

Update on Lambeth's Biodiversity Action Plan 2019-2024

1. Summary

This briefing provides:

- a) an overview of the 'Lambeth Biodiversity Action Plan' (Lambeth BAP) 2019-2024 in terms of its aims, objectives and importance for Lambeth's residents and biodiversity;
- b) an update on the progress in delivering the Lambeth BAP and the key achievements secured since it was first adopted in April 2019, and;
- c) a summary of proposed future actions and activities to secure the continued delivery of the Lambeth BAP, and any opportunities to integrate into or provide benefit to other corporate and administration priorities for the borough.



Plate 1. View of Palace Road Nature Garden showing the new wildflower meadow and community mural

2. Headline Facts and Figures

Detailed information is provided in the Appendix, but this section provides a summary of what has been achieved since the new Lambeth BAP was adopted in April 2019.

1. The Lambeth BAP contains seven 'Priority Habitat Action Plans' (HAPs) which cover wildlife habitats which are of significant importance to the borough in terms of protecting and improving biodiversity and increasing resident's access to and enjoyment of nature.
2. Each HAP contains a series of practical actions which can be applied by the council and other stakeholders to protect and improve each priority habitat, and a diversity of wild plants and animals that live in and depend on them for continued survival.
3. The Lambeth BAP is designed to support the UK Biodiversity Action Plan, because the borough contains a wide variety of habitats and species which are prioritised in the UK BAP for action to protect and conserve them.
4. The Lambeth BAP has proved to be a key cornerstone in both directing and securing both internal (e.g. revenue budgets and s106 allocations) and external funding (e.g. from various central and regional government, lottery and landfill tax grants) to deliver improvements in many sites which have biodiversity value or which contain more or one of the Lambeth BAP priority habitats.
5. Lambeth contains 45 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), all of which are of critical importance in providing protection for the borough's biodiversity and supporting people's access to and enjoyment of nature (Figure 1). SINCs is a non-statutory designation, but one which is included in every local authorities Local Plan, to provide local protection to important wildlife sites.
6. Lambeth also contains a number of 'Areas of Deficiency for Access to Nature' (AoDs); these are parts of the borough where free access to nature or sites managed for biodiversity is severely limited (Figure 1). This may be due to the distance to walk to suitable sites is excessive (especially for children or those with mobility issues) or there are various physical barriers (e.g. railway lines or secure gates/walls) in the way. Lambeth is committed to undertaking actions to reduce or remove these AoDs through either creating new SINCs within or next to them, or by removing barriers to accessing existing SINCs.
7. A review of Lambeth's SINCs in 2018 has been used to underpin the Lambeth BAP, demonstrating the borough's continuing commitment to protecting biodiversity, and would result in a net increase in four new SINC sites, should these be incorporated and adopted in the new Lambeth Local Plan.
8. Since April 2019 Lambeth has made significant progress in delivering on the actions in each of the seven priority HAPs in the BAP; progress on all actions has been evidenced and demonstrates progression in meeting many of the original targets and timescales.
9. Many of the actions in each HAP are ongoing, and as the BAP develops increased effort is being made to involve other council services and other landowners and managers in ensuring these are being delivered on sites that they are responsible for.
10. As well as 45 SINCs Lambeth also has one Local Nature Reserve (LNR) – the upper part of Streatham Common. A key objective going forward is to increase the number of LNRs, with at least two new sites being submitted for declaration within 2021-22, and the potential for five LNRs in total by 2024.
11. Lambeth is committed to improving the quality of management of all SINCs, especially those that are small or which are privately owned and managed, in order to increase the number of sites that are rated as being good in terms of positive management. An action programme is being put in place to work with relevant landowners or site users to improve the ways we communicate, share good practice, and to ensure each site continues to contribute significantly to the overall ecological wellbeing of the borough.

