Lambeth Green Infrastructure Strategy
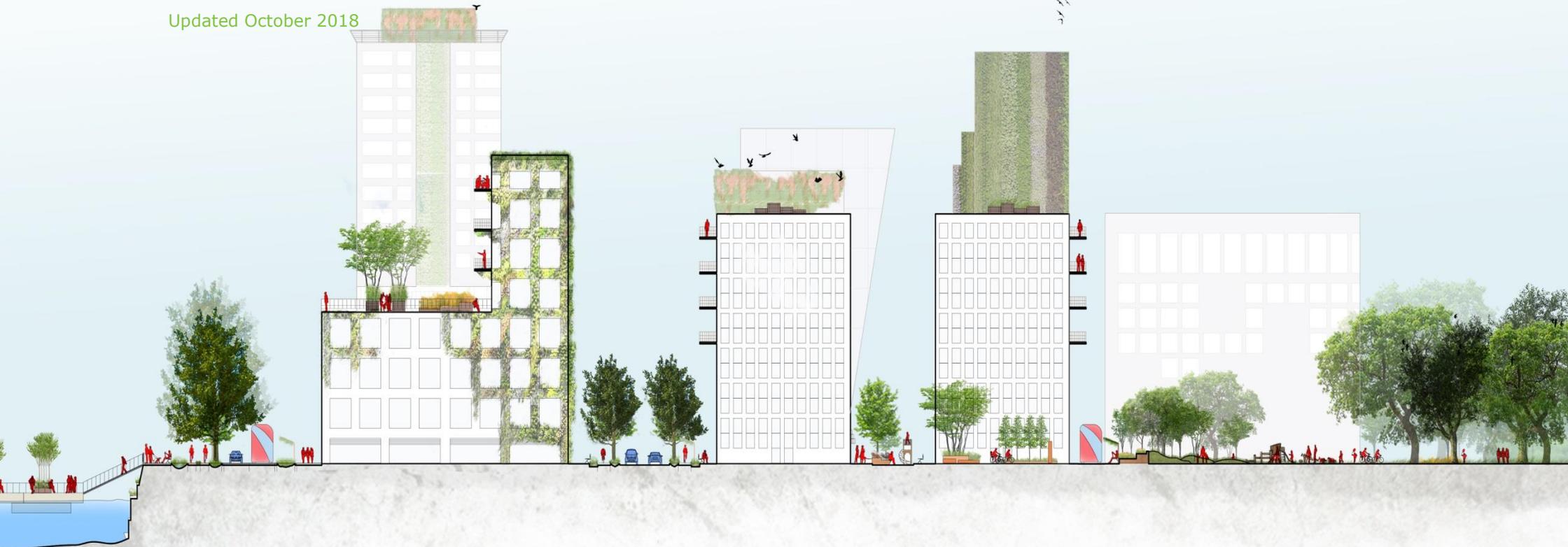
Creating a resilient network

Lambeth Green Infrastructure Strategy -

Creating a resilient network

This report has been produced by LUC in conjunction with Lambeth Council
August 2016 with updates in 2018

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Contents

1 Purpose and content of this strategy

What is green infrastructure?

1.1 The definition used by Natural England, the public body responsible for protecting and improving England's natural environment, is:

"A strategically planned and delivered network of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities."

1.2 For the purposes of this strategy, the borough's green infrastructure includes parks and other green infrastructure 'assets', as set out in **Box 1.1** below and illustrated in **Figure 1.1**.

1.3 Green infrastructure is a strategic issue that crosses borough boundaries and involves several partners, for example Environment Agency, Natural England, adjoining boroughs and community groups. Within local authorities, green infrastructure also crosses several areas of the council, for example planning, transport, biodiversity, parks and open spaces and flood risk. Therefore collaborative working with partners is crucial to improving the green infrastructure network both within Lambeth and London as a whole. These partners have helped inform the content of this strategy.

Box 1.1: Parks and other green infrastructure assets

- Parks
- Open spaces
- Trees and woodland
- Green (living) roofs
- Green (living) walls
- Rain gardens
- Swales
- Planted landscaping, including shrubs, wildflowers, etc.
- Private gardens and squares
- Allotments

Why is green infrastructure important?

Benefits and business case

1.4 The delivery of green infrastructure, alongside social and physical infrastructure, is integral to Lambeth's plan to ensure growth is sustainable.

1.5 As the Natural England definition and **Figure 1.1** highlight, the benefits (or functions) of green infrastructure include:

- Climate-proofing our cities
- Providing buffers from extreme weather
- Providing healthy, liveable environments
- Purifying water, soil and air.

1.6 The London Infrastructure Plan 2050 acknowledges these benefits and many other cities around the world are investing in green infrastructure because of the growing evidence base that it can:

- Reduce costs for local authorities by minimising the management of negative externalities (such as storm water and air pollution)

- Diversify funding opportunities for the provision of public goods (such as health and wellbeing, and ecological resilience), including investment from the private sector.

1.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2018 defines green infrastructure as 'a network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities'. Accordingly the NPPF recognises the value of green infrastructure in its policies regarding healthy lifestyles (para 91), air quality (para 181), planning for climate change (para 150), conserving and enhancing the natural environment (para 171) and well-designed places (para 127)

1.8 Lambeth Public Health advocates the health benefits of green infrastructure. Evidence suggests certain population groups are more likely to benefit, for example:

- Children: A greater quantity or proximity of natural spaces around the home or school is significantly related to improved cognitive performance and reduced incidence of behavioural issues. Evidence suggests that use of green space by children is a lifetime determinant of future use.

- Older people: Older people, especially over 75 years old, or those living on their own who are socially isolated, or in a care home are at greater risk of heatstroke. Planting trees and vegetation and the creation of green spaces to enhance evaporation and shading can make the environmental cooler and reduce this risk.

- Lower socio-economic groups: The benefits of green space are greatest for people from lower socio-economic groups. Living environments with a greater amount of green spaces are associated with reduced likelihood of depression and anxiety amongst those from this group.

- People in confined circumstances e.g. care homes, hospitals, prisons: Evidence in the literature shows that among other benefits, viewing nature is positive for health in terms of recovering from stress, improving concentration and productivity, and improving psychological state.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE **ASSETS** AND **FUNCTIONS**

Figure 0.1: Green Infrastructure assets and functions

Aim and structure of this Strategy

1.9   There are already deficiencies in the amount of open space across parts of the borough and land for other green infrastructure assets is in short supply. The predicted increase in population could exacerbate these deficiencies and increase the pressure on existing spaces.

1.10   Lambeth Council and its partners have undertaken a significant amount of work on the Borough's open space and other aspects of its green infrastructure, as summarised in the box below.

Box 0.1: Key documents related to Lambeth's GI and Open Space

- Lambeth Open Space Strategy (2004, 2007 and 2013).
- Lambeth SINC review (2018)
- Active Lambeth Sport and Physical Plan 2015 (October 2015).
- Lambeth Cycling Strategy (2013).
- Surface Water Management Plan (2011)
- Lambeth Biodiversity Action Plan (2006)
- All London Green Grid – Central London Area Framework (2012).

1.11   The Lambeth Parks and Opens Spaces Capital Investment Plan 2014/15 - 2018/19 set the borough's priorities for improving parks and open spaces and has been thoroughly updated in 2018. In addition, a significant amount of work has been undertaken auditing (through the Lambeth Open Space Strategy Audit 2013) and preparing detailed design and management plans of many of the borough's open spaces.

1.12   While this work serves important specific purposes, there is a need for a more integrated, proactive framework for green infrastructure planning and delivery that takes account of climate change and the predicted increase in population density.

1.13   This Strategy seeks to provide this framework. It sets out an approach for managing, enhancing and creating new open space and other forms of green infrastructure in Lambeth. It will support the early review of the Lambeth Local Plan and provide a vehicle for a more integrated, stronger cross-departmental approach to green infrastructure planning and delivery.

1.14   The Strategy takes account of the existing evidence base and will help to prioritise and guide future green infrastructure interventions. Chapter 2 describes the Lambeth context, in terms of key factors affecting green infrastructure. Chapters 3-6 discuss and illustrate four key themes:

- Finding space for green infrastructure (Chapter 3)
- Making the most of green infrastructure (Chapter 4)
- Creating a sense of space and connectivity (Chapter 5)
- Improving access and interpretation (Chapter 6).

1.15   Each chapter sets out recommendations on key actions and interventions required in relation to the theme. A case study, focusing on the Vauxhall area, is used to illustrate the application of the key themes for each chapter.

1.16   Finally, chapter 7 provides overarching recommendations on the implementation of the Strategy itself.

2 The Lambeth context

The borough's existing green infrastructure

Open space

2.1 The extent and quality of open space in Lambeth was assessed in the Lambeth Open Space Strategy Addenda (2013)[1]. Based on this information, the borough has around 843.5 hectares of open space, representing 31% of the borough's total area. This compares favourably with other inner London Boroughs, where the proportion of open space is less than 20%. The quantity of open space has been fairly static with no significant losses or gains of open space occurring since 2004.

2.2 The Lambeth Local Plan 2015 defines existing open space as including Metropolitan Open Land, common land, historic parks and gardens, district and local parks, nature conservation areas, play areas and adventure playgrounds, outdoor sports facilities, allotments, cemeteries and burial space, amenity land with housing estates, communal squares and gardens and the River Thames Foreshore and Thames Path in accordance with London Plan policy. Accordingly the Open Space Strategy Addenda (2013) is not a definitive list of all open space in the borough. Appendix 3 sets out changes to the definition of open space as proposed in the Draft Revised Lambeth Local Plan October 2018.

2.3 With population increases since 2001, the amount of unrestricted open space per head of population has been reducing and in 2011 stood at 1.48 hectares per 1000 people.

Areas of deficiency

2.3 In 2016 Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL), which is London's biological and open spaces record centre, prepared detailed maps of the specific types of deficiency – by size and type of open space – throughout the borough, using the London Plan provision standards to identify deficiency of open space for different categories identified. These are summarised in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: London Plan Open Space Hierarchy

Open Space categorisation	Size guideline	Maximum desired distance from home
Regional Parks – Large areas, corridors or networks of open space, the majority of which will be publically accessible.	400 hectares	3.2 to 8 Kilometres
Metropolitan Parks – Large areas of open space that provide a similar range of benefits to Regional Parks and offer a combination of facilities at a sub-regional level, are readily accessible by public transport and are managed to meet best practice quality standards.	60 hectares	3.2 Kilometres
District (or Major) Parks – Large areas of open space that provide a landscape setting with a variety of	20 hectares	1.2 Kilometres

natural features providing a wide range of activities, including outdoor sports facilities and playing fields, children's play for different age groups and informal recreation pursuits.		
Local Parks and Open Spaces – Providing for court games, children's play, sitting out areas and nature conservation areas.	2 hectares	400 metres
Small Open Spaces – Public gardens, sitting out areas, children's play spaces or other areas of a specialist nature, including nature conservation areas.	Under 2 hectares	Less than 400 metres
Pocket Parks – Small areas of open space that provide natural surfaces and shaded areas for informal play and passive recreation that sometimes have seating and play equipment.	Under 0.4 hectares	Less than 400 metres
Linear Open Spaces – Open spaces and towpaths alongside the Thames, Canals and other waterways; paths, disused railways; nature conservation areas; and other routes that provide opportunities for informal recreation.	Variable	Wherever feasible

2.4 Using the categories and threshold distances outlined in Table 2.1, areas of deficiency in relation to different categories of open space can be identified. The method used by GiGL is also used by the GLA, and models each public open space as to its access points, using road and path data as well as available survey data. From each access point GiGL ran a model which identified accessible areas, by walking along suitable roads and paths, for that category of the site's recommended distance. AoDs were then identified as the areas outside these modelled areas. This means that in some cases, areas seemingly close to open space are identified as deficient, by virtue of barriers to the open space. For example the area north of Ruskin Park is identified as an area of open space deficiency. This is due to the railway line that cannot be crossed except at the bridges at either end of the park.

2.5 The dataset used is London-wide, which means sites outside of the borough's boundary are also considered, providing a more accurate reflection of how people access parks and open spaces. For example, those living next to Tooting Bec Common are likely to see that as their nearest accessible open space rather than an open space in Lambeth that is physically separated from them. This updated modelling, based on what people actually do, provides much more realistic information on open space deficiencies and how these can be addressed and overcome. Previously, areas of deficiency were identified using the older 'as the crow flies' method, which did not represent as accurate reflection of accessibility as used by the public.

2.6 Figures 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 illustrate the AoD data for each public open space (POS) category: local parks only, district parks only and metropolitan parks only. In the modelling, each category of park also acts as all its lower categories, for example district parks also act as local parks, and metropolitan parks also act as district and local parks. The higher the typology of park, the greater the impact on AoD areas.

2.7 Figure 2.4 brings together figures 2.1, 2.2 and 2.3 as one combined map. It shows a gradual deepening of colour from areas with excellent access to any open space category (grey colour) through to areas deficient of access to one category of open space, areas deficient in two categories of open space and areas deficient in access to all three categories of open space (darkest orange colour).

2.8 Around one third of the borough (31%) has sufficient provision in relation to three categories. These areas are focused around the four largest open spaces: Clapham Common; Tooting Bec

Common (within Wandsworth Borough but still important for Lambeth residents); Streatham Common and Brockwell Park.

2.9 About 2% of the borough is deficient in all open space categories; these areas are predominantly in the east, particularly near King's College Hospital and towards Kennington[2]. This often reflects the restrictions placed on free and rapid access to local open spaces as a result of obvious physical barriers like intervening railway lines, or the design and layout of housing estates and estate roads, where entry and exit security gates or walls can make it difficult to directly walk to the nearest open space. The small area of high deficiency in West Norwood, even though it lies adjacent to and includes part of West Norwood Cemetery, a large and important open space in the borough, reflects the design of the cemetery which has only one entrance gate on the western side, so that streets and estates to the east and north have to take a convoluted journey around it to access the cemetery or other nearby open spaces. As part of the Parks for People HLF bid for the cemetery, two options for additional entrances are being evaluated.

2.10 Figure 2.5 illustrates AoD in access to nature. It shows that much of the north and central parts of the borough is deficient in its access to Sites of Borough and Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation.

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[2] Regional Parks are not included because they skewed the results with the whole west of the borough being an AoD just outside of the catchment of Richmond Park.

Figure 2.1

Areas of Deficiency in Access to Local, Small and Pocket Parks

GiGL

Public Open Space
- Local, Small and Pocket Parks

Area of deficiency in access
to Local, Small and Pocket Parks

Borough Boundary

Scale 1:31000

Produced by Greenspace
Information for Greater London CIC
www.gigl.org.uk
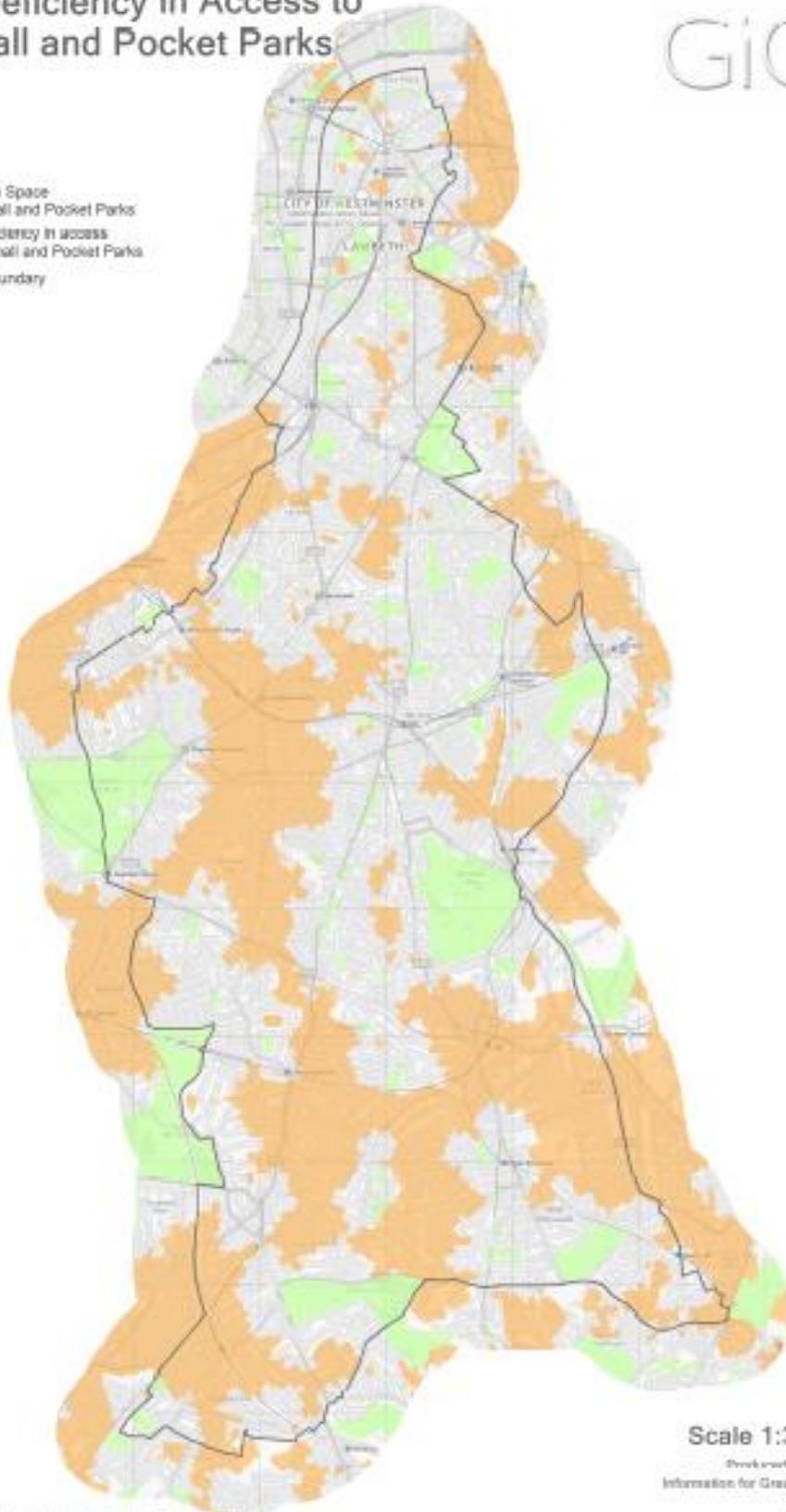
Figure 2.2

Areas of Deficiency in Access to District Parks

GiGL

Public Open Space
- District Parks

Area of deficiency in access
to District Parks

Borough Boundary

Scale 1:31000

Produced by Greenspace
Information for Greater London CIC
www.gigl.org.uk

Figure 2.3

Areas of Deficiency in Access to Metropolitan Parks

GiGL

Public Open Space
- Metropolitan Parks

Area of deficiency in access
to Metropolitan Parks

Borough Boundary

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

LAMBETH

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

Scale 1:31000

Produced by Greenspace
Information for Greater London CIC
www.gigl.org.uk
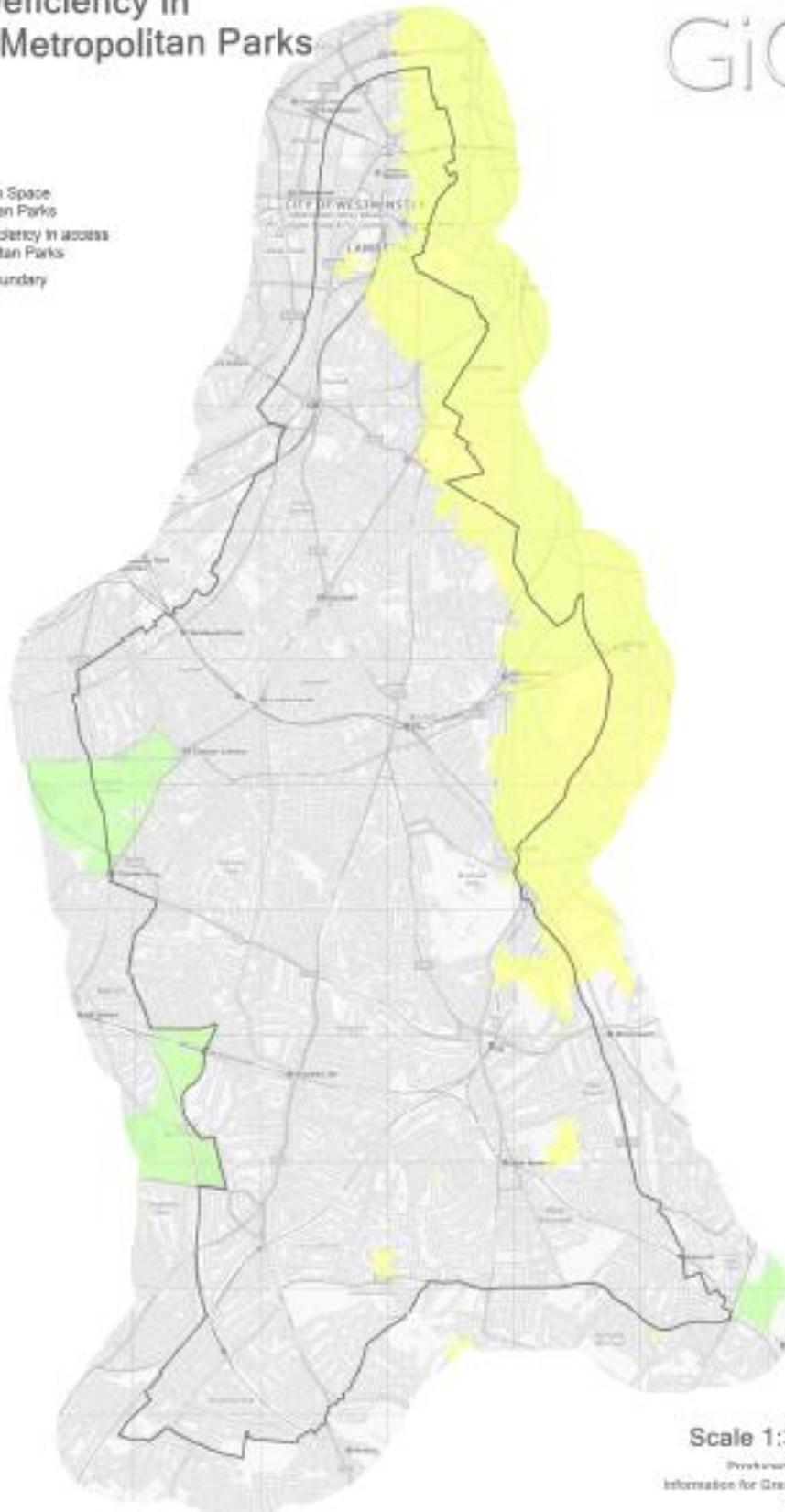
Figure 2.4

Areas of Deficiency in Access
to Public Open Space

GiGL

Public Open Space

Areas of Deficiency in Access to...
One category of Public Open Space
Two categories of Public Open Space
Three categories of Public Open Space

Scale 1:31000

Produced by Greenspace
Information for Greater London CIC
www.gigl.org.uk
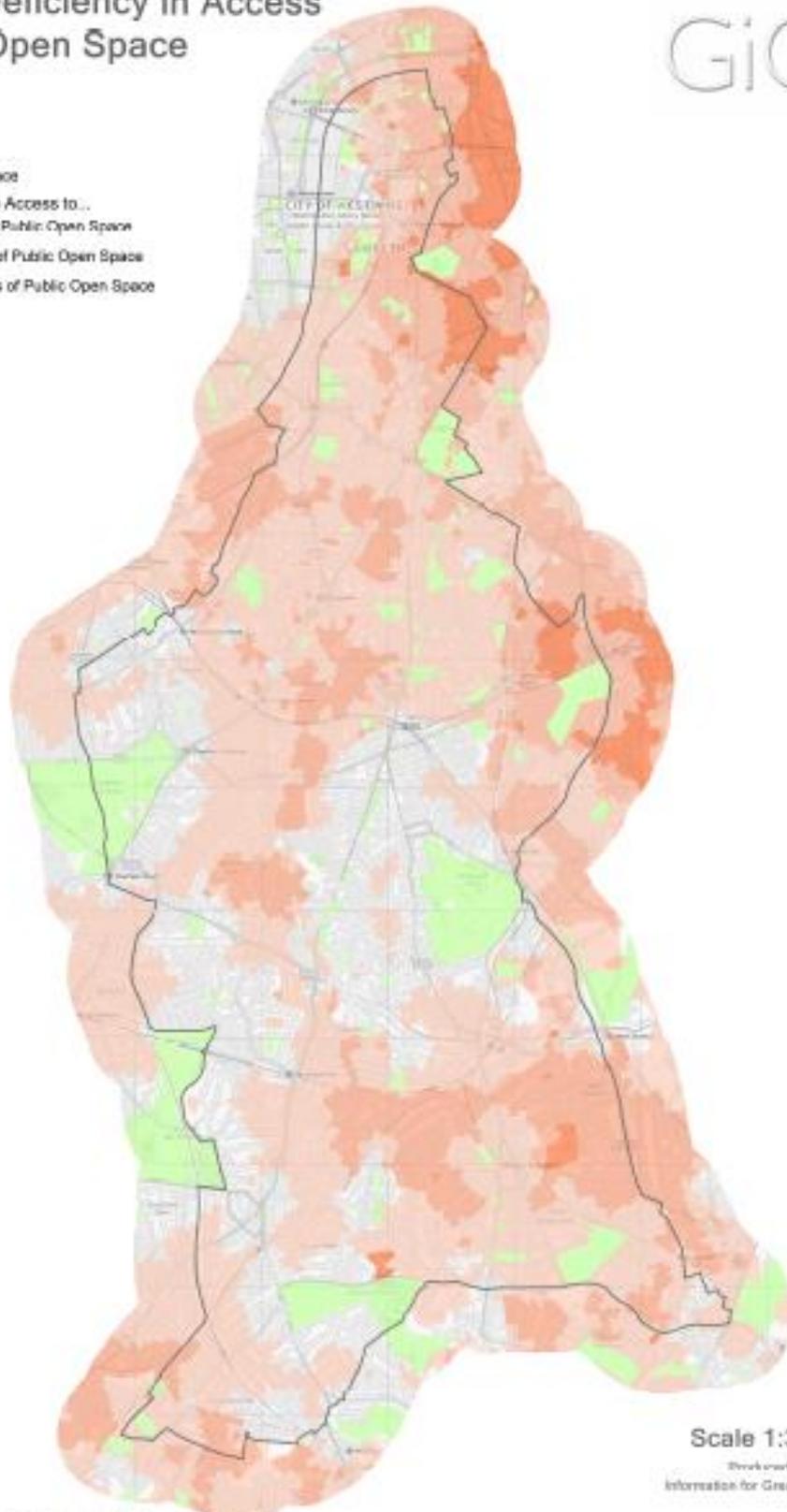
Figure 2.5

Areas of Deficiency in access to nature

Produced by Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC on belalf of LB Lambeth, August 2018

Areas of Deficiency in Access to SINCs are areas more than 1km walking distance from a publicly accessible Site of Borough or Metropolitan Importance to Nature Conservation. Walking distance is measured from a model of access points and walkable roads or paths. Local SINCs are not included when calculating Areas of Deficiency, following recommendations in the London Plan. SINCs with restricted access, such as limited opening hours or entrance fees, may also be excluded.

Areas of Deficiency in access to Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation (AoD to SINCs)

Accessible Sites of Borough and Metropolitan Importance to Nature Conservation

BII
BI
M

Scale 1:36000 at A3

GiGL Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC the capital's environmental records centre

Based on Ordnance Survey data © Crown copyright and database right 2018. Ordnance Survey 100019338
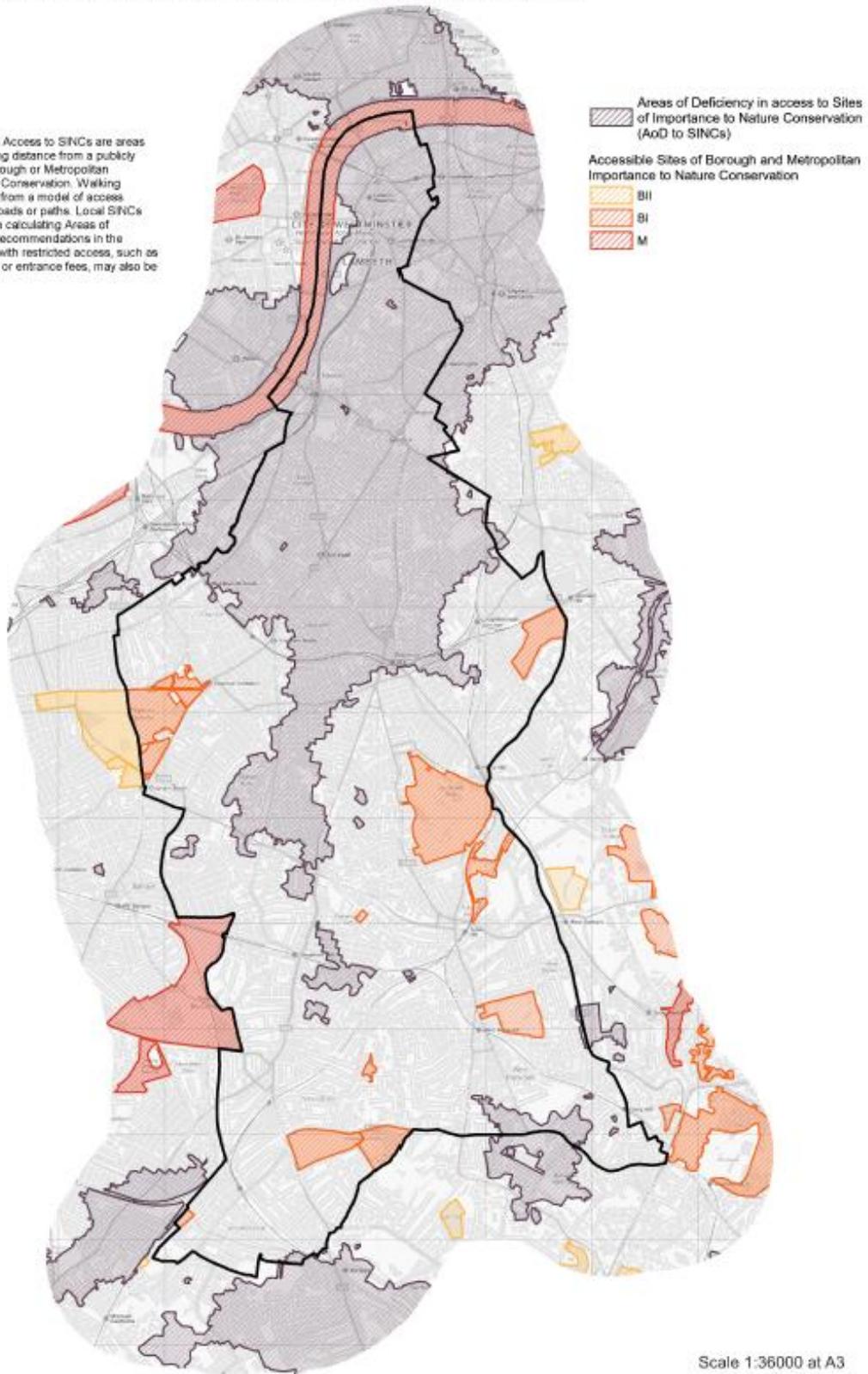
Other green infrastructure assets

2.11 As outlined above, there are good, up-to-date data on the largest open spaces in Lambeth. There are also data on street trees in the Borough.

