

# **The Art of Salisbury River Park**

**Exhibition in Large Text**

## AS YOU WALK INTO THE GALLERY SPACE HEAD TO THE RIGHT TOWARDS THE LARGE WELCOME PANEL

The new Salisbury River Park has inspired a series of unique artworks for the city. This exhibition will help you understand how and why the artworks have been created and what art can add to major developments like the River Park.

We hope it enables you to:

**Explore.** and learn about the art of the new Salisbury River Park - the artists, their inspirations and how the artworks have been made.

**Reconnect.** with the rivers in our City, their habitats, flora and fauna.

**Celebrate.** and be proud of this unique part of Salisbury's identity.

### **With thanks to:**

Jane Edden, Fred Fieber, Francesca Mclean, Tech Moon, Zac Newham, Karen Wimhurst, Curious Origins, Sue Martin, Michael Illas, Green Play Project, Brunton Media, Andy Wallis (Environment Agency); Sarah Gregson, Marc Read, Mostyn Coombes (Salisbury City Council); Tamzin Earley, David Milton, Dr Emily Dunbar, Philip Tomes, Naomi Fewins (Wiltshire Council); Marie Martyn, Antony Parry, Sarah Rouse, Wendy Richards (AtkinsRéalis), Pupils and staff from Sarum St Paul's CofE Primary School, Exeter House School, South Wilts Grammar School; DIGS (Disability Interest Group Salisbury). The images used in the exhibition are courtesy of the artists, Michael Illas Photography and Green Play Project unless otherwise stated.

## **Fishy Facts:**

Look for the salmon around the gallery to discover some fascinating and fun facts about the flora and fauna found in the River Park.

**Explore.**

**Reconnect.**

**Celebrate.**

Studio Response Logo

Salisbury River Park Logo

Environment Agency Logo

Wiltshire Council Logo

Salisbury City Council Logo

**Image of the Map showing the locations of the Artists pieces features in the Exhibition.**

# **01**

## **Salisbury River Park**

### **Colour Palette by Zac Newham**

A vibrant palette inspired by the River Avon's natural colours and created by artist Zac Newham working with local school pupils.

#### **Inspiration**

26 pupils from Year 10 of South Wilts Grammar School took part in colour studies of the River Avon and its bankside environment led by Zac. Inspired by their observations, the pupils isolated different colours from the river's ecology.

## **How it was Made**

On the river walk the pupils coloured in their drawings with watercolours and pencils. They gave their new colours names which were relevant to where they had seen them or to what had inspired them, for example “Crowfoot Frond Green” and “Goat Willow Grey.” Zac then extracted the colours from the pupils’ drawings to create the final palette.

## **Connection to the River and the City**

Zac has used the colour palette across all of the artworks he has designed and created for the River Park. It is unique to the River Avon. There are lots of ways it could be used in future arts projects across the River Park and further afield across the city.

## **Materials:**

Watercolours & pencils. The palette itself was created digitally

## **Size:**

There are 63 named colours on the palette

## **Community Participants:**

26 students from year 10 of South Wilts Grammar School

## **Did you know**

Zac used to be an aquatic ecologist before he became an artist.

Zac Newham says

“It was fantastic to watch the students at work, looking at everything in minute detail to pick out one or two colours they wanted. They didn’t have to look for too long before realising that water definitely isn’t just blue and plants can be many more colours than green. As you can see, they ended up giving me a riot of colours to work with!”

**IMAGE PANELS x 3 Showing the origins of the colour palette, the walk and drawings and finally the colour palette.**

## **River Rainbow - Curious Origins**

**LARGE WALL VINYL: A river shaped rainbow made up of the 63 colours from the colour palette, including the names which the pupils came up with.**

### **Inspiration**

Rivers have played a vital role in the origin of our city. They shaped the farmland and countryside around it and crucially provided a much needed water source for the new Cathedral, after its move from Old Sarum. Centuries on our city continues to grow and the rivers continue to flow.

These water ways are a reminder of the city's long history in this location and should be cherished and protected - as both a key connection to our past and a vital link to our future. I believe reconnecting with nature and the landscape will help us build a deeper appreciation for it and enable us to all learn from it and flourish together.

