

Green Streets Initiative

Urban greening projects in Manchester, Trafford and Salford



Green Streets has captured the imagination of communities throughout Manchester, Trafford and Salford by giving them the chance to help design, create and maintain projects that bring nature into their neighbourhoods. Community involvement at every stage means that local people gain a real sense of ownership. The projects have not only improved their environment by planting trees, or greening walls and gable ends, but also instilled a renewed sense of pride and community spirit. The project is part of Red Rose Forest, the Community Forest for Greater Manchester, set up in 1991 to make the least wooded landscape in Europe a greener and better place to live.

objectives

- To bring nature to the urban sprawl of inner city Manchester, Trafford and Salford.
- To help people feel better about themselves and the places where they live.
- To educate people about the health benefits of having trees and shrubs in their urban environment.

actions

- Consultation with local residents led to their engagement in over 100 projects.
- Project delivery involved local residents at every level from inception through to design, planting and ongoing maintenance.
- Projects have included:
 - "living walls": graffiti-covered brickwork planted with climbers such as clematis, Virginia creeper and ivy;
 - "green artwork": welcoming visitors to inner-city estates with signposts covered in greenery;
 - the provision of hanging baskets and potted plants to enhance the frontages of terraced houses.

achievements

- Local residents have benefited from an enhanced sense of well-being brought about by living in a greener more attractive environment.
- A sense of pride in the community was created through ownership of individual projects, and schemes brought people together as they were discussed and delivered.
- The success of Green Streets from its beginnings in Manchester and Trafford in 2001 led to its expansion to Salford in 2004.
- Following community consultation on an area notorious for vandalism, graffiti and youth crime (Walter Street, Old Trafford), young people from the local Deal for Communities team helped to remove oppressive and overgrown shrubs. Local residents, businesses, councillors and children from Seymour Park Primary School then planted 14 silver birch trees, thousands of bulbs and installed 14 'standing stones' along the roadside.

background

Red Rose Forest was established in 1991 with the primary aim of transforming parts of Greater Manchester into greener places to live by improving the environment in and around urban areas, revitalising the land, providing new leisure and cultural opportunities and supporting healthy living. Working as a partnership, comprising the Forestry Commission, Natural England, the Boroughs of Bolton, Bury, Trafford and Wigan, and cities of Manchester and Salford, Red Rose Forest is one of two Community Forests that cover nearly 292 square miles of Manchester (population 1.5m people).

The partnership also works with other bodies including landowners, voluntary groups, communities and schools to develop the forest in a variety of different ways. Red Rose Projects include Community tree nurseries, Woodland Wildflowers, Green Tips and Green Streets. Red Rose Forest also teamed up with 'Trees for Cities' on an international project to plant trees in 20 cities around the world. Manchester was one of the first cities to benefit, and 'Trees for Manchester' is committed to working with local communities, schools and the City Council to ensure that every tree planted is cared for long term.

The 'Green Streets' initiative has left a lasting legacy. Future generations of local residents and visitors to the area will enjoy the benefits of a greener urban environment for many years to come. The 40 year Red Rose Forest plan will ensure the long term regeneration of Greater Manchester.

quotes

"Green Streets seemed to get the community chatting. Before, people would just walk past with their heads down but once we planted the trees they would stop to admire them and all of a sudden people were talking about flowers and trees. I can't tell you how wonderful it's been. Now our neighbours in the next street have just got funding to plant trees there too. They saw what we'd done and wanted to get involved."
Yvonne Pole, resident of Moston, Manchester.

"The Green Streets project is an excellent example of a sustainable urban greening project, where the impact reaches much further than the aesthetic appearance of the street scene. Communities are working together to help deliver Green Streets and it is encouraging to witness their commitment to improving their local environment for the long term." Tony McNulty MP, Minister for Regeneration 2002-2003.

partners

Manchester City Council
Trafford Borough Council
Community Technical Aid Centre
Groundwork
United Utilities plc.

funding

Viridor Waste Management
Environmental Action Fund
Marketing Manchester (ERDF)
Northwest Development Agency
Groundwork Manchester (New Deal for East Manchester)
United Utilities plc.

lessons learnt

The project team have really valued the consultation and discussion with local residents – they have had good ideas and their commitment to make the project work is essential. Giving the community a sense of ownership of the project ensures that the trees and other forms of greenery are nurtured and protected.