



A Year of Change

April 24~April 25

Margaret's: A Gateway to Support

In 2024–2025, The Makery evolved into Margaret's, a welcoming, trauma-informed hub offering early intervention, advocacy, and signposting. Margaret's has become a vital gateway service, where individuals experiencing hardship—whether emotional, financial, or housing-related—can find practical guidance, empathy, and a route toward longer-term support. It's the first step for many on their journey to recovery and independence.

The Iris Project: Restoring Dignity and Direction

Running alongside Margaret's, the Iris Project continues to provide dedicated support for survivors of trauma—including domestic violence, trafficking, hate crime, and exploitation. Iris offers a safe and empowering space through peer support, creative workshops, one-to-one advocacy, and employment pathways. The project's community shop helps fund HomeSafe kits, delivering practical essentials that help survivors rebuild their lives with dignity.

Plate of Plenty: Food with Dignity and Purpose

2025 marked the pilot launch of Plate of Plenty, our social supermarket. Designed to tackle food insecurity without stigma, Plate of Plenty combines affordable, choice-based groceries with wraparound support. Hosted within Margaret's, the initiative also connects people to debt advice, employment support, and wellbeing services—further embedding our commitment to early intervention and community resilience.

Presented by
Sioux Watkins CEO

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Content

Page

<i>Chairs Statement.....</i>	<i>3-4</i>
<i>Our vision/Our Mission.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Transition and growth.....</i>	<i>6-7</i>
<i>The Robin Project.....</i>	<i>8-9</i>
<i>The work/life experience project... </i>	<i>10-12</i>
<i>Plate of Plenty Project.....</i>	<i>13-15</i>
<i>Talking Therapies Collaboration..</i>	<i>16-17</i>
<i>Santas Guardians/xmas dinner.....</i>	<i>18-19</i>
<i>The Iris Project.....</i>	<i>20-22</i>
<i>Our Impact.....</i>	<i>23-25</i>
<i>Homelessness/housing support.....</i>	<i>26-28</i>
<i>Independent Financial Statement</i>	



Chair's Statement

2024–2025: A Year of Redefining Impact and Expanding Hope

This year has marked a defining chapter in the evolution of The Guardians Grow Charity. What began as a grassroots community initiative has now become a recognised and trusted gateway organisation, offering early intervention, emotional and practical support, and longer-term pathways for those facing some of life's toughest challenges.

As Chair and CEO, I have witnessed not just operational growth, but a deepening of purpose. We haven't simply expanded services—we've refined our identity and committed even more strongly to being a first place people turn to, not just a last resort.

At the heart of this shift is Margaret's, our reimaged community hub. Previously known as The Makery, Margaret's now serves as a trauma-informed, welcoming space that offers early help, signposting, and essential advocacy. Whether someone is experiencing homelessness, food insecurity, poor mental health, or simply isolation, Margaret's provides compassionate, no-barrier access to support. This is where conversations begin, trust is built, and people start to feel seen and heard.

Alongside Margaret's, The Iris Project has continued to flourish. It stands as our dedicated response to individuals who have experienced trauma—especially those impacted by domestic violence, sexual violence, human trafficking, modern day slavery, hate crime, and exploitation. Iris offers a safe, inclusive environment where survivors find peer support, creative expression, and pathways to rebuild. Through the project's community shop and the HomeSafe kits initiative, we've not only offered emotional support but also helped survivors transition with dignity and practical tools for independent living.



This year also saw the pilot launch of Plate of Plenty, our referral-only social supermarket. Situated within Margaret's, Plate of Plenty is more than a food resource—it's a dignified, compassionate service that addresses food poverty while also offering budgeting advice, emotional wellbeing support, and referrals to relevant external services. Its success has shown us what's possible when food support is delivered with humanity, choice, and zero judgment.

Of course, all this progress has come with challenges. The increase in complex referrals—particularly safeguarding and trauma-related cases—has highlighted the growing demand for safe, community-led intervention spaces like ours. We've had to navigate financial pressures, limited space, and the emotional toll of the work, but we've done so with unwavering commitment. Our community deserves nothing less.

One of the most significant milestones this year was receiving funding that allowed us to employ staff for the first time in our history. With a Service manager a Community Support worker now in post, we are beginning a new era of sustainability and professionalism in our operations—without losing the heart and humanity that define our charity.

What continues to inspire me most is the unwavering passion of our volunteers and community members. Each person who walks through our doors brings a story, and every interaction has the potential to change a life. Our partnerships have also deepened this year, and we are proud to work alongside other organisations that share our values of dignity, inclusion, and justice.

As we reflect on 2024–2025, it's clear this has been a year of courage, creativity, and change. We've not only grown—we've redefined what community support looks like. We remain rooted in compassion, led by lived experience, and committed to showing up for those who need us most.

Thank you to everyone who has been part of this journey. The future holds even more promise—and we look forward to walking it together.

Sioux Watkins
Chair & CEO
The Guardians Grow Charity



Our Vision

Our vision is by working collaboratively with people, Local Authorities and Organisations we aim to bring about change at a Social level: to do the social knitting required to create stronger and more resilient communities. Supporting them to identify and remove barriers that prevent them living connected lives, thus reducing isolation, loneliness and exclusion. We work to reduce social distance and increase the visibility of underrepresented groups across all our interventions.

Our work involves utilising a range of projects and interventions to improve outcomes for communities that are often left behind.

Giving people time, undivided attention and empathy meets a fundamental emotional need and reduces distress and despair.

We are not like other charities, we are not afraid to challenge existing ways of doing things and pride ourselves in using innovative ideas to create projects that meet current changing needs. We refuse to accept that any life is worth less than another.



Our Mission

The mission of The Guardians Grow Charity is to create a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment where individuals and communities can thrive. We are committed to reducing isolation, loneliness, and exclusion by offering innovative projects, advocacy, and practical support. Through our work, we empower people to overcome challenges such as domestic abuse, violence, and social inequalities, enabling them to rebuild their lives and reach their full potential. Guided by compassion and a deep connection to our community, we strive to bring lasting, meaningful change to the lives of those we serve.



Transition and Growth: Building a Professional Service (2024–25)

In 2024, The Guardians Grow Charity achieved a major milestone: funding from the National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund, which allowed us to employ our very first members of staff for Margaret’s (formerly The Makery).

This was a turning point in our 10-year journey, moving us from a fully volunteer-led service to an organisation with professional staff in post. It was not without its challenges, but it has been one of the most important developments in our growth as a charity.

From Community Hub to Gateway Service

When we began, Margaret’s was a safe space for community connection—a place to tackle loneliness and isolation. By 2024–25, it had organically grown into much more: a crisis support hub, a gateway service where people in urgent need of help could find safety, advocacy, and signposting to life-saving services.

The scale and seriousness of the issues we faced—safeguarding incidents, domestic abuse, homelessness, suicidal ideation, poverty—made it clear that our charity had evolved far beyond its original role. We were not just changing lives. We were saving them.

