

RLTCC Grounds Maintenance report for 2020 AGM

This report has been compiled by Pam Sim and Roy Tillcock using notes from John's files

As we have done for a number of years previously we continue with the Soil and Turf Research Institute's recommended plan for the grassed areas of our grounds. The contractor carries out work we cannot do ourselves. This includes over-seeding and top dressing, scarification, Verticut/ Vertidrain, Air2G2, application of wetting agent and appropriate fertiliser, disease treatment and moss and weed killing which requires a professional licence.

Air2G2 is a more recent innovation in which compressed air is injected into the compacted root zone without disrupting the surface. John was impressed by the consequent improvements to drainage and felt this treatment should be continued to obtain maximum benefit. The lawns have been severely tested by an unusually wet winter so time will tell if he was right.

There was severe damage to a cutting blade of our new Toro mower caused by an object in the grass tennis courts. This object was not identified but was probably a largish stone or perhaps a piece of metal from a net fixing.

During the summer there were some machinery problems; the main drive belt for the tractor had to be professionally repaired/replaced and there was a similar problem with one of the rotary mowers, but this time in-house repair was successful.

Fixed stop boards were put along the eastern boundary of Croquet lawn 1, and being deeper than the normal portable boards will improve safety from errant croquet balls for members using the footpath and also for parked cars. Similar boards have been fixed along the western boundary of the grounds to protect the flower bed area.

John was concerned that there may have been damage to the drains, alongside the paved path between the tennis and croquet courts, as a result of heavy machinery slipping off the protective boards laid by Chiltern Sports, when refurbishing tennis courts 4, 5 and 6. In order to alleviate the ongoing flooding of this area, he felt that the lines of bricks protecting the drainage pipes would have to be removed. After the pea shingle has been cleaned of soil and debris the bricks can be replaced.

With attention being directed to conversion of 7 and 8, John highlighted the importance of not losing sight of previously identified needs such as replacement of the paling fencing along the road boundary and also members' much requested extension of car parking beside and/or behind tennis courts 1,2 and 3.

We know that John would once again have wanted to thank Jan and her team for their continued care of the flower beds and pots which make so much difference to the ambience of our club. Similarly, thanks are also due to all of the volunteers who willingly give their time to many small tasks and chores, which are necessary for our operation to run smoothly.