Triangle Community Garden

Created and cultivated by people of all ages and abilities at Ransom's Rec Hitchin, Herts

Annual Review 2023-24

Sunday Garden Club

Our Growing Ability monthly stall

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Welcome to our Annual Review for 2023-24

After the massive changes we underwent in 2022-23, this year has been a year of review, consolidation, and outreach. During her time with us, Project Manager Alice Woodward overhauled our internal processes and helped our new staff team secure an impressive 'Good' in last year's Provider Assessment Market Management Solution (PAMMS) inspection. Business Development / Outreach lead Ed Harkness revamped our New Shoots project, initiated our Branching Out Easter Scheme and built relationships with many referrers and funders. Current Project Manager Julie Zirngast has taken these gains and run with them, moving the charity forward on all fronts, and creating many new opportunities. None of which would be possible without our outstanding staff and volunteer team.

Our vision is for **a community where people feel happier and more fulfilled through a connection with gardening and the natural world.**

Our aim is to help people of all ages and abilities to **'connect, grow enjoy!'**, through gardening and contact with the natural world. We do this through:

- Supporting physical and mental health using social and therapeutic horticulture, arts and crafts, cooking and a focus on healthy living
- Providing volunteering opportunities,
- Running skills workshops and
- Holding community events.

We're active in three areas within Ransom's Rec (near Hitchin station): the allotments, our Community Nature Garden and our riverside Forest Garden. The areas vary in character and each has different challenges and rewards. All three sites continue to thrive under the loving care of our three green-care projects: Garden Club, New Shoots and Growing Ability.

Growing Ability works long-term with adults with additional needs such as learning disabilities, autism, and severe or enduring mental illness. The project focuses on the goals, abilities and support needs of each individual, and using horticulture, food growing and engagement in nature to increase the health, wellbeing, self-esteem and self-confidence of our 'gardeners'.

New Shoots is a 6-week project for people with stress, anxiety or depression. It uses the five ways to wellbeing to bring about improved health and wellbeing in a nature-based setting. Many New Shoots participants join our **Friday Garden Club** to nurture our community spaces and help at our events.

The projects we introduced last year - **Family Forest School**, **Triangle Tribe** and **Sunday Garden Club** – continue to thrive. We have secured ongoing funding for the first two and will run the third from our own funds in 2025, when we're planning several new initiatives as you'll find out on page 10.

Vicky Wyer, Chair of Trustees

Find out more at www.trianglegarden.org

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For more information please email info@trianglegarden.org

Growing Ability

Pedal-powered smoothies!

Nettle soup made at GA

Growing Ability welcomes young people transitioning from school or college

Please contact us for details:
info@trianglegarden.org

Growing Ability is our social therapeutic horticulture project for people with additional needs, including learning disabilities, autism, brain injury and severe or enduring mental illness.

Through supported learning and meaningful activities in the community Growing Ability helps people grow in confidence and self-worth, increase their independence, and develop and reinforce key skills.

Those who attend gain valuable training and experience not only in horticulture, gardening and food growing. They also prepare, cook and share the food they've grown among the groups.

Our Growing Ability 'gardeners' also regularly take part in activities such as nature conservation, mindful exercise, making art and crafts, selling produce and taking orders/making refreshments. This year they've used their skills to pot up succulents and make hanging baskets and wooden herb troughs to sell at our monthly stalls within Thursday sessions.

At Growing Ability we welcome new people including those transitioning from school or college.

We provide a safe, caring and stimulating environment where sessions are structured in a person-centred way. This allows us to focus on the goals that each individual wants to achieve, while also incorporating key training, reflection and life skills experience.

The project is primarily based at our allotments but also incorporates the Pavilion, Triangle Garden, Forest Garden and Ransom's Recreation Ground. Regular trips to gardens of interest are an important part of the Growing Ability calendar.

Sessions are 2.5 hours long and there is a charge to attend (from £30 per session, depending on support need). Individuals pay via Direct Payments, their PIP or ISF or have the placement commissioned by Herts County Council, while some are self-funded. Sessions run Tuesday-Thursday with a capacity of 6-8 gardeners per session. Each session is run by two experienced care professionals, and at least one trained volunteer.

