

Thistles

Your Choice, Your Life



Annual Report

Thistles Market Garden Ltd

2023 -2024

www.ThistlesMarketGarden.net

thistles.enquiries@hotmail.com

Thistles Market Garden Ltd.

Station Road

Sutterton

Boston

Lincolnshire

PE20 2JX

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A Charitable organisation

Registered under the
Co-operative and Benefit
Societies Act 2014

Reg. Company number: IP031461

FCA Reference: 31461R

HMRC Charities Ref. No. ZD03863

Management Committee:

Chairman: Sarah Nash
Secretary: Sonia Bowman
Treasurer: Nikki Phillips

Committee Members: Cheryl Gratton
Sue Clark
Kerry Gibson
Mark Elston
Steve Ring
Rachel Bowser

Service Manager: Michael Burgess



Chairman's Report

2023 to 2024 has seen a steady growth for Thistles in every way, from new service users, new activities experienced and new additions to the site.

The service users have been busy cultivating, tidying and growing throughout the year. There have been many changes and improvements to the site which is coming along amazingly. Along with the growing, cooking, selling and looking after the produce, the service users have also managed to fit in lots of lovely trips out and about, taking part in many different activities and visiting many new places.

Throughout the year Thistles has received some very generous donations, along with grants, the main one enabling Thistles to replace their old bus, which had seen better days, with a smart new bus which allows all the service users to be able to all travel out together on outings.

As we end another year Thistles is looking forward to continuing in working with established partnerships and also making new partnerships as they go.

Thank you to Michael and all the staff, service users, members of the committee and supporters, for enabling Thistles to continue doing what it does best.

Sarah Nash

Managers Report

Update

This has been my first full year in charge of Thistles Market Garden, one that has been enjoyable and extremely rewarding.

Hard work and dedication from the team have enabled Thistles to operate at near capacity levels, which is a fantastic achievement in such a short space of time.

Our profile has developed as we have upped the ante with our Facebook page and promoting our name in the community.

We have continued with our fantastic working relationships with organisations and businesses, we have also developed new partnerships and collaborative working.

I will end by thanking everyone, businesses, organisations, staff, volunteers, parents, committee members and carers for their continued support of Thistles this past reporting year.

I would also like to thank the committee for their continued support and to the staff team in believing in our ethos and showing a high level of commitment.

Without all these people, elements and organisations, Thistles would not be as successful as it is today.

Lastly, I would like to Thank Jessie Scattergood for her continued support of the land usage, we are truly grateful.

Michael Burgess

Activities

September at Thistles members is always a busy one on site, plenty of watering, mowing weeding and harvesting our lovely fruit and vegetables, including tomatoes, runner beans, peppers, cucumbers and both honeydew and water melons which we were very proud of. The group also did lots of re-potting, strung up the grape vines and tending the pumpkin patch. Members also enjoyed an array of other activities such as; making Chutney, health walks, Horse Therapy, collecting paving slabs, collecting compost from Fountain Plants Ltd, making Halloween decorations out of pallet wood and collecting plants donated from B&Q. Trips out included, Willoughby allotments, activities at Boston Rowing club, Indoor Bowling, and visits to Hunstanton, Skegness and Ferry Meadows which every one enjoyed.

