

# Annual Report

Year ending 31 March 2019

## Introduction

### What is Martineau Gardens?

A therapeutic Community Garden, close to Birmingham city centre, it is a valued slice of organically maintained land that provides a place to learn, to heal, to connect with nature and to play. The Gardens are tended by a community of volunteers, many of whom experience mental health issues or have learning difficulties. The Gardens are open six days a week, as a tranquil place that is free for all to visit, thanks to the dedication and generosity of our volunteers and supporters.

### Martineau Gardens' 2018/19 overview

We continued to welcome volunteers on our Therapeutic Horticulture Programme and started a pilot programme for people living with dementia. We consolidated our Environmental Education work with local schools. We completed work on two capital projects, the refurbishment of the Pavilion and the Courtyard Garden, and began work on an extension of the Courtyard Garden around the Pavilion. Martineau Gardens achieved a Green Flag Community Award for the ninth year running.

The Visitor Welcome team of 24 Meet and Greet volunteers continued to welcome our visitors, providing information, sales assistance and cups of tea. We recorded 1602 hours of work. Venue hire increased, with lots of return visits for parties, and events run by other organisations.

Staff and selected volunteers attended external training courses including: continuing professional development for Social and Therapeutic Horticulture and FSI Fundraising and Developing Corporate Relationships. The Trustees review the Risk Management policy annually.

### Our achievements

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

**I To provide opportunities that enhance people's health and wellbeing, in particular but not exclusively through therapeutic horticulture and other support**

**I.I Designing programmes of support that meet volunteers' identified needs. Training volunteers in skills that contribute towards further learning, volunteering and employment.**

Our Therapeutic Horticulture (TH) practice involved 78 people including people with mental health issues,



*A breath of fresh air. Martineau Gardens provides tranquility, close to the city and an opportunity to get close to nature.*

## Mission Statement

To open up Martineau Gardens to as many people as possible for the promotion of good health and wellbeing, and a growing understanding and enjoyment of our natural habitat and how best to protect it.



*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.*

learning disabilities, autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs), head injuries and strokes. These volunteers look after the Gardens, supervised by our expert staff Stewart Holmes and Miranda Kingston, whose work is funded by Charitable Trusts. We recorded 4,306 hours of volunteer time worked.

Volunteering gives people exercise, purpose, social contact and an opportunity to learn about plants, conservation and each other. 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.

We worked with Baskerville School, Queen Alexandra College and Woodbourne Priory School and offered work experience placements to students with ASDs, learning disabilities and mental health issues.

Measuring the impact of the work we do with very vulnerable people is incredibly important to us, even though it can be difficult. We have just started using a new system for measuring wellbeing and initial findings are very encouraging.

Average life-satisfaction scores (out of 10) reported by volunteers on our TH programme is 6.65, and of people who apply to join 5.70. The national average is 7.50. We are particularly proud of our volunteers' reports that their life achievement, feelings of community and satisfaction with relationships are all, on average, higher than people report before they join us.

For more details look on our website at: [bit.ly/2jHK5JT](http://bit.ly/2jHK5JT)

## 1.2 Maintaining and developing the restorative environment of the Gardens

Providing a restful green space that is free to enter improves the health of our volunteers and visitors (including patients and visitors from the Priory Hospital). We started work on a new garden to provide accessible Therapeutic Horticulture.

## 2 To provide educational opportunities for the people of Birmingham in environmental issues, the sustainable use of resources, therapeutic horticulture and the value of organically grown produce

### 2.1 Demonstrating organic practices, sustainable use of

resources and good habitat for local wildlife

### Our normal activity includes:

Composting and making leaf mould, organic pest control, reuse of materials, maintaining habitats (bird, bat, insect and hedgehog homes).

### Purchasing consistent with our values:

Electricity from Engie; telecoms from The Phone Co-op; building work from Jericho Foundation; recycled or FSC paper; recycled toner cartridges; peat free and organic compost; payroll services from BVSC; DBS checks from Birmingham City Council; catering from ChangeKitchen; consumables from Lembas Ltd; tree surgery from Midland Arboriculture.



