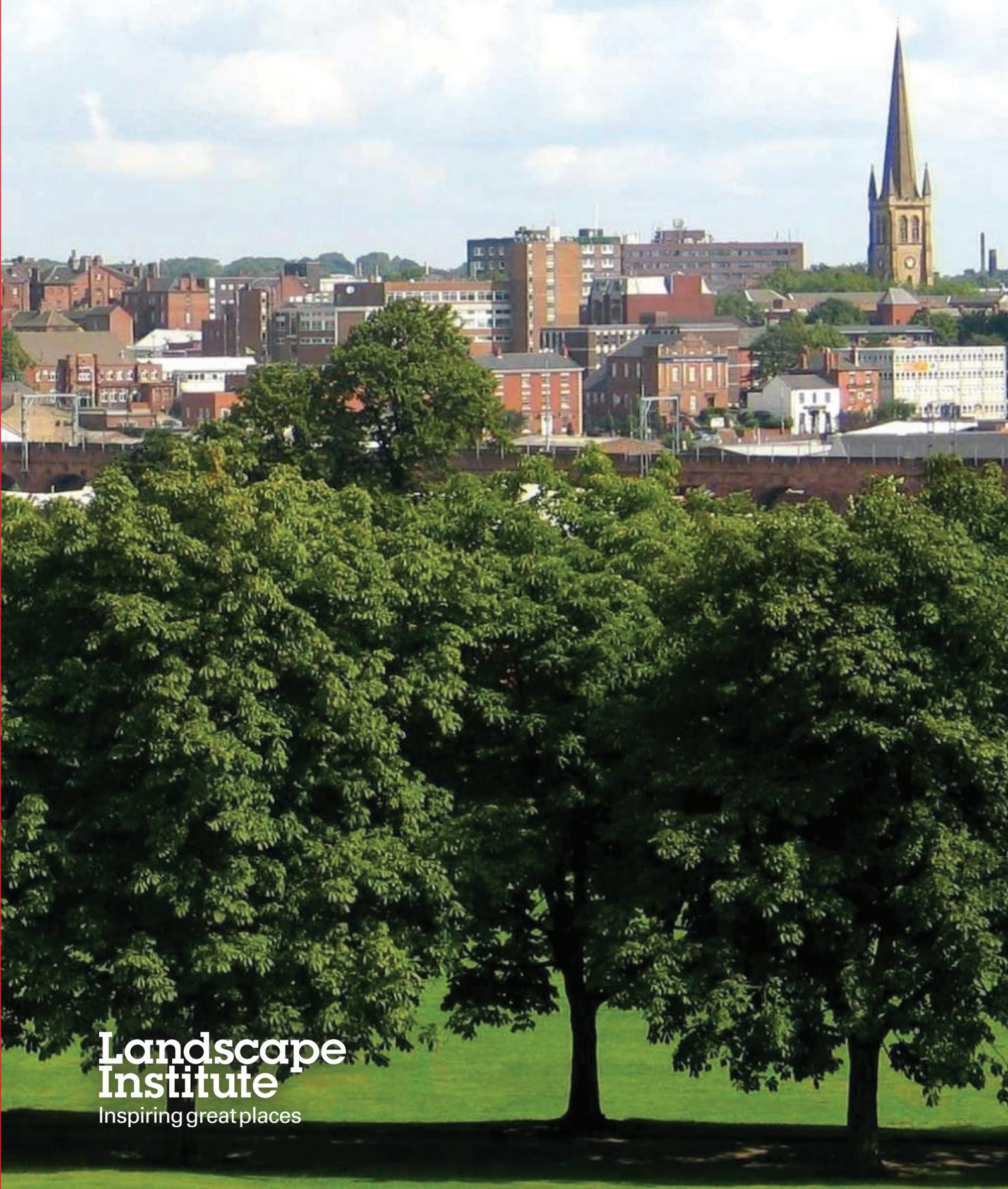


Local Green Infrastructure

Helping communities make the most of their landscape



**Landscape
Institute**
Inspiring great places

Local Green Infrastructure

Helping communities make the most of their landscape

“Open spaces of all types and sizes can be designed or managed in ways that deliver more benefits to the whole community”

Inspiring people

This publication aims to inspire people to make positive changes in their neighbourhoods by thinking about the potential offered by the natural environment and integrating this into the way places are planned, designed and managed. By finding ways to make local landscapes more productive and more useful, people can help achieve real benefits for themselves and their environment.

Harnessing nature

Nature gives us what we need to survive – clean air and water, fertile soils, flood protection and fuel and food. At the same time it also enriches our quality of life, providing us with places to relax and play, enabling us to enjoy wildlife and creating places which inspire and delight. Natural green open space attracts businesses to invest in an area, adds value to property, provides an educational resource and brings together local communities. Harnessing nature and making better use of our limited supply of land can therefore promote sustainable economic development and open up new employment opportunities.

Making the most of our land

Green infrastructure is the network of green spaces, rivers and lakes that intersperse and connect villages, towns and cities. In rural areas this can include fields, woodlands, hedgerows, country parks, rivers and lakes. In urban areas it can include domestic gardens, street trees, sports pitches, civic spaces, green roofs and walls. Approaching all these elements as service-providing infrastructure invites us all to think harder about the benefits they provide.

