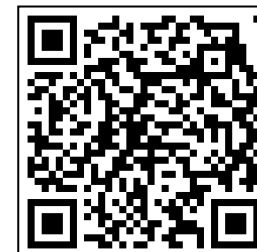




FOREST GATE COMMUNITY GARDEN REVIEW 2025 - 2026



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SUCCESSES 2025 - 2026

- The garden hosted a full year of very successful events including welcoming 80 people to share memories at our VE Day celebration, ukulele classes, the Witches Tree Walk, welcoming winter with Friluftsliv, a MacMillan Coffee Morning, the Earlham Advent Calendar Walk on Christmas Eve and continued the popular Sunday Socials – talks on topics by local residents. We also hosted Chinese language sessions on Saturday mornings, partnered the Co-op celebrating Great Big Green Week, held a book launch for local author Paul Jones and held two sessions with the Bumble Bee Trust.
- Largely due to the enthusiasm and hard work of our Outreach Co-ordinator, footfall increased to over 7,000 adult and children visits compared to 5,800 in the previous year.
- Plant sales throughout spring and summer continue to be an important source of income for the garden.
- We continued our partnership with Forest Gate Plastic Free Ally with Eco7, aiming to reduce single use plastic.
- 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. Altogether we held 19 school sessions. We welcomed Newham Carers, Forest Gate Library, Memory Makers Dementia group and adult SEND groups.
- Our Tuesday morning Family Sessions continue to be very popular, often attracting over 40 adults with small children.
- NHS East London - Speech and Language Sessions - the garden is now used throughout the year, comprising of consecutive 5 week sessions for up to 6 families each time. The families attending have children under 3 who are newly diagnosed with autism. We also have regular visits from the Occupational Therapy for parents.





SUCCESSES Cont... 2025 - 2026

- Working with Jazanne Arts, we took part in an intergenerational project with Earlham Primary school
- The Green Shoots team continued to do great work maintaining the raised bed at the Forest Gate Learning Zone. Volunteers also maintained planters in Woodgrange Road.
- We increased the number of Duke of Edinburgh students volunteering with us over the year to 8
- Two 'Volunteer Connect' event for trustees, volunteers and staff took place. People got to know each other, discussed common issues and had fun.
- We planted flax seed to see if we can eventually produce a small quantity of linen – a very laborious process.
- We welcomed a regular volunteer from the Youth Offenders Unit - we are looking to expand this work.
- Trustees agreed a Water Policy to ensure that we make the best use of this increasingly scarce resource.
- We were awarded funding from the Co-op Local Causes scheme, the Metropolitan Parks and Gardens Association, Tesco Stronger Starts and the Field Family Trust.
- A local resident had a National Lottery win with a ticket bought at the Co-op and as a result the Lottery donated £600 to us!



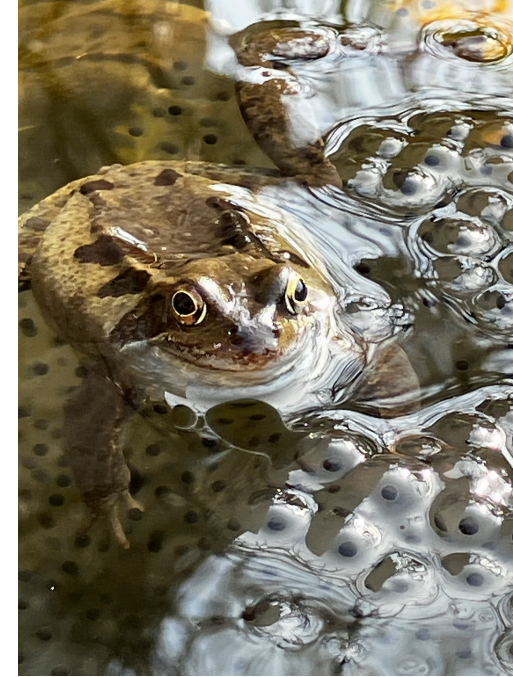


CHALLENGES

- Raising funding for staff salaries has become extremely challenging. We will try to raise more through donations and are planning a Friends of the Garden scheme for people able to make a small regular donation. We are likely to have to reduce staff hours in the second half of 2026.
- Retaining reliable volunteers as well as recruiting hosts to oversee sessions is an ongoing issue. We hope our Volunteer Connect events will encourage people to stay with us.

CHANGES

Long serving trustee Hedy Richards, who oversaw finances for many years, resigned as a trustee due to ill health. Donna Stokes, who served as a trustee from 2021 also resigned. We thank them both for their valuable contributions.



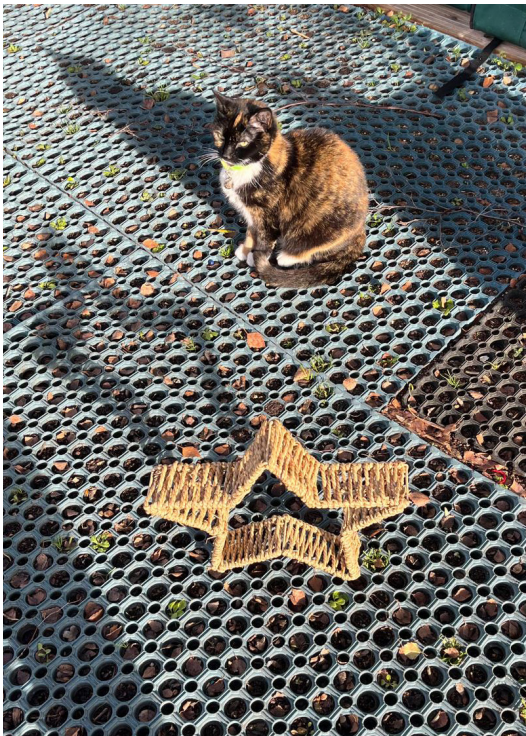


VOLUNTEERS

Many thanks to Trustees, staff and 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.

Without all of you there would be no Garden!





STAFF



Misty Dampier
Coordinator



Lisa Eller
Garden Overseer



Fiona Leckenby
Outreach



Max Mason
Communications



Sally Medcalf
Administrator

TRUSTEES



Laura Batatota



Maureen Egbe



Kerena Fussell



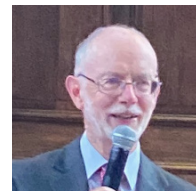
Mark Gorman



Kevin Mansell



David Rosenberg



Peter Williams



Myanah Saunders
Chair





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



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