

THE GREAT GREEN EXPOSITION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 2026

The Great Green Exposition

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1 | Executive Summary

Who

The Great Green Exposition (GGX) is a landmark initiative of *The Rhizome Institute*, a U.S.-based non-profit dedicated to building an optimistic, pragmatic future for environmentalism and urbanism. Led by an accomplished team of designers, planners, and cultural visionaries, GGX brings together decades of expertise in large-scale placemaking, sustainable architecture, and event production. Founders include philanthropist and environmental leader **Bob Chapman** and **Lady Caroline Percy** of Syon Park, joined by internationally recognized designer **Lew Oliver** and a multidisciplinary leadership team with proven track records in delivering transformative projects.

Founders: Bob Chapman and Lady Caroline Percy

Designer: Lew Oliver and Company

Leadership: Nicholas Chrapliwy, William Barber III,
Lady Caroline Percy, Lew Oliver, Bob Chapman

Media: William Austin Smith, Julie Wilde,
Bradley Martin, JJ Zannetta

Education: Aaron Sebens

Operations: Donna Dodd

What

The Great Green Exposition will be a once-in-a-generation public event showcasing the future of sustainable living, regenerative design, and human-scale urbanism. For several weeks in late summer to early autumn 2027, the grounds of historic Syon Park in London will be transformed into a full-scale, walkable **temporary English hamlet** — conceived by Lew Oliver Inc. and constructed using locally sourced, modular structures that will be repurposed after the event.

Within this living village, over 110 pavilions will host leading businesses, innovators, artisans, and non-profits working toward a greener future. Visitors will encounter immersive exhibits, interactive workshops, live performances, and cultural programming for all ages — blending environmental solutions with the joy, beauty, and conviviality of great public space.

When

The Great Green Exposition will take place from the late summer to the early autumn of 2027.

Where

Syon Park, the 500-year-old London estate of the Duke of Northumberland, just ten minutes from Heathrow Airport. GGX will utilize thirty acres of its parkland, with six acres dedicated to the central English Hamlet.

How

By uniting world-class designers, craftspeople, innovators, educators, and thought leaders, The Great Green Exposition will demonstrate regenerative building technologies, sustainable urban design, and new cultural narratives, not as abstract concepts, but as tangible, walkable reality. The modular village model ensures the event leaves a legacy: structures will be relocated and reused, ideas will be documented and shared globally, and new partnerships will continue beyond 2027.

Why

We face urgent global challenges like a rapidly changing climate, the depletion of natural resources, and polarizing social fragmentation that demand not just policy responses, but **compelling visions of how life could be better.**

The Great Green Exposition is designed to inspire and equip both the public and professionals with actionable, hopeful models for a thriving, sustainable future. It is an experiential answer to the question: *If we built our communities for beauty, ecological harmony, and human connection — what would they look like?*

2 | The Big Picture

Mission, Vision, Principles, Philosophy, Narrative

Mission

The Great Green Exposition exists to change how the world thinks about building a sustainable future. Our purpose is simple and serious: to bring together the public and professionals in a setting that sparks curiosity, exchange, and collaboration. In this place — neither conference hall nor trade fair, but a living village — ideas will be tried, touched, and tested. The aim is not merely to talk about a better world, but to show what it looks like and how we can build it together.

Vision

We picture a future in which our towns and cities grow in concert with the landscapes around them, where streets are shaped for people, not just for traffic, and where beauty is treated not as a luxury, but as a civic duty.

For several weeks in late summer and early autumn of 2027, Syon Park will hold a working model of that future. Its parklands will give way to a complete, walkable hamlet, built with materials and methods that favor both the planet and the people who inhabit it. Visitors will be able to wander from one end to the other, moving from shaded squares to busy workshops, seeing for themselves how sustainability can be quicker, more affordable, and more delightful than its opposite.

