

Hammersmith's Sunken Garden





Peabody's Hammersmith Estate is shared by residents of over 300 properties. A good quality open space was identified as key to the wellbeing of residents and the sunken garden was the obvious choice.

Recent research has shown the importance of good quality open space in mental and physical health and Groundwork's experience demonstrates the importance of good quality open space in improving community cohesion.

Funding - £77,000

Peabody Trust

Hammersmith Estate Tenants' and Residents' Association

Western Riverside Environmental Fund (WREF)

Project description

The sunken garden on Peabody's Hammersmith Estate dates back to 1926. It has a long and turbulent history. Virtually destroyed by WWII bombing, it was subsequently rebuilt but by the start of the 21st century it was in desperate need of a facelift.

Our challenge was to transform this tired, worn-out space into a modern community hub, whilst not losing its unique history.

Groundwork carried out extensive consultation with the local community and worked closely with the Tenants' and Residents' Association and the Peabody Trust. This resulted in an open space 'owned' by the local community, creating a sense of pride and helping reduce antisocial behaviour and vandalism.

Our team of landscape architects created plans and specifications for the gardens based on the needs and wants of the community. We then worked with specialist contractors Mather and Smith to implement the improvements. New paths and benches were installed and turf was laid. The existing gates and steps leading down into the garden were restored, as was the central plinth, which had been broken by overgrown tree roots. A new iron arch was designed to fit with the overall look of the garden and installed over the eastern entrance and extensive planting by Greenscene finished the refurbishment.

Objectives

- Improve community cohesion and increase engagement in the local area
- Create a safe, attractive open space for all the community
- Maintain the garden's traditional character

Impacts

- A quality open space that provides a community hub
- A more engaged community with an increased sense of pride in their estate
- A more cohesive community

The Future

The regenerated garden has injected new life into the estate. Residents now have an attractive, safe open space in the centre of their estate. It has quickly become a hub for the community, bringing them closer together and providing a place of quiet recreation for all age groups. Essentially, the garden's traditional character has been preserved.

Project Partners

- Peabody Trust
- Hammersmith Estate Tenants' and Residents' Association
- Local residents
- Greenscene
- Mather and Smith

Groundwork London

18-21 Morley Street
London SE1 7QZ

T – 020 7922 1230
F – 020 7922 1219

www.groundwork-london.org.uk