reducing the number of courts available in 2012 while repair and maintenance are carried out. A number of new posts and nets will be needed and we would welcome offers of sponsorship – nets cost approximately £95 each and pairs of posts also cost £95.

However, as always, the most laborious, labour-intensive and ongoing task has been the collection of the leaves which have been falling since early autumn. Leaves have to be blown and raked into piles before being bagged into large sacks, collected by car and trailer and then put into piles to rot down in the collection area behind the Rotunda car park or, more recently, behind plastic fencing below the play area (right). The prevailing winds tend to make the leaves collect in a few main areas, most



collecting along the bottom path which we have tried to keep as clear as possible particularly as there are grid drains in that area which prevent flooding. A very small group of volunteers have met regularly on Wednesday and Saturday mornings to do this job and it would be nice to have some more help. Come and join us at 10am for a couple of hours – it would be greatly appreciated.

Janet Allan and Philip Thwaites with car and trailer have co-ordinated most of the garden work, as many Park users will have noted. Particular thanks also to Paul and Carol Hope who will be looking forward to seeing the appearance of the many daffodils which they planted in the top rose bed. Please contact Janet on 295612 if you can offer some non-strenuous gardening time.

Work on the trees continues, subject to budget restrictions. Regular users of the Park may well have noticed that the trees are better maintained, with regular pruning and lifting by our skilled and dedicated tree surgeon, Dave Budden. The worst problem has been that of clearing away the 'brash', or leaves and small twigs. Some has been burnt and some chipped, and helpers have been able to take some cut logs away for home burning.



Unfortunately, honey fungus has been identified in a number of tree-stumps; this is a widespread problem across the country and is almost impossible to eradicate, but at present it is only evident in the many rotten stumps in the Park. It is planned to remove as many of these stumps as possible, but this is a major task requiring significant effort and we must call on volunteer assistance.

Users of the Rotunda car park will have noticed the safety barriers; they have been erected as a safety measure to enable us to monitor any movement in the wall where the holm oak trees used to lean against it before their removal last year.

Local police and our security men regularly patrol parts of the Park and the House.

