

MINUTES FOR LEECHWELL GARDEN ASSOCIATION MEETING

Friday 8th January 2010 10.15am, Leechwell Cottage

PRESENT: Sue Holmes (Chair) Ed Vidler, David Mitchell, Janet Mitchell, Robert Vint, Jim Carfrae, Mark Chapman, Shirley Prendergast (Sec) Observers, Patsy Johnson, Gill Pugh. (Thanks to Dave and Janet for venue and hospitality)

1. APOLOGIES: Jeannette Craig Willington, Wendy Reid, Jackie Francis, Alex Whish
WELCOME: Sue welcomed the two observers, Patsy Johnson and Gill Pugh (both Heath Way residents) who may be interested in joining the LGA Committee. Sue briefly described the background to the garden and the history of consultation dating back to 1994.

She noted that the Committee had not had a chance to discuss and therefore could not reply to, the letter commenting on design of the garden, recently received from Evan Pugh. However, some of these issues would come up in the meeting and the observers would be asked for their feedback as meeting progressed. Matters related to garden access would not be discussed, they are not the remit of the LGA and are being considered by Alex Whish of SHDC.

There had been some good news in that contractors- South West Highways- would be starting Phase 1 work on the garden by 25th Jan or before. Work was expected to last 5 weeks. SHDC were covering the immediate cost out of their capital fund until S106 money was received from MIDAS, when it would be repaid.

2. UPDATE GARDEN DESIGN: After some discussion it was agreed to limit update of the technical drawing to what is already in Stage 1. An updated version of the coloured design would also be needed for display (see 7 below) and Charlotte suggested that Jim and Dave might be able to do this to save time and costs. In relation to Evan Pugh's concerns about noise and overlooking from the main play area, SP asked that its exact location be marked on the drawings. By her calculations it looked to be about 20-25 metres from the back wall of the courtyards of Heath Way houses, and would be screened from them by trees and bushes. **CR to update technical drawing, JC, DM to update coloured design version.**

Sue asked observers for any comments on meeting so far. Gill Pugh said that as the situation had changed significantly since the last consultation the current design might need reconsideration accordingly- specially the paths- if there was no public access from Heath Way. (*It was noted that only one bark path might be affected and this could be adapted later*). Residents of the 10 most affected houses in Heath Way had not been consulted about the garden and she had only been in residence since August 2009. (NOTE SH- Mark Chapman, resident of Heath Way had been Chair of the LGA for most of 2009) Besides issues of screening, visibility and potential noise from the play area there was also problem of water and subsidence of the steep bank directly behind the houses. (*CR described the French drains which are being put into the bank which should solve this problem*). Gill was thanked for her comments. **The Committee asked that Heath Way residents meet and submit a collective letter with their combined comments on the new garden ASAP before the next LGA meeting.** The LGA would meet to discuss Evan Pugh's letter once they had heard about the legal situation from Alex Whish. Sue would meet with residents later.

3. MINUTES of LGA MEETING Dec 2nd 2009: agreed
4. MATTERS ARISING: none
5. SHDC UPDATE: Sue had already responded, see 1 above
MEMORANDUM of AGREEMENT: this is with SH solicitors. While we need to add an appendix on the immersion pool, there is no hurry on this item.
HEATH'S GARDEN: Work would probably be starting this month. SH thought the contractors would be the same as for the Leechwell Garden- South West Highways. LGA have already agreed that the two gardens will share a Friends Group.
6. STAGE 2 APPLICATION AND FACILITATORS VISIT: Jowanna will come one more time- probably at the end of February. We may ask for an extension of the funding application deadline to end of April. DM has circulated 2nd draft of Questions 8/9/10. Sue suggested that Shirley undertake Questions 11/12/13/14, but Shirley is not sure she can do this having both questionnaire and meetings about the immersion pool underway. We need to have draft of most/all questions on the funding application by mid February.
7. QUESTIONNAIRE: We will go ahead with a mail drop of 400 amended Questionnaires to residents in streets nearest to the garden. Plan is to ask volunteers to help with delivery. The garden designs will go on display in following places: website, library (if possible) TIC, Guildhall, car park notice board. These will also be points for returning Questionnaires. **SP will organise in the next few weeks. Charlotte and Jim/Dave to let Shirley know as soon as they have updated drawings ready to be copied.**
8. TREE FELLING: The suitability, quality and size of the large eucalypt trunks left in the garden was discussed. If the wood is not suitable for use as benches or as play logs, it needs to be removed ASAP. Agreed that Mike Jones be asked to advise on a consultancy basis and that the smaller cordwood would be removed by Jim. **SH to contact MJ.**
9. LEECHWELL POOL: A meeting with English Heritage will now take place on 21st January. This will be a combined meeting so that officers can also look at possible repairs to the Leechwell. English Heritage had requested very restricted numbers at the meeting, but agreed that SP can attend. **SP has sent SHDC/EH officers background info, community wishes for and CR's detailed designs for the pool area of the garden.**
10. PROCUREMENT AND ACCESS: **SH will arrange.**
11. PROJECT MANAGER: Jim Carfrae was proposed as Project Manager by EV and seconded by SP. The committee voted to accept JC and expressed their delight that the LGA had found someone so capable and knowledgeable to undertake this role. Jim will now attend the Partnership Meetings instead of Sue or Ed.
12. VOLUNTEERS: **To be discussed at the next LGA meeting.**
13. AOB: (Observers not present). It was agreed that the LGA Committee support SHDC decision to take legal advice regarding access following Evan Pugh's letter. The LGA Committee also agreed to continue with the current design plans without modification until we had further news from SHDC. **SH to contact Alex**

LGA agreed to ask either Gill **or** Patsy- which one to be decided by them- to join the LGA Committee. We would like to receive a combined letter from present Heath Way residents expressing their collective concerns about the garden before this happened.

Gill and Patsy were informed of these decisions and thanked for attending.

14. NEXT MEETING: 20th January, 2.15pm, Dave and Janet Mitchell's house.