



Growing in the City – a lasting legacy

Growing in the City (GITC) is a community-led food, environment and educational charity based in east Manchester, at St Barnabas Church. The charity provides a social and inclusive environment to support people with mental health issues. By working with a range of groups and organisations including Men's Sheds and Barnabas Bees, GITC provides support through a range of activities including projects growing and eating food, building items using reclaimed wood, and creating community green spaces.

Community allotment

In 2014, BAM and Laing O'Rourke joined forces to help Clive Hamilton, GITC Project Manager, to create a community allotment which would allow local residents to grow and pick their own fruit and vegetables. The proposed site for the allotment, at the side of St Barnabas church, was a wasteland and would need lots of volunteers and donations to bring it to life. Volunteers helped to create planters from old pallets, and local businesses provided skips and used felled trees to make wood chippings for pathways. Through the hard work of the volunteers and donations from local businesses, the site was cleared and created into an allotment.

Collaborative approach

BAM stayed in contact with GITC and in 2017 agreed to help Clive with his next community venture – to create a 'pocket park' at the back of the church for the local community. The 1.4 acre site was again a wasteland and would require a significant amount of work to bring Clive's aspirations to fruition.

As the previous volunteering day had been such a success, BAM's North West Education and Community Co-ordinator suggested to the North West Construction Hub's (NWCH) social value group that contractors could collaborate on a community project.

43 volunteers from ten contractors and the NWCH joined forces in May 2017 to spend a day volunteering to clear the site and litter pick. The day was a huge success, and so much more was achieved through the collaborative effort than could have been achieved individually. And with more work yet to do before the pocket community garden is finished, future volunteering days are in the pipeline.

Lasting legacy

The GITC project is a great example of how BAM can work with a charity or organisation over multiple years to provide a long lasting legacy - even once the volunteering days have finished, the garden and allotments will continue to support the local communities.

It also shows how a collaborative approach can provide multiple benefits. It gave the volunteers a chance to learn more about opportunities in the local area and also share best practice, and with more helping hands - we were able to make a bigger impact on the day!

'The help from BAM staff (and NWCH associates) in May has again proved crucial in initiating another key milestone for the charity. The support provided not only helped achieve real results for starting the clear up of the space but set a marker which has spurred other companies to offer additional support. We cannot express enough thanks for the help from the NWCH.'

Clive Hamilton
GITC Project Manager



Organisations involved:

Balfour Beatty
BAM
Burdens
Galliford Try
ISG
Laing O'Rourke
Manchester City Council / NWCH
Morgan Sindall
Premier Waste
Redgate
Sir Robert McAlpine
Vinci
Wates
Wilmott Dixon

