

Friends of Llanfrechfa Grange Walled Garden

Trustees Annual Report

For the period

April 2024 to March 2025



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 2025 the charity had 101 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 71 registered volunteers, with several new ones having joined during the year. Many commit to regular sessions in the garden, some help at events, while others drop in when they can. There are teams of volunteers present in the garden every day which enables the garden to be open to the public every day of the week, with core hours being 10.00 to 13.30. Each team looks after specific parts of the garden or development projects, while all share responsibility for watering and other generic activities. Work plans are largely at their own discretion while also following agreed priorities generated from planning sessions.

Supporters

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

Objectives and Activities

The objectives of the charity are to redesign and restore the Victorian walled garden at Llanfdechfa 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 Llanfdechfa 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 is open to visitors every day of the week. Visitor numbers in 2024/5 steadily increased and included 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 made to volunteers by visitors and on our social platforms.

The final planting plan for the whole garden is almost complete, although of course it will continue to evolve and change over time. Maintenance of the maturing ornamental flower beds and lawn, plant propagation, and growing fruit and vegetables are now the dominant activities, while a small group of volunteers continue to progress the hard landscaping and building restoration work. Craftwork has also become an integral part of the volunteers' activities with items made being sold on craft stalls at garden events.

The costermonger's barrow sited in the middle of the garden has been joined by a timber 'sentry box' filled with second-hand books. Regularly restocked these enable visitors to purchase books, plants, and produce, using an honesty box for payments.

All four quadrants of the garden are maturing beautifully with one of the new challenges being to keep established plants under control! Many of the garden's plants are split or propagated for sale on the barrow and in the nursery. These are always popular with visitors and raise valuable funds for the garden's continued development and upkeep. The fruit trees around the garden were in full of blossom in the spring with a promise of lots of apples, pears, cherries, peaches and figs in the coming summer and autumn. The protective frame built around the wall trained peach tree last year to control fungal peach leaf curl worked a treat and so will remain in place. Step over pear trees have been added as a border to the ornamental vegetable bed, adding to the fruit harvest promised by the strawberry plants, blackcurrant bushes and raspberry canes. The kitchen garden, greenhouse, polytunnel and ornamental vegetable beds have grown enough produce for volunteers and for general sales.

Two 'flat pack' storage containers have been installed in the compound outside the east gate. These now house furniture and other items used during garden events previously stored in grace and favour rooms provided by the Health Board.

The cottage windows were replaced in March with double glazed UVPC units that matched the design of the original timber framed single glazed windows. Other building work has included the completion of the perimeter path around the Kitchen Garden and the commencement of a retaining wall which will be topped with donated stone balustrade to create an 'upper terrace' in the southeast quadrant. Replacement of the old staging in the nursery also began, using donated pallets and other salvaged timbers to build bigger and more robust tables.

Two 'hot bins' have been purchased and a donated wormery stocked with new worms. These have added new approaches to our own already successful compost making activities.

A blind electricity cable, laid into the southwest quadrant some years ago, was made live to supply power for a water feature donated by the hospital chaplaincy and installed in the bog garden. Power and water have also been laid into the poly tunnel.

Red cedar obelisks have been constructed to provide architectural features in the northwest and southwest quadrants and to provide support for summer climbers.

A garden logo has been designed by a sub-group of volunteers. Funding from Torfaen County Borough Council has enabled this to be reproduced on headed paper, business cards, and clothing for volunteers. Our new logo is proudly presented on the front cover of this report.

Events

We held our 6th 'Have a Grow Day' in June as part of the Social Farms and Gardens' UK wide celebration of community gardening. Lots of interesting things to see and do were laid on, including plant and produce sales, a propagation station, children's activities, and games for all, the latter on the big lawn outside the west wall. Several hundred visitors enjoyed a lovely sunny day in the garden with significant funds raised for its ongoing development and upkeep.

The 2024 AGM was held in the Grange University Hospital Education Centre. Attendees enjoyed a presentation 'Hydrangeas, a Gentle Obsession' from guest speaker Roger Lloyd, co-owner of a stunning local garden that opens regularly as part of the National Garden Scheme to raise funds for nursing and other health charities. The Charity's Annual Report and Annual Accounts were presented and later submitted to the Charity Commission.

Defibrillator and first aid training for volunteers was provided by Torfaen County Borough Council, a tool repair and maintenance session was provided by Keep Wales Tidy, and several art classes have been led by one of the garden's volunteers.

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 during 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 including a summer BBQ and a Diwali Festival of Light celebration. These gatherings offer an opportunity for volunteers to relax in the garden and to meet up with others who come in on different days. September also saw a lovely garden party held to celebrate the 70th birthdays of four of the gardens' volunteers.

In March a small group of volunteers were treated to a complimentary visit to 'The Newt in Somerset', courtesy of another volunteer who now runs the productive growing and market gardens at the hotel.

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.

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 Keep Wales Tidy, the Community Land Advisory Service in Wales (CLAS Cymru), Tyfu Fyny, Social Farms and Gardens, local Associations of Voluntary Organisations, the Hardy Plants Society, the Wales Society of Botanical Illustrators, and the Gwent Guild of Weavers, Spinners and Dyers. We also continue to be supported by specialists in garden design and plant choices.

