



Ethelburt Avenue Road Improvement Group

Report for HCERA AGM, Aug 2024

Three road working parties for Ethelburt Avenue have taken place since the last AGM - on 18th November, 17th February and 18th May.

The condition of the road held up well over the year, despite exceptionally wet winter. The loose stones laid over recent years, despite them posing difficulties for cyclists and wheelchair users, overall this approach does seem to help.

The preferred gravel material for the body of the road “red binding path gravel” is now available again and was used in the session in May this year. For the November and February sessions, 40mm “scalpings” used for deep potholes does seem to last, although the grey colour is not ideal.

Volunteer numbers were down again on previous years – particularly towards the end of the May session. That makes it harder on those who do manage to make it.

Dates for 24/25 are proposed to be: 16th November 8th February and 10th May.

There was a clash between the road maintenance session and a plant sale being held by the tennis club in May 2023. The tennis club had been asked previously if it would try to avoid a clash in future years. The road maintenance session dates are published in the autumn HCERA newsletter in October for the following 3 sessions. Works planned to spread loose gravel around the lower green could not fully take place due to vehicles driving to and from and parking at the tennis club event and there were more people walking in the road than necessary, which are risks to safety.

RIG again approached the tennis club asking for improved co-ordination on event dates. This took time to achieve, but an assurance has been given the tennis club will not hold a plant sale or similar event on the date of the road maintenance session in May.

Comment has been made about the deteriorating condition of the bituminous section of the road at the lower end of Ethelburt. Informal discussion at the maintenance sessions has so far been that on balance, repairs of bituminous areas with gravel is acceptable in terms of appearance and safety concerns. Previously repairs to potholes with bitumen and surface dressing by an external surfacing contractor were looked into, but these were over £10,000. A reduced scope scheme would be possible but for now it is considered a full repair would not be value for money. It is proposed to seek the views of those at the AGM as to whether the condition is such that a higher standard of repair is thought necessary.

Dan Hopgood