

Application for charitable funds expenditure over £10,000

Please complete this form for all charitable expenditure requests over the value of £10,000.

Please read the application guidelines available at [Charities - Home \(sharepoint.com\)](https://www.sharepoint.com/Charities-Home) to help you with completing your funding request. Please direct any questions to: charitablefundsfinance.hdd@wales.nhs.uk / 01267 283055 / 01827 1655.

Section 1: Applicant			
Lead applicant			
Contact name:	Neil Mason	Stuart Bancroft	
Job title:	Head of Older Adult Mental Health	Assistant General Manager	
Department/Service:	Older Adult Mental Health	Carmarthenshire System	
Directorate:	Mental Health & Learning Disabilities Clinical Care Group	Community & Integrated Medicine Clinical Care Group	
Lead director			
Contact name:	Andrew Carruthers		
Job title:	Chief Operating Officer		
Section 2: Application summary			
2.1 Title of charitable funds application:			
Development of Sensory Gardens at Prince Philip Hospital (PPH), Llanelli.			
2.2 Brief description of your application:			
In no more than 50 words please tell us what you are requesting charitable funds for.			
The request is for funding to create therapeutic sensory gardens which transform the experience of patients, their families, and staff at Prince Philip Hospital's Mynydd Mawr and Bryngolau Wards, providing an enhanced healing environment for patients experiencing certain mental health and dementia associated health challenges as well as being available to support staff wellbeing. This important and ambitious project aims to achieve best practice in actively supporting the optimisation of wellbeing and rehabilitation and recovery of older patients through the creation of an outstanding sensory space.			
2.3 Total value of charitable funds requested:		Option A: £183,287.53 (excluding the bowling facility) Option B: £200,087.53 (including the bowling facility)	
Note	Project cost (inc. VAT)	DCP contribution	Charitable funding

			requested
Option A (excluding the bowling facility)	£209,287.53	£26,000.00	£183,287.53
Option B (including the bowling facility)	£226,087.53	£26,000.00	£200,087.53
2.4 Duration of project		Project start date:	01 February 2026
		Project end date:	30 April 2026
2.5 Strategic priorities			
Please identify which of the charity's strategic priorities this application relates to (select all that apply).			
Patient experience: Enhancing the patient experience throughout the whole care and treatment journey.	Staff experience: Supporting the wellbeing and professional development of University Health Board staff.	Innovation: Encouraging and supporting innovation and excellence in the delivery of healthcare.	
Yes	Yes	Yes	
2.6 Expenditure type			
Please select the type of expenditure your application relates to (select all that apply).			
Medical equipment <i>please also complete Appendix 1</i>	Service development or improvement	Staff welfare and Wellbeing	
No	Yes	Yes	
Building/refurbishment Work <i>please also complete Appendix 2</i>	Other <i>If 'yes' selected, please state expenditure type in box oppos</i>	<i>Expenditure type:</i>	
Yes	No		
Section 3: Case for support			
3.1 Funding request:			
Please tell us what you are requesting charitable funds for. Give us as much information as possible so that we can determine whether your request is eligible for support.			
<p>We are requesting funds to create therapeutic gardens which provide a full sensory experience for patients, their families and staff at Mynydd Mawr Ward, a 15-bed elderly care rehabilitation unit and the adjacent Bryngolau Ward, a 15-bed Older Adult Mental Health Unit based at Prince Philip Hospital (PPH), Llanelli.</p> <p>Based on current evidence on the advantages that sensory gardens offer to dementia patients, the Mynydd Mawr and Bryngolau ward gardens fall short of the minimum requirements for patients who are frail, elderly, and/or live with dementia. This should not come as a surprise given this area was never designed for this purpose.</p> <p>The funds will facilitate the creation of new gardens, which have been designed with healing attributes known to optimise recovery and wellbeing and will be available to the two adjoining wards and will take the therapeutic benefits of an effective outdoor space to new levels, demonstrating the health board's ambition to provide the very best care to patients, and the very best environment for staff to deliver care more effectively.</p> <p>To develop the state-of-the-art sensory gardens, the proposed works to be funded by charitable funds would include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a dementia-friendly sensory walk and pathways. • Provision of sheltered outdoor spaces for dining, resting and therapy. • Development of smaller, intimate spaces for quiet contemplation and private 			

time with visitors.

- Provision of gardening activities, to afford patients options for activity and to become engaged: this will take the form of raised planters which are accessible to all.
- Planting of dementia-friendly herbs and fruits to stimulate sight, touch and smell.
- Artwork and installations to stimulate the senses.
- Inclusion of bird feeders and native rich planting to encourage birds and other wildlife to visit and provide birdsong.
- Creation of spaces for wheelchair users, and provision of wheelchair-accessible outdoor furniture.
- Inclusion of tactile, colourful and varied planting and grass areas to stimulate the senses, evoke memories and varied textures underfoot.
- Installation of handrails around the main walkways for increased safety and stability.
- Laying of level and bound surfaces suitable for wheelchair movement.
- The option to include a raised bowls lawn facility for the exclusive use of Mynydd Mawr Ward.

The spaces are enclosed for safety, privacy and security and have consideration for hard and soft landscape materials appropriate to dementia care and physical rehabilitation and in keeping with nature wherever possible. To this end, advantage will be taken of the recent capital investment made which restores and enhances the perimeter fencing at not insignificant capital costs. The south facing aspect is also a virtue to be taken advantage of to the overall benefit of the patient experience. Further Discretionary Capital funding (DCP) is also being made available to offset some aspect of the scheme which could be considered maintenance by definition. This amounts to a contribution of £26,000 to the scheme.

The project brief has been developed by the Mynydd Mawr and Bryngolau Ward teams and approved by the PPH Unscheduled Care and Mental Health and Learning Disabilities (MHL) management teams. Concept designs were revised in July/August 2025 by the Hywel Dda University Health Board (HDdUHB) design team following a design review workshop with the Mynydd Mawr and Bryngolau Ward clinical teams:



Paths and Planting



Planters and Accessible Gardening



Accessible Furniture and Shelters



3.2 Reason for request:

Please tell us why this expenditure is needed, how the need has been identified and who this has been discussed with.

