

# Garden Report – February 2026

## CONTENTS

Executive Summary .....	1
1. Horticultural Practice and Outcomes .....	2
1.1 Bed Renovation and Plant Health Improvement .....	2
1.2 Dell: Path Management and Seasonal Development .....	2
1.3 Coppicing .....	3
1.4 West Gate Bed Reorganisation.....	4
1.5 Ground Elder Suppression and Evergreen Structure .....	4
1.6 Chichester Terrace – Invasive Control and Regeneration .....	5

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In February 2026, the Kemp Town Enclosures team focused on bed renovation, weed management, coppicing deteriorating shrubs, and climate-conscious replanting. Systematic removal of bramble and mature *Clematis vitalba* at Chichester Terrace has reopened previously suppressed areas and facilitated natural regeneration. Additionally, grass reinforcement measures were implemented in the Dell to address ongoing winter mud issues.

# 1. HORTICULTURAL PRACTICE AND OUTCOMES

The first section focuses on horticultural activity undertaken during February. It outlines key tasks, ecological rationale, and resulting benefits for plant health, biodiversity, sustainability, and visual coherence. This section is suitable for publication.

## 1.1 Bed Renovation and Plant Health Improvement

### Anna Neagle Bed

Overgrown *Veronica (Hebe)* and *Brachyglottis* were removed. These shrubs had become poorly rooted and were concealing significant infestations of ivy, bindweed, and goji berry. Their removal enabled:

- Thorough weed clearance
- Structural reorganisation of the planting scheme

New species introduced include:

- *Salvia* 'Amistad' – a long-flowering hybrid sage valued for pollinator support and suitability to warmer summers.
- *Koenigia alpina* – a robust late-season perennial providing height and nectar resources.
- *Helenium* 'Moerheim Beauty' – an autumn-flowering perennial supporting extended seasonal interest.

Existing *Miscanthus sinensis* was lifted, divided, and repositioned to provide shelter from salt-laden winds in this exposed area.

These interventions enhance biodiversity value, structural layering, and climate resilience.

## 1.2 Dell: Path Management and Seasonal Development

### Eastern Path Stabilisation

The eastern path in the Dell regularly becomes muddy during winter. Grass reinforcement mesh has been installed in the worst-affected areas to:

- Improve surface stability
- Reduce compaction
- Maintain permeability
- Improve winter accessibility

This intervention is targeted and reversible, addressing erosion without altering the garden's historic layout.

### **Seasonal Planting and Pruning**

Following weeding, *Primula* were introduced to enhance early-season colour.

- Established *Galanthus nivalis* (snowdrops) are flowering well.
- *Ribes sanguineum*, following heavy pruning, is performing strongly.
- *Lonicera fragrantissima* and *Viburnum* spp. will be pruned once flowering has concluded to preserve bloom potential and maintain form.

These measures support pollinator activity and maintain structured seasonal progression.

## **1.3 Coppicing**

### **Jubilee Bed – *Caryopteris***

*Caryopteris* was coppiced due to declining vigour. Coppicing will:

- Stimulate strong basal growth
- Improve flowering performance
- Reduce bramble and bindweed pressure

- Improve long-term manageability

#### **North Garden – Structural Shrub Management**

- *Euphorbia mellifera* was coppiced beneath a *Prunus* to rebalance the canopy and improve light penetration.
- A dead *Sambucus nigra* collapsing into a bed was removed.
- Associated weeding and shrub pruning were undertaken.

These works have improved spatial clarity and will allow the *Prunus* to develop without suppression.

#### **1.4 West Gate Bed Reorganisation**

Significant couch grass was present in the flower bed by the west double gates. The team:

- Lifted, divided, and replanted *Chrysanthemum* and *Nepeta*
- Reorganised the planting arrangement so taller species are positioned at the rear and shorter species at the front

This improves visual coherence, weed suppression, and ease of maintenance.

#### **1.5 Ground Elder Suppression and Evergreen Structure**

In the Polly Binder bed, an etiolated *Brachyglottis* was removed along with ground elder encroachment. It was replaced with:

- *Juniperus horizontalis* 'Lime Glow' to provide evergreen ground cover
- *Primula* for interim seasonal interest

Dense ground-cover planting will assist with long-term weed suppression and structural continuity.

## 1.6 Chichester Terrace – Invasive Control and Regeneration

With improving weather conditions, work resumed at Chichester Terrace, an exposed coastal site.

### **Bramble and *Clematis vitalba* Removal**

Over two days, extensive bramble and mature *Clematis vitalba* were cleared. Although native, *Clematis vitalba* becomes ecologically dominant when unmanaged, forming dense crowns and suppressing surrounding shrubs. Some previously planted shrubs had been smothered and died.

Dead material will be removed and regeneration gaps assessed during the growing season.

### **Natural Regeneration**

Numerous species are naturally self-seeding across the terrace, including *Echium pininana*, a biennial requiring areas of open soil for establishment.

Maintaining some exposed ground:

- Encourages ecological succession
- Supports pollinators
- Reduces reliance on replacement planting
- Enhances long-term resilience

As barely six months have elapsed since work commenced, much of which has occurred during winter dormancy, the visible results of regenerative management will become more apparent through spring and summer growth.