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

GiGL

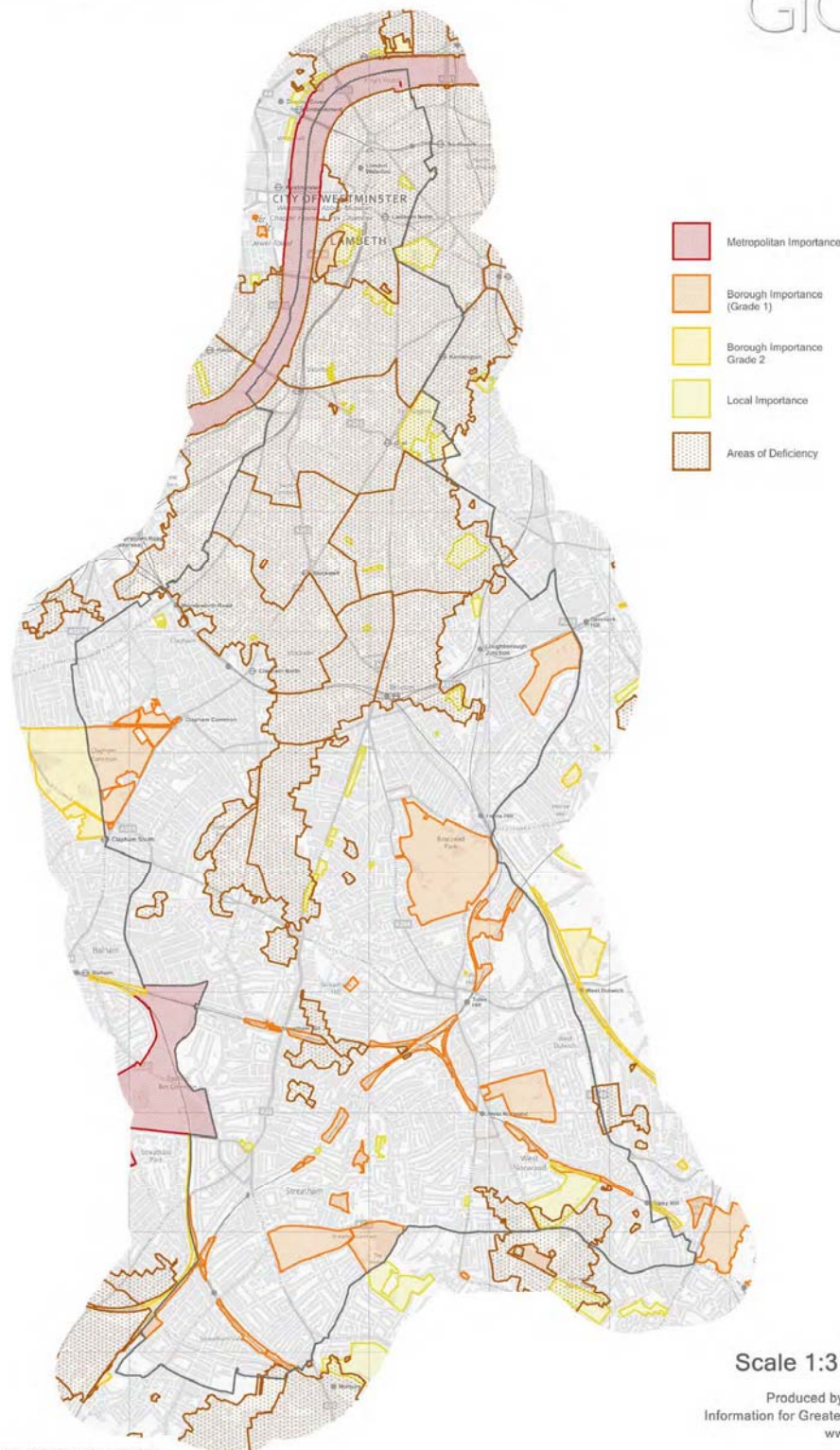


Figure 1. Map of Lambeth's SINCs and Areas of Deficiency for Access to Nature (AoDs). Reproduced by permission of Greenspace Information for Greater London

3. What is the Lambeth Biodiversity Action Plan?

The Lambeth Biodiversity Action Plan (Lambeth BAP) is a document which is designed to achieve two main objectives:

- a) It helps everybody living and working in Lambeth to understand and appreciate what we have in terms of wildlife within the borough;
- b) It provides information and guidance to enable residents, landowners, land managers and developers to both give due consideration to, and take appropriate action to protect, Lambeth's wildlife, in order to secure its continued wellbeing for present and future generations.

A copy of the full Lambeth BAP is available as a PDF to download from the Lambeth Council website at:

<https://beta.lambeth.gov.uk/parks-sports-and-leisure/parks/biodiversity-lambeth>

It lists a series of 'priority habitats', which we all see and use regularly across the borough, such as woodlands and trees, parks and open spaces, rivers and standing waters (e.g. ponds) and the built environment (e.g. streets, buildings and housing estates).



Plate 2. A biodiverse 'living roof' on part of the Fenwick Estate in Clapham North, summer 2018

It also includes a small number of other priority habitats that might not be readily accessed or used by the general public, but still play a critical role in providing a home for wildlife in Lambeth, such as railway land and linesides, private gardens and communal growing spaces (e.g. allotments) and the River Thames, its foreshore and walls.

For each priority habitat there is a Habitat Action Plan (HAP). This revolves around a number of practical actions to protect and improve each priority habitat, with appropriate timescales for completion. These are designed so they can be undertaken, not just by the council but also by residents and other stakeholders, to protect these habitats and improve their quality and hopefully, their extent within the borough.

These actions are designed to be habitat specific, measurable, achievable and realistic, rather than unrealistic or placing excessive burdens on existing financial resources and staff.

4. Current Progress on Delivering the Lambeth BAP

Many of the actions in the Lambeth BAP have a minimal or negligible cost. They simply involve engagement and dialogue with landowners and land managers, including those within other Lambeth services, or engaging with and supporting volunteers and community stakeholders to help manage and improve sites.



Plate 3. Part of a new wildflower meadow and pond in Palace Road Nature Garden, summer 2020

However, some activities need financial support to maximise their impact or return, although the Lambeth BAP has been designed to ensure these are small-scale and can be used to secure matched resources.

1. Lambeth Ecology & Green Infrastructure Budget Expenditure on Lambeth BAP

The annual ecology budget is £12,500 and this is prioritised for supporting delivery of the Lambeth BAP. Key expenditure this year includes:

a) Service Level Agreement (SLA) with Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL) - £2,500

This SLA with London's biological records centre enables the council to obtain accurate data and map-based information on the distribution and abundance of wild plants/animals and habitats across Lambeth to help inform and direct management of public and private sites, to protect and improve their biodiversity value. It ensures all of the various BAP activities are based on sound evidence and their actions can be fully justified.

Over £58,000 of grant applications and s106-derived funding has been secured on the basis of evidence provided through the GiGL SLA as to the justification in undertaking projects on at least seven sites which are owned and managed by Lambeth Council in 2020-21.

b) Site-Specific Ecological Surveys (£2,250)

Commissioning site-specific surveys to determine actions to improve key wildlife sites, and ensure future management is appropriate to protecting biodiversity value, or to secure additional resources (including volunteers and grant funding) to restore or improve them. Surveys were undertaken of:

- Sunnyhill Road Nature Garden (Streatham Wells) to help rehabilitate this small local wildlife site and secure external grant funding for its restoration, along with volunteer support;
- Streatham Common (Streatham South) to assess existing areas of 'acid grassland' and develop proposals to both protect this important wildlife habitat and ultimately extend its coverage further across the Common and Lambeth as a whole.

c) Brockwell Park Wildflower Meadow (£1,140)

Cutting/collecting of grass and scrub to ensure a new wildflower species-rich meadow beside the Brockwell Lido, to complete its initial creation phase (which was primarily funded by SUEZ Environment Fund with £10,000). This will ensure the meadow is in the right condition to be managed in house by Lambeth Landscapes, in order to maintain its diversity, accessibility and its value for people and nature.



Plate 4. View of the new species-rich wildflower meadow in Brockwell Park, summer 2019

d) Clapham Common Pond Improvements (£3,763)

This included a) installation of new floating aerators and b) purchase of bottom-feeding tench fish for Eagle and Mount Ponds. These actions improve water quality, habitat diversity and prevents algal blooms, in order to benefit fish health and general biodiversity. These works have also provided match funding for a grant application to the Environment Agency for new fishing platforms and habitats improvements, which successfully secured £12,000.

e) Ruskin Park Habitat Improvements (£1,195)

Purchase of plants and plant root barriers to restore the old herbaceous borders of the 'Labyrinth Garden' in Ruskin Park. This will create two large areas of pollinator-friendly perennial planting which will complement the other key wildlife areas in the park, helping reinforce the park's significant ecological value. The Friends of Ruskin Park (FoRP) matched this expenditure with £1,000 of their own funds.

f) Purchase of Swift Boxes for Lambeth Parks and Cemeteries (£2,500)

18 swift boxes have been purchased for installation on buildings in Lambeth's parks and cemeteries. The swift (*Apus apus*) is a migratory bird found in Lambeth but is in serious decline, not just in the borough but across London and the UK as a whole. Installing these boxes will help provide additional nesting habitat for swifts where they are known to occur.

This includes locations around Stockwell and Vauxhall (e.g. Slade Gardens or Van Gogh Walk), West Norwood (e.g. West Norwood Cemetery) or in Tooting (e.g. Lambeth and Streatham Cemeteries). The swift boxes will be installed during 2021 to ensure that nesting opportunities are available for the arrival of swifts in that year.



Plate 5. Swift boxes installed on buildings at Lambeth Hospital, Landor Road; a similar design of swift box will be installed on buildings in Lambeth's cemeteries and other suitable host buildings in 2020-21

2. Internal and External Funding Secured to Help Deliver the Lambeth BAP

Lambeth has also been remarkably successful to date in securing a mixture of internal and external funding to support a wide range of projects that are designed to deliver the Lambeth BAP and promote increased access to and enjoyment of nature by its residents. This includes section 106 (s106) capital or revenue allocations, as well as grants derived from Lottery, landfill tax credits, the Mayor of London/GLA and Central Government. Some keystone recent achievements include:

- a) Brockwell Park: funding secured from SUEZ Environment Trust to create over 0.4 hectares of wildflower species rich meadow grassland on the site of a derelict Redgra pitch beside the Brockwell Lido.
- b) Clapham Common: funding secured from s106 revenue allocations and Veolia Environment Trust to improve the structure and content of Battersea Rise and Nursery Woodlands, increase its capacity to store and disperse surface floodwater, and to encourage a more open 'mosaic' of wildlife habitats.
- c) Elam Street Open Space: funding from Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) to undertake improvements to landscaping, access and safety, including creating or restoring important grassland and boundary habitats.
- d) Norwood Park: funding secured from a) Mayor of London's Greening City Fund, b) National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) by Friends of Ruskin Park, and c) s106 allocations to deliver increased planting of native trees and hedge plants, and increase the park's capacity to store surface and flood water.
- e) Ruskin Park: funding secured by Friends of Ruskin Park from Mayor of London's Greener City Fund to deliver a range of improvements to the Wildlife Area, including new planting, hedge-laying and a dipping platform. Funding was also secured from the NLHF and Western Riverside Environment Fund (WREF) by Froglife to undertake enhancements to the ponds in the park to benefit amphibians and invertebrates.



Plate 6. New wetland 'scrapes' created in the Ruskin Park Wildlife Area in spring 2020, to provide additional habitat for amphibians and marginal planting for invertebrates and wild birds

- f) Rush Common: funding secured from Mayor of London's Greener City Fund to deliver a range of improvements to the middle section of Rush Common, including improved play provision but also better ground and boundary landscaping and habitat enhancement.
- g) Streatham Common: funding secured from NHLF by London Wildlife Trust and Streatham Common Cooperative (SCCoop) for improvements to woodland cover and access, including the 'Great North Wood' programme.
- h) Sunnyhill Road Nature Garden: funding secured from Mayor of London's Grow Back Greener Fund to restore and rehabilitate this Local SINC, including improved access and creation of new habitats and educational features, with strong community involvement.
- i) Tivoli Park and Knight's Hill Wood: funding secured from s106 allocations for access and landscape improvements, including addressing historical flooding and safety issues, and to create a more open habitat mosaic in both sites.
- j) Unigate Woods: funding secured from s106 allocations for access and landscape improvements, including creating new natural paths and addressing historical concerns over tree health issues, and to create a more open habitat mosaic.



Plate 7. View of new natural path through the centre of Unigate Woods, as well as banks of pollinator-friendly vegetation during lockdown in summer 2020

UK Priority Habitats and Species in Lambeth

The Lambeth BAP is obviously focused on Lambeth, but it sits under and supports the [UK Biodiversity Action Plan](#). This covers the whole of the United Kingdom and sets out a series of priority habitats and species which require conservation, not just protection but also improvement and promotion, across every country, local region and authority.

Whilst the UK BAP includes a large and exhaustive list of priority habitats and species, there are a number which are highly relevant to Lambeth. This is because though nationally rare, declining or threatened, Lambeth is fortunate in having them present within the borough, so that we have a public and moral responsibility to enable them to establish and colonise, or return to the borough through our own actions.

It is not the intention to list every single UK priority habitat and species that would be relevant to Lambeth, rather to focus on the main ones where we can and will make an impact upon their status through actions in the Lambeth BAP or other local activities.

The key UK BAP priority habitats which are relevant to Lambeth, the Lambeth BAP and how we manage our biodiversity assets are:

- Rivers
- Ponds
- Reedbeds
- Lowland Meadows
- Wood Pasture and Parkland
- Wet Woodland
- Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodlands
- Lowland Dry Acid Grassland
- Hedgerows
- Traditional Orchards.