Running a successful vegetable plot requires planning and organisational skills, decision making, fine-motor skills and the application of literacy and numeracy. Growing food involves our gardeners in shared goals and responsibilities, like watering each other's plots, as well as creativity, experimentation and resilience.

Our staff and volunteers understand the reciprocal benefits of working with nature: planting and nurturing a seed starts a process of growth in a mutually beneficial relationship. The rewards are shared and enjoyed, and the challenges borne and overcome together.

Growing Ability taps into the healing and restorative powers of nature to embed a culture of wellbeing, personal growth and connection.

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Growing Ability continued

In September 2023 there were 15 individuals attending Growing Ability, down from 20 the previous year. Several gardeners had left to join local free-to-attend horticulture projects. We saw this progression as a testament to the power of Growing Ability in promoting confidence and resilience in all those who attend. But without a steady stream of new gardeners coming on board, this success could be the undoing of us.

We know there is a local need for Growing Ability which deserves to be widely known as a welcoming and transformational place for young adults transitioning from school or college into the wider world. I'm pleased that this is now happening.

Through the combined efforts of my predecessor Alice Woodward, our Business Development / Outreach Lead Ed Harkness myself and our brilliant staff team, we have been able to share the excellent work happening at Growing Ability with the wider professional world of social care, both in Herts and across the border in Bedfordshire.

Our Growing Ability video has helped enormously, and we have had visits from many local care commissioners and user groups, including Herts Adult Commissioning Service for Learning Disabilities, the local Herts Partnership NHS Foundation Trust Mental Health team, and Herts Viewpoint, as well as Natural England, and local MPs Alistair Strathern and Bim Afolami.

I joined the organisation at a pivotal time. During her tenure as Project Manager, Alice Woodward reviewed and streamlined our processes in close collaboration with our excellent staff team. In September 2023 we successfully navigated a PAMMS inspection (the equivalent of a CQC inspection for non-residential services) and achieved well-deserved **GOOD**, an overall improvement on 2022.

I'd like to congratulate our staff and volunteers for the professionalism, care and dedication of their work, and thank our gardeners and their parents and carers for their positive feedback, independently given.

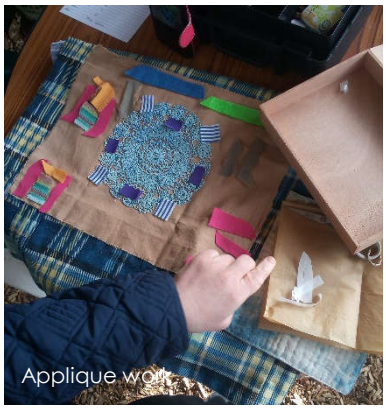
This year, our gardeners at Growing Ability have enjoyed many trips including to Buzzworks Bee Garden, Hitchin Garden Centre and Cambridge Botanical Gardens. They've also taken part in a range of activities including mosaic making, yoga, wassailing, willow weaving, fabric dyeing, applique, making soups, salads and desserts, as well as several enterprise projects such as hanging baskets, potted succulents, herb planters, and pedal-powered smoothies on our new smoothie bike!

I'm delighted to say that all our outreach work is paying off and we have had **five new gardeners** join the project since Easter, three during this review period. We're very grateful to Westland and Emmaus for donations in kind, to all the companies, trusts and individuals who have supported the project (see page 9), and to our Platinum Sponsors McCarthy Stone and The Letting Quarter.

