

Lifestyle

In pictures: The moment the Preston twin elm tree was carefully transported to be turned into art

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A treasured elm tree which had to be felled after standing in Preston Park for more than 400 years has been carefully transported ready to be given a new life.

The tree was safely transported from the Waterhall Sports Ground, where it was winched onto a flatback lorry, and was then carefully lifted by crane into the Secret Garden in Kemp Town, on Monday.



The elm tree, which had to be felled in 2019 after contaminating elm disease, will be worked on from the Secret Garden by acclaimed sculptor, Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva, and will become part of a major sculpture exhibition next year. It is hoped it will then be returned to **Preston Park**, where its twin elm tree still stands.

Speaking about the transportation, the Secret Garden trustees said it was a 'very skilled job – and quite dramatic'. They added: "A special brace was made to support the tree, and the transportation was managed by Alister Peters of Connick Tree Care, Marc Thomas of Millimetre and Nigel Riley Crane and Haulage together with colleagues, all of whom worked very closely with Elpida Hadzi-Vasileva. The team showed incredible expertise as they craned the tree over the tall open gates of the Secret Garden as it was too wide to go through the gates themselves. It was then eased down the entrance slope and is now standing upright, ready for Elpida to get to work."

It has been a joint effort to ensure the tree will get a new lease of life. Alister Peters, a consultant for Connick Tree Care, who had been seconded to the council, was the one who approached Elpida. Elpida was happy to help but needed more space to complete the work. She approached Gavin Henderson, chairman of the Secret Garden Kemp Town, for which she was already creating a new piece for the exhibition in Spring 2022. Gavin was delighted for Elpida to work on the elm at the secure garden and so the transportation plan was put in place. There will be some openings of the garden during the summer so that visitors can see Elpida at work. For further information, visit: www.secretgardenkemptown.co.uk





