



Keeping you updated: UK's first Supertrees set to arrive in Chester as ForEST project continues

AUGUST 2019

What's happening?

For the last six months you may have seen activity start to build in the 'sunken garden' area at Hoole Way roundabout for the arrival of three Supertrees in August.

It is the brainchild of the city's ForEST (For Eco Supertrees) community group and designed to boost wildlife in a city centre environment, Cheshire West and Chester Council has supported the group to design and deliver the project. ForEST is working with Chester Zoo to look in to ongoing support to the project through their wildlife conservation programme.

The group's plans will see the space become somewhere for residents, visitors and workers to relax and appreciate an environment that allows biodiversity to thrive in an area of the city it would not normally exist.

Inspiration for the Chester Supertrees project came from Sir David Attenborough. The final episode of his Planet Earth II documentary shows the success of Supertree Grove in Singapore's nature park and botanical garden. He talked about the ecosystems that exist within cities, in particular the Gardens by the Bay project in Singapore, where the Supertrees are located. Chester's Supertrees are on a much smaller scale but still aims to achieve some of the same environmental and social goals.

What are the Supertrees?

Each Supertree is a metal construction standing 7.5 metres tall which will support planting to grow and create a canopy similar to that of a tree.

Climbing plants will support a wealth of wildlife to flourish and increase biodiversity in the city. The planting will take a number of years to establish and grow up to the tree canopy section.

Important dates – Monday 5 August for two weeks

Sections of the trees will begin to arrive and assembled on site. A small temporary compound at Brookdale Place using two of the parking bays will store items while the works are taking place.

Works will continue for the remainder of this week and the following week.

The site, including the subways, will remain closed for the duration of the works including weekends. Signs will be in place to direct pedestrians to the nearest crossing point. The subways are predicted to re-open after **5pm** on **23 August 2019** (weather dependant). We are working to find resolutions to flooding in the subway leading to Brook Street and to fix the electricity supply.

An inner lane closure of the roundabout is planned for **20 - 21 August** to support cranes lifting the tree trunks into position.

What's happened on site so far?

- Walls have been lowered to increase visibility.
- A new ramped area has been created to provide easy access to the raised seating area.
- Additional York stone paving has been installed in areas of the site.
- The flower beds have been lowered to increase visibility.
- Wildflower seeds have been sown and successfully established.

What other work is due to take place?

- **Planting** - trees and shrubs are due to be planted once the weather conditions are suitable.
- **Benches** - five benches will be installed on the raised area accessible via the new ramped access and steps.
- **Resurfaced pathways** - pathway enhancements will aid access and increase the visual appeal of the garden.
- **Interpretation boards** - six interpretation boards will be installed on site helping visitors to understand the environmental impact of the scheme.
- **Murals** - colourful art on the themes of water, air and earth is planned for the subways.
- **Wood carving sculpture** - a number of the tree stumps will be carved on site.
- **Bin** - a bin for waste will be installed on site.

Where has the funding come from to pay for the project?

The ForEST group secured funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government Pocket Parks Plus grant and further funding has been provided through FCC Communities Foundation. Section 106 funding and New Homes Bonus funding has also been used to fund this project.

ForEST is developing a working relationship with Chester Zoo to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project. Chester Zoo has agreed to financially support ForEST to make sure the space is used as an educational space and funded and maintained to a high standard for years to come.

ForEST has also been very active in raising funds and awareness for the transformation of the site locally. They have held events and literally ran over continents to raise support and awareness of the project. This has led to support and very generous donations from the local community and an army of followers who are all very excited to see the imminent arrival of Chester's very own Supertrees.

When will all works be complete?

It is anticipated that the site will be fully open by **September 2019**. The trees will be in place by **23 August**, with minor works to install benches etc. taking place from **26 August**. Work to create subway murals and large scale planting will take place later in the year.

Will the trees be lit?

The walkway areas of the garden will be lit in the same way they always have been, with the lighting column situated on the central raised area. We are currently exploring options for lighting the Supertrees. We'll keep you updated on these proposals as they progress.

When is the mural artwork taking place?

FORest is currently working with three artists to design the murals for the subway walls. There will be an opportunity for the community to get involved in the painting of the artwork.

Do you want to be part of this exciting project?

If you have a little spare time and would like to volunteer to help create the artwork or develop the garden you can contact ForEST by email at: chestersupertrees@gmail.com or twitter.com/ChesterSTrees