Those who work in the field — architects, planners, builders, municipal leaders, artisans — will come to present their ideas and to learn from each other. They will leave with tested models and practical solutions to carry back to their own communities. Ordinary visitors will carry something just as important: the conviction that the future need not be a compromise between beauty and survival.

Principles

Our work is guided by four interwoven environments — the **built**, the **natural**, the **social**, and the **temporal**. We treat these not as separate silos but as parts of a single conversation, and our principles flow from that belief:

Build for beauty — We believe beautiful places invite stewardship and pride.

Work with nature — Regeneration begins with respect for living systems.

Foster connection — Communities thrive when people know and trust one another.

Think in centuries — Our work honors the long arc of time.

Philosophy

The environmentalism of the twentieth century was forged in urgency. It drew hard lines, raised warning flags, and did what its leaders thought was necessary. But the conditions have changed, and so must the tone.

We do not believe people can be persuaded to live well by being told to live less. Nor do we believe sustainability will succeed if it asks people to trade away beauty, comfort, or prosperity. The truth is that most people want a future that feels better than the present, not simply one that is less harmful. Our task is to prove that such a future is possible and that it works in everyone's interest.

The Exposition will make that case in the most direct way: by building it. It will not be another abstract proposal or sterile exhibit, but a place with roots in the character and history of Syon Park, and in the human need to belong somewhere. This choice of place matters. It ensures that every visitor experiences not only the technical side of sustainability, but the feeling of arriving in a setting that is whole, coherent, and worth caring for.

We will tell this story through four symbolic environments — Time, Nature, Structure, and Society — each given its own presence within the Exposition. Together, they form a pattern for building places that endure.

Narrative

Eighteen years ago, Bob Chapman met Lady Caroline Percy while touring a cluster of architectural marvels in Italy. In passing, she invited him to visit her family's home in London should the occasion ever arise. It was an invitation he remembered. Nearly two decades later,

travelling to London with designer Lew Oliver, he unearthed her email from the lower strata of his inbox, and reached out to visit.

After a tour of Syon House and the surrounding parkland, Lady Caroline spoke of a vision she had long harbored: to see the grounds host an exposition that would marry beauty, belonging, and environmental balance. The idea found an immediate and willing audience in Bob and Lew, whose professional careers in town planning, design, and large scale events made achieving such a vision immanently possible.

It is fitting that Syon should inspire such a venture. A visit to the estate was the spark for the very first World Exposition, when Prince Albert, captivated by Syon's glass and iron Conservatory, conceived of the Crystal Palace. That 1851 exposition displayed the innovations of an age in which advances in food, clothing, health, and industry lifted the baseline standards of life for millions.

In 2027, the Great Green Exposition will follow in that same inspired tradition. But instead of glass and iron, it will showcase innovations in regenerative building, sustainable urbanism, and cultural renewal. Visitors will leave Syon as they left the Crystal Palace in Prince Albert's day — with eyes widened, imaginations stirred, and a renewed belief that the future can indeed be finer than the present.

3 | The GGX Concept and Plan

Date & Location

The Great Green Exposition will take place in July, August, and September 2027, when both children and adults are on holiday and have the leisure to explore. This is the season when ticket sales and participation are at their strongest — and when London offers its most generous weather.

The venue, Syon Park, is no ordinary setting. The Thames curves quietly behind it; the historic Syon House stands as its architectural heart; and the gardens will be in full bloom, complemented by a thriving garden center on the grounds. It is a place where heritage and nature meet — the perfect stage for imagining a future in which they remain inseparable.

Event Concept

At the center of the Exposition will stand The Great Green Hamlet, a fully walkable village designed by renowned New Urbanist Lew Oliver.

The hamlet will feature:

The Ellipse — a generous public space anchored by a fountain.

A Broad Street and **High Street**, converging at a performance venue that will host cultural events, talks, and evening gatherings.

