



Triangle Community Garden

Created and cultivated by people of all ages and abilities at Ransom's Rec Hitchin, Herts

Annual Review 2019-20

Welcome to our Annual Review for 2019-20

This is the year the Triangle Garden should have been celebrating its 20th anniversary and the Pavilion its 10th. However it's never good to dwell on what might have been, and a missed anniversary is a very small problem to have had. Let's focus on the positives:

So, what have we gained from this year of loss and trauma? What are the silver linings to Covid-19? For me there are two things that stand out: the massive public awakening around the importance of nature in our lives, and the significant re-evaluation of the contribution made by those who work in care.

We were all no doubt made quite emotional by the 'clap for carers' initiative in streets across the country during lock-down. But how will that sentiment manifest itself in terms of carers' pay in the months to come; most carers only receive the national minimum wage, even in a wealthy, expensive county like Hertfordshire. We are incredibly lucky to have a highly skilled and experienced team of people running our sessions, and we pay them well over the living wage, but I do wonder whether it's right that a cleaner can earn more than a trained horticultural therapist. These strange times bring our values into sharp focus.

Which brings us back to the value of nature in our lives. Since the enforced curtailment of normal life we have become much more aware of the seasons and natural activity around us. People have rediscovered walking, cycling, gardening, foraging and just the therapeutic benefits of being outside. And nature has reacted too - to the lack of traffic, the reduced air

pollution and the hiatus in human interference - by proliferating in unprecedented ways across the world.

So if we're wise we'll view this as a wake up call to put a value on nature beyond economics, and to work hard to prevent the collapse of the ecosystems that support us.

But what has this got to do with the Triangle Garden I hear you ask? Well it's what we're all about:

Our vision: A community where people feel happier and more fulfilled through a connection with the natural world and an understanding of our place in it.

Our values:

Connect – bringing people together through gardening and nature

Grow – helping people to develop and learn by sowing the seeds of interest in a healthier and more sustainable world

Enjoy – making lives better – with a smile!

Respect – caring for our planet and valuing people for who they are and what they do.

Before I sign off I'd like to say goodbye and thank you to longstanding staff member Avril Frost and recent trustee Lexi Turner for their greatly valued contributions to our work and to welcome new trustee David De Smet.

And finally I'd like to pay tribute to all those in our wonderful Triangle Garden community – to our staff, trustees, volunteers, gardeners, participants and supporters. Without your dedication, care, determination and resilience, the Triangle Garden and its projects would be a very different place. Thank you

Vicky Wyer, Chair of Trustees



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Thanks to Illustrator [Polly Wyer](#) for her pro bono work on our new-look logo.

Find out more at www.trianglegarden.org



Growing Ability Projects

Never before has our project been of such benefit and importance to so many people in our community. With the life changing effects we have all been immersed in throughout the pandemic, individuals have come together to form stronger bonds of solidarity and register their appreciation towards the continued support and development of our projects.

From small beginnings in 2009, our service for adults with learning disabilities has branched out into three projects under the Growing Ability Programme (GAP) umbrella: Growing Ability, Growing Gang and Growing Health.

All our GAP projects use the principles of social therapeutic horticulture to improve the well being, self esteem, resilience and life skills of participants. The benefits are many and varied and never more apparent than in this last year:

- Better physical health through exercise, healthy eating and sharing insights
- Improved mental health through a sense of purpose and achievement, mutual support and positive reinforcement
- The opportunity to connect with others – reducing feelings of isolation or exclusion
- Acquiring new skills to improve confidence, resilience, and the chance of finding volunteering or employment opportunities
- Just feeling better for being outside and in touch with nature.

Growing Ability is the cornerstone of our social therapeutic horticulture work. Using gardening tasks and the outdoor environment, our horticultural therapists build a set of activities for each participant to improve their particular health and wellbeing needs, and to work on certain goals they want to achieve.

Growing Gang is a progression opportunity for those who are ready for more practical work-experience such as helping to grow produce on our allotment and maintain community spaces including the Triangle Garden.

Growing Health aims to promote active, healthy living. Sessions include physical exercise, food growing and shared support around healthy eating, fitness, mental health and weight management. One of the key activities of this session has been the group preparation of a healthy meal using fresh ingredients grown on our

allotment, and eaten together at the Pavilion.

Our weekly half-day sessions run at a minimum staff to participant ratio of 1:3, with volunteers providing additional support.

