

THANK YOU



Major Project Funder



GROW WILD
FLOWERS TO THE PEOPLE



LOTTERY FUNDED

Royal Botanic Gardens
Kew



National
Wildflower
Centre



MANCHESTER
CITY COUNCIL



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National
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creative • protective • ecology



the
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Supporters

Kew Grow Wild • Ken Rogers • Stephanie Lynch • Pagoda Arts • The Eden Project
Engage Liverpool • Dave Roughley • David Garner • Landlife/NWC Staff
Southway Housing Trust • Pollyport CIC • Draw & Code

Hosts & Partners

Hulme Community Garden Centre • West Everton Community Council • Shrewsbury House Youth Club
Everton Community Garden • Manchester Museum • National Museums Liverpool • Liverpool Cathedral
Brighter Sound • EnChord • LIMF • The Whitworth • Venture Arts • Z-Arts • Manchester Carnival
Everton Children's Centre • St. George's Church • Kazimier Productions • Culture Liverpool
Metal Culture • Contact Theatre • Methodist Centre • Young Identity • Rooftop Poets

Schools

St. Wilfreds Primary School • St. Mary's Primary School • Rolls Crescent Primary • Manchester Academy
William Hulme Grammar School • Beacon C of E Primary School • Old Moat Primary School
Faith Primary School • Our Lady Immaculate Catholic Primary • Notre Dame Catholic College
North Liverpool Academy • Millstead School • Everton Nursery School







MANCH

LIVE



ESTER

RPOOL





A TALE OF TWO CITIES

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times

In 2014 this project won the Kew Grow Wild England Flagship Award with 20,000 votes rallied from across the North West and as far afield as China to create wildflower landmarks and send out signals for a more biodiverse and colourful world.



PROJECT OUTCOMES

"It was just a wonderful chance to collaborate and to work with such an array of natural environment expertise... A key point is that it's so transformative, it's replicable, we can do it elsewhere."

Dave Barlow,
Manchester City Council

"It's been pretty good going in terms of this project's success in engaging people. Appreciation of wildflowers is palpable. If you walked there today and asked everyone, you'd get 100% positive, really delighted with it."

John Hutchison,
Friends of Everton Park

"With locally-produced seeds the key objective was to sow landscape-scale, visible urban areas to set about changing practice and mindsets, whilst introducing biodiversity and colour into urban neighbourhoods."

Richard Scott,
National Wildflower Centre

1

Archaeological dig which changed the history of Everton FC

1

RHS trophy won and two awards received

3

Wildflower dresses made

6

Mayors back the Northern Flowerhouse

6

Surveys for bees, butterflies and plant species

10

Music recording sessions

11

Artworks commissioned

14

Live performances

19

Original exhibitions, concerts, showcases and displays

20

Football pitches of wildflowers sown

23

School and community sowings

35

Artist workshops delivered

86

Poems and songs written

106

People attended training days

119

New invertebrates identified on Princess Parkway

130

Journeys made between both cities as a result of the project

260

Homebaked pies baked and relished

520

New visitors to National Wildflower Centre

900

Academics view World Conference stand

1,300

Volunteer hours spent

Unknown

Heads turned on buses

11,000

Postcards and posters produced

71,000

Passers-by see the Northern Flowerhouse Beach Hut on the Albert Dock

100,000

People witness Quinney Crescent flowerings

125,000

People drive past roadside flowers each day

700,000

Viewers watch features on BBC News, Bay TV and big screens

6.5 million

Viewers of BBC Countryfile find out about the project

250 million

Seeds sown in Liverpool and Manchester

1 billion

Merseyside seeds supplied to Kew Grow Wild

BOOK THE FIRST

RECALLED TO LIFE



Our tale started with the singing of anthems in parks, markets, train stations and rallying votes...

“Say we want a revolution,
We’d better get it on right away.
Well, get yer on your feet,
And into the street, singing.
Flowers to the people!
Flowers to the people!
Flowers to the people, right on!”

Adapted from John Lennon for Tale of Two Cities

This Tale of Two Cities is set in times of austerity. The future and quality of public and green spaces has become increasingly uncertain, and charities and the not-for-profit sector have an increasingly important role to play. Winning the Grow Wild England Flagship Award, with the help of volunteers and Everton’s very own Green Goddess combine harvester, set people buzzing about the potential for transformation. In a small way it felt we had arrived when we got to Hulme with Ian Prowse and Helen Maher playing all the way!

