

EDINBURGH GARDEN PARTNERS

**Annual Report and Accounts
for the Year Ended 31st March 2024**

Edinburgh Garden Partners

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Trustees' Report

Board of Trustees and Administration Details

Edinburgh Garden Partners (EGP) was established as a company limited by guarantee and recognised as a charity in Scotland (No. SC042164) on 11 March 2011. It converted to a Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation on 14 December 2015 and is governed by its constitution.

The structure of the charity consists of the Charity Trustees, who are also the organisation's only members and comprise the organisation's board. The board may at any time appoint new trustees and at each AGM trustees stand down but may be re-elected.

The Objects of the Charity

The charity's objects, as set out in its constitution are:

- to advance the health of the community through promoting and enabling gardening activities in the local area and the growing and consumption of local and organic food;
- to advance citizenship and community development through volunteer gardening and other volunteer opportunities in line with our objectives;
- to promote environmental protection and improvement through the promotions of sustainable and environmentally friendly methods of gardening;
- to relieve those in need by reason of age, ill-health, disability or other disadvantage, through helping them to maintain and cultivate their gardens, and/or enabling them to participate in and gain from the therapeutic benefits of gardening; and
- to advance the education of the public in horticulture and related environmental issues

Edinburgh Garden Partners' Strategy

EGP has a clear vision, which was reaffirmed in a strategy review in 2022: We strive for sustainable, connected communities, where everyone lives well and has space to grow. Our work aims to strengthen communities by creating relationships between people who want a space to grow and those who have garden space to share. We connect people of different ages, abilities, and backgrounds to build a shared gardening movement through the exchange of skills, knowledge, and life experience. All of this is guided by our values:

- We are **inclusive** and strive to bring people together in a spirit of shared endeavour.
- We are **nurturing** of gardens, of relationships and of ourselves.
- We are **open** to new ideas, new ways of working, and in the way we communicate.
- We are **collaborative** and believe that our organisation, partnerships and communities are stronger when we work together.
- We are **resourceful** in our gardens and in our organisation, making the most of what we have and sharing our time, knowledge and skills.
- We **care about the environment** and are committed to promoting sustainable practices and respect for our planet.

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Trustees' Report (continued)

Review of activities

EGP continues to be motivated by strengthening our connections to each other and enhancing our relationship with food and nature. This year, at our strategy review, we organised our activity into five workstreams that will allow us to be more focused in delivering our mission.

1. Sustain our garden partnerships, nurturing the breadth and quality of relationships between owners and volunteers within these, and build a bank of evidence for this.

Sustaining and nurturing our garden partnerships is the core of EGP's work. Over the year, we have maintained a steady level of partnerships, supporting 50 volunteers and 47 garden owners over the year. Together with a sustained level of interest and referrals, this demonstrates the relevance and need for garden sharing in communities across Edinburgh.

Our annual volunteer survey indicates that our community feels well supported and values both the space to grow and the social connection that garden sharing offers. We continue to learn and develop how we support garden partners. This year, our staff have benefited from training on befriending and dementia awareness and communication, all of which will enhance the way we work with volunteers and garden owners.

2. Develop further opportunities for people to contribute to and collaborate with EGP, increasing volunteer capacity and strengthening partnerships.

This year EGP organised more opportunities for learning and connecting than ever before. A programme of community events included spring and autumn foraging walks, our annual seed swap, garden owner coffee mornings, and workshops on chutney making, mushroom growing and wreath making. All of this allowed us to connect with new and existing partners, including Bridgend Farmhouse, Granton Community Gardeners, Jupiter Artland, and the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh.

Alongside these in-person activities, we have also seen increased engagement in WhatsApp groups, with volunteers celebrating growing successes and swapping plants and tools; and we have begun to advertise through new channels, including using community Facebook groups to reach particular neighbourhoods.

This activity helps us to build community among our volunteers and garden owners and strengthen their connection with EGP. Through this, we have also developed new partnerships and generated new enquiries, which allows us to connect with different people and communities across Edinburgh.

3. Prioritise building diversity in our community and encouraging people of all different ages, abilities and backgrounds to get involved with our work.

EGP is working across a number of areas to reduce barriers to inclusion and to increase diversity in our garden sharing community. We continue to iterate the way we communicate our values, and this year have seen the positive impact of this in our recruitment. We have developed a new Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Commitment, which aims to open up a conversation and build understanding among our volunteers and garden owners. Alongside this, we continue to build relationships with organisations who can help us to connect with different communities in Edinburgh, including Milan SWO, NKS and Rowan Alba.

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Trustees' Report (continued)

A highlight of the year was our pilot project with The Welcoming: 'Friends through plants'. We created four new partnerships involving refugees and asylum seekers and supported them to grow together over the summer. Through this, we have learnt lots about the benefits of knowledge and cultural exchange, about partnership, and about how we can support refugees and asylum seekers to participate in garden sharing. Moving forward, we hope to integrate this learning into our core work.

4. Share and promote the EGP model with others and develop ideas for expanding the scope of our work, in line with our key values and mission.

At the start of the year, we planned out activity that would enable us to share our learning with others more effectively. We pulled together 'frequently asked questions', drafted an information pack and held a networking session for groups trying to develop their own garden sharing projects. From this, we were invited to visit and share our learning with 'Grow Dundee'. It has been hugely fulfilling to see their project develop as a direct result of our experience.

