

THE SPADE

STRATEGIC
REVIEW LATEST

CHARITY UPDATE:
NEWS OF OUR GIVING

WELCOME A NEW
CHAPLAIN AND BEADLE

EDINBURGH AND
THE BORDERS



DATES FOR
YOUR DIARY

THE WINTER EDITION 2024 - ISSUE 66
GARDENSCOMPANY.ORG.UK
ISSN 1473-091X





THE WORSHIPFUL COMPANY OF GARDENERS



Welcome to the Winter Spade. Written contributions, ideas for articles and help in gathering material and preparing it for publication are always very welcome. Do visit our recently refreshed website. The public or first page features a steady stream of news stories about the Company, events in the City and other items of interest in the horticulture and gardening worlds. Click on the News button. Next to it are the links to our Twitter and Instagram accounts. Please send photographs for posting there to Assistant Barbara Segall.

www.instagram.com/gardenliveryco

THE MASTER
Nicholas Woolf OBE KStJ

RENTER WARDEN
Alderman Robert Howard

SPADE EDITOR
John Gilbert

UPPER WARDEN
Cindy Peck

SPADEBEARER
David Balfour

CHARITY EDITOR
Garry Coward-Williams



THE CLERK - OLLIE FINN
07947 794 613 | clerk@gardenerscompany.org.uk
The Worshipful Company of Gardeners, PO Box 79415, London N7 1HD
(The Office is open Monday–Wednesday)

A MESSAGE FROM THE MASTER

Dear Fellow Gardeners, midwinter is a turning point for all Gardeners, including the Master as I reach halfway through my year. Time flies by and I look back at our Autumn outside visits finishing at Nymans on 17th October last year. Since then we have been inside for a variety of events including our annual Linnean Society Lecture and a special Christmas carols and dinner.

A major recent event is the completion of the Strategic Review which was delivered to the Tradescant Court on 18th December and discussed at the adjourned Court meeting on 15th January. Thanks from myself and from John Gilbert, who initiated the review in December 2022, to the review team led by Renter Warden Robert Howard.

There are 50 recommendations in the report including some changes to the committee structure and it will take us time to work through them as we reinvigorate all that we do as a Company. The passage of time has affected our numbers and the major need is to increase our membership, a drive to which we can all contribute. We all know people who are interested in gardens and horticulture and who might be flattered if asked to join us.

We will be holding an event centred on the Big Curry Lunch Garden in Guildhall on 15th April to which you can invite potential members. The Company Catch-up on 25th January gave everyone a chance to have a wider discussion of the recommendations and a brief summary of the review is also in this edition (see page 6). It's everyone's Company!

Looking forward to Spring and Summer events, please note that the Spring Court luncheon has been moved by one day to Wednesday, 24th April and will be at Barber Surgeons' Hall with its garden. All the dates are in the diary in this edition and on the website.

And do not miss the trip to Northern Ireland in June. If you have never been there this is a great opportunity to see nine wonderful gardens including the spectacular Mount Stewart and Hillsborough Castle and gardens.

We were pleased to welcome our new Chaplain, Fr Jack Noble, to the Tradescant Court lunch at Ironmongers' Hall just before Christmas and also our new Beadle Elliott Tuffin. We bade farewell to Chris Hanrahan, who had been our Beadle for 25 years, and presented him with a small token of our appreciation. We were also pleased to appoint Charlotte de Rothschild as an Honorary Liveryman.

I look forward to seeing you at our many and various functions as we move into spring.

Nicholas Woolf



The Master with two Beadles: on the left, retiring Chris Hanrahan and on the right his successor Elliott Tuffin. (photograph John Gilbert).



Our new Chaplain, Fr Jack Noble, Rector of St Giles Cripplegate (photograph John Gilbert).

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

New dates will be added during the year. The Trowel and other circulars from the Clerk will provide further details. The Master may vary eligibility to events. Liverymen and partners will take precedence where numbers are limited.

