



**Trees for Cities**

**IMMEDIATE PRESS RELEASE**

## **The Maudsley Hospital have opened their Horticultural Therapy Garden**

Cultivating a greater sense of well-being

A horticultural therapy garden for patients in the John Dickson and Eileen Skellern 2 wards was officially opened last week, during London Tree Week.

Trees for Cities worked with the Maudsley Hospital to develop the garden that will benefit patients on the wards, which provide care and treatment for adult males with severe mental illnesses.

Horticulturalist and Patron of Trees for Cities, Chris Collins opened the garden and Dr William Bird from Intelligent Health was invited to talk about the importance of community green spaces and their benefits to our mental well being.

**Hannah Oakenfold, ward manager at Eileen Skellern 2, said:** “For both ward teams this has been a really exciting opportunity to offer our patients somewhere outside of the ward where they can relax, get some fresh air, play games and also to learn some new skills that they can take with them when they leave.

“There has already been a really positive response and the staff and patients are getting involved in the planting and cultivating of our edible garden. We look forward to many more months of developing this space and watching everything grow.”

The natural outdoor space, which is both safe and accessible to patients, has raised beds which grow fruit and vegetables, as well as apple trees, while climbing thornless blackberries and hydrangeas will provide some privacy. A seating area offers patients a delightful space to relax and socialise.

**David Elliott, Chief Executive at Trees for Cities said** “The horticultural therapy programme we have developed in partnership with the Maudsley Hospital gives patients a chance to work together in the garden, while staff will be able to use the space for yoga and meditation sessions. We are delighted to be working in partnership with the Maudsley Hospital to demonstrate the value of horticulture therapy to improve mental well-being”

The therapy garden will directly benefit 39 patients a year, as well as benefitting Occupational Therapists and other hospital staff, providing a more natural, inspiring and calming place to work.

This project is kindly supported by the South Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust and the Mayor of London, as a funder through the London Tree and Woodland Community Grant Scheme.

### **Notes to Editors**

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**Trees for Cities** is the only charity working on an international scale specialising in **planting urban trees** and providing **volunteering opportunities** to bring local people together. We are a game-changing, ambitious organisation that sets the standard for urban forestry worldwide. Our groundbreaking Edible Playground programmes **inspire children to grow and eat good food**, and create a lifelong connection with nature.

Since we started in 1993, we've engaged over **70,000 people** to plant over **600,000 trees** cities worldwide. We plant trees in parks, streets, schools and housing estates.

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