



DILSTON  
PHYSIC GARDEN

*Transforming lives with medicinal plants through  
education and scientific research*

# Impact Report

## Dec 2023 to Nov 2024



# Dilston Physic Garden Impact 2024

Fiscal Year ending 30 November 2024

In 2024, Dilston Physic Garden continued to advance its charitable objectives across education in plant-based medicine, scientific research, heritage preservation, conservation, and community engagement. At the heart of our mission is the promotion of sustainable health and wellbeing – drawing on the UK's heritage of self-care with medicinal plants to inspire, educate, and support lifelong wellness—while serving as a vibrant nature wellness hub for people of all ages.

Dilston Physic Garden is committed to ensuring the development of a new era in health and medicine, one supported by the growing body of scientific evidence that places medicinal plant medicine and preventative medicine for lifelong wellness at its core. This year saw the continuation of our scientific research, expansion of our Gardening for Wellbeing programme and community events, and the launch of focused work in natural-habitat cultivation, both made possible through the generous support of charitable funders and individual donors, acknowledged later in this report.

2024 also underlined the importance of building a sustainable funding base to realise the charity ambitions in heritage, conservation, and disease prevention, and to extend the benefits of health and wellness to the wider community. With targeted grant applications and new fundraising strategies now in motion, we are laying the foundations for a stronger, long-term financial future – supporting growth in our workforce, enabling planned heritage projects, and securing the garden's role as a place of knowledge, healing, and community impact for generations to come.

This report presents our purpose and summarises the charity's activities, developments, and financial position during the fiscal year ending 30 November 2024.

Dilston Physic Garden is a living breathing science garden where people explore over 700 heritage herbs, vegetables, flowers and trees with rich histories in health, healing, and medicine. It exists to advance public health through education, research, and community engagement with medicinal plants and natural spaces. We promote science-backed plant medicine as a safe complement to conventional care, highlight the role of plants in preventing chronic disease, and foster conservation and biodiversity. Through our two-acre physic garden, educational programmes, scientific research collaborations, and community wellbeing activities, we connect people of all ages to heritage, health, and nature—helping both individuals and ecosystems to flourish.

# Mission

Dilston Physic Garden was founded for education and research and exists to advance public health. Our mission is to share knowledge of our heritage of science-backed plant medicine, disease-preventative plants, conservation, and the benefits of being in natural spaces.

We focus on engaging the public with plant medicine as a safe, evidence-based approach for common ailments, to be used alongside and in some case in place of conventional treatments that carry side-effects. By promoting the everyday use of edible and home-grown medicinal plants, we highlight their science-backed role in maintaining health, preventing chronic disease, and easing the pressure on the NHS. Our research explores evidence-based and clinical efficacy, bridging the gap between plant-based, multi-active medicines and modern single-compound pharmaceuticals. Alongside this, we raise awareness of heritage medicinal plants, biodiversity, conservation, and the value of wild green spaces for health and ecological balance.

Our vision is to share this knowledge widely—through work with schools, community groups, and the public—to help reduce disease and promote lifelong health for both people and nature. Achieving this vision depends on financial sustainability, which is key to extending our reach and impact.

We accomplish our mission through the daily life of the physic garden. Our two-acre community garden is home to more than 700 medicinal plants, each with interpretive signboards detailing their science and heritage. Here we host an active programme of tours, talks, workshops, courses, and curriculum-linked school visits, alongside free community events, outreach, and collaborations. We also provide access to a regulated NIMH plant medicine dispensary. Research remains central, with studies on plant medicine for the brain and the wellbeing benefits of wild green space conducted in partnership with universities and organisations, including Durham University and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.

Above all, Dilston Physic Garden is a place of engagement and inspiration. By offering volunteering opportunities, wellbeing activities, and partnerships with local groups, we connect people to plants, heritage, and nature—helping both communities and ecosystems to flourish.