| DATE | EVENT AND DRESS | VENUE AND INFORMATION | ELIGIBILITY |
|---------------------------------|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| Thurs 22nd February 2024 | COMPANY VIRTUAL EVENT – HAMPTON COURT GARDENS HISTORY | 6pm. In March 2023 we visited Hampton Court and at the Discovery Day in October Dr Terry Gough gave a fascinating talk on the history of the gardens which he has kindly agreed to repeat here. | The Company, partners and guests |
| Tue 12th March 2024 | COMPANY VIRTUAL EVENT- FLOWER HUNTING IN PATAGONIA | David Haselgrove, Past President of the Alpine Garden Society, is a frequent visitor to Patagonia in search of its rare flowers. He will share his discoveries and enthusiasm with us. | The Company and partners |
| Tue 26th March 2024 | LORD MAYOR’S ONLINE LECTURE: ‘GREENSPACE: CULTIVATING THE MIND, BODY AND SOUL’ | 11am. Part of a series, this lecture will be given by PM Dr Heather Barrett-Mold and Professor Alistair Griffiths RHS Director of Science. | The Company, partners and guests |
| Date TBC | COMPANY VIRTUAL EVENT – GARDENERS’ QUESTION TIME | Liveryman David Domoney, a very experienced horticultural broadcaster, will again host this very popular virtual event. | The Company and partners |
| Tue 9th April 2024 | COMPANY CATCH UP ONLINE | A look forward to the Spring and Summer visits and a general update. | The Company and partners |
| Mon 15th April 2024 | BIG CURRY LUNCH GARDEN EVENT Comfortable attire | 6-8pm. Guildhall Yard. Start at the Big Curry Lunch Garden, provided by WCOG, then move to the Guildhall North Wing courtyard for drinks. Bring potential members to help showcase the Company and its activities. | The Company and partners |
| Tue 16th April 2024 | PACKWOOD HOUSE AND BADDESLEY CLINTON Comfortable attire | The first of three spring garden visits is to Packwood House and Baddesley Clinton, two adjacent National Trust properties in Warwickshire. B94 6AT and B93 0DQ. | The Company, partners and guests |
| Tue 23rd April 2024 | MAIVERLEYS Comfortable attire | The second of three spring garden visits is to Malverleys in Hampshire, one of the finest private flower gardens redesigned by Head Gardener Mat Reese. | The Company, partners and guests |
| Wed 24th April 2024 | SPRING COURT LUNCH Lounge suit/equivalent | Barber Surgeons’ Hall, Monkwell Square, Wood St, Barbican, London EC2Y 5BL | The Company, partners and guests |
| Sun 12th May 2024 | CLAREMONT VISIT AND MASTERS’ LUNCH Comfortable attire | The Masters of the Gardeners and the Wax Chandlers invite both Companies to lunch in their garden, which also has direct access to Claremont Landscape Garden (NT). Wyngates, Portsmouth Road, Esher KT10 9JA | The Company, partners and guests |
| Thurs 16th May 2024 | BIDDULPH GRANGE GARDEN Comfortable attire | The third of three Spring Garden visits is to Biddulph Grange, a fascinating National Trust property. It is a remarkable survival, a Victorian horticultural masterpiece and a quirky, playful paradise full of intrigue and surprise. ST8 7SD. | The Company, partners and guests |
| Tue 21st May 2024 | THE FAIRCHILD LECTURE Lounge suit/equivalent | The Company’s traditional Fairchild lecture will be given in St Giles Cripplegate. Followed by supper locally. | The Company, partners and guests |
| Sun-Thurs 2nd – 6th June 2024 | STRANGFORD LOUGH, NORTHERN IRELAND Comfortable attire. Jacket and tie/ equivalent for evenings | Arrive during Sunday, June 2nd for a four-day visit to Northern Ireland’s finest gardens around Strangford Lough including in particular Mount Stewart. Liveryman Trevor Edwards will act as our guide throughout the visit. | The Company, partners and guests |
| Tue 11th June 2024 | COMPANY CATCH UP ONLINE | A look forward to the next Master’s events and a general update. | The Company and partners |
| Wed 12th June 2024 | THE COMPANY GOLF DAY Golf attire, change for dinner | The Company’s Golf Day will be held at the Master’s Golf Club, Malden Golf Club, organised once again by Liveryman Richard Bernhard. | The Company, partners and guests |
| Thurs 20th June 2024 | CITY ROOF GARDENS Comfortable attire | SPM Nick Evans will lead a tour of the gardens at the top of some of the City’s new skyscraper buildings. | The Company, partners and guests |
| Tue 25th June 2024 | MUNSTEAD WOOD Comfortable attire | The National Trust acquired Gertrude Jekyll’s house and gardens in Spring 2023. This is a special private tour ahead of public access. | The Company, partners and guests |
| Wed 3rd July 2024 | INSTALLATION COURT DINNER Black tie | The Installation of the new Master and the start of the Company year at Drapers’ Hall, Throgmorton Street, London EC2N 2AR. | The Company, partners and guests |
| Thurs-Mon 22nd-26th May 2025 | SWEDEN Comfortable attire plus suits. | A four-night/five-day trip based in Uppsala and Bruksgratan, Sweden. We will see marvellous gardens including those of Carl Linnaeus and much more. | The Company, partners and guests. |

THE ONLY WAY IS ESSEX AS THE MASTER LEADS A TOUR OF TWO JOYOUS GARDENS

As we journeyed deeper into the Essex countryside, we thanked the Lord for the brilliant satnav that led us to the joyous home of Philippa and Bryan Burrough at Ulting Wick, a farmhouse spanning many centuries.

After a welcome cup of coffee, Philippa gave us a brief history of the farm and the trials and tribulations of turning it into the stunning garden of today, the black barn so redolent of local history, the charming rooms dug from the detritus of farm machinery, and the yard polluted over may years of use.

We swished through wavering gaura, guarded by stately *Verbena bonariensis* into the white garden with wonderful cosmos ‘Purity’. The sun came out as we emerged into a piece of land with many trees,

old and new, which led to the river planted with thousands of snowdrops and special bulbs.

