

**Present:** The Chairman, Councillor Dave Eggleton  
The Vice Chairman, Councillor Kellie Hinton  
Councillor Sara Abey  
Councillor Lorraine Hillier  
Caroline Langler – Henley in Transition  
Catharine Notaras – Henley Wildlife Group & Hedgehogs  
Phil Simms – Henley Standard

**In Attendance:** Janet Wheeler – Town Clerk  
Karl Bishop – Parks Manager  
Kyle Dowling - Senior Park Warden (Horticulture)  
Ilona Livarski - Park Warden (Conservation)  
Becky Walker – Committee Administrator  
Janet Munro-Nelson – Committee Administrator

The Chairman invited Jan Sutton of Gardening Buddies and Jeanette Cronin of Scott Investment to join the table.

**19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Tuc Ahmad.

**20. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

None received.

**21. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION**

None.

**22. MINUTES**

The minutes of the Henley in Bloom/Civic Pride Sub Committee (HiB) held on 26 July 2018 were received, approved and adopted and were signed as a true record.

**23. BUDGET UPDATE**

The Sub Committee received and noted the budget.

The Vice Chairman advised that HiB continues to look for sponsors.

**24. GARDENING BUDDIES**

Members received an update from Jan Sutton, continuing to fill Elizabeth Hodgkin's role in her absence, as follows:-

- Gardening Buddies (GB) finished their autumn work yesterday
- It has been a struggle this year with a number of plants dying due to the hot weather. Martyn Sheldrake of Toad Hall has a list of plants which need replacing and advises these are best planted in the spring
- The Rotary Club bed at Mill Meadows needs some replanting and this is planned for the spring. Contact to be made with the Rotary Club.

- It is hoped the leader of GB, Elizabeth Hodgkin, will return next year, possibly as a consultant/organising basis
- Parks have been a considerable help to GB taking on many aspects of the work particularly the Horticulture Park Warden with the Celebration Beds
- Thanks to Martyn Sheldrake of Toad Hall who continues to be a great help

The Sub Committee **RECOMMENDED**

**that Garden Buddies and Parks be thanked for their hard work this past year**

**25. THAMES AND CHILTERN IN BLOOM – NEWSLETTER AND NEW JUDGING CRITERIA**

- i. Members considered whether Henley would enter the Thames and Chiltern in Bloom campaign in 2019 with consideration of an entry fee.

After consideration, the Sub Committee **RESOLVED**

**that Henley-on-Thames enter the 2019 Thames and Chilterns in Bloom with an entry fee of up to £130 be allocated from the Henley in Bloom budget**

- ii. Members received and noted the changes in judging criteria and the 2018 Thames and Chiltern in Bloom October Newsletter.
- iii. Members received and noted the results of 2018 Britain in Bloom including the Gold award for Amersham with a discussion ensuing:-
- Amersham had improved greatly and involved community groups eg the Scouts who created floral models
  - get schools more involved next year
  - new and inventive projects are required to ensure Henley stands out
  - focus on wildlife for this year's competition - Ilona Livarski, Conservation Park Warden, is keen to get involved, especially to showcase what she does
  - an overall conservation plan to knit into the Neighbourhood Plan - Ilona has already started work on a conservation plan
- iv. Members noted and appreciated the Thames and Chilterns in Bloom Judges' Award for Outstanding Contribution given posthumously to Gareth Bartle in October 2018.

**26. SINGERS PARK**

Members received this item which was referred back from the Recreation and Amenities Committee's Meeting of 13 November 2018 for further consideration of the issue of rats and possible solutions along with details of costs and budget considerations. The R & A Committee requested that HiB Sub Committee report their recommendation directly to the Full Council at their next meeting on 8 January 2019.

