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# Garden Sketchbook Springbank Community Resource Centre

*For West Cheltenham Partnership*

1st October 2025

Revision: R01





# 1. Introduction

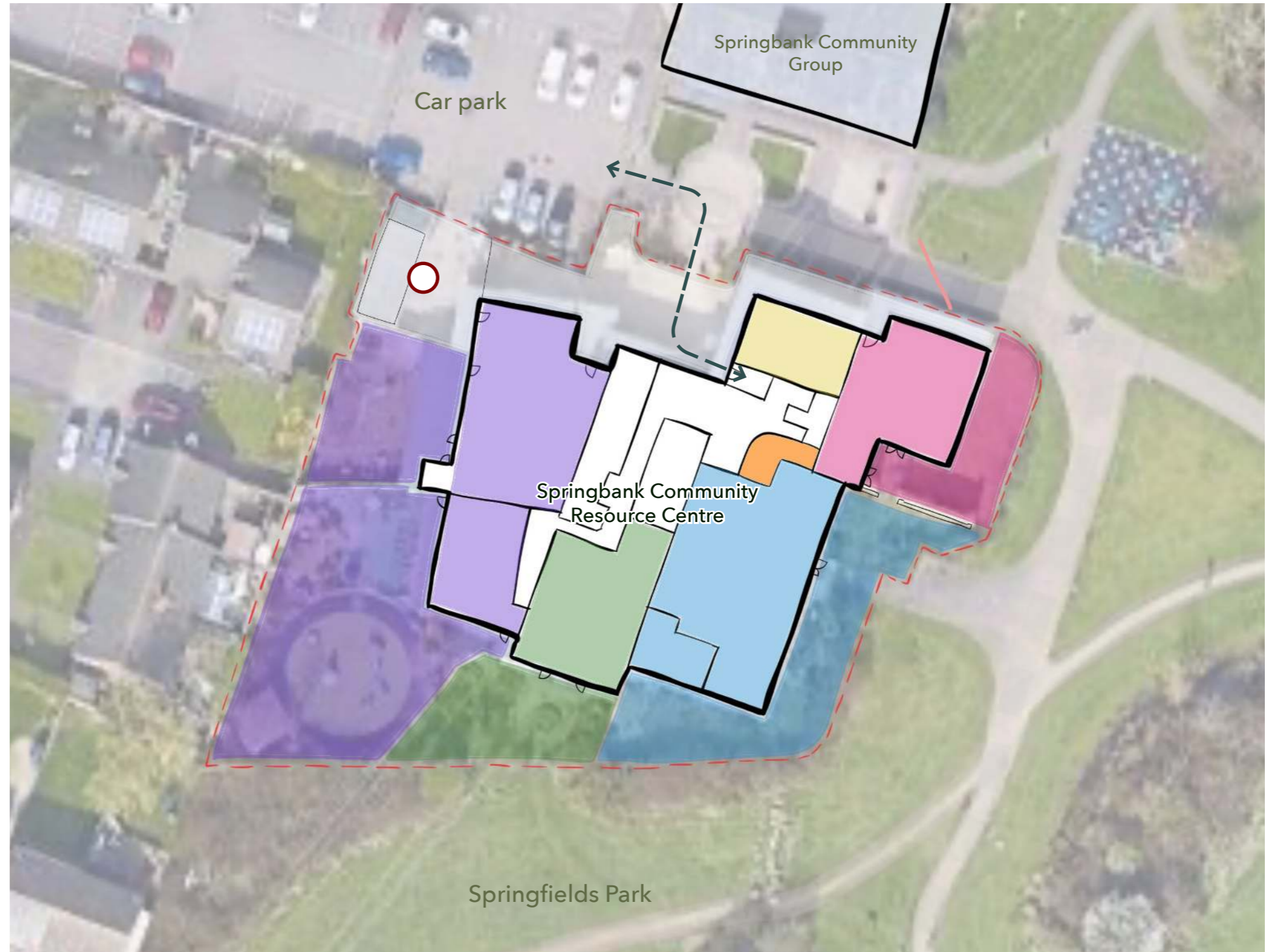
This Garden Design Sketchbook has been prepared on behalf of West Cheltenham Partnership (WCP) for the Springbank Community Resource Centre. The Centre occupies a prominent location within the residential area of Springbank, with Hester's Way to the south, and benefits from its position on the edge of Springfields Park. Covering 13 hectares and awarded Green Flag Status in 2011, the park provides a valued green setting and an important community asset.

The Centre itself is a well-established hub for local health and wellbeing services, particularly for children. Facilities include language, occupational and physiotherapy services, alongside a nursery and dental practice. Together, these services make the Centre a vital resource for the surrounding community.

As part of its ongoing commitment to enhancing access to community facilities, WCP has identified two external areas of the Centre with significant potential for improvement: the Community Garden, located to the south of the building and accessed via the Hall; and an enclosed space to the north-east; referred to in this Sketchbook as the Care Garden.

This Sketchbook introduces initial ideas for how these two spaces could be reimagined to create safe, accessible, and welcoming gardens. It also sets out aspirations to involve local residents in both the design and long-term stewardship of the spaces, ensuring the project not only delivers physical improvements but also fosters community ownership and pride.

-  Community Hall & Garden
-  Nurses Centre & proposed Care Garden
-  Giggles Nursery & playground
-  Health Centre, Dentist & external space
-  Reception
-  Main entrance and access via external arrival.
-  Refuse store



A plan showing the arrangement of internal and external areas at Springbank Community Resource Centre

# 1.1 Introduction

## The Vision

### West Cheltenham Partnership Vision

The West Cheltenham Partnership (WCP) aims to improve community access to the Community Garden and proposed Care Garden by creating inclusive, vibrant, and welcoming spaces that can be enjoyed by all members of the Springbank community.

### Community Garden Design Objectives

#### Accessibility

- Ensure visitors can reach and enjoy all areas of the garden.
- Use surface materials that are smooth, consistent, and free from slip or trip hazards, while avoiding visual patterns that may be disorienting for some visitors.
- Provide clear and direct access between the Garden and the Community Hall.
- Explore opportunities for temporary connections to Springfield Park during community events.

#### Community

- Create a welcoming space that caters to the needs of all visitors to the Community Resource Centre.
- Incorporate flexible areas suitable for community gatherings, celebrations, and outdoor cooking such as BBQs.
- Encourage community involvement throughout the design process and during the construction phase to foster a sense of ownership and pride.

#### Experience

- Introduce planting schemes that stimulate the senses, support local wildlife, and create an uplifting and engaging environment.
- Provide hard landscaping areas designed to host small group activities.
- Include facilities such as an outdoor kitchen or BBQ space.
- Design seating areas nestled within planting to encourage relaxation, reflection, and social interaction.
- Integrate opportunities for outdoor learning, horticultural activities, and ecological education.



*Gardens to reflect the voices & needs  
of the people they serve.*

# 1.2 Introduction

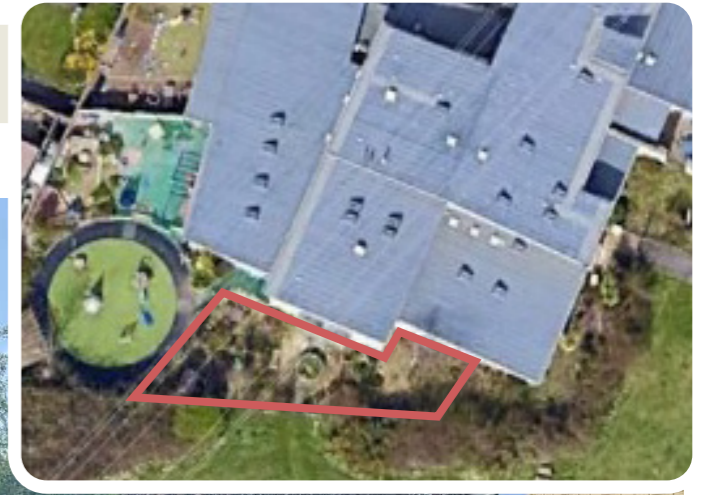
## The Community Garden

Currently accessed via the Community Hall, the existing surfaces have become uneven and in places unsafe; this has led to planting becoming overgrown further adding to the gardens poor accessibility. With thoughtful enhancements, WCP hope to reconnect the community with the garden by improving access, providing opportunities for small gatherings, enhancing planting and ensuring effective long-term maintenance.

## Opportunities

- **Improve access:** The existing surfaces are uneven therefore restricting use. By replacing them with level, accessible paths, the garden would be open to all users of the Community Hall, including those with mobility challenge
- **Mature trees:** A number of small, established trees already provide a canopy and structure. With maintenance, these can form a strong foundation for a greener, more inviting space.
- **Planting:** Overgrown vegetation currently encroaches on paths, providing limited interest for people. There is scope to enrich the planting palette with a mix of ornamental and native species, making the garden both attractive to visitors and supportive of wildlife.
- **Seating and social spaces:** At present, a single weathered bench offers little opportunity for rest or gathering. Introducing high-quality, well-placed furniture would create spaces for relaxation, social interaction, and community activities.
- **Boundary enhancements:** The existing railings are in good condition, offering security and definition. Targeted screening towards the nursery, along with maintenance of vegetation along Springfields Park, would improve privacy and outlook.