I was inspired by the River Park Colour Palette and have created a piece of work which celebrates the full spectrum of flora and fauna found along our river banks, from the Bindweed to the Damselfly!

**I invite you to be curious, to reconnect with our rivers and appreciate their habitats and wildlife. Let's learn and explore and care for them all - because when they flourish we do too.**

### **About Curious Origins**

Curious Origins is a Design & Art Studio, based in Tisbury, Wiltshire - run by me, Bexi Harris. I'm driven by a desire to live, work and create more sustainably, and am committed to being a force for good in all that I do. I love working with like minded businesses who put planet + people first and was delighted to be asked to design this exhibition for Studio Response.

Like me, Curious Origins has its roots in both art and design, so the fruit is a curious hybrid of functional/beautiful design, thought-provoking original pieces and carefully considered ideas. As an experienced Graphic Designer I specialise in logo design, brand development, print design and creative thinking. When I'm not designing or screen-printing at home, I love exploring the outdoors, either on foot or on two wheels, and I'm endlessly fascinated by the origin of landscapes and the universe.

If you're curious to know more about what I do, head over to Instagram and search for Curious\_Origins

## 02

# River of Life and Play Boards by Zac Newham

Artworks by Zac Newham that are designed to make the River Park's ecology accessible and fun.

### Inspiration

Zac's artworks for the River Park's new play area are inspired by the River Avon's unique chalk stream habitat and the array of species it holds. Zac spent time running art and ecology workshops with local schools. At Sarum St Paul's CofE Primary School he worked with pupils to help them identify and understand more about the different species that live in the river and to find out how they would like to see the natural environment of the River Park incorporated into the play area. At Exeter House School Zac explored how different textures, colours and sounds could be used to bring more sensory elements into the play area.

### How they were Made

The River of Life is a striking, large-scale artwork featuring over 1,000 different cut-outs of species that live in the river that were all

cut out by Zac by hand. They have been painted different colours from the River Park Colour Palette and mounted onto seven robinia wood slabs which are fixed to the back of the multi-use games area. Zac has also made a series of double-sided boards for the play area with one side giving information and the other being an interactive game. Zac used his experience in designing and building puzzles to create 3 separate river themed games. Zac's background as an aquatic ecologist helped him create the content for the other side of the boards which provides more interesting facts about the River Park.

The boards were the most complex and technically demanding of all of Zac's commissions for the River Park as they used multiple materials, many moving parts, magnets and weights, pulleys and levers.

### **Connection to the River and the City**

All of the wood used in the River of Life artwork has been sourced locally or donated from a National Trust property at which Zac often works.

Zac made a smaller version of the River of Life for Sarum St Paul's CofE Primary School as a test. This artwork is a permanent visual link between the school and the River Park.

### **Location:**

Ashley Road Open Space

### **Materials:** Multiple Materials

**Size:** The River of Life is 15 metres long.

**Participants:** 230 pupils from both Sarum St Paul's CofE Primary

School and Exeter House School

### **Did you know**

The robinia wood slabs used in the River of Life have been treated using the Japanese “shou sugi ban” method, which is an ancient technique using fire to char the wood to make it more weather resistant.

### **PLAY BOARD IMAGE: Zac stood in front of one of his ‘River of Life’ walls**

Zac made this interactive play board for Exeter House School after running workshops with some of its pupils. Designing and making the board informed Zac’s ideas and designs for the boards in the play area.

## **03**

### **Play in The River Park by Green Play Project**

Inspired by the local wildlife, habitats, landscape and chalk stream river, the new playground and games area celebrate Salisbury’s unique ecology.

#### **Overview**

Designing play spaces is an exercise in imagination and careful listening. By considering the needs of multiple ages, genders, neurodivergent users and those with limited mobility, we have created two sites bursting with life and room for a diverse array of activities and people.



Consultations with the Environment Agency and the Disability Interest Group of Salisbury (DIGS) influenced the specific choice of equipment used, ensuring the play offering is suitable to the unique environment of the site and is accessible to all.

### **Ashley Road Play Area**

Central to the design of the play area is a bold blue path that flows through the site. It takes inspiration from the natural formation of a river and allows for a gradual revealing of views and the discovery of different play environments.

