



SOCIAL LANDSCAPES
CARE FOR THE EARTH • CARE FOR THE PEOPLE

Final Report

Gardens and Outside Spaces

Treadgold House

June 2021

Funded by
Innovate UK

Final Report Outline:

- Social Landscapes introduction
- The brief from the client
- Direct methods used to gather information
- How a permaculture approach improves residents' experience of the retrofit
- Outcomes of the workshops
- Design suggestions

The design suggestions focus on three parts of the surrounding gardens plus the balconies.

- Conclusions

Social Landscapes Introduction

Social Landscapes is a community interest company working with both individuals & groups to re-imagine and re-design their green spaces, supporting personal, social and ecological wellbeing.

We believe that healthy neighbourhoods need vibrant places and that these places need engaged communities.

By using a creative, permaculture and placemaking approach to what we do, we create urban environments where people and planet prosper.

"Human connection lies at the heart of human wellbeing!"



People



Places



Livelihoods

The design brief from the client, BowTie Construction:

Social Landscapes was contracted by BowTie Construction, who received the funding from Innovate UK, to engage residents to re-imagine the outdoor spaces surrounding Treadgold House. The findings of this engagement are to be fed into the overall refurbishment of the estate. The main given deliverables are:

- A form of gardening project for residents that leads to seedlings and plants for residents to use on their new balconies. Wider co-benefits include fostering new friendships between residents and psychological benefits of gardening
- Co-design options for balconies, feeding these views into the actual balcony design to include suitable fixings for accessories
- Better use of green spaces around Treadgold House and landscaping of this area.
- Possible re-organisation/ re-modeling of car park
- Creating a children's play space/ playground
- Designs drawings and models for all of the above

The following document are the outcomes gathered from the workshops we hosted with residents with a conclusion to our findings at the end.

Direct methods used to gather information:

- Site survey
- Invitation to workshops via post and email with some initial thinking exercises about their current usage of the outdoor spaces surrounding Treadgold House
- Online consultations in 3 parts:
 1. *Gathering ideas*: engaging residents in conversation to find out what would improve the green spaces at Treadgold House; starting with hearing what they enjoy about the space and also what could improve it.
 1. *Concept development*: we take their ideas and produce visual examples of what they could look like in real life; we discuss placement of these ideas, accessibility, movement through the space.
 1. *Design details*: we come up with design options reflecting residents' ideas and preferences; we discuss these results with residents and focus on details.

Tool used:

Appreciative Inquiry Asking open positive questions to engage residents and help them excite their imagination. *'What do you like about your space/home?' 'What would you like to see more of?' 'How could it be even better?' 'What would make the garden feel like an extension of your home?'*

How can a permaculture approach improve residents' experience of the retrofit:

Permaculture design creates beneficial relationships between people and the places they inhabit. By making the surroundings of Treadgold House more welcoming and functional to meet residents' needs, they become an extension of their homes.

The designs we've created with the residents include **a direct link between the gardens and the homes**. Residents will be able to use the new potting area greenhouse to grow plants for their optional planters and hanging baskets designed to fit their balconies. The optional bokashi composting bins will provide compost which can be used to grow these plants.

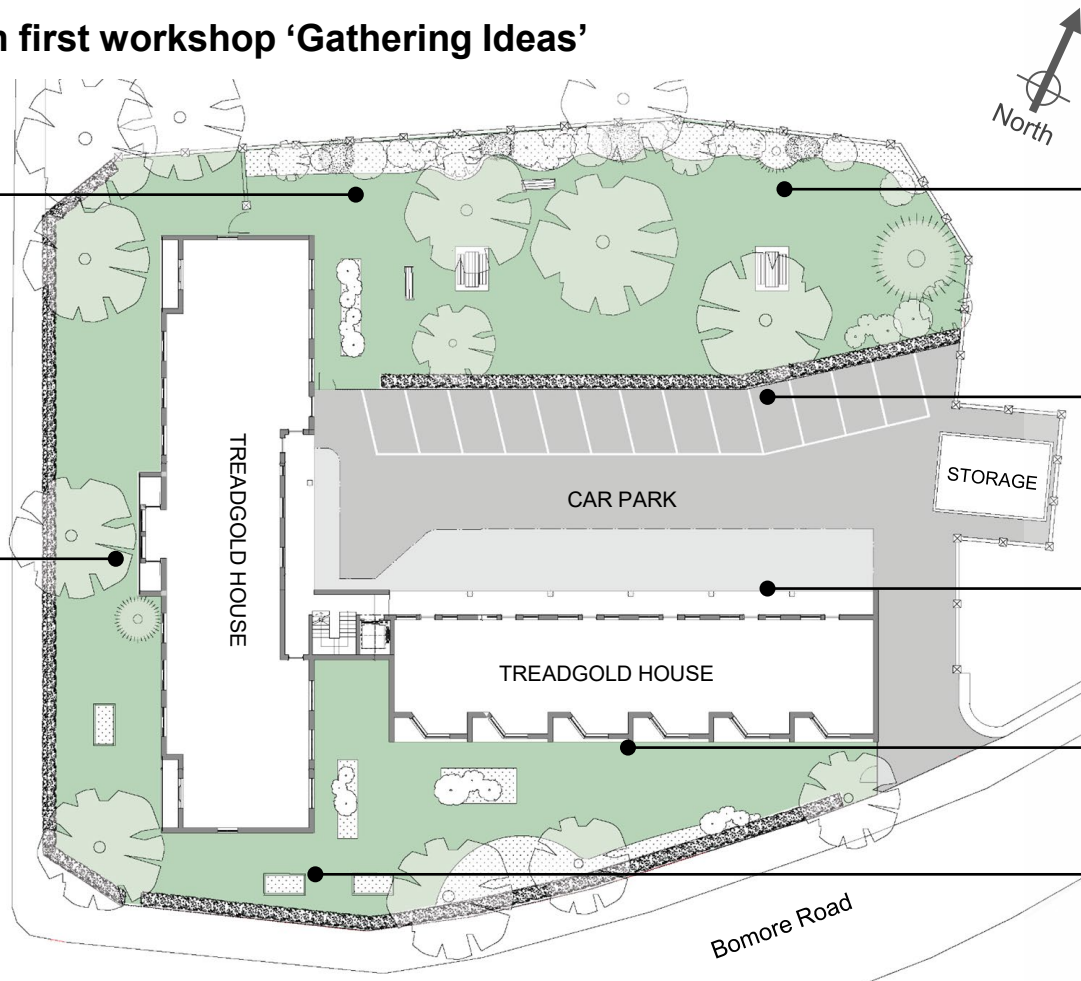
Residents will be able to foster new friendships and enjoy the more functional communal spaces together. Funds could be raised to start a weekly gardening club for residents to learn new skills and further form a more beneficial relationship to their gardens. We have found that these sort of projects **build community by bringing a sense of ownership and belonging to residents**.