Julie Zirngast, Project Manager

Woodwork at Growing Ability

Willow fish made by a gardener


Applique work

196 sessions

17 individuals

490 volunteer hrs

3 joiners, 1 leaver

4 off site trips

6 GA stalls

Find out more at www.trianglegarden.org

Branching Out

3 full-day sessions

11 attendees

Statistically significant improvement in wellbeing

Strong links to partner organisations in Beds

A Branching Out participant

New Shoots at CU Botanic Gdns

New Shoots

6 half-day sessions

6 attendees

Statistically significant improvement in wellbeing

Branching Out - Easter 2024

Thanks to funding from the Bedfordshire Charitable Trust, we were able to run a successful and fully subscribed Easter holiday scheme for Bedfordshire residents. Branching Out took place from 9th-11th April and had 11 attendees in total (6 per day). It included a variety of nature-based activities and each session was run by two members of TCG staff plus volunteers and support workers.

We carried out monitoring using the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS) to generate paired data to monitor and evaluate the project's effect on participants' mental wellbeing.

On average, wellbeing scores increased by a statistically significant 6 point score, indicating the scheme's effectiveness as a mental wellbeing intervention.

In addition to this we had 3 referrals to our Growing Ability project from those who attended.

This suggests that the scheme is replicable in future to feed into our core offer of learning disability and mental health support through social and therapeutic horticulture.

The funding from Bedfordshire Charitable Trust also allowed us to deliver significant outreach to schools, colleges and community organisations in Bedfordshire. We have created strong links with these partner organisations and hope to continue working with them in future to generate referrals to future holiday schemes as well as our core services.

Ed Harkness, Outreach Coordinator

New Shoots - September 2023

New Shoots uses community gardening to reduce social isolation and promote mental wellbeing.

The project was set up to respond to the high levels anxiety, stress and depression brought on by the pandemic and exacerbated by the cost of living crisis. Initially we ran it as a 15 week block, but in September 2023 we experimented with a more structured programme of **six weeks**, each session based around one of the **five ways to wellbeing**:

- Being physical
- Connecting with people
- Giving to others
- Learning new skills
- Experiencing mindfulness

As before, the block culminated in a trip to Cambridge Botanic Gardens with our Friday Garden Club and an offer to continue volunteering with one of our weekly or monthly Garden Clubs.

The WEMWBS (Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scores) at the beginning and end of each block, showed a statistically significant improvement in wellbeing taken as a median across the group.

Feedback from the 6 week cohort showed the highest improvement in the following areas:

- **Feeling useful**
- **Feeling relaxed**
- **Feeling closer to other people**
- **Feeling interested in new things**

One September participant now volunteers with Sunday Garden Club.

We have been struggling to get sufficient referrals to run further blocks of New Shoots in 2024 but we are determined to persevere and run it in future years.

Ed Harkness, Outreach Coordinator

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Family Forest School and Triangle Tribe

This is our second year of providing Forest School opportunities at the Triangle Garden, in collaboration with **Tanya Dickson at Culturewood CiC**, and we're delighted to report that all sessions have been pretty much fully booked across the year. Feedback has been excellent.

Our provision covers a range of age groups with Family Forest School activities catering for families with children aged 3-12, and Triangle Tribe tailored to families with older children aged 12-16, with more of a bushcraft focus.

Triangle Tribe:

Over the last year, we've provided a range of engaging activities including:

- Knife Skills: Crafting spoons using basic carving techniques.
- Pewter Work: Designing moulds and smelting pewter over the campfire.
- Survival Skills: Covering basic survival techniques.
- Bat Walk & Talk: Exploring the natural world
- International Campfire Cooking: Preparing and enjoying foods from different cultures over the campfire.
- Crafting with Natural Resources: For example, making blowpipes from elder branches or crafting stick star decorations.
- Ancient Fire-Making Techniques: Exploring traditional methods of creating fire.
- Mindful Moments: Many activities integrate mindfulness and wellbeing, with some sessions including simple breathing exercises and other mindful techniques.

Intended outcomes are to build individual and community resilience, strengthen family bonds, tackle isolation, create new networks, nurture interests outside the digital world, foster environmental awareness, reduce anxiety and encourage safe exploration of risk boundaries. Here's a quote from one of our Triangle Tribe parents:

'I found the sessions of Triangle Tribe very beneficial for my daughter … She got to learn new skills in a different environment, all within a friendly situation so it felt like fun. I could see that she was less stressed after these sessions and always looked forward to the next … As well as helping my daughter, I also found these sessions a good relaxing end to the week. Meeting other parents is an added bonus for me, and I love learning some outdoor skills.'