This expenditure is needed for the following reasons:

1. There is an opportunity presented by the outdoor space to create sensory gardens which would greatly improve the experience, optimisation of wellbeing and rehabilitation of patients which may indirectly decrease their length of stay in hospital. There is also an opportunity to create spaces which will holistically enhance the wellbeing of patients' families and friends, as well as staff working on the wards.

The expenditure would offer patients, their families, and staff at the two wards with:

- A safe, contemporary dementia-friendly outdoor garden environment.
- Optimising levels of stimulation and activity to promote recovery and wellbeing.
- Bespoke access to nature, fresh air and a sense of space.
- Opportunities for physical exercise and movement as part of rehabilitation.
- Increased engagement with other patients, relatives, friends and staff.
- Secluded areas for privacy, dignity and independence.
- Extended range of meaningful outdoor activities adding purpose and pleasure during the episode of care and treatment.

The gardens will provide tranquil, intimate spaces with seating and sensory planting which will offer colour, fragrance and texture all year round as well as attracting wildlife. They will create sanctuary and immersion in nature, a natural and accessible place away from the intensity of in-patient ward activity as well as a place for patients to meet with family and friends, a place for relatives to take a break or enjoy privacy with their loved-ones, and for staff to take well-earned breaks.

The gardens will provide safe, bespoke multi-purpose areas to accommodate patient rehabilitation, exercise and activity. Prolonged periods of sitting and bed rest can reduce a patient's ability to walk independently and through an elevated risk of de-conditioning can contribute to deterioration of physical function. Improved space for physical rehabilitation will contribute positively to patients' ability to live independently.

The need for the new gardens has been identified by staff working on Bryngolau and Mynydd Mawr Wards. It has long been recognised that patients on the wards would benefit significantly from having access to safe, stimulating and therapeutically designed outdoor spaces. The ward teams have been working since 2018 to develop and implement plans for improvement works. However, due to investment capacity and delays as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic these plans have not yet been realised.

In 2023, a Project Team was formed to oversee the project and delivery of a capital scheme to modernise and improve the outdoor spaces at Mynydd Mawr and Bryngolau Wards. The Project Team comprised of representatives from the PPH Unscheduled Care and MHLD management teams, PPH Estates Team, HDdUHB Design Team, and the Hywel Dda Health Charities (HDdHC) Fundraising Team.

The aims of the project are supported by a growing body of evidence that documents the benefits of access to nature and green spaces for both mental and physical health, including positive outcomes for heart rates and blood pressure, stress levels, mood and self-esteem. Additionally, incidents of stress and distress, at times culminating in violence and aggression arising from reduced agitation levels have been well documented when access to sensory spaces is available.

2. The outside areas at Mynydd Mawr and Bryngolau were not designed for the healing and wellbeing of patients, particularly those who might be frail, elderly, and/or living with dementia. The gardens are not currently in full use as they do not provide an appropriate or safe space for patients. Paths and walking areas are uneven as the tarmac has lifted due to tree root progression; there are no handrails to support frail patients; seating and raised borders have become rotten and unsafe; plants and shrubs have prickles and thorns and there are no covered areas to provide shelter from the sun or light rain. This means that patients who could benefit greatly from time outdoors are largely confined to the wards.

3.3 Project delivery plan:

Please tell us how you will deliver this charitable-funded project. Provide a timeline for delivery with clear milestones or phases of activity to allow you to monitor progress effectively.

Item	Date
CFC and Corporate Trustee consideration of funding request	September 2025
Tender acceptance	September/October 2025
Contractor mobilisation	February 2026
Construction phase	February - April 2026
Opening of gardens	May 2026

3.4 Risks:

Please tell us what risks have been identified and how they will be mitigated.

The following risks have been identified:

Risk 1: Conflicting expectations between clinical staff, operational managers and design team.

Mitigation:

- Project team to continue to liaise and engage with all stakeholders throughout the development.
- Regular communication and updates to stakeholders to align goals and expectations.

Risk 2: Gardens becoming sources of infection or safety hazards.

Mitigation:

- Collaborate with health and safety and gardening experts on plant selection and garden layout.
- Specification of non-toxic, low-allergen plants and easily cleanable surfaces.
- Provide clear signage, accessible pathways, and adequate lighting.
- Collaborate with estates colleagues on bird feeders and items to encourage birds and other wildlife to visit.

Risk 3: Gardens may be unusable in certain weather conditions.

Mitigation:

- Incorporate covered seating, windbreaks, and shade structures.
- Use hardy, native plants that require minimal intervention.
- Designs will facilitate garden views that can be enjoyed from inside.

Risk 4: Garden deteriorates due to lack of upkeep and maintenance.

Mitigation:

- Specification of low maintenance weather tolerant materials in the design.
- Choose low-maintenance, drought-tolerant plants and materials.
- Schedule regular inspections and upkeep activities.
- Develop a maintenance plan with estates colleagues and dedicated volunteers.
- Foster community ownership through staff/patient involvement.

Risk 5: Gardens may be damaged or misused by users.

Mitigation:

- Specification of durable, vandal-resistant materials and fixtures.
- Ensure gardens are inspected regularly.
- Foster community ownership through staff/patient involvement.

Risk 6: Garden does not achieve desired therapeutic outcomes.

Mitigation:

- Design is based on evidence-based principles.
- Healthcare professionals have been involved in the planning of the gardens to align with therapeutic objectives.
- Monitor impact through surveys and usage data.

Risk 7: Reputational risk if the funds raised to date for this project via the public appeal cannot be spent to achieve aims of the project

Mitigation:

- Proposals for alternative uses of the funding raised to be presented to key stakeholders for consideration and approval.

3.5 Additionality:

Please tell us how this expenditure is considered 'above and beyond' core NHS provision.

Whilst a small element of the scheme can be considered maintenance works by definition, the majority of the expenditure is above and beyond core NHS provision. The plan is to create areas which are not solely functional outdoor spaces which meet health and safety criteria, but which afford a stimulating sensory outdoor garden experience which are ambitious in their creation of engaging and therapeutic spaces for patients, their friends and families, and staff.

