



The Recovery Tree Charity

Annual Report April 2024 to March 2025

We help people with a mental health condition to lead fulfilling and satisfying lives.



TWIGS is a community garden where people can regain confidence and self-esteem through learning new skills and participating in therapeutic activities.

Our Mission

We help people with a mental health condition to lead fulfilling and satisfying lives. We like to think that our presence, our pride in who we are, and what we do, will mean we are doing our part to reduce the stigma of mental illness.

We offer a mix of time-limited placements and longer term volunteering opportunities for people who have mental health support needs. At TWIGS people can be referred (or self-refer) to us for a placement in therapeutic horticulture and related activities. Some also volunteer with us for longer periods.



Olive Tree Café

The Olive Tree Café's year fell into two parts. For the first three months, we continued operating as before. In July, we suffered a forced move of premises when the pump serving the drains failed irreparably and our landlord did not repair it. As a result, there was no way for us to deal with waste water and it was impossible to operate a café in these conditions.

We were able to find new premises to move to. The community of Swindon rallied together to support our relocation to Toomer's Country Store and Garden Centre, SN5 3LD and raised over £20,000 to support us. In October, we re-opened on a rather smaller footprint. We also took the opportunity to hire premises in a community centre at favourable rates for a separate kitchen both to provide baked products for sale in the Café, and also to continue with our bakery therapy and training.

Case study

Lesley was referred to us by the Job Centre. She found it difficult to speak to people and started by baking cakes in the back kitchen. After a few months she had found her feet and moved into the main kitchen. Her confidence built week by week and she was coming out of her shell and chatting to other staff. After a few more months, she felt able to take on front-of-house duties and deal with customers, many of whom she made friends with.

Up to our July closure, we had 55 volunteers and 15 staff with a known mental health support need. Ten independent volunteers helped deliver the service. We regularly welcomed young people who are disabled or vulnerable for some work experience or as part of a Duke of Edinburgh Award. After our re-opening in January 2025, we had 17 volunteers and 8 staff with a known mental health support need.

Four staff completed the mental health first aid course to put them in a better position to be able to support others. We continued with our bakery training workshops on Mondays, and with our Level 1 food safety courses. These were commented on in our Environmental Health inspection, which graded us at Level 5 and recognised our training and support of volunteers.



As a Community Cafe we are reliant on grant funding to support our ongoing operations. Two major grants came to an end during the year and unfortunately; we were not able to secure the funds needed to keep the Cafe open and we had to close permanently on 28th February 2025.

The Cafe has been open since 2011 and over 14 years has served the community formidably providing volunteering and paid employment opportunities to people with mental health challenges. In this time, we have served 413 volunteers and staff with a known mental health support need. Of our leavers, many went on to do something with their lives which would have been beyond their reach before they started with us. We also provided space for numerous community groups and charities to meet.

We believe that this has been a significant benefit to the community in Swindon. There are many people to thank for this:

- Phyllida Richards (our Cafe manager since the beginning) and all of our fantastic volunteers and staff for their dedication and professionalism;
- Our many grant funders;
- Our customers and the fantastic community of Swindon;
- the Toomer family who helped us find our new home last year.

