

Friends of Llanfrechfa Grange Walled Garden

Trustees Annual Report

For the period

April 2023 to March 2024



Reference and Administration

Charity name, registered number, and address

Friends of Llanfrechfa Grange Walled Garden (FoLGWG)

Registered charity number 1176172

Llanfrechfa Grange

Llanfrechfa

Torfaen

NP44 8YN

Trustees

Mrs Janet Mary Smith MBE - Chair

Mrs Jane Christine MacDonald Nehaul - Vice Chair

Mrs Angela Mary Fry – General Secretary

Mr Christopher John Parsons - Treasurer

Dr Umapathy Sivagamasundari - Volunteers Secretary

Ms Bobinca Gwynne Wilson - Membership Secretary

Structure, Governance and Management

The **Friends of Llanfrechfa Grange Walled Garden** was established as a small charity in 2015 and registered with the Charity Commission in December 2017.

The charity is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) governed by a detailed Constitution. The current trustees are four of the founder members with a further two appointed in 2016 by the founder members. The charity is run entirely by volunteers.

Governance Arrangements

The Walled Garden is owned by the Aneurin Bevan University Health Board as a part of the larger Llanfrechfa Grange manor and The Grange University Hospital estate. The garden is an integral part of the hospital landscape providing a tranquil and inviting green space that physically links the old house to the University Hospital.

Responsibility for the redevelopment of the garden sits with the garden's Trustees who are supported by a vibrant group of volunteers. The charity enjoys a close working relationship with the Health Board Executive, the Works and Estates Department and staff based on the site.

A 10-year lease has been in place since March 2022. This is the longest term available under the NHS Wales governance rules. It will be reviewed and renegotiated ahead of its expiry in 2032.

The charity has structure and contents insurance with the National Farmers Union, and Public Liability insurance with Hiscox Business Insurance.

A Risk Policy/Register is supplemented by a 'Guidebook for Volunteers', 'Safety Instructions' and 'Principles for Working in the Garden'. These documents are reviewed periodically to

reflect changes of practice in the garden and to ensure compliance with any relevant legislation.

New volunteers receive induction and safety briefings and are required to follow the safety instructions and working principles.

Associate Membership

Associate membership can be obtained on payment of an annual membership fee of £5. At 31st March 2024 the charity had 105 Associate Members. Members receive our quarterly newsletter and other garden related information and links via e-mail, including advanced notice of garden events. They also have access to a dedicated 'Members Only' part of our website where they can download minutes of meetings, learning materials and other updates on the garden. Many of our members are also active volunteers.

Volunteers

The charity has more than fifty registered volunteers, several new ones having joined in year and with many committed to regular sessions in the garden. There are teams of volunteers present in the garden every day with work plans generated from planning sessions and at their own discretion. The garden is open to the public when there are volunteers on site, with core hours being 10.00 to 13.30 but much longer on most days.

Supporters

In addition to its members and volunteers the charity has continued to receive support from the Health Board's senior officers and staff, and from local businesses and organisations.

Objectives and Activities

The objectives of the charity are to redesign and restore the Victorian walled garden at Llanfrechfa Grange as a recreational or leisure time resource for the benefit of the public and healthcare staff who have need of such facilities by reason of their youth, age, infirmity or disablement, financial hardship or social and economic circumstances, or for the public at large in the interest of social welfare and with the object of improving the condition of life of those using the garden.

With due regard to the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit the Friends of Llanfrechfa Grange Walled Garden have continued to develop the garden as an uplifting green space for the benefit of all.

Formal Trustees meetings are held quarterly interspersed with regular gatherings in the garden and WhatsApp, text and e-mail interactions. An established volunteers' WhatsApp group continues to enable daily update reports and provides a platform for social interaction, support, and light relief. Several WhatsApp sub-groups have also been established as a way of managing specific workstreams within the garden. These routine ways of working have ensured effective communication and have facilitated the maintenance and continued development of the garden.

Achievements and Performance

The garden was formally opened to the public in April 2022 and has seen visitor numbers steadily increase over the ensuing two years. Visitors include members of the local community, Health Board staff, walking groups, other organised groups, and hospital patients and their visitors.

Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive with unsolicited comments supplemented by responses to a grant application survey question that asked visitors to describe the garden in 'just three words'. The following words were offered:-

| | | | | | |
|----------------|------------|-------------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Calming x 3 | Changing | Encouraging | Excellent | Biodiverse | Phenomenal |
| Peaceful x 8 | Soothing | Inspirational x 5 | Cute /Pretty | Fabulous x 2 | Atmospheric |
| Beautiful x 9 | Creative | Community | Helpful | Comforting | Educational x 2 |
| Pleasing x 2 | Varied | Holistic | Natural | Tranquil x 3 | Relaxing x 3 |
| Intriguing x 2 | Great | Uplifting x2 | Well kept | Interesting x 4 | Fragrant |
| Engaging | Delightful | Inviting x 3 | Waw! | Transforming | Stimulating |
| Joyful x 2 | Improving | Amusing | Serene x 3 | Oasis x 2 | Lovely x 3 |

Throughout 2023/24 trustees and volunteers have maintained a daily presence in the garden. While structural hard landscaping work continues much of the garden workload has now shifted into maintenance of the maturing ornamental flower beds, plant propagation, and growing fruit and vegetables. Craftwork has also become an integral part of the volunteers' activities with the wide range of items made being sold on craft stalls at garden events. A costermonger's barrow, built from reclaimed materials, is sited in the middle of the garden where visitors can purchase plants and produce using an honesty box for payments.

The northwest quadrant

The soft colour pallet of this Reflective Quadrant is now in its fourth year and maturing beautifully. An ornamental winter flowering cherry tree has been added to provide height and eventually shade, with more bulbs and new shrubs added to maximise the comforting floral impact. A red and black quarry tiled floor and a long stone bench have been built in the northwest corner, and we plan to build an open timber framed shelter against the wall above them. Bespoke robust cream metal benches have been installed in four of the paved seating areas. Designed by volunteers, the benches have laser cut backplates depicting flowers from the four seasons and were funded by a Levelling Up grant from Torfaen County Borough Council. The winding paths in this and the southwest quadrant received their final top dressing of amber self-binding gravel in September. Laid in over several very hot working party days the materials were funded by a grant from the Health Board's Charitable Funds.

The northeast quadrant

The vegetable garden has been productive throughout the year and, as it now provides both vegetable and fruit, has been renamed The Kitchen Garden. The poly tunnel cover, seriously damaged over winter, was replaced by a working party in early spring and a heated

propagation table installed to enable early seed sowing in a protected warm environment. We continue to employ 'No Dig' and 'Moon Sowing' principles for growing vegetables with a wide variety of crops raised and enjoyed by volunteers or sold to raise funds. A protective water shedding frame has been built around the wall trained peach tree which we hope will reduce the occurrence of fungal peach leaf curl next year. Work to build the long low dressed stone retaining wall around the plot began during the summer which enabled the number of vegetable beds to be increased from six to eight. The edges of all the beds were replaced with donated decking boards, paths re-laid, and the squash frames repaired and repositioned. All this work was completed in time for the busy 2024 spring sowing period.

The southwest quadrant

This quadrant houses our 'demonstration gardens' that flow from one to another around a circular lawn and winding paths. These show how different garden designs can provide differing impacts. The ornamental grasses surrounding the lawn have come into their own this year, thickening up and providing a lovely display of tall flowerheads that sway gently in the breeze. The flowering cherry trees also put on a vibrant show in late spring, followed by a growing range of attractive medicinal plants in the physic garden. Our tree fern has survived its first winter and complements the smaller ferns in the Victorian stumpery, while the wildlife garden had its first makeover this year. The planting in the Japanese Garden, rockery and scree beds have also grown and matured providing still more bright stimulating form and colour. Ornamental vegetables flank the main path through the garden, providing crops of colourful edibles, and the rainbow bed against the south wall is starting to take shape. The demonstration gardens have proved very popular with visitors providing inspiration for their own gardens.

The southeast quadrant

This quadrant houses more demonstration gardens, our large greenhouse and shed with a patio area where volunteers congregate for coffee and lunch breaks. The greenhouse has been full throughout the year, growing plants and produce for the garden and also for a local Community Council commission to fill their roadside flower planters. We supplemented the greenhouse space with temporary cold frames which have also been fully utilised and which we therefore plan to replace with permanent structures in due course. A sturdy timber pergola has been erected over the steps that run through the drought resistant Mediterranean Garden onto the middle terrace and planted with a grapevine, a summer jasmine and a Chinese trumpet vine. The Victorian Cottage Garden has been a riot of colour this year with its backdrop of the Gardener's Cottage enhanced by roof repairs and new fascia boards and guttering. Often used as our BBQ and fire pit cooking area, our catering ventures were extended this year to include a pizza oven with homemade pizza enjoyed by volunteers and even a few visitors.

