

Parks and Open Spaces

Strategic Plan 2020-2025



Lambeth's Parks and Open Spaces – Strategic Plan 2020-2025

VISION

“To provide a diverse range of safe, well managed parks and open spaces that actively improve the quality of life for our residents and visitors; as well as delivering a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits.”

THE 10 STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

These principles represent our strategic aims and delivering against them constitutes Lambeth's Strategic Plan for parks and open spaces.

1 The Council's Stewardship Role

We will manage our parks and open spaces in the interests of the whole community. The Council is the 'steward' of Lambeth's parks and open spaces and holds them in trust for the community and future generations. This role includes increasing the financial sustainability of the service



2 Our History and Heritage

We will protect and conserve the historic landscapes and architectural heritage to be found within Lambeth's parks and open spaces. We will ensure that this heritage is protected, now and for the future



3 Parks and Open Spaces as Community Assets

Lambeth's parks and open spaces are an essential and inalienable community resource. We will encourage community events and work in partnership with local people, involving them in the decision-making processes relating to the use, development and management of the borough's parks and open spaces



4 Investing in Our Parks and Open Spaces

We recognise that our parks and open spaces require investment and nurturing. We will actively seek opportunities to generate income and secure funding for the improvement and regeneration of our parks and open spaces, in partnership with key stakeholders and external agencies



5 Universal Access to Parks and Open Spaces

Lambeth's parks and open spaces are there for use by everyone. We will support and promote fully inclusive access and use of Lambeth's open spaces for the benefit of the whole community; improving accessibility where resources permit. We will also improve access to information and services



6 The Right to Safety

Our users have the right to visit Lambeth's parks and open spaces in safety and without fear of crime. We will work in partnership with key stakeholders and partner agencies in order to provide healthy, safe environments



7 Education, Art and Culture

We will encourage the use of our parks and open spaces as important centres of education as well as places to celebrate Lambeth's historic, cultural and artistic diversity. We will aim to facilitate a full and diverse range of events, in line with the new Events Strategy 2020-2025



8 An Active and Healthy Borough

Our parks are crucial for improving health and wellbeing through physical activity, play, relaxation and contemplation. We will maximise these opportunities as resources allow, working with a wide range of partners to improve and develop facilities; with a focus on expanding our play offer



9 Promoting Biodiversity and Sustainability

We will protect and enhance biodiversity and actively promote nature conservation. We will aim to make our operations as sustainable as possible, increasing recycling opportunities, reducing the usage of non-renewable resources and minimising the use of pesticides and other chemicals. We will actively contribute towards Lambeth's broader sustainability objectives



10 Aiming High – Ensuring Quality

We will make best use of our resources to ensure the highest quality service possible for all our open spaces. We will invest in our staff, strive to achieve Green Flag accreditation across all appropriate sites over one acre in size and actively participate in London in Bloom and other accreditation schemes



Delivering Against the Strategic Principles

The following list details the actions we will take to ensure we deliver against our ten strategic principles. **Specific actions will be included within the annual Service Development Plan for Neighbourhoods**

Principle	Key Delivery Commitments 2020 to 2025
1. The Council's Stewardship Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an annual user survey and use the results to tailor our management and investment actions and priorities • Create an individual management plan for each site managed by Lambeth, either a five-year plan for Green Flag sites, or a three-year plan. These management plans will provide the detail on how our strategic principles will be delivered at a local level • Produce a Grounds Maintenance Specification document, which will be reviewed annually • Seek to secure Deeds of Dedication with Fields in Trust for at least five parks • Work with Legal Services and Planning to deal robustly with any unauthorised occupation of, or damage to, public open space • Work with Legal Services and Planning to protect public open space from inappropriate development • Invest in training and development for our staff and promote horticulture and parks maintenance as a career choice for Lambeth residents • Seek to bring as many sites as possible under active management as public open space and create new public open space in areas of deficiency • Achieve a balanced budget for the service through constantly reviewing and reducing costs and increasing income • Actively seek external funding to improve the service offer and mitigate the effect of budget cuts • Develop a Tree Strategy • Work with Property Services to bring all buildings in parks into active use through lease arrangements, reinvesting income back into the parks service • Seek innovative ways to manage our parks which bring financial or other benefits
2. Our History and Heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record all Listed assets • Arrange for condition surveys as appropriate • Prioritise conservation for structures on the Heritage at Risk Register (HARR); aim to remove all Listed assets from the HARR • Develop a funding plan for all Listed assets needing remedial works • Apply for Listed status for additional assets meeting the appropriate criteria • Ensure appropriate actions are built into management plans and Masterplans • Develop Landscape Conservation plans for Listed Parks and Gardens

