

The Patchworking Garden Project - Trustees Report 31 March 2024



The Patchworking Garden Project Trustees Report – 31 March 2024

For the year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024

Reference and Administration Details

Charity name	The Patchworking Garden Project
Registered Charity number	1162471 (Registered in England and Wales)
Charity's Principal Address	Carmel O'Shea 44 West Bank Dorking Surrey RH4 3DH
Website	www.patchworkinggardenproject.co.uk Find us also on Instagram and Facebook

Trustees

Name	Office (if any)
Isobel Gowan	Chair
Carmel O'Shea	Founder
Dan Andrew	Treasurer
Helen McHenry	
Chris Munford	Appointed 11 December 23
Dr Glenn Cornish	Mental Health Adviser, Appointed 11 December 23
Others who served during the year / Date of Resignation	
Val Theobald to 28 June 24 Joanne Olney to 23 August 23	Helen Clifford-Jones to 28 June 2024

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Structure, Governance and Management

Type of governing document	The Constitution was adopted on 23 April 2015.
How the Charity is constituted	<p>The Patchworking Garden Project is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with voting members comprising its trustees and its management committee.</p> <p>Its registration as a Charity was effective from 1 April 2015.</p>
Trustee selection methods	Trustees are appointed for a three-year term. There must be a minimum of five and a maximum of nine. Vacancies or new appointments may be filled by the Trustees. The appointment of such interim Trustees must be confirmed at the next Annual General Meeting. From the second Annual General Meeting onwards one third of Trustees must retire annually but may be reappointed for further terms.
Decision-making	<p>Decisions are made both by the Trustees or are delegated to the Management Committee.</p> <p>The definition of Members was widened in April 2024 to include both Volunteers and Supported Volunteers, in addition to the Management Committee and Trustees. In the event of a matter being raised to the members for a decision then a quorum of fifteen is required and a simple majority is required from the voting members.</p>

Other relevant governance matters

The project has policies and procedures in place covering the operation of the garden and what is expected of our volunteers. We also have policies for safeguarding, equal opportunities, health and safety, GDPR/consent, how we manage our income and expenditure and a reserves policy. These policies are reviewed on a regular basis.

The project works closely with local mental health and learning disability services, General Practitioners, volunteer agencies and other charities supporting individuals with physical and mental health needs.

The trustees and the management committee give their time voluntarily and receive no remuneration or other benefits. The project is entirely run by a dedicated group of volunteers who give freely of their time and many skills.

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Objectives and activities

The objectives of The Patchworking Garden Project are:

- The promotion of improvement in well-being as a result of accessing the therapeutic benefits of gardening in a volunteer supported environment, which include better physical health, improved psychological health, improved social opportunities, learning new skills and access to the natural environment.
- The promotion of volunteering to increase engagement with the community, enhancing the use of community resources and raising confidence and self-esteem.
- The reduction of stigma associated with physical disability, psychological health problems, old age and infirmity by creating an inclusive project where the contribution of each person is equally acknowledged.
- To provide this service within the Mole Valley area of Surrey.

Activities and Achievements

2023-2024 has been a busy and successful year for the project. We have had all sorts of weather of course but this was a year for welcoming new supported and support volunteers as well as Trustees. We also said a fond farewell to many people.

- Our calendar of public facing events, spring plant sale, Summer Open Day, and Christmas wreath and craft sale were very well attended as local support continues to grow, so special thanks to all our team who make these events such a success!
- 2023-24 was a tough year for Fundraising but our community events along with legacies means we have continued to invest whilst also keeping a tight rein on costs.
- Our Academy students are to be congratulated both for their academic achievement and for the subsequent employment gained by some.
- We can support up to 90 people alongside our 60 support volunteers and will keep to that number. It has been lovely to see how people thrive in our project.
- There has been a huge drive through the year of raising our profile with other charities, social prescribers and the public with over 70 posters advertising what we offer and how to access our services posted around the area.
- We are lucky enough to have experienced volunteers helping with marketing and social media alongside a local company which means our profile is maintained regularly and is well recognised.
- We recruited two new Trustees: one is our Mental Health Adviser, and the other is leading on Fundraising and Communications. Both bring hugely welcome experience and expertise.
- We have strengthened our amazing admin team and have a new volunteer who is focussed on helping us apply for grants.
- Although it is technically in our 2024/25 year, we were blown away by the support shown to us during the Dorking Westival Music event at the beginning of May as the final total raised was an amazing £10,000.

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Challenges

- Inevitably keeping up with fundraising is always a major challenge but we have many great supporters, and our 2023 events showed us the great support we have.
- At the beginning of 2024 we have been successful in applying for a number of grants but know that continuing to be successful will be tougher given the impact of the pandemic and the UK economy; we are lucky to have sufficient reserves but know that other charities do not.
- We are close to finalising a long-term lease with our new landlord Stonegate homes who are developing the former Aviva site.

Benefits in kind and Value of Volunteer Time

We would like to formally record the generous support we receive from local businesses Buckland Nurseries and Downs Solicitors. Many others kindly give us a variety of discounts which all helps !

We would also like to acknowledge the value of the time that our volunteers, support staff and trustees contribute to the project. We are a £172,000 a year operation if you added the value of volunteer time, estimated at £125,000, to our recorded costs of £47,000.