The project is considered eligible for charitable funding under the following category of the charity's eligibility criteria:

- Building and/or refurbishment works that create more welcoming and comfortable surroundings for patients, services users, visitors and staff, where no NHS resources are available and will not be available for the foreseeable time (five years minimum). Including improvement to outdoor spaces for patients, services users, visitors and staff.

The scheme has evolved since inception, from one which originally centred around a general upgrade of the external space, to a full sensory garden experience. The gardens will incorporate elements which are beyond basic provision, yet will have a significant impact on the wellbeing of everyone using the gardens. These elements include:

- Sheltered outdoor spaces for dining, resting and therapy.
- Smaller, intimate spaces for quiet contemplation and private time with visitors.
- Accessible raised planters which are accessible to all, promoting garden activities.
- Artwork and installations to stimulate the senses.
- Planting of dementia-friendly herbs and fruits to stimulate sight, touch and smell.
- Inclusion of tactile, colourful and varied planting and grassed areas providing varied textures underfoot to stimulate the senses, evoke memories.
- Inclusion of bird feeders and native rich planting to encourage birds and other wildlife to visit and provide birdsong, enhancing the sense of human wellbeing.
- The option to include a raised bowls lawn with edge ditches and other multiuse spaces.

In autumn 2024 and spring 2025, Healthcare Inspectorate Wales (HIW) completed separate unannounced inspections on Bryngolau and Mynydd Mawr Wards. The inspections found that the wards' gardens did not support the health, safety and wellbeing of patients and were unsuitable for the patient groups.

Recommendations were made that the environmental issues identified should be promptly addressed to provide access for patients to support their physical and mental wellbeing.

General grounds maintenance and remedial work has already been undertaken by local estates colleagues to address the health and safety recommendations made by HIW. However, this has not changed the basis of the proposed scope of works associated with the provision of the sensory garden, which goes above and beyond routine maintenance works.

In 2024/25 the Health Board invested £83,000 of DCP funding in replacement fencing around the perimeter of the outdoor areas of the wards as part of a capital maintenance work. This step is considered an important enabler to the sensory

garden development and preserves the charitable component to one that is wholly in keeping with the eligibility criteria for such funds.

The Health Board (HB) has also made provision for a £26,000 DCP funding allocation from its 2025/26 programme for this project. This is to cover the cost of site clearance and ground works to level the site and the removal of broken tarmac. This contribution for enabling works ensures the main focus of the project remains the provision of the sensory garden experience which is above and beyond routine maintenance works.

When set against the deliverables and expectations the development area involved is not insignificant and given the current cost rates for delivering works in hospital premises in the post pandemic period, the amount of investment sought is considered reasonable. This has been endorsed by the HB's retained professional cost advisers – AtkinsRealis.

The project which brings four essential factors together (orientation, patient type, charitable resource and sympathetic design and construction) will create a standout facility that the HB can showcase in the future as an exemplar.

Although a small element of this project will invariably involve repair and replacement of some building elements, the scheme's main focus is on the delivery of an enhanced sensory experience. This includes dementia friendly walkways and pathways and the creation of level and bound surfaces suitable for wheelchairs; features which go beyond what can be considered maintenance repair works.

Section 4: Impact

4.1 Impact:

Please tell us about the positive changes or effects that will take place as a result of this expenditure (e.g. improved patient experience, improvements to patient health, efficiencies in the provision of care). You will be required to submit an evaluation report to summarise the impact at a later date.

The creation of therapeutic, sensory gardens at the hospital will have far-reaching and transformative impacts on patients, their families and friends, hospital staff, and the HB. By providing a safe, engaging, and therapeutic environment, the garden will address a range of needs related to mental and physical health, emotional wellbeing, and social interaction, while contributing positively to the hospital's overall efforts to deliver the very best care to its population. The project also embraces the HB's operational strategies.

1. Positive effects for patients

- **Dementia-friendly design:** For patients living with dementia, the sensory garden will provide a safe, familiar, and stimulating environment. The sensory elements, such as tactile plants, bright colours, and bird feeders, will engage the senses, helping to reduce agitation, anxiety, and confusion. This can promote a sense of calm and emotional stability.
- **Stress reduction:** Nature has well-documented benefits in lowering stress and improving mood. A calming outdoor environment can offer patients a space to relax, reflect, and regain a sense of autonomy and normality, which is particularly valuable for individuals in rehabilitation or those with dementia.
- **Physical exercise and rehabilitation:** The gardens will offer a safe, accessible space for patients with physical health challenges to engage in

gentle physical activities like walking, stretching, or gardening. Raised beds and outdoor therapy areas will facilitate rehabilitation, aiding mobility and coordination in a non-clinical, relaxed setting.

- **Improved sleep patterns:** Exposure to natural light and outdoor spaces, and outdoor activities in the fresh air, have been shown to help regulate circadian rhythms, promoting better sleep patterns for patients. Improved sleep is important to overall recovery and wellbeing.
- **Engagement and purpose:** Gardening activities, such as potting plants and tending to raised beds, will provide patients with a sense of accomplishment and purpose. These activities are particularly beneficial for those with dementia as they are often familiar, sensory, and routine-based, supporting cognitive stimulation.
- **Social interaction:** The therapeutic garden will create opportunities for patients to interact with one another and with friends and family, share meals, and participate in group activities, which fosters socialisation and reduces feelings of isolation. This is especially important for older patients who may feel disconnected from the outside world during longer stays at hospital.

2. Positive effects for families and friends

- **Emotional support and connection:** The garden will offer families and friends a peaceful, supportive environment in which they can visit and spend quality time with their loved ones. Sheltered outdoor dining areas and private spaces will allow for meaningful, intimate interactions away from the clinical setting.
- **Mental health benefits for visitors:** Being in a natural, serene environment has been shown to reduce stress, not only for patients but also for family members. Visiting a therapeutic garden allows families to feel more connected and less anxious during their loved one's treatment.
- **Improved communication:** The sensory elements of the garden (e.g., tactile plants, visual stimuli, bird sounds) can stimulate conversation, encouraging patients and their families to engage in dialogue that might be difficult within the confines of the hospital room. For patients with dementia, these stimuli can help prompt recognition and memory, improving the quality of family interactions.

