



Friends of Valley Gardens “Harrogate”

Harrogate’s Award Winning Park

President: Martin Fish
Charity Number: 1148369



Minutes of Annual General Meeting held in the Brostoff Centre, St Peter’s Church, Harrogate on Thursday 17 March 2016.

Present: Jane Blayney (Chairman), Ann Beeby, Anne Grange, Robert Grange, Jim Clark, Paula Collier, Simon Collier, Sue Wood, Kate Dawson, Mike Hine, Malcolm Neesam, Barbara Stone, Richard Dobson, Peter Blayney.

Apologies: Martin Fish, Jon Collins, Patrick Kilburn, David Mason, Helen McCallum, Liz Chidlow, James Cain, Nicky Cain.

Welcome: **JB** welcomed those present and the speaker, David Hirb.

Minutes of last AGM: These were approved as a correct record.

Matters arising: None.

Officers’ reports: These are attached. **JB** summarised last year’s progress and thanked all concerned for their hard work throughout. **AG** presented the Annual Accounts. Membership now stood at 98. **AB** spoke to **LC**’s Volunteer Gardener report.

Harrogate Borough Council: There were no questions for HBC. **KD** thanked FOVG members for their efforts over the past year. **JB** thanked **KD**, **SW**, **SC** and **PC** for their support.

Projects: a) Japanese Garden. **AB**’s report is attached. **JB** and **AB** elaborated.

b) Green Park Entrance. **PB**’s report is attached. The issue of the name was discussed and it was agreed that the full version - *The King Edward VII Memorial Entrance* should be used. The matter had been put to HBC and as far as was known there was no good reason not to introduce the new name.

Elections: The following had been nominated as Trustees: Jim Clark, Jane Blayney, Peter Blayney, Anne Grange, Liz Chidlow, Jon Collins. Proposed **MN**. Seconded **MH**. All were accepted by unanimous vote.

As **LC** had assumed the role of Volunteer Gardener Co-ordinator last summer it was necessary to vote formally that she take it on. Proposed **JB**, seconded **AB**, all in favour. The Chairman, **JB**, Secretary, **PB** and Treasurer, **AG** had all agreed to stand for a further year and there were no other nominations. **JB** would be taking on the role of Acting Marketing and Publicity Officer and **JC** would remain as Membership Secretary.

ADDENDUM: *An application for the role of Young Persons’ Representative from Maisie Wilkinson was accepted on an “Acting” basis.*

Any other business: **JB** advised that the Army Foundation College would not be helping at the 1940s Open Day as they would be on vacation. This was contrary to previous information and a potential set-back. **JB** was working hard to obtain replacements and appealed to members to assist.

Thanks were expressed to North Yorkshire County Councillors **JC** and Don MacKenzie for their donations of £600 each towards a pagoda for the Japanese Garden.

MN enquired if Valley Gardens was experiencing any tree diseases which were currently on the increase in the UK. It was not known if there were any problems, but reference to the internet may help.

PB read a poem written by **BS** about the Old Magnesia Well Pump Room. This is attached.

MN advised the Valley Gardens would be featured in Don Warrington’s “Discovering Britain” on More4 TV on 30 March.

Date of next Annual General Meeting: Thursday 16 March 2017 at 7.30 pm in the Brostoff Community Centre. St Peter’s Church.

David Hirb then gave a fascinating talk featuring old Postcards of Harrogate. JB thanked him.

P J Blayney: Secretary

J E Blayney: Chairman



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Chairman’s Report 2015

7.3.16

OPENING of OLD MAGNESIA WELL PUMP ROOM 6.10.15



The Old Magnesia Well Pump Room is now opening on the First Sunday of the month as an Education and Information Centre.

Malcolm Neesam Harrogate Historian and Freeman of Harrogate Borough opened the Old Magnesia Well Pump Room Tuesday October 6th

The Pump Room was completed and the opening attended by the Mayor Cllr Nigel Simms and Mayoress Mrs Lynne Simms, President Martin Fish, members, supporting officers of Harrogate Borough Council, contractors, funders, supporters and friends.

As the result of all the hard work of the FOVG volunteers I was awarded the Community Volunteer of the Year 2015 Award. Thank you.



1. In 2015 the restoration of the inside of the Pump Room was completed:

- (a) The recreation of the “Wilford”, water dispensing station.
- (b) Display of artifacts of yesteryear including Victorian bottles.
- (c) Information boards depicting the history of the development of the Valley Gardens, Harrogate’s Spa Heritage and the Restoration of the Old Magnesia Well Pump Room.

