

## Stafford Orchard

### A Park for People



This is the fourth in a series of articles about the refurbishment of Stafford Orchard with a Parks for People grant from the National Lottery.

By the time you read this, the main contractors will have fenced off a large part of the park and work will be well under way. The landscaping and play equipment installation, together with the building work on the Park Services Building (the old toilets) and the listed lock-up, should be completed by early October.

The replanting of new trees, shrubs, hedgerows, willows, reeds and spring bulbs will then take place in the Autumn. Some of this planting will be carried out by volunteers under the supervision of Jane Hollingworth and the new groundsperson. Your help would be appreciated - please sign up in the parish office.



The refurbishment work will mean that there are restrictions on access to most of the Stafford while work is going on and some of the paths may also have to be temporarily re-routed. We're sorry about this but it is unavoidable for practical and safety reasons and the contractors have promised to do everything possible to minimise disruption.

The major plans for the park refurbishment have been covered in earlier articles in this series. In this one we tidy up some of the loose ends, particularly landmark features planned for the park and some restoration work on historic buildings.

There are still a few decisions left to make and the project team would like your help. The Heritage Lottery Fund have agreed to fund a piece of artwork for the park and we would like your views (we are trying to avoid another 'sock man' controversy!). It will be sited alongside the under 8's play area by the main footpath. You may have already received a consultation leaflet containing some ideas (if not please email the parish clerk on [parishclerk@quorndon.com](mailto:parishclerk@quorndon.com) or ask in the parish office). There is a range of possible styles, each illustrated in the leaflet – natural, play, humorous, abstract, classical and finger post. A decision will be made at the end of July but we are under no illusions – whatever is chosen will not please somebody – but that's in the nature of art!

An unexpected opportunity to add another feature to the park arose when the diseased chestnut tree adjacent to Station Road had to be felled. The resulting fox and hound tree-sculpture by Kevin Deignan of Hungarton, also funded by the lottery, proved to be an instant hit. To complete the 'arty' bits, two of the sculptures in the churchyard carved from the stone capping when Wright's Victorian factory chimney was demolished will be relocated to the planned historic garden to complement the new tree carving and add interest to the garden.



Alongside the garden will be the restored memorial to those members of the 505<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the US 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne Division who were stationed in Quorn and who gave their lives in the Normandy and Arnhem landings in World War 2. The stone from Nijmegen church will be repositioned in a granite enclave with planting, gaps in the memorial avenue of lime trees will be filled, and there will be a heritage board nearby explaining the history and significance of the memorial. In 2011 the memorial is planned to be rededicated in association with the 82<sup>nd</sup> Airborne and its UK representatives, the US embassy, and Quorn British Legion.

On a lighter theme, the original village stocks were sited next to the old gaol adjacent to the car park (the pizza takeaway). These will be reinstated as part of the repair and restoration of the exterior of the grade 2 listed gaol and a plaque will provide details of its rather chequered history. The stocks might well provide future May Days with some interesting ways of raising money!



That just about covers everything. You can follow progress on the village website at [www.quorndon.com](http://www.quorndon.com) . The park will reopen for use towards the end of the year and may be 'officially' opened at the May Day event in 2011. Overall, the project will have taken 5 years to plan, fund and implement..