

Mobile Garden Report

February 2024 – April 2025

This report covers the activity and operations of the Mobile Garden at Hackney Bridge from February 2024 to March 2025. Our Parklife worked in partnership with Groundwork London and *idverde* to maintain the garden as well as local organisations to deliver a programme of activities accessible to all.



1. Highlights

In the past year, Our Parklife has successfully enhanced the offerings at Mobile Garden, collaborating with local organisations and residents to diversify the activities available. This approach has successfully boosted attendance and engaged a wider range of interests. Since last February, the garden has had over 1,050 visits with attendees being from a wide range of backgrounds, 80% being local and ages ranging from 4 years old to 75 years old.

From June to October, when the garden was at its peak activity, the following was achieved:

- Trained 17 Allotment Users, who collectively visited the garden over 100 times, dedicating more than 82 hours to tending their plots.
- Hosted over 40 Workshops, ranging from gardening sessions, Tai Chi, art and craft workshops, biodiversity related activities and natural remedies workshops.
- Celebrated the end of the season with a BBQ event, marking a successful summer and the harvest.

Some of these accomplishments were made possible through external funding, enabling us to deliver even more to the community:

- Groundwork London supported monthly maintenance sessions, facilitated 20 community gardening workshops, delivered some corporate volunteering days and contributed to the end-of-summer event.
- Social Farms & Gardens funded 8 workshops and the end-of-summer celebration.
- Places for People has provided funding for 2 additional textile workshops and an after-school program for Mossbourne Riverside School that took place between January and April.
- Idverde provided in-kind support for maintenance sessions and activities.

The feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. Attendees appreciate that Mobile Garden is local, accessible, and offers a “peaceful and relaxing, bubble-like secret garden” experience. Many highlighted the welcoming and inclusive environment, along with opportunities to connect with nature in meaningful ways. Comments included:

- *“My highlight about my involvement at the garden is being able to reignite my love of nature and connecting with the community.”* Mobile Garden user

- *“Mobile Garden is a hidden gem!”* Park BioBlitz attendee
- *“Workshops like these are invaluable to the community and the inner city.”* Mobile Garden user
- *“It is really lovely to see people passionate about nature, and how much effort is put into helping wildlife thrive!”* Park BioBlitz attendee
- *“It’s a brilliant idea to hold events like this in the community. It helps improve residents’ mental health and well-being! Thank you so much!”* Macrame workshop attendee
- *“AH-MAZING! It was lovely to learn a new skill in such a lovely environment and to meet my neighbours, will definitely come again! Thank you!”* Art and craft workshop attendee
- *“Shahina led a very interesting and supportive session. I will definitely come back again. 100% worthwhile *****”* Crochet workshop attendee

Q1 – Feb to Apr	Focus has been around engaging with local residents and organisations through varied methods including monthly community gardening sessions, social media outreach, flyering and promoting the garden at local events.	After months of the garden being closed, the aim has been to get the garden ready for the planting season.	
Q2 – May to Jul	In early June, 15 local residents underwent training to become Allotment Users and Garden Reps. By end of the quarter, Allotment Users have utilised the garden over 50 times, dedicating more than 49 hours to tending their plots.	An extensive programme of activities available at Mobile Garden. Leveraging the expertise of local residents and organisations, we offered workshops that have successfully engaged many new community members.	Our Parklife and idverde have built three new planters to create a textile garden at Mobile Garden. This project was developed in partnership with three local sustainable textile organisations: Yodomo, Indigo Works and Fantasy Fibre Mill.
Q3 – Aug to Oct	Our Parklife, Social Farms Garden and Groundwork London have worked together to deliver an end of summer BBQ. Despite the stormy weather, this was attended by 39 local residents, some new to Mobile Garden who had heard about the event through other Park partners.	Following some Allotment Users dropping out, 4 more Allotment Users have been trained. A specific session has been organised for all to become ‘Compost Champions’ and learn tips on how to look after their bed this winter. This quarter, Allotment Users have utilised the garden over 100 times, dedicating more than 82 hours to tending their plots.	An extensive programme of activities has been available at Mobile Garden, with workshops that have successfully engaged many new community members, targeting both families and adults.
Q4 – Nov to Jan	Mobile Garden took part in the Day of the Dead Festival, opening the garden for workshops ran by the event organisers. This was attended by 110 children and adults.	One of Mobile Garden’s dedicated volunteers and local resident has applied for the Future Gardeners course and was successfully enrolled. She completed her course in November and is now an idverde employee.	Two Allotment Users have moved away from the local area and consequently had to leave their allotment “thanking us for everything we do for this wonderful space” saying that “they’ve enjoyed it so much and will

			miss it". Training took place in December to welcome 1 new Allotment User and 1 new Garden Rep.
Q5 – Feb to April	Our Parklife delivered afterschool sessions for Mossbourne Riverside Academy from 7 th Jan to 8 th Apr with 6 to 7 attendees per sessions. Feedback received has been very positive and the school is keen to continue, funding permitting.	Smooth handover of the management of the garden to Hackney Bridge. Allotment Users were able to continue using their plot without disruption.	Met with Hill's contractor Emersons and Hackney Bridge to look into running an electricity cable from the marquee to the black portacabin. All agreed on feasibility, waiting for Hill to confirm when it can be done.

2. Impact in numbers

Total number of visits this year: 1,055

Total number of attendees at workshops: 553

Total number of visits from Allotment Users: 138

Total number of tickets booked (including those who were no shows): 601

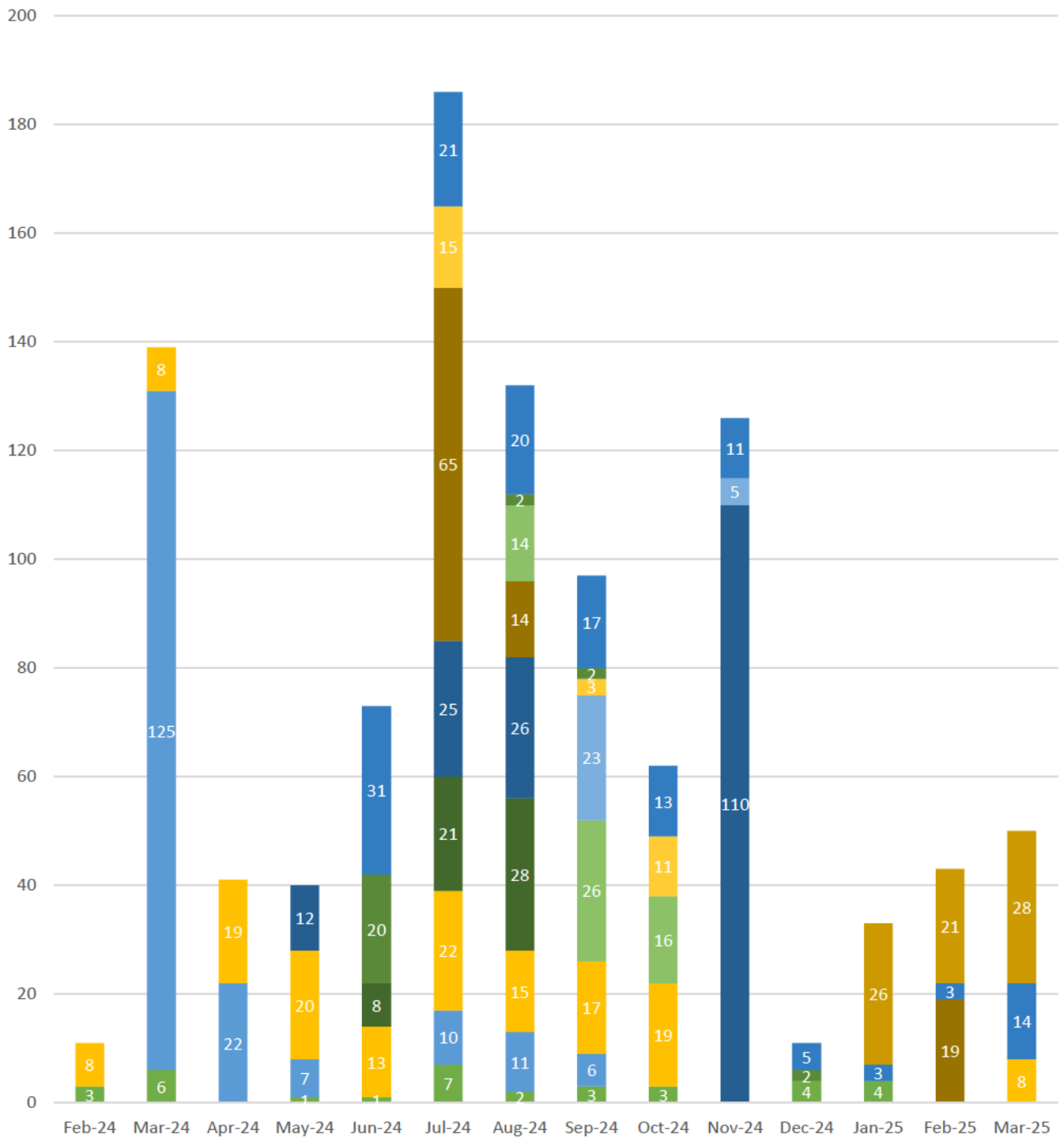
No show rate: 30% (improvement from 40%)

