



FOREST GATE COMMUNITY GARDEN REVIEW 2022 - 2023



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SUCSESSES 2022 - 2023

- Seeing our visitor numbers return to pre-Covid levels of just under 2000 adult visits a year.
- Appointing Max Mason as Co-ordinator for a day a week following the sad loss of Sophie Rigg, our Co-ordinator of 6 years. Max brings experience from other community gardens as well as impressive graphic and social media skills
- Appointing Fiona Leckenby as Outreach and Engagement worker. She has built up excellent relationships with local schools, the library, child minders, home schoolers, asylum seekers and other vulnerable groups ensuring the Garden is well used during the week
- Completing a multi-faceted project around the work of a local 18th century botanist, Dr John Fothergill, with a £9000 Heritage Lottery grant
- Welcoming Arcola theatre for a performance in the Garden attended by over forty local people
- Participating in the GLA's London Nature Trail, the Green Fair and the Forest Gate Festival
- Organising a vegetable growing project where local residents have grown an abundance of delicious vegetables
- Giving away over 40 free vegetable growing kits to encourage local residents to take up gardening
- Running workshops focussing on adapting to climate change using native plants
- Holding four seasonal celebration events with music, refreshments and activities





SUCCESSES Cont... 2022 - 2023

- Replanting the Earlham Bridge area on the Coronation Big Help Out Day
- Celebrating Diversity as part of the GLA Mayor's Community Weekend
- Improving the rainwater capture systems
- Holding an Eid celebration for asylum seekers resident in a local hotel
- Organising 4 very successful plant sales to raise funds
- Welcoming corporate volunteers from Ernst and Young, Cadent and Hays Recruiting, and 3 Duke of Edinburgh award volunteers
- Continuing to offer volunteering opportunities through Social Prescribers and mental/occupational health services
- Maintaining our valued volunteer force of around 20 regular and 25 occasional volunteers
- Improving our media presence through greater use of Twitter and Instagram
- Increasing the number of private hires to provide a space for local residents to generate income
- Reviving the Green Shoots team who are active in maintaining street planters in Forest Gate



