

Islington Greener Together Champions

VOLUNTEER CASE STUDY

“The programme has opened up so many new friendships and connections.” - Lucy Facer, Islington Resident



Islington Together
for a greener future



Making Islington Greener

In partnership with Islington Council, Groundwork London provides opportunities for local residents to volunteer with the Islington Greener Together Champions (IGTC) programme.

The IGTC programme taps into the enthusiasm of Islington residents to plant and maintain new green spaces, find new opportunities for greening, act on climate change and transform neighbourhoods.

The programme provides:

- ✓ Resources: Materials, guides, and tools designed to support volunteering efforts and initiatives.
- ✓ Support: Our team is available to answer questions, and offer advice and assistance.
- ✓ Training: Tailored workshops to enhance knowledge and skills in sustainability, community engagement, and more.
- ✓ Champions Network: Connecting volunteers, sharing ideas, and collaborating on projects to create a supportive community of changemakers.



MEET LUCY

ISLINGTON GREENER TOGETHER CHAMPION

Lucy is a volunteer with the Islington Greener Together Champions (IGTC) Programme. We spoke to her to find out what it is like being part of the programme and what inspired her to take action in her community.

I'm a mum, living in Islington for over 15 years with my family. I applied to the programme with the goal of reducing air pollution while creating a safer and greener space outside my son's school.



Why did you join the programme?

There were about ten car parking spaces directly outside the early years' classrooms at Thornhill School and limited space on the pavement.

It was a crush at school pick-up times that became a stressful environment. Cars were idling their engines just a couple of metres away from classrooms where young children learn, putting them at risk of the impacts of air pollution: on both their physical health and cognitive learning ability.

We wanted to redesign the space to prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and the climate while creating a space that is welcoming for children as they arrive at school. It combines rain gardens, cycle and cargo bike stands, plus a lovely bench.

“The rain gardens are like a water cooler in the office, they attract people to stop and chat for a few minutes before moving on. Things are shared and connections made.”

What are some of your highlights of the IGTC programme?

The programme training session with Groundwork London was great, informative, supportive, and helped me connect with other like-minded community groups running green spaces.

I've gained lots of gardening skills through working with other volunteers who share their knowledge about plants, wildlife, and bird names etc.

The programme has opened up so many new friendships and connections. People come to help and we get to know them and their families. We meet up socially and often bump into familiar people out and around Islington.

It has heightened our connection in the community and led to some lovely events such as singing groups, more greening projects and meeting up for coffee.



How has the site impacted the local community and environment?

There is a parent group from the reception class who weed and litter pick every week. This will be handed to the next reception class each year so that parents can get involved, support the school, and help benefit their children starting at the school.

The reception class teacher is also encouraging children to enjoy gardening activities: they learn about caring for the plants, watering and planting bulbs. This is particularly exciting as it will involve children with special educational needs and disabilities.

What are your future goals for the site?

We're looking forward to adding painted elements on the road which will bring the grey areas to life. We'd also like to expand the rain gardens and street improvements around to the front of the school so that older children benefit from the incredible benefits of greening too.

Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experience as a volunteer?

The programme is really well thought through. The council's team take on the lion's share of delivering the project and is super professional.

I really like the training and equipment that has been offered as this has helped us to support more volunteers to learn and help out. It has also helped me to lead the project and confidently pass on advice and set up a sustainable group which is key for the ongoing success of the site.

What advice would you give to someone considering joining the Islington Greener Together Champions programme?

Don't overthink it - just do it!

Once you get started you will be empowered. You'll learn and expand your knowledge, meet people and get to feel connected with the community.



Do you want to join the Islington Greener Together Programme?

Register via our website: groundwork.org.uk/london/all-london-projects/islington-greener-together-champions/



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Islington Greener Together (IGT) Champions is joint funded by Islington Council and Future Parks Accelerator.