

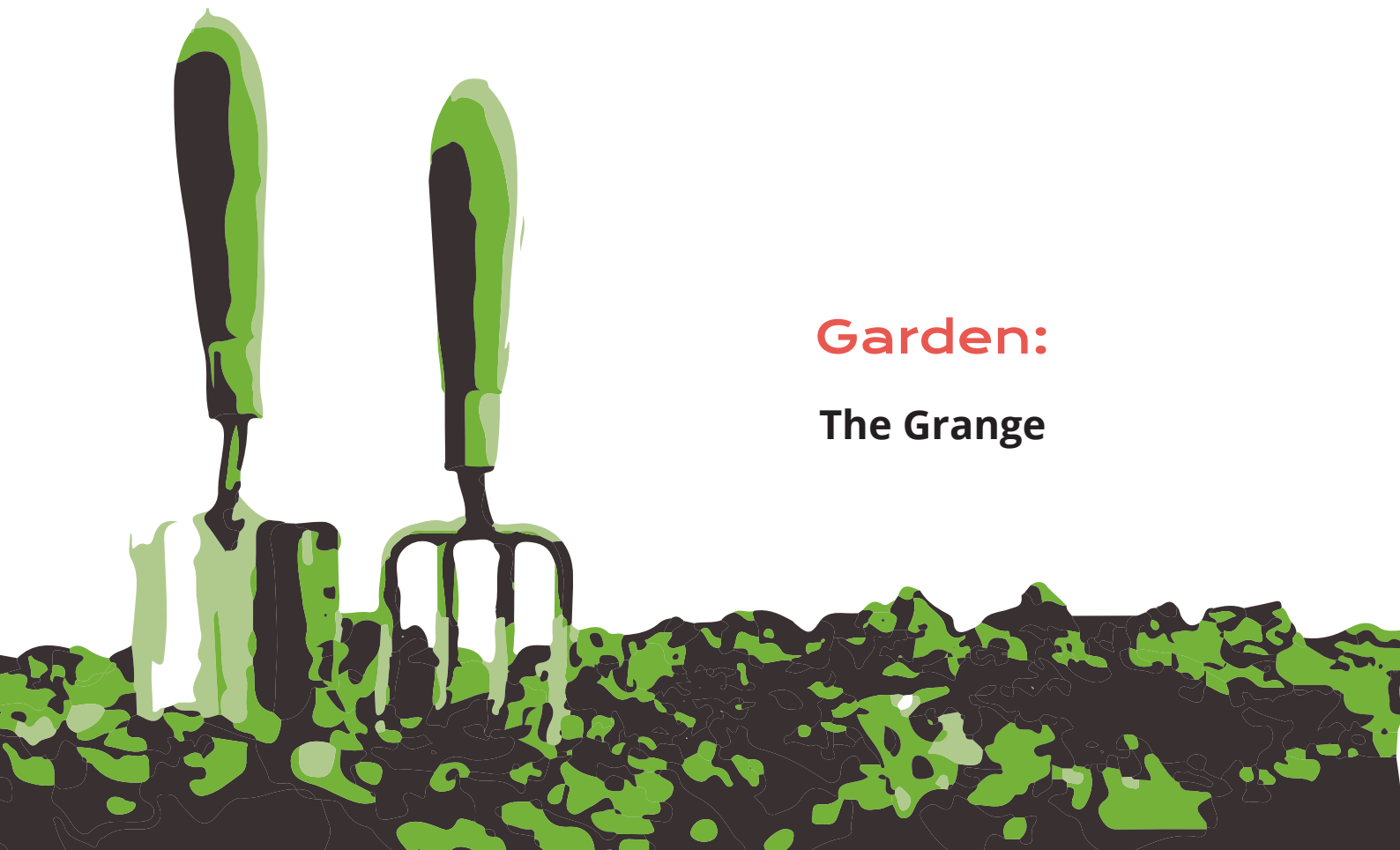


UGAIN

Urban **G**Ardens for the social
INtegration of migrants

Garden:

The Grange



Internet links

- ✓ <https://www.thegrangenorfolk.org.uk/>
- ✓ <https://www.facebook.com/thegrangenorfolk/>

1. Introduction

The Grange is a former Rectory building with 10 acres of gardens, situated in a small rural village in West Norfolk. The project started as a family home, and has developed over time to employ one part time member of staff who works with a range of volunteers, including many refugees and asylum seekers, to develop and maintain the gardens and outdoor spaces. The main building has 9 bedrooms, and for a time the project mainly offered residential retreats. During this period up to 12 groups of asylum seekers would visit every year for anything from 3-10 days, but due to fire restrictions the project has now moved on to only offering single-day sessions.



