

Transition & Permaculture Hull Visit to Bakersville, Newland Allotments, Tavistock St, Hull on Monday 12 September 2016

Bakersville is a project designed for people who suffer with mental health conditions and who are currently receiving a service from the Humber NHS Foundation Trust. The allotment uses gardening and related activities as treatment and therapy to aid recovery and the project is facilitated by occupational therapy and health care staff. Jeanette Wood, Occupational Therapy Technical Instructor and one of the founder members of the project, now in its 16th year, showed us round.

The site occupies several allotment plots and has been developed as a pleasant place to work, walk and sit. Grassy paths wend their way among trees and shrubs, passing fruit trees, places to sit and a pond. Two areas of raised beds provide growing space for vegetables and soft fruit, inter-planted with candula and nasturtiums. Greenhouses with tomato, cucumber, peppers and chilli were near a container for storage and shelter, and a communal seating area.

Five staff are involved with the site and there are 15 to 20 service users, plus five volunteers – usually ex-service users. It is a peaceful, relaxing environment with opportunities to participate in growing, maintenance or creating features of your own design

From a permaculture perspective, the garden prioritises **people care**, such that attending the Tuesday sessions is therapeutic rather than stressful. The emphasis is on a pleasant tranquil environment in which to walk and sit, with the growing of food an optional extra. In terms of **earth care** the measures to encourage wildlife include the pond, wildflower patch, organic growing and companion planting.

Permaculture, biodiversity, education, community and partnership-working all contribute to the positive outcomes and rewards for those who attend.