The Charity Registration Number is – 1187272

Grounded Community

Report and Unaudited Accounts

31 March 2026

The King's Award for Voluntary Service

The MBE for volunteer groups

Grounded Community

Report and accounts for the year ended 31 March 2026

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Grounded Community

Reference and Administrative Details

Trustees:	John Hanson John Richards Mark Stimson – Chair of Trustees Michael French Theresa McManus Eleanor Wills Helen Gialias Mayu Rouco Santos (appointed 10 July 2025) Joanna Ciuk (appointed 10 July 2025) – Treasurer Trustee
Charity Registration Number:	1187272
Registered Office:	45 Maxwell Road Bournemouth Dorset BH9 1DQ
Independent Examiner:	Miss J A Richardson 32 Award Road Wimborne Dorset BH21 7NT

Trustees Annual Report – FY 25/26

The Trustees present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2026. The Trustees have adopted the provisions of 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 (FRS 102) (effective 1st January 2019).

Objectives and Activities

Our charity's purposes as set out in the objects contained in the CIO Foundation Constitution are: -

1. To advance the education of the public in subjects of sustainable development and the protection, enhancement, and rehabilitation of the environment by teaching, demonstrating, and supporting people how to grow food to improve health and well-being.

2. The relief of those in need, by reason of age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage through the gathering, collection and distribution of food, the provision of support to grow food and the reduction of food waste

Summary of the main activities undertaken for the public benefit in relation to these objects

The Trustees confirm that in shaping our objectives for the year and planning our activities, they have considered the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Our main objectives for the year continued to be the advancement of education related to teaching people food growing skills and distributing food to those in need.

The strategies we used to meet those objectives included:

- Developing skill sharing workshops to educate our volunteers and the local community in learning about Food Growing Skills.
- Hosting volunteer sessions in our Secret Garden and other sites, including Little Gardeners.
- Helping people grow their own food by installing raised beds and helping to get them started.
- Collecting and distributing surplus food out to local beneficiaries through The Pantry, including supporting them in accessing warm meals in a comfortable setting.
- Establishing the Gatherers programme for cooking and preserving surplus or foraged produce for local beneficiaries.
- Collecting waste from the local community and turning the waste into compost to use by us.
- Developing our bee keeping workshops and mentoring programme.
- Trialling and growing microgreens to supplement the surplus food given out to local beneficiaries and raising the profile locally of this highly nutritious food through distributing to local businesses and farm outlets. *(This is one of our Pilot Projects).*

Below you will read about the six projects (as shown in green) that form our charity. Our Community Food Map below shows how we are engaging our community partners (as shown in orange) with our projects.

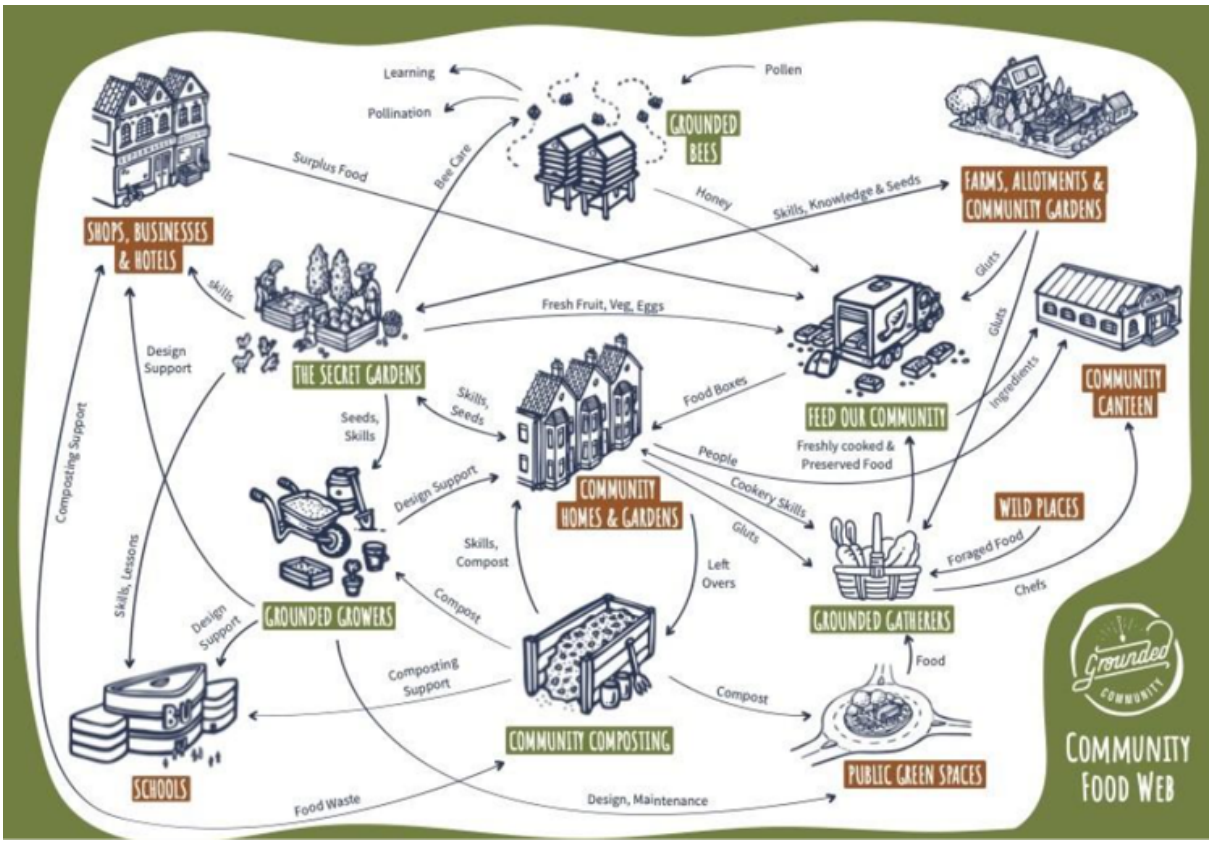


Fig 1 – Our community food web illustration

Project 1 - The Secret Garden:

Skills and Learning Workshops

The educational workshops mostly took place at the Secret Garden, but some workshops took place in the Nursery Garden and/or on the roof of the Sovereign Centre in Boscombe, Bournemouth.

