3 stories from Wales to mark National Gardening



Rhaeadr yng Nghoedwig Dyffryn Penllergare Richard Hanson

To celebrate National Gardening Week, we've been speaking to three people who have all been closely involved in exciting, and very different, projects in Wales that have brought heritage gardens back to life.

Here's what they had to say about how National Lottery funding has helped their gardens bloom again…

1. Joseph Atkin, head gardener at Aberglasney Gardens

"Aberglasney is regarded as one of Britain's finest historical gardens, but the development of our new training facility along with the restoration of the wonderful old cattle sheds and piggeries thanks to the National Lottery ensures our continued success - and a horticultural legacy for future generations.

Training future heritage gardeners

"Essentially, we've managed to create our own 'miniature college' where we're able to teach all the skills that go into making a heritage garden like Aberglasney great. As well as being a training facility the buildings we've restored also house a nursery for propagating plants to expand our collection of rare and unusual and make us more self-sufficient.

“It’s most reassuring to know Aberglasney is now a wonderfully resourced garden with state of the art equipment and facilities. We’re also very fortunate that The Aberglasney Restoration Trust has been able to provide accommodation for students, something which is essential when providing learning opportunities in a rural area.

Going green(er)

“Our National Lottery grant has also funded the creation of a mini-arboretum and meadow walk, a new composting facility and a ‘green’ heating system. It’s also enabled the appointment of a part-time Senior Horticultural Trainer and provided funding for four traineeships in heritage horticulture skills – one of whom has even gone on to become head gardener at Margam Park.

“We mustn’t forget what the funding has done for the visitor experience at Aberglasney. The area covered by the Gardens has been increased by around 20% and everyone visiting is able to gain a greater insight into heritage horticulture and its importance.”

2. Ray Butt, volunteer operations director at Penllergare Valley Woods

“As a volunteer at Penllergare Valley Woods for over eight years, I am delighted at the transformation that has taken place during that time, which is all thanks to National Lottery funding and to the hard work and dedication of our outstanding group of over 100 regular volunteers.

Bringing a no-go area back into public use

“The woods, which were once an important Victorian estate, have been transformed from an abandoned, litter-strewn and overgrown site, into a beautiful, magical green oasis and an important wildlife habitat.

“Many of the features from the original estate have been restored, like the picturesque lake, historically unique observatory and medieval bridge, and much of the valley has been opened up to give the public access to beautiful walks and stunning scenery.

“We have also provided visitor facilities including a very popular coffee shop. It is rewarding to see so many of the public now visiting the woods and enjoying engaging with the outdoors, wildlife and history.

But the story doesn’t end there…

“Thanks again to a further grant by the National Lottery, we will now be able to take forward the exciting second phase of the project which will be centred around the restoration of the Walled Garden and adjacent pleasure gardens.

“The main feature of this development will be the restoration of the Edwardian Vinery which will contain a full-size replica of the site’s historic Orchid House, which was one of the very first purpose built in the country. The award of the grant will also create several new jobs and an apprenticeship training programme.”

3. Huw Bowen, member of the Paradise Regained steering group at the National Botanic Garden of Wales

“This is a major landscape restoration project for Wales, bringing back to life a magnificent but long lost Regency estate and water park full of cascading dams, lakes and ornamental bridges.

Uncovering forgotten history

“Through archaeological investigation, by professional archaeologists and a fantastic cohort of volunteers, and thanks to a set of early 19th-century paintings of the parkland, we have started to understand the complexity and significance of our historic parkland.

“But this ambitious project is also so much more besides…

Telling stories that shaped Britain’s place in the world

“What the National Botanic Garden is able to do using National Lottery money, as well as bringing back to life this designed landscape, is also uncover fascinating stories of the people in and from Wales - the Middletons, the Paxtons, the Abadams, successive owners of Middleton Hall - who created and sustained this estate for more than 350 years.

“In particular, the links and key roles that the Middleton brothers and Sir William Paxton played in the founding and











The Cloister Garden at Aberglasney House, Carmarthenshire Nigel McCall

Efallai y bydd gennych chi ddiddordeb hefyd mewn ...



ndscape of Penllergare Valley Woods

Mae Gardd Fotaneg Genedlaethol Cymru yn dathlu Dydd G?yl Dewi mewn steil gyda-gwerth miliynau o bunnoedd buddsoddiad



National Botanic Garden

Plas Aberglasne

Aberglasney inspiring the next generation of heritage gardeners