



VIEWFIELD GARDEN COLLECTIVE

AGM 19th March 2025 Minutes

2.30pm at Tongadale hotel, Portree

Present: Sandy Masson, Judy Foottit, Sally Phelps, Lesley Kirkwood, Kate Cholerton, Richard Hiles, Christine Toms, Meg Rosher, Jryna Batters, Solomon Azulay, Louise Kerr.

Apologies: Viewfield House (Hugh, Iona and Jasper), Nick Crutchley, Menna Augiers, Janet Hey

Chair's welcome Louise welcomed everyone and good turnout on a lovely day!

Minutes of last AGM (7th march 2024): reviewed and accept. Proposed by Sally, seconded by Richard.

Matters arising: Covered in chair's report.

Chair's report: (Louise) See attached report.

Financial Report: (Louise) See attached report.

Fundraising report: (Louise and Solomon)

Election of trustees: Full board re-elected. Proposed by Solomon, seconded by Kate. Elected trustees: Louise Kerr, Jryna Batters, Christine Toms, Meg Rosher, Richard Hiles.

Two newcomers have expressed an interest in becoming trustees- Halcion and Mark. They have been given trustees' application forms. Sany Masson may also be interested.

Lesley Kirkwood is happy to continue to be co-opted to help the Trustees.

Kate Cholerton offered to take minutes at trustees' meetings if she is able to attend.

AOCB:

- **20th anniversary:** 2026 will be our 20th anniversary. Discussed ideas for a celebration with old photos, plant tree, acknowledge Marcus' contribution as longest serving volunteer.
- **PayPal update:** Solomon has taken on the role and is registering as the account holder. This is not easy and still not active despite providing the information.
- **Review and update Facebook and website:** Awaiting Solomon's input if he has time.
- **OSCR:** Both Sandy Masson and Lesley K. have knowledge and experience of completing OSCR reports and offered their help.
- **DONM for trustees:** Not discussed! Date to be arranged.
- Meeting closed



VIEWFIELD GARDEN COLLECTIVE

Chair's report for AGM 19th March 2025

Report for calendar year 2024

Written by Louise Kerr 24th February 2025 for AGM 19th March 2025

TRUSTEES: Jryna Batters, Christine Toms, Richard Hiles, Louise Kerr, Meg Rosher.

Chair: shared by Jryna Batters and Louise Kerr.

Secretary: Louise and other trustees took on secretary duties as required.

Treasurer: Jryna and Louise.

Membership secretary: Meg Rosher

Safeguarding Trustees: Meg Rosher and Christine Toms

Co-opted: Lesley Kirkwood to help with sponsorship but not a trustee.

Thanks to all our trustees for their commitment and hard work.

STAFF:

Garden Manager: Nick Crutchley

Support Manager: After Betty Grant resigned in 27th October 2023, Nick and trustees covered until appointment of new volunteer co-ordinator in May.

Volunteer Co-ordinator: Menna Augier, appointed 29th May 2024

Fundraiser: Solomon Azulay, appointed in November 2024

Summary of year:

2024: Trustees held 5 meetings-24/01/2024, 3/04/2024, 26/06/2024, 21/08/2024, 19/11/2024

January: Very challenging year. Started with only one staff member, Nick. No support manager and no assistant gardener. Nick stepped up to cover and help with managing the volunteers and administration aided by the trustees, well beyond his remit and putting in many extra hours.

March: held AGM and voted Meg Rosher onto the trustees' board

April: Advertised for new post of Volunteer Co-ordinator. Several applicants.

Interviewed 3 very strong candidates, appointed Menna Augier.

May: Menna started job. Received grant from IOSRC for composting and polytunnel project but does not include any salary costs or general running costs.

June: reached a financial crisis point. Only 3 months' reserves left and no prospect of new funding. On threshold of closure. Trustees and Nick put in big effort to fundraise, applying for several grants with help from Jo Ford of SLCVO.

August: Receive grant from H.C. Wards discretionary fund which buys us time to secure further funding.

October- December: further funding is secured.

November: Solomon officially appointed as our fundraiser.

December: staff reviews. Year ended in much happier and healthier state.