Learning Through Experience

Our journey into becoming an employer highlighted just how much we had grown. At first, roles and salaries were not aligned with the complexity of the work. Through experience, we learned that Margaret’s required experienced leadership and specialist skills to reflect the reality of the service we had become.

In 2025, we appointed a new Service Manager, bringing 22 years of third sector experience, alongside a Community Support Worker with a wealth of knowledge and expertise. Together, they provide professional oversight, safeguarding assurance, and practical frontline support, working alongside our dedicated volunteers and trustees.



This staffing structure has transformed our capacity and resilience. It has given us the professional foundation we need to continue responding to the complexity of community needs.

Looking Ahead: Professionalisation and Expansion

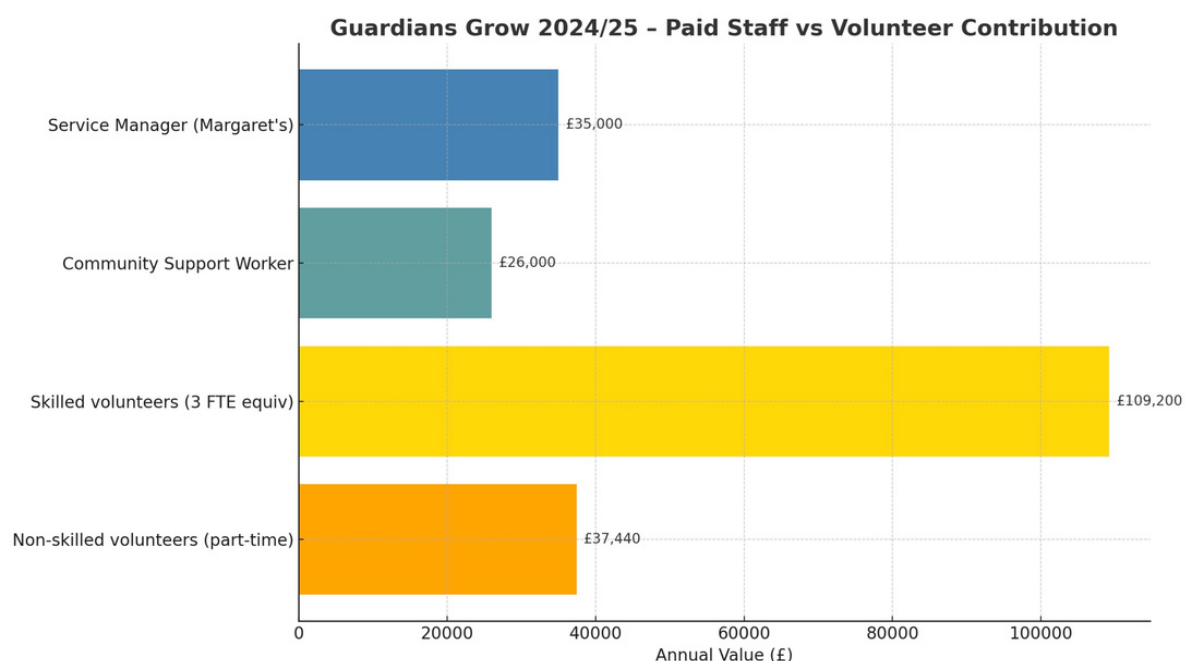
2025–26 marks the next stage of our journey. We are now moving:

- From paper-based case files to computer-based systems, improving efficiency and safeguarding.
- Towards strengthening governance, policies, and procedures, embedding professionalism across all levels of the charity.
- Into planning for future staffing increases to meet the growing demand and complexity of the service.

Our partnerships with organisations such as WCAVA, CDA, Warwickshire County Council, and other third sector partners have been vital in guiding this growth. We have learned as we've gone along—writing our own handbook, developing our own systems, and supporting others to do the same.

Our Foundation

Despite all this change, one thing remains constant: our charity was built by and for the community. The CEO and founder continues to serve in an unpaid role, supported by trustees and volunteers who bring lived experience, passion, and resilience to the heart of everything we do.



This chart compares the financial value of paid staffing with volunteer contributions. Volunteers add the equivalent of nearly £150,000 in staffing capacity alongside £61,000 of paid roles.



Our Work

Standout Initiative: The Robin Listening Bench Project **Funded by the National Lottery Community fund.**

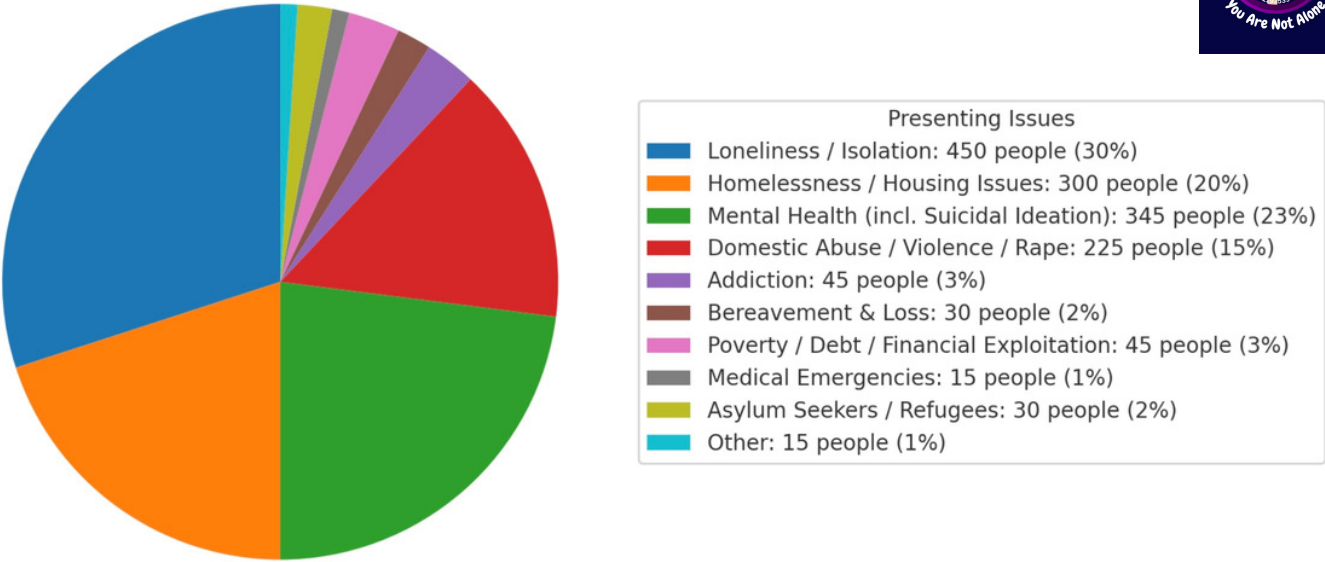
One of the most impactful and transformative initiatives of the year has been the Robin Project Listening Benches—an initiative designed to break isolation, foster human connection, and offer trauma-informed support in everyday spaces.

Initially launched as a simple concept—offering seated spaces in public settings where individuals could pause and be listened to—the Robin Benches quickly surpassed all expectations. Installed in Abbey Gate Shopping Centre, these benches became more than places to sit; they became lifelines.

