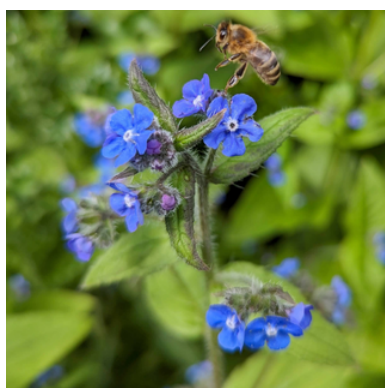




ANNUAL REPORT

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Financial Statements and Trustees' Report
1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024



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Our Trustees

Caroline Pearce, Chair

Anthony Blackman *

Georgia Bozekova **

David Field

Paul Jones **

Elizabeth Lockwood +

Martin Long, Finance Trustee

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Charity Number

1159534

*resigned June 2024

**appointed January 2025

+appointed August 2024

++appointed April 2024

#resigned February 2024

Chair's Introduction

I am delighted to introduce Communigrow's 2024 annual report and accounts. There is much to say about what we do, the great work of all those involved in the charity and the benefits the charity provides.

Communigrow is a community based food education charity, growing food to teach the benefits of fresh food for health and wellbeing and environmental sustainability and through this the wider benefits of social and therapeutic gardening in a community setting.

Our work attracts local schools, including special education needs schools, families whose children are home educated and partner charities who support young people with, for example, additional needs and caring responsibilities. We welcome people of all ages including those with long-term physical or mental health conditions and those experiencing social isolation or significant life changes and those who just want to engage in outdoor horticultural activities and enjoy the company of others. We provide opportunities to join a community, improve health outcomes, and make new friends and learn new skills. Our two drivers are therefore first, teaching people about growing healthy, affordable food whether within a community setting or by encouraging them to do so at home and secondly, increasing awareness of the benefits it brings to them physically and how they feel about themselves. Much is written at the moment about healthy eating and plant based foods, the positive benefits of being outside and physically active and having an involvement in a community group. It is a perfect match.

In 2024, Communigrow reached a significant milestone: 10 years as a charity and we have grown and developed a great deal over that time, not least reaching a second milestone: in supporting over 1,000 beneficiaries last year.

We are also proud of the external endorsements we received, winning a Wilder Kent Gold Award and being finalists in the BBC Make a Difference Award, the Third Sector Awards and the Kent Charity Awards.

What of the future? Growth and development of the facilities and the range of services and activities we offer and the resulting increase in beneficiaries means that our current focus is on becoming more financially self-reliant. Whilst grant and trust support has in past years facilitated transformative growth, we, in common with many in the charitable sector, are finding that this fundraising remains stubbornly harder. We are therefore particularly grateful to the Trusts and Foundations, local businesses, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, our local councillors, our sponsors and all our other donors who support our work and growth - some of whom have supported us over a number of years.

We are very fortunate in having dedicated and hardworking staff and volunteers who are so vital to the success of Communigrow and my grateful thanks to them and my fellow trustees for everything they do for Communigrow.

Caroline Pearce

Chair of the Board of Trustees



Caroline at the Kent Charity Awards where Communigrow was a finalist

About Communigrow

Enabling communities to realise the educational and wellbeing benefits of sustainable horticulture and growing

Communigrow is a community based food education charity, growing food to teach the benefits of fresh food for health and wellbeing and environmental sustainability and through this the wider benefits of social and therapeutic gardening in a community setting.

We operate from a 2.4-acre site in East Malling and through outreach projects across communities in Kent and Medway.

Our objectives are to make a real difference to people's lives by teaching sustainable food growing methods, to their health through therapeutic gardening and to their sense of belonging through community outdoor activities.



Our beneficiaries include children and young people with special education needs, local schools, people from under-resourced communities, young carers, adults with health conditions, older adults experiencing social isolation and people coping with bereavement.

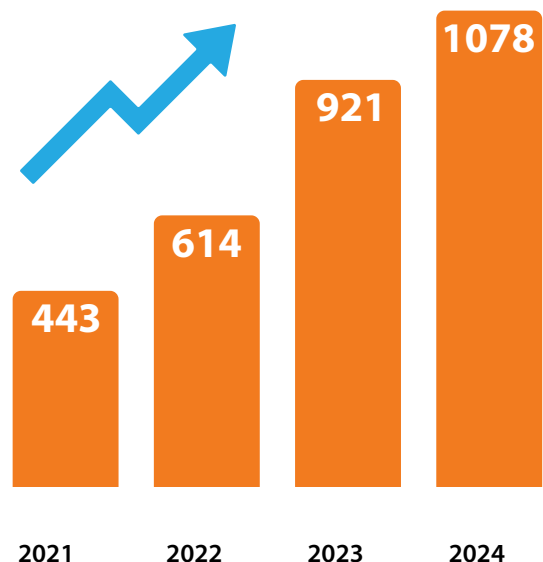
In our Field School, Communigrow helps children and young people to learn about sustainable food growing and the importance of nature and the natural world.

It also supports the social and emotional development of children and young people with additional learning needs by providing inclusive and engaging outdoor educational experiences that develop confidence and life skills.

Our programmes provide adults with opportunities to experience the mental and physical benefits of community gardening, and to develop greater environmental awareness and understanding of sustainable horticultural practices.

