

Company No: 08399741

Charity No: 1153883

GREEN SYNERGY

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TRUSTEES  
ANNUAL  
REPORT

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2023/2024





## Green Synergy Trustee Report and Financial Statements 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024

Status	Green Synergy was founded in 2012 and is a charitable company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 12 <sup>th</sup> February 2013 and registered as a charity on 20 <sup>th</sup> September 2013.		
Charity Number	1153883		
Company Number	08399741		
Registered Address	49 Roman Pavement, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN2 5RD.		
Trustees	Alan Robson	Chair. Resigned January 30 <sup>th</sup> , 2024.	
	Caty Collier	Interim Chair	
	Rachel Gibbons		
	Susan Kernachan		
	Jane Loffhagen	Resigned March 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2024.	
	Ryan McCormick	Appointed 10 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	
	Sharon Page	Appointed 24 <sup>th</sup> April 2024	
	Ethan Miller	Appointed 16 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	
	Caroline Clarkson	Appointed 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2024	
Senior Management Team	Mrs Alison Talbot Miss Ana Oliveira Miss Katie Rayner Ms Victoria Potterton		
Bank Accounts	Co-operative Bank & Charity Bank & CAF Bank		
Independent Examiner	John O’Brien, FAIA, FCCA, FCIE employee of Community Accounting Plus Units 1 & 2 North West 41 Talbot Street Nottingham NG1 5GY		
Solicitors	Sills & Betteridge Solicitors, 18-28 Clasketgate, Lincoln, Lincolnshire. LN2 1JN		

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**Using community gardening to support people to socialise, learn and thrive.**

## Chair's Foreword

What a year! Reading this report, I am blown away by the sheer scale of activity and positive impact that our small team of wonderful humans has achieved.

But of course, none of it would be possible without our partnerships, our community, our participants, our supporters, our volunteers and funders, so I find myself reflecting on the aptness of our name: *Green Synergy*. It is those synergies, the coming **together** that enables us all to be greater than the sum of our parts.

It was a big year in many ways, with the 10-year anniversary of our formation as a charity, listening to the needs of the people we serve, the board and staff team coming together to review our vision, mission, values and strategic direction. Not to mention the thousands of people we have talked to, walked alongside and learned from. It is this **community** of people that help make the gardens a vibrant yet safe place to be and make our charity a welcoming social space as well as an office.

Huge credit must go to Ali and the team for their outstanding work that has made a real difference to so many people and built a strong track record that has enabled the charity to secure further funding to develop our range of activity. As well as growing plants, we aim to **grow** skills, resilience, resources and resourcefulness to sustain our people and our work for as long as it is needed.



I am proud to play a tiny part in the award-winning, compost-making, community-building, people-nurturing organisation that is Green Synergy. Thank you so much to everyone who has contributed this year. Thank you to Alan and Jane, our outgoing trustees.

Welcome to our new trustees and team members, I know we are all looking forward to 'Growing our Community Together'.

**Ms Caty Collier**

**Interim Chair of the Board of Trustees**

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## Green Synergy Overview

Green Synergy is a well-respected Lincoln based gardening and horticulture charity that supports people to socialise, learn and thrive. **Our vision** is creating healthier and caring communities connecting nature, people and plants. **Our mission** is to inspire, enable and empower people in Greater Lincolnshire to meet, grow, learn and thrive through community gardening and connecting with nature.

Our charity currently manages two community gardens, Hillside Garden and Ellie's Memorial Garden as well as developing outreach urban gardening and our work supports people of all ages in the most under-served communities in Lincolnshire to improve their mental and physical wellbeing. The ward in which we are based is in the bottom 25% of all neighbourhoods in England and its health deprivation is very acute being in the worst 18% in England.

Our programmes focus on delivering community gardening and therapeutic horticulture programmes to support people in the most deprived communities in Lincolnshire to improve their mental and physical wellbeing whilst managing the green spaces in environmentally responsible ways. We offer garden design and build services supporting local communities to develop green spaces into new community gardens in a sustainable and responsible manner.

We are so much more than a gardening charity - with volunteering, older people's warm and cool spaces, activities and community engagement events to bring people together and the support for people living in Lincolnshire to improve their mental health and wellbeing. Green Synergy enables people to learn skills for life, for work and encourages people to care for themselves, each other and the environment whilst bringing communities together to create more life chances, quality green spaces and re-connect people to green spaces, growing and nature.

2023 was our 10th anniversary as a charity and Green Synergy won the Best Gardening and Horticulture Charity- East Midlands in the Non-Profit Organisation Awards.



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## Structure, Governance and Management

**Public benefit:** In considering the activities of the charity, the Trustees note with due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit. In particular, the Trustees consider how specific projects and programmes will contribute to delivering and furthering the impact of Green Synergy's charitable objectives and our strategic objectives.

The Trustees who are also Directors of the limited company for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standards applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2015) (as amended by Update bulletin 1).

**Governing document:** The charity is controlled by its governing document, the Articles of Association, and is a company limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.

**Recruitment and appointment of new Trustees:** As set out in the Articles of Association, the Board of Trustees must consist of not less than three. There is no maximum number of members on the Board of Trustees. Green Synergy undertakes thorough external recruitment for Trustees and nominations for new Trustees are made to the Board of Trustees for approval following an external recruitment process. New Trustees are subject to due diligence checks, references and a DBS check. Members of the Board of Trustees are subject to rotation. At the Annual General Meeting, one third of the Board members retire, these being the longest serving members. Retiring members are eligible for reappointment.

**Organisational Structure:** The Trustees govern Green Synergy, and the Board of Trustees meets at least five times each year. In addition, the Chair or Vice Chair meets with the Chief Executive on regular occasions during the year to review progress of the charity's work. Sub-groups are convened to deal with specific issues arising in the work of the organisation. A Chief Executive Officer is appointed to implement Green Synergy's vision and mission and manage the day-to-day operations.

**Induction and training of new trustees:** New Trustees undertake an induction and are provided with an information pack to brief them on their legal obligations under charity and company law and the management and operation of Green Synergy. New Trustees undertake their induction at Green Synergy's premises, providing an opportunity to meet employees and discuss projects and activities. Green Synergy encourages further training for Trustees, either internally or through external providers, where this helps them to undertake their role.

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**Related parties:** Green Synergy delivers a large proportion of its projects through partnership working with other voluntary sector organisations, statutory bodies, and the local authority.

**Reference and administrative details:**

Registered Charity Number (England and Wales) 1153883

Registered Company Number (England and Wales) 08399741

Registered Office: 49 Roman Pavement, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN2 5RD

This report has been prepared in accordance with the special provisions of Part 15 of Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

Approved by order of the Board of Trustees on and signed on its behalf by:

29<sup>th</sup> November 2024



**Ms Caty Collier**

**Interim Chair**



**Volunteers at our Global Harvest Celebration - October 2023**

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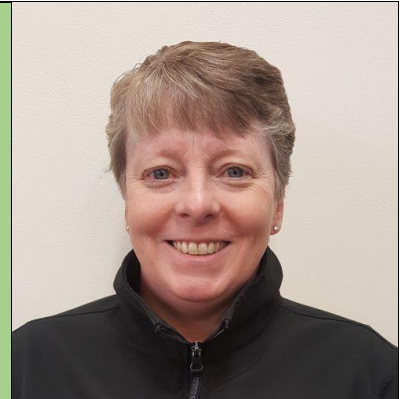
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## Our Team

### **Ali Talbot – Chief Executive**

I have had the pleasure of working in the public, private and third sectors at senior management level for the past 32 years specialising in strategic, operational, marketing and communications, project and resource management of charities, youth, sports, leisure and cultural services including sport, leisure, tourism, visual and performing arts services.

Prior to coming to Green Synergy, I held roles as Chief Executive of Headliners (UK), CEO of Cerebral Palsy Sport, a national disability sports charity and formerly RNIB's National Leisure Services Manager. I had the honour of chairing LOCOG's London 2012 Disability Community Engagement Forum as well as being Event Director for the Nottingham 2015 CPISRA World Games and is a current member of Scope's National Assembly. I am the mum to two young men both who have impairments and I'm a military wife. I love Italian food, gardening, walking, gymnastics, reading and am a closet 80's music fan. When I'm not working, I can be found on a side of an athletics track or rugby pitch supporting my sons or in my treasured happy place – my garden!



### **Vic Potterton – Community Development and Delivery Manager**

I'm Vic and I have worked in Creative Arts and Mental Health and Holistic Wellbeing for over 25 years and have a passion for empowering individuals and communities to explore what makes them feel truly alive! I believe in the power of creating safe, inclusive, spaces where people can explore art, music, movement and mindfulness as a catalyst for self-expression, healing and joy. As humans we live in a busy, demanding society that for many breeds isolation, and disconnect. During our lifetime more than a quarter of us will need support with our mental health and it is vitally important that we have access to spaces where we can reconnect, recharge and reach out for companionship and support. Nature has an incredible power to remind us of our connection to the world and to a sense of belonging beyond the individual self. Green Synergy allows people to gently bud and flower at their own pace and provides the soil for people to grow and flourish alongside like-minded others. I look forward to being part of the team and supporting people to thrive and blossom in the beautiful community garden.



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### **Ana Oliveira – Hillside Garden Manager**

I studied botanical horticulture at Kew and wrote my dissertation on why and how nature benefits us. I have worked in garden management, horticulture and teaching garden design. The biophilia hypothesis suggests that humans possess an innate tendency to seek connections with nature and other forms of life. This has certainly been the case for me. My first step into understanding it was to study landscape architecture. The second was to study botanical horticulture at Kew. As I wrote my dissertation on why and how nature benefits us, I developed a great interest in how that could be enabled, both in terms of human engagement, but also in how we design the outdoor environment. Previous jobs in garden management, horticulture and teaching garden design were enriching, however, I now wanted to add social rehabilitation and wellbeing into the mix. Hillside garden is the stage where sustainability, nature conservation and human health all meet. It is the future we should all strive for.



### **Katie Rayner – Finance and Office Manager**

I was merchandise manager, marketing and communications departmental lead, and departmental finance officer for the past four years at the University of Lincoln Sports Centre and Shop. Prior to this, I worked as a veterinary assistant for 9 years at a village, first opinion small animal veterinary practice, and towards the latter end of my veterinary career, I decided to return to university to pursue a degree in business and management. After finishing my studies, I took a gap year and travelled around New Zealand. I own a miniature dachshund called Sully and a naughty pony called Woody, who both take up most of my time at weekends and evenings. Interests include horse riding (show jumping, XC and drag hunting with the Cranwell Bloodhounds), baking, football, interior design and travel. I also have a love of house plants and my collection continues to grow. One of my favourite pastimes is going out for coffee and cake!



