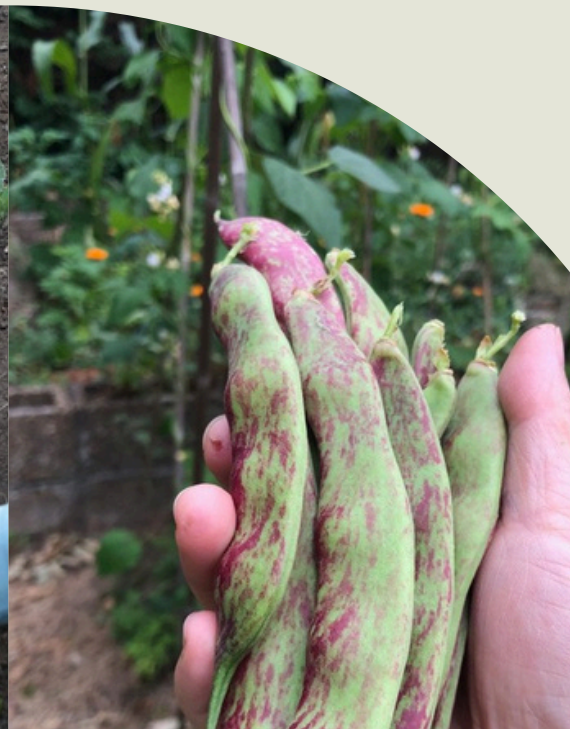


VEGECOPIA

VEGGIE | COOPERATIVE | UTOPIA

ANNUAL REPORT 2024



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THANKS, 2024!

2024 is truly an amazing year for Vegecoopia CIC. Our organisation has grown a lot, just like our vegetables! In early January, we secured our own allotment plot to cultivate. Despite its small size, we were able to lay the foundation for upcoming gardening, cultural food, and craft events. Supported by Big Issue Invest's accelerator programme, our team gradually grew from a duo to a board of three directors, with 2 full-time equivalent staff members, aiming to develop a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) scheme in Kingston upon Thames.

As food growers, what's more satisfying than connecting local, ethical, and sustainable food production to consumption? We are fortunate to collaborate with members of Kingston Hive, who not only give us additional food-growing space but also, unexpectedly, the opportunity to run a community shop, "The Honey Pot." This is literally a plot twist for us – Vegecoopia needs to start engaging in retail in addition to offering gardening services and experiential activities. There is so much to learn, along with plenty of trial and error. Challenging, yet exciting!

With extra support from Kingston Charitable Foundation and Kingston Council, we managed to launch The Honey Pot in midsummer. Alongside the weekend shop, our extraordinary team also delivered a series of cultural cooking sessions and community craft events in Kingston, including our first six-month-long community art project, supported by the Greater London Authority.

None of this would have been possible without the funding we received, the efforts of our team, and, most importantly, the support from our beneficiaries and customers, including not only Hong Kong migrants but also local Kingston residents. This year, I have truly felt the power of cooperation and collaboration. A sincere thank you to all of Vegecoopia's stakeholders – and I hope the organisation continues to thrive in the coming year, aligning with our missions and vision.

PERLE WONG

Founder & Director

OUR VISION & MISSIONS

As an agri-food educational organisation based in Kingston upon Thames, we aim to **build community bonds** and **resilience** through **sustainable food practices**.

We achieve this by growing, sharing, and redistributing food locally — particularly through our community shop, food gardening, cultural cooking events, and nature-based art and craft workshops.

We believe in food-growing and community-building with **Dignity, Autonomy, and Sovereignty**; DAS the essence of community-supported agriculture (CSA).



2023 RECAP



APRIL
founded

DEC
Community Interest Company
(CIC) status

By working with 8 collaborators, we hosted:



9

Gardening Events



14

Food & Cultural Events

which served 400+ beneficiaries.