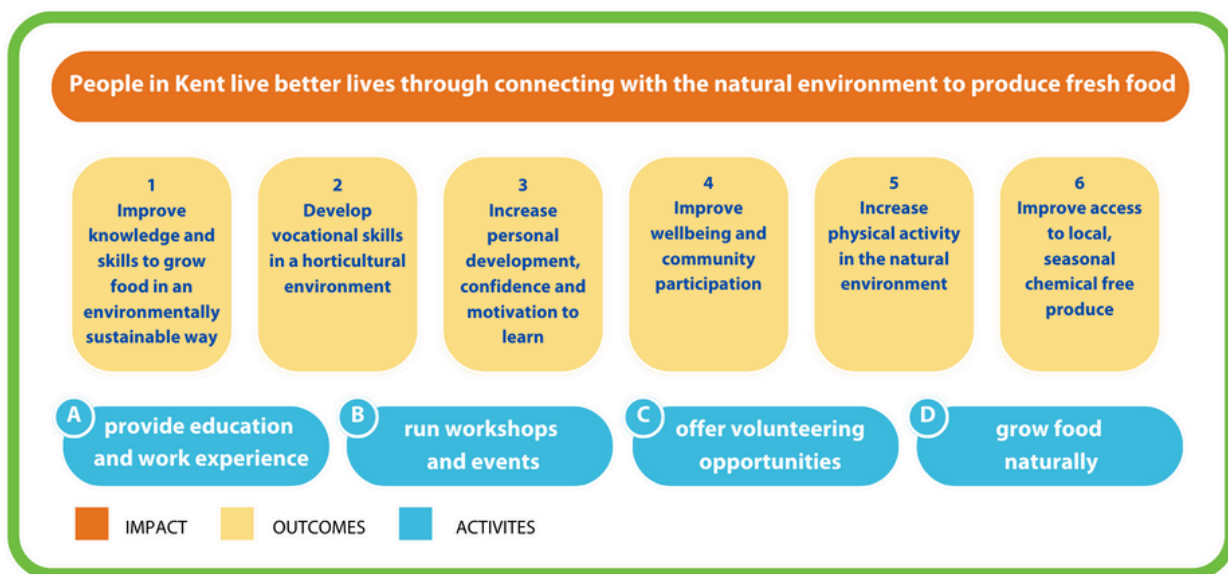
We are very proud to say that our beneficiary numbers have grown every year. In 2024, we supported over 1000 people to lead healthier and happier lives in our sustainable and inclusive community charity.

Our beneficiary numbers are growing



Public Benefit

As a charity we have a responsibility to provide a public benefit. Our approach is guided by our Theory of Change, adopted in 2022, which remains a key structural tool. Our six key outcomes set out in our Theory of Change aim to deliver physical, educational, psychological, social and economic benefits and our KPI monitoring and evaluation allows us to review the effectiveness of our activities and services and to adjust and improve them in response. In the Autumn of 2024 we re-evaluated our KPI structure and our methodology for gathering outcome data. As of January 2025, all programmes will have their outcomes directly measured against our Theory of Change.



Our work benefits not only our beneficiaries but also their families, carers and wider communities, including local authorities and other partners.

Social and therapeutic gardening is recognised by the NHS, healthcare governing bodies and the UK Government as part of the solution for mental and physical healthcare.

“

Communigrow benefits residents in Tonbridge and Malling, promoting wellbeing and social inclusion through community gardening. The initiatives at Communigrow provide valuable opportunities for people of all backgrounds, including those with physical, mental health or learning difficulties, to engage in meaningful activities.

Over the last few years, we have had the opportunity to provide grants to support several excellent projects, improving the lives of residents.

Cllr Des Keer, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, Cabinet Member for Community Services

”

Our Year in Highlights

We Reached 1000+ Beneficiaries

A 17% increase on 2023.

This is a great milestone for our charity and demonstrates the impact we have had in the local community.



Wilder Kent Award

Receiving the acclaimed Wilder Kent Gold Award demonstrates our positive actions to create a more climate-resilient county, encourage biodiversity and provide a home for wildlife.



More Awards Success

We were pleased to be finalists in the BBC Make a Difference Awards, The Third Sector Awards and the Kent Charity Awards.



Delivery in Numbers

This year we have worked hard to reach more people.

45

wellbeing sessions for older adults



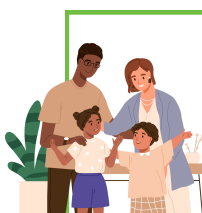
10

local schools



30

weekend family workshops



90

sessions for children & young people in home education



116

sessions for children & young people with SEN



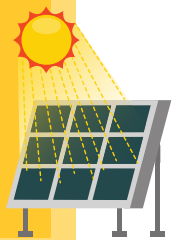
Sensory Garden

This beautiful, relaxing space at the entrance to Communigrow was created to provide a calm retreat for beneficiaries, volunteers and staff.



Solar Powered Office

We transformed a donated shipping container into a solar powered office space. The panels allowed us to stop using fossil fuel powered equipment so that our machinery is now battery powered and charged by the sun.



Crowdfunder Success - Bereavement Group

In October 2024, we surpassed our crowdfunding target of £17,000 to enable us to set up the Garden Gate Group, to use therapeutic gardening as bereavement support. This group starts its first sessions in February 2025.



Show Gardens

The creation of three inspirational show gardens to replicate the size of home gardens and teach people how they can grow their own veg at home and create a haven for wildlife.



The Field School

The Field School at Communigrow encompasses all our educational and therapeutic work with children and young people - both on and off site.

Our experienced tutors provide absorbing activities ensuring that everyone - including those who are neurodivergent or have complex additional needs - feel comfortable and included. While learning practical skills, learners grow in confidence and experience the mental health benefits that come with spending time in nature.