Having well-used green spaces surrounding our homes has been linked to **improved wellbeing, better health, reduction in stress levels and isolation and lower crime rates**.

Tool used:

Permaculture Design: Approaching the space including its inhabitants as an ecosystem of beneficial relationships; people become an integral part of the landscape that simultaneously improves the ecological value of the area, such as biodiversity and air quality, while meeting the needs and improving the wellbeing of people.

Outcomes from first workshop 'Gathering Ideas'



Too much shade caused by trees. Residents said you would like to have more sunny areas with benches and tables for picnics and to hang out with your children.

Residents were cautious about pigeons due to having had problems in the past. Have had to cover balcony with netting.

Residents said you would like a play area for children somewhere safe away from the carpark.

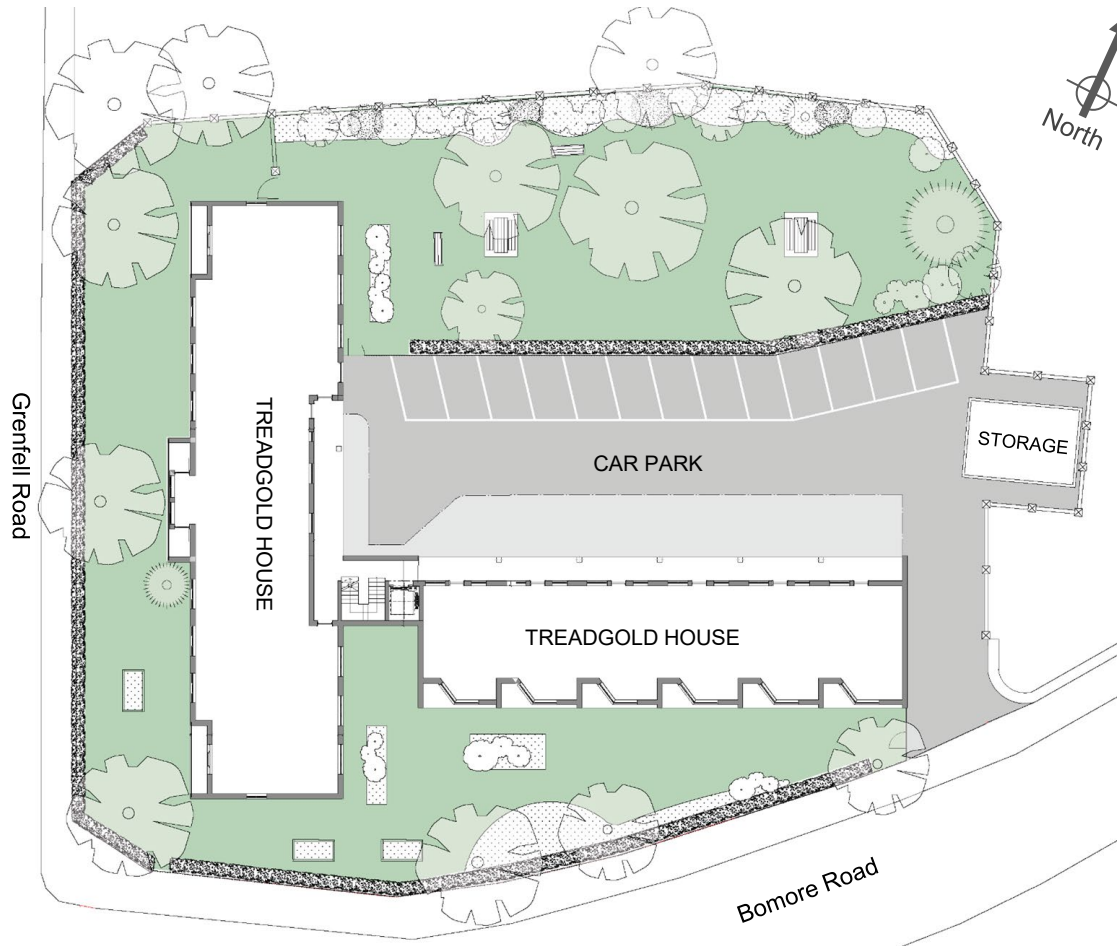
There were mixed feeling about the car park. Could one or two spaces be used for an outdoor gym or greenhouse?

