

‘Considerate Friends’ Report with Recommendations for Thingwall Park Allotments

Considerate Friends are a group of unpaid family carers and disabled people who visit local services to suggest recommendations and improvements for disabled people, carers and people aged 50 and over. The project works across the Greater Fishponds area and visits started in January 2018.

The project is under the umbrella of Bristol Ageing Better and run in partnership between The Care Forum and Carers Support Centre. Carers Support Centre supports carers to volunteer for the project and organises the visits.

On 30th August 2019, a small group of volunteers visited Thingwall Park Allotments and made the following observations.



Did you find the venue easy to access? Score 8/10

There is a lot of parking nearby, and they are close to a bus route. The gate is quite heavy, but there are allotment reps and people around who are helpful and willing to help with this.



Were the staff/volunteers easy to talk to? Score 10/10

Irene and colleagues were so friendly and helpful. Considerate Friends were put at ease and were given lots of time to ask questions. We were impressed by the knowledge of the volunteers and really appreciate the time they spent with us.



Were the opening times suitable for carers? Score 10/10

The community allotment shop is open on Saturdays and Sundays from February to October, Saturdays only from November to January. Given that this is run completely by volunteers, we think these times are very suitable.



Did you feel understood? Score 10/10

Volunteers seemed to understand the access needs of older people, carers and disabled people.

Would you go back again? Score 10/10

Considerate Friends felt that they would like to go back to the October apple picking day, if time allows.

A carer said, "I felt a sense of excitement when I saw the colourful fruits in the orchard"

What was the best thing about the allotment?



It is very multi-cultural.

The community orchard.

Well stocked shop run by volunteers.

Low membership fees.

Community events, e.g. apple picking day.

Accessible toilet by the allotment entrance.

Wide paths which are easy to manoeuvre on.

Friendly and welcoming volunteers who have offered to do another tour with carers.

What would you like to see improved about the allotments?

More promotion to the local community so that they know that they can access the shop (we took away some flyers and can try to help with this).

The community orchard is a long walk from the entrance (but we know that this can't be helped).

In summary

Considerate Friends were really impressed by the allotments and the community allotments. We were also inspired by the hard-working volunteers. We would recommend the site to anyone considering taking on an allotment or considering volunteering for the community orchard.