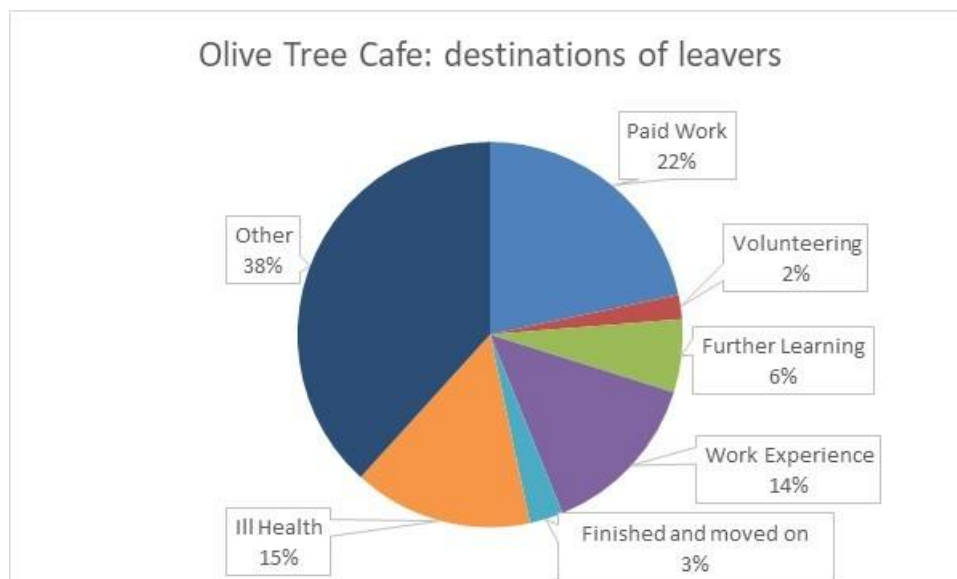


Figure 1: Destinations of leavers from the Olive Tree Café, 2011-25

TWIGS

Our gardening sessions continue to be well-attended and cover a range of seasonal activities in a natural environment. Our service users, ex-service users now in our “ambassador” role and our volunteers together make a group of over 120 people who regularly benefit from our service and facilities each week. 10 – 15 of these are former service users: we encourage them to use their lived



experience to support current service users. Our Dementia Gardening Groups continue and we have created a new Garden of Hope for a group focussed on people dealing with the effects of bereavement. Our facilities continue to be valuable for other local mental health support charities to deliver therapeutic art and craft workshops. Among these were dedicated sessions for women asylum seekers and refugees. 36 people have benefitted over the year.

We have added to our facilities by building a fire proof forge area. Building it was a therapeutic activity for several people: now it is complete, using it will provide further therapeutic opportunities to people at TWIGS. We also constructed our new “Garden Of Hope” which is now in regular use by a Gardening Through Grief group for people dealing with the aftermath of bereavement.

We delivered our **Level 2 Essential Garden Skills course** (8 sessions over 8 weeks) twice, in the autumn and again in the spring, at both TWIGS and Bridewell Organic Gardens in South Oxfordshire. 30 people graduated. The course is both popular and therapeutically valuable.

Our programme of public open days included 8 events during the year. These are good ways to reach new members of the public, to promote the benefits of good mental health and to help diversify our income.

Our support for young people has continued: we hosted visits from local schools (primary and secondary, special and main stream), provided DofE and work experience placements, and ran activity evenings for Scout groups and activity days for groups from the Youth Adventure Trust. We continued our long-term collaboration with Marlborough House, our local in-patient service for young people, providing sessions on their premises and on ours.

We have continued giving talks to local groups about our work and its benefits, and hosting volunteer teams from local employers – 14 during the year.

During the year, we have supported **103** people. In addition, 55 independent volunteers help deliver the service. Several of these are former service users: we encourage them to use their lived experience to support current service users. 6 are “TWIGS Ambassadors” who help present the service to visiting members of the public. The destinations of our leavers is shown below.

Case study

Gill was diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder and suffered childhood trauma: she experiences extreme highs and lows and auditory hallucinations. She also cares for her mother, and has had periods ‘out’ from TWIGS where her mother’s physical and mental health has been so poor that Gill has had to become a full time carer. Initially Gill could attend only with her mother but has progressed to travelling on her own and having her session at Twigs on her own. Over the course of her time at TWIGS Gill’s wellbeing has quantitatively improved, and she feels an increase in confidence, made new friendships and picked up gardening skills and knowledge including floristry which she has a natural flair for.

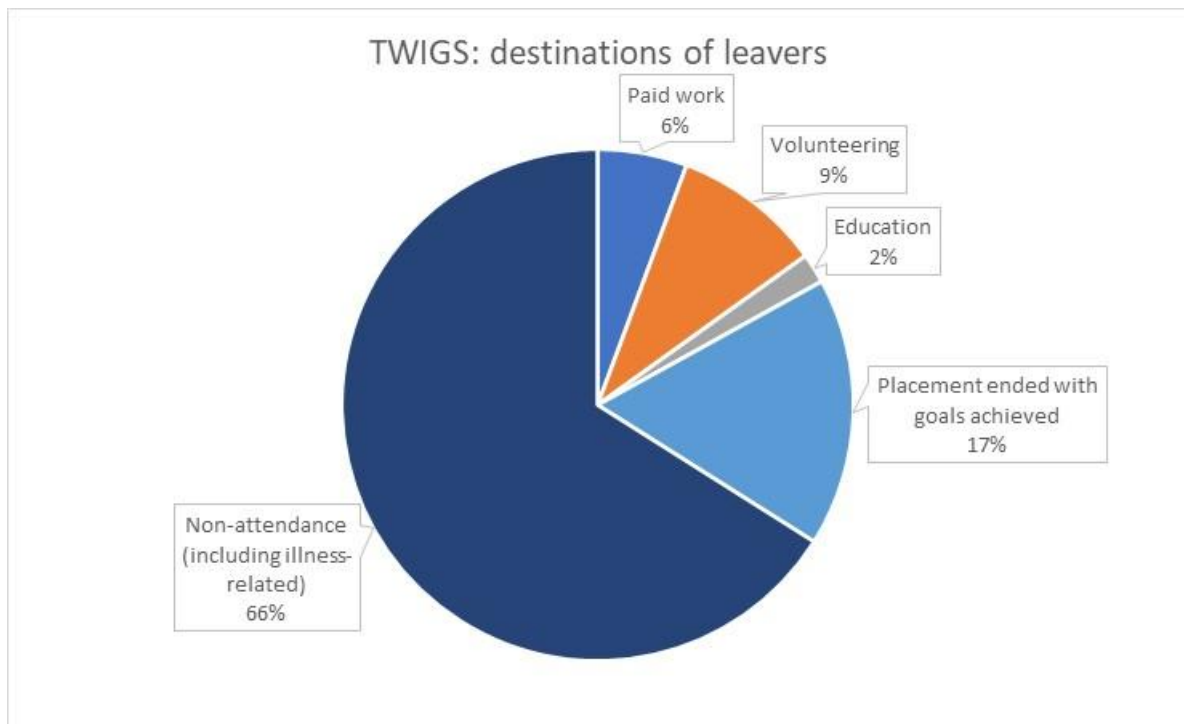


Figure 2: Destinations of leavers from TWIGS, 2024-25



Dementia Friendly Gardening

100% of service users report receiving good or excellent service and **95%** say their mental health has improved. **90%** report that being at TWIGS has given them new knowledge or skills. **67%** report being able to function more independently, with **38%** saying they needed less help from the NHS.

Message from the Trustees

We have been able to continue providing services to support wellbeing for an increasingly diverse group of people, and are grateful to the large number of funders and donors who have helped us be able to do this. In particular, we are very grateful to the many people who contributed to the enormous fundraising effort for the Olive Tree Café, which raised over £27,000 including generous matching for some payments by the Zurich Community Trust. We are pleased that this could keep the Cafe going after its forced move, but very sorry that this managed to keep it open only for a short time.

The year in numbers

Income £427,190	Expenditure £535,604	Balance at year end £53,475
Total people helped: 163	Volunteers: 61	Staff 1 full time, 6 part time

Our Trustees

Dick Millard (Chair), Gillian Barber, Jo Ridley, Kenny Baxter, Cara Hiscock and Lynn Rowe.

The Recovery Tree Charity is

- a registered charity (1149848)
- a company limited by guarantee (08091204).

Manor Garden Centre, Cheney Manor Industrial Estate, Swindon, SN2 2QJ.

email: trustees@therecoverytreecharity.org.uk

Web: www.therecoverytreecharity.org.uk/

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100082394996111>



Dick Millard
Chair

Date: 17th June 2025

Report and Financial Statements

The Recovery Tree Charity

1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025

Administrative Information

The Recovery Tree Charity is responsible for both the Olive Tree Café and TWIGS. It is a registered charity (Charity Commission registration number: 1149848) and a company limited by guarantee (Companies house registration number: 08091204). Its principal office and its registered address is Manor Garden Centre, Cheney Manor Industrial Estate, Swindon, SN2 2QJ.

At the start of the year, there were five trustees and directors: Dick Millard (Chair), Gillian Barber (Secretary), Jo Ridley Kenny Baxter and Cara Hiscock. During the year, Lynn Rowe joined the trustee board.

Governance and Management

Trustees meetings are currently held usually once a month, at which decisions are taken and minuted. The trustees delegated the day to day running of the Olive Tree Café to a manager, Phyllida Richards, while it was operating; and of the TWIGS service to a manager, Alan Holland. The managers provide regular reports to the trustees to aid decision making and prioritisation.

