

**BRIDGE END GARDENS WORKING PARTY held at 4.30pm at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 18 SEPTEMBER 2000**

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

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

BEG19 APOLOGIES

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

BEG20 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 24 July 2000 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

BEG21 ROSE GARDEN DESIGN

Officers circulated a plan illustrating the rose garden design. This was based on work carried out by the landscape designer, Loudon, published around 1830. This was considered to be appropriate as there may be some connection between Loudon and the gardens. Support would be sought from national rose growers. Further details would be provided at the next meeting of the Working Party.

BEG22 BYLAWS – UPDATE

It was reported that draft bylaws had been submitted to the Home Office. The Home Office had suggested that it was not appropriate to include items within the bylaws which had not caused problems in the past or were likely to cause problems in the future. Accordingly, the Working Party reviewed and agreed the content of the draft bylaws which would be submitted again to the Home Office for comment.

BEG23 TASKFORCE – UPDATE

Further to Minute BEG14(ii) discussions had been held with the Employment Service who had indicated that a tender document was requested. The preparation of this tender had involved considerable officer time and would be dispatched by 22 September. If the proposal was agreed a contract could be entered into to continue with the New Deal scheme.

The Landscape Officer reported that he had attended a conference at Welwyn and had made a presentation on the environmental taskforce option. The presentation had been well received and a number of delegates indicated that they were likely to visit the gardens.

The Chairman reported that at the last meeting of the Amenities Sub-Committee Officers had been asked to investigate the possibility of obtaining a Writtle College student on a placement to work in the gardens. It was reported that a representative from the College was currently carrying out a site assessment at the gardens and once this had been agreed progress would be made with the NVQ scheme. The question of a student placement could then be pursued with the College.

BEG24 NEW SECURITY MEASURES

Officers reported that fencing was now in place at one particularly vulnerable part of the gardens a ditch had been dug, within which defensive planting would be established.

BEG25 EVENING CLOSURE

Following the last meeting an approach had been made to the groundsman at the cricket club but no response had been received. Discussions had been held with the Council's Personnel Section and it was understood that some of the stewards might be interested in undertaking the locking of the gates during the summer. The total cost of undertaking the locking of the gates would be in the region of £4,400 per annum and there would be one off costs of various equipment, including locks. It was suggested that the Task Force could lock the gates during the autumn and winter period and that, as an experiment, this could commence from 1 October to 31 December 2000. The situation could then be reviewed to decide whether to extend until March and the possibility of locking during the summer period could also be investigated at that time. It would be necessary to advise the general public.

RECOMMENDED that subject to the views of the Friends of Bridge End Gardens the above course of action be pursued and implemented once the necessary * were in place.

BEG26 SPECIFICATION FOR SUMMER HOUSE

Officers reported that a specification was needed to enable the work to be tendered. Much of the work was of a specialist nature. The cost of repairs to the summerhouse could be in the region of £20,000 and that the cost of preparing a full specification would be approximately £1,500. It was noted that there was provision in the existing budget to enable the specification work to be undertaken. It was hoped that the cost of the repairs to the summer house would be met from external sources.

RECOMMENDED that Officers be authorised to proceed with the preparation of the specification work.

BEG27 EXTERNAL FUNDING UPDATE

Officers reported that positive discussions had been held with BAA Stansted regarding the possibility of a £10,000 grant from their C21st Community Trust Fund. It was also understood that English Heritage were prepared to consider an application in principle for repairs to the listed buildings. In addition, the Linbury Trust had responded positively and were undertaking further investigations with a view to a grant application being discussed at their next meeting. It was also reported that the Community Service had donated a number of quality tools for use by the Task Force in the gardens. Officers reported that an approach had also been made to the National Grid Community 21 Awards. The MEPs had been contacted concerning the joint application that had been from Evergreen sources and asked to assist in advising a positive outcome.

Officers emphasised that partnership funding of this type was crucial and they would give high priority to pursuing all funding opportunities, prior to formally making application to the Heritage Lottery Fund.

Councillor Mrs Cornell reported that she had been in touch with Tesco concerning the possibility of a grant and this matter had now been referred to their Head Office. She undertook to go back to them to suggest that the restoration of the Dutch Garden would be a suitable project for funding.

BEG28 PROVISION OF STATUES

Councillor Miller suggested that it might be useful to investigate the possibility of seeking sponsors for sculptors to undertake such works within the gardens.

BEG29 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on 30 October 2000 at 4.30pm.

The meeting ended 5.40pm.