Staffed by trained volunteers, the benches offer more than just a conversation. They provide a trauma-informed presence for anyone in need of emotional support, signposting, or simply a non-judgemental ear. Volunteers do not give advice—they listen, offer empathy, and, where appropriate, guide individuals toward further help and services.

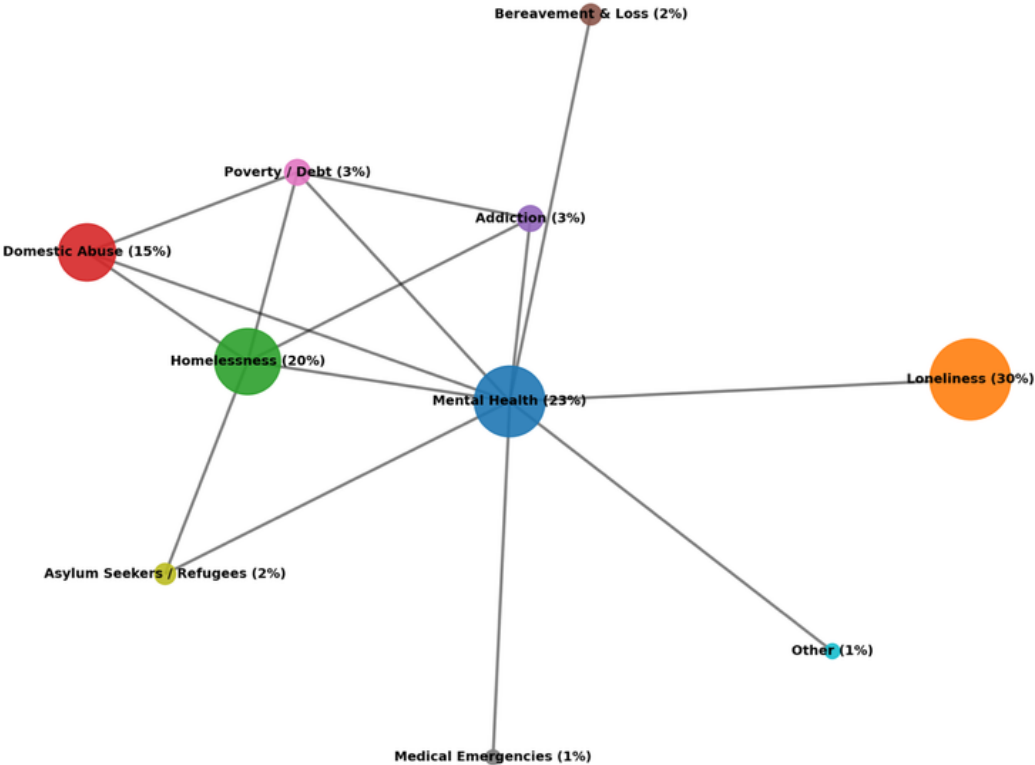
What began as a project to gently reduce loneliness and social isolation soon revealed a much deeper need within the community. Over the year, volunteers have engaged with:

- Individuals experiencing suicidal thoughts, who expressed that the bench gave them a reason to stop and talk instead of carrying out harmful actions.
- People fleeing domestic abuse, who found the safety and care at the bench to be the first step in reaching out for help.
- Elderly people who had not spoken to another person in days or weeks.
- Young people facing mental health challenges but unsure where to turn.



As a charity, we are proud that we avoid placing people in boxes — but we understand systems require them. This chart shows the headline figures for presenting issues, as required by funders and commissioners.

How Issues Interconnect – Mental Health at the Centre



Here's the reality: every issue overlaps with Mental Health, and many overlap with each other. This diagram shows how interconnected challenges are — bridging the gap between tick-box reporting and lived experience.



Work-Life Experience & Social Prescribing Impact

In 2024 we launched an exciting new partnership with Warwickshire Medical School as part of our Work-Life Experience Project. This programme was designed to invite organisations and students into Margaret's Community Support Hub to gain first-hand experience of the work we do and to understand the crucial role of the third sector in supporting people's health and wellbeing.

Throughout 2024 alone, 75 medical students joined us for placements. These students, many of whom will go on to become doctors, surgeons and healthcare professionals, were able to experience at ground level the impact of social prescribing and the unique contribution that charities like ours make in tackling the social determinants of health.

Why This Matters

- **Breaking down silos**

By embedding future clinicians in a community-led environment, we are helping them understand that healthcare is about more than symptoms. It is about what matters to a person—not just what is the matter with them.

- **Reducing inequalities**

Social prescribing is a recognised approach within the NHS to address inequalities by linking people into non-clinical support. Our partnership demonstrates how frontline community work changes lives and how medical education can reflect that.

Transforming perspectives

Students consistently reflected that their time with us offered a fresh insight into the realities of poverty, isolation, domestic abuse, housing insecurity and mental health challenges. These experiences will shape how they practise medicine in the future.



What We Achieved Together in 2024

- 75 Warwick Medical School students spent time with us at Margaret's and The Iris Project.
- Students engaged with our projects, including Plate of Plenty, gaining insight into the vital role of food, budgeting, and nutrition in overall health.
- They observed and sometimes participated in the social prescribing pathway in action, through referrals from local PCNs and GPs for individuals facing isolation, domestic abuse, financial hardship and more.
- Students were provided with reflective learning opportunities that connected their clinical training with the lived realities of our community.

Looking Ahead – 2025 and Beyond

We are expanding this project to welcome not only medical students but also nutritionists, dieticians and other health professionals in training, embedding them into projects such as Plate of Plenty. This provides invaluable work-life experience for them, and ensures that future healthcare workers enter the system with a deeper understanding of the role of the third sector and community services in recovery and resilience.

We actively encourage universities, authorities and other organisations to make use of this model. It is both an opportunity to tackle inequalities in healthcare and to bridge the gap between clinical care and community wellbeing.

Impact

Our partnership with Warwickshire Medical School is one we are extremely proud of. The benefit is twofold:

- For students – they gain real-world exposure to the challenges patients face beyond the clinic walls.
- For the community – they experience the value of meeting health professionals in a safe, non-clinical setting, building trust and relationships that last.

**General Comments:**

“I enjoyed the third sector day immensely, involvement with activities I wouldn't have previously considered to fall under the healthcare banner that were incredibly positive”

“Really fun as I got to be involved with a different population with different needs and the work that they have contributed to the society”

The Makery

“Unique placements like the Makery, were really engaging and interactive placements, and actually useful for our future career as doctors because we got to see unique resources that are available in the community which we may have never heard about before.”

“I thought everyone was very eager to have us - I liked going to the Makery and thought that the environment there was really good and allowed us to interact with different service users.”

Thank you for supporting our students this year. It has had a huge impact and we look forward to working with you again next year.

Dr Jackie Shanley
Warwick Medical School



Plate of Plenty – A Social Supermarket for Nuneaton

In 2025, The Guardians Grow Charity launched its most ambitious pilot to date: the Plate of Plenty Project. This initiative is more than a food programme—it is a vision for dignity, empowerment, solidarity, and healthier futures.

