



Growing Places – Berkshire

Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO No. 1097671)

Annual Report and Annual Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025

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GROWING PLACES - BERKSHIRE

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

Growing Places - Berkshire (GPB) is a charity and is governed by its Foundation Constitution which was granted on 10 December 2021 when it converted to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). Membership is restricted to the Trustees. Prior to its conversion to a CIO GPB was registered with Companies House, this registration closed on 9 December 2021.

The Objects of GPB are defined in the Foundation Constitution as the relief of people with learning disabilities in Wokingham and surrounding areas (the area of Benefit) in particular, but not exclusively, through the provision of therapeutic opportunities, training and constructive work experience in horticulture. The primary activity is to grow from seed and stock, plants and other similar products for sale. The income is retained within GPB to fund the Objects.

Also, GPB develops more extended relationships with other supportive organisations to attract sponsorship, grants and similar to procure items for use in the horticultural activities and invest in the infrastructure of the growing areas (known as the 'Farm' based at Turgis Court Farm) where the horticultural activities take place. The Trustees are supported by a team of volunteers who make and repair Farm items and help maintain all of the growing and conservation areas.

GPB is administered by the Trustee Board for all constitutional, strategic planning, financial control and project investment matters. The Operations Committee reports to the Trustee Board and is delegated to manage all aspects involved in the growing and selling of plants and similar items. The Trustees and members of the Operations Committee provide their services free of charge. GPB employs no staff nor hires contracted staff.

During the year the Trustee Board met 4 times and the Operations Committee met 4 times and the AGM was held within 3 months of the year end. The Foundation Constitution requires the Trustee Board to comprise a Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer plus two other Trustees, three shall form a quorum. During the year and to the date this report was approved, the Trustees were:

Chairman:	David Baker
Secretary:	Brian Stainton (resigned and re-elected for a term of 3 years)
Treasurer:	David Baker
Trustees:	Neil Dunlop
	Robert Sinclair
	Michael Westrop

In December 2023, the Registered Office was transferred to the Acorn Centre address (see below) from the Farm address at Turgis Green.

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ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025 (cont'd)

Members of the Operations Committee are appointed by the Trustee Board with consent of the nominee. The Operations Committee has representatives from three Trustees, Partner teams such as Optalis and has two members with learning disabilities as an integral part of the Operations Committee: who are supported by their Advocate.

Volunteers: The Trustees wish to sincerely thank all the volunteers who, throughout the year, have given their time, skills, effort and often brought their own tools and materials to maintain and service the Farm. GPB is about growing confidence and growing friendships to help the adults with learning disabilities have a valuable and enjoyable time at the Farm.

Business Profile - Plant sales: The total incoming resources for the year ended 31 March 2025 was £10,844 including donations and a Tropical plant sale. The main income stream was the sale of spring and summer plants raising £4,614 (down 6% on 2024) plus a very good Christmas wreaths sale raising £961. Spring bulbs were sold for the second time and raised £581. In addition, £861 was raised from the sale in March of donated tropical plants.

Non-plant sales income: This was all from donations and events. During the year GPB benefited from donations in both cash from the Berkshire Foundation Trust, David Wilson Homes and some smaller individual donations. The sum of £1,500 was rolled over from 2023/24 from The Englefield trust as a Restricted Reserve. The total raised for the year 2024/25 was £3,927. Full details of income and expenditure is shown on page 7.

Policies: GPB reviews its policies annually for the AGM or when any regulatory guidance requires GPB to do so: these include:

1. Financial Controls	2. Conflict of Interest Declaration
3. Investments and Reserves	4. General Data Protection
5. Trustee Eligibility Criteria	6. Health and Safety at Work
7. Social Media	8. Equality, Diversity and Equal Opportunities

Fixed Assets: A full asset check was carried out in March 2025 for year end 202/25. During the year, old and damaged assets were scrapped and replaced with new items: manual and powered garden tools. The total cost of new fixed assets purchased was £6,083. The major costs were for the replacement of one of the polytunnels, new staging and plant drainage system in a polytunnel, bridge and platforms around the conservation area, new mower and battery strimmer. The Asset Register value was at £nil as the policy is to write down to nil value on purchase.

In December 2023, the new Guide to Operations and Service Levels was finalised between GPB and its associate partner Optalis Wokingham. This enabled the transfer of all fixed (assets) structures to Optalis ownership with GPB retaining ownership of all powered and manual tools, DIY tools, sales display tables and a range of marketing equipment. No transfers took place in the year 2024/25. Polytunnel 2 will be transferred in year 2025/26.

