

## **Most Pioneering Use of Green Space by a Healthcare Professional**

### **What did you/they do?**

The North Cotswold Hospital was built 2012 with 246 NHS Forest trees planted on site as part of the development. There are accessible pathways throughout the tree planting and the site is used by staff, patients and the local community for rest, relaxation and gentle exercise.

Part of the site was specifically designed, with input from staff, for Occupational Therapists to use with their patients to assist with rehabilitation, thereby improving independence and self-confidence. It offers:

- Slightly raised benches
- Steps and a sloping path with handrails
- Different surfaces encompassing gravel, grass and brick

The benches are to help people stand up easier, while they practice on the steps and sloping path with handrails either individually with staff or in groups. The space is planted up to provide beauty and colour, while the hardscaping provides visual interest in winter.

The Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists mainly use the garden in the warmer months. It is right next to the gym, where patio doors open out onto the different surface space, so if someone needs to practice mobility, they can easily go outdoors. An Active Balance Class record can track the progress of the patient over 9 months

Patient recovery is also aided in the hospital through the addition of very large windows in the building so that patients can make the most of the views of the Cotswolds that surround them. The gardens are fully wheelchair accessible and patients can be taken outdoors to enjoy the peaceful setting of the gardens.

### **How did you/they set it up?**

This was part of the new building design. Since physiotherapists and occupational therapists were all invited to design meetings they were able to provide their input into the design of the outdoor spaces thus ensuring that the bench height for example was suitable for use in rehabilitation therapies.

### **Who did you involve?**

The staff and landscape architects contributed to the design.

### **Who does the project benefit?**

The project benefits the patients both inpatients on the ward that can come down and access physiotherapy services outdoors. Along with the outpatient visitors that attend.

### **What difference has it made?**

Having an area designed and built to allow its use for physiotherapy services has been a great benefit to the hospital. The patients enjoy the opportunity to get outdoors and get the fresh air that they require.

"I have really enjoyed the opportunity to undertake some of my physiotherapy sessions outdoors, not only is the lovely scenery a welcome distraction from the hard work but the cooling breeze is most welcome!"

Patient, North Cotswold Hospital