Why Plate of Plenty Was Born

From the very beginning of our journey as a community group and then as a charity, food has been at the heart of everything we do. For a decade, we have grown from grassroots to a registered charity, and throughout that journey we have never lost sight of the importance of food as a tool for survival, connection, and community.

From delivering 6000 food parcels during COVID to running our café as a safe hub, our mission has always been rooted in ensuring that people have access to what they need. Plate of Plenty is not an afterthought—it is the natural continuation of ten years of work and learning in our community.

How the Pilot Works

- Referral only (2025 pilot): Families and individuals are referred to Plate of Plenty by trusted partners and assessed by our staff.
- Contributing with dignity: For a contribution of £5, participants can select fresh and dried foods from our shelves, supplied by FareShare and generous donors. This restores choice and dignity—people are not taking handouts, they are contributing to their recovery.
- More than food: Each visit includes a conversation. We assess what brought people here, provide information, and where necessary, act as advocates to ensure people access the full range of support available to them.

Why It Matters

Plate of Plenty is not just a project about eating. It is about:

- Breaking the cycle of crisis – we don't simply hand out food; we address the reasons why people are struggling to access it.
- Empowerment through choice – people choose what they eat, giving them control.
- Dignity – no stigma, no shame, just access to affordable, quality food.
- A gateway to wider support – each referral opens the door to housing, domestic abuse services, mental health, financial resilience, and more.



Our Roots in Food

This project is not new to us—it is the culmination of a decade of work. During the pandemic, we delivered food parcels. Through our café, we built community around the table. Through our support hub, we’ve connected people over meals, coffees, and conversations. Plate of Plenty takes us back to our roots—food as survival, food as connection, food as community.

Lived Experience at the Heart

The bigger picture of Plate of Plenty is one of solidarity. It is about people with lived experience of poverty, crisis, and hardship, using their resilience and knowledge to support others. At The Guardians Grow Charity, we are experts by experience. Everything we do is based on the real lives of our volunteers, staff, and service users.

This lived experience cannot be taught in a classroom or behind a desk. It is what makes us different. It means we meet people without judgement, with understanding, and on a completely different level. That trust is why our services work—because people know we understand.

Looking Ahead – 2025 and Beyond

The pilot is only the beginning. With the right funding and support, Plate of Plenty will evolve into a fully established social supermarket with a community kitchen.

- The supermarket will provide sustainable access to affordable food.
- The kitchen will host cooking lessons, workshops, and shared meals—building skills and breaking social isolation.
- Education and health will be embedded through partnerships with Warwick Medical School, dieticians, nutritionists, and clinicians, addressing health inequalities linked to diet.
- Inclusion and integration will be central. Refugees, asylum seekers, and those facing barriers to work will gain experience, confidence, and connection.
- A community garden will allow people to grow their own produce, reconnect with food, and share cultural knowledge.



The Bigger Picture

With the right backing, Plate of Plenty has the potential to transform how our community addresses food poverty. It can:

- Create jobs and training opportunities.
- Tackle food poverty in a sustainable way.
- Promote healthier lifestyles and reduce illness.
- Build community cohesion across cultures and generations.
- Shift food support from handouts to dignity, partnership, and empowerment.

Our Vision

Plate of Plenty is not just about filling stomachs—it is about filling lives with dignity, purpose, and possibility. It represents a step change for our charity and our community: from crisis response to long-term resilience.

With support, we can make Plate of Plenty the first social supermarket in Nuneaton—a model that combines food, health, inclusion, empowerment, and solidarity, reimagining what it means to feed a community.





Mental Health & Talking Therapies Collaboration 2024–25

In 2024 we were proud to establish a new collaboration with the NHS Talking Therapies Service, supported through a grant from Rethink Mental Health. The aim was simple but vital: to raise awareness of Talking Therapies and ensure our community knew how to access them.

How It Worked

- We hosted weekly mindfulness sessions on Mondays at The Makery (now Margaret's), delivered in collaboration with NHS Talking Therapies staff. These sessions introduced simple tools such as breathing techniques and mindfulness practices to support mental wellbeing.
- More importantly, this partnership enabled us to become a point of contact for information and advocacy. By stocking leaflets, explaining the service, and guiding people through what was available, we were able to bridge the gap between community members and clinical support.
- For those who lacked the confidence or capacity to make a referral themselves, our staff and volunteers actively supported or made referrals on their behalf.

Our Impact 2024–25

- 300+ leaflets and information packs distributed to our community.
- 30+ direct referrals made into Talking Therapies, ensuring people received professional mental health support.
- Countless informal conversations and signposting opportunities, raising awareness of mental health support options for those who may never have accessed help otherwise.

Why It Matters

This collaboration was about more than just leaflets. It was about breaking down barriers to mental health support. Many of the people who come through our doors are experiencing loneliness, trauma, domestic abuse, financial hardship, or homelessness. Mental health is woven through every aspect of our work.

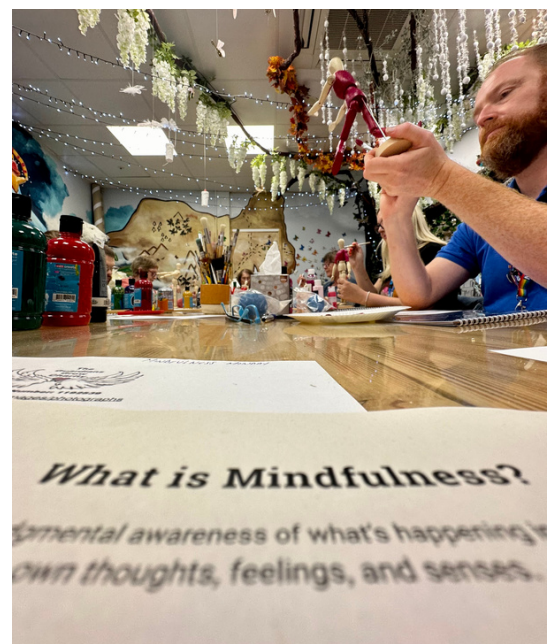
By partnering with Talking Therapies, we were able to:

- Demystify what Talking Therapies are and how they help.
- Increase confidence in accessing NHS services.
- Ensure equality of access, particularly for those who may otherwise be excluded due to lack of confidence, literacy challenges, or stigma.

Looking Ahead

We will continue to build on this partnership into 2025 and beyond, ensuring that mental health remains central to our work at Margaret's. Our role is to continue advocating, sharing information, and supporting referrals, while ensuring our community understands that seeking help for mental health is a strength, not a weakness.

We are proud to work alongside the NHS Talking Therapies Service and Rethink Mental Health to raise awareness and improve access to mental health support for all.





Santa's Guardians: A Decade of Christmas Solidarity

For the past eight years, Santa's Guardians has been a cornerstone of our community — a heartfelt initiative rooted in making sure no one in Nuneaton feels forgotten at Christmas. What began as a small gesture has blossomed into a beloved annual tradition of compassion and unity.