February 2024 – April 2025 in numbers

Community Gardening sessions	N. of sessions delivered	24
	Attendance n.	149
Maintenance sessions	N. of sessions delivered	24
	N. of apprentices involved	29
Corporate Volunteering days	N. of sessions delivered	4
	N. of individuals involved	58
Session for Allotment Users and Garden Reps - Training - Composting - Winter tips	N. of sessions delivered	6
	Attendance n.	30
Walk ins / Talks in the garden	N. of individuals engaged with during the community gardening sessions – people who walked in and took information and might have harvested some herbs but didn't take part in the activity	58
	Talk to specific groups	123
Tai Chi sessions	N. of sessions delivered	6
	Attendance n.	63
Art & Craft workshops: - Beads clay - Macrame plant hangers	N. of sessions delivered	12
	Attendance n.	204

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Crochet basics - Bug making - Flower crowns - Flower printing - Flax to fibre processing - Fresh leaf indigo dying - Day of the Dead - Hapa Zome 		
Biodiversity related activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building bee hotels - Park's BioBlitz Hub - Soil food web - Seed bombs making 	N. of sessions delivered	6
	Attendance n.	98
Natural remedies workshops: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Art of tea blending - Wild herbs vinegar - Fire cider immunity tonic - Herbal bath bombs and salts - Herbs for the skin - Introduction to aromatherapy 	N. of sessions delivered	6
	Attendance n.	56
Afterschool sessions	N. of sessions delivered	13
	Attendance n.	89
Badu sessions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grow your Grub - Private session half term 	N. of sessions delivered	2
	Attendance n.	21
Private events: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Filming - Corporate get together - Butterfly Champions get together - Future Gardeners 	N. of sessions delivered	4
	Attendance n.	29
Community Engagement session	Attendance n.	9
End of summer BBQ	Attendance n.	39

