

## **GREENHAM HOUSE GARDENS PUBLIC CONSULTATION REVIEW**

Newbury Town Council have been maintaining Greenham House Gardens (adjacent the 'Burger King Roundabout') for over 20 years. The land is currently owned by West Berkshire Council, but Newbury Town Council are in the process of formalizing ownership, at no extra cost to the residents of Newbury. The pathways will be upgraded before the transfer to ensure that the area is handed over in an acceptable condition.

A Public Consultation was carried out to seek the opinion of local residents on how the area could be improved with provisional suggestions for suitable facilities which would complement the area and improve biodiversity. 106 letters were hand delivered to local residents together with local press and social media coverage.

A number of local residents gave us some of the history of the site, going back to the 1950's, which was greatly appreciated. We received 32 responses, and the majority were in favour of the proposed investment into the Gardens and were positive about Newbury Town Council taking ownership.

Of the ideas originally put forward for the consultation, the Wildflower Meadow was very popular with a number of requests to include a pathway through with a bench, logs or something similar to sit on. Suggestions for more colour, pollution resistant planting, native species and fruit trees and hedges to encourage more biodiversity, were made as well as suggestions for low level lighting to help with security. There was keen interest for the gardens to be 'opened up' and to be more visible.

There was majority support for the upgrade of the pathways, additional litter bins and seating. An interpretation sign was suggested, explaining the context of the garden to Greenham House and St Donats Place.

Continued.....

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The provision of a small goalmouth and additional sculptures was questioned by a number of respondents with the general view being that the area is too small.

There were positive comments for the repair of the existing 'Fame' statue and for this to be made a more prominent feature of the Gardens. The current ability to use the green space behind the Yew hedge for multiple activities, it was suggested, should remain.

The access gate through St Donats Place received a mixed response and will be subject to further discussions with Sovereign Housing.

Cllr Martin Colston, Leader of the Council said, "We are pleased with the number of responses we have received and would like to thank everyone who took the time to contact us with their views. Consideration will be made to all of the comments and suggestions received.

Regrettably, the Grant application for CIL (Community Infrastructure Levies) funding from West Berkshire Council was not successful, which means that the development of the Gardens will therefore have to be spread over a number of financial years, but we are confident that we will be able to make a start this year enhancing this beautiful open space".

Moving forward, the project plan for 2021/2022 will include the following:

- Moving the floral display to the main entranceway
- Replacing the bench that has been stolen
- Planting a Wildflower Meadow
- Planting a native hedge alongside the old flower bed
- Discuss with Sovereign Housing the possibility and agreement for access through to St Donats Place

**END**

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Press Release Link on NTC Website: <https://www.newbury.gov.uk/news/greenham-house-gardens-public-consultation-review/>

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