A resident asked if there was an opportunity for a communal space - somewhere to hold functions & gatherings.

A general feeling that gardens are not inviting enough to visit and spend time in.

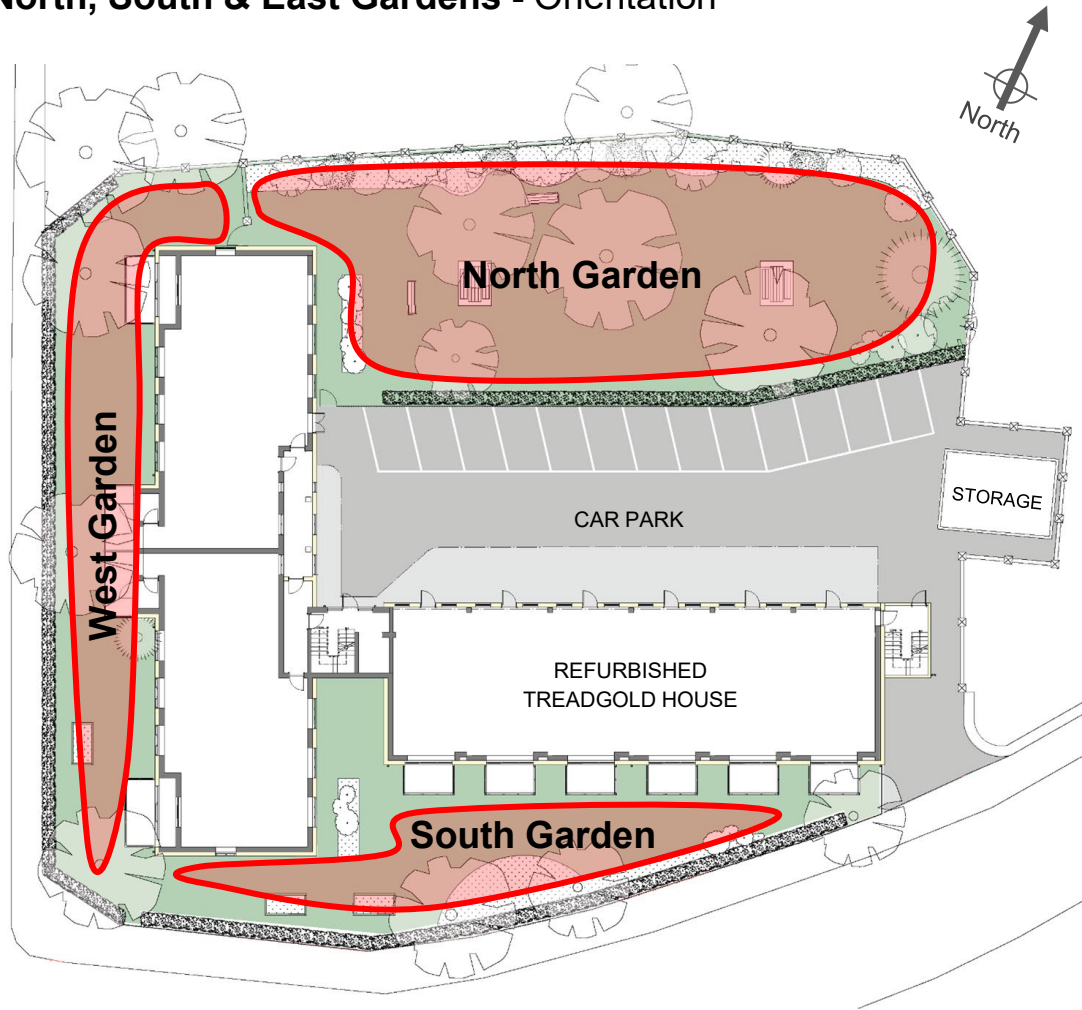
Existing planters not used and therefore are left looking unattractive.