Fantastic drawings of animals, patterns and plants by students from Sarum St Paul's CofE Primary School are carved and stencilled onto the play area's climbing structure. They even inspired the expressions and poses of the 3D carved animals, scattered within the site. (Find the student's artworks in the sketchbooks!)

### **Fisherton Recreation Ground**

With the additional help of wonderful suggestions from Sarum St Paul's CofE Primary School students, we have reimagined the traditional multi-use games area, adding climbing posts, dodgeball markers, a ping-pong table, and hopscotch markings.

We were also fortunate to receive advice from Christy Penny, former Salisbury Sparks basketball player, on the best basketball hoops and court markings.

The goal wall was designed in collaboration with Zac Newham to incorporate the colours of the surrounding natural landscape.

### **Location:**

Fisherton Recreation Ground and Ashley Road Play Area

**Materials:**

Robinia, oak, larch, stainless steel, rope and more!

**Installation Build Time:**

Approximately 11 weeks

**In collaboration with:**

Zac Newham, Environment Agency, KIER and Atkins

**Did you know**

The flagship climbing structure in the play area is called the Water Vole Towers and was inspired by the habitat of the Water Vole.

**IMAGE PANELS: Two large illustrations of the new play areas and a childrens 'Story Chair' complete with books about the inspiration and process of designing the play areas**

**Come and take a seat in Green Play Project's magical Story Chair.**

## **The Story Chair by Green Play Project**

Green Play Project's natural play equipment is all handmade by their workshop team in Bristol from slow grown, untreated Robinia timber. That same timber has been used to make this beautiful chair. The drawings featured are direct references to the fantastic drawings of competition winners from Sarum St Paul's CofE Primary School.

## **Did you know**

The paint colours used on the chair are the same colours as the new play equipment. These colours are from the nature-inspired palette, created by students from South Wilts Grammar School.

Open up the sketchbooks to see the design process of Ashley Road Play Area and Fisherton Recreation Ground unfold!

# **04**

## **Illustrations**

### **by Francesca Mclean**

A series of flora and fauna illustrations created for the River Park's information boards.

#### **Inspiration**

Francesca is an illustrator and designer from just outside Salisbury, on the edge of the New Forest, with a love for the natural world. She was commissioned to produce 30 illustrations for the information boards throughout the River Park that tell you about the area and help you find your way around.

Francesca has illustrated some of the mammals, fish, insects, trees and other vegetation that can be found in and around the River Park, helping us to see in detail the natural world that surrounds us.

#### **How they were Made**

Francesca worked closely with wildlife experts to make sure her illustrations were an accurate portrayal and with the team

responsible for designing the boards to make sure her illustrations met their requirements. She first made sketches and then added in more detail and colour. Francesca worked digitally which made it easier for her illustrations to be incorporated into the design work for the boards themselves.

### **Connection to the River and the City**

Francesca's illustrations enable people to identify the River Park's special flora and fauna as they walk around it.

### **Location:**

Throughout the River Park

### **Materials:**

Digital illustrations

### **Size:**

30 A4 Illustrations

### **Design time:**

8 weeks

### **Did you know**

Francesca also designed the fishy facts that are on display in the exhibition and the bookmarks you can collect for completing the River Park mini arts trail.

**IMAGE PANELS: 30 large illustrations of mammals, fish, trees, plants insects found along the local river banks and used on the way finding panels around the Salisbury River Park.**

# 05

## **Coach Park Mural by Fred Fieber**

This mural at the coach park brings the flora and fauna of the River Park into the heart of the city.

### **Inspiration**

The River Avon is a designated Special Area of Conservation. This means it is an important and high quality conservation site that is protected. Fred's mural shows 18 different species that are found in or around the River Avon, including insects, mammals, fish and plants.

### **How it was Made**

Fred is a Salisbury based artist and is well known for painting other artworks around the city including the Milford Street mural. Fred's canvas for this artwork is the coach park's toilet block. After designing the mural he painted directly onto the building's walls using a water-based exterior paint. Once finished the mural was varnished with an anti-graffiti coating to protect it.

### **Connection to the River and the City**

The coach park toilet block did not provide an attractive or welcoming sight for people arriving at Salisbury by coach or for people walking nearby. Fred's vibrant mural makes an instant impression. It improves the appearance of the building and shows people that they are close to an area of natural beauty which is worth exploring.