The planting of the wild meadow has been a great success with open days in early summer to show the visitors the delights of butterflies and insect life. We then made our way past magnificent dahlias to the front of the house for a group photograph with our new Master, Nicholas Woolf. The Gardeners were now showing signs of needing a pit stop!

The Master made a short speech and presented Philippa with the Gardener’s shield. After an opportunity to buy more plants, we were off to a completely different and yet equally delightful Victorian villa belonging to Avril and Roger Cole Jones.

Roger fitted all our cars into a small piece of land nearby and then guided us to Furzelea. What a treat. Avril has turned her two-acre Victorian garden into a plantsman’s delight. A tiled Edwardian terrace with plumbago led us down to a large pond and roses with terracing and colour matching plants. She has a wonderful eye for colour with larger tubs of fuchsias and coleus by the front door. New to me were strobilanthes – a lovely blue plant.

Roger laid on a magnificent tea with cakes (eat your heart out Mary Berry). There is no end to his talent as his metal plant stands were selling like hot cakes. The master concluded the visit with another presentation and there were more plants to buy.

Report by Jenny Dicken



Gardeners enjoy a well-earned rest in the Cole Jones garden.

THE COMPANY VISION AND STRATEGY FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS



The Master outlines the Court's thinking on the way ahead for the Company

In January the Court met to discuss the report of the Strategic Review established by our then Master, John Gilbert, at the Tradescant Court in December 2022.

The wide-ranging Review's purpose was "to conduct a Review of all of the Company's activities, including all aspects of its membership, and its external profile in order to recommend a Strategic Plan for the Company to Court for the next five years".

It was commissioned because of a sense – after the Covid pandemic and against a backdrop of strikes and high inflation – that now would be an opportune moment for our Company to take stock of itself and ask how best we can achieve our Company objectives and engage our membership, and by doing so continue to thrive.

To engage the wider Livery and inform the Review, a substantial member survey was conducted, and my thanks to all who responded. For the most part the results were pleasingly positive, with interesting insights including:

- The Company's objectives are well understood and it is felt the Company is achieving them.
- Communication is generally good, with members feeling informed about Company activities, although some felt more information about the Charity would be appreciated.
- Over the past year, members have not attended as many events as they would have liked. The majority say they want to

attend more in the coming year.

- It is not always easy to find and communicate with members of similar interests.
- Members would like to be able to indicate via the Company website their willingness to volunteer for a range of Company activities.
- The majority of the Livery have not yet introduced a new member to the Company, but are overwhelmingly willing to do so, albeit a significant minority do not find the process easy.

The view of the Court is that the Company should look to grow our membership, rather than retrench post-pandemic, and to be a more inclusive, engaged Livery, supported by a well-resourced Office. This will help the Company continue to enhance its engagement with members and to attract and explain the Company's purpose to prospective members.

The Livery's strength is in our membership and, to that end, I would be grateful if you would consider recommending our Livery to interesting potential candidates.

The Review also recommends the consideration of a new membership type: Corporate Membership. This has worked well at other Liveries and may work well for our Company too, if structured appropriately.

Looking to the wider world, the Review also noted that the horticultural industry is currently under significant pressure. A report last November from a House of Lords Select Committee, which included Liveryman Baroness Janet Fookes, describes a "pivotal moment for the future of horticulture". Your Court is considering how best the Company's

convening power and reputation can be used to support industry and help advocate with policy makers.

Our Committees are doing a fantastic job but, to ensure momentum is maintained, the Court has approved a proposal for a new committee: the Member Engagement and Recruitment Committee, or MERC, which Assistant Simon Catford has kindly agreed to chair. This will do what it says on the tin, with oversight of an engagement and membership strategy that will also incorporate the Company's commitments as a signatory of the Livery Diversity Charter.

The Court has also approved making the current Events Sub-committee a full Committee, tasked with supporting the Master, Upper Warden and Office with the planning and execution of events and trips.

Much of the report can be seen as building on what has gone before, adding to and hopefully enhancing what we already aim to do as a Company, rather than representing any fundamental changes.

I am grateful to the members of the Strategic Review Group, who included: Robert Howard (Renter Warden and Chair of the Review), Stephen Bernhard (Senior Past Master), Paul Rochford (Past Master), Assistants Jonathan Matheson, Sue Medway and Philippa Burrough, and Robert Merrett (Liveryman). My thanks also to everyone else who has contributed.

For a copy of the Strategic Review and/or the survey results, please contact the Clerk.

Nicholas Woolf

GARDENERS AND WAX CHANDLERS TOUR EDINBURGH AND THE BORDERS

Our trip began at the historic 70-acre Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh. The Master gave a warm welcome to both members of our Company and of the Wax Chandlers. Simon Milne, Regius Keeper, outlined the 350-year history of the garden and its mission to explore, conserve and explain the world of plants.

