

FAIRER WESTMINSTER

Westbourne Green Canalside Sundial
Sunseekers 2025
Bronze Casts

Engagement Report
November 2025

SUPPORTED BY
MAYOR OF LONDON

Studio Long

City of Westminster

Executive Summary

This commission is part of the Council's commitments in North Paddington to support improved health and wellbeing outcomes for its residents.

With funding from the Greater London Authority's Good Growth Fund, the Council appointed a multi-disciplinary team to design and deliver a series of public space improvements at Westbourne Green Canalside.

St Mary Magdalene Church and Grand Junction already serve as key community anchors in the area. The ambition is for the surrounding public spaces to become a natural extension of these vibrant community hubs.

Since 2021, the project team has engaged extensively with the local community, listening to their ideas and priorities. This collaborative process has shaped a shared vision to unlock the potential of the canalside and transform it into a lively and inclusive destination for everyone.

The vision is guided by three core objectives:

1. Enhance the canalside
2. Upgrade the landscape
3. Improve pedestrian connectivity and access

Construction began in November 2024 with completion anticipated by the 19 November 2025.

Sundial Public Art

In June 2025 Westminster City Council appointed Studio Long to collaboratively design and deliver an inspiring public artwork at Westbourne Green Canalside, London W2.

As part of the wider park improvement works, including new planting, seating, trees, and signage, the sundial at the heart of the park was retained and renewed. The sundial comprised twelve small and one large stone pieces set into the pathway. The large central stone featured six inserts, originally designed in collaboration with a local school, which had become worn and required replacement.

To deliver this project, Studio Long designed and led a creative workshop with pupils from St Mary's Primary School to collaboratively design the new public artwork. This document serves as the engagement report for that workshop.



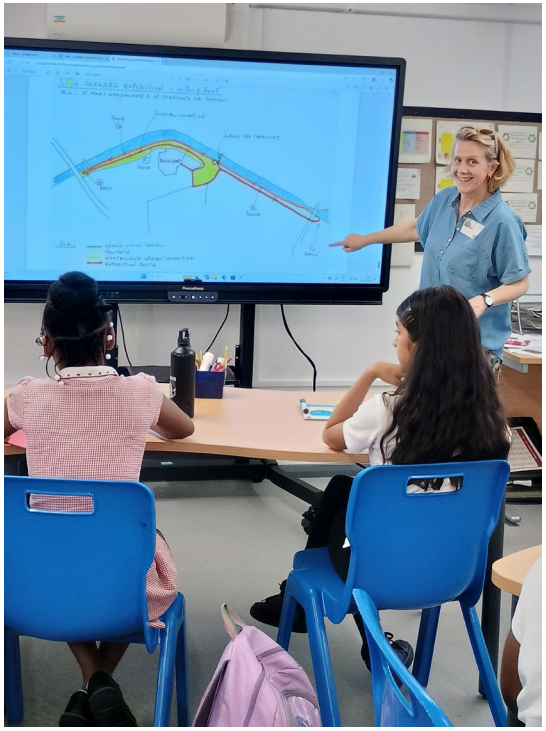
Sunseekers

Date: Thursday 10 July, 9:30 am to 3:00 pm

Participants: St Mary Magdalene & St Stephen's Primary school.

Facilitators: Vicky Long

Sunseekers, the Westbourne Green sundial renewal project, began with a walk along the Grand Union canal with 20 year 6 students from St Mary Magdalene & St Stephen's Primary school. The workshop, led by the artist Vicky Long, was divided into three parts: an introduction to the Sundial Renewal project, an exploratory canal walk to collect natural materials, and a classroom clay activity, allowing students to learn, create, and contribute ideas for the new artwork within the renewed sundial. The focus of the workshop was to look for plants flourishing in the sunlight along the canalside.



Classroom intoduction

It began with an energetic 30-minute introduction, where students learned about the Sundial Renewal project through slides and inspiring stories from Vicky's past expeditions. Each student received an expedition map, a bag that they personalised as a first creative exercise, a sketchbook, and pencils to prepare for the day ahead.

Exploration along the Canalside

This was followed by an immersive 90-minute exploration walk along the canal. Students discovered more about the sun, photosynthesis, and the local ecology, while gathering natural treasures such as leaves, feathers, flowers, and sticks.







Back in the classroom, the students spent around 45 minutes turning their collected materials into 15cm clay disks, creating their own unique pieces of art to take home.

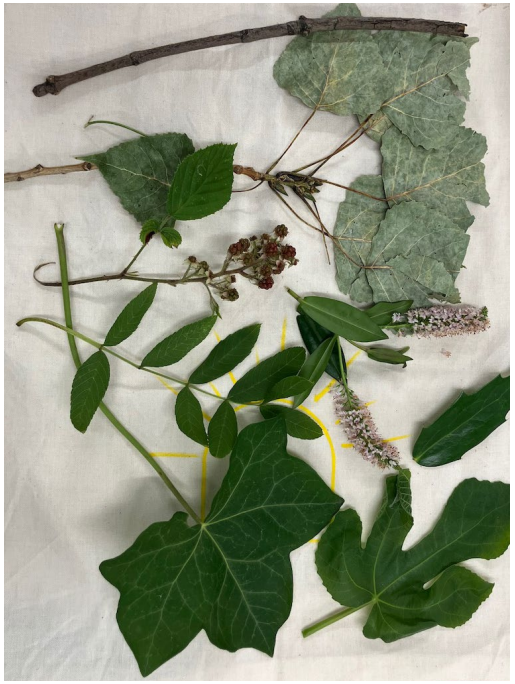
Clay activity in classroom

The workshop concluded with a lively group discussion, where the students shared ideas about which natural elements could be featured in the new public artwork, helping to shape the future look of the renewed sundial.

