

**Shevington Parish Council  
Annual Inspection of Property - Report  
Policy & General Purposes Committee – 4 September 2024**

**Gathurst Lane Car Park**

**Monday, 5 August 2024 – 6:00pm to 6:10pm**

Present: Cllrs Mike Grimes and Chris Horridge and the Clerk

Apologies: Cllr Helen Thompson

- In general the car park surface is in good condition. Two drains are visible. In 2023 a small area around one of the drains was breaking up and had become a trip hazard. A quotation for the repair was approved in 2023 and the work on lifting the drain was carried out earlier this year. [The final stage of adding a layer of tarmac is due to be completed in the near future.](#) The other drain is now also showing signs of having sunk since 2023 and the tarmac around it is beginning to crack. [The contractor will assess it when he completes the work on the first drain.](#)
- The hedge is in need of trimming. [This was addressed by the grounds maintenance team when they visited on Wednesday, 7 August 2024.](#)

**Shevington Recreation Ground**

**Monday, 5 August 2024 – 6:10pm to 6:20pm**

Present: Cllrs Mike Grimes and Chris Horridge and the Clerk

Apologies: Cllr Helen Thompson

- Both of the Parish Council's bins have been replaced over the past 18 months and are in good condition.
- Grounds maintenance (which is the responsibility of the Recreation Ground Trustees) needs to be extended to the border between the footpath and the housing. Some of the trees and hedgerows need pruning back to prevent them getting in the way of people using the walkway.
- The edging of the footpath and wide bands on both sides of footpath are overgrown and need to be exposed.

[An email has been sent to the Secretary to the Trustees to advise him about the above findings. He has replied that the Trustees have a contractor who is responsible for maintaining the area referred to under the second bullet point.](#)

**Shevington Memorial Park & Garden**

**Monday, 5 August 2024 – 6:20pm to 6:50pm**

Present: Cllrs Mike Grimes and Chris Horridge and the Clerk

Apologies: Cllr Helen Thompson

- The park continues to have severe drainage problems during periods of heavy rain. Pooling of water makes grounds maintenance at the Church Lane end of the park difficult. Over the past year the degree of ground saturation has been such that it has at times been difficult to reach and mow all areas of the park.
- The bins in the park are emptied twice a week by the contractor (Wigan Council). In general, the litter situation is under control. The Caretaker collects litter on three

**Shevington Parish Council**  
**Annual Inspection of Property - Report**  
**Policy & General Purposes Committee – 4 September 2024**

occasions a week. All bins are in good condition. The bin located directly behind a bench near the northern end of the park was removed earlier this year following a suggestion made by members in 2023, thereby reducing the number of bins in the park by one. It was used to replace a bin located in the Recreation Ground that was past its use by date.

- The Caretaker also cleans the benches and sweeps the footpaths from time to time, as necessary.
- The play area is checked (and cleared, if necessary) by the contractor (Wigan Council), who also inspects the play equipment once a week and arranges for statutory inspections to be carried out and for repairs to be undertaken. Rotovation of sand is meant to take place once a month, if it is not too wet. All weeds are meant to be treated and removed regularly. Both sand rotovation and weed treatment are currently overdue. [This has been reported to Wigan Council.](#)
- Closure of the gates to the play areas depends on the conscientiousness of the user and they are often left open, enabling dogs not on leads to enter. New warning signage was attached to each gate in 2023 and is plainly visible, but often ignored. The installation of self-closing gates would be desirable. Wigan Council had looked into what could be done to address this in 2023 and had provided costings. These were considered to be too high at the time. One of the gates is now in need of repair or replacement, as the elements of the closing mechanism are no longer aligned. [This has been reported to Wigan Council.](#)
- A small number of paving flags along the footpath running from the Church Lane entrance to the park to the northern entrance in Shevington Lane have been loosened by root activity and by rain. These need attention. Arrangements have been made for a contractor to carry out the work as soon as possible.
- At the entrance to the Memorial Garden near the play area there is a sudden drop from the paved footpath in the park. This has sunk lower in the recent past. There follows a short stretch where there is no crushed stone pathway. On a long term basis the above all need to be addressed by raising the surface of the crushed stone footpath when it is being re-surfaced, which will need to be done, as it is no longer integrated and in good condition. Costings were considered by the Finance Committee in September 2023 and the work was deferred pending the availability of more funding and quotations from other contractors.
- 20 trees felled over the past few years will need to be re-instated. The Trees & Woodlands Officer has stated that this can be done after the new drainage has been installed. A tree near the middle entrance to the park in Shevington Lane seems to be leaning more than it has been in the recent past and will need to be removed on H&S grounds. [Advice has been sought from the Trees & Woodlands Officer at Wigan Council.](#)
- One or two of the trees have dead branches that need removing. Two or three trees have fungi growing at root level. This needs to be monitored. [Photos of the fungi have been sent to the Trees & Woodlands Officer. The arboricultural survey of the trees ordered earlier this year has been completed and the report with](#)