As for UK BAP priority species, Lambeth is fortunate in having records of the following amongst others:

- **Invertebrates:** Small Blue Butterfly, White-letter Hairstreak Butterfly, Stag Beetle, Bumblebees, Solitary Bees and Mason Bees (mixed species).
- **Fish:** (in River Thames within Lambeth): Allis Shad, Sea Trout, Smelt, Twaite Shad.
- **Reptiles and Amphibians:** Common Lizard, Common Toad, Grass Snake, Great Crested Newt, Slow Worm.
- **Birds:** Common Starling, House Sparrow, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Song Thrush, Yellow Wagtail.
- **Mammals:** Bats (8 species including Noctule and Soprano Pipistrelle), Hedgehog.

The Lambeth BAP, by both protecting and improving the management of the various priority habitats, is designed to secure the continued presence of these and other species, by securing sufficient habitat for them to feed, shelter and breed. It is also designed to support activities that create new or extend existing habitats, which enable many of these species to move to new areas or to establish within the borough from other locations.

Other Key Milestones for Delivery of the Lambeth BAP

1. Review of Lambeth's Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)

Lambeth currently contains 45 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). These are sites in public or private ownership designated by Lambeth Council and the Mayor of London for biodiversity importance and also to provide access to nature by residents and communities. Sites are designated as Local, Borough or Metropolitan SINCs depending on their ecology, size and how accessible they are to the wider population; there are currently 24 Local, 20 Borough and one Metropolitan SINC in Lambeth (the River Thames).



Plate 8. Part of the grounds of St. Mark's CE Primary School, a Local SINC for Lambeth showing its diversity of wildlife habitats and in an area of the borough that is relatively deficient in access to nature

In 2018 a borough-wide review of Lambeth's SINCs was commissioned by Lambeth and undertaken by London Wildlife Trust (LWT). This was to determine both the current condition of our existing sites but also identify which other sites could be recommended as new SINCs, and with what justification.

The SINC Review identified that:

- All of the borough's existing SINC sites were being managed to retain their current designations, although there should be some minor boundary amendments and some actions to improve site management, especially on certain privately owned sites.
- Norwood Park should be upgraded from a Local to a Borough SINC.
- Three new sites should be designated as SINC's within Lambeth.
- Part of an existing Metropolitan SINC, Tooting Bec Common, should be extended into Lambeth, so that the borough will have two Metropolitan SINC's instead of one.
- There would be a total of 49 SINC's within Lambeth if the changes were formally agreed by Planning.
- 18.8ha of land (over 15 existing SINC's) will be added as part of the new additions and boundary changes.

These recommendations were endorsed by the Mayor of London's Local Wildlife Sites Review Board (LWSB) in October 2019. They have also been incorporated into the new Proposals Map for the Draft Revised Lambeth Local Plan (DRLLP), which is currently undergoing 'examination in public' by the Planning Inspectorate. Should they be adopted, the final Proposals Map will indicate their location.

2. Delivery of Actions for Priority Habitats in the Lambeth BAP

In terms of other actions undertaken, up until November 2020, to ensure progress is made on delivering the Lambeth BAP, the following provides a summary of the key achievements. This section also summarises 'next steps', going into 2021 and beyond, which are planned to secure further successful delivery of the Lambeth BAP.

a) Lambeth BAP Priority Habitat – Parks and Open Spaces

PO1 *"Increase net area actively managed for a measurable biodiversity benefit to at least 25% (27 hectares) of the total measured area of parks and other public open spaces, including cemeteries and churchyards by 2024."*

- Proportion of parks, commons, cemeteries, churchyards and open spaces managed by Lambeth Parks service and mapped as being maintained as 'naturalised area' is now 25% of the total land area managed by the service.
- However, it is planned to continue to increase this in each successive year so as to secure continual improvements to biodiversity.
- Working with Butterfly Conservation (www.butterfly-conservation.org) on a network of survey transects across sites to weekly record butterflies and moths, as indicators of habitat quality; sites include Brockwell Park, Streatham Common and West Norwood Cemetery.
- Butterfly Conservation has secured funding from the NHLF for a London-wide programme called 'Big City Butterflies' (BCB), which aims to inspire Londoners to discover butterflies and moths, and in doing connect them with nature and their local parks and other greenspaces. Lambeth is a signatory to the BCB programme and will facilitate a wide range of projects, events and activities to be hosted in as many of our own sites as possible.

PO2 *"Increase net area of acid grassland by 25% by 2024, from 6 to 7.5 hectares through appropriate intervention and management where soil and ground conditions permit."*

- An ongoing programme: recent specialist site surveys at Streatham Common identified potential new 'extension areas' for acid grassland creation as well as actions for improving the condition and quality of the existing habitat.
- A funding proposal is now being prepared in partnership with SCCoop and London Wildlife Trust to take this forward into 2021-22.

PO3 *“Increase net area of meadow grassland in parks and public open spaces to 40 hectares by 2024, through appropriate intervention and management.”*

- An ongoing programme: continuous conversion of poor-quality amenity grassland in parks, commons and open spaces to a more species-rich meadow grassland cover has added over 7 hectares of habitat to the current inventory since April 2019, which is now calculated as approximately 29 hectares.
- This includes conversion of 4 hectares of land on Clapham Common, using heavy horses from ‘Operation Centaur’ to meadow grassland, along with the sowing of a native grass and wildflower mix to help improve species diversity.

PO4 *“Increase the net area of wildflower species-rich grassland to 15 hectares by 2024, through appropriate intervention and management.”*

- Creation of wildflower species-rich meadows in Brockwell Park, Old Paradise Gardens, Palace Road Nature Garden and Clapham Common, adding 0.80 hectares of habitat.
- Additional opportunity areas are being identified, and changes in grassland management along with additional sowing of native grasses and seed mixes, are ongoing with the aim to rapidly accelerate the rate of conversion.

b) Lambeth BAP Priority Habitat – Trees and Woodlands

TW01 *“Adopt and implement a ‘Lambeth Tree Strategy’ for the borough’s public tree stock by 2020.”*

- Lambeth Tree Service is currently scoping a draft Lambeth Tree Strategy, along with supporting policies. This will not be ready until 2021 due to other operational and service priorities having to be addressed first within existing resources and capacity.

