

# Marden Gardeners' Association Proposals for Village Enhancement





Introduction

Comments on Budget, Implementation, and Maintenance

Priority Areas

- War Memorial
- Rudge Grove
- Volunteer Junction
- Morton Sutton Junction

Easy Wins

- Corner Planters
- Telephone Booth

Other Areas For Future Consideration

Next Steps





**BACKGROUND:** In collaboration with the Marden Parish Council, a small group of members of the Marden Gardeners' Association (Village Enhancement Committee - VEC) volunteered to look at several areas of the village area that could benefit from additional planting or landscaping.

Some areas are maintained by Balfour Beatty, some are maintained by the Parish Lenghtsman, some by the various local housing estates and some are privately owned and maintained.

The VEC have identified our first set as "priorities". We realise that there are multiple areas that could benefit from improvement, but we want to be realistic regarding time and budget.

The planting proposals mentioned in this document are outline concepts only to give the PC an idea of our thinking. As we move forward we would then undertake to identify specific plants. The planting may also rely on what we have available to us as well.

We have divided this presentation into three sections:

- (1) Priority Areas – Prominent green areas in the village that could benefit from planting and landscaping
- (2) Easy Wins– Areas that are simple and easy to achieve
- (3) Future Projects – areas that might be difficult, under private ownership or more sensitive. And may also require larger expense.

All proposals have considered:

- Physical restrictions such as electrical/broadband boxes and utilities
- Disabilities, accessibility and sight restrictions
- Planting that prioritises pollinators, drought resistance and easy and low maintenance - ideally seasonally only
- Natural and local planting



It is our intention that this document will be used as a first stage draft to start the discussion process on the areas the committee has considered. We recognise that further iterations and proposals will be required as we work through this– some areas may be added, others discarded or put aside for future consideration.

As this is a very early first stage document and that there will be multiple stakeholders that will need to be consulted, we have not attempted to put together a budget for these ideas.

However, we have considered the following:

- When the areas are approved, that as much of the work be done by local volunteers as possible. Some areas may require more than one year to be landscaped and planted.
- The planting areas will be designed so that there is a *mowing edge*. Planting won't be so close to this mowing edge to allow easy maintenance for the various contractors and stakeholders.
- A call to go out to Marden social clubs and organisations for sponsorship of specific areas – for example, The History Society for the War Memorial, Marden Gardeners for the Volunteer Junction, Mothers Groups and Girl Guides for the Rudge Grove etc. In addition, we would hope that members of the Marden Gardeners and other local parishioners would volunteer for the upkeep of the areas. If the areas are well designed then the maintenance should only be required seasonally.
- We would aim to get as much of the initial planting donated as possible. Many of the Marden Gardeners and parishioners are keen plantsmen and raise and propagate their own plants.
- It is hoped that we may be able to get parishioners to donate benches for specific areas mentioned
- Request sponsorship from our local garden centres and businesses - i.e, Radway and Wellington Garden Centres, Tarmac, Sean Stanley Construction, S&A, Berrington Water and Stretton Tree Services for specific areas – ie Morton Sutton Junction.
- We would investigate local and national grants for funding, such as “Hereford Communities in Bloom”.
- Once we understand what areas we can start work on, we will approach the Parish Council with a budget request.

Our hope *was* that we could start to implement a few of these Spring 2021 ideally starting April/May, but we recognise the current pandemic situation may make that unlikely. If restrictions do ease off this spring (post Easter), then it should be possible to work on some of these areas with social distancing restrictions. If that isn't possible, summer or autumn planting is perfectly feasible.



### COMMENTS ON GENERAL AREA

- Currently a missed opportunity as this is a prominent and focal area as you drive into the village
- Dark colour of monument and lack of planting means that the area often isn't noticed
- We don't understand why there is a chain across the main path at the approach to the memorial. We think this discourages visitors from approaching it.

### LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

- Lift up paved path and re-lay to make even.
- Cut away overgrowth each side of the paved path to its original size.
- If possible, we would like to make this path wider so that it is accessible for mobility scooters and wheelchairs. In its current form it is not.
- Implement a border each side of the path to create a ceremonial walkway
- Create a natural arch behind the memorial to create a focus
- Permanently remove the centre chain to encourage visitors to approach the memorial.

### PLANTING PROPOSALS

- Pathway Border: Various seasonal flowering heathers and short lavender
- Natural Arch: Two multi stem small three season trees – such as crab apples or amelanchier. These would flower in the spring, produce berries or fruit in summer/winter, turn colour in the autumn and set off the memorial.
- Small hybrid white English roses each side of memorial
- Spring naturalized bulbs such as snowdrops and daffodils to cover the whole area.
- Area to be monitored this spring to see what bulbs are already in the ground.



## Priority Area 2 – Rudge Grove Bus Stop



9 Feb 2021

## PROPOSALS FOR VILLAGE ENHANCEMENT



### COMMENTS ON GENERAL AREA

Number of functions and elements present a jumble on this prominent site as you approach the village

- Bus Stop Shelter
- Garden Bench
- Gas Hut
- Parish Information Board,
- Electric Panel
- Rubbish Bins
- Timber planter owned by the Parish and maintained by the Girl Guides

### LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

Elements to be reorganized to create more of a focal “Square” for this area.

- Relocate bench to be centered on side of Gas Hut. If this isn’t possible (as it’s currently cemented in) then a small flowering tree/shrub could be planted at the side to disguise facing wall of the gas hut. (We recognize the ventilation panel at the lower facing side)
- Relocate timber planter to front of “Rudge Grove” sign. We think this would be a more prominent site.
- Paint the gas hut a colour to blend in to the area – ideally green.
- Paving of area to finish off the “Square” - and planting in middle of square (avoiding electrical trunking to panel box )
- Relocate one bin to other side of Square to balance out area. Bin would still be accessible and available.

### PLANTING PROPOSALS

- Low planting here to create “sensory garden”
- Hardy herbs – sage, thyme, oregano, rosemary, lavender, chives, catmint, alliums, garlic,
- Small flowering shrub either behind bench or beside it if it can’t be moved.
- Small spring bulbs

Version 1



### COMMENTS ON GENERAL AREA

- Area is considered a protected green space in the NDP, but currently has no distinguishing characteristics
- Giga Clear Box on site
- Bins not convenient to bus stop or pavement
- Planting to be kept low for sightlines from all 4 directions
- Area maintained by Balfour Beatty

### LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

- New Bench at bus stop
- Potential for a few other benches adjacent to pavement
- Relocate bins to bus stop area – but still close to streetside for collection and ease of use by pedestrians
- Large area to be divided into three planting beds, with larger in middle and smaller each side.



### PLANTING PROPOSALS

Area could be divided into three planting beds

- Step-Over Apples on low frames – no more than 2'-0" (60mm) high (to maintain sight lines) at the back of each bed to reference Herefordshire's heritage
- Monitor the area this spring for bulbs such as daffodils and crocus. Bulbs to be lifted and replanted
- Hostas, heuchera, low flowing grasses, hypericum, cotoneaster, photinia, dogwood, lavender
- Centre bed: border-within-a-border – Rockery with alpines. We may know of a source for rocks in the village





### COMMENTS ON GENERAL AREA

- A main focal point for most arriving in the village, it is a missed opportunity as a welcoming feature. This could also be a prime opportunity for one of the local garden centres or local organisation to sponsor planting.
- Any planting would need to be low so sight lines are not obstructed.
- Concrete access cover to be maintained
- Even though Balfour Beatty have indicated that they wouldn't be in support of any planting here (as they use this area to park their vehicles for maintenance work), we still feel strongly that this area is a priority. Discussions would need to be held with Balfour to understand what they require for their vehicles – perhaps they don't need to park over the whole area.

### LANDSCAPE PROPOSALS

- A circular bed with a mowing edge.

### PLANTING PROPOSALS

- Prairie style planting with low bulbs, dwarf perennials and grasses for seasonal interest – rudabekia, echinacea, helenium, achillea etc.
- Grassed area to be completely planted with naturalising spring bulbs such as daffodils and snowdrops.