2.12 Data on other green infrastructure assets are much more limited. Green infrastructure audits have been undertaken by Vauxhall One Business Improvement District, covering the Vauxhall area, the South Bank Employers Group, covering the South Bank and Waterloo area and the Clapham Business Improvement District. Prepared by LUC, these audits provide a complete dataset on existing green roofs, green walls, green verges and trees, well as parks in these areas. They also identify potential for new and enhanced green infrastructure. However, these audits cover only a small proportion of the Borough and further auditing is required to improve the baseline information.

Implications of population growth and climate change

2.13 Unless positively managed, population growth and climate change could compound the existing deficiency of green infrastructure and present challenges to management and maintenance, with consequential costs.

Population Growth

2.14 Lambeth's population has grown rapidly in recent years, reaching 303,086 in 2011 (2011 Census data, ONS). The GLA project that the population will grow to over 359,000 by 2035 (Lambeth Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2017. This increase in population will place significant pressures on Lambeth's green infrastructure resource.

2.15 The sustainability of this population growth, in terms of green infrastructure provision, will depend on a range of factors, rather than a straight interpretation of the number of hectares of open space per 1000 people. These include:

- The number of people using spaces
- The types of uses and activities taking place
- The sensitivity of the site (e.g. biodiversity) to these activities
- Whether the design and maintenance of the open space is appropriate to the types and level of use.

2.16 Careful monitoring of open spaces and green infrastructure will be important, as well as corresponding measures to increase the resilience of the green infrastructure.

New Development

2.17 The draft London Plan 2017 (as amended August 2018) sets an increased housing target as a result of projected population growth. For Lambeth, the minimum ten year target (2019/20 – 2028/29) has increased slightly from 15,594 net additional dwellings to 15,890, and therefore the annual monitoring target has increased from 1,559 net additional dwellings to a minimum of 1,589.

2.18 Key development areas which are currently providing opportunities for green infrastructure provision, or will have implications for green infrastructure in the future, include:

- The regeneration of Nine Elms on the South Bank, which extends from Battersea in Wandsworth to Vauxhall Lambeth[3]. This includes substantial development including: the Northern Line extension and new stations; 3km of Thames river frontage lined with cafes, bars, restaurants and public space; a new linear park running through the area east to west (Nine Elms Park); and major development including housing, office, commercial and community space.

- Significant improvements to Waterloo Station increasing its capacity and the redevelopment of nearby sites and buildings such as the Shell Centre, and Elizabeth House; the conversion

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[3] See: http://www.nineelmslondon.com/.

of part of Hungerford Car Park to open green space as an extension to Jubilee Gardens and; future extension of the Low-Line project at Bankside south into Lambeth borough.

- Areas of significant transport transformation such as Vauxhall Gyratory and Tulse Hill Gyratory.

- The regeneration of Brixton including:; reinvigorating the town centre; growth as a centre for creative and cultural industries; introduction of new residential uses in the town centre supporting communities; and improving the connectivity and permeability through public realm improvements.[4]

- Regeneration of West Norwood town centre area, including Lambeth Local Plan site allocation 18

- The construction associated with the Thames Tideway Tunnel.[5]

- Regeneration of parts of the Oval and Kennington Development Area[6] to provide a sustainable high quality mixed use development providing jobs, home and public space that will enhance the local area.

- Emerging Neighbourhood Plans in the borough that will have a contribution to green infrastructure.

2.19 Despite additional open space that is proposed as part of major new developments, there will remain deficiencies of open space in the north of the borough. This area should therefore be a focus for investment in the green infrastructure network.

Climate Change

2.20 Addressing climate change is one of the core land use planning principles which the National Planning Policy Framework (section 14) expects to underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. Predictions are that there will be warmer, wetter winters;

increased stormy conditions and longer periods of warm dry weather (UK Climate Projections 2009). This reinforces the need for green infrastructure, including SUDS, in order to increase Lambeth's resilience. The 'urban heat island effect' will be a particular problem in dense built up areas and green infrastructure is a key intervention to help mitigate this. Increased densities, coupled with warmer periods, mean that parks and other green spaces will be under increasing pressure.

Planning policy on green infrastructure

2.21 The delivery of green infrastructure is supported by a suite of planning policy documents such as those listed in **Box 2.1**.

Box 2.1: Relevant Planning Policy Documents

- Draft London Plan (2017, as amended August 2018)

- All London Green Grid SPG 2012

- Draft Revised Lambeth Local Plan October 2018

- Lambeth Local Plan 2015

- Vauxhall Area SPD (January 2013)

- Vauxhall Nine Elms Battersea Opportunity Area Planning Framework (March 2012)

- Waterloo Opportunity Area Planning Framework (October 2007)

- Emerging Neighbourhood Plans e.g. South Bank & Waterloo, Kennington Oval and Vauxhall (KOV), West Norwood

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[4] See: http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/lambeth-local-plan-pre-submission-publication

[5] See: http://www.thamestidewaytunnel.co.uk/the-project/construction-sites/albert-embankment-foreshore

[6] See: https://www.oakda.co.uk

2.22   Chapter 8 of the Draft London Plan (2018) is on green
        infrastructure and natural environment. Of particular relevance to
        green infrastructure in Lambeth are policies G1 green
        infrastructure, G3 metropolitan open land, G4 open space and G5
        urban greening. All policies are likely to positively impact green
        infrastructure in Lambeth, but particularly policy G5 and the use of
        the urban greening factor in major developments.

2.23   The All London Green Grid (ALGG) is a policy framework to
        promote the design and delivery of 'green infrastructure' across
        London. The policy framework comprises adopted London Plan
        2016 policies on green infrastructure and urban greening – and
        those relating to open spaces, biodiversity, trees and woodland,
        and river corridors – plus the All London Green Grid
        Supplementary Planning Guidance and a series of ALGG Area
        Frameworks. This will be updated in light of the Draft London Plan
        (2017, as amended August 2018). The ALGG can only be
        delivered through collaborative working by a wide range of
        partners including London boroughs, the Environment Agency, the
        Forestry Commission, Natural England and environmental
        organisations such as the Trees for Cities, London Wildlife Trust
        and Thames 21.

2.24   Protecting existing open space will be paramount and the Local
        Plan (2015) prioritises the protection of existing open spaces
        (whether public or private) and includes seven separate policies
        that contribute to either the protection of existing open spaces or
        support / require the creation of new open space. (See in Local
        Plan (2015) Policies: D3 Infrastructure, H5 Housing Standards,
        EN1 Open Space and Biodiversity, Q2 Amenity, Q6 Urban Design
        and Public Realm, Q11 Building Alterations and Extensions, Q14
        Development in gardens and on back land sites).

2.25   Appendix 3 to this Strategy (added in October 2018) sets out the
        emerging policy position in the Draft Revised Lambeth Local Plan
        October 2018 as a result of Draft London Plan 2017 (as amended
        August 2018), and recommendations and guidance contained in
        this Green Infrastructure Strategy.

3 Finding space for green infrastructure

3.1 The borough's first priority should be to protect and enhance existing open space and other green infrastructure assets. The second priority should be to support the delivery of new assets.

3.2 The use of such provision standards and a typology based approach remain useful to planning and reference should be made to the deficiency maps when determining planning applications. **Figures 2.1 – 2.5**, and the data supporting these maps, will be useful in this regard.

3.3 The scope to create new open spaces, outside major new development areas, is limited. This chapter therefore focuses on the provision of other elements of green infrastructure, which are more achievable.

Targeting areas of deficiency

Broad areas

3.4 As noted in chapter 2, just 2% of the borough is deficient in all open space categories. These areas are predominantly in the east, particularly near King's College Hospital and towards Kennington[7]. However, a much larger area, coloured orange on the map, is deficient in relation to three categories of open space.

3.5 The densely populated, urbanised nature of the north of the borough and its deficiency in open spaces (particularly large open spaces) suggests that this part of the borough would particularly

benefit from urban greening measures, such as green roofs and street trees.

Areas with predominance of flats and few private gardens

3.6 Using the 2011 census data (ONS 2015), it is possible to identify the different housing types that are unlikely to have a private garden, including flats, maisonettes and caravans. The sum of these households can be compared to the overall total to give the percentage of households unlikely to have access to a private garden. **Figure 3.1** shows the results of this analysis.

3.7 The south of the borough is suburban in character and there are a greater proportion of household types which are likely to have access to (or at least the visual amenity of) a private garden. The more densely populated northern part of the borough and areas in the west and central parts of the borough have a much greater percentage of households unlikely to have access to a private garden.

3.8 This reinforces the need to focus green infrastructure provision in these areas. Figure 3.1 also suggests that Clapham Common, Brockwell Park and Streatham Common are likely to be highly valued as they are located in areas with a predominance of households without gardens.

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[7] Regional Parks are not included because they skewed the results with the whole west of the borough being an AoD just outside of the catchment of Richmond Park.
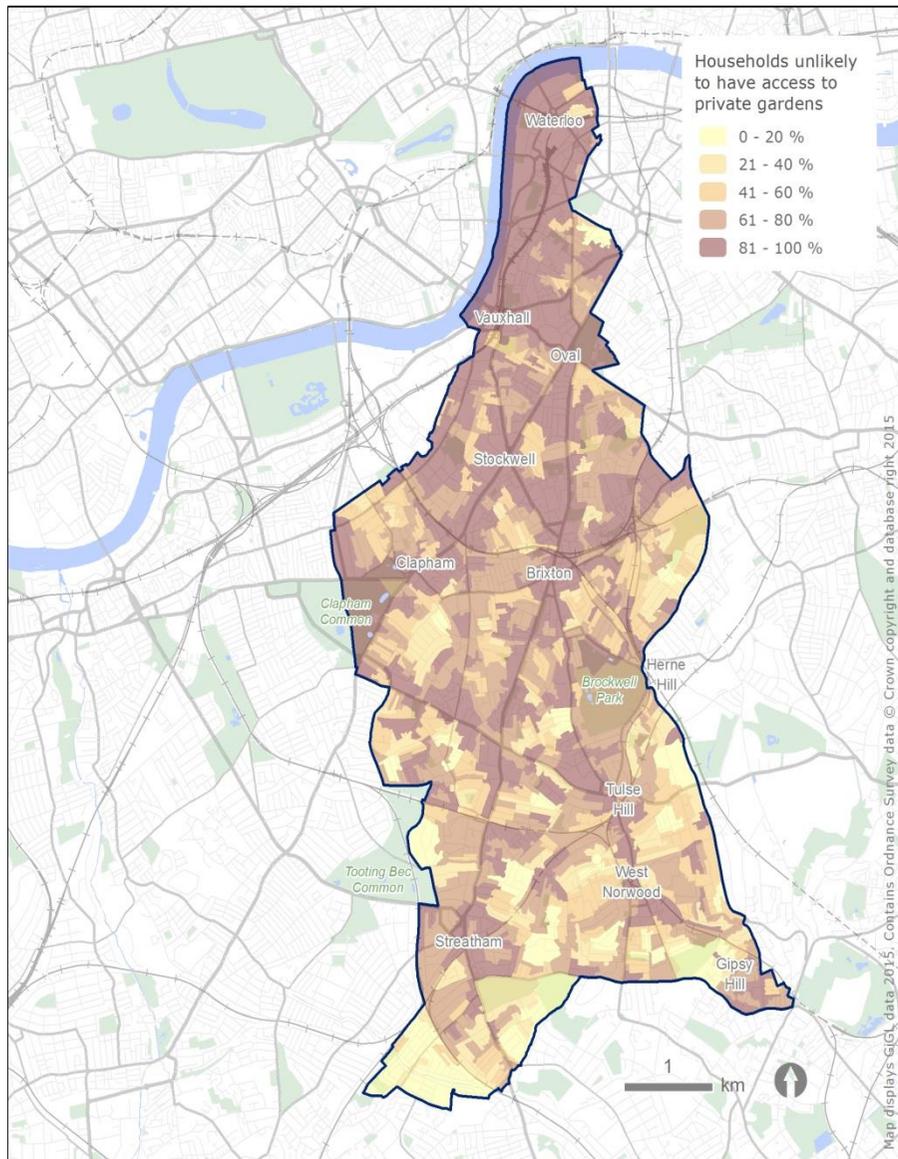
Figure 3.1: Percentage of households unlikely to have a private garden

Major developments

3.9 Major new developments provide the main opportunity for the creation of new open space and other green infrastructure assets, particularly with the application of the urban greening factor required by draft London Plan policy G5. Retrofitting urban greening features, such as green walls and roofs can be limited by technical issues. It is therefore important to consider green infrastructure at the pre-application stage.

3.10 The Lambeth Local Plan 2015 identifies the need for major developments to provide new onsite or off-site open space and this requirement should be prioritised. Discussions and negotiations on major developments, particularly major infrastructure developments, often start years in advance. This Strategy should help the council to set out its expectations in terms of green infrastructure and provide guidance for developers for initial project ideas.

Credit: Remapp Ltd

Arundel Square, Islington. This newly refurbished park has been extended across a railway line cutting, creating an additional acre of new land and rejuvenated an existing public open space. The building of the deck almost doubled the available open space of the square, and was paid for through developer contributions from the adjacent housing development.

Accessible green roofs

3.11 While living roofs receive strong support in the Local Plan, it may also be possible (especially in larger developments) to incorporate accessible green roofs. Subject to technical, management, health and safety and security considerations, opening up roof space to the public (or private members) can help to increase the total 'stock' of open space.

3.12 Accessible green roofs can be used for a range of different sports and recreation uses, including sports pitches, children's play spaces and quiet relaxation spaces. They can also provide a range of benefits in addition to open space including water attenuation, improved thermal efficiency of buildings, and air pollution control.

Accessible Green Roof, Cardinal Place, Victoria. Source: Chris Loades/Victoria BID

Reclaiming the streets

3.13   Opportunities for creating new green infrastructure do not solely rely on new developments. Smaller opportunities to create areas of greenery, relaxation and even informal play may arise through 'reclaiming' street space. Car ownership is falling in inner London and the majority of Lambeth households have no car – but a lot of street space is used for parking cars. This creates opportunities to consider new ways of using streets for the whole local population rather than only those with cars. Such interventions will clearly require careful coordination with the management of streets and highways.

3.14   Pedestrianisation of streets provides an opportunity for pocket parks and playable space to be established, promoting streets as social places[8] with significant benefits for local residents, especially those who do not have private gardens. They also provide an opportunity for multiple micro-scale urban greening benefits to be delivered (e.g. street trees, plus planted filter strips allied to permeable paving to help with run off/groundwater re-charge). This supports the Healthy Streets approach in the draft London Plan and Lambeth's draft Transport Strategy October 2018.

Reclaiming the streets adjacent to Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens, as part of Vauxhall One's The Missing Link project.

Van Gogh Walk in Stockwell was previously dominated by parking bays for local buses. In 2013-14 Transport for London and Lambeth Council installed a network of seating, new landscaped beds and planted areas. Porous bonded gravel and extensive areas of planted bedding increased the water retention capacity of this area.

