

# METROPOLITAN PUBLIC GARDENS ASSOCIATION



Annual Report and  
Accounts 2017





Claremont Crescent Gardens, Surbiton, RB Kingston-upon-Thames

Front cover picture:  
Nomura Roof Garden by courtesy of Diana Jarvis



# ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2017

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## METROPOLITAN PUBLIC GARDENS ASSOCIATION OFFICERS

### President

Mr Hugh Johnson OBE

### Vice Presidents

The Rt Rev & Rt Hon the Lord Bishop of London *resigned February 2017*

The Viscount Davidson

Sir David Howard Bt

The Master, The Worshipful Company of Gardeners

Mr Alistair Gould

Mr Wesley Kerr OBE

Mr Christopher Woodward

Ms Rosie Atkins FL *from October 2017*

Ms Joyce Bellamy MBE *from October 2017*

The Marchioness of Salisbury *from November 2017*

**Chairman** Mr William B Fraser OBE

**Hon Treasurer** Mrs Marjorie Dowbiggin

**Hon Secretary** Ms Marguerite Potter *resigned December 2017*

**Hon Minutes Secretary** Ms Nicola Freshwater

**Grants Officer** Mrs Linda Forrest *resigned September 2017*

**Temporary Grants Officer** Ms Ruth Holmes *from September 2017*

### Executive Committee

Ms Rosie Atkins FL *resigned October 2017*, Mrs Shirley Brihi, Mr Benedict Bull,

Ms Jodie Jones, Mr Mark Lane LVO, Mr Graeme Maynard,

Mr Rex Thornborough RD FCSI, Mrs Paula Tomlinson

**Hon Legal Adviser** Mr Vivian Robinson QC

**Hon Independent Examiner** Mr John Clark FCA

### Trustees

Mr William B Fraser OBE, Mrs Marjorie Dowbiggin, Mr Rex Thornborough RD FCSI,

Mr Alistair Gould, Ms Marguerite Potter *resigned December 2017*

**THE CHARITABLE PURPOSE** of the MPGA is the protection, preservation and enhancing of public gardens, disused burial grounds, churchyards and open spaces or land situated within the Metropolitan Area of Greater London; the provision of seats and the planting of trees within places of public resort; and the encouragement of public interest in the cultivation of gardens or similar public areas.

Edited by Annabel Ward

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Registered Charity Number 303330



## INTRODUCTION FROM PRESIDENT Hugh Johnson OBE

The MPGA was born in a London that Dickens would have recognised; a city of squalor and deprivation, where walls were black with soot, plants struggled to grow and children collected horse-droppings to sell for bread. London was expanding at a frightening rate: just look at the miles of terrace houses built in those years, covering fields and farms and swallowing village after village as Greater London took shape. Land was for building on. The Royal Parks were sacrosanct, but even the green squares in the salubrious parts of the capital had no statutory protection until the 20th century. Victoria Park in Tower Hamlets was the first and grandest project to improve conditions in the East End.

It was a remarkably far-sighted member of the London County Council who determined that the whole capital needed green lungs; that they could be provided with local enthusiasm and involvement, given the help of an organising body. Lord Brabazon was the man, later to inherit the old Anglo-Irish title of the 12th Earl of Meath. The MPGA, founded by him in 1882, was to be the organising body. To give the date some context, it was the year of the Married Women's Property Act, which gave wives financial autonomy from their husbands (Gladstone was Prime Minister) - and the year Jesse James was shot.

The stresses on London are different today - but in some senses more intense. For one thing the capital is enormously bigger; you can travel for up to thirty miles in a completely urban environment where plants of any kind are an introduced feature.

For another; the streets are cleaner but the air impregnated with fumes and noxious particles. Speed and restlessness are the essence of the modern city. As it develops (and the cranes are everywhere) it loses the sense of place.

**The sense of place, of familiar surroundings, is essential to a quiet mind. A place in which nature plays a proper part. A seat to allow the body and mind to settle. The shade of a big tree, one that challenges the buildings, on a hot day. An expanse of green and a cheering burst of colour.**

We can all think of corners, triangles, little parklets that do far more than justify the tiny acreage they occupy in the overbearing cityscape. Too often any open space is architect-designed, perhaps statutorily required around a massive development, more hard landscape than place of rest. They are swept, the bins are emptied, but nobody actually loves them.

The MPGA exists to help and encourage people to love, and engage with, their environment, to add their own ideas and shape their corner as they would like to see it.

We offer help and advice, and money. We look for help, too, and money, too, from members of the public, Londoners who see the point of what we do, and care. It all needs doing, as much as ever, 135 years on.





## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

### William Fraser OBE

The recent BBC television series of Britain in Bloom highlighted the value of greening open spaces and other public areas such as churchyards, school playgrounds, streets and even whole villages. The series showed just how much can be achieved by volunteers encouraged by enthusiastic leaders. For many years the MPGA has supported *London in Bloom* and in 2014 awarded the London Spade to their Secretary, Ann Holman, for her services to London's open spaces.

We know that the benefits go far beyond refurbishing a neglected space or brightening up a street or railway station with hanging baskets or planted containers.

Such efforts bring the local community together, young and old, and encourage a sense of pride in the area.

**Green spaces are vital for our environment, help to soak up pollution, provide wildlife habitats and, most importantly, give people a sense of well-being.**

These same values are reflected in the grants given by the MPGA each year and our Bulbs for London scheme plays a very significant role too. Once again, we are very grateful to *Taylor's Bulbs for London* and *Holbeach* for supporting this joint initiative.

The scheme is now in its sixth year and has benefitted over 660 sites, the bulbs making a huge impact across London's 33 boroughs. So much of the work involved is carried out by volunteers, whether on small sites or large public parks, and they undoubtedly deserve our appreciation and that of their communities.

We also value the support of *Bulldog Tools*, who offer our grant recipients a discount on their products, as well as providing the spade for our London Spade Award. Finally we would like to record our thanks to *The Worshipful Company of Gardeners* for their annual donation and support.

The MPGA has had a long association with several London Squares and we are delighted to continue our support of *Open Garden Squares Weekend*. We have also had a long relationship with *London City Farms and Community Gardens* and again this year funded two prizes which were awarded at their annual festival. A full list of other grants given during the year can be found in the Financial Report.

Following his retirement, the Bishop of London stood down as Vice President and I would like to thank him for his support over the last 20 years. We are delighted that The Marchioness of Salisbury has agreed to be come a Vice President, thus continuing her family's link with the MPGA. We are also pleased to welcome as Vice Presidents Rosie



Danson Park, LB Bexley

Atkins and Joyce Bellamy. Rosie Atkins was until recently on our Executive Committee and her input and enthusiasm are much missed. Joyce Bellamy MBE, who was our long serving Secretary, has an unparalleled knowledge of the MPGA and of the London Metropolitan area. I would also like to thank our President and Vice Presidents for their interest, encouragement and support.

There were also some changes to our Executive Committee. We were sorry to lose our Hon Secretary, Marguerite Potter, who retired due to her heavy workload. Linda Forest stepped down as Grants Officer for personal reasons and I would like to thank her for her excellent work. In her place, we were pleased to welcome to the Committee Ruth Holmes who took on the role on a temporary basis. We congratulate Ruth on her recent appointment as Chair of the *London Parks and Gardens Trust*.

Our Executive Committee Members often visit sites and advise on grant applications and I thank them all for their commitment

and energy. In particular, I would like to thank Shirley Brihi for again overseeing our *Bulbs for London* scheme, which entails a great deal of work in a relatively short period of time, and for her help with recruiting, Twitter, the database and the Annual General Meeting.

The MPGA regularly receives requests from Friends' Groups and others across London seeking our advice and support. It reminds us that in the 21st Century we are still a very active and relevant organisation, continuing to make a difference across the capital, as we have done for the last 135 years.



# ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2017

The most recent Annual General Meeting of the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association was held at 5.30pm on Thursday 12 October 2017 in Herringham Hall, Regent's University, in the appropriately green urban setting of Regent's Park, NW1.

MPGA Chairman William Fraser OBE was first to address the hall. He welcomed, amongst others, representatives from several London boroughs, members of various horticultural and heritage organisations, and community gardeners who had successfully applied for MPGA awards in the past.

At a time when London's green spaces are under increasing threat from development, he paid particular tribute to the London Children's Flower Society, London in Bloom, and the remarkable foresight of MPGA founder Lord Meath, who in 1880, voiced his concerns about deteriorating air quality in the capital.

The Chairman went on to announce the appointment of two new Vice Presidents: Rosie Atkins, who recently retired from the Executive Committee, and Joyce Bellamy MBE, who gave great service to the MPGA as Secretary over a period of 25 years.

**President Hugh Johnson OBE was next up to the podium, welcoming the assembled guests and reminding them that the primary purpose of the MPGA is to support**

**activities on the ground and encourage local people and projects, rather than rubber stamp grandiose events.**

He went on to express relief at the cancellation of the Garden Bridge project and enthusiasm for the Garden Museum which had recently reopened following an extensive refurbishment. It was now, he said, 'an absolute must-visit' for anyone with even a passing interest in the subject.

The President went on to present the coveted MPGA London Spade Award to Roger Taylor and Sue Taylor (no relation!) representing Taylors Bulbs of Holbeach, in recognition of their generous support of Bulbs for London. For the past five years Taylor's has provided thousands of bulbs free of charge to more than 550 sites, and in so doing has brightened the lives and lifted the spirits of many thousands of Londoners in springtime.



Guest speaker for the evening was Tim Richardson, who the President introduced as the 'gardener's intellectual'. As a journalist and author, Mr Richardson has written on an eclectic sweep of topics, ranging from theatre

criticism and garden design, to a cheerful work on the history of sweets, but it was as founder of "The Chelsea Fringe" that he addressed the assembly. He explained that he came up with the idea of an event to complement the RHS Chelsea Flower Show in much the same way that the Edinburgh Fringe exists alongside the main Edinburgh Festival, as an informal alternative to the highbrow, high priced main event.

The Chelsea Fringe, he said "is not worthy, but fun." Since its inception,

the Fringe has included 1,400 diverse 'events', including a Bicycling Bavarian Beer Garden and a dog show in the Inner Temple garden. The common theme throughout, however, has always been to encourage community gardening and foster an environment in which gardening can intersect with other activities. In this respect, the aims of this youthful organisation align perfectly with those of the considerably more mature MPGA and explain why Mr Richardson was such a fitting speaker to draw to a close our 135th Annual General Meeting.



*The London Spade Award presented to Roger Taylor and Sue Taylor on behalf of Taylors Bulbs of Holbeach by Hugh Johnson OBE (centre)*

## OUR WORK

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### HELP MAKE LONDON A GREEN AND VIBRANT CITY

As a charitable organisation we rely solely on the hard work of volunteers and the generosity of donations and legacies provided by benefactors. Your support is vital to us to continue our work in keeping London green for ourselves and for future generations.

### GET INVOLVED AND JOIN US

Membership Form page 27

### CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP

We enjoy working with companies who share our passion for supporting local communities, improving and protecting green spaces in London. Please contact us to discuss a range of opportunities.

### GET INSPIRED

Over the years we have supported countless projects which have touched the lives of ordinary people in everyday places, including parks, community gardens, churchyards, museum grounds, historic houses, hospitals, schools and library gardens.

Visit our website to learn more about our work and find out how we can help to develop your project or public green space.

Apply for a grant  
Volunteer  
Visit gardens near you

[www.mpga.org.uk](http://www.mpga.org.uk)



Age UK Centre, LB Merton

## MPGA GRANTS 2017



## CHURCHES

### St Mary & Holy Trinity Church (Bow Church)

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

After a successful application to the MPGA in 2016, Bow Church followed this up in 2017 with a request for funds to continue the transformation of the west churchyard into a garden. A mix of evergreen and deciduous flowering shrubs and climbers which can cope with dry shade have now replaced some diseased laurels.

This historic church, originally laid out by Fanny Wilkinson, receives visitors from across the world and has noticed an increase in the number of regular users since beginning the work to make the site more welcoming.



Bow Church, LB Tower Hamlets

## PARKS

### Salisbury Row Park

London Borough of Southwark

Salisbury Row Park is a pocket park in the north of Southwark which continues to be improved by the Friends of Salisbury Row Park. The Friends' Group have researched and implemented plants which increase biodiversity and improve air quality. The

park features a shady triangular raised bed, which the MPGA granted funds to plant up with appropriate plants to green the area and inspire others with similar situations in their own gardens. The plants are labelled with information for the public and the bed is maintained by the Friends' Group.



Salisbury Row Park, LB Southwark

### Caledonian Park

London Borough of Islington

New Clocktower Place Garden is a relatively newly created garden space in Caledonian Park. It is located in the middle of a mixed residential redevelopment and is flanked by residential roads and overlooked on both sides by recently redeveloped five storey blocks of flats. The garden links Caledonian Park with the business and public transport facilities of North Road, N7. The MPGA provided a grant for over 100 climbing plants to cover the full length of the bare perimeter railings to make the area more



Climbers in New Clocktower Place Garden, Caledonian Park, LB Islington

'garden like' and attractive. These will bring year-round colour, interest, and height to the garden.

### Hazelwood Recreation Ground

London Borough of Enfield

Hazelwood Recreation Ground is a small park bordered by busy roads in the socially diverse area of Southgate. In recent years it had fallen into disrepair as the council struggled to fund maintenance. A Friends' Group was set up to improve the area for the benefit of the community including two neighbouring schools. Their primary focus was to plant a range of flowering shrubs and bulbs to encourage pollinating insects and associated wildlife to thrive. The MPGA was able to finance the purchase of a good selection of plants, plus hand tools for their ongoing maintenance.

### Pymmes Park

London Borough of Enfield

The Friends of Pymmes Park volunteer group was formed to protect and revitalise this 'green haven in an otherwise concrete jungle' in Enfield. In recent years, the park had been a focus for antisocial behaviour but its ornamental lake and surrounding grounds had great potential for improvement. The Friends' Group wanted to make this an attractive retreat for local residents and a sanctuary for wildlife. They had already received the support of Enfield Council to buy gabions and wetland plants to enrich the waterside when they approached the MPGA for a grant to purchase wildflower seeds and a bench, which was approved.

### Hilly Fields

London Borough of Lewisham

Hilly Fields is a Victorian hilltop park in the Ladywell area of south east London

which is well used by local residents, dog walkers and pupils from an adjacent school. The residents' group contacted the MPGA with a plan to enhance a triangle of land at the entrance to the wider park which had become neglected and overgrown. Since the park was already used for dawn chorus walks and bat spotting, the volunteers wanted funding to create an improved wildlife corridor which would enhance its habitat value. The Committee approved funding for three damson trees, flowering hedge plants, primroses and snowdrops to extend the availability of pollen at both ends of the season.

### Queen's Park Gardens

London Borough City of Westminster

The Friends of Queen's Park Gardens maintain the wildlife area of Queen's Park Gardens and the triangular rosebed in the centre of the gardens. The Friends also help out on projects throughout the gardens including litter picking. The gardens are open to the public. Additionally, two nursery schools and a primary school use the wildlife area for forest school on a weekly basis. The Friends approached the MPGA for a grant for plants for an unused part of the Wildlife Area and to fill in the gaps in the triangular rosebed. The MPGA was pleased to approve the grant application.

## SCHOOLS

### Christ Church Primary School, Battersea

London Borough of Wandsworth

Christ Church Primary is an RHS level 5 gardening school in the middle of a large housing estate. It is also the first school in London to achieve Gold Level accreditation for Learning Outside the Classroom. Pupils

are working to transform school grounds and the local area to create a beautiful and peaceful space for pupils, their families and the local community. They planted daffodils to cheer up their local memorial garden and are now working with Cleve West, an award-winning landscape gardener, to transform their new playground garden.

Having previously received an MPGA grant to build raised beds and buy compost, a further grant enabled them to purchase flowers and shrubs to complete the project.



Christ Church Primary School, LB Wandsworth - Lavender Border

## COMMUNITY PROJECTS

### Cricklewood Town Team

London Borough of Brent

The green triangle at the end of Cricklewood Lane abutting the Cricklewood Railway Bridge had been an area of concern for many years, attracting anti-social behaviour and rough sleepers. The Cricklewood Town Team, a voluntary organisation, cleared the site and planted bulbs supplied by Bulbs for London. With plans to plant trees already in place, the MPGA were pleased to support

the Team further with funding to plant up beds with soft fruit, herbs and wild flowers, which will be available for foraging and for workshops with local schoolchildren.

### DeptfordFolk Evelyn 200

London Borough City of Lewisham

DeptfordFolk is the constituted user group representing Deptford Park & Folkestone Gardens in the Evelyn Ward, Deptford. The local area is the most deprived in Lewisham with 40% child poverty and poor health outcomes. It also has the lowest number of trees and worst air quality of any ward in the borough. Access to parks is difficult due to traffic, poor accessibility and permeability. In 2018, to mark the 200th anniversary of the publication of John Evelyn's diaries, DeptfordFolk is running EVELYN200 and will plant 200 trees in the Evelyn Ward. A grant for 5 trees was requested from and granted by the MPGA, which have been planted in parks across the Evelyn Ward.

### NorthWestTWO Residents' Association

London Borough of Brent

This community group in Cricklewood wanted to improve a rather neglected area and engender civic pride through planting. They had already provided planting troughs to brighten up a kerbside barrier. The MPGA



NorthWestTwo, LB Brent - bicycle lock planter

were pleased to supply the funds to purchase plants for these troughs, as well as funds to purchase edging for tree pits to encourage local residents to plant and maintain their own patches, and for herbs to reinvigorate the community herb garden – free for anyone to help themselves – in a bicycle lock planter.



NorthWestTwo, LB Brent - tree pit edging

### Harington Scheme

London Borough City of Haringey

Based on a site that was once used by drovers as they rested flocks on their way towards the City of London, the Harington Scheme works with young people aged from 16 to 25 with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities. By growing vegetables and flowers which are sold at their market stall or consumed by the clients, young people learn horticultural, English and maths skills, and gain retail experience. The MPGA were pleased to provide funds for plug plants to support this project.

## COMMUNITY GARDENS

### Henry Dickens Community Garden

London Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

A Community Garden in North Kensington in the Henry Dickens housing estate, incorporating 21 raised plots with hard

surface access is part of a scheme to provide kitchen gardens for local residents who do not have their own outdoor space. The garden club has continued to develop the site by planting flower beds, making a raised fish pond, and a wet area. They have also added many fruit trees and bushes, grape vines, spring bulbs and flowering shrubs. For the second year running, the garden achieved 'Level 5: Outstanding', in the London in Bloom awards. MPGA granted the club funding for a new shed, as the old one was not fit for purpose, as well as a water butt.

### Tyssen Primary School

London Borough City of Hackney

Tyssen Community Primary School was awarded land by the local council in order to improve the space and to continue to develop their gardening group. The garden shares a wall with nearby residents and will be a shared space between the school, residents and locals from St. Thomas' Church parish. MPGA granted funding for the creation of 15 raised beds, as well as some fruit trees which will be espaliered along the fence. This will allow for an initial allocation of five beds for the school, five for the parish and five for local residents.

### Marlborough Sports Garden

London Borough of Southwark

The Marlborough Sports Garden in Southwark has been managed under licence from the Council by Bankside Open Spaces Trust since 2012, when BOST oversaw the creation of all-weather sports facilities on the site. Following this first phase, the Trust approached the MPGA with the declared intention to put the 'garden' into the Marlborough Sports Garden. We were originally asked to fund the purchase of trees and shrubs to fill a series of raised planters, but when Palmstead Nursery generously donated the plants, it was agreed that the



money should be used to purchase good quality soil for the raised beds instead. The garden had a high profile opening ceremony attended by the family of murdered MP Jo Cox and local celebrity Tom Daly and is now well used by the local community.

## HOSPITALS

### Maudsley Hospital

London Borough of Southwark

The Maudsley Hospital provides in-patient and community mental health care to thousands of people from across the country. The publicly accessible outside spaces running through the site were bland, under-used and lacking in greenery and so a plan was developed in conjunction with Trees for Cities to transform those areas into beautiful gardens for patients and local residents. The hospital community were



Orchard at Maudsley Hospital, LB Southwark



Maudsley Hospital Courtyard, LB Southwark

involved in developing the planting designs and helped to plant the gardens during community planting days. The MPGA were pleased to be invited to contribute to this major project, and provided funding for fruit trees, hedging shrubs and other plants.

## FARMS

### Firs Farm

London Borough of Enfield

Firs Farm is a large open green space which in the past two years has undergone a major transformation from flat green open boggy field to an area of wetlands, park and playing fields. The Friends have added a mini stumpy along the top of the bank of the watercourse that flows through the small woodland.

Following consultations with local residents and park users, the Friends wished to provide bulbs which will encourage pollinating insects such as bees, butterflies and hoverflies to further enhance this special space for both residents and wildlife. They wanted to ensure that the planting should be colourful, attractive to pollinators and encourage a good habitat. Everybody in the community now has access to Firs Farm and naturally the bees, butterflies and beetles have also benefitted. MPGA awarded the Friends of Firs Farm £200 to purchase bulbs and grasses.



Firs Farm, LB Enfield

## ADDITIONAL AWARDS

### Open Garden Squares Weekend

Over 230 gardens in London, from Kingston to Rainham, took part in Open Garden Squares Weekend this year. 2017 marked the 20th Anniversary of the event and was the largest yet, with a lot of new gardens including Baring Asset Management rooftop garden, The Deanery in Southwark, Hachette UK, and Trumpeters' House. Together there were more than 45,000 individual garden visits, over 3,000 of them from children. The event involved some 900 volunteers in various capacities and, as well as opening gardens, included Poets in Residence, 60 guided walks and many other activities. The Trust is a not for profit charity and the support of the MPGA is vital, enabling them to prepare for this once a year celebration of London's green spaces.



Trumpeters' House, LB Richmond  
courtesy of Colin Wing

### London City Farms & Community Gardens

In 2017 the London City Farms & Community Gardens Association applied for a grant to support its 19th annual London Harvest Festival. Projects from 11 different London Boroughs competed in the horticulture events. The MPGA has supported the show for many years by providing two prizes, one for the Best Display from a Garden at a City Farm, and one for the Best Display from a Community Garden, won this year by **Woodlands Farm**



Woodlands Farm Trust, RB Greenwich



St. Mary's Secret Garden, LB Hackney

**Trust and St Mary's Secret Garden, Hackney** respectively. Prizes help celebrate the achievements of young and adult volunteers who cultivate the exhibits. Prizes also boost excitement and morale which encourages engagement in community volunteering.

### London in Bloom

London in Bloom is part of the RHS Britain in Bloom, London in Bloom Awards which celebrate the efforts of London's Boroughs, Communities, Businesses and individuals who do so much to make London such a special place to live, work and visit. Their awards recognise every entrant's efforts in improving their local environment. In 2017, the MPGA continued its support for London in Bloom with a donation and through sponsorship of its 'Common of the Year' and 'Heritage Park and Garden of the Year' awards.

This year, the Common of the Year prize was awarded to **Friends of Barnes Common**. The Heritage Park and Garden of the Year award went to **Chiswick House and Gardens Trust**.



## BULBS FOR LONDON

Last year, 2017, was a bumper year for Bulbs for London. We fulfilled around 120 requests for bulbs which, for the sixth year running, were supplied by award winning *Taylor's Bulbs of Holbeach*. The scheme exceeded our expectations and we already have a long waiting list from applicants for the coming year.

As in previous years, the bulb recipients came from a wide cross-section of parks, gardens and organisations across the London boroughs, including nature reserves, fire stations, memorial gardens, railway stations and allotments. In 2017, we reached out to the London hospices and are delighted to report that six of them received bulbs: Haven House Children's Hospice *LB Waltham Forest*, Greenwich & Bexley Hospice, St Joseph's Hospice *LB Hackney*, Marie Curie Hospice *Hampstead*, St Francis Hospice *LB Havering* and St Christopher's Hospice *LB Bromley*.



*Dartmouth Park, LB Islington*

We also supplied bulbs to many of London's parks, ranging from Ray Park and Valentines Park in Redbridge in the East and Blondin Park Ealing in the West, to Alexandra Park Haringey in the North and Priory Gardens Bromley in the South.

Over the years London squares have figured strongly in the scheme, helped no doubt by our connection with *Open Garden Squares Weekend*. We were delighted to be able to send bulbs to nine London squares, including Red Lion and Argyle Squares in Camden and Granville and Union Squares in Islington. Two of the squares were new to the scheme, ie Wilton Square in Islington and Ion Square in Tower Hamlets - this was laid out by the MPGA and opened to the public in 1895. Bulbs also went to Brunswick Square in Camden and Bonnington Square in Lambeth, two beautiful and very calm oases in busy parts of London, both featured by Marc Owen in his blog *Marc's Favourite Gardens* which can be seen on our website.



*Shoreditch Park, LB Hackney*



*Rhodes Estate, LB Hackney*



*Planting at Pensford Field, RB Richmond*

### 2018 Update

We are delighted to confirm that Taylor's Bulbs have agreed to continue their partnership with us for another year. Details can be found on our website.

Our very grateful thanks go to Taylor's for their tremendous ongoing support. Their bulbs, which are world class and regular Chelsea prize-winners, are now spread across over 600 London sites, bringing colour and joy each Spring to residents and visitors alike.



*Addiscombe Recreation Ground, LB Croydon*



*King George's Playing Field, LB Merton*



*Temple Gardens, City of Westminster*



## 2018 UPDATE

### Database

The database will eventually provide information on every site in London with which the MPGA has been involved since its inception in 1882. The details are obtained from the Annual Reports and other publications. IT specialist Matt Eglin has continued to assist us during the year, mainly in sorting out teething problems encountered as data begins to be entered. As we depend on volunteers, this is going to take some time to complete.

However, early in 2018 we were delighted to welcome Dr Hazel Russman, a retired database specialist, who has started to work through the early Victorian Annual Reports and her help with this is proving invaluable. Dr Russman is very experienced in her field and has highlighted a number of points which we need to consider in the future. She feels that the MPGA database will become a very important historic document on London's gardens and green spaces.

### Archives

The search for the Annual Reports continues. In this we have been helped by another very able volunteer, Leanne Newman. She has a good knowledge and strong interest in the history of London's gardens and the personalities involved. She recently wrote an excellent article for The London Gardener on Kate Hall, a remarkable woman for her time, who established a nature study museum in the East End at the beginning of the 20th Century.

In the current year she has helped us to trace a further ten of our 136 Annual Reports. This leaves 18 to find, which no doubt are lurking in some dark corner of a museum or university library.

### Blog

We congratulate our blogger Marc Owen on completing his MA in Garden and Landscape History. Since then he has found the time in his busy schedule to write two excellent blogs for us, one on Brunswick Square Gardens in Bloomsbury and the other on Bonnington Gardens in Vauxhall. Marc is due to write another blog shortly, which we are looking forward to reading. His blogs can be found on line at 'Marc's Favourite Gardens' or on the MPGA website.

### Twitter

Our Twitter account has proved to be a great success and an excellent way for us to keep abreast of what's happening with London's parks and gardens and the people involved.

We now have over 750 followers and continue to encourage other parks, gardens and organisations to join the world of Twitter. The MPGA has been exposed to a new audience though Twitter, which has been of great benefit and enabled the Association to make some interesting new friends and contacts.



MPGA@MPGALondon

### Fairchild's Garden

Following on from our Update in last year's Annual Report, we are delighted to report that we have now heard that in September 2018 Hackney Council will invite quotes from Landscape Gardeners for the design of this site.

According to the brief, Hackney Council want to transform the garden into a safe, welcoming, flexible space which meets the needs of the local community.

This is long awaited news and much welcomed by the MPGA. Rex Thornborough,

who has been following this on our behalf, is in touch with Hackney Council regarding all aspects of the process and reporting developments to the Committee.

### Gardens and Green Spaces Under Threat

As housing needs become more pressing and, as a result, the threat to green land increases, it is essential that the MPGA rises to the challenge. We often hear from parks, gardens and green sites when they find themselves under threat. When we laid out Christchurch Spitalfields in the 1890s, we could never have imagined that in 2018 we would still be fighting to preserve these historic church gardens. However, in 2016, they asked for our assistance to oppose a serious threat of development to the church grounds. The case went to appeal but was turned down. We have recently heard they intend to mount a further appeal, for which they have launched a crowdfunding initiative, to which the MPGA has donated.

Early in 2018, the Chairman wrote a letter of support against the development of a school on the boundary of St John-at-Hackney, another site with which we have had a connection since 1886. At Appeal

the case went in favour of the developers. St Johns are now working on the conditions for the development, which is on a very cramped site with severe access limitation. To date they have successfully prevented a proposal to cut back trees along their border. This development is part of the Free School Programme, which has been severely criticised, and will probably be cut back or cancelled in the future because of examples like this for which the costs have been exorbitant. St Johns feel that they will have contributed to this change of policy by their action and consider they have lost the battle but are continuing the fight.

We've also been following the campaign of Northfields Allotments in Ealing, which has been highlighted in the London Evening Standard. Thousands signed a petition demanding the preservation of the allotments, which are the oldest in London dating back to 1832. Part of the site had been earmarked for housing for the elderly. Although the Allotment Society recognises that there is a housing shortage in London, they feel that this should not override the wider needs of local communities and the environment, as it would represent an irreversible loss of scarce green space. We've now heard that there are other issues involved and the development plans have been put on hold, although the threat



Northfield Allotments LB Ealing (with kind permission of Paul Bate)

has not gone away from this much loved green space.

Looking at the wider implications across London, the MPGA feel there is a real danger that this could lead to other councils using their allotment space for housing.

The Green Belt is still under pressure with around 200 sites threatened with development. The Enfield Road Watch Action Group (LB Enfield) is a good example of an active community working to protect their section of the Green Belt and its wildlife. They are very effective and are determined to save this Green Belt land, which once lost would be gone for ever.

We are also awaiting developments on Island Gardens in Tower Hamlets with regard to the Calders Wharf project and Udney Park Teddington (LB Richmond), where private developers are planning to build on the parks playing fields. It has just come to our notice that the Old Tidemill Wildlife Garden in Deptford (LB Lewisham) is under threat of demolition to make way for yet another luxury flat development. This is very disappointing, as community sites like this are very few and far between. We are closely following the campaign to save Victoria Tower Gardens from planned development and will be ready to comment on the application when it is submitted later this year.

## SPECIAL PROJECTS

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### BLUE PLAQUE APPLICATION

We have recently made an application to English Heritage for a blue plaque to be erected at 6 Gower Street for Fanny Wilkinson – the first female Professional Landscape Gardener in England.

Fanny Wilkinson first became involved with the MPGA in 1884 and was employed by us for a period of twenty years. In this time she created or designed more than seventy five public gardens in London including Myatts Fields, Red Cross Garden, Vauxhall Park and Meath Gardens. She also worked on smaller gardens, many in deprived areas, including St Anne's Churchyard Garden in Limehouse, St Mary's Churchyard Bow, Paddington Street Gardens in Westminster and Wilmington Square in Islington. The majority of these she created under the auspices of the MPGA, but she also occasionally worked for the Kyrle Society.

After leaving the MPGA in 1904, Fanny's gardening career took her in a different

direction, and she became the first woman Principal of Swanley Agriculture College in Kent and founded the Woman's Farm and Garden Union. In the First World War, the Union was active in helping the Government to recruit women to work on the land.

In the course of our research, it was interesting to discover that Fanny was also involved in the Women's Movement, which campaigned for women's rights and was instrumental in the struggle for Votes for Women. Fanny was introduced to the Suffragist Movement through her connection with Millicent Fawcett, a friend, relative and close neighbour at Gower Street.

As 2018 is the Year of the Woman, it seemed the right time to submit our application to English Heritage, which we very much hope will be successful, although the process can take up to two years.



# MPGA FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

## 31 DECEMBER 2017



## Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 December 2017

	Notes	Income £	Capital £	Total 2017 £	Total 2016 £
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>					
Gross dividends received		12,114	-	12,114	11,387
Deposit account interest and Gift Aid interest		109	-	109	87
Subscriptions with Gift Aid Recoveries		2,387	-	2,387	1,126
Donations and subscriptions without Gift Aid		3,938	-	3,938	4,255
<b>Total Incoming resources</b>		<b>18,548</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>18,548</b>	<b>16,855</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>					
Grants, affiliation fees & London Spade	2	22,372	-	22,372	12,012
Annual General Meeting		2,382	-	2,382	2,898
Office expenses – incl. postage, stationery, travel and sundries		2,068	-	2,068	3,577
		<b>26,822</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>26,822</b>	<b>18,487</b>
<b>Net incoming/(outgoing)</b>		<b>(8,274)</b>		<b>(8,274)</b>	<b>(1,632)</b>
Gains/(Losses) on investments			21,211	21,211	24,189
Net movement in funds		<b>(8,274)</b>	<b>21,211</b>	<b>12,937</b>	<b>22,557</b>
Balances brought forward at 1 January 2017		19,456	287,138	306,594	284,037
<b>Balances carried forward at 31 December 2017</b>		<b>11,182</b>	<b>308,349</b>	<b>319,531</b>	<b>306,594</b>

The notes on pages 4 to 5 form part of these accounts

**Independent Examiner's Report:** I have examined the financial statements for the year ended 31st December 2017 from the books and records and information and explanations supplied to me. In my opinion the financial statements give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the Association as at 31st December 2017 and of its incoming resources and application of resources for the year ended 31st December 2017.

**John Clark FCA Chartered Accountant**

## Balance Sheet

31 December 2017

Notes	2017 £	2016 £
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
Investments	308,349	287,138
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Debtors	478	176
Cash at bank and in hand	19,745	23,410
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>20,223</b>	<b>23,586</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Creditors	9,041	4,130
	11,182	19,456
<b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<b>£319,531</b>	<b>£306,594</b>
<b>REPRESENTED BY:</b>		
<b>Capital Fund</b>	<b>308,349</b>	<b>287,138</b>
<b>Accumulated Income Fund</b>	<b>11,182</b>	<b>19,456</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>£319,531</b>	<b>£306,594</b>

Approved

W B Fraser  
Chairman

Mrs M Dowbiggin  
Hon. Treasurer

## Note to the Accounts

31 December 2017

## 1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

- (a) Expenditure is dealt with on an accruals basis, which includes making provision at the year end for grants approved which have not yet been paid.
- (b) Dividends, interest and life subscriptions receivable are credited when received.
- (c) Investments are shown at their market value at the year end. Realised and unrealised gains or losses on investments are credited or debited to the Capital Account.
- (d) Contributions received as a result of appeals for capital are credited to the Capital Account.
- (e) **Policy on reserves.** The total of grants approved over any given period is chosen to keep income and expenditure broadly in balance, and avoid the accumulation of large cash balances. It is therefore not appropriate to specify a precise level of reserves to be maintained.

## 2. GRANTS, AFFILIATIONS AND LONDON SPADE

## Grants and Donations Approved

The Camden Society	918
Christ Church Primary	282
PCC St Mary's	370
Trees for Cities Maudsley Hospital	1,500
London in Bloom	1,070
NorthWest Two Res	202
St Ethelburgas	2,000
Harington Scheme	973
London Parks and Garden Trust	1,000
Cricklewood Improvement Pro	300
Queens Park Community	128
London City Farms	300
Bermondsey South Community Garden	525
Friends of Firs Farm	200
Friends of Hazelwood	748
Friends of Pymmes Park	747
Cardwell Primary School	500
BOST	1,500
Family Mosaic Housing Association	200
Viridis Schools	1,582
Bricklayers Arms Tenants Association	300
Caledonian Park Friends Group	700
Friends of Hilly Fields	521
Henry Dickens Garden Club	1,000
Deptford Folk Evelyn 200	1,500
Edible Rotherhithe Avondale	1,029
Tyssen Family Gardening Group	2,208
<b>Total</b>	<b>£22,303</b>

## Affiliations

London Forum	19
Fields in Trust	50
<b>Total</b>	<b>£69</b>



<b>Total</b>	<b>£22,372</b>
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## Note to the Accounts

31 December 2017

## 3. FIXED ASSETS

	Equities Investment Fund for Charities	COIF Income Units	COIF Deposit Account	Total 2017	2016
	£	£	£	£	£
As at 1 January 2017	143,715	143,323	100	287,138	262,949
Realised and unrealised gains & losses	10,040	11,171		21,211	24,189
<b>As at 31 December 2017</b>	<b>£153,755</b>	<b>£154,494</b>	<b>£100</b>	<b>£308,349</b>	<b>£287,138</b>
Holding in Units	9,360	10,486.77			
<b>Cost of investments 31 December 2017</b>	<b>£5,881</b>	<b>£116,622</b>		<b>£122,503</b>	
31 December 2016	£5,881	£116,622		£122,503	
<b>4. DEBTORS</b>					
Tax recoveries due				£478	£176
<b>5. CREDITORS</b>					
Penge Green Gym					493
National Trust re Rainham Hall					200
Eden Community					455
Turners House Trust					2,448
Postage etc AGM and Annual reports					534
Family Mosaic Housing Assoc				200	
Viridis Schools				1,582	
Bricklayers Arms Tenants Assoc				300	
Caledonian Park Friends Group				700	
Friends of Hilly Fields				521	
Henry Dickens Garden Club				1,000	
Deptford Folk Evelyn 200				1,500	
Edible Rotherhithe Avondale				1,029	
Tyssen Family Gardening Group				2,209	
<b>Total</b>				<b>£9,041</b>	<b>£4,130</b>
<b>6. CASH at BANK and in HAND</b>					
TSB Bank				5,293	8,076
COIF				14,452	15,334
<b>Total</b>				<b>£19,745</b>	<b>£23,410</b>

Included in the COIF amount is £3,000 received from the Worshipful Company of Gardeners for 2018.



Note to the Accounts *continued*

31 December 2017

## 7. COMMITMENTS AT YEAR END

**Firm Commitments**

London in Bloom
London in Bloom Awards
London Parks and Gardens Trust re Squares Day
London City Farms Prizes
Fairchild Garden
Friends of Meath Gardens
The Camden Society

**Possible Future Involvement**

A further £5000 to Fairchild Garden

Contribution £	Borough
1,000	London wide
70	London wide
1,000	London wide
300	varies
10,000	Hackney
1,000	Tower Hamlets
860	Camden
5,000	Hackney

*Firm commitments are subject to projects, events proceeding as planned.***TREASURER'S REPORT ON THE 2017 ACCOUNTS**

The financial sector has still been volatile but our investments value rose by approx £21,000 by the year end which was very pleasing and our dividend receipts also rose slightly. Our income was increased by £2000 mainly because of a donation from Hugh Johnson and 3 new life members.

