



Presented at AGM for year ended 31st March 2025

Company Registration Number: 05945388

Charity Number: 1116544

*Our funders and supporters
in 2024 / 2025:*



Members of the Board and Professional Advisors

Registered Charity Name:

Barracks Lane Community Garden Project
Charity Number: 1116544
Company Registration No.: 05945388

Registered Office:

c/o 38 Kenilworth Avenue
Oxford
OX4 2AN

Trustees (Directors) as of April 2024:

Nicole Pohl (Chair)
Helen Osborn (Treasurer)
John Green (Company Secretary)
Jenny Creese
Melissa Smith Robertson
Yasmin Spark

Trustee (Company Secretary):

John Green

Bankers:

Co-operative Bank PLC
P.O. Box 101,
1 Balloon Street,
Manchester
M60 4EP

Barracks Lane Community Garden Project Ltd

Chairperson's Annual Report - Year ended 31st March 2025

The Chairperson and Company Secretary on behalf of the Trustees, (also Directors for the purposes of company law) present the report and financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2025.



The Trustees

The current Board of Trustees appoints new Trustees at a General Meeting, and the decision is duly minuted. One third of Trustees are obliged to retire by rotation at each Annual General Meeting and offer themselves for re-election if that is their wish.

Governance and Management

Barracks Lane Community Garden Project was originally registered as a charity in 2005 and became a company limited by guarantee and incorporated in September 2006. The company registration number is 05945388 and the Charity number is 1116544.

The Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association govern the Charity

The day to day work of the Charity is undertaken by the Charity Chairperson and Trustee Directors. They are responsible for ensuring that the strategic aims of the Charity, as determined by the Trustees, are achieved to their satisfaction. The Charity employs a part time Coordinator, Gardener and Caretaker for project development and programme delivery.





Chair's Summary

Nicole Pohl

This report confirms the achievements and hard work of all involved in the garden. Special thanks to Tracy, Esmee (who sadly had to leave the garden to finish her studies), Faye, Maia, Jane, Stig and all the Trustees for their commitment to the garden. Thank you also to the funders and users of the garden - see below for the amazing opportunities the funders allowed us to pursue.

With the generosity of our funders, we have started to work on an ongoing problem with flooding in the garden. We are commissioning work on the compost toilet as well as re-routing rain water to the bottom of the garden where it will be absorbed in a soakaway.

Thanks to our Funders

We would particularly like to thank our funding bodies and community fundraisers:

- Pye Charitable Settlement - Community Engagement Gardener, contributed towards the Coordinator and paid the Caretaker expenses
- TOE - funding the work for our hazel hedge
- OCF - Singing and Gardening for Well Being
- Kate's Fund - supporting our unaccompanied asylum seeker partnership with Oxford Spires Academy (OSA Steps Programme)
- Oxfordshire County Council and delivery partners Community First Oxfordshire - Connected Communities project (continues into 24/25)
- CAG Oxfordshire - funding for Food Waste Awareness Week event
- National Lottery Community Fund - 2 year project with the Steps Programme Students at OSA
- Our local Oxford City Ward Councillors, Max Morris and Rosie Rawle, for supporting our Harvest event in September 2024

We'd also like to thank

- All the people, groups and organisations that have booked the garden for their own events – this provides an essential part of our income
- All those who give donations to the garden and offer their time and skills

Thank you to Tracy and the staff at the Oxford Spires Academy to develop and host a programme that supports unaccompanied asylum seeker students. The National Lottery is funding this work until 2026. The students have been coming to the garden every week, and we recently had a Community event in the garden with participation of the students to cook, and show their maintenance / garden work in the garden. During a workshop the students also composed some beautiful poems about the garden in June this year. Part of the Steps Programme is to host 4 community events a year throughout the life of the project and we very much look forward to them.

Singing has continued to be very popular in the garden and this year we've hosted a Singing and Gardening for Well Being project, funded by Oxfordshire County Council and delivery partners Community First Oxfordshire, which continued until July 2024. We are committed to delivering community singing in the garden so will be exploring options to fund this in the next financial year.

We ran our normal series of events, including pizza making, fermentation, and a plant and seed swap session, which were well attended and received by the local community.

We are continuing to host Flo's Nature Nursery for 3 days a week in the garden.

Thanks to our trustee Melissa and her husband, the website has informative and professional videos that promote the history and the workings of the garden.

Currently, discussions are held to re-design the pond space with some artwork and a range of new plants.

We are excited about the future of the garden and look forward to welcoming old and new members into our beautiful, safe, green space.

It goes without saying that the garden would not be in such great shape if it wasn't for our amazing team. Thank you again to everyone!