From the workshops we aimed to equip people with the basic knowledge they needed to then grow their own fruit and vegetables at home, with the ultimate ambition of helping the community become self-sufficient, and to share their food within the local community. Our skills and learning programmes included one-off workshops to the public and ongoing volunteer training workshops, of which had been delivered during our weekday volunteer sessions.

The workshops generally start with an introduction to the theory, followed by a practical session in which participants get an opportunity to practise their new skills. After the practical sessions, there is always a Q&A session with suggested home activities and resources to follow up what the participants have been learned about. There is usually something to take home – a detailed handout, seeds, plug plants or harvested food.

Our fortnightly advanced volunteer training sessions go into further depth on seasonal topics to share skills and support growing at the Secret Garden.

Topics this year included mushroom growing, rainwater harvesting, making nettle soup, companion planting, composting and the Summer Solstice.

Volunteer sessions

Our garden volunteer sessions have continued to run throughout the whole year on Monday and Friday mornings from 9am to 1pm.

These volunteer sessions at The Secret Garden have provided several key services for our local community:

- Growing local, nutritious, seasonal, chemical-free food to give out to those in need, through our food distribution project – Feed our Community - The Pantry.
- Demonstrating simple, regenerative techniques for growing a wide variety of crops that can be replicated in back gardens.
- Providing the skills needed for our local community to grow their own food and everything that supports this (e.g. composting, wildlife gardening, beekeeping).
- Nurturing a local community of people who come to learn and share their own skills and experience.

Monday and Friday sessions have continued to be inclusive and open to all. The sessions attract people with a range of ages, abilities, nationalities, backgrounds, beliefs and life circumstances, representative of our diverse area. Garden activities vary with the season and are catered to the interests, skills and ability of our volunteers. The activities have included sowing, weeding, planting, harvesting, watering, seed saving, chicken care as well as DIY, creating wildlife habitats, composting, painting and developing new growing spaces. As mentioned above, we also held advanced volunteer skills training session twice a month. As well as helping our volunteers develop new skills, these sessions have greatly contributed to the volunteers physical and mental health. At these sessions there are always time for a hot drink and chat, usually with cakes and snacks contributed by our volunteers or staff.

Little Gardeners Stay & Play Sessions

During term time we have continued to run a nature play group for under 7s and their adult carers. In these weekly 90-minute sessions, children have taken part in a variety of play-based activities based connecting the children with the outdoors, soil, plant and wildlife and growing organic, seasonal food and conserving wildlife habitats. The nature play group activities have included pond-dipping, plant and bug identification, making insect habitats, feeding the chickens, craft activities, play-kitchens and reading books related to nature and food growing. As like with the volunteer sessions, there are always hot/cold drinks and healthy snacks available for adults and children.

Parents often comment on the calm, playful and friendly atmosphere. New friendships and connections are formed, and we have families signing up to our projects as a result of coming to the Little Gardeners play sessions.

As well as the activities that are laid out, all children and adults are encouraged to freely explore and enjoy our beautiful walled Secret Garden, complete with a sheltered outdoor classroom/kitchen area, wildlife pond, chicken run and polytunnel.

The aim of the sessions has always been to initiate a positive lifelong connection with the outdoors, soil, plant life, chickens, wildlife and where our food comes from, to learn through play and to respect and take care of each other and our planet.

The Little Gardeners sessions run every week in all weather conditions (apart from dangerously high winds and thunderstorms!). Our measurable outcomes are that 90% of adult attendees report that a) their children are more comfortable playing outside in nature, and b) are more familiar with where their food comes from, as a result of attending our Little Gardeners sessions.

Project 2 - Grounded Growers:

Our Grounded Growers project provides design and installation services to create bespoke growing spaces throughout our local community. Their services include the supply, delivery and installation of raised beds made from reclaimed timber frames, a waste product of the shipping industry along with locally sourced soil and compost, created from collected green and local food waste. Our Growers project also provide seasonal organic seeds and plug plants and with their outreach support, help individuals, groups and organisations to learn how to grow their own nutritious food with access and connection to a range of grower's skills workshops within our Secret Garden or within the setting of the new installation. Our Grounded Growers project has volunteers often young men and some from refugee asylum seeking community.

Project 3 - Feed Our Community – The Pantry:

'The Pantry' is an open 'farm shop' style area where rather than come and collect a pre-prepared food box, the beneficiaries are encouraged to take a basket and browse the shop to select the items they need.

Examples of those people that benefit from 'The Pantry' are vulnerable individuals, single parent families, elderly, large families, those with mental health issues and/or substance abuse and low-income households. Many of the volunteers are also beneficiaries and our project team encourages everyone who can to get involved, building a more confident and resilient community.

'The Pantry', launched in December 2025, has a new system of charging its beneficiaries £2 to do a shop. This has completely transformed the way The Pantry organises shopping and manages demand. Previously, beneficiaries needed to book a slot on a register, which created long waiting lists

and meant that if someone didn't turn up, the slot was lost. The Pantry has now moved from paper and pen to a fully digital system designed and installed by our very own Educational Coordinator, including a Sum-up machine so we can charge £2 per shop and a separate tablet for registration.

Project 4 - Grounded Gatherers:

The aim of Grounded Gatherers has always been to put surplus food to good use – whether it's unwanted fruit from gardens, foraged fruits from public spaces or even supermarket veg that needs using fast. Our Gatherers come together to create a whole range of seasonal delicacies such as nettle soup, rosehip syrup & three-cornered leek pesto as well as producing a variety of soups, juices, cakes, bakes and makes from food that would otherwise end up in landfill.

Project 5 - Community Composting:

Our community composting project transforms food waste from local businesses into nutritious compost, using our rocket composter on the roof of the Sovereign Centre in Boscombe.

In the early part of the year, the rocket composter was not operational for a while due to a technical problem. Once resolved, it was back up and running on the Sovereign Centre rooftop, turning food waste into high-quality compost for community growing.

Project 6 - Grounded Bees:

We keep beehives on the roof of the Sovereign Shopping Centre. We also keep a beehive at our Nursery Garden for educational purposes. Periodic volunteer sessions are run to help manage the hives and help mentor new and potential beekeepers.

Achievements and Performance

In this section of the report, we would like to share with you an overview of the charity's achievements in 2025/2026.

