

BETHNAL GREEN NATURE RESERVE TRUST

England & Wales · Charity number 1166648

Details

Other names	BGNR TRUST
Status	Registered
Legal form	CIO
Registered	2016-04-20
Register	View on the Charity Commission register

Contact

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Activities

Objects: THE OBJECTS OF THE CIO ARE TO PROMOTE, FOR THE PUBLIC BENEFIT, THE PRESERVATION AND CARE OF THE FLORA, FAUNA, AND FUNGI OF THE BETHNAL GREEN NATURE RESERVE AS A PLACE OF ECOLOGICAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND CULTURAL INTEREST - LOCALLY AND MORE WIDELY – IN TERMS OF BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT, LEARNING, HEALTH, ARTS, PARTICIPATION AND RESEARCH

Activities: THE MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE BETHNAL GREEN NATURE RESERVE IN EAST LONDON, IN TERMS OF ECOLOGY, ARTS AND EDUCATION, FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL.

Classification

- **How:** Provides Buildings/facilities/open Space, Provides Services, Other Charitable Activities
- **What:** General Charitable Purposes, Education/training, Arts/culture/heritage/science, Environment/conservation/heritage, Recreation, Other Charitable Purposes
- **Who:** Children/young People, Elderly/old People, People With Disabilities, Other Charities Or Voluntary Bodies, The General Public/mankind

Geography

- Throughout London

Finances

Period end	Income	Expenditure	Assets	Employees
2025-03-31	£118,409	£101,584	-	-
2024-03-31	£44,645	£45,240	-	-
2023-03-31	£70,746	£93,997	-	-
2022-03-31	£91,854	£66,286	-	-
2021-03-31	£37,571	£8,932	-	-

Trustees

Name	Role	Appointed
Sajida Malik	Chair	2021-01-20
ANGHARAD CAROLINE MARY DAVIES		2025-09-27
Adelaide Bannerman		2023-01-22
Bryony Rosanna Harris		2023-01-23
Gwendoline Agnes Wright		2022-01-25
Oliver Michael Grazebrook		2024-01-23

BETHNAL GREEN NATURE RESERVE TRUST

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Accounts



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The Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust (BGNRT) was officially registered as a charity (1166648) in April 2016. Our charitable purpose is to protect and enhance the flora, fauna and fungi of the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve for public benefit. We support this by promoting biodiversity, fostering learning, strengthening community health, supporting the arts, encouraging participation and enabling research.

Governance

Trustees: Sajida Malik (Chair), Gwen Wright (Treasurer), Bryony Harris (Secretary), Adelaide Bannerman, Oliver Grazebrook, Angharad Davies.

2025 Site Team:

Abel Daniel (Deputy Site Manager)
Ash Miah (Food Garden Site Manager)
Edward Simpson (Site Manager)
Fatima Ali (Community Gardener)
Hakim Oreagba (Finance)
Ingrid Chen (Forest School Lead, Community Gardener)
Izzy Johns (Community Gardener in Residence)
Mark O'Leary (Forest School Tutor)
Maryam Hoang (Forest School Tutor)
Michael Smythe (Senior Manager)
Odhran Lawlor (Community Gardener)
Phyllis Martin (Development)
Shilpi Choudhury (Forest School Tutor, Community Gardener)

We extend heartfelt thanks to the dedicated volunteers who care for the Reserve each week. Your commitment ensures the site continues to thrive both ecologically and socially. We would also like to extend our gratitude to our funders who support the vision and range of the work we do.

The Bethnal Green Nature Reserve is generously supported by Anton Juergens Charitable Trust, Arnold Clark Community Fund, Awards for All, BBC Children In Need, Canary Wharf Community Fund, Chapman Charitable Trust, City Bridge Foundation, Forte Charitable Foundation (formally Trusthouse), Garfield Weston, London Marathon Foundation, Marsh Charitable Trust, Nineveh Trust, Postcode Neighbourhood Trust, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Skinners Company, Stafford Trust, Tower Hill Trust, Womble Bond Dickinson.

Site Manager's Report by Edward Simpson Ecological Work & Volunteer Achievements



The Bethnal Green Nature Reserve continues to flourish thanks to the dedication of our volunteer community. This year, the clay pond project at the Bethnal Green Ecology Garden (BGEg) was completed with the addition of aquatic plants and the final hedgerow installation. Volunteers also worked across the Nature Reserve site to maintain woodland, wildflower meadows and wetland habitats.



A major focus was the large ecology pond, where rapidly dropping water levels over summer and reduced bat activity signalled a need for intervention. Dense vegetation was cleared and relocated to reopen the water surface. Bats have since returned this autumn, skimming the pond at dusk. We also advanced long-term efforts to improve the forest understory, prioritising soil-building and expanding in-house compost production.



At the Ecology Garden, the Community Ecologies programme supported the creation of a new solitary bee habitat led by community member Eamonn Postlethwaite. Annual bird-box monitoring recorded another successful nesting season, with at least six boxes used by great tits and blue tits. Thanks to these collective efforts, biodiversity continues to increase. Newly recorded species in 2026 include a female stag beetle, silver-washed fritillary and firecrest.

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements for the year ending 31 March 2025

A new rain canopy installed at the start of the year has transformed our capacity to host education sessions, volunteer days and events during unpredictable weather. The Canopy was generously funded by Tower Hill Trust.



Climate Resilience

Climate change continues to shape our site management. This year saw extreme weather and more site closures than usual due to high winds, drought and sudden rainfall. Several trees required emergency work, meaning we brought in arborists twice instead of the usual annual visit. We anticipate this becoming standard practice and will adjust future budgets accordingly.

The main pond dried more quickly than in previous summers. Volunteers installed a new filling system to stabilise water levels. Improvements to woodland soils are beginning to show results, with healthier plant growth and better moisture retention. Expanding this work is a core part of our climate-resilience strategy.

Volunteers, Data & Newsletter

From January onwards, we ran 35 volunteer sessions (with only two cancelled due to weather), averaging 12 participants per session—a total of approximately 840 volunteer hours.



We welcomed 122 new volunteers, many of whom have since become regular contributors and keyholders. Most new volunteers joined to support the Medicinal Garden, connect with nature and build community links. The majority live locally in E2, with many discovering the Reserve while passing by; others joined through word of mouth and our digital platforms.

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A major achievement this year was the relaunch of our monthly newsletter. Rebuilt from scratch using the past two years of volunteer opt-ins, it now reaches 214 subscribers and serves as both a communication tool and an ongoing archive of activity across the Reserve.

“The Reserve” - A Film by Karolina Raczynski



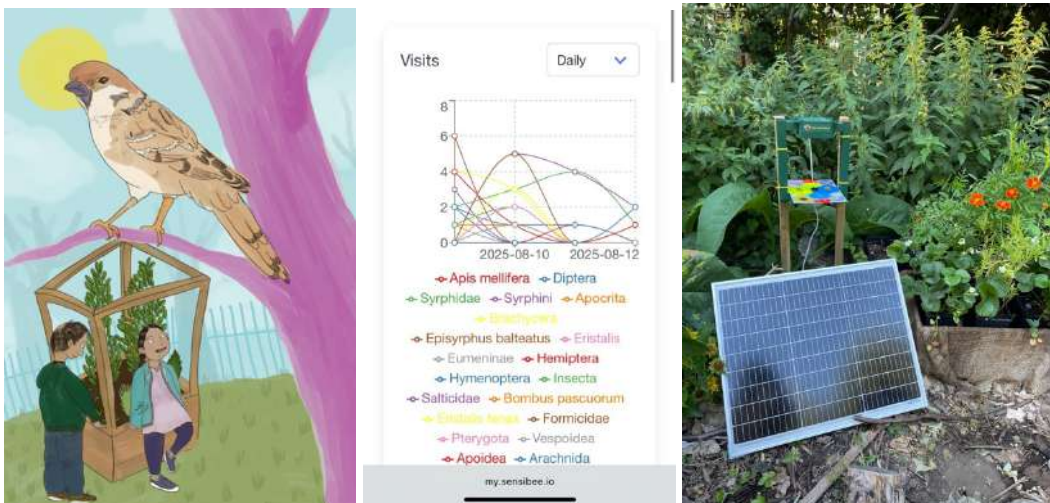
Filmmaker and community member Karolina Raczynski produced *The Reserve*, a poetic documentary capturing volunteer life at the site during winter 2025. Through personal stories, natural imagery and plant-chemistry film techniques, the work reflects the generosity of volunteers and the importance of the Reserve in their daily lives.

Link: <https://vimeo.com/1071870940?fl=pl&fe=sh>

PhD Pollinator Project

We were pleased to support part of Ana Vadeanu’s PhD research (UCL Bartlett School of Planning / National Institute of Agricultural Botany), examining pollinator activity across London’s green spaces. Early findings from data gathered at both the Medicinal Garden and BGEG food-growing areas have already offered valuable insights, with further analysis and a public talk planned for 2026.

Grow Wild Follow-On Grant



A follow-on grant from Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew Grow Wild initiative funded a booklet documenting our clay pond project—a practical “how-to” resource for other community gardens. We also commissioned Sadie St. Hilaire to illustrate key pond-supporting species, which will inform future educational materials. Looking ahead to 2026, we aim to:

- finalise our management plans to strengthen long-term site resilience
- improve accessibility through infrastructure upgrades, including toilet plumbing, a new wheelchair ramp and additional seating

- expand soil-building and climate adaptation work
- support new research, including Bonnie Wang's PhD project on human–bat interactions



Mycelium Alley Report by Abel Daniel

In 2025, work within Mycelium Alley continued to strengthen connections between the community and the world of fungi. What began as an experimental growing zone has now developed into a hub for learning, cultivation, and ecological observation. A significant milestone this year was the completion of both the Mycelium Ecology Report and the Introduction to Mycelium Alley booklet, documents that distil several years of collective research into an accessible guide for visitors and growers. Design and typesetting are underway, with the official launch planned for 2026.



Mycelium Alley: Developments and Observations

The mushroom habitats were consistently productive this year, with regular fruiting of Turkey Tail, Oyster mushrooms, Birch Polypore, and Shiitake. These successful cultivation areas appear to have positively influenced the wider Nature Reserve, where a greater diversity of wild fungi was observed—likely supported by increased spore dispersal and growing volunteer awareness.

Experimentation remained central to the programme. New species were introduced, including Velvet Shank on logs and Dryad's Saddle on fresh substrates, alongside several new Oyster mushroom strains. To accommodate these trials, the older Wine Cap bed was cleared and repurposed.



A key development was the creation of a new mushroom-growing area within the BGEG polytunnel, providing a controlled environment for species that are less suited to external weather conditions. Early trials included Velvet Shank and a Lion's Mane growing kit, both of which generated interest among visitors and volunteers.

Mycelium Alley also continued as a focal point for volunteer activities, including watering, harvesting, and inoculating logs. These hands-on sessions supported learning about fungal lifecycles and ecological functions. Beyond cultivation, volunteers developed a dual-extraction Turkey Tail tincture and produced paper from fungi, highlighting the artistic and medicinal potential of the site's mushroom species.



In 2026, work will continue across the polytunnel and Ecology Garden, with a focus on trialling additional native UK mushroom varieties. Finalising the Mycelium Ecology Booklet remains a priority; the draft is complete and now requires funding for professional design and printing. Once produced, this guide will support wider public engagement and practical fungal education.

The day-to-day running of the Nature Reserve is generously supported by Awards for All, BBC Children In Need, Chapman Charitable Trust, Forte Charitable Foundation (formally Trustshouse), Garfield Weston, London Marathon Foundation, Marsh Charitable Trust, Postcode Neighbourhood Trust, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Tower Hill Trust, Womble Bond Dickinson.

Community Ecologies Programme by Abel Daniel



The Community Ecologies Programme completed its second year in 2025 as a stakeholder-led initiative shaped through an open call for proposals. A panel of local volunteers selected projects aligned with the Nature Reserve's charitable objectives: health, ecology, culture, and learning. The resulting programme offered a platform for diverse practitioners to share skills, perspectives, and creative approaches to engaging with the Reserve.



Sessions ran on Saturday afternoons (3–4 pm) throughout the year, encouraging more visitors to explore the site. Programme highlights included:

- Creative Plant Naming Walk-shop, Yaya Wang
- Embodying Nature Through Butch Movement, Elspeth Chan Chi Fan
- Singing with the Birds, Catherine Clover
- Sensing, Mapping, Visioning: Collective Cartographies of BGNR, Leela Keshav
- Wild Food Preparation & Preservation, Magdalena Gomez
- After-Life Drawing Workshop, Kirsty Badenoch
- Unravelling the Patterns of Nature, Eden Rickson & Anand Joshi
- Providing Solitary Bees with Bed and Board, Eamonn Postlethwaite
- The Colour of Herbs Walk, Odhran Lawlor
- Wild Food Walk, Thanusan Gunabalasingham



Looking ahead, the 2026 Open Call will centre on climate change and climate adaptation, inviting proposals that approach these themes in creative, accessible, and community-building ways. Climate change can often feel overwhelming; this programme aims to offer entry points that foster curiosity, encourage meaningful engagement, and support both community wellbeing and ecological health.

Community Ecologies is generously supported by Chapman Charitable Trust, City Bridge Foundation, Nineveh Trust.

Phytology Medicine Garden Updates by Izzy Johns



This year, we successfully completed the Apothecary Shed, our new feature for the medicine garden. We installed new shelving, introduced a wide range of jars for storing dried herbs and finished preparations and added a removable hanging drying rack. The drying rack has proved to be highly effective. The shed is now fully stocked with ingredients, tools, and kitchenware for making balms, tinctures, oil infusions, and other herbal preparations. It has been great to see the shed being actively used by many members of the community. People have begun collecting herbs and preparations independently, as well as with guidance from the Saturday afternoon medicine garden team.

Plant Species in the Medicine Garden

This year, we reintroduced several plant species that have historically been part of the medicine garden but had become scarce or absent in recent years. These include clary sage,

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oxeye daisy, self-heal, borage, calendula, and pansy. Our purpose in expanding or reintroducing species remains the same: to meet a diversity of community needs. This means growing plants that support a broad range of ailments, supporting biodiversity in the wider ecosystem, and including species from a variety of cultural herbal traditions.



Looking ahead, we are planning to introduce further new species next year. A new sunny area has opened beside the shed after a storm brought down an ivy-covered dead tree, and we intend to develop this into a new growing bed. Next year's focus will be on increasing our selection of nervine herbs to support stress, burnout, and anxiety. As always, we will be working with suggestions from the community on what new plants they would like to see growing in the garden.

Volunteer Sessions

This year, volunteer sessions in the medicine garden have included a greater emphasis on herbal knowledge sharing alongside regular gardening tasks. We've also been familiarising volunteers with the Apothecary Shed and teaching them how to use the space effectively. A significant development has been the introduction of hands-on remedy-making. Volunteers have helped produce tinctures, infused oils, vinegars, and balms using plants grown within the garden. In a recent session, for example, the group made a plantain balm together. This work not only equips people with valuable practical skills but also allows us to preserve our harvest, so herbs remain accessible even out of season.

Medicine Garden Team & Saturday Afternoon Opening

This year, we introduced a small rota of community members to care for and host the medicine garden during Saturday afternoon openings. We'd like to thank Ingrid, Fatima, Shilpi, Odhran and occasionally Bones, for holding the space regularly and for sharing their knowledge, enthusiasm, and support with visitors.

Medicine Garden Booklet Updates

Our Medicine Garden Booklet is now close to completion. The booklet provides a clear and accessible guide to common plants in the garden, including how to identify them, what they can be used for, and basic preparation methods. Once finished, it will empower community members to confidently harvest and use herbs independently when visiting the space.



Phytology Medicine Garden is generously supported by Anton Juergens Charitable Trust, Awards for All, City Bridge Foundation, London Marathon Foundation, Postcode Neighbourhood Trust.

Forest Friday by Ingrid Chen



Forest Friday is a free after-school nature club for families with school-aged children at the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve (BGNR). Sessions run on Fridays during term time and parts of the school holidays, continuing a long-standing local tradition of Friday nature clubs dating back to at least 2005. Our core aim is to welcome local families into the Reserve and support their wellbeing through nature-based play, learning, and, especially in recent years, providing much-needed shade and outdoor space.

This spring, we said goodbye to one of our long-standing Forest School leaders, Judith Stanley, who moved to Yorkshire to become a grandmother. We extend our warmest congratulations and heartfelt thanks for her years of dedication to both Forest Friday and the wider Nature Reserve. We are also grateful to Elwira, who volunteered with us during the transition, and to Maryam and Mark, both experienced Forest School practitioners who have recently joined the team. Maryam first attended sessions as a parent, and we are delighted to now have her as part of our leadership team.

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In 2025 we were able to increase our frequency of sessions and began the year by supporting volunteer days with on-site childcare. Across the year, we delivered 43 sessions:

- 31 Friday sessions from February to November
- 12 Saturday sessions spanning the winter months, the summer holidays, and September, our busiest period
- During winter, although attendance is quieter, we contributed to habitat-enhancement work by helping build willow structures at the Bethnal Green Ecology Garden (BGEG). We continued collaborating with BGEG throughout the year, joining adult volunteer sessions and participating in the Community Harvest Picnic in September. We intend to continue this partnership in 2026.

This year we also expanded our feedback systems for both children and parents/carers. We will collate and analyse this data over winter to improve our offer for 2026.

Throughout 2025, families took part in litter-picking, maintaining the fungi farm, moving woodchip, cooking popcorn over the fire, sculpting with clay, and exploring the Reserve through games and guided learning. These activities help build confidence, resilience, and a sense of agency for young people facing the uncertainties of a changing climate.



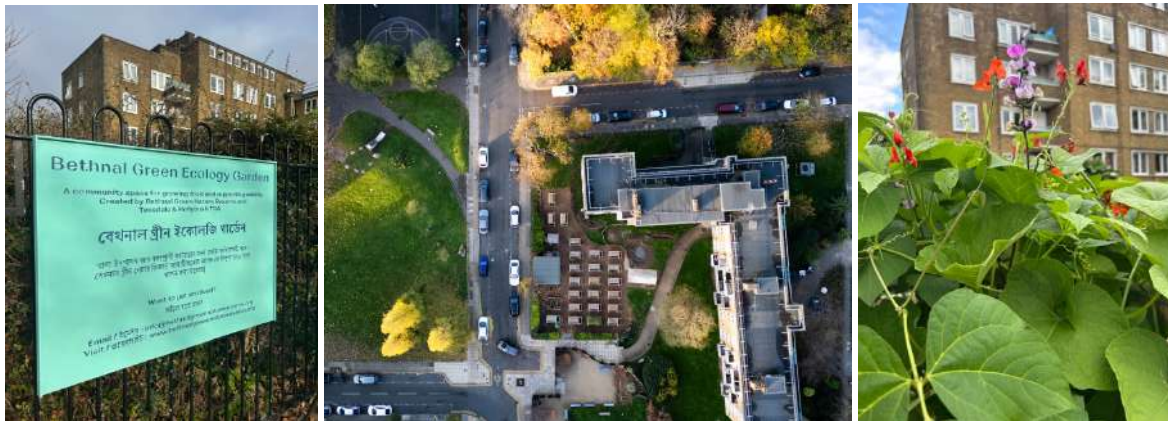
Highlights included:

- building new willow structures
- watching blue tits raise their chicks in nest boxes
- enjoying a successful mushroom season
- ending our year with a bat watch during the final Friday session
- In the months ahead, we aim to strengthen our winter outdoor cooking skills and begin a small wildflower nursery to support nocturnal pollinators.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the trustees, staff, volunteers, and partner teams across BGNR, BGEG, and the Medicine Garden, as well as to our funders and fundraisers, for supporting this work and enabling families to enjoy our little woodland.

Forest Friday is generously supported by Arnold Clark Community Fund, BBC Children In Need, Marsh Charitable Trust, Skinners Company, Stafford Trust.

Bethnal Green Ecology Garden by Michael Smythe



The Bethnal Green Ecology Garden (BGEG) completed its second growing season as a community food and ecology garden, addressing local needs around food security, biodiversity loss, and access to nature. A hotter and drier summer created challenges for our young hedgerow and meadows but resulted in an excellent crop of pumpkins and tomatoes. This year we:

- our first annual vegetable growers' competition, with awards for best raised bed and best vegetable
- installed our new polytunnel for year-round food growing
- built three shared community beds for residents wanting to participate without managing a full plot



In 2026, we hope these additions will broaden access and help more people connect with the soil, the seasons, and each other. Our summer events included the following highlights.

- Summer wild food foraging walk
- Forest Saturday children's activities
- Harvest Picnic (September 2025), attended by over 150 residents
- Winter working bee, supported by GoodGym and local volunteers

The garden continues to welcome weekly visits from Mission GP Practice, Stephen Hawking School, Misery Medicine & Rangers Kindergarten.



Bethnal Green Ecology Garden is generously supported by Anton Juergens Charitable Trust, Canary Wharf Community Fund, London Marathon Foundation, Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, Womble Bond Dickinson.

Experimental School of Urban Ecology (2025–2026)

In 2025 we began developing the Experimental School of Urban Ecology, an annual learning programme supported by the City Bridge Foundation. The initiative aims to establish BGNR as a community learning hub, offering accessible ecological education rooted in the site's values: care for the land, community participation, practical skills, and environmental understanding. It also contributes to the financial resilience of the Nature Reserve.

Early planning focused on shaping course structures, schedules, and teaching approaches, with detailed budget and governance work to follow. The project will evolve over time, and 2025 marks the first formal articulation of its vision.



Course 1: Tree School – Children's Nature & Mental Health Programme

Led by Ingrid, Tree School builds on Forest Friday and offers a week-long immersive programme for children aged 5–11. Activities include nature walks, conservation tasks, creative projects, mindfulness, storytelling, and introductory herbal practice. The programme runs in late August, Monday–Friday, 9:30–4:00. Sliding-scale pricing and prioritisation of local families ensure accessibility.



Course 2: Foraging & Land Stewardship

Led by Izzy, this course fills a national gap in ethical foraging education. Across six modules taught in spring, summer, and autumn, participants learn field practice, plant identification, sustainable harvesting, herbal preparation, legal responsibilities, and cultural histories. A tutorial system supports individual projects, and the course includes a dedicated mushroom module. It targets forest school leaders, ecologists, chefs, and others seeking to deepen their knowledge. Accreditation and a balanced fee structure (full-cost and subsidised places) are planned.



Course 3: Climate, Ecology & Population Health

Delivered by a multidisciplinary team, this course integrates climate science, ecology, philosophy, health, culture, and social justice. Participants explore urban resilience, biodiversity, ecological needs, and community-based responses to climate change. The course concludes with a capstone project proposing actionable, local-scale interventions. Format and accreditation remain under development.

In 2026, the Experimental School of Urban Ecology will become a central focus for the BGNR Trust, accompanied by a rolling public programme of lectures, exhibitions, and community ecology events. This will offer valuable opportunities to gather participant insights and shape our work for 2027.

The Experimental School of Urban Ecology is generously supported by the City Bridge Foundation.

Mobile Apothecary

In 2025, the Mobile Apothecary continued its mission to provide high-quality, plant-based remedies to community members in Bethnal Green and the surrounding neighbourhoods. Our street service operated on the last Sunday of each month from 7pm to 8pm, stationed outside Bethnal Green Tube Station. We continued our partnership with Refugee Community Kitchen (RCK), who generously supplied hot vegetarian meals each week, helping create a warm and welcoming environment for attendees.



Each session supported an average of more than 30 people, with approximately 80% being regular visitors. This consistency allowed meaningful relationships to form between residents, our street service team, and the remedies we offer. Throughout the year, our product range included Good Skin Balm, Decongestant Rub, Muscle & Joint Rub, Immune Support Vinegar, Cough Syrup, Hand Sanitiser, and Epsom Salts Deodorant. All products continued to undergo formal testing at Oxford Bioscience, ensuring they perform as intended. This rigorous process informs our descriptions of benefits, potential contraindications, and common irritants; all information is available upon request. Beyond our street service, volunteers delivered quarterly medicine-making workshops at a nearby community centre, using herbs grown in the Phytology Medicine Garden and sourced from local shops along Bethnal Green Road.



In 2025, we also hosted a visioning day with our core team. This gathering provided valuable feedback and helped us explore ways to evolve the service while maintaining our focus on fostering meaningful connections and mutual care within the neighbourhood. Looking ahead, the Mobile Apothecary will continue its monthly street distributions and medicine-making workshops to meet the community's needs. Sadly, our cargo bike was stolen from the Nature Reserve in November. Replacing this essential resource will require additional fundraising efforts in the year ahead.

We are grateful for the generous support of Fote Charitable Foundation (formally Trustshouse), Lush, and the Hollybush & Teasdale Tenants & Residents Association.

Misery

In 2025, misery continued a residency at Bethnal Green Nature Reserve, offering the beloved programme: 'misery medicine: plant magic'. misery is a mental health community and sober rave based in London and led by and for queer, trans, intersex, black people and people of colour (QTIBPOC).

Through a series of outdoor, communal and nature-centred gatherings for QTIBPOC, participants came together at the Reserve, connected with each other and the natural world.