Outcomes from second workshop 'Concept Development'



- Residents want to make the gardens more **welcoming**, e.g. opening up more sunny seating and play areas, bringing in colour
- Residents want to make the gardens more **accessible - changing the way we can move through the space**, e.g. levelling the ground or creating paths, having new entrance, taking away boundaries
- Residents want to make the gardens more **functional - an extension of your home**, e.g. including opportunities to use the balconies, growing and harvesting useful plants in the gardens and planters

North, South & East Gardens - Orientation



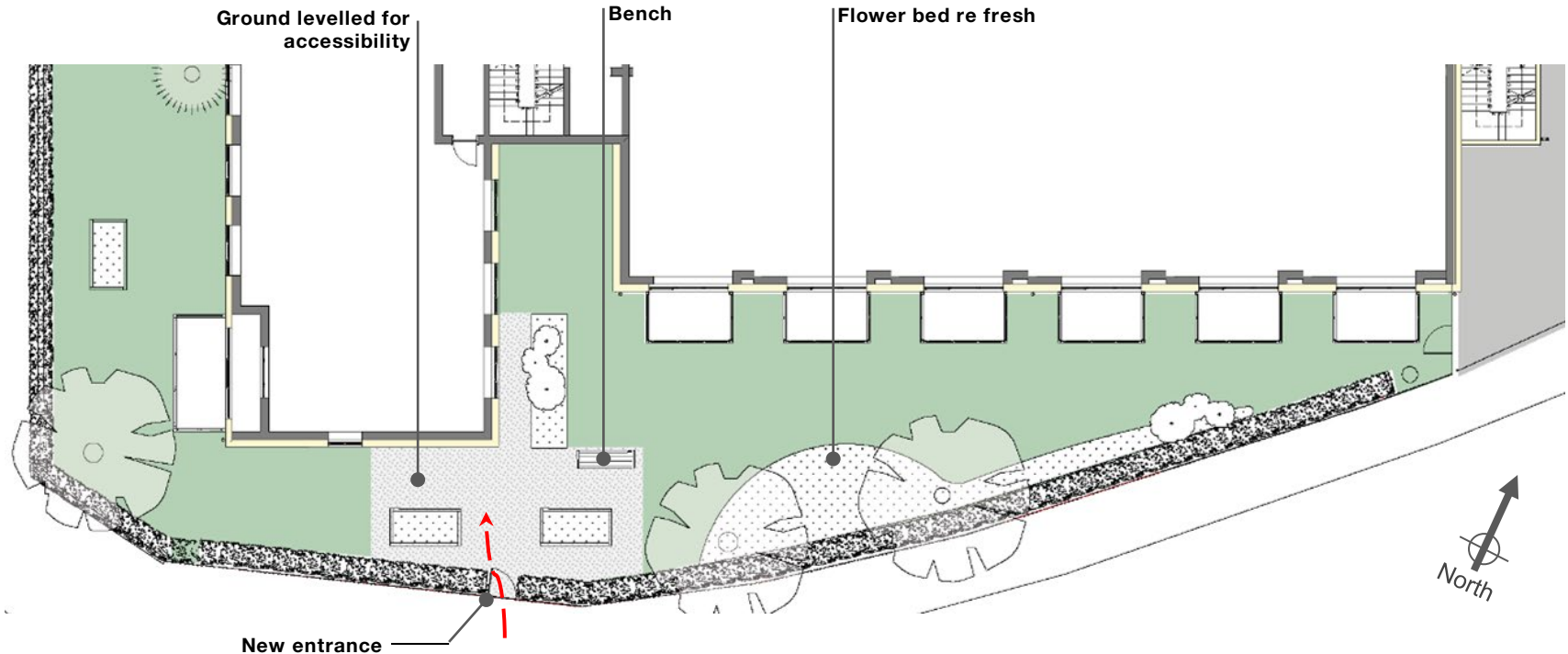
After the first & second workshops, it became apparent the outdoor spaces surrounding Treadgold House divided naturally into three spaces:

- The North Garden, a communal space that all residents are able to access.
- The South Garden, accessible by all residents, however only residents living in the ground floor flats tend to use the space
- The West Garden, accessible by all residents however only residents living in the ground floor flats tend to use the space

The South Garden - What we proposed to residents

This garden gets most sunlight and is best for growing flowering plants and edibles. The existing flower beds and raised beds could be refreshed with herbs and pollinators, visually pleasing to look at for residents who have balconies overlooking the space.

We recommend that the trees are pruned, otherwise will cast too much shade and overhang the balconies. Or otherwise they could be replaced with 3 to 4 smaller fruit trees along the south border.