2019 was the tenth anniversary of Growing Ability. We marked this auspicious occasion in a respectful and inclusive way, with a special open air Harvest Lunch outside the Pavilion. Blessed by beautiful weather, we were able to share our harvest from the allotment and celebrate the achievements and friendships we have made over the years. Staff, volunteers, family members, trustees, participants and supporters gathered together, creating happy memories to keep us going in the months to come.

In October, our annual tradition of celebrating Hallowe'en (and Holly's birthday) was marked by carving pumpkins grown by Katherine, Marc and Holly and making the pulp into pumpkin soup. November saw us gathering our precious leaf mulch for composting and coming together around the brazier at the allotment for hot chocolate and marshmallows between biscuits – a wickedly sugary one-off in our healthy eating calendar! In December arts and crafts sessions were interjected with festive culinary delights including a meal out at the Millstream Pub (These sessions were all led by Avril, Rachel and Steve as I was on Jury service for the month.)

In early 2020 we had a PAMMS inspection (one of the requirements of being an accredited provider of adult social care). I'm delighted to say that we were awarded a Good, with Excellence in safety and safeguarding. The only element requiring improvement was staff support/suitability of staff qualifications. Although our staff have years of experience in working with adults with learning disabilities, some had had no formal social care training. As a result we have arranged for all our staff to complete the Care Certificate.

All the while in the background last year we were working hard to plan out how we could run our service under the terms of the new Herts County Council social care contract, more specifically under the financial restrictions imposed by the proposed hourly rates which only cover half our costs. This is an ongoing concern.

Find out more at www.trianglegarden.org/growing-ability

Growing Ability continued

At the beginning of this year we were running two Growing Ability sessions, one Growing Gang and one Growing Health session and had four staff members. With attendance slowly building at all our projects we had hopes of starting a fifth session in the summer and were offered a third allotment at the Ransoms site (on loan from a supporter).

Then Covid-19 emerged, and as fast as we risk assessed and adapted to new regimes of frequent cleaning and 'catch it, kill it, bin it', the virus with all its unknowns at that time, overtook the country. Work from home was imposed, schools closed, and the vast majority of our participants went home to their parents or began shielding in their residential settings.

Our last session pre-lockdown was 11th March 2020 and in April all staff began their furlough leave. Although unable to see each other, volunteers, staff and participants were able to stay connected in lockdown via phonecalls, group messaging and video calls. Volunteers gave their time to sow seeds, write poetry and take photos for those that couldn't get out and see the allotment and Triangle Garden on their daily exercise.

When we returned in July, as restrictions lifted, we were able to see the results of all of the dedication and commitment put in by our volunteers during lockdown. We also felt a new connection of belonging; coming back together, becoming stronger through the adversity even though we had not been together physically for so long. This paved a way for an easier transition for our Growing Ability gardeners to return. Fruit and vegetables growing and the sites looking cared for. Members feeling a connection. Individuals who were isolated and not able to see friends and family have said how important being back has been and how much they value reconnecting with their friends.

One of our service users said 'It is different [being back] as we work outside all the time. I feel safe and I am enjoying having things to do, like when in lockdown I thought that was it, I was so concerned about going out - I didn't do much or go out. It's really nice to see everyone. The first week I was quiet - I hadn't seen anyone else. It feels nice.' He added that it was 'emotional [being back] - in a good way'.

The impact of our project has never felt so important. The connection and support that has been established over the last 10 years has resulted in the ability to go forward to support each other to manage social anxiety as life moves into a new stage.

Since July, thanks to block funding from HCC, we have been able to restart our sessions incrementally, reducing their duration to allow for the extra cleaning time required and merging the projects to capture the best elements of all three in each new session. Some activities like cooking and sharing food are obviously restricted at present. As we are only a small staff team, having 'bubbled' sessions has not been possible but we are taking every recommended precaution to avoid transmission. Volunteers are returning now that we are all able to navigate social distancing on the allotment in a safe and confident way.

Wet weather sessions were previously held inside the Pavilion but due to the ever-changing Covid restrictions, we want to limit time spent inside and have applied for a grant from Herts Community Foundation (HCF) to build sheltered spaces on the allotment in areas not used for growing.

