



**PRESS RELEASE**

**4<sup>th</sup> June 2009**

**Ground-breaking Future Gardens unveiled  
– 200,000 visitors expected to visit 27 acre conservation attraction –  
- Emilia Fox and David Bellamy among high profile patrons -**

Today (4<sup>th</sup> June 2009) the impressive new 27 acre Future Gardens visitor attraction near St Albans was unveiled by actress and patron Emilia Fox. The pioneering conservation project, open from June to October, represents a notable achievement in the current economic environment. It is estimated that 200,000 visitors of all ages will explore the inspirational gardens over the next four months.

The focus of the event, the first of its kind in the UK, is its ongoing commitment to bio-diversity as the first phase of the £27m Butterfly World Project. It is a standard-bearer for the future as it re-establishes new wildlife habitats that have been destroyed by development. Its nectar-rich planting throughout the permanent and designer gardens offers a banquet for native species of butterflies and bees and other wildlife. The ultimate goal of the entire project is that it will flourish year on year as the permanent landscape develops.

By encouraging visitors to interact with all the gardens, Future Gardens aims to inspire and challenge visitors to think about how they can play their part in creating positive environments for wildlife. As such it is intentionally moving away from more traditional garden shows.

Marking the opening, actress Emilia Fox, a project patron says:

“The knowledge, passion and care of the team behind this project has helped create an inspirational showcase to be shared with the many thousands of people visiting Future Gardens – the first phase of Butterfly World. Butterflies are the inspiration behind this whole project and hold special memories for all of us. It is important that we hand those memories safely onto the next generation.”

The 27 acre site, designed in the shape of a giant butterfly, is masterminded by the celebrated designer Ivan Hicks. The landscape creates a series of gardens and meadow areas, developed to increase the site’s plant and animal diversity and provide a unique educational, scientific research and recreational resource. Key permanent garden features include ‘antennae’ walk-ways, a spiral ‘proboscis’ walk and a feature butterfly garden – each with specially selected nectar food plants to attract indigenous butterflies.

Clive Farrell the founder of the project adds:

“12 years ago I had a dream and sat down with landscape designers Ivan Hicks and Andrew George, drawing up our initial vision on scraps of paper. It is overwhelming to see that translated into reality today. Getting here has been quite a journey - especially in relation to the economic climate. But we’ve kept our focus on the end goal.

“We’re looking forward to seeing the project evolve, not just over the next few months but over the next few years as we progress towards the ultimate goal of establishing the largest butterfly walkthrough experience in the world.”

Future Gardens includes 12 showcase contemporary designer gardens from globally acclaimed designers as well as exciting emerging talent in the world of garden design. In a deliberate move away from high-cost show gardens, Future Gardens annual bursary scheme gives designers a budget of £25,000 to cover construction and materials. This frees them from having to secure sponsorship and ensures the selection panel are free to pick the best possible designs for the event, solely on the merit of the design. The designer gardens will change on an annual basis.

Viewed from above, the designer gardens enclosure take the form of the caterpillar of the Giant Privet Hawk Moth. Its body segments form the individual gardens.

Designer garden selection panelist, James Alexander Sinclair, garden designer, journalist and broadcaster said:

“Occasionally it is good to let the imagination soar. That is what Future Gardens is all about: to allow flights of fancy to fly and to give the offbeat room to roam. Let there be no constraints and let us throw convention to the four winds. The results are clear to see today. Visitors will be enchanted.”

- ENDS -

**For media information:**

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Pictures and multimedia presentation are available via -

<http://www.futuregardens.org/press.php>

**Notes to Editors:**

Visitor information:

**When:** 5<sup>th</sup> June to 4<sup>th</sup> October 2009

**Where:** Future Gardens  
Phase I: Butterfly World  
Miriam Lane  
Off Noke Lane  
Chiswell Green  
Herts AL2 3NY

Exit the M25 at junction 21a and head towards the A405 towards St Albans. Take the first left hand junction before the roundabout, called Noke Lane. The entrance to Future Gardens is on your right.

**Opening times:** 9.30am – 6pm seven days a week

**Ticket prices:** Adults £12.50  
Children (under 16) £5.00  
Senior/Conc £9.50  
Family (2 ad/2 ch) £32.00  
Groups (10+) ad £11/conc £8/ch £4.00 Group bookings must be made at least one week in advance.

Under 3's free

**Contact:** Tel: 01727 869203  
[visitors@futuregardens.org](mailto:visitors@futuregardens.org); [www.futuregardens.org](http://www.futuregardens.org)

Key people involved in project:

- Butterfly World Project Founder: Clive Farrell
- Co-Founder: John Calvert
- Ivan Hicks: Chief landscape designer
- Therese Lang, Director, TJM Associates Ltd
- Future Gardens selection panel:
  - James Alexander Sinclair
  - Andrew Fisher Tomlin
  - Cleve West
  - Ivan Hicks
  - Therese Lang
  - Clive Farrell
- Butterfly World Project Ltd is the company responsible for delivering **Phase I** of the Butterfly World Project.
- Project Patrons:
  - Sir David Attenborough CH FRS
  - Professor Dr David Bellamy OBE
  - The Marquess of Salisbury PC DL
  - Emilia Fox
  - The Lord Lieutenant of Hertfordshire, The Countess Verulam
  - Baroness Helena Kennedy QC
  - Professor Jeremy Thomas
  - Professor John A Pickett CBE DSc FRS
  - Martin Lane Fox FRICS VMH
  - Alan Titchmarsh MBE VMH DL
  - Rosie Boycott
  - Priscilla Rattazzi-Whittle
  - Ian Worlock
- It is anticipated that the construction of The Butterfly World biome will commence early 2010 and will take 2 years. It will be home to 10,000 tropical butterflies and moths and will include hummingbirds and other birds and insects.
- Timings:
  - **Phase I** – Future Gardens opens to public 5<sup>th</sup> June 2009 and closes on 4<sup>th</sup> Oct 2009. Also open to the public will be the ‘antennae’ walk-ways and spiral ‘proboscis’ walk, the leaf gardens and a stunning butterfly garden feature.
  - **Phase II stage I** - Future Gardens opens to the public on 28<sup>th</sup> May 2010 and closes on 3<sup>rd</sup> Oct 2010. The tropical biome will be constructed and ancillary structures and environmental controls installed. The biome will showcase tropical gardens and a live butterfly exhibit.
  - **Phase II stage II** - Anticipated 2012: Butterfly World is complete. The biome and walkthrough experience will include reproduced Mayan ruins, a vibrant living rainforest, a kaleidoscope of up to 10,000 tropical butterflies and many beautiful hummingbirds will be on display
- Sponsorship opportunities exist for this project in 2010 and beyond, interest should be directed to: Angela Harkness, Senior Commercial Director. Tel: 01442 257722
- [www.butterflyworldproject.com](http://www.butterflyworldproject.com) and [www.futuregardens.org](http://www.futuregardens.org)