Family Forest School sessions have a slightly different structure, offering a more open-ended approach. Each session provides access to a range of hand tools and natural resources, allowing children to explore and create freely.

Popular activities include:

- Crafting items like wands, swords, blowpipes, pea shooters, bows and arrows, fishing rods, and more, by peeling sticks and using tools.
- Enjoying physical activities such as swinging in hammocks, using tree swings, or trying out the slackline.
- Gathering around the campfire to toast marshmallows, enjoy hot chocolate, and reflect on the session together

This approach allows children to revisit and repeat favourite activities, fostering a sense of familiarity and mastery while encouraging creativity and play.

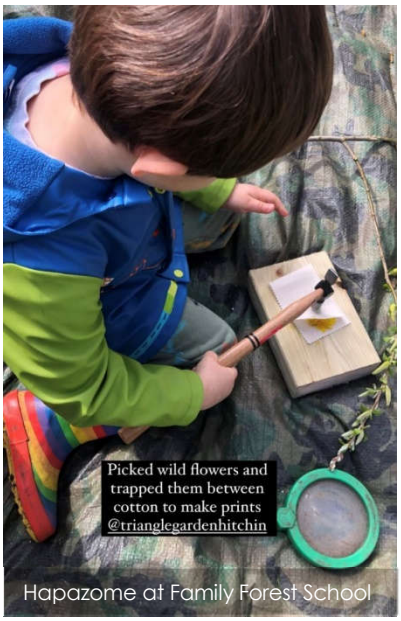
Family Forest School meets monthly, every fourth Sunday morning 11am-12.30 plus half-terms and holidays. **Triangle Tribe** meets every third Friday evening 6.30-8.30pm. Sessions need to be booked in advance as places are limited. Both initiatives are neurodivergent-friendly.

We're very grateful to Hitchin Youth Trust and North Herts Council's Community Fund for part-funding the continuation of Family Forest School and Triangle Tribe, respectively, from July 2024 to July 2025.

Tanya Dickson, Culturewood CiC
Vicky Wyer, Triangle Garden

10 Triangle Tribe sessions
55 attendees including
30 young people

13 Family Forest School sessions
232 attendees including
127 children



Hapazome at Family Forest School

Whittling tools at Triangle Tribe

To book your place at Family Forest School or Triangle Tribe please visit trianglegarden.org/events

Find out more at www.trianglegarden.org

Our Garden Clubs

Hedge cutting at Sunday GC

Friday Garden Club's polytunnel

To find out more about joining Friday Garden Club please contact Steve Granger via steve@trianglegarden.org

To book your free place at Sunday Garden Club visit trianglegarden.org/events

Friday Garden Club meets every Friday morning from 10am for some gentle guided social gardening. It is open to anyone, and its purpose is to maintain and develop the Triangle Garden and Forest Garden for the benefit of people and nature. Members enjoy learning new gardening skills, meeting new friends and being active in the fresh air, while making a positive contribution to the community and biodiversity. There are also regular trips and outings, and a shared allotment.

A very important part of the Garden Club experience is the cuppa, cake and chat at the end of each session! Thanks go to Lesley for her homemade cakes at coffee time, often using produce from our sites.

Friday Garden Club has been running for **ten years** now, since June 2014, when I joined the organisation to coordinate, plan and run what had previously been ad hoc volunteer-run gardening sessions.

This year has seen another increase in volunteers with **an average of 10 attending each session**. Many of our volunteers have been attending for a number of years, and new members are always welcome. Amongst those volunteers is Chris, who was there in the early days and remains an integral part of the group, producing plants to sell and the ever popular jams and chutneys we sell at our community events and at our Hitchin Farmers Market plant stall in May.

Overall Friday Garden Club volunteers have this year put in **788 hours of time** on the gardens, and also provide invaluable help at our Apple Day and Summer Fete.