RBGE has the largest living collection of Chinese plants in cultivation outside China and was the first organisation to have a joint field station in that country. The Edinburgh Biomes, a new project, involves the restoration of the existing glasshouses and the construction of new ones at an estimated cost of £100 million. Our Master and the Master Wax Chandler planted a commemorative tree, *Prunus serrula*.

Our tour of the garden included various demonstrations such as Sonic tomography used to detect decay and cavities in standing trees non-invasively, and a Geo injector used to blast compressed air into compacted soil around trees to improve drainage and aeration.

In the evening Gardeners and Wax Chandlers attended an excellent reception and dinner at the New Club.

Day two started at the Shepherd House Garden, a stunning triangular one-acre walled garden in the 18th Century village of Inveresk. Charles and Ann Fraser designed and developed the garden over 66 years. Ann is a botanical artist and gardener. The garden is packed with overflowing borders, including box parterres, topiary, rose borders, sculptures, an alpine wall and woodland planting.

The next stop was Kevock Garden, Lasswade owned by Stella and David Rankin. This wonderful hillside garden has magnificent views over the North Esk Valley. Its steep slope creates a range of different habitats perfect for Alpine plants.

In Holyroodhouse gardens we were met by head gardener Stuart Lerette. He has three gardeners, an apprentice and occasional labourers. Prince Albert influenced the development of the garden, the woodland and the rockery which is undergoing severe pruning and replanting.

The Plags acquired Kailzie Gardens near Peebles two years ago. It is a well established woodland garden cocooned in the Tweed valley with a wonderful walled garden established in 1811. There is a magnificent

Mackenzie and Moncur glasshouse being lovingly restored with a magnificent display of tender plants.

RBGE Dawyck's beautiful woodland in the Scottish Borders has magnificent trees. Our guides pointed out some significant trees including *Fagus Sylvatica* 'Dawyck', the upright form found at Dawyck in 1912.

The grand finale of the trip was dinner in the City Chambers attended by many distinguished guests. The Master of the Wax Chandlers (Dame Fiona Woolf) was invited by the Incorporation of Candlemakers to tie a ribbon round the flag of the new Edinburgh Exiles Society.

Report by Angela Chambers and Frances Glanusk



Regius Keeper Simon Milne and the Master Gardener and Master Wax Chandler are poised to plant a Tibetan cherry (*Prunus serrula*).

OUR CORONATION LEAD PLANTERS AND A CAST OF TWO MASTERS

Work continues on the commemorative lead planters being made at the Plumbers' Company's Amberley Museum in West Sussex to mark the Coronation of their Majesties King Charles and Queen Camilla. The project is a joint venture with the Plumbers; many Gardeners have generously contributed to the cost of the project which will see the planters installed at Sandringham later this year.

The Master's consort, currently Master Wax Chandler, is a past master of the Plumbers' Company. Our Master and Paul Nash, then Master Plumber, visited the museum in the autumn in order to get their hands dirty contributing to the construction of the planters.

Accompanied by members of our Company they added their own personal touches to the design by casting some of the decorative metal work for the planters. Paul Nash had the honour of casting the main Royal Cypher for Queen Camilla who is an Honorary Liveryman of the Plumbers' Company. Our Master cast our coat of arms for his Majesty.

Paul Nash said of the occasion: "It was a great honour and privilege to undertake this casting. Knowing that I have contributed in a small but significant way to creating something which will be viewed by the Royal Family and visitors to Sandringham House for many generations to come and which will be recorded in the annals of the history of the Plumbers' Company is a memory I shall treasure forever. Something to tell the children and grandchildren!"

The Gardeners' Company will be responsible for filling the planters. King Charles is well known for his interest in gardening and

landscaping and has taken a particular interest in specifying the planting arrangement.

Of his day spent with the Plumbers' Company Nicholas Woolf said: "This is the first time the Gardeners' Company has been involved in a Royal casting. It was extremely special for me to cast our coat of arms to be placed in the panel on the side of the planter for His Majesty, who is a Royal Liveryman of our Company.

"My colleagues with me at Amberley will be responsible for the planting design. Plans are well underway for this key aspect that creates the visual impact of this complex undertaking. This is how history is made and in the most enjoyable manner for everyone."

Thanks to the Amberley Museum e-newsletter for help with this article.



The Master Plumber and the Master Gardener get down and dirty at the Amberley Museum.

GARDENERS TAKE A STROLL THROUGH THE CLASSICAL WONDERS OF STOWE

It is said that you never have to teach the pupils of Stowe School perspective, which is not surprising as they are surrounded by magnificent architecture, panoramic vistas and wonderful landscaped gardens.

We met the Master on the 5th of October and were introduced to Roger Frampton our highly knowledgeable and amusing guide for the day, who showed us around the gardens. An estate of more than 1,000 acres and 250 acres of garden are managed by the National Trust completely separately from the school.

