



# Annual Review 2020



Patron: H.R.H. The Prince of Wales KG KT GCB OM AK CD QSO PC

# Chairman's Review

*Chelsea Physic Garden has come through 2020 in remarkably good shape. Our income was less severely affected by COVID-19 than we feared and our fundraising campaign for the Glasshouses Restoration Project exceeded our expectations.*

In line with Government guidance, the Garden closed to all but essential workers on 22 March and partially re-opened at the beginning of June. We welcomed Friends and the Public, although there were no Guided Tours and the Shop had to remain closed.

As a result, visitor numbers were only 50% of 2019's level, at 35,585, while Friends declined by 8.4% to 5,975. We are very grateful to all the Friends who continued to support us in such exceptional circumstances.

The continuing restrictions made both venue hire and our normal programme of public events impossible, impacting our income still further. We did, however, succeed in delivering some events digitally.

*The pandemic has also given us a chance to reflect on what people most value about the Garden, with its calming and restorative power seeming to be one of its consistent features. We hope that it's an experience that will be shared by even more people as we move towards full recovery.*

Tight cost control, with a new Committee monitoring cash flow monthly, and successful applications to the Culture Recovery Fund enabled the Management Team to restrict the net operating loss to £40,724, a significantly better result than we expected. We are particularly grateful to the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport and the National Lottery Heritage Fund for the funding we received.

We furloughed very few staff and maintained a core of essential staff in those early days. The gardening team did a wonderful job maintaining the plant collections supported by operational staff, despite the absence of volunteers because of the restrictions.

The outstanding achievement of our fundraising team in raising the full £2.75 million needed to restore our Glasshouses during this time is noteworthy. Once again, we are extremely grateful to the National Lottery Heritage Fund for their support, as well as to the Trustees of the John Browne Charitable Trust. The Trust matched every donation over £100 up to £500,000. My deep thanks go to all our donors.

Although this extraordinary period of uncertainty is not yet quite behind us, the Chelsea Physic Garden has come through it in much better shape than we dared hope, thanks to the Management Team so ably led by Sue Medway. Their commitment is illustrated by the office based staff being prepared to take a 20% pay cut for six months .

My fellow Trustees, the staff and the volunteers have demonstrated great resilience in these most unsettling of times. We can look forward with confidence to our 350th Anniversary in 2023, as we continue to inspire both adults and children to learn about the unique value of useful plants and the role that they can play in our lives.

Images: Front cover:  
Spring Plant Fair  
© Laura Stoner-New

Opposite:  
Tulipa 'Hermitage'  
© Laura Stoner-New



**Michael Prideaux,  
Chair of Trustees**

# Mission & Purpose

## Our Mission is:

*To demonstrate the medicinal, economic, cultural and environmental importance of plants to the survival and well-being of humankind.*

## Our Purpose:

Sitting on the Thames Embankment, and sheltered by high walls, Chelsea Physic Garden is one of the oldest and most respected botanic gardens in Europe. It is the oldest in London, and only surpassed in age, in England, by Oxford Botanic Garden.

Founded in 1673 by The Worshipful Society of Apothecaries of London for its apprentices to study medicinal plants and their uses, it became one of the most important centres of botany and plant exchange in the world.

Chelsea Physic Garden's plant collection is unique in being the only botanic garden collection focused on medicinal, herbal and useful plants.

Today, as an independent charity, we rely on visitors, Friends and supporters to help protect and nurture the Garden for future generations.

## Chelsea Physic Garden carries out this Mission for the public benefit by:

- providing programmes of educational activities, publications and events;
- maintaining documented plant collections in labelled and interpreted displays in an historic botanic Garden;
- demonstrating the development of the science and practice of horticulture, botany and related disciplines through the historical role of the Garden;
- promoting the importance of the Garden, conservation of plants and the natural environment.