*Above left, freshly picked produce from the vegetable garden in the sales area.. Above, right, a bumblebee and sunflower.*

2.2 Promoting the work of the Gardens by organising special events, producing interpretive literature for visitors, communicating our core values to the people of Birmingham through the securing of media coverage, maintaining an up to date and informative web site, attending local events and giving talks at local groups.

Public Engagement enables Martineau Gardens to meet its Charitable Objects. We promote the work of Martineau Gardens with a range of leaflets, newsletters, news and events e-mailings, securing media coverage, social media and an informative website. We gave talks to two groups and attended seven external events. Groups of adults visiting the Gardens have tours either self-guided or with a member of staff.



1. Social Farms and Gardens workshop in the refurbished Pavilion 2. Therapeutic Horticulturalist Stewart Holmes in the Courtyard Garden on a Spring morning 3. School children on a blindfold walk in the woodland as part of their 'Plant Professor' lesson

### 2.3 Providing education events, activity-based learning and opportunities for sharing knowledge

Our annual events programme gives people a reason to visit and return to the Gardens, and provides opportunity for family learning. This year we held the Spring Event, two outdoor theatre productions (with Folksy Theatre), a Garden Party with an auction, The Honey Show (with Birmingham and District Beekeepers Association), the Autumn Event, hosted an event for Birmingham Literature Festival and Halloween Storytelling Event (with the Traditional Arts Team).

**Courses:** two Beekeeping courses (taught by our volunteer Beekeepers Ray Bowers and Sam Walker); 'Building an Earth Oven' taught by Lizzie Bean, and Ceramics taught by Claire Cotterill.

### 2.4 Hosting and promoting school visits, Forest School and Outdoor Learning activities with an Environmental Education programme

Martineau Gardens was originally designed as a resource for Environmental Education. We employ Juliette Green, an experienced Environmental Education teacher. She has created material for schools to use whilst here and has devised and delivers five lesson plans (Habitat Explorer, Minibeasts, Plant Professor, Pirate Adventure and Adaptation, Evolution and Classification) for Primary Schools. Each visiting school receives a senses tour of the Gardens and a lesson that fits with the National Curriculum. We had visits from 21 schools and home education groups over 46 days. Juliette adapted her teaching to create family activities in school holidays. Caroline Starr conducted tours for children, which complemented Juliette Green's teaching. We offered a venue and/or activities for children and young people's groups like the Woodcraft Folk and Little Leaf Nature Play.

## 3. To conserve, protect and improve the natural environment of Martineau Gardens

### 3.1 Providing opportunities for people to support our horticulture and conservation work

The wildlife area of Martineau Gardens is designated as a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC). A diversity of plants supports a diversity of insects which feed birds and bats. During the winter months our conservation work parties coppice and thin the woodland to let more light reach the 'herb layer'. We remove ivy and brambles to encourage the growth of wildflowers.

### 3.2 Conducting surveys and recording wildlife to monitor the outcomes of conservation management work

To monitor the quality of the habitats we care for, volunteers Brian Perry and Andrew Curran continue to record our wildlife sightings. Birds, invertebrates and wild plants seen during the month are recorded in the bird hide, our records contribute to Eco Record. Wildlife news is shared in our newsletters and social media posts.



Pictured above **left:** Martineau Gardens was featured on BBC 'Gardeners' World', Brian and Andrew were interviewed by presenter Adam Frost about their moth trapping sessions, the moths 'performed' and a rare find for the Gardens was recorded during the BBC's visit, that of the Lime hawk-moth.



Pictured above **right:** providing recreational opportunities—families picnicking at an event

### 3.3 Maintaining a balance between the educational, therapeutic, productive, recreational, aesthetic and wildlife-friendly aspects of the Gardens

We monitor feedback through a range of sources, including ratings from schools and pupils, visitor satisfaction forms, event comments slips and reports on web sites such as Tripadvisor:

"this lovely little oasis feels a million miles from the hustle and bustle of the city. There are formal gardens to relax in or a little area of woodland, should you want to take younger members on a bear hunt (ok, a bug hunt)" *June 2018*

### 3.4 Managing the land using organic principles so that it produces high quality food and plants

We produce and sell plants, vegetables, fruit, preserves, honey and chopped logs. In 2018 John Gale retired, after many years, as our beekeeper. He's still active in the Gardens, extending and maintaining our rainwater collection system.