3. Positive effects for hospital staff

- **Staff wellbeing and morale:** Healthcare staff working in environments with access to outdoor spaces tend to experience fewer episodes of burnout arising from stress, and fatigue. The therapeutic garden will provide staff with an opportunity to step away from the clinical environment and emotionally reset, improving their overall wellbeing in the process.
- **Enhanced job satisfaction:** Staff will likely feel a greater sense of job satisfaction by working in an environment that fosters patient-centred care and wellbeing. The garden's potential for improving patient outcomes could enhance staff motivation and pride in their workplace.
- **Patient engagement and therapy support:** Staff can use the garden as a therapeutic space for both physical and emotional rehabilitation, offering patients a change of scenery and a way to incorporate nature into their recovery plans. For example, therapists can use the garden for outdoor exercises and movement therapy.

4. Positive effects for the health board

- **Alignment with HB's strategic goals:** The new gardens support the delivery of many of the strategic objectives of the HB (please see 6.2 below).
- **Reduction in healthcare costs:** Providing patients with therapeutic spaces can reduce the length of hospital stays by fostering faster recovery.
- **Improved patient outcomes:** Studies have shown that nature-based interventions can improve recovery times for patients, reduce the incidence of falls, and improve the mental health of patients, which directly impacts the quality of care and hospital performance metrics.
- **Contribution to sustainability:** The installation of bird feeders, sensory plants, and raised beds promotes sustainability by encouraging ecological engagement and supporting biodiversity. This can positively reflect on the HB's commitment to environmental responsibility. Using native plants and low-maintenance landscaping reduces the need for pesticides and fertilizers, contributing to a more sustainable environment.
- **Best practice:** The gardens would demonstrate the HB's ambition for its patients and staff, and its commitment to providing the very best care which sets standards of best practice in Wales.

4.2 Patient benefit:

Please summarise how patients will benefit from this expenditure. If patients will not directly benefit (i.e. the main beneficiaries are staff), please tell us about the direct benefits to staff as well as the indirect patient benefits.

The therapeutic gardens will provide numerous benefits, tailored to the needs of older patients living with diagnoses such as dementia, and those with physical health challenges.

1. Benefits for older patients with diagnoses such as dementia

- **Memory stimulation:** The gardens' dementia-friendly planting and tactile features provide multi-sensory stimuli which can help trigger memories and provide patients with opportunities to connect to familiar sensations. This is particularly important for dementia patients who may have difficulty recalling words or faces but often retain sensory memories.
- **Emotional regulation:** Spending time in nature has been shown to help reduce agitation, lower anxiety, and improve mood. A sensory garden provides a peaceful, stimulating environment where patients can spend time reflecting, avoiding overwhelming stimuli, and helping regulate emotional states. Natural sounds, such as birds singing, and the visual appeal of the colourful plants and artwork can soothe agitated or anxious patients, providing an environment where they can feel calm and comfortable.
- **Reduced symptoms of depression and anxiety:** Exposure to natural spaces has been proven to reduce feelings of depression. For dementia patients, a therapeutic garden can be a source of comfort and joy, improving their quality of life, providing a break from the clinical setting, and offering a more natural, restorative alternative.
- **Encouraging socialisation:** A key benefit of the garden is that it offers opportunities for social interaction in a less intimidating environment than the hospital ward. Patients can engage with each other while sitting in sheltered outdoor spaces for dining or therapy, sharing meals, or participating in simple gardening activities.
- **Family interaction:** Family members and friends of dementia patients can also benefit from a relaxing space to spend time with their loved ones. The private spaces within the garden allow families to engage with their relatives away from the clinical environment, strengthening bonds and enhancing communication, which can be challenging in a hospital setting.

- **Sensory stimulation:** The gardens' tactile and colourful planting and stimulating artwork, combined with sounds of birds and the natural environment, offers multiple avenues for sensory engagement. These features can help stimulate a dementia patient's senses, encouraging physical interaction (touching plants, feeling textures), visual engagement (seeing bright flowers or birds), and even auditory experiences that can be soothing or stimulating, depending on the patient's needs.

2. Benefits for older patients with physical health problems

- **Encouraging movement and exercise:** For older patients in rehabilitation, particularly those recovering from a fall, the therapeutic garden provides a safe and accessible space for gentle exercise. Patients can take short walks along wheelchair-friendly pathways, perform stretching exercises, or participate in outdoor therapy in a relaxed and non-clinical environment. The space allows them to rebuild confidence and mobility in a setting that doesn't feel medical or restrictive.
- **Reduced fall risk:** The gardens' design includes level surfaces and handrails, ensuring that patients with mobility issues or balance challenges can move around safely. This will encourage patients to use the space without fear of falling, which is crucial for those recovering from injury or surgery.
- **Strengthening and flexibility:** Gardening activities, such as raised beds for planting, can encourage patients to engage in light physical activity. The act of bending, reaching, and planting can help improve strength, coordination, and dexterity, particularly for those recovering from a fall or surgery. This not only promotes physical rehabilitation but also offers patients a sense of achievement and purpose.
- **Mental health and wellbeing:** Being in the garden setting also provides mental health benefits. Physical recovery can often be accompanied by mental strain, and a calming outdoor environment provides patients with the opportunity to relax and recover emotionally. Natural light, the soothing sounds of nature, and the visual appeal of plants and flowers can have a profound effect on mood, improving the outlook for patients through the stages of mental health recovery.
- **Fostering autonomy:** For patients in rehabilitation, the sensory garden provides opportunities to practice self-care and independence. The garden design includes private spaces, where patients can spend time alone, either engaging with nature or simply having quiet reflection time. This promotes a sense of autonomy and personal space, which is critical for older adults recovering from physical illness or injury.
- **Purposeful activity:** Patients recovering from physical health issues, such as those with limited mobility, can benefit greatly from gardening activities. The garden features raised planters allowing patients to engage in low-impact, purposeful activities. Tending to plants can improve both mental and physical health, providing patients with a tangible, achievable task that brings a sense of accomplishment.
- **Socialising:** Patients can also interact with others while tending to the garden, providing a social outlet for those who may feel isolated. It creates a space for peer support and camaraderie during the rehabilitation process, especially for those who might not be as comfortable engaging in more traditional therapy or physical activity indoors.

