

The Patchworking Garden Project - Trustees Report 31 March 2025



The Patchworking Garden Project Trustees Report – 31 March 2025

For the year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025

Reference and Administration Details

Charity name	The Patchworking Garden Project
Registered Charity number	1162471 (Registered in England and Wales)
Charity's Principal Address	Chris Munford 50 Woodlands Road Little Bookham Leatherhead, Surrey KT23 4HF
Website	www.patchworkinggardenproject.co.uk Find us also on Instagram and Facebook

Trustees

Name	Office (if any)
Isobel Gowan	Chair
Dan Andrew	Treasurer
Dr Glenn Cornish	Mental Health Adviser
Helen McHenry	HR Adviser
Chris Munford	Academy and Supported Volunteer Lead
Rebecca Ward	Fundraiser (Appointed 6 March 2025)
Others who served during the year / Date of Resignation	
Carmel O'Shea 26 June 2025	
Val Theobald 28 June 2024	Helen Clifford-Jones 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 add both Volunteers and Supported Volunteers to the Management Committee and Trustees.</p> <p>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

2024-25 has been a busy and successful year for the project but also a time for thinking about change as we enter into our 10th year. 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 and an early highlight in May 2024 was Westival. This is a local music event, and we were lucky enough to be selected as their charity of the year. Our team were amazing all weekend and the support we received was utterly fantastic, raising £10,000!
- Fundraising continues to be hard work but our community events along with a generous 2-year grant from the National Lottery Community Fund, additional support from Mole Valley District Council and a new fundraising volunteer writing our applications has made everything feel more manageable this year.
- Our Academy students are to be congratulated both for their academic achievement and for the subsequent employment gained by several.
- 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, especially as we regain a focus on friendship and fun.
- 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.
- One of our supported volunteers has joined our management committee and is bringing welcome insight into how our sessions operate.
- Our visionary founder is stepping down in June 2025, so we used an external facilitator to help us prepare for that big change. She designed a process that included

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everyone in the project so we feel confident that the redistribution of roles and responsibilities will stand us in good stead as we look forward.

Challenges

- We enter the 2025 year in a healthy financial position but have been much saddened by several break ins and will have to spend funds on increased security.
- We were close to finalising a long-term lease with our new landlord Stonegate homes who had plans to develop the former Aviva site, but the whole site is now up for sale.
- At the time of writing in June 2025 we are bidding a very fond farewell to our founder Carmel O'Shea. Carmel's vision, tenacity and skills will be much missed, but we have a strong team in place to carry the project on though we all know it will be challenging at times.

Benefits in kind and Value of Volunteer Time

We would like to formally record the generous support we receive from local businesses Buckland Nurseries, Downs Solicitors, Dave Ford Tree Services and RB Fencing. Many others kindly gave 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 £175,000 a year operation if you added the value of volunteer time, estimated at £130,000, to our running costs of £45,000.

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 total income increased £900 to £54,200 however our expenses increased £22,100 compared to the prior year. With reserves of £71,000 however, we remain in an acceptable financial position going into this year.

Our 31 March 2025 balance sheet shows total funds of £71,000. (2024 : £85,700) a decrease of £14,700.

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Our result for this year was close to the budget set by the Trustees and was impacted by two significant matters: the first being essential expenditure to replace both the kitchen area roof and the Academy shelter for a total cost of £13,500. The second was exceptional expenditure on consultancy fees of £4,100 to help guide the Charity on the design and adoption of a new organisation model for the next ten years.

It should also be noted that in March 2024 we received a National Lottery grant of £20,000 for the two years from June 2024. Our result would be close to break even if we adjusted this year's result for that early funding and the exceptional costs mentioned above.

Funds are held in cash at NatWest (£51,000) and in a CCLA Equity Investment Fund at a cost of £20,000 (Market Value on 31 March 2024 - £21,200). Our funds are unrestricted funds except for the remaining deferred National Lottery grant (£10,000) and further restricted grants of a net £2,007 held for future expenditure.