# Learning and Public Engagement

*In 2020 our new Learning and Public Engagement department was established, and our Five Learning Values embedded, even through the pandemic.*

*We embraced change and flexed our digital skills to continue to engage with people and bring learning experiences to people who could not visit the Garden.*

The team found new ways to engage with schools, families, and adults. Although hampered by our ability to engage with people onsite, we developed online school resources, delivered workshops and built more partnerships in the local area.

## Key activities

**The Snakes Trail** – we developed a self-led trail for families funded by John Lyon’s Charity, which meant that families could still learn at the Garden, even when they could not take part in a face-to-face activity.

**Digital Engagement** – we created a selection of curriculum-based school resources and saw a 2300% increase in downloads in May 2020. We also delivered family activities, digital tours, and adult workshops online.

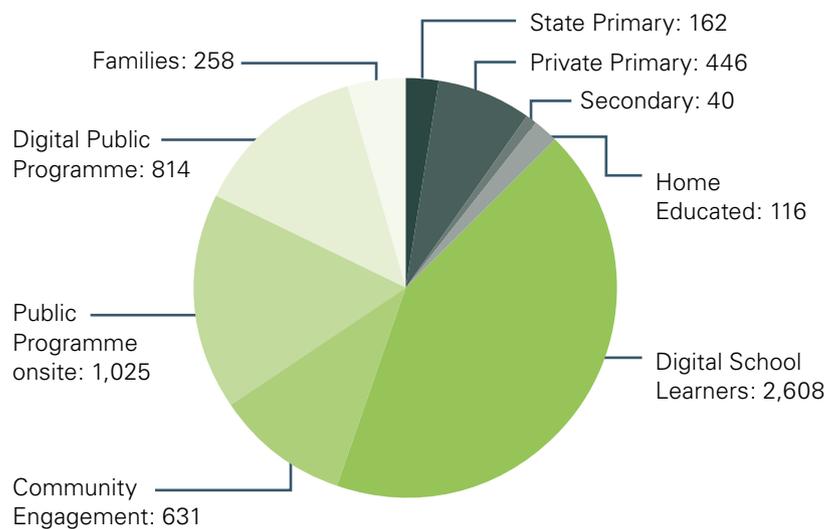
**Public Engagement** – through the summer we were able to try new things onsite, such as music nights, theatre, a houseplant fair and Halloween spooky tours for families and adults.

## Community Engagement

At the beginning of the year, we started our first **Help Us Grow Alumni** course, which ran for three weeks before lockdown in March 2020. We continued to engage with the group through digital workshops and access to the Garden when we reopened in June 2020.

We ended our tenure at the Elkstone Road garden space, and will continue to work closely with community gardens, gardeners and supporting greening projects, such as our project with **Royal Brompton Hospital**.

**2020 Total Learners: 6,100 (onsite and digitally)**



Our team delivered a greening project for the courtyard space within Royal Brompton Hospital. The courtyard was designed by our volunteer Liz Cowan, and in November 2020 our team carried out the work at the hospital. The space is now full of plants and designed to be a relaxing and calm space within the hospital. This project was made possible by the Foyle Foundation and the Goldsmiths’ Company Charity.

Our engagement programmes are possible due to the support of the City Bridge Trust and the John Lyons Charity, who fund two staff posts alongside the RUB White Charitable Trust who help fund some of the activities.



Image: Shivani working at the Royal Brompton Hospital

# Collaborations

*Chelsea Physic Garden contributes to and collaborates with a number of leading botanical, horticultural and related organisations.*

These include Botanic Gardens Conservation International; PlantNetwork; the Botanic Gardens Education Network; Plant Heritage; the Royal Horticultural Society; the London Medical Museums Group; Central Saint Martins; the University of Westminster and the Natural History Museum.

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, we were still able to work in partnership. Below are a few of our 2020 collaborations:

- **Live Karma Yoga:** We launched our partnership with Live Karma Yoga, whose ethos is to make yoga accessible to everyone. Together we delivered outdoor yoga sessions on the upper lawn and brought together their community with ours. This was very welcome during the summer and brought people together to exercise in a safe environment.
- **Central Saint Martins University:** Students from CSMU were set projects to develop commercial products inspired by the Garden. They visited the Garden for information and inspiration. The students presented their work to members of our staff for feedback on the commercial viability of their work. The body of work was then displayed in the window galleries at CSMU Kings Cross from 6 March–26 April 2020.
- **Audio Description with the University of Westminster:** Together with the UoW a collaborative doctorate award was developed to explore the impact of Audio Description in Botanic Gardens for visitors. We have been successful in our funding bid through the UoW and the collaborative doctorate award will launch in 2021 and provide vital insight into how we can become a more accessible site for blind and partially sighted visitors.

- **Natural History Museum:** Whilst finalising a project to explore the Pelargonium specimens sent to the Natural History Museum in 1724 by Sir Hans Sloane, we have continued to provide material for research to the NHM. This year we provided *Trochetiopsis eburnus* (St Helena ebony) leaf samples for their DNA sampling project.

## Contributions

The collaboration with Beefeater Gin through the London Garden Gin and their charitable donation to the Garden continued in 2020. An agreement has been reached with Octopus Publishing for the production of a Garden Herbal and an initial charitable donation has been made by them.

## Chelsea History Festival

After a successful collaboration in 2019, we partnered with National Army Museum and the Royal Hospital to deliver the Chelsea History Festival in September 2020. This year the festival combined digital with onsite delivery, and engaged with people from all over the world with its diverse and exciting programme of speakers and events. Chelsea Physic Garden opened for free over the weekend and 411 people participated in our free family activities of pond dipping, planting and storytelling.



Images: Above:  
Live Karma Yoga session  
© Katy Parry

Right: Band of the Scots  
Guards playing at Chelsea  
Physic Garden  
© Frances Sampayo



# Glasshouse Restoration and Interpretation

All of the detailed planning and preparation for the restoration and reinterpretation of the Garden's Victorian Glasshouses was completed, with a successful delivery grant application made to the National Lottery Heritage Fund on the back of securing all the pledges and fundraised income.

Capital works include timber, glazing and metalwork repairs and replacements. Improvements to ventilation, heating and shading are included in the scope of works, as well as increasing the rainwater harvesting capability from every glasshouse roofspan. Accessibility improvements are an important outcome of this project.

The plan that has looked at the historic evolution of the Garden and its plant collections has been compiled and will guide the future management of the collections. It includes a blueprint for our archive collections which are the subject of a further phase of capital works.



Images: Above:  
A visitor enjoying the Pelargonium Glasshouse  
© Laura Stoner-New

Left: The Cool Fernery  
© Laura Stoner-New

## National Lottery application

In November 2020, we submitted our Second Round application to receive funds from the National Lottery Heritage Fund towards the completion of the Glasshouses restoration project. The application was slightly later than scheduled, due to delays caused by Covid-19. We were delighted to hear in March 2021, that our request for £680,700 was successful, meaning that the £2.75m project could begin in spring 2021.



## The Hothouse Challenge

In October 2020 we began a match fundraising campaign to raise the £1m of remaining funds needed to complete the restoration project. 'The Hothouse Challenge' was supported with a grant from The John Browne Charitable Trust of £500,000. For every donation of £100 raised, the Trust was willing to match pound for pound. 'The Hothouse Challenge' – so named to reflect the role of glasshouses and the stimulus of the grant – completed in March 2021, raising a total of £1,030,000 for the project.



# People

*“In a year which has been probably one of the most challenging to date, I thank again the dedication and hard work of staff and volunteers who have remained committed and loyal to the Garden .”*

**Sue Medway, Director**

Images: Right:  
Horticultural volunteers  
© Laura Stoner-New

Below: Franziska, Trainee  
clipping the Bay topiary  
© Laura Stoner-New

## Staff

An essential core of staff has remained working throughout, during the forced closure between March and June 2020 we furloughed 20% of staff. Nearly 70% of staff were asked and agreed to take a reduction in their hours and salary in order to reduce the number of redundancies. The shop had to close for several months and two staff left.

A list of staff is maintained on our website [chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk/about/trustees-staff](http://chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk/about/trustees-staff)



## Volunteers

The Garden’s team of volunteers, 135 in total, provides invaluable support across the Charity and their numbers have risen slightly.

Recruitment of volunteers throughout the year to support all areas of our activity continues to improve our care of the Garden, our collections and the standard of service offered to visitors.

Around 32 volunteers support horticulture; 9 in administration; 17 support the learning and public engagement programme; whilst the largest proportion of volunteers, 77 in 2020, helped support the Garden. The annual programme of new Guide recruitment was undertaken and the training sessions completed prior to the first lockdown, but the new Guides had little opportunity to practice their newly acquired skills. Guided tours were undertaken in the summer for groups of no more than six until restrictions again made this not possible. In line with the closing of the Garden due to COVID-19 volunteers have continued to support the Garden remotely, some carrying out research, as well as support with internal communications and they remain ready to return when restrictions allow.

# Financial Report

*The Garden was required to be closed under the Government COVID-19 restrictions between March and early June 2020 and operated throughout the remainder of the year under the various restrictions that were in place. However, we were glad to be able to welcome visitors to the Garden, primarily for essential exercise and to see Friends on a more regular basis.*

The ability to host many of the private functions that go on throughout the year, outside of our normal opening times, have been particularly badly hit by the restrictions and we are grateful to those supporters who have been able to move their planned function to an alternative date sometime in 2021.

Total income in 2020 of £1,761,180, is -21% less than 2019. Total expenditure has decreased -9.5% to £1,801,904. We saw a net operating loss of -£40,724 and an unrealised gain on our investments of £165,340. Fundraising to support the Glasshouse appeal has been successful and at the end of the year we had raised £201,489 towards the Hothouse Challenge.



## Admissions

Our website [www.chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk](http://www.chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk) is kept up to date with the opening times and admission prices which vary seasonally. Total visitors for 2020 was 35,585, -50% less than 2019.

Images: Visitors in the Garden  
© Laura Stoner-New

## Friends of the Garden

The Friends' scheme generates substantial funds without which the Garden could not continue its core activities. We are particularly grateful to those Friends that have maintained their subscription throughout the closure of the Garden because of the effect of the Covid-19 global pandemic. At the end of 2020 the total number of Friends was 5,975 (6,525) a decrease of 8.4%.

## Retail

Shop sales have been badly hit and it was necessary to close the shop for a substantial period of the year, making two staff redundant. Overall the shop made a loss in the year of -£28,691 compared to the previous year's profit of £35,197.

## Garden Lettings

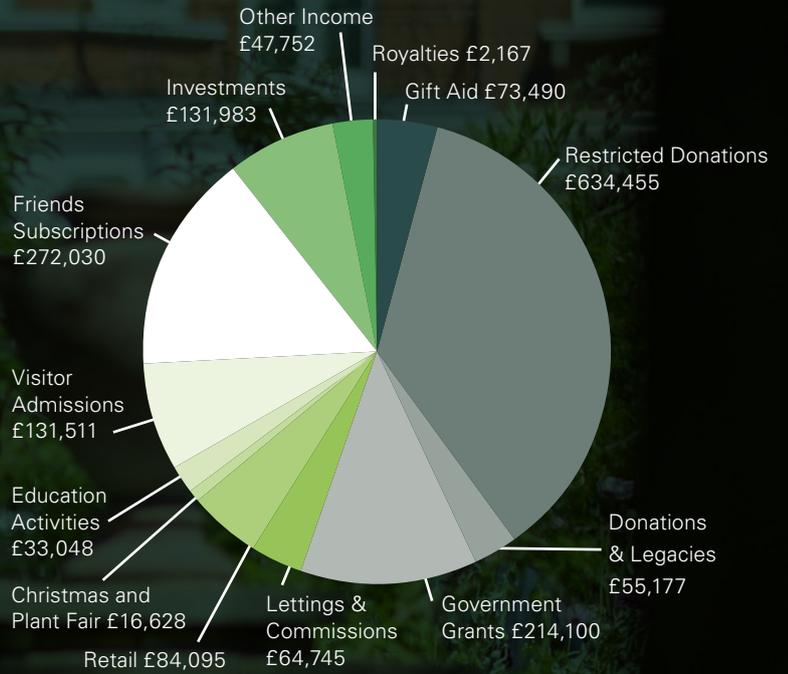
The Garden is closed to visitors on a Saturday in order to satisfy the demand for private hire and venue hire is an important income stream. Income from letting rooms and external events in the Garden is £64,745 (2019: £386,006).

## The Physic Garden Café

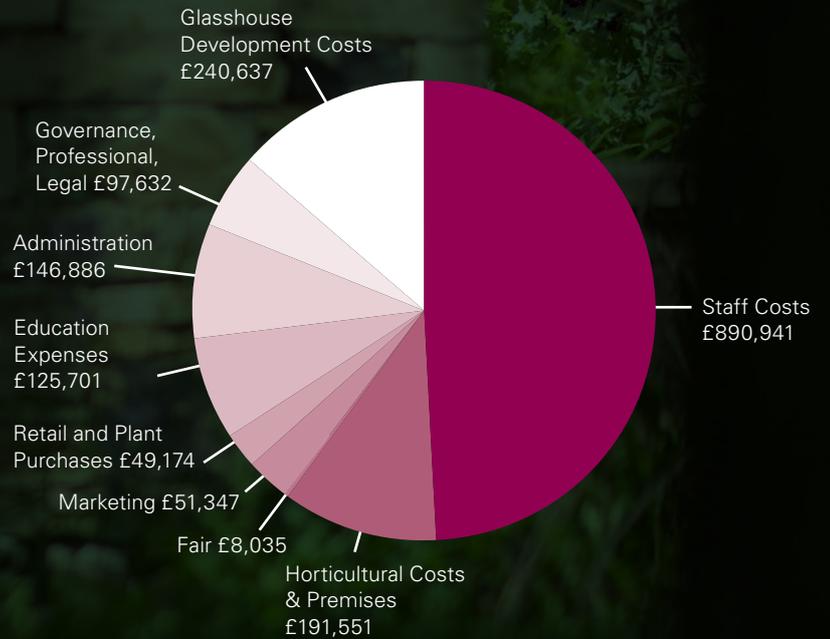
The café concession operates under the Garden's trading name providing the catering for visitors as well as the popular summer evening suppers and to several private clients using the Garden for venue hire. We are grateful for their flexible approach throughout the year notwithstanding the uncertainty and changes to restrictions imposed on catering businesses. Commission received is a valuable source of income to support the Garden's core aims.



**Total Income: £1,761,180**



**Total Expenditure: £1,801,904**



# Fundraising

*We are hugely grateful for the generous financial support from our Friends, individual supporters, and many charitable foundations in 2020. With this help, the charity survived the very worst of the pandemic and launched a successful appeal to secure the final funds needed to restore the Glasshouses.*

*We are particularly grateful to the Department of Digital, Culture, Media and Sport for the funding received through the Culture Recovery Fund. This grant provided emergency funding for staff salaries between October 2020 and March 2021 and funding for repairs to our Embankment Gates and the design of our new website.*

## Culture Recovery Fund

An award of £428.2k from the Culture Recovery Fund, which was administered by the National Lottery Heritage Fund on behalf of the Department of Culture Media and Sport, contributed to staff salaries, basic operating costs and to enable the new accessible welcome space with combined shop from Royal Hospital Road. This funding was vital to support the Garden at such a critical time.

## General Fundraising

In 2020 many charitable trusts and foundations, understandably, reprioritised their support towards COVID projects or organisations at risk of complete failure. We are particularly indebted to those individuals and charitable trusts and foundations that have continued to support the Garden's core horticultural trainee, volunteering, the learning and outreach programmes.

The charity did not receive any complaints in the past 12 months as regards its fundraising practice or activities. We continue to ensure that all of our fundraising activities are monitored, particularly where this relates to vulnerable beneficiaries, to ensure that they are protected.



## The Power of Legacies

Over the years the Garden has been fortunate to receive several legacies. These have been put to good effect in maintaining the Garden or for specific projects, for example, funding early career horticulturalists. This source of revenue will become increasingly important to fund future growth and to preserve the character and collection of Chelsea Physic Garden. We are indebted to the late John Balson for his very generous legacy of £190,000 which has been put towards the Glasshouses restoration project. The Garden was amongst several charities to benefit from his will.

Images: Above:  
The Atlantic Islands collection  
© Laura Stoner-New

Opposite:  
Echinop's seed heads  
© Laura Stoner-New

# Grants, Donations and Legacies 2020

*The Garden thanks the many charitable foundations and individuals who have supported our project to restore the Glasshouses, helped navigate the Covid-19 pandemic, and funded our Learning and Engagement and our work with local partners. We also thank all those donors who wish to remain anonymous.*

Barbara Whatmore Charitable Trust  
City Bridge Trust  
Professor Dianne Edwards  
The Eranda Foundation  
The Finnis Scott Foundation  
Garden House School Parents Association  
John and Diana Kemp-Welch Charitable Trust  
David Laing Foundation  
John Lyon's Charity  
The Stanley Smith (UK) Horticultural Trust  
The Stonewall Park Charitable Trust  
Mrs R U B White Charitable Trust

## Glasshouse Restoration Project

Our thanks go to all the National Lottery players for their funding to support our Glasshouses restoration project, and to Rebecca Jenkins, Investment Manager, National Lottery Heritage Fund for her support.

We would especially like to mention Mr Daniel & Mrs Marcela Pinto for their generous gift. Their funding has helped to transform the Garden's organisational capacity, without which we would not be able to deliver the Glasshouses project.

The Hobson Charity Ltd  
The John Armitage Charitable Trust  
The John Swire 1989 Charitable Trust  
The Peter Stormonth Darling Charitable Trust  
The Pilgrim Trust

## With special thanks to The John Browne Charitable Trust and Hothouse Challenge Donors (2020) including:

Augusta Charitable Trust  
Chelsea Physic Garden Florilegium Society  
The Consuelo and Anthony Brooke Charitable Trust  
The David and Emma Verey Charitable Trust  
Mr Stephen Edge  
The Hon William & Mrs Gibson  
The Golden Bottle Trust  
The Hon Lady Arabella Lennox-Boyd  
London Gardens Network  
The Marchus Trust  
Bryan Mayou FRCS  
Mr Michael McGonigle  
Daniel & Marcella Pinto  
Mr Michael Prideaux  
Mrs Sue Prideaux  
The R H Charitable Trust  
Libby and David Richwhite  
Mr Adrian Sassoon  
Dr Martin Schoernig  
Sir James & Lady Scott  
Stevenson Family's Charitable Trust  
The Worshipful Society of the Apothecaries of London

