

Annual Report from Chair of CAC March 13th 2019

Throughout the last year the Civic Amenities Committee has been working hard to progress a variety of projects, both in respect of maintenance and improvements. We are obliged to follow certain procedures when spending public monies and this means that some matters take much longer than would be wished for.

Benches

CAC has long hoped to replace benches on Kings Walk and this is still the case however this will be reviewed as necessary after the proposed major works to the sea-wall are completed.

Swans

Sadly a black swan was attacked by a dog on The Lawn and this then became the subject of an investigation by Teignbridge District Council, who own the land, and also the Police. The dog owner was later successfully prosecuted. The incident raised many concerns regarding the welfare of the swans and the waterfowl in general and there were many representations from members of the public. The CAC took the matter very seriously and has continued to pursue various requests and suggestions. As a result TDC was contacted regarding one suggestion that the path alongside the Brook be made a dog free path. We have no response so far. However another suggestion, that signs indicating free-range waterfowl on the roads coming into the Town has

been pursued and begins to look more promising. We hope to agree a plan with DCC in the near future.

The Swans were particularly keen to raise families in the last year, regularly nesting and laying eggs which resulted in 12 cygnets of which 8 reached adulthood. Naturally there is a limit to how many Swans can realistically be kept on the Brook especially with regard to keeping a healthy breeding stock.

Currently we have 1 black swans and it seems that one pair at least has already begun to prepare for the next family. According to one of the regular reports to CAC we also have approximately 50 other waterfowl comprising several interesting breeds.

In addition, CAC is following a proposal to replace the rather poor quality fencing from the waterfowl enclosure along the Brunswick and up to the next footbridge, with quality fencing to match that elsewhere along that side of the Brook.

We are also in the process of arranging the installation of an information board concerning the swans, on the West side of the Brook in Tuck's Plot which was designed by the Warden who assisted during last Summer.

You will be aware that for some time the path on the East side of Tuck's Plot has been periodically blocked by large and rather ugly barriers in order to protect the swans which have been nesting on the island below the beacon? These are soon to be replaced with specially designed gates which can be locked closed or open according to when the swans or cygnets need protection.

Littleweek Play Park

CAC was made aware of the deterioration of this play park some time ago and following a site visit by members of CAC we closed off the climbing apparatus as a matter of Health and Safety. Although the park is inspected annually by ROSPA we agreed that it was not in a good condition and we decided to approach the Finance and General Purposes Committee for funding to carry out renovation. A further visit to the site enabled members to make contact with some of the users, who prepared a 'wish list' which has formed part of our brief and enquiries towards a new Play Park. Subsequently we have followed the necessary processes and we believe that in the very near future we will be in a position to appoint a company to carry out the work, intending that it will be completed early this year.

Cutting of Grass verges

CAC is responsible for arranging the periodic mowing of the grass verges around the Town, other than the splays at the junctions with main roads which is the responsibility of Devon County Council. The first mowing takes into account the need to allow the narcissi to die back. Last year CAC also arranged for weed eradication on the edges of the roads.

Town and Parish Audit

Once again CAC arranged another Audit of works needed for example to drains/potholes/road signs etc,. This was carried out by members identifying various problems and also by including matters brought to the Council by residents. The Clerk has forwarded matters contained in the Audit to the

relevant Authorities for action and the Audit is up-dated as works are dealt with and/or as others are brought forward.

Liaison with TDC officer re green spaces.

CAC holds regular meetings with the TDC officer responsible for the management of green spaces here and those things presented to him at our last meeting in October are currently being dealt with. The Chair and other available members meet for a walk around the Town with the officer to identify any problem areas needing attention, such as gaps in planting, overgrown hedges and footpaths and so on. Included are those problems brought to us by residents. A report is then produced for the purpose of our records and this allows us to prompt if any works are outstanding. The officer involved is most helpful and photographs everything which needs attention so that he can give staff specific orders for the work.

Community Notice boards

Latterly CAC has begun to seek out designs and groups or organisations willing to take responsibility for Community Notice Boards. One of the first will be at the renewed Littleweek Playpark.

There are many other tasks undertaken by the CAC for the benefit of the community and it is always most satisfying to see problems solved and good ideas come to fruition.

Cllr Val Mawhood

Chair CAC