



Granton Community Gardeners Trustees' Annual Report

1st February 2025 to 31st January
2026



info@grantoncommunitygardeners.org

Signed:

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "F. Boesche".

Frauke Boesche (Chair)



Charity Name: Granton Community Gardeners SCIO

Scottish Charity Number: SC047087

Address. C/O Royston Wardieburn Community Centre

Edinburgh

Postcode: EH5 1NF

Email address: info@grantoncommunitygardeners.org

<http://www.facebook.com/grantoncommunitygardeners>

www.grantoncommunitygardeners.org

Charity Trustees

Name all of your charity trustees for the period, and the date they arrived/left if they were not in post for the whole year

1. Frauke Boesche (chair)
2. Nathalie Nagues (treasurer)
3. Eleanor Ryan-Saha (secretary).
4. Alexandra Hurcikova.
5. Georgia Forsyth-Sijpestijn
6. Mizan Rahman
7. Marie-Amélie Viatte



Community Lunch May 2025

Objectives and activities

Granton Community Gardeners began as a group of neighbours who decided to work together to turn a plot of waste ground into a community garden. We set up as a charity in order to be able to support more residents in our area to do similar things, and to pursue the following aims:

1.To support the advancement of a well functioning community with an increasingly healthy social, environmental, and economic fabric. Particularly by creating opportunities for people to meet together around food (growing cooking and eating) and by supporting those who take initiative on this.

2.To promote environmental improvement, including protecting and increasing biodiversity, by creatively imagining the best uses for our open spaces, and by caring for these spaces, particularly community gardens.

3.To advance health and wellbeing, both physical and mental, by:
i. facilitating and supporting access to gardening opportunities, and other community events.

ii. contributing to improved diet through increased access to, and availability of, fresh local produce.

4.To advance education and skills, particularly related to food (growing, cooking, and eating).



Gardening Club September 2025

Our activities over the past year have included:

1/ Our weekly gardening club

Wednesday Gardening Club is a weekly open afternoon drop-in session where everyone is welcome. These sessions are hosted by members of staff, who can give guidance and find suitable seasonal tasks for all abilities and skill/confidence levels. This is a busy and friendly group, who maintain the garden, grow substantial amounts of food, and share knowledge and skills.

During Gardening Club, we are open for the public to visit the garden, including our free shop, and to join



Gardening club January 2026

us for our weekly free Community Lunch. It's a place where anyone can come and get food, clothes, and other items. No one needs to have money, and everyone has the opportunity to contribute in some practical way.

We aim to host the garden in a way that provides a safe context for community members to work together, and provide for each other in a way in which everyone benefits.



Everyone should have the chance to pick and eat fresh raspberries!

We were open 50 Wednesdays of the year (in all weathers!) with an average 51.8 participants, and a high of 125.

2/ Women's Cooking Club

Every Wednesday in school term time we've run Women's Cooking Club. This is a partnership project with Pilton Community Health Project, and is a two hour group, where local women meet and cook together, including taking it in turns to teach others to make cultural dishes and specialities. Thanks to a partnership with nearby Lauriston Farm we're able to use local seasonal fresh vegetables throughout the year. Our community bakery also provides fresh bread each week. Most of the year the group cook outdoors in our community garden, but in the Winter we use an indoor space at the Health Project.



Meals are always made with lots of fresh ingredients

A few comments from participants about what they liked:

“Meeting new people, learning new recipes and having fun while we cook”

“This group brings all people together from different cultures and backgrounds. We all mix together and get on”

“Very interactive group, very Educational and lots of support from the group. Meeting new people and sharing ideas and recipes. The environment in general is very helpful and healing”

“Staff are very welcoming and looks like you came your own house”

“I learned new recipes and also, I improved my English language”

3/ Hosting Free Community Meals

Hosting Community Meals is a core part of our work. Over the past year we hosted 62 different events which included a meal. The average number of diners/participants was 55.3.



Every Wednesday lunchtime we share a meal in the garden

In a society where it's very common to eat alone, or only with close friends or immediate family, we've found that creating a culture of shared meals, with neighbours, and wider community members, has a wide range of benefits.

The shared meal table is at the core of our organisation. It is the place where people can connect, and get to know each other. Sometimes this is a gradual process, especially where there are language barriers. Local news is shared, ideas can be floated and shared plans made.

As well as our weekly Community Lunches, we've partnered with local charity Scran Academy to provide monthly evening meals at the garden using the Scran Van, (their catering van). These are always at 5pm, which can be a sunny relaxed afternoon in summer, or a chilly evening in Winter.



Scran Van meal July 2025

4/ Providing training and workshops

We've continued to provide various skills workshops according to demand, including sourdough baking, fruit tree pruning, winter wreath making, seed saving, and more.

5/ Hosting Large Community Events.

Our biggest two events of the year were our Burns Night Community Ceilidh (a partnership with Pilton Community Health Project, Royston Wardieburn Community Centre, Tinderbox, and others), and our Harvest Festival. Both involved large numbers of local people contributing performances, helping serve food, decorating venues, etc. We also contributed to the busy North Edinburgh Community Festival held in West Pilton Park in May.



