

## MAD ABOUT CORK



# PAINT THE TOWN GREEN

MAKING THE CITY FLOURISH WITH GREEN FEATURES

The Jazz Festival has come and gone, the Dragon of Shandon is back in hibernation after the Halloween parade, and the clocks have been put back - we are in wintertime, folks! While the cold, wet weather means we can't do as much as we would like, we're still busy prepping for springtime.

Already we've been planting spring bulbs at our garden project sites across town. There'll be plenty of colourful daffodils, tulips, and more to look forward to come springtime. We're also beginning the process of building large planter boxes for new trees that we will be installing around Cork city centre. This project will start at a new site near our Coal Quay Veg Garden at Portney's Lane. Once this area is planted up, our intention is to bring more of these tree boxes to other areas.

The initial site, which has been left overgrown for a number of years, was recently cleared out by a group of our volunteers and will soon become an extension of our already existing veg garden, though this time however, our focus will be on planting large trees, particularly native Irish species.

Recent damage to trees across Cork city by storms Ophelia and Brian (see the example of Centre Park Road where over 20 trees were



blown down) has highlighted the need for a proper management system in the city to plan and care for our green features. Currently, it seems green features are a nuisance to city planners. Old trees are left to rot while others are seemingly wantonly removed without being replaced.

The benefits of trees far outweigh the costs as there are so many positive outcomes, both for people's health and the economy. Trees can reduce pollution by absorbing particle matter from the air and promote biodiversity by offering a canopy and habitats to wildlife and insects. Strategically planted trees can also reduce the effects of flash flooding by offering drainage on otherwise impermeable urban surfaces.

More and more research is also showing that exposure to nature can decrease stress and improve a person's mental health. If all that's not enough, a row of trees can be a simple way of beautifying the urban realm. Who doesn't love a stroll on Grand Parade in September when the

leaves on the Turkish Oak trees change from green to glorious autumnal shades of browns, yellows, and reds?

We know that our efforts will be a drop in the ocean in terms of what is needed long term but we hope to make an immediate aesthetic impact on previously derelict, underused, or forgotten about parts of Cork while getting people thinking about the need to protect the biodiversity of Cork.

So, for the short term, our focus will be on transforming our new garden space on the Coal Quay with decorative tree boxes planted up with native species such as hazel, sessile oak and birch. Long term, we hope that Cork can become a city flourishing with green features on every street.

Keep up to date with our work @MadAboutCork on Facebook, twitter and Instagram, and to get involved email [info@madaboutcork](mailto:info@madaboutcork).