

# THE LONDON TREE AND WOODLAND AWARDS 2019

## CASE STUDY - THE COMMUNITY TREE AWARD

### WINNER – DEPTFORDFOLK



The London Tree and Woodland Awards celebrate the work of individuals, communities and professionals to protect, improve and expand the capital's tree and woodland cover.

The Community Tree Award is for a tree project that has been inspired, driven and delivered by local community groups.

The winner of the 2019 award is DeptfordFolk for the Evelyn200 project.

#### **DeptfordFolk:**

The Evelyn200 project was implemented by volunteer park users group, DeptfordFolk, and aimed to plant 200 trees in the Evelyn Electoral Ward of Deptford (London Borough of Lewisham). The ward is very densely populated, with a high proportion of social housing, 49% child poverty rate, poor air quality and limited green space. Giving children the opportunity to plant trees was an important part of the project.

The project was inspired by the legacy of John Evelyn, the 17<sup>th</sup> century diarist, who wrote about trees, air quality, urban design, gardening and horticulture. John Evelyn lived in Deptford at Sayes Court Manor, now demolished along with his famous garden. The project celebrated the 200th anniversary of the publication of John Evelyn's diaries, with the planting of 200 trees.



## Activities:

The project involved a wide section of the community and was well publicised, organised and welcoming both to those actively involved in DeptfordFolk and passers-by intrigued by the tree planting. Tree planting took place in winter to ensure the new trees could settle in and establish in spring and between May and October, DeptfordFolk held a series of talks about trees, air quality and John Evelyn.

The group also organised activities for children, art events and more to celebrate trees in Deptford. These included a 'Nature of Cities' programme with local artists, forest school sessions for children, and events for families including a celebration of 'Blossom Day'. Funding was provided by local residents, the London Borough of Lewisham, the GLA, The Orchard Project, Veolia, CVB Tideway and Lendlease. The planting was also supported by Trees for Cities and Civic Trees.



## Outcomes:

The first tree was planted on the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Charter of the Forest in November 2017, with the help of children from Deptford Park Primary School and local residents. The 200 Evelyn trees have been planted in parks, housing estates, schools and streets and DeptfordFolk have also planted two orchards and replaced missing trees.

Cllr Sophie McGeevor, Cabinet Member for the Environment at the London Borough of Lewisham, who nominated the project for the awards said: "Securing the funding and co-ordinating support for the project required a high level of organisation and commitment. I attended the 200<sup>th</sup> tree planting on the 13 April 2019 at Pepys Park and was delighted to hear a little girl who lived in the flats overlooking the park describe the tree she had helped plant as 'her' tree."



DeptfordFolk has established an excellent relationship with the London Borough of Lewisham which will help ensure that the trees are maintained and their benefits enjoyed for generations to come.

The project brought attention to John Evelyn's legacy and the history of Deptford and is an impressive well-conceived grass roots project, which started in a park and is now having a benefit way beyond, in streets, school grounds and a children's nursery.

The success of the Evelyn200 and the 2019 Tree & Woodland Award has nurtured an appetite for more urban tree planting. 2020 marks 400 years since the birth of John Evelyn. DeptfordFolk, Lewisham Council and The National Trust have planted more trees to celebrate this anniversary. The first trees for the Evelyn400 project were planted in Sayes Court Park and more trees will be planted across the borough this year with a range of locally led groups.

### 2019 Awards Ceremony:

The London Tree and Woodland Awards were presented at a ceremony hosted at City Hall on 10 July by Shirley Rodrigues, Deputy Mayor for Environment and Energy and Sir Harry Studholme, Chair of the Forestry Commission.



### 2019 Award Sponsors:

The awards were kindly sponsored by the following organisations:



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