In 2025, we improved our methods of capturing and reporting on Output/Outcomes and measuring our Impact, and we adopted a person-centered evaluation method enabling us to measure and report on the impact of our funded activities and evidence how our work makes a tangible difference to individuals and communities. We use an asset-based approach to evaluation that involves more qualitative (words and stories) than quantitative (numbers) data and evidence.

Also at the start of 2025, the Grounded Greens microgreens project started as a pilot. Thanks to our three funding sources received from National Lottery Rewards for All, Hubbubs and Wessex Water, we

started with a budget of roughly £15,000 to see if we could successfully grow and sell microgreens locally, while keeping true to Grounded's mission and community ethos.

Over the many months, the pilot showed us that:

1) We can grow the product and we can consistently grow substantial yields of high-quality microgreens
2) that people want to buy microgreens in that there is a clear local appetite for this, and
3) We now have all the microgreens kit needed to run a microgreens operation.

The setting this up as a Grounded 's 7th project is now all dependent on securing additional funding and a more appropriate site for the project.

In early spring 2025, our amazing volunteers were awarded the Community Action Network 'Community Team Spirit Award' at the recent CAN Voluntary Service Awards gala. At its core, volunteering is a selfless gesture, Grounded's beliefs have always been that together we can grow and without doubt, Grounded would not be where it is today without our volunteer family. Grounded were so thrilled to receive the award amongst such worthy contenders. This award recognises the incredible teamwork, and commitment volunteers give back to our community and Grounded could not be prouder. CAN said of the awards "we are deeply honoured to provide a platform to recognise the remarkable individuals who volunteer their time and skills across Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole. The volunteer's selfless dedication forms the backbone of so many vital services and initiatives and their impact on Grounded's local community is immense". Attending the event were Sharon Brinkman, our Volunteer Coordinator, and two of our most dedicated garden volunteers. Sharon said, "We were so thrilled to receive the award amongst such worthy contenders".

At the beginning of April 2025, Ecological SIPs (who specialise in delivering high performance and low impact homes for self-builders and developers), attended our Little Gardeners sessions with the family. Having been inspired by our six projects, they were so grateful that they offered to donate some timber from their local business, allowing us to build some much-needed accessible raised beds for the Secret Garden. So, during a sunny DIY volunteer session - one bed at wheelchair height was built, and the other a standing height bed was built, for people with back problems who find it hard to bend down. We even managed to build a wheelchair accessible ramp for our outdoor classroom too.



Fig 2 – Team at Rutland Road Allotment

In April 2025, we were connected to Rutland Road Allotment Association to supply raised beds to plot holders and to advise on sustainability using permaculture ethics. Shortly afterwards, our Grounded Growers Co-Ordinator was very fortunate to be offered a full allotment plot by the Association. So late

April, the Grounded Growers team started the hard work of clearing and prepping the allotment site to start growing. The Grounded Growers team installed 19 raised beds, water butts, composting bays and a greenhouse all with the help of volunteers who had been learning how to grow and care from seed, increase their DIY skills, create compost and support their own well-being by being outside and connecting with others in nature.

Also in April, we made the most amazing connection with the like-minded, community focused Joy Cafe. Grounded's Feed our Community project donated £100 to the Cafe Pay It Forward board – that means free paninis, coffees, and treats for anyone who needed a little pick-me-up, on the house. And Grounded also bought £400 of Joy Cafe vouchers to give out to The Pantry people – so everyone could enjoy a warm meal or drink in a beautiful, welcoming space right here in Boscombe.

At the end of April 2025, Grounded Gatherers returned – and kicked off with a wild and tasty adventure at Vale Lodge in Boscombe. The participants had an absolute blast making three-cornered leek scones, dandelion hummus, and microgreen leek pesto. All the food was made using mostly hand-foraged ingredients picked earlier in the week. Everyone went home with a couple of scones, a jar of pesto, the recipes, and that lovely feeling you get from learning through doing.



Fig 3 – Grounded gatherers out in Kings Park foraging

At the beginning of May, we held Grounded's Easter Open Day. It was lovely to see so many friendly people enjoying the space, the sunshine, and of course cooking 36 pizzas too.

In May 2025, we launched our Crowdfunder event to raise vital funds to keep our community garden growing strong – and to support all the amazing Grounded projects that connect people, food and nature across the area. As part of the Crowdfunder event, we also created some beautiful rewards – from jars of homemade chutney to beekeeping experiences and shared meals under the sky.

In June 2025, we held our Midsummer BBQ event. What truly joyful day was had by all at the Secret Garden when we hosted our annual Volunteer and Thank you and Summer BBQ which also combined

with The Eden Project Big Lunch. With record numbers of people attending, we hosted 130 people in the Secret Garden where the local community enjoyed a delicious BBQ and food sharing lunch, including a bake-off competition: honey, cake & plant sale, and a range of midsummer craft activities!

From July, Grounded Growers held weekly drop-in workshop sessions at the Rutland Road Allotments for Volunteers. Learning skills such as planning tasks and managing time, growing vegetables from seed, plant care including watering and cropping, DIY skills such as building the greenhouse, installing guttering and water butts and collaborating to complete tasks.

In July 2025, Nurtured by Nature returned to the Secret Garden with a peaceful series of workshops designed to gently reconnect participants with the natural world and themselves. Each session invited participants to pause, reflect, and explore grounding practices through nature connection, sensory awareness, and mindfulness.



Fig 4 – Enjoying some mindful leaf making

In August 2025, we received confirmation from our Crowdfunder event that we had received an amazing £9,446 thanks to the generosity, belief, and community spirit of our supporters. Every donation directly strengthened our ability to grow more food, support more people, and continue building a resilient, connected community. We were deeply grateful to everyone who contributed, shared the campaign, or cheered us on along the way.

In the autumn, we had the pleasure of working with Pokesdown Primary School after they reached out to us for some help in transforming their growing space into a dedicated allotment classroom. What started as a request for advice soon became a full, hands-on project and the school community threw themselves into it with enthusiasm and vision.

The allotment classroom at Pokesdown Primary School is now complete, and it had been a fantastic success. The classroom is already buzzing with excitement as children explore the beds, learn new skills, and experience the joy of growing their own food. Teachers now have a vibrant outdoor space to enrich lessons, spark curiosity, and connect learning to the natural world. It's been a privilege to support Pokesdown Primary School in creating a place where young growers can thrive.

The Pantry launched a new initiative for the cooler months which became a community favorite - Hot Dog Fridays! Running from September 2025 until the end of the year, The Pantry fired up the hot dog oven and served up tasty hot dogs, alongside good conversation and a welcoming space for everyone. It was a simple idea, but one that brought people together, lifted spirits, and added a little extra joy to the end of the week. Hot Dog Fridays were open to all, and every visit helped strengthen the sense of community that Grounded Community is building together.



Fig 5 – Hot dog Fridays!!

In September 2025, Grounded held another successful Harvest Festival in the Secret Garden. Everyone had such a lovely afternoon – there was a treasure hunt for the children, a raffle of which prizes included Grounded honey, craft kits and a seasonal harvest hamper. People also brought produce for the table, made food for the community meal and brought apples for pressing.

In September and also in October 2025 too, Grounded held its first 2-day Introduction to Permaculture Course with Gary Finch. Attendees of the course discovered how to design their own home, garden and lifestyle for sustainability, abundance and deeper connection with nature.



Fig 6 – Permaculture course held at the Secret Garden

In October 2025, Grounded held another refreshing and educational session with its Home and Community Herbalist Group hosted by our lovely Lorraine Hughes, where they learned about lavender and its various uses.

At the beginning of November 2025, it was National Trustees Week, in which Grounded were able to say a huge thank you to all its amazing trustees, both those who have been with us from the very beginning and those who have joined us more recently. At Grounded we are so lucky to have trustees who are not only passionate about what we do but also so hands on in all our projects across Grounded. From the Secret Garden, to Feed our Community and beyond, the Trustees give their time, skills, and energy to help our work grow and thrive.

During the autumn months of 2025, we identified growing isolation and food poverty among women and mothers who were frequently sacrificing their own food intake to support their family. In response, in November, our Feed our Community Coordinator, launched our all-woman's 'Gather & Grow' sessions. The sessions offered a consistent weekly space for connection, skills development and peer support and proved particularly valuable in addressing isolation among women

The first of the sessions had an excellent turnout and a really positive mix of women from The Pantry, the garden, and the wider community. In the early weeks we faced some challenges around group dynamics, which affected how comfortable some women felt. This was addressed by changing the room layout and adjusting how we advertised the sessions. This worked extremely well and created a much more inclusive, welcoming atmosphere. Since then, the sessions have gone from strength to strength, with activities such as Scrabble, chair yoga, butter making, and shared breakfasts helping women build confidence, connection, and new skills.



Fig 7 – Our first Gather and Grow flyer

We continued throughout the year to hold our Gatherers sessions. The sessions are always so joyful, with laughter-filling the evenings whilst celebrating seasonal flavours and community creativity. At one session using chestnuts foraged on the Gatherers last outing, and also with green tomatoes from our Secret Garden, the group were able to whip up delicious chestnut butter and a vibrant green tomato chutney. The kitchen was full of wonderful smells, busy hands, and plenty of smiles as everyone got stuck in and learned new ways to make the most of autumn's harvest.

At another Grounded Gatherers session, we had a fascinating mini session on water kefir, thanks to Gatherer Anita, who brought along some happily bubbling grains for the group to try. It sparked brilliant conversations about gut health, fermentation, and all the simple, nourishing things we can make at home. All in all, it was a fantastic evening of learning, tasting, experimenting - and a whole lot of fun.

On 1st December 2025, we launched The Pantry's new system of charging its beneficiaries £2 to do a shop. This has completely transformed the way The Pantry organises shopping and manages demand. The Pantry has now moved from paper and pen to a fully digital system designed and installed by our very own Educational Coordinator, including a Sum-up machine so we can charge £2 per shop and a separate tablet for registration.

In the leadup to the launch, there was understandable anxiety from both volunteers and beneficiaries about how we would manage the 15 shops per day limit and what would happen if demand exceeded capacity. Interestingly, the opposite happened at first: only a few people came in for the paid shop each day, while the queue for the free food in the foyer grew significantly. Thankfully, numbers picked up again in the final week of the transition, and we are now seeing a steady, healthy turnout.

In December 2025, Grounded was presented with the The King's Award for Voluntary Service by His Majesty's Lord-Lieutenant of Dorset. During the presentation he shared the following words, which beautifully capture what Grounded and the local community have built together is all about: "Here in Boscombe, you have taken a simple but powerful idea – good food for all – and turned it into a vibrant local movement. You share them generously. You rescue surplus food from waste. And you teach others the confidence and joy of producing food for themselves". The Kings Award belongs to every volunteer, grower, donor, workshop leader, and supported who has played a part in the Grounded movement.

At the end of January 2026, we held our Annual Team Away Weekend in Studland. It was wonderful to have the space to slow down, spend time together, and connect with each other, with nature, and with the values that are at the heart of Grounded – from coastal walks spent looking for signs of spring, to shared means, laughter, creativity, and warming soup around the fire. As we continue to grow as a team, moments like these help us to strengthen our bonds, set new goals, and enter the year ahead feeling refreshed, supported, and inspired.

At the Away Weekend we focused on the planning of our 5-10 Year Vision for Grounded, together with the planning forward to the subsequent follow-up meeting arranged for March 2026. We also celebrated our brilliant progress made on measuring impact, reflected on how to make it easier, and planned ahead on the impact measurements.



Fig 8 – Photos from our annual weekend away in Studland

In mid-February 2026, Jurassic Coast Mushrooms generously donated surplus Oyster and Winecap mushroom spawn to help us grow even more local food. On a grey Friday morning at the Secret Garden, our brilliant volunteers rolled up their sleeves for a mini workshop and set out four buckets of Oyster mushrooms on pasteurised straw. We also created a new outdoors mushroom bed at the back of the garden, inoculating woodchip with Winecap spawn in a shady spot beneath the pear tree. Jurassic Coast Mushrooms also created a discount code for use by our volunteers and supporters.

In February 2026, Grounded were able to extend the 'Gather and Grow' sessions for a further five weeks as the Bournemouth Foodbank were able to fund the sessions. Grounded has been blown away by the feedback it has received from the ladies about how valuable the time is and how much the space is appreciated. It honestly means the world to the whole of the Grounded Community team when they hear how successful the Gather and Grow initiative has been. At the sessions we have women from all walks of life, different experiences and yet watching connections form and common ground being found between women who, on paper, might be total opposites was just so rewarding to see. This is exactly why Gather and Grow exists - community, connection, and a place where everyone belongs.