# Community Garden for Wellbeing

At Dilston Physic Garden, gardening is more than cultivating medicinal plants—it is a pathway to health, wellbeing, and self-care. The garden provides a safe and nurturing space where people can connect with nature, find calm away from everyday stress, and experience the therapeutic benefits of working with plants in a welcoming community. Whether through structured sessions or informal volunteering, gardening together reduces stress, improves mood, and fosters resilience and lasting connections. We are especially grateful to the **National Lottery Community Fund**, whose two-year support has enabled us to deliver and expand these programmes to reach more people.

Over the past year, participants of all ages and backgrounds have engaged with medicinal plants, learned about their heritage, and contributed to the care of the garden. Many return regularly, reporting improved mental health, greater social connection, and a renewed sense of purpose. Our gardening for wellbeing initiatives also extends into areas designed to support biodiversity, such as wildflower meadows, pond margins, and woodland edges. These natural-habitat spaces provide rich sensory experiences and a deeper connection to the environment, with research showing that natural biodiverse settings can offer greater benefits for mental health than general green spaces.

This work reflects Dilston Physic Garden's wider mission: to preserve medicinal plant knowledge, inspire learning, and promote self-care and wellbeing through nature. Gardening for Wellbeing embodies this vision, helping individuals flourish while also supporting the garden's sustainability. By engaging people in planting, maintenance, and habitat creation, participants gain practical skills, mindfulness, and a sense of achievement, while also supporting wildlife, biodiversity, and conservation. As these programmes grow, they demonstrate how caring for the natural world enhances personal health, strengthens community resilience, and inspires stewardship of both plant heritage and the wider environment. Looking ahead, we aim to expand opportunities for participation so that more people can share in these positive outcomes.



# Natural-Habitat Cultivation

Over 30 years our two-acre site has transformed from agricultural land into a flourishing natural habitat. Our management practices evolved through feedback, as we saw the benefits for nature and the cultivated medicinal plants. The unique wellbeing garden, with its natural design and cultivation methods, offers an innovative ecological take on a botanic garden. Focused on growing medicinal plants naturally while enhancing biodiversity and the environment, our practices contribute to restoring natural populations of flora, fauna, and microorganisms. These practices also thereby improve air, soil, and water quality, fostering the overall health of the ecosystem.

We are hugely grateful for the support of the **Riverbank and Local Environmental Action funds at the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland** for allowing us to continue our conservation by supporting a year of our natural-habitat practices, ecological assessments and promotion of the importance of rewilding and sustainable practices to the community.

Key practices we use are leaving plant litter and wood locally, minimal digging, dispersed natural composting, creating wild seed migration evolution corridors, and rewilding meadow and wetland. Over time these practices have produced a unique natural botanic garden that is brimming with nature, fostering a diverse balanced ecosystem, and promote soil and plant health. This Physic Garden is renowned for its wildlife-friendly design, supporting 500 native flora and a diverse range and higher garden population of pollinating and predatory insects, spiders, lizards and amphibians.



## Education at Dilston Physic Garden

Throughout 2024, our education programme continued to thrive through tours, talks, workshops, courses, events, newsletters, and social media, all designed to invite the public to rethink their relationship with health. Visitors explore our extensive garden signboards, which share both the historical heritage and modern science behind medicinal plants, while our blog, community group visits, and school sessions extend learning opportunities even further. Together, these activities guided many more people on their own botanical wellness journey.

Our affiliated courses focus on practical and evidence-based approaches to plant medicine: from making safe and effective home remedies for everyday conditions, to using edible medicinal plants and herbs daily to support wellbeing and reduce disease risk. We also teach the science of medicinal plants shown to improve memory, sleep, anxiety, and mood—often with fewer side effects than conventional single-drug medications. Our 10-day seasonal Foundation in Plant Medicine remains fully booked this year, providing participants with a solid grounding in what health is and how to maintain it with medicinal plants. Free community events and other events designed to nurture wellbeing include art, writing, music and philosophy workshops.