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Remuneration: None of the Trustees or members of the Operations Committee received remuneration or incurred personal expenses that required reimbursement during the year. There were reimbursements against receipts when Trustees purchased items with the prior agreement from the Trustee Board.

The Trustee Board regularly reviews the Objects of GPB and takes due regard of guidance published by the Charity Commission on public benefit. The Trustee Board consider the activities to be for the public benefit because the services of GPB are available to the class of beneficiaries as set out in the Objects and within its resources, free of charge at the point of delivery.

Reportable Incidents: All Trustees are now DBS cleared for another 3 years. The Trustees confirm with regards to Safekeeping and GDPR legal requirements there were no incidents to report in the year.

Policies: The AGM in June 2024 confirmed the acceptance of amended and updated Policies on Financial Controls and Investments and Reserves and confirmed acceptance of new policies on the use of Social Media as part of marketing and provision of information and a Policy on Equality, Diversity and Equal Opportunities: a requirement for sponsors.

Marketing: increased activity in both website and Facebook visitors has led to improved sponsorship in the year. A Donate button and CAF Bank operated successfully. GPB has approached a wider range of sponsors in 2024/25 and has been successful in gaining support for the acquisition of new assets and tools.

Chairman: Growing Places - Berkshire	Secretary: Growing Places - Berkshire
	
Name: D W Baker	Name: B R Stainton
Date: 20th June 2025	Date: 20th June 2025

GROWING PLACES - BERKSHIRE

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Growing Places - Berkshire

I report on the Statement of Assets and Liabilities, the Statement of Financial Activities and the Notes to the Accounts (together the Accounts) for the year ended 31 March 2025, which are set out on pages 6 to 8.

Respective responsibilities of the Trustees and the Independent Examiner

The Trustees of GPB are responsible for the preparation of the Accounts and consider that an audit is not required for this year (under section 144 (2) of the Charities Act 2011 (2011 Act)) and that an independent examination is needed.

It is my responsibility to:

- examine the Accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the General Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of Independent Examiner's Statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeking explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the accounts.

Independent Examiner's Statement

In connection with my examination, no material matters have come to my attention which give me reasonable cause to believe that in, any material respect, the Trustees have not met the requirements:

- To keep accounting records in accordance with Section 130 of the 2011 Act; and
- To prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and to comply with the accounting requirements of the 2011 Act.

M P Bailey
Rafters
Heathlands Road
Wokingham
Berkshire RG40 3AR



11 June 2025

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STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES AT 31 MARCH 2025

	Notes	2025 £	2024 £
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash at National Westminster Bank	3	11,256	6,530
Petty Cash		<u>-</u>	<u>15</u>
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		<u>11,256</u>	<u>6,545</u>
RESERVES			
Balance brought forward	1	11,433	6,544
Net income/(expenditure) for the year		<u>(177)</u>	<u>4,899</u>
Balance carried forward		<u>11,256</u>	<u>11,433</u>

Accounts approved by  D W Baker Chairman and Treasurer	 B R Stainton Secretary
20 th June 2025	20 th June 2025

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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2025

	2025	2024
	£	£
INCOME		
Sale of plants	6,917	7,395
Raffle	-	-
Sale of van	-	189
Donations	3,927	9,174
TOTAL INCOME	<u>10,844</u>	<u>16,758</u>
EXPENDITURE		
Seeds and compost	2,985	3,869
Van Hire	392	-
Van Insurance	-	(2)
Fuel	52	-
Van Repairs	-	173
Repairs to equipment	1,213	401
Equipment and Site improvement	6,083	6,841
Website	29	6
Subsistence	51	324
Sundry expenses	217	257
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	<u>11,021</u>	<u>11,869</u>
		<u>4,88</u>
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE) FOR THE YEAR	<u>(177)</u>	<u>9</u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

1. BASIS OF PREPARATION

The Accounts are prepared on a receipts and payments basis under the historical cost convention in accordance with applicable accounting standards, the Statement of Recommended Practice for Charities 2005, the Foundation Constitution and comply with the Charities Act.

2. GRANTS

There were no Grants to any external organisation during the year.

3. FUNDS

GPB has only one fund which is an unrestricted income fund. The purpose of the fund is to enable the provision of therapeutic opportunities, training and constructive work experience in horticulture for adults with learning disabilities. The year end bank balance includes a donation of £577 to be spent on a specific project and is a restricted reserve.