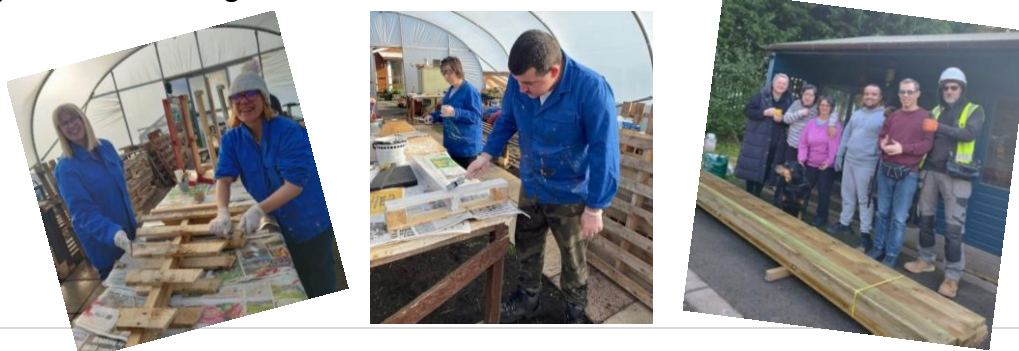


October continued to be a hive of activity at Thistles, the group continued with keeping the site tidy with weeding, mowing, strimming, harvesting and watering. Seeds were harvested from squishy tomatoes ready for next year, and sunflower heads deseeded too, and fruit from the orchard was picked. The tomato plants were shredded, pumpkin patch harvested and cleared and the runner beans plants and tripods removed. The shed received a tidy up and a new coat of paint, and the group continued with painting more Halloween decorations and made broomsticks from twigs and branches. The poly-tunnel was tidied up and decorated for Halloween, pumpkins carved and much party preparations made ready for the Halloween Party, where other similar day services were invited to join us at Thistles. This was a great event with music, dancing, raffle and a BBQ, everyone enjoyed getting into their scary costumes.

Other October activities included; Indoor Bowling, a Healthy Eating course and Card Making course by the Pelican Trust, attending Careers Day at The Endeavour Academy, Litter Picking at Kirton Cemetery, Horse Therapy, local Health Walks, and making some tasty home made soups from our very own home grown vegetables, Pumpkin, Butternut Squash and mixed vegetable...yummy!



November at Thistles is a busy month for Christmas preparations, the group got involved with making, sanding and painting wooden Christmas pallet decorations to sell to the public, and also with Christmas wreath making, wrapping the wire wreath rings, tying bows, wiring cones and baubles, and later in the month collecting and cutting the foliage before helping to make up wreaths to sell. The group members also enjoyed some cooking sessions making cakes and brownies. Trips out included; indoor bowling, Horse therapy at Sunset Farm, coffee at Willoughby allotments, and a trip to Woodhall Spa to collect donated Xmas tree foliage and a coffee. Our wonderful group also worked really hard learning the Makaton signs and words to White Christmas, and practicing all month for a performance at Boston Stump...they were great. At the end of the month the group members made paper chains to decorate the building and put up our Christmas tree and loaded the van to sell Christmas project at the Heckington Christmas fair.





December started with a workshop, where Thistles staff and group members taught a Headways group the art of making Christmas Wreaths, this was held at the Medlock centre due to bad weather and ex Manager Liz Judge came in to help with her tutorial. The group went to the Salvation Army for the Music Man Christmas concert which they thoroughly enjoyed, there was also an outing to the Chapel centre Spalding for their Christmas fete, a visit to Holbeach to pick up a donation from Chosen and treated to delicious cakes and drinks courtesy of the Aurora Café, Holbeach. Thistles members, staff and committee members went for Christmas Dinner at the Burton House. The month continued with many more Christmas treats, including a sausage and mash day at Thistles, 2 trips to the winter wonderland at Baytree Garden centre, 2 trips to the Lincolnshire wildlife centre, horse therapy, collecting a cheque and grabbing supplies and a coffee from Tesco in preparation for Thistles Christmas parties, games and Christmas DVDs leading up to the Christmas break.



January activities included various health walks, coffee trips to Pinchins and Goodfinds Heckington, and a trip to Ferry Meadows when the weather was bright and dry, and on those damp dark days the group members got stuck into indoor activities such as spring cleaning the building, putting away Christmas decorations, card making sessions and cooking cakes. The seeds were sorted, bulbs were sorted, the Jakeman planters were emptied and bulbs put in. The group were tasked with washing pots and sieving compost ready for the new growing season ahead. Several B&Q donations were collected and consisted of paints, baskets and planters which were deconstructed and plants re-potted. Herbs and Lupins were seeded, planters and raised beds were weeded and the ground fertilised with horse manure dug in. The group were invited for more indoor bowling, to make bird boxes at the Centenary Church and made fat balls which were hung around site at Thistles, members also joined forces with Kirton Clean-Up Squad to help clear overgrown foliage from Kirton pathways and were rewarded with a chippy lunch by Thistles. Trees on site were pruned, and Pilgrims patched was visited and tidied up.



