



Appointment of Chair

November 2024

Reference: UBOSA2

Saxton Bampfylde

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Welcome from the Interim Chair

At an exciting moment of renewal, growth and change, we are delighted to launch our search for a new Chair of Trustees. Having recently overseen the Garden through its 350th year, including the conclusion of the Glasshouse Restoration Project, the Board of Trustees and the executive team have begun the process of imagining the future of the Garden's wider built environment. We are in the first stages of developing a plan for transformation, whose aim is to ensure that this vital green space in the heart of London is more accessible, community-facing and sustainable for the long-term.

The Board is now seeking a person with the right vision, passion, energy and commitment to help shape and achieve these plans. The last five years have already seen considerable change for the Garden, including in widening access and reaching a broader range of people, and we are keen to build on this transformation. This key ambassadorial role represents a real opportunity to make a positive difference, positioning the Garden for the next 350 years, and building the profile of this unique historic resource and its potential to unleash the healing power of plants for the future benefit of humanity.

Chelsea Physic Garden is in a strong position financially and operationally: we have strong and diversified revenue streams that fully cover our costs. We have an energetic and passionate team and an engaged Board of Trustees comprising a wide range of backgrounds and lengths of service; we recently undertook a skills audit and have an opportunity to develop the Board further over the coming years. We have also recently undertaken a body of work on our future strategy and the incoming Chair will arrive to find a supportive team with a sense of excitement and united purpose about the work of the Garden in the coming years.

I hope that you will share our enthusiasm for this unique opportunity.

Andrew Woodward, Interim Chair



Introduction

Thank you for your interest in serving as Chair of the Chelsea Physic Garden. It is a wonderfully romantic and inspiring place for learning about useful plants.

Being in the same place and doing the same thing since 1673 is quite something to celebrate. In the 1670s, when John Evelyn visited the Garden, he saw a Chincona tree growing in one of the first heated greenhouses ever built. It used an innovative system of underground heating. Bark from that tree (modern day quinine) was given to Charles II as a palliative for the malaria that the poor chap had contracted from, of all places, the Essex marshes.

As a candidate for the Chair, I hope that you'll enjoy our rich history and appreciate its role in keeping us relevant today, as we help people to understand everything from the threat to plant habitats from climate change to the benefit to our wellbeing from this green space in the heart of London.

We recently celebrated our 350-year anniversary in 2023, and have taken the opportunity to reflect on all that has been achieved by the organisation over its long history.

2023 was the culmination of so much hard work. Not only did we complete the restoration of the Glasshouses, but our 350-anniversary year was the springboard for many new activities. We commissioned research into our plant collections and published four zines on varied topics. Our events programme had something for everyone, activities ranged from bee safaris, poetry reading, yoga on the lawn to family theatre. A special curated '350 trail' took visitors to new and unexpected parts of the garden, and shed light on our rich history along the way.

We are confident that we can continue to transform, to make an impact and create a bright, sustainable future for Chelsea Physic Garden. We have a strong Board with some recent new recruits and they will be fully able to support you in providing my impressive Management Team with the right degree of constructive challenge.

Being Chair of the Chelsea Physic Garden is a wonderful, inspiring and enjoyable opportunity. It takes a fair amount of time but the plants, the people and, above all, the place itself make it so worthwhile.

We look forward to receiving your application.

Sue Medway
Director



About the Chelsea Physic Garden

Situated on the bank of the Thames, 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. There has been a Garden on our site since 1673, and we recently celebrated the significant milestone of our 350th anniversary in 2023.

The Garden's survival stems from its ability to adapt and evolve. In climate change, we perhaps face our biggest challenge. In 2023 we successfully delivered the restoration of our historic Glasshouses, we are now readying ourselves for the next chapter.

Last year, we welcomed 46,300 visitors and we are confident that we can continue to transform, to make an impact and create a bright, sustainable future for Chelsea Physic Garden.

Although the pandemic offered many challenges, the Garden is in a strong position, and we have found new and creative ways to engage with our visitors and audiences, including through significant activity in our newly established Learning and Public Engagement department, which has supported our engagement with over 11,700 learners, both onsite, and online.

The Garden has a highly performing and well managed staff team who through the Director, Sue Medway, and Senior Leadership Team, handle the day-to-day operations of the Garden, its trading subsidiary, the capital projects and its public and community activity programmes.



About the Chelsea Physic Garden

Our Mission is:

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

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

Our Purpose:

Our purpose is to Sow the Seeds of Discovery through three key themes: People, Plants, and Place, all in the spirit of One Garden, One Place.