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### **Lizzie McFarlane: Projects Officer**

Following on from struggles with my own mental health, I rediscovered my affinity for growing and started volunteering with Green Synergy in September 2015. This affirmed to me my love of people and my passion to work with communities to improve people's lives and support them in a positive way. After 12 months as a volunteer, I successfully applied for a role as a Trainee Project Officer with an apprenticeship in Horticulture. I am now a fully-fledged Project Officer and deliver the BBO MOVE and Better Together projects. I enjoy using my coaching skills to support people who are experiencing mental ill health and help them to progress on their recovery journeys.



### **Brodi Wyman: Projects Officer**

I initially started as an apprentice at Green Synergy and over the past 3 years I have built up my skills and confidence working throughout all areas of the charity. I enjoy this role because of the variety of work and the ability to incorporate my different passions and share them with young minds. Using gardening, craft and games to educate and support our community has made such a difference to my own life. I have always wanted to work with children and being able to do a job that impacts lives and drives their passion for the environment has been extremely rewarding for me. Watching as children gain more interest in growing their own plants and wanting to be more involved with the things we do, has been amazing. I am continually learning and can't wait to see what the future holds.



### **Wendy Slater – Community Engagement Co-ordinator**

I came to Green Synergy with a long and varied background of experience gained from being a volunteer, as well as from working for and with Charities, Trusts, Communities, Partnerships and Authorities. I also have the experience of life, dealing with adversity and pushing through barriers. Personally, I feel my life has been a journey of me having to prove myself, until I started to ask why and who am I proving myself to? The skills I learnt on that journey I now share with others in order to help them to empower themselves and progress. I also share coping strategies as they are a great way to break through barriers. I returned to education later in life as I believe a door never completely closes. After undertaking a few short courses, I enrolled full time and now have a BA(Hons) in Socio-



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Legal Studies, as well as an MSc in Sustainable Communities and Environments. These help my work with both the community and on the garden. I have three grown up daughters, two grandsons and a granddaughter. I moved to Lincoln late 2022 but remain a true Yorkshire Lass at Heart! Glass half full / half empty? It's simple – you have the wrong size glass! Or alternatively its refillable!

### **Rebecca Graham - Garden and Horticulture Assistant**

I'm Rebecca I am a Garden and Horticulture Assistant who has just started at Green Synergy. My previous experience has been working with children with additional needs and working in a forest school with clinical professionals. My last role was working with a conservation charity in Manchester doing jobs such as gardening, installing fences, edging, tree planting and dead hedging. I have an allotment at home so love to grow my own produce and teach people how to grow their own and how to prepare the ground. I am looking forward to learning more about the different projects in Green Synergy and learning about how horticulture can help people in the community.



### **Katie Rooker – Freelance Children and Young People's Projects Assistant & Garden Assistant**

Through volunteering with Green Synergy, I've seen first-hand the benefits therapeutic horticulture and community gardening can have. After completing an employability project ran by Green Synergy, I was successful in becoming a member of the team. My role is Garden Projects Assistant, I help the Garden Manager and Projects Team to support volunteers and beneficiaries through different projects and sessions we run at Hillside Garden. I really enjoy interacting with the range of people I encounter through my role, as well as the variety of activities and tasks we provide at the garden. I studied Zoology at the University of Lincoln, and have an interest in animals, plants, and conservation. I enjoy trying to learn how to look after new houseplants and teaching my cat new tricks



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### **Trudy Norris- Freelance Projects Officer**

I have worked as Green Synergy's Project Manager but in 2023 wanted to evolve the way I work and so became one of our freelance team members. With a nudge from an elder, I developed an interest in plants as food and medicine from my late teens. As a result, I switched from a degree in politics to studying for a degree in Health and Community Studies. I then trained in Western Herbal Medicine for 3 years and have been in practice as an herbalist for 25 years (FNIMH). As my interests in influences in health and wellbeing grew, I then sought to develop my skills and trained in adult learning (PGCE) and to qualify as a Counsellor (BACP). Green Synergy enables me to work with all my passions in life: plants, people and communities.



### **Ruby Berridge – Freelance Projects Officer**

Hello, my name Ruby and I am a Freelance Project Officer at Green Synergy, so you might see me at different sessions. I believe that mental health care is really important; and I feel that a connection with nature, being outside and gardening, is one of the key areas for self-nurturing and sustaining individual well-being. I have a background in healthcare; with a recent focus on nutrition, phytotherapy and supporting people with cancer. My other interests include edible gardening, my pet succulents, being outdoors, walking, reading, drawing and crafts. Family, communication and community are important to me and I'm excited about my role at Green Synergy, meeting new people and making new connections. I feel I have seen the valuable contribution the charity, staff and volunteers make to individuals using the garden, the local community, wildlife, and to Lincoln generally, as a supportive and therapeutic/accessible (much needed) green space.



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## Our Trustees

### Caty Collier: Interim Chair & Trustee

In my day job I am the Social Prescribing Development Lead for Lincolnshire working as part of the personalised care team alongside colleagues from health and social care. I have over 25 years' experience in the voluntary and community sector and am passionate about the wellbeing benefits of being in nature and the outdoors. I first got to know Green Synergy in 2012, prior to it becoming a charity when they were seeking advice on incorporation. In 2016, I was invited to become a Board Member. In my spare time, I practice yoga, morris dance and am involved in community music, as well as being a well-intentioned but not very expert gardener!



### Rachel Gibbons: Trustee

I became a trustee to Green Synergy after visiting Hillside Community Garden and being inspired by the work of the charity, seeing the life-affirming values and benefits to the community through connecting with nature in the garden. Green Synergy encourages people to embrace the outdoors for their wellbeing, health and self-belief.

My working life has been in agriculture, horticulture and conservation. For many years I was a consultant, linking farmers with the natural world around them, as well as working with Wildlife Trusts.

My family lives on a farm near Market Rasen where we host school visits, forest school camps, the Girl Guides, walkers and other groups. In my spare time I am a keen gardener and volunteer with several charities including being a First Responder for 16 years. I am also involved with biodiversity monitoring projects on our farm and in the county.



### Susan Kernachan: Trustee

I joined the Board of Green Synergy in December 2020 to contribute my skills and experience to a local organisation that was about to go through a period of change. The time I spent in my own garden during the 2020 lockdown gave me a first-hand understanding of the physical and mental health benefits of horticulture and I'm an advocate for green social prescribing.

I've spent over 20 years as a senior property leader in disability charities, I've recently qualified as an EMCC Accredited Coach at Foundation Level and I'm a volunteer with The Lincoln Community Larder. I'm married with one son and have lived in Lincoln since 2012.



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### **Ryan Mc Cormick: Trustee**

I joined Green Synergy as a Trustee as I wanted to make a difference to our communities and the values of the charity really resonated with me. I'm a business owner with years of experience in the development of gardens and projects including planting schemes, budget management, adherence to building and environmental regulations. A strength is supporting others in the development, design and implementation on projects that meet the needs of the users and stakeholders. The skills and experience I can offer to Green Synergy comes from 12 years of military service and 7 years as a business owner and landscape designer.



### **Sharon Page: Trustee**

I am a newly appointed trustee and a relative newcomer to Lincolnshire having moved here in 2020 to be closer to my parents. I have spent almost 30 years in senior leadership roles in higher education and the arts and culture sector in the UK and the Middle East. I was keen to bring my professional experience of governance and operations to support a local charity, having been a trustee and Chair of a community-based charity, The Mill, when I lived in East London. I come from a long line of gardeners – my mum has amazing green fingers and anything she puts in the soil grows! I am passionate about the benefits that gardening and being outdoors can bring, particularly the pleasures and health benefits of growing fruit and vegetables.



### **Ethan Miller: Trustee**

I am Ethan and I am a Health & Safety Officer, I am an IOSH grade member who supports my employer throughout all levels to achieve statutory compliance. I am experienced in occupational Health & Safety management and Facilities management. I pride myself on my communication, crisis management and a keen eye to detail. Outside of my professional working life I enjoy crafting jewellery, getting into nature, cycling and kayaking, however my favourite passion is my wonderful son.



### **Caroline Clarkson: Trustee**

I am the managing director and a trustee director of ECLISSE UK Ltd, an employee-owned company based in Lincolnshire supplying pocket door and concealed frame door systems for home improvements and multi-million-pound projects alike. I was inspired to offer my services as a Trustee for the Green Synergy after visiting Hillside Community Garden and seeing how the team supports the local community through activities that promote wellbeing, personal development and a connection with nature. I'm passionate about the outdoors and green spaces. While I used to spend my weekends outdoors kayaking, a shoulder injury now has me enjoying nature through long walks with my dog".



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## Our 2024 – 2027 Strategy

Throughout 2023 Green Synergy marked the 10th Anniversary from the establishment of our charity, and as the charity moves into its next decade it is an exciting phase of development from the perspective of the gardens, the team and all those we welcome to the gardens.

In order to evolve our new strategic plan, our Trustees and workforce team undertook a parallel Business Model Canvas process. This enabled the charity to explore our current and future services, the gardens' leases, our challenges, opportunities and risks. We undertook community listening to inform the thinking and looked at the current and future needs of our communities and the landscape that the charity is operating in. This process culminated in a Board and Team away day to enable the sharing and fertilisation of ideas to refine our vision, mission, values and cornerstones.

### Green Synergy's 2024-2027 Strategic Objectives:

- ❖ Growing People
- ❖ Growing Green Spaces Sustainably
- ❖ Growing Communities and Partnerships
- ❖ Growing Giving and Resources
- ❖ Growing Sustainability

A full copy of our strategy can be downloaded [here](#)

### Our Values

#### ❖ Inclusive

- We seek to be welcoming, accepting, trusting, accessible and non-judgemental with our diverse communities.

#### ❖ Understanding

- We care, support and empower people, plants and our places to thrive and feel safe.

#### ❖ Respectful

- We treat people with dignity, fairness, integrity and respect at all times.

#### ❖ Collaborative

- We work towards productive partnerships to enable communities and people to connect and grow.

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## Our Cornerstones

- **Person Centred:** We take an empathetic approach through active listening, acting and supporting people where they are at in an accepting environment.
- **Sustainable:** Managing our resources responsibly and protecting the sustainability of our people, places, finances and our plants safely.
- **Growth:** Enabling people, places and our organisation to grow through skills building, partnership connections and income development.
- **Innovative:** Adopting creative, agile, responsive and resourceful approaches to our services, communities and organisation.

