

Bohemia Walled Garden Association

Management Committee Report 2013

Bohemia Walled Garden Association
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT
For the year ended 31st December 2013.

The Management Committee submit their annual report and financial statement for the Bohemia Walled Garden Association (BWGA) for the year ended 31st December 2013

Background

The Bohemia Walled Garden Association was formed in 2009 and became an unincorporated organisation in order to bring the Victorian Walled Garden at Summerfields back into active use for horticulture and associated cultural and educational activities. The garden is owned by Hastings Borough Council (HBC) and is located within the Summerfields Woods Local Nature Reserve (LNR) but is not part of the LNR. The project is supported by the Friends of Summerfields Woods (FOSW) Local Nature Reserve. The seven key objectives of the BWGA remain unchanged since the BWGA formation. These are:

- a) To restore and put back into active use the Victorian walled garden within the nature conservation area of Summerfields Wood.
- b) To raise awareness of the site's historical, social, and horticultural value.
- c) To work in sympathy with the Summerfields Wood environment as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR).
- d) To encourage education, training and cultural awareness,
- e) To work in a sustainable manner that encourages recycling, where appropriate.
- f) To demonstrate and offer opportunities for participation in the horticultural craft of growing fruit and vegetables.

Structure, Governance and Management

The Bohemia Walled Garden Association has a Management Committee governed by the constitution adopted on 9th March 2009. Day-to-day management of the Association is vested in the members of the Management Committee, who must be elected and co-opted under the terms of the constitution. The Management Committee work as a team.

Management Committee responsibilities

The members of the Management Committee are responsible for ensuring that the BWGA has an appropriate system of financial controls. They are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the Association, for safeguarding the assets of the Association, and for taking reasonable steps to detect and prevent any financial irregularities. They are also responsible for the health and safety of volunteers working in the garden, for the health and safety of visitors to the garden, and for ensuring that the Association complies with relevant statutory legislation. The Committee are responsible for developing projects

and events for the benefit of members and the wider community whilst ensuring that the current objectives of the BWGA are developed.

Members of the committee during 2013

Secretary	Sue Thomson
Treasurer	Christine M'Baye
Chair	Bob Hart
Minute Sec	Sally Hick
	Mary Dawson

Achievements during 2013.

All 2012 plot users were invited to renew their plot use for 2013. All plots were being used during the growing season, with 39 plot-holders registered in May 2013." All available plots are in use and a waiting list is available. The plot fee, agreed at the 2013 AGM, for the use of a plot at the Walled Garden during 2014 remains at £1 sq metre.

We continued to encourage the participation of St. Paul's & St. Mary's primary schools within the garden without any charge and during the year use was made of the garden for different activities.

There was entertainment and music in the garden when it was opened on a Sunday for Heritage Open Days in September and on that day the Ice House at Horntye was also opened. The Heritage Open Day in September was the weekend for the launch of the "Wall Fund" tasked with providing funds to assist with the reinstatement of the missing east wall, the sub committee responsible has developed strategies for future years.

Other events in the garden included a "Mini Tray Garden" "Private Concert" "Wild Gardens" organised by Kim Richards of the Sussex Wildlife Trust in association with the Royal Horticultural Society where one of the attractions was planting bulbs. Towards the end of the year a "Pumpkin" event with carving pumpkins for adults and children as well as recipes was well attended on an inclement day. However rain caused the cancellation of an event in June. We are pleased that the HBC Rangers supply and help with a marquee that is essential on wet days and acquisition of some form of temporary shelter is under consideration by the committee.

In addition to activities in the garden members attended and promoted craft fayres in the Spring of 2013 and also in December the Curiosity Christmas Bazaar at the Print Works at Claremont where crafts and items were sold raising funds for the BWGA. At the Print Works event the BWGA provided a Mother Christmas in the basement grotto. Another event away from the garden was by Paul Rummery who organised the annual Bohemia Book Fayre that also allowed a generous donation of over £380 to the funds for the garden. During the year we were contacted by the Sainsbury supermarket who offered support and assistance and we thank them for a donation of £100 as well as the opportunity to promote the garden at the store entrance. Money raised at events during the year has been set aside in the wall restoration fund where it is protected from general expenditure.

Planning permission has been granted by HBC Planners for a toilet inside the garden and now funding is being sought in order to purchase and install a KL2 waterless toilet.

There needs to be special mention of the quality of the posters that were produced by Kris Alexander to promote events during the year as well as newsletters and the social network presence on Facebook & Twitter. In order to bring the garden to the attention of more people a "Garden Use Agreement has been developed so that other people and organisations are able to use the garden for their events. Information about the garden is brought to the attention of members by the distribution by email of a newsletter produced by 3 of our members Sue Thomson, Robin Pridy & Kris Alexander.

The bees continue to use a space in the corner of the garden, and the beekeepers report that they are pleased with the site and that the bees are thriving.

Plans to hold work days periodically during the year were changed to happen during the winter months when members were thought to be less busy tending their crops and Saturday 25th January 2014 has been set aside for BWGA members to work in partnership with Friends of Summerfields on essential tree clearance tasks affecting the Walled Garden.

Plans for 2014

Further work is required on past proposals and forms part of plans for 2014

- To develop a team of members to obtain grant funding to repair the fallen wall.
- To develop a team of members to obtain grant funding for horticulture & health promotion issues.
- To install a KL2 Waterless toilet inside the garden.
- Implement the revised BWGA Business Plan that takes into account the developing model of use that has been achieved over the last years and ideas submitted in a current online consultation document.
- Major Projects - Rebuilding end wall, waterless toilet, accessibility to garden.
- Maintenance - Proposals to perform maintenance days during the winter months are being developed and the first work day for 2014 is to be on Saturday 25th January 2014.
- Education / Community - Continue working with schools, developing links with other educational groups, encouraging other community groups to volunteer in the garden.
- Events - Run educational workshops eg Composting, Growing Herbs, wildlife gardening, income generating community events and open days, cultural and artistic events in line with the garden ethos.

The BWGA Management Committee would like to thank all BWGA members, volunteers and partners for their support during 2013.

This report was approved by the Management Committee on 31 December 2013

and signed on its behalf by:

Chair: Bob Hart (Chair)

Secretary: Susan Thomson (Secretary)

Christine Mbaye (Treasurer)