



Streatham
Common
Community
Garden



**Annual report and accounts for the year ended
7th October 2024.**

This report has been compiled by the Trustees of Streatham Common Community Garden, registered charity 1154156. It was agreed at the Trustee meeting on 4th November 2024 and will be placed on our website, <https://streathamcommoncommunitygarden.org>.

The report covers the period 8th October 2023 to 7th October 2024.

Trustees' Report

We hope that all our volunteers and visitors have got pleasure from the Community Garden and been inspired to grow plants, or just to spend more time in nature. Over the last year, we have achieved the following. Further details are given in the body of this report:

- Creating a welcoming place for new volunteers and visitors.
- Managing the Learner Plotters' and the Little Growers' projects. The Learner Plotters' project continues to introduce new people to gardening and to unite people from different backgrounds through a common interest. The Little Growers' project offers children, from 6 to 9 years of age, the chance to grow their own healthy vegetables.
- Managing events throughout the year. These include events to inform and to increase skills, including the tree pruning workshop. Those that bring the community together and celebrate the diverse heritage of residents, including black history month and the volunteers' lunch. As well as those that are just fun, such as Wassailing.
- Growing a broad variety of fruit and vegetables on site. From the common place such as potatoes to the unusual, for example medlars. Visitors are often fascinated by the range of plants we have and to learn how their supermarket produce grows. For example, asparagus is a frequent revelation to many!
- Supporting habitats that encourage birds and other wildlife including frogs and toads.
- Increasing our reach, through newsletters and regular updates on social media.
- Working with our colleagues from Streatham Common Cooperative (SCCoop) to maintain the site. This year we have made great use of the new polytunnel and expanded our composting facilities.

Over the last year our Trustee Board have shown that, even when our resources are stretched, by working together we can deliver something amazing that everyone can enjoy. We could not do this without our wonderful volunteers and the following report pays testament to everyone's efforts. Thank you!

Trustees, Streatham Common Community Garden

Our Charitable Purposes and Public Benefit

Availability of the Garden

Apart from a short break for Christmas 2023 and in January 2024, we have opened each Wednesday and Sunday between 11am and 3pm.

Volunteers and Visitors

We continue to welcome volunteers and visitors to the Garden, showcasing a place that inspires people to garden and to enjoy nature.



Our volunteers are core to our everyday activities of sowing, planting, weeding, digging, and watering. Some of our volunteers have been attending the garden regularly for many years, others come along during for an occasional visit or for a short period, e.g. during university holidays. We tailor volunteer tasks to the needs of the Garden and to people's individual abilities. There is no pressure to attend every week, and people can stay for as little or for as long as they can. This flexibility is significant in our ability to attract a broad range of people.

In the year ending 7th October 2024 we had 112 volunteers offering a total of 2,735 hours.

This compares to the year ending 7th October 2023 when we **had 117 volunteers offering 2,948 hours.**

The reduction of hours is primarily due to less Trustee time on site, because of personal issues unconnected with the Garden.

In considering these volunteer hours it is noted that:

- It does not include the Little Growers, which is a gardening activity for children and is discussed below.
- It does include the Learner Plotters, whose contribution supports the overall maintenance of the garden. More details are provided below.
- It excludes the paid for Community Gardener.
- It excludes Trustee hours which are spent managing the garden.

Education and training



As in previous years we have run the Learner Plotters' project and the Little Growers' project, supported by a Community Gardener who is on site on a Sunday.

Community Gardener

Patrick Mc Cabe was our Community Gardener up to the end of October 2023. He continued to provide cover in 2024, when Catherine took the occasional Sunday off, and he led a workshop, as below.

Catherine Birkett was appointed as the Community Gardener on 25th February 2024 and will provide services to the end of November 2024. Catherine is not going to renew her contract in 2025, as she looking forward to

relaxing on Sundays again!

We will begin recruitment for next year's Community Gardener by the end of 2024.

Learner Plotters

Our Learner Plotters (Plotters) start in Spring and people can continue until the early months of the following year when they clear their plot for the next intake. People without a garden apply to have a small plot for a year to develop their skills with guidance from a Community Gardener or from more experienced Trustees and volunteers at the garden. As well as on-site support, they are offered workshops and can participate in a WhatsApp group to share ideas and to create a community of interest.

In 2023 we had 18 participants, with some plots shared by two family members. Feedback from these Plotters suggested that the size of the plots should be increased. So, in 2024 we reduced the number of plots to 11, with 17 people signed up, albeit this number consolidated to 11 plots with 15 people attending. In 2024 the Plotters started on 7th April. This was a couple of weeks later than usual whilst we completed the recruitment for a Community Gardener. Looking forward we will aim have people on site from mid-March 2025.

Little Growers

The Little Growers project is attended by children between 6-9 years of age. They meet every Sunday, from 12 noon to 1pm with a parent or carer. Each child has a section of a raised bed where they choose what to grow, how to look after their plants and to harvest their own crops.

In 2024, eight children attended along with their adult companions, and occasionally a brother or sister.