Creating multifunctional networks

Providing green infrastructure also emphasises the importance of connecting the many individual natural and fabricated elements and spaces to enhance a local area. Green infrastructure can be planned, designed and managed as a network so that the whole is more than the sum of the parts. We can benefit because such networks help our future urban and rural landscape to address challenges such as climate change, flood risk, water management, food supply, providing efficient and renewable energy and creating comfortable, attractive places in which to live.

Local decision-making

The current interest in local empowerment and decision-making offers good opportunities for action. Local authorities, land owners and communities can apply their local knowledge and interests to investigate how the benefits of green infrastructure can be exploited in their neighbourhoods.

Planning green infrastructure

Opportunities to plan new green infrastructure can come through regeneration and environmental projects or through community-led initiatives. Existing open spaces of all types and sizes can also be designed or managed in ways that deliver more benefits to the whole community.

Building on our green legacy

The concept of green infrastructure is critical in delivering the benefits of the natural environment that have been acknowledged for centuries from the Victorian urban parks and the garden cities which brought health benefits to industrial England, to the more recent new towns, community forests and eco-settlements.

Delivering Green Infrastructure

This publication presents eight case studies where green infrastructure has been woven into the fabric of local communities. Chosen from examples across the UK they show green infrastructure:

- Enabling wildlife to flourish
- Reducing our contribution to climate change
- Making our villages, towns and cities more comfortable and liveable
- Providing space to grow food
- Reducing the risk of flooding
- Giving us spaces in which we can relax and be healthy
- Providing opportunities to learn
- Cleaning our air and water
- Creating distinctive places
- Delivering multiple economic benefits
- Weaving together local communities

The eight case studies are:

- **Eastern Curve, Dalston, London**
- **Leeds City Region Green Infrastructure Strategy**
- **Manor Fields Park, Sheffield**
- **Dalzell Estate and Baron's Haugh, Motherwell, North Lanarkshire**
- **Betjeman Millennium Park, Wantage, Oxfordshire**
- **Phoenix Park Gateway Gallery, Castlefields, Runcorn**
- **Greening for Growth in Victoria, London**
- **Bury Mount and Watermeadows, Towcester**

The document includes an illustration and key diagrams showing examples of how local green infrastructure initiatives can create a network of essential and desirable services. It concludes with suggested opportunities for local actions that will contribute to multifunctional green infrastructure networks.

Produced by the Green Infrastructure Working Group

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Eastern Curve, Dalston, London

A peaceful oasis connecting people with nature



Sarah Blee

The Eastern Curve was an overgrown, abandoned and little-known piece of railway land used as an unofficial landfill site for several decades. Located in Dalston, one of the Greater London Authority's priority areas for development and an area lacking in open space, it was identified as one of ten projects to receive London Development Agency funding for redevelopment. Within eight months the site was transformed into a lively place for the local community, who were closely involved throughout the design and construction of the project.

The Eastern Curve has quickly become established as a popular public space, hosting events from gardening to dancing. The project is also a good example of temporary use of land, with a 'meanwhile' arrangement in place with the local landowner to allow the space to be

used by the local community until more long-term development solutions are finalised.

Trees have been planted to offer shade, cooling and improvements to air quality, offsetting the pollution associated with the heavy traffic on nearby roads. Vegetable and herb growing areas have been incorporated into the design of the site, promoting learning and skills development in horticulture, as well as reconnecting local people with the natural environment and local food production.

Fundamental to the project is its success in delivering benefits for the existing community. The restoration of the site has provided opportunities for volunteers and its design and construction offered apprenticeship schemes for local people.

“The Dalston Eastern Curve Garden is a perfect example of small budget, big impact. We're in an area severely lacking in public green space, that can feel very frantic with traffic and noise. The Garden is a peaceful oasis where people can connect with nature and meet their neighbours in a relaxed way.”

Marie Murray, local resident and garden coordinator, Eastern Curve

Further information

Size

0.25 hectares

Landscape architect

J&L Gibbons

Client

London Development Agency, Design for London, London Borough of Hackney

Approximate costs

£200,000

Websites

www.jlg-london.com

www.dalstongarden.site11.com

Key partners

Muf Architecture Art, EXYZT, Forest Road Youth Club, Hackney Community College, Making Space in Dalston Steering Group

Leeds City Region Green Infrastructure Strategy

Planning for growth and climate change adaptation



The Leeds City Region partnership comprises the districts of Barnsley, Bradford, Calderdale, Craven, Harrogate, Kirklees, Leeds, Selby, Wakefield, York and North Yorkshire County Council. It has a £51bn economy, over 100,000 businesses and over 3 million inhabitants. It is the largest economic and population centre in the country outside London. Against this backdrop, local authority and business leaders came together and submitted a proposal to Government to be granted Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) status in September 2010. LEPs are partnerships between local authorities and businesses which play a central role in determining local economic priorities, driving growth and job creation within their boundaries. The Leeds City Region proposal was approved by Government in October 2010.

A key feature of the submission was the green infrastructure strategy, which contains a number of investment programmes highlighting the ways in which green infrastructure delivers a wealth of economic, and other, benefits. The strategy maps existing aspects of the natural environment and suggests how this can be enhanced and new features added in order to increase the number of benefits. A delivery plan for the strategy's flagship project, Fresh Aire, will be developed in 2011 in order to ensure the thinking in the strategy is translated into reality on the ground.

The strategy contains an investment programme designed to to minimise the effect of new development on future climate change. In recognition of increased flooding and higher temperatures, particularly in towns and cities, the strategy proposes a number of green infrastructure interventions such as increased tree planting and the greening of urban areas.

Another aspect of the strategy focuses on enhancing green infrastructure on derelict sites to improve local environmental quality, thereby increasing the attractiveness of the area to developers and investors. In order to continue to deliver strong, yet sustainable, economic growth it is crucial that the city region continues to improve and make best of use of its natural environment. The Leeds Region green infrastructure strategy will be central to achieving this.

“Our mission is to develop a competitive, internationally recognised city region. Our green infrastructure assets are crucial to delivering on this mission – encouraging and promoting economic growth, healthier communities and supporting climate change adaptation and mitigation.”

Councillor Stephen Houghton, Chair of the Leeds City Region Leaders Board

Further information

Size

The strategy covers a city region of 5700km²

Landscape architect

LDA Design

Client

Leeds City Region

Website

www.lda-design.co.uk

www.leedscityregion.gov.uk



Stephen Russell



Ralph Cobham

Betjeman Millennium Park, Wantage, Oxfordshire

Green space and a celebration of literary heritage

This 0.6 hectare site is close to the Market Square in Wantage, Oxfordshire, adjacent to Letcombe Brook. The site had become derelict, used for fly-tipping and a place for anti-social behaviour. In the 1990s, a developer's planning application was challenged by a local amenity society, now constituted as the Letcombe Brook (Wantage) Charitable trust, who applied for change of use to a park. The consequent planning appeal for housing failed, resulting in the purchase of the land by the Trust. This was made possible through a grant from the Vale of White Horse District Council and a loan from a local supporter.

The principal aims of the Trust were to create an area for public use which would improve the river corridor, through the conservation of woodland and the creation of connected glades and open spaces, and to celebrate the life and work of poet John Betjeman, who lived in the town for over twenty years.

Management of Betjeman Millennium Park conforms to a plan, which is reviewed and adjusted as required in consultation with the District Council's Tree Officer, a renowned arboricultural consultant, a local wildflower supplier, members of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust, the adjacent landowners and park users.

Members of the local community have been actively involved in many aspects of the park's development and its ongoing maintenance. Volunteers come together to collect litter, sweep leaves, plant bulbs, wildflowers and trees, cut the grass, guide visitors and carry out fundraising activities. The Park is now used for a wide range of purposes, both formal and informal, by a diversity of individuals and local organisations. These uses include drama productions, jazz concerts and poetry recitals as well as foraging for edible plants and visits by local schools. It is a tranquil place where people come to relax.

The park is within view of John Betjeman's one-time home. The glades and open spaces

were enriched by the installation of six specially sculpted plaques containing a selection of his poetry. Educational visits for local schools are also supported by three permanent exhibits. These have been grant-aided by the Heritage Lottery Fund as part of a three year project and have three linked themes: the life and works of John Betjeman, 'Mother Nature' and 'A Sense of Place'. The vegetation of the park was diversified by planting a wide range of native trees and shrubs such as small leaved lime, spindle, hazel and dogwood. Thanks to the ecological and cultural improvements made by the Trust, the Betjeman Millennium Park continues to grow in popularity with local people and visitors alike.

“How refreshing it was that the trustees of Betjeman Millennium Park recognised that young people had adopted the space as a meeting place in the evenings and, despite challenging behaviour from a small minority of teenagers, the trustees wanted to manage this rather than lock up the Park or move them on. The trustees have worked hard to ensure that the area is inclusive to teenagers, that artworks include positive representation of youth culture. Their efforts reflect a successful, if unlikely community partnership between older members of the trust and teenagers.”

Garry Kingett, Area Youth Worker, Wantage, Grove and Faringdon Area Youth Office

Further information

Size

0.6 hectares

Landscape architect

Gabriella Pape, Land Art

Client

Letcombe Brook (Wantage) Charitable Trust

Landscape manager

Ralph Cobham FLI

Website

www.betjemanpark.org.uk

Approximate costs

The site was purchased at a cost of £300,000 from the developer through a grant received from the Vale of White Horse District Council and a loan from a local supporter

Key partners

The Betjeman Society, The Vale and Downland Museum, King Alfred's Specialist Sports College, Heritage Lottery Fund

Manor Fields Park, Sheffield

Tackling climate change and creating an enjoyable place



Manor Fields Park, in the Manor Housing Estate, Sheffield, has taken formerly derelict land in an area of high deprivation and transformed it into a place of enjoyment and delight. Development of the project took place gradually, showing sensitivity to the natural environment and ensuring that future maintenance costs would be carefully controlled. The local community was closely engaged in the design of the site and continues to play an active role in its management.

Manor Fields Park contains a range of wild spaces in addition to innovative landscaped areas. Within these there are opportunities for children to play, not only on the brand new playground but also in the trees, streams and grassed areas. The site has over 4km of footpaths, as well as smaller paths in order to encourage exploration of the wilder, hidden areas.

A sustainable drainage system (SuDS) has removed the need for underground engineering. The SuDS scheme used the site's existing landscape and character as a basis for design. This was put to the test during the floods of summer 2007 and performed well. Floodwaters were contained and within four days the site was being used once again as a community open space.

The recent completion of a formal 'Gateway' now connects the park via good public transport links to the whole of Sheffield making it truly a regional park and not just one for local people.

Innovative design has continued with the implementation of another SuDS scheme incorporating a water garden.

The development of Manor Fields Park, through cooperation between Sheffield City Council and stakeholders, has added significantly to the regeneration of the area, creating an inspiring, safe and welcoming high-quality space for residents and visitors alike. The approach has resulted in an environment which is well adapted to future climate change.

