

St. Stephen's Millennium Green Trust

Annual Report for the year 1st October 2016 to 30th September 2017.

The St. Stephen's Millennium Green Trust of 3 Richmond Hill, Bath, BA1 5QT was registered by the Charity Commission under the terms of a Declaration of Trust dated 5 May 1999. Registered charity number is 1076240. The Trust Deed is available for inspection by appointment.

The Trustees

Mary Ede, 12 Springfield Place, Bath

Jacqueline Harris, 10 Mount Beacon, Bath

Brenda Bridgeman, The Cott, Richmond Lane, Bath

Claire Smith, 14 Upper Camden Place, Bath (Treasurer)

Ian Wilson, 3 Richmond Hill, Bath (Chairman)

Lyn Jacobs, 9 Springfield Place, Bath

Chris Champion, 11 Lansdown Lane, Bath

Howard Jacobs, 9 Springfield Place, Bath

Anne Claxton, Hill House, Richmond Hill, Bath

Under the terms of the Deed existing Trustees are responsible for the appointment of new Trustees and officers. All existing Trustees are due to retire and to be open to reselection after a term of 4 years.

Aims of the Trust and Powers of the Trustees

The Trustees are committed to hold the Trust funds and apply them to the maintenance of The Green, to develop The Green for informal recreation, play or other leisure-time occupations, and as a meeting area for local events for the general benefit of the community. The site is designated by Bath and North East Somerset Council as being of "special visual importance".

Progress Report

This year, the 17th year of the St. Stephen's Millennium Green's existence, has been yet another year of successes and achievements. The Millennium Green continues to thrive and is seen as a valuable asset by the local community.

This year there has been one change in the line-up of Trustees. Anne Claxton has been appointed a new Trustee and we are very grateful to have Anne's expertise and experience to be added to the Board of Trustees.

The Green has been looking in excellent condition throughout the year and its appearance continues to attract many favourable comments. Our thanks are due once again to our gardener John Gibbon, and to two of the Trustees, Jackie Harris and Brenda Bridgeman, who work so hard to ensure that the Green has always looked at its very best.

Earlier this year we were surprised and delighted to see the photograph behind the weather forecaster during a recent edition of 'Gardeners' World' It was a recent picture of the Millennium Green taken by a local photographer and what better endorsement for the Green than to be shown on national television.

Last year the old totem poles were removed. After some discussion about options for a replacement the Trustees have decided on a weeping cherry tree. Work has started on filling the hole where the previous totem poles stood in preparation for planting the tree later this year.

As covered in the Financial Report the Trust continues to be in a healthy financial position with income exceeding expenditure and a growing capital reserve fund. In essence if the Trust had no more income from today the capital reserves would enable the administration and maintenance of the Green for another 8 years. The Trustees will continue to grow the capital reserves so that this becomes at least 15 years. By the end of the 2017 the Trustees will make further investments to increase the size of the Trust's investment assets.

Historically donations and fund-raising events have been a major source of revenue for the Trust. Over recent years as the core group of donors to the Trust age and move away the income from donations has decreased although during the past year the Trust still had 91 active donors. This means that the fund-raising events have become a more important component of the Trust's income. In order to encourage more donations the ability to make a donation online via PayPal has been introduced. In addition donations can also be made via text messages using the free Vodafone JustTextGiving service.

During the period covered by this Annual Report there were four very successful fund-raising events organised by the Events Committee. These events provided plenty of entertainment for the local community as well as raising much needed funds for the upkeep of the Millennium Green.

A Christmas Wine Tasting & Supper was held on November 19th 2016. The evening was a great success with 62 guests enjoying the Christmas selection presented by Great Western Wine's Patrick Goudge and a supper prepared by the Millennium Green Events Committee. The evening raised over £950 towards the upkeep of the Millennium Green.

A Tea and Talk was held on Feb 25th 2017 which was a highly successful event with more than 60 attendees. David Beeton entertained the audience with a series of anecdotes about life inside the Royal Palaces and afterwards attendees enjoyed tea and cake featuring the usual selection of delicious cakes. Over £650 was raised towards the maintenance of the Millennium Green.

The annual Lansdown Open Gardens event was held on June 4th 2017. Six gardens were open and the afternoon started out with plenty of sunshine but showers later on. However this did not stop over 200 visitors coming to enjoy the gardens and the customary delicious cakes and teas. The event raised over £1800.

The Summer Fair and Produce Sale was held on a beautiful sunny August Bank Holiday Monday with a big crowd enjoying the Fair on the Millennium Green. The children's sunflower competition brought many children and families onto the Green and as usual the Punch & Judy show was a big hit with both children and adults. In all over £1300 was raised for the upkeep of the Millennium Green.