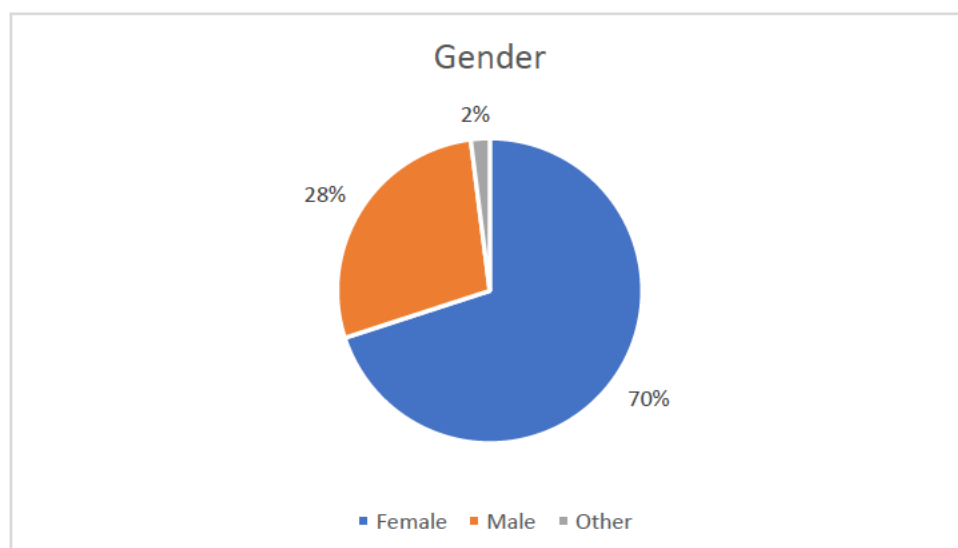
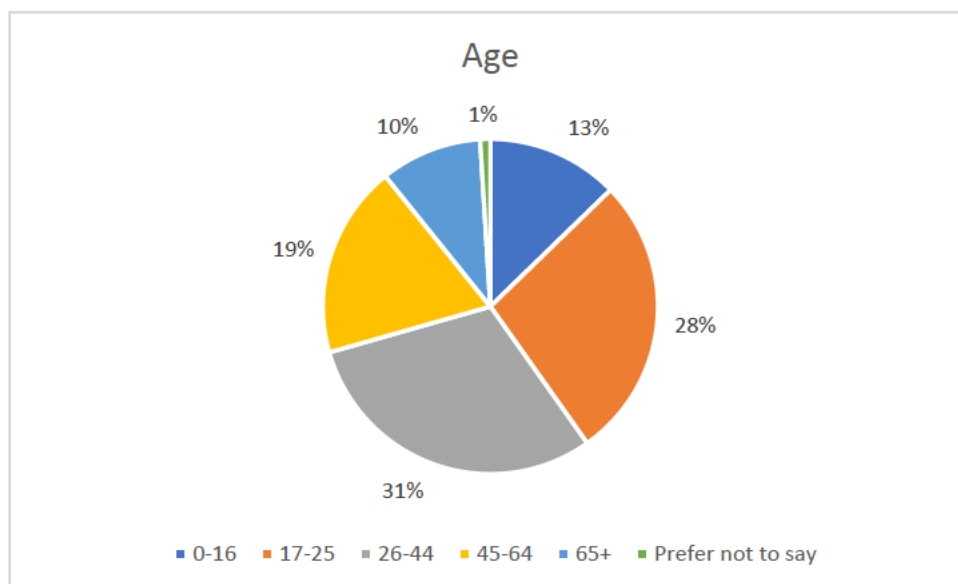
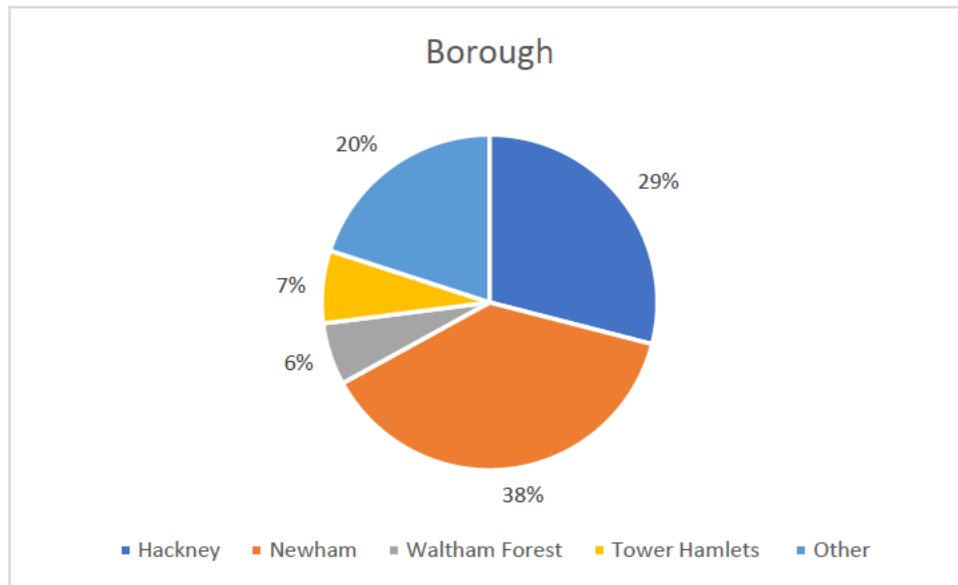
Attendance



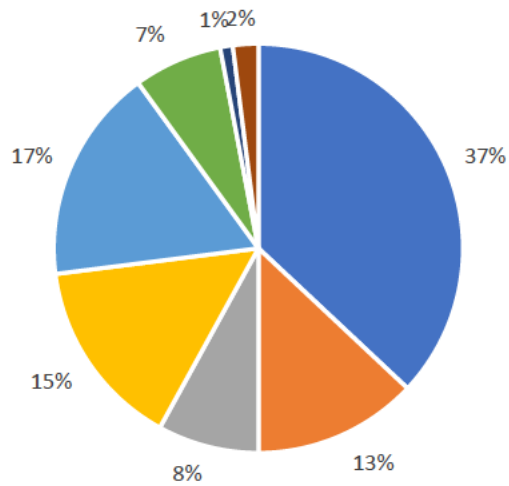
- Maintenance sessions
 - Tai Chi sessions
 - Natural remedies workshops
 - Training
- Walk-ins / Talks in the garden
 - Art & Craft workshops
 - Textile workshops
 - Allotment Users
- Gardening sessions
 - Biodiversity related activities
 - Private Events
 - Afterschool Sessions

3. Attendees' profile

Data has been collected at registration time and at sessions. The below shows the profile of participants who have agreed to share their demographic data.