## Our Operating Principles

- ❖ All people matter and our role is to enable positive change through opportunities to have fun, improve life chances and choices.
- ❖ We place community at the heart of what we do through active asking, listening and responding to needs.
- ❖ We deliver quality services that are consistent and reflective whilst measuring, communicating and learning from our impact.
- ❖ We ensure consistent good governance, management and leadership across all aspects of the charity's services by effective and efficient use of resources to grow people, places and plants.
- ❖ We responsibly manage, protect and build sustainable spaces and operations with oversight and scrutiny.
- ❖ We positively communicate our message in tailored, inclusive and accessible manner.
- ❖ We create safe spaces for all team, volunteers and participants through effective risk and health and safety management.
- ❖ We adopt collaborative approaches to alliances and innovative partnerships with a wide range of sectors.



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## A Review of Our Year 2023-2024

2023 – 2024 was a momentous year for Green Synergy as we marked and celebrated our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and it was truly special as the charity was awarded the **Best Gardening & Horticulture Charity 2023 - East Midlands** award in the Not-for-Profit Awards. What a way to mark 10 years of our charity's work and it is a testament to the hard work, dedication and support of our staff team, volunteers, Trustees, supporters, partners and funders. For this we thank every single person that has supported us in 2023/2024. We are truly indebted to you all as this has enabled us to reach **4602** people this year. Thank You!

Growing our Communities Together is at the heart of what Green Synergy does so it has been incredible to see so many people visiting the gardens. Green Synergy is however so much more than a gardening charity and is proud of the trusted relationship we hold with so many of our local community residents so to be able to expand our Warm Spaces session during the winter months thanks to the funding from the Community Cost of Living Fund. The charity once again achieved our 5 Star Food Hygiene rating and was able to distribute **150** emergency warm packs reaching **180** people, issue **60** community grocery memberships, deliver **57** hot lunch club meals and deliver **31** warm spaces sessions and a slow cooker workshop.

Our See How our Garden Grow's National Lottery Community Fund Reaching Communities project continued to have positive impact in our local community and the charity reached **865** people through our wonderful series of garden events and **396** people through our Warm Spaces and coffee morning activities and **135** people through our Knit and Natter programme. The charity hosted **85** adults on specific garden visits, undertook **58** community engagement activities and events reaching **2381** people and our social media activities created **210,134** impressions.



Supporting people to make a positive difference to their lives is central to our adult projects delivery and we were delighted to secure new three-year funding for our Green WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) project and one year funding for our Green Nature and Nurture project to support

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young people with neuro-diverse needs. Given the high suicide rates in Lincoln, the charity has welcomed the opportunity to develop and deliver a new men's suicide prevention project. Our Green Shoots of Wellness project is delivered through new funding from the Lincolnshire Suicide Prevention Fund.

It is so important to us as a charity that we are able to provide support and services to people where and when they need it including to a range of demographic age groups from children, young people, adults and older people. Our Tower Power children and young people programme reached **216** young people last year including **74** we had never engaged with before. We supported **58** families with **86** hours of volunteering supporting the project with a range of exciting events, holiday programmes and after school activities. The new Green Explorer's Holiday and Activities Food (HAF) programme supported **30** children and young people to enjoy green spaces and nature connections for the first time.

Our Better Together wellbeing project directly supported **33** adults with their mental health and wellbeing journeys and **22** people were positively supported through our Green WRAP project. Our Growing and Cooking on a Budget project supported **33** people, our pilot Green Nature and Nurture project supported **7** people, and our Green Shoots of Wellness men's suicide prevention programme supported **19** men into wellness, and our The Forge Garden outreach sessions supported **40** people.

Green Synergy has worked hard to develop our volunteering programmes including how we celebrate and recognise our volunteers' incredible contributions. Our volunteers supported the charity with an amazing **3709** volunteering hours this year and it was lovely during Volunteer's Week to say 'thank you' for their time, talents and skills. We have also developed a range of corporate volunteering days and group volunteering days including Apogee Corporation and Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust to aid the charity's garden operations whilst improving the volunteers' wellbeing.



2023/2024 also saw significant developments on the lease negotiations moving towards the finalisation of a 10-year lease with United Lincolnshire Hospitals Trust. The charity was also pleased

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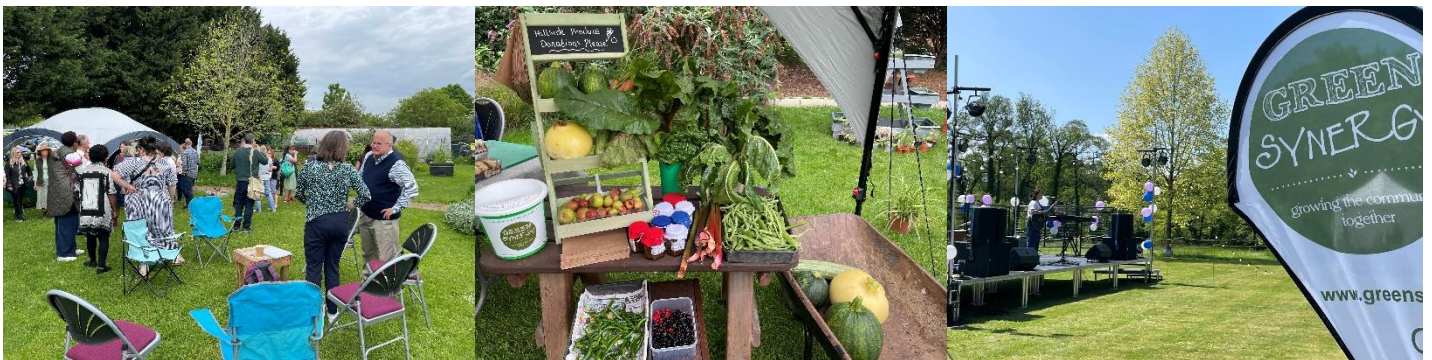


to receive the news that the City of Lincoln Council would grant a 25-year lease for the management of Ellie's Memorial Garden. On Hillside Garden, the construction of the children's garden green pergola took place, the fences were painted, and the children designed the planting beds and decorated the fences with their handprints.

Green Synergy was pleased to secure funding from National Grid's Green Spaces Fund that enabled the project that designed and created a new Hazel and Willow Coppice Grove on Hillside Garden to create a wildlife-rich new habitat from a brown field site area. **21** new species and **160** new specimens were planted, **33** volunteering sessions were delivered reaching **64** volunteers and generating **561** volunteering hours.



Partnerships matter to Green Synergy and we can achieve so much more when we work together. We are pleased to support the development of LocalMotion Lincoln, and we were pleased to be able to host the national LocalMotion Places visit on Hillside Garden. Our proactive lead work to support Lincoln Climate Hope and our activities and events for Great Big Green Week 2023 helped raise the profile of the climate emergency and challenge for Lincoln. Green Synergy is proud of our partnership with the HM Prison and Probation Service's Community Payback team supporting with garden operations and planters making. We were also delighted to be the benefitting charity for the University of Lincoln Year 3 Music course Nebula Festival raising over £2,250 for the charity.



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Green Synergy's social media presence has grown in the last year and the charity reached over **51,000** impressions on Twitter and **121,269** impressions on Facebook. Our website content has continued to be developed with new event, partnerships and volunteer stories sections.

We saw some change in our staff team with Trudy stepping back to undertake new freelance opportunities, Helena moved to a new community role and Marcelina moved onto a full-time role with all our best wishes. Tiwonge joined us as the new Community Development and Delivery Manager overseeing the whole projects team and Jo, Tanya, Joanna and Ruby joined our freelance project team. We said farewell to Anna, a much-loved volunteer, supporter and friend of the charity and we wished her and her family well as they moved back to Latvia and then sadly also to Tiwo in July 2024 and thank her for her hard work whilst she was with us.

Our Trustee Board provides an incredible level of knowledge, guidance and support to the charity and we are so grateful to have a group of Trustees who will not only support our governance but also our events and opening up new opportunities for us. We thank all of our Trustees for their tireless support. The year has seen a lot of time spent on our board development with three Board sessions to develop and strengthen the charity's governance. We also saw some changes to our Trustee Board as we welcomed Ryan, Sharon, Ethan and Caroline to our Board. Sadly, Jane Loffhagen stepped down from our Board in March 2024 and our long serving Chair Rev Canon Alan Robson stepped down in January 2024. Alan has been an incredible supporter of the charity since 2016, and it was lovely to be able to mark his last days as Chair with a lovely celebration and gifts and we couldn't resist sharing a photo from him from the Global Harvest Celebration!



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## Our Impact



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# The Gardens

## Hillside Garden

It has been a busy and productive year in the gardens, and we have been fortunate to have been supported by our incredible volunteers who support our garden operations. In 2023/2024 we were supported by **1588** volunteer hours for gardening sessions and **2121** volunteer hours with our Willow and Hazel Grove project. Our great partnership with the Lincolnshire Prison and Probation Service's Community Payback team together with external partners and sponsors has made significant contributions to the way in which we were able to tackle key projects this year and we are pleased to have hosted a range of corporate volunteering days including Apogee, Lincolnshire Co-op and Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust (LPFT).

## Garden Operations

Green Synergy continues to improve sustainability practices, with an emphasis on soil improvement, water savings, resilience to climate change and training of staff and participants. With our **soil improvement work**, following the expansion of our compost bays, all staff, volunteers and participants were trained on composting and green waste management. This resulted in over **11m<sup>3</sup>** of compost put back in the beds over autumn and winter. All the vegetable beds were mulched and so was the herbaceous border for the first time. Compost holds moisture in the soil, whilst improving fertility and soil structure, all of which will enable more resilient and healthier plants. A woodchipper was purchased and woodchips are now used in composting or directly as a mulch in newly planted areas. This suppresses weed growth and preserves soil moisture.



Increasing the gardens biodiversity has been very important to Green Synergy and Yellow rattle was sowed for the second year in the orchard meadow, from seeds collected at Whisby by our Gardens Manager. Yellow rattle will reduce grasses vigour and increase diversity in the meadow whilst the willow and hazel project and the children's garden further increase the species diversity on site. Additionally, the charity has developed our drought resilience practises by following dry gardening

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principles, training staff and volunteers on watering techniques to reduce watering consumption whilst ensuring plant health and extending the rainwater harvesting containers on Hillside Garden.