Bronze casts

During the canalside exploration walk, the group stopped to notice, name and take samples of plant life, from tiny algae to large London Plane trees. The samples were brought back to the classroom and pressed into circles of earthenware clay. The students took their pressings home and from the group's research, Studio Long was able to find the plants that had made the most successful impressions. Studio Long used these plants to make fresh clay pressings, which were then used to create silicon rubber patterns. The patterns entered a sand-casting process at a foundry, where six bronze pieces were produced to set in the granite sundial at Westbourne Green. The plants featured in the bronze casts were all found at the height of summer and, are:

- *Dog Rose (Rose Hip)*
- *Fig (Common)*
- *Grasses*
- *Clematis (Vitalba)*
- *Buddleia*
- *Holly & Ivy*





Key takeways

- Enthusiasm from students for learning about plant life
- Interest from students in plants and how they can be transposed into another medium
- Excitement from students when a plant pressed well into clay
- Identification by students of plants that pressed especially well, informing final choice of shapes for bronze casts
- Assurance from students' pressings that the chosen shapes would sit well in the circular recesses of the granite sundial
- Satisfaction that students would recognise their creative work in the final bronze casts
- Confidence that the link between the reliance of plant life on sunlight and impressions of local plants being set into the local sundial was understood



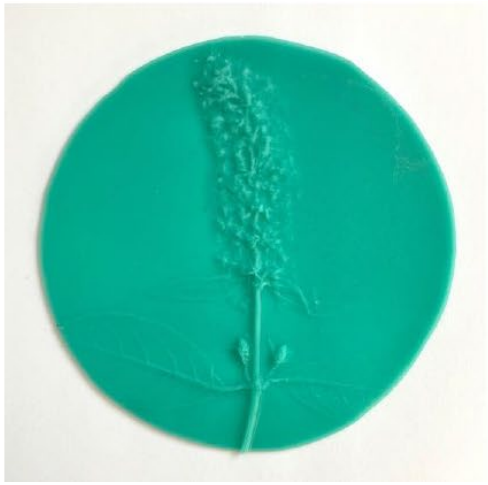


Production process





Step 1: Fresh clay pressings were made using the selected plants. Example shown: *Buddleia*.



Step 2: Silicone rubber moulds were created from the clay pressings.



Step 3: The foundry produced sand moulds based on the silicone patterns



Step 4: Molten bronze was poured into the sand moulds.



Step 5: The hardened bronze pieces were removed from the moulds, trimmed to exact size, and carefully buffed.



Step 6: The final set of six bronze pieces was installed into the sundial's granite stone.

Next steps

The Westbourne Green Canalside improvement works are yet to be completed by 19 November 2025 and the granite stone will soon be moved from the construction site hub (pictured) to its permanent position.

If you would like to find out more about Westbourne Green Canalside improvements, please visit:

https://www.westminster.gov.uk/north-paddington-programme/projects/westbourne-green-canalside-improvement-works

If you would like to find out more about the wider North Paddington Canalside programme and sign up to hear further project updates, please scan this QR code or visit:

https://npcanalsidestrategy.commonplace.is



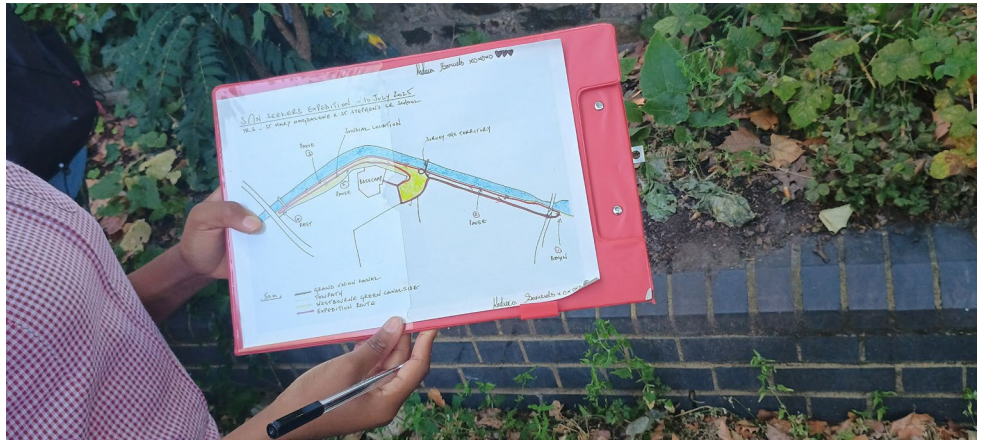


You can also contact our team at:

npcanalside@westminster.gov.uk

Thank you

This project has been shaped by the creativity and energy of local children. Thank you to our collaborators, Year 6 St Mary Magdalene & St Stephen's Primary School, architects DSDHA, restoration advisors Szerelmey and Maybrey Precision Castings.





Studio Long

City of Westminster