

Most Pioneering Use of Green Space by a Healthcare Professional

What did you do, How did you set it up, Who did you involve, Who does the Project benefit, What difference has it made.

Northwick Park Hospital covers 44 acres of land and is part of the unfragmented Sheepcote farm site which has a wildlife corridor via the Metropolitan Line.

In support of North West London Hospital Trust Sustainable Development Plan I have attempted to, use local ecology of our hospital grounds and the Ducker wood to engage with the hospital community, create ecological awareness and enhance staff health.

Over 2013:

I recruited the trust's first sustainability champions group. The aim of the group is to promote sustainability within their own departments, support nature and have fun!

I engaged with one local school, Mount Stewart Junior School, invited the Children to the hospital and raised £300 for trees for NWLH grounds resulting in an article in the Harrow Observer.

I completed the first ever ecological survey of the council-owned strip of Ducker Woodland on our boundary and put together a proposal to open an extra entrance to Northwick Park Hospital grounds via Public right of way 34 which passes through the Ducker Wood. Brent council has been very supportive of the idea.

I arranged a staff Saturday morning working group to clean up the council owned section of the Ducker wood with the support of Paul Hutchinson from Brent Council. We planted trees, picked up litter and erected 3 nest boxes. This was to teach staff woodland management skills.

For NHS week of Sustainability, I arranged a tree planting event with NPH staff and children from Mount Stewart Junior School and we planted 8 ecologically suitable trees next to the maternity unit resulting in a photo and article in the Harrow Observer. I also invited Chris Cockryl from the Brent Rivers Trust to come to NPH to do a presentation on the local Brent River.

I attended the Welsh conference of Nature as an Alternative Healthcare provider in April 2014 and learnt the concept of the ecological self. I was the only NHS representative at the event.

I built a Kestrel Box, as the construction of the new A&E onsite has disturbed their habitat. The nest box was erected on the other side of the hospital in March 2014.

In April I had a meeting with Ann-Marie Morris from the Brent Carers Association. We are working on several ideas to help the carers who look after the patients of Northwick Park Hospital. Our first action is to invite the carers on nature walks; this will be followed by working events in the Ducker Wood.

Over the 2014 year:

I have Led 9 staff nature walks, 6 at Northwick Park Hospital, 2 at Central Middlesex Hospital and one at Perivale Wood local nature reserve. Subjects are: bats, woodland ecology and seasonal change and wild flowers.

I recruited all of the sustainability champions through the nature walks. Mark Terry, Audrey Alimo Ann-Marie, Nikki and Susan Moggan.

I have worked with Peter Edwards from Kew Research Centre to put together a list of local native and ecological suitable tree species for the hospital grounds which are being developed.

I have arranged a survey of the sites hedgehogs with the security guards. We had a population that I believe has gone extinct in 2011 due to rubbish, cars and strimming. This survey has proved so.

I have identified the hospital land behind the trusts nursery as an ecological hot spot, an area of varied habitats and a wildlife corridor for the sheepcote farm site from the Metropolitan railway line.

With the help of the champions, I have set up 3 small mammal survey stations and have found field voles. I have bought up the issue with management the threat that rat bait poses to native small mammals.

I am managing and enhancing 2 staff gardens with Sumita Patel, Radiology Services Manager.

In August, I wrote and published the first sustainability Newsletter with the help of Audrey Alimo.

The trust is in the beginning of a development plan that will rebuild the whole NPH site. I am working to raise awareness among the staff and management of how important ecology is for us to have a healthy and unpolluted environment.

Charles Hurford
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