Fred Fieber says

“I really enjoyed the work on the River Park mural. It is always rewarding during the process interacting with the public and their positivity towards the project.”

**Location:**

Coach Park, Salisbury City Centre

**Materials:**

Exterior paint

**Size:**

90 metres squared

**Time on Site:**

6 weeks

**Did you know**

Fred has used colours from the Salisbury River Park Colour Palette as the background to the mural.

**IMAGE PANELS - Two photographs of Freds work on the Coach Park toilet block.**

## 06

# Central Car Park Mural by Tech Moon

Tech Moon's mural brings the wow factor to the city's Central Car Park.

### **Inspiration**

Tech Moon's striking artwork transforms the walls of the toilet block in the Central Car Park, with each wall giving pride of place to a native species that can be found in Salisbury's rivers– the European Otter, Atlantic Salmon, Kingfisher, Grey Heron and the Banded Demoiselle, which is a type of Damselfly.

### **How it was Made**

The first step was to complete the intricate design work. The building's walls were primed with a masonry paint and then Tech Moon spray painted the designs onto the walls.

### **Connection to the River and the City**

Tech Moon uses the five sides of the building to represent the five rivers of Salisbury: the Avon, Bourne, Ebble, Nadder and Wylye. The mural's prominent position encourages people to not only visit the city centre but the River Park too.

### **Tech Moon says**

“It's been great meeting the people of Salisbury while painting this over the last 2 months and hearing such a positive response from them has made this all worth it.”

### **Location:**

Central Car Park, Salisbury City Centre

**Materials:**

Spray Paint

**Size:**

120metres squared

**Time on Site:**

8 weeks

**Did you know**

The large gold flowers in the mural are representations of the watercress and yellow flag iris which grow in the River Park.

**IMAGE PANELS - Two photographs of Tech Moons work on the Central Car Park toilets.**

## 07

### **Seating and Willow Bulb Sculpture by Zac Newham**

These functional artworks made of natural materials provide a fun place to meet and a quiet space to connect with nature.

**Inspiration**

Local artist Zac Newham has made three fish-inspired picnic benches and a living willow bulb sculpture which provides a low-sensory space where people can rest and calmly connect with nature.



During the design process, Zac spoke to local residents and groups such as DIGS (Disability Interest Group Salisbury) and Exeter House School and ran model making workshops at South Wilts Grammar School to understand how his functional artworks could meet the needs of a wide variety of people.

### **How they were Made**

The picnic benches have all been made out of robinia (black locust) wood from two trees that came down in Churchill Gardens and were kindly donated by Salisbury City Council. All of the oak used for the table and bench footings came from a traditionally managed local forest on the outskirts of the city.

The willow bulb sculpture was made from cuttings from several willow trees in the local area, including some from within the River Park. Zac will continue to shape and weave the living sculpture with the help of the local scout group so that it keeps its form and develops more rigidity over time.

### **Connection to the River and the City**

The picnic benches represent the eel, grayling and the salmon. No piece of wood travelled more than 10 miles before being made into the benches.

Zac Newham says

“For me, making the Bulb has been one of the absolute highlights of the whole project. I couldn’t pass up the opportunity to design and literally “bring to life” a piece of art made out of trees!”

### **Location:**

Near the community orchard at Ashley Road Open Space

**Materials:**

*Picnic benches:* oak trunks, robinia slabs, resin

*Willow bulb:* weeping willow

(the internal, permanent structure), crack willow

(the external, temporary frame), robinia slabs and pine timber

(the temporary benches)

**Size:**

*Benches:* 3 benches per round table (1.5m diameter)

*Willow bulb:* 5 metres tall, 5 metres diameter

**Build time:**

*Benches:* 3 months

*Willow bulb sculpture:* 3 weeks

**Did you know**

In around 5 years the trunks of the willow bulb sculpture should be strong enough to support the weight of people.

**IMAGES of the benches being built and cardboard models of the seats created by pupils earlier in the process.**

**LARGE IMAGE PANEL - A 3D render of the of the Willow Bulb.**

**08****Fleeting****by Jane Edden**

The sculpture is inspired by the fleeting glimpses of wings that we see when trying to observe insects in flight.