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

- Fundraising increased further to £23,600 (Last year £15,300) an increase of £8,300.
- This included our three annual events – the April Plant Sale, July Open Day and our Xmas Wreaths plus the result from the Westival Music Festival where, over the May Bank Holiday weekend as their designated charity, we made an incredible £9,600.
- Donations received totalled £8,100 (Last year £6,900) an increase of £1,200.
- Grants were received of £16,300 (Last year £29,000) a decrease of £12,700. However, we did receive £10,000 for this year which was shown in the 2023/4 accounts meaning our adjusted grant income was near flat, year-on-year.
- Legacies income added £3,700 (Last Year £800) an increase of £2,900.
- Interest and Investment Income added £2,500 (Last year £1,300) an increase of £1,200.

Our costs increased to £69,000 (Last Year £46,900) an increase of £21,100 This can be broken into three parts.

- Running costs totalled £25,800 (Last year £18,400) an increase of £7,400. This includes all garden costs including activities, repairs and maintenance, fund-raising, insurance and other overhead costs plus, for this year, the exceptional consultancy costs of £4,100 mentioned above.
- Academy tutor and other training costs totalled £22,400 (Last year £23,800)
- Our investment in the Pixham site increased to £20,500 (Last year £4,700) with essential expenditure on the Academy shelter, Kitchen Roof (Total £13,500) and the Events shed, replacement front gate and fencing and the Fire Pit (Total £7,000).
- Expenditure to develop the site's facilities looks complete and we will move to a care and maintenance phase from this year onwards.

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Financial outlook

Our total running costs for the year to 31 March 2026 are budgeted at £41,000 plus additional expenditure of £2,500 for car park repairs, if we can secure additional grants or use our reserves. Given our typical fundraising income, we will then have a shortfall of £10,000 which we will look for grants to cover.

Grants will always remain essential for the Academy to cover its annual running costs of £21,000. We will continue to manage our expenditure carefully due to the uncertainties over the availability of grant money.

Reserves Policy

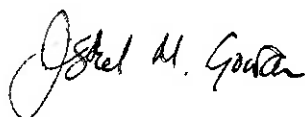
Our Reserves Policy requires the Charity to retain a year's running costs in reserve, which for the Garden and Academy, excluding further development expenditure, is a combined total of £41,000. With reserves of £71,000 we are pleased to report that we have almost two years of running costs.

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

Declaration

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

Signed on behalf of the Trustees on 11 July 2025



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-24	To	31-Mar-25	Form : CC16a
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Section A Receipts and payments

	Unrestricted Funds £	Restricted Funds £	Total Funds £	Last Year £
Receipts				
Fundraising	23,634	-	23,634	15,273
Donations including Gift Aid	8,114	-	8,114	6,933
Grants Received	14,092	2,200	16,292	28,994
Legacies and In Memory Donations	3,675	-	3,675	818
Interest and Investment Income	2,531	-	2,531	1,316
Total receipts	52,046	2,200	54,246	53,335
Payments				
Kitchen Roof and Academy Shelter Upgrades	13,533	-	13,533	-
Other Site Development Expenditure	7,012	-	7,012	4,680
Garden, Craft supplies and Equipment	7,182	-	7,182	8,601
Training Costs	22,426	-	22,426	23,761
Fundraising Costs	2,419	-	2,419	2,222
Other Expenses	16,212	193	16,405	7,607
Total payments	68,784	193	68,977	46,871
Net (Deficit)/Surplus	(16,738)	2,007	(14,731)	6,464
Transfers between funds	10,500	(10,500)	-	-
Opening funds	65,202	20,500	85,702	79,238
Cash funds this year-end	58,965	12,007	70,971	85,702

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

		31-Mar-25 £	31-Mar-24 £
B1 - Cash and Investments	NatWest - Current Account	1,836	1,215
	NatWest - Deposit Accounts	49,135	63,267
	Virgin Money - Charity Deposit Account	-	1,220
	CCLA - Global Equity Fund Units (Market Value £21,203)	20,000	20,000
		70,971	85,702
Funds	Unrestricted Funds	58,965	65,202
	Restricted Funds	12,007	20,500
		70,971	85,702
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 2025.

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: 11 July 2025