Our Volunteers

Volunteer numbers have continued to grow and as we started 2025, we had over 200 people supporting us. At its core, volunteering is a selfless gesture and without doubt, we could not have delivered in the last few years without them, from all age groups with incredible diversity, the commitment they show is keeping our vision alive.

We now have ten volunteer facilitators who support us in managing our projects, they are creative and bring new opinions, ideas and approaches to our work and they help us stay connected to our community. Our volunteers demonstrate incredible patience, understanding and resilience as we navigate change while, in many cases facing their own challenges.

Going Concern

The Board of Trustees is satisfied with the performance of the charity during the financial accounting period and the position as at 31st March 2026. The Board considers that Grounded Community is in a reasonable position to continue its activities during the coming year.

Financial Review

The Statement of Financial Activities shows net assets for the financial period ending 31st March 2026 of £ 70,677. This comprises £13,267 in restricted funds and £57,410 in unrestricted funds. Free reserves are £57,410.

Policy on Reserves

It is the policy of Grounded Community to hold in reserves the equivalent of three-months general core costs or a minimum of £10K to cover our regular monthly outgoings of which currently includes our staff salaries. Our unrestricted funds are currently in excess of the reserves policy. The Trustees consider that holding additional reserves at this time is prudent given the local and national funding situation.

Investments

The interest receivable on investment income is £270.

Benefactors

Grounded Community is very grateful to all of its grant funders, supporters and donors, notably:

- Bournemouth Coastal Bid
- National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund
- DCF/BCP Food and Energy Fund
- Hubbubs Foundation
- Let Yourself Trust
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- Wessex Water Environmental Fund
- ASDA Foundation
- Increase the Peace
- Lush
- Bournemouth Symphony
- Kiteley Solicitors

Principal risks and uncertainties

Grounded Community is a young, up-and-coming charity. We are still exploring opportunities to develop more financially sustainable income streams. However, at the moment, we remain heavily reliant on grant funding. So, the principal risks for Grounded Community are being unable to secure funds for the core operational team, and failing to secure our longer-term financial sustainability. To this end we have increased and will continue to increase our applications for core fund grants, thereby ensuring we mostly generate unrestricted income rather than restricted income. We are also continuing to look for other suitable income-generating opportunities, and a new location for microgreens.

Structure, Governance and Management

Nature of Governing Document

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), set up on 9 January 2020. The CIO is governed by its governing document which is based on the Charity Commission foundation model constitution, whose only voting members are the Trustees of the Charity.

Organisational Structure

Trustees The Trustees retain responsibility for ensuring that the charity is complying with the law, managing its finances well and acting in accordance with its charitable objectives. Trustees meet six times a year to review key decisions and satisfy themselves that the governance model is operating appropriately.

As at the 1st April 2025, the charity had seven trustees. During 2025/26 we welcomed two new trustees - Mayu Rouco Santos and Joanna Ciuk. Mayu works for CAN and brings her skills in community engagement and building connections together. Joanna brings with her over two decades of financial expertise and HR skills in her role as Director of Finance and HR for a local company.

At the end of last year, our Trustee, Theresa, joined the Funding Circle to provide some trustee related support to the Circle and to also support our Fundraising Coordinator, Sharon, in the drafting and submission of funding applications.

Every trustee will be appointed for a term of three years by a resolution passed at a properly convened meeting of the charity trustees. In selection of individuals for appointment as charity trustees, the charity trustees will have regard to the skills, knowledge and experience needed for the effective administration of the CIO.

The constitution currently states that there is no maximum number of charity trustees that may be appointed to the charitable incorporated organisation.

Staffing Staff recruitment and retention remain a challenge for small charities. The charity operates a transparent pay approach and continues to review pay sustainability within available resources. As a charity we have developed an organizational structure influenced by Holacracy which distributes authority and decision-making through self-organising teams rather than being vested in a management hierarchy. Day-to-day operations of Grounded Community are administered by the Core Operational team. Currently staff are all paid the same.

Risks and their management - 2025/2026

In this section of the report, we would like to detail both the staffing, funding and project related challenges/risks we faced as a small grassroots charity during 2025/2026.

1. Staffing Risks

With reference to staff, since being awarded the National Lottery Community Fund nearly five years ago, our staff numbers have grown considerably. However, whilst the actual staffing numbers have increased across the projects, the overall total hours have remained nearly the same. So although we are still operating all our projects on 5 full-time equivalent days, our outputs and growth within the charity have noticeably increased resulting in hours and roles being stretched. Workload and capacity remain key operational risks. Trustees continue to monitor staffing levels, wellbeing and resourcing, and to seek funding for additional capacity where possible.

In terms of salaries, we had been conscious that we had not been able to increase the basic hourly rate in 2024 and as a result therefore it had been over 2 years since we applied a salary increase. However, following a successful application to the National Lottery Community Fund for additional core funding for the period from the 1st April 2025 to 14th February 2027, we were able to increase our

basic hourly rate of £13.20 per hour to £13.86 per hour, being an increase of 5%. This additional core funding also helped us to cover the NI rate increases from £13.8% to 15%.

2. Funding Risks

Securing core, unrestricted and multi-year funding remains challenging, and the Trustees continue to diversify income and monitor financial sustainability.

We have experienced, and still are, funding struggles to secure core, unrestricted and multi-year funding. We have been reliant on a blend of government support, local funders and fund-raised income. But we are now finding all of these streams are under strain. The key reasons for the financial struggles are because of a decline in donations due to the cost-of living crisis, soaring operational costs including the necessary increases to the minimum wage and employer national insurance contributions, together with a reduction in the receipt of public/government funding.

3. Project Risks

3.1 Grounded Bees

Sadly, we have had some losses, which looks like it's mainly due to the wet winter we've had. The picture nationally is looking like heavy losses as the bees simply haven't been able to deal with the onslaught of rain non-stop for so long.

3.2 The Secret Garden

It has been challenging trying to advertise our workshops without resorting to paying Meta for their services. However, using Grounded's expanding network of contacts has proven fruitful for filling many of the workshop places this spring. It is just the higher ticket workshops/courses that are not booking up as quickly as we would like. We are currently looking for additional advertising channels.

