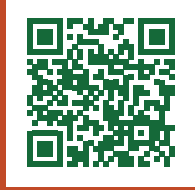




BRIGHTON
PERMACULTURE
TRUST



VISIT OUR
WEBSITE

Impact Report 2024-25

25 Years On

A reflection on our journey
since the millennium



Inspiring, connecting and learning; for people and planet to flourish

Brighton Permaculture Trust is a charitable company registered in England and Wales | Registered charity number: 1150808 | Company number: 4072259
Registered Address: The Fruit Factory, Stanmer Village, Stanmer, Brighton, BN1 9PZ

25 years on: A reflection on our journey since the millennium

The year 2000 marked a turning point in history – a new millennium full of promise and change. But even as the world looked ahead, environmental issues were already making headlines.

That same year, the UK faced unprecedented flooding. The first signs came when the River Uck in East Sussex burst its banks, eventually affecting large parts of the British Isles. These floods were driven by a series of deep Atlantic depressions, linked either to extreme weather patterns or, more concerningly, to the escalating effects of global warming. Environmentalists warned then, as they do now, that the UK needed thousands more trees to help guard against future flooding.

Yet, 2000 wasn't solely marked by environmental despair. The Sydney Olympic Games earned recognition for their efforts to be the greenest Games ever, incorporating solar energy, promoting public transportation, and embracing recycling on a large scale.

For Brighton Permaculture Trust, 2000 was a quiet but significant beginning. It marked the moment our founders set out to more formally bring permaculture to the people of Sussex, planting the seeds of a movement rooted in Earth Care, People Care, and Fair Share.

As we reflect on our impact over the past 25 years, we recognise the shifts in public awareness around climate change.

The threats of the biodiversity and climate crisis can feel overwhelming, but attitudes have evolved and permaculture thinking is becoming more mainstream. Designing resilient systems and regenerative practices has never been more relevant.

Today, more than ever,
we must focus on
regeneration, by
inspiring action,
connecting communities,
and committing to
lifelong regenerative
practice.

As well as reflecting on our impact and revisiting our strategy, we want to offer some small regenerative solutions you can take and share going forward. →

25 simple regenerative actions

#1 to 10 for the Planet: Regenerative Environmental Actions

#1

Compost food scraps

Turn waste into rich soil instead of landfill methane

Thanks to our partnership with the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership, the Stanmer Village community now benefits from a shared composting hub, turning food and garden waste into nutrient-rich soil.

Our Plot, also based in Stanmer, runs an impressive three-tier composting system and uses compost teas to nourish the land naturally. Interested in getting hands-on and learning more? Volunteer with us and gain practical skills in regenerative growing that you can use at home or in your community.

#2

Harvest rainwater

Reduce stormwater runoff and ease pressure on local water systems.

We're launching a new workshop in 2026 'Rainwater Harvesting at Home'. We'll learn how to collect, store, and purify the water, and the legal and practical considerations. It's a great first step toward supporting pollinators, reducing water use, and building resilience at home.

#3

Buy less plastic

Use products with compostable or refillable packaging.

Thank you to our customers who kindly return our glass bottles to the Fruit Factory, after enjoying a bottle of juice or cider. Together we've minimised food waste, but also energy waste (by not having to produce more bottles)

#4

Use natural fertilisers

Avoiding chemicals supports soil microbiomes and pollinators.

Why not join one of our friendly, practical courses? Whether you're curious about composting, gardening, or sustainable living, there's something for everyone.

#6

Use your green space

Convert lawns to wildflower areas or grow them in pots.

Consider working with a permaculture designer or join one of our Introduction to Permaculture courses to understand how nature-based principles can reshape how we grow, build, and live.

#5

Grow your own herbs or vegetables

Even a windowsill garden regenerates connection to food.

Over the coming year, we'll be expanding our learning opportunities to help more people live sustainably and take meaningful steps toward regeneration at home, in the community and their workplaces.

#7

Support regenerative farmers

Buy from local farms that prioritise soil, water, and animal welfare.

Even if buying organic isn't an option right now, amplify their work by sharing on social media. Every bit of visibility helps grow awareness and support.

#8

Plant trees and shrubs

They help to restore local biodiversity and improve soil health.

This year, we proudly added three new orchards in Rye, planting a total of 92 trees - each one opening new opportunities for local engagement, food resilience, and biodiversity.

We welcome applications from new community groups interested in starting an orchard and are also keen to work with companies looking to meet their Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) goals through community-based, regenerative action.

#9

Switch to renewable energy

If possible, opt into community solar or green energy plans.

Explore community solar: Energy Coops like BHESCo, and Brighton Energy help bring the cost of solar panels down by pooling demand. It's a smart, collaborative step toward a cleaner energy future.