Publicity in the Guardian and other publications, following recent grant funding, has further extended awareness and impact.

**Young People's Education** Young learners have also been at the heart of our educational mission. Children continue to enjoy our regular Potion Clubs, the monthly Junior Herbalist Clubs (Years 1 & 2) run in partnership with the National Institute of Medical Herbalists and dedicated home-school herbalist sessions. Schools also bring pupils to the physic garden to learn how to care for their health with medicinal plants. All these sessions are designed and led by NIMH medical herbalist Davina Hopkinson, to whom we are hugely grateful for inspiring the next generation in our community.

**Community Learning** Our low cost season-pass has enabled more people to access the garden regularly, while volunteer programmes in gardening for wellbeing and botanical making for self-care have added hands-on learning opportunities. In addition, collaborations with local universities, wellbeing organisations, farmer's markets, and gardening groups have deepened community connectedness and widened the reach of our educational mission.

## Scientific Research & Plant Medicine

Our scientific research continued. Analysis of the plant medicine trial, testing the effects of traditionally used European plant medicine on memory, generously supported by the Make My Day Better Charity & Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, the Ridley Family Trust and EcogPro continued to be delayed due to illness. The study is entitled A Randomised Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled Trial to Test A Standard Plant Medicine for Effects on Memory and Attention in Healthy Middle-Aged to Older Volunteers. Preliminary results suggested improvements were seen in attention.

Our ongoing collected self-reported responses to the effects of botanical teas and plant medicine, collected from forms alongside product use, continues to slowly build an evidence-base behind the everyday use of plant medicine for common conditions.

Plans are underway for a more cohesive collection of self-reported of memory improving medicinal plants for 2025.

Consultation with **NIMH affiliated medical herbalists** in the garden dispensary continued, and the Physic Shop continued to provide safe plant medicine, as well as provide organic locally grown herbs and botanical products. Our reach was extended with attendance at Farmer's Markets, and trade with local and national outlets including Chelsea Physic Garden, where promoting our botanical teas is key as they are designed to increase awareness of the benefits of using of medicinal plants for health.

# Financial report

Fiscal year (FY) 2024, which ended on November 30 2024, marked a year of moving towards securing sustainable income from key areas of the Garden such as increasing our opening hours, managing expenses prudently to break even. Our revenue was similar to the last FY, with turnover increased 10%, and earned income (admissions, season-pass and physic shop) our largest revenue, increased 32% compared to the previous FY. This income increase was enabled by 5 months (in this FY) of new additional open days, enabled through a generous individual donation. Our assets totaled £30K, similar to the previous year and grants and subsidies received were £18,460.

Our expenditure was in line with previous FY, with consultancy costs for the year increasing 10% (to £61K) on the previous FY. The Managing Director & Pharmacognosist, and the Garden Manager consultancies were further supported through a generous donation from an individual. Our Natural-Habitat Gardening for Wellbeing Horticulturalist was further supported through the generosity of the Community Foundation and the National Lottery Community Fund.

Dilston Physic Garden is significantly reliant and indebted to the community of generous volunteers who enable the physic garden to exist through their time, commitment and generosity. They work tirelessly to help maintain the medicinal garden and the medicinal tea farm, in preparing botanical products and plant medicine, and in their hours attending admissions and the physic shop, throughout this year, and year on year.

Time allowed for limited but successful funding applications and going forward this aspect is in need of support to enable the development of a fully sustainable business going forward and in order fully develop our current site and the charity's aims.

