

Royal Greenwich
Parks and Open Spaces Strategy

April 2017

Foreword

The Royal Borough of Greenwich is fortunate in that we have a wealth of parks and open spaces within the Borough with varied, rich natural heritage and cultural histories. This Strategy aims to:

- Ensure our parks and open spaces are well managed and maintained to a high standard;
- Set out the Council's strategic intentions for their management for the next 10 years;
- Assist the Council in achieving the objectives set out in the Local Plan;
- Contribute to the protection and enhancement of our green spaces;
- Highlight and strengthen links with other important strategies;
- Contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of the borough's residents as well as people that work in the borough, the significant student population and tourists;
- Assist in meeting challenges such as climate change and flooding; and
- Ensure our parks and open spaces offer the appropriate range of facilities and amenities to meet the needs of our growing and changing population.



This Strategy recognises the value and commitment already shown by friends of parks and other community groups, residents and staff to help maintain and improve our parks and open spaces. It also recognises the need to maintain and increase this partnership approach to help us care for and improve our parks and open spaces in the future.

The Council believes that through community partnership working we will be able to deliver a network of quality parks and open spaces that are well used and provide a focal point for vibrant local communities, as well as reflecting the natural and cultural heritage importance of these key assets. The Royal Borough will need to consider new ways of working to deliver quality parks services to withstand future financial challenges and constraints. We will need to work with our stakeholders to promote strong inward investment and to establish a sustainable approach to management.

Our ultimate goal is to work with our community partners to ensure that our parks and open spaces add to the quality of life of our residents and people that work, learn in and visit the Royal Borough.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jackie Smith". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Councillor Jackie Smith, Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Environment

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Introduction

Parks and open spaces are essential components of the urban environment providing valuable breathing spaces, supporting the health and wellbeing of the borough's population, encouraging biodiversity and helping to mitigate the anticipated effects of a changing climate. In Royal Greenwich, parks and open space also contribute and help define the borough's cultural heritage which attracts significant numbers of tourists to the area.

Feedback from local residents demonstrates that parks and open spaces are highly valued and appreciated. However continued pressures on local government funding will result in a need to consider alternative models to sustain the management of publicly accessible open spaces.

This ten year Parks and Open Spaces Strategy presents the Royal Borough's Vision for the future of its parks and open green spaces. This vision is:

“To work in partnership with the local community to provide and sustain a network of safe, attractive, diverse and flexible parks and open spaces which meets the needs of our growing and changing population.”

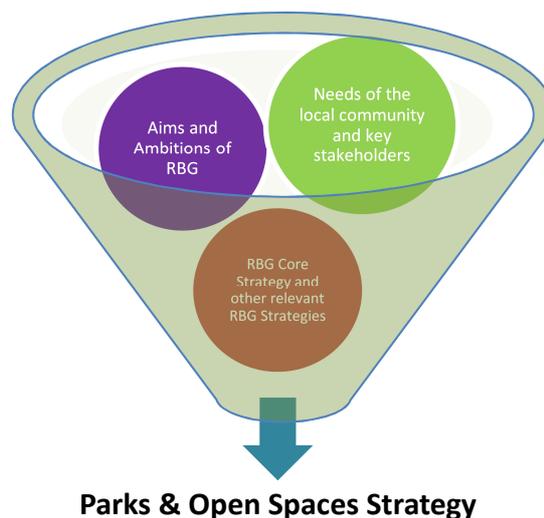
The Strategy is centred on the following seven themes:

- **Park and open spaces management:** Ensuring our parks and open spaces are well managed, maintained in good condition and are safe to use;
- **Community engagement:** Ensuring we actively engage and work in partnership with local residents to provide good quality parks that meet the needs of the local community;
- **Nature and biodiversity:** Ensuring that areas and habitats are provided for wildlife and that they are protected from inappropriate development;
- **Environmental management:** Maximise resource efficiency by increasing recycling opportunities, establish better use of essential energy sources and controlling the use of pesticides and chemicals;
- **Recreation, health and wellbeing:** Ensuring that parks provide spaces for active recreation and quiet reflection and contribute to the health and well-being of the local community;
- **Regeneration and local economy:** Ensuring our parks are well designed, attractive to visitors and encourage enterprise and employment of local people; and
- **Culture and heritage:** Ensuring our parks are places for culture and that their heritage is preserved and celebrated.

Each theme of the Strategy explains the Royal Borough's priorities for the future provision of parks and open spaces. An action plan will be finalised to accompany the strategy and delivered over the next 10 years. Actions will consider the wider economic context and challenges faced by local authorities and will be measurable against the strategy objectives. The Strategy also indicates how, through increased partnership working and careful planning, the Council will secure the provision of the borough's much loved parks and open spaces for generations to come.

Strategic context

This Parks and Open Spaces Strategy has links with policies, strategies and plans at national, regional and local levels including the National Planning Policy Framework, the London Plan and the Mayors Open Spaces Strategy. The Strategy also feeds into, and links with many internal strategies and a host of community groups, forums, external stakeholders and Government Agencies.



A summary of the key policies and strategies relating to parks and open space provision in the Royal Borough are identified below. A list other relevant strategies can be found in Appendix I.

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework outlines 12 core planning principles aimed at guiding plan-making and planning decisions at national and local level. The most relevant to this strategy are:

- Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment;
- Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations; and
- Take account of and support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all, and deliver sufficient community and cultural facilities and services to meet local needs.

The London Plan

The Mayor of London's London Plan contains a number of policies relating to the provision of parks and open spaces including the following:

- Policy 2.18 – Green Infrastructure: the network of open green spaces
- Policy 7.4 – Local Character
- Policy 7.6 – Heritage Assets and Archaeology
- Policy 7.17 – Metropolitan Open Land
- Policy 7.18 – Protecting Local Open Space and Addressing Local Deficiency
- Policy 7.19 – Biodiversity and Access to Nature
- Policy 7.21 – Trees and Woodlands

Royal Greenwich Local Plan

The Royal Greenwich Local Plan: Core Strategy with Detailed Policies (July, 2014) sets out the spatial strategy, long term spatial vision, and core policies for the Royal Borough to cover the period up until 2028. Policies OS1, OS2 and OS3 of the Local Plan encourage the safeguarding, enhancement and improvement of access to existing public and private open space, including Green Chain, Community Open Space and other small open spaces such as local green spaces. Policy CH2 highlights the link between open space and healthy communities and the important contribution these make to facilitating healthy and active lifestyles. In addition, Policy OS4 encourages the protection, restoration and enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity.

Individual parks and open spaces management plans

Each of the major parks in the borough has its own strategic and operational management plan. The layout of these plans follows CABE Space good practice guidance

Funding and finance

The Communities and Local Government Committee (CLGC) recently completed an inquiry into the current state of the nation's public parks. The findings of the inquiry acknowledges the multiple benefits of parks but states that cuts to local government revenue budgets, combined with limited protection within planning policy, has resulted in the nation's network of public open spaces as being at a "tipping point". The inquiry concludes that in face of continued pressures on traditional revenue funding streams, there is a need for holistic and innovative approaches to the

planning and management of public parks. The inquiry therefore recommends that strategic plans are prepared to maximise the value of the open space network whilst setting out sustainable mechanisms for the governance and management.

The findings of the CLGC inquiry supports the Heritage Lottery Fund 'State of UK Parks' report (2016) which also highlighted the risks posed to open spaces and other green infrastructure assets by public sector funding cuts. The report recommended seeking alternative funding sources for open space provision and maintenance, as well as considering new forms of governance.

The implementation of the Parks and Open Spaces Strategy will be delivered within available council budgets, and supplemented by external financial resources - such as funding bids and grants.

Consultation and partnership working

The preparation of this Strategy has been informed by an understanding of the views and needs of residents, park users and other stakeholders. Consultation was carried out during the preparation of the Strategy including an online public surveys and focus group meetings.

As well as helping to gain an understanding of residents' views on the current service, the consultation also helped to identify priorities for future expenditure and investment in delivering the service.

Public involvement during the preparation of the Strategy encouraged greater understanding of, and confidence in, what the Royal Borough is trying achieve. It will therefore make the implementation of the Strategy easier as people understand what is being done and why.

Theme I: Parks and open spaces management

Current provision of parks and open spaces in the Royal Borough

There are around 300 open spaces within the Royal Borough across a range of typologies, totalling 1,390 hectares of land, which is approximately 28% of the Borough's total area. Royal Greenwich contains many valued areas of open space, including Blackheath and Greenwich Park, which is one of the largest green spaces in South East London.

Both of these spaces are also part of the Green Chain which runs through Royal Greenwich and the adjoining boroughs of Bexley, Lewisham and Bromley. The open spaces which form the green chain are all designated as Metropolitan Open Land.

The current provision of parks and open spaces in the Royal Borough has been identified in the recent Green Infrastructure Study, which revealed:

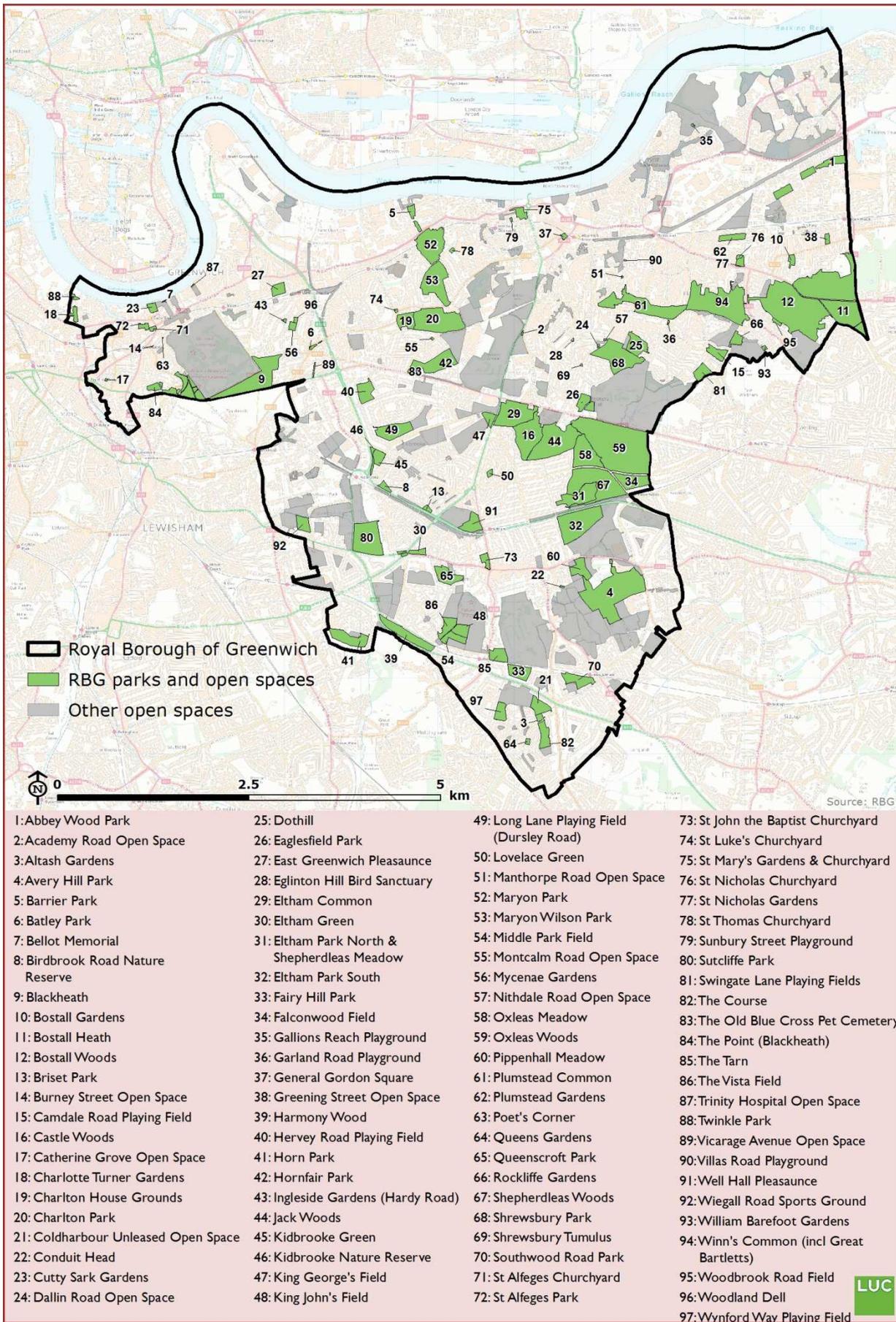
- Public open space in the Royal Borough totals 822 hectares. Parks and gardens comprise 382ha of this, or around 46% of publicly accessible open space; the largest proportion of any of the types of open space that we have in Royal Greenwich.
- This level of public open space is already high in a London context. The key interventions needed are in terms of accessibility to parks and accessibility in the east of the Borough will be improved by the planned Tripcock Park in Thamesmead.

Table I records the quantity of open spaces in the Royal Borough by type and accessibility. It also reveals the amount of parks and open spaces which are managed by the Royal Borough.

Table I: Quantity of open space in the Royal Borough of Greenwich

Typology	Total area (ha)	Publicly accessible area (ha)	Area managed by Royal Borough (ha)
Parks and gardens	391.64	381.85	240.13
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	378.57	299.79	266.95
Green corridor	36.98	18.85	
Amenity greenspace	92.48	59.23	12.96
Cemeteries and churchyards	54.43	54.43	2.93
Civic Space	7.83	7.83	1.69
Other provision (play, sport, agricultural land, allotments)	406.01	n/a	28.99
All typologies	1387.14	821.98	553.65

Figure I: Parks and open spaces managed by the Royal Borough of Greenwich



Parks and open spaces in the Royal Borough are owned and managed by a numerous organisations with significant landholders including The Royal Parks (Greenwich Park), Ministry of Defence (Woolwich Common) and Peabody (open spaces at Thamesmead).

This Strategy covers Parks and Open Spaces owned and managed by the Royal Borough of Greenwich but does not include allotments or cemeteries as these will have their own strategies developed in the future. **Figure 1** opposite shows the distribution of the parks and open spaces owned and/or by the Royal Borough.

Future provision of parks and open spaces in the Royal Borough

The recent Green Infrastructure Study (Towards a Greener Greenwich), proposed a public open space standard of 2.69ha/1000 people. This quantity standard is based on the provision of publicly accessible parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural green space and amenity green space as at 2016. Rather than develop a quantity standard for each typology, it was considered more appropriate to aggregate the amount of publicly accessible open space within these three typologies when developing an open space standard. 740.87ha out of the total publicly accessible area shown in Table 1 falls within these typologies and was considered when establishing the quantity standard as shown in Table 2.

