



President: Lady Wroughton

Trustees' Annual Report for 2015/16

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

As usual my Report covers the Trust's year to the 31st March 2016. I will add further comments on activities after that date where they are relevant.

The year has been a busy one for the Committee as we have been looking at the future management of the Trust in the light of Ben Viljoen's retirement as a Trustee, which formally took place at the AGM, but which had been notified to the Committee earlier in the year. Ben's role had encompassed the Trust's IT, including preparation of flyers for events and the formatting of the Newsletter. He had an even greater role in Research.

With the willing support of the Trustees, we were able to allocate the administrative roles. But it has been a steep learning curve and with the help of Ben a great deal of informal training has taken place.

Obviously this has limited our resources for organising events and we decided that we would limit visits to one to West Green House Garden and the promised return to Folly Farm for those who had not been on the earlier visit in 2012. We started to look ahead to 2016 as a time to increase activity, although the tercentenary of Capability Brown's birth, which was celebrated across the country, meant that this activity was centred on that celebration.

The visit to West Green House Garden proved popular and successful. Many of us met at the Leather Bottle for an informal lunch and then drove the mile or so to the Garden. As it was not a day when the Garden was open to the public, we had a peaceful afternoon and led by Marilyn Abbott the owner of the Garden, we also had a very informative occasion.

Our Autumn Lecture which followed the AGM, was given by Dr Michael Symes on the subject of Rousham and the development of the Pictorial Circuit Garden. We linked this talk with a visit to Rousham in May 2016. A talk followed by a visit is a useful way of becoming more informed and then seeing the result in action.

Although Ben Viljoen had retired from the Trustees and hence had handed over to the Committee his leadership of our Research, he took responsibility with our Secretary, Fiona Hope, and Bettina Kirkham for the Berkshire work of Capability Brown. There are six gardens still extant on which Brown worked in Berkshire, plus Highclere Castle which straddles the Hampshire/Berkshire border.

Ben had identified three which he hoped we could visit and show to members of the public. Sadly although initial approaches had been favourably received, in the end only the BBC, the owners of Caversham Park, were prepared to allow us to conduct guided walks around the grounds; three tours took place, but all were outside the year under review.

Apart from the detailed work researching this property, Ben also undertook more general research on Brown in Berkshire, and he shared his knowledge with us at our Spring Lecture in March. This was held at Purley Barn and was one of our best attended occasions with nearly every member of the Trust coming as well as a number of others, mainly from the locality. The first visit to Caversham Park in April was fully subscribed within days and all the tickets for the three visits were sold. During 2016, Ben is also giving a similar talk to other organisations and thereby making the work of the Trust better known. The Trustees are very grateful to him for all the time and effort he has devoted to researching this subject and to the two other members of his working party for their investigations and comments.

During the second half of the year, the Trustees embarked on a review of our research activity, to see how it could be managed within our limited resources. We are in need of someone to take responsibility for that following Ben's retirement. Volunteers to join in the research would also be most welcome.

New members are always welcome. We have increased the number of visits this year and with the publicity generated by CB 300 we hope to have more interest. The membership leaflet has been redrafted to set out the aims of the Trust more clearly.

The Awards for public initiatives were presented at our AGM by the Lord Lieutenant and our President. There was a pleasing level of interest and the standard of the schemes inspected was high. There are no awards made this year as this is held in alternate years.

Watlington House Garden has finally been completed and was opened in July 2015. This project was led by Gaila Adair who was also carried out much of the work. She has continued to maintain the Garden with help from the Manager of Watlington House. It was a long time in the planning due to the work undertaken by Thames Water which prevented work on the garden. But the result is most worthwhile and a tribute to the hard work of those involved.

The Hungerford Memorial Garden, created in memory of those killed in the shootings 25 years ago, and restored by BGT to mark the anniversary, has been a disappointment. It was handed over in good condition but the resources available in Hungerford have led to neglect

and it was unkempt when we were invited to inspect it a couple of years ago. Although suggestions have been made for further work to replace the plants which have died, there was no commitment to maintain it for the future. The BGT cannot undertake an ongoing commitment, and the original work was done with the understanding that resources would be available locally to maintain it.

The Treasurer's Report follows and shows our financial position to be a satisfactory one, despite a small drop in membership.

I would like to record my personal thanks to the Trustees, who have all played a part in the work of the BGT. The devotion of Fiona Hope, our Executive Secretary, to the Trust deserves a special mention. Without her commitment the Trust could not operate. She has been involved from the beginning and our gratitude to her knows no bounds.

