

King Edward VII Memorial Gate

Valley Gardens

Project Report for the AGM

February 2018

- Planning permission for the project was granted in June 2016.
 - During the year all outstanding planning matters were resolved although we did not win the battle on the colour of the gates and railings; they will therefore have to be painted black.
 - At the last AGM we had raised approximately 50% of the £60,000 required for the project. We managed to achieve the goal in the autumn of 2017 and we were then able to enter discussions with HBC to put the contract out to tender. Major donors since the last report were the Charles and Elsie Sykes Trust, the Garfield Weston Foundation, the Ironmongers' Company and North Yorkshire County Council.
 - In advance of the main contract, and with the grant from the Ironmongers' Company, we were able to commission Kendrew Architectural Metalwork to commence the restoration of the two gates. The work was commenced in the late summer and as of today the gates are complete except for final painting and their hanging in the Gardens.
 - The project was tendered in October by HBC and at the end of the year TWS Construction Ltd of Thirsk were awarded the contract, out of a total of 8 contractors who returned tenders. TWS recently completed the Japanese Garden.
 - The commencement of work on site has been delayed slightly due to the necessary permissions required for a temporary closure of the right of way through the gate and there is an electrical meter box which has to be moved. With all the paperwork now submitted we are hopeful that the start on site will be made towards the end of February and the works should be complete in eight weeks.
 - The new rose beds will be created either side of the new gate as soon as the contractor is complete in the spring. The roses have been ordered from the nursery and they will be ready for lifting and planting in the first week in November.
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**Japanese Garden Project, OMWPR and Volunteer Gardeners reports 2017/18
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Old Magnesia Well Pump Room, Report 2017-2018

As I have just taken over the OMWPR all the successes in 2017 are down to Peter, who managed the OMWPR so well, thank you to my predecessor. Also thank you to John and Stephen whose generosity, energy and commitment especially over Easter and Christmas will be greatly missed, good luck in Scotland.

A big thank you to Ann, Liz and all the volunteer gardeners, as well as Simon and Paula who keep the Pear Garden looking so good.

The OMWPR is open for the first and third Sundays of the month from spring to autumn and just the first Sunday in Winter, each open day is split into a morning and afternoon shift. This new arrangement (Peter's idea) is far better to the fantastic team of volunteers who give up their time. It is great to welcome new volunteers to the OMWPR who quickly learn the ropes and soon become "old hands".

Bank Holidays and special events which draw larger numbers of visitors into the Valley Gardens have proved very successful to the OMWPR in the past but we can only open if we have enough volunteers.

Although we took £3,000 in donations (and mug sales, thank you David and Peter), I think the greatest success of the volunteers in the OMWPR was to enhance the visitors experience in the Valley Gardens, which is one of the key aims of the FOVG. This is highlighted by the many favourable entries in the comments book.

On March 10th we are joining the Pump Room Museum for a Science Week Event with experiments and tours in the OMWPR.

On April 27th we are giving 50 members of the Warrington USA Garden Group a guided tour of the Valley Gardens.

To book or enquire about making a donation to the Friends Of Valley Gardens for a guided tour, please contact Jane Bayney or Andrew Jordan.

Ideas for the future;

- More school involvement.
- Offer guided tours of the Valley Gardens, tailored to group interests.
- Recruit more volunteers.
- Increase donations.
- Improve the donation boxes inside the OMWPR.
- Provide an outside donation point, available when the OMWPR is closed.
- Improve the heating in the OMWPR.

Comments please.

Andrew Jordan

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Japanese Garden Restoration Project report for AGM 2017/2018

I am delighted to report strong progress with the Japanese Garden project during the last year. This is due to excellent work and cooperation between Friends of Valley Gardens, Harrogate Borough Council and all three main contractors; TWS Contractors UK, Treesaw, and Johnny Clasper stonemason. Together with the members of the Japanese Garden Society and Friends of Valley Gardens volunteers who have contributed in excess of 1200 hours of volunteer labour to the project with a value equivalent of over £24,000. My grateful thanks are due to everyone for their hard work.

We have now received 90% of the Heritage Lottery grant, the final 10% is due on completion of an evaluation report during 2019. Currently the balance in our account is £11,000. The Community elements of our plan, working with three schools, are also on course.

During 2018/19 we will complete the planting and hold themed events and activities.

Ann Beeby Project Manager

Friends of Valley Gardens Gardening Volunteers Report 2017

In 2017 the volunteer gardeners helped the Council gardeners throughout the year. A major focus was working for the Japanese Garden Project, firstly in winter and spring doing weeding, shrub and brash clearance and dead wood pruning; secondly in the autumn with new planting, tidying of leaves and some rock work.

In addition, volunteers maintained the Peat Garden, particularly in preparation for In Bloom judging, and helped with the Scree Garden maintenance, annual flower beds, lawn twig raking, uncovering of the *Gunnera* winter protection, dahlia beds, edging, weeding and pruning of shrubberies and rose beds. Peat Garden bird boxes were cleaned by Harrogate District Biodiversity Action Group/RSPB and contained nuthatch and blue tit.

It has been demanding doing project and general maintenance work with a variety of people having health problems. Nevertheless, we had some new volunteers, and have worked in many parts of the Gardens. We had up to 11 volunteers, and usually 6 plus volunteers gardening per session. We tried some Saturday gardening in the Japanese Garden.

Dogs need to be on leads to avoid damaging plants and being a health risk due to faeces left on the ground.

In 2018 we will continue planting and developing our Japanese gardening skills in the Japanese Garden. We will also maintain the Peat and New Zealand Gardens and assist the Council gardeners with a wider range of gardening. There will also be the project work related to the King Edward 7th Memorial Gates Project in progress. So, it will continue to be a demanding year, and with In Bloom judging again.

Liz Chidlow Volunteer Garden Coordinator February 2018