The South Garden - Outcome



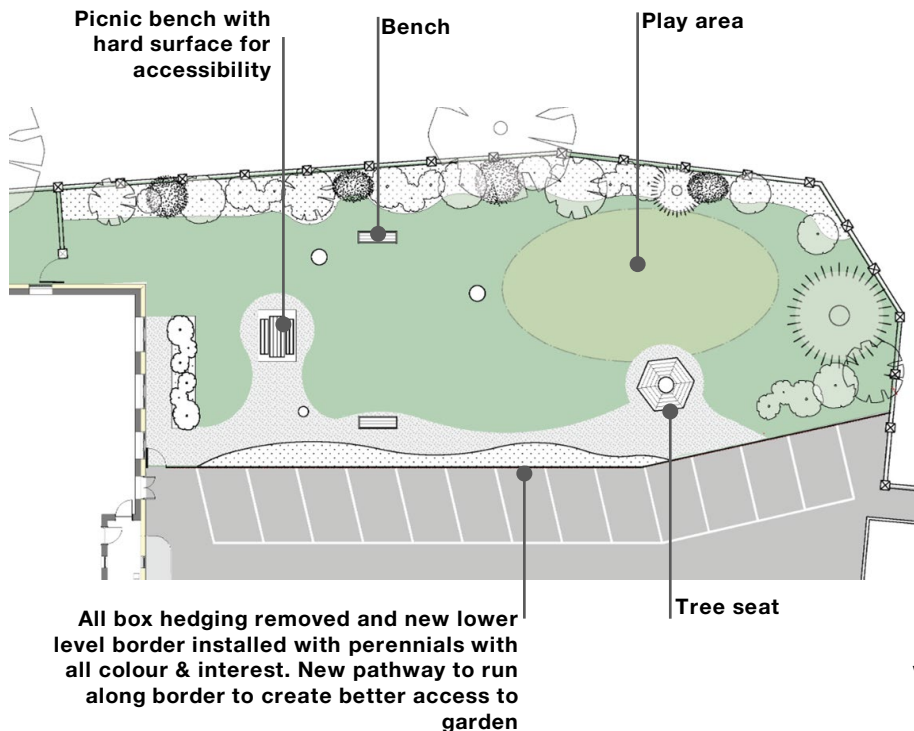
The new gate needs to be locked and accessible only with the residents' FOB key they use for their buildings. In this way access to the planters will not disturb the privacy for those living in ground floor flats.



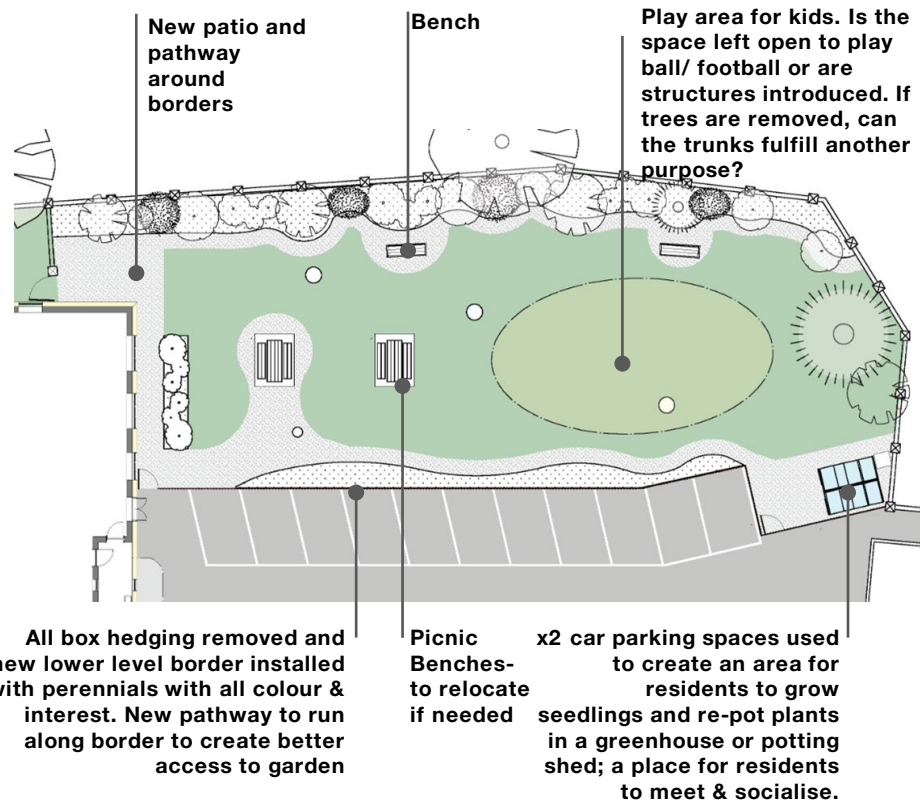
The North Garden - What we proposed to residents

The North Garden gets plenty of sunlight if the trees are pruned and/or some trees are removed and could be replaced with smaller trees.

