



PRECEDENTS



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6.1. BLACKTHORN MEDICAL CENTRE(garden project)

Maidstone, Kent (UK)

by Clare Cooper Marcus



Figure 6.1. View of part of the garden. (Photo by Clare Cooper Marcus) (Sachs 1999:289)

6.1.1. DESCRIPTION

A facility that addresses both physical and mental illness by combining alternative medicine with a specialised indoor and outdoor environment designed for healing. The aim of Blackthorn Garden is to create through work a sense of usefulness and meaning to rebuild self confidence and self esteem. The Garden project provides a valuable social/physical setting, that relieves the patients from the distressing symptoms of mental illness (Sachs 1999:288)

The garden has 3 objectives:

- to rehabilitate people who have not responded to other treatments.
- to create an environment which encourage social interaction.
- to encourage various disciplines involved with mental health care to work together effectively (Sachs 1999:288).

The Garden Project consists of the following facilities:

- A quiet flower garden with trees, lawns and seating areas for patients and the surrounding community which is also used for fund raising events.
- A greenhouse and lath house used for the cultivation of garden and house plants to sell.
- Extensive vegetable gardens
- An organic cafe serving produce from the gardens to staff, patients, volunteers and members of the local neighbourhood.
- a craft hut (Sachs 1999:290)

Everything in the garden is used and what is left over is recycled in compost. The vegetables is used in the kitchen and the bedding plants and cut flowers are raised for sale or used in dried flower arrangements, massage oils, herbal preparations, jams and chutneys. All of these products are sold through the crafts program. Patients are referred to the hospital by psychiatrists, social workers and CP's as coworkers rather than patients, working alongside staff members and volunteers, depending on their mood. Similar to the patients at Weskoppies, the mental illnesses of these co workers include schizophrenia, chronic states of anxiety, depression or school phobia amongst others (Sachs 1999:290).

Figure 6.2. A coworker in the garden (Photo by Clare Cooper Marcus) (Sachs 1999:291)



6.1.2. OPPORTUNITIES AND IDEAS

Weskoppies also provides patients with work opportunities through work schemes, but there is a need to encourage the younger generation patients to get involved and interested in the garden.

The Blackthorn Medical Centre is a good example of how engagement with the natural physical environment can promote social interaction and restore a feeling of belonging and purposefulness while also teaching patients about responsibility (refer to 5.3.1 & 5.3.4).

6.2. MOROKA DAM PRECINCT

Moroko Park Precinct, Soweto

by Newtown Landscape Architects

6.2.1. DESCRIPTION

Moroka Dam Precinct includes an area of plus minus 20 ha that was developed around the Moroka dam as a 'neighbourhood park'. The project is a good example of how outdoor environment can provide social sustainability and community upliftment.

For the Landscape Architects the social challenge was to illustrate the potential of parks to uplift communities through community participation (NLA, 2005:1). The idea was also to create a sense of pride and ownership towards the environment (NLA, 2005:2). The community was involved in the project from the onset until construction. Amongst other ideas the community envisioned the idea of art in the park.

Individuals from the community were allowed to put their mark on their environment through mosaic art at strategic positions. The mosaic work reflects the social and political views of the community with graphics and phrases like 'keep clean', 'do not waste', 'condomise' and other powerful messages (NLA, 2005:2).

6.2.2. OPPORTUNITIES AND IDEAS

As part of the occupational therapy program patients can also do mosaic work on planters or retaining walls with positive images and uplifting phrases such as 'you are not alone' or 'there is always hope'. This will not only create a feeling of ownership and pride but also create an outdoor environment with a positive, uplifting identity (refer to 5.2.2).



Fig. 6.3-6.5 :Mosaic art by the community reflects the communities' views and culture (NLA, 2005).

Fig. 6.6 : A sense of ownership is established by allowing people from the local community to do the mosaic art (NLA, 2005).