

October 2021



Hello members,

We hope that you're doing well. It's been a while since we've been in touch with an update - the summer was a busy blur as it probably was for most of you, too.

Since we last were in touch, we have more members, and more local schools and nurseries using the gardens for forest school and outdoor learning, which is exactly the kind of benefit Lettsom was established to bring. In fact, the gardens became so popular in the spring and summer that we had to close sections off to protect the plants, but the autumn weather seems to be doing the trick of bringing the spaces back to their normal wild-ish conditions.

We've also finalised and signed a new long-term lease with Southwark Council, which means the future of the gardens as a historical, ecological and community site is secure, for at least the next 25 years.



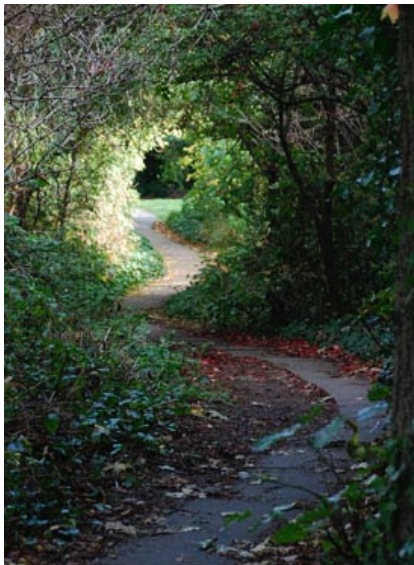
No bonfire night this year

Unfortunately, not all the news is as good

Lots of you have been in touch recently asking if we'll hold a bonfire this year, and we know it's an annual event for lots of local families. It's a pretty big deal for Lettsom Gardens too, both because we love doing it, and because it's the biggest fundraising day in our charity's calendar.

But with the central wall not yet repaired, we aren't able to safely hold an event, especially one after dark, where we rely on the space near the wall. So the trustees have had to agree not to hold a bonfire this year. If you're looking for an alternative, our neighbours and friends at the Dog Kennel Hill Adventure Playground are holding one on Friday 5th, 4 - 8pm.

The wall repair itself is in progress with Southwark Council, who have committed to restoring the original period wall (but with improved drainage, helping to prevent this kind of collapse again in the future). Unfortunately, it's currently stuck in legal delays between Southwark and the building contractors, which is frustrating to all of us. We know that this is affecting the use of the gardens for all of us, and we will keep working to get it sorted soon as possible



Autumn Tidy-up days

We will still run our annual autumn tidy-up days, next weekend on the 6th & 7th November. All ages and gardening ability levels are welcome, and the kids tend to have a suprisingly good time getting stuck in with the clearing and tidying!

If you're able to join in, please come around 10.30 am to the gardens, and bring some sturdy gloves. We can give you any of the tools needed, which are pretty light and minimal as the biggest tasks are things like litter picking, leaf clearing and clearing weeds from the edge of the hardcourt. It makes a real difference to how easy the gardens are to use the winter months, and we always appreciate every helping hand we get.

We look forward to seeing many of you there, and to having a bigger event back in the gardens as soon as we safely can.

All the best until then,

Philippa & Marq
Co-Chairs, Lettsom Gardens Association