

## **COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT (SCOTLAND) ACT 2015**

### **ASSET TRANSFER REQUEST FORM**

#### **IMPORTANT NOTES:**

**This is a standard asset transfer request form which can be used to make a request to any relevant authority. Relevant authorities may also provide their own forms in their own style.**

**You do not need to use this form or a relevant authority's form to make an asset transfer request, but using a form will help you to make sure you include all the required information.**

**You should read the asset transfer guidance provided by the Scottish Government before making a request. Relevant authorities may also provide additional guidance on their schemes.**

**You are strongly advised to contact the relevant authority and discuss your proposals with them before making an asset transfer request.**

**When completed, this form must be sent to the relevant authority which owns or leases the land your request relates to.**

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**This is an asset transfer request made under Part 5 of the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015.**

**Section 1: Information about the community transfer body (CTB) making the request**

1.1 Name of the CTB making the asset transfer request

Sustaining Dunbar

1.2 CTB address. This should be the registered address, if you have one.

Postal address:

[REDACTED]

Postcode: [REDACTED]

1.3 Contact details. Please provide the name and contact address to which correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request should be sent.

Contact name: Philip Revell

Postal address: [REDACTED]

Postcode: [REDACTED]

Email: philip@sustainingdunbar.org

Telephone: [REDACTED]

We agree that correspondence in relation to this asset transfer request may be sent by email to the email address given above. *(Please tick to indicate agreement)*

*You can ask the relevant authority to stop sending correspondence by email, or change the email address, by telling them at any time, as long as 5 working days' notice is given.*

1.4 Please mark an "X" in the relevant box to confirm the type of CTB and its official number, if it has one.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Company, and its company number is ..... and Charity Number is	SC351910 SC040106
	Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SCIO), and its charity number is .....	

	Community Benefit Society (BenCom), and its registered number is .....	
	Unincorporated organisation (no number)	

**Please attach a copy of the CTB's constitution, articles of association or registered rules.**

1.5 Has the organisation been individually designated as a community transfer body by the Scottish Ministers?

No

Yes

Please give the title and date of the designation order:

1.6 Does the organisation fall within a class of bodies which has been designated as community transfer bodies by the Scottish Ministers?

No

Yes

If yes what class of bodies does it fall within?

Community Controlled Body

## Section 2: Information about the land and rights requested

2.1 Please identify the land to which this asset transfer request relates.

*You should provide a street address or grid reference and any name by which the land or building is known. If you have identified the land on the relevant authority's register of land, please enter the details listed there.*

*It may be helpful to provide one or more maps or drawings to show the boundaries of the land requested. If you are requesting part of a piece of land, you must give a full description of the boundaries of the area to which your request relates. If you are requesting part of a building, please make clear what area you require. A drawing may be helpful.*

Belhaven Community Garden, Beveridge Row, EH42 1TR

The area being requested is outlined in blue in this map. This area is approximately 2.03 acres.



In 1905 the 7th Baronet of Lochend, George John Scott Warrender, made a bequest to the County Council of the County of Haddingtonshire and to the Provosts, Magistrates and Councillors of the Burgh of Dunbar of land for the purposes of a hospital for the treatment of infectious and contagious diseases. This subsequently became Belhaven Hospital and hence part of the NHS in 1948. Part of this original bequest states that the ground not used for building should remain as agricultural land and as pleasure grounds in connection with the hospital and that "the said hospital and said ground shall be put to no other use without the consent of the Superior".

Since 2012, with the full and active support and cooperation of NHS Lothian (including some funding from NHS Lothian Charity), Sustaining Dunbar has been managing this area as a community garden and orchard for the benefit of hospital patients, staff and the health and wellbeing of the local community. This has been highlighted by NHS Lothian as an example of its 'Green Health Strategy' (Appendix 2). In 2013 we sought and were granted planning permission for change of use of hospital ground and agricultural land to form a community garden (13/00438/P).

The hospital was once in the countryside, south of the village of Belhaven but, with the expansion of Dunbar, it is now surrounded by housing with the 'Tree Scheme' dating from the early 1950's to the north and large new housing developments to the west and now also to the south of the mainline railway that forms the southern boundary of the site.

2.2 Please provide the UPRN (Unique Property Reference Number), if known.

*If the property has a UPRN you will find it in the relevant authority's register of land.*

UPRN:



### **Section 3: Type of request, payment and conditions**

3.1 Please tick what type of request is being made:

✓ for ownership (under section 79(2)(a)) - go to section 3A

for lease (under section 79(2)(b)(i)) – go to section 3B

for other rights (section 79(2)(b)(ii)) - go to section 3C

### **3A – Request for ownership**

What price are you prepared to pay for the land requested? :

Proposed price: £ 45,000 See Appendix 3A [Material to this section] which sets out the basis of this offer price which we believe represents market value.

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to apply to the request.

### **3B – request for lease**

What is the length of lease you are requesting?

How much rent are you prepared to pay? Please make clear whether this is per year or per month.

Proposed rent: £ per

Please attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to be included in the lease, or to apply to the request in any other way.

### **3C – request for other rights**

What are the rights you are requesting?

Do you propose to make any payment for these rights?

**Yes**

**No**

If yes, how much are you prepared to pay? Please make clear what period this would cover, for example per week, per month, per day?

Proposed payment: £	per
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**Please** attach a note setting out any other terms and conditions you wish to apply to the request.

## **Section 4: Community Proposal**

4.1 Please set out the reasons for making the request and how the land or building will be used.

*This should explain the objectives of your project, why there is a need for it, any development or changes you plan to make to the land or building, and any activities that will take place there.*

The site of Belhaven Hospital was gifted to the community in 1905 for the purposes of supporting public health. In 2012, with the full support and active cooperation of NHS Lothian, Sustaining Dunbar took over management of just over two acres of the grounds and established Belhaven Community Garden<sup>1</sup> (BCG) under the auspices of the NHS Lothian Community Gardens Steering Group. Now that the hospital has closed, we are seeking to bring the garden into community ownership so as to maintain the legacy by supporting public health and wellbeing for the long-term.

The garden and orchard is an important community resource which provides wide-ranging public health benefits for many individuals across a broad range of ages and groups and is well used as a public green space for dog walking and relaxation.

We are making this asset transfer request so as to be able to continue providing these public health benefits and, through having control of the site, to be able to expand these activities in future to reach even more people and groups across the local community.

Since 2012, we have relied on short-term agreements with NHS Lothian to manage the community garden. This lack of long-term tenure has severely restricted our ability to fundraise for capital infrastructure improvements or long-term staff to enable us to establish more formal therapeutic activities in the garden. We have sustained the garden for 13 years without this tenure, but community ownership will be a game changer.

Over the last four years the lack of tenure has been exacerbated by issues with the hospital water supply which means that we have had to operate without access to water or toilet facilities which has limited the groups able to make use of the garden during this time. Ownership will enable us to invest in this essential infrastructure and start realising our long-term vision for the garden.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://sustainingdunbar.org/projects/belhaven-community-garden/>

#### **4.1.1 Vision and mission**

Our vision sets out the long term change that we intend to make through Belhaven Community Garden.

**Vision: Dunbar and East Linton will have a thriving community garden which supports good health, strong community, lifelong learning, and a diverse natural ecosystem.**

Our mission sets out, at a high level, what we will do to achieve the vision. Our **mission** is to continue developing BCG as:

- A Therapeutic Space: for peace and relaxation, for all local people.
- A Growing Space: for herbs, flowers, fruit and vegetables, for anyone who wants to come together with others in a supportive, sharing environment.
- A Learning Space: for sharing practical food growing and regenerative land-care skills, for all ages and abilities.
- A Biodiverse Space: for developing the range and variety of habitats so as to enhance the number and variety of species in the garden and its soil.

#### **4.1.2 Aims and objectives**

Over the period of this plan we will continue to build on the activities and benefits that the BCG already provides – the ethos and nature of this successful project which has been operating for thirteen years will not change.

At the same time, community ownership of the site will open up new possibilities for us to expand services, reach more people, and deliver increased social impact. This section describes our planned development.

Following wide consultation, we have agreed **four ‘aims’** relating to areas of change and development. These are:

1. Take the site into community ownership.
2. Develop infrastructure.
3. Re-introduce formal training programmes.
4. Develop green health services.

Under each Aim, we have agreed SMART ‘objectives’. The Gantt Chart below sets out the aims and objectives which we intend to deliver over the first 3 years of community ownership. (Year 1 is the first year of community ownership).

	Year 0	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<b>1. Take the site into community ownership</b>				
a. Negotiate with NHS Lothian and submit asset transfer request.				
b. Submit SLF Stage 2 application				
<b>2. Develop infrastructure</b>				
a. Repair boundary wall				
b. Repair polytunnel and install fence				
c. Install water and utilities connections				
d. Install storage space for equipment				
e. Install composting toilet				
f. Install container office				
g. Improve path accessibility				
g. Install outdoor classroom space / shelter				
h. Develop drop off area at the south entrance.				
<b>3. Reintroduce formal training programmes</b>				
a. Develop partnership with Dunbar Grammar School and the Ridge				
b. Introduce new training programmes				
<b>4. Develop green health services</b>				
a. Create new sensory garden				
b. Develop links with GP practices / mental health services				
c. Recruit worker to support health & wellbeing services				

## **Aim 1: Take the site into community ownership**

**Why:** This is essential to secure the site and the continuation of existing services. Without community ownership, the site is likely to be lost to development (contrary to the community's wishes) and could not be replicated elsewhere. Community ownership provides security of tenure which enables us to improve the infrastructure and fund raise for long-term staff.

**What we will do:** Continue engagement with NHS Lothian and submit an asset transfer request as soon as NHS Lothian is ready to receive the same.

## **Aim 2: Develop infrastructure**

**Why:** We have operated since 2022 without access to water or toilet facilities – this restricts the people and groups able to visit BCG. Post community ownership we will lose access to our current tool storage at the hospital, so we need an alternative store. As owners we will be responsible for the safety of the site – the boundary wall needs to be repaired to make it safe; and we need to secure the polytunnel area to prevent vandalism. We also want to provide some sheltered spaces to support learning activities.

**What we will do:** Upon transfer of the site we will repair the polytunnel and secure this whole area; install utilities connections; install a container unit for equipment storage; install a composting toilet and repair the boundary wall.

Quotes for the work have already been obtained and further planning will take place once the outcome of the Asset Transfer is ascertained. (Year 0).

Over the course of Year 1 we will add a containerised office/canteen, to enable volunteers to warm up / enjoy hot drinks, and to support activities in poor weather. We will also improve the accessibility of our paths to support access by people with mobility issues.

In Year 2 we will install an outdoor learning area – plans for this will be developed in collaboration with the Ridge and Dunbar Grammar School (see aim 3 below). We will also explore the possibility of a vehicle drop off at the South entrance, with disabled spaces. These are larger scale developments, so left until years 2 - 3 to allow further planning and to avoid overstretching the Sustaining Dunbar Board and BCG Steering Group.

### **Aim 3: Reintroduce formal training programmes**

**Why:** Until 2024 BCG part-hosted the SQA accredited Rural Skills course, led by the Ridge and attracting participants from across East Lothian. The project has ended as funding for transport was cut. We want to fill this gap in provision for practical training by restarting the course for Dunbar based young people and by developing other accredited training programmes hosted at BCG.

**What we will do:** Over Year 1 and into Year 2 we will work with Dunbar Grammar School and the Ridge to develop and plan new accredited training programmes to be delivered at BCG. This will include discussion on the infrastructure they need (we plan to install an outdoor classroom space in Year 2, informed by their requirements).

We aim to launch accredited training programmes in Year 2. There is a longer lead-in time – this is to (1) ensure infrastructure improvements are completed; (2) to support fundraising if required; and (3) as any training programmes needs to be finalised in alignment with the academic year.

### **Aim 4: Develop green health services**

**Why:** Over the course of this plan we want to develop more structured referral links with health & social care and be part of the green prescribing movement. This enables us to deliver further cost savings for NHS Lothian.

**What we will do:** Our current sensory garden is not included within the land to be taken into community ownership. As an initial step, we will create a new sensory garden within the site boundary.

Over Years 1 and 2 we will strengthen links with the three local medical practices in order to develop more structured referral pathways. We intend to launch these in Year 3. Our assumption at this stage is that funding will be required for a worker to support vulnerable volunteers, manage referrals from the NHS; and develop new services (such as mindfulness/ yoga in the Garden). This will be planned fully over Years 1 and 2, with the intention that a worker is taken on in Year 3.

#### **4.1.3 Key Activities**

This section describes the specific activities and services we deliver at BCG and how they will develop when we own the site.

