

Prudential Grass Roots

Supporting communities to improve their local environment



CASE STUDY

Causeway Park, Cambridge

A major transformation has taken place in an under-developed area of public green space in Cambridge thanks to this Grass Roots project together with the Prudential-owned Grafton and BTCV. Causeway Park is a haven of peace and quiet for local residents and wildlife alike, and is now fully accessible to all local residents by way of a path suitable for people with limited mobility and families with children in pushchairs. A new wildflower meadow adds a splash of colour in addition to improving biodiversity.

"This really is a lovely addition to the amenities we have in the East Chesterton area. Not only are we helping to build a healthy and sustainable community, but we are creating a wonderful open space for everyone to enjoy,"

JENNY BAILEY, MAYOR OF CAMBRIDGE

Prudential Grass Roots was launched in 2001. It is run by BTCV, the UK's leading practical conservation charity, and funded by Prudential plc.

The programme is helping to drive regeneration for people and wildlife in communities around shopping centres and business parks throughout the UK, invested in by Prudential plc and managed by PRUPIM.

Conservation charity BTCV led local school children, dedicated residents and volunteers from Prudential in fulfilling the area's great potential by creating an accessible and welcoming urban oasis that's exciting to be in. Local residents were the key to the improvements and in consultations they called out for changes. Funding from Prudential Grass Roots has enabled these needs to become a reality.



A peaceful green space...

Causeway Park, Cambridge

Causeway Park is an urban green space stretching 170 by 30 metres that is already home to semi-mature trees and birdlife. It has been granted Green Space status by Cambridge City Council after years of being threatened by a road development. Many local residents already use the area and value it highly. Prudential Grass Roots, in partnership with BTCV and The Grafton, has now given these residents the opportunity to really make a difference by getting them involved in the transformation process.

The Grafton agreed with local people that the park could be made more special by the addition of a wheelchair accessible path, planting of wildflower plugs in a meadow area and building permanent homes for wildlife, including bird and bat boxes. It is hoped that the increased level of biodiversity will encourage residents to remain involved by volunteering their time to maintain the area.

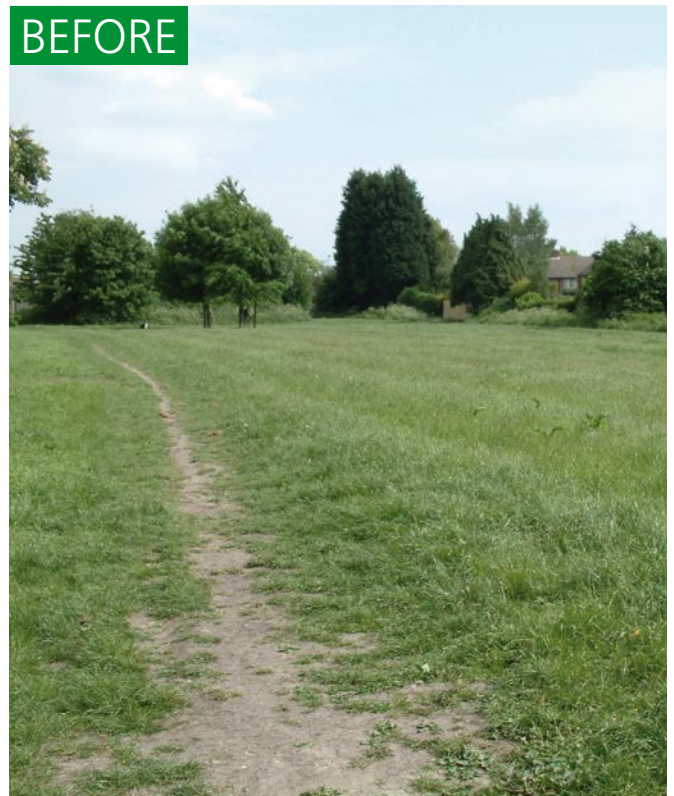
A grand group effort

The hard work of BTCV staff, school children, residents, Prudential staff and even the mayor reached an equivalent of 50 days worth of volunteering, which together meant that all these tasks were completed. The participants in the project will decide on tree and hedge species and placement for the future and a grass mowing regime is now in place to make the previously rough grass areas more suitable for picnicking and strolling.

Key Statistics

- Housing around Causeway Park is mixed, consisting of council-owned property, private landlords and owner/occupiers.
- A residence for people with physical and learning disabilities backs onto the park and the improvements have been strongly supported by the management and occupants.
- 31% of homes in the area house one or more person(s) with a limiting long-term illness.
- The park was threatened by the prospect of a new road for many years which would have reduced the level of positive local amenities in the East Chesterton area.

BEFORE



“The Grafton is delighted to support these community-led improvements to Causeway Park. Now a much wider range of visitors can enjoy the improved access around this local amenity and look forward to added colour in the shape of a host of wild flowers in the spring.”

MICHAEL WISEMAN, GENERAL MANAGER, THE GRAFTON

...accessible to all

Causeway Park, Cambridge

AFTER



“This project has given local people the opportunity to have an active role in their local area and it has helped us to raise awareness of the value of urban green spaces.”

BEN HAMMOND, BTCV REGIONAL OPERATIONS MANAGER

Positive experiences

- The developments to the park were strongly backed by the Mayor who wholeheartedly supports the need for green spaces in helping to build healthy and sustainable communities, reflecting on her own childhood experiences of exploring nature and learning about wild flower species.
- During the wildflower plug planting event a local wheelchair user took great pleasure in using the new all-weather footpath.

Revitalising green spaces

Causeway Park, Cambridge

Achievements

- £750 worth of volunteer hours
- Total of 324 metres of path laid
- 300 wildflower plugs planted
- Enabled access for wheelchair users, cyclists and families with children in pushchairs
- A new BTCV local group made – will care for the area and participate in future developments
- Improvement of important urban habitat for wildlife in line with the Biodiversity Action Plan
- Celebration event with Mayor
- Built effective working partnership with Cambridge Council

Project costs

Prudential Grass Roots funding contributed £10,000 towards capital costs, event costs, publicity, project materials and project evaluation.

Cambridge City Council provided £5,000 for the all-weather path.

Project partners

BTCV • The Grafton • Prudential plc • Cambridge City Council • Friends of Causeway Park



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