Burns Community Ceilidh, January 2026



Harvest Festival September 2025

8/ Granton Nature Project

Building on our previous biodiversity work, we took big steps forward this year. In March we hosted an ecology day in partnership with RSPB, and The Natural History Museum. In July we created the new part time post of 'Community Ecologist'. This has enabled us to run a regular program of events and activities, including a new fortnightly Saturday group who meet to do practical tasks in the garden and throughout the local area, related to improving biodiversity. Other activities have included biodiversity surveying -including a nocturnal bug survey at our garden, in partnership with entomologists from the National Museum of Scotland. We've also done birdwatching and tree walks, whale watching, planting wildflowers, fungi surveys, shoreline surveys, and have worked with groups of all ages, including the local Brownies and Rainbows, and church coffee mornings. In total our Community Ecologist has engaged with 19 local organisations, run 22 public engagement events, and involved over 101 local people in citizen science to record over 400 species in our local area.



Deploying native oysters from a boat as part of Restoration Forth reintroduction program.

In addition to all this activity, we've run a series of consultations: including an online survey, in person focus groups, garden events and some local door knocking. This will inform both a program of local

tree planting, and the development of a 'Neighbourhood Plan for Nature', which will make a wide range of recommendations for how our neighbourhood could thrive, including people and all the other species that make up our local community.



Community gardens represent a huge improvement for biodiversity compared with mown amenity grass

7/ Hosting Groups

Our garden is now well established as a community venue and is regularly used by several different local organisations to run groups, including Stepping Stones North Edinburgh, and Pilton Community Health Project.

We continue to attract lots of interest in our work from further afield and have hosted study visits from Heriot Watt University, and Edinburgh University, as well as visiting researchers from Australia.

As well as our regular drop in sessions, we run additional sessions for organised groups, including employability groups, a local mens group, and groups from a local Housing Association.

8/ Supporting gardening throughout our area

Our organisation began as a group of neighbours growing food on street corners in Wardieburn which became a network which spread through the local area. As a charity we continue to support this network, for example by providing bulk compost deliveries, advice, and other practical support and materials when needed. This work will expand a lot in the coming year, for example with the planting of over 100 fruit trees to create a 'patchwork orchard'.

9/ Bike Repairs

We've hosted 9 free Dr Bike sessions at the garden, with over 60 bikes receiving a free safety check with minor repairs (and some bigger ones) carried out by trained bike mechanics. This is thanks to the R2 network, and coordination from North Edinburgh Arts.

10/ Granton Chicken Co-op

A flock of egg laying hens are kept at the community garden. These are owned and cared for by a co-operative of 12 local households, who share costs, care, responsibility, risk, and eggs. The hens add a lot of value to the garden as a whole, and the co-op model makes livestock ownership and care a practical possibility for people who could never otherwise benefit from this. Due to building work in the garden we've not had hens for part of this year, but we're getting ready for a new flock this coming Spring.

11/ The Free Shop

Our Free shop is a large room in a shed, where people can either donate or collect clothes, toys, small furniture and bric a brac. It's a popular feature of the garden and has diverted several tonnes of useful items from landfill, as well as providing people with things they need and saving a lot of money. We always emphasise that using the freeshop is not about being 'in need', but about reducing resource consumption. The challenge is often avoiding an excess of donations. There is 'too much stuff' in our city, while plenty of people don't have

what they need. We need to get better at redistribution to where resources are needed, and the free shop is our contribution to this.

12/ Granton Garden Bakery



Our sourdough loaves are on sale every Saturday

Our very popular bakery has continued to grow, and demand continues to outpace what we can supply. We've put a lot of work this year into planning a major expansion into new premises. In order to do this we have created a trading subsidiary. This is a new company (Granton Community Bakery and Kitchen Limited, SC857892) wholly

owned by Granton Community Gardeners SCIO. We will transfer relevant staff, trading, and equipment to the new company in April.

13/ Granton Seed Savers

This initiative has hosted workshops, distributed seeds at events, and is collating a seed library of saved seed from useful crops that grow well in North Edinburgh.

Links are being made with other seed libraries and groups around Scotland. This year we've done more joint work with groups across North Edinburgh, and have plans to get seeds into Granton and Muirhouse Libraries.



14/ Crop Trials, and our Wheat Growing Project



Harvesting wheat by hand July 2025

This year we've continued our wheat growing project, and grew small plots of heritage wheat and rye in our community gardens. We've also further developed our partnership with Lauriston Farm, and in Autumn we sowed 4 acres of our heritage wheat that we've been growing on

street corners for 12 years. We are looking forward to assessing this field scale yield, and scaling up our hyper-local grain system, to supply our bakery. If we can supply thousands of loaves to our local community from grain grown and processed within 2 miles, then this will be an exciting step towards a greater local food sovereignty.

