

Southsea Green Monthly Garden Volunteer Meeting

Minutes: 5th January 2019

Present: Carla, Sam, Goff, Miguel, Helen P, Helen F, Vik (taking minutes), Sarah, Nige, Nick

Agenda

- 1) Welcome/Intros
- 2) Children's Area Plan for 2019
- 3) Compost
- 4) Sheds
- 5) Communal Beds
- 6) Dig For Victory Project
- 7) Cabin/Solent All Stars Plan
- 8) Poly Tunnel
- 9) AOB

1	<p>Welcome/Intros</p> <p>Introductions of all volunteers present and welcome to Miguel, our newest volunteer (Vik did an informal induction/tour of the garden prior to the meeting beginning)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carla - chair of both garden volunteer meeting group and management group, and garden volunteer and plot holder with Sam • Sam - garden volunteer & plot holder with Carla • Goff - part of the SG Management group and head gardener volunteer • Miguel - new volunteer (welcome!) • Helen P - garden volunteer & plot holder (litter picker extraordinaire) • Helen F - part of SG management group, garden volunteer & plot holder of the 'purple patch' • Vik - part of SG management group, garden volunteer & joint-plot holder of 'The Marigold Loft' plot • Sarah - part of SG management group, garden volunteer & joint-plot holder of 'The Marigold Loft' plot • Nige - part of SG management group, garden volunteer • Nick - part of SG management group, garden volunteer & plot holder 	<p>Actions:</p> <p>None</p>
2	<p>Children's Area Plans (& child engagement ideas)</p> <p>Group discussion regarding the use of the old children's area under the fig tree, next to the compost bins. Discussion regarding the use of this space as:</p>	<p>Actions:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children’s play/exploration area • Meditation space • Workshop space <p>Group agreed that all of the above options are possible, so long as the space is cleared and safe.</p> <p>Carla suggested that everyone could look out for free, safe, attractive seating for children (such as on FreeCycle / Facebook free items groups) to replace the old logs* (see note below for info about how these can be used)</p> <p>Fig tree - Goff advised that it’s fine to trim this.</p> <p>It was suggested that a specific ‘Team Day’ be allocated to clearing this area. Anyone/everyone is welcome to help. The aim of this day will be to get rid of rubbish, repair items we want to keep, produce signage, work on creating the wooded/natural flower area.</p> <p>The small bed, which was previously allocated for use as composting and then cleared to create a plot can be planted with wild flowers, to create a natural woodland area. Goff suggested that the logs can be used to form a mound where the flowers and foliage can naturally grow, creating an interesting and wildlife-friendly space.</p> <p>Sam mentioned he and Nick had been talking about possibly running some gardening workshops with Brambles School as they have some beds and are working on developing an outdoor classroom. This sort of project could be part of establishing positive relationships with community groups who work with children.</p>	<p>Volunteers to look out for suitable seating</p> <p>Carla to identify/arrange a team day.</p> <p>No specific action identified, but suggestion to revisit this again in the future</p>
3	<p>Compost</p> <p>It was suggested that the compost system appears to be working well in general (we have some good quality compost as a result), however group discussion with regards to the use of leaves in the compost – do we allow some leaves or none at all. Today the group agreed that we need to limit the amount of leaves going in to the compost. Goff suggested thin layers could work, otherwise it takes too long for the leaves to rot down.</p> <p>Suggestion that when we have the children’s ‘team day’ some people can dig out the compost.</p> <p>It was highlighted that the compost needs to be fairly distributed and we all need to be mindful of what is put in it (size and type).</p> <p>Goff will bring some chicken compost over the next few weeks</p> <p>Helen has put chicken pellets in today</p>	<p>Actions:</p> <p>Everyone to be mindful of what is being put in the compost – please limit the leaves.</p> <p>Goff to bring chicken manure when convenient to him</p>

