

MAD ABOUT CORK



Flower power – Adding more greenery and art to the city

It's been a busy time for Mad About Cork over the past few weeks. The long daylight hours and the huge number of volunteers turning out to help have been a big boost to us. We've been able to complete some new projects and also revamp some of our existing ones.

Coleman's Lane was given a complete makeover with summer flowers and new paintwork, our urban garden in Kyle St was also freshly planted up, while our plan to grow fruit and veg on the Coal Quay has begun offsite with our newly built planters set to be installed in early May.

We also have two new street art paintings to add to our collection. King Joffrey of Game of Thrones, played brilliantly by Cork-born actor Jack Gleeson, was given his own tribute on an electrical box on Merchant's Quay. Even though the boy king might have had no redeemable features whatsoever in the hit show, the piece has been well received on Leside. Also, we collaborated with the Cork Samaritans to paint an electrical box on Union Quay aimed at promoting the charity's 24-hour freephone helpline, 116

123, offering people support through difficult times in their lives.

Perhaps the biggest projects we completed this month were the newly installed guerrilla-style gardens on an awkward corner on Travers St (just off Douglas St,) and an unused wharf on Georges Quay. These were similar to our project on Patrick's Quay, completed in February, where another derelict wharf was turned into a garden. Though these gardens may have appeared to pop up in a day, weeks of work had gone into preparing for both of these projects at our base of operations in the Kyle St garden. Large wooden planters were built out of pallets. Old metal bins were repainted and given some fresh artwork before being filled with flowers. Barrels were also upcycled, filled with soil and planted up with larger shrubs and trees.

With little money, our aim with these projects is to show what can be achieved by adding greenery to unused, or even otherwise unusable, spaces in the city. Douglas St looks set to be transformed by the fantastic, new heritage centre at Nano Nagle Place due to open this summer

and with thousands of visitors expected yearly, it would be great to improve the public space in the surrounding areas too. Equally, Cork's quays could look so much better and our latest project on George's Quay could easily be replicated in other riverside areas of the city. The Save Cork City campaign has highlighted many problems with the OPW's flood defence plans for the city recently. We share their hope that these plans will be amended to enhance the city's relationship with the river, rather than to destroy it.

Meanwhile, we'll keep going in our mission to add more art and greenery to the city. If you happen to pass our work, be sure to stop and appreciate the work of our volunteers.

Along with this project we'll also be working on lots of other urban gardening and street art projects in the coming months. Keep up to date with our work @MadAboutCork on Facebook, twitter and Instagram, and to get involved email info@madaboutcork.