2. The Peat Garden

(a) Sadly Tony Sissons former Volunteer Garden Organiser died in November 2015.

Tony was responsible for the organising of the FOVG gardening volunteers from 2010. He was responsible initially in organizing the volunteers in the planting of the New Zealand Garden with plants he had sourced himself. Tony was a wonderful character, had an extensive knowledge of New Zealand plants, a passion for rhododendrons, was brilliant at collecting money in buckets on 40s Day, knowledgeable on paints from his working life in his family owned paint industry and last but not least we shall never forget his wonderful dry sense of humour.

(b) Liz Chidlow has taken over as Volunteer Gardener organiser and is reporting on the development and progress of their activities. Report from Liz Chidlow

Projects following the completion of Old Magnesia Well Pump Room.

3 Restoration of the Japanese Garden led by Ann Beeby and Liz Chidlow

- (a) The Japanese Garden built, we believe in the early 1930s, following the Second World War lost much of its Japanese character and hard landscape artifacts.
 - (b) The project led by Ann Beeby and Liz Childlow, is likely to cost about £80K. The project is at the pre-application stage for fund raising through Heritage Lottery.
 - (c) The Heritage Lottery Grant relies entirely on achieving outcomes for Heritage, People and the Community.
 - (d) The HLF is believed to be the best way to secure funds for the project.
 - (e) Graham Hardman Vice Chairman of the UK Japanese Garden Society is donating a design for the Garden.
 - (f) The garden is a "Walk-Through" Design with entrance Gates at either side. The area above the stream will be developed in a more naturalistic style.
- Report from Ann Beeby

4 Restoration of the Green Park Entrance led by David Mason

- (a) Pillars to replace the present remaining single pillar, has been procured.
 - (b) A design drawn to enhance the present entrance
 - (c) Railings resourced from local contractor.
 - (d) Gates for entrance with provenance located.
- Verbak Report

Trustees 2015

Jane Blayney (Chairman), Jon Collins (Vice Chairman),
Anne Grange (Treasurer), Peter Blayney (Secretary), Jim Clark, Liz Chidlow

Executive

Jane Blayney (Chairman)
Jon Collins (Vice Chairman) retiring March 2016
Jon Collins (Membership Secretary)
Anne Grange (Treasurer)
Peter Blayney (Secretary)
Sally Haslewood ((Young Persons Representative) retiring March 2016
Kim Wilson (Marketing and Publicity) & 40s Day Bookings to Sept 2015 - Jane Blayney
40s Day Bookings) from Sept 2015
Tony Sissons (Volunteer Gardening Co-ordinator) retd 2015/ succeeded by Liz Chidlow
Tom Holleman Web Manager

Membership

The membership list of has been reviewed again and lapsed members and honorary members who have not been active removed from the mailing list.

Funding/Grants awarded

Treasurer Anne Grange to report on the Finances.

Events

1. **40s Day:** Over £7,000 was raised for the completion of the restoration of the Old Magnesia Well Pump and future projects. 27,000 people entered the park and enjoyed the music, attractions and the large variety of stalls. The Battle of Britain Memorial Flight Spitfire flypast took place after lunch and was the highlight of the day.
2. **National Heritage Open Days:** Friends Of Valley Gardens opened the Pump Room in September for 4 days this year. The event was well supported.
3. **The Pump Room has been opened on the First Sunday of the month from November:** The support from the public has been good and this has been reflected in the Visitors Books.
4. **Presentations:** to Bilton Men's Forum, Burton Leonard Gardening Club, Knaresborough Gardening Club.
5. **Garden Tour:** Paxton Friday Forum Leeds

Harrogate Borough Clerks Of Works and Supporting Officers.

Friends Of Valley Gardens wish to express their gratitude for the support of Mark Coston (Clerk of Works Pump Room) and Wayne Trott (Electric Works) for the Pump Room restoration, Trish Mc Laughlin (Clerk of Works Peat Garden), Simon and Paula Collier, (Gardening support Peat Garden and Japanese Garden.).

The Way Forward 2016

1. Proceed with Fund Raising and Restoration of Japanese Garden
2. Proceed with Fund Raising and Restoration, of the Green Park Entrance
3. Increase membership
4. More involvement with schools
5. Increase number of presentations
6. Increase number of Garden Tours
7. Increase the Open Days for the Old Magnesia Well Pump Room in Summer months
8. More promotion of the Old Magnesia Well Pump Room as an Information and Education Centre
9. Continue maintenance of Peat and New Zealand Garden and support for all other areas of Valley Gardens

Once again the Valley Gardens volunteers have been very active and the praise for their endeavors, has been recorded, by the hundreds of visitors, in the Visitors Books on Open Days. The team work, time volunteered and expertise has been exceptional.