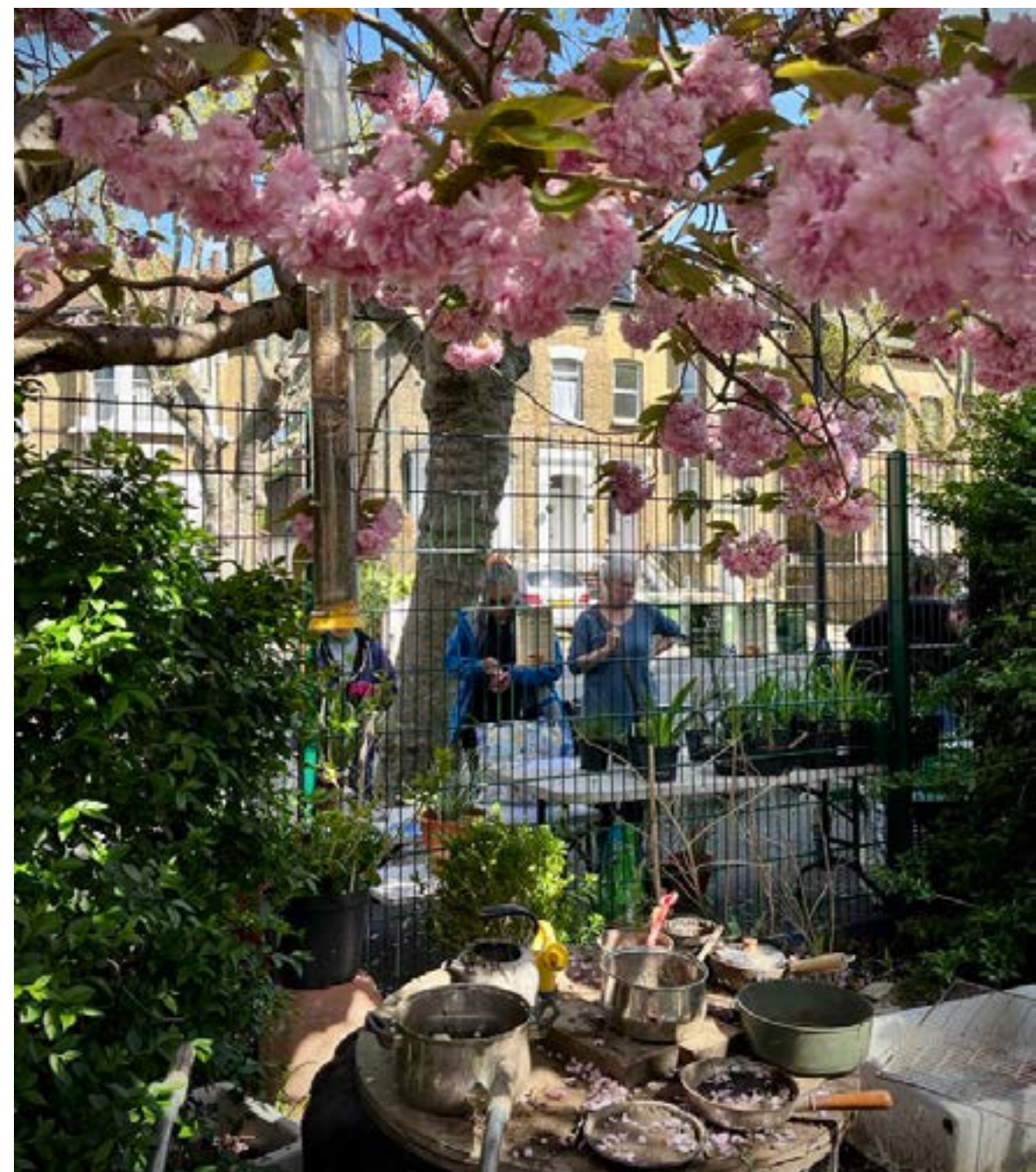


CHALLENGES

- Increasingly dry summers have meant we have run out of water by June in the last couple of years. We have reluctantly agreed to install a standpipe for use when we run out of rainwater
- Many plants were lost in the dry summer of 2022, so we are using more drought tolerant plants
- As raising funds continues to be difficult, we are focussing on generating more income from plant sales and hires
- The loss of our Co-ordinator Sophie Rigg has considerably reduced our capacity to establish new initiatives. We are therefore focussing on our core services and events – seasonal celebrations, plant sales and the Garden Trail in 2024 – until we can increase our capacity further

Many thanks to Trustees, staff and especially our wonderful volunteers, who have contributed more than 2000 hours on site this year, as well as countless unrecorded hours behind the scenes.

Without you there would be no Garden!





REPORT FROM STEPHEN MASON Lead Gardener

What a year its been, a year of changing weather patterns, new visitors, great volunteers and busy plant sales .

The new fence opened up the view of the garden and so began the growing numbers of visitors from schools and the locality.

The pond and garden have thrived with noticeable richness of biodiversity and a gloriously long flowering period into early summer.

Bird, insect and arachnid life has been helped by the garden's organic management, habitat and plant species diversity.

The pond has had possibly its best year in terms of frogs and newts although many tadpoles did not make it beyond the first stages. Worth noting here that as a delicate ecosystem it is best left undisturbed as much as possible.

Organic food has grown well, planted and cared for by eight keen participants and we will use the beds next year for herbs/dye plants and other interactive creative planting .

As visitor numbers and their use of the garden change it will be important to think about wear and tear on the garden and the life it supports. With this in mind I would suggest some consideration with regard to how many groups and bookings we can safely accommodate.

With a growing community interest the garden can continue to evolve and provide a positive focus as climate change becomes a reality.





VOLUNTEERS

Barbara McKenzie
Cath Perry
Cathy Stack
Celia Mansell
Chris Rogers
Clive Troubman
Damian Brody
Dennis Chipperfield
Derek Smith
Don Lewis
Gillian Striesow
Gill Lewis
Jackie Holmes
Julia Statman
Kathryn Copnell
Kerena Fussell
Kevin Harris
Laura Batatota
Lisa Eller
Lucy Ockenden
Luke Ellis
Maudlyn Carter
Mark Gorman
Michaela O'Connor
Myanah Saunders
Peter Tympkow
Sandra Jackson
Saydun Begum
Simon Vakeva-Bird
Stephen Oates
Susan Perkins
Susan Foley
Veronica Jeans
Ysr Mahmood

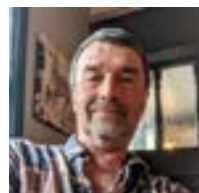
STAFF



Fiona Leckenby
Outreach



Max Mason
Coordinator



Stephen Mason
Lead Gardener



Sally Medcalf
Administrator

TRUSTEES



Maureen Egbe



Mark Gorman



Georgia Lindsay



Kevin Mansell



Hedy Richards



David Rosenberg



Kerena Fussell
Chair



Donna Stokes



Peter Williams

