

Quaker Legacy Garden—Brief project report for cost sheet.

This project was suggested as part of the planning of Yearly Meeting Gathering. 2014. First plans were drawn up in December 2013 to present to the Trustees of the University for approval. The final plan emerged during discussion with regional Friends, notably Bristol AM though they were widely circulated for comments and revisions.

A budget of £750 was allowed for in the Arts funding budget of YMG though, as was pointed out early on, this was never going to fund the entire garden. A generous donation from Devon AM kept us going and more came along the way through the network of QGP supporters. Thank you to all.

Donations received were enough to take a leap of faith that if we persevered Friends would lend not only their muscle but their cash too. Without the generous sponsorship of plants and materials and donations in the week we would have been out of pocket—having to use the remaining funds in the QGP bank account to cover costs. Deb only charged for site visit petrol trips and a small fee to cover design costs. All other time was donated. The Legacy garden was therefore delivered for around £3500. A commercial enterprise including labour a similar garden might have cost perhaps £5-6000.—A not unreasonable sum for many Area Meetings who might wish to think of this exercise as outreach in their areas.

QGP now (August 2014) have a small surplus to be used for further work, publicity as and when needed.

The logistics of getting materials ordered and brought to site on time were demanding. Various extra expenses were incurred at last minute as final ideas changes on site but all was manageable due to reasonably accurate ordering of quantities, always a key to the success of a project.

We had no idea how many volunteers would want to join in but, confident of a small team who had signed up previously, we went ahead and gathered more folk during the week as progress became more visible and the garden took shape.

The experience of working together on the weeding, digging, stone laying etc while 'getting to know each other in the things that are eternal' was wonderful—the making of the garden being the reason that several Friends came and stayed for the whole week.

Still in the Garden—our half hour silence early in the morning also gathered support through the week and, blessed by fine weather, we ended up running out of chairs. This was meant to be a pattern and example to Meetings that I hope others will take up.

We needed and gained several keen tea makers, T shirt sales assistants and information managers as well as the core team of willing gardeners— all essential in producing a happy atmosphere. At times we were paddling furiously underneath even if it looked a smooth operation but— with the gift of the right Friends at the right time in the right place and much mutual encouragement— we made it!

The Estates team who will continue the gardens maintenance are impressed. Local Friends will come and keep an eye on progress.

It's hoped to have a commemoration sign inscribed in the near future.

Deb Arrowsmith