3.3 Grounded Composting

There is currently a limit to the amount of compost we can produce without compromising its excellent quality. This means that Grounded Growers are having to purchase compost for installations, as what we produce is being used in the Secret Garden and by the microgreens pilot project.

We do have plans in place to upgrade our equipment to speed up production and therefore produce more compost. However, this is taking longer than expected due to staff sickness and restricted availability. We also have plans to reduce the carbon footprint of the project by using a cargo bike / electric trailer bike for pickups and deliveries. A number of options for this are being explored.

3.4 The Microgreens Project

The pilot highlighted some major logistical issues that were currently holding the project back:

- The Location: The balcony roof at the Sovereign Centre in Boscombe just isn't the right space for the growing of the microgreens. Aside from being an inefficient space to work in, it completely isolates the project from the social side of Grounded. Because volunteers can't easily interact or get involved in a welcoming environment, finding volunteer help has been a real struggle.
- Deliveries: We haven't had a formal delivery system in place. We have been delivering the microgreens by hand each week, which puts an unsustainable strain on staff time and the budget. This lack of delivery infrastructure is also one of the main reasons we haven't been able to secure any larger contracts yet.
- Day-to-day Management & Standards: The day-to-day management of the growing hasn't run smoothly under the current growing contractor. The pilot identified the need for clearer procedures, documented food-safety controls and role clarity before commercial expansion.
- The Trustees have now agreed to pause the pilot project until the above has been resolved and further funding has been received.

Plans for future periods

In the next period 2026/2027, we intend to explore further:

- Impact, Impact, Impact…….. We have so much Impact and we need to measure it.
- Continuing to define our 5-10-year vision.
- Encouraging each project to be more enterprising whilst reducing costs.
- Continuing to review and monitor the Delivery Plan
- Re-launching and promoting Friends of Grounded to increase regular donations.
- Continuing with the paid educational workshops for the local Primary schools and exploring the provision for more session leads for children's groups to include term times and school holidays.
- Keep facilitating what we are doing now but with MORE offerings i.e replicating the model we have on a larger scale and offering a diversity of workshops.
- Training the facilitators and workshop providers.
- Replicating our community food web/circular food system for others to set up in their communities.
- Continuing with the sales of honey, eggs and plants.
- Kings Park Development - From early in 2025 through to the end of March 2026, we worked together with the Parks Foundation on the Kings Park Nursery redevelopment project, reimagining the Nursery as a high-quality, community-focused education centre. We believe this development continues to present a strategic opportunity for Grounded to expand its vision, work and projects.

Approval

The annual report was approved by the Trustees of the Charity on 29th October 2026 signed on its behalf by:



Mark Stimson

Chair of Trustees

Independent examiner's report to the Trustees of Gounded Community

I report to the charity Trustees on my examination of the accounts of Grounded Community for the year ended 31 March 2026.
This report is made solely to the charity's Trustees, as a body, in accordance with section 154 of the Charities Act 2011 ('the Act'). My independent examiner's work has been undertaken so that I might state to the charity's Trustees those matters I am required to state to them in an independent examiner's report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the charity, the charity's members as a body for my independent examiner's work, for this report, or for the opinions I have formed.

Responsibilities and basis of report
As the charity Trustees of the Charity you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 .

I report in respect of my examination of the Charity's accounts carried out under Section 145 of the Act and in carrying out my examination I have followed all 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 Trust 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 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.



.....
Miss JA Richardson FCA FCCA DChA

Date ....30th October 2026.....

Statement of Financial Activities
for the Year Ended 31 March 2026

	Notes	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2026 Total funds £	2025 As restated Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM					
Donations and legacies	2	140,263	34,440	174,703	157,410
Other trading activities	3	4,896	-	4,896	188
Investment income	4	270	-	270	323
TOTAL		**145,429**	**34,440**	**179,869**	**157,921**
EXPENDITURE ON					
Raising funds	5	11,529	-	11,529	10,952
Charitable activities	6	110,674	46,689	157,363	135,132
TOTAL		**122,203**	**46,689**	**168,892**	**146,084**
NET INCOME BEFORE TAXATION		23,226	(12,249)	10,977	11,837
Transfers between funds					
Movement in funds		23,226	(12,249)	10,977	11,837
Transfers between funds	11	(2,458)	2,458	-	-
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS					
Total funds brought forward		36,642	23,057	59,700	47,863
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		**57,410**	**13,267**	**70,677**	**59,700**

The notes form part of these financial statements

Grounded Community

Balance Sheet 31 March 2026

	Notes	Unrestricted	Restricted	2026 Total funds £	2025 As restated Total funds £
CURRENT ASSETS					
Debtors	9	547	-	547	-
Cash at bank and in hand		61,334	13,267	74,601	61,737
Total current assets		61,881	13,267	75,148	61,737
CREDITORS					
Amounts falling due within one year	10	4,471	-	4,471	2,037
Net current assets		57,410	13,267	70,677	59,700
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		57,410	13,267	70,677	59,700
Provision for liabilities		-	-	-	
NET ASSETS		**57,410**	**13,267**	**70,677**	**59,700**
FUNDS OF THE CHARITY					
Restricted funds		-	13,267	13,267	23,057
Unrestricted funds		57,410	-	57,410	36,643
TOTAL FUNDS	11			**70,677**	**59,700**

The financial statements were approved by the Board of Trustees and authorised for issue on ..***29th October 2026..*** and were signed on its behalf by:

Mark Stimson - Chair

The notes form part of these financial statements

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2026

1 ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Basis of preparing the financial statements
The financial statements of the charity, which is a public benefit entity under FRS 102, have been prepared in accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) '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 (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019)', Financial Reporting Standard 102 the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland' and the Charities Act 2011. The financial statements have been prepared under the historical cost convention.

Income
All income is recognised in the Statement of Financial Activities once the charity has entitlement to the funds, it is probable that the income will be received and the amount can be measured reliably.

Expenditure
Liabilities are recognised as expenditure as soon as there is a legal or constructive obligation committing the charity to that expenditure, it is probable that a transfer of economic benefits will be required in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be measured reliably. Expenditure is accounted for on an accruals basis and has been classified under headings that aggregate all cost related to the category. Where costs cannot be directly attributed to particular headings they have been allocated to activities on a basis consistent with the use of resources.

