

Item 14 - Addiscombe Recreation Ground update

Since the last AGM there have been significant and very visible improvements to the two flowerbeds managed by the volunteer gardening group.

Following approval by the Parks Department for the fencing devised by Chairman, Steve White, a small team of volunteers, led by Dave Lee, put up the fencing on 10 March 2018. This greatly enhances the look of the flower beds and hopefully creates a deterrent to inquisitive dogs.

Five sections of trellis have been erected on the 'toilet block' wall. They have been spread evenly across the wall to allow the stonework to be seen in the intervals. A variety of climbers have been planted to give all year interest.

Following a donation of 600 spring bulbs, several gardeners helped with planting these on a cold December morning. These are now giving a delightful display in the two beds with a few extra bulbs being planted in the Sefton Road entrance.

Established and newly planted shrubs and perennials seem to have survived the cold winter months. Once the spring bulbs have died down, the gardening team will consider what plants are needed to infill the gaps.

During the year, a water butt was acquired and a hosepipe purchased. When connected to the water supply it can stretch and reach both of the beds. This has greatly assisted the watering process. Special thanks should be given to the residents and dog walkers who regularly take time to fill the watering can or direct the hosepipe onto the flower beds.

Now that the group has been responsible for looking after the beds for several seasons, we are learning which plants thrive and those that do less well. Our aim is to bring colour and interest to the beds and reduce ongoing maintenance and the need for regular weeding.

The gardeners have been very appreciative of the funding received from our local councillors via their community budgets. The £1000 grant received from the Tesco Bags of Help initiative has been a massive help in being able to purchase the fencing and various plants. Remaining cash will be used for compost to enrich the soil. A representative from Tesco presented a cheque on Wednesday 18 April and several residents and park users attended, enjoying the gardens, the sunshine and some refreshments.

Local residents have continued to offer plant and seed donations throughout the year which have been gratefully received and put to good use.

As the two main flower beds continue to be developed, going forward we can start to think about enhancing the planting in the three entrances to the park, possibly using cuttings from the main beds, excess plants or donations from local residents. The objective would be to keep this to a very low maintenance planting scheme as the main flower beds already keep us quite busy.

Many thanks to all the volunteers who have given up their time and their expertise during the year for the wider benefit of the community. Feedback from park users has been unanimously positive. Anyone interested in helping with the gardens should email secretary@theaspra.org.uk

Lyn Simmons