## **Inspiration**

Insects are almost impossible to see in detail when they are in flight. They are there ... then gone... flitting about. They don't stay still long enough to allow us to study them clearly so the beautiful structures of their wings are lost to us.

The sculpture is informed by Jane's investigations into the detailed vascular structure or network of veins that make up an insect's wing. Scaling up the wings gives us the chance to see their intricate, natural forms.

## **How it was Made**

Jane worked with metal fabricators Benson-Sedgwick Engineering Ltd to make the sculpture. It is made of 6 panels of 8mm weathering steel which have been welded together. The panels have been laser cut to show the structure of the wings.

Over time the weathering steel will develop a complex rust-coloured protective layer called a patina.

## **Connection to the River and the City**

The sculpture represents the wings of two species that are found near the chalk streams of the River Avon: the Green Drake Mayfly and the Common Darter Dragonfly.

As you walk around the sculpture there are four places where the image will resolve to show a complete pair of wings for each insect.

## **Location:**

Pocket Park near Mill Stream Approach

## **Materials:**

8mm weathering steel

**Size:**

3.72 metres long x 2.35 metres high

**Build Time:**

3 Months

**Did you know**

The sculpture weighs around 545kg

Jane Edden says

“The ideas behind the Fleeting sculpture come from looking at 2 common insects found on the River Avon. With ideas of unfolding and revealing, metamorphosing, and ideas of representing the wings by cut outs, so that the drawings of the wings is created by what is not there, the air the insects fly in.”

**MINI MODELS IN CASE:****Maquettes for Fleeting sculpture**

These small models are some of the tests and try outs that the artist Jane Edden made while designing the full sized Fleeting sculpture now installed in the River Park. The full size sculpture is 3.7 metres long and 2.35 metres tall.

**LARGE HANGING MOCK:****Large-scale test model**

Made by Jane Edden as a test for the Fleeting sculpture to visualize the hole sizes needed to represent the insect wings on a large scale.

# 09

## **Becoming River by Karen Wimhurst**

A series of short musical pieces inspired by the Salisbury River Park and the Avon Valley Nature Reserve.

### **Play me!**

Use the headphones and press the button below to listen to Karen's specially composed music which is inspired by the River Park's habitats, flora and fauna.

### **Inspiration**

Karen has researched the River Avon and its habitats to create a series of 8 musical pieces. They are called: Wetlands, Sky River, They are Busy, Night River, Warble, Flood, Spiral, and The Salmon's Leap. They are varied and intriguing, with each piece being a different "sound world."

### **How they were Made**

Recordings were made on site while walking at dawn at the River Park and the Avon Valley Nature Reserve, as well as underwater recordings made by Adrian Newton. The underwater recordings were made at a number of locations along the River Avon using a pair of hydrophones suspended from fishing rods. Hydrophones are special underwater microphones that are sensitive enough to detect a variety of sounds made by aquatic plants and invertebrates which are found in chalk rivers such as the Avon. All of these recordings have been integrated into a series of short, 2 minute compositions.

## **Connection to the River and the City**

These compositions are a wonderful way for people to experience life on, in, and around the River Avon. They are available online so that people from far and wide can enjoy hearing a musical representation of this unique part of Salisbury.

## **Featured Musicians:**

Ed Bersey - percussion, bass; Julia Blinko - soprano; Emily Burrige - cello; Paul Hutchinson - accordion; Ricky Romain - sitar; Robin Walter - guitar; Karen Wimhurst - vocals, clarinets, piano.

## **Did you know**

Becoming River was recorded and mastered by Sylvafield Studios in Shaftesbury.

Karen Wimhurst says

“Inspired by the aspirations of the Salisbury River Park Scheme and a wet dawn chorus walk in the nearby Avon Valley Park, these pieces are short musical glimpses exploring what it is to live within the song of the Avon.”

**IMAGE PANEL: Sound profile of Cetti's Warbler recorded at dawn in the Avon Valley. Nature Reserve, April 2024. And Abstract sound waves.**

## **Tracks listed below:**

### **Wetlands**

Avon Valley Nature Reserve

April 2024 and a solo dawn chorus splash in the Avon Valley Nature Reserve as the adjacent wildlife corridor and wetland restoration in the Salisbury River Park is on its way. Thrillingly, I am accompanied by a Cetti's Warbler.