2024 JOURNEY



Spring

Gardening Workshops



Summer

Food & Cultural Events



Autumn

Community Art Events



August

**Community Shop -
The Honey Pot**

FOOD GARDENING

We knew nothing about food growing before but thanks to this programme, we are able to handle it now... The instructor is knowledgeable, and the handouts are comprehensive.
(Originally written in Cantonese)
- I CAN GROW participants



Bean planting workshop
@ Kingston Environment Centre



I CAN GROW gardening series
for Kingston Beats



New food garden
collaborating with Kingston Hive

Time flies! We met a group of friends who also love gardening, and we hope that there will be more workshops like this series in the future.
(Originally written in Cantonese)
- I CAN GROW participants

4 months / 10 topics covered / 30 beneficiaries

The workshops not only sparked the interest and confidence of Hong Kong migrant participants in food growing but also connected them with nature and local communities. The series brought participants together monthly, helping them make new friends while reducing their sense of isolation and stress.

- I CAN GROW series

FOOD & CULTURE

New life hack! I learnt about different uses of vegetables... This is a creative recipe with everything homegrown and fresh, a quick and easy meal for busy lives... I will try to prepare it at my home.
- CRL participants



Culturally Resilient Lunch
@ Kingston Environment Centre



Mid-autumn food workshop
@ Save The World Club



Cultural food demonstration
@ KingsGate Student Pantry

It was nice to meet with others and have a social experience and eat together... Love the farm to table vibe... Good knowledge, interaction, and discussions.
- CRL participants

12 sessions / 7 home chefs / 150 beneficiaries

This is a continuation of last year's Culturally Lovely Lunch series. Participants from diverse ethnic backgrounds learnt about new culinary practices and cultural recipes, as well as how to eat nutritiously – an essential component of the NHS Eatwell Guide. We also shared how to grow the vegetables we used, or how to access surplus food throughout the borough, so as to increase people's access to affordable food.

- Culturally Resilient Lunch series

ART & CRAFTS



Photo walk &
Cyanotype workshop



Plant-based lantern DIY
@ ESEA Culture Festival



Soap making workshop

To my surprise, my parents who joined the project showed impressive artistic talent... This project also deepened my understanding of Kingston and allowed me to meet a lovely group of new friends and neighbours.

- Participant of Encounter, Engagement & Expression:
Navigating Kingston with Art

15 events / 7 collaborators / 120+ beneficiaries

Participants made use of natural resources and plant materials to exercise their creativity. Art and crafts also provided a means for participants to explore the local community and green spaces with people from different cultural backgrounds. Some projects offered a platform for reflecting on personal journeys and growth.

THE HONEY POT



Local honey & Handmade soap



Surplus food



Local fresh produce

Well done! Keep it up, yet the price of the vegetables can be set a bit higher, reasonably.
(Originally written in Cantonese)
- Customer and supporter

5 months / 500+ visitors / 10 local suppliers / 30+ products

This is an experimental project that transforms a former clothing shop into a weekend community food space. We sincerely thank Kingston Hive for their support. We hope to increase Kingston residents' understanding of where our food comes and goes, while also improving access to more seasonal fresh harvest and various local products.

COMMUNITY & PLACE MAKING

It's lovely to visit your allotment, installing the green house and be part of the team! The team work was inspirational.
- Food garden volunteer



Food Growing Space



Local Shop Space



Community Art Space



I've lived in Kingston for many years and it's beautiful to see people coming together to cultivate spaces and projects like this - because it doesn't happen often in this town!
- Art exhibition visitor

