

# Building together

**Bulletin 9**  
Winter 2010

 **Norfolk** County Council



**every child matters**  
a brighter future for Norfolk's young people

**nps**  **group**

## Two new **Norfolk Schools** open for learning



Sophie, Countess of Wessex visited Norfolk on the 22 July to open the new £12.1m Churchill Park School, the first new complex needs school in the county to be commissioned by Norfolk County Council under the Special Needs Strategy.

The Countess was introduced to the project team including NPS who designed the building; which includes a hydrotherapy pool, sensory rooms and garden, a soft play area, adventure playground, nursery and sixth form provision. The teaching and practical spaces have been designed to maximise natural light and natural ventilation and the building has many sustainability features including low energy heating and external lighting.



**Also in the west of the county St Michael's VC primary school was opened by the Bishop of Lynn on 30 September 2010** – the Norfolk County Council commissioned school has been occupied by staff and pupils from June 2010. The single storey contemporary style building designed by NPS, is part of the NORA (Nar/Ouse Regeneration Area) development and is designed to complement its surroundings and provide community facilities. It consists of

7 classrooms, a hall and learning resource centre with shared community use. It also incorporates a children's centre and a shared reception and exhibition space, as well as an all weather multi purpose games area and changing rooms which will also benefit the community. A green approach has guided many aspects of the design process with energy saving features and a highly efficient thermal construction.



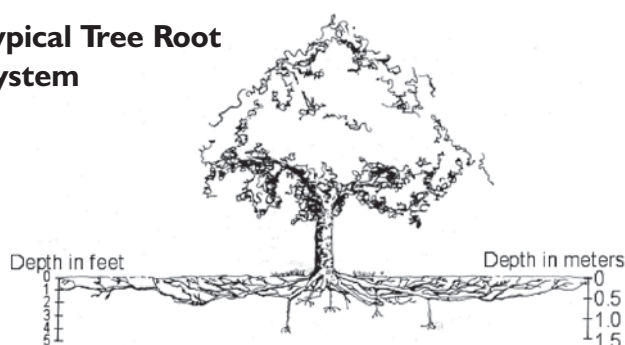
# The Green Room

## Managing tree roots on a school site

We all know the environmental, wildlife and landscape values that trees provide for us – but do we ever consider that the most important part of a tree is completely out of sight underground?

Contrary to popular belief, tree root systems are not a mirror image of the branches and most trees do not have a tap root. The typical pattern of a tree root system is more like a wine glass. The majority of roots (90%) will be found where moisture and oxygen levels are highest in the top 600mm of soil. Roots can extend outwards from the tree for a distance of up to 3 times the height, depending on the species. Typically they extend at least one and a quarter times the height.

### Typical Tree Root System



### Damaging roots

- If structural roots are cut, a tree could become unstable and fall over
- Severing one major root can cause the loss of 15-20% of a root system
- Severing roots will cause slow dieback and eventual death or failure of a mature tree if more than 30% of a tree's root system is destroyed
- Severing roots will reduce the amount of water and nutrients a tree can absorb, therefore putting it under stress, making it more likely to die back and be more prone to pests and diseases
- Damaged roots can be invaded by fungal organisms that can cause root and stem decay, leading to future structural and stability problems

### How to protect roots

- Seek advice from NCC's Arboricultural Officers
- Look at the "Tree Information" page on the intranet, particularly the section "Prevention of damage to Trees and NJUG Guidelines" (see link)
- Never cut roots more than 25mm in diameter without advice from the Arboricultural Officers
- Do not excavate below trees – there are many methods of "no-dig" construction to allow paths and roads to be laid under trees without damaging their root systems

## What you need to do

Schools need to ensure that they have a member of staff who has been on the 'Basic Tree Inspection' course or that they get NORSE or another tree specialist to routinely inspect trees. To find out more about the course, schools should contact Anne Crotty or Tom Russell-Grant. Contact details below.

### Further reading

Norfolk County Council has a Tree Safety Management Policy that was adopted in Nov 2009. This policy applies to all Norfolk County Council owned trees.

The National Guidelines that explain how construction can be carried out close to tree roots can be found on NCC's Tree Information page on the intranet:

<http://intranet.norfolk.gov.uk/PAndT/grouppages/operations/treeinformation/treeinfo.asp>

### Arboricultural Officers

Anne Crotty, Arboricultural Officer  
[anne.crotty@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:anne.crotty@norfolk.gov.uk)

Tom Russell-Grant, Assistant Arboricultural Officer  
[tom.russellgrant@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:tom.russellgrant@norfolk.gov.uk)

Tina Wakefield, Arboricultural Technician  
[tina.wakefield@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:tina.wakefield@norfolk.gov.uk)

### Phone 01603 222118

Biodiversity and Countryside Team  
Environment, Transport and Development Department  
Room 301. County Hall. Martineau Lane.  
Norwich.NR1 2SG



# Artists working together to **reduce** carbon

## STOP PRESS

**While thinking about carbon reduction it is timely to remind schools to think about their heating management over the winter and holiday period. It is important to match school operations and occupancy levels and set the heating controls so that they protect against frost but are not left on too high over the holiday period**

Norfolk County Council has a statutory obligation to reduce its carbon emissions and has committed to an ambitious target of a 25% reduction by 2014. 60% of the Council's footprint is associated with school buildings so there is a big part for schools to play. We know that reducing energy consumption and carbon emissions will not only result in significant financial savings, especially in the face of escalating energy costs, but will also have a positive impact on the health and quality of life of our communities and of our environment.