February the group continued to help prune the trees, removed all the strawberry plants from the raised beds, potted them up so the soil in those beds could be fertilised and topped up. Box plants were re-potted, potatoes chitted, onion sets, Geraniums and Lupins were planted, more compost was sieved, the small poly tunnel given another dig over ready for planting, the new raised beds were filled, and old raised bed weeded. The group deseeded flower heads, washed pots, and tidied the green houses. Cosmos, Parsley and Tomato seedlings were pricked out, and more broad beans sowed. Trips out included Health walks around Westgate woods and a stop off for refreshments at the Fisherman’s Rest, Dobbies to purchase seeds and a have drink, a Fairy Door hunt at the Guild Hall Boston, Indoor bowling courtesy of Boston Indoor Bowling Club and Horse Therapy at Sunset Farm, Fosdyke. On wet days the group had some cooking Days, they made Pancakes, Pizzas and Shortbread.



March was a hive of activity, with much pricking out of seedlings, including Geraniums, Lupins, Tomatoes, Cucumbers, Peppers, Aubergines, Lobelia, Marigolds & Asters. Potatoes were planted in the small poly tunnel, Parsnips in the raised beds and violas planted into the

planters around site. Ivy cuttings were taken and potted up, spider plants were re-potted, and more seeds sown. Jobs around Thistles included washing more pots, moving and tidying up the remaining sleeper, and moving many sacks of compost donated. A large collection of Violas and baskets were collected from B&Q and sold on to Thistles customers. Mowing and strimming began on site when the weather allowed. The group members had further visits to Horse Therapy, Indoor Bowling, Adaptive Cycling at Peterborough, went on various Health Walks and a visit to Inspire for lunch and bingo. The group had fun cooking cup cakes and pizzas, and enjoyed Easter egg hunts around the site. Members also went to the Range to purchase art materials to make Easter hats and cards which were judged by Thistles old Manager Liz and land owner Jessie, who had a tough job picking a winner. The Group greatly enjoyed a trip to Conningsby, where we had a rather chilly Picnic whilst watching the Red Arrow practice their routine for the Kings Coronation. The group were also invited to Golden Grove Nursery to see how small fir trees are grown on a large scale and to the first of two trips to Willow Bridge Sheep Therapy to see, hold and feed new born lambs.



April was hectic with our seedlings growing, tomatoes, cabbage, herbs and Rudbeckia all pricked out; Parsley, Asparagus, various herbs and Rosemary potted up and Geranium and trailing ivy also potted on in preparation of making hanging baskets later in the month. Salad potatoes, broad beans, onions, cauliflower and sweetcorn was planted in the main plot, while the new raised beds were dug over and topped up with soil, and planted with beetroot and spring onions. Mowing, strimming, digging over the plot, rotavating and more

weeding continued around the site, frames were erected in preparation of planting the cucumbers in the poly tunnels, and tripods made for the sweet peas to be planted. More seeds were sown including, carrots, peas, lettuce, peppers, Iris and Chrysanthemums. More compost was collected from our friends at Fountain plants, another donation from B&Q Peterborough of plants and a couple of new water butts. The staff and group members took on a massive challenge of sorting and clearing out the pot storage area at the rear of Thistles, and recycling a huge amount of them, this task went on for some weeks. More slabs were collected with help from James Bowser and his trailer. In the meantime Thistles members enjoyed trips out to Adaptive cycling, Horse Therapy, another trip to Sheep Therapy, went to Inspire for lunch, bingo and a disco, visited Butters to purchase plug plants for baskets, and still found time to make some delicious chocolate brownies and a crust-less quiche. The first few hanging baskets were made at the end of April ready for sale.



May was a very busy month of preparation for our up coming open day in June, lots of mowing, strimming, weeding, rotavating and watering to showcase Thistles looking at its best. More hanging baskets made up ready for re-sale, planters of mixed annual plants and Sweet Williams. Fuchias, begonias, lemon basil, Lupins, dahlias, petunias, Asters and more tomatoes were potted up, and Foxgloves, Dill, peppers, Chives, Dwarf Rudbeckia and Sunflowers pricked out. Planting outside on the main plots included Sweet Peas, cabbages, Butternut Squash, Pumpkins and Courgettes, and more tripods made for the Runner beans

to also be planted. The tomatoes were planted in the main polytunnel and an early crop of potatoes were harvested in the small poly tunnel to make way for the planting of Aubergines, Cucumbers, Peppers, Water and Honeydew Melons. French beans and more lettuce were planted in the raised beds. The group also had trips to Horse Therapy, Bowling and Adapted cycling and a picnic at Ferry Meadows Peterborough. Members also enjoyed making sausage rolls, cheese scones and making bunting to decorate the main group room. The group also began to prepare the tombola prizes kindly donated by friends and families supporting our event by putting tickets on them.