Distinct paths devoted to the four environments:

- ***Built Environment*** — urbanism, engineering, architecture, and the trades that shape our settlements.
- ***Social Environment*** — law, policy, religion, education, entertainment, and the cultural forces that sustain community.
- ***Natural Environment*** — conservation, agriculture, and innovations in ecological stewardship.
- ***Temporal Environment*** — our relationship to time, heritage, and the stories that bind past and future.

Lew Oliver's design draws on local vernacular architecture, ensuring that the hamlet feels deeply rooted in place. All structures will be fabricated in the UK by skilled labor, using modular

construction that allows them to be assembled off-site, transported to Syon, and repurposed after the Exposition closes.

What Happens Here

The Exposition will be alive with activity from morning to evening.

Public Exhibits will demonstrate both practical and visionary solutions:

- *Natural Environment*: desalination technologies; reforestation projects; edible gardens; immersive fragrance gardens.
- *Built Environment*: carbon-negative building materials; innovative engineering that reduces resource use; demonstrations of historic building crafts alongside cutting-edge fabrication.
- *Social Environment*: live arts, music, and performance; explorations of food culture and cuisine; spaces to engage with civic, policy, and cultural leaders.
- *Temporal Environment*: a Hall of Ancestors, telling the stories of innovators whose work has shaped modern life, from the agricultural revolution to the present day.

Professional Programming will include:

- Keynote talks by leading figures in urbanism, architecture, environmental policy, and design.
- Technical workshops and masterclasses in sustainable construction, planning, and policy.
- Roundtables connecting municipal leaders, industry innovators, and community advocates.
- Networking events to forge partnerships between private sector, government, and civil society.

Interactive Experiences will draw visitors into the work itself:

- Hands-on building workshops (e.g., hempcrete block making).
- Urban farming and permaculture demonstrations.
- Collaborative design sessions where attendees can sketch, model, and imagine their own sustainable spaces.

Family-Friendly Experiences will include:

- A Child's Village — a half-scale hamlet designed to delight and inspire young visitors.
 - School tours in partnership with local educators.
 - Storytelling, crafts, and performances for younger audiences.
-

Audiences

We anticipate a cumulative audience of one million visitors across the Exposition's run.

General Public: Families, school groups, local residents, and international visitors.

Professional Delegations: Urbanists, municipal leaders, architects, artisans, builders, environmentalists, educators, and policy-makers from across the globe.

VIP Preview Days: Reserved for donors, sponsors, and distinguished guests, offering first access to exhibits and private networking opportunities.

While the largest proportion of visitors will come from the UK, the Exposition is being designed for truly global reach, with strong participation from continental Europe, North America, and representation from Asia, Africa, and South America.

Unique Attraction Points

The Location

Syon Park has a history with world expositions: its Conservatory inspired Prince Albert to commission the Crystal Palace for the first World Expo in 1851. The estate carries the physical traces of Britain's industrial history — including coal dust shadows in some rooms — making it a fitting place to consider the advances in clean energy and sustainable industry since that time.

The Design

Lew Oliver's work (including the award-winning community of Trillith in Georgia, USA) is internationally recognised for its artistry, human scale, and ability to create places that feel authentic from day one. The hamlet will be documented in the business plan appendix, but more importantly, it will be a lived space where design serves both form and function.

The Storytelling

The Exposition's unifying narrative is one of abundance — of a future in which the built, natural, social, and temporal environments flourish together. Visitors may follow colour-coded paths — *red* for the built, *green* for the natural, *blue* for the social, and *golden yellow* for the temporal — or simply wander freely through a web of interconnected experiences.

The Architecture in Action

All structures will be modular, allowing them to be dismantled and reused after the Exposition. While the focus will be on completed spaces rather than on-site construction, the event itself will serve as a case study in adaptable, sustainable placemaking.