4.3 Beneficiaries:

Please tell us how many people are expected to benefit as a result of this expenditure and

how you have determined these numbers. Beneficiaries may include patients, service users, patient families/carers, and staff.

The following number of people are expected to benefit from this project on an annual basis:

Bryngolau ward

Patients: 85 (83 patients during 2024/25)

Family members, carers and visitors: 255 (average of three per patient)

Staff: 45 (established multi-disciplinary team and visiting staff)

Volunteers: eight (supporting the up-keep of the garden)

Mynydd Mawr ward

Patients: 110 (108 patients during 2024/25)

Family members, carers and visitors: 550 (average of 5 per patient)

Staff: 40 (established multi-disciplinary team and visiting staff)

Volunteers: eight (supporting the up-keep of the garden)

4.4 Evaluation methods:

Please tell us what methods you will use to measure the effectiveness of your expenditure and the difference it makes. Please also describe any baseline information that you have that demonstrates the current position.

Pre-and post-intervention surveys (patient and staff) will be conducted, looking at:

1. Patient: Mental and emotional wellbeing, mood, stress levels, engagement with activities, physical mobility (walking distance, balance, etc), physical activity levels, weight gain/loss and overall quality of life (please note that gathering feedback from patients with severe advanced dementia can be difficult as they may struggle to articulate).

2. Staff: Satisfaction with the working environment, ease of interaction with patients, stress levels, and job satisfaction. Perspectives on how the garden affects patient care and rehabilitation. Improvements in staff-patient interactions in the garden environment. Changes in staff morale and overall work environment.

3. Observational studies will also be conducted; these will look at:

- Frequency of use of the gardens by patients, family members, and staff.
- Interaction levels between patients and staff in the garden.
- Types of activities being done (e.g., walking, sitting, gardening, socialising).
- Instances of patient agitation or distress before and after time spent in the garden.

4. Health and wellbeing assessments will also be conducted for individual patients, looking at length of stay in hospital, physical health (e.g., mobility, physical fitness, weight, appetite), mental health (e.g., reductions in anxiety, depression, agitation) and cognitive functioning (especially relevant for dementia patients).

5. Feedback will also be sought from family members and care givers.

Section 5: Exit strategy (for revenue expenditure requests)

Please tell us how the benefits of this expenditure will be sustained beyond the end of this time-limited period of charitable funding. For project funding, please tell us if it will continue, and how it will be funded. If it will not continue, please tell us how it will be brought to a close.

An essential consideration of this project is the post commissioning maintenance and upkeep of the sensory garden. This is important if the HB is to see a return on investment and those people groups that will benefit from the availability of the facility can do so on a sustained basis. To this end the gardens will require regular seasonal attention to the highest standards to ensure the facility's longevity and continued access by patients long into the future.

The proposals for ongoing maintenance of the gardens will follow a number of delivery strategies as follows:

1. PPH Estates Team: The maintenance of the grounds and gardens will be aligned with contractual arrangements for the PPH site. This will service as the default and is intended mainly to ensure the rustic areas don't become overgrown and unmanageable. The area will be included in the planned maintenance schedule for the general upkeep of the site and this will be overseen by the Local Estates Site Manager. The local Estates team will also be responsible for responding to any calls for ad-hoc reported defects.

2. Establishing a volunteer programme: There are a number of dedicated green-fingered volunteers who were recruited for Shades of Green (Shared Prosperity funded project delivered during 2023/24 in partnership with the National Botanic Garden of Wales) who have expressed an interest in supporting projects in the Llanelli area. The volunteers are enthusiastic and experienced gardeners who have already completed the HDdUHB induction programme for volunteers and would be available to support the gardens on completion of the construction works. The volunteers would be supported by the Future Workforce team who would also support targeted recruitment for volunteers to specifically support the maintenance of the gardens, as and when required, so they continue to provide enjoyable outdoor spaces for our patients, staff and visitors. A number of families and recent visitors to both wards have also expressed an interest in becoming regular volunteers once the work is complete.

3. Community involvement: There is also scope to work with the Future Workforce team to establish dedicated community involvement/volunteer days with local gardening groups and community associations to assist with seasonal planting or themes during the year. This work would be risk assessed on a case-by-case basis, in line with the patient groups being cared for at each ward, and overseen by the Future Workforce Engagement Officer assigned to PPH.

4. Local business engagement: There are also opportunities to extend the community involvement days to business across the locality with a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) commitment or to those who may wish to provide sponsorship or in-kind support such as the donation of materials or plants.

5. HDdUHB Green Health Network: the local green health networks provide opportunities for staff across the HB to share ideas, project work and expertise in green health. Opportunities to support the ongoing maintenance and future development of the gardens will be promoted to the PPH network.

In addition, the following approaches will be applied to ensure the benefits of the gardens will be sustained long into the future:

- The service will establish a sensory garden working group that will ensure the efforts for both principal users are coordinated and push toward a unified

goal.

- Identifying staff members to become "garden champions" or ambassadors, responsible for promoting and integrating the garden into patient care plans, ensuring its use in rehabilitation and therapy, and maintaining enthusiasm among patients, families, and staff.
- Integrating the therapeutic gardens into daily rehabilitation and care routines and encouraging staff to use the garden as part of structured activities (e.g., physical therapy, sensory therapy, relaxation sessions) so that it becomes an element of patient care.
- Ensuring that the gardens are integrated into the care pathways of patients: for instance, incorporating nature therapy or horticultural therapy as part of structured rehabilitation programs, ensuring that the garden is seen as a necessary part of care.
- Designing rehabilitation programs that specifically utilize the garden for physical exercise (e.g., walking therapy, gardening activities) and mental stimulation (e.g., sensory activities, relaxation).
- Incorporating garden-based therapies or nature-based interventions into ongoing staff training, making it an integral part of professional development for healthcare workers at the units.
- Monitoring and evaluating the gardens' impact on patient outcomes (e.g., mental health, physical mobility, cognitive function) and staff satisfaction, and using this data to demonstrate the gardens' value.
- Ensuring that the therapeutic gardens are embedded into the overall mission and values of PPH / the HB. This might involve incorporating the garden into staff wellness programs, patient-centred care initiatives, or holistic rehabilitation approaches.

