

BRIDGE END GARDENS WORKING PARTY held at 4.30 pm at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 2 MAY 2000

Present:- Councillor D J Morson - Chairman
Councillors Mrs D Cornell and D M Miller

Also present:- Mr M D White (Clerk to Saffron Walden Town Council)

Officers in attendance:- J Bosworth, Miss S Chapman, M T Purkiss and
B Smeeden

BEG26 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R C Dean and M A Hibbs.

BEG27 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2000 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

BEG28 BUSINESS ARISING

(i) BEG18(iii) - Potential Grant Sources

The Working Party noted that good progress was being made with European colleagues and awareness of the Bridge End Gardens Project was being promoted through the Partnersearch - Culture 2000 initiative. Three partners had expressed an interest and Officers would be working with these partners in an attempt to put a bid together.

(ii) BEG18(iv) - Maze Security Fencing

It was noted that Uttlesford Contract Services would commence erecting the chain link fencing on 3 May 2000 and some heritage fencing would be installed shortly. The total cost of this fencing was £4,800, which meant that there was a sum of £4,200 unspent in the budget. It was suggested that a site visit be held prior to the next meeting of the Working Party to help Members assess the best way of utilising this unspent balance to extend the fencing in the most appropriate way.

(iii) BEG22 - Offer from Friends of Bridge End Gardens

It was noted that the plants had now been received and the final planting of the pond in the kitchen garden would be undertaken shortly.

BEG29 GARDENER/SUPERVISOR/TASK FORCE - PROGRESS REPORT

It was reported that interviews for the post of Gardener/Supervisor would be held on 8 May 2000.

BEG30 SCHEDULE OF RE-COSTED WORK

As reported at the last meeting, Officers had undertaken a preliminary assessment of the costings for the work identified in the consultant's report. A schedule was circulated indicating that much of the work identified in the consultant's report could be undertaken for a significantly smaller total cost than the consultant had originally estimated. This had arisen in part because of the much reduced cost of the work required to the culvert and of the assumption that Officers would provide technical advice and manage the contracts instead of employing a consultant and that there would be continued involvement of the Task Force. It was agreed that Officers would now meet with the consultants, Liz Lake Associates, to discuss the revised schedule and to seek the consultants comment on these revisions.

BEG31 VIEWING PLATFORM

It was reported that discussions had been held with the blacksmith and a provisional estimate had been given. A written quotation would be provided in the near future.

BEG32 APPLICATIONS FOR EXTERNAL FUNDING

Officers circulated a draft letter which it was proposed to use to invite other organisations and companies to participate in the restoration of the gardens. Members were asked to submit any comments on the letter by 5 May 2000. It was also suggested that the letter could be included on the Council's website.

BEG33 POSSIBLE CLOSING OF GATES

Members were aware that much of the vandalism in the gardens took place during the hours of darkness, particularly during the summer months. Members' views were sought on whether they would support the closing of the three gates leading into the gardens during this period. The Working Party felt that security was of paramount importance in obtaining funding for the project. Locking the gates during the hours of darkness would assist greatly in making the gardens more secure and would also help in enabling the by-laws to be enforced. Some Members also considered that the gate leading to the Anglo American Playing Fields should be locked on a permanent basis, except when special events were being held in the gardens.

Officers were asked to investigate these matters and report to the next meeting.

BEG34 RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE SLADE

Members received a report which clarified that the open stretch of the Slade between Bridge End Gardens and the Anglo American Playing Fields was owned by Saffron Walden Town Council and the Town Council accepted responsibility for it.

The Slade then passed beneath the land leased to the Council by the Fry Trustees. Whilst the original lease provided for the Council to keep this part clear of sand, gravel and weeds, it did not make the Council responsible for any other works which might be required. Equally, the lease did not place any responsibility on the Fry Trustees. If some of the culverting were to collapse it would be a matter for negotiation between

the Council and the Trustees as to who should be responsible for any necessary works.

BEG35 PROPOSED BY-LAWS

Members had previously received and discussed the Home Office Model By-Laws for Pleasure Grounds, Public Walks and Open Spaces which might be appropriate in controlling the use of Bridge End Gardens. Members noted that in the past the making and confirmation of by-laws had often been a long and protracted process. However, a fast track scheme was now in operation for by-laws which followed the Home Office Model.

The Working Party had previously expressed the opinion that the by-laws should not be too draconian but needed to include such matters as controlling the use of vehicles, including cycles, removal of structures, ball games, protection of flower beds, trees etc, noise and obstruction. The Home Office had advised that by-laws would not normally be confirmed if the subjects were covered by general legislation. Examples would include damage and graffiti which were covered by the Criminal Damage Act 1971 and litter which was covered by Section 87 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

RECOMMENDED that the Council make and advertise by-laws, based upon the Home Office Model, to regulate the use of Bridge End Gardens.

BEG36 MANAGEMENT AND FINANCING OF THE RESTORED BRIDGE END GARDENS

It was noted that a reply had been sent to Councillor Clifford following the question which he raised at the last Council meeting. Copies had also been sent to all Members of the Council.

BEG37 NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held at 4.30 pm on Monday 12 June 2000. Members were asked to meet initially at the summer house in Bridge End Gardens when it was hoped there would be an opportunity to meet the Gardener/Supervisor.

The meeting ended at 5.25 pm.