The Welsh Society of Botanical Illustrators have completed numerous paintings of plants growing in the Physic Garden. In collaboration with Gwent Arts in Health (GARTH), their artwork was exhibited in the Grange University Hospital during 2024/5.

Six monthly meeting with the Health Board's CEO and Head of Communications continue to provide a forum for partnership working with the garden's landlord. Links have also been made with the Nevill Hall Hospital group of volunteers who sought advice on establishing a similar charity for that hospital's grounds.

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 though 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 close to £6,500.

Two successful grant applications were made during the year.

- Croesyceiliog and Llanyrafon Community Council awarded £250 towards the cost of replacing the cottage windows.
- Torfaen County Borough Council awarded £2,072 from their Community Resilience Fund for the development of a garden logo and the provision of bespoke stationery and clothing for volunteers.

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 sixth consecutive year. Administered by Keep Wales Tidy the Green Flag is the international benchmark for exceptional 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 2025.

The financial position of the Charity remains strong with a balance of £15,851 at 31 March 2025 (31 March 2024: £15,782).

Balance sheet as at 31 March 2025				
	31-Mar-25	31-Mar-24	Movement	
£'s	Actual	Actual	£'s	%
Unrestricted	14,250	14,432	(181)	(1.3)%
Restricted	1,600	1,350	250	18.5%
Endowment	-	-	-	N/A
Net Cash	15,851	15,782	69	0.4%

The charity had a small surplus in the period of £69. This has been a result of fewer grants being received in the year (£2,322 in FY25 compared to £12,250 in FY24). The charity therefore has largely self-funded itself through successful events run at the garden and continued support from visitors and through plant and produce sales, donations, and membership fees. The charity has continued to purchase larger items (for example storage containers, volunteer clothing, and hot bins), along with more day-to-day expenditure.

As set out earlier in the report, the garden was the beneficiary of two of grants in the year totalling £2,322. Of this a total of £2,072, one grant, from our restricted funds was spent in the year.

At the end of the financial year the Charity has two restricted funds in place:

Bellway Homes (Wales) (£1,350) for art in the garden. This has remained unspent as the company engaged to deliver a moon-gate for the southwest quadrant ceased trading before they could deliver.

Croesyceiliog and Llanyrafon Community Council (£250) to be spent towards the cost of replacing the cottage windows. (This work was completed in March 2025 but not invoiced before year end).

Income statement for the period 1/4/24 - 31/3/25				
£'s	FY25 Actual	FY24 Actual	Movement	
			£'s	%
Income				
Unrestricted income	11,439	11,263	176	1.6%
Restricted income	2,322	12,250	(9,928)	(81.0)%
Income	13,761	23,513	(9,752)	(41.5)%
Expenditure				
Unrestricted expenditure	(11,621)	(6,507)	(5,113)	78.6%
Restricted expenditure	(2,072)	(15,060)	12,988	(86.2)%
Expenditure	(13,693)	(21,567)	7,875	(36.5)%
Unrestricted income	(181)	4,756	(4,938)	(103.8)%
Restricted income	250	(2,810)	3,060	(108.9)%
Net income	69	1,946	(1,878)	(96.5)%

Income from the charity's own sources (events, sales, membership fees and donations), increased by £2,248 from the previous year largely reflecting the hugely successful 'Have a Grow' day along with continued fantastic take up of the wreath making workshops and craft fayres.

Expenditure from the charity's own funds also increased from the prior year due to the purchase of the containers and hot bins which were self-funded, rather than grant funded.

As noted earlier, local businesses have shown generosity in providing goods and services either free of charge 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.

2024/25 was another great year as the charity and the garden continue to mature. It is a significant achievement that the garden has been able to largely self-fund itself as a direct result of the continued hard efforts and support from volunteers, members, supporters, and visitors.

Our trustees and volunteers have therefore again looked back over the year with pride and are looking forward with enthusiasm to 2025/26 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 2025

J C M Nehaul

Jane Christine MacDonald Nehaul
Vice Chair
12th August 2025





Receipts and payments accounts

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For the period from	01/04/2024	To	31/03/2025
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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	2,660	-	-	2,660	2,816
Donations	335	-	-	335	648
Membership fees	682	-	-	682	662
Event income	3,440	-	-	3,440	6,162
Other income	4,321	-	-	4,321	976
Grant income	-	2,322	-	2,322	12,250
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	11,439	2,322	-	13,761	23,513
A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).					
N/A	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total receipts	11,439	2,322	-	13,761	23,513
A3 Payments					
Building materials	7,797	-	-	7,797	17,655
Plant and compost purchases	1,370	-	-	1,370	2,211
Refreshments	468	-	-	468	402
Garden sundries	1,386	2,072	-	3,458	884
Structure & contents insurance	290	-	-	290	232
Public liability insurance	-	-	-	-	133
Events	59	-	-	59	-
Other	250	-	-	250	50
Sub total	11,621	2,072	-	13,693	21,567
A4 Asset and investment purchases, (see table)					
N/A	-	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-	-
Total payments	11,621	2,072	-	13,693	21,567
Net of receipts/(payments)	- 181	250	-	69	1,946
A5 Transfers between funds	-	-	-	-	-
A6 Cash funds last year end	14,432	1,350	-	15,782	13,836
Cash funds this year end	14,250	1,600	-	15,851	15,782

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	14,250	1,600	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds (agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))	14,250	1,600	-
		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

12/08/2025
12/08/2025