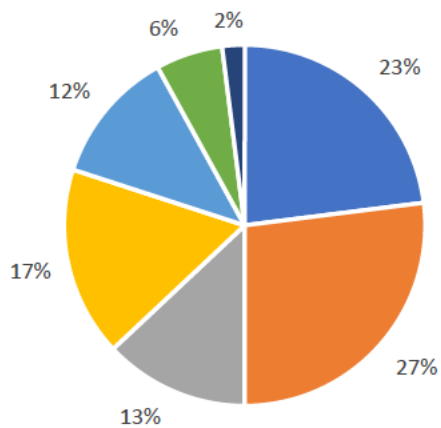


Employment Status



- Employed Full Time
- Employed Part-Time
- Unemployed (seeking work)
- Retired
- Education or Training
- Other
- Full Time Parent
- Prefer not to say

Ethnicity



- Black British/African/Caribbean
- White British, Irish, Welsh, Scottish
- White Other
- Asian British/ Asian
- Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups
- Other Ethnic Groups
- Prefer not to say



4. Financial

Below is a summary of the spent from February 2024 to April 2025.

It is worth noting that during this period, additional funding has been used:

- By Groundwork London who successfully acquired funding to deliver a maintenance session on the first Thursday of every month as well as weekly community food growing sessions on the other Thursdays. The cost of this service is over £10,500.
- By Social Farm Gardens who used some of their existing funding to deliver 3 workshops at the garden in July, 5 workshops in August and co-delivered the end of summer BBQ in September.
- By Places for People who have funded the afterschool session, £950 used with OPL GM time in kind.

Category	Notes	Spent
Mobilisation	Meetings and creation/review of agreements and materials	£2,352
Engagement	Face to face events and get togethers – inc. end of summer BBQ	£1,422
	Outreach through social media & mailing	£1,563
	Flyers creation and distribution	£481
	Community meeting	£421
Programming	Groundwork London	£1,094
	OPL	£929
	Tai Chi	£360
	Yodomo	£1,500
	Badu (4 sessions still to be delivered)	£1,500
	Madleap	£1,000
	Hackney Herbal	£500
Maintenance	General Maintenance - Groundwork London	£1,908
	Provision of additional staffing - idverde	£1,430
Training	Creation of training content	£619
	Delivery of training OPL	£581
	Support Groundwork	£728
	Support idverde	£200
	Staff training with Farm Garden	£20
General Project Management	Fundraising, reporting, weekly and monthly meetings, liaising with all parties, attendance at sessions and planning for the future	£9,045
Materials	Refreshments, maintenance materials, stationary, PPE, first aid box, kits for allotment users, flyers, IT software for calendar	£775
Total		£28,428
OPL time in kind		£6,163
Idverde time in kind		£1,630
Total after in kind		£20,635

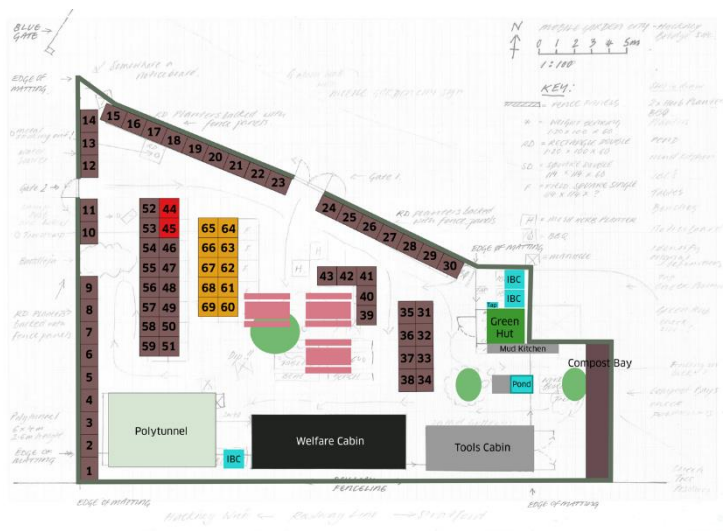
Funding left over

- Places for people funding for 2 Textile Workshops
- As of mid April, there is £2,203 left over from LLDC grant. We propose to run 7 workshops this Spring/Summer delivered by Our Parklife, idverde/RSPB and local organisations who we previously worked with.