The Study also recommended that every resident should be within:

- 3.2km of a metropolitan scale public open space
- 1.2km of a district scale public open space
- 400m of a local scale public open space
- 280m of a small local public open space

The population of the Royal Borough of Greenwich, as recorded in the 2011 Census, was 254,557. The projected population based on the GLA 2015 ward projections is 326,349; a 28% increase overall.

Population growth will be significantly higher in the Greenwich Peninsula area, where the population is expected to grow by 71% by 2028. The number of children in this area is expected to almost double.

The sharp rise in population in the Greenwich area is a result of the large development currently taking place in the Peninsula ward.

The GLA capped household size projections are linked to housing developments so any major housing scheme built in the Royal Borough will be reflected in the projection data. The three largest housing schemes are currently being built in Peninsula, Eltham West and Woolwich Riverside wards.

Table 2 shows the extent that public open space provision per head is likely to be reduced as a result of population increases.

Table 2: Public open space provision in the Royal Borough

Committee Area	Publicly accessible open space (ha)	Population 2016	Population 2028	Provision ha per 1000 people 2016	Provision ha per 1000 people 2028
Eltham and Kidbrooke area	318.07	93,681	100,424	3.40	3.17
Greenwich area	116.07	52,683	74,362	2.20	1.56
Woolwich and Thamesmead area	306.72	129,507	151,563	2.37	2.02
Royal Greenwich	740.87	275,871	326,349	2.69	2.27

As can be seen, new public open space will need to be delivered alongside housing in order to ensure that the standards are met. The Green Infrastructure Study highlighted that whilst the Eltham and Kidbrooke Committee Area enjoys a level of provision above this proposed standard, the rest of the Borough is less well served and currently falls below this provision standard. This is particularly the case in the Greenwich Committee Area.

Quality of parks and open spaces

The Royal Borough wants to create parks and open spaces that people want to visit. We aim to do this by creating spaces, which through their appearance, range of facilities, standards of maintenance, and ease of access, make people feel they are cared for and safe.

The Green Flag Award scheme is a nationally recognised standard for a good quality park, which is recognised and endorsed by central government. The Royal Borough is committed to maintaining twelve parks to Green Flag or other similar quality standard and to work in partnership with community groups to secure quality awards including Community Green Flag Awards.

Park Management plans are important to ensure that future maintenance is carried out to a high standard in large and priority parks. The Green Flag award criteria upon which parks can be judged, will be used to assist in the management of all parks to help ensure they are maintained to a good standard.



The Italian Garden at Well Hall Pleasaunce

Working in partnership with our Friends Groups, Environmental Champions and other volunteers, the Royal Borough will ensure that we maintain our parks to a high standard.

There are conflicting demands made upon parks and open spaces from different user groups, neighbours and park visitors. Through community engagement these pressures will be identified and used in shaping service delivery that reduces conflict.

Parks Services will be certified against internationally respected quality standards including ISO 9001 for quality management systems and ISO 14001 for environmental management systems. These certifications will assist in ensuring that the services are well managed and delivered efficiently, and in an environmentally friendly manner.

An assessment of the parks and open spaces in the Royal Borough was completed in 2016 as part of the Green Infrastructure Study. This assessment involved an audit of all publicly accessible open spaces using the Green Flag Criteria. The results of the assessment will be used to guide the sustainable management of the Royal Borough's parks and open spaces and to aid priorities of enhancement projects.

Horticultural and grounds maintenance

Successful parks management requires a range of elements to be developed and delivered effectively these include: horticulture, landscaping, buildings and infrastructure, public facilities (sports pavilions, toilets, cafes etc.), sports and exercise, sufficient competent staff and training, security and supervision. Set against this is the need to balance the sometimes different and conflicting uses which people bring into parks.



Horticultural and grounds maintenance works will clearly be defined within site specific work programmes and will reflect the individual characteristics of each site whilst also contributing to wider strategic objectives of this and other relevant strategies.

The delivery of this area of service and arboricultural maintenance hinges on sufficient competent staff being available. Therefore work is, and will continue to be, undertaken on workforce planning to help maintain service standards.

Opportunities to employ local people will be utilised via apprenticeships and work experience programmes and we will contribute positively to offering work experience opportunities to young and older people to help them become work ready.

Arboricultural maintenance

Tree surveys will be carried out at parks and open spaces on a 5 year basis. These surveys will identify maintenance priorities with responsive work carried out between the surveys to ensure the health and safety of park users. The Council aims to maintain a safe and healthy tree stock, with work undertaken to support Park Friends and other Environmental Groups with tree planting schemes in appropriate places. The Council will resist the removal of healthy trees and will not allow memorial trees to be planted on an ad-hoc basis.

Park cleansing

Park cleansing is carried out seven days per week and comprises of a combination of programmed and responsive work. The aim is to maintain sites to a high standard of cleanliness with cleansing schedules reviewed where reoccurring issues are identified by park users. Litter is a concern at some sites and managers will work with Park Friends and Environmental Groups on campaigns to improve cleanliness. Event organisers in parks are required to clean up and dispose of the litter generated from the event at their cost.

Graffiti will be removed in line with standards set by the Royal Borough. Feeding birds in most locations is not encouraged as it supports unnatural bird population numbers and can provide food sources for vermin.

Customer care

Parks services will be delivered in full recognition that they are being delivered for the benefit of the local community. A key management principle is that staff will engage with park users in a professional, friendly and helpful manner.

Accessibility and equality

Parks and open spaces should be available for all residents to use and the Royal Borough will work to ensure that physical and social barriers for usage are identified and that work is undertaken to remove them where possible. Parks are free to use and enjoy and are accessible for most people.

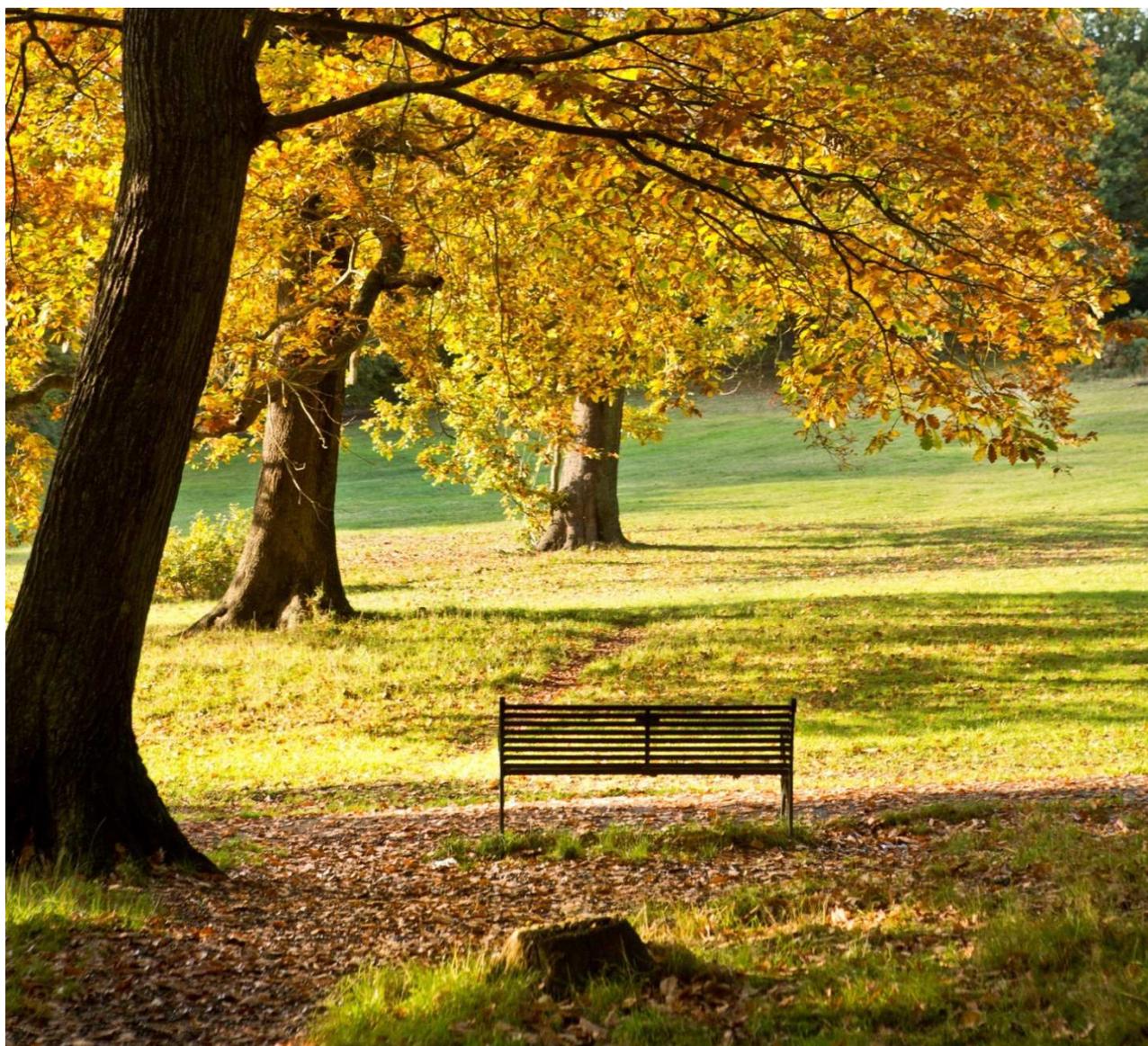
Built infrastructure and facilities

Recent site surveys have identified a number of problems with the built infrastructure and facilities in some parks. Account is taken of public consultation findings and the Council's priorities for improvements. Initial work has been undertaken to identify some sites that are priorities for improvement. Further surveys will be required to identify, a full list of priority works.

Park furniture and signage

Signage at park entrances and surrounding roads are important to help people find parks and provide helpful information to visitors. New signs will follow the principle set out in Green Flag guidance and the Royal Borough's design standards. Signs should be used sparingly and not detract from the overall feel of the site. A review of park signage will be undertaken and a phased replacement programme organised.

Park furniture consists of benches, picnic tables and bins located at strategic points within parks and open spaces. When replacement of park furniture is required, it is replaced with a consistent design to create uniformity throughout these spaces. Memorials in parks will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and dedications on park benches are limited and controlled by an application process.



Appropriate provision of site furniture

Safety and security

Well used and well managed parks and open spaces have major positive effects on the security and wellbeing of local communities. Parks that are good quality and welcoming, encourage people in, helping to self-police and reduce antisocial behaviour.

The Royal Borough works closely with the Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams (SNT) and Community Safety Warden Service to reduce antisocial behaviour and crime in our Parks.

The safety of park visitors and the prevention of accidents are of the highest importance to the Royal Borough and require constant vigilance, action and review.

Staff regularly inspect sites and associated facilities to ensure they are safe for park users and visitors to use. This is complemented by reports from Park Friends Groups representatives and park visitors. Unfortunately some parks experience crime and anti-social behaviour. The Park Rangers and Community Safety Wardens will patrol parks to act as a deterrent and provide a reassuring uniformed presence for park visitors. Partnership working with Community Safety Wardens, Police Safer Neighbourhood Teams has been successful in reducing anti-social behaviour in parks.

The Royal Borough will complete a review of byelaws for parks open spaces and they will be implemented and used when appropriate. A protocol has been adopted for dealing with illegal encampments on parks and other land within the Borough.

Dogs

Dog walkers are a valuable part of the park user community. However some damage is caused by dogs in playgrounds, to trees and plants and uncontrolled dogs can be frightening for park visitors. The Royal Borough will work with the Police if concerns are raised about dangerous dogs. Most dog walkers are responsible but dog fouling continues to be a concern in some areas and targeted education and enforcement will be planned and undertaken where a need is identified.

The Royal Borough has adopted Dog Control Orders that makes it an offence if people do not clean up after their dogs have fouled. Dog Control Orders will be used against irresponsible dog owners and authorised officers have the authority to issue Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) for breaches of these orders. The aim is to encourage and support responsible dog ownership but the Royal Borough will take enforcement action against owners that repeatedly allow their dogs to cause damage and/or foul.

Marketing and promotion

We want our parks to be well used and enjoyed by residents living, and people working, visiting and learning in the Royal Borough. We will review the way the service is currently promoted and

will look for opportunities to ensure the rich and varied offer of our parks is promoted so that people know what our parks offer and are encouraged to visit and enjoy the facilities they provide.

Financial constraints

Central Government continues to reduce funding to Local Authorities. This results in reduced funding available to manage and maintain our parks and open spaces and places limitations on services that can be provided. It is therefore essential that services are delivered cost effectively and that the following issues are considered when delivering services in the future:

- Strong partnership working including volunteer groups
- External funding and funding from local developments
- Social enterprise opportunities
- Generating additional income
- Improved working practices
- Reducing costs
- Prioritising spending

Public Parks Inquiry

The Communities and Local Government Committee launched an inquiry into public parks to examine the impact of reduced local authority budgets on parks and open spaces and consider concerns that their existence is under threat. The Committee looks at how parks should be supported now and in the future. This includes studying alternative management and funding models, such as a mutual or a trust.

However, it is clear that whatever models individual local authorities explore or adopt, there are risks and costs associated with both the exploration and development of alternative arrangements. Striking the right balance between open access to parks, and revenue-raising activities will be challenging. However innovative and alternative approaches will need to be sought to ensure the future of parks.

Public Consultation Findings

Future Management of Parks and Open Spaces Online Survey Responses:

Amount and quality of open space:

- 84% of respondents are very or fairly satisfied with the amount of parks and open space in Royal Greenwich. 6% are very or fairly dissatisfied with the quantity;
- 78% of respondents are very or fairly satisfied with the quality of parks and open spaces in Royal Greenwich. 10% are very or fairly dissatisfied with the quality; and

- Sites are used for a number of different purposes, the majority of users listing access to nature, exercise and to rest and relax as their main reasons.

Access to open space:

- The vast majority of respondents (84%) visit a park or open space at least once a week. Of those who don't use parks or open spaces, or use them very infrequently, concerns over safety was the most frequent reason given;
- The parks and open spaces owned or managed by the Royal Borough of Greenwich visited most often by respondents are Oxleas Wood, Shrewsbury Park, Avery Hill Park, Horn Park, Fairy Hill Park and Charlton Park;
- 76% of respondents travel on foot to their local park or open space for the majority of their journey. 14% travel by car or motorbike with smaller numbers travelling by public transport (6%) or by bicycle (4%); and
- 41% are able to reach their local park or open space in under 5 minutes. 71% are able to reach their local park in less than 10 minutes and 85% are within 15 minutes of their local park or open space.

Parks, Estates and Open Spaces Service:

- 76% of the respondents were either very or fairly satisfied with the Parks and Open Spaces service; and
- A large number of respondents stated the most important aspects for the Royal Borough to focus on in the future are maintaining cleaning standards in parks, repair and maintenance of facilities and increasing natural habitats.

Parks Friends Strategy Focus Group Responses:

- Ensuring parks are safe, clean and well maintained were identified as key priorities;
- Elimination / reduction of anti-social behaviour / crime in parks, by working more closely with the police;
- Park Management Plans with clear action plans to deliver priorities;
- Control of dogs in parks through education and enforcement;
- Generating income from parks;
- Increasing awareness of park byelaws (signage, leaflets, website);
- Councils web site to provide more information on each park for example; access to park management plan, tree survey, directions, maps etc.;
- Increase visitor facilities such as Cafés and toilets; and

- Retain Green Flag Awards.
- Innovation and alternative approaches:
 - Make parks statutory.
 - Responsibility for managing and maintaining parks should remain with the Council supported by partnership working with local residents via community groups.
 - The Trust approach was not supported although it was recognised it could work for some parks/green spaces subject to funding and capacity.
 - Concern was expressed about the capacity and longevity of some community groups.
 - Considered that parks should remain accessible and free to use.

Children and Young People Consultation Responses:

- 13% of those who responded stated they visited a park or open space daily, 31% of respondents visit a park or open space at least once a week and 36% respondents stated they visited a park or open space 'sometimes'.
- In general (46%) respondents thought their local park or open space was 'good.' And 14% thought the park or open space local to them was excellent.
- 46% of respondents stay less than an hour when they visit a park or open space.
- The motivations for visiting parks and open spaces differed greatly dependent on the age of the respondent; spending time with friends being the most popular response with relaxing and playing sports not far behind.
- The majority of young people felt unsure or that it wasn't a good idea to leave parks open in the evening. Some of the older respondents thought it was a good idea as long as thought was given to the safety and well-being of visitors.
- Responding to the question "is the park or open space you visit usually clean", 51% of the steering group stated 'sometimes' and 14% stated 'no'. When asked to identify what makes a park unclean the respondents included: Rubbish, dog mess and bins overflowing.
- When asked if respondents felt safe when they visited the parks or open spaces 57% stated 'yes' but when asked to identify what makes them feel unsafe respondents included: Poor lighting, gangs, violence, large groups and dogs with irresponsible owners.
- When asked how parks and open spaces could be made safer and cleaner respondents stated: Invest in more bins, better lighting, staff and community warden patrols and more CCTV.
- When asked how parks and open space could be made more enjoyable respondents stated: better play equipment, more community events, installation of Wi-Fi, more bins,

more seating, better facilities for older children (including bike trails, skate parks etc.), more drinking fountains and more staff to make it safer for park users. In addition include the improvement of maintenance of sports facilities. If the facilities are of better quality, young people may well respect 'their' areas better.

Theme 1: Parks and open spaces management - aims and strategic objectives

Aim: To ensure our parks and open spaces are well managed, maintained in good condition and safe to use

Strategic objectives:

Objective PM1: Ensure there is a good quality park within easy reach of home.

Objective PM2: Ensure high standards of management, maintenance, cleanliness in our parks and open spaces.

Objective PM3: Ensure parks are safe and secure for all users.

Objective PM4: Ensure parks and open spaces are accessible and reflect the needs of the local community.

Objective PM5: Ensure good information is available on the facilities within parks and that this information is promoted.

Objective PM6: Ensure that the service is delivered cost effectively, within the budget available and that priorities for improvement are identified and are delivered by a combination of external and internal funding.

Objective PM7: Where there is a shortage of open space, informal green spaces should be upgraded to diversify their offer providing opportunities for informal play, sport and nature conservation.

Objective PM8: Investigate innovative and alternative approaches to the management of parks and explore funding opportunities available to Parks & Friends Groups.

Theme 2: Community Engagement

Park Friends groups

The Royal Borough of Greenwich is fortunate as it has many dedicated local residents that take pride in their Parks and wider local environment. The Royal Borough actively encourages the development of democratic, constituted Park Friends Groups with the aim of working in partnership to help care for and improve their local parks and open spaces.

The term Friends Group used in this Strategy applies not only to groups formally titled as Park Friends but also to other Environment, Community and Amenity Groups that work in partnership with the Council to care for our local parks and open spaces. These Groups contribute immensely to parks and open spaces making a significant difference to the quality and management of their local parks.

Park Friends Groups are recognised as a valuable asset and undertake a variety of roles and functions as follows:

- Helping to maintain parks and keep them clean;
- Helping manage parks by identifying priorities for improvement;
- Helping deliver improvements by developing improvement initiatives and seeking and securing external funding;
- Maintaining and improving biodiversity by being involved in planting schemes and initiatives to support wildlife;
- Helping to utilise parks as an education resource by providing talks and tours and providing spaces for outdoor learning;
- Helping to keep parks safe by undertaking and encouraging positive use of parks that acts as a deterrent to anti-social behaviour; and
- Helping to promote parks, community cohesion and wellbeing by organising community events, physical activities, workdays and managing and maintaining community food growing areas.

The Royal Borough also works in partnership with the Greenwich Parks Friends Forum. This Forum is made up of representatives from the Park Friends Groups. The Forum plays an important role and provides feedback on strategic issues relating to the Parks and Open Spaces Service along with providing Friends Groups with the opportunity to network with each other, and supporting groups with seeking external funding.

The Royal Borough grant funds the Greenwich Parks Friends Forum to manage a summer programme of cultural events and activities (Parksfest) in parks and open spaces. This programme is delivered by individual Friends Groups and helps create community cohesion by bringing local residents together to organise and enjoy outdoor events in a parks setting. It also provides residents with access to cultural activities and provides opportunities for local talent to perform and develop.

Empowering volunteer groups

The Royal Borough aims to empower groups that want to take more of a leading role in managing and maintaining their local parks and open spaces. However it is important that there is a clear agreement and understanding about the role a group will play. The Friends of Plumstead Common and the Twinkle Park Trust are good examples of where there are agreements in place with groups for managing and maintaining areas. These groups have also secured Community Green Flag Awards for areas they manage.

Other groups including the Friends of Well Hall Pleasaunce, The Tarn, Fairy Hill Park and Bostall Woods (to name but a few) are very proactive in identifying and delivering improvements and the Royal Borough aims to support these groups with these initiatives. All groups play a valuable role in helping manage and maintain parks and open spaces to a high standard. The Royal Borough aims to continue to develop and strengthen partnerships with voluntary groups and other organisations to manage, maintain and improve our parks and open spaces.

Events in parks and open spaces

Hundreds of events are held in the Royal Borough's parks and open spaces each year ranging from the London Marathon, which starts on Blackheath, to small local community organised events in local parks. Parks are pleasant and enjoyable venues for events, particularly in the summer months.

Events help develop a vibrant parks environment and help encourage people to revisit and enjoy their local environment. Most events in parks are free and provide residents on low incomes with accessible opportunities for recreation and enjoyment with family and friends. Events and activities in parks can be provided purely as a means of recreation and enjoyment, as an educational resource and/or to promote health and wellbeing.

The Royal Borough aims to encourage parks to be used by the local community for events and activities to help promote and encourage community cohesion. There are also economic benefits from events as they support local businesses and the local economy by promoting and encouraging residents to spend locally. Commercial events/activities in parks can generate an income for the Royal Borough and help contribute to maintaining services. Some events contain regulated entertainment and organisers of these events are legally required to obtain a Temporary Events Notice or Premises Licence to allow the event to take place.

All event and activity organisers are required to submit applications if they wish to hold an event in a Royal Borough park or open space. This helps to ensure that events are run safely and don't provide an unreasonable nuisance to local residents. It also allows the Borough to consider if an event is suitable and allows for unsuitable event applications to be refused.

Some events can potentially have a negative impact on the park environment and as part of the event application process the Royal Borough aims to ensure that these impacts are minimised and that measures are put in place at event organisers cost for repairs and reinstatement.



A learning resource for local communities

Parks and open spaces are a free and valuable education resource for all sections of the community and offer rewarding and stimulating venues to study a range of subjects such as biodiversity, horticulture, local history, geology, food growing and a range of sports.

Learning Through Landscapes has estimated that 50% of the National Curriculum can be taught outside in the open air. There are several successful forest schools already operating within the Royal Borough's parks and open spaces.

The Royal Borough provides an Animal Park at Maryon Wilson Park where the public and school groups get the opportunity via guided tours to get close to and learn about animals such as sheep, deer, goats and a range of smaller animals.



Deer at Maryon Wilson Animal Park

The Royal Borough will continue to support opportunities for learning by working in partnership with local schools and other external agencies such as Hadlow College and the University of Greenwich. Opportunities for closer partnership working will be explored.

Consultation with local communities

Consultation has taken place with local residents to understand attitudes to existing parks and open space provision and aspirations of future use and needs of parks and open spaces users. The Royal Borough will continue to work constructively with Friends Groups to develop individual management plans for their park that supports the aims of the parks and open spaces strategy. There are many park users that prefer not to be part of a Friends Group but whose views are still valued. The Royal Borough will consult Friends Groups if significant changes or developments are proposed within a park or open space.

Further work will be undertaken to seek the views of residents from minority communities and residents with disabilities.

Public Consultation Findings

Parks Friends Strategy Focus Group Responses:

- Friends Groups to be communicated with and consulted more about the priorities and action plans for their park;
- Proper liaison with parks “Friends Groups” and a single point of contact;
- Support and empower Friends Groups;
- Council website with links for Friends Groups to share information;
- Engage more with young people and encourage schools to use and help look after parks;
- Promote Friends Groups within the local community to increase awareness and reach new members;
- Support Friends Groups to put on events for the local community;
- Effort should be made to engage with all sections of the community; and
- Utilise the good local knowledge that Friends Groups have.

Children and Young People Consultation Responses:

- Encourage participation and engagement with schools, and local organisations, including:
 - NHS trusts (health objectives), collaboration with organisations and event planners with schools and local groups.
 - School councils; creating a youth advisory board for those interested in continuing to engage with the Children’s Services team.
- Encourage local sense of place, particularly including:
 - ‘Adopt a park’ schemes.
 - Youth hubs.
- Successful communication with the local community, particularly through:
 - Enhanced use of social media.
 - Ensuring young people are always involved in future consultations.
 - Continue to consult regularly with existing youth groups and forums in the borough

on what events they would like and involve them in shaping and developing the Royal Borough's annual plan.

- Young people suggested developing an app for the parks and open spaces in the Borough that would uncover walking trails; educate them on the history of the area, learn about the animals and plants and collect rewards the more they explore their surroundings.
- Many young people said that their studies were a factor in not visiting parks but appreciated the benefit it could have as an alternative to studying at home or in the library. Learning pods were suggested; facilities that would enable young people to access Wi-Fi and allow them to study in parks.

Theme 2: Community engagement - aims and strategic objectives

Aim: To ensure we actively engage and work in partnership with local residents to provide good quality parks that meet the need of the local community.

Strategic objectives:

Objective CE1: Support participation and involvement in parks and open spaces through consultation, participation in active management of spaces, volunteering, education and outreach activities.

Objective CE2: Actively develop new, and support and engage with existing, Park Friends and other volunteer groups, and develop strong partnerships to support the management and maintenance of parks and open spaces.

Objective CE3: Support the development of learning opportunities in parks for local people.

Objective CE4: Encourage a programme of community events and activities for the borough's open spaces to increase the enjoyment of these assets and support community cohesion.

Objective CE5: Encourage community and appropriate commercial events, while minimising impacts on the environment and maximising opportunities for income generation.

Objective CE6: Consult Park Friends Group when proposing significant changes or developments in parks.

Objective CE7: Engage and actively develop connections with youth organisations and schools to encourage children and young people to use parks more.

Theme 3: Nature and biodiversity

Access to Nature

The Borough is currently very well served by natural greenspace and sites of nature conservation and there is therefore no specific need to increase this type of provision over the next 10 years. All residents should have access to a Site of Metropolitan Importance or Site of Borough Importance (Grade I or II) within a distance of 1km from their home.

Access to the natural environment provides physical, educational and health benefits for the people that utilise it. This is particularly relevant for people living in an urban environment such as the suburbs of London.

Table 3 summarises the provision of natural or semi-natural green spaces in the Royal Borough.

Table 3: Provision of natural or semi-natural green space in the Royal Borough

Natural or semi-natural green space in the Royal Borough

- There are 379 hectares of natural green space within the Royal Borough. Natural green spaces are the second most common type of open space that we have in the Royal Borough.
- Greenwich is well supplied with Sites of Importance of Nature Conservation (1157ha) with 4.2 hectares per 1,000 population, which is well above the minimum standard of 1 hectares per 1,000 population (derived from Natural England's standard for Local Nature Reserves).
- The recent review of SINC's as part of the Green Infrastructure Study identified additional sites that may warrant designation as SINC's, which, if achieved will strengthen the Royal Borough's ecological networks. A series of recommendations from the study highlighted further opportunities to improve biodiversity in the Royal Borough.

The Royal Borough will strive to ensure that all our residents have adequate access to the benefit and enjoyment of natural green space. We will adopt sustainable management policies to protect and conserve our natural and semi-natural green spaces, and the animal, plants and life that they support. We aim to balance visitor access with ensuring there is no loss of important habitat.

The Green Chain is home to a network of over 50 miles of sign-posted footpaths, through green spaces in Greenwich, Lewisham, Bexley, Bromley and Southwark. The Green Chain provides a great way for residents and visitors to gain access to the natural environment and to be active.

We will endeavour to provide parks and open spaces as a natural resource that can be used to educate and engage with local schools, youth groups and volunteer groups. This will provide opportunities to encourage these groups to experience and enjoy the natural environment and help protect it for future generations.



