

# Style Acre

Supporting people with learning disabilities



## Progress Report for the Nineveh Charitable Trust – October 2023

The Nineveh Charitable Trust has been a generous supporter of our Garden Project, most recently in September 2022. People with learning disabilities and autism have continued to access the support they need to get involved in gardening. Our gardeners have had a productive year at our Market Garden, community hub gardens, at home or working for Green Acre, our garden maintenance social enterprise. Special events, themed workshops, plant sales and open days have also been held throughout the year.

People have volunteered at the Garden Project in many ways including therapeutic 1:1 sessions, small group sessions working as a team, larger groups that come to garden and socialise together, skills development through gardening work and educational workshops and events.

### Activity in the past year

Wreath making in the Market Garden poly tunnel is popular every year and two sessions were held last year. A Christmas party was enjoyed with people making Christmas wreaths and table decorations with garden foliage with suitably festive refreshments.

Our Market Gardeners harvested lots of fruit and vegetables this year including potatoes, runner beans, grapes, apples, courgettes, cucumbers, tomatoes, flowers, soya beans. The produce has been shared between all the garden volunteers. The gardeners also cooked up their vegetables and made salad with their produce at a thank you barbecue in the summer.



As well as growing, the gardeners aim to make the garden wildlife friendly and held a Wildlife Day recently so visitors could take part in wildlife activities and enjoy a cake and plant sale. This followed a nighttime wildlife safari in September which spotted frogs, hedgehogs and listened to bats using a bat detector.

We are fortunate to receive help from teams of employees from local companies who help us with large jobs at the garden and our hubs. One company secured funding so that we could install an accessible compost toilet at the Market Garden to improve the facilities for our gardeners. They have installed the new toilet this year and it has been painted beautifully to blend in with the garden.

### Feedback

A recent feedback survey of people we support, volunteers and employees from our Garden Project confirmed some positive outcomes:

- 89% of respondents said gardening makes them feel really good or fantastic.
- 92% of respondents said they felt valued and fulfilled in their gardening role.
- 100% said gardening helped them feel more confident, 85% giving this the highest possible rating on our smiley face scale.
- 96% of people said gardening helped them learn new skills, 78% giving this the highest possible rating.
- 92% of people said gardening helped them make new friends, meet new people /feel part of a team, 78% giving this the highest possible rating.

**What our gardeners say:**

'I like the peace and quiet in the garden.'

'I like being out in the fresh air. I love the team Christmas party.'

'I get money for work. The people whose gardens we do are friendly'.

'It gets me out of the house and it's very relaxing and [I]socialise and learn new stuff.'

'I like pulling the weeds out. It keeps me fit. I feel happy when I see my friends at the garden.'

'I like gardening because I feel free, if I am having a bad time, it makes me happy.'



**Thank you for supporting our Garden Project!**

The support of the Nineveh Charitable Trust has helped us to sustain and create diverse gardening opportunities for adults with learning disabilities, enabling people to benefit from gardening whether they seek quiet, therapeutic activities to meet their sensory and emotional needs, or if they are looking for sociable group work, volunteering or work opportunities to help them live a fulfilled life and meet their personal objectives.