COMMUNIGROW

England & Wales · Charity number 1159534

Details

Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2014-12-08
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

Address	Hazel Hall Church Road West Peckham Maidstone Kent ME18 5JL
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Website	www.communigrow.org.uk

Activities

Objects: TO PROMOTE AND ADVANCE EDUCATION IN RESPONSIBLE FOOD FARMING ACTIVITIES FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT BY EMPOWERING LOCAL COMMUNITIES TO DIRECTLY LINK WITH FARMING AND TO RECONNECT WITH WHERE THEIR FOOD COMES FROM AND HOW TO ENJOY LOCAL, HEALTHY, SUSTAINABLE, AFFORDABLE FOOD.

Activities: COMMUNIGROW enables communities to realise the educational & wellbeing benefits of sustainable horticulture and growing in practical field sessions and activities for schools and community groups. It teaches people how to grow chemical free food, using environmentally friendly methodologies and using the therapeutic benefits of gardening to bring positive change to physical and mental wellbeing.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Human Resources, Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Provides Advocacy/advice/information
- **What:** Education/training, The Advancement Of Health Or Saving Of Lives, Environment/conservation/heritage
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, The General Public/mankind

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Geography

- East Sussex
- Kent
- Medway
- Surrey
- West Sussex

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2024-12-31	£174,915	£197,550	-	-
2023-12-31	£214,541	£193,894	-	-
2022-12-31	£257,728	£159,394	-	-
2021-12-31	£127,490	£105,225	-	-
2020-12-31	£114,216	£95,440	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Caroline Pearce	Chair	2019-12-07
Alan Piper		2016-05-06
Elizabeth Lockwood		2024-08-15
Natasha Stille		2025-01-10
Nathan Omane		2025-12-11
Rebecca Prince Dr		2024-04-11
Sharon Looker		2026-04-21

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COMMUNIGROW

England & Wales - Charity number 1159534

Accounts

communigrow

ANNUAL REPORT 2024

Financial Statements and Trustees' Report
1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024










www.communigrow.org.uk
Charity no. 1159534

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Our Trustees

Caroline Pearce, Chair
Anthony Blackman *
Georgia Bozekova **
David Field
Paul Jones **
Elizabeth Lockwood +
Martin Long, Finance Trustee
Alan Piper
Dr Rebecca Prince ++
Dr Robert Saville #
Natasha Stille **

Site Address

Communigrow
via NIAB site
New Road, East Malling
Kent, ME20 6PE

what3words ///glance.callers.squish

Independent Examiners

Perrys Audit Limited, Chartered Accountants
Churchdown Chamber
Bordyke
Tonbridge, TN9 1NR

Website & Email

www.communigrow.org.uk
info@communigrow.org.uk

Charity Number

1159534

*resigned June 2024
**appointed January 2025
+appointed August 2024
++appointed April 2024
#resigned February 2024

Chair's Introduction

I am delighted to introduce Communigrow's 2024 annual report and accounts. There is much to say about what we do, the great work of all those involved in the charity and the benefits the charity provides.

Communigjrow is a community based food education charity, growing food to teach the benefits of fresh food for health and wellbeing and environmental sustainability and through this the wider benefits of social and therapeutic gardening in a community setting.

Our work attracts local schools, including special education needs schools, families whose children are home educated and partner charities who support young people with, for example, additional needs and caring responsibilities. We welcome people of all ages including those with long-term physical or mental health conditions and those experiencing social isolation or significant life changes and those who just want to engage in outdoor horticultural activities and enjoy the company of others. We provide opportunities to join a community, improve health outcomes, and make new friends and learn new skills. Our two drivers are therefore first, teaching people about growing healthy, affordable food whether within a community setting or by encouraging them to do so at home and secondly, increasing awareness of the benefits it brings to them physically and how they feel about themselves. Much is written at the moment about healthy eating and plant based foods, the positive benefits of being outside and physically active and having an involvement in a community group. It is a perfect match.

In 2024, Communigrow reached a significant milestone: 10 years as a charity and we have grown and developed a great deal over that time, not least reaching a second milestone: in supporting over 1,000 beneficiaries last year.

We are also proud of the external endorsements we received, winning a Wilder Kent Gold Award and being finalists in the BBC Make a Difference Award, the Third Sector Awards and the Kent Charity Awards.

What of the future? Growth and development of the facilities and the range of services and activities we offer and the resulting increase in beneficiaries means that our current focus is on becoming more financially self-reliant. Whilst grant and trust support has in past years facilitated transformative growth, we, in common with many in the charitable sector, are finding that this fundraising remains stubbornly harder. We are therefore particularly grateful to the Trusts and Foundations, local businesses, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, our local councillors, our sponsors and all our other donors who support our work and growth - some of whom have supported us over a number of years.

We are very fortunate in having dedicated and hardworking staff and volunteers who are so vital to the success of Communigrow and my grateful thanks to them and my fellow trustees for everything they do for Communigrow.

Caroline Pearce

Chair of the Board of Trustees



Caroline at the Kent Charity Awards where Communigrow was a finalist

About Communigrow

Enabling communities to realise the educational and wellbeing benefits of sustainable horticulture and growing

Communigrow is a community based food education charity, growing food to teach the benefits of fresh food for health and wellbeing and environmental sustainability and through this the wider benefits of social and therapeutic gardening in a community setting.

We operate from a 2.4-acre site in East Malling and through outreach projects across communities in Kent and Medway.

Our objectives are to make a real difference to people's lives by teaching sustainable food growing methods, to their health through therapeutic gardening and to their sense of belonging through community outdoor activities.



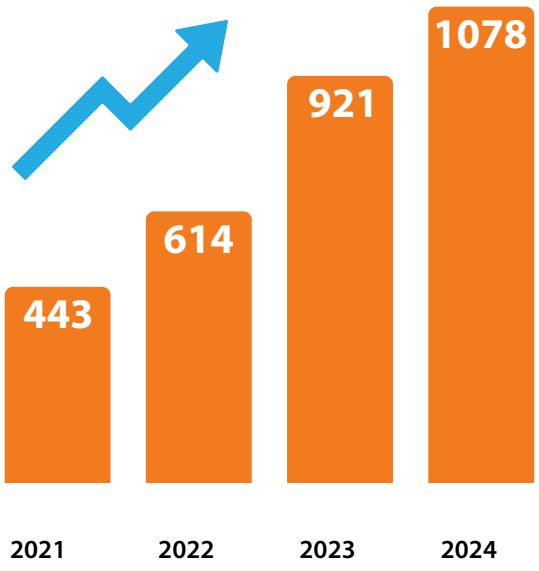
Our beneficiaries include children and young people with special education needs, local schools, people from under-resourced communities, young carers, adults with health conditions, older adults experiencing social isolation and people coping with bereavement.

In our Field School, Communigrow helps children and young people to learn about sustainable food growing and the importance of nature and the natural world.
It also supports the social and emotional development of children and young people with additional learning needs by providing inclusive and engaging outdoor educational experiences that develop confidence and life skills.

Our programmes provide adults with opportunities to experience the mental and physical benefits of community gardening, and to develop greater environmental awareness and understanding of sustainable horticultural practices.

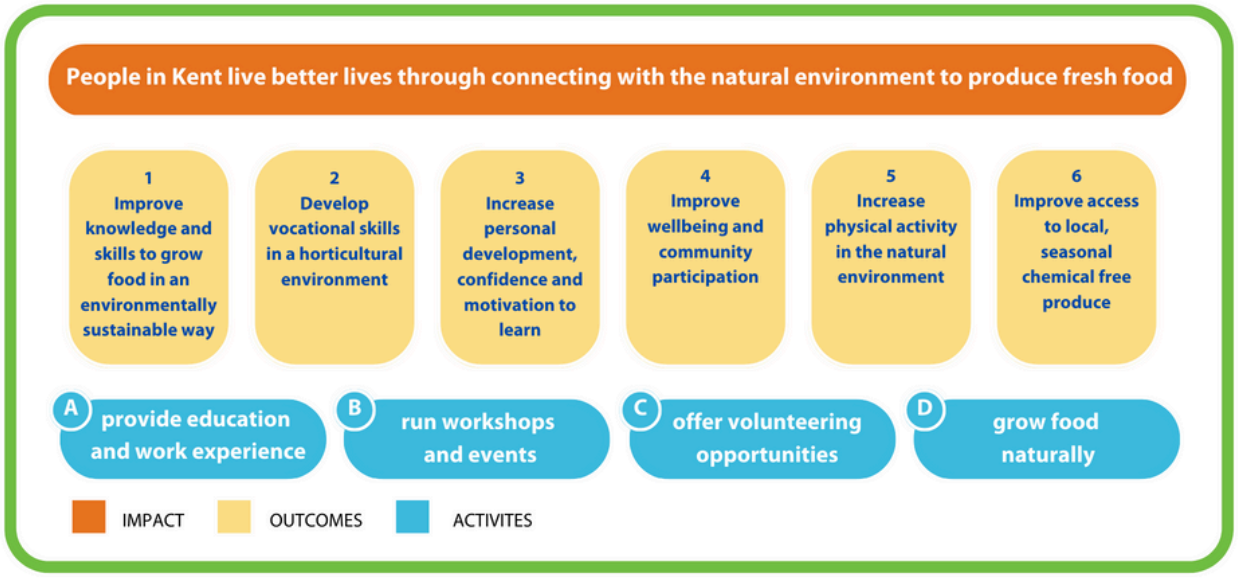
We are very proud to say that our beneficiary numbers have grown every year. In 2024, we supported over 1000 people to lead healthier and happier lives in our sustainable and inclusive community charity.

Our beneficiary numbers are growing



Public Benefit

As a charity we have a responsibility to provide a public benefit. Our approach is guided by our Theory of Change, adopted in 2022, which remains a key structural tool. Our six key outcomes set out in our Theory of Change aim to deliver physical, educational, psychological, social and economic benefits and our KPI monitoring and evaluation allows us to review the effectiveness of our activities and services and to adjust and improve them in response. In the Autumn of 2024 we re-evaluated our KPI structure and our methodology for gathering outcome data. As of January 2025, all programmes will have their outcomes directly measured against our Theory of Change.



Our work benefits not only our beneficiaries but also their families, carers and wider communities, including local authorities and other partners.
Social and therapeutic gardening is recognised by the NHS, healthcare governing bodies and the UK Government as part of the solution for mental and physical healthcare.

> Communigrow benefits residents in Tonbridge and Malling, promoting wellbeing and social inclusion through community gardening. The initiatives at Communigrow provide valuable opportunities for people of all backgrounds, including those with physical, mental health or learning difficulties, to engage in meaningful activities.
>
> Over the last few years, we have had the opportunity to provide grants to support several excellent projects, improving the lives of residents.
>
> Cllr Des Keer, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, Cabinet Member for Community Services

Our Year in Highlights

We Reached 1000+ Beneficiaries

A 17% increase on 2023.
This is a great milestone for our charity and demonstrates the impact we have had in the local community.



Wilder Kent Award

Receiving the acclaimed Wilder Kent Gold Award demonstrates our positive actions to create a more climate-resilient county, encourage biodiversity and provide a home for wildlife.



More Awards Success

We were pleased to be finalists in the BBC Make a Difference Awards, The Third Sector Awards and the Kent Charity Awards.



Delivery in Numbers

This year we have worked hard to reach more people.

45 wellbeing sessions for older adults



10 local schools





30 weekend family workshops

90 sessions for children & young people in home education



116 sessions for children & young people with SEN



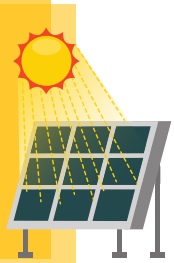
Sensory Garden

This beautiful, relaxing space at the entrance to Communigrow was created to provide a calm retreat for beneficiaries, volunteers and staff.



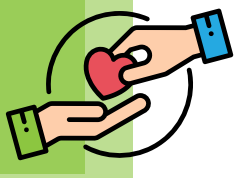
Solar Powered Office

We transformed a donated shipping container into a solar powered office space. The panels allowed us to stop using fossil fuel powered equipment so that our machinery is now battery powered and charged by the sun.



Crowdfunder Success - Bereavement Group

In October 2024, we surpassed our crowdfunding target of £17,000 to enable us to set up the Garden Gate Group, to use therapeutic gardening as bereavement support.
This group starts its first sessions in February 2025.



Show Gardens

The creation of three inspirational show gardens to replicate the size of home gardens and teach people how they can grow their own veg at home and create a haven for wildlife.



The Field School

The Field School at Communigrow encompasses all our educational and therapeutic work with children and young people - both on and off site.

Our experienced tutors provide absorbing activities ensuring that everyone - including those who are neurodivergent or have complex additional needs - feel comfortable and included. While learning practical skills, learners grow in confidence and experience the mental health benefits that come with spending time in nature.



A key part of our work is the 'field to fork' cookery experience. Using the vegetables they have grown and harvested at Comunigrow, our young learners have great fun enjoying cookery outdoors, developing more adventurous palates and an enjoyment of fresh, healthy food.

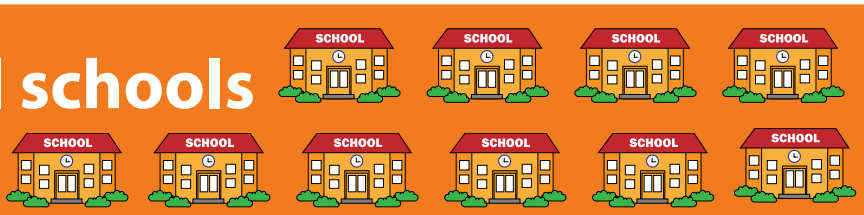
Local Schools

Our after school gardening club at St James the Great Academy, East Malling, continues to thrive. Teachers select the club participants based on greatest need - some learners need to build confidence when communicating, others have had a challenging time at home and some are young carers who need some respite.

In 2024 we also refined our school trips offer, with visits from 90 children from local schools during the year. We provide whole class visits to support the science, DT and sustainability curriculum in Key Stages 1 & 2. As well as looking at plant life cycles, bespoke sessions for each school include options such as pond dipping and preparing dishes from veg harvested on site. This is an area of activity we plan to expand in 2025.



10 local schools



Special Schools and SEND

Our work continues with local SEND schools, providing purposeful outdoor learning experiences, improving confidence and communication, and providing work experience opportunities.

Sessions are based around individual needs and tasks are varied. These could include laying woodchip paths, planting bulbs, maintaining structures and propagating new plants.

We continued to provide weekly sessions at Communigrow for Five Acre Wood School, a Special School for children and young people with profound, severe and complex learning difficulties, including those with Autistic Spectrum Condition.

Grow 19, a SEND college for 18-25 year olds, also attend weekly for social and communication skills, horticultural activities and work experience to support their City & Guilds qualifications.



Grow 19 students enjoying pizzas made with toppings they grew, harvested and cooked

In addition, we go out to The Rosewood School weekly to provide gardening enrichment sessions for students. We also provided work experience placements at Communigrow for 10 pupils in the Summer. Students at Rosewood have either medical, mental health or physical needs and many are also socially disadvantaged through missing some of their education.



Pupils from Five Acre Wood School outside our accessible toilets for the grand opening



116

sessions for children & young people with SEND

Communigrow Awards

Our unique Communigrow Awards scheme recognises the skills gained in all our Field School programmes, ranging from basic tool handling to woodwork, propagation, and seed sowing.

Learners of all abilities can celebrate their successes at the end of their course.

Like a different child
Cassie's Story

Cassie attends a local mainstream school, and has significant additional needs and an Education Health and Care Plan.

She attended Communigrow for a six week inclusion programme with other children from her school, learning alongside children from a local special school.

The school reported that Cassie was very isolated at school, finding it difficult to interact with other students.

At Communigrow she was able to be herself. The practical and inclusive nature of the activities meant that she could fully engage with tasks which has given her a new sense of confidence. Cassie has made friends while on the programme which has helped her begin to socialise with other children back at school.

Her teaching assistant said, "Cassie is like a different child at Communigrow! She didn't interact with other children at school, however at Communigrow she has fun and enjoys socialising with the other children and adults.

She engages in all the activities and shows a really fun, friendly side, for example chatting to whoever she is helping whilst washing up. She looks forward to coming every week and this is used as an incentive to help her make the right choices in class and with her learning."



"It's fun doing cooking, especially because we get to pick it, chop it and then cook it.

I love eating it the most!"

Cassie, age 11

*names have been changed



Home Education

Our home education programme supports learners aged 4-16 years old to gain practical food growing skills and learn about nature and the environment through a programme of study that incorporates science, food technology, sustainability and geography.



In addition to this we have introduced a Wood Craft skills programme for older home educated learners. Teaching carpentry basics in a supportive and inclusive environment.



50%

of our home educating parents reported that mainstream education did not meet the needs of their child, particularly when children were neurodivergent.

Family workshops

In 2024 we delivered 19 affordable family workshops at weekends and in school holidays including our 'Get Set, Grow!' Saturday workshops.
These give local families screen-free time together, gaining practical skills to grow food at home - whether on a windowsill or in a garden - and learning how to care for the environment.





30

weekend and family workshops

Charity partner workshops

Working with partner charities Space 2 Be Me and IMAGO, we delivered 5 Field to Fork workshops, where young people with additional needs or caring responsibilities harvested and prepared a meal from produce grown at the field.

Community Outreach

East Malling continues to be a top three priority area for Tonbridge and Malling, with parts of it among the 20% most income deprived areas in England according to ONS data.
Our outreach in this community is a source of pride.



We work with the East Malling Centre to run subsidised Communigrow Tots sessions to under fives each week, with a range of nature based crafts and activities aimed at encouraging physical activity, healthy eating and a love of nature.



During school holidays we provide free drop in sessions for children alongside the 'Community Pantry' at the East Malling Centre.

These popular sessions focus on growing and eating healthy food, caring for the environment and always have an element of cookery in them.

Our sessions at The East Malling Centre have been successful in introducing new families to the other services that Communigrow and the East Malling Centre can offer, as well as helping improve diet and access to affordable, fresh food.

"Come rain or shine, Communigrow never fails to draw a crowd of curious children eager to get involved and learn something new. Their activity sessions perfectly complement the work we do for the community, helping to provide fun and educational activities for local residents. Communigrow is a valued partner of the East Malling Centre, and we look forward to working with them for years to come."

Kevin Williams, Centre Manager
The East Malling Centre



Gaining independence
Ben's Story

Ben is an 18 year old with autism, cognitive delay and limited communication skills. He is a student in the sixth form of Five Acre Wood Special School, attending weekly sessions at Communigrow with his class.

When Ben first came to Communigrow he was extremely anxious and refused to join in activities - he used to sit on the grass watching his classmates or pace the field. He could be extremely vocal and, at times, destructive.

Over time, Field School staff devised a programme of tasks which Ben was comfortable completing on his own to settle him on arrival. He was able to take part in familiar activities independently. For example, knowing where to collect a watering can when tasked with watering plants.

The routine and format of these sessions helped Ben become calmer and more focused. He now takes part in a range of horticultural activities and is one of the first to make his way off the bus to the Field School Yurt. He has read the day's job list and chosen a task before some of the others have even arrived!

One memorable day Ben sat for over half an hour taking willow cuttings. Once he had been shown a few times he completed the whole process himself.

He is also beginning to work alongside other students, occasionally interacting - something he would not have done before.



"Ben is much calmer in this setting. He is able to move away from his special interest object and participate willingly in activities. He can indicate a preference for tasks and his engagement levels are higher with less anxiety.

At Communigrow our students are given a multitude of opportunities to develop their skills in a safe environment.
They benefit from working with nature, developing their understanding of where food comes from and are provided with screen free opportunities for learning."

Five Acre Wood School Teacher

*names have been changed

Therapeutic gardening with adults

Recent research, backed by the NHS and Royal Horticultural Society, has evidenced the positive benefits of gardening and nature on people's physical and mental health ("green therapy"), whether or not they have underlying mental health conditions or are experiencing life changing circumstances or social isolation. Green therapy in horticulture in particular, provides accessible and cost-effective wellbeing outcomes. Collective food-growing has additional positive effects in generating community engagement, and our programmes are especially effective for the socially isolated.

> **"Therapeutic gardening has proven positive effects on both physical and psychological well-being.**
>
> **Being active outdoors, amongst nature and other people, is hugely beneficial."**
>
> Dr Rebecca Prince,
> Communigrow Trustee and local GP



Having been awarded the accolade Kent's Mental Wellbeing Space of the Year in 2023 at the Kent Mental Wellbeing Awards hosted by East Kent Mind, we were proud to receive a Highly Commended award this year for our wellbeing services for adults.

Gardening to Feel Great

With funding from Involve Kent, this year we helped 37 people aged 55+ or who have health conditions improve their mental and physical wellbeing, boost their confidence and combat social isolation.

Participants meet new people in a friendly and relaxed outdoor environment, and together take part in gardening activities, promoting gentle physical activity and social connection. In the colder months the group takes part in nature-based craft activities in our heated yurt.



After attending for a season, Gardening to Feel Great members often move on to become committed Communigrow volunteers, making a long term commitment to both their health and to being part of our team.

Improving mental and physcial health
Robin's Story

Following a period of mental and physical ill health, Robin was referred to a health and wellbeing coach via his GP who in turn made a referral on Robin's behalf to Communigrow.

Robin described how coming to Communigrow had benefited his mental and physical health:

"I had become like a hermit really. Not having any contact with others was making me more and more insular.

Joining the Gardening to Feel Great group has been really great for my mental and physical health.

I have stepped outside my comfort zone - taking part in activities I wouldn't normally try in the Winter Wellness craft sessions.