Section 6: Governance

6.1 Compliance:

Please tell us (if applicable), how your expenditure request meets any relevant legislative requirements or standards as well as any Hywel Dda policies and procedures (e.g. Data Protection, Clinical Governance, etc.).

The creation of therapeutic gardens for Mynydd Mawr and Bryngolau Wards aligns with various legislative requirements, standards, and policies.

1. Legislative requirements and standards in Wales and the UK

- The **Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003 (UK)** outlines the need for providing high-quality services in both the NHS and social care settings that meet patient needs and ensure dignity, independence and choice. The garden aligns with the Act by offering a safe, engaging environment that promotes wellbeing, dignity and choice. The garden will provide opportunities for physical exercise, dignified private spaces, and mental health stimulation, all essential for rehabilitation and care.
- The **Health and Social Care (Wales) Act 2014** promotes the need to integrate services, promote person-centred care, and support health and social wellbeing for individuals across Wales. The garden provides an integrated approach to rehabilitation that complements person-centred care, promoting independence and patient wellbeing.
- The **Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014** prioritises the wellbeing of individuals and encourages a holistic approach to care, ensuring that services are responsive to individual needs and preferences. The gardens offer a holistic, person-centred space that promotes mental and

physical wellbeing.

- The **Equality Act 2010** mandates that services should be inclusive and accessible to people with disabilities, including those with mental health challenges, physical disabilities, and age-related issues. The gardens' dementia-friendly design and wheelchair-accessible pathways comply with the Act by ensuring that all patients, regardless of ability or cognitive function, can safely access and enjoy the outdoor space. The gardens' features, such as handrails and level surfaces, support mobility needs and ensure equal access to outdoor therapy and rehabilitation.

2. HDdUHB Policies and Procedures

- **Clinical Governance and Quality Assurance:** Clinical governance is a key framework for ensuring that healthcare services meet high standards of quality, safety, and effectiveness. The therapeutic garden supports clinical governance by contributing to patient wellbeing and quality of care. By offering a space that encourages physical activity, mental stimulation, and social interaction, the garden enhances patient care, thus supporting Hywel Dda's clinical governance framework. Additionally, ongoing monitoring and feedback from patients and staff can help to assess the garden's impact on health outcomes.
- **Infection Prevention and Control:** Infection control is a crucial aspect of healthcare settings, ensuring the safety of patients and staff by preventing and controlling infections. The gardens will be maintained to high hygiene standards, ensuring the health and safety of all individuals using the space. Regular cleaning and proper care of planting areas, especially raised beds and gardening tools, will be part of the hospital's infection control procedures. The sheltered dining and therapy areas will also be designed with hygiene and safety in mind, following appropriate guidelines to reduce infection risks.
- **Environmental sustainability and resources:** HDdUHB promotes environmental sustainability and the responsible use of resources. The gardens will align with the HB's commitment to sustainability by incorporating native plants, low-maintenance landscaping, and environmentally-friendly materials. The bird feeders and garden's biodiversity can also support local wildlife, contributing to the hospital's environmental goals.
- **Staff wellbeing:** The gardens provide staff members with a safe and restorative space for breaks and reflection, which can reduce burnout and improve job satisfaction. The gardens will be compliant with staff wellbeing policies, offering a supportive environment.

6.2 Strategic alignment:

Please tell us how this funding request aligns with the health board's [strategic objectives](#).

The development of a new therapeutic sensory garden for older patients at PPH aligns closely with HDdUHB strategic priorities, particularly in enhancing mental health services for older adults and promoting holistic care.

HDdUHB provides specialist NHS mental health assessment, treatment, and care for older people facing functional mental health difficulties in later life, including those with dementia. The introduction of a sensory garden supports these patients by offering a calming, nature-rich environment that can reduce agitation and improve mood for patients with dementia or rehabilitation needs. This aligns with the HB's aim **to enable older people to age well and recover their wellbeing**.

The HB's arts and health service integrates creativity, arts, and culture to improve people's health and wellbeing and promote healing and recovery. A sensory garden which incorporates art installations serves as a form of outdoor art therapy, engaging patients through visual, tactile, and auditory stimuli, thereby enhancing their overall wellbeing.

Additionally, the funding request aligns with the following HB strategic objectives:

- It supports the objective to **put safety and quality first**, and ensure as a minimum that our services do no harm, so that people can live safely within their communities. The gardens will prioritise safety and place an emphasis on providing a high-quality environment which can be sustained.
- It supports the objective to **support people to have independent lives**. It will achieve this by speeding up recovery after treatment and care and reducing the amount of time spent in hospital.
- It supports the objective to **use research, knowledge and information** to design evidence-driven health and care services, which are based on what works, shared learning, and innovative solutions.
- It supports the objective to **work in collaboration to find transformative ways of delivering safe, sustainable, accessible and kind services**, so that we work differently to achieve our vision.
- It supports the objective of **ensuring timely discharge from hospital** by supporting the rehabilitation process and providing support for physical exercise, movement and wellbeing.

Section 7: Other

Please provide any other relevant information in support of your funding request.

