

Creative Rusholme 4,700 Trees Project, Climate Change Project Brief

Purpose

To develop a programme of work to plant and establish 4,700 trees in memory of late MP Sir Gerald Kaufman and to take collective action for a more sustainable future across the new Rusholme Constituency. This will be a collaborative approach between residents and Council services and will run until the task is complete, within 3 to 5 years.

Background

Creative Rusholme, supported by the Friends of Platt Fields and Birchfields Parks and the Rusholme Labour Party, set out to encourage community groups and local organisations to plant 47 trees – one for each year Sir Gerald represented the area in Parliament. Despite the intervention of Covid, by June 2021, we were able to celebrate the achievement of this objective at a ceremony at the Birch Community Centre where Sir Gerald's nephew planted the last of the 47. Following the completion of the 47th tree a further consultation with the project backers was undertaken and agreed to then continue the project and grow this to 470 trees. Afzal Kahn planted the first of these in Birchfields Park at the same event.

In August/September this year, a survey of the project area (the wider Rusholme, from Whitworth to Platt Fields Parks and Upper Lloyd Street to Hamilton Road) established that over 460 trees had been planted. At an event in Platt Fields in November attended by over 60 people – local residents and staff and students of MMU Business School planted 75 trees including the 470th and the first of the proposed 4,700 was planted by Afzal Kahn who is a warm supporter of the project. The trees were planted by Friends and Residents Groups, the City Council, churches, schools and others.

The survey also established that there is unlikely to space to plant 4,700 in the original project area. Fortunately, the next general election will be held for the new Rusholme Constituency (incorporating Fallowfield, Moss Side, Whalley Range, Hulme and Ardwick as well as Rusholme wards) and the 4,700 Trees Project is proposed to cover the whole constituency. Creative Rusholme has approached the City Council to collaborate to achieve the project, recognising that their networks and relationships do not extend beyond the original project area.

Approach

While this programme is very much resident led, a team from Manchester City Council will be formed to support the development and implementation of the work. This includes:

- Phil Barton & Fiona McGuire – Creative Rusholme
- Dan Robinson - Neighbourhood Officer Rusholme
- Mary Clements – MCC Parks
- Noel Nugent/colleague from Grounds Maintenance and tree planting team

As the project develops, residents from other parts of the constituency should be invited to join.

In order to maximise the chance of success and substantial resident buy-in, it is suggested that funding is sought for a part time Project Officer contracted over three years to promote the project, build relationships with communities and local organisations, liaise with Council officers and other organisations and support on the day planting and subsequent aftercare efforts.

Key aspects to develop

- A project Brief/Plan in sufficient detail to support funding bids
- Potential locations
- Outreach in the six wards
- Timescales
- Funding

Success

Potential success criteria might include:

- 4,700 trees planted and thriving
- Community engagement with the Project throughout the area
- Local groups and individuals taking ongoing monitoring and 'ownership' of them
- Delivery of outcomes supporting City Council sustainability and community policies

Timelines

In order to launch the project we would need to have funding and a project officer in place for the 2024/5 planting season:

Jan to March 2024

- Secure buy in by relevant officers and members; Approach key local community organisations including Friends Groups
- Prepare project Prospectus and Plan

April onwards:

- Submit funding applications
- Put in place clear and proportionate governance and project management arrangements

September to March 25

- First planting season

April onwards

- Implement aftercare arrangements, including watering during any droughts
- Review first season and plan for 2025/6 planting season

Production of a timeline to shape the work. This may need to be annually?
Alongside of this could be roles/responsibilities..

Reflections/ongoing evaluation