Every Community Gardener offers something different to the Little Growers. This year, as well as workshops (e.g. flower prints, potting seedlings etc), tours around the garden and enjoying freshly cooked produce, each child maintained their own diary of what they did and achieved.

Duke of Edinburgh Award Participants

Three Duke of Edinburgh Award participants volunteered at the Garden during the Spring and Summer of 2024. We were particularly impressed by their enthusiasm, reliability and willingness to undertake tasks. All participants attended in accordance with our safeguarding policy requirements.

A Growing Hub and Wildlife

We have just completed our second year of using the 'no dig method' for our rotational beds. Whilst we still have a lot to learn, it has been successful. Potatoes, beetroots and various green beans have been particularly impressive! Other areas of note are:

- The new polytunnel, also see below, has been very useful in the sowing and care of tender plants.
- We have introduced a small patch showcasing medicinal plants.
- We continue to get good results from world garden including the polytunnel for the growing of plants not normally seen in south London.
- The small spaces garden demonstrates what people can do without a large growing area. This is something that we wish to build upon in the future.
- After a disappointing year in 2023, the mulberry tree was magnificent in 2024. Some produce was sold to our neighbours in the Inkspot Brewery as well as being enjoyed by volunteers and visitors.
- Although robustly pruned, the fig tree has been quick growing and produced a lot of fruit.



Every year presents challenges. This year the mix between periods of wet and warm weather meant that slugs and other predators were a particular problem. There was an occasion, (carrots), when a whole bed was eaten! We increasingly covered plants to successfully protect delicate seedlings. Whilst relatively late in the season, we also were hit by tomato

blight. A recurring problem.

We were delighted that the Community Garden was again awarded 'outstanding' in the RHS' London in Bloom assessments, with the awards on 3rd October 2024. It is so lovely to know that people external to the garden rate what we do so highly.

Maintenance of the Site

At the start of the year, we erected a large polytunnel for seedlings and tender plants. This was bought from the gift vouchers given by Incredible Edible in 2023, i.e. our prize for two awards; Abundant Growing of Edibles and Best Space for Encouraging Wildlife. Going forward there are things that we have learnt about using the polytunnel, particularly around the number of seeds sown and the need for ongoing care. In 2025, we also intend to introduce a dedicated potting area to the Garden.

Thanks to the work of volunteers and Trustees we have expanded the composting area with new bays to store garden waste. Our aim will be to produce more compost on site rather than buy in, which has been costly.



Due to wear and tear and water damage, some of the wooden boards that contain the herb garden, and the pagoda have degraded. The boards along the herb garden have been fixed and we have plans to revamp the pagoda area, (including a new vine) in 2025.

Events Held at the Community Garden

In addition to workshops included in the Learner Plotters project, we held more events than ever before for volunteers and the wider community. These were -

- Black History Month lunch in October 2023, i.e. 15th October 2023 just within this reporting period. (A further event will take place in October 2024 just outside this reporting period).
- Wreathmaking workshops in December 2023.
- Wassail attended by the Brixton Tatterjacks at the start of January 2024, to celebrate the New Year.
- Tree pruning workshop in February 2024, run by Patrick McCabe.
- Volunteers lunch July 2024. Our volunteers helped to organise, and everyone brought a dish to share and eat.
- Natural Dyes Workshop August 2024
- Apple Day September 2024.

Each event was successful, providing skills and enhancing knowledge, recognising the contribution of our volunteers or bringing the community together.

Communications

We have distributed more newsletters in the year up to 7th October 2024, than in previous years. These keep our supporters up to date with what is happening in the garden as well as news about our partners.

We have also increased our social networking presence, with regular updates on Instagram and Facebook, this has been useful in advertising events and was supportive in the recruitment of the Community Gardener.

Plans are afoot to survey volunteers and newsletter recipients. This aims to gain information about what they like about the garden, changes they'd like to see and whether there are any skills that they can contribute. We know that there are some talented people out there and we are keen to make connections. We hope that the results of the survey will be available early in 2025.

Working with Partners

We have continued to work positively with our partners and neighbours, Inkspot brewery, as well as representatives from Lambeth Council.

We would like to particularly thank Vicky Peet the manager of SCCoop with whom we have worked closely and who has given us particular support at the Wednesday sessions.

Considering the above, the Trustees are satisfied the charity has met its obligations for charitable purposes and for the public benefit. The remainder of the report considers Trustee appointments and financial accounts



Trustees for the year 2024-2025

Adam Gibbs

Anna Savage

Barbara Booth

Kate Daly

Katharine Samuel

Jill Seymour

Steph Smith

Helen Swan (Coopted Trustee September 2024)

Those who resigned during the year.

Giovanni Tivan relocated to Italy at the beginning of 2024 and resigned as a Trustee on 31st December 2023.

Elections

A third of trustees are required to stand down each year by rotation. This year the following will stand down and have indicated a wish for re-election:

- Adam Gibbs
- Katharine Samuel

We will also use the opportunity of the AGM to formally elect the Coopted Trustee (Helen Swan), albeit this is not a requirement of the Constitution.

