

Shevington Parish Council
Clerk's Report to the Council Meeting of 25 November 2020

Christmas Shop Front Competition

Leaflets inviting local shopkeepers to take part have been either posted or delivered to all shops. Enclosed with them were letters of thanks from the Parish Council to business owners for their contribution to the well-being of the local community during the first lockdown.

Christmas Decorations

The Christmas trees are due to be fitted early during the week beginning 22 November and dressed later the same week. The new string lights have been delivered and are now with the tree dressing team. The garlands for the lamp standards in Appley Bridge and Shevington Moor and the lamp post motifs in the centre of Shevington have all been fitted. The lamp standards that bear the garlands have now had time clocks installed. These were paid for last financial year. Enviocare are installing and will remove the Heras security fencing around the Christmas trees free of charge.

I recently received an email from a resident who had returned to the Parish after having lived elsewhere for some time. The resident had emailed on behalf of herself and her friends to ask if the lights on the Christmas tree could be arranged horizontally instead of vertically. I explained that some of the lights were arranged vertically because they were an integral part of a waterfall star. The resident replied: *"Not to worry... we'll enjoy seeing the tree as it is. I promised my friends that I would email you... we'd been discussing it. We feel privileged to be back living in Shevington where our paternal ancestors lived. It's like coming home. Keep up the good work... it's a village to be very proud of."*

East Quarry, Appley Bridge

To date the only application to the Environment Agency for a Water Abstraction Licence in relation to East Quarry made on behalf of Maybrook Investments appears to have been the one submitted in June 2019 and withdrawn in March 2020. A FOI enquiry has been submitted to the EA to find out whether another one was submitted during the Summer, as reported. The enquiry has been acknowledged – a reply is awaited.

Annual Inspection of Property

A report was submitted to the Policy & General Purposes Committee for its next meeting and I have had a site meeting with a contractor to obtain quotes for a number of repair jobs. These will need to be assessed in terms of urgency, the need for additional quotes and their affordability this financial year.

New Trees for Memorial Garden

I have met with the resident who has been given permission to plant a new Tibetan Cherry in memory of her mother in the Memorial Garden to agree a location. In view of the possible issues experienced by the existing Tibetan Cherry with regard to light the Shevington in Bloom Co-ordinator also attended the socially distanced site meeting to provide advice. By mutual agreement the tree will be planted immediately behind one of the flower beds in the central section that SinB maintain. SinB will tend to the tree when it has been planted. As the existing cherry tree in this vicinity is due to be removed, SinB will also fundraise for a matching Tibetan Cherry to be planted behind the other flower bed. These will act as replacements for the two beech trees that died a couple of years ago.

Trees from the Queen's Commonwealth Canopy

The SinB Co-ordinator is delighted that the Parish Council have agreed to plant the birch sapling in Memorial Park. However, as the sapling still needs to grow on, she is currently sourcing a larger pot into which to transfer it. Once this has been done Cllr Horridge will move the sapling to the 'in Bloom' section at Forest Fold, where it will be further developed. It may well have to be planted out in the grounds at Forest Fold and grown on further before it can be transferred to the park. It seems that there is also a rowan sapling which will be given the same treatment as the birch sapling and we are welcome to have that too.

Remembrance 2020

The War Memorial was illuminated for one and a half hours on the evening of Thursday, 5 November. This was part of a boroughwide initiative and paid for by Wigan Council. Photographs were put on social media. It has been reported that approximately 10 people at any one time came over to view it.

No official formal Acts of Remembrance were held at either Appley Bridge or Shevington on Remembrance Sunday. Cllr Grimes laid a wreath on behalf of the Parish Council at Appley Bridge War Memorial and Cllr I Whiteley laid one at the War Memorial in Shevington. A wreath was also laid at the Miners' Memorial in St Anne's Churchyard. Representatives of other organisations laid wreaths at the War Memorial in Shevington throughout the day.

People had been asked to pay their respects at other times of day and not to congregate at 11am. However, it has been reported that about 100 people came, - not all at the same time - paid their respects and left that morning. Amongst them was a detail of three from the Police, who came to lay a wreath on behalf of Greater Manchester Police. I understand that a short informal ceremony took place and that the people present were socially distanced.

The Police are notified each year of the arrangements for Remembrance Sunday locally and they usually attend and supervise the parade. When told that there would be no formal arrangements this year they advised that they would be attending as usual and would make sure that, if other people arrived, social distancing was maintained. This was something the Police did at all War Memorials in the Borough. It has been reported that they were quite satisfied with what had taken place in Shevington.

It has been reported that another small informal ceremony took place at the War Memorial in Shevington at 11am on Remembrance Day itself when about 20 local residents arrived to pay their respects. Again, I have been assured, social distancing was maintained.

Stop Tap Repair at Forest Fold Allotments

This has been carried out – it should now be much easier to turn off the water on the main allotments at Forest Fold, as the tap is nearer the surface and more accessible. It can also be found under its own easily-identifiable dedicated cover, so it is not necessary to try to guess which flag it is under, as before.

Minor Repairs at Forest Fold

A small fence panel which had been damaged by illegal entrants onto the bowling green has recently been replaced and painted with green wood preservative by a contractor we use to carry out minor work at a cost of £50 in total. The same contractor also carried out repairs to the felt on the roof of the Bowling Club pavilion. The cost of this work is being covered by the Bowling Club.

Play Equipment in Memorial Park

Wigan Council Playspaces repairs team visited the play area in Memorial Park recently to rub down and paint the underside of the double slide as identified by the ROSPA inspection. After rubbing the flaking paint and rust off the slide the repairs team established that the metal underneath that forms part of the platform is very thin and may only last out this winter. They will keep monitoring the condition of the metal and inform the Council if it gets any worse and action needs to be taken. The action Playspaces are referring to is complete removal of the item.

Forest Fold Allotments

The newly elected Committee of the Tenants' Association recently met virtually for the first time. Shaun Boyle has been elected as Chairman and Angela Power is the Secretary. They will be issuing all members of the Association with their Privacy Notice.

Carole Miles

We received the sad news earlier this week that former Parish Councillor Carole Miles lost her sister very suddenly. I have sent an e-sympathy card from the Parish Council. Carole has sent her thanks.

K.M.P. 20.11.20