

LEECHWELL GARDEN ASSOCIATION
Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 8th January 2013 at Totnes Fire Station.

1. Present; Jim Carfrae; David Mitchell; Liz Warnes; Roma Church; Laurel Ellis, Ed Vidler; Shirley Prendergast; David Martin, Robert Vint

Apologies: Catherine Munro; Stephanie Parker; Susan Taylor, Lorette Logie; Keith Rennells

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

3. Matters Arising

Garden Signs: Dave had commissioned Day Signs to make the two signs and handed them over to David Martin for installation in the garden. **Action: David Martin**

4. Pool Project

Shirley outlined the work that was done in November - digging the trench, moving the fence and planting some 90 hedging plants. The LGA is very grateful for all the work organised by Keith and paid for by SHDC. There was more hazel than expected so some thinning may be necessary later. It was decided not to plant on the inside of the fence near the pool to provide more space for visitors.

Shirley has made a sign showing what has been planted and all the plants are labelled. The plants cost £134 and the mulch, compost and membrane about the same, so the total cost was well under £300.

Shirley then outlined the next steps for the pool area:

(a) we need to contact Richard Gage, Conservation Officer at SHDC to get formal permission to go ahead asking EH for scheduled monument consent (since SHDC own the garden). Shirley will draft a letter to be signed by Jim **Action: Shirley and Jim**

(b) we need to produce a repair plan for the pool - materials, contractors etc

(c) we need to produce specs and cost for the hard standing, steps, planting and pipe work

(d) we need to fill in and submit the necessary forms to EH

At the next pool group meeting (5th February) we should develop a detailed timetable for these tasks.

Shirley asked Jim if he would contact John Clipson to see if he would like to be involved (task (b) in particular).

5. SHDC Report

Keith circulated his report before the meeting (attached below). There was some concern that the pool area was not covered in the plan, the perennial weeds have not been sprayed and also about the Japanese Knotweed spreading in the pool area and it was agreed that Roma should contact Keith about this. **Action: Roma**

6. Volunteers/Activities

Roma wants to refresh the list of volunteers and will be sending out an email asking people to get involved. **Action: Roma**

She plans to have volunteer meetings once a month in the morning. She will also chase up the 'bug man' about a 'bug house' near the wood pile.

7. Catherine

Totnes Caring tree planted and awaiting their update for a plaque to go with this shortly.

Kid's Corner programme will be starting in Spring.

No Gardening for Health sessions to report for 2013 so far. May alter in plans, but not planned for now.

Programme of workshops - would like to do again, with Lamb/Leechwell partnership, but will need to follow up with Keith and Roma on that and, how the SHDC form would work/be completed.

Shirley would like an evening bat workshop (in June/July) and would like to invite the bat specialist who supplied the bat boxes back for this. Laurel suggested a 'moth evening' would be a goo idea too. Roma agreed to mention these ideas to Rachel (Muddy Mums co-ordinator). **Action: Roma**

8. Quiz

The proceeds from the next quiz night at the Bay Horse (Monday 14th January) will go to the LGA. We have to provide prizes and those present agreed to provide at least 4 bottles of wine (for the winning team) and 4 cabbages (for the losers) as well as a box of biscuits and any other prizes we could bring

along for the raffle. Quiz starts at 8.30pm (but you need to get a seat before then). **Action: All**

9. AOB

Ed noted that there was upwards of £2000 in the LGA account and wondered if we should plan to spend any of it. After some discussion it was agreed that we should hold another 'Spring Celebration' event some time around May and make it a fund-raising affair with the specific aim of raising funds for the pool project (we should have more detailed plans we can show of what we plan to do ready by then).

Jim felt he should not continue as Chair given he now has a heavy teaching load at Plymouth University. Roma volunteered to be Acting Chair until the AGM (which will probably be held in late May). All those present thanked Jim for his valiant service and Roma for taking on the job. Jim will continue to be a member of the LGA Committee and be in the Pool Group (which Shirley will chair).

NEXT MEETING: 6pm, TUESDAY 5th February 2013, Totnes Fire Station (Pool Project Meeting)
6pm, Tuesday 5th March 2013, Totnes Fire Station (all other LGA Matters).

Note new starting time!

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.