



Trustees' Annual Report for the period

From	Period start date			To	Period end date		
	01 st .	October	2022		30 th .	September	2023

Section A Reference and administration details

Charity name	Stephen Cox Garden Trust
Other names charity is known by	Mid-Wessex Garden Trust; Stephen Cox Trust, SBC Garden Trust
Registered charity number (if any)	1174239
Charity's principal address	84, Studley Lane, Studley, nr.Calne, Wiltshire Postcode SN11 9NH

Names of the charity trustees who manage the charity

	Trustee name	Office (if any)	Dates acted if not for whole year	Name of person (or body) entitled to appoint trustee (if any)
1	Stephen Ben Cox	C.E.O./chair/Founder		
2	Colette Som			
3	Nicholas Self			
4	Iain Jessup			
5	Simon Kerstan	Publisher & Assistant Director		
6	Ryan Miller			
7	David Meier			
8				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				

Names of the trustees for the charity, if any, (for example, any custodian trustees)

Name	Dates acted if not for whole year

Names and addresses of advisers (Optional information)

Type of adviser	Name	Address

Name of chief executive or names of senior staff members (Optional information)

Stephen Ben Cox

Section B Structure, governance and management

Description of the charity's trusts

Type of governing document (eg. trust deed, constitution)	Constitution
How the charity is constituted (eg. trust, association, company)	Charitable Incorporated Organisation
Trustee selection methods (eg. appointed by, elected by)	By majority approval of all Trustees via e-mail proposal from C.E.O./Founder.

Additional governance issues (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant, about:

- policies and procedures adopted for the induction and training of trustees;
- the charity's organisational structure and any wider network with which the charity works;
- relationship with any related parties;
- trustees' consideration of major risks and the system and procedures to manage them.

1. The Trust has a wide range of policies with regards to such matters as: Risk Assessment; Student Welfare; Health & Safety; Accidents; etc (14 documents in all). The student receives a written copy of all of these as part of our detailed Induction Programme prior to commencing any studies, training or volunteering with the Trust.
2. Four times a year (31Dec/31 Mar/30 June/30 Sept) the Trustees receive from the Founder Trustee/CEO a detailed Report on the activities of the Trust and also detailed Accounts (additional to Annual Accounts and lengthy detailed Annual Report).
3. Covid19: The Trustees and CEO kept in mind Government guidelines regarding teaching and visitors in all its activities.
4. Whilst the overall quantity and range of provision of charitable services has gradually increased, the Trust keeps in mind the relative balance between online/remote provision and on-site provision. Where appropriate it increases the former according to the resources available in terms of finances/donations etc and manpower. (It is also cognisant of the necessity to not undermine the CEO's state of health)

Section C Objectives and activities

Summary of the objects of the charity set out in its governing document

- (i) To advance education in the subjects of horticulture and conservation in particular but not exclusively by providing study courses, training placements and workshops.
- (ii) Such charitable purposes for the public benefit as are exclusively charitable according to the laws of England and Wales as the trustees may from time to time determine.

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects (include within this section the statutory declaration that trustees have had regard to the guidance issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit)

Trustees kept in mind the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit when planning our activities for the year. As a matter of course, reference was made to our agreed objectives to aid decision-making. The main activities undertaken for the public benefit were as follows:

1. Public information & guidance via its own three websites, its own YouTube channel, & Google website, and Google notices & news + FaceBook/LinkedIn/Xing/Instagram, & other professional networking media.
2. Provision of residential educational placements all year round for foreign students especially from the E.U.
3. Making available information sheets, guides etc on conservation, wildlife to the general public.
4. Offering access to the library for local students; and to post-graduate scholars.
5. University Student Manager conservation roles.
6. Offering the garden for relaxation visits by residents of nursing homes and retirement homes (under carer supervision).
7. Similarly group bookings by gardening clubs/women's institutes etc.
8. Offering training/study opportunities for young unemployed.
9. Offering the garden for supervised visits by pupils of local schools for projects/study.

Additional details of objectives and activities (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include further statements, where relevant, about:

- policy on grant making;
- policy programme related investment;
- contribution made by volunteers.

10. Residential Student Volunteer programme (E.U) assist garden improvement increasing enjoyment students, visitors, disadvantaged, elderly. Also interact with the community. gain skills. They come to the Trust for tuition/study holiday/language improvement/life and skills enhancement/work experience and were given free board and lodge. Each student stays for between 2 and 6 weeks.

11. Association with Wiltshire County Council Unit for young adults with learning difficulties: providing a resource for building skills & confidence under carer supervision.