## **Sky River**

Salisbury River Avon underwater recordings, dragon fly wings  
“Atmospheric rivers, sky flows, are a reminder that a river is not a bounded entity, a ribbon of water in a channel. Rivers are simply the places where water is most visible and alive. There is a river flowing through you now.” Amy-Jane Beer *The Flow*

## **They Are Busy**

Salisbury River Avon underwater recordings  
Listening in underwater..... there's a whole scene going on as we two legs stroll by along the banks. Water beetles, nibbling fish, invertebrates and many unknowns all getting on with life.

## **Night River**

*Salisbury River Avon underwater recordings Daubenton and Pipistrelle bats*  
As dusk draws in, other creatures inhabit the river on wing. Agile, skimming the water, flitting, twisting, turning, half glimpsed in the night.

## **Warble**

Avon Valley Nature Reserve, reed warbler, reed bunting, sedge warbler  
Swing number with lead singers from the reeds. They are waiting in the wings to make their home in Salisbury River Park's new wetlands. Listen out for their songs.

## **Flood**

Salisbury residents recently flooded. Floodwaters from Salisbury, Nepal, Bangkok  
The Salisbury River Park scheme is striving to make Salisbury more resilient to flood waters. The failure to tackle climate change means people worldwide are increasingly suffering the devastating

destruction of floods. The sitar scale is raga miyan ki malhar which is associated with the rainy season in Northern India.\

## **Spiral**

River Avon and chalk stream recordings

Gazing into the river and watching the ripples, the curls, the vortexes, we see the forces which have created our living world. We see the same spirals in our bones, ears, fingertips, organs, all drawn by the same rhythm of flow.

## **The Salmon's Leap**

Salisbury River Avon underwater recordings, Bells of St Thomas  
This is a new dance, ready for the time when everyone gathers once a year in Salisbury to join hands and welcome the Atlantic Salmon back to their ancestral breeding grounds in the Avon.

# **Environment Agency Salisbury River Park**

The Environment Agency, in partnership with Wiltshire Council and Salisbury City Council have been constructing a River Park scheme to improve existing green space and create a new enhanced river corridor within the centre of Salisbury.

The project will reduce the flood risk to several areas within the city, so homes and businesses are better protected, whilst also providing major ecological enhancements to the vital and internationally important chalk stream habitat of the River Avon.

The works involve constructing flood embankments and flood walls, new river channels, wetland areas and flow control structures. This includes removing existing structures to enable



fish passage through the area, and improving the riverside habitat for the benefit of all species. The scheme also enhances the local green infrastructure which includes new amenity areas and play areas; and improved footpaths, cycle paths, public art, lighting, river crossings and wayfinding.

These improvements are included within the scheme to improve accessibility and well-being for visitors and residents and to help enable future regeneration. Throughout the scheme will be information boards which provide further information on the background to the project and the benefits it provides.

The project was also an opportunity to invest in local educational projects and public art, with both being used to highlight the importance of local habitats and the need for us all to look after them.

Funding for the project has been provided by the Department for Food and Rural Affairs, Swindon and Wiltshire Local Enterprise Partnership, National Highways, Wessex Regional Flood and Coastal Committee, Department for Education, Wiltshire Council, Salisbury City Council, Forestry Commission, Active Travel England and Wessex Water.

Salisbury River Park Logo  
Environment Agency Logo  
Wiltshire Council Logo  
Salisbury City Council Logo

**IMAGE PANELS X 3: One large image panel depicting a variety of images from the work so far and then two aerial shots of the land works.**

# **The Art of the Salisbury River Park**

We hope you have enjoyed learning about the art of the Salisbury River Park.

What will you do next to...

**Explore.**

**Reconnect.**

**Celebrate.**

Studio Response Logo

This exhibition is printed on Xanita Board

A sustainable fibreboard that is made from fibres recovered from recycled used cardboard boxes.

Printed locally by Blackmore Ltd, Shaftesbury, Dorset

**Thank you we hope that you  
have enjoyed the exhibition**