We will also seek to confirm Adam Gibbs continuing in the role of Treasurer.

Finance Report

The final page of this report shows the full year statement of accounts for year ending 7th October 2024. These will be subject to approval by Members at the AGM on 5th January 2025.

Notes on the Financial Statement of Accounts

To confirm, the accounts show the full year position, on a cash accounting basis, as of 7th October 2024, that is money in the bank account. Any income or expenditure passed through the bank account after this date are not included, for example £240 of sales money was not banked by the 7th October cut-off date. The balance of money held is primarily unrestricted.

Overall, our financial position has improved by £6,663. Expenditure was less in year ending 7th October 2024 compared to the previous year, namely:

- In 2024 there was a slight delay in the recruitment of the Community Gardener.
- We restricted Community Gardener engagement to Sundays, Trustees providing support on Wednesdays.
- There was a slight reduction in Community Gardener hours compared to the previous year. This has not impacted on services.

Restricted Funds

In the final months of 2023, the Little Growers' project was funded by money that had been received by Higgidy (the food producer), this was the third and final year of this award.

In 2024 the Learner Plotters' project and Little Growers' project (including the Community Gardeners) have been funded by money received from City Bridge. Drawn from a three-year grant awarded in July 2023.

Events

Whilst the number of events increased this year, the income is slightly less than in 2023.

Reasons include:

- There was slightly less income from the Christmas fair in 2023, compared to the previous year.
- Income taken at Apple Day is under sales, i.e. purchase of plants and juice.
- We did not break even on the tree pruning workshop. The latter was on a donation basis and if repeated we will manage with a small charge. (The previous year this was delivered as part of the Community Gardener's contract).

Nonetheless, events are significant contribution to our overall income.

Donations

There was an increase in donations this year. A very generous one-off donation and more recently an anonymous monthly payroll contribution are significant in reaching the overall

total. We would like to extend our thanks to everyone who gives us a donation. We really appreciate people's generosity.

Gift Aid

Please note that whilst we have made an application for gift aid, covering the last two years, HMRC has not confirmed the payment by the date of this year's accounts. Money received will appear in next year's statement.

Sales

Sales at the garden of fruit and vegetables as well as plants remain important income. During 2024 fewer Trustees were able to be on site, particularly during the busy months of Spring and Summer. In this period, we had to concentrate our resources on the key purposes of the Garden focussing on growing, caring for our plants, and supporting volunteers. Sales therefore have dipped but we hope will increase in 2025.



Other

Insurance costs have increased, albeit in line with others in the insurance market. Whilst we contacted the website supplier, they have not levied charges again this year.

The financial statement is overleaf, it is over two pages.

Streatham Common Community Garden

Income & Expenditure

8/10/23 - 7/10/24

Year Ending 7/10/24

INCOME	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL	Total Yr Ending 7/10/23	Difference 2023 & 2024
	£	£	Total £		
Grants (City Bridge & Higgidy)		7,945	7,945	8,030	-85
Unrestricted (Cavendish Lodge)			0	228	-228
Sales	1,779		1,779	3,066	-1,287
Donations	2,241		2,241	373	1,868
Subscriptions	40		40	60	-20
Events	1,818		1,818	2,045	-227
Prizes	0		0	0	0
Easy Funding & Amazon Smile	29		29	116	-88
Gift Aid	0		0	594	-594
Gross Income	5,907	7,945	13,852	14,512	-660

Payments	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL	2023	Variance
	£	£	Total £		
Community Gardeners - City Bridge		4,864	4,864	10,694	-5,830
Community Gardeners- Higgidy		448	448	1,900	-1,452
Restricted Donations		0	0	0	0
Seeds Plants Garden Supplies	529		529	1,342	-813
Equipment Maintenance	453		453	369	84
Volunteer Expenses	0		0	18	-18
Events	771		771	385	386
Insurance	124		124	97	27
Website Hosting	0		0	0	0
					0
					0
Total Payments	1,877	5,312	7,189	14,804	-7,615

	UNRESTRICTED	RESTRICTED	TOTAL	2023	Variance
Gross Income Less Total Payments	4,029	2,633	6,663	-292	-6,955
Transfer between funds	0	0	0	0	
Cash Funds at 7/10/23	18,830	7,936	26,766		
Cash Funds at 7/10/24	22,859	10,570	33,429	26,766	6,663
Petty Cash 7/10/24	15		15	15	0
Bank Balance at 7/10/24	22,844	10,570	33,414	26,751	6,663
Total Cash Balance	22,859	10,570	33,429	26,766	6,663

Streatham Common Community Garden

Balance sheet

For the year ended 07 October 2024

	07/10/2024	07/10/2023
Current assets:	£	£
Net Current Assets	<u>33,429</u>	<u>26,766</u>
Total Net Assets	<u><u>33,429</u></u>	<u><u>26,766</u></u>
The funds of the charity:		
Restricted funds	10,570	7,936
Unrestricted funds	22,859	18,830
Total charity funds	<u><u>33,429</u></u>	<u><u>26,766</u></u>