Example 01

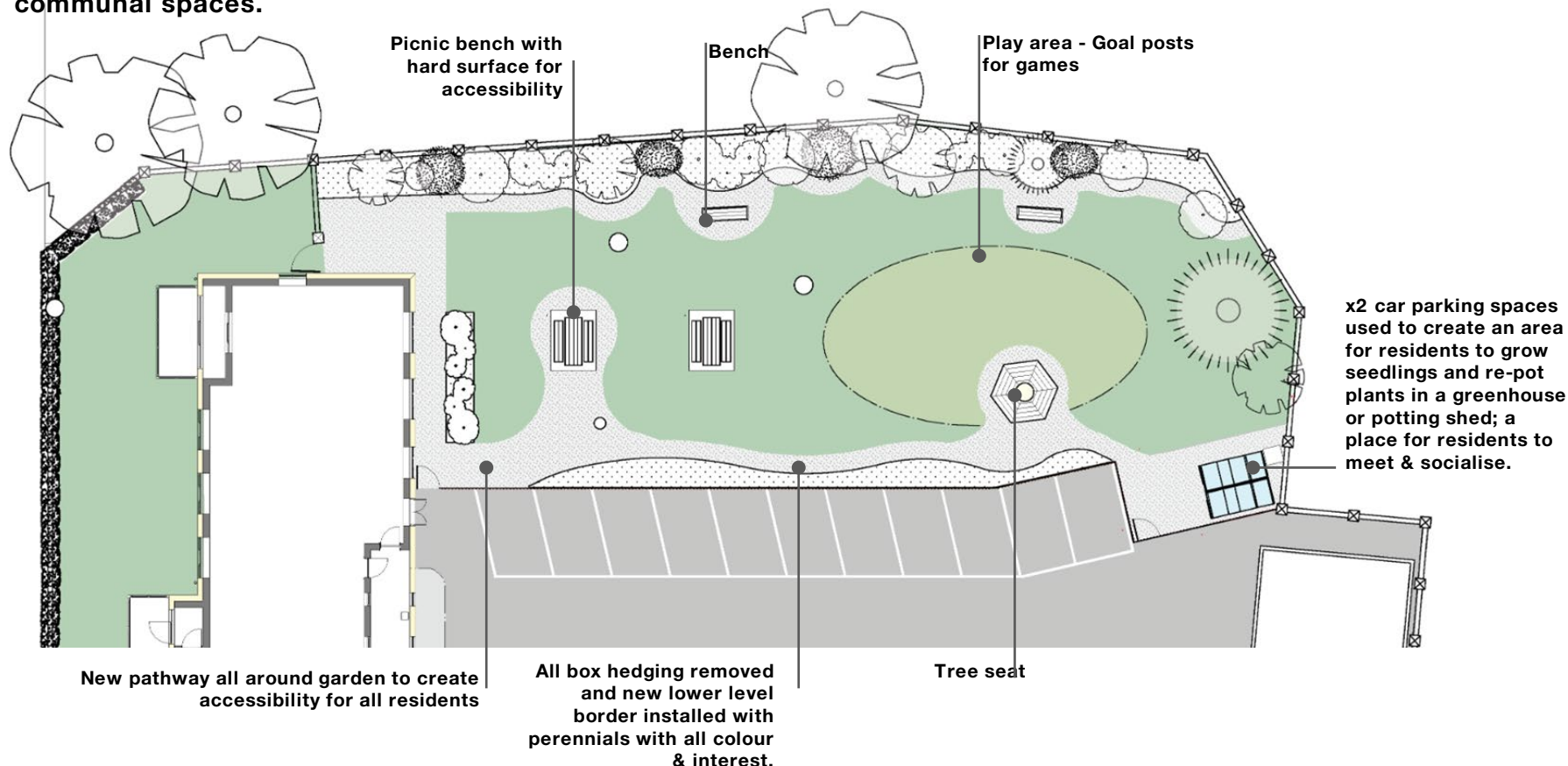


Example 02



The North Garden - Outcome

This final suggestion for the North Garden includes residents' preferences of both our options. The pathway adds accessibility, pruned and removed trees allow more sunlight into the space, soften more colourful edges make the garden welcoming, a playscape for children and a greenhouse and potting area add versatile communal spaces.