“Chant my lyrics if you please so I
Know your spirit’s on my team for this
United existence
Plots and plans will always stand
And guide us with resilience
...Plots and plans and helping hands
Will guide us on our mission
...What’s the use in staying down?
Don’t let your wishes cease
to make us proud!”

Written and performed by Shoa Osborne,
arranged and produced by Michael Seary.

Everton and Hulme have shared social histories with energetic and charismatic communities. Our wildflowers were sown on historic demolition sites from which working class communities were displaced, initially with bold, utopian housing projects – crescents and towers – which were then demolished in the 1990s.

As local resident Ann O’Brien said “We’ve gone from tower blocks to flower blocks!”

“We should build for our
future, not decimate worlds
Create a land we’re proud
to give our boys and our girls
Where you’re not judged on
trivialities given to you at birth
And borders are buried under
the soils of the earth
And education is not something
that teenagers despise
But revered by the masses
as the deity of life”

Eddie Toomer-McAlpine and Adam Ali, written
and performed at Brighter Sound, recorded with
Sophia Ben-Youssef at Parr St Studios

Andy Warhol’s exhibition at Tate Liverpool featured flower paintings and played host to our very first workshop, at which North Liverpool Academy students showed us their understanding of the eclectic and colourful potential of our wildflower visions for over the road from their school gates.

“Land Really is the Best Art”

Andy Warhol

Seven assemblies later and children and young people from all Everton's schools turned out to sow seed (or do some "shoomering" together, as one child put it!). This meaningful act brought out playful natures, laughter, song and tears, and then the waiting began.

We sowed seeds along the old street lines of Kepler Street, Samson Street and Druid Street. Caroline Tattersall, who has since founded the Clay Space in Hulme, worked with Venture Arts and Millstead School in Everton to make an installation of terraced houses along these street lines.

Subway stress was caused by the risk associated with crime in the subway and possible bad press.

"I've been using the Mancunian Way underpass for years and I've never felt particularly secure when doing so. With the wildflower planting, that feeling has changed. It just seems so much nicer walking under Mancunian Way with all that colour and it feels more secure, more cared for and more like a usable public space."

Robert Docherty, Hulme

Canon Neville Black, who baptised 1,000 babies, married circa 300 couples and conducted 600 funerals, learned during his time as Vicar of St George's Church, Everton...

"The need to be present, to discover, to learn and to respect the earth beneath one's feet from which like the wonderful poppies that emerge. The poppies speak to me of some memories of that period in my life – the sadness of old Everton passing, the new emerging, the amazing ability of the earth of Everton to survive and yield forth new abundance and vitality."

Neville Black, Everton

Red bricks, Mersey grit and demolition rubble actually provide good bedding grounds for wildflowers

We ended 2015 with two exhibitions – Liverpool's Poppy Fields in the Anglican Cathedral and the Northern Flowerhouse at St George's Hall. Poppies evoke different sentiments and symbols across cultures. For the Chinese, red and poppies symbolise good fortune and prosperous futures.

"It was a wonderful thing to see people coming back in their droves to remember the way it was while being inspired by the wildflower street corridors that represented Everton's ongoing regeneration. A former English Civil War site, one of Liverpool's original villages and the birthplace of big time football on Merseyside, Everton Park can tell many stories, but last summer's wildflower extravaganza has now become integral to that folklore."

Ken Rogers, Author of "The Lost Tribes of Everton & Scottie Road"



↑ Mark Loudon

BOOK THE SECOND

THE GOLDEN THREAD

Dandelions = Hotspots – invented word by Our Lady Immaculate pupil for nature writer and supporter, Professor Robert MacFarlane.

“I never thought wildflowers could bring us together but it's more to do with our instinctive love of nature. Amongst you ladies and gentleman I am a Dandelion.”

Stephen Chung, UK Chinese Association



Richard Scott ↗

Barbara Disney, who has travelled to Kunming to research textiles, worked with Chinese community members in both towns to paint silk flags and a banner, which inspired the Chinese New Year celebrations in Liverpool in 2017.

“So, if there’s something you’d like to try
If there’s something you’d like to try
Ask me, I won’t say no, how could I?
Nature is a language, Can’t you read?
Nature is a language, Can’t you read?”