TW02 *“Increase native and orchard tree cover/content, as a proportion of the borough’s total tree population, by 5% by 2024.”*

- Clear obligation in site management plans for Lambeth’s parks and public open spaces to prioritise, wherever appropriate, the selection of native tree species in any planting scheme which is part of a restoration or improvement programme.
- Priority is given to selection and use of native tree species in any tree planting programme for Lambeth’s streets, housing estates or the wider public realm, unless there are significant heritage, landscape or legal reasons for using non-native or ornamental species. In such cases these species must not pose a risk to the health and ecological wellbeing of the borough’s existing tree stock and tree canopy cover.
- Commitment as part of planning application consultation process to securing selection of native tree species in any tree planting programme for developments on both private and public land. Where non-native or ornamental species are proposed, they must demonstrate a significant ecological and landscape benefit to the development and the wider area.
- Active continuing support for planting of new orchard trees in Lambeth, especially in appropriate locations in parks, in housing estates, allotments and community growing spaces. Examples include the Brixton Orchard, Streatham Rookery Community Orchard, Norwood Park Community Orchard, Archbishop’s Park Orchard and Clapham Common Community Orchard.

TW03 *“Increase native and orchard tree cover/content, as a proportion of an individual woodland site’s total tree population, by 5% by 2024.”*

- All management plans for public woodlands in Lambeth are committed to selectively reducing the proportion of non-native or invasive tree species where appropriate, and to replace any removed trees with native species of greater ecological value, or to encourage colonisation of cleared areas with native species from existing seed banks.

- For private woodlands, landowners are encouraged to prioritise reduction or selective removal of non-native or invasive tree species, if appropriate, and replace removed trees with native species of greater ecological value, or allow colonisation of cleared areas with native species from an existing seed bank.
- Where appropriate, new native trees are planted in 'blocks' or 'clusters' next to existing areas of woodland to gradually extend their net area over time, using species typical for that woodland and which have high biodiversity value.
- When new hedges are created in parks and open spaces they are located to 'connect up' existing blocks of mature hedgerow or woodland. This provides a 'green corridor' for movement of plants and animals between areas of wildlife value and creates strips of 'linear woodland' which increase net cover of woodland and trees in any given site.
- Where new orchards are proposed, or when existing orchards are restored or improved, priority is given in providing advice to selection and planting of traditional varieties typical of Surrey and Middlesex, and those with high value for pollinators over ornamental ones.

TW04 *"All of Lambeth's public and private woodlands have a working management plan or management agreement in place by 2024."*

- All of Lambeth's public woodlands, i.e. Streatham Common, Unigate Wood, Knight's Hill Wood, Palace Road Nature Garden, Eardley Road Sidings and Clapham Common, have adopted management plans which include actions to protect existing tree stock and canopy cover, and to increase net biodiversity value.
- We are actively working with owners or managers of Lambeth's private woodlands to encourage appropriate management, including adoption of management plans and practices which protect and promote biodiversity.
- A new 'Lambeth Woodlands and Hedgerows Management Strategy' is being developed for 2021. This will provide an overarching vision for how Lambeth's private and public woodlands, and hedgerows, will be protected, managed and improved, not just for biodiversity but also to promote sustainable public access, increase climate change resilience and respond to impacts from tree diseases or pests.

TW05 *"Maintain and increase proportion of elm (Ulmus) species both planted and present on selected sites to promote White-letter Hairstreak and other elm-favouring invertebrate populations by 20% by 2024."*

- Areas of woodland or tree-rich habitat in Lambeth identified as rich in native elms are managed to a) retain as much mature/semi-mature elm cover as possible, and b) to bring them under a regime that promotes elm coppicing and regrowth to improve habitat quality for invertebrates, plants and fungi.
- Wherever appropriate, Dutch Elm Disease-resistant varieties of elm are now included in tree planting plans for parks and open spaces in the borough to secure a progressive increase in elm coverage, especially in areas where this improves tree diversity or provides benefit to species including the White-letter Hairstreak.
- For example, over 20 *Ulmus* 'New Horizon' trees planted in 2005 on Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens are sufficiently established and mature to provide habitat for White-letter Hairstreak butterflies, and in an area where they have never been recorded before.
- Over 25 additional semi-mature *Ulmus* 'New Horizon' trees planted in parks and open spaces since 2019, including Norwood Park, Clapham Common and Ruskin Park.
- Through planning application consultation and consent process, applicants are actively encouraged to include disease-resistant elm species in tree planting and landscaping proposals, especially in areas of Lambeth where elm tree cover is already present or in 'hotspots' for the White-letter Hairstreak and other key elm-associated species.

c) Lambeth BAP Priority Habitat – The Built Environment

BE01 *“Produce database and maps identifying ‘opportunity areas’ for delivering improvements to the extent and quality of biodiversity within the built environment.”*

- GiGL and Lambeth are assembling a series of maps during 2021, showing the ‘greening’ of each ward in the borough, indicating where there are areas of deficiency in terms of green infrastructure or accessible green space.
- This exercise is particularly useful in identifying opportunities within urban areas of Lambeth where new or better green infrastructure can be created or provided. This includes new green/biodiverse roofs, public realm planting (trees, hedges and planters), or where communal amenity areas on housing estates, social housing or schools can be provided.

BE02 *“Identify locations of priority species of conservation concern or with legal protection within Lambeth’s built environment, e.g. swifts, black redstarts, bats, and are afforded appropriate protection from harm, or the avoidable loss of nesting/feeding habitat.”*

- Working with GiGL to gain a sounder understanding of areas of the borough which are ‘hotspots’ for key protected species like bats, and areas where species of conservation concern are recorded, e.g. swifts, black redstarts and hedgehogs.
- Data is used to assess potential adverse impacts of proposed developments and identify if any additional protection or mitigation measures are required as part of the development consent process.
- Where there are potential adverse impacts on such species, policy is to request suitable mitigations or enhancements, e.g. additional site surveys, new bat/bird boxes, and improved landscaping with suitable inclusion of appropriate plants, trees, etc.