2024 Highlights

- **Christmas Deliveries & Dining**

In December 2024, our team of approximately six dedicated volunteers partnered with the Nuneaton Community Christmas Lunch Group, who host a festive meal at the Newtown Community Centre (WCAVA). Together, we prepared and delivered over 50 Christmas dinners — complete with hot meals, presents, and personal cards — to local residents who couldn't attend the community event, whether due to health or mental health challenges.

- **Gifts for Children and Families**

In the weeks leading up to the holiday, Santa's Guardians coordinated with schools, services, and community partners to distribute over 200 gifts to children and adults across Nuneaton and Bedworth. These thoughtful gestures ensured individuals and families referred in confidence felt seen, known, and cared for during a difficult time.

- **Community Spirit in Action**

Local children and school groups also joined in, making Christmas cards and messages that were personally delivered, bringing warmth and connection into homes that might otherwise have felt isolated.

This isn't just volunteering—it's solidarity. Through Santa's Guardians, our community actively says, 'You are not forgotten.'

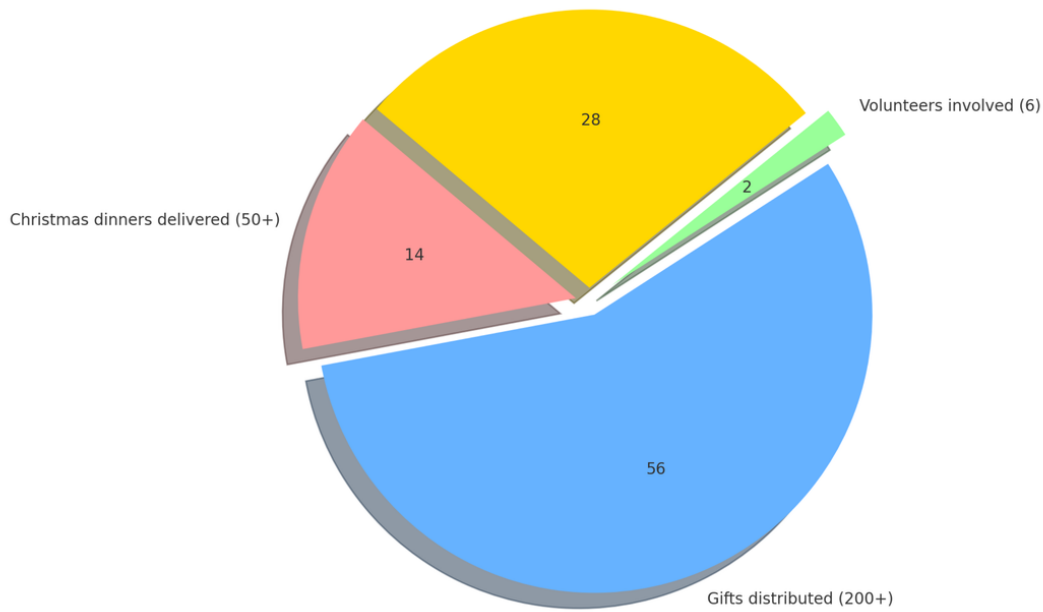
Why It Matters

- **Community Care in Action** – Rather than waiting for people to come to us, we take care to them — delivering warmth and the reminder that someone cared enough to remember.
- **Building Connections Across Generations** – By involving schools, volunteers, and local organisations, the initiative knits together different generations and life experiences through shared humanity.
- **Living Our Values** – Santa's Guardians embodies everything we stand for—rooted in lived experience, fueled by dignity, and powered by resilience. It's not a programme—it's a promise.



Santa's Guardians 2024 - Community Impact

Schools & community cards delivered



Funded by the ASDA Foundation, Hinckley & Rugby Building Society, and supported by the community.
This initiative ensured no one in Nuneaton felt forgotten at Christmas.



ASDA
Foundation,,

Hinckley & Rugby
Building Society



The IRIS Project – “I Just Want You to Know Who I Am”

About IRIS

The IRIS Project is a uniquely compassionate part of our work—disguised, deliberately, as a small gift shop. It offers a safe, non-institutionalised space where survivors of domestic abuse, rape, human trafficking, and familial violence can breathe, heal, and begin to reclaim themselves.

What IRIS Does

In 2024–25, we supported over 250 women and children through IRIS, either via Margaret’s or within the IRIS space itself. Survivors were supported through ongoing casework, receiving advocacy, referrals to domestic and sexual violence services, and safeguarding interventions, including MARAC referrals where needed. IRIS exists outside of traditional therapy or formal counselling. Instead, it creates a welcoming, survivor-led environment where people can be seen, heard, and safe in their body and story.

A Space to Heal and Rebuild

IRIS is intentionally crafted around creative expression and peer connection, rather than talk therapy. Survivors, often volunteers with lived experience, facilitate volunteering opportunities, creative activities such as T-shirt printing, and informal support. The space allows women to be with others who understand, without judgement or the need to explain. We also offer private booths and a discreet meeting space for professionals, including police, victim support, and domestic abuse services, to connect with survivors in a way that feels safe—not criminalising, but supportive.

Why IRIS Matters

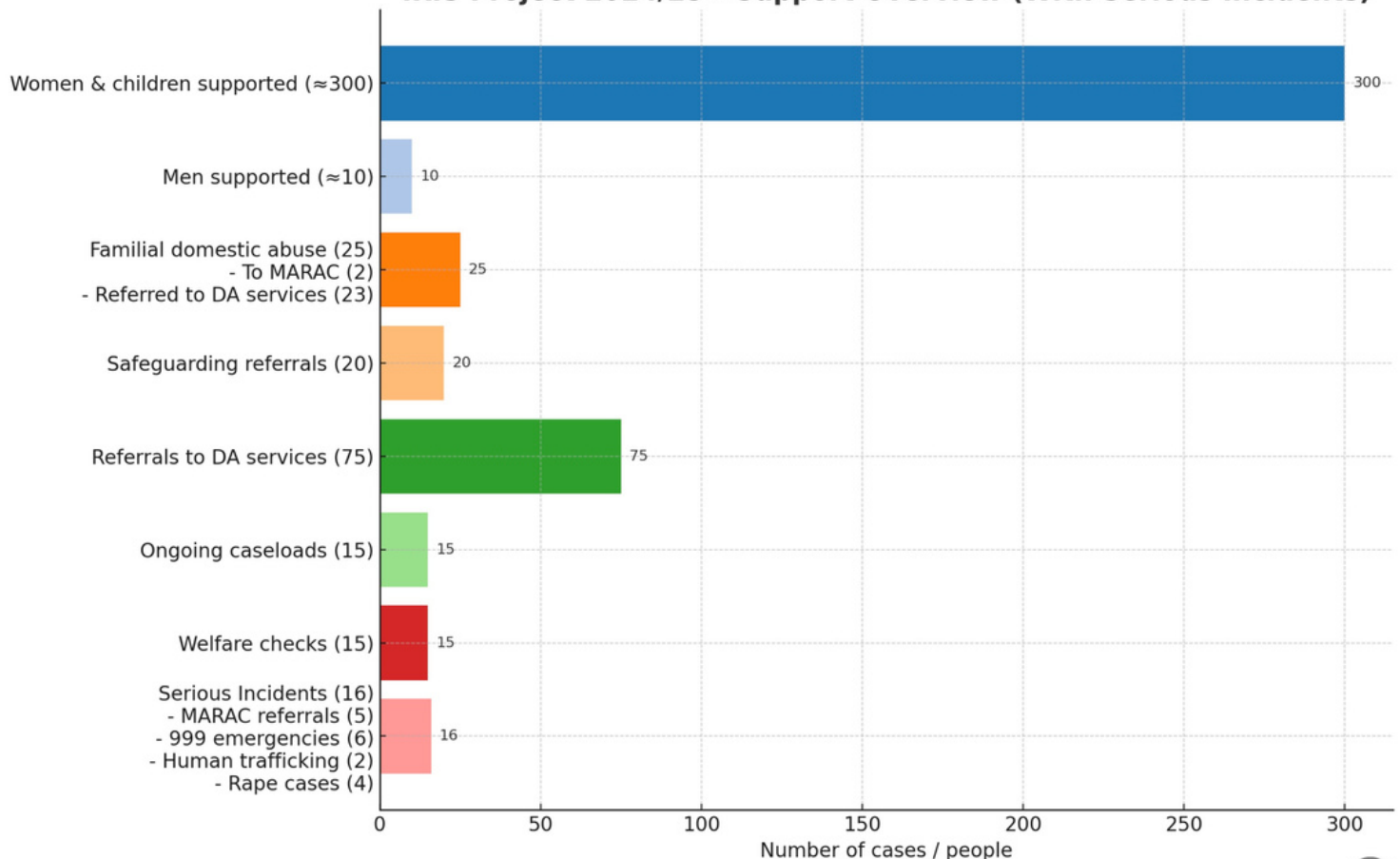
IRIS is one of only a few services that blends peer-led creativity with structured advocacy, built on lived experience. Survivors often arrive having fled with nothing, and IRIS helps them rebuild identity, purpose, and confidence. It bridges gaps in the domestic abuse system, creating a flexible, human-centred response that adapts to real lives rather than forcing individuals into institutional frameworks.



