

## **Bohemia Walled Garden Association**

### **Updated Business Plan 2010 – 2013**

#### **Current Update 2013 -2016 (March AGM )**

**Status:** Unincorporated organisation

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#### **Introduction**

The Bohemia Walled Garden association (BWGA) was formed on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2008, with a constitution adopted on the 9<sup>th</sup> March 2009.

The BWGA was formed with the purpose of restoring, preserving and utilising the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Victorian walled garden set in Summerfields Wood, as a horticultural education centre for local individuals, schools and social groups. This walled garden is the only substantial part of the former Bohemia Farm which included a Georgian style mansion at the centre of the Brisco family 47 acre estate. During the 20<sup>th</sup> Century the house was used as a school, known as Summer Fields School. The house was demolished by the local council in 1972. It is envisaged that the BWGA would bring about full circle the horticultural and educational aspect of the site.

The BWGA site is situated to the east/north east of Bohemia Road, St. Leonard-on-Sea, East Sussex, behind the police station and law courts, in Summerfields Wood which is a Local Nature Reserve (LNR). The Bohemia walled garden site is owned by Hastings Borough Council (HBC) and the BWGA has a 25 year lease dated from April 2011.

#### **The Bohemia walled Garden Association (BWGA)**

The BWGA is currently an unincorporated organisation which is governed through the BWGA Management Committee. It is supported and run by a mixture of members, plot-holders, volunteers and interested members of the public.

Local individuals, school groups as well as social, community and corporate groups are encouraged to participate in the garden and will benefit from the knowledge and expertise of horticultural specialists and volunteers.

#### **Membership**

Currently, membership is free to all interested parties, individuals, schools, social, community and corporate groups. Plot-holders paying an agreed amount for allocated space in which to grow plants.

There is a supporter list for those who wish to be updated regarding events.

Participation may eventually be via paid-up membership only, then membership fees for each fiscal year commencing on the 1<sup>st</sup> January each year, would be agreed at each AGM which is held in March each year.

## **OBJECTIVES Revised 2016 and ongoing. (To be revised annually for AGM)**

The BWGA was formed with the purpose of restoring, preserving and utilising the 19<sup>th</sup> Century Victorian walled garden set in Summerfields Wood, as a horticultural education centre for local individuals, schools and social groups.

- To restore and put back into active use the Victorian walled garden within the nature conservation area of Summerfields Wood.
- to obtain, through fund-raising, enough monies to carry out repairs to the damaged area of the eastern boundary wall to restore the garden to its original state
- to make the entrance to the garden accessible to all
- to maintain and keep in good repair the structure of the walled garden and immediate surrounding area as the lease requires
- to maintain the interior of the garden including paths, buildings, demonstration areas and upkeep of communal areas as the lease requires
- to obtain funding for a the Waterless Toilet **(Installed 2014)**

### **To raise awareness of the site's historical, social and horticultural value, including the Bohemia House heritage area and Summerfields woods (LNR)**

- to open the garden for income generating community events, open days and cultural and artistic events
- to promote the garden at other local events raising awareness of the historical, social and horticultural value of the site
- to work in sympathy with the Summerfields Wood environment as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR).

### **HBC (Lease holder)**

- to inform HBC – estates department – of events, developments etc.
- to keep the park rangers informed of developments within the BWG
- to promote and encourage members and volunteers to participate in joint projects with the park rangers in Summerfields Wood

### **COMMUNITY** information, education, and cultural awareness

- to work with schools and other local community groups within the garden
- to provide activities/workshops (horticulture, natural and historical heritage)
- to encourage volunteers and plot-holders to share their horticultural knowledge
- to publicise the garden widely in the community
- to consider Health and Safety with in the garden (Up to date insurance and risk assessments **(reviewed annually)**)

### **ENVIRONMENTAL**

- to work in a sustainable manner that encourages recycling
- to develop ongoing water collection
- to encourage collection of food waste to produce compost. **Advised against this by HBC rat control officer, composting of other matter continues.**
- to develop use of renewable energy source **(Solar/wind powered toilet)**

