

# Gardening4Health Newsletter

## Edition 4 Winter 2025

With January finally behind us, and the days are beginning to lengthen - the first hints of spring are appearing outside. Under the fallen leaves and within the ice-cold soil: there is the stirring of hope. We at Gardening4Health are filled with anticipation for the growing season ahead.

In the same way the Gardening4Health shoots of growth are slowly but surely developing. We're turning our attention to a new website, and also to fundraising so that we can start to turn our dreams into reality: of which more, hopefully very soon!

In this newsletter we're also sharing important updates from wider community of Green Therapy practitioners. We hope you find it a source of warmth and inspiration as we look forward to spring, and all the promise it holds!

We're also excited to share news of our upcoming symposium and ways you can get involved in shaping the future of community gardening.

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### Save the Date!

Our next Gardening4Health Symposium is to be held back at [Tuppenny Barn](#), near Chichester, on **30<sup>th</sup> June**.

We're just finalising the content, but it promises to be another day full of fascinating talks and opportunities for making new connections.

Bookings will be available very soon. Watch this space...



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## Online Networking events for STH Practitioners hosted by The Chartered Institute of Horticulture

For those of you who don't know about it, there's a brilliant online networking group run by the CIH and coordinated by Sue Jefferies. For example there was a networking event this week entitled

**'How the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns have impacted on STH projects and programmes across the UK'**



Members working in STH and those interested in the area are always welcome to attend.

If you're not included in this network, do make contact by emailing:

[cihsth@horticulture.org.uk](mailto:cihsth@horticulture.org.uk)

You don't have to be a CIH member as long as you're an STH practitioner, researcher or aspiring to become one of the above!

<https://www.horticulture.org.uk/cih-social-and-therapeutic-horticulture/>

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## Tell us about gardening in your community and win gift vouchers



Do you grow or garden in your community?

We have teamed up with the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) to understand more about your experience growing or gardening in your community.

This is part of a major national research project to learn more about community growing spaces, your input will help shape support for community gardening in future.

Take the 15-minute survey about your community growing space here:

<https://link.mhminsight.com/GEN>

The survey closes on 31 March 2025. If you have any questions about the survey, please email [communities@rhs.org.uk](mailto:communities@rhs.org.uk)

As a thank you for taking part, respondents will have a chance to enter a prize draw. Eight lucky winners will be selected at random to receive £125 in National Garden Gift vouchers. The winners will be notified directly by email by Monday 7 April 2025.

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### The Effectiveness of Social and Therapeutic Horticulture for treating Anxiety and Depression

**Have you thought about trying social and therapeutic horticulture?**

Social and Therapeutic Horticulture uses **gardening activities** to improve health. Evidence shows it could:

- Reduce symptoms of mild to severe depression and anxiety
- Enhance skills, knowledge and social relationships
- Improve both physical & mental health

It can be used where depression and anxiety are linked to other health conditions or concerns (e.g. loneliness) and alongside other types of treatments. It can take place indoors and outdoors, and in both community and healthcare settings.

**FIND OUT ABOUT GARDENS NEAR YOU BY:**  
Speaking to your GP, Social Prescriber or health professional  
OR  
Searching for a local provider and self-referral information at  
<https://gardening4health.co.uk>  
<https://www.trellisscotland.org.uk/>

This poster was co-produced with lived experience experts and STH stakeholders

**MQ** Mental health research | Scan the QR code to access the poster online | University of Essex

You may remember the excellent Infographics produced by Carly Wood and her team from the University of Essex that we publicised in the Autumn Newsletter.

Never one to let the grass grow under her feet, Carly has been busy – and recently had a review of the evidence-base for STH in treating anxiety and depression published - find it here:

Frontiers | Effectiveness of social and therapeutic horticulture for reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety: a systematic review and meta-analysis.

<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychiatry/articles/10.3389/fpsyt.2024.1507354/full>

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## The National Gardens Scheme

Did you know that the NGS was founded in 1927 with the intention of helping to fund the UK's first District Nursing service. Known to most as the charity behind the Yellow Book open gardens, it retains a close link between gardening and wellbeing to this day.

In recent times the charity has built on this link through a Gardens and Health Programme which raises awareness of both the physical and mental health benefits of gardens and gardening for everyone, and of the importance of healthy gardens to wider biodiversity.

Celebrated in May each year (3-11 May in 2025) with a dedicated Gardens and Health Week, the NGS works to promote gardens and health throughout the year, linking service users from its beneficiaries with free garden visits and funding garden and health projects.

<https://ngs.org.uk/gardens-and-health-week/>

### **The Little Yellow Book of Gardens and Health**

What started as a record of the heightened awareness of gardens as we headed out of the pandemic in 2021, has become an increasingly significant annual publication and a highlight of the NGS' Gardens and Health Week each May. It's a lovely publication, full of useful facts and tips – you can view the last four editions of the Little Yellow Book of Gardens and Health [here](#).



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## **Green and Nature-Based Social Prescribing Survey**

The National Academy for Social Prescribing is inviting practitioners, provider organisations, social prescribing link workers, and community connectors offering nature-based activities to share their insights in a short survey.

This survey will help the cross-government '**Preventing and Tackling Mental Ill Health through Green Social Prescribing**' programme understand the skills and workforce development needs in this important sector.

It will only take 10 minutes to complete, and the closing date is Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup> February 2025. If you're able to help with this, here's the link: <https://forms.office.com/e/fmQVyFCsW3>

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## Trellis Therapeutic Horticulture Conference 2025



The Trellis Scotland Annual Conference will take place on Friday March 14th at The Bield at Blackruthven, Perth.

The conference is a great opportunity to learn about the latest research on therapeutic gardening, hear from inspiring speakers, and network with other practitioners and researchers. As well as some really interesting workshops, this year the conference features a keynote speech on 'Therapeutic Horticulture in Mental Healthcare' from none other than Dr Carly Wood.

If you're interested in attending the Trellis Conference, you can register [here](#).

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To finish, we at Gardening4Health wanted to say huge congratulations to our friend and patron: Dr Olivia Chapple, who went to Windsor in December to receive her OBE from the King. A richly deserved recognition of her amazing work as founder and Chair of the Board of Trustees of Horatio's garden.

Nobody has done more to bring Therapeutic Horticulture into the UK's hospitals.

