

Golden Lane Gardeners Annual Report 2011/2012

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Introduction

This report outlines the achievements of the Golden Lane Gardening Group (GGG) for the financial year 2011/12 and outlines future plans. The GGG had been in existence for over five years; many of the projects listed here were commenced in previous years.

We believe this report is timely in the light of the 'Golden Lane Estate Plans & Agreements 2012/13' currently being consulted upon. In this regard, we would welcome the inclusion of some of this report's contents.

We would like to suggest the inclusion of a statement to reflect the principal objective of the GGG as specified in its constitution (Appendix1):

To work with the GGG, to enhance the open/green spaces and biodiversity of the Golden Lane Estate and to involve local residents in this enhancement

We suggest this is written under Objective 5 of the Estate Plans and Agreement ie: *To maintain open spaces so that the estate remains an attractive place to be*

Achievements for 2011/12

GGG's principal projects for year ending 2012 have been:

- The allotment, which now comprises 31 bags, with an estimated 50 people taking part in the project. The scheme was extended in spring 2011 and we hope to add an eight more bags to the space in spring 2012, now the contractors Quinn have vacated the site. The Gardening Group currently has 18 people on the waiting list. The scheme has proved enormously popular and is still attracting new requests, each new growing season. There is certainly enough interest from residents to warrant a second site on the Estate. The Gardening Group would like

to request working with GLERA in looking into the options of further potential space to expand the project on the Estate.

- The Biodiversity strip, Basterfield Lawn
- Cleaning of pond and pruning roses rear of Bayer garden
- The hosting/organising of a number of allotment open days and community events to involve people/ensure the waiting list is up-to-date

Members of the GGG are also active in:

- The Community Café via projects initiated through Wastewatch
- Market Days in 2008, 2009 and 2010
- Various talks and events hosted in the community centre

Consultations

GGG undertook a series of consultations on Market Days held in 2008, 2009 and 2010. These consultations took the form of maps and plans and people recorded the 'good the bad and the ugly'. Written results of all three events can be seen in Appendix 2; some of the plans can be seen on the Golden Lane website at:

http://www.goldenlaneestate.org/photo?xgi=&test-locale=&exposeKeys=&xg_pw=&xgsi=&groupId=&groupUrl=&xg_disable_customizations=&page=22

In general, most residents loved their estate, but thought there was room for improvement, not least to the estate's 'boring' open spaces. The ideas for: an allotment, the biodiversity strip, improvements to Great Arthur House roof garden, better play provision, more trees and better planting, the upgrading of Hatfield House gardens, the encouragement of wildlife – all came from these consultations. A principal frustration was that 'just one complaint could spoil the project for the many'.

GGG was reassured that a parallel survey carried out by the Corporation (Appendix 3) supported and encouraged these ideas.

Finances

The focus for all finances has been the allotment. The first phase (2010/11) was financed through Capital Growth funds raised by GGG. Funding from GLERA in 2011/12 was used to extend the allotment (Phase 2). As in the previous year, GLERA has also funded the annual RS subscription and the insurance as well as some additional some tools and compost. A good quality compost with added nutrients, such as John Innes, is needed to revitalise the growing bags each season.

The total cost of both phases of the allotment amounts to £1963.25. Just under 50% of these costs were raised by GGG.

Source	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	Totals
Capital Growth	970.00	0	0	970
GLERA	164.25	92	134.00 603.00	993.25
Totals	1134.25	92	737.00	1963.25

GGG is now aware that funds previously designated for gardening have now been designated for 'community' use including gardening, and that it is now required to seek approval for any funds from GLERA. It is also aware of the need, where practical, to obtain three quotes for competitive tendering purposes.

Aims and Proposals for 2012/13

GGG's aims for the coming year are to:

- (1) Maintain, improve and extend the allotment (see action plan below)
- (2) Pursue last year's successful biodiversity strip on Basterfield Lawn
- (3) Work with GLERA and the estate contractor to improve open spaces and renew/replace plants damaged in 2011/12, e.g. standard rose by pond; planting on rotunda
- (4) Develop a programme of community events to involve residents eg social activities, bulb planting days, community planting, and talks
- (5) Initiate and carry out a scheme to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in partnership with residents, CoL, GLERA and the Diamond Jubilee Planning Group
- (6) Prepare an Open Space Strategy for the estate in consultation with residents, GLERA and CoL to improve and enhance the estate's public spaces for residents and wildlife

(7) Continue to fund raise and work with a range of new partners: Landlife; London Wildlife Trust; Eden Project; Woodland Trust – Jubilee Forest/ Diamond Forest/Community Free packs of Trees