Switch to green energy: Most energy providers now offer green tariffs, and switching is usually quick and simple. Check your supplier's website for details.

Energy saving is part of our Permaculture Design Course.

#10

Leave wild corners in your garden

Let nature reclaim a small space for pollinators and insects.

In nature, the edge effect is a powerful principle - it's where two different ecosystems meet, creating rich, diverse spaces full of life. These transitional zones often support greater biodiversity than either area alone. By intentionally leaving and designing for edge, we create welcoming habitats for pollinators, insects, and wildlife to thrive. It's a beautiful reminder that where difference meets, life flourishes.

25 simple regenerative actions

#11 to 20 for the Community: Regenerative Social Practices

#11 Buy better

Buy from cooperatives and social enterprises and strengthen ethical, people-centered business.

Our juicing takes place in full view of the public, and you're always welcome to visit for a tour and see our process in action!

We're also seeking funding to create an immersive juicing and sensory experience – particularly for people who might not otherwise have access to such hands-on food education.

Please reach out if you can support us to do this.

#12 Organise or attend local clean-ups

Build pride and stewardship for your area.

If you're wondering where to start with local action, the [cleanupuk](#) website offers simple steps and advice to help you begin.

In Brighton? You might like to join the Tidying up together! Team, as a fun, friendly way to keep our shared spaces beautiful and cared for.

#13 Practice mutual aid

Help neighbours with time, meals, rides, or care.

Fair Share in action: We live our values – Earth Care, People Care, and Fair Share – in many ways. For example, we offer reduced site hire in exchange for an agreed contribution or service, ensuring access while encouraging mutual benefit.

Here are some simple questions to ask in daily life
Who around me might need care right now?
What can I share instead of keep for myself?
How can I leave this space, meeting, or interaction more alive than I found it?

#14 Rest and renewal

Normalise taking breaks and honouring limits, regeneration requires energy.

We introduced the idea of Radical Resting at our Apple Blossom Day, and will be developing more workshops and opportunities to expand People Care in the coming year.

#15 Host community skill-shares

Teach or learn gardening, sewing, preserving, or bike repair.

Learning, Sharing and Growing Together:
In addition to our courses, we're running a series of hands-on workshops to help people explore practical, regenerative skills– from composting to community gardening and more.

Volunteering at repair cafés, local community groups, and charities is another brilliant way to share skills, connect with others, and contribute to a more resilient, circular economy.

#16 Celebrate local culture

Music, food, and stories strengthen identity and belonging.

Storytelling feeds the soul and strengthens community. We're deeply grateful to the wonderfully creative people who contribute their time and energy – especially the fantastic entertainers who make our free Apple Days so magical and memorable.

#17 Encourage decision-making

Get people involved in choices that affect their environment.

As we prepare to refresh our five-year strategy, we know it's vital to reflect the world we live in today. To shape a meaningful and inclusive path forward, we'll be inviting input from our friends, supporters, volunteers, and freelance collaborators. Your voice matters – this is your story too.

#18 Start or join a community garden

Grow food, friendships, and resilience.

Sussex is home to many inspiring community gardens, but we need more! You and your neighbours can explore your Right To Grow on public land and help transform unused spaces into thriving food gardens.

Supporting Creativity and Community in Newhaven: Together with partners and local supporters, we're excited to back a Newhaven-based artist developing funding for a vibrant new community project. Watch this space for more updates!

#19 Mentor young people

Regenerate knowledge across generations in sustainability or craft skills.

We're working with the Permaculture Association to develop formal learning pathways for young people. In the meantime, we're proud to welcome children and youth to our Apple Harvest Days, where they can take part in real-life juicing and learn by doing.

#20 Choose an ethical bank

Pick a bank or investor that aligns with your values.

We ensure that at Brighton Permaculture Trust, we bank with companies that match our values.

Choosing an ethical bank or investor, or using a local community finance organisation, like Wave Community Bank in Brighton, is a good place to start.

25 simple regenerative actions

#21 to 25 Bridging the Two: Regeneration of Systems and Mindsets

#22

Slow down consumption

Pause before buying and choose reuse, repair, or rethink.

Slowing down and learning to breath and provide space to rethink, is included in a course design to give space for community and learning together. In the coming year we're keen to grow our network, in a way that fosters mutual learning and permaculture practice.

A simple step, re-think your wardrobe: Polyester sheds microplastics with every wash. Next time you shop, try choosing natural fibres like cotton or linen, and explore secondhand options to reduce waste and emissions.

#24

Reconnect with nature regularly

A deeper relationship with the Earth leads to regenerative choices.

At the Stanmer Park Permaculture Plot – a dedicated Learning And Network Demonstration (LAND) site, which attracts around around 700 visitors annually to experience permaculture up close.

Volunteers often describe the plot as profoundly healing. It's a place for sharing and connecting to others.