4 | Lew Oliver Designs for Exposition Grounds



Figure 1 | GGX Conceptual Site Plan

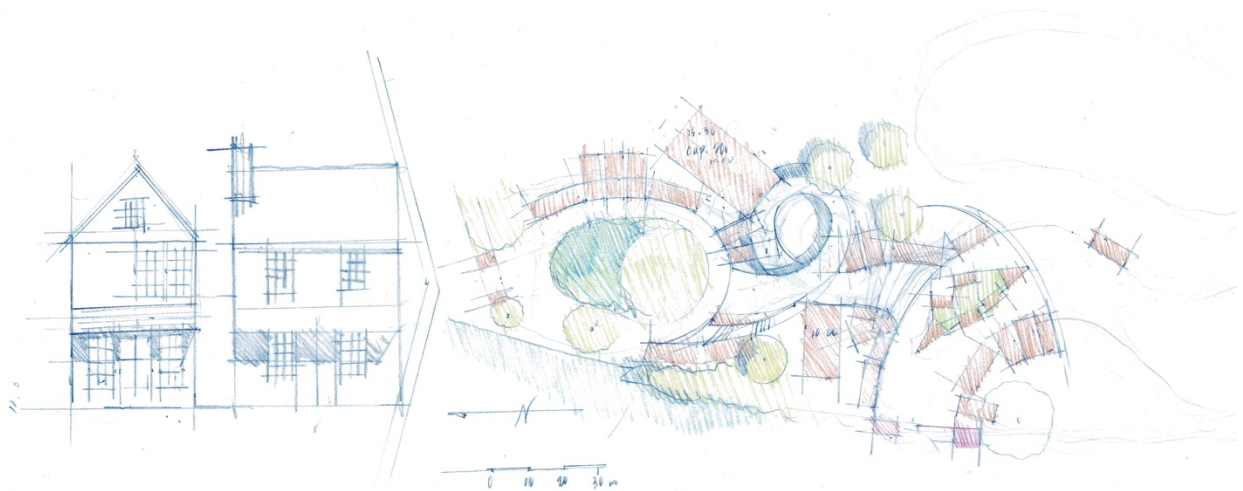


Figure 2 | Site Plan Sketch #4

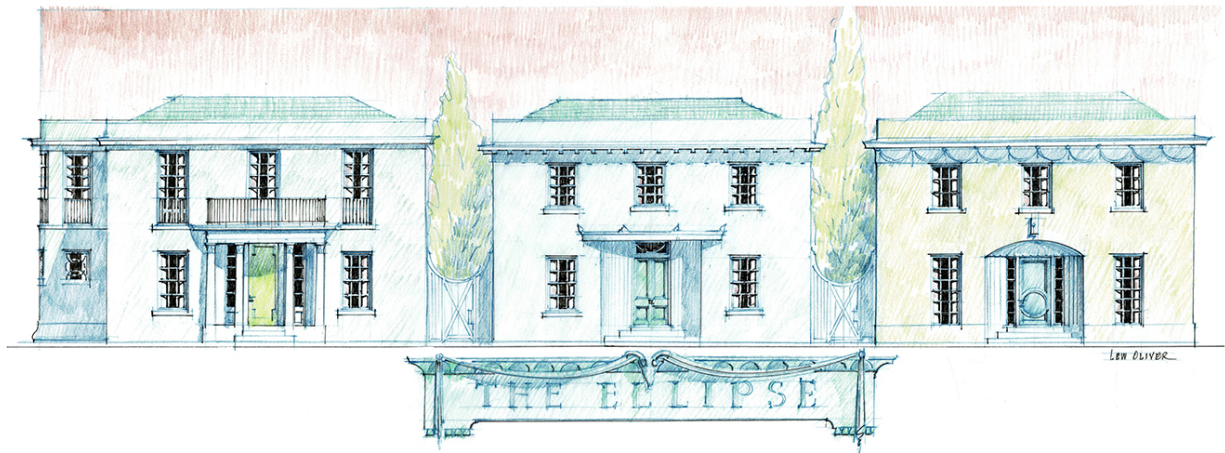


Figure 4 | *The Ellipse Elevations*



Figure 3 | *Syon Park Surroundings*