“The design makes a big statement for local residents about the area's history and demonstrates the first class investment for the future of the public park without being overbearing or brash.”

Councillor Terry Fox, Sheffield City Council

Further information

Size

25 hectares

Landscape architect

Landscape Design Team, Sheffield City Council

Client

Sheffield City Council

Website

www.sheffield.gov.uk

Approximate cost

£1.5 million

Key partners

Manor and Castle Development Trust, Green Estate Company, Change for Life, Transform South Yorkshire and an embryonic Friends Group.

Dalzell Estate and Baron's Haugh, Motherwell, North Lanarkshire

Blending history and nature



The Dalzell Estate and neighbouring Baron's Haugh RSPB Reserve are located within walking distance of Motherwell town centre yet were, until their restoration, largely unknown by local people. A partnership led by North Lanarkshire Council and RSPB Scotland sought to rectify this by undertaking a range of environmental improvements aimed at making the most of the rich and diverse landscape.

The partnership was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, North Lanarkshire Council, Scottish Natural Heritage, Historic Scotland, RSPB Scotland and Wren (Waste Recycling Environmental). It recognised that the two sites had the potential to provide a green space for local people, wildlife and visitors in an area facing the challenges associated with the decline of heavy industries.

The partnership has worked closely with the local community to reconnect people with their natural environment and ensure they make best use of this valuable asset. Local people were involved in research into the site's history and in the project design to help in delivering the community's aspirations as far as possible. The connectivity of the site is reinforced by physical links to nearby green space resources such as Chatelherault Country Park, Strathclyde Country Park, the Clyde Valley and the former Ravenscraig Steelworks site.

Dalzell Estate and Baron's Haugh are designated as historic landscape, Conservation Area, Site of Importance for Nature

Conservation and an Area of Great Landscape Value. The project included environmental conservation, repairing and restoring historic features, improvements to access and the interpretation of natural, social and cultural history. The area is also designated Green Belt in the Local Plan.

Wildlife hides have been improved in Baron's Haugh, and a flooded meadow restored to its natural state. The reserve is now managed for wetland birds, and cattle are once again a feature of the landscape, maintaining the short grassland that wading birds like to nest in.

North Lanarkshire Council's partnership with RSPB Scotland has continued beyond the project's delivery, with joint events which are designed to showcase the site's wildlife to visitors and reconnect people with the natural environment on their doorstep. The two organisations have also come together to arrange volunteering activities such as the Tree Nursery to give people recovering from addictions the opportunity to learn conservation skills.

“Dalzell Estate and Baron's Haugh are among Motherwell and North Lanarkshire's finest attractions, offering a unique blend of history and nature. Established as a Royal Hunting Forest in 843, it's now a place where people can enjoy fresh air, green space and amazing wildlife right in the heart of the town.”

Councillor Helen McKenna, North Lanarkshire Council

Further information

Size

160 hectares

Landscape architect

North Lanarkshire Council

Client

North Lanarkshire Council/RSPB Scotland

Websites

www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk

www.dalzellandbaronshaugh.co.uk

Approximate cost

£1.6 million

Key partners

Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage, WREN, RSPB Scotland

Phoenix Park Gateway Gallery, Castlefields, Runcorn

Community arts project improving space for the well-being of local people



Castlefields was a 1960s suburb built around a public transport loop linking long rectilinear four and five-storey blocks. Despite a promising start, the 1980s saw a change in the fortunes of the area, which developed wide-reaching environmental, economic and social problems leading to severe decline. Since 2002, the Castlefields Regeneration Partnership has worked in coalition with local people to make the area a better place. A masterplan for Castlefields was published in 2003. Anyone living in the area who wanted to stay had the right to a new house. One recurring priority from the consultation was the poor state of the public realm, particularly the forbidding subways, a crucial part of the pedestrian network. One or two subways were replaced, but due to highway constraints it was not possible to replace them all.

The Phoenix Park Gateway Gallery was initiated as part of the masterplan and the Castlefields Public Arts Strategy. This art installation has transformed Plantation Close subway, a gateway connecting Castlefields with Phoenix Park, an important green space. This one small project is part of a much bigger place-making approach, set out in the masterplan and vision for the area, addressing a local fear of crime and anti-social behaviour. It creates a place of true distinction and provides an important link in the overall green space in the area, connecting the play area and park with

residential areas in a way which is imaginative, comfortable and safe for pedestrians.

The Gateway Gallery is managed on behalf of local people by a committee who act as guardians of the installation and manage the use of and exhibitions in the gallery space. Local residents, councillors, community groups, schools and other interested parties are all able to attend the committee meetings.

A panel of community representatives selected artist Mamily Sheibani for his creative approach, which uses stainless steel mirrors in frames to bring the subway to life with natural light and changing reflections. The steel frame panels have been designed to allow artworks to be installed, creating a versatile and changing exhibition space. This approach also enables ongoing community use. Seventy-six local young people worked with a community artist to create the first exhibition.

“The Phoenix Park Gateway Gallery is a truly unique subway intervention which secures local distinctiveness and a great public space. As an arts project the principles of community participation and ownership are embedded in its inception, design and its ongoing function as a community art gallery. What was once an unloved subway now contributes to the social, economical and cultural wellbeing of Castlefields.”