June arrive and the group continued to get ready for the open day event, group members continued to hoe and weed, mow the grass, water and feed the very thirsty plants. Herb pots and Begonia pots were made up for resale, plastic chairs washed down, outside bunting was put up and staging moved for our plants and produce to be priced up and displayed in readiness for our big day. Unfortunately the open day was postponed till July due to threats of bad weather on the open day itself which never actually materialised! Our group members carried on with their task regardless, planting spring onions, sweet corn and marigolds between the vegetables. More seeds were sown, such as; Pak Choi, sprouts, Broccoli and Kale, and the remaining runner beans were re-potted along with sunflowers, beef tomatoes, Thyme, Agapanthus and Foxgloves. Our potatoes were ridged up from our newly acquire ridger, supports put in place for the melons, sweet pea and cucumbers were tied up to support them and salad potatoes were harvested. Our guys also went out to

Sutterton Surgery to do some weeding. The group enjoyed a day trip to Skegness, a trip to Scot House for a concreted workshop making garden ornaments, a tour of Jakeman's sweet Factory, indoor bowling, adapted cycling and a picnic, a health walk and drinks at Westgate woods and a coffee stop at Pinchins Farm shop.



July was jammed packed full of days out as well as the Open-day delayed from June. Weeding, Watering, mowing and strimming continued to maintain the site prior to the Open day, and members were busy putting the finishing touches to the raffle display, ticketing more tombola prizes, moving picnic tables and adding more bunting to our site. Thistles raised a fantastic £987.00 towards new equipment and some well deserved summer trips thanks to all the help from staff, group members, volunteers, and of course all that came and supported our event. Days out for July included Lincolnshire Wolds Wildlife Park, Hunstanton, Newark Aircraft Museum and Tallington Lakes for tobogganing, as well as outdoor bowling, a visit to Springfield shopping, and to Butters for some closing down bargains. The group also spent some time planting up Pilgrims Patch on John Adams Way for Boston in Bloom and planted up Jakeman's planters in the village, they also found time to make a lovely collage picture for the Heckington Show, for which they won second place in their category for the second year running and £30. A donation of Begonias and Pinks were received from B&Q were sorted and re-potted, along with our own plants such as; Ivy Rudbeckia, Honey Suckle and Clematis, more melon, Cucumber and Beef tomatoes were

planted in the poly-tunnel, and more Kale and Brussels sprouts into the main plot. The group began to see the results of all their hard work with the harvesting of Cauliflower, carrots, tomatoes, courgettes, radish and spring onions, as well as some lovely bunches of sweet peas to brighten up the group room.



August continued with lots of watering, weeding, mowing, and of course harvesting our produce such as cucumbers, tomatoes, 2 varieties of melons, runner beans, apples from the orchard, rhubarb, courgettes and the last crop of potatoes were dug up and our sweet peas kept us in a constant stream of fresh flowers to cut for our group room. The group re-potted Lupins, Aquilegia, Agapanthus and many different herbs, and the sunflowers were de-seeded ready for next year's crop. Great excitement in August getting ready to purchase a new larger and newer mini-bus, so the old one got emptied and cleaned inside and out ready to be part exchanged for the new one to arrive thanks to the funding from Lincolnshire Community Foundation Grassroots Grant. It certainly made a great difference to taking out group members out and not having to take a second vehicle to get everyone

out and about to activities. The guys enjoyed lots of off site activities in the good weather which included; Sail ability, Boston park for a circus skills workshop, Scott House for their summer fete, Boston Food market and a cheeky stop at Wetherspoons for refreshments, Adapted Cycling, Ferry Meadow's for a picnic, Boston Indoor Bowling Club open day, several health walks, several trips for skinner ice-creams and refreshments at Ivy's to see the Llamas and goats. The group also fitted into their very busy schedules some cooking; they made courgette and orange cake, rhubarb crumble and some vegetable soup; and also tried their hands at decoupage and they also fitted in going to Sutterton's Doctor's surgery to tidy up their outside spaces.