## 4. To grow support for Martineau Gardens to ensure that it remains open to the people of Birmingham and beyond as a safe and tranquil space

### 4.1 Securing income from a range of sources including grants, donations, the Membership scheme, events and selling produce.

A number of Trusts have generously supported our work for several years, and we continue to seek new supporters through applications to new funds established to promote wellbeing through social prescribing. We encourage visitors to become a 'Friend of Martineau Gardens' through our membership scheme. We actively promote this to visitors, on our events literature, and on our web site.

#### 4.2 Increasing public use of Martineau Gardens

Completing the renovation of the Pavilion by installing the kitchen has provided greater opportunity to generate income from venue hire, for both business and private events. The arrival of 'Stickman' introduced a new wave of family visitors who have made good use of the play area. A new cycle shelter was installed funded through Birmingham Cycle Revolution via Birmingham City Council.



*The Pavilion: a welcoming space at the heart of our community*

### 5. Looking ahead

The Pavilion refurbishment work has created a lovely room for school groups, courses, meetings and parties. The next step will be to improve toilet facilities and the 'shipwreck' children's play area. Jo Malone London 'shines a beacon on mental health' by supporting therapeutic gardens for people with mental health issues. With their funding our volunteers started transforming an under-used space into an accessible garden, where some of our most vulnerable users will be able to participate in Therapeutic Horticulture.

### 6. Further information

#### 6.1 Legal status

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

## How to contact us

Martineau Gardens, 27 Priory Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham B5 7UG

T: 0121 440 7430

E: [info@martineau-gardens.org.uk](mailto:info@martineau-gardens.org.uk)

## Opening Hours

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

### 6.2 The Trustees

Peter Arnold, Tim Bruton (Treasurer), Sarah Colles, Liz Hensel, Sue Roberts (Chair), Glenys Thomas and Tom Walkling.

### 6.3 The Staff

Gill Milburn replaced Caroline Hutton as Director in April 2018. Caroline completed the hand-over in July. Jane Bradshaw (Administrator) 3 days; Michael Burnett (Fundraiser) 1.5 days; Lee Davies (Apprentice Gardener, to July 2018); Juliette Green (Environmental Education) 3 days from March to Oct; Sarah Hill-Daniel (Marketing and Communications) 2 days; Stewart Holmes (Therapeutic Horticulture) 4 days; Miranda Kingston (Therapeutic Horticulture) 3 days; Alec Middleton (Venue Hire) 1 day; Gill Milburn (Director) 4 days.

### 6.4 Patron

Alys Fowler

### 6.5 Finances

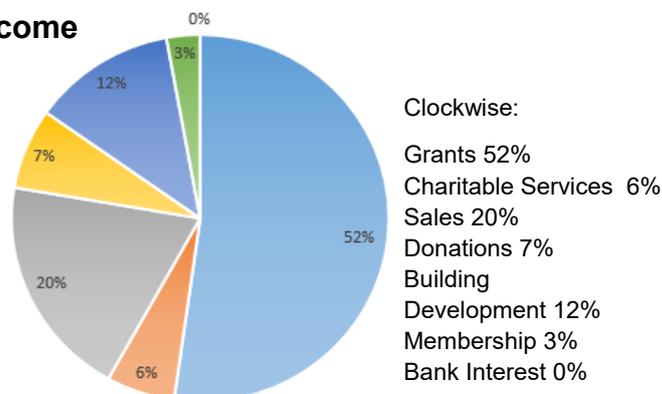
Income: £206,451 Expenditure: £211,393

Balance at 31 March 2018 = £116,767

Balance at 31 March 2019= £111,825

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

### Income



### Expenditure

