

## **Town Managers Report**

### **Current Projects**

#### **East Midlands in Bloom 2018**

Judging took place on 13 July. Thank you to all sponsors including the 83 shops that sponsored hanging baskets, all were recognised in the Portfolio submitted to the judges. A total of 133 hanging baskets are on display this summer.

A special thanks to our regular gardening volunteers, David, Simon, Tim and Barry, and our Grounds Maintenance team as well as the U3A Gardening Group, two of whom led the judges on the judging route together with myself and Paul Henry. Also thank you to the lovely people who generously gave up their time for making the judging route a pleasure to behold. Thank you also to Syston in Bloom for their tremendous work at Syston Railway Station and other areas of the town and for assisting David Smith with the preparation of the judging route.

The Portfolio, showcasing seasonal bloom and areas not covered by the judging route will be uploaded to the Syston Town Council website and an electronic copy has been circulated to all Councillors.

This year was particularly stressful as David Smith was on holiday just before and on the actual judging day, and also for me as I returned from holiday two days before judging day. However, the judges were very amenable and offered excellent ideas for further development along the route as we walked.

Two schools showcased their school gardens, Merton School and The Gables Nursery. We had six entries into the Front Garden Competition; Wyevale Garden Centre and East Goscote Nurseries provided prize vouchers for the winners. Four pubs entered the competition for Best Pub Garden. The Awards Ceremony takes place on 19 September 2018.

#### **Syston Regeneration Project**

Cllrs Henry, Vardy, Lucas and Barkley together with the Town Manager and Assistant to Town Manager, met on 6 June to assess the information obtained from the stakeholder consultation on the Syston Regeneration Project.

An Action Plan will be drawn up during August when we have an interval from weekly Council meetings, which is always a useful time to allow Officers to catch up on projects.

#### **CCTV Coverage**

I have met with a representative from ADT to continue with the Melton Road project and also to obtain quotations for CCTV coverage of an additional park.

### Melton Road Site

ADT have provided a new quotation for a camera to be sited near the railway station and this has been reported back and approved by Development Committee, subject to a more realistic quotation from BT Outreach for the connection, which is being sought by John Hadfield of CBC.

### Parks

#### Archdale Park

Parks surveyed were Archdale Street Park and the remainder of Central Park.

Archdale Park would be very easy capture on CCTV cameras but the major drawback is the lack of an electricity supply to connect into. There is an industrial estate next door to the park but there are no buildings close enough to the park. The cost of installing an electricity supply would be greater than the cost of the CCTV cameras and therefore, this is probably not a viable option in the short term.

#### Central Park

Coverage currently covers the Skate Park and a small area of pavement to the left.

I have received a quotation for the majority of Central Park coverage, the Peace Gardens and the pathway from the Bowling Green building facing towards Melton Road. The cost is circa £14K and this will be taken to the September Amenities Committee meeting.

### **Replacement Windows and Fire Door at the Community Centre**

Three windows in the Brookside Suite and the fire door are in need of replacement. There is a Shire Community grant available to fund partial costs of double glazing and I have obtained three quotations for double glazed units and a new fire door.

The quotations will be taken to Resources Committee in September.

### **Winfield Park – RoSPA**

I am currently in negotiations with Proludic whom installed the new Winfield Park playground due to the recent RoSPA report highlighting the inadequate ground cover material, as the site is still under warranty. After initially trying to dismiss our claim, they are now co-operating. I will keep Amenities Committee updated.

### **WWI End Centenary and Procession**

Recruitment of volunteer stewards is still on-going, and it appears that most people that volunteered last year are willing to do so again.

I have obtained a verbal quotation from Traffix to traffic manage the road closures (Melton Road, High Street and Upper Church Street, as well as affected side roads). A written quotation is expected very shortly.

I have submitted an application to LCC for the road closures and am in the process of determining how many signs are needed as LCC are already requesting orders, to avoid last

year's debacle when they ran out of signs. However, if we appoint the traffic management company, I would expect that they will take over this part of the arrangements.

I am booked on to a traffic marshalling course at LCC provided free of charge and have also booked Ursula Southan onto it in view of the road closure arrangements for the Christmas Event. I have also arranged for Phil Waldren of the Royal British Legion to attend.

### **Royal Standard Flag at Central Park**

Initially I thought that one quotation would suffice as it was going to be less than £500 but installation costs have taken it over the threshold and a second quotation is now being sought. I have a meeting arranged with Phil Waldren of RBL in August to continue with the planning of the WWI End Centenary arrangements.

### **WWI End Centenary Bench**

The bench has now been delivered and is in safe storage, it is hoped that this will be installed close to the Peace Gardens in Central Park w/c 23 July.

### **High Street Lorry Problems**

Highways installed a hard rubber bell stop in front of Gambles Funeral Directors on High Street in Syston within the last two years as a preventative measure against lorries hitting the building which is very close to the road on a narrow corner of a very busy part of Syston. Whilst this has helped in steering lorries away from the approach to the roof, when the lorries steer back to the left, they are veering too close to the pavement; This week, the far side of the roof has been clipped by a lorry, which has caused damage to the roof but also significant damage to the beams inside the roof. When the roof is repaired, the scaffolding takes up some of the road and traffic lights have to be installed, causing traffic congestion on the High Street, if this was a "one-off" that would be acceptable to motorists, but it is happening on a frequent basis and the funeral directors are having to deal with a lot of negative publicity as a result.