**Shevington Parish Council**  
**Annual Inspection of Property - Report**  
**Policy & General Purposes Committee – 4 September 2024**

recommendations has been received. Photos of the fungi were also sent to the arboricultural consultants.

- Two young memorial trees planted in the Memorial Garden and cared for by Shevington in Bloom look as though they have died. SinB have been contacted and are looking into the way forward. They have so far contacted the supplier of the trees. They have suggested that it is possible that the trees have been overwhelmed by the water-logging in the garden and have advised that we wait until Spring of 2025 to ascertain whether the trees have died.
- The railings behind the 'out of use' bus stop at the Church Lane entrance to the park opposite the Recreation Ground car park are damaged and rusting. The railings are in poorer condition than in 2023. They are in need of repair or replacement. This has been reported again to Wigan Council. Similar railings at two other entrances to the park are in good condition.
- Most benches in the park are in good condition at present. All have been either repainted, cleaned with a power-washer or re-varnished since the inspection in 2021. The family responsible for the care of the southernmost memorial bench beside the play area were informed of the signs of rot on its feet in 2023.
- The trees along the fence line with St Bernadette's school were inspected. One of the smaller trees along the boundary of the park with St Bernadette's School looks as though it may have died. If so, it will need to be removed.
- A few years ago willow whips were planted along the fence line in an attempt to aid drainage in the park. Some or all of these will need to be removed, as they will cause significant issues in this area in relation to the fence in the future. The fence at the front of the school was replaced earlier this year. That along the boundary with the park is due for replacement when funding permits. When this happens the new fencing will be installed several feet away from the trees to allow for their future trunk growth.
- A small amount of fly tipping was evident in the northeastern corner of the park. This will need to be removed.
- Restoration of the top surface of the trimtrail path continues to be a matter of urgency. The base of the trimtrail is sound, but the edging needs to be reinstated and the surface needs to be replaced. Most sections of the path need to be widened. The grounds maintenance team will endeavour to widen the path through the strategic use of weedkiller when the weather permits.
- There are gaps in several sections of hawthorn hedging. These will need to be filled with fresh hedging in the Autumn.

**Vicarage Lane Fields**

**Monday, 6 August 2024 – 6:50pm to 7:15pm**

Present: Cllrs Mike Grimes and Chris Horridge and the Clerk

Apologies: Cllr Helen Thompson

- The sports pitches look very good and are well maintained.