Looking Forward

IRIS currently operates with volunteers, many of them survivors themselves, but we are seeking funding to employ trained survivors or qualified advocates, such as ISVAs and IDVAs, to continue caseholding. We also aim to expand our creative service offers and peer support pathways, while strengthening our role as a speaker and training hub. Using lived experience, we will continue to empower organisations, reshape pathways, and disrupt stigma, creating opportunities for survivors to find purpose and reintegrate safely.

IRIS Project 2024/25 - Support Overview (With Serious Incidents)



Notes: Totals are approximate and categories overlap. Serious Incidents include 5 MARAC referrals, 6 emergency 999 calls, 2 human trafficking cases, and 4 rape cases.





Developing the IRIS Project

The IRIS Project will mirror this staffing development, recognising the complexity of supporting survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence, and trafficking. Our goal is to secure funding for:

- Two Community Support Workers dedicated to IRIS.
- A Store Assistant to manage the day-to-day running of the shopfront, freeing up support workers to focus on survivor care.

CEO Support

Our CEO remains unpaid, but the workload continues to grow as the charity expands. We aim to secure funding for:

- A PA to the CEO, who can support with administration, scheduling, and coordination. This would release vital capacity for leadership and strategic development.

Why This Matters

Our volunteers contribute the equivalent of nearly £150,000 in staffing capacity each year, alongside £61,000 of paid staff roles. This is extraordinary – but it is not sustainable. Volunteers cannot replace skilled safeguarding staff, nor can they carry the emotional weight of trauma work without professional oversight.

Our next stage is about sustainability, professionalism, and safeguarding. By expanding the staff team while continuing to invest in volunteers, we can protect what makes Guardians Grow unique – our compassion, flexibility, and humanity – while ensuring we remain safe, accountable, and resilient into the future.



Our Impact – Beyond the Numbers

Measuring the true impact of Guardians Grow is not simple. We are not a single-issue service, nor do we fit neatly into tick-boxes. We are a community-led charity that sees every individual as unique, and our support flows around their needs.

Over the past year, more than 10,000 people have walked through our doors. Some came once, some come every day. Some needed a listening ear for an hour, others required ongoing support, advocacy and referrals into specialist services. For many, the difference we make cannot be captured in a figure – because sometimes a single conversation, a few hours of someone's time, or a safe space to sit has literally changed, or even saved, a life.

The trackable outcomes are impressive:

- 35 safeguarding referrals (children and adults)
- 20 emergency 999 calls (including 6 linked to domestic abuse)
- 25 crisis team calls for mental health support
- 75 referrals to domestic abuse services
- 312 welfare checks on vulnerable community members
- 75 referrals into our Plate of Plenty pilot social supermarket
- 30+ referrals into Talking Therapies, alongside over 300 leaflets shared
- 200+ Christmas gifts and 50+ meals delivered at Christmas

But behind these numbers is something greater: time, compassion and empathy. Our staff and volunteers sit with people when they are isolated, listen when no-one else does, and advocate for those who cannot advocate for themselves. These hours are not counted in spreadsheets, but they are priceless.

Every day at Margaret's and across our projects is different. One day might bring a safeguarding crisis, the next might bring a new group connecting over coffee, or a referral to housing support, or simply a vulnerable person who finally feels heard.

Our impact cannot be measured only in figures. It is measured in trust built, stigma broken, isolation eased, and lives changed.



Guardians Grow – Impact 2024/25

■ Reach & Connection

10,000+ people engaged through doors, groups, and events
500 Plates of Hope served, 1,500 Cups of Kindness shared

■ Safeguarding & Protection

35 safeguarding referrals (incl. serious neglect)
20 emergency 999 calls (6 linked to DA)
25 crisis team interventions (mental health)
312 welfare checks

■ Housing & Homelessness

30 homelessness cases supported
Referrals to P3, Doorway, SWEP
Support for NHS Mental Health Bus to reach vulnerable and homeless individuals

■ Domestic Abuse & IRIS

300+ survivors supported
25 familial DA cases (2 MARAC escalations)
75 DA service referrals
2 human trafficking cases, 4 rape cases

■ Mental Health & Specialist Referrals

30+ Talking Therapies referrals (300 leaflets shared)
25 social prescribing referrals
Referrals to Citizens Advice, Carers Trust, Dementia support

■ Food Security

75 Plate of Plenty referrals (pilot year)
Ongoing café/community meals tackling poverty with dignity

■ Community Highlights

200+ Christmas gifts & 50 meals delivered (Santa's Guardians)
360 people supported through Pain Clinic
75 medical students hosted for placements

■ Groups & Inclusion

MS Support Group
Pain Café
Cancer Care & Share (Fridays)
Warwickshire Pride (Saturdays)
Dementia Friends sessions
Refugee support & integration projects



Next Steps 2025–27 – Building for Sustainability

Guardians Grow has grown rapidly over the past two years. What began as a community hub has evolved into a frontline crisis support and gateway service. With this growth has come a clear understanding: while volunteers remain at the heart of everything we do, the complexity of the situations we deal with requires more skilled, trained staff to safeguard both the individuals we serve and our volunteers themselves.

