



# A year in review 2023/24



# Bankside Open Spaces Trust - a year in review

---

Bankside Open Spaces Trust works to

- Transform open spaces
- Empower and engage local communities
- Enhance health and wellbeing
- Champion sustainability



This report highlights the impact Bankside Open Spaces Trust has had over the financial year 2023/24, which ended 31st March 2024.

## In 2023/24:

---

**10**

We won 10 awards  
for excellence  
this year!

**1775**

Free holiday activities  
kept 1775 children  
active and sociable.

**20K**

An estimated 20,500  
people attended our  
community events.

**612**

We planted 612 new  
trees and plants.

**149**

We worked with 149  
volunteers from our  
community.

**18**

Supported 18  
resident-led  
green projects.

**16**

We maintained  
16 open spaces with  
our volunteers.

**73%**

Helped 73% of Future  
Gardeners graduates  
into work or training.

# Transforming open spaces



In 2023/4 we worked to transform open spaces by:

- Maintaining 16 open spaces.
- Planting 612 trees and plants and 2,000 bulbs.
- Caring for 5 wildlife ponds and 1 raingarden.
- Creating 3 log piles and 3 dead hedges for wildlife.

Our parks won four Green Flag Awards, four London in Bloom Awards and the Britain in Bloom Urban Community category.



We continued to fundraise for our transformation of Marlborough Sports Garden into a community hub for sport and wellbeing.



We facilitated community involvement in enhancing Crossbones Graveyard. Improvements to the garden are planned to take place alongside building works next to the site. We worked with the developer, Landsec, to reestablish the garden's steering group.



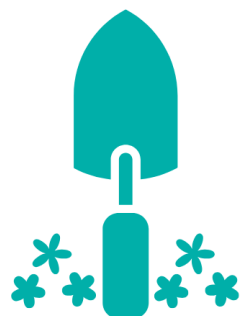
# Empower and engage local communities

In 2023/4, our Future Gardeners course, Green Hub network, Living Space community centre, events and outreach programmes helped thousands of people connect with nature and spend time together outdoors.

## Green Hub: helping local people grow

Our Green Hub actively works with **18 different, resident-led projects**, offering a wide range of support including gardening advice and workshops, tools and materials, assistance from our dedicated Green Hub Facilitator and BOST volunteers, and more.

### In 2023/24 Green Hub:



- Helped to plant **206 new plants and 728 bulbs**.
- Distributed **34 new tools**.
- Installed **7 new raised beds, 3 sheds, 2 new polytunnels, a 3,000L rain-capture system and 6 new composters**.
- Hosted **32 group gardening sessions** and Green Hub workshops attended by a total of 129 local residents.

## Living Space – a community hub

Our community centre in Waterloo makes space for community activities such as afterschool clubs and family holiday camps. Hall and office space hire boost our income.

### In 2023/24, Living Space:

- Facilitated **1,016 hires** and had **16,006 attendances**.
- Delivered activity sessions in the school holidays in partnership with Oasis Hub Waterloo and South London Kings. **We had 1,641 attendances over 11 weeks.**
- Partnered with London Play and Lambeth Council to **repair our playground equipment**. The partnership brought groups of corporate volunteers into the centre to help maintain the equipment and tidy the space.
- Continued to work with the Ministry of Justice's Restorative Justice, who facilitated Community Payback teams undertaking weekly 'unpaid work'.



# Empower and engage local communities

## Future Gardeners – growing careers

Future Gardeners is our free horticulture course for those out of work or seeking a career change. It's designed to tackle skills shortages and get people work-ready in just 10 weeks.

### In our 8th year of Future Gardeners:

- **43 people participated in the course, 93% graduated.**
- **Of those that graduated, 73% are now in employment or further training.**
- **63% of our students had a disability or long term health condition.**
- We launched a pilot Future Gardeners programme in Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, run in partnership with the London Legacy Development Corporation, Build East Skills Centre and idverde. 10 students took part with **70% graduating and finding jobs or further training.**



## Community events – in 2023/24 we held:

**4** Seasonal events

**3** Open gardens

**2** Garden tours

**1** Summer festival

Bankside Open Spaces Festival again attracted an estimated 20,000 visitors on 10th June 2023. **93% of visitors surveyed felt the festival was great or excellent.**

**“Love it, came last year and couldn’t wait for today!.”**

Festival goer, 2023

**“More events like this please :-)”**

Festival goer, 2023

**“I cannot sing the praises of this course highly enough. I’ve never felt so supported, encouraged and empowered.”**

Future Gardeners graduate, July 2023



# Enhance health and wellbeing

**Our community volunteering sessions, corporate work days, park steering groups, Green Hub, wardening at Crossbones and trusteeships give people opportunities to get involved in our outstanding green spaces.**

**"I love volunteering with BOST; it is something I look forward to from week to week. I love most watching the garden change over the seasons and seeing the work you do shape it. I like being able to complete a task and see the result – this can be rare in the rest of life."**

Jesse, Tuesday volunteer, March 2024

**"There's no better catalyst for volunteer work than people who are passionate about the task at hand. Bankside Open Spaces Trust has that, and it makes the whole experience special."**

Corporate volunteer, 2024

# 312

community volunteering sessions.

