

# Friends of Valley Gardens

Newsletter October 2020

No 20

## ***Work Parties***

All work parties will meet under the bridge by the small pond.

***Sunday October 11<sup>th</sup> – 10am***

***Sunday October 25<sup>th</sup> – 10am***

We've put in two work parties this month to try and get the jobs we have started finished before the really bad weather sets in.

We will continue weeding the rockery by the small pond, finish tidying the shrub borders near the Crescent and plant bulbs alongside the paths below the Art Gallery.

Current Covid regulations prevent us working in groups larger than six, but the three projects mean that work groups will be well separated. We must, however, remember that the groups should not mix with each other.

Deans Garden Centre has offered us a 10% discount on bulbs and the pick of any remaindered bulbs at the end of the season.

The September Evening work session had to be cancelled as it was grey and wet, but in the Sunday session we weeded the long border and put in a number of perennials, cleared litter, weeded about a third of the rockery area above the small pond and removed seven barrow loads of accumulated soil off the bridge between the ponds.

## ***Around the Park***

The strimming team have been in the park over the last week and cut the sections of longer grass and it has really tidied up the area. It should give the early flowering perennials (Primroses, windflowers, cowslips etc.) a chance to build up strength so that they give another superb display next spring.

Over the next couple of months the Parks team will be carrying out a number of gardening tasks. Many of the shrubs that were removed last autumn have started to regrow. These will be cut back and a stump grinder used to remove them permanently. The fallen tree by the pond will be removed and the sycamore that is growing out of the rockery by the small pond will be felled. Its roots are affecting the structural integrity of the dam that holds water in the large pond.

You may well have noticed that the large pond is beginning to silt up and the council are obtaining quotations to dredge up some of the silt and remove it. This could be expensive as none of the Scarborough tips are equipped to deal with disposal of the mud, so it might have to be transported some distance.



Weeding the rockery

## *A Vision for the Gardens*

We had a very constructive meeting with Tim Allison (Parks and Countryside Services Manager, the boss) and Matthew Jordan (Valley Gardens Team Leader). They both seem very happy with the work the Friends are doing, and their vision for the future of the park seems both realistic and achievable and should result in a much improved and safer environment.

The area to the South of Valley Road has always looked good. The daffodils are a joy in spring and the lower areas of grass are kept short and neat. It has the appearance of the sort of open parkland that you might get around a stately home.

The other side of the road presents a different set of problems. They were once private gardens and were designed to be much more intensely gardened, each one probably having several gardeners. Austerity has meant that a new management approach is needed. The trees and shrubs have been thinned out to create a more open setting with better visibility and fewer places to hide, thus creating a safer environment. This has had the added bonus of generating a series of excellent views towards the Spa Bridge and sea. Shrubs such as privet and laurel will be removed, but some will be replaced with native shrubs that give a more colourful display and provide food and shelter for wildlife. Some sections of grass will be regularly mown to provide recreational areas, others sections of grass, especially on the steeper slopes, will be left to grow and wild flowers encouraged to develop for the benefit of insects and small mammals and birds. The formal circular beds will continue to add a splash of colour and the Friends will maintain their flower beds and provide help where necessary in the rest of the park.

We have some good news regarding funding for the various projects we would like to carry out in the park. The Hankinson Group, the firm painting the bridge, have offered some money towards a bird feeding station and a bench and offered to provide money and paint for the footbridge over Vernon Road.



Valley Road in 1905. You can see the shelter on the left and the circular flower beds would be behind the man lounging against the fence.