

## Celebratory Superbloom display opens at the Tower of London

The Tower of London is set to be encircled by a thriving new natural landscape this summer in the biggest transformation of the historic moat in 150 years.



In a project led by landscape architects Grant Associates for Historic Royal Palaces, 20 million seeds have been sown in the Tower's moat to create 'Superbloom', a floral display and haven for wildlife and biodiversity, surrounding the famous fortress. Key design partners include the University of Sheffield's planting professor Nigel Dunnett, artists Max Jacquard and Spencer Jenkins, 'soundscape' composer Erland Cooper, lighting designers Nipek Lighting and landscape contractors Landform.

The nature-focused attraction celebrates the value and importance of nature to our collective wellbeing and runs from 1 June - 18 September 2022. New paths, walkways and viewing points offer a fresh perspective on the Tower's ancient walls, whilst a 17.5m four-lane slide offers a unique way for people to enter the moat.

The planting scheme for the Superbloom has been selected to provide visitors with a different experience whenever they visit, and is bolstered by an evocative soundscape and sculptures throughout. Familiar wildflowers will appear in the moat throughout the summer, from red Poppies, to yellow Corn Marigolds and blue Cornflowers. In addition to the wildflowers, a range of garden plants will heighten the colour effects and extend the season of flowering. Sunflowers, Cosmos and Rudbeckias will flower into early autumn, and the snapdragon-like Fairy Toadflax and Baby's Breath will bloom at the very beginning of the summer.



The crowning glory of the display is the 'Queen's Garden', installed in the Tower's historic Bowling Green. Inspired by HM The Queen's Coronation gown by Sir Norman Hartnell, this elegant garden features a combination of meadow flowers, topiary and summer-flowering perennials, bulbs and ornamental grasses.

Designed by Andrew Grant and James Clarke of Grant Associates, the garden draws on the colours, shapes and motifs deployed by Hartnell in the 1953 gown. Rising above it are 12 cast glass forms by artist Max Jacquard, representing the national emblems featured in Hartnell's design. In the centre of these motifs sits a glass crown, a reminder of the Tower's role as home of the Crown Jewels. The layout of the space – with its concentric scalloped hedging – is intended to evoke the scalloped tiers of embroidery which feature on the gown's silk skirt.

**Tom O'Leary, Public Engagement Director, Historic Royal Palaces, comments:**

*“The Tower's moat was designed in the 13th century to keep people out – now we're thrilled to be welcoming people, and nature, into this amazing new green space. The weather might have set back our blooms, but they're gradually beginning to appear, and the moat is beginning to buzz with wildlife. We hope that we've created something joyful, celebratory and fun, with a lasting environmental legacy and we look forward to sharing it with visitors to the Tower this Summer.”*

**Andrew Grant RDI, Founder and Director, Grant Associates, comments:**

“We're proud and honoured to have been given the chance to transform this historic site into a wonderful new visitor experience. It's a brilliant example of how we can repurpose urban green spaces in ways that we hope will bring wonder and joy to millions of people, whilst creating rich new habitats for wildlife and biodiversity.”

The Tower's 'Superbloom' is already spreading across the country. As part of the initiative, almost 1,500 schools have been growing their own gardens, using a similar mix of seeds provided by HRP, who have sent out 17,112 packets of seeds, all over the country. The schools involved have created some amazing new spaces in the heart of their communities, supporting local wildlife and learning about how gardening is good for health and wellbeing along the way. Many of the schools involved will be visiting the Tower during the summer, to see the large scale display in bloom.

Superbloom is the biggest change to the Moat since 1845 and is the beginning of a long-term transformation of the Tower of London moat that will see it become a new natural landscape in the heart of the City of London. Replacing the current lawn permanently, it will create a nature-rich, sustainable landscape for the benefit of both biodiversity and the communities of the Tower, Tower Hamlets, London and all future visitors, and serve as a catalyst for other transformational projects across the country.

The Tower of London Superbloom will be open from 1 June - 18 September 2022. Tickets need to be booked in advance of visiting and can now be purchased [online](#).

**Key collaborators:**

**Lead designers:** Grant Associates, the international landscape architecture practice, designed the landscape concept and visitor experience for the Superbloom. Andrew Grant and James Clarke of the practice also designed the concept for the 'Queen's Garden'.

**Flowers:** Nigel Dunnett, Professor of Horticulture at the University of Sheffield, served as the lead horticultural consultant for the Superbloom, carefully selecting the 20 million seeds for planting.

**Woven sculptures:** Spencer Jenkins has created the willow sculptures that populate the Superbloom.

**Glass sculptures:** Max Jacquard and Dawn Bendick have created the cast glass forms and glass crown that adorn the 'Queen's Garden.'

**Soundscape:** Erland Cooper has composed 'Music for Growing Flowers' as an evocative soundscape to accompany the visual spectacle.

**Contractors:** Landform UK has been responsible for the construction of the new landscape.

**Lighting show:** Nipek Lighting has designed the lighting display which will illuminate the Superbloom nightly throughout the summer.

**Insect sculpture:** Quist designed and made the flight of metal insects as part of the final exit garden from the Moat.





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#### ABOUT GRANT ASSOCIATES

Grant Associates is a pioneering international [landscape architecture practice](#). Our work reconnects people with nature in insightful, delightful and distinctive ways whilst addressing the global challenges of urbanisation, the climate crisis and biodiversity extinction.

Our design process is underpinned by a knowledge of human behaviour, nature and ecological science combined with innovative design technology. We bring original thinking, creative collaboration and are exploring what regenerative design and the circular economy means to landscape architecture.

Our varied portfolio includes ambitious large-scale, landmark projects through to small, local ventures.



Grant Associates