

PROPERTIES WORKING PARTY

Members 2007-08: Cllrs Hancock (Chairman), Thompson, Winchester, Knowles, Thornley

The Properties Working Party looks after the Playing Fields, Cemetery and Village Greens. We are fortunate in Harbury in having a large area for recreational use which for the most part is used responsibly. Unfortunately, following the Carnival, an illegal 'rave' was organised resulting in very considerable disturbance to residents and large quantities of rubbish, some of it broken glass being left on the field. Thanks to the intervention of the Police and the Parish Council, those responsible did clear up the mess the following day. We have met with the Carnival Committee to look at ways of ensuring no recurrence this year.

The safety of the play equipment is a priority and it is regularly subject to professional inspection and we aim to deal with identified problems promptly. The chain preventing vehicular access to the field from the car park has been repeatedly vandalised and has now been replaced with two retractable bollards. The fence around the tennis courts is in need of attention and this will be undertaken jointly by the Parish Council and the Tennis Club. The Council is currently working with the Village Hall Committee to improve the boundary at the rear of the Hall and quotations for the work are currently being sought.

Providing a BMX track at the top of the field is an ongoing project largely taken on by Councillor Thornley. Planning permission has been obtained and shortly the excess soil which has accumulated around the sides of the cemetery will be moved to the field for the construction for which grant aid is being pursued.

The path in the cemetery has been extended which makes access to graves much easier. A risk assessment has been carried out on the gravestones, a number of which are very unstable. It is proving extremely difficult to contact relatives and the Council is currently considering how best to undertake the work of making the loose headstones safe.

Dog mess is still a problem around the village. The Council has installed 3 new dog bins in Vicarage Lane, Bull Ring Farm Road, and Mill Street.

The small garden in Chapel Street has sadly become a problem area. The bench (in memory of Mr Cecil Parkhurst) has been vandalised and has been

removed for repair and probable re-siting. The garden will be renovated and we have asked for the Horticultural Society's help with this. A larger litter bin will be installed and we are considering whether to replace the bench with a more robust form of seating.

I would like to thank my fellow Working Party members-Councillors Thompson, Thornley, Winchester and Knowles for their hard work over the last year. My particular thanks to Councillor Winchester who has now retired from the Council and will be much missed.

Sharon Hancock. (Chairman)