- **People:** Rooted in remarkable people, past present and future; connecting communities with nature by unlocking 350 years of history; sharing knowledge and expertise through partnership and innovation.
- **Plants:** A living library which illustrates the vital importance of plants in every aspect of our lives; conserving and protecting endangered plants and our historic archive for future generations.
- **Place:** A green space in the heart of London for people, plants and wildlife; drawing on the continuity and unique spirit of place to innovate and ensure a sustainable future; custodians of a biodiverse refuge in London's changing landscape reflecting and celebrating cultural diversity.

Our Values:

- 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.

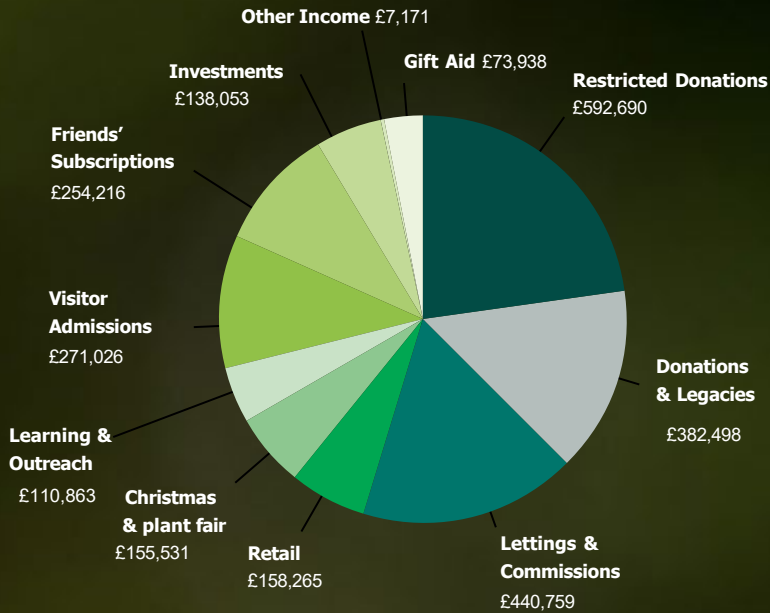
Additional information on the Garden and its work, current programme of activities and priorities for fundraising can be found on our website www.chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk.



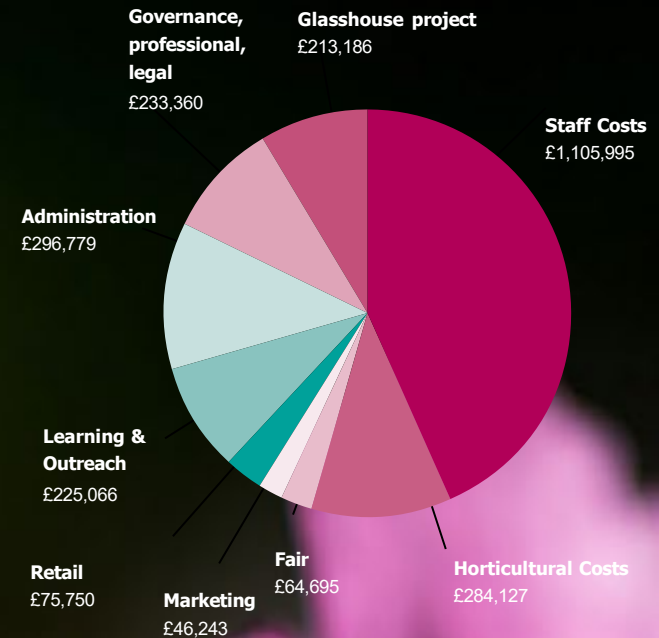
Finance, Income and Fundraising

Our most recent Annual Impact Report can be found [here](#).

Total Income: £2,585,010



Total Expenditure: £2,545,201





Governance

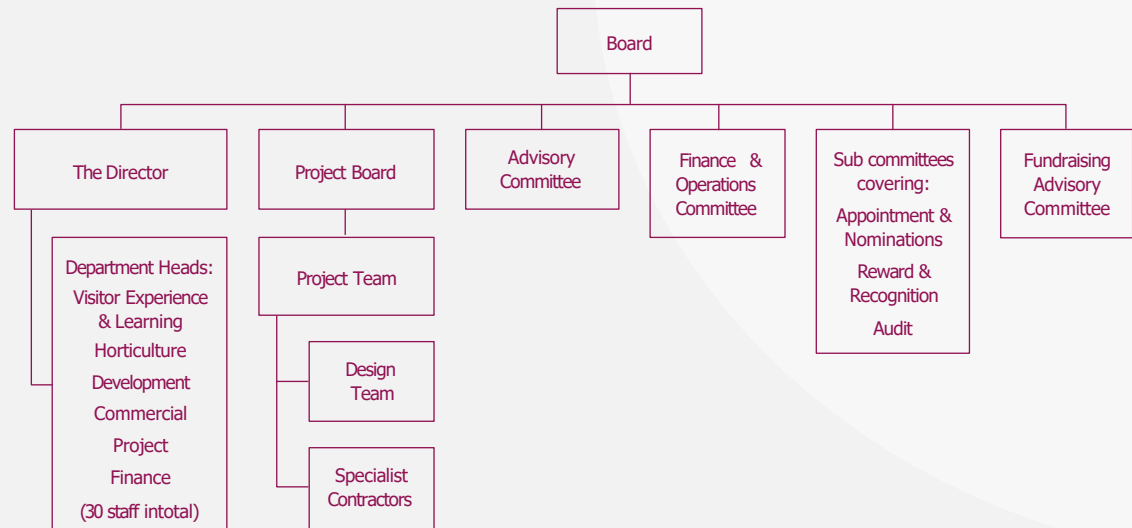
People and plants have shaped Chelsea Physic Garden since 1673. The people who currently work or volunteer in the Garden are passionate about the power of plants.