There is also the health and safety problem of the narrow pavements on the road, I know of five occasions where pedestrians have been hit by a wing mirror from a lorry driving by this narrow section of pavement. These are able-bodied people, those with mobility issues are far more vulnerable.

It has been suggested that should a lorry hit the bell stop at speed, the lorry would be bounced across the road into on-coming traffic, which is also a cause for concern, although I think that Gambles would not wish to have it removed.

Gambles have asked Syston Town Council to raise the possibility of the installation of a road narrowing system or similar along this route. They have said they have campaigned for nine years with LCC Highways whom eventually installed the bell stop, but that more needs to be done.

I have therefore, written to LCC Highways asking them to consider traffic calming measure or similar in order to avoid further damaging one of the oldest building in Syston (over 400 years old) and Grade II Listed. Gambles are having problems insuring the building due to the number of insurance claims they are having to make.

It would be a tragic loss to Syston if Gambles were forced to move out and the building be left to deteriorate; and even worse if a pedestrian is injured by a passing lorry on the extremely narrow pavement.

Both County Councillors have been copied into my correspondence with LCC Highways and Cllr T Barkley is fully supportive of some sort of remedial action. It is possible that James Poland has not seen his emails yet.

### **National Citizens Service (NCS)**

STC is hosting students on the NCS scheme again this summer, last year they did some fantastic work in our parks and this was used in our Portfolio this year.

This August they will be focussing on public awareness campaigns, I have suggested the following:

- Dog fouling
- Litter
- Selfish parking
- ASB

If anyone has further ideas, please let me know.

### **Food Festival**

On-going.

### **MUGA (Multi Use Games Area)**

Project now terminated.

### **Councillor Recruitment**

In readiness for the election next year, STC should embarking on a public awareness campaign. This will commence with STC having a stall at the Syston Carnival in September, with a section for Councillor recruitment and another area showcasing our achievements. We could also use Syston Town News, STC website and social media to raise awareness and explain the work of a Councillor. It may also be worthwhile hosting an informal Council Open/Recruitment Day.

If any Councillors are interested in being involved in the arrangements for this, it might be worthwhile holding a meeting during August to devise a plan. Anyone interested should contact the office.

### **Panels – updates since Amenities Committee Meeting**

#### **New Cemetery**

The tender specification was evaluated by Procurement Manager at CBC, David Howkins, whom suggested a few changes to Appendix D, in order to be compliant with the National Contract Finder conditions. He discussed this with me and also with CDS. CDS had confirmed to David Howkins that all changes had been made, but on reading through it, I found this not to be the case. I advised David Howkins of my concerns and he confirmed that these changes should be made. This is currently on-going, as Justin Smith of CDS is very

elusive at times. However, I am currently in the process of uploading the majority of the content to the National Contractor Website, which is a time-consuming exercise, and I am confident that the final document of the tender specification should be uploaded next week.

The cemetery plans signs have arrived, one is on display at the community centre and a larger sign is being installed at the cemetery by the Grounds Staff w/c 23 July.

#### Tree Panel

The Diocese of Leicester have been supplied with supplementary information regarding our application for further works to be carried out on the three trees to the West of St Peter and St Paul Church. Still awaiting a decision.

Quotations for the first stage of the rolling tree survey, starting in the Merton Ward will be discussed at a meeting of the Tree Panel in mid-August.

#### Pavilion Panel

I met with a representative from the Football Association this week. She provided me with some useful advice on how to obtain funding from the FA and the Football Foundation. She has confirmed that the FA will work with us on our funding bid, as long as we are compliant with FA regulations. There are a few hoops to jump through she is arranging a further meeting with me and one of her colleagues in mid-August in order to provide me with a plan of action to take our bid forward. I will be arranging a Pavilion Panel meeting to report to for around the beginning of September.

#### St Peter and St Paul Church Yard Panel

Good progress being made with the Panel, a contractor has commenced clearance work in the churchyard today. The East Midlands in Bloom judges were very impressed with our plans but were also keen for us to keep some areas as "natural" for sustaining wildlife.

#### Christmas Event Panel

Traffic Management companies are quoting to manage the road closure and diversions. Good progress being made and reports are being assessed by the Amenities Committee.

#### **SOS Charity Fashion Show**

An SOS Fashion Show has been planned at STC for Friday, 2 November 2018. The event including a raffle is to raise money for the Chairman's Charity, The Woodland Trust.

#### **Diary Dates**

- 25 July – Children's Activities Central Park
- 4 August 2018; 10-11am Councillors Surgery at Syston Community Centre
- 6-17 August – NCS Students in Syston, base Syston Community Centre
- 8 August - Children's Activities Central Park
- 15 August - Children's Activities Central Park
- 31 August to 2 September Rotary Club Beer Festival, Syston Community Centre
- 1 September Syston Carnival, Central Park

Please remember to join up to our Facebook page for further developments at Syston Town Council:

[social@systontc.org.uk](mailto:social@systontc.org.uk)

Website: [www.systontc.org.uk](http://www.systontc.org.uk)

Twitter: @Syston\_TC

Catherine Voyce - Town Manager