The North Garden - Outcome



The North Garden - Outcome

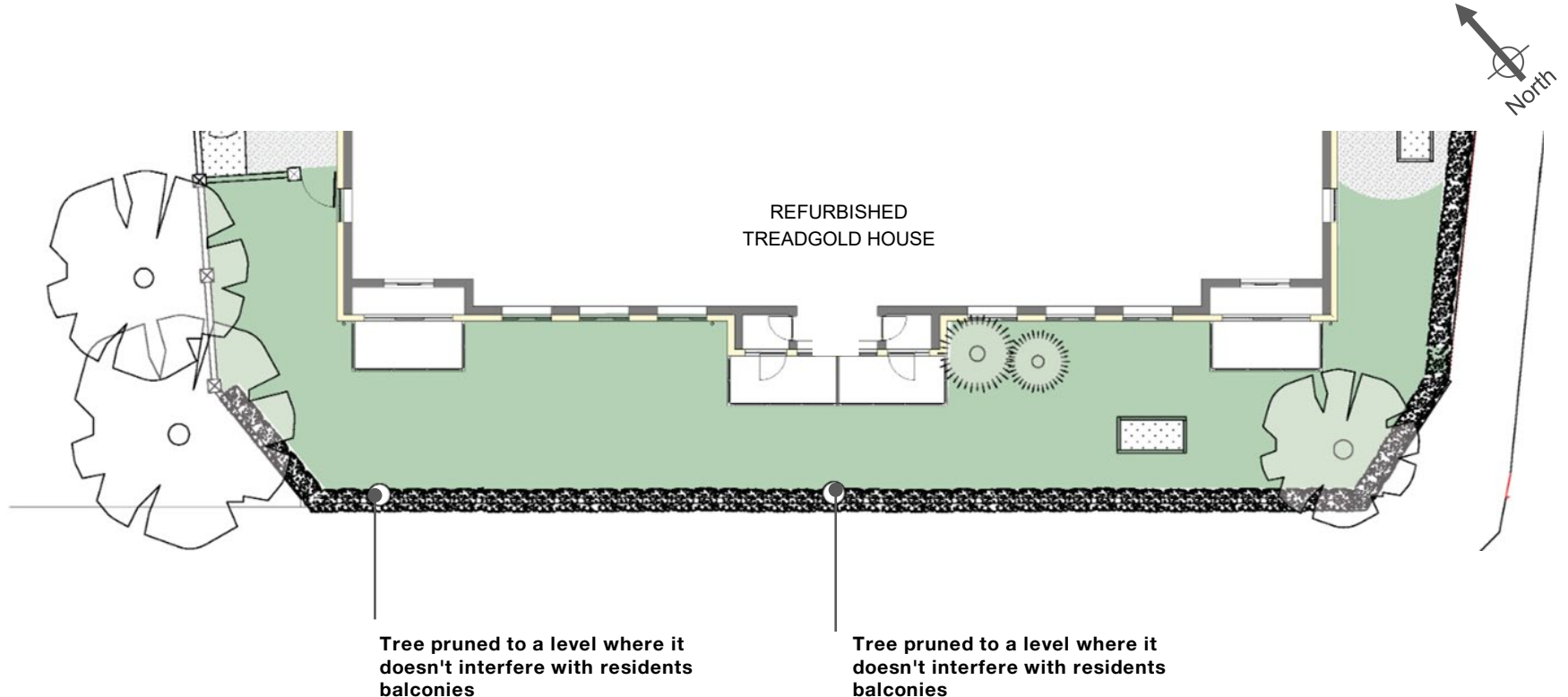


The North Garden - Visual

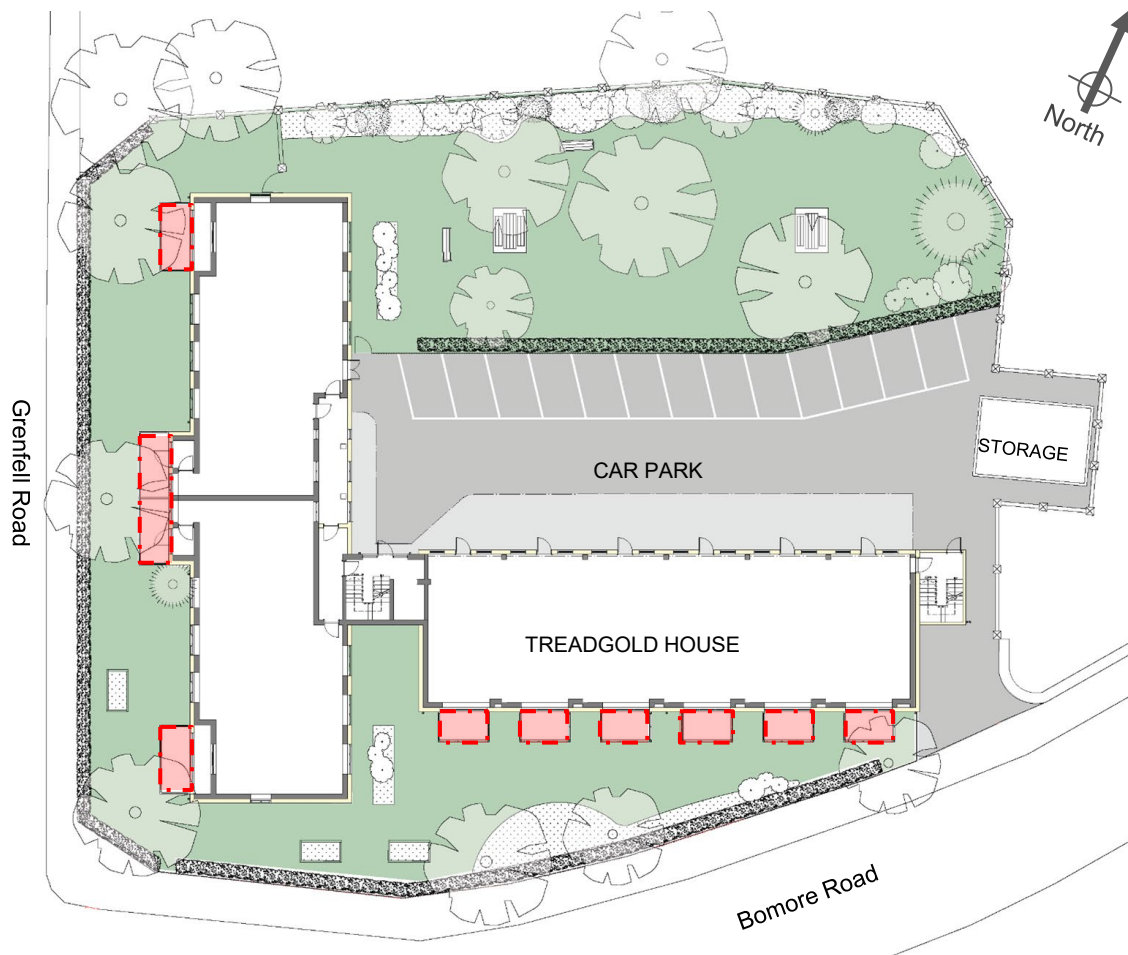


The West Garden

This West Garden gets afternoon and evening sun and is least accessible. We are suggesting for the trees to be pruned to give more light to the new balconies. The space could have some new planting if ground floor residents desire.



