



THE GROW WELL PROJECT

A Guide for Referrers





WHAT IS THE GROW WELL PROJECT? THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY GARDENING GROUPS

- Grow Well is a health and wellbeing community gardening project based in Cardiff, in the South West GP Cluster Area (Caerau, Ely, Canton, and Riverside).
- We do a whole range of growing activities, from growing flowers and vegetables, looking after wildlife, woodwork to build planters and garden furniture, nature arts and crafts, and the most important part: having a cup of tea and sitting down with company to chat and enjoy the gardens.
- It is a Social Prescribing project, which means that Health and Social Care Staff can refer people to us, if they feel that our activities would benefit on individual.

Grow Cardiff works within a Wales-wide landscape

We keep our hands close to the soil while aiming to share best practice within the wider policy landscape. Our work complements Welsh Government's Recovery Action Plan for Wales 2020-2023 as well as Natural Resources Wales' Green Recovery: Priorities for Action (2020).

Our work is also framed by the world-first Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015). Our practice sits squarely within the move towards integration of health and social care resources, as promoted in the Health and Social Care (Wales) Act 2020, and Grow Cardiff's field of expertise is directly reflected in Cardiff's Local Well-being Plan. The recent Welsh Government strategy Connecting Communities: A strategy for tackling loneliness and social isolation and building stronger social connections (2020) highlighted the type of community-based activities offering informal opportunities which Grow Cardiff champions: there is always time for tea, cake, and each other in our community gardens.



WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM ATTENDING? WHY REFER?

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

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

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

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

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



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



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



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



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



Sleep can become easier after a rewarding day spent outdoors.

■ WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF PARTICIPATING IN GROW WELL?



■ We use a range of outcome measures as part of our bespoke 'toolkit' developed with WSSPR.

■ We have trialled a simple barometer tool used each session and over a 6 month period:

■ **68% of attendees reported that they felt better (their score increased by at least one place) at the end of a session.**

■ **32% stayed same**

■ **0% reported feeling worse**

■ We use the SWEMWBS and UCLA- 3 Loneliness scale to measure overall well-being and isolation, alongside a range of other data, case studies, reflections and testimonies to gather a fully rounded picture of our impact. As we work, we are reviewing our tools to try to choose the most appropriate ones for our groups.

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





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

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

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

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

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

SOME WORDS FROM OUR VOLUNTEERS...



Are there any Exclusion criteria?



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

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



HOW TO REFER TO THE GROW WELL PROJECT

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



Where and When are the sessions?

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

The Dusty Forge, 460 Cowbridge Rd West, Ely

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

Lansdowne Surgery, Sanatorium road, Canton

Thursdays: 11-1pm

Riverside Health Centre, Wellington St, Riverside

OUR FUNDERS AND PARTNERS



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



STARBUCKS®



GIG
CYMRU
NHS
WALES

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



cadwch keep
gymru'n wales
ddaclus tidy

ASDA foundation
Transforming Communities, Improving Lives



South and West Wales
De a Gorllewin Cymru



LOVELL



PRINTED OCT 2023

WRITTEN BY C TERRY & I HORTON