	ALLOTMENT BUDGET	cost
1	Eight additional bags @ £65 each including bag, soil and delivery	520
2	RHS subscription and insurance paid to December 2012	135
3	Fork and trowel set	12
4	Hose on reel – + new tap connector*	42
5	Secateurs	15
6	Leaf rake	13
7	Shears	17
8	4 Tier mini- greenhouse – so residents can grow better seedlings	60
9	Seed trays pack of 10 half size trays -pack of 5 seed tray lids x 2 for greenhouse	18
10	Garden sieve	4
11	Levingtons Multi-Purpose Garden compost with Added John Innes, suitable for seeds > mature plants, veg etc, 50litres @7.99 each (last year from Camden Garden Centre) 15 bags + 10£ delivery = 129.85, .50 bag per allotment bag	130
12	Suttons Vegetable plug collections – 86 plants (18 Plug Plants of Beetroot Boltardy, 9 Cabbage Frostie, 9 Cauliflower All Year Round, 25 Leek Musselburgh, 25 Onion Santero) plus packs of seeds of Broccoli Purple Sprouting, Runner Bean Armstrong, Carrot Resistafly and Parsnip Tender & True.	10
13	Suttons Salad plug plants: Cucumber Green Fingers, Tomato Fantasio & Tomato Cherry Belle, 18 plug plants each of Lettuce Mix and Beetroot Boltardy plus 1 FREE packet of seed each of Carrot Amsterdam Forcing 3, Spring Onion White Lisbon & Radish French Breakfast 3	13
13	Salad and veg seeds @1,85 each –lets go for pluglets and residents can buy own seeds, they do anyway	15
14	Rotating composter 1. Envirocycle Composter OR 2. Tumbleweed Compost Turner see notes below (this ensures that garden waste is recycled into compost and site is tidy) see Appendix 4	150
	TOTAL	1155

APPENDIX 1

Golden Gardeners Group

Constitution adopted 04 March 2010 and amended 08 August 2011

- (1) *Name*: Golden Lane Gardeners (GGG)
- (2) *Objective*: to enhance the open/green spaces and biodiversity of the Golden Lane Estate and to involve local residents in this enhancement
- (3) *Membership* of the GGG is open to any resident of the Golden Lane Estate interested in gardening; a record of membership will be held by the group. There will be no subscription fee
- (4) *The Committee*: The affairs of the GGG shall be conducted by a Committee comprising officers of the Group and other members
- (5) The following named officers include: Roberto Mingrino; Tim Chapple; Liz Davies; Bev Bytheway; Jane Beckett; Anthony Best; Deborah Cherry. The group has decided not adopted a formal structure
- (6) *Committee Meetings*: Where possible, the Committee will meet regularly on the second Thursday of each calendar month. Committee meetings will be chaired on a rota basis and notes taken and circulated to officers
- (7) *GLERA*: Where possible, updates of the activities of the Group will reported to GLERA by an officer
- (8) An Annual General Meeting (AGM) shall be held on the last Thursday of March, will be open to the wider membership of GGG and will seek to:
 - a. Approve the Committee's Annual Report on the work of the Group during the preceding year (if appropriate)
 - b. Elect Committee officers
 - c. Approve financial statements signed by an Auditor (if appropriate)
 - d. Note any other matters for consideration
- (9) *Election of Officers*: officers shall be elected at the Annual General Meeting of GGG and shall hold office until the end of the next Annual General Meeting.
- (10) *Extraordinary General Meetings*: The Committee has the power to convene an Extraordinary General Meeting at any time with 28 days notice.

APPENDIX 2 - CONSULTATIONS

General

- (1) Lots of people interested in doing things – don't let one complaint spoil it for others
- (2) A few architects obsessive about aesthetics, shouldn't stop people doing things – it's a living estate and everyone has a view. You can still work within the listing.
- (3) Public space is open to all – need a more detailed consultation as a platform for making things happen and appeasing the moaners
- (4) Estate office/CoL needs to show some leadership and work with the doers not the moaners
- (5) Great opportunities for art projects – lots of artist live on estate
- (6) Lots of talent on estate – Big Society!!!
- (7) Obsessive H&S regulations means nothing happens – life is about risk taking
- (8) Need a comprehensive plan which is supported by residents and CoL and acts as a decision-making platform – without some agreed strategy there is always going to be a play-off (rightly or wrongly) between CoL and residents or tenants and owner occupiers.....
- (9) You cannot not talk about gardening without talking about open spaces; all these things interconnect which is why an agreed plan is needed. Too many people taking about separate issues p they all connect isn't this sustainability!!!
- (10) Need to get the right balance for play, quiet areas, improved and greener spaces
- (11) Need an active community space where all this can be discussed – why is the community centre not working? Just seems to be run by the bar many of whom do no live on estate (lots of criticism about bar and poor availability of community rooms)
- (12) The community hall is an inside outside space – why can't it be used more and without paying!!
- (13) Too much silo thinking here and people with pet projects – it's all connected can't they see!