## Legacies

John Balson  
Lady Sandra Lean  
Joyce Hogge

## Grandiflora Patrons

Mrs Catherine Armitage  
Mr Lawrence Banks CBE VMH DL  
Lady Benyon  
Mrs Amanda Bishop  
Mrs Jean Botts  
Mrs Debby Brice  
Mr and Mrs P H G Cadbury  
Earl and Countess Cadogan  
Mrs Rosemary Campbell-Preston  
Mr Colin and Baroness Chisholm  
Mr Iain and Mrs Caroline Conn  
Mr Loyd Grossman CBE FSA  
Mrs Karyn Daysh  
Ms Liz Earle  
Prof Dianne Edwards  
Mrs Ernestine Fiertz  
The Hon. William & Mrs Gibson  
Mr Peter Gregory  
Mr David and Mrs Claudia Harding  
Lady Julia Hiscox  
Mr Hugh and Mrs Judith Johnson  
Sir Henry and The Hon Lady Keswick  
The Hon. Mrs Sandra de Laszlo  
Mr Mike and Mrs Jane McGonigle  
The Hon. Lady Morrison  
Mr Nghi Nguyen and Lord Browne of Madingley  
Mr Michael & Mrs Sue Prideaux  
Mr Hans and Mrs Julia Rausing  
Dr Martin Schoernig  
Mrs Erica Simonis  
Mr and Mrs R Tomkins  
Mrs Gerald Ward  
Mrs Lesley Watson & Mr Dougal Philip  
Lady Harriot Tennant  
Mr Alan and Mrs Jane Woods

## Corporates

Chivas Brothers Ltd (Beefeater Gin)  
With special thanks to the team at Chestertons

# Trustees, Directors, Committees and Staff 2020

## Board

The Directors and members of the Board (who also act as trustees for the charitable activities of The Chelsea Physic Garden Company) who served during the year were:

Cathy Arnold

Colin Chisholm  
(Hon. Treasurer,  
Finance & Operations Committee)

Paul Gray  
(Finance & Operations Committee)

Sukie Hemming

Anna Jobson

Tony Kirkham  
(Chair of Advisory Committee)

Patricia Lankester  
(Resigned 31 December 2020)

The Hon Lady Arabella Lennox-Boyd

Michael McGonigle  
(Finance & Operations Committee)

Quoc-Nghi Nguyen

Michael Prideaux  
(Chairman of the Board,  
Finance & Operations Committee)

Sarah Speller  
(Finance & Operations Committee)

Sue Medway  
(Company Secretary)

## Senior Leadership Team

Director: Sue Medway

Deputy Director (Visitor Experience): Frances Sampayo

Commercial Director: Tom Gilliford (from April 2020)

Development Director: Joanna Wells

Head of Finance: Paul Ryan

Executive Assistant: Gill Mathias

Head of Plant Collections: Nell Jones

Head of Learning & Public Engagement: Katy Parry

Project Manager: Sue Saville

## Advisory Committee

Dr Helen Charman (Learning Specialist)

Dr John David (Royal Horticultural Society)

Professor Michael de Swiet  
(Royal College of Physicians)

Anne Edwards (Head of Volunteers)

Professor Dianne Edwards (The Royal Society)

Tony Kirkham, Chairman, Trustee  
(Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew)

John Koh (Libraries and Archives Specialist)

The Hon Lady Arabella Lennox-Boyd, Trustee

Professor Tony Moffatt  
(Royal Pharmaceutical Society)

Michael Prideaux Trustee

Dr Mark Spencer (Forensic Botanist)

Dr Peter Tooley (Worshipful Society  
of Apothecaries of London)

Cllr Emma Will (Royal Borough of  
Kensington & Chelsea)

**Chelsea Physic Garden**  
**66 Royal Hospital Road**  
**London SW3 4HS**  
**www.chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk**  
**Telephone +44 (0)20 7352 5646**

Limited Company registered in England Number  
01690871 Registered Charity Number 286513

*The Garden is supported by a small team of staff and an active growing cohort of volunteers. A list of staff is available at: [chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk/about/trustees-staff](http://chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk/about/trustees-staff)*

*The contribution to Chelsea Physic Garden by its staff and volunteers is immense. Their enthusiasm, engagement, and active support is greatly appreciated.*