In addition, we continue to invest time connecting with other organisations and attending local and national events. We know that this enables us to raise awareness and to build partnerships that enhance our work. We continue to see the benefits of this in the shape of new referrals, new collaborations, and new funding opportunities.

5. Build further resilience into EGP - including the background processes, governance structures and finances - to ensure the organisation is equipped to deal with change.

We know that the continuing success of EGP is built on the people within the organisation. This year we have successfully recruited a new Volunteering Development Coordinator and three new trustees. These appointments have brought in new skills and perspectives that have benefited EGP already, and which will contribute to our stability in the years ahead.

We are grateful to our current funders who make our work possible: Edinburgh Health and Social Care Partnership, The National Lottery Community Fund and Vegware Community Fund. The year ahead will be an important one for planning and securing funding for the future, and it is good to be able to do this from a stable financial position.

Financial review

The accounts have been compiled on a receipts and payments basis. At the year-end cash reserves stood at £71,802 of which £23,982 was unrestricted. It is the trustees' policy to maintain sufficient reserves to cover staff and operating costs for three months. At the end of the year this had been achieved.

Approved by the Trustees on 14 September 2024 and signed on their behalf:



Trustee

Edinburgh Garden Partners

Annual Report and Accounts for the Year Ended 31st March 2024

Independent Examiner's Report to the Board of Trustees of Edinburgh Garden Partners

I report on the accounts of the charity for the year ended 31st March 2024.

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The charity's Trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the terms of the Charities and Trustee Investment (Scotland) Act 2005 and the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006.

The Trustees consider that the audit requirement of Regulation 10(1) (d) of the Accounts Regulations does not apply. It is my responsibility to examine the accounts as required under section 44(1) (c) of the Act and to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's statement

My examination is carried out in accordance with Regulation 11 of the Charities Accounts (Scotland) Regulations 2006. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts and seeks explanations from the trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

Independent examiner's statement

In the course of my examination, no matter has come to my attention

1. which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with Section 44(1) (a) of the 2005 Act and Regulation 4 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations, and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with Regulation 9 of the 2006 Accounts Regulations have not been met, or

2. to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed

Date: 20/9/2024

Edinburgh Garden Partners
Receipts and Payments Account for the Year Ended
31st March 2024

	Restricted funds £	Unrestricted funds £	Total 2023/24 £	Total 2022/23 £
<u>Receipts</u>				
Grants	53,368	1,800	55,168	55,485
Donations	-	74	74	394
Total receipts	53,368	1,874	55,242	55,879
<u>Payments</u>				
Payments for charitable activities:				
Staff costs	41,019	230	41,249	47,373
Project support costs	941	-	941	-
Volunteer costs	163	310	473	-
Events	497	-	497	1,678
Materials and equipment	63	-	63	77
Office costs and subscriptions	1,261	-	1,261	1,585
Insurance	734	-	734	565
Telephone	301	-	301	238
Travel and subsistence	232	-	232	478
Legal and professional costs	377	-	377	434
IT and Website	264	-	264	490
Misc. expenses	105	-	105	125
Governance costs:				
Accounts and independent examination	800	-	800	780
Trustee recruitment & other expenses	168	-	168	328
Purchase of assets:				
Office equipment	198	-	198	-
Total payments	47,123	540	47,663	54,151
Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-
Surplus/(deficit) for year	6,245	1,334	7,579	1,728
Cash funds brought forward	41,575	22,648	64,223	62,495
Cash funds carried forward	47,820	23,982	71,802	64,223

Edinburgh Garden Partners **Receipts and Payments Account for the Year Ended** **31st March 2024**

Bank and cash on hand

	2023/24	2022/23
	£	£
Opening balances	64,223	62,495
Surplus / (deficit) for year	7,579	1,728
Closing balances	71,802	64,223

Restricted funds

	Cash at 01/04/2023	Received	Paid	Cash at 31/03/2024
	£	£	£	£
The National Lottery Community Fund	40,849	29,400	(29,176)	41,073
Edinburgh Integration Joint Board	726	23,968	(17,947)	6,747
	41,575	53,368	(47,123)	47,820

The National Lottery Community Fund - Improving Lives

Funding to allow us to continue working towards our key mission to reduce loneliness and social isolation in Edinburgh through building relationships between garden owners and volunteers who are looking for space to grow.

Edinburgh Integration Joint Board

Funding to develop and run a project with BAME communities in partnership with Networking Key Services and other relevant organisations.

Assets

At the year end, in addition to the cash in the bank, Edinburgh Garden Partners had equipment valued at approximately £468 (2023: £528).

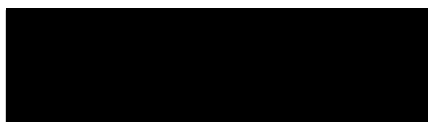
Liabilities

At the year end, the charity owed £135 for employment costs and unpaid bills (2023: £560).

Trustee expenses

The members of the Board of Trustees did not receive any remuneration in either year and only reimbursement of approved expenses incurred in the performance of their duties as Trustees. One trustee received expenses totalling £20 to attend a conference (2023: nil). No other expense payments to trustees were made in the year.

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 14 September 2024 and signed on its behalf



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Trustee