Open spaces

- (1) Garden for older people
- (2) Do we need so many car spaces outside Great Arthur – more trees and benches please!
- (3) Somewhere where you can read a book, meet friends for a natter

- (4) Pond area should remain a quiet area
- (5) Bar still using area and noise – this has been going on for years
- (6) Need more trees and benches – would benches encourage anti-social use?
- (7) Reduce the feeling of concrete
- (8) Around Great Arthur House terrible – need better views
- (9) Why is graffiti returning – get rid of it!
- (10) Basterfield lawn is great but it's so boring
- (11) Get rid of tree of Basterfield lawn - it's ugly
- (12) More flowers
- (13) Brighten up the spaces
- (14) Everybody loves it here, especially the spaces, but people need to be supported by CoL – it's ok to talk about Big Society but it needs leadership
- (15) Money is important, but it doesn't need much

Play

- (1) Why can't the play pit be improved for children – it's become a no-go area?
- (2) Reinstate slide in play pit
- (3) Wood chip/play surface to bottom of play area
- (4) Need more events and social activities
- (5) Clarity about where you can and can't play
- (6) Cannot be done by the Corporation alone – need parents to take a lead
- (7) How does play on the estate interact with other play opportunities near-by or in the City – has any survey been carried out about what young people want and what they use now?

Biodiversity

- (1) Do bio-diversity areas exclude children?
- (2) Bio strip very popular with kids hiding in the plants – best play area ever!
- (3) Lots of people liked the bio diversity strip – it just seemed to be a few who complained; the complainers seem have more weight

- (4) Need to tell people about biodiversity – need interpretation/education/info
- (5) New bio strip in front of Hatfield House
- (6) Make the edge of some of walls living walls
- (7) How does the CoL Habitat Action Plan/Bio plans support biodiversity on the estate?

Allotments & Gardening

- (1) Keep the one at Nursery and expand project throughout the Estate
- (2) Develop community garden next to Allotment site
- (3) Set up community project to help residents maintain their gardens/balconies
- (4) Need more space for more allotments!
- (5) Need training/advice on what to plant on balconies
- (6) Need advice on growing in pots/bags
- (7) More active food growing
- (8) Urban Farm – horse riding – visits to urban farms
- (9) Reinstate pond outside Hatfield House

Great Arthur House (most residents support organised trips to roof)

- (1) Open up roof to local people and visitors
- (2) Open roof every week/month at an agreed time
- (3) Beehives on roof
- (4) Use roof as an allotment for Great Arthur residents
- (5) Area to front of tower needs some serious de-concreting!
- (6) What will happen to the spaces outside the building when works begin??

Appendix 3

Golden Lane Estate Open Spaces Survey - Results

Golden Lane Estate currently has a plan which sets out what each bit of open space can be used for ('designated use'). This plan was agreed in July 2003 and was based on consultations with the Residents' Association and the Parent Group. It is time to review this plan to see if open spaces could be used in different ways.

1. Grassed Area of Basterfield House

Current Use:

The grassed area is for residents and children regardless of age, but only soft balls (foam only) are allowed due to the proximity of residents' windows and flower pots, and football is not permitted. The paved areas around the grass may be used by under 5's accompanied by an adult if they wish to ride their tricycles/scooters. Supervising adults must ensure that the children do not ride on the grass. Last year, there was a period of time when there was a strip of grass left uncut as part of the City of London's Year of Biodiversity to see what wildlife and flowers sprung up. This year, the Gardening Group would like to reinstate the strip and would like to scatter wild flower seeds in the uncut area.

What is not open to change:

Playing football or any other games that require hard balls. Only foam balls are permitted.

Are you happy with the stated uses? Yes 50 No 8
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3. Front of Cuthbert Harrowing House at Great Arthur House

This is not a designated ball games area. There is no designated use for this space.

Do you think this area should have a designated use? Yes 21 No 32
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4. Rear of Cuthbert Harrowing House and Bowater House

Current Use:

For the use of residents and their children within the block. The same usage as the Basterfield Lawn applies, i.e., foam balls only.

What is not open to change:

The only balls that will be acceptable are foam balls.

Are you happy with the current use? Yes 56 No 1
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5. Hard area to the rear of the swimming pool and badminton courts

The only designated ball games area on the estate. This excludes cricket and softball/baseball, as the balls may hit windows.

Are you happy with the current use? Yes 49 No 9
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7. Rear of Hatfield House

The grass area is for the quiet enjoyment of all residents and their children.

Are you happy with the current use? Yes 50 No 5
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