BE03 *“All developments in the borough, wherever feasible, to include living roofs and walls within either new or retrofitted existing buildings.”*

- It is now automatic policy, through the planning consultation and consent process, to request or expect a requirement for provision of appropriate designs of green and biodiverse roofs, walls and other ecologically beneficial features within any proposed development.
- Applications on sites where there is potential to include such features, and which fail to propose or provide these, are normally refused until suitable revisions are made, or alternative ecologically appropriate provision can be secured.

BE04 *“75% of all living roofs installed in the borough to be biodiverse extensive roofs (‘biodiverse brown roofs’), wherever feasible. Priority is given to provision within existing areas of deficiency for access to nature.”*

- Through the planning application consultation and consent process, over 50% of all green roof proposals in 2020-21 were identified as of a design categorised as biodiverse extensive or a living roof design.
- In areas of the borough with an existing deficiency for access to nature (e.g. North and Central Lambeth) designs based on poor-quality or single species sedum green roofs are actively discouraged or rejected.

BE05 *“Secure 3 hectares of additional living roof and wall habitat of significant benefit for biodiversity through planning and other agreements on new and existing buildings.”*

- Progressing towards this target for 2024; there are ongoing developments which should secure at least 3 hectares of good quality biodiverse living roof and wall, especially in areas of open space or biodiversity deficiency, and in North/Central Lambeth.

BE06 *“Exterior landscaping design proposals for all developments to include features designed to promote and improve biodiversity, including appropriate planting schemes and maintenance schedules. Priority is given to provision within existing areas of deficiency for access to nature.”*

- Through the planning consultation and consent process all landscaping proposals are expected to demonstrate, and provide supporting evidence for, a commitment to both protecting and promoting biodiversity, especially in areas of deficiency for access to open space and nature in the borough.

d) Lambeth BAP Priority Habitat – Railway Linesides

RL01 *“Secure no net loss of railway lineside habitat, especially sites designated as SINC.”*

- A clear commitment in the Lambeth Local Plan to presume against the loss of any existing railway lineside habitat where specifically designated as a SINC, both present and future. There has been no evidenced net loss of such land in 2019-20.
- Continue to work with Network Rail and Transport for London (TfL) to ensure any proposed changes to and developments of railway land that is part of or adjacent to a SINC does not result in an avoidable loss of any part of that SINC.

RL02 *“Protect and increase the net amount of railway land positively managed for biodiversity through creation of new or extension of existing areas of wildlife habitat, including for railway linesides designated as SINC.”*

- Secured and maintaining close working relationships with Network Rail and TfL to ensure the management of railway land which is part of or adjacent to a Lambeth SINC is appropriate to its protection and of any habitats and species that it contains.
- All applications to the council for consent to undertake works on railway land designated as a SINC scrutinised to ensure it is appropriate to protect existing nature conservation interest; appropriate advice provided to project managers and contractors as required.

RL03 *“A progressive increase in the net amount of railway lineside habitat designated as SINC from 34 hectares to 38 hectares, a net increase of 12%, by 2024.”*

- Current proposals, through the Lambeth SINC Review and the DRLLP Proposals Map, should secure a net gain of railway lineside habitat designated as SINC to 38 hectares.
- This includes a new SINC of railway land between Herne Hill and Loughborough Junction stations, and extensions to SINC in the West Norwood and Streatham areas.

e) Lambeth BAP Priority Habitat – Private Gardens and Growing Spaces

GS01 *“Secure a baseline for number and area of communal gardens, allotments, community gardens and growing spaces positively managed for biodiversity.”*

- Working with GiGL and Incredible Edible Lambeth (IEL) to secure a draft map indicating the location, number and area of communal gardens, allotments, community gardens and growing spaces in Lambeth, and to use this to assess them (e.g. scored or rating) in terms of biodiversity quality and value.

GS02 *“Encourage and promote good nature conservation practice within private or communal gardens and growing spaces to secure a progressive increase in the abundance and diversity of wild plants and animals in the borough.”*

- Working with landowners and site managers, or site user groups, to provide advice, guidance and support to promote increase in biological diversity and ecological quality of private and public gardens or growing spaces in the borough.
- Providing advice on development of site management plans which include actions or activities to provide equal benefit for biodiversity as for food growing, plant health and community wellbeing, e.g. Oasis Nature Garden, Roots & Shoots, Effra Nature Garden.

GS03 *“Increase the baseline number and area of communal gardens, allotments, community gardens and growing spaces positively managed for biodiversity as measured in 2019 by 5% in each successive year.”*

- Once Covid-19 restrictions are relaxed in spring/summer 2021, a borough-wide survey will be undertaken to assess growing spaces sites for their biodiversity quality.
- A ‘toolkit’ is being developed using the popular ‘Planning for Biodiversity’ checklist, which can be downloaded for use by private, communal/public gardeners or site user groups to assess their sites for key species and habitats (abundance and condition), and to return their results to the council to help assist with annual monitoring of this objective.

f) Lambeth BAP Priority Habitat – Rivers and Standing Waters

RW01 *“Secure a baseline value for the net area of rivers, ponds and standing water bodies classified as ‘positively managed’ (good or better) in terms of their biodiversity value and ecological management.”*

- GiGL, Environment Agency and Lambeth have access to data which indicates location and area of rivers, ponds and other standing water bodies in the borough, enabling a baseline assessment of their ecological value.
- Initial assessments of those accessible for survey indicate 59% are being positively managed for biodiversity, e.g. Clapham Common, Brockwell Park, Palace Road Nature Garden, Roots & Shoots and remnants of River Effra.
- Priority targets for future improvement and/or investment include the River Graveney in Streatham, and ponds in Ruskin Park, Myatt’s Fields Park, Tate Mews Streatham and Stockwell Park Estate.

RW02 *“No net loss of open river, stream, pond or standing and moving waters within Lambeth, especially in SINCS.”*

- Clear commitment through Lambeth Local Plan to presume against loss of any ponds, lakes or open streams and rivers in the borough, especially in sites designated as SINCS, both present and future. There has been no evidenced net loss of such areas of standing or open water in 2019-20.
- Continue to work with landowners, land managers and site user groups to provide appropriate advice for management of standing or open water bodies to both protect and improve any biodiversity interest.
- Parks or open spaces containing areas of standing and open water include management proscriptions designed to ensure such features are suitably protected and maintained for their biodiversity value within management plans.