There's a great camaraderie, trying something new with the others. It's a very relaxed environment. You find yourself talking to people and getting to know them without it being forced. You open up.

I was quite proud of how my festive wreath turned out - I wouldn't normally have signed up to do something like that, but it was very satisfying and I could give it as a gift.

Having something in the calendar each week is really helpful, knowing you've got something on. I would thoroughly recommend this group to anyone like me who needs a bit of a nudge.

Now I can see myself becoming a regular Communigrow volunteer as well as attending this group."

*names have been changed



Wellbeing in the Community

Working in partnership with local authorities and other local organisations and referral agencies represents the most effective way to meet local needs and ensure that we design and deliver the optimum wellbeing activities and services.

The Sahara Foundation in Medway is an example of a local group we hosted at Communigrow. It is a community initiative dedicated to helping South Asian people make the most of later life and we welcomed a group of 40 older visitors who took part in therapeutic nature-based and gardening activities.



Bereavement support

As a result of witnessing the impact that coming to Communigrow had on some of our volunteers who had experienced recent bereavements, in 2024 we set up our first ever crowdfunding campaign to fund a dedicated therapeutic gardening group supporting people who have been bereaved.

In October 2024 we had surpassed our target of £17,000 and put in place the groundwork for our Garden Gate Bereavement Support group which is set to start in February 2025.



Chris' story

"When my wife passed away in November 2023 I joined a bereavement group called Friends Together.
They arranged a trip to Communigrow in East Malling where we had a great day.

We had such a warm welcome and I was invited to become a Communigrow volunteer.

Coming to Communigrow gives me a sense of purpose. The people are fantastic and every week we have a variety of jobs to do.

I would recommend Communigrow to anyone who finds themselves in the same position as I was"

Volunteering

In 2024, 79 wonderful regular volunteers supported all areas of our work and 160 corporate volunteers joined us for specific projects. These generous people bring skills, experience and enthusiasm to assist our dedicated and hard-working staff. This helps us provide distinct and fulfilling experiences for our beneficiaries.

The estimated economic value of this donated time to Communigrow is £92,160.

In return for their support, we provide a welcoming and inclusive experience, with dedicated volunteering events, opportunities to acquire new skills, make friends and of course enjoy unlimited cups of tea!

Volunteers also gain valuable work experience. In fact, 50% of our staff team are 'home grown' - joining us as a result of volunteering at Communigrow.

Thanks to a grant from Involve Kent at the end of 2024 we are able to continue to offer this rewarding experience for our volunteers and plan to grow the opportunities available.





5544

Number of volunteer hours donated to Communigrow

£92,160

These volunteer hours have an estimated value of

27

New regular volunteers were welcomed in 2024

Supported volunteering

Inclusivity is important at Communigrow and in 2024 we were able to offer supported volunteering sessions for adults requiring a little more support thanks to funding from Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. This included people with mild learning difficulties and/or autism, and people with social anxiety or other mental health conditions.

Working with family members, support workers and social prescribers we have developed a programme that teaches skills, boosts confidence and communication and provides valuable work experience. Most importantly these volunteers are part of a supportive and inclusive community.

Anne's Story

Having seen a piece about Communigrow on the BBC news, Anne joined us as a volunteer in February 2024.

"I arrived in time to be a part of the project to create the new sensory garden which was a great achievement. It was very rewarding seeing the project through from beginning to end and watching it grow and change throughout the year.

Volunteering really benefits you socially and mentally, and of course being outdoors makes such a difference.

It gives you something to get up for and gives a structure to the day. Especially when you're retired, it really gives you a focus. You get to meet many different characters, learn new skills and hear about different outlooks on life.

Recently I've discovered the joys of the hot, aerobic constant throughput composter! I do enjoy prepping the produce for the composter, feeding it in and cranking the handle to mix it through - it's great exercise and definitely gets your core going!"



Jo's Story



Jo has volunteered with Communigrow for five years, setting up and helping support our wellbeing group. In 2025 Jo will become a paid member of staff, running our wellbeing sessions for over 55s and people with health conditions.

"I started volunteering at Communigrow to find some respite from being a carer. I was also keen on growing my own food and wanted to be part of a like-minded community.
I was quite shy and anxious at the time and, due to circumstances at home, I wasn't able to make many friends.

Since starting as a volunteer I have gained loads of confidence and made wonderful friends, both at Communigrow and outside.

Working with the wellbeing group has reignited my passion for both creative activities and for helping others.

I really want to help other people experience the growth I have and I think it's fantastic how Communigrow offers volunteers opportunities such as training or employment where possible."

Sustainability

Environmental sustainability at Communigrow is not only a key teaching pillar, it is also integral to our organisational values. Communigrow provides space to learn about sustainable food growing. We are intending to become Carbon Literate with training from The Carbon Literacy Project.

Rain water harvesting

4,000

litres water storage

We are chemical free

growing beautiful fresh veg without synthetic fertilisers or pesticides.

Solar Power

We added more solar panels which have allowed us to greatly reduce our carbon footprint. We no longer use fossil fuel powered equipment - our machinery is now battery powered and charged by the sun.

Our wildlife habitats

encourage pollinators and other invertebrates to thrive and our wildlife pond is a haven for frogs, newts, toads and beetles.

The composting area

has seen the addition of a commercial capacity hot aerobic constant throughput composter as well as several other hot composters to help us reduce waste and reliance on outside compost.
It is also a useful teaching resource for soil health and home composting.

Companion planting

helps pollination and is a natural form of pest control.

A 'no dig' approach

protects soil health, improves soil drainage and prevents carbon release from the undisturbed soil.

Wildflower areas

are a haven for pollinators, supporting the growing process and conserving nature.

Drought resistance measures

include dead hedge windbreaks to reduce water loss through transpiration and mulch to retain moisture.

Native hedgerows

increase biodiversity by providing food and shelter to invertebrates, birds and mammals.

Fundraising

The generosity of our funders and supporters has enabled us to achieve the following substantial progress in the development of our charitable aims:

- Deliver skills and therapeutic gardening sessions to 1078 children, young people and adults - a 17% increase on 2023.
- Overhaul our growing area to include 31 high yield 'no dig' raised beds.
- Run our onsite office solely on solar power to support beneficiaries, staff and volunteers.
- Build a Sensory Garden.
- Build disabled access compost toilets with baby changing facility, disabled access raised beds and an all-terrain wheelchair to improve accessibility.
- Create three 'show gardens' to demonstrate to local people how they can grow their own food and create an environmentally friendly garden at home.
- Help cover core staffing costs and the running of the charity.





We are very grateful to the following organisations for the support they have provided this year:

Barbara Ward Foundation
Cole Charitable Trust
Crowdfund Kent & SpaceHive
East Malling Picnic in the Park
East Malling Trust
Finnis Scott Foundation
Groundwork Ent Dev Prog (EDP)
Hollick Family Foundation
Involve Kent
John Swire 1989 Charitable Trust
Kent Country Council Member Grant (via Councillor Trudy Dean)
Kent Community Foundation
Kiln Family Trust
Leigh Trust
Malling Lions
McCrone Charitable Trust
Minerva & Howard Family Fund
National Lottery Community Fund
Philip and Connie Phillips Foundation
St Andrews School Rochester
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

Fundraising
Corporate Partners

In addition to income from trusts and foundations, corporate partners provide both in kind and direct support that helps to reduce our reliance on grant funding.

These partnerships are often mutually beneficial, helping our corporate friends to achieve their social and environmental aims.

In particular, we are hugely appreciative of the support we have received from:

Atwood Benefits UK Ltd, our neighbours and long term supporters, who kindly provided funding to help improve our growing areas and also funded our fleeces and other workwear.

Perrys Chartered Accountants who raised a staggering £14,000 for Communigrow at their Charity Golf Day and Three Peaks Challenge. This funding has been of great support to our therapeutic gardening work with children, young people and adults.



Perrys Chartered Accountants Team 3 Peaks Challenge



Scrummi working hard during their volunteering day

Scrummi, a West Malling based B-Corp, who sponsored our Open Day and also completed a fundraising Trek for Communigrow.

Barratt David Wilson Homes and the Barratt Foundation who funded our raised beds and also gave up their time and resources to spend a Volunteers Week with us, creating our fantastic Show Gardens.

We are also grateful to:

Apogee
B&Q Aylesford
Bretts Business Recover Ltd
Great Comp Gardens
Infinis
Kent Case Management
Kings Hill Management
Kingswood Group
Lush, Tunbridge Wells
The Malling Jug
New Earth Solutions
Shipbourne Farmers Market
Sinclair and Rush
Tesco Lunsford Park
The Swan, West Malling
West Malling Farmers Market

Plans for 2025

The Field School

Expand our affordable Schools Trips offer, increasing the number of children and young people that visit to develop their knowledge of how food is grown, to understand the importance of healthy eating, engage more in physical outdoor activities and connect children with nature and the outdoor world.

Build a Field Kitchen with pizza oven to improve our field to fork cookery sessions for children and young people.

Build a new Field Shelter in our wildlife area to provide an additional dry, sheltered space for our Field School sessions.

Achieve the LOtC Quality Badge - Council for Learning Outside the Classroom

Horticulture

Create a parterre garden as an alternative style of vegetable garden.

Install a new polytunnel to lengthen our growing season and to produce plug plants for sale to generate income for the charity.

Training our first apprentice, providing a career opportunity for a young person.



Environment

Commit to becoming a bronze status Carbon Literate Organisation with Carbon Literacy training for staff, volunteers and trustees.
Make group pledges on carbon reduction to further reduce our environmental impact. Work with external partners to help them reduce their carbon footprint.

Create a small copse of native trees to increase the diversity of our wildlife for the benefit of our teaching and growing areas.

Therapeutic Gardening & Community Engagement

Begin delivery of our Garden Gate Bereavement Support group for adults, using green therapy to support people at a time of loss.

Set up a therapeutic gardening group for veterans and emergency services personnel to improve mental and physical wellbeing.

Build on our partnerships with local GPs and other social prescribers to increase the number of green therapy referrals we receive.



Governance & Organisational Structure

Communigrow is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation incorporated in 2014 and is governed by its constitution.

Leadership and Management

The board of trustees manage the affairs of the charity. They meet every other month and are responsible for the charity's activities, for monitoring progress and policies, developing the charity's strategy and for risk management. The trustees recognise that they are required to meet the objects of the charity and provide a public benefit. In making their decisions, they follow the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.
We are very fortunate in having a skilled and active board of trustees who are passionately committed to Communigrow and its work. In April 2024, we added to our board of trustees with the appointment of Dr Rebecca Prince who is a local GP with a particular interest in mental health care and in August 2024 with the appointment of Elizabeth Lockwood, a teacher and head of department at a secondary school. In addition, the board of trustees is supported by a full-time operations manager and engages business development and fundraising consultants to assist with business development and income generation.
When recruiting trustees, the board of trustees identifies any skills gaps and looks for individuals who can provide expertise and leadership. As a result, three further trustee appointments: Natasha Stille (PR, Marketing and Comms), Paul Jones (fundraising) and Georgia Bozekova (HR) will join the board of trustees in January 2025. The principal means of recruiting new trustees is by public advertisement of the role. Under the charity's constitution, trustees are appointed for a fixed three year term (or such lesser period as the trustees decide) and are then eligible for re-election for up to two further three year terms. There is an induction programme for new trustees and all trustees undertake training.

Major Risks Statement

The trustees have assessed the major risks of the charity including, governance, operations, financial and external risks. They are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate the major risks.

Review of Financial Position

The income of the charity for 2024 was £174,915 (2023: £214,541) and expenditure was £197,550 (2023: £193,894). Total funds at 31/12/2024 were £211,612 of which £156,399 were restricted funds and £55,213 were unrestricted (2023: £234,247, £154,627, £79,620 respectively) and the bank balance at the year end stood at £156,399 (2023: £172,169). The trustees consider this a satisfactory position for the charity to be in.
The charity has invested £12,824 during the year (2023: £51,784) in facilities at the field to improve the experience for all visitors to the site.

Reserves Policy

The charity needs reserves to enable it to progress to completing both its long term projects, and its current activities and fluctuations in receipts and payments. The trustees consider that £50,000 of unrestricted funds should be held in reserve, this is the estimated amount needed to allow for an orderly closure of the charity should this ever be necessary. The level has also been set to take account of the following:

1. Contingency: unexpected expenditure in the event of an emergency;
2. Cash-flow: situations where a bill has to be paid before the money to cover it has been received;
3. Commitment: a commitment to expenditure which cannot be covered by the annual income.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with the applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of it's constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Trustees

Caroline Pearce, Chair
Anthony Blackman *
Georgia Bozekova **
David Field
Paul Jones **
Elizabeth Lockwood +
Martin Long, Finance Trustee
Alan Piper
Dr Rebecca Prince ++
Dr Robert Saville #
Natasha Stille **

Registered Address

Hazel Hall
Church Road
West Peckham
Kent
ME18 5JL

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed:  Date: 29/04/2025

Caroline Pearce, Chair

*resigned June 2024
**appointed January 2025
+appointed August 2024
++appointed April 2024
#resigned February 2024

COMMUNIGROW
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income from					
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES		17,031	5,177	22,208	25,873
COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING		9,532	580	10,112	1,584
CORPORATE DONATIONS		5,000	17,115	22,115	27,230
DONATIONS		7,633	436	8,069	3,113
SPONSORSHIP		-	-	-	-
GRANTS		6,517	101,607	108,124	153,760
VEGETABLE SALES		1,985	-	1,985	972
OTHER INCOME		2,302	-	2,302	2,009
Total		50,000	124,915	174,915	214,541
Expenditure on					
ADMIN/UTILITIES		619	5,758	6,377	5,009
CONSUMABLES		520	9,240	9,760	7,592
EQUIPMENT AND DEPRECIATION		17,415	2,486	19,901	10,725
FUNDRAISING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT		15,528	6,438	21,966	21,340
INSURANCE & RENT		144	3,468	3,612	3,210
MARKETING		5	1,375	1,380	2,019
SERVICES (INCLUDING SALARIES)		40,176	94,378	134,554	144,000
Total		74,407	123,143	197,550	193,894
Net income		(24,407)	1,772	(22,635)	20,647
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD		79,620	154,627	234,247	213,600
Total funds carried forward		55,213	156,399	211,612	234,247

The Statement of Financial Activities include all the gains and losses in the year and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

All the above amounts relate to continuing services.

Comparative information is shown in note 10.

The notes on pages 27-33 form part of the financial statements

COMMUNIGROW
BALANCE SHEET
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	2	56,641	-	56,641	59,412
Current assets					
Debtors	3	393	-	393	3,070
Cash at bank and in hand		-	156,399	156,399	172,169
		393	156,399	156,792	175,239
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	4	1,821	-	1,821	404
Net current assets		(1,428)	156,399	154,971	174,835
Total net assets		55,213	156,399	211,612	234,247
Funds of the Charity					
Restricted income funds			156,399	156,399	154,627
Unrestricted funds		55,213		55,213	79,620
Total funds		55,213	156,399	211,612	234,247

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

Comparative information is shown in note 11.

These financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 29/04/2025 and signed on their behalf by: Caroline Pearce

Signed: Caroline Pearce Date: **29/04/2025**

The notes on page 27-33 form part of the financial statements

1. Principal accounting policies

Accounting convention

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with "Accounting and reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (Second Edition)" and the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The Charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102.

Communigrow is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England and Wales.

Going concern

Communigrow, at 31 December 2024, had unrestricted funds of £55,213 and a cash balance of £156,399 as such the trustees consider it appropriate to prepare the accounts on a going concern basis.

Incoming resources

Income is accounted for when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Resources expended

Expenditure is included on an accrual basis once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing £500 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. All costs incurred to bring a tangible fixed asset into its intended working condition should be included in the measurement of cost.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method.

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:

Field property - 20% straight line
General equipment - 33 % straight line

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term deposits with a maturity of three months or less.

Liabilities

Creditors are recognised when the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any discounts due.

2. Tangible fixed assets

	Field property £	General equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At 1st January 2024	61,676	4,298	65,974
Additions	12,824	-	12,824
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 December 2024	74,500	4,298	78,798
Depreciation			
At 1st January 2024	6,030	532	6,562
Charge for the year	14,176	1,417	15,593
At 31st December 2024	20,206	1,949	22,155
Net book value			
At 31 December 2024	54,294	2,347	56,641
At 31 December 2023	55,646	3,766	59,412

3. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Amounts falling due within one year		
Other debtors - VAT	394	3,070

4. Creditors

	2024	2023
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year		
Trade creditors	1,821	404

5. Funds

Unrestricted funds

Comprise those funds which the trustees are free to use in accordance with the charity's general purposes.

Current year	Opening balance 1.01.2024	Income	Expenditure	Closing balance 31.12.2024
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds	79,620	50,000	74,407	55,213

Prior year	Opening balance 1.01.2023	Income	Expenditure	Closing balance 31.12.2023
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds	63,038	36,882	20,300	79,620

The notes on pages 27-33 form part of the financial statements

Restricted funds

Restricted funds comprise donations and grants for specific activities intended by the donor.

Current year	Opening balance 1.01.2024	Income	Expenditure	Closing balance 31.12.2024
	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds	154,627	124,916	123,144	156,399
Of which material funds are:				
National Lottery Community Fund	16,913	22,500	39,413	-
Bereavement Group	-	14,124	19	14,105

Prior year	Opening balance 1.01.2023	Income	Expenditure	Closing balance 31.12.2023
	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds	150,562	177,659	173,594	154,627
Of which material funds are:				
National Lottery Community Fund	19,452	45,000	47,539	16,913
Enterprise Development Fund	-	22,000	17,424	4,576

6. Independent examiner's remuneration

The independent examiner's remuneration amounts to an independent examiner fee of £ Nil (2023 - £ Nil).

7. Trustees' remuneration

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2023 - £Nil).

8. Staff costs and pensions

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme

	2024	2023
	£	£
Wages and salaries	119,938	131,004
Social security costs	9,014	7,855

Contribution to defined contribution pension scheme	5,602	5,141
	134,554	**144,000**

The average number of persons employed by the charity during the year was as follows:

	2024	2023
	No	**No**
Staff	5	6
Contractors	13	13
	18	**19**

No employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

Wages and salaries include wages and payments that have been made for contracted services.

9. Related party disclosure

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 December 2024 (2023 - £Nil).

10. Comparative information – Statement of financial activities

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income from					
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES		21,046	4,827	25,873	12,111
COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING		1,584	-	1,584	7,317
CORPORATE DONATIONS		1,178	26,052	27,230	19,279
DONATIONS		2,134	979	3,113	1,334
SPONSORSHIP		-	-	-	3,995
GRANTS		7,959	145,801	153,760	211,628
VEGETABLE SALES		972	-	972	2,064
OTHER INCOME		2,009	-	2,009	-
Total		36,882	177,659	214,541	257,728
Expenditure on					
ADMIN/UTILITIES		694	4,314	5,008	5,563
CONSUMABLES		1,679	5,913	7,592	4,137
EQUIPMENT AND DEPRECIATION		8,363	2,362	10,725	1,213
FUNDRAISING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT		6,940	14,400	21,340	15,411
INSURANCE & RENT		938	2,272	3,210	2,340
MARKETING		394	1,625	2,019	640
SERVICES (INCLUDING SALARIES)		1,292	142,708	144,000	130,090
Total		20,300	173,594	193,894	159,394
Net income		16,582	4,065	20,647	98,334
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD		63,038	150,562	213,600	115,267
Total funds carried forward		79,620	154,627	234,247	213,600

The notes on pages 27-33 form part of the financial statements

11. Comparative information – Balance sheet

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	2	59,412	-	59,412	13,987
Current assets					
Debtors	3	3,070	-	3,070	2,228
Cash at bank and in hand		17,542	154,627	172,169	197,901
		20,612	154,627	175,239	200,129
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	4	404	-	404	516
Net current assets		20,208	154,627	174,835	199,613
Total net assets		79,620	154,627	234,247	213,600
Funds of the Charity					
Restricted income funds			154,627	154,627	150,562
Unrestricted funds		79,620		79,620	63,038
Total funds		79,620	154,627	234,247	213,600

The notes on pages 27-33 form part of the financial statements

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF COMMUNIGROW

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Communigrow
I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Communigrow (the Charity) for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are set out on pages 25 to 33.

Responsibilities and basis of report
As the Charity's trustees 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 the Charity's 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 Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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:

S. Hale.

Stephen Hale FCA FCCA
Perrys Audit Limited
Chartered Accountants
Churchdown Chambers
Bordyke
Tonbridge, TN9 1NR

Date: 22/5/25.

COMMUNIGROW

England & Wales - Charity number 1159534

Accounts

Annual Report 2023

communigrow











Financial Statements and Trustee's Report
1 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

www.communigrow.org.uk
Charity no. 1159534

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Our Trustees

Caroline Pearce, Chair
Anthony Blackman
David Field
Martin Long, Finance Trustee
Alan Piper
Dr Rebecca Prince*
Dr Robert Saville**

Site Address

Communigrow
Park Farm
Ditton, Aylesford
Kent, ME20 6PE

what3words ///glance.callers.squish

Bank

The Cooperative Bank Plc
P.O. Box 101
1 Balloon Street
Manchester M60 4EP

Website & Email

www.communigrow.org.uk
info@communigrow.org.uk

Charity Number

1159534

*Appointed in April 2024
**Appointed July 2023, resigned February 2024

Chair's Introduction

Welcome to Communigrow's 2023 Annual Report, in which we tell Communigrow's story, the progress in the last year, the impact it has had, the support we receive and the great work of all those involved in the charity.