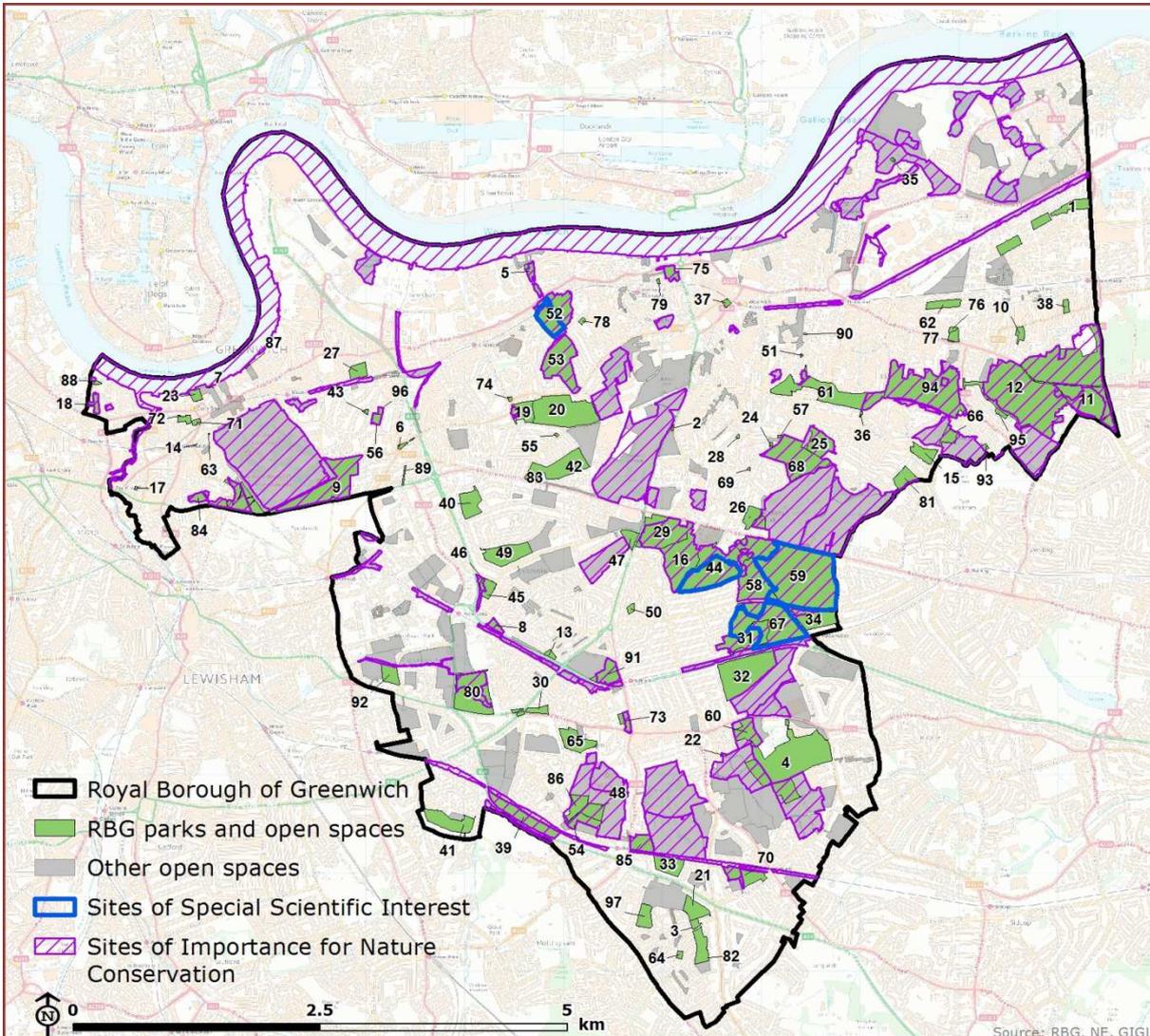
Environmental designations and considerations

The Royal Borough supports two Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (Gilbert's Pit and Oxleas Woodlands), and 55 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), 30 of the SINC's are located in Royal Borough parks and open spaces. The Royal Borough also supports three Local Nature Reserves, a Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site and two Locally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites.

The SINCs are designated for their importance for wildlife. The designation is also referred to as a 'non-statutory wildlife site' or 'local site'. The SSSI's and SINC' are protected through planning policy at both a London, Regional and National level and are shown in **Figure 2** overleaf.

The open spaces which form the green chain are all designated as Metropolitan Open Land. These areas have the same level of protection as the Metropolitan Green Belt. Designation is intended to protect areas of landscape, recreation, nature conservation and scientific interest which are strategically important.

Figure 2: Environmental designations in the Royal Borough of Greenwich



- | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| 1: Abbey Wood Park | 25: Dothill | 49: Long Lane Playing Field (Dursley Road) | 73: St John the Baptist Churchyard |
| 2: Academy Road Open Space | 26: Eaglesfield Park | 50: Lovelace Green | 74: St Luke's Churchyard |
| 3: Altash Gardens | 27: East Greenwich Pleasaunce | 51: Manthorpe Road Open Space | 75: St Mary's Gardens & Churchyard |
| 4: Avery Hill Park | 28: Eglinton Hill Bird Sanctuary | 52: Maryon Park | 76: St Nicholas Churchyard |
| 5: Barrier Park | 29: Eltham Common | 53: Maryon Wilson Park | 77: St Nicholas Gardens |
| 6: Batley Park | 30: Eltham Green | 54: Middle Park Field | 78: St Thomas Churchyard |
| 7: Bellot Memorial | 31: Eltham Park North & Shepherdleas Meadow | 55: Montcalm Road Open Space | 79: Sunbury Street Playground |
| 8: Birdbrook Road Nature Reserve | 32: Eltham Park South | 56: Mycenae Gardens | 80: Sutcliffe Park |
| 9: Blackheath | 33: Fairy Hill Park | 57: Nithdale Road Open Space | 81: Swingate Lane Playing Fields |
| 10: Bostall Gardens | 34: Falconwood Field | 58: Oxleas Meadow | 82: The Course |
| 11: Bostall Heath | 35: Gallions Reach Playground | 59: Oxleas Woods | 83: The Old Blue Cross Pet Cemetery |
| 12: Bostall Woods | 36: Garland Road Playground | 60: Pippenhall Meadow | 84: The Point (Blackheath) |
| 13: Briset Park | 37: General Gordon Square | 61: Plumstead Common | 85: The Tarn |
| 14: Burney Street Open Space | 38: Greening Street Open Space | 62: Plumstead Gardens | 86: The Vista Field |
| 15: Camdale Road Playing Field | 39: Harmony Wood | 63: Poet's Corner | 87: Trinity Hospital Open Space |
| 16: Castle Woods | 40: Hervey Road Playing Field | 64: Queens Gardens | 88: Twinkle Park |
| 17: Catherine Grove Open Space | 41: Horn Park | 65: Queenscroft Park | 89: Vicarage Avenue Open Space |
| 18: Charlotte Turner Gardens | 42: Hornfair Park | 66: Rockliffe Gardens | 90: Villas Road Playground |
| 19: Charlton House Grounds | 43: Ingleside Gardens (Hardy Road) | 67: Shepherdleas Woods | 91: Well Hall Pleasaunce |
| 20: Charlton Park | 44: Jack Woods | 68: Shrewsbury Park | 92: Wiegall Road Sports Ground |
| 21: Coldharbour Unleased Open Space | 45: Kidbrooke Green | 69: Shrewsbury Tumulus | 93: William Barefoot Gardens |
| 22: Conduit Head | 46: Kidbrooke Nature Reserve | 70: Southwood Road Park | 94: Winn's Common (incl Great Bartlett's) |
| 23: Cutty Sark Gardens | 47: King George's Field | 71: St Alfeges Churchyard | 95: Woodbrook Road Field |
| 24: Dallin Road Open Space | 48: King John's Field | 72: St Alfeges Park | 96: Woodland Dell |
| | | | 97: Wynford Way Playing Field |



The All London Green Grid (ALGG) provides guidance on the functions and benefits that well-managed open space can deliver, and defines the ‘GGA6 South East London Green Chain Plus Partnership Area’. Where appropriate, the GI network within Royal Greenwich should join up with the proposed strategic links highlighted in the ALGG, including the Greenwich to Eltham Link, and the Kidbrook Link. The London Plan also supports development proposals that strengthen links between public spaces and parks (Policy 7.5).

The Royal Greenwich 2014 Local Plan outlines what are considered appropriate uses of Metropolitan Open Land.

Biodiversity

Biodiversity (biological diversity) is the variety of all life on earth. It refers to plants, animals and the habitats in which they live. Protecting and enhancing biodiversity is important both for the intrinsic value of the flora and fauna themselves and for humankind. Globally human activities continue to deplete biodiversity at an ever-increasing rate.

Within the Greenwich context, parks and open spaces contribute significantly to supporting biodiversity in the Royal Borough and this strategy aims to support the main aim of the Royal Borough’s Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP):

“To secure the conservation, enhancement and public appreciation of the biodiversity in the Borough”

The role of local BAPs is to utilise national and regional targets and to protect and enhance locally important species and habitats present within the Royal Borough’s parks and open spaces (see boxes opposite). It states that: “Management of every SINC and other key sites should be subject to a management plan with ecological objectives” and that this should be achieved through negotiations with landowners and managers.

This Strategy aims to protect and enhance biodiversity within parks and open spaces in the Royal Borough and will ensure that future management arrangements support this aim.

Green Infrastructure

Achieving wildlife conservation and improving biodiversity in parks and open spaces, on housing estates and alongside roads is entirely possible with appropriate management. Connectivity is as crucial for wildlife as it is for people.

Priority habitats

- Acid grassland and heathland
- Gardens
- Parks and green spaces
- Wasteland
- Waters' edge, rivers, ponds and wetland
- Woodland

Priority species

- Bat
- Black poplar
- Black redstart
- Hedgehog
- Stag beetle
- Water vole

Forming 'wildlife networks' that allows wildlife both to move and adapt can be achieved by creating green corridors and the Green Chain Walk provides an excellent example of such a network.

High maintenance, overly manicured green spaces are becoming a thing of the past. Balancing the needs of wildlife, people and the environment requires a different approach. However it is possible to balance these needs in order to create ecosystems where wildlife can flourish, ensuring biodiversity and conserving the habitats of our species.



Oxleas Woods

Restricted Areas for Nature

In addition to the three designated Local Nature Reserves at Plumstead Common, Sutcliffe Park and Kidbrooke Green Park a number of other areas within parks and open spaces are managed to allow nature and biodiversity to thrive. Public access to these areas is subsequently restricted to avoid disturbance to sensitive habitats and species. These sites are located at Birdbrook Road, Eglington Hill and an area within The Tarn.

Conservation grass and wildflower meadows

In 1990 a number of Conservation Grass Areas were designated in parks, and follow an annual mowing regime where the grass is only cut once a year to allow seeds to be preserved. This allows anthills to establish and provide rough grass habitat, which is valuable for both invertebrates and small mammals.

Wildflower meadows have been in decline for decades but are an important habitat for insects, birds and small animals. They provide an important food source for bees and other pollinators and help boost pollination of plants in the wider local environment.

Feedback from the public consultation supports an increase in areas for wildflowers and work will be undertaken to maintain current provision of conservation grass areas and to identify opportunities to create new wildflowers areas in parks and open spaces.

Tree management

Trees are vital to the health and wellbeing of communities located within densely populated urban areas. Trees help dissipate some of the effects relating to rising temperatures, absorb CO₂, attenuate rain water and provide shade. Their role will become more important as the anticipated changes to our climate take hold.



Charlton Park in the Autumn

The Royal Borough is committed to conserving its population of trees and has an annual tree planting programme. Where appropriate, native trees are planted although consideration is also given to ensuring species chosen are drought resistance and pollution tolerant.

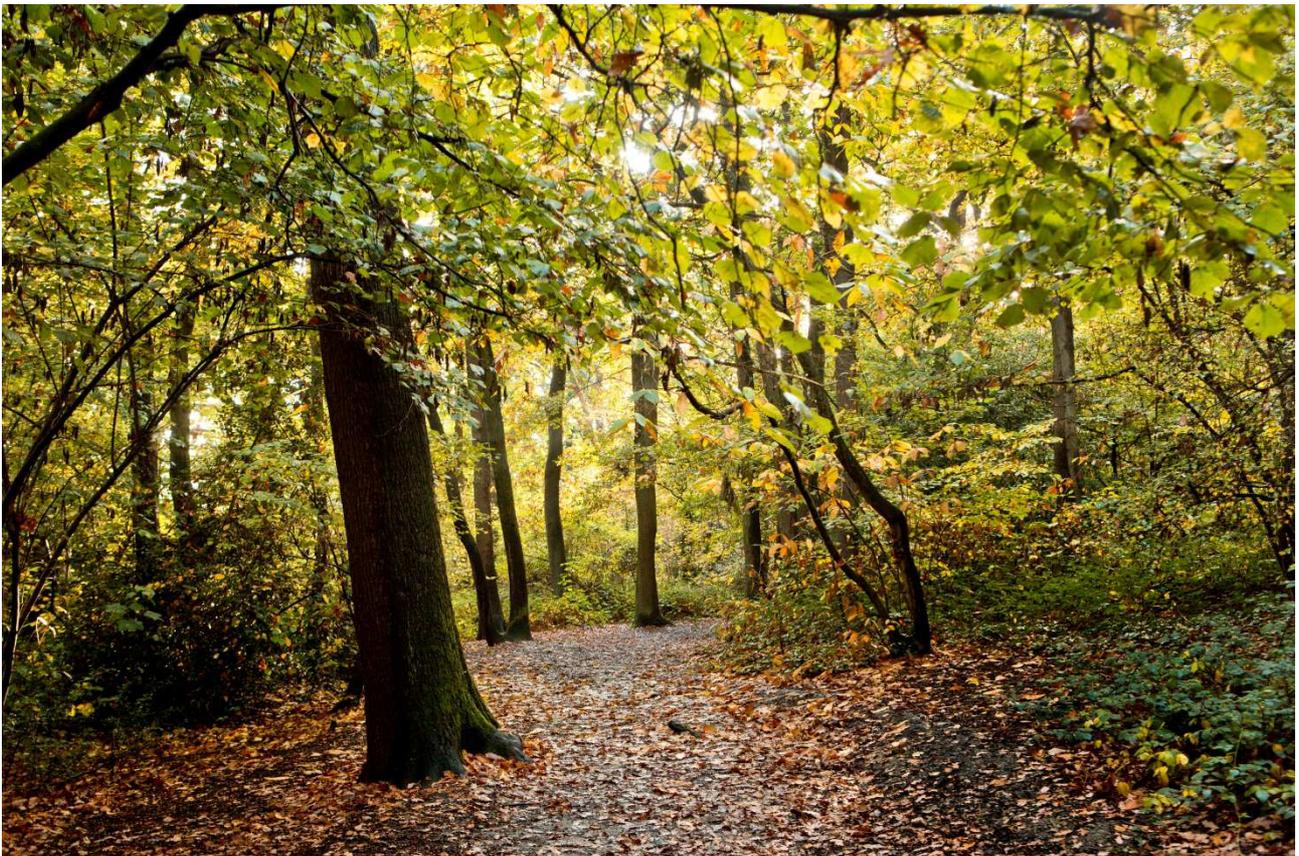
Standing and laying dead wood is left in appropriate park and woodland locations to provide habitat for invertebrates.

