

## COMMUNITY ORCHARD AND WILDFLOWER MEADOW, TREES FOR CITIES



### BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT OVERVIEW

Residents at St Georges Estate were instrumental in setting up a community orchard. With help from Trees for Cities and EastendHomes, residents ranging from under five to over sixty planted 58 fruit trees at a community event. In a few years the orchard will provide a source of healthy, locally grown fruit that residents can harvest. The project has also heightened local interest in incorporating edibles into future landscaping improvements.

The orchard has been sown with strips of wildflowers that have produced a spectacular display of colourful flowers attracting lots of bees and other pollinating insects. The wildflowers were sown by corporate volunteers with the aim of encouraging more residents to visit and enjoy the orchard throughout the growing season.

The design with diagonal rows of trees and wildflowers also ensures that the orchard looks great for residents looking down from surrounding tower blocks. The wildflower strips will be scythed in late summer, and volunteers will help to spread any remaining seeds before the arisings are removed for composting, ensuring that the wildflower meadow looks great year-on-year.

- The orchard includes a mixture of apple, pear, plum, cherry and medlar trees.
- The project helped to reform some historical links to previous activities and features of the site including using a traditional orchard pollinating method of having an avenue of crab apple trees along the perimeter.
- Wildflowers such as poppy, mallow, cornflower and corn marigold have been planted around the orchard trees to increase the number of pollinators on the estate and widen its biodiversity.
- Six species of bees were spotted on a recent site visit: Tree Bumblebee, Early Bumblebee, Red-tailed Bumblebee, Hairy-footed Flower Bee, Common Carder Bee and Honey Bee.

### Fact box

**Company name:**

Trees for Cities

**Project name:**

Community Orchard and Wildflower Meadow

**Location:**

St Georges Estate, Shadwell

**Biodiversity enhancement:**

Fruit trees, native whips and wildflowers planting

**Size:**

- 58 standard size fruit trees
- 225 native whips (young trees)

**Cost:**

N/A

**Tips:**

- Outline a framework for consultation and engagement of the community
- Consider rootstock when selecting your fruit trees. Always obtain specialist advice.
- Holding a community planting event is a great way to engage residents and the community
- Environmental improvements built by local volunteers are more likely to have a sense of community ownership and shared responsibility
- Linking with local businesses can provide another source of volunteers and give people a chance to give back to their local area

**Year completed:**

2014

### Categories:

- Large scale permanent
- Pollinator
- Community engagement

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## BIODIVERSITY ENHANCEMENT OVERVIEW (cont.)

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Paul Wilson, Community Engagement Manager at EastendHomes said *“It’s lovely looking at this year’s crop and even better planning what we can do as the harvest grows. The urban orchard will have an edible and community impact for years to come.”*

### Pictures of the enhancements



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