

Mayes Brook restoration project

Mayesbrook Park is the UK's first climate change adaptation park. Reconnecting the river with its floodplain has increased flood storage by one hectare. Restoration has improved access, recreation and plant and wildlife for the local community. An ecosystem services study estimated the project would produce a wide range of benefits.

Project summary

Location: Mayesbrook, East London, England

Length: 1600m

Cost: €3,800,000

Dates: 2008 (planning) - 2012, Phase 2 of the park restoration scheme (lake restoration) due to start in 2014

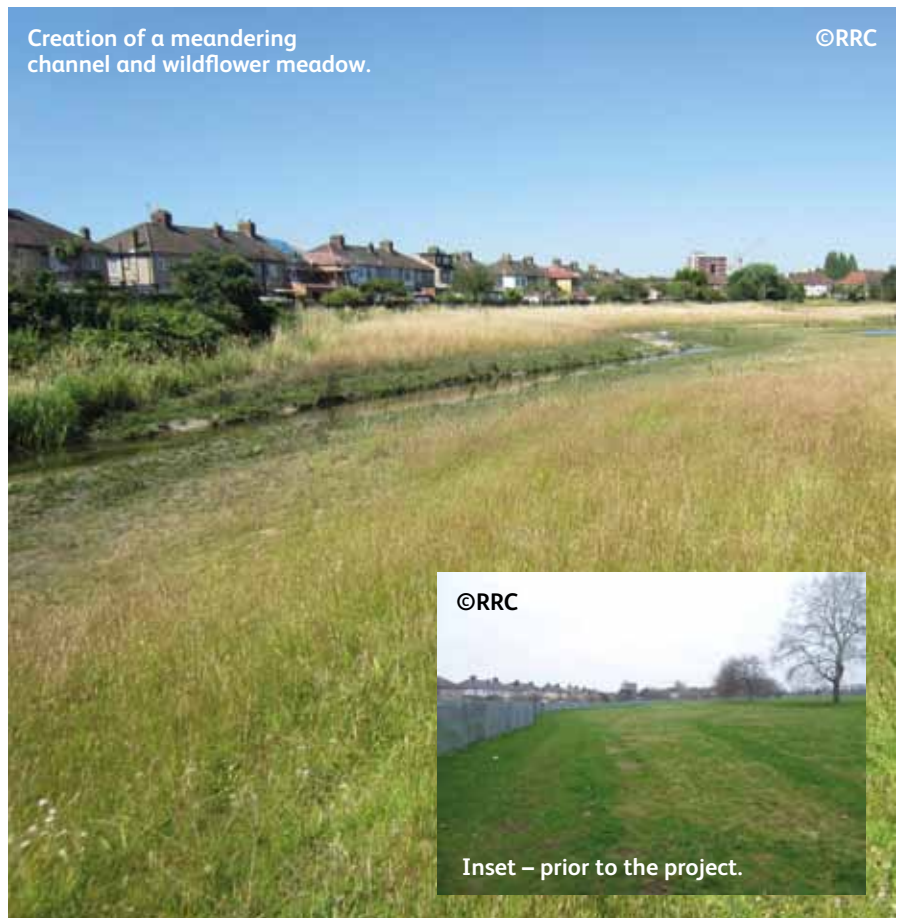
Delivery

Delivered through: Multi-partnership funding, including the London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games and a private insurance firm.

Partners: Thames Rivers Trust, London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, Environment Agency, Natural England, Greater London Authority, London Wildlife Trust and Design for London, Royal Society of Arts, SITA Trust, LOCOG.

Creation of a meandering channel and wildflower meadow.

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Inset – prior to the project.

Background and issues

- Concern over risk of flooding in a densely populated part of East London.
- River hidden behind a metal fence – many locals did not realise it was there.
- Crime and antisocial behaviour a major problem.
- Degraded park – poor and few public facilities.

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Public consultation event at the park, 2009

Step-by-step

1. Improvement to water quality by identifying misconnected domestic water pipes (Thames Water), which had led to pollution flowing into the brook.
2. River construction works to increase flood storage by 1ha; and increase in park habitats and wildlife.
3. Improvement in landscape, social and aesthetic value. New recreation facilities (outdoor gym and sports facilities) and better access for park users.



Volunteer clear up event to help keep park tidy, 2012

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Benefits

- Assessed over 40 years, the lifetime benefits of restoration were estimated at €31.2 million - a benefit-to-cost ratio of 7:1.
- Vast improvement in plant and wildlife in the park.
- Successfully involved the public.
- Identifying misconnected waste water pipes should improve the quality of water over time.



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Lessons learned

- Creation of a river corridor and a wider 'green network', such as paths, parks and gardens, to create a dramatically improved natural infrastructure. UK's first 'climate change adaption park'.
- Social benefits significant such as increased numbers of visitors and greater feeling of safety – demonstrated by formal monitoring. The role of the on-site ranger as a friendly face for local people, and event organisation has been a great success.
- An integrated monitoring strategy to coordinate all evaluation activities related to water, land, social and climate change issues.

Project Contact: River Restoration Centre