The shelters will provide protection from the elements and give our projects a secure future. We are encouraging all our participants and volunteers to be involved in the preparation and construction, which will develop individuals' resilience and confidence. We're looking forward to being able to provide a safe and secure environment for everyone, a place to heal and recover. Further outcomes we aim to achieve through this project are:

- **Physical and mental wellbeing** – year round outdoor sessions will allow us to continue our vital work to improve physical and mental wellbeing.
- **Reduction in social disconnection and loneliness** by providing areas for our community to meet and connect through activities, thus reducing social isolation.
- **Sustainability of our projects** – The provision of the shelters will enable us to continue and expand the capacity to run more sessions
- **Safe spaces for community activities by others** eg Nature's Rainbow with their dye-plant workshops



Find out more at www.trianglegarden.org/growing-ability

Growing Ability continued

After over ten years of dedication, and a driving force behind the success of our Growing Ability Project, Avril Frost has retired. Avril has been greatly missed as individuals have come back gradually to hear the news. We are very grateful for all of her support and friendship over the years and wish her the very best for her future.

We have also had to say goodbye to one of our service users, Helen, who has moved away but has kept in touch with us online.

After nearly 9 years of keeping the Pavilion clean each week, Sean decided to step down from his cleaning job last year. Since the cleaning requirements have increased so dramatically in recent months we have had to change our practices and Jeremy has also stepped down. It has been a pleasure working with both of them.

Our thanks and appreciation:

My overwhelming feelings of gratitude towards those that have supported us throughout lockdown and beyond, extends to the families, support workers, volunteers, our trustees and staff, without whom this whole experience would have been so very different. We were able to step back to our project in confidence and to look forward to a future of transition and hope.

I would like to start by thanking Vicky Wyer our Chair of Trustees who co-founded the Triangle Garden back in 2000. Vicky has worked tirelessly on the HCC tender bid, alongside Fiona Dolman, Andrew Green our Treasurer and the other trustees. She has overseen a smooth transition for staff in and out of furlough and has been a huge support throughout this year, keeping our projects ticking over during lockdown and beyond.

My thanks also go to Yolanda, Fiona, Vicky, Avril, Rachel and Steve for their support with our PAMMS inspection in February. And to Margaret for her invaluable support with monthly payroll, financial administration for all of our service users and so much more.

Thanks to Fiona, Gill and all the volunteers who kept the allotments tended through the lockdown period and beyond. I would also like to thank everyone who contributed to the Thursday and Friday Garden Club. Their work and dedication

meant that our return was less traumatic as we were not faced with an overgrown 'lost garden'.

Our groups have benefitted this year from the continued support and volunteering by staff at Crane BSU Ltd, based in Hitchin. Crane volunteers completed the rebuilding of the allotment raised beds in 2019 and the outdoor sink unit they built for pot-washing has been invaluable as a handwashing facility.

To our session volunteers, Carol, Jane, Judith, Yolanda and Lesley for their ongoing support throughout the year, without whom our sessions would be quite different. Their enthusiasm, commitment and support make such a difference and is very much appreciated by staff and our gardeners throughout the sessions.

To Yolanda for her support with funding bid writing, especially recently for our most recent HCF bid towards new shelters.

To Steve and Rachel who have both been a tremendous support throughout lockdown along with Avril; connecting and supporting with each other and keeping in contact with our GA gardeners and Garden Club members. Their enthusiasm, energy and commitment has so far lead to a smoother transition back into the running of our sessions. I thank them so very much.

Thanks also for the support from families and support workers who have helped with staying in contact through lockdown and have helped secure a safe return for our Growing Ability members.

Our gratitude extends also to Herts County Council and HCPA (Hertfordshire Care Providers Association) who have kept us up to date with current issues and provided us with extensive training opportunities and support.

And finally...

As our service shrinks once again with the enforcement of 'new national measures' this month, we look forward to welcoming back as many service users as are able to return in December and the New Year. For those that are not able to join us yet we look forward to staying in touch and sharing our news from the allotment.

Liz McElroy, Project Manager



**To find out more
about Growing
Ability please
contact
Liz McElroy on
liz@trianglegarden.org**

Find out more at www.trianglegarden.org/growing-ability

Garden Club

COVID -19 has had an impact on every aspect of our work at Triangle Garden, including the Garden Club. This section reflects on the year more broadly and also talks about the impact of COVID on our activities during 2020.