Woodlands

Woodland is an important habitat for biodiversity and the Royal Borough contains significant tracts for deciduous woodland, some of which are designated as ancient woodland.

The Shooters Hill woodland complex is one of the largest areas of ancient woodland in south London. The complex includes Oxleas Woods, Jackwoods and Sheperdleas Woods which covers an area of 72 ha and is designated as a SSSI for the species it supports including Wild Service Tree.

The Royal Borough works with Natural England and Friends Groups to manage these habitats to protect their nature conservation values with non-native species being removed and eradicated.



Oxleas Woods

Lakes and Rivers

The Royal Borough contains a diverse range of water-bodies. These comprise of rivers, streams, ponds, marsh and wetland and water's edge habitats that are important for many species. Riverine associated habitats are important for biodiversity and connectivity; in addition wetland areas often act to cleanse and improve water quality and alleviate flooding.

The Thames and tidal tributaries is a designated SINC of metropolitan importance. Sutcliffe Park is an exemplary site in Royal Greenwich which performs these natural services, and is also designated as a Local Nature Reserve.

The Royal Borough manages these water-bodies to promote their nature conservation values thus supporting the aims for the BAP. However there is a significant challenge at The Tarn with a build up of silt in the lake and work will need to be undertaken to address this issue.



Sutcliffe Park Nature Reserve

Acid grassland and heathland

Priority habitats in the Royal Borough include acid grassland and heathland. Acid grassland and heathland are characteristic of soils in some parts of Royal Greenwich, and form part of its historical heritage. These habitats are often in mosaic form, fine examples can found at Winn's Common and Vanburgh Pits on Blackheath, and parts of the heathland at Bostall Heath.

Working with local conservation groups

Management of the Royal Borough's nature and biodiversity network is delivered in coordination with Park Friends Group and local conservation groups such as The Greenwich Wildlife Advisory Group and Thames 21.

Public Consultation Findings

Future Management of Parks and Open Spaces Online Survey Responses:

- Wildflower meadows and woodland areas were noted as being the most popular choices in terms of increasing biodiversity in parks.

Parks Friends Strategy Focus Group Responses:

- Conservation and protection of habitats and species is a priority;
- Education about nature and biodiversity via interpretation boards on site, information on the website and provide walks and talks for public and groups on nature;
- Have a dedicated Biodiversity Officer to ensure the ecological value of parks is maintained;
- Maintain conservation areas and create more areas in parks, highways and estates for biodiversity;
- Encourage native planting in new developments;
- Train / educate staff about appropriate mowing regimes for wild flower meadows;
- Work more closely with conservation groups;
- Proper planning of tree planting regarding location and species;
- Needs to be a balance between providing areas for wildlife and use of the parks; and
- Provide access to maps and information about tree species and tree numbers in the park.

Children and Young People Consultation Responses:

- The natural environment should be used to develop wildlife-friendly activities such as growing a natural maze.
- Sessions on how to plant and take care of plants should be developed which have the added benefit of making the surrounding area more attractive.

Theme 3: Nature and biodiversity - aims and strategic objectives

Aim: To ensure that areas and habitats are provided for wildlife and that they are protected from inappropriate development.

Strategic objectives:

Objective NB1: Conserve and strengthen the network of high quality natural and semi-natural green spaces in the borough, balancing the need for protecting valuable wildlife habitats with providing residents with access to nature.

Objective NB2: Seek opportunities for sites supporting nature conservation features to become a focus for supporting community involvement.

Objective NB3: Ensure management and maintenance regimes are appropriate to conserve and establish favourable conditions for biodiversity whilst ensuring the spaces feel welcoming and provide visitors with a sense of security.

Objective NB4: Achieve favourable conservation status for the borough's Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation.

Objective NB5: Consider new opportunities for improving the nature conservation value of open spaces whilst carefully balancing the need for space to support sport and formal recreational activities.

Objective NB6: Ensure new spaces delivered as part of proposed development in the borough consider suitable provision of nature conservation features.

Theme 4: Environmental management

Managing environmental impact

The Royal Borough's Parks, Estates and Open Spaces Department will maintain an Environmental Management System certified against the internationally respected ISO 14001 Environmental Standard. This system ensures that the Department's operational procedures minimise the use of resources and potential negative effects on the environment as well as promoting activities that enhance the environment.

The Royal Borough has a Sustainable Procurement Policy under which decisions about procurement are made. The environmental impacts of changes to landscaping or buildings are considered. Further aspirations are detailed within individual site management plans. The Royal Borough also promotes Environmental Awareness through training and instruction to staff and contractors.

People travelling to parks should be encouraged to use public transport or to walk and cycle. It is important therefore that routes from transport hubs to parks are signed. It is also important that pleasant green commuting routes are provided through parks. Seating should also be provided for walkers and parking for cyclists.

Energy and waste minimisation

Royal Greenwich aims to be energy saving through efficient features installed within buildings, in new vehicles and machinery. Consideration is given to using re-chargeable grounds maintenance machinery where practical. Practices for recycling all green waste generated in Parks are also in operation.

Under its Environmental Policy, The Royal Borough of Greenwich strives to improve air quality, prevent the release of pollution, and minimise the production of noise and waste.

Flood management and sustainable water management

The Royal Borough utilises Parks and Open Spaces as part of the Royal Borough's flood defences. Sutcliffe Park operates as part of the flood alleviation scheme providing flood storage when required. The Royal Borough works closely with the Environment Agency to prevent localised flooding. Further opportunities to hold water at suitable park locations to prevent flooding will be considered in the future.

The Royal Borough will look at ways to improve water efficiency at parks sites and consideration will be given to utilising rain water at sites. A water borehole has recently been installed at Well Hall Pleasaunce as a sustainable alternative to mains water for the moat and the bowling green.

Chemical use

Royal Greenwich will control the use of pesticides and chemicals and use targeted controlled droplet application and integrated pest management where appropriate. An annual treatment programme of invasive weeds, such as Japanese Knotweed and Giant Hogweed is carried out in Parks and Open Spaces. Targeted stem injection applications are made in accordance with good practice guidelines, to comply with the legal duty for the control of invasive weeds.

Peat use

The Government is seeking to protect and enrich peat reserves, recognising their value to biodiversity and global carbon storage. There is a move to reduce peat use in horticulture to zero by 2030, by using sustainable peat free alternatives. The Royal Borough already minimises the use of peat of peat based products in relation to planting, mulching or as a soil improver.

Climate change adaption

It is essential to recognise the important role that the natural environment plays in reducing the impact of climate change and improving the sustainability of park management. It is also important to consider the impacts of climate change on biodiversity and review policies and actions to help wildlife to adapt. Royal Greenwich will help to respond locally to the changing climate and aim to mitigate through resilient new planting, and operations such as mulching. The effects of climate change must be recognised in the way we manage our parks and open spaces in the future.



Provide shaded walkways through parks and open spaces

Theme 4: Environmental management – aims and strategic objectives

Aim: To maximise resource efficiency by increasing recycling opportunities, establish a better use of essential energy sources and minimise the use of pesticides and chemicals.

Strategic objectives:

Objective EM1: Promote open spaces as key components in mitigating the effects of climate change by providing water storage, shade and incorporating drought tolerant planting.

Objective EM2: Promote sustainable transport links to parks and open spaces including sufficient directional signage to/ from transport hubs and provision of cycle parking.

Objective EM3: Improve quality of green corridors (e.g. public rights of way) to support green commuting, recreation and biodiversity.

Objective EM4: Control the use of pesticides in the management of the borough's parks and gardens, minimise waste and the use of peat.

Objective EM5: Promote sustainability and conservation and minimise activities that have a negative effect on the environment.

Theme 5: Recreation, health and wellbeing

Promoting parks to support healthier lifestyles

Parks and open spaces make an important contribution to public health and wellbeing by offering residents active and passive recreation opportunities that support healthier lifestyles. The Royal Borough's parks and open spaces, supports delivery of the priorities of the Council's Local Plan and Health and Wellbeing Strategy in its ambition to encourage physical activity in an effort to prevent obesity and improve mental health.

Parks and open spaces are freely accessible, providing opportunities for people of all ages and income levels to be physically active, socialise and achieve healthy lifestyles. They are also used as venues by local sports clubs and to support public health campaigns.

It is important that strong links are made with Public Health teams so that parks and open spaces are fully utilised to support campaigns to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents.



Opportunities for physical recreation

The Royal Borough promotes active, healthy living and aims to provide a good network of pathways in parks that provide green and pleasant commuting routes and access to park

amenities. Well maintained, safe paths that are easily accessible for walkers, joggers and cyclists encourage people to walk and cycle for recreational enjoyment and commuting.

Our park pathways are part of a sign posted network of routes such as The Green Chain, Capital Ring and the London Cycle Network that link green spaces. The Green Chain Walk is an important environmental, recreational and educational resource of regional significance that should be promoted and enhanced for the benefit of those who live in and visit Royal Greenwich.

The Green Chain Walk has been identified by The London Plan as one of six strategic walking routes in London, and also forms part of the Capital Ring which is a 72 mile orbital path around London.

The Council encourages the use of parks for general wellbeing and works with other agencies in providing healthy guided walks. Greenwich Get Walking is part of the Greenwich Get Active Programme and offers weekly led walks starting from various points around the Borough. These walks encompass local green spaces including the Green Chain, the Thames Path and areas of Greenwich's rich heritage. Guided walks have been very popular as they combine exercise and a social dimension that enables people to meet up and can help prevent social isolation. A range of walking route maps are provided for those that want to walk independently.

The Royal Borough is committed to improving the health of residents and to help combat the high levels of obesity in parts of the community. The aim is to make exercise and fitness accessible to people who might not want to set foot in a gym. Outdoor exercise equipment is available to use free of charge at 14 of our parks across the Borough. When considering options for increasing active recreation we will pay close attention to supporting the objectives of the Playing Pitch Strategy and Sport Facilities Strategy.

Places for relaxation and good emotional wellbeing

There are substantial health benefits associated to access to and use of parks and open spaces, including better physical and mental health and increased social interaction. A good quality park or open space has a positive effect on mental health and emotional wellbeing and is effective at soothing the pressures of everyday urban living.

Pleasant green surroundings are effective at reducing stress and anxiety. Good access to local green spaces can act as a focal point for fostering community interaction and reducing social isolation particularly for older and disabled people.

With a good proportion of residents not having a garden of their own, it is important that provision is made for them to be able to relax and enjoy the outdoor environment. There is a need to balance areas for active recreation in parks and open spaces such as sports pitches with passive recreation such as picnic areas and quiet areas.

In addition to promoting and enhancing parks as a recreational resource and visual amenity it is important to ensure areas in parks are identified and maintained for peace and relaxation. As such, potential conflicts between active and passive recreation will be carefully assessed before implementing any change of use for areas.

Provision for participation in sports

Evidence from Sports England shows that increasing participation in sports and physical activity can help reduce health inequalities, spur economic growth and energise community engagement. The Royal Borough's 2012 Olympic Legacy programme funded major improvements in the provision of outdoor sports facilities in parks and has given people opportunities for healthier lifestyles through participation in sports.



Junior Tennis Courts at Hornfair Park

The Royal Borough offers a diverse range of outdoor sports facilities and works closely with external partners such as Greenwich Leisure Limited, to encourage people of all ages to exercise and enjoy sports. The variety of sports that can be enjoyed in parks include football, rugby, tennis, cricket, table tennis, basketball, netball and outdoor bowls, providing opportunities for physical activity and healthier lifestyles. Parks also provide a number of hard surfaced multi-use games courts and amenity and natural areas that encourage casual sports use and physical activity.

Five sports grounds within The Borough are leased out to local clubs that work in partnership with The Royal Borough to provide sports and Greenwich Leisure Limited manage a Lido and fitness centre within Hornfair Park.

Latent demand for playing pitch sports in Royal Greenwich is high relative to London and England. Projections for sport participation (based on increased population) suggest there is likely to be increased demand for the current sports facilities.

Management of the playing surfaces of pitches will be carefully considered to ensure that they can be maintained to a suitable standard and are able to meet the demands made upon them. Additionally, it will be necessary to ensure the capital costs for new facilities are matched by increased demand and income.

Table 4 provides a summary of outdoor sport pitches in the Royal Borough.

Table 4: Outdoor sport provision in the Royal Borough

Outdoor sport pitches in the Royal Borough

- 62 of our open spaces have outdoor sports provision as their primary typology with further sports provision found in a range of other types of sites, particularly parks and gardens.
- The Greenwich Playing Pitch Strategy (2015-28) revealed that the overall quality of sports facilities in Royal Greenwich is mixed and there are issues with security across the range of sites. The greatest issue identified in the strategy is the imbalance of geographic provision of accessible sites and the uneven provision across the different wards.
- The majority of marked out grass playing pitches are located in the central and southern areas (Eltham & Kidbrooke). There are far fewer marked out grass playing pitches in the more densely populated areas in the north and west of the Borough. Greenwich Peninsula and Greenwich Riverside in particular have no grass pitches for football or rugby and just one for cricket.
- The Borough is well provided for in terms of football and senior rugby pitches.
- The Strategy identifies supply issues for:
 - Junior football and rugby pitches – this is a particular issue for football, where teams aged 11-18 comprise over 46% of teams in Royal Greenwich.
 - Provision of artificial grass pitches for hockey.
 - Floodlit artificial grass pitches - Sport England's facilities planning model highlights the need for at least two full size AGPs to meet demand.
 - Cricket and junior rugby pitches - an additional 11 junior cricket, 7 senior cricket and 9 junior rugby pitches are required up to 2027.

Outdoor play

Children benefit physically and developmentally from outdoor play and it helps them build social, emotional and life skills. Parks and open spaces provide opportunities for children to develop healthily, to be physically fit and to develop awareness of risk and provides those children without gardens, a safe local play space. The parks landscape also provides numerous opportunities for natural play. **Table 5** below provides a summary of the provision of outdoor play space in the Royal Borough.



Table 5: Outdoor play space provision in the Royal Borough

Play facilities in the Royal Borough

- During the Green Infrastructure audit, 44 sites were found to have play provision. The Royal Borough manages 26 dedicated play facilities.
- In addition to the dedicated provision, there are numerous open spaces that have informal areas suitable for use for children's play.
- When compared to the GLA's benchmark figure of 10sqm per child, Greenwich is well provided for in terms of children's play space (when informal play areas are included). However, there is a need to improve provision and accessibility for some age categories.

Traditional play equipment normally caters for younger children and there are limited activities available for older children. With careful planning, design and management, our parks can safely accommodate play for a wide range of ages and interests.

