

A Really Wild Lockleaze Story of Change:

Huma and Noman Shaikh

Really Wild Lockleaze is a **community-led nature recovery project** in the north Bristol suburb of Lockleaze, run by Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust. The project supports residents to make more space for nature in their gardens and on their streets. It is part of the Bristol Climate & Nature Partnership's Community Climate Action Project.

Huma Shaikh has been a Really Wild Lockleaze "Greens Champion" for the rewilding work that happened on her housing green on Landseer Avenue. This meant she took a leading role in recruiting other neighbours to take part in work. Her husband, Noman, and her three children have also all been involved. Together, Landseer Avenue residents planted a new pear tree, fruit bushes, bulbs, and some large swathes of wildflower meadow.

Before they got involved, Huma and her family were already lovers of nature, gardening without chemicals, and trying to reduce their waste as much as they could. They are also active in the Muslim Community, for example helping to run Muslim Scouts. They had previously organised "Playing Out" sessions on their street, but not since Covid.



Photo by Jon Aitken

Noman talks about their regret about losing the wildspace behind their house to house-building:

"We used to see many of nature's creatures, like hedgehogs, squirrels, foxes and so many others. The animals we used to see have all vanished. By having more trees and plants on the green, we will attract the animals again."

Noman also found the project to be helpful socially:

"I feel more confident in interacting with other people who live on my street."



Huma says the Really Wild Project has had some good impacts for her personally – especially meeting like minded neighbours, like Hannah, who has also been really involved in the project.

"They are lovely neighbours, and it's amazing getting to know that somebody nearby is thinking with the same mindset. We are coming together on the same grounds, which is really important. People believe in dividing the community on different issues, and religion can be one of them. It is really important to meet each other, and then we get to know we are all humans and think similarly."



Huma has stepped up and done interviews on camera for Really Wild Lockleaze, as well as attending an awards ceremony, where Really Wild Lockleaze was awarded WECA's Beebold Communities Award. She said she saw it as important to be a positive role model.



"I think it's important for me to step up as a Muslim Mum, and show this is something we can do. I know many Muslim neighbours who think positively about this work, but are just shy to get involved."



Their involvement with Really Wild Lockleaze, has also led to them getting involved with other community activities with Lockleaze Neighbourhood Trust, including organising a well-attended Community Iftar.

"I'm really happy the way things are going because for a time I've not been connected to the Hub much, and I always want to get involved with their community work. It's bringing me back to my local community, where I live, and where my kids are being born."

"My purpose is to invite not just Muslim people – I want the whole community to come together, and know each other, so.... we can work on common grounds."



We say take a risk like Huma & Noman, and get involved in contributing to your community – you don't know what the results will be!