A key part of our work is the 'field to fork' cookery experience. Using the vegetables they have grown and harvested at Communigrow, our young learners have great fun enjoying cookery outdoors, developing more adventurous palates and an enjoyment of fresh, healthy food.



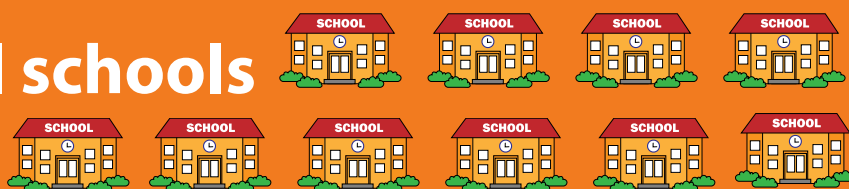
Local Schools

Our after school gardening club at St James the Great Academy, East Malling, continues to thrive. Teachers select the club participants based on greatest need - some learners need to build confidence when communicating, others have had a challenging time at home and some are young carers who need some respite.

In 2024 we also refined our school trips offer, with visits from 90 children from local schools during the year. We provide whole class visits to support the science, DT and sustainability curriculum in Key Stages 1 & 2. As well as looking at plant life cycles, bespoke sessions for each school include options such as pond dipping and preparing dishes from veg harvested on site. This is an area of activity we plan to expand in 2025.



10 local schools



Special Schools and SEND

Our work continues with local SEND schools, providing purposeful outdoor learning experiences, improving confidence and communication, and providing work experience opportunities.

Sessions are based around individual needs and tasks are varied. These could include laying woodchip paths, planting bulbs, maintaining structures and propagating new plants.

We continued to provide weekly sessions at Communigrow for Five Acre Wood School, a Special School for children and young people with profound, severe and complex learning difficulties, including those with Autistic Spectrum Condition.

Grow 19, a SEND college for 18-25 year olds, also attend weekly for social and communication skills, horticultural activities and work experience to support their City & Guilds qualifications.



Grow 19 students enjoying pizzas made with toppings they grew, harvested and cooked

In addition, we go out to The Rosewood School weekly to provide gardening enrichment sessions for students. We also provided work experience placements at Communigrow for 10 pupils in the Summer. Students at Rosewood have either medical, mental health or physical needs and many are also socially disadvantaged through missing some of their education.



Pupils from Five Acre Wood School outside our accessible toilets for the grand opening



116

**sessions
for children & young
people with SEND**

Communigrow Awards

Our unique Communigrow Awards scheme recognises the skills gained in all our Field School programmes, ranging from basic tool handling to woodwork, propagation, and seed sowing.

Learners of all abilities can celebrate their successes at the end of their course.

Like a different child

Cassie's Story

Cassie attends a local mainstream school, and has significant additional needs and an Education Health and Care Plan.

She attended Communigrow for a six week inclusion programme with other children from her school, learning alongside children from a local special school.

The school reported that Cassie was very isolated at school, finding it difficult to interact with other students.

At Communigrow she was able to be herself. The practical and inclusive nature of the activities meant that she could fully engage with tasks which has given her a new sense of confidence. Cassie has made friends while on the programme which has helped her begin to socialise with other children back at school.

Her teaching assistant said, "Cassie is like a different child at Communigrow! She didn't interact with other children at school, however at Communigrow she has fun and enjoys socialising with the other children and adults.

She engages in all the activities and shows a really fun, friendly side, for example chatting to whoever she is helping whilst washing up. She looks forward to coming every week and this is used as an incentive to help her make the right choices in class and with her learning."



“

"It's fun doing cooking, especially because we get to pick it, chop it and then cook it.

I love eating it the most!"

Cassie, age 11

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*names have been changed



Home Education

Our home education programme supports learners aged 4-16 years old to gain practical food growing skills and learn about nature and the environment through a programme of study that incorporates science, food technology, sustainability and geography.



In addition to this we have introduced a Wood Craft skills programme for older home educated learners. Teaching carpentry basics in a supportive and inclusive environment.



50%

of our home educating parents reported that mainstream education did not meet the needs of their child, particularly when children were neurodivergent.

Family workshops

In 2024 we delivered 19 affordable family workshops at weekends and in school holidays including our 'Get Set, Grow!' Saturday workshops.

These give local families screen-free time together, gaining practical skills to grow food at home - whether on a windowsill or in a garden - and learning how to care for the environment.



Charity partner workshops

Working with partner charities Space 2 Be Me and IMAGO, we delivered 5 Field to Fork workshops, where young people with additional needs or caring responsibilities harvested and prepared a meal from produce grown at the field.

Community Outreach

East Malling continues to be a top three priority area for Tonbridge and Malling, with parts of it among the 20% most income deprived areas in England according to ONS data.

Our outreach in this community is a source of pride.



We work with the East Malling Centre to run subsidised Communigrow Tots sessions to under fives each week, with a range of nature based crafts and activities aimed at encouraging physical activity, healthy eating and a love of nature.



During school holidays we provide free drop in sessions for children alongside the 'Community Pantry' at the East Malling Centre.

These popular sessions focus on growing and eating healthy food, caring for the environment and always have an element of cookery in them.

Our sessions at The East Malling Centre have been successful in introducing new families to the other services that Communigrow and the East Malling Centre can offer, as well as helping improve diet and access to affordable, fresh food.



"Come rain or shine, Communigrow never fails to draw a crowd of curious children eager to get involved and learn something new. Their activity sessions perfectly complement the work we do for the community, helping to provide fun and educational activities for local residents. Communigrow is a valued partner of the East Malling Centre, and we look forward to working with them for years to come."

