



Case Study:

UPTON



Engaging with our customers

Location: Northampton

Site Type: Service charge

Size size: 5ha/1,000+ properties

Site Take on: 2016

After ten years of managing green spaces such as country parks and nature reserves, in 2015 the Land Trust started exploring a new area of business in the form of residential green space management, paid for by the residents in the form of a service charge.

We identified a real need for an organisation such as ourselves to take on the public open space within a development, add real value and manage it with fairness and the best interests of the residents at heart.

We now have a number of these sites in various locations across the country and we are delivering real social change with our communities.

The first of these sites we took on was in Upton, Northampton, in 2016 and since then we have learned a lot of lessons along the way.

Taking on a site like Upton is never easy, particularly when you don't always know what residents have been told or the way in which previous management companies may have managed the site.

Upton also came with its own unique challenges with SUDS management a key part of the Land Trust's work at the site and other facilities such as lighting and the Fountain in the main square. On this particular estate, many of the residents were not happy with the performance of the incumbent contractor.

However, our community based approach turned this situation around. Our Estates team worked very hard to get a thriving residents group up and running, to give them a voice and allow them to play a key role in the future direction of the site's management.

After a thorough consultation process, a joint decision was made between the Land Trust and the residents group to remove the incumbent contractor and tender for a replacement. The chair of the working group was part of the tender panel and represented the views of the residents when it came to making the decision about which contractor to choose for the future management of the public open space within their development.



Perhaps surprisingly, the residents, in collaboration with our team, chose to appoint a more expensive contractor as the most important combined aspiration, was to provide a service that met the expectations of the community. The estate is now in a much better place with our management contributing significantly to the social cohesion of the area.



What turned this situation around was our willingness to engage with people, implement our learnings and come up with a solution that worked best for all parties involved.



"Quite a lot of management companies won't engage with you. They're not interested. The Land Trust have taken a very different approach to this in that they're happy for us to engage with them.

"A new estate like this doesn't have its own personality, you need to develop its personality so it becomes a place full of character. Slowly we're doing that, and it's with the Land Trust's help that we're achieving that."

Nick Sturgess-Alex, Chair,
Upton Meadows Resident's Association