**Shevington Parish Council  
Annual Inspection of Property - Report  
Policy & General Purposes Committee – 4 September 2024**

- A section of fence to the left of the gate at the entrance to the car park is missing. The Parish Council has agreed to replace this at some time in the future.
- The hedgerows surrounding the site have re-grown and will need to be strimmed in the Autumn before the fly-tipping – which is currently hidden – can be removed by the Community Payback Scheme. The civil engineering company that had previously agreed to remove it free of charge has ceased trading.
- There are still a couple of areas of scrubland that are in need of maintenance and a use for them needs to be identified.
- The allotments continue to need a drainage system, as drainage on this part of the site and along the perimeter of the site is poor. This is particularly evident along the footpath between Dixon Avenue and the PROW from Vicarage Lane Fields to Crooke Village. The allotments society have been given permission to address this issue themselves.
- Litter and some fly tipping was visible in Little Wood. It will need to be removed.

**Crooke Village and Otters Croft Wood**

**Wednesday, 7 August 2024 – 2:00pm till 3:30pm**

Present: Cllrs Mike Grimes and John Whiteley, Mr Mike Thomas (CVRA Chair) and the Clerk

Apologies: Mr David Crook

- The new section of knee high fence constructed by M&Y is in place and has an opening wide enough to permit vehicles to access the green for maintenance purposes and Christmas tree installation and dressing.
- The Platinum Jubilee tree has died despite having been nurtured by the CVRA. It will need to be replaced.
- It is thought that the majority of the tree whips planted a three years ago in the centre of Crooke Park have survived. The whips are still very small and cannot be seen above the long grass protecting them. Several fruit trees that were donated recently have been planted amongst the whips.
- The paths on the field are no longer overgrown with grass. A group from the Community Payback scheme were involved in the work of widening the paths by cutting back the overgrowth.
- The Parish Council's two bins in Crooke Village are in good condition, as are the planters, which are blooming prolifically this year.
- The bench that was removed for repair in 2022 has recently been replaced by a new one.
- The green spaces and the village as a whole are maintained free of litter by residents who carry out regular litter picks.
- The trees in Otters Croft Wood have recently been surveyed by an arboriculturalist and his report has been received.
- The remains of an old, damaged barbed wire fence along the boundary of the wood

**Shevington Parish Council**  
**Annual Inspection of Property - Report**  
**Policy & General Purposes Committee – 4 September 2024**

was observed in 2023. It was recommended that the whole of the boundary would need to be checked and any elements of the old fence would need to be removed for H&S reasons. The fence is still in place. [In 2023 a local contractor was invited to assess the boundary and provide a costing for removing the barbed wire. This is still being chased.](#)

### **Forest Fold Site**

**Thursday, 8 August 2024 – 6pm to 7:40pm**

Present: Cllrs Bill McKnight, John Whiteley, Chris Horridge and Mike Grimes  
Mrs Eileen Longmore (Co-opted P&GP Committee member, ABinB and FFTA),  
Mr Mike Dickinson (Chair FFTA – at main allotment site),  
Mr Jimmy Jones (FFTA – at raised bed allotments and main allotment site),  
Mr Andy Moakes (Vice Chair FFTA – at main allotment site - and SVBC – at bowling green) and the Clerk

### **Raised Bed Allotments**

- The raised beds in the enclosure and the 'Edible Appley Bridge' raised beds were admired.
- The woodchip surface between the raised beds has largely been replaced by grass, which is strimmed regularly by the grounds maintenance team.
- The communal shed provided for tenants was leaning heavily last year, creating an H&S issue. The shed was replaced last Spring.
- One of the neighbours in Broadriding Road has removed old fencing and left a small opening between his garden and the raised bed area. This will need to be addressed.
- Another neighbour in Broadriding Road has been fly-tipping over his fence into Plot 30 and has failed to replace fencing that he has removed. [He has been sent a letter asking him to address the issues.](#)

### **Bowling Green Site**

- A great deal of renovation work has been carried out on the bowling green surface during 2023 in order to reduce the thatch layer that has continued to cause problems and to remove moss. As a result the green looked much improved.
- Earlier this year the SVBC secured a grant for the materials needed to re-instate the wooden boards around the boundary of the green. Volunteers from the SVBC carried out the work involved in installing the boards. The edges are now well supported and the green looks quite smart.
- The peripheral areas are being maintained regularly and weeds are under control. Some members of the bowling club are working on enhancing the flower beds surrounding the green by introducing flowering plants.
- The moss in the car park and within the peripheral areas of the bowling green is being kept under control by the grounds maintenance team.
- The weeds within the storage area have received attention several times this year.
- The hedge is due to be pruned this month. [The grounds maintenance team have begun this work, but it is still a work in progress.](#)
- The toilets continue to be cleaned regularly.

