

**BRIDGE END GARDENS TASK GROUP held at BRIDGE END GARDENS  
SAFFRON WALDEN at 4.30 pm on 21 JUNE 2004**

Present:- Councillor D J Morson – Chairman.  
Councillors B M Hughes, A J Ketteridge and V Pedder

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

Also present at the invitation of the Chairman:- Mr C Goldie.

**BEG64 APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor R P Chambers.

**BEG65 MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 26 April 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**BEG66 BUSINESS ARISING**

**(i) Minute BEG55 (iii) - Progress Report**

It was noted that the work to the dangerous wall in Bridge Street Path had been completed and preparatory work on the Bridge Street Passage would be completed shortly.

**(ii) Minute BEG55 (v) - Postcard of Mosaic Tile**

It was noted that the TIC were working on the postcard of the mosaic tile. The leaflet was now available and copies would be circulated to Members of the Task Group with the next set of Minutes.

**(iii) Minute BEG56 - Progress Report**

It was reported that works to the railings and walls was nearing completion and works to the paths and statues was progressing well. The Project Manager said that the main area to be addressed was the completion of soft landscaping.

**(iv) Minute BEG57 - Health and Safety**

The Project Manager reported that further tests on the London Plane tree had confirmed that there were cavities and there was potential for a failure in part of the crown. In order to reduce this risk, the Council's Development Control Committee at their meeting on 28 June 2004 would be asked to agree to the overall crown being reduced by 25 to 30%. The Project Manager said that whilst this was regrettable, public safety had to take priority. He confirmed that the tree surgeon would be asked to make every effort to maintain the shape of the crown.

The Project Manager also reported that part of the wall in the maze had been declared dangerous and he had arranged for work to be carried out with the agreement of the Executive Manager Development Services.

(v) **Minute BEG58 - Feedback from meeting with Friends**

Mr Goldie said that the Friends were continuing to provide assistance in the Garden and were seeking to identify individuals who could take over specific tasks. The Project Manager thanked the Friends for their valuable assistance and said that the Friends had agreed to purchase a seat for the maze.

(vi) **Minute BEG59 - Staff Update**

The Project Manager reported on the current staffing situation and said that there appeared to be general consensus that two full time staff would be required once the work had been completed. At the last meeting, Councillor Ketteridge had suggested that the duties of the gardeners could include work on other gardens in the area and the Project Manager said that the job descriptions would be examined later in the year.

(vii) **Minute BEG61 - Garden Relaunch**

At the last meeting, the Task Group suggested that the Earl of Wessex should be invited back to the Gardens to commemorate the completion of the restoration in June 2005. Mr Goldie also reported that this coincided with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of the Anglo American Playing Fields and it was suggested that there might be scope to combine the two events.

**BEG67 FEEDBACK FROM MEETING WITH FRIENDS**

Mr Goldie reported on the current situation with the Friends. In particular, he said that it was intended to arrange guided tours and he suggested that Members of the District Council and Town Council should be invited to take part in one of these tours.

Councillor Morson thanked Mr Goldie for this invitation and also for the invaluable assistance given by the Friends over the past few years.

**BEG68 HIRE OF THE GARDENS**

The Project Manager reported that the Garden had recently been hired out for a private function and for a theatre production by the Irish Theatre Company. He considered that, in hindsight, the hire fee of £300 might be excessive and asked for the Task Group's comments. There was general consensus that the fee was prohibitive and all Members were keen to see the Gardens made available to the local community for appropriate events. It was agreed that Members of the Task Group would meet informally to discuss arrangements for the hire of the Garden and, in particular, would look at customer practice in similar gardens elsewhere.

**BEG69 LOCKING OF THE GARDENS**

The Project Manager reported that since the installation of the security cameras, there had been no serious incidents of vandalism. He said that the boundaries would soon be secure and asked Members to decide on whether the gates should be locked at the entrances in Bridge Street, Castle Street and from the Anglo American Playing Fields. The Task Group considered that the Garden should remain unlocked for the time being, particularly to assess the effect during the summer holiday period, but that the situation should continue to be monitored closely.

**BEG70 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held in the Garden at 4.30 pm on Tuesday 31 August 2004 and that Mr Goldie would be invited to attend.

The meeting ended at 6.00 pm.