Taxation
As a charity, Grounded Community benefits from various exemptions afforded by tax legislation and is therefore not liable for corporation tax on income or gains falling within those exemptions.

Prior year adjustment
Reconciliation from R&P accounts prepared to 31 March 2025 to comparative results in SORP accounts.

Funds R&P to 31 March	£	61,737
Adjustment for liabilities	£	(2,037)
Funds as restated at 31 March 2025	£	59,700

Fund Accounting
Unrestricted funds can be used in accordance with the charitable objectives at the discretion of the trustees.

Restricted funds can only be used for particular restricted purposes within the objects of the charity. Restrictions arise when specified by the donor or when funds are raised for particular restricted purposes.

Further explanation of the nature and purpose of each fund is included in the notes to the financial statements.

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2026 (continued)

Debtors
Trade and other debtors are recognised at the settlement amount due after any trade discount offered. Prepayments are valued at the amount prepaid net of any trade discounts due.

Cash at Bank and in hand
Cash at bank and in hand includes cash and short term highly liquid investments with a short maturity of three months or less from the date of acquisition or opening of the deposit or similar account.

Creditors
Creditors are recognised where 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.

Governance costs
These include costs attributable to the charity's compliance with constitutional and statutory requirements, including financial compliance, strategic management and trustees' meetings and reimbursed expenses.

2 DONATIONS AND LEGACIES	**Unrestricted**	**Restricted**	**Total 2026**	Total 2025
	£	£	£	£
Donations	33,506	-	33,506	12,182
Legacies	15,000	-	15,000	-
Grants	91,757	34,440	126,197	145,227
	140,263	34,440	174,703	157,410

Grants Received	**Unrestricted**	**Restricted**	**Total 2026**
	£	£	£
Bournemouth Coastal Bid	-	8,840	8,840
National Lottery Reaching Communities	76,757	-	76,757
DCF/BCP Food and Energy Fund	-	10,000	10,000
Hubbubb Foundation	-	8,000	8,000
Let Yourself Trust	-	5,000	5,000
Garfield Weston Foundation	15,000	-	15,000
Wessex Water Environmental Fund	-	2,000	2,000
ASDA Foundation	-	600	600
	91,757	34,440	126,197

3 OTHER TRADING ACTIVITIES				As restated
	Unrestricted	**Restricted**	**Total 2026**	Total 2025
	£	£	£	£
Sale of goods or services	4,896	-	4,896	189
	4,896	-	4,896	189

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2026 (continued)

4 INVESTMENT INCOME	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2026	Total 2025
	£	£	£	£
Interest receivable	270	-	270	323
	270	-	270	323

5 EXPENDITURE ON RAISING FUNDS	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2026	As restated Total 2025
	£	£	£	£
Staff wages and salaries	11,529	-	11,529	10,952
	11,529	-	11,529	10,952

6 COSTS OF CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total 2026	As restated Total 2025
	£	£	£	£
a **DIRECT COSTS**				
Staff wages and salaries	75,620	21,953	97,574	76,595
Contractor Fees	5,587	12,301	17,888	16,391
Direct Project Costs	10,610	7,714	18,325	27,563
Office and Admin	1,980	329	2,309	629
Insurance	2,325	-	2,325	215
IT Software and Consumables	658	56	714	1,129
General Expenses	2,201	62	2,263	315
Training and Development	516	976	1,492	1,661
Vehicle Running Costs	1,727	18	1,745	2,511
Rent and Land	7,046	3,139	10,185	2,500
Other indirect expenses	363	140	504	5,513
	108,633	46,689	155,321	135,022
b **SUPPORT COSTS**				
Bank charges	45	-	45	40
Accountancy Fees	1,997	-	1,997	70
	2,042	-	2,042	110
TOTAL COSTS OF CHARITABLE ACTIVITIES	110,674	46,689	157,363	135,132

The fee paid in respect of the Independent Examination of £1,700 (2025: £70) is included in accountancy fees.

7 TRUSTEES REMUNERATION AND BENEFITS

There was no Trustees' remuneration or other benefits for the year to 31 March 2026.

Trustees' expenses

Two trustees have received a total of £160 in reimbursed out of pocket expenses from the charity during the period.

8 STAFF COSTS

	£
Wages and salaries	106,778
Social security costs	-
Pension costs	2,293
	109,071

Key management personnel remuneration totalled £50,605 (2025: £48,761).

The average monthly number of employees during the year was as follows:

Employees	9

No employees received emoluments in excess of £60,000.

9 DEBTORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

	2026	2025
	£	£
Trade debtors	547	-
Prepayments and accrued income	-	-
	547	-

10 CREDITORS: AMOUNTS FALLING DUE WITHIN ONE YEAR

		As restated
	2026	2025
	£	£
Trade creditors	-	119
Social security and other taxes	2,182	1,711
Other creditors	590	208
Accruals and deferred income	1,700	-
	4,471	2,037

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2026 (continued)

11 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS

	At 1 April 2025 As restated	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	At 31 March 2026
Unrestricted					
General	36,643	145,429	122,204	(2,458)	57,410
Total Unrestricted	36,643	145,429	122,204	(2,458)	57,410
Restricted					
ASDA Foundation	-	600	600	-	-
Coastal Bid	-	8,840	2,547		6,293
DCF Community Wellbeing and Mental Health Fund	976	-	976	-	-
DCF Neighbourhood Fund	1,411	-	1,411		-
DCF/BCP Food and Energy	(444)	10,000	9,556		-
Hall and Woodhouse	525	-	525		-
Hubbub COOP food grant	568	-	568		-
Hubbub Foundation	6,254	8,000	11,719	665	3,200
Let Yourself Trust	-	5,000	2,058	-	2,942
National Lottery Awards for All	13,519	-	14,941	1,422	-
Talbot Village Trust	100	-	100		-
Wessex Water Environmental Fund	-	2,000	1,169		831
Wessex Water	148	-	519	371	-
Total Restricted	23,057	34,440	46,689	2,458	13,267
TOTAL FUNDS	59,700	179,869	168,892	-	70,677

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2026 (continued)

11 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS (continued)

