

FENCING IN THE FORMAL GARDENS

Head of Service/Contact: Ian Dyer, Head of Operational Services

Annexes/Appendices (attached):

Other available papers (not attached):

Report summary

To put forward a proposal from the Nonsuch Voles to seek the committee's approval to apply for funding for security fencing in the formal gardens.

	<i>Notes</i>
<p>Recommendation (s)</p> <p>(1) To approve the Nonsuch Vole's proposal to apply for funding for security fencing in the formal gardens.</p> <p>(2) To agree to the provision and source of match funding at 11.5% of the total bid value (approximately £2,200) from the working balance account.</p>	

1 Background

- 1.1 The Pinetum was planted in the 1840s. Initially planted with cedars and redwoods, it was later planted with atlas cedars, pines, firs, larches as well as a gingko, a tulip tree and cut leaved beeches. The Pinetum adjoins the historic formal gardens of Nonsuch Park.
- 1.2 Over the last 2-3 years major work to restore the Pinetum has been carried out by staff and volunteers from the Nonsuch Voles. Although, further improvements and planting are planned for the future, there are concerns that efforts to improve the area are often marred by vandalism caused after the formal gardens are locked at night.
- 1.3 One of the main weaknesses in security of the formal gardens is the fence at the rear of the Pinetum, which is in a very poor state of repair, please see Appendix 1.
- 1.4 The gaps in the fence allow dogs to enter this 'dog free' area via the Pinetum, with some gaps large enough for people to gain access after the formal gardens are locked at night.

Nonsuch Park Joint Management Committee

29 May 2018

- 1.5 The fence currently consists of wooden stakes held together by wire. Some sections have had a steel mesh or plastic mesh added. In recent year, staff and volunteers have weaved pruned branches from trees and bushes to help close the gaps and strengthen the fence, but overall, the fence looks uncared for and is subject to repeated vandalism.
- 1.6 In 2016, in response to the increase in vandalism in the formals gardens, the Police Crime Reduction Officer visited Nonsuch to assess the site and recommend measures that could be taken to help reduce antisocial behaviour. One of these measures was secure fencing around the gardens.
- 1.7 Later that year, Surrey County Council removed a large section of pedestrian guardrail (PGR) from Epsom Town centre and it was hoped that this would be sufficient to use as security fencing. However, the amount supplied fell short of the 181 metres required to fence the rear of the Pinetum and the PGR was used instead, very successfully, to replace temporary wire panels by the side of Nonsuch Mansion.
- 1.8 Due to competing pressures on the park maintenance budgets, finding a large sum of money for security fencing proves a challenge. Therefore, the Nonsuch Voles are seeking the Committee's permission to apply for external funding from the SUEZ Communities Landfill Trust. The trust offers grants for the maintenance, repair or restoration of a building, other structure or a site of archaeological interest, which is a place of religious worship, or a site of historic or architectural or archaeological interest and is open to the public.
- 1.9 In order to bid for funding from SUEZ the Nonsuch Voles will need to secure 11.5% of the money from another party.

2 Proposals

- 2.1 The Nonsuch Voles in consultation with park staff have investigated various fencing options and agreed that although more expensive, metal fencing is preferable to the wooden posts and wire mesh currently in place.
- 2.2 On this basis fencing contractors were approached and quotes received for a variety of metal fencing options.
- 2.3 To ensure security and longevity of the fence, the preferred option is 2 metre high, black prison mesh fencing. Prison mesh fencing is extremely durable and the black colour will match other fencing in the formal gardens and unlike green fencing, the dark colour will blend into the surroundings rather than stand out.
- 2.4 To supply and erect approximately 187m x 2m high prison mesh, galvanised and polyester powder coated black and secured to 60x60mm RHS posts concreted into the ground will cost in the region of £19,000 excluding vat, which will require 11.5% match funding of £2185.

Nonsuch Park Joint Management Committee

29 May 2018

3 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 3.1 If the committee approve this proposal, the Nonsuch Voles will prepare the funding application with the assistance of officers as required. If the funding application is successful, the Volunteers and park staff will obtain three quotes from reputable fencing contractors and prepare the site ready for installation.
- 3.2 As the project will be largely managed by the volunteers, there are no significant manpower implications.
- 3.3 The project will require 11.5% match funding from the Joint Management Committee, which is likely to be in the region of £2200.
- 3.4 Given the durability of the fencing selected, it is unlikely that the fencing will require significant maintenance in the foreseeable future and should not need replacing for at least 15 years.

4 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 4.1 There are no legal implications arising from the contents of this report.

5 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 5.1 This project offers security and sustainability for the formal gardens and Pinetum and will help to reduce antisocial behaviour.

6 Partnerships

- 6.1 This is a partnership project between officers and the Nonsuch Voles volunteer group.

7 Risk Assessment

- 7.1 If this proposal is not supported, there is a risk that the formal gardens and Pinetum will continue to be susceptible to vandalism and improvement works and historical features will be damaged. This could cause disillusion amongst those who have worked hard to care for the area and could prove costly to committee to repair.

8 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 8.1 This project will provide vital security to one of the most important areas of Nonsuch Park, with only a small investment required from the Joint Management Committee.
- 8.2 It is therefore recommended that the committee agree to the proposal for security fencing as detailed in paragraph 2.4 and allocate 11.5% match funding from the working balance to support the bid application.

Ward affected: Nonsuch Ward; (EEBC)