The Nursery

The nursery outside the south wall has two discrete areas, one for growing on plants for the garden and the other houses plant sales tables. This has proved to be an immensely valuable addition to the garden enabling propagation of new and existing plants and contributing significantly to funds through plant sales. The beech hedge planted outside its railings to provide protection from both wind and sun has begun to mature and had its first trim in early summer.

Outside the Walls

The garden's north gate, which faces the hospital, is flanked by two climbing roses, Rosa Compassion. Planted several years ago by the Lord Lieutenant of Gwent to mark the 70th anniversary of the NHS these now provide a welcoming invitation to enter the garden. Either side of the gate spare geraniums and spring bulbs have been planted against the walls and a dwarf cherry tree added to a grassy area, while along the outside of the west wall a collection of sunflowers provide a bright summer display. The colourful beds outside the east wall provide a screen to hide our pallet built compost bins, which in turn are providing a steady supply of good quality compost and leaf mould for the garden. Seating areas in the wider grounds of the old mansion house have also benefitted from more spare plants from the garden, as our volunteers waste nothing! We have also planted a small orchard behind the house with fruit trees provided as part of a grant from Keep Wales Tidy.

Events

We supported the Social Farms and Gardens' UK wide celebration of community gardening again this year by holding our 5th 'Have a Grow Day' in June. Several hundred visitors took part in a variety of activities and enjoyed light refreshments which, together with a plant sale, raised significant funds for the garden.

The 2023 AGM was held in the garden on a lovely sunny day. The Charity's Annual Report and Annual Accounts were presented and later submitted to the Charity Commission.

Throughout the autumn many volunteers turned their energies to preparing craft items and preserves to sell for Christmas with Craft Fayres held outside the Grange University Hospital throughout December.

Wreath making workshops have become popular events in the run up to Christmas with eight workshops held on two consecutive weekends for over 100 participants. These, together with the Craft Fayres are a significant source of income to the charity.

Several social events for volunteers were held throughout the year; a BBQ; a Diwali Festival of Light celebration and a Christmas party. These gatherings offer an opportunity for volunteers to relax in the garden and to meet up with others who come in on different days.

Administration and Planning

A Volunteers' Handbook is included in new volunteer induction.

Records are kept of any incident or accidents. These are reviewed at Trustees meetings and action taken as appropriate.

Planning workshops are held in September and February where volunteers review progress to date and agree plans for the next 6 months.

Half yearly partnership meetings with the Health Board's CEO and Head of Communications are held where garden progress is shared and Health Board support/endorsements agreed.

A 'Locked In' policy and procedure has been developed and implemented in partnership with the Health Board to enable rapid action should a visitor be inadvertently locked in.

Communications and Making Connections

The charity produces a quarterly newsletter in electronic format with paper copies available in the garden. The newsletter is e-mailed to all Associate Members and is published on the charity's website and Facebook page. The newsletter and social media sites are used to provide updates on progress, to call for volunteers and members, and to share items of interest associated with the garden. The charity also has a trifold leaflet providing brief information about the garden and our contact details.

The charity has connections with several Not-for-Profit organisations as sources of information, support, and advice. These include the Community Land Advisory Service in Wales (CLAS Cymru), Tyfu Fyny, Social Farms and Gardens, local Associations of Voluntary Organisations, the Hardy Plants Society and the Gwent Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers. We are also supported by specialists in garden design and plant choices, and the 'no dig' approach to growing.

Torfaen Council Community Capacity Builder, the Health Board's Communications Team, and the Keep Wales Tidy Torfaen Environmental Project Officer continue to be communication links and sources of support when needed.

Shoosmiths Solicitors, via LawWorks, the Solicitors Pro Bono Group, has continued to provide support for the lease agreement and confirmed in January 2024 that our lease had been successfully registered with HM Land Registry.

