

## News release

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## Do you value Manchester's wildlife? Then tell us about it!

Local nature initiative, OPAL North West, has teamed up with Manchester City Council's biodiversity partnership and they are looking to local residents to help develop an action plan. The council wants to know what local people think about biodiversity in the city. How important is nature in Manchester? Does it matter to you? Do you enjoy feeding the birds or going for walks in the park? What role does nature play in your life? Residents can help by providing the answers to questions like these in an online questionnaire.

Jonathan Taylor, OPAL North West, comments, "*Manchester City Council recognises that it is incredibly important to investigate the relationship between cities and biodiversity if we are to preserve wildlife and habitats. By working in partnership, our organisations can gain a greater understanding of Manchester's natural environment through user-friendly surveys and research*".

The Manchester Biodiversity Strategy aims to inspire the people of Manchester to become more responsible towards their local environment by capitalising on the 'citizen science' methodology promoted by OPAL at a national level. OPAL uses public participation surveys looking at different aspects of nature and the environment to help communities learn, record and explore biodiversity in their local area.

The biodiversity partnership includes representatives from organisations such as Groundwork, BTCV, Environment Agency, Red Rose Forest, The Mersey Basin Campaign and Natural England. This partnership will expand the reach and impact of OPAL North West's work in the region. By working with the Council and its partner networks, the project will be able work with many more communities in Manchester.

To take part in the survey visit [www.wildaboutmanchester.info](http://www.wildaboutmanchester.info) The OPAL project is funded by a Big Lottery Fund grant of £11.75m.

### Notes to editor

- Full survey URL: <http://survey.groundworknw.org.uk/Survey.aspx?s=391a096150e1459ea7d469deb1638c36>

- Open Air Laboratories (OPAL) is a nation-wide partnership initiative that will inspire communities to discover, enjoy and protect their local environments. It aims to create a new generation of nature-lovers by stimulating interest through local and national projects which are accessible, fun and relevant to anyone who wants to take part
- For more information, please visit [www.OPALexplorenature.org](http://www.OPALexplorenature.org)
- The Big Lottery Fund's Changing Spaces programme was launched in November 2005 to help communities enjoy and improve their local environments. The programme funds a range of activities from local food schemes and farmers markets, to education projects teaching people about the environment. Imperial College London (the leading OPAL partner) was awarded a **£11,760,783** Changing Spaces grant in August 2007
- The Big Lottery Fund, the largest of the National Lottery good cause distributors, has been rolling out grants to health, education, environment and charitable causes across the UK since its inception in June 2004. It was established by Parliament on 1 December 2006. Full details of the work of the Big Lottery Fund, its programmes and awards are available on the website: [www.biglotteryfund.org.uk](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk)