

METROPOLITAN PUBLIC GARDENS ASSOCIATION



Annual Report and
Accounts 2019



Roe Green Village, LB Brent

Front cover picture:

St Paul's Cathedral Rainbow Bedding (courtesy Rex Thornborough)

During the 2020 Covid-19 lockdown, the Rainbow became a symbol of hope



ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2019

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JOIN THE MPGA

METROPOLITAN PUBLIC GARDENS ASSOCIATION

OFFICERS

President

Mr Hugh Johnson OBE

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The Marchioness of Salisbury

Sir David Howard Bt

The Master, The Worshipful Company of Gardeners

Ms Rosie Atkins FL

Ms Joyce Bellamy MBE

Mr Alistair Gould

Mr Wesley Kerr OBE

Mr Christopher Woodward

Chairman Mr William B Fraser OBE (2019)

Mr Rex Thornborough MStJ RD (2020)

Hon Treasurer Mrs Marjorie Dowbiggin

Hon Secretary and Grants Officer Mrs Mandy Kidd

Hon Minutes Secretary Ms Nicola Freshwater

Executive Committee

The Officers as above, Mrs Shirley Brihi, Mr Benedict Bull, Mr Nicholas Evans,

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

Mrs Paula Tomlinson, Mrs Annabel Ward

Hon Legal Adviser Mr Vivian Robinson QC (2019)

Mrs Patricia Robertson QC (2020)

Hon Independent Examiner Mr John Clark FCA

Trustees

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

Mr Alistair Gould, Mrs Mandy Kidd

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

Website www.mpga.org.uk

Email secretary@mpga.org.uk



MPGA@MPGALondon

Registered Charity Number 303330



INTRODUCTION FROM PRESIDENT

Hugh Johnson OBE

Amid all the alarm, confusion and sadness of the Covid pandemic, one factor has been paramount: the value of space. Space for social distancing of course, but more fundamentally the open air, room to breathe and the sights of nature. Many people have suffered the frustration and misery of confinement. If you can walk out of your door into a garden, or any green environment, it is hard to imagine just how it must feel - especially in fine weather - to be forbidden that most essential need.

It is not just elbow-room we need; it is the clean fresh air, the sight of the sky, of leaves, and the sound of birds. At the start of lockdown, those who could go outside were first astonished, then enthralled, by the sense of peace, the quiet broken only by birdsong, the lack of aircraft and traffic noise. It was a glimpse of the world before we humans changed it forever.

There is no going back, but that peaceful reminder compels us to keep nature in our sights and do everything we can to connect with what is clean and green. When Lord Brabazon founded the MPGA in 1882, London was Dickens's smoky city. Most lives now are immeasurably healthier, cleaner and more pleasant. But there are three times more of us, there are buildings ten times taller around us, and where their traffic produced horse-droppings, ours fills the air with poisonous gases. Above all, we live under pressures of time and multiple distractions that leave little time

for calm and contemplation. It was a hundred years ago that WH Davies wrote 'What is this life, if full of care, we have no time to stand and stare?' Or sit and observe nature.

The MPGA's job has changed little; it has just become more essential and urgent. Its mission could be called 'Green Corners'. Boris Johnson coined the term 'Pocket Parks'. We don't aspire to many parks; just spaces of any shape or size which we can fill with natural beauty (churchyards are an example).

A seat to encourage someone to stop and stare is an unquantifiable benefit. The opportunity we have to create such green corners, to give or dig or persuade the council, is a heart-lifting benefit in itself. In 2019 alone, we were able to give small grants to 30 schemes.

We are developing ambitious plans to bring back to London's streets an element that has been missing for forty years; the elm tree. Until disease wiped them out in the 1970s, they were one of the capital's principal trees. We are inviting the mayors of all 32 London boroughs to plant elms with proven immunity to start their restoration. As always we look for, and actively invite, projects where we can make a difference.



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

William Fraser OBE

As I write this report we have just finished the first week of Lockdown due to the COVID-19 virus. With the delightful spring-like weather during this week we have been able to spend a great deal of time preparing our garden for the summer.

Sadly the self isolation will have prevented many open spaces, especially those voluntarily maintained, from receiving the attention they require. At the same time the restrictions have highlighted the great value of parks and other open spaces towards the physical and mental state of those living in heavily built up areas. The preservation and maintenance of public open spaces has been the prime objective of the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association since our foundation in 1882.

During 2019 we gave 30 grants as listed later in this report, amounting to £20,670 (£19,310 in 2018). This, however, does not include our two special projects. For the 7th year we were partnered by Taylors Bulbs of Holbeach in our "Bulbs for London" project. Taylors generously provide us with bulbs they have in stock at the end of the season, as well as organising the distribution of the bulbs totally free of charge to a great variety of gardens and green spaces across London. This year some 100 sites benefitted from the scheme and we thank Taylors for their invaluable support in what has been their 100th Anniversary year.

I also thank Shirley Brihi for arranging the allocation of the bulbs from our end. It is a big task and has to be completed in a relatively short space of time.

The second project has been the distribution of benches made available to us through Paul Rochford following the closing of The Royal National Rose Garden at St Albans. To date 20 benches have been distributed, all inspected and cleaned by Rex Thornborough, who also arranged the deliveries. I thank him and Paul for dealing with this project in a very efficient manner.

I also thank the Worshipful Company of Gardeners Charity and Bulldog Tools for their continuing support which is so much appreciated.

The 2019 Spade was awarded to Paul Rochford in view of his very considerable contribution to open spaces within London in recent years. Paul is a Past Master of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners and we are very grateful for the support he has given to the MPGA and many other horticulture organisations.

It was a great honour for me to succeed the late Roger Payton as Chairman in 2009. After 11 years I felt it was time to hand over this position and I therefore retired with effect from 1st January 2020. During my tenure, I have received wonderful support from so many sources.

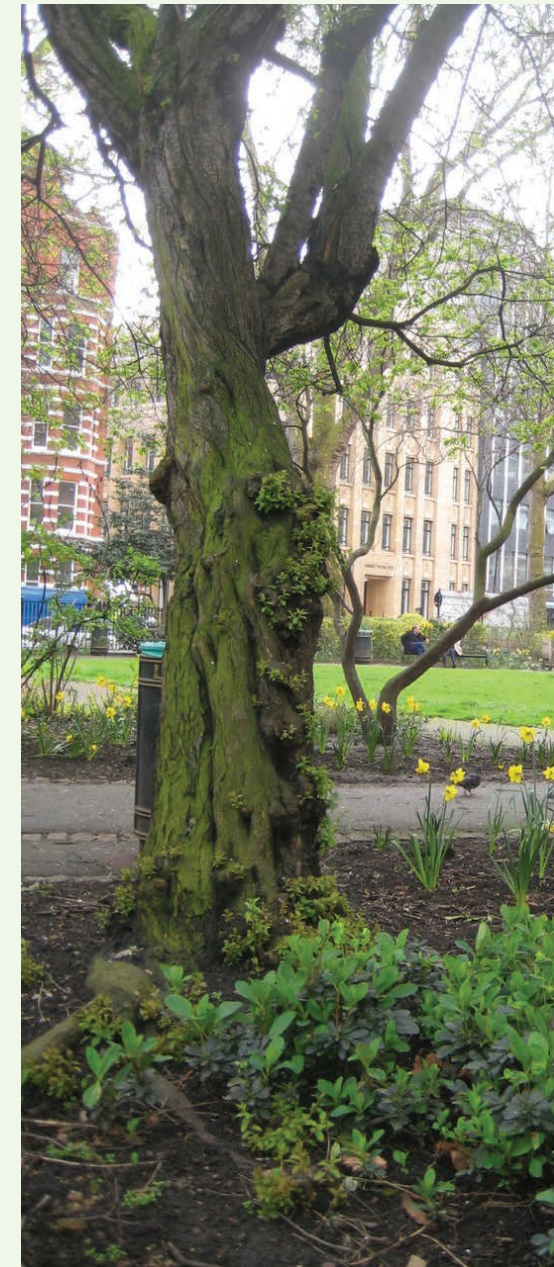
We are very fortunate to have Hugh Johnson as our President. He is enormously enthusiastic for our work and always provides good sound advice. I thank him and all our Vice Presidents for their interest and encouragement.

'We also very much appreciate our Executive Committee all of whom are busy people but freely attend our Committee Meetings, offer advice to many Grant applicants and visit many of the sites we support. I especially thank Marjorie Dowbiggin, our long serving Treasurer, and Mandy Kidd who combines her role of Hon Secretary with that of Grants Officer. I am also conscious of the contribution we received from retired officers such as Joyce Bellemy, Helen Knight, Vivian Robinson, David Sadler and Patrick Hegarty. I thank them all for their very considerable time and effort.

Finally I am delighted that Rex Thornborough has taken over as Chairman. Rex is a Past Master of The Worshipful Company of Gardeners and he has been on our Executive Committee for 10 years during which time he has led our negotiations with Hackney Council over the restoration of The Fairchild Garden in Hackney Road.

I am very confident that he will be a very effective Chairman and I wish him and the Executive Committee every success going forward.

April 2020



Red Lion Square, LB Camden



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Rex Thornborough RD FCSI

I begin my part of the Chairman's report by thanking Bill Fraser for all the excellent work he did during his tenure and for handing over the MPGA in such good shape.

When I took over in January 2020, no one thought we would be where we are now in July with the nation slowly emerging from four months of lockdown in response to the Covid virus and wary of a second wave. Very swiftly it became obvious that we would have to rethink our approach to funding projects, as most of them had been put on hold or cancelled. At the same time the business of planning applications and attempts to turn green spaces into blocks of flats continued unabated.

As a result of the latter, I have written on behalf of the Association on several occasions to object to development proposals that would have led to the loss of public open green space. I am pleased to report that the proposed development by Lambeth Council, which would have left the Garden Museum gardens in shade for most of the day and resulted in the loss of green space in Old Paradise Gardens, has been called in by the Minister.

I also wrote to various Ministers at the start of the outbreak to point out that it was foolish to keep Garden Centres and Nurseries closed while supermarkets were open, when it was obviously easier to achieve social distancing outside in the fresh air. Thank goodness this was achieved and the growers could carry on growing!

What the past few months have taught us is that nature and open green spaces are invaluable to our physical and mental health, especially in our crowded City. The Association was founded to protect, preserve and improve our public green spaces and our mission today is just as important as it was in Victorian times.

Research by Fields in Trust shows that parks and green spaces provide adults in the UK with £34 billion of wellbeing benefits each year, saving the NHS over £110 million. Improving health and wellbeing and reducing pressure on the Health Service are going to be increasingly important in the future, as will the opposition to speculative and investment development proposals for green spaces.

As a grant giving body, we are extremely efficient, being an all-volunteer organisation with no overheads or running costs, so our money is spent on grants. I would like to publicly thank the Committee for their commitment and expertise that benefits so many areas of London and also our President and Vice Presidents for their continued support and advice. My thanks go to Vivian Robinson QC for his valuable contribution over the past several years as our Honorary Legal Advisor and I am delighted to welcome Patricia Robertson QC as his replacement.

As Bill Fraser has said in his report, particular thanks are due to Taylors of Holbeach who provide the bulbs for our "Bulbs for London" initiative that does so much to brighten corners of our city and to Shirley Brihi who runs the project for us.

Thanks are also due to Bulldog Tools, the Worshipful Company of Gardeners and many others for their continuing support. Like all charities, we find our income and therefore our grant giving ability, severely stretched at this time of dividend cuts and uncertain financial markets so we will redouble our efforts to acquire new funding streams for the future.

In the meantime our work goes on and I look forward to reporting in a more optimistic fashion next year!

July 2020



Southwark Cathedral, LB Southwark



The Worshipful Company of Gardeners



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2019

The 137th Annual General Meeting of the Metropolitan Public Gardens Association was held on Tuesday 15th October 2019 at the Garden Museum, Lambeth Palace Road, London.

The Chairman, William Fraser OBE, congratulated the Garden Museum on having undergone such a successful refurbishment, and welcomed all those present. He made the sad announcement of the death on 27th September 2019 of Viscount Davidson, Vice President of the MPGA, whose family have had a long-standing connection to the Association. The Chairman had recently attended meetings for London in Bloom, Parks for London, the London Parks and Gardens Trust and CPRE, all of which highlighted the importance of green spaces for the public, and the role played by community involvement in the face of declining local authority budgets.

He thanked Roger Taylor of Taylors Bulbs for supplying the bulbs for “Bulbs for London”, as well as Shirley Brihi and Marilyn Rose for organising the distribution of the bulbs. He reported that Hackney Council is now moving forward with plans to refurbish the Fairchild Garden, and the project to erect an English Heritage blue plaque to Fanny Wilkinson is moving forward.

The Chairman announced that he would retire on 31st December 2019 and that the Trustees had endorsed Rex Thornborough as his replacement.

President Hugh Johnson OBE thanked all attendees, and Christopher Woodward for hosting the meeting at the Garden Museum.

He thanked William Fraser for his hard work and support as Chairman and expressed his gratitude to Rex Thornborough for taking over the position, and his sadness at hearing the news of the death of Viscount Davidson. The President’s address focused on the need for a wider recognition of the importance of gardens to health, and advocated that this should be reflected in the funding for parks.

The Annual Report and Accounts 2018 were approved, and it was confirmed that the Trustees had endorsed the reappointment of the Chairman (William Fraser) until 31st December 2019 and his replacement with effect from 1st January 2020 by Rex Thornborough RD. The Trustees also endorsed the reappointment of the Treasurer (Marjorie Dowbiggin) and Secretary (Mandy Kidd), and the appointment of Nicholas Evans as a Trustee. The Committee Members stood for election and were re-elected en bloc. Vivian Robinson QC stood down as Hon Legal Adviser. The Chairman thanked him for all his service and advice over many years.

Next came the presentation of the London Spade by Hugh Johnson to Paul Rochford of Joseph Rochfords Gardens Ltd. The Spade, sponsored by Bulldog Tools, is awarded annually to a person or organisation that has made an outstanding contribution to London’s open spaces.

As well as being part of the Future Gardeners project, Paul Rochford instituted the annual temporary garden for the Lord Mayor’s Big Curry Lunch.

He recently also organised the provision of 30 National Rose Society benches for distribution to various of our grant applicants.



Paul Rochford (right) accepting the Spade from MPGA President Hugh Johnson OBE

The meeting was then addressed by Mark Camley, Executive Director of Park Operations and Venues, London Legacy Development Corporation. Illustrating his talk with extracts from Shel Silverstein’s book “The Giving Tree”, Mark made the point that the Victorians left us a great bequest with the parks they created and we have let them down. He felt a generation had lost its connection with nature: children are not allowed to roam freely, and can name more Pokemon characters than plants.

He also mentioned a recent report in the Evening Standard, which stated that a quarter of London parks break limits on air pollution.

While the 2016 parliamentary inquiry made recommendations for addressing the problems faced by parks, the necessary funding was not forthcoming. And yet, he pointed out, we still have great parks with great advocates for them, such as Regent’s Park, Hampstead Heath, Lee Valley, and activists like Judy Ling Wong. It is vital that we continue to nurture parks and to take the case for doing so to those not already convinced. He stressed the importance of trying to reach a younger, more diverse audience.

The President thanked Mark for his inspiring story.

The Chairman then thanked the President for his contribution and support, and also all the Vice Presidents and the Executive Committee. He also thanked the MPGA’s sponsors – Taylors Bulbs, Bulldog Tools, the Worshipful Company of Gardeners and others, and the Garden Museum for their very generous provision of the AGM venue.

The Chairman expressed his confidence that under Rex Thornborough the MPGA will continue to flourish in London, the world’s first National Park City.

MPGA GRANTS 2019

ALMSHOUSES

The Charterhouse

London Borough of Islington

The MPGA funded the planting of a Magnolia Sieboldii in Washhouse Court at The Charterhouse (Sutton Hospital) in the City of London to replace a cherry that had died. This type of magnolia was chosen because it has fragrant white flowers in summer. The flowers recall the white robes of the Carthusian monks who had lived on the site for 160 years before the monastery was dissolved during the Reformation. Due to the poor quality of the ground, new topsoil and a large amount of ericaceous compost was mixed into the ground before planting. A plaque marking the grant has been located near the base of the tree. (Picture of tree on page 27)



Plaque commemorating the planting of Magnolia Siboldii at The Charterhouse, City of London

CHURCHES & CHURCHYARDS

All Saints Church, Margaret St

London Borough of Westminster

The courtyard of this Grade 1 listed church had become unkempt over the years and was due for a rethink. A careful plan to reuse as many of the existing plants as possible was drawn up and three distinct areas – Mediterranean, English and Oriental – were created to make the garden more attractive and interesting. The aim is to have interest through all four seasons, and to emphasise colour and fragrance to attract bees and butterflies. A team of volunteers care for the courtyard garden and the grant awarded by the MPGA has enabled them to complete the project of breathing new life into the site for the enjoyment of the congregation, local residents and office workers.



All Saints Church Mediterranean Courtyard Garden, LB Westminster

Southwark Cathedral

London Borough of Southwark

The MPGA grant has been used to upgrade the Cathedral's herb garden, by investing in new plants, plant signs and soil improver. The main rationale for the project was to install botanical plant signs in the monastic herb garden to better inform visitors with regard to herbs and their uses. Summer in the herb garden was exceptionally busy with lots of visitors and some very positive feedback. The Cathedral's Education Centre reopened in September after its summer break and the garden will be used for children to study the use of herbs.

St. Peter's Churchyard Walworth

London Borough of Southwark

The churchyard at St. Peter's Church Walworth is a wonderful green space in the heart of a densely populated area of great social deprivation, which was cleared of burials and converted into a public garden by the MPGA in 1895. An engraved drinking fountain erected by the Association commemorates the event. In recent years the churchyard gardens have been maintained by Southwark Council but parts of the site have fallen into disrepair and attracted some incidents of antisocial behaviour. To make this area more attractive to local families, the rector approached us to request help with refurbishing an area rather unpromisingly known as the Concrete Circle (which is centred on the MPGA fountain), and we were happy to fully fund the new planting scheme of attractive flowering shrubs and hardy perennials.



St Peter's Churchyard Walworth, LB Southwark

CEMETERIES

Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park is a 31-acre oasis in the East End which is valued by the local community as a place of sanctuary for people as well as wildlife, with richly wooded areas and wildflower meadows, a forest school and good wheelchair accessibility.

The award-winning Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park charity cares for this site, with the help of paid staff and an enthusiastic group of volunteers. They approached the MPGA to request a grant for the purchase of a new chainsaw, tree-lifting chains and safety equipment, to be used by a qualified staff member as part of their overall woodland management strategy.

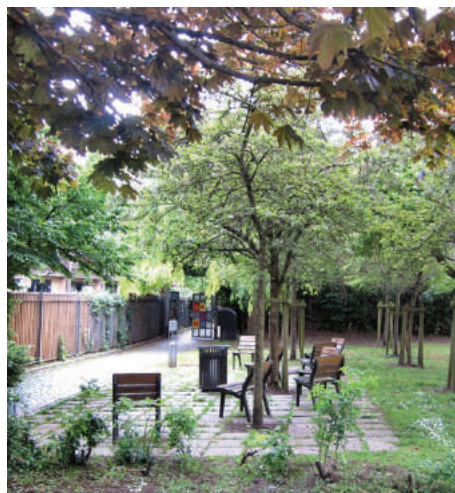
The new equipment was enthusiastically received, allowing the tree canopy to be opened up and improving the woodland's biodiversity potential.



Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park
LB Tower Hamlets



Crofton Park Railway Garden
LB Lewisham



Edward Square Orchard
LB Islington



Hargrave Road Planters, LB Islington



Harington Scheme Outreach Programme
LB Haringey & Barnet

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Crofton Park Railway Garden London Borough of Lewisham

This grant was applied for by the Friends of Crofton Park Railway Gardens. The addition of children's stools and logs in the woodland play space of this garden, funded by the MPGA, has provided a lasting impact that will be there for many families to enjoy. Four 'mushroom' stools were purchased and a local company were commissioned to make a table and log chairs.

Children make their way to this space as soon as they enter the garden and a recent survey provided further insights into the use of the space by young families. One visitor said 'I take my two year old daughter there and it's just a little haven!' Since the garden was completed, more volunteers have been joining the work sessions and there are now 30 regular volunteers.

Plans for some outdoor learning sessions with local schools are also in hand.

Edward Square London Borough of Islington

The Friends of Edward Square, a group of volunteers which supports Edward Square and three nearby parks, applied to the MPGA for funds to restore a neglected orchard. The grant awarded was used to purchase lavender, comfrey and white alyssum to create a series of informal plantings across the sunniest parts of the orchard, enhancing not only its appearance but its attractiveness to bees, and complementing the wild flowers already growing there.

The Friends now plan to invite the nearby school to take part in activities that teach children how the plants attract insects that pollinate the apple trees. They hope to gradually encourage local adults and children to develop an interest in how different elements of the natural world work together to produce the apples and other food they enjoy.

Hargrave Road, Bovington Close and Gresham Place London Borough of Islington

The Neighbourhood Watch Association wanted to show other Londoners what a caring, inclusive, diverse, community-minded group of residents could do when pulling together to create a positive reason for residents to spend time outside their flats on the street together. Hargrave Road was frequently used for drug dealing or as a place to dump unwanted goods/litter. The MPGA awarded funds to purchase planters for the street, along with flowers, shrubs, vegetables and herbs to fill them. Putting together the flat pack planters and planting them up was completed as a community and the group describe doing this together as a really positive shared experience.

The project has helped to build a sense of community and boost local morale and the group report that the planters have had a ripple effect; more people have now started putting plants on their window sills and in front gardens.

Harington Scheme London Boroughs of Haringey & Barnet

This charity which supports young people with disabilities approached the MPGA looking for support for their outreach programmes in Barnet. These schemes, within publicly accessible parks, open spaces and community gardens, are of great benefit to those undertaking accredited training, as well as young gardeners on work experience and supported employment placements designed to assist them in accessing sustainable employment within the land-based sector.

The target beneficiary group is among the most socially excluded in our society. The MPGA were pleased to award the charity a sum to purchase tools to be used by the young people undertaking outreach activities.



*Norman Park Community Peace Garden,
LB Bromley*

Norman Park Community Peace Garden London Borough of Bromley

This new garden, partially funded by the MPGA, will provide gardening and outdoor enjoyment opportunities for the local community and its planting will be a community engagement activity. The garden will be multi-sensory, with fragrance, texture and colour being primary considerations. Designed for all season interest, the plan prioritises plants with scent and winter colour. The garden is designed to be low maintenance. A seating area will be created, with two new benches around a central flowerbed. Raised beds will be incorporated to ensure people of all abilities and ages with a variety of needs can work effectively in the garden.



*River House Trust
LB Hammersmith & Fulham*

River House Trust London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

The River House Trust, a charity and voluntary organisation, is a community-based centre for people who live with HIV. As well as therapy, counselling and educational courses, the charity maintains a small and secluded garden which is particularly valued by its older members, who enjoy sitting in this calm and shady space, close to the river but safely enclosed by screening trees and shrubs. The MPGA was asked to provide the funds for a selection of new tools required by the volunteer gardeners to maintain the high horticultural standards that they have recently attained.



*Old Paradise Gardens
LB Lambeth*

Old Paradise Gardens London Borough of Lambeth

The MPGA grant went towards improving Old Paradise Gardens, a public space adjacent to the Garden Museum, through Mediterranean style planting. The flowerbed is the prominent ornament feature of these gardens and is situated next to a children's play area and seating. The Garden Museum replanted this area to increase its use among the estate residents and those passing through, and improve the environment around the Museum. Existing herbs were dug up and incorporated into a new design. Stones were left in place but larger slabs removed to allow for denser planting. The soil was dug over and planted with a brand new Mediterranean scheme, and gravel mulch added on top. Finally, the edging was repainted.



*Marble Hill Park, LB Richmond
(photo courtesy of English Heritage)*

HISTORIC HOUSES

Marble Hill Park London Borough of Richmond

In late November, landscaping contractors began ground clearance in the Woodland Quarters of this historic garden. This work continued until Christmas and has ensured better growing conditions for the new trees and plants, as well as providing them with the space to grow to maturity.

Stone fruit trees were purchased using the MPGA grant, including Greengage, Plum and Cherry and these will be planted in the Orchard. The Head Gardener recruited 803 volunteers during 2019, as the project created volunteering, trainee and job opportunities.



St George's Hospital (Courtyard Clinic) LB Wandsworth



The Princess Alice Garden at St. Bartholomew's Guild Hospital, City of London

HOSPITALS

St George's Hospital Tooting London Borough of Wandsworth

The Battersea Community Gardeners, a not-for-profit community interest company, approached the MPGA for support with a new project in the Courtyard Clinic at St George's Hospital, Tooting. This is an HIV outpatient clinic and the group wanted to transform a neglected site into a safe and welcoming space for the patients, many of whom experience discrimination and stigmatisation within their own communities, which causes them to withdraw into social isolation. As part of a large and ambitious project, the MPGA were pleased to fund the purchase of soil improvers and a selection of bare-rooted fruit trees, which were enthusiastically received by the newly formed gardening club, which is combating isolation and loneliness as well as cultivating plants.

St. Bartholomew's Hospital The Princess Alice Garden City of London

The Princess Alice Garden at St Bartholomew's Hospital, the oldest hospital in Britain, lies in the busy heart of the City of London and has provided patients and staff with a peaceful sanctuary since it first opened in 1962. In 2019, the Barts Guild approached the MPGA to help fund a refurbishment plan for the garden developed by celebrated landscape gardener Mary Keen. We were able to make a significant grant towards replanting costs, and the refurbishment works were completed in time for the Guild's Patron, the Duke of Gloucester, accompanied by the Duchess of Gloucester, to make an official visit on 24 September, 2019.



Aldersbrook Park play area, LB Enfield

PARKS

Aldersbrook Park London Borough of Enfield

The MPGA were pleased to support the Friends group who asked for funds to improve the planting in the park, and add trees to the picnic area to grow and cast some much-needed shade in years to come. Enfield Council provided assistance with preparing the ground and planting, and volunteers are monitoring and watering regularly. Where a flower bed next to a children's play area had been damaged in the past, this was planted up with grasses that it was hoped would prove tougher. Local residents are also grateful that the new planting helps to address their safety concerns by deterring access to the boundary fence and their gardens beyond.



Latchmere Recreation Ground, RB Kingston upon Thames

Latchmere Recreation Ground Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

The MPGA grant went towards the purchase of flowering bulbs and raised beds to complete a Sensory Garden area of the recreation ground. Hundreds of people pass through this area on a daily basis and the Friends Group has around 15 volunteers who maintain the horticultural features of the space.

SCHOOLS

Freezywater St. George's CE Primary School

London Borough of Enfield

The school applied for funds to brighten up a dull playground and brick wall with hanging baskets filled with colourful plants. They reported that once the MPGA funding had been received, the children were excited and raring to go. They knew this was going to change the playground for the better. The planting has had a very positive effect on parents and visitors as well as the children. They are talking about, touching and smelling the plants.

Most importantly, the children are caring for the plants: asking when they can water them, advising other children not to harm the plants and being protective of what they have worked so hard to achieve, asking questions about what type of plants, are they winter or summer plants and about the bulbs in the planters. The parents have commented on how amazing the school looks and what a difference it has made to the playground, transforming it from a regular playground to one that attracts nature.



Freezywater St. George's CE Primary School
LB Enfield

North Beckton Primary School

London Borough of Newham

MPGA funding contributed towards the creation of an "Edible Playground" within the school grounds. All the classes have their own growing beds in order to learn about the complete growing process, and grow up to three crops each. Over 600 children, including a number with special educational needs, have started to learn about healthy growing and healthy eating.

In addition, at the start and end of each day, the parents are all able to access this space to either use it as a quiet area to relax ahead of their children coming out of school, or, once they have picked up their children, they are able to look at the plants and crops with them.

This has resulted in families from different backgrounds, often with no common language, now having a shared area and interest encouraging them to socialise together. To celebrate this achievement, the school had an official 'Edible Playground Opening' where all the children showed their learning to the various guests and were able to articulate what they had accomplished during the year.

St. Mary's RC Primary School

London Borough of Wandsworth

St. Mary's RC Primary School is located in a built-up area close to Battersea Power Station, where current high volumes of construction work are exacerbating already high levels of pollution. Following the sad death of a very young pupil due to sudden illness, the school approached the MPGA for funding to create a small memorial garden of raised beds filled with flowers and herbs in a previously unused outside space. We funded this project in full, and were delighted to receive reports that three vulnerable pupils helped build the new beds, which are due to be planted up in the autumn.

This heart-felt project has given the pupils a sense of pride and ownership, and they now look forward to spending more time in this space.



St. Mary's RC Primary School pupils building raised bed, LB Wandsworth

St. Augustine's High School

London Borough of Westminster

The Special Educational Needs team at St Augustine's applied to the MPGA for funds to create a sensory garden within their existing and expanding school garden. Collaborating with the local College Park special school, students using the garden benefit by improving their social and emotional skills, and ameliorating their behavioural and learning difficulties. Outdoor learning sessions for the rest of the school focus on strategies regarding emotional management and formation of positive social skills.

In addition, the garden enhances and supports local wildlife by the inclusion of wildlife and bug houses. The MPGA were pleased to support the application and awarded funds for buying plants, as well as offering the school two garden benches.



St. Augustine's CE School
LB Westminster

St. Thomas the Apostle College

London Borough of Southwark

St. Thomas the Apostle College in Southwark is a state school with the unusual facility of an on-site swimming pool which it shares on a regular basis with eleven local primary schools. However, as Deputy Head Teacher Polly George explains, 'the entry to the pool (which is accessible to wheelchair users) is currently very bleak and harsh. There is no greenery and it would make the whole area so much more attractive and welcoming if we were able to put pots and planting into place.'

The MPGA approved an application to fund two large planters and appropriate shrubs, which should improve the entrance for the hundreds of children who pass by on their way to their swimming lessons every week.

WAR MEMORIAL GARDENS

Christchurch Gardens

London Borough of Wandsworth

Christchurch Gardens in Battersea is a former burial ground and was laid out as a public garden in 1885 by Fanny Wilkinson, the landscape gardener of the MPGA at the time. Christchurch Gardens is now a very attractive Second World War Memorial Garden. Part of the layout features an Arts and Crafts style shelter and displays a plaque to commemorate the men, women and children of Battersea who lost their lives during the Second World War. The triangular garden, with roses, trees, clematis montana and lawn, is surrounded by hedging and the original railings.

The Friends requested wheelchair friendly picnic benches made from recycled plastic. This seemed to us at the MPGA to be a particularly well thought out grant application and we were subsequently delighted to learn that the benches have been put to good use and gardens made more accessible and appealing to the local community.



Christchurch Memorial Gardens,
LB Wandsworth

ADDITIONAL AWARDS

Open Garden Squares Weekend

Open Garden Squares Weekend is London's most popular garden event giving exclusive access to some of the most exciting and original gardens and green spaces in the capital, as well as an opportunity to take part in a variety of exclusive events and activities. In 2019, more than 130 gardens were open, many of which are usually closed to the public.

OGSW is organised by the London Parks & Gardens Trust, a registered charity which relies very much on volunteers and donations. This is their main fundraiser, which generated 46,000 visits over two days, and which the MPGA is once again delighted to support.

New gardens taking part for the first time in 2019 included the Aga Khan Islamic Gardens at King's Cross, Bell House Dulwich, Knight's Walk Community Garden, Montague Street Gardens Bloomsbury, Oasis Farm and the Community Garden Cluster at Kensington Olympia.

Several of the gardens which feature in the OGSW event have been helped by the MPGA with grants or bulbs over the years. These include Barbican Wildlife Garden, Inner Temple Garden, King Henry's Wharf Garden, Olden Gardens, Phoenix Garden, Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability, St Joseph's Hospice, Walworth Garden and many more.

This flagship event, which gives pleasure to so many people, celebrates the beauty, ecology and value of London's parks, gardens and squares and we are delighted to be associated with this special weekend.



Walworth Garden, LB Southwark



Regent's University London,
City of Westminster

London City Farms & Community Gardens

The London City Farms & Community Gardens held their 21st Annual London Harvest Festival on 28 September 2019 and, as for a number of previous years, the MPGA funded two of the awards. Phoenix Farm received the MPGA prize for the best display of produce, and Surrey Docks won the prize for Best Display by a City Farm. MPGA committee member Jodie Jones attended the event and presented the winners with their certificates. In addition, this year the MPGA provided funding for an area specifically set up to meet the needs of older people who take part in community gardens projects, including additional seating and a herbal workshop. This proved a popular innovation which it is hoped can be repeated in future years.



Surrey Docks won the prize for Best Display
by a City Farm (picture courtesy John Harris)

London in Bloom

Formed in 1967, London in Bloom provides regional awards and forms part of the RHS Britain in Bloom campaign. Over 350 parks, gardens and communities were judged during the summer across London. The annual awards are given to celebrate the efforts of communities, parks and individuals who do so much to make London a special place to live.



Strawberry Hill House, LB Richmond-upon-Thames

Apart from supporting this event, the MPGA also sponsors two prizes. The first, the Heritage Park of the Year Award was won by Chiswick House and Gardens Trust for the fourth consecutive year. The judges said 'Overall, the site is exemplary and an asset to those fortunate to have it as a local green space and visitors from further afield.

The second award supported by the MPGA is the coveted Common of the Year award, which for the third year in a row was won by Wimbledon Common, who also achieved a Gold Award in the London in Bloom competition.

The Gold Award is presented by the judges to all sites considered by them to have reached a level which is classed as 'outstanding'.

Marked under a number of categories which include the welfare of park users, access, facilities, maintenance (including control of litter, graffiti and vandalism), maintenance of hard landscape features, environmental sustainability, conservation and community involvement, the Gold Award is presented by the London In Bloom judges to all sites considered by them to have reached a level which is classed as 'outstanding'. Strawberry Hill House pictured here is in this category.



Wimbledon Common, LB Merton



Chiswick House, LB Hounslow

BULBS FOR LONDON

In the autumn of 2019 under the Bulbs for London scheme, 40,000 bulbs were supplied to 100 sites across the London boroughs, with a high number of applications coming from Barnet, Camden, Hounslow, Newham and Southwark.

Once again we thank Taylors Bulbs of Spalding for their amazing generosity. Their bulbs are of the highest quality and it's not surprising therefore that each year we receive an overwhelming response for the bulbs from a wide variety of green spaces across London. This year these included parks, squares, hospitals, hospices, social housing estates, cemeteries, allotments, streetscapes, churches, fire stations and train stations. Bulbs were also supplied to ten schools, each in a different Borough, as well as three children's charities plus four City Farms.

London's parks are well represented - 18 in all - as well as the Barbican Wild Life Garden, Strawberry Hill and Queens Parade in Kingston, which is a very attractive historical riverside site. One group which was new to us this year was the London Almshouses. There are over 50 in London and we supplied bulbs to six of them, again all in different Boroughs.

One of the most interesting requests came from Alice Roberts of CPRE London. She requested bulbs for several 'parklets' in Hackney which she has been instrumental in establishing. It's a very new and original project; the parklets sit on the pavement and look rather like raised beds. Alice is hoping to roll this scheme out across other London Boroughs, so it's one to watch.

In Spring 2020 many of the Friends Groups who would normally be very active emailed us to say they were not able to organise their usual volunteer sessions due to the Covid lockdown. However, when the photographs came in, the bulbs were blooming beautifully, totally unaware of the mayhem around them! Consequently we received many heartfelt messages of thanks, saying that during this difficult period the flowering bulbs had been very uplifting and a symbol of hope and cheer.

We were also delighted with the publicity which appeared on Twitter, for both the MPGA and Taylors. Our thanks go to the Friends' Groups, the Volunteers and the London gardening organisations, but most of all to Taylors who are instrumental in making this scheme such a success.



*Bell House Education Centre, Bromley
LB Bromley*



*Queen's Promenade, Kingston upon Thames
LB Kingston*



Ravenscroft Park, LB Tower Hamlets

VISIT TO THE CHARTERHOUSE (Sutton's Hospital)

On 12th September 2019, we were very fortunate to be invited to the Charterhouse, one of London's oldest hidden treasures and a real oasis in the centre of the City near Smithfield. The Charterhouse was founded by Sir Walter de Manny as a Carthusian Priory back in 1347. In 1611 Thomas Sutton, a wealthy businessman, bought the Charterhouse and later it served as a private mansion, boys school and, until now, an almshouse. It is currently home to over 40 residents - men and women - who are still known as 'Brothers'.

Charterhouse Square is pentagonal and was originally laid out in the 17th Century. In the last few years the square has been enlarged and redesigned by Todd Longstaff-Gowen, making a very attractive and green setting for the Charterhouse, which is situated on the north side.



Entrance to the Charterhouse Cloisters

Our party of 28 comprised MPGA Committee members, members of the Association, volunteers and other friends. The group congregated at the entrance of the Charterhouse, which is situated in seven acres, and apart from the gardens consists of ancient buildings, cobbled courtyards, a museum, cloister and chapel.

We were welcomed by Development Director, Dominic Tickell and Head Gardener, Kate Robinson. We then went through to the garden where Dominic gave us a very interesting talk on the history of the Charterhouse. In the first cobbled courtyard, Washhouse Court, we stopped to admire the *Magnolia Sieboldii*, which was donated by us in March 2019 to take the place of a cherry tree which had died.



Magnolia Sieboldii, Washhouse Court

Kate went on to explain that the Charterhouse garden is laid out in a sequence of courtyard gardens, reminiscent of a series of rooms. As we wandered from 'room to room' we were struck by the peace and tranquillity of these beautiful gardens, which were restored and transformed by Claire Davies during her term as Head Gardener from 2009-2018. Kate Robinson has now taken up the reigns. She has a wealth of experience and it will be interesting to watch how the garden evolves in her capable hands.

As we walked around the grounds in the sunshine, the serenity and overall sentiment were evident. Fortunately there is very little traffic noise from the surrounding roads, which helps to make it a true oasis. The feeling very much evokes an English country garden, featuring a pond, roses, herbaceous borders and several mulberry trees. There are also a wide variety of garden herbs grown here, which are used in the kitchen every day.

The largest of the enclosed gardens is Preachers Court, where the Queen's Mulberry is situated. This particular tree dates from 1840, not one of the oldest in London, but it's said to be a cutting from Milton's Mulberry at Christchurch College, Cambridge. By tradition, every year the Master and Brothers of Charterhouse offer a basket of the first ripe mulberries from this tree to the Lord Mayor of London.

Following our tour of the garden, and a short visit to the Chapel and Hall, we were kindly hosted for tea by Dominic Tickell in the historic Dining Room. We reminisced and marvelled at the beautiful gardens and the part that the Charterhouse has played in the nation's history since 1347. Usually the Charterhouse gardens can be visited by booking on line or as part of the National Gardens Scheme.



The Queen's Mulberry Tree, Preachers Court

2020 UPDATE

Archives

Some of the old Annual Reports have been through quite a journey before they land on our desk. To date, we have discovered Reports in at least twelve different libraries or archives in the UK and the US. It has been very time consuming but we've been helped enormously by Leanne Newman, who is assisting us to put together a complete set of Reports from 1882 to the present. We thank Leanne for all her time and effort on our behalf.

The first meeting of the MPGA was held on 20 November 1882 and we have a copy of the handwritten Minutes. However, deciphering them has not been easy but thankfully from 1883 onwards the reports were printed. Most of them, from 1883 up until World War Two, are now in our possession - the two exceptions being 1889 and 1903, which to date have proved elusive. They must be out there somewhere, so we carry on the search.

During the second world war, not surprisingly, no Reports were printed in 1944, 1945 and 1946. It seems that this was due to, amongst other things, a shortage of paper, although financial statements were produced. We are still missing the Reports for the years 1975 to 1986. We were making progress with these, but with the Covid-19 closures it's become more difficult. We're looking forward to getting back to our detective work as early as possible.

Blog

Most years since 2014, our loyal blogger Marc Owen has written two blogs on our behalf, in spite of a heavy workload and his studies for an MA in Garden and Landscape History. His blogs are original, interesting,

well informed and accompanied by brilliant photographs. However, like all of us, he has been restricted by the Covid 19 lockdown and not been able to travel far. We hope that Marc will be able to get going again soon, but in the meantime his previous MPGA blogs can be found on our website www.mpga.org.uk.

Marc also publishes another blog - marcsgardens.blogspot.com - in which he writes on various topics and raises some interesting questions for the horticultural fraternity.

Database

We have continued to make good progress with the database, thanks in the main to Dr Hazel Russman who has been a valuable asset to the MPGA. At the moment she is entering data from the Annual Reports and, when one considers some of the early Reports are well over 100 pages long, this has been very challenging. We are enormously grateful for all the assistance that Dr Russman has given us and for her professional help and advice.

As reported last year, the early database trial was disappointing, mainly because our original designer could not give the project sufficient time, although his initial input was much appreciated. Moving on, we turned to our webmaster, Justin Swabey, who is also an excellent database designer and has solved several of our problems and got us back on track. We are delighted to report that, with Justin and Hazel collaborating on this project, the database is now progressing very well.

Blue Plaque Application

In 2018 we lodged our application with English Heritage for a Blue Plaque to be erected in Bloomsbury for Fanny Wilkinson, the first professional Landscape Gardener

in England, who was employed by our Founder, Lord Meath, in 1884. She worked for the MPGA for 20 years, during which time she designed more than 74 public gardens in London. We were advised by English Heritage that their decision could take up to two years. However we know that our application was shortlisted earlier this year and English Heritage are now carrying out their necessary research. We had hoped for a decision by the end of 2020, but with the Covid-19 shutdown we may well have to wait longer.

Fairchild's Garden

We were advised that work would start in April 2020 on the Fairchild's Garden project in Hackney. Unfortunately, due to the Covid 19 shutdown, it seems that this has been delayed. Our Chairman, Rex Thornborough, is following this closely and we hope to have better news shortly.



We have built up a good Twitter account and now have almost 1150 followers. We encourage all parks and gardens to join Twitter, as a few words and a photograph can relay a strong message. Several gardens under threat have used Twitter to very good effect. We certainly value the coverage Twitter gives us. It allows us to keep abreast of much that is going on all over London, in parks, gardens and green spaces - large or small.

VISCOUNT DAVIDSON OBITUARY



It is with great sadness that we record the death of our Vice President Viscount Davidson in October 2019.

His association with the MPGA originated with his mother, the former Frances Dickenson, later Baroness Northchurch, who was also a Vice President.

Malcom Davidson was the second son of the first Viscount Davidson, and succeeded his brother as the 3rd Viscount in 2012. After graduation from Pembroke College, Cambridge he distinguished himself as an expert on English furniture and a fine art dealer with a keen interest in music and a fine nose for wine. He later moved to Spain as Sotheby's local representative and lived for some years near Algeciras, where amongst other things, he bred ostriches. He returned to England, and to his house at Terling in Essex, in the early 2000s, rejoined the MPGA and served as a Vice President.

Malcolm was a keen and knowledgeable gardener and a great supporter of the MPGA, always available and full of sound advice. He was a charming and delightful companion who never hid his strong sense of humour. We miss his knowledge, his loyalty, his company and his practical advice.

GARDENS AND GREEN SPACES UNDER THREAT

We continue to monitor gardens and green spaces under threat. We lend our support in a variety of ways - by providing a grant, a letter of support or some historical background. Recently our Chairman, Rex Thornborough, has written on behalf of two campaigns - Greendale Fields Park and Old Paradise Gardens. The threats which we highlight below have been brought to our attention, but there are many others. We are always ready to investigate and help if we can.

As we have reported in previous years, **Christ Church Gardens** in Spitalfields is a very important historic site with which we have been involved since 1891. In 2018 we supported their second appeal against the judicial court ruling allowing a large illegal new building within the churchyard to remain in situ. Fortunately, the appeal court ruled that the building must be demolished and the site restored as public open space. However, it is a very complex issue and is still ongoing. We have been dealing with Christine Waite at Christ Church Spitalfields and recently received the following email from her.

Successful legal action supported by MPGA resulted in the 2019 Restoration Order to remove a large, illegal building from the middle of **Christ Church Gardens** (0.38 hectares), a Public Open Space Trust area, and consecrated land in Spitalfields.

MPGA originally created the Gardens in 1891 under the Open Spaces Acts. By July 2020 Tower Hamlets, statutory manager, had re-opened nearly half the Gardens, the pandemic having underscored how vital green space is to public health, especially in densely populated inner London.

Being Open Space Trust land and the consecrated Setting integral to Spitalfields'

Grade 1 listed National Heritage Asset should have been enough to guard against illegal development, but apparently not these days! Thus MPGA's continuing commitment to gardens is precious indeed.

Burgess Park is a large, well established inner city park of 57 hectares in Southwark. The Friends have mounted a very strong campaign 'Don't put Burgess Park in the Shade', as they are worried about an application to build a ten storey high development along Park House Street, adjacent to the park. The proposed buildings are north facing and will cast long shadows across the park, affecting about one third of the width of the park at certain times of the year. This will infringe on a newly planted wildlife area, completed in 2019 at the cost of £3.5m, where wild flowers and pollinators will die if deprived of sunlight. Burgess Park is a jewel in this heavily populated area. However, the proposed development would change the character of the park and have a negative impact on green space, biodiversity, and people's health and well-being.

London's **Green Belt** is under an even greater threat since the Government recently announced that they propose to 'build'. London garden organisations like ourselves have fought for many years to protect the green belt, amongst them CPR protect the green belt, including particularly CPRE London, which works with several local 'watches'. They also keep all interested groups updated with regular Newsletters and Twitter posts.

We are also kept informed by the London Green Belt Council, who are presently studying the Government's new proposals. The Council meets three times a year to update Parliament and decision makers and to challenge any proposed development on green belt land. They have a very active committee, and bring together over 100 interested parties - councils, residents, environmental groups etc - who, like

ourselves, are passionate in preventing the erosion of these much treasured areas and to preserve their rural character. We are mindful that, as London grows into a higher density city, more people will rely on protected green spaces for the many benefits they provide.

Greendale Fields Park The friends of **Dog Kennel Wood** have been leading a campaign, heavily supported by several London gardening organisations, including ourselves, the London Friends of Green Spaces Network and CPRE London. The campaigners have been trying to stop the building of a 4,000 capacity stadium on Greendale Park. Currently, the present stadium is due to be demolished and flats built on the land, and it is proposed that a new stadium be built on Greendale Park. This has caused a huge amount of concern in the Camberwell area as it is an encroachment on Metropolitan Open Land and would destroy a much valued wild green space which can never be replaced.

Our Chairman, Rex Thornborough, has written to the Mayor of London voicing our concerns that the destruction of any green space is unacceptable and goes against all logic. We have just heard (July 2020) that the development is going ahead, but hoping that the Mayor will reconsider and look at a suggested alternative site for the stadium on a nearby car park.

Highgate CAAC (Conservation Area Advisory Committee), together with the Friends of Millfield Lane Terrace, are still awaiting the outcome of the planning application to build a five house development near the borders of Hampstead Heath, which would front directly onto the bird sanctuary pond. The application is still under review and, if it goes through, the rural character and ecology of this site will be lost. We very much hope that Camden Council will ensure that this area of the Heath is protected.

Jessell Green in Loughton was saved from development by the very active and well coordinated 'Save Jessell Green' campaign. Councillor Chris Pond welcomed the news that the Green was saved for the present, and suggested the campaigners should turn their efforts towards preserving it beyond this local planned period ending in 2033. As a result, the group is now known as 'Protect Jessell Green' and is aiming for Village Green Status to ensure that there will be no future threat of development. This is very good news all round and we congratulate the Friends and other campaigners.

Manford Way Park and Bocket Way Park. Sadly the residents of Hainault were not able to stop sixty prefabricated container homes being built on Manford Way Park. Although they mounted a very strong and well put together campaign, the court ruled against them. The residents feel the outcome is an eyesore and, although this is a temporary housing scheme (ten years), they are naturally concerned that this will lead to a more permanent development.

Fortunately the nearby Bocket Way Park green space which was earmarked for similar treatment, did not go ahead. It is now hoped that the repairs needed to the park, especially the play area, will proceed quickly as at the moment parents feel it is unsafe.

Old Paradise Gardens is on the Albert Embankment close to the Garden Museum in Lambeth. The proposed towers would place the park in shadow for the majority of the day, remove the warmth and sunlight that plants need, and would create an uninviting space instead of an open and sunny green area for visitors. The shadows cast by these unacceptably tall buildings would also affect the gardens of the Garden Museum and Lambeth Palace. In granting this permission, it seems that the correct procedures were not followed, either by Lambeth Council or the Mayor of London.

In support of this campaign, our Chairman, Rex Thornborough, has written a letter to the Ministers concerned.

It is now hoped that an independent enquiry will be granted by the Secretary of State as this would establish the facts and allow a properly informed decision to be made.

Save Lee Marshes is a local campaign group which keeps watch on the **Lee Valley Regional Park area**. The campaign that we highlighted last year against a new enlarged ice rink at Leyton Marsh is still under review. To date there has been no conclusion. However, the LVRA is also fighting another project - the Gasworks Development - which will have a negative impact on the openness of the marshes and Jubilee Park. This is important as the marshes are Metropolitan Open Land, with the same status as the Green Belt, and as such has to be protected.

Udney Park is a precious green space in Teddington, originally donated by Lord Beaverbrook, which was designated for amateur sport. Thousands of local residents who came together to wage an extensive campaign against the developers and, after a long awaited judgement, were finally rewarded with the news that the planning permission to build on the playing fields had been refused. The campaigners fought long and hard for five years to achieve this result. It is hoped that the land will now be sold to the community under the 'Asset of Community Value' legislation, to preserve all of Udney Park for ecology and community use.

Victoria Tower Gardens The London Parks Trust is leading the campaign against the building of a Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in Victoria Tower Gardens next to Parliament. In this they are supported by many other campaign groups, including 'Save Victoria Tower Gardens', the Thorney Island Society and ourselves.

The Trust contends that the proposals represent an exceptional intrusion into a very important green public space.

