

**Sydenham Garden**  
Trustees' Annual Report  
and  
Financial Statements  
For the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

## **SYDENHAM GARDEN: TRUSTEES' ANNUAL REPORT & FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

The Trustees present their report for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

This report has been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice Accounting and Reporting for Charities SORP FRS102 and in accordance with the special provisions of Part 13 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small entities. It includes the directors' report as required by company law.

### **TRUSTEES AND DIRECTORS**

The directors of the charitable company are its Trustees for the purposes of charity law. Throughout these statements the reference to either Directors or Trustees is a reference to both.

The following Directors have served either for the whole or part of the time since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023:

	<b>Position held / relevant dates</b>
Kehinde Adeogun	Appointed as Trustee 05/08/20, Vice Chair since 02/12/2022, re-elected 23/11/2022
Julia Brandreth	Appointed as Trustee 04/04/19, Chair since 13/06/19, re-elected as Trustee and Chair 22/11/2023
Frances Bristow	Appointed as Trustee 12/04/18, Vice Chair since 05/12/19, retirement as trustee and Vice Chair 22/11/2023
Sir Stephen Michael Bullock	Appointed as Trustee 06/12/18, re-elected 23/11/22
Julien Gordon	Appointed as Trustee 05/08/20, re-elected 23/11/22
Arthur Ngoka	Appointed as Trustee 29/08/17, re-elected 07/11/20, former Treasurer
Natasha Victoria Ratter	Appointed as Trustee 07/11/22, elected as Trustee 23/11/22, elected as Vice Chair 31/01/24
Laura Elizabeth Reynolds	Appointed as Trustee 07/11/22, elected 23/11/22, appointed as Vice Chair 09/03/2023
Laura Saksena	Appointed as Trustee 01/08/23, elected 22/11/23
Jon Sherman	Appointed as Trustee 05/09/19 and Treasurer since 10/12/19, re-elected 13/11/2021
Anne Sykes	Appointed as Trustee 05/07/18, re-elected 22/11/2023
Graeme Thomson	Appointed as Trustee 25/08/17, Vice Chair since 06/12/18, Company Secretary since 07/12/18, re-elected as Vice Chair 22/11/23

**Summary details about the Trustees are set out on the Sydenham Garden website.**

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## GOVERNANCE

### Governing Document:

Sydenham Garden is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is established under a Memorandum of Association and governed by its Articles of Association.

### Trustee Recruitment and Appointment:

Under the Articles of Association, the Board of Trustees consists of at least six and not more than thirteen individuals. One third (or the number nearest) of the Trustees, excepting those being elected or retiring, must offer themselves for re-election at each AGM, with those longest in office retiring first and the choice between any of equal service being made by drawing lots.

At the AGM in November 2023 Fran Bristow stepped down as a Trustee after five and a half years' service. Fran used her NHS and strategy experience to make a big contribution during her time as trustee. Fran will always be welcome at our sites.

One new trustee was appointed during the year. Laura Saksena brings experience in dementia and mental health settings at a strategic level. Laura was also appointed the Trustee Board Safeguarding Lead during the year.

### Trustee Benefit:

Trustees of the Charity do not receive any benefits from their position. Trustees are entitled to reclaim travel and other reasonable expenses incurred in their duties. No Trustees made a claim in the 2023/24 period (22/23: nil). The charity pays for trustee indemnity insurance.

### Trustee Induction and on-going training:

All Trustees are provided with a detailed role description and given informal guidance and support regarding their role from the Chair and Vice Chairs of Trustees. All new Trustees receive a copy of the NCVO Good Trustee Guide. Trustees are encouraged to attend training to help them in their roles.

### Trustees' Responsibilities:

The Trustees are responsible for the strategic direction of the Charity, setting its aims and monitoring progress towards these. Day to day management is delegated to the Director.

### Trustees' Meetings:

The Board of Trustees have met seven times during the year. The Officers sub-group met a similar number of times during the year.

### Trustee Sub-Committees:

During the financial year, two of the three Trustee Sub-Committees met periodically. These Committees are Finance and Governance (Chair: Jon Sherman) and Services and People (Chair: Anne Sykes). The Fundraising Sub-committee held its first meeting in May 2024 (Chair: Natasha Ratter)

## OBJECTIVES

### Objects:

The objects of the Charity as set out in our governing document are:

*To promote the physical and mental health of the residents of the Boroughs of Lewisham, Bromley and other South London Boroughs, in particular by providing:*

*(a) a community garden where horticulture is used for therapy and rehabilitation;*

*(b) the protection and preservation of the environment for the benefit of the public by the conservation or promotion of biological diversity through:*

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## MANAGEMENT, STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

### Staff:

- Rebecca Kelly resigned from her post on 23 August 2023. Instead of replacing the post, we have contracted a freelance fundraiser.
- Jermaine Bennett resigned from his post on 7 December 2023 and was replaced by Ollie Moss who started on 20 May 2024.
- Rosie Hollands' post was regraded to a Project Lead level from 1 April 2023.
- Natalie White was appointed African and Caribbean Project Worker on 15 January 2024.
- Charlene Henderson was appointed as Community Growing Project Facilitator on 15 March 2024.
- Penny Jones and Kenton Brown were employed as sessional workers during the year.

