

Volunteers create first Miyawaki Forest in Brent

4 years ago



Volunteers across Brent have teamed up to launch Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Forest, becoming the borough's first ever Miyawaki Forest of 650 trees at the heart of King Edwards VII Park.

The major community initiative saw students from Park Lane Primary School join project leaders, [Wates Living Space](#) and partners, [Brent Council](#), [Network Homes](#) and nationwide conservation charity, The Conservation Volunteers, to plant 650 new trees.

The project marks the launch of Brent's first Miyawaki Forest, which is designed to use species of trees that would occur naturally in the area and that work together to create a diverse, multi-layered forest community.

One of the most effective tree planting methods for creating forest cover quickly on degraded land, the Miyawaki method sees trees planted at a high density to create a resilient and thriving forest ecosystem.

The pioneering project has been championed by Network Homes resident, Nichola Rogers, who has worked with Wates Living Space and The Conservation Volunteers to coordinate the volunteer efforts.

Nichola commented: Projects like this create environmental awareness and bring attention to the many reasons why it's so important to have more green spaces. With the ever-changing climate, green spaces help fight biodiversity loss, filter general environmental pollution and capture heavy metals, as well as offsetting carbon emissions. It also provides a variety of mental and physical benefits for people too. It feels amazing to have manifested Brent's first Miyawaki urban forest. I would love to create more urban forests in Brent and around London. I am truly grateful to have had this opportunity and for the support of the amazing companies I worked with.

The project has seen Wates Living Space donate £6,500 to make the project possible through its wider social value commitment within the borough.

Wates Living Space currently works on behalf of Brent Council on a number of projects including the refurbishment of four high rise blocks as well as supporting the council's retrofit energy efficiency strategy.

James Gregg, Managing Director of South Planned Maintenance at Wates Living Space, commented: The plans for the Queen Elizabeth II Platinum Jubilee Forest have been in development between Wates Living Space, Brent Council and Network Homes for a year and it's a very proud moment for the team to see the plans come to life. We work with social landlords across London to create high quality, safe and sustainable homes for residents. Having worked with Brent Council to support their sustainability strategy, it's vital that we look beyond homes to seek out innovative ways to positively impact the environment and make a difference to the wider community."

Councillor Krupa Sheth, Cabinet Member for Environment at Brent Council said: "Tree planting is fantastic not only does it suck out CO2 from the air, but it also creates more vibrant and beautiful spaces that all residents can be proud of. Studies even show that walking through green spaces can improve mental health, so it really is a win, win. That is why I am so happy that along with partner organisations we are supporting this tree planting project.

Thank you to all the amazing volunteers and organisations who have worked tirelessly to bring this project to life."

Jamie Ratcliff, Network Homes Executive Director of People, Partnerships and Sustainability, commented: "We're pleased to be working with partners Wates, Brent Council and residents to create this new mini-forest which will benefit the community for generations to come. This is a great example of truly grass roots engagement. I'm very grateful for the original proposal by a resident of Network Homes and the work of so many people who have turned it into reality."