Bill of reductions

At the June 2025 CFC meeting, the Chief Operating Officer (COO) advised members that tender costs for the project had been received that were significantly higher than those anticipated. Since that time a design review workshop has been held with the Mynydd Mawr and Bryngolau Ward clinical and operational management teams, where the Bill of Reductions exercise was undertaken. As a result of this workshop, £45,154.09 of cost reductions were identified. The following gives an overview of those items listed on the bill that have been omitted or amended within the tender specification and price to ensure the viability of the project whilst still meeting the project brief:

- Slow growing grass instead of artificial grass due to concerns with overheating of artificial grass in warm weather.
- Maroon resin bound gravel instead of coloured asphalt.
- New stepped path and access gate to Bryngolau to be omitted. Existing steps to be retained and cleaned.
- 92square metres of Bryngolau Ward (adjacent to Mynydd Mawr) to be kept as existing and fenced off with gate access due to concerns with reduced sightlines.
- Mature acer tree in Mynydd Mawr garden to be kept in existing location.
- Edging changed to plastic / Glass Reinforced Plastic (GRP).
- Individual pagodas replaced with one large gazebo that spans both gardens. No base needed and as such can blend into flow of paths.
- Potting sheds omitted – day rooms to be utilised for tools.
- Bowling green area to be kept as on optional feature (Option B) priced at approximately £14,000 plus VAT. If excluded, existing area to be fenced off with gate access.

Independent commercial assessment of project costs

AtkinsRéalis has been appointed to review the tender documents received and confirm the accuracy of the financial estimate, to ensure it reflects current anticipated market rates. The report received from AtkinsRéalis in August 2025 confirmed that:

- The contractor has submitted a compliant tender.
- Generally, the rates submitted by the contractor align with rates from other schemes and rates in the market and were considered acceptable.
- It has been agreed that the consultant and professional fees are fixed based on the budget cost and no additional fees will be occurred due to the additional project cost.
- The contractor has provided accurate supporting information for their tender and have provided clarity to the queries raised.
- In consideration of the above review, AtkinsRéalis deemed the contract sum to be reasonable and offering value for money and would recommend the contractor is appointed for the works detailed in the tender report.

Contractor's social value commitment

In the tender return, the contractor has demonstrated a commitment to delivering social value throughout the project. This includes providing certain items free of charge along with supplying certain materials at a reduced rates to maximise project resources. This has created a cost reduction of £16,419. The contractor will also actively support skills development by engaging apprentices where appropriate to gain hand-on experiences in the design and construction of seating areas and signage to assist patients to get full enjoyment from the garden. Sustainability is also a consideration with as many items and materials as possible to be re-purposed and upcycled.

Grass maintenance

Artificial grass has been omitted from the project as a cost reducing measure. At the same time this variation attends to concerns raised by the service from artificial grass overheating underfoot. To retain the sensory aspect of the garden yet also keep ongoing maintenance minimal, slow growing grass is now proposed. It is acknowledged that slow growing grass is more vulnerable to long-term damage than common grass varieties during its establishment however once established, slow growing grass requires less frequent mowing (i.e. every two to three weeks). A maintenance plan for the establishment of the grass will be developed as part of the scheme and sustainability plans outlined in section five above. It is proposed that during the periods of most intense growth that the mowing work will be locally led and efforts to secure, on a donated basis, a robotic mower will be pursued.

Option to include the bowling green

As part of the bill of reduction measures, the bowling green was omitted, with scope provided in the design to include at a future date. This has facilitated the outturn cost figure to be reduced to **£209,287.53** (Option A). However, the acute partner in the service collaborative holds fairly strong views about the inclusion of this facility and whilst inherently were not opposed to its omission, on the basis that the overall scheme viability is more important than the bowling green alone, the prospect of including at a future date given this will introduce added cost leaves the project with a dilemma. As a result, an option (B) to include the bowling green at a time when costs can be kept to a minimum is provided and this increases the outturn cost figure to £226,087.53 (and additional funding request of

£16,800 including VAT).

Construction timeline:

If the project's funding is approved, it is proposed that the construction phase can commence in February 2026 and be completed in April 2026. These dates will avert the need to undertake invasive ground works during winter and allow the sensitive planting to take place at an optimal time of year. The contractor has confirmed that the tender return figure submitted will be held to facilitate this programme intent and apply to either option. Additionally, these dates facilitate the timely expenditure of financial year constrained sums included in the overall project funding package (DCP).

Section 8: Funding requirements

8.1 Cost breakdown:

Please provide a breakdown of all costs associated with this funding request. Alternatively, please attach as a separate document.

Item/Category	Cost (£)	Comments
Option A (excluding the bowling facility)		
Capital Cost Summary		
Ref	Cost Centre	Net £ VAT @ 20% £ Gross £
5	Works Cost (DAF2]	158,989.31 31,797.86 190,787.17
6	Fees (DAF3)	5,361.00 1,072.20 6,433.20
7	Non-works Costs (DAF3)	3,000.00 600.00 3,600.00
8	Equipment Costs (DAF2)	0.00 0.00 0.00
9	Contingency	7,949.47 1,589.89 9,539.36
10	<i>Forecast Project Out-turn Cost (Pre VAT Recovery)</i>	175,299.77 35,059.95 210,359.73
11	LESS RECOVERABLE VAT (DAF5)	1,072.20 1,072.20
12	FORECAST PROJECT OUT-TURN COST	175,299.77 33,987.75 209,287.53
- <u>Notes</u> :- 1) HDUHB's Development Approval Form does not account for VAT on Fees, as such are 100% recoverable.		

DAF D 22/08/2025

Option B (including the bowling facility)

This option increases the overall project cost by £16,800 (£14,000 & VAT works costs) to £226,087.53.

