



Annual General Meeting 2025

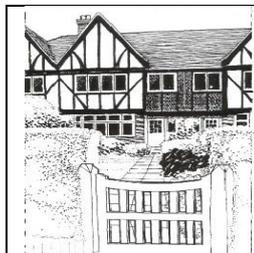
ROSE GARDEN PROJECT

A project group has been working on plans to restore the Rose Garden, at the top of Princes Gardens, as part of the Estate centenary celebrations. This paper reports progress so far and seeks approval to take the project to the next stage. We will be back at the 2026 AGM to report progress.

The Rose Garden is part of the Houses' half of the Estate and is looked after by the Estate gardeners. They have been working over the past couple of years to cut back overgrown areas at the two ends and to replant a section of hedge that had been killed by honey fungus. However, the area's drainage is very poor, with standing water after wet weather. The rose bushes are old and many of them are in poor condition. The grass is uneven, full of weed and ant nests. This is a large area which could be made a lot more attractive and welcoming as a community resource.

Renovation will be a big and expensive project but it's one that fits well with the idea of Estate centenary celebrations. After the last AGM, we therefore put out a call for volunteers to join a working group to develop ideas. This has met three times and researched other community gardens, including visiting one in north London. It commissioned a professional survey of the area and 'concept' ideas from Aoba Landscapes, the company led by Estate resident John Ward. This work has been distilled into the list of priorities below and a single initial concept design (available at the meeting) to put out to consultation among the wider community. The group's thinking to date can be summarised as follows:

- Green spaces define our Estate and are a valuable resource, particularly given the welfare benefits of being out in the open. The Rose Garden formally belongs to the Houses but the working group felt it should be open to all residents.
- Roses have been grown in the garden since the Estate was built and should be woven into the design, but re/planted away from the exhausted soil of the current beds. Likewise cherry trees (Purple Plum – *prunus cerasifera* 'Nigra') which are reaching the end of their natural lives.
- Scientists expect London's climate to be more like Barcelona's current one by 2050, with warmer wetter winters and hotter dryer summers. Planting for the future means care will need to be taken in choosing the shrubs and – especially – trees to be planted.
- The area is big enough to accommodate several distinct areas or 'moods'. The design should accommodate a mix of family-friendly, biodiverse/climate-friendly and ornamental elements.
- The boundary hedge should be retained/restored, partly on cost grounds but mostly because it discourages intruders and makes the garden a safe space for young children. It should probably be gated, and clearly identifiable as being a private garden for Estate residents.
- Priority must be given to nearby residents' privacy and security, and discouraging antisocial behaviour (open visibility, entrance gates, restricting use only to Estate residents). No picnic tables; if seats or benches are included, they must be removeable if problems arise. No litter bins so people take their rubbish home. A policy will be needed on dogs.
- Working group members liked the idea of community events (an annual HHGE village fête? Outdoor yoga? Concerts?) or even commercial use to raise funds for the Residents



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Association. This would imply including an area of lawn where stalls or a marquee could go. Careful thought would be needed about commercial use – insurance, disturbance etc.

- Community gardening should be part of the plan, with raised beds for shared use and potential for involvement by residents in regular maintenance.
- Lawn areas should be small enough or broken up so they're not used for football matches etc.
- As this will be a centenary project, there should be an information board outlining the history of the Estate and the Rose Garden itself (maybe renamed Centenary Garden?).
- Low maintenance is essential, given limited HHGERA funds. Likewise, for cost reasons hard landscaping should be kept to a minimum and where paths are needed (eg at the entrances), use of woodchip or mown paths are economical options.

We propose that the next step should be to sound out residents about priorities and make contact with other stakeholders such as Ealing Council officials and ward councillors. As with our last big project, renovation of the Princes Gardens central reservation, we will use a mixture of approaches including a consultation meeting and questionnaire. Consultation will be Estate-wide but more intensive for those houses that directly overlook the Rose Garden. Once the working group's thinking is settled, it will be necessary to add detail to the design and start costing the work. We would hope to get that far this year. Fundraising will be a big challenge as we will almost certainly need to supplement HHGERA's own resources. This will probably take up much of 2026.

The AGM is invited to endorse the Working Group's approach and authorise it to consult residents more widely, ahead of drawing up a more detailed design and costings. An update will be provided at next year's AGM.

Nim Maradas
HHGERA Secretary