Communigrow is a sustainable food education charity providing learning opportunities and activities by teaching people about growing local, healthy and affordable food in a chemical free and otherwise environmentally friendly way and at the same time helping them to benefit from the social and therapeutic power of gardening in a community setting.

What we do attracts local schools, including, the special education needs schools, families whose children are home educated and partner charities who support young people with, for example, additional needs and caring responsibilities. Families and school and pre-school children come to our after school clubs and our workshops. Our wellbeing groups include the over 55s and younger people with long-term health conditions.

In recognition of the work that Communigrow does, we were delighted to receive an overall Champion Award at the Kent Mental Wellbeing Award ceremony winning Kent's Wellbeing Space of the Year.

As a board of trustees, we are greatly encouraged by the stories we hear on the impact that Communigrow is having on our beneficiaries and some of the stories are told in this Annual Report.

In the previous Annual Report we set out our future plans and I am pleased to say that we have either realised or are well on the way to realising those plans. For 2024 we intend to build on our established base and continue to increase our reach to more schools in the neighbourhood and offer more in the way of therapeutic and social gardening opportunities to benefit the wider community. Against the background of increased numbers of referrals and diagnoses of people with autism, ADHD and other neurodiverse conditions, we are better able to support those children and young people with our improved learning area.

In 2023, we saw how fundraising was harder with less money available and more competition and it continues to be. We are very grateful to the trusts and foundations, the local businesses, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and all our other donors who support us and allow us to do what we do.

I would like to finish with a thank you to our staff and volunteers who work very hard and with so much enthusiasm and who are vital to our success.

Caroline Pearce

Chair of the board of Trustees



Photo of Caroline at the Grand Opening our new Yurt in July 2023

About Communigrow

Communigrow is a sustainable food education charity. We teach people how to grow chemical free food, using the therapeutic benefits of gardening to bring about positive change to physical and mental wellbeing.

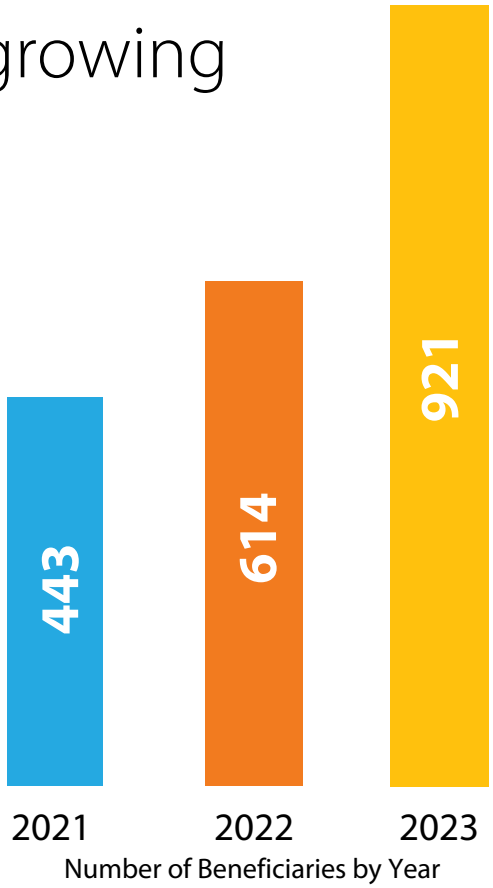
Communigrow is based on a 2.4-acre field in East Malling and we also deliver services in communities in Kent.

Our beneficiaries include children and young people with special education needs, local schools, people from under-resourced communities, young carers, vulnerable adults, older adults experiencing social isolation and those with health conditions.

We are very proud to say that since our origin as a community gardening project in 2011 and our registration as a charity in 2014, our beneficiary numbers have grown every year. In 2023 we supported over 921 people to lead fuller, healthier and more independent lives in our sustainable and inclusive community charity.



Our beneficiary numbers are growing



Number of Beneficiaries by Year

"Communigrow provides a fantastic experience to young and old alike. The staff are fantastic and it is a fully inclusive enterprise.

In fact we enjoyed ourselves so much we returned with our granddaughters! Thank you for inviting us and long may you continue your fantastic work"

Cll James Clark, Mayor of Tonbridge and Malling







Our Mission

- To use horticulture to educate, support, inspire and enrich the lives of people in our community, and particularly to help disadvantaged groups achieve greater independence.

Our objectives

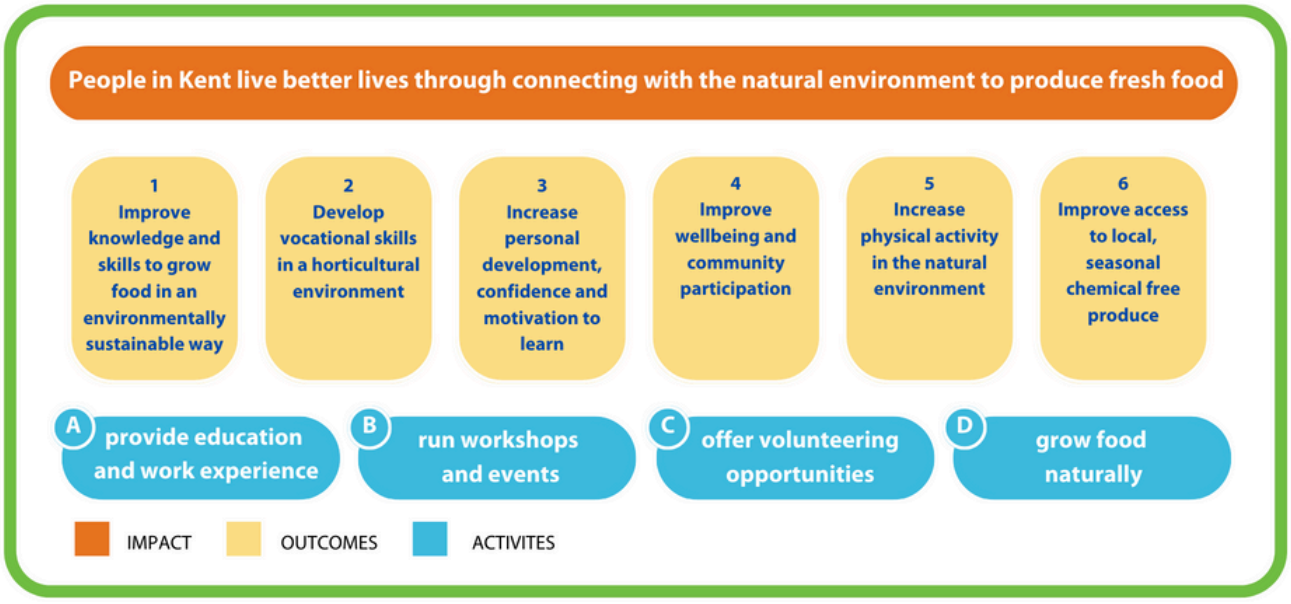
- Support, inspire and empower children, young people and adults of all abilities by providing accessible horticultural experiences in a natural environment.

- Cultivate a space where our community can work collaboratively and gain knowledge, understanding and respect for how fresh food is grown, and the many benefits that growth can bring to their health, to their wellbeing and to the environment.

Public Benefit

- Our work benefits not only our beneficiaries but also their families, carers and wider communities, including local authorities and other partners.
- Our six key outcomes aim to deliver physical, educational, psychological, social and economic benefits.
- Social and therapeutic gardening is recognised by the NHS, healthcare governing bodies and the UK Government as part of the solution for mental healthcare.

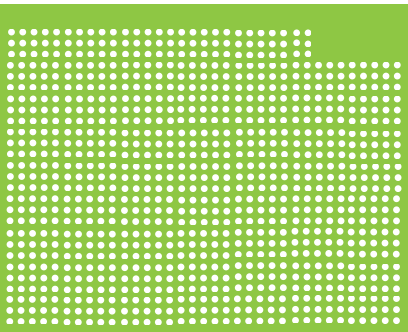
Communigrow Theory of Change



2023 Communigrow Highlights

50%

Increase in beneficiary numbers from 614 to 921, each represented here by a dot.



Winner of Kent's Wellbeing Space of the Year hosted by East Kent Mind

Recognition of our impact on the mental and physical wellbeing of our beneficiaries.



38 Weekend & holiday family workshops

48 Wellbeing sessions for older adults

88 Sessions for children & young people in home education

130 Sessions for children & young people with SEN

Delivery in Numbers

Opening our free after school club

Nature Kids, in the heart of the community in partnership with The East Malling Centre.



2023 Communigrow Highlights

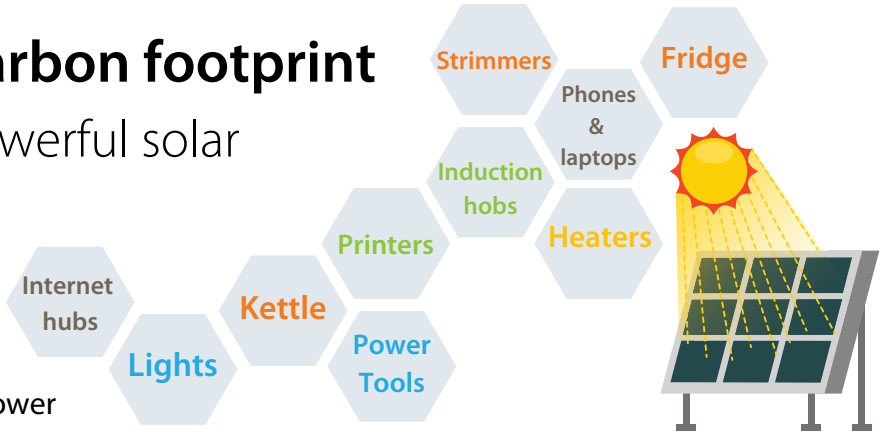


New 24' yurt with log burner

which will enable us to run an additional 55 sessions for Field School and Wellbeing beneficiaries during the winter months.

Huge reduction of carbon footprint

from installation of 14 powerful solar panels and batteries.



All these appliances now run on solar power



BBC film at Communigrow

for a feature on the therapeutic benefits of gardening, article also appears on BBC Website.

Pizza Bed social enterprise project

gets national funding from The Social Enterprise Development Programme allowing us to take this innovative product to local schools and community groups and encourage the growing of fresh food.

The Pizza Bed communigrow

The Field School

In 2023 we rebranded all our work with children and young people under The Field School banner, but we definitely don't mean school in the 'brick built institution' sense. Instead, we provide a unique alternative learning space where children and young people can be themselves, and learn in a way suited to their individual needs.

Our new yurt serves as an all-weather classroom. Our field shelter - made of reclaimed wood - allows year-round outdoor learning. The wildlife pond provides fascinating pond dipping sessions and our stunning wildflower garden gives ample opportunity for bug hunting.

Our experienced tutors provide absorbing activities making sure that everyone - including those with neurodiverse or complex sensory needs - feels comfortable and included. While acquiring valuable practical skills, learners grow in confidence and experience the mental health benefits that come with spending time in nature.

65
Communigrow Awards presented

Communigrow Awards

The awards recognise skills gained in our Field School programmes, ranging from basic tool handling to woodwork, propagation, and seed sowing.

Field to Fork

Using the vegetables they have grown and harvested, our young gardeners have great fun enjoying outdoor cooking experiences, developing more adventurous palates and an enjoyment of fresh, healthy food. They learn skills to grow food at home.



Local Schools

Our after school gardening club at St James the Great Academy is thriving. Teachers select the club participants based on greatest need - some need to build confidence when communicating, others have had a difficult time at home and some are Young Carers who need some respite.

This led to further outreach work in 2023, including work with the school's nursery to improve the provision of outdoor education and the delivery of lunchtime drop in gardening sessions.

Bethany School returned to us for weekly enrichment sessions learning about sustainable food growing and its environmental benefits.

As well as the regular weekly sessions for schools, in 2023 we offered tailored school trips covering curriculum-related activities in science, food technology, geography and sustainability for pupils in Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

9  local schools



"The children loved the experience of eating things they had picked - finding the potatoes was like digging for treasure! The seed dispersal was fantastic - it made the knowledge stick like velcro. The way it came to life made us gasp - it was so much clearer to see the seeds pop."

Year 3 teacher Palace Wood Primary School



Special Educational Needs

Our work continues with local SEN schools, providing purposeful outdoor learning opportunities and improving confidence.

Sessions are based around individual needs and range from filling raised beds with compost to build physical stamina, to taking tea break orders from volunteers in order to develop communication skills.



Grow 19 students digging potato bed

"John often needs coaxing to take part in school activities. When he knows he is coming to Communigrow he is more focused and organised and will follow instruction to get onto the minibus. Once at Communigrow he becomes engaged and receptive to instructions provided by the staff at Communigrow."

Five Acre Wood School Teacher

John is a student with Down Syndrome who has moderate learning difficulties, is non verbal and has global delay.

In 2023 we started weekly sessions at The Rosewood School, whose students all have physical or mental health needs. As part of their 'Beyond the Classroom' Enrichment, we set up a vegetable garden and have been awarded Level 1 RHS School Gardening accreditation.



Taking part in Field to Fork Summer workshop

We continued to provide weekly sessions at the Communigrow field for Five Acre Wood School, a Special School for children and young people with profound, severe and complex learning difficulties, including Autistic Spectrum Disorder, and Grange Park School, a specialist school providing for children and young people with an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC).

Grow 19, a SEND college for 18-25 year olds, attend weekly for social and communication skills, horticultural activities and work experience to support their City & Guilds qualifications.

***names have been changed**

A place to belong
Daniel's story

Daniel, aged 10, attended our Home Education sessions this year. He has ASD, ADHD, dyspraxia, hypermobility and verbal tics.

Daniel's mother reports,

"We have seen multiple benefits since attending these Communigrow sessions. Daniel's sense of wellbeing and belonging have dramatically improved.

On arriving at Communigrow he said, 'Mum, this is my place.'

Socially he would never instigate a conversation but he will talk to other children during sessions. He told me that he had made a friend - he has never made a friend before.

Since starting Communigrow sessions Daniel's verbal tics have completely gone - and not just when he's at the field.

It's an amazing place, it's so hands on. He can recall what he's done and tell his dad when he gets home from work. I've never known that before."



Daniel has loved the practical learning sessions on trees, vegetable families, winter growing and practical tasks on the field. He has also taken cuttings from the field which he is growing on at home.

Daniel said of Communigrow, "It makes me feel excited and energised!"

***names have been changed**

Home Education



Our home education programme supports learners aged 4-16 yrs old to gain practical food growing skills and develop their knowledge and understanding of the natural world through a programme of study that incorporates science, food technology, sustainability and geography.

In 2023, for the first time, we were able to continue the programme over the winter months in our new warm yurt.

50% **of our home educating parents reported that mainstream education did not meet the needs of their child, particularly in relation to neurodiversity.**

Family Workshops

In 2023 we extended our family provision with 12 free 'Get Set, Grow!' Saturday workshops funded by Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. Families spent time together gaining practical skills to grow food at home - whether on a windowsill or in a garden - and learning how to care for the environment.

In addition we delivered 11 affordable Family Workshops providing fun and educational days out in school holidays.

Charity Partner Workshops

Working with partner charities Space 2 Be Me, IMAGO and Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness we delivered 7 Field to Fork workshops, where young people with additional needs or caring responsibilities harvested and prepared a meal from produce grown at the field.



38 Weekend and holiday sessions for children and young people.

Community Outreach

In 2023 we increased our outreach in East Malling.



ONS data shows that parts of East Malling are among the 20% most income deprived areas in England and it is a top three priority area for Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council.

Nature Kids after school club, is a joint project with the East Malling Centre. It is a free activity for families to grow and cook healthy food together and learn how to live more sustainably.

Communigrow Tots is our weekly affordable session for toddlers and preschool children in the East Malling Centre.

During school holidays we provided 8 drop-in sessions at the East Malling Centre where children learnt about growing and eating healthy food and caring for the environment.

These sessions run alongside the Centre's 'Community Supermarket' and have been successful in introducing new families to the other services that Communigrow and the East Malling Centre can offer, as well as helping improve diet and access to affordable, fresh food.



Changing lives
a foster family's story

The family, two foster parents and three siblings under 11, started regularly attending our free Get Set, Grow! Saturday Family Workshops in the Summer 2023.

All the children had experienced significant neglect, emotional and physical trauma, and the youngest had a speech delay.

Their foster mother told us:

"The children grew up surrounded by electronics. The oldest could only get to sleep if on his ipad and found it hard to engage with anything else.

They love it here and keep coming back, for someone like Philip, who spends all his time on his phone, this is a great getaway. He gets a real sense of achievement cooking and learning how to look after the veg at Communigrow.

We have seen increased confidence and ability to sustain concentration on a task. Improved ability to follow instructions and understand rules.



They have had opportunities to work as a team to make new raised beds or lay woodchip paths. Philip, in particular, will now persevere with a physically demanding task for far longer than before. Now it will be him encouraging others to complete a project!

The children feel they are listened to and involved in decision making - it's very cleverly done.

It's just incredible. Communigrow gets children outside their comfort zone and gives them a new sense of normality. It's very tranquil here and helps with their ongoing therapy, they have a new interest in the natural world.'

***names have been changed**

Wellbeing

Gardening to Feel Great!

This is the third year of our Wellbeing sessions for over 55s and younger people with long term health conditions, funded by Involve Kent. Our weekly sessions have helped more than 40 local people improve their mental and physical wellbeing, boost their confidence and combat social isolation.

Participants meet new people in a friendly and relaxed outdoor environment, and together take part in general gardening activities, promoting gentle physical activity and connection with nature.

This year for the first time we were able to offer sessions all year round, moving inside our heated yurt for gardening, crafting and other nature-related activities on colder days.



Extra 190 hours

of physical activity delivered in October - December for this group.

48

wellbeing sessions



With new found confidence and skills, Gardening to Feel Great members often move on to become committed Communigrow volunteers, making a long term commitment to both their health and to being part of our team.



In October 2023 Communigrow received two awards at the Kent Mental Wellbeing Awards hosted by East Kent Mind. We were thrilled to receive an overall Champion Award and were named Kent's Wellbeing Space of the Year.

Estelle's Story

"Coming here saved my life."

"In December 2017, I suffered a pulmonary embolism and the damage this caused my lungs meant I had to give up my gardening business. After previously being very active, being this ill and inactive really impacted my mental health. This was made far worse with the social isolation of Covid hampering my recovery.

Coming to the wellbeing group - Gardening to Feel Great - saved my life.

I met people of a similar age and formed new friendships. Being outside, gardening again alongside other people helped me get my mojo back!

I now also volunteer for Communigrow in the growing team and Field School team and have supported the fundraising activities. It's a great charity to be part of."

***names have been changed**





Gardening to Feel Great Linda's story:

"It's so uplifting being out in the fresh air mixing with others, especially when you are on your own. It gives you a reason to get out and soak up some Vitamin D.

It really helps to know that others are in the same boat."

Wellbeing in the community

In addition to our centre based activities, in 2023 we also delivered a workshop to The Sahara Foundation in Medway.

The Sahara Foundation is a community initiative dedicated to helping South Asian people make the most of later life.





A group of over 30 elderly participants took part in an inclusive and relaxed succulent propagation workshop. They enjoyed the therapeutic, stress-reducing benefits of having their hands in the soil and the social benefits of learning something new in a group.

The group are planning to visit us in 2024 to take part in another growing experience in our outdoor space.

Volunteering

Our amazing volunteers support all areas of our work, bringing skills, experience and enthusiasm to assist our dedicated and hard-working staff. This helps us provide distinct and fulfilling experiences for our beneficiaries.

In return we aim to provide a welcoming and inclusive experience, with dedicated volunteering events, a range of incentives, and of course, unlimited cups of tea!

Volunteers also gain valuable work experience that can lead to employment. In fact, over 50% of our staff team are 'home grown' - joining us as a result of volunteering at Communigrow.

During 2023, 111 volunteers donated an incredible 5,621 hours of their time and knowledge - at an estimated economic value of £77,722.

111 volunteers spent

5,621

hours volunteering with us.



Wellbeing to Volunteering **James' Story**

"Having joined the Wellbeing group at Communigrow and felt the benefits of being part of this community project it was a natural progression to start volunteering.

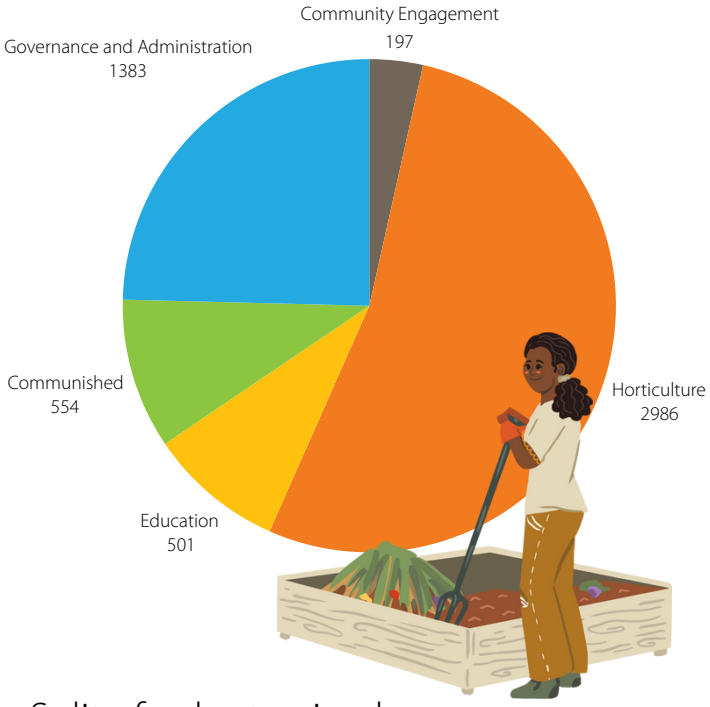
It has a great impact on ones' wellbeing working alongside different people of all ages and backgrounds to a common end. Having your hands in the soil is good for your all-round health!