Principle	Key Delivery Commitments 2020 to 2025
3. Parks and Open Spaces as Community Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a Memorandum of Understanding with the Lambeth Parks Forum • Actively support the Lambeth Parks Forum and use the Forum as a conduit for consultation with stakeholder groups • Encourage the creation of new Friends groups and help groups to develop robust and sustainable structures through a model constitution and mentoring • Provide named contacts to all Friends/stakeholder groups for operational and developmental issues • Create Partnership Boards for larger sites where there is the demand to do so • Support stakeholders and community groups to undertake partial or complete management of individual sites where this reduces the financial liability and resource input for Lambeth; and adds value over and above our core service offer • Provide support to stakeholder groups with applying for external grants • Engage with stakeholders over the creation and development of management plans • Create and implement a Volunteering Plan, maximising opportunities for people to get involved with the maintenance and management of our parks • Work with Housing to develop the potential of Lambeth Housing land for public amenity and nature conservation
4. Investing in Our Parks and Open Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete implementation of the Parks Capital Investment Plan, actively seeking out funding opportunities supported by a dedicated Fundraising Officer • Actively pursue external funding as our priority funding stream • Seek to apply for and utilise S106, CIL and NCIL in a strategic way to support priorities under the Parks Capital Investment Plan • Increase the financial benefit to parks from events income • Focus on making parks feel more welcoming through enhanced entrances and improved signage
5. Universal Access to Parks and Open Spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission an access review for park facilities and seek funding for implementing recommendations • Ensure accessibility is factored into all new capital projects as appropriate • Provide accessibility information about our parks online • Contribute towards implementation of the Equality Commission's recommendations • Improve our digital offer for park users
6. The Right to Safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund one of the Partnership Plus officers forming the new Public Realm policing team for the initial three-year agreement • Seek opportunities for increasing the presence of other enforcement officers within Lambeth's parks • Work collaboratively with the Safer Streets commissioning team and outreach officers to address rough sleeping

Principle	Key Delivery Commitments 2020 to 2025
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to implement a Public Spaces Protection Order covering all appropriate public open space to provide a more flexible way of enforcing byelaws and additional opportunities for enforcing against anti-social behaviour • Maintain existing lighting within parks, dealing promptly with defects • Continue with quarterly inspections of play area and appropriate mechanisms to address and rectify identified risks in a timely manner • Develop a risk management policy covering trees in parks • Seek to respond to safety concerns robustly, working with partners to implement solutions where reasonably practicable
7. Education, Art and Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage use of parks by Lambeth schools for educational activities • Seek partnerships with schools to take on park-based projects and activities • Work with Arts colleagues and cultural partners to increase public art and cultural offerings within our open spaces • Provide financial support for free bandstand programmes organised by stakeholders • Provide event planning and management support and training to community groups • Facilitate a wide-ranging and diverse programme of events
8. An Active and Healthy Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise play within the Parks Capital Investment Plan, improving and expanding play opportunities • Implement the Lambeth Local Football Facility Plan • Implement relevant actions under the Active Lambeth Plan and Outdoor and Indoor Sports Strategies • Complete implementation of the Health Parks pilot in Ruskin Park and roll-out to other parks • Work closely with Public Health on relevant initiatives • Expand the opportunities for sport and physical activity through improving and expanding the range of facilities, activities and guided trails • Actively support community sport initiatives to maximise opportunities, particularly for target groups within Active Lambeth, including young people • Promote and support allotments, community gardens and orchards as part of an overall approach to healthier living • Proactively manage a licensing scheme for personal trainers to ensure those using parks for training are providing a safe and professional service • Address the issue of cycling in parks through an agreed position and appropriate control measures
9. Biodiversity and Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the action plan linked to our Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) • Deliver against the Green Infrastructure Strategy • Include BAP objectives within all Management Plans • Implement the 2019 SINC review • Where resources allow commission studies to assess existing biodiversity value of our sites and make recommendations for enhancing

Principle	Key Delivery Commitments 2020 to 2025
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase opportunities for residents to have access to nature • Promote and develop green corridors between parks for recreation, nature conservation and sustainable transport • Work with Highways to increase the biodiversity value of Highways land, including de-paving areas to create new green and wildlife verges • Implement our Integrated Pest Management Policy • Increase recycling and composting facilities • Avoid all peat-based products • Reduce use of single-use plastics • Increase battery-operated equipment • When replacing vehicles purchase models with the lowest environmental footprint possible, compatible with operational requirements • Tailor management where appropriate to contribute towards Lambeth’s carbon neutral pledge and the Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan • Promote management policies which help combat climate change • Fulfil our role in Lambeth’s Air Quality Action Plan • Tailor management where practicable to enhance the value of our open spaces in improving air quality • Create a Pollinator Action Plan • De-pave hard surfaces where they are no longer essential, returning land to soft landscaping, with a focus on biodiverse planting where possible • Seek to procure goods in accordance with Lambeth’s Responsible Procurement policy wherever possible
<p>10. Aiming High – Ensuring Quality</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain Green Flag accreditation for all 32 parks and open spaces falling within our eligibility criteria • Proactively participate in London in Bloom and aim to increase the number and standard of awards each year • Work to improve Lambeth’s score under the Good Parks for London report. The 10 scoring criteria provide a measurable benchmark for the quality of local authority parks services • Aim to remain within the top five performing boroughs under the Good Parks for London Report • Achieve FTA Van Excellence annually • Achieve FORS Bronze • Maintain a suite of Key Performance Indicators for the parks service, reviewing targets annually and reporting publicly through a quarterly performance report

