

LEECHWELL GARDEN ASSOCIATION
Minutes of meeting held on Tuesday 13th November 2012 at Totnes Fire Station.

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

Apologies: Jill Tomalin; Stephanie Parker; Lorette Logie; Keith Rennells

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

3. Matters Arising

The Third Gate: following a brief discussion it was confirmed that we would not commission a new gate from John Churchill (the £2500 would be better spent on the Pool Project). Instead the existing gate will be moved. It will be necessary to modify/weaken the closing spring remove the numeric keypad lock, replacing it with the same padlock as the two existing gates. **Action: Heathway Residents?**
Dave will email John Churchill of our decision. **Action: Dave**

4. Pool Project

Shirley outlined the work that she and Jeannette had done planning the new hedge. There is a small window of opportunity to do the work and the following timetable has been arranged:

- SHDC will be providing tools for the digging to arrive on **Friday November 23rd** (will be stored on Liz's patio that night)
- Thanks to Catherine, 15 Dartmouth Cadets will come to do the digging on **Saturday 24th November** (more volunteers welcome). David Martin will provide electricity to make tea in the shed that day and Dave will ensure the gazebos are erected that morning.
- The trench to be dug will be 4' wide, 2' deep and some 23 metres long!
- Keith is hoping to get the fence removed before the 24th.
- The plants (see 16th October minutes for list) have been ordered and will arrive on **December 3rd**

Action: most of us!

Jim agreed to produce an updated large detailed plan of the pool area.

Action: Jim

5. SHDC Report

Keith circulated his report before the meeting (attached below). Volunteers are welcome at the Meadow Conservation Day on **Wednesday 28th November** (Dartington TCV will be coming). There was some uncertainty about when work would start on the new steps down to the third gate.

6. Totnes Caring

It was agreed that Catherine and Lorette should agree a date with Totnes Caring for the tree planting - making sure to avoid 24th or 28th November (because of the activities mentioned above which are taking place in the garden then). While the committee had no objection to the placing of a small explanatory plaque near the tree it was agreed to discuss the issue of similar donations (e.g. to raise money for the pool project) at the next LGA meeting. **Action: Lorette, Catherine**

7. Activities

Roma felt these were running very well at present. The Willow Workshop was well attended and enjoyed (see website gallery for photos).

8. Kids Corner

Rachel Laila Rafiqi has taken over responsibility for Muddy Mums and Kids Corner. There was some discussion of the need for an information leaflet for groups wishing to hold activities in the garden (simple list of do's and don'ts).

9. Litter Sign

Catherine had a quote for £15 from Day Signs for a simple notice to be fixed to the picnic table. Dave agreed to design it and communicate with Day Signs. **Action: Dave**

10. Jill Tomalin

Unfortunately Jill could not attend the meeting, but the committee would like to express its deep appreciation for energy and enthusiasm she has contributed to the LGA over the years.

11. AOB

David Martin wondered if there should be a sign indicating who had made the “Three Guardians”. Dave pointed out that there used to be a “Who Made What” list on the notice board outside the garden. It was agreed that this should be converted to a small permanent sign that could be fixed to the wall inside the garden (near the sign about the Community paces grant. Dave agreed to produce and circulate a design and contact Day Signs when it had been approved. **Action: Dave**

Robert raised the issue of the maintenance of public opens spaces in Totnes. SHDC's Public Spaces Working Group is investigating how new open spaces will be financed and the Totnes Public Space Forum, which Robert co-chairs, is in dialogue with them about viable options. It was agreed that the LGA was fortunate in having such good support from SHDC.

Shirley raised the issue of the £5k for Public Art. Following a heated outburst from Dave it was agreed that he and Shirley would produce a costed proposal for spending the £5k in the Pool Area and submit it to the Development Trust for a decision. **Action: Dave and Shirley**

Liz wondered what had happened about the donation from Robert towards wild flowers. Ed said the money had already been transferred to the Development Trust account.

**NEXT MEETING: 7pm, TUESDAY 11th December, Totnes Fire Station (Pool Project Meeting)
7pm, Tuesday 8th January 2013, Totnes Fire Station (all other LGA Matters).**

Updates from South Hams District Council – 13th November 2012 - Keith Rennells

Project	Actions/position
1. Projects in progress now	
Increasing meadow diversity	Proposal to introduce yellow rattle seed to two areas of meadow to try and break up dominance by coarse grass species. Meadow conservation day – Wednesday 28th November , led by Keith & Tim. Trainees from Dartington based TCV (The Conservation Volunteers formerly BTCV) will be joining us as the project is a credit for their Environmental Conservation Diploma. All volunteers welcome!
New access path	SHDC has appointed a contractor to construct the new steps and path section, to the spec agreed on site, later in November. This work is thus in readiness for the other measures required to provide access from Heathway West/St Katherine's Way, timescale to be agreed.
Pool project	SHDC's Grounds Maintenance team should be spraying off the 'weed' vegetation (including knotweed) any day now, weather permitting, inside and outside the current pool area as marked out by Shirley/Jeanette. This, as requested, and in readiness for the follow up re-design of the area. SHDC's contractor will remove willow and move fence/gate to new marked out line next week (w/b 19 Nov).
Replacement tree	SHDC happy with proposal for replacement . Also happy with proposed 'labelling' plaque idea. Would be helpful if dead magnolia could be removed as part of preparation for planting replacement. Cut and stack at far end
2. Projects to be progressed over the winter	
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 when current batch of projects are complete
Bird and bat boxes	Proposal from Tim Pollard for 2 tit boxes to go on taller trees and sparrow box to go on end of shed; Mark Capper (GM team) will install in due course – autumn/winter task; still on the list
Entrance signs	SHDC will amend signs to ensure consistency in messages – ie, about cycling! Still on list – will progress when current batch of projects are done.
Willows	3 no. willows planted in SE corner are poorly staked and leaning, so will be re-staked appropriately. These are due to be pollarded this winter .
Hedge tree	The leaning tree in the new hedge line adjacent to the lawn near the entrance to the site will be re-fastened with a taller stake by GM team. Not sure if this has been done?
3. Projects recently completed	
Bank planting	Complete . A big thank you to all the people who helped with this project.
Herb garden	Info panel installed – looks good and v nice feedback
4. Grounds maintenance issues	
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 an annual trim at the end of the season.