

War Memorial Garden Report – July 19

Report of meeting held on 26th July 2019 at the War Memorial Garden, Steyning Memorial Playing Field.

Attended by Lewis Whittaker, Chair of the Steyning Royal British Legion, Cllrs Sarah Sullivan, Chris Young and Tim Lloyd.

Lewis Whittaker contacted me as Chair of Amenities and requested a meeting to bring to the attention of the Parish Council his concerns over the future financial funding and maintenance of the War Memorial Garden located on the Memorial Playing Field. The War Memorial Garden was fully refurbished in 2011 and Steyning Parish Council hold ownership of the land. Lewis explained that the Charity Commission bars the Royal British Legion from providing funds to maintain War Memorial Gardens. For the past two years no grant request has been made to SPC for the maintenance of the garden. When an application has been received SPC has granted £50 per annum.

Steyning's War Memorial Garden is currently maintained to an extremely high standard through the considerable financial support of a single Bramber resident, and the volunteer tending to light gardening by a local Steyning resident.

Listed below are examples of some of the work funded by the Bramber resident:-
replacement of a section of the oak, post and rail fencing (including kickboards), and of the upright post of one of the gates (these few items alone cost in the region of £1,000).

Tree surgery,

Cutting of bamboo and other hedges.

There is a tree (thought possibly an Acer) which may require some reduction as it is rather large. This tree does not appear to have been mapped in Andrew Gale's Tree Survey as it is not shown on his map (where the War Memorial Garden is drawn but not labelled). No tree number disc could be seen during the meeting.

Due to the close proximity of overhead powerlines, the hedge on the boundary with Mill Road was cut by SPC in recent years.

Lewis is seeking the donation of benches from a garden centre contact to replace the four existing. There is also a bespoke, horseshoe shaped bench which provides a prominent, central feature to the garden. This bench needs attention before Winter and requires rubbing down and staining of the wood.

The green garden waste bin is stored off site by a Mill Road resident with the emptying costs paid for through donations. The litter bin is the responsibility of SPC. The garden is kept mainly free of litter with the litter bin well used. Lewis said he has reported issues off overflowing to the office 'on many occasions over years'.

Steyning currently displays no signage referring to its War Memorial Garden. Lewis suggested fingerposts and signage displayed within the town's car parks would raise awareness of and provide directions to the garden.

Colleagues present at the meeting agreed the War Memorial Garden should be included in the next Amenities budget, and the maintenance required to the horseshoe bench be proposed as needing attention in Autumn.

Cllr Sarah Sullivan,
Chair of Amenities