8.2 Total amount of funding requested:

Option A (excluding the bowling facility)

Net £ <i>Excluding VAT</i>	152,739.61	VAT £	29,654.43	Gross £ <i>Including VAT</i>	183,287.53
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Option B (including the bowling facility)

Net £ <i>Excluding VAT</i>	166,739.61	VAT £	33,349.92	Gross £ <i>Including VAT</i>	200,087.53
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Note: Value of funding requested = total project cost less £26,000 (DCP contribution)

8.3 Designated charitable fund

Charitable fund details:	Balance 30.06.2025	Value of contribution:	
Mental Health & Learning Disabilities		Option A	Option B

T429 Bryngolau Fund	£8,723.10	£8,723.10	£8,723.10
T691 Bryngolau Ward	£15,066.21	£14,000.00	£14,000.00
T603 MHL D Services Corporate	£14,970.84	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
T790 Mental Health Services Carmarthenshire	£27,746.73	£7,746.73	£7,746.73
Sub total		£35,469.83	£35,469.83
PPH Unscheduled Care		Option A	Option B
T253 Mynydd Mawr Rehabilitation Unit	£7,817.48	£7,817.48	£7,817.48
T742 Mynydd Mawr General Purposes	£81,600.18	£77,500.00	£77,500.00
T716 PPH General Purposes	£65,331.41	£5,000.00	£5,000.00
Sub total		£90,317.48	£90,317.48
Fundraising appeal		Option A	Option B
T592 PPH Gardens Appeal	£41,469.15	£41,469.15	£41,469.15
Sub total		£41,469.15	£41,469.15
Hywel Dda General Fund		Option A	Option B
T600 Support for Life Response Fund	£526,652.61	£16,031.07	£32,831.07
Sub total		£16,031.07	£32,831.07
Total (£)		183,287.53	200,087.53

8.4 Alternative funding sources:

Please tell us about alternative funding sources that have been sought before applying for charitable funds. It is important that all other sources of funding have been exhausted prior to submitting an application for charitable funds.

The HBis committing £26,000 of DCP funding from the 2025/26 financial year capital allocation for the project. This contribution covers the cost of site clearance, ground works to level the site and the removal of broken tarmac. As further enhancements to the gardens to improve patient experience do not feature on the HDdUHB capital themed risk registers, it was not possible to secure any additional DCP contributions in the context of a combined capital backlog of c. £300m across HDdUHB estate.

This project was nominated for consideration by the MHL D directorate for submission to the Welsh Government (Capital, Estates & Facilities) Targeted Estates Fund however it was not one of the three bids submitted by HDdUHB to the Welsh Government.

The total area of the enclosed outdoor space at Bryngolau and Mynydd Mawr Wards is circa 1,556 m². Due to the significant area being developed and the proposed scope of works, the professional cost advisers appointed recommend this as a fair estimate for this work, at approximately £74.34 per m² and is within range for external garden spaces of this high-quality type.

Section 9: Authorisation

9.1 Application prepared by:

Contact name:	Job title:	Date:
Neil Mason	Head of Older Adult Mental Health	29.08.2025
Contact name:	Job title:	Date:
Stuart Bancroft	Assistant General Manager	29.08.2025

9.2 Application authorised by: Please ensure that your fund manager (approver up to £10,000) has reviewed your application before submission.		
Contact name:	Job title:	Date authorised:
Sarah Perry	General Manager Carmarthenshire System	02.09.2025
Contact name:	Job title:	Date authorised:
Liz Carroll	Mental Health & Learning Disabilities Clinical Care Group	02.09.2025
9.3 Finance Business Partner review: Please ensure that your Finance Business Partner has reviewed your application before submission.		
Contact name:	Job title:	Date reviewed:
Lynne Jones	Deputy Head of Business Control – Community & Integrated Medicine	03.09.25
Andrew Thomas	Finance Controller MHLD	03/09/2025

Please return completed form via email to:

charitablefundsfinance.hdd@wales.nhs.uk

or via internal mail to:

Charitable Funds Support Officer
Finance Department
Ty Gorwel, Building 14
St David's Park, Job's Well Road
Carmarthen SA31 3BB

Appendix 1

Assessment for medical equipment (as per [Medical Devices Policy](#)):

Not applicable for this funding request

Appendix 2

Assessment for building or refurbishment work (to be completed by Estates team):

Do you consider this request to be above and beyond routine maintenance work?	Yes
Please explain your answer to the question above:	This charitable funding request is to develop sensory gardens for Bryngolau and Mynydd Mawr Wards that will significantly improve the patient experience. This is above and beyond routine maintenance work and could not be delivered by the local estates team. The DCP contribution will support enabling works that ensures the charitable contributions will cover all above and beyond elements to deliver the sensory gardens elements of the scheme.
Are the costs provided based on a cost estimate or formal quotation?	Yes (via the Health Board's design team)
Are there any immediate or ongoing revenue or	There is no expectation that additional maintenance charges will be incurred as a result of this project's

maintenance costs associated with this request?	upkeep. The areas occupied by the gardens are included in the planned maintenance schedules for the PPH site and grass cutting is already a part of current contractual arrangements with an external provider (funded by the local estates budget). It is acknowledged that there will be a requirement to maintain the gardens as a whole (in addition to grass cutting) to a higher standard following completion of the works. Support will be provided to the working group and garden volunteers to ensure that this can be achieved.	
If yes, please explain how these costs will be met.	N/A – outlined above.	
Estates authorisation I confirm that I have read this application in full and that I am supportive of the application.		
Contact name:	Job title:	Date reviewed:
Simon Day	Head of Maintenance & Engineering	2 September 2025

For Charitable Funds Finance Department

Application Reference Number:		CF03295	
Fund Title:	Fund Code:	Current Fund Balance £:	
T429 Bryngolau Fund	T429	£8,723.10	
T691 Bryngolau Ward	T691	£15,066.21	
T603 MHL D Services	T603	£14,970.84	
Corporate	T790	£27,746.73	
T790 Mental Health	T253	£7,817.48	
Services Carmarthenshire	T742	£81,600.18	
T253 Mynydd Mawr	T716	£65,331.41	
Rehabilitation Unit	T592	£41,469.15	
T742 Mynydd Mawr	T600	£526,652.61	
General Purposes			
T716 PPH General			
Purposes			
T592 PPH Gardens			
Appeal			
T600 Support for Life			
Response Fund			
Finance review			
I confirm that I have reviewed this application and that it can be submitted to the Charitable Funds Sub-Committee / Charitable Funds Committee for consideration.			
Contact name:	Job title:	Date reviewed:	
Jessica Elderfield-Scott	Accounts Assistant	04/09/25	
Outcome of meeting CFC/CFSC			
I confirm that this application has been considered and approved by the Charitable Funds Sub-Committee / Charitable Funds Committee.			
Meeting date:	Outcome:	Contact name:	Job title: