

**BRIDGE END GARDENS WORKING PARTY held at COUNCIL OFFICES  
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 4.30 pm on 15 APRIL 2002**

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

Officers in Attendance:- J Bosworth and M T Purkiss.

**BEG140 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R C Dean and M A Hibbs and from the Clerk to Saffron Walden Town Council.

**BEG141 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 March 2002 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**BEG142 BUSINESS ARISING**

**(i) Stone Bench**

Councillor Miller reported that the bench had not yet been completed.

**(ii) Writtle College**

The Local Plan and Conservation Manager reported that arrangements were in hand for the felling of the diseased beech tree by students of Writtle College.

Councillor Morson said that the Friends had suggested that the Council should consider sponsoring one of the Task Force participants as a student. The Local Plan and Conservation Manager said that he would find out more details including costs and advise Members accordingly.

**(iii) Further Tasks in the Garden**

It was noted that the 33<sup>rd</sup> Regiment from Carver Barracks had agreed to prepare the ground outside the kitchen garden for a disabled car park, to undertake works to the entrance to the culvert under the gardens and to make the gate for the kitchen garden. A timetable of work would be provided. It was confirmed that no work would start on another project, cutting a defensive ditch on Borough Meadow adjacent to the Dutch Garden, until the report on flooding which had been commissioned by the Council had been considered and until the Town Council's consent had been obtained.

**(iv) Photo Call**

The Working Party was delighted to note that Lord Sainsbury had accepted the invitation to visit the Gardens and a suitable date would be agreed with the Chairman.

(v) **Byelaws**

The signs relating to the Dog Byelaws were now in place and notice of the other byelaws would be displayed shortly.

Councillor Mrs Cornell had raised with Essex County Council the possibility of providing brown heritage signs. The County Council had confirmed that the signs in Saffron Walden were currently being re-evaluated and consideration would be given to this as part of that exercise.

(vi) **Events in the Garden**

The Committee & Communications Manager reported that letters had been sent to local organisations concerning the possible use of the Gardens for events but no responses had yet been received.

(vii) **Constitution Task Group**

Councillor Morson said that he had raised the issue of whether the Working Party should report to the Community and Leisure or the Environment and Transport Committee. The report of the Constitution Task Group would be considered at the Council meeting on 23 April 2002.

BEG143 **TASK FORCE UPDATE**

The Local Plan & Conservation Manager reminded Members that the Government had introduced an Innovation Scheme to replace the Task Force Scheme and a bid had been submitted prior to the deadline of 15 March 2002. The outcome was awaited.

BEG144 **EXTERNAL FUNDING UPDATE**

The Local Plan and Conservation Manager reported that a further grant of £2,000 had been made by Essex County Council towards works in the Dutch Garden.

He said that due to commitments on planning appeals and other aspects of planning work, he had not been able to allocate time to the Bridge End Gardens project recently. However he had received an assurance from the Head of Planning and Building Surveying that he would now be able to give priority to the work on Bridge End Gardens.

BEG145 **FEEDBACK FROM MEETING WITH FRIENDS**

Councillor Morson said that the Friends of Bridge End Gardens had expressed some concern on progress being made with this scheme. The

Local Plan and Conservation Manager said that tenders for the historic planting plan would now be sought and dealt with through the Council's normal tender procedure. He would be dealing with the tender documentation as a priority and had already consulted English Heritage on a potential list of tenderers.

Councillor Morson said that the Friends had suggested that it would be helpful to the public to leave the maze and kitchen garden open during weekdays when the gardener/supervisor was on site. The Local Plan and Conservation Manager said that this could be operated for an experimental period to give an opportunity to assess whether any problems arose. Councillor Morson said that the Friends had also referred to the electricity supply. The Local Plan and Conservation Manager said that the supply of electricity was a fundamental part of the Heritage Lottery Fund Bid and could not be dealt with in isolation.

Councillor Morson reported that Charles Goldie was looking at the possibility of arranging a series of lectures on historic gardens. Councillor Morson had also met with Charles Goldie, Barbara Lumsden and Marion Sweetman and had discussed a draft plan for the Dutch Garden, which had been prepared by Barbara Lumsden. She had suggested reducing the height of the yews and trimming them. She had also suggested that the bed by the Ha Ha could be double dug so that planting could be undertaken during this year. The Local Plan and Conservation Manager advised that, following discussions with Heritage Lottery representatives, any restoration of the gardens needed to be approved by the Heritage Lottery Fund. This did not necessarily mean that selected work on individual aspects could not commence but close liaison with HLF was a prerequisite with that organisation. He would contact Barbara Lumsden.

The Working Party was keen to maintain the impetus of the assistance given by the Friends and the Local Plan and Conservation Manager would accompany the Chairman of the Working Party to the next meeting of the Friends to discuss a timetable for implementation for the restoration programme.

Councillor Morson had also raised the question of how representatives of the Friends could best be involved in the work of the Working Party and it was agreed that they could be invited to some future meetings on an ad-hoc basis.

BEG146

### **NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held at 4.30 pm on 20 May 2002.

The meeting ended at 5.50 pm.