RW03 *“Progressively increase the net area of rivers, ponds and standing water bodies classified as ‘positively managed’ (good or better) in terms of their biodiversity value from the baseline value as measured in 2019.”*

- Working with landowners and site managers, or site user groups, to provide advice, guidance and support to promote increase in the biological diversity and ecological quality of all areas of standing and open water in Lambeth.

- Includes providing additional advice on development of site management plans which include actions for areas of standing and open water to provide benefit for biodiversity as well as for recreation, sport and heritage, e.g. Oasis Children's Nature Garden, Roots & Shoots, Lambeth Palace Gardens.

g) Lambeth BAP Priority Habitat – River Thames

TT01 *“Secure a baseline value for the net area of the Tidal Thames in Lambeth classified as ‘good’ or better in terms of habitat quality and ecological management.”*

- Working with GiGL, Mayor of London and Environment Agency, a baseline value for good or better quality habitat within the Tidal Thames in Lambeth is available. The habitat quality in Lambeth is rated good at over 70%, as there are suitable measures in place to protect most of the available area from inappropriate use or development.

TT02 *“Secure continuing and additional protection for wildlife habitats and species within or adjacent to the Tidal Thames through the statutory planning process.”*

- Over 15 planning applications alongside or adjacent to River Thames or foreshore, have been responded to in order to prevent any loss or damage to sensitive wildlife habitats.
- This includes proposals for the South Bank Centre, IBM and ITV Television Buildings, Keybridge House, Tintagel House and Gabriel's Wharf, and the 'Illuminated Thames' bridge lighting project.

TT03 *“Increase the net area of foreshore, walls, sea defences and vertical structures in the Tidal Thames classified as ‘good’ or better in terms of biodiversity value, through regular audit and assessment.”*

- Through the planning application consultation and consenting process, priority is given to supporting enhancements and mitigations to improve the ecological quality of sea walls and defences.
- This includes installing vertical/horizontal timber fenders on concrete walls, creating habitat niches in walls and paths, or creating areas which collect shingle, mud, reeds and other forms of fixed or mobile estuarine habitat.
- Walk-through surveys undertaken in summer 2019 indicated approximately 48% of Lambeth's River Thames foreshore and sea defences were of good quality in terms of biodiversity value, especially plants, foraging birds and lichens.

TT04 *“Secure additional and new investment to improve the quality of biodiversity management within or adjacent to the Tidal Thames in Lambeth.”*

- Ensuring all decisions on planning applications alongside or adjacent to the River Thames or foreshore include measures to protect key wildlife habitat or protected species or include features which mitigate for any potential harm.
- Securing, as part of the planning process, additional ecological features/enhancements as part of any consented developments alongside the River Thames.
- This includes ongoing delivery of significant in-river and bankside enhancements through the 'Thames Tideway Tunnel' project at Vauxhall Bridge and on the Albert Embankment, such as a new estuarine reed bed complex and improved habitat for sheltering and spawning fish, especially the allis shad, twaite shad and smelt.

Proposed Future Activities to Continue Delivering the Lambeth BAP

In terms of future actions during the remainder of 2020, into 2021 and beyond, as well as continuing to deliver on all of the actions in the Lambeth BAP, there are a number of additional priorities.

1. Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)

Lambeth Council is empowered under the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 to designate sites of nature conservation importance as LNRs. LNR status offers a site additional planning and legal protection from inappropriate use or development, and increases the chances of securing additional external funding, especially grants.

Lambeth currently has only one LNR, part of Streatham Common, designated in 2013. There is however considerable potential to designate additional LNRs in the borough and Natural England, the Government's statutory nature conservation agency is keen to encourage more in Greater London and other cities.

An initial assessment has identified Unigate Wood and Eardley Road Sidings in Streatham as eligible for LNR declaration and of a size that would be two 'quick wins' for the process. Both have active management plans and local community support for the process.

It has been decided to prepare Unigate Wood for the designation process with an aim to have the process starting during April 2021, and with Eardley Road Sidings to follow afterwards. Other potential LNR sites for 2021 and beyond include Norwood Park, as well as parts of Brockwell Park and Clapham Common.

2. Improving Management of Poorly Performing SINC

Every year Lambeth submits a report, called a 'Single List', to Natural England and DEFRA on the status quality of its current SINC. This assesses how well managed SINC are; and can be used to identify sites where additional effort or resources are required to improve their management or to improve protection of important habitats.

Whilst publicly owned SINC (including those managed by organisations like Network Rail) normally score well, some SINC do not. These tend to be those in private ownership, and whilst they still have significant ecological value, there are concerns owners or managers might not be engaging with the council to demonstrate what they are doing, or not, to protect its biodiversity or improve access to and enjoyment of the site for its nature interest.

Examples of poorly scoring sites in the Single List assessment include Bishop Thomas Grant School Rough, Durand Gardens, Stockwell Park Estate Pond; Sunnyhill Road Open Space, and Tulse Hill Nature Garden on Tulse Hill Estate.

There are also sites where management for biodiversity is good, but no active relationship with landowners or managers, which means opportunities to secure resources and improve knowledge of good nature conservation management are lacking. These include Lambeth Palace Gardens, Oasis Children's Nature Garden, Vauxhall City Farm and schools with SINC such as Hill Mead, Julian's and St. Mark's Primary Schools.

To address a number of actions will be undertaken across these 'orphan SINC' during 2021 and beyond, to improve their assessment values in successive Lambeth Single List reports to Natural England and DEFRA.

This process, which has already started, is as follows:

- a) Improved engagement and contact with SINC site owners and managers, making contact to organise online or Covid-19 safe site visits or meetings, and establish long-term communication channels with key decision makers.
- b) Support for appropriate nature conservation management and protection: maintaining contact and dialogue to share good practice and advice as to improved management of each SINC, along with an evidence base as to how this has been responded to.
- c) Assistance with developing site management plans and funding applications: using existing templates to enable site managers to evidence how they are protecting, improving and enhancing biodiversity on

each site, and assisting with information to secure additional grant and other funding to deliver these actions.