The activities are:

1. Community Growing, volunteer sessions and skills shares
2. Work with adults with learning difficulties
3. Visits from local groups
4. Community events
5. Workshops
6. Equipment hire
7. Accredited training at the Garden

The Garden also supports several 'outreach' projects. These largely take place at other sites, but they are managed by the BCG Steering Group and rely on ongoing practical support from Garden volunteers. Without BCG as base, they could not take place:

8. Beehive Garden at Dunbar Nursery School
9. Intergenerational Volunteers
10. Pledgehog Project

<b>Service and description:</b>	<b>Future development:</b>
<b>1. Community growing, volunteer sessions and skills shares.</b> These run on Saturdays between 2-4pm. A second	Growth in the number of volunteers: we estimate total volunteer hours of 1664 in Year

<p>session runs on Wednesday afternoons during harvest time (July to October).</p> <p>We have 40 regular volunteers, with around 12-15 participants each week. Volunteers are diverse and include young people undertaking Duke of Edinburgh Awards; 'New Scots'; and people experiencing challenges with mental health.</p> <p>We regularly offer skill shares for gardeners covering composting, sowing seeds, organic growing tips and orchard management.</p> <p>Sessions are sociable and involve physical activity.</p> <p>Volunteers carry out a wide range of activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cultivate the communal growing areas all year round.</li> <li>• Manage the orchard.</li> <li>• Harvest during the growing season. Volunteers take home produce; and further produce is distributed to other local initiatives.</li> <li>• Process compost - supporting the fertility of the soil.</li> <li>• Enhance habitats at the Garden, including our wildflower meadow; woodland area and hedges.</li> </ul> <p>We also have a further 18 individual plots which are cultivated by regular volunteers.</p>	<p>1; 1880 in Year 2; 1896 in year 3.</p> <p>Other developments will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved planning to ensure more continuity of cropping.</li> <li>• Review bed layout for best soil productivity and to reduce couch grass issues.</li> <li>• Planting to ensure year-round supply of nectar and pollen. Reintroduce the 'bee school'.</li> <li>• Create new habitats -willow bed, wetland and bog garden.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Work with adults with learning difficulties.</b></p> <p>Our Green Team project brings adults with learning difficulties into BCG for light gardening and other nature based activities. They have their own allocated plot which they maintain. Activities include growing food, painting the benches and planters, mowing grass, and craft activities (indoors during winter).</p> <p>Green Team breaks down social barriers, helps participants develop new interests and gives them</p>	<p>Secure continuation funding so the service can continue.</p> <p>We want to involve more participants but will not set targets for growth – the Green Team is person centred and needs to be the right fit for current and new participants.</p>

<p>local recognition and dignity.</p>	
<p><b>3. Visits from local groups</b></p> <p>This has included local third sector groups supporting vulnerable people, including Dunbar Dementia Carers Support Group and Dunbar Area Christian Youth Project.</p> <p>It has also supported visits from groups working with young people:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Community Carrot Food Outreach worker delivers outdoor food and fire cooking sessions for young people at the Garden.</li> <li>• Beavers and Cubs: who work towards gardening badges.</li> <li>• West Barns Primary School.</li> </ul> <p>Visits are arranged in discussion with the BCG Steering Group.</p>	<p>Increase in the number of group visits: 8 visits in Year 1 with an estimate of 96 participants; 9 visits in Year 2 with an estimate of 108 participants; and 10 visits in Year 3 with an estimate of 120 participants.</p> <p>We will build stronger links with a wider range of other local groups to create opportunities for visits and other collaboration e.g. East Lothian Horizons [Refugee support], Muddy Buddies (outdoor nursery), Dunbar FoodShare, Wilder Outdoor Education, Sunny Soups (food waste project) etc.</p>
<p><b>4. Community events</b></p> <p>We run events to draw people into BCG and to connect with each other, celebrating the natural environment and local food. Our most popular community wide events are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Seedling Swap:</b> a popular spring event in the garden. People bring surplus seedlings to swap and we hold a plant sale.</li> <li>• <b>Apple Day:</b> to celebrate the apple harvest. We offer tours of the garden and orchard, apple pressing, refreshments and activities for children.</li> <li>• <b>Civic Week Events:</b> each June. We run family friendly events at the Garden such as a wildflower hunt; “moth morning”, face painting, tours of the garden and refreshments.</li> <li>• <b>Wassailing in the orchard:</b> an event to gather around a bonfire and sing wassailing</li> </ul>	<p>Increase in the number of attendees:</p> <p>7 events in Year 1 with an estimate of 210 attendees total; 7 events in Year 2 with an estimate of 224 attendees total; and 7 events in Year 3 with an estimate of 245 attendees total.</p>

<p>songs around the time of twelfth night. These are coordinated by the Steering Group. Events rely on volunteers with enthusiasm to contribute their skills. Taking part is free of charge, though donations are accepted. Others have a fundraising element.</p>							
<p><b>5. Workshops</b></p> <p>Ad hoc workshops take place throughout the year, open to the public. Over the last year, workshops have covered propagation, scything, composting, bee keeping, foraging for wild herbs, natural ink making, wildflower ID. In the past, we have delivered art sessions at BCG, supported by a professional artist.</p> <p>These are run by the Steering Group or local people willing to contribute their expertise. We have applied for grant funding in the past to pay professionals to deliver workshops.</p> <p>Community participation is usually free, though donations are encouraged. The charging for services may need to change in the future.</p>	<p>Increase in the number of workshops:</p> <p>8 workshops in Year 1 with an estimate of 96 attendees total; 9 workshops in Year 2 with an estimate of 117 attendees total; and 10 workshops in Year 3 with an estimate of 130 attendees total.</p> <p>There will be a wider range of workshops. New ideas from volunteers and the consultations included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wellbeing focussed: Art therapy, outdoor yoga, mindfulness, Tai Chi etc.</li> <li>• Biodiversity related: e.g. making bug hotels, birdwatching etc.</li> </ul>						
<p><b>6. Equipment hire</b></p> <p>The Garden owns an apple mill and juice pasteuriser to be able to juice large quantities of fruit, mainly apples, pears and grapes which</p> <div> <p>Fruit Harvest Equipment Booking Available Equipment About Us Sign In</p> <p><b>Available Equipment</b></p> <p>Welcome to the Belhaven Community Garden Fruit Harvest Equipment Booking site. Community equipment is free to hire with a suggested donation of about £30 that goes towards garden running costs. All equipment must be returned clean and ready for the next hire. Note we can only hire equipment in the East Lothian area. Find out more <a href="#">About us</a>.</p> <p>1 Select Select one or more items 2 Availability Check Availability 3 Book Sign in and confirm booking</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td> The Electric Speidel Apple Mill The Electric Speidel Apple Mill pulses apples</td> <td> Speidel Hydropress The Speidel apple hydropress juices fruit</td> <td> Manual Apple Crusher The manual apple crusher is a great tool to</td> <td> Manual Apple Press The manual apple press is a great tool to use at</td> <td> Pasteuriser The electric pasteuriser is a drum with an element which heats water up</td> <td> Fruit Dryer The fruit dryer is an electric box with 9 drawers which operates</td> </tr> </table> </div> <p>otherwise would go for composting. We also have a</p>	 The Electric Speidel Apple Mill The Electric Speidel Apple Mill pulses apples	 Speidel Hydropress The Speidel apple hydropress juices fruit	 Manual Apple Crusher The manual apple crusher is a great tool to	 Manual Apple Press The manual apple press is a great tool to use at	 Pasteuriser The electric pasteuriser is a drum with an element which heats water up	 Fruit Dryer The fruit dryer is an electric box with 9 drawers which operates	<p>Slight growth in the number of groups/individuals hiring the equipment: 4 in Year 1; 5 in Year 2; 5 in year 3.</p> <p>We are currently supporting an amateur producer who is prototyping apple juice and cider production from the Gardens' apples. We aim to continue this support.</p>
 The Electric Speidel Apple Mill The Electric Speidel Apple Mill pulses apples	 Speidel Hydropress The Speidel apple hydropress juices fruit	 Manual Apple Crusher The manual apple crusher is a great tool to	 Manual Apple Press The manual apple press is a great tool to use at	 Pasteuriser The electric pasteuriser is a drum with an element which heats water up	 Fruit Dryer The fruit dryer is an electric box with 9 drawers which operates		

<p>manual apple press and mincer and a dehydrator. We have set up an online booking system to make these available for hire to community groups and local apple growers, in return for a small donation. This connects apple growers across the Lothians.</p>	
<p><b>7. Activities with school students learning practical rural skills.</b></p> <p>The Ridge is a local charity that provides social support while training or re-training young people. One of their SQA accredited courses is Rural Skills which attracts participants from schools across East Lothian. The course was run for a third of the year at BCG from 2021 - 2024 until funding for transport was cut.</p> <p>The skills and work experience gained during this course are practical and provide young people an outdoor environment and space to build confidence and self-awareness. As this course is no longer an option for Dunbar teens, this is something we intend to set up and develop in collaboration with Dunbar Grammar School.</p>	<p>This is described at Section 3.2 above. We intend to work with the Ridge and Dunbar Grammar School to reintroduce the Rural Skills course, and explore how the Garden can be used to provide other accredited training.</p>
Service and description:	Future development:
<p><b>8. Beehive Garden at Dunbar Nursery School</b></p> <p>This is a collaborative project at Dunbar Nursery School. We have established a growing space where nursery children can grow food and plants and connect with nature.</p> <p>It is also a base for Dunbar Grammar students on the childcare course to come and do work experience with nursery children to have practical experience for their National Qualifications.</p>	<p>Secure continuation funding so the service can continue. We've been funded by DELAP, the Mushroom Trust, Belhaven Brewery, The Robertson Trust &amp; The Amos Trust.</p> <p>Currently seeking continuity funding</p>
<p><b>9. Inter-generational Volunteers</b></p> <p>An intergenerational volunteering project which provides positive experiences for S4-S6 students at Dunbar Grammar school. Young volunteers</p>	<p>Secure continuation funding so the service can continue.</p>

<p>undertake a dementia awareness training course and then weekly sessions with the residents doing a range of activities, and gardening.</p> <p>Young volunteers work towards a Saltire Award; but all participants benefit from the sharing of stories, the fun, camaraderie and bonds between older and younger people.</p>	
<p><b>10. Pledgehog project</b></p> <p>This is a biodiversity project which has spun out from the Garden. It aims to raise awareness of the plight of hedgehogs in Dunbar and to help reverse the downward trend of populations by demonstrating how best to create hedgehog friendly habitat and access to gardens.</p> <p>This is a self-contained project under Sustaining Dunbar, funded by DELAP, Viridor, Hugh Fraser Foundation, Safe Deposit Scotland, Coop &amp; Belhaven Brewery and delivered by our Pledgehog Project Officer. It relies on BCG as a part of a wildlife corridor in the town where hedgehogs can forage.</p>	<p>Work with the Pledgehog Project Officer as a demonstration garden for what habitats suit wildlife and to encourage locals to garden for the benefit of wildlife.</p>

## Benefits of the proposal

4.2 Please set out the benefits that you consider will arise if the request is agreed to.

*This section should explain how the project will benefit your community, and others. Please refer to the guidance on how the relevant authority will consider the benefits of a request.*

In this section we consider the benefits arising under the headings of:

- Public Health and Social Wellbeing
- Environmental Wellbeing
- Economic Development, Regeneration and reducing inequalities
- Strategic Benefits -fit with national and local policy outcomes
- Financial Impact

A logic model (adapted from the logic models in Annex 3<sup>2</sup> and Annex 4<sup>3</sup> of NHS Lothian's Greenspace and Health Strategic Framework -see Appendix 4) summarises the key beneficial outcomes and social impacts from current and future activities at BCG in terms of our mission's four priorities.

#### **4.2.1 Public Health and Social Wellbeing**

Belhaven Community Garden is a community growing project in its widest sense.

The current health and wellbeing benefits provided by our community garden have been researched and documented in a number of student dissertations (Appendix 5 and 6) and reports and anecdotally from many of our volunteers. These benefits are recognised by NHS Lothian's Greenspace and Health Strategic Framework<sup>4</sup> (appendix 7) which states: “*We are increasingly recognising the role and importance of greenspace and therapeutic interventions in greenspace on our health and wellbeing. Indeed, greenspace is often now described as our natural health service.*”

“*There is compelling evidence that green exercise improves not only our physical health but also our emotional and mental health as well.*”

Dr Gregor Smith, Deputy Chief Medical Officer

Our volunteers report greatly valuing working outdoors, collaborating together to enhance a local space, creating new and stronger social networks and growing their skills and understanding, as well as benefitting from the shared harvest. Here are a few of our volunteers sharing their experience of the garden.

	<p>Thomas “I've got dyspraxia, aspergers and anxiety. Coming to the garden is so great because the people help me here. They are like a second family. I've been coming here for 8 years. I'd miss the garden if it wasn't here.”</p>
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<sup>2</sup>

[https://greenhealth.nhslothiancharity.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Greenspace\\_and\\_Health\\_Anne\\_x\\_3\\_Logic\\_model\\_-\\_greenspace\\_and\\_health.pdf](https://greenhealth.nhslothiancharity.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Greenspace_and_Health_Anne_x_3_Logic_model_-_greenspace_and_health.pdf)

[https://greenhealth.nhslothiancharity.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Greenspace\\_and\\_Health\\_Anne\\_x\\_4\\_Logic\\_model\\_-\\_interventions\\_\\_greenspace.pdf](https://greenhealth.nhslothiancharity.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Greenspace_and_Health_Anne_x_4_Logic_model_-_interventions__greenspace.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/nhs-lothian-green-health>

	<p>Lee-Ann “We use the garden on a regular basis. My son, Zack, has developmental delay and mobility issues as well as autism. The garden is a safe haven for him and walking here helps him with his exercise regime. He’s obsessed with the plants and flowers and loves the trains passing by. The garden is a huge asset in our lives.”</p>
	<p>Eric “I enjoy the peace and tranquillity of the community garden. I had been unwell in 2022 (with severe depression that had me signed off work for 9 months) and going along helped give me purpose. I would say it was a turning point in starting to feel better. It was also good to feel I was helping maintain the garden as well, giving something back to the community. I’d recommend getting involved. The people were great company.”</p>
	<p>Ruth “I feel really passionate about the Community Garden and taking it into community ownership for the future. I’m a single mum and this is the place I bring my son to burn off energy. We are always welcome here, it’s safe, it’s beautiful and it’s very important to me. I’ve learned so much about food growing, the no-dig technique, and wildflowers from people here. If you don’t have a background where your parents share this knowledge, what do you do? This is where I’ve learned. I’ve benefited from the ‘Seed Swaps’ and created my own garden at low cost. I love this garden - it brings me so much happiness.”</p>
	<p>Lizzie “I moved to Dunbar in the middle of the pandemic to a flat without a garden so when I found the community garden it was the first place I started to meet people. Everyone here is very accepting of my difficulties with my mental health and I can work calmly by myself or chat to others. It’s been an absolute life line for me. There’s something magical about working together on the land that opens up conversations. I hit a low point and had to take off 11 months off work because I was suicidal but when I came to the garden, it always felt like a safe space for me to be - friendly, welcoming, no judgement. I can’t emphasise enough how that helped me get through my struggles and get back to work. Last year I got married and everyone here helped grow the flowers, herbs and salads for my wedding - it was such a celebration, I felt like all my garden friends</p>

	<i>were there too."</i>
	<i>Bob "We used to have an allotment before we moved here 8 years ago. I was very happy to find the community garden and share my experience - there's not a right way or wrong way to grow but I'm old so I've probably tried it before! One of my ideas is the dead hedge here - it's great for insects. Being here has its own benefit, with the skylarks in the background, out in the open. Being outside does you good."</i>
	<i>Ryan "I wasn't the sharpest tool in the box at school. Through volunteering at the community garden and the time on the Rural Skills course, that is what got me where I am today. I am worried that we would lose a huge asset to the community if we lose the garden. We need the Belhaven Community Garden."</i>
	Full video interviews with the above volunteers are available <a href="#"><u>HERE</u></a> <sup>5</sup>

The population of Dunbar has expanded hugely over the past twenty years and new development is still continuing so that what was once greenspace on the edge of town is now covered by new housing. There are only a handful of allotments [privately owned and run] in Dunbar and no new allotments have been created by East Lothian Council in decades despite this being a requirement of the Community Empowerment Act 2015 (Part 9 - 2018). This act also required local authorities 'to develop a food growing strategy, including identifying land that may be used as allotment sites and other areas of land that can be used by the community for the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers.' As yet East Lothian Council has not done so and retaining and further developing BCG would therefore assist ELC towards meeting this legal requirement.