We were very pleased to receive a donation from the Worshipful Company of Gardeners and we also thank the Worshipful Company of Saddlers and Hugh Johnson for their donations together with all our members some of whom made additional donations. As well as providing bulbs O A Taylor and Sons gave us a donation of £375 towards our AGM for which we thank them.

We approved 27 grants totalling just over £22,000.

**JOIN THE METROPOLITAN PUBLIC GARDENS ASSOCIATION**

The MPGA is a philanthropic charity, established in 1882, that has remained true to its principal object, which is the protection and safeguarding of public spaces within the Greater London area.

How the MPGA does this has evolved over the years, but its dedicated team of volunteers remain committed to providing small grants and expertise to local groups who strive to create and maintain the Capital's green spaces.

In 1882 when Lord Brabazon, later the first Earl of Meath, conceived the charity a seventh of the UK population lived in Greater London. Since then the city's 4.8 million inhabitants have doubled to 8.6m, the highest since its 1938 peak. Diminishing government funding and growing development is putting huge pressure on our green spaces, large and small.

Your membership of only £25 pa helps us make London a greener and more vibrant city for generations to come. For more details of membership and the work we do visit [www.mpga.org.uk](http://www.mpga.org.uk) where you will also find details of life membership for £250 (£150 if over 60 years of age). We very much look forward to meeting new members at our AGM and if you can't make it we will send you a copy of our Annual Report which keeps you abreast of our activities.

**Complete and return the Membership Form overleaf or download the form at [www.mpga.org.uk](http://www.mpga.org.uk)**



# GET INVOLVED AND JOIN US

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Tel day \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

### SUBSCRIPTION RATE - ANNUAL

Adult £25  Student/over 60 £15

### LIFE SUBSCRIPTION - single payment

Adult £250  over 60 £150

Corporate £500

Donation £ .....

Cheque/Banker's Order enclosed £ .....

I want the MPGA to treat all my donations as **Gift Aid**. I am a UK Taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax/Capital Gains Tax than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations in that tax year, it is my responsibility to pay any difference. *Please tick box.*

### BANKER'S ORDER FORM/DETAILS FOR BACS

Bank \_\_\_\_\_

Branch Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Post Code \_\_\_\_\_

Sort Code \_\_\_\_\_ Acc No \_\_\_\_\_

Acc Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature(s) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please pay MPGA the sum of £ and again on 1 January 20 and on \_\_\_\_\_  
1 January each subsequent year until further notice.

Bank TSB Sort Code 30 93 67 Acc No 00556750  
Acc Name Metropolitan Public Gardens Association

### RETURN FORM WITH CHEQUE/BANKER'S ORDER TO:

Hon Treasurer, MPGA, 14 Magnolia Way, Cheshunt, Herts EN8 0FD



Argyle Square, LB Camden

A colourful photograph showing flowering Spring bulbs given to the Friends of Argyle Square under the Bulbs for London scheme.





# BULBS FOR LONDON

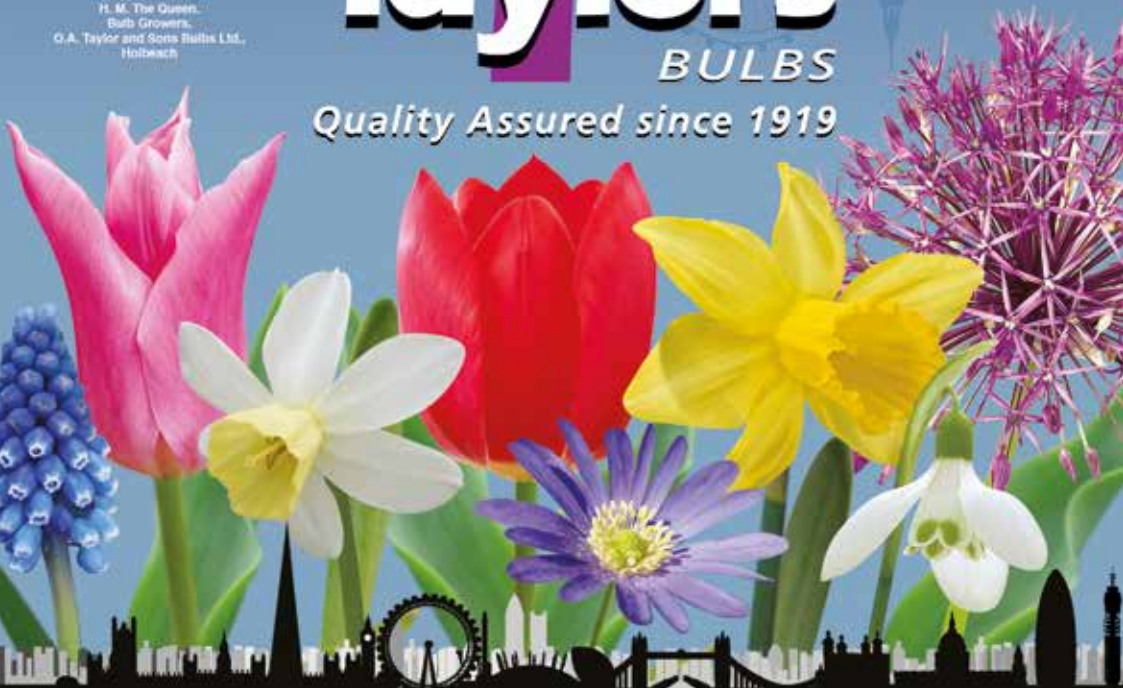


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H. M. The Queen,  
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