

YOU TOLD US, WE DID...

WHAT YOU TOLD US...

1 MANAGEMENT & MAINTENANCE

- The Gardens need to be maintained at a much higher standard – ongoing high quality horticulture and maintenance is essential
- There are too many signs
- A lot of planting beds are bare earth – they need to be planned and maintained again
- Other areas of the Seafront need improvement as well as the Gardens
- There are not enough staff to maintain the Gardens
- Memorial benches need to be kept
- Will there be any rangers or CCTV?
- The 'flood boards' mean I cannot access the Gardens in the autumn and winter. Can these be removed?

WHAT WE DID...

- Concentrating high cost ornamentals in high impact areas but fewer annual bedding areas overall to reduce maintenance costs, releasing funds for better maintenance throughout the Gardens
- Selecting attractive but easier to maintain planting, including shrubs and groundcover
- A considered approach to signs including what they say, where they are located and what style/size they are will be implemented
- Careful reduction in canopy cover to increase light levels to the ground. This will mean we can plant the understorey on previously bare areas, together with new plantings being selected for shade tolerance
- The project team are co-ordinating with teams working on other projects including the County Council's Shared Space project, coastal defences and grounds maintenance review within Felixstowe by the Council's contract
- Working with the Council's ground maintenance contractor, the staff team for the Gardens has been increased by the addition of one permanent and full-time member of staff for the Gardens
- Memorial benches are an important part of the Gardens and those formerly dedicated as memorials are to be retained
- The plans include an extension of the existing CCTV coverage and closer liaison with the local police community support team to manage unwanted behaviour
- These boards to trap blown sand and shale, preventing it from entering the Gardens are being removed as a trial this autumn/winter. Alternative features which stop blown sand but allow access will be incorporated to increase wintertime use of the Gardens

WHAT YOU SAID...

"Do not lose sight of the quiet, peaceful Edwardian feel of the place"

"No modern additions"

"If granted, spend wisely"

"Please keep Felixstowe as a Victorian town"

"Try to retain Felixstowe's heritage"

"New features need to be sustainable"

"Retain plenty of trees and shrubs"

"Keep up the good work"

"Thank goodness people care"

2 RESTORING KEY FEATURES

- Key features help give the Gardens their identity and many are in need of restoration
- More shelter is needed in the Gardens
- What is happening to the Pump House?
- Will there be a bandstand?
- Can an adult fitness/activity area be included?
- What is the decking at the Spa Pavilion?
- I would like to see sculpture and water features and displays as well as contemporary art installations
- Ponds need to be enhanced and well maintained

Specialist conservation architects and landscape architects created proposals to restore the Round Shelter, Octagonal Shelter, stonework and ponds

- We have brought forward a proposal to re-create a small shelter at the top of the Town Hall Gardens which will also serve as a viewing point
- The Pump House will be interpreted and the story of its history and role within the Spa Gardens told as part of the restoration
- An informal performance area within the Garden lawns is included within the new plans
- There are no plans to include such an activity area within the Gardens but facilities do exist in other parts of the town
- This was proposed as timber surfacing to external areas of the Spa Pavilion but no community support was shown so this is no longer included
- Opportunities exist throughout the Gardens for the incorporation of sculpture and key features which might include mosaics in paths and walls as part of the Heritage Trail
- Improvements to all seven ponds are planned as part of the restoration project

3 ORNAMENTAL & OTHER PLANTING

- Existing ornamental planting should be improved and new areas should be created
- Maintain views by keeping hedges and trees well pruned
- The Upper Cliff could be beautiful rockery but it is overgrown
- Gardens need to have colour and variety – the Gardens should include floral displays – Felixstowe has historically been renowned for its beautiful gardens
- Without nature conservation there are no Gardens! We need to give wildlife as much support as possible

- New areas of ornamental shrubberies and flowering groundcover will be planted throughout the Gardens
- The re-establishment of intended views down and across the Gardens is an important component of the project
- Improvements to planting along the Upper Cliff to increase ground cover, biodiversity and interest is planned
- The planting proposals for the Gardens built on the strength of the original designs, adding diversity and colour where possible and mindful of maintenance costs throughout
- An area at the rear of the Spa Pavilion is to be maintained for nature conservation. Ground cover planting will be increased and the pointing of walls where wall lizards are known to be present will be avoided – some of the examples of our approach to conserving and improving biodiversity

"I love the Gardens and bring all our visitors to see them"

"Constraint on your magnificent floral displays"

"Good luck"

4 ACCESS

- Steps and steep slope gradients make accessing areas of the Gardens difficult
- There is no step free route through the Gardens which makes it difficult to access
- There is a need to improve accessibility within the Gardens for those with mobility and visual impairments
- Routes that appear accessible have steps or steep ramps further along, making many users double back
- I do not know where to park when I visit the Gardens – disabled parking spaces are limited
- The bus service to the Gardens is poor
- What about cycling?

- Removed steps and replaced with ramps wherever practical
- Added signage and visitor information about routes, gradients and accessibility
- Removed steps from the lower levels of the Ivy Terrace and the Felix Hotel Garden to create two new step free routes throughout the Gardens
- Re-graded sections of path within the Pram Walk, Pavilion Terrace and The Cliff House Garden areas, to make the paths more easily accessible by all users
- Improvements to handrails and painting step nosings for improved visibility
- Planting schemes to be designed as a sensory experience throughout
- Added clear signage not just at entrances but around the Gardens which shows fully accessible routes as well as those with steps
- Included information about entrances and ways into/out of the Gardens
- Highlighted parking and bus route information within signs around the Gardens – as well as at the Tourist Information Centre
- The Council is taking forward discussions with public transport providers to look at ways to improve connections
- To maintain the tranquillity of the Gardens, cycling will continue to be disallowed in the Gardens. To support those who visit by cycle, a new cycle park is proposed by the Spa Pavilion

"It seems the Seafront Gardens speak for themselves as to what the priority should be"

"The value and character of the Gardens is in their vegetation and formal areas"

"I believe the Gardens symbolise the Felixstowe 'front'"

"Return the Gardens to their Edwardian majesty"

"It is a haven along the prom and needs to remain so"

5 CHILDREN'S ACTIVITIES

- Facilities need to be increased for children without disturbing the more quiet and tranquil areas of the Gardens
- Brighten the area up with decorative coloured tiling and attractive features
- Children's play facilities are well represented on the other side of the pier – the Gardens is a place where people come to contemplate and look at the scenery in peace

- A children's Heritage Trail will be created that will run the length of the Gardens. The Trail will consist of sculpture freestanding and incorporated within new paving and a nature trail
- Opportunities exist throughout the Gardens for the incorporation of sculpture and key features which might include mosaics in paths and walls as part of the Heritage Trail
- The children's activities within the Heritage Trail are intended to be enjoyable whilst in keeping with the peaceful atmosphere of the Gardens

