

OLYMPIA COMMUNITY KITCHEN GARDEN, ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON & CHELSEA



BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT OVERVIEW

A 1500m² disused platform has been transformed into a buzzing, colourful and productive community kitchen garden, where local residents can grow their own fresh fruit and vegetables. 89 raised vegetable plots have been installed on the platform and allocated to local residents to grow their own. The raised beds have been specially made so they are movable in case Network Rail need to use/ access the platform. The plots are only 1.15m x1.15m which is a manageable size, allowing quite a lot of produce to be grown.

The new garden is used by over 200 residents to grow a wide range of fruit, vegetables and flowers and has become an important community hub where people can meet and make friends.

Quote from a local resident who has a vegetable plot at Olympia:

"I just wanted to say well done to you for starting up this initiative.... It is a fabulous idea and a great way to interact with the local community. I got my plot on Saturday and I have already met a great bunch of 'keen gardeners'!"

I have never planted anything before and whenever I buy a house plant it normally dies within a month or so.....but, I am not going to give up just now! Your guys, Wills and Chris are extremely helpful and knowledgeable with the right personality. I am sure they will lend a helping hand/few tips if I am struggling.

Thanks again all and I won't forget you when I harvest my organic veg!!"

The garden includes a community orchard, with over 30 fruit trees, including a variety of apple, pear, cherry and plum trees.

Fact box

Company name:

Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea

Project name:

Olympia Community Kitchen Garden

Location:

Olympia Station, London

Biodiversity enhancement:

- Kitchen garden
- Wildlife friendly areas
- Bird feeders
- Pollinator friendly planting
- Fruit tree planting

Size:

30 fruit trees
89 raised vegetable plots

Cost:

N/A

Tips:

- For a project to be sustainable over the long term it is important that a community gardener or garden lead assists with overseeing a project of this size.
- It is important to plan what you want to grow, as space is limited and good to think about succession planting so you always have a crop.

Year completed:

2014

Categories:

- Large scale temporary
- Community engagement
- Most innovative

BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT OVERVIEW (cont.)

The project is supported by a community gardener which gives free gardening advice and support to plot holders, and encourages them to garden organically, use companion planting to attract useful bugs and make mini beast areas. There is a weekly gardening workshop held on site, where any plot holder can get free gardening advice and support. The vast majority of plot holders have never grown anything before, therefore these workshops provide some friendly support and encouragement.

A wide range of pollinator friendly planting has been installed around the garden, which have attracted lots of bees and butterflies.

The project shows successful partnership working between Network Rail (the landowner) and the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. The raised beds have been specially made so they are movable in case Network Rail need to use/ access the platform.

The garden has only been completed one month (Early July) and has already proved extremely popular with local residents and wildlife.

Pictures of the disused platform and of the community garden