## Willow and Hazel Grove

Green Synergy has been able to regenerate a new area at Hillside with the creation of a hazel and willow coppice grove. This project was funded with the kind support of The National Grid Green Spaces Fund with the aim of increasing the number and species diversity on site with the planting of bare root hazel and other mixed hedging species. The willow was planted in January for both coppicing and creating a living willow tunnel, provide a local source of timber for activities, structures or workshops. The project would engage people with ancient woodland management practices. The project resulted in the planting of **21** new species, **160** new specimens, **175%** increase in number of woody species in the area and a **370%** increase in number of specimens in the area (excluding the willow tunnel). The team delivered **33** Volunteering sessions, **7** participant led sessions, 2 corporate volunteering days and opportunities for **21** people on probation to learn new skills. The project is enabling more opportunities for engaging with nature, craft activities and sustainability practices, visual screening from adjacent houses and increased biodiversity at Hillside and potential for income generation.



## Children's Garden

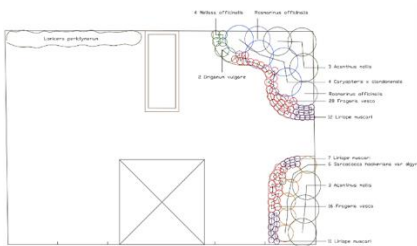
The garden design and construction were shaped following a consultation with children and young people, volunteers and staff from our children's projects, and embedded sustainability principles. The aims were to create a shaded area for quiet play, with sensory plants to engage the children during sessions and create opportunities for children to feel ownership towards the garden. The design involves two ornamental beds created by Abbey Access Training as part of their construction courses, with sensory planting, one accessible raised bed for seasonal planting and a gazebo with gabion bench in addition to building the base to install two IBC containers, to collect up to 2000L of rainwater from the gazebo roof. The planting plan comprises non-poisonous plants, with year-round interest and ground cover, and provides opportunities to engage children with the senses.

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Edible species were combined with others with fragrant foliage and/or flowers, including herbs. Colour and texture were also considered, so the planting is visually pleasing, even for people who are colour blind. The result was **9** new species introduced, **95** specimens planted, and **24** construction learners involved during construction.



## Plant Sale

In May 2023, Green Synergy hosted our annual plant sale. For the first time, some plants were grown from seeds collected on site throughout autumn and winter and nurtured by project participants. Some seeds were also packaged for distribution during events. The event attracted **62** visitors, and we raised £623.44 for our charity.



## Ellie's Memorial Garden

Green Synergy is pleased to be able to confirm that approval has been given by the City of Lincoln Council for the granting of a 25-year lease for Ellie's Memorial Garden. The charity awaits the lease signing in 2024 and the north fence replaced by the City of Lincoln Council in advance of the charity undertaking a restoration project. Our work in the meantime has focused on maintaining the existing plant collection, cutting back or removing competitive species, pruning shrubs and trees for optimising fruiting and flowering, trimming back climbers and bulb planting. Raspberry runners were dug out, the main rose shrub was renovated and both apple trees were pruned to improve fruit picking and reduce load on the tree.



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## Our Projects

### Tower Power



Tower Power is our children and young people's programme funded by BBC Children in Need and Tower Power uses outdoor and gardening activities to enable children to have more fun, develop pride in themselves and their neighbourhood and engage positively in groups. This helps with improving their connectedness to the community and nature around them while supporting their development, mental and physical health and giving them a wider experience of the world. The team deliver two groups, Family Zone and Youth Group. Family Zone focuses on children between the ages of 4-7 and encouraging whole families to come along and join in during term time and school holidays. The Youth Group is delivered once a month on Hillside Garden for 8-14yrs from 4-5pm, and during holidays the sessions run alongside the Family Zone sessions.

This year the team reached **216** children through weekly sessions, trips and events including our special Family Fun Day which was a huge success. We had **95** children and young people come, of which **74** were children that we had never engaged with before. The project also delivered trips for families to Lincoln Cathedral and Skegness beach whilst we worked in partnership with Leaf and Land Collective to deliver Forest School sessions. The children were so proud to take part in a wheat project spanning a year where they planted, grew and harvested wheat which was then milled by a volunteer and baked into bread which they all got to eat. It was a great opportunity to show them where their food comes from.

The impact we make on the children and their families is so important and from the feedback and evaluation we ask children to rate the session on a smiley face scale. Throughout Year 2, **86%** of all the data collected was 😊 faces. For Year 3 so far, we have had **52** children attend the sessions, delivered a trip to Rand Farm Park for the Christmas celebrations for **26** children and their families where they got to meet Santa. **86%** of children gave a smiley face when asked how they felt about the session.



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## Green Explorers – Holiday, Activities and Food (HAF) Programme

Green Explorers is our Holidays, Food and Activities programme funded by Lincolnshire County Council where we delivered one off community events during the school holidays. The sessions were a carousel of activities around craft, gardening, nature connectedness and fun for children between the ages of 7 and 15 who receive free school meals. The children received fruit snacks and lunch, a range of activities and some extras that the children took home at the end of the day. Some examples of activities include Making bird feeders, planting potatoes, bug hunts, sensory walks, colouring, planting sunflowers to take home and much more.



During the reporting period, we delivered 2 event days during the summer and winter holidays reaching 30 children and helping us reach a wider community of children and young people that wouldn't normally get to experience what we offer. We had 6 children from the first event return to the second as they enjoyed it so much! We have been awarded a second year of funding, our Easter event day went well gaining us some of the following feedback from the children and young people.

Some feedback we have received included "*I enjoy spending time here*"; "*All 😊 I just liked being outside*" and in response to would you come again; their responses were: "*Yes. I've come twice. I'd love to come again*" and "*Definitely. This was my second time coming*". Additionally, as part of our feedback we ask the children how they enjoyed the day on a scale of 1-5, 1 being the worst and 5 being the best, 60% of children that attended our Winter Green Explorers gave the day a 5/5.



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## See How Our Garden Grows – National Lottery Community Fund



We have had a very busy year with our See How Our Garden Grows (SHOGG) project delivery to support our community to socialise, learn and thrive. The project is focused on making a positive difference to our local communities, increasing our reach, visitors, networking, partnerships and engagement with our local communities in Lincoln through the development of the community gardens. See How Our Garden Grows is also aiming to increase community cohesion, support under-served communities, reduce isolation and improve people's mental and physical health.

We have offered an exciting series of events which have been very well supported by residents, the wider community and stakeholders. This included five seasonal events including the Easter Egg Hunt, Plant Sale, LocalMotion Lincoln Open Garden Visit: Great Big Green Week Open Garden, Family Fun Day and our Summer Garden Celebration and Global Harvest Celebration. The events attracted **865** people. Two Christmas wreath and decoration workshops were held in November and our Carols on the Garden took place on a cold sunny December Wednesday where we were delighted to welcome local school Monks Abbey Choir Squad, families, parents and the City of Lincoln Civic Party.

The Tower Coffee morning goes from strength to strength and people enjoyed two trips to Newark and the National Craft Centre in Sleaford. The coffee mornings and trips not only enable residents to socialise and bond, but also help to address and reduce isolation. The group also took part in a memorial rose planting in memory of Cliff, a much-loved local resident who lived on the Tower Estate. Our Knit and Natter group continue to produce some stunning crafts, and we are now using the bunting they have created at our events.

Our community engagement events along with attendance at events such as Faces to Names, Countryside Lincs, Wild Escape Lincoln, Wilder Lincolnshire festival, Lincoln Growth Conference, Aurbourn Open Garden event and Connecting Communities events has enabled us to reach **2381** people. Our garden visits have also attracted **85** people over the year, and we hope to grow the number of visits next year.



We have delivered two SHOGG match-funded slow cooker workshops reaching **17** people and our community listening has identified significant demand for warm spaces activity support, as well as the local community

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requesting an additional warm space morning for which we are exploring funding options. The team have carried out **44** food bank referrals and these are becoming much more frequent. Green Synergy is also now part of the Lincolnshire Cost of Living Warm Spaces County group – the Lincs Community Response Group.

Community listening has been a central focus for our SHOGG project to enable us to respond to the needs of our local communities which has informed our new 2024-2027 strategy as well as our service planning. The community listening led us to apply and secure funding from the Community Organisations Cost of Living Fund which enabled us to support **654** people, deliver **57** winter lunches until the end of March and reach a **181** people with emergency warm packs.

Volunteering is at the heart of our community gardening programmes and we could not deliver what we do without the amazing support of our volunteers. Learn more about some of our incredible volunteers by reading their stories [here](#). Our Spring Synergy clean up saw **17** people supporting our garden clean up and Volunteers Week saw a volunteer's celebration on the garden with recognition certificates for all our volunteers. We were delighted to host a series of corporate volunteering days, and we thank those organisations who came to help us. Our amazing volunteers have supported us with **3709** volunteering hours!



Our partnerships and collaborations are growing, and we have been pleased to be able to work in closer partnership with Lincoln LocalMotion and our CEO joining Lincoln Climate Hope to support the city's goal of achieving Net Zero by 2030. Our team have also developed new partnerships with different faculties in the University of Lincoln, including the Performing Arts courses who delivered a Nebula Festival raising over £2250 for our charity. We have collaborated with Bishop Grosseteste University hosting two courses for garden visits and with a range of other stakeholders including Rebecca Poole of Lincoln Independent; Meryl Ward of Lincolnshire Rural Chaplaincy and Lincolnshire Pork; Leicestershire Social Prescribing team; Lincolnshire Organic Growers Organisation, NW Counselling Hub CIC, Lincolnshire Community Connectors, We are With You Charity, Old Wood Organic CIC, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and Steve Martin - Patient Safety Programme Manager from ULHT.

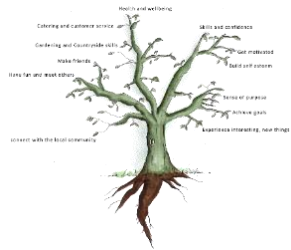


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## Better Together Project (B2G)



Better Together II is a partnership project with Abbey Access Training and Developmentplus which resulted from successful extended funding from the Community Fund. This is the 3rd and final year for this round of funding on the project, which ends in December 2024. The project aims to support people with their personal growth, manage their mental health, to build confidence and self-esteem as well as enabling them to engage more fully in society. Sessions offer people choices of activity including a wide range of gardening tasks and linked activities such as eco crafts, walking, cooking, and planning sessions. The group have been a part of many events including the Plant Sale, Family Fun Day, Global Harvest Celebration and Carols on the Garden.

