



GROUNDWORK UK

EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING IMPACT REPORT 2024

INTRODUCTION

Groundwork is a charity taking practical action to create a fair and green future in which people, places, and nature thrive.

That's why we work with businesses big and small to put their corporate responsibility strategies into action by connecting them with the communities that need their help and delivering employee volunteering days across our projects.

Thanks to the wonderful businesses that we have worked in partnership with throughout 2024, we have been able to make an incredible impact in the communities that need us the most to transform and improve outdoor projects and green spaces to help local communities and nature to thrive.



What we have achieved in 2024



Groundwork carried out **131 days** of volunteering with employee volunteers across our projects.



Employee volunteers made a positive impact to local people and environments across **74 community spaces**.



Over **2150 volunteers** joined us at Groundwork projects, donating a collective total of **11,863 hours** of their time to making an impact in the communities where they live and work.



The transformation of these outdoor spaces has improved the wellbeing of **3,394 school children** in local communities.



We worked in partnership with **17 amazing businesses** on our employee volunteering.



86% of individuals reported improved wellbeing from volunteering with Groundwork.

ANNIE LENNARD PRIMARY SCHOOL, BIRMINGHAM

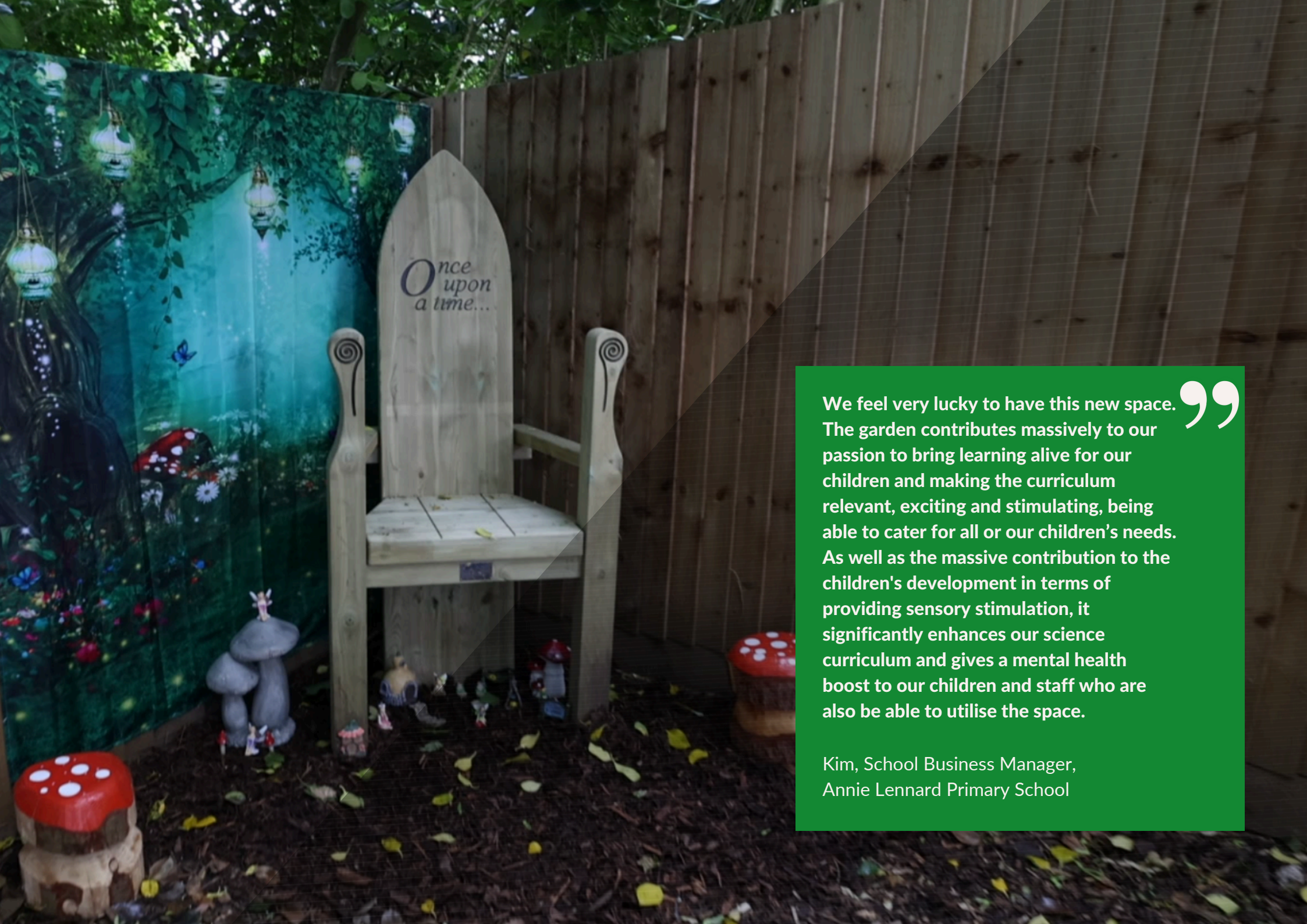
Annie Lennard Primary School is a small school in Sandwell, one of the most deprived districts in England with high levels of poverty. The core of Annie Lennard's ethos is to be a nurturing and caring school with a passion for bringing learning to life for their children.

