
grow

Trustee Report

Impact & Financial Report
Jan – Dec 2023

*Inspiring hope and unlocking potential in
young people through nature*



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Chair of Trustees comments

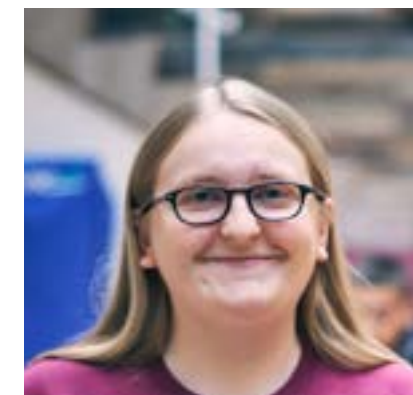
Well, what a year of celebration - a move to new premises with its increased space and capacity, new partnerships with the Green Estate and other local businesses, and Grow's 5th birthday. But most of all, an increased number of young people have participated in and completed one or more of Grow's expanding programmes during the year.

It's what we are here for, but it's still so exciting as trustees to be able to cheer on the amazing Grow staff team and volunteers. They work tirelessly to see these young people grow in confidence, acquire new skills, improve their mental health and, for many, make the move into fulfilling jobs. Hearing the individual stories and knowing the journey and courage each one represents is awe-inspiring. Thank you to all our funders and supporters for making this possible.

The year, with its record referral levels, and number of trainees, has emphasised yet again that we are only scratching the surface of the needs of young people in Sheffield and the surrounding region. Thank you to my fellow trustees for your expertise, skill, and commitment as we continue to encourage and support the work of Grow and consider 'what next' for 2024. It's great to be on the journey with you.



John Lovell,
Chair of Trustees



Lucy
Oct 21 - current



Tommy
Feb 18 - current



Carol
Feb 18 - current



Sam
Nov 22 - current

Shari
Nov 23 - current

MD comments



Steven Cotton,
Managing Director

2023 has been a year of growth both in terms of the quality of our work, but also the number of young people we work with. As always, our trainees continue to inspire me. Personal growth can be painful and it involves making difficult decisions. Taking control of your life and making positive steps forward requires determination and bravery. As you'll see in this report, many of our trainees have made humongous leaps in their personal and work lives. The year has been filled with highlights, but three stand out in particular:

Moving office - We were very excited to move to Green Estates. This new site enabled us to connect our office, training room and green space to create more fluency between all elements of our work. We also get to partner with Green Estates who do incredibly inspiring and important work!

Celebrating our fifth birthday - We were thrilled to hit this milestone! The whole team enjoyed celebrating and reflecting on the achievements of our trainees over the past five years.

Working with even more trainees - As this report shows, 2023 has been our biggest year in terms of trainee numbers. We were inundated with referrals and so continue to work on building our capacity.

I think I say it every year, but Grow really is a huge team effort. This year I want to give a particular shout out to Grow's staff team. We're incredibly lucky to have attracted a wonderful mix of highly dedicated, passionate and skilled team members. Their hard work, partnered with the trainees' bravery, is enabling amazing things to happen.

We're also incredibly grateful for the support of our volunteers who dedicate their precious time to Grow's trainees in a whole range of roles. And of course none of this work would be possible without the generosity of our funders and donors.

I hope you are inspired by the stories of our trainees in the coming pages. We've had a fantastic year and cannot wait to continue working with more young people in 2024!!



Tom's story

Do you feel that the job has benefited you?

100%! I was so isolated when I moved to Sheffield from Essex - it felt so draining. Being outside and trying new things has been so beneficial. I never thought I'd be in the gardening world but after my work coach recommended the Grow Programme I thought 'why not'?!

What aspects of the job did you enjoy?

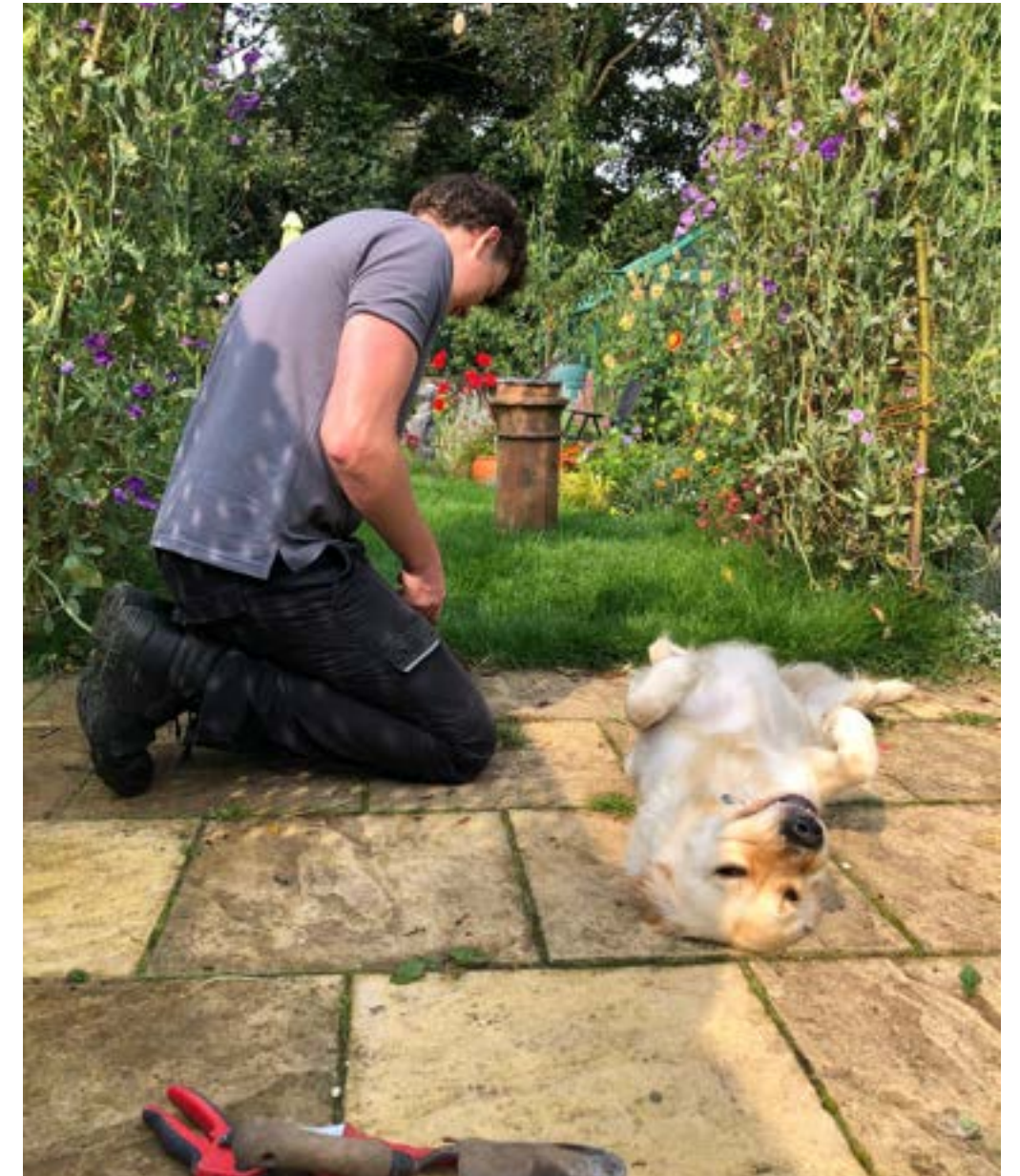
The opportunity to work in a team, talking to people e.g. clients and being around people.

Do you think your confidence has improved?

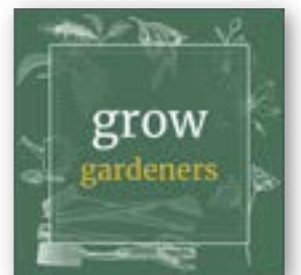
Definitely - talking to new people and getting to know people - hearing about their day has helped me. Seeing people every day has helped me to build confidence. Grow Gardeners has pushed me outside my comfort zone. Since coming to Grow I've had more of a routine and rather than feeling secluded at home I've had a reason to get out of the house.

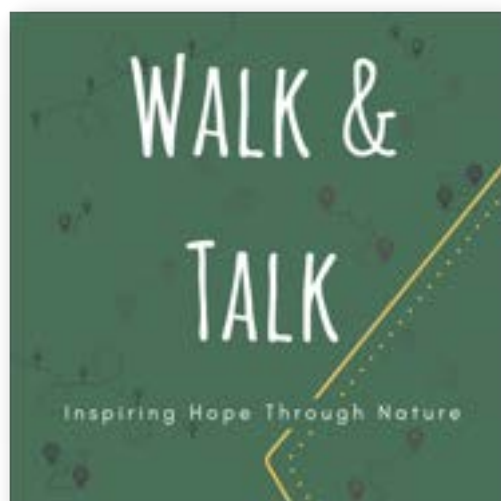
Since covid, my confidence dipped drastically due to being so isolated. I couldn't see my wider family and friends and missed being social. Then I moved to Sheffield from Essex which increased my feeling of being isolated. Until I came along to Grow, I just hung out with my sister's friends and didn't have any friends of my own.

We're incredibly proud of Tom, who secured a Green Space Apprenticeship with Sheffield City Council even before his time had completed with Grow Gardeners!



grow
programme





Walk & Talk is a walking coaching programme for young people aged 16 - 24. Most of the young people who participate experience mental ill-health and often have additional disabilities or challenges.

Young people are matched with a trained mentor, who takes a coaching approach when they meet for up to 8 sessions for a regular walk. They chat about their current situation, hopes, and challenges to work out steps they can take to feel they are moving forward in life. This may include getting into or staying successfully in education, increased confidence to apply for training or a job. They may also experience increased feelings of wellbeing and reduced feelings of isolation.

In 2023, **34 young people** engaged with the programme and we recorded an average increase of:

50% in wellbeing

31.3% in social connection



Wendy Flemming,
Programme Coordinator



What our Walk & Talk trainees said:

“It’s helped me get into a slightly better routine as in winter especially I’d always struggle with my sleep patterns, but waking up early and actually having something to do is great! Talking with my mentor also helped me build up a bit of confidence regarding my self worth and dealing with social situations (which I often struggle greatly with)”.

“I’ve become more confident with speaking to new people”.

“100% it’s given me confidence to do stuff in my life whereas before I wouldn’t have dreamed it.”

Volunteers

The Walk & Talk programme is volunteer led.
In 2023, **27 volunteers** attended our 6 hour training programme.
They show such passion and patience for the young people they support and are all truly amazing.

During the year, **123 hours of Walk & Talk sessions** took place providing coaching and mentoring sessions for young people.



grow programme

Taking place over five weeks, the Grow Programme aims to promote wellbeing, increase social connection and develop employability skills. It includes a mix of group sessions, practical nature-based sessions and 1:1s. Following completion of the Grow Programme, all trainees have the opportunity to interview for our paid work placement programme, Grow Gardeners.

In 2023, we closely reviewed the Grow Programme curriculum to ensure all elements aligned with Grow's supportive triangle; a framework designed to cultivate holistic change. The programme's delivery at Green Estates has allowed more space for team-based activities and created fresh avenues for collaboration with Manor and Castle Development Trust on CV workshops, Roots and Bloom on volunteering opportunities, and hands-on experience at the Grow Farm.

In 2023, we are delighted to have achieved the following:

- 43 Trainees completed the Grow Programme
- 17% Increase in wellbeing
- 20% Increase in social connection
- 22 Trainees progressed to Grow Gardeners
- 67%* Successful EET (employment, education or training) outcome



Dave Cooke,
Programme & Impact
Manager



* Based on trainees reaching 12 months post programme. This figure will change as more trainees reach this milestone.

In 2024, we will run four Grow Programmes; the highest number we have delivered so far. We are continuing to refine and consolidate the curriculum, enabling us to replicate across future sites.

By introducing work readiness measures into the Grow programme we aim to give young people the best chance of employment. Whether that's securing employment opportunities with Grow Gardeners, or guiding them towards clear next steps in their journey, our focus considers the entire journey of young individuals through the programme, from referrals to completion and next steps.

What our Grow Programme trainees said:

"My time with Grow has been incredible. It's allowed me to connect with new people and learn different work skills. It's been an amazing experience."

"I have enjoyed all the sessions being indoors doing teamwork activities the outdoor sessions have been fun too, it has helped me with teamwork the most I struggled before working in groups incase people didn't like me and found it awkward but I found things better working with new people and it was nice."





Grow Gardeners is our paid work placement programme. We employ our trainees on a part-time basis and work in more than 60 client gardens across Sheffield. This programme gives our trainees real life work experience and aims to promote their wellbeing, increase social connection and develop employability skills.

In 2023, we achieved the following:

20 trainees completed the programme across three cohorts

More than **2,000** hours of gardening completed

Regularly maintained more than **60** gardens across Sheffield

During this time, we recorded an average of:

80%* successful EET (employment, education or training) outcome

15% increase in wellbeing

14% increase in social connection

* Based on trainees reaching 12 months post programme. This figure will change as more trainees reach this milestone.



Dave Cooke,
Programme & Impact
Manager



What our Grow Gardeners trainees said:

"I'm more comfortable being myself around people and more confident when talking to people."

"It has taught me to be more responsible and mature."

When asked if they'd recommend the programme to a friend, one trainee said:

"I have and will continue to recommend the programme to friends. I have told them the programme is helpful with getting you used to a work environment and employability skills such as interview practice. It also gets you used to working as part of a team and individually."

When asked how they had changed, another trainee said:

"Know more about gardening now. Been getting up earlier. I try more now. I feel more open to trying new experiences - less worried about them now."

Impact for trainees after programme completion:

100% felt they had benefited from Grow Gardeners

100% reported confidence increase

100% would recommend Grow Gardeners

65% increase in gardening skills





As part of our alumni community work we run monthly Catch Up events. They give past and present Grow trainees the opportunity to connect socially with each other in a safe environment.

In 2023, we held **12 Catch Up events** and welcomed **26 young people**. During this time, we engaged in various activities, including animation, creative art, toasting marshmallows on the firepit, a quiz, and outings to the cinema and a board game café.

It's great to bring our alumni community together and see them connect, try new things, and have fun in a safe and welcoming environment.

We continue to consult our alumni to gather feedback on future activities they would like to explore and areas for improvement.



Sarah Walker,
Alumni Coordinator



Co Production

2023 saw the launch of Grow's Co Production group, named 'Sprouts' by the participating young people.

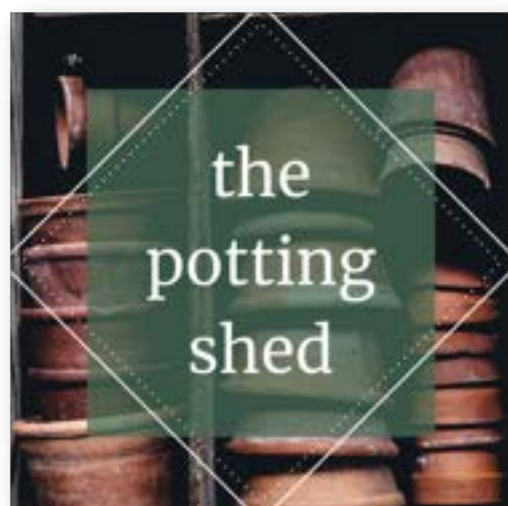
The intention of the group is to provide a space for our past and present trainees to make their voices heard regarding the development of Grow. We want young people and their opinions to be at the heart of everything we do, from being part of our interview panels and training, planning and attending events, to shaping the content of our social media communication, and more!

This project is very much in its early stages but we are excited to see it develop over the next year.



Sarah Walker,
Alumni Coordinator





The Potting Shed is our micro plant nursery based in Sheffield, aiming to sell nature friendly plants while creating paid work experience opportunities for our trainees.. We remain the only supplier of totally peat-free plants in Sheffield!

Plant orders are predominately taken through our website but also run regular pop-up shops and attend local markets.

A big highlight of 2023 has been seeing more trainees than ever gain work experience at our pop-ups across the city. The Potting Shed offers very different work experience for our trainees enabling them to develop customer service skills as well as learning how to nurture plants in more detail.



In 2023:

Over **3,500** plants were sold

£9,000 income generated



Rebecca Koch,
Potting Shed Coordinator

In 2024, we are moving The Potting Shed to Green Estates. We will be growing more plants ourselves and creating the opportunity for our trainees to learn skills such as seed sowing, taking cuttings and dividing plants. This move will enable us to expand the Potting Shed and create more work experience opportunities for our trainees.

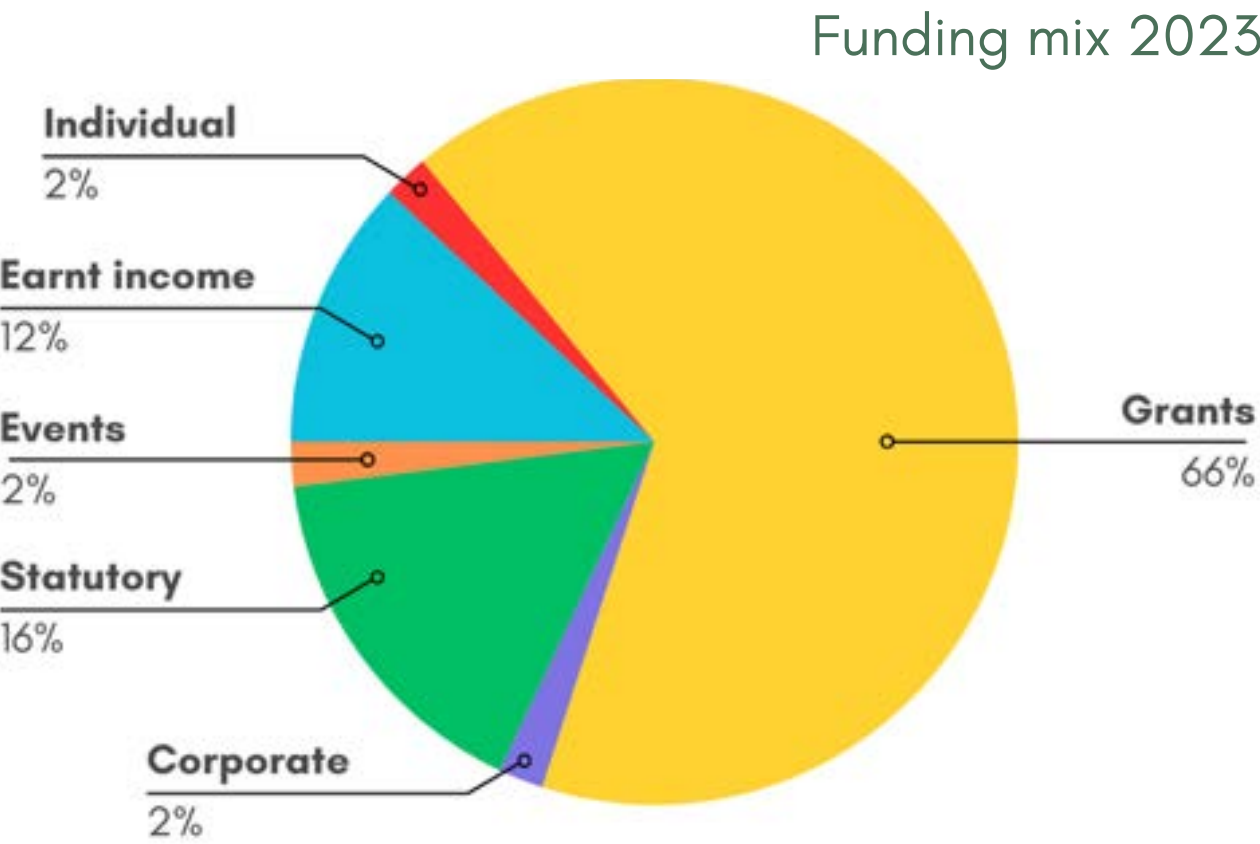


Funding & Finance

2023 saw a significant increase in our turnover. This was mainly due to partnering with significant trusts and foundations enabling us to strategically develop and expand our work.

As our finance report below details, our turnover in 2023 was **£379,628** which is a **£135,404 (55%)** increase from 2022.

The chart to the right shows a brief breakdown of our funding mix in 2023.



We want to extend a huge thanks to the following funders who supported us in 2023:

KFC
Westfield
Tesco Bags of Help
Easy Fundraising
Amazon
Royal Society of St George
Blakemore Foundation
The Rotary Club
Co-op Community Fund

The Well Church
Tesco Community Giving
ESF Positive Change Programme
Violence Reduction Unit
NHS waiting list
Sheffield City Council
South Yorkshire Community Foundation

Continued...

Police crime commissioner
Imagine Foundation
Brelms Trust
Tweed Family Foundation
The Peter Sowerby Foundation
CBTU
Finis Scott
Localgiving - Magic Little Grants
SYCF - Green Prescribing
Groundworks
Zest
Garfield Weston
CLA Charitable Trust

Chimo Trust
Holbeck Charitable Trust
Seven Friends Foundation
The Sheldon Trust
Sheffield Church Burgesses Trust
Swire Trust
29th May 1961
Souter Charitable Trust
Albert Gubay Foundation
Brown Sauce Trust
Thornbridge for Everyone
Sheffield Bluecoat and Mount Pleasant Educational Foundation
Zachary Merton and George Woofindin Convalescent Trust

RHS
Igen Trust
James Neil Trust Fund
Tramlines
Field Fenn Trust
SYCF Cost of Living 2
Kaye Charitable Trust
Hedley Foundation
Northwick Trust
J G Graves
Let's Build Health Grant
Innox foundation

The future

In 2024 we are focussing on our both our sustainability and generating funds to enable us to expand our work into surrounding areas.



People & Culture

2023 was a year of growth for our staff team. We recruited a number of new positions including Programmes and Impact Manager, Grow Programme Coordinator, Potting Shed Coordinator, and Fundraising and Marketing Manager. Through the Groundwork UK New to Nature scheme we also recruited a Fundraising Assistant and Grow Gardeners Assistants. These organisational structure changes bring ownership, increased capacity to each area, and a strengthened approach to our work.

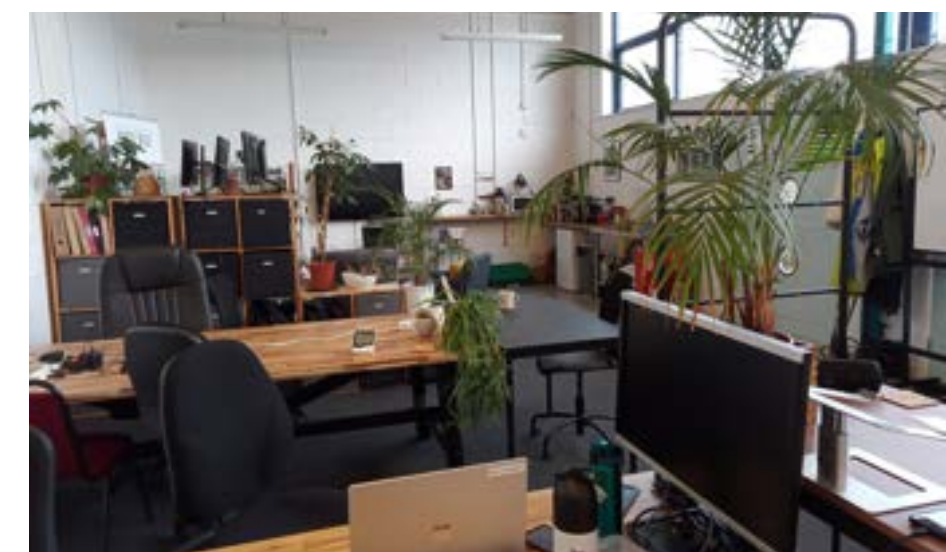
During the year we reviewed and evolved our values and appraisal process. Our [new values](#) feed into our Personal Growth Review appraisal process which has been integrated into line management meetings throughout the year.

We also built on the monthly training schedule from 2022, introducing short monthly wellbeing sessions for staff every month. During these sessions, we took time to engage in activities such as meditation, seated yoga and sound bathing!

The impact of our move to Green Estates has been felt in the culture of our work. More office based staff are now able to join sessions on the Grow Farm, trainees are more visible to the wider staff team and the green environment is having a benefit on everyone's health and wellbeing.



Jon Davies,
Operations and
Communications Manager



Operations

2023 was a big year for Grow operationally, with the biggest change being our move to the Green Estate in The Manor (south east Sheffield). [The Green Estate](#) is a like minded Community Interest Company that runs various enterprises and have turned 42 hectares of derelict land and heritage buildings in The Manor into a beautiful, sustainable landscape. We're now part of that landscape with our office, Grow Farm, coaching space and Grow Gardeners all situated on site. It's been amazing to be based so close to nature and have everything within close proximity.

There are various projects to make the space more suited to our programme needs. We have submitted a planning application to construct a large polytunnel and wooden outdoor teaching space. We've also applied for funding to transform an onsite shipping container into a functional trainee space with indoor seating, a covered outdoor area, picnic benches and tool storage.

We were also busy improving our systems, moving to app based communication for Walk & Talk mentors and mentees, rather than having phones specifically for volunteers. We've developed and improved our impact data dashboards for our programmes. We also took on another van for Grow Gardeners, making us a two van charity!



Jon Davies,
Operations and
Communications Manager



Communications

In 2023 we celebrated our 5th birthday! At our party we shared a [video showcasing the work](#) we've done and lives changed since the beginning, as well as sharing our hopes and dreams for the next five years. We created an interactive display for people to listen to and read stories from our trainees over the years. You can explore this for yourself [here](#) (password Grow2023).

We also released a video about a particularly positive Walk & Talk mentoring relationship. [Charlotte and Jayne](#) shared their experiences from the perspective of a young person and mentor.

In September we benefited from the pro bono support of Fourth Day PR company. Our senior team were invited to a private workshop to develop our key messaging as a charity and work out ways to communicate with the different audiences we interact with. This helped to inform our strategy for 2024.

In July we were featured in a national article in the RHS The Garden magazine. The article not only helped us broaden our reach, but secured various trust funds totalling £185k.

Through increased presence and engagement, our Grow Instagram account also passed 1000 followers towards the end of the year. This was a 'nice marker in the sand', as we continue to broaden our reach and build awareness.



Jon Davies,
Operations and
Communications Manager



The future

In 2024 we are particularly excited about the following things:

Increasing our impact

We will be having a real push on quality. We not only want to work with more young people but we also want to make sure the programmes we run are as good as they possibly can be. We will focus on improving our programme curriculum, developing the support systems that underpin our programmes (IT systems, resources, etc) and also fine tune the way we collect and use data.

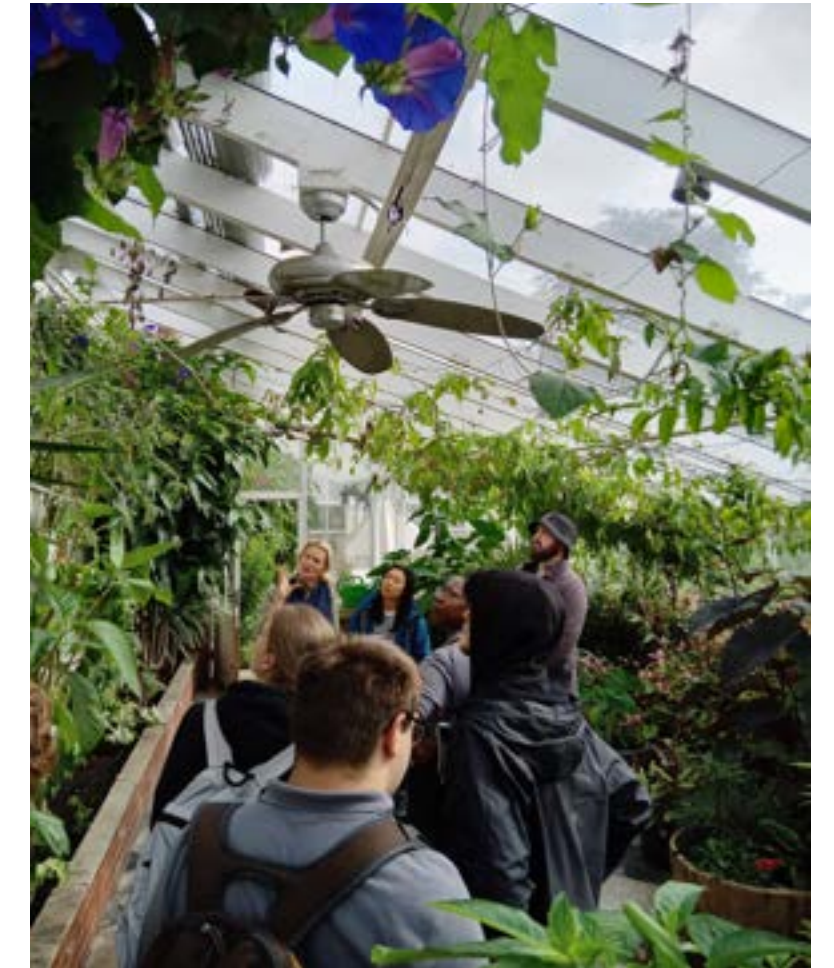
Expansion

In 2024 we are excited to be moving towards piloting our work in a new geographic area. This will enable us to expand our reach and work with more young people. We're working alongside some of our funding partners to explore this next step and can't wait to share our progress!

Sustainability

As we seek to expand, we want to make sure that we are on a secure financial footing. Our fundraising team is working hard to develop long-term funding partnerships that will invest in Grow's work and our expansion journey.

We are incredibly grateful to all of our key partners who have enabled 2023 to be a huge success. We look forward to continuing to share the adventure with you in the year ahead!



Get involved

Whether you're an individual, a funder, or a business there are many ways to get involved with Grow, such as...

- Supporting our programmes and projects with financial contributions
- Volunteering your time to support our work
- Giving a one-off gift or regular donation of any size really adds up and makes a big difference
- Getting involved in our events that take place throughout the year
- Building a meaningful corporate partnership with us
- Fundraising for us with by taking on sporting challenges, pledging your birthday or hosting a Bake Off... the ideas are endless!

Learn more about our work and how to get involved
growuk.org



Independent examiner's report of Grow UK accounts

Accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023

Charity no 1177035

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts for Grow UK

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

I report in respect of my examination of the Trust's accounts carried out under s145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable directions given by the Charity Commission under s145(5)(b) of the Act.

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 effect:

the accounting records were not kept in accordance with s130 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 in 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.

Philip N Burley FCA

13th May 2024

Flatt Lodge Roadhead Carlisle CA6 6PH

Statement of
Financial Activities
for the year ended
31st December 2023

Notes are provided further on in this document

Income	Note	Total	Unrest'd	Restricted	2022
Donations		15015	15015		9585
Grants		273870	132911	140959	160758
Events		9066	9066		6363
Grow Gardeners		40158	40158		43952
Potting Shed		9669	9669		14758
Training					5096
Gift Aid		722	722		1236
Room hire		1905	1905		2476
Training support		29223	29223		
		379628	238669	140959	244244
Expenditure					
Alumni monitoring expenses		1942	1942		
Salaries and pensions	6	276935	139381	137554	196818
Grow Gardeners direct expenses	7	27028	23623	3405	16648
Potting Shed direct expenses	8	15464	15464		12936
Walk and Talk expenses		3134	3134		2786
Cost of events		755	755		1552
Rent		8304	8304		8977
Telephone		965	965		1449
Website and marketing		25225	2525		2045
Office expenses		3523	3523		1955
Travel		1209	1209		386
Training		3223	3223		1497
Staff health scheme		507	507		
Repairs and Renewals					1285
Sundry expenses		2450	2450		797
Bank and finance charges		748	748		722
Depreciation of fixed assets		1573	1573		1552
		350285	209326	140959	251405
Net (deficit)/surplus for the year		29343	29343	0	-9711

Balance Sheet as at 31st December 2023

	Note		2023		2022
Fixed assets	2		2033		3595
Current assets					
Stock	3	300		2350	
Debtors		19675		8869	
Cash at bank		79659		12170	
Cash in hand		126			
		99760		23389	
Current liabilities					
Deferred income		50028		8769	
Creditors and accruals		4453		246	
		54481		9015	
Net current assets			45279		14374
Total assets			47312		17969
Financed by:					
Unrestricted reserves			27216		-2127
Restricted reserves			20096		20096
			47312		17969

Notes are provided on the next page

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023

1. Accounting policies

a. Basis of preparation

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Accounting and Reporting by Charities Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland FRS 102.

b. Tangible fixed assets

Depreciation is provided at rates estimated to write the assets off over their useful lives:

25% Office fixtures and fittings

33% Grow Gardeners tools

20% Potting Shed equipment

50% Website

50% Laptops

c. Direct and overhead expenditure

Expenditure is summarised under functional headings. Motor and leasing expenses are included as direct expenses against the income they refer to. The charity uses two vans under operating leases.

d. Pension costs

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme.

e Stock is valued at the lower cost and net realisable value.

Notes to the accounts for the year ended 31st December 2023

2 Fixed assets

	Office fixtures	Grow Gardeners tools	Potting Shed
Cost 1 Jan 23	1739	1642	3280
Depreciation			
1 Jan 23	658	1096	1312
Charge for year	370	547	656
	1028	1643	1968
Net book value			
1st January 2023	1081	546	1968
31st December 2023	721	0	1312

The website and laptops were fully depreciated at the start of the year under review.

3

	1st January 2022	Incoming resources	Outgoing resources	31st December 2023
Unrestricted reserves	-2177	238669	209326	27166
Restricted reserves	20096	140959	140959	20096

4 Going concern

The trustees are pleased to report that at the balance sheet date unrestricted reserves were again positive. Their policy remains to carry the equivalent of three months costs in unrestricted reserves and hope to make progress to achieve this in 2024. Accordingly the accounts have been prepared under a going concern basis.

Notes to the accounts
for the year ended
31st December 2023

5 Continuing operations

All income and expenditure derive from continuing operations.

6 Salaries and pensions

Grow Gardeners	120253
Potting Shed	11554
Walk and Talk	17824
Grow Programme	35275
Other and admin	92029
	276935

7 Grow Gardeners expenses

Plants	2454
Tools	3406
Vehicle running exs	4079
Vehicle lease costs	8410
Travel	1373
Training	1977
Protective clothing	2123
Other expenses	3206
Salaries	120253
	147281

8 Potting Shed

Plants	10938
Equipment	537
Other	1156
Rent	2833
Salaries	11554
	27018