We have Richard Temple, 1st Viscount Cobham, a British soldier and Whig politician to thank for what we see today. In the 1670's he took over Stowe Manor and proceeded to rebuild the house, employing William Cleare who built the central block and later Vanburgh and William Kent who designed and built the North and South wings and porticos.

Vanburgh then turned his attention to the gardens working alongside Bridgeman in the early 1700's. The gardens continued to be developed under other famous designers such as James Gibbs, William Kent and a young man called Lancelot 'Capability' Brown, who learned his trade at Stowe before becoming head gardener and after 10 years moving on to design other famous gardens in his own right.

There are more than 50 monuments and memorials in the gardens from a large gothic folly, (now a holiday rental managed by the Landmark Trust) to a small globe mounted on an island commemorating James Cook. Nearly all the monuments

have a high classic mythological or political significance. The classical element is based on Greek Mythology; for some reason Richard Temple was not a lover of the Romans.

It must be remembered that visiting the gardens is nothing new, they in fact opened to the public in 1717. Then the gentry of the day, after having possibly been on the Grand Tour around Europe, would come and visit the gardens where the relevance of the classical sculptures would be second nature to them, unlike today.

We learned that the gardens were an ever-moving entity. With the changing fortunes of parliament and the succession of future members of the Temple family, the monuments would be moved into more prominent positions or hidden away depending on the flavour of the day. The monument ridiculing the period when Walpole was Prime Minister after falling out with Richard Temple was a typical example.

The pièce de résistance in my eyes were the temples. Apart from being wonderful scaled down architectural masterpieces, they set the scene as a classical back drop to these most beautiful gardens. Their reflection in the lakes of which there were many, the Grecian valley, Elysian Fields, and the stunning Palladian Bridge designed and built by Vanburgh give one the feeling of strolling through the most wonderful classical landscape.

The house and gardens stayed in the same family right up to the early 20th Century. The rot set in with the 2nd Duke who racked up debts of well over £100mn in today's money, most of the estates around the country were sold off and Christies were invited to auction off the contents of Stowe.

The house fell into disrepair and with the final auction in 1921 it was sold. Stowe Public School started in 1923 and maintained the gardens up to 1989 when the National Trust took over their stewardship.

Report by Martin Panter



Vanburgh's Palladian Bridge reflected in the lake. Photograph Martin Panter

GARDENERS EXPLORE THE CITY'S HIDDEN AND SURPRISING PLACES

'Gardens, Spaces and Surprising Places' in September was a fantastic tour of some of the lesser-known nooks and crannies at the heart of the City of London and the September weather was kind to us.

Robert Woolf led a group of 20 from Blackfriars Station through to Brown's, by the Guildhall. Along the way, we learned a lot about ghosts, architecture, City life and the way that history – dating back to Richard III and his wardrobes – has changed the City over time. We also saw part of the ancient City Wall. At every point of interest, Robert was a mine of information.

Amidst the hustle and bustle of a typically busy mid-week City morning, we were treated to sites of calm, quiet reflection. It was particularly pleasing to see a small area near London Wall being re-

planted with saplings and shrubs. Let's hope this continues!

Robert showed us many buildings by Wren (or the remains thereof after 1945) and we also visited the C.F. Watts Memorial in Postman's Park – a very moving tribute to 'ordinary' men, women and children who gave their lives to save others. Yet again we found ourselves in an area of tranquillity whilst the City life continued. It's a very special place.

We also saw several of Shakespeare's abodes in the City and there was just a hint that he might have been moving around so often to keep one step ahead of his creditors.

Thereafter, we headed towards One Love Lane and saw the remains of St Mary Aldermanbury. It was a splendid building, but if you want to

see it in its full glory you will need to go to Fulton College, Massachusetts, where it was rebuilt after the Second World War.

Then a very fine lunch at Brown's (via the Guildhall) which rounded the morning off perfectly.

As always, the Gardeners enjoy these outings in a relaxed manner and are full of enthusiasm. Robert was full of knowledge and made each and every one of our stops along the way very interesting and informative. He showed us hidden treasures that I suspect many of us may have walked past before without knowing what we had missed. It was wonderful to experience these very special places in the heart of the City.

Report by James Taylor

FLOWERS IN THE CITY WINNERS

WINTER COMPETITION 2023

Presented 20th April 2023 in a ceremony at Cutlers' Hall.

Roger Payton Trophy Apothecaries' Hall, Black Friars Lane EC4V 6EJ.

Annie Hart Trophy 38 Lombard Street EC3V 9BS.

Edmund and Annie Hart Trophy The Liberty Bounds, 15 Trinity Square EC3N 4AA.

Colin Downie Trophy Mitre House, Mitre Street EC3A 5BU.

Edmund Hart Trophy Byward Kitchen and Bar, Byward Street EC3R 5BJ.

Cutlers' Trophy Pan Pacific Hotel, 80 Houndsditch EC3A 7AB.

Reception Trophy Threadneedles Hotel, 5 Threadneedle Street EC2R 8AY.

An additional trophy for seasonal colour impact The Ship public house, 11 Talbot Court EC3V 0BP.