Councillor Tom McInerney, Executive Board Member, Physical Environment, Halton Borough Council

Further information

Size

13m long, 2.5m high and 3m wide

Landscape architect

Nick Martin, Halton Borough Council

Installation artist

Mamily Sheibani

Client

Castlefields Regeneration Team, Halton Borough Council on behalf of Castlefields Regeneration Partnership

Website

www.castlefields.info

Approximate costs £30,000

Key partners

Local residents, Homes & Communities Agency, Liverpool Housing Trust, Plus Dane Group and Halton Borough Council

Greening for Growth in Victoria, London

Integrating nature and business



The Greening for Growth project, in the Victoria Business Improvement District, is an example of business, local government and government agencies working together to deliver local business-led aspirations. It seeks to embed the natural environment in the creation of a sustainable and climate-resilient business area. The project is led by a sub-group of the Victoria Business Improvement District (BID) which includes members representing the wider business community, Natural England, the Greater London Authority and Westminster City Council.

Business Improvement Districts provide a platform for businesses to work together to improve and enhance their local area. They are defined geographical areas agreed by ballot, in which businesses are charged on an annual basis to deliver enhancements. The Victoria BID was launched in April 2010 and set itself a programme to help boost the local economy, improve visitor experiences of the area and enrich the sense of place.

A green infrastructure audit for the Victoria Business Improvement District was commissioned to map the current natural elements and to understand opportunities to enhance this vital resource. In total the audit identified a potential 1.25 hectares of new terrestrial green infrastructure, 1.7 hectares of enhancements to existing green infrastructure and suitable space for 25 hectares of green roofs. The dense urban fabric of the area meant

that the audit needed to identify even the smallest green infrastructure opportunities. However, taken together, retrofitting the Victoria Business Improvement District will deliver a wealth of benefits.

As a Business Improvement District is valid for five years and all members make an annual contribution to the running of the programme, this model is a sustainable option for delivering urban green infrastructure.

The strategy proposes that increased workforce satisfaction and property values will result from delivery of an enhanced green infrastructure network in the area. In addition it would reduce the risk of local businesses incurring costs as a result of flooding.

A significant environmental issue in the area is surface water flooding, which has in the past led to the temporary closure of Victoria Station and Underground. Fitting the 25 hectares of green roofs alone could deal with 80,000m³ of rain water each year.

“The Victoria BID is championing a sustainable green agenda for the area and is looking to become the leader in the development of sustainable business environments through the retrofitting of green infrastructure. We are working closely with public and private sector partners to achieve a positive change in the physical landscape in the area. The increase in green infrastructure will not only benefit the environment but also the workers, residents and visitors that come into Victoria every day.”

Ruth Duston, Chief Executive Officer
Victoria BID

Further information

Size

126 hectares

Landscape architect

Land Use Consultants

Client

Victoria Business Improvement District (BID)

Websites

www.insw1.com, www.landuse.co.uk

Key partners

Natural England, Greater London Authority and Westminster City Council

Bury Mount and Watermeadows, Towcester

Creating an incentive for investment



Bury Mount, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, has been at the heart of the market town of Towcester since the 11th century. It was originally constructed as a medieval 'motte' and has subsequently been used as a civil war gun emplacement, a 19th century prospect mound and a market garden. Unfortunately in recent decades the monument fell into disrepair and was listed on English Heritage's *Heritage at Risk* register.

Bury Mount is part of the wider Moat Lane regeneration project. The site was purchased by South Northamptonshire Council and restored alongside twelve hectares of Grade II* watermeadows as the first phase of this project.

Completed in April 2010, the project reconnects the site physically and culturally with the town centre. The site has been reprofiled, and steps and paths provided to improve access and encourage exploration. Artworks and design details tell the story of the site's past and enhance the identity of Bury Mount. The inclusion of a new footbridge over the adjacent millstream creates a link from the town centre, through the wildlife-rich watermeadows, to the footpath network beyond.

Towcester residents have been involved throughout the development process, contributing to the design of the project and providing feedback on design ideas and proposed uses. Planting for Bury Mount, which included a wildflower meadow using a locally-specific seed mix, has encouraged new and diverse insect and bird life to the area. It is

planned to retain and enhance this diversity.

While Bury Mount has provided a much needed and loved public green space, it has also played a fundamental role in helping to ensure the success of the wider Moat Lane regeneration project. By bringing the site into public ownership and dealing with complex restoration challenges, the rejuvenation of Bury Mount has delivered a high quality first phase of development, attracting investment to the Moat Lane regeneration area, and helping it to become the civic and cultural focus of the town.

Restoration has created an attractive centrepiece around which private investment can occur. This was done through a number of different methods: by gap funding an element of pure cost, demonstrating the commitment and intent of public sector partners, and the credibility and dynamism of the project team, raising awareness of and improving the appetite for investment and overcoming statutory challenges such as dealing with scheduled ancient monuments. All of this combined has secured the interest of leading private sector developers to bid for the next stage of the project.

“The scheme sets a very high standard for future phases of the project and provides a wonderful attraction for the centre of Towcester.”

