

Background

Proffitts have been working alongside Tottington and Bury West Rotary Club and Bury Council officers for several years, looking at the proposals to upgrade and improve access and improve Whitehead Gardens to better benefit the local community.

The aim of the project is to open up areas within the site; introduce colour to the site with new planting and create a new larger stage area to better accommodate local events and activities, such as those which used to take place, now known as Tottington's Big Day Out. The site will once again become the focal point for community activity, whilst respecting the heritage of the Gardens.

Community Consultation

A consultation was carried out between November 2019 and July 2020 by the Rotary Club, focussing on the community, schools and parishioners in the Village and surrounding areas. A series of questions were asked to determine how the site is used at present and how it could be used if access and facilities were improved.

There was a great response to the consultation – 128 people directly responded to the online consultation with additional more detailed feedback coming from within the Rotary and others in the Village.

Responses included a focus on tree pruning/felling and introducing more colour to the garden through planting; creating a new, permanent 'stage' (bandstand) area, resurfacing paths; restoration of the memorial; improving the site for wildlife and installation of additional seats and signage.

“Restoration / development of the bandstand or a complete rebuild is sorely needed so that it can be put back into safe use by the community for a range of events and made into an attractive feature. The attached memorial stone needs refurbishment”.

Proposed Events

The aim in improving the and extending the 'stage' area is to allow small community events to take place once more in the Garden.

The current stage has 2 steps at the rear with a relatively narrow stage area and a significant drop at the front. It is accessed by steep steps at each side (which are now in a poor state) and hard to access. The total depth is approx. 5700mm.

The altered stage area will be lowered for safety (avoiding the need for barriers) and will have a level surface. The existing steps at each side will be repaired with handrails installed and a new accessible ramp created from the south ensuring the stage is accessible for all. The new depth of the stage will be 8200mm.

The likely events to take place in the Gardens include:

- Brass band concerts
- Events associated with neighbouring St Anne's Church – wedding photos, etc
- Events associated with local Scout and Guide groups (12th Bury & Ramsbottom) who are based at St Anne's Church

Tottington Big Day out used to be hosted at Whitehead Gardens, but this event moved to Tottington St John's Cricket Club field. This venue is far better suited to an event of this nature and scale, and it is not intended that the Big Day out would be held at Whitehead Gardens again.

Events are anticipated to be held approximately 5 times a year, catering for no more than 60 people.

Events would be managed by those responsible for arranging the events (including marshalling, safety and cleaning up etc). No events are suggested that would necessitate any form or road closure – they will not be of that nature or scale. The majority of these events are for local groups and organisations meaning travel and car parking will not be a particular concern over and above other types of local activity such as weddings at St Anne's Church.

Any event in the Gardens would require consent and approval via a Temporary Event Notice form from Bury MBC as landowners. This form aims to ensure event organisers have considered all aspects of the event and the event will be delivered in a safe and responsible manner. Any proposals which do not meet these criteria will not be given permission to take place.