In all the events held during the period of this report raised a net contribution of £4639 toward the income of the Trust. Many thanks to the Events Committee (Lyn Jacobs – Chair, Joyce Peachey, Elizabeth Jones, Di Ashby, and Jenny Sharples) and all the cake makers, tea servers, stall minders and all the other helpers who have made these events so enjoyable and successful.

Two years ago B&NES Council solicited nominations for green spaces that could be part of the Local Green Space Designations under the National Planning Policy Framework. The Trustees submitted a nomination for the Millennium Green. The nomination was accepted by B&NES and was included in the list of B&NES Local Green Space Designations within the B&NES Place Making Plan. This plan was formally adopted by the council in July 2017 and is in turn part of the Development Plan for the B&NES which governs planning applications. This should give an extra level of protection against any future development on the Millennium Green.

Last year we reported that the Trustees had made some minor amendments to the Declaration of Trust that established the St. Stephen's Millennium Green Trust and is the governing document for the Trust. When the Trust was originally setup a standard template provided by the Millennium Commission was used to frame the Declaration of Trust. This contained a few omissions and some clauses that are now incorrect or irrelevant. The Trustees believed that these changes are important so that in the future there could be no legal challenge to the validity of the Trust and its operation. The Trustees did not want this to be an issue in the future when, for example, the current lease of the Allotments expires. The current status of this activity is that the solicitors engaged by Natural England need to give final approval to these changes which should be done by the end of 2017. We will publish to all the final agreed version of the Deed of Trust. Many thanks to Howard Jacobs for continuing to work on this issue.

Email continues to be the primary method of communication with supporters of the Green and we now have over 200 email addresses for supporters of the Green. The website (www.millenniumgreen.org.uk) is also very active and every effort is made to keep it up to date. If you 'Google' 'Millennium Green' you will see that the Green appears top of Google's list.

Over the past year the Millennium Green has largely been free of vandalism. However over the summer months the Green became a focal point for youths to gather. Whilst in general these gatherings were trouble-free on a number of occasions there were disturbances and illicit activities that caused disruption for those living adjacent to the Green. The local police were involved and as summer moved into autumn these disturbances have tapered off.

Clearly the Trustees do not want this to be a recurring problem over the summer months in the future. Actions to be taken including reinstating the lighting by the sub-station, encouraging a more regular presence on the Green by our supporters and a continuing dialogue with the local police.

Looking to the future the factors that will ensure a healthy future for the Millennium Green remain much the same:

- **Infrastructure & Maintenance.** At present the day to day gardening and maintenance activities are well covered but in time a number of more significant items requiring capital expenditure will need to be addressed – e.g. renewal of the stage, maintenance of the fort and the gifted land. As already mentioned an activity for coming year will be filling the space left by the removal of the totem poles. In addition there are plans to replace the solar panel and the water feature and to establish a fernery on the Green.
- **Resources.** Since inception the Millennium Green has been very lucky in having a core of volunteers and supporters who have supported the maintenance and fundraising activities for the Green. In recent years there has also been a paid gardener for the Green and it is our intent to always continue with this model. Looking forward it is vital that we continue to have an active set of core volunteers and supporters to ensure the health of the Green for the future. A challenge for the Trustees over the next few years is to ensure that we are doing all we can to bring on a new generation of volunteers to support the Green.

- **Financial Viability.** The present financial status of the Green is healthy as outlined in the Financial Report. However looking at the future there are challenges ahead. Currently the 'running costs' of the Green are now c. £9000 per annum. Assuming a 2% inflation rate over the next 15 years that requires c. £156,000 to maintain the Green 'as is'. On top of this would be amounts required for capital expenditure to refurbish the stage, the fort etc. This means that the Trustees have a key responsibility to continue to build up the capital reserves of the Trust to ensure financial viability for the next 15 or more years.

In conclusion I would like update some facts that I unearthed last year. Back in June 1999 according to an old Millennium Commission newsletter that I discovered 468 Millennium Greens were underway or planned. According to the Charity Commission website there are 214 Millennium Green Trusts currently in existence. Out of these 214 the St. Stephen's Millennium Green is certainly in the top 10 in terms of annual income, and is probably now in the top 4. This is a great testament to both the original founders of the Green and to the local community for maintaining and supporting the Millennium Green over the past 17 years.

Financial report

The attached accounts show that the Trust has again received more money than it has expended due to the hard work of our Events Committee and the generosity of our donors. Currently the total yield on our investments is now running at over £2000 a year.

Cash on hand (approximately £20,200) together with planned income for 2018 will cover the running costs for next year and we anticipate being able to increase reserves again at the end of 2018 to help secure the long term funding of the Millennium Green.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my fellow Trustees for their contributions over the past year. They have always been willing to lend a hand with whatever task needs doing. The Stephen's Millennium Green has been a wonderful community asset for over 17 years. It is my goal, and the goal of the Trustees that it continues to be a wonderful local asset over the next 17 years.

Ian Wilson

Chairman

Dated: 19/11/2017