Garden Club normally meets every Friday morning 10am-12.15 for some gentle social gardening. It is open to anyone and its purpose is to maintain and develop the Triangle Garden and Forest Garden. Members benefit from learning new gardening skills, meeting new friends and being active in the fresh air, while making a positive contribution to the community. There are also regular trips and outings to gardens and shows. A very important part of the Garden Club experience is the cuppa, cake and chat at the Pavilion at the end of each session!

Garden Club has met most Fridays throughout the year, excluding holidays and for bad weather. During lockdown, members made individual visits to tend the allotment as part of their daily exercise. Volunteer numbers have remained fairly constant through the year, with 14 volunteers and an average of 8 people attending each week.

After a difficult end to last year with a spate of drug-related antisocial behaviour at the Garden, we sought the help of the community police and the problems seem to have abated.

This year we've spent time focusing on new projects and have started to build a herbarium, which has involved pressing plants in the garden at different stages of the year to build a full record.

We've also taken on a new allotment plot and a number of volunteers have focused on developing it. Our allotments have produced a lot of vegetables and provided a great deal of respite for the volunteers through the year.

Once lockdown ended, we began to welcome volunteer groups back, initially running 2 sessions with a maximum of 5 volunteers on Thursday and Friday afternoons to enable us to provide a COVID secure environment.

When restrictions eased the groups were keen to get back to the normal Friday morning sessions, with an average of 7/8 people attending each week, generally

split into two groups across our sites. We are also looking forward to finally building our cold frames with a grant secured pre-lockdown from charity Bite Sized Pieces.

We have also been working with Groundwork Hertfordshire, providing a 6 week programme for their '[Get Outdoors Get Active](#)' sessions, aimed to provide work experience for Syrian refugees and local unemployed people.

Due to the impact of COVID-19 we left the Forest Garden to evolve naturally for much of the summer, with little intervention from our group. It seems to have worked and the garden has fared well, with a good harvest of almonds, quince, mulberries, medlars, primarily due to a long summer with a fair amount of sunshine and rain.

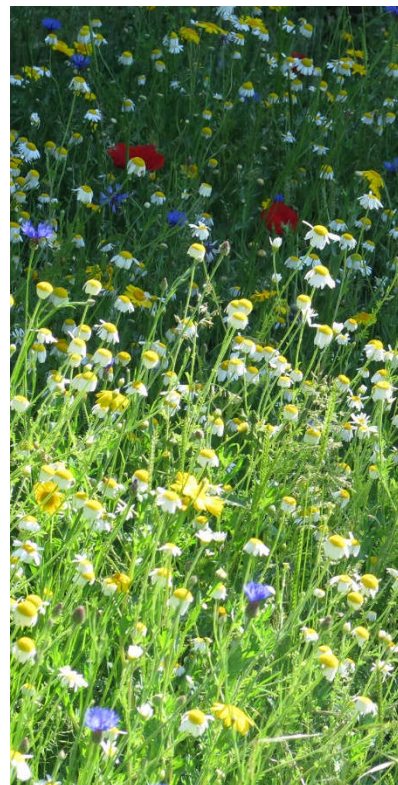
A number of volunteers have been working to remove the weed-block membrane that was laid when the forest garden was first planted, as it is now hampering herbaceous growth.

Our group outings this year included a pre Christmas trip to London, visiting the Crossrail Garden at Canary Wharf, St Dunstan's church garden and finally the Sky Garden to see London lit up at night. We also visited the Cambridge Botanical Winter Garden in February.

Since March 2018 Garden Club members have been joined once a month by volunteers from Crane Building Services & Utilities. This has continued throughout 2019 and 2020 (excluding lockdown). Groups of four Crane employees have helped carry out a range of tasks including repairing the willow maze and building a bug hotel in the garden. It has been wonderful to have this help and we are very grateful to the Crane team for their ongoing commitment and support. I'm really pleased to report that Crane volunteer days have restarted and the first day was spent building an impressive stag beetle habitat.

I would like to thank Steve Granger, who skilfully leads Garden Club every week, imparting his knowledge and humour, Rachel who supported us through the summer, the volunteers who kept the allotments going during lockdown and of course the volunteers who are able once more to show up, rain, shine or storm, on a Friday and who make the Garden Club the wonderful place that it is.