Jane Blayney (Chairman)



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FRIENDS OF VALLEY GARDENS, HARROGATE

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015**

	2015 £	2014 £
Income		
Membership subscriptions	701	639
Donations and grants	2,508	14,249
Net fundraising events income	8,539	6,763
Gift Aid	251	227
	----- £11,999 =====	----- £21,878 =====
Expenses		
Publicity and administration	162	739
Pump Room project	11,840	25,573
Miscellaneous	135	391
	----- £12,137 =====	----- £26,703 =====
Net (Deficit)/Surplus	£ (138) =====	£(4,825) =====

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A.G.

The Old Magnesia Well Pump Room was officially opened on the 6th October and since then we have opened it for viewing on the first Sunday of each month. The first reason is to allow the public to gain access to the building where they are able to learn the history of the building, Valley Gardens and Harrogate in general. Secondly to encourage visitors to become members of FOVG. We do emphasize that becoming a member does not involve any commitment to help at events or with volunteer gardening. It is purely to keep up-to-date with what's happening in Valley Gardens and to support us financially in a small way.

Donations we receive at the moment will be used towards our next projects which, as mentioned in the Autumn/Winter 2015 edition of FOVG Newsletter, are the restoration of the Japanese Garden and the Green Park entrance (off Valley Drive). We do not have firm prices for the work on either project but we anticipate they will be in the region of £150,000 in total. We currently have £9000 so we have rather a long way to go. We are approaching various trust funds in the hope that we will be awarded money towards either or both projects.

Our fundraising continues mainly thanks to Jane's enthusiasm for visiting local groups and telling them about the history of Valley Gardens.

As mentioned before (on numerous occasions) our major fundraising event is the 1940s Open Day, which this year will be held on the 19th June. As in previous years we are looking for helpers on the day. We also need tombola prizes and cakes. Any committee member will be able to provide further information about how you can help.



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Friends of Valley Gardens Gardening Volunteers Report 2015

This year has once again been a busy and successful year for the volunteer gardeners. Six new volunteers joined us during the year and the number of volunteers coming along on a Tuesday has ranged from three up to ten and averaging five.

Tony Sissons kept gardening for as long as his health permitted and then handed over the baton of Volunteer Gardening Co-ordinator to Liz Chidlow earlier in the summer of 2015. Sadly Tony died in November 2015, however his work will continue to be appreciated by garden visitors and he will be remembered by the volunteers, particularly as they garden the New Zealand Garden.

A wide variety of gardening activities have been carried out in many parts of the Gardens during the year, some of which are linked to projects.

Throughout the year the volunteers were kept busy in the Peat Garden, planting up the bog and woodland areas and adding additional plants to the sensory and rock gardens. Volunteers were present in the Peat Garden at 'In Bloom' judging in July.

The final touch was the planting of *Scilla* bulbs in the woodland area and the installation of a commemorative plaque. The plants will take some time to mature, but are generally getting established, and through the year people have enjoyed the flowers and watching the garden develop.

Children from Western School spent an industrious November day with the volunteers creating a bug mansion, and log, stick and leaf piles for invertebrates and hedgehogs. Horticap Bluecoat Wood Nursery was commissioned to make six bird nest boxes for installation in early 2016.

The volunteers have enjoyed maintaining hedges and paths, pruning and protecting the plants for the winter in the New Zealand Garden and weeding in the Scree Garden.

We are now beginning to work on our next gardening project in the Japanese Garden.

The volunteers have also helped the Council gardeners with digging and dead heading in the dahlia bed, the removal of and planting of summer and winter bedding plants, tying in the sweet peas, cutting back perennials in the herbaceous beds and pruning rose and shrub beds.

Many thanks to our volunteers for their good work in the Gardens. New volunteers are always welcome. Contact Liz Chidlow e mail: liz.chidlow@hotmail.co.uk

Liz Chidlow
Volunteer Garden Coordinator



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Japanese Garden Team Report for AGM March 17th 2016

Jane Blayney, Liz Chidlow and I started planning the Japanese Garden Project last September, in partnership with Harrogate Borough Council, when the decision to go ahead had been taken. We visited a private garden outside Skipton in lovely sunshine, Tatton Park's Japanese Garden on a beautiful autumn day, followed by Walkden Garden in Sale where we met members of the Japanese Garden Society who had built the garden, all of which was extremely useful.

