

TRUSTEE INFORMATION PACK



Sydenham Garden
A growing community



WELCOME.

Thank you for your interest in joining Sydenham Garden as a Trustee.

This is an exciting time to join our organisation as we continue to embed our Strategic Plan to:

- develop Sydenham Garden services to reach a larger cohort of co-workers (the people accessing our services).
- continuously improve the effectiveness and impact of Sydenham Garden activities.
- solidify and diversify Sydenham Garden's funding sources.
- increase Sydenham Garden's diversity at all levels.



As a Trustee, you will be responsible for helping our organisation deliver against our strategy and business objectives, providing advice and guidance as a critical friend.

You will join a team where your contribution will be valued. We provide an induction and there will be opportunities to visit our projects to see first-hand the work we do alongside our co-workers (the name we give to our primary beneficiaries).

The board enjoys a close working relationship with the staff team and we believe that serving as a Trustee at Sydenham Garden is both a rewarding and enjoyable role.

You can read our full **[2024-2027 Strategic Plan](#)** **here**

WHAT WE DO.

Sydenham Garden is a unique wellbeing centre utilising its gardens, nature reserve and activity rooms to help people in their recovery from mental and physical ill-health in Lewisham.

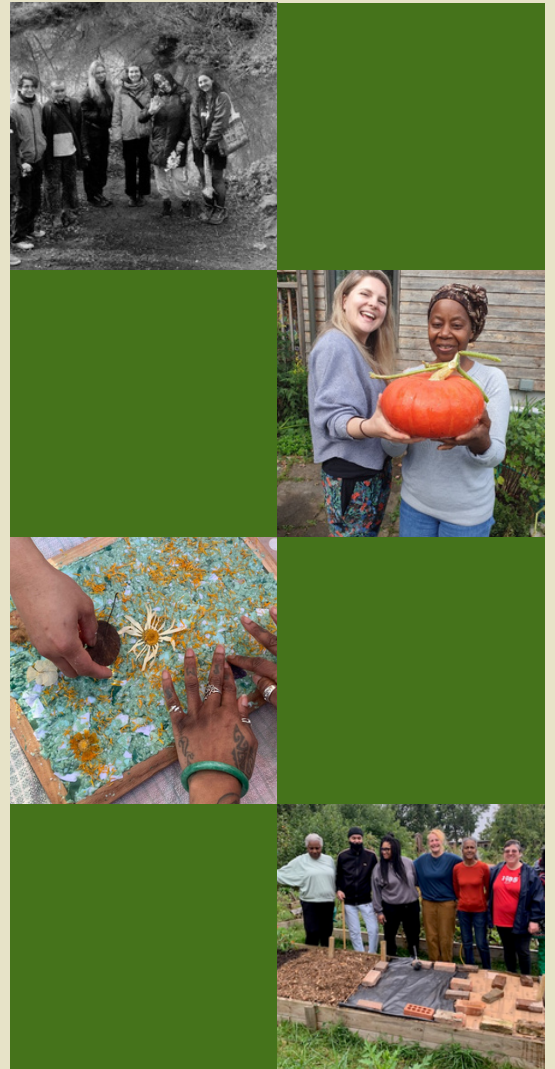
We do this through providing co-workers (the people accessing our services) an opportunity to take part in one of our five main projects, along with many supplementary activities and clubs.

Four of these projects are focused on Adult Mental Health and include gardening, art & craft, cooking and opportunities to achieve recognised qualifications.

The fifth project is focused on Dementia and includes all the same elements but underpins them with Cognitive Stimulation Therapy (CST).

We promote inclusion and reduce prejudice by bringing together co-workers with different degrees of mental and physical ill health, volunteers and members of the local community to work together.

Sydenham Garden enables people to improve their quality of life, social interaction and physical and mental health in a supportive community environment.



Find out more about the work we do [on our website](#) and in our latest [Annual Impact Report](#).

CHARITABLE STATUS & FINANCES.

We have been a Charity since 2004, and we are registered with the Charity Commission (Charity No: 1108100).

In our last published financial year (2024-25) our total income for the year was £429,703 (compared to £343,762 in 2023), and total expenditure was £445,788 (compared to £484,332 in 2023); we will see an increase income generated the year just ended and intend to continue efforts to diversify our income base over the next two years.

Our sources of income to date have been grant and trust funding, individual donations, community fundraising, as well as trading income from rental and corporate hire as well as our Flower farm.

Our current list of grant funders includes City Bridge, Mercers' Company, National Lottery as well as commissioning funding from South London and Maudsley (SLaM) NHS Foundation Trust and Lewisham Council.



Our 2023-24 Financial Statements can be [viewed here.](#)

TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES.

Our trustees have a responsibility to support Sydenham Garden to deliver our charitable objectives. They do this by:

governing and guiding the policy and direction of the organisation, and

- supporting and advising the leadership of Sydenham Garden

The general responsibility of a trustees are:

- to help shape the organisation's mission, goals, policies, and direction
- to manage the organisation in accordance with its constitution and legal requirements
- to approve the organisation's annual budget and quarterly management account
- to attend Sydenham Garden activities and promote Sydenham Garden to the outside world
- to lead or support subcommittees in partnership with the Director and/or Chair
- to oversee appointment of senior staff and participate in recruitment
- to approve, monitor and support implementation of Sydenham Garden policies
- to open doors or identify opportunities for the organisation
- to maintain confidentiality of the organisation's business
- to disclose any possible conflicts of interest

As the Board of Trustees are responsible and liable for the governance and functioning of Sydenham Garden, Trustees are legally accountable to a variety of stakeholders including the Charity Commission, Companies House, the Information Commissioner as well as staff, volunteers, co-workers and the local community.

