

Vision Group for Sidmouth: Press release 17 May 2022:

New working party to help restore Victorian glory of Glen Goyle

There is a magical place tucked away in the heart of Sidmouth. This is Glen Goyle, a small stretch of Victorian parkland set in a gully winding along a pretty little stream.

“I love its natural beauty, peace and seclusion”, says Maureen Hackett of the Friends of Glen Goyle. “Someone I know refers to it as the “secret garden” .’

It was last year that the Friends of Glen Goyle was set up to see if this unique area could be restored to something of its original glory – and things have been very much moving in that direction over the last twelve months.

Following discussions within both the SVA's History Group and the Sid Valley Biodiversity Group, the new group was formed to look at both the heritage and natural environment of this charming spot.

Under the auspices of the Vision Group for Sidmouth, the FOGG has a dedicated website and social media pages, as well as a newsletter and developing plans for the future.

Walks have been organised down the stream, mapping out what is there and what could be done to spruce it up. There are some fabulous trees, but also a lot of overgrown foliage; paths and other infrastructure could be improved; and some sensitive planting could be undertaken.

As FOGG member John McGregor says, “At the bottom of my garden is the stream that runs through Glen Goyle. The badgers, foxes, squirrels and an occasional deer all come through the garden which runs the length of eight properties. Owls are also present... Whilst exploring during the strange days of Covid, I discovered the Glen's delights but was saddened by the neglect of many years.”

And it was John who contacted the council to get the wooden railings replaced and the little wooden bridge repaired – making it much safer and more welcoming.

Now EDDC's Horticultural Technical Officer, Paul Fealey, is very keen to get involved in the project – and has offered to lead a regular working party with the Friends of Glen Goyle, where he would offer proper horticultural training. As the site is owned by EDDC and managed by Streetscene. it makes very good sense to involve the council – who also look after the neighbouring Connaught Gardens.

And as Paul says, it would be great to have a team of volunteers to work with to clear and replant Glen Goyle, to bring it back to its Victorian charms.

“It is apparent that this area was something special when it was constructed,” says FOGG member John, “and it surely deserves to be brought to life and cared for once again.”

The first meeting of the FOGG working party will be at the entrance on Manor Road at 10am to 12.30pm on Thursday 9th June. Tools will be provided – but do bring something for a mid morning coffee break.

“We intend to meet fortnightly,” adds FOGG member and volunteer Phil Lee. “There will be no commitment – and any help and time given will be appreciated.”

Do come along and join in the restoration of this unique part of Sidmouth's heritage.



For further information, contact sec@visionforsidmouth.org or go to <https://visionforsidmouth.org/contact>