## **Update Plan of Action from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 - March 2016 (AGM)**

### **FUNDING**

- Expand and complete Business Plan -**written 2010 -updated 2014 and March 2016**
- Applications for funding:

June 2009 HBC Small Grants – money for Heras Fencing - £500  
July 2009 BTCV Start up grant -for insurance £120  
July 2009 BTCV grant for tools -£350  
April 2010 The Grey Owl Society – money to buy materials for a lean to shelter - £200  
August 2010 East Sussex County Council – Grant for composting - £500  
September 2011 HBC Small Grants – Grant for a wooden shed - £497  
September 2011 BTCV Chestnut Fund -Grant for more gardening tools - £350  
November 2011 HBC Small Grants – to improve lower path with gravel - £492

November 2010 Lottery funding from the People's Millions' was applied for to restore the east wall of the garden. BWGA were runners up in a vote between two projects.

**2014 Awards for All grant for £10 000 towards a Eco Waterless toilet**  
**2014 Grant of £1000 from Sussex Gardens Trust towards a Marquee**  
**2014 Grant from Sainsbury Superstore Hastings £100**  
**2016 Heritage Lottery Funding Reapplication January 2016**

### **ADMINISTRATION**

- Obtain a full and detailed lease from HBC -**This commenced 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 for 25 years**
- Obtain planning for access route - **2016 HLF grant application includes a path that will improve access**
- **2015-2016 Charity status is being sought and this will mean that committee members will be called Trustees. BWGA will need to conform to Charity Commission (CC) rules and send them annual accounts and reports. If the BWGA gets the HLF grant then this will be necessary. There will be a CC constitution and objectives that fit with our current good practice and the objectives as below.**
- **2015 BWGA have submitted a nomination December 2015 to be included on the Hastings Local Heritage Asset List to be decided by HBC.**

### **PUBLICITY**

The BWGA was contacted by the BBC for inclusion in a local programme re the ' BIG SOCIETY ' David Cameron's idea about communities helping themselves. This was filmed at the garden but the garden were never informed of it being televised.

**2014-2016 BWGA has extended this to include the Hastings Online Times and the BWGA had a visit from Radio 4 'Gardener's Question time in 2015. The web site is being upgraded and redeveloped. Mail Chimp is now used for emails to keep members updated. An email and paper news letter will be available every 3 months from January 2016.**

## **GROUNDWORK**

- arrange work parties to clear undergrowth –**completed**
- Clear south east corner to enable erection of Heras fencing –**completed**
- Identify saplings to be retained– **completed**
- Clear and burn all waste–**completed**

### **2016 Ground work in and around the garden continues**

## **PLANNING**

- Expose original layout and reclaim old bricks etc. –**completed**
- Arrange a planning workshop to design ground plan – **completed**

**2016 Planning continues for the garden border planting and ongoing maintenance as needed year by year. An identified group of members are currently planning the borders.**

## **BOUNDARY**

- Obtain a quote to prune trees around perimeter – **completed**

**2016 the HLF application has included advice re any trees that may need felling with HBC. Any concerns re dangerous trees around the garden walls are reported to HBC and felled with permission.**

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS**

**March 2010 –FIRST AGM and there after each March**

**2016 March 12<sup>th</sup>**

## **BUILDING/WALL RESTORATION**

- Engage builder to construct access route.
- Plan building stages
- Obtain accurate building quotes –
- Engage 1<sup>st</sup>stage builder.  
**The People's Millions application was unsuccessful so unable to complete the above.**

**2016 HLF reapplication includes a specification for the restoration of the wall, path construction, interpretation boards. Quotes and a local builder has been identified. The outcome of the application is due April 2016.**

## **PLAN OF ACTION 2016 onwards (To be revised annually for AGM)**

1 The Committee and fund raising sub group explore ways of raising enough funds to carry out projects in objectives

**2016 the Committee and Subgroup continue to look at fund raising for projects and maintenance**

**HLF grant application includes wall build, path construction and installation of interpretation boards, Heritage activities. Result of application due April 2016**

2 To ensure income is secured annually from plot-holders and possibly members to maintain and keep in good repair both the structure of the walled garden and surrounding area as well as maintaining the interior of the garden as outlined in objectives.

