

Agenda Item 6

River wall from the play area through to Bullholme:

Following comments from Cllr. Waddington regarding concerns over the condition of the wall the Clerk made an inspection, drafted the following report and sent it to Mr. K. Roberts at Pendle for consideration and response **Appendix 1** is Mr. Roberts email reply.

River wall from the play area through to Bullholme:

Overview: After being alerted to the condition of some sections of this wall by a Parish Councillor, the Clerk and the Handyman viewed the wall on Thursday 1st August, during the morning. The wall viewed from Riverway appears to be a semi random coursed wall of indeterminate age but the top 80cm to 1m appear to be later and would probably date to after the 1967 flood when a whole raft of flood defences were introduced around Bullholme and some stabilisation of the banking to the land side of the river.

After walking the length of the parapet wall from Bullholme to its termination adjacent to the park play area our initial impression was that the wall has not had routine inspection or maintenance for a number of years, the only recent evidence was 15-20cm square hole that had deliberately been created at road level to allow runoff into the river. The wall although needing pointing was in reasonable condition for the vast majority but deteriorated towards the park.

The river bank has not had routine removal of weeds including Himalayan Balsam or self-seeded saplings from the river bank; this has allowed and possibly encouraged weeds and some saplings to invade the wall. The lack of pointing does not help prevent self-seeding and plant growth within the wall but routine removal would help reduce weakness within the wall.

Concerns: The main areas of concern are;

- A self-seeded Ash tree has been allowed to establish abutting the wall with most of the root growth pushing along the wall side is slowly pushing the parapet wall over with some capping stone showing movement.
- Several short sections exhibit a crack running between the parapet wall and its capping stones these cracks are all the way through with daylight visible but I am unsure whether this being caused by subsidence or from the growth action of plants growing from the wall.
- One hole approximately 30 by 40cm through the path side skin of the parapet wall.
- Odd larger vertical cracks visible from Riverway

Recommendations to Pendle Borough Council prior to Transfer:

1. That the wall is inspected by a competent surveyor to assess the structural soundness of the wall.
 - 1) To assess what is the reason for the cracking subsidence/root growth.

Agenda Item 6

- 2) To assess the impact of the self-seeded Ash on the structural integrity of the wall and his/her recommendation for removal in conjunction with the Tree officer.
 - 3) What urgent maintenance needs to be carried out to rectify the highlighted problems?
2. That these recommendations are fully discussed with the Parish Council and where necessary carried out prior to or within a reasonable timescale of the park transfer.

Other Areas of Concern: Some time ago at a meeting with Mr Mousdale the Parish Council raised the condition of both the trees and the retaining walls built on the banking. These walls were built either to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of George V or the Coronation of George VI, erosion of soil in the intervening years had led to several of these walls hanging in mid-air supported by the roots of the trees they were built to support. Several of these walls are quite high up the steep banking above Coronation Walk.

We are aware that a tree survey of the park was carried out following the collapse of one of the larger Beech trees last year but have not had any correspondence relating to the condition and safety of these walls.

May I suggest that whilst the river wall is being surveyed that these walls are also inspected and a condition report written by the Borough Surveyor as to the remedial action needed to bring these walls to a safe condition, with these works and the tree works highlighted in the Tree Survey being discussed with the Parish Council and where necessary carried out prior to or within a reasonable timescale of the park transfer.

Appendix 1 Email response from Mr. Roberts

Hi Iain,

Thanks for your email. I've just picked up your voice mail too.

Scott Whalley, Lee Johnson and I will have a look at the issues highlighted but it won't be until later this month as we are all on holidays/annual leave over the next 2-3 weeks.

Regards

Kieron Roberts

Green Spaces Manager

Neighbourhood Services (Pendle Council)