### WALKERS GREEN TRIANGLE - AREA 5

#### COMMENTS ON GENERAL AREA

- Focal point as drivers enter Marden from Sutton or Morton
- This corner could benefit from a planter to provide colour and year round interest. Small shrubs, grasses, some annual plants.
- Pavement is wide enough here to accommodate a narrow rectangular planter without impeding pedestrians
- Planter height needs to consider the height of the Walkers Green address numbers – we were hoping we might be able to get these moved higher up the post.



### WALKERS GREEN TRIANGLE - AREA 6

#### COMMENTS ON GENERAL AREA

- Focal point as drivers enter Marden from Bodenham
- Area could be benefit from a planter to provide colour and year round interest.
- Pavement is wide enough here to accommodate one without impeding pedestrians.
- Same considerations as above for sightlines to sign and planting.



### TELEPHONE BOOTH AREA

Phone Booth currently accommodates Parish Footpath Information and there is a proposal to for a Seed Swap to be included in the near future. It would be good if the Phone Booth could be made a bit more of a feature.

- Area is recognized to be quite restrictive as clear access needs to be maintained to the side of the booth for Mini Mart deliveries.
- Planting around area to be tidied up, cut down, overall appearance to be improved.
- We are not sure who owns the fence, but it is collapsing. It would benefit from a new panel or two. A trellis could be installed for climbers.
- Future consideration: We are also wondering if a larger board could be installed here to both advertise the info inside the booth and allow parishioners to post their own notices. Currently, there is no place for parishioners to post their notices for clubs, events etc. Most of the surrounding villages have them and they seem to be fairly well self policed.

## Other Areas for Future Consideration



### NEW HOUSE FARM AREA

We feel that this area is likely to be very disrupted during construction and would like to wait until the construction of the new drive and entranceways are finished before considering what else we would add or enhance at this stage.

## PROPOSALS FOR VILLAGE ENHANCEMENT



### MINI MART AND CAR PARK

We recognise that this is privately held land, but as it's central in the village, we wonder if the owner might be encouraged to make small efforts to improve it's appearance. The new hair salon already looks improved as they have painted the outside.

- Small potted ornamental trees – bay, evergreen, etc. These could be secured.
- Small pots on the concrete upstand outside the mini mart. We loved their “Christmas gnomes” this past year.
- Large tubs of flowers

### THE DUCK POND

The Duck Pond is noted in the Marden NDP as a “protected green space”. We have identified it as a potential site for improvement.

- Due to issues relating to the ownership of the property and possible problems in contacting the owner, it remains to be seen whether we could progress any improvements on this site at present.
- If the problems mentioned above are able to be overcome, then it is a prime opportunity to make this into a village feature – especially as it is in the heart of Marden and on the main road into the village.
- It is more than likely teeming with wildlife now, but by clearing out some of the reeds and bulrushes, we may be able to encourage more. For instance we know that ducks used to be on the pond, and it might be that we could encourage them to return.
- It could be a good opportunity to install 2-3 benches along the back of the pond at the hedge as it has a pleasant south facing aspect.





Presentation and discussion of the proposals with the Parish Council of the first draft proposals. Comments back to the VEC on what the PC think is feasible and whether they are willing to assist with the first contact of the stakeholders.

Parish Council to instigate discussions with the various parties who are invested in the areas when deemed appropriate. VEC are willing to participate in these initial discussions.

Comments from all parties to be communicated back to the VEC and proposals to be adjusted, omitted etc.

PC to comment on their preferences for the Priority Areas. Areas to start once Covid Restrictions start to ease off. Easiest areas to start are the War Memorial and Rudge Grove.

VEC to establish budget for the various areas.

VEC to apply for any applicable grants.

Call out to any parties, social groups, business etc on who might help out, sponsor an area or assist with the work. This to be done via the Parish website, Marden FB Page, and News and Views.

Monitor areas for location of spring flowering bulbs this year for bulb planting in the autumn.