#21

Shift from scarcity to abundance

Instead of "There's not enough", ask "How can we share what we have?"

Seed-sharing libraries and events thrive in many parts of Sussex. For example the Seedy Sunday - seed swap & sale

We're creating sources of free food, by working with people to plant fruit and nut trees in their local area, and to equip them with new skills to care for the trees and nature in general.

#23

Use your voice

Advocate for policies that protect ecosystems and support climate justice.

We not only celebrate local knowledge and practices, but also bring forward inspiring examples of permaculture in action.

While we're not a campaigning organisation, we do speak up for people, projects, and principles that support the health of our planet. Whether it's championing access to land, fair food systems, or regenerative design, we believe in using our platform to amplify what matters.

#25

Integrate permaculture thinking

Apply principles like "observe and interact" or "use small and slow solutions."

As custodians of the Racehill Community Orchard, we've been able to exemplify these principles: it began by observing and interacting – carefully studying both the land's history and the lived experience of community members to inform design.

Adopting small and slow solutions, implementing modest changes, learning from each step, and scaling the work over time for durability and impact.

Kirsty and the volunteers have cared for Racehill Community Orchard since 2013.



Growing together for 25 years



2000: Our original logo
The trust was formed in September 2000 as an ethical not-for-profit organisation operating in Brighton and Sussex and became a member of the National Permaculture Association (Britain).



2002: The first Green Architecture Day
The first event took place in January 2002 at the Phoenix Centre, featuring talks on eco-building, renewable energy, and sustainable design.



2006: Earthship Brighton
We supported this pioneering project, an off-grid home built from recycled materials. One of only two in the UK, it stands as a powerful symbol of what's possible when innovation meets ecological stewardship.



2006: Permaculture Plot
Founded at Stanmer Organics in 2006, the Plot is a hands-on learning site showcasing forest gardening, composting, water harvesting, and sustainable growing.



2007: Apple Day starts
We held our first Apple Day as Brighton Permaculture – with the aim of promoting Sussex apples, local food, and orchard planting, which still remains our reasons for the event today!

Winter 2009-2010:
Orchard planting started in earnest with 12 school and community orchards planted that winter.

2012: Caroline Lucas (Green MP) visits our Scrumping Project



Late 2009:
Our Scrumping Project begins



2013 – 2015: Orchards Without Borders
We partnered up to planted small orchards in schools on both sides of the Channel, alongside sharing knowledge and expertise.

Jan 2013: Racehill's first tree planted
The first tree was planted at Racehill Community Orchard after strong local support. It's now home to 200+ fruit trees and native plants, and brings people together to grow food and care for nature.

Feb 2013: Granted charity status

Sept 2013: Our National Collection
Our collection of Sussex apple varieties at was officially recognised as a National Collection.



2014 - 2015:
The winter of 2014/15 saw our largest planting to date across the city – 3,505 whips and 279 fruit trees!



Late 2014: Building begins on our Fruit Factory in Stanmer
We overcame the challenges of a damp, short-lease farm building, by combining it with our Straw Bale course to create a practical and inspiring example.

2018 & 2019:
Racehill Community Orchard wins Britain in Bloom Awards



2020 & 2021:
Despite the pandemic and lockdown, we successfully taught a number of online courses and donated many bottles of juice to people in need via FareShare.



2022: Our rebrand
Our seedling Trust has grown into a strong organisation with a bold logo that reflects the complex intersections of people, community, apples and nature.



2025: Our community orchards are featured in The Times



2024: Kat joins as Charity Manager
Kat has embraced permaculture and brings new energy and a strong People Care focus.

2025: A bumper crop at Racehill
In August our flagship community orchard at Racehill produced a huge Cherry Plum harvest that provided a significant amount of free food for the community. We celebrated with a local event, incorporating storytelling, sharing knowledge and simply having fun!



2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020 2021 2022 2023 2024 2025

2000–2005 The early years: Laying foundations

In our first five years, we laid the groundwork for a new way of living. Our inaugural Permaculture Design Course empowered early learners with the tools to observe, interact, and design sustainable systems. Through community workshops and growing partnerships, we began to inspire a broader audience to rethink how they connect with nature and each other.

Since founding Brighton Permaculture Trust as a charity, we've been a beacon for sustainable living, a community hub, and a catalyst for environmental regeneration. What began as a small group teaching permaculture principles has blossomed into a dedicated movement, weaving together people, land, and hope across Sussex.

2006–2010 Growth and community roots

As our community grew, so did our projects. We planted our first community orchard in Sussex, sparking a city-wide movement that has since seen over 200 orchards planted, with 80+ in Brighton & Hove alone. In 2009 our 'Scrumping Project' started harvesting unused fruit across Sussex and turning it into products like juices, ciders, jams, and chutneys. Our aim has always been to tackle food waste, to promote local food production and to strengthen local ties.