Community Support:

Thistles are especially grateful for the continued support we have received from our community throughout this year. We would like to thank local businesses and individuals that have given their time and supported us financially.

A big thank you to the many organisations and individuals who have helped Thistles during this period, including the following:

Jessie Scattergood, our landowner who continues to support Thistles with the peppercorn rent as well as her generosity of cash donations.

Lincolnshire Community Foundation, Lincolnshire Community Partnership, UKSPF Grassroots Grant Fund, for the grant to enable us to purchase a larger and newer minibus.

Rachel & Michael Bowser who not only volunteer their time, and have helped to source new equipment for the site.

Donation of £529.93 from Glenda Barsby, money raised from her and her husband.

Mark Elston for his time and effort with the group, and for the numerous collections of B@Q donations and donation of folders.

Jakemans, who invited our group members for tours & continues to donate boxes of their Jakemans sweets.

Baytree Garden Centre for the donation of seeds.

Cheryl Gratton for her time and support with the Thistles open-day, donations of raffle prizes and her husband, Nick Gratton for providing the disco for our open day and Halloween events.

Malc Firth Landscaping for bringing their wood chipper on site to shred up branches pruned from the orchard.

Fountains Plants Ltd for their continued support and generous donations of compost.

Chosen, a charity shop in Holbeach who chose to support Thistles as one of their projects to receive a £1000 donation.

Lincolnshire Police for donating compost bags and large black pots, a big thank you for Nicky for bring them to Thistles.

Ann- Marie at Headways, for organising and promoting a charity race night where Thistles received £1045.80 from monies raised.

Golden Grove Nursery, for the interesting tour of your nursery and the donation of the trees.

Chris Chrisford for the donation of drone footage at our open day.

Bicker wind farm for the £1200 donation to allow the purchase battery powered strimmers, mowers and sensory garden plants and ornaments.

Steve Ring for continuing to support Thistles after your retirement as our driver, and for standing in as reserve driver, and the many tip runs you have done for us.

The Sutterton Community Village Hall for their donation from local fund raising events.

Seeds and plants, and various other garden materials donated by staff member Tracy Mulvaney.

Laminator and envelopes donated by Helen Marshall.

Allen's Haulage for donating their time to collect railway sleepers to enable us to build more raised beds at Thistles.

Pilgrim Fathers Masons for the £500 donation.

Andy Butler who provided some seed potatoes, and for helping sell our produce.

B & Q (Peterborough) who donated various items via the neighbourly scheme.

B & Q (Boston) who donated many plants and baskets via the neighbourly scheme.

The ATAM Garden Maintenance, aka the mower man who has been looking after our mowers and strimmers for us at minimal cost.

Kevin Feary of KDF Motors, Sutterton, who has continued to maintain our minibus at favourable rates, and the raffle prize donated.

Henny Pinchin of Pinchins farm shop and café, Algakirk, for the continued support and donation of cakes for our Open Day.

Barbara and Dave Mulligan who donated a trailer to Thistle, and Barb has donated many cakes, and also donated many raffle and tombola prizes.

The Fisherman's Rest who have supplied us with blue mushroom crates.

Rob Holmes, our Thistles neighbour who donated apples, and an array of plants.

John Bark from Willoughby Sheep visits for a group visit and for bringing some sheep to our open day.

Julie Cross for the donation of raffle prizes.

Tanya from Boston Indoor Bowling Club for arranging group visits, and their members who have helped to instruct our group, and for the raffle prize donation.

Sylvia Davey for the loan of her gazebo, raffle prizes and police visits.

Tony & Maisie Balkow who arranged coffee mornings and donated £100 on behalf of the Zion Church, Brothertoft Road, Boston.

Hr Branch ltd for the raffle donation.

Café Aurora, Holbeach for the donation of raffle prizes and cake donations.

Susannah's Studio, of Sutterton for the raffle prize.

Lincolnshire Community Foundation for the donation of £1000 to purchase a new shed.

Sutterton Fish and chip shop for the Raffle prize.

Tesco Communities for the raffle prize & £50 donation.

Terry from Kirton for the donation of paving slabs and to Dowdings Property & garden maintenance for delivering them to Thistles.

Tony Bills for the £80 donation

Petina Hayes for the £50 donation in Loving Memory of Martyn Hayes.