**Shevington Parish Council**  
**Annual Inspection of Property - Report**  
**Policy & General Purposes Committee – 4 September 2024**

**Main Allotments**

- The allotments are largely in very good condition and well cultivated. The FFTA Committee inspect them regularly and advise if any require enforcement action to be taken. [Only two plots are currently subject to enforcement action.](#)
- The grass along the centre of the road through the allotments is being strimmed regularly by the contractor and weeds in both car parks are being kept under control.

**Stockley Park**

**Thursday, 8 August 2024 – 7:50pm to 8:10pm**

Present: Cllrs John Whiteley and Mike Grimes, members of the Friends of Stockley Park and the Clerk

- The overall quality of grounds maintenance, particularly grass cutting and weeding (as provided by Wigan Council's grounds maintenance team) is still poor. However, the FSP have worked hard to find alternative ways of addressing the issues.
- The footpaths that in past years needed to be treated with weedkiller and edged to help prevent grass from encroaching onto them have recently been edged and cleared by a contractor provided by M&Y.
- The sand in the play areas needs to be rotovated and the weeds growing in it are in need of removal. This is Wigan Council's responsibility.
- The suggestion that lighting should be provided along the narrower footpath through the park from Back Lane to Woodnook Road was discussed. The FSP are still working on its introduction.
- The FSP group have succeeded in introducing new planters and new benches to the park over the past year and several railing planters have been provided by Moss Bank Nurseries. New outdoor gym equipment has been installed and was officially opened by a former Olympian.
- The Friends group are very pleased with the new accessible gate that has recently been installed by M&Y.
- The Jubilee tree was hit hard by the warm, dry spell early in 2023 and has died. It will need to be replaced.

**Whiteacre Park**

**Thursday, 8 August – 8:20pm to 8:40pm**

Present: Cllrs Mike Grimes and John Whiteley and the Clerk

- The hedge has not been pruned so far this year and a great deal of detritus has collected at its base.
- The overall quality of grass cutting and weeding continues to be very poor. Indeed it has deteriorated significantly.

**Shevington Parish Council  
Annual Inspection of Property - Report  
Policy & General Purposes Committee – 4 September 2024**

- The footpaths need to be edged to help prevent grass from encroaching onto them. One or two have been cleared, but the rest have virtually disappeared.
- The maintenance of the sand in the play areas is not as good as that in other parks.
- The planters outside the park are all well maintained by the Parish Council's contractor.
- The Jubilee tree that was planted in March 2023 has died and will need to be replaced.

**Planters**

All planters owned by the Parish Council are in good condition and well-maintained by the contractor. The concrete planters at Crooke Village were re-painted in 2022. Those at the stations are on the list to be re-painted by Northern's volunteers.

**Bins**

The Parish Council's bins underwent a condition survey in 2023. Most were found to be in good condition. A programme of replacement of those that were not was agreed. Six were replaced during the Spring of 2023 and a further four were replaced in the Spring of 2024. Another three will be replaced next financial year.

**Notice Boards**

The notice board at Gathurst Station is in need of repair. The door to one of the casings has come off and is in storage and the door to the other casing is now hanging on for dear life. Arrangements had been made by the Clerk in 2023 to meet on site with a fabricator to discuss what needed to be done, but it was not accessible throughout 2023 as Northern had put Heras fencing around the area with a view to constructing an accessible toilet. The toilet has been constructed, but the notice board still cannot be accessed, because the toilet is not in use and is still surrounded by Heras fencing.