This year, misery's monthly sessions took place between February - December, travelling through all four seasons at the Reserve. In winter, we dove deep into warming herbs and roots with chai. In spring, we made medicines with beautiful violets and shared queer, floral folklore. Summertime had us making decolonial cyanotype prints and discussing how we might reclaim ecological art practices. Autumn began with a session on roses, which we made monographs of and heart-centred teas from. The year ended with a fire ritual, where we wrote intentions for the new year on wildflower seed paper.

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As usual, each session was centred on rest, collaboration, curiosity, and care, honouring our shared cultural wisdoms, queerness, and the various multispecies ecologies that inform misery and the Reserve. The programme also continued to respond to land-based colonial genocides across the world in Palestine, Sudan and Congo.

misery also tended to plants in the Bethnal Green Ecology Garden, and summertime saw a flurry of tomatoes, chilli, nasturtium, lavender, rosemary, marigold. The tree spinach was especially formidable!



Mission GP Practice

In 2025, the Mission Practice, our local GP surgery, continued its weekly site care sessions, tending both the Medicine Garden and the food-growing areas. Facilitated by the Social Prescribing team, these sessions encouraged staff to care for the Nature Reserve—and for each other—throughout the warmer months.

From September 2025, the Mission Practice continued its residency connecting local residents with food growing at the Bethnal Green Ecology Garden. This initiative provides a dedicated space for growing food and offers patients experiencing isolation the opportunity to connect with others and support their wellbeing through participation in a vibrant community garden.



In the summer of 2025, we lost Esther Bissessar, a much-loved member of the Mission Practice Social Prescribing team. To honour Esther's deep connection to the Nature Reserve and her dedication to supporting local community members, we held a memorial gathering at the Reserve and installed a bench in her name.

Esther's Bench Dedication

In the heart of Bethnal Green, where cultures meet and stories intertwine, there was a woman whose presence felt like a quiet sunrise—gentle, warm, and full of promise. Her name was Esther Bissessar.

Esther served at The Mission Practice as a Wellbeing Link Worker, but her work was far more than a job. She was a bridge between people and services, between fear and hope, between isolation and belonging. She dedicated herself to supporting asylum seekers and vulnerable patients, many of whom arrived with little more than the weight of their pasts and uncertainty about their futures.

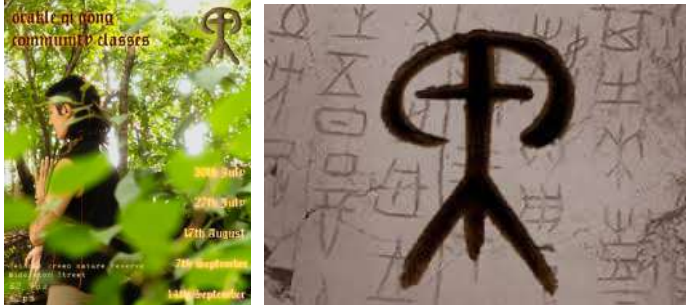
Esther had a rare gift: burdens felt lighter in her presence, and even the most anxious hearts found rest. She met each person with calm grace and made people feel seen—not as cases, but as human beings worthy of care and connection.

The Bethnal Green Nature Reserve was one of her sanctuaries. Here, she found space to breathe, reflect, and restore. Sometimes she sat quietly beneath the trees; at other times, she accompanied someone who needed peace, grounding, or a moment of safety. Her love for nature was inseparable from her faith in a creator God, a faith that flowed through everything she did.

Even in the hardest moments, her message of love and connection shone brightly, drawing the Mission Practice team closer together in both grief and gratitude for a life so generously lived. Although she is no longer with us, her legacy remains in every life she touched, in every seed of kindness she planted, and in the quiet moments of connection that continue to bloom in her memory.

Qi Gong with Orakle Apothecary (bones tan jones)

Throughout the spring, summer and autumn, bones tan jones facilitated accessible Qi Gong sessions beneath the woodland canopy. Held on Sunday mornings, these sessions helped participants connect with their bodies, their community, and the Nature Reserve.



The sessions introduced foundational movements, theories, and concepts, emphasising soft strength and playful movement—core elements of Qi Gong’s health benefits.

Stephen Hawking School

Stephen Hawking School continued its outdoor learning sessions at the Nature Reserve and neighbouring Bethnal Green Ecology Garden throughout 2025. The school, located across the road from our site, provides education for children aged 5–11 with profound, multiple, and severe learning, health, and care needs.



The school maintained weekly visits focused on growing and caring for herbs and vegetables in their dedicated beds. We look forward to strengthening this partnership in 2026, with plans for visits to increase from one day a week to several shorter sessions.

Rangers Kindergarten

In 2025, the Forest School children continued to deepen their connection with nature through play and activities at the nature reserve, while also branching out into the ecology garden. Here, they cared for their own growing bed, nurturing baby trees grown from seed. This has been a particularly meaningful experience, and the children have shown their attachment to the nature reserve by regularly asking whether we can plant some of the trees “at Forest School.”

This year, we explored permaculture more deeply. Following the Wheel of the Year, the children learned about the trees within the reserve, how to use them respectfully, and how

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they support wider ecosystems. Trees and plants were incorporated into activities such as ink making and foraging for teas, while continuing to play a central role in imaginative and physical play.



The children have also embraced practical conservation activities, including litter picking, wood-chip spreading, and dead hedge building. In the early months of 2025, they became deeply engaged in an animal tracking project, creating ink traps with charcoal and oil and using cardboard boxes to record footprints of resident and visiting animals. They also captured images of nocturnal wildlife using a night-vision camera.



One area that has featured heavily in play this year is the space left when the old writers hut was moved and transformed into the Medicine Garden Apothecary Shed. This open area allowed children to explore freely without disturbing new trees, plants, or animal habitats, and has proven to be a real gift. Leaving land fallow to observe what emerges is a core permaculture principle, and this year we applied it not only to land but also to time. By intentionally leaving space in the day for observation and spontaneous activity, alongside the fallow shed area, we fostered rich, child-led play. This included physical activities such as climbing, balancing, swinging, and running, as well as imaginative play like shops, dragon dens, home and den building, and tea ceremonies. We look forward to seeing what emerges in 2026.

Heartfelt thanks to our close local partners Praxis, Revoke CIC, Hackney Herbal for another great year working alongside one another.

Renku Group by Claire Chatelet

In November 2024, a workshop on Renku, an ancient form of collaborative poetry, was the recipient of the 2024 'Community Ecologies' micro-grant. The workshop served as an

introduction, as there are many rules and guidelines for creating and presenting a finished poem. Some participants were keen to continue, so we met three more times and plan several more sessions before completing a Kasen—a 36-stanza poem, the favourite form of Matsuo Bashō, the most widely known master of Renku. Once finished, it will be illustrated and displayed in the Reserve.



Our writing focuses solely on the Reserve and its local area. Participants have found it a meaningful way to share reflections on what the Reserve means to them, especially as we meet across different seasons. The activity has sparked engaging conversations and broadened our appreciation of the place, offering an accessible, creative way for anyone involved with the site to participate.

Knitters/Yarn Group by Claire Chatelet

In 2025, the Knitting/Yarn Group at Bethnal Green Nature Reserve consolidated into a recognised and resilient creative community, evolving from its informal yarn-bombing origins.



Summer 2025 brought increased interest from newcomers, prompting the group to clarify its purpose, boundaries, and responsibilities: key members completed site inductions for safe access, sessions were formalised to run twice monthly during autumn and winter, and publicity was updated to emphasise that the group is a shared, non-instructional inclusive craft space.

Members also continued creative work beyond BGNR, with three Nature Knitters contributing to a jute-history project linking Dundee and Bangladesh, and 2025 reaffirmed the group's social and emotional impact, welcoming diverse participants and fostering connection, craft, and moments of belonging in the Reserve.

Aims & Aspirations for 2026

- Continue nurturing intergenerational connections locally, building meaningful engagement with both Nature Reserve and Ecology Garden as a hub for community and ecosystem health, culture and learning.
- Strengthen Understanding of Climate Impacts - continue to explore how climate change affects our local area, supporting greater collective understanding of its impacts on community mental and physical health.
- Enhance Feedback Systems – by furthering the development of feedback mechanisms across all programmes to ensure our work is continually shaped by the voices of those we serve.

This report was approved by the Trustees at the 2025 Annual General Meeting on 13th December 2025 and signed by:

Sajida Malik 
Chair, Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust
Charity No. 1166648

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements
for the year ending 31 March 2025



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

**Independent examiner's report on the
accounts**

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

Charity Name

Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust

**On accounts for the year
ended**

31st March 2025

**Charity no
(if any)**

1166648

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended **31 / 03 / 2025**.

**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**

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:

VBEQIRI

Date:

15/12/2025

Name:

Visar Beqiri

**Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):**

ACA - ICAEW

Address:

6 The Abbey Woods, Douglas, IM2 5PL

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements
for the year ending 31 March 2025



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name:	Charity No	1166648	
Bethnal Green Nature	Company No		
Annual accounts for the period			
Period start date	01/04/2024	To	31/03/2025

Section A Statement of financial activities

Recommended categories by activity	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Total funds £	Prior year funds £
	F01	F02	F04	F05
Income (Note 3)				
Income and endowments from:				
Donations and legacies	25,900	88,557	114,457	36,178
Charitable activities	3,952	-	3,952	8,467
Total	29,852	88,557	118,409	44,645
Expenditure (Notes 4)				
Expenditure on:				
Charitable activities	20,074	76,542	96,616	42,873
Other	4,968	-	4,968	2,367
Total	25,042	76,542	101,584	45,240
Net income/(expenditure)	4,810	12,015	16,825	[595]
Reconciliation of funds:				
Total funds brought forward	8,175	22,191	30,366	30,961
Total funds carried forward	12,985	34,206	47,191	30,366

Section B Balance sheet

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Total this year £	Total last year £
Current assets				
Debtors (Note 5)	-	-	-	100
Cash at bank and in hand (Note 7)	19,154	34,206	53,360	71,101
Total current assets	19,154	34,206	53,360	71,201
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (Note 6)	6,169	-	6,169	40,835
Net current assets/(liabilities)	12,985	34,206	47,191	30,366
Total assets less current liabilities	12,985	34,206	47,191	30,366
Funds of the Charity				
Restricted income funds (Note 8)		34,206	34,206	22,191
Unrestricted funds	12,985		12,985	8,175
Total funds	12,985	34,206	47,191	30,366

The company was entitled to exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

On behalf of all the trustees

Sajida Malik



Company Registration No. [England and Wales] 1166648

Section C

Notes to the accounts

Note 1 Basis of preparation

1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with:

- and with*

✓

 the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014
- and with*

✓

 the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)
- and with the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.*

*-Tick as appropriate

1.2 Going concern

If there are material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, please provide the following details or state "Not applicable", if appropriate:

An explanation as to those factors that support the conclusion that the charity is a going concern;

The trustees are of the view that unrestricted reserves to fund charitable activities are adequate to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and is therefore a going concern

1.3 Change of accounting policy

The accounts present a true and fair view and no changes have been made to the accounting policies adopted in note { }.

Yes*	☒	*-Tick as appropriate
No*	☐	

1.4 Changes to accounting estimates

No changes to accounting estimates have occurred in the reporting period (3.46 FRS 102 SORP).

Yes*	☒	*-Tick as appropriate
No*	☐	

1.5 Material prior year errors

No material prior year error have been identified in the reporting period (3.47 FRS 102 SORP).

Yes*	☒	*-Tick as appropriate
No*	☐	

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements for the year ending 31 March 2025

Section C		Notes to the accounts		(cont)
Note 2				
2.2 INCOME				
Recognition of income	These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when: - the charity becomes entitled to the resources; - it is more likely than not that the trustees will receive the resources; - the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		✓	ü	ü
Offsetting	There has been no offsetting of assets and liabilities, or income and expenses, unless required or permitted by the FRS 102 SORP or FRS 102.	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		✓	ü	ü
Grants and donations	Grants and donations are only included in the SoFA when the general income recognition criteria are met (5.10 to 5.12 FRS 102 SORP).	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		✓	ü	ü
	In the case of performance related grants, income must only be recognised to the extent that the charity has provided the specified goods or services as entitlement to the grant only occurs when the performance related conditions are met (5.16 FRS 102 SORP).	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		✓	ü	ü
Government grants	The charity has received government grants in the reporting period	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		ü	✓	ü
Support costs	The charity has incurred expenditure on support costs.	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		✓	ü	ü
2.3 EXPENDITURE AND LIABILITIES				
Liability recognition	Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		✓	ü	ü
Governance and support costs	Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		ü	ü	✓
	Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources, eg allocating property costs by floor areas, or per capita, staff costs by the time spent and other costs by their usage.	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		ü	ü	✓
Grants with performance conditions	Where the charity gives a grant with conditions for its payment being a specific level of service or output to be provided, such grants are only recognised in the SoFA once the recipient of the grant has provided the specified service or output.	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		✓	ü	ü
Grants payable without performance conditions	Where there are no conditions attaching to the grant that enables the donor charity to realistically avoid the commitment, a liability for the full funding obligation must be recognised.	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		ü	ü	✓
Deferred income	No material item of deferred income has been included in the accounts.	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		✓	ü	ü
Creditors	The charity has creditors which are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		ü	✓	ü
Provisions for liabilities	A liability is measured on recognition at its historical cost and then subsequently measured at the best estimate of the amount required to settle the obligation at the reporting date	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		✓	ü	ü
Basic financial instruments	The charity accounts for basic financial instruments on initial recognition as per paragraph 10.7 FRS 102 SORP. Subsequent measurement is as per paragraphs 11.17 to 11.19, FRS 102 SORP.	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		✓	ü	ü
2.4 ASSETS				
Debtors	Debtors (including trade debtors and loans receivable) are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the charity. Subsequently, they are measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be received.	Yes *	No *	N/a *
		✓	ü	ü

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements
for the year ending 31 March 2025

Section C	Notes to the accounts	(cont)
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Note 3

Income

Analysis of income		Unrestricted Income funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds £	Prior year £
Donations and legacies:	Donations and gifts	-	-	-	-
	General grants provided by government/other charities	25,900	88,557	114,457	36,178
	Total	25,900	88,557	114,457	36,178
Charitable activities:	Charitable activities	3,304	-	3,304	5,743
	Donations	648	-	648	2,724
	Total	3,952	-	3,952	8,467
TOTAL INCOME		29,852	88,557	118,409	44,645

Note 4

Expenditure

Analysis		This year			Last year		
		Unrestricted income funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds £	Unrestricted income funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds
Expenditure on charitable activities:							
	Professional fees	4,988	-	4,988	918	-	918
	Project Costs	15,086	76,542	91,628	6,964	34,991	41,955
	Total expenditure on charitable activities	20,074	76,542	96,616	7,882	34,991	42,873
Other							
	Insurance	1,226	-	1,226	1,170	-	1,170
	Bank Charges	60		60	60		60
	Maintenance and other overheads	3,682		3,682	1,137		1,137
				-			-
	Total other expenditure	4,968	-	4,968	2,367	-	2,367
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	25,042	76,542	101,584	10,249	34,991	45,240

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements
for the year ending 31 March 2025

Section C	Notes to the accounts	(cont)
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Note 5 Debtors and prepayments

5.1 Analysis of debtors

	This year £	Last year £
Trade debtors	-	-
Prepayments and accrued income	-	100.0
Other debtors	-	-
Total	-	100.0

Note 6 Creditors and accruals

6.1 Analysis of creditors

	Amounts falling due within one year		Amounts falling due after more than one year	
	This year £	Last year £	This year £	Last year £
Trade creditors	4,969	-	-	-
Accruals and deferred income	1,200	40,435	-	-
Total	6,169	40,435	-	-

6.2 Deferred income

Please explain the reasons why income is deferred.

This year	Last year
	<i>£15,635 - Groundwork £5,000 - London Catalyst £10,000 - Garfield Weston £2,000 - Chapman Trust £4,800 - Tower Hamlet Homes £3,000 - Rank Foundation Representing income for projects in 2024/25</i>

Movement in deferred income account

	This year £	Last year £
Balance at the start of the reporting period	40,435	25,636
Amounts added in current period	-	24,799
Amounts released to income from previous periods	(40,435)	(10,000)
Balance at the end of the reporting period	-	40,435

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements
for the year ending 31 March 2025

Section C	Notes to the accounts	(cont)
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Note 7 Cash at bank and in hand

	This year	Last year
	£	£
Cash at bank and on hand	53,360	71,101
Total	<u>53,360</u>	<u>71,101</u>

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements
for the year ending 31 March 2025

Section C **Notes to the accounts** **(cont)**

Note 8 **Charity funds**

8.1 Details of material funds held and movements during the CURRENT reporting period

Fund names	Type PE, EE R or UR *	Purpose and Restrictions	Fund balances brought forward	Income	Expenditure	Fund balances carried forward
			£	£	£	£
Charities Trust	R	Food Garden and Bethnal (	6,300	-	(6,300)	-
Awards for All	R	Ecology/Garden	7,146	-	(7,146)	-
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation	R	Mobile Apothecary	3,320	5,000	(3,320)	5,000
Tower Hill Trust	R	Outdoor Classroom	4,001	-	(4,001)	-
Groundworks	R	Bethnal Green Ecology Ga	-	31,270	(31,270)	-
Chapman Trust	R	Community Ecologies publ	-	2,000	(693)	1,307
Rank Foundation	R	Bethnal Green Ecology Ga	-	3,000	(2,994)	6
Postcode Society	R	Forest Friday	1,424	-	(1,424)	-
Tower Hamlets Homes	R	Bethnal Green Ecology Ga	-	4,800	(4,800)	-
London Catalyst	R	Bethnal Green Ecology Ga	-	5,000	(5,000)	-
Royal Botanical Garden, Kew	R	Ecology & outreach	-	2,500	(1,616)	884
Museum of Homelessness	R	Mobile Apothecary	-	607	-	607
Lush	R	Mobile Apothecary	-	3,000	(2,660)	340
Stafford Trust	R	Forest Friday	-	4,180	-	4,180
Children in Need	R	Forest Friday	-	8,300	(2,918)	5,382
Nineveh Trust	R	Community Ecologies publ	-	4,000	-	4,000
City Bridge Trust	R	Adult learning research & c	-	12,500	(2,400)	10,100
Arnold Clark Foundation	R	Forest Friday	-	400	-	400
Skinners Trust	R	Forest Friday	-	2,000	-	2,000
SHED	UR	Mycelium project	1,859	-	-	1,859
Foyle Foundation	UR	Charitable activities	-	5,000	(5,000)	-
Other unrestricted income	UR	Charitable activities	6,316	3,952	(7,540)	2,728
Postcode Society Trust	UR	Charitable activities	-	10,900	(2,502)	8,398
Garfield Weston	UR	Charitable activities	-	10,000	(10,000)	-
Total Funds as per balance sheet			30,366	118,409	(101,584)	47,191

Fund balances carried forward include assets and liabilities denominated in a foreign currency

Yes*	No*
☐	☒

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements
for the year ending 31 March 2025

Section C	Notes to the accounts	[cont]
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Note 8 **Charity funds**

8.2 Details of material funds held and movements during the PREVIOUS reporting period

Fund names	Type PE, EE R or UR *	Purpose and Restrictions	Fund balances brought forward	Income	Expenditure	Fund balances carried forward
			£	£	£	£
Charities Trust	R	Food Garden capital w	-	10,000	(3,700)	6,300
Awards for All	R	Ecology/Garden	1,892	9,000	(3,746)	7,146
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation	R	Reserve Management	-	8,000	(4,680)	3,320
Tower Hill Trust	R	Outdoor Classroom	-	4,900	(899)	4,001
Timberland	R	Reserve Management	2,400	4,278	(6,678)	-
ArtsCouncil England	R	We Speak in Tongues	2,237	-	(2,237)	-
Raines Foundation	R	Forest Friday	819	-	(819)	-
Postcode Society	R	Forest Friday	13,656	-	(12,232)	1,424
SHED	UR	Mycelium project	1,859	-	-	1,859
Foyle Foundation	UR	Garden project	2,539	-	(2,539)	-
Other unrestricted income	UR	Charitable activities	1,085	8,467	(3,236)	6,316
TRIODOS BANK UK	UR	Mycelium project	4,474	-	(4,474)	-
Total Funds as per balance sheet			30,961	44,645	(45,240)	30,366

Fund balances carried forward include assets and liabilities denominated in a foreign	Yes*	No*
	☐	☒

BETHNAL GREEN NATURE RESERVE TRUST

England & Wales - Charity number 1166648

Accounts



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Bethnal Green Nature Reserve 2024 Annual Report

The Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust (BGNRT) was officially registered as a charity (1166648) in April 2016. The objectives of the charity are to promote, for public benefit, the preservation and care of the flora, fauna, and fungi of the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve as a site of ecological, educational, and cultural interest—both locally and beyond. Our work focuses on enhancing biodiversity, fostering learning, improving health, supporting the arts, encouraging participation, and facilitating research.



Governance

Trustees: Sajida Malik (Chair), Gwen Wright (Treasurer), Bryony Harris (Secretary), Adelaide Bannerman, Oliver Grazebrook.

The 2024 site team included:

- Izzy Johns (Community Gardener in Residence)
- Ingrid Chen (Forest School Lead)
- Shilpi Choudhury (Forest School Tutor)
- Edward Simpson (Site Manager)
- Abel Daniel (Deputy Site Manager)
- Michael Smythe (Senior Manager)
- Ash Miah (Food Garden Site Manager)
- Sarah Beydoun (Food Garden Site Manager)
- Nozomi Nakabayashi (Community Gardener)
- Judith Stanley (Forest School Tutor)



We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the incredible volunteers who show up each week to care for the Reserve and one another. Your dedication is foundational for the site to thrive ecologically and socially.

Charitable Objectives and Policy Review

In 2023 and early 2024, the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve began an internal review of its governance structures and policies with the generous support of Law Works and the legal team at Inmarsat.

This review has focused on making policies more accessible by simplifying language and removing outdated systems that no longer serve our evolving organisation. The Board and site team has also developed new policies, including an anti-racism policy, fundraising and recruitment policies, service-level agreements for site partner organisations, and an expanded keyholder handbook. To ensure transparency, all governing documents are published on the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve website.

Additionally, the Board reassessed the Reserve's constitution and charitable objectives. Proposed updates include emphasising our commitment to community health, biodiversity, and advocating for the non-human populations that depend on the Reserve—flora, fungi, and fauna. Key changes to governance include limiting Trustees to two terms of service and enhancing the vetting and recruitment process. The Board can also now agree to appoint Trustees at any meeting throughout the year rather than just at the AGM as before. These updates were approved by the Trustees at the 2023 AGM (and again by written resolution in 2024) and ratified by the Charity Commission in 2024.





Site Manager's Report By Edward Simpson

Volunteers

Bethnal Green Nature Reserve is supported by a dedicated group of volunteers. Since January, we have hosted 40 volunteering sessions with an average of 12 participants per session, amounting to approximately 960 volunteer hours.

This year, we introduced a streamlined sign-up process, making it easier for people to volunteer and for us to manage sessions efficiently. A total of 151 new volunteers registered, with many attending multiple sessions. This led to the addition of 27 new site caretakers, who provide essential care for the site outside of formal sessions.

Key volunteer achievements this year include:

- Maintaining the mushroom farm, which produced its first birch polypore and shiitake harvests alongside abundant oyster mushrooms and turkey tails.
- Enhancing the forest soil, which stakeholders reported as being more biodiverse than ever before thanks to the dedicated work over the past few years.
- Creating a hedge laying area bordering a new 'no-intervention zone' for nesting birds.
- Relocating bird boxes under the guidance of local bird expert Jane Mutiny, resulting in a record number of nesting birds on site.
- Managing the wetland area through regular duckweed removal and plant control, ensuring it remains a vital habitat for wildlife.

These are just a few examples of the ongoing efforts by our volunteers to sustain and enhance the Reserve.



Grow Wild Initiative

In April, we received funding from Kew Gardens' Grow Wild initiative to establish a new hedgerow and pond at the Bethnal Green Ecology Garden (also known as the James Middleton Food Hub).



This project involved:

- Planting a 65-metre hedgerow with 321 trees.
- Constructing an experimental 2.5-metre clay pond.
- Hosting workshops on tree propagation and clay pond construction, engaging local residents and volunteers.

These efforts aim to enhance the ecology of the Food Garden and strengthen the connection between it and the Nature Reserve, benefiting both wildlife and the community for years to come.



Future Plans

Looking ahead to 2025, we will continue to build on this year's work. Key projects include:

- Developing the new pond and ensuring the hedgerow becomes a thriving habitat for birds, mammals, insects, and fungi.
- Expanding the mushroom farm and exploring the fascinating fungal species it attracts.
- Nurturing the recently rediscovered Mulberry Tree, with hopes of seeing it flourish.
- Constructing a fixed canopy structure to improve year-round site accessibility and shelter for learning sessions and events.