To be able to turn my enthusiasm into action and make a small mark, a contribution, has been wonderful."





Field school volunteers supporting our family workshops.



Split of volunteering hours

These volunteer hours have an estimated value of

£77,722

50%

of our staff are 'home grown' - they started off as volunteers!

18

new regular volunteers were welcomed in 2023.

Field School Volunteer
Sue's story

"I have always worked with people and have a background in special needs education. So retirement, followed by lockdown and a gruelling stint of jury service, was a bit of a shock.

Volunteering with The Field School team at Communigrow meant my skills were still relevant, which gave me more of a purpose after retirement.

I am certainly more physically active on the days I am here!

It is lovely to see the children taking part and developing. The small groups at Communigrow are so important for children with SEN. It means we can cater for specific needs and individual interests. This allows the children to gain confidence and really feel that they are achieving."

***names have been changed**

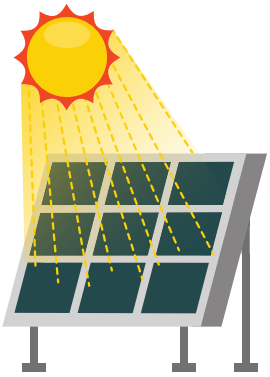


Sustainability

Communigrow provides space to learn about sustainable food growing. We use chemical free methods, no dig and companion planting. Our office runs on solar power, we harvest rainwater and we have composting toilets!



We are chemical free,
growing beautiful fresh veg without chemical fertilisers or pesticides



Solar Powered
In 2023 our new solar panels have allowed us to greatly reduce our carbon footprint

Our wildlife habitats encourage pollinators and other invertebrates to thrive



The composting area
has expanded to help us reduce waste and reliance on outside compost. It is also an effective teaching resource for soil health and home composting

A 'no dig' approach
protects soil health, improves soil drainage and prevents carbon release from the undisturbed soil

Drought resistance measures
include dead hedge windbreaks to reduce water loss through transpiration and mulch to retain moisture

Rain water harvesting
4,000
litres water storage

Wildflower areas
are a haven for pollinators, supporting the growing process and conserving nature

The Pizza Bed

In March 2023, Communigrow was one of 13 environmental charities in England to gain support from The Social Enterprise Development Programme (funded by The Foundation for Social Investment).

This fund helps organisations become more sustainable by diversifying their income sources.
The funding supported us to build our capacity to develop an income generating social enterprise product, including building our new website, creating an on-line shop and having specialist support to help us upscale our social enterprise activity.





The Communigrow Field School Pizza Bed has always been successful in engaging children and parents in the joy of growing and eating fresh food.
Children could relate to the pizza shape and were thrilled to make their own pizzas using vegetables they had to helped to grow and harvest.
We were very excited to make this into a product that more schools, communities and families could use to learn about growing naturally produced fresh food.



During 2023, we re-designed the bed to make it a commercially viable product.
We created a 'how to' guide that details how to grow and prepare fresh vegetables in the Pizza Bed and also includes nutritional advice.

The Pizza Bed
communigrow

Fundraising

The generosity of our funders and supporters has enabled us to achieve the following substantial progress in the development of our charitable aims:

- Deliver skills and therapeutic gardening sessions to 921 children, young people and adults - a 50% increase on 2022
- Purchase a 24' all seasons yurt, with log burner, to enable Field School and Wellbeing sessions to operate year round
- Convert a donated shipping container into a sustainable onsite office to support beneficiaries, staff and volunteers
- Build a wellbeing Tea Garden
- Fund a disabled access toilet
- Continue our progress towards net carbon zero with 14 powerful solar panels and battery storage
- Improve our sustainability and water conservation
- Help cover core staffing costs and the running of the charity.

We are very grateful to the following organisations for the support they have provided this year:

Alison and Glenn Luff
Apps Family
Asda, Kings Hill
Baily Thomas Charitable Fund
Barbara Ward Foundation
Berger Tools
BUPA Foundation
Cole Charitable Trust
Colyer-Fergusson Trust
Coop Local Community Fund
East Malling Picnic in the Park
East Malling Women's Institute
Every Day Active
Fidelity UK Foundation
Forrester Family
Garfield Weston Foundation
Giles Whitehead
Groundwork Ent Dev Prog (EDP)
Hendy Foundation
Hollick Family foundation
John Swire 1989 Charitable Trust
Kent Community Foundation
Kent County Council
Leigh Trust
Lush, Tunbridge Wells
Minerva Family & Howard Family
National Lottery Community Fund
New Earth Solutions
Rowan Bentall Charitable Trust
Sarah Kennerell-Walters
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council
West Peckham Village Fete
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Foundation
Woodroffe Benton Foundation

Fundraising
Corporate Partners

In addition to income from trusts and foundations, corporate partners provide both in kind and direct support that helps to reduce our reliance on grant funding. These partnerships are often mutually beneficial, helping our corporate friends to achieve their social and environmental aims.
In particular, we are hugely appreciative of the support we have received from:

Atwood Benefits UK Ltd, our neighbours and long term supporters, who kindly provided funding for our sustainable office.

NIAB for their ongoing support, particularly as part of the Growing Green project which funded our solar panels.

Perrys Chartered Accountants who raised a staggering £4,600 for Communigrow at their Charity Golf Day and other fundraising events which has allowed us to build a Wellbeing Tea Garden and also helped fund the office.



Representatives from St Modwen Homes and Kent Community Foundation opening our new yurt

St Modwen Homes who generously provided funding for our Yurt.

United Living for providing the kitchen units in our volunteer cabin.



Perrys Chartered Accountants Charity Golf Day

Plans for 2024

The Field School

Enhance our affordable School Trips offer, increasing the number of visits to Communigrow.

Attract new SEN schools, increasing the number of neurodiverse young learners who can benefit and thrive in our unique learning environment.

Continue to grow our community outreach to local schools, nurseries and toddler groups, encouraging a healthier lifestyle for children and young people.

Wellbeing & Community Engagement

Deliver a new 'gardening to heal' bereavement support group and develop our natural world workshops for Adults.

Increase our community outreach work in priority areas, identifying communities and residents who would benefit from the opportunities we provide.

Develop partnerships with local GPs and other social prescribers to increase our green therapy referrals.

Environment

Plant native hedging to increase the diversity of our wildlife for the benefit of our teaching and growing areas.

Install additional rainwater capture resources.

Horticulture

Diversify our produce by experimenting with varieties more resilient to climate change, increasing our undercover growing and installing no-dig raised beds.

Create teaching 'show gardens' to demonstrate food growing in a 'normal' domestic garden space.

Resources

Completion of staff office - providing a secure and comfortable working space for the team.

Provide disabled toilets with baby changing facility, disabled access raised beds and an all-terrain wheelchair to improve accessibility.

Enterprise

Launch our 'Pizza Bed' product for general sale in partnership with Grow 19.

Governance & Organisational Structure

Communigrow is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation incorporated in 2014 and is governed by its constitution.

Leadership and Management
The board of trustees manage the affairs of the charity. They meet every other month and are responsible for the charity's activities, for monitoring progress and policies, developing the charity's strategy and for risk management. The trustees recognise that they are required to meet the objects of the charity and provide a public benefit. In making their decisions, they follow the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

We are very fortunate in having a skilled and active board of trustees who are passionately committed to Communigrow and its work. In July 2023, we added to our board of trustees with the appointment of Dr Robert Saville who works at NIAB, East Malling Research Station but he was unable to continue due to other commitments. In addition, the board of trustees is supported by a full-time operations manager and engages business development and fundraising consultants to assist with business development and income generation.

When recruiting trustees, the board of trustees identifies any skills gaps and looks for individuals who can provide expertise and leadership. The principal means of recruiting new trustees is by public advertisement of the role. Under the charity's constitution, trustees are appointed for a fixed three year term (or such lesser period as the trustees decide) and are then eligible for re-election for up to two further three year terms. There is an induction programme for new trustees and all trustees undertake training.

Major Risks Statement
The trustees have assessed the major risks of the charity including, governance, operations, financial and external risks. They are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate the major risks.

Review of Financial Position
The income of the charity for 2023 was £214,541 (2022: £257,728) and expenditure was £193,892 (2022: £159,394). Total funds at 31/12/2023 were £234,247 of which £154,627 were restricted funds and £79,620 were unrestricted (2022: £213,600, £150,562, £63,068 respectively) and the bank balance at the year end stood at £172,169 (2022: £197,901). The trustee consider this a satisfactory position for the charity to be in.

The charity has invested £51,784 during the year (2022: £14,189) in facilities at the field to improve the experience for all visitors to the site. This includes the construction of a yurt to provide accommodation for the field school during the winter and periods of wet weather and upgraded toilets (including disabled toilets) to expand the numbers who can visit.

Reserves Policy
The charity needs reserves to enable it to progress to completing both its long term projects, and its current activities and fluctuations in receipts and payments. The trustees consider that £50,000 of unrestricted funds should be held in reserve, this is the estimated amount needed to allow for an orderly closure of the charity should this ever be necessary. The level has also been set to take account of the following:

1. Contingency: unexpected expenditure in the event of an emergency;
2. Cash-flow: situations where a bill has to be paid before the money to cover it has been received;
3. Commitment: a commitment to expenditure which cannot be covered by the annual income.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with the applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are require to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP;
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- state whether applicable accounting standards have been followed, subject to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of it's constitution. It is also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Trustees

Caroline Pearce, Chair
Anthony Blackman
David Field
Martin Long, Finance Trustee
Alan Piper
Dr Rebecca Prince (appointed April 2024)
Dr Robert Saville (appointed July 2023, resigned February 2024)

Registered Address

Hazel Hall
Church Road
West Peckham
Kent
ME18 5JL

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed:  Date: 28th June 2024

Caroline Pearce, Chair

COMMUNIGROW
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income from					
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES		21,046	4,827	25,873	12,111
COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING		1,584	-	1,584	7,317
CORPORATE DONATIONS		1,178	26,052	27,230	19,279
DONATIONS		2,134	979	3,113	1,334
SPONSORSHIP		-	-	-	3,995
GRANTS		7,959	145,801	153,760	211,628
VEGETABLE SALES		972	-	972	2,064
OTHER INCOME		2,009	-	2,009	-
Total		36,882	177,659	214,541	257,728
Expenditure on					
ADMIN/UTILITIES		694	4,314	5,009	5,563
CONSUMABLES		1,679	5,913	7,592	4,137
EQUIPMENT AND DEPRECIATION		8,363	2,362	10,725	1,213
FUNDRAISING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT		6,940	14,400	21,340	15,411
INSURANCE & RENT		938	2,272	3,210	2,340
MARKETING		394	1,625	2,019	640
SERVICES (INCLUDING SALARIES)		1,292	142,708	144,000	130,090
Total		20,300	173,594	193,894	159,394
Net income		16,582	4,065	20,647	98,334
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD		63,038	150,562	213,600	115,267
Total funds carried forward		79,620	154,627	234,247	213,600

The Statement of Financial Activities include all the gains and losses in the year and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

All the above amounts relate to continuing services.

Comparative information is shown in note 10.

COMMUNIGROW
BALANCE SHEET
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2023

	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2023	Total 2022
		£	£	£	£
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	2	59,412	-	59,412	13,987
Current assets					
Debtors		3,070	-	3,070	2,228
Cash at bank and in hand		17,542	154,627	172,169	197,901
	3	20,612	154,627	175,239	200,129
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	4	404	-	404	516
Net current assets		20,208	154,627	174,835	199,613
Total net assets		79,620	154,627	234,247	213,600
Funds of the Charity					
Restricted income funds			154,627	154,627	150,562
Unrestricted funds		79,620		79,620	63,038
Total funds		79,620	154,627	234,247	213,600

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

Comparative information is shown in note 11.

These financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 28th June 2024 and signed on their behalf by: Caroline Pearce

Signed: Caroline Pearce Date: 28th June 2024

The notes on pages 31-36 form part of the financial statements

1. Principal accounting policies

Accounting convention

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with "Accounting and reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) (Second Edition)" and the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The Charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102.

Communigrow is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England and Wales.

Going concern

Communigrow, at 31 December 2023, had unrestricted funds of £79,620 and a cash balance of £172,169, as such the trustees consider it appropriate to prepare the accounts on a going concern basis.

Incoming resources

Income is accounted for when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Resources expended

Expenditure is included on an accrual basis once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing £500 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

With effect from 1 January 2023 last year's "General equipment" has been renamed "Field property".

Tangible fixed assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. All costs incurred to bring a tangible fixed asset into its intended working condition should be included in the measurement of cost.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method.

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:
Field property - 20% straight line
General equipment - 33 % straight line

Cash at bank and in hand
Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term deposits with a maturity of three months or less.

Liabilities
Creditors are recognised when the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any discounts due.

2. Tangible fixed assets

	Field property £	General equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At 1st January 2023	14,189	-	14,189
Additions	47,487	4,297	51,784
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 December 2023	61,676	4,297	65,973
Depreciation			
At 1st January 2023	202	-	202
Charge for the year	5,828	531	6,359
At 31st December 2023	6,030	531	6,561
Net book value			
At 31 December 2023	55,646	3,766	59,412
At 31 December 2022	13,987	-	13,987

3. Debtors

	2023 £	2022 £
Amounts falling due within one year		
Other debtors - VAT	3,070	2,228

The notes on pages 31-36 form part of the financial statements

4. Creditors

	2023	2022
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year		
Trade creditors	404	516

5. Funds

Unrestricted funds

Comprise those funds which the trustees are free to use in accordance with the charity's general purposes.

Current year	Opening balance 1.01.2023	Income	Expenditure	Closing balance 31.12.2023
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds	63,038	36,882	20,300	79,620

Prior year	Opening balance 1.01.2022	Income	Expenditure	Closing balance 31.12.2022
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds	43,008	31,816	11,786	63,038

Restricted funds

Restricted funds comprise donations and grants for specific activities intended by the donor.

Current year	Opening balance 1.01.2023	Income	Expenditure	Closing balance 31.12.2023
	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds	150,562	177,659	173,594	154,627
Of which material funds are:				
National Lottery Community Fund	19,452	45,000	47,539	16,913
Enterprise Development Fund	-	22,000	17,424	4,576

Prior year	Opening balance 1.01.2022	Income	Expenditure	Closing balance 31.12.2022
	£	£	£	£
Restricted funds	72,258	225,912	147,608	150,562
Of which material funds are:				
Ex Pat Foundation	13,500	33,393	31,155	15,738
National Lottery Community Fund	19,084	45,000	44,632	19,452

6. Independent examiner's remuneration

The independent examiner's remuneration amounts to an independent examiner fee of £ Nil (2022 - £ Nil).

7. Trustees' remuneration

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2022 - £Nil).

8. Staff costs and pensions

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme

	2023	2022
	£	£
Wages and salaries	131,004	116,199
Social security costs	7,855	9,083
Contribution to defined contribution pension scheme	5,141	4,808
	144,000	**130,090**

The average number of persons employed by the charity during the year was as follows:

	2023	2022
	No	No
Staff	6	7
Contractors	13	13
	19	**20**

No employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

Wages and salaries include wages and payments that have been made for contracted services.

9. Related party disclosure

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 December 2023 (2022 - £Nil).

10. Comparative information – Statement of financial activities

Prior year	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2022 £
Income from				
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES		7,882	4,229	12,111
COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING		2,428	4,889	7,317
CORPORATE DONATIONS		9,500	9,779	19,279
DONATIONS		1,334	-	1,334
SPONSORSHIP		1,899	2,096	3,995
GRANTS		8,772	202,856	211,628
VEGETABLE SALES		-	2,064	2,064
OTHER INCOME		-	-	-
Total		31,815	225,913	257,728
Expenditure on				
ADMIN/UTILITIES		996	4,567	5,563
CONSUMABLES		2,346	1,791	4,137
EQUIPMENT AND DEPRECIATION		197	1,016	1,213
FUNDRAISING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT		6,359	9,052	15,411
INSURANCE & RENT		-	2,340	2,340
MARKETING		336	304	640
SERVICES (INCLUDING SALARIES)		1,552	128,538	130,090
Total		11,785	147,609	159,394
Net income		20,030	78,304	98,334
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD		43,008	72,258	115,267
Total funds carried forward		63,038	150,562	213,600

The notes on pages 31-36 form part of the financial statements

11. Comparative information – Balance sheet

Prior year	Notes	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total 2022
		£	£	£
Fixed assets				
Tangible assets	2	13,987	-	13,987
Current assets				
Debtors		2,228	-	2,228
Cash at bank and in hand		47,339	150,562	197,901
	3	49,567	150,562	200,129
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	4	516	-	516
Net current assets		49,051	150,562	199,613
Total net assets		63,038	150,562	213,600
Funds of the Charity				
Restricted income funds		-	150,562	150,562
Unrestricted funds		63,038	-	63,038
Total funds		63,038	150,562	213,600

The notes on pages 31-36 form part of the financial statements

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF COMMUNIGROW

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Communigrow.
I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Communigrow (the Charity) for the year ended 31 December 2023 which are set out on pages 29 to 36.

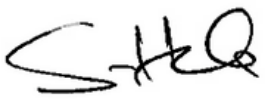
Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Charity's trustees 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 the Charity's 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 Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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.



Stephen Hale FCA FCCA
Perrys Audit Limited
Chartered Accountants
Churchdown Chambers
Bordyke
Tonbridge
TN9 1NR

Date: 3/7/2024

COMMUNIGROW

England & Wales - Charity number 1159534

Accounts

communigrow



Annual Report 2022

Financial Statements and Trustee's report
1 January 2022 to 31 December 2022

www.communigrow.com

Charity no. 1159534

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Chairman's Introduction



I am very pleased to introduce the 2022 annual report which tells Communigrow's story, what it achieved last year, the impact it has had and the ever growing support we receive both financially and from the active involvement of so many people.

Communigrow is a horticultural charity providing educational opportunities and activities for the whole community, including special needs, vulnerable and disadvantaged young people and adults. For these young people and adults we are able to promote their personal development and sense of achievement as well as providing them and all our other beneficiaries with horticultural learning opportunities. Everyone who comes to the field has the opportunity to reconnect with nature and learn about growing their own food in a sustainable way. A key benefit of what we do is being able to promote health and wellbeing.

Communigrow moved forward in a number of ways in 2022. We appointed an Operations Manager from the start of the year who has been able to coordinate and manage our activities on the ground. We have expanded our horticultural team to include a dedicated Community Gardener and Produce Gardener to support our teaching and volunteering sessions and to increase our sustainable food production. Increasing our income to £257,728 an increase of 102% on 2021, has also allowed us to take on more growing staff and improve our facilities. It has also allowed us to appoint a part time community and corporate fundraiser which has advanced our income diversification strategy. These appointments and our improved facilities have provided a platform to expand the services we offer and to increase our reach to additional beneficiaries through our new outreach work, whilst ensuring that the services we offer continue to have more impact and a greater benefit to our beneficiaries and the local groups and communities we support.

We were delighted to have the work we do recognised in the two awards we received in 2022. These were the first Produced in Kent Community Award and the Cauldron Community Champion Award.

As a board of trustees, we are greatly encouraged by the stories we hear on the impact that Communigrow is having on our beneficiaries and some of these stories are told in this Annual Report.

I conclude with a thank you to the trusts and foundations and all of our other donors who support us. We are very grateful for all the financial support we continue to receive and which allows us to do what we do. I would also like to thank our staff and all our volunteers. Both staff and volunteers are vital to the success of Communigrow and their efforts and enthusiasm on the field, with the weekly school sessions and workshops the planting and growing and the social media and marketing support is very much appreciated. Finally, I would also like to thank Simon Webley and Helen Turner who were two of the founding trustees and who retired in 2022. Since Communigrow's inception, they have been hugely dedicated to the charity and worked tirelessly in supporting its work. Communigrow as it is now, owes much to their visionary contributions.



Caroline Pearce
Chair of the board of trustees

About Communigrow

Communigrow is a food education charity, established in 2011 as a locally focused community gardening group in West Kent. The organisation became a registered charity in 2014. Communigrow is based on a 2.4 acre site leased from the East Malling Trust, which is where we grow our produce in a sustainable way.

