

Annual Report

Year ending 31 March 2014

I. Introduction

I.1 What is Martineau Gardens?

Our Charity is a community garden, close to Birmingham city centre. It is a valued green space with organically maintained land providing a place to learn, to heal, to connect with nature and to play. The Gardens are tended by a community of volunteers, the majority of whom experience social exclusion or isolation. The Gardens are open six days a week and are free to visit, thanks to the dedication and generosity of our supporters.

I.2 Martineau Gardens' 2013/14

Funding of the Therapeutic Horticulture project, which is central to Martineau Gardens, continued to be challenging during this year. Fortunately, at the end of the year, we were awarded a significant grant for two years. With the support from other Charitable Trusts, we have been able to pull through the 18 months after the City Council stopped funding us. In response to the uncertain economic climate, we have continued to diversify our voluntary income streams. We actively encourage more people to visit the Gardens through our marketing and have seen a corresponding growth in sales of plants, produce and Garden hire for events.



A breath of fresh air. Martineau Gardens provides tranquillity, close to the city. Photocredit: (L) J Fletcher (R) S Hill-Daniel

What drives our work?

Social inclusion, accessibility and a welcoming approach

Environmental sustainability

Accountability to all our stakeholders



Volunteering is at the heart of what we do - the Green Flag Award celebrates the efforts of our volunteers and staff in keeping Martineau Gardens open, six days a week, throughout the year Photocredit: (L) P Arnold (R) S Hill-Daniel

How to contact us

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2. Our achievements

This report refers to our strategic document: 'Mission, Values, Objectives and Activities' available on our website.

2.1 Conserving, protecting and improving the natural environment of Martineau Gardens

The wildlife area of Martineau Gardens is designated a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC). Our conservation work parties continued to coppice and thin the woodland to let more light reach the 'herb layer'. We regularly remove ivy and brambles to encourage the growth of wildflowers. A diversity of plants supports a diversity of insects which feed birds and bats. We are proud to be custodians of such a rich wildlife habitat.

55 volunteers participated in 4,265 hours looking after the natural environment of Martineau Gardens, supervised by Stewart Holmes and Rachael Burt. A reduction due to staff sickness and a lower staff:volunteer ratio when we have volunteers needing more supervision. Thanks to the volunteers' hard work, the Gardens look beautiful for all to enjoy.

2.1.1 Wildlife recording

In order to monitor the quality of the habitats, wildlife is recorded weekly by volunteers Brian Perry and Andrew Curran. Our records contribute to the database, Eco Record, held by

the Wildlife Trust of Birmingham and the Black Country. Our species list is on our website.

2.2 Improving mental and physical health for the people of Birmingham

Our volunteers include people with mental health issues, learning disabilities, as well as people recovering from addictions, strokes, head injuries and people on the autistic spectrum. Volunteers learn about horticulture and conservation, but they also learn about themselves, each other and visitors to the Gardens. Regular volunteering, even if only for half a day a week, can give structure to someone's life and take them towards integration into society and possible employment. A waiting list of people to participate in the Therapeutic Horticulture Programme at Martineau Gardens, demonstrates the great need for, and value of, this service.

2.2.1 Evidence of outcomes

We have used a questionnaire system run by our social work students for many years. We have been exploring the most effective way of measuring outcomes for the wide range of people that we work with. We have started to use the Warwick-Edinburgh Wellbeing Scale.

2.3 Working with the NHS

We are preparing to join the Edgbaston Wellbeing Hub, an unfunded pilot set up by local GPs, who want to refer their patients with Mental Health issues to services provided by organisations, like ourselves, in the Voluntary Sector.



'Martineau Gardens, where people, plants and wildlife meet'. Pictured here: Winter conservation volunteers clearing undergrowth around the bee hives; Bluebells, a herald of spring, growing in our SLINC status woodland; A child picks runner beans — our demonstration vegetable beds show where food comes from

Photocredit: Left (Brian Perry), Centre and Right (S Hill-Daniel)

2.4 Education for children and young people

We continue to offer a range of opportunities: Work experience placements for Aston Manor and Dame Elizabeth Cadbury secondary schools.

Tours and outdoor learning activities for children from seven Primary Schools and five out of school groups.

Kika Kozar ran five sessions of 'Crafty Kids' activities for pre-school children.

We provide opportunities for family learning at our events, and through interpretative leaflets and explorer trails available at the Gardens for our daily visitors.



Family learning: (Inset) Baked apples at Apple Day, (Left) Earth Oven cooking workshop inspiring people to grow their own healthy food and have fun cooking together (Right) Learning how to take sage cuttings at the Big Dig event

2.4.1 Providing work experience for vulnerable young people

There are very few opportunities for secondary school students with learning disabilities to access work experience. The combination of the students' conditions and the prejudice of others, make it difficult, to find placements in the mainstream working environment. We provided weekly work experience for students from Calthorpe School, Fox Hollies and Baskerville special schools from mid-February to the end of November.

2.5 Promoting sustainability and the value of organically produced produce

We aim to promote the work of the Gardens in a variety of ways: Our education programme for schools; environmental courses; events; having

a presence at local events; giving talks to local groups; leaflets; newsletters; a presence on social media platforms; good media relationships and an informative website.