With ownership, and the provision of basic infrastructure, such as a water supply, that has been lacking in recent years we will be able to plan for the long-term so as to expand the activities that we can run and to reach many more individuals and groups across our community. Ownership will secure the public health and social wellbeing arising from the garden for decades to come and these will increase over time as we are able to expand our activities. The garden is easily accessible and open to the public at all times. Current and future planned

<sup>5</sup> [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Xvv9cTUxiWATUaM63\\_9UbaxPlZnJ0UQF?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Xvv9cTUxiWATUaM63_9UbaxPlZnJ0UQF?usp=sharing)

activities support NHS Lothian's Strategic Development Framework<sup>6</sup> which has 'prevention' and 'support to stay well' at its core.

We consider that the benefits go well beyond purely cost savings through reduced demand on the NHS and other public services. We are therefore wary of putting a financial value on the public health and social wellbeing benefits arising from BCG. However, the cost-benefit analysis in this Biodiversity and Climate Change Assessment for the NHS Estate<sup>7</sup> carried out for NHS Lothian in 2021 estimated that two existing therapeutic gardening activities run by NHS Lothian (with 350 participants annually), '...showed a Net Present Value (NPV) of the QALYs produced by this nature-based health intervention over a period of 50 years of £4.65 million. This is a return on investment (RoI) of 2.00. That is, every £1.00 spent on therapeutic gardening results in benefits to health with a value of £2.00. This demonstrates that therapeutic gardening delivers health benefits the value of which significantly exceeds the costs of running them.' The same study also highlighted the very significant benefits in carbon sequestration, air and water quality regulation arising from the natural capital of the current NHS Lothian estate. The financial value for all BCG activities is explored in more detail in section 4.2.5 below.

## 4.2.2 Environmental Wellbeing



When Sustaining Dunbar first started creating Belhaven Community Garden in the winter of 2012, the whole site comprised areas of lawn and modified grassland with very limited biodiversity.

We have been managing this natural capital asset on behalf of and in collaboration with NHS Lothian for thirteen years and the site now comprises a range of habitats including areas for horticulture, grassland, orchard, wildflower meadow, woodland, scrub, hedgerows and hazel coppice. A recent biodiversity assessment (see appendix 8 and 9) concluded that habitat areas within the site currently represent a value of

<sup>6</sup>

<https://org.nhslothian.scot/strategies/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2023/05/LSDF-Summary-for-website-08042022.pdf>

<sup>7</sup>

<https://org.nhslothian.scot/keydocuments/wp-content/uploads/sites/28/2023/05/BiodiversityClimateChangeAssessment.pdf>

6.13 Biodiversity Units (BUs) and that the single hedgerow represents 0.57BUs. This compares with an estimate of 3.75 BUs prior to the creation of the community garden. The conclusion from this study states:

*Establishing a community garden at Belhaven Hospital has increased the number of habitats within the site and in turn increased area BUs by a very high margin (63.5%) as well as created hedgerow BUs where previously none existed. The gardens therefore represent a valuable resource to local biodiversity, and in line with NPF4 and the principles of the mitigation hierarchy, the site should be protected from development.*

*Traditional orchards in particular represent a rare and highly distinctive habitat which can support a wide range of notable fauna, and neutral grassland can develop into lowland meadow, which is another highly distinctive habitat which can support rare fauna and flora.*

*BUs calculated from habitats are a proxy for biodiversity, such as the presence of protected or otherwise notable species of e.g. mammals, birds and invertebrates, but replacing a single habitat type, lawn and modified grassland, with a much greater variety of open and wooded habitat is indeed likely to provide the structural diversity that will benefit a much greater range of both faunal and floral species.*

*The Biodiversity Metric is the best tool currently available to define baselines and quantify potential or realised gains in a transparent way. Moreover, it is a very useful tool for highlighting where further gains can be made through targeted site management. For example, habitats in the Biodiversity Metric workbook which are currently in a poor or moderate condition can be targeted for improvement to increase the condition. Some of this is also likely to happen automatically over time; e.g. as the orchard habitat matures, the condition is predicted to increase from moderate to good.*

Our intention is to further diversify the range of habitats within the community garden, particularly through creation of a pond and wetland area and increasing the length of hedgerow. As noted above, the new habitats that we have created over the past twelve years are still quite young and further improvements in their condition and biodiversity value should naturally increase over time.

#### **4.2.2.1 The Pledgehog Project**

The hugely successful [Pledgehog Project](#)<sup>8</sup> is a spin out from Belhaven Community Garden, with events and activities taking place at the garden. It aims to inspire local people, of all ages and backgrounds, to become actively involved in and take positive actions for the conservation of hedgehogs within the Dunbar and East Linton ward. The aim is to improve public understanding of biodiversity, teach new habitat creation skills and an understanding

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<sup>8</sup> <https://sustainingdunbar.org/projects/the-pledgehog-project/>



of the plant and bug life needed for hedgehogs to survive so as to foster a life-long passion for nature and the environment. The project works across the community to:

- promote, advise & facilitate the creation of more wildlife-friendly gardens and greenspaces for crucial hedgehog habitat
- Create more wildlife corridors throughout the town where hedgehogs can take cover and forage
- Help people to connect with their neighbours in new neighbourhoods to create access points in and out of gardens

### **4.2.3 Economic Development, Regeneration and Reducing Inequalities**

As outlined above, ownership of the community garden will enable us to expand our activities, including increasing the quantity of healthy, nutritious food grown on the site. This food will be freely available to all our community garden volunteers, distributed on a needs basis. As at present, surplus produce will be sold through our local, community-owned '[Community Carrot](#)'<sup>9</sup> shop, on Dunbar High Street or will be donated to Dunbar Foodshare and crates of apples taken to Dunbar nursery school. This is already playing a small part in strengthening our local food economy and shortening supply chains and in making more, healthy, nutritious food available locally.

The intergenerational work that has grown out of BCG is also playing a part in building real-life skills and experience for students at Dunbar Grammar School as well as benefiting Dunbar's nursery school children and many older people.

Here are some examples of what we have put into action so far.

#### **4.2.3.1 Reducing Food Waste**

In July 2021, BCG purchased a Vigo Hydropress, an apple mill, juice pasteuriser and dehydrator to be able to juice, dry and store large quantities of surplus fruit, mainly apples, pears and grapes which otherwise would go for composting. This equipment was in addition to the manual apple press and mincer that is also available for loan. In spring 2022, we set up an online booking system to allow community groups and local apple growers (including private householders) to borrow the equipment and process their own fruit locally for a donation to the Belhaven Community Garden. This has resulted in creating a small income stream for the garden and has connected many apple growers in the area, and as far

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<sup>9</sup> <https://communitycarrot.scot/>

afield as Edinburgh, the Borders and Mid-Lothian. These connections are valuable to support growers in their choice of apple and pear trees for cultivation, exchanging best practice for pruning methods and for sharing pruning techniques.



#### **4.2.3.2 Adding Value Through Local Processing**

Apart from the apple juice made available to local people through our community apple pressing, Sustaining Dunbar has supported a local cider maker prototyping the use of locally sourced apples. Using our Hydropress, apple mill and pasteuriser to process fruit from BCG and two other local spray-free or organic orchards he is prototyping local production of both apple juice and cider for local sale.

The July harvests of redcurrants and blackcurrants were abundant in 2024 and 2025. We froze over 36 kilos of surplus fruit after garden volunteers had taken as much as they wanted. We organised community preserve making days in the new catering kitchen at Belhaven Parish Church. Again, this is sold locally to generate a small income.



#### **4.2.3.3 Intergenerational work with local children, teenagers and older people**



Thanks to the ongoing support of BCG volunteers we created and now run the Beehive Nature Garden in collaboration with Dunbar Nursery School. With diverse grant funding we have been able to employ a Volunteer Coordinator who works with the nursery school staff to run gardening sessions for the children, all 250 of whom now have regular access to an outdoor learning

space and food growing area. In collaboration with Dunbar Grammar School we also run a buddying project for S4-S6 students on the SQA Child Development Course. Each week, a group from the course designs outdoor activities and they buddy up with the nursery children to get hands-on experience working with them. This brings their course to life and gives the students valuable time in the outdoors building relationships with the nursery school children. This has been transformational for many of the students over the last 4 years and with the support of our Volunteer Coordinator many have gone on to find full time work locally thanks to the skills and confidence they have developed on this project.



*“I was quite shy and anxious but you can’t really be like that around little children, they don’t give you the chance! After I volunteered in the Beehive, I did some extra volunteering in the school as well as a work placement which was also really good. My volunteering helped build my confidence and choose a career path. I am working in an after-school club now, I really enjoy it.”*

**Chloe, Beehive Garden Volunteer**

Another intergenerational volunteering project which provides positive experiences for S4-S6 students at Dunbar Grammar school started out as a project for students to spend weekly sessions doing a range of activities, and gardening with the elderly residents of the Blossom Ward at Belhaven Hospital. The S4-S6 students worked towards a Saltire Award; but all participants benefited from the sharing of stories, the fun, camaraderie and bonds between older and younger people. With the closure of the hospital, this project has now transferred to Dunbar Day Centre but we plan to reintroduce such intergenerational work to BCG once ownership is secured.

**Millie H** “The project helped me gain lots of communication skills and feel more confident when talking to others. I found it incredibly useful as I can talk about it in interviews and applications as an example of a time I worked as a team, or worked with others. It was well organised and coordinated and I really enjoyed meeting all of the elderly people”



**East Lothian Horizons [Refugee support]:** This group has made possible the resettlement of 3 refugee families in Dunbar and each of these families participates in the volunteer sessions.

**Duke of Edinburgh volunteers** are a regular feature at our Saturday volunteer sessions at Belhaven Community Garden. Each year we take on 2-3 volunteers from Dunbar Grammar school who spend 3 - 6 months with us as part of their bronze or silver award for their community service.



**Our partnership with Belhaven Brewery** opened up an unexpected opportunity for young people. Sustaining Dunbar employed a horticulturalist with the sponsorship from the Brewery to look after a very old, formal ‘secret garden’ on the grounds of the Brewery. This project was set up in 2021. In collaboration with East Lothian Works, a horticultural apprentice, Lily (aged 19) joined the project for 1 year and was joined by another young volunteer, Angus (aged 21). Sadly, this project came to an end in April 2025.

## Partnership with The Ridge

The Ridge<sup>10</sup> is a local Dunbar-based charity and social enterprise that provides social support while training or re-training young people. One of their SQA accredited courses is Rural Skills which attracts participants from schools across East Lothian. The course was run for a

<sup>10</sup> <https://the-ridge.org.uk/>



third of the year at the Belhaven community garden from 2021 - 2024 until funding for transport was cut. The skills and work experience gained during this course are practical and supported and provide young people an outdoor environment and space to build confidence and self awareness. As this course is no longer an option for Dunbar teens, this is something we intend to set up and develop in collaboration with Dunbar Grammar school.



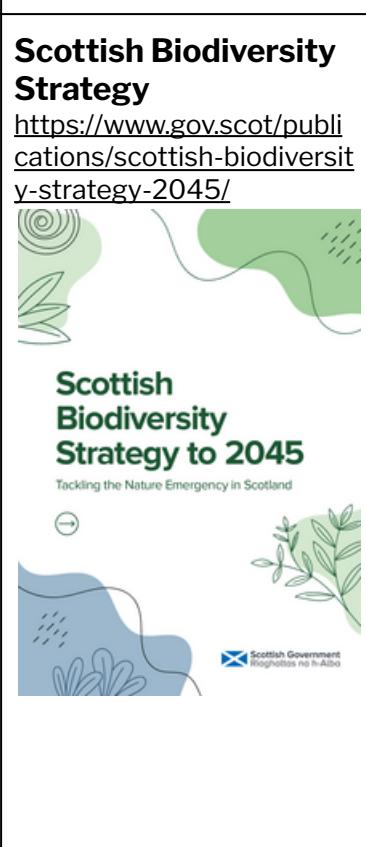
Ownership will also allow us to fundraise to employ a paid support worker who will be able to help us to recruit and support a greater number and a greater diversity of volunteers and establish a greater range of more structured therapeutic activities including for refugees, people with dementia and their carers etc. There will be increased opportunities for school students to volunteer (for example through the Duke of Edinburgh scheme) as well as for more participation by youth (uniformed) groups (such as beavers, cubs, guides). Opportunities for formal and informal skill-sharing and active learning around food growing/horticultural skills, pruning, foraging, scything, bee keeping, herbal plants and medicines, moth and wildflower identification, biodiversity understanding etc. will be increased and, working with Dunbar Grammar School and The Ridge, we will also be able to restart and further develop the range of training opportunities in rural and regenerative landskills that we can offer from the garden. These opportunities will be for S4-6 school pupils as well as for young adults and, as well as training in specific land management skills, young people will gain soft-skills such as group working, self-confidence, communication, working with adults they don't know, all of which will enhance their employability.

