

RPA 'Tracks' – Repair and Maintenance Project 2019

What to do about the Tracks?

A frequent item at Committee meetings has long been the maintenance of our tracks. There have been many attempts by volunteers to improve the rutted surfaces – essentially by tipping in and pounding coarse grade crushed limestone to make level. Not easy. Even the delivery of the material has been problematic, involving craning bulk bags over the wall and then wheelbarrowing as needed.

You will have noticed that around the entrance area there has been a lot of 'ponding'. This has meant that those on foot have needed to walk on the adjoining plots, and the route has become hazardous for cyclists. In addition to washing puddle water onto the adjoining plots, cars have even been seen to drive over the verge. Elsewhere the tracks have become increasingly pitted and precarious for all users.

Opinions are divided over the merits of allowing cars on site, but we feel that standards of the tracks need to be improved for all our benefit. With this in mind we have sought the advice and quotes from three contracting firms, which have produced estimates for three differing levels of work – from 'make do and mend' to a full works type specification, across the whole site, similar to the tracks around Bushy Park. The latter option has been ruled out on the grounds of cost, as this would come to more than £80,000. Reserves that we don't have!

Our inclination is to work to a middle option, of 'full' works to the entrance area and then upgrading the route from there up to the Seed Store (see Zones 1 and 2 marked on the plan). The cost for this would be about £25,000. We can look at other tracks when, and if, funds allow.

In simple terms, **the work proposed is:**

To the Entrance Area (Zone 1)

- Excavate the site by 200mm/8 inches
- Lay a 150 expanding cellular confinement system – looks like an egg crate from above



- Fill with a reduced fines type 3 limestone
- Above this lay a further 50mm/2 inch of type 3 limestone as a wearing course, with a grey stone appearance.



This should provide a free draining surface but, in addition, we propose to dig perpendicular ditches along its length to assist with run-off.

For the Track up to the Seed Store (Zone 2)

We propose to regularise the height by skimming off the central, raised section and filling the deeper ruts with compacted limestone.

The Metal Vehicle Gates

We're also proposing to carry out remedial work to the gates, which have not been closing properly due to the posts becoming out of alignment.

During the work

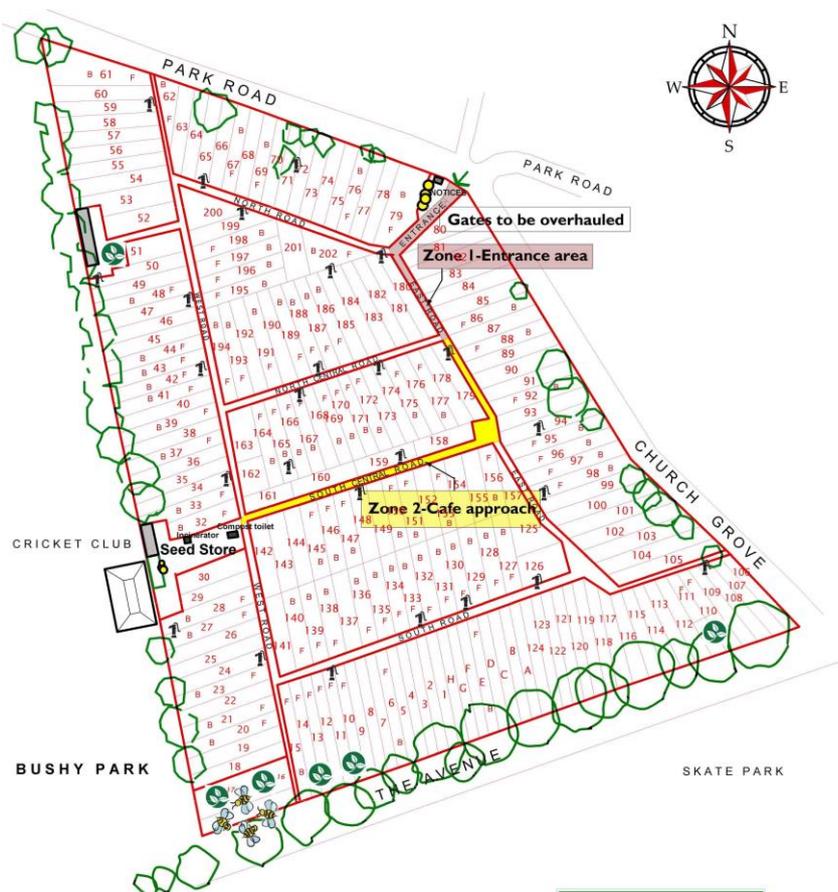
The work should take about four weeks to complete and this would mean no access for vehicles during that period. We are aiming to do the work early in the Spring, following a decision at the end of January.

The RPA 'Tracks Team'

Nick Baylis, Gill Hiley, Grey Rigge and John Hourigan. Once a contractor is on board Grey and John will liaise between the contractor and plot holders to ensure good communication and an understanding of who is doing what and when.

What do you think?

We welcome your comments, questions and suggestions. Please let us have them by emailing us at tracks@paddocks-allotments.org.uk We'll get back to you by email or in person. Thanks!



ROYAL PADDOCKS
ALLOTMENTS

- ↑ Represents pumps
- 🌿 Nature area
- 🐝 Bees
- 🐝 Pollinator patch