



The Friends of South Park Gardens

Annual Report and Accounts
1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021

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 (Secretary)
Susan Hook
Carra Kane
Peter Kenning
Christopher Magee
Helen Rogers
Sarah Willis
Helen Buckley

Treasurer

Lynn Dyson

Bankers

Lloyds Bank plc
Chichester Branch
PO Box 1000
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CCLA Investment Management Ltd
COIF Charity Funds
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London
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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 and were elected at the annual general meeting. All Trustees are volunteers and there are no paid employees of the Friends of South Park Gardens.

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 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 known as the Garden Pavilion is regularly used for both community and commercial activities, including exercise classes for older people, art classes, yoga classes, craft workshops, pottery painting sessions and Japanese book reading groups. Receipts from lettings will be put towards maintenance and running costs including cleaning and replacement of furniture and equipment.

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 the entrances with flat stone paving.

The Friends have regular meetings and are in regular communication with both Merton Council's head of green spaces and the Council contractor responsible for the maintenance of the Gardens - idverde.

The Friends has an active gardening club who assist with maintenance of the flower beds in the Gardens and who have established a nursery area in the raised beds behind the Garden Pavilion. This area is used for the cultivation and growing on of plants for planting in the Gardens.

EVENTS AND THE EFFECT OF THE PANDEMIC

Due to the continued effects of the Coronavirus and the ensuing lockdowns and restrictions, the Friends were again unable to hold the usual programme of events in 2021. 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 Easter Egg Hunt Event, children were invited to send in easter pictures, which were displayed in the windows of the Garden Pavilion – each participant received a small easter egg.

ACTIVITIES IN 2021

The Gardening Club continued to meet whilst maintaining social distancing in accordance with Coronavirus restrictions. They continued to maintain the Heritage Lottery Beds, created, planted and built winter borders along the Kings Road edge of the Gardens and attracted regular new volunteers. The Gardening Club organised some additional sessions during the week for people who were working at home who wished to have their daily exercise in the park. The trustees funded a small coffee budget for the Gardening Club volunteers to obtain hot drinks from the kiosk.

The Gardening Club held a Plant Sale in June 2021. Many of the volunteers grew plants from seed at home and cuttings from plants in the Gardens raised in the nursery beds were for sale at reasonable prices. All proceeds were reinvested in the Friends. The unsold plants (which were very few) were replanted in the gardens.

The Garden Pavilion was closed from March 2020 until 19 July 2021. Resuming activities for many hirers has been slow with some regular pre-pandemic hirers not returning at all. In August 2021 a partnership was secured with Home Instead Care in Wimbledon for a regular Monday lunchtime booking. The Friends are very grateful for our volunteer room manager who looks after the administration for this resource.

In July 2021 the membership system was changed and is now fully automated using a recommended third-party provider for small membership organisations – MemberMojo.

This has resulted in a simplified system for members and a considerable workload taken away from our membership secretary volunteer. The membership fee is set at £10 per household and £5 per individual member and represents a small investment in a hugely valued local community resource. The introduction of a donation button during the renewal process has been helpful in generating funds. A total of £xxx or xxx% of our income was generated through this alone. The automation of the membership renewal process will enable the Friends to cease the SurveyMonkey subscription in 2022.

In the Autumn of 2021, the programme of refurbishment of the benches in the Gardens commenced. In total 35 benches will be refurbished starting with those without any dedication plaques. This expenditure has been planned for over the past couple of years and will be funded from our reserves.

ADMINISTRATION

Recurring administration expenses included insurance, Mailchimp, Zoom, 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 contained in the reserves policy.

The trustees continued to meet but virtually rather than in person during 2021. The Trustees' communication with the membership has been maintained with PDF copies of newsletters sent by email. There have also been regular updates on the Friends' social media pages.

The Park has been an invaluable community resource throughout the pandemic, but the level of use has posed some issues regarding littering and multiple parties at the weekend. The Friends regularly remind all park users to be mindful of each other whilst using the Gardens and also to take rubbish home.

Bliss in the Park has been operating the kiosk since August 2018. This has been a welcome addition to the Gardens and Christelle St Mart has been a valuable member of the community. Her team has been very helpful in helping the hirers of the Garden Pavilion. Joint events with Bliss in the Park will be planned in the future.

The financial impact of pandemic on the Friends income and expenditure has resulted in a deficit for the financial year 2021. The Accounts are attached to this Trustee Report.

CONFIRMATION OF PUBLIC BENEFIT

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

Date

THE FRIENDS OF SOUTH PARK
GARDENS

DRAFT

STATEMENT OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS

	Note	2021	2020
		£	£
RECEIPTS			
Income from subscriptions/donations		5,631	2,459
Gross income from events	2	-	-
Garden Room Rent and Takings		3,061	1,705
Interest		9	186
Sundry		194	-
		<hr/> 8,895	<hr/> 4,350
PAYMENTS			
Expenses of events	2	47	700
Garden room outgoing		351	955
Insurance		371	873
Website and newsletter		1,557	1,052
Sundry		244	632
Gifts/donations/drinks		676	2,711
Plants purchased		5,802	2,229
		<hr/> 9,048	<hr/> 9,152
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		<hr/> (153)	<hr/> (4,802)
Balance brought forward		91,937	96,739
Net decrease in funds		<hr/> (153)	<hr/> (4,802)
Balance carried forward		<hr/> 91,784	<hr/> 91,937

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DRAFT

STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

	2021	2020
	£	£
Cash at banks - current account	20,688	20,850
- deposit account	71,096	71,087
Total assets	<u>91,784</u>	<u>91,937</u>
 Represented by:		
Unrestricted funds	91,784	91,937

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

**THE FRIENDS OF SOUTH PARK
GARDENS**
NOTES

2. Income and expenditure of events

	20121			2020		
	Income	Expenses	Profit	Income	Expenses	Profit
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Easter Egg Hunt		47	(47)	-	76	(76)
Picnic in the Park	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fireworks Party	-	-	-	-	624	(624)
	-	47	(47)	-	700	(700)