

Annual report 2025

Activities, figures and accounts for the year 1 January – 31 December 2025, approved by the general assembly on 14 March 2026.

A fictional association. Versailles Vivant was created for a university course project (Business Practice, FCSE/FINKI, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University, Skopje, 2025/2026). Its people, events and figures are invented; it is not affiliated with the Château de Versailles. The figures match those on the website's Impact page.

A word from the president

2025 was the year the association grew up a little. We passed six hundred members, ran twenty-four events, and kept three garden apprentices in training all year. It was also the year the box hedges reminded us what they cost: replacing the sections we lost to box blight and box tree moth was the largest unplanned expense we have had. Every figure below is the real figure, including the uncomfortable ones, because members fund almost all of it and have a right to see it.

Marie Laurent, President of the board

The year in figures

620 members on 31 December	24 events and programmes	1,430 people at our events	760 volunteer hours in the gardens
----------------------------------	-----------------------------	-------------------------------	--

Three garden apprentices were funded throughout the year. Membership grew by 35 over the year, more slowly than in 2017–2019 but steadily.

Income and spending

Income and spending were both €145,000: the association ended the year balanced, with no surplus and no deficit. The two part-time coordinators are the only paid staff; their salaries are included in the lines they work on, mainly garden maintenance and public programmes.

Income 2025

SOURCE	SHARE	AMOUNT
Membership dues	72%	€104,400
Donations	21%	€30,450
Events and publications	7%	€10,150
Total	100%	€145,000

Spending 2025

CATEGORY	SHARE	AMOUNT
Garden maintenance	52%	€75,400
of which box hedges		€28,600
Garden apprenticeships	22%	€31,900
Public programmes	14%	€20,300
Archive and research	7%	€10,150
Running costs	5%	€7,250
Total	100%	€145,000

What the box hedges cost

Of the €75,400 spent on garden maintenance, €28,600 went on the box hedges of the parterres we look after: €17,900 for the two full trims of the year (apprentice and contractor hours), €7,800 to replace sections lost to box blight and box tree moth caterpillars, and €2,900 for tools and green-waste removal.

Events

Events and attendance in 2025, by type

TYPE OF EVENT	EVENTS	PEOPLE
Public talks (free)	8	960
Members' mornings	3	240
Volunteer days (Garden Saturdays)	12	190
Patrons' dinner	1	40
Total	24	1,430

Membership since 2016

Members at the end of each year

2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
40	105	185	270	330	400	470	535	585	620

Membership costs €9 a month (individual), €16 (family, up to five people at one address) or €40 (patron). Members can leave at any time.

Governance

The association is run by a board of seven unpaid members, elected each March by the general assembly. The board elects its president, treasurer and secretary. Two part-time staff run the day-to-day work.

Board officers and staff

Marie Laurent	President of the board
Philippe Renard	Treasurer
Jean-Pierre Martin	Board member, archive
Sophie Bernard	Board member, membership
Thomas Moreau	Programme Director (staff, part-time)
Claire Dubois	Garden Coordinator (staff, part-time)

Plans for 2026

- A Garden Saturday every month, and about 4,000 bulbs planted in the parterre borders in October.
- Keep three apprentices in training, and help each one towards permanent work in horticulture.
- Free public talks in the 2026–2027 season: the fountains' hidden engineering, the Hall of Mirrors and the politics of 1919, and the King's building accounts.
- Publish the archive volunteers' work on the inventories of 1793 as a members' talk.

Figures in euros. The statutes of the association can be downloaded from the About page of the website.