

IMPACT REPORT 2024-2025



trellis
gardening for wellbeing

A message from our CEO



Fiona Thackeray, CEO (pictured above, right) with Brian Cunningham, Trellis Patron & Head Gardener, Scone Palace

In 2024–25, Trellis worked with practitioners, volunteers, community groups and individuals to support people dealing with disability and disadvantage to improve their health and wellbeing through gardening, plants and nature connection. We also advocated strongly on behalf of everyone in the network to gain recognition for the sector and the positive impact it has on people's lives.

Although the funding landscape continues to be extremely difficult, we helped thousands of people transform their lives, thanks to the strength of the network, the generosity of our funders and supporters, and the dedication of our team.

We made significant progress with long-held project goals: creating a practitioner qualification, the Professional Development Award, now awaiting qualifications authority approval, and taking big strides with the UK Association for Therapeutic Horticulture, finally bringing the sector clear quality standards and professional progression routes, giving practitioners greater recognition and safeguarding the most vulnerable in society.

My sincere thanks to the whole therapeutic horticulture community whose devotion continues to inspire us. This was especially evident on World Therapeutic Horticulture Day when we united to celebrate the work of the amazing people in this field. Please do join us on 18th May to celebrate in 2026!

OUR VISION

Excellent therapeutic horticulture and its benefits are available to all.

OUR MISSION

To help people who need it most to improve their health and wellbeing through gardening, plants and nature connection.

A Year with Trellis



14,310 disabled & disadvantaged people supported to garden each week



174 enquiries answered



1000+ practitioners learning from our live demos, workshops and talks



It costs just £15.97 per person to deliver our vital services



69 new videos created with 27,000 views in the year on youtube



15 projects, given in-depth support, helping 481 *more* people to garden



530 projects in our network



158 people learning and sharing good practice at our network events



A summary of our work...

Enabling widespread provision

Our services support practitioners and communities to get gardening. Without our support many projects simply wouldn't get started. Often, practitioners and beneficiaries participate together in the activities we run - ensuring community engagement whilst also providing a sustainable way to share knowledge.



- **174 queries answered**, from training requests to adaptive gardening advice
- **15 in-depth site visits**, enabling 555 *more* people to garden including staff/volunteers, and beneficiaries with a range of support needs
- **21 live online demonstrations** with 203 attendees - both practitioners and beneficiaries
- **Free 'Have a Go' Packs** for people and organisations new to gardening for wellbeing
- A **'Garden Bites' monthly activity calendar** delivered straight to people's inboxes for inspiration and know-how
- **69 new videos created**, taking our YouTube Library count to 246
 - 27,000+ views, an increase of 216% from 2024
 - 672 hours watch time with 551 subscribers
- **10 new Activity Sheets** including:
 - Herbal Bath Bags
 - Gardens' Sound of Music
 - Quick Crops: Salad Leaf



"I love having the inspiration to try new activities and integrate new ideas into my practice!
I know my clients benefit through that."

I've actually forgotten most of the things I walked in with. So relaxing and uplifting. Your approach of doing things 'with' instead of 'to' people is such a rare role model of good practice.

The autism session was fantastic - guidance and practice both covered with clarity and care.

Strengthening the workforce



It is vital that the workforce who support the most vulnerable people in society are as knowledgeable and skilled as possible. This gives beneficiaries the best experience and referral agencies the assurance they need. To ensure excellent standards in provision for the sector and its practitioners, we're developing quality and practice guidance for the UK Association for Social & Therapeutic Horticulture.

- **Autism and Gardening Training Course** held in Stirling with 13 participants
- **11 public workshops** with 143 participants
- **11 private workshops** for people living with long term conditions such as cancer and dementia. Family members/carers attended to share the experience.
- **Professional Development Forum** meetings:
 - 3 sessions, 60 attendees with over 200 people expressing ongoing interest
 - created a new code of ethics and practice standards along with draft routes to registration published, plus ongoing consultation on other guidance.
- **Professional Development Award** practitioner qualification pending approval with the qualifications authority (SQA).



One practitioner explained how Trellis' support services have led to earlier hospital discharge and improved their clients' wellbeing:

"Engagement with the elderly population of the hospital has improved, with clients responding positively to a diverse range of winter activities and in some cases leading directly to improved patient experience in hospital and earlier than predicted discharge."

...and the difference we make

Building and sharing knowledge



Feeling part of something bigger, being connected to, and learning from, peers and experts in the field is essential for keeping practitioners enthused and informed of best practice around the world.

- **Annual Conference**

- **107 attendees**

- Keynote by Dr. Carly Wood on her recent University of Essex research on therapeutic horticulture and mental health
- Workshops on homelessness prevention and community gardening, curriculum-linked gardening & how to run sustainable organisations

- **Good Practice Sharing and Network Events**

- **3 regional gatherings:** 2 in Fife, 1 in Perth

- **51 total attendees** with The Haven Garden session captured on video, now viewed 29 times, increasing the learning possibilities for those unable to attend

- **16 Lectures & Presentations with 417 attendees**

- **An improved website** with:

- Project directory and map
- Comprehensive research summary pages
- FAQ section
- Simplified query & event booking systems
- Evidence infographics for carers, patients and health professionals

"Feeling part of a wider social and therapeutic horticulture group makes me feel enthused about leading our gardening sessions."



Trellis is awesome! You opened my eyes to this field. What you do really matters. Fantastic day, full of ideas and energy. Great speakers and hands-on activities. So inspiring!

Championing the sector



Evidence of the effectiveness of therapeutic horticulture as a health intervention continues to grow. As the voice and trusted authority for the field, we use this data to advocate for recognition of practitioners and their work, at policy and strategy level.

- **12 external events and talks, including:**

- International People Plant Symposium
- British Society of Lifestyle Medicine: Reaching Underserved Communities
- British Association of Social Workers Conference



89% of respondents said that they felt more confident to run gardening sessions after attending our live demos



90% of survey respondents felt inspired by our resources



88% said their skills & knowledge had increased from attending Trellis demos/workshops or training



86% felt more connected to others in the field thanks to Trellis



78% of respondents said their clients' connection to nature had increased as a result of our training

"Lovely to use senses. Therapeutic and takes you out of your thinking head! Thank you :)"

Murdostoun Brain Injury Rehabilitation Centre



In early 2024, staff at the Murdostoun Brain Injury Rehabilitation and Neurological Care Centre in Wishaw approached Trellis for support in reviving a neglected courtyard. The Centre, which provides care and neurorehabilitation for adults with brain injuries, sought to create a space that was welcoming, therapeutic, and accessible to patients and their families.



Trellis Project Advisor Joan collaborated closely with the team to reimagine the space. The once-gloomy courtyard was not only the safest and most accessible outdoor area for patients, but also a prime opportunity to support nature-based rehabilitation work. Joan developed a low-maintenance garden design focused on sensory stimulation, social interaction, and gentle gardening activities. Staff rolled up their sleeves, clearing the area themselves in what became a rewarding team-building effort.



Gardening sessions now involve potting, watering, weeding, and seasonal tasks – all tailored to individual rehab goals. The garden has become a valued space for physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech and music therapy, and simply for taking time out in nature.

The impact has been significant. The garden is now a calm, sociable hub where patients gather, relax, and reconnect with others. One patient, previously reluctant to start his day, now finds purpose in tending to the plants. Others have contributed creative chalk murals and enjoyed peaceful visits with family.

For many, it's become a space to reflect, recharge, and re-engage with life.

"We needed help and that help arrived in the form of the lovely ladies from Trellis. Not only did Joan give us a plan, she gave us the motivation to get our garden back on track. Following her advice and guidance the team really rolled up their sleeves and got to work. Our patients now have an area which they can enjoy."

— Lorna, Rehab Assistant







Challenges included storm damage and ongoing accessibility issues, such as the need for handrails and a water supply. But the transformation has sparked further ambition. With guidance from a follow-up visit in May 2025, plans are underway for wheelchair-accessible raised beds, shaded seating, improved planting, and integrated activities linking gardening with art, craft, and cooking.

This evolving garden is more than a physical transformation – it is a growing part of the Centre's rehabilitation toolkit, fostering connection, confidence, and wellbeing for patients, families, and staff alike.

Ways you can change a life with Trellis:



-  Become a Friend of Trellis
-  Leave a gift in your will
-  Open your garden
-  Celebration & commemorative giving



Sign up for news, training and inspiration at trellisscotland.org.uk

t: 01738 624348 | e: info@trellisscotland.org.uk

Follow us on social



Trellis is a charity registered with OSCR

Charity Number SC037429

© Trellis