The trustees have reviewed the guidance on public benefit published by the Charity Commission, and have taken due regard to it in exercising their powers and duties.

Review of financial results and future developments

Throughout the year we applied for publicly available government grants, and for charitable grants. Thanks to the generosity of our many funders, we have ended the year in a sound financial position. Our major funders are listed in the notes to the accounts on page 12.

At TWIGS, we have a contract with Swindon Borough Council (SBC): this runs for five years to 31 December 2026. We intend to continue to apply for grants to meet costs of the additional capacity we provide at TWIGS over and above the Council contract.

Reserves policy and annual review statement

The Recovery Tree is a charitable organisation and as such depends on its income from varying sources. Twigs has 5 year contract with SBC expiring on 31 December 2026, plus we receive other grants and donations, supplemented by small amounts of income from plant sales and outreach work.

It is therefore important that we have enough funds to keep running during lean times or when we are short of cash flow. A general reserve is required in order to continue providing the service, including paying staff wages and essential bills.

Our policy therefore is to keep, where possible, a minimum of 3 but not more than 6 months expenses as a general reserve.

It is our intention to build up the reserve from sales and fund-raising activities. We intend to review the Reserves Policy every year when completing current year's budgets, to ensure that it remains relevant and financially correct.

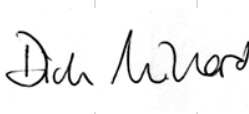
Reserves Review July 2025

The unrestricted surplus at the end of March 2025 is £41,304. Twigs expenses for the period April 2024 to March 2025 were £144,775. The unrestricted reserve provides us around 3.4 months running costs, which is within our policy of between 3 to 6 months running costs.

Our aim over the coming year will be to increase our Reserve position in line with our expenses, to ensure a secure back up for any potential future problems, using income from sales and fund raising activities.

THE RECOVERY TREE CHARITY
Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31 March 2025

	Notes	Total this year	Previous Year
		£	£
Incoming resources			
Grants and Donations	1	284743	291442
Fundraising activities		23958	30238
Sales - Income from activities in furtherance of charitable objects		118489	241532
Total incoming resources		427190	563212
Resources expended			
Materials		54394	86399
Salaries and staff costs	2,3	391457	341527
Direct Expenses	3	18536	24553
Overheads	3	69321	89567
Fundraising Costs		1896	1723
Total resources expended		535604	543769
Surplus/deficit		-108414	19443
Net movement in funds		0	0
Fund balances brought forward as at 1 April 2024		161889	142446
Fund balances carried forward as at 31 March 2025		53475	161889

THE RECOVERY TREE			
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31/03/2025			
	Notes	Total this year	Previous Year
		£	£
Fixed Assets		12170	28278
Tangible assets	6	12170	28278
Current Assets			
Debtors and Prepayments	7	5088	4613
Stock		0	3298
Cash at bank and in hand		87444	250772
		92532	258683
Short term creditors	8	51227	125072
Net current assets		41305	133611
Total assets less current liabilities		53475	161889
Net Assets		53475	161889
Capital and Reserves			
Unrestricted Funds		53475	161889
Designated Funds		0	0
Total Funds		53475	161889
<ul style="list-style-type: none">For the year ending 31 March 2025 the company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.			
Approved by the board of Directors and signed on its behalf by			
<div></div>			
Dick Millard Chairman			