Phytology Medicine Garden

Reflections by Izzy Johnston, Community Gardener in Residence

This has been my inaugural year as Community Gardener in Residence. Since June, we have focused on assessing the garden ecosystem, refining volunteer sessions, and planning a new structure for the Medicine Garden, an Apothecary Shed. Two community planning sessions shaped

our vision for this, repurposing an old writer's hut that had become disused. Volunteer sessions have increasingly integrated foraging storytelling, and as hands-on activities. We have incorporated more gardening-adjacent activities such as medicine making and wildcrafting. Additionally, I've been working on a guide to help visitors identify herbs and use the Medicine Garden independently.



Achievements in 2024

- Collaborated with volunteers and staff on plans for an apothecary shed to store and provide free herbal/mushroom remedies.



- Rebalanced the garden's ecosystem by managing dominant species and reintroducing herbs such as borage, oregano, skullcap, echinacea, and red clover.
- Facilitated volunteer sessions focused on holistic garden and community care, including
- harvesting, gardening, wildcrafting, plant identification and information, and medicine-making techniques.
- Reintroduced a system for producing liquid fertiliser from nettles and comfrey.



Aspirations for 2025

- Complete the apothecary shed and co-design its interiors for accessibility.
- Create herbal first aid kits for physical and emotional wellbeing, to be left in the apothecary shed, and to facilitate greater accessibility.
- Strengthen connections with sibling initiatives, such as the Mobile Apothecary, Misery, and Rights for Weeds.
- Create a basic guide to the garden's plants, including their identification, uses, and preparation methods, to be left in the garden.

The site team role generously was supported by Trustshouse & Awards for All.

Forest
Fridays

Education & Learning

Our Partners and Programmes

In 2024, we were proud to collaborate with Rangers Kindergarten, Stephen Hawking School, and Columbia Road Primary School. In addition, we hosted our own outdoor learning sessions under the banner of *Forest Fridays* throughout the year.



Forest Fridays by Ingrid Chen

Forest Friday is a free, after-school nature club for families with school-aged children. Sessions run every Friday during term time, weather permitting, from 4pm - 5:30pm. We welcome families rain or shine, except in cases of thunder, lightning, or high winds. Our aim is to introduce families to the Nature Reserve, offering opportunities to learn about, care for, and enjoy the woodland. This engagement fosters a sense of connection with nature and promotes the well-being benefits of spending time outdoors.

Our approach is not a typical Forest School model—if such a thing exists. Instead, we think of children and their families as budding ecologists and site caretakers. Activities often involve helping the reserve thrive, such as watering the fungi farm (*Mycelium Alley*), spreading woodchip to benefit invertebrates, or learning the names of the many trees living in our woodlands. Participants are always given a choice in line with Forest School principals, with plenty of time for games and free play. Our philosophy is simple: by looking after the woods, we ensure everyone can enjoy them.



2024 Highlights

We began the year with a February Fun Day during the half-term holiday, funded by the final part of the Postcode Society Trust grant and additional support from the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust (BGNRT). From Easter onwards, we resumed the regular after-school format, supplemented by a holiday taster day and participation in multiple community events locally. These included activities within the Reserve, on Middleton Green, and at the Food Growing Hub, creating a kind of “mini Forest Friday roadshow.”

A particularly memorable highlight was our Halloween event, which proved very popular with local families—a wonderful way to mark the shorter days and beginning of winter.

We continue to focus on engaging local families, especially those from nearby estates, and



are refining our approach to best serve residents' needs. Running sessions as a drop-in club has been particularly effective, offering flexibility that better suits family schedules. To support this model, we typically have a team of three staff drawn from a pool of four regular Forest School Leaders. In addition, we were delighted to host a visiting Forest School Leader (Eden, who runs Forest School in Hackney) and hope to organise a reciprocal visit soon. One of our regular parents is currently training to become a Forest School Leader, and we look forward to potentially welcoming her into our team in 2025.



In August, we received exciting news: funding from Children in Need and the Skimmers' Foundation will support our work for the next three years. This has enabled us to undertake strategic planning and continue expanding our reach locally.

This autumn has been particularly busy, with 64 children and four babies or toddlers attending *Forest Friday*. Almost half were new participants this term. After the clocks go back, we pause our after-school sessions due to the early darkness, instead joining the Nature Reserve's Saturday openings before closing for winter in December. We are ever grateful to the Trustees, our site team, and our dedicated volunteers, who make it possible to welcome local families to the Reserve.



Forest Friday is generously supported by Postcode Society Trust, Children In Need, Skimmers Foundation & London Borough of Tower Hamlets.



Partner Highlights

Stephen Hawking School holds outdoor learning sessions at the Nature Reserve every Wednesday from 9am to 1pm. The school, located just across the road, provides education for children aged 2–11 with profound, multiple, and severe learning, health, and care needs. In 2024, the school introduced weekly nature connection sessions, focusing on growing and caring for herbs and vegetables in our new food garden—the *Bethnal Green Ecology Garden*. The garden includes a bespoke raised bed, making it accessible to wheelchair and mobility device users. We look forward to continuing our partnership with Stephen Hawking School in 2025.

Rangers Kindergarten

By Jo Gilks

Rangers Kindergarten, a local early year's education provider specialising in outdoor learning for children aged 2–8, runs sessions every Monday and Tuesday from 9am to 2pm at the Reserve. These sessions aim to foster a deep connection to the natural world and build children's confidence in outdoor environments.



Highlights of 2024

This year has been an exciting one. We've bid farewell to children moving on to school or relocating, while also welcoming new participants, including home-educated children. Our focus remains on connecting children to the Nature Reserve, its plants, and its non-human inhabitants, encouraging them to grow into stewards of their local environment.

One highlight was the continuation of the *London Children's Forest – Forest from Seed* project. The children explored different tree species in the Reserve, learning about their features, uses, and ecological roles. They collected seeds, planted them, and cared for them in the medicinal herb garden's cold frame over winter. In spring, these seedlings were moved to a rodent-proof nursery at Rangers Kindergarten.

This autumn, the trees were transferred to a dedicated nursery bed at the new Bethnal Green Ecology Garden. These saplings will eventually form a new children's forest,



benefitting future generations of all species. Through stories, songs, crafts, games, and guided nature exploration, we've continued to follow the seasonal "wheel of the year," helping children understand how various elements of the environment work together. Sustainability has been a recurring theme, with activities such as herbal tea-making, crafting conker soap, and making cherry plum pie and blackberry jam. Looking forward, we are excited to welcome new children, staff, and trainees while nurturing our baby trees until they are ready to be planted in their permanent homes.



Mobile Apothecary

In 2024, the Mobile Apothecary continued to deliver high-quality, plant-based remedies to the residents of Bethnal Green. Our street service operated from 7pm – 8pm on the last Sunday of each month, stationed outside Bethnal Green tube station. We serve alongside our long-term partner **Refugee Community Kitchen (RCK)**, who provided hot vegetarian meals weekly.

On average, served around 30+ people per session, with 70% of attendees being regular visitors. The consistency of the service enabled locals to build meaningful relationships with both the street service team and the remedies we provide. This year, we offered products such as: Good Skin Balm, Decongestant Rub, Muscle & Joint Rub, Immune Support Vinegar, Cough Syrup, Hand Sanitiser, Epsom Salts Deodorant.

In 2024, we continued to have our products family are formally tested at Oxford Bioscience. This ensures our products do what is says on the tin. This process guides us when describing the benefits or possible risks (counter indicators, potential irritants etc) when enjoying the remedies. All this information is available upon request.



In addition to the street service, our volunteer team held quarterly medicine-making workshops at a nearby community centre. Many of the fresh herbs used were sourced from the **Phytology Medicine Garden** and local shops along Bethnal Green Road.



This year, we also organised a visioning day with our core team and extended community to gather feedback and explore ways to evolve the service. The focus remains on creating meaningful connections and fostering mutual care within the neighbourhood. Looking ahead to 2025, the Mobile Apothecary will continue its monthly medicine-making workshops and street distributions, ensuring we meet the community's needs.

The Mobile Apothecary is generously supported by Trustshouse, Lush, and the Hollybush & Teasdale Tenants & Residents Association.



Healing Justice London – Art therapy with Roah K

In the summer of 2024 Healing Justice London and Art Psychotherapist, Roah K, for Palestinian, Sudanese, and Congolese Communities + Racialised Allies. The sessions engaged in communal artmaking, embodiment exercises, and creative healing practices to foster connection, sustainable movement building, and honour existence as resistance.



Cultural Programming 2024

Our cultural programme evolved significantly in 2024, with the Board shaping a decentralised system for selecting and commissioning activities at the Reserve. This process prioritises projects that are *useful* and aligned with the Reserve's values and charitable objectives: uplifting and celebrating ecology, intergenerational learning, and community health. Here are some highlights from the year:

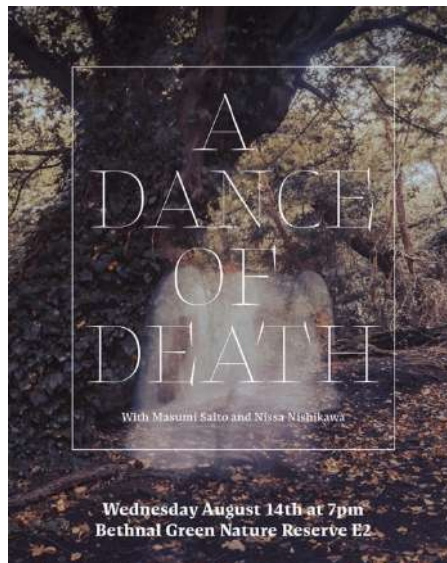


Kupala Festival x ЗБІРКА x ШЦЦ

On 23 June 2024, the **Kupala Festival** returned to the Reserve for its fifth year, celebrating midsummer and nature's peak flourishing. Inspired by pre-Christian traditions observed in Northern and Eastern Europe, this year's event was co-curated with **ЗБІРКА** and **ШЦЦ**, featuring participatory art workshops and music. The festival welcomed over 300 attendees, with all tick sale profits donated to **SEEDS for Ukraine**, a charity supporting families in Ukraine to grow food in their private gardens.

Programme Highlights:

- **Craft Market**
- **Linocut Printing Station:** Led by ЗБІРКА's Veronika Prykhodko, guests created their own Kupala-themed prints.
- **Flower Crown Workshop:** Artist Eleonora Lushchyk guided participants in making ritual floral crowns.
- **Kupala Tree Decoration:** With artist Marysya Rudska, participants crafted crepe paper flower pins.
- **Singing Circle:** Eka, a singer and certified Body Voice Therapist, led a session of voice practice, breathwork, and Kupala songs.
- **Traditional Tea Ceremony:** Hosted by Serhii Povisenko, a gongfu cha enthusiast.



A Dance of Death – Obon Performance

In honour of Obon, the Japanese ceremony commemorating ancestral spirits, **Masumi Saito** and **Nissa Nishikawa** activated the Reserve with a dance performance exploring the connection between soil, sky, and the poetic body. The evening concluded with tea from the medicinal garden and a fireside dialogue with the artists.



Qi Gong with Orakle Apothecary (aka bones tan jones)

Throughout autumn and winter, **bones tan jones** facilitated accessible **Qi Gong** sessions beneath the Reserve's canopy. Qi Gong is an ancient Chinese energy movement practice, suitable for all abilities and bodies. These sessions introduced foundational movements, theories, and concepts, focusing on the soft strength and playful movements central to Qi Gong's health benefits. bones, an artist, composer, and vocalist of mixed Chinese, Malaysian and Welsh heritage, has been facilitating radical martial arts spaces since 2016 and studying Qi Gong since 2018.



Community Ecologies Programme

The **2024 Community Ecologies Programme** was a stakeholder-led initiative of weekly experimental walks, talks, and workshops exploring the Reserve. Designed and led by those who care for the space, the programme engaged participants with themes such as:

- Renku Writing Workshop
- Natural Dyes
- Grief Shrine Making
- Tree Planting
- Worm Talk
- Contact Improvisation Dance
- Introduction to the Herb Garden Talk
- Tree Identification Walk
- Mushroom Farming Talk
- Urban Food Growing Tours

These sessions were free and advertised via DIY posters across our neighbouring estates. In 2025, we aim to expand on this success by holding *community-led sessions every Saturday* from May to December, building a cultural programme based in local knowledge, skill exchange and curiosity.

The Community Ecologies programme is generously supported Chapman Trust & The Nineveh Trust.

2024 Partner Organisations

Misery

Over 2024, misery continued a residency at Bethnal Green Nature Reserve, offering the beloved programme: '*misery medicine: plant magic*'. misery is a mental health community and sober rave based in London and led by and for queer, trans, intersex, black people and people of colour (QTIBPOC).



Through a series of outdoor, communal and nature-centred gatherings for QTIBPOC, participants came together at the Reserve, connected with each other and the natural world.

misery hosted monthly sessions between February - May, and then again from September - December. Each session centred on honesty, rest, collaboration and conversations about our ecologies, herbs and food, all through shared cultural wisdoms and queerness.



Across the year, misery offered a huge range of activities at the gatherings. These included: communal cooking, bread-making, feasting, weaving, eco-poetry, singing, incense-making and painting with plant dyes. The programme also continued to respond to land-based colonial genocides across the world in Palestine, Sudan.

Photos courtesy of Misery.



Praxis

Praxis is an award-winning human rights charity that has been advocating for migrant rights since 1983. They provide advice, support, and campaign for migrants and refugees in the UK to live with safety, dignity, and respect.

From summer 2024, Praxis hosted weekly health and wellbeing sessions for their men's group, *The GIANTS*, within the Nature Reserve. The Reserve provided a peaceful and safe



space for participants to build social connections while engaging with the medicine garden and wider site ecologies.



Mission Practice

In 2024, our local GP surgery, *Mission Practice*, continued its weekly site care sessions, which included watering the medicine garden and maintaining the mushroom farm. Facilitated by the Social Prescribing team, these activities encouraged staff to nurture both the Nature Reserve and one another during the warmer months.

In September 2024, Mission Practice began a residency in the newly established Bethnal Green Ecology Garden. This initiative provides a dedicated food-growing space for patients experiencing isolation, fostering community connection and wellbeing through growing food in a thriving community garden.





Bethnal Green Ecology Garden (formerly James Middleton House Food Hub)

In 2023, the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve initiated a community consultation to establish a food-growing hub opposite the Nature Reserve. This collaborative project with the Hollybush & Teesdale Tenants and Residents Association (TRA) aims to provide residents with space and resources to grow food locally while promoting ecologically diverse land care practices. The site, located at Middleton and Clarkson Streets, was granted a five-year lease by Tower Hamlets Homes. Development continues with support from the TRA and dedicated volunteers.



Project Overview

The Bethnal Green Ecology Garden (BGEG) champions urban ecology, community food growing, and biodiversity. It addresses critical issues such as food security, habitat loss, and social disconnection with the natural world. Guided by the Tower Hamlets Biodiversity Action Plan, the garden incorporates wilding initiatives to enhance biodiversity, pest control, and ecological balance while creating a thriving green space for residents and wildlife.

Summary of Activities

Stage 1: Site Preparation (May–June 2024)

The site was cleared of old planters, fences, and rubbish. Residents contributed to the design, ensuring the garden met community needs and accessibility standards.



Stage 2: Infrastructure Development



Twenty-five raised beds were constructed—one per household, with additional communal beds for schools and community groups. A garden handbook and community agreement outlined shared guidelines, while weekly onboarding sessions introduced new growers to the space.

Stage 3: Ecology and Biodiversity Enhancements

Features such as ponds, swales, glasshouses, bird boxes, and hedgerows were incorporated to create habitats for wildlife. Scheduled for completion by winter 2024/25, these efforts aim to boost biodiversity and encourage ecological engagement among residents.



Achievements

The project has transformed a neglected site into a vibrant community garden, now a hub for community learning, recreation, and social connection. Residents of all ages, from children to seniors, actively participate in maintaining and enjoying the space. The initiative has fostered pride, community spirit, and an inclusive environment while supporting urban biodiversity.



Community Events

- Community Supper (July 2024): Over 60+ attendees of all ages connected over a shared meal ahead of the garden's official opening.
- Community Picnic (September 2024): More than 150+ residents celebrated the garden's summer abundance. A survey from the event highlighted strong enthusiasm for additional workshops, events, and food-growing knowledge-sharing opportunities.



Several local groups now use the garden weekly, including:

- Mission GP Practice, Bethnal Green
- Stephen Hawking School, Bethnal Green
- Rangers Kindergarten, Bethnal Green

Looking Ahead



As the project nears completion, the Bethnal Green Ecology Garden is set to become a sustainable urban green space, supporting biodiversity while strengthening community connections. It serves as a model for future urban ecology initiatives.

This project was generously supported by the Mayor of London, Groundwork, Tower Hamlets (formerly Tower Hamlets Homes), London Catalyst, Rank Foundation, RBG Kew & Benefactor Group.



Bethnal Green Nature Reserve – Aims & Aspirations 2025

- 1. Develop a Site Management Plan**
Co-design a management plan for both the Nature Reserve and Food Garden, prioritising local community access, wellbeing and biodiversity in every decision.
- 2. Better understand the impacts of climate change locally**
Foster greater collective understanding of how climate change will affect our communities' mental and physical health.
- 3. Enhance Learning and Cultural Programmes**
Create and refine learning and cultural initiatives that are relevant and meaningful for local residents, emphasising the Reserve's role as a vital intergenerational community asset.

Trustees' Report for the Financial Year Ending 2023/2024

This report was approved by the Trustees at the 2024 Annual General Meeting held on 7th December 2024 and signed by:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Malik'.

Sajida Malik

Chair, Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust
Charity No. 1166648



Independent Examiner's report to the Trustees of Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust (the Charity) for the year ended 31 March 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Trustees of the Charity (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 (the 2006 Act).

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the Charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 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:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act 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; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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.

Hakim Oreagba

H Oreagba

4 Hertford Walk
London DA17 5JW
3 December 2024

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements
For the year ending 31 March 2024



Charity Name: Bethnal Green		Charity No	1166648	
Nature Reserve Trust		Company No		
Annual accounts for the period				
Period start date	01/04/2023	To	31/03/2024	

Section A Statement of financial activities (including summary income and expenditure account)

Recommended categories by activity	Guidance Note	Unrestricted funds £ F01	Restricted income funds £ F02	Total funds £ F04	Prior year funds £ F05
Income (Note 3)					
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	S01	2,724	36,178	38,902	65,658
Charitable activities	S02	5,743	-	5,743	5,088
Total	S07	8,467	36,178	44,645	70,746
Expenditure (Notes 4)					
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	S09	7,882	34,991	42,873	91,783
Other	S11	2,367	-	2,367	2,214
Total	S12	10,249	34,991	45,240	93,997
Net income/(expenditure) before tax for the reporting period					
Tax payable	S13	(1,782)	1,187	(595)	(23,251)
tax before investment gains/(losses)	S14	-	-	-	-
Net gains/(losses) on investments	S15	(1,782)	1,187	(595)	(23,251)
Net income/(expenditure)	S16	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	S17	(1,782)	1,187	(595)	(23,251)
	S22	(1,782)	1,187	(595)	(23,251)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward	S23	9,957	21,004	30,961	54,212
Total funds carried forward	S24	8,175	22,191	30,366	30,961



Section B Balance sheet

	Guidance Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Total this year £	Total last year £
Current assets					
Debtors (Note 5)	B07	-	100	100	4,900
Cash at bank and in hand (Note 7)	B09	30,666	40,435	71,101	51,997
Total current assets	B10	30,666	40,535	71,201	56,897
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (Note 6)	B11	400	40,435	40,835	25,936
Net current assets/(liabilities)	B12	30,266	100	30,366	30,961
Total assets less current liabilities	B13	30,266	100	30,366	30,961
Total net assets or liabilities	B16	30,266	100	30,366	30,961
Funds of the Charity					
Restricted income funds (Note 8)	B18		22,191	22,191	21,004
Unrestricted funds	B19	8,175		8,175	9,957
Revaluation reserve	B20			-	-
Fair value reserve	B21				
Total funds	B22	8,175	22,191	30,366	30,961

The company was entitled to exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

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

Signature

Print Name

Date of
approval
dd/mm/yyyy

Sajida Malik

07/12/2025

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements

For the year ending 31 March 2024



Note 1 Basis of preparation

1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with:

- and with*

ü

 the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014
- and with*

ü

 the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)
- and with the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.*

*-Tick as appropriate

1.2 Going concern

If there are material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, please provide the following details or state "Not applicable", if appropriate:

An explanation as to those factors that support the conclusion that the charity is a going concern;

The trustees are of the view that unrestricted reserves to fund charitable activities are adequate to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and is therefore a going concern

1.3 Change of accounting policy

The accounts present a true and fair view and no changes have been made to the accounting policies adopted in note { }.

Yes*	☒	*-Tick as appropriate
No*	☐	

1.4 Changes to accounting estimates

No changes to accounting estimates have occurred in the reporting period (3.46 FRS 102 SORP).

Yes*	☒	*-Tick as appropriate
No*	☐	

1.5 Material prior year errors

No material prior year error have been identified in the reporting period (3.47 FRS 102 SORP).

Yes*	☒	*-Tick as appropriate
No*	☐	

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements

For the year ending 31 March 2024



Note 2

Accounting policies

2.2 INCOME

Recognition of income

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- it is more likely than not that the trustees will receive the resources;
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☒	☐	☐

Offsetting

There has been no offsetting of assets and liabilities, or income and expenses, unless required or permitted by the FRS 102 SORP or FRS 102.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☐	☒	☐

Grants and donations

Grants and donations are only included in the SoFA when the general income recognition criteria are met (5.10 to 5.12 FRS 102 SORP).

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☒	☐	☐

In the case of performance related grants, income must only be recognised to the extent that the charity has provided the specified goods or services as entitlement to the grant only occurs when the performance related conditions are met (5.16 FRS 102 SORP).

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☒	☐	☐

Government grants

The charity has received government grants in the reporting period

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☐	☐	☐

Support costs

The charity has incurred expenditure on support costs.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☐	☐	☐

2.3 EXPENDITURE AND LIABILITIES

Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☒	☐	☐

Governance and support costs

Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☐	☐	☒

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources, eg allocating property costs by floor areas, or per capita, staff costs by the time spent and other costs by their usage.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☐	☐	☒

Grants with performance conditions

Where the charity gives a grant with conditions for its payment being a specific level of service or output to be provided, such grants are only recognised in the SoFA once the recipient of the grant has provided the specified service or output.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☒	☐	☐

Grants payable without performance conditions

Where there are no conditions attaching to the grant that enables the donor charity to realistically avoid the commitment, a liability for the full funding obligation must be recognised.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☐	☐	☒

Deferred income

No material item of deferred income has been included in the accounts.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☒	☐	☐

Creditors

The charity has creditors which are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☐	☐	☒

Provisions for liabilities

A liability is measured on recognition at its historical cost and then subsequently measured at the best estimate of the amount required to settle the obligation at the reporting date

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☒	☐	☐

Basic financial instruments

The charity accounts for basic financial instruments on initial recognition as per paragraph 10.7 FRS 102 SORP. Subsequent measurement is as per paragraphs 11.17 to 11.19, FRS 102 SORP.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☒	☐	☐

2.4 ASSETS

Debtors

Debtors (including trade debtors and loans receivable) are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the charity. Subsequently, they are measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be received.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
☒	☐	☐

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements
For the year ending 31 March 2024



Note 3 Income

Analysis of income		Restricted			Total funds £	Prior year £
		Unrestricted funds	income funds	Endowment funds		
Donations and legacies:	Donations and gifts	-	-	-	-	-
	General grants provided by government/other charities	-	36,178	-	36,178	65,658
	Total	-	36,178	-	36,178	65,658
Charitable activities:	Charitable activities	5,743	-	-	5,743	5,088
	Donations	2,724	-	-	2,724	-
	Total	8,467	-	-	8,467	5,088
TOTAL INCOME		8,467	36,178	-	44,645	70,746

Note 4 Expenditure

Analysis	This year			Last year		
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds
£						
Expenditure on charitable activities:						
Freelance Fees	-	-	-	-	-	-
Professional fees	918	-	918	300	-	300
Project Costs	6,964	34,991	41,955	32,833	58,650	91,483
Other - Materials	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total expenditure on charitable activities	7,882	34,991	42,873	33,133	58,650	91,783
Other						
Insurance	1,170	-	1,170	1,170	-	1,170
Bank Charges	60	-	60	72	-	72
Maintenance	1,137	-	1,137	972	-	972
	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total other expenditure	2,367	-	2,367	2,214	-	2,214
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	10,249	34,991	45,240	35,347	58,650	93,997



Note 5 Debtors and prepayments

5.1 Analysis of debtors

	This year £	Last year £
Trade debtors	-	-
Prepayments and accrued income	100.0	4,900.0
Other debtors	-	-
Total	100.0	4,900.0

Note 6 Creditors and accruals

6.1 Analysis of creditors

	Amounts falling due within one year		Amounts falling due after more than one year	
	This year £	Last year £	This year £	Last year £
Accruals and deferred income	40,435	25,936	-	-
Total	40,435	25,936	-	-

6.2 Deferred income

Please explain the reasons why income is deferred.

This year	Last year
£15,635 - Groundwork £5,000 - London Catalyst £10,000 - Garfield Weston £2,000 - Chapman Trust £4,800 - Tower Hamlet Homes £3,000 - Rank Foundation	£10,000 from Charities Trust £15,635 - Groundwork

Movement in deferred income account

	This year £	Last year £
Balance at the start of the reporting period	25,636	30,000
Amounts added in current period	24,799	15,636
Amounts released to income from previous periods	(10,000)	(20,000)
Balance at the end of the reporting period	40,435	25,636

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements
For the year ending 31 March 2024



Note 7 Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and on hand
Total

This year	Last year
£	£
71,101	51,997
71,101	51,997

Note 8 Charity funds

8.1 Details of material funds held and movements during the CURRENT reporting period

Fund names	Type PE, EE R or UR *	Purpose and Restrictions	Fund balances brought forward	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Fund balances carried forward
			£	£	£	£	£
Charities Trust	R	Ecclesiastical Award	-	10,000	(3,700)		6,300
Awards for All	R	Ecology/Garden	1,892	9,000	(3,746)	-	7,146
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation	R		-	8,000	(4,680)	-	3,320
Tower Hill Trust	R	Outdoor Classroom	-	4,900	(899)	-	4,001
Timberland	R	National Park	2,400	4,278	(6,678)	-	-
ArtsCouncil England	R	We Speak in Tongues	2,237	-	(2,237)	-	-
Raines Foundation	R	Forest Friday	819	-	(819)	-	-
Postcode Society	R	Forest Friday	13,656	-	(12,232)	-	1,424
SHED	UR	Mycelium project	1,859	-	-		1,859
Foyle Foundation	UR	Garden project	2,539	-	(2,539)		-
Other unrestricted income	UR	Charitable activities	1,085	8,467	(3,236)		6,316
TRIODOS BANK UK	UR	Shed	4,474	-	(4,474)		-
							-
Total Funds as per balance sheet			30,961	44,645	(45,240)	-	30,366

Fund balances carried forward include assets and liabilities denominated in a foreign currency

Yes*	No*
☐	☒

Report of the Trustees and Financial Statements
For the year ending 31 March 2024



Note 27 Charity funds

8.2 Details of material funds held and movements during the PREVIOUS reporting period

Fund names	Type PE, EE R or UR *	Purpose and Restrictions	Fund balances brought forward £	Income £	Expenditure £	Transfers £	Fund balances carried forward £
Timberland	R			4,800	(2,400)	-	2,400
Arts Council England	R		22,476	3,798	(24,037)	-	2,237
Raines Foundation	R			10,000	(9,181)	-	819
Awards for All	R	Garden project	7,203	10,000	(15,311)		1,892
Nineveh Trust	R		1,702	-	(1,702)		-
Postcode Society	R		932	17,060	(4,336)		13,656
City of London	R		1,683		(1,683)		-
SHED	UR	Mycelium project		15,000	(13,141)	-	1,859
Foyle Foundation	UR	Garden project		5,000	(2,461)	-	2,539
Other unrestricted income	UR	Charitable activities	2,114	5,088	(6,117)	-	1,085
TRIODOS BANK UK	UR	Shed	18,102		(13,628)	-	4,474
<i>Other funds (balancing figure)</i>	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funds as per balance sheet			54,212	70,746	(93,997)	-	30,961

Fund balances carried forward include assets and liabilities denominated in a foreign currency	Yes*	No*
	☐	☐

Accounts



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Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Annual Report 2023

The Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust (BGNRT) was formally recognised as a registered charity (1166648) on April 20th 2016. The charity has grown out of an informal Friends of Bethnal Green Nature Reserve that had been in existence since 2014.

Governance

Trustees overseeing governance for the Nature Reserve include Sajida Malik (Chair), Gwen Wright (Treasurer), Adelaide Bannerman, Glenda Trew, Neil Davidson.

Staffing for 2023 include Edward Simpson, Ingrid Chen, Shilpi Choudhury, CJ Jude, Shumaisa Khan, Judith Stanley, Izzy Johnston, Abel Daniel, Claire Chatelet, Michael Smythe.

Education & Learning

Our 2023 partners include Rangers Kindergarten, Stephen Hawking's and Oaklands School. We also host our own outdoor learning sessions under the name of Forest Fridays across the year.



Rangers Kindergarten

By Jo Gilks

9am – 1pm Monday & Tuesday, Rangers Kindergarten: Rangers is a local kindergarten specialising in outdoor education for children aged 2 – 8 years. Their weekly sessions instil a deep connection and confidence with the natural world.

In 2023 the Rangers children have been learning about the different trees at the nature reserve as part of the 'forests from seed' project. This has involved focussing on the attributes of different tree each week, learning how to identify leaves, seeds, and bark. Connecting children with folk law, edible and medicinal properties.

Rangers have learnt about the Elder, Hazel, Linden, Horse Chestnut, Hawthorn, Rowan, Sycamore, Butchers Broom, Oak, Ivy, Cherry, Field Maple, Juniper, and Holly. The children have searched for these in the nature reserve, and we have plotted some of them on our map using the Celtic Ogham (tree alphabet). Some of our recent activity highlights have included tie dying with berries, making Linden cordage, shelling, and crushing acorns to make flour, Hawthorn ketchup, Rowan berry tea, and using autumn leaves to make mandalas and winter wreaths.



Photos by Jo Gilks

Stephen Hawking School

9am – 1pm Thursday, Stephen Hawking School: Stephen Hawking School is dedicated to raising the standard of educational achievement for children between the ages of 2 and 11 years with profound, multiple, and severe learning, health, and care needs. In 2023 Stephen Hawking School have held weekly nature connection sessions for the children with observing ponds and wetlands being the favourite activity each week. While sitting next to the ponds the children learnt about the many birds, insects and animals that call the Nature Reserve home.

These observations contribute to our identification and surveying, providing useful data for the nature reserve management plan. Stephen Hawking School will continue their weekly engagement with the Reserve into 2024 and beyond.

Forest
Fridays

Forest Friday

By Ingrid Chen

4pm – 6pm Friday, Forest Friday: Forest Fridays is a free, weekly after school club run by the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust. Forest Fridays is for local children aged 4 – 11 years, encouraging them to explore and connect with the wonders of nature on their very own doorstep.

We started our 2023 Forest Friday sessions in February half term and ran through to the end of November. Our aim is to enable families to enjoy and care for the woodland, with all the benefits to health and wellbeing that entails. Forest Friday is particularly aimed at welcoming our closest neighbours to the reserve, especially those who may be less confident about woodland activities

and/or have little access to outside space, many of whom still don't know how to get into the reserve or maybe even that it is a nature reserve.

With that in mind, we simplified our program somewhat and ran most Fridays, including the school holidays, making it easier for people to know when they can visit. As much as possible, we aim to join in with care of the site, so this has included pond care & rainwater harvesting, care of the fungi farm, spreading woodchip & weeding amongst other fun and useful activities, lots of observation, some plant ID and a few games too.

We did expand our staff pool & our increase staffing level so that we could continue to operate a drop-in system and welcome all comers, rather than require booking. We continue to update and improve our safeguarding knowledge and procedures. A special congratulations to Shilpi Choudhury who has completed Level 3 FS training in 2023.

We now have 3 Forest School leaders on the team, plus the site manager, who joins us regularly, and other collaborators who have helped us run specific events. Higher staffing levels have been great for keeping the gate open more often and having more conversations with local families. A side benefit we're hoping to develop is that we're providing some insight to visiting parents & carers into employment in outdoor education, and hopefully some encouragement as our various staff has very different backgrounds and routes to co-running our sessions and different 'day jobs'.

In the summer and autumn of 2023 Forest Friday had a regular presence on Saturday, our public opening day, offering accessible and creative family activities.

This year we took part in the local Tenants and Residents Association's fun-days, ran our own fun day and hosted a special Halloween evening campfire, which was new this year and was well received. In 2024 we will look to bring more people into the staff pool and running more fun-day-type-events, all being well with funding and staffing.

Forest Friday is generously supported by **Postcode Neighbourhood Trust**.

Oaklands Secondary School

Oaklands secondary school occupies the old Raines Foundation building neighbouring the Nature Reserve. Oaklands caters for young people aged 13 – 18 years from the local area. Our education collaboration continued into 2023 with the geography department researching the complex biodiversity found across the site. Student research primarily focused on the relationship between the meadow and wetlands, including the meadows and medicine garden. Local volunteers were also asked to participate in a survey, capturing data on local understanding and connection with biodiversity within the Nature Reserve. The research will be shared with the local community in 2024.

In addition to school groups, we also hosted regular field trips with universities across the year. Our academic partners include Central Saint Martins, Royal College of Arts, University of East London, Chelsea School of Art, and Kingston University, all participated in day long workshops exploring the intersection of ecology, climate, and arts research.



Mobile Apothecary

In 2023 the Mobile Apothecary continued delivering high quality plant-based remedies to the residents of Bethnal Green across the year. Our Street service took place 7pm – 8pm, on the last Sunday. We serve outside the Bethnal Green tube station, alongside Refugee Community Kitchen (RCK). RCK provide hot vegetarian meals each week.

In 2023 the Mobile Apothecary served roughly 30 people each evening, with 70% return attendees accessing our service on any given night. The regularity of the service ensured locals could build meaningful relationships with the street service team and the products we offer. In 2023 the service provided the following remedies: good skin balm, decongestant rub, muscle & joint rub, immune support vinegar, cough syrup, hand sanitiser and epsom-salts deodorant. This year also saw the launch of a dedicated website, providing accessible information including our street service schedule, medicine making events and ingredient lists for each of our available products.

www.MobileApothecary.org.uk

In addition to the Street Service our team of volunteers delivered monthly medicine making workshops in the neighbouring Community Centre, sourcing most of our fresh herbs from the Phytology medicine garden and/or local shops found on Bethnal Green Road. In 2024 the Mobile Apothecary will continue hosting monthly medicine making and street distribution for our neighbourhood.

HEALS ON WHEELS

Can free plant medicine transform our healthcare system? Herbologist Maya Thomas heads into the community with Mobile Apothecary, a roaming project sharing herbs with those in need

Photography Isabelle Rose Povey

It's just before 7pm on the last Sunday of July and I'm standing at the corner of Bethnal Green Road in East London. I'm here to observe Mobile Apothecary at work. A cargo bike is being unpacked and transformed into a sturdy table, on top of which sits baskets laden with various herbal

salves, ointments and tonics and a giant flask of nourishing nettle tea. A sandwich board placed a few paces away announces, 'free herbal medicine to support community health'.

Mobile Apothecary's remedies are practical, carefully considered and aimed at meeting the most immediate needs of the people they are providing for. Namely, but by no means exclusively, those with limited access to accommodation and quality healthcare. There is a soothing antibacterial skin

halm for minor injuries, deodorant, hand sanitiser, a salve for achy joints and muscles and an immune system boost tonic.

People start to arrive before setup is complete. The first customer accepts the mineral-rich tea and picks out some muscle and joint balm before heading to the Refugee Community Kitchen, a sister



organisation that provides free meals. From here on, there is a steady stream of people arriving to ask for advice and gratefully take what they need.

Setting up the Mobile Apothecary was an organic process, a response to the growing numbers of unhoused people in the area, Michael Smythe tells me. He is one of a collective of project co-founders, as well as of Phytology, an urban physic garden and nature reserve in Bethnal Green. He says this is a local venture in every sense: the products are made by local volunteers knowledgeable in the art of plant medicine and have been made with plants either grown at Phytology or responsibly foraged in areas such as Victoria Park around the corner or, in the case of some spices, procured from one of the nearby Bangladeshi and Turkish shops. Ingredients such as daisies and comfrey (both important for bruises, aches and skin repair) are such common plants they make the stark point that healthcare could easily be accessible and available to all, if we only had the knowledge.

One man comes over from the refugee kitchen and asks what it's all about. When he's told about



the plant-based remedies, his eyes light up and he starts talking excitedly about a plant that grows everywhere locally and is commonly used in his home country of Morocco for prostate problems - 'it makes the men strong!' But, he says quizzically, no one seems to use it here. After asking for a description of the plant, I tell him it sounds like stinging nettle, and point to the cup of steaming tea he's just been handed. His eyes widen and he insists that we fill up his flask before he leaves. We've found connection (to place and to each other) through a plant that is familiar to us both but culturally and historically has been valued in different ways.

I've often tussled with the nature of my work and the ethics surrounding it. As an educator, I spend my time teaching people about the benefits of plants which for millennia have been our primary medicines. Striking the balance between paid workshops and free community programmes is not always straightforward, especially when bills need to be paid. Ideologically speaking, the knowledge I have should be available to everybody: if we all have a better understanding

Bloom Magazine - featuring Mobile Apothecary

London National Park City

In 2023 the London National Park City (LNPC) commenced a year-long collaboration aimed at nurturing and recording local knowledge of community led land stewardship. This took the form of multiple knowledge exchange sessions. The research was attended by volunteers from both Bethnal Green Nature Reserve and London National Park City, exploring themes centred around urban ecosystem caretaking. The group explored ways to share knowledge, co-authoring a collection of land care guides based on the participants lived experience.



Some of the themes include 'how to become a caretaker', 'how to care for caretakers', 'a guide on non-intervention vs intervention forestry work', 'how to coppice', 'how to understand the symbiotic relationship between birds and trees', 'how to encourage children's curiosity in nature' and 'a user's guide for icky jobs'. Over the winter months we will test the usability of the various guides, editing

and adjusting the content to ensure they are accessible for future caretakers of the Nature Reserve. A collection of these guides will be published on our website in 2024.

The Bethnal Green Nature Reserve would like to extend gratitude to Floree Zama-Neagra, Becky Lyons, the London National Park City team and Timberland. Everyone's generosity with time, ideas and resources have been seminal in realising this work.

This project was generously supported by **Timberland & London National Park City**.



Misery

In 2023 Misery commenced a year-long residency at Bethnal Green Nature Reserve. Misery is a mental health collective centring healing for queer / trans / non-binary black people and people of colour.



Photos courtesy of Misery

Misery hosted monthly workshops on the first Saturday of each month (May – December). These sessions engaged participants with knowledge sharing centred around ecology, social justice and medicine making. Some of the sessions includes decolonising cyanotype photography, medicinal honey making, herbal remedies for heart health and nervous system medicines.

The workshops ran between 12-3pm, with an optional open hour from 3-4pm for socialising, exploring the Nature Reserve, sharing readings or other offerings, and winding down together.

Nourish Yourself

Poet **Suhaiymah Manzoor-Khan** and Visual Artist **Alaa Alsaraji** hosted a series of creative activities rooted in connection to the natural world and thinking about how this impacts our wellbeing. Alongside making, participants learned about the artists' own paths into their creative practices and careers, including how they use creativity to connect with communities and aid them to express themselves for a myriad of outcomes.



Photo courtesy of the V&A

The workshop took place over two weekends in June and was aimed at young people aged 16-24 years. This residency was produced by V&A East as part of the V&A Upstart Creative Careers Festival 2023.

Praxis

Praxis is an award-winning human rights charity fighting for migrant rights since 1983. They give advice, provide support, and campaign so that migrants and refugees in the UK can live with safety, dignity, and respect. In the spring and summer of 2023 Praxis hosted weekly health and wellbeing session for women at the Nature Reserve. The Nature Reserve provided a quiet and safe place to exercise, build social connections and weekly access to the medicine garden and wider site ecologies.



Mission Practice

In 2023 our local GP Surgery, Mission Practice, continued weekly site care including watering the medicine garden and mushroom farm. The sessions are facilitated by the Social Prescribing team, encouraging the practice staff to nurture one another, while caring for the Nature Reserve over the hotter months.



Photo courtesy of Hackney Herbal

Hackney Herbal Nature Club

Hackney Herbal Nature Club is a weekly session bringing people and nature together in a welcoming, supportive, social, and safe place. The sessions will focus on spending time with others in nature and takes place at their garden in Hackney Wick as well as exploring local green spaces in and around the East End. The club visited the Nature Reserve in summer, autumn, and winter, focusing on mushroom ecologies and woodland land care in times of climate change.

University of East London

The university of East London commenced yearlong research project exploring how the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve aligns with contemporary sustainable development goals (SDG). The research team specifically researched our weekly volunteering opportunities, the Mobile Apothecary, Forest Friday and the Misery workshops.



At the end of 2023, the researchers present the Trust with areas that can be highlighted within the SDG framework, aiming to guide our work with the SDGs, which offer numerous benefits such as:

- Optimising organisational resources
- Defining priorities within the organisation
- Creating more value in the work you do locally
- Opening new opportunities for resourcing local communities



Community Ecology

By Edward Simpson

The 2023 ecology programme has been shaped by our 2021 and 2022 stakeholder-led programming, taking the form of weekly ecology walks, talks and workshops exploring the Nature Reserve designed and led by the people who help care for the space.

The programme explored various themes including birds, trees, mycelium, wetlands, and the medicine garden. These sessions were free and advertised across the local estates via diy posters. We look to build upon this weekly knowledge sharing and engaging local communities in 2024 by holding community led sessions each Saturday May till September.

During 2023 we held over 30 volunteer sessions where people were able to come and learn more about the nature reserve and how to care for it. As well as nurturing the plant and wildlife of BGNR the volunteers keep the site a safe and welcoming place for everyone who visits. Lots of our keyholding volunteers also come outside of these organised sessions to continue this vital work. It is always great to visit and see that someone has popped by and picked up litter or has been shovelling woodchip out of hours.

This year we decided to keep the sessions running once a month over the winter dormancy period as there was a lot of energy and enthusiasm to continue following on from the previous year's mushroom farm project. This decision really benefited the reserve as well as providing continuity for our community.

Early spring saw a transformation of the forest floor. We built up mulch piles of organic material to improve the soil quality and as our volunteers returned to weekly sessions we planted 232 bulbs, plug plants and saplings. To increase biodiversity this planting introduced 26 new species to the nature reserve. The selection of the plants came from our community's collective knowledge of which plants should thrive in a woodland habitat. The spring of 2024 should see all this work culminate as these new species start to thrive.



Lots of learning came through patient observations of the work done over the last couple of years. The pond continued to thrive and teach us how best we can care for it. Last year the pond was dense in vegetation and plant diversity but observationally there were less birds and mammals interacting with it. Over 2024 we will keep some areas of the pond clear in order to provide habitats that support both wildlife and plant life.

As a community we spent a lot of time with the mushroom farm, we had the first glimmers of successful growth with wine caps and turkey tail mushrooms appearing. Everyone is still really excited about this project and embracing its mycelial pace. We've been thinking of ways to keep people engaged and in autumn we welcomed back Able from last year's internship to run a workshop on oyster mushroom inoculation which introduced new people to the project.

We experimented with the ancient technique of hedge laying as a way of managing some of our trees. An incision is made at the base of a small tree and then folded over so that it continues to grow

horizontally. This creates a very dense habitat that is great for wildlife, especially nesting birds. When done at the edge of the reserve it has a secondary function of letting in more light without removing the trees. We experimented around the Billboard area and it has worked very well, creating a healthy hedgerow, bringing more light to the meadow and increasing the visibility of the billboard. Now we know that this is a viable form of woodland management for the reserve we will continue this practise in 2024.

The wildflower meadow had its second year in bloom, the first year was full of annuals such as poppies, cornflowers, and corn marigolds. This year saw the biannual plants thrive, like the mini teasels for the first time. Alongside these new plants lots of the classic BGNR plants like mallow and comfrey started to appear. Although these plants are great, we wanted this meadow area to support a different variety of plant species. I have developed a management plan to experiment with different ways of caring for the meadow and keep it a biodiverse habitat. Volunteers cut back the meadow in autumn, leaving some areas for wildlife refuge, then scattered it with new wildflower seeds ready for the spring.

This project was generously supported by **Postcode Neighbourhood Trust** and **Chapman Trust**.



Knitters Circle

In 2023 a group of regular volunteers formed the Knitters group, a weekly meet up for all ages where knitting, basket weaving, and other craft bases skills are exchanged. The knitters met most Saturdays beside the Nature Reserve pond across spring and summer, moving into the local Bethnal Green library in winter.

Food Growing Hub

In 2023 the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve received funding to develop a food growing space opposite the Nature Reserve entrance. The project aims to offer residents with space and resources to grow food locally, while connecting with the Nature Reserve resources and opportunities.

Tower Hamlets Homes have granted a five-year lease for the land located on the corner of Middleton St & Pundersons Gardens. The project will evolve over a twelve-month period, working closely with the Teesdale & Holybush Tenants and Residents Association.

We hope the food growing hub becomes a much-loved resource for the local communities, while also encouraging greater curiosity and engagement with the Nature Reserve, especially for individuals currently underrepresented at the Reserve.

This project is generously supported by **Groundworks London & Tower Hamlets Homes**.

Billboard Commissions

Farzana Khan

Farzana Khan was artist in residence at the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve during 2022, and part of, '*We Speak In Tongues About The Thing(s) We Love*' programme curated by Adelaide Bannerman for the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve. From 1st February till 31st June 2023 Farzana exhibited her largescale artwork titled '*We Extend Ourselves Towards Each Other's Aliveness*'.

The billboard quote originates from writing Farzana made and shared during her residency, which explored, what grief, loss, and trauma is, and how the process of healing can lead to understanding 'aliveness' – the state of being alive. What does that mean to us as individuals and communities?



Aliveness is more than being physically present, it's a generative approach and feeling that pulsates, and reaches deeply, amongst beings. '*We Extend Ourselves Towards Each Other's Aliveness*', invites us to consider what it means to access and offer each other life during times of multiple and cascading losses of many kinds. How do we commit to our own and each other's aliveness whilst honouring grief, practices of liberation and survival.

This project is part of '*We Speak In Tongues About The Things We Love*' generously supported by **Arts Council England**.

Polly Townsend

Polly Townsend's billboard is inspired by her 2023 experience as Artist in Residence in the Antarctic. The billboard work uses acrylic and watercolour paint, both long-standing mediums in the painting tradition. Acrylic, a plastic polymer mix, is used to form the ocean backdrop of the painting. The iceberg is painted in watercolour; mixed with the water collected off the Western Antarctic ice shelf.



Over a three-month period, the iceberg painting will degrade, changing colour and shape due to exposure to the elements (rain, sun, wind). The work raises questions of value, impermanence, and connection. As the world's largest and most distant wilderness melts, what is the link with our local community? What is the role of the City of London, whose skyscrapers look down on the billboard, and which continues to finance multi-billion-pound fossil fuel investments? These contribute to an accelerating destabilisation of the polar regions that regulate the Earth's climate. The work connects two ecosystems: 10,000 miles apart, one 10 billion times larger than the other, yet interdependent and equally miraculous.

Supported by the **Friends of Scott Polar Research Institute**.

Website

In 2023 the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve launched a new and improved website www.bethnalgreennaturereserve.org. The website replaced the previous www.phytology.org.uk site, transitioning to centre the Nature Reserve as the core project overseeing the day-to-day management of the Nature Reserve. The new website features a much-improved archiving and search system, helping to make our work more accessible.

Governance

A Board level incident regarding a Trustees code of conduct was triggered in May 2023, impacting the Trust delivering aspects of our public programme between June-August. The incident was addressed by the Board with the support from Personology (Human Resources) and Howard Kennedy (legal service). The Charity Commission & ICO were informed at the time and are satisfied with the Boards processes and protocols. A full statement will be available once the Board have concluded their investigations.

In 2023 the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve commenced an internal review of our governance structures and policies guiding our day-to-day work with the generous support of Law Works and the legal team at Inmarsat.

This work includes making the existing policies more accessible, prioritising plain-speak by removing unnecessary jargon, along with removing past systems that are no longer fit for purpose as our organisation evolves. The Board are also producing new policies to guide our work, including an anti-racism policy and statement, recruitment policies, service level agreements for site partner

organisations and a more extensive keyholder handbook. To ensure transparency and accessibility the Board will be publishing all our governing documents on the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve website in the spring of 2024.

In 2023 the Board and site team re-assessed the Nature Reserves constitution and charitable objectives. The Board have proposed a new set of objects that include our ongoing work addressing community health, biodiversity and more profoundly advocating for non-human populations that rely on the Nature Reserve. The new constitution also reduces the time a Trustee can serve (maximum of x2 terms) and enhances the vetting and recruitment process for governors. The new constitution will also introduce the 'associate' scheme, a non-legal governance role for stakeholders to participate in Board decision making. Associates will be involved in overseeing our work in areas such as mental wellbeing, ecology, cultural programming, and allocation of financial resources. The new constitution will be voted on at our AGM and integrated into our work across 2024 and beyond.



Compost Loo with A View

By CJ

We all know the compost loo at Bethnal Green Nature Reserve is the best loo in London. Volunteering to oversee the taking care of it is a continuous win, win. It helps the community and helps stabilise and ground me.

For this I want to express my gratitude to the people who made it a reality - without them there would be no compost loo - and to the people in the community who let me get on with it while respecting my differences and needs.

Behind the scenes

There is a lot more to maintaining the compost loo than basic cleaning and filling up the water tank.

Weekly, the compost loo is de-cobwebbed. Although there are numerous species of spider in residence at the compost loo, it is not a structure for spiders to dominate. It is a structure for many species to share including the human species - which many forget is as much a part of nature as any other species and who is in desperate need of compassion than is generally given to this species.