The school has very little outdoor space and part of the limited space that they do have was completely unsafe and unusable for the children. That's why Education Recruitment Agency, TeacherActive, teamed up with Groundwork and donated funding and volunteering time to transform this unused space into a sensory and outdoor learning area where teachers could enhance learning for the children and provide them with new opportunities.

Over 20 volunteers from TeacherActive volunteered with Groundwork at the school over two days to carry out the ground preparation work and then bring the space to life by building planting beds and installing benches and sensory elements including a new storytelling chair.

This new multi-functional space benefits the school children and their teachers, providing them with a calm space to learn and connect. Special Educational Needs teachers use the space for one to one sessions and the children are enjoying bringing their science and geography lessons to life with outdoor experiments.





We feel very lucky to have this new space. The garden contributes massively to our passion to bring learning alive for our children and making the curriculum relevant, exciting and stimulating, being able to cater for all or our children's needs. As well as the massive contribution to the children's development in terms of providing sensory stimulation, it significantly enhances our science curriculum and gives a mental health boost to our children and staff who are also be able to utilise the space.

Kim, School Business Manager,
Annie Lennard Primary School

GROZONE, CHESHIRE

Grozone is a cosy community garden and wildlife project in Cheshire. A place where local people are welcomed to meet new friends, learn new skills and connect with nature in a welcoming and friendly outdoor environment.

Grozone prides itself on being an inclusive space, providing opportunities to people of all walks of life. From connecting families and introducing toddlers to outdoor learning through their weekly forest school sessions to supporting individuals with learning difficulties through craft, music and cooking workshops, this space is such an important asset to the community.

Grozone relies heavily on the generous support of volunteers to maintain and improve the space so that they can continue to be a place that local people can depend on. That's why Centrica employees have donated multiple days of volunteering time to this project, allowing them to really get to know Grozone and build a strong and valuable local partnership.

Centrica volunteers have made an impact across the site, edging and resurfacing pathways to improve accessibility, pruning trees and maintaining shrub beds, and installing a new donated shelter. This new shelter means that Grozone can provide the local people and groups that they support with a space to enjoy a cup of tea and lunch without being rained on and a place to carry out activities even through bad weather.



I have been coming to Grozone since 2010 and it has enabled me to go from being house-bound with agoraphobia to having the confidence to work for a local charity and coach a youth football team.

I still pop in regularly to see everyone. Thanks to the volunteers from Centrica we have a yurt and shelter, so that I can keep coming over winter, which is really important for my mental health.

Simon, Community Member, Grozone

ST KATHARINE'S COMMUNITY GARDEN, LONDON

St Katharine's Community Garden is just one example of the many wonderful community projects supported by Groundwork across London. Since 1950, St Katharine's has been a place of refuge, building connections in the vibrant community of Limehouse, East London, supporting other charities, social enterprises and creative arts.

With the help of volunteers, Groundwork is developing the outdoor space to create more areas where the community can connect with nature, have places to relax and grow food.

Teams from real estate and accountancy firms, JLL, PWC and Deloitte have donated their time on site to build raised beds, install new seating and create a new garden space with a pergola. For local people, the garden has now become a sanctuary.

