

Grow for Life

Charity Number: 1173914

**Trustees' Annual Report
and Financial Statements
for the Year ended
31 January 2024**

Grow for Life

Trustees report for the year ended 31 January 2024

Reference and administrative details of the charity, its trustees and advisors

The trustees during the financial period and up to and including the date the report was approved were:

<i>Trustee Name</i>	<i>Office (if any)</i>	<i>Appointed</i>	<i>Re-elected</i>
1: Martin Geake	Chairperson	24 July 2017	7 July 2021
2: Phillip Blacker		24 July 2017	13 October 2023
3: Denise Weikert		16 May 2019	6 July 2022
4: Dr Alex Eldridge		20 November 2019	Stood down 1 March 2023
5: Dr Peg Bavin Butler		7 July 2021	
6: Ted Litchfield		7 July 2021	
7 Tristram Lewis		19 October 2022	

Charity number

The charity was registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales, number 1173914, on 24 July 2017.

Registered and principal address

548 Wellsway

Bath

BA2 2UE

Names & Address of Bank

	<i>Name</i>	<i>Address & Postcode</i>
Bank:	Lloyds Bank	47 Milsom Street , Bath, BA1 1DN

Grow for Life

Trustees report for the year ended 31 January 2024

Structure, governance and management

The charity is registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and is governed by a constitution adopted on 24 July 2017.

Trustees determine the strategy and policy of the charity. When staff are appointed they report to the board of trustees. Trustees must have an active commitment to the objects of the charity. The board of trustees selects and appoints new trustees who are chosen for their expertise. Trustees are all required to read the Charity Commission's guidelines on the role of charitable trustees and also to familiarise themselves with the charity's work on the ground.

The trustees have the pleasure of presenting the accounts for the year ending 31 January 2024 with comparison for the year ended 31 January 2023.

Objectives and activities

Grow for Life (GFL) was registered as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation in July 2017 and the objects were updated in September 2023, approved by all trustees and the Charity commission. The new objects are to assist in the treatment and care of persons in England and Wales who are experiencing mental or physical ill health or low self-confidence, through the provision of therapeutic gardening, horticulture training and companionship. These objects are to be pursued in accordance with the principles and values of the Christian faith.

Summary of the Main Activities Undertaken for the Public Benefit in Relation to the Charity's Objects

Grow for Life provides therapeutic gardening for people struggling with life, especially those suffering with depression and/or anxiety conditions. Working outdoors in a garden is enjoyable and productive and gives trainees, who we now call Gardeners, a sense of wellbeing and achievement. The charity aims to increase the confidence and self-esteem of its Gardeners equipping them with gardening and social skills, thereby providing a potential route into employment or meaningful activity.

We work in teams with Gardeners participating weekly in a morning or an afternoon session. We make the sessions informative, fun and safe. GFL works in both private and public gardens, in particular Bath Botanical Gardens. The hosts of the private gardens where we work need assistance due to old age or infirmity.

In late 2021 GFL took on a lease from the Duchy of Cornwall on an abandoned walled garden in Newton St Loe. While still a work in progress, it is being transformed into a productive vegetable garden and a superb resource for training and therapy. This Walled Garden and its adjoining orchard are now the centre of GFL's operations and will be a key resource in enabling GFL to expand its activities and reach more Gardeners. A large polytunnel has been

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Trustees report for the year ended 31 January 2024

built on site together with two WCs and a tool shed. As a result, it is now possible to operate sessions year-round.

GFL also started an orchard pruning, harvesting and pressing activity. We have visited special needs homes and other venues and involved vulnerable participants in the process of making apple juice. This has proved very popular.

Statutory Declaration

The trustees declare that they have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the commission in exercising their powers or duties.

Summary of the Main Achievements

Our core activities and outputs centre around weekly sessions. These are run by our part-time members of staff assisted by an amazing and growing army of volunteers who contributed 1839 hours in 2023. Within this we've received HR, fundraising and strategic management support from volunteers who heard of us through BBC Gardeners World who visited and filmed at the Walled Garden in April.

Over the year we have developed the walled garden. This has given the charity a superb base from which to offer a wider, more comprehensive learning experience to our Gardeners. In future we will be able to receive a wider range of groups with special needs due to the safe nature of the garden and its facilities. Together with our access to Bath Parks, we now have excellent venues to host a wide range of clients.

GFL has several weekly sessions ongoing. One is a starter group at the Walled Garden for new referrals. One is at St Martins School Odd Down in partnership with St Philips and St James Church. One is a peripatetic group that moves from venue to venue - the Walled Garden, Haycombe Cemetery (for Parks), private gardens of care homes and needy individuals. The aim of this group is to get the Gardeners out and about and ready for employment. Another is a new Herbs and Nature course held at the Parks Nurseries which is to be run three times a year. The excellent working relationship with Bath Parks Dept continues.

GFL has built new partnerships in 2023 to enable the GFL model to be more widely used and to attract an increasing number of participants. In particular, the charity has a partnership with Boys in Mind (BiM) & a local secondary school, with a group of boys, who have issues with their mental health, meeting at the Walled Garden weekly. The sessions teach the boys horticultural and social skills, giving them more confidence and less anxiety. We hope to expand this to other secondary schools in the area as the model appears to have been very positively received by the school. GFL also ran a horticultural therapy course for Genesis Trust beneficiaries and we plan to run this annually. The next sessions commence in April.

In addition to the above, we have continued to hold orchard pruning, harvesting, pressing and juicing days which are very popular.

Over the year 74 participants benefited from the work of GFL. Of these 34 were new referrals and 16 were from the partnerships with Boys in Mind and Genesis. Expanding our numbers of Gardeners and our partnerships is a key objective for 2024.

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Trustees report for the year ended 31 January 2024

In total over 2023 there have been 1428 hours of supported therapeutic gardening across the different groups. We recognise that many of our Gardeners have benefited from more than 12 weeks of sessions gardening with us, and as part of our strategic ambition to increase numbers reached by our therapeutic sessions we need to encourage our existing Gardeners to consider their longer term ambitions and goals. We are starting to network with existing local gardening groups to promote the 'next steps' in our Gardeners' journeys.

All our Gardeners undertake an initial assessment with our Gardener's Support Manager and a follow up "Flourish review" at the end of the block of sessions they attend. From our most recent cohort of Gardeners, 96% experienced improved mental health and self-confidence, against our target of 80%.

Most of the Gardeners progress in a remarkably short space of time which reflects the high quality of support and therapy that we are able to provide.

One of the Gardeners has now transitioned into becoming a core volunteer with GFL, taking on more responsibility for supporting new Gardeners referred to us in subsequent session blocks. We really value his input and can see the potential for his growth within our team in supporting new referrals to Grow for Life. Two others have taken on part-time roles with GFL.

Due to the expansion of Grow for Life, the trustees determined that there was a need to recruit a part-time Director to lead and manage the charity. The post was advertised internally and externally on the GFL website and, following thorough interviews by trustees, Dr Alex Eldridge was appointed in April 2023.

We are also joining up with a local charity, "Foodcycle" who provide meals to local families, and they are using our surplus vegetables to support others in need. Vegetables grown at St Martin's Garden school are shared with the families who use the food pantry there.

This year we have started getting feedback from regular volunteers who are key to our success. Many of them shared the benefits of volunteering with GFL on their own mental wellbeing. Most of our volunteer hours are made up of individuals supporting one of GFL's weekly groups.

Financial review

Income for the year 2023/24 was £82,302 (£58,517 2022/23) of which £33,415 was restricted (£16,370 prior year). Expenditure for the year was £69,526 (£71,141 2022/23) this was split between unrestricted £42,688 (£38,421 prior year) and restricted £26,838 expenditure (£32,720 prior year). GFL's main costs were for the part-time employment of staff and the development of the walled garden.

Policy on Reserves

At the period end, it is holding just under £41k in free reserves. The Charity's policy on reserves is to generate and maintain a balance which is sufficient to preserve the financial viability of the Charity in the event that unforeseen and/or unavoidable circumstances precipitate a short-term fall in its income. At the current time the trustees consider this to be a minimum of six months expenditure which is around £35k so our free reserves meet this policy.

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Trustees report for the year ended 31 January 2024

Particulars of Any Outstanding Guarantee Given by Grow for Life

There are no outstanding guarantees given by GFL

Particulars of Any Outstanding Debt

We owed pension contribution of £286

Signed on behalf of the board of trustees: Signed:

Name ME GEARKE

Date: .. 5 JULY 2024

NE Geake

Grow for Life
Receipt and payment account
For the Year to 31 January 2024

		Year to January 2024			Year to January 2023		
		Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
		funds	funds	funds	funds	funds	funds
	Note	£	£	£	£	£	£
Receipts							
Interest		508	-	508	34	-	34
Donations and grants	2	48,379	33,415	81,794	42,113	16,370	58,483
Total receipts		48,887	33,415	82,302	42,147	16,370	58,517
Payments							
Charitable activities							
Activities relating to the							
work of the charity	3	42,688	26,838	69,526	38,421	32,720	71,141
Total payments		42,688	26,838	69,526	38,421	32,720	71,141
Net receipts/ (payments)		6,199	6,577	12,776	3,726	(16,350)	(12,624)
Cash funds at start of period		34,635	-	34,635	30,909	16,350	47,259
CASH AT THE END OF THE YEAR		40,834	6,577	47,411	34,635	-	34,635

Grow for Life
Statement of assets and liabilities
As at 31 January 2024

			2024			2023		
			Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
		Note	funds	funds	funds	funds	funds	funds
			£	£	£	£	£	£
CASH FUNDS								
Cash at bank and in hand		5	40,834	6,577	47,411	34,635	-	34,635
			40,834	6,577	47,411	34,635	-	34,635
OTHER MONETARY ASSETS								
Due from invoices			-	-	-	2,100	-	2,100
Due on Gift aid			21	1,250	1,271	936	1,165	2,101
OTHER MONETARY ASSETS			21	1,250	1,271	3,036	1,165	4,201
LIABILITIES			258	28	286	62	-	62
Signed on behalf of trustees								
Name			ME GEAKE					
Date			5 JULY 2024					

Grow for Life
Notes to the accounts
For the Year ended 31 January 2024

1 Accounting policies

Basis of accounting

The trustees have taken advantage of section 133 of the Charities Act 2011 and have prepared the accounts on a receipts and payments basis.

The comparisons are for the year ended 31 January 2023.

Taxation

As a registered charity the organisation benefits from rates relief and is generally exempt from income tax and capital gains tax but not from VAT. Irrecoverable VAT is included in the cost of those items to which it relates.

Grants

Grants are recognised on receipt from the grant making body.

Fund accounting

Unrestricted funds are available for use at the discretion of the trustees in furtherance of the general objectives of the charity.

Restricted funds are subjected to restrictions on their expenditure imposed by the donor or through the terms of an appeal.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the accounts.

Grow for Life
Notes to the accounts
For the Year ended 31 January 2024

2 Grants and donations

	Year ended January 2024			Year ended January 2023		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Gardening services and training	2,831	-	2,831	5,752	-	5,752
South West Social Entrepreneur Fund	-	-	-	-	15,000	15,000
Voluntary donations and other trust donations	45,548	33,415	78,963	36,361	1,370	37,731
Total	48,379	33,415	81,794	42,113	16,370	58,483

3 Payments - Charitable activities

	Year ended January 2024			Year ended January 2023		
	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
Salaries and consultants	32,591	24,373	56,964	34,888	10,641	45,529
Training	1,104	-	1,104	381	120	501
Insurance	469	-	469	780	-	780
IT, Marketing and Website	1,280	-	1,280	772	700	1,472
Other costs	1,418	-	1,418	1,600	-	1,600
Walled garden non staff costs	5,826	2,465	8,291	-	21,259	21,259
Total	42,688	26,838	69,526	38,421	32,720	71,141

Grow for Life
Notes to the accounts
For the Year ended 31 January 2024

4 Trustees expenses and remuneration

No trustee received any expenses or remuneration during this year or the previous period.

5 Restricted and unrestricted reserves

	Brought forward as at 1 February 2023	Income	Expenditure	Carry forward as at 31 January 2024
Therapeutic gardening groups	-	18,500	15,500	3,000
Walled Garden	-	3,665	2,465	1,200
Other restrictions	-	11,250	8,873	2,377
Total restricted reserves	-	33,415	26,838	6,577
Unrestricted reserves	34,635	48,887	42,688	40,834
Total Reserves/ Cash	34,635	82,302	69,526	47,411

Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of Grow For Life

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31 January 2024.

Responsibilities and basis of report

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

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

Independent examiner's statement

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

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

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



Matthew George Small FCA
ICAEW
Berkeley Hall Marshall Limited
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BA1 2NE

5 July 2024