



BUSINESS PLAN

2020-2022

GARDEN ORGANIC - BUSINESS PLAN – 2020-2022

VISION

Our Vision is of a healthy and sustainable world that has embraced organic growing

MISSION

Our Mission is to promote and advance the use of organic growing with its benefits for plants, people and communities

PURPOSE

Our Purpose is to get more people growing organically

VISION STATEMENT

(the statements below are based on those approved by the Board for the 2017/8 communications around the proposed sale of the Ryton site, amended to reflect the conclusion of the sale)

Take organic growing out into communities

We will take organic growing directly to the gardens and allotments of the UK. We know that many people want to learn about organic growing so we will do more to go to them. We will work more locally with our beneficiaries and partners, whether they be Garden Organic members, local groups, experienced Master Composters and Master Gardeners, schoolchildren, horticultural therapy clients, visitors to organic gardens, HSL members, or domestic growers. We will use our expertise to support existing activities and/or start new ones to get more people growing organically.

Support local groups and organisations

There are some fantastic organisations and groups across the country supporting the environment and local communities. We will do our bit to support them with organic growing, from helping public gardens to switch to organic management, to providing more advice and resources to members and to our local groups, and helping to establish local groups in new areas. We know that when we provide organic growing advice specific to someone's growing space and local climate there is far more chance of them following it.

Increase campaigning and lobbying

We will increase our campaigning. We will do more to raise awareness in the general public of the potential dangers of pesticide use and the alternatives open to people. We will lobby the garden centre industry to stock more organic alternatives and look more closely at the methods and interventions used in their supply chain. Most gardeners would choose an organic product to control pests or improve their garden sustainably if they were given a little more knowledge and choice.

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Enhance the Heritage Seed Library

We will do more to collect 'at risk' varieties from around the UK, and help return the varieties we have back to their original location. This is a vital source of genetic resource and we will continue to maintain and grow it.

STRATEGIC AIMS

The Board of Trustees considered and agreed the strategic aims for the charity over a 5 year period from 2019 – 2023 at their meeting in May 2018. These were:

1. We will extend access to organic horticultural knowledge and best practice to the maximum number of people across the whole of the UK.
2. We will protect and share heritage plant genetic resources and promote improved biodiversity through organic practice.
3. We will promote and support research in organic growing.
4. We will be a recognised leader in developing policy for organic growing in the UK.
5. We will manage the charity as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Draft BUSINESS PLAN 2020-22

This draft plan sets out the way in which the charity will meet the 5 Strategic Aims set out above over the period 2020-22. It outlines proposed areas of activity and engagement – it is not an operational plan – and sets out a direction of travel for the charity. It reflects the charity's rich heritage and past experiences, and builds on these with a bold, ambitious and challenging set of targets and objectives for the period

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a. EDUCATION

WE WILL EXTEND ACCESS TO ORGANIC HORTICULTURAL KNOWLEDGE AND BEST PRACTICE TO THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PEOPLE ACROSS THE WHOLE OF THE UK.

By 2023, there will be Garden Organic networks of local organic groups, organic demonstration gardens, education and training activities, and Ambassadors/Trustees throughout the UK.

We see an increased focus on organic horticultural knowledge as the core of our charitable aims. We need to actively engage with all those who wish to commence their growing activity organically and sustainably, and to support and encourage those existing growers who wish to transition to more organic and sustainable approaches. We anticipate a new Directorate focused on this area.

Organic Horticultural Information, Advice, and Guidance

- **Online** – continue to implement an annual online communications plan to engage with the general public across all regions – website visitors/podcast downloads increase by 10% in 2020, 15% in 2021 and 25% in 2022
- **Training** - continue to develop and successfully deliver a minimum of 3 generic organic training courses by 2020, 6 by 2021 and 10 by 2022, with 100 course beneficiaries in 2020, 500 in 2021, and 750 by 2022
- **Review/Update** - refine and execute the process to regularly review organic information to ensure we continue to provide current advice and information in all relevant formats on an ongoing basis – review 5 policy statements by 2020, remaining 5 policy statements by 2021, website organic advice in 2021, and new editions of printed publications by 2022
- **Partnerships** - develop 1 innovative partnership(s) within a variety of settings that provide organic gardening information, guidance, advice and training by 2020, 3 by 2021 and 5 by 2022
- **Mergers and Acquisitions** – we will actively seek opportunities for expansion and develop through mergers and acquisitions with like-minded organisations where our charitable aims coincide. We see a number of potential opportunities to be pursued
- **Ambassadors** – we will review our Ambassadors and key supporters, introducing a revised list by 2020, and increasing the number of high profile supporters by 10% in 2021 and 20% by 2022