With these interventions, the Community Garden could evolve into a vibrant and inclusive outdoor environment for recreation, reflection, and community use.



Birch trees on boundary with Health & Dental Centre



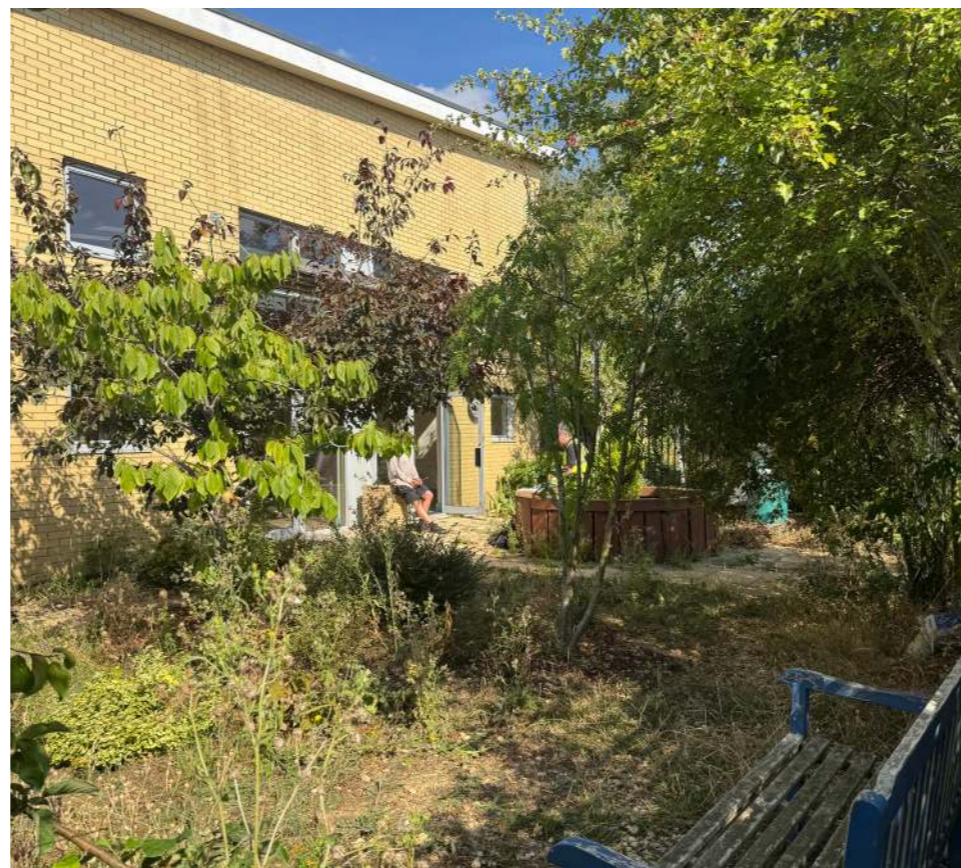
Raised timber planter within uneven paved area



Access gate to Springfields Park



The compost area



View towards the Hall access with overgrown planting



View towards the boundary with Springfield Park - showing overgrown path

# 1.2 Introduction

## The Care Garden

An enclosed paved area accessed via the nurses centre, the *Care Garden* currently lacks greenery and purpose. By transforming the space into a garden, improving access and introducing planting and seating places, WCP hope to provide a cherished space; encouraging use of the centre.

## Opportunities

- **A healing and wellbeing focus:** By introducing planting and thoughtful design, the Care Garden could be transformed into a calming, restorative environment. This would particularly benefit the nurses and their visitors.
- **Sustainability and biodiversity:** Currently devoid of vegetation, the garden could be enlivened through seasonal planting, wildlife habitat and small trees. The introduction of planted areas will also capture surface water from within the site.
- **Purpose:** With careful planning, the Care Garden could offer opportunities for quiet reflection, small group activities, and therapeutic interaction with nature—helping to support both physical and mental wellbeing.