5. Lessons Learnt

- We took the decision to have a reduced number of activities this winter based on very low turn ups last year and challenging weather conditions for gardening.
- Engagement crucial to develop relationships and encourage attendance – using Eventbrite has worked really well to reach out further to the local community but this has brought people from further afield too.
- Due to the fact that it is free to attend, not all sign ups result in attendance. This has improved from 40% of people signed up through Eventbrite not attending to 30%. Increasing the number of spaces is sometimes delicate if all attend.
- Attendance is highly influenced by the weather. Our partnership with Hackney Bridge has been crucial in providing access to indoor spaces as a backup option.
- So far, the Garden Reps haven't been active despite several chase. Two of the Garden Reps are also allotment users, which should have helped with a higher take up. A new Garden Rep has been trained in December.
- Whilst we are working through the hurdles, fences around the Hackney Bridge lower gardens and the lack of signage are still an issue for visibility and to engage with walk-ins.

6. Handover



Garden Reps

- 3 trained Garden Reps
- The idea is that they book with us when they'd like to open the garden so that we can show the garden as 'open' in the calendar we had on OPL's website.
- They don't necessarily have an allotment bed unless they've asked for it.
- They've never been active in the past year.

Allotment Users

- 13 current allotment users, 8 active and 5 haven't been active in a while, might be worth asking them if still interested.
- We had a waiting list going on for a while but it's now cleared and we have no one waiting for beds.
- There is a whatsapp group with all allotment users where they sign in and out, raise any issues and where we/group owner can make announcements and share updates. Abs is now group owner and the OPL team is now removed from the group.
- See below list of allotment users, their training date, the bed they've been allocated and their status.

Name	Training date	Bed n.	N. of visits	Status
	Dec-24	60	2	Active
	Jun-24	61	11	Active
	Jun-24	62	38	Active
	Jun-24	63	12	Active
	Sep-24	64	8	Active
	Jun-24	65	2	Inactive since July
	Jun-24	66	4	Inactive since Sept
	Aug-24	67	1	Inactive since Nov
	Aug-24	67	2	Inactive since Oct
	Jun-24	68	16	Active
	Jun-24	68	3	Inactive since Aug
	Jun-24	69	4	Active with friend Natalie
	Jun-24	69	16	Active

Organisations we've worked with

- Yodomo, Indigo Works and Fantasy Fibre Mill – they are local textile related companies and have delivered workshops at Mobile Garden. Together with them, we've created a Textile Garden at Mobile Garden (the 3 beds by the polytunnel) and we would love to see this continue if possible. We've also got funding to run a couple more sessions.
- Badu – Badu has two allocated beds at the garden (44 and 45) but hasn't made use of them in the past year. They've received funding through Our Parklife to deliver 6 sessions at the Garden, 2 have been delivered and 4 need to be delivered. Rhea has been notified to contact LLDC to arrange those.
- Groundwork London – They've got funding to continue monthly maintenance and community sessions for now. You're all already in touch.
- Idverde – idverde has supported Our Parklife for irrigation and maintenance.
- RSPB – ran some biodiversity related sessions through idverde and created some wildlife habitats at the garden. Has been key to ensure we've got appropriate habitat and plants that benefit wildlife.
- Social Farms Garden – has funded some sessions and helped deliver the end of Summer BBQ.
- EastWick and Sweetwater – they run community sessions, which can take place in the garden where appropriate.
- Madleap – based in Hackney Wick, ran natural remedies sessions.
- Hackney Herbal – based in Hackney Wick, ran natural remedies sessions.
- Adrian – local resident who runs Tai Chi sessions. Those sessions were very popular.

Other items

- Difficult user update – relationship to be taken on by LLDC/Hackney Bridge.
- Hill [REDACTED] is meant to run an electricity cable from the marquee to the black container for free as part of their community project. The supplier has met with OPL and HB a few weeks ago and has confirmed that it's possible to deliver, OPL has chased and cc'ed Hackney Bridge.
- There is a hot water urn, some tea and coffee left in the black container, which are for Allotment Users to use when they come to the garden. This was topped up through the LLDC funding.
- Library is installed outside the small gate.
- Codes:
 - Main gate: [REDACTED]
 - Small gate: [REDACTED]
 - Green hut: [REDACTED]
 - White container: [REDACTED]
 - Black container: [REDACTED]