# 4,826

hours of volunteering given to our sites.

# 100%

of corporate volunteers had fun and enjoyed themselves.

# 42

Crossbones Wardens helped us open the garden for 6 hours a week.



Above: BlackRock corporate volunteers. Below: community volunteers with our London in Bloom Award at Tate Modern Community Garden.



# Enhance health and wellbeing

## Marlborough Sports Garden – supporting healthier futures

Marlborough Sports Garden (MSG) is our community sports facility. We host accessible, free or low-cost coaching and pitch hires to benefit a diverse area lacking open space for sport and play.

### At MSG in 2023/24:

- **272 children** registered for our free afterschool sports sessions. 10 different sports were on offer, led by trained coaches.
- **132 children** accessed the free places on our sports holiday camps (pictured right).
- Thanks to our funded teaching assistant programme, **19 children with additional needs** attended our camps.
- We ran a pilot SEND sports programme benefitting **18 neurodiverse children** from two local schools.
- **44 children and young people** took part in free weekend football coaching.



Above: adapting raised beds for improved access.

## Outreach: improving our offer

This year we strengthened our relationship with charities, people from marginalised and minority communities and those managing disability by creating and delivering micro volunteering sessions.

The sessions were designed to encourage people to take part in gardening activities and build the skills and confidence needed to sign up as a regular volunteer.

Many participants also expressed a desire to connect with nature and the community alongside gaining skills for volunteering or employment. We now plan to offer more accessible gardening opportunities. **This year we laid the foundations for this by building easier to reach raised planting beds, and by buying adapted tools.**



# Champion sustainability

**Bankside Open Spaces Trust aims to reduce our impact on the environment by gardening without chemicals, choosing drought-resistant plants and using peat-free compost.**



# 4

We now have four zero green waste sites:

- Red Cross Garden
- Tate Modern Community Garden
- Waterloo Millennium Green
- Diversity Garden

All have composting facilities, sustainable planting and rainwater capture.

## **Marlborough Sports Garden: A sustainable build for a sustainable future**

**This year, we've continued to plan and fundraise for our development of Marlborough Sports Garden. Sustainability is at the heart of our award-winning designs.**

The garden's £5million+ building and refreshed sports pitches won't just give our community more opportunities for sport and play, they'll also be low impact in the way they are built and run.

### **Sustainable build**

- Circular economy principles.
- Zero waste; materials will be repurposed or recycled.
- We're part of the ZAP project, which is developing solutions to combat the prevalence of plastic waste in construction.

### **For a sustainable future:**

- Air source heat pumps and solar panels.
- Rainwater collection.
- Climbing plants and food growing for shade, environment cooling and encouraging healthy lifestyles.
- Activities and events will be run with robust environmental policies around recycling, packaging, and waste and water management.

# Future plans

Over the next year, Bankside Open Spaces Trust will hold ourselves accountable to our strategic plan by focusing on the following key projects:

## 1) Transform Open Spaces

- Finalise our fundraising and begin to transform MSG into a community hub where people can improve their health and resilience in the long term.
- Working with Landsec and the community to finalise plans for the transformation of Crossbones Graveyard.



**"This is such a great opportunity for them to play sport just 5 minutes from home and they enjoy it..."**

**What you guys have been doing is absolutely amazing for my kids."**

Marlborough Sports Garden parent, October 2023



**"I am excited to get back to work and to start this new chapter and appreciate your help in making this possible."**

Future Gardeners Queen  
Elizabeth Park Student,  
now working part time  
with landscaper idverde.

## 2) Empower and Engage Local Communities

- Expanding Future Gardeners across London.
- Relaunching and developing our park steering groups.

