

Preston Park twin elm tree – felled after 400 years due to elm disease – to be given new life

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A famous elm tree which had stood in Preston Park for more than 400 years before it had to be felled will be turned into a piece of art.

The trustees of the Secret Garden Kemp Town announced the news that the tree, which had to be felled after contaminating elm disease, would be worked on by a sculptor at the garden and become part of a major exhibition before it is returned to Preston Park.



Sculptor, Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva with the stem of the Elm tree. Photo by Nicola Coleby

The trustees explained: "The Brighton 'Preston Twins', considered to be two of the largest and oldest elms in the world, were planted around 1613, during James I's reign, when Shakespeare's plays were first being performed.

"Until 2019, the last of their kind, they stood majestically together, having avoided contamination by elm disease through the stringent control measures adopted by Brighton & Hove City Council. The city is host to the National Elm Collection, thanks to the Council's arboreal expertise.