Councillor John Townsend, South Northamptonshire Council

Further information

Size 13 hectares

Landscape architect

Camlin Lonsdale

Client

South Northamptonshire Council

Approximate costs

£500,000 (Bury Mount), £100,000 (Watermeadows)

Websites

www.camlinlonsdale.com

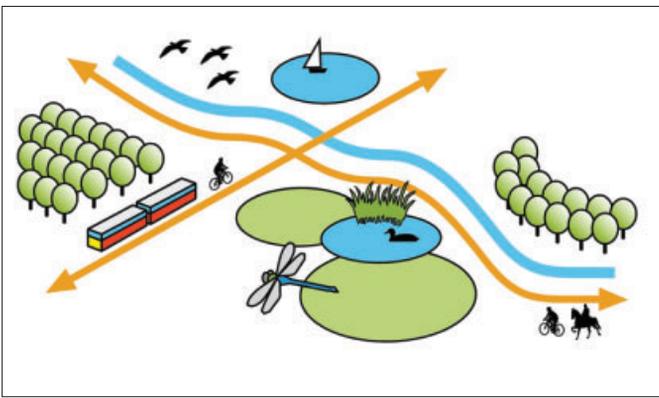
www.moatlane.org, www.urbandelivery.co.uk

Key partners

East Midlands Development Agency Consultants leading the Moat Lane scheme: Urban Delivery, studio REAL, Moat Lane Partnership: South Northants Council / Northamptonshire County Council / West Northamptonshire Development Corporation



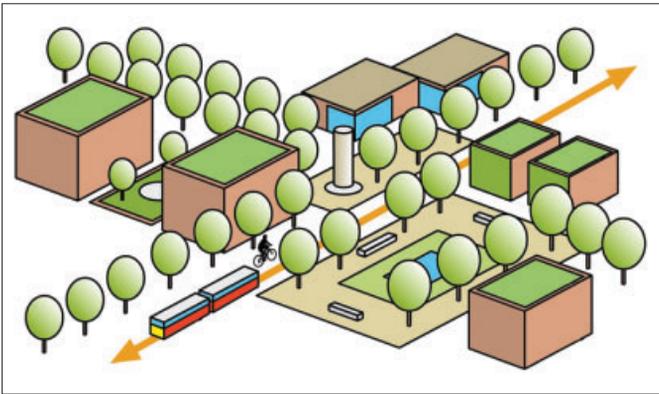
Key to illustration



A

Main green spine

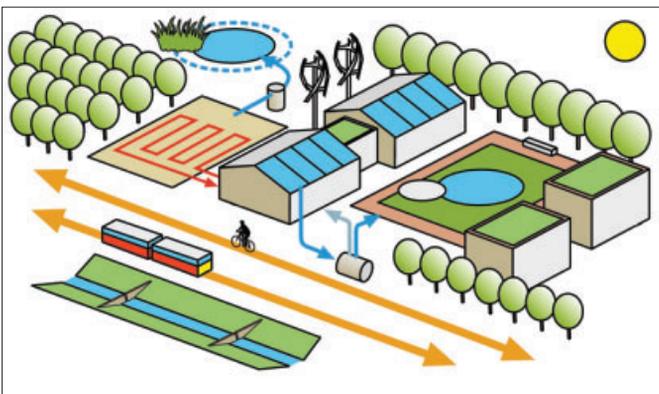
Trees, green spaces, river valleys and waterways, pedestrian and cycle routes connecting places, reflecting local character, enabling wildlife to flourish, offering sustainable transport routes and reducing the impact of climate change.



B

Urban areas

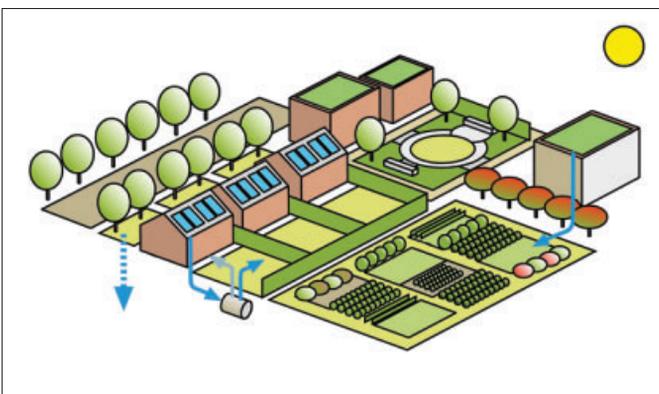
Boulevards, plazas, green roofs and walls making attractive settings for shopping and leisure, improving the vibrancy of local economy. Street trees and green space making our settlements more liveable, providing cooling, shade and cleaner air, giving us spaces for relaxation and healthy living, creating distinctive places and delivering multiple economic benefits.



C

Business park

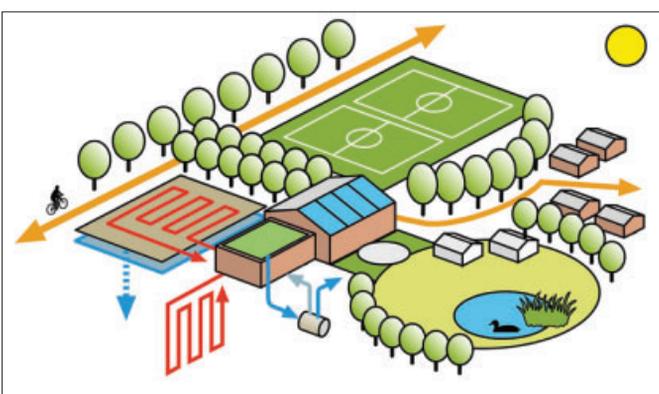
Attractive settings encouraging inward investment, incorporating sustainable transport, sustainable urban drainage, rainwater collection and waste water cleansing. Creating attractive and distinctive workplaces, contributing to a vibrant local economy and economic benefits, reducing flood risk and climate change impacts and creating space for nature.