The County Council will be a participant in the Carbon Reduction Commitment Energy Efficiency Scheme (CRC). The scheme is being simplified as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review to reduce the burden on the organisations involved. The County Council will be required to buy carbon allowances and first sale of these allowances will be in 2012, rather than 2011 but will cover the financial year 2011/12. The revenue generated by the Government from the sale of allowances will no longer be recycled as bonuses and penalties amongst participants based on their performance. The monies generated (£12 per tonne of carbon emitted) will go straight to the Treasury to support wider public finances.

Many local initiatives can make a contribution to reducing the County's carbon footprint. A new award-winning initiative to support and inspire behavioural changes to meet carbon reduction targets and to make sustainable living both desirable and achievable, has been developed. Artists for Climate Change has become the first initiative in the eastern region to be awarded the London 2012 Inspire Mark for Sustainability. The Artists for Climate Change directory, which is being sent to all Norfolk schools showcases inclusive creative learning programmes designed by local artists to inspire the behavioural change necessary to lower our carbon emissions.

The artists and partners have given their own time voluntarily to develop the programme, representing exemplary cross-sector partnership working. The programmes cost between £170 and £200 pounds per day. Schools may wish to consider an artist coming into school to undertake a programme instead of planned supply cover, where appropriate. If you would like to work with an artist in your school to inspire the change in behaviour necessary for carbon reduction you should contact the artists directly.

For information on the Artists for Climate Change project please contact:  
Anna McCarthy, Creative Projects Officer, Children's Services  
Tel: 01603 638099 [anna.mccarthy@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:anna.mccarthy@norfolk.gov.uk)

Artists for  
Climate  
Change 



# Getting on site

**It's often thought that a building project starts once work begins on site. In reality the hardest part of a building project is actually getting on site.**

Work has recently started on site to build a new Church of England voluntary aided school at Little Plumstead. This has been a particularly complex project which has taken five years to get to this point. This length of time is unusual but it provides an example of the type of issues that can be faced and the need for partners to work together to achieve a common aim. Issues that had to be worked through included:

- Finding the right site
- A funding deadline
- Agreeing and funding the infrastructure
- Synchronising and obtaining planning permission
- The unexpected!

Finding an appropriate site for a new school can be difficult if it needs to be on land not owned by the County Council. Usually on a new housing development, a site is earmarked for a new school but it may not be in the best location. This happened at Little Plumstead and a better school site was agreed, but firstly the landowner needed to get planning permission to build on the original site reserved for the school. Outline permission was granted, but the County Council could not relinquish its entitlement to the reserved site until it had secured planning permission to build on the new site.

The Little Plumstead project then hit an unexpected problem, the company that was going to develop the site for the landowner went into receivership. This happened before things like roads and services to the new site had been agreed, crucial for getting planning permission for a new school. Whilst all this was going on, the deadline for spending the grant to build the new school was drawing nearer and it had been made clear by central government that this deadline would not be extended.

After much negotiation, funding for roads and services was provided by NCC and a new developer who wanted to build on the originally reserved school site. At the same time, NCC had to negotiate with a health trust to relocate elsewhere some of its provision in buildings next to the school. Only once these issues had been resolved could planning permission for the new school on the new site be applied for.

Planning permission has now been received and all the transfers of ownership have taken place. The project is on site and the new school is due to open early in the Autumn Term 2011. This is thanks to the hard work of all parties involved including the school governors, the Diocese of Norwich, the landowner, the District Council, NPS, NCC Children's Services and the new housing developer. A real team effort!





## Eliza and Tyla win our Norfolk Show competition

Our NPS stand at this year's Norfolk Show was inundated with youngsters who wanted to take part in the two competitions we were running.

Youngsters of all ages took part in the 'Guess the age of the school building' and our mystery colouring competition where students were invited to decorate a paper 'brick' and place it on the outline of a school building – depending on where they placed the brick they could be our prize winner. Eliza Cock from Hockwold Primary won the building competition and Tyla Smith of St Nicholas Priory Junior School won the mystery brick one - with both of their schools receiving £200 to be spent on books or school equipment. Well done Eliza and Tyla!

*Eliza Cock one of our prize winners at the Norfolk Show*



## Meet the Interior Design Professional

The role of the Interior Design Team on a construction project varies widely depending on the client requirements. Our projects can range from arranging small moves and decants between different premises to designing large multimillion pound developments and refurbishments.



An interior designer can both lead a project or work together in a wider design team to offer a range of services. We are often required to scrutinise general internal spatial layouts looking at relationships, dimensions and services within the existing and proposed spaces and develop these themes further. We also help end users evaluate their individual needs for all fit out elements such as furniture and specialist equipment.

As an interior designer you are responsible for the coordination of a range of design issues. It is paramount to work together with all the different disciplines within the team to ensure the final design delivers a building the client can use for years to come. Our design solutions are the conclusion of many meetings with end users

to ensure their requirements are addressed, and that budgets, site restraints, other design strategies and the overall programme is considered carefully.

There is an increasing awareness of the importance of having an interior designer on major construction projects and interior designers and spatial planners are often involved from the initial concepts of a project. The spaces inside the building are the ones in which the users spend the majority of their time and it is so important to ensure that there is a considered response to the design of flexible and future thinking layouts.

For more information contact:  
Rose Jenkins (Interior Design Manager)

[Rose.jenkins@nps.co.uk](mailto:Rose.jenkins@nps.co.uk)

## Contact us

If you have any suggestions for future articles – then please get in touch with the editors:

**Micaela Holmes**  
NPS Group  
(01603) 706065 or e-mail:  
[Micaela.Holmes@nps.co.uk](mailto:Micaela.Holmes@nps.co.uk)

**Jo Ashford**  
Children's Services  
(01603) 222246 or e-mail:  
[Jo.ashford@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:Jo.ashford@norfolk.gov.uk)