

POSTCARD GARDEN 8

3:30:300



PRESENTED BY:

**LENNOXVALE TREE NURSERY AND
MALONE GATEWAY VOLUNTEERS**

COMMUNITY AND WELL-BEING IN A MODERN CITY

3:30:300 – A ‘RULE OF THUMB’ FOR CITIES



Line drawing by Jonny Greig

- **3 TREES FROM EVERY HOME**
- **30% TREE CANOPY COVER IN EVERY NEIGHBOURHOOD**
- **300 METRES FROM THE NEAREST PUBLIC PARK OR GREEN SPACE**

Belfast City Council's Tree Strategy¹ says of the 3:30:300 rule of thumb:

“This rule of thumb provides clear criteria for the minimum provision of urban trees in our urban communities. At the same time, it is straightforward to implement and monitor – and easy to remember.”

The Strategy reflects how trees can help adapt our living environment and mitigate some of the effects of climate change, saying that the city's trees are valued and need to be protected and cared for over the coming decades. The Strategy recognises the role of communities and emphasises the importance of partnership working to expand opportunities for planting, with a target of 30% tree canopy cover for Belfast by 2050.



¹ Belfast Tree Strategy 2023



Lennoxvale Glen is an unspoilt green and blue corridor running from Lower Malone to the River Lagan. In the past it formed part of Belfast's Victorian waterworks.



Image courtesy of National Museums NI

Lennoxvale Tree Nursery and Malone Gateway



Today Lennoxvale Tree Nursery (LTN) abuts Belfast's busy Lower Malone Road at the northern end of Lennoxvale Glen. The 1/3 acre site lay derelict for many years after a fire destroyed vacant property owned by Queen's University.

In 2019, Sans Souci Residents Association (SSRA) approached The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) and Queen's University (Queen's) to establish a community growing space. The three-way partnership now produces 5-600 healthy young tree seedlings for planting on every year.

In this aerial shot, an AFBI² advisor explains how including biochar in planting mixes can tackle heavy metal pollution and improve growth of tree seedlings. Volunteers select container-grown cherry, oak and birch for the first tests using willow biochar.

² Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute – a non-departmental public body of the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs, Northern Ireland



One of our volunteer leaders, Margaret, has grown native oak (*Quercus robur* and *Quercus petraea*) at LTN for the past five years, using locally foraged seeds.

LTN has joined the 'Million Trees for Belfast' campaign and achieved an international Green Flag Award for high quality community green space in 2023/24.

LTN volunteers enjoy hosting well-organised student groups to share the care of LTN in workshops and volunteering sessions. The volunteers visit and support other gardens and take part in shows and exhibitions across Ireland. In 2022 LTN won 'Best Design' for their 'Forget-me-Not' display at Garden Show Ireland and in 2023 one of their forecourt plantings was awarded best in category in Belfast in Bloom.

This year's 3:30:300 Postcard Garden is LTN's first exhibit at Bord Bia Bloom in Phoenix Park, Dublin. It celebrates the beauty of Belfast's historic Lennoxvale Glen and Lower Malone. With support from sponsors too many to name, the garden is a tribute to the generosity and goodwill of communities and individuals coming together in friendship to create something special.

Every year, LTN donates 500 native trees to help restore native woodlands across Greater Belfast. Other seedlings are used in tests of how various container and substrate technologies impact on aspects of growth.



In 2021 SSRA and LTN teamed with local businesses and charities, supported by funding from Belfast City Council, to launch the 'Malone Gateway' initiative and help landscape commercial premises. LTN is a base for maintaining Malone Gateway.



Ariel view of LTN, Summer 2023



LTN seedling beds, October 2023

Colour photographs of LTN and Malone Gateway mostly courtesy of Matt Cummings, Queen's University Belfast and Francesca Cerri.