Kevin Williams, Centre Manager
The East Malling Centre



Gaining independence

Ben's Story

Ben is an 18 year old with autism, cognitive delay and limited communication skills. He is a student in the sixth form of Five Acre Wood Special School, attending weekly sessions at Communigrow with his class.

When Ben first came to Communigrow he was extremely anxious and refused to join in activities - he used to sit on the grass watching his classmates or pace the field. He could be extremely vocal and, at times, destructive.

Over time, Field School staff devised a programme of tasks which Ben was comfortable completing on his own to settle him on arrival. He was able to take part in familiar activities independently. For example, knowing where to collect a watering can when tasked with watering plants.

The routine and format of these sessions helped Ben become calmer and more focused. He now takes part in a range of horticultural activities and is one of the first to make his way off the bus to the Field School Yurt. He has read the day's job list and chosen a task before some of the others have even arrived!

One memorable day Ben sat for over half an hour taking willow cuttings. Once he had been shown a few times he completed the whole process himself.

He is also beginning to work alongside other students, occasionally interacting - something he would not have done before.



“

Ben is much calmer in this setting. He is able to move away from his special interest object and participate willingly in activities. He can indicate a preference for tasks and his engagement levels are higher with less anxiety.

At Communigrow our students are given a multitude of opportunities to develop their skills in a safe environment.

They benefit from working with nature, developing their understanding of where food comes from and are provided with screen free opportunities for learning.

Five Acre Wood School Teacher

”

*names have been changed

Therapeutic gardening with adults

Recent research, backed by the NHS and Royal Horticultural Society, has evidenced the positive benefits of gardening and nature on people's physical and mental health ("green therapy"), whether or not they have underlying mental health conditions or are experiencing life changing circumstances or social isolation. Green therapy in horticulture in particular, provides accessible and cost-effective wellbeing outcomes. Collective food-growing has additional positive effects in generating community engagement, and our programmes are especially effective for the socially isolated.

“**Therapeutic gardening has proven positive effects on both physical and psychological well-being.**

Being active outdoors, amongst nature and other people, is hugely beneficial.”

Dr Rebecca Prince,
Communigrow Trustee and local GP



Having been awarded the accolade Kent's Mental Wellbeing Space of the Year in 2023 at the Kent Mental Wellbeing Awards hosted by East Kent Mind, we were proud to receive a Highly Commended award this year for our wellbeing services for adults.



Gardening to Feel Great

With funding from Involve Kent, this year we helped 37 people aged 55+ or who have health conditions improve their mental and physical wellbeing, boost their confidence and combat social isolation.

Participants meet new people in a friendly and relaxed outdoor environment, and together take part in gardening activities, promoting gentle physical activity and social connection. In the colder months the group takes part in nature-based craft activities in our heated yurt.



After attending for a season, Gardening to Feel Great members often move on to become committed Communigrow volunteers, making a long term commitment to both their health and to being part of our team.

Improving mental and physical health

Robin's Story

Following a period of mental and physical ill health, Robin was referred to a health and wellbeing coach via his GP who in turn made a referral on Robin's behalf to Communigrow.

Robin described how coming to Communigrow had benefited his mental and physical health:

"I had become like a hermit really. Not having any contact with others was making me more and more insular.

Joining the Gardening to Feel Great group has been really great for my mental and physical health.

I have stepped outside my comfort zone -

taking part in activities I wouldn't normally try in the Winter Wellness craft sessions.

There's a great camaraderie, trying something new with the others. It's a very relaxed environment. You find yourself talking to people and getting to know them without it being forced. You open up.

I was quite proud of how my festive wreath turned out - I wouldn't normally have signed up to do something like that, but it was very satisfying and I could give it as a gift.

Having something in the calendar each week is really helpful, knowing you've got something on. I would thoroughly recommend this group to anyone like me who needs a bit of a nudge.

Now I can see myself becoming a regular Communigrow volunteer as well as attending this group."

*names have been changed



Wellbeing in the Community

Working in partnership with local authorities and other local organisations and referral agencies represents the most effective way to meet local needs and ensure that we design and deliver the optimum wellbeing activities and services.

The Sahara Foundation in Medway is an example of a local group we hosted at Communigrow. It is a community initiative dedicated to helping South Asian people make the most of later life and we welcomed a group of 40 older visitors who took part in therapeutic nature-based and gardening activities.



Bereavement support

As a result of witnessing the impact that coming to Communigrow had on some of our volunteers who had experienced recent bereavements, in 2024 we set up our first ever crowdfunding campaign to fund a dedicated therapeutic gardening group supporting people who have been bereaved.

In October 2024 we had surpassed our target of £17,000 and put in place the groundwork for our Garden Gate Bereavement Support group which is set to start in February 2025.

Chris' story

"When my wife passed away in November 2023 I joined a bereavement group called Friends Together. They arranged a trip to Communigrow in East Malling where we had a great day.

We had such a warm welcome and I was invited to become a Communigrow volunteer.

Coming to Communigrow gives me a sense of purpose. The people are fantastic and every week we have a variety of jobs to do.

I would recommend Communigrow to anyone who finds themselves in the same position as I was"

Volunteering

In 2024, 79 wonderful regular volunteers supported all areas of our work and 160 corporate volunteers joined us for specific projects. These generous people bring skills, experience and enthusiasm to assist our dedicated and hard-working staff. This helps us provide distinct and fulfilling experiences for our beneficiaries.

The estimated economic value of this donated time to Communigrow is £92,160.

