

Royal seal of approval for Old Tree Nursery



Our nursery and garden centre in Wolverhampton has been given a massive boost following a Royal visit to find out more about its work and to open a new café.

Old Tree Nursery, based in Pendeford Hall Lane, received a visit from HRH The Duke of Kent today where he also officially opened Ruth's Kitchen, a brand new working kitchen and tea rooms named in honour of student, Ruth Polack.

Old Tree Nursery is managed by Heantun Housing Association, part of the Accord Group, and not only grows and supplies fruit and vegetables for people living in its Black Country housing schemes, but it also acts as a base for its Skills for Life programme. As part of the scheme it helps local people with disabilities and mental health issues by offering work experience opportunities and a place to spend time, make friends and learn new skills and experiences.

During his visit, HRH The Duke of Kent met with students, staff, board members and sponsors of the Nursery, and enjoyed a tour of the 5.5 acre site. The Duke also unveiled a plaque to officially open Ruth's Kitchen, as Joanne Antcliff, director of performance at Heantun Housing Association, explained: *“Ruth Polack was a much loved skills for life student. Her mother, Margaret, co-founded the skills for life service. Her legacy inspires others and as she loved baking, Ruth's Kitchen is a catalyst for other students to be successful. She was inspirational and she would be thrilled that we have been awarded the prestigious accolade of the Duke of Kent opening the team rooms named in her honour!”*

Old Tree Sara Woodall, Chief Executive of Heantun, said: *“We are delighted to welcome HRH The Duke of Kent to Old Tree Nursery. We have all worked tremendously hard to get the nursery to where it is today, sourcing external funding and grants, and coming together as a whole team, giving up free time and more to make this place somewhere special for everyone regardless of age or ability!”*

Sara added: *“To secure a Royal visit to our lovely nursery is truly the icing on the cake!”*

Some of the grant funding Old Tree Nursery has secured includes funds for a community play area and exploratory tree house area supported by the Veolia Environmental Trust, as well much valued support from Costa, Asda, Lord Combustion, Travis Perkins, Marston's, Carillion, Lloyds Bank and Birmingham Midshires. The Nursery also won the

regional round of Tesco's Bags of Help campaign to build the Woodland Walkway, a project is to restore the current overgrown woodland walk to create an oasis of beauty, interest and accessibility for children, young people and adults of all ages and abilities.

Caroline Silke, Head of Community at Tesco, said: *“Tesco is proud to support the Old Tree Nursery project. It’s a great example of a space which has been given a new lease of life, and will have a positive impact for the local community. It’s fantastic testament to the hard work of the Heantun team that the Duke of Kent has visited to admire their hard work.”*

Following the Royal visit, the day continued with a garden party to thank everyone who has contributed to the success of Old Tree Nursery.

For more information about Old Tree Nursery please [visit their website](#).
