

BERNIE SPAIN GARDENS

2017 - ongoing, London, United Kingdom



West 8's design features two illustrious pollinator gardens at its heart enclosed by an intimate garden-like setting complete with a custom-designed gardener's pavilion. The 'pollinator gardens' feature an abundance of nectar and pollen-rich flowers. Creating the ideal habitat for foraging, shelter and nesting for birds, bees, butterflies and moths throughout the seasons. With spectacular colourful and scented floral displays, the garden features native floral diversity and provides a valuable resource for declining pollinator populations, currently at risk due to habitat loss, introduced diseases, pesticide poisoning, and pollution. It will be here that residents, workers and visitors can spend time and interact with nature.

Along the South Bank Riverside Walkway, the gardens are part of a world-class public realm used by thousands of visitors. Here, several gently curving seating alcoves provide natural gathering spaces, a unique aspect towards the River Thames and an elegant buffer between the more intimate atmosphere of the inner gardens.

The new gardener's pavilion will be fundamental to establishing a sense of stewardship. Inspired by the traditional garden shed, this classic structure is given a contemporary twist. Rendered in a combination of wood and glass, it features several custom designed rooftop beehives.

The design's strong botanical, educational and community focus, fully embraces the garden's unique context, and pays homage to the legacy of Bernadette Spain, a local campaigner on health and housing provisions in the 1970s, after whom the gardens are named.

This upgrade will transform the garden from its current function as a pedestrian thoroughfare into an idyllic garden, its charm will fascinate residents, workers and visitors throughout the seasons. The bold yet elegant design with its botanical heart and robust high-quality materials balances seasonality and romance with careful attention to functionality and flexibility.

The competition, launched at the end of 2017, was run by the social enterprise owner and manager of the gardens, Coin Street Community Builders (CSCB). CSBC and West 8 are currently working on the next stages of design and consultation, with a view to submitting a planning application by the end of 2018.

client

Coin Street Community Builders

partners

AKT II, Tim O'Hare Associates

team

Lydia Franken, Adriaan Geuze, Zeger Dalenberg, Laura Font Gallart, Perry Maas, Sarah Naulet, Alvaro Novas Filgueira