

Meeting	Community Development Committee
Date	6 th June 2023
Report Title	Memory Café Sensory Garden Report
Agenda Reference	8
Author	Jo Newman, Memory Café Co Ordinator

Officer's Recommendations:

1. To note the report.

Background

In April 2023, the Memory Café Co Ordinator developed an idea to create a Sensory Garden at Goodearl Allotments, Old Blunsdon Road. Plot 9B was used as this plot has not been appealing to those on the waiting list due to the ground conditions and the amount of work required to be able to cultivate.



This project complements the Council's successful, award-winning Memory Café and expands upon the service it can offer to its participants. The creation of the Sensory Garden has been funded using surplus Horticultural and Memory Café budgets, with many of the structural elements being upcycled from unwanted materials that originated from the leisure garden site and had been donated by other tenants.

Purpose

The idea behind the Sensory Garden is to offer a safe, calm and relaxing space to the residents of the Memory Café and their companions, to enable them to sit in the sun and listen to the birds, relax within the seated area, amongst the especially chosen scented plants, flowers and climbers which include honeysuckle, roses and clematis.

The purpose of the Sensory Garden is to enable the residents of the Memory Café living with dementia and their companions to come sit and relax in a safe environment where they can chat with others, potter, hand weed and plant.

The specially designed raised beds make it easier to access the plants and save any unnecessary bending and lifting. A bench seat has been attached to one of the raised beds so that gardeners can sit down if needed. The location of the corner seating area has been positioned to catch the sun, and you can smell the herbs and other scented plants growing alongside. The clematis and honeysuckle will create some shade over the seating area as the Sensory Garden becomes more established.



The project started with rotavating the soil to prepare the site, then edging up the area with timber gravel boards. Next, came the construction of the raised beds, creating the bark paths and selecting the plants with an emphasis on texture and fragrance and the longevity of the seasonal plants.

The upcycled components from the allotments include old sleepers, a small timber shed, fencing, timber, a compost bin, an old dustbin (made into a water butt), a rhubarb plant, cherry, pear and apple trees which have been transplanted, a blackcurrant bush, some unused play area posts, wooden pallets, paving slabs and bricks, trellis, canes, netting, plastic tubing, a tap, an old style watering can, six large racing tyres, ground sheeting, and old tree roots, which have been used for decoration.

Donated items by residents and local businesses

- Bike wheels
- A garden bench, garden patio set, and plant pots donated by Memory Café volunteers.
- Artificial grass offcuts for texture (Grass Perfect Artificial Grass Experts)
- Tomato plants
- Shingle for the pathway (GK Olley Groundwork Ltd)
- Decorative pebbles (GA Plant)
- Jeff the Scarecrow (created by the Rainbows Girl Guiding of Haydon Wick)
- Plants, soil and plant food (donated by a supporter of the Memory Café)
- Bee Bombs full of wildflowers (Brewers Decorators)
- Lavender plants and hooks for hanging the herb pots and 'forget me not' hooks made from Iron (Cuffy & Sons Blacksmiths The Quay, Exeter)

Future Maintenance and Working Towards

A small group of Memory Café residents who love gardening but are now unable to work on their own gardens, have got together and want to be involved in maintaining this special place. The garden will encourage friendships to form, and those more isolated residents will have the opportunity to meet with others in a safe space. The Sensory Garden will encourage conversations, trigger memories of the past and make memories in the present. The benefits of having access to a safe outdoor space will have a positive impact on those who visit.

The Memory Café Co Ordinator is planning some future events at the Sensory Garden which will involve younger pre-school parish residents.

Budget

£500.00 Horticultural Budget from 2022/2023

£500.00 Memory Café Budget for 2023/2024

Summary Table	
Budget allocated	£1,000
Final expenditure	£743.05
Estimated value of donated items	£550
Number of users who will benefit from this facility each month	40



Memory Café Sensory Garden Pictures