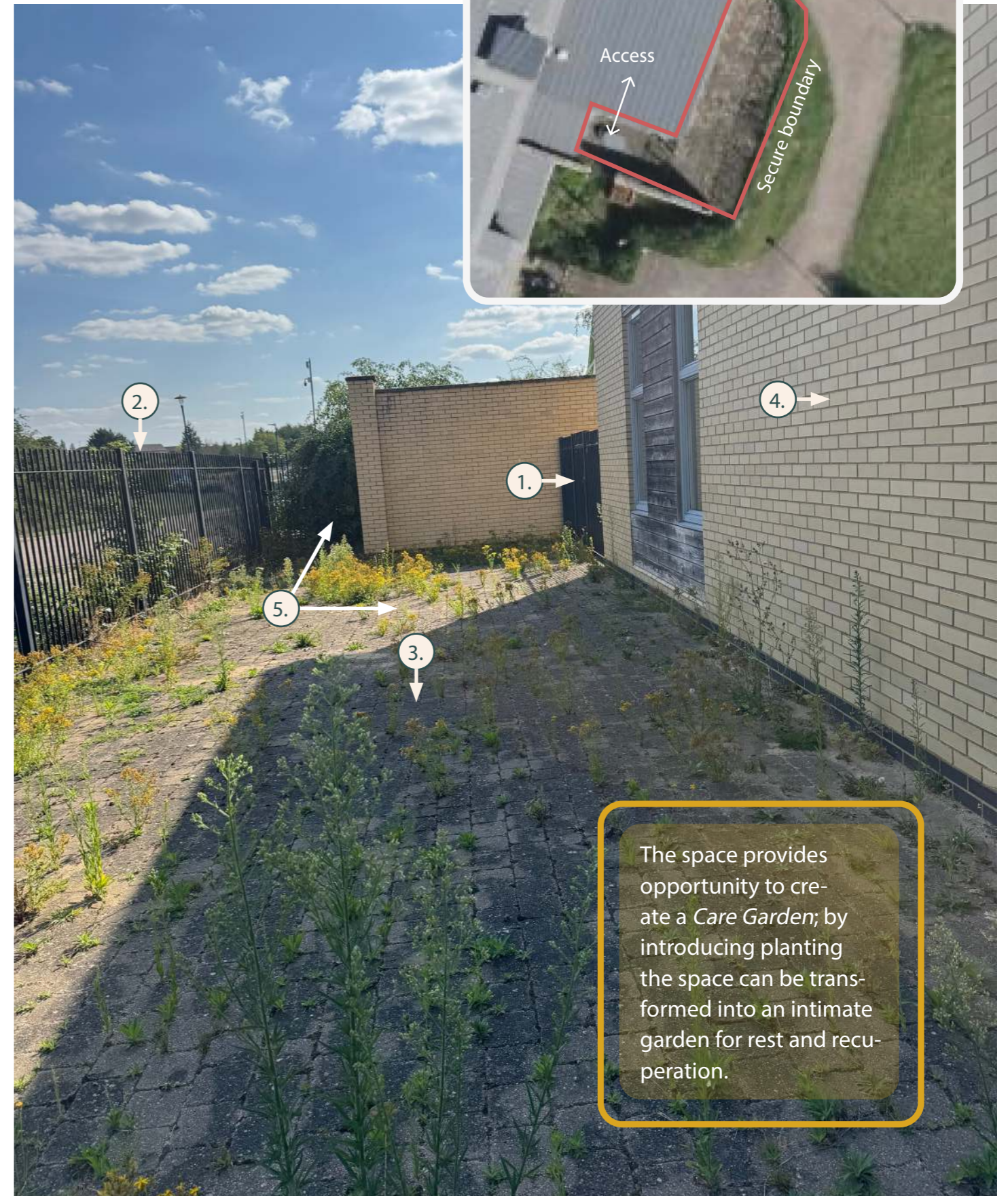
This transformation would ensure the space serves a meaningful role for the Centre, adding a new dimension to its facilities while meeting the needs of health-care professionals and community members alike.

Key:

1. Removing the internal railings and gate will improve access to the proposed garden.
2. Secure boundary/ railings to Springfields park: visual permeability encourages natural surveillance whilst potentially raising awareness of the proposed garden leading to increased community use and sense of ownership. A new secure pedestrian gate will provide access to the adjacent play area.
3. Existing paved surface in good condition and should be retained where possible to reduce environmental impact.
4. Opportunity to enliven blank facades through planting and/ or public art.
5. Maintenance access required.



Existing photograph showing extent of proposed Care Garden and view from Springfields Park.



A view from within the proposed Care Garden - looking towards the south.

## 2.0 Emerging Garden Design

### The Community Garden

The emerging design prioritises the protection of existing trees, integrating them meaningfully into the garden so visitors can enjoy their shade, seasonal colour, and the wildlife they attract. A single hard surface forms an accessible core, softened by generous planting beds. Stepping planks through the central bed and around existing trees encourages both play and a deeper connection with nature.

A flexible space has been retained adjacent to the hall access for ease of use during event; with an outdoor kitchen seating bench. To the west, along the boundary with the Nursery, the path widens to accommodate two benches, offering opportunities for visitors to sit alone or with friends while surrounded by sensory and climbing plants.

