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Jubilee Gardens begins to bloom

Plans to transform Jubilee Gardens on London's South Bank into a new green landmark of superior quality in time for both the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games are on schedule. Progress is going well as the Gardens continue to take shape, with key construction elements underway including the installation of new drainage, the production of the appealing granite units that will make up the seating-edges throughout the Gardens and the formation of tree pits for the planting of 70 new trees.

This month sees the start of the granite edge units being installed and the placement of the sub and top soil which will ready the Gardens for its next key milestone; the planting of 70 new trees. Within the next four weeks, the soft landscape of the Gardens will start to take shape with the installation of English Oaks, Common Beech and Sweetgum. Particularly elegant examples of the Common Beech may earn the name 'Queen Beech', which befits the Royal associations of the Gardens. The Sweetgum is a flowering tree, colourful in autumn which retains its leaves later than many other species and one of the largest trees in the Gardens will be the English Oak; a long-lived tree with a wide-spreading crown of rugged branches which is the thickest tree that naturally grows in Great Britain. Over the course of construction, Bald Cypress, Pin Oak and Small Leaved Limes will also be planted. The installation of colourful flowerbeds will feature red Geraniums (pelargonium Anthony) for the opening in spring and in the summer prior to the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the beds will be replanted with Lilium 'Orange Pixie'.

Completion of Jubilee Gardens, in time for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations in June, will transform what is now a flat and featureless patch of grass into a lush, new green landscape to Royal Parks standard, as soft and green as it is sustainable, worthy of its Jubilee associations and reflecting the quality of the South Bank's cultural organisations, tourist attractions and high profile businesses. The new Jubilee Gardens, designed by landscape architects West 8, will probably be the most visited green space in central London, appreciated not just by the millions who visit the South Bank, but also local employees and residents alike.

Maarten Buijs, Project Manager, West 8 said:

"Jubilee Gardens will be a quintessentially English park with undulating lawns, large lush trees and boldly coloured flowerbeds with selected species to reflect the seasonal changes. The wide granite pathways with their generous flowing alignment, will meander in between the trees providing constantly changing views across the site and over the Thames towards Westminster and across the city. The paths and granite seating

edges will accommodate the many visitors who will come to South Bank to discover the park and to enjoy this fabulous new green space in London's key cultural area."

For more information and images:

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If you have any specific questions you would like to ask the architects about the planting, or if you would like to arrange to view the gardens once tree planting has commenced, please get in touch.

Notes to Editors

For background information: www.jubileegardens.org.uk

The transformation of the Gardens is being managed by the Jubilee Gardens Project Board comprising; Lambeth Council, Southbank Centre, current owner of Jubilee Gardens, the Jubilee Gardens Trust, which will be responsible for the management and maintenance of the Gardens following the completion of the contract, and Transport for London, which is providing funding towards the project on behalf of the Mayor. Other funding is from Lambeth Council secured through planning agreements with Shell and the EDF Energy London Eye, and contributions from several charitable trusts.

The project is remarkable in bringing together the very wide range of partners listed below. By working in partnership this group has created a wonderful green vision for gardens in one of London's most vibrant areas and secured the funding and planning consent with huge public support. Work will started on site 34 years after the gardens were first created to celebrate the Queen's Silver Jubilee in 1977.

- **Southbank Centre** which holds Jubilee Gardens on a long lease from the Arts Council and has agreed to pass over the gardens to an independent Trust to provide dedicated and long term care and management.
- **Lambeth Council** has contributed £3.6m to the scheme and led on the delivery of the project, in line with its Cooperative Council policy, in working in partnership with local stakeholders and letting the contract for the re-landscaping.
- **Shell and EDF Energy London Eye** contributing £3.6m via Lambeth Council with funds arising from Section 106, a financial contribution from the developers to mitigate the impact of their developments in the area.
- **The Mayor of London** contributing £1.5m through Transport for London to ensure that the quality of public space in this part of the South Bank is right for the South Bank's role in the cultural festival that will precede the games. **Jubilee Gardens** is one of the Mayor of London's Great Outdoors projects, which aim 'to transform the everyday experience of London's outdoor spaces and create beautifully designed oases throughout the capital's urban jungle'. For further details see below.
- **The Jubilee Gardens Trust**, comprising Southbank Centre, EDF Energy London Eye, Shell, and representatives of local businesses, local residents and Lambeth Council, in taking responsibility for maintaining the gardens to Royal Parks standards and organising an annual programme of cultural events.
- **Kate Hoey MP** and the local community in consistently championing the upgrading of the gardens.
- **Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP**, Secretary of State for Culture, Media, Sport whose intervention enabled the project to proceed.
- the **Shirayama Corporation** (owner of neighbouring County Hall) for supporting the project.

- **South Bank Employers' Group**, an association of 17 major organisations in the South Bank neighbourhood, which has championed and coordinated the Jubilee Gardens project throughout.
- **Other donors to the project**, including the 29 May 1961 Trust, The Gosling Foundation, The Hobson Trust.

About

- **Frosts Landscape Construction Ltd** are specialists in landscaping, gardening, green roofs and walls, ponds, block paving and more. www.frostslandscapes.co.uk
- **West 8** is a cutting-edge practice which delivers ground-breaking urban parks and public spaces. Set up in 1987 as an international team of architects, urban designers and industrial designers, West 8 designs landscape interventions, urban plans, squares, parks and gardens worldwide. www.west8.nl
- **The Mayor of London's 'Great Outdoors - A Manifesto for Public Space'** is supported by two practical guides, 'Better Streets' and 'Better Green and Water Spaces'. Together they set out the Mayor of London's vision for improving public spaces in London. This will ensure that our streets, squares, parks and green and water spaces are fit for a great world city, are enjoyed by everyone who visits them and most importantly, help improve the quality of life in the capital. They are accompanied by an implementation plan that will see £355m invested in 80 public realm improvement projects between 2009 and the 2012 Games; funding for which comes from Transport for London, The London Development Agency and London's boroughs as well as other sources. The measures include redesigned streets, which can be shared by both the pedestrians and vehicles and reclaimed derelict green spaces and underused waterways. The manifesto and guides have been written and produced by the Greater London Authority, London Development Agency, Design for London and Transport for London. For further information please go to www.london.gov.uk/greatoutdoors