Green chains

3.15   Limiting motorised transport on streets, giving greater priority to cycling and walking, developing cycle routes and establishing and extending 'Green Chains' both within Lambeth and outside in adjoining boroughs can all help create streets for more activities and incorporate urban greening.

3.16   Where footfall is low, converting 'grey' hard landscaped public realm to 'green' soft landscaping provides further opportunity to create new areas of urban greening or small open spaces.

Home Zones and Streets for People

3.17   Other urban greening and temporary closure measures also allow streets to be reclaimed for public open space on a temporary basis, for example Home Zones and other similar initiatives such as Sustrans' DIY streets and 'Streets for People'.

Holmewood Gardens Home Zone in south Brixton covers a small number of side roads surrounding a public green space, which contains a popular children's playground. The scheme was completed in 2005 and features a road closure and modest amounts of shared surface alongside more conventional traffic calming measures.

3.19   A less intensive approach to temporarily reclaiming street space is The Play Streets scheme. This scheme allows residents to close their streets for up to three-hours a week so their children can play in a traffic free environment.

The Play Streets scheme.

Temporary closure of streets can also create space for community events. Each year, Lambeth holds a Car Free Day. In 2014, Loughborough Road was closed and a roller disco for children was held in the street.

3.20 Temporary closures can be a good way to trial reallocation of road space, and could become a regular closure if there is community support. For example, Venn Street in Clapham was originally closed as a trial and is now closed every weekend for a farmer's market and café

seating, with the space managed by local traders and it is very popular with residents. Streets in new developments should be designed to be used in this flexible way, incorporating urban greening and the ability to become temporary open space for residents either on a regular basis (e.g. at weekends), or less frequently, for example for annual events.

Temporary use of sites

3.21 In addition to the temporary use of streets for open space, the idea of 'meanwhile' uses for spaces awaiting longer term development is well established in Lambeth. Lambeth Local Plan promotes the use of vacant and derelict land for short term food growing (Policy EN2) and also arts and cultural uses (Policy ED11).

Oasis Urban Farm, Waterloo: Using agriculture and horticulture to engage individuals, groups and the wider community

Urban greening - delivering multi-functionality

3.22 Urban greening provides the opportunity to achieve many of the positive benefits brought about by green infrastructure within the existing fabric of the urban area without the need for significant tracts of open undeveloped land. Increasing the amount, cohesiveness and quality of urban greening provides a key opportunity to enhance the borough's green infrastructure network.

3.23 There are a wide variety of different measures that fall under the term urban greening, and technical design, management and knowledge of these measures is improving all the time as experience grows in this relatively new field. Commonly used urban greening measures include:

- Street Level – street infills, reallocation of road space, pocket parks, roadside verges, incidental spaces and street trees;

- Raised Street Level – planters and green walls; and

- Roof Level – living roofs, accessible green roofs and blue roofs.

Street Level

3.24 Street trees are a very traditional part of the London urban landscape and can provide a range of benefits. These include alleviating the heat island effect through shading, intercepting and funnelling rainwater, filtering air pollution, providing habitat for biodiversity enhancement, and visually enhancing an area.

Kendoa Road – a small pocket park created using raised wooden beds.

3.25 The positive enhancement of incidental spaces and street infills (often as part of sustainable drainage schemes) can also have significant benefits for biodiversity, flood alleviation, air and noise pollution and the aesthetic of a street.

Granton School, Streatham South: Planters stop cars outside entrance, rather than Council paying for enforcement of zig-zags – and creates seating for waiting parents

3.26 There are a number of perceived and real barriers to retrofitting street infills, incidental spaces and street trees into the urban realm, all of which can be overcome through careful and appropriate siting and design:

- Presence of underground services and street furniture.

- Management is required, including vegetation management and litter picking.

- Conflict with street users, particularly in areas of high footfall.

- Health and Safety concerns, particularly associated with sunken features (rain gardens) or those with edging.

Edible Bus Stop, The Kerb Garden, Landor Road between Clapham North Station and Stockwell Green.

3.27 One of the most successful multifunctional schemes in Lambeth has been the 'Edible Bus Stop' concept. There are also permanent edible gardens at the Hoopla Garden, Norwood High Street and Grow Brixton on Popes Road. Local people have transformed these areas around an existing bus stop to:

- reduce the amount of hardstanding and paving,

- increase the amount of green cover,

- provide opportunities to grow and harvest healthy food

- to enhance local biodiversity, and

- provide people waiting at the bus stop with a colourful, friendly and safe environment to meet, socialise and enjoy their locality.

Raised street level

3.28 Raised planting beds, planter and window boxes (to articulate building façades and window reveals) can create a more attractive environment, whilst also providing micro-habitats for wildlife. Through careful design it may be possible to deliver other

environmental benefits, such as irrigation from gutter downpipes, whilst increasing water attenuation during rainfall.

3.29 Green walls can have a dramatic and visible greening effect, and have the added advantage of screening unattractive buildings and providing habitats for wildlife. The most economical way of achieving a green wall is with climbing plants; whilst the alternative is to install a 'modular green wall', where plug plants are established within a vertical growing system. The latter has a more immediate effect, but is more expensive as maintenance requirements are more onerous (i.e. for irrigation/replacing dead or failed plant material as required).

An example of a green wall using climbing plants on strained/tensioned wires.

Indicative view of potential candidate for green wall treatment in the Vauxhall area.

Roof Level

3.30 This strategy differentiates between living roofs - those that are covered in vegetation - and accessible green roofs - those that provide accessible open space including vegetation. Depending on the roof type, a range of benefits can be provided including water attenuation, improved thermal efficiency of buildings, air pollution control, provision of wildlife habitat and the provision of open space.

3.31 The type of green roof which can be installed on a building is dependent on the structural loading of the roof, the amount of substrate which can be supported (as well as potential for public access), and the resultant vegetation which could survive.

Summary: Finding space for Green infrastructure:

- **Continue to protect** existing open space and improve access and quality.

- Maximise and take advantage of all opportunities to **create new open space** where appropriate and feasible throughout the borough, particularly when major new developments are planned.

- **Accessible green roofs** should be incorporated into new developments where possible and opportunities should be identified for retrofitting them to existing buildings where appropriate and feasible.

- Space should be **reclaimed from streets** and the hard landscaped public realm through pedestrianisation and establishment of pocket parks, establishing Green Chains, and moving towards green 'soft' landscaping where possible.

- Space should be recognised as the precious commodity it is, the **temporary use of spaces** should be sought and encouraged and spaces should be designed in a flexible way that allows their temporary use as open space.

- Increasing the amount and emphasis on **urban greening**, particularly in the north of the borough.

Case Study: Vauxhall

Finding space for green infrastructure

1. Shows existing green infrastructure assets

2. Shows the potential for new green infrastructure assets. This includes the following:

Areas with new development ▭

Reclaimed streets ●

Green roofs ●

Street level urban greening ●

Please note that this diagram is indicative only, based on the best available information on existing and potential green infrastructure assets. Further feasibility studies may be required.

4 Making the most of Lambeth's green infrastructure

4.1 Given the challenge of creating new and retrofitting green infrastructure, it will be imperative for the borough to maximise the environmental and other benefits that green infrastructure provides. This includes providing a high quality experience for residents and visitors, recognising cross borough movement of visitors to and through green spaces, working with adjoining boroughs and developments on the borough border to extend green chains and infrastructure cross boroughs, and maximising resilience to climate change.

Maximising the benefits

4.2 **Table 4.1** identifies the range of environmental benefits that green infrastructure in the borough has the potential to provide.

Key benefits of green infrastructure
Biodiversity[9] and access to nature
Productive green environments (local food growing)
Air quality regulation
Water quality
Flood regulation, through controlling run-off
Noise regulation, through screening
Local climate regulation, as a result of the cooling effect of evapotranspiration
Recreation
Health and wellbeing
Linkages and wayfinding for borough and cross-borough movement
Sense of place & heritage

Table 4.1: Benefits of green infrastructure[10]

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[9] The NEA does not consider biodiversity to be an ecosystem service in its self, however given the significance that the public places on biodiversity it has been included here as a service in its own right.

[10] Environmental Benefits adapted from UK National Ecosystem Assessment (2011) Urban – Broad Habitat Type Ecosystem Services. Available at: http://uknea.unep-wcmc.org/Home/tabid/38/Default.aspx

4.3 Significant attention has been paid to some of these benefits when considering open space and, more recently, urban greening (e.g. recreational services, sense of place particularly aesthetic services and more recently biodiversity services). Others have received less attention. The council should ensure that the broadest range of benefits possible is delivered so that the potential of green infrastructure is realised.

4.4 Joint working between different teams within the Council and external partners is already taking place; for example between the parks and transport teams, and partnerships with residents groups and adjoining boroughs. There remains scope to form new partnerships to maximise the benefits of existing and new green infrastructure.

4.5 The improvement of Eagle and Mount Ponds on Clapham Common is a good example of joint working to improve wildlife and landscape interest. Mount Pond was given a major overhaul in 2010 using funding provided by the Environment Agency and from S106 contributions. An extensive network of reed beds, a new wildlife zone, floating wildlife islands, new fishing platforms and a new all-weather wooden boardwalk around one side of the pond was created.

4.6 This has been further reinforced by additional improvements to the ponds between 2012 and 2018 which include a) replacement of defective wooden fishing platforms with new and wider ones made of recycled plastic, which are not only more sustainable but designed to maximise access by the less abled; b) more floating islands which extend the net cover of high-value wetland and bird breeding habitat; and c) installation of new aerators to maintain water quality.

4.7 Mount Pond is now an ecologically robust resource; the extensive reedbeds not only provide habitat for a wide diversity of wild birds but also act as 'natural filters' to trap and remove nutrients from the water, and add oxygen to keep fish and aquatic wildlife populations healthy. The pond is also a popular venue for people to fish, sit at and enjoy the views, and this has increased passive surveillance, helping to reduce antisocial behaviour, littering and vandalism.

Improvements to the ponds at Clapham Common

4.8   Identifying opportunities for cross-borough collaboration is important to ensure green infrastructure is optimised. Some examples of Lambeth working with adjoining boroughs to help address deficiencies in access to open spaces includes:

Adjoining borough	Site	Description
Merton	Eardley Road Sidings	Eardley Road Sidings is a local nature reserve and Borough grade SINC in Streatham Vale; it abuts onto part of the London Borough of Merton. For a long time there was only one entrance into the site, from Bates Crescent and Streatham Vale road, but a series of improvements to the site, including a project delivered by Trust for Conservation Volunteers (TCV) using Heritage Lottery Funding, has resulted in two pedestrian entrances at the north and southern end of the site, along with a network of disabled access-friendly paths throughout it. Lambeth and TCV worked closely with colleagues in Merton, including Highways, Community Safety and Merton Borough Police, to ensure that the entrances would permit the free entry and flow of foot traffic through and into the site, but in such a way as to prevent access by motorcycles and horses, which would have adversely affected both the nature reserve and the safety and wellbeing of local residents and properties adjacent to the site.
Wandsworth	Clapham Common	Clapham Common is Lambeth's largest open space, and is Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) and a Borough Grade SINC for both Lambeth and Wandsworth. Lambeth is working with Transport for London, Sustrans and Wandsworth to deliver a new cycle route called 'Quietway 4'; this will run from Clapham Common to Wimbledon, and is designed to allow cyclists who are less confident to use the 'Cycle Super Highways' on main arterial roads to travel to and from home, work and school. The project will result in physical improvements to

		existing paths on Clapham Common, as well as improving entrances onto it which are currently in poor condition or unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. Part of the Quietway 4 project involves closing off 33% of Windmill Drive, which runs east to west across the middle of the Common, to help make the Quietway a continuous route, and over 1 hectare of what is presently a poor quality tarmac road will be returned to amenity and meadow grass and made part of the Common again. Wandsworth and Lambeth are working together on ensuring the project results in no net loss of accessible open space, rather that there is a physical gain of open land and that any current barriers to safe access to Clapham Common by cyclists and pedestrians are removed or reduced.
Wandsworth	Tooting Bec Common	Although not within Lambeth, Tooting Bec Common is still heavily used by many Lambeth residents living in the Balham, Streatham and Clapham areas of the borough, and over 22% of its boundary abuts directly onto the borough. Wandsworth secured Heritage Lottery Funding which is being used to improve the public's awareness and use of Tooting Bec Common, which includes practical conservation and physical enhancement activities which are addressing potential barriers to safe access and use of the site by residents of both Lambeth and Wandsworth. Lambeth is working with colleagues in Wandsworth to promote use of the Common by its own residents, and to help identify any physical or perceived barriers to access which can then be targeted and resolved by Wandsworth, its staff and volunteer base. This also includes improving wildlife habitats on parts of the Common so that Lambeth residents can access, appreciate and enjoy these.
Southwark	Ruskin Park	As well as being a Borough grade SINC for Lambeth, Ruskin Park is also an important district open space for residents in adjacent Southwark, and is heavily used by them for a wide range of activities and events. One major issue has been the poor quality of access into the park from its eastern side, due to narrow gates that are over-shaded, so making them feel unsafe and unwelcoming, and difficult to negotiate for the less abled. Funding agreed with UK Power Networks as part of works to lay new high voltage cables through part of

		Ruskin Park, will result in improvements to the north-eastern entrance on Denmark Hill adjacent to Champion Hill and King's College Hospital. This will improve views into and out of the park, and remove a number of barriers to safe access as well as making the area feel more welcoming and safe. Lambeth is collaborating with UK Power Networks, the Friends of Ruskin Park and colleagues in Southwark to ensure that any planned improvements to this and other entrances provide an equal benefit to people living in Southwark and opportunities to promote the park and its assets, including directional signage and engagement with local communities, are identified and secured.

Through the action of local residents and the support of the Lambeth Neighbourhood Environment Programme (NEP), planted beds have been created in small underused spaces on Clapham Manor Estate

Protecting and increasing environmental benefits

4.9 Given Lambeth's highly urbanised context, land prices and projected future population growth, it is likely that land, once built on, will never revert to an open state. As noted above, therefore, the protection of existing open space should be a priority.

4.10 Careful consideration should also be given to the uses of open space – to ensure that an appropriate range of environmental services is provided. In particular the erection of buildings (including education facilities and cafes) on open space should be avoided wherever possible. Alternative locations or options that don't reduce the potential environmental benefits should be explored; for example nearby hard surfaced public realm, or existing buildings.

4.11 Under Local Plan policy EN1 (and proposed Draft Revised Lambeth Local Plan October 2018 policy EN1) development which would involve the loss of existing public or private open space will not be supported unless at least one of the following tests is met:

- Replacement open space of equivalent or better quality and quantity is provided within a suitable location in the local area.

- In the case of housing estate amenity areas, significant regeneration and community benefits would be achieved that could not be achieved in any other way, and appropriate compensatory provision for the loss of open space is made, including improvements to the quality of the remaining open space.

- It is for the provision of facilities directly related to the use of open space including ecology centres, indoor sports facilities, changing rooms, toilets or cafes as long as these are appropriate in scale and form to the size and character of the open space and acceptable in terms of impact on openness and do not harm the function and operation of the open space.

Experiencing different types of green infrastructure

4.12 People's experience of the borough's green infrastructure will help ensure that it is valued, used and protected in the long term. It is also important that the network as a whole provides a variety of different types of experiences.

4.13 The 2013 Open Space Strategy Addenda identified 19 different typologies of open space in Lambeth to help understand the supply and demand for different types of space. Whilst this approach is useful, it doesn't highlight how spaces are used and experienced by people. Four broad types of experience can be defined.

