

## 2018-2019 review

Over the course of the year:

We produced over **25 tonnes** of organic produce with a value just over **£65,000** (an increase of 8% on last year), distributing it alongside about **£155,000** worth of produce from small-scale organic growers and wholesalers including the Better Food Shed, a new not-for-profit organisation set up for and by several London box schemes.

Our box scheme grew by **26%**, reaching **600** weekly bags in November 2018.



We worked with over **300** volunteers, **217** with a regular commitment.

We harvested an estimated **840,000** litres of rainwater.

We trained **108** adult learners and worked with **22** schools across the year, with **108** learners gaining City and Guilds accreditation and **101** gaining AQA accreditation.



We worked across Waltham Forest and beyond at nine community growing sites, building gardens and running monthly food-growing sessions at housing associations and community allotments.

We welcomed almost **1,500** visitors to our Hawkwood site, with an average visitor attendance of **133** on our 11 monthly Open Days.

We featured in a film made by Co-operatives UK to celebrate co-ops, **Not through competition but co-operation of each, the people's strength**, and Lush commissioned a film for their Soapbox channel, showing a typical day at Hawkwood and at our market stalls. Visit [www.organiclea.org.uk/about/publications](http://www.organiclea.org.uk/about/publications).



We continued to be active members of the Community Food Growers Network and the Landworkers' Alliance, joining with them to take action to call for post-Brexit agricultural policy that is better for small-scale farmers, and the environment.

## Find out more

### Box Scheme and Market Stalls

Fresh, sustainably-grown fruit and veg every week in your neighbourhood. Find out more on our website, email [box@organiclea.org.uk](mailto:box@organiclea.org.uk) or call 020 8524 4994.

### Produce Distribution

We sell to a range of restaurants, cafés and shops in London. Contact [tsouni@organiclea.org.uk](mailto:tsouni@organiclea.org.uk) or call 020 8524 4994 for more information.

### Training

We offer a range of formal training courses, including accredited horticulture courses. Email [courses@organiclea.org.uk](mailto:courses@organiclea.org.uk) for more information.

### Volunteering

We have a vibrant and diverse volunteer community. Email [volunteering@organiclea.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@organiclea.org.uk) if you would like to volunteer. Email [volunteering@organiclea.org.uk](mailto:volunteering@organiclea.org.uk) if you would like to volunteer or do a structured placement with us; or if you would like to refer someone.

## OrganicLea

Founded in February 2001 as a workers' co-operative. Not-for-profit Company Limited by Guarantee, number 05135926; VAT Reg 161 391029

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[www.organiclea.org.uk](http://www.organiclea.org.uk)

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All photos: OrganicLea

### Community Food Growing

OrganicLea supports food growing and gardening projects in the community. Contact [info@organiclea.org.uk](mailto:info@organiclea.org.uk) to find out more.

### Schools and young people

We can offer schools visits, activities within schools, teacher training and programmes for young people. We also offer tailored programmes for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and in alternative provision at our site and within schools. Email [schools@organiclea.org.uk](mailto:schools@organiclea.org.uk) for more information.

### Plants

Our main plant season is from April to June, with winter plants for sale in August and September. Contact [plants@organiclea.org.uk](mailto:plants@organiclea.org.uk) or go to our website for more details.

### Donations

If you'd like to support our work financially, please get in touch. Contact [info@organiclea.org.uk](mailto:info@organiclea.org.uk) for more information.



# OrganicLea

Community · Food · Growing

## Annual Review 2018-2019





OrganicLea grows and sells food in north-east London, and helps others do the same. Based at Hawkwood Plant Nursery, our 12-acre organic market garden and wildlife haven in the London Borough of Waltham Forest, we help Londoners to connect, learn and build skills and confidence for work and life. We're a not-for-profit workers' co-operative, managing our work ourselves and feeding any surplus back into our projects. We work for change in the food system locally and globally, in solidarity with peasant farmers and campaigners taking action for ecological and just farming systems.

We do this by:

**Growing Food:** we grow vegetables, fruit, herbs and flowers on our 12-acre market garden site, Hawkwood Nursery, involving volunteers, trainees, apprentices and course students in the work. We sell produce and some processed goods to our own outlets and to around 15 restaurants, cafes and shops. We sell plants through our own outlets and to individuals and community groups. We operate a weekly box scheme and two market stalls, selling our own produce and produce supplied by farmers in East Anglia and Kent, plus some UK-wide and European produce.

**Growing People:** we run a volunteer programme 3 days per week at our market garden. This is open to all including referrals from agencies and partners working with disadvantaged beneficiaries, and supported volunteering for people with higher support needs.

*"Mum and Dad say they are noticing a big difference each week in how I seem. I have a little more energy the day after volunteering and was very happy yesterday. I really enjoyed the day and find myself joining in conversations at lunch time. Setting goals and doing things in steps is helpful."*  
Regular Hawkwood volunteer



We run training courses (including accredited gardening courses), an apprenticeship, traineeships, and programmes for young people with special educational needs or excluded from mainstream education.

**Growing Community:** we support community food growing on sites around north-east London, to share and build skills, connect people and green places. We offer family activities and community engagement through workshops and activities and tours at our site and at other local community events. We are active in local, national and global movements for food sovereignty and land justice.

### Ecological action

We underwent an eco-audit in 2017 and received a follow-up assessment in early 2019 to review the changes that had been implemented.

3 Acorns Eco-Audits stated that:

*"OrganicLea is by far the greenest organisation we have encountered in our 15 years of eco-auditing!... Not only have they a radically smaller environmental impact than other such organisations, but they positively contribute to reducing the environmental impacts of their local community by processing local organic waste into fertiliser, reducing food-packaging for their customers and teaching people how to grow their own food."*



### Cultivating community and courage

One of the biggest impacts of our Hawkwood volunteering programme is creating connections between people, building community strength. This year we have increased our range of partners, including more work with those referring asylum seekers and refugees. Ben has been a weekly volunteer in the gardens for 9 months and he says:

*"I have grown plants and surprised myself by growing to really like it here! I have made friends and the weekly sessions gave structure to my life at a crucial time. I have gained 2 certificates and enjoyed being part of garden study groups – which included helping others who were newer than me. That felt good. OrganicLea has given me good back up and support towards my future – that's courage."*



### Developments in 2018-19

- We ran a successful crowdfunder campaign to build a Woodland Classroom at our Hawkwood site as an informal education setting for workshops and training. Building of a reciprocal roundhouse began in Spring 2019.
- We developed a new partnership with the London Learning Consortium to become a direct provider of City & Guilds accredited training courses.
- We gained Veganic certification for our Hawkwood site from the Vegan Organic Network, meaning all produce grown is free from any inputs derived from animals.
- We supported the development of a national FarmStart Network, to link up organisations supporting new entrant farmers. We continued to support the development of Wolves Lane (Haringey), Pasteur Gardens (Enfield), and other sites as commercial growing spaces.
- We received funding from Heritage Lottery Fund for a two year BeeWild project, enabling us to strengthen, diversify and raise awareness around the flora and fauna of our Hawkwood site and the important role pollinators play in our ecosystem.
- The pilot of our Building Connections Fund work to combat loneliness began in January, providing shared meals, supported volunteering and green care activities.
- We continued to receive support from Barrow Cadbury Trust for our volunteering and training programme.

- We were able to employ an Apprentice Grower with funds from the Worshipful Company of Gardeners.
- Following on from our City Bridge Trust funded pilot, we began to deliver health and wellbeing outcomes for people referred via social prescribing, funded by the Department of Health and the Clinical Commissioning Group.
- We provided supported paid placements at Hawkwood through the Able, Capable, Employed (ACE) programme, helping Londoners with disabilities and long term health conditions back into work.

### Financial report

OrganicLea's income for 2018-19 was £687,904. Expenditure was £680,899, ending the year with a small net surplus of £7005. Total funds carried forward were £167,447, of which £19,978 is tangible fixed assets. Income was slightly lower than the previous year, due to completion of grant-funded capital works. Self-generated income increased again by 26%, making up 77% of our turnover.