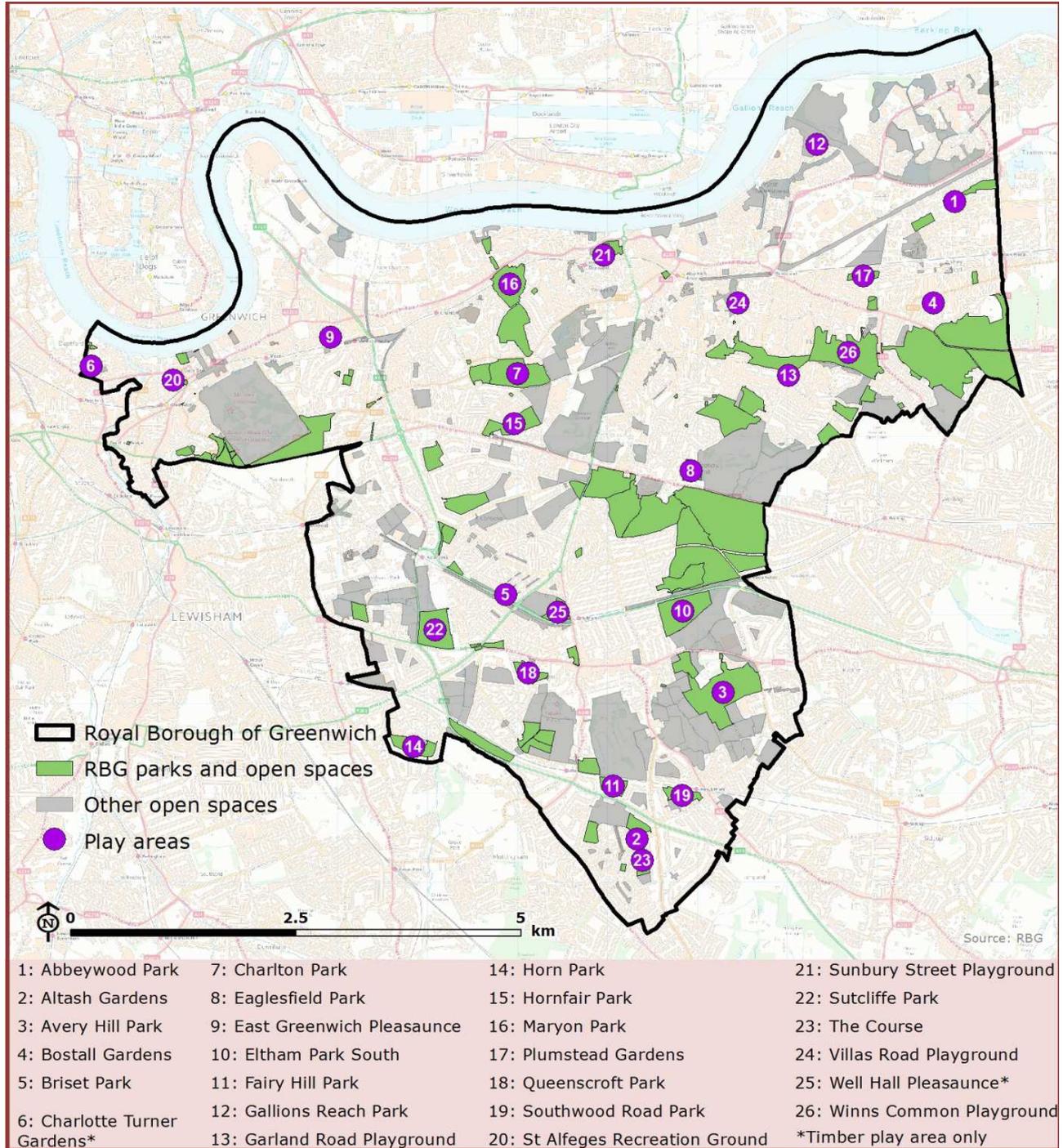
The Royal Borough aims to provide exciting, stimulating and challenging play facilities in a safe and inclusive environment. We will ensure that our play spaces offer safe inclusive access for all children and ensure that there are no barriers to participation so that no child feels excluded regardless of their ability. The locations of play spaces within the Royal Borough can be seen in **Figure 3** opposite.



Two children's paddling pools are provided within The Borough, one at Hornfair Park and the other at Winn's Common. These paddling pools are open during July and August for local families to use and enjoy. Other facilities include a skate park located at Horn Park. Another skate park is planned for Charlton Park in 2017.

Greenwich Leisure Limited manages Adventure Play Centres at Plumstead Common and The Course and also a BMX track at Hornfair Park. The Royal Borough will consider how to improve areas for teenagers to actively use our parks, in addition to providing play equipment for younger children.

Figure 3: Outdoor play space in the Royal Borough



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CB:DM EB:Manson D LUC Fig3_7044-01_r2_play_gyms 16/03/2017

The recommended standard for children's play provision in Greenwich's Open Space Strategy and the Green Infrastructure Study proposed play standard in line with the Mayor of London's Supplementary Planning Guidance *Shaping Neighbourhoods: Play and Informal Recreation* is a minimum of 10m² of dedicated play space per child.

The guidance states that every child should be within:

- 800m of a neighbourhood playable space
- 800m of a youth space
- 400m of local playable space
- 100m of a doorstep playable space

New development will be required to include children's playspace on-site.

Community food growing

Community food growing areas can be vibrant community spaces that offer a good physical workout whilst growing and providing healthy, fresh and affordable food. They also offer opportunities to strengthen social cohesion, alleviate food poverty, share cultural skills and reclaim public space from anti-social behaviour. Furthermore, food growing areas can offer distinct therapeutic benefits for participants and have been used effectively to help marginalised groups and individuals overcome mental health problems.



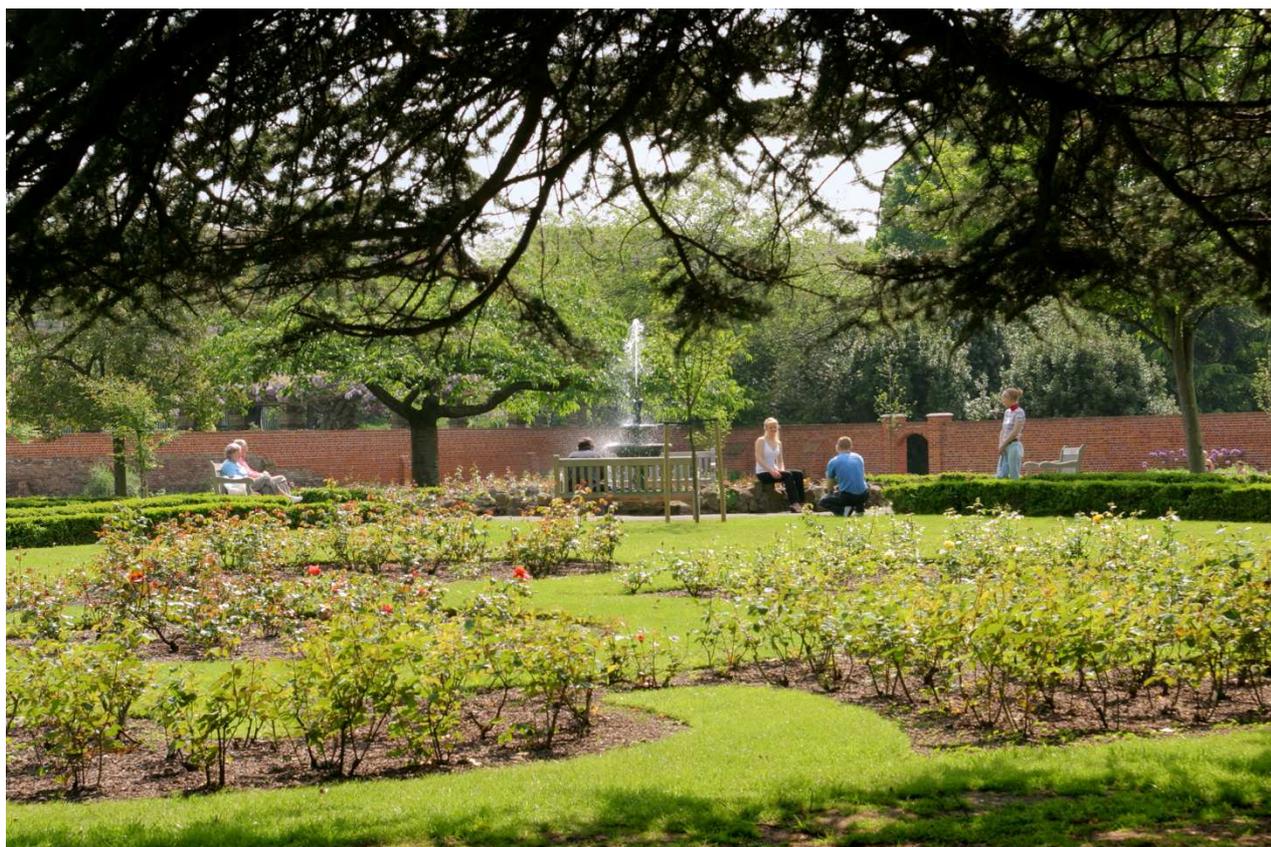
Community food growing

The Royal Borough has two community food growing areas on parks land, one in Bostall Gardens and the other in Maryon Park. In addition a small Community Orchard has also been planted at East Greenwich Pleasaunce.

The Royal Borough aims to support and encourage the development of community gardens in appropriate locations. Community food growing is recognised as an important part of being a sustainable borough and a way of tackling obesity and mental health issues. As such opportunities for making additional areas of parks land available for community food growing will be explored.

Places to meet and socialise

Local parks and open spaces are arguably the most important green space for most of us. Well managed and good quality local parks are at the heart of the community. Local events can act as a unique focal point for fostering community interaction and reducing social isolation.



The Royal Borough supports events in parks throughout the year giving local people the opportunity to meet and socialise with members of their local community and for family and friends to enjoy. Opportunities for meeting and socialising with others are available through groups such as the Friends of Parks and Community Food Growing schemes. Parks Friends Groups organise work days that benefit the local parks and give enjoyment, satisfaction and exercise to its volunteers.

Public Consultation Findings

Future Management of Parks and Open Spaces Online Survey Responses:

- 18% of respondents gave 'use of playgrounds' as their main reason for visiting a park or open space.
- Of those who expressed an opinion about the quantity of play provision for 0-5 year olds, the majority 79% are fairly satisfied or very satisfied. 5% are very dissatisfied with provision for this age group.
- Of those who expressed an opinion about the quantity of play provision for 5-10 year olds, the majority (76%) are fairly satisfied or are very satisfied. 17% are very dissatisfied with provision for this age group.
- Of those who expressed an opinion about the quantity of play provision for 11+ year olds, only 50% are very satisfied or fairly satisfied. 35% are fairly dissatisfied and a further 15% are very dissatisfied with provision for this age group.
- In terms of quality of play provision, of those who expressed an opinion, 77% are fairly satisfied or very satisfied. 6% are very dissatisfied and 17% fairly dissatisfied.

Parks Friends Strategy Focus Group Responses:

- Income could be generated by leasing out unused buildings in parks to local businesses.
- Unused building in parks could be converted into cafes that will attract more visitors to the park making parks feel safer and reducing vandalism.
- Provide more work experience opportunities and apprenticeships in parks including back to work.
- Explore using spaces in parks for pitches for food / drink / ice-cream vendors as it provides a service and generates income.
- Encourage sponsorship within parks from local businesses for example planting up of flower beds.
- Secure more section 106 and other external funding to make improvements to parks.
- More local interest from elected members of council. Consider a Ward member walkabout in parks.
- Jobs could be provided locally by leasing out unused buildings in parks to local businesses.

Children and Young People Consultation Responses:

- Almost 60% of respondents thought that their play and sports facilities were 'excellent' and 'good' however, barring existing facilities, young people thought there was a lack of activities on offer.
- Young people felt there were not enough age appropriate facilities. Play facilities should reflect the needs of different age groups of young people especially for the age groups above 12+.
- A large number of young people (over 30% accumulatively) indicated that: playing sports, exercise and wanting to be more fit were motivation to visit parks and open spaces.
- 50% of young people commented that existing facilities needed improving; from playground equipment to missing nets in goals to the cleanliness of their local pond. It was highlighted the maintenance of sports facilities should be improved. Stating if the facilities are of better quality, young people may well respect 'their' areas better.
- It was stated equipment like balls, skates, bikes, bats, skipping ropes to name a few, should be made available for people to hire to encourage sports and play. In addition could include better quality facilities for fun and exercise – including more skate parks, free AstroTurf football pitches, basketball facilities and AstroTurf baby play areas;
- In addition it was highlighted parks and open spaces could collaborate with health and wellbeing organisations e.g. NHS Trusts, to encourage children and young people and their families to develop good habits of physical activity.
- Young people suggested seasonal events as well as physical activity events that coincide with major sporting events.
- Using the natural environment of parks to build a sensory garden to stimulate the senses of visitors – in particular for young children and those with special needs.

Theme 5: Recreation, health and wellbeing – aims and strategic objectives

Aim: To ensure that parks provide spaces for active recreation and quiet reflection and contribute to the health and well-being of the local community

Strategic objectives:

Objective RHW1: Provide good quality, accessible outdoor sports pitches and facilities for people to be physically active and support public health initiatives to reduce obesity.

Objective RHW2: Work in partnership with Public Health teams on initiatives to improve the health and wellbeing of residents, supporting activities to reduce social isolation and support mental wellbeing.

Objective RHW3: Support clubs and individuals by providing multifunctional facilities to encourage participation in outdoor sport.

Objective RHW4: Maintain and promote strategic walking/cycle routes.

Objective RHW5: Provide safe and accessible children and young people play areas that offer diverse and challenging spaces.

Objective RHW6: Provide opportunities for community food growing and access to healthy food.

Theme 6: Regeneration and local economy

Development and partnerships with local business

The Royal Borough of Greenwich works in partnership with a host of businesses and national developers on the regeneration of local neighbourhoods including the provision of new green spaces in the borough.

Parks and open spaces in developments can play an important role in improving local air quality, providing flood alleviation opportunities, carbon capture, reducing urban heat island effect, enhancing, improving biodiversity and providing diversionary activities to reduce anti-social behaviour.



Sutcliffe Park looking towards Kidbrooke Village

Parks play a vital role in boosting community cohesion through activities and events and can become important focal points within new developments for existing and new communities. The

Royal Borough's Local Plan presents a series of regeneration projects that include Kidbrooke Village, Charlton Riverside and Woolwich Town Centre where new parks will be combined with the physical regeneration.

In line with The Local Plan all Metropolitan Open Land will be maintained and its open character protected from inappropriate development and certain land classifications will be protected against development such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and Local Nature Reserves (LNR).

