



# FOREST GATE COMMUNITY GARDEN REVIEW 2024 – 2025



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## SUCSESSES 2024 - 2025

- The garden hosted a full year of very successful events including: the biennial Garden Trail, Ukulele classes, Welcoming Spring and Summer and Winter Events, South Asian storytelling, Witch's Walk, South Asia History month, a MacMillan Coffee Morning, a celebration of the life of Benjamin Zephaniah, Earlham Advent Calendar Walk on Christmas Eve, Gardening Made Easy sessions, a 80th VE Day Celebration, and Sunday Socials – talks on topics by local residents.
- Largely due to the enthusiasm and hard work of our Outreach Co-ordinator, footfall increased to 5,758 compared to 4,546 in the previous year.
- The PPP project concluded with new signage painted by volunteers; the completion of the all-weather shelter and a useful side door cut into our container.
- Plant sales throughout spring and summer continue to be an important source of income for the garden.
- We continued our Forest Gate Plastic Free Ally partnership with Eco7, aiming to reduce single use plastic.
- Thanks to the Fairy Water Trust our solar panels are up and running, providing hot water for coffee and powering lights. We've had a few hiccups with continuity that we're working on.
- Our continuing outreach efforts have been successful, with the Garden now being used throughout the week. The many schools and organisations using the garden include Sandringham, Woodgrange, Maryland, Earlham and Sheringham Primary Schools, West Ham Lane Health Centre, Newham Carers Community / Age UK East, Newham Arts and Heritage, Forest Gate Library, Eastside Community Heritage LGBTQ+ and Jazzane Arts.

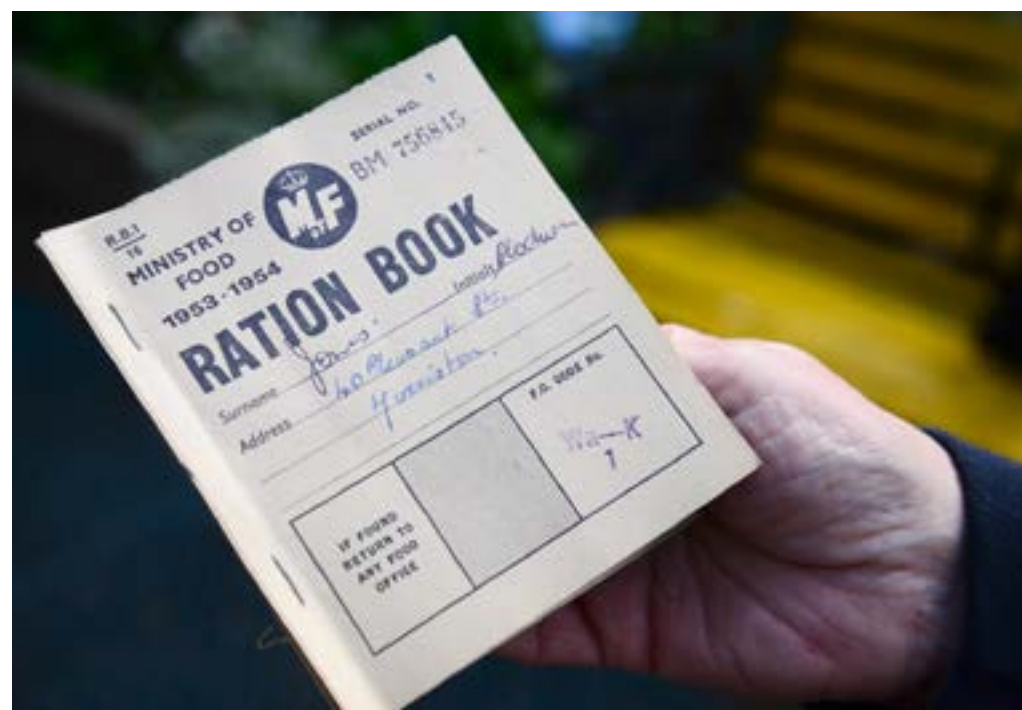






## SUCSESSES Cont... 2024 - 2025

- 2024-2025 was a year of many physical site updates including: Buggy parking, Garden Rules posted at entrance, additional opening hours - Tuesday 10-12pm every week, ongoing Dare to Dream area updates, new filters to improve pond health, a blackboard system with weekly task list for hosts and volunteers posted 10-11 every Friday and posted on WhatsApp. The Fothergill bed is being replenished, and finally, we inherited Star the garden cat.
- The Green Shoots team continued to do great work maintaining the raised bed at the Forest Gate Learning Zone.
- A 'Volunteer Connect' event for trustees, volunteers and staff took place in May. People got to know each other, discussed common issues and had fun. We will continue to hold these events regularly
- We were awarded £5000 unsolicited from Kusuma Foundation which we used to support our Outreach work. We raised grants of £16K from the National Lottery, £4k from Nature's Hub, £3,200 from M&G Associates and £1000 from Tesco to continue Outreach work in 2025/6.
- Planning permission for the site has been granted until April 2029, and our lease extended for 10 years.
- We added 'to promote biodiversity and sustainable practices' to our aims. We hope to work with UCL on a biodiversity audit of the Garden which will help us to develop a planting/wildlife strategy.







