

University Centre Farnborough
Frimley Park Hospital, Frimley, Surrey, UK
Mace Ltd

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award category: Medium Scale Permanent Award

Project overview

The garden transformation at Frimley Park Hospital took place on 25th and 26th February 2016. The hospital has a number of small garden spaces for patients but some have fallen into disrepair. Mace stepped in and transformed one of these, incorporating new access, flood mitigation and new planting, to create an area that could be enjoyed again by patients, visitors and staff.

What were the biodiversity conditions on site, prior to the enhancement?

The area was predominantly gravelled or paved and had no step-free access for wheelchair access. An area of waste storage was present to the rear of the garden, which was considered an eye saw.

Were there any specific conditions that led to you carrying out this work?

There were no specific conditions to carry out the work. The project was a goodwill gesture undertaken by the Mace team to contribute to the local area they had been working in. The team met Janet King (Director of Corporate Services at the hospital) at a community liaison meeting and proposed the idea to transform the area into an accessible garden area.

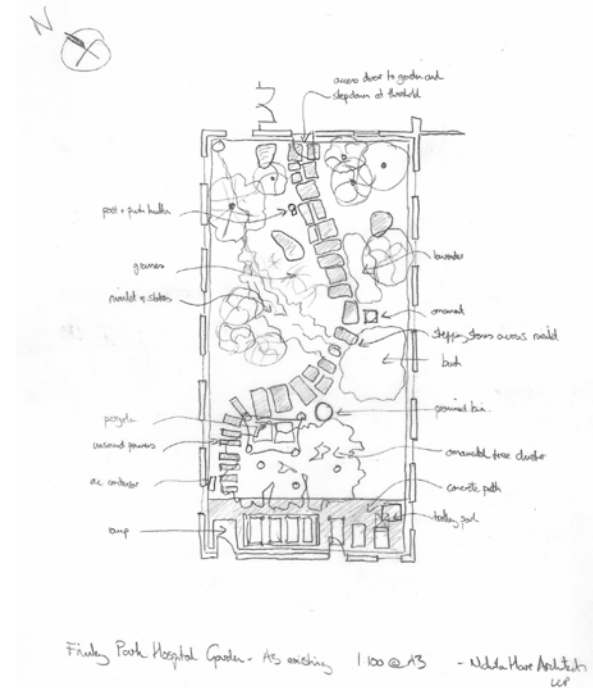


Photo Description: Initial garden design drafted following the liaison meeting (above) and volunteers at work making the plans a reality (left).

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

Initially, the team carried out a process of managing the existing trees and shrubs, removing dead matter and encouraging growth of new plants. All existing trees and shrubs were retained during the landscape improvements of the gardens.

Hard paving was removed from areas of the garden and replaced with soft landscaping to allow natural rainwater drainage. A slate rainwater gully was also installed to dissipate the rainwater from the roof drainage pipes. This doubles up as a semi-permanent water habitat in the winter months.

To increase biodiversity in the garden, a number of small shrubs, grasses and herbs were planted, taking into account the potential for restricted sunlight during certain periods of the day. This will ensure the long-term stability of the garden space.



What were the biodiversity measures taken?

A large quantity of waste materials were reused in the garden, including pieces of slate and large rocks that were used to create ornamental features. All garden waste and rotten wood was removed and appropriately recycled.

Photo Description: Volunteers at work (left and above)

How would you best describe the project?

A long-term enhancement.

Further information

The project took place across two days with time volunteered by the Mace Farnborough team, Nicholas Hare Architects, Peter Brett Associates, Colour Urban Design Limited, Realtime, Full Electrical Services, Arc Construction, Glassolutions, Rainsford and Briggs Amasco. In total, around 40 days of volunteer time was provided. All tools and materials were donated by sub-contractors or purchased by Mace, therefore the space was created at no charge for the hospital.

The area has been transformed from a sparsely vegetated dark space, with low accessibility and large areas of hard standing to an area that incorporates water-run off control, new planting, seating areas and step-free access.

The key lesson learnt is the importance of speaking to the staff and patients about their requirements regarding the garden prior to works commencing. This proved very effective in creating a space that would be enjoyed in the long-term by a wide range of people.

Janet King, Director of Corporate Services: *'the effect is truly stunning and will give a lot of pleasure and solace to patients, staff and visitors to the hospital.'*



Photo Description: Completed garden

What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

The team's personal motivation for carrying out the scheme was to contribute positively to the community they have worked in for over a year, and to address the need for more accessible gardens for patients, staff and visitors alike to enjoy.