Park regeneration and restoration projects

Park regeneration projects will tackle economic, social and environmental needs in an integrated way. A range of complementary improvements will be sought to combat poor infrastructure and anti-social behaviour and provide a basis for economic growth in addition to meeting the needs of the community.

The Royal Borough is committed to the regeneration of specific areas within Parks that have been identified by Friends Groups and local residents as areas that have fallen into decline. In light of limited funding availability, bespoke and creative solutions to deliver regeneration projects in parks will be required. Finance for projects will be sought from Section 106 Funding, the Community Infrastructure Levy and investment from other external funding sources.

Redevelopment of disused park buildings into cafés for example can transform parks back into life by greatly improving the aesthetic value, giving an additional visitor attraction, encouraging community ownership and creating a much improved park environment, in addition to supporting the local economy and reducing anti-social behaviour. Regeneration projects in parks will be designed to be sustainable.

Providing job opportunities and apprenticeships

The Royal Borough of Greenwich supports and works in partnership with local businesses through the Greenwich Local Labour and Business Initiative to provide skills, courses, and work experience placements for young and unemployed residents in the borough.

The Parks, Estates and Open Spaces Department works closely with the Greenwich Local Labour Programme (GLLP). Parks, Estates and Open Spaces have provided many work placements for local residents, that have been long term unemployed especially those most affected by the welfare reforms. Some of these work placements have led to permanent jobs in Parks, Estates and Open Spaces or other areas of the Council.

The Royal Borough is fully committed to supporting the provision of Apprenticeship Schemes and works in partnership with The London Apprenticeship Company and Hadlow College to provide training and work experience opportunities for young people within the borough.

Supporting the local economy

The Royal Borough of Greenwich grant funds a series of Parkfest events run by local Park Friends Groups. This initiative, in addition to bringing communities together to enjoy a fun day out, also gives local businesses the opportunity to promote and network with each other. Many events in parks are fund raising in nature and raise money and awareness for local charities. Event organisers of large commercial events also look to the local work force when arranging their events, which provides investment into the local economy.

The Royal Borough of Greenwich aims to support local business by buying goods and services locally where possible. Attractive, pleasant townscapes support local business and attract visitors and inward investment. Creating vibrant parks and open spaces increases the desirability of a locality which in turn attracts people to live, work, visit or study in the surrounding area.

The Royal Borough of Greenwich facilitates a wide range of locations for filming. The diverse landscape and historical building within parks provide unique filming opportunities. The Parks, Estates and Open Spaces department facilitates requests by the Greenwich Film Unit where possible in order to promote the cultural heritage of the Borough and boost the local economy.

Central to supporting the local economy is the movement of people and goods. Road traffic congestion is a major barrier to efficient movement in some of our urban centres. Providing good quality sustainable transport systems by investing in walking and cycling infrastructure supports growth without gridlock, and enables people to move around efficiently and affordably and creates and sustains jobs, as well as reducing other business costs, such as parking.

Linking in with Business Improvement Districts

Royal Greenwich has some of the largest development sites in London and therefore presents some unique opportunities for provision of new open spaces. Leasehold or freehold design and build opportunities are available on most of the new sites, and land can be let on flexible arrangements or on long leases.

Public Consultation Findings

Parks Friends Strategy Focus Group Responses:

- Income could be generated by leasing out unused buildings in parks to local businesses.
- Unused building in parks could be converted into cafes that can provide jobs and generate income as well as attracting more visitors to the park making parks feel safer and reducing vandalism.

- Provide more work experience opportunities and apprenticeships in parks including back to work.
- Explore using spaces in parks for pitches for food / drink / ice-cream vendors as it provides a service and generates income.
- Encourage sponsorship within parks from local businesses for example planting up of flower beds.
- Secure more Section 106 and other external funding to make improvements to parks.
- Jobs could be provided locally by leasing out unused buildings in parks to local businesses.

Theme 6: Regeneration and local economy – aims and strategic objectives

Aim:

To ensure that our parks are attractive to visitors and encourage enterprise and employment of local people

Strategic objectives:

Objective RE1: Identify parks, park buildings and infrastructure that will benefit from regeneration/restoration drawing existing priorities and the findings of the green infrastructure audits.

Objective RE2: Promote parks and open spaces as contributors to the local economy and business.

Objective RE3: Provide job opportunities within the service and training for local people.

Objective RE4: Seek to ensure the parks management team are consulted on regeneration and development within the borough to ensure the open space requirements are fully reflected in emerging proposals.

Objective RE5: Support delivery of sustainable new developments that provide suitable green spaces for the local community.

Theme 7: Culture and heritage

Local heritage

Royal Greenwich's rich historic heritage includes the well-known Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site (which is one of only four World Heritage Sites in London), 20 diverse conservation areas, registered parks and gardens, archaeology such as scheduled monuments and nearly 1,000 listed buildings as well as other locally significant assets, creating an important link to the rich history of Royal Greenwich.

It is important that information on the local history of our parks and open spaces is promoted as a useful educational tool. Access to protected areas of some sites will be by arrangement only to ensure they are conserved for future generations.



Charlton House managed by the Royal Borough Heritage Trust

Conservation of buildings

Some buildings and structures within our parks and open space are part of the cultural heritage of the Borough and it is important this that is recognised and celebrated. Listed buildings are designated under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 by the Secretary of State for their special architectural or historic interest. The local planning authority is required to have ‘special regard’ to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.

Listed building and structures are recorded and will be regularly inspected. Works will be arranged when necessary to ensure they are preserved and maintained to a good standard.

Appendix 4 contains a record of sites with listed buildings and structures within the Royal Borough’s parks and open spaces.

Scheduled Monuments

Four of the Royal Borough’s parks and open spaces contain Scheduled Monuments as shown in **Table 6** below.

Table 6: Scheduled Monuments in the Royal Borough’s parks and open spaces

Site ID	Site Name	List entry	Name
7	Bellot Memorial	1410710	Greenwich Palace
22	Conduit Head	1005550	Conduit Head, Eltham
69	Shrewsbury Tumulus	1430983	Shrewsbury Barrow, Shooters Hill
94	Winn's Common (incl Great Bartletts)	1002005	Burial mound on Winns Common, Plumstead



Conduit Head

Register of historic parks and gardens of special historic interest in England

Well Hall Pleasaunce is included as grade II on Historic England’s register of parks and gardens of special historic interest in England. Registered parks and gardens do not enjoy any additional legal protection but are designated heritage assets.

Table 7: Registered parks and gardens in the Royal Borough

Site ID	Site name	List entry	Grade
91	Well Hall Pleasaunce	1000850	II



Tudor Barn and moat in Well Hall Pleasaunce

Archaeology

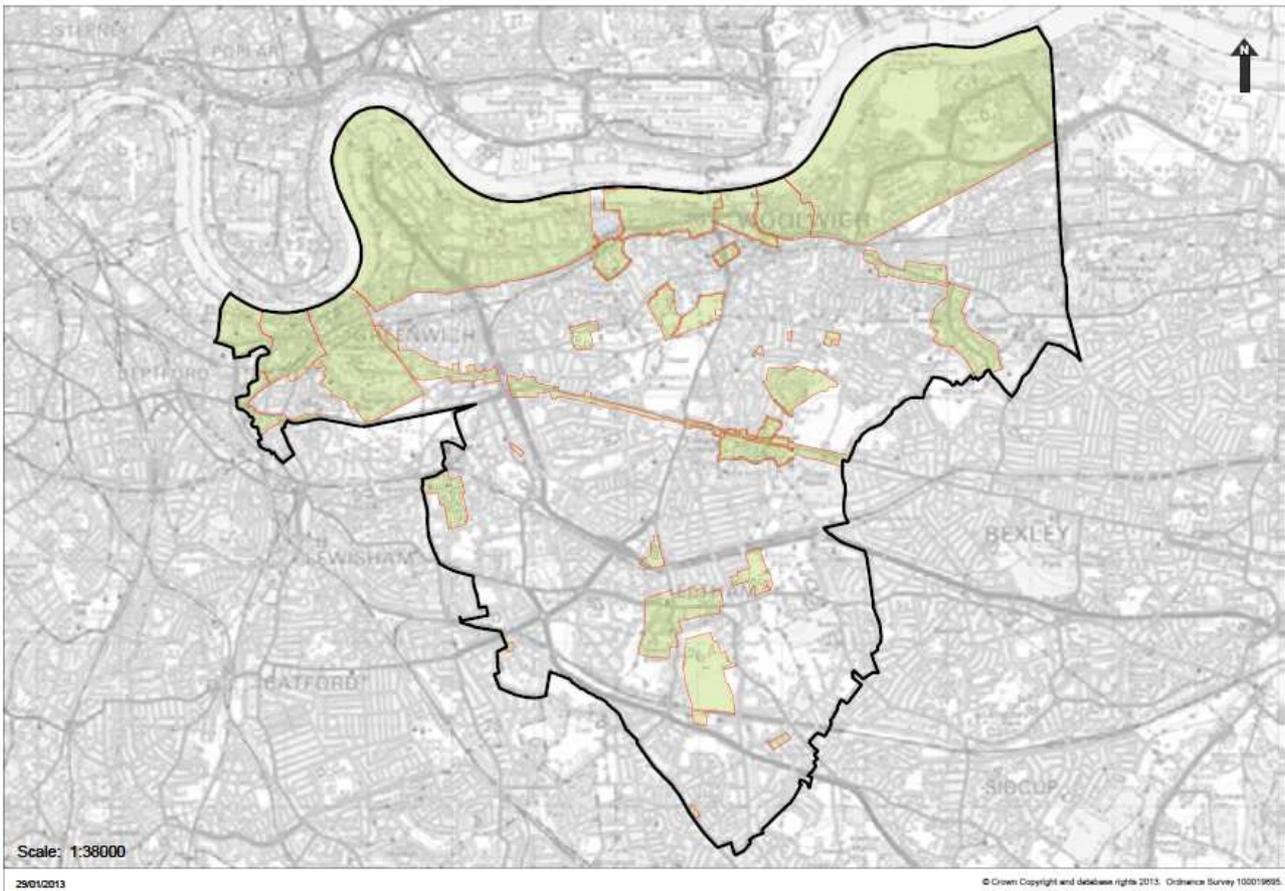
Greater London Archaeological Priority Areas (APAs) are areas where there is significant known archaeological interest or potential for new discoveries. A key document which outlines areas with a greater likelihood to yield archaeological finds was prepared by English Heritage in 2011 titled *London Borough of Greenwich – Areas of High Archaeological Potential: Appraisal* (available

online). Many areas are located adjacent to the River Thames. These areas represented a total of 1719.35 hectares or 34% of the borough.

Some park and open spaces contain archaeological remains of local or lesser importance and the Royal Borough will seek to preserve the remains but where this is not feasible the remains should be investigated, excavated and removed from the site, or investigated, excavated and recorded before being destroyed.

Some parks sites contain areas of high archaeological potential (identified by English Heritage) and any proposed development of these sites should be undertaken in accordance with policy set out in the Local Plan. **Figure 4** shows the areas shaded in green of potential high archaeological importance in the Royal Borough.

Figure 4: Areas of High Archaeological Potential



The Royal Borough of Greenwich has several sites in the south of the borough, mainly concentrated around Eltham Palace with medieval ridge and furrow ploughing. Pippenhall in Eltham is an interesting relic of agricultural land. It is a network of small meadows and ancient hedgerows on Eocene space; a river terrace of Blackheath Gravels overlying a spring line on Woolwich & Reading Beds.

The first evidence of human utilisation of the Pippenhall Valley is a Mesolithic concave scraper dropped by a hunter gatherer sometime around 7000 BC and discovered by a “Young Friend of Avery Hill Park” while hedge planting. Since then, the Bronze Age and Celtic, Eltham farmers have cleared the wet woodland and planted hedges around their fields. The oldest dateable hedges at Pippenhall are from 1370.

Landscape heritage and preserving local character

Certain park and open spaces sites have a valuable heritage and character or contribute to the character of the wider local environment and it is important that this is fully recognised and where appropriate preserved for the benefit of current and future generations.

In Greenwich, Areas of Special Character include Shooters Hill Golf Course, Eltham Park, Woolwich Common and Avery Hill Park.

Also some parks and open spaces are within conservation areas or parts of the sites have listed status and it is important that these special characteristics are preserved and protected from inappropriate change.

Geological conservation

Gilbert’s Pit in the Woolwich Riverside Ward is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for its rare geology in the London context. The Royal Borough is committed to working with partner organisations including Natural England and the London Geo-diversity Partnership to protect the site and promote it as a site of interest.

In terms of locally designated sites of importance for geodiversity the Borough contains a Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site and two Locally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites. These sites are:

- Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Site (RIGS): Dog Rocks in Plumstead Common; and
- Royal Greenwich's Locally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (LIGS): Bleak Hill Sandpits and Wickham Valley Brickworks complex.

These designated areas are conserved and protected through local and national planning policies.

The Royal Borough is currently considering the designation of two new sites, Tripcock Ness and Vanburgh Blackeath Pits as LIGS- Locally Important Geological Sites.

London view

Some parks sites have important local views and strategic views across London. These views are an important element in the character of Royal Greenwich. All of the views are from publicly assessable spaces and offer panoramas and views of landmarks and water-space recognised for their contribution to the built and natural environment.

These views will be protected in line with the policy set out in the Local Plan (pages 105-107). Local Views identified include following:

- Shooters Hill to Central London
- Shrewsbury Park towards the Lower Thames
- Eaglesfield Recreation Ground towards Bexley and the Lower Thames
- Eltham Park (North) to Central London
- Winn's Common to the Lower Thames
- St. Mary's Churchyard towards Mast Pond Wharf and beyond
- The Point, Blackheath to Central London



Shrewsbury Park towards the lower Thames

Fields in Trust

Three of The Royal Borough of Greenwich's parks and open spaces, including Well Hall Pleasaunce, Oxleas Woods and Charlton Park were protected with Fields in Trust as part of The Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge in 2012. This Fields in Trust designation gives protection to playing fields and outdoor recreational spaces and ensures that everyone has access to play and keep fit. King George's field also benefits from the same level of protection from an earlier designation.

Cultural heritage

The Royal Borough recognises the intrinsic values of arts and culture with its rich mix of arts and entertainment helping to attract nearly 20 million visitors from all over the UK and worldwide each year. The Royal Borough has developed exciting proposals to celebrate the military heritage at Woolwich and to establish a Creative Quarter which will support cultural organisations and industries.

The Royal Borough acknowledges the role its network of parks and open spaces performs in providing opportunities for communities to come together to share, promote and celebrate their multi-cultured heritage.