- Active spaces providing a focus for recreation and the community

- Tranquil contemplative spaces

- Wild spaces to connect with nature

- Designed / cultural spaces providing a sense of place and history

Kennington Park: potential for improved entrances and boundaries

These experiences may be found in different combinations in, or within, different green spaces. By understanding what is currently provided by the green infrastructure network it will be possible to identify where there are any gaps in provision that can be taken account of in future planning, design or upgrading of open spaces and green infrastructure.

The central and northern parts of the borough are almost entirely deficient in access to nature. Part of Ruskin Park is managed to provide an opportunity for people to access nature and to enhance biodiversity.

Many of the borough's parks were designed as formal spaces, many by the Victorians. They provide a distinct sense of place and a more traditional experience of open space as seen in Vauxhall Park and Archbishop's Park, above and below.

Summary: Making the most of Lambeth's green infrastructure

- Ensure Lambeth's green infrastructure is **delivering the broadest range of benefits to the maximum number of people**.

- Ensure the **ability** of the green infrastructure network **to deliver environmental benefits**, both now and in the future, is protected.

- Ensure that green infrastructure is of the **highest quality**, providing a positive experience for those using it.

- Ensure that green infrastructure delivers a **range of different experiences** to communities, including spaces to be active in, to seek tranquillity, and to reconnect with nature.

Case Study: Vauxhall

1

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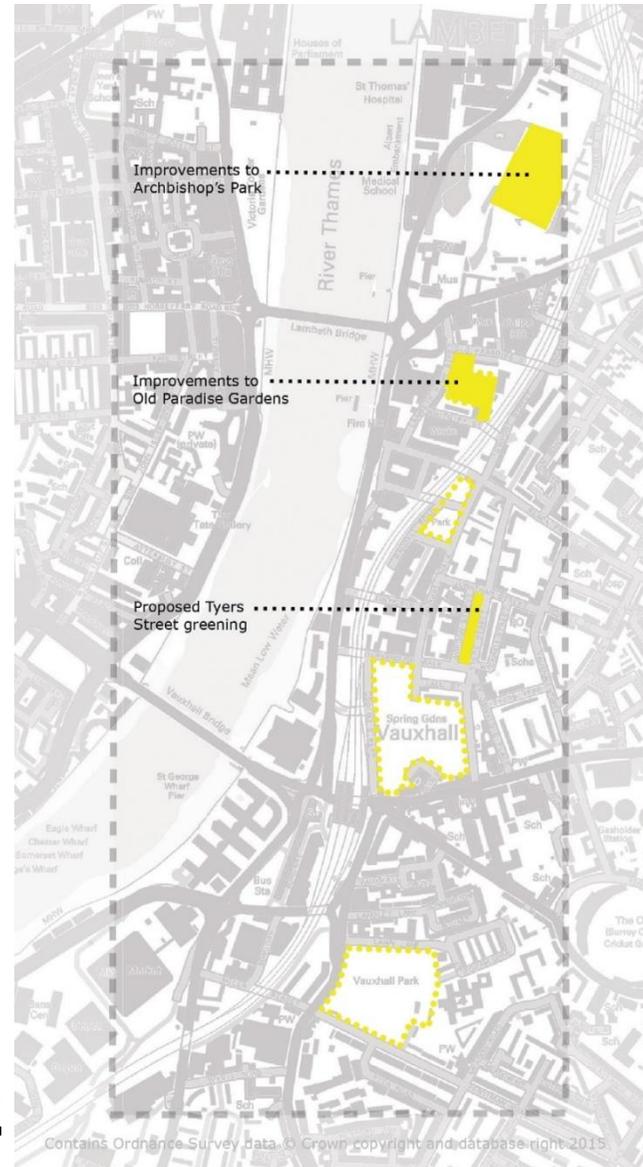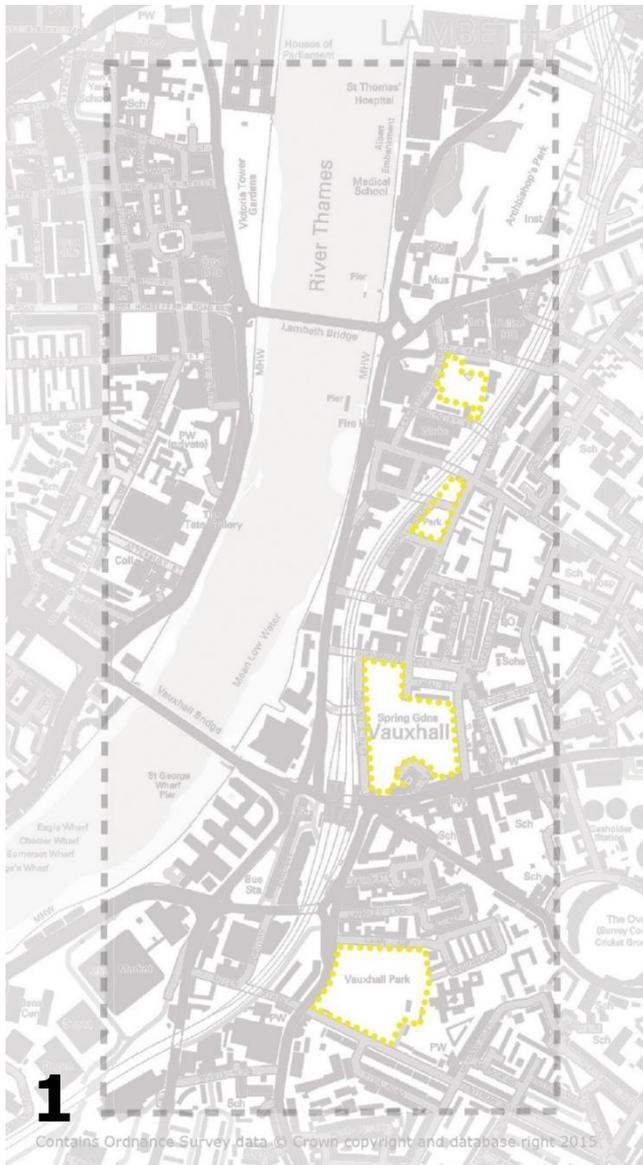
Making the most of Lambeth's green infrastructure

1. Shows existing green open space assets

2. Shows the potential spaces for improved and new open space assets. This includes the following:

Improving quality

Maximising environmental benefits

Please note that this diagram is indicative only, based on the best available information on existing and potential green infrastructure assets. Further feasibility studies may be required.

5   Creating a sense of space and connectivity

5.1   Although the opportunities to increase the amount of open space in the borough are limited, certain interventions can increase the 'sense of space' and openness. This is particularly important in areas of open space deficiency, for residents, workers and visitors. These interventions include:

- careful design of parks and the space immediately around them to increase the perception of space

- enhancing connectivity between parks, other open spaces and other green infrastructure elements.

Potential for better connectivity between Albert Embankment and the River Thames

Green fringes and designing small spaces

5.2   Focusing urban greening around the boundaries of open space, particularly at entrances will help both to increase the perception of space and reduce the stark contrast between the 'grey' and 'green' environment.

5.3   This will have the most significant impact around small open spaces and the north of the borough, which is dominated by small parks of less than 2 hectares in size. The most significant increases in population are expected in this area and maximising the sense of space in these small open spaces will be critical in order to prevent and reduce feelings of enclosure and overcrowding.

Bonnington Square: The Paradise Project has transformed the surrounding roads creating a 'green fringe' around the gardens and extending the feeling of space.

5.4   Some key design principles to help achieve a sense of space are set out below in **Box 5.1**.

Box 5.1: Increasing the perception of space - Design Guidance for small spaces

Layout

Proportion and scale

Create the right proportion and size of open space within parks in keeping with the scale of the space to retain open green/grey areas free from park features and furniture.

Entrances and Access

Keep entrances uncluttered from unnecessary signage, bollards, barriers so that the visitor feels like they are entering a space, with an open invitation to enter. Design access routes through the park to take the user on a route through the park to another access point or focal point so that a sense of movement and purpose is gained whilst using the park.

Changes in level, sightlines and views

Use changes in level and mounding to create enclosures and features, as an alternative to cluttering spaces with planting and physical barriers, which can detract from a sense of openness. Mounding also provides elevations from which to provide opportunities to gain viewpoints within and out of the space, adding to feelings of openness and space.

Perspective

The brain perceives small objects as farther away in relation to larger ones. Place larger objects close to the viewer at an entrance of a park and smaller landscape elements beyond, to exaggerate the illusion of perspective so that, the perceived distance between the objects becomes larger.

Reveal

Placing landscape features so that elements are hidden by other elements, the landscape isn't revealed all at once. A space unfolds as the user ventures into it, obscuring its actual size and extending the size beyond its actual boundaries.

Detail Design

Design palette

A clear design palette with uniformity of materials for surfacing, barriers, bins, benches, signage and lighting will help to unify a space and so that it feels it has a coherent identity and one ownership.

Reduce clutter

Minimise the amount of unnecessary site furniture items, so that the space is not cluttered with features but feels open, accessible and useable.

Planting

Texture

Fine-textured plants can create an illusion of distance, demanding less visual attention, fading into the background and seem more distant. By creating a textured visual line away from a focal point, with the coarsest plants nearest the centre of a space and fine-textured plants farthest away, you can create a false impression of distance.

Colour

Cool colours (like blue, green, pink and purple) appear to recede and visually blend in with the landscape, whereas we are drawn to warm colours (like red, yellow, brown and orange) and they appear to advance towards us. Planting cool colours along the borders and edges of spaces creates the illusion of distance.

Height and Form

By adding visual cues that draw the eye upward, you can make a space appear larger. Trees with an upright growth habit add height to an open space. Low shrub planting at strategic points such as entrances to parks allow the viewer to see over the planting into the park and obtain a sense of its openness and space.

Planting design

Create a journey through a space, leading you to a focal point or to another access point with the use of linear avenues of trees and hedges. Planting can also be used to create outdoor rooms, providing enclosure and adding to the sense of many different areas/themes in a park. Mass block planting of a single plant species also provides a sense of uniformity and simplicity and suggestion of space. Gaps in planting at strategic vantage points to allow views out of the park provides a contextual sense of space

Context/Connectivity

Extend the park footprint to adjoining facilities and vice versa e.g. Jubilee gardens and River Thames, adjoining to allotments /pub gardens into parks.

Enhancing connectivity

5.5   Enhancing the visual connectivity of open spaces and other green infrastructure assets can increase the sense of space. While this is not always possible, urban greening and green walking and cycling routes can be designed to link spaces. Creating these 'Green Chains' of linked publically accessible open space which are easy to move between along attractive 'greened' streets or paths allows people to feel that they can travel through the urban area without leaving the open space. This significantly increases the perception of the amount of open space in the area.

Improvements to Vauxhall Walk, increasing its connection with Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens

Creations of a series of low-profile planted beds and porous surfacing at the southern end of Vauxhall Walk where it enters Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens, into a new public amenity space known as the 'Missing Link'.

5.6 The River Thames is one of the borough's most important green (and blue) infrastructure assets in terms of providing a sense of space. Increasing the visual and physical connectivity of open spaces to and from the river will help maximise the sense of openness. The Thames Path is also a major walking route providing access to and connectivity with open spaces in other boroughs.

TFL's Legible London maps help residents and visitors walk to their destination quickly and easily. They also identify the main green spaces.

Protecting and enhancing the visual amenity of green infrastructure

5.7 The ability to see green infrastructure, as well as use it, contributes to a sense of wellbeing and has a beneficial impact on residential amenity. Visual amenity is most important where people lack access to outdoor space.

*Wyck Gardens flats: high density living, but a strong sense of space*

5.8 Just over half of the borough's open space (433 ha) has restricted or limited access to the public[1]. However, this does not mean that it is not valued by the public. Local residents will still gain positive benefits from this green infrastructure even if they have never physically set foot in the open space. Large trees and shrubs are particularly important in this regard, whether they are in private gardens, along railway lines or around institutions. Therefore their protection is vital and the planting of trees should be encouraged in new developments and redevelopments.

5.9 Maintaining, establishing and re-establishing views to open space (whether accessible or not) is particularly important in terms of engendering a sense of space. Views to open space from neighbouring properties should be protected where possible and re-established where they have been degraded. New developments should also seek to establish views onto public open space where possible.

5.10 Even where public access to open space is not possible or desired for security or health and safety reasons, these spaces can be designed to be 'outward' facing to maximise the benefit for

passers-by and surrounding area. This is particularly relevant to institutional spaces and railway lines. There is a significant amount of line-side estate along the railway line running through Knights Hill and Streatham Hill in the centre of the borough. Too often the external boundaries of these sites are characterised by unattractive palisade fencing and poorly managed dense scrub that prevents passers-by from seeing into the space. Whilst secure fencing still needs to be in place for safety reasons, planting can be opened up and well managed to create attractive spaces that people can appreciate.

Summary: Creating a sense of space and connectivity

- Create green fringes by focusing **urban greening around the boundaries** of small open spaces

- Maximise the sense of space in **small open spaces through implementing design principles** set out in this chapter

- Enhance the **visual connectivity** of open spaces to/from each other

- Increase the physical connectivity of open spaces through establishing **Green Chains** of greened, safe and accessible walking and cycling routes

- Where possible increase the **visual amenity** gained from inaccessible open spaces

- Protect the visual amenity gained from **trees and shrubs** in private gardens and encourage their planting in new developments and redevelopments