Lambeth’s Borough Plan 2019-2021

Through this Strategic Plan our Parks service contributes to Lambeth’s Borough Plan priority of:

Making Lambeth a place where people want to live, work and invest

Specifically, the goal of:

We will maintain Lambeth’s award-winning parks, and invest in a wider network of green spaces to support community activity and wellbeing

In addition, this Strategic Plan will contribute to the following Borough Plan goals:

We will work to achieve sustained reductions in serious youth violence

(by providing safe neutral spaces for young people to play, socialise and undertake a range of leisure activities; and by supporting community-based groups and organisations to run diversionary activities within parks)

We will invest in the assets that our communities need to be healthier and more resilient

(through ongoing capital investment across parks and open spaces)

We will improve the mental health of Lambeth residents and council staff, focusing on those at greatest risk

(by increasing usage of our parks - extensive research confirms the benefits to mental health from spending time in parks)

We will support people to live longer and healthier lives

(again, a large body of evidence proves the multiple health benefits achieved from spending time in parks, whatever the activities undertaken)

Mayor of London’s Environment Strategy 2018

Green Infrastructure is covered in Chapter 5 of the Mayor’s Environment Strategy, with three core objectives:

OBJECTIVE 5.1 MAKE MORE THAN HALF OF LONDON’S AREA GREEN BY 2050

OBJECTIVE 5.2 CONSERVING AND ENHANCING WILDLIFE AND NATURAL HABITATS

OBJECTIVE 5.3 VALUE LONDON’S NATURAL CAPITAL AS AN ECONOMIC ASSET AND SUPPORT GREATER INVESTMENT IN GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Delivery of our Strategic Plan will contribute towards achieving a number of the Mayor’s policies and proposals, which sit under the three core objectives. The links are set out in the table below.

Policy	Supporting Delivery Commitment(s)
Policy 5.1.1 Protect, enhance and increase green areas in the city, to provide green infrastructure services and benefits that London needs now, and in the future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create an individual management plan for each site managed by Lambeth, either a five-year plan for Green Flag sites, or a three-year plan. These management plans will provide the detail on how our strategic principles will be delivered at a local level • Produce a Grounds Maintenance Specification document, which will be reviewed annually • Seek to secure Deeds of Dedication with Fields in Trust for at least five parks • Work with Legal Services and Planning to deal robustly with any unauthorised occupation of, or damage to, public open space

Policy	Supporting Delivery Commitment(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Legal Services and Planning to protect public open space from inappropriate development • Seek to bring as many sites as possible under active management as public open space and create new public open space in areas of deficiency • Actively seek external funding to improve the service offer and mitigate the effect of budget cuts • Seek innovative ways to manage our parks which bring financial or other benefits • Complete implementation of the Parks Capital Investment Plan, actively seeking out funding opportunities supported by a dedicated Fundraising Officer • Actively pursue external funding as our priority funding stream • Seek to apply for and utilise S106, CIL and NCIL in a strategic way to support priorities under the Parks Capital Investment Plan • Increase the financial benefit to parks from events income • Gain Green Flag accreditation for all 32 parks and open spaces falling within our eligibility criteria • Proactively participate in London in Bloom and aim to increase the number and standard of awards each year • Work to improve Lambeth's score under the Good Parks for London report. The 10 scoring criteria provide a measurable benchmark for the quality of local authority parks services
<p>Proposal 5.1.1.f The Mayor will back greater community involvement in the improvement and management of London's green spaces and natural environment</p>	<p>All actions under Principle 3. - <i>Parks and Open Spaces as Community Assets</i></p>
<p>Policy 5.1.2 Protect, conserve, and enhance the landscape and cultural value of London's green infrastructure</p>	<p>All actions under Principle 2. - <i>Our History and Heritage</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Arts colleagues and cultural partners to increase public art and cultural offerings within our open spaces • Provide financial support for free bandstand programmes organised by stakeholders
<p>Policy 5.2.1 Protect a core network of nature conservation sites and ensure a net gain in biodiversity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the action plan linked to our Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) • Deliver against the Green Infrastructure Strategy • Include BAP objectives within all Management Plans • Implement the 2019 SINC review • Where resources allow commission studies to assess existing biodiversity value of our sites and make recommendations for enhancing • Increase opportunities for residents to have access to nature

Policy	Supporting Delivery Commitment(s)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote and develop green corridors between parks for recreation, nature conservation and sustainable transport • Work with Highways to increase the biodiversity value of Highways land, including de-paving areas to create new green and wildlife verges
<p>Proposal 5.2.1.c The Mayor will provide guidance and support on the management and creation of priority habitats, the conservation of priority species, and the establishment of wildlife corridors</p>	<p><i>Lambeth welcomes the promise of this guidance and will incorporate it into its strategic plans and operational policies</i></p>
<p>Proposal 5.3.1.b The Mayor will develop and promote a natural capital accounting framework for London</p>	<p><i>Lambeth welcomes the natural capital accounting framework and will consider how it can be incorporated into our strategic plans, including the Green Infrastructure Strategy</i></p>