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Gardens

- **Ryton “Green Classroom”** - build and actively manage an organic demonstration/training garden – Green Classroom - at GO head office to showcase the Principles of Organic Gardening (POGs), which is open to the public, members and course attendees by Q4 2020, with 10 Open Days in 2021 and 12 public courses by 2022. We will trial new education and training programmes and courses through the Green Classroom initiative, and where successful, seek to roll these out regionally through partner organisations
- **Partner organic gardens** – define criteria for ‘partner garden’ and agree a template for expectations and support. Enhance the network of partner/recommended demonstration gardens showing sound organic practice open to the public across the UK with a minimum of 12 gardens by the end of 2021 and a minimum of 25 gardens by 2022
- **Open days** - establish an ‘Open Organic Gardens’ annual weekend to promote visits to organic gardens with a minimum of one organic garden open in each of the UK Nations and Regions from 2021, and one garden in each county/metropolitan area by 2022

Regional Structure

- **Other Charities’ experience** – we will learn from the experiences of other charities in effective regional and local delivery and representation. We will seek to emulate successful models, learning from the successes and failures of similar organisations
- **Hubs** – expand across the UK nation, developing 2 UK Nations and Regions hubs – in Scotland and Wales - by Q4 2020 and a minimum of 3 further hubs by 2022, initially in the north of England, the Midlands, and the south of England, with the intention of further development as resources allow. Whilst initial funding will be needed to establish this provision, the intention is that the regional hubs would be financially self-supporting in due course.
- **Local Groups** – increase engagement and build stronger relationships with existing local organic groups and support their sustainable development by Q4 2020, and engage with other aligned local groups/organisations and other organic horticultural initiatives to promote organic practice – expand database of such groups by 10% by 2020, 25% by 2021 and 50% by 2022
- **Wider Engagement - Events** - empower regional and local support for relevant events and activities in support of core charitable aims across each of the defined regions and trial in 2021

b. HERITAGE

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WE WILL PROTECT AND SHARE HERITAGE PLANT GENETIC RESOURCES AND PROMOTE IMPROVED BIODIVERSITY THROUGH ORGANIC PRACTICE.

By 2023, Garden Organic will be part of a UK-wide network working together to support and promote plant gene biodiversity, with a particular emphasis on organic heritage and heirloom seed/plant provision

We see Organic Heritage as a key area for growth, expansion and fundraising, and as a way in which to engage non-organic growers and move them towards better organic practice. We acknowledge the need for significant investment in HSL. We see opportunities for expansion through mergers, acquisitions and joint working. We see significant opportunities to create attractive opportunities for fundraising and development.

- **Ambition** – consider options for the possible further development of the Heritage Seed Library, taking into account wider Heritage Horticultural organisations, by end 2020
- **Review** - review, refine and execute the process of continuing assessment of varieties supported by the Heritage Seed Library (HSL) to ensure those varieties most at risk are preserved on an ongoing basis - review to complete mid 2021
- **Model** - develop a model for showcasing local HSL varieties from the regions and pilot the model in one UK region by end of 2020, 3 regions by 2021 and 5 regions by 2022
- **Delivery** – develop and manage a plan for delivery of required seed quantities to POGs standards, using a combination of direct growing, contract/external growing and seed guardians (including options to address current decline) and publish plan and set targets from 2021
- **Growth** - achieve a growth in HSL memberships from 2019 base to 6,500 current memberships by 2021, and 7,500 by 2022 and to manage seed stock and fulfilment abilities as necessary
- **Collaboration** - maintain strong collaborative relationship with other genetic resource organisations in order to maintain up to date information and knowledge on an ongoing basis – a minimum of 4 interactions annually
- **Facilities** – in conjunction with Board 2020 review, consider existing facilities and resources within HSL to ensure that they meet long term demand for seed production, storage and distribution of the collection, with consideration of demand for regional recognition, and create a plan to deliver this by Q4 2020

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- **Mergers and Acquisitions** – we will actively seek opportunities for expansion and develop through mergers and acquisitions with appropriate organisations where our charitable aims coincide.

c. RESEARCH/CITIZEN SCIENCE

WE WILL PROMOTE AND SUPPORT RESEARCH IN ORGANIC GROWING.

By 2023, Garden Organic will have improved understanding of organic practice, by continuing to develop and deliver members' experiments; actively promoting citizen science around organic growing issues; using demonstration gardens to expand and update organic growing knowledge; and disseminating best organic growing practice through training modules and multiple communication channels.

