

A6 to Manchester Airport Relief Road – Seashell Trust, Sensory Garden
Stockport/Manchester/Greater Manchester

Morgan Sindall

BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award category: Community Engagement

Project overview

Whilst undertaking construction of a new-build road to Manchester Airport, the team at the A6MARR continued its support of the local community, lending a helping hand in the development of the Seashell Trust's sensory garden. A team of willing A6MARR volunteers have removed old paving bricks and have constructed a new tactile pathway after the old one was condemned due to being unsafe to walk on. This had meant the garden was previously out of bounds to the students.

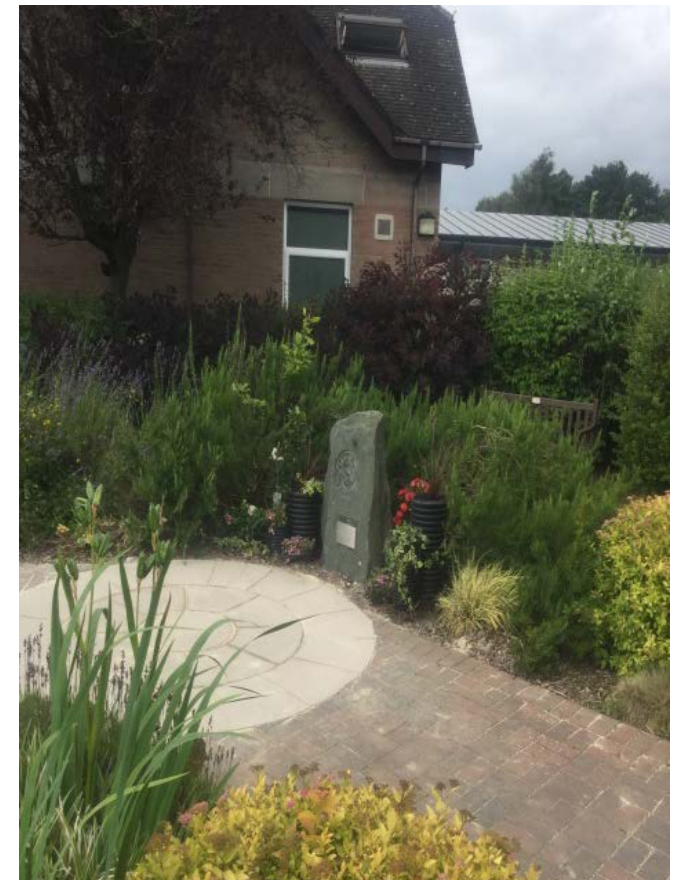
Off cuts of drainage ducts have been used to create raised flower beds and the A6MARR have donated sensory plants which offer a variety of textures and smells for the children, as well as a source of pollen and habitat for wildlife. The plants will help to encourage wildlife into the area, allowing the children to experience this first hand.

What were the biodiversity conditions on site, prior to the enhancement?

The garden had a number of plants, however they were unmanaged and not accessible to the students due to the condition of the paving.

Were there any specific conditions that led to you carrying out this work?

A6MARR have made a commitment to assist the local charities and communities where possible. Following a meeting with the Seashell Trust, they highlighted the desire to improve the sensory garden and increase the biodiversity of the area.



Sensory garden showing drainage ducts as plant pots

What were the biodiversity measures taken?

Staff from the A6MARR project volunteered to repair and complete a sensory garden for the Seashell Trust. Plants were provided by the A6MARR to add to the garden based on their sensory qualities such as the smell, colour, texture and on their ability to attract wildlife to the area. The plants selected attract pollinators and insects to the area, providing them with a habitat.

Raised flower beds were created using the offcuts from drainage ducts. This material was not needed on site and would have normally gone to landfill.

In addition to increasing the biodiversity of the area, safer access has been provided by A6MARR. This allows the children, that the charity provides care for, to safely access the garden and enjoy the nature on their doorstep. The newly created access also means that the Seashell Trust can maintain the garden in the future.

The A6MARR shall continue their commitment to assisting the local community and to increase the biodiversity of the areas surrounding the project corridor. The use of drainage ducts to create raised flower beds is one which can be easily replicated across all Morgan Sindall projects.

How would you best describe the project?

The works undertaken by the A6MARR were an enhancement of an existing garden which had not been maintained due to what was considered unsafe access.



Plants selected to attract pollinators



The newly constructed access to the sensory garden

Further information

The Seashell Trust project began with the installation of new paving to allow for safe access to the existing garden. Offcuts of ducting were then used to create raised flower beds. Plants were selected for their sensory properties and those known to attract bees, butterflies and pollinators.

Now complete, the children at the Seashell Trust have safe access to the sensory garden and have been enjoying the rich biodiversity which has been created by the presence of the pollinating plants. As well as a diverse range of insects, a varied range of bird species are regular visitors to the sensory garden.

The children who attend the Seashell Trust have a varying range of mental and physical disabilities. Plants such as lavender were selected because of their high sensory values, allowing children who suffer issues with sight to experience the garden through their sense of smell.

In undertaking the project, the site team have been able to build a positive relationship with the local community. Further initiatives have been planned with the Seashell Trust as well as other local charities and schools.

What was your personal motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

The A6MARR has made a commitment to support the community and charities surrounding the project. Staff at the A6MARR were inspired by the dedicated work carried out by the Seashell Trust, providing care to children with severe mental and physical disabilities.



Example of the biodiversity at sensory garden