We have had trips this year, as we often do, to Cambridge Botanic Garden and to Walworth Community Garden in London.

Unfortunately the Triangle Garden suffered some fire damage over the summer, but it was mainly confined to the paved areas and the trees overhanging the compost bins which need management anyway. Most of the planting is now well established and we added more bulbs and perennials over the year to boost biodiversity. The Forest Garden continues to mature and provides a range of unusual plants to harvest. Our volunteers receive many positive comments about the garden from dog walkers and visitors while we are working there.

Sunday Garden Club has seen **72 volunteers** attending the monthly sessions, of whom **28 were children**. Tasks have included bulb planting, wildflower planting and fruit tree pruning. The gardens also hosted two **Beaver groups** this year who had the chance to learn about and create insect habitats, do bug hunts and take root cuttings.

Groundwork UK ran a **GOGA session** (Go Outside Get Active) at the garden for people living with substance addiction towards the end of last year, and those who attended learnt how to take mint root cuttings and use hedge trimmers to trim the hedge at the front of the community garden. They also planted a large number of Camassia bulbs in the meadow areas in front of the community and forest gardens.

Local building services company **Crane** continue their volunteering visits to us. They have carried out numerous tasks including preparing our new allotment 2B and installing rainwater harvesting on the polytunnel on 2A. We have some regular volunteers from Crane and new faces join us when they can. We were delighted to be invited to attend Crane's anniversary barbecue event in July this year.

In May **Garden Committee** and the trustees held a joint strategy morning, the outcomes of which have formed the basis of our new programme for 2024-25.

Steve Granger, Garden Club Leader

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Community Events and Workshops

Each year we put on a number of workshops and community events to engage and connect people with the natural world, spread the word about what we do and raise funds for our work.

In 2023 we held our annual **Summer Fete** in September as a bit of an experiment, having previously held it in high summer. The timing gave us more time to prepare and meant we weren't competing with so many other local events. We also hoped it would protect us from summer heatwave conditions although that year it didn't prove to be the case!

We expanded the event to include more stalls, activities and entertainments, headlined by Garden City Samba and Imajica Theatre. The aim was to raise awareness of the community garden and our work, and showcase our local collaborators like jewellery tutor Tuuli Parker, dyeplant experts Nature's Rainbow, and Tai Chi practitioner Three Treasures Chris. It was a really well-attended day, raised £550 and sealed the September timing for 2024!

In October 2023 we held our 19th **Apple Day** in Hitchin town centre. A celebration of English apples, local food in season and sustainability, the event was a great success with several new stalls including The Wildlife Trusts, Culturewood and Wymondley Community Garden. The event was supported by a £200 grant from Cllr Hoskins' Locality fund to cover the costs of hiring the square.

May 2024 was a busy month for events with an outreach stall at Plastic Free Hitchin's **Eco-Fair** followed by a very successful **plant stall at Hitchin Farmers' Market** run by Friday Garden Club, which made a whopping £530. Lastly the Millstream pub hosted a **Quiz Night** on our behalf, raising £430 and providing a lovely fun social for us all. We're very grateful to the Millstream for their support.

We also held a **Talk on Dickens** and his local connections at the garden - the first of many garden-based events perhaps?

In 2024 we introduced a number of **new workshops** to our calendar, building on the skills of our staff and volunteer team and collaborating with some great external tutors.

Two of our Garden Club volunteers ran a successful **Festive Wreath Workshop** in December 2023 and Steve Granger used his extensive expertise to run two very well-received **Seasonal Photography Workshops** for us, as well as a well-attended **Vegetable Growing Workshop**.

Local artist Yoshie Allen held three nature-based **Fabric Collage Art Workshops** at the Pavilion in collaboration with us, which were a lovely addition to our events calendar and very popular.

We ran an Easter holiday **Mini-beast Safari** but the wet spring and late onset of warm weather meant the insect count was slightly disappointing. Hopefully our pond works will be finished by next spring we'll be able to reinstate pond-dipping at Easter and move the bug hunt to June.