D

Suburban housing

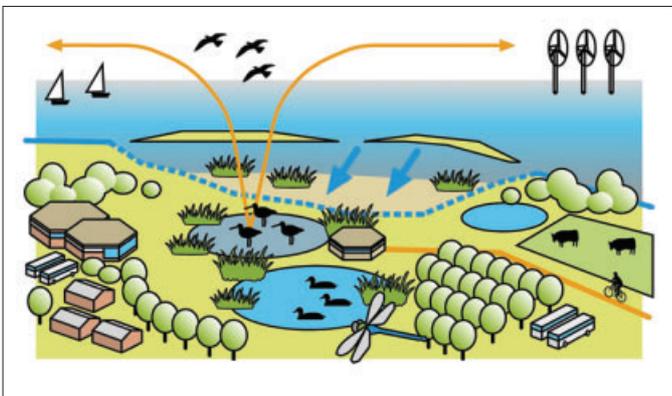
Spaces for relaxation and healthy living, encouraging social interaction, neighbourhood events and food growing, building community cohesion, making the settlement comfortable and liveable. Improving property values and reducing effects of climate change through natural drainage, renewable energy use and building orientation which maximise solar gain and daylight.



E

Community centre

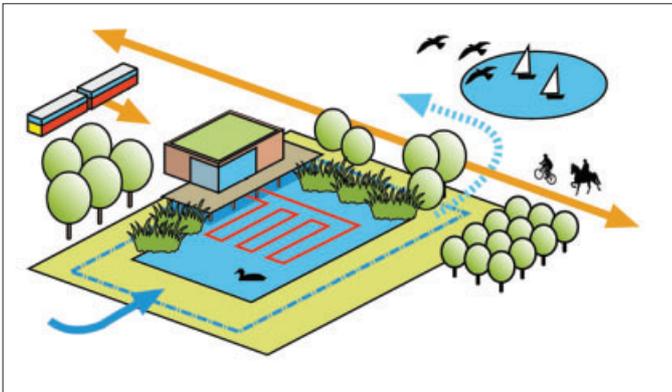
Sustainable building with green roof, geothermal heating and cooling and rainwater collection helping reduce climate change impacts and acting as a neighbourhood hub. Associated green space caters for healthy living activities including sports and opportunities for learning through connecting with nature and food growing, and employment in green space management.



F

Coastal zones

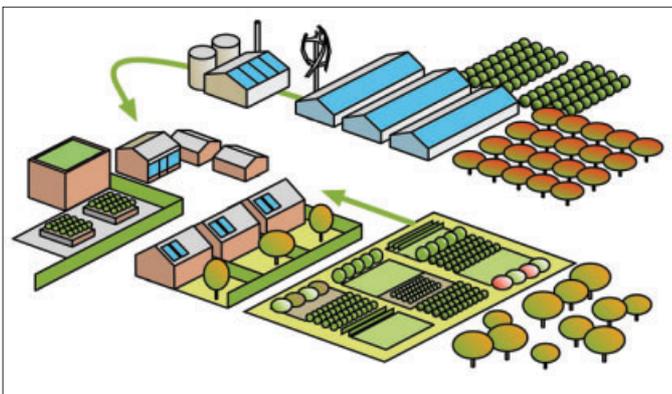
Managed coastal realignment reducing risk of flooding, providing potential sites for renewable energy and creating connected habitats for wildlife. Coastal areas provide opportunities for learning and leisure and deliver economic benefits through the creation of distinctive places for tourism.



G

Country park

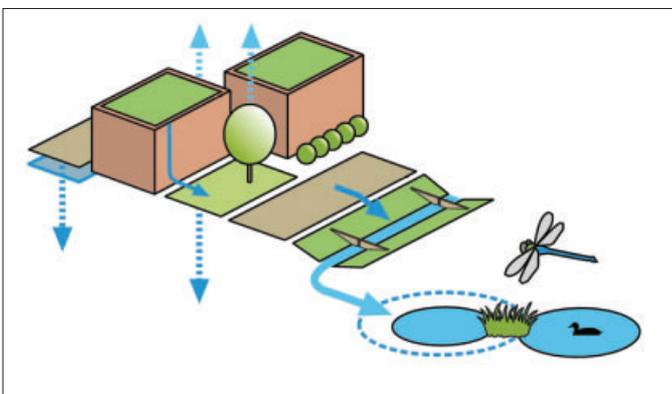
Range of accessible habitats and green spaces managed for wildlife to flourish and people to enjoy, also giving spaces for relaxation and active recreation. Learning and employment opportunities via interpretation and events and jobs as rangers, green space managers and education outreach.



H

Allotments, smallholdings and orchards

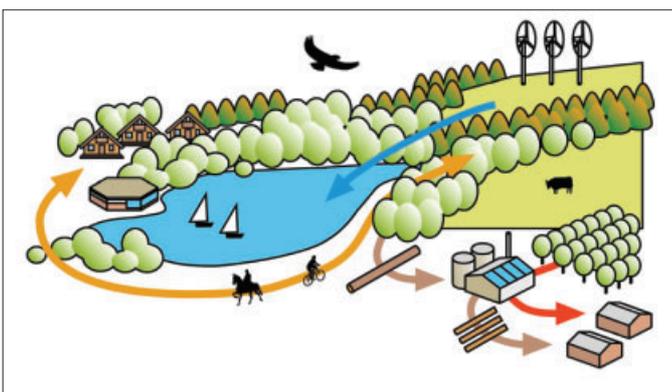
Providing space to restore locally sourced and distinctive food production and to connect urban populations with the rural economy. Opportunities to learn about and gain apprenticeships in gardening, vegetable and fruit growing, bee-keeping and horticulture, as well as providing for outdoor places and activities that help bring communities together and provide an active lifestyle.