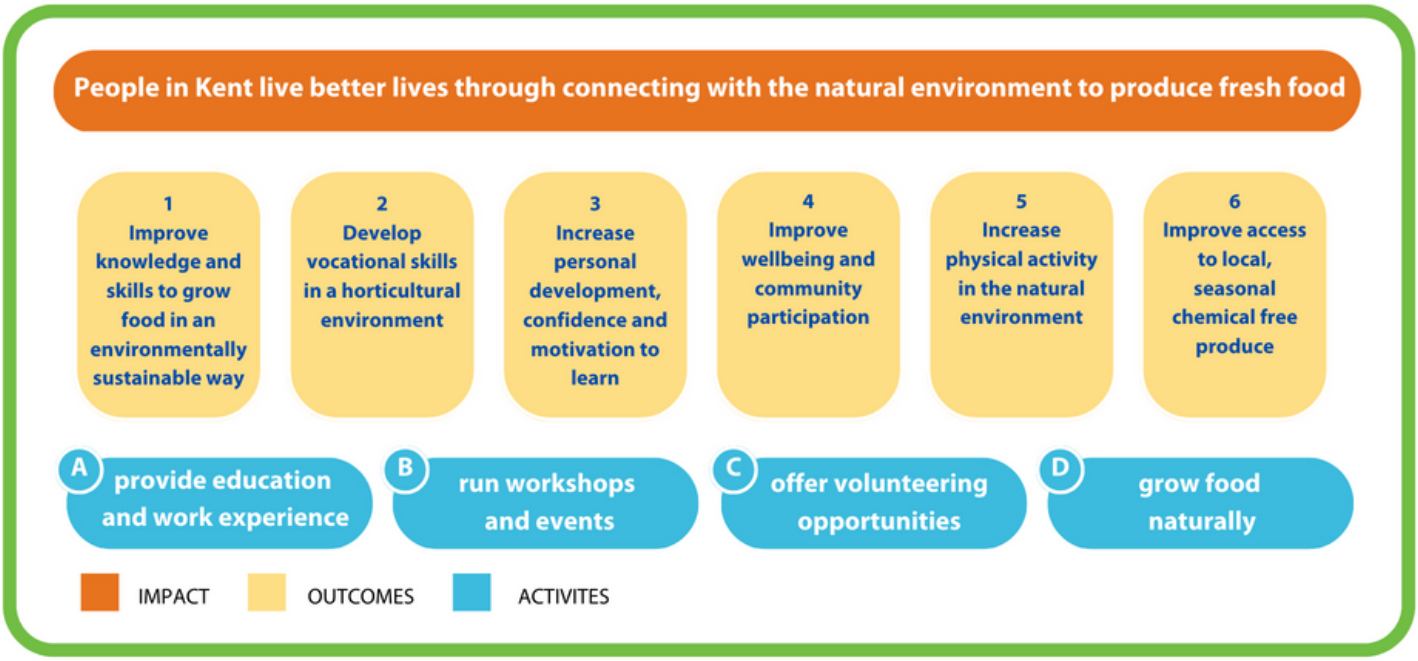
Our services and support continue to develop and each year more people benefit. Our work with children and young people continues to grow with more schools engaging with us every year and increased attendance at our family workshops. In 2022 we began our outreach work taking our skills and knowledge into local communities and engaging with residents and local community groups.

Our Mission, Objectives and Public Benefit

To use horticulture to educate, support and inspire everyone in our community by enriching their lives and, for disadvantaged groups, by achieving greater independence.

Our objectives are to support, inspire and empower children, young people and adults of all abilities by providing accessible horticultural experiences where people in our community can work collaboratively to appreciate and understand how food is grown and the many benefits it offers to their health and wellbeing, inspiring them to lead fuller lives in a sustainable community. Our work is of benefit not only to our beneficiaries but also their families, carers, local authorities and other partners, as well as the local communities in which we operate.

At our Away Day in October 2022 the whole Communigrow team contributed to the creation of our vision and plans for the next five years. We completed our 'Theory of Change' strategic plan consolidating our existing outcomes to six core themes:



Highlights

Highlights and achievements of the last year include:

- Welcoming 614 individuals including the young people and adults who attended our classes and workshops, many of whom come on a regular basis (443 in 2021)
- The introduction of the Communigrow Achievement Awards
- Winning the first Produced in Kent Community Award and the Cauldron Community Champion Award
- Developing our outreach work with The East Malling Centre and local social housing providers
- Creating our Men's Shed project as our own 'Communished'
- Improving the ecosystem at Communigrow to include additional resources to attract and provide habitats for local wildlife and encourage wider biodiversity for the benefit of our growing activities and our schools curriculum
- Diversifying our sources of income and increasing the charity income to £257,728 from (£127,480 in 2021) by developing social enterprise, corporate and individual giving as well as grants and trusts fundraising
- Obtaining funding for new solar panels via the Growing Green Low Carbon Kent programme
- Adapting our growing techniques and practices to mitigate the effects of climate change by introducing a Mediterranean style area, increasing our no-dig growing areas, experimenting with arid planting and using companion planting as a natural alternative to pesticides.

We are proud of these achievements, some of which are described in more detail overleaf.



Education

Schools and SEND

We have continued to develop our relationships with local SEN Schools and the educational and skills development activities that we offer for a large number of neurodiverse students.

Five Acre Wood, a school for students aged 11-18 with severe and complex learning difficulties, including Autism Spectrum Condition, attends Communigrow weekly to take part in our growing activities.

Grow 19, SEND college for learners aged 18-25, attends weekly sessions for horticultural experience and activities that increase their social and communication skills to support their City & Guilds qualifications.

Grange Park School supports students with an Autism Spectrum Condition. Attending weekly for work experience and the development of life skills, pupils assist with all aspects of food production.

In addition to the SEN Schools, we now work with with Bethany School, whose students visit weekly to learn about local food production and its environmental benefits as part of the pupil enrichment programme.

St James the Great Academy, Little Growers After School Club, is run by Communigrow on the school site in East Malling. 10 children take part weekly, learning about the benefit of growing and eating fresh food.

Max's Story

Joining in @ Little Growers after-school club

Max* (7 y/o), a Little Growers member, is under assessment for ADHD and ASD. His mother shared that he finds attending school difficult, but loves going to the gardening club on a Tuesday.

The School Liaison Officer told us, "The club provides a relaxed environment where Max knows exactly what is expected of him, is able to relax, listen and process instructions. Max feels listened to and will ask questions and make suggestions which he would not do in class."

Home Education

Our home education programme supports learners aged 4 to 16 to learn new skills, including seed propagation, pond life and amphibian study linked to the mainstream curriculum. In 2022 we introduced a new woodworking group for 12-16 year olds, teaching basic carpentry techniques.



Communigrow Awards

In 2022 we introduced our Communigrow Award scheme celebrating the achievement of learning basic horticultural and woodcraft skills. These awards support the learning of important life and vocational skills. In the year we had 36 students enrolled in the awards programme.

"Interesting & engaging, whilst being relaxed & inclusive. Sitting together to enjoy a meal we had cooked was a lovely end to the session."

SUMMER FAMILY WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

"A calming atmosphere. Excellent staff!"

"I most enjoyed making pizza & picking salad veg."

AUTUMN FAMILY WORKSHOP PARTICIPANTS



Emma's Story

Developing physical skills and confidence

Emma* (16 y/o) attends with her SEND school. She is autistic with complex physical and learning needs.

Emma was initially reluctant to engage and required physical support moving around the field.
We agreed on a plan to help her develop her physical skills and confidence. For example, Emma was encouraged to hold the handles of a wheelbarrow with support to lift and move it. Gradually she was able to take the weight alone and, with lots of encouragement, began to really enjoy the task. Since then Emma has required minimal physical assistance at Communigrow. Her communication skills developed with this confidence and we saw her joining in with a loud speaker during our 2022 challenge.

Chris* (School staff) said: "Communigrow has certainly been a catalyst in Emma's recent improvement at school. It's fantastic to see her enjoying herself and working as part of the class."

Education in the Community

Partnership Workshops

Nine targeted workshops were delivered with local partners Kent County Council and Tonbridge and Malling borough Council, Space 2 Be Me and INVOLVE. Young carers and young people with learning difficulties have learnt about wildlife and enjoyed field-to-fork cooking.

We delivered thirteen family workshops to local residents giving them the opportunity to take part in the Communigrow experience.

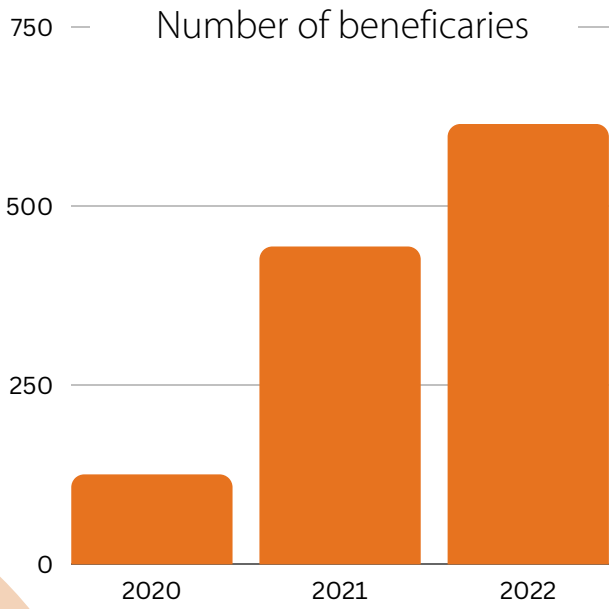
Bea's Story

Reducing anxiety and improving confidence

Bea* (12 y/o) is autistic, has selective mutism and generalised anxiety disorder. These affect every part of her life and can be debilitating; they often lead to her being unable to attend events or even leave the house. Bea attended four Eco-Explorer Workshops at Communigrow over the Summer.

Bea's mum says, "To find somewhere like this which was so inclusive and understanding was incredible. The difference attending the summer sessions made to my daughter's life was immeasurable. She became happier, less isolated, less anxious and more confident."

Our partnership and engagement with the East Malling Centre and local residents has strengthened during 2022 allowing us to reach more disadvantaged members of our community. This included sessions run alongside the Centre's Community Larder, Little Growers Sessions (in partnership with the Children's Centre), weekly Nature Tots sessions for pre-school children and drop in natural craft workshops during the school holidays.





Wellbeing Programme

Wellness Wednesday

This is the second year we have offered our Wellbeing sessions to the over 55's and younger people with long term health conditions. Funded by Involve Kent we have run over 40 sessions supporting 42 people to improve overall wellbeing, improve their confidence and help prevent social isolation.

Participants take part in general gardening activities, are physically active and connect with nature. They meet new people in a friendly and relaxed outdoor environment.
With new found confidence, Wellbeing members often move on to becoming committed Communigrow volunteers making a long term commitment to being part of the team.

Judy's Story

Wellness Wednesday sessions - Improving Wellbeing

"Wellness Wednesday is such a lovely group of kind supportive people, with a caring, creative leader. It has given me two hours every week where my mind is able to just switch off.
I enjoy the different activities, I contribute my ideas, I've learnt so much & feel included in the development of Communigrow.
We always make time for each other & are very considerate of each person's needs, we have cuppa & cake ...most of all we chat, laugh & get to know people & make new friends."

JUDY, PARTICIPANT OF THE WEDNESDAY WELLNESS SESSIONS



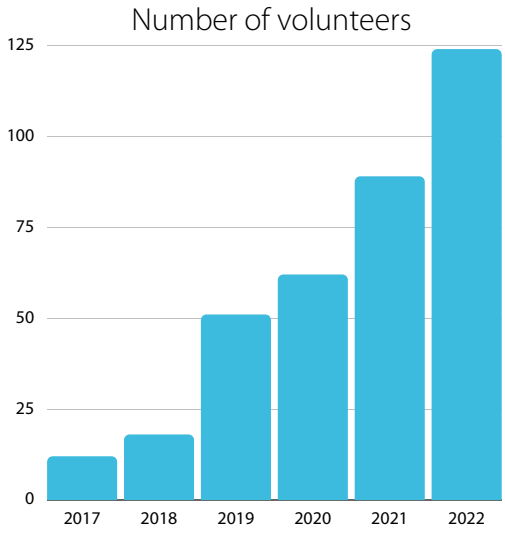
"It is good for my mental health and general wellbeing as I can get away from my home office desk job and socialise with like minded people."

WELLBEING GROUP PARTICIPANT

Volunteers

Volunteering is at the heart of everything we do at Communigrow. Our volunteers are involved in every aspect of our work. The diversity of volunteer roles that we provide allows us to appeal to people of all ages, abilities and interests. We provide opportunities for volunteers to use their existing skills and knowledge but also provide support to learn new skills.

During 2022 we were supported by 124 volunteers who donated 5958 hours, a great increase on last year. 79 were regular volunteers and 45 attended our 'Get Away Days' corporate volunteering events.



"Our Away Day was over & above my expectations - being involved with such a positive & enjoyable project. The guided tour was excellent & I learnt a great deal in a short amount of time. It was great to be able to give such crucial support to a local charity."

KCC EMPLOYEE, ATTENDEE OF CORPORATE VOLUNTEERING DAY

Our regular volunteers assisted on the field in the planting, growing and harvesting of our produce and with our educational activities including family workshops, weekly schools sessions and ad-hoc activities for other groups. Volunteers were invaluable in carrying out maintenance, clearing and on-going horticultural tasks. A dedicated group of volunteers also helped with administration and strengthened the charity's digital presence.

In the summer we launched our pilot Men's Shed project 'Communished'.

Led by volunteer Vincent, maintenance and woodcraft activities were delivered by the 'Shedders'. This group has made a host of improvements and repairs to our resources and structures and greatly helped Communigrow enhance its environment.



"It's therapeutic, cost saving, planet saving, chemical free and enormously good for your own well-being to get out into the fresh air and reap the pleasure of watching something grown that you did yourself."

VOLUNTEER (GROWER)

"People often learn from each other. Volunteers often help each other outside of the field. People ask each other for and share tips and advice, both of what to grow and eat but also just general shared interests."

VOLUNTEER (GROWER)



VOLUNTEER HOURS 2022

5958

Volunteered hours

Between 1st January and 31st December 2022

£64,079

Estimated economic value of time donated by volunteers

Six of our volunteers have now joined the Communigrow staff team as 'Bank Staff' these individuals have helped us to expand our services, reach more people and develop our outreach support.

Overall, volunteers made an essential contribution to the work of the charity and were active ambassadors who also helped the charity to reach new volunteers and local groups.
We hugely appreciate volunteers' efforts in continuing to make Communigrow a success.

*names in case studies have been changed

Working in Partnership

Working in partnership is vital to Communigrow, helping us to raise our profile locally and supporting and being supported by other local organisations.

We are proactive in identifying and building relationships with community, voluntary, commercial and statutory partners who share our vision and support our objectives.

We are committed to reaching individuals and communities most in need of our help. Our offer and support helps address a number of socio-economic issues affecting individuals and families in our communities.

Our partners provide us with both financial and in-kind support that has enabled us to grow our charity, improve our resources, and reduce our environmental impact.

Our partners include:

Crossroads Kent Young Carers
East Malling Centre
East Malling Trust
IMAGO Community
Involve Kent
Kent County Council
Kent Virtual Schools
KRAN - Kent Refugee Action Network
NIAB
Space 2 Be Me
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council – One YOU



PRACTICAL SUPPORT ON OUR WILDLIFE WALK FROM KCC

Fundraising

2022 was a very successful year for increasing our income from a variety of Trusts and Foundations, which has enabled us to achieve the following substantial progress in the development of our charitable aims:

- Build a field shelter to allow us to continue education sessions even in poor weather conditions
- Deliver 32 workshops during school holidays with 338 young people attending
- Invest in our horticultural team and our volunteers to continue the development of a sustainable and engaging growing programme
- Create a new wildlife pond to enhance our education curriculum and encourage biodiversity
- Purchase new tools and woodwork equipment for the education team to use in their teaching programme
- Work towards carbon zero with funding for powerful solar panels and battery storage
- Help cover core staffing costs.

Additionally, our newly appointed Corporate and Individual fundraiser has allowed us to diversify our income, increasing our fundraising from individuals and corporate donors from £5,585 in 2021 to £31,925 in 2022. This has strengthened the perception and image of Communigrow as a credible and capable educational charity worthy of endorsement, sponsorship and investment.

We are hugely appreciative of the support we have received from:

Albert Hunt Trust
Atwood Benefits UK Ltd
Barbara Ward Foundation
Cauldron
Chapman Charitable Trust
Childwick Charitable Trust
Clarion Futures
CLA Charitable Trust
The Cleary Foundation
Cllr Andrew Kennedy (KCC Member Grant)
Cllr Trudy Dean (KCC Member Grant)
Cobtree Charitable Trust
Cole Charitable Trust
Colyer-Fergusson Charitable Trust
Dandara
David Solomon Charitable Trust
ExPAT Foundation
Garfield Weston Foundation
Golding Homes
Hasluck Charitable Trust
Hollick Family foundation
Ian Askew Charitable Trust
Involve Kent
John Lewis
John Swire 1989 Charitable Trust
KCC Reconnect
KCF Anniversary Fund
KCF Development Fund
KCF Minerva Family & Howard Family
Leigh Trust
Linda Hogan Community Fund
Monica Rabagliati Charitable Trust
National Lottery Community Fund
New Earth Solutions
Perrys Chartered Accountants
Persimmon Homes
Robert Gavron Charitable Trust
Souter Charitable Trust
UK Community Renewal Fund
United Living
Waitrose
Whitehead Monckton Charitable Foundation
Woodroffe Benton Foundation



PERRYS CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTS, POND DIGGING

Our total income for 2022 from grant funding, donations and our charitable services amounted to £257,728 (£127,480 in 2021).

Future plans

Horticulture

- Extend our growing areas that will also demonstrate innovative growing methods including inspirational 'show garden' areas that replicate the size and possibilities of local residents' gardens
- Develop a sustainable composting system
- Respond to the demands of climate change by experimenting with arid planting, expanding our perennial vegetable beds, planting windbreak hedges, no-dig areas and mulching
- Create a Tea Garden and edible flower area
- Build partnerships with local food outlets/restaurants, to supply locally grown, seasonal produce

Education

- Increase the number of schools we work with; on site and in the community
- Continue the development of our 'Communigrow Achievement Award' programme to help us evidence and celebrate the skills and learning outcomes achieved by our beneficiaries
- Improve our learning areas to better support neurodiverse children and young people

Wellbeing

- Increase our wellbeing programmes, identify local healthcare partners and social prescribers
- Develop our 'Communished' project to attract more diverse volunteers and help us develop our facilities and services
- Improve facilities for the staff and volunteers on site
- Provide staff support for professional development activities

Social Enterprise

- Increase our income diversification through, for example, the development of viable social enterprise activities (e.g. corporate away-days, viable products)

Environment and Sustainability

- Reduce fossil fuel use and invest in sustainable resources and equipment
- Increase and develop our wildlife areas to provide a habitat for local wildlife
- Increase surface water capture to reduce our dependency on local water sources

All of which will benefit our growing areas, our sustainability credentials and our horticultural educational offerings

Fundraising

- Develop a range of donation opportunities, fundraising events and corporate partners
- Identify empathetic funders and develop long-term relationships that will support our organisational growth

Governance and Organisational Structure

Communigrow is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation incorporated in 2014 and is governed by a board of trustees

Charity Name	Communigrow
Registered Charity No.	1159534
Contact Address	Hazel Hall, Church Road, West Peckham, Kent, ME18 5JL
Trustees during 2022	Caroline Pearce - Chair Anthony Blackman David Field Martin Long Eleanor Nicolas Alan Piper Helen Turner Greg Ward Simon Webley
Independent Examiner	Priscilla Asirifi
Bank	The Co-operative Bank PO Box 200, Skelmersdale, WN8 6 WT
Website	www.communigrow.org.uk
Email	info@communigrow.org.uk



Governance and Organisational Structure

Leadership and Management

The trustees meet every other month and are responsible for the charity's activities for monitoring progress and policies, developing the charity's strategy and for risk management. In 2022 we also adopted the Fundraising Regulators Code of Practice and registered with the Fundraising Regulator.
The trustees recognise that they are required to meet the objects of the charity and provide a public benefit. In making their decisions, the trustees follow the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

In 2022, two of our founding trustees, Simon Webley and Helen Turner retired. Martin Long was appointed as the finance trustee in place of Eleanor Nicholas and for a brief time Greg Ward was also a trustee, but was unable to continue owing to other commitments.

We are very fortunate in having a skilled and active board of trustees who are passionately committed to Communigrow and its work. In addition, the board of trustees is supported by a full-time operations manager and engages business development and fundraising consultants to assist with business development and income generation.
When recruiting trustees, the board of trustees identifies any skills gaps and looks for individuals who can provide expertise and leadership. There is an induction programme for new trustees and all trustees undertake training throughout the year.

Major Risks Statement

The trustees have assessed the major risks of the charity including, governance, operations, financial and external risks. They are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate the major risks.

Reserves Policy

The charity needs reserves to enable it to progress to completing both its long term projects, and its current activities and fluctuations in receipts and payments. The policy is to hold £50,000 for working activities. The level has been set to take account of the following:

1. Contingency: unexpected expenditure in the event of an emergency;
2. Cash-flow: situations where a bill has to be paid before the money to cover it has been received;
3. Commitment: a commitment to expenditure which cannot be covered by the annual income
4. Closure: the charity becomes financially unsustainable and has to be wound up.

'The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed: Date:

Caroline Pearce, Chairman

Finance Report

Communigrow Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31st December 2022

	Notes	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Incoming resources					
Charitable activities		7,882	4,229	12,111	8,261
Community fundraising		2,428	4,889	7,317	1,029
Corporate donations		9,500	9,779	19,279	3,000
Donations		1,334	-	1,334	1,557
Sponsorship		1,899	2,096	3,995	-
Grants		8,772	202,856	211,628	103,228
Vegetable sales		-	2,064	2,064	4,069
Other income		-	-	-	6,336
Total		**31,815**	**225,913**	**257,728**	**127,480**
Resources expended					
Admin/utilities		996	4,567	5,563	3,063
Consumables		2,346	1,791	4,137	1,899
Equipment		197	1,016	1,213	4,643
Fundraising & business dev		6,359	9,052	15,411	9,000
Insurance & rent		-	2,340	2,340	2,005
Marketing		336	304	640	938
Services (including salaries)		1,552	128,538	130,090	83,677
Total		**11,786**	**147,608**	**159,394**	**105,225**
Net incoming resources for the year		20,029	78,305	98,334	22,255
Total funds brought forward		43,008	72,258	115,267	93,012
Total funds carried forward		**63,037**	**150,563**	**213,600**	**115,267**

The Statement of Financial Activities include all the gains and the loses in the year and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and loses has not been prepared.
All the above amounts relate to continuing services.

