

**MINUTES FOR LEECHWELL GARDEN ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**9<sup>th</sup> September at 6pm in the Leechwell Garden**

**PRESENT:** David Mitchell (Chair), Shirley Prendergast, Philip Strange, David Martin

**1. APOLOGIES:** Jeannette Willington, Lu Overy, Roma Church, Keith Rennells

**2. MINUTES:** the minutes of the meeting of the 29<sup>th</sup> July were agreed

**3. MATTERS ARISING**

None.

**4. SHDC 'HEALTH CONCERNS'**

Dave had received, via Keith and Rob Sekula of SHDC, an email from Naomi Vinecombe of SHDC regarding a 'complaint':

Attached voicemail from a mum who uses the play area at Leechwell.  
Concerns around the sand pit / cats / dogs using it as a toilet.  
Children transporting steam (*stream?*) water to pond / drinking the water :-0  
Children being sick ☹

The main issue behind this is the increasing frequency of the sandpit cover being left off over night. Cats certainly do roam in the garden (I saw one myself this morning!). David says he often has to close the cover when locking up. We took a look at the notice beside the sandpit and it does warn people that the sandpit might have to close if it's left uncovered too much. Rather than change the notice I suggest that we put a stronger warning on the blackboard threatening to close the sandpit if things don't improve (Roma/Lu - is this something you could do?).

**5. 10<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

Clearly any celebration will have to wait, but we agreed we should put up a notice on the gates in mid-October reminding people that the garden has now been open for ten years and encouraging donations to pay for improvements. See also Shirley's proposal in AOB below.

**6. KEITH'S REPORT**

Keith writes:

Firstly, realising that we are close to being spent up now on pocket parks and pool garden budgets, but I think we've pretty much achieve what we set out to do...and more!

Monitoring report from Catherine went off to the government department who funded pocket parks, and was well received.

Two weeks ago Andrew and I cut back the hedge to give better visibility in and out of the pool garden. Need to maintain it at that lower height in future.

Final project...proposed date Friday 18th September....we will cut and rake the three wildflower meadows - pool garden, wildflower bank and Heath Way bank. Anybody who wants to join us and help with raking would be very welcome, but please let me know as we can, under the new rules, only have 6 of us working on the project at any time, so people will need to book in! We can have other safe measures in place that day.

So one final bill to come from me for these couple of days...hope the budget can still stretch to it. Let me know if not, and I will try and get some money in from SHDC councillors, or another source.

So that will be pretty much it for 2020 for our project list. Obviously SHDC will need to come and cut the hedges in the early autumn, but as I say, I think a good time to pause until we get some more grant money in!

All agreed that Keith and Andrew had done a great job and noted the "cut and rake" event on September 18<sup>th</sup>.

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## **7. ROMA'S NOTE**

Roma writes:

Some points for the meeting:

New (paid) gardener Ross did well, he covered alot of large jobs:

Thinning fig tree

Trimming silver birches

Clearing/trimming beds by play area.

Tidied large bed by garden wall

Cutback kids willow structures

Plus some other stuff that I can't remember.

He's here with us again in September & well worth the money!

I'm also looking at funding/grants (alongside Keith,) to keep funds topped up alongside plant sales & donations.

All agreed the work had made a real difference. The work SHDC had done trimming the lane was also much appreciated.

## **8. AOB**

David Martin noted that several hedgehogs had been killed on Heath Way though whether they had come from the garden he was not sure.

Philip had seen a noticeable reduction in pollinators (bees etc.) and hoped that we could encourage them in the spring (e.g. if Keith has any of the wildflower mix left we could use that).

Shirley showed the booklet she and I had produced back in 2016 to support the inclusion of the garden as a green space in the Totnes Neighbourhood Plan. She suggested that we could enlarge it and bring it up-to-date (it predates the new play structure, Susie's Gate, the repair of the path and work in the pool area) with the idea of turning it into short book about which we could use to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and get some donations). She is going to make a start on this in the coming weeks. You can read the original on the LGA website at <http://www.leechwellgarden.org.uk/NeighbourhoodPlanNomination.pdf>

Jeannette sent a note indicating that as of 8th September we had £5431.20 in the LGA account plus £182.88 in the Pool Fund account.

Dave noted that he had arranged to lend a gazebo and two chairs for 3 days to Sally Murrall-Smith of TRESOC in exchange for a £30 donation to the garden's bank account.

During our tour of the garden, David Martin pointed out a deep gash in the new path surface (on the slope below the play structure) apparently caused by run-off from the grassed area during the torrential rain about three weeks ago. It was agreed that Keith/Andrew should be asked about possible remedial work

**NEXT MEETING:** No date was agreed at the meeting but Dave will suggest dates (probably in mid October).

**Action:** Dave to circulate dates