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**REPORT FROM THE GARDENING CLUB FOR THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE FRIENDS OF**

**CHISLEHURST & WALDEN RECREATION GROUNDS (FOCRG)**

**ON 30th November 2021**

The gardening club has 12 fairly regular attenders and 2 intermittent. Usually on any given day there are 9 or 10. The least number is 1 (me) and 2 (Gary and me). The average is 8.

The shade garden is almost complete. The raised beds are finished and the edging is well underway.  The only purchase for this was 2 sleepers, the rest is all recycled.

We continue moving towards being green.  We now only use seaweed extract on the plants.  And the leaf mulch we started 2 years ago has produced some lovely stuff. We have started another leaf bin and will soon be adding more.

The power tools we have purchased are all battery operated.  Although petrol is more powerful and last longer, battery operated is greener and safer.

The long tennis court side is really taking off some extra colour will be introduced this year.  The Tennis club intended using weed killer on encroaching plants from the flower beds, but the gardening club now go in to deal with the offending plants.  The Ash Trees continue to be a problem.

Unfortunately, we had to have the ‘wasp killer man’ in to deal with a nest under the pyracantha.  I’d have liked to let nature take its course but it was too near where children play and 2 members got stung (one 8 times in one session).  LBB sorted this.

The raised beds at the Empress Drive entrance continue to get abused by kids but we still manage to make them look nice.  Plant stealing still continues.

The planters - this year we had planned a really spectacular show - but it was not to be. The adverse weather conditions meant that bulbs didn’t flourish (though they should do better this year) and the shortage of bedding plants (weather and furloughing) made it difficult to be imaginative.

Many, many thanks to Terry from idverdi for helping us out with plants and bulbs.

Book sales - we made about £118 from book sales. Very few went to landfill.  Although the amount that companies are willing to pay is not very lucrative, the amount makes it worthwhile since the companies pay postage.  I have found a company that takes the books that main purchasers reject. (Sometimes because they are too out of date or in poor condition.) This company sometimes only give 1p or nothing but the books are recycled into cardboard or toilet/kitchen rolls and the company pays postage.

The book sale in the High Street went well.  The GC members really enjoyed it and it helped to raise the profile of FOCRG - and it raised about £130.

**Next year**

We will start collecting books again in the New Year. Unfortunately, the Roost is unable to be a deposit point.  So I’m looking at alternatives, leaving them on my doorstep advertises when we are out.  Not a problem when it’s ‘by arrangement’ but people still deposit them ad hoc.

New planters for the northernish side of the park would be nice.

But the existing planters - we have plans…

Membership of the GC could do with a boost.

**Mai Bunce, Gardening Club Co-Ordinator**