‘Ask’ by The Smiths

The threads and filaments (like mycelium in forest soils) that connect our two cities, reveal both shared and contrasting histories. Shipping and weaving on a world scale bred strong co-operative traditions, solidarity through northern grit, soul and wit. Remembering and honouring our common bonds and narratives is fundamental to seeking truth and adapting to collective futures.

“The Parkway has been transformed into magical place and the subway is a delight to look down on. It makes my day every Wednesday... I’d love to see more of it.”

Catherine, Manchester resident

Lemn Sissay, MBE, Chancellor of Manchester University met Ian Prowse in the Friary Church and spoke at the foot of the wildflower streets on Everton Park, saying “*Change is part of and intrinsic to who we are ... It’s what human beings do. It’s what wildflowers do*”.

Liverpool’s much-loved singer-songwriter, Ian Prowse, played “*Does this train stop on Merseyside?*” to Lemn Sissay, MBE, Chancellor of Manchester University at an in conversation event in Everton’s magnificent Friary Church before Lemn performed on the wildflower streets to Everton’s Lost Tribes.

**“We are wildflowers
Wild as the wind
Wild as the dawn
Wild within”**

Lemn Sissay’s morning poem, July 18th 2015

At the Whitworth Art Gallery themes of communication, transformation and education were picked up both at a specific Artists' Sharing event and at a meeting of textile artists, who were shown around by the curator of the Revolutionary Textiles exhibition.

“My work focuses on three issues. It's all to do with fragility and vulnerability, survival and hope. It's a wildflower. And I feel very much that I'm a wildflower.”

Rachel Gadsden, Artist and Honorary Doctor,
London Southbank University

“You can really run with this idea: what wildflowers mean. There's an ecological, there's a political, there's a personal, there's a very powerful set of metaphors that you can draw from just planting a set of wildflowers in a park, letting them grow and then watching them.”

Mark Loudon, Photographer and Baker



Mark Loudon ↗



↗ Mark Loudon

Chinese Pagoda Youth Orchestra and West Everton Junior Philharmonic created an original Flowerful Fusion concert at the Invisible Wind Factory.

Ben Mellor, poet and performer from Hulme, taking some inspiration from Kew's Millennium Seed Bank, developed five characters whose lives criss-cross between Everton and Hulme. The first being...

“Daisy stares out of her 9th floor window
To Everton Park below;
Wildflowers blowing in the breeze,
The ones she sowed 5 months ago...
She sips her tea, returns her gaze to the
sway of those gently shaking heads,
Some days the blue cornflowers
are her favourites,
Others the chamomiles she'd mistaken
for her namesakes: Ox-Eye Daisies,
But Alan, who co-ordinates the
volunteers says they're perennials,
So won't be flowering 'til next year.
Day's Eyes the name came from
because they close at night
But the wild Ox-eyes don't.
He quoted some long-dead
poet who wrote 'At dusk they
shine like fallen moons'.”

Ben Mellor

BOOK THE THIRD

THE TRACK OF A STORM



After many milestones along the way – school assemblies, the many sowings that brought Van Gogh’s iconic “*Sower*” to life, celebrations and songs – children were involved in co-designing deck chairs, bags, aprons and scarves with Sally Gilford, Joe Ford and one 69a.

The exhibition above Manchester Museum’s Living Worlds gallery showcased a selection of these works along with a performance by Ben Mellor and a convivial Mayoral meet hosted by Lord Mayor Cllr Austin-Behan. The combination of artworks co-designed by children and produced by artist-makers led to conversations about sustainable production lines, performances, tours and archives of work.

Seeing the wildflowers in bloom with people out on the streets, barbecuing, in the sunshine for Manchester Carnival 2016 with Liverpool’s Katumba, Viva Brazil dancers and Rooftop Poets really caught a vibe, which we’d love to take further with communities in Moss Side.

As the Tale of Two Cities Project reached its end, National Wildflower Centre staff were made redundant in January 2017, and the Centre’s gates closed. Landlife’s glorious Green Goddess combine harvester took her last ride to the Pierhead in protest.

“The Wildflower Centre is a place where people can slow down for a moment and be happy. It is a beacon in a world that is becoming more busy each day. Places like the Wildflower Centre are of great value for the contact of people with nature.”