That volunteer time commitment is invaluable and makes the project the success it has been. Like the local business support, it shows nowhere in our financial numbers.

Looking forward

- We will keep publishing our quarterly newsletter to those who like to hear about our work.
- We will approach local businesses more formally with a view to establishing a network from whom we can ask for ongoing financial support.
- We are continuing to build more links within our community to ensure our students and others we support can find new opportunities for employment and volunteering.
- We are investing in our site as funds become available and ensuring a wide range of activities are available for everyone who attends.

Financial Review

This year our income increased by £13,900 and our expenses fell £3,400 compared to the prior year and, with reserves of £85,700, we remain in a strong financial position.

Our 31 March 2024 balance sheet shows total funds of £85,700. (2023 : £79,200) an increase of £6,500.

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An important caveat is that in March 2024 we received a National Lottery grant of £20,000 for the two years from June 2024. Adjusting this year's cash result for that early payment creates a deficit of £13,500 for the current year.

Funds are held in cash at NatWest (£64,400), Virgin Money (£1,200) and in a CCLA Equity Investment Fund at a cost of £20,000 (Market Value at 31 March 2024 - £22,575). Our funds are unrestricted funds except for the National Lottery grant and a smaller grant of £500, both of which will be released to unrestricted reserves in future years.

Our income increase of £13,900 can be broken down as follows :

- Donations received totalled £6,900 (Last year £6,500) an increase of £400.
- Grants were received of £29,000 (Last year £15,000) an increase of £14,000.
- This year included the National Lottery two-year award described above.
- Fundraising remained strong at £15,300 (Last year £16,800) a reduction of £1,500.
- Investment and Interest Income added £1,300 (Last year £100) an increase of £1,200.
- Legacies added £800 (Last Year £1,000) a reduction of £200.

Our costs decreased by £3,400 to £46,900 which can be broken into three parts.

- Running costs totalled £18,400 (Last year £21,900). This includes all the costs of the garden including activities, maintenance, fund-raising and other overhead costs.
- Our Academy tutor and other training costs totalled £23,800 (Last year £20,000)
- Our investment in the Pixham site was reduced to £4,700 (Last year £8,400). Funds this year were invested in extending our irrigation system to the Academy plots (and for which we received a grant of £3,000) and other improvements.

Financial outlook

Our total running costs for the year to 31 March 2025 are forecast at £44,000 plus additional development expenditure of £12,000, if we can secure grants or use reserves. We regard the receipt of regular grant income as essential for the Academy due to its annual running costs of £22,000. We will manage our expenditure accordingly as there may be less grant money available in the immediate future.

Reserves Policy

Our Reserves Policy requires the Charity to retain a year's running costs in reserve, which for the Garden and Academy, excluding further development expenditure, is a combined total of £44,000. We are pleased to report that we have almost two years of running costs.

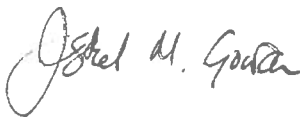
The reserves we have will be retained to cover any shortfalls in income, for unforeseen expenditure to make appropriate investments that the Trustees and Management Committee agree should be made in furtherance of our charitable objectives.

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Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the Trustees on 30 August 2024



Name	Isobel Gowan	Dan Andrew
Position	Chair	Treasurer

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The Patchworking Garden Project	Reg. 1162471
	England & Wales

Receipts and payments accounts

For the year	01-Apr-23	To	31-Mar-24	Form : CC16a
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Last Year £
Receipts				
Donations including Gift Aid	6,933	-	6,933	6,509
Grants Received	8,494	20,500	28,994	15,000
Fundraising	15,273	-	15,273	16,806
Investment income and Interest	1,316	-	1,316	100
Legacies Received	818	-	818	1,000
Total receipts	32,835	20,500	53,335	39,415
Payments				
Expenditure to develop the Garden	4,680	-	4,680	8,377
Garden, Craft supplies and Equipment	8,601	-	8,601	10,953
Training Costs	23,761	-	23,761	19,990
Fundraising Costs	2,222	-	2,222	1,426
Other Expenses	7,607	-	7,607	9,508
Total payments	46,871	-	46,871	50,253
Net surplus/(deficit)	(14,036)	20,500	6,464	(10,838)
Opening funds	79,238	-	79,238	90,076
Cash funds this year-end	65,202	20,500	85,702	79,238

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

		31-Mar-24 £	31-Mar-23 £
B1 - Cash and Investments	NatWest - Current Account	1,215	4,238
	NatWest - Deposit Accounts	63,267	-
	Virgin Money - Charity Deposit Account	1,220	75,000
	CCLA - Global Equity Fund Units (Market Value £22,575)	20,000	-
		85,702	79,238
Funds	Unrestricted Funds	65,202	79,238
	Restricted Funds	20,500	-
		85,702	79,238
B4 - Assets retained for the charity's own use	No book value is placed on our buildings, equipment or development expenditure at Pixham.	None	None
B5 - Liabilities	Liabilities	None	None

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Independent examiner's report to the trustees of The Patchworking Garden Project Registered charity number 1162471

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of The Patchworking Garden Project ('the Project') for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the charity's trustees of the Project, 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 Project'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 Project as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matter 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:



Mr David Huw Bassett FCCA
Tamar,
Harrow Road East,
Dorking,
Surrey

Date: 30 August 2024

