

# the national wildflower centre knowsley

category Cultural  
Leisure  
client Landlife  
value £1.35m  
date 2000  
awards + RIBA Award 2001  
+ Civic Trust Award 2002

The Wildflower Centre is a working organisation with regenerative and ecological concerns. The Centre offers an opportunity to be more than an educational tool; it offers a means by which visitors can understand the whole ethos and process of growing wildflowers. This competition winning building is for a 160 metre long sculpted inhabited wall which extends through the Park linking the play/visitor areas with the working area of the Centre within an existing walled garden. The wall is more than simply a building. It is at once a threshold, an enclosure and a link and its character changes to become different things appropriate to different contexts within the Park.

At the east end the concrete wall is wholly permeable and lined with oak to define covered education areas. Upon entering, this palate is inverted with adjustable oak shutters cloaking an internal skin of concrete to the café bar and offices located at the west end.

An elevated boardwalk caps the wall from which the surrounding parkland and walled garden may be viewed and so extending the promenade through the Centre.

*“It’s a courageous, highly complex building for all its simple form because it offers so many different types of space... and the light is glorious.”*

Grant Luscombe,  
Director, Landlife  
*Architects’ Journal*  
8 March 2001