To obtain funding for the project the decision was taken to concentrate our efforts in trying to gain a grant from the 'Our Heritage Fund' £10,000 - £100,000 limit administered by the Heritage Lottery. HLF are currently promoting grants for landscape projects, which are free from match funding. These grants are given on the basis of the quality of outcomes they can achieve for both Heritage and people.

We have linked up with the Japanese Garden Society, Jane and I have since become members, and their Vice Chairman Graham Hardman has kindly agreed to do a design and act as a Consultant through the whole process wishing to become involved in the details of placing rocks and planting up to completion of the garden entirely for expenses, for which we are extremely grateful.

Kate Dawson, from HBC is giving generously of her time to help where she can, and is currently running a Consultation process on our behalf, an important part of the application process, and we urge you to support us through the link on the FOVG website. We have some consultation forms here with us tonight for anyone who hasn't got the facility to go online. You will be able to see the proposed design plan with artistic impressions during the week of May 2nd – 9th when we have booked the foyer of St Peter's Church to mount a display as part of the consultation process. We have to staff the exhibition from 10.00am through to 5.00pm every day so any help with the rota would be very gratefully received.

Currently we are working on all the aspects which the HLF application requires; involving local community groups and Educational establishments, producing a detailed Project Plan, a Feasibility Study, Timescale, costings, and generally trying to get the content as excellent as we can for submission during July. Without exception we have been welcomed by everyone and have had some enthusiastic responses to our plans, it would take too long to give you all the details but do come and talk to us after the meeting.

If anyone would like to become more involved there is plenty to do! Hopefully by this time next year we will be in the throes of construction and looking forward to creating a beautiful calm space which reflects the heritage of the garden which was designed in around 1930 when everything Japanese was very popular, will be interesting to explore, and informs on aspects of Japanese culture today.

Thank you all for listening.



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Restoration of Green Park Entrance

Two sets of pillars have been offered by Harrogate Borough Council of which those originally providing access from Kings Road to ^{Rose}~~Crescent~~ Gardens, the pillars to the King Edward VII Memorial Gates, are favoured and have been inspected. The original gates were given to the people of Harrogate by industrialist W H Baxter and were removed some time after 1994 to make way for exhibition hall space. The gates themselves and some railings were purchased from a scrap metal dealer and have been located. They have been offered to FOVG and it has been agreed to purchase them. They are extremely ornate and have appropriate historical provenance.

Following a further meeting with David Kendrew of Kendrew Architectural Metalwork agreement has been reached to collect the gates and 20 railings with 5 kingposts and to store them at no cost at their Lingerfield works prior to the necessary work being carried out for which we have received budget costs. Drawings have been prepared showing the integration of old and new railings and the original kingposts.

A topographical survey, supplied and paid for by HBC has been completed. Sketches will be prepared for approval prior to their incorporation into a Planning Application.

Approval in principle has been obtained from North Yorkshire County Council for block paving the tarmac pavement and semi-circular area. A commuted sum will be calculated following submission of a Vehicle Crossing Application Form which will be prepared shortly. Jenny Love, our most supportive HBC contact, has been asked to obtain a quotation for the cost of paving from approved contractor Duffields of Ripon.

The project is proceeding. Meanwhile, it has been suggested that it would be highly appropriate to re-name the entrance "The King Edward Entrance" or "The King Edward VII Memorial Entrance". As far as is known the only reason it has become known as the "Green Park Entrance" is because of its proximity to the Green Park Hotel and there was no other obvious landmark. The Green Park Hotel no longer exists and so there every good reason to think again. What do you think? Please send your views to pjblayney@gmail.com



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Poem read by Peter Blayney written by Barbara Stone:

You sit among the flora of the spring,
your body faded by the sun and rain;
your windows cobwebbed where the crane flies cling;
will eager footsteps tread your path again?
And in the summer, leaves of mottled green,
sun-freckled, form a picturesque surround:
till autumn, brings its windfall, fresh and keen
and apricots and reds enhance your ground.
Your pure, unsullied roof in winter's snow,
contrasting with your orange-brown facade,
embellished by the lamplight's amber glow,
could well compete with any Christmas card.
But when the winter's harshness travels on,
does spring awaken thoughts of times long-gone?

Barbara Stone