



Trustees Report

The Trustees present their report together with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31st December 2023

Organisational structure

Hawbush Community Gardens is a constituted as a CIO – Foundation. Charity Registration 1170413

Address

Bull Street
Brierley Hill
West Midlands
DY5 3NQ

Trustees

Ken Smith	Chair
Michelle Betteridge	Secretary (Resigned 1 st February 2024)
John Merrick	
Erika Keshelya	
David Hadley	
Jason Bloomer	

Objectives and Activities

- 1 To promote for the benefit of the inhabitants of Brierley Hill (DY5) and surrounding areas the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation of individuals who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances or for the public at large in the interests of social welfare and with the object of improving the condition of life of the said inhabitants.

- 2 To further such other purposes as are exclusively charitable purposes under the laws of England and Wales as the Trustees from time to time decide.

Main Activities

It is clear that, through reputation and increasing links and contacts in the community, the reach and impact of Hawbush Community Gardens continue to grow – especially so, over the last two years. Interest in the gardens is reflected in estimated attendance numbers and logging of on-site hours. These data have continued to show increasing interest in allotment plots following COVID lockdown and, also by group attendance as well as volunteer numbers. Data summarised here for 2023, show total a total of 11,800 volunteer hours for 2023 (cf. 13,662 for 2022). Overall on-site hours, for 2023, were 32.3 hrs/day.

During 2023, a total attendance of 342 volunteers were estimated from the numbers recorded via the on-site work logging. Not a completely accurate estimate but an indication of the interest, attendance and engagement. Allowance for the large number (38) of volunteers from the community attending the two litter picking days; 33 ACC volunteers who assisted across the 5 family afternoons; 30 from Pens Meadow School (staff & students); 20 from Dudley College (staff & students); ca. 25 from Dudley Stroke Association and a large number (>50) of EHKO “regulars”, with those referrals who worked as volunteers; the estimates still indicate a valuable input during the year of almost 150 volunteers, even though some (e.g. work experience, CVS taster volunteers, or YJS youngsters) will have attended only for one day. We still value their contribution and hope they have been impacted positively by their experience.

During 2023, a total of five family events were held, with a Community Family picnic scheduled for late August unfortunately cancelled due to wet weather. The events consistently well attended, with all family tickets booked within a couple of hours of posting. Always very positive feedback from attending families; well organised and supported by a great team of volunteers (ACC, EKHO, HCG). The summer event (17th Aug) was organised during the ACC/CITC Mission week, with about 12 young people from “Mission” helping with set-up, running activities and clearing up.

Since early March, the mother and toddler support group, Mom’s Mindful Hub has been running, with increased numbers. Nature Stay and Play is aimed at mothers and their families. The group has a focus on mental wellbeing and aims to promote connection between both parent and child and parent to parent through child led play and nature-based activities. The group had taken over the vacant allotment plot adjacent to the “Art Garden” paddock, an additional interest for some of the moms and older children. A winter break taken from end of November until a planned re-start in the spring.

Through the woodland space, EKHO CIC have linked with other community groups to run/support workshops with natural and sustainable craft activities. EKHO also continued to run the Friday support sessions for the social prescribing referrals and on behalf of Dudley CVS Integrated Plus. A Home Education Group (age range 10-17) was run from September; activities including craft/ green woodwork and cooking. Hot plant-based meal and drinks included. The group was privately funded by participant payments and had a high proportion of additional physical/SEN needs. Subsequently, another group (age range 3 - 6 and 7 – 9) launched due to demand. Tutor led activities include craft/ green woodwork and cooking for higher age group, with self-led play and craft provided for younger age group.

Achievements and Performance

We are pleased and excited to report the near completion of the EKHO sensory, Wellbeing Garden, with a well-attended, official "opening event" held 24th September; the result of great vision, significant ambition, some innovative planning by one of the EKHO directors and much hard work by a dedicated team of volunteers. We look forward to the practical realisation of this vision in helping the vulnerable group with severely restricted mobility towards improved physical health and wellbeing.

In the woodland, the roundhouse shelter now completed, but for a raised cover/dome over the centre vent and some waterproofing. The shelter now in regular use for groups and activities. A temporary tarpaulin cover over the outdoor woodworking workshop now allowing a range of craft and cooking activities to run on a regular basis.

The substantial accumulation of waste & rubbish of all kinds, a major problem along the site margins, was completely cleared through the organization of two very successful "community litter pick"/rubbish removal events in March. Our thanks are due also to Dudley Council for organising removal from the site, by several truck loads.

As part of the original vision for Hawbush Gardens, we have continued to supply freshly grown fruit and veg. in season (potatoes, tomatoes, cucumbers, vegetables, fruit); donations in 2023, were 435kg. Over the 7 years, 2017 to 2023 inclusive, a total of 1.75 tonnes of fresh produce have been donated to Foodbank and local families, an average of 250kg per year.

Financial Review

Principal sources of income included receipts from Allotment Fees, Donations, Grants and Hire Charges which are used to sustain the availability of the facilities for the benefit of the community.

Policy on reserves

The policy agreed by the trustees is to aim to hold in unrestricted reserves not committed or invested in tangible fixed assets (the 'free' reserves) sufficient to cover the general overhead expenses and salary costs not specifically funded by external agencies, for a period of six months. At this level, the trustees feel that they would be able to continue the current activities of the charity in the event of a significant drop in funding. It would then be necessary to consider how the funding would be replaced or activities changed. The amount of 'free' reserves at 31st December 2023 amounted to £6201 which equates to 10.35 months.

Trustees' responsibilities in relation to the financial statements

Law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the charity's financial activities during the year and of its financial position at the end of the year. In preparing those financial statements, the trustees are required to:

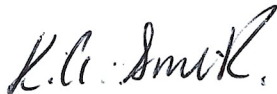
- select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- make judgments and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;

- state whether applicable accounting standards and statements of recommended practice have been followed subject to any departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charity will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 1993. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Approved by the trustees on and signed on their behalf by:

8th May 2024



Ken Smith
Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Trustee

Hawbush Community Gardens
Statement of Financial Activities
For the period from 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Total funds	Prior year total funds
Income and endowments from:				
Donations and legacies	131.72	-	131.72	2,012.00
Income from charitable activities	5,980.00	-	5,980.00	1,440.00
Other trading activities	665.11	-	665.11	243.00
Total income	6,776.83	-	6,776.83	3,695.00
Expenditure on:				
Expenditure on charitable activities	7,185.80	-	7,185.80	2,378.24
Total expenditure	7,185.80	-	7,185.80	2,378.24
Net income / (expenditure) resources before transfer	(408.97)	-	(408.97)	1,316.76
Transfers:				
Gross transfers between funds - in	-	-	-	-
Gross transfers between funds - out	-	-	-	-
Other recognised gains / losses				
Gains/losses on investment assets	-	-	-	-
Gains on revaluation, fixed assets, charity's own use	-	-	-	-
Net movement in funds	(408.97)	-	(408.97)	1,316.76
Reconciliation of funds				
Total funds brought forward	6,610.25	-	6,610.25	5,293.49
Total funds carried forward	6,201.28	-	6,201.28	6,610.25
Represented by				
Unrestricted				
General Fund	6,201.28	-	6,201.28	6,610.25
Total funds	6,201.28	-	6,201.28	6,610.25

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Balance Sheet detailed

		As at 31/12/2023	As at 31/12/2022
Current assets			
	7000: Current Account - HSBC	-	6,610.25
	7001: Current Account - Metro	6,201.28	-
	Total Current assets	6,201.28	6,610.25
	Net Asset surplus (deficit)	6,201.28	6,610.25
Reserves			
	Excess/(deficit) to date	(408.97)	-
	Z01: Starting balances	6,610.25	6,610.25
	Total Reserves	6,201.28	6,610.25

Represented by Funds		
General (Unrestricted)	6,201.28	6,610.25
Total	6,201.28	6,610.25

Hawbush Community Gardens

Analysis of income and expenditure Selected period: 01 January 2023 to 31 December 2023

	General	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	This year	Total Last year
Income and endowments from:						
Donations and legacies						
0400 - Donations	131.72	-	-	-	131.72	2,012.00
0500 - Gift Aid	-	-	-	-	-	-
Donations and legacies Totals	131.72	-	-	-	131.72	2,012.00
Income from charitable activities						
0100 - Allotment & Woodland Fees	780.00	-	-	-	780.00	880.00
0200 - Room Hire	520.00	-	-	-	520.00	560.00
0220 - Events & Activities	180.00	-	-	-	180.00	-
0300 - Grants	4,500.00	-	-	-	4,500.00	-
Income from charitable activities Totals	5,980.00	-	-	-	5,980.00	1,440.00
Other trading activities						
0600 - Other Income	665.11	-	-	-	665.11	243.00
Other trading activities Totals	665.11	-	-	-	665.11	243.00
Investments						
Investments Totals	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other income						
Other income Totals	-	-	-	-	-	-
Income and endowments Grand totals	6,776.83	-	-	-	6,776.83	3,695.00
Expenditure on:						
Raising funds						
Raising funds Totals	-	-	-	-	-	-
Expenditure on charitable activities						
2000 - Garden Equipment & Tools	5,269.27	-	-	-	5,269.27	1,185.88
2006 - Toiletries & Consumables	10.20	-	-	-	10.20	467.56
2010 - Repairs & Maintenance	897.12	-	-	-	897.12	402.59
2020 - Utilities	236.88	-	-	-	236.88	258.61
2021 - Insurance	454.54	-	-	-	454.54	-
2030 - Volunteer Expenses	-	-	-	-	-	-
2040 - Licenses & Subscriptions	150.00	-	-	-	150.00	-
2050 - Accountancy & Professional Fees	152.39	-	-	-	152.39	-
3000 - Bank & Finance Charges	15.40	-	-	-	15.40	63.60
Expenditure on charitable activities Totals	7,185.80	-	-	-	7,185.80	2,378.24

	General	Designated	Restricted	Endowment	This year	Total Last year
Other expenditure						
Other expenditure Totals	-	-	-	-	-	-
Expenditure Grand totals	7,185.80	-	-	-	7,185.80	2,378.24