I

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Attenuation ponds, swales and reed beds, providing natural ways to reduce flood risk, provide temporary storage and improve water quality, while creating wetland habitats for wildlife in an attractive aquatic setting with additional potential for accessible leisure facilities.



J

Upland areas

Agriculture, pasture, timber production and timber products, including biomass for local CHP plant and renewable power generation all providing multiple economic benefits and contributing to reducing climate change impact. Areas set aside for extreme sports, relaxation and activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle whilst protecting vulnerable wildlife habitats and retaining the essential natural character of the landscape.



Local green infrastructure:
making the most of our landscape

Green infrastructure in action

The places where we live, work and play are important to us, and most could be enhanced to improve the quality of our lives. Could better use be made of local land? Does the water need to be cleaned or conditions for wildlife improved? Could more food be grown locally? Is it a healthy and attractive environment for children? If you want to improve the green infrastructure in your neighbourhood, here are a dozen ways in which local decision-makers can start to make a difference.



Dalston Eastern Curve – Sarah Blee

- 1 Identify which of the benefits that green infrastructure can provide are the most important and achievable ones for your local area, in order to gain support and unlock funding.

What are the key issues that need to be addressed? What triggers change in the area? Use these as potential levers to gain funding for green infrastructure initiatives. Think about the creative use of budgets from other sectors, such as health, education, transport, water and drainage, which all benefit from investment in green infrastructure.

- 2 Look at existing local open space with fresh eyes and consider its potential as a community asset.

Enhance existing local spaces that are under-used: the appearance of streets can be improved by planting trees, neglected grass areas turned into a community garden and wildlife havens created in a park. Set up a friends' group, seek help from the local authority or apply for grant funding to enhance the design or management of green space.

- 3 Maximise the benefits of green infrastructure and create networks by seeing local projects in the context of a wider strategy. This can generate useful ideas and help with funding applications.

Check whether relevant strategies exist, and if so, use them. Collaborate with partner organisations on funding and implementing projects. Consider the contribution that one small project can make to the bigger picture.

- 4 Ensure Local Plans promote adequate green infrastructure standards, so that new local development enhances the area.

Councillors, officers and community groups can help to ensure that developments incorporate green infrastructure ideas and aspirations, by responding to local planning policy documents and proposals early in the planning process.

- 5 Partnerships are crucial to sustainable delivery. Local communities and organisations can be a valuable source of knowledge, ideas and aspirations of particular relevance to green infrastructure. They should be fully engaged through effective consultation.
Current political initiatives aim to give more power and responsibility to local individuals and communities. Develop communications and good working relationships between community groups, businesses and all those who are interested in or can influence neighbourhood planning.
- 6 Don't overlook long-term management and maintenance issues in the enthusiasm for creating and improving local open spaces.
Include adequate, separate funding for good aftercare in the proposals, and establish clear responsibilities for management and maintenance.
- 7 Remember the important role of carefully planned green space in reducing the impact of climate change, particularly in controlling flooding and improving the living environment in built-up areas.
Involve the Environment Agency, or the relevant departments of devolved governments, and think about opportunities to reduce the risk of flooding by improving water management.
- 8 Every place is different. Green infrastructure developments should reflect and enhance the local character of the area.
When proposing new, or enhanced, green infrastructure, seek guidance about the local landscape character and use the information to retain or enhance natural features.
- 9 People are interested in the history and heritage of their local area, and interpretation and conservation can attract funding, so don't overlook this aspect.
Make sure you know about the area's heritage and include interpretation proposals and historic references in your ideas.
- 10 For many businesses, it is important that they have an attractive location and approach route for visitors, and they may be persuaded to pay for improvements to their setting.
Talk to local companies and business groups about how they feel about the area. Understand what would make a difference for them, their staff and customers.
- 11 Vacant land can give a negative impression of an area and is a waste of potentially useful space.
Find opportunities to work with owners of stalled development sites or under-used areas of land, using creative ideas and community engagement to bring temporary or long-term benefits to the people and the place.
- 12 Public art can be controversial, but it has a well-established track record of reflecting local heritage and creating a sense of place.
Art can be incorporated into the functional aspects of a green infrastructure plan. When planning public art, ensure that the commission is developed through consultation with the local community, and that the plan addresses the practical requirements of the area.

Further information

Visit the Landscape Institute's website to see examples of green infrastructure projects and sources of further information, help and guidance.

landscapeinstitute.org/gi

Find out how a landscape architect can advise you from the Landscape Institute's directory of registered practices. landscapeinstitute.org/registeredpractices

Find out more about **Spaceshaper**, a tool that helps communities to assess the quality and fitness for purpose of open space to inform their design and management decisions. landscapeinstitute.org/spaceshaper

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The Landscape Institute is an educational charity and chartered body responsible for protecting, conserving and enhancing the natural and built environment for the benefit of the public. It champions well-designed and well-managed urban and rural landscape. The Landscape Institute's accreditation and professional procedures ensure that the designers, managers and scientists who make up the landscape architecture profession work to the highest standards. Its advocacy and education programmes promote the landscape architecture profession as one which focuses on design, environment and community in order to inspire great places where people want to live, work and visit.

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