



Natural
History
Museum

**A FUNDING REPORT PREPARED FOR
NINEVEH CHARITABLE TRUST
SEPTEMBER 2023**

**THE
URBAN
NATURE
PROJECT**



It has been a year of significant progress for the Urban Nature Project. Visible changes to the Museum's South Kensington site are now well underway and the associated learning programme continues to be developed.

May we take this opportunity to thank the Nineveh Charitable Trust for its generous support of the Urban Nature Project learning and activity programme that will be delivered in the new outdoor Nature and Activity Centre (NAC) supported by AWS (previously referred to as the Learning and Activity Centre).

We hope that this report provides a useful overview and insight into the considerable activity and progress the Museum is making in our mission to equip future generations with the knowledge and motivation to advocate for the future of our natural world.

CAPITAL PROGRESS AT SOUTH KENSINGTON

As a central part of this project, the Museum's five-acre site in South Kensington is being transformed into an accessible and biologically diverse green space, where visitors can learn more about the incredible diversity of life on earth.

The project 'broke ground' in September 2022, starting with the translocation of our nature ponds. Since then:

- Hoarding was erected along Exhibition Road in October and demolition works began in November.
- Excavations of our step-free route from the TfL subway tunnel are underway, ensuring the gardens will be completely accessible to visitors.
- Stones have been sourced from quarries around the UK for the timeline wall which will be installed onsite from August.
- The pond structure was completed at the end of April and in early May we saw completion of the translocation process.
- The external walls of the NAC are now complete.
- We are creating a new urban grassland habitat and have recently sown a mixture of local native grassland species.

Image above: Progress so far for the new pond and sunken pathway with the Nature Activity Centre in the background



LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Alongside the capital project, our learning and education team have been creating a wide range of outdoor learning activities and programmes to encourage the next generation to become advocates for our planet.

These activities are being designed for the new NAC and we are grateful to the Nineveh Charitable Trust whose generous support has helped make this dynamic programme of learning activities possible.

Highlights include:

- Family activities designed for the space are being test run. A pilot of the Minbeast Maxihero self-guided family trail was trialled with community group Grow2Know, which will encourage learning of insect species amidst the excitement of a treasure hunt.
- Volunteer-led activities have been developed in collaboration with community groups. Designed to creatively engage audiences with the natural world, they provide us with the tools to explore and

support biodiversity in our own gardens. Eighteen volunteers have been selected and trained to deliver this collection of activities.

- Resources to support disabled groups are in development and we have piloted early-morning opening events at the Museum for autistic children and their families.

Beyond the gardens, we are doing so much more. These are a few of the activities being delivered:

- A national learning programme, *Explore: Urban Nature*, in partnership with museums across the UK.
- Urban nature training for youth workers and the development of a *Youth Worker Toolkit*.
- The launch of *Nature Overheard: Tune into your streets*, a nationwide community science project co-designed with school children.

Image above: An activity during one of three Grow2Know community planting days on the Lancaster West Estate.



Image above: Sam Thomas, UK Biodiversity Officer for UNP, showing specimens to a young guest at the UNP Community Showcase Event



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We are delighted to have successfully achieved our £19.6m fundraising target for UNP, thank you for your help in getting us there.

Looking ahead to this time next year, we anticipate the first classes will be underway in the NAC, and the gardens nearing completion.

As we get a step closer to witnessing the gardens' transformation and helping visitors to understand their role in nature, I would like to thank all those at the Nineveh Charitable Trust once again for their generosity and championing the Museum and its work. **THANK YOU**

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