

Friends of Mycenae Gardens

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Newsletter No 7 Spring 2017

Next AGM at 7.00pm Wednesday 22nd March 2017

The Friends of Mycenae Gardens will hold its next Annual General Meeting on **Wednesday 22nd March 2017 at 7.00pm in Woodlands**, home to **Greenwich Steiner School, 90 Mycenae Road, SE3 7SE**.

Membership of the Friends is free and existing members do not need to renew. However, donations are very welcome and should be forwarded to **The Secretary, Friends of Mycenae Gardens, c/o Mycenae House, 90 Mycenae Road, SE3 7SE**.

Anyone wishing to stand for election to the Committee needs to be a member of the Friends and must be proposed by two other members of the Friends. There is a nomination form on the website, to be returned by post to the address above, or by email to friendsofmycenaegardens@gmail.com.

Dear Friends

2016 was another busy and positive year in the Gardens.

Members of the group and volunteers from GoodGym undertook the heavy work of forking over the denuded patches of ground to the north of the lawn and under the plane trees, aerating the soil and reducing compaction, and then spreading bark mulch provided by the Royal Borough of Greenwich. An experimental patch of particularly tough grasses was planted in the same area.

In the spring more bulbs were planted on the west side of the gardens, and more recently shrub beds to the east and north of the lawn were forked over, replanted and better defined to allow passage between them and views to the house. The bed nearest the Greenwich Steiner School has been adopted by the school, and children of year 6 planted the shrubs in that bed and provided the artwork for the notices.

Meanwhile the gardens were enjoyed, as ever, by many in the local community, as well as by their pets and local wildlife. A particular highlight of the year was the very successful

ParksFest event organised by Mark Johnson-Brown with support from the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

For more contemplative enjoyment the group has recently installed 2 benches, with funds granted by our local councillors from their ward fund. One of the benches has been formed by adapting two old concrete posts that were already in place towards the northwest corner of the gardens.

*Although the Gardens are owned and supported by the Royal Borough of Greenwich, the borough is increasingly looking to local communities and to groups such as ours to help with the management, maintenance and improvement of their local parks and green spaces. Please come to the Annual General Meeting on 22 March and join the group, perhaps even offer to join the committee, and help us to preserve and improve these historic gardens for the benefit of all. **Three of our committee are standing down. We shall miss their expertise and energy. We need to replace them. We need your help.***

Mark Barnes Committee Chair

The plane trees



Volunteers from GoodGym joined members of the Group to fork over the ground around the plane trees and to spread woodchip mulch to decompact and enrich the soil.

After this back-breaking work, the GoodGym volunteers ran home - one of them covering 16km.

Shrub beds

A number of distinct shrub beds have been shaped from the rather loose arrangement of shrubs on the eastern side of the Gardens. Over the course of two planting days, these were forked over and replanted.



The Dell

After all the planting in 2015, the Dell is progressing well, although only the early flowers, like this hellebore, are currently on show.



The main concern has been to deal with what appeared to be low-level vandalism: the sisal rope barrier surrounding one of the planted areas was repeatedly severed.

It was not clear whether it had been cut or chewed by animals —

but a steel replacement was stolen.

The barrier has now been replaced with a knee-rail constructed from branches found on site (see photo). Many thanks to Shirley Broughton and David Jervis for their patience and persistence.



Sisal ropes surrounding the shrub beds in the gardens have recently suffered the same fate, and we may have to adopt the same approach there.

Elsewhere ...

The first signs of spring have appeared in the 'Glade' on the west side of the gardens. The aconites shown here were among the bulbs and shrubs planted by members and volunteers on a planting day in April.



In November, a patch of this particularly tough turf was laid as an experiment. The tape barrier was removed after a few weeks, to see how the turf fares under normal use.

If it thrives, it may allow for returfing of some of the parts of the gardens that are currently bare.



Here are the new benches, one under the maple and the other under the plane trees.



Returfing a large area would require a major fund-raising effort.

Parksfest 2016

We were delighted to welcome over 1200 people into the garden at the Summer Sunday Parkfest event in July. It featured 12 high quality live music and dance performances from Chinese, African, Hungarian and English artists on the main stage. The accompanying programme of over 30 arts and fun activities for children and families kept the visitors engaged and enthralled and every one was fed and watered from the delicious food and drinks on offer. The Friends of Mycenae Gardens devised a tree-sure hunt which provided educational fun for many of the children. We are busy planning another event for this summer, so watch this space for more information.

