

## **THE TED GREEN MEMORIAL AWARD**

# **Whetstone Stray Allottees Association**

## **The Whetstone Community Plot**

One of our priorities for self-management was to become inclusive to people with disabilities, who are not able to manage an individual plot by themselves. To achieve this, we designated an area as a community resource - we chose a level double plot near to our site facilities (compost toilet, parking and Trading Hut). Since 2016, local volunteers and plot holders have been working together with people with learning disabilities and Barnet Mencap staff, to create the Whetstone Community Plot.

The Community Plot is organic and includes plenty of opportunities for people to connect with nature, relax and socialise, as well as garden, grow and eat vegetables and fruit. These are all ways that are proven to improve physical and emotional well-being. We have seen how our Learning Disabled Group's concentration and co-ordination has improved, along with their confidence.

The Community Plot has brought people together to create a wonderful resource for our site and the local area - local school children have also come in to use it. Volunteers put up a large poly tunnel (funded by People's Postcode Lottery; the Learning Disabled Group dug a pond (funded by the Royal Mencap Society); sowed pollinator and wildflower areas (mentored by Grow Wild), and planted fruit trees provided by the Woodland Trust.

We have taken part in the Big Dig (Day for Community Garden Projects) for the last two years - in the first year digging over the plot, in the second year : potting on in the polytunnel; digging drills for potatoes and planting up the pond. We enjoyed a barbecue together, cooked by one of our wonderful plot holders.

In the coming year, we have funding from Barnet Giving to put in disabled access pathways, and will take part in the Community Gardens Open Day in September.