The notes on pages 19-21 form part of the financial statements

Finance Report

Communigrow Balance Sheet
for the Year Ended 31st December 2022

	Notes	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
Fixed assets			
Tangible assets	2	13,987	-
Current Assets			
Debtors	3	2,228	-
Cash at bank and in hand		197,901	115,267
		200,129	115,267
Creditors:			
Amounts falling due within one year	4	516	-
Net current assets		199,613	115,267
Total net assets		**213,600**	**115,267**
Funds of the Charity			
Restricted income funds		150,562	72,967
Unrestricted funds		63,038	42,300
Total funds		**213,600**	**115,267**

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small company's regime.

These financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 3rd July 2023 and signed on their behalf by Caroline Pearce, Chairman

The notes on pages 19-21 form part of the financial statements

Finance Report

Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31st December 2022

1) Principle accounting policies

Accounting convention

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention and in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard for Smaller Entities. In preparing the financial statements the charity follows best practice laid down in the Statement of Recommended Practice - Accounting and Reporting

Going concern

Communigrow, at 31 December 2022, had unrestricted funds of £63,037 and a cash balance of £197,901, and as such the trustees consider it appropriate to prepare the accounts on a going concern basis.

Incoming resources

Income is accounted for when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Resources expended

Expenditure is included on an accrual basis once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing £500 or more are capitalised.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method.

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:

General equipment - 20% straight line

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term deposits with a maturity of three months or less.

Finance Report

2) Tangible Fixed Assets

	General Equipment
Cost	
At 1st January 2022	_
Additions	£14,189
Disposals	_
At 31 December 2022	£14,189
Depreciation	
At 1st January 2022	_
Charge for the year	£202
At 31st December 2022	£202
Net Book Value	
At 31 December 2022	£13,987

3) Debtors	**2022**	**2021**
Amounts falling due within one year		
VAT	£2,228	_

4) Creditors

Amounts falling due within one year		
Trade creditors	£516	_

Finance Report

5) Funds

Unrestricted funds

Comprise those funds which the trustees are free to use in accordance with the charity's general purposes.

Restricted funds

Restricted funds comprise donations and grants for specific activities intended by the donor.

6) Independent examiner's remuneration

The independent examiner's remuneration amounts to an independent examiner fee of £ Nil (2021 - £ Nil).

7) Trustees' remuneration

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2021 - £Nil).

8) Staff costs and pensions

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme

	2022	2021
Wages and salaries	£116,199	£76,374
Social security costs	£9,083	£4,664
Contribution to defined contribution pension scheme	£4,808	£2,639
	£130,090	**£83,677**

The average number of persons employed by the charity during the year was as follows:

	2022	2021
Staff	7	4
Contractors	13	7
	20	**11**

9) Related party disclosure

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 December 2022 (2021 - £Nil).

Independent Examiner's Report

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Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Communigrow

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31/12/2022.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, 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 the Trust's 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

The charity's gross income exceeded £250,000 and I am qualified to undertake the examination by being a qualified member of The Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA).

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

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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: DocuSigned by: 6FD2B9FC0FF2488...

Date: 30/05/2023

Name: Priscilla Asirifi ACMA

Relevant professional qualification(s) or body: CIMA

Address: 3 St Annes Place, Manchester, M34 5JB.

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COMMUNIGROW

England & Wales - Charity number 1159534

Accounts

communigrow



Annual Report 2021

Financial Statements and Trustee's report
1 January 2021 to 31 December 2021

www.communigrow.com

Charity no. 1159534

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Chairman's Introduction



I am delighted to have taken over the role of chair of trustees in June of last year and to provide the introduction to this year's annual report.

Commungrow achieved a number of notable landmarks in 2021 despite the ongoing impact of Covid-19.

Income generation has continued its upward trajectory by increasing by more than 10% last year. Our income from charitable activities on the field has increased 2.5 times, which provides a springboard for further growth in what we offer by way of horticulture and educational activities.

We were able to appoint a full-time operations manager and a part-time fundraiser. These are important appointments as they provide us with dedicated resources to increase and diversify our revenues and to manage our operations more effectively. The appointments provide a platform to expand the services we offer and to increase our reach to additional beneficiaries and the local community whilst ensuring that the services we offer continue to have more impact and a greater benefit to our beneficiaries and the local community.

Communigrow is a horticultural charity providing educational opportunities, work experience and outdoor activities for the whole community, including special needs, vulnerable and disadvantaged young people and adults. For these young people and adults we are able to promote their personal development and sense of achievement as well as providing horticultural learning opportunities. Through working outside and growing crops, everyone who comes to the field has the opportunity to reconnect with nature and learn about growing their own food in a sustainable way. A key benefit of what we do is being able to promote health and wellbeing.

As a board of trustees, we are greatly encouraged by the stories we hear on the impact that Communigrow is having on our beneficiaries and some of these stories are told in this Annual Report.

I conclude with a thank you to the Trust and Foundations and all of our other donors who support us. We are immensely grateful for all the financial support we continue to receive and which allows us to do what we do. I would like to thank our staff and all our volunteers. Both staff and volunteers are vital to the success of Communigrow and their efforts and enthusiasm on the field running the classes and workshops and helping with the planting and growing, as well providing a valuable support network with our social media and marketing, are very much appreciated. Finally, I would also like to thank Simon Webley who has so ably chaired the board of trustees for 5 years and whose support Communigrow continues to enjoy as he remains a trustee.

Caroline Pearce
Chair of the board of trustees



About Communigrow

Public benefit

The objects of Communigrow are to promote and advance education in responsible food farming activities for the public benefit by empowering local communities to directly link with farming and to reconnect with where their food comes from and how to enjoy local, healthy, sustainable, affordable food.

Our mission

To use horticulture to educate, support and inspire everyone in our community by enriching their lives, and for disadvantaged groups by achieving greater independence.

Our vision

Our vision is to provide horticultural experiences where all people in our community, regardless of background or abilities, work collaboratively to respect and understand how food is grown and the many benefits it offers to their health and wellbeing; inspiring them to lead fuller lives in a sustainable community.

Our values

Our core values are focused on:

- People – who are at the centre of everything we do
- Education – to impart an understanding of nature, where food comes from and how it is grown
- Respect – towards all people in our community and nature
- Inclusion and Diversity – so that all groups in the community can benefit and work together, for the benefit of individuals and our community
- Sustainability – to create a sustainable world and society
- Wellbeing – to create a positive change in individuals and our local community
- Partnership – with local community groups to develop and tailor our offering, as well as partnering with other organisations to advance our objectives and respond to local needs.



Highlights

Despite disruptions caused by the Covid-19 restrictions, the past year has nevertheless been a year of highlights and achievements that include:

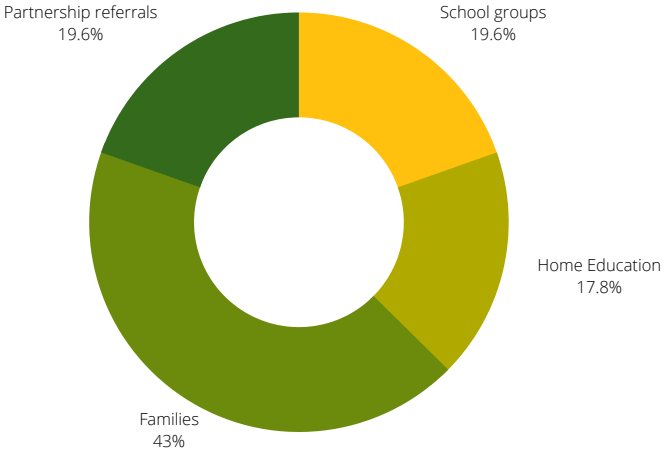
- Welcoming 443 individuals including the young people and adults who attended our classes and workshops, many of whom come on a regular basis (125 in 2020).
- Increasing the number of our volunteers to 89 (62 in 2020) who support Communigrow on site and off site and who gave us 5,268 hours of their time (3,614 hours in 2020).
- Working with 19 local community organisations including those who refer young people and adults to us so that they can benefit from the activities we run.
- Increasing our income to £127,480 (£114,216 in 2020) which has allowed us to expand our work and increase the number of young people and adults we can accommodate on the field.
- Achieving one of the Kent Volunteering Awards organised by the Kent Messenger Charity Team. The award was in recognition of our volunteers as a voluntary group making an outstanding contribution to its charity and community.
- Growing chemical-free produce and selling 319 large and small affordable veg boxes for the local community.

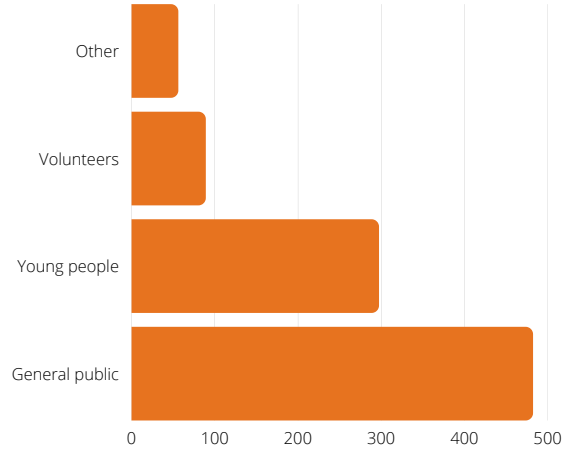
We are proud of these achievements which are described in more detail overleaf.



Education and Wellbeing

The chart below gives a breakdown of the different groups who benefited from our educational provision and the graph which follows, shows the numbers of people organised by the target group. This includes people who attended regular sessions, one-off sessions; and community and online events.





Schools

Five Acre Wood School is one of the schools which comes to Communigrow. Two groups of sixth form students from this special school come once a week during term time and benefit both physically and mentally from being outdoors and participating in the growing activities.

Grow 19 is a college for young adults aged 19–25 with significant needs which offers vocational skills and knowledge. Students visit every week and we support Grow19's aims by providing practical horticultural experience for their City & Guilds land based qualification.

Grange Park School is a specialist school for children and young people with an Autism Spectrum Condition. A group of students attend one morning a week to gain valuable work experience. They assist with all aspects of growing and harvesting. In the warmer months they help prepare veg boxes and sell our produce to local residents door to door.

As part of their enrichment programme, students from Bethany school, a private school in Kent, visit weekly to learn about local food production and its benefits for the environment.

The impact of what Communigrow does is illustrated by the support we have received from members of staff at these schools.



"All of the students that attend the placement speak highly of the support and experience that they get. We have seen a positive change in our students that attend the placement and this transgresses into other parts of their programme of study. We are thankful for Communigrow in supporting the school and students and hope the partnership can continue."

PAULA MARTIN, SENIOR LEARNING MENTOR, GRANGE PARK SCHOOL

"Communigrow has given our students a great escape from everything going on during lockdown. Being outside and near nature has helped with their mental wellbeing and given the students a regular focus. Thank you Communigrow for all that you have done and your ongoing support during Covid."

STAFF MEMBER, FIVE ACRE WOOD SCHOOL

"We have worked with Communigrow for three years. Their staff and volunteers fully understand the needs of our groups and their future pathways. They are proactive and flexible in how they work with us and we are pleased to call them a community partner."

KIRSTIE HEMINGWAY, HEAD OF GROW 19

Education and Wellbeing

Working with local partners Crossroads and Involve Kent we have delivered 7 workshops. Groups of young carers and teenagers with autism and communication difficulties have learnt about wildlife and growing in these fun hands-on sessions. As part of the post Covid Reconnect programme, attendees harvested and cooked fresh veg, forging new connections and friendships after the isolation of lockdown. We also worked with IMAGO in delivering two online workshops. We have begun offering similar workshops to the general public and which have also proved very popular.

In 2021, in order to reach the more disadvantaged members of our local community, we forged links with the East Malling Centre. We offered 5 activity sessions for local families including tasting veg, learning about wildlife and crafting.

"I now know more about plants and animals"

AUTUMN FAMILY WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

"It helps me eat better and fresher food."

PARTICIPANT OF SESSION DELIVERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH INVOLVE KENT

"I enjoyed making the bug houses and digging up the sweet potatoes."

PARTICIPANTS OF THE COMMUNIGROW FAMILY WORKSHOPS

"I learned how to make a salad out of fruit and vegetables that I've never tried."

PARTICIPANTS OF SESSIONS DELIVERED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH IMAGO



"The children... enjoyed the tour of the allotments, seeing the various vegetables that had been planted, planting the various seeds and potatoes and also being able to take some pots home with them."

YOUNG CARERS TUTOR, CROSSROAD CHARITY

Education and Wellbeing

Home Education

The home education programme ran from March to December in 2021. Learners aged 4-14 studied a range of topics, from pond life, to food miles. Following feedback from parents, the course included more practical sessions where learners help with tasks on the field to acquire new skills including cooking veg from the field.

The following case studies illustrate the impact of the work that Communigrow does.

Case study 1

Overcoming shyness with nature

Zac (11 y/o), one of our home education students, came to Communigrow as a very self-conscious young person. At the back of the group trying to be as small as possible. A pond dipping session changed everything. A discovery of Red spider mites by Zac soon had the whole group gathering around, encouraged by the Communigrow education team his confidence grew.

Mr red spider mite man started joining in all conversations as his opinion was now as valid as everyone else's. We are so proud of how he has continued to respond and can't wait to work with him next term.

CAROLL, COMMUNIGROW EDUCATION COORDINATOR

Case study 2

Improving communication skills

Gina (16 y/o), who attends sessions with her local learning disability school, has complex needs. In the beginning she wasn't keen to engage with manual work and insisted on being supported when walking. Lots of encouragement and attention saw Gina really start to enjoy her tasks. Recently Gina got off the bus with enthusiasm, and now doesn't need physical support to walk around the site. With her communication skills starting to improve, she even joined in using the loud speaker during an activity.

#Her support worker said: "Communigrow has certainly been a catalyst in Gina's recent improvement at the site and in general at school. It's fantastic to see her enjoying herself and working as part of the class".

CAROLL, COMMUNIGROW EDUCATION COORDINATOR

Education and Wellbeing

Wellbeing Programmes

Covid-19 in particular provided us with an opportunity to reach out to other sections of our local community. In partnership with Involve Kent, we delivered sessions and workshops as part of the KCC Universal Wellbeing Programme. These are designed for the over 55s to tackle loneliness, social isolation and those with health challenges.

Case study 3

Wednesday Wellness sessions - Improving Wellbeing

"Attending weekly sessions has provided me with something fun and different from my usual day to day activity. I have enjoyed meeting new people, learning new things. Making new friends gets harder as you get older and this group whilst all being quite different from each other are friendly and welcoming.This experience has encouraged me to volunteer and contribute to a local charity."

ANNE, PARTICIPANT OF THE WEDNESDAY WELLNESS SESSIONS



Working in Partnership

Working in partnership is vital to Communigrow, helping us to raise our profile locally and supporting and being supported by other local organisations. We are actively seeking and building relationships with community, voluntary and statutory partners who share our vision and support our principles.

We have strong connections with:

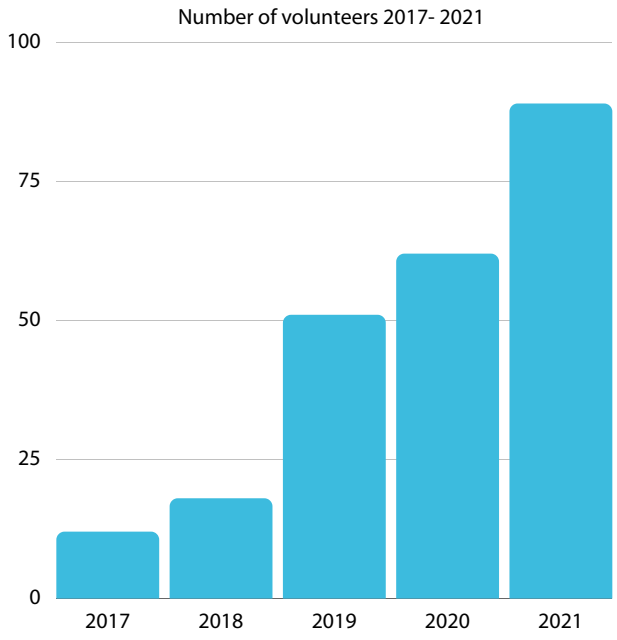
Clarion Futures
Crossroads Kent Young Carers
East Malling Centre
IMAGO Community
Involve Kent – Social Prescribing Platform, Wellbeing, Young People
Kent Virtual Schools
KRAN - Kent Refugee Action Network
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council – One YOU
United Living



Volunteers

The number of volunteers has continued to increase year on year as shown in the graph.

The charity provided volunteering opportunities in horticulture, education, marketing, event assistance, fundraising, research, recruitment and general administrative tasks. In 2021 we had 64 volunteers who supported us on the field with the cultivation, harvesting (making up weekly veg boxes) and maintenance activities, such as repairing the brassica cage and building the bird boxes and the bird hide to encourage birdlife. They assisted with the delivery of 87 educational sessions and workshops, five fundraising events, 25 wellbeing sessions and workshops and seven external events. 17 volunteers worked remotely producing content for our social media channels, designing and distributing 12 newsletters, organising nine online educational talks and updating the website. They helped us to increase and keep audiences engaged which made our online presence stronger. Eight volunteers supported us both on the field and remotely. We also delivered three Volunteering Days for the corporate sector and local businesses.



"It was really rewarding to provide support to Communigrow, a wonderful local charity that does such good work for the community. Our team of volunteers built a raised bed area, worked in a no dig plot and helped with general tasks and thoroughly enjoyed our time there."

JACQUELINE NOON, SOCIAL VALUE MANAGER AT UNITED LIVING PROPERTY SERVICES

Our volunteers tell us they benefit by learning how to grow their own food, how they feel they are giving something back to the community and how they are helping to protect the environment. They gain knowledge and skills and better mental and physical health whilst connecting with nature, food and people. They also tell us this helps build confidence and self-esteem, giving them a sense of purpose and helps them to make new friends.

"David has actively encouraged volunteers to learn how to use pieces of equipment, such as the rotavator, which is really rewarding. The different levels of knowledge amongst the team is always helpful and insightful. The field itself is a wonderful place to be and definitely helps mindfulness and wellbeing."

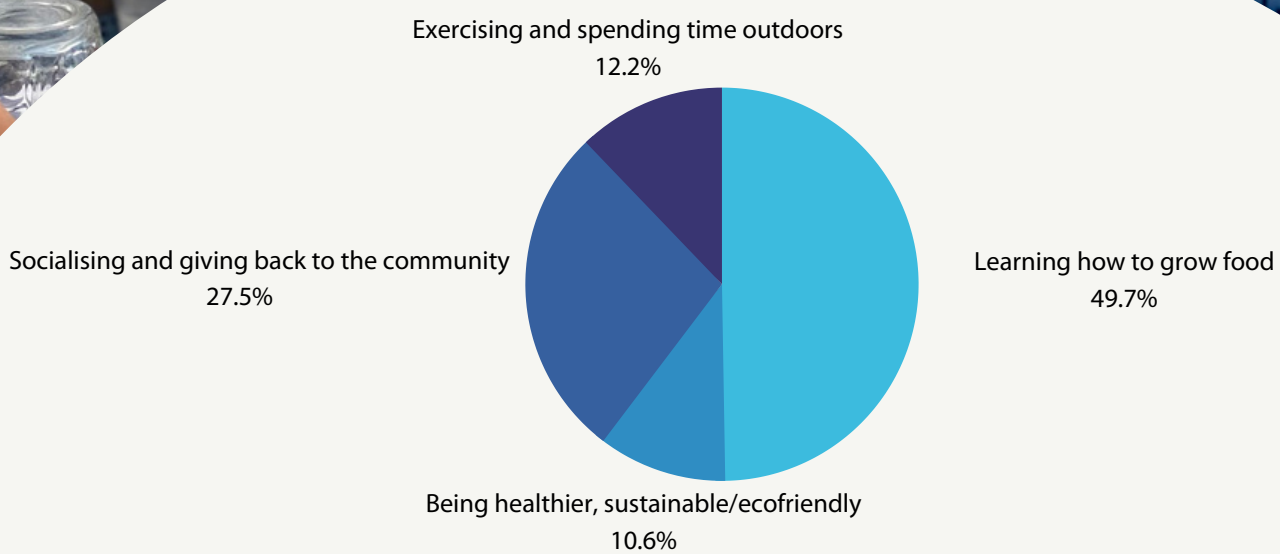
VOLUNTEER (GROWER)

"Volunteering with Communigrow has absolutely reinforced my interest in gardening and growing. I enjoy the experience of meeting and working with new people, learning about new things, and contributing your time towards something meaningful."

VOLUNTEER (SOCIAL MEDIA)



VOLUNTEERS' MOTIVATIONS TO BE PART OF COMMUNIGROW 2021



Volunteers

Being a delivery partner of the KCC Universal Wellbeing Programme (in partnership with Involve Kent), brought new opportunities for our volunteers. These encouraged them to join the weekly activities that support communities' wellbeing while making the group stronger and helping us to reinforce our commitment to promote health, wellbeing within the local community.

The achievements of our volunteers was recognised by the award of one of The Kent Messenger Charity Team awards, one of the most prestigious volunteering awards in Kent and one of only 13 regional winners across the county. This is given in recognition of voluntary groups in Kent which make outstanding contributions to charities and communities.

We thank all our volunteers very much for their time, skills and energy to support the charity's work in 2021.

5268

VOLUNTEERED HOURS

Between 1st January and 31st December 2021

£58,828

ESTIMATED ECONOMIC VALUE OF TIME DONATED BY VOLUNTEERS



Fundraising

2021 has been a very successful year for increasing our income from a variety of Trusts and Foundations both local and national. This has strengthened the perception and image of Communigrow as a credible and capable educational charity worthy of endorsement, sponsorship and investment. Our income for 2021 amounted to £127,480 (£114,216 in 2020).

