

LEECHWELL GARDEN ASSOCIATION
Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 5th March 2013 at Totnes Fire Station.

1. Present; Jim Carfrae; David Mitchell; Roma Church; Ed Vidler; Catherine Munro; David Martin, Robert Vint; Susan Taylor

Apologies: Liz Warnes; Shirley Prendergast; Stephanie Parker; Laurel Ellis; Lorette Logie; Keith Rennells

2. Minutes of the previous meeting: Confirmed as accurate.

3. Matters Arising

Bug House: Roma has bought and installed a bug house for the garden (the 'bug man' is no longer active).

Roma is to check the fire station booking as it seems it may not be available on Wednesdays.

Action: Roma

4. Pool Report

Jim, Dave and Shirley are meeting with Andrew Rathbone (who has appropriate qualifications) on 20.3.13 to explore whether Andrew could do drawings for pool restoration, negotiating with contractors, specs etc. We will only have small amount of money available for this, but it would be very helpful if Andrew could undertake it.

David Martin has looking into possibilities for a very simple terracotta pipe for the new outlet spout – he will present his findings at the next Pool Group meeting. This would be a holding measure while we investigate other options. We will specify new pipe in the SMC application so progress on rest of pool is not held up. David

Shirley has identified some fairly local specialist contractors who could do the work on the pool. We have written to Richard Gage at SHDC informing him of our Scheduled Monument Consent application, asking for advice and requesting that SHDC to give us formal permission to make the application. No response to date.

Knotweed. This is urgent. Consulted with Devon Knotweed Forum etc. Requested of Keith, who has agreed, that we instigate a programme of **stem injections** rather than spraying or cutting. This is a more effective form of eradication but will take time. Meanwhile we will carefully mark all clumps until SHDC inject in the autumn. Thanks to Susan for all information on this.

5. National Lottery Awards

Dave has partially completed the LGA application for a National Lottery Award (the prize is £2000 if you are judged to have been the best at spending your Lottery grant). Various suggestions were made to his draft (sent with these minutes) and when approved he will submit it. The form asks for someone to represent the project (who would be prepared to have their story appear in the media). It was agreed that Dave should ask Sue Holmes if she was prepared to do this.

Action: Dave

6. Workshops/Spring Event

7. Volunteers/Activities

Catherine circulated the (very extensive) list of activities she and others have arranged which can be seen online at <http://www.gardeningforhealth.org.uk/workshops.html>. These include kids gardening, Tai Chi, school wildlife education, gardening for health, an Easter Hunt, the Big Dig etc, etc.

The herb garden has been composted and the bank above Heath Way will be planted next month.

Roma has arranged to meet a 'volunteer organiser' who offered help.

Roma plans to buy a "What have you seen in the Garden Today" blackboard to be erected near the entrance (like the one in the Lamb Garden) and create a year-planner for volunteer sessions rather than the current ad-hoc process.

The Spring Event is timetabled for Sunday May 19th (the same day as the food market). It will run from 12 until 4. Roma, Liz and Susan have made stuffed animals (10 each of snake, toad and long crippler) that will be available (for donations) on the day. We plan to have Tai Chi, Singing, Indian Head Massage and a 'Parcour for Kids' session (by Kyle Perkins). There may also be 'Seedy Sisters', 'Muddy Mums' and 'Dangerous Dads' sessions. Liz has agreed to run a cake stall, Catherine a Gardening for Health stall, Di Reeves a Plant stall and Ed a Tombola.

Finally, it was agreed that the LGA should contribute to the printing costs of the Big Dig in Totnes events.

Action: Ed

8. AGM

It was agreed to hold the AGM on Monday May 20th (the day after the Spring Event). It will be a low-key, largely formal affair. Ed agreed to ask the Kingsbridge Inn if we could hold it there.

Action: Ed

9. AOB

Ed noted that we have roughly £1600 in the general kitty and £1500 set aside for the pool project. It appears that we will also get £2000 of the Midas Public Art money..

**NEXT MEETING: 6pm, Wednesday 27th March 2013, Totnes Fire Station (Pool Project Meeting)
6pm, 7th or 8th of May, Totnes Fire Station (date to be confirmed later).**

Updates from South Hams District Council – 8th January 2013 - Keith Rennells

Project	Actions/position
1. Projects complete	
Increasing meadow diversity	Initiative to introduce yellow rattle seed to two areas of meadow to try and break up dominance by coarse grass species, successfully completed. Meadow conservation day – took place Wednesday 28th November , led by Keith. Trainees from Dartington based TCV (The Conservation Volunteers formerly BTCV) undertook the project as a credit for their Environmental Conservation Diploma. Very well attended, and group were able to carry out other development/maintenance projects in the garden that day, such as tree maintenance.
New access path	The new steps and path section, to the spec agreed on site, have been installed by SHDC's contractor, Sebastian Kelly. This scheme is in readiness for the other measures required to provide access from Heathway West/St Katherine's Way, tied into an ongoing legal process. Paperwork with solicitors but SHDC chasing to conclude asap and get new path open. Will require sign, design tbc.
Pool project	Reported elsewhere by Shirley, but SHDC's contractor Sebastian Kelly moved fence/gate back to new line as requested.
Replacement tree	Reported elsewhere? SHDC removed dead magnolia as requested.
2. Projects in progress	
Path maintenance	There has been a second stronger application of weedkiller where grass growing into rolled stone path surface. Will be top dressed and rolled this winter, where eroded. Still on list – will progress early this year
Entrance signs	SHDC are amending signs to ensure consistency in messages – ie, about cycling! Draft design to be circulated soon
Garden Trail Leaflet	First draft has been produced by SHDC design office. Minor amendments this week before wider circulation for comment. Will be printed and available for early Spring.
3. Grounds maintenance issues (as per previous report – Nov 2012)	
Grounds Maintenance plan	Three elements previously discussed are being changed in the SHDC plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A switch from single to twice yearly cut of meadow, as by mid to late August the meadow has gone over and looks scruffy. • Additional grass cuts alongside woodchip path to allow better access • Proposal to remove two wildlife banks from GM schedule to allow volunteer monitoring/maintenance of species. <p>However, once these are incorporated, SHDC is seeking a period of stability with the maintenance plan, and would hope that no further amendments are required.</p>
Hedgerows	The natural established hedge at the south end of the garden and the newly planted hedge along the west side of the garden are thriving, and fall within the GM plan as 'hedge bank', with a scheduled annual trim at the end of the season.