

MARESFIELD FOOTPATHS GROUP (part of Maresfield Conservation Group)

An update on work carried out since our last report in March 2016.

What we have done since March 2016:

Summer growth has been cut back on most of the footpaths. This is a continuing task throughout the year and, this year, the weather has encouraged an extraordinary amount of growth.

One day was spent clearing the church car park. Overgrown shrubs were cut back, the hedge trimmed and the bushes cleared. Bricks were cemented to define the path from the car park to the village hall. The flower bed was dug over, and rotovated ready for planting.

Three new planters were installed at the gateways to the village and, as with the church car park flower bed, the planting and care of these was handed over to the green fingered members of the MCG who have done an excellent job of keeping them looking bright and cheerful throughout the summer.

A fallen tree was reported as blocking one of the footpaths in the forest and was promptly dealt with. Another walker reported that one of the boards on a bridge in the forest had rotted, collapsed and was a hazard. On inspection we found that six boards were rotten and had to be replaced together with the post supporting the handrail. ESCC provided the materials very quickly and the repairs were carried out.

You may remember that the hedge at Lampool Corner was cut back in extremely wet weather and the contractor's vehicles left rather a messy verge. This was taken in hand by the Footpaths Group and, over five weeks (Wednesday mornings only), the ground was dug, rotovated and seeded. With warm and wet weather growth was quick and we now have a green entrance to the village. Work continues on this with some mowing and weed killing but it is understood that the care of the verge will be handed over to contractors when it is established.

Litter continues to be unsightly on this verge and requires almost daily clearance.

The work:

We now have five volunteers meeting on Wednesdays from 9.30 am until 12.30. Clearance work is continuous and we have some path improvements and community work listed for the coming months.

Feedback

Feedback to date has all been very positive and we would welcome suggestions for improvement of any paths or areas in the village.

The future

Among the projects to be undertaken during the next few months are improvements to the path from Rabbity Lane to the A22 which is very muddy in places. Now that the grass is established on the verge at Lampool Corner some foxglove, poppy and lupin seeds have been sown in the raised part

of the verge and further wild flower seeds will be added during the autumn and spring - hopefully enough will germinate to satisfy the mice, deer and rabbits and still provide some colour.

John Smith

Leader of Footpaths Group

www.maresfieldconservationgroup.co.uk