4	<p>Sheds</p> <p>Carla showed the group examples of things in the shed which are irreparable. Suggestion that the sheds need to be sorted with contents being cleaned, fixed and disposed of (where relevant)</p> <p>This will be a job that a few people can take on during the children's area 'team day'</p> <p>Helen P kindly offered to get some spring clips which will help us store tools more efficiently.</p>	<p>Actions:</p> <p>Carla - Sorting and clearing needs to be added to the list for the next 'team day'</p> <p>Helen P to get some spring clips.</p>
5	<p>Communal Beds Plan</p> <p>Goff has produced a plan for the 5 beds empty beds which will now be communal beds. Goff took us through the plan and the group offered suggestions.</p> <p>NB, the notes below also include the 2 beds at end of the garden, which currently have apple trees in them.</p> <p>Bed by the Port-a-cabin – No-Dig Bed Discussion of use of bed, and Nick suggested a perma-culture was the wrong term to use, and it was agreed that this will be a NO-DIG BED.</p> <p>It was agreed that this could be used for planting unusual plants, and for it to be used as an exploratory bed, such as unusual varieties of the rotation crops.</p> <p>First 3 plots in the long beds (previously Nick & Charlene's and Southsea Green beds) Discussion about the rotation plan for these three beds:</p> <p>Bed 1: peas and beans, e.g. major cook (heritage, great local story attached to this!), companion planting like sweet peas. This bed needs to be cleared by March (Nick to lead on this). Goff suggested a bed repair and showed the group where the timber is.</p> <p>Bed 2: Could have a rotation within the bed, summer then winter. Suggested crops include onions, beans and carrots (baby carrots appeared to be popular with the group)</p> <p>Bed 3: This has had a good covering of manure. Goff suggested this could include a couple rows of early potatoes, e.g. Lady Charlotte, Maxine (pink), then two thirds of the bed to do more roots, spinach, beetroots.</p> <p>March is when everything can be planted. Carla suggested starting seedlings in poly tunnel here and Frank Sorrel – Nick is a great source of info for successfully growing salads. This can be started now.</p>	<p>Actions:</p> <p>The first bed of the trio needs to be cleared by March (Nick to lead)</p> <p>We can start using these beds from March.</p> <p>All volunteers can use the polytunnel to start seedlings</p>

	<p>Plot by the poly tunnel This is good for salad crops, tomatoes, peppers etc. due to good sunlight.</p> <p>Take fruit plants out and move them to the communal fruit plot by the cabin.</p> <p>Rosemary, cut back.</p> <p>Remove sorrel plant and offer to volunteers to use in own plots (Sarah requested one for the Marigold Loft plot please)</p> <p>The sorrel appeared to be a popular crop (just not in this bed) so Sam and Carla have kindly offered the use of part of their plot for communal sorrel as so many people like it.</p> <p>2 extra plots at the very end of the garden It was suggested that this area would be ideal for a potato bed, rather than using up space in the beds. People seemed keen on growing heritage varieties.</p> <p>Communal plot maintenance & further ideas: Please can people weed and water communal beds. Goff is happy to oversee these plots, keep an eye for disease etc.</p> <p>Nick and Carla both suggested highlighting 'veg with a story' – there are many varieties which may have local stories and/or information of interest – it would be nice to be able to communicate this.</p>	<p>(don't forget to label things please) Fruit plants to be moved to fruit plot Can we have a volunteer for this please</p> <p>Cut back rosemary plant Can we have a volunteer for this please</p> <p>Remove and redistribute sorrel (some to Marigold Loft plot, some to Sam and Carla's plot, and anyone else who would like some)</p> <p>Goff to oversee communal plots and advise accordingly.</p> <p>All volunteers to help with watering and weeding</p> <p>No action decided today, but suggest revisiting this in the future</p>
6	<p>Dig For Victory Project</p> <p>Goff is involved in Canoe Lake Park's 'South East in Bloom' project. As part of this, he will be leading a 'Dig For victory' garden.</p> <p>Goff has researched the area and found information about the Canoe Lake area in the 1930's and 40's, there were many allotment plots.</p> <p>The Canoe Lake Park people will cultivate a plot, which will be a mini version of a war-time plot (in line with the allotment chart issued by to</p>	<p>Actions:</p> <p>Goff to lead on this, and be supported by</p>