12. Mentoring: The Trust provides aspects of mentoring to 19 of its past students to support their ongoing (e.g. university or vocational) education and/or career development.

13. Making educational videos on conservation/wildlife/climate change which are made publicly available via our YouTube Channel.

14. Creation of research documents on climate change/conservation/wildlife etc in an immense range of subjects.

15. Student Trips to places of historical, cultural and scientific interest.

16. Book Publishing (educational): horticulture, well-being, conservation. heritage. Initially as e-books Rolling programme of new titles each year.

Summary of the main achievements of the charity during the year

1. CONSERVATION VIDEOS

The Trust has developed its own YouTube video channel and is now actively producing videos for public education in the arenas of: conservation, climate change, habitat protection & restoration, pollution, wildlife, endangered species. This also involves the active participation of students at various universities in the UK and abroad. Four videos were produced this year:

Arcadia, Water in the Trust Gardens.

Journey of Statues.

Neighbourhood Plans.

These were edited/produced by students from: Bath University; Bath Spa University; University of the West of England; Berlin.

The Founder produced the text, audio and photographs.

Several more videos are in pre-production planning.

2. BOOK PUBLISHING

The Trust has initiated a project to engage in additional public education and welfare: book publishing.

This is made possible by the support of a company in Germany who will undertake e-publishing for the Trust.

A series of books is planned to assist public understanding of such matters as:

conservation, gardening, well-being, ecological landscaping, design.

The two books "The Water Gardener" and "The Well Being Gardener" (both written by the founder, Stephen Ben Cox) are due for public release early in 2024.

The third book, The Happy Gardener is in an advanced stage of writing/completion.

A fourth book: "The Healthy Gardener" is now being written

And a fifth book The Heritage Gardener has been planned.

3. E.U. STUDENT SUPPORT:

Ongoing mentoring/guidance given to 21 of our past residential student volunteers for their university studies/career etc in their home countries. Re-visits to the Trust by some of them. And they send feedback on their lives and studies for the Trust Quarterly Magazine/Report.

4. U.K. UNIVERSITIES

Links continued and were expanded with several U.K. Universities student union internship/volunteering/community portals. Trust profiles have been published. Several volunteering jobs in the areas of Multi-Media, Video production, Conservation, Wildlife were published with U.K. universities. These included:

University of Bath; Bristol University; Bath Spa University; and University of the West of England; Oxford University, Southampton University.

And this year Bournemouth University was added.

5. VISIT BY GERMAN BUSINESS SPONSOR

An active 12-month programme of restoration is now under way thanks to generous sponsorship from Germany. In August they visited the gardens to view the work undertaken, the transformation from a field, discuss the work of the Trust and then also visited major

gardens in southwest England. The Founder acted as guide for this and on several cultural and botanical excursion around England, also accompanied by two of our past international students and two others.

6. EXOTICS GARDEN

This has now undergone its refurbishment with installation of porcelain paving, replacement of plants, addition of additional plants, new planters, and new concrete block walls. It will also provide seating/table for meetings and studies.

7. PUBLIC INFORMATION & GUIDANCE & EDUCATION

- (i) Conservation research articles by student managers
- (ii) On social media platforms (LinkedIn; Facebook; Xing; Instagram; Google for Business.
- (iii). And our three Websites.
- (iii) Provision/offer of guide sheets and reference on wildlife; animal habitats; conservation; organic gardening, pollinating planting.
- (iv) Videos on climate change, conservation, wildlife.
- (v) Writing of several books for public release in 2024.

8. STUDENT EXCURSIONS

The Trust is now also helping its foreign students by organising cultural excursions around England and Wales. This year these were: Avebury henge; Bath; Lacock Abbey; Wells; Malmesbury; Castle Combe, Weston-Super-Mare; Salisbury; Oxford. With the Trust sponsors, the Kerstans & Lange, we also went to Exeter, Truro, the Devon Coast, Cornish Coast, Dartmoor, Halligan gardens, Buckfast Abbey Gardens, This opportunity for our students has also been enhanced by the generosity of a Trust supporter who allows the use of his car.

9. E.U. STUDENTS CONSERVATION MANAGERS

The Trust is now investigating the possibility of expanding the student manager roles and opportunities to other countries (in the E.U.). Initially discussions are taking place with German students.

10. PROMOTION

- (i) Improvement of our main website Garden Trust (webnode)
- (ii) 'Workaway' website profile and four other student traveller sites.
- (iii) Various local directories.
- (iv) Google listing & Google website
- (v) YouTube Channel .
- (vi) LinkedIn
- (vii) Xing.
- (viii) FaceBook
- (ix) Instagram
- (x) <https://philomathes5.webnode.page/> (education website)
- (xi) A website is being produced by a German publisher to promote the books being written by Stephen Cox (the Trust's Founder).

