

Challenges and Opportunities for Denzell Gardens and The Devisdale

OVERVIEW

The changing nature of the way in which parks and open spaces are resourced and the implications of a changing climate are all major challenges for local communities seeking to preserve, restore and enhance the many benefits such places can provide.

The purpose of this information is to highlight some of those challenges but more importantly the opportunities that could be taken to ensure the continuity and improvement of these important open spaces.

FUNDING AND SUPPORT CHALLENGES

Ensuring the funding for maintenance is improved:

- Lobbying to have the grass on the Devisdale mown and the cuttings taken off to help improve the amount and diversity of wildflowers.
- Finding ways to support the staff on site.
- Adopting a section of Denzell Gardens or The Devisdale, such as the flower beds in front of the main house

IDENTIFIED MAJOR PROJECTS

- Boundary Wall
- Peace Garden
- Ornamental Pond

ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Anti social behaviour not only causes disruption to those in Denzell Gardens at the time it leads to major damage later when those responsible begin to think they can do what they like. Examples of anti social behaviour are:

- Camping/partying/under-age drinking and the lighting of fires on the Devisdale
- Drug use
- Vandalism
- Theft
- Persistent dog fouling
- Picnicking and leaving rubbish behind

There are various ways to tackle the above problems which involve working with Altrincham police and Trafford Council:

- Keep GMP advised of problems and be particularly diligent and ask for high-visibility patrols around school holidays, especially during the summer months
- Direct contacts to police rather than via switchboard to cut out wasted time of repeating location, problems and numbers etc
- Post information in notice boards advising of action general public should take to encourage more people to report a crime
- Liaise with local schools to introduce more educational problems in order to build future respect from an early age
- Current Trafford Council notice boards displaying anti-dog fouling are in dire need of updating and should be in more prominent positions
- Additional notice boards informing people of the rules re camping/alcohol consumption and lighting fires need to be displayed in prominent positions.
- Create new areas to encourage people from all backgrounds and cultures. At the moment, the majority of visitors to the Devisdale are dog-walkers
- Lobby Trafford Council to restore courtyard and their buildings to get more people living on site

FUNDING ISSUES

No Council funding for Lych Gate repairs but Friends are looking for funding towards this in the near future.

OTHER ITEMS NEEDING FUNDING ARE

- Paths
- Shrub Planting
- Devisdale Grassland
- Devisdale Ecology Pond
- Formal Flower Beds

MAJOR MAINTENANCE PROJECTS

- Devisdale
- Trees
- Shrub Borders

DEVISDALE MAINTENANCE ISSUES

- Cutting and raking off grass on the Devisdale to improve diversity of grasses and herbs
- The wildlife pond on The Devisdale needs work to safe guard the edges
- Control / eradication of Japanese Knotweed and Himalayan Balsam

TREES

Trees are a main landscape feature in Denzell Gardens and The Devisdale. However, some of these either have limited life spans because of the species, or they may have very long life spans (with significant biodiversity value) if they are managed correctly.

ADOPTING AREAS OF DENZELL GARDENS AND DEVISDALE FOR MAINTENANCE WORK

There are many features in Denzell Gardens and The Devisdale that offer opportunities for volunteers to help with regular maintenance.

By dividing up the areas and features of Denzell Gardens and The Devisdale, into smaller sections, even 2 or 3 people working together could make a significant difference. The Sunken Garden Project shows how successful this can be.

Possible areas to be considered:

- The ornamental pond area
- The flower beds in-front of the main house
- The area from the Lych Gate to the sunken garden
- Sections of boundary plantings in Denzell Gardens and The Devisdale

LONGER TERM RESTORATION PROJECTS

The frontage of Denzell House with its ornamental urns and lamps and now with only the bases of the urns and lamps remaining.

TAKING THE INITIATIVE

The challenges are many but so are the opportunities. The community needs to be involved more if these important places are not to fall further into decline. The decline may not be obvious but all the main infrastructure of both hard and soft landscape is in need of renewal and repair.

**Don't let our children and their children not have access to this
valuable resource, please take part**