Figure 5 | High Street Elevation

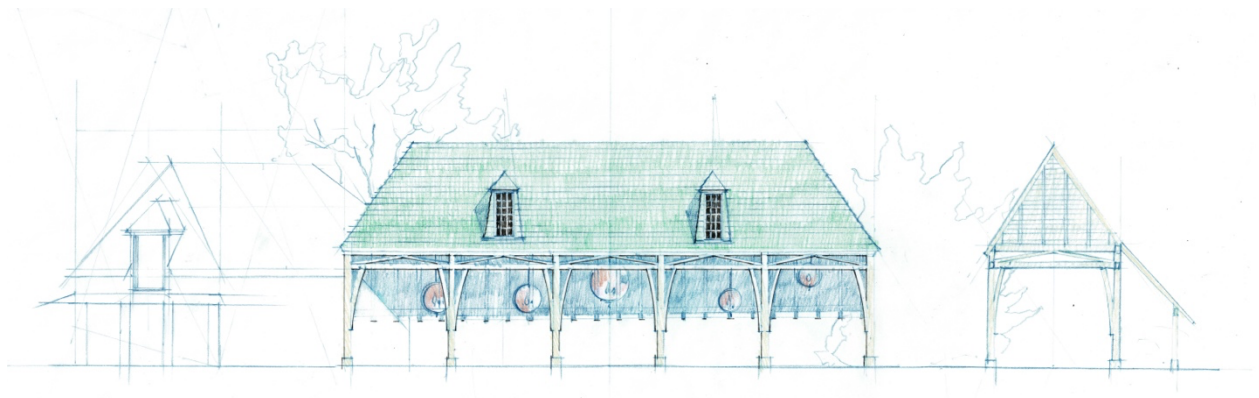


Figure 6 | The Market Square Elevation One



Figure 7 | Market Square Elevation Two



Figure 8 | *The Play Hamlet*

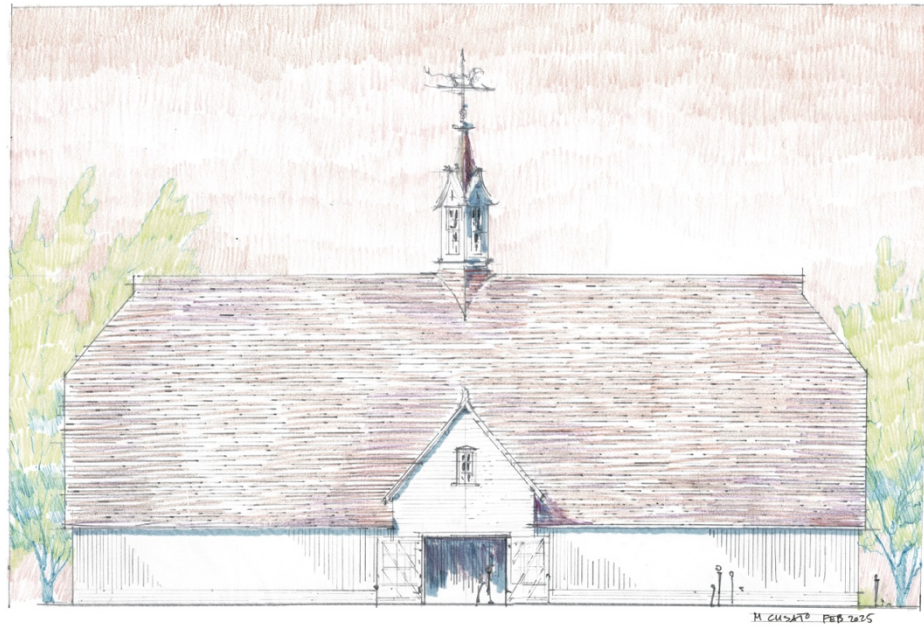


Figure 9 | The Town Meeting Hall Front, Left, and Right