If spiders were left to their own devices they would cover the compost loo structure in webs. Unregulated; it would look like a scene from Miss Havesham's room in Great Expectations. Clearing cobwebs and making the compost loo hospitable for all species is essential.

Trixie

There is a big - by British standards - spider in the compost loo who I named Trixie. She likes to get cosy behind the insect drawings or in one of the pieces of pottery on the lower shelf behind the Dada urinal. She often makes me jump and I suspect she makes a lot of the other spiders jump, also as she is much bigger than most of the other species of spider resident.

Changing rooms

Each week there is often something new the community has left in the compost loo and each week I include it as part of the ongoing organic makeover.

Much, much more goes on

I did an exercise on Christmas Eve called what do you see in the compost loo for this piece of writing. Here is what I saw and what goes on inside the wooden walls:

Information, Activism, Education, Lost Property, a reminder of being in the urban East End of London, artwork cherished and exhibited, recycling, repurposing and reusing many street found objects, little things found and loved, statements, values, community contributions, communications, crafts, ornaments, object d'art, designs, plans, gardening items, woodwork, a bicycle wheel repurposed, bird feathers, a divine nest, sculptures, art projects, cleaning tools which are repurposed items normally discarded, quotes, motivational sayings, smiley faces, sticks for drying gloves, homemade soaps and perfumes, signposting, photography, pottery, Dada art, zines, drawings, First Aid, Fire Safety, important Information about the site, eco calendar, LGBT + badge, poetry, sawdust donated freely from a local business, recycled toilet roll, and much, much more.

Keeping on top of all these elements is the sort of productivity which is usually hidden and taken for granted. Not anymore, I am making it visible!

Suggestion for the community

The next time you have to visit the compost loo you might want to look around and guess how many items have been found on the street and repurposed?

What is your favourite? My latest favourite - I have too much going on in my brain to have one favourite - is the umbrella handle which is great for all sorts of cleaning and maintenance jobs as well as being a walking stick for when my hips and knees are playing up.

Finance & Admin

The net deficit for the year amounted to £23,251 (2022: surplus of £25,568). Total restricted funds are at £21,004 for the year (2022: £29,925), with general reserves (unrestricted and designated funds) now standing at £9,957 (2022: £24,287) with total funds at 31 March 2023 being £30,961 (2022: £54,212).

We would also like to thank our funders who have enabled us to carry out our work throughout a turbulent time. Our gratitude goes to Necessity, Mayor of London, Groundworks, Arts Council England, Postcode Neighbourhood Trust, Awards For All and Foyle Foundation.

Bethnal Green Nature Reserve - Aims & Aspirations 2024

- Devise and co-design a site management plan with stakeholders that encompasses climate change, social justice, and habitat protection.
- Develop closer links with the hyper local community, especially residents of neighbouring housing estates.
- Continue nurturing viable and accessible opportunities for residents to connect and engage with habitats for insect, birds, bats, mammals, and amphibians via weekly engagement sessions (walks, talks, workshops). These sessions are led by local stakeholders with the central aim of sharing knowledge and centring the Nature Reserve as a core local resource.
- Co-design and test a community led cultural framework for commissioning and collaborating with artists, research, and cultural institutions.
- Develop an 'associate' scheme of local experts in specific areas e.g. health, education, culture, ecology and resourcing. The associates will be appointed annually, advising and working closely with the Board. This role aims to enhance dialogue around site management, diversify the consultation process and build connections and capacity for stakeholders to influence Board decisions and ultimately progress into Trustee roles.
- Develop the food growing hub in collaboration with the Tenants and Residents Association to ensure local engagement and sustainable management systems for the new space over the coming years.

Trustees report for the financial year ending 2022/2023.

This report was approved by the Trustees at the 2023 Annual General Meeting held on 23rd January 2024 and signed by:



Sajida Malik
Chair, Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust
Charity No. 1166648

Independent Examiner's report to the Trustees of Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust

I report to the Trustees on my examination of the accounts of Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust (the Charity) for the year ended 31 March 2023.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Trustees of the Charity (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the financial statements in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 (the 2006 Act).

Having satisfied myself that the financial statements of the Charity are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's financial statements carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 (the 2011 Act). In carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 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:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the charity as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. financial statements do not accord with those records; or
3. the financial statements do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act 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; or
4. the financial statements have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102).

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.

Hakim Oreagba

H Oreagba

4 Hertford Walk
London DA17 5JW
23 January 2024

Charity Name: Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust	Charity No	1166648	
	Company No		
Annual accounts for the period			
Period start date	01/04/2022	To	31/03/2023

Section A Statement of financial activities (including summary income and expenditure account)

Recommended categories by activity	Guidance Note	Unrestricted funds £ F01	Restricted income funds £ F02	Total funds £ F04	Prior year funds £ F05
Income (Note 3)					
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	S01	20,000	45,658	65,658	63,484
Charitable activities	S02	5,088	-	5,088	28,370
Total	S07	25,088	45,658	70,746	91,854
Expenditure (Notes 6)					
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	S09	33,133	58,650	91,783	66,190
Other	S11	2,214	-	2,214	96
Total	S12	35,347	58,650	93,997	66,286
Net income/(expenditure) before tax for the reporting period					
Tax payable	S13	(10,259)	(12,992)	(23,251)	25,568
tax before investment gains/(losses)	S14	-	-	-	-
Net gains/(losses) on investments	S15	(10,259)	(12,992)	(23,251)	25,568
	S16	-	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure)	S17	(10,259)	(12,992)	(23,251)	25,568
Net movement in funds	S22	(10,259)	(12,992)	(23,251)	25,568
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward	S23	20,216	33,996	54,212	28,644
Total funds carried forward	S24	9,957	21,004	30,961	54,212

Section B Balance sheet

	Guidance Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Total this year £	Total last year £
Current assets					
Stocks (Note 18)	B06	-	-	-	-
Debtors (Note 19)	B07	-	4,900	4,900	-
Cash at bank and in hand (Note 24)	B09	26,361	25,636	51,997	84,512
Total current assets	B10	26,361	30,536	56,897	84,512
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (Note 20)	B11	300	25,636	25,936	30,300
Net current assets/(liabilities)	B12	26,061	4,900	30,961	54,212
Total assets less current liabilities	B13	26,061	4,900	30,961	54,212
Total net assets or liabilities	B16	26,061	4,900	30,961	54,212
Funds of the Charity					
Endowment funds (Note 27)	B17	-		-	-
Restricted income funds (Note 27)	B18		21,004	21,004	29,925
Unrestricted funds	B19	9,957		9,957	24,287
Revaluation reserve	B20			-	-
Fair value reserve	B21				
Total funds	B22	9,957	21,004	30,961	54,212

The company was entitled to exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

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

Signature

Print Name

Date of approval
dd/mm/yyyy

Sajida Malik

23/01/2024

Company Registration No. (England and Wales) 1166648

S. Malik

Note 1 Basis of preparation

1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with:

- and with*

ü

 the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014
- and with*

ü

 the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)
- and with the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.*

*-Tick as appropriate

1.2 Going concern

If there are material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, please provide the following details or state "Not applicable", if appropriate:

An explanation as to those factors that support the conclusion that the charity is a going concern;

The trustees are of the view that unrestricted reserves to fund charitable activities are adequate to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and is therefore a going concern

1.3 Change of accounting policy

The accounts present a true and fair view and no changes have been made to the accounting policies adopted in note { }.

Yes*	☒	*-Tick as appropriate
No*	☐	

1.4 Changes to accounting estimates

No changes to accounting estimates have occurred in the reporting period (3.46 FRS 102 SO RP).

Yes*	☒	*-Tick as appropriate
No*	☐	

1.5 Material prior year errors

No material prior year error have been identified in the reporting period (3.47 FRS 102 SO RP).

Yes*	☒	*-Tick as appropriate
No*	☐	

Note 2

2.2 INCOME

Accounting policies

Recognition of income

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- it is more likely than not that the trustees will receive the resources;
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	ü	ü

Offsetting

There has been no offsetting of assets and liabilities, or income and expenses, unless required or permitted by the FRS 102 SORP or FRS 102.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
ü	✓	ü

Grants and donations

Grants and donations are only included in the SoFA when the general income recognition criteria are met (5.10 to 5.12 FRS 102 SORP).

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	ü	ü

In the case of performance related grants, income must only be recognised to the extent that the charity has provided the specified goods or services as entitlement to the grant only occurs when the performance related conditions are met (5.16 FRS 102 SORP).

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	ü	ü

Government grants

The charity has received government grants in the reporting period

Yes*	No*	N/a*
ü	ü	ü

Support costs

The charity has incurred expenditure on support costs.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
ü	ü	ü

2.3 EXPENDITURE AND LIABILITIES

Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	ü	ü

Governance and support costs

Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
ü	ü	✓

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources, eg allocating property costs by floor areas, or per capita, staff costs by the time spent and other costs by their usage.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
ü	ü	✓

Grants with performance conditions

Where the charity gives a grant with conditions for its payment being a specific level of service or output to be provided, such grants are only recognised in the SoFA once the recipient of the grant has provided the specified service or output.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	ü	ü

Grants payable without performance conditions

Where there are no conditions attaching to the grant that enables the donor charity to realistically avoid the commitment, a liability for the full funding obligation must be recognised.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
ü	ü	✓

Deferred income

No material item of deferred income has been included in the accounts.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	ü	ü

Creditors

The charity has creditors which are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts

Yes*	No*	N/a*
ü	ü	✓

Provisions for liabilities

A liability is measured on recognition at its historical cost and then subsequently measured at the best estimate of the amount required to settle the obligation at the reporting date

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	ü	ü

Basic financial instruments

The charity accounts for basic financial instruments on initial recognition as per paragraph 10.7 FRS 102 SORP. Subsequent measurement is as per paragraphs 11.17 to 11.19, FRS 102 SORP.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	ü	ü

2.4 ASSETS

Debtors

Debtors (including trade debtors and loans receivable) are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the charity. Subsequently, they are measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be received.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	ü	ü

Section C	Notes to the accounts	(cont)
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Note 3 Income

Analysis of income		Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Endowment funds	Total funds £	Prior year £
Donations and legacies:	Donations and gifts	-	-	-	-	-
	General grants provided by government, other charities	20,000	45,658	-	65,658	63,484
	Total	20,000	45,658	-	65,658	63,484
Charitable activities:	Charitable activities	5,088	-	-	5,088	25,000
	Donations	-	-	-	-	3,370
	Total	5,088	-	-	5,088	28,370
Total		-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL INCOME		25,088	45,658	-	70,746	91,854

Note 6 Expenditure

Analysis	This year			Last year		
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds £	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds
Expenditure on charitable activities:						
Freelance Fees	-	-	-	13,748	31,435	45,183
Professional fees	300	-	300	300	-	300
Project Costs	32,833	58,650	91,483	5,763	4,865	10,628
Other - Materials	-	-	-	4,882	5,197	10,079
Total expenditure on charitable activities	33,133	58,650	91,783	24,693	41,497	66,190
Other						
Insurance	1,170	-	1,170	-	-	-
Bank Charges	72	-	72	96	-	96
Maintenance	972	-	972	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total other expenditure	2,214	-	2,214	96	-	96
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	35,347	58,650	93,997	24,789	41,497	66,286

Note 19 Debtors and prepayments

19.1 Analysis of debtors

	This year £	Last year £
Trade debtors	-	-
Prepayments and accrued income	4,900.0	-
Other debtors	-	-
Total	4,900.0	-

Note 20 Creditors and accruals

20.1 Analysis of creditors

	Amounts falling due within one year		Amounts falling due after more than one year	
	This year £	Last year £	This year £	Last year £
Accruals and deferred income	25,936	30,300	-	-
Total	25,936	30,300	-	-

20.2 Deferred income

Please complete this note if the charity has deferred income

Please explain the reasons why income is deferred.

This year	Last year
<i>£10,000 from Charities Trust</i>	<i>£10,000 from Charities Trust</i>
<i>£15,635 - Groundwork</i>	<i>£10,000 from Raine's Foundation</i>
	<i>£10,000 from A4A Ecology</i>
	<i>All restricted for 2023/24</i>

Movement in deferred income account

	This year £	Last year £
Balance at the start of the reporting period	30,000	9,777
Amounts added in current period	15,636	30,000
Amounts released to income from previous periods	(20,000)	(9,777)
Balance at the end of the reporting period	25,636	30,000

Section C**Notes to the accounts****(cont)****Note 24 Cash at bank and in hand****Cash at bank and on hand****Total**

This year	Last year
£	£
51,997	84,511
51,997	84,511

Note 27 Charity funds**27.1 Details of material funds held and movements during the CURRENT reporting period**

Fund names	Type PE, EE R or UR *	Purpose and Restrictions	Fund balances brought forward	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Fund balances carried forward
			£	£	£	£	£
Timberland	R			4,800	(2,400)	-	2,400
ArtsCouncil England	R		22,476	3,798	(24,037)	-	2,237
Raines Foundation	R			10,000	(9,181)	-	819
Awards for All	R	Garden project	7,203	10,000	(15,311)	-	1,892
NinevehTrust	R		1,702	-	(1,702)	-	-
Postcode Society	R		932	17,060	(4,336)	-	13,656
City of London	R		1,683		(1,683)	-	-
SHED	UR	Mycelium project		15,000	(13,141)		1,859
Foyle Foundation	UR	Garden project		5,000	(2,461)		2,539
Other unrestricted income	UR	Charitable activities	2,114	5,088	(6,117)		1,085
TRIODOS BANK UK	UR	Shed	18,102		(13,628)		4,474
Total Funds as per balance sheet			54,212	70,746	(93,997)	-	30,961

Note 27 Charity funds**27.2 Details of material funds held and movements during the PREVIOUS reporting period**

Fund names	Type PE, EE R or UR *	Purpose and Restrictions	Fund balances brought forward	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains and losses	Fund balances carried forward
			£	£	£	£	£	£
Awards for All	R	Garden project	692	10,000	(3,489)	-	-	7,203
Groundwork UK	R		7246	7,525	(17,457)	2,686	-	-
Arts Council	R		-	34,182	(11,706)	-	-	22,476
Postcode Neighbourhood	R		-	9,777	(8,845)	-	-	932
Nineveh Trust	R		-	2,000	(298)	-	-	1,702
City of London	UR		20706	150	(16,487)	(2,686)		1,683
SHED	UR	Shed	-	25,000	(6,898)	-		18,102
Sajida Forest Scho KANTINE	UR	Charitable activities	-	3,000	(1,049)	-		1,951
National Medical	UR	Charitable activities	-	150	(56)	-		94
Donation	UR	Charitable activities		70				70
Total Funds as per balance sheet			28,644	91,854	(66,286)	-	-	54,212

Accounts



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Bethnal Green Nature Reserve

Annual Report 2022



Photo; Casey leading a mushroom foraging in Hackney Marshes, Dana leading a conversation circle on economy, immigration and agriculture at Kupala Festival, Volunteers sitting around a campfire at the 2022 end of year supper, Circle of stools in amphitheatre.

The Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust (BGNRT) was formally recognised as registered charity (1166648) in April 2016. The charity has grown out of an informal Friends of Bethnal Green Nature Reserve that had been in existence since 2014, based on a collaboration between Nomad Projects and Teesdale and Hollybush Tenants and Residents Association; around the core project Phytology and the goal of delivering quality access to the Nature Reserve by integrating ecology, arts, and education engagement opportunities within our work.

Governance

Trustees: Neil Davidson (Chair), Gwen Wright (Treasurer), Ellie Doney (Secretary), Saif Osmani, Glenda Trew, Ingrid Chen, Sajida Malik, Kenneth Greenway.

The 2022 site team included Shumaisa Khan (Community Gardener), Dimuthu Meehitiya (Ecologist & Environmental Educator), Adelaide Bannerman (Curator), CJ Jude (Compost Toilet Caretaker), Ingrid Chen (Forest School Lead), Shilpi Choudhury (Forest School Teacher), Edward Simpson (Co-Site Manager),

Mila Guichard Lawlor (Mobile Apothecary Project Manager), Michael Smythe (Site Manager & Volunteer Coordinator). We also want to acknowledge the incredible dedication of so many people that show up each week to care for the Reserve and one another. Your commitment to the Nature Reserve is fundamental to its existence.

Education/Learning

In 2022 we continued to collaborate with local schools, providing high quality outdoor learning space for children and young people. We believe having access to quality outdoor learning facilities is essential for the wellbeing of each and every person regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability or socioeconomic status. Our 2022 partners include:



Photos – Forest Friday tree planting workshop, Forest Friday mushroom workshop, Forest Friday mushroom log inoculation workshop. Image by Ingrid Chen.

Rangers Kindergarten - 9am till 2pm Monday & Tuesday: Rangers is a local kindergarten specialising in outdoor education for children aged 2 – 8 years. Their weekly sessions instil a deep connection and confidence with the natural world.

Oaklands Secondary School - 1pm till 3pm Wednesday: Oaklands secondary school for young people aged 13 – 18 years. Geography & Biology departments engaged with the Reserve, but we hope to connect with other departments within the school across 2023.

Stephen Hawking School - 9am till 1pm Thursday: Stephen Hawking School is dedicated to raising the standard of educational achievement for children between the ages of 2 and 11 years with profound learning, health, and care needs. In 2021 the school commenced their weekly residency within the Nature Reserve. In 2023 they will explore weather and seasonal change.



Photo – Forest Friday mushroom farming workshop, Forest Friday shadow play, Forest Friday's den building. Image by Ingrid Chen.

Forest Friday - 4pm till 6pm Friday: Forest Fridays is a free, weekly after school club run by the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust. Forest Fridays is for local children aged 4 – 11 years, encouraging confidence, curiosity and connect with the wonders of nature on their very own doorstep.

Forest Friday afterschool club is led by Ingrid Chen (local resident, outdoor educator, Trustee), Shilpi Choudhury (local resident, forest schoolteacher), with additional support from Claire Chatelet & Dim Meehitiya. Forest Friday aims:

- Nurture connections with neighbours and build community relations
- Support wellbeing by spending time in nature
- Encourage curiosity, knowledge sharing / skill building and promote physical activity
- Foster care for the environment in children, young people, and adults
- Learn about natural history and take part in citizen science

In 2022 the team delivered outdoor learning activities to over 90 local children and their families. Forest Friday was generously funded in 2022 by Raines School Foundation.

Volunteering

As seen in 2021, there was a noticeable increase in people looking to volunteer and connect with the Nature Reserve throughout 2022. The site key-holder scheme continued across the year, providing individuals with 24/7 access to the Nature Reserve in exchange for light-touch upkeep and site care. Keyholders include local-residents, school groups, regular volunteers, resident researchers, community herbalists and local health, asylum & wellbeing organisations (Revoke, Praxis, Mission Practice).



Photos- Volunteers sorting logs for the medicine garden re-design, Volunteers learning how to make Fire Cider, Volunteers participating in wetland ecology survey.

Volunteer sessions took place each Saturday 11am – 1pm, May till December. These sessions were led by Shumaisa Khan, Michael Smythe & Edward Simpson, provide a supportive environment for people to learn more about the Nature Reserve, encourage curiosity for the natural world, skills building and increased confidence caring for the Nature Reserve on a day-to-day basis.

In May 2022 we hosted an Eid celebration for local-residents on the official opening of the Nature Reserve following two years of Covid-19 restrictions. The success of the event was testament to Shumaisa Khan leading the planning, supported by many local volunteers delivering invitations across the neighbouring estates.

Phytology Medicine Garden

In 2022 the Phytology Medicine Garden continued providing a range of outreach and learning opportunities for individuals, groups, and local community organisations. Weekly medicine garden volunteering remained a popular way for people to connect with the Nature Reserve, building knowledge, skills and confidence using the herbs for day-to-day food and medicine.

Fatima Ali joined the team as our 2022 medicine garden assistant, providing horticultural support to Shumaisa. The role included researching medicinal properties of particular plants grown within the medicine garden, welcoming visitors to the Reserve during our opening hours, and sharing foraging/harvesting techniques with those who engage with the herb growing area.



Photo of Shumaisa sharing herb knowledge in the medicine garden, Cough syrup making workshop, Borage in flower.

Beginning in February, the garden also underwent a redesign centred on improving physical accessibility and creating more accessible/understandable plantings. The new design also integrated adaptation to the new microclimate of greater sun exposure due to the removal of some trees during the pond rebuild. Layout changes entailed transforming the central mound into two terraces – which could decrease runoff of water down the slope and prevent erosion – with a 90cm wide central path between them. This shifted the biggest path from the bottom of the garden into the middle of the garden, enabling (in theory), wheelchair-users to be able to go into the centre of the garden.

A log wall was made from wood cut during winter tree care, and smaller branches and twigs were buried beneath the main paths to fill in the trenches before topping with other material. Over time, the decay of the buried wood may feed fungal networks in the garden. Holes were made in the log wall to support solitary bees. Plantings directly behind the wall will also enable people who may not be able to bend down to interact with plants that are not so tall.



Medicine garden re-design as a terraced growing space with wider pathways. Photos by Michael Smythe.

The process took place over a few months, beginning in late winter, and was supported by a dedicated team of volunteers, without which the ambition of the redesign would not have been feasible.

The garden also welcomed new plants that add colour, fragrances, textures, attract diverse insects, and which are more drought tolerant.

Daily care of the medicine garden across the summer months was overseen by a dedicated group of local-residents. Each evening saw volunteers measure and record moisture in the soil, ensuring the herb garden remained healthy and abundant across the long dry summer.

The drip irrigation was also re-established later in the summer; it can now be switched on earlier in 2023 to enable conservation of water from the start of the season. Drip irrigation, which waters the soil directly, was allowed during the hose pipe ban.

As part of increasing accessibility and understandability/literacy about the plants, we also started to develop profiles of the plants and some of their benefits and basic information about herbal preparations. These will be made available via the new website in time for the 2023 season.



The medicine garden was also host to several organisations throughout 2022. These include, but not limited to: Mission GP Practice, Orbis Herbalist Group, Revoke, Rabiah Mali (Herbal Blessing Clinic), Healing Justice London, Raju Rage, Shadow Sisterx, Bow Arts.



As part of the redesign, a medicinal bed was created at the pond edge as a transition from pond to medicine garden. Marshmallow was transplanted here, it's more native habitat.



Top - Echinacea & Bee balm. Bottom - California poppy & Lemon verbena. Photos by Shumaisa Khan.

Ecology

Reflections on the Wetland Enhancement project

In 2022 interdisciplinary ecologist Tyra Enchill commenced work on the 'Wetland Enhancement Report', a booklet offering insights into the year-long upgrade of our wetland to increase biodiversity and improving access to our ponds for amphibians, birds, insects, and mammals (including humans).



Photo of wetland Ecology Report, Photo of two mallard ducks in the new ecology pond, Photo of report by Tyra Enchill, photo of ducks by Michael Smythe.

Wetland Enhancement report provides a useful guide to our wetland's history and our long-term research, design, and visions for this critical urban habitat in the long-term. The booklet was published in Autumn 2022 and launched at the Nature Reserve on 26th November 2022. An online version of the report is available on the BGNR website - <https://phytology.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Wetland-Enhancement-Report-Nov-2022.pdf>

Experimental Ecology Survey Project

In 2022 our annual ecology programme was led by a team of regular volunteers and site stakeholders. The project aimed to generate knowledge and share learnings by and for residents and volunteers.

Rather than simply record the biodiversity of the site during a slice of time, the aim was to observe and discover new ways to connect and record the relationships between plants, insects, mammal life that makes up the community of the Bethnal Green Nature.



Ecology of ecology insect workshops by Michael Smythe.

We hope the experimental nature of this project inspired slower and closer connections with this remarkable urban Nature Reserve, generating many new ways of understanding and caring for the land and its living inhabitants. Project leads included Ailo Ribas & Chiara Famengo (Botany), Tyra Enchill & Edward Simpson (Wetland), Gineo Brignoli (Insects) & Jane Laure (Birds).

Botany (Ailo Ribas, Chiara Famengo)

Throughout spring and summer 2022 the botany team organised a series of walks which aimed to build a living archive of botanical knowledge for current and future friends of the reserve, both online and onsite. This included stories, remedies & recipes, observed & learnt from the plants themselves. The research aimed to collectively explore what a community-organised ecology survey could look like. The following workshops took place:

‘What’s your herb culture’ led by community herbalist **Rasheeqa**

Ahmad focused on plant-based medicines and seasonal remedies generated by the abundance of plants and trees found growing within the Phytology Medicine Garden and wider Nature Reserve.

‘A morning with Terry Lyle & Izzy Johnson: Stories and Flora of the BGNR from 1970’s to now’ a walking tour of the Nature Reserve by Terry Lyle (Co-founder of the BGNR) and Izzy Johnston (Botanist / Forager). The session explored the historic ‘roots’ of the Nature Reserve and its past and current flora.



Photos of botany workshops by Ailo Ribas and Chiara Famengo.

‘Learning from herbs: tea tasting and plant observation with Mila’. This workshop investigated the physical and emotional responses plants generate within us. Led by herbalist Mila Guichard Lawlor, the session featured tea tasting, drawing and group discussion around our psych-emotional connection to botany.



Photos of foraging workshops by Ailo Ribas, Chiara Famengo and Michael Smythe.

‘Composting Thoughts/Fermenting Worlds: Food, Writing & Connections to Nature’: Rajiv Bera (Queer Masala) & Jennifer Obidike hosted an afternoon of experimental writing and storytelling for people who identify as LBGT+ / BPoC within the Nature Reserve. Participants explored how we employ language to communicate our connection to the land and each other. Writing from this session will soon be published on the BGNR website.

‘Foraging Walks at the BGNR with Izzy Johnson’ took place across the Spring, Summer and Autumn. Izzy shared knowledge on a plethora of wild plants, trees and shrubs found within the Nature Reserve. A celebration of folklore, foraging

protocols, medicinal and nutritional information was shared amongst the many people in attendance.

Invertebrates (Gino Brignoli)



Photos of wetland insect workshops by Michael Smythe.

Entomologist, Gino Brignoli, hosted a series of community-focused invertebrate workshops across Spring and Summer. The workshops celebrated local invertebrate fauna by providing first-hand knowledge on how to use non-lethal, non-destructive methods to survey insect populations living within the Nature Reserve.



Photos of insects captured at the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve by Gino Brignoli.

The following themes were explored over five sessions:

- Nocturnal insect survey
- How to record data, keep a field notebook, & use identification guides and keys
- Surface, Soil & Leaf litter Invertebrates
- Aquatic Invertebrates

- Invertebrates on Plants & Flying Invertebrates

An incredible number of insects were reported, including several rare species not expected in Bethnal Green.

Wetland (Tyra, Edward)

From Summer 2022 to Spring 2023, Edward Simpson & Tyra Enchill present a series of wetland ecology surveys in collaboration with friends and residents of the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve. Their project investigates the complex array of lifeforms and relationships that are emerging in the newly installed wetland.



Photo of and by Tyra Enchill and Edward Simpson capturing data at the Bethnal Green wetland.

Workshops included:

‘Herbaria skills workshop’ was led by Mila Guichard Lawlor, seeing participants collect botanical specimens from the pond for drying - arranged by family, genus, and species. The survey also included individual interpretations from each participant. The herbarium will become an important reference in the coming years as the community shifts, and as plants respond to a changing climate.

‘Mindful observation workshop’, held by interdisciplinary ecologist Tyra Enchill and environmental writer, Joanna Pocock. Guided by principles of mindfulness, the session focused on living and non-living entities, relationships and stories which form the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve’s ecosystem. Participants were invited to create writing and share reflections with the group. By prioritising depth and expansiveness of presence, we hope to make space for a slower and deeper awareness of this ecosystem through ‘being’ and the act of writing.



Photo of wetland survey project by Tyra Enchill and Edward Simpson.

Data Recording In addition to hosting workshops, Tyra & Edward oversaw the collection of data for the new pond. These investigations include water temperature readings, bird and botany observations, oxygen and nutrient levels. This data will inform our future care of the pond ecosystem. In 2023 Tyra and Edward will train up other volunteers to continue collecting data over the years ahead.

Birds (Jane Laurie)



Photo of Jane Laurie leading bird survey workshop by Michael Smythe.

The 2022 Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Bird Survey is led by artist, environmentalist, and bird enthusiast Jane Laurie. Workshops and events include: **Plumology workshop** - Plumology is the science associated with the study of feathers, and during this session Jane led an introduction to their purpose, identifying details and structure on both micro and macro scales. The

session was followed by a drawing workshop to heighten observations on feathers.

Story Telling with Deb Newbound and Lisa Knapp - In April 2022 we will host a two-part event of poetry, writing, fireside storytelling, and music, hosted by poet, writer and performer Debs Newbold. This event was postponed due to snow in December 2022. The event will now take place over two parts; an afternoon writing workshop, followed by an evening fireside storytelling and music in April 2023.

Data Recording – Across 2023 Jane will lead a series of bird survey workshops, sharing methods of data collection across the spring, summer, autumn, and winter months. This information is critical to better understand how the various ecosystems found within the Nature Reserve can best serve a diverse community of birds.



Photos courtesy of Pesticide Free London.

Pesticide Free London

In September 2022 we partnered up with advocacy group Pesticide Free London to discuss ways to stop the use of pesticides in our public spaces. This conversation was held in several green spaces across London, providing an opportunity to sharing local knowledge with other local organisations and campaigners, ensuring our neighbourhoods can become pesticide free. Host sites included:

- South London: Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses, 30th August
- North London: OmVed Gardens, 6th September
- East London: Phytology, 8th September
- West London: Hammersmith Community Gardens (Phoenix Farm), 13th September

The Ecology program for 2022 was generously supported by Awards for All.

Mycelium Ecologies Project

In the Autumn of 2022 Revoke & the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve co-developed an eleven-week research, design and build project exploring mushroom and mycelium ecologies. The project mirrored “mycorrhizal networks”, connecting young people from Revoke and our stakeholders with an extensive network of mentors, collaborators, educational resources, and economic opportunities linked to nurturing a mycelium growing zone within the BGNR.



Photos of mushroom identification and wood/straw inoculation workshop by Michael Smythe.

Our 2022 Ecology project was managed by Dim & Michael, with our apprentices roles held by Abel & Amir (who undertook the 11-week traineeship). Abel & Amir were supported by a team of mentors with experience in mycelium farming, foraging, nutrition, medicine, and storytelling backgrounds. By the end of the 11 weeks the apprentices and local community had built a remarkable mycelium farm and learnt a multitude of ways to grow, care for and prepare food/medicines from mycelium.



Photos of mushroom growing zone in order by Michael Smythe, Ingrid Chen and Neil Davidson.

For the project we select several species of mushrooms to grow for their ecological benefit/scarcity and medicinal/nutritional properties. These include Lions Main, Jelly Ears, Chicken of the Woods, Turkey Tails, and Birch Polypore. Wilde cultivars of each species was provided (dowels / spores) by Craig from Marvellous Mushrooms.

A long-term aim of the project is to provide food and medicine for our communities while offering learning opportunities amongst residents, school groups and social prescribing networks. The new mushroom habitat will also contribute towards our long-term ambition to develop the Nature Reserve into an alternative centre for learning about social and land-based ecologies.



Photos of mycelium project at RBG Kew Fungarium and Izzy Johnson mushroom lecture at Bethnal Green Nature Reserve by Michael Smythe.

Revoke is a grassroots organisation advocating for the rights and welfare of underserved young people, particularly refugees, asylum seekers, and those in the care system, living without advocates, families, power, or a voice. By recognising the brutality of the political, economic, and bureaucratic systems these young people battle every day, we take a holistic approach to their care,

prioritising compassion, empathy, and respect. Their values are rooted in abolition principles and trauma-informed practices. Revoke is founded by a team with lived experience of migration; racism; learning English as an additional language; and the trauma of displacement. This creates a strong connection to the young people they work with, aiming to give them the tools, education, and confidence to advocate for themselves and restore the rights they've had revoked.

The Mycelium program for 2022 was generously supported by Necessity.

Mobile Apothecary

Since April 2019, the Mobile Apothecary has been bringing people together to collectively learn about medicinal plants and create herbal medicine for distribution to fellow community members facing barriers to health, food, and shelter. The Mobile Apothecary supports communities in the locality with good-quality, homegrown and communally made herbal remedies.



Photos of Mobile Apothecary Street Service by Michael Smythe.

In the winter of 2021, the Mobile Apothecary resumed street service outside Hackney Town Hall after a 3-month hiatus. This particular location is calm and enables higher level of focused conversation and engagement with the communities that engage with the service. During this period the Mobile Apothecary team carried out a focused period of consultation with people who regularly visit our service. We collected useful anecdotal feedback on the medicines, the overall service, and ways to improve our service.



Photo of daisy harvest in Victoria Park & MA vision day. Images by Michael Smythe.

Parallel to this we commissioned permaculture designer Muzammal Hussain to develop a reflection piece on the Mobile Apothecary's journey so far - from its early beginnings, the pandemic emergency response, and future aspirations to build long term sustainable systems. This piece of research provides an essential moment of reflection for the Mobile Apothecary, recording the journey of a front-line project over a very memorable three-year period.

In 2022 we intentionally scaled back our service to pre-pandemic times, focusing on solely on supporting our hyper-local community in Bethnal Green, serving 7pm – 8pm on the last Sunday of each month outside the Bethnal Green Tube Station (alongside our long-term collaborators Refugee Community Kitchen). In 2022 we re-brand our medicine products ensuring greater accessibility, lab tested and certified all our regular products and commenced monthly medicine making workshops with volunteers of the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve. The medicine making workshops were led by Mila Guichard Lawlor, who shared knowledge of herbs and remedy making processes. In February 2023 will see the publishing of a dedicated Mobile Apothecary website.

The Mobile Apothecary is generously supported by Necessity and all the dedicated volunteers who regularly show up for harvesting, medicine making and street service.



Looking Back billboard by Eduardo Padhila, AUM billboard by George Chakravarthi. Photos by Sol Aizcorbe & Michael Smythe.

Arts

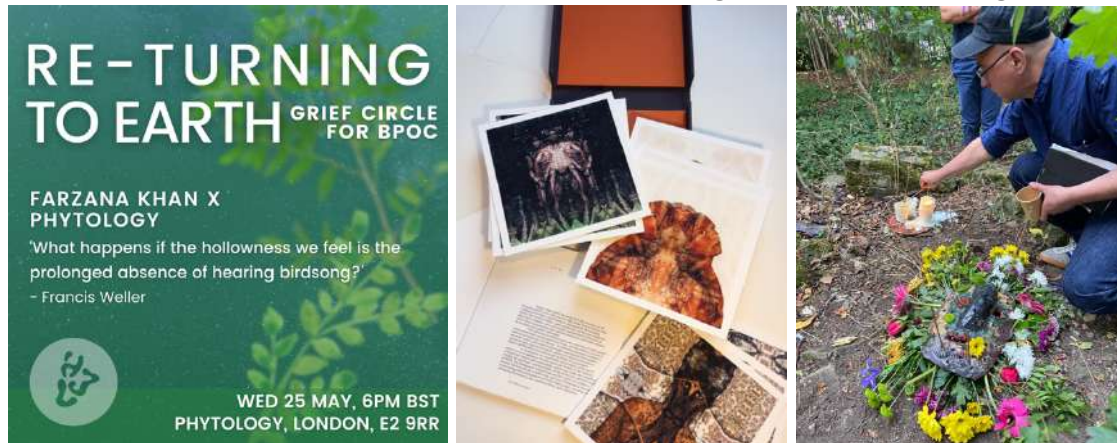
In 2022 Adelaide Bannerman devised, curation and delivered 'We Speak In Tongues About The Thing(s) We Love', the formal cultural programme at the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve. A programme of overlapping activities from all the participating artists has been delivered during 2022, with various research outputs to be published across 2023. Participating artists include Farzana Khan, Eduardo Padhila, George Chakravarthi, Daze Aghaji and Healing Justice London. Some highlights of the past year include:



Eduardo Padhila & Adelaide Bannerman leading an artist tour of the Nature Reserve installation. Photos by Michael Smythe.

- **August 2021 – March 2022** Adelaide Bannerman & Daze Aghaji present x3 successive billboard artworks at the BGNR.
- **July 2021** Farzana Khan/Healing Justice London facilitated, '*Recipes for Resistance: Migration and Un/Belonging*'. The workshop explored memory, grief and un/belonging in relationship to the politics of food, identity and land with Raju Rage & Rajiv Bera.
- **September 2021** Daze Aghaji/'*Letters to the Earth: A Creative Writing Workshop*', gathering participant responses to climate change, biodiversity loss, social injustice in advance of COP 26, Glasgow.

- **October 2021** Eduardo Padhila and George Chakravarthi begin research.



Farzana Khan's *Grief Circle* poster, George Chakravarthi's *AUM* publication, Eduardo Padhila installation and artist talk. Photos in order by George Chakravarthi & Michael Smythe.

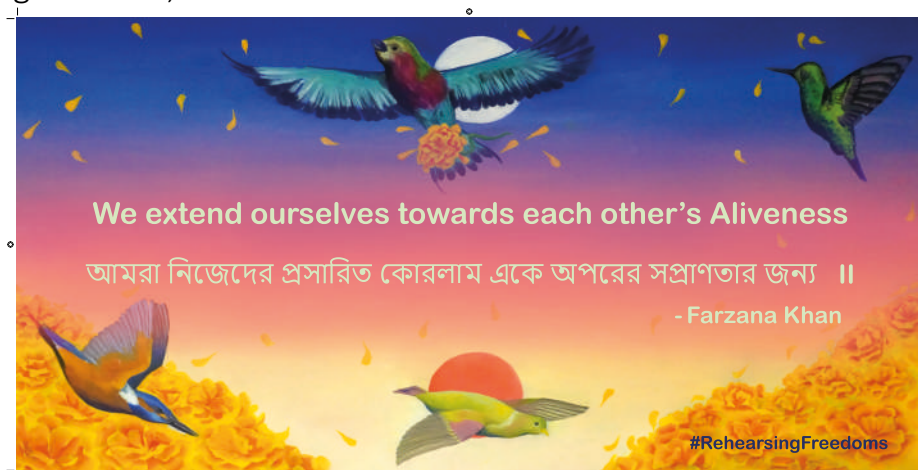
- **March 2022** Farzana Khan/Healing Justice London facilitated the '*Grief Circle: Fire Ceremony*'. The session is a healing and grief space, intended to hold and support multiple forms of loss and mourning.
- **May 2022** Farzana Khan begins research for her summer writing residency at the BGNR. The public programme kicked off with Eduardo Padilha's research, '*The Non-existent Gardener*', featuring: three billboards exhibited May-July, new ceramic sculptures and eco-prints on paper and textiles exhibited throughout the entire BGNR May till October 2022. Launch of Iniva's publication, '*Floating Margins*'. The book was edited by Rose Nordin, Amrita Dhallu and Priya Jay and features a conversation between Michael Smythe & curator Adelaide Bannerman celebrating the legacy of the BGNR co-founder Naseem Khan.



Photo of Architecture Association students learning to make immune support tonic, Healing Justice London leading a poetry writing workshop with Rakaya Esime Fetuga, installation detail of Eduardo Padhila. Photo in order by Michael Smythe, Sol Aizcorbe.

- **June 2022** Eduardo Padilha event, '*Ayahuasca: A Declaration of Love*' with guests Govert Derix and David Luke pursued a conversation exploring personal testimony, philosophical inquiry & scientific study of the psychoactive brew Ayahuasca.

- **July 2022** Eduardo Padilha & Adelaide Bannerman led a tour of, *'The Non-existent Gardener'*. Conversation to be published online, December 2022.
- **September – December 2022** George Chakravarthi's project, AUM is a series of self-portraiture merging with topographic studies from the site in print-media & moving image. A billboard, limited edition box set of prints, free postcards, artist/curator text, will be disseminated online and from BGNR throughout autumn 2022 through to early spring 2023.
- **July, August, September 2022** Farzana Khan/Healing Justice London, x3 sessions of *'Herbal Uprising'*, exploring plant medicine to deepen connection to land and nurture a sense of belonging.
- **September 2022** Farzana Khan/Healing Justice London, *'Re-Turning To Earth: Grief Circle'* for BPOC. Farzana Khan previewed new writing developed during the residency. To be exhibited online after publishing embargo is lifted, Feb-Mar 2023.



Artwork by Farzana Khan and Sarah Al-Sarraj.

- **January – March 2023** Farzana Khan/Healing Justice London exhibits artwork on BGNR billboard – incorporating text from her essay/poetry.

The 2022 residency programme was generously supported by Arts Council England.

Parallel to our formal residency programme, the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve hosted guest researchers testing new ideas and ways of working. Artists and cultural producers included:

Raju Rage

As an artists, healer and chef Raju is adept at creating space for generative, intersectional, and experimental formats of exchange and production. In 2021 Raju hosted 'Recipes for Resistance' at Phytology, exploring memory, grief, and un/belonging in relation to coloniality, gender, adaptability and resistance. A shared meal provided the setting for group discussion exploring the ruptures

and failures of heritages and linages that dis/connect us from the land, ourselves, and one another.



Images courtesy of Raju Rage.

2022 saw Raju undertake an experimental research residency titled ‘Grow Not Build’ within Phytology. ‘Grow Not Build’ speaks to the notions of what it means *to grow verses* building, an antithesis to gentrification, institutionalisation, and the degradation of biodiversity ecosystems. This research took the form of a rolling conversation with site stakeholders, nurturing deep listening and looking processes to better understand the social and ecological landscape. A valuable opportunity for our stakeholders to critically engage with the global ecological crisis through a hyper-local lens of lived experience.



Photos of Hayley Harrison workshops and performances. Images courtesy of Hayley Harrison.

Hayley Harrison

Hayley Harrison is an experimental artist who has been developing new work within the BGNR since 2021. Hayley’s work often explores the possibilities of deeper connection to each other and the non-human world. Recent projects include:

An Evening of Listening - Since the spring of 2021, Hayley Harrison has been collecting questions from different individuals and communities engaging with the BGNR. The questions vary from humorous to poignant – ‘what did you have for breakfast’ or ‘do you feel welcome’. An Evening of Listening event saw these questions projected onto plants and trees and read out collectively. This interspecies event is a chance to stand together and listen to what the answers might be.

‘Projection’ was performed at dusk, followed by bat echolocation, and listening session with bat detectors led by Michael Smythe and fresh nettle pakoras made by Frank Kelly (picked from Phytology Medicine Garden).

Cyanotype type workshop with Melanie King & Hayley Harrison - Cyanotype type printing is an alternative photography process using chemicals that create blue-prints when exposed to sunlight. Melanie & Hayley shared how to make one-off Cyanotype prints from flowers, leaves and objects found in and around the Nature Reserve. Melanie King is an artist and expert in sustainable photographic processes, including non-toxic developing techniques.



Photos of Hayley Harrison workshops and performances. Images courtesy of Hayley Harrison.

Circle of Listening - The ‘Circle of Listening’ is a meditative gathering where participants are invited to sit and walk silently together, listening to what the Nature Reserve has to say. The session was made up of short experimental listening activities, including time to share and reflect on the listening experience. Together the participants record observations of what we have heard. This snapshot of time will be included in the nature reserve’s ongoing ecology survey.

Becky Lyons - Earth Shapes

In 2022 artist and London National Park City Ranger Becky Lyon presented a series of eight community led gatherings marking the seasonal rhythms across the entire year.



Images courtesy of Becky Lyons.

Side-stepping the Gregorian, financial and academic diaries, Becky invite participants to join a series of workshops, readings and performances that offer a punctuation marking significant ecological time-turning points of the British Isles, inspired by the ancient Celtic and Pagan wheels, lunar calendar, and cross-cultural festivities.



Photo of Kupala Festival by Maksym Honcharuk.

Olha Pryymak - Kupala Festival

Kupala Mid-Summer Festival took place within the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve for a fourth year in June 2022. Kupala is a traditional pre-Christian Slavic holiday, originally celebrated on the shortest night of the year. This year the festival featured collaborations with a growing population of displaced Ukrainians artists who have recently made their way to the UK.

The festival saw traditional midsummer floral crown making, Ukrainian food, Bandura playing, alongside games and installations by artists challenging the notions of coloniality and cultural heritage. Collaborators include **Lika Tarkhan-Mouravi**, **Dana Olarescu**, **Maria Petrovska**, **Olha Pryymak**, **Darya Tsymbalyuk**, **Vlad Vazheyevsky**.

Rose Nordin, Amrita Dhallu and Priya Jay - Floating Margins / STUART

In May 2022 we were proud to host the 'Floating Margins' book launch in collaboration with Iniva. 'Floating Margins' is a conduit for intergenerational work and wisdom, an opportunity to create from a place of possibility, celebrating creative lineages, interdependence, and care.



Images courtesy of Rose Nordin, Amrita Dhallu and Priya Jay.

The publication features a community of contributors channelling ancestral voices of seminal individuals such as intellectual Stuart Hall, artist David Medalla, writer/producer Mahmood Jamal and our much beloved and missed Naseem Khan (co-founder of the Phytology project & Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust).

The Gardening Drawing Club

Founded in 2021, The Gardening Drawing Club is a series of unique events with a holistic approach offering free access to arts and horticulture in Britain. With monthly happenings, The Gardening Drawing is hosted in a broad range of locations, from art centres to community gardens and temples; the events range from workshops to talks and experiences.

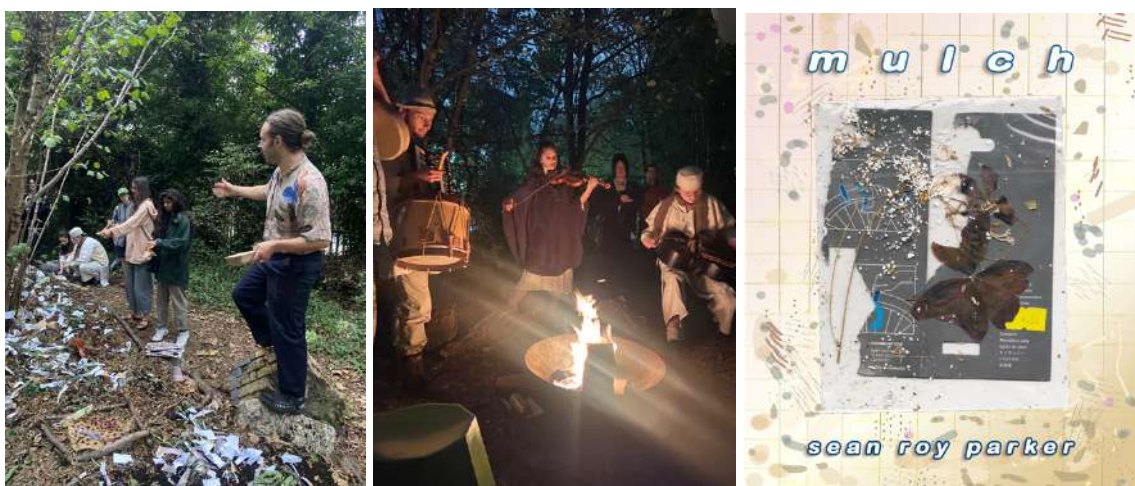


Images courtesy of The Garden Drawing Club.

Veganic gardening methods are employed through The Gardening Drawing Club, advocating for gentleness and compassion while supporting seed sovereignty, racial, climate and land justice and reparation, biodiversity, and animal liberation. The Gardening Drawing Club is a form of Seva and is on a shared mission to integrate the joys of gardening and drawing in others' lives for individual and community well-being.

Sean Roy Parker – Mulch

In the summer of 2022 artist, writer and gardener **Sean Roy Parker** participated in a month-long research project demonstrating ways to build soil quality within the BGNR woodland. This part of the Reserve is made of rubble from pre-WW2 Victorian buildings.



Images courtesy of Sean Roy Parker.

A dry and historically low diversity area, Sean set out to build soil density by a process called 'sheet composting', an indigenous horticulture technique (appropriated by Western permaculture) of building soil health with strata of fresh and dried organic matter that rot down over time and provide habitats for fungi, microbes and insects that aid decomposition, releasing nutrients into the soil and completing a short yet dynamic life cycle and replenishing the ground ready for new life.

The Mulch pile has been decomposing since September and we look to commence planting into the soils in early Spring 2023, part of the woodland floor improvements.

This project is in collaboration with the **Museum of Modern Shopping (MoMS)** led by artist Laura Yuile.

Community Forum

The Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Community Forum is a regular gathering taking place within the Nature Reserve on a quarterly basis. The Forum provides a space for residents, volunteers, visitors, staff and trustees, to share what they are working on, gather feedback, work on proposals and provide input on decisions about the Nature Reserve day-to-day programming and management.



Images of Community Forum (winter / summer) by Michael Smythe

We would like to thank Ellie Doney, along with everyone who gives their time to attend these insightful and generative sessions (especially across the colder winter months!).

Finance & Admin

Our audited end of year accounts and annual report will be submitted to the Charity Commission on 24th January 2023. The Trust would like to acknowledge the tireless work of Hakim Oreagba for preparing the providing external oversight and audit of our financial records.

We would also like to thank our funders who have enabled us to carry out our work throughout such a turbulent year. Our gratitude goes to *Raines Foundation, Necessity, Mayor of London, Arts Council England, Postcode Neighbourhood Trust, Awards for All* and *Ground Works*.

Aims & Aspirations

- Equality and access research into ensuring the BGNR remains accessible, relevant, and culturally responsive to and for the hyper local demographics and context.
- Development of a public facing collaborator agreement for all research undertaken within and on behalf of the BGNR – inc. events, arts, learning and ecology research. A circle of stakeholders will be drawn together to advise on suitability inc. ecology, learning, local and cultural knowledge.
- Continue negotiating 30-year lease with London Borough of Tower Hamlets.
- Continue developing funding bids with a focus on long-term core funding provisions for our research and engagement work.
- Develop Community Cultural Fund – a bursary for cultural production by and for local communities of Tower Hamlets.
- BGNR Rangers scheme – a collaboration with London City National Park and Becky Lyons.



Photo of Bethnal Green Nature Reserve by Sam Kingfisher (2022)

Name: Mr Neil Davidson

Role: Chair of the Trustees of the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve, Charity No. 1166648

Signature: 

Date: 23.01.2023

Independent Examiner's report to the trustees of Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 March 2022 which are set out on pages [x to x].

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 examiners 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:

- 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.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust

Hakim Oreagba

H Oreagba

25 Avenue Gardens

London SE25 4EB

1st December 2022

Charity Name: Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust	Charity No	1166648	
	Company No		
Annual accounts for the period			
Period start date	01/04/2021	To	31/03/2022

Section A Statement of financial activities (including summary income and expenditure account)

Recommended categories by activity	Guidance Note	Unrestricted funds £ F01	Restricted income funds £ F02	Total funds £ F04	Prior year funds £ F05
Income (Note 3)					
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	S01	-	63,484	63,484	26,483
Charitable activities	S02	28,370	-	28,370	11,088
Total	S07	28,370	63,484	91,854	37,571
Expenditure (Notes 6)					
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	S09	24,693	41,497	66,190	7,911
Other	S11	96	-	96	1,021
Total	S12	24,789	41,497	66,286	8,932
Net income/(expenditure) before tax for the reporting period	S13	3,581	21,987	25,568	28,639
Tax payable	S14	-	-	-	-
tax before investment gains/(losses)	S15	3,581	21,987	25,568	28,639
Net gains/(losses) on investments	S16	-	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure)	S17	3,581	21,987	25,568	28,639
Net movement in funds	S22	3,581	21,987	25,568	28,639
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward	S23	20,706	7,938	28,644	5
Total funds carried forward	S24	24,287	29,925	54,212	28,644

Section B Balance sheet

	Guidance Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Total this year £	Total last year £
Current assets					
Debtors (Note 19)	B07	-	-	-	-
Cash at bank and in hand (Note 24)	B09	22,199	62,313	84,512	38,721
Total current assets	B10	22,199	62,313	84,512	38,721
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (Note 20)	B11	300	30,000	30,300	10,077
Net current assets/(liabilities)	B12	21,899	32,313	54,212	28,644
Total assets less current liabilities	B13	21,899	32,313	54,212	28,644
Total net assets or liabilities	B16	21,899	32,313	54,212	28,644
Funds of the Charity					
Endowment funds (Note 27)	B17	-	-	-	-
Restricted income funds (Note 27)	B18	-	29,925	29,925	7,938
Unrestricted funds	B19	24,287	-	24,287	20,706
Revaluation reserve	B20	-	-	-	-
Fair value reserve	B21	-	-	-	-
Total funds	B22	24,287	29,925	54,212	28,644

The company was entitled to exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

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

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval dd/mm/yy yy

Note 1 Basis of preparation

1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with:

• and with*

☐

the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014

• and with*

☐

the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)

• and with the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.*

*-Tick as appropriate

1.2 Going concern

If there are material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, please provide the following details or state "Not applicable", if appropriate:

An explanation as to those factors that support the conclusion that the charity is a going concern;

The trustees are of the view that unrestricted reserves to fund charitable activities are adequate to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and is therefore a going concern

1.3 Change of accounting policy

The accounts present a true and fair view and no changes have been made to the accounting policies adopted in note { }.

Yes*

☐

No*

☐

*-Tick as appropriate

1.4 Changes to accounting estimates

No changes to accounting estimates have occurred in the reporting period (3.46 FRS 102 SORP).

Yes*

☐

No*

☐

*-Tick as appropriate

1.5 Material prior year errors

No material prior year error have been identified in the reporting period (3.47 FRS 102 SORP).

Yes*

☐

No*

☐

*-Tick as appropriate

Note 2

2.2 INCOME

Recognition of income

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- it is more likely than not that the trustees will receive the resources;
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

Offsetting

There has been no offsetting of assets and liabilities, or income and expenses, unless required or permitted by the FRS 102 SORP or FRS 102.

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

Grants and donations

Grants and donations are only included in the SoFA when the general income recognition criteria are met (5.10 to 5.12 FRS 102 SORP).

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

In the case of performance related grants, income must only be recognised to the extent that the charity has provided the specified goods or services as entitlement to the grant only occurs when the performance related conditions are met (5.16 FRS 102 SORP).

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

Government grants

The charity has received government grants in the reporting period

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

Support costs

The charity has incurred expenditure on support costs.

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

2.3 EXPENDITURE AND LIABILITIES

Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

Governance and support costs

Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources, eg allocating property costs by floor areas, or per capita, staff costs by the time spent and other costs by their usage.

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

Grants with performance conditions

Where the charity gives a grant with conditions for its payment being a specific level of service or output to be provided, such grants are only recognised in the SoFA once the recipient of the grant has provided the specified service or output.

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

Grants payable without performance conditions

Where there are no conditions attaching to the grant that enables the donor charity to realistically avoid the commitment, a liability for the full funding obligation must be recognised.

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

Deferred income

No material item of deferred income has been included in the accounts.

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

Creditors

The charity has creditors which are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

Provisions for liabilities

A liability is measured on recognition at its historical cost and then subsequently measured at the best estimate of the amount required to settle the obligation at the reporting date

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

Basic financial instruments

The charity accounts for basic financial instruments on initial recognition as per paragraph 10.7 FRS 102 SORP. Subsequent measurement is as per paragraphs 11.17 to 11.19, FRS 102 SORP.

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

2.4 ASSETS

Debtors

Debtors (including trade debtors and loans receivable) are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the charity. Subsequently, they are measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be received.

Yes *	No *	N/a *
ü	ü	ü

Section C

Notes to the accounts

(cont)

Note 3

Income

Analysis of income		Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Endowment funds	Total funds £	Prior year £
Donations and legacies:	Donations and gifts	-	-	-	-	-
	General grants provided by government/other charities	-	63,484	-	63,484	37,571
	Total	-	63,484	-	63,484	37,571
Charitable activities:	Charitable activities	25,000	-	-	25,000	-
	Donations	3,370	-	-	3,370	-
	Total	28,370	-	-	28,370	-
Total		-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL INCOME		28,370	63,484	-	91,854	37,571

Note 6

Expenditure

Analysis	This year			Last year		
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds
£						
Expenditure on charitable activities:						
Freelance Fees	13,748	31,435	45,183	4,033	2,198	6,231
Professional fees	300	-	300	300	-	300
Project Costs	5,763	4,865	10,628	-	-	-
Other- Materials	4,882	5,197	10,079	1,380	-	1,380
Total expenditure on charitable	24,693	41,497	66,190	5,713	2,198	7,911
Other						
Insurance	-	-	-	952	-	952
Bank Charges	96	-	96	69	-	69
	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total other expenditure	96	-	96	1,021	-	1,021
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	24,789	41,497	66,286	6,734	2,198	8,932

Note 20

Creditors and accruals

20.1 Analysis of creditors

	Amounts falling due within one year		Amounts falling due after more than one year	
	This year £	Last year £	This year £	Last year £
Accruals and deferred income	30,300	10,077	-	-
Total	30,300	10,077	-	-

20.2 Deferred income

Please complete this note if the charity has deferred

Please explain the reasons why income is deferred.

This year	Last year
<i>£10,000 from Charities Trust</i> <i>£10,000 from Raine's Foundation</i> <i>£10,000 from A4A Ecology</i> <i>All restricted for 2023/24</i>	<i>£9,777 received from Neighbourhood Trust is deferred for charitable activities starting in 2021/22</i>

Movement in deferred income account

	This year £	Last year £
Balance at the start of the reporting period	9,777	3,863
Amounts added in current period	30,000	9,777
Amounts released to income from previous periods	(9,777)	(3,863)
Balance at the end of the reporting period	30,000	9,777

Note 24 Cash at bank and in hand

	This year £	Last year £
Cash at bank and on hand	84,511	38,721
Total	84,511	38,721

Section C	Notes to the accounts	(cont)
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Note 27 **Charity funds**

27.1 Details of material funds held and movements during the CURRENT reporting period

Fund names	Type PE, EE R or UR *	Purpose and Restrictions	Fund balances brought forward	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Fund balances carried forward
			£	£	£	£	£
Awards for All	R		692	10,000	(3,489)	-	7,203
Groundwork UK	R		7246	7,525	(17,457)	2,686	-
Arts Council	R		-	34,182	(11,706)	-	22,476
Postcode Neighbourhood	R		-	9,777	(8,845)	-	932
NINE VE H TRUST	R		-	2,000	(298)	-	1,702
City of London	UR		20706	150	(16,487)	(2,686)	1,683
SHED	UR		-	25,000	(6,898)	-	18,102
Sajida Forest.Scho KANTINE	UR		-	3,000	(1,049)	-	1,951
NATIO NAL MEDICAL	UR		-	150	(56)	-	94
Donation	UR			70			70
Total Funds as per balance sheet			28,644	91,854	(66,286)	-	54,212

Note 27 **Charity funds**

27.2 Details of material funds held and movements during the PREVIOUS reporting period

Fund names	Type PE, EE R or UR *	Purpose and Restrictions	Fund balances brought forward	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains and losses	Fund balances carried forward
			£	£	£	£	£	£
Awards for All	R		-	3,563	(2,871)	-	-	692
Groundwork UK	R		-	7,525	(279)	-	-	7,246
City of London	U		-	26,483	(5,777)	-	-	20,706
Nomad Projects /ACE	U		5	-	(5)	-	-	-
<i>Other funds (balancing figure)</i>	<i>N/a</i>	<i>N/a</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Funds as per balance sheet			5	37,571	(8,932)	-	-	28,644

BETHNAL GREEN NATURE RESERVE TRUST

England & Wales - Charity number 1166648

Accounts



Annual Report 2021

The Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust (BGNRT) was formally recognised as a registered charity (1166648) on April 20th 2016. The charity has grown out of an informal Friends of Bethnal Green Nature Reserve that had been in existence since 2014, based on a collaboration between Nomad Projects and Teesdale and Hollybush Tenants and Residents Association; around the core project Phytology and the goal of delivering quality access to the Nature Reserve via integrating arts, ecology & education within our work.

Governance

Trustees: Neil Davidson (Chair), Amina Haque, Kenneth Greenway, Glenda Trew, Ingrid Chen, Sajida Malik, Ellie Doney, Saif Osmani.

Site Team: Shumaisa Khan (Community Gardener & Outreach Facilitator), Dimuthu Meehitiya (Ecologist & Outdoor Educator), Adelaide Bannerman (Curator & Research Programmer), CJ Jude (Compost Toilet Caretaker), Ingrid Chen (Forest School Lead), Shilpi Choudhury (Forest School Teacher), Michael Smythe (Site & Volunteer Coordinator).

COVID-19 & Volunteering

Bethnal Green Nature Reserve (BGNR) is committed to ensuring the safety of all our staff and volunteers during the Covid-19 pandemic. In line with government guidance, we managed to continue our weekly site care and medicine garden work once the spring lockdown measures eased. As seen in 2020, there was a noticeable increase in people looking to volunteer and connect with the Nature Reserve.

Managed access was provided to existing site key-holders, including local residents, school groups, volunteers, resident artists, community herbalists and gardeners throughout the week via a basic booking system. This system helped to minimising risk of virus transmission, ensuring the site stayed open to our stakeholders at a time when it was most useful for both physical and mental health.

Our weekly volunteer sessions took place each Saturday 11am – 1pm, May till December. These sessions provide a supportive environment for people to learn about the Nature Reserve, its history, the various ecological features and ongoing research opportunities taking place across the year. After participating in a few volunteer sessions, volunteers can nominate to become a site key holder. This enables people to access the Nature Reserve 24/7 in exchange for small day-to-day site care tasks, such as litter picking, watering the medicine garden, monitoring bird and bat populations.

Education/Learning

The Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust look to nurture and build long lasting partnerships with local schools and education providers across the Borough. We believe having access to quality outdoor learning facilities is essential for the wellbeing of each and every person regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, ability or socioeconomic status.

Our 2021 partners include;

9am – 1pm Monday & Tuesday, Rangers Kindergarten: Rangers is a local kindergarten specialising in outdoor education for children aged 2 – 8 years. Their weekly sessions instil a deep connection and confidence with the natural world.

1pm – 3pm Wednesday, Oaklands Secondary School: Oaklands secondary school has recently moved into the neighboring site (formally Raines Foundation). Oaklands caters for young people aged 13 – 18 years from the local area. Our collaboration commenced at the end of 2021 and will continue throughout 2022. Geography & Biology departments are visiting the Reserve, but we hope to connect with other departments in 2022.

9am – 1pm Thursday, Stephen Hawking School: Stephen Hawking School is dedicated to raising the standard of educational achievement for children between the ages of 2 and 11 years with profound, multiple, and severe learning, health and care needs. In 2021 the school commenced their weekly residency within the Nature Reserve. In 2021 their curriculum focused on trees and urban woodland ecologies and 2022 they will explore weather and seasonal change.

4pm – 6pm Friday, Forest Friday: Forest Fridays is a free, weekly after school club run by the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust. Forest Fridays is for local children aged 4 – 11 years, encouraging them to explore and connect with the wonders of nature on their very own doorstep.



Forest Friday

Forest Friday afterschool club is led by Ingrid Chen (local resident, outdoor educator, Trustee) and Shilpi Choudhury (local resident, forest school teacher). The club is focused on nurturing enjoyment and knowledge of Bethnal Green Nature Reserve for local families with school age children, through year-round access to forest school and ecology focused learning. Activities include arts and crafts, foraging and bushcraft, with trained regular staff and outdoor learning specialists.

Forest Friday aims

- Connect neighbours and build community relations
- Support wellbeing by spending time in nature and being physically active, learning and volunteering
- Foster care for the environment in young people
- Learn about natural history and take part in citizen science
- Provide volunteering opportunities and work experience for children and adults

"I am a home educating parent to 2 children. Forest Friday sessions have been amazing for us as they provide the children opportunities to take part in structured activities as well as free play, and also a safe space to connect with others."

"Studying and being in nature is an integral part of our home education. We have attended forest school sessions led by different providers in the past but the fact that Forest Fridays is a local resource and one that is also free of charge is amazing. These sessions are an important part of our week."



Among the 2021 highlights was the opportunity to join in with the pond refurbishment project. Our group spent many weeks shovelling and transporting sand that helped build the pond banks. The group were awestruck to see the pond works completed and filled with water. We look forward to developing new learning opportunities connected to this ecosystem in 2022. Children also had the opportunity to complete the Royal Forestry Society's *Young Forester Award*. This was popular amongst our regulars, with many receiving their certificate at an awards ceremony this past Autumn.

"We go to the forest club every Friday and we also attended the holiday club. I would never be able to afford to pay for my both daughters to attend the forest school club if

there would be not free of charge. We are very grateful to have this opportunity- a little oasis in the Urban East London where the new generation of nature lovers are growing."

Over 140 sessions were delivered (children x no. of sessions) by Ingrid and Shilpi in 2021.

We had many repeat visits: 1 child attended all 12, 10 children attended 4 or more sessions. In all 31 families attended over the 12 weeks, averaging 12 children per week.

Due to Covid-19 & the colder temperatures, we have paused the regular after-school club in the winter months (December + January). We plan to resume Forest Fridays from mid-February 2022, all being well.

We would specially like to thank Clare Chatelet for her tireless work volunteering and as a paid member of staff when our core team were required to isolate due to Covid-19.

Phytology Medicine Garden



In 2021 a group of dedicated residents formed the 'hydration collective'. The group tended the Phytology medicine garden daily, ensuring it remained well hydrated and healthy for weekly harvesting. The collectives' activities ensured we could continue harvesting medicine herbs throughout the entire summer & deliver our core activities of horticultural/herbalism learning and medicine making for the Mobile Apothecary.

In 2021, Shumaisa [Community Gardener] started a weekly sensory herbal workshop for people to learn about herbs grown on site. Usually this was through 'blind' tea tasting (not knowing what was in the tea until after drinking it), but on two occasions, through an herbal foot bath. These were well-received and an engaging and fun way for people to experience herbs of the garden and across the Nature Reserve.



As the garden serves as a place of research, e.g. improving soils for climate resilience, further reflection is needed to achieve a balance between meaningful tasks and supporting a resilient garden, whose soil and biodiversity obviates daily watering. To this end, we commissioned some soil testing by Hari Byles, which provided some useful information that will inform 2022 garden planning and local engagement opportunities.

As part of the focus on soil health, we invited [Kernow Black](#) to run biochar workshops at the Nature Reserve. Biochar is created by burning biomass under low oxygen conditions and has many benefits including carbon sequestration and high porosity, which can help with soil microbial life and water and nutrient transport. We look to hold more biochar work in 2022 and perhaps apply to test areas to assess changes in microbial life.



To build a more climate resilient garden we installed a micro-swale (basically a gully full of woodchip to hold moisture and encourage microbial growth). We planted comfrey and marshmallow along the swale, holding ground with its deep roots. As a result, the 2021 yielded was abundant and we were able to harvest weekly with volunteer support. This yield was greatly useful for community medicine-making via the Mobile Apothecary & Good Botanics.

Other abundant herbs that were harvested included Violet leaf, Nettle leaf/seed, and St John's Wort flower, and Mugwort. For personal use, local residents were mostly harvesting Comfrey, Plantain, Yarrow, Mugwort, Nettle, Lemon Balm, and Dandelion leaf.

The Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust have resourced Shumaisa to redesign the garden in 2022. As part of this, Tomas Remiarz, a permaculture tutor and forest gardening expert, visited the site in October 2021 and will mentor Shumaisa in developing a permaculture design for the garden throughout the winter and spring of 2022. One of the possibilities they are exploring is expanding a portion of the garden toward the recently refurbished pond, planting with medicine plants that prefer damper soil while increasing the pond planting diversity.

Local Relationship-building



Building upon endeavors begun during the pandemic, Shumaisa Khan dedicated a substantial amount of time cultivating relationships with Bangladeshi and other minority ethnic groups living locally, who had comparatively lower engagement with the site. Conversations with people in the neighborhood reinforced the sense that there was a need to install culturally appropriate, weatherproof signage as a priority. Bilingual (Sylheti & English) street signage was installed in Summer 2021, making a palpable difference to the experience of passers-by, particularly those who have long passed or lived in the surrounding estates and did not know how to access the Nature Reserve, get involved, or understand what getting involved meant.



Other focused engagement opportunities in 2021 included:

- A local young man engaged with the site, becoming a paid ecology intern, and then successfully gaining a job with Trust for Conservation Volunteers foundation.
- Spearheaded by local residents; a local group of Muslim women began self organising cultural gatherings within the Nature Reserve in the Autumn of 2021. We hope to see this group build capacity into 2022.
- Shumaisa formed 'The Herb Circle', a regular meeting space for local refugee and Muslim families to gain confidence connecting with the Nature Reserve and using herbs from the Phytology medicine garden. This included regular gardening and medicine making, via x4 2-hour herbal medicine-centered workshops from late July till mid-September. The group learnt to make herbal vinegars, infused oils, medicinal balms, and to identify herbs in the medicine garden.

Ecology

In the spring of 2021, we appointed Dimuthu Meehitiya as our site Ecologist and outdoor educator. Dimuthu started his year-long appointment with a series of workshops aimed at engaging hyper-local residents of all ages. These sessions included:



- Wetland Ecology Survey Workshop - developing an ecological survey specifically for wetlands, included pond dipping, collecting a range of insects, amphibians, animals, and plants. Identification keys, magnify glasses and microscopes were used to help us better understand the current health of our pond life.
- Bug Hunt Workshop – celebrating the many fascinating invertebrates living in the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve using equipment, such as microscopes, magnifiers, and identification keys to explore interesting facts on invertebrate's life cycle and their importance for maintaining ecosystem health and balance.
- Tree & Urban Forestry Workshop – exploring our urban woodland, identifying the many different species living within the Reserve. The workshop highlighted trees

value as the planet's great food, shelter, carbon regulators, habitat, and oxygen providers.

Dimuthu's work looked to connect our neighbours with the Nature Reserve on a deeper level, exploring the micro and macro ecologies that inhabit our small but mighty urban Nature Reserve.

Pond Refurbishment

In the summer of 2020, our large pond was no longer holding water. The structure, installed by Teri Lyle back in the 80's, was becoming gradually inhospitable for aquatic life in the last few years. The wetland area had also become overshadowed by a rapidly growing plum tree. The tree blocked all sunlight from the ponds, preventing aquatic plants from filtering and oxygenating the water. After much consultation we decided to remove the tree and extend the footprint of the wetland. We agreed this intervention would ensure the wetland remained a central feature of the Nature Reserve for decades ahead.



The project was led by our resident Ecologist, Dimuthu Meehitiya and six brilliant Urban Ecology Trainees - Tyra, Zoe, Sahil, Charlie, Mila & Lauren. The Ecology internship was available to young people aged 18 – 25 years from underrepresented groups within the conservation sector, i.e. BIPOC, ethnic minorities, people from working class backgrounds & LGBTQ+ communities. The internship is a paid role offering first-hand work experience in urban wetland development and ecosystem management.



Over the course of 8 weeks, we managed to dig a 9m x 9m hole, lift over 54 ton of (wet) sand, fill roughly 400 sandbags and build up the internal pond bank with the aim of maximising a diverse range of aquatic plants, insects, and amphibious life.

The pond refurbishment could only take place within the autumn period, when our toad and newt populations are more terrestrial, before hibernation commences. This mega effort was only achieved thanks to so many dedicated volunteers and neighbours who showed up each and every week to help move the project forwards. A special thanks to Margaret Cox & Good Gym for weeks of night-time digging!



Parallel to the pond refurbishment we held an urban ecology enrichment program for our trainees, exploring the macro & micro of urban habitats. We visited a range of urban wetland habitats including Camley St Natural Park, Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park and the Natural History Museum. We also received master classes from urban ecologists, foragers, nature writers, climate activists, bird experts, artists, climate policy makers, landscape architects and career development advisers.



A brilliant report has been written by the ecology trainees, soon to be published on the Phytology / Bethnal Green Nature Reserve website. The report outlines the various process of building an urban ecology pond, aiming to capture and share our collective learnings and resources from this period.

“ The Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Ecology Internship was a dream opportunity. I was honoured to have been entrusted with such an ecologically promising process at a transformational time in the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve wetlands’ history. To have created a new pond with this wonderful community of artists, ecologists and educators, met so many local nature experts, and been introduced to so many life-affirming skills – from foraging to environmental writing and habitat formation – was one of the greatest privileges of my life.

There are many young people like me who dream of working in nature conservation and want to give back to their city, but haven’t enough experience or a foot in the door for an environmental career. Before I began the internship, I was homeless and hadn’t managed to graduate because of my disabilities; I didn’t believe I would find my way in the world, let alone in conservation. The internship restored my confidence in myself and helped open a huge network of role models advocating for me to flourish. I feel more empowered than ever to dedicate myself towards building local resilience against the ecological and climate crises, and I now better understand the steps I’ll take to make this work my life”.



A special thanks to Teri Lyle & Neil Davidson.

Their generosity, guidance and creativity were invaluable!

Throughout the year we collaborated with many remarkable urban ecologists.

These included:

Isabella (Izzy) Johnston

Izzy is a rising star in the world of urban foraging. In 2021 she collaborated on several walks within the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve and the Hackney Marshes.

The walks celebrated wild sessional food and medicinal plants that can be harvested throughout the summer and autumn. Izzy is a knowledgeable and captivating storyteller, and we very much look forward nurturing our collaboration into 2022 and beyond.



Jane Laurie

Jane Laurie is a local artist and bird expert who hosted a number of birdwatching walks within and around the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve this year. Throughout the walks Jane would share her extensive birdsong archive, collected on various field trips around the UK. These workshops were free open to all ages and abilities.

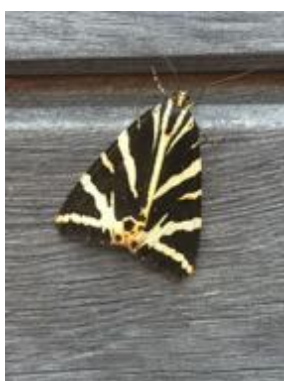


In support of our 2021 Ecology internship, Jane produced a 'Bethnal Green Bird Guide' booklet. This document has been incredibly useful for our forest school groups and as a citizen science tool for local residents to survey the bird populations that live and pass through the Nature Reserve each year.

Katherine Pogson

In late spring Katherine Pogson held a moth survey workshop at the Nature Reserve.

An opportunity for local residents to meet some of the surprising hidden creatures that live in the local area, learn their names, habits, origin stories... discovering the Hawks, Tigers, and even Elephants that inhabit in the oases that is the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve.



The study of moths and butterflies goes back centuries, giving us very important data about how human activity may be benefiting some species, and challenging others.

Katherine activated our inner 'citizen scientist' and looked at how collecting environmental data can influence our relationships with 'nature', and rethink what 'creativity' might address for future generations. This event was part of 'Places to Intervene in a System', an art-research exhibition taking place at Lumen gallery Bethnal Green in August 2021.

The 2021 ecology programme has been supported by Mayor of London, Ground Works & The City Bridge Trust.

Arts

Adelaide Bannerman



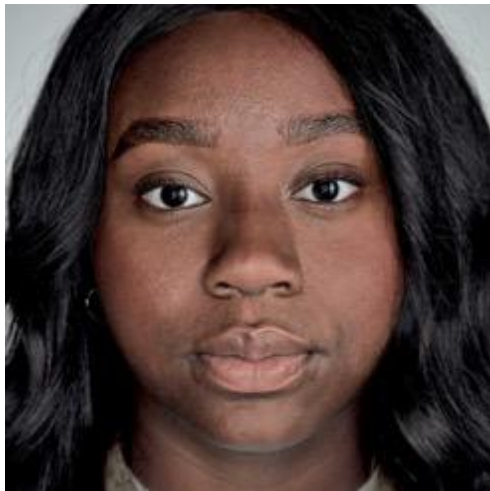
Adelaide Bannerman has been developing the curatorial direction of the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve throughout 2021. Bannerman has lived in the neighbourhood for over two decades and has strived to devise a cultural programme that speaks to the Nature Reserve, surrounding neighbourhood and times we live. Not being afraid of a challenge, Adelaide developed 'We Speak In Tongues About The Thing[s] We Love'.

Our 2022 cultural programme facilitates dialogue with artists in the areas of radical/environmental justice, especially urgent in a period of times shaped by COVID-19 & the climate breakdown. Our researcher in residence include:

Daze Aghaji

Aghaji's research will focused on youth political engagement, social inclusion and intersectionality within environmental movements and society. Aghaji will facilitate a Regenerative Cultures Retreat within the Nature Reserve - workshops based on

permaculture principles, field guiding and conversational techniques.



In September 2021 Daze brought 'Letters to the Earth' and 'Listen to The Land' events to the Nature Reserve. This event publicly launched Dazes' residency and the beginning of a 500-mile pilgrimage on foot from London to COP 26 held in Glasgow.

In the winter of 2020/21 Adelaide & Daze commenced a twelve-month billboard installation series called 'wecomewithourquestions'. An evolving collection of hand-painted texts reflecting on the Nature Reserve, the environment and representation. These questions have come from recent conversations between Bannerman and local stakeholders, reflecting on and questioning the Nature Reserves' current meaning and future role for surrounding local communities.

Eduardo Padilha

Eduardo Padilha looks to create a series of sculptural works within the Nature Reserve, working with clays, pigments and armatures found from within the site.



'The nature reserve will operate as an open studio that brings people together. I'm especially interested in the medicinal garden and want to learn as much as possible. I want to connect the programme at Balin House Projects and host talks about nature and wellbeing with professionals from the health and mental health sectors, writers and philosophers.'

In the summer of 2021 Eduardo brought members of the Tabard Growers group (Southwark) to the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve. The group worked alongside soil scientists and residents, discussing the history of urban soils, soil pollution, community health, creative strategies in caring for urban land. This initial site visit will lay the foundation for Padilha's 2022 research.

Farzana Khan + Healing Justice

Farzana Khan will develop and present new visual / writing responses to land justice, care of the environment and land stewardship principles based on faith, culturally specific and indigenous practices.



In the summer of 2021 Farzana Khan facilitated a day-long conversation in collaboration with Raju Rage & Queer Masala. The event was titled '*Migration and Un/Belonging*'. This event laid foundations for Farzana to continue working within the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve across the coming year.

George Chakravarthi

Chakravarthi is a multidisciplinary artist who works with visual and live art using his body and image to explore the politics of identity. He also employs religious and spiritual iconography referencing his multi-faith upbringing, predominantly Hinduism and Catholicism.

'I am looking forward to this residency and to discover the various organisms on this precious piece of Earth. My imagination has already been lit by my brief visit and I can't wait to immerse myself in this project!'



For his research residency George will develop a series of digital works reflecting his engagement with arboriculture and tree rituals within the Reserve. These works will be published online and exhibited within the Nature Reserve.

'We Speak In Tongues About The Thing(s) We Love' has been generously supported by Arts Council England. The Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust would like to thank Adelaide Bannerman for her dedication and great care developing this extensive research programme.

In 2021 the following contemporary artists and collectives resided within the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve.

F*Choir



F*Choir a London-based, all-genders choir led by performance artist and drummer Jenny Moore. Over the last 4 years it has grown as a place to gather in body and in voice, to vibrate and move and learn together. F*Choir sing songs about gender, sexuality, freedom, and rage. They don't use traditional sheet music and gendered voice parts or auditions, but instead devise other ways to notate and perform Moore's high energy arrangements of everything from Meredith Monk to Tirzah and Micachu.

In 2021 F*Choir gathered at the Nature Reserve on a monthly basis. The site provided a Covid safe space for the group to continue developing their vocal work, at a time when singing indoors was near impossible for a group this size. F*Choir aim is to provide space for all voices to be heard without assuming anyone's gender, origin or sexuality – to use the choir as a form of feminist practice and communal singing as a type of magic.

Hayley Harrison

In 2021 artist Hayley Harrison commenced a year-long research project based within the Nature Reserve. Her research explored the limitations of the human experience, language, and the struggle to avoid being human-centric when experiencing and discussing the world.



Harrison residency has involved close observation of the Nature Reserve across the seasons. She hosted walks with local residents, artists and scientists, walking the Reserve and discussing ways of seeing and speaking about the natural world. Harrison also experimented with light projections and carefully placed hand-woven sculptures within the Nature Reserve, observing how the work is interpreted and degrades over time.

Campfire Club

The Campfire Club returned in 2021 for one night only, when Covid-19 infections were at its lowest point in London.

The event featured The Rheingans Sisters who make bold, playful, and innovative contemporary music that is anchored in folk traditions. Winners of the BBC Radio 2 Folk Award for 'Best Original Track', The Rheingans Sisters performed their recent work in front of a warming fire and captive audience.



Due to Covid-19, audience capacity was limited to 30. This meant it was not financially viable for further Campfire Club events at the Nature Reserve in 2021. Ticket sales for these events cover artist fees, making it unsustainable for the artists to make a decent wage. We will revisit the feasibility of the Campfire Club returning in 2022.

Primordial Sky



Primordial Sky was an experimental performance of live music and movement-based performance that took place across the entire Nature Reserve in July 2021. The evening featured new work by Àssia, FAUCI, Jawara Alleyne, Koichi Yamanoha, Naima Karlsson, Nissa Nishikawa, YaYa Bones.

The performance was free, but booking was required to ensure capacity of 80 was maintained. The event was fully booked well in advance of the event, with a substantial waiting list for returns.

Laughter & Nature Comedy Night



Laughter & Nature was an experiMENTAL open mic comedy event, offering performers and audience a friendly place to enjoy doing something they love – whether it's laughing, or making other people laugh. This event was hosted by CJ Jude and Felix from the Lion's Den, in support of World Mental Health Day 2021.

Recipes For Resistance



Healing Justice Ldn teamed up with Recipes for Resistance to offer three workshops exploring Memory, Grief, and Un/belonging in relationship to the politics of food and identity. The third session was hosted at Phytology, offering a physical space to gather and close the series which had previously been online due to the pandemic.

Raju Rage facilitated a conversation which explored our heritages and linages with all their ruptures and failures: our own unique stories that dis/connect us to this and other lands. They also brought a collection of books and zines exploring the politics of food. Special guest Rajiv Bera from Queer Masala prepared an incredible meal for us using foraged

plants from Phytology's medicinal garden, including ribwort plantain, burdock stem, mallow leaf, mugwort and more.

ELASTIC FICTION



Becky Lyon of ELASTIC FICTION has been developing a series of nature connection workshops throughout 2021. These workshops focus on seasonal rhythms, patterns of place and earth-centric chronology. Each event explores ways we can connect with the seasonal changes across the year (spring, summer, autumn, winter).

Participants are invited to discuss the specifics of each season from both ecological to cultural perspectives. ELASTIC FICTION celebrates the macro and the micro, the contemporary and the historic understandings of the seasons and often overlooked ecologies. Important work, especially in a hyper-urban location such as Bethnal Green.

Social Justice

Mobile Apothecary

Since April 2019, the Mobile Apothecary has been bringing people together to collectively learn about medicinal plants and create herbal medicine for distribution to fellow community members facing barriers to health, food, and shelter. The Mobile Apothecary supports communities in the locality with good-quality, homegrown and communally made herbal remedies.



In 2021 we continued delivering our pandemic response service in Dalston, Hackney & Bethnal Green on a weekly basis until the summer of 2021. After which the Mobile Apothecary team decided to take a much needed 3-month break to rest and reflect on our work.

In the Autumn of 2021, we resumed street service outside Hackney Town Hall once a month. This location is calm and enables higher levels of focused conversation and engagement. This location enabled us to carry out a focused period of consultation with people who regularly visit our service. We collected useful anecdotal feedback on the medicines, the overall service, and ways to improve our work.



Parallel to this we commissioned Muzammal Hussain [social permaculture designer] to develop a reflection piece on the Mobile Apothecary's journey - from its early beginnings to the pandemic emergency response. This piece of research will provide a moment of reflection for the Mobile Apothecary, recording the journey of a front-line project over a very memorable three-year period.



In 2021 the Mobile Apothecary received the community service awards from the National Institute of Medical Herbalists, a professional body representing medical herbalists in the United Kingdom.

In 2022 we will scale back our service to pre-pandemic times, focusing on supporting our hyper-local community in Bethnal Green, alongside the Refugee Community Kitchen. We are currently in the process of building a local herb growing and medicine making network across the East End. Collaborators include Company Drinks, Spitalfields City Farm, Refugee Community Kitchen, Street Kitchens, The Community Apothecary, St Ethelburga's, Inava/STUART magazine, and Create Conscious Community. We will soon publish a dedicated Mobile Apothecary website and re-brand our medicine products ensuring greater accessibility.

Community Forum



The Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Community Forum is a regular gathering taking place within the Nature Reserve on a quarterly basis.

We would like to thank Ellie Doney, along with everyone who gives their time to attend (especially across the winter months!).

Over the past few 5 years we have been collaborating on a research project called Urban Mind, examining how the surrounding environments affects our mental health. In December 2021 we published our second academic paper in 'Scientific Reports' specifically exploring how contact with nature, especially in cities, can help reduce loneliness.

Contact with nature in cities reduces loneliness, study shows

Loneliness is significant mental health concern and can raise risk of death by 45%, say scientists



A woman and child surrounded by cherry blossoms. The study is the first to assess how aspects of the surrounding environment can affect loneliness. Photograph: Andrew Chin/Getty

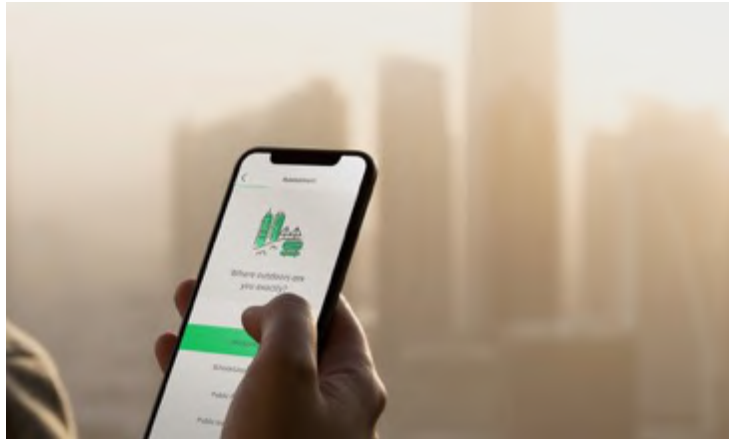
Loneliness - the feeling of distress resulting from a discrepancy between one's desired and actual social relationships, is a universal experience, found irrespective of age, gender, socioeconomic status and culture.

Prospective studies suggest that the degree of loneliness predicts subsequent mental health symptoms, including depression, alcoholism, suicidal behaviour and cognitive decline leading to Alzheimer's disease, and physical health issues, including immune and cardiovascular disease. To put things into perspective, while air pollution, obesity, and excessive alcohol use have been found to increase a person's mortality risk by 6%, 23%, and 37% respectively, loneliness increases the risk of death by 45%.

Our research found that feelings of overcrowding increased loneliness by an average of 39%. But when people were able to see trees or hear birds, feelings of loneliness fell by 28%. This is especially important data when trying to protect and advocate for places such as the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve. Our research was published in Scientific Reports and The Guardian on 20th December 2021.

"Loneliness is a significant mental health concern, and can raise risk of death by 45%, say scientists." The Guardian, Damian Carrington. You can read the full article here - <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2021/dec/20/contact-with-nature-cities-reduces-loneliness-study-mental-health>

Urban Mind is a collaboration between King's College London, J&L Gibbons Landscape Architecture & Design, Phytology and hundreds of Citizen Scientists who contributed to this research.



Disability Confidence & Access Research

Goss Consultancy was commissioned in the autumn of 2021 to deliver a tailored disability confidence training for Staff, Trustees and partner organisations. In addition, Goss Consultancy carried out a full site access review of the Bethnal Green Nature Reserve and associated website (inc. social media platforms).

Their recommendations and guidance will be published in spring of 2022, informing our decision-making processes over the coming years. The Nature Reserve access audit will take into account the challenges we face in keeping the space wild, while equally reducing physical and intellectual access barriers.

Finance & Admin

Our audited end of year accounts and annual report will be submitted to the Charity Commission on 26th January 2022.

The Trust would like to acknowledge the tireless work of Hakim Oreagba for preparing the financial records for the Trust.

A special thank you to Sajida Malik for their generous donations in 2021. This funding enabled us to invest into site access improvements and permaculture guidance for Shumaisa Khan and the medicine garden care takers.

We would also like to thank our funders who have enabled us to carry out our work throughout a turbulent time. Our gratitude goes to Necessity (Julie, you're a rare gem), Mayor of London, City Bridge Trust, Arts Council England, Postcode Neighbourhood Trust, Awards For All and Ground Works.

Aims & Aspirations

The BGNR Trust aims to address the following areas over the next 12 months;

- Continue to keep the site accessible without compromising the wildness of the Nature Reserve biodiversity.
- Dedicate focus to increasing access and engagement with local Bengali communities. Ensure this aim is prioritised in every aspect of our core work.
- Solicit funding that covers core overheads over multiple years (2 or 3 real cycles).
- Continue developing our relationships with local organisations working in complementary areas such as refugee support, community health, climate resilience, habitat protection.
- Continue dialogue with the various landowners regarding a 30-year lease agreement.
- Continue exploring feasibility of establishing the food growing hub within the neighbouring school grounds in partnership with Praxis, Mission GP Practice, Oaklands School and Stephen Hawking School.
- Build more entry points / pathways for local engagement around ecological care of the Nature Reserve.

Trustees report for the year ending 30 April 2021.

This report was approved by the Trustees on 25th January 2022 and signed by:



Mr Neil Davidson
Chair, Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust
Charity No. 1166648

Independent Examiner's report to the trustees of Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity ("the Trust") for the year ended 31 March 2021 which are set out on pages [x to x].

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 examiners statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination (other than that disclosed below *) 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.

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust

Hakim Oreagba

H Oreagba

25 Avenue Gardens
London SE25 4EB

24.01.2022

Charity Name: Bethnal Green Nature Reserve Trust		Charity No	1166648	
		Company No		
Annual accounts for the period				
Period start date	01/04/2020	To	31/03/2021	

Section A Statement of financial activities (including summary income and expenditure account)

Recommended categories by activity	Guidance Note	Unrestricted funds £ F01	Restricted income funds £ F02	Total funds £ F04	Prior year funds £ F05
Income (Note 3)					
Income and endowments from:					
Donations and legacies	S01	26,483	-	26,483	12,287
Charitable activities	S02	-	11,088	11,088	-
Total	S07	26,483	11,088	37,571	12,287
Expenditure (Notes 6)					
Expenditure on:					
Charitable activities	S09	4,761	3,150	7,911	14,946
Other	S11	1,021	-	1,021	60
Total	S12	5,782	3,150	8,932	15,006
Net income/(expenditure) before tax for the reporting period					
Tax payable	S13	20,701	7,938	28,639	(2,719)
tax before investment gains/(losses)	S14	-	-	-	-
Net gains/(losses) on investments	S15	20,701	7,938	28,639	(2,719)
	S16	-	-	-	-
Net income/(expenditure)	S17	20,701	7,938	28,639	(2,719)
Net movement in funds	S22	20,701	7,938	28,639	(2,719)
Reconciliation of funds:					
Total funds brought forward	S23	5	-	5	2,724
Total funds carried forward	S24	20,706	7,938	28,644	5

Section B Balance sheet

	Guidance Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted income funds £	Total this year £	Total last year £
Current assets					
Debtors (Note 19)	B07	-	-	-	300
Cash at bank and in hand (Note 24)	B09	21,006	17,715	38,721	3,568
Total current assets	B10	21,006	17,715	38,721	3,868
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year (Note 20)	B11	300	9,777	10,077	3,863
Net current assets/(liabilities)	B12	20,706	7,938	28,644	5
Total assets less current liabilities	B13	20,706	7,938	28,644	5
Total net assets or liabilities	B16	20,706	7,938	28,644	5
Funds of the Charity					
Endowment funds (Note 27)	B17	-	-	-	-
Restricted income funds (Note 27)	B18	-	7,938	7,938	-
Unrestricted funds	B19	20,706	-	20,706	5
Revaluation reserve	B20	-	-	-	-
Fair value reserve	B21	-	-	-	-
Total funds	B22	20,706	7,938	28,644	5

The company was entitled to exemption from audit under s477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to small companies subject to the small companies regime and in accordance with FRS102 SORP.

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

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval dd/mm/yy yy

Note 1 Basis of preparation

This section should be completed by all charities.

1.1 Basis of accounting

These accounts have been prepared under the historical cost convention with items recognised at cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant note(s) to these accounts.

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with:

- and with*

✓

 the Statement of Recommended Practice: Accounting and Reporting by Charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) issued on 16 July 2014
- and with*

✓

 the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)
- and with the Charities Act 2011.

The charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS 102.*

--

* -Tick as appropriate

1.2 Going concern

If there are material uncertainties related to events or conditions that cast significant doubt on the charity's ability to continue as a going concern, please provide the following details or state "Not applicable", if appropriate:

An explanation as to those factors that support the conclusion that the charity is a going concern;

<i>The trustees are of the view that unrestricted reserves to fund charitable activities are adequate to continue in operational existence for the foreseeable future and is therefore a going concern</i>

1.3 Change of accounting policy

The accounts present a true and fair view and no changes have been made to the accounting policies adopted in note { }.

Yes*	<table border="1"><tr><td>✓</td></tr></table>	✓	* -Tick as appropriate
✓			
No*	<table border="1"><tr><td>✓</td></tr></table>	✓	
✓			

1.4 Changes to accounting estimates

No changes to accounting estimates have occurred in the reporting period (3.46 FRS102 SORP).

Yes*	<table border="1"><tr><td>✓</td></tr></table>	✓	* -Tick as appropriate
✓			
No*	<table border="1"><tr><td>✓</td></tr></table>	✓	
✓			

1.5 Material prior year errors

No material prior year error have been identified in the reporting period (3.47 FRS102 SORP).

Yes*	<table border="1"><tr><td>✓</td></tr></table>	✓	* -Tick as appropriate
✓			
No*	<table border="1"><tr><td>✓</td></tr></table>	✓	
✓			

Note 2

Accounting policies

2.2 INCOME

Recognition of income

These are included in the Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA) when:

- the charity becomes entitled to the resources;
- it is more likely than not that the trustees will receive the resources;
- the monetary value can be measured with sufficient reliability.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	✓	✓

Grants and donations

Grants and donations are only included in the SoFA when the general income recognition criteria are met (5.10 to 5.12 FRS102 SORP).

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	✓	✓

In the case of performance related grants, income must only be recognised to the extent that the charity has provided the specified goods or services as entitlement to the grant only occurs when the performance related conditions are met (5.16 FRS 102 SORP).

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	✓	✓

Government grants

The charity has received government grants in the reporting period

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	✓	✓

Support costs

The charity has incurred expenditure on support costs.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	✓	✓

2.3 EXPENDITURE AND LIABILITIES

Liability recognition

Liabilities are recognised where it is more likely than not that there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to pay out resources and the amount of the obligation can be measured with reasonable certainty.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	✓	✓

Governance and support costs

Support costs have been allocated between governance costs and other support. Governance costs comprise all costs involving public accountability of the charity and its compliance with regulation and good practice.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	✓	✓

Support costs include central functions and have been allocated to activity cost categories on a basis consistent with the use of resources, eg allocating property costs by floor areas, or per capita, staff costs by the time spent and other costs by their usage.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	✓	✓

Grants with performance conditions

Where the charity gives a grant with conditions for its payment being a specific level of service or output to be provided, such grants are only recognised in the SoFA once the recipient of the grant has provided the specified service or output.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	✓	✓

Grants payable without performance conditions

Where there are no conditions attaching to the grant that enables the donor charity to realistically avoid the commitment, a liability for the full funding obligation must be recognised.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	✓	✓

Deferred income

No material item of deferred income has been included in the accounts.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	✓	✓

Creditors

The charity has creditors which are measured at settlement amounts less any trade discounts

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	✓	✓

Provisions for liabilities

A liability is measured on recognition at its historical cost and then subsequently measured at the best estimate of the amount required to settle the obligation at the reporting date

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	✓	✓

2.4 ASSETS

Debtors

Debtors (including trade debtors and loans receivable) are measured on initial recognition at settlement amount after any trade discounts or amount advanced by the charity. Subsequently, they are measured at the cash or other consideration expected to be received.

Yes*	No*	N/a*
✓	✓	✓

Section C

Notes to the accounts

(cont)

Note 3

Income

Analysis of income		Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds £	Prior year £
Donations and legacies:	Donations and gifts	-	-	-	12,287
	Gift Aid	-	-	-	-
	Legacies	-	-	-	-
	General grants provided by government/other charities	26,483	11,088	37,571	-
	Membership subscriptions and sponsorships which are in substance donations	-	-	-	-
	Donated goods, facilities and services	-	-	-	-
	Other	-	-	-	-
	Total	26,483	11,088	37,571	12,287
Total		-	-	-	-
TOTAL INCOME		26,483	11,088	37,571	12,287

Note 6

Expenditure

Analysis	This year			Last year		
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds £	Unrestricted funds	Restricted income funds	Total funds
Expenditure on charitable activities:						
Freelance Fees	4,033	2,198	6,231	1,860	9,117	10,977
Professional fees	300	-	300	992	2,860	3,852
Project Costs	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other - Materials	1,380	-	1,380	117	-	117
Total expenditure on charitable	5,713	2,198	7,911	2,969	11,977	14,946
Other						
Insurance	952	-	952	-	-	-
Bank Charges	69	-	69	60	-	60
	-	-	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total other expenditure	1,021	-	1,021	60	-	60
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	6,734	2,198	8,932	3,029	11,977	15,006

Note 19 Debtors and prepayments

19.1 Analysis of debtors

	This year £	Last year £
Trade debtors	-	-
Prepayments and accrued income	-	300.0
Other debtors	-	-
Total	-	300.0

Note 20 Creditors and accruals

20.1 Analysis of creditors

	Amounts falling due within one year		Amounts falling due after more than one year	
	This year £	Last year £	This year £	Last year £
Accruals and deferred income	10,077	3,863	-	-
Total	10,077	3,863	-	-

20.2 Deferred income

Please complete this note if the charity has deferred

Please explain the reasons why income is deferred.

This year	Last year
£9,777 received from Neighbourhood Trust is deferred for charitable activities starting in 2021/22.	

Movement in deferred income account

	This year £	Last year £
Balance at the start of the reporting period	3,863	9,500
Amounts added in current period	9,777	300
Amounts released to income from previous periods	(3,863)	(5,937)
Balance at the end of the reporting period	9,777	3,863

Section C**Notes to the accounts****(cont)****Note 24 Cash at bank and in hand****Cash at bank and on hand****Total**

This year	Last year
£	£
38,721	3,568
38,721	3,568

Note 27 Charity funds**27.1 Details of material funds held and movements during the CURRENT reporting period**

Fund names	Type PE, EE R or UR *	Purpose and Restrictions	Fund balances brought forward	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Fund balances carried forward
			£	£	£	£	£
Awards for All	R		-	3,563	(2,871)	-	692
Groundwork UK	R		-	7,525	(279)	-	7,246
City of London	U		-	26,483	(5,777)	-	20,706
Nomad Projects / ACE	U		5	-	(5)	-	-
Total Funds as per balance sheet			5	37,571	(8,932)	-	28,644

27.2 Details of material funds held and movements during the PREVIOUS reporting period

Fund names	Type PE, EE R or UR *	Purpose and Restrictions	Fund balances brought forward	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	Gains and losses	Fund balances carried forward
			£	£	£	£	£	£
Awards for All	R		-	5,937	(5,937)	-	-	-
Groundwork UK	R		-	3,465	(3,465)	-	-	-
Human Soil Eco Brit Ecology Society	R		-	1,546	(1,546)	-	-	-
The Veolia Environment Trust	R		-	564	(564)	-	-	-
Groundwork UK	R		-	385	(385)	-	-	-
Marion Richardson	U		-	90	(90)	-	-	-
Nomad Projects / ACE	U		2,724	300	(3,019)	-	-	5
Total Funds as per balance sheet			2,724	12,287	(15,006)	-	-	5