We see collaboration with partners as the key way forward, better promoting both our existing experience and expertise and the many opportunities where partnership might benefit both parties. We will particularly focus on partnering with academic institutions, bringing our expertise in citizen science to innovative projects.

- **Innovation** - develop and manage innovative Citizen Science/Members' Experiments each year to build and test new and existing relevant and appropriate knowledge, with a 5% growth in active participants during 2021, and 10% during 2022.
- **Expansion** - Open Citizen Science/Members' Experiments to non-members from 2021, including opportunities through social media and aligned organisations – 10% participants non-GO members in 2021 and 20% in 2022
- **Academic Science** – proactively promote the opportunities for joint-working with our Citizen Science (Members' Experiments) model. We will work collaboratively with a minimum of one university/academic institution in 2020, and 5 by 2022.
- **Long-term** - include longitudinal surveys for experiments over multiple years from 2021 – 1 in 2021 and 2 (in total) in 2022
- **Communication** - improve the communication of results of Citizen Science/Members' Experiments, dependent on the outcomes, and the implications, where appropriate, in The Organic Way, website and social/traditional media and to a wider audience
- **Funding** - identify potential sources of new funding/sponsorship and collaborate on at least one example of independent organic research by 2021 and two by 2022

d. WE WILL BE A RECOGNISED LEADER IN DEVELOPING POLICY FOR ORGANIC GROWING IN THE UK AND ALIGNED CAMPAIGNS

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By 2023, Garden Organic will proactively contribute to policy specifically focused on Sustainable Horticulture and will promote aligned campaigns

We will focus on areas of specific interest to Sustainable Horticulture. We will ensure that Garden Organic continues to represent organic growers in appropriate institutions and organisations. We will pursue policies and initiatives which support our charitable aims.

- **Review** - instigate an ongoing review of Garden Organic's Policy Statements relating to organic growing/gardening and other related environmental policy areas - (as above)
- **Partners** - establish and maintain external relationships with experts and specialists in policy relevant to organic and sustainable horticulture – a minimum of 5 by 2020, 7 by 2021 and 10 by 2022
- **Collaboration** - collaborate with other aligned organisations to influence national, regional and local policies as opportunities arise - at least twice annually
- **Engagement** - engage our members and supporters where appropriate, to add their voice to our activities – at least once annually
- **Campaigns** - deliver campaigns either directly or in collaboration with other aligned organisations as appropriate, engaging with members, supporters and the general public – a minimum of one campaign annually
- **Publicity** - engage with horticultural trade and consumer growing/gardening press to secure an average of 10 items of press coverage in 2020, 15 in 2021 and 25 in 2022

e. WE WILL MANAGE THE CHARITY AS EFFICIENTLY AND EFFECTIVELY AS POSSIBLE

Garden Organic will continue to be an exemplar of good practice in all areas including finances, governance, employment, volunteer management and customer/member service, fulfilling all statutory and legal requirements

We aim to maintain and improve our internal practices and processes, and to become an employer of choice. We will continue to ensure Governance is maintained at the highest standards. There will be a particular focus on creating the necessary resources and provision for our Business Development ambitions

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- **Fundraising** – initially create a Fundraising Team, with a review of fundraising strategies (including investment income returns) across all charitable and trading activities by 2020. We will build the infrastructure to support the development priorities from 2021/2. We aim for a net income target of £500,000 pa by 2025.
- **Membership** - invest in promoting and increasing an engaged and increasing membership base to act as advocates and supporters of organic growing – membership increase 2% in 2020 rising to 5% by 2022, dependent on budgetary support
- **Supporters** – invest in expanding our social media supporter base as a pipeline for future membership and financial support – target 50,000 by 2020, 70,000 by 2021 and 100,000 by 2022
- **Finance** - manage annual budgets to a break-even position by the end of 2022
- **Staff/Volunteers** - continue to develop and seek to improve management and development of good practice for employees and volunteers and seek external accreditation by 2021
- **Ryton redevelopment** – oversee the new office accommodation in 2020 and establish a group to plan for the future post 2022
- **Remuneration** - benchmark employee salaries internally and externally at least once in the three years
- **Compliance** - update and maintain suite of GO internal policies and procedures to meet all relevant legal, financial and regulatory frameworks, following agreed timelines for regular review.
- **M & As** - review and consider updating Memorandum and Articles of Association, and charity Rules, as appropriate (with Charity Commission approvals) – for 2021 AGM
- **Governance** - review against the Charity Governance Code and, where necessary, improve Governance practices throughout the organisation – annual review