



A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

**TECTONIC CREATES THERAPY GARDENS IN LONDON
THAT COULD BUILD BRIDGES TO PAST MEMORIES FOR
ALZHEIMER AND DEMENTIA PATIENTS AT THE NHS
CHASE FARM HOSPITAL**

Dementia is a long-term condition which has a high impact on a person's health, personal circumstances and family life. However, a number of studies have shown the benefits of therapeutic gardens and horticultural activities for patients with dementia. For example, when people with dementia can freely use outdoor areas independence is promoted, agitation and aggression are reduced and there is an increase in memory recall.

Brief

The Royal Free Charity and NHS Trust's brief was for Tectonic to create a specialist garden at the Chase Farm Hospital tailored to the needs of patients being treated for Alzheimer's and dementia. To create a garden design that reflected and supported this group's specific needs, Tectonic devised and held a series of in-depth workshops with staff and patients at the hospital. They also visited the De Hogeweyk, a model village in The Netherlands designed to care for elderly people with dementia.

Design

This garden has an organised and geometric layout, symbolising a desire to provide patients with an ordered and structured area. Tectonic designed the courtyard garden on a grid that referenced itself to the structure of the surrounding building. As it's important for dementia patients to 'exercise' their memory, ►



- 1 Bright and colourful planting combinations and seating
- 2 View down memory lane leading into gardens, Victorian lamp posts, shop fronts and zebra crossing
- 3 Shop fronts, zebra crossing with Mini
- 4 Initial conceptual design master plan

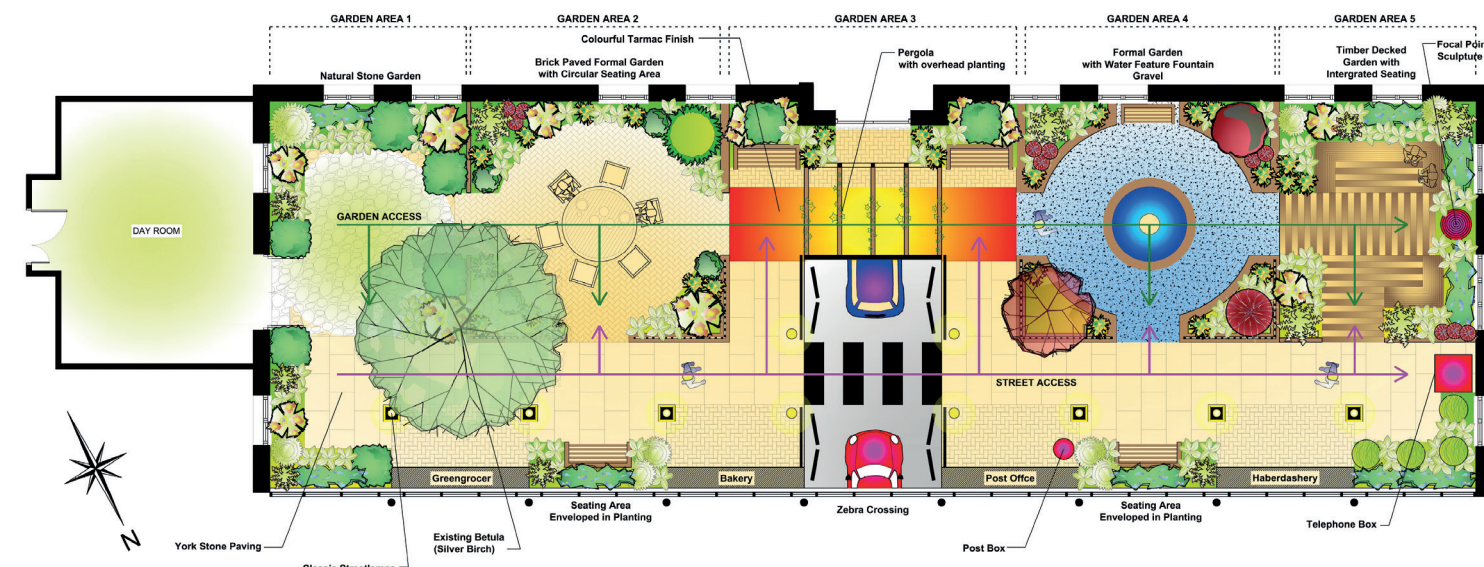


Project Value
£92k

Build Time
10 months

Size of Project
272m²

Awards
Gold Medal for
Best Public
Building Gardens



4 COURTYARD GARDEN TO ADELAIDE WARD: CONCEPTUAL DESIGN

Tectonic created a ‘memory street’ within the garden, using colour, scent and visual stimulation to evoke memories.