SUMMER COMPETITION 2023

Presented 9th October 2023 at Mansion House

Small Display Mitre House, 12 -14 Mitre Street EC3.

Medium Display Astronomer Public House, 125-128 Middlesex Street E1 7JF.

Large Display Liberty Bounds Wetherspoons Public House, 15 Trinity Square Tower Hill EC3 4AA.

Enclosed Court Yard Falcon Court, Falcon Chambers Fleet Street EC4Y 1AA.

Small Garden Elm Court Garden, Inner Temple EC4Y 9BT.

Large Garden Inner Temple Garden, EC4Y 7HL.

James Miller Trophy The Avenue, Devonshire Square EC2M 4YE.

Edward Wright Trophy Best Floral Street Lombard Street.

Master's Special Trophy Hydroponic Garden [Square Mile Farms] 25 Old Broad Street.

Livery Hall , Large Garden Drapers' Hall, Throgmorton Ave EC2N 2DQ.

Dick Belfour Trophy Best Small Garden Girdlers Hall, Basinghall Ave EC2V 5DD.

Luder Trophy Corporation The Festival Garden, St Paul's EC4M 8AD.

Skyline Trophy Beaufort House Roof Garden, 15 St. Botolph Street EC3A 7DT.

Living Wall Trophy, Adam Court Terrace EC2N 1DX.

Best Inside Garden Bury Court, 16th Floor 6 Bevis Marks EC3A 7BA.

CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

One of the many Livery Company Collective groupings is The Livery Company Charity Chairs group, of which our Company is a member. They circulated a report on philanthropy by Livery Companies and I thought I would share with you some of the figures. The 110 Livery Companies in the City, with 47,000 Livery and Freeman, gave just over £75mn in charitable contributions in the year 2022. Of this total just under £6mn was from members' donations with the rest from Company endowments (as I am sure you know there are Companies much richer than us). Interestingly, the largest single area of grants was education which took £30mn of the total.

Charity accounts

Staying with the theme of members and funding, you can now view our charity accounts up to June 2023 on the Company website. These were approved by Trustees at our November meeting. The highlight from these accounts is that from an income of £97,600 we made grants to 32 organisations totalling £93,800. I did send out a Christmas thank you email to all those who made this possible with their donations. Just in case anyone was missed, on behalf of the Charity Trustees thank you very much. Charity is such an important part of the Livery movement.

New Trustees

The Charity had some changes of Trustees in October: Stephen Dowbiggin and Roger Hedgecoe both retired while Richard Capewell and Angela Evans joined.

Volunteers for visits

Although Trustees visit some grant recipients, we don't manage to visit them all. Therefore we are still looking for volunteers who would be interested in visiting a grant-receiving organisation. We would give you the grant information including contact details and for what the grant was given. It would then be up to you to contact them, visit and send a short report. If you would be interested do contact me by email: david@a-tait.co.uk.

CHARITY GAINS NEW VEHICLE FOR DISABLED GARDENERS

In 2023 the Worshipful Company of Gardeners of London Charity granted £1,500 towards a new vehicle specially adapted for wheelchair users for Herefordshire Growing Point, a small, horticultural therapy charity.

Herefordshire Growing Point offers social and horticultural therapy to anyone with a physical or mental disability. This is done through tutor-led sessions either at the charity's Demonstration Garden at Credenhill or as part of the outreach programme to care homes and other organisations round the county.

Chair of Herefordshire Growing Point Laura Hone said "Everyone at Growing Point is so grateful to the WCOG London Charity for their invaluable support". Gardeners John and Maurissa said "We really like

this van. It's much nicer than the old one". Another gardener, Jean said "this is so comfortable". If anyone would like to learn more about

Herefordshire Growing Point a short video can be viewed via the website www.growingpoint.org.uk.



From left to right: Tony Prosser (gardener); Julian Reeves (Manager) Colin Jones (volunteer); John Davis (gardener) and Rebecca Sheen (tutor).

GETTING SPECIAL NEEDS PEOPLE INTO THE WORKPLACE



Oakleaf Enterprise were granted £5,450 from the Worshipful Company of Gardeners of London Charity in support of their 'Gardening for Wellbeing' project

Oakleaf is a community-led mental health charity providing work-related horticultural training, employment guidance and coaching, wellbeing activities and counselling services to adults throughout Surrey. Oakleaf supports anyone aged 16-67 suffering from any mental illness including schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder, depression and generalised anxiety.

Working in the community

'Gardening for Wellbeing' is an established and important work-related horticultural programme which provides a first-class service to the public while giving Oakleaf's clients the opportunity to complete their training in gardening. An impressive

87% of programme costs are covered by income generated by this social enterprise, allowing the wider community the chance to give back and help hundreds of individuals to live well with their mental illness.

Useful for the public

A satisfied customer said: "A gardening team from Oakleaf has visited every fortnight for the past six years. They are so cheerful, so willing and so effective. I'm just so grateful for them keeping my garden looking beautiful. Meanwhile, I get immense satisfaction knowing their work is not just about my well-being but also theirs — it's 'win-win'!"