Encounter Engagement & Expression:
Navigating Kingston with Art

Exhibition Every Saturday & Sunday
24.11.2024 - 30.12.2024
12.00 - 18.00

Kingston Hive
47-49 Wood Street
Kingston upon Thames
KT1 1SL

Opening
24.11.2024 - 11.00 - 14.00

ROYAL PATENT
MAYOR OF LONDON

OUTREACH & SHARING



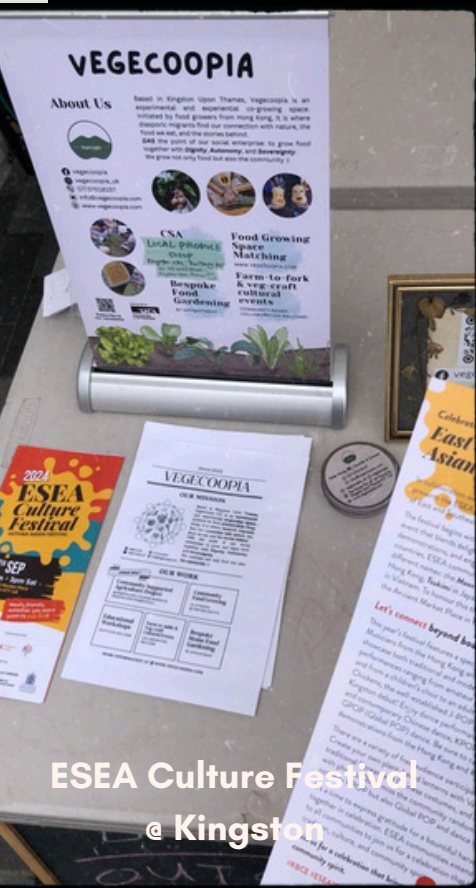
2024 Oxford Real Farming Conference



Hong Kong March Cultural Festival



Lunar New Year Market @ New Malden



ESEA Culture Festival @ Kingston



HK-UK Children & Young People's Book Festival @ Ealing



Sharing and case study @ Kingston Uni

YEAR IN FIGURES

3000 sq ft **60** **80 kg**



Food gardens cultivated & matched



Varieties of food grown



Surplus food redistributed

5



Funded projects

20



Weeks opened - The Honey Pot

100%



Satisfaction with our events

Altogether we approached 1,200+ beneficiaries.

OUR TEAM

The achievements of this year were made possible by our core team:

Director and grower Perle, grower Hei, Director Daniel, and Director Ellen.

We also want to extend a million thanks to the other project-based staff and volunteers who assisted with funded events and helped maintain our community gardens in good shape!



This year, our team equipped ourselves with training in

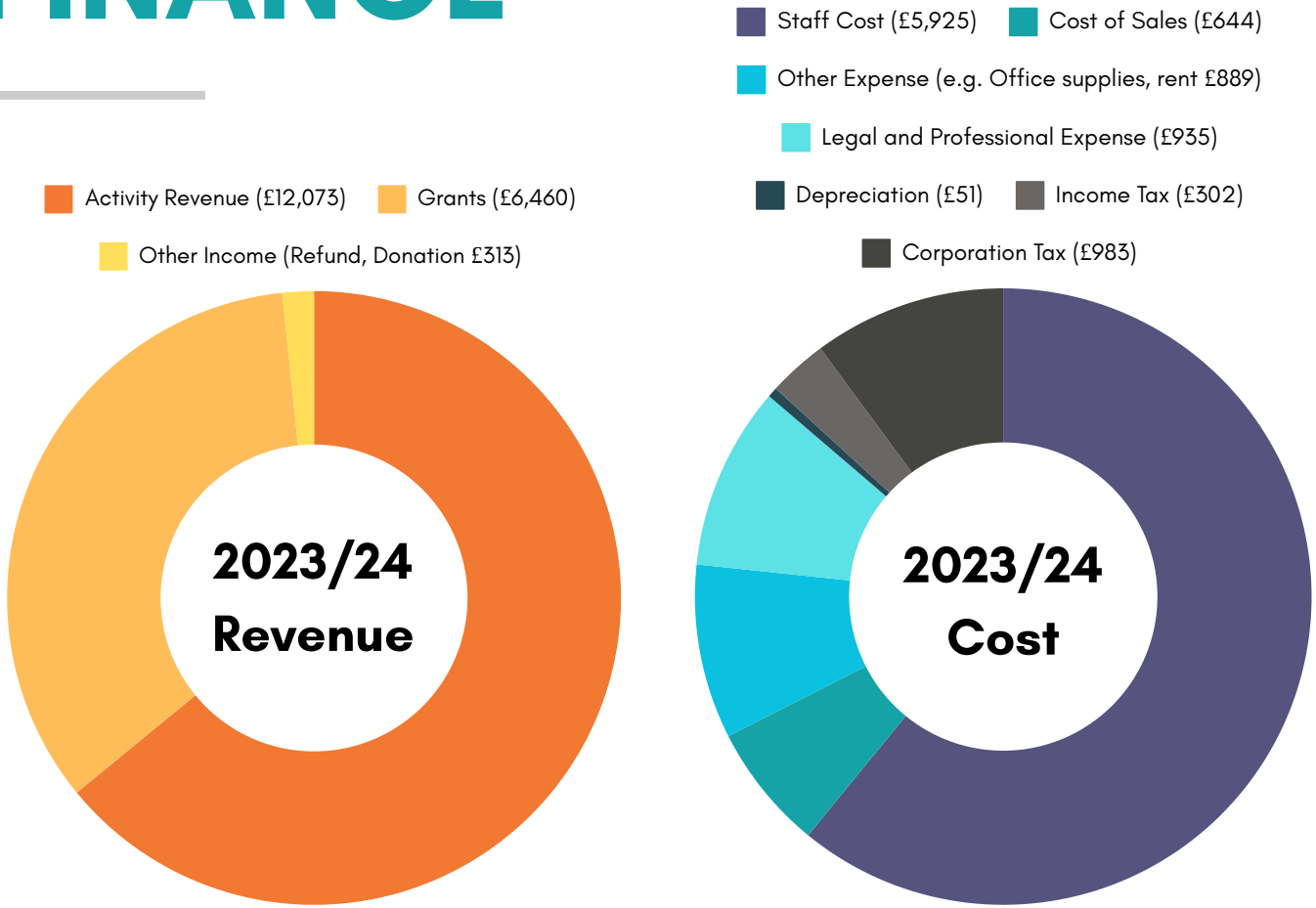
Level 2 Certificate in Practical Horticulture Skills, Level 2 & 3 Food Hygiene

