



BLACKTHORN TRUST

Project report to the Nineveh Charitable Trust

Blackthorn Trust – August 2019

Blackthorn Trust sits in a one acre walled garden. It was set up 33 years ago by GP, Dr David McGavin in the belief that more than medication was needed to improve the well-being of patients struggling with mental illness. The Trust is a social prescribing project which combines meaningful work in a supported environment with anthroposophical therapies to guide beneficiaries to make positive changes towards their own wellbeing and learn new skills. The same ethos is used to support clients with long term chronic pain which has not been successfully managed by mainstream medical intervention. Our latest programme supports people with type 2 Diabetes pilot project along with 7 partners both in the UK and Europe, using our ethos to help beneficiaries to better manage their condition.

Our beneficiaries have access to workshops offering craft, gardening, café work, woodwork, baking and preserving skills as well as Eurythmy, Rhythmical Massage, Metal Coloured Light and Biographical Counselling therapies if needed. Beneficiaries may be referred by their GP, secondary care services, social services, Live Well Kent or Self Referred.

The .3-acre Physic Garden is a capital project we undertook to provide a platform to raise awareness of the services we offer our community and to increase the gardening activities for our beneficiaries, especially those with mobility issues. Being open to the public, the garden is free to visitors to wander around. The disabled friendly garden comprises of harmonious planting, (coming soon) glass sculpture and verse or poetry to provide a reflective calming environment for all who use it. The Trust has a café where craft items and meals made by the beneficiaries can be purchased.

Aside from the positive social impact that the new Physic garden will have on our beneficiaries and the local community, an important aspect is the increased income from social enterprise. Donations, purchase of our products and outreach fundraising opportunities such as lectures/and dinner talks will further fund the work we do. We have cautiously anticipated a year on year increase of 20% visitor footfall using our café and taking advantage of our retail offerings. We have seized the opportunity to host BBC Gardeners World on 20th June 2019, who wanted to film in our garden.

In addition to offering additional gardening activities to our more vulnerable beneficiaries, the new Physic garden will enable us to offer further volunteering roles for the local community, helping with social isolation and loneliness and improving volunteers' sense of self-worth.

The cost of this capital project was £154,574 and we have raised the totality of the fund. The final stage of construction is now near completion: borders are in, planting and decking are completed, glass sculpture will be in in the next 2 weeks.

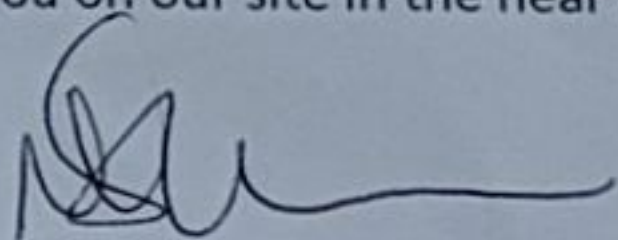
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We are now busy preparing for the formal opening day of the Physic Garden on the 28th September.

We are extremely grateful to the Nineveh Charitable Trust for their contribution to our organisation and we hope to welcome you on our site in the near future.

With kind regards



Nathalie Belmas

Development manager

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physic garden under construction



The Physic garden today!