And we invited Hitchin's Dr Bike (aka Mark Nash) to run a couple of **Cycle Repair Workshops** from the Pavilion this summer to help promote sustainable travel.

Our well-established **Seasonal Foraging Walks** around Ransom's Rec and Oughtonhead Common, led by The Hitchin Forager (Jane Simmons), have had a steady flow of bookings as always, and this year Jane introduced a new walk at Purwell Meadows.

As always feedback for our workshops has been excellent, thanks to our fantastic tutors. Thanks to all who helped at our events and of course to our hardworking band of events organisers:

Gemma, Mel, Vicky, Gill, Karenanne & Isabelle

Mini-beast Safari

Vicky Gill & Gemma at Apple Day

1 Festive Wreath Workshop - 12 attendees;
1 Minibeast Safari - 15 people (8 children);
5 Foraging Walks - 70 attendees;
3 Collage Art Workshops - 26 attendees;
2 Photography Workshops - 16 attendees;
2 Cycle Repair Workshops - 10 attendees;
1 Veg Growing Workshop -7 attendees.

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Julie (right) at the Crane BBQ

Carole, Liz and Karenanne

Susan Dye at our allotment

Indigo-dyeing at Growing Ability

People

This year we've welcomed a number of new people to the Triangle Garden team and said farewell to some familiar faces over the year. Project Manager Alice Woodward left in April as the commute by train from her houseboat on the Grand Union canal was proving too much, and Support Worker Karenanne Hay moved on as her own business has flourished. Our Outreach Coordinator Ed Harkness qualified as a Psychotherapist and left in June to pursue his new career.

Several new staff members and trustees joined us over the last year:

- **Julie Zirngast** joined us in April as Project Manager and has been an absolute powerhouse. We'll be gutted when she moves away in January
- **Helen Fitch-Hunter** joined us in September, as GA 1:1 support worker
- **Isabelle Robinson and Kate Hughes** joined as trustees over the winter, with expertise in events and fundraising

Growing Ability volunteers Lesley Brown and Carole Knight stepped back from supporting our sessions since 2023. We owe huge thanks to them and to current volunteers Sue and Yolanda for their hard work and dedication to Growing Ability. We'd also like to thank Lou Green and Clare Chambers for their help with cover at our GA sessions this year.

We also said farewell to webmaster Robin Clarke who has looked after our website for many many years. We're so grateful for all the time and effort that longstanding volunteers like Robin, Carole and Lesley have given. It is invaluable.

As always we say a big thank you to our wonderful Garden Club volunteers who help to keep our sites so biodiverse and beautiful, to our Growing Ability gardeners and their supportive parents and carers, our events team, our trustees, our accounts volunteer, and all our collaborators, supporters and funders.

Pavilion hires and Nature's Rainbow

It's great to see our Pavilion continuing to host creative workshops such as **Tuuli Parker's** glass fusion and silver clay jewellery classes, and **Kim Raymont's** MakeSpace art workshops. This year **Herts Wildlife Trust** also held a creative nature writing workshop from the pavilion run by Guardian Country Diary writer **Nic Wilson**.

These hires provide welcome income to help fund our Garden Clubs and make good use of our little community facility.

Nature's Rainbow have also been regular hirers of the pavilion and our outdoor classroom space on the allotment. As well as running their internationally acclaimed natural dye workshops and dye garden tutorials, Susan Dye and Ashley Walker have been generously giving their time to working with our Growing Ability and Garden Club groups. Susan introduced fabric dyeing, sewing and applique to our GA sessions and ran a number of special workshops for Friday Garden Club including botanical printing, mordanting and natural dyeing of old sheets to make 25th anniversary bunting for next year. We were all very saddened to learn of her recent death after a short illness, and will cherish our memories of her fathomless patience and generosity.

In addition Chris Nutley of **Three Treasures Tai Chi** now runs a weekly outdoor Tai Chi class at the Rec. every Friday 11.15am-12.15. This class is slowly building a following, bringing grace, power and positivity to the park. Chris is also running evening tai chi classes in the park when the evenings are light, and from our allotment shelter in the winter months. Why not give it a try? Beginners welcome!

