

## **Facilities Committee Report 2020 - 2021**

The Facilities Committee holds delegated responsibility for managing the property the Town Council is responsible for. This includes: The Corn Exchange, The Old Town Hall, The Pump House, Elms Tennis Court, Tuckers Play area, All Saints Church Yard, the Town Park, Oakwood Park, Willes Place Triangle, the Portwell Pump seating area and some of the grit bins and bus shelters. It also oversees the Tidy Team, who work in response to community requests in areas that do not necessarily fall under Town Council responsibility but need attention.

4 meetings were held during the year. All of which were held virtually over Microsoft teams due to Covid-19 restrictions.

This year brought us some unexpected challenges as venues were closed to the public and those that has restricted opening required extra attention for cleaning and disinfecting.

Thanks, must be given to those staff and volunteers that worked hard to keep leisure spaces open.

Budgets are being sought from s106 to resurface Elms Tennis Courts which should last up to 10 years with a record number of key holder families this recreation space is a valuable asset for our community and courts can be booked from 8 in the morning to 8 in the evening.

The Wilderness continues to offer a heaven for wildlife with basic maintenance and planting being undertaken in partnership with advice from environmental experts. New whips have been planted and paths established. Discussions to consider installing a pond are likely and work to plant whips around The Hobble was possible thanks to The Woodland Trust that donated them to the Town.

The Tidy Team has been busy with requests from residents identifying areas for attention and have been busy clearing, sweeping and cutting pavements.

The Corn Exchange has undergone quite a facelift with work undertaken to repair the floor, chairs have been shampooed, the hall repainted as well as usual annual maintenance and servicing. Work to the roof has identified attention is needed to prevent further damage, a never ending issue with old buildings.

Very pleased to welcome The Place Family Centre into their new venue properly with people allowed to visit. This is a great facility for Faringdon which welcomes all families with children under 5. It is a non judgemental, friendly led Group which offers a place for ALL families to feel accepted and welcomed.

The Pump House continues to be used for the Community benefit with the Jubilee Rooms being converted to a more accessible Food Bank whilst normal activities were suspended. We are pleased to continue to support The Pump House Project, by leasing the Old Theatre to them at a peppercorn. This enables them to deliver their activities, as a standalone charity, providing a wealth of activities for our community.

Improvement works are on-going for The Old Town Hall as the Town Centre gets a facelift with new seating proving popular and outdoor table licences secured to encourage a cafe culture to compliment leisure and business activity in Town. New discussions about bollards and bins are proof there is no easy answer to please everyone!

Volunteers are being encouraged to come forward to help with snow warden schemes, wildlife monitoring and other activities

This committee continues to be mindful of the commitment to regard the Climate Emergency with the activities under our responsibility; we have looked into using electric vehicles (currently not viable), living roofs for bus stops and more extensive wildlife friendly planting to compliment less mowing and chemical use as well as encouraging the roll out of LED street lighting.

There are various working party groups that have a direct input to this committee and we welcome members of the public to get involved and offer ideas and opinions. These include Town Centre Regeneration, Covid Recovery Group, Parking and Christmas Lights.

I'd like to thank all those that have contributed to last year's effort and look forward to using our facilities in our more normal way this coming year!

Cllr. Kiera Bentley, Chair of the Facilities Committee

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