2.5.1 Events

Our annual events programme is organised to give visitors a reason to return frequently to the Gardens. Working with various partners we have expanded the programme. This year we held: a Spring Event, The Big Lunch, Storytelling Festival (with the Traditional Arts Team), Our Big Gig (with On the Edge Fusion Youth Orchestra), a Green Flag lunch, the Honey Show (with Birmingham and District Bee Keepers Association), Big Dig Edible Gardens, an Autumn Event, Apple Day, Halloween Storytelling (with Traditional Arts Team) and The Big Dig.

2.5.2 Talks, tours and stalls

We gave six talks to groups and took nine stalls to events, in addition to the regular Stirchley Community Market. We had a stall at 6/8 Kafe for three days when we were their Charity of the Month.

Eight groups of adults booked for tours, either self-guided or with a member of staff

We ran food growing activities for four groups in partnership with the Black Environment Network.

2.5.3 Courses

Our bee keeper, John Gale, taught two Bee Keeping courses, which were fully booked.

2.5.4 Media coverage

With a Marketing and Communications specialist on the team, our media coverage continues to increase in quantity and quality. Media coverage is gained regularly in a range of predominantly local media (across newspaper, radio, magazine and websites).

2.6 Planning construction of an ecologically designed building to enhance Martineau Gardens

As we continued to focus on raising funds to keep the Gardens open, there were no resources to pursue this project. When the revenue funding is more stable, we will

refurbish and insulate the Pavilion and Reception/studio buildings.

2.7 An effective and sustainable organisation

For the fourth year running, Martineau Gardens has been awarded a Green Flag Community Award, in recognition of being a 'superb community run green space'.

Ernst & Young Birmingham have chosen us to be their Charity of the Year and supported the Gardens with staff fundraising activities and volunteering days.

The visitor welcome team of Meet and Greet Volunteers play an active part in improving the quality of the visitor experience by providing a warm welcome to the site, information and sales assistance. 26 volunteers provided 1,774 hours of volunteering over 12 months, an increase on previous years.

Members of staff attended 17 funded training courses for continuous professional development.

The Trustees review the Risk Management Policy annually.

3. Looking ahead

More and more people are visiting and we are better known as a visitor attraction. We are developing an exciting programme of regular events and extending our range of day courses. The bursaries from the National Association for Environmental Education have funded some of the increasing number of school visits. We are exploring using an Environmental Education specialist to deliver the work with schools, rather than our present staff.

With more stability for our revenue funding, we are in a better position to develop the organisation.

4. Further Information

4.1 Legal status:

Martineau Gardens is a Company Limited by Guarantee (4273209) and a Registered Charity (1092364).

4.2 The Trustees:

Peter Arnold (Chair), Margaret Holmes (Treasurer), Sue Roberts and Glenys Thomas.

Peter Coke, Maree McAndrew, Richard Smith and Mel West resigned in March 2014.

4.3 The Staff:

Rachael Burt (Education and Therapeutic Horticulture, two days), Lorraine Carden (Cleaning half day), Sarah Hill-Daniel (Marketing and Communications, three days), Stewart Holmes (Therapeutic Horticulture, four days), Caroline Hutton (Director, fulltime), Dharmendra Parmar (Events Coordination sessional)

4.4 Patrons:

Alys Fowler and Mollie Martineau

4.5 Finances

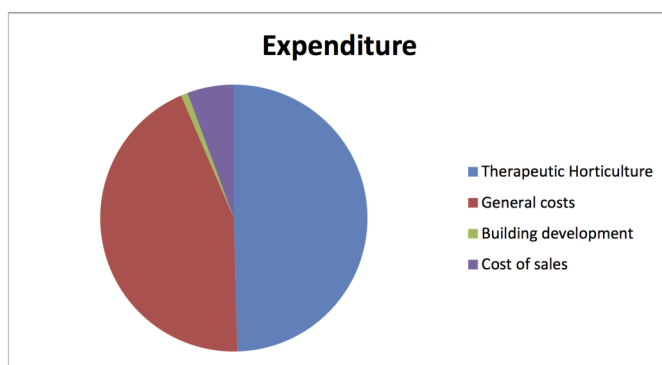
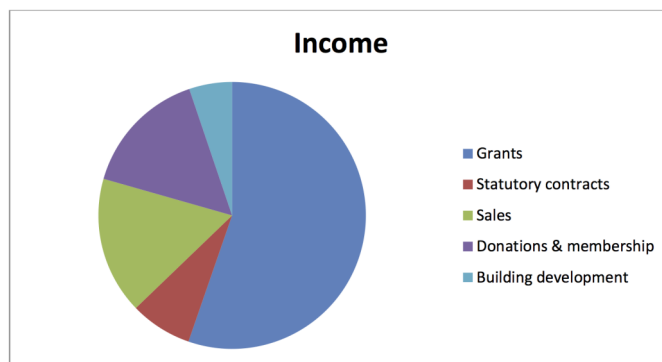
Income: £105,337

Expenditure: £94,881

Balance at 31 March 2013 = £11,911

Balance at 31 March 2014 = £22,387

For further information, our annual accounts are available on request.



Opening Hours

For visiting: Mon - Sat, 10am - 4pm, Volunteering: Mon - Thurs, 10am - 4pm, Volunteering for women: Fri, 10am - 4pm