

KGS: AGM Garden Update 2022/23 for the Small Garden

Here some highlights:

Trees & Shrubs: we planted new ones, but lost others

- We managed to replace the ailing lime tree in the north-eastern corner with a golden Pseudo-accacia Frisia in March, which is doing well
- A Cercis Canadensis and small lilac tree were donated and planted next to it.
- We are planting a Katsura (Cercidiphyllum Japonicum) in the north-west corner end of this month, as per Westminster Council recommendation. Great autumn colour!
- We are adding a magnolia tree in the large bed this winter.
- We seem to be losing the gorgeous red Acer tree in the middle of the garden due to Acer Wilt (soil infestation of Verticillium Wilt)
- We lost a mature Viburnum shrub due to Aphids (northwest corner), but saved two others at the garden entrance with the help of introducing insect larvae; the Viburnum was replaced by a Deutzia. A Photinia tree toppled over in the same area, leaving space to regroup some of the plants there.

Plants: Great year for Roses, Rhododendron, and spring flowers (see photos)

- The Garden has now colour interest all year, starting in February, with November colours still going strong. More detailed information on perennials planted can be provided on request.
- The grass area was reseeded with shade tolerant seeds and has looked throughout the summer; this will now be done every spring.
- The west side of the garden is being replanted and continues to improve.

Garden Furniture

- At the western end of the garden, we repainted the open shed green and adding a (donated) bench, and are considering adding two comfortable wooden chairs for the grass area, now that the grass seems a bit more robust.
- The garden is small, densely planted, and situated very close to adjunct houses, which makes larger social gathering not suitable. The plan is to provide seating opportunities in three areas of the garden for individuals seeking a quiet space.

Challenges ahead

- The ivy covering of the ugly surrounding fence is preventing air circulation to a number of plants, encouraging mildew infestations (particularly of the hydrangeas). Regular organic spraying can only keep this marginally in check.
- The garden is prone to vandalism, with the fence damaged in several areas by people climbing over it.
- With the surrounding buildings and mature plane trees (and their pruning kept low by Westminster Council) there is only dappled shade in summer and no sun at all between October and February. Managing tree sizes & pruning needs to continue to allow for some plant diversity and colour.

