

## Kairos Enterprises (Ark Community Gardens)

### Trustees Annual Report Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025

As we reflect back over the last financial year at the Ark, our site seems to get busier month by month and now plays a very significant part in the lives of many people within our community and further afield. Whilst it is lovely to observe the positive impact that the Ark is having in so many people's lives, the busyness also brings many challenges from a practical perspective. We try to maintain a professionalism in how we run the day to day activities and commercial aspects, yet making sure that we always keep our mission **"To demonstrate the love of God to our community, following the example of Jesus"** as the main thing that drives what we do. When expanding our retail activities, we viewed this initially as a means to help fund the main activities on the site but, as time went by, we realised that these retail functions have become a vital part in enabling us to show God's love to our community – bringing a whole new group of people through our gates, with so many commenting on the very special atmosphere that exists at the Ark. Many customers have experienced a sharing of God's love and support during very difficult times in their lives.

The last year has seen a significant expansion in our team of volunteers and we truly have an ever increasing Ark family, who genuinely care and support each other whilst doing fantastic work in the various areas of the site – growing, harvesting, work shop activities, repairs & maintenance, farm shop & coffee shop. We simply could not exist if it were not for this fantastic team of willing workers.

On the staff front, we had a few new additions to our shop and coffee shop teams, which reflects the greatly increased busyness of both retail functions. Could we thank all our staff and volunteers for the manner in which they look after customers coming onto the site. The feedback we receive from our customers on a very regular basis relates to how much they were touched by the care and friendship shown by those who served them. We also have teams of volunteers who are not customer facing but whose dedication and hard work feeds into the overall experience of visitors to our site. We are finding more and more customers who are commenting on how lovely it is to be able to purchase locally grown organic vegetables.

On the financial front, the past year has again seen a very significant increase in turnover, both on the income side and in outgoings. The expansion of our retail activities has brought significantly more people through our gates which, in turn, has resulted in many of those people seeing the benefits of the Ark for themselves or family members. Whilst so much of our work can be carried out by volunteers, there are certain roles associated with caring for individuals with special needs which require additional staff resources. A walk around our site will reveal a significant development of our customer facilities, improvements in volunteer facilities, expansion of our animal family and, in more recent times, development of new kitchen and office facilities. As we write this report we only have access to initial draft financial accounts, but we expect that, financially, we will be showing a net deficit of approx. £15,000. This will be the third year in a row that we will be showing a deficit, which

is an area for concern. However, this does need to be balanced against the fact that this has been over a period of rapid expansion of the organisation and facilities, which inevitably has been a major drain on our finances. On a much more positive note, as we look at our 2025/2026 financial projections, we anticipate that we will return to a fairly health surplus. This has been achieved by a combination of increased turnover in shop and coffee shop, increased production levels of vegetables and a significant increase in support from a number of Christian funders, who have recognised the significant impact that the Ark is having in the lives of individuals and in God's outreach to our community.

Just some of the highlights for the year are as follows:

- Monthly Men's Social Night set up.
- Ladies Craft classes continue to be very well attended.
- Monthly Men's Breakfasts continue.
- Bible Study groups x2 meeting weekly/fortnightly.
- Sponsored Walk to raise funds.
- Very successful Christmas Twilight Market.
- Harvest boxes provided to the local churches for their harvest services.
- Training session for Food Safety and Health & Safety.
- Fortnightly sessions held for Knockevin Special School pupils.
- 1to1 sessions introduced to provide additional support for those struggling with issues in their lives.
- Celebrated our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a big BBQ night.
- Ark Tots sessions for kids from the local nursery.
- Throughout the year so many people have testified to the massive impact that the Ark family have made in their life or the life of a loved one.

Many thanks from the Board to our fantastic team of staff and volunteers for another very positive year at the Ark. Do not under estimate the impact that you are having in our community and bringing peace to troubled lives. A special word of thanks to all those who helped, both practically and financially, in replacing the many polytunnels that were damaged during Storm Eowyn.

**"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality"**

**Romans Ch12 Vs 12&13**

Board of Directors/Trustees Kairos Enterprises