A member of the local community, John, has cancer and is currently undergoing treatment. He walks his dog through the garden every day and is now able to stop and rest on the benches.

I love the new garden. It means I sit for a few minutes each day and can get some peace and quiet on these benches. I love this place.

John, Community Member, St Katharine's





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The garden has become a space for finding solace and for those who can't find a sense of belonging and welcome elsewhere. They will always find an oasis in this garden to sit and rest.

Community Engagement Manager, Royal Foundation of St Katharine's

NEWHAM CENTRE FOR MENTAL HEALTH, LONDON

The NHS Newham Centre for Mental Health provides a wide range of services to people who need inpatient support and care for mental health problems across East London. Groundwork has supported the Centre to create an outdoor space for service users where they can connect with nature and experience the benefits of accessing green space.

Employees from JLL and Deloitte have joined Groundwork to help transform the outdoor space into a safe, green and wholesome environment for service users that they have named 'Cherry Tree Garden'. The team worked together to build new raised beds for food growing and build new furniture to create a comfortable space and place of sanctuary.

The hard work of the volunteer teams has meant that the Centre has been able to offer gardening sessions, occupational therapy sessions and social activities for both service users and staff members which has been so important to their wellbeing.

I feel emotional, I can't wait to see service users come and use the garden. You've made a masterpiece, thank you so much!

Service Lead, NHS Newham Centre for Mental Health

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I enjoy learning new skills at the gardening workshop. It helps me focus. I don't like my wife to visit me on the ward, so we meet here at the Cherry Tree garden where we can relax.

Service User, Newham Centre for Mental Health

THE GREEN PATCH, KETTERING

The Green Patch is a thriving community garden in Kettering, Northamptonshire. A project that makes a difference to the lives of hundreds of people each week. Over the last ten years, Groundwork has transformed The Green Patch from a site that was barely used into a vibrant green space and friendly hub that brings together local people from primary school children to elderly people experiencing social isolation.

With over 2.5 acres of land filled with orchards, food growing spaces and natural play areas and home to a range of wildlife as well as resident ducks, chickens, rabbits and cats, The Green Patch relies heavily on the support of volunteers so that local people can continue to access the benefits of connecting with people and with nature.

That's why over 100 volunteers from global law firm, Kennedy's, swapped their suits for gardening gear to join forces at The Green Patch, joining members of the local community to clear, replant and rebuild areas of the garden. Teams were tasked with rejuvenating the bee garden, rebuilding the duck pond, weeding, planting and potting.

It was wonderful for us all to come together and make a positive difference to the community. We started the day with a tour of the Green Patch community garden which is a very special place.

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Kennedy's Volunteer, The Green Patch





The woman who named The Green Patch has been coming here for 22 years. At 86 years old, she walks a mile and a half from her house with her walking trolley and has a plot down here.

What I like about the Green Patch is it doesn't matter what age you are – we all look out for each other.

Community Volunteer, The Green Patch

TRAFFORD ECOLOGY PARK, MANCHESTER

Trafford Ecology Park is a beautiful and peaceful greenspace hidden in the industrial area of Trafford Park, Manchester.

The park stretches over 11 acres of land and is a registered nature site of Biological Importance, home to an abundance of wildlife in its woodland and lakes. But it is also so much more than this to the local community. It is a hub of outdoor activity, providing outdoor learning experiences to local school children and a space for local groups and individuals to meet and connect.

That's why a team of ten volunteers from Deloitte teamed up with youth work charity Manchester Youth Zone to not only improve the biodiversity of the park, but to provide a group of young people with the opportunity to contribute to enhancing the environment, to meet new people and to build on their passions and self-confidence.

The young people who are part of Manchester Youth Zone are often from deprived communities and many are navigating life in areas with some of the highest rates of serious youth violence and organised crime presence in the country. Manchester Youth Zone provides these young people with as many opportunities as they can that they may not otherwise get to experience.

Through volunteering, the young people benefited from the positive role models from both Deloitte and Groundwork who talked to them about their careers and experiences. Deloitte volunteers paired up with young people from Manchester Youth Zone to build bug hotels and learn about the biodiversity at the park.





**THANK YOU
FROM ALL OF US AT GROUNDWORK**