In return for their support, we provide a welcoming and inclusive experience, with dedicated volunteering events, opportunities to acquire new skills, make friends and of course enjoy unlimited cups of tea!

Volunteers also gain valuable work experience. In fact, 50% of our staff team are 'home grown' - joining us as a result of volunteering at Communigrow.

Thanks to a grant from Involve Kent at the end of 2024 we are able to continue to offer this rewarding experience for our volunteers and plan to grow the opportunities available.



5544

Number of volunteer hours
donated to Communigrow

£92,160

These volunteer hours have an
estimated value of

27

New regular volunteers were
welcomed in 2024

Supported volunteering

Inclusivity is important at Communigrow and in 2024 we were able to offer supported volunteering sessions for adults requiring a little more support thanks to funding from Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. This included people with mild learning difficulties and/or autism, and people with social anxiety or other mental health conditions.

Working with family members, support workers and social prescribers we have developed a programme that teaches skills, boosts confidence and communication and provides valuable work experience. Most importantly these volunteers are part of a supportive and inclusive community.

Anne's Story

Having seen a piece about Communigrow on the BBC news, Anne joined us as a volunteer in February 2024.

"I arrived in time to be a part of the project to create the new sensory garden which was a great achievement. It was very rewarding seeing the project through from beginning to end and watching it grow and change throughout the year.

Volunteering really benefits you socially and mentally, and of course being outdoors makes such a difference.

It gives you something to get up for and gives a structure to the day. Especially when you're retired, it really gives you a focus. You get to meet many different characters, learn new skills and hear about different outlooks on life.

Recently I've discovered the joys of the hot, aerobic constant throughput composter! I do enjoy prepping the produce for the composter, feeding it in and cranking the handle to mix it through - it's great exercise and definitely gets your core going!"



Jo's Story



Jo has volunteered with Communigrow for five years, setting up and helping support our wellbeing group. In 2025 Jo will become a paid member of staff, running our wellbeing sessions for over 55s and people with health conditions.

"I started volunteering at Communigrow to find some respite from being a carer. I was also keen on growing my own food and wanted to be part of a like-minded community.

I was quite shy and anxious at the time and, due to circumstances at home, I wasn't able to make many friends.

Since starting as a volunteer I have gained loads of confidence and made wonderful friends, both at Communigrow and outside.

Working with the wellbeing group has reignited my passion for both creative activities and for helping others.

I really want to help other people experience the growth I have and I think it's fantastic how Communigrow offers volunteers opportunities such as training or employment where possible."

Sustainability

Environmental sustainability at Communigrow is not only a key teaching pillar, it is also integral to our organisational values. Communigrow provides space to learn about sustainable food growing. We are intending to become Carbon Literate with training from The Carbon Literacy Project.

Rain water harvesting

4,000

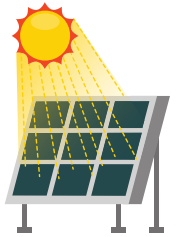
litres water storage

We are chemical free

growing beautiful fresh veg without synthetic fertilisers or pesticides.



Solar Power



We added more solar panels which have allowed us to greatly reduce our carbon footprint. We no longer use fossil fuel powered equipment - our machinery is now battery powered and charged by the sun.

Our wildlife habitats

encourage pollinators and other invertebrates to thrive and our wildlife pond is a haven for frogs, newts, toads and beetles.

The composting area

has seen the addition of a commercial capacity hot aerobic constant throughput composter as well as several other hot composters to help us reduce waste and reliance on outside compost.

It is also a useful teaching resource for soil health and home composting.

Companion planting helps pollination and is a natural form of pest control.

A 'no dig' approach protects soil health, improves soil drainage and prevents carbon release from the undisturbed soil.



Wildflower areas

are a haven for pollinators, supporting the growing process and conserving nature.

Drought resistance measures include dead hedge windbreaks to reduce water loss through transpiration and mulch to retain moisture.

Native hedgerows increase biodiversity by providing food and shelter to invertebrates, birds and mammals.

Fundraising

The generosity of our funders and supporters has enabled us to achieve the following substantial progress in the development of our charitable aims:

- Deliver skills and therapeutic gardening sessions to 1078 children, young people and adults - a 17% increase on 2023.
- Overhaul our growing area to include 31 high yield 'no dig' raised beds.
- Run our onsite office solely on solar power to support beneficiaries, staff and volunteers.
- Build a Sensory Garden.
- Build disabled access compost toilets with baby changing facility, disabled access raised beds and an all-terrain wheelchair to improve accessibility.
- Create three 'show gardens' to demonstrate to local people how they can grow their own food and create an environmentally friendly garden at home.
- Help cover core staffing costs and the running of the charity.



We are very grateful to the following organisations for the support they have provided this year:

Barbara Ward Foundation
Cole Charitable Trust
Crowdfund Kent & SpaceHive
East Malling Picnic in the Park
East Malling Trust
Finnis Scott Foundation
Groundwork Ent Dev Prog (EDP)
Hollick Family Foundation
Involve Kent
John Swire 1989 Charitable Trust
Kent Country Council Member Grant
(via Councillor Trudy Dean)
Kent Community Foundation
Kiln Family Trust
Leigh Trust
Malling Lions
McCrone Charitable Trust
Minerva & Howard Family Fund
National Lottery Community Fund
Philip and Connie Phillips Foundation
St Andrews School Rochester
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council

Fundraising

Corporate Partners

In addition to income from trusts and foundations, corporate partners provide both in kind and direct support that helps to reduce our reliance on grant funding.

