

Accessing Permaculture for people with chronic illness and/or disability

Top tips for permaculture events/courses facilitators and permaculture demonstration sites



- Include as much information as possible (in the course/event marketing and in the event joining information) about physical access issues, the availability of quiet resting spaces and the ability to support additional learning needs.
- Ask about specific needs as part of the event joining information. Be honest and realistic about whether these needs can be met.
- Consider having lower cost or free places for Carers of people with CI/D.
- Invite a person with CI/D to speak or lead a session/workshop at events and on courses about accessing permaculture for people with CI/D.
- Include people with CI/D as part of the design team when creating permaculture information sharing, event, courses or new designs for demonstration sites.
- Consider whether learning materials/event/course/volunteering options could be broken down into smaller sections. Is it be possible to charge for each section separately? (This would avoid a person with a CI/D needing to pay a full price for only attending a fraction of the event.)
- Design Permaculture Design Courses (PDC) as modular courses (either online or face to face) so that people can attend and pay for one module at a time.
- Choose venues and activities for your events that are accessible for people who have reduced mobility and who need for spaces to rest.
- Ensure provision of quiet spaces to rest at events/courses/demonstration sites, including space to lie down.

- Design new demonstration sites (and redesign existing sites) so that they include accessibility for people with CI/D as a core function.
- Create a “buddy” system in your local permaculture network and/or events – with the aim of providing extra support for people with CI/D, thereby improving inclusivity.
- Create a culture of care and empowerment at your event/course/demonstration site. Ensure awareness of permission and encouragement for people to take time out for self-care whenever they need to.
- Provide “hidden illness/disability” badges/lanyards at events, together with information about what these mean and how others could help.
- Use diverse teaching/learning materials – including take-away/digital handouts detailing the main points covered and explaining any terminology and acronyms.
- Design short, diverse teaching/information-sharing/workshop sessions with regular breaks.
- Provide information and engage in awareness-raising relating to health risks that may result from attending permaculture events and demonstration sites. Some examples of these are tick-borne illnesses (Lyme disease and others); leptospirosis (Weil’s disease) from urine of infected animals, most commonly from rats; injuries and their associated sepsis risk; sunburn/heatstroke.