

Brook Way Community Biodiversity Project

Sunita Hirani and John Poole, of Brookfield Crescent, led the local community's transformation of this derelict space



The hatching of a determined plan in local community conversation in December 2020 led to the project team initiating discussions with the local council, London Borough of Brent, in February 2021. Successful bids for NCIL and Love Where You Live funding followed shortly afterwards. Months of dedication and much emotion later, the community space was formally opened by the Mayor in October 2021, with ward councillors in attendance, and so many members of the local community that you could hardly move. Refreshments were served alongside in the new hall at Uxendon Manor Primary School.

The team were keen to share tips on making a success of transforming the run down, derelict micro-spaces which blight so many areas, not least to take any help that you're offered and to keep communicating with your neighbours, local services, and the council. They recommend taking regular photos, creating community boards online and in the area, and always inviting everyone to stay in contact and see the results whether they supported the project or not. Making the project intergenerational, and ensuring accessibility, helped strengthen the community endeavour. Share the good news!

There are donations, discounts and give-aways available from so many sources, including the local neighbourhood in items and helping hands. Many organisations have Community Managers or officers who are keen to support activity in their areas. The project secured the following grants and donations:

- £8,000 NCIL (Neighbourhood Community Infrastructure Levy) Funding
- £1,000 Veolia (Brent Highways and Brent Refuse) donation + topsoil
- £500 Love Where You Live Grant
- £500 Wetland Trust (Thames Water) Community Grant

- £800 in plants and discounts on purchases from
 - Tesco, Neasden
 - Morrisons, Queensbury and Hatch End
 - Asda, Wembley
 - Waitrose, South Harrow and Harrow Weald
 - Squires, Clamp Hill
 - B&Q, Queensbury



A review of the grand opening can be found in the Kilburn Times here <https://www.kilburntimes.co.uk/news/brook-way-bio-diversity-project-in-kenton-8437864>

We were delighted to be voted top of Brent's Participatory Budgeting programme 'You Decide' on the 29th January. A Brent article can be read [here](#) and the winning video watched on YouTube [here](#). The project team are now working to have educational classes run by Brent and Harrow Parks departments, buy mature trees, extend the wall mural, and involve some local residents and their families to establish a wild meadow flower area, a mason bee colony and/or planting a flowering fruit tree in their gardens where they have one. The project is looking to move on from NCIL, to manage the project within the community, and take accountability and ownership of the outcomes.

The project's January 2022 newsletter can be found here http://designingfutures.uk/files/BWCBP_Newsletter_Jan22.pdf.

To find out more, contact Sunita or John at bwcbp@friendsofwoodcockpark.uk.