These partnerships are often mutually beneficial, helping our corporate friends to achieve their social and environmental aims.

In particular, we are hugely appreciative of the support we have received from:

Atwood Benefits UK Ltd, our neighbours and long term supporters, who kindly provided funding to help improve our growing areas and also funded our fleeces and other workwear.

Perrys Chartered Accountants who raised a staggering £14,000 for Communigrow at their Charity Golf Day and Three Peaks Challenge. This funding has been of great support to our therapeutic gardening work with children, young people and adults.



Perrys Chartered Accountants Team
3 Peaks Challenge



Scrummi working hard during their
volunteering day

Scrummi, a West Malling based B-Corp, who sponsored our Open Day and also completed a fundraising Trek for Communigrow.

Barratt David Wilson Homes and the **Barratt Foundation** who funded our raised beds and also gave up their time and resources to spend a Volunteers Week with us, creating our fantastic Show Gardens.

We are also grateful to:

Apogee
B&Q Aylesford
Bretts Business Recover Ltd
Great Comp Gardens
Infinis
Kent Case Management
Kings Hill Management
Kingswood Group
Lush, Tunbridge Wells
The Malling Jug
New Earth Solutions
Shipbourne Farmers Market
Sinclair and Rush
Tesco Lunsford Park
The Swan, West Malling
West Malling Farmers Market

Plans for 2025

The Field School

Expand our affordable Schools Trips offer, increasing the number of children and young people that visit to develop their knowledge of how food is grown, to understand the importance of healthy eating, engage more in physical outdoor activities and connect children with nature and the outdoor world.

Build a Field Kitchen with pizza oven to improve our field to fork cookery sessions for children and young people.

Build a new Field Shelter in our wildlife area to provide an additional dry, sheltered space for our Field School sessions.

Achieve the LOTC Quality Badge - Council for Learning Outside the Classroom

Horticulture

Create a parterre garden as an alternative style of vegetable garden.

Install a new polytunnel to lengthen our growing season and to produce plug plants for sale to generate income for the charity.

Training our first apprentice, providing a career opportunity for a young person.



Environment

Commit to becoming a bronze status Carbon Literate Organisation with Carbon Literacy training for staff, volunteers and trustees. Make group pledges on carbon reduction to further reduce our environmental impact. Work with external partners to help them reduce their carbon footprint.

Create a small copse of native trees to increase the diversity of our wildlife for the benefit of our teaching and growing areas.

Therapeutic Gardening & Community Engagement

Begin delivery of our Garden Gate Bereavement Support group for adults, using green therapy to support people at a time of loss.

Set up a therapeutic gardening group for veterans and emergency services personnel to improve mental and physical wellbeing.

Build on our partnerships with local GPs and other social prescribers to increase the number of green therapy referrals we receive.



Governance & Organisational Structure

Communigrow is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation incorporated in 2014 and is governed by its constitution.

Leadership and Management

The board of trustees manage the affairs of the charity. They meet every other month and are responsible for the charity's activities, for monitoring progress and policies, developing the charity's strategy and for risk management. The trustees recognise that they are required to meet the objects of the charity and provide a public benefit. In making their decisions, they follow the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit. We are very fortunate in having a skilled and active board of trustees who are passionately committed to Communigrow and its work. In April 2024, we added to our board of trustees with the appointment of Dr Rebecca Prince who is a local GP with a particular interest in mental health care and in August 2024 with the appointment of Elizabeth Lockwood, a teacher and head of department at a secondary school. In addition, the board of trustees is supported by a full-time operations manager and engages business development and fundraising consultants to assist with business development and income generation.

When recruiting trustees, the board of trustees identifies any skills gaps and looks for individuals who can provide expertise and leadership. As a result, three further trustee appointments: Natasha Stille (PR, Marketing and Comms), Paul Jones (fundraising) and Georgia Bozekova (HR) will join the board of trustees in January 2025. The principal means of recruiting new trustees is by public advertisement of the role. Under the charity's constitution, trustees are appointed for a fixed three year term (or such lesser period as the trustees decide) and are then eligible for re-election for up to two further three year terms. There is an induction programme for new trustees and all trustees undertake training.

Major Risks Statement

The trustees have assessed the major risks of the charity including, governance, operations, financial and external risks. They are satisfied that systems and procedures are in place to mitigate the major risks.

Review of Financial Position

The income of the charity for 2024 was £174,915 (2023: £214,541) and expenditure was £197,550 (2023: £193,894). Total funds at 31/12/2024 were £211,612 of which £156,399 were restricted funds and £55,213 were unrestricted (2023: £234,247, £154,627, £79,620 respectively) and the bank balance at the year end stood at £156,399 (2023: £172,169). The trustees consider this a satisfactory position for the charity to be in.

The charity has invested £12,824 during the year (2023: £51,784) in facilities at the field to improve the experience for all visitors to the site.

Reserves Policy

The charity needs reserves to enable it to progress to completing both its long term projects, and its current activities and fluctuations in receipts and payments. The trustees consider that £50,000 of unrestricted funds should be held in reserve, this is the estimated amount needed to allow for an orderly closure of the charity should this ever be necessary. The level has also been set to take account of the following:

1. Contingency: unexpected expenditure in the event of an emergency;
2. Cash-flow: situations where a bill has to be paid before the money to cover it has been received;
3. Commitment: a commitment to expenditure which cannot be covered by the annual income.

Statement of Trustees' Responsibilities

The trustees are responsible for preparing the trustees' report and the financial statements in accordance with the applicable law and United Kingdom Accounting Standards (United Kingdom Generally Accepted Accounting Practice).

