

**BRIDGE END GARDENS WORKING PARTY held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 21 JANUARY 2002 at 4.30 pm**

Present:- Councillor D J Morson – Chairman.
Councillors Mrs D Cornell, R C Dean and M A Hibbs.

Officers in Attendance:- J Bosworth, Miss S Chapman and M T Purkiss.

BEG125 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor D M Miller and from the Clerk to Saffron Walden Town Council.

BEG126 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2001 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

BEG127 BUSINESS ARISING

(i) Progress on Summer House

It was noted that despite some unforeseen structural problems, work had now been completed. The windows had been boarded up temporarily until such time as the CCTV was installed and the building alarmed. Options for shutters that would be in keeping with the gardens would be examined in the future.

(ii) Stone Bench

It was noted that the stone bench had been ordered.

(iii) Writtle College

Progress was continuing to be made with Writtle College concerning its future involvement in the gardens and it was hoped to formalise arrangements in the near future. The college would be involved in the felling of a large diseased beech tree in the gardens which would result in a considerable saving for the Council. The Local Plan and Conservation Manager reported that it was possible that one of the follow through participants on Task Force would be taken on as a student. The Working Party felt that, prior to the felling of the beech tree, it would be useful to issue an appropriate press release and to ensure that the Friends were fully aware of what was being done.

(iv) Further Tasks in the Garden

The second tranche of roses had now been planted by the Friends. The replacement wall damaged by flooding was currently under construction. It was understood that, following meetings with local residents, a detailed study of the Slade and culverts would be commissioned.

(v) Photo Call

At the last meeting, Members had suggested that a photo call should be arranged in the gardens to maintain and increase interest in the project. It was suggested that it would be useful if Lord Sainsbury could visit the gardens and the Local Plan and Conservation Manager undertook to contact him.

BEG128 TASK FORCE UPDATE

It was reported that there were six participants currently on community service and six from the youth service working in the gardens. One additional person was also assisting. Paul Dawson had made contact with the Commanding Officer at Carver Barracks to see whether there were any opportunities for the regiment to assist in the gardens. Councillor Mrs Cornell said that she would ask the Mayor of Saffron Walden to add her support to this request.

BEG129 BY-LAWS

Now that all the relevant by-laws had been confirmed, orders had been placed for the relevant signs. The Working Party considered that, in addition to the signs for the by-laws, it would be useful to have well designed signage leading to the gardens similar to the signs for the Maze. It was considered that this might be a project where the Friends could be involved.

BEG130 EXTERNAL FUNDING UPDATE

At the last meeting, it had been noted that the Heritage Lottery Fund had decided to award a stage 1 pass up to £362,500 to the Council's bid so that the project might progress to stage 2.

The Local Plan and Conservation Manager reported that he was involved in a number of other projects at the present time which was limiting the amount of time he could put into this project. He reported that representatives of the Heritage Lottery Fund would be visiting the gardens on 26 February. The Chairman advised that if he was available, he would accompany the Local Plan and Conservation Manager at this meeting.

It was also noted that, prior to the stage 2 bid being submitted, work would be required on six issues and the Local Plan and Conservation Manager updated Members on these.

- 1 A detailed historic planting plan would be required. The Heritage Lottery Fund had offered a development grant towards this and it was intended that tenders would be sought from the consultants who tendered for the original plan. The advice of the Heritage Lottery Fund on the tender process would be sought.

- 2 A fully costed and agreed management plan including a ten year rolling management plan for the care and replacement of trees and shrubs was also required. It would be difficult for this to be carried out in house and it was likely that tenders would need to be sought for this work. This could be funded from the special project fund and possibly from a further grant of £10,000 which had been agreed by Saffron Walden Town Council. The Local Plan and Conservation Manager would consider the likely cost further and report back to a future meeting.
- 3 Details of alterations to the toilet block were required. Work on this would be carried out in house and had already commenced. It was intended that there should be one unisex and one disabled toilet.
- 4 An assurance and details showing that the Maze and walled gardens would be more readily accessible to visitors was required. This was already in hand with the assistance of the Friends.
- 5 Proposals for dealing with vandalism were required. This would be secured by providing CCTV, alarms, securing boundaries and improving the balustrades.
- 6 Proposals for developing new audiences and bringing more people into the garden were also required. The Local Plan and Conservation Manager asked for suggestions from Members and ideas such as the web site, concerts, plays and leaflets were put forward. It was also emphasised that it was essential to have mains water, drainage and electricity and that the hiring of the gardens be made as user friendly as possible. The Working Party would be pleased to hear of any other ideas from Members.

The Chairman advised the Working Party of the contents of a letter from Councillor O'Neill reflecting the views of the Friends on some of the above matters.

BEG131 PROPOSED WEB SITE

The Local Plan and Conservation Manager reported that he had discussed this matter with the Council's IT section and it was hoped that the project could be carried out in house with an attractive design which would be monitored and comply with the Government's accessibility standards.

BEG132 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Working Party would be held at 4.30 pm on 4 March 2002.

The meeting ended at 6.00 pm.