

Garden of Contemplation

at Didsbury Cenotaph



Design theme: Ripples

In quiet times we can ponder on how our lives affect those around us and how they affect us. Our lives, our loves and friendships, even our very health and longevity: how we are all connected by our actions, their overlapping waves creating results far beyond what we see.

As we watch the effects of these choices we make in our present world - of friendship and endeavour, collaboration and conflict, care and commitment, we can reflect on how they will affect the futures of others just as those of the past have affected ours. The way we view the world, the things we value send ripples across both years and miles.

We see in this space those who have come before us have bought our freedoms with their sacrifice. We also know in this thriving town how much is owed to those who give and have given of themselves in so many ways to this community, and how that is echoed in other communities across this and other lands.



Environment and sustainability

Planting material

All trees and plants sourced are sustainably grown here in the UK by local suppliers in Greater Manchester and surrounding areas

Species have been chosen for suitability for birds and pollinators, selecting for natural species and forms, suitability for local fauna, wide variety, deciduous and evergreen, and all seasons flowering. There are some surprises – eg fatsia japonica is v good for pollinators in the autumn and winter months.

Plants selected are tolerant of a range of conditions in our changing climate where both heavy rainfall and heat and drought are factors. A number of plants have been picked for their ability to absorb pollution and noise eg. Camellia: others for their ability to absorb waterlogging or heat.

Other factors determining choice of plants are manageability and durability for a public area maintained by volunteers and also suitability for a part shaded site with good morning light.

Building materials

Recycled Plastic benches and bench backs

Recycled Plastic Lumber (RPL) uses 100% recycled plastics from domestic and commercial waste, requiring only a third of the energy that new plastic uses in its production and is 100% recyclable after its original intended use. It needs no paint or treatment, is waterproof, resists all types of rot and mould and thus has a very long lifespan. It can also be bent and fixed to form strong arching curves.

Owing to the bidirectional malleability of recycled plastic lumber it can be used for for inclined backs of curved benches when suitably fixed in place

Stone and Paving

As much as possible stone will be reclaimed local yorkstone and gritstone paving slabs and traditional cobbles. Any granite used for cobbles or kerbs will again be from local reclaimed stone suppliers.

Any new cut stone required will be from small, low impact family run quarries in the nearby Pennine hills.

Gravel is a useful, cost effective and sustainable material with a SuDs compliant ability to absorb large amounts of water. The more stable alternatives for heavily used public spaces are to lay it on recycled plastic grids. For some areas permeable resin bound gravel might be considered.

Walling will be a mixture of cut block and drystone with a minimal use of cement support. Local quarry and waller to be used.

Wood

Recycled hardwoods are available from such sources as the renovating of British piers, alternatively we would choose small sustainable timber mills using estate trees such as that at Peover Hall in Cheshire.

Design approach

Large areas of paving have been avoided, the paving surface is regularly interrupted with planting, even small strips of 'walk on' planting.

Community

The lawn area where the christmas tree is located and the circular seating area offer both spaces for art exhibits and for local groups to gather. The seating circle will accommodate up to about 15 people. Water and electricity supplies will be housed in the adjoining wall facing the lawn. The water feature will be able to be turned off when required.



perennials

- Acanthus mollis
- Acanthus mollis 'Rue Ledan'
- Acorus gramineus
- Ageratina altissima 'Chocolate'
- Anemone x Hybrda eg honore Jobert
- Anthriscus sylvestris 'Ravenswing' (Cow Parsley)
- Astilbe red baron or red sentinel
- Astrantia major eg'Buckland' 'Gill Richardson Group'
- Athyrium niponicum eg f. metallicum
- Brunnera Alexanders great
- Brunnera looking Glass
- Campanula lactiflora 'loddon anna
- Campanula pyramidalis
- Campanula persicifolia Takion Blue/White
- Carex everest
- Centaurea montana (Perennial cornflower)
- Cimicifuga Brunette
- Deschampsia cespitosa
- Dicentra spectabilis alba
- Digitalis purpurea various subsp.
- Dryopteris affinis (Golden shield fern)
- Euphorbia amygdaloides 'Purpurea'
- Ferns evergreen various eg. Dryopteris affinis 'Cristata The King'
- Festuca glauca
- Geranium hardy varieties
- Geranium Phaeum
- Geranium pratense eg 'Cloud Nine'
- Gillenia trifoliata
- Helleborus evergreen, vatiou inc foetidus, argutifolius, cultivars eg Winter sunshine,
- Helleborus orientalis various
- Heuchera various eg 'Palace Purple, Obsidian'
- Hosta slug resistant blue var. Eg halcyon, Abiqua Drinking Gourd', Krossa Regal
- Libertia grandiflora
- Lily of the valley - Convallaria majalis.
- Liriope muscari
- Luzula nivea
- Miscanthus 'Morning light'
- Persicaria amplexicaulis'Firetail'
- Primrose
- Pulmonaria longifolia 'Diana Clare'
- Pulmonaria officinalis
- Scabiosa incisa 'Kudo'

climbers

- Hydrangea Seemanii
- Shade tolerant rose eg Rosa Iceberg
- Trachelospermum jasminoides

bulbs and corms

- Allium karataviense
- Allium schoenoprasum and similar
- Allium sicutum (syn. Nectaroscordum)
- Anemone blanda varieties
- Anemone nemorosa (wood anemone)
- Camassia varieties
- Chionodoxa forbesii
- Crocus
- Cyclamen coum
- Erythronium dens-canis
- fritillaria persica
- Galanthus elwesii (Greater Snowdrop)
- Hyacinthoides non-scripta (Native Bluebell)
- Iris reticulata
- Muscari armeniacum (Grape hyacinth)
- Narcissus 'Actaea'
- Narcissus poeticus
- Snake's head fritillary (Fritillaria meleagris)
- Tulipa turkestanica and similar

trees and shrubs

- Acer palmatum varieties eg enkan
- Amelanchier laevis Ballerina
- Berberis spp.
- Camellia.
- Cercis canadensis Ruby Falls
- cornus alba sibirica variegata
- Cornus Kousa var. Chinensis
- Cotoneaster spp.
- Daphne odora Aureomarginata
- Euonymus alatus
- Hebe topiaria or similar.
- Hydrangea Annabel
- Hydrangea Little Lime
- Rhododendron - smaller cultivars
- Rosmarinus officinalis
- Sarcococca confusa (Sweet box)
- Skimmia japonica
- Viburnum opulus

groundcovers and subshrubs

- Bugle
- Campanula portenschlagiana
- cotoneaster
- euonymus fortunei silver queen
- Herniaria glabra
- Ophiopogon planiscapus Nigrascens
- Pratia Angulata or similar
- Selinum wallichianum
- Slow growing, small ivy eg ivalace, starling, pixie dixie
- Thymus serpyllum
- White star creeper Pratia angulata