

# LOWER CENTRAL GARDENS TRUST BOARD



Report subject	<b>Lower Central Gardens Trust Board Meeting 12 May 2025</b>
Meeting date	12 May 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>The report provides service update information to the Lower Gardens Trust Board to demonstrate the Council commitment to maintain the public gardens known as "The Lower Central Gardens" in Bournemouth for the recreation and enjoyment of the public in accordance with the terms of the Charity Scheme made by the Charity Commission on the 13 May 2011</p> <p>Items include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 2025 – 26 Event Programme</li><li>• Arts &amp; Makers Market</li><li>• Westover Gardens Kiosk site retendering</li><li>• General Grounds Maintenance</li></ul> <p>The report provides information to note whilst also seeking support and approval from the board. The report furthermore asks the board to give consideration as to topic items for future reports.</p>
Recommendations	<p>It is RECOMMENDED that:</p> <p>a) The Board authorise Officers to carry out a tendering exercise to seek best value for the Westover Gardens Kiosk operation for between 5- 7 years and, following evaluation of the tenders, to award a lease to operate to the successful applicant.</p> <p>b) To authorise the minor changes in the current arrangements, to include use of half to the 'art store' for storage and subject to any planning permissions to install an additional wooden decking area. To also include within the new lease, subject to approvals, the use of the wider area near the aviary for specific events.</p> <p>c) Confirm if the Trustees wish to appoint a board member as part of the evaluation panel.</p>
Reason for	To allow the smooth running of the gardens and for time sensitive

recommendations	matters to be dealt with by officers.
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Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Andy Hadley – Climate Response, Environment & Energy
Corporate Director	Glynn Barton – Chief Operations Officer
Report Authors	Kate Langdown – Director of Environment Amanda Barrie – Director of Commercial Services Ed Alexander – Planning & Contracts Manager Helen Wildman – Head of Leisure & Events
Wards	Not applicable
Classification	For Update, information and decision

## Background

1. The Lower & Central Gardens Trust (LCGT) was created in 1873 under an Indenture (legal agreement) between BCP Council's predecessor body the Bournemouth Commissioners and Sir George Eliot Meyrick Tapps Gervis. The day-to-day control and management of the Lower Central Gardens and hence the charity, was varied by s.29 Bournemouth Borough Council Act 1985. This vested in the Council the general power to use, control and manage the Lower Central Gardens.
2. The object of the charity is the provision of open space for the purpose of recreation and enjoyment of the public.
3. The Trust Board must hold at least two ordinary meetings each year. One such meeting in each year must involve the physical presence of those Trust Board Members who attend the meeting. Other meetings may be held in person or by such suitable electronic means, including video-conferencing, as the Trust Board decide provided that the form chosen enables the Trust Board Members both to see and to hear each other.

## 2025 – 2026 Events Programme

4. South Coast Makers Market (1 day monthly 2025) – new small event proposal for 6 stalls within the tunnel path of local businesses and charities as an extension to the Bobby's market using hardstanding.
5. Arts by the Sea Festival (26 – 28 September 2025) – annual festival with arts installations and performances throughout the Lower Gardens, Seafront and Town Centre.

6. Run Bournemouth (11 - 12 October 2025) – annual running event primarily along the seafront between Bournemouth and Hengistbury Head with some elements utilising Pavilion Terrace, Street Food Corner and Pinewalk Bandstand.
7. Bournemouth Christmas (Nov & Dec 2025) – annual ice rink and Christmas lighting through the Lower Gardens. This year will see the entire contract through external organisation which will be contract managed through the events team.
8. Bournemouth Bay Run (Mar / April 2026 – date TBC) - annual running event with race village in front of the bandstand.
9. As per previous years there are a number of smaller minor events planning such as duck races and bandstand performances dealt with by the events team under the delegated authority for Commercial Operations.

### **Art & Makers Market**

10. The Art and Makers market went out for tender in 2024 with the view for an operator to take over the bookings and general maintenance of the space. No submissions were received so the operation is continuing in house for May.
11. The team received a proposal from Makers Space Markets to run the Art & Makers market from June 2025 – December 2025 as a trial with the view to undertake it longer term.
12. The proposed operator will take full responsibility of the site including bookings, general maintenance, paperwork and marketing. References and paperwork have been received as well as approval from the council's procurement team.
13. The Commercial team will undertake spot checks during this time and a full review will be undertaken in December 2025 for options for the operation for 2026 onwards.

### **Westover Road Kiosk Concession Retender**

14. The kiosk, currently trading as Picnic Park Deli, was installed on behalf of the Trust Board in 2016. It was part of a restoration of the Westover Gardens area which had become very tired. This unit replaced an old wooden kiosk next to the old aviary.
15. A tender exercise was carried out in 2016 for an operator and the current operator won that process. They have improved the area, and along with the new aviary building and cutting back some of the vegetation, the area is now busier, less intimidating and has less anti-social behaviour issues than previously.
16. The original lease term was for approximately five and half years but has had two extensions (a two year and one year extension) while resources have been sought to assist with the tender process.
17. Procurement have advised we are unable to offer any further extensions and must now go out to full tender.

### **Tender process**

18. The tender will be drafted working with colleagues across Procurement, Estates and Legal to ensure the tender and the subsequent lease meets the legal requirements.
19. It will be an open tender advertised on the [www.supplyingthesouthwest.org.uk](http://www.supplyingthesouthwest.org.uk) website.
20. The operator will be required to fit out the unit and maintain the kiosk during the term of the lease. They will also be required to provide external seating and to keep the leased area clean.
21. Whilst the tender will have a strong financial element, it will also seek to ensure a high quality offer selling hot and cold drinks, cakes and pastries and foods distinct from the variety of other foods available in the Gardens. The unit is not designed for high volume fried food and low-quality foods are not expected to be on sale.
22. There will be an expectation of the operator to use environmentally friendly products such as sustainable cardboard plates and wooden cutlery.
23. The need for some additional storage, decking (STPP) and event space has become evident during the current operation. There is currently a limited alcohol licence for 'on-sales' only.

#### **Post tender**

24. Once the tender deadline closes, the Environment and Procurement Teams will evaluate the submissions awarding to the successful applicant and arrange for the new lease to take effect from January 2026.

#### **Grounds Maintenance**

25. General grounds maintenance activities continue to be delivered throughout the gardens. 5,000 bulbs were planted this Spring to enhance the visual and biodiversity of the planted stock held.

#### **Summary of financial implications**

26. By going to the open market through a tender process for the Kiosk, it will allow for best value to be obtained.

### **Summary of legal implications**

27. All appropriate legal requirements as part of the retendering process will be followed

### **Summary of human resources implications**

28. No human resource implications identified.

### **Summary of sustainability impact**

29. The land contained within the Trust continues to be managed in a way that seeks to protect its future and move to more sustainable planting to improve biodiversity and growing impacts of climate change.

### **Summary of public health implications**

30. Access to good-quality, well-maintained public spaces can help to improve physical and mental health by encouraging individuals to walk more, to play sport, or simply to enjoy a green and natural environment. Parks create important opportunities for social integration and health and wellbeing outcomes. Lower Central Gardens positively contributes towards this outcome.

### **Summary of equality implications**

31. There are no equality implications from this report the LCG remain a public open space for the benefit of all to enjoy.

### **Summary of risk assessment**

32. No risks identified

### **Background papers**

None

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Proposed plan of Kiosk site for retendering

## Appendix 1 Plan of proposed lease area

