



THE GROW WELL PROJECT

A Guide for Referrers





WHAT IS THE GROW WELL PROJECT? THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY GARDENING GROUPS

- **Grow Well is a health and wellbeing therapeutic community gardening project** based in Cardiff, in the South West GP Cluster Area (**Caerau, Ely, Canton, and Riverside**) and the City and South GP Cluster (**Grangetown, Butetown, Cardiff bay and Cardiff central**).
- Everyone is welcomed to our gardens, and no previous knowledge of gardening is required! **We particularly support people experiencing mental and physical health difficulties, loneliness and isolation.**
- **Our Staff are skilled and experienced** in working with people and supporting their individual needs and development, we take a trauma informed approach in our service.
- We do a whole range of growing activities, from growing flowers and vegetables, looking after wildlife, woodwork to build planters and garden furniture, nature arts and crafts, and the most important part: having a cup of tea and sitting down with company to chat and enjoy the gardens.
- It is a **Social Prescribing project**, which means that Health and Social Care Staff can refer people to us, if they feel that our activities would benefit an individual.

We are an Award winning project, which recognises the engagement and achievements of our asset based collaborative approach.

- Bevan Exemplar project 2020
- Finalists Social Prescribing Network Awards 2021: Best Nature Based Social Prescribing Project
- NHS Forest Active Community Engagement Award 2022
- Keep Wales Tidy Community Award holders 2000-2025 and UK Best of the Best Health Initiative Award 2022
- RHS/One Show Growing Together Award 2023 for community Gardening - Outstanding Award
- CLAS Cymru Award for Community Managed Green space 2023



WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM ATTENDING? WHY REFER?

We commonly receive referrals for people experiencing the following sorts of difficulties:

- Socially isolated
- Anxiety and Depression
- Carers
- Stress
- Lacking a family / social network
- * Loss of role after retirement
- * Bereavement
- * Living with chronic health conditions
- * Low confidence and self esteem
- * Recovering from a health condition

We welcome people with all levels of gardening knowledge: from those who have never tried growing before, to experts who can share their knowledge with us.

Attendees are welcome to bring someone with them for support, whether they are a family member or an official carer.

If the attendee has a specific mobility or support need, we discuss this with them prior to attending so we can ensure we make our session accessible for their needs.



Being outside in natural environments can help to relieve stress and anxiety.



Taking part in activities with a group regularly helps to reduce isolation, give a sense of purpose and build self-esteem.



We can build healthier lifestyles by taking part in regular exercise at the level which is appropriate for an individual, whether this is seated in a wheelchair gently reaching and stretching, up to heavier tasks like digging and sawing wood.



Access to a wider range of fruit and vegetables that we grow ourselves can improve people's diets or encourage experimentation with different foods that people wouldn't usually try.



Sleep can become easier after a rewarding day spent outdoors.

■ WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF PARTICIPATING IN GROW WELL?

■ We use a range of outcome measures as part of our bespoke 'toolkit' developed with the Welsh School for Social Prescribing Research.

■ We use the SWEMWBS and UCLA- 3 Loneliness scale and EQ5S to measure overall well-being and isolation, alongside a range of other data, case studies, reflections and testimonies to gather a fully

rounded picture of our impact. As we work, we are reviewing our tools to try to choose the most appropriate ones for our groups.

■ **“Measurable/identifiable outcomes include a growth in confidence, sense of progression/achievement, increase in well-being, physical and mental health, sense of community togetherness inside the garden which is also linked to outside the garden.” (Evaluation of the Grow Well Project - Nov 2021 Professor Carolyn Wallace et al)**

Common themes are that people feel:

More confident

More connected to other people

Reduction in stress and anxiety

Building a healthier lifestyle

Reduction in feeling isolated

A sense of purpose

More willing to try vegetables and fruit they have grown.



Grow Cardiff works within a Wales-wide landscape

We keep our hands close to the soil while aiming to share best practice within the wider policy landscape. We take our direction from the influence of the following documents:

Welsh Government's Recovery Action Plan for Wales 2020-2023
Natural Resources Wales' Green Recovery: Priorities for Action (2020).

Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015).

Health and Social Care (Wales) Act 2020

Cardiff's Local Well-being Plan.
Connecting Communities: A strategy for tackling loneliness and social isolation and building stronger social connections (2020)



SOME WORDS FROM OUR VOLUNTEERS...

“It gives me something to aim for and I feel a bit more like my old self.”

“The Grow Cardiff project provides volunteers with a purpose and a connection with the community”

“I find it so important to have a chance to talk with people that have similar mental health problems”

“I find this group very friendly and sociable and welcoming”

“After the day at the Dusty things are far more in proportion”



What our referrers say about us...

“I have seen the benefits of the project in supporting patients who are suffering with social isolation and other psychosocial problems. I have seen patients who have struggled for many years, thrive in the supportive environment of the Grow Well garden” *(Dr Karen Parady, while working as a GP in the Cardiff SW Primary Care Cluster)*



HOW TO REFER TO THE GROW WELL PROJECT

- Referrals for The Grow Well Project can be made through the Elemental Social Prescribing platform
- or by email / phone:
- growwell@growcardiff.org
- Mobile phone: 07935 734577
- Self referrals welcome

Are there any exclusion criteria?

Due to the nature and locations of our groups, they are not appropriate for the following groups of people:

- People experiencing acute mental health crisis
- People who would require 1:1 support from Grow Cardiff Staff
- People who have no means of transport to the gardens
- People who are unable to adhere to our community groups code of conduct for the safety of themselves and others





WHERE AND WHEN ARE THE SESSIONS?

Mondays: 10:30-12:30pm and 1-3pm

The Dusty Forge, 460 Cowbridge Road West, Ely CF5 5BZ

Wednesdays: 10:30-12:30pm and 1-3pm

Lansdowne Surgery, Sanatorium Road, Canton, CF11 8DG

Thursdays: 11-1pm

Riverside Health Centre, Wellington St, Riverside CF11 9SH

Thursdays: 1-4pm

Grange Medical Practice, 25 Bishop St, Grangetown CF11 6PG



WITH THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS



Registered charity no. 1158700

STARBUCKS®



**NHS
CHARITIES
TOGETHER**

Greener
COMMUNITIES 



South and West Wales
De a Gorllewin Cymru



**Clwstwr Gofal Sylfaenol
Dinas a De Caerdydd
Cardiff City & South
Primary Care Cluster**

Cardiff & Vale
HealthCharity
Elusenlechyd
Caerdydd a'r Fro



**Cardiff South West
Primary Care Cluster**
Health & Wellbeing in your Community



cadwch keep
gymru'n wales
daclus tidi

**Social Farms
& Gardens**



**GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES**

Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol
Caerdydd a'r Fro
Cardiff and Vale
University Health Board



LOVELL



PRINTED AUGUST 24

WRITTEN BY C TERRY & I HORTON