

**BRIDGE END GARDENS TASK GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 4.30 pm on 23 MARCH 2005**

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

BEG80 APOLOGIES

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

BEG81 OPENING OF THE MAZE AT WEEKENDS

The Task Group were reminded that the HLF Eastern Regional Manager had visited the gardens and supported the maze being opened at weekends. The matter had been discussed with the Friends and Mr Goldie confirmed that they would be willing to open the maze at weekends on an unsupervised basis from 10.00am until 4.00pm.

The Task Group thanked Mr Goldie for this offer and asked that the opening be arranged as soon as possible.

BEG82 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 31 August 2004 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

BEG83 BUSINESS ARISING

(i) Minute BEG73 - Postcard of Mosaic Tile

The Project Manager reported that the TIC had delayed the postcard of the mosaic tile due to work on the new District Guide. It was hoped to address this issue in the next two to three months.

(ii) Minute BEG73 (4) - Locking of the Garden

The Project Manager reported that since the gardens had remained unlocked there had been no significant problems and the Task Group agreed that the current arrangements should be continued.

(iii) Minute BEG75 - Feedback from the Friends

It was noted that the evening tour of the gardens for Councillors in September had been well attended and it was suggested that a further tour be arranged in May/June. Mr Goldie said that he would look at making the necessary

arrangements. The Project Manager also reported that the signs advising that ball games and cycling were prohibited had been prepared. He subsequently advised the Chairman that new signs in the family style would be put in position shortly.

(iv) Minute BEG77 - Future Staffing

The Project Manager explained the current staffing situation. Mr Goldie said that he had spoken to the Essex Gardens Trust and said that they had suggested engaging an outside consultant to plan the work and attend the gardens on an ad-hoc basis. The Project Manager said that this suggestion would be looked at and the issue of working more closely with Writtle College would also be pursued.

BEG84 PROGRESS REPORT

The Project Manager reported that progress with the project was on target and within budget. Most of the planting and building work had been completed. The replacement of the iron works still needed to be finalised and he said that the restored statues would be put back in place shortly before the official opening.

BEG85 CELEBRATION OF THE COMPLETION OF THE PROJECT

It was agreed that the celebration of the completion of the project would be held on Saturday 8 July 2005. The Project Manager said that the Earl of Wessex had been unable to attend and he suggested that the principal speaker should be Liz Forgan, the Chair of the Heritage Lottery Fund and the other main speakers should be Tony Fry, on behalf of the owners of the gardens and Lord Sainsbury, one of the major benefactors.

The Project Manager said that his initial thoughts were that there should be a marquee on the lawn with a buffet and optional tours and suggested that the event should start at 11.30am. He would draw up a list of invitees and consult with Members of the Task Group before finalising the arrangements. Councillor Ketteridge suggested that the marquee could be located on Borough Meadows which would allow the gardens to be kept clear. He agreed to pursue this matter with Saffron Walden Town Council. The Task Group stressed that it was important that the event was well publicised.

It was AGREED that:

1. The Project Manager to work up details of the event and circulate these to Members of the Task Group
2. The Council's Press and Communications Officer be invited to the next meeting to discuss the publicity arrangements.

BEG86 MARRIAGE CELEBRATION

The Project Manager reported that he had been approached by a couple who wished to hire the gardens for a marriage celebration on 26 August 2005. He had discussed the matter with Officers and there were no legal problems and the couple were happy to make a contribution of £50 towards the restoration of the gardens. The Task Group agreed that the Project Manager should offer the gardens for this event as set out above.

BEG87 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Thursday 28 April at 4.30 pm at the Council Offices.

The meeting ended at 5.30 pm.