Members heard from and read several different reports including from neighbours of Singers Park including Jeanette Cronin of Scott Investment, from Kyle Dowling (Horticultural Park Warden) and Ilona Livarski (Conservation Park Warden) who presented different options including a replacement hedge and railings and plant boxes, planting lavender around the base of the trees etc. During discussion the following comments were made:-

- bait bins have now been ordered; to be delivered 20 December 2018
- discussion first whether hedge should be removed; the privet is dying in many places
- this may be the opportunity to enhance this area
- put planting in that rats don't like such as lavender or green planting that allows for clear lower branches
- the main concern is the rats and how they seem to have multiplied in last 18 months; Scott Investment used to have 9 rat boxes and now has 19 rat boxes
- people enjoy the intimacy of the hedge and the concern is that trees will not provide the same protection
- some neighbouring businesses report their own pest companies have not reported an increase in rats; an adjoining business reports sighting rats, people drinking to excess and drug taking in Singers Park (anti-social behaviour)
- Ilona reported that silver birch trees were good at reducing pollution and noise and also suggested an evergreen native hedge

After discussion it was **RESOLVED**

**that the present privet hedge and contaminated soil be removed with Parks reporting its suggestions for greenery replacement at the next Full Council Meeting on 8 January 2019**

**27. GRAVEL HILL FLOWER BED**

Members received and considered a report from Kyle Dowling, Senior Park Warden regarding options for upgrading the paved area at the amenity area at the top of Gravel Hill/West Street. Councillor Kellie Hinton suggested making a feature of the pudding stone and suggested the possibility of an historical plaque.

It was **RESOLVED**

**that further investigation be carried out into how the area can be improved including featuring the pudding stone and the possibility of installing a heritage sign**

**28. SEED SWAP**

Members received and considered a report regarding establishing a seed swap. Kyle Dowling and Karl Bishop have met with representatives of the Allotment Association and Henley in Transition and the focus was on facilitating a community seed swap rather than setting up a seed bank as storage of seeds can be problematic. Further discussion provided the following comments:

- guidelines would include information forwarded by Councillor Sara Abey from the Eden Project "How to organise a seed exchange"
- the Allotment Association and Henley in Transition are keen to be involved with this project
- information will be available on social media, the Allotment Association's website and newsletter, the Town Council's website and possibly an event

The Committee noted the report.

**29. PLANTERS OUTSIDE WOOTTON MANOR SHOPS**

Members received and considered a report regarding the planters outside the Wootton Manor shops. Kyle Dowling had spoken with the owner of the property who does not want the benches to be reinstated however has offered to donate 3 or 4

quality planters if the Town Council arrange their planting and maintenance.

Comments during discussion were:

- plant sustainable planting eg perennials
- ask for size of planters and Parks can then devise a planting plan (to be agreed with the donor) and a budget can then be considered
- confirm these arrangements in writing with the donor

After discussion it was **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

**that the offer of planters to the Town Council (who are to plant and water) to be placed outside Wotton Manor shops be agreed in principal subject to the detail being clarified (eg sizes, design) and the donor be thanked for his kind offer**

**that once the details are know this Committee consider a budget for planting and maintenance**

### **30. CHAMPIONING THE HEDGEHOG**

Catharine Notaras updated Members regarding the Championing the Hedgehog projects which included included:-

- visiting Sacred Heart School who has a pupil championing hedgehogs,
- creating a second library window display to raise awareness of hedgehogs eg checking bonfires before lighting
- promoting "hedgehog highways"

Future projects planned include a primary school hedgehog themed competition and raising awareness of the danger litter can do to hedgehogs and other small mammals – to be included in the spring litter pick.

The Parks Manager also advised the Parks Services have adopted new policies to protect hedgehogs.

Phil Simms suggested investigating in cameras with night vision to observe hedgehogs which may help educate and enthuse school children and offered to put the Conservation Park Warden in touch with someone who maybe able to offer advice on this.

After discussion it was **RESOLVED**

**to allocate up to £60 from the Henley in Bloom budget for the hedgehog competition project for primary schools**

### **31. MEETING WITH HORTICULTURAL CONTRACTOR**

Members received an update from the Chairman regarding a meeting with the Horticultural Contractor – Windowflowers.

