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5th December 2017

Dear Robert Lewis and Trustees

## CommuniGrow progress report 2017

With the grant for a part time community grower we have been able to fund working hours enabling us increase our presence on the field. The grower has made a valuable contribution to the operational growing activities which has underpinned and enhanced our work with schools. We have been able to develop and initiate new work with the special needs schools.

Grange Park School bring a group of sixth form students with learning disabilities every week. They help with growing activities and then take a barrow of produce to the nearby offices on site to sell the vegetables. This has resulted in increasing self confidence and self-esteem through contact with members of the public. Their communication skills have improved and they are benefiting from feeling included in everyday activities.

Five Acre Wood School also bring Sixth Form students weekly. They participate in the growing cycle matched to their range of abilities. This makes a valuable contribution to their pre-employment qualifications. They also bring a group of 16 students who are doing their Duke of Edinburgh awards by contributing to the community volunteering section.

Rowhill School which caters for pupils with a range of behavioral difficulties brings their full age range of pupils. All the classes come and their involvement is tailored to their needs and integration of learning. Recently they created a 'bug hotel' and have put it in an accessible place on the field.

All three schools report positively on the impact of coming to CommuniGrow including improved behaviour and engagement with learning.

This is what Five Acre Wood School say:

*CommuniGrow is very beneficial for young people. It provides a work related learning environment that students of various levels can access, from pre-entry level 1 to those that, with preparation, can access work. Students can learn the skills required for work, engage in tasks and opportunities to develop their skills. These could be motor skills, social skills, academic skills, personal skills, travel skills.*



*James benefitted because he enjoys the outdoors and being active. He has improved his social skills and can now help his mum in the garden from completing tasks at Communigrow.*

*Aidan struggles with his emotions and engaging with others. Communigrow is something he enjoys and looks forward to and it allows him to meet his sensory needs so that he is more focused when in social situations.*

*Connor benefitted because he realised he enjoyed the work and liked working on the land. He developed his passion for this and when he left Five Acre he went on to work placement at a farm.*

*Jack benefits because he can and has demonstrated he can work regularly and purposefully. He has secured a part time job now!*

*Communigrow is fully supportive of our young people and will always do the most they can to facilitate their learning and development.*

During the year we have had 4 referrals from Kent Pathways Service for a placement for adults with learning disabilities. They require a level of supervision and support which the growers and volunteers have now been able to give.

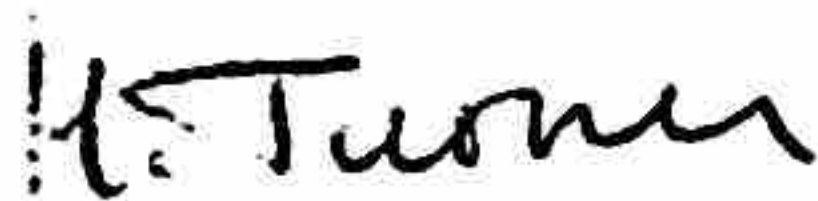
With the team of volunteers and the Community Food Grower we have been able to develop the range and quality of produce grown and expand our outlets which are contributing to increasing our income.

The trustees are now looking to expand our activities and to this end are looking to appoint an Education Co-ordinator and a Volunteer Co-ordinator. The Education Co-ordinator will be working with local schools and other agencies to provide a range of educational opportunities. The Volunteer Co-ordinator will be recruiting, training and managing new volunteers. In the longer term we are looking to appoint a full time Community Grower to manage the overall operational activities. These key posts will enable the charity to increase our offer of a community resource.

We have much appreciated the support that we have received from Nineveh Trust. It has enabled us to have a more consistent presence on the field and to provide more continuity and stability.

I hope this report gives a valuable insight to the impact your grant has made and we look forward to receiving the second year of our grant. If there is anything else you would like me to expand on please do let me know.

Your sincerely



Helen Turner  
Secretary