

Bohemia Walled Garden Association

Updated Business Plan 2013

Status: Unincorporated organisation

Contact: BWGA Secretary

Mrs. Susan Thomson

bohemiawga@yahoo.co.uk

Introduction

The BWGA was formed on 9th July 2008, with a constitution adopted on the 9th March 2009.

The BWGA was formed with the sole purpose of restoring, preserving and utilising the 19th Century walled garden set in Summerfield Wood, as a horticultural education centre for local individuals, schools and social groups. This walled garden is the only part of the former Bohemia Farm which included a Georgian style mansion at the centre of a 47 acre estate. During the 20th 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's on Sea, East Sussex, behind the police station and law courts, in Summerfields Wood. The BWG Site is owned by Hastings Borough Council and the BWGA has a 25 year lease.

Project

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

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

Participation may eventually be via paid-up membership only, catering for all groups – individuals, schools, social, community and corporate members, with all groups being represented by one collective vote through an elected registered member.

Currently, membership is free to all interested parties, with plot holders paying an agreed amount for allocated space in which to grow plants.

Membership fees for each fiscal year commencing on the 1st January each year, will be agreed at each AGM which is held in March each year.

Update on plan of action from 1st January 2010

Funding

- expand and complete business plan - **Achieved**
- continue applications for funding

HBC Small Grants – June 2009 – money for Heras Fencing - £500

The Grey Owl Society – April 2010 – money to buy materials for lean to shelter - £500

East Sussex County Council – August 2010 – Grant for composting - £500

HBC Small Grants – September 2011 - Grant for a wooden shed - £497

BTCV Chestnut Fund – September 2011 – Grant for more gardening tools - £350

HBC Small Grants – November 2011 – Grant to improve lower path with gravel - £492

Lottery funding applied for in 2010 - to restore the end wall of the garden. Unfortunately we were runners up in a vote between two projects.

a) Administration

- Obtain a full and detailed lease from HBC - This commenced 1st April 2011.
- Obtain planning for access route
- Contact BBC.SE for inclusion in local programmes – We were approached by BBC to participate in a series about the Big Society, Cameron's idea about communities helping themselves. It was filmed in the garden but to date has not been televised.

b) Groundwork

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

c) Planning

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

d) Boundary

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

March 2010 – Hold AGM – **Achieved**

e) Building

- Engage builder to construct access route.
- Plan building stages
- Obtain accurate building quotes – **Achieved**
- Engage 1st stage builder.

Revised Objectives

The BWGA was formed with the sole purpose of restoring, preserving and utilising the 19th Century walled garden set in Summerfield Wood, as a horticultural education centre for local individuals, schools and social groups

1. 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
 - to maintain the interior of the garden including paths, buildings, demonstration areas and upkeep of communal areas
 - to install an accessible, waterless toilet within the walled garden
2. To raise awareness of the site's historical, social and horticultural value, including the Bohemia House heritage area
 - 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
3. To work in sympathy with the Summerfields Wood environment as a Local Nature Reserve (LNR).
 - 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
4. To encourage education, training and cultural awareness.
 - to work with schools and other local community groups within the garden
 - to provide educational workshops relating to horticulture
 - to encourage volunteers to work in the garden
5. To work in a sustainable manner that encourages recycling, where appropriate.
 - to develop ongoing water collection
 - to encourage collection of food waste to produce compost
 - to develop use of renewable energy sources
6. To demonstrate and offer opportunities for participation in the horticultural craft of growing fruit and vegetables
 - to encourage members and volunteers to demonstrate and share their expertise and/or offer workshops to small groups of interested people.

Plan of Action

To form a fund-raising sub- committee to explore ways of raising enough funds to carry out projects in objective 1.

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 objective 1.

To increase the number of fund-raising events and to ensure donations are actively requested at all fund-raising events to put towards the Save the Wall fund.

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 benefitting from being part of this community.

To continue to open the garden for a minimum of two open days a year, to include the Heritage Open Day, 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.

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.

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 for the "Save the Wall" project.

Finances

To use the income from plot holders and possibly members 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.

Monies raised from fund-raising events (minus costs) to be transferred into a savings account to be used for the fund raising projects in objective 1.

Grants to be applied for to assist in the provision of the waterless toilet as well as accessibility at entrance of garden and the Save the Wall Project.

At a later date funding will be sought to provide workshops and support and training for volunteers and others in the community.

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 – in particular we will be running a campaign to Save the Wall/Heritage garden, as well as installing a waterless toilet and making the entrance to the garden accessible.

We are keen to encourage as many members/plot holders as possible to become more involved in terms of fund-raising, sharing horticultural skills, recycling and participating in events at the garden as well as attending other events in the community to publicize the garden.

We are also keen to invite and encourage more groups of local people from within the community to volunteer take part in our activities including school children, young people and adults.

In time we would like to provide workshops and support and training to volunteers and others in the community and will seek funding to support us in our delivery.

Lastly, we will promote the use of the garden for private events, in keeping with the ethos of the garden, for an agreed donation.

Revised 2013

Adopted by Committee with Update of Business Plan ACTION PLAN 2015

For AGM 2015 date 30th May 2015

Previously presented at AGM 2014