

Bohemia Walled Garden Association

Action Plan for 2021/22

Each year the Bohemia Walled Garden Association (BWGA) plan activities for the coming year with references to the Charity's aims. These are aspirations and we work hard to achieve them but sometimes circumstance beyond our control mean that they are not completed. This is the case more than ever at the moment.

The BWGA Charity Commission objects:

(1) To promote for the public the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment.

(2) To advance the education of the public in the conservation, protection and improvement of the physical and natural environment.

(3) The provision of facilities for recreation and other leisure-time occupation in the interests of social welfare for the public at large with the object of improving their conditions of life.

Overall Aim:

To restore and put back into active use the Victorian walled garden within the nature conservation area of Summerfields Wood.

We will continue to try and do this through the aims below:

1. To provide plots to rent out for the growing of vegetables and fruits.

Plots will continue to be available, although there is a waiting list.

Plot fees will be collected in January and February, and we are planning to increase the price for next year to £1.50 per square metre (from £1.20).

We maintain a waiting list which is closed when it reaches 20 people.

2. To maintain and keep the garden within the walls in good repair, safe and secure.

We will continue to maintain the garden through regular volunteering and Community Task Days. Plot inspections and health and safety reviews will also continue. We will keep in regular contact with Hastings Borough Council and raise any issues regarding the garden structures with them as needed. We also support their routine site inspections.

3. To develop the garden as a beautiful Covid-safe outdoor space for BWGA activities, collaborations with other community organisations and to hire out for appropriate activities

Use of the garden for activities and events has been severely restricted over the past 18 months, but we hope to continue and expand this area in the coming year. The garden has a lot of potential especially in a time when good outdoor spaces are becoming much more important to the whole community.

BWGA has a responsibility to serve the community in that way. After consulting garden members, we are now in the process of collecting quotes for a rain and sun shelter on the east side of the wall, which would greatly improve how the garden can be used by the wider community for learning and wellbeing year round. It could provide a space not just for BWGA activity, but also for more collaboration and partnership with other organisations.

Any external hires of garden or specific areas will be assessed so that they are in keeping with the aims and the character of the garden and with the wellbeing of all its users. They will also of course be fully risk assessed and insured.

Realising these ideas will depend on whether we can secure funding and on how much support the wider garden community can provide with all the work involved in such a project. The current committee will not be able to carry this, and recruiting more administrative type help is going to be a major focus for the coming months.

4. Raising awareness of the site's historical, social and horticultural value, including the Bohemia Estate heritage area and Summerfields Wood (LNR).

Promotion continues through the booklet (HLF funded), website and social media. Events at the garden will be arranged again now, and we want to do more partnership work with other organisations, similar to the collaboration with the Sanctuary Festival and Hastings Museum in September 2021.

5. Working with the community

BWGA will continue to welcome various groups and volunteers to the garden. We also hope to continue the collaboration with Greener Futures, which means new groups of people are able to get involved and use the garden for learning and wellbeing.

We will maintain access to BWGA trustees and committee via email account and the mailbox at HVA.

We will continue to try and actively recruit more trustees and volunteers for the committee work and the tasks that are essential to running BWGA.

6. Education

We will continue to engage with groups and schools to ensure that the educational and community plots are well used.

We will further develop the Forage Garden in the northeast corner of the garden and encourage a regular group of volunteers to organise volunteering and skill share sessions.

We are exploring the possibilities of re-designing the website to simplify it and include more learning possibilities. This will depend on support with the work and on funding being available.

The proposed new shelter will also be a fantastic space for all kinds of workshops/talks as well as providing a sheltered facility for educational activities.

These plans depend on finding more support for these tasks.

7. Health and Safety

The BWGA insurance is renewed each July.

The BWGA committee write and review risk assessments for activities at the garden and carry out regular plot and health and safety reviews to ensure that the environment remains safe. These now include any covid related rules and considerations as relevant at the time.

8. To consider environmental issues

We want to expand water harvesting through the new shelter with a sloped roof.

We continue to compost and recycle wherever possible, and avoid single use plastics at all our events.

We are maintaining the solar/wind powered Waterless Toilet.

We will be asking all plot-holders and volunteers not to use pesticide, and to talk to the committee first if there was ever a situation where it might be considered.

9. Lease requirements

BWGA continue to inform HBC as leaseholder of all relevant changes.

We promote and encourage members to participate in joint projects with the HBC Rangers in Summerfields Wood through the use of social media notifications and newsletters.

10. Charity Commission obligations

The charity trustees meet and record decisions, keep accurate and up to date accounts that are inspected annually, report to the Charity Commission as required annually, report to the BWGA members at the annual AGM.

Approved by trustees Justine Munro, Sue Jirbandey, Daniela Othieno. Nigel Sinden

Date: 20/09/2021