## 3) Enhance Health and Wellbeing

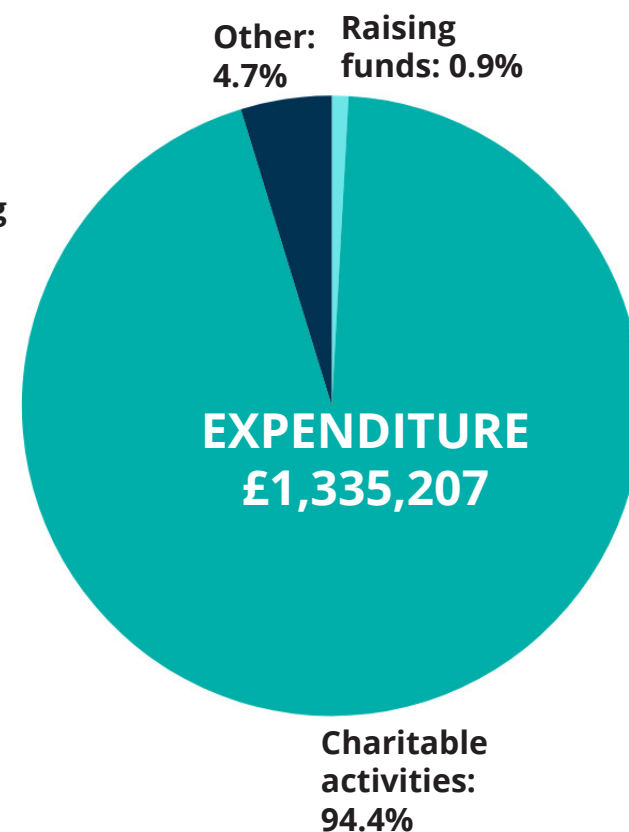
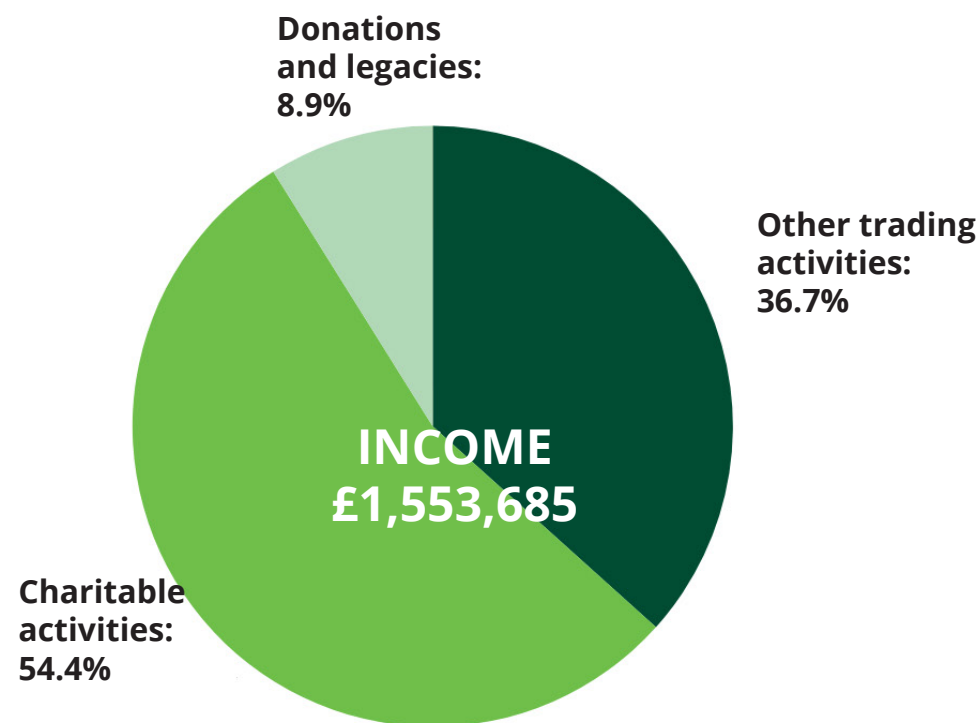
- Ensuring our local community can access a local green space known as The Grotto.

## 4) Champion Sustainability

- We'll begin to measure our biodiversity baseline to help us work towards our aim of being net zero across our parks and green spaces by 2030.
- As a member of the Mayor of London funded Southwark Climate Collective, we'll aim to increase our recycling by 10%.



# Income and expenditure 2023/24



Donations and legacies:	£138,339
Charitable activities:	£845,758
Other trading activities:	£569,491
Investments:	£97

Charitable activities:	£1,260,370
Other:	£63,315
Raising funds:	£11,522

Note: 23/4 income total includes multi-year grants to be spent in subsequent years.



---

[www.bost.org.uk](http://www.bost.org.uk) | [info@www.bost.org.uk](mailto:info@www.bost.org.uk) | [info@bost.org.uk](mailto:info@bost.org.uk)  
Charity Reg Number: 1085454