

Parish Steward Scheme

Some of you may remember the Parish Steward Scheme from a few years ago. Well the County Council has re-introduced it.

We all know our neighbourhood better than the steward will, so now we have a chance to get the work done that we think is important.

Please contact the Parish Council by email where possible (ckpc_clerk@yahoo.co.uk) with any ideas for work the steward may be able to complete. In the meantime The Parish Council will be asking the steward to assess areas he thinks he can help our Parish.

The steward will be available in our parish on a regular basis to undertake the following type of work:

- Hand clearing and cutting of growth from drainage grips and drain gully covers;
- Hand clearing of blocked drainage gullies, culverts, pipes and pits;
- Clearing storm debris from the roads and footways;
- Clearing collision debris, clinical waste etc;
- Pedestrian barriers repairs, preparation and painting;
- Cleaning, re-installation and straightening of small road signs, street nameplates and bollards;
- Installation of small road signs, verge marker posts and supplied street name plates;
- Removal of limited graffiti from road signs, bollards and street nameplates;
- Hand cutting of grass and vegetation in visibility areas;
- Hand treatment of weeds in rural areas;
- Removal of Ragwort and other noxious weeds;
- Clearance of encroaching growth and soils from footways;
- Repair of minor surface defects in roads and on footways.

October to December.

This is the time to “tidy-up” the last of the summers growth and thus to prepare for winter. Winter, in Highways is really all about drainage and on rural roads this is “grips”. There are many tens of thousands of these short ditches, which are provided to let water off the roads to soak into the verge or to fall into the adjacent ditches. Stewards will be looking to cut the grass around these features and to clear silt and debris to ensure the water has a clear passage. Where many grips need clearing in areas, the Council supports the Parish Steward’s work with its six tractors: during autumn and winter

these are fitted with a device to clear these gullies far more quickly than a Parish Steward can, working with a hand shovel. This is a resource that our Steward can request for support and efficient working. In areas where kerbstones are present the drainage may be through gratings; we refer to them as "Gullies". The council has a programme to routinely cleanse the 85,000 + gullies but in rural areas they are often filled with mud from farming activities or silt from the verges. The Parish Steward can clear small numbers of these but can request an additional visit from the Gully Tanker. These machines are always in high demand. This is also a good time to clear and remove dead plants and silt from kerbside channels.

Seasonal growth on visibility areas and alongside footways and bus stops may have ceased but October and November are the months to have this cut-down as no one welcomes wet cut grasses when walking by these areas.

Parish Stewards are provided with tubs and bags of various materials for repairing small potholes in minor roads and on footways and they will attend to these as they find them. It is a fact that anything with a depth less than 30mm (1 1/4 inches) is almost impossible to fill – the material will simply come out, as there is insufficient of it to survive traffic loads. Timely filling of these failed areas can prevent a problem developing in the winter. (Please note that any very deep or worrying Potholes should be reported to Wiltshire council through the "My Wiltshire" Application. This sends the work straight to Pothole repair teams, who carry a wider range of materials to remedy these potential safety hazards.)

Whilst the preceding summer months give generally fairer weather, road signs can become dirty with road dust or mud. Asking the Steward to clean these as the evenings become darker is a sensible precaution. The many roadside black and white marker posts seem to attract the most muck and as they are often placed to assist drivers and riders to understand the road edge, these are particularly worth attention.