Other staff whose employment continued in 2023-24 are: Beth Jaichand, Director; Vani Niranjana, Finance Manager; David Lloyd, Growing Lives Project Coordinator; Steve Prowse, Business and Premises Manager; Charlotte Dove, Garden Project Lead; Joanna Vallis, Art & Craft Project Lead; Rachael Tyndall, Outreach and Development Worker; Sekha Hall, Environment Education and Biodiversity Officer; Inma Anido, Booking Host; and Vinay Thakrar, Booking Host.

The Trustees acknowledge and are very grateful for the enormous contribution and professionalism of the staff, past and present, to the work of the Charity. The Trustees would particularly like to acknowledge the contribution of Jermaine Bennett to Sydenham Garden during his seven years of service.

### Volunteers:

Our volunteers are crucial to Sydenham Garden's operations; the Trustees and staff record their gratitude for their time and effort. We had 71 people volunteering regularly for the Charity in 2023-2024, contributing on average 3 hours per week. This results in over 10,000 volunteer hours over the year.

### ATTENDANCE STATISTICS (GROUPED):

The table below shows the number of referrals and number of co-workers attending at least one session during the year, with data for previous years shown for comparison. The diversity data for our co-workers during the year is also presented. Data for 2020 – 2021 is not available as a result of Covid interrupting normal services.

	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	
<b>Number of Referrals</b>	277	213	258	318	441	313	421	
<b>Number of people attending at least one session</b>	336	238	180	228	378	354	349	
<b>Co-worker ethnicity</b>	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	<b>Lewisham 2021 Census</b>

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Co-worker Religion	2023-24	2022-23	2021-22	2019-20	2018-19	2017-18	2016-17	Lewisham 2021 census
Buddhist	0%	3%	2%	1%	1%	3%	1%	1%
Christian	25%	29%	36%	44%	47%	61%	62%	44%
Hindu	1%	1%	0%	0%	3%	0%	2%	2%
Jewish	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0.3%
Muslim	1%	3%	2%	1%	4%	4%	1%	7%
No Religion	17%	23%	17%	35%	30%	18%	21%	37%
Sikh	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0.2%
Other	11%	4%	10%	7%	4%	3%	3%	1%
Preferred not to say	30%	26%	13%	9%	9%	9%	8%	
Not indicated	14%	10%	19%	2%	2%	2%	1%	8%

The trustees are committed to Sydenham Garden becoming an organisation that reflects the diversity and ethnicity of the community around them.

### ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

During the year, Sydenham Garden has run the following weekly sessions:

Adult Mental Health:

- Garden groups x 3
- Art & Craft groups x 3
- African Caribbean group x 1
- Growing Lives groups x 6
- m.u.d (Young Person Project) x 2
- Practical Organic Gardening (leading to an accredited qualification) x 2

Dementia:

- Sow & Grow groups x 2
- Sow & Grow Families group x 1

School sessions:

- Brent Knoll specialist school sessions x 4
- Greenvale specialist school sessions x 2

Clubs:

- Wild Walks Club – a walking group
- Wildlife Club – a club to enjoy and learn about wildlife
- Activities Club – a club to enjoy a variety of textiles activities
- Gardening Club – a club to enjoy gardening activities

Additional activities:

- Trinity Laban dance for wellbeing
- Opening Wildlife Club, Activities Club and initiating Gardening Club to drop-in sessions as part of Lewisham Warm Welcomes from Dec-Mar.

Adult Mental Health groups are run for people recovering from ill-health in Lewisham and the surrounding boroughs. People were referred to us through Lewisham Wellbeing Hub, by secondary mental health services, or via primary care services from other boroughs. All groups have social, therapeutic, creative and training based activities at their core.

Sow & Grow groups are for people in the early stages of Dementia and the Families group is for people in the early stages of Dementia and their carers. People were referred to these projects by the Lewisham Dementia Support Hub. Groups also have social, therapeutic and creative activities at their core, and

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2023). The total income for the year was £429,703 (compared to £343,762 in 2023), and total expenses were £445,788 (compared to £484,332 in 2023). Despite this, the charity is continuing to make progress in delivering its services.

### **Reserve Policy**

The Trustees continued with a policy of maintaining an unrestricted reserve of approximately six months of operating costs (approximately £241k in the 24/25 financial year), which they consider remains appropriate given the challenges and uncertainties facing the charity. The total reserves as of year-end were £228,383 which is less than six months of the operating cost. The charity is expected to achieve the target reserve through the new fundraising strategy to bring more multiyear funding. The charity holds a restricted reserve of £310,707 on fixed assets: this non-cash item is depreciated every year as set out in the accounting policies.

### **Progress since the end of the year:**

- Lauren's Goddard's post was upgraded to m.u.d Project Lead from 1 April 2024.
- Clare Phipps joined as Sow & Grow Sessional Worker on 11 April 2024.
- Ollie Moss joined as Head of Services on 20 May 2024.

In total, we currently have 17 members of staff, three full-time, twelve part-time and two on-call.

### **Risk Management**

The trustees have assessed the major risks to which the charity is exposed. Strategies continue to be developed to mitigate these risks and are reviewed by the Trustees at board meetings.

We have secured £342,000 of the budgeted income of £483,000 for the year 2024-25 (as at June 2024).

We have funding applications totalling £265,000 currently being considered by a variety of funders. In addition to this, all secured grants and Service Agreement funds continue to be received such that 71% of 24/25 projected grant income for the year has been secured.

The charity's initial budget for 2024-24 indicated a surplus of £1,924 for the year.

During the year we have engaged the services of a Freelance Fundraiser and developed a multi-year funding strategy.

We have been awarded a £125,000 endowment fund from the Edward Gostling Foundation. Terms state that for five years the capital and/or interest from the endowment fund must be used to ensure our reserves meet our policy of six months operating costs at the end of the each year. After five years, the restrictions lift and trustees may decide how to use the endowment fund, while meeting Charity Commission rules.

We have also been awarded a grant of £278,000 over three years from the National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund. The grant will start on 1 September 2024.

### **Banking Arrangements:**

CAF Bank remains our banker. Funds are placed in the Gold Savings account with an arrangement that a balance of £1,000 is maintained in our current account at the end of each day.

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT**

**INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF SYDENHAM GARDEN FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2024**

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 which are set out on pages 13-21.

**Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner**

The Charity's Trustees and also its directors for the purposes of company law are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ("the 2006 Act"). They consider that an audit is not required for this year under Section 144 of the Charities Act 2011 ("the 2011 Act") and that they are eligible for an independent examination.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts (under S145 of the 2011 Act)
- follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under S145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act); and
- state whether particular matters have come to my attention

**Basis of independent examiner's statement**

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

**Independent Examiner's Statement**

In connection with my examination, I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention giving me cause to believe:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a "true and fair view" which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS102).

I have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



Tanja Lawes FCA,  
Carleys

Date: 03/12/24

Carleys  
The Fitted Rigging House  
Anchor Wharf, The Historic Dockyard  
Chatham, Kent, ME4 4TZ

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## BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31ST MARCH 2024

	Notes	2024 £	2023 £
<i>Fixed Assets:</i>			
Tangible assets	4	355,459	389,996
<i>Current Assets:</i>			
Debtors	5	15,001	30,031
Cash at bank and in hand		255,587	186,668
		270,588	216,699
<i>Liabilities:</i>			
Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year	6	(86,957)	(51,520)
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		183,631	165,179
<b>Total Assets Less Current Liabilities</b>		539,090	555,175
Creditors: Amounts falling due after more than one year		0	0
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>539,090</b>	<b>555,175</b>
<i>Represented by:</i>			
General Unrestricted funds		228,383	215,850
Designated Special Unrestricted fund		0	0
Total Unrestricted funds		228,383	215,850
Restricted funds - tangible assets		310,707	339,325
Restricted funds		0	0
<b>Total funds</b>		<b>539,090</b>	<b>555,175</b>

For the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 the Company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. The members have not required the Company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibility for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and for the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

The financial statements on pages 13-14 were approved and authorised for issue by the Trustees on 19 November 2024 and signed on their behalf by:

Julia Brandreth  
Chair



Jon Sherman  
Treasurer



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### 2. Legal Status of the Charity

The Charity is a private company limited by guarantee incorporated in England and Wales. The liability of each member in the event of a winding up is limited to £1. Its registered office and business address is Sydenham Garden Resource Centre, 28A Wynell Road, London, SE23 2LW.

### 3. Staff and Pension Costs

	2024	2023
Gross wages and salaries	£282,304	£327,362
Employers NI	£17,477	£21,954
Pension costs	£16,616	£18,826
	£316,397	£368,142

No employee received emoluments of over £60,000 during the year (2023: nil). No trustee received any remuneration.

The average number of employees in the year was 15 (2023: 16). The equivalent full time number of employees was 9 (2023: 9)

The Charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme for the benefit of employees. Contributions payable by the Charity for the period were £16,616 (2023: £18,826).

### 4. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Land and Buildings	Equipment & Furniture	Total
<b>Cost</b>	£	£	£
At 1st April 2023	595,110	68,977	664,087
Additions			0
Disposals		(13,228)	(13,228)
<b>At 31st March 2024</b>	<b>595,110</b>	<b>55,749</b>	<b>650,859</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1st April 2023	218,328	55,763	274,091
Charge for the year	28,242	3,308	31,550
Disposals		(10,241)	(10,241)
<b>At 31st March 2024</b>	<b>246,570</b>	<b>48,830</b>	<b>295,400</b>
<b>Net Book Value</b>			
At 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2023	376,782	13,214	389,996
<b>At 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024</b>	<b>348,540</b>	<b>6,919</b>	<b>355,459</b>

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## 8. Movement in restricted funds

		Balance 01.04. 2023	Incoming Resources	Outgoing Resources	Transfer between funds	Balance 31.3 2024
		£	£	£	£	£
<b><i>Funds held as cash and debtors:</i></b>						
1)	Art Project costs	-	11,250	47,610	36,360	-
2)	De Frene Growing Lives Fund	-	63,785	69,726	5,941	-
3)	Garden Fund	-	5,000	42,281	37,281	-
4)	Dementia Sow & Grow	-	32,503	36,870	4,367	-
5)	NCIL Ward Meeting Up	-	8,100	8,100	-	-
6)	OCN Practical organic gardening	-	27,000	35,353	8,353	-
7)	Culturally diverse Youth Project	-	37,250	49,860	12,610	-
8)	Hyde Charitable Fund	-	2,834	4,265	1,431	-
<b>Sub-total – cash and debtors</b>		-	<b>187,722</b>	<b>294,065</b>	<b>106,343</b>	-
<b><i>Funds held as tangible assets:</i></b>						
a)	Wynell Greenhouse	26,624		1,365		25,259
b)	Garden Resource Centre building	264,747		14,226		250,521
c)	De Frene Greenhouse including stove	1,501		754		747
d)	De Frene compost toilet	1,845		758		1,087
e)	De Frene Equipment	1,224		888		336
f)	De Frene Hub building	7,806		2,019		5,787
g)	De Frene Education Hub	1,188		406		782
h)	Buggy	5,779		5,779		-
i)	Path	25,000		1,667		23,333
j)	Shelter	3,611		756		2,855
<b>Sub-total (tangible assets)</b>		<b>339,325</b>	-	<b>28,618</b>	-	<b>310,707</b>
<b>TOTAL RESTRICTED RESERVES</b>		<b>339,325</b>	<b>187,722</b>	<b>322,683</b>	<b>106,343</b>	<b>310,707</b>

The providers of the above funds in note 8 are as follows:

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## 9. Net movement in funds

	2024	2023
	£	£
<i>The net movement in funds are shown after charging:</i>		
Depreciation	31,550	33,469
Leases/premises rent	1,020	1,179

## 10. Summary of Assets and Liabilities by Fund

	Unrestricted General Fund		Unrestricted Designated Fund		Restricted Funds tangible assets		Restricted Funds		Total	
	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023	2024	2023
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	44,752	50,671			310,707	339,325			355,459	389,996
<b>Net Current Assets</b>	183,631	165,179							183,631	165,179
<b>Long term liabilities</b>										
<b>Total</b>	<b>228,383</b>	<b>215,850</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>310,707</b>	<b>339,325</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>539,090</b>	<b>555,175</b>

## 11. Related Party Transactions

The charity received donations from the Trustees in the year of £15 (2023: £455). No payments were made to related parties in the year (2023: nil).

## 12. Trustees Expenses

Trustees are entitled to claim travel and subsistence and other expenses related to carrying out their duties at Sydenham Garden. There were no expenses in the year (2023: nil).

## 13. Independent Examiner's Fee

£1,500 was accrued in the year being the cost of the independent examination for 2024 (2023: £1,500).

## 14. Volunteers

During the year the Charity had 71 volunteers that supported it on a weekly basis. The Charity has benefitted from these unpaid volunteers and this is not recognised in the financial statements.

## 15. Government Grants

Government grants, including local government and NHS Trusts, have provided funds of £157,183 in the year being 42% of total grant income (2023: £127,337- 43%).