

## HGPA COMMUNAL GARDENS REPORT 2023

### DOGS

At the 2023 AGM there was a discussion around allowing dogs into the communal gardens. The committee contacted all proprietors asking for their views and received 54 responses out of a possible 115. There were 35 'no's and 14 'yes's. Five people were in favour of a trial period and two people from the same household said they did not recognise the committee, the survey or the rules of the gardens and would act as they pleased. Also, some of the 'yes' responses weren't a clear yes and had suggested caveats including dog owners paying extra and a strike system for bad behaviour. Based on this result the committee agreed to keep the status quo of 'no dogs' in place. The proprietor who made the proposal has said they only wanted to test the water, has thanked the committee for doing so and let the matter rest. No adverse responses were received to the status quo being maintained.

### PLANTING

We spent £288 on new plants to fill in some of the gaps around the perimeter – three *Elaeagnus* Limelight, two *Aucuba* (Japanese Laurel), two *Mahonia* and a *Skimmia*. Sadly, the *Elaeagnus* didn't survive and we are thinking of planting some *Cornus* (Dogwood) in their place over at the lower north gate, which will give excellent winter colour.

We will be extending the central rose beds by joining up the individual planting areas to make four quadrants. This means the perennials planted around the bases of the roses can be lifted, divided and used to fill in the new spaces.

### BIRD FEEDERS

We used to have four squirrel proof bird feeders which were attracting a wide variety of birds, including Goldfinches. They are now gone after being vandalised beyond repair. Also, the lid was constantly being taken off the bird seed bin and the seed eventually went mouldy and had to be disposed of. This is obviously very disappointing, not to mention costly, as the feeders were about £30 each and a bag of bird feed is about £30 – so that's £150 wasted. It's true that pigeons would gather under the feeders and that the top lawn under the oak was very messy with their droppings. But, in response to a complaint, the feeder on the oak was moved and none of them were over any of the lawns. We now have no bird feeders.

### VANDALISM

The lower north gate was vandalised during the summer. It looked as if someone had tried to prise off the wire mesh along the bottom and the lock was hanging off, looking as if it had been kicked or hit.

### LITTER

Please take it home!

*Here endeth the report ...*