15/ Improved infrastructure in the Community Garden



Construction of a new permanent shelter, for outdoor community meals and other activities



Now that we own our big garden (since completing a community asset transfer back in Nov 2023) we have been able to secure some funding to improve our infrastructure for the long term. We are reconfiguring the various structures onsite, including providing much improved outdoor cooking and dining facilities. Our new shelter has already made a huge difference to our weekly outdoor community lunches this very wet and windy winter.

16/ Other social enterprise work

We conducted some paid projects for other organisations this year, including running a series of gardening workshops for Harbour Homes. We have also done some paid consultancy for other organisations.

17/ Nature Neighbourhoods

Our partnership project with the National Trust, RSPB, WWF, and 17 Community organisations around the UK is now reaching completion. It's been particularly valuable learning from organisations in different towns and cities that have similar aims to ourselves. While Nature Neighbourhoods is coming to an end, we've had various opportunities to contribute to a significant follow up program: Nature Towns and Cities. For example we presented a workshop on Community Food Growing, at a conference in Manchester in October, and have since had a series of paid speaking appointments, from other organisations around the UK who are keen to learn from our work and experience.

18/ Canopy Communities

We have started a new partnership project with Thriving Greenspaces, which is part of City of Edinburgh Council. This has a focus on planting trees on areas of Council Housing land that have been identified by the 'Tree equity score' as having very low tree canopy cover. This includes much of Granton. We've done lots of door knocking throughout our area and identified several areas where there is demand from neighbours to plant fruit trees. We currently have 120

trees on order which will be planted this coming February and March. This is a 3 year project, so if this Winter's planting is successful, we will have another 2 Winter planting seasons in which to extend this new 'patchwork orchard'.



apples ready to harvest at the community garden

19/ Sowing Our Horizons

We have partnered with an innovative local initiative that aims to support 'local regenerative food ecosystems', through raising money from people and businesses who use air travel, and who may wish to support projects such as ours, particularly because we work in a very collaborative way with other aligned organisations and are seeking to strengthen our local food economy based on producing and distributing food in our community. This provides a more locally visible alternative to typical 'carbon offset' schemes. And for us, has started to provide some useful funds (in the form of donations).

Structure, governance and management

Type of governing document

Our organisation is governed by our SCIO constitution. We adapted this in order to become a Tier 2 SCIO in 2019.

Trustee recruitment and appointment

We registered as a charity in January 2017 with 5 trustees, of these 3 have continued to serve, with one resigning (due to moving away), one retiring, and four joining the board.

Financial review

See our accounts for details. Our organisation is in good financial health. We have been able to generate 31% of our own income this year through social enterprise activity, both through our bakery, and through consultancy, running workshops for other organisations, and speaking engagements.

Our income was slightly higher than our regular expenditure (by £1,732), but because we invested £20,000 in our new trading subsidiary, our bank balance closed £18,268 lower. The expansion of our bakery (operated by the trading subsidiary) is forecast to generate profits for our charity of over £20,000 per year (increasing over time). This investment is therefore justified, on the basis of increasing the sustainability of our financial model long term. In addition the bakery, which will run as a social enterprise, will continue to contribute to advancing our charitable aims.

Reserves policy

We always hold reserves sufficient to meet any obligations we may incur such as staff redundancies. In addition we aim to hold sufficient reserves in order to enable us to consider some sources of income that need to be claimed in arrears without creating cash flow problems. In the coming year, because we are transferring our bakery staff to our new trading subsidiary, this will significantly reduce the level of reserves we need to maintain, as calculated by 3-4months

regular expenditure. Our revised target level of reserves is £30,000. This allowed us to make an investment of £20,000 in the new trading subsidiary, while still retaining reserves of £30,339.

Details of any deficit

N/A

Donated facilities and services

We work in partnership with a wide range of local organisations, and have received in kind support in the form of venue use (thanks to Royston Wardieburn Community Centre, City of Edinburgh Council, and Pilton Community Health Project).

We are also very grateful to NWH Waste Services for the donation of skip services.

Future plans

We will continue to host regular community meals and bigger celebrations, bringing people together around food: eating, growing and cooking. We continue to aim to make sure that no-one need go hungry in our community and that everyone has regular opportunities to eat with others in a safe and welcoming environment.

We'll continue to provide a variety of opportunities for people to join with others to grow and cook food and to learn new skills, continuing to recognise and promote the amazing wealth of skills in our community.

We will continue to provide support to local people who want to develop good ideas that fit with our charitable aims.

We will explore with local people, opportunities to create new food-based enterprises.

We will complete the physical improvements to our community garden infrastructure, particularly the outdoor kitchen and dining facilities.



Summer BBQ 2025

We will transfer our bakery operation to our new trading subsidiary, and move to much larger new premises, including developing a community kitchen and exploring models of more regular communal dining in an indoor environment (eg. evenings). This will also allow us to create new jobs and training opportunities.

We will partner with other organisations to plan and action ambitious improvements to our local green spaces to improve biodiversity, food production, and the wider health and wellbeing of our community.

We will publish our Granton Nature Plan, which will make a wide range of recommendations for how our local neighbourhood could be improved so that our ecosystems can flourish, for the good of all of our community.

We will keep discovering more about how community can form around sharing food.



Community Lunch Spring 2025