We are most appreciative of the support we have received from:
Atwood Benefits Ltd (formerly F & L Finance)
29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
Albert Hunt Foundation
Barbara Ward Children's Foundation
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust
ExPat Foundation
Gatwick Charitable Trust
Hollick Family Foundation
Ian Askew Trust
Involve Kent
KCC Members Grant
Kent Community Foundation
Leigh Charitable Foundation
Matthew Wrightson Foundation
National Lottery Reaching Communities
Robert Gavron
Social Farms and Gardens
Tesco



Grant funding has enabled us to achieve the following substantial progress in the development of our charitable aims. It has:

- Helped us to design an enhanced growing programme that offers a breadth of educational and skills development opportunities for all of our service users.
- Enhanced the coordination and deployment of our small team of growers and our volunteers in maintaining an effective and engaging growing programme across our 2.4 acre site.
- Ensured the consistent provision of education and skills development despite the restrictions imposed by Covid-19.
- Enabled us to create new roles of operations manager and fundraiser. It has also allowed us to develop and expand the existing roles.
- Enabled us to deliver 13 workshops during the school holidays and half terms with 165 young people attending.
- Allowed us to Improve and broaden our data gathering, so as to better monitor and evaluate our service delivery and meet the requirements of our beneficiaries.

Future plans

During the current and future years we aim to:

- Continue with our core activities in offering learning and skills development through our horticultural activities to an increased number and range of community groups and schools and in doing so, maximise the usage of the field to demonstrate new and innovative planting and soil management using sustainable growing methods.
- Develop the 'Communigrow Achievement Award' to help us evidence and celebrate the skills and learning outcomes achieved by our beneficiaries, These awards will be available first to young people including students attending SEN schools. They will encourage young people with their development and assist them when entering the employment market. Subsequently, volunteers and other beneficiaries will also be able to take part in these awards.
- Continue to develop opportunities for practical experience on the field for the City & Guild qualifications.
- Capitalise on the success in 2021 of the KCC Universal Wellbeing programme (in partnership with Involve Kent) by extending the programme to members of the general public. Launch Ready, Steady, Grow, bite-size workshops for new and enthusiastic gardeners in partnership with our landlord, the East Malling Trust.
- Launch a number of new initiatives including garden craft workshops, a 'communi-shed' project, where beneficiaries can improve their garden related woodcraft skills and create an outdoor kitchen to help us build our field to fork opportunities and expand our education and training offering. Overall, our objective with these initiatives is to increase the numbers and diversity of disadvantaged young people and adults and to build relationships with our local communities and their residents.
- Implement our 4-year income diversification strategy. This includes piloting social enterprise activities, developing a range of donation opportunities, organising fundraising events and researching corporate relationships leading to sponsorship. We have already launched our 'adopt a plot', that we are marketing to local businesses to help them meet their corporate social responsibility aims.



Governance and Management Structure

Charity name	Communigrow
Registered Charity No.	1159534
Contact address	1 Wesley Close, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 9HT
Trustees	Caroline Pearce - Chair Helen Turner – Secretary Alan Piper Simon Webley David Field Anthony Blackman Eleanor Nicolas – Treasurer
Independent Examiner	Priscilla Asirifi
Bank	The Co-operative Bank PO Box 200, Skelmersdale, WN8 6 WT
Website	www.communigrow.org.uk



Organisation and decision making

Communigrow held its AGM in June 2021 when new trustees David Field and Anthony Blackman were appointed. The trustees met seven times in 2021 to consider all aspects of the charity's activities and to monitor progress.

Leadership and Management

We are very fortunate in now having a very skilled and active Board of Trustees who are passionately committed to our principles of using horticulture creatively to assist those facing challenge and disadvantage amongst communities across West Kent. In addition the Board engages a business development and fundraising consultant to assist with business planning, growth and income generation.

New Trustees

Prospective trustees are invited to a trustee meeting to discuss their application to be a trustee. References and due checks are carried out and following appointment as a trustee an induction session is held including explanations of the roles and responsibilities of trustees.
The trustees confirm that they have had due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when making their decisions.

The management team met regularly through 2021 to plan and monitor activities. Other day to day decisions were made informally as and when required.

Major Risks Statement

The trustees regularly review the following major risks and respond accordingly.
1. Governance - a skills audit was carried out in 2020 to identify strengths and weaknesses.
2. Financial - regular reports are received on the charity's financial position, sustainability, safeguarding funds and reserves.
3. Operational - safeguarding and health & safety reviews are undertaken and volunteer roles and beneficiary welfare are assessed.
4. External - key for the charity was responding to the impact of Covid-19, safeguarding its reputation, responding to demographic changes and changes in funders' criteria.
5. Compliance with law and regulation - in particular employment law and charity law.



Finance Report

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	8,261	-	-	8,261	3,241
COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING	1,039	-	-	1,039	413
CORPORATE DONATIONS	3,000	-	-	3,000	135
DONATIONS	1,557	-	-	1,557	419
SPONSORSHIP	-	-	-	-	3,500
TRUSTS & FOUNDATIONS		103,228	-	103,228	102,872
VEG SALES	4,069	-	-	4,069	3,636
OTHER INCOME	6,336	-	-	6,336	-
Sub total *(Gross income for*	24,262	103,228	-	127,490	114,216
A3 Payments					
ADMIN/UTILITIES		3,063		3,063	3,504
CONSUMABLES	413	1,486	-	1,899	6,431
EQUIPMENT	84	4,559	-	4,643	14,031
FUNDRAISING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT		9,000	-	9,000	7,413
INSURANCE & RENT		2,005	-	2,005	1,893
MARKETING	712	226	-	938	115
SERVICES (INCLUDING SALARIES)	80	83,597	-	83,677	62,054
			-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	1,289	103,937	-	105,225	95,440
Total payments	1,289	103,937	-	105,225	95,440
Net of receipts/(payments)	22,974	- 709	-	22,265	18,776
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	11,951	62,285	-	74,236	30,775
Cash funds this year end	34,925	61,576	-	96,501	49,551

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds		20,045	72,967	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	20,045	72,967	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	Agreement Error	OK

Reserves Policy

The charity needs reserves to enable it to progress to completing both its long term projects, and its current activities and fluctuations in receipts and payments. The policy is to hold £8,000 for working activities. The level has been set to take account of the following:

1. Contingency: unexpected expenditure in the event of an emergency;
2. Cash-flow: situations where a bill has to be paid before the money to cover it has been received;
3. Commitment: a commitment to expenditure which cannot be covered by the annual income
4. Closure: the charity becomes financially unsustainable and has to be wound up.

Explanatory Notes

1. General funds are unrestricted and are spent on the charity's general purposes.
2. Restricted funds comprise donations and grants for specific activities intended by the donor 3.
3. £66,365 of the £72,258 restricted funds at the end of 2021 is carried forward to 2022 for staff salaries and business development costs during 2022.

Independent Examiner's Report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Charity") for the year ended 31/12/2021.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

Independent examiner's statement

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's 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.

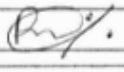
I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

· the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or

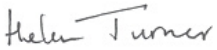
· the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or

· the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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:		**Date:**	02/02/2022
Name:	Priscilla Asirifi ACMA		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)		
Address:	8 Sandown Street Manchester M18 8SA		

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.



Name: Helen Turner (Signed on behalf of trustees)

Position: Secretary & Trustee

Date: 26th May 2022

© Communigrow 2021 Registered Charity No. 1159534

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

COMMUNIGROW	No (if any) 1159534

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period from	Period start date 1/1/2021	To	Period end date 12/31/2021

Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted funds to the nearest	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
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CORPORATE DONATIONS	3,000	-	-	3,000	135
DONATIONS	1,557	-	-	1,557	419
SPONSORSHIP	-	-	-	-	3,500
TRUSTS & FOUNDATIONS		103,228	-	103,228	102,872
VEG SALES	4,069	-	-	4,069	3,636
OTHER INCOME	6,336	-	-	6,336	-
Sub total *(Gross income for*	24,262	103,228	-	127,490	114,216
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	24,262	103,228	-	127,490	114,216
A3 Payments					
ADMIN/UTILITIES		3,063		3,063	3,504
CONSUMABLES	413	1,486	-	1,899	6,431
EQUIPMENT	84	4,559	-	4,643	14,031
FUNDRAISING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT		9,000	-	9,000	7,413

INSURANCE & RENT		2,005	-	2,005	1,893
MARKETING	712	226	-	938	115
SERVICES (INCLUDING SALARIES)	80	83,597	-	83,677	62,054
			-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	1,289	103,937	-	105,225	95,440

A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
	-	-	-	-	
	-	-	-	-	
Sub total	-	-	-	-	
Total payments	1,289	103,937	-	105,225	95,440
Net of receipts/(payments)	22,974	- 709	-	22,265	18,776
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	11,951	62,285	-	74,236	30,775
Cash funds this year end	34,925	61,576	-	96,501	49,551

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds		20,045	72,967	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	20,045	72,967	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	Agreement Error	Agreement Error	OK

B2 Other monetary assets

Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-
	-	-	-

B3 Investment assets

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use

Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
6 TEMPORARY STRUCTURES - POLYTUNNELS/YURT/GREENHOUSE		-	-
LOG CABIN/SHEDS		-	-
HORTICULTURAL TOOLS & MACHINERY/TRACTOR		-	-
KITCHEN TRAILER		-	-
IT EQUIPMENT		-	-
		-	-
		-	-

		-	-
		-	-

B5 Liabilities

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
Helen Turner	Helen Turner	12.02.2022

Explanatory Notes

General funds are unrestricted and are spent on the charity's general purposes.
Restricted funds comprise donations and grants for specific activities intended by the donor
£60,914 of the £72,967 restricted funds at the end 2020 is carried forward for staff salaries and business development costs during 202

CHARITY COMMISSION FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees/ members of	COMMUNIGROW		
On accounts for the year ended	31/12/2021	**Charity no.**	1159534

Responsibilities and basis of report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the year ended 31/12 /2021.

As the charity trustees of the Trust, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

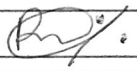
I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

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 which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act or
- the accounts do not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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

Signed:		**Date:**	02/02/2022
Name:	Priscilla Asirifi ACMA		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)		
Address:	8 Sandown Street Manchester M18 8SA		

COMMUNIGROW

England & Wales - Charity number 1159534

Accounts

ANNUAL REPORT 2020

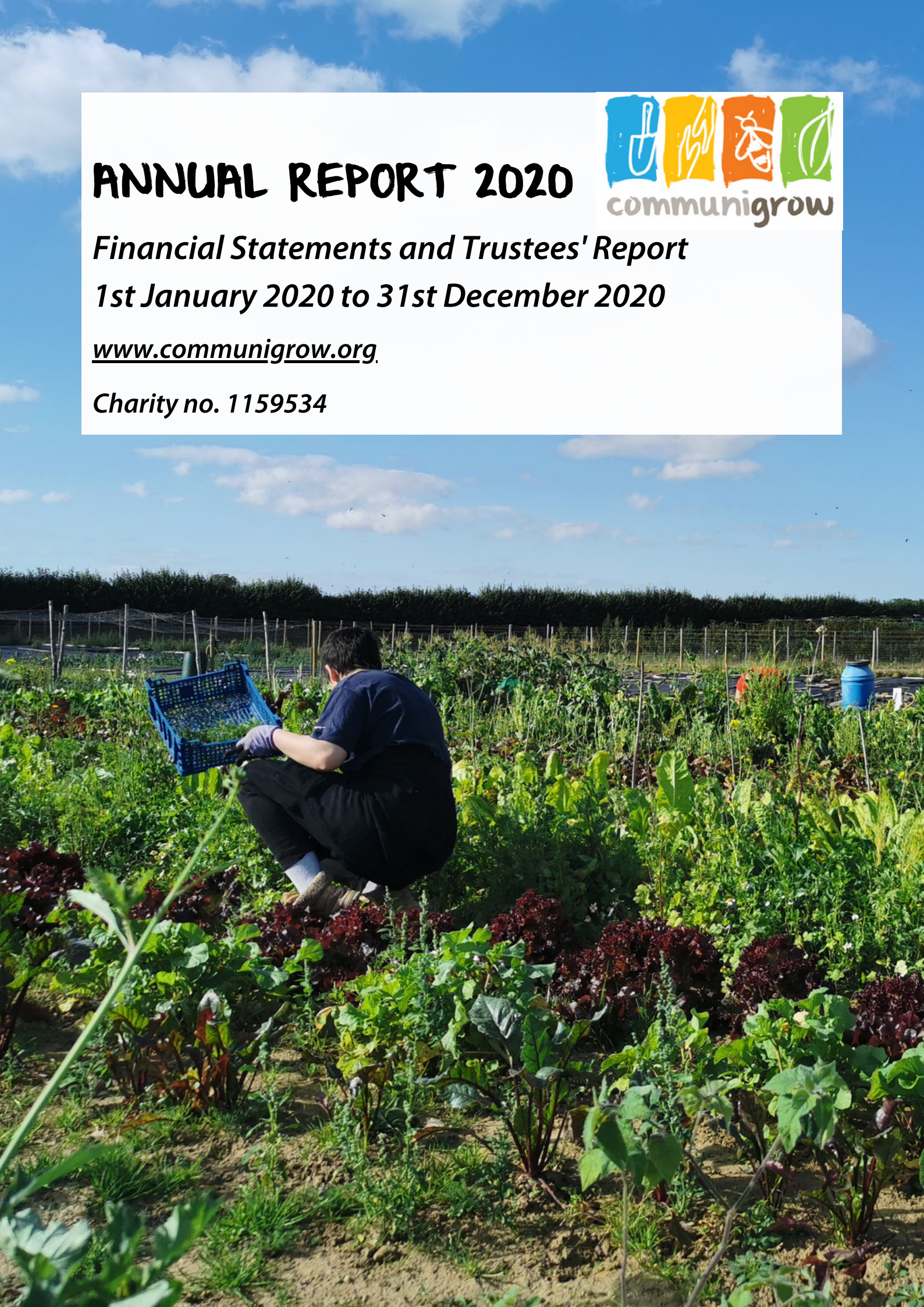
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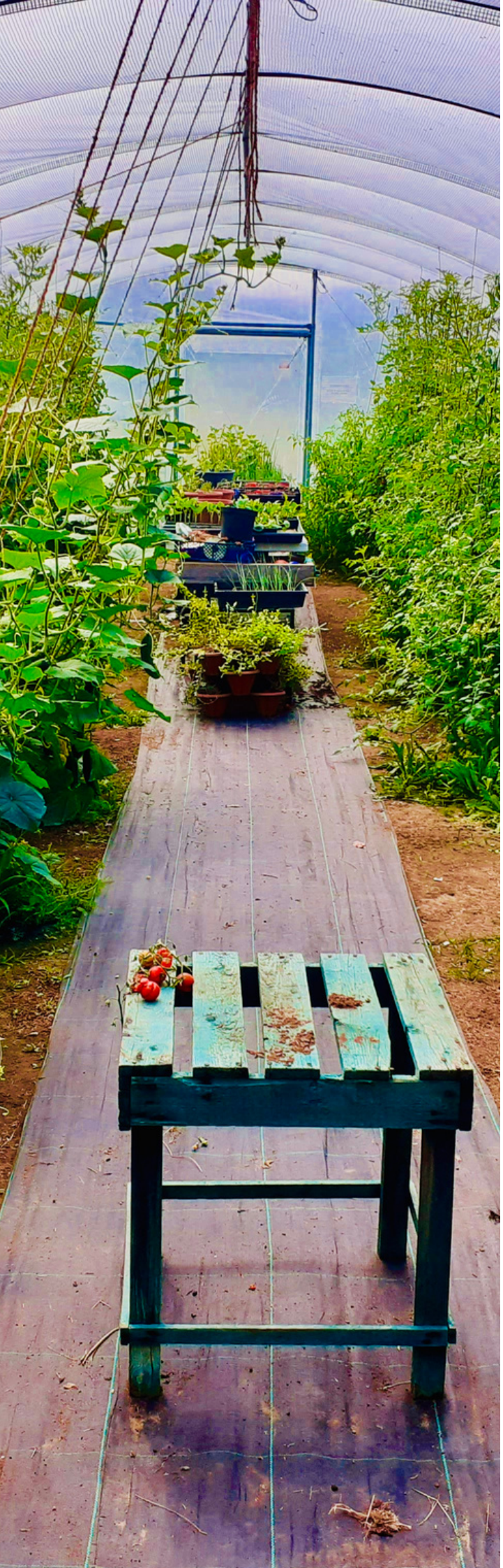
Financial Statements and Trustees' Report

1st January 2020 to 31st December 2020

www.communigrow.org

Charity no. 1159534





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Chairman's introduction



I am very pleased to introduce this report on another year in which despite the limitations imposed on all of us by Covid-19, Communigrow has continued to move forward. It has consolidated its reputation as a trusted and highly respected educational, skills and personal development support charity. It has also continued to provide an increasing range of educational opportunities for adults and young people through its horticultural activities.

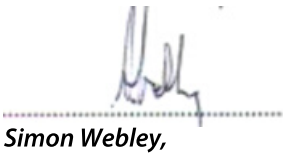
Communigrow is based in Mid Kent and through its horticultural activities provides an increasing range of educational opportunities for young people and adults. It also promotes personal development and achievement for adults and young people who face a variety of challenges and vulnerabilities. Communigrow offers a facility for those in the local community to participate in its work in a variety of ways; at the same time as providing an opportunity to learn how food can be produced in an organic and sustainable way. One of our aims is to promote community involvement and wellbeing. We have a flourishing local market for our produce that promotes the benefits of locally produced fresh food.

Over the year, we have been able to continue with some of our educational sessions for schools and other local groups, although some have inevitably been curtailed. The schools and local groups who have been able to come have benefited greatly from the practical experience they have gained in the sustainable growing and harvesting of produce.

We have benefitted hugely from the increase in the number of our volunteers over the year from 51 at the beginning of 2020 to 62 by the end of the year. They have helped us in the field with planting and growing as well as with our support network. They have, for example, contributed to the evolution of our website, our newsletters, our veg box recipes and growing veg tips. Prompted by Covid-19, our growing team have also developed online educational videos on growing veg.

Our horticultural activities are the bedrock of the educational opportunities, our community involvement and the health and wellbeing benefits we offer. We are very pleased to see how these activities have expanded over the year. The amount of produce and the varieties and range of what we grow are more than in previous years and this year's seasonal plantings also show great promise.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Trusts and Foundations and all of our other donors who support us, we are very grateful for all of the financial support we have continued to receive during 2020. I would also like to thank our staff, volunteers and all those who have helped Communigrow in the past year and I look forward to seeing our plans to expand both our activities and our reach come to fruition in the coming year.



Simon Webley,
Chair of the board of trustees



About Communigrow

Public benefit

The objects of Communigrow are to promote and advance education in responsible food farming activities for the public benefit by empowering local communities to directly link with farming and to reconnect with where their food comes from and how to enjoy local, healthy, sustainable, affordable food.

Who we are

We are a charity that through our horticultural activities, creates opportunities for education, skills development, personal development and community engagement.

What we do

- Provide opportunities and activities for community involvement and participation in horticulture and the growing of fresh produce
- Share our passion, knowledge and skills on how food is grown and its health benefits
- Provide education, work experience and skills development opportunities for all and including disadvantaged young people and adults from across West Kent
- Promote an interest in the value of biodiversity, wildlife habitats and the natural environment
- Provide a varied and vibrant environment for volunteering
- Offer a welcoming, safe and secure environment for those who are isolated, vulnerable and keen to engage with others from their community
- Work in close partnership with a variety of statutory and voluntary sector agencies in response to local needs
- Develop social enterprise to sustain our work and expand our community connections

How we do it

Communigrow is based on a 2.4 acre field leased from the East Malling Trust where we grow seasonal, fresh, local produce and some ornamentals and have an all-weather classroom and education centre.

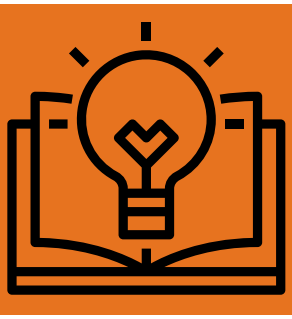
We provide structured learning programmes in workshops and class groups on site to help schools, local groups and volunteers gain practical experience in the production and harvesting of vegetables and herbs using sustainable horticultural techniques.



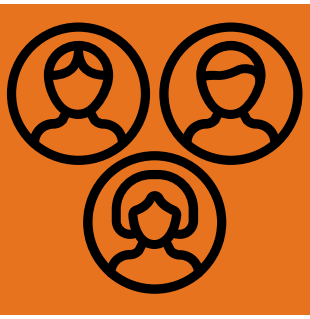
We publish a range of online bulletins, newsletters and articles on growing produce, healthy eating and recently a Lockdown wellbeing series.

We have a team of 62 volunteers who support the charity remotely or at the field, helping to grow the produce which is sold on site and in veg boxes to local communities in Ditton, Larkfield, East Malling and Aylesford and who themselves benefit from the experience gained in growing the produce and from the outdoor activity.

We expect to be able to organise open days again once the Covid-19 restrictions are lifted so we can share our ethos and purpose and give talks and workshops to strengthen our relationship with the local community.



