



Friends of Valley Gardens
Harrogate's Award-Winning Park

President: Martin Fish

Chairman's Report to AGM 5 April 2012

We have had a busy year. Our membership has doubled. The size of the executive has been increased to manage the increasing workload. Sue Clarke has been appointed as Administrative Officer. Sue, besides welcoming our new members, deals with the distribution of all the FOVG News Letters, notices of forthcoming events, and minutes of meetings. Liam Clarke has been appointed as Publicity and Marketing Officer. Liam comes with, a natural youthful written presentation style, which has much enhanced the FOVG image. Increased membership fees for 2012 were agreed in November, to cover rising administration costs. Charity Status Discussions are underway to register FOVG as a charity. Grants have been awarded by, the Harry Bolland Trust, North Yorkshire Community Fund, and the Harrogate Arts and Heritage Fund.

Our main project is The Restoration and Refurbishment of the Grade 2 Old Magnesia Well Pump Room. Harrogate Borough Council is Clerk of Works and has obtained quotations on the various works needed. English Heritage, HBC Conservation Officer and Harrogate Museums have been consulted. We are now applying for planning consent to the Secretary of State via the HBC planning committee. 11K has been raised towards our project target of £50K. FOVG Members and Members of the Public have been very generous in their donations of money, time and professional expertise.

We have had numerous fund raising events. Our most publicised event was 40s Day in June 2011. The monies raised sadly did not reflect the time and effort from members. Heritage Open Day was FOVG's first event in the Old Magnesia Well Pump Room and a great success. Martin Fish our President, Director of Harrogate Flower Show, was instrumental in FOVG being the 'named' charity for the Autumn Flower Show. Similarly we were one of the 'named monthly charities' by Waitrose. Bag Packing at Marks and Spencer also proved lucrative. Father Christmas visited and is another day to be repeated. 40s Tea Dances proved a struggle to break even. Malcolm Neesam and Mike Beckwith's presentations and Fish and Chip Supper were all "sell outs."

I would like to thank our President Martin Fish, my multi-talented committee, the FOVG membership, our donors/sponsors, Harrogate Borough Council and Simon Collier, Head Gardener and his team for their support and hard work throughout the year 2011.

Jane Blayney
 Chairman