“Be aware of sensitivities that other people may have, but don’t let that be a barrier to engagement or mean you treat people differently just because they are a refugee or asylum seekers. Look for similarities between people and yourself, rather than differences.

Monthly supervision with a trained therapist can help deal with some of the emotional burden that can come from the work. Ensure appropriate safeguarding measures are in place.

If working in rural environments, be aware of isolation and any health and safety issues that may arise from lone working.”

2. Garden data



Location - coordinates:

The Grange
The Street
Great Cressingham
Norfolk
IP25 6NL

<https://www.google.co.uk/maps/>

Garden description: The project is located in a very small rural village in West Norfolk, and is based around a former rectory building which was originally the childhood home of one of the project founders, and later became her family home as an adult. The gardens cover around 10 acres, with a herb garden, polytunnel, fruit orchard, forest garden, large lawns, water meadows and permaculture vegetable beds. The entire site has been designed using permaculture principles, and also has spaces for the livestock, currently chickens and two Shetland ponies. In addition to the main building there are a number of barns and outbuildings which have been converted into workshop spaces for crafts including pottery and textile weaving. There is also an outdoor green woodwork area, and a cob pizza oven.

Visitor numbers vary throughout the year, and also depending on what activities are happening. When The Grange was able to host residential retreats the numbers of refugees and asylum seekers visiting was far greater, but without residential stays there are more local volunteers coming and only around 5 refugees and asylum seekers visiting per month from a partner organization based in Norwich, as part of their involvement in Work Day Wednesdays.

The project is able to run on a low budget due to the absence of rental payments, since the use of the premises is gifted by the property owners. The main costs are staff time and overheads such as power, water etc. and practical items such as tools, animal feed and refreshments.

3. Social integration and empowerment of migrants



Details of the Initiative: The Grange run regular “Workday Wednesdays”, where local volunteers join with a group of refugees and asylum seekers from Norwich (the nearest city) to garden and eat together. All first time volunteers must complete an application form and be assessed by a staff member. All volunteers receive training in the asylum system and how to work with asylum seekers, as well as how to be aware of the signs of vicarious trauma. A key part of the training is identifying boundaries to ensure volunteers are not offering well-meaning, but potentially damaging, advice on practical or psychological challenges.

Chances and Opportunities: The project has also started running a range of workshops and craft based courses in partnership with local artists. These help bring income in to the project and also raise awareness about the work they are doing with sanctuary seekers.

The Grange sees both formal and informal therapeutic outcomes. One psychotherapist who brought groups to The Grange described his weeks there as being like a 'turbo charger' for his therapeutic process. He said he could accomplish as much with some people in a week at The Grange as with 6 months in weekly group sessions in London. Feedback from group members shows that some of the key reasons for this are:

- The trust shown to be welcomed in to a family home and to be made welcome.
- The space and beauty of The Grange and the surrounding area.
- Working alongside local volunteers and feeling valued as part of the group.

Threats and Challenges: The only threats or challenges are the availability of a suitable tutor, and the lack of funding to pay for sessions when a volunteer tutor is not available.



Knowledge/Attitude/Skills/Training: The skills sharing aspect of work at The Grange also has very beneficial outcomes. The Grange works with local craftspeople to offer art, pottery, weaving, woodwork, music and other learning opportunities. They also identify skills that asylum seekers and refugees have and find ways for them to explore those at The Grange, and to share them with others. This is a fun way of providing a therapeutic environment where people can regain confidence in their own abilities and be part of a safe learning environment which can support them to find their way into more formal learning spaces like English classes, college etc.

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GärtnerInnen der Welt kooperieren

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Project Website

www.ugain.online



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