	<p>residents during the war, so people were able to make best use of their gardens)</p> <p>The plot will be ready to start working on 1st March.</p> <p>The SE in Bloom judging (of the Canoe Lake park in general, not just the 'Dig For Victory' plot) will take place in June.</p> <p>Goff has suggested that there will be a celebratory event in June (not necessarily when the judging happens) where we can set up a marquee and have displays of the original photos/plans of the area, info about the project and varieties planted (for example, Goff spoke about the 'Home Guard' potato – he is going to a potato fair at the end of the month and is happy to bring some back for use in this project and/or the communal beds), people dressed up in 1940's get-up etc.</p>	<p>SG garden volunteers who would like to take part</p> <p>Goff to inform Carla of the event date</p>
7	<p>Cabin/Solent All Stars</p> <p>Last year, Sarah, Vik, Peta, Sue and Gra were involved in bidding for funding and running 'Solent All Stars' (a youth social action project). There was £500 of the bid left, and the funding agency have agreed that it can be used to run a small youth-engagement project.</p> <p>The plan is to use this £500 to buy materials to refurbish the cabin. Materials need to be purchased before the project deadline set by the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Community Foundation (funding agency).</p> <p>Further to the decisions made at the last meeting in December, the cabin plan is currently:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nige to repair the interior of the cabin and make fit, ready for painting. • The inside walls of the cabin will be decorated (young people can be included in this bit, in addition to anyone else, of course) – Jean's suggested a neutral background with paint splatters. Vik and Sarah are happy to help with this. • The interior can be fitted with work benches (and possibly some shelving) to ensure this space can be used for things like crafting – suggestions for who could help with this welcome (Men in sheds? Repair Café?). <p>It was noted that there was a loud, ringing noise inside the cabin today. Sam and Nige checked it out and the noise has stopped.</p>	<p>Actions:</p> <p>Carla to find out the end date of the project and arrange the purchase of materials (Vik and Sarah happy to help, and anyone else is welcome)</p> <p>Nige to repair the inside of the cabin.</p> <p>The involvement of young people is likely to happen in the spring – with Vik, Sarah, Jean and anyone else who would like to join in.</p> <p>All volunteers to consider who could help with making/fitting the carpentry elements of this project.</p>

	Sam advised that the solar panels will need tilting as the spring comes.	Sam to change the solar panel direction when necessary.
8	<p>Poly-Tunnel Short discussion on the use of the poly tunnel, with the following suggestions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goff suggested the work benches/tables which aren't being used for growing be removed, including the tea-making station eventually (possibly place these in the cabin, if that works with the new plan – if not, consider other uses for benches/tables or not) • Discussion about keeping a propagation area, but also having a growing bed. It was agreed that the poly-tunnel in its current state appears to be working for now, and it may be more beneficial at this point to focus our efforts on the garden in general. 	<p>Actions:</p> <p>Point for next meeting: Consider usefulness of tables/benches not being used for planting and move/dispose of if needed in the future.</p>
9	<p>AOB</p> <p>Wild Thyme Herbs Some volunteers are already aware, however Nick has spoken to Wild Thyme as they are interested in selling fresh, potted (cans, not plastic pots) herbs, grown at Southsea Green.</p> <p>As a group it was suggested that we didn't want to over-commit to a formal arrangement whereby Southsea Green would be expected to provide a regular stream of produce, and it would be sensible to focus on getting the garden working.</p> <p>It could be possible to grow some produce which could be sold or donated, for example, Goff suggested we could have chives around the no dig bed, which could be used for companion planting or given/sold to community. It was agreed that the priority at the moment is for produce to be grown for volunteers and the local community if possible.</p>	<p>Actions:</p> <p>None</p>