Donation of £123.92 monies raised by a local community group, Sing.

Cath for donating some slabs and to James Bowser for collecting them for us on his trailer.

Boston Lions for the £500 donation.

Boston Indoor Bowling club for the donation of £103, and for their time & patience in teaching our group member to play bowls.

Thank you to you all...we could do what we do without your continued support.

Treasurer's Report

2023 – 2024 saw a significant change from an accounts point of view compared with the previous few years. There has been good growth, income has increased significantly, and expenses although increased which would be expected, did not increase at the same rate as the income, which left Thistles more or less even at the end of the year, once the additional funds were contributed for the purchase of the new bus.

Money received from fund raising activities, roadside sales, and donations of items and money has helped to contribute to putting things back into Thistles, helping to maintain the site, providing new and updated areas, and helping towards activities for the service users.

There are so many positive things to take from this year, all bills have been paid, all equipment has been maintained, a new minibus has been purchased with the help of a significant grant from Lincolnshire Community Foundation, all staff have been paid and Thistles has managed to keep a healthy balance in the bank towards any unexpected costs that may occur, or to enable Thistles to invest into future projects.

Nikki Phillips

Statement of Accounts

THISTLES MARKET GARDEN LIMITED 31461R					
Receipts and payments accounts					
	For the period from	Period start 01/10/2023	to	Period end 30/09/2024	
Section A Receipts and payments					
	Unrestricted funds to the nearest £	Restricted funds to the nearest £	Endowment funds to the nearest £	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Donations & gift aid	3,666	-	-	3,666	2,269
Fund raising activities	4,348	-	-	4,348	1,574
Fees for provision of services	92,638	-	-	92,638	62,640
Open Day	-	-	-	-	900
FIT	-	-	-	-	428
Grants received	1,000	-	-	1,000	-
<i>Sub total (Gross income for AR)</i>	101,652	-	-	101,652	67,811
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
Vehicle sale	3,000	-	-	3,000	-
<i>Sub total</i>	3,000	-	-	3,000	-
Total receipts	104,652	-	-	104,652	67,811
A3 Payments					
Salaries, cover staff & pensions	76,918	-	-	76,918	63,053
Vehicle & transport expenses	4,769	-	-	4,769	3,597
Repairs & maintenance	4,211	-	-	4,211	1,560
Light & Heat	651	-	-	651	896
Water rates	364	-	-	364	335
Premises Insurance	2,259	-	-	2,259	2,051
Telephone & internet	915	-	-	915	1,019
Stationery ,postage and carriage & advertising	134	-	-	134	7
Bookkeeping charges	-	-	-	-	182
Accountancy charges	1,099	-	-	1,099	420
Cleaning	4	-	-	4	110
Sundries	4,828	-	-	4,828	2,877
Training costs	274	-	-	274	170
<i>Sub total</i>	96,425	-	-	96,425	76,277
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
Vehicle	7,830	-	-	7,830	-
Equipment	1,929	-	-	1,929	-
<i>Sub total</i>	9,759	-	-	9,759	-
Total payments	106,184	-	-	106,184	76,277
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 1,532	-	-	- 1,532	-8,466
A5 Transfers between funds					
A6 Cash funds last year end					
Cash funds this year end	- 1,532	-	-	- 1,532	- 8,466

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

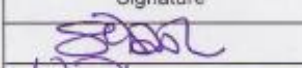
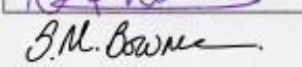
Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B1 Cash funds	Cash at bank	11,026	-	-
	Cash in hand	279	-	-
	Total cash funds <small>(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))</small>	11,305	-	-

Categories	Details	Unrestricted funds to nearest £	Restricted funds to nearest £	Endowment funds to nearest £
B2 Other monetary assets				

Categories	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B3 Investment assets	Property	119729	-	-
	Motor vehicle net of grant	7830	-	-
	Equipment	2686	-	-

Categories	Details	Fund to which asset belongs	Cost (optional)	Current value (optional)
B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use				

Categories	Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
B5 Liabilities				
	Accumulated fund	141,550	-	-

Examined and approved on behalf of the Society Chairman	Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
		SARAH NASH	26/2/2025
	Treasurer	Nilda Philipps	22/6/25
Secretary		SONIA BOWMAN	19.03.2025