

Item 7 Re-pointing & repairs to the Church wall

Hi Taila,

Further to our visit to the church with Keith Attowe last week, I'm writing to confirm my thoughts:

The wall on the corner of Church Street and Surrogate Street has been pushed over by pressure exerted by the growth of the root ball of the adjoining Ash? tree. This has clearly been going on for many years and I suspect the replacement footpath, laid 8-10 years ago? was butted up to a distorted wall. Whilst the wall is unlikely to present an imminent risk of collapse, things aren't going to get any better and the damage and distortion will gradually worsen over time. There are three options as far as I'm concerned to deal with the problem.

1. Simply take down and rebuild the affected section of wall - from the crack on the corner to the first pier in Surrogate Street. This is the cheapest option but will leave the wall vulnerable to continued pressure from the growing tree and will therefore have a limited lifespan.
2. Do likewise but excavate between the inner face of the wall and the tree and install a void former (compressible material - usually polystyrene) to absorb the pressure from the growing root mass. Sounds odd, but is very common in more complex foundation designs!
3. Rebuild the wall on a high level foundation (just below footpath level) supported by screw piles which will penetrate the tree roots and allow them to grow under the wall without applying pressure to it.

Options 2 and 3 are clearly more expensive (3 more than 2) and may meet resistance due to conservation/listing/tree preservation issues. The other potential option would be to fell the offending tree, but again it would doubtless meet with resistance and would be a shame to lose an otherwise healthy tree.

Whilst inspecting the wall, it also became apparent there are a number of areas which require repointing and/or localised reconstruction, mainly due to loose flints. Keith is going to provide a cost for doing all of the work he considers necessary and also a rate (ie cost per square metre or linear metre) so we can cherry pick the worst sections for attention in the event of a limited budget.

Happy to discuss further once the EC have given it some thought?

Kind Regards

Cllr. Andy Westby

Item 9 London Road Dog Walk New Fencing Update

Hi Taila,

Please find below my findings following a further inspection of the fences at the London Road dog walking area carried out this morning with the groundsmen John and Tim which you will no doubt wish to discuss at this evening's Environment Committee meeting (which unfortunately I'm unable to attend in person).

The contractor has re-visited following our initial inspection and has corrected some of the deficiencies raised, but a number of issues still remain.

The posts supporting the lower fence, separating the dog walking area from the playground are still too far apart and in some cases the fencing is not adequately fixed. This has led to damage already, due to park users climbing over the fence to retrieve balls, etc. Mention has been made elsewhere about installing a thicker top tension wire but I believe if sufficient posts were installed then the current wire would be adequate as it would derive more support.

I have downloaded a guide 'How to install a chain link fence' from the mesh direct website, (<https://www.meshdirect.co.uk/how-to-install-chain-link.html> - printed copy attached) noting that the components illustrated are virtually identical to those installed. The fence as installed does not comply with the guidance provided.

Other issues are the general standard of workmanship which is fairly poor noting that at a number of locations the chain link element is fixed with any old twisted wire - some pieces sticking out and a number of pieces of which were left strewn on the ground, although have now been cleared by John and Tim. Some of the posts seem loose, as if they have not been properly founded. Of significant concern is the use of a random piece of steel to terminate the original fence at the Cedar Drive end of the separating fence which stands higher than the fence and presents a significant Health & Safety hazard. John is to wrap the offending section with padding in the short term

In the summary, the fence has not been installed in accordance with industry standard practices and looks wrong, most noticeably in the absence of sufficient supporting posts. This will leave the fence vulnerable to further damage over time as its not robust enough and will result in the Council incurring additional costs to remedy unless the matters are rectified now.

I'll leave it to the Environment Committee to decide how they wish to proceed.

Kind Regards

Cllr. Andy Westby