She is not alone in dedication to the Trust. It is invidious to single out any particular Trustee, but I would want to thank Kaye Warner for her work as our membership Secretary; handling the events booking and the communication with members is an important job. Sadly her work with the National Trust local group has increased and she can no longer continue. Her shoes will be difficult to fill and we are urgently seeking someone to do that.

Charles Elly, DL

Chairman of the Berkshire Gardens Trust

August 2016

BERKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST COMMITTEE

Current Committee members / Trustees are:

Gaila Adair	Hugh Simon (Treasurer)
Charles Elly (Chairman)	Peter Thorn (Minutes Secretary)
*Richard Griffith-Jones	Indra Townsend
Fiona Hope (Executive Secretary)	**Kaye Warner (Membership Secretary)
Bettina Kirkham	

** standing for re-election at the 2016 AGM under the provisions of the Articles*

*** not standing for re-election*

In accordance with the provisions of the Articles, the following officers have been elected by the Trustees for the forthcoming year, to take effect at the conclusion of the AGM:

Charles Elly, Chairman
†Richard Griffith-Jones, Vice-Chairman
Hugh Simon, Treasurer
†subject to his being re-elected as Trustee

TREASURER'S REPORT 2015-16

FINANCIAL SUMMARY (financial year ending 31st March)

	£ 2016	£ 2015
INCOME & EXPENDITURE		
Incoming Resources	3,634.80	2,610.99
<i>less</i> Resources Expended	2,116.99	1,565.51
Net incoming resources for year	<u>1,517.81</u>	<u>1,045.48</u>
NET ASSETS as at 31st March		
Fixed Assets (display stands)	-	102.88
Cash at bank	14,670.44	11,737.25
Other current assets	517.25	552.25
Total Current Assets	15,187.69	12,289.50
<i>less</i> Creditors	1,523.50	246.00
Net Assets	<u>13,664.19</u>	<u>12,146.38</u>

The Trust's net assets, which are predominantly held as cash, increased by £1,517.81 over the year. Subscription income and donations of £1,787.80 for the year (including Gift Aid £232.78) and a surplus of £682.00 on events were offset by operating costs of £951.99, including £102.88 depreciation of display stands, which are now fully depreciated although still in use. Creditors include £1,147.50 advance ticket sales for events to be held in the following financial year.

There were 84 paid-up members in the subscription year ended 31st March 2016, a decrease of 4 members compared with the previous year.

My thanks to Brian Tubman ACMA, who has examined the accounts for 2015-16. The income and expenditure account and balance sheet are set out in the following pages.

Hugh Simon ACMA, Treasurer

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (see note 1 below)**INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT**

	£ 2016	£ 2015
Incoming Resources		
Donations and Gift Aid	803.80	651.49
Membership subscriptions	984.00	1,036.00
Events	<u>1,847.00</u>	<u>923.50</u>
	<u>3,634.80</u>	<u>2,610.99</u>
Resources Expended		
Promotion and website	166.70	117.49
Insurance and TGT affiliation	419.75	427.25
Administration, travel and AGM	262.66	195.85
Events	1,165.00	722.06
Depreciation	<u>102.88</u>	<u>102.86</u>
	<u>2,116.99</u>	<u>1,565.51</u>
Net incoming resources for the year	1,517.81	1,045.48

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st MARCH

	£ 2016	£ 2015
TANGIBLE FIXED ASSETS (NET)	-	102.88
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	105.00	30.00
Accrued income	-	77.50
Prepaid expenditure	412.25	444.75
Cash at bank	<u>14,670.44</u>	<u>11,737.25</u>
	<u>15,187.69</u>	<u>12,289.50</u>
LIABILITIES		
Deferred income	<u>1,523.50</u>	<u>246.00</u>
	<u>1,523.50</u>	<u>246.00</u>
NET CURRENT ASSETS	<u>13,664.19</u>	<u>12,043.50</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>13,664.19</u>	<u>12,146.38</u>
FUNDS		
At start of year	12,146.38	11,100.90
Net incoming resources for the year	<u>1,517.81</u>	<u>1,045.48</u>
At end of year	<u>13,664.19</u>	<u>12,146.38</u>

NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

1. **The full Directors' Report and Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2016 may be found on the Trust's website: www.berks-gardens-trust.org.uk**
2. In accordance with the provisions of the Trust's articles of association, the Trustees have elected for the financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2016 to be examined in lieu of a full audit. Mr Brian Tubman ACMA, the Trust's independent examiner, has certified that in his opinion the financial statements for the year ended 31st March 2016 and the balance sheet as at that date show a true and fair view of the Trust's affairs.