

MINUTES FOR LEECHWELL GARDEN ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday 22nd May 2018 6pm at the REconomy Centre

PRESENT: David Mitchell (Chair), Frances Gillmore, Pete Taylor, David Martin, Jeannette Willington

1. APOLOGIES: Lu Overy, Shirley Prendergast, Keith Rennells

2. MINUTES: The minutes of the meeting of the 24th April 2018 were approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING:

all dealt with below

4. RHS PENNANT DAY (13TH JULY)

Dave reminded the committee of the RHS Pennant visit on 13th July. We need to produce a hand-out for the assessors containing recent photos of the garden with information about what's been done over the last year or so (since there was no assessment in 2017, the new Play facilities and solar watering system can both be mentioned. Dave agreed to work on the document and he and David Martin would try to take photos when the garden was busy (e.g. when the Grove School are present).

Action: Dave and David to take photos

5. SANDPIT

The cat poo incident was discussed. It was agreed that:

- (a) there should be a reminder on the blackboard by the gate about the need to cover the sandpit – David Martin has already done this.
- (b) It should be made easier to put the cover on (the elastic cords are quite tight)
- (c) We should put a notice on the board outside the garden about the incident – warning people that the sandpit might have to be closed if it happens again

Action: David to investigate the elastic cords

Action: Dave to draft a note for the notice board

6. INSURANCE

Given that Keith thinks volunteers are not covered by SHDC insurance unless an SHDC person is supervising them, it was agreed that we should join the RHS as an affiliate society to get insured through them (affiliation costs £35 and insurance £75 per annum).

Action: Dave to fill in the RHS forms

7. SHDC TASKS

Keith apologised for not being able to make the meeting but sent the following notes:

- a. I've queried why SHDC hasn't topped up the sand pit yet...it was promised when the weather improved...so chasing again.
- b. I've also sent another email to Rob Sekula at SHDC following up on the work David and I did on the path resurfacing specification. It's a few months now, so I've requested that they respond to let us know how they intend to undertake the work, and when. If I hear back by this evening I will forward details. Bit frustrating...was hoping to have this done by Summer! They are in danger of missing the boat again, because it gets too busy in July and August.
- c. Several of us met to discuss the pool area a fortnight ago, and came up with a plan for a light touch tidy up, without disturbing the knotweed. The membrane which covers most of the area is doing its job, in that the bramble and other plants trying to establish on the slope are shallow rooted and easy to pull up. We also agreed to coppice the hazel tree, and prune the side branches of the hedge trees, and also clear the path edges. It's a mornings work, and I have suggested some dates in the next week or two...think we are waiting to hear from Shirley. Not sure if there is any paid work in this for me, but if the

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garden volunteers want my support with the project I'd estimate 4 hours at £15, so £60 for the job. But if the volunteers are happy to do this themselves, you may decide you don't need me! Happy either way.

- d. Pleased to see the knotweed much diminished this year, just one small stand on the edge of the pool. I undertook to check SHDC were going to come in and treat with chemicals in July.

8. GARDEN NEWS

Jeannette and Frances reported that while the solar watering system was just about adequate in hot weather, the current hose is much too heavy. It was agreed they would investigate lighter alternatives. They would also like a step installed outside the shed – it is currently quite difficult to access the power switch.

Action: Jeannette and Frances to investigate

The biennials had been cleared but it looks as though the myrtle in the herb garden is dying. There had also been damage to plants caused by people climbing over the wall in the herb garden area. It was not clear what we could do to prevent this.

9. SUSIE'S GATE

Since the last meeting Pete, Jeannette and David Martin had met with Spencer Field Larcombe to discuss modifications to the design. The meeting went well and Spencer has agreed to produce a new design based on their discussion. Pete will circulate the design when Spencer sends it.

It was agreed that a small plaque should be mounted on the wall beside the gate explaining Susie's role in creating the garden.

Action: Pete to draft the text, with help from Dave

It was agreed we should publicise the design once agreed – as well as an article in the Totnes Times we should put something in the monthly Totnes Directory

AOB:

David mentioned the growth of hogweed on the banks by the lower 5 Heath Way houses. Given their toxic nature it was not clear how they could be controlled or eradicated. Perhaps when we have joined the RHS we can ask them?

Shirley reports that she paid £320.58 into the LGA Account this month:

£146.64 plant stall

£15 donation from Di Reeves

£159.21 books

Many many thanks to Liz for caring for the stall and emptying to donation box.

And to Di who generously lets us use her storeroom for the books.

And to all who give the plants and books.

Could not happen otherwise!

NEXT MEETING: The next Committee meeting will be on **Wednesday 4th July 2018** at the REconomy Centre, Leechwell Street, starting at 6pm.

Action: Dave to reserve room (**DONE**)