#### 4.2.4 Strategic Benefits

How our proposal fits with national and local policy outcomes	
Policy	How Belhaven Community Garden contributes
<b>East Lothian Plan</b> <a href="https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210603/performace_and_spending/12729/t">https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210603/performace_and_spending/12729/t</a>	BCG fits with all aspects of the East Lothian Plan, particularly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grow our Economy -through expanding existing</li> </ul>

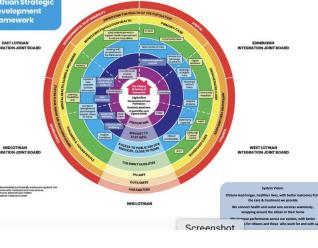
<p><u>the east lothian council plan 2022-2027</u></p>  <p>East Lothian Plan 2017-27</p>  <p>"We will work in partnership to achieve an even more prosperous, safe and sustainable East Lothian, with a dynamic and thriving economy that enables our people and communities to flourish."</p>	<p>skills training, particularly for young people</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grow our People -through increasing activities with young people and supporting health and wellbeing for all, including refugee families, vulnerable and older people</li> <li>• Grow our Communities -through all participants and volunteers having the opportunity to be involved in the running and development of the project.</li> </ul>
<p><b>East Lothian Climate Change Strategy</b>  <a href="https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/29179/climate_change_strategy_2020-2025">https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/downloads/file/29179/climate_change_strategy_2020-2025</a></p>  <p>East Lothian Council's Climate Change Strategy 2020-2025</p>  <p>"When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe."    John Muir 1838-1914, pioneer of nature conservation, born in Dunbar and inspired by its natural environment</p>	<p>BCG contributes to many aspects of East Lothian's Climate Change Strategy. Specifically ownership will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enable us to build on the work that we have already started to develop a healthy, diverse natural ecosystem and greenspace that supports the biodiversity and wellbeing of our community and builds resilience to changes in climatic conditions.</li> <li>• create new opportunities for a wide range of people to develop general employability skills and train in specific skills for regenerative land management and organic food growing in the heart of our community and accessible by active travel.</li> <li>• help people to develop a deeper connection to nature and understanding of nature's closed loop cycles -encouraging understanding of a circular, sharing economy.</li> <li>• enable opportunities for healthy, outdoor, physical activity that enhances physical health and mental wellbeing, encourages social interaction between diverse participants, provides space for local food growing and for discussion around low carbon lifestyles and community resilience.</li> </ul>
<p><b>East Lothian Community Wealth Building Strategy</b>  <a href="https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210699/community_wealth_building/12853/community_wealth_building">https://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/info/210699/community_wealth_building/12853/community_wealth_building</a></p>	<p>This commits 'anchor institutions' (such as NHS Lothian) to the <b>Anchor Charter Mission Statement</b>:  <i>"To commit to long-term collaboration between East Lothian Anchor Institutions, supporting shared Community Wealth Building goals <b>to improve collective wellbeing and create a strong, resilient and inclusive local and regional economy</b>. This</i></p>

	<p><i>includes a commitment to the embedding of Community Wealth Building principles and reporting on progress to the East Lothian Partnership.”</i></p> <p>Community ownership of BCG will create an asset that is owned by and for the local community. It will also contribute to improving local wellbeing, including enhancing people’s individual resilience (a key requirement for a strong, resilient and inclusive local economy) by creating a place where they can connect with others, feel useful, valued and listened to.</p> <p>The charter also commits signatories to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• make productive use of land and assets to support communities</li> <li>• to support equitable land development and ownership models -including the imaginative use of assets for community and wider social and economic use</li> <li>• support social and community enterprises</li> <li>• take immediate and sustainable action to reduce carbon and greenhouse gas emissions and tackle the nature emergency.</li> <li>• develop and support strategies to support sustainable communities and our natural environment and biodiversity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Improving Nature Networks for East Lothian’s Communities</b></p>  <p>Find out about Nature Networks' initiatives in your area at: <a href="http://www.eastlothian.gov.uk/nature-networks">www.eastlothian.gov.uk/nature-networks</a></p>	<p>This has the objectives of connecting, enhancing, restoring and creating habitats as part of East Lothian’s Nature Network and undertakes to support and work in partnership with community organisations wanting to create their own nature network including <b>increasing orchards and local community food growing sites</b>.</p>
<p><b>Dunbar Local Place Plan</b></p>	<p>Community ownership of BCG fits with the <b>Dunbar Local Place Plan</b>:</p> <p><i>“One of the strongest messages we received in the survey was to protect green space and we should guard against further development of these in existing neighbourhoods..... Another special case is the Belhaven Community Garden adjacent to the, now</i></p>

 <p>The Dunbar and West Barns Local Place Plan 2025-2035 Report</p>	<p>closed, NHS Belhaven Hospital. We must ensure it is retained as a therapeutic space for education, training, community connection, mental health and supporting biodiversity.”</p>
<p><b>Scottish Biodiversity Strategy</b>  <a href="https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-biodiversity-strategy-2045/">https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-biodiversity-strategy-2045/</a></p> 	<p>BCG contributes to the <a href="#">Scottish Biodiversity Strategy</a>, particularly Target 12: <i>“Significantly increase the area and quality and connectivity of, access to, and benefits from green and blue spaces in urban and densely populated areas sustainably, by mainstreaming the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, and ensure biodiversity-inclusive urban planning, enhancing native biodiversity, ecological connectivity and integrity, and improving human health and well-being and connection to nature and contributing to inclusive and sustainable urbanization and the provision of ecosystem functions and services.”</i> And the outcome: <i>‘Towns and cities will include nature-rich environments close to all communities, contributing to Nature Networks and measurable increases in urban biodiversity.’</i></p>
<p><b>Scottish Government ‘Place Principle’</b></p>	<p>The <a href="#">Guidance on local-living and 20-minute neighbourhoods</a><sup>11</sup> states that <i>“The concept of local living ...is a flexible approach which can adapt to support the context, local needs and aspirations of communities.”</i> It proposes that: <i>“Access to good quality natural space provides a wide range of benefits for wellbeing and the environment and is a</i></p>

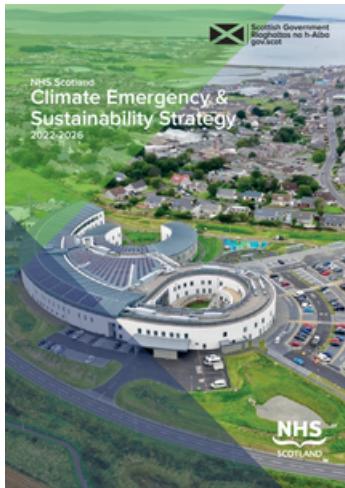
<sup>11</sup>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-government-planning-guidance-local-living-20-minute-neighbourhoods/pages/3/>

	<p><i>central aspect of delivering local living</i>" and requires consideration, inter-alia of "supporting existing natural features and forms, ecosystems, and biodiversity, incorporating allotments and growing spaces, including community food growing."</p>
<p><b>NPF4</b>  <a href="https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/">https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/</a></p> 	<p>National Planning Framework4 (NPF4) obliges councils to allocate land for community growing and to protect, conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity. BCG is included in East Lothian Council's map of local biodiversity sites. In community ownership, BCG will continue providing a space for community growing and to protect and further enhance the biodiversity of the site which has increased considerably over the thirteen years that we have been managing it.</p> <p>NPF4 also requires that any development proposals "which are likely to have a significant adverse effect on health will not be supported". Clearly, protecting this space as a community garden will avoid the adverse effects that would arise if the land were to be built on.</p>
<p><b>NHS Lothian Strategic Development Framework</b>  <a href="https://org.nhslothian.scot/strategies/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2023/05/LSD-F-Summary-for-website-08042022.pdf">https://org.nhslothian.scot/strategies/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2023/05/LSD-F-Summary-for-website-08042022.pdf</a></p> 	<p>NHS Lothian's Strategic Development Framework has '<b>prevention</b>' and '<b>support to stay well</b>' at its core. NHS Lothian has supported the BCG in delivering this objective for 13 years with great success.</p>
<p><b>NHS Scotland's Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy</b>  <a href="https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/">https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-planning-framework-4/</a></p>	<p>NHS Scotland's Climate Emergency and Sustainability Strategy recognises the climate and ecological emergency as also being a health emergency and the responsibility of the NHS to support sustainable practices in our communities and neighbourhoods including: '<b>supporting</b></p>

[cations/nhs-scotland-climate-emergency-sustainability-strategy-2022-2026/](https://www.nhs-scotland-climate-emergency-sustainability-strategy-2022-2026/)

**health and wellbeing', 'building community resilience' and 'engaging our communities'.**



### **NHS Lothian Greenspace and Health Strategic Framework**

<https://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/nhs-lothian-green-health>



Greenspace and Health Strategic Framework for Edinburgh & Lothians



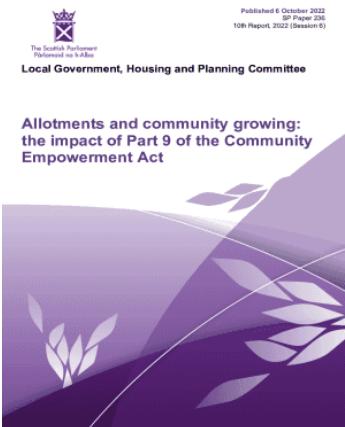
NHS Lothian Charity has highlighted Belhaven Community Garden as an exemplar of the implementation of its Green Health Strategy<sup>12</sup>. Sustaining Dunbar took over management of just over two acres of the grounds and established [BCG](#) under the auspices of the NHS Lothian Community Gardens Steering Group. Now that the hospital has closed, we are seeking to bring the garden into community ownership so as to maintain the legacy by supporting public health and wellbeing for the long-term, as intended by the original 1905 Bequest.

#### ***Longer lives, better lived through our GreenSpace: Lothian's 'natural health service'***

*We fully realise the potential of the NHS outdoor estate and community greenspaces as a community health asset benefiting patients, visitors, staff and communities. Green health activities and services are recognised and resourced as vital tools for supporting health and wellbeing. Together, we are achieving the ambition of a health promoting health service*

<sup>12</sup>

<https://greenhealth.nhslothiancharity.org/get-involved/green-health-activity-on-sites/belhaven-hospital/>

<p><b>Community Empowerment Act</b></p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.scot/policies/community-empowerment/">https://www.gov.scot/policies/community-empowerment/</a></p> 	<p>Part 9 of the Community Empowerment Act states:</p> <p><i>“There is a requirement for local authorities to develop a food growing strategy for their area, including identifying land that may be used as allotment sites and identifying other areas of land that could be used by a community for the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers.”</i></p>
<p><b>Scottish National Performance Framework</b></p> <p><a href="https://www.gov.scot/colleccions/national-performance-framework">https://www.gov.scot/colleccions/national-performance-framework</a></p> 	<p>Illustrates the BCG's core values</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Children and Young People</b></li> </ul> <p><i>We grow up loved, safe and respected so that we realise our full potential</i></p>	<p>We will be able to expand our work and activities with young people to enhance their physical and mental wellbeing, their connection to nature and their knowledge and skills in food growing and regenerative landcare. Through the Garden we encourage children to engage positively with the natural environment and to play their part in its care. Our Beehive Garden outreach project gives nursery children opportunities to grow food and plants and</p>

	<p>connect with nature.</p> <p>Qualitative feedback from parents who volunteer at the Garden has highlighted its positive impact on the physical and mental wellbeing of their children (including children with additional needs).</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Communities</b></li> </ul> <p><i>We live in communities that are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe</i></p>	<p>The garden will be owned and managed by members of the local community, building skills and resilience and contributing to the vision that local people take responsibility for their community and engage with decisions about it.</p> <p>Our volunteering, outreach work and community events contribute to the outcome vision that Scotland has “friendly, vibrant and cohesive communities which value diversity and support those in need”.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Culture</b></li> </ul> <p><i>We are creative and our vibrant and diverse cultures are expressed and enjoyed widely</i></p>	<p>The garden will be used for a wide range of creative activities. We use history, traditional and rural culture to bring the community together: for example through events such as Wassailing in the orchard; growing and celebrating Scottish Heritage apple varieties. We support expression of diverse cultures by welcoming refugee families into our community – e.g. through growing heritage crops.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Fair Work and Business</b></li> </ul> <p><i>We have thriving and innovative businesses, with quality jobs and fair work for everyone</i></p>	<p>We will be growing healthy food for local consumption, selling surplus to our community-owned shop on Dunbar High Street whilst supporting local people to learn skills in food growing and regenerative land management. We foster economic participation through production and sale of preserves using produce from the Garden; and through hire of our fruit pressing equipment to local producers and growers.</p> <p>We support people into work through delivery of accredited training, by providing volunteering opportunities to Duke of Edinburgh participants, and through outreach projects which provide training on childcare and dementia awareness to Dunbar Grammar pupils.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Education</b></li> </ul> <p><i>We are well educated, skilled and able to contribute to society</i></p>	<p>We will create formal and informal opportunities for skill sharing and learning about horticulture, regenerative land management, biodiversity, group working and more</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Environment</b></li> </ul> <p><i>We value, enjoy, protect and enhance our environment</i></p>	<p>Direct contribution to the outcome vision that communities “can engage with and benefit from nature and green space”. The Garden also supports carbon reduction efforts and biodiversity practice which are part of the outcome vision -we will be further developing and enhancing the range of habitats on the site including the</p>

	orchard, hedges, coppice, woodland, scrub, wildflower meadow and creating a pond and wetland area..
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Health</b></li> </ul> <p><i>We are healthy and active</i></p>	<p>We contribute to the vision of a whole system approach to promoting good health and activity. This relates particularly to food culture, where the Garden supports local, healthy food production and distribution.</p> <p>The therapeutic benefits of gardening and time in nature are well established: our volunteers report mental and physical health benefits of their engagement with the Garden. Community ownership will enable us to expand this work by developing a more formal approach to social prescribing.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Poverty</b></li> </ul> <p><i>We tackle poverty by sharing opportunities, wealth and power more equally</i></p>	<p>We will provide opportunities for all local people to participate in growing food for themselves and their neighbours in a setting that encourages everyone to contribute and develop their skills. We contribute to eradication of hunger through distribution of surplus produce to the Dunbar Foodshare, to volunteers at the Garden and to Dunbar Nursery.</p> <p>The Garden is inclusive and welcoming: everyone is treated with dignity and we encourage everyone to contribute and develop their skills. Qualitative feedback from our volunteers has commented on the friendly, welcoming, non-judgemental approach which supports people in moving forward in their lives.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Climate Action</b></li> </ul> <p><i>We live sustainably, achieve a just transition to net zero and build Scotland's resilience to climate change.</i></p>	<p>The Garden provides a healthy, diverse natural ecosystem and greenspace that supports biodiversity and builds resilience to changes in climatic conditions. It provides a means to engage the community around low carbon lifestyles and community resilience to the climate emergency. Through the Garden we promote sustainable food systems – distributing healthy produce for local consumption and supplying local businesses and the Dunbar Foodshare. As part of the East Lothian Climate Action Network we use the garden to share skills and learning with other communities.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Care</b></li> </ul> <p><i>We are cared for as we need throughout our lives and value all those providing care</i></p>	<p>Community cohesion is promoted at the BCG which builds strong connections between new and old residents in the area and beyond. Our Intergenerational Outreach Work supports the care of the Elderly at Dunbar Day Centre and our Beehive Nursery Garden project teaches our younger generation to care for the 3-4 year olds at the nursery.</p>

## 4.2.5 Financial Impact

As noted in the Scottish Government's 'Asset Transfer Guidance for Considering Social Value<sup>13</sup>': '*Attributing a monetary figure to social value should be treated with some caution, as there cannot be a simplistic one-size-fits-all formula to measure subjective values that ultimately require a qualitative approach. Decisions around social value will always include a level of subjectivity, and a formula that puts a price on social values should not be a replacement for decision makers engaging with communities to understand what is valued on a human level and making their judgements on this basis.*'

Nonetheless, alongside the other elements to be considered in assessing 'best value' it seems important to at least attempt to estimate a monetary figure for the social value of activities in the community garden. In order to do so, our consultants, Community Enterprise Ltd. were given one-off, trial access to the service provided by the HACT Social Value Portal<sup>14</sup>. This is based on a robust and rigorous methodology that is Treasury Green Book compliant and uses big data surveys such as the ONS Understanding Society annual report<sup>15</sup>. This methodology is used by NHS England, for example for assessing the social value generated by Cavell Centres, as well as by UK government departments including Highways Agency, Dept. for Culture Media and Sport, Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government and, internationally, by the OECD. (See further details in Appendix 10).

*'Within this, people are asked about how they value, for example, volunteering - what impact it has on their life satisfaction. From this, it's possible to arrive at an average increase in life satisfaction as a result of regular volunteering (i.e. volunteering once a month for twelve months). This number (between 0 and 1) is applied to the UK Government's unit of wellbeing, the Wellby. This has been set at £13,000 for an increase in 1 point for one person over one year. From this, the value of regular volunteering over the year is £1,122 on average. To this is added the indirect wellbeing health benefit (a further £2,044) and then any savings or benefits to the Exchequer arising from people volunteering (approx £2,180). A deadweight is then applied to this total to ensure against over claiming - allowing for what would have happened anyway without the activity. In the case of volunteering, the deadweight is 0.298.'*

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<sup>13</sup>

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/community-empowerment-scotland-act-2015-asset-transfer-guidance-considering-social-value/documents/>

<sup>14</sup> <https://hact.org.uk/tools-services/social-value-insight/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.understandingsociety.ac.uk/about/annual-report/>

This methodology is applied consistently to every value outcome, whether that's volunteering, gardening, attending workshops, etc. Each of the value outcomes are explained in more detail in this 'Methodology Note for Wellbeing Values' (appendix 11).

The value outcomes identified by HACT for each activity are:

- Volunteering: *regular volunteering, gardening, feel belonging to neighbourhood*
- Green team: *gardening*
- Visiting groups: *attend youth clubs, improvements in confidence (youth)*
- Community wide events: *feel belonging to neighbourhood, greenspaces are of a high standard*
- Workshops: *active in social group*
- Accredited training: *vocational training*

More information on this methodology including Exchequer valuations and deadweight calculations is available from the HACT Social Value Portal on request.

The figures in our Business Plan for projected future activity were used for this modelling (see Appendix 12). These are conservative, assuming a modest increase from current activity levels once we have been able to install necessary infrastructure such as a water supply and toilet facilities, lack of which have restricted activity since COVID and the subsequent closure of Belhaven Hospital. The social impact value of the community events is relatively high because our experience is that there is little overlap between those attending each event (eg. those people attending the wassailing are largely different from those coming to the seedling swap etc.). These events therefore impact a greater number of people across the community. As we don't have ongoing access to the portal we are unable to interrogate the assumptions but would note that, even if this figure for social value were halved, the five-year social value is still in excess of £2.3 million. We also note that these figures make no allowance whatsoever for benefits arising from all the informal but regular use of the garden by members of the public.

Volunteer Sessions	1764 hours per year increasing to 2536 hours by year 5
Green Team (adults with learning difficulties)	208 hours per year increasing to 624 hours by year 5
Visiting Groups	96 people per year increasing to 144 people by year 5

Community Events	210 people per year increasing to 260 people by year 5
Workshops	96 people per year increasing to 156 people by year 5
Accredited Training	640 hours per year from year 2

The social value amounts to:

- In year 1, we estimate the potential social value to be £665,457
- In year 2, we estimate the potential social value to be £681,872
- In year 3, we estimate the potential social value to be £728,542
- In year 4, we estimate the potential social value to be £731,327
- In year 5, we estimate the potential social value to be £768,199

**Total: £3,575,398**

In terms of activities, we estimate the following social value generated over the five years:

- Volunteering: £399,877
- Green team: £65,250
- Visiting group: £69,990
- Community wide events: £2,504,859
- Workshops: £147,155
- Accredited training: £388,267

**Total: £3,575,398**

## 4.2.6 Logic Model

We know that BCG makes a significant positive impact because of the extensive research on the benefits of green space in urban areas, postgraduate research on the impact of Belhaven Garden specifically, and life story interviews from our volunteers. We want to formalise our approach to monitoring impact so that the full benefits of BCG are captured. The logic model below sets out the expected social impact from the activities that we will deliver. This has been informed by logic models produced by the NHS Lothian charity in their NHS Lothian Greenspace and Health Strategic Framework (see appendix 4) although we have

adapted the content for use by a volunteer-led group. It is set out under the four parts of our mission:

- A Therapeutic space
- A Growing space
- A Learning space
- A Biodiverse space

<b>A Therapeutic space:</b>				
<b>Inputs</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Wider Social Impact</b>	<b>Local policy contribution</b>
<u>People:</u> Trustees; Garden Steering Group; Volunteer Leads and Plot Champions etc.  <u>Workers:</u> Volunteer Coordinator.  <u>Partner</u> organisations inc. Dunbar Dementia Network.  <u>Facilities:</u> Growing spaces: inc. communal plots.  Sensory garden.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly volunteering sessions estimate of 1664 volunteer hours in Year 1.</li> <li>• 5 carers groups will visit the Garden - involving 50 carers and 100 supported people annually.</li> <li>• 500 people will visit the sensory garden annually.</li> <li>• Local people who use the space to bring their children or walk the dog for a peaceful and safe enclosed space.</li> </ul>	<b>Participants have improved mental health</b>  <b>Participants have improved physical health</b>	People in the area lead healthier, happier lives. Health inequalities are reduced. Cost savings to NHS Lothian due to preventative work at the Garden which supports physical and mental health. Improved health will enable some participants to return to employment. Discrimination and stigma relating to mental health is reduced.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East Lothian Plan: Outcome 3.2.</li> <li>• Dunbar &amp; East Linton Area Plan.</li> <li>• NHS Lothian Charity: Green Health Programme Strategy.</li> <li>• NHS Lothian: Strategic Development Framework.</li> <li>• NHS Lothian Sustainable Development Framework.</li> <li>• East Lothian Good Food Charter: Goal 3.</li> </ul>
<b>A Growing space.</b>				

There are two parts: (a) Growing together as a community; and (b) Growing fresh produce

**(a) Growing together as a community:**

Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes	Wider Social Impact	Local policy contribution
<u>People:</u> Trustees; Garden Steering Group; Volunteer Leads and Plot Champions; Local Good Food Alliance coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator; volunteers leading events and workshops. Partnerships including with Dunbar Grammar; Dunbar Day Centre, ELCAP, East Lothian Horizons. <u>Facilities:</u> As above. Growing spaces for heritage crops.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Weekly volunteering sessions estimate of 1664 volunteer hours in Year 1.</li> <li>7 community wide events annually; attended by 210 people.</li> <li>8 workshops annually; attended by 96 people.</li> <li>Intergenerational befriending involving 25 older people and 10 school pupils.</li> </ul>	<b>Participants have improved social connections</b>	There is improved social cohesion across Dunbar and East Linton. New and longstanding residents are brought together. Social connections are made across generations. Social isolation and loneliness are reduced – leading to improvements in health and wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East Lothian Plan: Outcomes 2.1 and 2.2</li> <li>Dunbar &amp; East Linton Area Plan.</li> <li>NHS Lothian Charity: Green Health Programme Strategy.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2 people with additional needs take part in the Green Team - 208 therapeutic gardening hours annually.</li> <li>15 people with additional needs take part in regular volunteering.</li> </ul>	<b>People with additional needs are integrated into the community</b>	Improved social cohesion. People with additional needs have more freedom, dignity, choice and control over their lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NHS Lothian: Strategic Development Framework</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 New Scots</li> </ul>	<b>New Scots</b>	New Scots in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>East Lothian Plan:</li> </ul>

	participate in volunteering sessions - including growing heritage crops.	<b>are integrated into the community</b>	Dunbar build diverse relationships and healthy intercultural bonds.  The community respects the diversity and strengths that New Scots bring.	Outcome 2.1
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**(b) Growing fresh produce:**

Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes	Wider Social Impact	Local policy contribution
<u>People:</u> Trustees; Garden Steering Group; Volunteer Leads and Plot Champions etc. Workers: Local Good Food Alliance coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator. Partner organisations inc. the Community Carrot and Food Bank. <u>Facilities:</u> Growing spaces: inc. communal plots. Orchard and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cultivation of 21 raised beds; 9 communal field plots; 15 individual field plots; Polytunnel; 2 soft fruit patches; 143 fruiting trees.</li> <li>237 kg of food distributed to individuals in the community.</li> <li>100 kg of food distributed to Dunbar Foodshare</li> <li>200 jars of preserves sold - value of £ 650 .</li> <li>8 outdoor cooking events, attended by 64 annually.</li> </ul>	<b>Greater opportunities for growing within the local community</b>  <b>The community has access to fresh, locally grown, healthy produce.</b>	People in the community value the food they eat, know where it comes from and how to prepare it.  Food poverty (and therefore health inequalities) are reduced through access to low cost, nutritious produce.  The community learns more about the links between food choices and climate change.  The community has a diverse and vibrant food economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dunbar &amp; East Linton Area Plan</li> <li>East Lothian Council's Climate Change Strategy: Outcome 7</li> <li>NHS Lothian Sustainable Development Framework</li> <li>East Lothian Good Food Charter: Goals 1,2,3,4,5 and 7.</li> <li>East Lothian Partnership Poverty Plan</li> </ul>

nuttery.			which celebrates, promotes, and supports local food producers and land resources.	
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A Learning space:				
Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes	Wider Social Impact	Local policy contribution
<u>People:</u> Trustees; Garden Steering Group; Volunteer Leads and Plot Champions etc. Workers: Local Good Food Alliance coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator; tutors/leads for workshops; staff at the Ridge and Dunbar Grammar. Partner organisations inc. local schools, the Ridge CIC, East	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 skills shares engage 120 participants - 24 hours annually.</li> <li>• 8 workshops annually; attended by 96 people.</li> <li>• 25 pupils attend dementia awareness training.</li> <li>• 20 pupils volunteer at the Beehive Garden each year.</li> </ul>	<b>Participants learn new skills</b>  <b>People in Dunbar will have increased awareness of climate change and how they can respond</b>	People in the community will be better-skilled, confident and empowered. This includes empowerment to contribute to the community, and particularly to local responses to the climate emergency. Other gardens and green spaces in the area will be enhanced as local people gain growing skills.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East Lothian Council's Climate Change Strategy: Outcome 7.4.</li> <li>• East Lothian Good Food Charter: Goal 4.</li> </ul>
	• 10 participants	<b>Participants</b>	Local people	• East Lothian Plan:

<p>Lothian Works.</p> <p><u>Facilities:</u></p> <p>Growing spaces: inc. communal plots.</p> <p>Sensory Garden</p> <p>Outreach sites: the Beehive Garden and Dunbar Day Centre.</p>	<p>gain Rural Skills SQA qualification</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 20 pupils gain SQA Childcare qualification.</li> <li>• 30 participants gain Duke of Edinburgh and Saltire Awards.</li> </ul>	<p><b>gain qualification s</b></p> <p><b>Participants grow in confidence</b></p>	<p>will have high quality opportunities for people to learn, develop skills, and grow their potential.</p>	<p><b>Outcome 1.1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East Lothian Council's Climate Change Strategy: Outcome 1.8</li> <li>• East Lothian Local Economy Strategy Objective 2.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• [250] children will participate in the Beehive Garden at Belhaven Nursery</li> <li>• [ 3 ] visits from groups of young people e.g. uniformed organisations, engaging [ 72 ] annually.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Children will learn about nature and growing</b></p>	<p>Engagement with natural environments at BCG supports increased levels of physical activity for children, lower levels of obesity, and improvements in mental health and cognitive performance.</p> <p>Children and young people will value local greenspace.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NHS Lothian Charity: Green Health Programme Strategy</li> <li>• East Lothian Council's Climate Change Strategy: Outcome 1.8</li> <li>• East Lothian Good Food Charter: Goals 1 and 4</li> </ul>

A biodiverse space:				
Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes	Wider Social Impact	Local policy contribution
<p><u>People:</u></p> <p>Trustees; Garden Steering Group; Volunteer Leads and Plot</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 large composting spaces.</li> <li>• Green manure growing and</li> </ul>	<p><b>Habitats at the Garden are enhanced.</b></p> <p><b>There is a</b></p>	<p>Biodiversity at the site increases.</p> <p>Improving habitats at the Garden leads to improved carbon sequestration and air</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East Lothian Council's Climate Change Strategy: Outcome 6.1</li> </ul>

<p>Champions etc.</p> <p>Workers: Local Good Food Alliance coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator.</p> <p><u>Facilities:</u></p> <p>Growing spaces; sensory garden; orchard; hedges, coppice; woodland; scrub, wildflower meadow; beehives; composting spaces.</p>	<p>harvesting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 bee colonies in hives at the Garden.</li> <li>• Wildflower meadow with 47 types of wildflower identified; and 4 wild grasses.</li> <li>• 4 hedges and 3 dead hedges cultivated.</li> <li>• Creation of bog garden/ wetland area.</li> </ul>	<p><b>wider range of habitats at the Garden.</b></p> <p><b>Local people have opportunities to experience and connect with nature</b></p>	<p>quality regulation.</p> <p>Ecosystems are improved.</p> <p>Increased biodiversity helps to mitigate the impact of climate change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• East Lothian Community Wealth Building Charter</li> <li>• NHS Lothian Charity: Green Health Programme Strategy</li> <li>• NHS Lothian Sustainable Development Framework.</li> </ul>
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## Restrictions on use of the land

4.3 If there are any restrictions on the use or development of the land, please explain how your project will comply with these.

*Restrictions might include, amongst others, environmental designations such as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSI), heritage designations such as listed building status, controls on contaminated land or planning restrictions.*

There are no restrictions on the use or development of the land that would prevent us from implementing our proposals for continuing to support the health and wellbeing of people across our local community and retaining and further developing the garden as a therapeutic, biodiverse, growing space and learning space. Current planning permission for the site is for a community garden. This also aligns with the terms of the original 1905 Bequest.

Once the NHS disposes of the other part of the site with the existing hospital buildings, we will retain pedestrian access from Pine Street and vehicular access from beside the railway bridge on Beveridge Row.

## **Negative consequences**

4.4 What negative consequences (if any) may occur if your request is agreed to? How would you propose to minimise these?

*You should consider any potential negative consequences for the local economy, environment, or any group of people, and explain how you could reduce these.*

- 1. Bringing the land into community ownership and protecting its future use as a community garden could arguably be considered as a negative consequence if this prevented its use for housing development.**

**Mitigation:** There is already significant housing development in the Dunbar area, including additional developments on land which was not included in the 2018 Local Development Plan. There has been no meaningful increase in the provision of associated open space for amenity and food growing use, as opposed to sports provision, and BCG has contributed to providing for this shortfall. Retaining the community garden will be a positive benefit for existing and any future housing that may be built in the surrounding area including on the remaining land at Belhaven Hospital.

- 2. It could also be argued that NHS Lothian could have sold the land for housing development and so that selling it to Sustaining Dunbar at current use value will mean NHS Lothian missing out on a one-off, capital receipt.**

**Mitigation:** Estimates of the size of this one-off capital receipt from sale as development land vary hugely, from a figure of £470,000 proposed in the valuation by Graham Sibbald (appendix 3B) for the site without planning consent for housing (the current situation) to as much as £1,151,556 provided as a ‘market appraisal’ (on behalf of NHS Lothian) by Ryden (appendix 13) on the assumption that planning consent for housing were granted. We note that the Ryden market appraisal was made without actually visiting the site and so without full awareness of the constraints on development. For the reasons set out in Appendix 3A, we believe that there are sound reasons to believe that a sale for development may not be achieved.

We strongly believe that selling the site at current use value can be justified as a “best value” disposal given: [1] the above impediments to any possible housing development and [2] our conviction that our proposal will allow many decades of future public health and other benefits that will far outweigh any possible short-term benefits from a one-off capital receipt. It is also likely that being adjacent to a thriving community garden would enhance the development value of the remaining land at Belhaven Hospital. It seems logical to us that Belhaven Community Garden should take on the role of ‘Health Care Site’ whilst the remainder of the former hospital land be rezoned for future housing, especially if this housing can be truly affordable and meet real, local community needs.

### **Capacity to deliver**

4.5 Please show how your organisation will be able to manage the project and achieve your objectives.

*This could include the skills and experience of members of the organisation, any track record of previous projects, whether you intend to use professional advisers, etc.*

Our Business Plan (appendix 19) provides detailed information about our plans for future management and development of Belhaven Community Garden and our capacity to deliver. Some main points are summarised below.

#### **4.5.1 Legal structure**

Sustaining Dunbar is a Company Limited by Guarantee (SC351910) with charitable status (SC040106).

This structure provides us with a separate legal personality and limited liability for members. Charitable status will provide rates relief entitlement and access to charitable funding and other support.

The powers in the constitution are wide enough to cover the acquisition and further development of BCG.

Trading activity at BCG will be low level, but is likely to constitute primary purpose trading because it directly contributes to our charitable purposes. This will continue to be monitored by the board.

#### **4.5.2 Governance**

##### Membership:

Ordinary membership is open to any individual over 16 who is resident in the Community (Ward 6); entitled to vote at a local government election in a polling

district that includes the community or part of it; and supports the charity's purposes.

There is also associate and junior membership, but these members do not have voting rights. The ordinary members therefore control the charity.

We have 597 members in total, of which 570 are ordinary members with voting rights.

**Board:**

The majority of board members are Elected Directors, elected by the membership. The constitution also enables the board to co-opt an additional 3 directors to bring specific skills and experience.

At present, we have 6 directors.

Directors meet regularly to discuss progress and plan ahead and all decisions are fully discussed, minuted and approved before implementation.

The skills audit carried out as part of this business planning showed that trustees have strong skills and experience. No skills gaps were identified: the board has the capacity to take on and develop BCG and there is no overreliance on particular individuals. There is some potential to grow experience of asset development, but as the board already has some skills here, this is not a critical gap.

The board also oversees Sustaining Dunbar's membership of the Transition Network, Development Trusts Association Scotland, Scottish Communities Climate Action Network, East Lothian Climate Action Network, Community Energy Scotland, Circular Communities Scotland and Nourish Scotland. These links provide further capacity.

**Steering Group:**

*Our constitution allows the board to “delegate any of its powers to sub-committees, each consisting of not less than one Director and such other person or persons as it thinks fit or which it delegates to the sub-committee to appoint”.*

*Day to day management of the Garden is carried out on behalf of the board by the Belhaven Community Garden Steering Group. Its role is to: “to oversee management and development of Belhaven Community Garden on behalf of the Sustaining Dunbar board, including liaising with NHS Lothian and creating plans and proposals that the larger group of volunteers can engage with”.*

In practice, the Steering Group's work includes planning the planting schemes, working parties, events and socials etc.

The Steering Group has 7 members, including one trustee. This provides a direct link to the Sustaining Dunbar board. In practice, another member of the Steering Group also attends part of the board meetings to provide an update on BCG and the outreach projects.

As regular volunteers themselves, Steering Group members are in regular contact with other volunteers who are actively encouraged to share their ideas, opinions and knowledge. Volunteers' ideas are then brought to the Steering Group meetings.

The members of the Steering Group have different roles. These are: Meeting Facilitator; Volunteer Coordinator; Plot-holder Lead; Treasurer; Link to Belhaven Community Hospital; Outreach communications; and Social event lead as well as sharing responsibility for oversight of different areas of the garden such as the wildflower meadow, orchard, bees, hazel coppice, raised beds etc...

The Steering Group meets monthly. Meeting agendas and minutes are recorded in an online logbook document. This is saved on a secure Google Drive and available to the trustees.

In relation to skills, the 2025 skills audit showed that the Steering Group has appropriate skills and experience to manage the Garden post-acquisition, although building skills in relation to marketing would be helpful.

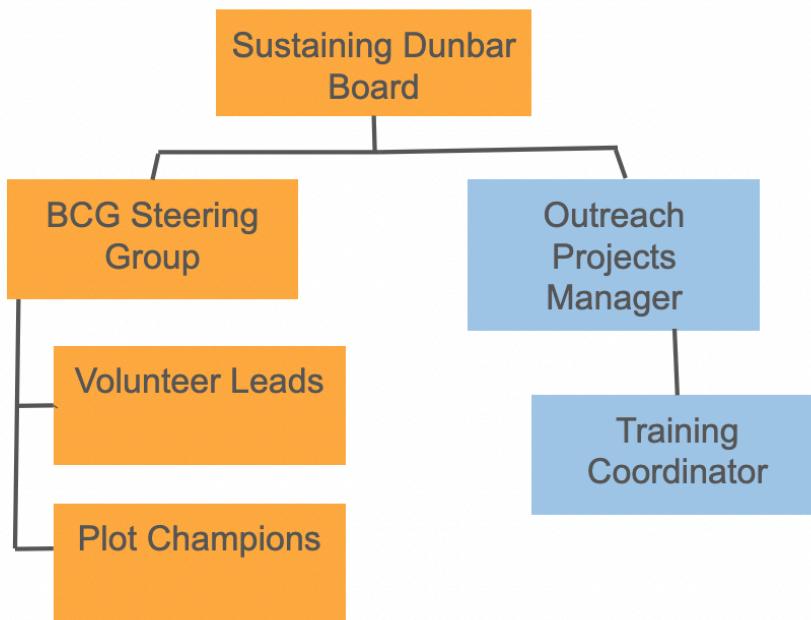
The Steering Group has operated in this way for around 5 years, so this is already working well. However, over autumn/winter 2025/26 we intend to formalise the governance of the Steering Group in preparation for community ownership. This means agreeing and documenting:

- A formal scheme of delegation, setting out what must be approved by the Sustaining Dunbar board. This will cover, for example, delegated authority in relation to submission of funding bids, and the capital work at BCG (these will require signoff from the board).
- Composition of the Steering Group. This has developed organically as interested volunteers have stepped forward. We will agree and document how new members of the Steering Group can be reappointed, and also consider term limits.
- Code of conduct. Our Steering Group works well together and this has not been an issue to date. However, to support good governance, we will agree a code of conduct setting out expectations (including attendance at meetings etc), with provisions for removal from the Steering Group if the code of conduct is breached.

- Specific roles on the Steering Group. At present these are relatively informal. Role descriptions will be documented so there is clarity on what is required, and in order to support succession planning.

#### 4.5.3 Staffing and volunteer structure

The structure is set out below:



#### Volunteers:

The Community Garden is run exclusively by volunteers. Volunteer positions are shown in orange. These include the Sustaining Dunbar board, and Steering Group (described above). The other roles are:

- Volunteer Leads: We have a rota of 5 volunteer leads (all PVG checked). They plan and lead the weekly volunteering sessions which undertake the majority of garden work. We organise this through groupsio.com – this platform enables us to discuss activities, update volunteers, share files, photos and plans.
- Plot Champions: Each of the communal growing plots has a volunteer ‘champion’ that oversees the annual cycle of growing and caring for soil health.

All volunteers receive a copy of our volunteer agreement and must sign a form to confirm their acceptance. The agreement includes induction, conduct, practical information about tasks, health & safety responsibilities, and support, supervision and management etc.

There is also an agreement for Plot Holders which sets out responsibilities in relation to the individual plots.

Paid positions:

Outreach Gardening Projects are supported by two paid positions:

- Outreach Projects Manager: Currently paid 1 day/week.
- Training Coordinator – this is a paid (grant funded) position, variable but currently 12 hours per week over 3 days. Activities extend beyond BCG, but they help to deliver the Green Team volunteering sessions, Beehive Garden and Intergenerational Volunteers.

The intention is to recruit and pay a Development Officer in Year 1 to oversee the essential infrastructure changes to the garden that will be required before we can carry out plans to increase participation of more groups. This plan sets out our intention to recruit a Green Health officer in Year 3. Line management responsibilities will be developed more fully in due course to support this role.

#### **4.5.4 Fundraising Record to date**

Sustaining Dunbar has a strong record of securing grant funding for a wide range of local projects since 2008. As a recent example, securing grant funding for the setting up of garden outreach projects at Dunbar Nursery has been undertaken by Belhaven Community Garden's volunteer coordinator on a self-employed basis and illustrates our strong track record of successful funding awards to deliver social and environmental benefits to our local community through gardening and nature-based activities. More details about the projects can be read at <https://www.sustainingdunbar.org>. Moreover, it demonstrates that there are a number of foundations in the UK that understand and support the value of promoting wellbeing through connecting with nature and physical activity while gardening.

#### **Summary of funding for revenue and capital expenditure to set up the Beehive Garden at Dunbar Nursery & for 3 intergenerational projects (including revenue to restore Belhaven Brewery's Secret Garden in 2021-25)**

Date	Funder	Amount per year	Length of fund	Subtotal
2021	Dunbar and East Linton Area Partnership	£5,000.00	1 year	£5,000.00
	The Mushroom Trust	£5,000.00	1 year	£5,000.00
	Belhaven Brewery	£10,000.00	4 years	£40,000.00

<b>2022 - 2025</b>	Amos Trust	£10,000.00	3 years	£30,000.00
	The Robertson Trust	£8,000.00	3 years	£24,000.00
<b>2025 - 2028</b>	The Mushroom Trust	£3,000.00	1 year	£3,000.00
	The Robertson Trust	£9,000.00	3 years	£27,000.00
	Volunteer Support Fund	£20,000.00	2 years	£20,000.00
	Elizabeth Drummond Charitable Fund	£2,000.00	2 years	£2,000.00
	<b>TOTAL FUNDING SINCE 2021</b>			<b>£156,000.00</b>

This funding is additional to grants secured for other recent Sustaining Dunbar projects including Connecting Dunbar 2.0, Insulate Innerwick, Fixing for a Future, Pledgehog and the Rivers Project.

#### **4.5.5 Operation, Policy and procedures**

Sustaining Dunbar has been operating since 2008, and the necessary policies and procedures for BCG are in place. All those supervising sessions have relevant Disclosures in place for working with young people and vulnerable adults. Garden specific policies have been drafted by the Steering Group for approval by the board. The board reviews all policies annually.

In preparation for community ownership, Garden specific policies will be reviewed by the Board to ensure that these remain suitable.

Policies and procedures can be supplied on request.

Sustaining Dunbar has a suite of employment policies in place – these are less relevant to BCG as present as there are no dedicated staff for the Garden. We will review these prior to taking on a staff member in Year 3 to ensure they remain suitable.

#### **4.5.6 Partners**

Over the 13 years of BCG, we have built up strong partnerships with local third, public and private sector groups.

This section sets out the key partnerships for service delivery at BCG and how we will develop these:

Organisation	How partners can contribute
Dunbar Grammar School	<p>We work with them to provide work experience for pupils through the Beehive Garden and Intergenerational Volunteers projects. We will work with them to revive the Rural Skills course for their pupils.</p> <p>We also take on pupils on Saturdays who volunteer with us for their Duke of Edinburgh award.</p>
Dunbar Primary and Nursery School	<p>Hosts the Beehive Garden. We will continue to invest in this outreach project.</p> <p>We will continue to supply them with seasonal fruit in the autumn</p>
Dunbar Medical Centre	Referral of individuals potentially using social prescribing in the future.
West Barns Primary School	We will continue to encourage regular visits from primary school classes.
The Ridge CIC	<p>We will continue to work with the Ridge so they are able to use BCG to support the marginalised young people they work with. We will work with the Ridge and Grammar School to reintroduce the Rural Skills course.</p> <p>We will also use trainees at the Ridge to carry out the necessary repairs to the site boundary wall.</p>
Community Carrot	We will continue to supply the CC with fresh produce and preserves. We will encourage more use of BCG for outdoor food and fire cooking sessions for children, run by their Community Food Outreach worker.
Dunbar Foodshare	We will continue to supply Foodshare with fresh produce. We will also seek to encourage referrals of people using the Foodshare who would benefit from therapeutic gardening activities.
Dunbar Day Centre	We will work with DDC to continue the Intergenerational Volunteers intergenerational befriending project.

Dunbar Dementia Network SCIO	With installation of running water and toilet facilities, group visits can restart. We will also encourage visits from individual members and their carers.
East Lothian Horizons	We have worked with ELH to support three Dunbar based refugee families – we will work with ELH to develop our support to displaced people.
Dunbar Shed	Contributes to ad hoc projects such as coppicing our hazel and willow. We will be able to work with Dunbar Shed volunteers to support some of our capital works (like installing the container units). Has offered to run woodwork training and making sessions, eg. bird and bat boxes
Dunbar Community Woodland Group	We host a tree nursery and tool share for DCWG as well as having common volunteers.
Dunbar Area Christian Youth Project	We have facilitated visits and a summer holiday club with some of the vulnerable young people supported by DACYP. Improved infrastructure at the garden will enable these activities to resume.
East Lothian Council Community Justice team	ELCCJ Team supports us by mowing parts of the site. There may be potential for further activity following community ownership of the garden.

#### 4.5.7 Other Projects

Sustaining Dunbar is a Community Development Trust for the Dunbar and East Linton Ward of East Lothian, established in 2008. We aim to provide a structure that can enable, support and incubate local projects that help to build a more resilient community that will be better placed to face up to the many challenges facing us in today's world. We believe that local, community-led action that values and taps into local knowledge and experience has a key role to play in building a future in which everyone in our community can thrive within a flourishing natural environment.

We have a strong track-record of initiating and supporting local projects and enterprises, some of which, such as Dunbar Community Bakery and Reuse Scotland have now become successful independent enterprises. Much more information about some of our past work and projects and current activity is available on our website ([www.sustainingdunbar.org](http://www.sustainingdunbar.org)).



Apart from Belhaven Community Garden, some current projects include:

**The Pledgehog project**, a hugely popular way of raising awareness and encouraging people to create more wildlife friendly gardens and wildlife corridors.

**The Dunbar Community Heat Team** of volunteers, trained to carry out infra-red thermal imaging surveys of people's homes, targeting those most in need, to highlight potential sources of heat loss and to signpost people to expert advice and support.

**The Bike Hub**, part of the Dunbar Skills Partnership, which provides training in bike maintenance, cycle confidence training and which repairs and rehomes bikes, providing bikes for free to people in need.

**OurLocality**, a safe and secure website platform, powered by open source software, enabling local community groups, projects and individuals to set up and maintain their own web presence quickly and cheaply without intrusive adverts or pop ups or corporate interference with personal data.

**Climate Action East Linton**, a support network for people in the East Linton area who care deeply about the climate and biodiversity crises. They have a number of specific projects under way, and sub-groups working on particular themes.

**Fixing for a Future**, a spin-off from Climate Action East Linton, which runs a tool library, regular repair cafés and skills workshops in sewing and textiles, furniture repair, tool sharpening and much more and which is now expanding its activities across East Lothian providing employment skills training for young people as well as intergenerational skills sharing.

**Rivers Project**, a project to kickstart action to implement landscape scale restoration of biodiversity across the whole of the East Lammermuir area working in partnership with Forth Rivers Trust and East Lammermuir Community Council.

We work closely with other local groups and stakeholders including through local community planning structures and we have carried out a number of studies such as on the impact of tourism on local nature sites and improving local infrastructure for active travel.

Sustaining Dunbar was actively involved in establishing the East Lothian Climate Action Network and Hub<sup>16</sup> which now supports sharing and learning between groups across East Lothian and which is taking forward a number of collaborative projects around themes of biodiversity, energy, food, climate adaptation and education.

## **Section 5: Level and nature of support**

5.1 Please provide details of the level and nature of support for the request, from your community and, if relevant, from others.

*This could include information on the proportion of your community who are involved with the request, how you have engaged with your community beyond the members of your organisation and what their response has been. You should also show how you have engaged with any other communities that may be affected by your proposals.*

### **5.1.1 Evidence of support for community ownership**

The Local Place Plan for Dunbar, prepared by Dunbar Community Council, West Barns Community Council, Dunbar Trade's Association, Dunbar and Area Local Partnership, Sustaining Dunbar and other organisations consulted with over 800 local people of all ages from across the local area. The Place Plan sets out that protection and retention of Belhaven Community Garden was an important priority emerging from their consultations.

We have also carried out extensive consultations over 2024 and 2025 to understand whether the community across Ward 6 supports community ownership of Belhaven Community Garden.

#### **2024 consultations**

##### Survey and petition:

An online survey was carried out over summer/autumn 2024 – asking the community whether they supported community ownership of Belhaven Community Garden.

The survey was widely promoted on social media and Dunbar Online, an article in the Courier, through door to door collection of petition signatures, a stall on the High Street, and posters/leaflets. Consultations specifically included Ash Grove (the street bordering the Garden) to ensure that the views of immediate neighbours were considered.

##### **1085 people responded: Yes - I support community ownership.**

861 respondents (79%) are in the EH42, EH40 and TD13 postcode areas -so in the immediate community of benefit (the Dunbar and East Linton Electoral Ward).

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<sup>16</sup> <https://eastlothianclimatehub.org/>

Some open comments;

*This is a vital asset for our community*

*The garden is a gorgeous green space and is an asset to the community.. it should be kept and nurtured*

*This is a really valuable resource to the many different people and groups who use it, with potential to benefit many more. It is a place of beauty and biodiversity which should be celebrated and secured for the future.*

*Seems only right that this wonderful space, that volunteers have spent so many hundreds of hours working on, should stay part of the community enjoyed by and available*

A full list of comments is included as appendix 16.

A separate paper petition was circulated between June – October, asking “*Do you support taking the site of Belhaven Community Garden into community ownership to protect this asset for the benefit of the community in the longer term?*”

**485 signatures were gathered**, in support of community ownership.



To whom it may concern

**BELHAVEN COMMUNITY GARDEN**  
REQUEST FOR ASSET TRANSFER TO COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

Dunbar Community Council has actively supported the work of Belhaven Community Garden since its inception in 2012. In that time, it has developed from a small sensory garden, for all to enjoy, to the established community garden it is today with planting of all types, largely focused on food production.

The team of volunteers and garden users reaches every socio-economic and age grouping and the benefits to all in respect of mental and physical wellbeing are patent.

Dunbar Community Council fully supports the application for a community asset transfer of the garden grounds to community ownership.

Letters of support:

22 letters of support were received from local organisations supportive of the Garden being taken into community ownership. This includes:

- Schools: Dunbar Grammar School, Dunbar Primary School (which includes the Nursery), West Barns Primary School.
- Community Planning and Community Councils: Dunbar & East Linton Area Partnership; Dunpender Community Council, West Barns Community Council, Dunbar Community Council.
- Local third sector groups: The Community Carrot CBS, the Ridge CIC, Dunbar Shed, Wilder Outdoor Education CIC, Dunbar Area Christian Youth Project, Dunbar Dementia Network SCIO, East Lothian Horizon Community Refugee Sponsorship,
- Networks /partnerships: East Lothian Climate Hub, Dunbar Medical Center (Lauderdale, Cromwell, Whitesands Practices), Dunbar and East Linton Health and Wellbeing Group.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that appears to read "P.A. Swan".

Pippa Swan  
Chair  
Dunbar Community Council

10th September 2024

Letters of support have also been received from Craig Hoy MSP, Martin Whitfield MSP, Paul McLennan MSP and local councillor Donna Collins. Cllr Lyn Jardine also indicated support in her 'Vision for Belhaven' report. All letters are included in Appendix 17.

## 2025 survey

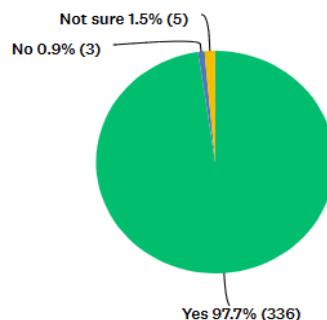
We carried out a further community survey in February 2025, to consult in more depth on the activities local people wanted to take part in at BCG. The full survey analysis is in the Business Plan (Appendix 19). The survey attracted 346 responses.

### Support for community ownership:

There was almost universal support for community ownership – consistent with the findings of previous consultation exercises. 98% of respondents were in favour.

Overall, and if a viable future can be found for it, do you support the community purchase of the land from the NHS?

Answered: 344    Skipped: 2



### Impact of community ownership:

Respondents were asked if they agree or disagree with the following statements: '*Developing the land into productive community space will...*'. The majority of respondents strongly agreed with all statements:

- Strengthen the community and bring people together: 87% strongly agreed; 13% agreed.
- Develop health and well-being: 85% strongly agreed; 15% agreed
- Get people more involved in their community: 79% strongly agreed; 21% agreed

- Enhance the economic resilience of the community: 55% strongly agreed; 33% agreed. 12% neither agree nor disagree.

### Negative consequences from community ownership

The survey also asked, “*If you are not supportive of community ownership of the garden, please let us know why*”. This was to determine whether there are any negative consequences from community ownership of the site (and how those could be mitigated).

The only comment which was not supportive of community ownership was “*I think housing is a higher priority in terms of community need (especially affordable housing for rent)*”. A larger number of comments were received elsewhere in the survey opposing more development or housebuilding.

### **5.1.2 Support and market demand**

The 2025 survey provided respondents with a list of existing and proposed services at BCG. They were given options to select whether they (1) support the service and would use it themselves; (2) support but would not use it themselves; (2) do not support the service; and (4) are not sure.

The list of services was compiled following consultation with BCG volunteers on what they would like to see happen at the site.

**Each of the suggested ideas was supported by more than 90% of survey respondents.** Less than 2% were opposed to any of the suggestions.

The services are set out under the relevant part of the Garden’s Mission: a Therapeutic Space; Growing Space; Learning Space; and Biodiverse Space. We have included some additional evidence/statistics where relevant:

#### **A Therapeutic Space**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Evidence of support / demand</b>
Volunteering (e.g. upkeep of the garden, gardening for wellbeing sessions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 47% (160 people) support this and would take part. 49% support although they would not take part themselves.</li> <li>• 40 additional survey comments noting the benefits of volunteering, including wellbeing and confidence.</li> <li>• Existing volunteering numbers between March 2023 and March 2024 were 552 volunteers: 1,104 volunteer on site hours.</li> <li>• The Dunbar &amp; East Linton Area Partnership’s Area Plan includes an action to support more social contact and</li> </ul>

	friendship to support health. This is evidence of need.
Therapeutic gardening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 35% (119 people) support this and would take part. 58% support although they would not take part themselves.</li> <li>• 18 additional comments were received noting the benefits to physical and mental health.</li> <li>• Letter of support from East Lothian Horizons – this community organisation has referred three refugee families to BCG: therapeutic gardening has helped reduce their social isolation and learn new skills.</li> <li>• Letter of support from Dunbar Medical Centre indicating interest in social prescribing.</li> <li>• The 2023 NHS Lothian Public Health Survey results for East Lothian found 12% of respondents reported low life satisfaction; 9% reported feeling lonely most of the time, 30% some of the time; and 15% experience low mental wellbeing. The NHS Lothian Green Health Programme Strategy sets out that exposure to natural environments supports positive mental health outcomes.</li> <li>• The Dunbar &amp; East Linton Area Partnership's Area Plan includes an action to support improved mental health for all ages, but especially young people, and recognises the contribution of BCG.</li> </ul>
Sensory garden restful spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 70% (235 people) support this and would make use of the sensory garden. 24% support although they would not take part themselves.</li> <li>• 28 additional comments were received, noting that this is valuable to the community as a peaceful space to support positive wellbeing; but there is particular value for young people with additional needs, older people (including those with dementia) and carers.</li> <li>• Letter of support from Dunbar Dementia Network SCIO notes the value of the garden as a therapeutic space for their members.</li> <li>• Letters of support from the Community Carrot - Food Outreach Lead: provides a calming space for them to support children who are neurodivergent, growing up in</li> </ul>

	foster care or have food avoidance disorder.
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## A Growing Space

This relates to growing herbs, flowers, fruit and vegetables; but also growing together as a community:

Service	Evidence of support / demand
Community growing together:	
Events such as Apple Day and Seedling Swap (i.e. centred on growing/ horticulture)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>This was the idea with the highest number of people who would take part themselves:</b> 77% (261 people) support this and would take part. 20% support although they would not take part themselves.</li> <li>• 23 additional comments received, noting that previous apple and seedling swap days have been well received.</li> </ul>
Community events such as bonfire night and wassailing (i.e. community events in the green space not necessarily focussed on growing).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 71% (239 people) support this and would take part. 20% support although they would not take part themselves.</li> <li>• 20 additional comments received, noting that these are valuable for families, as well as those without access to their own garden.</li> <li>• Continued population growth shows a need to support community cohesion (as per the Local Place Plan).</li> <li>• The Dunbar &amp; East Linton Area Partnership's Area Plan includes an action to develop a more connected community with a positive attitude. This is evidence of need.</li> </ul>
Growing herbs, flowers, fruit and vegetables:	
Allotments and growing space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 33% (113 people) support this and would take part. 65% support although they would not take part themselves.</li> <li>• 58 comments received, noting the benefits of gardening and food growing to health and wellbeing. Several noted the long waiting lists for the private allotments at Thistly Cross, and there was interest in</li> </ul>

	taking up growing plots at the Garden.
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## A Learning Space

Service	Evidence of support / demand
Workshops such as pruning and bee keeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 69% (236 people) support this and would take part. 29% support although they would not take part themselves.</li> <li>• 22 additional comments received, noting that these are valuable in developing knowledge and learning from others.</li> <li>• An additional survey question indicated willingness from respondents to pay for workshops – although these should be affordable and accessible to all in the community.</li> </ul>
Outdoor cooking e.g. kids cook club	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 35% (119 people) support this and would take part. 63% support although they would not take part themselves.</li> <li>• 23 additional comments received, noting that these are enjoyable and help to develop life skills. There were several offers to help deliver the sessions.</li> <li>• Letter of support from the Community Food Outreach &amp; Communications Lead, Community Carrot: who delivers these sessions – there is nowhere else locally these can take place.</li> <li>• Only 21% of people in East Lothian get the recommended amount of daily fruits and vegetables.</li> </ul>
Tours and visits (for groups such as beavers and cubs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 29% (98 people) support this and would take part. 70% support although they would not take part themselves.</li> <li>• 14 comments received noting that young people/children have enjoyed these sessions previously.</li> <li>• Letter of support from Dunbar Area Christian Youth</li> </ul>

	Project shows demand for more visits to the garden with the vulnerable young people they support. Letter of support from West Barns Primary School shows demand for more visits.
Employability and accredited training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 18% (61 people) support this and would take part. 77% support although they would not take part themselves.</li> <li>• 18 comments received, noting that these can benefit young people in particular.</li> <li>• Letters of support from Dunbar Grammar School and the Ridge- stating support for existing work and demand for this to grow further. The Ridge notes that the Garden “<i>has enormous value as a unique educational space</i>”.</li> <li>• 13.5% of the working age population of the Ward claimed Universal Credit in September 2024 – this is below the Scotland average of 14.8% but still shows a need for employability support.</li> </ul>

## A Biodiverse Space

The services above contribute to enhancing habitats and improving biodiversity at BCG. There were additional comments in the survey directly relating to biodiversity, such as “*Biodiversity e.g. native wildflower pollinator meadows; perhaps a small area of woodland; a pond*”.