The Garden is governed by the Board, supported by its sub-committees. The Board is well established and there is currently a good balance of skills and professional backgrounds amongst its members. The Garden continues to strengthen its Board through the careful recruitment of Trustees and is looking to appoint a number over the next 12 months.

Together the small, dedicated team of staff benefit from the knowledge and support of the Board and the various sub-committees that report into it, to ensure that the Garden is a vibrant, and successful operation.

Biographies of our current Trustees and staff can be found here:

<https://www.chelseaphysicgarden.co.uk/about/trustees-staff/>



Our next Chair

Main responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Providing leadership to Chelsea Physic Garden in collaboration with the Director and the Board of Trustees.
- Capacity for strategic thinking for ambitions and longer-term development of a transformational masterplan.
- Ability and contacts to support philanthropic and other forms of fundraising.
- Always acting in the best interests of, and as an ambassador for Chelsea Physic Garden.
- Leading the Board at a time when we are undertaking the longer term development of a transformational masterplan as well as building on our strong operational strengths.

The anticipated commitment in order to play a full and active part in the working of the charity is likely to include:

- Chairing quarterly Board Meetings.
- Attending various sub-committee meetings, including quarterly Finance and Operations Committee and Project Board meetings, ad hoc meetings of the Nominations and Appointments Committee, yearly meetings of the Audit and Reward and Recognition Committee and twice-yearly Advisory Committee Meetings.
- Regular (currently monthly) phone or video calls with the Director.
- Where appropriate and as required, attending additional engagements to represent the Garden.

Commitment and terms



Person specification

The appointment is for an initial term of three years with two optional additional appointments of three years each. The role is voluntary but reasonable expenses can be claimed.

Chelsea Physic Garden wishes to encourage applications from senior leaders drawn from a variety of backgrounds.

You will have a passion for plants and a deep commitment to our values and mission.

You will bring a forward thinking, emotionally intelligent approach, and a flexibility in your thinking which will help us discern the right future for the Garden.

Upcoming Board Meeting Dates

Tuesday 18th February 2025

Tuesday 13th May 2025

Tuesday 22nd July 2025

Tuesday 11th November 2025

Candidates will likely bring the following:

- A passion for horticulture and an understanding and appreciation of the curatorial and heritage significance of the Garden, including its living and non-living collections.
- A proven track record of leadership in a large organisation in the voluntary, public, or commercial sectors such as Chair, Chief Executive or Director.
- An understanding of fundraising and willingness to play an active role as an Ambassador for Chelsea Physic Garden, particularly in relation to current and future capital projects.
- A focused, decisive and inclusive leadership style with an understanding of the dynamics of Board working and the need for a strong, positive relationship with executive management.
- Excellent communication, influencing, and representation skills.



How to apply

Saxton Bampfylde Ltd is acting as an employment agency advisor to The Chelsea Physic Garden on this appointment.

Candidates should apply for this role through our website at www.saxbam.com/appointments using code **UBOSA2**.

Click on the 'apply' button and follow the instructions to upload a CV and cover letter and complete the online equal opportunities monitoring* form.

The closing date for applications is **noon on Tuesday 10 December 2024**.

- The equal opportunities monitoring online form will not be shared with anyone involved in assessing your application. Please complete as part of the application process.

GDPR personal data notice

According to GDPR guidelines, we are only able to process your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data, health, or sexual orientation) with your express consent. You will be asked to complete a consent form when you apply and please do not include any Sensitive Personal Data within your CV (although this can be included in your covering letter if you wish to do so), remembering also not to include contact details for referees without their prior agreement.

Due diligence

Due diligence will be carried out as part of the application process, which may include searches carried out via internet search engines and any public social media accounts.



Saxton Bampfylde