

Friends of Valley Gardens

October/November 2022 No 40

Work Parties

Sunday November 13th

The date above is a change of date from the last newsletter.

Sunday December 11th

Meet under the bridge at 10am.

We have had two work parties since the last newsletter. In September five members planted perennials in the shade border and in the October session seven members cleared abandoned clothes and camping equipment and put in daffodil, crocus, allium and anemone bulbs across a number of areas of the Gardens. Also in October the Brownies came and collected litter and planted bulbs in the shade border. It was dark by the time we got to putting in bulbs and had to do it by torchlight. It was quite exciting. In our November and December sessions we will probably be clearing leaves off paths and borders and collecting litter. I don't intend to put in a January work party, but we will get underway again in mid February, weather permitting.



Annual General Meeting

**Open to everyone with an interest in the future of
Valley Gardens**

Tuesday 1st November

The Conference Room

Woodend 7pm

Afterwards there will be an illustrated talk entitled

The Forgotten History of the Gardens.

Discover the part played by the gardens in improving the nation's health, uncover the tragic life of Sarah Robinson and be amazed at the link between the lily pond and the marriage of Edward, Prince of Wales.

Tea, coffee and biscuits

A chance to find out what we have achieved and what we plan to do in the future.

Bulb planting in October

Other News

A couple of weeks ago Felicity and Graham met the Parks and Gardens Team, Chris, Steve and Gary, who is the new team leader. We discussed the Friends' vision for the Gardens and Gary seemed to be happy with what we were proposing. He has certainly been quick off the mark and got most the strimming done that we asked for.

We also discussed what could be a suitable small project that we could apply to the Mayor's Fund for. Chris suggested that we request money for plants to go in the bare borders around the lily pond. He has provided a list of suitable plants and we have applied to the fund for a total of £470.

If we are successful we should be able to start putting plants in the borders next March and April. I've looked at the borders and one is quite wet but gets a reasonable amount of light, but the rest are drier and more in the shade.

The plants will have to be quite tough to survive in drier shadier borders but we can try *Astrantia*, *Cranesbill*, *Geraniums*, *Pulmonaria*, *Heuchera*, *Japanese Anemone*, *Waldsteinia*, *Actaea* and ferns.

In the wetter area we could try *Astilbe*, *Tiarella*, *Candelabra Primula*, *Persicaria*, *Hosta* and *Dicentra*.

Consultation Weekend

This went pretty well although we had hoped for a few more people visiting the event. However, those that did come were very supportive of the work we do, and enjoyed the displays and the refreshments.

We made a number of useful contacts including Crescent Arts, The Old Parcels Office, and Councillor Richard Maw. We've had a good number of questionnaires completed and the comments are broadly as you would expect.

Most of the people who responded use the Gardens to walk their dog or to get to town, a few visit the park to feed the ducks or admire the flowers.

The most popular improvements visitors would like to see in the park include better maintained paths with improved disabled access; more seating; lighting alongside some of the paths; repairs to the walls; cleaning out the pond; increasing the number of litter bins; adding information boards and using the park for events. The suggestion I particularly liked was closing Valley Road to traffic in the region of the park. I can't see it happening, but we can always dream.

If you haven't filled in a questionnaire, there is still plenty of time to do so and copies will be available at the AGM



***Photographs from top
The display at the Consultation Weekend
Autumn colour in the park***