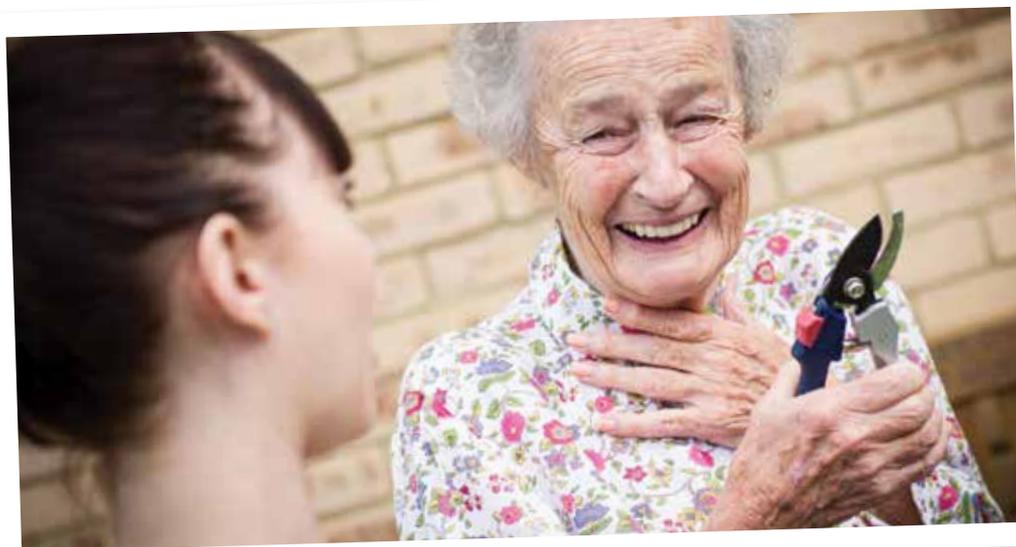


# growing support

because gardens are good for you



## Growing Support: Our impact 2015/2016



**Growing Support** is an award winning social enterprise turning care home gardens into thriving growing spaces and lively hubs of community activity. Our gardening clubs provide a practical and affordable means to enable older people to exercise, socialise, connect with nature and engage in purposeful activity.



**1,000** older people reached

We supported gardening clubs in 30 care homes, community gardens and social housing estates in Bristol, South Gloucestershire and Bath.



**940** volunteer hours delivered

We trained 20 new volunteers to provide practical and emotional support to enable older people to participate in gardening activities.



**470** activity sessions

We delivered almost 1,000 hours of gardening activity such as growing food and flowers and garden related crafts such as woodworking or kite making.



**60** care staff trained

We provided practical, hands-on training to help embed outdoor activity into the everyday routine of care home life.

### Physical activity in nature

Growing Support gardening groups increase opportunities for older people to exercise key muscle groups vital to maintain independence and reduce falls. Our gardeners spend more time outdoors, interacting with nature and engaging in purposeful activity.



### Community

Growing Support increases the involvement of the community in care. Our volunteers enable older people to maintain social networks, with their support everybody is able to contribute to group activities.



### Health and wellbeing

Studies show the Growing Support approach has a positive impact on health and wellbeing. Participants demonstrate improvements in communication and engagement, reduced stress and agitation, and increased sense of belonging, feeling valued and of achievement.

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## Rose, Redcliffe Gardening Group

**Rose is a founder member of the Redcliffe Gardening Group. She joined the group when she found she was becoming isolated and spending too much time indoors after retiring.**

The gardening group is amazing. I wouldn't be without it. I'm proud of the difference we have made to the garden, we've planted fruit trees, made bird feeders and transformed the rockery.

I have made some new friends and we can talk about our health issues and share our problems. I was a bit nervous when I joined the Gardening Committee as I haven't done anything like that before. But it's going really well, I'm really chuffed, I feel like I have achieved something.

## Rosie, Volunteer

**Rosie joined Growing Support after caring for her gran who was considering moving into a care home.**

I was nervous at first, however I needn't have worried, Growing Support were very supportive and I settled in quickly, it just feels natural.

I've attended a number of Growing Support training workshops, I have learned loads – it has been amazing.

I'm always struck by the diversity of the residents and by the fact that at the end of the session everyone, no matter what their abilities, seem to take something away from their involvement.

I'd definitely recommend volunteering with Growing Support, in fact I already have! What happens in the sessions is so rich and meaningful for me as a volunteer. It's such a rewarding volunteering experience. I leave sessions in a better mood than when I woke up!



## Sam Hawker, Owner of AbleCare Homes

**AbleCare is a family run care provider in the South West, Growing Support run regular gardening activities in three AbleCare homes.**

We run a lively activity programme for residents and Growing Support have contributed helpful specialist expertise and new ideas

The great thing about gardening is that there is always something different for the residents to do, from growing food to making kites. It is important for us that residents have lots of opportunities to take part in really meaningful activity and the gardening clubs help a lot with this.

The training has given staff more confidence about being active in the

garden. At first they were out of their comfort zone but now they can see what they and the residents can achieve together.

The gardening groups help with the overall atmosphere of the home and make a very positive contribution to the quality of life of the residents

## Try us out!

We offer taster sessions to demonstrate our impact in practice. Contact us on [info@growingsupport.co.uk](mailto:info@growingsupport.co.uk) to find out more.

**We are grateful for the support of all our funders, partners and other supporters:**

AbleCare, Andy's Haven Nursery, Barchester Care, Barton Hill Walled Garden, Bridge Care, Bristol Care Homes, Bristol Ageing Better, Brunel Care, BUPA, Care England, Care Home Open Day, Embrace Group, Golden Hill Community Garden, Grove Care, The Henry Smith Charity, John James Bristol Foundation, Knowle West Health Association, Linkage, Milestones Trust, The People's Health Trust, Santander, Sirona Care and UnLtd.

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