2011–2015 Building capacity and recognition

This period marked a significant step forward. We planted our first tree at Racehill Community Orchard in 2013 after connecting with Brighton & Hove Food Partnership and with the support of the local community. We were also granted charity status, allowing us to apply for a broader range of funding, benefit from Gift Aid donations and increasing public trust. The opening of the Fruit Factory in Stanmer Park provided a vibrant hub for processing local produce and hosting events.

2016–2020 Deepening community impact

From planting the largest traditional orchard Brighton and Hove had seen in a century to engaging thousands of volunteers and launching "Growing Hollingdean" to reclaim urban spaces for food growing, this era was about roots and reach. We expanded educational programs to teach skills from composting to water harvesting, ensuring our knowledge spread wide and deep. Even when the pandemic challenged us to adapt, we found ways to keep community and learning alive through virtual connection.

2021–2025 Sustaining legacy: Inspiring the future

The most recent years have been about strengthening our foundations for the future. Our community orchard crowdfunding campaign energised supporters and secured funding for urban greening projects. We expanded school outreach, bringing hands-on permaculture learning to hundreds of young people getting ahead of the Government's sustainability requirements for schools. With new courses focusing on regenerative agriculture and climate resilience, we continue to empower individuals and communities to act boldly for the planet.

What we've achieved together in 2024-2025

The past year has shown the strength and resilience of our community, and the growing recognition of permaculture as a vital response to ecological and social challenges.

In 2024 we reached a milestone, 200 community orchards across Sussex. This living network of trees and people now provides fruit, shade, biodiversity, and joy for generations to come. Each orchard reflects a collective commitment to regeneration and community stewardship.

Working with local authorities, housing groups, community groups and residents, we helped plant orchards in Brighton, Lewes, Rye and other spaces across Sussex.

In summer 2025 after years of dedication, Racehill Community Orchard saw its most abundant Cherry Plum harvest to date. The celebration brought neighbours, volunteers, and families together to pick, taste, and share. More than just a harvest, it was a festival of storytelling, learning, and laughter-proof that food connects us in the deepest ways.

Apple Harvest Day 2024 and Apple Blossom Day 2025 were seasonal celebrations blessed with good weather. They help us to showcase our work alongside small local businesses, other charities and community groups. We aim to ensure our events have a joyous, inclusive, community feel. With storytellers, orchard experts, musicians, Morris dancers and choirs all donating their talents for free to support our work.



Scrumping stronger than ever

Our Scrumping Project marked 15 years in 2024. Last season, with the help of volunteers, we rescued and pressed 30 tonnes of surplus fruit, creating delicious juices and ciders while reducing food waste. Every bottle sold tells a story of collaboration, abundance, and care for the planet.



We supported the planting of 92 new trees in Rye, with the help of the local community.



Throughout these 25 years, we've embraced the permaculture principles that guide us...

Observing and interacting with nature, valuing small and slow solutions, and fostering fair share and people care. Our impact is not only measured by trees planted or courses run, but by the relationships nurtured, the skills shared, and the hope ignited.

Each orchard, garden, and classroom are a seed of regeneration, growing a future where people and planet thrive together. This journey would not be possible without the dedication of our volunteers, workers, supporters and community partners. Your passion fuels every step forward.

Looking ahead

As we celebrate this milestone, we recommit ourselves to expanding our reach, deepening our impact, and evolving alongside the challenges of our times. Together, we'll continue to sow seeds of resilience, nurture thriving ecosystems, and cultivate communities grounded in care for the Earth and each other.

More than ever and with funding and finances tight, we need to work collaboratively to share the challenges and the opportunities.

To sustain and grow this vital work, we warmly invite you to support us through participating in our courses, inviting friends to be part of our community, buying our produce, offering donations; grants; partnerships and corporate sponsorships. Every contribution, whether large or small, helps us grow and care for more trees, run inclusive educational programs, and create spaces where regeneration flourishes. Your generosity enables us to reach more people, inspire deeper connections with nature, and build a greener future for all. **Thank you for being part of our regenerative story.**



By sharing permaculture skills, reducing food waste, and planting thriving orchards, our charity is helping Sussex communities build a brighter future together. Here are a few ways you can support our work.

Learn more

Attend a course and deepen your knowledge of permaculture.



Volunteer

Help as much or as little as you'd like, on your own terms.



Get social

Connect with us on social media and help share our news.



Team work

Join our team as a valued member or become a Trustee.



Corporate days

A team building day helps connect your team with nature, and each other.



Drink to us!

A purchase of our scrumped juice and cider helps support our work.



Make a donation, or fundraise for us

Help us to continue inspiring more sustainable lifestyles and connecting people to their food, to nature and to each other.



Visit our website for more info brightonpermaculture.org.uk



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