Fiona Dolman, Garden Committee Chair



**To find out more
about Garden Club
please contact
Steve Granger on
steve@trianglegarden.org**

Find out more at www.trianglegarden.org/community-gardening



Events and workshops

As you can imagine this year's piece on events and workshops is going to be quite short! 2019's successful Apple Day and Halloween activities boded well for 2020 and we were delighted to welcome Tim Star to the events committee to step into the gap left by Karen Shields. A well-attended series of autumn activities including our ever-popular bat walk and Christmas wreath workshops were due to be followed by March's quiz night but we pulled the plug on the event as the effects of the pandemic in Italy heralded what lay ahead for the UK. We're very grateful to all those who donated the cost of their quiz tickets to helping us stay afloat.

Since then despite our 20th anniversary, the only events we have been able to hold have been our [Foraging Walks](#) which, with reduced numbers, complied with the Rule of Six. Despite having to increase the standard rate to cover our costs we kept the concessions rate at £10 to maximise participation.

We were very grateful for the opportunity to share a virtual version of Benslow Open Gardens on social media – fingers crossed

the real thing will be possible next year. And thanks to our long standing links with local bee charity [Buzzworks](#) we were able to take advantage of their monthly farmers' market stall in Hitchin to sell our apple juice, sales of which usually rely heavily on our community events. This year's apple crop was a good one and although group picking sessions were not possible, many of our usual 'apple donors' did us proud with their contributions.

Our small events committee has been far from idle this year with plenty of preparation work going into events that sadly couldn't happen. Regular zoom meetings have kept us going amid the added joys of home-schooling and ramped up 'proper jobs' for many of us.

Even with no events to run, we know that we need more members for when restrictions allow us to get something up and running. So if you're interested in joining us please get in touch via events.trianglegarden@gmail.com

Scarlett, Vicky, Mel and Tim,
Events & workshops committee

Ransom's Pavilion

After 2018's injection of funding and TLC to our wonderful little Pavilion, we were able to really capitalise on its community value last year with a full calendar of workshops planned by [Tuuli Parker Jewellery](#) and dye-plant experts [Nature's Rainbow](#), not to mention the children's parties that usually book out weekend afternoons.

However, standing empty from March to July, although only 4 months, seemed like forever. But the good news is that the Pavilion is a well-designed well-ventilated little building, with windows and air-source heat pumps in every room, bringing outdoor air inside whether on heat, air-condition or just fan.

As Tuuli Parker found when she restarted her jewellery workshops over the summer, using both the main room and the kitchen can accommodate up to seven people at 2m physical distance, and of course masks can be worn for short bursts of closer demonstration work when necessary.

To be financially viable, our Growing Ability sessions need to accommodate up to 6 service users, 2 members of staff, 1 volunteer and often at least one service user's personal care worker. At a potential total of 10+ people in a session, the Pavilion is simply too small to be safe for Growing Ability at present, particularly given the capacity of some of our participants for social distancing. This is why we're seeking funding to build new open sided shelters on the allotment.

With Pavilion cleaning work taking place each and every day now (Liz uses the space as her office and the toilets are still used during sessions), the weekly clean became redundant and with it Jeremy's Friday morning job, Sean having moved on last year. We thank them both for their good work over the years, ably supervised by Liz. We look forward to a time when the Pavilion can fulfil its full potential once more.

Vicky Wyer, Premises & Safety committee

Find out more at www.trianglegarden.org/get-involved

Treasurer's report

The year was dominated by the impact of COVID-19 on our activities, and those effects are likely to continue well into the next financial year.

Fundraising was significantly curtailed. Whilst Apple Day and Halloween in 2019 were successful, we have been unable to run any of our other usual fundraising events, notably the Open Day. Options for alternative fundraising activities were considered but with TCG staff on furlough, volunteers unable to meet, and uncertainty around every corner, there have been no new initiatives for filling the sizeable hole in TCG's income.

Our pavilion has also been an important source of income in previous years – generating fees from use by local community groups and classes, and hosting TCG workshops. With the pavilion closed for many months, and with ongoing Government restrictions on the number of people that are allowed to meet, this source of income was also drastically reduced this year.

Fees from clients were also vastly reduced due to the suspension of sessions during lockdown. Even since the pavilion could be re-opened, fee income has continued to be limited by the need to ensure safeguards were in place which have restricted the ability to run sessions as normal.