Find out more at www.trianglegarden.org

Treasurer's Report

For the first time in many years, the financial year to 31 August 2024 saw TCG make a deficit (£6,540) which has therefore reduced the charity's reserves. For a number of reasons, a deficit had been budgeted at the start of the year and so whilst the result is not unexpected, the size of the final deficit is much less than expected. This is in large part due to an increase in donations, fundraising surpluses and grants that we received during the year (some of which are for projects programmed for 2024-25).

We remain very aware of the hard truth that without other sources of income, the charity would certainly have made a larger deficit if it had to solely rely on fees from clients. That said, attendance at Growing Ability has improved during the year such that we are almost at capacity for the existing sessions and hope to begin new sessions if demand continues to grow.

A key reason for the budgeted deficit was the salary for our Business Development Manager, Ed Harkness, who left us this summer after laying the groundwork for a number of future income opportunities. The outreach part of his role has been taken on by our new Project Manager.

In 2024, TCG's Summer Fete was again held in September, meaning it falls outside this financial reporting period so only the 2023 surplus is reflected in these accounts. The Fete continues to be a key event for TCG both in terms of fundraising but also bringing the local community together and showcasing the charity's work. Other events - Apple Day (in October 2023), our Farmers Market plant stall and our Foraging Walks - did very well too and a Pub Quiz at The Millstream, plus several new workshops, contributed to the ever-growing TCG events calendar last year.

We remain very grateful to those who continue to support our work through attending our events, buying our produce, or making donations. In this financial period this includes very kind donations from Crane BSU, New England Biolabs, The Hadley Trust, Hitchin Tilehouse Rotary Club, St Marks Church, various Hitchin cubs and beavers, Hitchin Nature Network members and private individuals via our People's Fundraising website. We're also grateful for the grants awarded to us by Hitchin Youth Trust, North Herts Council (NHC) Community Fund and Cllr Keith Hoskins. This also shows the hard work undertaken by the team in submitting robust and convincing grant applications – their efforts this year have yet again been vital. We would also like to thank McCarthy Stone (2023-24) and The Letting Quarter (September 2024 onwards) for their Platinum Sponsorship.

Along with our other income sources, the pavilion continues to be an important generator of funds – bringing in fees from use by local community groups and tutors, and providing facilities for TCG activities and projects.

Income from client fees has shown a modest increase during the year. However under the fee structure introduced by Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) for community social care provision, the level of this income is precarious going forward, as the new rates for commissioned community opportunities services represent a significant reduction on those paid pre-2021.

Abbreviated accounts are included with this report. The full accounts in the format required by the Charities Commission are available on our website.

Andrew Green, Treasurer

Hitchin Community Gardens Statement of Financial Activities for the year ended 31st August 2024	**TCG Funds**	**Restricted Funds**	**Specified unrestricted Funds**	**Total**	Last Year 22/23
Income from:					
Charitable Activities	£4,652	£37,754	£0	£42,406	£36,953
Donations and Legacies	£5,400	£2,679	£0	£8,079	£12,992
Grants	£668	£3,484	£0	£4,152	£8,966
Fundraising	£8,977	£642	£0	£9,619	£7,311
Investment Income	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Other Income	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Total	£19,696	£44,560	£0	£64,256	£66,222
Expenditure on:					
Charitable Expenditure	£15,184	£51,792	£519	£67,494	£58,122
Raising Funds	£2,862	£439	£0	£3,302	£6,074
Total	£18,046	£52,231	£519	£70,796	£64,196
Net Income	**£1,650**	**-£7,671**	**-£519**	**-£6,540**	**£2,026**
Transfer between Funds	£5,488	£0	-£5,488	£0	£0
Net Movement in Funds	£7,138	-£7,671	-£6,007	-£6,540	£2,026
Total funds Brought Forward	£29,977	£16,538	£5,905	£52,420	£50,394
Total Funds Carried Forward	**£37,115**	**£8,867**	**-£102**	**£45,880**	**£52,420**