Children & Adult Safeguarding, Trauma-informed Practice

First Aid, Mental Health First Aid

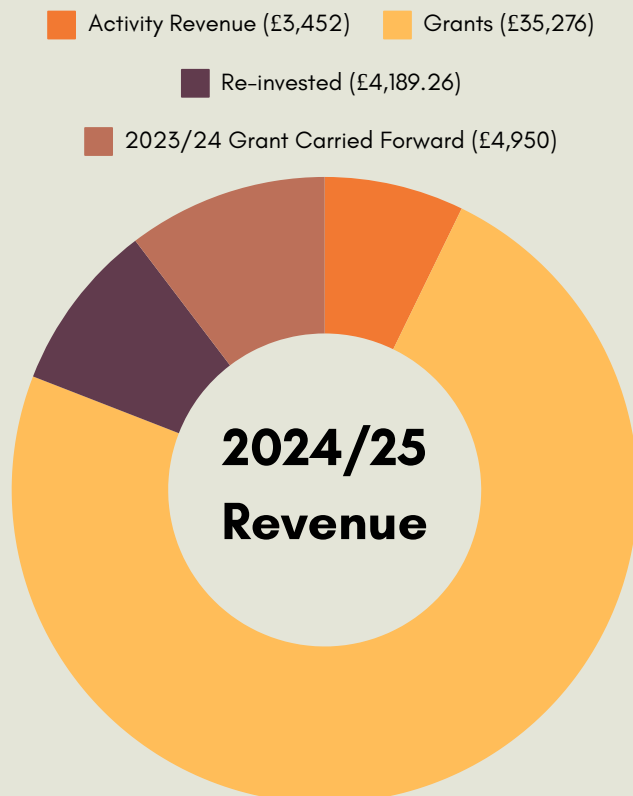
And we are all DBS checked.

FINANCE



2023/24 Financial Year

Net surplus after tax £4,189.26 - Re-invested into this year's community projects



As of Q3 2024

2025 OUTLOOK



The Honey Pot's development focused!



More food growing space,
higher productivity



Be viable &
financially sustainable



More collaboration,
be creative

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks for the funders' support



Thanks for the start up support programmes by



Thanks for the event partners' support



Proud to be a member of the networks



Media coverage:



Illustration credits:


Jade Shum; Kingston University students Yashoda and Lily

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