**2016 The plot rents have been increased from £1 a square metre to £1 20 (AGM 2015). Donations from Book Fair, a school and the toddler group were banked in the BWGA savings account.**

**Donations are to be requested from organizations to provide specific items/projects.**

3 To increase the number of fund-raising events and to ensure donations are actively requested at all events and to increase the numbers of other horticultural, cultural and artistic events on offer during the year, in keeping with the ethos of the garden.

**2014 -2016 events and footfall and money raised has increased each year**

**2015 12 public events ....footfall of 1000 and £1845 was raised**

**A list of all events 2015 is available. The Financial accounts are reported at the AGM**

4 To encourage plot-holders and members alike, through the website and other social media, to become more active in achieving all the objectives as well as feeling part of the BWGA and benefiting from being part of this community.

**2016 Use of Mail Chimp and web site renewal. An email and paper news letter will be available every 3 months from January 2016.**

5 To engage new members of the community to use the garden.

**2014 -2016 There has been an increase in people and groups using the garden Treasure Tots , Mallydams RSPCA Wild Things project, The Pocket Park, HEDGE a home education group. A residential home for adults have a plot and an organization that helps people to join in community projects have introduced volunteers. A special school for young people with Emotional Behaviour Difficulties are coming to the garden and have requested a plot. We have a contact with the University (Active Students)**

6 To continue to open the garden most Sunday and Wednesday mornings (weather permitting) as well as on other events and community activities

**2014 -2016 the garden has been opened regularly.**

7 To encourage members and plot holders and interested volunteers in participating in on-going maintenance work within the garden, as well as becoming involved in joint projects in the wood environment. To plan and carry out maintenance days, actively encouraging new volunteers to participate.

**2015 a task to relay gravel was completed. Many members contribute to the garden and we continue to encourage all members and plot-holders to engage as they can.**

**8 To organise events, both in the garden and in the local community to enable plot-holders and members to socialise and get to know each other as well as raising funds  
2014 and 2015 outreach projects were arranged and there is now an annual Christmas social event. Many members help with and attend the public open days.**

**9 Education and Heritage events. Art and Cultural events  
2014-2016**

**Schools and families have used the garden for outdoor learning activities and fun activities e.g. Forest school and Story telling. Organizations are bringing 'harder to reach' families to the garden. The National Heritage open Day has been run each year with talks on the garden and area (Bohemia estate etc.) also wildlife subjects. The HLF grant if successful will fund more heritage subjects that includes Natural Heritage the flora and wild-life. Also a horticultural course can be funded. Art and culture events have been run in the last 3 years.**

**10 To inform the lease holder and Rangers of HBC of relevant changes and actions at the garden and consult them re the grant application.  
2014-2016 this has been done.**

## **FINANCES**

To use the income from plot-holders to ensure the day to day running costs of the operation of the garden. This includes maintenance of the garden, insurance costs, hire of hall for AGM, stationary and expenses incurred by committee members in day to day running of the garden.

BWGA have an account for day to day expenses. Monies raised from fund-raising events (minus expenses) are transferred into a savings account to be used for projects.

**2014 -2016 this has been done and accounts overseen and reported at the AGM**

## **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

The walled garden is now fully up and running, with all plots currently taken and communal areas being tended by some members and some plot-holders. Maintenance of the walled garden is also carried out by members and plot holders on a regular basis. This is an area that we would like to expand on, encouraging more people to volunteer on a regular basis to tend to maintenance of communal areas and access paths.

The future development of the walled garden is building on what has already been achieved since 2009.

**Funding from the HLF if successful will restore the wall, increase accessibility by the path construction and better information by installation of interpretation boards. Heritage activities will mean more people in the community engage with heritage and enjoy the lovely garden for years to come.**

**If this funding is not available further funding possibilities will be considered and followed up.**

**We the BWGA will continue to look after this special garden for the community to enjoy for now and in the future.**

