

Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses 2026 – 2030 Strategy



This is the third and final version of our new strategy for Brockwell Park Community Greenhouses (BPCG).

1. About BPCG

BPCG is a registered charity in South London's Brockwell Park. We provide a space where people of all ages and backgrounds can connect with nature, community, or other opportunities to grow.

Our site has a rich history. Originally built in the mid-19th century as part of the Brockwell Hall estate, it fell into disrepair, before being revitalised by guerilla gardeners in the 1990s. BPCG formally established as a charity in 2003 when Lambeth leased the space to the community, with the current charity registered in 2011 securing a long-term lease. Over the years, we have sensitively developed our one-acre site into a unique and welcoming haven.

2. Where are we today



Over the past decade, BPCG has grown significantly. In 2013/14, we welcomed around 3,300 participants across all our programmes. By 2024/25, this had nearly trebled to over 8,700 participants, demonstrating the growing demand for our work.

Our garden programme has similarly expanded: what began with dedicated garden volunteers has evolved into a sophisticated operation where volunteers contributed over 4,389 hours in the garden alone during 2024/25. We continue to achieve RHS London in Bloom Outstanding status, an achievement we have maintained since our early years, testament to the dedication of volunteers and staff.

The opening of Brockwell Barn in 2022 has transformed our offering, providing us with a teaching kitchen and events space. In 2024/25, the kitchen volunteers produced 1,907 jars of jam and marmalade, 342 bottles of artisanal alcohol, 365 cocktails at events, and 415 slices of cake, all through just two volunteer cooking sessions per week. We hosted 66 venue hires and 18 community events attended by 1,649 people: activities that were not possible before the Barn existed.

The Children and Families programme has matured substantially. While we welcomed 1,300 children with school groups in 2013/14, by 2024/25 we delivered 425 sessions to 6,565 participants. More significantly, we have begun targeted work with underserved communities that were not part of our original model. This includes an expanded SEND programme (162 sessions reaching pupils with

special educational needs and disabilities) and a three-year initiative launched in January 2025 engaging schools with high percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals (1,267 participants from low-income households). This represents a strategic shift toward ensuring our garden serves those who need it most.



Our financial model has also evolved. In 2013/14, we operated with three part-time staff positions funded primarily through major grants. Today, we have one full time and four part-time staff positions and have diversified our income streams, balancing self-generated income (from hires, events, workshops, and shop sales) with continued grant support from funders.

3. Why we need a strategy

For a small charity like BPCG, a strategy helps us focus our limited resources on what matters most, and to all work towards the same goals. It also enables us to clearly explain our purpose, make informed decisions about opportunities, and stay true to our mission as we grow.

Unlike previous BPCG five-year strategies, which were detailed business plans, this document is a broad framework. It is intended to be a simple, living guide that we can review and change as we learn and evolve.

This strategy outlines our high-level plans for the next five years (2026 - 2030). Alongside the strategy we will create separate, detailed action plans each year, setting out the timelines, budgets, and other resources that we need to deliver on our goals. An annual process will mean that we can plan with more certainty, while taking new opportunities or challenges into account.

4. Our strategic framework

OUR VISION (the future we want to see)

We want to be a welcoming, restorative, vibrant, and ever-evolving community for the people of Lambeth and Southwark where **sustainable horticulture** opens the door to learning, friendship and wellbeing. This vision is in line with our articles of association.¹

OUR MISSION (what we do to achieve the vision)

We will **embrace the beautiful complexity of community life**, using sustainable horticulture as our foundation to **create an intentionally diverse range of nature-based learning activities**, which respond dynamically to our community's evolving interests, and **create space for unexpected connections and discoveries**.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY SUSTAINABLE HORTICULTURE?

For us, sustainable horticulture is a thoughtful approach to growing plants - such as food, flowers and herbs, using organic methods that protect soil, water and wildlife. This approach encourages the plants, soil, water and wildlife to work collaboratively to create a healthy ecosystem that can also support our wellbeing.

¹ Think of these as our charity's rulebook. Our articles of association can be found [here](#).

Our activities include things like food growing, cooking and preservation, sustainable beekeeping, composting, therapeutic gardening and gigs, among countless other possibilities.

We especially want to support people who may not normally have access to nature, locally grown food or community activities because of things like their income, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, disability (visible or invisible) or social exclusion.

OUR VALUES (the principles that guide our work)

In no specific order, these are the most important things we believe in:

- **Welcoming:** we proactively include everyone.
- **Community:** we bring people together.
- **Nurturing:** we help people, plants and wildlife to grow.
- **Sustainable:** we take care of our environment and each other.

5. Our strategic priorities for 2026 - 2030

Because of the wonderful community, history and site that we have built, we now have the chance to do **more and better**. Over the next five years, our priorities are:

1. Better **financial sustainability and resilience**
2. More and better **community relationships**
3. More and better **learning opportunities**
4. Better **environmental sustainability**
5. A better **working and restorative environment**

These priorities will guide our yearly planning, budgeting and fundraising. Although they are listed separately, they are all connected and rely on each other, and are not necessarily listed in order of importance. Each priority has a few milestones which help us measure our progress, which we will review during board meetings and annual general meetings. We will set more specific goals and key performance indicators (basically the important numbers that tell us how well we're doing, like how many people we've helped or how much food we've grown) in our yearly action plans.

Below is a detailed description of the strategic priorities and associated milestones:

Priority 1 | Better financial sustainability and resilience: To stay financially strong, we need to cover all our costs and be prepared for any unexpected costs or external events, like Covid.

Historically, we have chosen to cover our **core costs** through the money we earn ourselves. This is our most stable and flexible stream of income.

Grant funding is also important to us. It is often attached to specific activities, helping us to have a bigger impact in these areas, but meaning that it cannot be used to cover core costs or respond to unforeseen events.

We will continue to maintain a healthy balance between self-generated income and grant funding,

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY CORE COSTS?

Core costs are the costs we have to pay to keep the organisation operating, like staff salaries, water bills, phone service, and rent. These are expenses that stay pretty much the same whether we have a busy season or a quiet one. Sometimes, these are referred to as 'overhead costs'.

remaining mindful of our core vision of a space that's open and welcoming to all. To do this, we will:

Milestone 1.1: In Year 1, assess the potential opportunities to create more self-generated income from our current activities and site, while establishing an even more welcoming and restorative space for our community.

Milestone 1.2: In Year 1, assess the potential opportunities for raising grants for our existing programmes and activities, and in line with our current capacity.

Milestone 1.3: Run an annual planning process, through which the board will assess and balance maintaining a financially resilient organisation with growing the reach of our welcoming and restorative space in the local community.

Milestone 1.4: Update our risk register to enable us to better identify risks early on, especially financial and organisational risks (e.g. data management and succession planning) that could negatively impact the organisation.

Priority 2 | More and better community relationships: We want to better reflect the diverse community in Lambeth and Southwark Boroughs. To do this, we want to establish stronger relationships with those who struggle to access nature, locally grown food, and community. We already have great partnerships with schools and other organisations to help us with this, but we can do more and better. To do this, we will:

Milestone 2.1: Prepare and implement a volunteer engagement plan, starting from Year 1, to improve collaboration with existing volunteers, and support the recruitment and retention of new volunteers from as wide a range of backgrounds as possible, to reflect the diversity of the two boroughs.

Milestone 2.2: In Year 1, assess each of our current programmes, workshops, sessions, and events to understand who does and does not attend, and which groups from our local community are and are not represented.

Milestone 2.3: Starting in Year 1, and continuously after that, offer more and / or better opportunities for those who struggle to access nature, good quality, locally grown food, and community. We may do this through partnerships with other organisations or directly with community members.

Milestone 2.4: Starting in Year 1, launch a continuous process of identifying and removing barriers (like confusion about how to start a new project) and provide support (for example through simple processes or easy to access funding) for staff and volunteers. This will help us to always evolve our space so it can reach those who need it most.

Priority 3 | More and better learning opportunities: Learning is at the heart of everything we do, whether it's a child discovering where food comes from or an adult gaining confidence in their cooking skills. By expanding and improving our learning opportunities, we can reach more people who feel disconnected from nature or lack practical skills, while better serving those who are already engaged with us. To do this, we will:

Milestone 3.1: In Year 1, we will briefly assess how we currently give access to learning (i.e., certificates, informally, peer-learning); who we are reaching (e.g., primary school students, adults with limited cooking knowledge or skills); and what topics we are covering (e.g., horticulture, composting, climate resilience, sustainability).

Milestone 3.2: In Year 2, we will explore and plan how we can provide more and better opportunities for learning (e.g. through fundraising, collecting feedback, ensuring all our

activities incorporate learning), and that these learning opportunities range from informal and collaborative to some that are more in-depth and formal.

Milestone 3.3: In Year 3 to 5, we will continuously reflect on and launch more and better learning opportunities for the communities we serve or wish to reach.

Priority 4 | Better environmental sustainability: We already do a great job at being sustainable by growing food organically, minimising food waste, creating a haven for some urban wildlife (including pollinators), composting our garden waste and collecting rainwater. However, we can do even more and better. To do this, we will:

Milestone 4.1: In Year 1, we will get better at understanding our current impact and areas for improvement.

Milestone 4.2: In Year 2, we will prepare a budgeted sustainability plan and set targets for ourselves which we can feasibly monitor.

Milestone 4.3: Finance and implement the plan from Year 3 to Year 5, which may include capital works to improve our spaces, and / or change in our practices to improve our impact.

Priority 5 | A better working and restorative environment: We want to keep our space peaceful and restorative. While we want to do more and better, we want to do so within our current headcount. We need to make sure that we are financially sustainable, have a manageable workload for our staff, and ensure a calm and welcoming atmosphere for volunteers and visitors. To do this, we will:

Milestone 5.1: Support staff in achieving the above priorities throughout the 5-year period, including but not limited to transitioning in Year 1 from some direct delivery to mainly facilitating or enabling delivery by freelancers and / or volunteers.

Milestone 5.2: Introduce systems in Year 1 to improve coordination and planning between the different programmes, workshops, sessions and events so they complement rather than risk competing with each other.

Milestone 5.3: Continuously invest in making sure our facilities are safe, well organised and maintained, and welcoming to all, including those with disabilities.

Milestone 5.4: Transition the activities of the board of trustees away from operations and towards improved governance of the organisation and advisory support to the General Manager and staff.

Milestone 5.5: Continuously work to strengthen representation and skills of the board of trustees to reflect the needs of the organisation.