We recommend applicants visit **NVCO's Code of Good Governance**, which provides a good overview of general Trustee responsibilities.

You can read more about our current Trustee Board **here**.

WHO WE ARE LOOKING FOR.

To help us turn our strategy into reality we are looking for **three new volunteer trustees** who have specific experience or expertise in one or more of the following areas:

Fundraising and Income Generation: You will have professional or voluntary experience of driving one or more of the following: developing individual giving, community fundraising, grant funding, commissioning, ethical sponsorship and commercial trade.

We are looking for **two trustees** in this area, with one candidate taking the lead of chairing our fundraising sub-committee.

Equity, Diversity & Inclusion: You will have professional or voluntary experience of driving or organisational work around Antiracism, Equity, Justice, Diversity and Inclusion/Belonging.

We are looking for **one trustee** in this area, to sit as lead trustee for EDI on the Board.

Previous experience as a Trustee is **not required**, nor is senior leadership or senior management experience

WHO WE ARE LOOKING FOR.

As a trustee you will be expected to bring:

- Passion and enthusiasm about the work and direction of Sydenham Garden
- Commitment to stay informed and engaged in the work of the organisation
- Commitment to carry out the legal duties of a Board Member
- Organisational skills to plan for Board meetings, reading reports ahead of meetings and preparing questions
- Your personal and professional experience, knowledge and skills into board discussions
- A willingness for constructive challenge and empathy to multiple points of view
- willingness to act as a champion for the organisation
- The ability to treat sensitive information confidentially
- A commitment to anti-oppressive practice by challenging social injustice, bias and discrimination based on race, sex, gender, sexuality and disability.
- Integrity, impartiality, inclusivity, fairness and respect for confidentiality
- Good big picture thinking ("Strategic vision")
- Good interpersonal skills and the ability to work effectively as a member of a team

Our meetings are a mix of online and in person and our venues are fully accessible.

Specific adjustments can also be made for a trustee's individual needs.

YOUR TIME COMMITMENT.

Trustees are appointed for a term of three years but are eligible for re-appointment for a further two terms (maximum of 9 years in total)

After an initial induction to meet staff & volunteers and get to know the gardens, trustees attend:

- 5 hybrid Board meetings a year, held in the evenings taking approximately two hours, plus reading Board papers in advance.
- 1 in-person Board away day a year, held during the working week or on a Saturday according to Board availability
- Attending or chairing hybrid sub-committee meetings which meets at 6 times a year taking approximately two hours plus reading committee papers in advance.
- Occasional advice and support to staff, by telephone or in person

It is expected that this will require a commitment of no more than a day per month.

Sydenham Garden hosts a range of events throughout the year. We would always welcome trustees to attend these although they would not be mandatory.

The role of trustee is voluntary, but all reasonable expenses will be paid to attend trustee commitments.

OUR COMMITMENT TO ADDRESSING SOCIAL INEQUALITY.

At Sydenham Garden we value diversity and believe that a diverse mix of voices will help Sydenham Garden achieve its best work.

We expect our Board to directly tackle social injustices and to reflect the communities in which we live and work and are committed to taking action to address this.

We particularly welcome applications if you are:

- a resident of the London Boroughs of Lewisham, Bromley, Croydon or Southwark
- from a Black, Asian or minoritised ethnicity
- Trans
- a person with lived experience of mental illness or Disability.

We will follow up all applications with an equality monitoring questionnaire to complete. This will include the option to self-identify as being in a group currently under-represented on our Board.

We use this information to check we are reaching candidates from all backgrounds for this role and ensure we increase opportunities for qualified under-represented candidates.

We take data protection seriously and will keep information you provide us confidential, and will delete all application and monitoring information in its entirety once we have filled all places.

Sydenham Garden is committed to dismantling barriers for people facing exclusion from Trustee opportunities.

If you would like to discuss this in relation to either your participation in the recruitment process or in the role of Trustee, please contact us directly.

OUR COMMITMENT TO BEST PRACTICE.

Lewisham Safer Recruitment

Sydenham Garden is committed the safeguarding of all children, young people and adults and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Sydenham Garden follows Lewisham Safeguarding Board Safer Recruitment practices to best protect the people we work with.

All trustees are subject to regulatory checks including a basic DBS check.

QUESTIONS?

If having a informal chat with a current trustee would be helpful to understanding the role and it's commitment (especially if this will be your first trustee role), please email lowell@sydenhamgarden.org.uk to arrange a call.



HOW TO APPLY

Using Artificial Intelligence for your application

We welcome use of AI tools for word counting, spell-checking, and proofreading only.

Please do not use AI to generate answers or create content from scratch. We want to hear your authentic voice, experiences, and perspectives.

Supporting statements that appear to contain AI-generated content may be rejected.

If you have any questions about appropriate AI use, please contact us before submitting your application.

Submitting your application

Please email lowell@sydenhamgarden.org.uk (email subject: Trustee application) with:

- a brief CV outlining your key achievements in previous and current roles, including voluntary experience. On your CV please include contact details of two referees, including your most recent employer.
- a short supporting statement in your email, explaining why you would like to be a trustee for Sydenham Garden and your relevant skills and experience. This should be no more than 500 words.

We can also accept applications via video - if you would prefer to apply in this way, please e-mail us or call 020 82911650 for more details.

Shortlisted candidates will be invited to an interview with a panel of Trustees and our Interim Director.

Deadline for applications: 21 October at 10.00am

Dates for interview: tbc (evenings)

We intend to appoint our new trustees in October to allow time for onboarding ahead of our **11 November Board meeting**