	At 1 April 2024 As restated	Income	Expenditure	Transfers	At 31 March 2025 As restated
Unrestricted					
General	7,926	14,228	11,075	(25,564)	36,643
Cooper Deane Alice Ellen	-	5,000	-	5,000	-
National Lottery Yr 4	-	14,617	3,417	11,200	-
National Lottery Yr 3	708	46,731	45,170	2,269	-
Total Unrestricted	**8,634**	**80,576**	**59,662**	**(7,095)**	**36,643**
Restricted					
DCF Food and Energy Top Up	-			-	-
DCF Community Wellbeing and Mental Health Fund	-	1,920	-	944	976
DCF Neighbourhood Fund	3,953	2,858	3,548	1,852	1,411
DCF Vale Lodge	483	-	383	100	-
DCF Winter Warmth Fund	-	9,000	9,000	-	-
DCF/BCP Food and Energy and Top Up	229	11,532	12,205	-	(444)
Friendly Food Club	1,235	-	-	1,235	-
Hall and Woodhouse	2,000	120	1,017	578	525
Hubbub COOP food grant	-	1,000	432	-	568
Hubbub Foundation	-	9,000	2,746		6,254
JP Morgan	1,000	-	-	1,000	-
National Lottery Awards for All	-	19,965	6,446		13,519
Restricted Carried Forward	622	-	-	622	-
Talbot Village Trust	29,707	20,000	48,843	764	100
Wessex Water	-	1,950	1,802	-	148
Total Restricted	**39,229**	**77,345**	**86,422**	**7,095**	**23,057**
TOTAL FUNDS	**47,863**	**157,921**	**146,084**	**-**	**59,700**

As restated
Opening and closing funds have been restated at 31 March 2024 and 31 March 2025 as the basis of preparation has moved to SORP compliant accruals accounts from receipts and payments accounts for the financial year ended 31 March 2026. See Note 1.

TRANSFERS
Expenditure in the financial year to 31 March 2025 had not been correctly recorded against the correct fund. Transfers have been processed in the comparative fund note in respect of the allocation of expenditure in order to produce the correct funds balance split between unrestricted, designated and restricted carried forward to the financial year ending 31 March 2026.

Designated
Designated funds for National Lottery, Garfied Weston and Alice Ellen Cooper Dean are now shown as general funds as the funding received is spent on fulfilling the whole charitable activities.

Notes to the Financial Statements
for the Year Ended 31 March 2026 (continued)

11 MOVEMENT IN FUNDS (continued)

RESTRICTED FUNDS PURPOSE

ASDA Foundation	The Pantry to buy food and also for storage
Coastal Bid	Composting - Salary contribution to 31 March 2027.
DCF Neighbourhood and Food and Energy Top Up	DCF grants to introduced 2 new monthly skills and wellbeing workshops to support mental wellbeing - for Lorraine and Karin to present workshops and slow cookers, food,marketing, FOC salaries.
DCF Community Wellbeing and Mental Health Fund	A DCF grant for Mental Health Training & Training at the Away Weekend allocated to unrestricted expenditure and therefore fund balanced to £nil through transfer in comparative note above.
DCF Vale Lodge	Received £14,200 on 24th July 2023. A DCF Grant to buy materials and to pay for salaries/contractor fees for the set-up of Vale Lodge and all spent by 2024, removed from restricted funds through transfer in comparative note above.
DCF Winter Warmth Fund	A DCF grant for Christmas food hampers, food vouchers, soup kettles, community meals and events including Harvest festival and a Christmas meal.
DCF/BCP Food and Energy	A DCF grant for refursbishment of the Pantry and salaries for FOC staff.
Friendly Food Club	Food purchased for The Pantry in the year to 31 March 2025 allocated to unrestricted expenditure and therefore fund balanced to £nil through transfer in comparative note above.
Hall and Woodhouse	Grant received Jan 2024 - £2,000. It was originally for blinds for the Deck but in Sept 2024 we redirected/reapplied the funds for the monies to be spent on outdoor kitchen solar hot water/living roof for the chickens and compost toilet upgrade, allocated to unrestricted expenditure and therefore fund balanced to £nil through transfer in comparative note above.
Hubbub COOP food grant	Refurb of The Pantry
Hubbub Foundation	Microgreens salaries/gatherers salaries/Home growers workshops, electric cargo bike. The balance remaining was spent on an electric cargo bike in Summer 2026.
Let Yourself Trust	Little Gardeners contractor fees
JP Morgan	Fund spent in year to 31 March 2024 removed from restricted funds through transfer in comparative note above.
National Lottery Awards for All	Micro Greens and Gatherers - National Lottery Awards for All - £11,606 on Composting Materials/equipment and £8,359 on microgreens.
Talbot Village Trust	Funding for general charitable expenditure. All expended by 31 March 2026, in the year to 31 March 2025 some costs allocated to unrestricted expenditure and therefore fund balanced to £100 carried forward through transfer in comparative note above.
Wessex Water Environmental Fund	Composting - Salary contribution to 31 August 2026.

12 ANALYSIS OF NET ASSETS BETWEEN FUNDS

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total at 31 March 2026
	£	£	£
Current assets	61,881	13,267	75,148
Current liabilities	(4,471)	-	(4,471)
	57,410	13,267	70,677

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total at 31 March 2025
	£	£	£
Current assets	38,679	23,057	61,736
Current liabilities	(2,036)	-	(2,036)
	36,643	23,057	59,700

13 RELATED PARTY DISCLOSURES

There are no related party transactions in the year other than those disclosed in Note 7 for out of pocket Trustee expenses.

14 COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITES (As restated)

	Unrestricted £	Restricted £	2025 As restated Total funds £	2024 As restated Total funds £
INCOME AND ENDOWMENTS FROM				
Donations and legacies	80,118	77,344	157,462	145,680
Other trading activities	188	-	188	-
Investment income	270	-	270	-
TOTAL INCOME	80,576	77,344	157,920	145,680
EXPENDITURE ON				
Raising funds	10,952	-	10,952	-
Charitable activities	48,711	86,420	135,131	132,553
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	59,663	86,420	146,083	132,553
NET INCOME BEFORE TAXATION	20,913	(9,076)	11,837	13,127
Movement in funds	23,226	(9,076)	11,837	13,127
Transfers between funds	7,095	(7,095)	-	-
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS				
Total funds brought forward	9,374	39,230	47,863	34,736
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD	39,695	13,267	59,700	47,863