



The Archbishop of York Stephen Cottrell and his wife Rebecca visited the walled garden in Bishopthorpe, York, yesterday which is leased by Brunswick Organic Nursery. They visited in their capacity as patrons to the organisation and took a tour of the walled garden to meet some of the staff, workers and volunteers and learn more about their work.

Brunswick Organic Nursery is a registered charity based in Bishopthorpe which provides a range of productive and skilled activities for adults with learning disabilities (who choose to be named 'Workers') to develop skills, relationships and communities. This gives opportunities for people to participate, be part of a team and be valued in their local community and wider society.

Archbishop Stephen and Rebecca Cottrell were welcomed to the walled garden by Workers in the woodworking and gardening teams, alongside Brunswick volunteers and support staff. Directors Lauren Webb and Michael Tansley-Thomas, Mark Stevenson and Simon Usher on behalf of the Brunswick Trustees and volunteers Keith Lowe and Ed Clews, were also in attendance.

Archbishop Stephen said, 'It's been wonderful to come and see what goes on behind these tall walls! To see the space still being used for its original purpose and for so many people to benefit from being here is fantastic. I think we could all benefit for taking time to slow down and reconnect with nature and Brunswick offers this and more to people from all walks of life. Rebecca and I are so encouraged by the work that is done here to provide support to people with learning disabilities, offering opportunities for them to grow in experience and confidence.'

Lauren Webb said 'Gardening and growing offers something for everyone's abilities and strengths. Everyone in the team contributes and we see so many positive outcomes for people's wellbeing, confidence and skills development. The teams grow a range of organic vegetables and fruits just like the gardeners would have done here over a hundred years ago. They all do a brilliant job in helping to look after and develop this beautiful space. It's been a pleasure to be able to show the Archbishop and Rebecca Cottrell, our Patrons, around today and to share the pride in what we do.'

Gardening Worker Mark said 'I love coming here. It is fun and I do lots of work. My favourites are mowing and growing the roses. It is exciting the Archbishop is visiting.'

Woodwork Worker, William, said: 'I like making the bird houses and planters. I like being creative and doing the drawings.'

The Walled Garden is opposite the grounds of Bishopthorpe Palace and was originally used by the palace to grow its own fruit and vegetables. This included exotic fruits and in 1839, at the second annual fete of the Yorkshire Horticultural and Floricultural Association, head gardener John Legg won 'Best Pine in a Pot', took second prize for best dish of strawberries and third for cherries.



Ed Clews



Ed Clews



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