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025							
1	Grants and Donations Received						
				The Olive Tree Café	Twigs		Total
				£	£		£
	National Lottery			70107	6471		76578
	Swindon Borough Council				71610		71610
	Zurich Community Trust			45347	6520		51867
	Friends of Twigs			7648	29931		37579
	Nationwide B S				6755		6755
	Sarah Raven				6000		6000
	WCF				5000		5000
	NFUMIS				3189		3189
	Sir Jonathan Rivett-Carnac				3000		3000
	Other grants			5722	9130		14852
	Donations			5555	2758		8313
				<u>134379</u>	<u>150364</u>		<u>284743</u>
2	Paid Employees						
				The Olive Tree Café	Twigs	Total	Total
				this year	this year	this year	previous year
				£	£	£	£
	Gross wages and salaries		251377	80256	331633	289699	
	Employer's NI costs		10702	6792	17494	13895	
	Pension contributions		4170	3340	7510	6829	
	Total staff costs		<u>266249</u>	<u>90388</u>	<u>356637</u>	<u>310423</u>	
	Twigs	2 full time, 1 part time and 4 part time self employed					
	Café	At 1 April 2024, the Olive Tree Café had 28 part time staff. During the year all of these staff resigned or were made redundant. The body of the report gives more information.					
	There were no employees whose emoluments were over £50,000.						
3	Analyses of resources expended						
				The Olive Tree Café	Twigs	Total	Total
				this year	this year	this year	previous year
	Salaries and staff costs						
			£	£	£	£	
	Salaries		281500	75137	356637	310423	
	Staff costs		3807	3078	6885	4190	
	Contract staff			27935	27935	26914	
			<u>285307</u>	<u>106150</u>	<u>391457</u>	<u>341527</u>	
	Direct Costs						
			£	£	£	£	
	Cleaning		4262	6376	10638	12975	
	Equipment		3035	77	3112	3444	
	Card Charges		1710	93	1803	2812	
	Tableware/workwear		329	0	329	1188	
	Music Licence		598	0	598	644	
	Volunteers Expenses		720	609	1329	2192	
	Professional fees		347	380	727	1298	
			<u>11001</u>	<u>7535</u>	<u>18536</u>	<u>24553</u>	
	Overheads						
			£	£	£	£	
	Rent		7951	0	7951	17561	
	Gas		1942	0	1942	5210	
	Electric		7576	2604	10180	28874	
	Water		1338	1127	2465	5532	
	Insurance		1971	3273	5244	3781	
	Telephone/Broadband		1932	1361	3293	3143	
	Stationery		1345	666	2011	1049	
	Repair/Maintenance		7705	1597	9302	5964	
	Printing/Photocopy		507	652	1159	1184	
	Waste		1712	718	2430	3277	
	Depreciation		12773	4161	16934	5427	
	Vehicle costs		47	1727	1774	2194	
	Security		42	1252	1294	29	
	Website project		344	323	667	5255	
	Misc		2092	583	2675	1087	
			<u>49277</u>	<u>20044</u>	<u>69321</u>	<u>89567</u>	
4	Independent examiner's remuneration						
	An accrual for £380 has been made for the costs of the Independent Examination						

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2025				
5	Trustees			
	There has been no remuneration or other benefits paid to the charity's trustees or people connected with them			
	Number of trustees who were paid expenses			0
	Total amount paid			£0
6	Tangible Fixed Assets			
	Fixed Assets are individual items costing over £200, and depreciated on a straight line basis for four years (25% per annum)			
			this year	prev yr
			£	£
	Cost	B/fwd	116690	105667
		Additions	5509	11023
		Disposals	-96904	
		C/fwd	25295	116690
	Depreciation	B/fwd	88412	77197
		C/fwd	13125	88412
	Net Book Value			
		B/fwd	28278	28470
		C/fwd	12170	28278
7	Debtors due within one year			
			this year	prev yr
			£	£
	Pre-payments		665	2821
	Other Debtors		4423	1792
			5088	4613
8	Creditors - falling due within one year			
			this year	prev yr
			£	£
	Creditors		4817	8246
	Accruals		830	7580
	Deferred Income		45060	103041
	VAT		520	6205
			51227	125072
9	Basis of accounting			
	These accounts have been prepared on the basis of historic cost in accordance with			
	the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting by Charities and			
	the Charities Act and			
	the Companies Act 2006			

Report to the Trustees on the accounts for the financial year ending on 31 March 2025

Respective responsibilities of trustee and examiner

The Trustees responsibility for preparing the Trustees Annual Report and the financial Statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice) are set out in the Statement of Trustees Responsibility in the body of the Trustees Report.

You consider that the audit requirement of Section 144 Charities Act 2011 does not apply.

It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners (under section 145 (5) (b) of the Act), whether particular matters have come to my attention

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination was carried out in accordance with General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes the review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the financial statements presented with these records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the financial statements, and the seeking of explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the financial statements present a true and fair view and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention

- 1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
 - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Act
 - And
 - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Acts have not been met;
- or
- 2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the financial statements to be reached.


C VAUGHAN

Date: 13/8/25

Chartered Accountant
195 Ermin Street
Stratton St Margaret, Swindon
SN3 4NA