



Case Study:

UPTON



Location: Northampton
Size size: 5ha/1,000+ properties

Site Type: Service charge
Site Take on: 2016

About Upton

Upton is a vibrant, attractive community with a rich infrastructure of communal open spaces, play areas, nature areas and water features, managed by the Land Trust for the benefit of the local community.

We have the responsibility for the green space management within this development, maintaining and enhancing the green community spaces, including the SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) that residents contribute to through paying a service charge.

Over 1,000 homeowners pay a service charge for the maintenance of the land we manage on their behalf.

History

The Land Trust has been managing the land at Upton since 2016 and it was the first service charge site to come under the Trust's management. The site is managed by Land Trust Estates manager, Charles Langtree in partnership with Upton Meadows Residents Association (UMRA) and Nurture, our management contractor. Over the last few years the site has presented its own unique challenges, but we are now delivering a wide range of benefits across our charitable objectives. You can read more about this work overleaf.

DELIVERING CHARITABLE OUTCOMES

ENVIRONMENT AND BIODIVERSITY

At Upton we manage an extensive array of SuDS which serve a variety of purposes on the site. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are designed to be functional, fully integrated elements of green infrastructure, and are now increasingly important parts of new developments.

They were introduced to address concerns regarding surface water flooding resulting from increased urban development. However SuDS also deliver multiple environmental benefits. In addition to managing flows, volumes, and diffuse pollution some components (particularly vegetated or landscaped features) can positively impact air quality and reduce carbon.

A great example of SuDS working was when heavy rainfall in Northampton caused flash flooding in the area in May 2018. The properties of our customers at Upton, and the wider community, could have been seriously affected had it not been for the effective management of the SuDS, which held the water back and protected their homes until the worst of the rainfall was over and the water had subsided.



COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL COHESION

At Upton we have an excellent working relationship with UMRA and we hold regular meetings with them to discuss operations on site and how we can improve things for residents and deliver more.

UMRA were heavily involved when we chose to replace an underperforming contractor in 2018. We listened to their concerns about the previous contractor and liaised with them throughout the tender process, and included the Chair of the group in the interview process. Doing this so collaboratively helped build trust between Upton residents and the Land Trust and since the appointment of the new contractor our relationship with the residents has greatly improved

We're also involved in the organisation of seasonal events for the community, such as summer picnics, festive fairs and mini-markets in December, and springtime easter egg and nature hunts.



EDUCATION AND LEARNING

Over the last four years we have built an excellent relationship with the local school on site and have been delivering Forest School activity since 2017.

Forest School is a child-centred inspirational learning process, that offers opportunities for holistic growth through regular sessions. It is a long-term program that supports play, exploration and supported risk taking. It develops confidence and self-esteem through learner inspired, hands-on experiences in a natural setting.



HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Over the last four years our spaces have had a hugely positive impact on the physical and mental wellbeing on the residents at Upton. Having green space in close proximity is a huge benefit for residents, and was particularly beneficial during the COVID-19 pandemic. The fountain in the square acts as a focal point for the community to get outside and, in particular, enjoy the mental wellbeing benefits that being outside can bring. The site is a popular place for walkers and joggers from within Upton and the wider community. We have also worked with a local football coach to run sessions for local children during school holidays.



ECONOMIC VITALITY

The Trust's management of the public open spaces has created a huge amount of economic and social value for the homeowners at Upton as well as providing a boost to the local economy. The Trust's effective management of the SUDS system has protected homes from flooding and therefore secured the investment our customers have made in their homes. Regular seasonal events have also been supported by local businesses, while an ice cream van is a regular visitor to Upton throughout the summer months.



If you would like any further information about the work we do at Upton please contact Land Trust Estates Manager Charles Langtree at charleslangtree@thelandtrust.org.uk