

Over the year, our training and skills sharing events, field support and query services, helped many new groups set up and connect with others in the network, taking the number of therapeutic gardening projects we support to over **480**. By enabling people to gain new skills, knowledge and contacts, we helped over **12,000 people to improve their health and wellbeing through horticulture**.



Children with visual disabilities learn to 'grow a pizza', Falkirk, June.

- We welcomed **30 new gardens** to the network, representing an additional 1050 people who were able to benefit from new therapeutic gardening services (750 service users and 300 staff and volunteers)
- The Trellis events programme helped **1664** people gain **skills and knowledge** to improve their projects
- Our experienced fieldworkers helped **35 start-up groups find plots** and funding, get their design just right and make links to others who can help them.
- Our e-Bulletin provided over 2,000 groups and individuals with **research evidence, funding, training and policy news**. Trellis social media channels helped more people pick up information and make useful connections: 1,062 Facebook likes and over 9,000 followers on Twitter.
- By keeping costs low, we were able to put **92%** of our income to work to directly fund **our charitable activities**

Helping Therapeutic Gardeners Share Learning and Good Practice.



- We hosted a series of **4 Good Practice & Skills Sharing events** across Scotland, creating time and space for **114 people** to come together to share knowledge, skills and good practice in therapeutic gardening, a vital part of the work we do.
- Sadly our Dundee Network Meeting, hosted in conjunction with Dundee City Council had to be cancelled at the end of March due to covid-19 with 60 people registered.

“Thank you for all your help in getting me started with therapeutic gardening projects. I fully intend to keep going next year. Meeting N and her friends has been a great help for me. I think the people side of these projects is truly amazing.” JM, December 2019

- In addition, and a major blow to our practitioners and our income, the 14th Annual Conference at the beginning of March was also cancelled amid fears that a gathering of 150 people, many of whom worked with vulnerable people, would be too great a risk in the spread of covid-19.

We provide training events where everyone can learn new skills, increase their confidence and improve their gardening projects

- In 2019-20 our **training and seasonal workshop sessions** brought new ideas, fun, confidence and learning to **157 people**. Training topics included: *Adaptive Gardening* (Kinghorn, Fife), and *Health and Safety in the Garden* (at Ninewells Hospital, Dundee).
- We ran customised **taster and demonstration sessions for 298 people** including young carers, people with dementia, prisoners with disabilities and a group with severe Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD) at New Victoria Hospital in Glasgow. The 13 participants created herb planters to take home during our session, which used (among other things) specially pre-dampened compost to avoid the risk of introducing irritant dust in the air. The group found that taking part in gentle activity helped ease their symptoms while working with plants in the company of the others lifted their mood. What they learned about easy ways of growing herbs they will be able use back home to boost mood and activity levels and ultimately improve their wellbeing.
- Our training days have attracted people from all sectors including NHS professionals, community volunteers, teachers, prison staff and care workers.



We develop new factsheets and information resources to answer the needs of enquirers, reflecting themes arising from our Information Service, events and field visits.

- We rearranged a central part of the structure of our **website** so that people from different sectors or working with specific target groups can find a direct route to the information they need.
- We created **6 new factsheets and 3 new videos** to help practitioners expand their repertoire of inspiring seasonal activity ideas and keep their groups engaged, even during the winter months. New titles include *Planting Fairy Gardens*, and *Collecting and Processing Leaves and Flowers*. The subjects for our factsheets come from questions addressed to our Information Service and themes arising from our Good Practice and Training days.

“...It's great to have you share your gardening expertise and it's great to bring the goodness from outside inside. It's been a breath of fresh air.” —B, HMP Barlinnie.

We offer a Query and Information Service to anyone needing help relating to therapeutic gardening or with setting up and developing their projects.

- Our Information Service answered **190 queries**. We helped Drumchapel police create a community garden for and with local people; a women's shelter who wanted training on how to run gardening activities for their residents; an individual recovering from severe depression who wanted to find regular activity with company to help get out of the house, meet new people and get more active.
- Our Fieldworkers provided **on-site support to 33 projects throughout Scotland**. Their advisory visits and follow up support helped people trying to overcome addictions to create an indoor garden at Patchwork Community in Kilmarnock. In the north, students at Inverness Academy worked with us to create a new accessible garden and work towards a horticulture award. At Brimmond School in Aberdeen, our fieldworker helped children with visual impairments to create a sensory garden.