Nicole Pohl, September 2025

Barracks Lane Community Garden Project Ltd

Objectives & Activities

The objectives of the charity are:

1. To provide and maintain a public Garden or Gardens for the use and the benefit of the inhabitants of the Oxford area and others (the beneficiaries) in the interests of social welfare and with the objects of improving conditions of life for the said beneficiaries and to promote develop and support community led Gardening initiatives in the Oxford area generally.
2. The advancement of public education in the area of the environmental, economic and social dimensions of sustainability and biodiversity by the development and delivery of educational activities including vegetable and flower growing, waste management and the use of renewable energy sources.

To achieve this the garden project:

1. Has built and maintains a garden for all members of the community and general public to use free of charge for recreation and leisure.
2. Offers the garden to organisations and individuals who want to hold their own events for their members, for courses and for private functions.
3. Works in partnership with other organisations to facilitate events and activities that benefit certain community groups in particular those who are disadvantaged socially, economically, through disability or life circumstance.
4. Puts on events and activities open to everyone to encourage general use of the garden.
5. Uses the garden as a venue to demonstrate and encourage a greater understanding of sustainable and environmentally friendly ways of urban living. In particular to demonstrate sustainable and environmentally friendly ways of building, growing food, managing water, managing waste and the use of renewable energy sources.



Summary of Achievements & Highlights (2023-2024)

Flos Nature Nursery is an integral part of the garden and we love having all the children (and staff!) there for 3 days a week during term time. It's lovely to come in and see all the lovely things they have made hanging up in the garden.

Thanks to our grant from TOE, we were able to redesign the lower garden with a beautiful hazel hedge which lets in so much more light. Thank you to Hamish for doing such an amazing job.

Singing and music continues to be a big part of our community garden and thank you to the Connected Communities Fund for a grant that enabled us to have a number of different singing sessions. We hosted a number of singing sessions with Blackbird Leys Choir, Refugee Voices Welcome, Didcot Red Kites Street Choir and individual singing group leaders, bringing people together through song.

In the summer of 2024, we restarted our partnership working with Oxford Spires Academy, a local secondary school. We were delighted to welcome a group of unaccompanied asylum seeker students, who are studying at OSA, to the garden on Monday mornings during term time to support them with their language development, building confidence and working together, through gardening, music and art. This project was funded by BLCG in partnership with Nature Effect. At the end of 2024, we were awarded a grant from the National Lottery Community Fund and we were able to launch our 2 year programme of work with the students, called Plants, Place, People.

The garden hosted a number of events that were open to the public, including a Festival of Fire and Light, Harvest Festival, Spring Garden Tidy, Welcome to Summer and a Plant and Seed Swap, as well as regular open gardens for volunteering. All of these events were very well attended by visitors, including lots of people who had never visited before.

The garden has been kept safe and beautiful with the work of Hamish Burnett (Gardening and Fence Building), Tracy Walsh (Coordinator), Jane Wallace (Community Engagement Gardener) Stig (repairs and design) and Esmee Quinton (Caretaker, Cleaning and Maintenance). It is fantastic to have the continuity of their service to the Garden, as well as lots of volunteers supporting that work.

1. Use by the community

We are thrilled to report that 2024/25 saw the garden dramatically increase its number of visitors to just over 7000!

Many visits came via private bookings for community events and gatherings. We are delighted that we can continue to provide a safe, green space for our long term and regular users of the garden who continue to play such an important part in the garden activities such as:

- Name It Youth Group
- Woodcraft Folk and Woodcraft Pioneers
- Dharma Recovery
- Flos Nature Nursery
- Oxford Spires Academy Steps Programme Students

We were glad to be able to offer the garden as a space for parent and child singing groups, yoga, meditation, children's parties, management away days and training sessions.

2. Making the garden suitable for everyone

Keeping people safe while they are in the garden is important to us and we make regular checks to make sure that we provide a garden that is suitable for all the community. We listen to the feedback from our users and respond to identified needs and problems as they arise. We have started work on the compost toilet, to reduce odour in the garden and also the soakaway system. In 2025/26 we are going to be looking at the pond near the gate and doing some major work on it.

3. Developing our volunteer programme to support and care for the garden

Our Community Engagement Gardener, Jane Wallace, has committed so much of their time and experience during the year to keep the garden in such excellent shape, as well as engage with the local community and groups on garden open days every month. People were able to volunteer for a variety of gardening tasks to suit different abilities, or just enjoy being in the garden, so vital for people's wellbeing.



Jane and Jo planning some planting

4. Events, workshop and celebrations

Because of grants, community fundraising, donations, trustee and Community Work Days we have been able to celebrate the renewal of the infrastructure of the Garden. It was wonderful to be able to offer an exciting programme of workshops and events this year and be open more regularly with the Community Engagement Gardeners. This will continue in 2025-26.

