

FRIENDS OF ABBEY GARDENS

(Charitable Incorporated Organisation)

TRUSTEES' REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31.12.23

CIO number:1158147



Friends of Abbey Gardens

Financial year ending 31 December 2023

Trustees' report

CIO number 1158147

Charity Objectives:

To promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of Newham, London and the surrounding area, the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity, or disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances or for the public at large in the interest of social welfare and with the object of improving the condition of life of the local community.

Executive Summary

Another successful and active year was enjoyed in Abbey Gardens! This year, a smaller team and smaller amounts of funding meant we had challenges sustaining activities with the team's capacity being stretched at times. However we continued to build community engagement with the gardens. We enjoyed the space in Spring and Summer especially, with our first Bee Day celebrations and a community celebration of the Jubilee weekend with music in the gardens. A focus for 2024 is to increase funding that can support the team more sustainably. We are proud of the achievements of a small and passionate team within the gardens, and seeing how appreciated the space is by locals and those wandering by, providing a space of calm and connection.

Summary of main activities

The following events and activities addressed our charitable aims in 2023:

- **Spring festival**
 - We started the year with Spring fairy trail, easter egg hunts and a celebration of the gardens in bloom which attracted a lot of local families
- **Earth day with funding from CPRE and Go Parks**
 - We improved the space and made it more inviting with new fenceline planters and got the community involved in bedding them in on Earth Day which brought together existing volunteers and new people discovering the garden
- **Partnership with Hive Curates - recycling workshop**
 - In partnership with local program Hive Curates we hosted creative workshop in the gardens, with young teenagers getting involved, a

new audience for the gardens

- **Community grant to celebrate the Jubilee weekend in May**
 - We were lucky to be part of the local communities Jubilee celebrations, with yoga, food, flower arranging and live music in the gardens
- **Abbey Gardens celebrated our first World Bee Day event**
 - Honey bakes, bee talks and a climate change talk with 'Climate You Change'
- **Summer Fridays for families**
 - Every Friday from 2pm we invited families to start their weekend with us, with snacks and garden games. Attendance was very weather dependent but we had some lovely hot afternoons with kids enjoying the garden together.
- **Apple Day**
 - Apple Day is becoming a community favourite in the gardens, with a traditional press and juicer activity for all ages, Apple Bakes, and storytelling. This attracts new people to the gardens and enables the community young and old to get hands on with the Apple Harvest! We do have to add to Abbey Gardens own Apple harvest with additional Apples ordered in!
- **Successful funding application for People Powered Places**
 - A big focus of the autumn was to take all the conversations and activities we've had in the gardens over the past two years and build them into a program of activities for the community to get funded as part of Newhams People Powered Places Program. We designed a program called 'Grow Green E15' which includes weekly gardening sessions, the most popular family events in the garden, as well as wellbeing in the garden sessions.
- **50 Steps Steerco**
 - In September we joined the Newham's 50 Steps Steering Committee, providing ongoing community feedback for the councils re-launch of their health and wellbeing strategy. This also enabled us to reflect on how the gardens contribute to the health and wellbeing of local residents, and how we could further develop our work for both mental and physical benefits of the local community.



Earth Day Fenceliner Planters



Earth Day Fenceliner Planters







Apple Day Juicing

Summary of main achievements

- 1) We managed to maintain and grow community engagement in the gardens, continuing key partnerships with organisations such as Good Gym.
- 2) We maintained and improved the space itself, adding additional face planters and establishing the Bee Enclosure.
- 3) We consulted and put together a program and successful application for People Powered Places community fund for 2024, enabling us to pay a Project Manager, Gardener and Workshop leaders for Spring-Autumn 2024. This gave us an opportunity to discuss garden plans with the community, and reflect on the cross-section of users of the space. This will be a huge foundation for us next year, and to engage with existing and new communities around the garden to learn more about how our community needs to and wants to use the space.
- 4) We improved our networks and partnerships with local organisations and the council; including joining the health and wellbeing steering committee.

Ambition and focus 2024-25

- Deliver a successful program via People Powered Places funding
- Use the program as a way to learn more about our community and what they need or would like from the gardens and the community.
- Apply for more funding to sustain activities and team in the gardens
- Manage Apiary and bee enclosure
- Improve the usability of the space; build greenhouse

We would like to extend a special thank you to the core team below working to maintain the gardens. The passion and investment of this group are making it possible for a meaningful community to grow in the space.

Xuan Sinden

Alice Walters

Monika Szolle

Jess Damidot

Dr Zhen

And to all our other gardeners and volunteers who make the gardens such a special and unique place. And Vinny the dog!

Financial Review

Friends of Abbey Gardens

Financial year ending 31 December 2023

Reference and administrative details:

Charity number: 1158147

Trustees:

Stewart Haywood

Anna Bulman

Monika Szolle

Tim Peake

Principal address:

Abbey Gardens, 20 Bakers Row, London, E15 3NF

Bankers: Co-Operative Bank, 1 Balloon Street, Manchester, M6 04EP

Governing document: Constitution of the CIO Friends of Abbey Gardens (2014)

Type of organisation:

Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Appointment of Trustees:

New trustees are elected to post at the annual general meeting. As per the Constitution the CIO is required to have at least three trustees at any time.

The Trustees are responsible for preparing the Annual report and Annual Accounts in accordance with Charity Law of the United Kingdom/Charity Incorporated Organisations (General) Regulations 2012.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping accurate accounting records.

Financial review

Due to a small core team of Trustees, 2023 was a year of lower activity in grants and projects. The space was well maintained and visited by the presence of an onsite Cafe trading at weekends combined with a small group of regular volunteers.

This year the charity was unable to meet its reserves policy due to lower levels of grants and fundraising. The Trustees intend to increase funds for the coming years and will review fundraising strategy to support making the gardens more sustainable ongoing.

We have been lucky to receive enough volunteering and time investment into the gardens to maintain the gardens and community. Regular outgoings are low which enables us to sustain the space in years of lower income.

The trustees are prioritising grants and funds for the next year that can support a Project Manager for the space to be able to take on more structured activities in the gardens and generate more funds in 2024 to deliver on the charity's aims.

Friends of Abbey Gardens		
Financial year ending 31 December 2023		
Profit & Loss by activity		
INCOME		
Grant income	£ 2,567.50	
Unrestricted income	£ 714.20	
TOTAL INCOME	£ 3,281.70	
EXPENDITURE		
Labour	£ 6,210.00	
Project Management	£ -	
Gardener	£ -	
Contractors	£ -	

Materials	£ 1,565.61	
Insurance	£ -	
Utilities	£ 901.19	
Publicity	£ -	
Event costs	£ -	
General expenses	£ 316.64	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£ 8,993.44	
	-£ 5,711.74	

Friends of Abbey Gardens

Financial year ending 31 December 2023

Notes to the Annual Accounts

1. The annual accounts are prepared on a receipts & payments basis according to the Charity Incorporated Organisations (General) Regulations 2012
2. The CIO is exempt from external audit as the income in FY 2019 income falls below 250K threshold
3. In the FY 2023 the CIO did not enter into any guarantees
4. As at 31.12.2023 the CIO did not owe any amounts to external parties
5. The Profit & Loss presents the summary of all amounts received and paid out in financial year 2023