

ADEPT President's Awards

Category 3: Improving the Environment, Promoting Health

Project Submission: Goscote Lane Corridor Regeneration Area

Goscote Lane Corridor Regeneration Area consists of two brownfield development sites, totalling 21 ha, where over 800 new mixed tenure homes are under construction (circa 50%complete). Central to these developments is 19ha of designated open space (green belt) which is intersected by the Wyrley and Essington Canal. As well as regenerating brownfield land and creating modern sustainable homes, the project is about investing in the environment and people to achieve sustainable long-term change in the area.

The economic and health profile of the local area indicates that residents are hard-pressed economically and experiencing multiple deprivation, together with poor general health outcomes when compared with borough averages. Indicators include high levels of childhood obesity, lower life expectancy, above average teenage pregnancy rates, high smoking prevalence, above average referrals for drug and alcohol treatment and poor usage of preventative health services.

As part of the £87m housing-led regeneration scheme, Walsall Housing Group (whg- lead housing partner) secured £8.83m from the Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership Local Growth Fund; of which £1.3m was granted to the Council (delivery partner and land owner) to implement an open space masterplan.

Comprised of low quality grassland with some worn paths/ desire lines, the open space central to the new developments was an underutilised informal recreation area, primarily for used for dog-walking and with minimal/no play or sports provision for children, teenagers or adults. The open space was also poorly integrated with the surrounding residential areas which heightened perceptions of personal security threats and anti-social behaviour.

Through local consultation, facilitated by local community groups and in partnership with the Canal & Rivers Trust, an improvement masterplan was finalised that set out comprehensive works that would:

- Help support regeneration and improve quality of life by providing visually attractive and useable green spaces near to where people live;
- Promote health and well-being by providing opportunities for people of all ages to partake in informal recreation or walking along paths and the canal corridor;
- Sustain and enhance existing flora and fauna;
- Produce a community resource to encourage local cohesion and positive interaction.

The 8-month open space works programme completed in 2017 and has successfully transformed the space to provide a valuable outdoor recreation resource for the community. Works included:

- New paths / circular routes
- Trim trail route with green gym stations
- Trim trail area with green gym equipment
- Football pitches
- Children's play areas with formal and natural play equipment
- Multi-use games area
- Skate/scooter circuit
- Upgraded towpath

- Fishing pegs
- Site furniture (bins, benches, footpath markers)

Working with Walsall Public Health, whg have also delivered health and wellbeing interventions in the regeneration area; including lifestyle advice weight loss and smoking cessation programmes. These programmes have resulted in an increase in referrals and access to mainstream services, more outreach services available and improved links/referral pathways between provider organisations.

To comply with drainage requirements, a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) in the form of an infiltration basin has also been installed on the open space to capture the surface water from the development. As well as being practical, this feature provides an environment for local flora and fauna to flourish. Further enhancement measures have also been introduced on the development boundaries where construction meets existing open spaces or water courses to create buffer zones and wildlife corridors to protect and promote local wildlife.

Please see site images overleaf

Tweet Summary:

The £87m Goscote Lane Corridor housing scheme in Walsall has significantly enhanced 19ha of open space via new footpaths, play provision and trim trails; improving the quality of life for local residents who have also benefited from complementary advice on health and wellbeing.

Before: Prior to commencement of housing construction and open space works



Source: Bing Maps

After: Open Space Improvement works complete with housing construction on-going



Source: Google Maps

Open Space Masterplan