- Recognise the importance of **views from properties to open space**

Case Study: Vauxhall
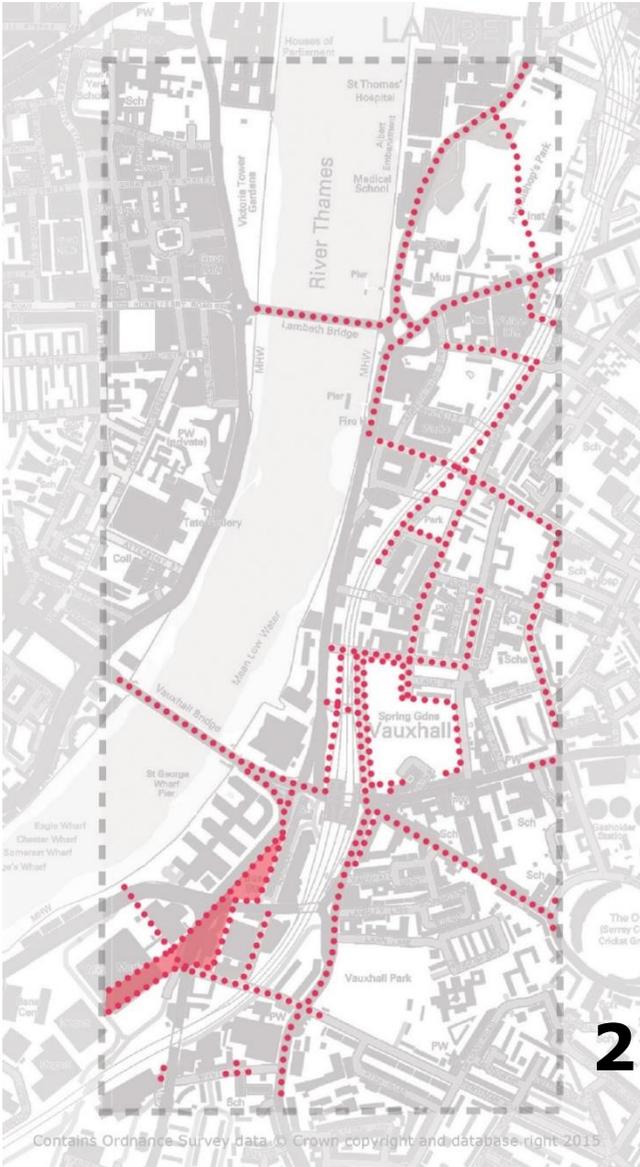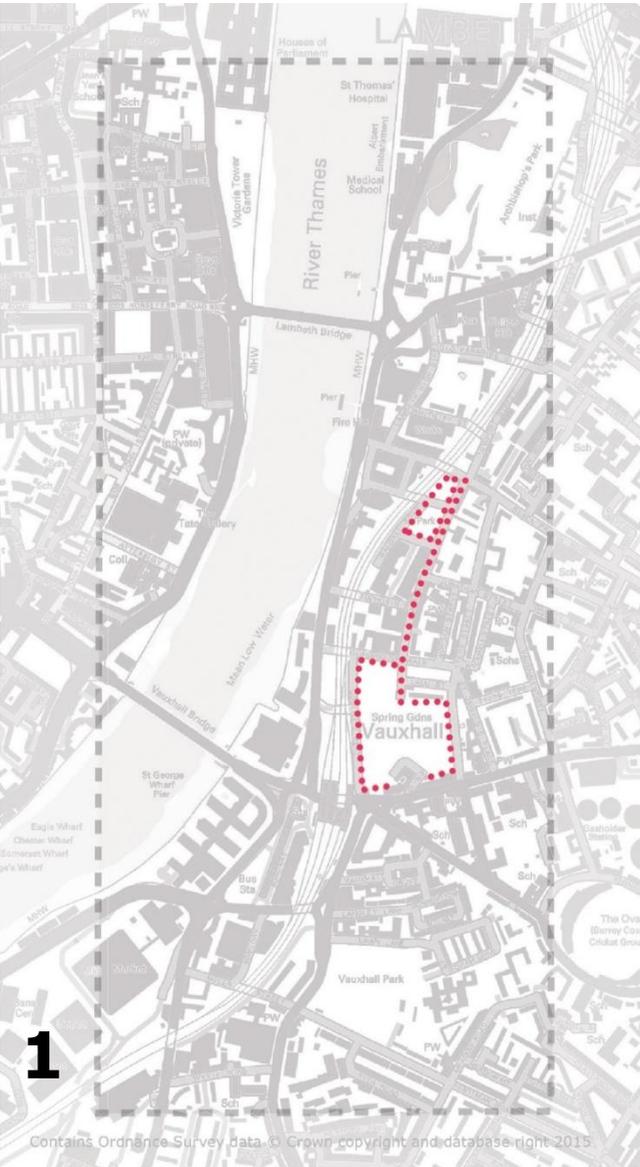
Creating a sense of space and connectivity

1. Shows existing connectivity of green infrastructure.

2. Shows the potential for improving connectivity through:

Enhanced fringes of existing green spaces or

Enhanced physical connectivity for cycling and walking.

Well-designed new small green spaces

Please note that this diagram is indicative only, based on the best available information on existing and potential green infrastructure assets. Further feasibility studies may be required.

6 Improving access and interpretation

Increasing public access to open space

6.1 Over half of the borough's open space has restricted or limited public access. Negotiating access to sites that aren't currently open to the public or only have limited access would bring significant benefits.

6.2 There is generally good accessibility to public open space around the centre of the borough. However, Oval, Herne Hill, Vassall, Streatham Wells, Knights Hill, Thurlow Park and Gipsy Hill wards contain areas of limited or restricted accessibility to open space[11].

6.3 Public access to some spaces is restricted on health and safety grounds (e.g. the immediate line side estate along railway lines), but some other spaces could be opened up. Developing partnerships between the council and relevant landowners to seek to remove barriers to public access will require time and resources but could lead to significant public benefits.

6.4 When new open space is created within the borough the emphasis should be on making this accessible to the public, rather than restricting access to residents.

Increasing knowledge

6.5 Public accessibility alone is not always enough to ensure open space is well used by local communities. Understanding the barriers – that may be physical, social or psychological – that

prevent people from using open spaces in Lambeth will be key to ensuring that they are used to their full potential.

6.6 The north of the borough is characterised by a network of small open spaces in the dense urban area. Surrounded by buildings and shielded from view, people are often unaware that some open spaces exist. Ensuring that entrances are well located along desire lines and close to public transport stops, are visible and clearly signed from approaches is therefore important.

A 'hidden' entrance to Archbishop's Park

6.7 Informing people through advertising, promotion and downloadable resources about where open spaces are, how to get to them, and what activities can be done in them[12], may also help encourage people to explore other underused open spaces in the borough. Ensuring open spaces have a clear identity, especially newer forms of open space such as pocket parks, will help to

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[11] Lambeth Open Space Strategy Addenda (2013)

[12] See:
http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/environmentandplanning/natureconservation/naturepr
ojects/steppingstones/ssprojectaims.htm

overcome the initial inertia that can exist amongst communities to use the space until a culture establishes of what the space is used for and what forms of use are acceptable.

A new attractive mural, created by local young adults and funded by s106 capital funding, inside Palace Road Nature Gardens in Streatham – this has radically transformed a blank boundary wall and has a 'worldwide wildlife' theme reflecting the origins of many of the young adults who helped design and install it.

Reducing physical barriers

6.8   Even where knowledge about an open space is good and there is a desire to use it, physical barriers can exist which put people off or have a detrimental impact on the experience of visiting that open space.

6.9   The Lambeth Open Space Strategy (2013) highlights the way in which the railway line creates a barrier to the use of some open spaces and increases walking distances to reach them. This is particularly notable west of the railway in Oval and Prince's wards and to the east of the railway in Herne Hill.

Lighting under the bridge adjacent to Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens

6.10   There are also a number of busy roads that surround or border some of Lambeth's open spaces (e.g. Clapham Common). This also acts as a barrier to accessing these spaces and can be a particular deterrent to families with young children.

6.11   To decrease such barriers, the council should promote clearly signed walking and cycling routes to open spaces. Developing safer routes to open spaces would not only encourage their use, but also make the areas safer. Pedestrianisation schemes and other traffic reduction or calming measures near to open spaces and green walking and cycling routes along the approaches to open space would all make the open space feel more accessible.

6.12   The Council's transportation team should ensure that measures are carefully coordinated so that crossing points match with desire lines and are in close proximity to the entrance to open spaces.

6.13   Whilst smaller open spaces are likely to be used mainly by those living or working in close proximity to them, some of the larger spaces in the south of the borough (e.g. Brockwell Park) draw visitors from a much wider catchment. For these spaces lack of proximate public transport options and / or information about public transport options is likely to deter users. It is therefore important to ensure that good public transport links are in close

proximity to open spaces (e.g. bus stops), and clear information exists highlighting the accessibility of these open spaces by public transport (e.g. open space information highlights transport routes, bus stop names are related to nearby open spaces). This will encourage and increase the likelihood of people visiting these spaces.

Creating welcoming spaces

6.14   Whilst some open spaces in Lambeth are widely used by the local community, others are not. As noted above, this may relate to barriers to access, but it may also be because people are not fully aware of what the spaces offer to them.

6.15   This can be addressed through clear and welcoming signage and notice boards at the entrances to open spaces (e.g. what can and can't be done, upcoming events, opening times, responsibility and contact details for the maintenance and management). However, the type of signage must still be appropriate for the site in question, and a 'portfolio' of different signage types available to allow important information to be provided to the visitor but doesn't clutter or over-dominate that space.

6.16   Holding appropriate events in underused open spaces that target different interests and sections of the community can be an effective way to attract people into open spaces. Events can introduce people to the space so they feel comfortable returning. They can also help to encourage users to take a stake in the management of spaces by getting involved in 'Friends of' groups.

6.17   Events provide an opportunity to celebrate the range of benefits that open spaces can provide for the local community such as food growing, health and well-being benefits. Care should be taken to ensure that events are inclusive and do not alienate existing users or local residents by creating noise and parking problems.

Summary: Access – Green infrastructure for all:

Negotiate **public access to sites** that aren't currently open to the public or only have limited access

Require **new open space** created as a result of development to be **accessible** to the public

Ensure **entrances** to open spaces are visible, well located, sign posted and display clear information about what the open space offers and acceptable behaviour

Advertise, **promote** and produce downloadable resources to raise awareness of the borough's open spaces

Develop **safe accessible routes** to open spaces

For larger spaces ensure **public transport** is well located and information on using it to reach open space is available

Ensure all feel welcome and **conflicting uses** are reduced

Hold appropriate **events** to attract people into under used spaces.

Case Study: Vauxhall
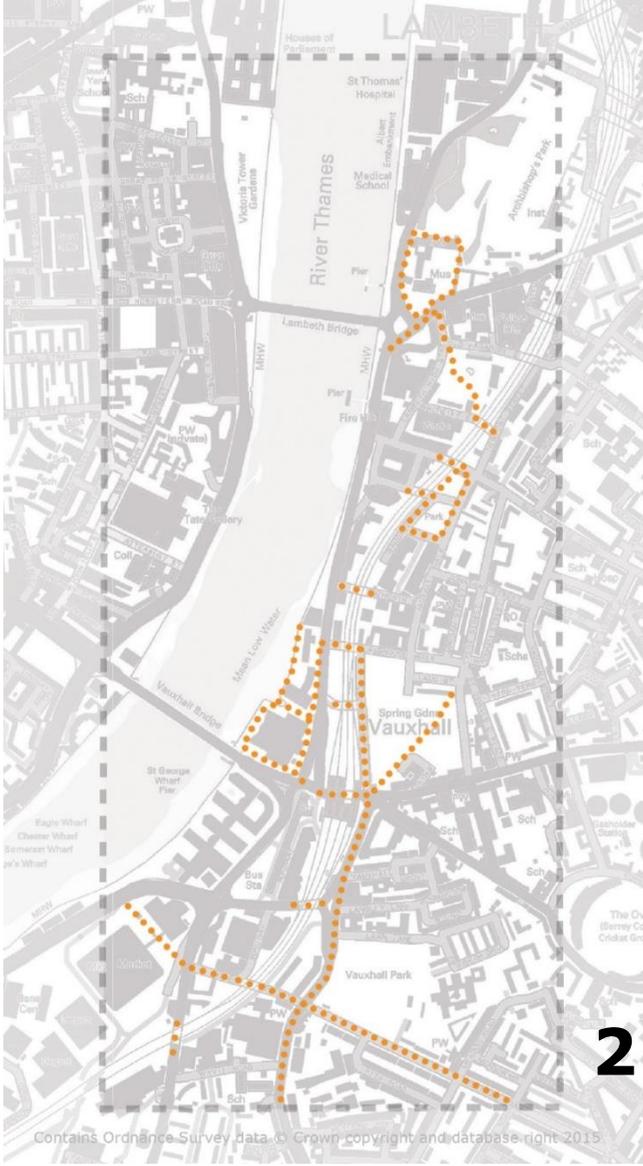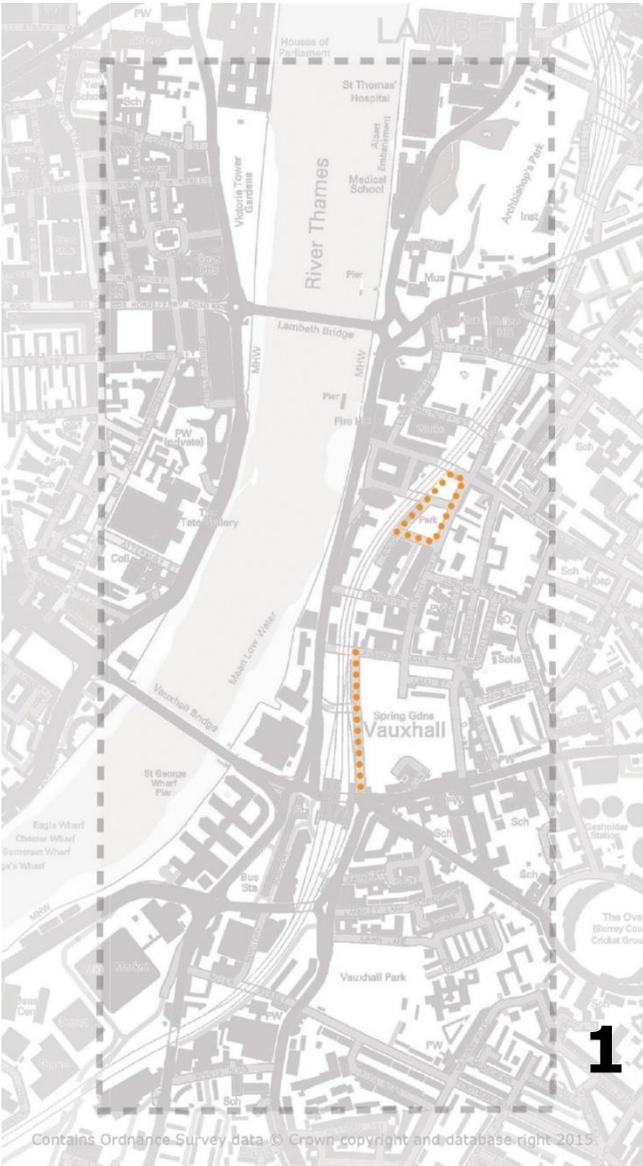
Improving access and interpretation

1. Shows existing access initiatives.

2. Shows potential access improvements. This includes the following:

Opening up access

Reducing physical barriers.

Please note that this diagram is indicative only, based on the best available information on existing and potential green infrastructure assets. Further feasibility studies may be required.

7   Implementing the Strategy

Overarching recommendations

7.1   The preceding chapters set out some key actions and interventions required to implement that part of the strategy. This final chapter provides overarching recommendations on the implementation of the strategy itself.

7.2   The overarching recommendations address the following issues:

- Gaining a better understanding of the current green infrastructure in the borough

- Being clear on what needs to be done to expand and improve the green infrastructure network

- Getting the right policies in place and ensuring implementation

- How to bridge the 'funding gap' and engender support

- Providing leadership and support on green infrastructure

- Monitoring progress

7.3   The case study maps presented in the previous chapters, focusing on Vauxhall, demonstrate the potential for each theme to be delivered. The map at the end of this Chapter brings these themes together and illustrates what a robust green infrastructure network might look like.

A better understanding of the current network

Recommendation1: Establish a robust baseline for the Borough's green infrastructure assets

7.4   Having a good understanding about the current state of the borough's green infrastructure is a vital first step in achieving a high quality expanded network. Whilst a significant amount of work has been undertaken on the quality of Lambeth's open spaces, there has been limited equivalent work on the borough's other green infrastructure assets, both in terms of quantity and quality.

Recommendation 2: Simplify and streamline the green infrastructure audit process

7.5   Whilst comprehensive, the current open space audit process is complex, which makes it difficult for partner organisations to contribute to the audit process. It is also not applicable to wider green infrastructure assets. Simplifying the audit and making it relevant to all assets will make it feasible to repeat the audit more regularly and engage partners in the process. Appendix 2 includes further information of how this might be achieved.

Recommendation 3: Undertake a community consultation exercise to understand how residents perceive and experience green infrastructure in the borough

7.6   Consultation should be undertaken with local residents to understand several aspects relating to green infrastructure including:

- Which parts of the borough have the lowest perception of open space / greenery in order to target interventions to increase the sense of space more accurately (see chapter 5).

- The barriers – that may be physical, social or psychological – that prevent people from using open spaces (especially underused spaces) in order to ensuring that they are used to their full potential (see chapter 6).

- The different user groups that open spaces need to provide for in different areas and what facilities or events might help to attract people to use these spaces (particularly underused spaces) (see chapter 6).

7.7   The Council's Co-operative Local Investment Plans (CLIPs) provide a consultation process to ask local communities about their priorities for investing the neighbourhood element of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Improving access to, and

facilities within, the borough's green spaces may be highlighted as local priorities for investing this money.

7.8   There are seven CLIP areas in Lambeth. The Pilot Co-operative Local Investment Plan was carried out in Stockwell, Vassall and Larkhall wards. During consultation within these wards in summer 2016, the community frequently made suggestions for improvements to green infrastructure and highlighted the importance of improving both the quantity and quality of green infrastructure in the area.

7.9   Where plans identify improvements to green space as a local priority, information collected during these consultations can be pooled across the borough. This would help develop a bank of proposals for greening initiatives so that future funding streams can be matched to locally endorsed projects.

Being clear on what needs to be done

Recommendation 4: Identify projects to improve and extend green infrastructure assets (beyond open spaces) to be included in the next Capital Investment Plan

7.10   Although it is often a lengthy process from concept to implementation to deliver green infrastructure, the window of opportunity to engage partners, negotiate with developers and infrastructure providers or apply to funding bodies can be very small. Therefore it is imperative that clear plans already exist detailing what needs to be done and where and what the likely costs are. This enables officers and others to move quickly when opportunities arise and clearly articulate the needs of the community and expectations.

7.11   This Strategy provides the overarching direction needed. Another key document is the Parks and Open Spaces Capital Investment Plan, which was prepared in 2014 to help improve the design, infrastructure and management of open spaces. Fully updated in 2018 the Plan prioritises investment across all Lambeth's parks and open spaces. It also seeks to draw together and unify the large number of overlapping and complex investment and design plans that have already been drawn up or are planned for open

spaces in the Borough (e.g. Master Plans, Management Plans, Green Flag Award Plans).

7.12   The Capital Investment Plan sets out a range of improvement projects across the borough that have been detailed, assessed, prioritised and costs estimated. Since 2014 the council has invested £9 Million capital and S106 into improving parks and open spaces. Work is now taking place to raise the remaining funding needed to complete the revised Plan.

7.13   A full understanding of the current state of the wider green infrastructure network was achieved during 2017/18 (Recommendation 1), enabling the Capital Investment Plan to be fully updated in 2018. One specific area where there is clearly a need for further work to identify, plan and design new green infrastructure, is for routes for green chains between the borough's open spaces.

7.14   This comprehensive Capital Investment Plan would provide a mechanism for green infrastructure to be considered at the earliest stage of both the planning and development process for an area.

Getting the right policies in place and ensuring implementation

Recommendation 5: Take account of this strategy in the Local Plan review

7.15   Some of the key actions and interventions required to implement Strategy could be addressed through planning policy. This will help to address the requirements of the Draft London Plan 2018, which supports green infrastructure provision (Policy G1), urban greening (Policy G5) and the protection of open space (Policy G4).

7.16   Although new policies are unlikely to be required, some additional policy requirements, criteria and detail in supporting text could be included to emphasise the importance of green infrastructure provision. This could include consideration of accessible green roofs in new developments and reference to the strategy in supporting text. Appendix 3 (inserted October 2018) sets out a

summary of policy approach proposed in the Draft Revised Lambeth Local Plan October 2018.

Recommendation 6: Ensure better alignment of all Council policies around green infrastructure

7.17 Significant joint working on green infrastructure is already taking place between Council departments. For example, the Council's transport team is using a green infrastructure approach to deliver surface water management through rain gardens. Road safety, traffic calming measures and walking and cycling routes are also linked to green infrastructure. This approach is reflected in the council's Draft Transport Strategy, published for consultation in October 2018.

7.18 Lambeth Health and Wellbeing Board is another important potential partner where an increase in the amount of joint working with Lambeth Parks and Planning teams could provide mutual benefits. The draft physical activity and sports strategy 2015 to 2020 commissioned by the Board sets out the vision for Active Lambeth, to increase participation in physical activity and sport across the borough. A key part to achieving this vision is ensuring that the built and natural environment contributes to a culture of people being active in their daily lives, including world class facilities and an active travel network that enhances the opportunities for people to get active and stay active. The green infrastructure network can play a central role delivering this part of the vision on behalf of the Board but will require finding ways to work with very different partners such as health commissioning groups and GPs.

7.19 Lambeth Public Health is keen to support the development and implementation of the strategy and the provision of green infrastructure in Lambeth generally. Lambeth Public Health will contribute to the provision of a strong evidence base in the review of the Lambeth Local Plan.

7.20 The benefits of green infrastructure need to be recognised by all relevant Council services, notably Transport, Economic Development, Regeneration and Housing, as well as Planning and Parks. This Strategy should be used to inform policy development by these departments.

7.21 Raising the profile of green infrastructure and highlighting the priority, weight and importance that the Council attach to it will also help to encourage partners to get involved.

Recommendation 7: Improve green infrastructure implementation and enforcement

7.22 Planning policies require implementation through the development management process. This requires a good understanding of the rationale for the policies and ways in which they can be implemented effectively. Green infrastructure is not a 'nice to have' but a fundamental component of any new development. When faced with other pressing policy requirements, however, there is a risk green infrastructure attracts insufficient attention in the development management process. The information on open space deficiency contained in this Strategy should assist this, as well as the other actions and interventions highlighted in Chapters 3 to 6.

7.23 Where developers incorporate green infrastructure into their development it is not uncommon for the amount of provision or level of ambition to reduce as the planning process progresses and budgetary and other constraints appear. Often the green infrastructure that is finally delivered in new schemes does not reflect the visualisations that were submitted at the planning stage. Planning enforcement officers therefore need to ensure that schemes are properly implemented and planning conditions are fully discharged.

Bridging the 'funding gap' and engendering support

7.24 The recent Heritage Lottery Fund 'State of UK Parks' report (2014) highlighted the risks posed to open space and other green infrastructure assets by public sector funding cuts. Lambeth is no exception, with significant cuts being imposed on the parks and open spaces budget.

7.25 To manage this risk, there will be a need for alternative funding sources for green infrastructure provision and maintenance, as well as new forms of governance.

Recommendation 8: Expand community involvement in the management of parks and open spaces, including the role of Neighbourhood Planning

7.26 Lambeth has placed great emphasis on developing relationships between the council and the communities of the borough. Local communities have been able to become actively engaged in the management and enhancement of open spaces. For example, at Brockwell Park a Strategic Partnership Board was created in 2018, with Board members drawn equally from Lambeth, ward councillors and the local community. Several Friends groups have extensive voluntary programmes including litter-picking and gardening and full community management is being trialled at three parks to see if completely sustainable financial models can be created.

7.27 The Localism Act (2011) provides other opportunities for the transfer of land or community assets from statutory bodies to communities, the right for communities to list land as being a community asset and then bid for it should it come up for sale and the right to reclaim underused land from the Local Council or other public bodies.

7.28 Neighbourhood Planning also provides an opportunity for aiding communities to influence green infrastructure delivery.

Recommendation 9: Harness the potential of the private sector through Lambeth's Business Improvement Districts and other business partnerships.

7.29 Lambeth's public, private and third sector organisations are increasingly represented through Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), or equivalent organisations that are funded through a local levy. BIDs across London take a considerable interest in green infrastructure, because it enhances the environment for employees and visitors and helps to ensure business continuity and success. A key driver for the Victoria BID, for example, was to seek to reduce localised flooding and improve local air quality.

7.30 To date, Vauxhall One BID and the South Bank Employers Federation have completed a green infrastructure audit, and Clapham BID is currently completing an audit in their area.

7.31 These audits provide valuable information (thereby contributing to recommendations 1 and 4) and create a forum for partnership working around implementation of identified opportunities.

Recommendation 10: Engender support through partnership with interested external organisations

7.32 A significant opportunity for Lambeth, particularly in terms of opening up new funding streams, is working with partners towards shared goals and reaching mutually beneficial outcomes. Potential partners are at different points in terms of their existing understanding and engagement with green infrastructure.

7.33 Potential partners include those that already have a good understanding of green infrastructure and are either actively delivering or planning to deliver green infrastructure as part of their organisations activities. A good example of this is Network Rail who hold a significant amount of land in the borough as part of their line-side estate. In 2014 Network Rail published a Sustainable Vegetation Management Strategy and other pilot projects are ongoing to look at changing the way that they manage their line-side estate for the benefit of biodiversity and other landscape goals. By working with Network Rail on this issue the Council has the opportunity to influence the management activities to tie in with the wider green infrastructure network and the recommendations identified in this strategy, for example improving the visual amenity of inaccessible space (Chapter 5).

7.34 The formation of a network of organisations that partner with, or could partner with, the council in creating and managing the borough's green infrastructure network would provide an opportunity not only for the council to expand its network but for groups to share information on best practice and design, coordinate activities and for the council to disseminate information on best practice and target assistance where it is most needed.

7.35 When thinking about potential partners for delivering green infrastructure it is useful to identify / distinguish two groups:

- Partners who directly benefit from the presence of green infrastructure in their local area for example, community groups or local businesses.

- Partners who are working towards shared goals and there is the potential for mutually beneficial outcomes to be reached. For example, those already delivering green infrastructure, aspects of it or undertaking work / managing activities that have the potential to be delivered using a green infrastructure approach, such as those designing flood alleviation schemes or seeking to increase active travel for health benefits.

Providing leadership and direction

Recommendation 11: Use this Strategy to demonstrate the vision and future direction for the GI network.

7.36 While partnership / multi-agency working opens up new opportunities for ways of delivering and funding green infrastructure, it also presents new challenges. Co-ordinating and balancing the priorities of a broad range of often single interest groups is challenging. Demonstrating and promoting a clear, consistent vision for green infrastructure in a way that engages all interest groups is critical along with good leadership.

7.37 The council has a clear role as the custodian of open spaces, safeguarding the public interest and therefore needs to remain at the centre of decision making about both the planning and management of green infrastructure.

7.38 Without clear leadership and direction, encouraging multiple partners to get involved in the delivery and management of green infrastructure could lead to different visions, approaches and management styles resulting in a visually and functionally fragmented network that lacks cohesiveness.

Recommendation 12: The Council should provide training and critical friend advice to community organisations.

7.39 Different partners need different levels and types of support. Potential partners have different levels of understanding of green infrastructure, and therefore level of support needed within organisations and even community groups will vary considerably. Some organisations have in house landscape management or environmental professionals and therefore require little in the way of technical support and some community groups will benefit from

individuals with relevant professional skills. These groups may require the focus of their support to be on other areas such as facilitating community engagement. Others will be highly dependent on technical expertise and guidance from the council as well as support and capacity building in terms of organising and mobilising an effective partnership. It is similarly important to understand where groups are best placed to provide value.

Monitoring progress

Recommendation 13: Develop suitable indicators for monitoring

7.40 While the open space audit process allows for monitoring the quality and accessibility of parks and open spaces, there is no equivalent for other green infrastructure assets. As noted in Recommendation 1, there is a need for better and more comprehensive baseline information on these assets. Once this has been achieved, suitable indicators should be developed and monitored.

7.41 Indicators might include the total amount of impermeable surface in the borough, the extent of green roofs, the number of tree preservation orders served, extent of areas of deficiency in open space.

Case Study: Vauxhall
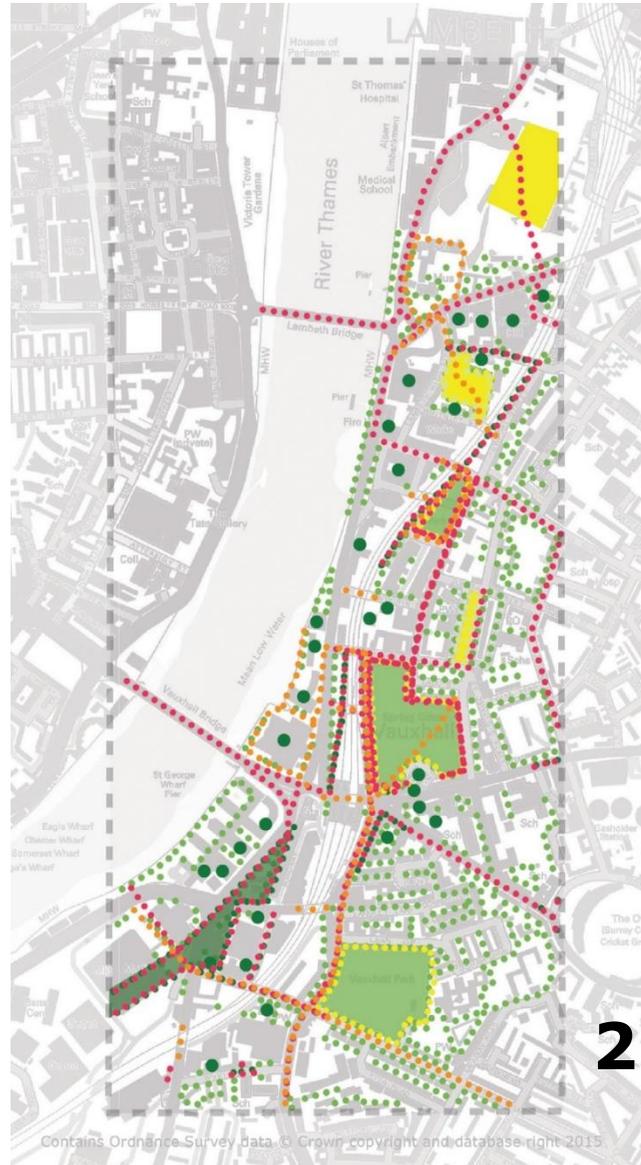
1. Shows existing green infrastructure assets and attributes.

2. Shows the potential for new green infrastructure assets and attributes. This covers all four themes in this strategy:

Finding space for green infrastructure (chapter 3)

Areas within new development ▪

Reclaimed streets or street level urban greening ▪

Green roofs ●

Making the most of Lambeth's green infrastructure (chapter 4)

Improving quality ▪

Maximising environmental benefits ▪

Creating a sense of space and connectivity (chapter 5)

Enhanced fringes of existing green spaces; or

Enhanced physical connectivity for cycling and walking ▪

Improving access and interpretation (chapter 6)

Opening up access ▪

Reducing physical barriers

Please note that this diagram is indicative only, based on the best available information on existing and potential green infrastructure assets. Further feasibility studies may be required.

Appendix 1
Lambeth Local Plan 2015: Supporting Policies

Policies in the Lambeth Local Plan provide support to particular themes that are covered by the Chapters of this Strategy. These policies are listed below and linked to relevant chapters of the strategy.