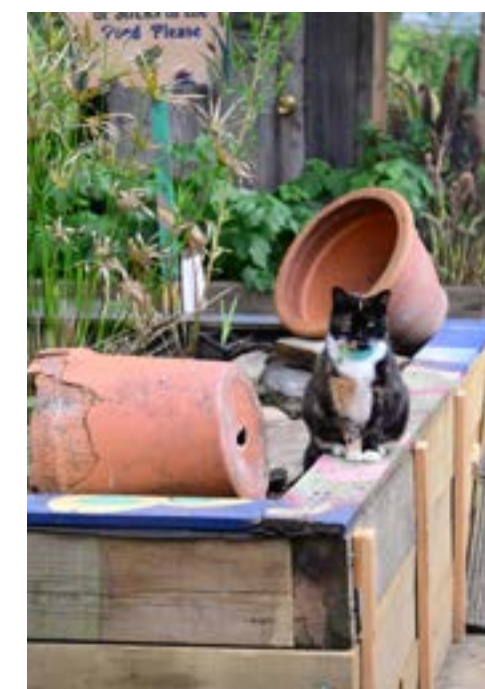
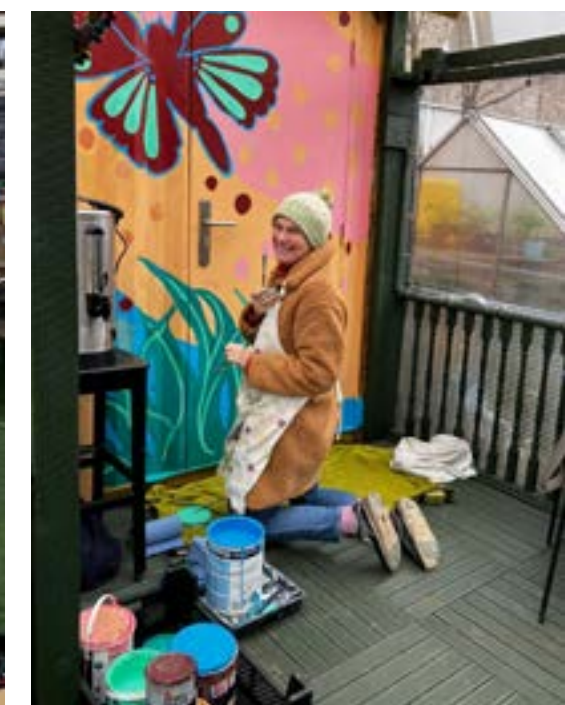
## CHALLENGES

- As a result of our increasing turnover, we have signed up to a financial management package, Quick Books. A learning curve for those involved.
- Retaining volunteers and recruiting hosts to oversee sessions is an ongoing issue. We hope our Volunteer Connect events will encourage people to stay with us.
- We sometimes have problems with donations to the garden of items which we cannot use. Our policy now is that volunteers cannot accept donations without prior staff approval.

## CHANGES

- We welcomed Baroness Lyn Brown of Silvertown as our first Patron. Hedy Richards retired from the position of financial trustee after 10 years but remains a trustee. We are very grateful to her and to Stephen Mason, our Lead gardener who left us in October. We welcomed Misty Dampier who joined us as a Coordinator in November.

The full financial report for 2023 to 2024 can be seen on our website: [www.fgcommunitygarden.org/about-us](http://www.fgcommunitygarden.org/about-us)







## THE BUZZ ABOUT THE GARDEN....

*'This is a sanctuary.*

*This garden is needed and has been nurtured and blossomed within the community to bring a great space that I am happy to visit any day of the week.'*

*'A lovely green and peaceful spot in bustling area. The people that I met there are warm and welcoming.*

*'Greatly enjoyable nature garden within city community. It's down to Earth garden with lovely staff to kindly talk and promote natural plants, gardening for better environment for all the human beings. They welcome all the diverse people families and children of the world with kind open hearts'*

*'There are always great activities for the kids. We love investigating the pond for frogs. Volunteers are friendly and very knowledgeable and get the kids involved.'*

*'Lovely little garden, my toddler loves it!'*

*'The sweetest little garden, well kept, with lovely volunteers ready to help. I only wish it was open more often!'*

*'A beautiful ever changing community space, biodiversity in abundance'*

*'Incredible green space in the middle of forest gate. Run by volunteers, airways work a visit, with lots of local events.'*







Many thanks to Trustees, staff and especially our wonderful volunteers and garden hosts for their boundless energy and enthusiasm. You have contributed thousands of hours in the garden over the last year, as well as countless unrecorded hours behind the scenes and on external associated activities.

A special thank you to our building team Kevin Harris, Stephen Oates and Peter Tmkow, Lisa Eller, Kerena Fussell, Myanah Saunders, Michaela O'Connor and many others who have worked tirelessly over the year contributing to the garden improvements.

VOLUNTEERS

- Adele

Amy

Annie

Belinda

Barbara

Cath P

Cathy S

Celia

Cherinet

Chris

Christine

Claire

Danielle

Deborah

Dipannita

Derek

Eku

Fiona

Gillian

Henry

India

Iram

Jackie

Jan

Jess

Jessica
- Jo

Joanna

Julia

Katia

Kath C

Kerena

Kevin

Laura

Lisa

Luke

Mark

Maudlyn

Mary

Miriam

Michaela

Mohammad

Myanah

Omar

Peter

Ruth

Rachel

Sally

Sandra

Simon

Skye

Stephen

Sylvia

Susan

Veronica







STAFF



Misty Dampier  
Coordinator



Lisa Eller  
Garden Overseer



Fiona Leckenby  
Outreach



Max Mason  
Communications



Sally Medcalf  
Administrator

TRUSTEES



Laura Batatota



Maureen Egbe



Kerena Fussell



Mark Gorman



Kevin Mansell



Hedy Richards



David Rosenberg



Myanah Saunders  
Chair



Donna Stokes



Peter Williams







# FOREST GATE COMMUNITY GARDEN

## Whats coming up in 2025/26

The Garden Trail  
Our 10th Anniversary Celebration  
A Biodiversity Audit  
Plant Sales  
Seasonal Activities and Events

Thank you to all our current funders and partners for their generous support