Our survival was helped in large part due to both the Government's furlough scheme and also a discretionary grant of £10,000 that we received from North Herts District Council in June. Our thanks to the Council for their approval of the grant and speedy distribution of funds.

Without these financial supports, we would have undoubtedly ended the year with a significant deficit and would have been questioning our ability to continue. As it is, we have finished the year with a surplus of just over £5k which has bolstered our reserves and put us in a much better position to weather the difficulties ahead.

As noted, we relied heavily on the furlough scheme to ensure that our dedicated and expert staff could be retained during the lockdown. This was essential if we were to have any chance to re-opening and starting our activities again. Our thanks therefore goes to all of the staff who have worked so hard, in the lead-up to

lockdown and in the large amount of work that was needed once we re-opened – from undertaking risk assessments to developing and implementing COVID-secure practices in order to keep clients, staff and visitors as safe as possible.

However, we are not out of the woods yet. The year ahead is full of uncertainty, not only due to the ongoing impacts of the pandemic and the threat of further restrictions, but also due to the outcome of Herts County Council's new tendering process.

HCC were in the process of changing the tendering framework and the fees it would pay for residents to attend a broad range of adult social care services, when the pandemic struck. The process was paused for a number of months but has been re-started and is expected to conclude within the next few months.

Having made strong representations to HCC highlighting how their proposed standard rates did not properly take account of the nature of TCG's services and its costs, we are disappointed that they continue to push ahead with a rate structure that would not cover the costs necessary to run our sessions. At the very least, this may mean a restructuring of how we run our sessions plus a focus on identifying potential new client groups (and areas outside the county) that we have not previously catered for.

Looking ahead, we envisage that 2020/21 is likely to result in a substantial deficit unless sessions can return to previous levels and expand, and our fundraising activities can begin again safely. In the year ahead we are likely to be heavily reliant upon charitable grants and donations if we are to avoid drawing upon a large portion of our reserves.

Abbreviated accounts are included with this report. The full accounts in the format required by the Charities Commission are available on our website.

I'd like to thank Margaret Byrne for her sterling work keeping our accounts and navigating the furlough system, and to all those who have made donations this year particularly St Mark's Church, and all the Friends of the Triangle Garden whose donations totalled over £360 this year.

Andrew Green – Trustee & Treasurer

If you'd like to help the Triangle Garden get through the next year why not become a Friend?

Please visit our [Virgin Money Giving site](https://www.trianglegarden.org/get-involved-friend) and sign up for a monthly donation of your choice. Even £2 a month makes a huge difference to us!

Become a Friend



Find out more at www.trianglegarden.org/get-involved-friend

Financial Report

Triangle Community Garden

Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31st August 2020

	TCG and Pavilion	GA Group	Capital Fund	Total	Last Year
Income from:					
Donations and Legacies	362	326		688	3911
Grants	1127	4061	5112	10300	1000
Fundraising	3932	0		3932	10334
Investment Income	0			0	1
Charitable Activities	2825	24454		27279	29123
Other Income					
Total	8246	28841	5112	42199	44369
Expenditure on:					
Raising Funds	1869			1869	4096
Charitable Expenditure	6377	28841		35218	35833
Total	8246	28841	0	37087	39929
Net Income	0	0	5112	5112	4440
Net Movement in Funds	0	0	5112	5112	4440
Total funds Brought Forward	15957	2422	2361	20740	16300
Total Funds Carried Forward	15957	2422	7473	25852	20740



Our Growing Ability tenth anniversary Harvest Lunch group photo: with Liz (3rd from left), Rachel (4th from left), Vicky (6th from left), Avril (far right), Carol (next to Avril) and Yolanda (4th from right)

You can find more photos on our [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) pages.

Find out more at www.trianglegarden.org

Hitchin Community Gardens
Income and Expenditure for the year ended 31st August
2020

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Income Funds	Endowment Funds	Total This Year	Total Last Year
Income from:					
Donations and Legacies	6301	4687	0	10988	4912
Other Trading Activities	3932		0	3932	10333
Charitable Activities	2825	24454	0	27279	29123
Investments	0	0	0	0	1
Total Income	13058	29141	0	42199	44369
Expenditure on:					
Raising Funds	1869		0	1869	4097
Charitable Expenditure	6377	28842	0	35219	35832
Total Expenditure	8246	28842	0	37088	39929
Net Income before Other Recognised Gains and Losses	4812	299	0	5,111	4,440
Other Recognised Gains and Losses	0	0	0	0	0
Transfer between Funds	0	0			
Net Movement in Funds	4813	299	0	5,112	4,440
Total funds Brought Forward	15957	4783	0	20740	14774
Total Funds Carried Forward	20770	5082	0	25852	19214