Achieving aims

"I have found that my involvement in the gardening team has been wonderful for my confidence," said one of the recipients of the project. They continued: "Working as a team

and getting used to doing a full, proper days' work has meant so much. I enjoy gardening and the experience I am getting with regards to using different machines and the knowledge I am gaining on plant maintenance is invaluable."

Mental stress on the increase

Alarming in the financial year to 31.3.22, Oakleaf supported 912 individuals – the highest number in 25 years, reflecting an increase of 27% on 2019. Demand post pandemic is extremely high, with the cost-of-living crisis and escalating conflict in Ukraine impacting on increased levels of mental stress in our community. Amanda Henderson Trusts Fundraising Manager said: "We are extremely grateful to the Worshipful Company of Gardeners for their ongoing support, safeguarding the continuation of this project and other elements of our vital work".



Oakleaf clients gain huge benefits by working in the outside community doing regular maintenance of private gardens



participants learn how to work in a team to deliver their gardening tasks

THRIVE GROWING OUT UPDATE



In 2022 the Worshipful Company of Gardeners of London Charity awarded a grant of £30,000 to be paid in three tranches of £10,000 to fund Thrive's Growing Out programme to help those affected by mental health issues. It uses gardening as a way to help the client to work with others, gaining trust and confidence and becoming more active in the community. Many use the opportunity to gain gardening qualifications.

During period July to September 2023:

- The programme was delivered on four days a week Tuesday - Friday
- 34 client gardeners attended the programme across the four days
- 2 client gardeners completed the Level 1 City and Guilds Practical Horticulture Skills
- 14 client gardeners were working towards the Level 1 City and Guilds Practical Horticulture Skills
- A total of 214 garden sessions were attended across the four-days-a-week programme delivery over July to September
- 10 Client Gardener Support Volunteers gave 330 volunteer hours to support STH garden sessions

Case Study September 2023

Louise had been living with depression that had got worse. She didn't feel any real reason to live. Having been at crisis point last year, living on her own and being isolated, as well as experiencing menopause, she didn't know what the next step was for her. Having spoken to her GP, she was referred through a social prescriber who suggested trying out Thrive as Louise loves plants and nature. She needed to find purpose and look to the

future. Louise managed to switch her shift at work so that she could come to Thrive.

Since being at Thrive, Louise shared that she has been much more open with others and really enjoyed being in the group. She has greatly

improved her gardening skills and knowledge and has just enrolled on the Level 1 City & Guilds horticulture qualification. Louise shared that she has found her passion for gardening and is thinking about the possibility of changing direction to work in horticulture.



Thrive's Growing Out programme helps people with mental disabilities to integrate back into society and many of them gain horticultural qualifications.

SCHOOLS OUTREACH HELPS CITY OF LONDON SCHOOL CHILDREN



City of London School (CLS) pupils returned to their Grove Park sports fields in summer last year to spend time working in and enjoying its flourishing conservation areas with the help of the Worshipful Company of Gardeners' Schools Outreach programme.

Since 2021, parts of Grove Park have been transformed into wildlife conservation areas. Back in November 2021 the Eco-Schools committee planted around 40 native trees and bushes, aiming to provide habitat and food for insects, birds and small mammals. In 2022 the pupils removed an area of grass and reseeded it with native wildflower seeds which gave a fantastic array of grasses and wildflowers, increasing biodiversity and attracting

a plethora of insect life to the otherwise monoculture space of the former lawns.

Biodiversity fieldwork

In 2023 the pupils undertook some biodiversity field work in these areas. They measured the trees and identified different plant species prevalent in the meadows. They also began to help establish a pond to promote keystone species and habitat in order to attract more complex animals to take up residence there. All the areas created will be invaluable space for nature to thrive, and in turn provide fantastic opportunities for the pupils to learn about biodiversity, biology, the value of nature and the importance of conservation.



The pupils were also involved in creating a new pond to further encourage wildlife



The native wildflower meadow created by the City of London School children

ENGAGING VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE

In 2023 the Worshipful Company of Gardeners granted £2,748 to the Royal Botanical Gardens Kew to help their Community Horticulture Learning Programme, Discover Horticulture project.

Practical workshops

Discover Horticulture is a three-day course designed to introduce people from a local London charity to gardening with practical workshops and tours of Kew Gardens. The course is aimed at participants who might otherwise face physical, sensory, psychological, or social barriers to visiting Kew.

Southall Black Sisters

In August, Kew's learning team



Women from Southall Black Sisters participating in the three-day course at Kew

welcomed 15 participants from Southall Black Sisters (SBS). SBS is a charity that works directly with victims of domestic abuse, providing free advice, support, and advocacy. They had not previously engaged with Kew, and the support of the Gardeners' Company enabled the group to attend this course with the support of a coordinator from the charity.