Expanding the Staff Team at Margaret's

Our plan is to strengthen the team at Margaret's Community Support Hub by adding:

- Two additional Community Support Workers – one specialising in mental health and one in family support.
- This will give us a team of three support workers, plus the Service Manager, ensuring dedicated one-to-one work is handled by trained staff while volunteers focus on more general community support.
- This structure will also help us manage the high safeguarding demand and crisis response with confidence and professionalism.

Strengthening Infrastructure

- Administrative and finance support – to handle HR, payroll, and finance functions, relieving frontline staff and trustees from these pressures.
- Clinical / counselling support for staff – recognising the emotional toll of dealing with trauma daily, we aim to secure either an in-house counsellor or a budget for external counselling to protect the wellbeing of staff and managers.
- Volunteer and staff training – continuing development in safeguarding, advocacy, and crisis response to stay ahead of ever-changing needs.
- Digital development – moving from paper casework to a secure digital case management system, ensuring data protection, safeguarding, and professional reporting standards.



Homelessness and Housing Support

Homelessness has been one of the most significant and interconnected issues we have faced this year. At Margaret's, we do not see homelessness as an isolated problem – it is bound up with poverty, poor health, addiction, domestic abuse, mental health, and the daily realities of people falling through the cracks in the system.

In the last year, we have supported hundreds of individuals at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Some of these cases were people sleeping rough in parks, in tents, or with nothing at all. Others were facing eviction or deemed to have made themselves “intentionally homeless” and turned away from housing services. Our role has been to stand with them, listen fully to their story, and advocate to ensure their rights and needs are recognised.

Significant Cases

Two individual cases deemed “intentionally homeless” – Both were thrown onto the streets despite having serious health or mental health concerns. We worked intensively with them, alongside our local MP and partner services, to challenge these decisions. Both were housed by the local authority and are now thriving in permanent accommodation. A refugee evicted from dispersed accommodation – Because of a language barrier, he did not understand his 28-day notice period. After a full day working with him, we identified health concerns that created a duty of care. He has since been rehoused.

How We Work

When someone comes to us homeless, the first 24–48 hours are about listening and assessment. Quite often, people approaching housing authorities only have minutes to explain their situation. We spend the time needed – sometimes days – to understand the whole picture, whether that means contacting safeguarding teams, medical teams, or social services on their behalf. We act as advocates and bridges, because people rarely fit neatly into one box.



For those who do not meet the criteria for urgent housing, we provide practical support: food, water, sleeping bags, pop-up tents, torches, radios, and clothing. We ensure people are linked into the right services – whether that is CGL for addiction support, P3 or Doorway for housing, Citizens Advice for legal or financial guidance, or NHS mental health teams.

Partnerships in Action

We work closely with the NHS Mental Health Team Bus and local PCNs, supporting homeless individuals with secondary mental health needs. During both cold weather SWEP and hot weather alerts, we provide food, drink, and essentials to ensure people are safe.

More Than Shelter

Homelessness is not only about a roof. At Margaret's, we provide a friendly face, a cup of tea, and a place to belong. For some, that companionship is as vital as housing itself.

Dave's story, already shared in this report, is one example of how lives can be turned around. Once sleeping rough in a park, Dave is now working, housed, and thriving – and still part of our community. His story is a reminder that homelessness can happen to anyone, and with the right support, recovery is possible.

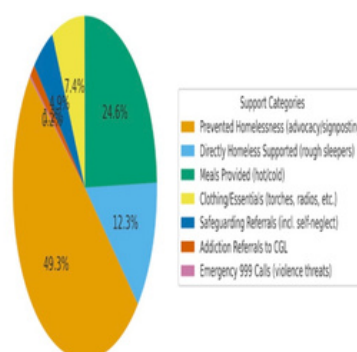
Our Impact

In the last year alone, we have supported and worked alongside hundreds of individuals facing eviction or homelessness. Some are now rehoused and thriving. Some remain on the margins, but with our ongoing support, they are not alone. Every case is different, every story matters, and we are committed to standing beside each person for as long as it takes.

Guardians Grow – Homelessness Support Impact (2024–25)

In 2024–25, Guardians Grow supported around **300 individuals** facing or at risk of homelessness. Our interventions went beyond crisis response, focusing also on prevention, advocacy, and essentials. The chart below provides a clear one-page breakdown of the ways we supported people throughout the year.

Guardians Grow - Homelessness Support Breakdown (2024-25)



This breakdown shows the scope of our impact: preventing homelessness, supporting rough sleepers, providing meals and essentials, making safeguarding referrals, and stepping in at times of crisis. Each figure represents a life touched and a step towards stability and safety.



Guardians Grow – Case Study

“It can happen to anyone.” – Dave

Dave’s story reminds us that homelessness does not always look the way people expect. After losing his job, his marriage, and eventually his home, Dave found himself sleeping in a tent in the local park. He had no money, no food, no clean clothes, and no idea how to survive on the streets. A proud man who had worked all his life, he was completely out of his depth.

When Dave found Margaret’s, everything began to change. We provided him with food every day and a safe space to spend his time. He was able to charge his phone and laptop, continue applying for jobs, and join our community for company and support. Volunteers gave him packed lunches, a torch, and a radio to help him feel safer at night. Most importantly, Dave found dignity, laughter, and belonging – and he stopped feeling alone.

He spoke openly about how difficult it was to return to his tent each night, surrounded by fear of weapons, drugs, and exploitation. But at Margaret’s, he said he had found a second family.

With our support, Dave attended job interviews directly from the hub. He was successful in gaining a new role with accommodation and a company car. The local community rallied around him – buying him suits, a watch, and offering practical support to help him restart his life.

Today, Dave is back on his feet. He has a home, a career, and still comes back to Margaret’s, telling us that “it feels like coming back to family.”

With our support, Dave attended job interviews directly from the hub. He was successful in gaining a new role with accommodation and a company car. The local community rallied around him – buying him suits, a watch, and offering practical support to help him restart his life.



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

THE GUARDIANS GROW CHARITY

On accounts for the year
ended

01/04/2025

Charity no
(if any)

1192539

Set out on pages

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the year ended 01/04/2025.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
- the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008 other than any requirement that the accounts give a 'true and fair' view which is not a matter considered as part of an independent examination.

I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Jackie Campbell

Date:

6/08/2025

Name:

JACKIE CAMPBELL

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Retired Bookkeeper + Sales Supervisor for
30 years +.

Address:

64 CHEVERGL STREET NUNEATON CV11 5SA.

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

On accounts for the year ended	2014/2015
Set out on pages	
Responsibilities and basis of report	
Independent examiner's statement	
I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that in any material respect: - the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or - the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or - the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, or that any requirement that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a requirement considered as part of an independent examination. I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.	
Signed:	[Signature]
Name:	[Name]



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name
The Guardians Grow Charity

No (if any)
1192539

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period	Period start date	To	Period end date
from	01/04/2024		01/04/2025

Section A Receipts and payments

Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds	Last year
to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £

A1 Receipts

Rethink mental health	6,250	-	6,250	-
Albert Hunt Trust	2,500	-	2,500	-
National Lottery (Reaching Communities)	-	50,745	50,745	-
National lottery community fund	-	14,000	14,000	-
Donations (cash)	15,950	-	15,950	-
Fund raising events	15,000	-	15,000	-
Community hub donations	12,134	-	12,134	-
	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	51,834	64,745	116,579	-

A2 Asset and investment sales, (see table).