This year we ran:

- Plant and Seed Swap
- Refugee Week session
- Welcome to Summer event
- Harvest Festival
- Festival of Fire and Light
- And lots of making pizzas with the Pizza Midwife



Nicole prepares pizza at our Harvest Festival 2024

5. Communications

We have Facebook and Instagram pages as well as our Mailchimp Newsletter, to enable public access to the Garden, providing a means of finding out about events, contacting and booking the Garden and a resource of materials. We also produce posters as a way of reaching people not connected to digital media. Thanks Stig for designing most of our posters, and to Computer Assistance for hosting our website.

6. Special Projects

Funding from TOE allowed us to build a beautiful new hazel hedge to let in more light in the garden.

A grant from the Connected Communities Fund, funded by Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action and Community First Oxfordshire, gave us the opportunity to run a number of regular singing for wellbeing sessions in the garden, where we had many people from the local community as well as asylum seekers. The grant also meant we were able to have extra open sessions for people to volunteer in the garden or just come along and enjoy the peace and quiet in a beautiful space.

The Nature Effect, the National Lottery Community Fund and the Steps Programme for unaccompanied asylum seekers made it possible for our local secondary school, Oxford Spires Academy to reengage with BLCG. These young people are aged 15 to 19 and are studying at the school, then moving onto college to develop their education further. We have been able to draw on the amazing skills of session leaders in Oxfordshire to deliver sessions on Monday mornings in the garden, such as gardening, art, bushcraft, cooking with fire.



Garden Open-day
Sunday 3rd March 2024 10am - 4pm

Join us for a Spring tidy-up. Gloves and tools will be provided. Refreshments available.

Bread making 11.30 - 1.30pm
 with ingredients supplied for a donation +/- £5. All welcome!

Join Didcot Red Kites Choir for singing 2 - 3.30pm

Details and more events are on our website:

www.barrackslanegarden.org.uk



Love Food - Hate Waste
Sunday 24th March 2024 FREE - All Welcome! 10am - 4pm

As part of Food Waste Awareness Week

Bring your leftover fruit and veg and learn to make nutritious and yummy smoothies on a smoothie bike. There will be some spare fruit and veg available.

Fermentation Workshop 12noon - 1.30pm
 Places are limited so booking is essential ~ please email: jo@cagoxfordshire.org.uk

Supported by Replenish Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire County Council

www.barrackslanegarden.org.uk



Harvest Festival
Sunday 15th September 2024 11am - 3pm

Apple Pressing bring your apples and containers to press into apple juice

Garden Kitchen: Soft Drinks & Snacks by Donation

Singing, Story Telling & Art Activities for all ages

Garden Reggae Tunes from our very own DJ Baps

Sharing Table Please bring spare plants, seeds, veg, etc, to swap or share

DIY Pizzas Noon until 2pm (Donation £4)

We are proud to be part of:

OXFORD OPEN DOORS
oxfordpreservation.org.uk

www.barrackslanegarden.org.uk

Festival of Fire & Light

Sunday 3rd November 2024 from 2pm until 6pm







- Make your own lantern
- Pumpkin soup cooked on the open fire
- No fireworks please
- All ages welcome!

Join our garden procession at 5.30pm



Supported by Replenish Oxfordshire and Oxfordshire County Council
Any questions, please email: info@barrackslanegarden.org.uk

- Make your own pizza (£4 donation)
- Join us for fire-inspired story telling around the fire



www.barrackslanegarden.org.uk





A rare bit of snow in the garden



Looking Ahead:

Planning for the future

An important aspect of the trustees' work is to plan ahead to ensure the garden's future. The garden was very successful in being awarded grant finding this year which enabled the day to day activities of the garden to be funded, support the core aims of the garden, and run new projects and adding to the infrastructure of the garden. Next year we will focus on work on our pond and drainage in the garden.

We have seen our social media presence grow this year which brings this unique venue to the widest groups of users in our diverse community.

Moving forward we are looking to encourage new, regular groups to the garden. We have made plans to ensure the infrastructure of the Garden remains safe and that items are replaced when they are no longer serviceable.

We will continue our work with OSA, using the National Lottery funding, and explore other funding sources for this work to carry on past the current funding stream.

Signed:



Nicole Pohl (Chair)

Date: 15.09.25

Signed:



John Green (Company Secretary)

Date: 15.09.25



Financial review and reserves policy

Our total funds increased by £12,454 in the year to 31 March 2025 mainly due to National Lottery funding being received during the year, but not yet spent. Total reserves at the end of March 2025 were £51,783, of which £32,574 were unrestricted. The charity is dependent on a mixture of grant funding, donations and other fundraising efforts. Reserves are retained in order to allow the charity to be able to continue to cover its operating costs for at least the next six months and continue as a going concern in the event that incoming donations are unexpectedly reduced for a period of time. The unrestricted cash equivalent reserves of £30,901 at the year-end represents just over one and half years of core operating costs.



*New low fence made from salvaged wood
made by Stig with some of the OSA youth*