

Restore's Manzil Way Gardens:



The Restore's Manzil Way Gardens are situated right in the middle of Oxford, set aside from Cowley Road.

It is a beautiful green space at the heart of the local, diverse and vibrant community. It has often been referred to as an **"Oasis of calm"**.

Throughout the year, everyone is welcome to come and enjoy the gardens.

The Garden is accessible to wheelchair users and/or people with limited mobility.

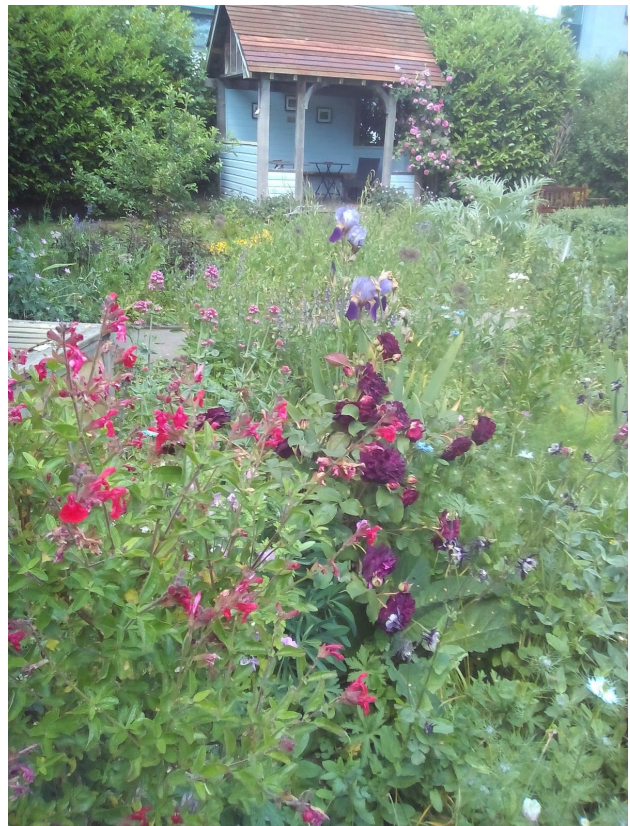
It is also a safe garden for children to play as we very much welcome them to have a first hand experience of nature.

There are plenty to discover:

- Our willow structures where children enjoy playing hide and seek,



- Our wooden summer house where you can relax and enjoy the silence or simply a cup of tea,
- Our beautiful borders with a lot of wildlife friendly shrubs and flowers: Bees, Butterflies, Birds, etc.. feel very welcome and do their best to help maintain the garden within our organic horticultural ethics.
- Our water feature **“Cycle of Life”**, adding to the sense of calm and tranquility, helping us stay in the moment,
- Our lovely established Hornbeam hedge creating just enough shade for our Hellebores to thrive throughout the year,
- Our vast array of trees and shrubs such as Eucalyptus, Silver Birch, Philadelphus, Buddleias, Olive, Salvias, Euonymus, Viburnums, etc....
- Our range of climbing, rambling Roses we can all admire,
- Our Boxwood knot bed filled with Rosemary, Lavender, Thyme,
- Our plants for sale nicely displayed on our upcycled vintage railway luggage trolleys,
- Our mosaic benches covered with vibrant colored tiles;
- Our new border filled with ornamental grasses including Carex, variegated Miscanthus, Pennisetum, Stipa.
- Our lovely Garden Cafe with its vegetable patch where peas, tomatoes, new potatoes are grown and harvested to be used in their kitchen, using the crop rotation system for healthy products,
- Our lovely specimen plants such as Fig tree, Birds of Paradise, Euphorbias, Lemon scented Geraniums and Paeonies,
- We also have plants grown for maximum foliage impact: Bergénias, Ferns, Hostas, Cardoons to name but a few,
- Bulbs like Daffodils, Crocuses, Cyclamens, Fritillaries, Snowdrops, Bluebells, Anemones, Gladiolis, Alliums, Alstroemerias bring us plenty of surprises from season to season.
- Last but not least, our Apple tree next to the Summer house, planted several years ago in memory of a good friend and colleague of ours.





At the back of our building, reserved to our members, we have:

- A polytunnel with a hot bed to help us start off plug plants early Spring,
- 2 greenhouse to help us propagate and look after plants over the Winter,
- 2 raised beds with Strawberries and Raspberries,
- Another raised bed with herbs such as Rosemary, Thyme, Lavender, Chive,
- A plants nursery with up to 1000 plants at the peak of the Summer season,
- A Mediterranean border facing South and therefore in full sun most of the day,
- Several compost heaps to turn our garden waste into a nutrient rich humus. We use this to feed our borders over the winter and to keep the weeds at bay,
- Several bird boxes, bug hotels scattered around the garden,
- We have put aside an area beside the compost heaps to encourage wildlife and in particular hedgehogs.
- By growing a rich variety of trees, shrubs, flowers, herbs which bloom and seed at different times, we provide a rich larder of nectar, fruits, leaves, nesting and shelter to many of our friends. Each species has its role in maintaining a natural balance.

How do we maintain the garden:

- Our members and volunteers on a weekly basis, as part of the therapeutic programme, take part in maintaining the gardens, working with nature rather than against it, being mindful of the seasonal cycles and natural rhythms,
- As we like to avoid using harmful products, we do not use any chemicals to feed the plants, or to keep weeds and pests under control. We firmly believe that, by nurturing the soil, we give our fauna and flora the best chance to thrive together in harmony in a biodiverse environment and ecological balance,
- We make our own compost mix to top up the borders in the Winter or early Spring to enrich the soil with the necessary nutrients to ensure a healthy sustainable ecosystem. Mulching our borders on a yearly plays its part towards a resilient growing system,
- We use rainwater as much as possible too in line with biodynamic principles as rain water is much more gentle to plants as free from additives.
- We provide plenty of suitable habitats for wildlife to use as their home. Birds, Bees, Beetles, Wasps, Lacewings, Earthworms, Hoverflies, Ladybirds, Dragonflies, etc... are all attracted to our garden for us to enjoy their company. These natural predators keep the few little foes at bay too,
- Members of the public bring us plants to add to our vast collection, helping the garden to evolve in a manner relevant to the local community,
- We have regular corporate events whereby organisations plan an away day for their staff to volunteer for us in the garden;
- We have had help too from the Community Payback Scheme who undertook many maintenance works such as building a path to our Straw Bale House where the Oxfordshire Recovery College runs its courses. This path has been designed with easy access to anyone with limited mobility too, enabling us to treat everyone in a dignified manner.



We recycle, restore, upcycle as much as we can:

- We produce many of our plants by propagation by taking cuttings, dividing established specimens, donations from the local community,
- We use as much as possible of our homemade compost to nurture plants during the growing season, bringing vitality and minerals to the soil.
- Many of the pots we use are donated to us giving them a new lease of life.
- Most of the timber used to build our raised beds, bird boxes, etc have been donated too to us by the members of the public.
- It is important to us to use resources responsibly with minimum damage to the environment as possible. For example, through regular mulching, we maximise the water holding capacity of the soil, thus reducing the need to water.

Such holistic horticultural approach emphasises the interdependence, connections between all life forms. It also illustrates and demonstrates pragmatically our therapeutic programme to our members making it accessible even when in some distress.

By learning what makes a plant thrive, we get to learn what makes us thrive as individuals and as a community.