Letter from The Dutch Masters. Signed by 16 gardeners of the world famous Ecological Parks Department

Our shared experience of the two cities rallied and strengthened support. The Eden Project stepped in to save the legacy of National Wildflower Centre with support for the project’s legacy from Kew’s Grow Wild team, and funding from Tesco’s Bags of Help.

“Because the promised land is here on earth
We do not need prayers just solid work
I wake up and I see all the possibilities
I see, I see, I see
I live life like a lucid dream
Revolution, evolution
I make my own history
I dream, I dream, I dream”

Adam Ali and Eddie Toomer-McAlpine, Brighter Sound



↑ Mark Loudon



We knew that the Victorian ending to Dickens' novel was not the end that we wanted to tell and write. Our ending and the future of a City's green spaces still awaits us. We can choose to bridge cultures which tell different stories and find forms to incorporate a myriad of voices.

"It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known."

Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities

"A culture that does not measure itself by its own best work and the best work of other cultures (the determination of which is its unending task) becomes destructive of itself and thus nature."

Wendell Berry, Landscapes of Culture

"The Northern Flowerhouse is a springboard for how we can increase biodiversity in our cities and shout about it"

Metro Mayor Steve Rotherham, June 2017

"Within every scar is a story to be told
An essence of character where legacy unfolds
Through the dead weights of agony
Our structures build on
As we root through the cracks which define
us as one...
...Structures can break from climatic distress
As it shatters through burdens 'til permanent rest
But united through labour we can reclaim control
To rebuild and improve for the ultimate goal
So gather your strength and carry the pain
Let it ache to the fade then refresh and regain
Take pride in your allies to halt bleeding in vain"

Reece Goldstein, Rooftop Poets

"But berate yourself all you want
for what you did or didn't do
It doesn't change the consequences
that they all must now live through
And your children have to
choose their own paths
Carve their own indelible marks
You shoot the arrows,
but you can't control their arcs.
But there is light amongst all the recent dark,
The equal parts thrilling and terrifying prospect
of becoming a Grandma
And though they have not yet met, she's
resolved to do her best to make things better
To help them, in whatever way
they need, to grow together."

Ben Mellor

"I have sincere admiration for what the Tale of Two Cities team and all the projects stakeholders have managed to achieve, through the best and worst of times.

This truly is a landmark project, that has impacted the lives of so many in such a positive way."

Richard Pollard,
Grow Wild England Partnership Manager

RECOMMENDATIONS

COLLECTIVELY WE ARE WORKING TO...

Optimise Future Potential of Local Sites

- Use wildflower landscapes to engage and inspire communities
- Review management guidelines biannually
- Secure funding and maintenance plans for all existing sites in Everton, Hulme/Moss Side and Huyton
- Gather data on plant and invertebrate species for a shared Park Flower Plots data-set
- Continue community sowing days and celebrations
- Mow paths through the larger areas of flowers
- Bring flowers into housing courtyards and school grounds
- Engage more with local universities, youth and football clubs
- Produce colourful signposts reflecting the changing flower landscapes

Build a Northern Flowerhouse

- Increase biodiversity and transform brownfield landscapes across the North
- Convene an assembly of willing champions across the North of England
- Work alongside the Woodland Trust's vision for a Northern Forest
- Involve landscape professionals in creative conservation
- Find meaning in local contexts to develop narratives and tell stories
- Curate a touring exhibition in galleries across Merseyside, Greater Manchester and Lancashire
- Link wildflower landscapes across Northern towns and seek new stages, such as Great Exhibition of the North
- Build on partnerships in Northern Ireland and across Northern Europe

Make a National Impact

- Revitalise the National Wildflower Centre and increase its scope
- Cultivate more sites for seed production nationally with the Eden Project
- Convene a National Wildflower Assembly
- Bridge the North-South and the urban, rural divide and evidence the best ways of increasing social cohesion
- Consolidate an events and communications plan

Increase Skills

- Provide innovative schools workshops in creative conservation methods
- Continue to support and build the skills of the Grow Wild network and mentor programme
- Launch a creative conservation professional development programme for public and private sectors focussed on local wildflower production and sites

Build a Shared Knowledge Base

- Work with the Association of Public Service Excellence
- Inspire a global network of urban regeneration programmes with wildflower landscapes at their heart
- Develop international exemplars for climate change resilience

**Thanks to all fellow
citizens for these
recommendations**