Grants and awards:

IOSRC composting and polytunnel project. Secured 29th May. Restricted. £15,433

H.C. Wards Discretionary Fund. Secured 28th August. Unrestricted. £2,800

BOS grant Secured 9th October. Unrestricted. £500

Awards for All grant secured 1st November. Unrestricted. £19,520

Whole Family Wellbeing Programme secured 3rd December. Restricted for family workshops and programmes. £9,900

Skye & Lochalsh Access Panel Secured 21st December. Restricted for disabled access. £1000

Acknowledgements and special thanks go to:

- We are delighted to welcome Menna to the team. She has brought youth, freshness and enthusiasm and proves to be very competent, diligent and sympathetic and supportive to our members. She's a huge asset to VGC
- Huge thank you to Nick for his continued diligence, competence, enthusiasm and for rising to the challenges of a difficult year. For his input to the composting, wormeries, recycling, soil improvements, etc.
- Thanks to all our volunteers and members for their continued attendance and contribution and to all who support us and donate.
- To the volunteers who came at different sessions helping, harvesting and processing our produce for home and sales. In particular, Morag Hanna, Janet Hey, Marcus, Sally Phelps, Meg Rosher, John Wright, Joss Fisher, Colin Brooke (for the strimming), for their regular attendance and huge contribution.
- To Jryna for her dedication and the numerous tasks she undertakes every week.
- Sol for his contribution to fundraising.
- Christine Toms and John Rogers for watering polytunnel and donation of a soil thermometer.
- Arie Beekman's donation of a new cooker hob.
- Helen Wilson for growing and providing cut flowers for Home Farm, Am Fasgadh and other worthy causes.
- Our Funders and the grant agencies; local businesses for donations.
- Jasmine for taking on Facebook (photos can be sent to her for posting, etc)
- Hugh Macdonald and Jasper and Iona Buxton at Viewfield House for their ongoing support.
- Skye Shrubs, Billy Buchanan (our bee keeper); Richard and Helen and their horses!
- Judith Wallace independent inspector of our accounts.
- SLCVO for their continuing and invaluable support and advice. The new Third Sector Consortium is being set up and funded by NHS for Scotland. VGC needs to decide if or how we may participate.
- Thanks to our regular soup, cake and lunch makers, Jryna, Christine and Meg.

- To all the people who have run and held workshops and activities at the garden. (see below)

Activities:

Grafting workshop: with Neil Clapperton, 13 march, 13 attended.

Bellringing ceremony with Helen Danter and a T.V. crew. 15th June. to remember the local victims of Covid.

Professional Gardeners Guild visit on 30th June. Featured on T.V.

First Aid training: 4 september, 10 attended.

Social gathering and lunch, 16 October, 35-40 attended a ceilidh with Morag Hendrickson, Carel Goodheir, Meg and Menna.

Willow weaving with Monique Bervoets, 30 october, 25 attended.

Xmas bonfire, lunch and music, 5 December, 25-30 attended.

Garden achievements:

- New composting system; 2 hot composters by car park, 2 wormeries (MT), 3 wormeries (UT), purchase of worms, rehaul of polytunnel including 9 new raised beds, upgraded raised beds outside- 3 strawberry beds (LT), 2 long beds (MT), filled with manufactured soil and vermicast; pruned all fruit bushes and improved accessibility; development of pond area, improved sensory bank and created sensory spaces for mindfulness, created cut-flower garden, made 250kg of vermicast for potting compost, reduction of plastics in garden, continued development of sustainable gardening including a focus on soil improvement; created earthworm habitat.

Other Achievements:

- Sales Shed has been opened weekly throughout the season with promotion on social media. Harvested lots of courgettes! We continued to offer free food and we receive donations.
- Portree High School volunteers continued to attend with approximately 4-6 pupils and 4 staff weekly during term times.
- Provided free cut flowers for Home Farm, Am Fasgachd and other worthy causes in the community.
- Began in-house education programme.
- Setting up PVG scheme as part of improving safe-guarding policy.

- We had a total number of 4,395 attendances in 2024, an increase on the previous year (see separate sheet)

Louise Kerr acting chair February 2025

OSCR

7 Beech Gardens
Portree
Isle of Skye
IV51 9UR

01478 611907
steveashaw@aol.com
04/03/2025

Re: Viewfield Garden Collective

I confirm that I have examined the accounts for the above Collective and am pleased to confirm that all is in order.

I summarize below the details of the accounts for Financial Year 2024:

INCOME

Bank Interest	£426.57
IOSRC	£15433.16
Private donations	£907.40
Institution donations	£34120.00
Total Income	£50887.13

EXPENDITURE

Salaries	£25036.40
Garden Operating Costs	£494.87
Tools and Equipment	£1828.92
Business Services	£1310.57
Garden materials	£5243.55
Events	£21.00
Total Expenditure	£33935.31

Opening Balance	£28604.89
Plus income of £50887.13	= £79492.02
Less expenditure of £33935.31	= £45556.71

Yours faithfully



4th March 2025

Stephen A Shaw - Independent auditor

Louise Kerr
chair for VGC

4th March 2025