Policies	Chapter 3: Finding space for green infrastructure	Chapter 4: Making the most of Lambeth's green infrastructure	Chapter 5: Creating a sense of space and connectivity	Chapter 6: Improving access and interpretation
Policy D3 Infrastructure: Safeguard and improve GI, and work with partners to ensure the delivery of additional infrastructure.	√	√		
Policy ED11 Arts and cultural uses: Temporary use of open space and public realm for performance and creative work will be supported.				√
Policy EN1 Open Space and Biodiversity: the Council will protect and maintain open spaces and their function. Development that involves the loss of existing public or private open space will not be supported. Prevent development which would result in loss, reduction in area or significant harm to the nature conservation or biodiversity value of an open space. Increase the quantity of open space through linking existing spaces through green chains, also new developments, requiring major developments in areas of open space deficiency or access to nature to provide on-site or off site open space and also designing in new or extending green chains and links for pedestrians, cyclists and wildlife.	√	√	√	√
Policy EN2 Local Food Growing and Production: The use of land and buildings for local food growing and production will be supported including the temporary use of vacant and derelict land, and the use of land on housing estates. Also the incorporation of innovative spaces for growing food (e.g. green roofs) will be encouraged and supported as will the inclusion of productive trees and plants in landscaping proposals.		√		
Policy EN4 Sustainable design and construction: All non-residential development proposals should incorporate living roofs and walls where feasible and appropriate to the character and context of the development.		√	√	

Policies	Chapter 3: Finding space for green infrastructure	Chapter 4: Making the most of Lambeth's green infrastructure	Chapter 5: Creating a sense of space and connectivity	Chapter 6: Improving access and interpretation
Policy EN6 Sustainable drainage systems and water management: Development proposals should implement sustainable water management through water sensitive urban design. Incorporate SuDS to maximise amenity and biodiversity benefits.	√	√		
Policy H5 Housing Standards: For new housing the policy sets out standards for private or communal amenity space and outlines that communal amenity space should incorporate sustainable landscape principles, promote biodiversity and where appropriate food growing.	√	√		
Policy Q2 Amenity: Development will be supported if adequate outdoor amenity space is provided, free from excessive noise or disturbance, pollution or odour, oppressive enclosure, wind/downdraught and overshadowing.	√			
Policy Q6 Urban Design, Public Realm: Supports development that creates new or enhanced open space and landscaping / trees.	√	√		
Policy Q9 Landscaping: Maximises opportunities for greening, retains existing planting, designated habitats and landscape features and creates opportunities for new ones, provides SuDs and minimises surface run off.		√	√	
Policy Q10 Trees: Requires account to be taken of existing trees, and states that development won't be permitted if it would result in the loss of trees of significant value. Planting of new trees should be included where appropriate in new development.		√	√	
Policy Q11 Building Alterations and Extensions: Development below gardens shouldn't compromise the ability of trees to grow without irrigation. Living roofs will generally be supported but are unlikely to be considered appropriate on heritage assets.	√			
Policy Q14 Development in gardens and on backland sites: Gardens will not be considered potential development sites. Car parking in front gardens won't be permitted where planning permission is required.	√			

Policies	Chapter 3: Finding space for green infrastructure	Chapter 4: Making the most of Lambeth's green infrastructure	Chapter 5: Creating a sense of space and connectivity	Chapter 6: Improving access and interpretation
Policy Q24 River Thames: Proposals along the river should enhance the character and views of the river, preserve the setting and approach of the Thames bridges, and maintain and create publicly accessible spaces and routes along the river.			√	
Policy T2 Walking: Improving the environmental attractiveness of walking routes for pedestrians.			√	

Appendix 2
Quality – ensuring high quality green infrastructure

Current quality of open spaces

The 2013 Open Space Strategy Addenda notes that the overall quality of parks in Lambeth is 'average to good', with good being the highest rating. The parks in most need of improvement were found in Larkhall and Prince's ward.

The majority of major parks (those over 20ha) are found in the south of the borough and their overall quality is good, although Streatham Common and Norwood Park in the very south of the borough need some improvement. The central part of the borough is well served by accessible high quality open space; however vandalism is most common in open spaces in this area, particularly in smaller spaces. The greatest number of small local parks is in the northern part of the borough and is in most need of attention.

The Lambeth Open Space Strategy (OSS) Audit was developed in 2014 following the 2013 Open Space Strategy Addenda. The OSS audit and accompanying database are tools for recording and monitoring the quality of Lambeth's open spaces. It provides a solid evidence base of the open spaces features and elements and their condition. A baseline assessment was undertaken of every publically accessible Council owned open space in the borough using a standard pro-forma. The assessment involved use of qualitative judgements, and considers the physical, social and aesthetic qualities of each open space.

The OSS audit undertaken in 2013 identified that there has been a general improvement in the quality of open space provided in the borough, and of the sites re-evaluated in 2013, 58 have improved, 29 have remained the same and 8 have decreased in quality since 2007. The number of parks with Green Flag Status has increased from 1 in 2005/06 to 11 in 2014/15; this is a powerful – and independently audited – measure of quality in that it assesses an open space across a wide range of important criteria that are also highly relevant to park users and their needs.

In February 2015 LUC and Lambeth Parks jointly re-audited ten parks in Lambeth using the audit pro-forma. The table below identifies the ten parks and their overall scores.

Quality Scores for ten sample sites in 2012 & 2015

Park/Open Space	2012 Overall Site Quality Score %	2015 Overall Site Quality Score %	Factors affecting increase or decrease in quality score
Archbishops Park	78.9	79.3	Improvements to planting, including biodiversity features
Jubilee Gardens	80.1	81.8	Planting established to provide some biodiversity interest
Bernie Spain Gardens	65.2	66.4	Food growing included in park
Hatfields Green	67.1	66.3	Existing vegetation requires management and improvements , including boundary treatment
St John's Churchyard Waterloo	68.5	69	Maintenance and management of vegetation and structures has improved
Waterloo Millennium Green	81.2	81.2	No change in quality score
Lambeth High Street Recreation Ground	63.4	63.7	Improvements carried out to entrances, site furniture. Additional tree planting
Pedlar's Park	72.6	73.4	New play structures installed
Ufford Street Open Space	59.7	59.7	No change to quality score

Park/Open Space	2012 Overall Site Quality Score %	2015 Overall Site Quality Score %	Factors affecting increase or decrease in quality score
Emma Cons Gardens	67.4	67.1	Improvements required to seating provision and planting for biodiversity interest

The results of the audit showed that two of the parks had reduced in quality; mainly due to the maturity of planting, wear and tear on the spaces and a general lack of investment in management. The other eight parks had either retained their original (2012) quality score or had increased their quality score. The increase in quality scores were due to recent improvements measures, including improved play areas, and additional site furniture, some of which had resulted from the Open Space Capital Investment Plan and/or localised improvements organised by Friends Groups, for example biodiversity initiatives in Archbishop's Park

With the exception of Ufford Street open space, all the spaces audited score in the good category (60-100%). Ufford Street open space falls into the top end of average category.

The sample audit work observed that improvements could be made around increasing biodiversity in many of the parks employing techniques such as wildlife friendly planting, meadows, varying mowing regimes, additional habitat features.

It was also noticeable that the access and entrances to some of the parks were uninviting, with high railings as barriers, poor signage and site information, narrow and cluttered entrances. Improvements to these items could be implemented with targeted investment and resources to impact positively on the quality of the open spaces by making them more welcoming and inviting.

A better understanding of green infrastructure in Lambeth

OSS Audit

Whilst the OSS Audit provides useful information about current quality of the larger open spaces in the borough and the issues they are facing, this is not a one off activity and ongoing monitoring needs to take place to chart progress and ensure investment is appropriately directed in the future. Given the new vision for open space set out in this Strategy and the changes that are happening in terms of how the Council manages its open space (discussed further in Chapter 8), it is important to ensure that the OSS Audit is fit for purpose and provides the Council and its partner organisations with the information that it needs in order to carry on delivering high quality open spaces.

The Audit is a potentially powerful tool in helping to understand the quality issues that the borough's open spaces face. However, the sample audit undertaken in February 2015 by LUC and Lambeth Parks found that the audit form was lengthy and complicated to use, the understanding of some of the categories and scoring criteria were not clear and did not appear to be relevant to an assessment of the quality of an open space.

It is recommended that Lambeth Council carry out a review of the open space audit and database. There are four key aspects of the audit that need to be considered further and these are discussed below.

Structure and content

The audit as it currently stands enables Lambeth Parks to record information about its open spaces and monitor quality, generating an overall quality score for each park as well as more detailed information for park managers on the presences/absence of features and their condition they are in, directing managers to where improvements can be made. Regular monitoring allows an assessment to be made of the impact of capital investment or management interventions on the quality of the open space.

The physical quality of the open space is assessed largely focussing on the (mainly) built features such as site furniture and boundaries but also including an assessment of access, looking at pedestrian, disabled access, cycle access, gates and crossings.

Aesthetic qualities are assessed with a view to defining the overall sense of place by reference to balance, scale, enclosure, texture, colour, diversity, unity and stimulus.

Each element is then scored with regard to up to ten factors: convenience, usability, condition, usefulness, need, coordination, functionality, presence of elements, work needed and appropriateness. An overall quality score is then derived and the open spaces are allocated to categories of 'Poor', 'Average' or 'Good'.

There are a number of categories that can be revised or combined to become more relevant to how a community values their space e.g. architectural features, and aesthetic. The overall scoring system can also be simplified with scores ranging from 1-5 good –poor, or tick box for presence/ absence.

There should also be consideration of whether the audit form should be revised to better reflect the contents of this Strategy, particularly perception and ecosystem services e.g. green sustainable surface water drainage. Ensuring the audit reflects both the current situation but also future opportunities to deliver these elements of the Strategy will be particularly useful to the Council, especially in ensuring that when others are involved in the management of open spaces, the full potential of those spaces is reached.

One option when redesigning the form would be to align it with Green Flag assessment criteria, as the recognised methodology for assessing the quality of open spaces and used in NPPF open space studies.

Audit teams and contributors

The Audit is an interactive database which can be updated as audits are carried out and will generate assessment scores. It is currently only used by Lambeth Parks staff. However, given the changes taking place in the management of Open Space and the pressure on resources the opportunity to involve other partners from both within and outside the Council for example Community Groups should be explored. Opening up the audit process to a wider group of contributors will have an impact on the design of the audit pro-forma, requiring it to be simplified, streamlined and for it to move away from overtly technical language.

Ownership of the audit and database

If the audit process is opened up to contributors outside Lambeth Parks, thought will have to go into ensuring that the consistency and integrity of the database and results remain intact. The Lambeth Parks team should retain ownership of the database and have a quality assurance and oversight role for the audits carried out by external partners. Training and support will also need to be provided to auditors to ensure consistency when completing proformas.

Monitoring frequency

It is proposed that the audit should be carried out on a three year cycle for all open spaces in the borough. Interim audits should also be made following significant capital investments or management interventions.

Urban greening audit

A comprehensive picture of Lambeth's green infrastructure network is currently not available. A green infrastructure audit of part of the borough has been undertaken of the Vauxhall area by LUC on behalf of Vauxhall One BID, but further more comprehensive information is needed to address this significant data gap.

A green infrastructure audit should note the location, functionality, ownership and condition of each feature whether in the public or private realm (where feasible). The results of this audit can then be used to identify existing gaps in provision, features that are poor quality, opportunities for enhancement and provide a baseline to monitor progress in the future.

The methodology the green infrastructure audit is likely to differ from that for open spaces, but consideration needs to be given to how the two audits might relate to one another, and whether attempts would be made to align the two processes.

Due to the fact that the audit would need to be borough wide a key challenge will be to devise a methodology and approach that is realistic in terms of resourcing, repeatability and the time taken to undertake it. A desk based assessment can be undertaken to map some existing urban greening assets, utilising tree surveys, open space data, GIS systems, aerial photography, and information from Council departments and third parties on existing greening schemes. However, surveying on the ground is generally used to build up a more accurate and complete picture, particularly of opportunities. For a borough wide

audit like this, it may be appropriate to explore crowd sourcing / citizen science techniques to gather information and verify the results of desk based assessments.

Appendix 3

Draft Revised Lambeth Local Plan October 2018: a summary of proposed policy changes

Taking into account Draft London Plan 2017 (as amended August 2018) and recommendations and guidance set out in this Strategy, policies referring to green infrastructure, open space and biodiversity in the Lambeth Local Plan 2015 have been revised in the Draft Revised Lambeth Local Plan October 2018 (DRLLP).

There are a number of references in the DRLLP on the protection, enhancement and support of green infrastructure and local biodiversity. These include Policy EN1 Open space, green infrastructure and biodiversity; Policy EN2 Food growing; Policy EN6 Sustainable drainage systems and water management; Policy H5 Housing standards; Policy D4 Planning obligations; Policy Q9 Landscaping; Policy Q14 Development in gardens and on previously developed rear land with no street frontage; and Policy Q27 basement development. There is no change to the strategic objective on biodiversity and green infrastructure in the DRLLP.

Revised Policy EN1

The most significant change in the DRLLP from current Local Plan policy is the stronger emphasis on green infrastructure in the revised Plan, particularly in policy EN1, for example protecting and maintaining open spaces, *green infrastructure* and their function; and increasing the quantity of open space and *green infrastructure* in the borough. The policy remains unchanged with respect to preventing development that would result in loss, reduction in area or significant harm to the nature conservation or biodiversity value of an open space including any designated or proposed Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) unless adequate mitigation or compensatory measures are included appropriate to the nature conservation value of the assets involved. Similarly, the policy remains unchanged in terms of encouraging development proposals wherever possible to protect, enhance, create or manage nature conservation and biodiversity interest in accordance with the borough's biodiversity action plan and the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy.

However policy EN1 in the DRLLP has been strengthened with respect to clarity in providing access to nature improvements. Major developments in areas of access to nature deficiency will need to provide access to nature improvements (or as existing policy states, if not feasible, make a payment in lieu to enable improvements to accessibility). While adopted

policy seeks to increase quantity, quality and access to open space; revised policy EN1 more appropriately recognises that creating new areas of open space is difficult (land is a finite resource) and introduces green infrastructure as a mechanism to providing similar benefits to open space provision. One of the many positive effects of increasing green infrastructure provision in the borough is its positive impact on biodiversity. Revised policy EN1 requires major developments to apply draft London Plan policy G5 on the urban greening factor, and all other developments will be strongly encouraged to include urban greening measures.

The definition of open space has been amended to also include existing public and private open space, amenity areas within housing estates, accessible roof gardens/amenity areas and areas of water (in addition to the other types of open space currently defined in the Lambeth Local Plan 2015).

New supporting text makes clear that urban greening should be integral to planning the layout and design of new buildings and developments, and that green infrastructure should be considered at pre-application stage.

Revised Policy Q9

Policy Q9 on landscaping in the DRLLP has been improved to maximise opportunities for provision of green infrastructure, and retains its current policy on supporting development where landscaping protects and enhances existing designated habitats and creates new habitats/areas of nature conservation interest and biodiversity value. Supporting text has been strengthened with regards to biodiversity in developing planting schemes where consideration to support habitats for insects and animals such as hedgehogs should be made.

Revised Policy D4

Policy D4 on planning obligations in the DRLLP now includes green infrastructure in the list of measures to mitigate the impact of development/requirements made necessary by development.

All other policy references (see above) to green infrastructure and biodiversity in the DRLLP remain unchanged from the Lambeth Local Plan 2015. New policy on basement development recognises that basement excavation can affect, among other things, biodiversity and garden settings.

Review of Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation in Lambeth, September 2018

As part of the DRLLP the council commissioned a review of its designated SINCs by the London Wildlife Trust. This has resulted in three new proposed SINCs (representing an area of 6.8ha) and proposed extensions to 15 existing SINCs (representing an area of 18.8ha). Eight SINCs are proposed to have boundary changes reducing their area (representing 2.6ha). There is also a decrease in Areas of Deficiency in Access to Nature in two locations as a result of Norwood Park being upgraded to a borough SINC and the extension and improved access to Roots and Shoots Borough SINC in the north.

Lambeth Biodiversity Action Plan

The borough's Biodiversity Action Plan will also be updated in Winter 2018 with adoption expected April 2019.

Sustainability Appraisal Draft Revised Lambeth Local Plan October 2018

The DRLLP has also been subject to sustainability appraisal. This means the DRLLP has been assessed against 19 sustainability objectives including one on biodiversity and one on green infrastructure. As a result of this assessment, the sustainability appraisal has made some recommendations with respect to further enhancing positive effects for biodiversity, open space and green infrastructure. These recommendations will be considered by officers alongside other representations received from the DRLLP consultation in the preparation of the proposed submission version Revised Lambeth Local Plan (expected Autumn 2019).