Tectonic depicted an old-fashioned street from a post-war era, with period shop fronts, street lamps and even a real Mini Cooper. This encourages residents to reminisce of, perhaps, their own gardens, their neighbours’ or gardens from holidays, invoking memories from different sights, colours and scents.

This street leads into a number of themed gardens. In these, the diversity of planting and hard landscaping materials allows the gardens to have a wider spectrum of appeal, and could trigger different aspects of the patients’ memory.

Tectonic created a pink garden centred around the circular paving, a wisteria walkway with colourful clematis and fragrant honeysuckle. Tectonic also created a Mediterranean themed garden with a cascading water fountain sitting on a circular resin bound base, anchored by four *Cupressus sempervirens* and Mediterranean planting. The Art Deco inspired garden contains a lawn and white rendered walls. There is a red border at one end of the ‘streets’, with *Callistemon*, *Hemerocallis* ‘Stafford’ and a red post box. In contrast, Tectonic also created a cool yellow border at the other end of the ‘street’, creating a focal

point. The centre point of the garden is the Mini and zebra crossing, and a lush shady area features *Dicksonia antarctica* with fragrant planting such as *Sarcococca*, *Skimmia* and *Osmanthus x burkwoodii*.

Due to the patients’ ability to respond to bright colours, brightly powder-coated garden furniture was commissioned by a specialist manufacturer, along with shop fronts to add the feeling of a vintage street – with a post office and post box. The staff and students of Barnet and Southgate Technical College embarked on stripping the Mini back and refurbishing it with a Union Jack that took pride of place at the centre of the garden.

Challenges

One of the key challenges was the logistics of working in the middle of a hospital environment – the gardens are situated within internal courtyards with wards leading directly onto them. Tectonics’ only access was through a main walkway in the hospital.

Tectonic was, therefore, required to satisfy all relevant health and safety requirements, provide method statements and risk assessments, as well as ensure sound pollution and privacy was maintained. Under these conditions, Tectonic did not have the ability to use a mini digger. That meant all existing planting and paving had to be removed by hand from the gardens.

Funding continued to be raised throughout the build, and much of the labour force was from staff kindly donating their time from companies, including: Tesco, Sainsbury’s, Metaswitch, Santander and the Masonic Charitable Foundation.



How materials were sourced for the job

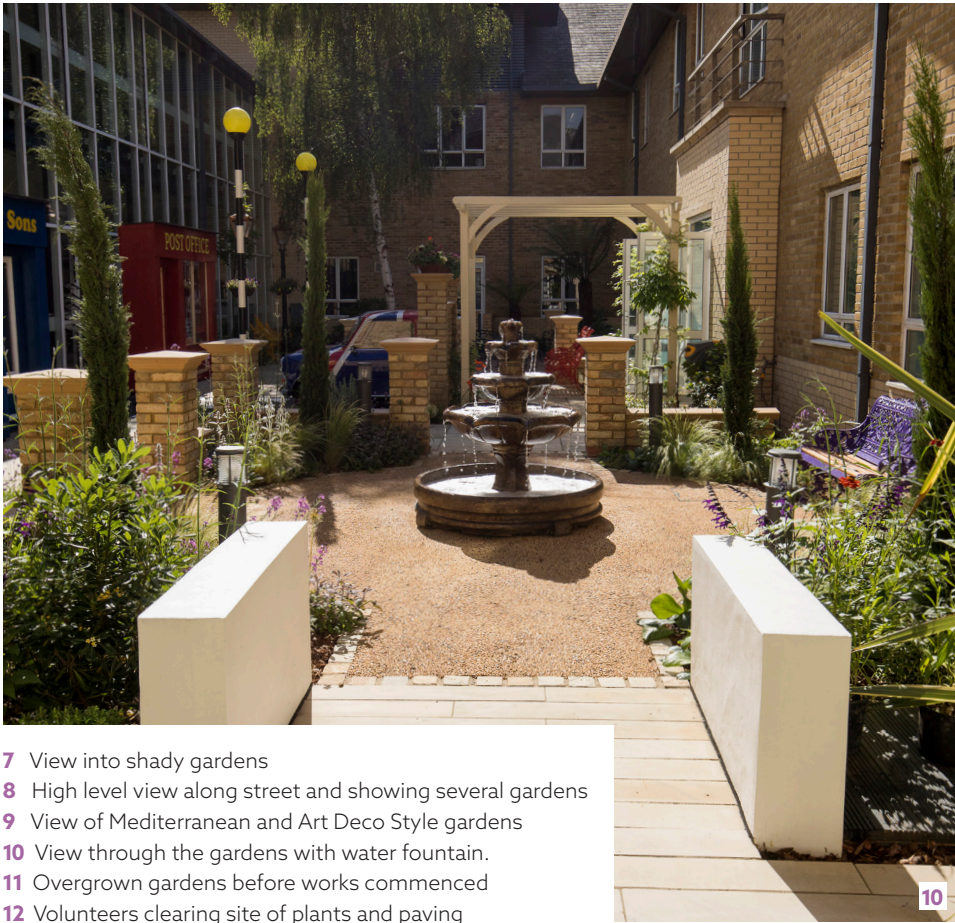
Materials were sourced from various suppliers, many of which kindly supplied at a great discount (including: Selco, Marshalls, Ronacrete and Thompsons of Crews Hill). Tectonic undertook a maintenance contract for the first 18 months to ensure that the gardens would develop and flourish.

The gardens were funded thanks to an appeal launched by the Chase Farm Charity, part of the Royal Free Charity. The support was overwhelming, and donations came from over 200 individuals, community groups, businesses and hospital staff, who skydived, trekked, climbed Snowdon and put on a range of events.

Look out for Tectonic’s follow-up feature in Pro Landscaper’s September issue: the Japanese Stroke Rehabilitation Garden

ABOUT TECTONIC

Chris Valiantis of Tectonic has built a successful, 30-year career as an architect, specialising in large scale commercial schemes around the globe, before going on to study landscape and garden design at Capel Manor. Chris then teamed up with Ollie Neaves (Pro Landscaper 30 Under 30 winner 2018) and they now have an award-winning company, specialising in high-end landscape design and installation projects, across the domestic, commercial and public sector spheres www.tectonicuk.co.uk



- 7 View into shady gardens
- 8 High level view along street and showing several gardens
- 9 View of Mediterranean and Art Deco Style gardens
- 10 View through the gardens with water fountain.
- 11 Overgrown gardens before works commenced
- 12 Volunteers clearing site of plants and paving



BEFORE AND DURING THE BUILD



- 5 Textural Mediterranean planting
- 6 Grocers shop along memory street and soft planting around brick piers

REFERENCES

Soil, manure, woodchip mulch, slate/boulders
Thompsons of Crews Hill
www.thompsonsofcrews Hill.com

Main contractor for laying paving and Ronacrete resin bound surfacing
Diamond Driveways Ltd
www.diamonddriveways.co.uk

Electrical contractors
Neotek Electrics Ltd
www.neotek-electrics.com

Paint
Crown Paints
www.crownpaints.co.uk

Victorian street lamps
English Lamp Posts
www.englishlampposts.co.uk

Custom made and powder coated Victorian benches
Elizabeth & Stevens, Bird Table Heaven
www.elizabethandstevens.com
www.birdtableheaven.co.uk/garden-benches-antique

Water fountain
Henri Studio
www.henristudio.com

Custom shop fronts
Tectonic
www.TectonicUK.co.uk

Mini Cooper
Kindly cut in half and refurbished by Barnet and Southgate College
www.barnetsouthgate.ac.uk

Railings
Metal Gates Direct
www.metalgatesdirect.co.uk

Coping stones & pier caps
Stonecrete Direct
www.stonecrete-direct.co.uk