



Chair's Report AGM 20th March 2024

Introduction

Grow Give Live was formed in February 2022 with myself, Louise Jaggard and Amber Madden as the committee. Our goal is to create a community garden space in Syston, with community, sustainability and wellbeing at the heart of everything we do.

This is our second full year of operating, and we have made some significant progress in our goal of involving the community in growing edible produce. 2024 is set to be even busier as we expand the areas we are growing in, and involve more volunteers in our activities.

Reflection on the period December 2023 to March 2025

Governance

We were successful in our application to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) in December 2023. Our registered charity number is 1206308. This charitable status enables us to expand the fundraising we do, opening up more grant funding opportunities. It will also mean that we will be able to hold contracts or similar in the name of Grow Give Live, should the need arise in the future.

Glebe Way Land

We continue to discuss with Charnwood Borough Council steps required to move towards Grow Give Live leasing the land on Glebe Way. The Council amenities team visited the site on a number of occasions to look at what will be required to bring the site boundaries into good repair, and are looking at completing some tree and hedge maintenance work. The lease terms are a work in progress; this project is a low priority for the council, but is still progressing. In addition, there is still Section 106 funding attached to the land for the council to put towards any work completed on the site.

It is clear that any project to develop this land into a community space would require multiple agency involvement. 2024 has not presented opportunity to progress this, but it remains under consideration.



Station Adopters

The committee members continue to be volunteer Station Adopters. We successfully grew tomatoes, strawberries and a variety of herbs in the planters in 2023 & 2024, and is continuing in 2025.

Community Centre Planters

We took on responsibility for some planters outside the Syston Community Centre. We used three for edible produce, and supported Syston Town Council with planting flower beds nearby. These planters are well placed for community engagement; we enjoyed the conversations we had with passersby, and the opportunity to encourage people to take home the ripe produce. We had some lovely feedback from people living nearby regarding the edible produce in the planters. Moving forward, there is the potential to share responsibility for these planters with another local community group who are looking for opportunities to garden together in the area.

Scotia Press

Scotia Press, a local business based on St. Peter's St in Syston, approached us for help in turning some planters at the front of their property into a community garden space. The planters required a significant amount of work to clear, and we ran several volunteer sessions over the autumn and winter to prepare them for planting. During the 2024 growing season, we were supported by a Duke of Edinburgh volunteer to help with watering and general maintenance of the beds. We were able to share potatoes, carrots and berries from the beds. After a review at the end of the season, we took the decision not to continue with these beds, due to the commitment of the allotment plot.

Allotment

In February 2024, we were successful in obtaining an allotment plot on the Upper Church Street allotments managed by Syston Town Council.

The allotment plot was the focus for our activities through most of 2024. The plot was in a state of disrepair, and has taken a lot of time and effort to return to good condition. We are grateful to Syston Town Council for their help in removing rubbish; approximately 2 tonnes was disposed of at a cost to us of approx. £200.

We purchased and installed a second hand potting shed and have cleared and planted the growing areas. We have been overwhelmed with the generosity of the community and the other allotment holders with the donations of plants and materials to help us on the plot.

We have held regular volunteer sessions every Friday morning at the allotment since May; we have been very fortunate to have welcomed some regular and committed volunteers to help us keep the plot in order and to help with growing the produce.



It's been wonderful to see how beneficial the allotment sessions are to everyone who attends; while we don't have a large number of volunteers yet, we are creating an important support network for those who attend.

Events

We attended the Syston Summer Fayre, and were able to share allotment produce with the community for welcome donations.

We finished our work with the Cubs in 2024, producing a lot of potatoes, tomatoes, strawberries and beans. In 2025, we have begun working with the Beavers, keeping our links with the Syston Scout Group.

Through Beavers, we connected with Alpa, volunteer lead at the Syston branch of Little Miracles, a charity providing support for children and young people with life limiting conditions and additional needs. Alpa is hoping to create opportunities for the families she supports to take part in gardening activities, and we are looking at ways we can work together to achieve that.

We attended a session of the M.A.D.S group, encouraging members to paint pebbles as plant labels for the allotment.

We continued to attend the Syston Mental Health Network meeting, developing our network with other local voluntary organisations and the local healthcare providers.

Through that network, we welcomed Jen Cardinale, Community Engagement Manager at Radfield Homecare, to the allotment. Jen is considering the allotment sessions as an activity for some of the people being looked after by Radfield Homecare. This is a partnership we hope to develop in 2025.

Group Governance

In addition to the CIO status, we have updated our policies, renewed our public liability insurance, and ensured that all Trustees have up to date DBS checks.

Partnerships

Through the Mental Health Network we are building connections with mental health support groups in the area, such as the Neighbourhood Café and the M.A.D.S support group. We are continuing our relationship with Syston Scouts, and have worked with Cubs, Scouts and Beavers. We continue to work with Syston Town Council on planters around the town.

Funding

We have been successful in our application for a Charnwood Borough Council Community Grant, being awarded £1 000 to be paid in two installments. We have also received a Council Member's Grant of £500. All funds will be used to prepare, plant and maintain the planters at the station, community centre and Scotia Press, and the allotment. Thank you to Cllr Sandra Woodward for her support and Member's Grant. We also held a Spring Raffle,



which was very well supported, with funds helping to support our general running costs (insurance, bank fees etc).

We raised money at the Syston Fayre, and received donations from Tesco and the Hungarton Gardening Club. Members of the Hungarton Gardening Club are keen to support us, and we hope to keep in touch with them over 2025.

Looking ahead

Glebe Way Land

We need to look at working in partnership with other organisations to move this forward. Currently, this is on hold.

Fundraising

We will continue to look for and apply for appropriate funding to support the current activity. Our CIO status will open up more funding opportunities.

Partnerships

We want to continue to build and develop partnerships with other groups and organisations who will be able to make use of the community garden, either as service users or as volunteers. The benefits of nature connectivity are far reaching, and impact all members of the community; our focus initially is on children and young people, those who are socially isolated, and those who may be experiencing mental health difficulties. We will continue to work with Syston Town Council, Charnwood Borough Council and the Mental Health Networking group to ensure we are meeting the needs of the local community through the community garden.

Conclusion

We want to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has supported Grow Give Live over 15 months; Syston Town Council, Charnwood Borough Council, Syston Town News, the Pharmacie Arms, Scotia Press, and all the members of the community who have supported us in any way. We are excited for the future, and look forward to building this inclusive, nurturing natural space together.

Hannah Coombe, Chair of Trustees

December 2025



Financial Report Dec 2023 – March 2025

Summary of Income

Category	Income
Charnwood Borough Council Community Grant	£1000.00
Members Grant – Sandra Woodward	£500.00
Donations	£177.00
Fundraising (raffles)	£925.00
Total	£2602.00

Summary of expenditure

Item	Expenditure
Publicity hi vis jackets, hoodies, t-shirts, long banner, flyers, plate stands, xmas tree	£388.32
Administration Public Liability 2024 2025 and Trustees Insurance	£264.04
Allotment 2024 and 2025 fee, Biffa, potting shed, equipment, H&S	£1014.82
Growing across all locations compost, plants	£229.09
Events: Spring Raffle gambling licence 2024 and 2025, ticket printing	£100.91
Events: Syston Summer Fayre plants for planter, stall hire 2024 and 2025, cyanotypes	£115.33
Events: other Delish, Garden Cafes, Mental Health Café, gazebo	£104.85
Miscellaneous walking boots, tap key	£77.19
Bank fees £5 p/m admin fee x 15 months	£75.00
Total	£2352.35