Hitchin Community Gardens
Balance Sheet as at 31st August 2020

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Income Funds	Endowment Funds	Total This Year	Total Last Year
Fixed Assets					
Tangible Fixed Assets - Equipment	0	0	0	0	0
Total Fixed Assets	0	0	0	0	0
Current Assets					
Stock	298	0	0	298	444
Debtors and Prepayments	849	900	0	1749	3737
Cash at Bank and in Hand	20008	4802	0	24810	17773
Total Current Assets	21155	5702	0	26857	21954
Current Liabilities					
Creditors and Accruals	385	620	0	1005	1214
Deferred Income	0	0	0	0	0
Total Current Liabilities	385	620	0	1005	1214
Net Current Assets	20770	5082	0	25852	20740
Total Assets less Current Liabilities	20770	5082	0	25852	20740
Amounts falling due after more than 1 Year					
Deferred Income	0			0	0
Net Assets	20770	5082	0	25852	20740
Funds of the Charity					
Triangle Community Garden Fund	3907		0	3907	5546
Pavilion Fund	12051		0	12051	10410
Balance of Grant to cover lost income 2020/2021	4812			4812	
Restricted Funds		5082	0	5082	4784
Total Funds	20770	5082	0	25852	20740

1. Basis of Accounting

The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the FRSSE and the 2015 SORP

2. Accounting Policies

The principal accounting policies are summarised below. The accounting policies have been applied consistently throughout the year.

(a) Fund Accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.

Designated funds are unrestricted funds earmarked by the trustees for particular purposes.

Restricted funds are subject to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor.

(b) Income

All income is included in the statement of financial activities when the charity is entitled to the income and the amount can be quantified with reasonable accuracy. The following specific policies are applied to particular categories of income:

Voluntary Income is received by way of grants, donations and gifts and is included in full in the Statement of Financial Activities when receivable.

Donated Services are included at the value to the charity where this can be quantified. The value of services provided by volunteers has not been included in these accounts.

Income from Trading and Charitable Activities are accounted for when earned.

Hertfordshire County Council is responsible for the payment of fees for six of the gardeners. Fees of £10844 were received from HCC in the year ended 31st August 2012.

(c) Expenditure

Expenditure is recognised on an accrual basis as a liability is incurred. Expenditure includes VAT which cannot be recovered and is reported as part of the expenditure to which it relates.

Costs of generating funds comprise the costs associated with attracting voluntary income and the costs of trading for fundraising purposes

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them. It includes governance costs which are those costs associated with meeting the constitutional and statutory requirements of the charity and include the accountant's fees and costs linked to the strategic management of the charity.

(d) Fixed Assets

Fixed Assets are included at cost less accumulated depreciation. The cost of minor additions, those costing below £1000 and those whose purchase costs are fully covered by a grant are not capitalised. Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost of the asset over its expected useful life, which in all cases is estimated at 5 years. Currently the charity has no fixed assets which have not been written off.

3. Income

(a) Donations

Triangle Community Garden

£362

Growing Ability Group

£326

(b) Grants

Bite Size Pieces £300 Local Authority Small business Grant £10000

4. Expenditure

For analysis see attached appendix

5. Trustee Remuneration and Related Party Transactions

Reimbursements were made to trustees for purchases made directly for Hitchin Community Gardens.

Details of trustees other transactions with the charity are given in note 14.

6. Salaries and Wages

At 31st August 2020 5 part time staff were employed including 1 Growing Ability Gardener who cleans the Pavilion for 1 hour a week who was on furlough at that date.

Total wages including pension contributions paid in the year to 31st August 2020 were £31518. £7513 furlough income was received from HMRC.

7. Tangible Fixed Assets

	Equipment
At Cost	£
At 1st September 2013	2916
Acquisitions	0
At 31st August 2014	2916
Depreciation	
At 1st September 2013	2645
Charge for Year	271
At 31st August 2014	2916
Net Book Value	
At 31st August 2019	0
At 31st August 2018	0

8. Debtors

Prepaid expenses	<u>£ 714</u>
Debtors	£1020
Reclaimable Gift Aid Tax	<u>£ 15</u>
	£1749

9. Creditors and Accruals

Income received in advance	<u>£ 226</u>
Creditors	£ 26
Payroll & pension liabilities	<u>£ 753</u>
Total	£1005

All deferred income has now been written back.