## Section 6: Funding

6.1 Please outline how you propose to fund the price or rent you are prepared to pay for the land, and your proposed use of the land.

*You should show your calculations of the costs associated with the transfer of the land or building and your future use of it, including any redevelopment, ongoing maintenance and the costs of your activities. All proposed income and investment should be identified, including volunteering and donations. If you intend to apply for grants or loans you should demonstrate that your proposals are eligible for the relevant scheme, according to the guidance available for applicants.*

### 6.1.1 Asset transfer and acquisition

The Community Asset Transfer bid will be submitted to the NHS offering a price of the current use value of £45,000.

Though there is a wide range of potential valuations depending on the use of the site, it is clear that the current use and current planning permission is for a

community garden and so we believe that this should be the basis used for valuation. As explained in Section 4.2 and Appendix 3A, we consider that the continuation and further development of the community garden also provides 'best value' for NHS Lothian.

As soon as our application is approved we will submit a Stage 2 application to the Scottish Land Fund. Any shortfall in funding required for the purchase will be met from a local crowdfunding campaign.

### **6.1.2 Fit with Funders' Outcomes**

We will seek a contribution from the Scottish Land Fund toward the purchase price for the site and associated legal costs of transferring ownership. There is a strong fit with the Scottish Land Fund outcomes:

**Outcome 1: Our communities will achieve more sustainable economic, environmental and/or social development through the ownership of land and buildings**

#### **Building a sustainable economy:**

- Democratic and inclusive business models will be supported through trading activity at BCG, and through support to the Community Carrot community benefit society.
- Benefits to mental health from participation at BCG will enable people to return to the workforce. At least two of our volunteers have been able to take up employment again, partly due to the therapeutic benefits of volunteering at BCG. Research from the Mental Health Foundation sets out the economic value associated with nature-based interventions for mental health<sup>17</sup>.
- Dunbar Grammar School pupils are supported into the workforce through the Intergenerational Volunteers and the Beehive Garden projects: participants report benefits to their confidence, employability and sense of purpose. Some have gone on to find employment in childcare: provision of childcare delivers further economic benefits.
- Young people will gain qualifications: we supported an SQA National 4 level Rural Skills course for 3 years and plan to revive this in partnership with the

<sup>17</sup>

<https://www.thrive.org.uk/how-we-help/social-therapeutic-horticulture-resource-centre/evidence-of-the-benefits-for-sth/economic-value#>

Grammar School. This also helps to improve participation rates for 16-19 year olds which is a priority within the East Lothian Plan.

- Distribution and sale of surplus fresh produce supports a vibrant local food economy and shortens sustainable food supply chains (in line with the East Lothian Good Food Charter).
- We support economic participation through production and sale of preserves, and hire of our fruit pressing and preservation equipment to support amateur producers.

### **Sustainable environmental outcomes:**

- Biodiversity at the site will be protected and increased as habitats at BCG mature and as we create new habitats. In 2012 it had an estimated value of 3.75 biodiversity units, and by 2025, had a value of 6.13BUs. Without community ownership, the site's biodiversity would be at risk.
- BCG is one of the last remaining green spaces in Dunbar: others have been subsumed by housing developments. It provides ecological connectivity with other green spaces marked for protection in the Local Place Plan.
- BCG provides formal and informal opportunities for skill sharing and learning about horticulture, regenerative land management and biodiversity. This gives participants confidence and skills to cultivate their own gardens.
- BCG provides a means to engage the community around low carbon lifestyles and community resilience to the climate emergency. We educate about food growing which helps to demonstrate the links between food choices and climate change.
- We practise organic farming at BCG: this contributes to improved soil health which supports healthy ecosystems (this is an outcome within NPF4).
- Our Beehive Garden outreach project gives nursery children opportunities to grow food and plants – increasing their engagement with nature and understanding of the value of nature through outdoor learning.

### **Social development:**

- We support community cohesion. The Local Place Plan notes a 60% increase in population between 2001-2021 and that traditional patterns of community have changed as a result. Our activities enable new and longstanding residents to meet, contributing to a strong resilient community where people respect and support each other.

- We help to mitigate the impact of food poverty through distribution of surplus food and support to Dunbar Foodshare and directly to nursery schools. This is vital, with a 137% increase in the number of children referred to foodbanks across East Lothian between 2020 and 2023; and only 21% of people in the region getting the recommended daily amount of fruits and vegetables.
- We tackle social isolation and loneliness. Activities at BCG bring together a diverse range of people, with the impact that people here are more connected, and have opportunities to develop meaningful relationships. Interviews with participants describe the life-changing impact of connection with others at BCG.
- People from marginalised groups such as New Scots or people with additional needs are supported to take part at BCG: this breaks down social barriers and supports participation as equal members of the local community.

## **OUTCOME 2: Our Communities will have a stronger role in and control over their development**

- Consultations over several years have shown overwhelming support for BCG to be saved; and for green spaces to be protected ahead of further development. Community ownership of the site delivers on these aspirations.
- BCG is volunteer-led: last year there were 552 volunteers and 1,104 volunteer on-site hours. This means local people control the delivery of services and are directly involved in supporting each other.
- BCG will be owned by Sustaining Dunbar: a charity with open membership for everyone in Ward 6. This contributes to the Community Wealth Building pillar of inclusive/plural ownership.

## **OUTCOME 3: Our communities own well managed, financially sustainable land and buildings**

### **Well-managed**

- A skills audit was undertaken as part of this business plan, showing a high degree of skills and experience across the Sustaining Dunbar board and the BCG Steering Group. Members of each are passionate about the positive impact of BCG.
- BCG has operated successfully for over 12 years. Our structure of management by the Steering Group (supported by Volunteer Leads and Plot Champions) works well. BCG is referred to as an exemplar in two public sector strategy documents.

- We have longstanding partnerships with local third, public and private sector groups (evidenced by the 22 letters we received in support of community ownership). These partners contribute further skills and capacity.

### **6.1.3 Financial Sustainability**

The financial projections within our Business Plan (appendix 19) show that BCG can continue to operate sustainably, with a small surplus. It has already operated sustainably for 13 years.

#### **Approach to sustainability:**

Our approach is that BCG and the services we provide should be free and open to all. We have historically not put pressure on people to pay for events or workshops, although we do collect donations and run fundraisers. The majority of work at BCG is delivered by our volunteers, willing to share their time and skills.

This approach will not fundamentally change, although we recognise that ownership of BCG will bring additional costs.

#### **Running costs:**

Expenditure has been low in previous years: £1,502 in 2023; £1,304 in 2022 and £4,056 in 2021 (of which £2,600 was purchase of our fruit press). Public liability insurance will also need to be added.

We anticipate that expenditure will be higher once we take the site into community ownership – largely due to the additional infrastructure which we will install:

	Annual	Notes
Rates	£0	As a charity Sustaining Dunbar would receive 80% mandatory rates relief. We assume that the additional 20% discretionary relief will also be obtained given our contribution to East Lothian Council strategies.
Water rates	£0	We assume that the Water and Sewerage Charges Exemption Scheme will apply <sup>18</sup> .
Electricity	£800	Rough estimate – we do not currently have an

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.mygov.scot/water-sewerage-exemption>

		electricity connection. Usage likely to be low.
Waste collection	£360	
Growing costs - plants, seeds, compost etc.	£300	Low as we produce our own compost and are starting to save our own seed etc.
Equipment - repair and replacement	£800	Based on previous years.
Site maintenance and repair	£2,000	To cover repairs to the new infrastructure such as container units, as well as the polytunnel etc.
Volunteer expenses	£1200	Though currently only £300, we have increased this to allow us to attract more volunteers and more who may be on a low income and need expenses to attend.
Marketing	£400	Increase in previous years to support increased donation and fundraising income.
Contribution to Community Outreach Growing	£300	i.e. Community Outreach Growing, such as the Beehive Garden at Dunbar Nursery School.
Contribution to Full Cost Recovery	£300	i.e. contribution to insurance, accountancy, website hosting costs etc incurred by Sustaining Dunbar. Based on previous years.
Sundry / Misc.	£250	
<b>Total:</b>	<b>£7710</b>	

Our financial projections include a 3% inflationary increase from year 2 onwards.

**Income generation:**

Income in previous years has been modest: £2,522 in 2023; £2,213 in 2022 and £4,177 in 2021 (although £3,103 of this related to grants for purchase of the fruit press).

Income to cover increased costs from community ownership will be generated from:

Trading income:

	Income in Y1	Notes
Community events	£1,520	<p>We run a range of events – some are free, but others have a fundraising element.</p> <p>We have estimated 7 events in Year 1; with an average of 30 attendees plus peaks for particular events; and average donation per person of £4. We assume that direct costs for events will be 20% of income.</p> <p>These are averages only, and intended to reflect the diversity of events we run.</p>
Workshops	£1950	<p>As with events, these vary widely in content and formality.</p> <p>In Year 1, we estimate 8 events, with an average attendance of 12. The average price per workshop is £15.</p> <p>Direct costs for each workshop are £80 for a tutor; and £20 for materials.</p> <p>These are averages and are intended to capture the diversity of the workshops.</p>
Equipment hire	£390	A small income stream, based on 13 hires per year, with an average £30 donation per hire in Year 1.
Donations from plot holders	£500	£250 secured in 2023. This increase in future years with a more deliberative marketing plan for donations from visitors but it is still modest.
Sale of produce	£1000	We estimate £1,000 per year in sales. This is based on the growth over previous years - £1,033 in 2023; £650 in 2022; and £876 in 2020.

		Direct costs are £70 for kitchen hire; and £130 for labels / printing etc.
<b>Total trading income</b>	<b>£2,736</b>	

Fundraising and donations:

This includes:

- £1,500 donations. This is based on the growth over previous years, of £1,488 in 2023; £949 in 2022. We have included a larger marketing budget to support this.
- Modest revenue funding – i.e. small grants from local fundraisers. In practice, this could be exceeded.

Excluding capital funding (addressed below), this amounts to £7500 income from fundraising and donations in Year 1.

From Year 3, we have included revenue funding of circa £35,000 for a Green Health officer role – to develop social prescribing and wellbeing services. In the event that funding for this role cannot be secured, we will aim to take forward these services as best we can through volunteer effort, supported by our local partners. Existing services and wellbeing activity would carry on as at present.

Summary:

A summary of the 5 year financial projections is shown below. Note that the summary includes:

- Capital developments – (detailed in Section 7.3 of our Business Plan -see Appendix 19). These are grant funded and if funding cannot be secured, we are able to continue our services without these.
- Revenue funding for a Green Health officer role, hence the peak in year three. Again, if funding cannot be secured, existing services and wellbeing activity would carry on as at present.

This shows that BCG breaks even, with a small surplus being built up over the 5 years shown. Full cash flows can be seen at appendix 18.

<b>Summary</b>	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5
	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Year 3</b>	<b>Year 4</b>	<b>Year 5</b>
<b>Income</b>					
<i>Trading, events, workshops</i>	£2,736	£3,059	£3,272	£3,367	£3,540
<i>Donations and Funding</i>	£74,700	£12,000	£109,000	£35,000	£36,000
<b>Total</b>	£77,436	£15,059	£112,272	£38,367	£39,540
% trading	4%	20%	3%	9%	9%
<b>Expenditure</b>					
<i>Salaries</i>	£0	£0	£31,650	£32,600	£33,577
<i>Running costs</i>	£4,814	£4,958	£5,100	£5,260	£5,418
<i>Capital development</i>	£72,121	£10,000	£75,000	£0	£0
<b>Total</b>	£76,935	£14,958	£111,750	£37,860	£38,996
<b>Surplus/deficit</b>	£501	£101	£522	£507	£545
<b>Balance carried forward</b>	£501	£602	£1,124	£1,631	£2,176

## **Signature**

Two office-bearers (board members, charity trustees or committee members) of the community transfer body must sign the form. They must provide their full names and home addresses for the purposes of prevention and detection of fraud.

This form and supporting documents will be made available online for any interested person to read and comment on. Personal information will be redacted before the form is made available.

**We, the undersigned on behalf of the community transfer body as noted at section 1, make an asset transfer request as specified in this form.**

**We declare that the information provided in this form and any accompanying documents is accurate to the best of our knowledge.**

Name      Jo McNamara

Address

[REDACTED]

Date      10th January 2026

Position      Chair

Signature

[REDACTED]

Name      Philip Revell

Address

[REDACTED]

Date      10th January 2026

Position      Trustee



Signature

## **Checklist of accompanying documents**

To check that nothing is missed, please list any documents which you are submitting to accompany this form.

Title of document attached:

- Appendix 1 Sustaining Dunbar Articles of Association
- Appendix 2 NHS Lothian Charity Green Health -Belhaven Community Garden
- Appendix 3A Making the Case for our Offer Price, January 2026
- Appendix 3B Valuation Report, Belhaven Hospital Garden Site, Graham and Sibbald
- Appendix 4 NHS Lothian Logic Models
- Appendix 5 Landscape and Wellbeing MSc Dissertation 1
- Appendix 6 Landscape and Wellbeing MSc Dissertation 2
- Appendix 7 Edinburgh and Lothians Health Foundation -Green Space and Health
- Appendix 8 BCG Biodiversity Baseline Assessment
- Appendix 9 Biodiversity Metric
- Appendix 10 Summary of UK Social Value Bank Methodology
- Appendix 11 Methodology Note for Wellbeing Values (HACT Social Value Bank)
- Appendix 12 Social Impact Participation Projections
- Appendix 13 Belhaven Hospital Market Appraisal Report, Ryden
- Appendix 14 Dunbar and West Barns Local Place Plan 2025-2035, Report
- Appendix 15 Dunbar and West Barns Local Place Plan 2025-2035, Maps and Action Points
- Appendix 16 Community Survey Comments
- Appendix 17 Letters of Support
- Appendix 18 Cashflow Projections
- Appendix 19 Belhaven Community Garden Business Plan and Appendices