Creating opportunities for education, skills development, personal development and community engagement



Supporting communities in Ditton, Larkfield, East Malling and Aylesford

Our Impact

Despite disruptions caused by the Covid-19 restrictions, the past year has nevertheless been a year of highlights and achievements that include:

- Welcoming around 125 young people and adults who have come to our site to attend our classes and workshops, many of whom come on a regular basis.
- Increasing the number of our volunteers to 62 (51 volunteers in 2019) who support Communigrow on site and off site and who gave us 3,614 hours of their time.
- Working with 19 local community organisations including those who refer young people and adults to us so that they can benefit from the activities we run.



62 volunteers who gave 3,614 hours of their time



Welcomed 125 young people and adults

- Increasing our income to £114,216 (£109,037 in 2019) which has allowed us to expand our work and increase the number of young people and adults we can accommodate at our site.
- The construction of a log cabin which represented an important milestone for the charity.
- Achieving the RHS Five Star Gardening School Award which is a nationwide initiative that supports organisations that provide learning opportunities for children through gardening.
- Achieving a Silver Award from the Kent Wildlife Trust which recognises schools and community groups that are taking positive actions towards combating the climate and nature crisis.

We are proud of these achievements which are described in more detail below.

Education

Schools

- Five Acre Wood School - sixth form students from this special school come once a week during term time and benefit both physically and mentally from being outdoors and participating in the growing activities.
- Grow19 is a college for learners aged 19–25 offering vocational education and they visit every week gaining practical horticultural experience for their City & Guilds land based qualification.
- Grange Park School - the small group from this special school returned for work experience at the start of September but due to the pandemic they have postponed their visits until further notice.

94%
feel accepted for who they are when they are at Communigrow*

88%
feel more connected to nature because of Communigrow*

*mid-term survey undertaken by 33 participants

The opportunity to run tailor made session through 2020 has been limited, however we were able to facilitate tailor made sessions for the following groups:

- IMAGO one off respite activity day for young children with disabilities.
- Home Education Sessions - 18 children with their carers came between September and December for "Nature, food and people" sessions.

We were also able to offer the opportunity of practical field experience to Pauline Coppard who is doing a degree in Commercial Horticulture. David Jeffrey, who we took on as our horticultural lead in June will continue to support Pauline throughout 2021 by offering growing space for her to conduct practical research for her dissertation.

David has been able to hold small practical workshops covering topics on soil structure and hardwood cuttings as well in creating wildlife habitats.

"Being part of a team as a class"
"Being outside and learning independence"

"I come out of my shell when out in the garden"
"I feel less anxious when I am there"

Comments from Five Acre Wood School students when asked "What is the best thing about Communigrow?"

Working closely with our horticultural leader and growers, we were able to recruit more volunteers and transfer knowledge through practical sessions at the field and formal learning sessions on a wide range of topics which inspired some of our volunteers to start to grow their own food (36.4%) and to start to enjoy food grown with no chemicals (90.9%). Volunteers who supported us remotely also attended online training workshops on marketing aspects and at the same time they gained new skills in digital marketing.

RHS Gardening School Award

At the beginning of the year we earned the status of the the RHS Five Star Gardening School Award. This is the highest level of this RHS campaign, which is a nationwide initiative that supports organisations that provide children with learning opportunities through gardening. We received this recognition based on our practical work, for growing a wide range of plants throughout the year, understanding environmental issues, using tools professionally and for engaging with the local communities while passing our skills on to others

Wilder Kent Award

We are proud to have received a Silver Award from the Kent Wildlife Trust, which recognises schools and community groups that are taking positive actions towards combating the climate and nature crisis. Being involved in the scheme has given our staff and volunteers new opportunities to learn about nature and how to protect local ecosystems.

"When we started this project, we hoped to achieve an increase in a number of learning opportunities available for people to get new skills while connecting with nature and protecting the ecosystem. To be acknowledged in this way feels like a great achievement and moving forward we plan to continue to further expand our education offer making sure we provide a safe environment to local communities to learn about growing food and reconnecting with nature."

Naomi Jenkins, Education Coordinator

Case Study: James (not his real name) from Five Acre Wood School sixth form:

James aged 16 has been attending Communigrow with his classmates from this special school for several months now. He is a placid natured lad, and is generally non-verbal. He has always tried to engage in our sessions, and will work hard if myself or a member of the school teaching staff continually keeps him on track. The group has never tried harvesting vegetables before, so I showed them all the runner beans growing up the poles. James began to look quite animated and started smiling, though he avoided eye contact, he seemed keen to try eating a bean. I let him choose one and try it. He was clearly enjoying the experience, and so I ventured to ask him 'What do you think about that, James?' and he actually spoke to me, replying: 'tastes good'.
This is a hugely significant step, which reminds us of the benefits of persevering with the students, and ensuring we give them many more positive experiences with us.

Bonnie Illingworth, Education Coordinator



Log Cabin

Thanks to support from Kent Mark Master Masons and the Mark Benevolent Fund, Communigrow purchased and built a log cabin. Its construction not only offered volunteers the chance to learn new skills, it also played an important role in increasing the community spirit during the pandemic for those involved in its preparation, construction and decoration. It has been a beautiful addition to the field and has become a multipurpose garden office space to protect volunteers and staff from adverse weather conditions and to keep educational resources and seeds dry and safe.

Working in Partnership

We are successfully attracting an increasing number and diversity of service users and volunteers. Some organisations who supported us and with whom we managed to keep in contact:

Canterbury Christchurch University
Clarion Housing Association
CXK – supports NEETs
Dandelion Time
IMAGO Community
INVOLVE Kent – Social Prescribing Platform
Kent & Medway NHS and Social Care Partnership Trust
Kent Recruitment Bureau
Kent Virtual Schools
Kent Wildlife Trust
Kent Youth Trust
Kingswood Group
KRAN – supporting young Refugee
Medway Valley Countryside Partnership
Sevenoaks area Youth Trust
Spadework
Strong Kent Communities
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council) – One YOU
Tunbridge Wells Welcomes Refugees
Tonbridge Welcomes Refugees



Volunteers



Despite the Covid-19 restrictions, our volunteer numbers have increased and we had our highest number of volunteers in 2020. These extraordinary individuals supported growing, administrative and marketing tasks. At the field they helped us with the veg boxes, building a polytunnel, a greenhouse and the log cabin, a brassica cage and 6 raised beds for supporting educational sessions for young people.

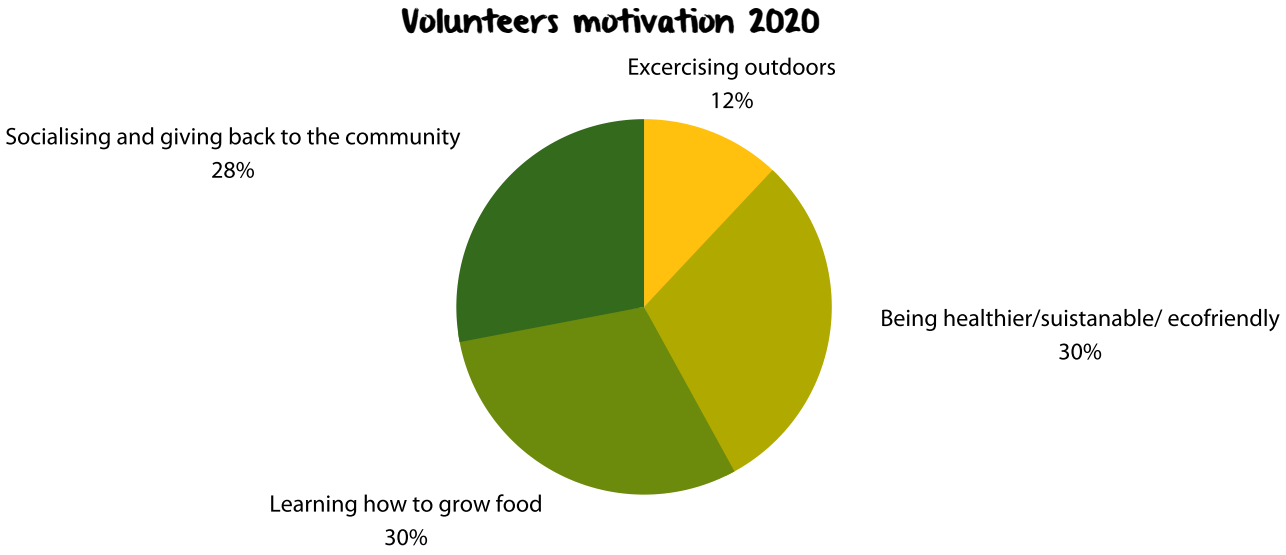
Volunteers are vital to expanding our capacity. In 2020, 60% of our volunteers supported our growing activities and in our last survey, 82% of those said they had learnt about growing food using sustainable methods, 2020 was the first year we were able to offer organised hands-on sessions where as well as learning about growing food, the volunteers learnt how to use garden machinery and for our disadvantaged young adults, this has also helped them to achieve their full potential and increase their confidence.

91%
Of volunteers reported eating & enjoying more food grown without chemicals

100%
Volunteers agreed that their wellbeing improved as a result of volunteering with Communigrow

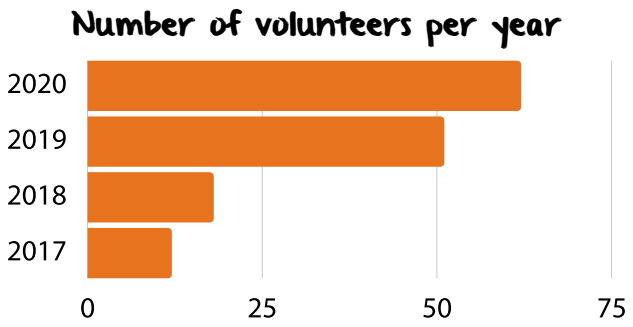
82%
Of volunteers reported positive mental & physical changes

During 2020 we were able to offer volunteers a wider variety of remote working opportunities which allowed volunteers to contribute their expertise in new ways. For example, by promoting the charity on social media, providing IT/digital services, assisting with our educational activities, recruitment, the youth forum and communications/marketing. Thanks to remarkable contributions from volunteers supporting us remotely, we reached online communities through our new website, newsletters and high quality content shared via social media which increased the number of social media followers on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram by between 19% and 42%.



Overall, the volunteers contributed 3,614 hours of their time, without which, Communigrow would not have been able to achieve its objectives.

Even though volunteer numbers have grown over the past year, we are still looking for volunteers with knowledge of how to grow food in a sustainable way. Increasing our volunteer numbers is a key priority.



"I have been exploring the subject of sustainable growing myself prior to volunteering but I find it great to meet like-minded people at the field. During those uncertain times we currently live in, I found volunteering at Communigrow very helpful. As someone coming from a busy office environment, working over 40 hours a week, first few weeks of furlough were extremely difficult to me. Volunteering at Communigrow provided me with a structure to my week and helped to find my focus again. No task is too small, there is always something to do at the field and there is great sense of achievement at the end of the day."

- Volunteer

Supporting the community through the pandemic

In 2020 we worked to ensure our site was safe for the community. Our site was closed to the public during the first national lockdown but was reopened to a handful of volunteers in May. Since then, we have implemented measures to provide a Covid-safe environment to staff, volunteers, beneficiaries, and visitors at the field. This includes the development of our COVID-19 strategy, limiting on-site capacity, social distancing, and installing new hand-washing facilities. We also introduced a mask requirement for volunteers working in polytunnels and groups.

In October we hosted our annual socially distanced open day to showcase our positive work to the community. Despite the wet conditions, visitors turned out to show their support and learn more about the work of the charity.



Our digital volunteer team produced engaging content on social media with a series of activities to do at home for families wanting to enjoy nature or start to grow their own food during the lockdown. Our team also shared notes on personal experiences of growing food at home and set up a public WhatsApp chat (Grow Along group) to share tips and advice on how to grow food at home. There were 40 participants who were actively engaged between March and December 2020.

"Having self taught to heal my gut health and learning about health and nutrition, it was important for me to find somewhere where I could learn more about how produce can be grown without the need of chemicals. Every week I learn more and more, the team are so helpful and fun. I am so grateful to have found communigrow and watching it grow from strength to strength and the positive impact it has on your mind, body and soul. Being part of this community is the best therapy you can do for yourself."

-Volunteer





Fundraising

2020 has been a very successful year for increasing our income from a variety of Trusts and Foundations both local and national. This has strengthened the perception and image of Communigrow as a credible and capable educational charity worthy of endorsement, sponsorship and investment. Our income for 2020 amounted to £114,216 compared to £109,038 in 2019.



We are most appreciative of the support we have received from:

Atwood Benefits Ltd (formerly F & L Finance)
29th May 1961 Charitable Trust
Albert Hunt Foundation
Baily Thomas Foundation
Colyer Fergusson Charitable Trust
East Malling & Larkfield Parish Council
Garfield Weston Charitable Trust
Gatwick Charitable Trust
Henry Smith Foundation
Hollick Family Foundation
Ian Askew Trust
INVOLVE Kent
Kent Community Foundation
Leigh Charitable Foundation
Lloyds Bank Foundation
Maidstone Lions
Malling Lions
Masonic Mark Benevolent Fund
Matthew Wrightson Foundation
Mrs Smith and Mount Trust
Nineveh Charitable Trust
Postcode Local Trust
Woodroffe Benton Trust



Grant funding has enabled us to achieve the following substantial progress in the development of our charitable aims. It has:

- Enhanced the coordination and deployment of our small team of growers and volunteers in maintaining an effective and engaging growing programme across our 2.4 acre site.
- Ensured the consistent provision of education and skills development support to over 50 young learners despite the restrictions imposed by Covid-19.
- Enabled us to create a new role of horticultural leader. We have been able to develop and maintain the roles of volunteer coordinator, education coordinators and growers.
- Enabled us to increase the usage of the site. We have been able to design a growing programme that offers a breadth of educational and skills development opportunities for all of our service users and importantly for those with additional sensory impairment.
- Improved and broadened our data gathering, with the help of our referral partners and external business development support, so as to monitor and evaluate our performance in supporting disadvantaged young people and adults to acquire knowledge, skills and greater self confidence in their abilities and potential.
- Helped us to innovate and create opportunities for service users to become engaged in growing, harvesting and selling of produce as part of our social enterprise activities.
- Enabled us to respond to adaptations to service delivery due to Covid-19 restrictions.

Future plans

During the current and future years we aim to:

- Offer learning and skills development through our horticultural activities to an increased number and range of community groups and schools, and additionally, in the case of disadvantaged and vulnerable people to improve their prospects of integration and participation in society.
- Strengthen our links with our referral partners who introduce to us to new groups who can benefit from our activities and workshops.
- Develop a structured learning programme for volunteers and growers to develop their knowledge and skills and with that offer accredited qualifications, such as City & Guilds.
- Develop social prescribing partnerships to offer our services to those who face challenges in their daily lives, either through long-term conditions, mental health issues or whose social needs have affected their wellbeing generally.
- Capitalise on the progress made last year in developing our reach to the wider community by offering our expertise and knowledge online through social media channels.
- Maximise the usage of the field to demonstrate new and innovative planting and soil management using sustainable techniques.
- Diversify our revenue streams to ensure the charity is sustainable and appropriately resourced. For example, through social enterprise activities, fundraising events, increased donations, legacy donations, corporate support and increased vegetable production and sales.
- Seek to work in partnership with other organisations that are aligned with our ethos and values and look for opportunities for collaboration and joint funding bids.
- Covid-19 permitting, open up our field for open days and community workshop days.



Governance and Management Structure

Reference, Administration, trustees

Charity name	Communigrow
Registered Charity No.	1159534
Contact address	1 Wesley Close, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 9HT
Trustees	Simon Webley - Chair Helen Turner – Secretary Alan Piper Judith Sweatman (resigned 03/07/2020) Caroline Pearce Eleanor Nicolas – Treasurer
Independent Examiner	Priscilla Asirifi
Bank	The Co-operative Bank PO Box 200, Skelmersdale, WN8 6 WT
Website	www.communigrow.org.uk



Organisation and decision making

Communigrow held its AGM in July 2020 when Helen Turner and Alan Piper resigned and were re-elected. The trustees met seven times in 2020 to consider all aspects of the charity's activities and to monitor progress.



Leadership and Management

Recent new appointments have invigorated our Board of Trustees adding new skills, expertise, networks and resources. We are very fortunate in now having a very skilled and active Board of Trustees who are passionately committed to our principles of using horticulture creatively to assist those facing challenge and disadvantage amongst communities across West Kent. The board is supported by a volunteer adviser to the board with special emphasis on financial and fundraising strategy. She has been instrumental in arranging and facilitating training for all trustees focusing on their role and responsibilities. In addition the Board has engaged a business development and fundraising consultant to assist with business planning, growth and income generation.

New Trustees

Prospective trustees are invited to a trustee meeting to discuss their application to be a trustee. References and due checks are carried out and following appointment as a trustee an induction session is held including explanations of the roles and responsibilities of trustees.

The trustees confirm that they have had due regard to the Charity Commission's public benefit guidance when making their decisions.

The management team met regularly through 2020 to plan and monitor activities. Other day to day decisions were made informally as and when required.

Major Risks statement

The trustees regularly review the following major risks and respond accordingly.

1. Governance - a skills audit was carried out in 2020 to identify strengths and weaknesses.
2. Financial - regular reports are received on the charity's financial position, sustainability, safeguarding funds and reserves.
3. Operational - Safeguarding and Health & Safety reviews are undertaken and volunteer roles and beneficiary welfare are assessed.
4. External - key for the charity was responding to the impact of Covid-19, safeguarding its reputation, responding to demographic changes and changes in funders' criteria.
5. Compliance with law and regulation - in particular employment law and charity law.

Case Study: Peter (not his real name) from Grow 19



Peter is a twenty year old student at Grow 19, studying for his City & Guilds in Practical Horticulture. He has some strong opinions and can lack the social skills to understand when he is riling his fellow students and speaking inappropriately to staff.

When he started attending Communigrow in September he did not always respond well to instructions. Staff have worked hard to engage with Peter, listening to his ideas, challenging them where appropriate and explaining the need to work as a team. Taking the time to address his points with practical examples has worked well.

A turning point came when the students became involved in the final stages of making a new 'no dig' vegetable bed. Peter was full of contempt for the project giving lots of reasons why it wouldn't work. Other students had shown a lot of interest in the scheme so we decided to challenge them to construct a 'new improved' no dig bed from scratch. Peter thought this was a great idea and joined in enthusiastically. As the project developed, he realised why certain decisions had to be made and whilst still asking questions he was more accepting of the answers- even if they diverged from his ideas.

Peter has continued to work enthusiastically on projects, accepting instruction and guidance where needed. In a recent session I watched Peter explaining a task to another student who had joined his team spreading compost on the squash beds. He took his time, demonstrated clearly and rather than reacting negatively to mistakes he demonstrated the correct technique. He was rightly proud of the work the team has achieved.

Finance report

Financial Statement for period 01/01/2020 to 31/12/2020

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	3,241	-	-	3,241	1,231
COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING	413	-	-	413	1,217
CORPORATE DONATIONS	135	-	-	135	1,303
DONATIONS	419	-	-	419	698
SPONSORSHIP	3,500	-	-	3,500	6,000
TRUSTS & FOUNDATIONS	-	102,872	-	102,872	95,343
VEG SALES	3,636	-	-	3,636	3,246
	-	-	-	-	-
***Sub total**(Gross income for AR)*	11,344	102,872	-	114,216	109,038
A3 Payments					
ADMIN/UTILITIES	827	2,677		3,504	1,247
CONSUMABLES	1,364	5,067	-	6,431	5,488
EQUIPMENT	-	14,031	-	14,031	5,148
FUNDRAISING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	-	7,413	-	7,413	4,300
INSURANCE & RENT	-	1,893	-	1,893	1,459
MARKETING	106	9	-	115	354
SERVICES (INCLUDING SALARIES)	952	61,102	-	62,054	47,582
	-		-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	3,250	92,190	-	95,440	65,578
Total payments	3,250	92,190	-	95,440	65,578
Net of receipts/(payments)	8,094	10,682	-	18,776	43,460
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	11,951	62,285	-	74,236	30,775
Cash funds this year end	20,045	72,967	-	93,012	74,235

Assets and Liabilities

6 temporary structures – polytunnels/greenhouses/ Yurt tent
Log cabin/sheds
Horticultural tools & machinery/tractor
Kitchen trailer
IT equipment
There are no debts outstanding and no potential liabilities under guarantee.

Reserves Policy

The charity needs reserves to enable it to progress to completing both its long term projects, and its current activities and fluctuations in receipts and payments. The policy is to hold £8,000 for working activities. The level has been set to take account of the following:

1. Contingency: unexpected expenditure in the event of an emergency;
2. Cash-flow: situations where a bill has to be paid before the money to cover it has been received;
3. Commitment: a commitment to expenditure which cannot be covered by the annual income
4. Closure: the charity becomes financially unsustainable and has to be wound up.

Explanatory Notes

1. General funds are unrestricted and are spent on the charity's general purposes.
2. Restricted funds comprise donations and grants for specific activities intended by the donor
3. £60,914 of the £72,967 restricted funds at the end 2020 is carried forward for staff salaries and business development costs during 2021.

Independent Examiner's Report

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Charity") for the year ended 31/12/2020.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

Independent examiner's statement

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's 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.

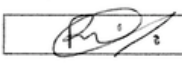
I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

· the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Act; or

· the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or

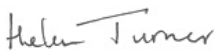
· the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

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:		**Date:**	04/02/2021
Name:	Priscilla Asirifi		
Relevant professional qualification(s) or body (if any):	Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA)		
Address:	8 Sandown Street Manchester M18 8SA		

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed on behalf of trustees



Name: Helen Turner
Position: Secretary & Trustee

Date: 16th April 2021

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