10. Analysis of Net Assets Between Funds

Triangle Community Garden	Ransom's Pavilion	Growing Ability Group
£3907	£12051	£2421
Capital Expenditure Fund (balance of grants)	£7473	

11. Related Parties

One trustee is a director of Bowles & Wyer who do the photocopying for Hitchin Community Gardens. No charge is made for black and white copies, and colour copies are invoiced at cost. This is considerably cheaper than using another supplier.

Note 4**Hitchin Community Gardens****Expenditure for the Year ended 31st August 2020**

	Unrestricted Funds	Restricted Funds	Total
Voluntary Income Costs			
General Admin & Publicity	32		32
Website	4	5	9
	<u>36</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>41</u>
Fundraising Costs			
Event Costs	740	0	740
Workshop Costs	565		565
Children's Activities Costs	0		0
Pavilion Costs	564	0	564
Gazebo Costs	0	0	0
	<u>1869</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1869</u>
Charitable Expenditure			
Insurance	383	256	639
Subscriptions	55	83	138
Gardening Club & Sunday Staff	2354		2354
Growing Ability Group Tutors		18500	18500
Project Management Salary	2915	7185	10100
Visits	18		18
Volunteer Expenses	0	9	9
Training	0	168	168
Project Management & GA Group Overheads	66	1788	1854
Wi-fi	115	175	290
Materials, Tools & PPE	181	161	342
Refreshments & Lunch Club costs	49	187	236
	<u>6136</u>	<u>28512</u>	<u>34648</u>
Governance Costs			
Accounting	120	180	300
Accountants Fees	28	42	70
DBS Checks	0	96	96
Legal costs	5	8	13
Other Governance Costs	50		50
	<u>203</u>	<u>326</u>	<u>529</u>
Total Expenditure	8244	28843	37087

Hitchin Community Gardens Reserves Statement 2020

Hitchin Community Gardens needs reserves to:

- Meet any contractual liabilities should the organisation have to close
- Meet unexpected costs like repairs to the pavilion
- To replace equipment as it wears out.
- Ensure the charity can provide a continuing service for its gardeners and to the community
- To provide working capital if funding is paid in arrears, and to enable it to bid for funding which is paid in arrears
- To provide working capital where there is a gap between funding streams. Where funding is not renewed bids for alternative sources can take time to process.
- Enable it to expand the range of services offered
- Provide a contingency fund in the event of a shortfall in one or more of its funding activities

Hitchin Community Garden Reserves at 31st August 2020

Hitchin Community Garden's reserves policy states that reserves should be between 30% and 40% of turnover.

Reserves at 31st August 2019 are £25852. This is 61% of turnover.

However this needs to be considered in the light of the effect of Covid 19.

Two of our major fundraising events and some of our workshops had to be cancelled, there were no bookings for the pavilion in May, June, July and August and our Growing Ability and Growing Health sessions had to be shut down from mid-March to the end of July. We received the furlough grant from HMRC to partly cover our salary costs. In addition we have received a small business grant from NHDC. £4812 of this grant has been carried forward into 2020/2021 to cover cancelled events in the coming year and also GA/GH running at below capacity.

Also other grants brought forward from 2018/2019 and received in 2019/2020 have not yet been used due to the Covid 19 outbreak – e.g. £1000 received from Hitchin horticultural society was earmarked for our 20th anniversary celebrations in 2020 which did not go ahead and £300 received in 2020 from Bite size Pieces for equipment and perennial herbs has yet to be spent.

In these uncertain times we do not consider our reserves level to be excessive and expect it to diminish considerably in the coming year.

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Hitchin Community Garden

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the Hitchin Community Garden for the year ended 31st August 2020.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity trustees of the Hitchin Community Garden you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act').

I report in respect of my examination of Hitchin Community Garden accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Hitchin Community Garden as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed: 

Name: Deniz Brown (FCCA)

Fellow of Chartered Certified Accountants

Address: 42 Brampton Park Road, Hitchin, Herts. SG5 1XF

Date: 14th November 2020