The group enjoyed practical sessions in the community allotments and

tours at Kew. The participants said it alleviated their stress levels and provided an exciting opportunity to learn about horticulture. As one put it, *"The sessions were really incredible; it was so interesting, and it does make me feel more relaxed and stress free - an unforgettable experience"*. Penny Appelbe, Trusts and Foundations Manager said: *"I would like to thank the Worshipful Company of Gardeners for generously supporting Kew and our programme."*

IN SEARCH OF OLIVER MESSEL AT NYMANS, THE EPITOME OF EDWARDIAN TASTE

The long-remembered images of ballet sets for Diaghilev, and later the Caribbean houses and fabulous London interiors, were the work of Oliver Messel, who grew up in the wealthy and creative Messel family who, over three generations, created Nymans. It was with great anticipation that I visited this famous garden with a group of Gardeners on a perfect late autumn day, to see perhaps the inspirational source of one of England's finest designers.

We found a great mature garden, the epitome of Edwardian taste, endowed with splendid trees, and a house mostly a romantic ruin, from which beautifully manicured lawns swept.

The first frost had proceeded the Gardeners' visit, but along the hedged, long and wide herbaceous borders, defiant burgundy amaranthus stood tall beside the orange *Dahlia* 'David Howard', and tawny helenium, cosmos, large salvias and the deepest canna leaves were providing final splashes of late colour.

But it was the density and diversity of these massed plantings that enthralled, as I wondered how long it would take to clear the herbaceous borders. These grand gardens were planned with a small army of gardeners in mind!

Generosity of scale, whether it was in sweeps of ericaceous plants, or in the rock garden where a fine collection of grasses are interwoven, captured the imagination. What a boon the ornamental grasses are to the late garden; I snapped the fluffy tails of a creamy pennisetum, just one example among many softening a strong planting placed over landforms.

Scale was well understood in this garden. A large round sunken garden was filled with circles of herbaceous plants, an unexpected feature in the main lawn where a Peto-style pavilion, a 1980's design by the neo classical architect Howard Jebb, had been placed.

Opposite, the trees and shrubs planted against the house ruins were massed against the soaring gables, and as I looked up into the glass-less windows, their fine tracery was starkly outlined against the sky and

I was convinced this was Oliver Messel's inspiration.

Nymans has been administered by the National Trust since 1953 and it was their welcoming staff who were encouraging us to return in high season, and I know I will, perhaps just to see the borders for their scale is mammoth, a set piece of planting and maintenance that defies imagination.

Report by Marylyn Abbott



Nymans: a great mature garden, the epitome of Edwardian taste.



Herbaceous borders were planned with a small army of gardeners in mind.



THE REAL STORY BEHIND THE GIVING OF POSIES TO THE LADY MAYORESS

In accordance with City and Company tradition the Master presented three posies and one buttonhole to the Lady Mayoress and those accompanying her in her carriage, at Mansion House on Saturday 11th November ahead of the Lord Mayor's Show.

He was accompanied by the Upper Warden, Mrs Cindy Peck and Miss Catriona Balfour (Dick Balfour's grand-daughter).

This tradition dates from 1991 when the late Dick Balfour, as Master Gardener, made a presentation of roses from his garden to Liveryman Lady McWilliams, the new Lady Mayoress.

Those accompanying the Lady Mayoress in the latest ceremony were Mrs Katharine Mainelli, Dr Markus Reuss and Mrs Heidi Grissmer.

The posies and buttonhole were produced by Senior Past Master Nick Evans.

Honorary Archivist Georgina Craufurd sets the Company's posy presentation into an older and more serious context: the fight against disease.

The presentation by the Master of posies to the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress before they jump into the golden carriage for the start of the Lord Mayor's Show sounds a quaint idea, but in times past it had a serious purpose.

Until the 19th Century people did not understand how infection was passed from person to person at a molecular level. Instead, they thought that all disease was transmitted by 'bad air', hence the word malaria, which is now restricted in its application of course.

It followed from that concept that 'good air' could be obtained by sniffing something pleasant, like flowers or herbs – both of which were grown by the Gardeners.

For the same reason, posies are provided for judges in law courts; 'gaol fever' (Typhus) was rife in prisons where everyone was crowded together, and it could be caught by the judges themselves. It is also the source of the tradition of strewing rose petals in front of royal brides; weddings are still legally a public occasion, where infection could be easily caught.

Finally, it is the reason for the sinister beaked headgear of the Docteur de la Peste (Plague doctor); the doctor, who had to work close to a sufferer and breathed through the long 'beak' which was stuffed with herbs and scented flowers: a primitive kind of gas mask.

We have all lived through two years of Covid, with the need to wear masks in public places. It gives the idea of the posy ceremony a relevance today.

Above: The Master with the Lord Mayor, Lady Mayoress and guests at the Mansion House early in the morning of the Lord Mayor's Show. Photograph Rex Thornborough.

Below: The Plague Doctor, relying on a beak stuffed with fragrant plants and herbs.