Donations, Fund Raising and Grants

The charity has received many donations in kind during the year including plants, flowerpots, and seeds. Financial donations have also been received from individuals and groups. Monies received are used to support planting and hard landscaping plans and for the general upkeep of the garden.

Funds are raised throughout the year through the sale of plants and produce from the garden. Three major fund-raising events were also held including the 'Have a Grow' day in June, Wreath Workshops in November and December and Craft Fayres in December. These collectively raised over £6,000.

Three successful grant applications were made during the year.

- Croesyceiliog and Llanyrafon Community Council awarded £250 towards the cost of providing sun shades.
- Torfaen County Borough Council awarded £10,000 from their Community Resilience Fund for the commission and purchase of four bespoke metal benches and three sun canopies.
- Torfaen County Borough Council awarded a further £2,000 from their Community Resilience Fund to enable repairs to the garden's utility block roof and doors.

The charity is grateful to all individuals and organisations for their support and generosity.

Awards

In July the garden received a **Green Flag Community Award** for a fifth consecutive year. Administered by Keep Wales Tidy the Green Flag is the international benchmark for exceptional highest standard parks and green spaces that are managed by volunteers.

Financial Review

The financial year end of the Charity is 31 March, with this review covering the year to 31 March 2024.

The financial position of the Charity remains strong with a balance of £15,782 at 31 March 2024 (31 March 2023: £13,836).

| Balance sheet as at 31 March 2024 | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|
| £'s | 31-Mar-24 | 31-Mar-23 | Movement | |
| | Actual | Actual | £'s | % |
| Unrestricted | 14,432 | 9,675 | 4,756 | 49.2% |
| Restricted | 1,350 | 4,160 | (2,810) | (67.5)% |
| Endowment | - | - | - | N/A |
| Net Cash | 15,782 | 13,836 | 1,946 | 14.1% |

The charity had a net increase in cash of £1,946 in the period as a result of successful events run at the garden and continued support from visitors and through plant and produce sales, donations and membership fees.

As set out previously in the report, the garden was the beneficiary of a number of grants in the year totalling £12,250 all of which have been spent in the year along with two grants which were received in the prior year. This meant a total spend of £15,060 from our restricted funds in the year. This is significantly higher than the prior year due to the successful grant awards in the current year.

At the end of the financial year the Charity has one restricted fund in place:

Bellway Homes (Wales) (£1,350) for art in the garden

| Income statement for the period 1/4/23 - 31/3/24 | | | | |
|--|--------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|
| £'s | FY23 | FY22 | Movement | |
| | Actual | Actual | £'s | % |
| Income | | | | |
| Unrestricted income | 11,263 | 7,749 | 3,515 | 45.4% |
| Restricted income | 12,250 | 3,010 | 9,240 | 307.0% |
| Income | 23,513 | 10,759 | 12,755 | 118.5% |
| Expenditure | | | | |
| Unrestricted expenditure | (6,507) | (4,821) | (1,686) | 35.0% |
| Restricted expenditure | (15,060) | (400) | (14,660) | 3,665.1% |
| Expenditure | (21,567) | (5,221) | (16,346) | 313.1% |
| Unrestricted income | 4,756 | 2,928 | 1,828 | 62.4% |
| Restricted income | (2,810) | 2,610 | (5,420) | (207.7)% |
| Net income | 1,946 | 5,538 | (3,592) | (64.9)% |

Income from the charity's own sources (events, sales, membership fees and donations), increased by £3,515 from the previous year largely reflecting a hugely successful 'Have a Grow' day along with fantastic take up of the Wreath Making Workshops and Craft Fayres.

Expenditure from the Charity's own funds also increased from the prior year primarily due to a higher spend on plants and compost.

As noted earlier, local businesses have shown generosity in providing goods and services either freely or at discounted rates, which has helped the garden to progress to its current stage. We would again like to thank them all for their continued support.

2023/24 was a great year as the Charity and the garden continue to mature. The ongoing investment in, and development of the garden is supported by members, volunteers, supporters, and visitors which has allowed the Charity to continue to align with its objectives and charitable aims while remaining financially robust.

The positive feedback, successful grant applications, and sound financial position are all gratifying and motivating. Our trustees and volunteers have therefore looked back over the year with pride and are looking forward with enthusiasm to 2024/25 and to welcoming more and more people into this now vibrant and inviting green space.

Declaration

The trustees declare that they have approved the above trustees' report.

Signed on behalf of the charity's trustees.

J M Smith

Janet Mary Smith
Chair
12th August 2024

J C M Nehaul

Jane Christine MacDonald Nehaul
Vice Chair
12th August 2024







Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period
from

01/04/2023

To

31/03/2024

Section A Receipts and payments

| | Unrestricted funds to the nearest £ | Restricted funds to the nearest £ | Endowment funds to the nearest £ | Total funds to the nearest £ | Last year to the nearest £ |
|---|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| A1 Receipts | | | | | |
| Plant and produce sales | 2,816 | - | - | 2,816 | 2,742 |
| Donations | 648 | - | - | 648 | 477 |
| Membership fees | 662 | - | - | 662 | 574 |
| Event income | 6,162 | - | - | 6,162 | 3,784 |
| Other income | 976 | - | - | 976 | 173 |
| Grant income | - | 12,250 | - | 12,250 | 3,010 |
| Sub total (Gross income for AR) | 11,263 | 12,250 | - | 23,513 | 10,759 |
| A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table). | | | | | |
| N/A | - | - | - | - | - |
| Sub total | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total receipts | 11,263 | 12,250 | - | 23,513 | 10,759 |
| A3 Payments | | | | | |
| Building materials | 2,595 | 15,060 | - | 17,655 | 2,795 |
| Plant and compost purchases | 2,211 | - | - | 2,211 | 1,405 |
| Refreshments | 402 | - | - | 402 | 261 |
| Garden sundries | 884 | - | - | 884 | 332 |
| Structure & contents insurance | 232 | - | - | 232 | 206 |
| Public liability insurance | 133 | - | - | 133 | 100 |
| Events | - | - | - | - | 121 |
| Other | 50 | - | - | 50 | - |
| Sub total | 6,507 | 15,060 | - | 21,567 | 5,221 |
| A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table) | | | | | |
| N/A | - | - | - | - | - |
| Sub total | - | - | - | - | - |
| Total payments | 6,507 | 15,060 | - | 21,567 | 5,221 |
| Net of receipts/(payments) | 4,756 | - 2,810 | - | 1,946 | 5,538 |
| A5 Transfers between funds | - | - | - | - | - |
| A6 Cash funds last year end | 9,675 | 4,160 | - | 13,836 | 8,298 |
| Cash funds this year end | 14,432 | 1,350 | - | 15,782 | 13,836 |

Section B Statement of assets and liabilities at the end of the period

| Categories | Details | Unrestricted funds to nearest £ | Restricted funds to nearest £ | Endowment funds to nearest £ |
|---|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| B1 Cash funds | Cash and cash equivalents | 14,432 | 1,350 | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | | - | - | - |
| | Total cash funds (agree balances with receipts and payments account(s)) | 14,432 | 1,350 | - |
| | | OK | OK | OK |
| | Unrestricted funds to nearest £ | Restricted funds to nearest £ | Endowment funds to nearest £ | |
| B2 Other monetary assets | Details | | | |
| | N/A | - | - | - |
| | N/A | - | - | - |
| | N/A | - | - | - |
| B3 Investment assets | Details | Fund to which asset belongs | Cost (optional) | Current value (optional) |
| | N/A | | - | - |
| | N/A | | - | - |
| | N/A | | - | - |
| B4 Assets retained for the charity's own use | Details | Fund to which asset belongs | Cost (optional) | Current value (optional) |
| | Green house | Tesco - Green house and shed | 7,349 | 7,349 |
| | Shed | Tesco - Green house and shed | 3,105 | 3,105 |
| | | | - | - |
| | | | - | - |
| B5 Liabilities | Details | Fund to which liability relates | Amount due (optional) | When due (optional) |
| | N/A | | - | |
| | N/A | | - | |
| | N/A | | - | |
| | N/A | | - | |
| | N/A | | - | |
| Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees | Signature | Print Name | | Date of approval |

| |
|---------------------|
| <i>J M Smith</i> |
| <i>J C M Nehaul</i> |

| |
|---------------------------------|
| Janet Mary Smith |
| Jane Christine MacDonald Nehaul |

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|------------|
| 21/10/2024 |
| 21/10/2024 |