

Lawrance Park Report 2022

This has been a difficult year for Lawrance Park. John Spooner who had been our treasurer since almost the inception of LP retired from his position at the last AGM due to ill health and he very sadly passed away some time later. This left the committee in a quandary. John had been the heart and soul of Lawrance Park and organised virtually everything with a little help from others. We were saved by the intervention of Colin Murrant who bravely took over the role of treasurer and has had a very steep learning curve. We have all felt the difficulty of having to take responsibilities that were dealt with so easily by John. The continuation of the pandemic has eased the pressures to some extent - the hall has been used less than before the outbreak giving us time to start to establish new working arrangements.

We were due to have an arborist visit to survey the park trees later this year but following a freak gust of wind in October which broke off a large tree branch into the lamp post at the field entrance from Park View, we brought forward the inspection. The wind damage to several trees and signs of fungal disease in others has led to the felling of 13 trees in the park. The work has been carried out and we will be following this up with plans for replanting following expert advice. The lamppost will also be reinstated.

Use of our indoor facilities have again been affected by COVID. Although the field and hall have been used by Kids Club and Thurlby Tigers, TKD, Smart Fit and Scouts and Beavers only returned later and we are only just beginning to see bookings for private parties and events slowly increase as life edges towards some normality. We are therefore very grateful to have once again been assisted in covering some lost revenue by an Omnicron Hospitality and Leisure Grant from SKDC.

Once again Thurlby Parish Council assisted the committee with an injection of £4000 which we used towards the maintenance of the park area. This was very much appreciated with the expense of the tree surgery. Thurlby Races were held in September 2021 instead of July, bringing big crowds to the park and the Race Committee very generously gave Lawrance Park a donation from their profits. It was great to see so many people back enjoying themselves.

Thurlby Tigers continues to thrive with matches being played on Saturdays and Sundays and training during the week. During the wet weather at the start of this year matches were played elsewhere because of the very wet pitch although the Academy still used Lawrance Park. After a year off, volunteers from the committee have resumed providing drinks and snacks on Saturday mornings to swell our funds. There are a few very grateful customers, especially on cold mornings, which make the effort worthwhile.

After much discussion about whether we would be able to hold bonfire night, we decided to take the plunge, order fireworks and keep our fingers crossed. We had a magnificent turnout and made a very healthy profit. Bonfire Night is our biggest event which involves all the committee and anybody else we can persuade to help.

One of the strange things about Lawrance Park is the Chance to Share scheme we have with Thurlby Community Primary Academy. Basically it means that the hall and social room are shared between the two parties with the school having the use during school hours. The cost of maintenance and replacement is shared based on usage. The fact that this works underlines the good working relationship we have with the school.

In order to keep Lawrance Park working we have a team : Yvonne Scott the booking clerk, Pete Aldridge the cleaner and Tim Sleight who looks after the grounds plus all the committee members who give their time freely especially Alan Thomas and most importantly Colin Murrant who has taken on a mammoth task.. In the coming year there are a number of jobs on our list including putting in the lighting on the path once we get the go ahead and organising new trees plus general maintenance.

Lawrance Park is a great asset for our village but still underused with many parishioners still believing it is part of school. We need to show our parishioners what a usable space is on their doorstep and try and cater for their needs. The more it is used the more it becomes a centre for the community. Our job as the Management Committee is to keep this space in good order and relevant to the needs of the local population. For over 50 years it has served the community, let's hope it can continue for the next 50.