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The Charity:

[National Trust - Morden Hall Park](#) is green oasis in the city, giving you a taste of a country estate with a glimpse of its agricultural and industrial history. This tranquil former deer park is one of the few remaining estates that used to line the River Wandle during its industrial heyday. The National Trust is an independent charity and membership organisation for environmental and heritage conservation in England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

The Project:

The purpose of my project was to create a wheelchair accessibility and legacy in Morden Hall Park's Community Kitchen Garden. I wanted the CKG to go even further and be able to attract more diverse groups of volunteers. In order to do this, the garden need to be physically accessible as well as easily understandable.

In order to achieve these goals, I created a wheelchair friendly environment with vertical walls, ultra-raised beds, wide paths and wheelchair-friendly seating areas. To make the gardens plans understandable for all, I created a physical folder for volunteers to sign in and out that will also contain seeds and a task list for the month. Lastly, I advertised the CKG all around Merton and on various societies – e.g. Royal Society of Biology, National Union of Students and many more.

I was positively surprised by the harmony of my co-workers contrasting backgrounds here at Morden Hall Park – everybody has a completely different skill set that they genuinely use together to pursue a common goal. Team meetings often involve some form of shared learning so people here are always furthering their skills and learning new things.

In terms of accessibility, the Community Kitchen Garden now has paths that can be used by people in need of wheelchair access, but also secondarily means that people with stability issues are much more comfortable in the garden, too. Vertical walls that will house herbs in the spring and summer months are from knee to head height, giving more freedom to people both in wheelchairs and with back issues.

I found out that I am a lot better dealing with people than I thought I was and that I love to talk to people about nature. I have a completely different outlook on my future now: I know that it is possible to take care of green spaces as a career and it is an extremely rewarding one at that. My project has achieved both legacy and accessibility as much as was possible in the given timeframe and has set up clear objectives for the coming year to take that even further.



Highlights:

- Having two corporate groups in from Goldman Sachs – they were very efficient and a joy to lead
- Setting up the new partnerships
- Yearly review meeting – everyone was very happy with the progress that has been made

