



## **The Friends of South Park Gardens**

Annual Report and Accounts  
*1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020*

## **THE FRIENDS OF SOUTH PARK GARDENS**

### **Address**

c/o The Garden Pavilion, South Park Gardens, Wimbledon, London SW19 8PN

### **Trustees**

Helen Day (Chair)  
Sylvia Lucas  
Helen Buckley  
Susan Hook  
Carra Kane  
Peter Kenning  
Christopher Magee  
Helen Rogers  
Sarah Willis  
David Benton – (resigned 31 May 2020)

### **Bankers**

Lloyds Bank plc  
Chichester Branch  
PO Box 1000  
BX1 1LT

CCLA Investment Management Ltd  
COIF Charity Funds  
80 Cheapside  
London  
EC4V 6DZ

## **THE FRIENDS OF SOUTH PARK GARDENS**

### **ANNUAL REPORT**

#### **Introduction**

The Friends of South Park Gardens is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) registered with the Charity Commission under number 1162459. The CIO is a direct replacement of the unincorporated charity with the same name. The CIO was entered on the Charities register of the Charities Commission on the 26 June 2015. The object of the charity is, in summary, to promote, support and assist in the maintenance, improvement and enhancement of South Park Gardens in Wimbledon, London, SW19, as a recreational area to be used and enjoyed by the whole community, including identifying and implementing security measures. The first trustees were all local residents. Current trustees are elected by the annual general meeting.

#### **Development**

The Friends began as a campaigning body with the purpose of restoring the Gardens to their former glory. Pressure was put on the local council to improve maintenance and over several years a grant was obtained from the Heritage Lottery Fund ('HLF'). In 2009 the Gardens were restored. In 2013/2014 permission was sought and granted to use the remaining HLF funds with support from the council to redevelop the dilapidated gardeners' compound and toilets. The building was completed in 2015 and the Friends ran drop in coffee mornings to introduce the new building to the park users as a temporary measure until the Council leased the kiosk. The kiosk is now leased by the Council and is a welcome addition to the Gardens enjoyed by many. The community space is regularly used for several activities including, art classes, yoga classes, theatre workshops, National Autistic Society coffee mornings, dementia café, pottery painting sessions, baking groups and Japanese book reading class. Receipts from lettings are put towards maintenance and running costs including cleaning and replacement of furniture and equipment. The Friends arranged the redecoration of the Garden Pavilion community space and a deep clean of the room and toilets in January and February 2020.

The Friends are continuing to work with the council and the HLF to ensure that repairs are carried out to paths in the Gardens and have liaised with the Council over improved accessibility to the Gardens for wheelchair and buggy users by the replacement of cobbles at entrances with flat stone paving.

The Friends attend meetings of the Independent Merton Green Spaces Forum and have continued to monitor the maintenance of the Gardens following its outsourcing from the Council to idverde.

The Friends have an active gardening club who assist with maintenance of the flower beds in the Gardens and who have established an attractive vegetable garden behind the Garden Pavilion as well as creating a new wildflower area in the circle by the Garden Pavilion.

#### **EVENTS AND THE EFFECT OF THE PANDEMIC**

Due to Coronavirus Act restrictions, the Friends were unable to hold the usual programme of events in 2020. The Trustees took the difficult decision to cancel all events, either because the restrictions in place meant that the event could not be held or, in the case of the fireworks event, continuing uncertainty meant that advance commitments were unwise. The Easter Egg Hunt planned for April, Summer Picnic in June and Over 60s Cream Teas were cancelled and planning was not started for the Fireworks Event.

In the absence of the Fireworks Event, children were invited to send in fireworks pictures, which were displayed in the windows of the Garden Pavilion.



Due to the pandemic, the AGM planned for March 2020 was postponed to June 2020 and held over Zoom. The trustees have continued to meet but virtually rather than in person. The Trustees also stopped hard copy delivery of newsletters due to the pandemic but email communication has been maintained with PDF copies of newsletters sent by email. There have also been regular updates on the Friends' website.

The Park has been an invaluable community resource throughout the pandemic but the level of use has posed some issues. The trustees liaised with Merton Council about notices on the park gates regarding social distancing and littering. The Park has remained open, but the toilets were closed for a period by the Council. Idverde gardeners continued to work in the park throughout.

Bliss in the Park had been operating the kiosk since August 2018. Trading was very challenging in the winter months. The trustees agreed to support the kiosk by making a one-off payment in 2020 to recognise the contribution made by the kiosk operator to the success of the Garden Pavilion by assisting with locking and unlocking and liaising with hirers and a monthly payment going forwards. The kiosk initially remained open but was later closed for a period due to public disquiet about queuing. The kiosk reopened in May 2020.

The Garden Pavilion room was closed to hirers in March 2020 until restrictions were fully lifted (this happened on 19 July 2021).

The Gardening Club continued to meet whilst maintaining social distance to comply with Coronavirus restrictions. They continued to maintain the Heritage Lottery Beds and attracted some new members who wished to have their daily exercise in the park. The Gardening Club organised some additional sessions during the week for people who were working at home. The trustees funded a small coffee budget for the Gardening Club to obtain hot drinks from the kiosk. In June 2020 the trustees approved a proposal from the Gardening Club for the creation of a wildflower meadow in the circle near the Garden Pavilion and work started on this in October 2020.

Due to the inability to hold any fundraising events or to hire the Garden Pavilion Room, expenditure in 2020 exceeded income. However, some of this expenditure was one-off expenditure which related to the previous years' income, such as the payment to the kiosk operator and a donation to the Woodland Trust from the Fireworks Event in 2019. Equipment purchased included spare keys, aprons, and oil cloth. Recurring expenses included insurance, Mail Chimp, Zoom, printing of newsletters, Survey Monkey, the domain name and ICO registration. These sums were met from reserves. Expenditure by the Gardening Club was planned use of reserves and was less than the amount planned in the reserves policy.

The trustees confirm that they have complied with their duty to have regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

APPROVED by the Trustees and signed on their behalf by

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Date: 14 September 2021

**THE FRIENDS OF SOUTH PARK GARDENS**  
**STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS**

	Note	2020 £	2019 £
<b>RECEIPTS</b>			
Income from subscriptions/donations		2,459	3,036
Gross income from events	2	-	17,603
Garden Room Rent and Takings		1,705	9,868
Interest		186	401
Sundry		-	-
		<hr/> 4,350	<hr/> 30,907
<b>PAYMENTS</b>			
Expenses of events	2	700	11,909
Garden room outgoings		955	931
Insurance		873	873
Website & newsletter		166	526
Sundry/administration		1,428	964
Gifts/drinks		801	554
Donations		2,000	-
Plants purchased		2,229	440
		<hr/> 9,152	<hr/> 16,198
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>		<hr/> <b>(4,802)</b>	<hr/> 14,709
Balance brought forward		96,739	82,030
Net increase/(decrease) in funds		<b>(4,802)</b>	14,709
Balance carried forward		<hr/> 91,937	<hr/> 96,739

**THE FRIENDS OF SOUTH PARK GARDENS**  
**STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

	2020 £	2019 £
Cash at banks - current account	20,850	25,838
- deposit account	71,087	70,901
Total assets	<hr/> 91,937	<hr/> 96,739
Represented by:		
Unrestricted funds	91,937	96,739

## THE FRIENDS OF SOUTH PARK GARDENS

### NOTES

#### 1. Basis of preparation

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the receipts and payments basis of accounting as permitted by the Statement of Recommended Practice "Accounting by Charities" issued by the Charity Commission for smaller charities. Thus income includes amounts reimbursed by the London Borough of Merton relating to previous years and expenses include items where the relevant income has been recognised in earlier years.

#### 2. Income and expenditure of events

	2020			2019		
	Income	Expenses	Profit	Income	Expenses	Profit
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Easter Egg Hunt	0	76	(76)	549	-	549
Picnic in the Park	0	0	0	-	251	(251)
Fireworks Party	0	624	(624)	17,053	11,659	5,395
	-	700	(700)	17,603	11,909	5,693