

MINUTES FOR LEECHWELL GARDEN ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE MEETING
17th March 2021 on ZOOM

PRESENT: David Mitchell (Chair), Shirley Prendergast, Lu Overy, Sue Holmes, Jeannette Willington, Roma Church, Wendy Reid

1. APOLOGIES: Keith Rennells, Philip Strange

2. MINUTES: the minutes of the meeting on 17th February 2021 were largely ignored!

3. MATTERS ARISING

none.

4. SANDPIT

This topic should have been discussed at the last meeting – the LGA, SHDC and the Heath Way residents all agree that the massive amounts of sand (6 tons +) transferred by toddlers from the sandpit to the pool area have had a detrimental effect on the pool area, seriously impact the leaf between the two Heath Way terraces and cost a great deal of money. Dave outlined what had happened over the last two weeks – a meeting with some of the Heath Way residents and subsequent photography and map making followed by a meeting between Shirley, Paul Church and Dave to discuss the possible changes to the sandpit and its surroundings. Shirley has distributed draft plans and a summary of the changes.

In essence, the plan is to put a low picket fence with a swing gate around the sandpit and a hedge around the part of the fence nearest the water. Two new sleepers will fix the boundary of the sandpit as well as providing seating. Lu mentioned that there is a fence around the play area in Borough Park put up by SHDC. It's the right sort of height (1 metre) but is just metal and Dave thought would not look right in the Leechwell Garden (see photo on the left below). Dave thought a wooden picket fence would be better (see photo on the right of B&Q fencing)



In addition there will be a fence and hedge across the muddy and slippery (southern) path that leads down to the circular pool. Children will still be able to use the other (northern) path that leads to what was the gravel 'beach'.

There was some discussion of what to use for the hedging. Sue suggested Copper Beech as it is slow growing but Jeannette felt we might find a hedge with additional value to pollinators. Lu suggested a short list of possibilities. The hedge protecting the southern path needs to be tougher- maybe holly (evergreen with flowers and berries)

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We discussed how to proceed. Shirley has drafted a letter to Rob Sekula and Alex Whish at SHDC outlining what we propose and asking for their permission (as landowners). Assuming they say yes the plan is to ask if SHDC will do the work - providing that we can

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specify the fencing and hedge. We can offer to bear some of the cost (Jeremy Logie has said the Totnes Trust would certainly give us £200 and the Town Council might too).

Note: Jeremy Logie has not stated that the Totnes trust would be prepared to give us a grant of up to £1000!

Shirley suggested we could also ask Carpenter Oak – two ‘dads’ who often bring their children to the garden (and used to help Shirley with the sandpit) work there so it’s definitely worth a try.

10. AOB

Roma mentioned the disappointing look of the pool area. She suggested that we should proceed with opening up the hedge and remove the fencing that protects the flower meadow as soon as is practical – perhaps in early summer when the planting is well established.

Shirley mentioned the draft notice fixed to the board in the herb garden. Assuming this meets with approval we should get a proper sign made (it was suggested we ask Keith since he has sourced the other signs in and outside the garden). Shirley felt it should be slightly larger and Dave agreed to produce a new PDF.

Note: following information from Sue about SHDC costs for signs, Dave decided to approach Day Signs on the Industrial Estate.

Action: all to approve or disapprove

NEXT MEETING: No date was agreed at the meeting but the next meeting will be held in the garden and hence will have to wait until outdoor meetings are allowed – probably in late April.

Action: Dave to circulate date