All supporters have made it clear that they are in favour of a new Holocaust Memorial, but that Victoria Tower Gardens is not the right place. Although Westminster Council turned down this application, the Government seem determined to push ahead with the project. It's a very worrying situation and the Trust have called for a judicial review, which will be heard at the High Court.

We've been following and watching proceedings at **Warren Farm** for a very long time. This 60 acre site is designated as Metropolitan Open Land and as such should be protected to the same level as Green Belt. It has been under threat from Ealing Council, who intended to hand over the land to Queens Park Rangers for them to develop a private sports facility, with corporate headquarters, including a large car parking area. Several times it looked as if all was lost, but we are delighted to report that in July 2020 QPR abandoned their plans to go ahead with the scheme. This has been an incredible and long drawn out campaign, kept alive by local residents, the 'Save Warren Farm' group, Hanwell Nature and many others.

The next step is to ascertain if Ealing Council still intend to build on this space or if they have other plans. They have pulled out of the judicial review which the campaigners had put in place. We hope this means that the land will not be built on and become a Nature Reserve, but we wait to hear.

MPGA FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

31 DECEMBER 2019

Statement of Financial Activities

For the year ended 31 December 2019

Notes	£	Income £	Capital £	Total 2019 £	Total 2018 £
INCOMING RESOURCES					
Gross dividends received		13,098	-	13,098	12,620
Deposit account interest and Gift Aid interest		73	-	73	46
Subscriptions with Gift Aid Recoveries		775	-	775	13,081
Donations and subscriptions without Gift Aid		4,070	-	4,070	4,230
Total Incoming resources		18,016	-	18,016	29,977
RESOURCES EXPENDED					
Grants, affiliation fees & London Spade	2	20,670	-	20,670	19,310
Annual General Meeting		2,210	-	2,210	2,484
Office expenses – incl. postage, stationery, travel and sundries		1,561	-	1,561	1,737
		23,531	-	24,441	26,822
Net incoming/(outgoing)		(6,425)		(6,425)	(6,446)
Gains/(Losses) on investments			48,775	48,775	(24,057)
Net movement in funds		(6,425)	48,775	42,350	(17,611)
Balances brought forward at 1 January 2019		17,628	284,292	301,920	319,531
Balances carried forward at 31 December 2019		11,203	333,067	344,270	301,920

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 2019 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 2019 and of its incoming resources and application of resources for the year ended 31st December 2019.

John Clark FCA Chartered Accountant

Balance Sheet

31 December 2019

Notes	2019 £	2018 £
FIXED ASSETS		
Investments	333,067	284,292
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	155	2,616
Cash at bank and in hand	14,815	21,479
Total Current Assets	14,970	24,095
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Creditors	3,767	6,467
	11,203	17,628
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	£344,270	£301,920
REPRESENTED BY:		
Capital Fund	333,067	284,292
Accumulated Income Fund	11,203	17,628
TOTAL FUNDS	£344,270	£301,920

Approved

W B Fraser
Chairman

Mrs M Dowbiggin
Hon. Treasurer

Note to the Accounts

31 DECEMBER 2019

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

Friends of Aldersbrook Park	1,000
All Saints Margaret Street	384
Father Thames Trust	710
Sutton Hospital in Charterhouse	545
Belmont Infant School	350
London Parks and Garden Trust	1,000
St Mary's RC Primary	350
Sandhurst Primary	250
Battersea Community Gardens	268
Freezywater St George's CE Primary	400
Grow Mayow Community Garden	1,145
London City Farms and Community Gardens	600
Crofton Park Railway Garden	435
Southwark Cathedral Development Trust	834
North Beckton Primary	817
Friends of Edward Square	188
London in Bloom	1,070
Princess Alice Garden Barts Guild	500
Friends of Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park	848
Harington Scheme	596
River House Trust	301
Marble Hill Park	1,127
Christchurch Gardens	1,102
Norman Park the Community Peace Garden	1,500
Hargrave Road Bovingdon Close and Gresham Place	
Neighbourhood Watch	928
St Thomas the Apostle College	652
St Peter's Church Walworth	860
Friends of Latchmere Recreation	426
Garden Museum Old Paradise Gardens	890
St Augustine's CE High School	450

Affiliations

London Forum	19.00
Fields in Trust	50.00
London Spade Engraving	75.00

Total £20,670

Note to the Accounts

31 December 2019

3. FIXED ASSETS

As at 1 January 2019
Realised and unrealised gains & losses

As at 31 December 2019

Holding in Units

Cost of investments
31 December 2019

31 December 2019

4. DEBTORS

Tax recoveries due

5. CREDITORS

St Paul's Church Yard
Friends of Gipsy Hill
Corsica Street
Olden Community Garden
Nomura
Willesden Town Garden Ecology Area
Friends of Beverley Park
St Thomas the Apostle
St Peter's Church Walworth
Friends of Latchmere Recreation Ground
Garden Museum Old Paradise Gardens
St Augustine's CE High School
S Brihi

6. CASH at BANK and in HAND

TSB Bank
COIF
Metro

Equities Investment Fund for Charities	COIF Income Units	COIF Deposit Account	Total 2019	2018
£	£	£	£	£
133,289	150,903	100	284,292	287,138
22,151	26,624		48,775	21,211
£155,440	£177,527	£100	£333,067	£308,349
9,360	10,486.77			
£5,881	£116,622		£122,503	
£5,881	£116,622		£122,503	
			£155	£2,616
				1,404
				500
				426
				800
				2,005
				832
				500
			652	
			860	
			426	
			889	
			450	
			490	
			Total	£6,467
				237
				10,802
				6,316
				9,677
				8,262
				1,000
			Total	£21,479

Included in the Metro account is £2,000 received from the Worshipful Company of Gardeners for 2020.

Note to the Accounts *continued*

31 December 2019

7. COMMITMENTS AT YEAR END

Firm Commitments

London in Bloom
London in Bloom Awards
Open Garden Squares Weekend (LPGT)
London City Farms Prizes
Fairchild Garden
Greenwich Park

Contribution £	Borough
1,000	London wide
70	London wide
1,000	London wide
300	varies
10,000	Hackney
2,500	

Firm commitments are subject to projects, events proceeding as planned.

Approved

Rex Thornborough
Chairman

Mrs M Dowbiggin
Hon. Treasurer

1. ACCOUNTING POLICIES

- 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.
- Dividends, interest and life subscriptions receivable are credited when received.
- 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.
- Contributions received as a result of appeals for capital are credited to the Capital Account.
- 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

ADDITIONAL NOTE: 2019 MPGA ACCOUNTS

The 2019 Accounts refer to a period before the Covid pandemic and were prepared and inspected before the outbreak. Since that outbreak and the period of Lockdown which started in March 2020, there has been a material change in the value of our Investments. Along with all other investors, the income we might expect to receive from them in the current year will be significantly reduced. This is a situation likely to have affected all Charities. Our investments are in well-spread pooled funds which should recover in value when a general recovery takes place, the timing of which is uncertain.

Whilst it is also uncertain how badly our income will suffer in the future, we have reluctantly taken the decision to defer new grant applications for the time being until the way ahead becomes a little more clear. We believe at the present time that our cash resources are sufficient to see us through the next 12 months without having to realise any investments.



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 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



GET INVOLVED AND JOIN US

Name _____
 Address _____
 _____ Post Code _____
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 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.*

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RETURN FORM WITH CHEQUE/BANKER'S ORDER TO:

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