

**SHREWSBURY TOWN COUNCIL
OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
4 MARCH 2026**

Officer: Danny Powell – Operations Manager

GROUNDS MAINTENANCE UPDATE

Purpose

To report on Town Council grounds maintenance operations.

Introduction

My second update of the year starts with “can it have been any wetter this January and February”. It seems to have rained every day, but luckily the river has mostly stayed within its banks. The weather has had an impact on the work we have been able to carry out because of how sodden the ground has become. I hope that with a sustained period of dry weather then we will be able to start grass cutting in mid-March similar to last year. If the weather starts to improve then we can look at getting machinery back on to the sports pitches and other surfaces.

Amenity Team

The replacement trees have been planted in the Quarry. Some shrub bed maintenance has been completed and the edging of the paths through the Quarry has started.

In the nursery, we have carried on with our plant production for the summer but again the lack of sunlight has impacted the rooting of our plant cuttings. The darker days have caused the Heliotrope cuttings to die off but with hopefully sunnier days the recently taken cuttings should increase our plant numbers. Staff have sown the seeds from several perennial plants to boost the number of plants we have instead of buying plant plugs.

In the nursery staff have installed new work benches and put in new pathways to help make movement around the greenhouse easier. We will be soon receiving the first of our summer bedding plant deliveries. The pruning of shrub beds around the Town and suburbs is now complete.

Countryside Team

The Tree team are still working through their list of work. They carried out the Ash Die back work on Mansel Williams Way during the Half Term Holiday week.

The Countryside team have taken over the management and maintenance of Dana Gardens. They have started a programme of laurel removal to allow more light into the garden.

The team have been carrying out their winter maintenance programme on the sites they manage.

Recs and Greenspace Team

The weather has impacted their daily maintenance considerably, the sodden conditions have caused the cancellation of football matches, and they have not been able to access the facilities with machinery to carry out any planned operations.

Instead, they have been, Installing gates and fences in the Quarry Depot, Tiding maintenance sheds and yards where they are based, Edging paths on Recreation sites, Carrying out shrub and tree work, Servicing gates on Recreation sites across the Town. All hedges in the Cemetery have been cut and some paths edged. We are looking to mow some areas of the cemetery where the ground conditions allow the use of smaller lighter machines

Logistics Team

Machine winter servicing is on-going ready for the new cutting season. The mechanics have fabricated two sets of gates for the Quarry depot, which the Recreation Team have fitted. Playground and Toilet maintenance is following its normal itinerary.

We have delivered tree bark to several of the Allotment sites where requests have been made. Stepping Up Team have been working across the Town.

The wet sodden ground conditions have caused some work to be delayed until later in the year, but this has allowed the teams to undertake work that we would have used contractors to do. With a period of dry weather, the ground conditions will improve, and this will allow the staff to start working on grass areas and carry out horticultural work. The kind conditions last autumn where we mowed grass till late October mean that at this time, we should not struggle with overly long grass when we start mowing this year.

Even with the poor weather conditions during the first 2 months of the year, staff have been carrying out work which will help during the summer months ahead.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the update be noted