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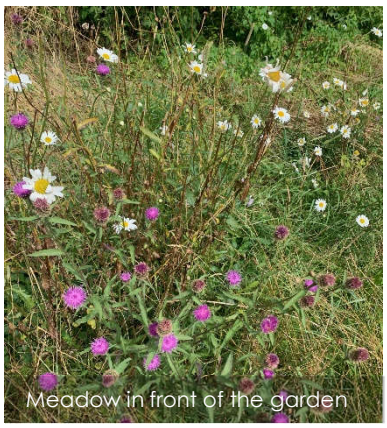
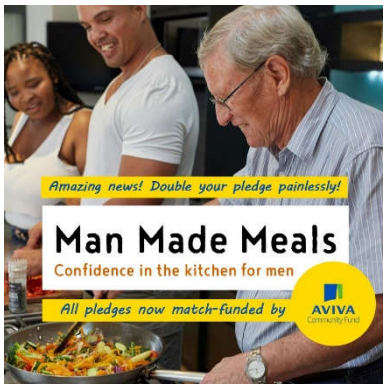
Future plans


Meadow in front of the garden

Paths to be fully accessible

Planting for people and nature



Next year is our **25th anniversary year** and we want to mark the occasion with some lasting improvements to the Rec, and our community spaces, for the benefit of people and nature.

Last year's goal of bolstering our financial stability and raising our profile locally, has been very successful and we are now looking to realise some of the outcomes of our **May Strategy morning** and initiate collaborations with local organisations that have mutual goals.

Our plans for the Rec will be based around the views of our community and to that end we have **two surveys** running at present, a general park survey and a café-specific one (that emerged out of the park survey). These will feed into our strategy for the Rec and we have recently secured Levelling Up funding through North Herts Council (NHC) for the following improvements:

- A biodiversity boost to the Triangle Garden – tree management to let more light in, repair of our central raised beds and new pollinator-friendly planting. The pond refurbishment work currently being done by North Herts Council will also enhance the garden's biodiversity.
- Resurfacing of the communal spaces at our allotments to facilitate better wheelchair and visually impaired access plus an enclosed timber shelter on plot 2B for small groups work
- Refurbishments to Ransoms Pavilion to enable cookery lessons to take place

Which leads us nicely on to our new project, **Man Made Meals,** which will offer confidence in the kitchen for men, and aims to build a community of men who can support each other through learning to cook together. We have a **Crowdfunder** for the project running until the beginning of December and hope to raise £3000+ for kitchen equipment.

The project will be run by two volunteers, one of whom is trustee, John Wyer.

We have commissioned a feasibility study into the business case for a **Community Café/Coffee Hatch** at the Pavilion, thanks to Herts County Council Locality funding. And we are working with NHC and the Countryside Management Service to draw up proposals for new **tree, and meadow planting for Ransoms Rec** and a **new mosaic** in the Triangle Garden.

Our goals for next year also include:

Growing Ability: Now that our current sessions are at capacity, we want to run more Growing Ability sessions to give us further secure, regular income and benefit more disadvantaged people.

Branching Out: We plan to run a second Easter scheme next year to introduce young people (16-25) to our social and therapeutic horticulture offer. When it comes time for these young people to leave further education and choose a future path, we hope they will feel more confident and comfortable joining our Growing Ability sessions.

New Shoots: We are hoping to attract funding to run new blocks of **New Shoots for Carers** specifically, in collaboration with Carers in Herts.

New Garden Clubs: In 2025 we're starting a fortnightly Garden Club for students aged 12-16 from **The Priory School**. We're also hoping to collaborate with local autism charities to run a fortnightly Garden Club for parents/carers of children with autism, coupled with half-term and holiday nature-based sessions for families with teens with autism.

Project Manager: To help us get all this done we will need a passionate, agile and committed Project Manager in post. If this sounds like your sort of challenge, please get in touch by 1st December!

Vicky Wyer, Chair of Trustees

Find out more at www.trianglegarden.org

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