Members considered areas which could be brought in-house now the Parks Team have a specialist horticulture Park Warden and two Park Wardens are taking a RHS Horticulture course. The areas included:-

- Gravel Hill
- Singers Park - planters
- Red Lion Lawn
- remove the 2 wooden barrel planters from in front of the Town Hall

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

**that the wooden barrels in front of the Town Hall be removed in May when the current planting is removed**

**that Gravel Hill, Singers Park planters and Red Lion Lawn from the horticultural contract subject to further discussion/investigation**

*Post meeting note: Some of the plants/planters are owned by Windowflowers and associated costs will need to be investigated.*

### **32. SCHOOLS IN BLOOM**

- i. Members considered projects for 2019. **Hedgehogs:-** Catharine Notaras agreed to lead on the Championing the Hedgehog project and could include a "Hedgehog Day". Ms Notaras asked whether the hedgehog could feature in the window competition – Carolyn Molyneux to be contacted.

**Hanging Baskets:** The Chairman suggested providing two baskets along with the relevant seeds/plants to each primary school possibly one basket for flowers and one for fruit. Judging of the baskets to take place in July. A budget of £50 was suggested for the six primary schools and Nettlebed Primary School who have asked to participate previously.

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

**that up to £350 from the Henley in Bloom budget be allocated for the Schools in Bloom project 2019 including hedgehog projects and up to £250 for the hanging basket project**

- ii. Members were asked to consider allocating prize money for the Henley Schools Environmental Science Competition for next year. HIB contributed £100 in 2018.

The Committee **RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND**

**that £150 be allocated from the Henley in Bloom budget towards the prize money for the 2018-2019 Henley Schools Environmental Science Competition/tree planting**

### **33. CHRISTMAS TREE SHREDDING**

Members received and noted the Parks Service would once again shred Christmas trees on 5 January 2019 at Mill Meadows between 10 am and 12.30 pm. Proceeds will go to Henley in Bloom. Volunteers are welcome to help with this event.

### **34. FUTURE PROJECTS**

Members considered suggestions for future projects as follows:-

**George Harrison Garden** - The Vice Chairman suggested this project is progressed and would discuss this with the Chairman.

**Conservation Report** - Members received a verbal update from Ilona Livarksi regarding the conservation work she had undertaken. She felt these projects could be incorporated into the Bloom judging however the locations being out of town did mean they may be difficult to visit on the judges' tour (eg Chalk Bank and Gillotts Field). Other projects to include could be building bug hotels with Badgemore

Primary School, installing water butts at the depot, installing signs on why certain areas are not mown and left to grow, developing a leaflet for children on what can be found at Mill and Marsh Meadows, install a nature board with a changing display at Gillotts Field etc.

**Paved Area on the Reading road (outside Tomalins)** – Caroline Langler suggested placing a planter in this area and would approach businesses in the area regarding sponsorship.

### 35. **PROGRESS REPORT**

Members received and considered the progress report and the following comments were made:-

*Chelsea Fringe Events* – the Vice Chairman suggested holding a Conservation Day with the Conservation Park Warden to include wildlife discussions, slideshow presentation, launch the nature quiz leaflet for Mill Meadows, invite interested parties eg Henley Wildlife Group, Henley in Transition, River and Rowing Museum etc, provide food (edible flower biscuits etc

*Town Entrance Signs*- Horticulture Park Warden to meet with Gardening Buddies in early 2019 to reassess the displays..

*Floral Train* – On-going

*Flowers at Henley Train Station* – Councillor Sara Abey asked about floral displays at the train station and agreed to contact GWR to enquire and take the lead on this project.

*Gardens of Henley 2019* – Kellie Hinton and Caroline Langler to meet and take this forward including preparing leaflets. Phil Simms would look into publishing the form in the Henley Standard.

The Committee **RESOLVED AND RECOMMENDED**

**that £150 be allocated for Gardens in Bloom 2019 from the Henley in Bloom budget**

It was **RESOLVED**

**that the progress report be noted**

### 36. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was agreed as Thursday, 7 February 2019 at 9.30 am.

The meeting closed at 12 noon

Chairman

jmn