The law applicable to charities in England and Wales requires the trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charity and of the incoming resources and application of resources of the charity for that year.

In preparing these financial statements, the trustees are required to:

- select suitable accounting policies and then 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 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 charity will continue in operation.

The trustees are responsible for keeping sufficient accounting records that disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charity and enable it to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Charities Act 2011, the Charity (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 and the provisions of its constitution. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charity and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

Trustees

Caroline Pearce, Chair
Anthony Blackman *
Georgia Bozekova **
David Field
Paul Jones **
Elizabeth Lockwood +
Martin Long, Finance Trustee
Alan Piper
Dr Rebecca Prince ++
Dr Robert Saville #
Natasha Stille **

Registered Address

Hazel Hall
Church Road
West Peckham
Kent
ME18 5JL

The trustees declare that they have approved the trustees' report above.

Signed:



Date: 29/04/2025

Caroline Pearce, Chair

*resigned June 2024

**appointed January 2025

+appointed August 2024

++appointed April 2024

#resigned February 2024

COMMUNIGROW
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Income from					
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES		17,031	5,177	22,208	25,873
COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING		9,532	580	10,112	1,584
CORPORATE DONATIONS		5,000	17,115	22,115	27,230
DONATIONS		7,633	436	8,069	3,113
SPONSORSHIP		-	-	-	-
GRANTS		6,517	101,607	108,124	153,760
VEGETABLE SALES		1,985	-	1,985	972
OTHER INCOME		2,302	-	2,302	2,009
Total		<u>50,000</u>	<u>124,915</u>	<u>174,915</u>	<u>214,541</u>
Expenditure on					
ADMIN/UTILITIES		619	5,758	6,377	5,009
CONSUMABLES		520	9,240	9,760	7,592
EQUIPMENT AND DEPRECIATION		17,415	2,486	19,901	10,725
FUNDRAISING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT		15,528	6,438	21,966	21,340
INSURANCE & RENT		144	3,468	3,612	3,210
MARKETING		5	1,375	1,380	2,019
SERVICES (INCLUDING SALARIES)		40,176	94,378	134,554	144,000
Total		<u>74,407</u>	<u>123,143</u>	<u>197,550</u>	<u>193,894</u>
Net income		(24,407)	1,772	(22,635)	20,647
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD		<u>79,620</u>	<u>154,627</u>	<u>234,247</u>	<u>213,600</u>
Total funds carried forward		<u>55,213</u>	<u>156,399</u>	<u>211,612</u>	<u>234,247</u>

The Statement of Financial Activities include all the gains and losses in the year and therefore a statement of total recognised gains and losses has not been prepared.

All the above amounts relate to continuing services.

Comparative information is shown in note 10.

**COMMUNIGROW
BALANCE SHEET
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024**

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2024 £	Total 2023 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	2	56,641	-	56,641	59,412
Current assets					
Debtors	3	393	-	393	3,070
Cash at bank and in hand		-	156,399	156,399	172,169
		393	156,399	156,792	175,239
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	4	1,821	-	1,821	404
Net current assets		(1,428)	156,399	154,971	174,835
Total net assets		55,213	156,399	211,612	234,247
Funds of the Charity					
Restricted income funds			156,399	156,399	154,627
Unrestricted funds		55,213		55,213	79,620
Total funds		55,213	156,399	211,612	234,247

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

Comparative information is shown in note 11.

These financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on 29/04/2025 and signed on their behalf by: Caroline Pearce

Signed: 

Date: 29/04/2025

The notes on page 27-33 form part of the financial statements

COMMUNIGROW
NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2024

1. Principal accounting policies

Accounting convention

These accounts 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 (FRS102) (Second Edition)" and the Financial Reporting Standard Applicable in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland (FRS102) and the Charities Act 2011.

The Charity constitutes a public benefit entity as defined by FRS102.

Communigrow is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation registered in England and Wales.

Going concern

Communigrow, at 31 December 2024, had unrestricted funds of £55,213 and a cash balance of £156,399 as such the trustees consider it appropriate to prepare the accounts on a going concern basis.

Incoming resources

Income is accounted for when the charity has entitlement to the funds, any performance conditions attached to the income have been met, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Resources expended

Expenditure is included on an accrual basis once there is a legal or constructive obligation to make a payment to a third party, it is probable that settlement will be required and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets and depreciation

Tangible fixed assets costing £500 or more are capitalised and recognised when future economic benefits are probable and the cost or value of the asset can be measured reliably.

Tangible fixed assets are initially recognised at cost. After recognition, under the cost model, tangible fixed assets are measured at cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. All costs incurred to bring a tangible fixed asset into its intended working condition should be included in the measurement of cost.

Depreciation is charged so as to allocate the cost of tangible fixed assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method.

Depreciation is provided on the following basis:

Field property - 20% straight line

General equipment - 33 % straight line

Cash at bank and in hand

Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short-term deposits with a maturity of three months or less.

Liabilities

Creditors are recognised when the charity has a present obligation resulting from a past event that will probably result in the transfer of funds to a third party and the amount due to settle the obligation can be measured or estimated reliably. Creditors are normally recognised at their settlement amount after allowing for any discounts due.