	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-

Total receipts **51,834**

64,745

116,579

-

A3 Payments

Salary payments	-	49,000	49,000	-
Rent & service charges x 2 hubs	28,165	-	28,165	-
Electricity x 2 hubs	4,580	-	4,580	-
Rates x 2 @20%	2,815	-	2,815	-
Depreciation x 2	720	1	720	-

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	Total cash funds (agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			
B2 Other monetary assets				
B3 Investment assets				
B4 Assets retained for the CCXX R3 accounts (££)				

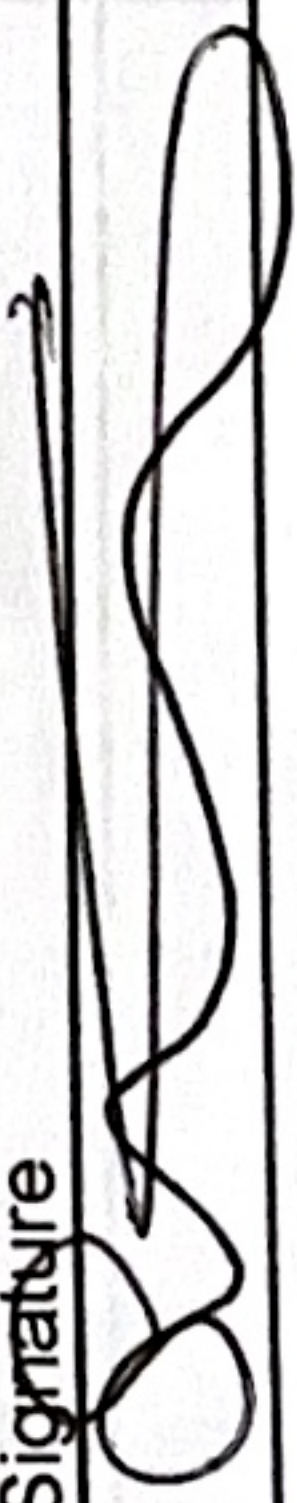
charity's own use

			-
			-
			-
			-
			-
			-
			-

Details	Fund to which liability relates	Amount due (optional)	When due (optional)
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	
		-	

B5 Liabilities

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	S Watkins	24/07/2025



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Independent examiner's report on the accounts

Section A

Independent Examiner's Report

Report to the trustees

THE GUARDIANS GROW CHARITY

On accounts for the year
ended

01/04/2025

Charity no
(if any)

1192539

Set out on pages

I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the above charity for the year ended 01/04/2025.

Responsibilities and
basis of report

As the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 ("the Act").

I report in respect of my examination of the accounts carried out under section 145 of the 2011 Act and in carrying out my examination, I have followed all the applicable Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the Act.

Independent
examiner's statement

I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which gives me cause to believe that in, any material respect:

- the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or
- the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or
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I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

Signed:

Jackie Campbell

Date:

6/08/2025

Name:

JACKIE CAMPBELL

Relevant professional
qualification(s) or body
(if any):

Retired Bookkeeper + Sales Supervisor for
30 years +.

Address:

64 CHEVERGL STREET NUNEATON CV11 5SA.

Section B

Disclosure

Only complete if the examiner needs to highlight material matters of concern (see CC32, Independent examination of charity accounts: directions and guidance for examiners).

Give here brief details of any items that the examiner wishes to disclose.

On accounts for the year ended	Charity (if any)
Set out on pages	
I report to the trustees on my examination of the accounts of the charity for the year ended At the charity's trustees, you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act). I report in respect of my examination of the accounts in accordance with section 145(5)(b) of the Act. I have completed my examination. I confirm that no material matters have come to my attention in connection with the examination which give me cause to believe that in any material respect: - the accounting records were not kept in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act; or - the accounts did not accord with the accounting records; or - the accounts did not comply with the applicable requirements concerning the form and content of accounts set out in the Charities (Accounts and Reports) Regulations 2008, or any other requirements that the accounts give a true and fair view which is not a defect considered as part of an independent examination. I have no concerns and have come across no other matters in connection with the examination to which attention should be drawn in this report in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.	
Signed:	
Name:	



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Charity Name
The Guardians Grow Charity

No (if any)
1192539

Receipts and payments accounts

CC16a

For the period	Period start date	To	Period end date
from	01/04/2024		01/04/2025

Section A Receipts and payments

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to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £	to the nearest £

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Fund raising events	15,000	-	15,000	-
Community hub donations	12,134	-	12,134	-
	-	-	-	-
Sub total (Gross income for AR)	51,834	64,745	116,579	-

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	-	-	-	-
	-	-	-	-
Sub total	-	-	-	-

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116,579

-

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Depreciation x 2	720	1	720	-

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		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
	Total cash funds	-	-	-
	(agree balances with receipts and payments account(s))			
B2 Other monetary assets		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
		-	-	-
B3 Investment assets				
B4 Assets retained for the CCXX R3 accounts (SS)				

charity's own use

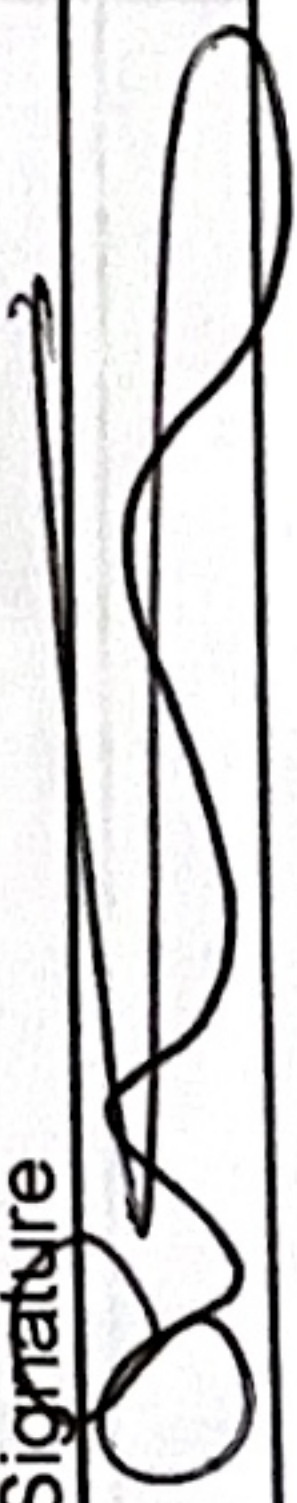
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B5 Liabilities

			-
			-
			-
			-
			-
			-
			-

Signed by one or two trustees on behalf of all the trustees

Signature	Print Name	Date of approval
	S Watkins	24/07/2025