- d) Assistance with site surveys: where resources permit, to assist with surveys of sites to understand habitat type, quality and species diversity, and help formulate actions to better manage these assets.

3. Draft Revised Lambeth Local Plan – Management of New SINCs

Subject to the Draft Revised Lambeth Local Plan being formally adopted, this could result in at least four new SINC

s within the borough, including part of an existing Metropolitan one (Tooting Bec Common).

The other additions would be Royal Circus in West Norwood, Effra Nature Garden in Herne Hill, and additional railway linesides between Loughborough Junction and Herne Hill Railway Stations. The core actions from this will be:

- a) Ensuring any new SINCs will be included on the council's maps and databases and added to the Single List that is reported annually to DEFRA and Natural England.
- b) Making contact with landowners and managers of new SINCs to engage with them at the earliest opportunity to advise on appropriate management, including management plans and condition assessments if required.

In the case of Tooting Bec Common this will involve closer working with Wandsworth Council as they are a majority owner of the land which will lie within Lambeth, so improving cross-boundary relationships.

- c) Prioritising these new sites for allocation of funds from the 2021-22 Ecology and Green Infrastructure budget to commission detailed site surveys to better understand their ecology and help direct future nature conservation management.

Lambeth's Current Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

LBL Number	Name	Owner	Ward
METROPOLITAN SINCS			
SINC01	River Thames and Tidal Tributaries	Crown Estate and Riparian Landowners	Bishop's, Prince's, Oval
BOROUGH SINCS			
SINC02	Bishop Thomas Grant School Rough	Archdiocese of Southwark	Streatham Wells
SINC03	Brockwell Park	London Borough of Lambeth	Herne Hill
SINC04	Clapham Common (Lambeth Section)	London Borough of Lambeth	Clapham Common, Clapham Town
SINC05	Eardley Road Sidings	London Borough of Lambeth	Streatham South
SINC06	Harleyford Road Community Garden	London Borough of Lambeth	Oval
SINC07	Lambeth Palace Gardens, Garden Museum & St Mary's Churchyard	Church Commissioners, London Borough of Lambeth	Bishop's
SINC08	Oasis Children's Nature Garden	London Borough of Lambeth	Stockwell
SINC09	Palace Road Nature Garden	London Borough of Lambeth	Streatham Hill
SINC10	Railway Linesides – Leigham Vale and Tulse Hill Junctions	Network Rail	Knight's Hill, Streatham Hill, Streatham Wells, Thurlow Park
SINC11	Railway Linesides - Peabody Hill	Peabody Trust, Network Rail	Thurlow Park
SINC12	Railway Linesides – Streatham Common to Norbury	Network Rail	St. Leonard's, Streatham Wells
SINC13	Railway Linesides – Streatham Cuttings	Network Rail	Streatham Wells
SINC14	Railway Linesides – Streatham Hill	Network Rail	Streatham Hill
SINC15	Railway Linesides – Tooting Bec to Eardley Road	Network Rail	St. Leonard's, Streatham South
SINC16	Railway Linesides – West Norwood	Network Rail	Gipsy Hill, Knight's Hill
SINC17	Roots and Shoots Nature Gardens	Roots & Shoots	Bishop's
SINC18	Ruskin Park	London Borough of Lambeth	Herne Hill
SINC19	Streatham Common and the Rookery	London Borough of Lambeth	Streatham South
SINC20	Unigate Wood	London Borough of Lambeth	Streatham Wells
SINC21	West Norwood Cemetery	London Borough of Lambeth	Gypsy Hill
LOCAL SINCS			
SINC22	Archbishop's Park	London Borough of Lambeth	Bishop's
SINC23	Knights Hill Wood	London Borough of Lambeth	Knight's Hill
SINC24	Churchyard of St. Leonard's, Streatham	Church Commissioners	St. Leonard's
SINC25	Hill Mead School's Nature Garden	Metropolitan Housing Trust	Coldharbour
SINC26	Durand Gardens, Stockwell	Durand Resident's Association	Vassall
SINC27	Elam Street Open Space	London Borough of Lambeth	Coldharbour
SINC28	Lorn Road Allotments	London Borough of Lambeth	Vassall
SINC29	Julian's Primary School Grounds	London Borough of Lambeth	Streatham Wells
SINC30	Kennington Park	London Borough of Lambeth	Oval
SINC31	Lambeth Walk Doorstep Green	London Borough of Lambeth	Bishop's, Prince's
SINC32	Loughborough Park	London Borough of Lambeth	Coldharbour

LBL Number	Name	Owner	Ward
SINC33	Myatt's Fields Park	London Borough of Lambeth	Vassall
SINC34	Norwood Park	London Borough of Lambeth	Gipsy Hill
SINC35	Sunnyhill Road Open Space	London Borough of Lambeth	Streatham Wells
SINC36	Land at Spring Gardens	London Borough of Lambeth	Prince's
SINC37	Rush Common	London Borough of Lambeth	Brixton Hill, Tulse Hill
SINC38	South London Botanical Institute Garden	South London Botanical Institute	Thurlow Park
SINC39	St John's Church Grounds	Church Commissioners	Clapham Town
SINC40	St Mark's C of E Primary School Grounds	London Borough of Lambeth	Oval
SINC41	St Paul's Churchyard, Clapham	Church Commissioners	Clapham Town
SINC42	Stockwell Estate Pond	London Borough of Lambeth	Ferndale
SINC43	Tulse Hill Nature Garden	London Borough of Lambeth	Tulse Hill
SINC44	Vauxhall City Farm	London Borough of Lambeth	Prince's
SINC45	Waterloo Millennium Green	London Borough of Lambeth	Bishop's



Plate 9. View of part of Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens showing the results of recent planting of extensive drifts of native spring bulbs; part of the site is currently a Local SINC, and the Lambeth SINC Review has proposed to extend the SINC to the whole site in recognition of these and other recent improvements