Patchwork Community Indoor Growing Space

We raise the profile of therapeutic gardening through media work, presentations and policy forums. This increases access to and support for therapeutic gardening initiatives.

- We represented therapeutic gardening projects at over **20 National events** including meetings of the Grow Your Own Working Group, the Generations Working Together network meetings, training seminars for the **Care About Physical Activity** campaign and Scottish Prison Service Offender Outcomes Planning Event.
- Other events included a **Scottish Government Adult Learning** conference in Edinburgh, a garden centre **Christmas Fayre**, in Fife, a **Staff Wellness Day** at Forth Valley College and the Horticulture Industry Grow Careers event at, Edinburgh Botanic Garden.
- Our staff, trustees and patrons gave interviews about the benefits of gardening and the work of therapeutic garden projects, for local newspapers in the Johnston Press Group (Summer, 2019) and about our newly published book, 'Plastic-free Gardening' for the **Sunday Post** (1st Dec 2019).

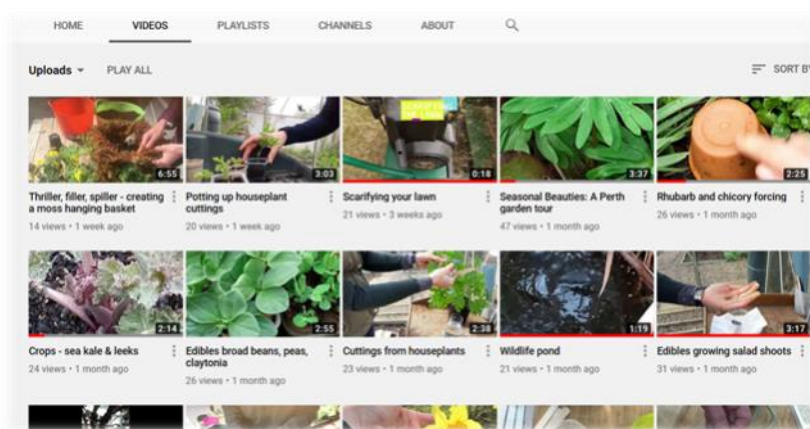
“Highly recommend this course; it is inspiring, extremely engaging, practical and relevant to many settings. Joan makes the course extremely fun, inspiring and worth the 320+ mile round trip.

Thank you Trellis for providing such fabulous opportunities .” GC, Nov, 2019.

Our response in light of covid-19 for our network

With the start of lockdown came new challenges for the support we provided to our network.

- We began the creation of **simple 'how to' videos** with 3 created in March and a further 14 added to our youtube channel at the time this report was produced at the end of May. This provided support for vulnerable people to garden at home and help care settings to continue to run gardening activities
- We started a **weekly 'coffee and chat' meeting** online on 8th April open to practitioners in our network to share the issues they were experiencing, ideas for maintaining contact with the vulnerable people they might ordinarily support at a gardening project and to understand how we can best support them as an organisation during this period.
- We started a regular **blog: The (lockdown) princess and the peas** to stay connected with our practitioners and help keep the mood light and nature connection possible even for those shielding.
- We provided **regular mini-bulletins** to inform our network. It included activity ideas, sources for templates for risk assessments and public notices during lockdown and sources of funding during the pandemic. Much of the content for these bulletins came out of discussions during our coffee and chat meetings with practitioners.
- We created a special **'stay well and garden' page** on our website with an abundance of information, inspiration and activity ideas all in one place for easy access.
- We got underway to **develop training online**. With our Summer Seasonal Gardening training cancelled in May we want to be ready to be able to run training online in the Autumn. Plans are also afoot to put procedures in place to run demos and training whilst observing current social distancing and safety guidelines in relation to covid-19 when it is safe to do so.
- We sent **activity packages to care homes** we should have been working with during this period. The first sent was a 'grow-along' wigwam which was received with great appreciation.



"I've already got some more great ideas from the chat on Wednesday so I'm excited to be able to add more to send out to our community. It's comforting to know we are all in the same boat! Stay well, and thanks for doing a great job!"

Rachel MacLauchlan, Community Activities Organiser, Alzheimer Scotland