The composting area has been retained, making use of the existing enclosing wall, and a new garden shed is proposed to support maintenance.

Finally, the fire escape route for the Nursery has been maintained, with new surface treatments ensuring a safe and accessible exit in the event of an emergency.

#### Key:

1. Flexible space for moveable furniture and events.
2. A curved linear bench provides a space to sit beneath existing trees.
3. Outdoor kitchen.
4. Central planting bed with existing trees and enhanced woodland planting for wildlife; meandering stepping paths add play value.
5. Sensory planting within raised bed with timber benches.
6. Composting and maintenance area.
7. Water butts for rain water collection.



Emerging Sketch Design: The Community Garden

# 2.1 Emerging Garden Design

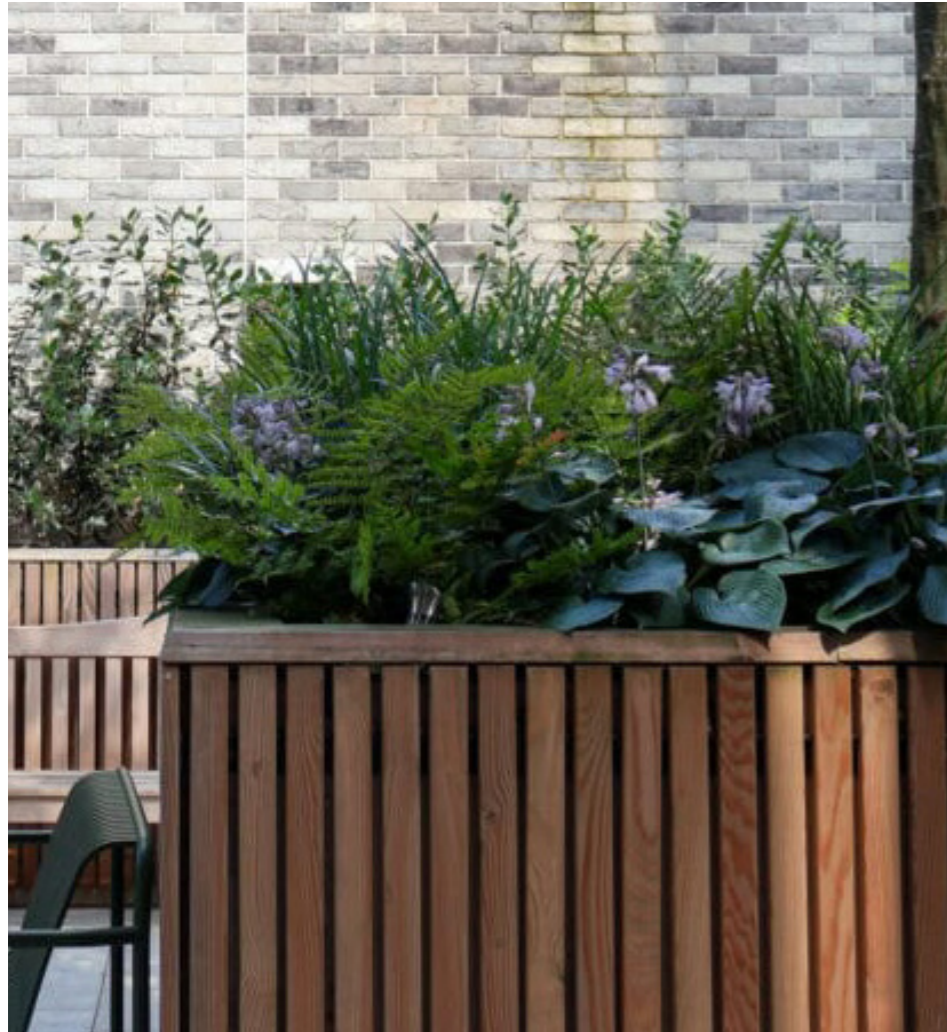
The Community Garden - Sketch View



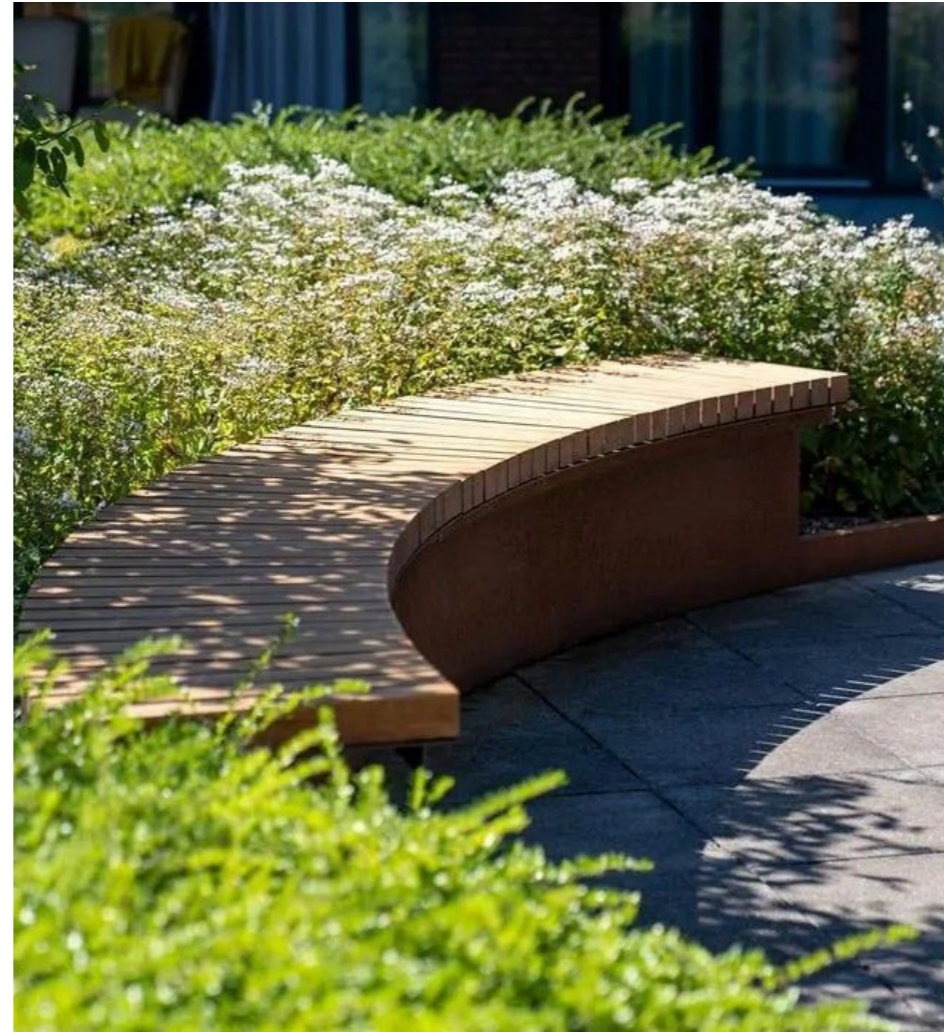
Emerging Sketch Design: Community Garden View A

## 2.2 Emerging Garden Design

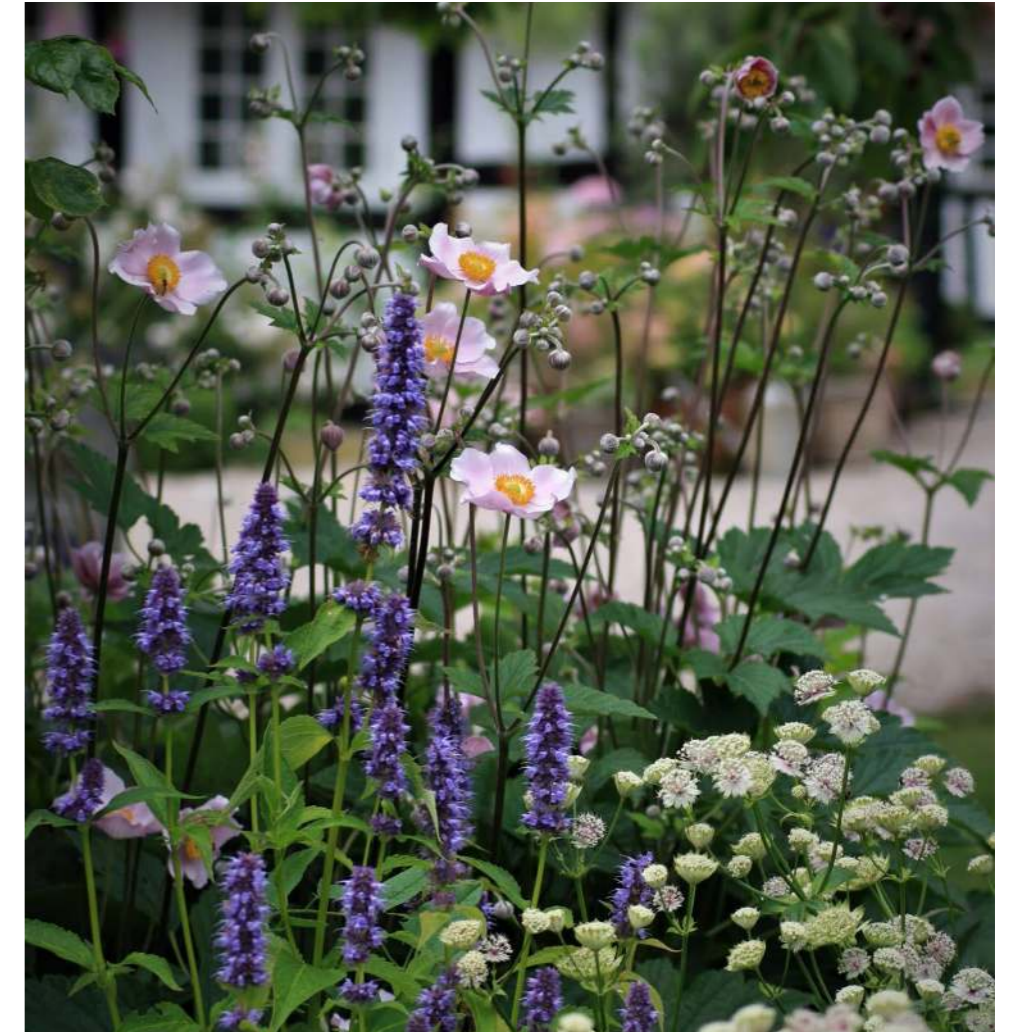
The Community Garden - precedent design images



Vertical timber slats to form raised planting beds



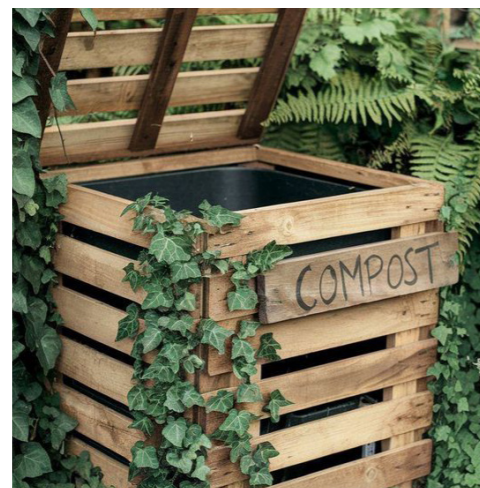
Curved timber benches - to include back and arm rests



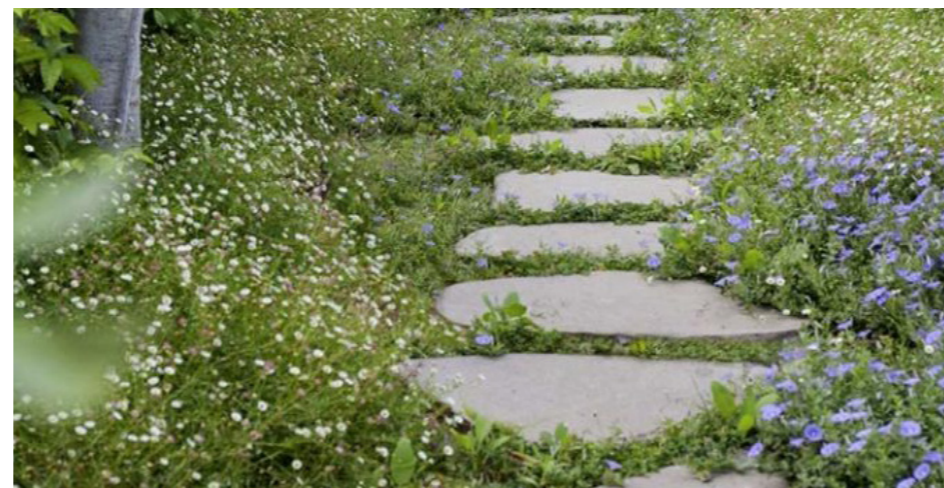
Vibrant planting for year-round interest.



Decorative and wayfinding lighting.



Composting facilities to be replaced.



Stepping planks through planting add play value and enhance connection with nature.



Bug hotels positioned within pollinator friendly planting



Potential reuse of existing art piece for wildlife habitat

## 2.3 Emerging Garden Design

### The Care Garden

The emerging design introduces seating opportunities nestled within planting, with new trees providing shade and a sense of enclosure. Carefully selected plant species will emphasise sensory qualities, creating a calming, garden-like environment where visitors are encouraged to pause and dwell.

New tree planting will bring shade and vertical interest to an otherwise exposed part of the Centre, while also offering valuable habitat for wildlife.

The design also retains much of the existing paving, minimising impact by incorporating linear planting beds. These planted areas will help manage surface water, enhance biodiversity, and bring moments of joy to those using the community centre.

Key:

1. The existing paving is retained and with a seating place for moveable furniture adjacent the access to the garden.
2. Planting against the existig wall with wires fitted for climbing plants - transforming the blank facade; alternatively an opportunity for community art display.
3. Seating places enclosed by planting.
4. Planting along the boundary consists of low growing evergreen shrubs and herbaceous perennials, with seasonal bulbs for year round colour and interest.
5. Proposed tree planting - small multi-stem native species.
6. Existing access retained.
7. Maintenance access and access to Park.

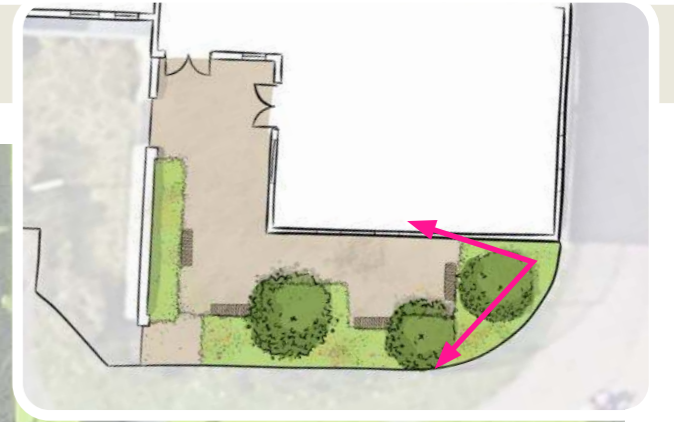
↕ Proposed location for secure gate providing connection/ access to park.



Emerging Sketch Design: The Care Garden

## 2.4 Emerging Garden Design

The Care Garden - Sketch View



Emerging Sketch Design: The Care Garden View B

## 2.5 Emerging Garden Design

The Community Garden - precedent design images



New multi-stem trees within vibrant planting will create an attractive space encouraging visitors to use the garden



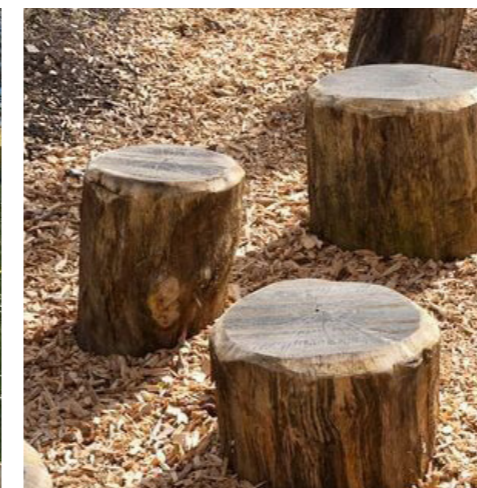
Linear benches against planting encourage visitors to connect with nature.



Opportunity for playful wildlife boxes adding educational value.



Opportunity to incorporate community art.



Stepping logs within planting for play.



Multi-stem trees provide structure and interest.



Climbing plant species to blank facades.

# 3.0 Community Engagement

## Community Engagement Strategy

As part of the proposed improvements at Springbank, we are committed to engaging the community at every stage of the project. This involvement will begin at the design stage, where residents, community centre users, and local groups will be invited to share their ideas, priorities, and aspirations for the two garden space. Through workshops, drop-in sessions, and on-site discussions, we will ensure that the gardens reflect the voices and needs of the people who will use them most.

During the construction phase, we will seek opportunities for community participation wherever possible. This may include volunteer days, skills-sharing activities, and collaborative pro-

jects with local schools and organisations. By offering hands-on involvement in elements such as planting and small-scale construction tasks, we aim to create a sense of ownership and connection to the gardens from the outset.

Once established, the gardens will continue to be community-led through their long-term care and maintenance. We will encourage local groups, volunteers, and individuals to take part in activities such as seasonal planting, wildlife monitoring, and garden upkeep. This approach will not only strengthen local stewardship but also provide opportunities for learning, wellbeing, and social connection.

By embedding collaboration throughout the design, construction, and maintenance of the gardens, our goal is to create spaces that are both meaningful and resilient – places that serve the community, celebrate local identity, and inspire pride for years to come.



### The design stage

*Workshops, surveys & drop-in sessions  
Discussions, sketches, brain-storming*



### The build

*Opportunities for community participation  
Volunteer days, skill-sharing activities & collaborative*



### Listening to the community

To ensure the gardens reflect the voices & needs of the people who will use it the most.



### Maintenance

*Community-led gardens  
Seasonal planting, wildlife monitoring and garden upkeep.*