Balconies



With the balconies being enlarged as part of the retrofit, we focused the residents on seeing how they could use their balconies more and create more of a link with the gardens.

The Balconies

Residents will be able to choose from a menu of options, including **hanging plant pots**, **planters**, **pigeon netting** which can also be used for **climbing plants** in combination with the planters to give shade and privacy, **bike hangers**, **bokashi compost bins**, to make compost from food scraps that can then be used in the planters.



Conclusions:

Residents are keen on using the green spaces surrounding their homes more and in different ways.



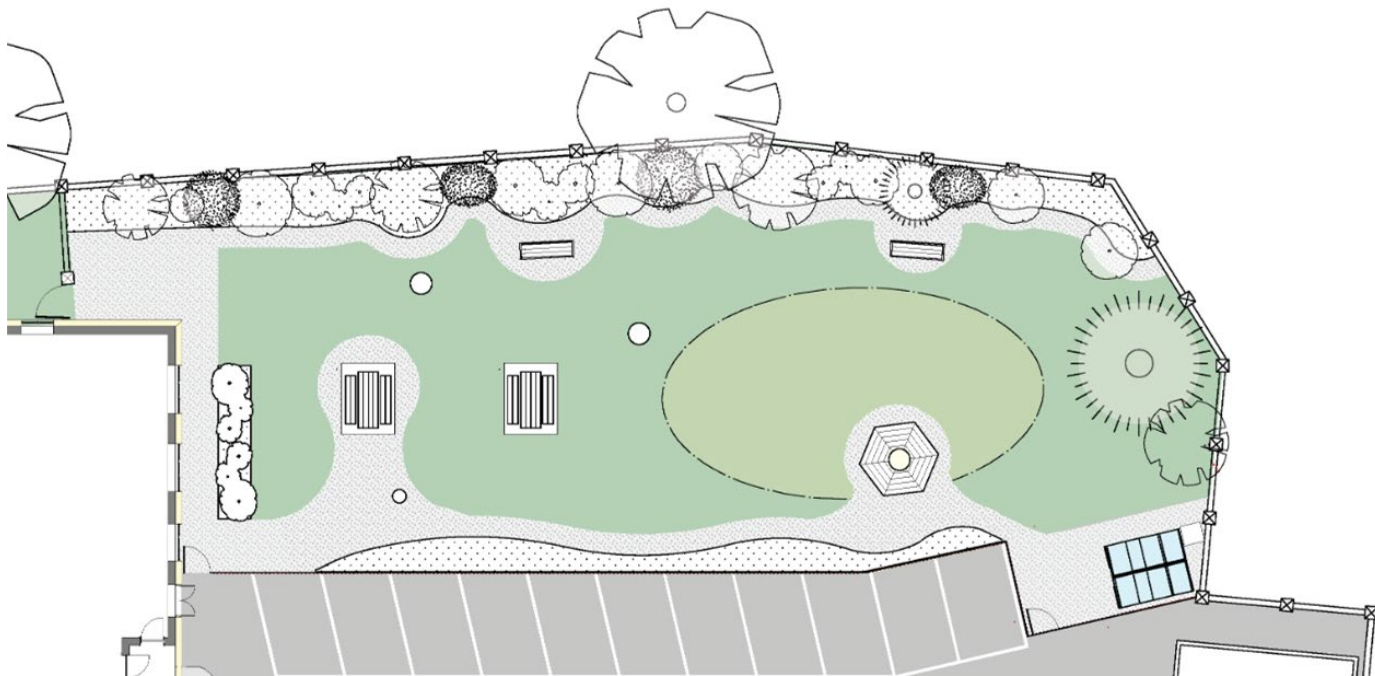
Conclusions:

By bringing in more light and softening the edges the gardens will be more welcoming and aesthetically pleasing for residents and their families while also supporting wildlife.



Conclusions:

New walkways and picnic benches will make the outdoor spaces more accessible and a playscape will invite families in.



Conclusions:

A potting area and greenhouse form a communal activity area that can be used by the gardener and the residents to grow plants for the garden and the residents' balconies.



Conclusions:

By creating a new access route to the South Garden, residents will feel more comfortable enjoying the planters planted up with low maintenance aromatic and culinary herbs.



Conclusions:

We see potential for a space that helps foster community, friendships, wellbeing and a sense of belonging.





Thank you!

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