The team received **65** referrals into our programmes this year, **24** new people joining the project which has supported **33** participants to engage in our therapeutic horticulture sessions offering over **700** hours of support, through all 4 seasons, taking part in all aspects of gardening on Hillside Garden and beyond. In particular, the growing of fruit and vegetables through their full lifecycle, from sowing the seeds, to eating the harvest. The focus is always on encouraging social interactions, meaningful activity, and nature connectedness through our activities, and being together in the garden. By enabling people to care for plants and the garden, in turn they are better able to care for themselves.

Examples of some of the session activities are shown below:



*Seed sorting*



*Bouquet making*



*Sustainable watering workshop*

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## Summary of project outputs and outcomes achieved.

The delivery of the sessions has contributed to the achievement of the following objectives:

- ✚ Improved the mental health and well-being of participants.
- ✚ Positive social connections among the groups
- ✚ Has contributed to greater understanding and awareness of mental health needs and the need for other services.
- ✚ Has led to learning of new skills and experience in gardening, crafts, which has boosted the confidence of participants even in other areas such as education, volunteering among others.

## Project Highlights and Achievements

This year we have had many highlights on the programme including:

- ✚ A trip to Doddington hall Christmas display, where many people got to experience this wonderful, historical site for the first time.
- ✚ Picnics on the garden, where participants made food with produce, they had grown, to come together and share food as a community.
- ✚ Gardening workshops with Ana, our garden manager, to teach participants skills in sustainable gardening techniques.
- ✚ Volunteering: Four participants have expressed interest to become Green Nature Buddies. The nature buddies will, while enjoying their participation on the garden, support new participants with gardening, activities and will motivate new and existing participants.
- ✚ Floristry workshop which came out of a participant's aspiration to move into this career. The workshop allowed several people to learn this useful and creative skill.
- ✚ A stakeholder event at Hillside Community Garden, showcasing all that the project partnership had to offer. Allowing existing participants to share their experiences directly with potential new participants and referral partners.



Bird feeder Christmas decoration



Doddington Hall trip



Sowing Green Manure seed in veg beds.

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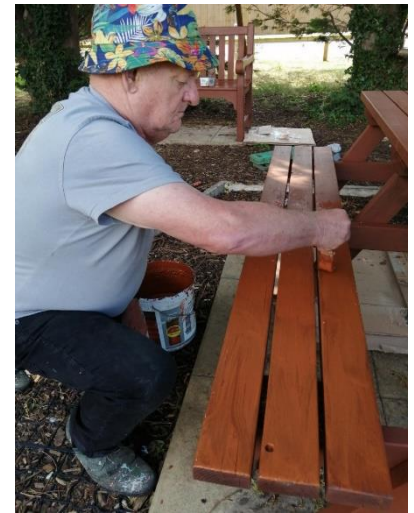
## Project Case Study

Chris has always enjoyed being part of the Green Synergy community. Before joining Better Together, Chris struggled with anxiety and loneliness. Chris explained how he joined:

*"Due to my mental health condition, I had to resign from active employment. Due to this, I needed a group and an activity that would allow me to engage, interact and socialise with other people to fill the void in my life".*

Since joining the group, Chris has positively engaged with other people in the groups. Chris is one of the participants who does not miss a session unless there is a valid reason. Chris cycles to and from the garden, which has helped his body fitness. The groups have also revived Chris's passion for baking. Chris bakes and brings cakes to the garden. Chris uses some of the ingredients from the garden to bake the cakes.

*"I enjoy harvesting rhubarb from the Hillside Garden and using it as an ingredient for the cakes that I bake. I also use other fruits and vegetables from the garden to make healthy food for myself".* In addition, Chris has gained gardening skills that have enabled him to grow crops on his allotment.



## Testimony from a Social Prescribing Link Worker

"One of my clients (M) told me at the point that I was discharging her from our Social Prescribing service on 13/09/23: M attended the garden via the Better Together programme on Tuesday afternoons from mid-May until mid-Sept 2023 when she returned to university – something I don't think she could have successfully achieved without gaining the confidence she did from coming to the garden. M enjoys going to the Green Synergy Garden on Tuesdays. She feels able to share how she is feeling with L and J, and they always check in with her at the start of a session to ascertain what she feels able to do. M likes that she can work at her own pace and have a sitting down task if she feels physically exhausted. L and J have also shared some of the skills they are working on in the Green WRAP sessions on Wednesdays that M has been unable to attend; she is finding these useful for managing feelings and will keep using some of the strategies – like 'tapping' – to manage feelings of anxiety as she has found that this has worked. M expressed that she feels her mental health has improved a lot since she has been going out regularly each week and it has taught her that she can associate going out of the house with feeling better."



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## Growing and Cooking on A Budget

In 2023, we launched a new Growing and Cooking on a Budget project kindly funded by the National Lottery Community Fund and designed as an additional support service for Better Together project participants to help tackle the cost-of-living crisis and supporting people with new knowledge, skills and experiences of how to grow and cook their own meals throughout the past year. The aim of the difference sessions is to develop knowledge on how to grow fruits and vegetables and the learn how to cook healthy, tasty meals. Some examples of the incredible food and meals that have been prepared are shown below



*Jacket Potatoes on the fire pit*



*Runner Bean frame*



*Picnic on the garden*



*Homemade Hillside rhubarb Bumper potato harvesting*



*Harvesting to make into recipes.*

It was clear that several project participants were experiencing financial hardship, so the project is supporting people to learn how to grow their own produce and what to make with it. The programme has positively supported **33** people to bring them closer to growing and learning to cook healthy meals.



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## Green Shoots of Wellness – Wave 3 Suicide Prevention Fund



Our Green Shoots of Wellness project is a Lincoln Suicide Prevention Fund Wave 3 funded programme which aims to support men at risk of suicide with the opportunity to grow wellness and confidence to improve their wellbeing, develop coping strategies and resilience to reduce the risk of self-harm and suicide. By taking part in social and therapeutic garden activities, the participants can connect and notice green spaces and nature, build social support networks collaboratively with each other, access a safe space, grow confidence, develop new skills, and be encouraged to use empathic and person-centred wellness tools identified by the participants themselves to improve their mental health. The project was launched in 2023 and so far, we have implemented **96** hours of project delivery reaching and supporting **19** men. The project offers a person-centred approach that utilises a range of therapeutic gardening activities, arts and crafts, social interaction, workshops on gardening and trips. Due to the success of the project, Green Synergy has been awarded funding for Green Shoots of Wellness II for 2024/2025.



### Project outcomes achieved

- At least **88.8%** of the current participants have expressed confidence in reaching out for help.
- At least **90%** expressed feeling safer in a community setting, particularly on Hillside Garden
- 80%** felt more connected with the community and now have 'awe spots' - places to visit to feel better.

### Highlights and Achievements

The Green Shoots of Wellness is one of the diverse range of projects that has made great strides in supporting men to promote their mental health and wellness:

- **Signposting** participants to other support services.

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Email: [info@greensynergy.org.uk](mailto:info@greensynergy.org.uk) Web: [www.greensynergy.org.uk](http://www.greensynergy.org.uk)

- **Supporting learning:** The garden activities included workshops in areas such as how to compost, how to water the garden, how to do edging. The workshops empowered participants and increased the confidence of the participants in gardening.
- **Supporting participants** with skills and employment support to secure a job. One of the participants, who engaged in the project activities and attended training in sustainable gardening was offered a job as a Garden Assistant at a care home.
- **Person centred approach** in adapted activities during garden sessions to suit the needs of participants. Some of the participants have different needs and we adapted the activities and allowed them to identify and work on activities that they enjoy and get confidence in doing.
- **Supporting exploration:** We organised activities outside of the garden such as visit to Doddington Hall. Participants also baked and cooked food for a Garden Picnic.
- **Social Support:** Participants worked together on the garden, shared experiences. Interesting topics ranged from music, languages, books, movies, books and cultures.

## Project Impact

*"The project has been a success to me as I am confident and have been supported to learn new skills that increases chances of me being employed. Even if I am offered the job, I am already on a pathway to becoming a Volunteer at Green Synergy". Participant J 2023/24*

*"In the coming year, I will become a volunteer and I am pleased that staff at Green Synergy are willing and committed to support me on the volunteer journey". Participant C 2023/24*



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# Green WRAP



Green Wrap (Wellness recovery action planning) is a project supported by the Lincolnshire Mental Health and Wellbeing Community Investment Fund – Sustainability and takes the form of a 10-week programme of workshops. The activities are based on Wellness Recovery Action Planning, a structured personal recovery programme that is used to promote, enable and sustain recovery. As part of the WRAP project, participants can develop their own wellness toolbox, and Green WRAP does this with an emphasis on what can be discovered and worked with in nature. This may include developing daily maintenance plans, grounding techniques, learning about thinking patterns and how to change them, Mindfulness and techniques to support polyvagal theory. The project launched in 2023, and the programme was delivered to three cohorts across the year reaching **22** people and engaging with a variety of people with a mix of lived experience and support needs. The project used a person-centered approach which allowed the team to adapt our delivery to best meet the needs and desires of the people attending.



## Project outcomes achieved.

- 🚦 **71%** of participants reported improved mental health.
- 🚦 **59%** of the participants reported that their confidence had improved
- 🚦 **57%** of participants reported learning new personal and green skills.
- 🚦 **57%** of participants reported that their resilience and ability to manage life challenges has improved.

## Project Highlights and Achievements

- **Peer Support:** This featured heavily and added huge value to all of this year's groups. At every stage, participants worked together to support each other and share their tools and experiences which helped others to progress

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- **Signposting to other support services:** As participants shared what they were experiencing, the team identified some support area which required participant to access specialist services.
- **Programmes Adaptability:** The ability to be able to adapt to the needs of each group including moving from mindfulness to EFT tapping, which the group said they enjoyed much more.
- **Positive impact on participants:** The participants shared that WRAP provided a platform to articulate their mental health challenges without being judged and encouraged them to know and use Wellness Shed Tools.
- **Reduced isolation and harm:** Participants reported that the sessions had reduced incidents of isolation and self-harm. *"This is a positive midweek activity that I love to attend without fail, I am happy to belong to a positive group", explained one of the participants.*
- **Session Variety:** The addition of herbal workshops with a WRAP practitioner which added real value. The feedback from these sessions were extremely positive and we aim to continue adding these for sessions in every group

## Project Impact

*"I have gained confidence in this moment in life because coming to Green Wrap I have felt nothing but heard and responded to, the reason this has helped because I used to lose my confidence by thinking people are going to ignore me but I've never felt ignored here ever, I have also found skills to make me feel more open about talking first.*

*I have started to put my dream mindset in action and getting support from Green Wrap to do so, this has made me see and feel hope in the future, I also have learnt techniques to make it possible to do so. So, all together I am feeling hopeful." Participant L 2023/24*



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## Green Nature and Nurture



Green Nature and Nurture was funded by the Mental Health and Wellbeing Community Investment Fund – Innovation, delivered from May 2023 to March 2024. It was a project focused on improving the mental wellbeing of young adults aged between 18 and 30 with neurodiversity. The sessions were delivered once a week on Hillside Garden from 10:30 to 12:00 on Wednesdays. We used Hillside Community Garden as a safe, peaceful, and secure place to develop young adults' ability to mix socially, make friends and learn practical skills that will help them to be more independent, build resilience and can improve their physical and emotional wellbeing. As part of the project, the team delivered a number of activities around gardening, craft and exploration, some of these include helping with the general maintenance of Hillside Garden, making clay prints of leaves and going on trips.



### Project Outcomes

- 🚧 **90%** of participants reporting that they feel their wellbeing has improved.
- 🚧 **85%** of participants reporting that they feel their mental health has improved
- 🚧 **90%** of participants reporting that they have positive plans
- 🚧 **75%** of participants reporting that their confidence has increased.

### Project Highlights and Achievements

- **Signposting:** Participants were then signposted to our Green WRAP project if they required additional support and three of the participants attended our Green Wellness Recovery Action Planning Project.

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- **Improving Wellbeing:** The participants benefited from the sessions and were supported with wellness tools. The holistic person-centred approach meant that participants were supported to transition and improve their well-being.
- **Experiential Activities:** The group experienced visits to Woodside Wildlife Park, Sherwood Forest, Lincoln Castle and Lincoln Arboretum to immerse them in green spaces and these were great ways to get the young people out to places that they hadn't experienced before.
- **Building confidence:** Participants reported that before they joined Green Nature and Nurture Project in June 2023, they didn't have much confidence and struggled to find meaning to life. It also proved to be a valuable tool to help us see into the lives of young people and how we can further support them.
- **Responding to need:** The learning from this project has led onto another Innovation Fund project, Layers of Green, which we are delighted to report will be starting in May 2024.

## Project Impact

*"I was not happy and not in the best head space, I felt like I was just giving and was not fully living my life" But at the end of the project this person shared things such as "The sessions have given me a sense of routine and structure", "The sessions gave me something to look forward to", "I feel like I can be myself without being judged". They reported having a more positive outlook on life as a whole as they had been able to give their life meaning, they said "I have a more positive day-to-day". Green Nature & Nurture participant*



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## New to Nature



Made possible with  
**Heritage Fund**



New to Nature was an exciting programme of paid work placements in nature-focused roles. Our Garden and Horticulture Assistant role is one of 70 roles that has been created across the UK to encourage new and diverse talent into the Natural Environment sector. The project supported young people (aged 18-25) who are from ethnically diverse backgrounds, who are living with a disability or are from low-income households. Rebecca took part in the New to Nature programme as a Gardening and Horticulture Assistant with our charity and she had the opportunity to work alongside our Garden Manager in the gardens, learn about potential careers in the natural environment and connect with the other young people working in New to Nature roles across the country.

### Our Green Synergy Trainee

Speaking of her experience, Rebecca said:

*"To be supported is the best – it is what it should be, and no one should have to go through discrimination or bullying because of who they are. I understand what it feels like to be different and to feel like I can't communicate well. But there's always a way to communicate with people. You just have to think of a different way of going about it. Not everyone is going to think the same as you or be the same as you. So, it's all about adapting things for people. I personally have learnt a lot about myself and I feel like I'm becoming a better person because of being in this job."*

Read more about Rebecca's experience in this role [here](#).



**Rebecca alongside our Gardens Manager Ana.**

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## The Year Ahead – 2024-2025

2024/2025 represents a new and exciting phase of Green Synergy's development as the charity embarks on its new 2024-2027 Strategy 'Growing our Community Together' and our focus will be on Growing People, Growing Green Spaces Sustainably, Growing Communities and Partnerships, Growing Giving and Resources and Growing Sustainability. The focus on our charity's direction of travel is the vision of creating healthier and caring communities connecting nature, people and plants to inspire, enable and empower people in Greater Lincolnshire to meet, grow, learn and thrive through community gardening and connecting with nature. We look forward to working with and supporting our communities to grow and thrive along with our team and charity.

2024/2025 also represents a year of development for our project delivery of our mental health programmes as we introduce Layers of Green to our programme delivery for neurodiverse adults and continue to deliver the second year of Green WRAP and deliver Green Shoots of Wellness II to prevent suicides in Lincoln and surrounding areas.



The coming year also presents challenges for us and hard work to come as our Better Together funding is coming to an end and we are examining alternative funding sources. Our See How our Garden Grows project is also ending at the end of September but we are delighted to be able to share that the charity has secured four years of funding from the National Lottery Community Fund for our Branching Out project. The project will focus on continuing to build diverse income streams whilst reaching more communities and supporting them to socialise, learn and thrive.

Our children's project, Tower Power, comes to an end in September 2024 but we are delighted that BBC Children in Need have recognised the considerable needs of our local community and have grant funded the charity for a further three years to deliver our Family Nature Zone project.

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In response to our community listening, we will be starting to reach out to our considerable military veterans' community across Lincolnshire and developing new services and programmes to meet their needs.

As we look to build our financial resilience as a charity, we will be embarking on a number of local community commissioned projects across Lincoln and the surrounding areas to enable us to make a positive difference through gardening to local communities whilst building our contract income.

Core to the charity and our delivery is having a secure base of operations so finalising the lease for Hillside Garden with United Lincolnshire Hospital Trust is a key priority following the offer of a ten-year garden lease. We will also be finalising the twenty-five-year lease for Ellie's Memorial Garden with the City of Lincoln Council.

With the garden's management at the heart of our programmes, project and volunteering activities, we are making a commitment to increase the resilience of the garden to climate change by increasing more rainwater harvesting and also developing our charity income through new market garden produce for sales offers.

We will continue to support, develop and celebrate our incredible volunteers and our new strategy places a renewed focus on developing new partnerships and collaborations for us to work in synergy with.

Our team will continue to develop the ways in which we communicate our opportunities to reach more people - we recognise not everyone uses social media so we will use diverse methods to reach people. Our community engagement programme and the events we have planned for 2024/25 provides exciting opportunities for our communities to come together to enjoy the green spaces and have fun.

With the changes within our Trustee Board, we will seek to attract new trustees with the right skills sets and experience to support our charity for the future and we are continuing to place a significant importance on looking after the wellbeing of our team through wellbeing days and supervision support.



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## Financial Review 2023-2024

At the year end the charity's total income to 31st March 2024 had grown year to £386,036 compared to £325,842 in 2022/23. The expenditure to 31st March 31st, 2024, was recorded as £329,636 compared to £313,684 in 2023/2024 of which there were unrestricted reserves of £178,267 (2023: £39,746) and £87,485 (2023: £245,849) were restricted. The expenditure totalled resulting in a surplus of £56,400.

The total charity funds are £265,752 with a cash in bank position of £233,630.

Green Synergy has been fortunate to continue being supported by a number of our funders including:

- **BBC Children in Need** is supporting our Tower Power programme of activities for disadvantaged children from the local community.
- **National Lottery Community Fund** for See How Our Garden Grows to support organisational development, community engagement, outreach and events programmes. and to diversify income streams and develop trading and commissioning revenues.
- **Lincolnshire Co-op Community Champions** for our Plant to Plate programme the installation of a cob oven.
- **Lincolnshire Community Foundation** – for the delivery of slow cooker workshops
- **National Lottery Community Fund** for the collaborative project Better Together with Development plus and Abbey Access Training.

The charity was also pleased to secure a range of new funding to provide much needed mental health programme support for adults and children. These included:

- **National Grid Green Spaces Fund** to create a new Willow and Hazel Grove on Hillside Garden
- **NLCF The Community Organisations Cost of Living Fund** for the delivery of warm spaces, warm lunch and warm packs for our community.
- **People's Postcode Trust** for the delivery of our B2G Green Chances programme.
- **Groundwork UK – New to Nature Fund** for the recruitment and employment of a Garden and Horticulture Assistant Apprentice role for 12 months.
- **Lincolnshire County Council HAF Programme** for the delivery of the Holiday Activities and Food programmes.
- **LVET Health Inequalities VCSE Grant Fund** for the delivery of our Young Shoots project.
- **City of Lincoln Council Community Chest** for the Portland Street planter Phase 2 project.

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- **Lincolnshire County Council** for the Multiply Champions programme.
- **Lincolnshire Suicide Prevention Investment Fund Wave 3** for the delivery of the Green Shoots of Wellness project.
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing Investment Fund – Sustainability Strand** for the delivery of the Green WRAP programme.
- **Mental Health and Wellbeing Investment Fund –Innovation Strand** for the delivery of our Green Nature and Nurture project.
- **The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust** for the match funding for Green WRAP project.
- **Lloyds Bank Foundation Trading and Sustainability Programme** – in kind training support of £6,000

Some of these funds will be made available in future financial years and Green Synergy is very grateful to all its funders.

### Reserves Policy

As the charity delivers its objectives through running projects a lot of costs are budgeted for within the projects and only arise on the delivery of these projects. Due to this, and to manage risk, the Trustees aim to hold reserves equivalent to six months 'core' running costs of the charity.

### Management of Risk

Green Synergy carried out regular reviews of the charity's risk register and risk analysis and the Trustees review a summary risk register in quarterly governance cycles at Board meetings. The summary risk register includes the most important risks identified in the risk analysis plus important risks arising in current operations. Data security including cyber security is an increasing focus and the charity has reviewed its Data Protection Policy and procedures to comply with the UK's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). In 2023/2024 Green Synergy achieved Cyber Essentials accreditation.

Green Synergy takes the safeguarding of child, young people and adults at risk very seriously and in 2023/2024 the charity appointed a Board Safeguarding lead in addition to our Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Leads. Safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures are reviewed at least twice a year by the Chief Executive and reported to Trustees when new legislation or guidance is issued. External safeguarding training is compulsory for all new and current staff members and there is an on-going internal training, reviews of records of concern and case reviews and referrals if required.



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## Thank you to Our Funders

Without the vital funding and support provided to Green Synergy we could not support the many people we reach and support them to socialise, learn and thrive. We are indebted to these funders and donors, and we wanted to say a very big thank you to:

- ❖ National Lottery Community Fund – See How Our Garden Grows.
- ❖ BBC Children in Need
- ❖ National Lottery Community Fund – Reaching Communities funding the Better Together programme, funded by Reaching Communities. Lead partner Development Plus.
- ❖ HM Government NLCF The Community Organisations Cost of Living Fund
- ❖ People's Postcode Trust
- ❖ Heritage Lottery Fund & Groundwork – New to Nature Fund
- ❖ Lincolnshire Community Foundation
- ❖ Lincolnshire County Council HAF Programme
- ❖ City of Lincoln Council Community Chest
- ❖ Lincolnshire County Council – Multiply Champions Funding
- ❖ LVET Health Inequalities VCSE Grant Fund
- ❖ Lincolnshire Suicide Prevention Investment Fund Wave 3
- ❖ Mental Health and Wellbeing Investment Fund – Sustainability Strand
- ❖ Mental Health and Wellbeing Investment Fund – Sustainability Strand
- ❖ The D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust
- ❖ National Grid Green Spaces Fund
- ❖ Lloyds Bank Foundation Trading and Sustainability Programme.
- ❖ University of Lincoln – Nebula Festival
- ❖ Waitrose
- ❖ Lincolnshire Co-op
- ❖ The Co-operative
- ❖ Aubourn Hall and Gardens
- ❖ Wickes Lincoln
- ❖ Lincolnshire Prison and Probation Services Community Payback Woodworking workshop – donating planters for sale
- ❖ Pennells Garden Centres.
- ❖ Mc Donalds
- ❖ Starbucks
- ❖ Majestic Wine

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## **Green Synergy Small companies provision statement**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the small companies' regime under the Companies Act 2006.

### **Statement of Responsibilities**

The trustees (who are also the directors of Green Synergy for the purposes of company law) are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice), including FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland". The report and accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions in the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies. Company law requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year. Under company law the trustees must not approve the financial statements unless they are satisfied that they give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including its income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and apply them consistently.
- observe the methods and principles in the Charities SORP.
- make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent.
- state whether applicable accounting standards, comprising FRS 102 have been followed, subject
- to any material departures disclosed and explained in the financial statements; and
- prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records that can disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities. The trustees are responsible for the maintenance and integrity of the corporate and financial information included on the charitable company's website.



Legislation governing the preparation and dissemination of financial statements may differ from legislation in other jurisdictions.

The annual report was approved by the trustees of the charity on **29 November 2024** and signed on its behalf by:

**Ms Caty Collier: Interim Chair**



### ***Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Green Synergy ('the Company')***

I report to the charity trustees on my examination of the accounts of the company for the year ended 31 March 2024.

#### ***Responsibilities and basis of report***

As the charity's trustees of the Company (and also its directors for the purposes of company law) you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 ('the 2006 Act').

Having satisfied myself that the accounts of the Company are not required to be audited under Part 16 of the 2006 Act and are eligible for independent examination, I report in respect of my examination of your charity's accounts as carried out under section 145 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the 2011 Act'). In carrying out my examination I have followed the Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act.

#### ***Independent examiner's statement***

Since the Company's gross income exceeded £250,000 your examiner must be a member of a body listed in section 145 of the 2011 Act. I confirm that I am qualified to undertake the examination because I am a member and Fellow of the Association of Charity Independent Examiners, which is one of the listed bodies.

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination giving me cause to believe that in any material respect:

1. accounting records were not kept in respect of the Company as required by section 386 of the 2006 Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the accounting requirements of section 396 of the 2006 Act other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination; or
4. the accounts have not been prepared in accordance with the methods and principles of the Statement of Recommended Practice for accounting and reporting by charities [applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)].

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attentions should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

.....  
John O'Brien MSc, FAIA, FCCA, FCIE, employee of Community Accounting Plus  
Fellow of the Association of Charity Independent Examiners

Units 1 & 2 North West  
41 Talbot Street  
Nottingham  
NG1 5GL

Date:.....03/12/2024.....





## Green Synergy

### Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2024 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains)

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
<b>Income and Endowments from:</b>					
Donations and legacies	2	7,093	-	7,093	32,668
Charitable activities	3	34,493	342,262	376,755	292,321
Investment income	5	2,188	-	2,188	853
Total income		<u>43,774</u>	<u>342,262</u>	<u>386,036</u>	<u>325,842</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>					
Charitable activities	6	<u>(12,188)</u>	<u>(317,448)</u>	<u>(329,636)</u>	<u>(313,684)</u>
Total expenditure		<u>(12,188)</u>	<u>(317,448)</u>	<u>(329,636)</u>	<u>(313,684)</u>
Net income		<u>31,586</u>	<u>24,814</u>	<u>56,400</u>	<u>12,158</u>
Net movement in funds		31,586	24,814	56,400	12,158
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>					
Total funds brought forward		<u>147,170</u>	<u>62,182</u>	<u>209,352</u>	<u>197,194</u>
Total funds carried forward	12	<u><u>178,756</u></u>	<u><u>86,996</u></u>	<u><u>265,752</u></u>	<u><u>209,352</u></u>

All of the charity's activities derive from continuing operations during the above two periods.

The funds breakdown for the period is shown in note 12.

The notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

## Green Synergy

### Statement of Financial Activities for the Year Ended 31 March 2024 (Including Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Total Recognised Gains)

These are the figures for the previous accounting period and are included for comparative purposes

	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £
<b>Income and Endowments from:</b>				
Donations and legacies	2	32,668	-	32,668
Charitable activities	3	41,189	251,132	292,321
Investment income	5	853	-	853
Total income		<u>74,710</u>	<u>251,132</u>	<u>325,842</u>
<b>Expenditure on:</b>				
Charitable activities	6	<u>(20,821)</u>	<u>(292,863)</u>	<u>(313,684)</u>
Total expenditure		<u>(20,821)</u>	<u>(292,863)</u>	<u>(313,684)</u>
Net income/(expenditure)		53,889	(41,731)	12,158
Transfers between funds		<u>21,067</u>	<u>(21,067)</u>	-
Net movement in funds		74,956	(62,798)	12,158
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>				
Total funds brought forward		<u>72,214</u>	<u>124,980</u>	<u>197,194</u>
Total funds carried forward	12	<u><u>147,170</u></u>	<u><u>62,182</u></u>	<u><u>209,352</u></u>

The notes form an integral part of these financial statements.



## Green Synergy

### (Registration number: 08399741) Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2024

	Note	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Fixed assets</b>			
Tangible assets	9	26,848	31,499
<b>Current assets</b>			
Debtors	10	16,304	158
Cash at bank and in hand		<u>233,630</u>	<u>183,429</u>
		249,934	183,587
<b>Creditors: Amounts falling due within one year</b>	11	<u>(11,030)</u>	<u>(5,734)</u>
<b>Net current assets</b>		<u>238,904</u>	<u>177,853</u>
<b>Net assets</b>		<u><u>265,752</u></u>	<u><u>209,352</u></u>
<b>Funds of the charity:</b>			
<b>Restricted income funds</b>			
Restricted funds	12	86,996	62,182
<b>Unrestricted income funds</b>			
Unrestricted funds		<u>178,756</u>	<u>147,170</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	12	<u><u>265,752</u></u>	<u><u>209,352</u></u>

For the financial year ending 31 March 2024, the charity was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

#### Directors' responsibilities:

- The members have not required the charity to obtain an audit of its accounts for the year in question in accordance with section 476; and
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the special provisions relating to companies subject to the small companies regime within Part 15 of the Companies Act 2006.

The financial statements on pages 5 to 16 were approved by the trustees, and authorised for issue on November 29<sup>th</sup> 2024 and signed on their behalf by:



Caty Collier  
Interim Chair

The notes form an integral part of these financial statements.

## **Green Synergy**

### **Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024**

#### **1 Accounting policies**

##### **Summary of significant accounting policies and key accounting estimates**

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

##### **Statement of compliance**

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)) (issued in October 2019) - (Charities SORP (FRS 102)), the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) and the Companies Act 2006.

##### **Basis of preparation**

Green Synergy meets the definition of a public benefit entity under FRS 102. Assets and liabilities are initially recognised at historical cost or transaction value unless otherwise stated in the relevant accounting policy notes.

##### **Going concern**

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

The trustees assess whether the use of going concern is appropriate i.e. whether there are any material uncertainties related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the ability of the charity to continue as a going concern. The trustees make this assessment in respect of a period of one year from the date of approval of the financial statements.

##### **Exemption from preparing a cash flow statement**

Under the exemption available to smaller charities the Board of Trustees has chosen not to include a Statement of Cash Flows within the financial statements.

##### **Income and endowments**

Voluntary income including donations, gifts, legacies and grants that provide core funding or are of a general nature is recognised when the charity has entitlement to the income, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability.

##### ***Donations and legacies***

Donations are recognised when the charity has been notified in writing of both the amount and settlement date. In the event that a donation is subject to conditions that require a level of performance by the charity before the charity is entitled to the funds, the income is deferred and not recognised until either those conditions are fully met, or the fulfilment of those conditions is wholly within the control of the charity and it is probable that these conditions will be fulfilled in the reporting period.

##### ***Investment income***

Dividends are recognised once the dividend has been declared and notification has been received of the dividend due.

## Green Synergy

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

#### Expenditure

All expenditure is recognised once there is a legal or constructive obligation to that expenditure, it is probable settlement is required and the amount can be measured reliably. All costs are allocated to the applicable expenditure heading that aggregate similar costs to that category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated on a basis consistent with the use of resources, with central staff costs allocated on the basis of time spent, and depreciation charges allocated on the portion of the asset's use. Other support costs are allocated based on the spread of staff costs.

#### Charitable activities

Charitable expenditure comprises those costs incurred by the charity in the delivery of its activities and services for its beneficiaries. It includes both costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

#### Taxation

The charity is considered to pass the tests set out in Paragraph 1 Schedule 6 of the Finance Act 2010 and therefore it meets the definition of a charitable company for UK corporation tax purposes. Accordingly, the charity is potentially exempt from taxation in respect of income or capital gains received within categories covered by Chapter 3 Part 11 of the Corporation Tax Act 2010 or Section 256 of the Taxation of Chargeable Gains Act 1992, to the extent that such income or gains are applied exclusively to charitable purposes.

#### Tangible fixed assets

Individual fixed assets costing £500.00 or more are initially recorded at cost.

#### Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation is provided on tangible fixed assets so as to write off the cost or valuation, less any estimated residual value, over their expected useful economic life as follows:

Asset class	Depreciation method and rate
Plant & machinery	10% on cost
Fixtures & fittings	25% on reducing balance
Motor vehicles	25% on reducing balance
Computer equipment	25% on reducing balance
Land and buildings	10% on cost

#### Trade debtors

Trade debtors are amounts due from customers for merchandise sold or services performed in the ordinary course of business.

Trade debtors are recognised initially at the transaction price. They are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, less provision for impairment. A provision for the impairment of trade debtors is established when there is objective evidence that the charity will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of the receivables.

#### Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents comprise cash on hand and call deposits, and other short-term highly liquid investments that are readily convertible to a known amount of cash and are subject to an insignificant risk of change in value.



## Green Synergy

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

#### Fund structure

Unrestricted income funds are general funds that are available for use at the trustees' discretion in furtherance of the objectives of the charity.

Restricted income funds are those grants for use in a particular area or for specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose.

#### Pensions and other post retirement obligations

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme which is a pension plan under which fixed contributions are paid into a pension fund and the charity has no legal or constructive obligation to pay further contributions even if the fund does not hold sufficient assets to pay all employees the benefits relating to employee service in the current and prior periods.

Contributions to defined contribution plans are recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities when they are due. If contribution payments exceed the contribution due for service, the excess is recognised as a prepayment.

#### 2 Income from donations and legacies

	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Donations and legacies;			
Donations from companies, trusts and similar proceeds	-	-	31,130
Donations from individuals	7,093	7,093	1,538
	<u>7,093</u>	<u>7,093</u>	<u>32,668</u>

#### 3 Income from charitable activities

##### Unrestricted funds

	General £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Grants & donations	-	342,262	342,262	251,132
Sales, fees and services	34,493	-	34,493	40,100
Events & activities	-	-	-	1,009
Sundry receipts	-	-	-	80
	<u>34,493</u>	<u>342,262</u>	<u>376,755</u>	<u>292,321</u>

## Green Synergy

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

#### 4 Grants & donations

	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total £
Urban Challenge	-	1,553	1,553
Development Plus	-	60,887	60,887
People's Postcode Places	-	25,000	25,000
Lincolnshire County Council	-	43,571	43,571
D'Oyly Carte Charitable Trust	-	3,500	3,500
Groundwork	-	3,341	3,341
Earnest Cook	-	89	89
Children in Need	-	32,829	32,829
LVET	-	5,000	5,000
The National Lottery Community Fund	-	109,004	109,004
Community Organisation Cost of Living Fund	-	43,824	43,824
Lincolnshire Community Foundation	-	3,000	3,000
Sundry	7,093	520	7,613
National Grid	-	10,000	10,000
Sage Gardener	-	144	144
	<u>7,093</u>	<u>342,262</u>	<u>349,355</u>

#### 5 Investment income

	Unrestricted funds General £	Total 2024 £
Interest receivable and similar income;		
Interest receivable on bank deposits	2,188	2,188
	<u>2,188</u>	<u>2,188</u>

## Green Synergy

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

#### 6 Expenditure on charitable activities

	Unrestricted funds General	Restricted funds	Total 2024	Total 2023
	£	£	£	£
Charitable activities	120	-	120	-
Activities	9,716	5,635	15,351	13,936
Equipment repairs & renewals	3,880	18,737	22,617	14,763
Sessional workers	-	22,446	22,446	7,859
Trips & events	-	3,903	3,903	1,944
Volunteer expenses	-	484	484	6,763
Bank charges	3	-	3	48
Insurances	2,220	-	2,220	2,062
IT costs	6,191	230	6,421	4,766
Legal & professional fees	4,154	355	4,509	9,250
Marketing	1,147	126	1,273	1,599
Office rent & rates	3,405	10	3,415	4,124
Office repairs & maintenance	3,855	1,666	5,521	1,283
Office costs	4,051	380	4,431	4,622
Utilities	2,807	-	2,807	4,187
Salaries NI & pensions	9,861	205,466	215,327	217,308
Recruitment	672	240	912	1,560
Supervision	-	330	330	660
Depreciation	4,652	-	4,652	5,527
Staff costs, training & travel	5,474	7,195	12,669	8,757
Allocation of overheads	(50,216)	50,216	-	-
Sundry	196	29	225	2,666
	<u>12,188</u>	<u>317,448</u>	<u>329,636</u>	<u>313,684</u>

#### 7 Net incoming/outgoing resources

Net incoming resources for the year include:

	2024 £	2023 £
Depreciation of fixed assets	<u>4,652</u>	<u>5,527</u>



## Green Synergy

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

#### 8 Staff costs

The aggregate payroll costs were as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
<b>Staff costs during the year were:</b>		
Wages and salaries	196,813	201,204
Social security costs	13,773	12,178
Pension costs	4,741	3,926
	<u>215,327</u>	<u>217,308</u>

The monthly average number of persons (including senior management team) employed by the charity during the year was as follows:

2024 No	2023 No
Average number of employees	<u>11</u> <u>12</u>

11 (2023 - 12) of the above employees participated in the Defined Contribution Pension Schemes.

Contributions to the employee pension schemes for the year totalled £4,742 (2023 - £3,926).

No employee received emoluments of more than £60,000 during the year.

The chief executive officer, as the highest paid member of staff, received benefits totalling £55,088 (2023 - £29,648).

## Green Synergy

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

#### 9 Tangible fixed assets

	Land and buildings £	Fixtures & fittings £	Computer equipment £	Plant & machinery £	Total £
<b>Cost</b>					
At 1 April 2023	23,408	7,591	10,427	3,000	44,426
At 31 March 2024	23,408	7,591	10,427	3,000	44,426
<b>Depreciation</b>					
At 1 April 2023	2,340	5,591	3,770	1,226	12,927
Charge for the year	2,340	500	1,664	147	4,651
At 31 March 2024	4,680	6,091	5,434	1,373	17,578
<b>Net book value</b>					
At 31 March 2024	18,728	1,500	4,993	1,627	26,848
At 31 March 2023	21,068	2,000	6,657	1,774	31,499

#### 10 Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Trade debtors	16,304	-
Other debtors	-	158
	<u>16,304</u>	<u>158</u>

#### 11 Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2024 £	2023 £
Other taxation and social security	4,752	3,788
Other creditors	6,278	1,946
	<u>11,030</u>	<u>5,734</u>

## Green Synergy

### Notes to the Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2024

#### 12 Funds

	Balance at 1 April 2023 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Balance at 31 March 2024 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>				
<i>General</i>				
General Fund	147,170	43,774	(12,188)	178,756
<b>Restricted funds</b>				
Adult Projects	7,059	135,281	(110,061)	32,279
Children's Projects	9,155	40,490	(43,394)	6,251
Community Engagement & events	43,548	156,491	(153,993)	46,046
National Grid	2,269	-	-	2,269
Suicide Prevention	151	-	-	151
Willow & Hazel Grove	-	10,000	(10,000)	-
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>62,182</u>	<u>342,262</u>	<u>(317,448)</u>	<u>86,996</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	<u><u>209,352</u></u>	<u><u>386,036</u></u>	<u><u>(329,636)</u></u>	<u><u>265,752</u></u>

	Balance at 1 April 2022 £	Incoming resources £	Resources expended £	Transfers £	Balance at 31 March 2023 £
<b>Unrestricted funds</b>					
<i>General</i>					
General Fund	72,214	74,710	(20,821)	21,067	147,170
<b>Restricted</b>					
Adult Projects	77,842	80,902	(130,618)	(21,067)	7,059
Children's Projects	9,346	50,286	(50,477)	-	9,155
Community Engagement & events	35,452	109,905	(101,809)	-	43,548
National Grid	-	10,039	(7,770)	-	2,269
Suicide Prevention	2,340	-	(2,189)	-	151
<b>Total restricted funds</b>	<u>124,980</u>	<u>251,132</u>	<u>(292,863)</u>	<u>(21,067)</u>	<u>62,182</u>
<b>Total funds</b>	<u><u>197,194</u></u>	<u><u>325,842</u></u>	<u><u>(313,684)</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>209,352</u></u>

The specific purposes for which the funds are to be applied are as follows:

A full description of the funds is contained in the Trustees annual report.



### 13 Analysis of net assets between funds

	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total funds at 31 March 2024 £
Tangible fixed assets	26,848	-	26,848
Current assets	151,908	98,026	249,934
Current liabilities	-	(11,030)	(11,030)
Total net assets	<u>178,756</u>	<u>86,996</u>	<u>265,752</u>
	Unrestricted funds General £	Restricted funds £	Total funds at 31 March 2023 £
Tangible fixed assets	31,499	-	31,499
Current assets	115,671	67,916	183,587
Current liabilities	-	(5,734)	(5,734)
Total net assets	<u>147,170</u>	<u>62,182</u>	<u>209,352</u>

### 14 Fees payable to independent examiner

During the period, the fees payable (excluding VAT) to the charity's independent examiner Community Accounting Plus are analysed as follows:

	2024 £	2023 £
Independent examination	1,330	1,200
Other financial services	850	-
	<u>2,180</u>	<u>1,200</u>

### 15 Taxation

The charity is a registered charity and is therefore exempt from taxation.

### 16 Trustees remuneration and expenses

No trustees, nor any persons connected with them, have received any remuneration from the charity during the year.

No trustees have received any reimbursed expenses or any other benefits from the charity during the year.

### 17 Related party transactions

There were no related party transactions in the year.



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## GREEN SYNERGY

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Green Synergy is a well-respected Lincoln based gardening and horticulture charity that supports people to socialise, learn and thrive. Our charity currently manages two community gardens, Hillside Garden and Ellie's Memorial Garden as well as developing outreach urban gardening. Our work supports people of all ages in the most under-served communities in Lincolnshire to improve their mental and physical wellbeing.

Our programmes focus on supporting people in the most deprived communities in Lincolnshire to improve their mental and physical wellbeing whilst managing the green spaces in environmentally responsible ways. We deliver community gardening and therapeutic horticulture programmes, volunteering, warm and cool spaces hub activities and community engagement events to bring people together in gardens and green spaces and to support people living in Lincolnshire to come together, meet new people and have fun.

2023 was our 10th anniversary as a charity and Green Synergy was proud to have won the Best Gardening and Horticulture Charity- East Midlands in the Non-Profit Organisation Awards.

Charity Number: 1153883