2. Tangible fixed assets

	Field property £	General equipment £	Total £
Cost			
At 1st January 2024	61,676	4,298	65,974
Additions	12,824	-	12,824
Disposals	-	-	-
At 31 December 2024	74,500	4,298	78,798
Depreciation			
At 1st January 2024	6,030	532	6,562
Charge for the year	<u>14,176</u>	<u>1,417</u>	<u>15,593</u>
At 31st December 2024	20,206	1,949	22,155
Net book value			
At 31 December 2024	<u>54,294</u>	<u>2,347</u>	<u>56,641</u>
At 31 December 2023	<u>55,646</u>	<u>3,766</u>	<u>59,412</u>

3. Debtors

	2024 £	2023 £
Amounts falling due within one year		
Other debtors - VAT	<u>394</u>	<u>3,070</u>

The notes on page 27-33 form part of the financial statements

4. Creditors	2024	2023
	£	£
Amounts falling due within one year		
Trade creditors	<u>1,821</u>	<u>404</u>

5. Funds

Unrestricted funds

Comprise those funds which the trustees are free to use in accordance with the charity's general purposes.

Current year	Opening balance 1.01.2024	Income	Expenditure	Closing balance 31.12.2024
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds	79,620	50,000	74,407	55,213

Prior year	Opening balance 1.01.2023	Income	Expenditure	Closing balance 31.12.2023
	£	£	£	£
Unrestricted funds	63,038	36,882	20,300	79,620

Restricted funds

Restricted funds comprise donations and grants for specific activities intended by the donor.

Current year	Opening balance 1.01.2024 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Closing balance 31.12.2024 £
Restricted funds	154,627	124,916	123,144	156,399
Of which material funds are:				
National Lottery Community Fund	16,913	22,500	39,413	-
Bereavement Group	-	14,124	19	14,105

Prior year	Opening balance 1.01.2023 £	Income £	Expenditure £	Closing balance 31.12.2023 £
Restricted funds	150,562	177,659	173,594	154,627
Of which material funds are:				
National Lottery Community Fund	19,452	45,000	47,539	16,913
Enterprise Development Fund	-	22,000	17,424	4,576

6. Independent examiner's remuneration

The independent examiner's remuneration amounts to an independent examiner fee of £ Nil (2023 - £ Nil).

7. Trustees' remuneration

During the year, no Trustees received any remuneration or other benefits (2023 - £Nil).

8. Staff costs and pensions

The charity operates a defined contribution pension scheme

	2024 £	2023 £
Wages and salaries	119,938	131,004
Social security costs	9,014	7,855

The notes on pages 27-33 form part of the financial statements

Contribution to defined contribution pension scheme	5,602	5,141
	<u>134,554</u>	<u>144,000</u>

The average number of persons employed by the charity during the year was as follows:

	2024	2023
	No	No
Staff	5	6
Contractors	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>
	<u>18</u>	<u>19</u>

No employee received remuneration amounting to more than £60,000 in either year.

Wages and salaries include wages and payments that have been made for contracted services.

9. Related party disclosure

There were no related party transactions for the year ended 31 December 2024 (2023 - £Nil).

10. Comparative information – Statement of financial activities

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Income from					
CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES		21,046	4,827	25,873	12,111
COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING		1,584	-	1,584	7,317
CORPORATE DONATIONS		1,178	26,052	27,230	19,279
DONATIONS		2,134	979	3,113	1,334
SPONSORSHIP		-	-	-	3,995
GRANTS		7,959	145,801	153,760	211,628
VEGETABLE SALES		972	-	972	2,064
OTHER INCOME		2,009	-	2,009	-
Total		36,882	177,659	214,541	257,728
Expenditure on					
ADMIN/UTILITIES		694	4,314	5,008	5,563
CONSUMABLES		1,679	5,913	7,592	4,137
EQUIPMENT AND DEPRECIATION		8,363	2,362	10,725	1,213
FUNDRAISING & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT		6,940	14,400	21,340	15,411
INSURANCE & RENT		938	2,272	3,210	2,340
MARKETING		394	1,625	2,019	640
SERVICES (INCLUDING SALARIES)		1,292	142,708	144,000	130,090
Total		20,300	173,594	193,894	159,394
Net income		16,582	4,065	20,647	98,334
TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD		63,038	150,562	213,600	115,267
Total funds carried forward		79,620	154,627	234,247	213,600

11. Comparative information – Balance sheet

	Notes	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total 2023 £	Total 2022 £
Fixed assets					
Tangible assets	2	59,412	-	59,412	13,987
Current assets					
Debtors	3	3,070	-	3,070	2,228
Cash at bank and in hand		17,542	154,627	172,169	197,901
		<u>20,612</u>	<u>154,627</u>	<u>175,239</u>	<u>200,129</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	4	404	-	404	516
Net current assets		<u>20,208</u>	<u>154,627</u>	<u>174,835</u>	<u>199,613</u>
Total net assets		<u>79,620</u>	<u>154,627</u>	<u>234,247</u>	<u>213,600</u>
Funds of the Charity					
Restricted income funds			154,627	154,627	150,562
Unrestricted funds		79,620		79,620	63,038
Total funds		<u>79,620</u>	<u>154,627</u>	<u>234,247</u>	<u>213,600</u>

INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF COMMUNIGROW

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Communigrow

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of Communigrow (the Charity) for the year ended 31 December 2024 which are set out on pages 25 to 33.

Responsibilities and basis of report

As the Charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act'). I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all the applicable directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material 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 Charity as required by section 130 of the Act; or
2. the accounts do not accord with those records; or
3. the accounts do not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 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.

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

Signed:



Stephen Hale FCA FCCA
Perrys Audit Limited
Chartered Accountants
Churchdown Chambers
Bordyke
Tonbridge, TN9 1NR

Date: 22/5/25