Declarations: The Physic Shop stocks products from Trustee Ross Menzies (Heavenly Herbs) and trustee Nicolette Perry (Brain Balms), who is also employed on a full-time consultancy basis. Health and safety of our team, volunteers and customers is paramount and our Policies & Procedures, Safeguarding + Health & Safety documents were kept up to date throughout the year and all necessary legislative changes were implemented. Risk assessments were completed for venue hire, school visits, visitors and volunteers. There were no serious incidents. Accounts and annual charity submissions were completed by Gateway Accountancy Services Limited. Emails were collected for our Database from forms located in the physic shop and on our website – information is collected and stored according to Data Protection, and used for 12-24 newsletters.



# Future Plans

Looking ahead, Dilston Physic Garden is committed to strengthening its role as a centre for heritage, health, and community wellbeing. Our priorities for the coming years are shaped by the need for sustainable funding, expanded capacity, and deeper engagement with our community and partners.

We plan to build on the success of our Gardening for Wellbeing and Natural-Habitat Gardening programmes by widening participation and offering more opportunities for people to benefit from the therapeutic effects of plants and green spaces. A key focus will be on reaching underrepresented groups and strengthening partnerships with local health and community organisations.

In heritage and education, we will continue to preserve and interpret the UK's rich tradition of medicinal plants and selfcare. This includes expanding our educational programmes for schools and community groups, enhancing resources within the physic garden, and developing innovative ways to share plant knowledge more widely, both in person and digitally.

In scientific research, we aim to extend our collaborations with universities and scientific organisations to further explore the role of medicinal plants and wild medicinal plant green spaces in supporting mental wellbeing and disease prevention such as dementia. These projects will contribute to the growing evidence base for plant medicine while raising the profile of Dilston as a hub for research and innovation.

To deliver these ambitions, we are aiming to put in place a stronger funding model through targeted grants, individual giving, and partnerships. This will allow us to expand our workforce, invest in conservation and biodiversity projects, and importantly ensure the long-term sustainability of the garden. With these foundations, Dilston Physic Garden will continue to inspire, educate, and promote lifelong health—ensuring that both people and nature can flourish for generations to come.

### **Board of Trustees**

(Chair) Professor Anya Hurlburt

Mrs Davina Hopkinson

Mr Ross Menzies

Professor Emeritus Elaine Perry

Professor Paul Chazot

Viscount Charles Beaumont

Lady Elizabeth Devonport

Mrs Margot Bromley

Dr Nicolette Perry

### **Consultants**

Ms Sarah Tulloch

Ms Sarah Pringle

Dr Nicolette Perry

### **Funding and Donations FY 2024**

We are grateful for the generous support of the **National Lottery Community fund** and the **Riverbank and Local Environmental Action funds at the Community Foundation Tyne & Wear and Northumberland**, and to the Individual Donors who have helped us and enabled us to achieve our charity's aims this year.



**DILSTON PHYSIC GARDEN**

**Corbridge, Northumberland, NE45 5QZ**

**W: [dilstonphysicgarden.com](http://dilstonphysicgarden.com)**

**E: [info@dilstonphysicgarden.com](mailto:info@dilstonphysicgarden.com)**

**T: 07875 533879**

**Facebook: Dilston Physic Garden**

**Instagram: [@dilstonphysicgarden](https://www.instagram.com/dilstonphysicgarden)**





**DILSTON PHYSIC GARDEN LTD  
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 NOVEMBER 2024**

## **Dilston Physic Garden Ltd**

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| The following pages do not form part of the statutory accounts: |             |
| Detailed Income and Expenditure Account                         | 5           |

**Dilston Physic Garden Ltd  
Company Information  
For The Year Ended 30 November 2024**

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|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| <b>Director</b>          | Dr Nicolette Perry  |
| <b>Company Number</b>    | 05505041  |
| <b>Registered Office</b> | Dilston Mill House<br>Corbridge<br>Northumberland<br>NE45 5QZ                                       |
| <b>Accountants</b>       | Gateway Accountancy Services Ltd<br>17 Enterprise Court<br>Crossland Way<br>Cramlington<br>NE23 1LZ |



**Dilston Physic Garden Ltd  
Accountant's Report  
For The Year Ended 30 November 2024**

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In accordance with the engagement letter dated 29 August 2024, and in order to assist you to fulfil your duties under the Companies Act 2006, we have compiled the financial statements of the company from the accounting records and information and explanations you have given to us.

This report is made to the director in accordance with the terms of our engagement. Our work has been undertaken to prepare for approval by the director the financial statements that we have been engaged to compile, to report to the director that we have done so, and to state those matters that we have agreed to state to them in this report and for no other purpose. To the fullest extent permitted by law, we do not accept or assume responsibility to anyone other than the Company and the Company's director for our work or for this report.

You have acknowledged on the balance sheet as at year ended 30 November 2024 your duty to ensure that the company has kept proper accounting records and to prepare financial statements that give a true and fair view under the Companies Act 2006. You consider that the company is exempt from the statutory requirement for an audit for the year.

We have not been instructed to carry out an audit of the financial statements. For this reason, we have not verified the accuracy or completeness of the accounting records or information and explanations you have given to us and we do not, therefore, express any opinion on the financial statements.

29/08/2025

Gateway Accountancy Services Ltd  
17 Enterprise Court  
Crossland Way  
Cramlington  
NE23 1LZ

**Dilston Physic Garden Ltd**  
**Income and Expenditure Account**  
**For The Year Ended 30 November 2024**

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|   | <b>2024</b>              | <b>2023</b>                 |
|---|--------------------------|-----------------------------|
|   | <b>£</b>                 | <b>£</b>                    |
| <b>TURNOVER</b>                                   | 84,902                   | 76,672                      |
| Other income                                      | 31                       | -                           |
| Cost of raw materials and consumables             | (4,374)                  | (11,157)                    |
| Staff costs                                       | (1,139)                  | (4,394)                     |
| Depreciation and other amounts written off assets | (266)                    | (8,794)                     |
| Other charges                                     | (74,451)                 | (65,114)                    |
|   | <hr/>                    | <hr/>                       |
| <b>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>                      | <hr/> <b>4,703</b> <hr/> | <hr/> <b>(12,787)</b> <hr/> |

**Dilston Physic Garden Ltd**  
**Balance Sheet**  
**As At 30 November 2024**

|  | <b>2024</b>   | <b>2023</b>   |
|--|---------------|---------------|
|  | <b>£</b>      | <b>£</b>      |
| Fixed assets                                   | 28,499        | 28,765        |
| Current assets                                 | 32,392        | 32,574        |
| Creditors: Amounts Falling Due Within One Year | 1             | -             |
| <b>NET CURRENT ASSETS</b>                      | <b>32,393</b> | <b>32,574</b> |
| <b>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>   | <b>60,892</b> | <b>61,339</b> |
| Accruals and deferred income                   | -             | (5,150)       |
| <b>NET ASSETS</b>                              | <b>60,892</b> | <b>56,189</b> |
| <b>RESERVES</b>                                | <b>60,892</b> | <b>56,189</b> |

**Notes**

**1. General Information**

Dilston Physic Garden Ltd is a private company, limited by guarantee, incorporated in England & Wales, registered number 05505041. The registered office is Dilston Mill House, Corbridge, Northumberland, NE45 5QZ.

**2. Average Number of Employees**

Average number of employees, including directors, during the year was: 2 (2023: 2)

**3. Company limited by guarantee**

The company is limited by guarantee and has no share capital.

Every member of the company undertakes to contribute to the assets of the company, in the event of a winding up, such an amount as may be required not exceeding £1.

For the year ending 30 November 2024 the company was entitled to exemption from audit under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.

The member has not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.

The director acknowledges her responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Act with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.

These accounts have been prepared in accordance with the micro-entity provisions.

On behalf of the board

Dr Nicolette Perry

Director  
29/08/2025



**Dilston Physic Garden Ltd**  
**Detailed Income and Expenditure Account**  
**For The Year Ended 30 November 2024**

|  | <b>2024</b> |              | <b>2023</b> |                 |
|--|-------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|
|  | <b>£</b>    | <b>£</b>     | <b>£</b>    | <b>£</b>        |
| <b>TURNOVER</b>  |             |              |             |                 |
| Sales  | 66,442      |              | 49,830      |                 |
| Grants and subsidies received                            | 18,460      |              | 26,842      |                 |
|  |             | 84,902       |             | 76,672          |
| <b>OTHER INCOME</b>                                      |             |              |             |                 |
| Interest receivable and similar income                   |             | 31           |             | -               |
|  |             | 84,933       |             | 76,672          |
| <b>COST OF RAW MATERIALS AND CONSUMABLES</b>             |             |              |             |                 |
| Purchases  | 3,518       |              | 7,884       |                 |
| Materials  | 856         |              | 3,273       |                 |
|  |             | (4,374)      |             | (11,157)        |
| <b>STAFF COSTS</b>                                       |             |              |             |                 |
| Subcontractor costs                                      | 1,139       |              | 4,394       |                 |
|  |             | (1,139)      |             | (4,394)         |
| <b>DEPRECIATION AND OTHER AMOUNTS WRITTEN OFF ASSETS</b> |             |              |             |                 |
| Depreciation   | 266         |              | 8,794       |                 |
|  |             | (266)        |             | (8,794)         |
| <b>OTHER CHARGES</b>                                     |             |              |             |                 |
| Repairs, renewals and maintenance                        | 773         |              | 815         |                 |
| Insurance  | 1,357       |              | 1,261       |                 |
| Printing, postage and stationery                         | 465         |              | 670         |                 |
| Advertising and marketing costs                          | 2,758       |              | 194         |                 |
| Training seminars and workshops                          | -           |              | 302         |                 |
| Telecommunications and data costs                        | 81          |              | 602         |                 |
| Website costs  | -           |              | 25          |                 |
| Accountancy fees   | 1,648       |              | 1,577       |                 |
| Professional fees  | 3,075       |              | 670         |                 |
| Consultancy fees   | 61,122      |              | 53,693      |                 |
| Bank charges   | 55          |              | 173         |                 |
| Other office costs                                       | 3,117       |              | 4,681       |                 |
| Sundry expenses  | -           |              | 451         |                 |
|  |             | (74,451)     |             | (65,114)        |
| <b>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>                             |             | <b>4,703</b> |             | <b>(12,787)</b> |

**DILSTON PHYSIC GARDEN LTD  
UNAUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
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Director  
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| <b>DEPRECIATION AND OTHER AMOUNTS WRITTEN OFF ASSETS</b> |             |              |             |                 |
| Depreciation   | 266         |              | 8,794       |                 |
|  |             | (266)        |             | (8,794)         |
| <b>OTHER CHARGES</b>                                     |             |              |             |                 |
| Repairs, renewals and maintenance                        | 773         |              | 815         |                 |
| Insurance  | 1,357       |              | 1,261       |                 |
| Printing, postage and stationery                         | 465         |              | 670         |                 |
| Advertising and marketing costs                          | 2,758       |              | 194         |                 |
| Training seminars and workshops                          | -           |              | 302         |                 |
| Telecommunications and data costs                        | 81          |              | 602         |                 |
| Website costs  | -           |              | 25          |                 |
| Accountancy fees   | 1,648       |              | 1,577       |                 |
| Professional fees  | 3,075       |              | 670         |                 |
| Consultancy fees   | 61,122      |              | 53,693      |                 |
| Bank charges   | 55          |              | 173         |                 |
| Other office costs                                       | 3,117       |              | 4,681       |                 |
| Sundry expenses  | -           |              | 451         |                 |
|  |             | (74,451)     |             | (65,114)        |
| <b>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>                             |             | <b>4,703</b> |             | <b>(12,787)</b> |