11. UNIVERSITY MANAGERS- HABITATS AND WILDLIFE

There are several categories each with various subjects. Each manager chooses a category and they proceed to write articles in that category. The appointments lasts for one academic year and is renewable.:

(A) Species (12 subjects); (B) How to Make Animal Houses (5 subjects)
 (C) Soil (7 subjects). (D) Planting (5 subjects). (E) Water (5 subjects)
 (F) Feeding/Foraging Routes/Wildlife Corridors (6 subjects).
 (G) Conservation For Children (4 subjects)
 (H) Recycling/Renewables (8 subjects)
 (I) Wild Spaces & Habitats (5 subjects)
 (J) Wildlife & Organic Gardening (9 subjects)

Neither the categories nor the range of subjects are exhaustive and are always being expanded. Students retain copyright of their work but the Trust has full rights of archiving/publishing etc. Students managers are given accreditation for their work and testimonials/reports/feedback is provided

12. WILTSHIRE COUNCIL EDUCATION & SOCIAL SERVICES

Working with the Wiltshire Council Unit for adults with learning difficulties & other disabilities (e.g. autism, Downes syndrome etc) with their carers) providing placements to enable them to gain work experience and improve skills and confidence and offer parent respite. Currently two mornings a week. We have taken on two additional clients.

13. FOREIGN STUDENTS RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENTS

Residential placements were continued for foreign students to come to stay with us for study/language improvement/work and skills enhancement/life adventure etc. They came from:

Germany. Italy. France. Belgium. Denmark. .

There was the return of two past students (from Germany).

It has been of value to the local community, to international friendship and understanding. They also improved their English; completed their designated abroad placements required by their respective universities. They also often made their university applications whilst here.

Places are being offered as from March 2024.

14. UNIVERSITY MANAGERS CONSERVATION

There are several categories each with various subjects. Each manager chooses a category and then proceed to write articles in that category. The appointments lasts for one academic year and is renewable.:

(A) Mitigation measures.(15 subjects) (B) Renewable energy advantages/impacts. (13 subjects)

(C) Re-wilding. (10 subjects) (D) Landscape restoring/protection/wildlife enhancement. (17 subjects) (E) Threats to species. Extinction. Climate Change(13 subjects). (F) Individual species/threats/decline(15 subjects). (G) Damage to migration routes/breeding. (11 subjects) (H) Well being & nature. Housing etc (15 subjects). (I) Loss/damage of Habitats/special landscapes. (10 subjects) (J) Pollution (12 subjects).

(K)Circular Economy. (7 subjects) (L) Landscape/Environment (15 subjects) (M) Landscape re-wilding (17 subjects) (N) Pollution Costs (11 subjects) (O) Oceans & Waterways (20 subjects) (P) Landscape & Economy Impacts (12 subjects)

Neither the categories nor the range of subjects are exhaustive and are always being expanded. Students retain copyright of their work but the Trust has full rights of archiving/publishing etc. Students managers are given accreditation for their work and testimonials/reports/feedback is provided

15. **LIBRARY:**

Modest expansion of the Library. Ongoing offer to local students for their studies, and to university and to post-graduate scholars for research.

16. **UNIVERSITY MEDIA MANAGERS:**

Another student managers post (this being the 3rd such managerial role) has been advertised with 7 UK universities. This is for managers to help with social media platforms, promotion, and internet. Each manager will take responsibility for one of the following:

- (i) Website design.
- (ii) YouTube channel.
- (iii) Social media profile & promotion : Instagram business account.
- (iv) Social media profile & promotion : LinkedIn business account.
- (v) Photography.
- (vi) Video about the garden. (vi). Video about the Trust.
- (vii) Video about our conservation projects.
- (viii) Podcasts.
- (ix) Webinars.
- (x) Foreign universities promo re volunteering/study holidays/college internships etc

17. **SPONSORS**

Major sponsorship from a landscape engineering company in Germany. This has enabled the Trust to recommence German and E.U. student residential study placements, occasional student excursions and also some major garden refurbishment and repairs and replanting projects.

18. **PEDAGOGY**

The Trust has continued to develop its unique educational philosophy based on the ethos and teachings of its Founder. This might be termed a version of humanist education: though not constrained by the theories, and delimitation or prejudice of what can sometimes be inherent in the term 'humanism'. The philosophy combines the best of teaching traditions and developments of the past with the experience, innovations and unique approach of the Founder over many years to yield this unique practical form of education to arm young people to:

- (i) fulfil their individual potential and a full and meaningful life (ii) improve and serve their community (iii) seek and practice innovation, improvement and high ideals and standards in life (iv) cherish the planet, wildlife and the environment and (v) to become model citizens.
- (ii) This is explained in our humanist education website Philomathes. (<https://philomathes5.webnode.page/>)

19. PAST STUDENTS:

Twenty one past residential volunteers from around Europe are staying in regular contact with the Founder and also write a quarterly report for the Trustees and Friends of the Trust (in its Quarterly Magazine/Report) about the progress of their university courses and life in general.

Some of our past students return.

21. GARDEN REFURBISHMENT PROGRAMMES

Having been created from a field starting 12 years ago, the entire area needed redesign, definition, and refurbishment. A one-to-two-year programme of works has been activated and is about to enter its second year of projects.

Items completed this year were:

- (i) Removing old turf and laying new lawns.
- (ii) Replanning/replanting of the Alpine Garden & rockery together with stone bird bath.
- (iii) Reorganizing of the Herb Garden ('Culpepper's Delights'), addition of 24 new herbs and re-design of area with various size planters for better cultivation and care.
- (iv) Exotics garden area now completed as in (6) above.
- (v) Repairs and repainting to all garden buildings, arches, pergolas, benches
- (vi) Replacement and extension of the exotic and coastal plants and shrubs in the pool area

It is hoped that 2024 will see the following projects undertaken:

- (i) Reorganisation of the small Woodland and development of rest areas, and wild-flower area.
- (ii) Redesign and planting of the Cottage Garden ('Jekyll's View')
- (iii) Replacement of the students' pool area changing room
- (iv) Taking up 6 patios, levelling ground, and re-laying.
- (v) Restocking pond fish and extending number of species.
- (vi) Improvement & extension of wildlife habitats
- (vii) Refurbishment of students' pool area via re-level ground, installing paving and construction of walls/floor and a fitted pool liner

Overall, this will enable a transformation of the garden and enhancing its unique sculptural and compositional character and vistas. Thereby also enhancing our ability to provide public benefit and educational opportunities/advancement of education and enhancing the experience of visitors and students.

22. TRUST QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

A quarterly illustrated magazine has now published and sent out. This contains all the news of the Trust e.g.: projects, opportunities, books, library, videos, developments, research documents, feedback from 21 of our past international students, etc.

It is distributed to Trustees, past Students, friends of the Trust, volunteers, advisers, sponsors, and other education organizations with which we may have contact.

Section D ends.

Brief statement of the charity's policy on reserves

The reserve fund (Savings Account) which was created for emergencies continues and has not been used. This now stands at: **£706.19** (an increase of £200 over last financial year)

Details of any funds materially in deficit

NONE

Further financial review details (Optional information)

You **may choose** to include additional information, where relevant about:

- the charity's principal sources of funds (including any fundraising);
- how expenditure has supported the key objectives of the charity;
- investment policy and objectives including any ethical investment policy adopted.

The Trust currently seeks support/income from the following sources:

Grants.
Occasional plant sales.
Small donations from individuals.
Occasional workshops/seminars.
Stock donations from businesses.
Donations via private group visits to the gardens.
Financial donations and/or sponsorship from businesses.

Section F**Other optional information**

(i) The Trust does not allow itself to run an overdraft or have loans or leases.

(ii) To enhance a strict financial discipline quarterly accounts are generated for Trustees and Advisers.

(iii) The Trust is registered with HMRC for Gift Aid and has its own customised donation forms/receipts which are issued to donors.

(iv) The Trust does not permit itself to have a credit card.

(v) The Trust does not enter into financial association or partnerships with other organisations.

Section G**Declaration**

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

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees

Signature(s)	<i>Stephen Ben Cox</i>	
Full name(s)	Stephen Ben Cox	
Position (eg Secretary, Chair, etc)	Chair/Founder/C.E.O.	
Date	22 October 2023	

Stephen Cox Garden Trust

(registered Charity #1174239)

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

01st October 2022 to 30th September 2023

EXPENDITURE

SUBJECT	2021/2022	AMOUNT
Tools/equipment	£82. 35	£211. 94
Residential students Food	£413. 22	£663. 17
Residential students Electricity	}--↓	}--↓
Residential students Water	}38	£110
Garden paint & sealants etc	£228. 43	£206. 61
Books	£---	£66. 01
Compost/Fertilisers/Plant aids	£120. 90	£241. 18
Postage	£--	£---
Printing	£--	£---
Telephone %	£---	£---
Internet %	£20	£60
Protective & promo clothing	£---	£12. 99
Visits/research/sponsors meetings	£---	£21. 41
Insurance	£259. 71	£283. 26
Landscaping/Building/Restoring	£353. 36	£1733. 18
Travel/Student excursions	£64. 65	£149. 01
Repairs (incl.patios/paving)	£99. 03	£984. 07
Subscriptions	£---	£---
Plants/Trees/Shrubs/Fruit	£623. 8	£828.83
Seeds	£17	£33. 50
Stationery/Office	£---	£29.77
Furniture/statues/clocks/fountain	£63	£203. 12
Replacements (incl greenhouse)	£150	£1064. 33
Mobile phone %	£---	£---
Residential students heating oil	£---	£---
Transfer to reserve account	£100	£300
Students pocket money	£100	£---
Transport/Travel/Parking	£---	£31. 75
TOTAL EXPENDITURE:	£2868. 49	£7234. 13p

INCOME

SUBJECT	2021/22	AMOUNT
Business sponsor donation	£6171.41	£200
Plant sales	£180	£225
Group visits	£---	£---
Grants	£---	£---
Monthly Pledges	£234. 36	£253. 89
Bequests	£850	£---
Loans	£---	£---
Refunds	£---	£57. 29
Private Viewing	£---	£---
Copyright fees	£102. 84	£93. 87
Just Giving platform	£---	£---
Gift Aid	£---	£---
Other donations	£1418. 99	£1585
Paypal Giving	£---	£---
Consultations	£---	£160
Amazon Smile	£5	£18. 41
Students accommodation	£559. 11	£210
TOTAL INCOME:	£9521. 71	£2803. 46

NOTES:

OTHER PURCHASES: Some Repairs (pond pumps etc); Seeds; Many plants; Stationery; Postage; Mobile phone; Business travel; Some paint; Cement & sand; Telephone; personally financed by Stephen Cox for the Trust (not shown here).

INSURANCE: This year monthly cost increased from £21. 70 to £24. 24 incl. 'Mutual Benefit' discount

FOREIGN RESIDENTIAL STUDENTS

Residential student placements continued from October 2022- Oct 2023. Placements being considered as from Spring 2024

RESERVE FUND

Was increased by £300 via transfer from current account

STUDENT FAMILIES' CONTRIBUTION

This year some families contributed to their off-spring accommodation

2024 SAFE PROJECTION to 01 July

Minimal anticipated expenditure/maintenance for ¾ Year 2023/2024

ESSENTIAL NEEDS (funds ring-fenced):

1. Insurance (12 months) =	£290. 88
2. Residential volunteers (8 months) food=	£1248
3. Volunteer electricity/water/heat =	£315
4. Summerhouse veranda repairs	£322
5. Portion of Internet @ £5 pcm	£60
6. Plants	£210
7. Paint	£90
8. Wood chemicals	£127
9. Seeds etc	£40
10. Accompany students on excursions/research	£90
12. Travel to sponsor's meetings	£160
TOTAL	£2862. 88p
Balance on 30 th .September 2023	£3034. 05p
Projected Credit 1 st .July 2023 =	+£171.17p

LIABILITIES & CREDITORS

None in current year

ASSETS & INVESTMENTS

1. Reserve fund: £706. 19p
2. Assets (less depreciation)
Chain saw/hedge trimmer:£99. 99; Statue £99;
Short hedge trimmer: £28. 99

CLOSING STATEMENT

	2021/22	2022/23
Opening balance:	£629. 39	£7464. 61p
Income from all sources =	£9521.71	£2803. 46p
	£10151. 10	£10268. 07

Expenditure =	£ 2686.49	£7234. 13p
<u>Sub-total/balance (A) =</u>	+ £7464. 61	<u>+£3034. 05</u> (=current account closing balance)

Reserve/Savings Account= £706. 19p
(incl interest for year= £5. 19p
Monies owing = £----
Sub-total balance (B) £706. 19p

Liabilities/loans= £ ----
Creditors = £----
Sub-Total (C) = £ ----

CREDIT (+) or DEFICIT (-) for the year

Total D (A+B - C) = **+£3740. 24p** (Inc. emergency reserve of £706. 19)

NOTES:

- (i) The Trust does not/will not run a Bank Overdraft.
- (ii) The Trust does not/will not have any Loans.
- (iii) The Trust does not/will not take on any Leases.
- (iv) The Trust does not/will not engage in any Share Dealing.

Stephen Cox Garden Trust

Registered Address

84,Studley Lane, Studley, nr.Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 9NH. UK.

Registered Trustees

Stephen B. Cox; Iain Jessup; Simon Kerstan; David Meier; Ryan Miller; Nicholas Self; Colette Som.