

**MINUTES FOR LEECHWELL GARDEN ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015 6pm at the REconomy Centre**

**PRESENT:** David Mitchell (Chair); Keith Rennels; Jeannette Craig Willington; Marsha Cummings, Shirley Prendergast, David Martin, Jim Carfrae

**1. APOLOGIES:** Louise Overy, Susie Boyd, Ed Vidler, Catherine Munro

**2. MINUTES:** The minutes of the meeting of the 21<sup>st</sup> October 2015 were approved.

**3. MATTERS ARISING:**

Dave had contacted the local SHDC councillors to ask for their support in replacing the play structure. Cllr Green had promised to give £200, Cllr Horsburgh offered support too and Cllr Hodgson, in her capacity as Totnes Town Council mayor said that the council would probably offer £200-300 in the New Year.

**4. REPLACEMENT OF PLAY STRUCTURE**

Keith, Shirley, Dave Mitchell, David Martin and Jim met representatives from Sutcliffe Play and Earthwrights (with Sue Holmes) in the garden that morning to look at the play structure and get an idea of what could be done to renew it. Both firms can produce design drawings before Christmas.

Keith said there was a contrast between the two companies in their approach. Earthwrights will start from scratch and design to meet the garden's needs. Sutcliffe would do something more off the peg, picking and choosing from their wide range of features. Keith was pleased that they could both work within the budget set.

Neither felt it was worth keeping any of the existing structure around the eucalypt and though reusing the timber would be good, it could prove to be a false economy and a constraint on the designs.

New timbers would be treated to stop any rot and Earthwrights hope to have a new treatment which should be available next year. Both would protect timber posts where they are buried in the ground – Sutcliffe by using aluminium holders and Earthwrights using a tar-based wrap.

Mike Jones (Earthwrights) was very keen on providing a sand feature for very young children, but it was decided that because of the likelihood that any sand would be used by local cats and we would not have the ability to monitor the equipment daily it would be too much of a health hazard.

Shirley thought that sand could possibly be incorporated in a container of some sort which could be used by children in a pouring activity. If it were enclosed in a container it would be inaccessible to cats.

There will be an opportunity to fine-tune the designs once we get them from the contractors in December.

Keith has invited Wicksteed to visit the garden next week and to give us a quotation and design. We would then have the necessary three contractors for the grant application.

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Keith said that SHDC will remove the existing structure (in lieu of a cash contribution) and have direct labour teams to do it. The Committee will need to decide what elements, if any, from the existing structure need to stay otherwise they will all be cleared. Any timbers not reused be put on Freecycle or used for firewood. The vertical poles and the cargo netting could be kept and reused. The Committee is keen to reuse what we can.

Once we have the designs it will be possible to start the consultation process. The views of parents and children and the Council will be sought about play value, aesthetics, environmental impact etc.

Shirley has written to the parents of 240 children at Grove School asking for support for the grant application and the head teacher will also write a letter of support.

**5. Any Other Business**

Sue Holmes is progressing getting signs for the Garden Trail, which will feature the Leechwell and the Leechwell Garden put up on the wall in Heaths Garden and in the Rotherfold.

Keith said there was the possibility of a grant from Santander for £5000. They much prefer to fully fund something rather than just provide part of the funds. It was felt we might be able to earmark part of the new structure (perhaps the part designed for younger children) for that [purpose. Shirley suggested applying to the Totnes Wellbeing Fund who give small grants (£100-500).

Jeanette said that all the bulbs have now been planted in the garden.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting of the Association is 6pm on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> December at the REconomy Centre in Leechwell Street.