

## **CHURCHYARD REPORT 2020/21**

**The churchyard** continues to be maintained by Ferns Gardens (Michael Pocock), with whom we have a contract, under which they provide a basic level of maintenance on a monthly scheduled basis. Unfortunately the scope of their work needed to be reduced during the year due to financial pressures caused by the pandemic.

During March a work party was organised to undertake certain other elements of maintenance. It was well attended and, dare we say, those who came generally enjoyed the mix of work and fellowship. Coronavirus restriction precluded any further work parties taking place.

The 'stay at home' policy introduced at the start of the pandemic, and the parallel guidance to exercise once a day, has seen a huge increase in the amount of people walking through the churchyard. While it is lovely that the local community are finding our peaceful haven and enjoying it, evidence of the impact can be seen in the worn, artificially-widened paths and the extra tracks that have been created across graves. Remedial work will be undertaken this summer to allow the grass to regrow.

In September a van was abandoned and set alight in the car park causing some damage to a couple of the lime trees and one light post. The trees have had to be taped off for safety and will be looked at carefully at the next tree inspection, due in May. Barry Foale is reviewing what to do about the light post.

Once again high winds affected the trees in the 'New Churchyard', clearance of which was speedily undertaken by a band of volunteers who tend to enjoy the opportunity to use their chainsaws. Some additional work was undertaken to identify and deal with vulnerable trees.

Special thanks are also due to June and David Cobham who continued in the role of keeping the Churchyard clean and tidy until the necessity to shield made that work impossible. We look forward to welcoming them back when conditions allow.

**The Victorian wall:** Not identified as part of the Quinquennial Inspection, but discovered later when overgrown plants were removed, was a need to repair the Victorian wall between the old Churchyard and the Tryhorn field. Until the repair has been completed no work should be undertaken within 6 feet of the wall without the agreement of the Churchwardens.

**The Tryhorn Field** continues to be used both for graves and for ashes and is one of the few churchyards in the area that is still open. All users of the field are encouraged to take waste home with them, but it appears to be a lost cause.

Philippa Rooke + Steve McCann