



**Friends of Valley Gardens “Harrogate”**  
**Harrogate’s Award Winning Park**

President: Martin Fish  
Charity Number: 1148369



## **Chairman’s Annual Report 2017**

**3.3.18**

This has been a busy year for Friends of Valley Gardens (FOVG).

### Trustees 2017:

Jane Blayney (Chairman), Anne Grange (Treasurer and Membership Secretary), Peter Blayney (Secretary retired), Jim Clark, Liz Chidlow (Volunteer Garden Organizer).

### Executive 2017:

Jane Blayney (Chairman), Anne Grange (Treasurer and Membership Secretary), Peter Blayney (Secretary retired during 2017 position now vacant), Old Magnesia Well Pump Room Organizer (OMWPR) Andrew Jordan, Young Persons Representative (vacant), Stephen Watkinson and Jon Iddon (Marketing and Publicity retired during 2017 now vacant), Jane Blayney (40s Day Bookings), Liz Chidlow (Volunteer Gardening Co-ordinator), Tom Holleman Web Manager, Ann Beeby Japanese Garden Project Leader, David Mason Green Park Entrance Restoration to be known as the King Edward VII Gate(Gate Project) Leader.

*NB, we still have outstanding executive vacancies and more trustees are always welcome.*

Peter Blayney has retired as secretary and OMWPR Organizer but is continuing to be active in his support of the Green Park Entrance Restoration Project. Thank you for dealing with the large and increasing volume of work that FOVG has generated over the year, including minutes, reports, welcome letters to new members and the Albatross Newsletter. Peter will be still seen at the OMWPR, promoting the Hygiea mugs with enthusiasm and these can be purchased for a £10 donation.

Stephen Watkinson and Jon Iddon have retired from the Marketing and Publicity Organizer role. Though their stay with FOVG was short they made a great impact and encouraged us into the media of the 21<sup>st</sup> century with regards to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Your enthusiasm will be missed in many roles, including

procurement of a wonderful selection of tombola prizes for 40s day and organizing visits of Father Christmas and an Easter Treasure Hunt event for children in the pouring rain. Lastly but not least FOVG has been very grateful for the sponsorship you and the enthusiasm for the events you organized. We wish you well in your new life in Scotland.

*Harrogate Borough Council Supporting Officers:*

Friends of Valley Gardens wish to express their gratitude for the support of Harrogate Borough Council, in partnership with whom, the restoration, maintenance and development of Valley Gardens has taken place. Patrick Kilburn (Head of Parks and Environmental Services), Clerks of Works Jenny Love and Andrew Hyde (Gates Project), and Kate Dawson and Jo Ryder (Japanese Garden Project), Simon and Paula Collier, (Gardening support and advice).

*Japanese Garden Society:*

FOVG would also like to express their gratitude for the support of the Japanese Garden Society in the restoration of the Japanese Garden, horticultural expertise and donation of plants and additional trees.

*Events 2017:*

- Father Christmas Visits OMWPR
- Easter Treasure Hunt
- 40s Day
- Sponsored Walk 'Coast to Coast' 84mile walk by Simon Collier (Head Gardener Valley Gardens), proceeds shared between FOVG and Starbeck in Bloom.
- Heritage Open Days

*Presentations: 'Projects Past and Present'*

- Methodist Ladies Group, Starbeck
- Tagg House Ladies, Bilton
- Vision Support Centre
- Methodist Ladies Circle, Woodlands

*Tours:*

- New Zealand Flower Show Exhibitors:
- Starbeck 'Off Shoot' Community Group

### Other:

- Duke of York Community Initiative Award renewed for further 5 years.
- 2017 Yorkshire In Bloom Platinum Award
- Harrogate Business Market: A stand was offered for their annual event, which gave us the availability to canvass interest in FOVG and its projects, 24.4.17.
- Team Harrogate membership a group of community groups offered an opportunity of information exchange and contribution to Harrogate In Bloom entry.
- Sunday Fun Run Valley Gardens have raised the funds for a defibrillator in Valley Gardens.
- 40s Day raised a record £8,500, on a scorching hot day. The running of the event has been handed to Sharon Canavar at Harrogate International Festival. FOVG has not the volunteer capability, to run an event of the size it has become. In 2017, 39,000 visitors came to the event.

### FOVG 2018:

- Complete the Japanese Garden and Gate Projects
- Enter the Yorkshire In Bloom and hope to get a 3<sup>rd</sup> platinum award
- Celebrate the centenary of the end of WW1 with a ceremonial opening of the restored King Edward VII Gate and new memorial rose beds at the Green Park Entrance.
- Extend the number tours of Valley Gardens, heritage and horticultural, for community groups and schools
- Increase the number of presentations 'Projects Past and Present' & 'Japanese Garden'
- More children's activities including presentation 'Children's lives in the 1940s'
- A comprehensive survey of the many significant trees in the Valley Gardens.
- Increase working with other community groups and educational establishments.
- Recruit more members to achieve the above.
- To achieve our aims and ambitions we need both volunteer help and financial support.
- Nominations, especially for vacant positions would be appreciated.

Questions to reports (sent out prior to meeting):

- Treasurer and Membership report; Anne Grange
- Old Magnesia Well Pump Room; Andrew Jordan
- Japanese Garden; Ann Beeby
- Gate Project, Restoration of Green Park Entrance; David Mason
- Volunteer Gardeners; Liz Chidlow

On behalf of the Trustees and Executive and I wish to thank:

- All the members and volunteers, who have supported us with their physical endeavors/man hours and have contributed in kind with their donations and membership fees.
- FOVG is also very grateful for the generosity of monies donated by the public in the form of donations, grants and sponsorship.
- Without the above mentioned support and our partnership with HBC FOVG would not have achieved the high standard of maintenance and restoration of the Valley Gardens or raised £300,000 towards the OMWPR and Peat Garden, Japanese Garden and Gate Projects.

**After AGM Presentation, "Municipal Marvels" by Peter Mather:**

Peter will give a presentation on the history and development of other parks in the UK.

Jane Blayney (Chairman Friends of Valley Garden)

Further information: Visit FOVG website

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