The Royal Borough seeks to promote the cultural heritage value of the Borough's parks and open spaces through supporting local schools and groups along with strengthening links with cultural organisations such as the Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance and the Millennium Performing Arts School.

Public Consultation Findings

Parks Friends Strategy Focus Group Responses:

- Promote local history information, photos and maps on parks website and notice boards.
- Protect all heritage assets in parks.
- Consider phone apps with parks info and local history making it more accessible to younger people.
- Promote art in parks, perhaps including softening some park buildings.
- Support cultural events in parks.

Theme 7: Culture and heritage – aims and strategic objectives

Aim: To ensure our parks are well designed, are places for cultural and that their heritage is preserved and celebrated.

Strategic objectives:

Objective CH1: Seek to use the borough's park and open spaces to promote the borough's national and international importance.

Objective CH2: Record and promote the local history of parks and open spaces (education/visitor attractions).

Objective CH3: Ensure the role parks and open spaces perform in defining the character of Greenwich and its neighbourhoods are fully understood and conserved.

Objective CH4: Conserve and restore historic features and listed buildings/structures within the borough's park and open spaces.

Objective CH5: Seek to link the cultural heritage value of the borough's parks and open spaces with school curriculum activities and local study centres.

Objective CH6: Provide appropriate interpretative material for parks and open spaces either in the form of sensitively designed and located signage or through the use of leaflets, websites or apps.

Implementation of the Strategy

To deliver the strategy a full action plan will be finalised.

Actions will be based on the agreed themes and will set out how we intend to deliver against our objectives throughout the lifetime of the Strategy. Clear priorities, informed by the public consultation, will be prepared with short, medium and long term delivery timescales.

Officers will undertake an annual review of the implementation of the Strategy's action plan. This review will include an assessment of what progress has been made against objectives as well as a review of the future action plan to ensure it is deliverable and fit for purpose. An annual report will be presented to the Cabinet Member responsible for the Parks and Open Spaces Service.

The review and refresh of Strategy objectives will take place every three years to ensure the Strategy remains relevant and can adapt to changing needs.

Appendices

Appendix I: List of relevant strategies and policies

- The National Planning Policy Framework
- The London Plan
- The Royal Borough of Greenwich's Local Plan / Core Strategy
- The Royal Borough of Greenwich's Public Health & Wellbeing Strategy
- The Royal Borough of Greenwich's Playing Pitch Strategy
- The Royal Borough of Greenwich's Sports Facilities Strategy
- The Royal Borough of Greenwich's Climate Change Strategy
- The Royal Borough of Greenwich's Green Infrastructure Study (draft)
- The Royal Borough of Greenwich's Biodiversity Action Plan
- The Royal Borough of Greenwich's Greener Greenwich Strategy (draft)
- Greenwich Open Space Study (Atkins)
- The Royal Borough of Greenwich's Green Space Strategy

Appendix 2: List of parks and open spaces managed by the Royal Borough

Site ID	Site Name	Typology	Area (ha)	Green Flag	Friends group	Play ID	Sport	Nature conservation designations	GI Study ID
1	Abbey Wood Park	Parks and gardens	7.21			1			1
2	Academy Road Open Space	Amenity greenspace	0.11						503
3	Altash Gardens	Parks and gardens	0.76			2			2
4	Avery Hill Park	Parks and gardens	32.02	✓	✓	3	✓	✓	4
5	Barrier Park	Parks and gardens	1.85		✓			✓	10
6	Batley Park	Parks and gardens	0.37						11
7	Bellot Memorial	Amenity greenspace	0.05						
8	Birdbrook Road Nature Reserve	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	1.13					✓	16
9	Blackheath	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	23.98	✓				✓	17
10	Bostall Gardens	Parks and gardens	1.10		✓	4	✓		27
11	Bostall Heath	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	13.38		✓		✓	✓	28
12	Bostall Woods	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	64.75		✓		✓	✓	30
13	Briset Park	Parks and gardens	0.67			5			36
14	Burney Street Open Space	Amenity greenspace	0.04						
15	Camdale Road Playing Field	Outdoors sports facilities (Education)	3.03				✓		45
16	Castle Woods	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	13.47		✓			✓	47
17	Catherine Grove Open Space	Parks and gardens	0.08						48
18	Charlotte Turner Gardens	Parks and gardens	1.24		✓	6		✓	51
19	Charlton House Grounds	Parks and gardens	4.12	✓	✓			✓	56
20	Charlton Park	Parks and gardens	17.18	✓	✓	7	✓		56
21	Coldharbour Unleased Open Space	Parks and gardens	3.66						65
22	Conduit Head	Amenity greenspace	0.12					✓	242
23	Cutty Sark Gardens	Civic Space	1.24						75
24	Dallin Road Open Space	Amenity greenspace	0.14						
25	Dothill	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	5.42					✓	80
26	Eaglesfield Park	Parks and gardens	3.65	✓	✓	8		✓	83
27	East Greenwich Pleasaunce	Parks and gardens	2.35	✓	✓	9		✓	84
28	Eglinton Hill Bird Sanctuary	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	0.12						86

Appendix 2: List of parks and open spaces managed by the Royal Borough

Site ID	Site Name	Typology	Area (ha)	Green Flag	Friends group	Play ID	Sport	Nature conservation designations	GI Study ID
29	Eltham Common	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	13.17		✓			✓	89
30	Eltham Green	Amenity greenspace	1.98						90
31	Eltham Park North & Shepherdleas Meadow	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	8.58	✓	✓			✓	97
32	Eltham Park South	Parks and gardens	16.79	✓	✓	10	✓		98
33	Fairy Hill Park	Parks and gardens	4.65	✓	✓	11	✓		102
34	Falconwood Field	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	6.42		✓			✓	103
35	Gallions Reach Playground	Provision for children and young people	0.13			12		✓	108
36	Garland Road Playground	Provision for children and young people	0.11			13			
37	General Gordon Square	Civic Space	0.45						110
38	Greening Street Open Space	Amenity greenspace	0.77						116
39	Harmony Wood	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	7.72					✓	127
40	Hervey Road Playing Field	Outdoors sports facilities	4.79		✓		✓		129
41	Horn Park	Parks and gardens	6.72	✓	✓	14	✓		133
42	Hornfair Park	Parks and gardens	9.93			15	✓		134
43	Ingleside Gardens (Hardy Road)	Parks and gardens	0.21						12
44	Jack Woods	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	19.53		✓			✓	136
45	Kidbrooke Green	Parks and gardens	2.30		✓		✓	✓	141
46	Kidbrooke Nature Reserve	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	0.86		✓			✓	142
47	King George's Field	Amenity greenspace	2.00				✓		143
48	King John's Field	Agricultural land	2.84				✓	✓	144
49	Long Lane Playing Field (Dursley Road)	Outdoors sports facilities (Education)	7.46				✓		82
50	Lovelace Green	Amenity greenspace	0.56						156
51	Manthorpe Road Open Space	Amenity greenspace	0.06						
52	Maryon Park	Parks and gardens	12.43	✓	✓	16	✓	✓	160

Appendix 2: List of parks and open spaces managed by the Royal Borough

Site ID	Site Name	Typology	Area (ha)	Green Flag	Friends group	Play ID	Sport	Nature conservation designations	GI Study ID
53	Maryon Wilson Park	Parks and gardens	12.49		✓			✓	161
54	Middle Park Field	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	2.88					✓	168
55	Montcalm Road Open Space	Amenity greenspace	0.12						
56	Mycenae Gardens	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	0.92		✓			✓	263
57	Nithdale Road Open Space	Amenity greenspace	0.11						
58	Oxleas Meadow	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	10.74		✓			✓	180
59	Oxleas Woods	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	47.12		✓			✓	181
60	Pippenhall Meadow	Agricultural land	4.54		✓			✓	186
61	Plumstead Common	Parks and gardens	15.73		✓		✓	✓	188
62	Plumstead Gardens	Parks and gardens	2.48		✓	17	✓		189
63	Poet's Corner	Amenity greenspace	0.01						
64	Queens Gardens	Parks and gardens	0.41						193
65	Queenscroft Park	Parks and gardens	5.18		✓	18	✓		194
66	Rockliffe Gardens	Parks and gardens	2.07		✓			✓	202
67	Shepherdleas Woods	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	20.92		✓			✓	210
68	Shrewsbury Park	Parks and gardens	14.43		✓			✓	215
69	Shrewsbury Tumulus	Amenity greenspace	0.07						216
70	Southwood Road Park	Parks and gardens	4.81		✓	19	✓	✓	219
71	St Alfeges Churchyard	Cemeteries and churchyards	0.44						221a
72	St Alfeges Park	Parks and gardens	0.89			20			221b
73	St John the Baptist Churchyard	Cemeteries and churchyards	1.64					✓	224
74	St Luke's Churchyard	Cemeteries and churchyards	0.18						
75	St Mary's Gardens & Churchyard	Parks and gardens	1.93					✓	225
76	St Nicholas Churchyard	Cemeteries and churchyards	0.32						403
77	St Nicholas Gardens	Parks and gardens	1.14						226
78	St Thomas Churchyard	Cemeteries and churchyards	0.29						

Appendix 2: List of parks and open spaces managed by the Royal Borough

Site ID	Site Name	Typology	Area (ha)	Green Flag	Friends group	Play ID	Sport	Nature conservation designations	GI Study ID
79	Sunbury Street Playground	Provision for children and young people	0.12			2 1			408
80	Sutcliffe Park	Parks and gardens	14.23	✓	✓	2 2	✓	✓	232
81	Swingate Lane Playing Fields	Outdoors sports facilities	2.94				✓		203
82	The Course	Parks and gardens	3.85			2 3			235
83	The Old Blue Cross Pet Cemetery	Cemeteries and churchyards	0.07		✓				
84	The Point (Blackheath)	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	1.32	✓				✓	17
85	The Tarn	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	3.61	✓	✓			✓	239
86	The Vista Field	Amenity greenspace	3.45					✓	240
87	Trinity Hospital Open Space	Amenity greenspace	0.04						
88	Twinkle Park	Parks and gardens	0.39		✓			✓	244
89	Vicarage Avenue Open Space	Amenity greenspace	0.32						250
90	Villas Road Playground	Provision for children and young people	0.06			2 4			
91	Well Hall Pleasaunce	Parks and gardens	4.50	✓	✓	2 5	✓	✓	254
92	Wiegall Road Sports Ground (Private)	Outdoors sports facilities	2.97				✓	✓	258
93	William Barefoot Gardens	Parks and gardens	0.31					✓	267
94	Winn's Common (incl Great Bartletts)	Parks and gardens	26.03		✓	2 6		✓	405
95	Woodbrook Road Field	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	0.57						227
96	Woodland Dell	Natural and semi-natural greenspace	0.35					✓	263
97	Wynford Way Playing Field	Amenity greenspace	3.00				✓		270

Note A: The above table excludes allotments and Royal Borough cemeteries

Note B: Gilberts Pit is included in Maryon Park

Appendix 3: Listed buildings and structures within parks and open spaces

Site ID	Site Name	List entry	Name	Grade
I	Abbey Wood Park	I376744	DELIGHT SCULPTURE IN ABBEY WOOD PARK	II
4	Avery Hill Park	I217996	AVERY HILL TRAINING COLLEGE (ENTRANCE GATE AND ADJOINING LODGE)	II
17a	Blackheath	I031861	MEMORIAL SHELTER AND PAVILION	II
47	Castle Woods	I289792	SEVERNDROOG CASTLE,CASTLE WOOD PARK	II*
56a	Charlton House Grounds	I218593	CHARLTON HOUSE	I
		I358935	GATEWAY AT AXIS TO WEST OF CHARLTON HOUSE	I
		I291892	GARDEN HOUSE TO NORTH WEST OF CHARLTON HOUSE (NOW PUBLIC LAVATORY)	I
		I079066	STABLE BUILDINGS TO SOUTH WEST OF CHARLTON HOUSE	I
75	Cutty Sark Gardens	I079013	THE CUTTY SARK	I
		I289371	ENTRANCE BUILDING TO GREENWICH FOOTWAY TUNNEL	II
		I394456	K6 TELEPHONE KIOSK	II
221a	St Alfeges Churchyard	I358970	CHURCH OF ST ALFEGE	I
221b	St Alfeges Park	I292191	WALLS TO WEST AND SOUTH OF RECREATION GROUND, AND A SHORT LENGTH OF WALL TO NORTH, AT EAST END	II
		I211615	GATE PIERS AT WEST END OF PASSAGE (FORMING ENTRANCE TO RECREATION GROUND) AND OLD WALL RUNNING SOUTH AND WEST FROM THESE (FORMING PART OF BOUNDARY TO RECREATION GROUND)	II
224	St John the Baptist Churchyard	I079016	OLD WALL ALONG SOUTH AND EAST SIDES OF CHURCHYARD, CHURCH OF ST JOHN	II

Appendix 3: Listed buildings and structures within parks and open spaces

Site ID	Site Name	List entry	Name	Grade
			THE BAPTIST	
		1219811	CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST	II
225	St Mary's Gardens & Churchyard	1078989	MONUMENT IN CHURCHYARD TO NORTH EAST OF CHURCH OF ST MARY WITH ST ANNE	II
		1358969	CHURCH OF ST MARY MAGDALENE	II*
239	The Tarn	1079037	ICE WELL TO RIGHT OF PATH NEAR ENTRANCE OF THE TARN RECREATION GROUND	II
242	Conduit Head	1211996	CONDUIT HEAD ON WASTE LAND AT REAR OF NUMBERS 53 TO 57 (ODD)	II
254	Well Hall Pleasaunce	1212111	GARDEN WALL TO SOUTH OF MOAT OF WELL HALL ART GALLERY	II*
		1289673	WELL HALL ART GALLERY	II*
		1212110	MOAT AND BRIDGE TO SOUTH OF WELL HALL ART GALLERY	II*
403	St Nicholas Churchyard	1211745	CHURCH OF ST NICHOLAS (PLUMSTEAD)	II*
601	Bellot Memorial	1211355	MONUMENT JUST OUTSIDE BOUNDARY FENCE OF ROYAL NAVAL COLLEGE AND ABOUT 16 YARDS WEST OF NORTH WEST CORNER OF KING CHARLES' QUARTER	II
610	Trinity Hospital Open Space	1078963	FRONT WALL TO TRINITY HOSPITAL	II
612	St Thomas Churchyard	1078939	CHURCH OF ST THOMAS	II
614	St Luke's Churchyard	1218584	CHURCHYARD WALLS, GATE PIERS AND GATE TO ST LUKE'S CHURCH	II
		1358934	CHURCH OF ST LUKE	II*

Note A: Not all listed structures and monuments within parks and open spaces are managed by The Royal Borough of Greenwich