



Northwood Green Streets and Northwood Forest Hills

A socially and economically deprived Knowsley neighbourhood now boasts a revitalised community woodland and tree-lined streets after being transformed by a project coordinated by a partnership of local organisations. Northwood's green space is now being managed to reap multiple benefits for the residents who live there – and for Knowsley as a whole.

Context

Northwood is an area of Kirkby suffering from high levels of multiple deprivation

and anti-social issues. Following the demolition of maisonettes and a school a large area of derelict land was left for over 20 years. The ten hectare site was previously little used and the streets surrounding it were bare, lacking greenery of any kind.

Three years on, the finishing touches have been applied to an extensive revamp that has revitalised a community woodland, and a complementing tree programme which has transformed Northwood's streets.

**200 street
trees
planted**



Landscape

The creation of Northwood Forest Hills has included significant woodland management, tree planting and work on pond and wetland habitats, with the aim of boosting both the aesthetics and biodiversity of the site. The trees are native broadleaf species, chosen specifically to compliment their wetter surroundings.

Welcoming new entrances to the site have been created, in addition to all-access paths and the installation of signage, seating and bins. The pond areas are now also more accessible, with the installation of new boardwalks.

As part of the accompanying street tree project, Northwood Green Streets, over 200 street trees were planted. These species were selected on the basis of being non-fruiting and shedding minimal leaf litter, providing minimal disruption to residents.

“Involving the community has been a great benefit to this project as we need to make the decisions for our area.”

Local resident

Community involvement

The local community were consulted and engaged from the start, and have now fully embraced the renewed woodland. A community consultation was held, including drop-in events, leafleting, surveys and a blog. Residents chose which tree was planted outside their house, and were encouraged to liaise with their neighbours regarding its exact location.

Conservation

This project has boosted biodiversity in the area. As a result, Northwood Forest Hills now contains a highly diverse range of habitats and supports a valuable range of animals and plants, some of which are locally, regionally and even nationally rare. This has led to the site being designated as a Local Wildlife Site, recognising its value to wildlife.

Education

Northwood Forest Hills is also being used for outdoor woodland lessons for local children who have enjoyed regular Forest School sessions. Staff from local schools attend taster days to inspire learning outdoors.

Recreation

A key benefit has been improved cycling and walking routes between homes, schools and workplaces. New

opportunities have been created for leisure and recreation, not least through the creation of a natural gym.

In order to help establish community ownership of the site, an activity programme is underway and includes angling, wildflower sowing and clean-ups.

Funding

The project has been funded through the FC's Setting the Scene for Growth programme; Big Lottery Fund; EWGS as well as M&S 'Green Living Places' Neighbourhood Renewal funds; Knowsley Housing Trust, The Big Tree Plant, The Woodland Trust and the Forest Education Initiative.

“This project has transformed Northwood”





“Northwood Forest Hills has become a haven for local residents and their families. People are going for walks along the paths, fishing in a natural pond and enjoying seeing all of the insects and birds in their habitats”

Jacqui Collins, Senior Community Development Officer, Knowsley Council

“There’s a real appetite for more trees and it’s been wonderful to see both young and elderly residents coming to my surgeries eager for their new woods and wetlands to be completed as quickly as possible so they can enjoy them to the full.”

Eddie Connor, Northwood ward councillor

