



Greenwich Open Space and Nature Infrastructure Study Royal Borough of Greenwich Council

Final Report
Prepared by LUC

Greenwich Open Space and Nature Infrastructure Study
Royal Borough of Greenwich Council



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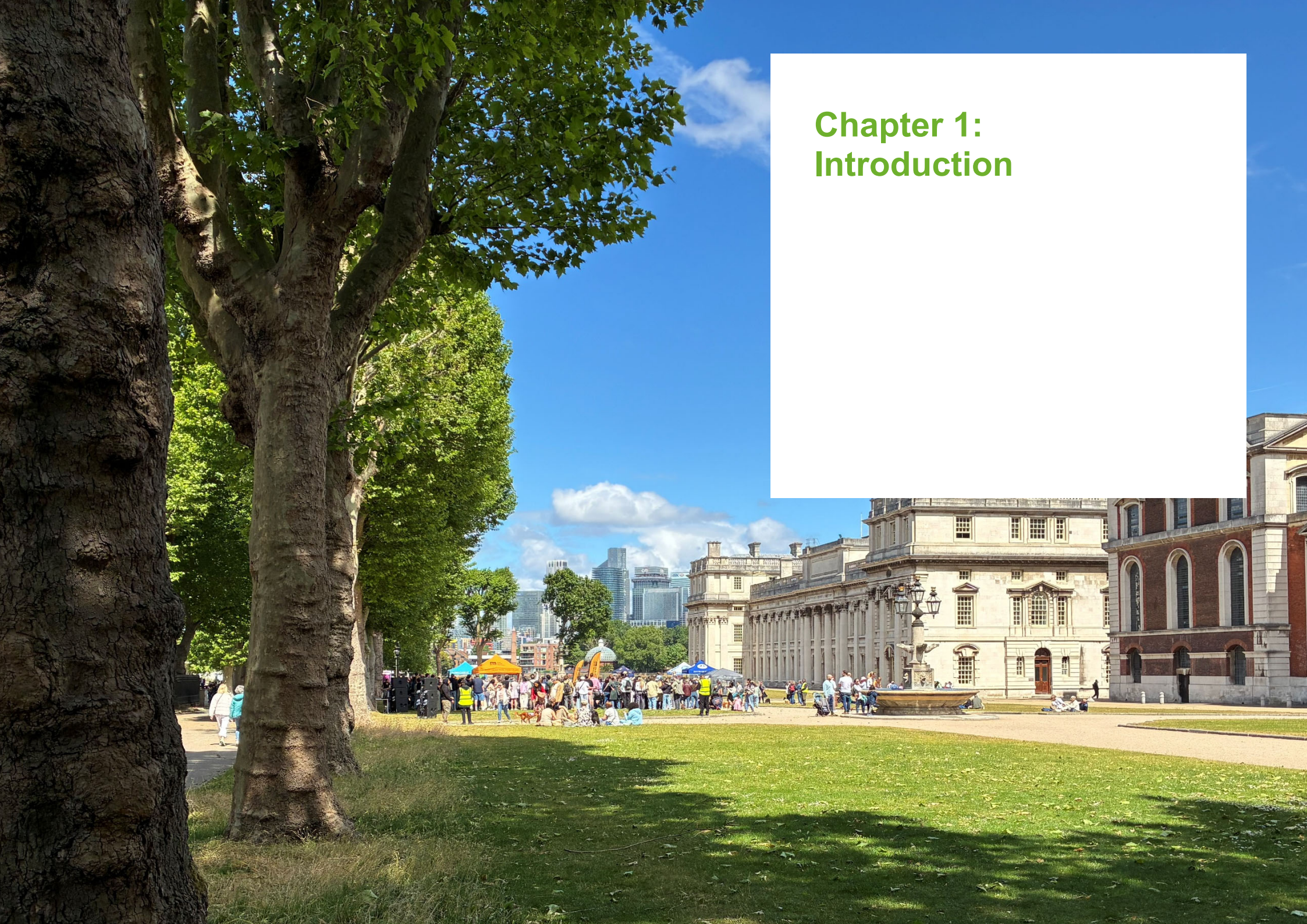
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Chapter 1: Introduction



Chapter 1

Introduction

LUC was commissioned by Royal Borough of Greenwich Council to deliver an updated open space and nature infrastructure study for the borough.

1.1 For the purposes of the report, 'open space and nature' encompasses all green and blue infrastructure (GBI), whether publicly accessible or not. This document provides an up-to-date, evidence base to inform the sustainable management of the borough's GBI through spatial policies and strategies to be included in the emerging Local Plan (up to 2037).

1.2 The Study provides a review of the borough's existing GBI provision, reflecting the unique characteristics and spatial contrasts of the borough's geography. The evidence base is both qualitative and quantitative, outlining the spatial distribution of GBI assets and deficiencies. The document will guide the planning of a network of multi-functional green and blue networks, helping to deliver a range of environmental, economic and societal benefits.

Aims and objectives

1.3 The overarching aim of the Study was to set out the objectively assessed current and future GBI needs across the borough, providing a sound and robust evidence base from which spatial policies and strategies can be devised for inclusion in the emerging Local Plan.

1.4 Specifically, the objectives of the Study were to:

- Update the current understanding of the existing network of GBI across the borough, highlighting key assets, deficiencies and opportunities for enhancement to maximise the delivery of multi-functional benefits.

- Assess the functionality and contribution of the borough's existing and future network of open spaces in terms of quality, quantity and accessibility, incorporating data from the metropolitan open land (MOL), sites of importance for nature conservation (SINC) and playing pitch strategy (PPS) reviews.
- Review the need for a local level open space designation and potential criteria for its application.
- Assess the level of need and deficiency across the borough to all publicly accessible open spaces based upon a number of objective demographic, socio-economic indicators, population growth in opportunity areas and any local environmental drivers of change.
- Provide a robust and comprehensive evidence base to support the development and implementation of detailed planning policies and to facilitate the future management of public green-blue spaces
- Identify planning mechanisms to meet future needs, including recommendations for an appropriate, locally-derived standard of GBI across the borough.

Structure of the document

1.5 The Study is structured as follows:

Chapter 1 – Introduction

1.6 Outlines the aims and objectives of the Study and the methodology used to develop the report. The concept of GBI is introduced and its importance and value to the borough is described through reference to the 'Benefit Principles' devised by Natural England.

Chapter 2 – Policy context and summary of local needs within Royal Borough of Greenwich

1.7 Summarises the national, regional and local policy context that applies to GBI in the borough, including an updated understanding of local needs.

Chapter 3 – A portrait of GBI within Royal Borough of Greenwich

1.8 Explores the borough's existing GBI network, organised by the key drivers and objectives identified in the London GI Framework.

Chapter 4 – Local level open space designation review

1.9 Provides a review of the borough's current local level open space designation framework and outlines recommendations to inform the further consideration of the suitability and functionality of its application.

Chapter 5 – Open space evidence base

1.10 Outlines the pattern of current and future open space provision, including the application of quantity, quality and value and accessibility standards for all typologies of open space across the borough.

Chapter 6 – Green and blue infrastructure evidence base by analysis area

1.11 Summarises patterns of GBI provision and deficiency across the eight analysis areas of the borough, including recommendations for enhancements to the network which support community wellbeing, climate resilience and nature recovery.

Chapter 7 – Recommendations for delivery

1.12 Considers the application of standards as well as the identification of planning mechanisms to facilitate future GBI delivery across the borough.

Appendices

- **Appendix A** – Policy context;
- **Appendix B** – Policy context - community open space designation;
- **Appendix C** – Long list of sites for borough open land designation; and
- **Appendix D** – Results of Quality and Value Audit.



View looking north from the A206 Romney Road towards Canary Wharf

Overview of methodology

1.13 This Study was developed following a bespoke methodology comprised of four distinct stages, as summarised below and illustrated graphically in **Figure 1.1**.

Stage 1: Understanding Royal Borough of Greenwich's GBI context

1.14 This stage underpinned the quantitative and qualitative baseline assessment of the existing network of GBI within the borough. GIS data was collated on existing assets from various sources, including the Council and other public bodies such as Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL), the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Natural England.

Stage 2: Analysis and assessment of the existing network

1.15 This stage encompassed the detailed analysis of the existing GBI network, providing an updated strategic context to reflect the borough's overarching priorities and goals. Audits of a representative sample of open spaces were undertaken to comprehensively update the baseline situation and inform the recommendations of this Study. Following the gathering of spatial, quantitative, and qualitative information, a review of the existing GBI network was undertaken. To help organise this large amount of data, the borough-wide analysis was structured using the objectives outlined within the London GI Framework to ensure consideration of the key drivers for GBI within the London context.

Stage 3: Appraisal of needs, issues and opportunities

1.16 Mapping outputs were used to assess the type, quality, quantity and extent of inclusive accessibility of each open space to inform the provision of GBI within the borough. This exercise was undertaken to build up a textured and granular picture of provision, demand and access to GBI across the borough. Areas of severance were identified to understand the proposed siting of GBI interventions. The outputs of this holistic analysis was used to objectively assess current and future GBI needs for specific analysis areas within the borough, whilst informing recommendations for enhancing local and cross boundary GBI networks.

Stage 4: Reporting

1.17 This Study, and supporting technical appendices, present the outputs and recommendations of the above stages.

Figure 1.1 Summary of the methodology for the Study



What is green and blue infrastructure?

1.18 GBI forms an essential component of healthy communities and ecosystems across London and the UK. It is a fundamental element of sustainable growth and is widely recognised as a key tool in enabling both local and global communities to tackle environmental, societal and economic challenges. The term GBI is used to describe the network of natural and semi-natural features, including 'blue' assets such as rivers, canals and ponds, and 'urban greening' assets such as green walls, green roofs, street trees and sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). GBI is not limited to traditional greenspaces such as parks and can include various assets which thread nature into streetscapes or to increase connectivity between assets at from the strategic down to the site scale.

1.19 This Study refers to the concept of 'GBI' rather than green infrastructure (GI) to ensure consideration is provided to blue infrastructure as part of land use planning and to reflect its context as a riparian borough. The Study assesses the opportunities presented by the River Thames and its banks in delivering multi-functional benefits. Reference to 'GI' during analysis of the policy context, the Natural England GI Framework and London GI Framework should assume the inclusion of water elements.

1.20 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024¹ defines GI as:

"A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities, and prosperity."

1.21 In London, the Mayor of London² defines GI as:

"A network of parks, greenspaces, gardens, woodlands, rivers and wetlands, as well as urban greening features such as street trees and green roofs, that is planned, designed and managed to:

- *promote healthier living, providing spaces for physical activity and relaxation;*
- *cool the city and absorb stormwater to lessen the impacts of climate change;*
- *filter pollutants to improve air and water quality;*
- *make streets clean, comfortable and more attractive to encourage walking and cycling;*
- *store carbon in soils and woodlands; and*
- *create better quality and better-connected habitats to improve biodiversity and ecological resilience."*

1.22 The concept of GBI continues to strengthen in national and regional policy, including through its promotion in the 25 Year Environment Plan (YEP)³, the London Environment Strategy⁴, and the London Plan⁵. In February 2023, Natural England launched the GI Framework⁶, a new tool to support both authorities and developers to deliver well planned, designed and maintained GI. The GI Framework is a commitment within the 25 YEP and places GI at the top of the planning agenda. The tool highlights the important role of GI in delivering multiple benefits across health and wellbeing, climate, biodiversity and economic targets. Furthermore, it provides a key link between other ongoing initiatives, including biodiversity net gain (BNG), the local nature recovery strategy (LNRS)⁷ and natural capital.

1.23 The GBI assets considered for the purpose of this Study are shown in **Figure 1.2**.

¹ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2024) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/67aaf8f3b41f783cca46251/NPPF_December_2024.pdf

² Mayor of London (no date). Green Infrastructure. Available at: <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-and-strategies/environment-and-climate-change/parks-green-spaces-and-biodiversity/green-infrastructure>

³ Defra (2018). A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment. Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

⁴ Greater London Authority (2018). London Environment Strategy. Available at: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_environment_strategy_0.pdf

⁵ Greater London Authority (2021). The London Plan. Available at:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/the_london_plan_2021.pdf

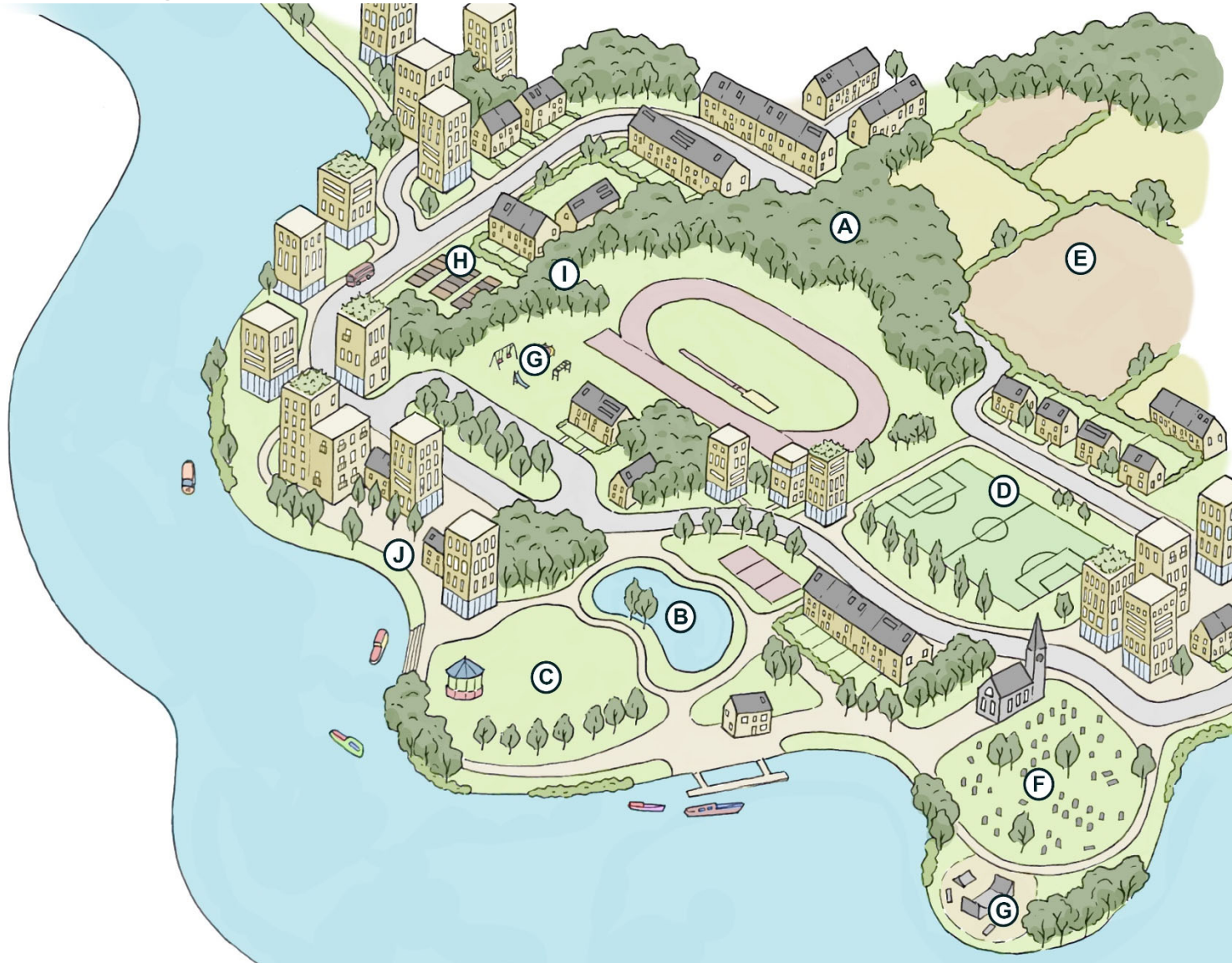
⁶ Natural England (2023). Introduction to the Green Infrastructure Framework. Available at:

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Home.aspx>

⁷ Greater London Authority (2026). London Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Figure 1.2 Summary of GBI assets within the borough

- Ⓐ Natural and semi-natural urban greenspace
- Ⓑ Parks and gardens
- Ⓒ Amenity green space
- Ⓓ Outdoor sports facilities
- Ⓔ Agricultural land
- Ⓕ Churchyards and cemeteries
- Ⓖ Provision for children and teenagers
- Ⓗ Allotments
- Ⓘ Green corridor
- ⓵ Civic space



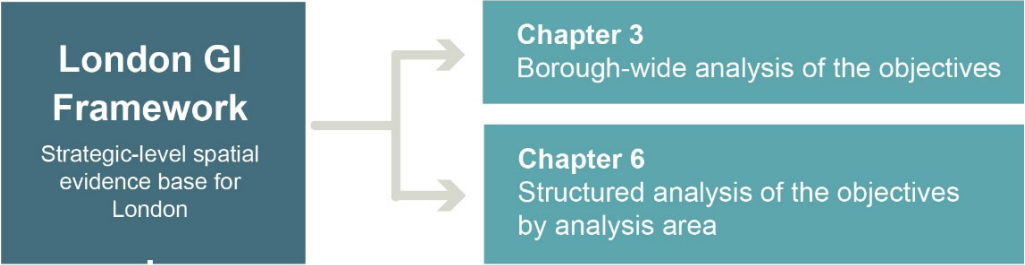
Linkages with the London GI Framework

1.24 In 2012, the GLA published the All-London Green Grid (ALGG) Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG)⁸ and accompanying series of ‘area frameworks’. Using spatial data available at the time, these static documents established a vision for London’s GI network by identifying key functions; defining area objectives; establishing strategic opportunities; and setting out a programme of projects for delivery. The ALGG informed the development of GI strategies, initiatives, and projects across London at a range of scales.

1.25 Published in March 2026, the London GI Framework provides a strategic-level spatial evidence base for London. The tool builds upon the ALGG SPG and GI Focus Map⁹, whilst also complementing the LNRS. The interactive public-facing online map provides the latest London-wide spatial data to help plan for and prioritise the siting of GI interventions that support key objectives and achieve multiple benefits. The tool will help decision makers prioritise strategic locations and suitable types of intervention for investment in GI protection, enhancement and creation across London.

1.26 Structured via a series of objectives, the London GI Framework has been used to inform the recommendations of this Study (see **Figure 1.3**).

Figure 1.3 Integration of the London GI Framework within the Study



Importance and value of GBI within Royal Borough of Greenwich

1.27 GBI is defined by its multi-functionality, with a single asset having the ability to provide a number of benefits to people, place and nature. It is this variety of benefits that play an important role in the delivery of sustainable growth. However, these functions often have varying weight and importance. This is particularly relevant where differing purposes conflict with each other. For example, the delivery of biodiversity enhancements (favourable status of statutorily designated sites or species) at select locations should be balanced with the need for active transport or recreation within an urban context.

1.28 In recognition of these multi-functional benefits, the 'GI Principles Wheel' (forming part of the Natural England GI Framework), outlines 15 principles needed to promote the successful delivery of GI (see **Figure 1.4**). These 15 principles are comprised of the following:

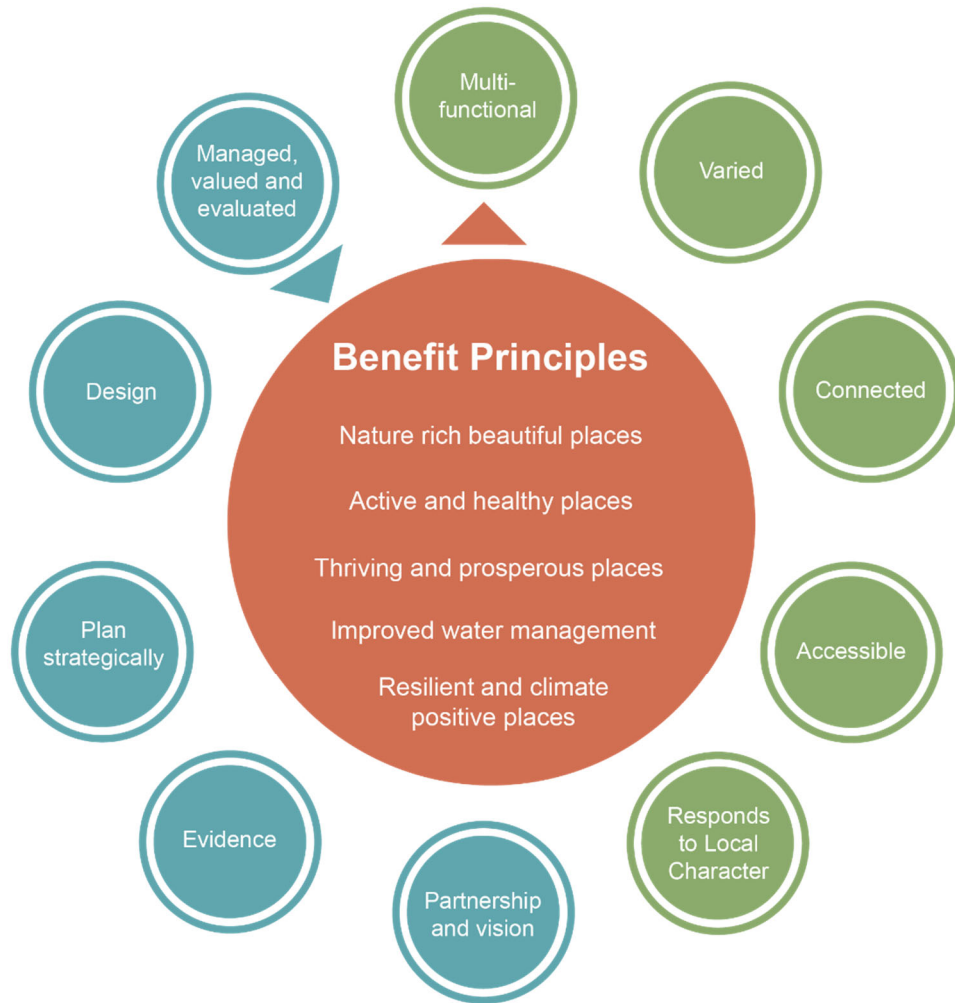
- Five 'Benefits of GI' – these five principles are referenced within the portrait of existing GBI across the borough described in **Chapter 3**.
- Five 'Descriptive Principles' – these five principles will be used to assess the function and value of the existing GBI network, as well as be used as a basis for future recommendations; and
- Five 'Process Principles' – these five principles have informed how this Study has been undertaken. They will also form the basis of future delivery recommendations for GI.

1.29 The five 'Benefit Principles' summarise the role GBI can play in the creation of high-quality attractive places, providing a setting for health, and active day-to-day living. Together with the London GI Framework, the 'Benefit Principles' have been used to explore the existing GBI assets within the borough, consider key needs and explore deficiencies within the existing network.

⁸ Mayor of London (2012) Green Infrastructure and Open Environments: All London Green Grid Supplementary Planning Guidance

⁹ Greater London Authority (updated 2023) Green Infrastructure Focus Map ([Green Infrastructure Focus Map](#) | Mayor of London)

Figure 1.4 'GI Principles Wheel', as developed by Natural England

**Nature rich beautiful places**

GBI supports nature to recover and to thrive everywhere from cities to countryside, conserving and enhancing natural beauty, wildlife and habitats, geology and soils, and our cultural and personal connections with nature.

**Active and healthy places**

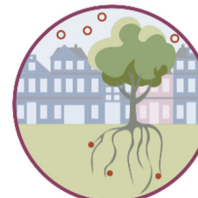
Green neighbourhoods, green / blue spaces and green routes support active lifestyles, community cohesion and nature connections that benefit physical and mental health, wellbeing, and quality of life. GBI also helps to mitigate health risks such as urban heat stress, noise pollution, flooding and poor air quality.

**Thriving and prosperous places**

GBI helps to create and support prosperous communities that benefit everyone and adds value by creating high quality environments which are attractive to businesses and investors, create green jobs, support retail and high streets, and to help support the local economy and regeneration.

**Improved water management**

GBI reduces flood risk, improves water quality and natural filtration, helps maintain the natural water cycle and sustainable drainage at local and catchment scales, reducing pressures on the water environment and infrastructure, bringing amenity, biodiversity, economic and other benefits.

**Resilient and climate positive places**

GBI makes places more resilient and adaptive to climate change and helps to meet zero carbon and air quality targets. GBI itself should be designed to adapt to climate change to ensure long term resilience.



Chapter 2: Policy context and summary of local needs within Royal Borough of Greenwich

Chapter 2

Policy context and summary of local needs within Royal Borough of Greenwich

This chapter provides a summary of the key legal, policy, socio-economic and environmental drivers which are likely to impact on the delivery and protection of good quality GBI and open spaces in the borough.

2.1 This section covers all relevant policy and legislation at a national, regional and local level. A high-level overview of key legislative and policy changes since 2017 is provided below and summarised in **Figure 2.1**. An overview of the relevant national, regional and local policy drivers, including a detailed description of their relevance to the borough's open space and nature infrastructure network, is provided in **Appendix A**.

Policy context

Updated policy context since 2017

2.2 The concept of GI continues to strengthen in national and regional policy, including through its promotion in the **2018 25 Year Environment Plan (25YEP)**¹⁰, the **2018 London Environment Strategy**¹¹, and the **2021 London Plan**¹².

2.3 National policy and legislation has evolved considerably since 2017. The **Environment Act (2021)** transcribes key components the 25YEP into law and sets out government actions

¹⁰ Defra (2018). A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf

¹¹ Greater London Authority (2018). London Environment Strategy. Available at: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/london_environment_strategy_0.pdf

¹² Greater London Authority (2021). The London Plan. Available at: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/the_london_plan_2021.pdf

over the next 25 years for nature recovery and the environment. The **Environmental Improvement Plan (2023)** builds on the 25YEP Vision and outlines how the delivery of GI will contribute to national targets for habitat restoration and enhancement, air quality, nutrient pollution, climate mitigation and adaptation, greenspace access targets and active travel.

2.4 In February 2023, Natural England launched the **GI Framework**¹³, a comprehensive new tool to support both authorities and developers to deliver well planned, designed and maintained GI. Comprised of GI Mapping, Principles, Standards, A Design Guide and Process Journeys, the Framework is a commitment within the 25 YEP and places GI at the top of the planning agenda. The GI Framework highlights the important role of GI in delivering multiple benefits across health and wellbeing, climate, biodiversity and economic targets. Furthermore, it provides a key link between other ongoing initiatives, including Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG), LNRS and natural capital.

2.5 The **Greater London LNRS** was published in March 2026.

2.6 Within planning policy, **NPPF (updated 2024)** requires planning authorities to take a landscape-scale approach to the maintenance and enhancement of GI. NPPF makes provisions for the delivery of safe and accessible GI to facilitate active, healthy lives and reduce health inequalities, as well as its role in climate change mitigation, biodiversity enhancement and open space provision. Planning authorities and developers are supported in the delivery of GI at national level, with the introduction of Natural England's **GI Framework**.

2.7 Since 2017, the Greater London Authority has published the **London Environment Strategy and Implementation Plan (2018)** which sets out key actions to improve the city's environment. The **Mayor's London Plan 2021** sets the Spatial Development Strategy for London, providing a framework for how the city will develop over the next 20-25 years. The London Plan Policy G5 is supported by **Urban Greening Factor Guidance (2023)** which provides guidance on the application of UGF in London.

2.8 At a local level, the Council has published their **Carbon Neutral Plan (2021)**, **Transport Strategy 2022-2032**, **Health and Well-being Strategy 2023-2028**, **Urban Design**

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), and **'Our Greenwich' Corporate Plan (2025)**. The Council is also in the process of adopting a **Climate Resilience SPD**¹⁴, setting out borough-wide measures to address the increased risk of flooding. Each of these documents include aims, objectives, or guidance relevant to GI and open spaces in the borough.

2.9 The Council is in the process of producing a new **Local Plan (emerging)** to replace the adopted Core Strategy. The new Local Plan will set out the Council's vision for development over the 15-year period from 2021 to 2036. A Call for Sites was undertaken in 2024 and the Council are in the production the draft Local Plan for public consultation. The new Local Plan is currently anticipated for adoption in 2027.

Socio-economic and environmental profile

Population and demographic profile

2.10 As of 2021, there were 289,100 residents living within the borough, marking a 13.6% increase from 254,600 in 2011. The is higher than the overall percentage increase in population across both London (7.7%) and England (6.6%). The borough experienced the fifth highest population increase by percentage of any London borough over this period, behind Tower Hamlets, Barking and Dagenham, City of London and Newham.

2.11 It is estimated that by 2030, the borough's population will be around 314, 926 and by 2043 it will have reached around 335,789¹⁵. This represents a 16.1% increase from 2021 population levels.

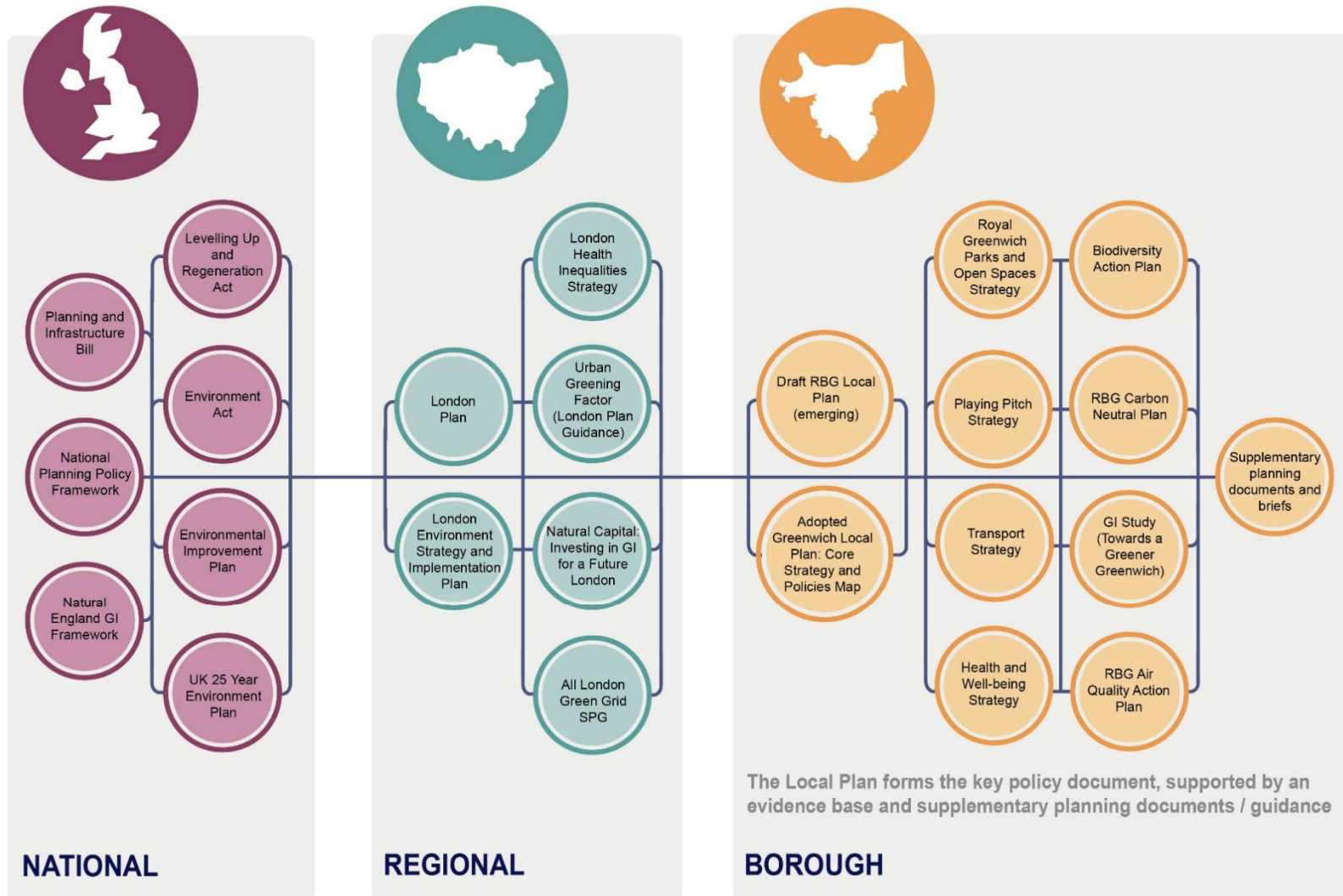
2.12 As of 2021, the residents of the borough have an average (median) age of 35 years, representing an increase of two years from 33 in 2011. The average age of the borough is similar to London as a whole (35 years) but is significantly lower than England as a whole (40 years).

¹³ Natural England (2023). Introduction to the Green Infrastructure Framework. Available at: <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Home.aspx>

¹⁴ <https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/news/2025/moving-climate-emergency-climate-resilience-pioneering-plan-future-proof-our-borough>

¹⁵ NOMIS (2020) Subnational mid-year population projection estimates: 2018-based (see: [Subnational population projections for England - Office for National Statistics](#))

Figure 2.1 Legal and policy context within the borough



2.13 As of 2021, 10.5% of the borough's residents are over 65 (compared with 18.4% of England). Nevertheless, this represents an increase of 15.6% since 2011, (albeit compared to 20.1% increase across England). The borough has experienced a growing younger population, with residents aged 15-64 increasing by 15.2% between 2011 and 2021, which is significantly greater than the national average (just 3.6% across England). The number of children (under 15) in the borough rose by 7.2% over the same ten-year period, compared to 5.0% across England¹⁶.

2.14 The borough's population is diverse. 55.7% of the population are white, 21.0% are black (including Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean and African), 13.2% are Asian (Asian British and Asian Welsh), 6.0% are mixed or multiple ethnic backgrounds, and 4.2% from other ethnic groups¹⁷.

Economy and employment

2.15 Unemployment affects an estimated 5.8% of the borough's residents, which is 0.6% higher than London as a whole and 2.0% higher than the average unemployment rate for the UK¹⁸. However, between 2011 and 2021, the borough saw England's third-largest percentage increase in the proportion of people (aged 16+, excluding full-time students) who were employed.

Poverty and deprivation

2.16 In 2022-23, approximately one in four households in the borough (26%) were estimated to be in poverty, which is in line with the average across London (26%). The borough has the largest proportion of in-poverty residents that were in working households (i.e. households where at least one member was in employment) across London. This equates to 84% of its approximately 38,000 in-poverty residents¹⁹.



Riverside views at Royal Arsenal West

¹⁶ Census 2021 – Population Age

¹⁷ Census 2021 – Ethnic Group

¹⁸ NOMIS Labour Market Profile – Greenwich. Employment and unemployment (Jan 2024 – Dec 2024).

¹⁹ Trust for London (2024) Poverty rates by London Borough (2022/23) (see: [London's Poverty Profile](#) | Trust for London)

2.17 In 2021, 51.8% of households in the borough were classified as being deprived in one or more of the following categories: employment, education, health and disability, and housing²⁰. The cost-of-living crisis has exacerbated issues of poverty in the borough, like much of the country, with many residents experiencing fuel poverty for the first time in 2022. One in seven households in the borough also experienced problems with food insecurity²¹.

2.18 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)²² measures relative deprivation, comprising a range of indicators including; income, employment, health, education, crime, barriers to housing and services as well as living environment. As of the latest IMD statistics released in 2025, the borough remains one of the most deprived local authorities, ranking within the 20% most deprived in England.

2.19 In terms of overall relative deprivation, 17% of residents live in areas ranked in the 20% most deprived in England. These neighbourhoods are spread throughout the north, east and centre of the borough, including areas of Woolwich, Thamesmead, Abbey Wood, Charlton, Kidbrooke, Eltham, Plumstead and Shooters Hill. By contrast, only 3.6% of the borough's residents live in areas ranked in the 20% least deprived in England. These areas are mostly found within Eltham, with additional pockets along the River Thames in Woolwich, and at Blackheath and Westcombe Park.

2.20 The borough witnessed an improvement in its overall ranking relative to other local authorities between IMD 2015, IMD 2019 and IMD 2025. In 2015, the rank of average rank (which summarises the average level of deprivation across an area, based on the population weighted ranks of all the neighbourhoods within it) placed the borough at 50th across all local authorities in England. In 2019, it ranked 60th, and in 2025 it ranked 74th. However, high levels of deprivation remain throughout the borough, particularly with regard to health and disability, living environment and crime (despite the small improvements in crime related deprivation since 2019). In contrast, income and barriers to housing and services have experienced an improvement during the period between 2019 and 2025. A summary of the borough's performance against each individual deprivation indicator is provided below.

- **Income:** Just over one fifth (which is a significant improvement from a third in 2019) of residents live in communities ranked in the 20% most income deprived in England and

only 3% (which is worse than 4% in 2019) live in communities in the 20% least income deprived.

- **Employment:** 14% (which is a small improvement from 15% in 2019) of the borough's residents live in communities in the 20% most employment deprived in England. In contrast, 8% (which is a small improvement from 7.5% in 2019) live in neighbourhoods ranked in the 20% least employment deprived.
- **Education, skills and training:** The level of deprivation relating to education, skills and training is much lower than other domains, with three areas in the south of the borough (at Eltham and Kidbrooke), ranked within the 20% most deprived (equating to 1.7% of the population). In contrast, 15% (the same as in 2019) of the population live in neighbourhoods in the least deprived in terms of education. These areas are generally located in central areas of the borough (Eltham, Plumstead and Shooters Hill) and west of the borough (Blackheath and Westcombe Park).
- **Health and disability:** There are 14 areas across the north, east and south of the borough (at Thamesmead and Abbey Wood, Woolwich, Eltham and Kidbrooke), containing 8.4% of the population, which rank in the 20% most deprived in England. Additionally, 6% (which is worse than 8% in 2019) of the population live in neighbourhoods ranked in the 20% least deprived for this domain. These areas are located in the south and west of the borough. Whilst other indicators have experienced an improvement in trend since the 2019 IMD, this indicator has experienced an overall worsening in the level of deprivation in 2025.
- **Crime:** The borough has high levels of crime deprivation across the borough. There are 30 areas, containing 20% of the population, which are ranked within the top 20% most deprived in terms of crime (this represents an improvement on the 44 areas and 30% of the population which were within the top 20% most deprived in 2019). In contrast, 2% of communities (an improvement on less than 1% in 2019) live in areas ranked in the 20% least deprived in England for this domain.

²⁰ Census 2021 – Household deprivation.

²¹ Royal Borough of Greenwich Council (2025) Our Greenwich (see: [Our Greenwich Plan | Home | Supported by Royal Borough of Greenwich](#))

²² Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2025) [English Indices of Deprivation 2025: Statistical Release](#)

- **Barriers to housing and services:** The borough is ranked as one of the most deprived local authorities in England in this domain. Over one third of the population live in areas ranked within the top 20% most deprived in terms of access to services and housing. However, this marks a significant improvement since 2019, whereby almost two thirds of the population were in the top 20% most deprived areas. These areas span most of the north and west of the borough; including Thamesmead, Abbey Wood, Woolwich, Charlton, Kidbrooke, and areas of Eltham. Additionally, 2.2% of the borough's residents live in areas ranked in the 20% least deprived in this domain (whereby previously none of the boroughs residents lived in the least deprived in 2019).
- **Living environment:** There are high levels of living environment deprivation across the borough, with 21.8% (a significant worsening from 12% in 2019) of the population in communities in the top 20% most deprived in England. The most deprived areas are located around Thamesmead, Abbey Wood, Plumstead, Shooters Hill, Blackheath and Westcombe Park. In contrast, 1.7% (which represents an improvement from none in 2019) of the borough's residents live in areas ranked within the least deprived 20% for this domain. As for health deprivation, this indicator has also experienced an overall worsening in the level of deprivation in 2025.

Opportunity areas

2.21 There are four 'Opportunity Areas' (OA) in the borough, as identified in the London Plan. These have been identified for significant regeneration and redevelopment (see **Figure 2.2**).

1. **Charlton Riverside Opportunity Area** – identified for redevelopment of the 122 ha riverside employment and retail area to create a mixed-use neighbourhood. Plans include enhancing the Thames Path to connect Woolwich Town Centre and Greenwich Peninsula as well as significant new residential development alongside community facilities, streets and open spaces. The Mayor's London Plan (2021) identifies the area with potential for 8,000 new homes and 1,000 new jobs by 2041.
2. **Thamesmead and Abbey Wood** - identified as one of the largest OAs in London, originally designated in 2004 as part of the Thames Estuary Growth Corridor. Plans for

the area's future development includes significant public transport improvements (e.g. extension of the DLR to Thamesmead and upgrades to the bus network), alongside major employment growth and supporting mixed-use development. The regeneration of Abbey Wood aims to complement the connectivity that the Elizabeth Line has generated to this area. The Thamesmead and Abbey Wood OA Planning Framework (2020)²³ outlines that, with public transport improvements, the area could provide over 15,000 new homes and 8,000 new jobs.

3. **Greenwich Peninsula** – identified in the Mayor's London Plan 2021 for 17,000 new homes and 15,000 new jobs by 2041. Proposals seek to build on the area's destination experience, incorporating public realm, greening and active travel opportunities.
4. **Woolwich Town Centre** – identified in the Mayor's London Plan 2021 with potential for 5,000 new homes and 2,500 jobs by 2041. The area has undergone significant regeneration in recent years, with investment of £140 million from the Council and its partners, due to be complete in 2025. The changes include new community facilities, homes, workspaces, studios and large-scale public realm enhancements. Future plans aim to make Woolwich a major economic hub for South East London.

Housing

2.22 The majority of residents live in a flat, maisonette or apartment (51.5%), with the highest densities in the north and west of the borough (i.e. 80-90% in riverside areas of Charlton, Woolwich and Greenwich). 48.4% of the borough's residents live in a whole house or bungalow, generally in the south (around Eltham and Middle Park) and east (Plumstead, Abbey Wood and Thamesmead). The borough is in the highest 3% of English local authority areas for the share of households in the social rented sector, as of 2021. This proportion of households fell from 34.3% in 2011 to 31.0% in 2021²⁴.

²³ GLA (2020) Thamesmead and Abbey Wood Opportunity Area Planning Framework (see: https://data.london.gov.uk/download/16bfd9d-8330-46db-a37c-ac2196d0993e/9ea9d5c8-688f-4253-835f-be1d87fcf991/TAW_OAPF_December%202020.pdf)

²⁴ Census 2021 – Accommodation type

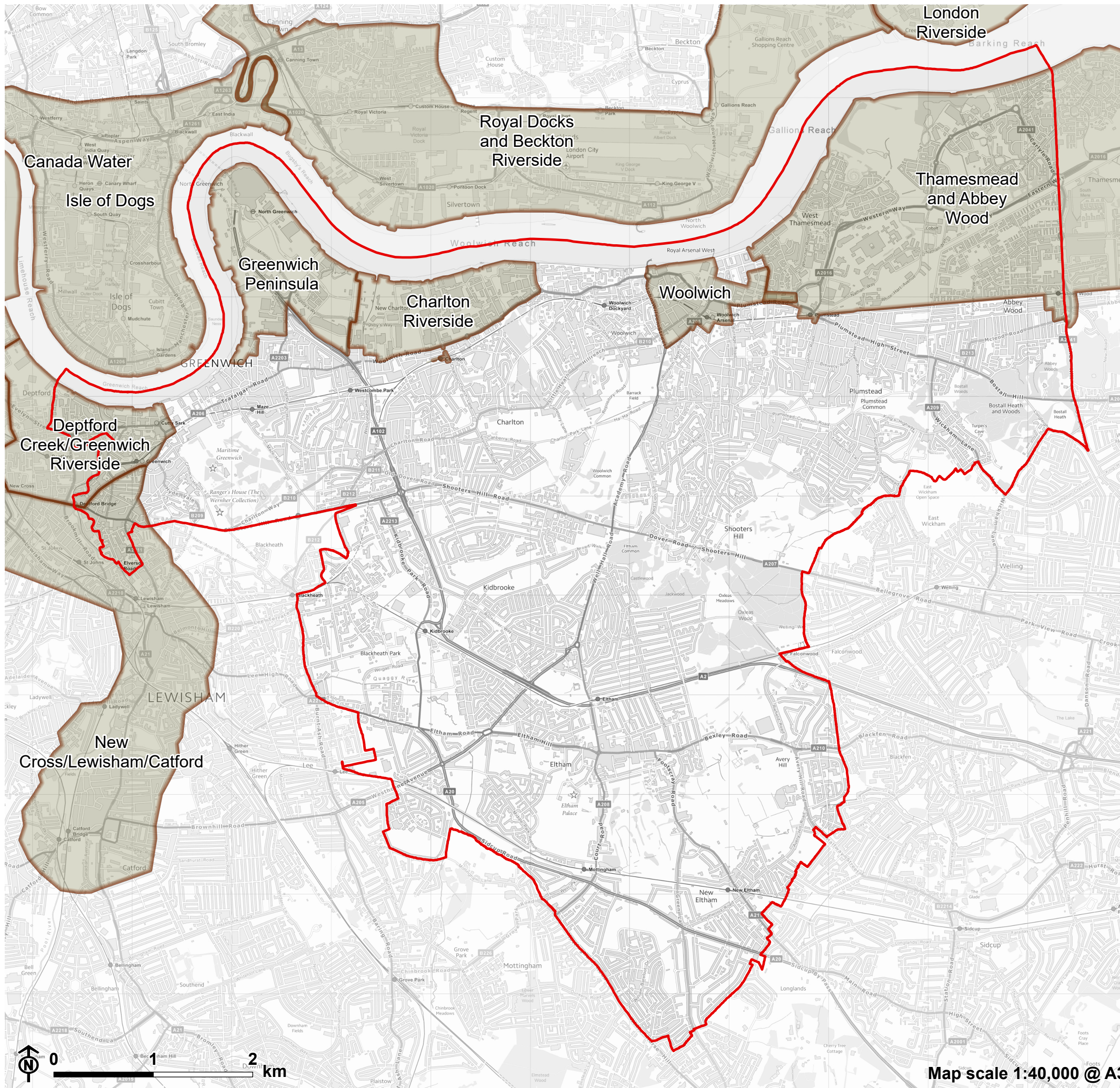


Figure 2.2: Opportunity Areas

Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
 Opportunity Areas

Access to private gardens

2.23 Compared to England, Greater London has a considerably lower percentage of addresses with access to private outdoor space (79% compared to 88%) and the average size of private outdoor space is much smaller (196.50m² compared to a national average of 332.90m²). As of 2020, the percentage of properties in the borough with access to private gardens is in line with the rest of London (80%) and the average size of outdoor space is 166.70m². The areas of the borough which have the lowest proportions of addresses with access to private greenspace are Charlton Riverside (50%) and Woolwich Dockyard (65%)²⁵.

2.24 The amount of private garden space at local level varies considerably across the borough. In the north, riverside neighbourhoods including Greenwich, Greenwich Peninsula, Charlton, Woolwich and Thamesmead, have a small proportion of private garden area per head of population (less than 24,000m² per 1,000 people). In areas in the centre and south of the borough, private garden space in relation to population density increases considerably. Avery Hill has the highest proportion of private garden space (167,181m² per 1,000 population)²⁶.

Health and wellbeing

2.25 As of 2021, 17.7% of residents are disabled as defined by the Equality Act (comprising 8.4% “day to day activities limited a lot” and 9.3% “day-to-day activities limited a little”). In terms of general health, 47.3% of borough residents described their health as “very good”; compared to 34.9% as “good” and 13.6% as “fair”. 4.7% describes their health as “bad” and 1.5% “very bad”. This is reflective of people own opinions of their overall health on a five-point scale²⁷.

2.26 Male life expectancy at birth in the borough is 79.5 years, compared to 79.6 years for England and 80.7 years for London. Life expectancy at birth is 83.0 years, compared to 83.2 for England and 84.5 for London. In terms of healthy life expectancy, the latest data (for 2015-17) indicated that on average, women in the borough will spend 61.0 years of their life in good health, compared to 63.2 years for men. Although women live longer than men, they spend more years in poor health.



Public open space immediately south of Delisle Road, Thamesmead

²⁵ ONS (2020) Access to gardens and public greenspace in Great Britain by Middle Layer Super Output Area (see: [Access to gardens and public greenspace in Great Britain - Office for National Statistics](#))

²⁶ Natural England (2025) Green Infrastructure Framework Map – Private Gardens Area per 1k people (m²) (see: [Green Infrastructure Map](#))

²⁷ Note: Census 2021 was conducted during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and this may have influenced how people perceive and rated their health.

A photograph of a park in Greenwich, London. A paved path leads from the foreground into the park, flanked by green grass. In the middle ground, there are two green metal benches and two green trash bins. Large, leafy trees provide shade over the path and benches. In the background, brick residential buildings are visible under a blue sky with some clouds. A black lamppost stands on the left side of the path.

Chapter 3: A portrait of green and blue infrastructure within Royal Borough of Greenwich

Chapter 3

A portrait of green and blue infrastructure within Royal Borough of Greenwich

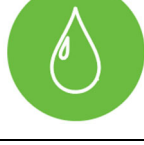
This chapter considers the pattern of existing GBI within the borough, organised by the objectives defined within the London GI Framework.

3.1 Owing to its multi-functionality, the benefits of high-quality GBI are numerous and far reaching (see **Chapter 1**). The London GI Framework identifies a number of objectives which GBI can help to address and mitigate within the London context. The tool is a strategic evidence base to help plan and prioritise investment in GI in London. A brief summary of the way in which GBI can help to achieve the objectives is provided in **Table 3.1**. Each objective is taken in turn and used to describe a borough-wide summary of existing GBI provision.

3.2 Commonalities exist between the objectives and Natural England's five 'Benefit Principles' (see **Chapter 1**), as summarised within **Figure 3.1**.

The London GI Framework assesses relative GI 'need' and 'provision' across the borough. Need is defined as 'the extent of a problem', while provision is considered 'the amount of existing GI that could help address the problem'. A borough level summary of the bi-variate need and provision analysis for each objective is provided within grey text boxes as part of this chapter.

Table 3.1 Summary of objectives, as defined within the London GI Framework

Name of objective		Rationale
Improved access to greenspace		Provision of accessible greenspaces within easy reach provides opportunities for physical activity and social interaction for Londoners, supporting physical and mental health and strengthening communities.
Improved access to blue space		Access to blue networks contributes to a range of recreational and health benefits. This can range from waterside access for walking to active sports.
Nature recovery		GBI can provide habitat and improve ecological linkages and connectivity to promote the movement of species as part of the wider nature recovery network.
Flood risk mitigation		A GBI-led approach can help support resilience and adaptation to surface water and fluvial flooding as part of nature-based solutions or SuDS.
Clean water		GBI can play a role in improving water quality to help maximise the benefits of water resources.

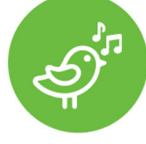
Name of objective		Rationale
Urban cooling		GBI performs a role in mitigating and adapting to climate change through local climate regulation, provision of shade and the reduction in ambient temperatures.
Clean air		If appropriately sited, GI can contribute to improved air quality along key transport corridors, reducing impacts from vehicle emissions.
Noise reduction		The integration of greening interventions, if implemented correctly, can have significant noise abatement benefits along key transport corridors.
Greener active travel routes		Through sensitive design, GBI can enhance the walking and cycling environment across London, leading to physical health benefits from more active lifestyles.
Greener high streets		GBI helps create high quality environments which attract inward investment, support high streets and retail, attract tourists and act as a catalyst for regeneration.

Figure 3.1 Alignment of London GI Framework objectives with the Natural England 'Benefit Principles' (as defined within the London GI Framework Technical Methodology Report)

Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework: Five Benefit Principles

		Nature-rich and beautiful places	Active & healthy places	Thriving & prosperous places	Improved water management	Resilient & climate positive places
Objectives	Improved access to green space	✓	✓	✓		
	Improved access to blue space	✓	✓		✓	
	Nature recovery	✓			✓	✓
	Flood control	✓		✓	✓	✓
	Clean water		✓		✓	✓
	Urban cooling		✓	✓	✓	✓
	Clean air		✓	✓		✓
	Noise reduction		✓			
	Greener active travel routes	✓	✓	✓		
	Greener high streets	✓	✓	✓		✓

Improved access to greenspace

Provision of accessible greenspaces within easy reach provides opportunities for physical activity and social interaction for Londoners, supporting physical and mental health and strengthening communities.

3.3 Accessible greenspace refers to areas of open space in the borough which offer areas for informal recreation and space for natural habitats. There are 2.75 ha of accessible greenspace per 1,000 of the population in the borough. This includes large swathes of semi-natural areas, including around Shooters Hill and Bostall Woods, as well as more formal parks including Greenwich Park, Charlton Park and Avery Hill Park. In addition, areas of common land including Woolwich Common and Plumstead Common form notable large accessible greenspaces. These larger open spaces are complemented by a network of smaller parks and gardens, semi-natural greenspaces and amenity greenspaces which provide areas of greenspace close to where people live and work.

3.4 Overall, 72.5% of the borough is situated within 400 m of an accessible greenspace of any size. This equates to 27.5% of the borough lying within an area of deficiency (AoD) for accessible greenspace.

3.5 Some greenspaces within the borough have been recognised for their important recreational role and good management through the Green Flag Award. Overall, 17 open spaces in the borough have achieved this recognition, including Horn Park, Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park, Well Hall Pleasance, Plumstead Gardens and Fairy Hill Park.

3.6 A full assessment of the provision of accessible greenspace, and other open space typologies is set out in **Chapter 5**.

3.7 The spatial distribution of need and provision in relation to 'improved access to greenspace', as described within the London GI Framework, is shown in **Figure 3.2**.



Greenwich Park: an internationally recognised landscape and one of the historic features which form the Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site.

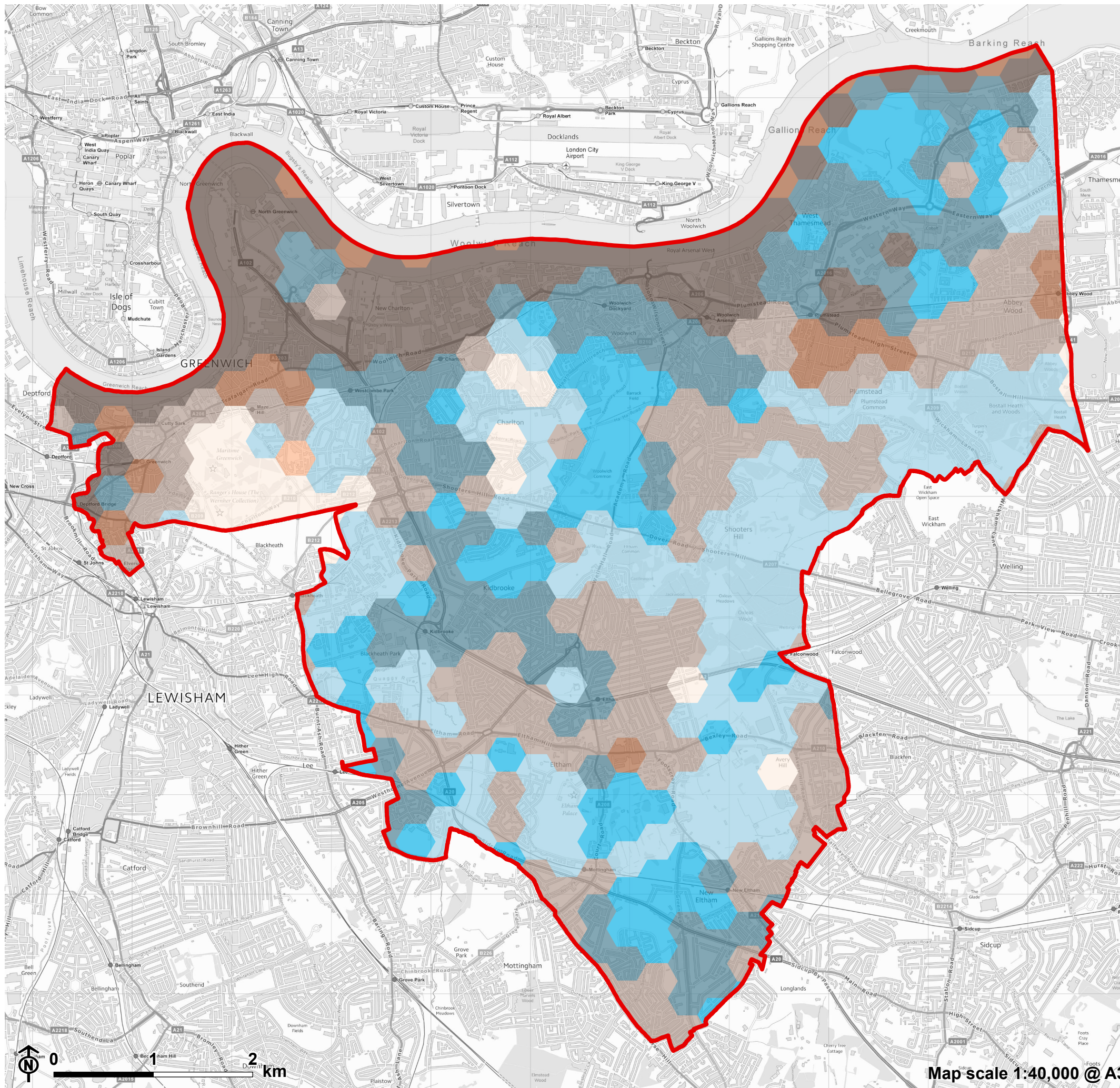
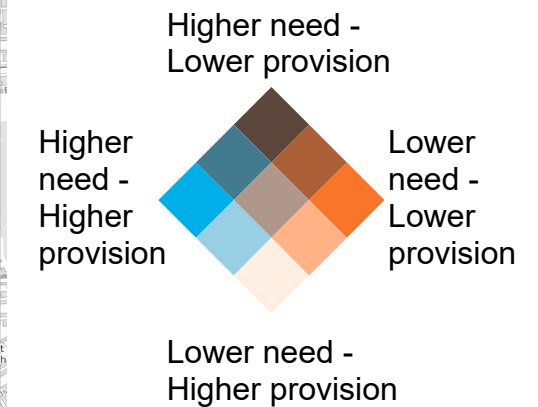


Figure 3.2: Spatial distribution of need and provision within the borough - Objective: Improved access to green space

 Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary

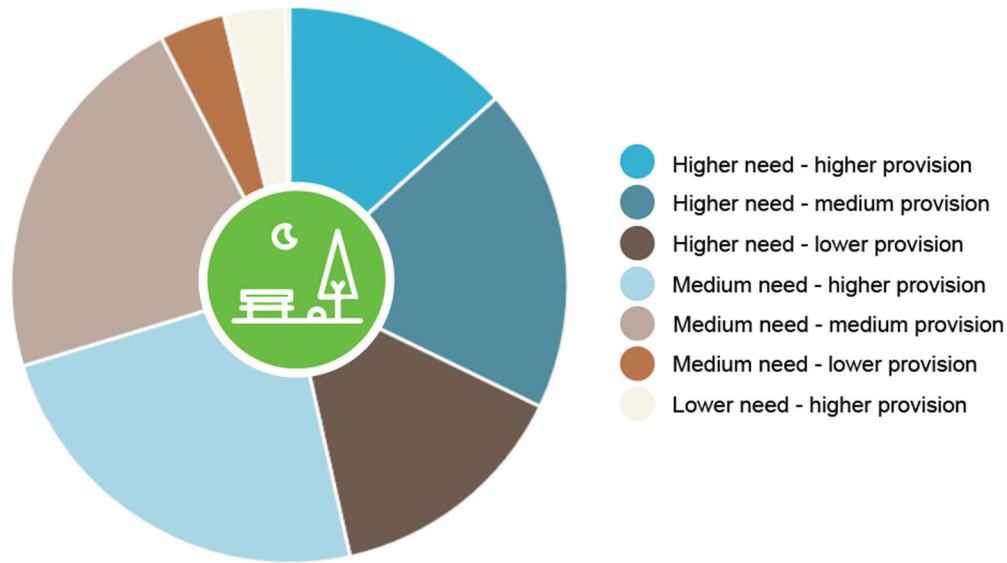
Need versus provision



Higher need / lower provision = Areas where there is a need to create new green space

Higher need / higher provision = Opportunities to make existing green space more accessible

Figure 3.3: London GI Framework: ‘improved access to greenspace’ objective – proportion of need and provision across the borough



London GI Framework: ‘improved access to greenspace’ objective

- **Figure 3.3** illustrates a borough summary of the overall proportion of need and provision relating to the ‘improved access to greenspace’ objective. The results indicate that 46.5% of the borough has a higher level of need for improved access to greenspace. These areas relate to parts of the borough which do not currently have close (i.e. walking distance) access to small or medium public open spaces (local and district parks), nature sites (SINCs) or private gardens.
- Only 3.8% of the borough is described as having a lower level of need for improved access to greenspace.

- When need is considered in conjunction with existing provision, the bivariate results show that 32.2% of the borough is defined as an area of higher need with either lower / medium levels of existing greenspace provision. This corresponds with areas where there is a need to create new greenspace.

Improved access to blue space

Access to blue networks contributes to a range of recreational and health benefits. This can range from waterside access for walking to active sports.

3.8 Blue infrastructure refers to the water elements in the borough, such as rivers, ponds, wetlands and canals. This network forms a fundamental component of wider GBI, forming key landscape features which contribute towards ecological connectivity, provide flood and water management functions and recreational corridors. These blue assets also provide, in some instances, opportunities for active travel, contributing to the borough’s wider accessibility. Watercourses within the borough are included within London’s ‘Blue Ribbon Network’ (as set out in the London Plan). Understanding the borough’s blue infrastructure as a ‘network’ is of particular significance as waterbodies are interconnected semi-natural systems that physically link other GBI assets within and outside the borough, providing multi-functional assets.

3.9 The northern extent of the borough is characterised by the tidal River Thames. The wide meanders of this watercourse provide the borough with approximately 13.5 km of river frontage²⁸. The borough’s location immediately south of the River Thames also holds historical and cultural significance, offering scenic and leisure opportunities along the riverbanks via routes such as the Thames Path National Trail, whilst also forming a backdrop for important heritage assets such as Woolwich Docklands. The watercourse plays a role in transportation and commerce, with flood risk management challenges requiring ongoing attention. **Figure 3.4** shows the extent of the borough’s blue infrastructure.

3.10 The spatial distribution of need and provision in relation to ‘improved access to blue space’, as described within the London GI Framework, is shown in **Figure 3.5**.

²⁸ On the River Thames - Visit Greenwich

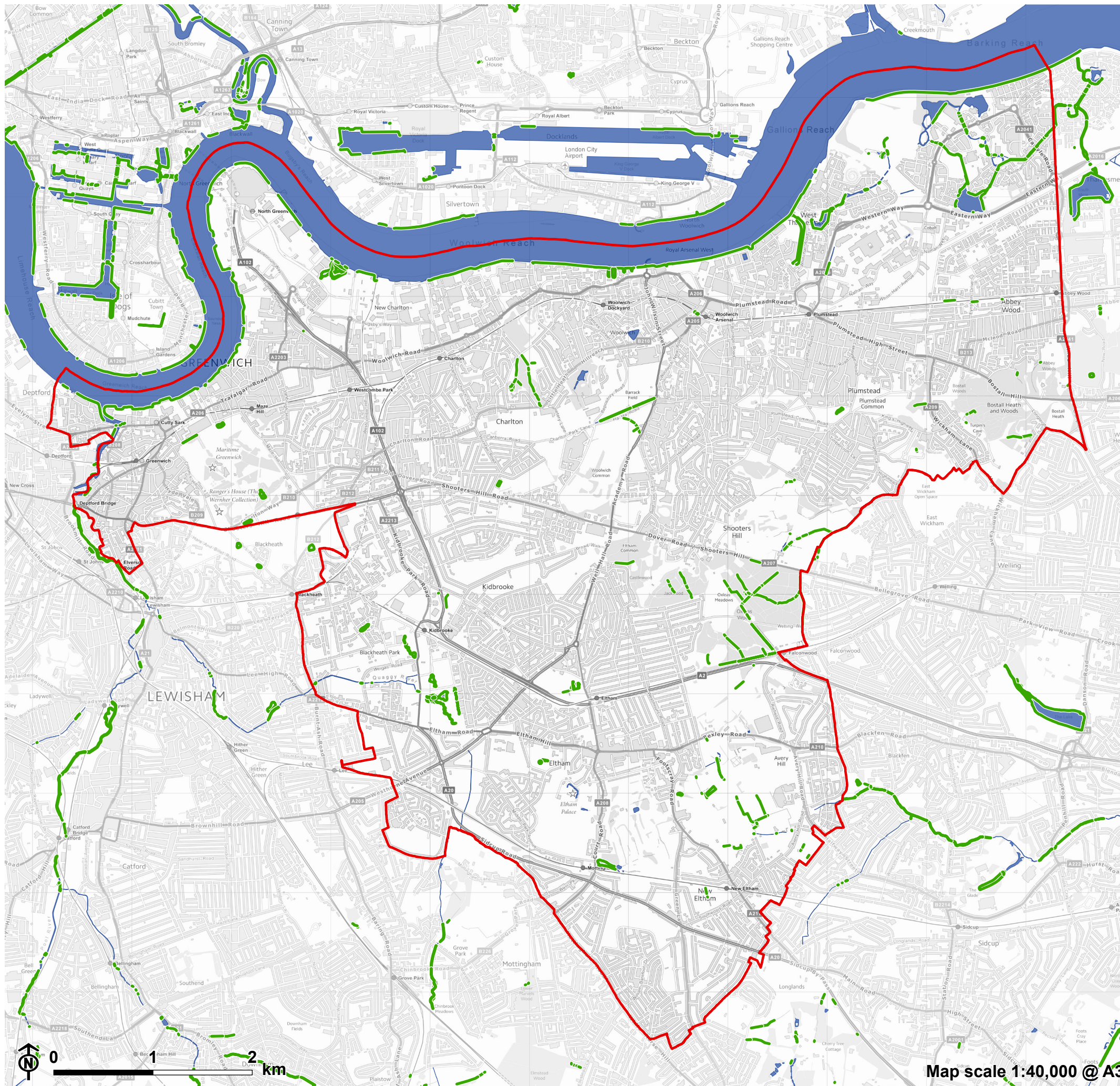


Figure 3.4: Blue infrastructure

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Accessible waterside
- Blue infrastructure network

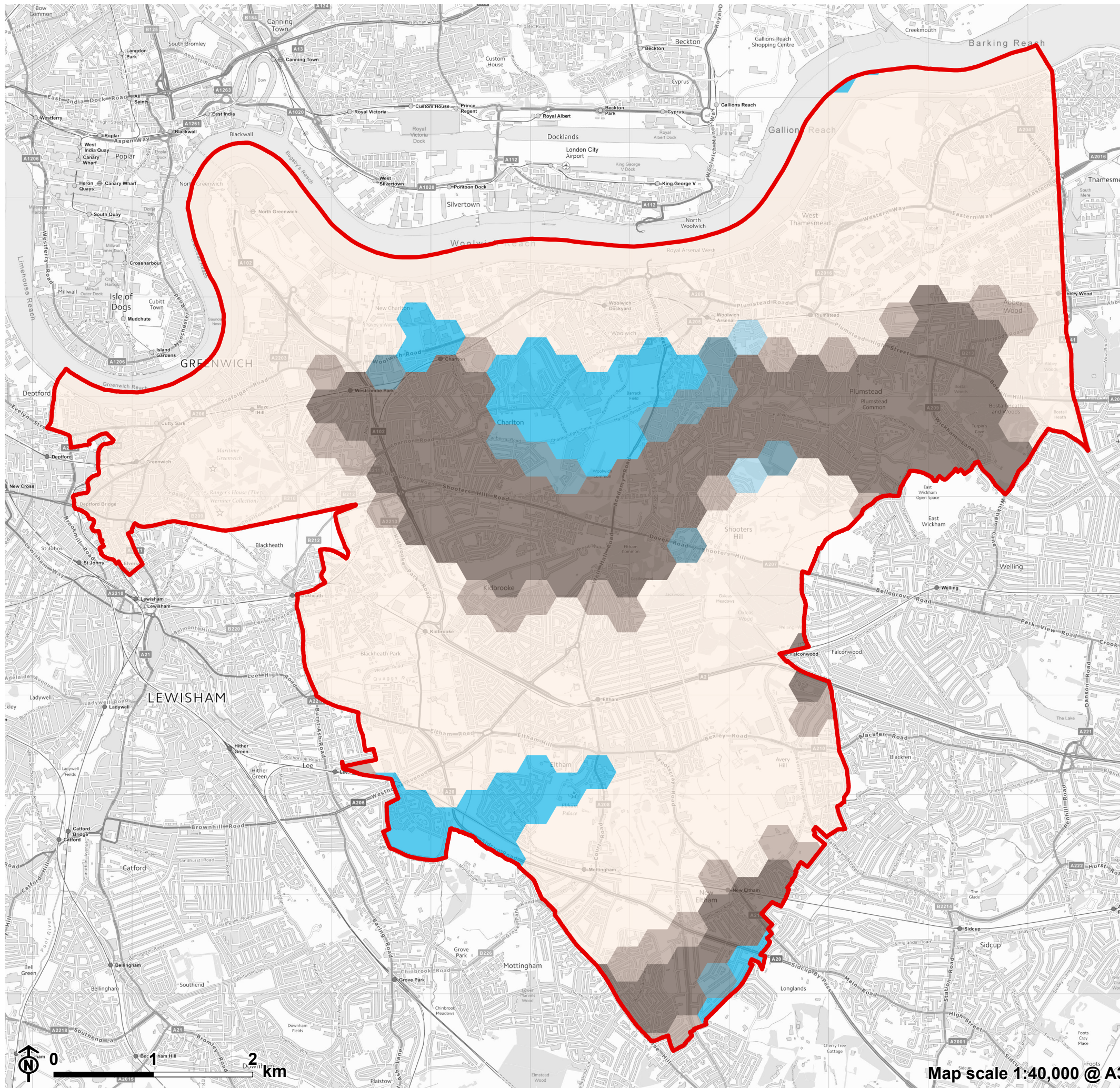
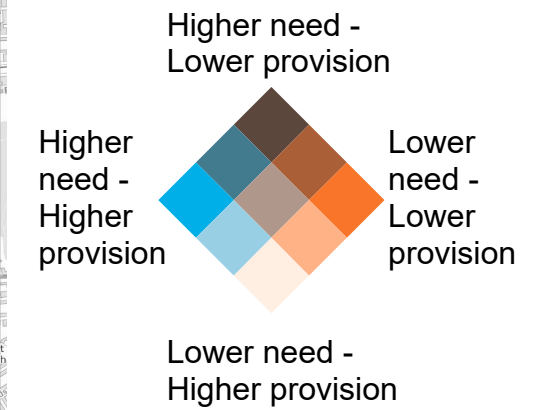


Figure 3.5: Spatial distribution of need and provision within the borough - Objective: Improved access to blue space

 Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary

Need versus provision





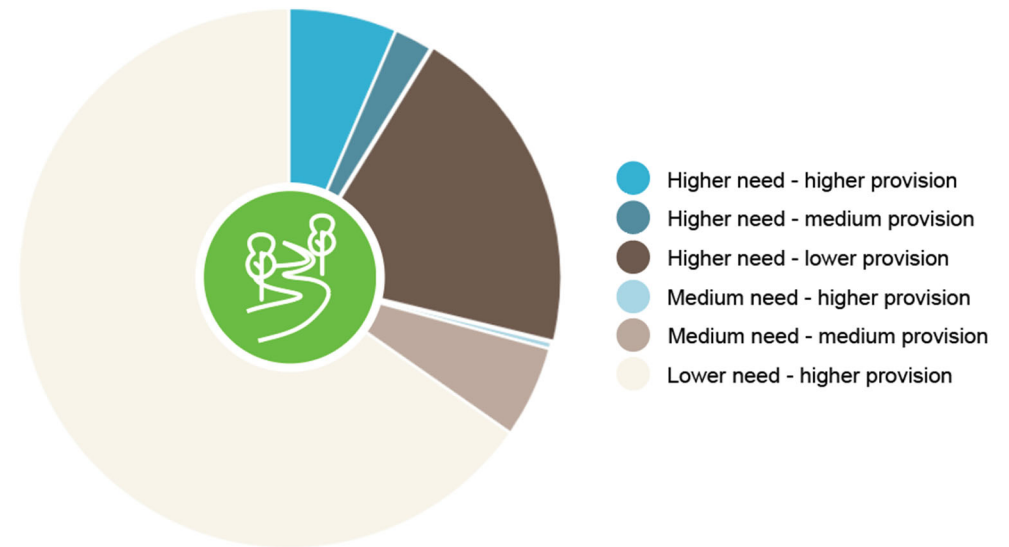
View across the River Thames from the Thames Path National Trail

3.11 In addition to the River Thames, a number of principal watercourses are also present within the borough. The Quaggy River flows north through Eltham and then west to its confluence with the River Ravensbourne. Although the Ravensbourne River itself does not flow through the borough, this catchment encompasses a wide section of the borough. As the River Ravensbourne nears its confluence with the River Thames it becomes tidally influenced and

flows through the far north west of the borough as the Deptford Creek. Other watercourses in the borough include the Kyd Brook, the River Shuttle, and the Wickham Valley watercourse which flows into the Butts Canal. The canal is culverted along much of its length, straddling the north east of the borough and the neighbouring borough of Bexley²⁹.

3.12 Thamesmead forms an area of residential and commercial development constructed on reclaimed marshland alongside the River Thames in the 1960s. A series of lakes and the canal network form part of the wider Marsh Dykes surface water management system with the aim of alleviating flood risk. In recent years, the blue infrastructure assets within Thamesmead have undergone a series of restoration efforts which have transformed the waterway environment into a thriving ecosystem³⁰.

Figure 3.6: London GI Framework: 'improved access to blue space' objective – proportion of need and provision across the borough



²⁹ Royal Borough of Greenwich Council (2017) Royal Borough of Greenwich Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

³⁰ <https://www.thames21.org.uk/improving-rivers/thamesmead-gallions-lake-and-butts-canal-restoration/>

London GI Framework: 'improved access to blue space' objective

- Largely due to the proximity of the River Thames and Deptford Creek, 72.2% of the borough is described as exhibiting higher provision of access to blue space. These areas lie within easy reach of an accessible waterway (see **Figure 3.6**).
- When areas of lowest provision are combined with areas of highest need in the borough, this equates to 20.0% of the borough. Improving access to blue space in areas of higher need and lower provision may involve enhanced signage and wayfinding leading to the waterside.
- Areas with the potential to open up an inaccessible waterway are described as exhibiting high need and high provision of access to blue space. This corresponds to 6.5% of the borough.

Nature recovery

GBI can provide habitat and improve ecological linkages and connectivity to promote the movement of species as part of the wider nature recovery network.

3.13 Due to its position along the tidal River Thames, the borough is afforded a diverse range of habitats and unique species assemblages found in terrestrial, aquatic and intertidal areas.

Designated nature conservation sites

3.14 The borough supports a diverse range of designated sites, which afford protection to its most ecologically valuable habitats and species, including the extensive network of irreplaceable habitat (114ha ancient woodland (covering 2% of the borough) and 135 veteran trees), priority habitat (742ha, covering 15% of the borough) and open water habitats (27ha of surface water, covering 0.5% of the borough, and 22km of rivers) across the borough (see **Figure 3.7**).

3.15 The borough sits in a geologically rich area with a range of habitats, including areas with chalk and acidic influence. Areas of lowland heathland are also evident around Bostall Heath and Bostall Woods, which are relatively unique habitats for this inner London setting. Extensive areas of ancient woodland and two large traditional orchards are also features of the borough, forming rare features in a London context. The geological setting and resulting complexity of habitat types, vegetation communities and designated sites are set out within the Strategic Biodiversity Assessment for the borough³¹.

3.16 Natural and semi-natural urban greenspace plays an important role in connecting, buffering and diluting pressure on designated sites to provide an expanded, well-connected and multi-functional network of habitats for wildlife.

Internationally designated nature conservation sites

3.17 The borough is devoid of internationally designated nature conservation sites. The nearest are Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), located 7.5km to the north and Lee Valley Special Protection Area (SPA) located 8.5km north west along the River Lee, which connects into the River Thames north of the borough. Additionally, Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar site are located approximately 20km east, towards Gravesend and Medway.

Nationally designated nature conservation sites

3.18 The borough incorporates several national statutory designated nature conservation sites; including three Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) with a total area of 78ha (1.5% of the borough), and three Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) with a total area of 143ha (3% of the borough) (see **Figure 3.7**).

3.19 The nearest National Nature Reserve (NNR), Swanscombe Skull Site NNR, is located 12 km south east of the borough. Additionally, there is a Marine Conservation Zone located 10km downstream, at Swanscombe, on the tidal River Thames.

³¹ Place Services (2025) Strategic Biodiversity Assessment

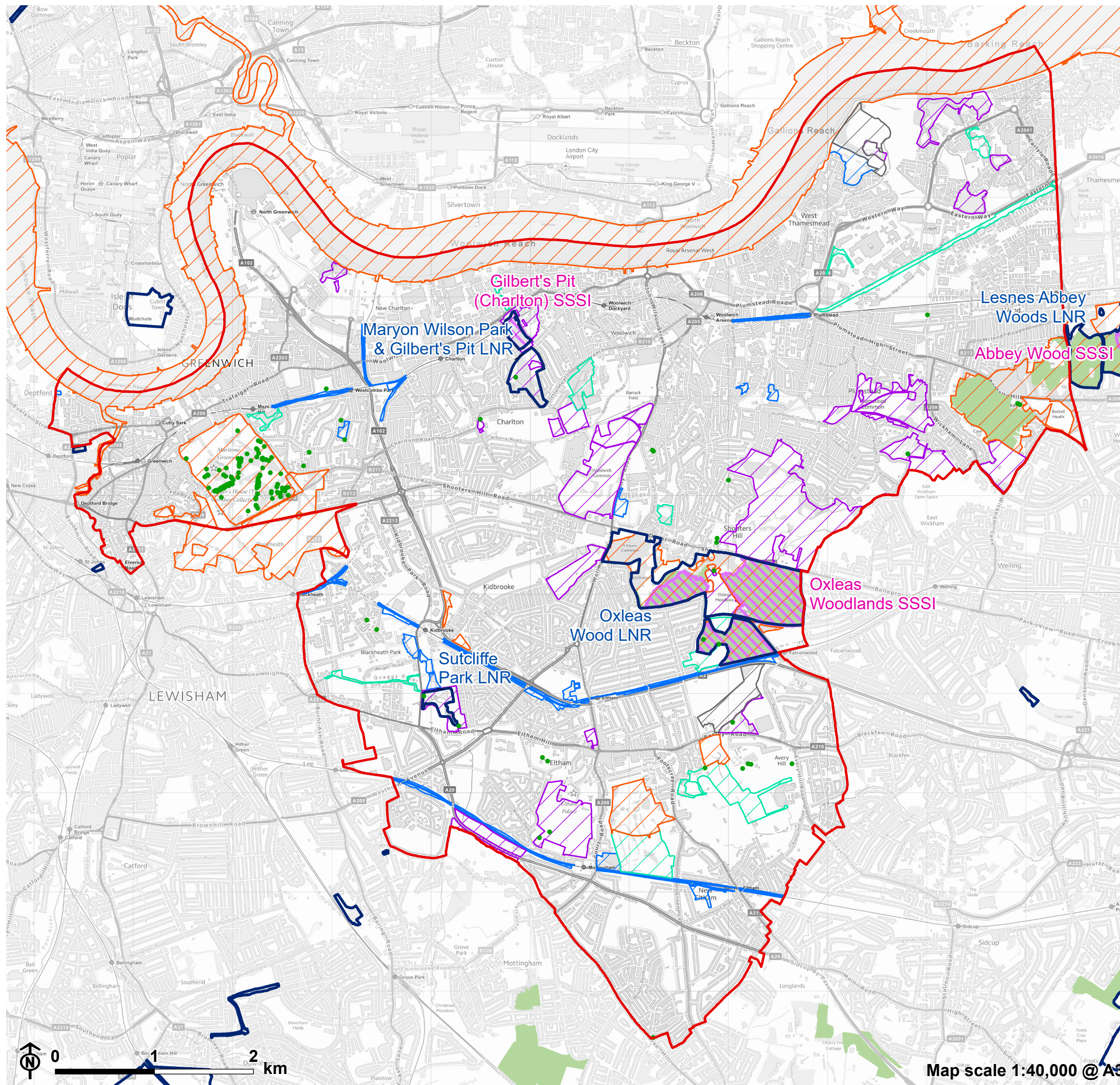


Figure 3.7: Designated sites and irreplaceable habitat

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Statutory Nature Conservation Sites**
 - Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 - Local Nature Reserve (LNR)
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)**
 - Local
 - Borough Grade 1
 - Borough Grade 2
 - Metropolitan
 - Potential
- Irreplaceable habitats**
 - Ancient Woodland
 - Veteran or Non-Ancient Veteran Tree

Biological SSSI

- Oxleas Woodlands SSSI – Supports several woodland types including long established ancient woodland, and tree and shrub species which have a restricted distribution in Greater London.

Geological SSSI

- Abbey Wood SSSI – Geological site containing fossilised deposits of mammals from the Tertiary age and birds.
- Gilbert's Pit (Charlton) SSSI – Geological site of Lower Tertiary beds dating from approximately 55 million years ago.

Local nature reserves (LNR)

- Maryon Wilson Park and Gilbert's Pit Local Nature Reserve – Former sandpits which have been converted into a public park. The site contains Gilbert's Pit geological SSSI.
- Oxleas Woodland Local Nature Reserve– Same designation as for Oxleas SSSI.
- Sutcliffe Park Local Nature Reserve– Large area of greenspace, containing a flood alleviation system for the Quaggy River.

Local non-statutory designated sites

3.20 Non-statutory sites designated at the local level include the rich network of **Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)**, which cover a total area of **1,125ha** (representing **22% of the borough**). There are overlapping SSSI and LNR designations such as at Shooters Hill. The borough supports all four SINC grades including Metropolitan, Borough (Grade I), Borough (Grade II) and Local SINC. Each SINC is characterised by varying ecological value, complexity of habitats, and species richness. In accordance with the results of the 2024 SINC Review for Greenwich, the network comprises the following:

- Six Metropolitan sites (631 ha, 12% of the borough);
- 20 Borough (Grade I) sites (322 ha, 6% of the borough);
- 12 Borough (Grade II) sites (82 ha, 2% of the borough); and
- 16 Local sites (53 ha, 1% of the borough).



Interpretive signage at Oxleas Woodland

Irreplaceable habitats

3.21 The borough supports **114 ha ancient woodland**, all of which is located within the SINC network (see **Table 3.2**) with the majority of the asset found at Shooters Hill Woodlands Metropolitan SINC and Lesnes Abbey Woods and Bostall Woods Metropolitan SINC.

Table 3.2 Irreplaceable habitats within the SINC network

Irreplaceable Habitat	Total area (ha)	Area within SINC	% within SINC
Ancient woodland	114	11	100%

3.22 Irreplaceable habitats, as defined by the Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024³², are habitats which take significant time to restore recreate or replace once they are destroyed, often as a result of their age, diversity or uniqueness. Of those habitats which are deemed to be irreplaceable, ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees are the key features for protection and conservation within the borough.

3.23 There is also a significant stock of ancient and veteran trees, with a total of **135 veteran trees** recorded within GiGL's Borough and Street Tree dataset. Veteran trees within the borough are often associated with wood pasture and parkland habitats, such as that at Blackheath and Greenwich Park Metropolitan SINC, which supports the majority of this irreplaceable asset within the borough, alongside other rare habitats such as acid grassland.

3.24 These assets provide an important resource supporting a range of flora and fauna, including rare invertebrates such as stag beetles and solitary mining bees. Important Invertebrate Areas³³, are found at Greenwich Park (ancient and veteran trees) and Thamesmead (open mosaic habitat).

3.25 Man-made lowland fens are present in smaller pockets as part of mosaic wetland habitats with reedbed and marshes at sites such as Greenwich Ecology Park SINC. This habitat aims to

replicate the ecological value of naturally occurring irreplaceable lowland fens (of which there are none present in the borough).

Priority habitats

3.26 On average, 84% of the priority habitats within the borough are present within the SINC network. **Table 3.3** presents the proportion of each habitat. **Figure 3.8** presents the distribution of priority and open water habitats.

Table 3.3 Priority habitats within the SINC network

Priority Habitat	Total area (ha)	Area within SINC (m ²)	% within SINC
Priority ponds	0.3	0.3	100%
Mudflats	43	43	100%
Good quality semi improved grassland	25	22	88%
Deciduous woodland	364	309	85%
Wood Pasture Parkland Area	286	236	82%
Lowland heathland	1.7	1.4	78%
Traditional orchard	3.3	2.4	73%
No main habitat but additional habitats present	18	8	46%

³² UK Government. The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations 2024

³³ Defined by Buglife as places that are home to nationally or internationally significant invertebrate populations and their habitats. Available at: <https://www.buglife.org.uk/our-work/important-invertebrate-areas/>

Priority Habitat	Total area (ha)	Area within SINC (m ²)	% within SINC
Coastal saltmarsh	0.3	0.1	29%
Total	742	622	84%

Terrestrial

3.27 The borough includes a combined area of **680 ha priority terrestrial habitats** (see **Figure 3.8**). These include (in order of extent) deciduous woodland, wood pasture and parkland, good quality semi-improved grassland, traditional orchards and lowland heathland. Of these priority habitats, 84% of the land area is afforded protection by the SINC network. The mosaics of terrestrial priority habitats present typically include deciduous woodland, good quality semi-improved grassland and to a lesser extent lowland heathland. These habitat assemblages are best represented at Shooters Hill Woodland SSSI, LNR and SINC and at Lesnes Abbey Woods and Bostall Woods SINC.

3.28 Sidcup Road Grassland and Harmony Wood SINC supports an extensive area of species-rich neutral grassland, as does Woolwich Common SINC and Oxleas Meadow SINC.

3.29 Although not captured within the mapping of the Priority Habitat Inventory, there is a significant resource of lowland acid grassland across the borough, including at Plumstead Common SINC, Plumstead Common Nature Reserve SINC and Woolwich Common SINC.

3.30 There are four green corridors identified in the adopted Local Plan (2014)³⁴, all of which are SINC:

- The railway line between Blackheath and Falconwood (GrL29);
- The Plumstead Railway cutting (GrL27);
- The Ridgeway in Abbey Wood/Thamesmead (GrBII06); and

- The railway line between Lee and New Eltham (GrL30).

3.31 Additionally, there is a Green Chain long-distance footpath which provides continuous public access through a series of open spaces, which are also designated as SINC (including Woolwich Cemetery, Plumstead Common and Bostall Woods).

Aquatic

3.32 The borough encompasses several river corridors, including the tidal River Thames, the River Ravensbourne and the Quaggy River. Together with a few small tributaries these comprise a **river network of over 22 km** (see **Table 3.4**). The River Thames and Deptford Creek, which passes through the west of the borough, both support extensive mudflats and a small amount of saltmarsh habitat. These provide hydrological connectivity for a range of aquatic species including fish, invertebrates, and birds.

Table 3.4 Aquatic habitats within the SINC network

Aquatic Habitat	Total area (ha)/ length (km)	Area / length within SINC	% within SINC
Main rivers (EA statutory main river)	22km	12km	61%
Open water (OS surface water)	27ha	19ha	70%

³⁴ Available at:
https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/info/200191/planning_policy_and_strategy/869/local_development_framework/2

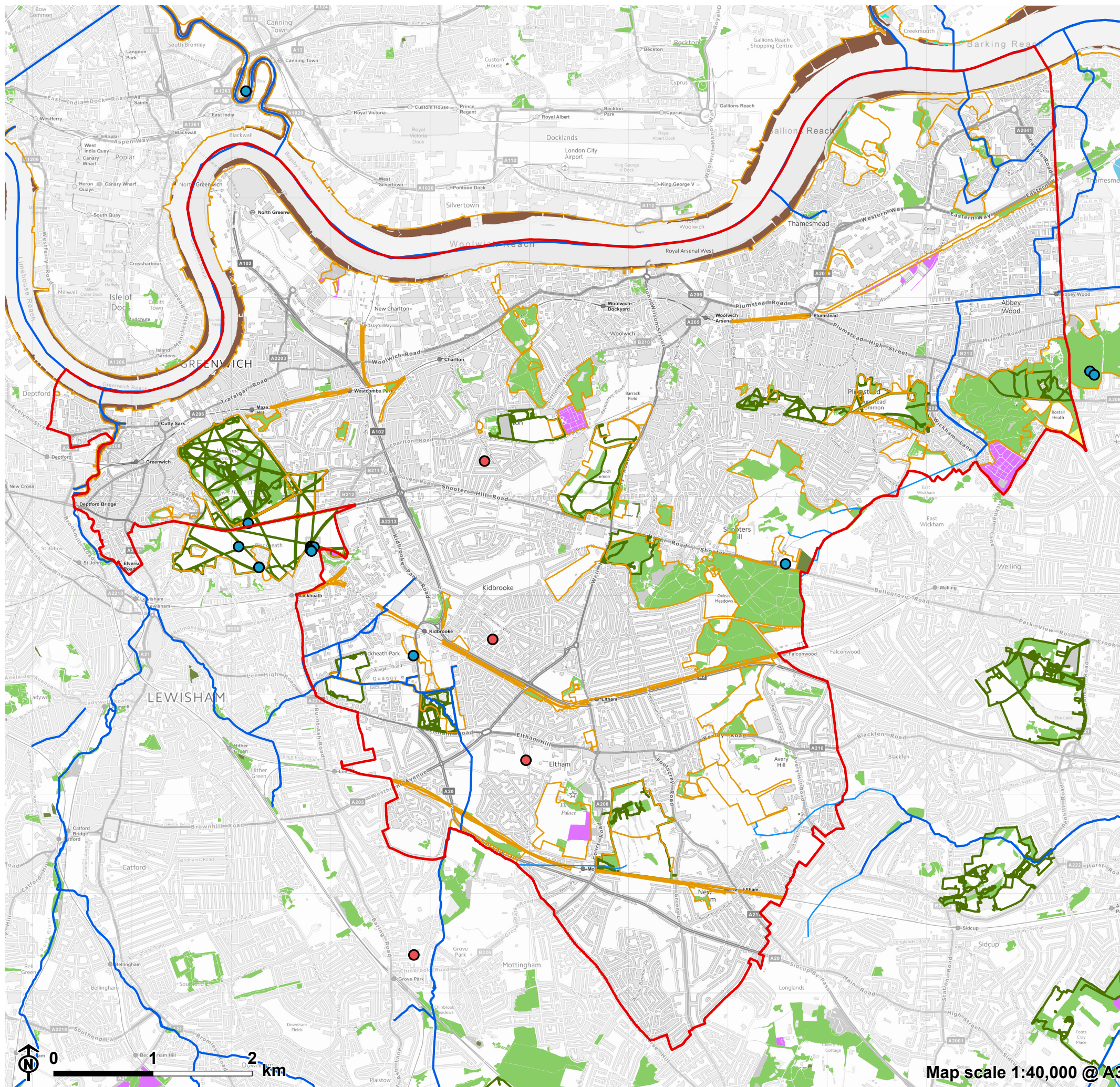


Figure 3.8: Priority habitat network and open water habitats

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

Priority Habitat

- Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh
- Coastal saltmarsh
- Deciduous woodland
- Good quality semi improved grassland
- Lowland heathland
- Mudflats
- No main habitat but additional habitats present
- Traditional orchard
- Priority pond
- Non-priority - Clean Water for Wildlife Ponds
- Wood Pasture and Parkland

Open Water Habitats and Main Rivers

- Statutory main river
- River
- Surface water

3.33 The Thamesmead canals extend over 7 km and provide connectivity with several large lakes in the Thamesmead area, characterised by an area of reclaimed marshland. There are two existing SINC in the Thamesmead area. Twin Tumps and Thamesmead SINC has a lake which supports water vole. Thamesmead Historic Area and Wetlands SINC consists of a series of water treatment lagoons and a species-rich ditch. The wider Thamesmead post-industrial site was identified as a potential SINC in the recent 2024 SINC review for the borough³⁵. However, the site requires a habitat survey to confirm its ecological value.

3.34 Sutcliffe Park Flood Alleviation Scheme is designated as a SINC following the restoration of the Quaggy River, creating a series of marshes which support a rich bird assemblage whilst also providing important flood storage capacity in an area of high risk to surface water flooding.

3.35 Elsewhere, throughout the borough there are **open water habitats** including streams and ditches, lakes and ponds with a **total area of 27 ha**. These support reedbeds and marsh habitat which are important to a range of waders and waterfowl and invertebrates, which are iconic to the many parks and open spaces in London. These habitats form important elements of the designation of many SINC sites in Greenwich including Birchmere, Cator Park, Repository Wood, Twin Tumps and Thamesmere, and The Tarn. Additionally, Greenwich Ecology Park SINC supports manmade fens, reedbeds and marsh.

3.36 Other open water habitats with significant ecological value include **six priority ponds and ponds offering ‘clean water for wildlife’**, which support substantial biodiversity including aquatic invertebrate, plant or amphibian populations, as confirmed by surveys undertaken by Freshwater Habitats Trust³⁶. Freshwater ponds form an important feature of designation of the following Metropolitan SINC, Royal Blackheath Golf Course SINC, which maintains a significant population of great crested newt, and Kidbrooke Green and Birdbrook Road Nature Reserves SINC which also supports significant amphibian populations.

3.37 The spatial distribution of need and provision in relation to ‘nature recovery’, as described within the London GI Framework, is shown in **Figure 3.9**.



Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park

³⁵ Place Services (2025) Royal Borough of Greenwich Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation Review 2024.

³⁶ Available at: <https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/7237bc7a-f267-473b-a300-a90881f9c699/os-priority-ponds-with-survey-data-polygons>

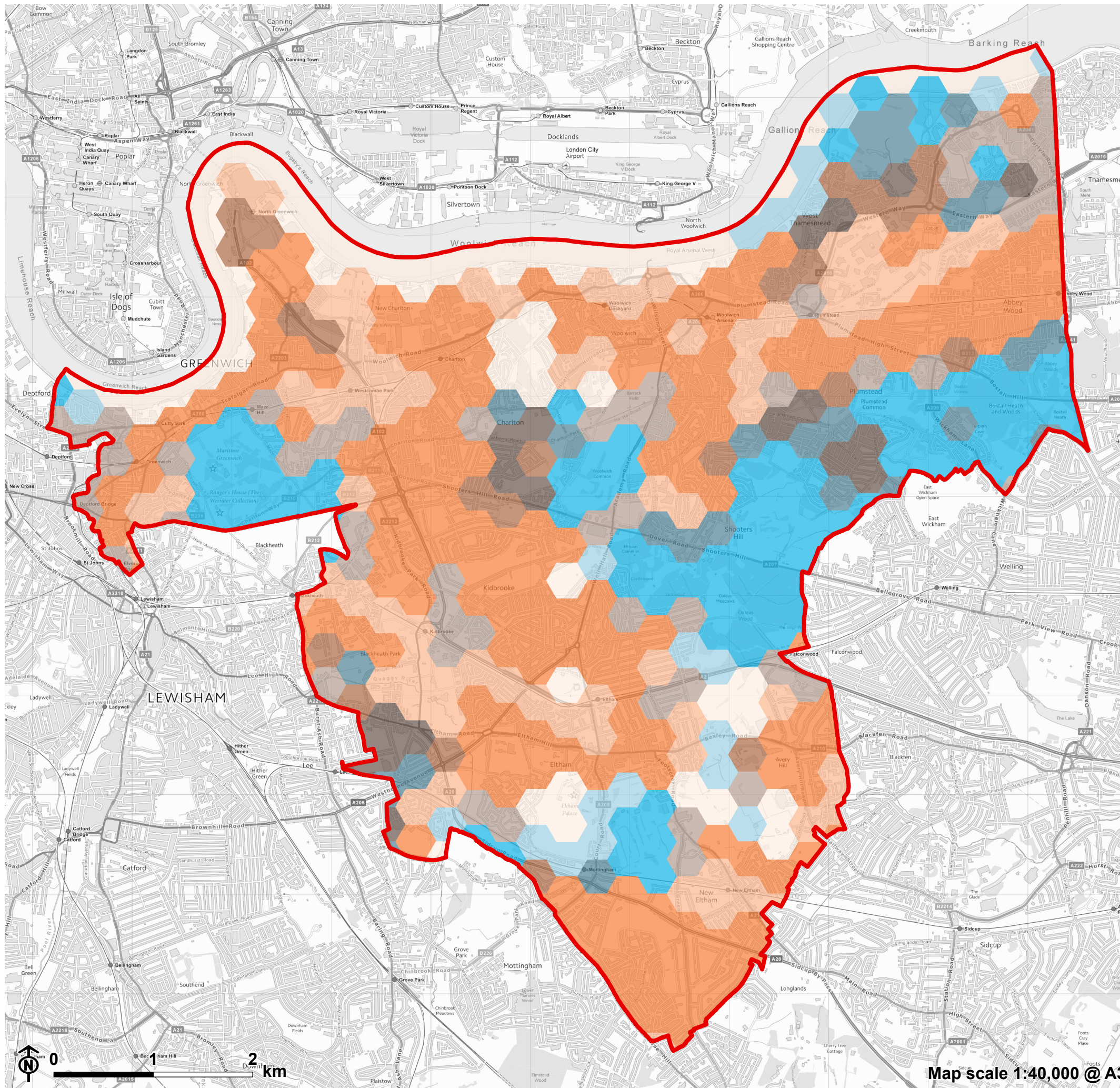
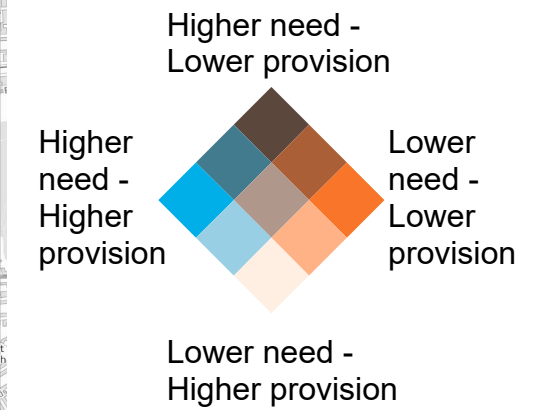


Figure 3.9: Spatial distribution of need and provision within the borough - Objective: Nature recovery

 Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary

Need versus provision



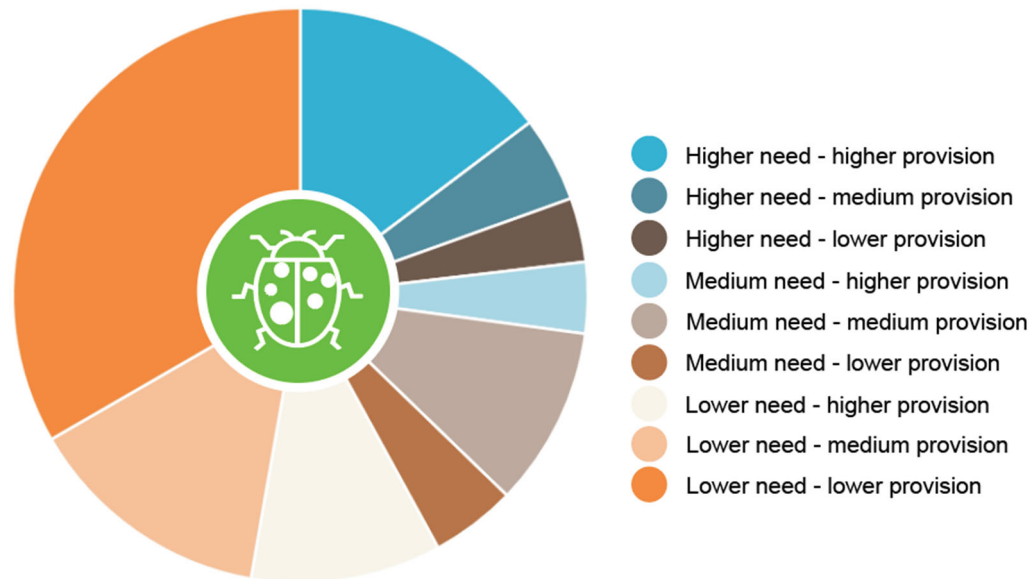
- Higher need / lower provision = Areas with potential for new habitat creation
- Higher need / higher provision = Existing nature sites with potential for enhancement

Intertidal

3.38 Mudflats and saltmarsh habitats lie along the banks of the tidal River Thames and Deptford Creek. Together they represent a total area of **43.7 ha of intertidal habitat** (see **Table 3.3**), with mudflats making up the vast majority (43.4ha). Over 99% of the habitat area lies within the tidal River Thames, which is designated as a Metropolitan SINC, due to the significance of this blue corridor for providing ecological and hydrological connectivity across Greater London.

3.39 The River Thames and the intertidal habitats support rare plant and invertebrate species, as well as other important populations including wildfowl and wading birds, a diverse range of fish species including migratory European eels, sea bass, twaite shad and sea lamprey. The tidal creeks also provide sheltered environments for fish nurseries.

Figure 3.10: London GI Framework: ‘nature recovery objective – proportion of need and provision across the borough



London GI Framework: ‘nature recovery’ objective

- Approximately 29.4% of the borough is identified as exhibiting higher provision, corresponding to the areas of particular importance for biodiversity (APIBs in the LNRS) located along river corridors and large greenspaces (see **Figure 3.10**). Areas of higher need (equating to LNRS potential measures) are those areas identified for potential nature recovery and cover approximately 23.1% of the borough.
- The findings of the bivariate analysis indicates that 14.7% of the borough is identified as an area of higher need and higher provision, corresponding with existing nature conservation sites with potential for enhancement e.g. Bostall Heath and Bostall Woods, Oxleas Wood and the River Thames.
- Areas defined as lower need and lower provision constitute those areas of the borough with fewer and smaller nature conservation sites (including those identified for potential nature recovery measures in the LNRS), covering 33.3% of the borough.

Pressures, and areas of deficiency in access to nature

3.40 A summary of the findings of the 2024 SINC review for the borough concluded that only six SINC are considered to be in “good” condition. Seven were considered to be in “poor” condition and five currently in moderate condition but declining. The majority of sites which were in poor or declining condition were grasslands affected by encroachment of competitive coarse grasses due to nutrient enrichment, and lack of, or inappropriate management resulting in poor species diversity.

3.41 Six SINC were identified to have particular pressures relating to public access. These were visited as part of the open space audit (see **Chapter 5**) to better understand the particular issues occurring, and inform measures for alleviating pressures. The results of the 2024 SINC review and discussion of the recommendations are presented within the analysis area profiles in **Chapter 6**, alongside discussion of the AoD in access to nature (SINC AoD). The SINC AoD dataset used in the analysis area profiles represents the existing AoD. It does not present updated modelling to reflect the results of the 2024 SINC review, as these had not been adopted at the time of writing. However, **Figure 3.11** presents the existing SINC AoD and the draft modelled AoD (based on the results of the 2024 SINC review pre-adoption) to highlight any potential areas of change.

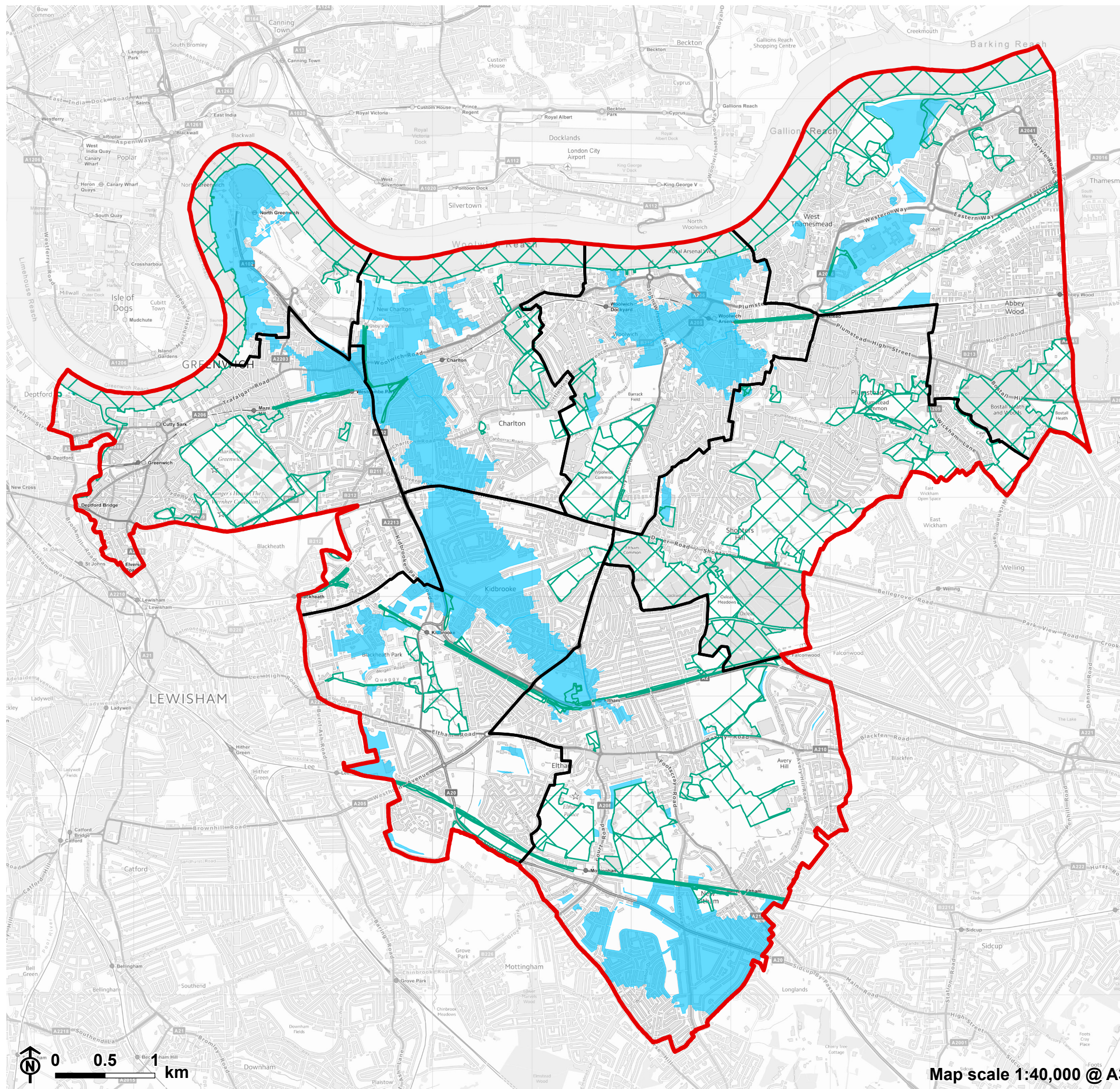


Figure 3.11: Area of deficiency in access to nature (SINC AoD)

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich analysis area boundary
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)
- Area of deficiency in access to nature (SINC AoD)

Map scale 1:40,000 @ A3

Flood risk mitigation

A GBI-led approach can help support resilience and adaptation to surface water and fluvial flooding as part of nature-based solutions or sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).

3.42 Flood risk forms a consideration for future management of the borough's blue infrastructure network. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for the borough (Levels 1 and 2) assesses flooding sources, considers climate change impacts, whilst also outlining the Council's role in fulfilling its obligations as a local flood authority. These documents summarise the risk of flooding from the tidal River Thames, fluvial watercourses such as the River Ravensbourne as well as surface water, groundwater and existing drainage infrastructure sources. Recommendations to provide flood risk management (e.g. safeguarding land) as well as reducing the causes and impacts of flooding (e.g. through the use of SuDS) to enhance climate resilience are summarised. The SFRA was prepared in collaboration with various stakeholders, including the Environment Agency and the Greater London Authority (GLA), to ensure a comprehensive assessment of flood risk in the area.

3.43 A naturalised-surface level SuDS refers to a water management approach that mimics or incorporates natural processes and features into urban areas to control and treat rainwater runoff (SuDS can also include engineered systems and subsurface solutions). Examples of naturalised-surface level SuDS include swales, vegetated channels, rain gardens, or ponds with natural vegetation and substrates. Additionally, SuDS encompass both new installations integrated into urban development and retrofitted solutions designed to manage and mitigate stormwater runoff in an environmentally sustainable manner. These features help slow down, filter, and store rainwater runoff, allowing it to be absorbed into the ground or released at a controlled rate.

3.44 The Drain London Partnership aims to raise awareness of the surface water drainage system, identify areas most at risk of flooding and attempt to alleviate this risk. The project has funded the development of London's Retrofit SuDS Map³⁷, highlighting locations of completed

SuDS interventions. A range of highway projects within the borough are listed, including Blackwall Lane, Plumstead Road rain gardens, Eltham High Street and a number of pocket parks along Pelton Road, Mell Street and Hoskins Street. The Council is also in the process of adopting a Climate Resilience SPD, setting out borough-wide measures to prepare for the rising risks of flooding. This includes embracing a 'sponge city' approach to surface water management³⁸. At a strategic scale, the London Surface Water Strategy outlines a collective approach to delivering a vision of increased resilience to surface water flooding across London through collective action at the catchment scale.

3.45 The spatial distribution of need and provision in relation to 'flood risk mitigation', as described within the London GI Framework, is shown in **Figure 3.12**.



View looking towards the Thames Barrier from the Thames Path National Trail

³⁷ London Retrofit SuDS Map, available at London Retrofit SuDS Map

³⁸ <https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/news/2025/moving-climate-emergency-climate-resilience-pioneering-plan-future-proof-our-borough>

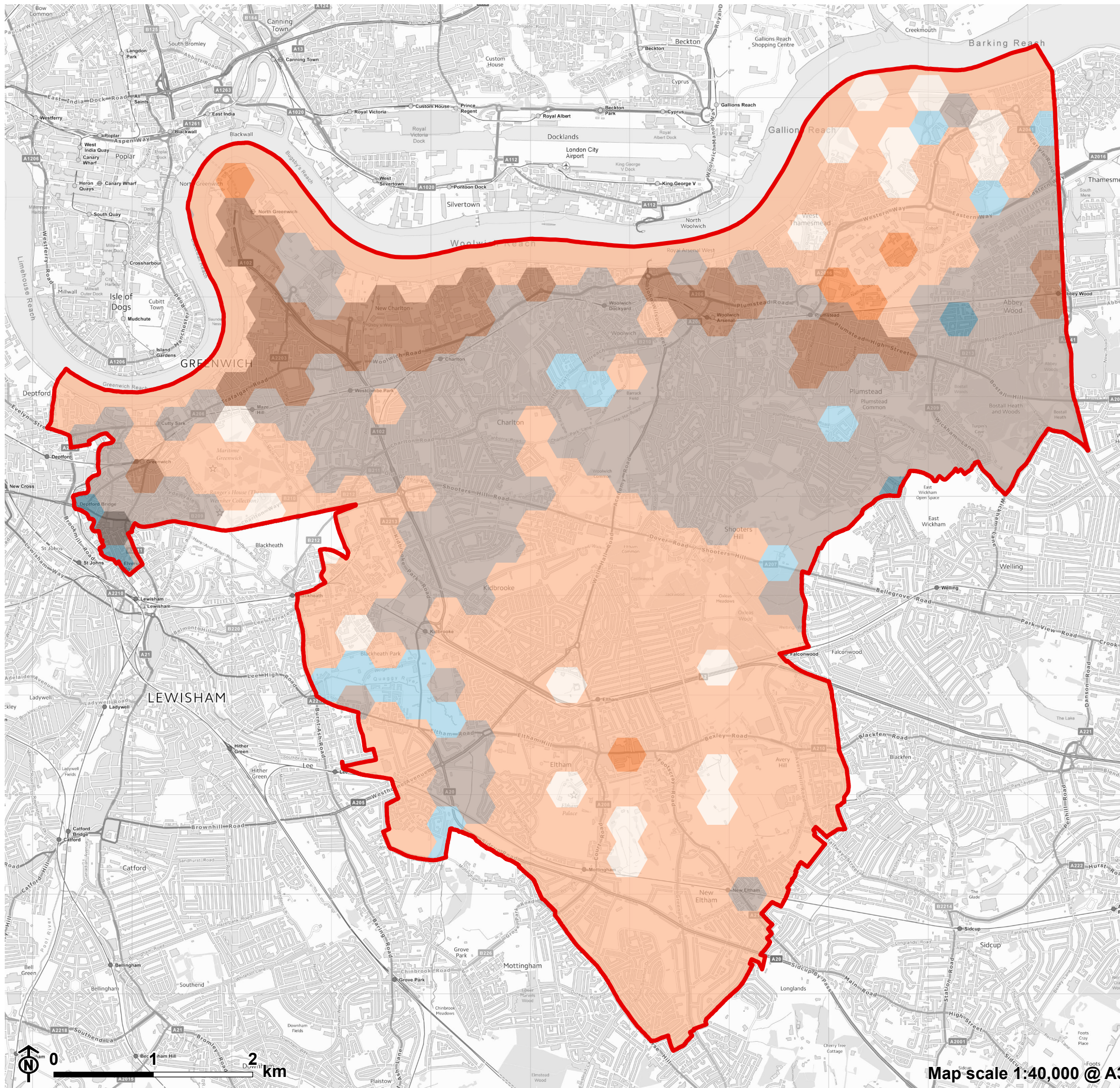
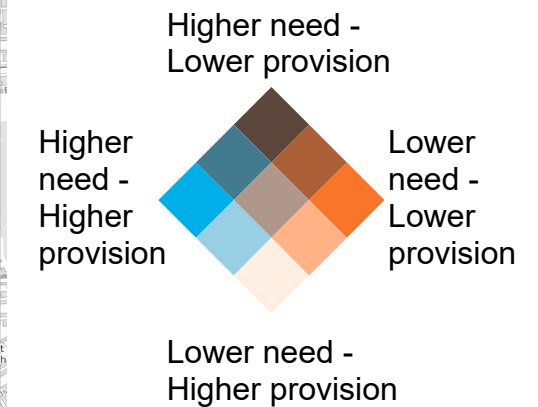


Figure 3.12: Spatial distribution of need and provision within the borough - Objective: Flood risk mitigation

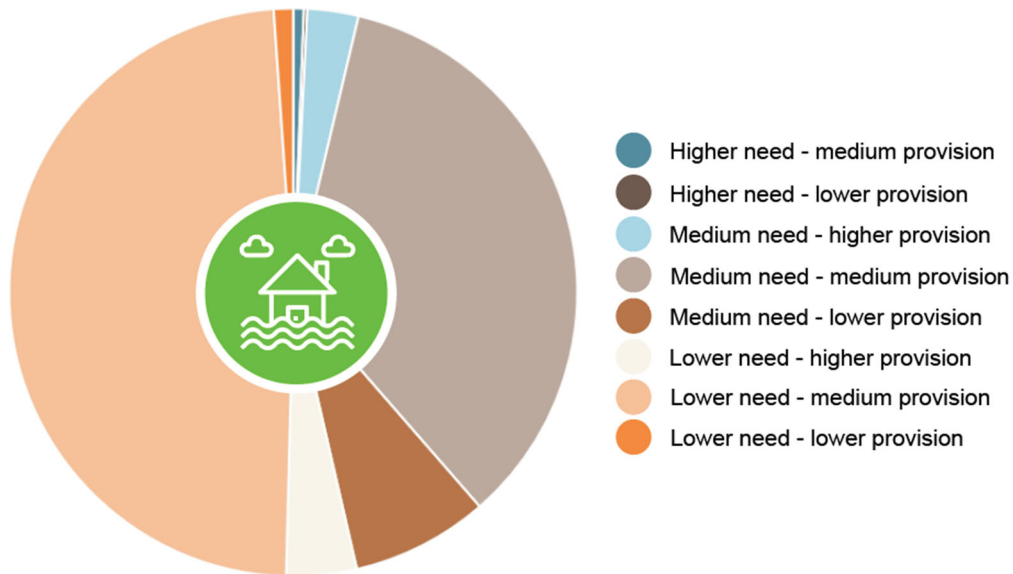
 Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary

Need versus provision



-  Higher need / lower provision = Areas where new GI could help alleviate flooding
-  Higher need / higher provision = Areas where existing green and blue infrastructure may be modified to increase its effectiveness at managing flood risk

Figure 3.13: London GI Framework: ‘flood risk mitigation’ objective – proportion of need and provision across the borough



London GI Framework: ‘flood risk mitigation’ objective

- Areas identified as higher need for flood control are limited to less than 1% of the borough, associated with the corridor of the Ravensbourne River at the borough’s western extent. Approximately 53.5% of the borough has a lower level of need for flood control (see **Figure 3.13**). Areas of green cover can intercept rainwater and reduce surface water, helping to reduce fluvial and surface water flood risk. Existing water bodies can also help to store water in times of high rainfall and reduce flooding.
- Areas with lower need and higher provision (4.0% of the borough) correspond with large areas of existing greenspace which fall outside of surface water flood risk areas e.g. Greenwich Park. Existing GBI may be modified in these areas to increase its effectiveness at managing flood risk.

- Areas of medium need with either lower or medium provision cover 42.7% of the borough and generally reflect densely built-up areas with relatively less green cover which are more susceptible to surface water flooding.

3.46 Flood zones in the borough are categorised into three levels: Zone 1 equates to the lowest flood probability; Zone 2, with a medium probability of flooding; and Zone 3, with the highest probability, including the floodplain (see **Figure 3.14**). Flood Zone 3 encompasses 25% of the borough, including well-established residential and commercial areas such as Greenwich Peninsula, New Charlton, Royal Arsenal West and Thamesmead. Only a small area of the borough (3%) lies within Flood Zone 2.

3.47 The Greenwich Natural Flood Management (NFM) Project forms a joint collaboration between The Council and Thames 21. The initiative aims to address flood risk management by slowing and storing water on the Wickham Valley Watercourse (also known as the Wogebourne or Plumstead River) as it crosses through Oxleas Wood, Clothworkers Wood and Bostall Woods. This initiative uses the principle of NFM to reduce localised flood risk, whilst enhancing biodiversity.

3.48 Water levels along the stretch of the River Thames forming the northern boundary of the borough are under tidal influence, and the Thames Barrier forms a moveable flood barrier. Upstream of the Thames Barrier, high water levels are managed by the operation of the Thames Barrier to protect against tidal flooding. However, fluvial and tidal flood risk, despite the presence of the Thames Barrier and defences, still carries residual risks. Upstream from the barrier, Deptford Creek (the lower reach of the Ravensbourne River as it flows into the River Thames) is also influenced by the tides, and is protected by flood defence walls on both banks.

3.49 Historically the area surrounding the River Quaggy experienced flooding due to heavy rainfall, but modern flood alleviation measures have significantly reduced this risk. The Sutcliffe Park Flood Alleviation Scheme forms part of these interventions. The park was re-landscaped as a wetland area in 2003 and designated as a LNR in 2006, becoming a valuable water storage area for reducing flood risk. Ongoing work to the River Quaggy aims to improve the river and bank habitat. Similarly, Deptford Creek located on the north west edge of the borough has been undergoing ecological regeneration.

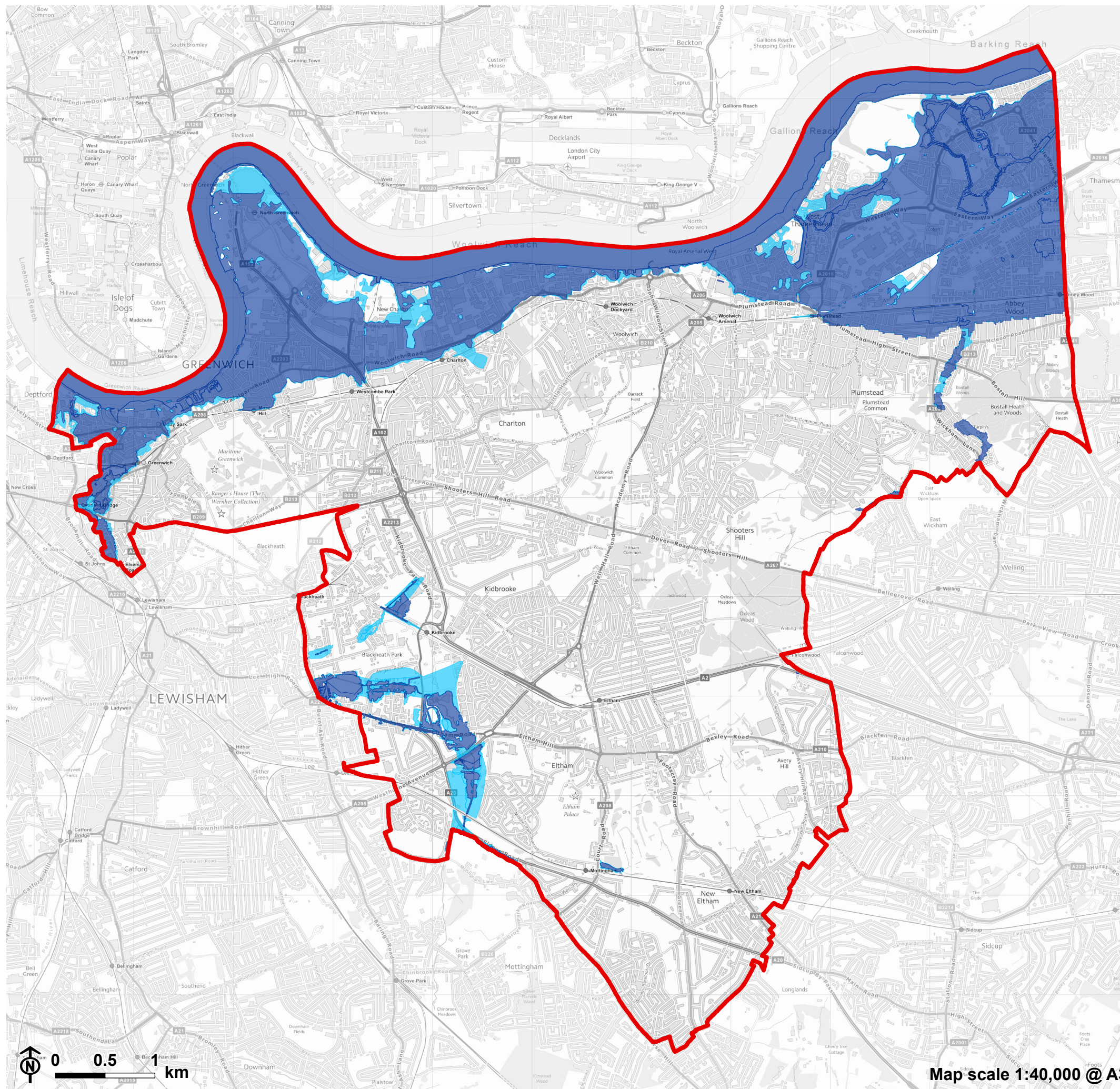


Figure 3.14: Flood risk zones

-  Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea)**
-  Flood zone 2
-  Flood zone 3

Clean water

GBI can play a role in improving water quality to help maximise the benefits of water resources.

3.50 The potential for climate change to result in more intense rainfall during the summer months and a wetter winter season in the UK is likely to affect the borough's water quality. Many of London's rivers are polluted; for example, only one of London's 41 rivers is classed as 'good quality' under the EU Water Framework Directive³⁹. Currently, water quality in the River Thames is stable⁴⁰. However, London's combined sewage system results in storm-water sewage pollution entering the watercourse and impacting the river's water quality. Surface water run-off can also cause sewer overflow to the detriment of water quality in the River Thames and its tributaries. The potential for rainwater to carry hydrocarbons, metals, dust, litter and organic materials into watercourses poses a threat to the water quality at local watercourses.

3.51 Data from Thames 21⁴¹ identifies roads of varying levels of priority that have the greatest potential to contribute towards pollution within the rivers of Greater London. Within the borough, the Road Pollution Solutions Tool identifies sections of the A2, A20, A102, A205, A206 and B210 as high priority for prioritising the treatment of road run-off. The findings provide an evidence-based strategy for the characterisation and resolution of road runoff across Greater London.

3.52 Issues affecting water quality and ecological value of the borough's watercourses arise from the urban nature of the catchments, as listed below:

- Physical or morphological alterations; including widening, straightening, bank re-enforcement and loss of meanders;
- Man-made barriers that prevent fish migration;

- Surface water runoff impacting water quality through contaminants such as petrol, herbicides and fertilisers;
- Sewage misconnections resulting in untreated sewage entering rivers; and
- Invasive non-native species.

3.53 In the borough and within Greater London, there are initiatives that are actively addressing water quality improvements in the River Thames and its surrounding waterways, such as:

- The Thames Tideway Tunnel project – a major infrastructure project to prevent untreated sewage overflow into the river during rainfall events, significantly enhancing water quality.
- Integration of SuDS into urban planning to manage stormwater runoff effectively reducing pollution inputs. SuDS can provide a number of water quality benefits in addition to their water quantity, biodiversity and amenity benefits.

3.54 Monitoring water quality remains an essential activity to water quality management. The Environment Agency Water Quality Sampling Sites (or Open WIMS) provide frequently updated water quality data on sample sites across England⁴². Sampling points within the borough include the Thames Fish Track, Victoria Deep Water Terminal and Cemex Angerstein's Wharf. Collation of water quality information with relevant hydrology, habitat and utilities spatial data could usefully inform the development of strategic nature recovery for the borough.

3.55 The spatial distribution of need and provision in relation to 'clean water', as described within the London GI Framework, is shown in **Figure 3.15**.

³⁹ Thames21 (2019) Spatial Quantification of Road Runoff Pollution in Greater London. Available at: <https://www.thames21.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Spatial-Quantification-of-Road-Runoff-in-Greater-London-20-08-19.pdf>

⁴⁰ <https://www.thames21.org.uk/water-quality-results/>

⁴¹ <https://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/road-pollution-solutions/>

⁴² Open WIMS data available at: <https://environment.data.gov.uk/water-quality/view/landing>

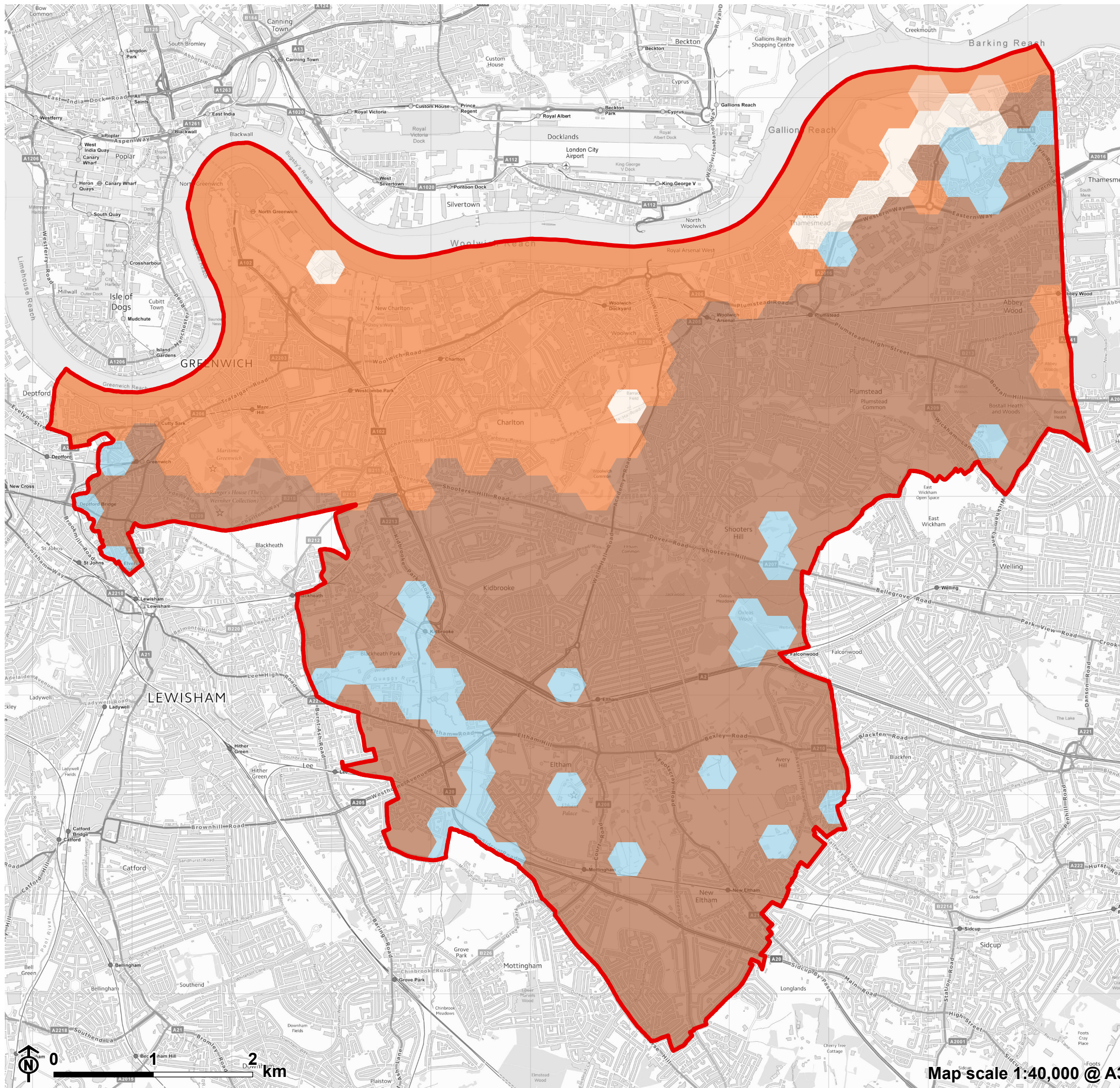


Figure 3.15: Spatial distribution of need and provision within the borough - Objective: Clean water

Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary

Need versus provision

Higher need - Lower provision

Higher need - Higher provision

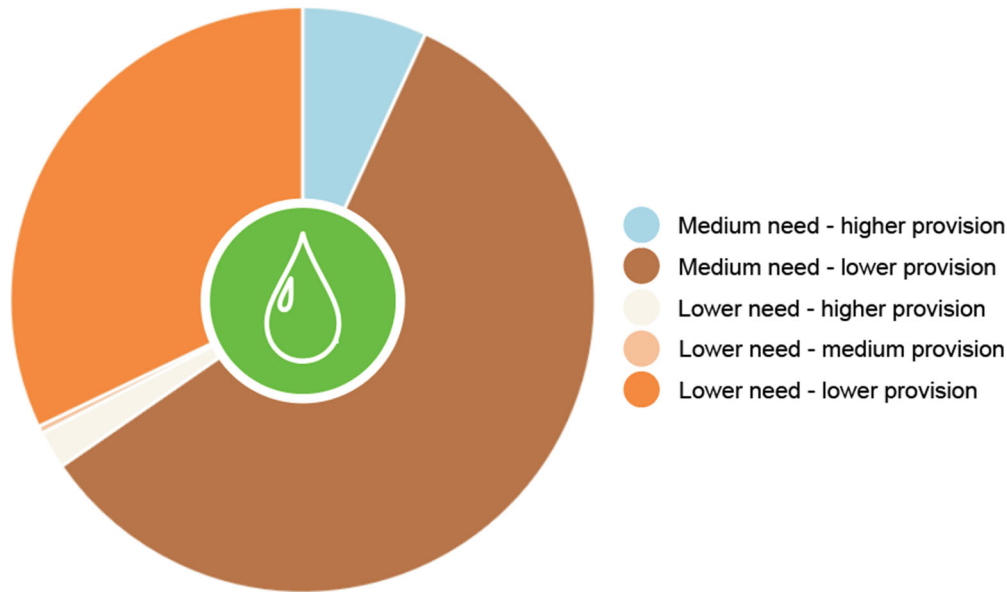
Lower need - Lower provision

Lower need - Higher provision

Higher need / lower provision = Areas where green riparian buffers could be created to improve water quality

Higher need / higher provision = Areas where existing green riparian buffers exist and could be enhanced

Figure 3.16: London GI Framework: ‘clean water’ objective – proportion of need and provision across the borough



London GI Framework: ‘clean water’ objective

- Using green riparian buffers as an indicator for existing GBI provision, the majority of the borough (90.5%) is characterised by overall lower provision. These vegetated areas adjacent to river corridors can help to provide filtration of surface water run-off and reduce the likelihood of pollution entering rivers.

- 32.0% of the borough is represented by lower need and lower provision, reflecting fewer reported pollution incidents and moderate river quality (see **Figure 3.16**).
- Areas with medium need and lower provision (58.5%) are generally characterised by poorer river quality and / or high risk of road run-off pollution.
- Limited to 2.1% of the borough, areas of lower need and higher provision generally correlate with small areas of marshland or wetland along the River Thames (e.g. land to the east of Gallions Reach Park). These areas are where existing green riparian buffers offer the opportunity for enhancement.

Urban cooling

GBI performs a role in mitigating and adapting to climate change through local climate regulation, provision of shade and the reduction in ambient temperatures.

3.56 The urban heat island (UHI) effect is the effect of built features (pavements, buildings etc) which absorb and retain heat, replacing natural land cover and vegetation. It is understood that the UHI effect can result in a 10°C increase in temperatures within London compared to neighbouring rural areas.

3.57 Increased temperatures may also result in negative health impacts, which are particularly associated with vulnerable groups (children, older people and people with pre-existing health conditions). However, urban greening interventions offer the opportunity to provide a notable cooling effect, for example a park is estimated to cool temperatures by 1.5 – 3.5°C⁴³. It is also estimated that the sheltering effect of trees could save 3-9% of energy bills in the UK and that one mature tree has the same cooling effect as 10 room-sized air conditioners⁴⁴.

3.58 The GLA Climate Risk Map⁴⁵ provides a mapping tool to visually compare flood risk and heat risk against environmental and social indicators. The data indicates that areas within the

⁴³ Natural England (2020) A Rapid Scoping Review of Health and Wellbeing Evidence for the Framework of Green Infrastructure Standards. Available at: <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/5992890930298880>

⁴⁴ GreenBlue Urban (2016). A Guide to the Benefits of Urban Trees. Available at: <https://www.greenblue.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Book-1-A-Guide-to-the-Benefits-of-Urban-Trees.pdf>

⁴⁵ <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-and-strategies/environment-and-climate-change/climate-change/climate-adaptation/climate-risk-map>

borough which are most vulnerable to heat risk include land around Woolwich Dockyard Station, pockets of Woolwich, Royal Arsenal West and the western extent of Plumstead (see **Figure 3.17**). Lower heat risk is associated with larger areas of open space in the borough; including Bostall Heath and Woods, Avery Hill, Woolwich Common and Eltham Park.

3.59 Trees play a significant role in mitigating and adapting to climate change including through local climate regulation, providing shade, reducing ambient temperatures and helping mitigate against extreme weather events such as flooding events and heat waves. GLA canopy cover data estimates overall canopy cover in the borough at 20.62%⁴⁶. This is in line with the average canopy cover within London as a whole (21%). A 2017 Canopy Cover Study focussed on towns and cities in England estimated an average of 15.8% canopy cover in urban areas (based on assessments using the i-Tree Canopy tool for 283 towns and cities in England). Comparing this assessment to the GLA canopy cover data suggests that the average canopy cover of the borough is above the estimated England average for towns and cities.

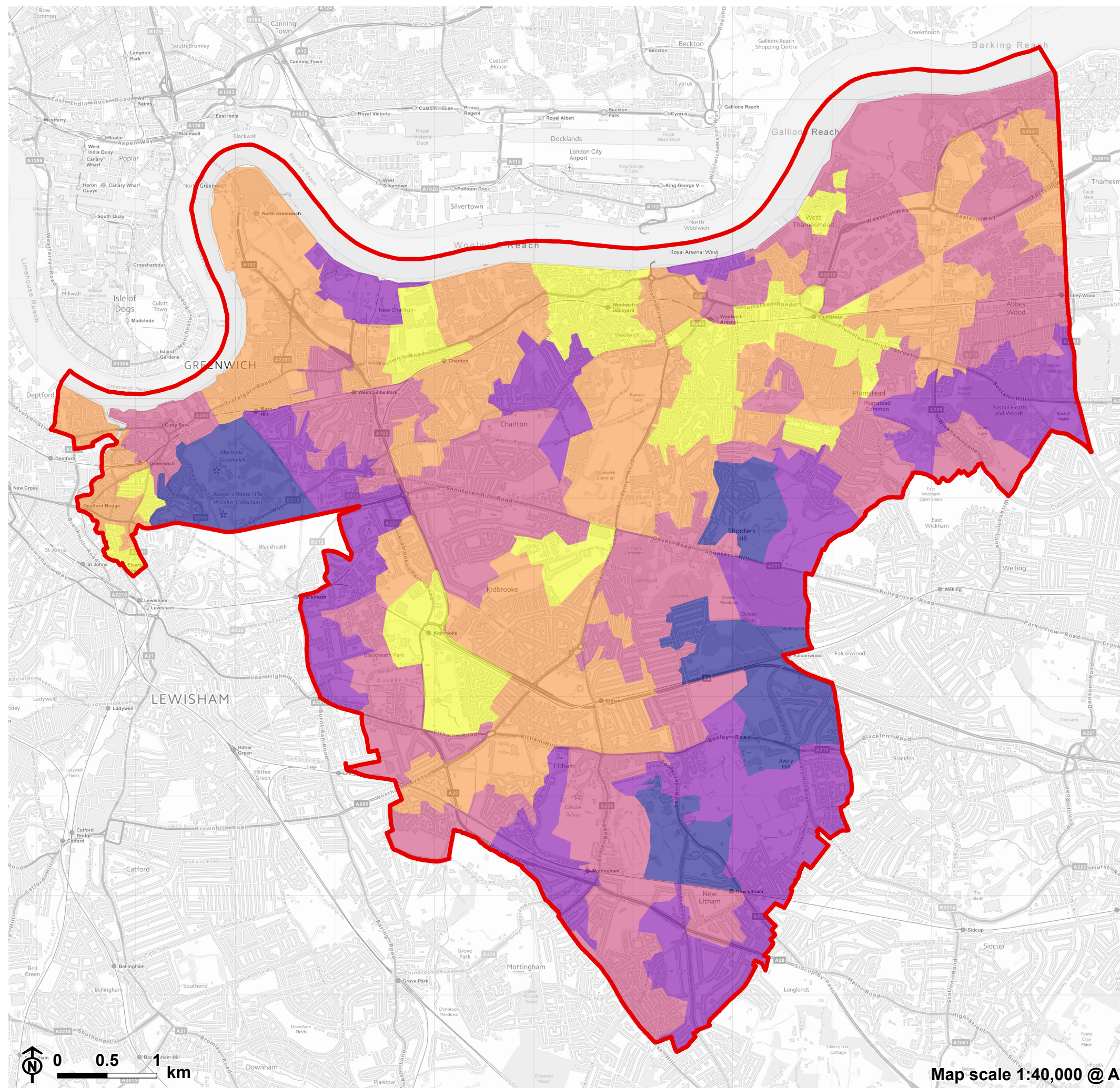
3.60 **Table 3.5** and **Figure 3.18** illustrate the difference in tree cover between the borough's 23 wards (percentage cover for each ward), ranging from 3.42% canopy cover for Greenwich Peninsula to 41.60% canopy cover for Eltham Park & Progress. Only four wards (Eltham Park & Progress, Shooters Hill, Blackheath Westcombe, and Abbey Wood) exceed 30% canopy cover. These wards are dominated by residential land use, and all except Blackheath Westcombe contain large areas of parks and woodland. At the other end of the scale, wards with the lowest percentage canopy cover are in high-density or post-industrial areas closer to the River Thames; such as Greenwich Peninsula, Woolwich Arsenal, and East Greenwich. Differences in percentage canopy cover between wards can largely be accounted for by the density of the built environment in the borough.



Mature tree avenue on Mycenae Road, East Greenwich

⁴⁶ GLA Tree Canopy Cover (2024) <https://apps.london.gov.uk/green-cover/?layers=tree-canopy.green.blue&pos=9.9/51.48658/-0.05884>

Figure 3.17: Overall climate risk



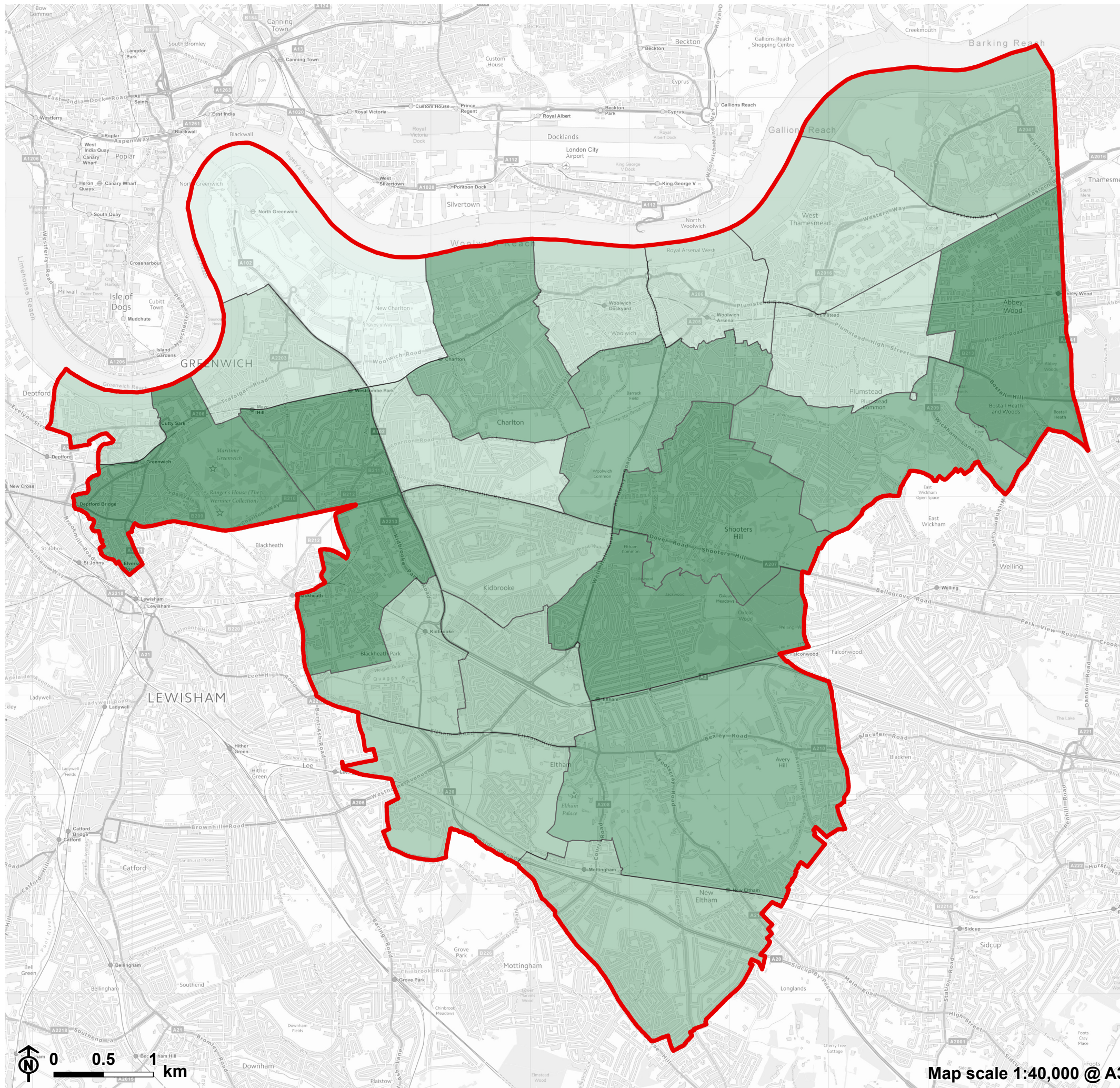


Figure 3.18: Tree canopy cover by ward

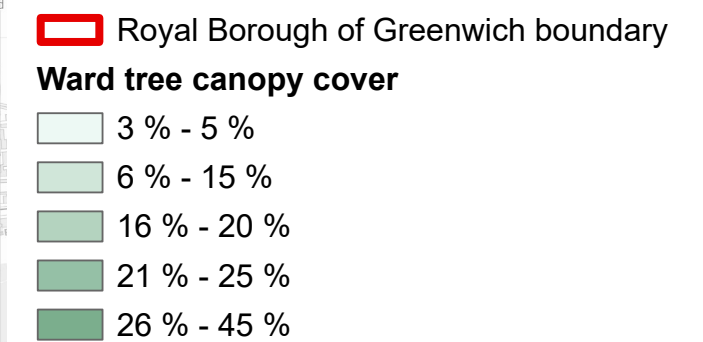


Table 3.5: Canopy cover % by ward

Ward	Canopy cover (%)
Eltham Park & Progress	41.60%
Shooters Hill	34.60%
Blackheath Westcombe	33.79%
Abbey Wood	33.66%
Greenwich Park	26.05%
Plumstead Common	23.45%
Woolwich Common	23.31%
Eltham Town & Avery Hill	22.69%
Charlton Village & Riverside	22.42%
Kidbrooke Village & Sutcliffe	18.93%
Thamesmead Moorings	18.22%
Middle Park & Horn Park	16.94%
Kidbrooke Park	15.91%
Eltham Page	15.66%
Mottingham, Coldharbour & New Eltham	15.08%
Charlton Hornfair	14.75%
Greenwich Creekside	12.92%
Woolwich Dockyard	12.92%

Ward	Canopy cover (%)
West Thamesmead	11.51%
Plumstead & Glyndon	10.79%
East Greenwich	7.81%
Woolwich Arsenal	6.83%
Greenwich Peninsula	3.42%

3.61 Launched in winter 2023 by American Forests, the Woodland Trust and the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare, the Tree Equity Score seeks to identify the areas in greatest need of people-focused investment in trees within the UK. The map-based application examines disparities in urban tree distribution and measures how well the benefits of trees are reaching communities living on low incomes and others disproportionately impacted by extreme heat, pollution and other environmental hazards. The score uses six climate, health and socio-economic datasets that measure social deprivation and quality of life. Collectively, these indicate how vulnerable a community is to environmental hazards.

3.62 The borough is allocated a composite Tree Equity Score of 89, demonstrating a moderate overall assessment of tree equity in the borough. However, this figure masks a degree of variation in tree equity across the LSOAs of the borough. Three LSOAs within the borough have a tree equity score of 69 or below, marking them as the highest priority for tree planting. Two of these lowest ranking LSOAs are located on Greenwich Peninsula and the other is in Eltham. Tree equity is achieved (score of 100) at a number of locations across the borough; including Greenwich Park, Shooters Hill, Thamesmead and land to the east of Plumstead.

3.63 The spatial distribution of need and provision in relation to 'urban cooling', as described within the London GI Framework, is shown in **Figure 3.19**.

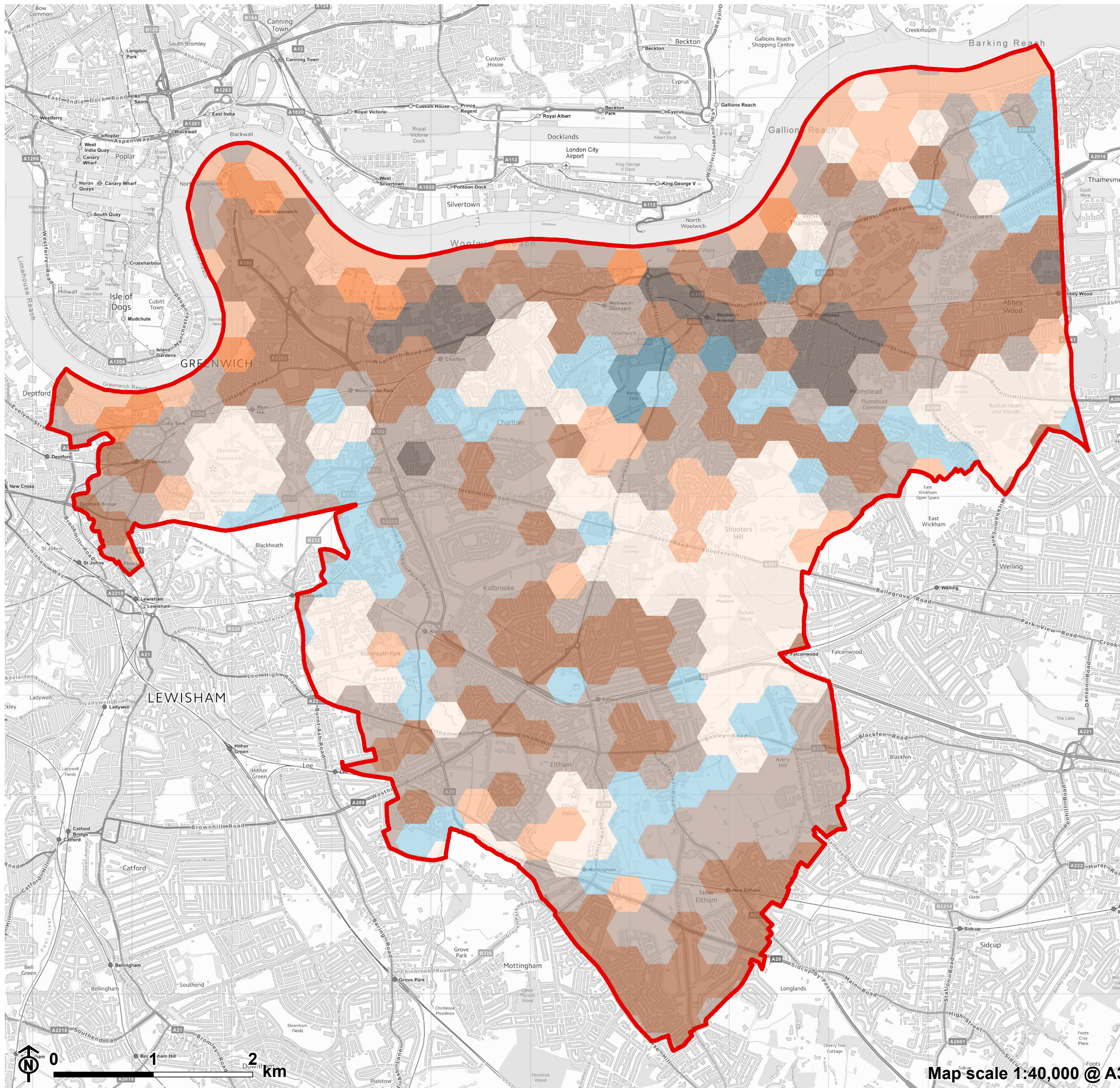
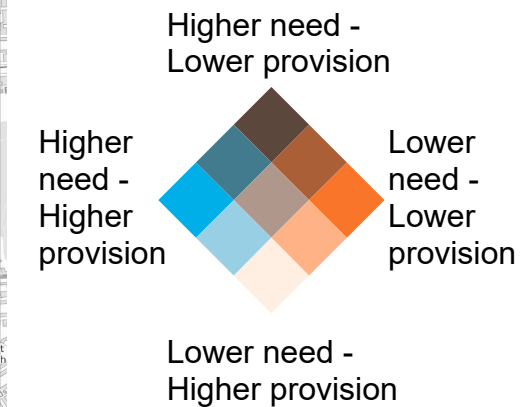


Figure 3.19: Spatial distribution of need and provision within the borough - Objective: Urban cooling

 Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary

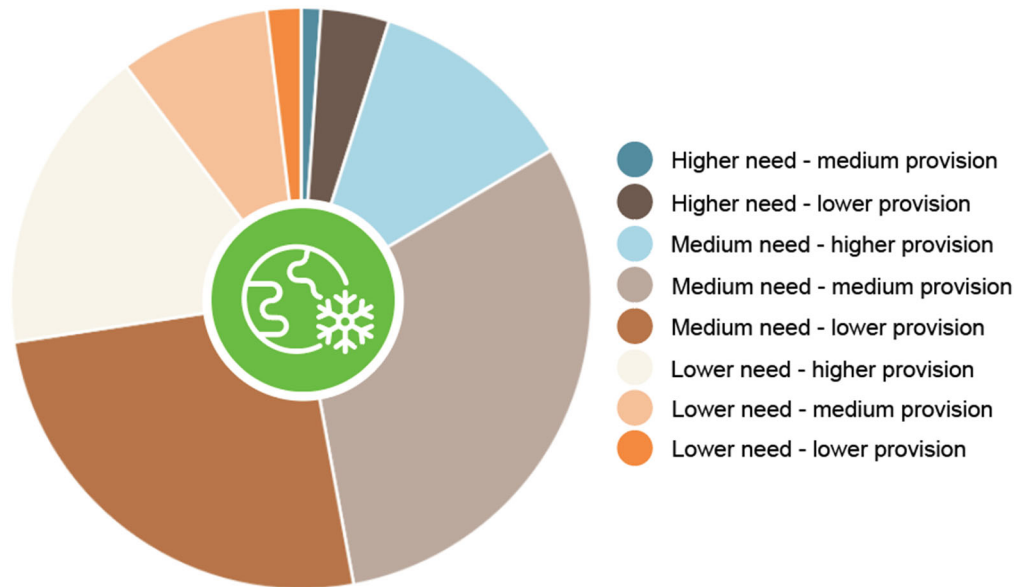
Need versus provision



Higher need / lower provision = Areas where the introduction of new GI might help reduce heat risk

Higher need / higher provision = Areas where existing GI might be adapted to better contribute to reducing urban temperatures

Figure 3.20: London GI Framework: ‘urban cooling’ objective – proportion of need and provision across the borough



London GI Framework: ‘urban cooling’ objective

- **Figure 3.20** indicates that areas exhibiting high need to urban cooling are limited to 5.0% of the borough, concentrated in areas of higher density where impermeable surfaces generate warmer temperatures and where GBI is less apparent. These areas include New Charlton, Woolwich and Plumstead.
- Lying at the northern extent of the borough, linear sections of land bordering the River Thames are described as lower need and medium provision due to the cooling presence of the watercourse.

- 27.4% of the borough is identified as lower need, corresponding with large areas of existing greenspace at locations such as Greenwich Park, Blackheath Park, Oxleas Wood and Bostall Heath.

Clean air

If appropriately sited, GI can contribute to improved air quality along key transport corridors, reducing impacts from vehicle emissions.

3.64 Poor air quality is the largest environmental risk to public health, resulting in premature death through cardiovascular disease, lung cancer and respiratory illness. The principal driver of air pollution in London is road transport. Research commissioned by Transport for London (TfL) and the GLA in 2019 assessed the impacts on health of mayoral air quality policies and air pollution in London from 2019 to 2050. It found that, in Greater London, between 3,600 and 4,100 deaths were estimated to be attributable to human-made particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). In the borough alone, estimated deaths as a result of air pollution in 2019 ranged between 113 and 129. Inner London boroughs were found to have a lower mortality rate due to their younger age profile but are worse affected in relation to other air quality related health outcomes, such as asthma admissions in children affected⁴⁷.

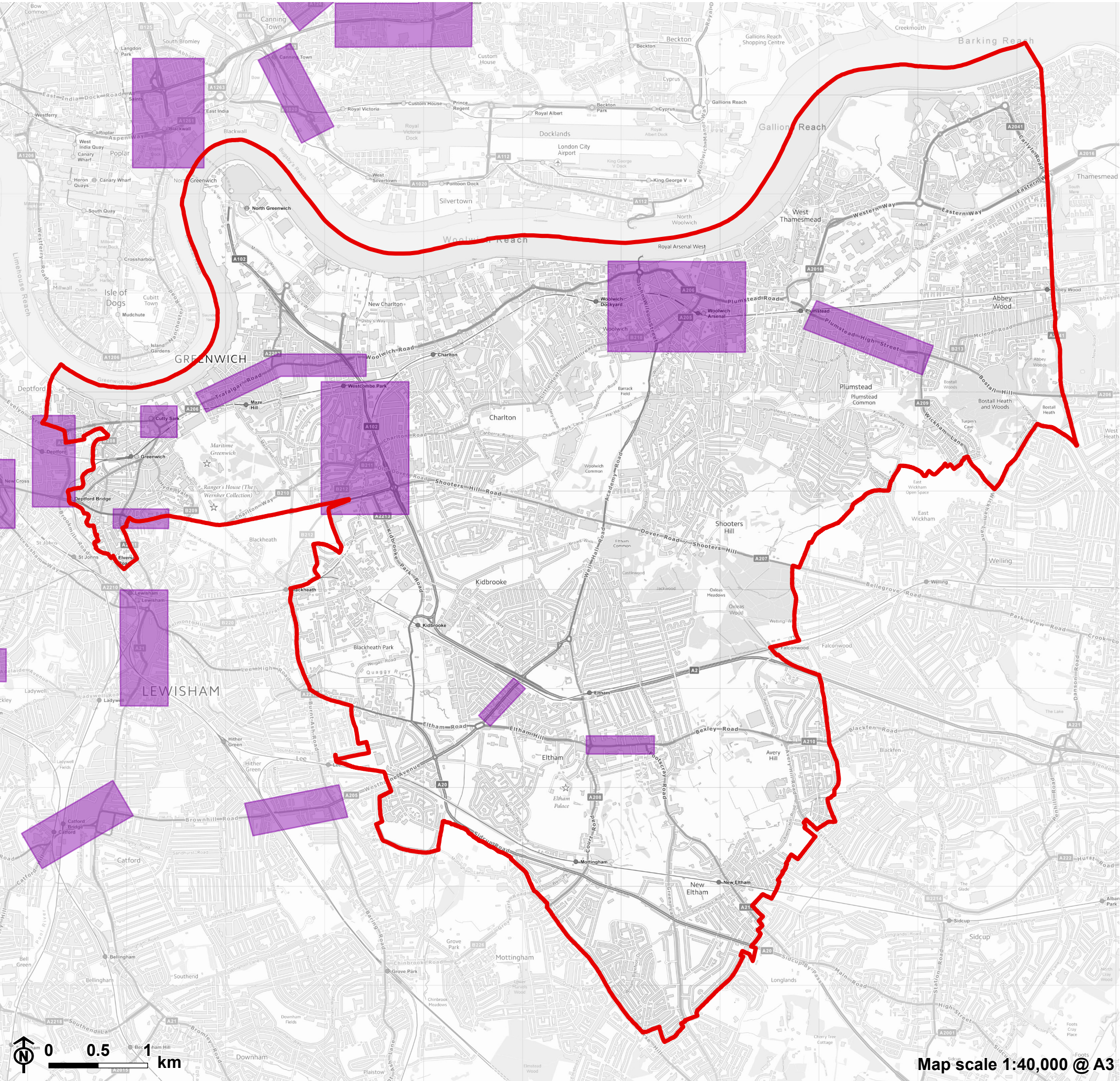
3.65 In 2001, the full extent of the borough was declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). The GLA’s London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (LAEI) (2019) indicates that the highest concentrations of pollutants (NO₂, PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀) are found along the borough’s main transport routes and busiest roads. The LAEI identifies eight Air Quality Focus Areas (AQFAs) in the borough which are areas with continued high levels of pollution and human exposure⁴⁸. (see **Figure 3.21**).

3.66 The spatial distribution of need and provision in relation to ‘clean air’, as described within the London GI Framework, is shown in **Figure 3.22**.

⁴⁷ Imperial College London (2019) London Health Burden of Current Air Pollution and Future Health Benefits of Mayoral Air Quality Policies (see: erg.ic.ac.uk/research/home/projects/tfl-hia-maqp.html)

⁴⁸ Royal Borough of Greenwich Council (2023) Air Quality Action Plan 2023 to 2027 (see: https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/downloads/download/1466/air_quality_annual_status_report)

Figure 3.21: Air quality focus areas (AQFAs)



- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (LAEI) Air Quality Focus Areas

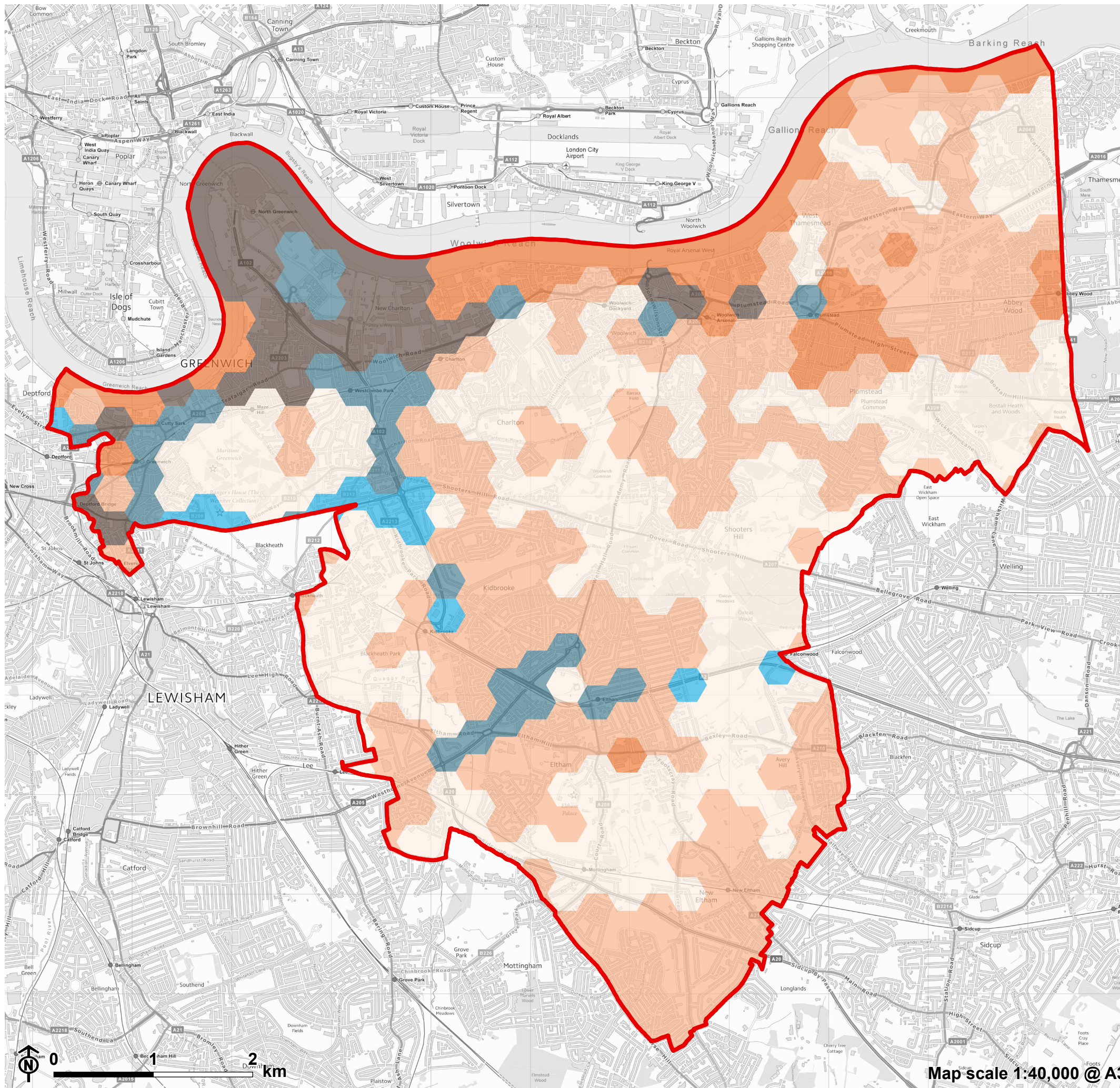
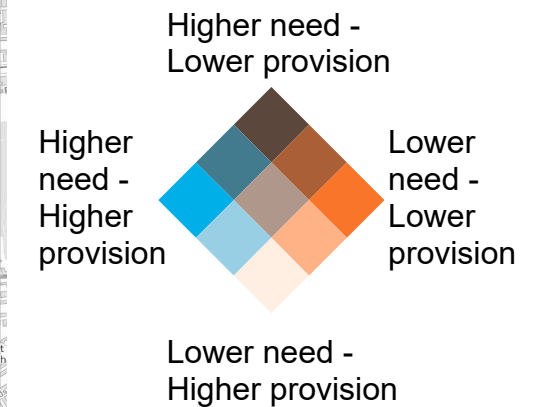


Figure 3.22: Spatial distribution of need and provision within the borough - Objective: Clean air

 Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary

Need versus provision



 Higher need / lower provision = Areas where new GI may help to address air pollution

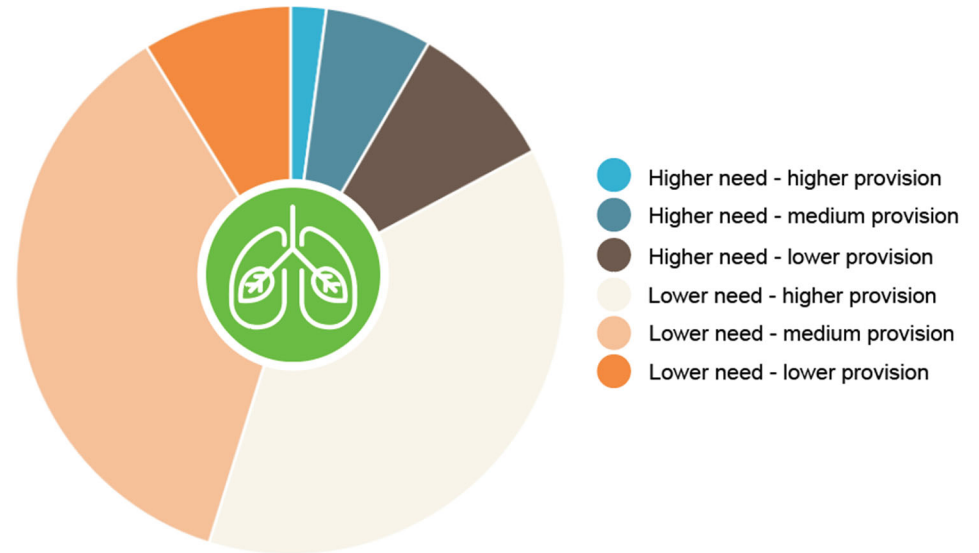
 Higher need / higher provision = Areas where existing GI might be adapted to better tackle air pollution

3.68 The Council published its Air Quality Action Plan 2023 to 2027 which recognises the importance of the borough's GBI in improving air quality and reducing exposure to air pollution. This includes actions for increasing tree canopy cover in the borough and encouraging active travel options away from the borough's most polluted streets. A number of air quality improvement measures have been introduced in recent years, including the implementation of a Low Emissions Neighbourhood (LEN) at Greenwich West and Peninsula Wards, adoption of a number of 'School Streets' initiatives, as well as tree planting projects and investment in the enhancement of parks and open spaces.



Vegetation and street trees providing a buffer between the A2203 Blackwall Lane and Christ Church Primary School

Figure 3.23: London GI Framework: 'clean air' objective – proportion of need and provision across the borough



London GI Framework: 'clean air' objective

- **Figure 3.23** illustrates a borough summary of the overall proportion of need and provision relating to objective 'clean air'. The results indicate that 17.2% of the borough has a higher level of need for cleaner air. Areas of highest need and lower provision for clean air reflect those locations where GBI should be focussed to address air pollution, evident at land at Greenwich Peninsula, densely built-up areas in New Charlton and Woolwich, as well as a linear stretch of Blackheath Road.
- The majority of the borough (82.7%) is described as an area of lower need. Areas with lowest need but highest existing GBI provision equate to 37.5% of the borough. Locations equating with higher need and higher provision (2.1%) correspond with the A2 between Eltham and Falconwood as well as sections of this route within Blackheath. GBI could be adapted at these sites to help contribute to urban cooling.

Noise reduction

The integration of greening interventions, if implemented correctly, can have significant noise abatement benefits along key transport corridors.

3.69 The borough comprises a number of strategic road corridors which channel significant traffic through the borough. High noise levels can have significant impacts on health and wellbeing, affecting sleep and overall quality of life. Exposure to ongoing noise above 50dB has been shown to have an impact on human health⁴⁹.

3.70 Changing travel patterns, technological improvements and policy responses to climate change are likely to result in reduced traffic flows, lower speeds and lesser air and noise pollution along the borough's road corridors in the future⁵⁰. This opens the prospect for re-imagining urban road corridors as multi-modal routes with a quality environment which effectively integrates GBI interventions. For instance, street tree planting can be incorporated to soften the environment, reduce air and noise pollution, provide shade and shelter and enhance the character.

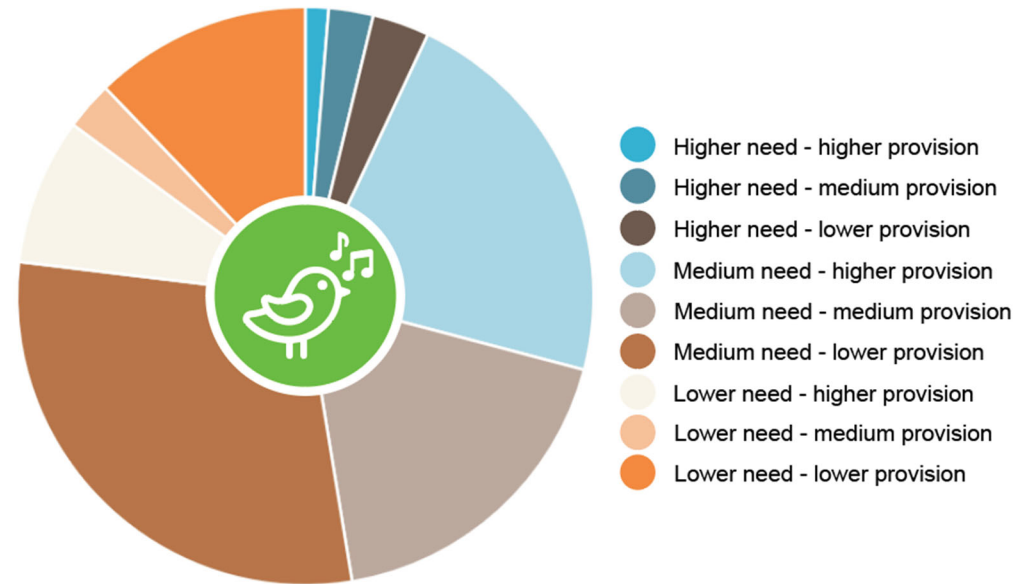
3.71 The spatial distribution of need and provision in relation to 'noise reduction', as described within the London GI Framework, is shown in **Figure 3.24**.

London GI Framework: 'noise reduction' objective

- Areas of higher need and lower provision relating to noise reduction are limited to 3.2% of the borough (see **Figure 3.25**), covering densely populated areas such as Charlton, Kidbrooke, Woolwich, Plumstead and New Eltham.
- Land exhibiting medium need represents 69.9% of the total area of the borough. When combined with areas of lower provision, these areas of the borough indicate medium exposure to noise and lower levels of tree coverage (e.g. A102 from Greenwich Peninsula to Westcombe Park as well as pockets of Charlton, New Eltham, Abbey Wood and Plumstead).

- Areas of medium or higher need combined with higher provision (23.4% of the borough) generally equate to road and rail corridors close to larger greenspaces.
- 12.2% of the borough corresponds to areas of lower need and lower provision, generally reflecting areas with relatively less green cover and a lower population density.

Figure 3.25: London GI Framework: 'noise reduction' objective – proportion of need and provision across the borough



⁴⁹ UK Health Security Agency (2023) Noise pollution: mapping the health impacts of transportation noise in England. Available at: <https://ukhsa.blog.gov.uk/2023/06/29/noise-pollution-mapping-the-health-impacts-of-transportation-noise-in-england/>

⁵⁰ Royal Borough of Greenwich Council (2023) Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document. Available at: <https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/media/3592/download?inline=1>

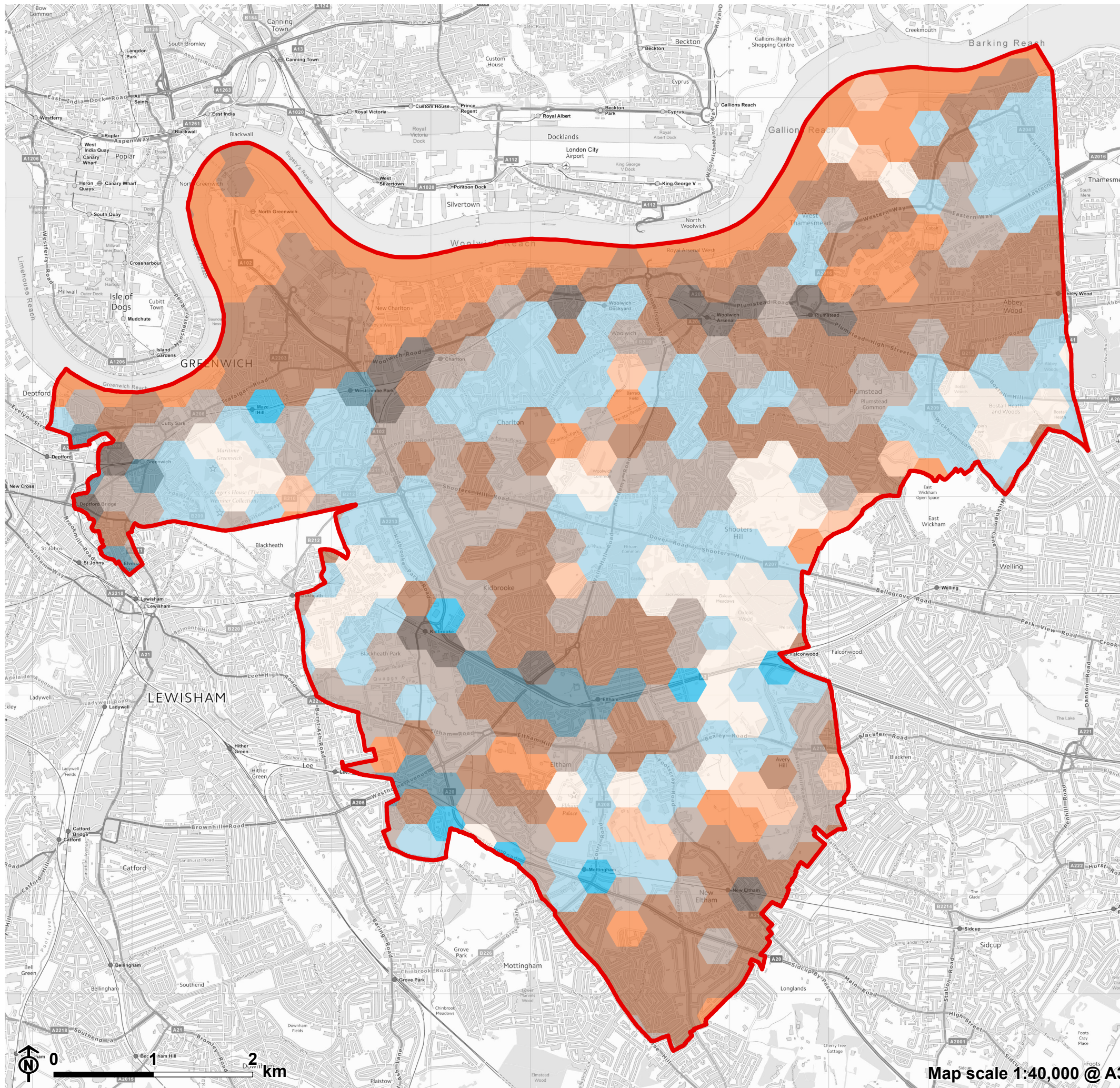
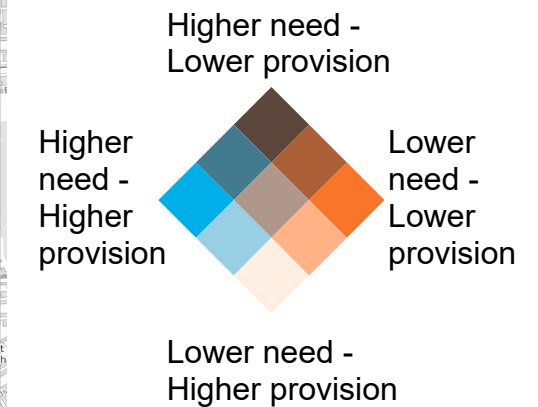


Figure 3.24: Spatial distribution of need and provision within the borough - Objective: Noise reduction

 Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary

Need versus provision



-  Higher need / lower provision = Areas experiencing high noise pollution where new strategic tree provision may help mitigate noise
-  Higher need / higher provision = Areas where existing GI may need redesigning to maximise impact on noise mitigation

Greener active travel routes

Through sensitive design, GBI can enhance the walking and cycling environment across London, leading to physical health benefits from more active lifestyles.

3.72 Existing urban constraints and dense development can often restrict the successful delivery of new greenspaces within the borough. Therefore, the integration of greening interventions within active travel routes offers the opportunity to improve the provision of GBI within the borough. GBI can also be used to promote active travel and reduce the reliance on private transport⁵¹. Research compiled by TfL⁵² has shown that investment in walking and cycling helps encourage more people to travel in a greener and healthier way.

3.73 The Active Travel Policy Framework Action Plan⁵³ for the borough aims to increase the number of people undertaking regular walking, cycling or wheeling trips. In general, land in the west of the borough has reactively good cycle route provision, with a network of routes connecting to London Borough of Lewisham and Greater London. However, gap analysis indicates that the borough is lacking in strategic north-south or east-west linkages in the southern part of the borough. Many of the existing cycling facilities are largely made up of routes that pre-date the introduction of the London Cycling Design Standards (2014) and Local Transport Note (LTN) 1/20 (2020). This means that the cycle network varies in the level and quality of provision. Sections can also be fragmented and often disrupted due to kerbside activity, such as parking and loading.

3.74 The Council is making efforts to improve overall cycle infrastructure across the borough. Priority actions include ongoing work to deliver Cycleway 4 (C4), which will connect Greenwich to Woolwich⁵⁴. Other actions include linking disconnected route sections and the provision of five new cycleways of strategic importance across the borough. The proposals also include plans to improve the experience of existing cycle routes. This will involve the creation of

segregated routes that protect cyclists from motor vehicles, and the expansion of cycle lanes to accommodate higher volumes of traffic.



Segregated cycle route on Battery Road, Thamesmead

⁵¹ Sustrans (2020) A Green and Just Recovery: Healthier Places and Better Transport. Available at: <https://www.walkwheelcycletrust.org.uk/policy/life-after-lockdown/a-green-and-just-recovery-healthier-places-and-better-transport/>

⁵² <https://content.tfl.gov.uk/walking-cycling-economic-benefits-summary-pack.pdf>

⁵³ Royal Borough of Greenwich Council (2022) Active Travel Policy Framework Action Plan. Available at: <https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/media/3252/download?inline=1>

⁵⁴ <https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/cycling/routes-and-maps/cycleways?intcmp=59201#on-this-page-2>

3.75 The Council is making efforts to improve overall cycle infrastructure across the borough. Priority actions include ongoing work to deliver Cycleway 4 (C4), which will connect Greenwich to Woolwich⁵⁵. Other actions include linking disconnected route sections and the provision of five new cycleways of strategic importance across the borough. The proposals also include plans to improve the experience of existing cycle routes. This will involve the creation of segregated routes that protect cyclists from motor vehicles, and the expansion of cycle lanes to accommodate higher volumes of traffic.

3.76 Beyond the designated cycle network, the Green Chain Walk is a valuable active travel route, forming part of a 64km footpath network across South London. The section within the borough moves south from the Thames Barrier to Eltham Palace, crossing over 20 of the borough's parks and open spaces, including Woolwich Cemetery, Plumstead Common and Bostall Woods. In addition, the Thames Path National Trail provides a traffic-free walking and cycling route for the majority of the length of the watercourse throughout the borough. The route incorporates National Cycle Network 1 between Thamesmead and the Greenwich Foot Tunnel.

3.77 Walking is a key mode of transport within the borough, with 28% of trips undertaken on foot. The borough scores highly on walking integration and incorporates a high density of walking routes, albeit the quality of these routes is variable. As a result, Walking Potential analysis by TfL shows that there are 63,900 daily trips by residents of the borough which are not currently walked, but are considered walkable⁵⁶. The Council aims to deliver improved pedestrian facilities by applying principles from the Greenwich Town Centre Streetscape Manual⁵⁷ to all schemes to improve the walking network, prioritising interventions that improve accessibility. These measures will be focused in the areas with highest potential, in the town centres of Woolwich, Greenwich, Plumstead, Thamesmead and Eltham.

3.78 The spatial distribution of need and provision in relation to 'greener active travel routes', as described within the London GI Framework, is shown in **Figure 3.26**.

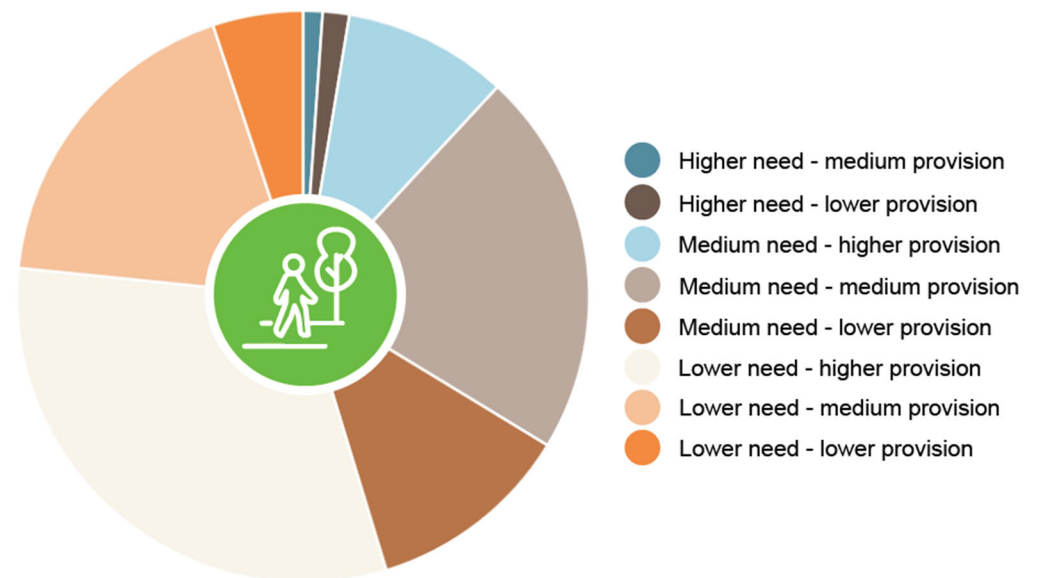
London GI Framework: 'greener active travel routes' objective

- Areas of higher need relate to the location of active travel networks with scope for the integration of urban greening or areas with high pedestrian density with high walking

potential. **Figure 3.27** indicates that areas exhibiting higher need are limited to 2.6% of the borough, concentrated along linear corridors such as Trafalgar Road, Woolwich Road and Woolwich Church Street.

- Pockets of lower need and lower provision comprise only 5.1% of the borough, concentrated largely within areas of Royal Arsenal West, land at HM Prison Belmarsh and areas of industrial land use in New Charlton. 31.4% of the borough corresponds to areas of lower need and higher provision, generally reflecting less developed areas with large areas of greenspace e.g. Greenwich Park, Royal Blackheath Golf Club, Eltham Common, Shooters Hill and Bostall Woods.

Figure 3.27: London GI Framework: 'greener active travel routes' objective – proportion of need and provision across the borough



⁵⁵ <https://tfl.gov.uk/modes/cycling/routes-and-maps/cycleways?intcmp=59201#on-this-page-2>

⁵⁶ Transport for London (2019) Greenwich Walking Analysis and Strategy.

⁵⁷ Royal Borough of Greenwich Council (1999) Greenwich Town Centre Streetscape Manual. Available at: https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/downloads/file/4337/04_greenwich_town_centre_streetscape_manual

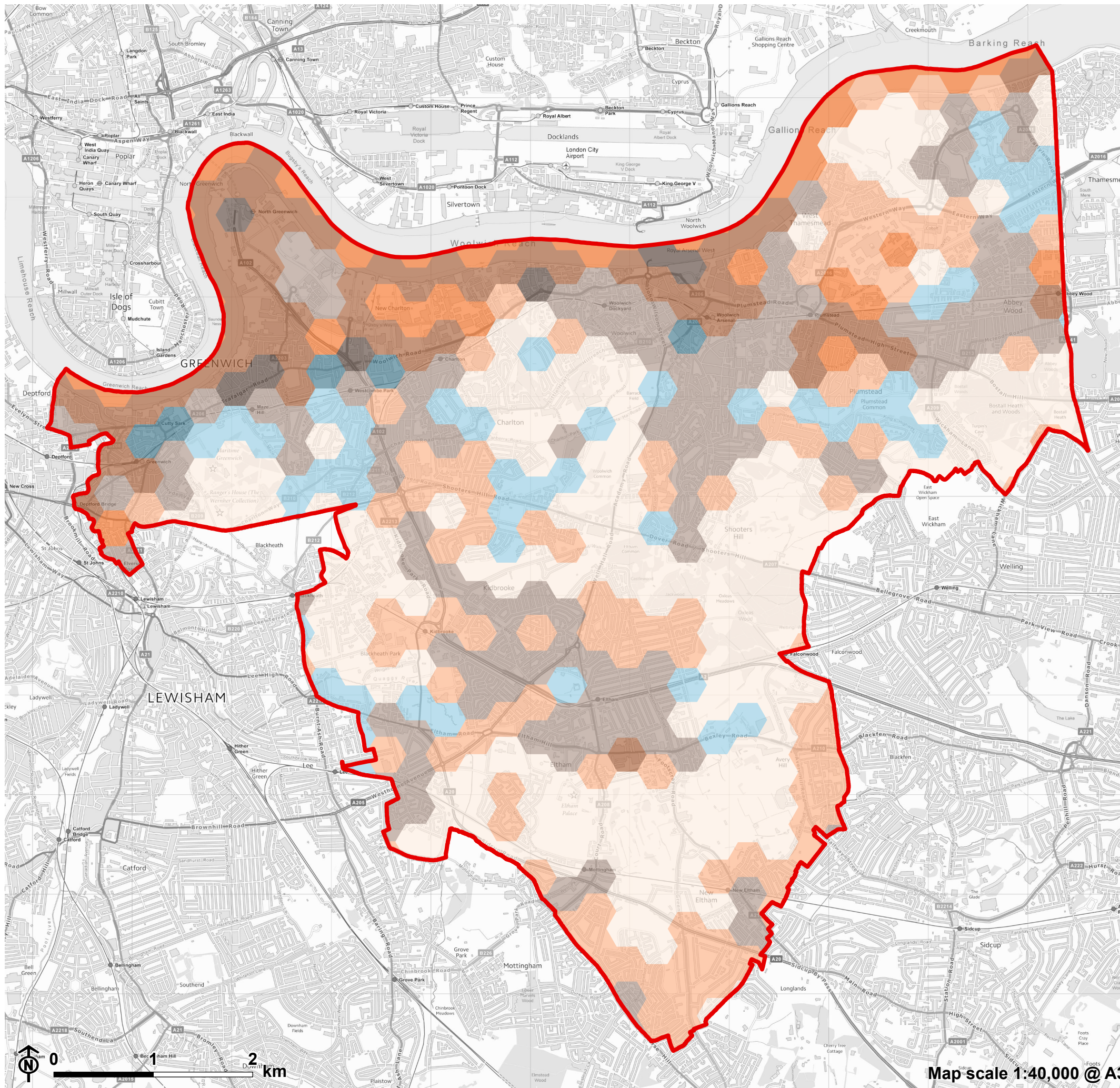
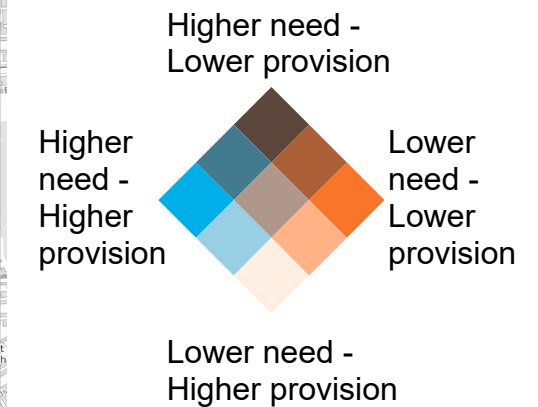


Figure 3.26: Spatial distribution of need and provision within the borough - Objective: Greener active travel routes

 Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary

Need versus provision



 Higher need / lower provision = Key cycling / walking locations that could benefit from increased GI

Greener high streets

GBI helps create high quality environments which attract inward investment, support high streets and retail, attract tourists and act as a catalyst for regeneration.

3.79 The integration of GBI interventions within high streets and town centres could help to attract more visitors to areas of the borough, indirectly supporting the local economy. Public Health England has highlighted the potential role of GBI in improving and regenerating the high street⁵⁸. Research from TfL also estimates that high street walking, cycling and public realm improvements can increase retail spend by up to 30%. People who walk and cycle were also found to take more trips to the high street over the course of a month⁵⁹.

3.80 The Council's Retail & Leisure Study⁶⁰ recommends the integration of increased GBI and improvements to the public realm within both Eltham and Woolwich Town Centres to improve environmental quality. The integration of urban greening interventions to alleviate air and noise pollution within Greenwich Town Centre is also highlighted. The existing network of street trees along Trafalgar Road are identified as key placemaking features within East Greenwich Town Centre. However, the narrow pavements, lack of planting and the appearance of the frontages detract from the shopping experience along Plumstead High Street. The report concludes that this high street would benefit from increased provision of GBI which, in turn, would make the centre a more attractive proposition for visitors and potential investors.

3.81 The spatial distribution of need and provision in relation to 'greener high streets', as described within the London GI Framework, is shown in **Figure 3.28**.



Street tree planting on Wilton Road, Abbey Wood

⁵⁸ Public Health England (2018) Healthy High Streets, Good place making in an urban setting

⁵⁹ Transport for London (no date) Walking & Cycling: The Economic Benefits. Available at: <https://content.tfl.gov.uk/walking-cycling-economic-benefits-summary-pack.pdf>

⁶⁰ Royal Borough of Greenwich Council (2018) Royal Borough of Greenwich Retail & Leisure Study. Available at: <https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/media/3410/download?inline=1>

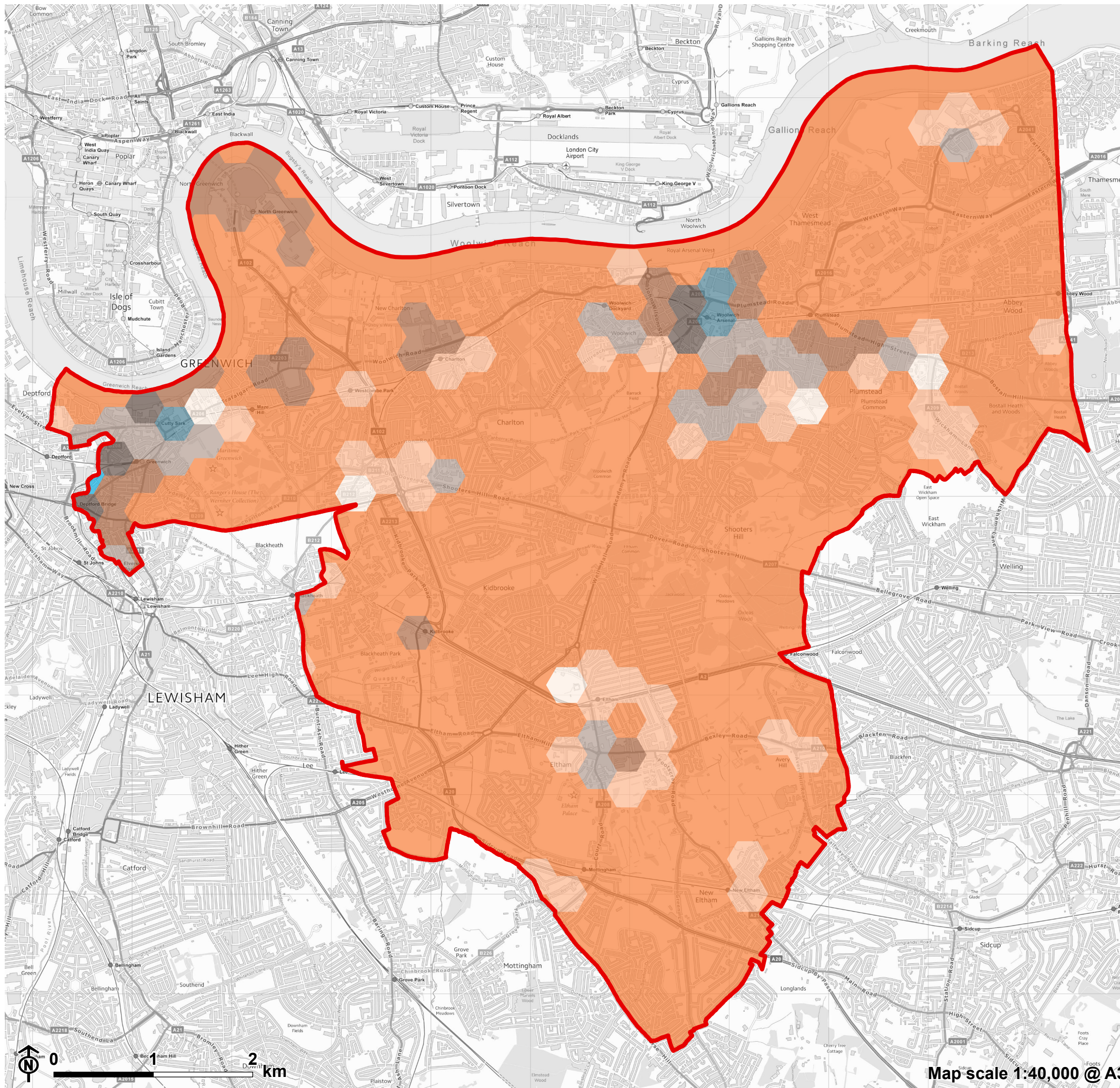
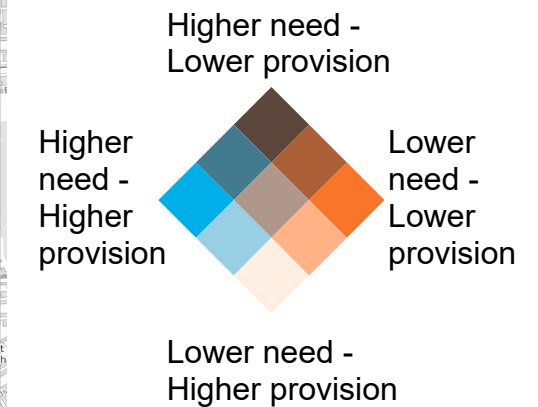


Figure 3.28: Spatial distribution of need and provision within the borough - Objective: Greener high streets

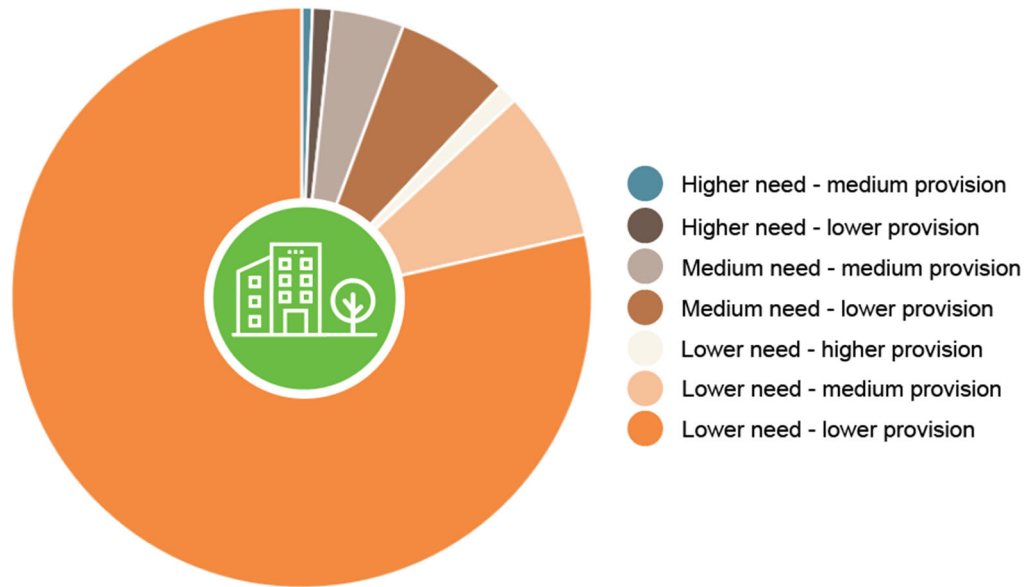
 Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary

Need versus provision



-  Higher need / lower provision = Busy economic areas that could benefit from introduction of new GI to support local economic activity
-  Lower need / lower provision = Areas with low existing footfall where introduction of GI may encourage greater visitor numbers

Figure 3.29: London GI Framework: 'greener high streets' objective – proportion of need and provision across the borough



London GI Framework: 'greener high streets' objective

- There is low provision of town centres and high streets with green cover throughout much of the borough, as reflected by **Figure 3.29** which indicates that 78.5% of the borough is identified as lower need and lower provision for this objective.
- **Figure 3.29** indicates that only 0.6% of the borough represents an area of higher need and medium provision. These areas include the greener, busier high streets and town centres which are located within close proximity to open spaces e.g. land close to Greenwich Pier and Cutty Sark.
- 1.1% of the borough is identified as an area of lower need and higher provision, limited to spatially discrete locations centred on small high streets e.g. Plumstead High Street, land at Eltham Station and a short section of Trafalgar Road.



Land at Cutty Sark

A photograph of a park scene. A gravel path leads from the foreground towards the background, flanked by green grass on the left and dense bushes on the right. A black metal bench sits on the grass near the path. Large, leafy trees frame the top and sides of the image, with a white house visible in the distance through the foliage. The sky is blue with some clouds.

Chapter 4: Local level open space designation review

Chapter 4

Local level open space designation review

Introduction

4.1 As part of the wider Study, LUC has reviewed the borough's current open space designation framework. The review aimed to inform further consideration of the suitability and functionality of the borough's current open space designations in managing sustainable development.

4.2 This chapter provides a summary of that review. It outlines current open space designations in the borough (including local and London-wide open space designations) and draws on approaches used in other London boroughs to develop and present options and considerations for a future open space designation framework. Two options are set out for a high-level policy framework which the borough can take forward to be developed for inclusion in the emerging Local Plan. The borough was invited to review and consider these options in June 2025. This chapter presents the preferred proposed policy framework and provides suggested criteria for the designation of open spaces.

Existing open space policy context and background to this review

4.3 The borough has an existing community open space (COS) designation, currently applied through the Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), which is used to protect open spaces in the borough. However, it is unclear how this designation has been applied and there are inconsistencies in its application to different open spaces.

4.4 At present, there is no clear or defined criteria which informed the designation of existing COS, and therefore there is no specified criteria for the designation of new COS. Feedback from the borough's planning officers suggested that there are some existing sites which are designated as COS which may benefit from strengthened policy protection. There are also other existing sites designated as COS where further flexibility could be beneficial to accommodate certain types of development. The review therefore considered the borough's existing COS designation and alternative approaches which could be adopted.

4.5 A summary of existing open space policy in the borough is provided in **Appendix B**. It sets out the open space policy provisions of the Mayor's London Plan (2021), as well as relevant local designations and policies in the adopted Local Plan: Core Strategy (2014). This includes an overview of MOL, COS and the associated policy wording attached to these designations.

Key considerations

4.6 Open spaces make up important parts of London's multi-functional GI network, providing important functions; including biodiversity, climate mitigation and adaptation, recreation, health and well-being. There are a range of pressures on open spaces in Greater London, including pressure from built development. Significant areas are also deficient in accessible, high-quality open spaces.

4.7 The Mayor's London Plan makes provisions for the protection of Greater London's larger, strategic open spaces. However, Local Plans play an important role in the designation and protection of their other public and private open spaces, including parks and gardens of all scales, recreation grounds, allotments, sports facilities, play spaces as well as small open spaces and pocket parks. Importantly, many small-scale local open spaces play important roles and provide important benefits to a local community. Consideration of the designation and protection of open spaces in the borough should take open spaces of all scales into account, particularly in areas of open space deficiency.

4.8 As part of the wider Study, LUC has undertaken open space audits (see **Chapter 5**), updating and expanding on previous audits carried out for the 2017 Green Infrastructure Study. This will provide an up-to-date evidence base of the types, quality and quantity of existing open spaces in the borough of 0.4ha or greater.

4.9 As noted in the supporting policy text for COS within the Local Plan Core Strategy (2014), there are many valuable open spaces in the borough that don't meet the criteria for MOL. However, many of these sites provide important functions for the local and wider community and need to be safeguarded from built development pressures.

4.10 There are also open spaces in the borough which serve important purposes. However, to accommodate development on open space, policy exceptions need to apply.

4.11 Currently, the borough's COS designation allocates a variety of sites throughout the borough. As noted, there is no identified criteria for the identification and designation of COS. From an initial review of current COS designations in the borough, it was noted that there is a wide variation in the typology and size of open spaces which fall within the designation. For example, some comprise small amenity grass areas less than 0.1ha in size, and others comprise relatively substantial sites (e.g. recreation grounds and allotments) over 10ha. There are also some spaces in the borough that may be expected to be included due to their similarity with other COS sites, that are not currently designated as COS. Without a clear set of criteria, there is no mechanism for clearly identifying and allocating new COS in the borough or reviewing those currently designated.

4.12 The policy protection of Local Plan policy OS(b) is similar to but differs in wording and detail from that afforded to MOL by OS(a) (see **Appendix B**). Whilst each policy sets out similar presumptions against most types of development (i.e. development will only be acceptable where is small-scale and ancillary to the existing land use of the site), Policy OS(a) provides clearer parameters for the type of development considered acceptable within or on land fringing MOL.

4.13 Feedback from planning officers at the Council identified that the existing COS policy does not suit all the range of sites it covers. For example, a car park which would be suitable for development is currently covered by a COS designation. In addition to the lack of clarity regarding the criteria which define COS, there is uncertainty and therefore opportunities for inconsistency about how the policy is applied in planning processes.

4.14 In summary, it was considered that the existing COS designation required review. The following sections explore options for future open space designation framework for the borough, drawing on examples from other London boroughs.

4.15 It should be noted that this review aims to provide an overview of the variety of approaches which may be appropriate for future open space designations and provides a snapshot of case study examples from a range of London boroughs. It does not provide an exhaustive list of all potential options for open space designations and policies which could be included in the emerging Local Plan.



Amenity greenspace at Eltham Green

Options for future local open space designations

4.16 This section outlines identified options for future open space designations to be included in the next iteration of the Local Plan. The discussion below draws upon case study examples from other London boroughs and defines options for the borough's future open space designation framework. Options for protection through policy, local open space designations, designation policy aligned with MOL and local greenspace designation are provided. An overview of policy approaches to open space on housing estates is also provided.

Protection through policy

4.17 If no specific local designation was to exist, all areas identified as 'open space' (other than MOL) are afforded some protection by Policy G4 (B)(1) of the Mayor's London Plan (2021) i.e. *"development proposals should not result in the loss of protected open space"*. An open space policy within the Local Plan could therefore be applied to afford all open spaces in the borough with the same policy protection.

Local open space designations

4.18 Several local authorities designate the majority of open spaces (which are not MOL) as 'identified open spaces' or 'designated open spaces'. A broad open space designation covers a variety of circumstances, open space typologies and the type of development. The examples below provide an overview of some the policy approaches of other London boroughs to local open space designation.

Case study: Islington

Islington Local Plan (2023)⁶¹ protects 'public open space' and 'significant private open spaces' (i.e. private open spaces generally greater than 1ha) under 'Policy G2: Protecting open space'. Part (a) ensures that all public open spaces identified in the Policies Map, and significant private open spaces are protected from development. There are no identified exceptions to this, besides development associated with the use of the canal

⁶¹ Imperial College London (2019) London Health Burden of Current Air Pollution and Future Health Benefits of Mayoral Air Quality Policies (see: erg.ic.ac.uk/research/home/projects/tfl-hia-maqp.html)

⁶¹ Royal Borough of Greenwich Council (2023) Air Quality Action Plan 2023 to 2027 (see: https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/downloads/download/1466/air_quality_annual_status_report)

⁶¹ Ibid.

[ash=87580E35EA21B2221918960F570CD1CC3CEFFE6B\)](https://www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/downloads/download/1466/air_quality_annual_status_report)

(further detailed criteria are set out in out site-specific Local Plan policies). As such, all open space identified in the Policies Map – including MOL, identified public open space, and significant private open space – is protected relatively comprehensively from all forms of development.

Islington's open space policy (**Policy G2**) acknowledges other open space in the borough which are not formally designated as open space. These are not identified on the Policies Map but are but are afforded policy protection. These specific references set out circumstances where development may be considered appropriate relating to a) open space on housing estates (see section below: '**approaches to open space on housing estates**') and b) other private open spaces.

4.19 Islington is one of the most densely populated local authorities in the country with one of the lowest amounts of greenspace per person. Not all public open spaces in Islington are identified in its Policies Map, with open space on housing estates being identified as a notable exception (see below). However, those that are identified on the Policies Map are all afforded the same degree of policy protection, which identifies very few circumstances where any form of development would be considered acceptable.

Case study: Camden

Policy A2: Open Space of the adopted Camden Local Plan (2017)⁶² (and **Proposed Policy SC4: Open Space** of the emerging Camden Local Plan – Proposed Submission Draft (2025)) covers the protection of open spaces, and provision of new and enhanced public open space. The emerging plan Proposed Policy SC4 also covers the design and management of public open space.

Policy A2 Part (a) (and Proposed Policy SC4 part B(1)) sets out the provisions for the protection of all 'designated public and private open spaces' (as identified on the Policies Map), with a few exceptions (e.g. equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality is provided within the local catchment, small-scale development associated with the use of the land or where it meets a demonstrable need).

Provisions for some types of spaces not designated in the Local Plan policies map are included in the policy wording, including a) open space on housing estates (see section below: '**approaches to open spaces on housing estates**') and b) to '*non-designated spaces with nature conservation, townscape and amenity value, including gardens*, which the Council aims to protect, where possible, and c) alternative sports and recreation provision, where the needs outweigh the loss and where this is supported by an up-to-date needs assessment. As such, the policy makes provisions for the protection and management of certain open spaces that are not designated in the Local Plan Policies Map.

4.20 This policy approach is less stringent than Islington in terms of the development which might be considered acceptable. For example, suitable re-provision of open space may be considered acceptable.

4.21 The cases above represent approaches whereby the borough has not differentiated, in policy designations terms, different 'tiers' of locally designated open space in the borough. If this approach was applied by the Council, 'open space' identified in the Local Plan (taking in all existing COS and other appropriate open spaces) would all be addressed in the same way.

4.22 If more stringent protections were applied through policy, careful consideration would need to be given to the identified sites and the exact boundaries of open spaces identified in the Policies Map as this would limit future flexibility for the re-configuration of land uses, re-provision of open space or development considered suitable within the open space.

4.23 Conversely, if more flexible policy was applied, there may by some sites in the borough which do not meet the criteria for MOL, but where it is considered that they should be afforded a similar degree of protection and therefore have weaker protection than necessary.

Local designation policy for important open spaces

4.24 Another option which the Council could take would be to apply an additional local open space designation to open spaces considered to be of higher value and therefore requiring

⁶² Camden Council (2017) Camden Local Plan (see: <https://www.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/4820180/Local+Plan.pdf/ce6e992a-91f9-3a60-720c-70290fab78a6>)

additional protection. This could be similar to the protection offered by the existing COS designation but applied to open spaces selected through the use of a consistent set of criteria.

4.25 The London Borough of Southwark provides a case-study example of a Local Planning Authority who have fully aligned their local designation with MOL policy (note: the Council's MOL policy and current COS policy vary slightly in policy wording and detail).

Case study: Southwark Borough Open Land

Southwark Local Plan (2022)⁶³ designates 'Borough Open Land' (BOL), which is afforded the same protections as its MOL. The criteria for designating BOL, for which a site must meet all, are as follows:

- 1) An area of local importance to Southwark;
- 2) A clearly distinguishable open space;
- 3) Land that contains features or landscapes of historic, recreational or nature conservation value at a borough level;
- 4) It must not be MOL.

The following types of open space must be BOL:

- Borough sites of nature conservation;
- Local parks and open spaces over 2 hectares that have public access;
- Open spaces over 0.4 hectares that occur in areas of local open space deficiency;
- Open spaces over 0.4 hectares that occur in areas of district open space deficiency;
- Open spaces protected under the London Squares Preservation Act;
- Local historic sites of interest.

The Local Plan sets out that policy protection of BOL does not differentiate it from MOL.

Southwark deals with other open spaces, which do not meet the criteria above, through Part 2 of its open space policy (P57) which states that: *"Development will not be permitted on Other Open Space (OOS). In exceptional circumstances development may be*

permitted if it consists of replacement OOS of equivalent or greater size or substantially better quality can be secured on site or nearby before development commences."

OOS is identified on the Policies Map. OOS does not comprise all other open space. It includes allotments public open space including public parks and gardens, playing fields and sports grounds (publicly or privately owned), private open space which is of benefit to the local community, open space that has been created/secured through planning obligations and site of ecological importance.

4.26 Southwark's open space policy therefore addresses MOL and BOL together, affording them the same levels of protection and parameters for appropriate development. In this case, there is clear criteria to determine what constitutes BOL. Southwark then identifies and protects all 'Other Open Space' in the borough, including the caveat that development may be appropriate in some circumstances, providing a greater degree of flexibility for development under some circumstances for these sites.

4.27 For this approach to be applied in the borough, criteria would need to be developed for COS, like Southwark's BOL criteria above, and a review of existing COS designations undertaken to identify which sites meet the criteria and should retain their COS status and any new open spaces to be designated. The previous policy wording for COS could be retained or adapted or it could be brought in line with that for MOL, following Southwark's BOL approach.

4.28 A refined COS designation would provide more protection for open spaces of most local value. This could be used alongside a local open space designation for other open spaces identified in the Policies Map with more flexibility offered for these open spaces. In the case of Southwark's OOS, while there is flexibility for exceptional circumstances, re-provision of suitable open space must be on-site or nearby.

Local Greenspace Designation

4.29 Local Greenspace (LGS) is another mechanism for the designation of open space. First introduced to national policy in 2012, it is one of the few provisions of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) specifically designed to serve the introduction of neighbourhood planning. NPPF (2024) paragraph 106 states: *"The designation of land as LGS through local and*

⁶³ Southwark Council (2022) Local Plan (see [Southwark Plan 2022 reduced 1.pdf](#))

neighbourhood plans allows communities to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to them. Designating land as LGS should be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. LGS should only be designated when a plan is prepared or updated and be capable of enduring beyond the plan period". The LGS designation should only be used where the greenspace is:

- a) in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves;
- b) demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance, for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife; and
- c) local in character and is not an extensive tract of land.

4.30 Policies and decisions for managing development within a LGS should be consistent with national policy for Green Belt. This does not mean that policies should simply repeat Green Belt policies but will provide a similar degree of protection and can be bespoke to specific sites.

4.31 While LGS can be designated through Local Plans, in most cases it is identified through the neighbourhood planning process (and then later reflected within Local Plan reviews). The range of ways a site can be identified as special or significant to a local community can vary widely and is generally identified via neighbourhood planning consultation and subsequent referendum on the proposed plan. If an LGS was to be identified and designated through the Local Plan, it would need to meet the criteria outlined above, including articulation of its importance to the community it is serving.

4.32 Several London boroughs have designated LGS sites. In these cases, sites were first identified as LGS through made neighbourhood plans.

Case study: Brent

Brent Local Plan 2019 – 2041⁶⁴ includes LGS designations. The Sudbury Town Neighbourhood Plan was made in 2015, which identified and allocated four LGSs – Butlers Green, Barham Park, Vale Farm and Maybank Open Space (these sites are also

identified as Open Space (London Plan Policy G4) in the Brent Local Plan). The Neighbourhood Plan affords these sites long term protection and development which is not ancillary to the use of land for recreation purposes will be resisted.

The Neighbourhood Plan includes four site-specific policies for each individual LGS, setting out key priorities and preferred developments within these sites (e.g. *"refurbishing and using the existing buildings for alternative uses which complement the open space" or "reusing the space for temporary activities, possibly including a weekly farmers market..."* etc.). The Brent Local Plan (adopted 2022) reflects these LGS designations, originally established through the neighbourhood planning process.

Case study: Camden

Planning policy within Camden is supportive of the encouragement of LGS designations through neighbourhood planning processes. The adopted Camden Local Plan (2017) includes the following provision as part of **Policy A2 Open Space**: *"In order to protect the Council's open spaces, we will:*

h) promote and encourage greater community participation in the management of open space and support communities seeking the designation of Local Greenspaces through the neighbourhood planning process..."

There are several adopted Neighbourhood Plans within Camden which have identified and allocated LGSs. The Neighbourhood Plans include details of why the spaces are of importance to the community. For example, Fortune Green and West Hampstead Neighbourhood Plan, adopted 2015 and include specific LGS policies e.g. *"The enhancement of these spaces will be supported, especially if these measures improve the access and use of the spaces by individuals and groups with protected characteristics"* (Kentish Town Neighbourhood Plan Policy GO1: Local Greenspaces).

The emerging Camden Local Plan – Proposed Submission Draft (2025) includes continued policy support for *"communities seeking the designation of Local Greenspace*

⁶⁴ Brent Council (2022) Brent Local Plan 2019-2041 (see: <https://www.brent.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-guidance/brent-local-plan>)

through the neighbourhood planning process” (Proposed Policy NE1) and LGS will be protected in accordance with Proposed Policy SC4: Open Space (see above).

4.33 As with other open space designations, careful consideration of the designation, boundaries and parameters of LGS is important, ensuring appropriate flexibility is maintained, as the provisions of LGS are similar to that of Green Belt / MOL policy.

4.34 Whilst Policy OS1 of the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy (2014) makes reference to LGS, there are none currently designated in the borough. It is understood that one neighbourhood planning group expressed interest in the designation of an LGS in the borough however the site already fell within MOL, and it was decided there was limited value-added by the designation of the site as LGS.

4.35 There may be opportunities for the identification of LGS within the borough through neighbourhood planning processes. These sites may be accompanied by bespoke site-specific policies within any future adopted neighbourhood plans. However, depending on the future policy framework taken forward for the next Local Plan, there may be limited value-added if open spaces are covered by other Local Plan designations (for example, if an open space was already covered by an MOL or COS designation).

4.36 Whilst LGS designation is unlikely to be identified through the Local Plan review process, the borough may wish to encourage LGS designation through neighbourhood planning processes, as some other London boroughs (e.g. Camden) have done. Neighbourhood forums should be encouraged to identify LGS in their neighbourhood plans to contribute to the identification of all open spaces of local public value and that these are afforded appropriate protection through the Local Plan.

Approaches to open spaces on housing estates

4.37 Several London borough Local Plan open space policies draw out specific reference to open / amenity space on housing estates as a sub-section of their broader open space policy. These sites are not identified on their Local Plan Policies maps, but the policy wording relates to all open spaces on housing estates in the borough.

Case study: Camden

In addition to the public space identified on the Policies Map, adopted Local Plan (2017)⁶⁵ Policy A2 (b) (and the emerging Local Plan Policy SC3 Part B(2)) makes provision for “safeguarding amenity space on housing estates while allowing flexibility for the re-configuration of land uses”.

The policy includes the factors which will be considered in the consideration of proposals including the effect of the proposed scheme (size, sitting and form of open space and its functions), re-provision of open space, and whether the public value of retaining the open space is outweighed by the benefits of the development for existing residents and the wider community, such as improvements to the quality and access of open space.

Case study: Islington

Policy G2 part (c) of the Islington Local Plan relates specifically to ‘open space on housing estates.’ These sites are protected, but development may be acceptable in some cases. Where development is proposed on open spaces on housing estates, on-site re-provision of the same quantum and improved quality is encouraged. Full loss will be resisted; however, re-provision of a lesser quantum may be acceptable under certain circumstances (for example, the lesser amount of space is of a higher quality, serves multiple functions, etc.).

4.38 While these sites would not necessarily need to be ‘designated’ or ‘identified’ in the Local Plan Policies Map, the Council may wish to consider similar policy wording to manage future proposals for redevelopment of housing estates, to ensure the quantum and quality of open space re-provision is of a suitable standard.

⁶⁵ <https://www.camden.gov.uk/documents/20142/4820180/Local+Plan.pdf/ce6e992a-91f9-3a60-720c-70290fab78a6>

High level policy framework options

4.39 This section provides an overview of the case study findings, setting out two high-level 'options' which were identified for a future open space designation framework in the borough. It outlines next steps for development of a designation framework.

4.40 For the purposes of this discussion, to avoid confusion with the existing designation, the term 'Community Open Space' has not been used to for proposed local open space designations. However, it is acknowledged the name could be carried forward for a future revised local designation.

Status quo

4.41 Given the current lack of definition and application, it is considered that maintaining COS in its current form should not be taken forward for the emerging Local Plan. This would not fully address the problems identified with the COS designation and policy in its current form (i.e. problems with definition and application).

4.42 Therefore, two options for a new designation framework were developed and are presented below. It should be noted that, while this review identified these as the two main options for an overarching policy framework for open space in the borough, the detailed criteria and policy wording will ultimately determine how they are applied in practice.

Option 1 – 'two-tier' approach

- **Metropolitan Open Land** – review opportunities to extend existing designations / allocate new sites where MOL criteria are met.
- **Identified / designated other open space** – identify other open spaces in the borough which do not meet MOL criteria and develop overarching policy wording which affords them suitable protection with flexibility for certain types of development. This policy may be broad to cover a variety of open spaces but could incorporate detailed policy wording about the types of development which may be considered acceptable in certain circumstances.

Option 2 – 'three-tiered' approach

- **Metropolitan Open Land** - review opportunities to extend existing designations / allocate new sites.
- **Local open space designation** (e.g. 'Community Open Space' or Southwark's 'Borough Open Land') - develop criteria to identify local sites which do not meet the criteria for MOL, but it is considered should be afforded a high degree of protection. Develop policy wording accordingly.
- **Identified / designated other open space** - identify other open spaces in the borough which do not meet the criteria for the two designations above (e.g. Southwark's 'Other Open Space'). Develop policy wording which provides but accommodates an appropriate degree of flexibility.

4.43 The Council's planning officers were invited to consider the review of open space designation and high-level policy framework options the Council may wish to adopt.

4.44 Based on this early review of the borough's open spaces and Local Plan designations, it was suggested that Option 2, which aligns with the approach adopted by Southwark, may be well suited for the protection of the borough's open spaces. As part of the BOL or COS designation process, the identification and protection of smaller open spaces in areas of open space deficiency in the borough should be a key consideration (e.g. 'small open spaces' as defined in the Mayor's London Plan. For example, Southwark ensures small open spaces (albeit greater than 0.4ha) in areas of local / district open space deficiency are designated as BOL. Aside from this designation, the wider Local Plan designation for 'identified / designated other open spaces' would need to be based on a broader set out criteria and afforded suitable policy protection with relevant policy wording (similar to Southwark's 'Other Open Spaces').

4.45 It must be noted that, in each of the options above, there is opportunity within policy wording to draw out policy requirements for specific types of open space that are not 'designated' (e.g. open space on housing estates, private open space).

4.46 In each of the scenarios above, proposals for LGS allocations may come forward through the neighbourhood planning process. However, this is subject to the neighbourhood planning process, and it may be determined that there is limited value-added if the site is already covered by another designation. It is not expected that LGS will be allocated through the Local

Plan and may come forward through neighbourhood planning processes. However, it is important that the preparation of the emerging Local Plan ensures that the approach to open space is thorough and fine-grained, ensuring local groups do not feel the open spaces important to them are being overlooked.

Key considerations for development of policy framework

4.47 There are several considerations which will help to inform the future development of open space spatial policy in the borough. It is important that the Council consider the options which will suit the future needs of the borough in terms of adequately protecting and managing its diverse range of open spaces, encouraging their enhancement and delivering an overall improvement in the quality and quantity of open space in the borough. Ultimately, the suitable scenario is dependent on the variety of types or 'tiers' of open spaces within the borough, and the ends the Council wants to achieve in terms of how these spaces are protected.

4.48 It is demonstrated that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to open space policy. It is recognised many open spaces may benefit for more stringent policy protection. Others may benefit from greater flexibility to accommodate appropriate redevelopment and re-configuration of land uses and certain type of small-scale development that are considered appropriate and ancillary to the land use of the site.

4.49 The Council was invited to consider the benefits of having more types of Local Plan open space designations (i.e. clearly defined distinctions or 'tiers' including with associated distinct levels of protection) vs. having fewer (i.e. a more simplified approach to designation that encapsulates a variety of types of open spaces and flexible policy wording that relies further on cases to be considered on a case-by-case basis).

4.50 Understanding the current features and functions of existing COS designations is important to fully understanding the current purpose they serve, informing future provisions of any new designation(s) made through the Local Plan. These results of the open space audit will be important in selecting open spaces using the proposed criteria.

4.51 The Council reviewed and considered the review presented in this chapter and requested that a set of criteria for designation be produced on the basis that they proceed with a three-tier designation approach for their open spaces.

Development of proposed approach and suggested criteria

4.52 Using the designations 'Borough Open Land' (BOL) and 'Other Open Space' (OOS) in line with the designation framework presented in Option 2, this section sets out the policy intention and the suggested criteria for the BOL designation and OOS designation which the Council may wish to apply in the selection of open spaces to be designated.

4.53 Other boroughs have incorporated the historic or ecological value of open spaces into the criteria for designation; however, it is considered that these sites should already be protected through other Local Plan policies. Therefore, the criteria for designation suggested here focus on the size, accessibility and value of open spaces to residents and communities.

4.54 In the context of a borough where there is high demand for development, an increasing population and increasing population density, the focus should not only be on the protection of larger open spaces through designation. Smaller, neighbourhood spaces are likely to have increased value for residents and will form an important part of the overall open space provision that will enable quantity standards to be met.

4.55 While the open space audit focussed on spaces over 0.4ha in size as per the categories of open spaces set out in the London Plan (see **Appendix A**), the criteria for designation also cover smaller open spaces. This will assist the Council in meeting the requirements of Policy G4 A(2) '*Include appropriate designations and policies for the protection of open space to meet needs and address deficiencies*'.

Borough Open Land Designation

Policy intention

4.56 The Borough Open Land designation would be applied to open spaces deemed to be of importance at a borough level. The focus here is on larger spaces which provide multiple functions and therefore are used by larger numbers of people. Smaller spaces within areas of deficiency in access to greenspace should also fall within this category as these may be required to perform multiple functions within these areas and / or be more frequently used.

Suggested criteria

1. An open space of borough-level importance;

2. A publicly accessible open space; and
3. Is not MOL.

4.57 Open spaces of the following types should be considered for BOL designation (categorisations as defined in the London Plan):

- Local parks and open spaces of more than 2ha that have public access.
- Small open spaces and pocket parks over 0.4ha that are in an identified area of open space deficiency.

Other Open Spaces Designation

Policy intention

4.58 The Other Open Space designation would protect open spaces of importance at a neighbourhood level. This designation should be used to protect local and pocket parks, including open space typologies such as food growing areas, play areas, sports pitches and MUGAs. Private open spaces which have wider value to local communities could also be protected under this designation.

4.59 A smaller size threshold is suggested for this designation; however, it should be applied selectively to spaces which are functioning as open spaces with recreational benefit for people and not incidental open space such as amenity grassland around buildings or road verges.

Suggested criteria

1. An open space of neighbourhood-level importance.
2. A publicly accessible open space.
3. Is not MOL or BOL.

4.60 Open spaces of the following types should be considered for OOS designation:

- Small open spaces and pocket parks over 0.4ha that have public access.
- Open space greater than 0.2ha which has public access and is in an identified area of open space deficiency.

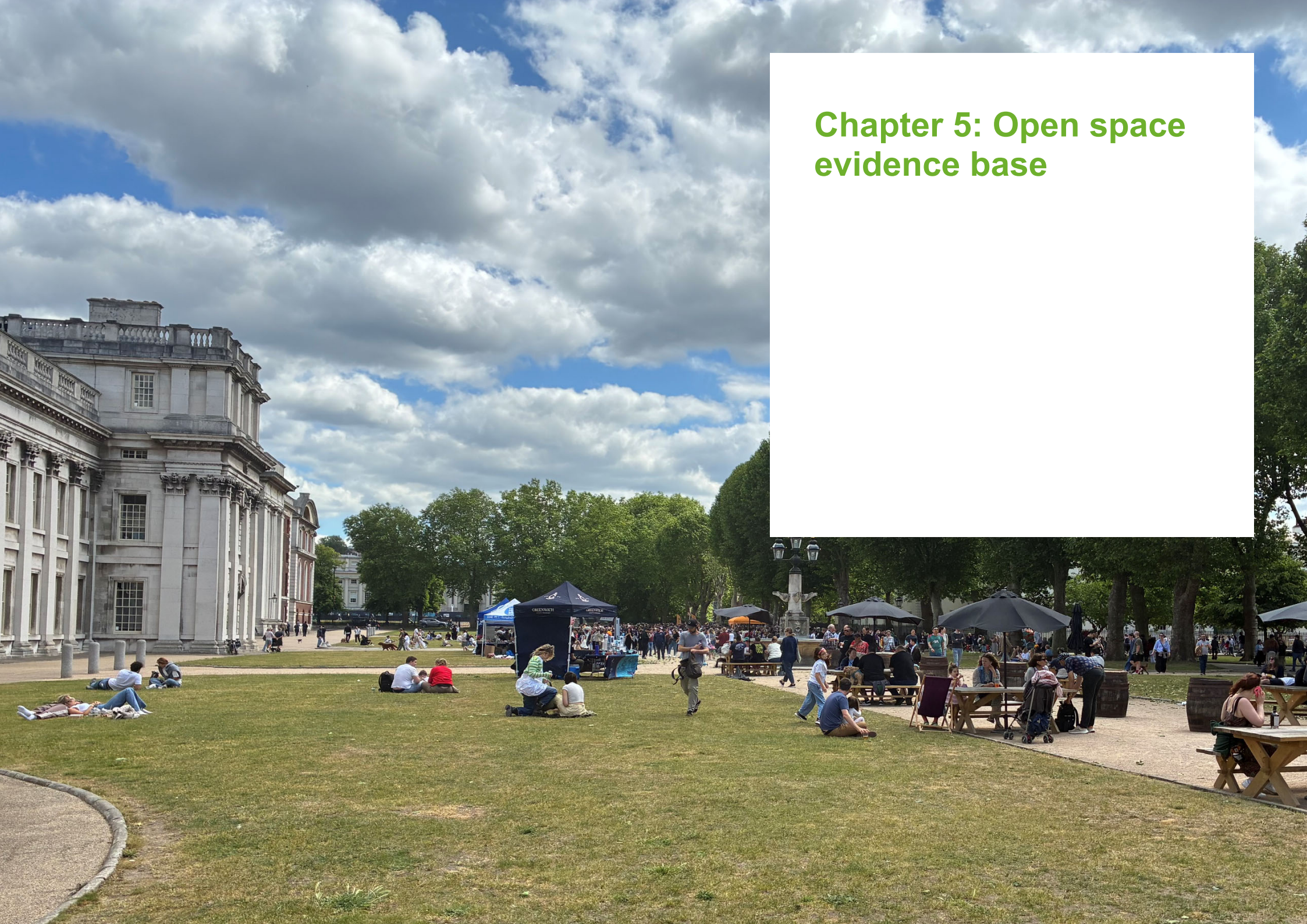
- Open spaces of the following typologies:

- Play areas;
- Food growing areas;
- Playing fields, sports grounds and MUGAs;
- Private open space of benefit to the local community; and
- Open space that has been created and secured through planning obligations.

Next steps

4.61 The Council has decided to proceed with the exploration of a Borough Open Land designation. Open spaces falling into the criteria outlined above for Borough Open Land will be considered in addition to MUGAs and allotments. A full list of these sites for consideration are provided in **Appendix C**.

Chapter 5: Open space evidence base



Chapter 5

Open space evidence base

Current provision

Provision of open space

5.1 Following the assignment of primary typology and access level, the total quantity of open space and play space across the borough can be assessed. Overall, there are 1,440.98 ha of open space in the borough. Approximately 62% of this provision is provided by open spaces which are publicly accessible (either open 24 hours a day, seven days a week or with opening hours). **Table 5.1** shows the quantity (in hectares) and count (number of individual sites) for all the sites that are publicly accessible.

Table 5.1 Amount of publicly accessible open space by primary typology

Primary typology	Area in hectares (ha)	Count (number of sites)
Parks and gardens	365.49	51
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	350.89	28
Amenity greenspace	81.72	135
Green corridor	32.91	20
Civic spaces	10.31	10
Cemeteries and Churchyards	46.08	9
Provision for children and young people	6.31	74
Total	893.71	327

5.2 In total, there are 893.71 ha of publicly accessible open space across the borough (see **Figure 5.1**). Approximately 39% of the total area is natural and semi-natural greenspace. This typology of open space includes many large spaces, such as Woolwich Common, Bostall Woods and Oxleas Wood. As a consequence, the count of this typology is correspondingly lower (28 individual open spaces).

5.3 Parks and gardens also contribute significantly to the overall area of open space. 51 sites make up just over 40% of total open space in the borough. This includes a number of larger parks and gardens, such as Greenwich Park and Avery Hill Park. All other typologies between them comprise just under 20% of the total area of open space. However, these generally form smaller sites and the count of these is much higher. For example, amenity greenspace is the most common typology and makes up around 42% of the total count of all sites.

5.4 In addition, some sites with restricted access, or no access are also included in the open space dataset (see **Figure 5.2**). This includes sites which may only be accessible to members or tenants, including for example allotments and outdoor sports clubs. These are shown in **Table 5.2**.

5.5 There are 405.12 hectares of open space which have restricted access. This includes several typologies that all have limited access. Allotments and outdoor sports facilities (which are broken down into education, private and public outdoor sports) all have access restricted by membership. Of these, private outdoor sports facilities are the most common, making up over half of the area of restricted access open space and 43% of the count of restricted access sites. Other areas of typologies with sites with restricted access include parks and gardens which require paid entry and amenity greenspaces which are accessible only to tenants within private or gated housing areas.

5.6 143.15 ha of open space with no access has been identified. Approximately 40% of this area is agricultural land, which may be accessible only where public rights of way cross through it. Additional areas of no access include private woodlands (natural and semi-natural greenspaces) and shelter belts along railway lines (green corridors). Whilst there is no access, these spaces may provide additional benefits associated with the visual connection to nature, and nature-based solutions (such as carbon sequestration, natural flood management or food production).

Table 5.2 Amount of open space with limited or no accessibility per typology

Primary typology	Area in hectares (ha)	Count (number of sites)
Allotments (all restricted access)	20.37	24
Outdoor sports facilities (Education) (all restricted access)	73.15	17
Outdoor sports facilities (Private) (all restricted access)	250.69	43
Outdoor sports facilities (Public) (all restricted access)	14.41	2
Parks and gardens – restricted access	7.95	1
Natural and semi-natural greenspace – restricted access	10.59	5
Amenity greenspace – restricted access	18.46	6
Green corridor – restricted access	1.45	1
Cemeteries and churchyards – restricted access	8.05	1
Agricultural land (all no access)	56.00	6
Natural and semi-natural greenspace – no access	65.28	10
Amenity greenspace – no access	2.78	2
Green corridor – no access	18.09	7
Total (restricted access)	405.12	100
Total (no access)	142.15	25

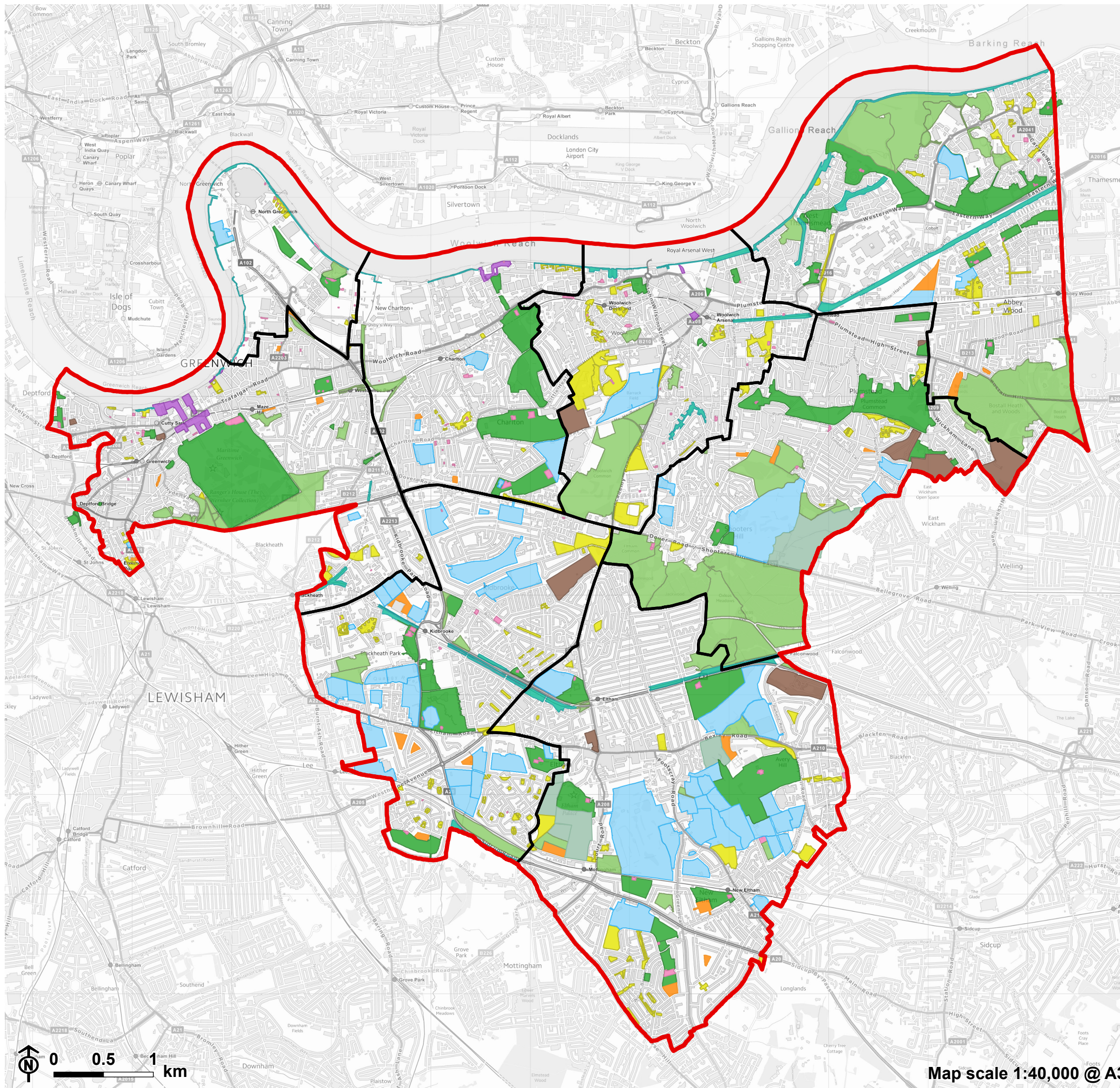


Figure 5.1: Open Space by Typology

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich analysis area boundary
- LUC Open Space 2025**
 - Agricultural land
 - Allotments
 - Amenity greenspace
 - Cemeteries and churchyards
 - Civic Space
 - Green corridor
 - Natural and semi-natural greenspace
 - Outdoors sports facilities
 - Parks and gardens
 - Provision for children and young people

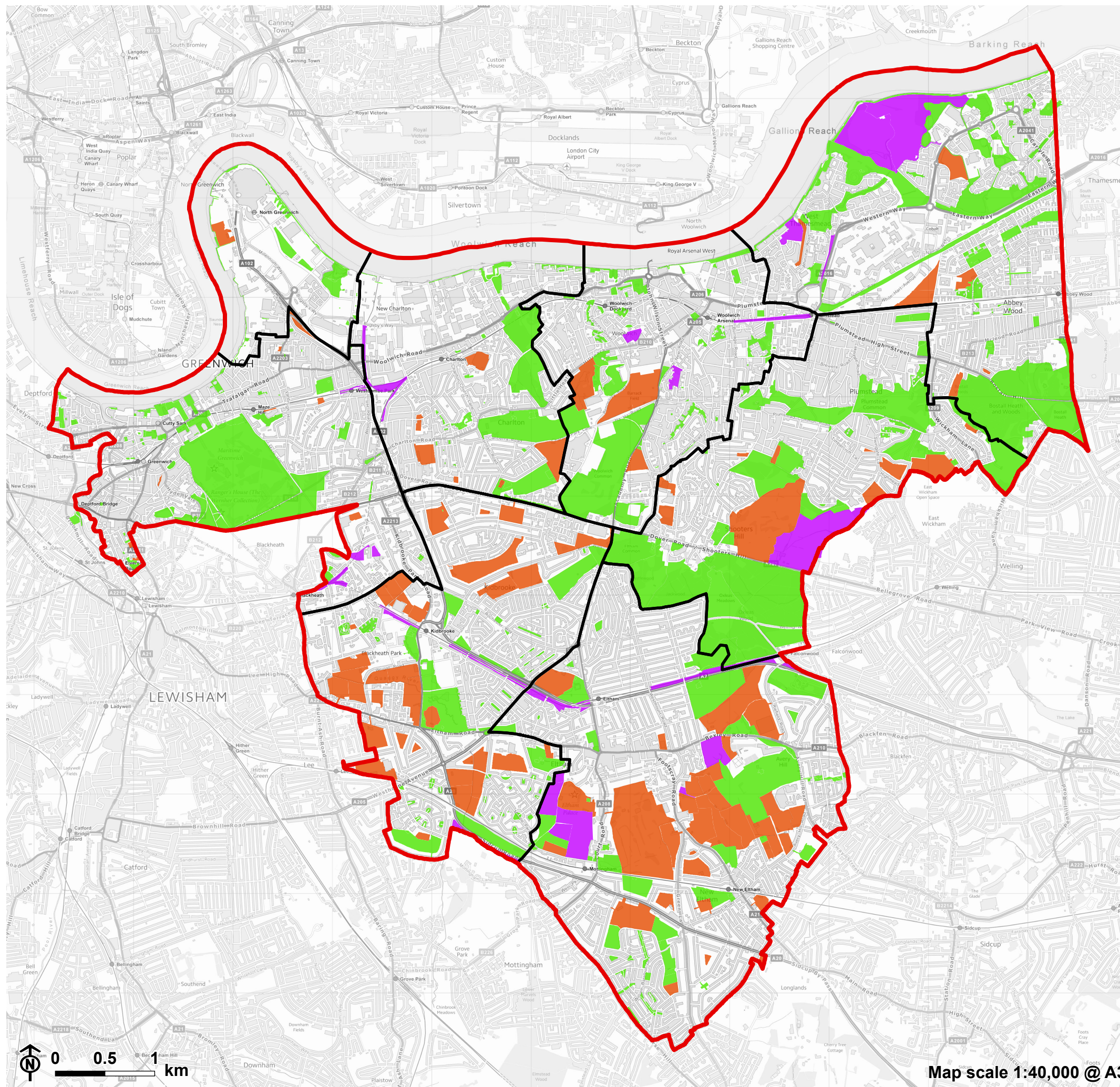


Figure 5.2: Access to Open Space

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich analysis area boundary
- LUC Open Space 2025**
 - Freely accessible
 - No public access
 - Restricted access

5.7 As well as considering the amount of open space by primary typology, the amount of open space by secondary typology has been identified. Secondary typology takes into account specific functions which apply to a discrete part of a larger site. This includes, for example, an area of play equipment within a larger park and garden. In this case the secondary typology total area would show a higher area of the provision for children and young people typology, and a lower total area for the parks and gardens typology. The total count of sites for provision for children and young people typology would increase due to the extra play provision provided. The count of parks and gardens typology would stay the same.

5.8 The areas (in hectares) and count of sites belonging to different typologies for all the publicly accessible open spaces are shown in **Table 5.3**. Within some sites, secondary typology

has been identified which has a different access level from the main site, so the total amount of publicly accessible open space is lower when breaking down sites into their secondary typologies.

5.9 An additional 73 areas have been identified as having a different secondary typology to the main site. The vast majority of these are provision for children and young people, which cover areas of equipped play, as well as other specific areas designed for young people, including multi-use games areas (MUGA), skate parks, green gyms and single basketball hoops.

Table 5.3 Breakdown of areas when taking secondary typology into consideration where the primary site is publicly accessible

Secondary typology	Area in hectares (ha)	Difference from primary typology (ha)	Count (number of sites)	Additional secondary typology contribution (count)
Parks and gardens	356.79	- 8.71	51	No secondary typology
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	350.66	- 0.23	28	No secondary typology
Amenity greenspace	82.14	+ 0.42	141	6
Green corridor	32.91	No change	20	No secondary typology
Civic spaces	10.31	No change	10	No secondary typology
Cemeteries and churchyards	46.08	No change	9	No secondary typology
Provision for children and young people	10.76	+4.46	138	64
Outdoor sports facilities (Private) (secondary typology is restricted access)	2.94	+ 2.94	2	2
Natural and semi-natural greenspace (secondary typology is restricted access)	1.14	+ 1.14	1	1

Provision of open space per population

5.10 Table 5.4 shows the provision of open space calculated as hectares per 1,000 of the population, derived using population data from the 2021 Census. This is calculated using the primary typology provision for all typologies, except outdoor sports and provision for children and teenagers. For these typologies, the quantity is based on secondary typology. Areas with a separate secondary typology to the main open space are accounted for in both the quantity for its primary typology and secondary typology totals. These areas contribute to the standalone provision of the specific function of the secondary typology, whilst also contributing to the wider facilities available which attract people to the wider open space. Most of the standards have been based only on the publicly accessible open spaces. The exception is for those typologies where the majority of the open spaces have access restricted to members only. This includes outdoor sports, allotments and community growing space and agricultural land. For provision for children and teenagers, the population is based on the population aged under 18 rather than the full population.

Table 5.4 Open space quantities per thousand of the population

Typology	Detail on open spaces used for the calculation	Quantity in hectares per 1,000 of the population
Parks and gardens	Primary typology area, publicly accessible only	1.27
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	Primary typology area, publicly accessible only	1.21
Amenity greenspace	Primary typology area, publicly accessible only	0.28
Green corridor	Primary typology area, publicly accessible only	0.11
Civic spaces	Primary typology area, publicly accessible only	0.04
Cemeteries and Churchyards	Primary typology area, publicly accessible only	0.16
Provision for children and young people	Secondary typology area, publicly accessible only (children under 18)	0.19
Outdoor sports (all)	Secondary typology area, any access level	1.18
Allotments	Primary typology area, any access level	0.07
Agricultural land	Primary typology area, any access level	0.19

Characteristics of current provision

Site audit methodology

5.11 In order to assess the quality and value of open space provision in the borough, open space audits of a sample of 100 sites were conducted, covering a range of typologies. The audit form consisted of five sections:

- Desk-based assessment;
- Scoring against the Green Flag Award judging criteria;
- Play provision audit;
- Active recreation audit; and
- Multi-functionality assessment (unscored).

5.12 The scores from each section of the open space audit were combined to provide an overall score for quality and value. The definition of each is provided below.

- Quality – Aspects relating to the management and condition of features and facilities.
- Value – The presence of the features and facilities, as well as the site's value to the local community.

5.13 The structure, scores and guidance used for the open space audit were based on the previous open space audit undertaken in 2017 to allow comparisons over time to be drawn. However, minor edits were made to reflect changes in best practice since 2017.

5.14 The desk-based assessment of the audit was completed for all sites, whereas the site audit sections were completed for a sample of 100 sites only.

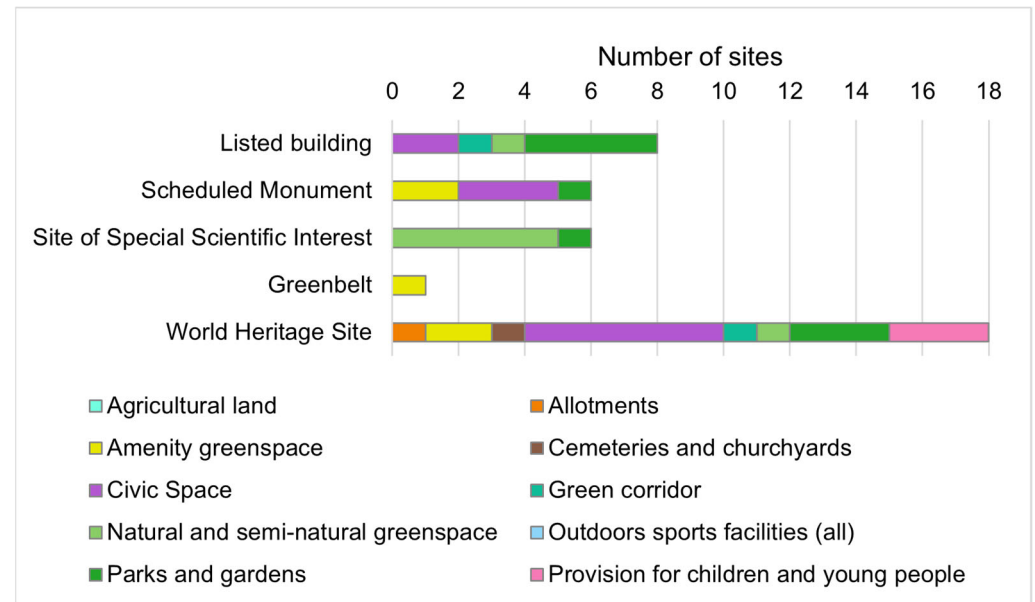
Desk-based assessment

5.15 This section of the open space audit was scored based on whether sites overlapped with national, regional and local designations, or features of interest.

5.16 National designations were split into statutory and non-statutory designations. Each overlapping national designation added a score of three to the value score.

5.17 The number of sites which achieved scores for the national, statutory designations category is shown in **Figure 5.3**. Most open spaces in the borough do not overlap with any national statutory designations. The most common overlapping designation was world heritage site, which covers the historic areas around Greenwich Town Centre and Greenwich Park. This designation is most common in civic spaces, which are concentrated around Greenwich Town Centre. Civic spaces are also the typology most likely to overlap with listed buildings and civic spaces. Natural and semi-natural greenspaces show the greatest overlap with SSSIs, corresponding to 11% of sites.

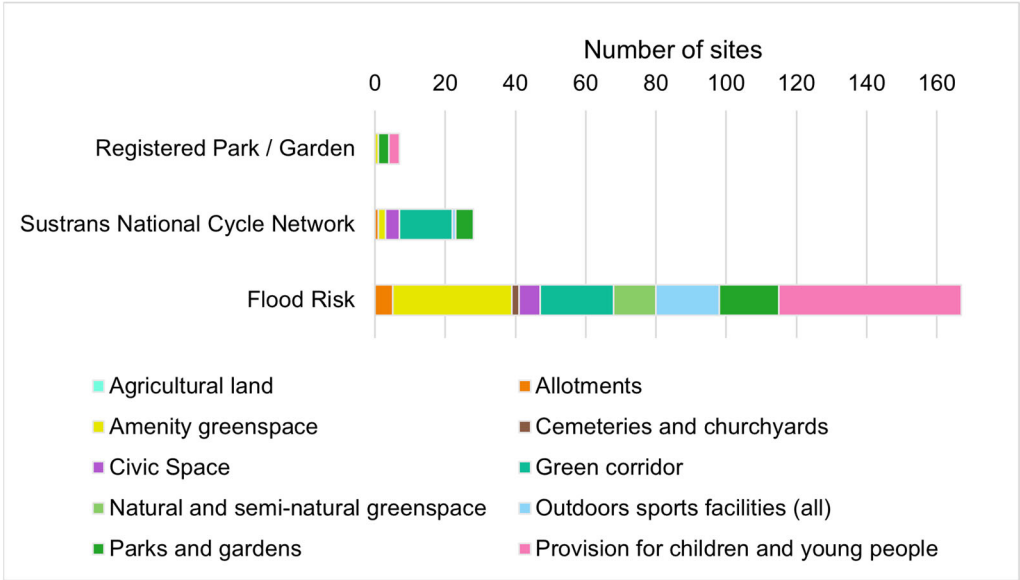
Figure 5.3 Overlaps with national statutory designations



5.18 Other national datasets considered include registered parks and gardens, Sustrans national cycle network (NCN) routes and areas of flood risk. Open spaces in areas of flood risk can contribute value by providing natural flood storage areas, acting as nature-based solutions to help alleviate flood risk. The breakdown of sites overlapping with these datasets is shown in

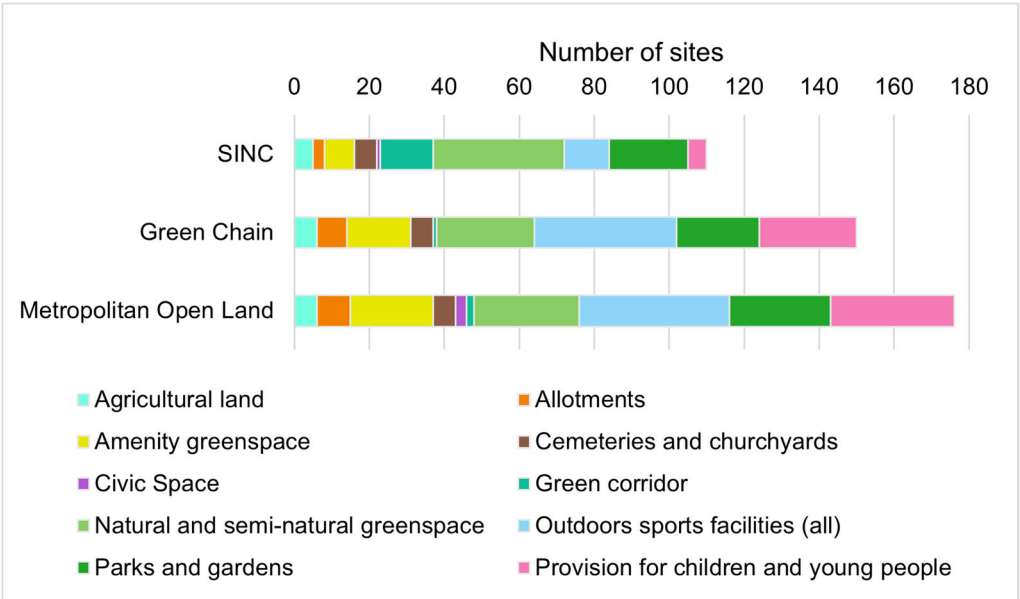
Figure 5.4. The most common overlapping national dataset was areas of flood risk, which occurs at 167 (32%) of sites. This includes 78% of green corridors, which includes a number of water-front routes, such as the Thames Path National Trail. Similarly, Sustrans NCN routes were most commonly found within the green corridor typology. This typology is of particular value for supporting active travel.

Figure 5.4 Overlaps with other national datasets



5.19 Regional datasets considered include SINCs, Green Chain sites, MOL and regionally important geological and geomorphological sites (see **Figure 5.5**). These overlap with open spaces more commonly than the national datasets. MOL is the most common overlap, and occurs at over a third of all sites (34%). This includes all agricultural land and more than half of outdoor sports provision, natural and semi-natural greenspace, cemeteries and churchyards. Green Chain sites, which overlap with 29% of all sites show a similar pattern in relation to typologies. SINCs overlap with open space at 110 (21%) of sites. This includes 76% of the natural and semi-natural greenspace sites, 60% of cemeteries and churchyards and 52% of green corridors. This has particular implications for management and the need to balance protection of the semi-natural features of the site with recreation. No open spaces overlap with regionally important geological and geomorphological sites.

Figure 5.5 Overlaps with regional datasets



5.20 Figure 5.6 shows the overlaps with local statutory designations. The most common of these are conservation areas, community open space designations and areas of special character. These all overlap with just under 25% of the open spaces and include a number of typologies. 90% of civic spaces overlapped with conservation areas. Community open spaces were also most commonly found in civic spaces (50%) and parks and gardens (42%). Areas of special character included all agricultural land, 60% of cemeteries and churchyards and 50% of natural and semi-natural greenspace. Other designations were found at a smaller number of sites. LNRs predominantly occur in natural and semi-natural greenspaces, where nature conservation is a key functionality of these sites. Riverside walks are most commonly found in green corridors, which includes the Thames Path National Trail.

5.21 Finally, Figure 5.7 shows the overlaps with other local designations and features. The most common feature is habitats within the Priority Habitats Inventory. These additional features were most commonly located in natural and semi-natural greenspace and parks and gardens. 81% of parks and gardens have received a Green Flag Award (including community and heritage awards).

Figure 5.6 Overlaps with local, statutory designations

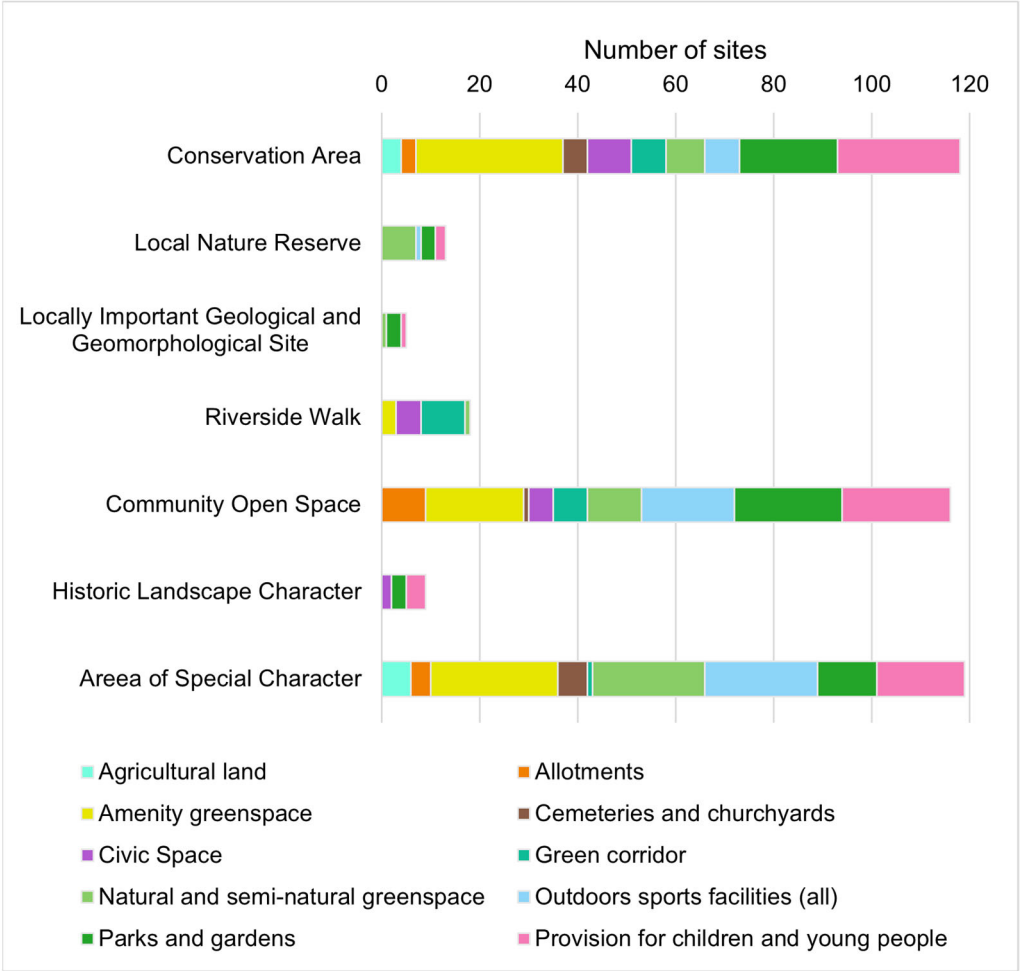
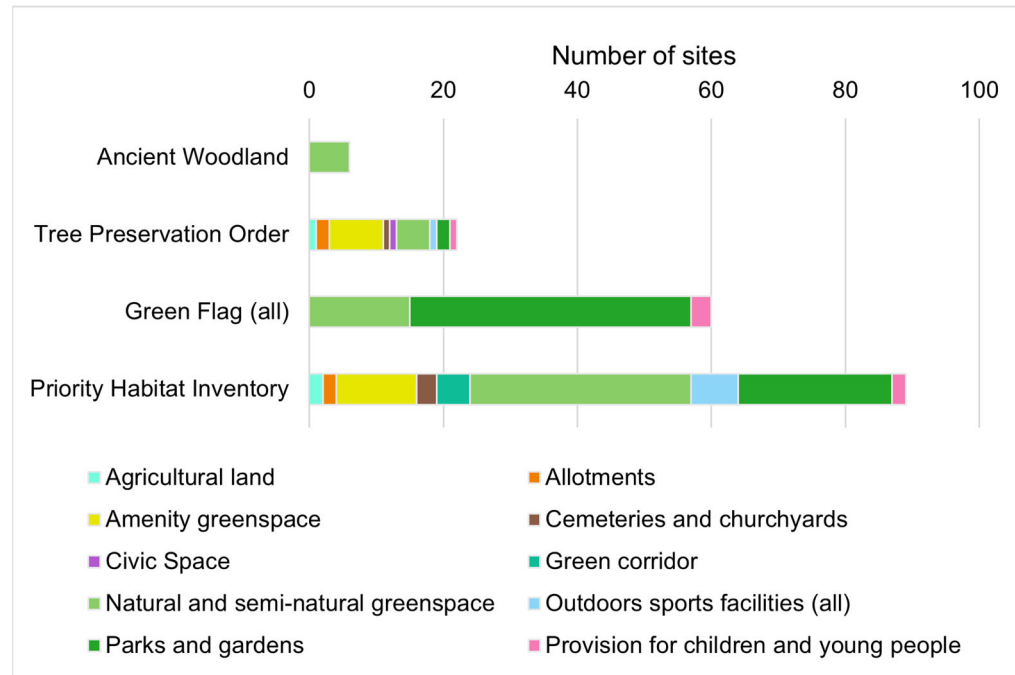


Figure 5.7 Other local designations and features



Green Flag Award scores

5.22 This section of the open space audit form highlights the key quality and value findings against the Green Flag Award themes. For each question in the open space audit, a score between one and six was given by the assessor, as outlined below:

- One – Very poor;
- Two – Poor;
- Three – Fair;

- Four – Good;
- Five – Very good; and
- Six – Excellent.

5.23 As noted in **paragraph 5.14**, comparison against the Green Flag Award scheme was undertaken for a sample of 100 sites across the borough. The sample comprises the following typologies:

- 4 allotment sites;
- 28 amenity greenspaces;
- 2 cemeteries and churchyards;
- 6 civic spaces;
- 12 green corridors;
- 9 natural and semi-natural greenspaces;
- 38 parks and gardens; and
- 1 site for children and teenagers.

Theme 1: A Welcoming Place

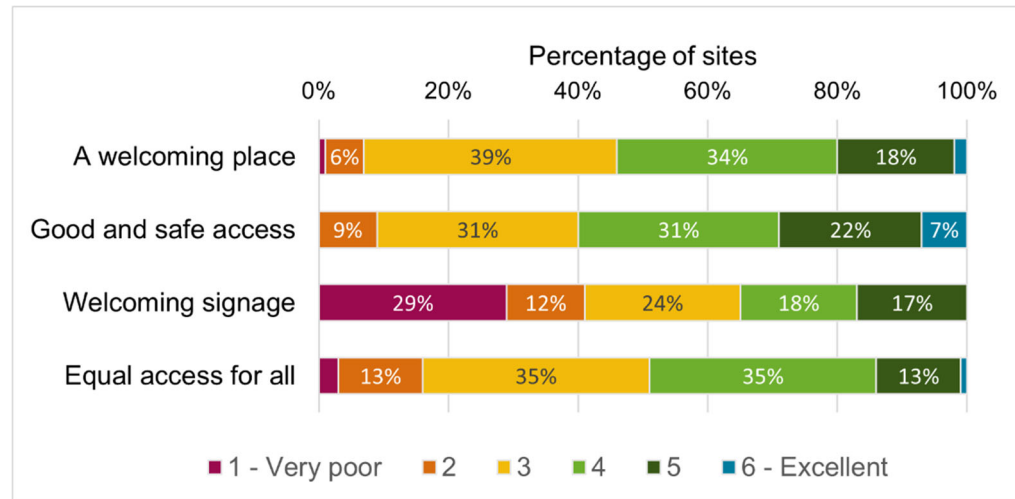
5.24 Theme 1 assesses how enticing and inviting an open space is overall to visitors. It brings together the overall management and offer of an open space, with a focus on the boundaries and entry points to the open space. The quality assessment for this theme was based on the following criteria:

- How welcoming the site is overall;
- The provision of good and safe access to the site;
- The condition and provision of welcoming signage; and
- Whether there is equal access for all (including physical access and availability of facilities for all users).

5.25 The value criterion for this theme is based on the level of accessibility.

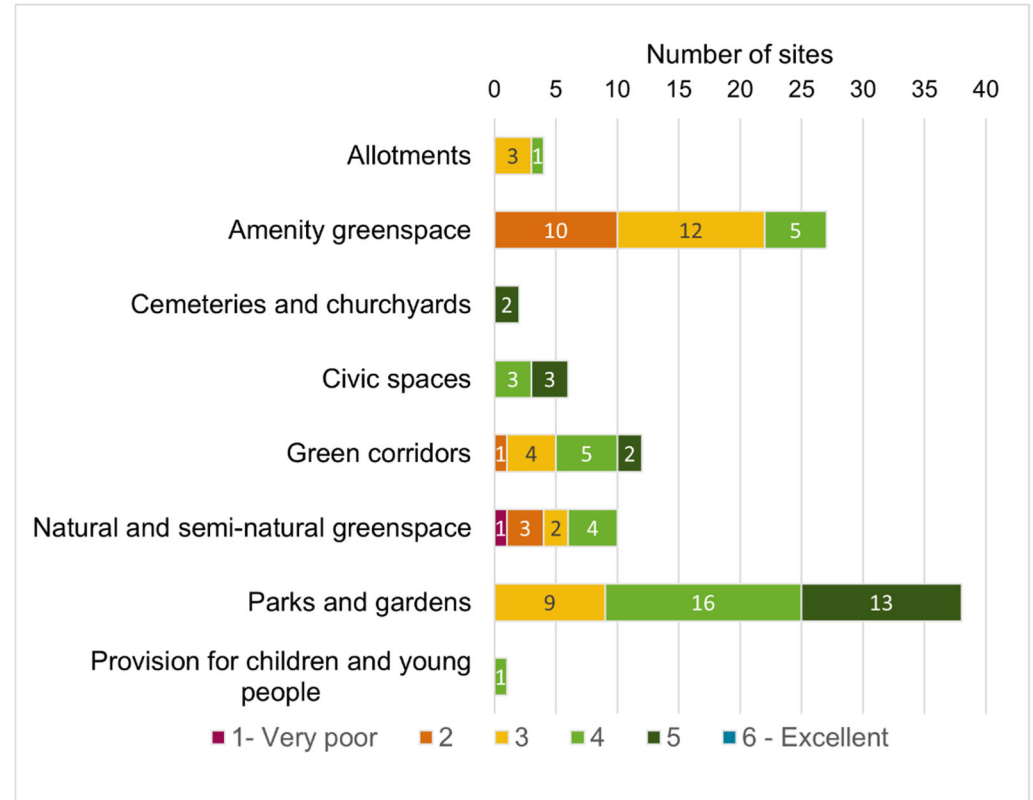
5.26 Figure 5.8 shows the range of scores for each of the four quality criteria across the audited sites. Overall, the vast majority of sites scored 'fair' or higher across three of the four welcoming criteria. Scores were particularly high for 'good and safe access', where 7% of audited sites scored 'excellent'. Many of the highest scoring sites included the civic spaces and green corridors where the high presence of hard surfaces and identified cycle paths increase the level of access. Conversely, the provision of welcoming signage scored less well. 41% of sites visited scored 'poor' or 'very poor' for this category.

Figure 5.8 Theme 1: 'A Welcoming Place' percentage of sites for each score per criterion



5.27 The average score achieved for each quality criteria in Theme 1 is presented per typology in Figure 5.9. Parks and gardens scored notably higher for this theme compared to other typologies. Amenity greenspace and natural and semi-natural greenspaces, on the whole, had lower scores. In the case of amenity greenspaces, the low scores were largely due to the absence of signage, whilst scores for the other criteria were higher. Civic spaces and cemeteries and churchyards also scored highly within this theme. Both these typologies scored highly for how welcoming a site feels, as well as criteria for accessible signage. A selection of the natural and semi-natural greenspace sites audited scored poorly across the criteria within this theme.

Figure 5.9 Theme 1: 'A Welcoming Place' average quality scores (rounded) per typology



5.28 Value scores for Theme 1 relate to the overall level of access. The vast majority of sites audited scored 'very good' for being fully accessible. Some audited sites also included those which had opening hours, which was most prominent within the parks and gardens typology. In addition, the allotments audited and a few of the amenity greenspaces had access restricted to members only.

Figure 5.10 Theme 1: A Welcoming Place



Well Hall Pleasance (Site ID 171) - signage at entrance



St Nicholas Gardens (ID 148) limited disabled access

Theme 2: Healthy, Safe and Secure

5.29 Theme 2 scores each open space based on the amenities available to support healthy activities, and the safe and well-managed condition of these facilities. Five criteria were identified for this theme, spanning quality and value criteria. These are listed below:

- Appropriate provision of facilities and activities (value);
- Quality of facilities (quality);
- Safety of facilities (quality);
- Personal security (quality); and
- Dog control (quality).

5.30 Figure 5.11 shows the range of scores for each of the five quality and value criteria across the audited sites. Generally, sites scored well in this theme, particularly in relation to the control of dogs. Over 80% of audited sites received a score of 'good' or higher and no sites

scored below 'fair'. However, scores for the provision of appropriate facilities and activities showed more variety, with 29% scoring 'poor' or worse and 34% scoring 'good' or higher.

5.31 The average value scores for Theme 2 across the different typologies are presented in Figure 5.12. Considering the range of these scores per typology, the majority of poorly scoring sites within this theme are within the amenity greenspace typology. This is to be expected as sites within this typology typically have a more limited offer in terms of formal recreation.

5.32 Figure 5.13 shows the average scores for the four quality criteria within this theme per typology. All sites audited had an average score of at least 'fair' for all four quality criteria. Cemeteries and churchyards, civic spaces and provision for children and teenagers scored particularly well, with sites having good natural surveillance and facilities in good condition with little or no vandalism. However, only a limited number of representative sites were audited within these typologies.

Figure 5.11 Theme 2: 'Healthy, Safe and Secure' percentage of sites for each score per criterion

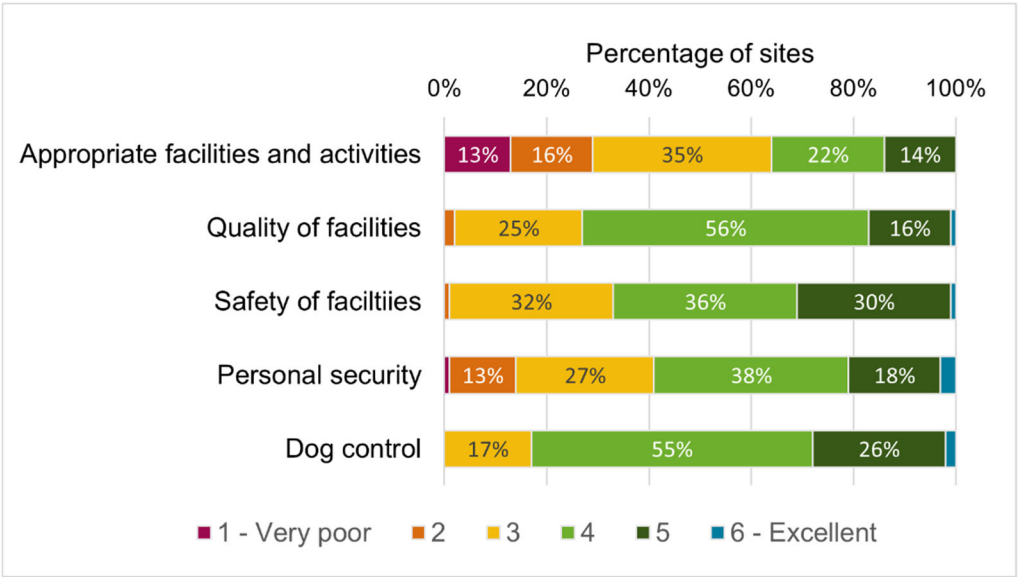


Figure 5.12 Theme 2: 'Healthy, Safe and Secure' average value scores rounded (per typology)

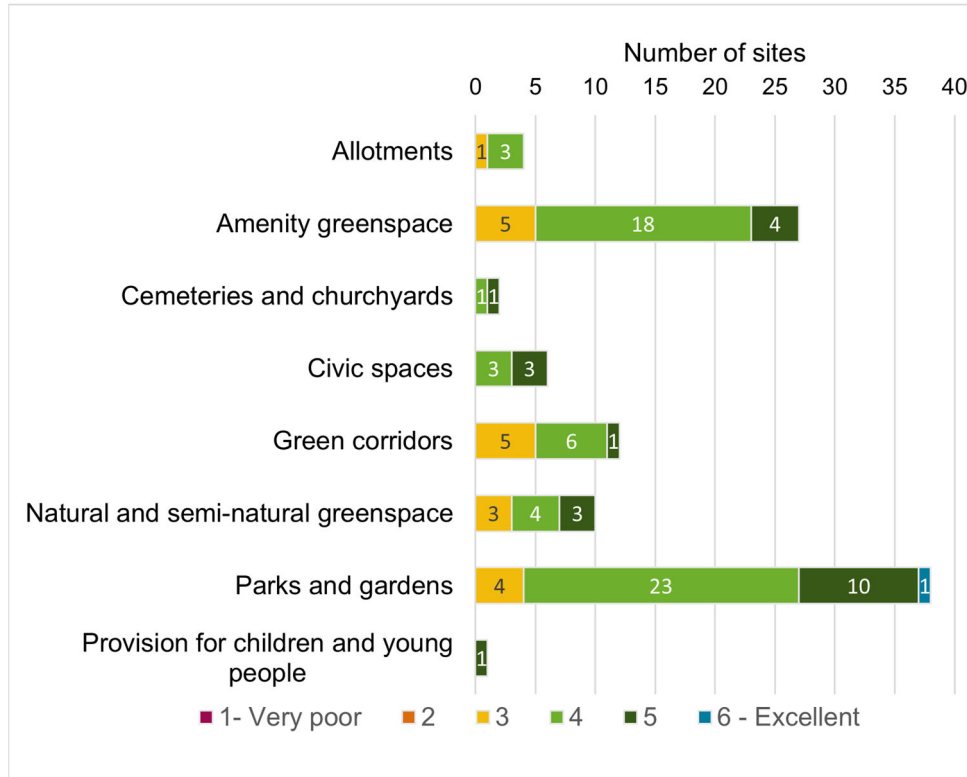


Figure 5.13 Theme 2 'Healthy, Safe and Secure' average quality scores (rounded) per typology

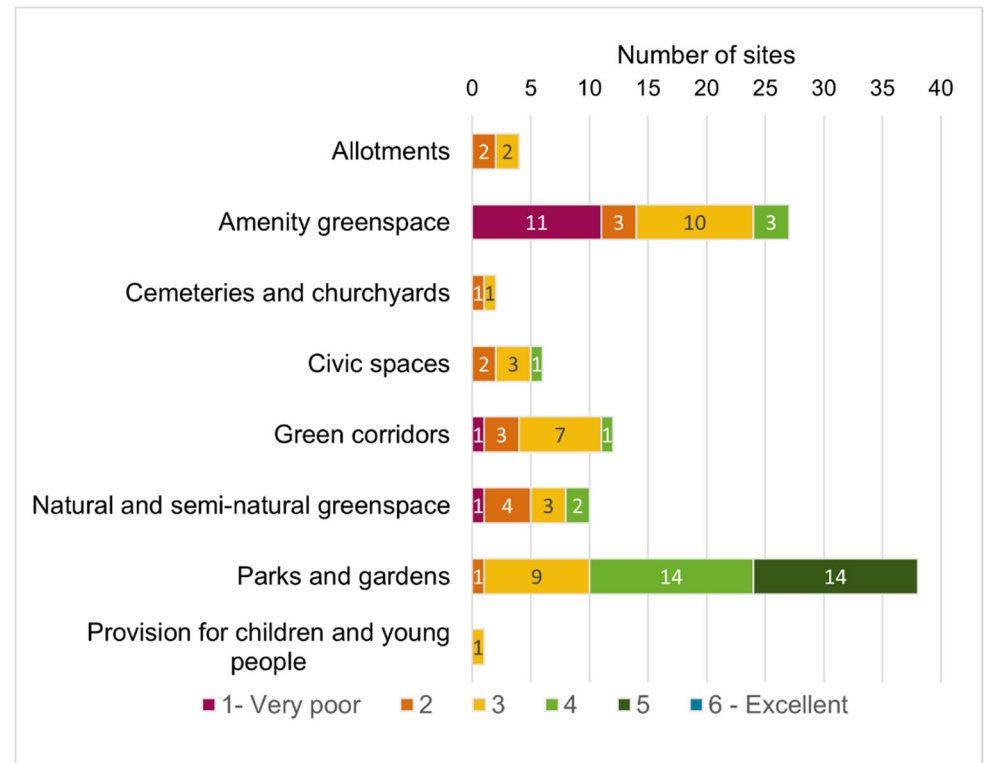


Figure 5.14 Theme 2: Healthy, Safe and Secure



Cutty Sark Gardens (Site ID 259) provides good natural surveillance from surrounding properties.

Figure 5.15 Healthy, Safe and Secure



Thames Path 2 (Site ID 352) provides no natural surveillance or formal lighting

Theme 3: Well Maintained and Clean

5.33 Theme 3 is primarily associated with the condition of various features and facilities, relating to quality criteria only. The assessment was based on the following criteria:

- Litter and waste management;
- Horticultural maintenance (see **Figure 5.16**);
- Arboricultural maintenance; and
- Buildings and infrastructure maintenance.

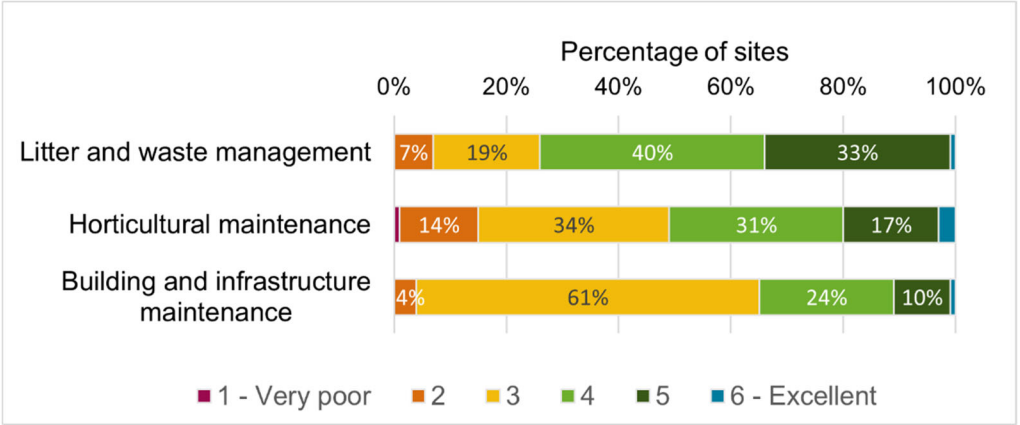
5.34 **Figure 5.17** shows the range of scores for each of the quality criteria across the audited sites. Over 85% of sites received a score of 'good' or higher for arboricultural maintenance and 74% scored 'good' or higher for litter and waste management. Scoring for horticultural maintenance varied across the sites, with the full range of 'very poor' to 'excellent' recorded across the open space sites. Overall, for this criteria, green corridors scored lower than other typologies (only 8% audited scored 'good' or higher), and cemeteries and churchyards scored higher (no sites audited scored 'good' or below).

Figure 5.16 Theme 3: Well Maintained and Clean



Grounds of National Maritime Museum (Site ID 37) with shrub and ornamental planting maintained to a very good standard

Figure 5.17 Theme 3: 'Well Maintained and Clean' percentage of sites for each score per criterion



5.35 The average score achieved for each quality criterion in Theme 3 is presented per typology in **Figure 5.18**. Both parks and gardens and amenity greenspace typologies scored highly for this theme, indicating good quality management and maintenance across individual open space sites. However, maintenance of features and infrastructure within green corridors and natural and semi-natural typology sites scored lower, with an average quality scored of 'fair'. Similarly to Theme 1, civic spaces and cemeteries and churchyards achieved high scores within this theme, scoring well for horticultural and arboricultural maintenance.

Figure 5.18 Theme 3: 'Well Maintained and Clean' average quality scores (rounded) per typology

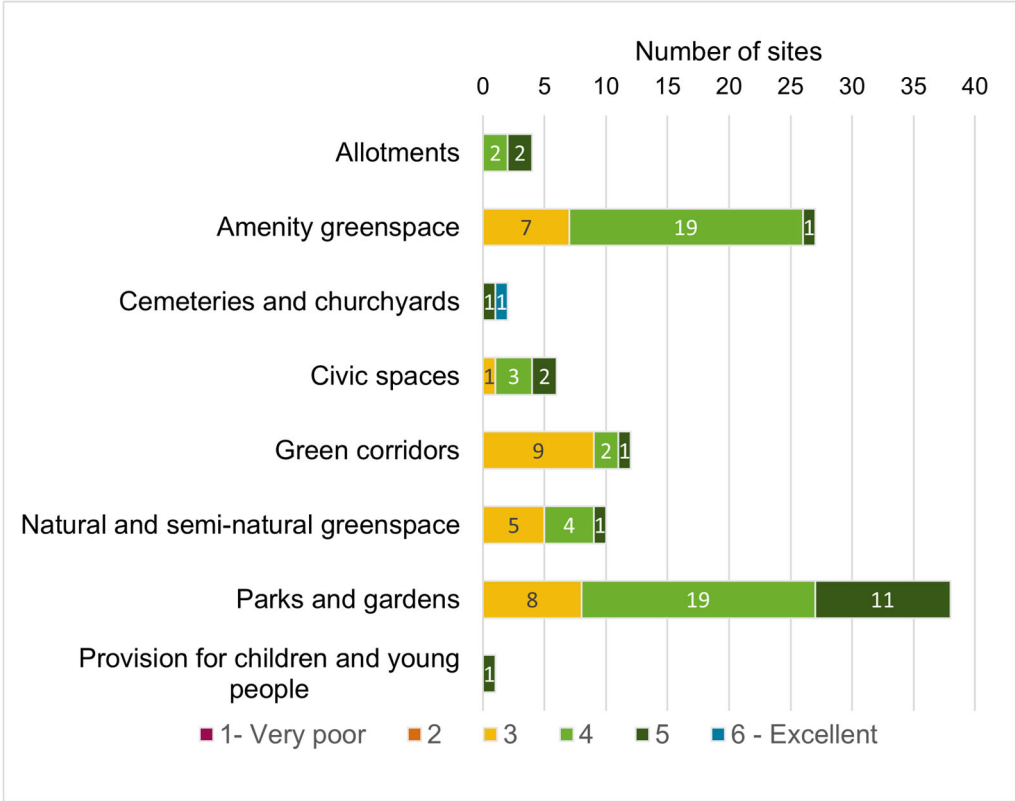


Figure 5.19 Theme 3: Well Maintained and Clean



Will Crooks Gardens (Site ID 176) - evidence of litter and limited maintenance

Theme 4: Sustainability

5.36 Theme 4 focuses on whether a site is managed for resilience, resulting in a positive impact on the environment. Three criteria were identified for this theme, as outlined below:

- Environmental sustainability (value);
- Waste minimisation (quality); and
- Arboriculture and woodland management (quality).

5.37 Figure 5.21 shows the range of scores for each of the quality and value criteria across the audited sites in relation to Theme 4. Arboriculture and woodland management achieved the highest scores, with 85% of sites audited receiving a score of 'good' or higher. In contrast, audited sites scored relatively poorly for the waste minimisation criterion. Only 7% of sites provided both recycling bins and facilities for green waste to be composted or used on site. It should be noted that the scores were based on the waste options available to users or visible on site, and may not reflect the wider practices delivered by site management teams.

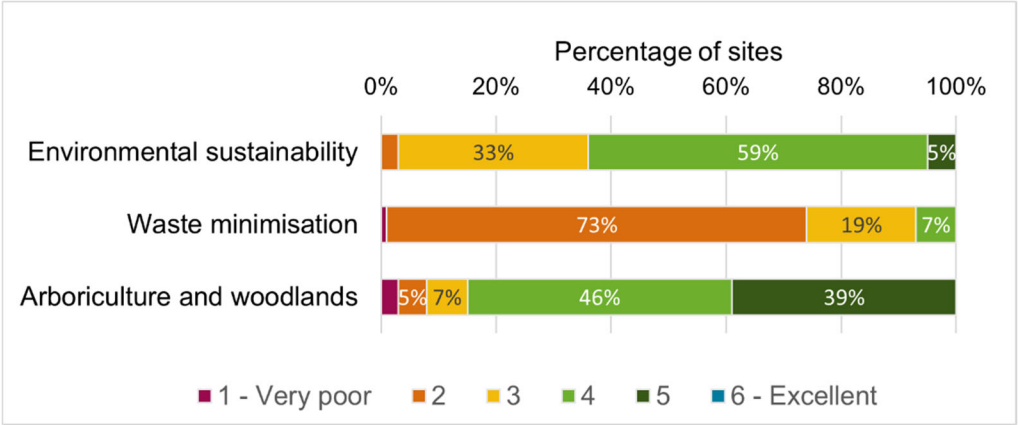
5.38 The environmental sustainability criteria was also based on the additional environmental roles the site delivered, such as separating development, natural flood management or providing a buffer for noise pollution. 65% of sites received a score of 'good' or higher for environmental sustainability. However, the remaining sites were scored as providing no wider environmental role (35%) and a few (3%) with evidence of uses of pesticides, herbicides or peat being used.

Figure 5.20 Theme 4: Sustainability



Thames Barrier Gardens (Site ID 149) - recycling bins available across the site

Figure 5.21 Theme 4: 'Sustainability' percentage of sites for each score per criterion



5.39 Figure 5.22 show the average scores for the quality criteria within this theme per typology. Cemeteries and churchyards, allotments and natural and semi-natural open spaces scored highly for the quality criteria. In general, allotments had recycling and composting facilities available. Arboriculture and woodland management was also recorded across all natural and semi-natural sites. 61% of parks and gardens which were audited received an average quality score of 'good'. However, 83% of green corridors, 63% of amenity greenspace and 39% of parks and gardens sites received an average quality score of 'fair' or lower for this theme. Recycling facilities and green waste management was not prevalent across these audited sites, which reduced the average quality score as most sites received a score of 'good' or higher for arboriculture and woodland management.

Figure 5.22 Theme 4 'Sustainability' average quality scores (rounded) per typology

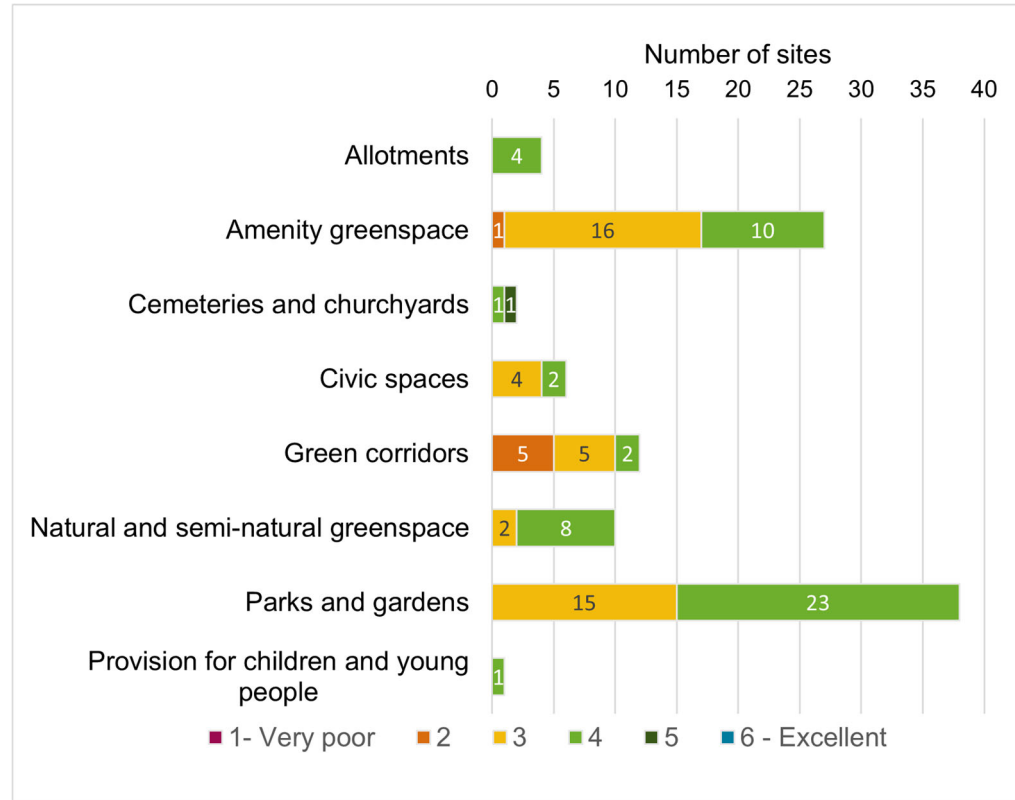
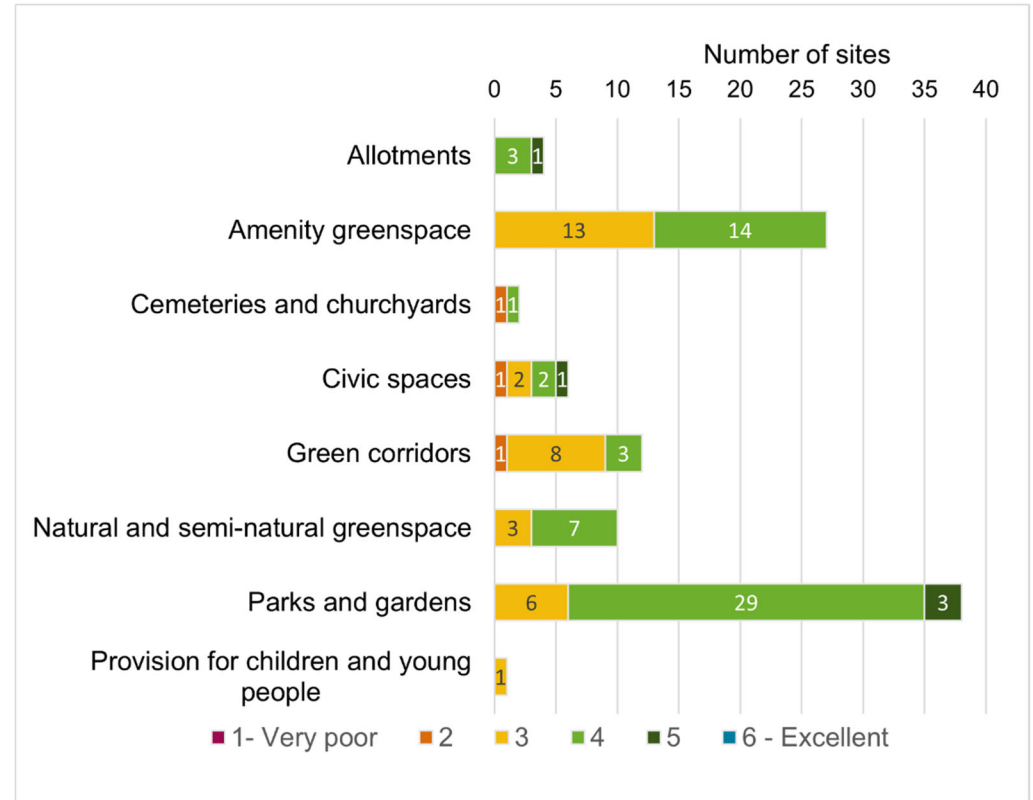


Figure 5.23 Theme 4: 'Sustainability' average value scores (rounded) per typology



5.40 Figure 5.23 shows the average value score for Theme 4 across the different typologies. All sites within the allotment typology and 84% of parks and gardens sites received an average value score of 'good' or higher, implying that at least one environmental role is being provided by each site. Over 52% of amenity greenspace sites were scored as providing at least one environmental function. 75% of green corridor sites scored 'fair' or lower, which suggests few sites were providing a wider environmental purpose.

Figure 5.24 Theme 4: Sustainability



Olympian Way (Site ID 309) - limited number of trees evident across site with no recycling bins.

Theme 5: Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

5.41 Theme 5 assesses the management and conservation of natural features, wildlife and flora, landscape features, and buildings and structures. Four criteria were identified for this theme.

- Conservation of natural features, wild fauna and flora (quality);

- Conservation of landscape features (quality);
- Conservation of buildings and feature (quality); and
- Structural townscape role (value).

5.42 Figure 5.26 shows the range of scores for each of the four quality and value criteria across the audited sites. For the value criterion of structural townscape, 64% of sites audited received a score of 'good' or higher. Conservation of natural features generally scored most favourably, with 60% of sites achieving a score of 'good' or higher.

Figure 5.25 Theme 5: Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage

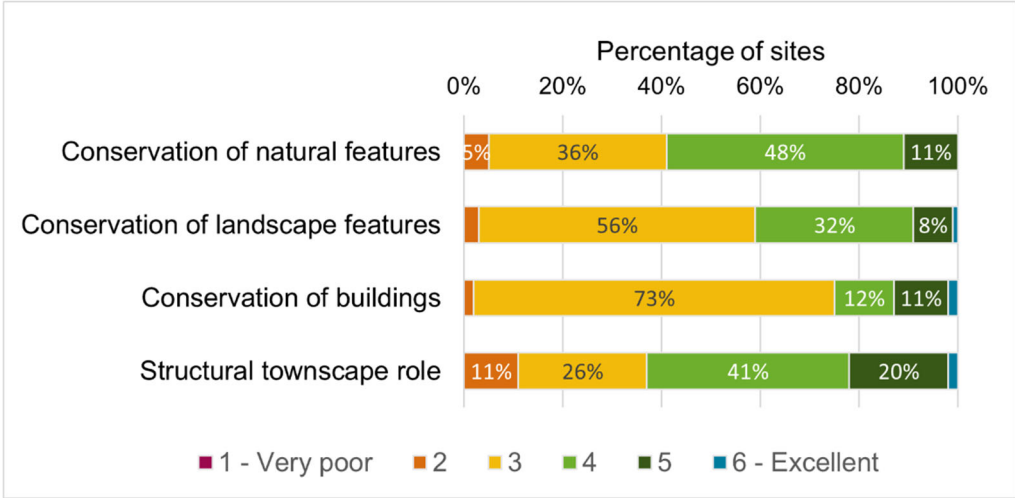


Birchmere Park (Site ID 5) – area of wildflower meadow



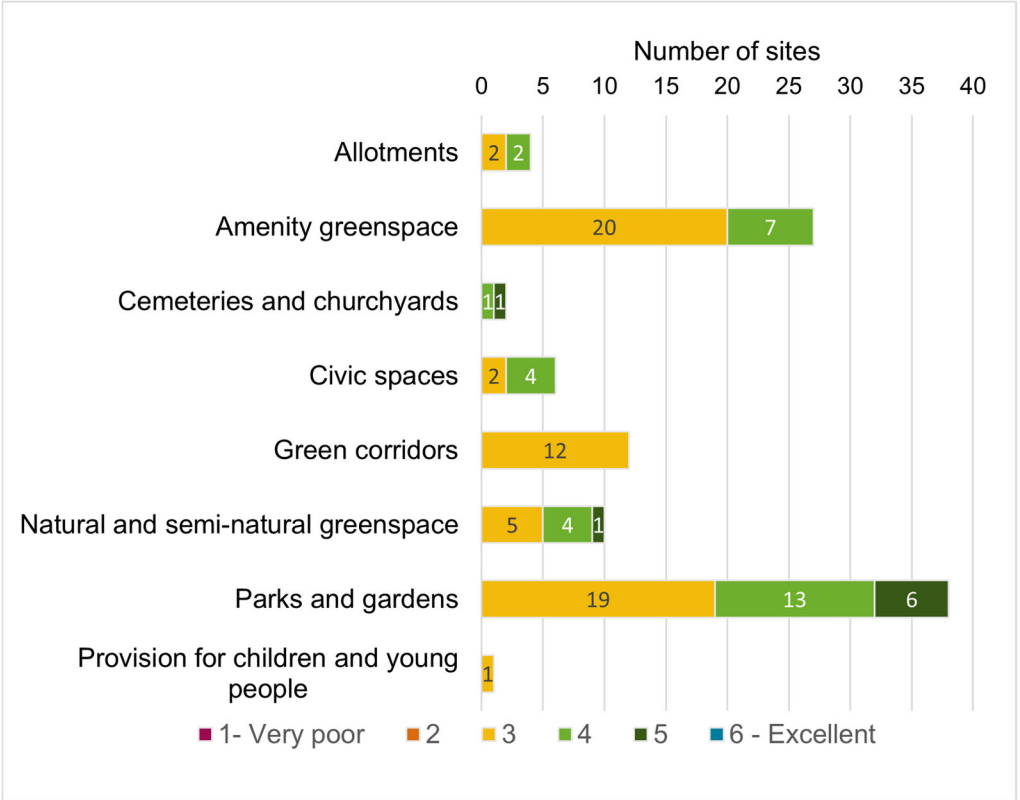
General Gordon Square (Site ID 23) – amenity grassland subject to trampling and heat stress

Figure 5.26 Theme 5: 'Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage' percentage of sites for each score per criterion



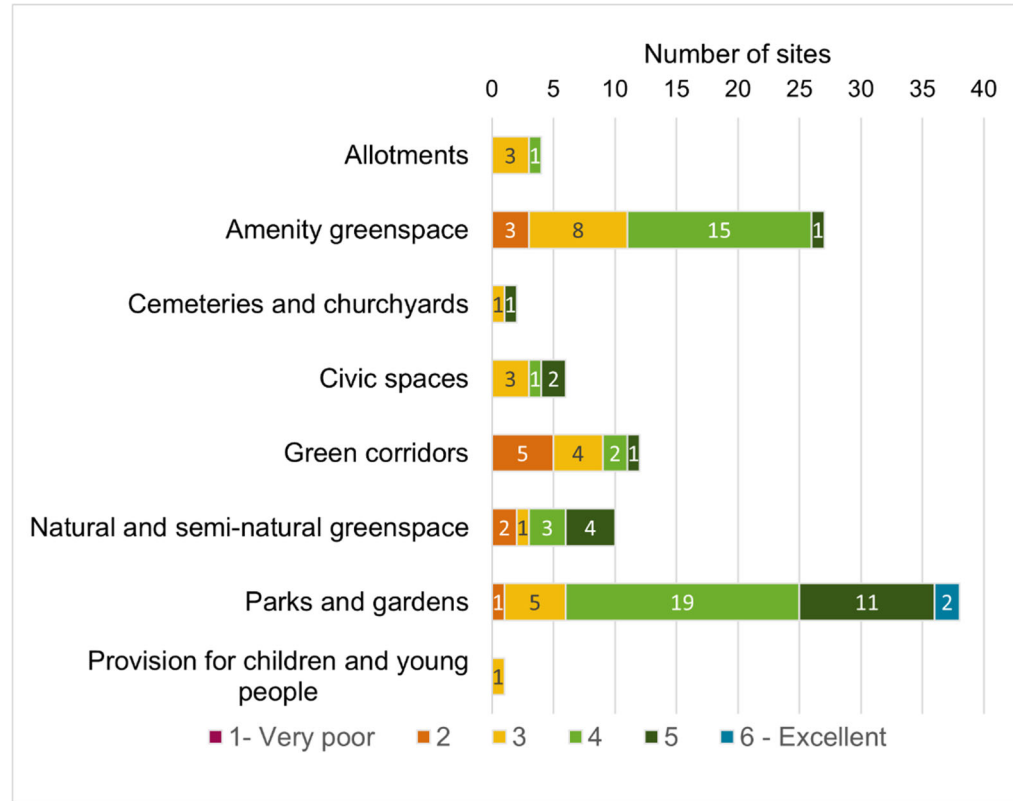
5.43 Figure 5.27 shows the average scores for the quality criteria within this theme per typology. Generally, most quality scores per typology were found to be 'fair', showing little variance between each typology, with the exception of parks and gardens. 55% of sites within the parks and gardens typology received an average quality score of 'good' or higher for this theme. This is a result of receiving high quality scores for conservation of natural features and conservation of landscape features.

Figure 5.27 Theme 5: 'Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage' average quality scores (rounded) per typology



5.44 Figure 5.28 shows the average value scores for this theme per typology. Parks and garden sites were found to have the greatest proportion of sites (84%) per typology that contributed to a sense of place. Amenity greenspace sites also performed well under this theme for value, with 59% of sites scoring 'good' or higher. Green corridors had the highest percentage of sites (31%) scoring 'poor', due to a limited discernible townscape role.

Figure 5.28 Theme 5 'Biodiversity, Landscape and Heritage' average value scores (rounded) per typology



Theme 6: Community Involvement

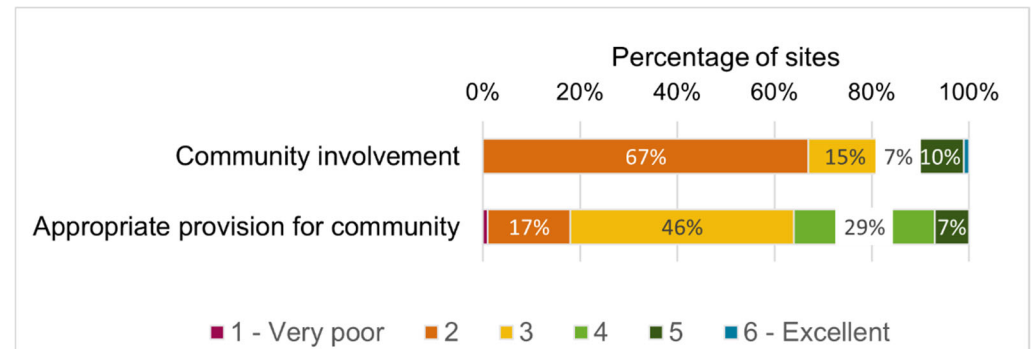
5.45 Theme 6 examines the extent to which opportunities for active participation, involvement of the local community and provision of facilities / activities are provided. This theme was only audited with value criteria, as outlined below:

- Community involvement in management and development; and

- Appropriate provision for community.

5.46 Figure 5.29 shows the range of scores for the two value criteria across the audited sites. Compared to many of the other themes, scores for this theme were notably low and varied widely across the sites. For the community involvement criterion, 67% of sites scored a 'poor' (67%) indicating there was no evidence of a friends of group, or other active involvement from the local community. Scores were higher for appropriate provision for the community, where 82% achieved 'fair' or higher. Just under half of sites audited had a basic provision of facilities (a score of 'fair'), and only 35% of sites were found to provide a range of facilities for the local community including play and youth facilities, and sport activities (a score of 'good' or higher). Some variation in this is expected given the different function and offer expected at different typologies of site.

Figure 5.29 Theme 6: 'Community Involvement' percentage of sites for each score per criterion



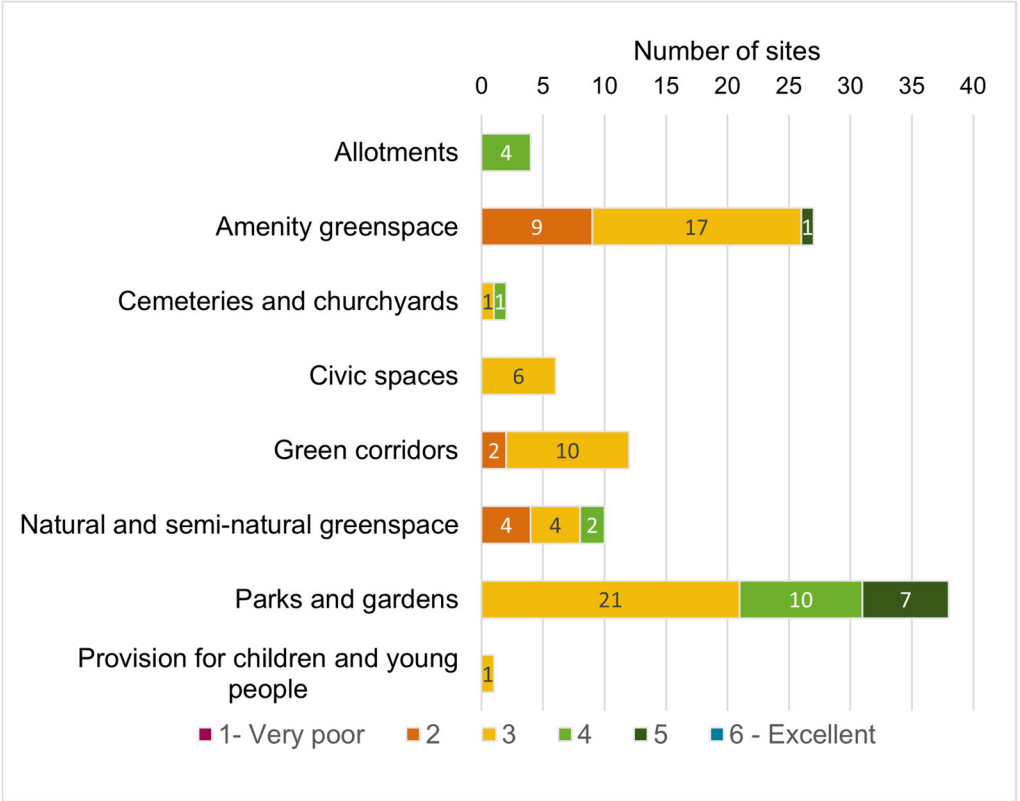
5.47 The average score achieved for each value criteria in Theme 6 is presented per typology in Figure 5.31. As expected, allotment sites exhibited a high average value score for this theme, as allotments are managed by local members or community groups. 45% of audited parks and garden sites scored an average value score of 'good' or higher, with only 50% of sites showing evidence that the community is actively involved in the management of the site. The remaining typologies tended to have an average value score of 'fair' or lower. Amenity greenspace sites scored poorly against the community involvement criteria, with 81% of sites showing no signs of public involvement.

Figure 5.30 Theme 6: Community Involvement



Horn Park (Site ID 49) - permanent up to date public noticeboard

Figure 5.31 Theme 6: 'Community Involvement' average value scores (rounded) per typology



Theme 7: Marketing and Communication

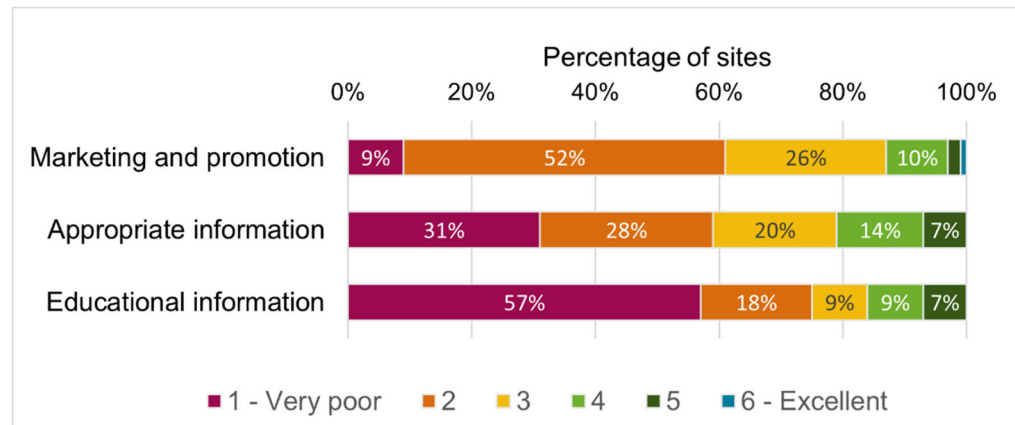
5.48 This theme assesses how well a site has communicated the key benefits / provision of the site and how actively this is promoted. This theme was only audited with value criteria. The value assessment for this theme was based on three criteria:

- Marketing and promotion;

- Provision of appropriate information; and
- Provision of appropriate educational information.

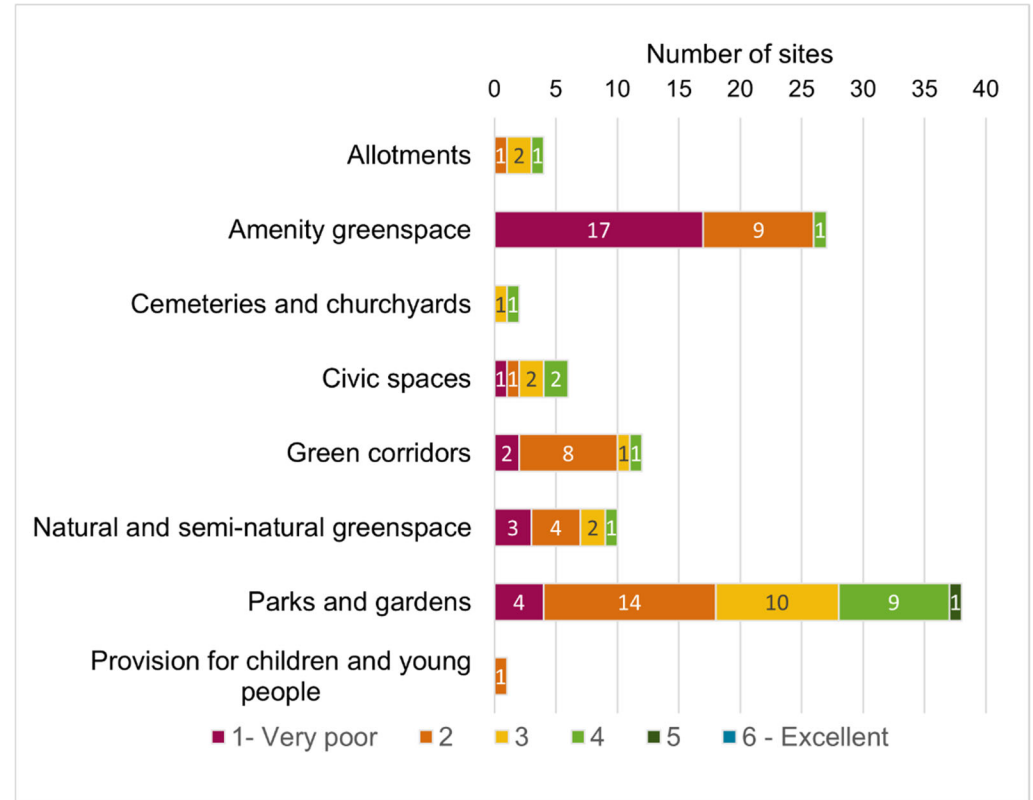
5.49 Figure 5.32 shows the range of scores for the three value criteria across the audited sites. Overall, audited sites performed poorly against this theme's criteria, suggesting little marketing and communication evidence recorded by audited sites. The lowest scoring criterion was educational information, which only scored 'fair' or higher in 25% of sites audited. In addition, 61% of sites had no evidence of the open space being promoted and 59% of sites had very limited or no provision of information.

Figure 5.32 Theme 7 'Marketing and Communication' percentage of sites for each score per criterion



5.50 The average score achieved for each value criteria in Theme 7 is presented per typology in Figure 5.33. Overall cemeteries and churchyards, allotments and parks and gardens were the best scoring typologies for this theme. Sites within the parks and gardens typology had the highest proportion of sites (26%) that had an average value score of 'good' or higher which implies good provision of educational and other information and active promotion of the site. Generally, most typologies received an average value score of 'poor' or 'very poor', reflecting the high percentage of sites with little marketing and communication.

Figure 5.33 Theme 7: 'Marketing and Communication' average value scores (rounded) per typology



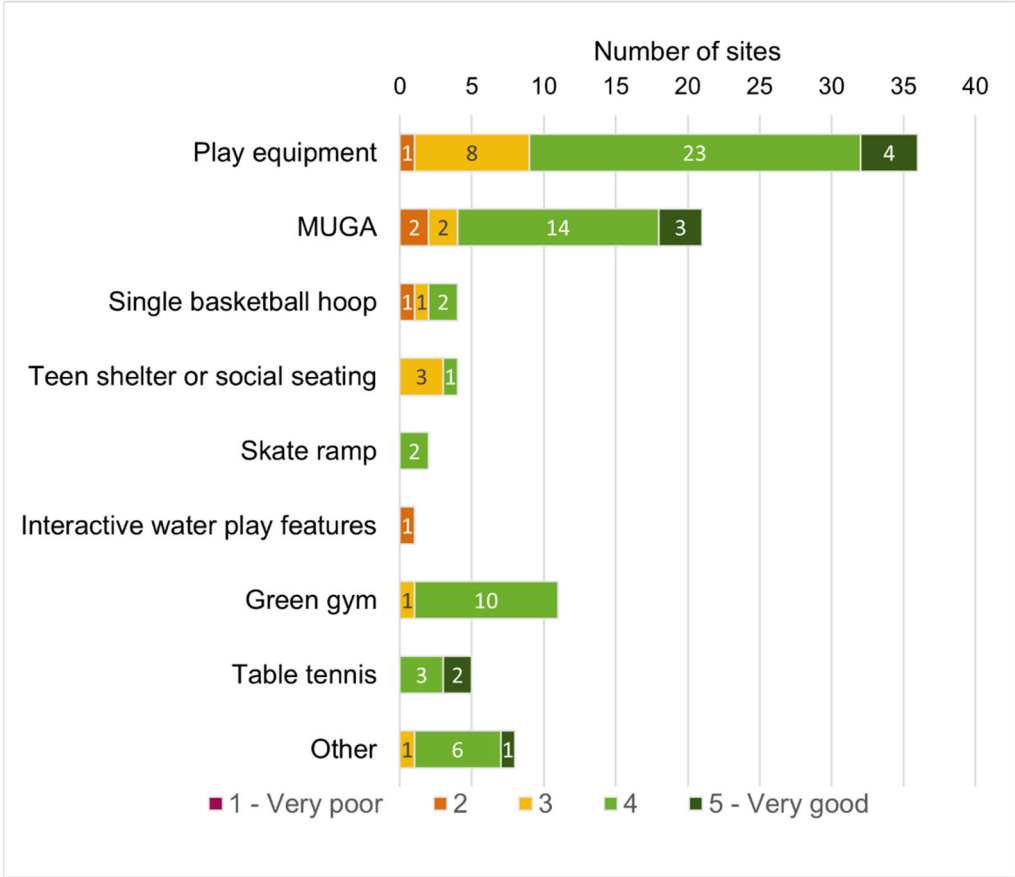
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Play provision

Overall play provision

5.55 In total, 56 youth features were recorded across 30 sites. 38% of these were MUGAs, followed by green gym equipment, which made up 20% of youth features. Provision for young people was generally in good condition, with most provision scoring 'good' or higher for condition, as shown in **Figure 5.35**. However, 75% of teen shelter or social seating audited were found to be scored '3 – fair' for condition.

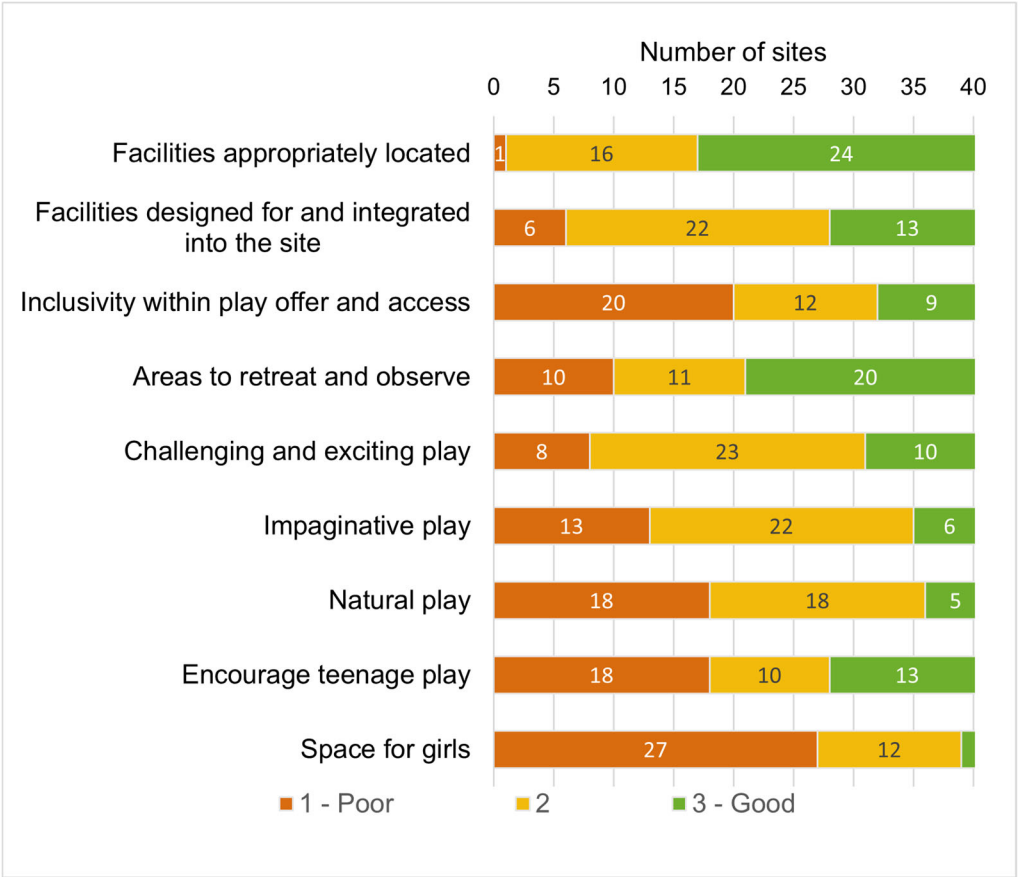
Figure 5.35 Quality scores for condition of play equipment



5.56 Value scores for additional play affordances varied across the sites audited (see **Figure 5.36**). Over 60% of sites with play / youth provision were found to provide inclusive access, equipment and play offer. A challenging and imaginative play offer varied across the sites with most sites audited as 'fair' for this value criteria. Opportunities for teenage girls was low across

sites audited with play and youth provision with 66% scored as poor for this criterion. Provision of encouraging natural play also showed room for improvement, with 44% audited as both fair and poor.

Figure 5.36 Value scores for additional play affordances



Active and informal recreation and sport provision

5.57 This section of the audit form highlights the key quality and value findings against active recreation and sport facilities provision. Features recorded within these section were scored between '1 – poor' and '3 – good'.

Active recreation and sport facilities

5.58 16 sites included active recreation or sport facilities, 80% of these sites were within the parks and gardens typology (13 out of 16 sites), with one site per for the amenity greenspace, provision for children and young people and natural and semi-natural typologies. The types of

5.59 The types of provision of active recreation and sport facilities was variable, but most commonly included full size football pitches, tennis courts and marked running or walking routes. The condition of these is shown in **Figure 5.37**. The majority of facilities were recorded as fair or good.

Informal recreation

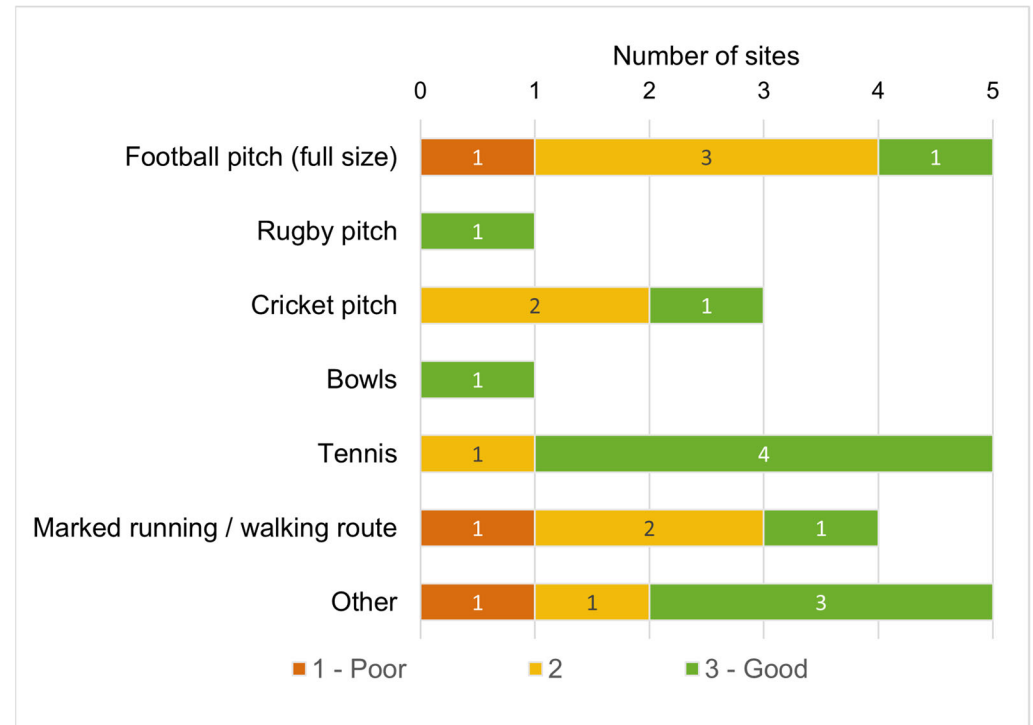
5.60 Evidence of informal recreation was recorded at all audited sites. The types of informal recreation to be recorded included:

- Walking / dog walking;
- Children's play (not equipment play);
- Teenagers 'hanging out';
- Sitting / relaxing;
- Desire lines;
- Horse riding;
- Cycling; and
- Skateboarding (not on skate ramps).

5.61 Walking and dog walking was the most frequently recorded informal recreational activity, observed at 85% of sites. Sitting and relaxing was recorded at 57% of sites. No typology had a significantly higher average score of informal recreation observed, but parks and gardens had a

slightly higher average score of 4 out of 8, compared to other typologies which ranged from 2 to 3 out of 8.

Figure 5.37 Quality scores for active recreation and sport facilities



Multi-functionality analysis

5.62 The multi-functionality analysis identifies the functions provided by the open space sites. The most common functions provided across the sites were shading and informal recreation (both recorded at 89% of sites). Civic spaces and green corridors were less likely to contribute to shading and cemeteries and churchyards were less likely to provide informal recreation.

Biodiversity (86%) and visual / aesthetic benefits (74%) were also recorded at a large number of sites. The number of sites where each function is recorded is shown in **Figure 5.38**.

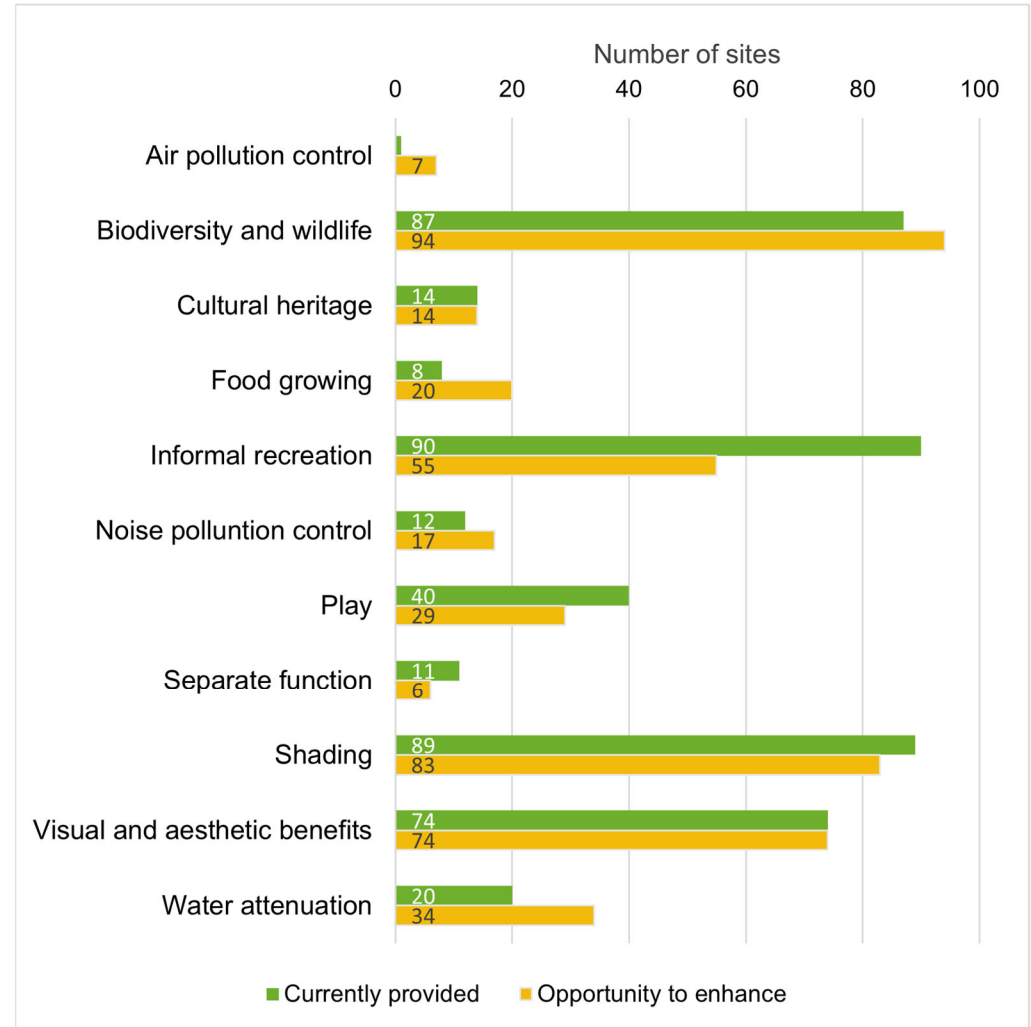
5.63 Cemeteries and churchyards, whilst limited in their recreational function, provide a number of additional functions, with an average of six functions recorded across the two sites of this typology audited. Parks and gardens and natural and semi-natural greenspace typologies were recorded as being more multi-functional, providing an average of five functions at each site. Green corridors were the least multi-functional, with an average of three functions recorded at each site.

5.64 Despite the existing provision of shading, biodiversity and visual / aesthetic benefits, there is also identified opportunities to enhance these functions. This includes ensuring there is new successional planting of trees where shading is mostly provided by older or veteran specimens. Additional biodiversity and wildlife opportunities include increasing areas of relaxed mowing regimes, specific wildlife features such as bug hotels or bat boxes, and management of the recreational impact on sensitive habitats. Increased formal bedding, herbaceous / perennial planting and wildflower meadow areas were identified as potential visual enhancements.

5.65 Opportunities for water attenuation were identified particularly within civic spaces, which often have more impermeable surfaces and natural and semi-natural greenspaces where there is scope for wetland habitats to also increase biodiversity enhancements. Opportunities to enhance air pollution were also primarily recorded within civic spaces, which were often located close to busy roads. The data indicates that there is scope to increase opportunities for food growing within amenity greenspaces, as well as some parks and gardens.

5.66 Overall, amenity greenspaces showed the most potential for enhancement of functions, with five enhancements on average being identified per site. Cemeteries and churchyards showed the least potential for enhancement, with just one or two potential enhancements noted.

Figure 5.38 Current provision and opportunities to enhance each function



Setting standards

Quantity

5.67 Quantity standards are set as area (in hectares) per 1,000 of the population (see **Table 5.5**). The quantity standard considers how much open space exists per person, ensuring there is adequate space for everyone to enjoy open space.

5.68 Quantity standards have been set for several different typologies to ensure that there is a variety of open space typologies available for the population. Quantity standards have been set for:

- Accessible greenspace (this includes all publicly accessible parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural greenspace and amenity greenspace);
- Allotments; and
- Playable space.

How have quantity standards been set?

Quantity standards have been set taking into consideration existing provision, the change since the 2017 assessment, and national guidance from Natural England's GI Framework and the London Plan.

Standards for accessible greenspace and provision for children and teenagers are based on the quantity of publicly accessible spaces only. Standards for allotments include all access levels. The provision for children and teenagers quantity includes areas of secondary typology.

Justification for the set standards include:

- The total quantity of accessible greenspace (referred to as accessible open space in the 2017 assessment) has increased from 2.69 ha / 1,000 of the population in 2017 to 2.93 ha / 1,000 of the population today.
- This is close to the Natural England recommendation of 3 ha / 1,000 of the population, which should be considered a suitable aspiration based on the historic increase in total provision.

- The quantity of allotments has remained consistent compared to sites recorded in 2017.
- The previous standard for allotments was defined using guidance from the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners which is no longer publicised by this group as a suggested standard. More recent guidance from the National Allotment Society recommends that local authorities supply the equivalent of 20 plots per 1,000 of the population, with an average minimum size of 250m² for each plot. This would provide a standard of 0.5 ha / 1,000 of the population. However, this would be difficult to achieve in a largely urban context such as the Royal Borough of Greenwich. As a consequence, a lower standard of 0.07 ha / 1,000 of the population has been set in accordance with current provision to ensure there is no net loss in provision per capita. This provides a more realistic target for the Borough.
- The London Plan recommends a provision of 10 m² of play per child (of any age). This is equivalent to 1 ha per 1,000 of children. The age bands used by the Census in the population estimates are in five year bands. The population under 15 has been used as an estimate of the population of children.

Table 5.5 Quantity standards

Typology	2025 standard	2017 standard	Change
Accessible greenspace	3.00 ha / 1,000 of population	2.69 ha / 1,000 of population	Increase of 0.31 ha / 1,000 of population
Allotments	0.07 ha / 1,000 of population	0.125 ha / 1,000 of population	Decrease in 0.055 ha / 1,000 of population
Provision for children and teenagers	1 ha / 1,000 of children	10 square metres per child	No change

Quality and value

5.69 In order to assess the sites consistently, the audit forms were scored for quality and value. As set out in the PPG17 Companion Guide⁶⁶, “quality and value are fundamentally different and can be completely unrelated”. For example, an open space may be of high quality but if it is not accessible it is of little value. However, if an open space is poor quality but has a wide range of facilities it is potentially of high value.

5.70 When assessing scored sites, it should be noted that the scoring varies according to the complexity of the site as well as the condition of the site. This limits the extent to which one should directly compare scores across different types of space. This means that the quality score for a good quality park or garden will differ from that of a good quality amenity greenspace, reflecting the different provision that can be expected within each. Quality and value standards have been developed for each typology and level of the size hierarchy (where appropriate) which ensure that sites are compared ‘like for like’.

5.71 Quality and value standards provide a numeric benchmark that represents what should be considered in an acceptable good quality and high value site. These benchmarks can then be used to categorise sites into four groups. These are described below.

- **High quality / High value (++):** These sites are considered to be the best open spaces within the borough, offering the greatest value and quality for the surrounding communities. Future management should seek to maintain the standard for these spaces and ensure they continue to meet the requirements of the communities they serve.
- **High quality / Low value (+-):** These sites have been scored as being of high quality but of a low value. Wherever possible, the preferred management approach to a space in the category should be to enhance its value in terms of its present primary typology or purpose. If this is not possible, the next best policy approach is to consider whether it might be of high value if converted to some other primary purpose.
- **Low quality / High value (-+):** These spaces meet or exceed the required value standard but fall below the required quality standard. Future management should therefore seek to

enhance their quality to ensure that the open spaces are welcoming and safe for use by the local community.

- **Low quality / Low value (--):** These spaces are falling below the applicable value and quality standards and therefore their future enhancement should be considered to be the priority.

5.72 Quality and value standards have been set for:

- Parks and gardens (split by hierarchy);
- Natural and semi-natural greenspace (split by hierarchy);
- Amenity greenspace
- Green corridors
- Civic spaces
- Cemeteries and churchyards;
- Allotments; and
- Provision for children and teenagers.

How have quality and value benchmarks been set?

Quality and value benchmarks have been set by taking an example of a well performing open space from each typology and hierarchy combination, and applying the scoring to other sites.

A few considerations need to be understood when applying this method and selecting exemplar sites:

- The structure of the survey means that higher value scores are normally accompanied by higher quality scores. This is because there are more features to assess – for example a bench in a poor state of repair may achieve a quality score of

⁶⁶ Department for Communities and Local Government (2002) Assessing needs and opportunities: a companion guide to PPG17. Available: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a79bab4ed915d042206a9be/156780.pdf>

'poor' or 'very poor', which is still higher than 'not applicable' which would be achieved if there were no bench on the site.

- Larger sites which are higher up the hierarchy are expected to have higher quality and value scores as the additional space offers the potential for more features or facilities to be on offer. Therefore benchmarks further up the hierarchy should always be higher than those lower down.
- Different typologies perform different functions and are therefore expected to achieve different quality and value benchmarks. Parks and gardens, as the most multi-functional sites, would be expected to achieve higher scores than natural and semi-natural greenspace or amenity greenspace of a similar size.
- The specific questions relevant to setting play standards rely on quality questions that are specific to the types of facilities present. Therefore an average of the quality scores have been to avoid the quality scores influenced by the number of facilities present (which is covered the value benchmark).

In some instances, an exemplar site has not been identified. This is where no open space audited within that typology and hierarchy group was suitable. For example, this may occur when all the audited sites were either very highly performing, or underperforming. In these cases, suitable benchmarks have been based on known best practice.

5.73 The proposed standards for public open space are set out in **Table 5.6**. This compares the proposed benchmarks set in this Study with those outlined in 2017. Amendments to the benchmarks aim to better reflect the expected quality and value scores of different typologies and hierarchies of open spaces. Key changes are listed below.

- The quality and value scores for local parks and gardens previously required a higher value score, compared to the quality score. Higher value scores usually coincide with higher quality scores as there are more features which can be assigned a quality score. Therefore the value score for local parks and gardens has decreased.
- In addition, the quality score for local parks and gardens has been raised slightly, from 71 to 75. This takes account of the fact that a well performing local space would be expected to achieve a higher quality score than a well performing smaller space. Previously, local parks and gardens had a lower benchmark than small and pocket parks and gardens.

- New quality and value scores have been set for pocket parks and gardens. These spaces were previously grouped together with small parks and gardens. New scores provide lower benchmarks to account for the fact that smaller open spaces are expected to deliver less features than larger sites.
- The quality benchmark for district natural and semi-natural spaces has been raised significantly from 57 to 72. Previously, district level spaces in this typology had a notable lower quality benchmark than local and small spaces. Due to few district natural and semi-natural greenspaces being audited, the new benchmark was set half way between metropolitan and local natural and semi-natural greenspace benchmarks, rather than derived from an exemplar site.
- Both the quality and value benchmarks for the local natural and semi-natural greenspace have been reduced. This ensures that the local natural and semi-natural greenspace benchmarks lie between the district and small benchmarks.
- The quality and value benchmarks for green corridors have been notably reduced from 73 and 55 to 62 and 38. This better sits within the range of scores given to this typology of sites, allowing prioritisation of green corridors within the district. In addition, this reflects the limited functionality of this typology of open space, due to its linear nature.
- Previously, standards for provision for children and teenagers were based on the theoretical performance of good play provision. No audits for provision for children and teenagers were conducted in 2017. Additionally, the scoring criteria for provision for children and teenagers was updated within the audit form to reflect increasing awareness of the wider value of play, including ensuring spaces cater to young women and girls.
- Value benchmarks for the provision for children and teenagers provision have been reduced. This is to better reflect the distribution of scores audited on site.
- A new category of provision for children and young people was created for combined spaces where youth spaces and equipped play are included within one site.

5.74 The exemplar sites used to set the quality and value benchmarks are listed in **Table 5.6** below. In some cases, 2017 scores are used to set the benchmark. This is the case where no site of that typology and hierarchy was audited within the 2025 survey, or where there was a gap within the 2025 audits between highly performing open spaces, and lower performing open spaces.

Table 5.6 Quality and Value benchmarks

Typology	Hierarchy	2017 quality benchmark	2025 quality benchmark	Exemplar site ID and name - quality	2017 value benchmark	2025 value benchmark	Exemplar site - value
Parks and gardens	Metropolitan	140	140	[119] Greenwich Park (2017 score)	129	129	[119] Greenwich Park (2017 score)
Parks and gardens	District	81	81	[405] Winn's Common (2017 score)	90	90	[405] Winn's Common (2017 score)
Parks and gardens	Local	71	75	[20] Gallions Hill (2025 score)	76	67	[65] Manorway Green (2025 score)
Parks and gardens	Small	73	73	[51] Charlotte Turner Gardens (2017 score)	40	40	[244] Twinkle Park (2017 score)
Parks and gardens	Pocket	73	69	[34] Beacons Field Road (2025 score)	40	35	[185] William Barefoot Gardens (2025 score)
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	Metropolitan	74	74	[17] Blackheath Park (2027 score)	45	45	[17] Blackheath Park (2017 score)
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	District	57	72	No exemplar site	45	45	[91] Oxleas Wood (2025 score)
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	Local	74	70	No exemplar site	51	43	[129] Shrewsbury Park (2025 score)
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	Small	63	63	[263] Woodland Dell (2025 score)	38	38	[263] Woodlad Dell (2025 score)
Amenity greenspace	NA	54	54	[115] Greenhaven Drive (2017 score)	39	39	[90] Eltham Green (2017 score)

Typology	Hierarchy	2017 quality benchmark	2025 quality benchmark	Exemplar site ID and name - quality	2017 value benchmark	2025 value benchmark	Exemplar site - value
Green corridor	NA	73	62	[309] Olympian Way (2025 score)	55	38	[352] Thames Path 2 (2025 score)
Civic space	NA	73	73	[110] General Gordon Square (2017 score)	40	40	[110] General Gordon Square (2017 score)
Cemeteries and churchyards	NA	68	68	[117] Greenwich Cemetery (2017 score)	41	41	[268] Woolwich Old Cemetery (2017 score)
Allotments	NA	49	49	[114] Gavestone Crescent Allotments	31	31	[114] Gavestone Crescent Allotments (check year)
Provision for children and teenagers	Combined play and youth	NA	9	[230] Cator Park North	NA	27	[65] Manorway Green
Provision for children and teenagers	Neighbourhood space	6	4	[440] Carnbrook Road	30	24	[440] Carnbrook Road
Provision for children and teenagers	Local space	3	4	[266] Duke of Wellington Gardens	21	19	[266] Duke of Wellington Gardens
Provision for children and teenagers	Doorstep space	3	4	[93] Peninsula Riverside Walkway	6	12	[93] Peninsula Riverside Walkway
Provision for children and teenagers	Youth space	3	4	[298] Morden Hill	1	9	[298] Morden Hill

Accessibility

5.75 Accessibility standards have been set to indicate how far people may expect to travel to reach an open space. Accessibility standards have been based on the hierarchy (or size) of open spaces). This is based on the assumption that larger sites have the potential to offer a greater variety of activities and amenities, and people are therefore willing to travel further distances to reach these open spaces.

5.76 Best practice guidance for accessibility standards, recommends that the access catchments should be applied using the distance along the road and path network, rather than based on straight-line buffers.

5.77 Accessibility standards have been set for accessible greenspaces, allotments and provision for children and teenagers. Provision for children and teenagers has been divided into different hierarchies based on the age ranges they cater for, in line with the Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) for play and informal recreation⁶⁷. The hierarchies used include:

- Doorstep playable space: An area of play with equipment suitable for younger children located close to home:
- Local playable space: An area of equipped play for children up to the age of 11:
- Neighbourhood playable space: A larger area for children up to the age of 11 and some facilities for those over 11:
- Youth space: For young people aged 12 and over where they can meet and take part in informal recreation and sport; and
- Combined spaces: This is not a hierarchy set out in the SPG. This has been used where youth spaces and equipped play are located within an open space.

How have accessibility standards been set?

Accessibility standards have been based on the access buffers set out in the London Plan for accessible greenspaces. This aligns with the approach undertaken by Greenspace Information for Greater London (GiGL), which combines Local, Small and Pocket open spaces.

5.78 The proposed accessibility standards are set out in **Table 5.7**.

Table 5.7 Accessibility standards

Hierarchy	2025 standard	2017 standard	Change
Accessible greenspace – Metropolitan	3.2 km	3.2 km	None
Accessible greenspace – District	1.2 km	1.2 km	None
Accessible greenspace – Local	400 m	400 m	None
Accessible greenspace – Small and Pocket	400 m	280 m	Increase of 120 m
Allotments	1.2 km	1.2 km	None
Provision for children and teenagers –	800 m	800 m	None

⁶⁷ Mayor of London (2021) Shaping Neighbourhoods: Play and Informal Recreation Supplementary Planning Guidance. Available:

https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_migrate_files_destination/Shaping%20Neighbourhoods%20Play%20and%20Informal%20Recreation%20SPG%20High%20Res.pdf

Hierarchy	2025 standard	2017 standard	Change
Neighbourhood space			
Provision for children and teenagers – Local space	400 m	400 m	None
Provision for children and teenagers – Doorstep space	100 m	100 m	None
Provision for children and teenagers – Youth space	800 m	800 m	None

Application of standards

Quantity

5.79 The quantity of open space compared to the set standards is shown in **Table 5.8**. Overall, the results show that there is a deficiency in accessible greenspace within the borough. The deficiency in access to provision for children and teenagers is more notable, with current provision at around one fifth of the recommended standard.

Table 5.8 Performance compared to quantity standards

Typology	Provision	Standard	Deficit / surplus
Accessible greenspace	2.75 ha / 1,000 of the population	3 ha / 1,000 of the population	Deficiency of 0.25 ha / 1,000 of the population
Allotments	0.07 ha / 1,000 of the population	0.07 ha / 1,000 of the population	None

5.80 Application of the standard has not been undertaken for playable spaces. This is because the current dataset captures areas of equipped play, rather than playable spaces in general. The current provision for children and teenagers (equipped play areas) is equivalent to 0.04 ha / 1,000 of children, significantly lower than the target of 1 ha / 1,000 of children. However, there will be areas of informal play within some of the accessible greenspaces. Additional work to identify these areas of playable space could be undertaken in the future. Consideration for identifying areas of informal play should be based around the guidance set out in the Play and Informal Recreation SPG for the London Plan⁶⁸ as well as Play England Design for Play guidance⁶⁹.

Key changes since 2017

5.81 Whilst the overall provision of accessible greenspace has increased since 2017, the more ambitious standard means that the borough is now performing slightly under the target.

5.82 The 2025 quantity for provision for children and teenagers was based on the area of provision for children and teenagers typology (including secondary typology) per 1,000 of the population under 15. As a result, the provision of 0.19 ha / 1,000 is not comparable with the previous estimate of 0.65 play spaces per 1,000 children (under 15).

⁶⁸ Mayor of London (2011) Shaping Neighbourhoods: Play and Informal Recreation Supplementary Planning Guidance. Available: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/gla_migrate_files_destination/Shaping%20Neighbourhoods%20Play%20and%20Informal%20Recreation%20SPG%20High%20Res.pdf

⁶⁹ Play England (2008) Design for Play; A guide to creating successful play spaces. Available: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/609a5802ba3f13305c43d352/t/60a3779623f60f41729fd84d/1718621808342/design-for-play.pdf>

Quality and value

5.83 Appendix D shows the full list of audited sites with their quality and value ratings, as well as performance against the benchmarks.

5.84 Overall, nearly half (49%) of open spaces audited fell within the higher quality / higher value category (+/+), whilst just over a quarter (27%) were within the lower quality / lower value category (-/-). The remaining of these were sites recorded higher quality but lower value (+/-) (16% of the total) or lower quality but higher value (-/+) (8% of the total).

5.85 Table 5.9 shows the breakdown of categories according to the typologies and hierarchies. Overall, natural and semi-natural greenspaces performed less well compared to other open space typologies, particularly at the larger scales of open space. In comparison, the parks and gardens audited tended to perform better against the benchmarks at the larger scales. For example, all district parks and gardens and three quarters of local parks and gardens audited were within the higher quality and value grouping (+/+).

Table 5.9 Performance of open spaces audited in 2025 against the benchmarks

Typology and hierarchy	Count of sites within +/+ group	Count of sites within +/- group	Count of sites within -/+ group	Count of sites within -/- group
District parks and gardens	2	-	-	-
Local parks and gardens	18	2	1	3
Small parks and gardens	3	-	4	3
Pocket parks and gardens	-	1	1	-
District natural and semi-natural greenspace	-	-	1	1

Typology and hierarchy	Count of sites within +/+ group	Count of sites within +/- group	Count of sites within -/+ group	Count of sites within -/- group
Local natural and semi-natural greenspace	3	2	-	2
Small natural and semi-natural greenspace	-	-	-	1
Amenity greenspace	8	9	-	10
Green corridor	6	1	1	4
Civic space	4	-	-	2
Cemeteries and churchyards	1	1	-	-
Allotments	4	-	-	-
Provision for children and teenagers – combined	13	6	4	3
Provision for children and teenagers – neighbourhood	1	1	1	-
Provision for children and teenagers – local	4	3	-	-

Typology and hierarchy	Count of sites within +/- group	Count of sites within +/- group	Count of sites within -/+ group	Count of sites within -/- group
Provision for children and teenagers – doorstep	1	-	-	-
Provision for children and teenagers – youth space	1	2	-	2

5.86 Figure 5.39 shows the scores against the benchmarks for sites across borough, with Figure 5.40 indicating the change in performance across the quality and value benchmarks. Open spaces which were audited in 2017 but not in 2025 have been assessed against the updated benchmarks. However, any changes to the quality or value of these open spaces has not been recorded. It is recommended that a full audit of open spaces is completed by the Council.

5.87 Figure 5.41 shows the performance against the benchmarks for the audited play provision. As play was not audited in 2017, only the sites audited in 2025 are recorded.

Key changes since 2017

5.88 74 of the 100 audited sites were also audited in 2017. Overall, the average change in score within these sites was an 8.9 point increase in the quality score and a 0.3 reduction in value. Overall, civic spaces and natural and semi-natural greenspaces showed lower or negative changes in 2017. Allotments showed the largest improved scores, with a 16 point increase in quality score and six point increase in value score. However, only a relatively small sample of allotments were audited. Additionally, as auditing of these required permission by the owners, this permission may be more likely granted for allotments that are well managed and highly used.

5.89 A number of sites showed a very notable change in quality and value scores since 2017. Some of the key changes are detailed below.

5.90 The first group of changes have occurred where open spaces have undergone enhancement or improvement works which have led to an increase in both quality and value scores.

- **230: Cator Park North:** This site has benefitted from additional works as part of the Kidbrooke Village development, including significant play provision which has contributed to the uplift in scores. During the 2017 audit, this was a brand new park. Scores related to the contribution to biodiversity and landscape were therefore lower as planting was less established.
- **135: St Alfeges Churchyard:** The 2025 audit identified a greater level of community involvement and signage within the churchyard. This contributed to improvements such as marketing, community involvement, welcoming, and sustainability.
- **99: Plumstead Gardens:** Plumstead Gardens received levelling up funding in 2022. This was used to increase the biodiversity of the park, including through wildflower meadow provision and bird boxes, as well as the planting of a community orchard. Recreational enhancements also included a new green gym, improvements to the multi-use games area, new picnic benches and enhancements to the entrance wall.

5.91 Smaller enhancement works, or enhancement of a particular feature within the open space were also evident. In this case, value was improved rather than quality at the following sites:

- **Southern Park:** Changes were mostly in relation to an increase in signage, which provided additional information and included noticeboards and input from the community.
- **Gallions Park:** The new and improved play area within this site contributed to an increase in the value score.

5.92 Conversely, some open spaces saw a decrease in value only. This was often associated with the removal of a certain feature or features which had provided a high value score. Examples of this are highlighted below:

- **98: Plumstead Common:** The 2025 audit showed that provision for children and play provision within the site was restricted to a privately owned adventure play area, with no public access. In 2017, there were additional play facilities within the site which contributed to a high value score.

- **25: Glyndon Open Space:** The 2017 recorded an equipped play area on site. In 2025 the only provision for children and teenagers on site was the MUGA. Therefore value scores associated with the equipped play were lost.
- **203: Avery Hill Park:** The 2017 audited recorded a high number of football pitches on the sites which each scored for value. The 2025 audit showed that many of these had become overgrown and were now part of a grassland area. Whilst this was increased the score in relation to biodiversity and conservation, the overall value score was reduced.
- **20: Gallions Hill:** Gallions Hill was a fairly new site when it was audited in 2017. The decrease in value scores in 2025 included within the 'marketing' theme, with less educational, interpretation and welcoming signage noted. In addition, there was less evidence of informal recreation during the 2025 visited.
- **150: Thamesmead canal:** This site scored slightly lower across all criteria, with minimal signage and interpretation boards being noted in 2025.

5.93 In some cases, the sites exhibited a reduction in quality score. This suggested that poor ongoing management and maintenance had contributed to the change in score.

- **23: General Gordon Square:** This was a relatively new site in 2017. The 2025 audit showed that the site was suffering due to poor ongoing maintenance and high footfall, exacerbated by a period of low rainfall preceding the audit.

5.94 Finally, there were some sites where a change in quality and / or value scores were related to a change in boundaries or categorisation of features within the site.

- **84: Nightingale Place:** The boundary for this site was changed and the audit for 2025 included only the accessible part of the site which was audited as a small green corridor. Scores were notably higher than in 2017 as the lack of access resulted in the site achieving a score of 0 for quality and -1 for access.
- **28: Grounds of Old Royal Naval College:** Much of this site is now private access for residents. The scores associated with this site relate to remainder of the site whereas the 2017 scores related to a much larger site.
- **91: Oxleas Woods:** The boundary between Oxleas Woods and Oxleas Meadows was moved to better reflect the boundary between the sites. As a result, a number of facilities

including the green gym, toilets and café were recorded as part of the Oxleas Meadows audit rather than Oxleas Woods.

5.95 Quality and value scores were not previously set for provision for children and teenagers so the changes in quality and value of this typology cannot be assessed.

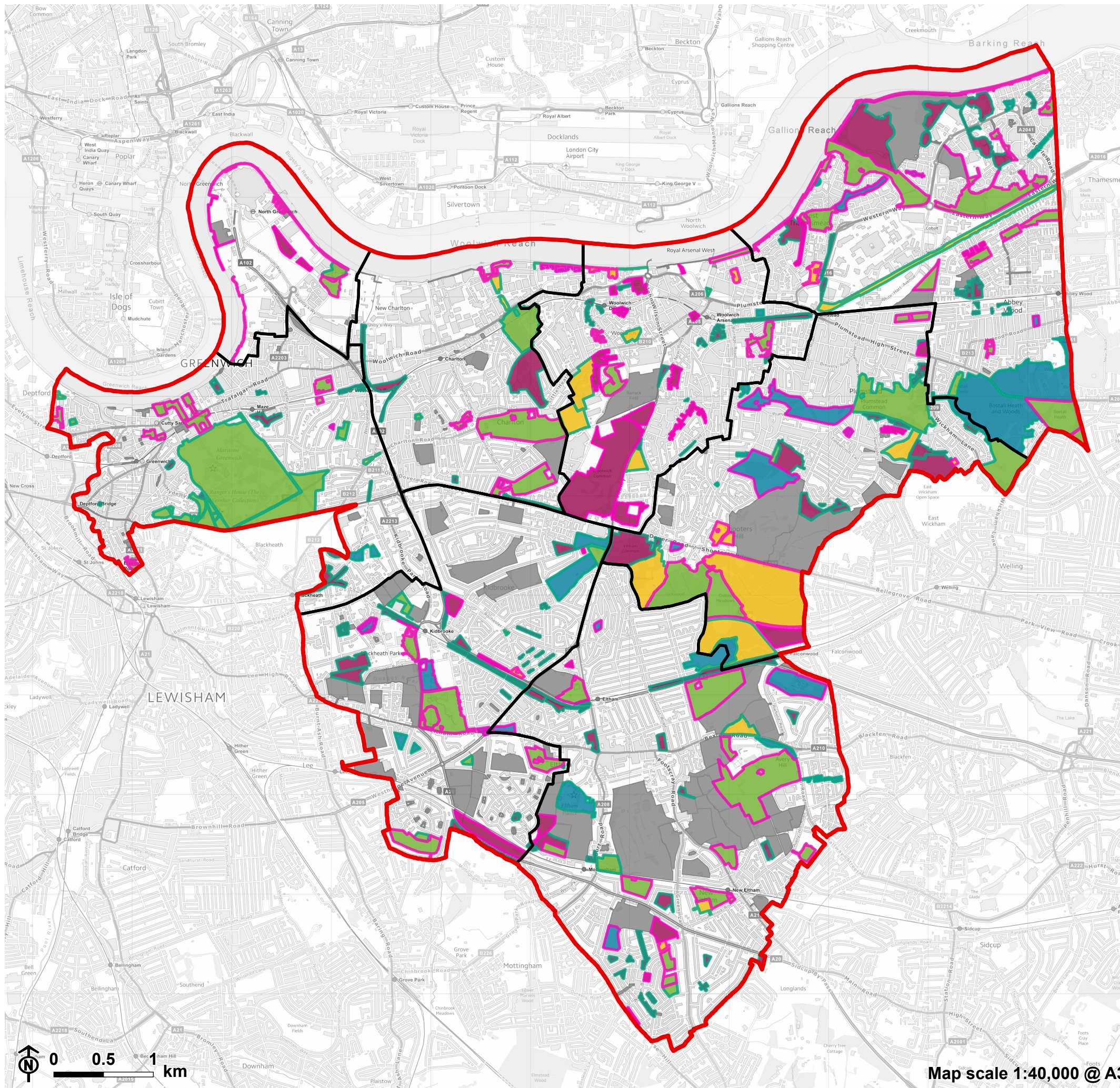


Figure 5.39: 2025 Performance Against Quality and Value Benchmarks - Primary Typologies

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich analysis area boundary
- 2025 and 2017 quality and value scores**
- Higher quality, higher value
- Higher quality, lower value
- Lower quality, higher value
- Lower quality, lower value
- Not surveyed in 2025 or 2017
- Score based on 2017 audit
- Score based on 2025 audit

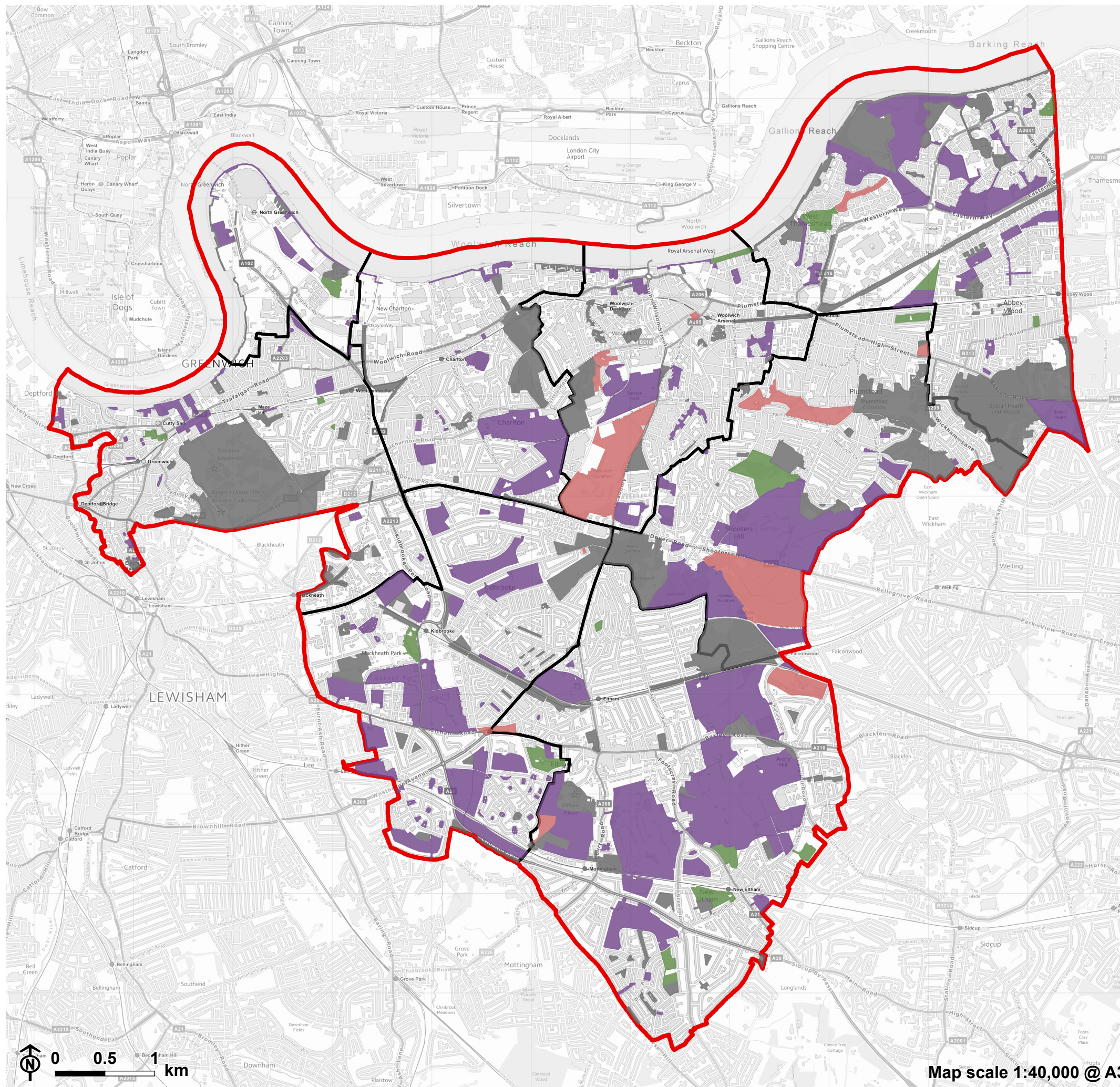
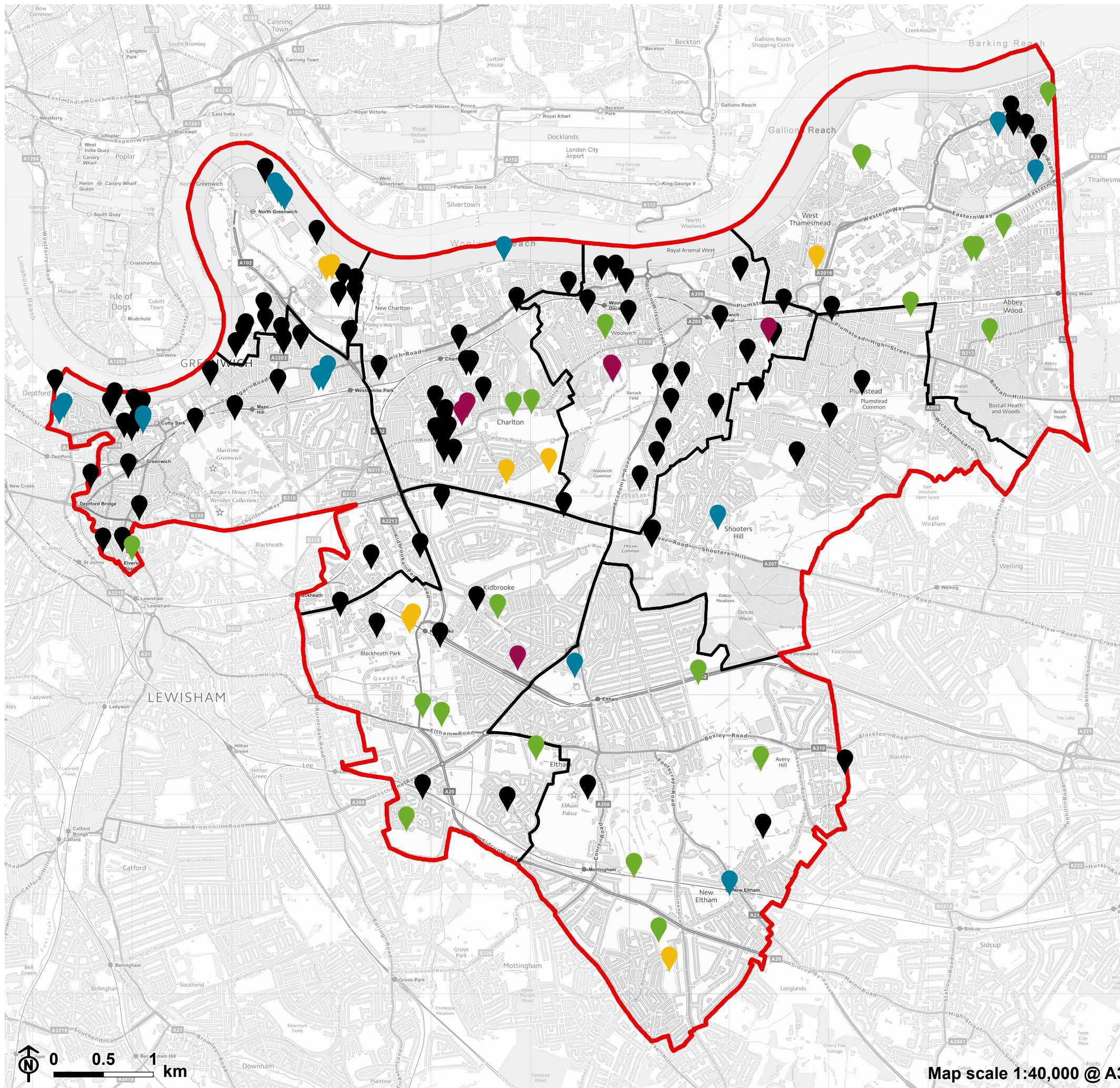


Figure 5.40: Performance Against Quality and Value Benchmarks Change Since 2017 - Primary Typology

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich analysis area boundary
- Quality and value score difference between 2017 and 2025**
- Score has decreased between 2017 and 2025
- Score has improved between 2017 and 2025
- Score remains unchanged between 2017 and 2025
- Either not surveyed in 2025 or 2017



**Figure 5.41: 2025 Performance Against
Quality and Value Benchmarks - Secondary
Typologies**

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich analysis area boundary
- Play space score 2025**
- Higher quality, higher value
- Higher quality, lower value
- Lower quality, higher value
- Lower quality, lower value
- Not surveyed

Accessibility

5.96 Areas of deficiency (AoD) which are outside the access catchments for each level of the hierarchy for accessible greenspace are shown in **Figures 5.42 – 5.49**.

5.97 Overall, access to accessible greenspace is most comprehensive in the north of the borough, located away from the immediate river-side locations. Overall, 8% of the borough has access to all levels of the hierarchy. These areas are mostly located in the south of the borough, as well as some areas bordering the River Thames.

5.98 There are only two accessible greenspaces at the metropolitan hierarchy. This includes Greenwich Park in the west and Bostall Woods in the east. The central area of the borough and all of the south of the borough are deficient in access to this level of the hierarchy. Overall, just under half (42%) of the borough is within an AoD for this level of the hierarchy.

5.99 The district level of the hierarchy shows similar patterns, with access being the strongest in the north of the district, with the exception of much of the area within close proximity of the River Thames. In the south, access is available in the east, including to open spaces such as Avery Park, and Oxleas Wood. In general, just under half (40%) of the borough is within an AoD for this level of the hierarchy.

5.100 Access to the pocket, small and local levels of the hierarchy are the most widespread. However, there are notable pockets of deficiency in access to these spaces, including within the residential areas of Eltham and land to the north of Kidbrooke.

5.101 Access to provision for children and young people (playable spaces) is varied. This tends to be better for neighbourhood and combined playable spaces (those which include equipped play and youth provision).

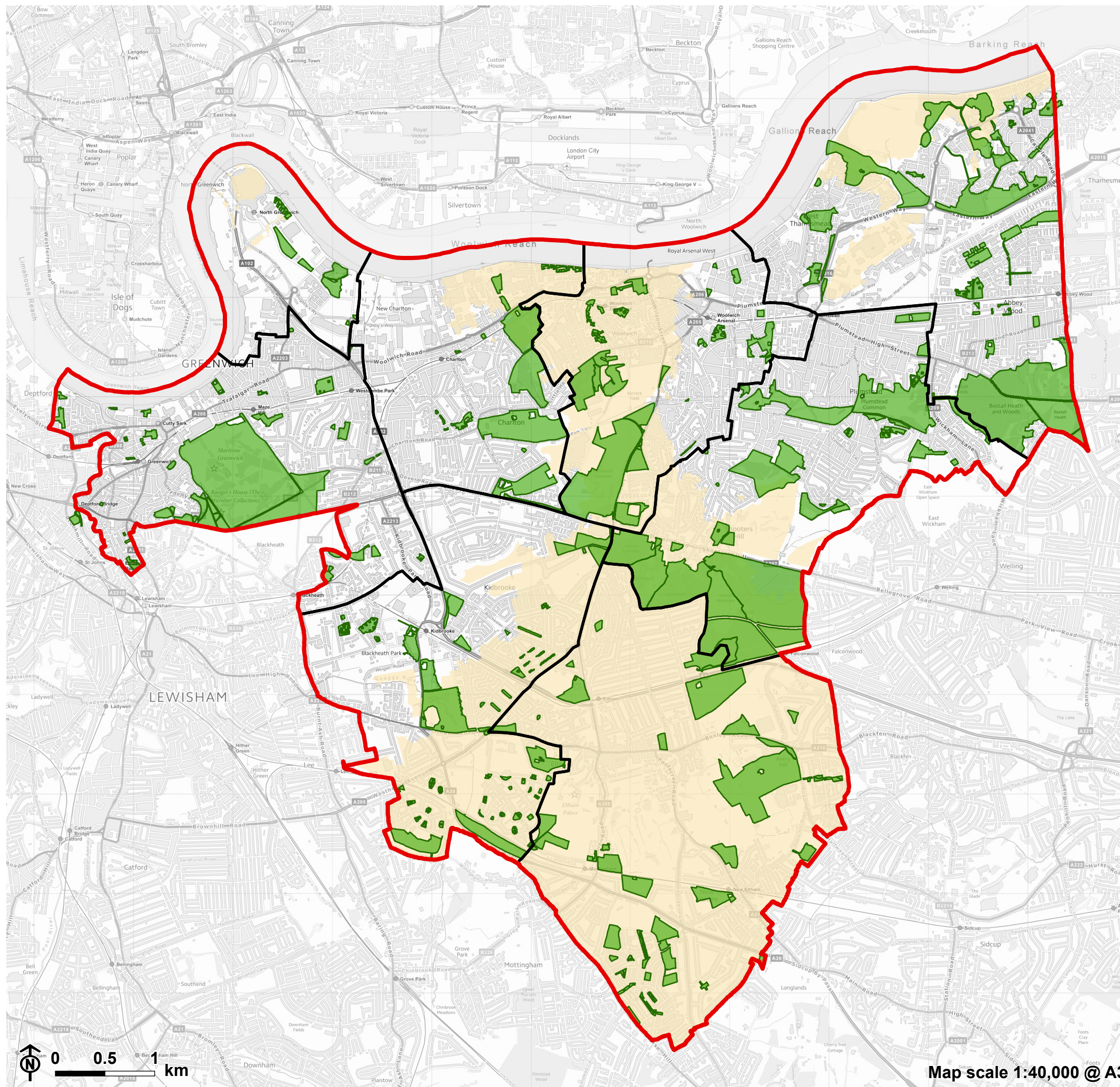
5.102 Access to allotments is fairly equally distributed across the borough, with some areas of deficiency in the centre of the borough and to the north bordering the River Thames.

Key changes since 2017

5.103 Overall, the results from this assessment highlight more areas that fall into AoDs. Primarily this is due to the different application of the standard which applies the access catchments based on walking distances using the road and path network, rather than on straight line buffers. This has decreased the overall size of the catchments. For example, whilst

the overall provision of accessible greenspace at the metropolitan hierarchy has not changed, the applied access catchments are now slightly smaller, increasing the area in the centre and south of the borough without access to this level of the hierarchy.

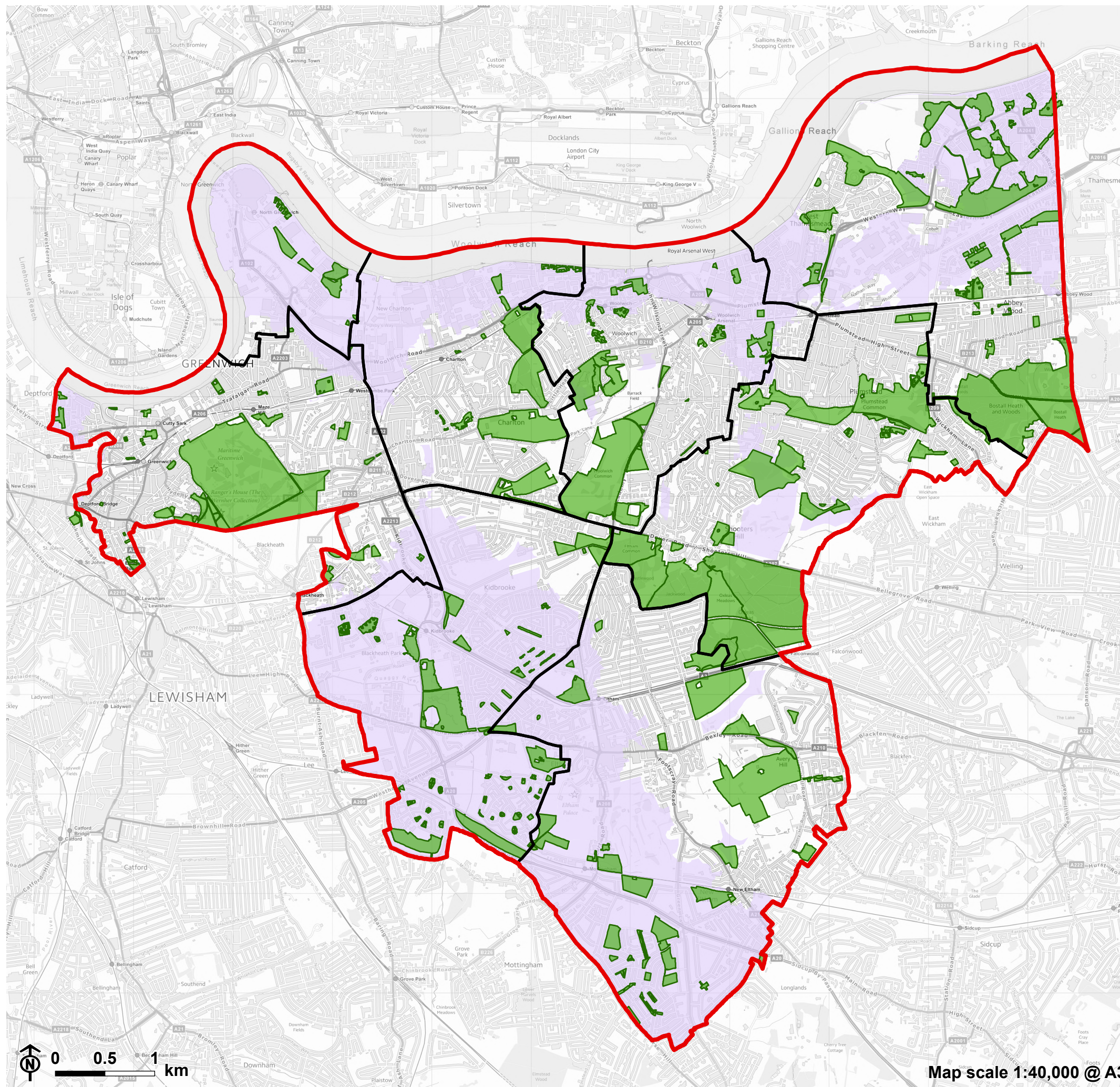
5.104 In some places, there is improved access based on this assessment. This is particularly the case where there are open spaces within the small and pocket level of the hierarchy. The 2017 assessment applied a 280 m catchment to these spaces. However, in line with the approach recommended by GiGL, this Study has applied a 400 m buffer to all accessible greenspaces in the local, small and pocket hierarchies.



**Figure 4.42: Open Space Area of Deficiency -
Area of Deficiency in Metropolitan Open
Spaces**

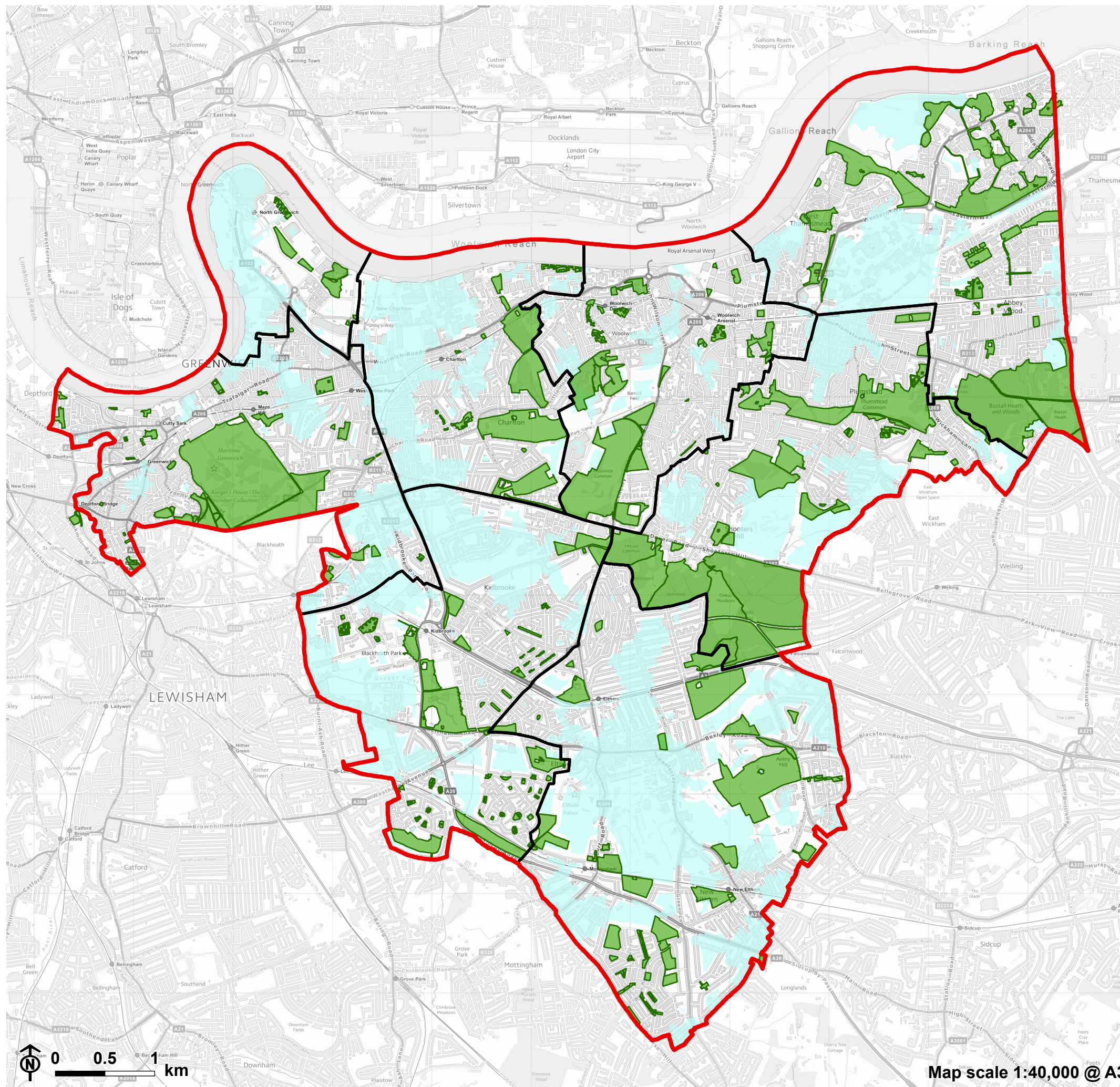
- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich analysis area boundary
- LUC Accessible Open Space 2025
- GiGL Area of Deficiency Modelling**
- Area of Deficiency in Metropolitan Open Spaces

Map scale 1:40,000 @ A3



**Figure 4.43: Open Space Area of Deficiency -
Area of Deficiency in District Open Spaces**

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich analysis area boundary
- LUC Accessible Open Space 2025
- GiGL Area of Deficiency Modelling**
- Area of Deficiency in District Open Spaces



**Figure 4.44: Open Space Area of Deficiency -
Area of Deficiency in Local Open Spaces**

- ▬ Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- ▬ Greenwich analysis area boundary
- ▬ LUC Accessible Open Space 2025
- GiGL Area of Deficiency Modelling**
- ▬ Area of Deficiency in Local Open Spaces

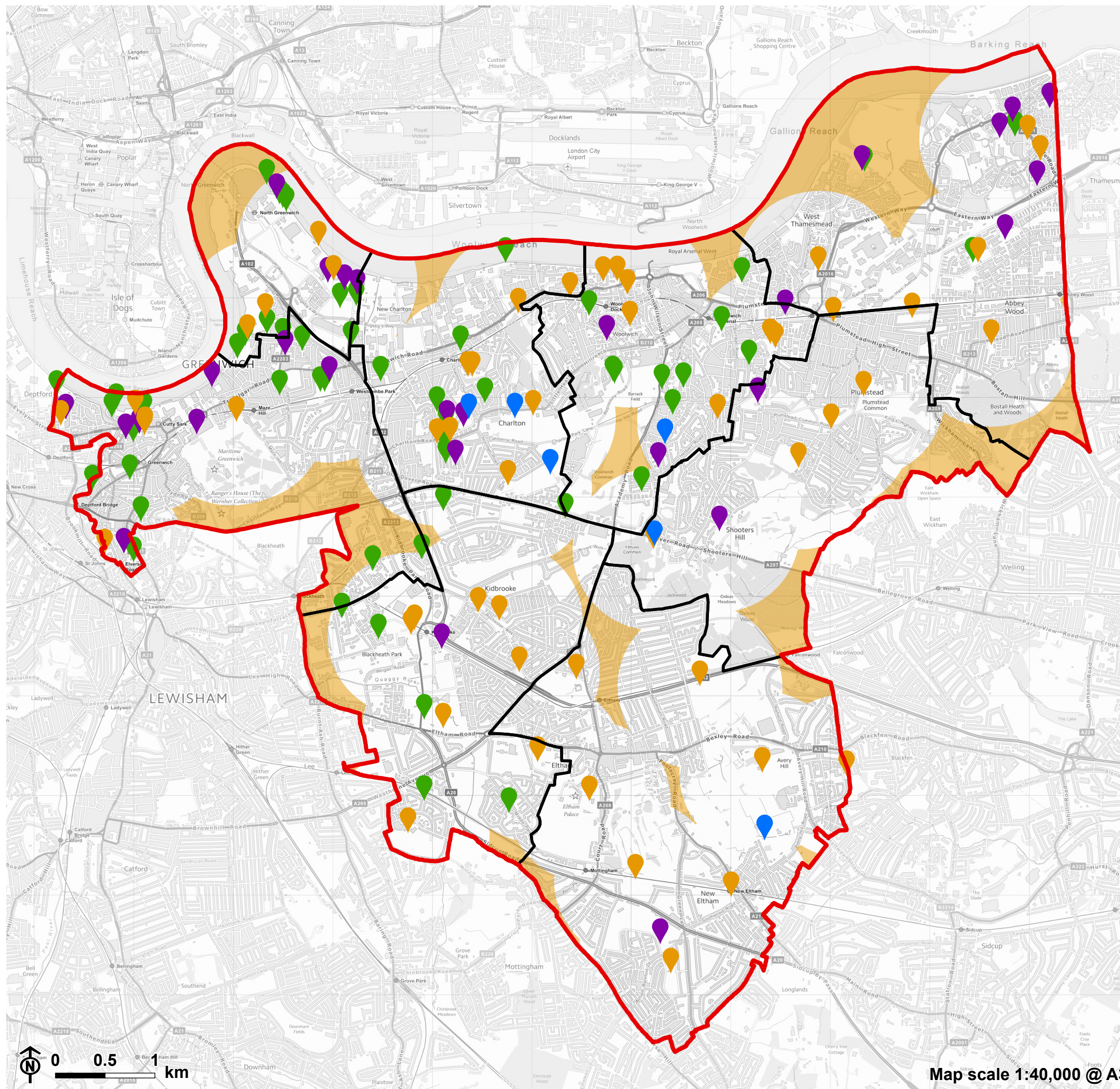
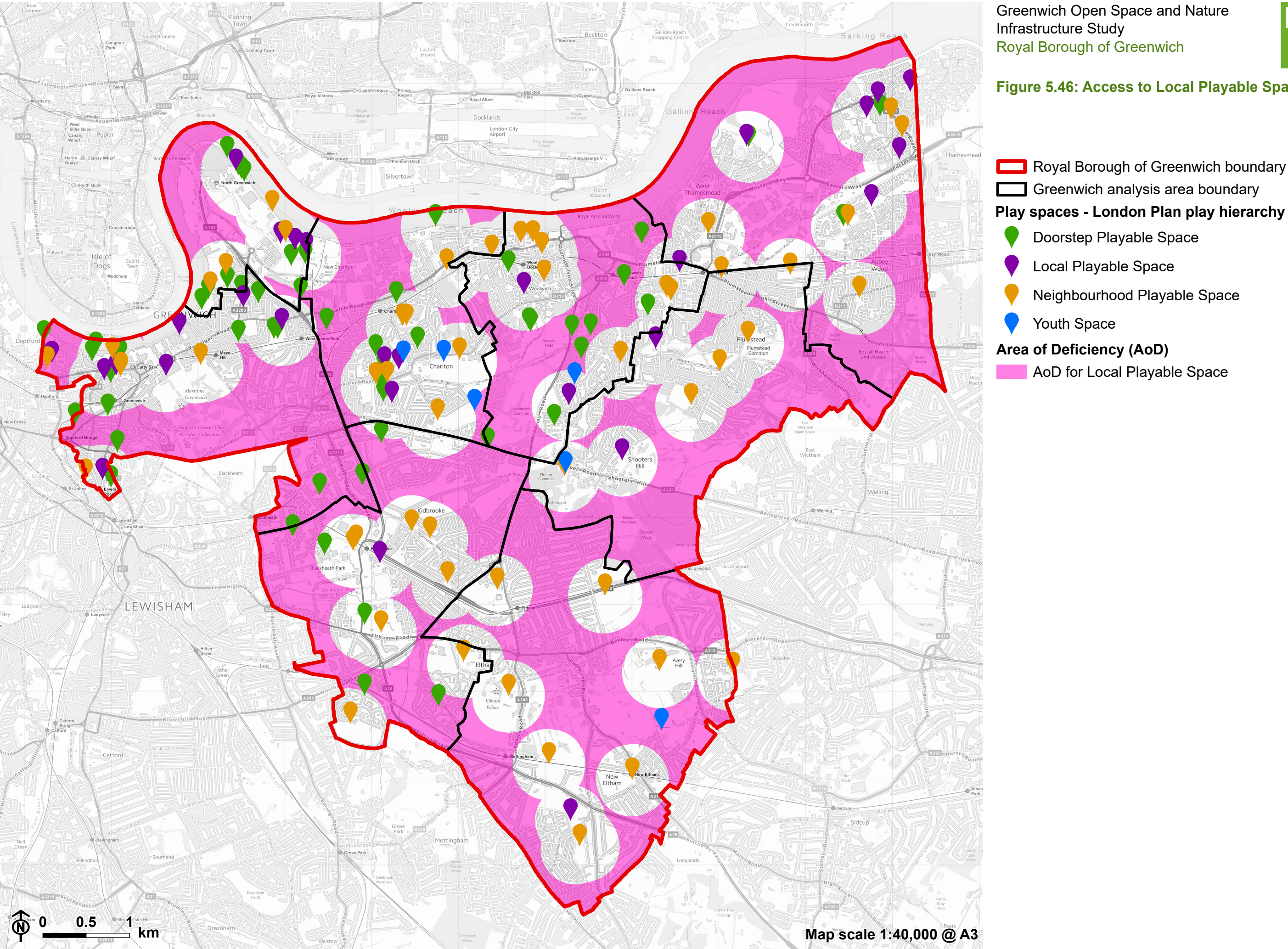


Figure 5.45: Access to Neighbourhood and Combined Playable Space

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich analysis area boundary
- Play spaces - London Plan play hierarchy**
 - Doorstep Playable Space
 - Local Playable Space
 - Neighbourhood Playable Space
 - Youth Space
- Area of Deficiency (AoD)**
 - AoD for Neighbourhood and Combined Playable Space

Figure 5.46: Access to Local Playable Space



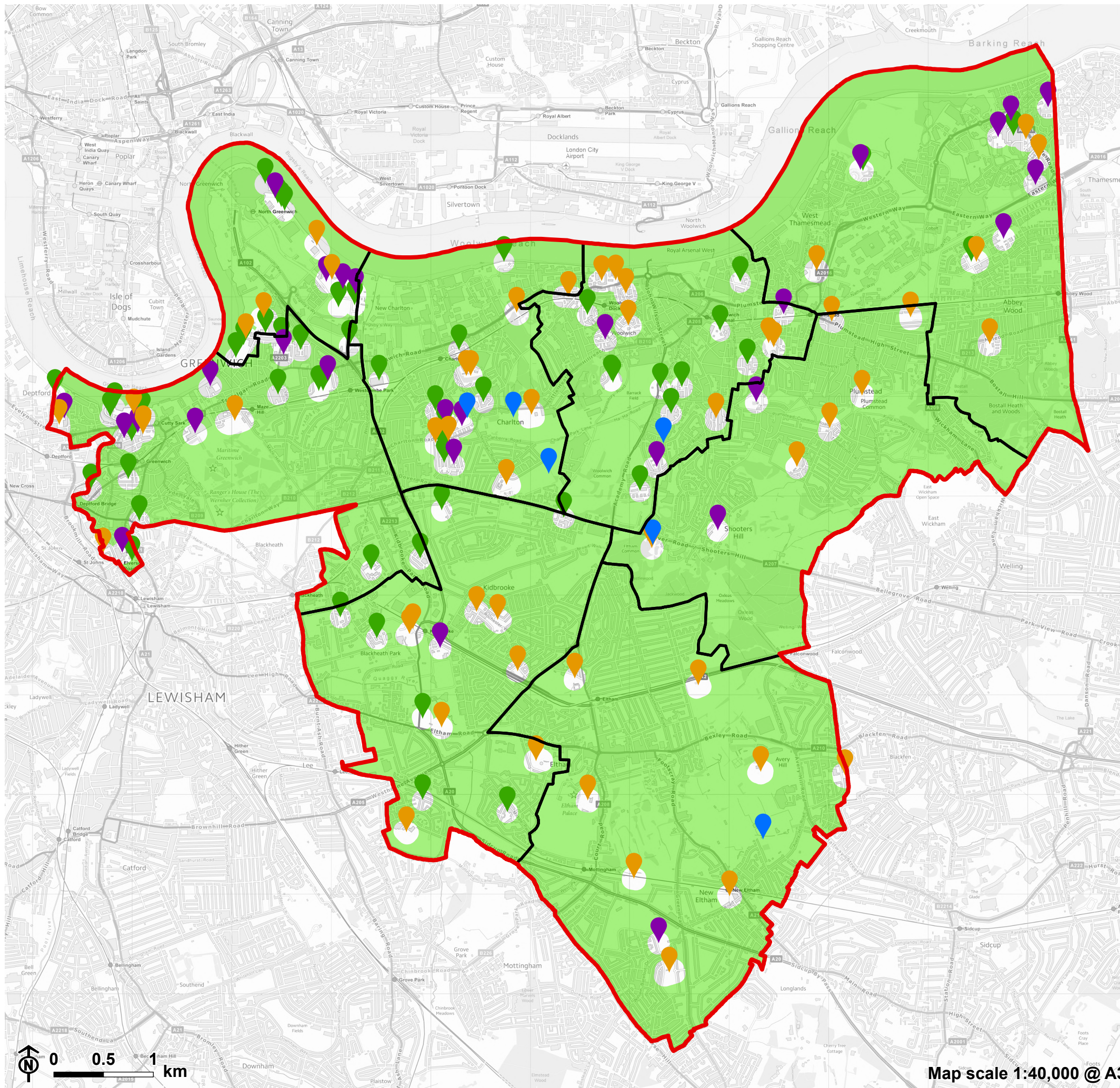
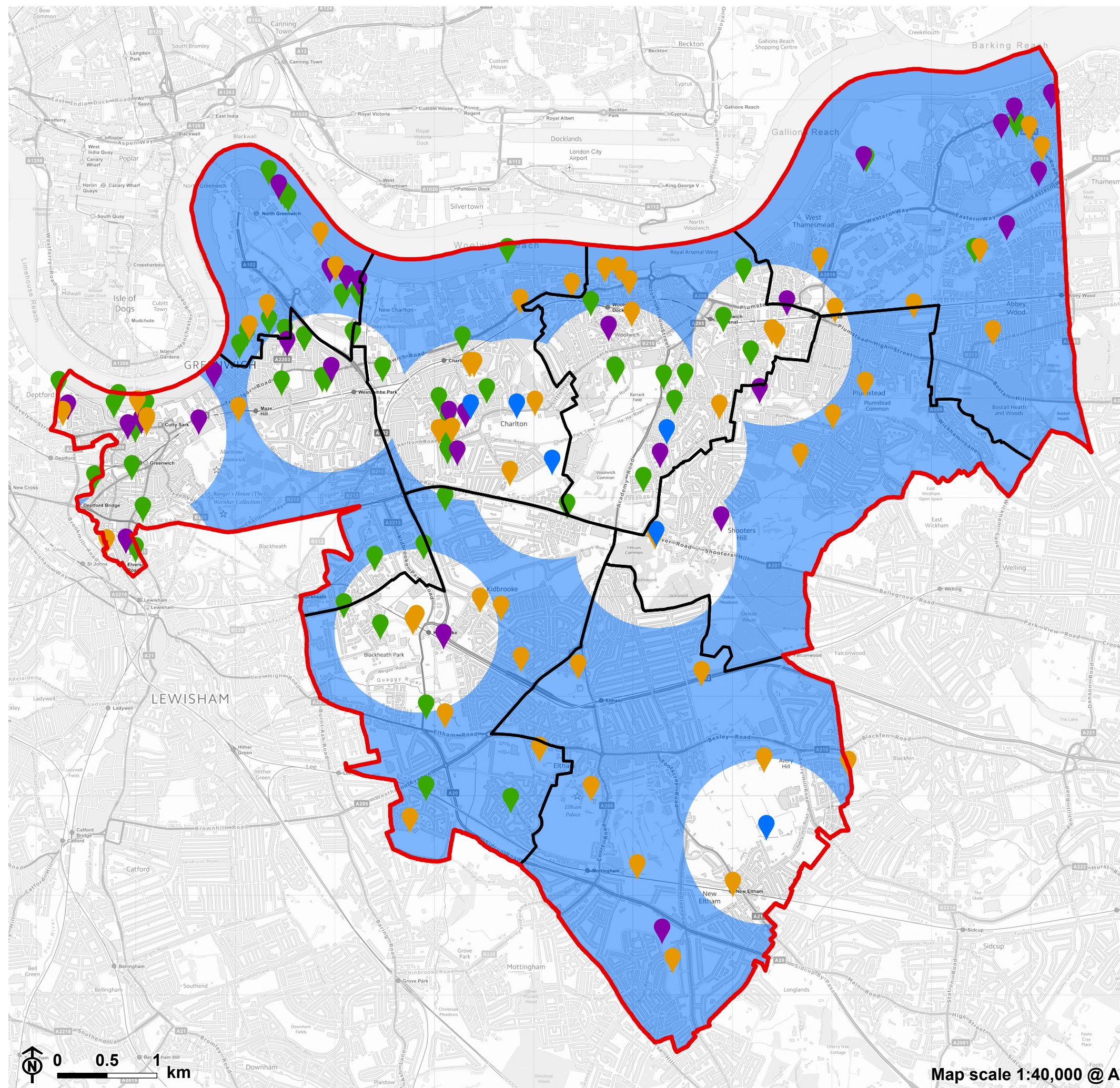


Figure 5.47: Access to Doorstep Playable Space

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich analysis area boundary
- Play spaces - London Plan play hierarchy**
 - Doorstep Playable Space
 - Local Playable Space
 - Neighbourhood Playable Space
 - Youth Space
- Area of Deficiency (AoD)**
 - AoD for Doorstep Playable Space

Figure 5.48: Access to Youth Playable Space



- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich analysis area boundary
- Play spaces - London Plan play hierarchy**
 - Doorstep Playable Space
 - Local Playable Space
 - Neighbourhood Playable Space
 - Youth Space
- Area of Deficiency (AoD)**
 - AoD for Youth Space (within 800m)

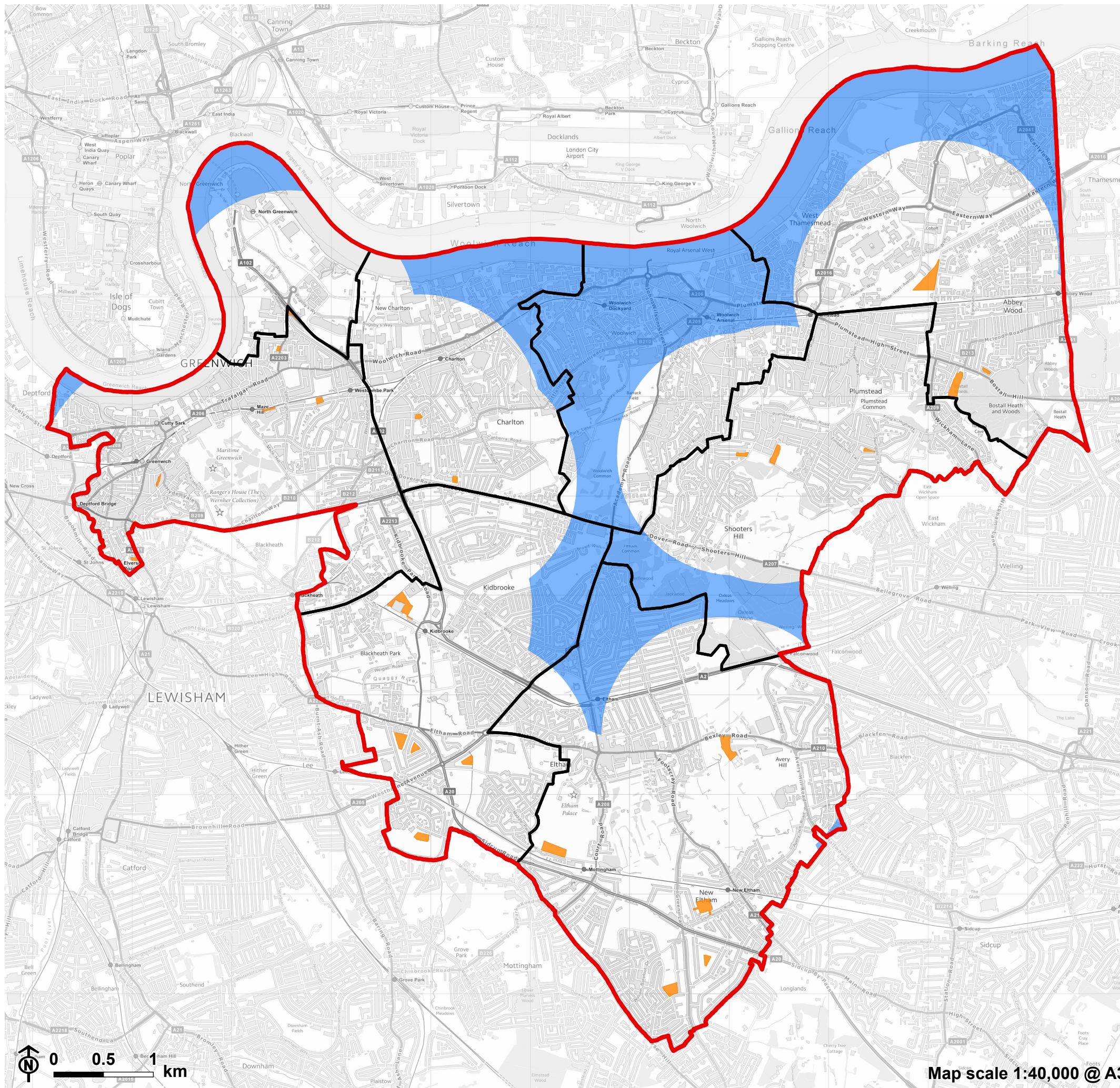


Figure 5.49: Access to Allotments

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich analysis area boundary
- LUC Open Space 2025**
- Allotments
- AoD for Allotments



Chapter 6: Green and blue infrastructure evidence base by analysis area

Chapter 6

Green and blue infrastructure evidence base by analysis area

This chapter summarises the pattern of GBI provision and deficiency across the eight analysis areas of the borough.

6.1 For the purposes of this Study, the borough has been divided into eight analysis areas, as listed below and displayed visually in **Figure 6a**:

- Charlton;
- Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour and New Eltham;
- Greenwich, Blackheath and Westcombe Park;
- Greenwich Peninsula;
- Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village and Middle Park;
- Plumstead and Shooters Hill;
- Thamesmead and Abbey Wood; and
- Woolwich.

6.2 Recommendations for enhancements to the existing GBI network are provided with the aim of supporting community well-being, climate resilience and nature recovery. Reference to the key findings of the London GI Framework are also outlined, including the distribution of need / provision ratings when all objectives are combined. As outlined in **Chapter 3**, the London GI Framework defines need as ‘the extent of a problem’, while provision is considered ‘the amount of existing GI that could help address the problem’.

6.3 Existing connectivity, gaps and strategic opportunities for nature infrastructure are described in each analysis area profile and summarised in **Figure 6b**.

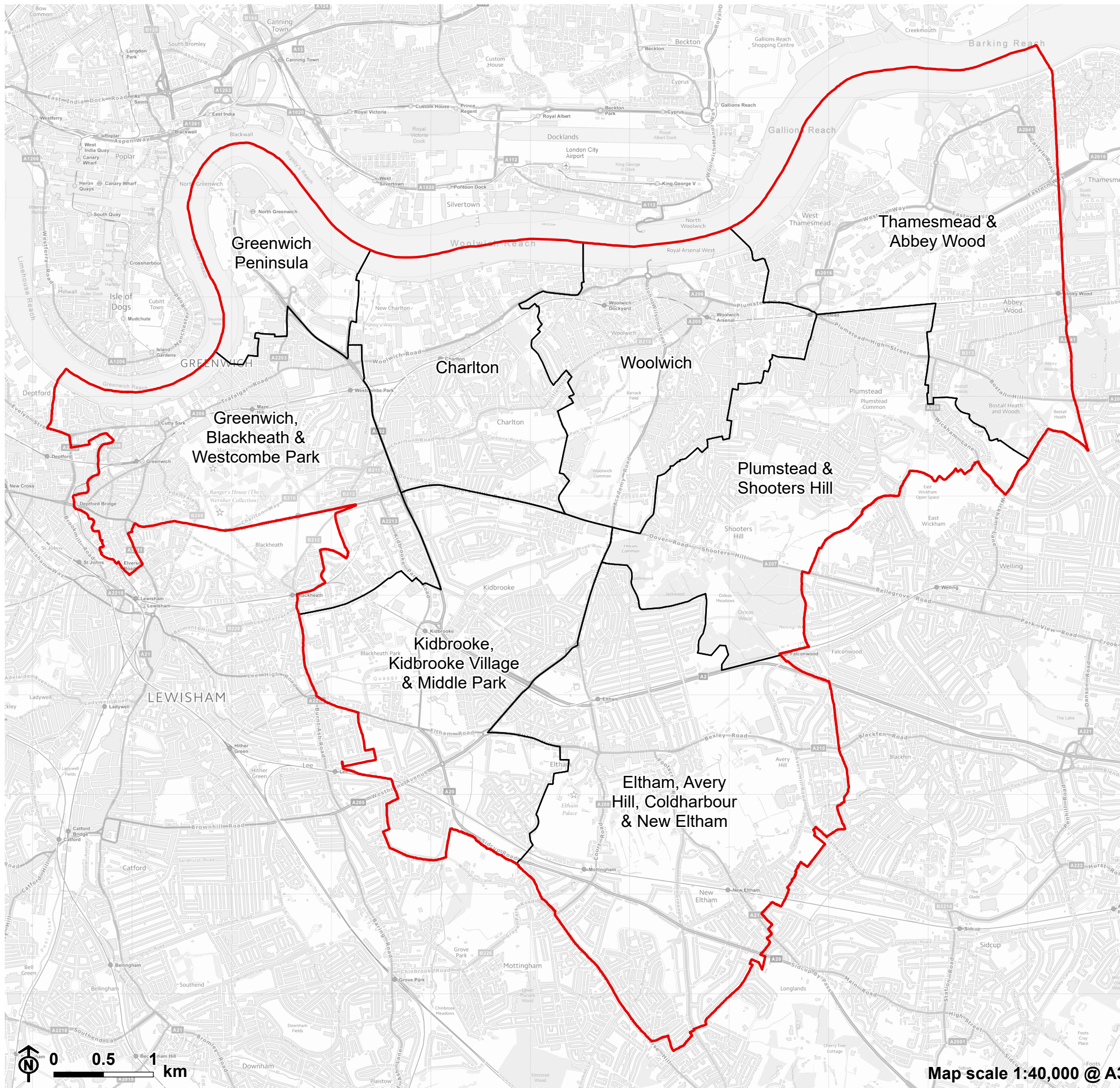


Figure 6.a: Analysis areas

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich analysis areas

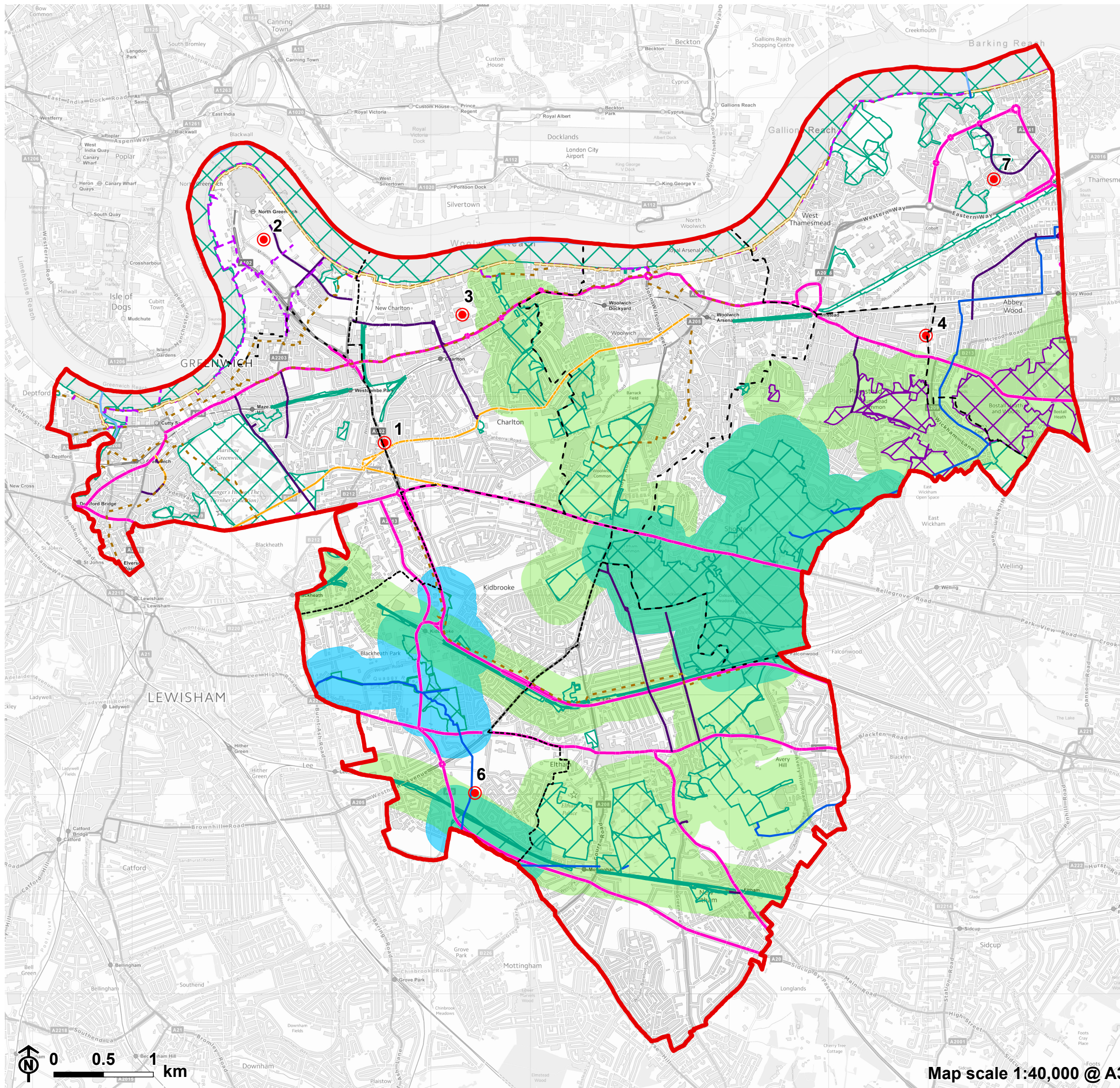


Figure 6.b: Nature Infrastructure Connectivity, Gaps and Strategic Opportunities

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich analysis area boundary
- Gaps in ecological connectivity

Assets

- Inland river
- Tidal river

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)

- SINC
- Green chain SINC
- SINC with terrestrial ecological connectivity
- SINC with hydrological ecological connectivity

Strategic opportunities along active travel routes

- Riverside walks
- National Cycle Network - Traffic free
- TfL cycle routes

Strategic opportunities along specific roads

- A Road
- B Road
- Unclassified road

Table 6.1 Target notes referenced within Figure 6b: Nature infrastructure connectivity, gaps and strategic opportunities

Target Note	Description
1	Create new or enhance existing habitats to extend the ecological connectivity provided by Westcombe Park Railsides SINC, further north along the railway towards the River Thames and further south along the amenity grasslands to the east of the A102.
2	Increase unsealed surfacing and vegetation cover within these heavily developed areas. Retrofitting street trees, SuDS, grass verges, green walls, and daylighting canals.
3	Increase unsealed surfacing and vegetation cover within these heavily developed areas. Retrofitting street trees, SuDS, grass verges, green walls, and daylighting canals.
4	Create a blue / green corridor which provides ecological connectivity north to south between larger areas of natural and semi-natural greenspace such as Oxleas Meadow SINC and Shrewsbury Park, Shooters Hill Golf Course, Dothill Allotments & Woodlands Farm SINC with smaller parks and gardens such as Plumstead Common, Rockliffe Gardens and north towards St Nicholas Garden and Plumstead Gardens.
7	Enhancement measures such as the addition of floating reedbeds, should be targeted towards the canal network to enhance ecological connectivity along Harrow Canal, Butts Canal, Waterfield Canal, Western Canal, Gallions Canal, Thamesmead Canal, and Broadwater Dock.
6	Deliver river restoration initiatives, such as re-naturalising the river bank and river bed, introducing riffles and pools and enhancing bankside marginal vegetation along the River Shuttle, Quaggy River, especially within Kidbrooke and Eltham and the Royal Blackheath Golf Course SINC.

Charlton



Charlton

Charlton stretches from the banks of the River Thames in the north to the corridor of the A207 in the south. Running broadly east-west, the A206 separates predominantly industrial land use associated with the riverside with dense residential areas to the south. GI assets in the analysis areas are dominated by the route of the Green Chain Walk which runs south from the River Thames, accommodating greenspaces at Barrier Park, Maryon Park and Maryon Wilson Park. Both Charlton Park and Hornfair Park are also crossed by this recreational route.

Figure 6.1a Location plan

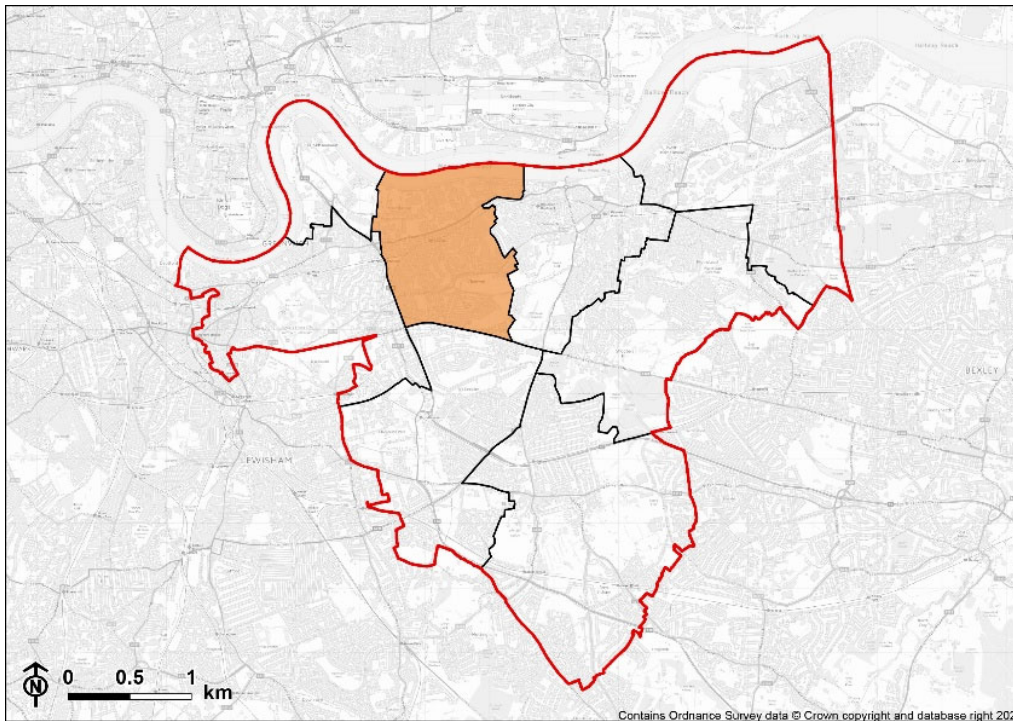
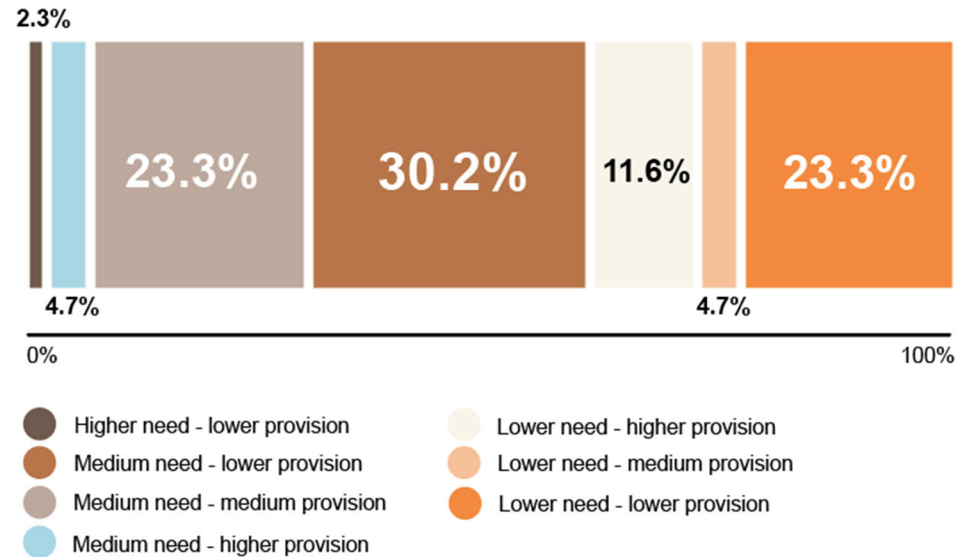


Figure 6.1b Distribution of need / provision ratings for Charlton (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)



London GI Framework: Distribution of need / provision ratings for Charlton (all objectives combined)

- Areas of highest need and lowest provision are limited to 2.3% of the analysis area.
- The analysis area is devoid of areas identified as highest need and medium provision or highest need and higher provision when all objectives are included.
- Swaths of industrial land use stretching along the analysis area's western boundary are defined as medium need with lowest existing provision. Sections of the A206 are also included within this need / provision category.
- Areas of medium need with medium existing provision describes residential areas lying with central Charlton and pockets of land at the analysis area's southern extent.

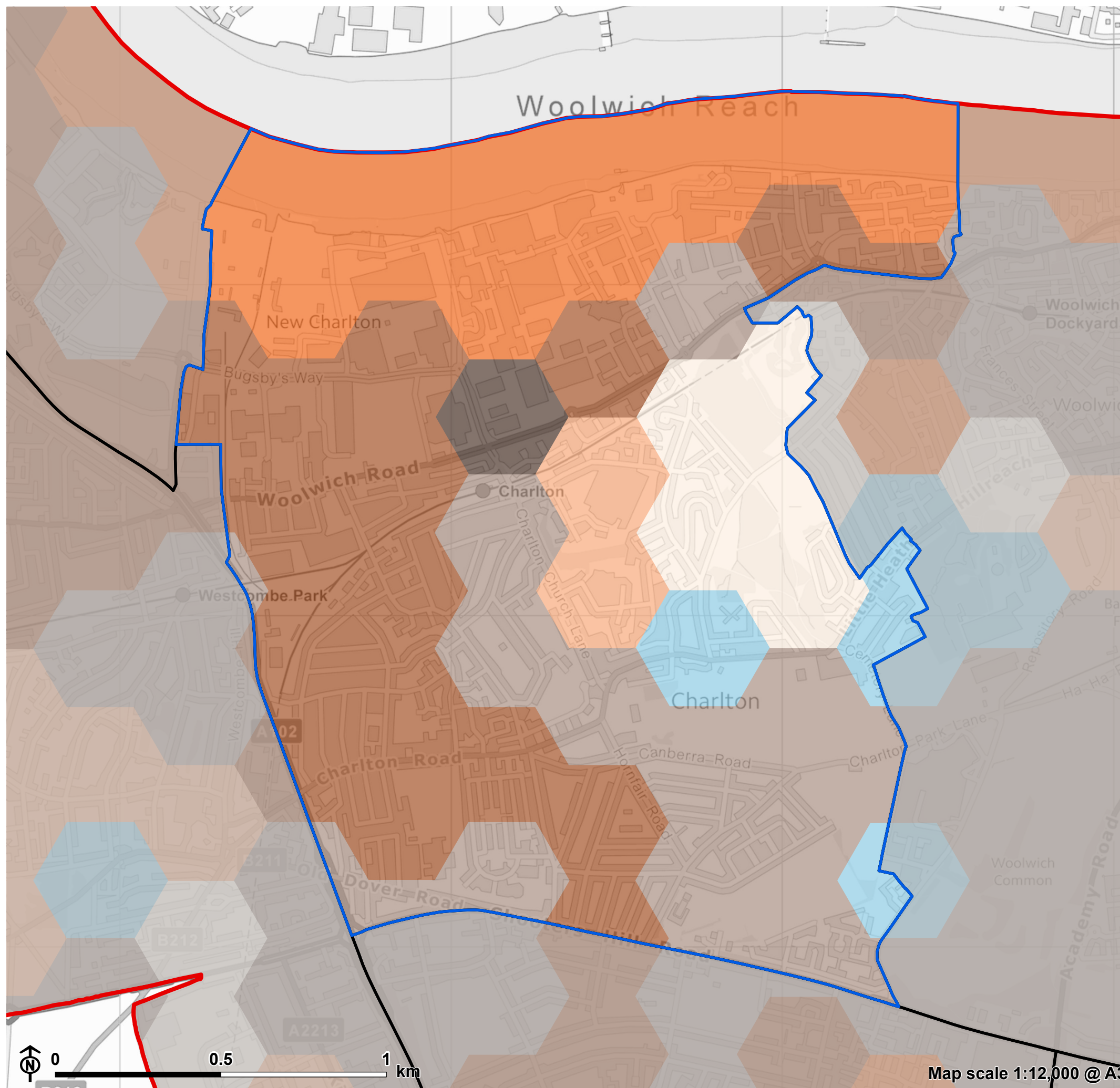


Figure 6.1c: Spatial distribution of need and provision for Charlton (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)

-  Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
-  Charlton
-  Neighbouring analysis area boundary

Need versus provision

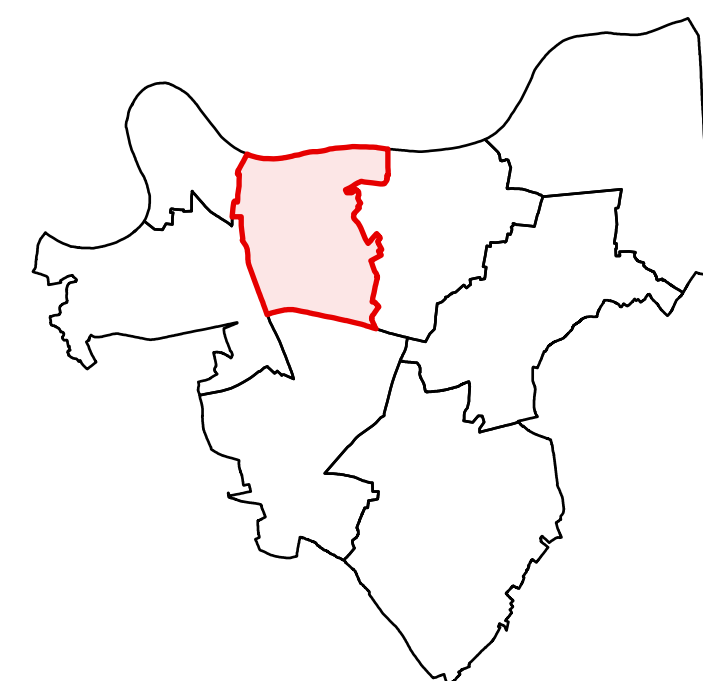
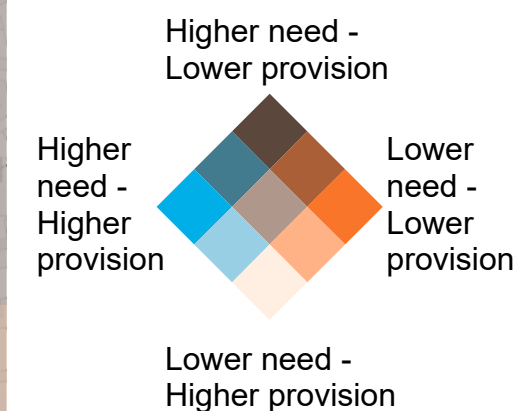
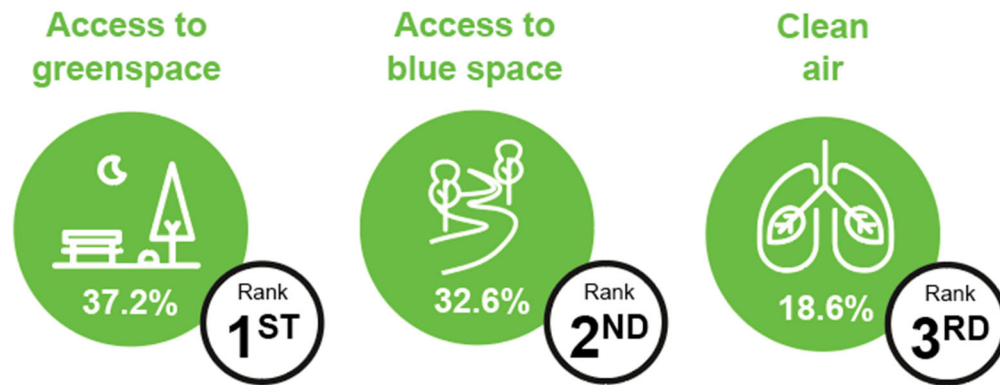


Figure 6.1d: Top three objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision which form the priority objectives for Charlton



Improved access to green and blue space as well as clean air form the priority objectives for Charlton.

London GI Framework: Ranking of objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision in Charlton

- 37.2% of the analysis area is identified as highest need and lowest provision for improved access to greenspace.
- Access to blue space is ranked second (32.6%) for the objective demonstrating the highest need and lowest provision in the analysis area.
- Areas defined as highest need with lowest existing provision for clean air cover 18.6% of the analysis area.
- No areas within Charlton exhibit highest need and lowest provision for objectives relating to flood risk mitigation, clean water and greener high streets.

Nature recovery

Assets

6.4 There are two conservation designations within Charlton; Gilberts Pit SSSI and Maryon Wilson Park & Gilbert's Pit LNR and SINC, which are co-located within the north of Charlton and comprise predominantly priority deciduous woodland. Gilbert's Pit SSSI is a geological SSSI covering 1% of the analysis area. The LNR is designated due to its wooded landscape with a mix of acid grassland, supporting burrowing bees and wasps, gorse and broom scrub and secondary woodland. Maryon Wilson Park also has a small stream and areas of wet grassland supporting locally rare plants; including bristle club-rush and bog stitchwort.

6.5 Maryon Wilson Park and Gilbert's Pit form the largest area of deciduous woodland within the analysis area. However, the sites are located in close proximity to several other areas of wood pasture and parkland, such as at Charlton Cemetery and Charlton Park SINC. Other sites in close proximity include recently enhanced acid grassland and priority deciduous woodland within Charlton House Grounds and unimproved acid grassland within Charlton House Lawn SINC, all of which are located no more than 50m apart (separated by the tree-lined Charlton Park Road). The entire boundary of Charlton Park is mapped as priority wood pasture and parkland, although the majority of the park is utilised for sports. Despite the tree-lined boundaries and footpaths, the site is not representative of semi-natural parkland habitat.

6.6 Eastmoor Street Park SINC and Thames Barrier Gardens open space comprise small parks offering ecological connectivity between Maryon Park and the River Thames SINC. The sites are separated from Maryon Park via the tree-lined dual carriageway of Woolwich Road. Eastmoor Street Park comprises predominantly species-poor amenity grassland with some species present which are more typical of coastal grazing marsh, as well as an area of wildflowers.

6.7 The River Thames itself forms a key connecting corridor, providing both ecological and hydrological connectivity.



Maryon Wilson Park

6.8 To the west of Charlton, Westcombe Park Railsides is designated as a SINC due to the presence of woodland, scrub and rough grassland. This site offers commuting, foraging and dispersal routes for bats, birds and badgers.

6.9 Together the SINC network covers 17% of the analysis area. The woodland cover (as informed by the National Forest Inventory), tree canopy and green cover (as defined by the GLA’s London-wide dataset⁷⁰) are presented in **Table 6.2**.

Table 6.2 Woodland, tree canopy and green cover within Charlton

Woodland cover	Tree canopy cover	Green cover
6%	16%	35%

Pressures and deficiencies

6.10 The 2024 SINC review identified that Charlton House Lawn Borough (Grade I) SINC was under recreational pressure, with disturbance and enrichment of the soil a particular risk to the survival of uncommon grassland species.

6.11 Despite the presence of accessible SINC’s within the east of Charlton, there is a broad AoD in access to nature through the west, which extends south through the Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village and Middle Park analysis area. This is also reflected in the lack of priority habitats, natural and semi-natural greenspace or parks and gardens within the west of Charlton (with the exception of Westcombe Park Railsides SINC which provides some ecological connectivity). However, this site does not provide publicly accessible greenspace.

6.12 The AoD in access to nature covers 29% of the analysis area and includes the industrial area between the banks of the River Thames at Woolwich Road, and residential areas south of Woolwich Road. With the exception of Eastmoor Street Park SINC, Thames Barrier Gardens open space, Harlinger Street open space, the Thames Way National Trail and other small areas of amenity grassland, there are no greenspaces within the industrial land north of Woolwich Road. Additionally, there are few natural and semi-natural greenspaces present within the

⁷⁰ <https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/green-cover-2024/>

residential area south of Woolwich Road, and those habitats present are of low ecological value.

Open space

6.13 The provision of open space in Charlton is shown by typology and access level in **Figure 6.1e**. There are 64.93 ha of publicly accessible open space in Charlton, comprising 44 separate sites. Provision of open space in this area is greatest in the east of the analysis area, where there are several local and district hierarchy parks and gardens (see **Table 6.3**). This includes Charlton Park, Maryon Wilson Park and Hornfair Park. Provision in the north includes green corridors along the River Thames and the open space associated with the Thames Barrier.

Quantity

6.14 Overall, there is a lower quantity of accessible greenspace compared to the borough average. The majority of this provision is accounted for by the parks and gardens typology. Charlton is particularly deficient in natural and semi-natural greenspace compared to other parts of the borough with no accessible areas of natural and semi-natural greenspace in this analysis area.

6.15 Additionally, there is a lower provision of allotments in Charlton compared to the borough average. Existing provision of allotments is primarily centred in the west of the analysis area, at Highcombe Allotments and Cherry Orchard Allotments.

6.16 Provision for children and teenagers includes standalone play areas and play areas within larger parks and gardens. The quantity of this typology is higher in Charlton compared to the borough average.

Quality and value

6.17 **Figure 6.1f** shows the quality and value scores of the open spaces assessed (excluding provision for children and teenagers) in 2017 and 2025, against the 2025 benchmarks. 42% of the open spaces in Charlton meet both the quality and value benchmarks. This includes most of the larger parks and gardens (Charlton Park, Hornfair and Maryon Park). However, Maryon Wilson Park does not meet either benchmark. A third of the open spaces do not meet the quality and value benchmarks. Many of these open spaces exhibit restricted access, including Cherry Orchard Allotments and Westcombe Park Railsides.

6.18 **Figure 6.1g** shows the quality and values scores for provision for children and teenagers. This score was calculated for seven play spaces in Charlton. The scores are fairly well distributed, with nearly 30% scoring above both benchmarks, 30% below both benchmarks and over 40% meeting one benchmark but not the other.

Accessibility

6.19 Overall, access to accessible greenspace is higher in Charlton compared to the average across the borough. However, there is better access to greenspace within the centre and south east of Charlton compared to the north and west. **Figure 6.1f** shows the cumulative areas of deficiency. Most of the areas along the River Thames are deficient in two or three levels of the hierarchy. To the west, areas are deficient in one level of the hierarchy – primarily the local, small and pocket level. Access to the metropolitan hierarchy of greenspace is provided by Greenwich Park, to the west of Charlton. The access catchment for this open space covers around 85% of the analysis area. Access to the district hierarchy of greenspace is predominantly provided by Charlton Park. Around 30% of the analysis area is within an AoD for the district level of the hierarchy.

6.20 Overall, access to provision for children and teenagers within the analysis area is better for older children than younger children. Just 3% of the analysis area is within AoD for neighbourhood play compared to 32% for local play and 86% for doorstep play. 41% is within an AoD for access youth space. For all types of provision for children and teenagers, access tends to be higher in the centre and south of the analysis area (see **Figure 6.1g**).

6.21 There is access to allotments for around 74% of the analysis area. The deficiency of access is predominantly in the east of the analysis area.

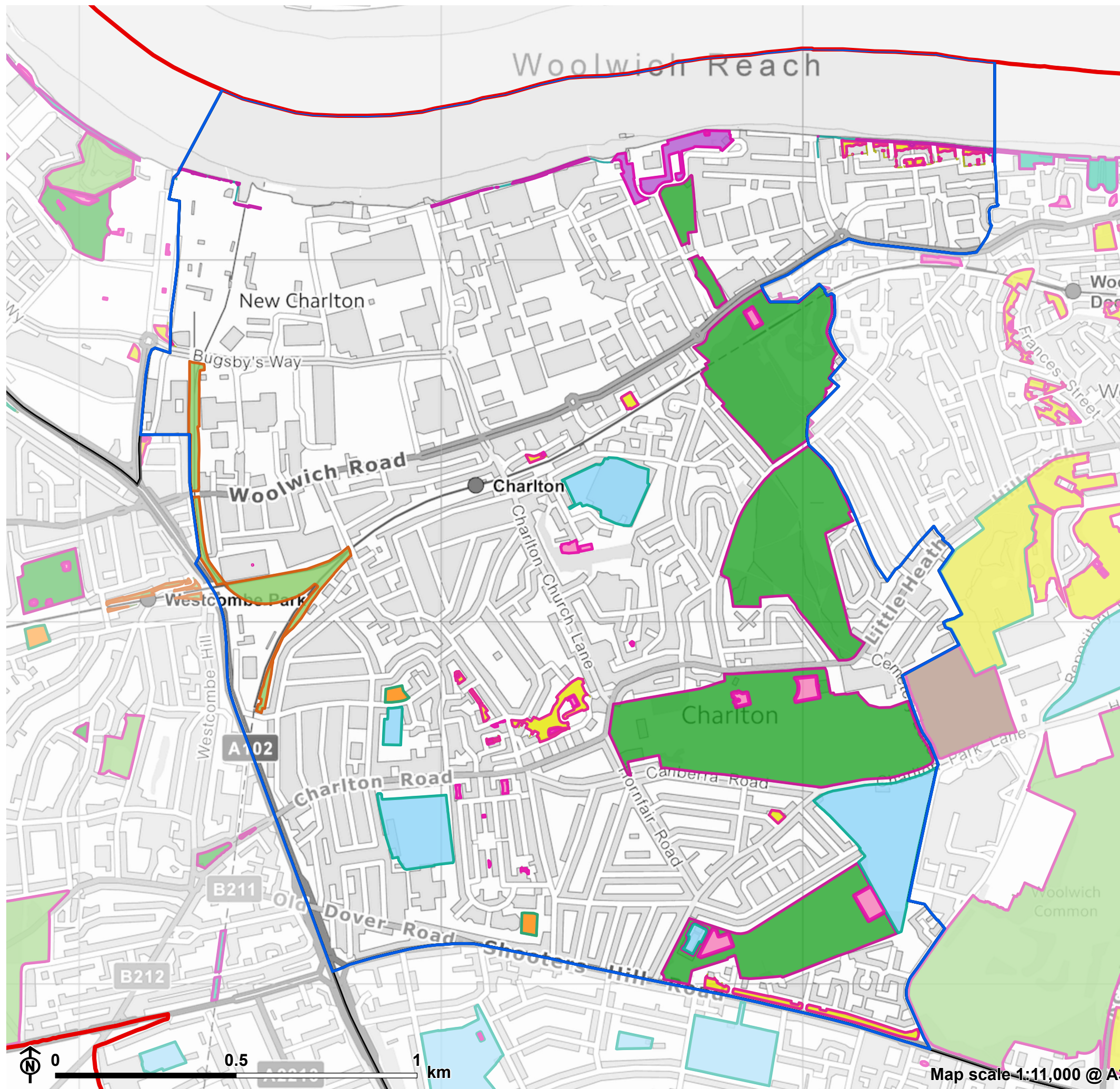
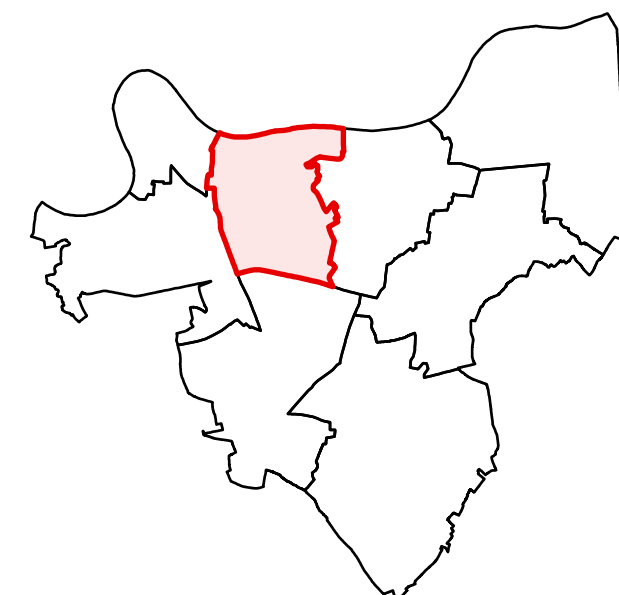


Figure 6.1e: Open space provision in Charlton

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Charlton boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- LUC Open Space 2025**
 - Agricultural land
 - Allotments
 - Amenity greenspace
 - Cemeteries and churchyards
 - Civic Space
 - Green corridor
 - Natural and semi-natural greenspace
 - Outdoors sports facilities
 - Parks and gardens
 - Provision for children and young people
- Access category**
 - Freely accessible
 - Restricted access
 - No public access



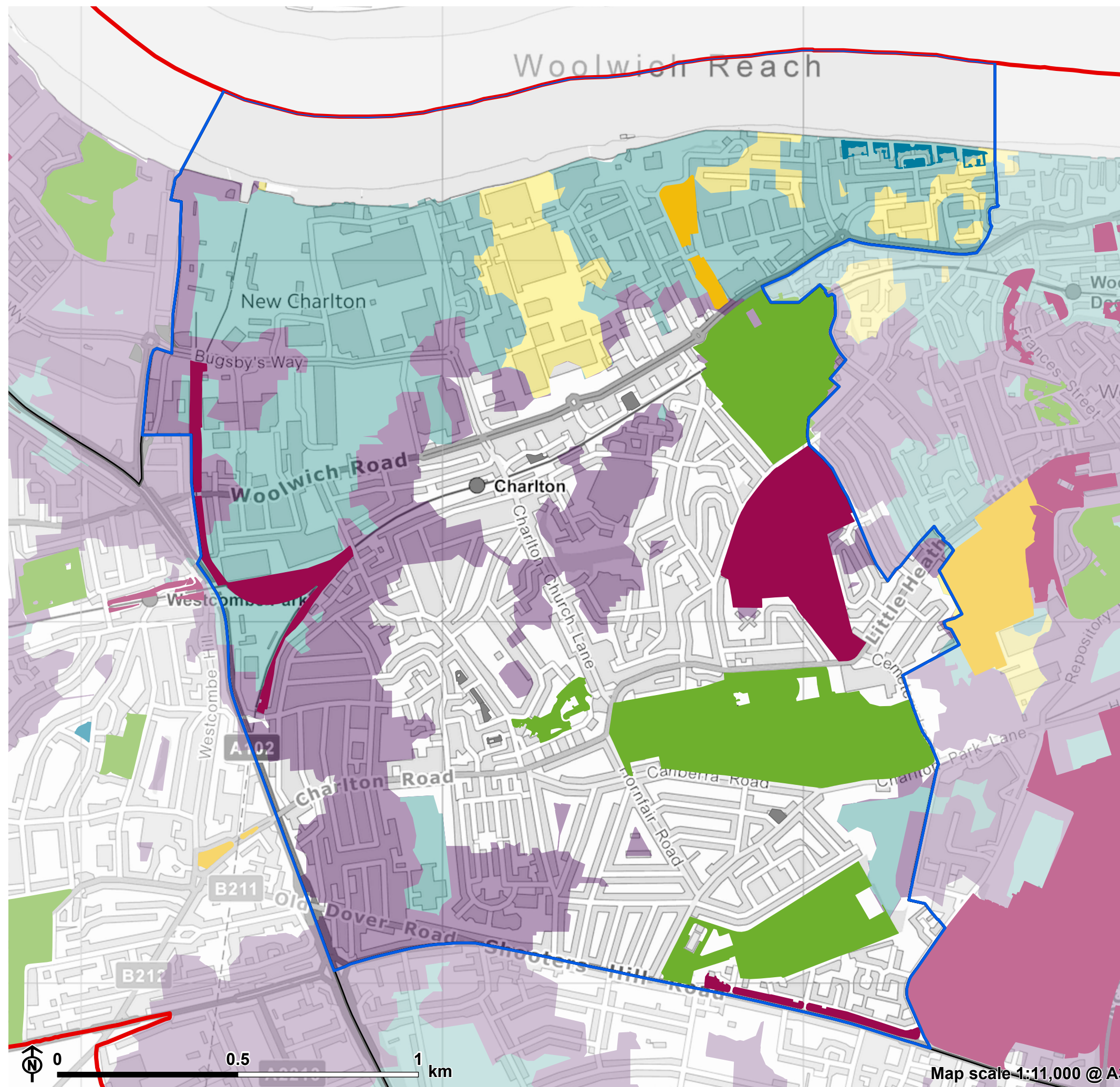
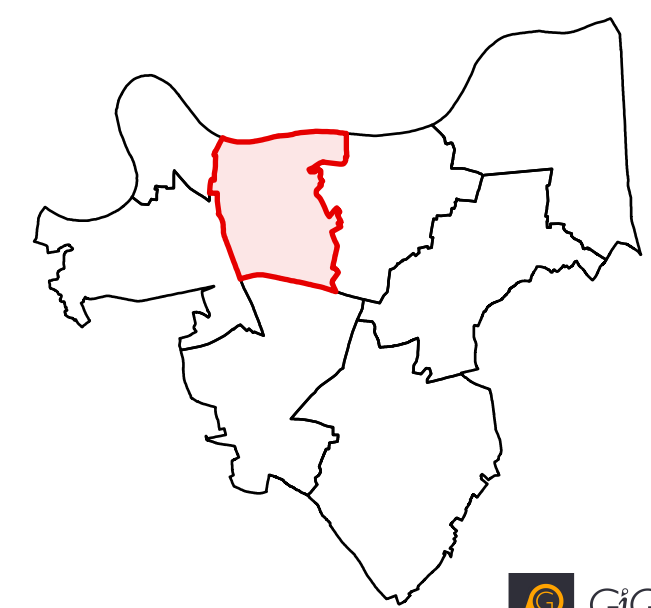


Figure 6.1f: Accessible green space provision in Charlton

-  Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
-  Charlton boundary
-  Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- Accessible green space quality and value score**
 -  Higher quality, higher value
 -  Higher quality, lower value
 -  Lower quality, higher value
 -  Lower quality, lower value
 -  Not surveyed in 2025 or 2017
- Count of Areas of Deficiency**
 -  Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
 -  Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
 -  Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy



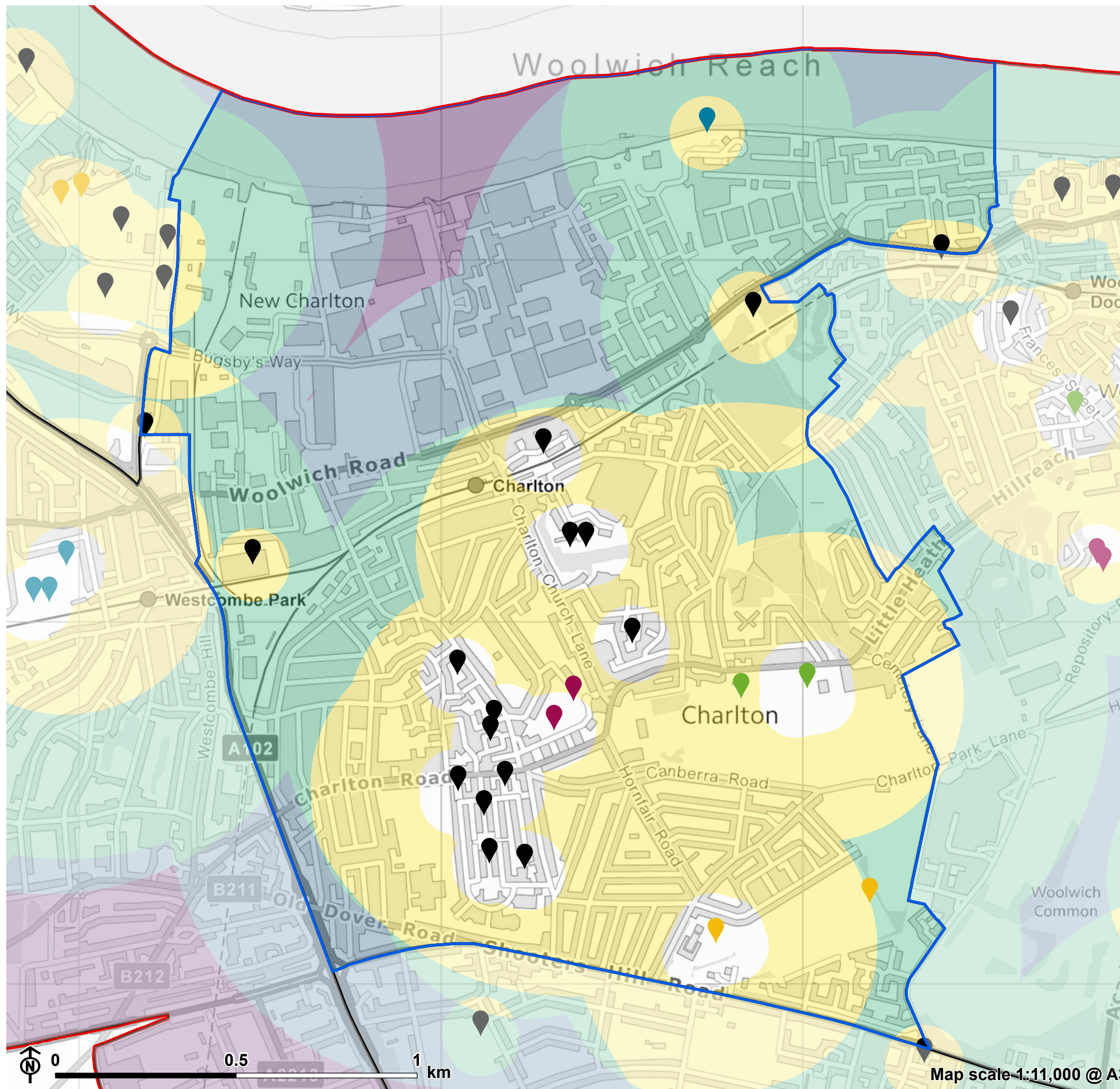
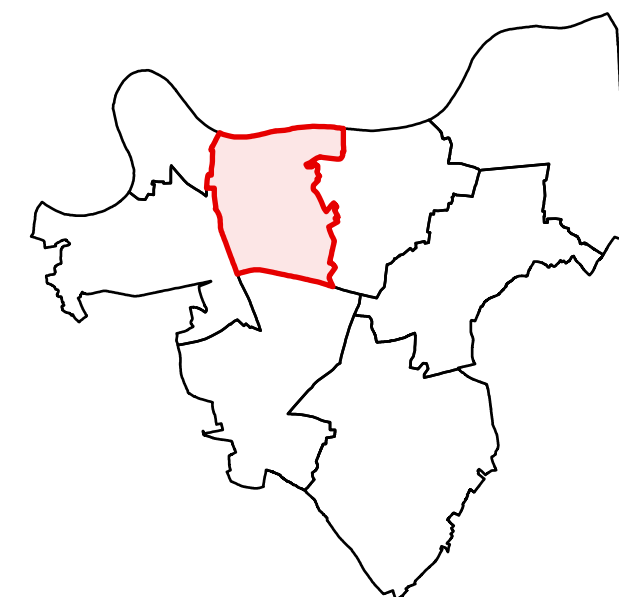


Figure 6.1g: Provision for children and teenagers in Charlton

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Charlton boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- Play space quality and value score 2025
 - Higher quality, higher value
 - Higher quality, lower value
 - Lower quality, higher value
 - Lower quality, lower value
 - Not surveyed
- Play space Areas of Deficiency (AoD)
 - Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in all levels of the hierarchy





Entrance to Thames Barrier Gardens – a civic space

Table 6.3 Performance compared to borough average and quantity standards (as set out in Table 5.5)

Typology	Provision	Comparison to borough average	Performance against standard
Accessible greenspace	2.28ha / 1,000 population	- 0.48 ha / 1,000 of the population less	0.72 ha / 1,000 deficit
Allotments	0.02 ha / 1,000 population	- 0.05 ha / 1,000 of the population	0.05 ha / 1,000 deficit
Provision for children and teenager	0.39 ha / 1,000	+ 0.20 ha / 1,000 children	N / A
Parks and gardens	2.14 / ha / 1,000	+ 0.88 ha / 1,000 of the population	N / A
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	0.00 ha / 1,000	- 1.21 ha / 1,000 of the population	N / A
Amenity greenspace	0.14 ha / 1,000	- 0.15 ha / 1,000 of the population	N / A
Green corridors	0.03 ha / 1,000	- 0.08 ha / 1,000 of the population	N / A
Civic space	0.07 ha / 1,000	+ 0.03 ha / 1,000 of the population	N / A
Cemeteries and churchyards	0.00 ha / 1,000	- 0.16 ha / 1,000 of the population	N / A

Potential GBI enhancements

- Consider the Charlton Riverside Opportunity Area as an opportunity to address the deficiency in natural and semi-natural greenspace. Provision of community food growing spaces within future development should address access deficiencies in the north.
- Explore opportunities to enhance the accessibility of existing blue spaces, including the Thames Path.
- Ensure the appropriate siting of GBI along key transport corridors, such as the A206 and along the railway line to improve air quality and achieve noise abatement benefit.
- Deliver enhancements to existing open spaces to meet quality and value standards, particularly around the promotion of community involvement. Explore opportunities to engage local communities in the management and ownership of publicly accessible open spaces to increase multi-functionality e.g. marketing and promotion of spaces online and via public noticeboards, food growing activities or use for community activities. New open spaces should be prioritised in the west of Charlton at the local, small and pocket level.

Within existing SINCs and greenspaces, the following opportunities exist:

- Create new or enhance existing habitats to extend the ecological connectivity provided by Westcombe Park Railsides SINC. This includes on land further north along the railway towards the River Thames and further south bordering the amenity grasslands to the east of the A102.
- Introduce grassland enhancements to amenity greenspaces, incorporating relaxed meadow management, supplemented by grass and wildflower seeding in areas which are not used for recreational activities. Incorporate associated features to support the full lifecycle of invertebrates such as butterfly banks and insect hotels.
- Undertake tree planting within amenity greenspaces to provide cooling and shading. The creation of community orchards could also provide opportunities for community engagement with nature.
- Include natural play features and biodiversity enhancement features which offer dual benefits as well as natural play opportunities.



Moore Park, Eastmoor Street

- The Greater London LNRS identifies potential measures for lowland meadow habitat within Charlton Park and Hornfair Park. Although a large proportion of Charlton Park (Charlton House Lawn SINC and Charlton Park and Charlton Cemetery SINC) forms a sports pitch, opportunities exist for enhancing edge habitats, introducing additional tree planting within amenity grassland areas and improvements to the existing woodland habitat to the west. Due to the presence of semi-improved grassland at Hornfair Park, and the reduced levels of recreational pressure within this area, Hornfair Park offers most potential for ecological enhancement.
- Seek opportunities to deliver measures for lowland meadow enhancement and creation within Hornfair Park and other areas which are not required for sports provision. Increase the provision of wildlife habitats, which are protected from recreational impacts such as trampling, managed through suitable cutting regimes to protect habitat for ground nesting birds and provide undisturbed areas for wildlife (either through physical exclusion or natural barriers). Supporting measures include the creation of nesting habitat for birds and insects and scrub creation and management.
- Within 200m of the River Thames, Eastmoor Street Park SINC and Thames Barrier Gardens open space provide the only semi-natural greenspaces within 200m of the River Thames which are available for the delivery of off-site BNG. However, consideration is required as to whether this small area is appropriate to delivering measurable and meaningful net gains. There may be other areas within the borough that are more appropriate in this regard. Therefore, opportunities for delivering new habitats and nature-based solutions within 200m of the River Thames in Charlton, may be better targeted towards reclaiming land and / or retrofitting greenspace into existing areas of sealed surface such as car parks, roads and buildings, and through the creation of new green-blue roofs as part of future development.

Outside of the existing SINC and greenspace network, the following opportunities exist:

- The industrial area to the north of Woolwich Road lies within Flood Risk Zones 2 and 3 and is also subject to surface water flooding. Therefore, it is recommended that features of ecological enhancement are designed to also provide nature-based solutions to flooding. The Charlton to Bexley Riverside Integrated Water Management Strategy⁷¹ recommends features such as naturalised surface level SuDS features, storage features such as retention ponds and swales, raingardens and green and blue roofs.
- Opportunities to enhance blue infrastructure through 'daylighting' of these assets should be explored, especially marginal planting measures and creation of opportunities for birds, fish and riparian mammals to find shelter, resting and nesting places.
- The residential area to the south of Woolwich Road offers opportunity for small scale ecological enhancements such as grassland improvements to amenity greenspaces. Incorporate associated features to support the full lifecycle of invertebrates such as bare ground, butterfly banks and insect hotels.
- There are two cycle routes which run east-west through Charlton. One of which lies parallel with the River Thames and includes a section of the Thames Path National Trail; the other lies along Woolwich Road. Sections of the Thames Path offer the opportunity for street tree planting, wildflower verges, green walls and intertidal habitat features along flood defences. The potential to integrate GI along the cycle route on Woolwich Road should be explored. Street tree cover is lowest to the west and increases to the east towards Stone Lake Retail Park and Maryon Park.
- A network of connecting roads offer walking routes to large greenspaces; including Charlton Road, Old Dover Road / Shooters Hill Road, Bugsby Road leading to Charlton Church Lane and Charlton Park Road. Consideration should be given to additional street tree planting, SuDS interventions and urban greening along these routes.

⁷¹ AECOM (2017) Charlton to Bexley Riverside Integrated Water Management Strategy. Available at: <https://www.bexley.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2021-10/Charlton-to-bexley-riverside-integrated-water-management-strategy-2017.pdf>

Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham



Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham

Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham analysis area encompasses land at the southern extent of the borough. The area is characterised by predominantly residential land use, interspersed with a network of open spaces. The carriageways of the A2, A20 and A210 cross the analysis area broadly east-west, connecting with the route of the A208 which runs north-south.

Figure 6.2a Location plan

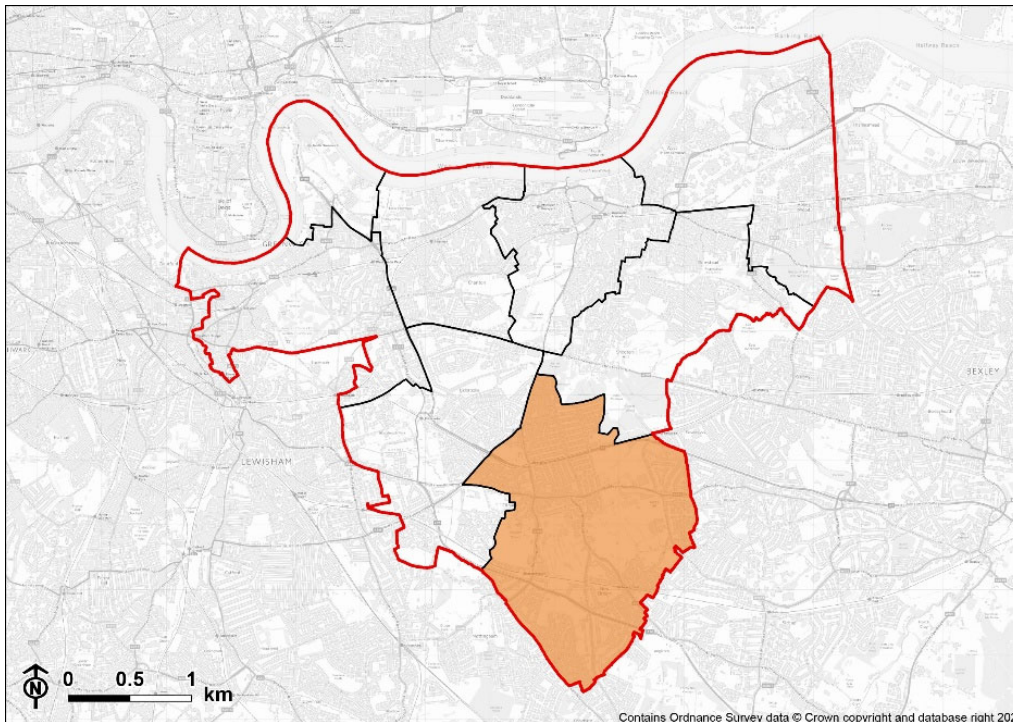
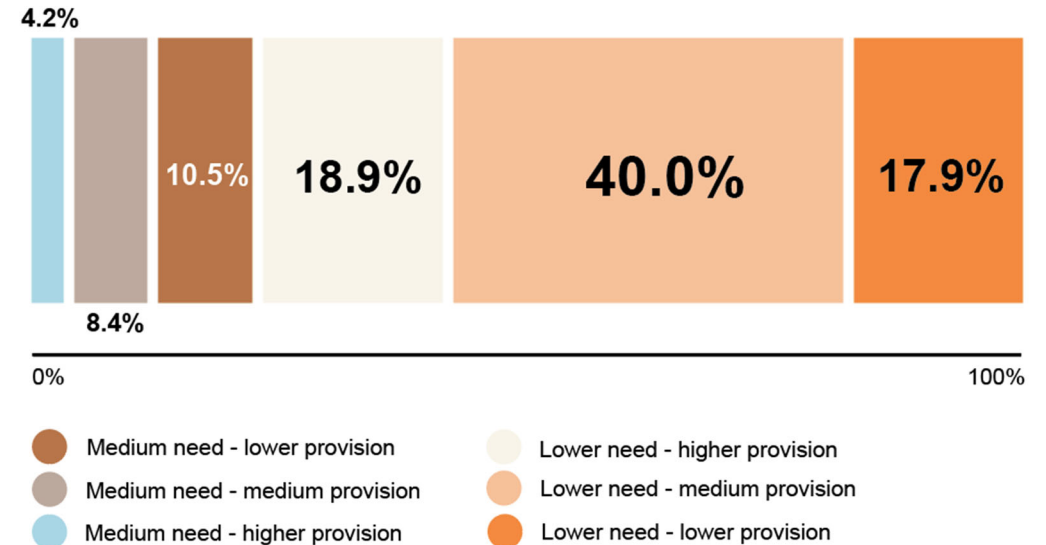


Figure 6.2b Distribution of need / provision ratings for Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)



London GI Framework: Distribution of need / provision ratings for Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham (all objectives combined)

- The analysis area is devoid of areas identified as highest need when all objectives are included, weighted by health and social equity.
- Areas of medium need and lowest provision are primarily concentrated at the southern extent of the analysis area.
- Pockets of land centred on the A208, A20 and A2 are defined as medium need with medium existing provision.

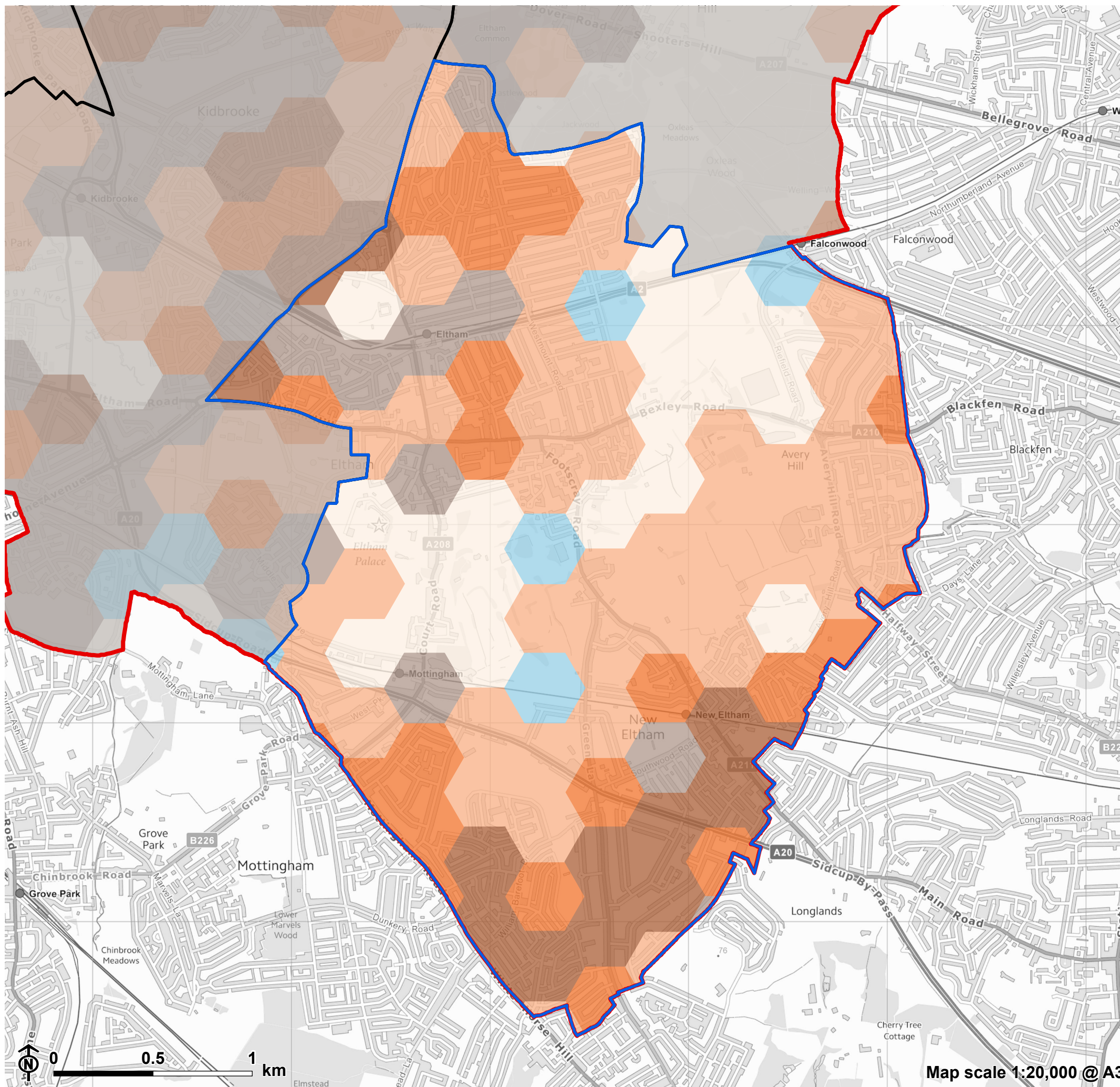


Figure 6.2c: Spatial distribution of need and provision for Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)

-  Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
-  Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham
-  Neighbouring analysis area boundary

Need versus provision

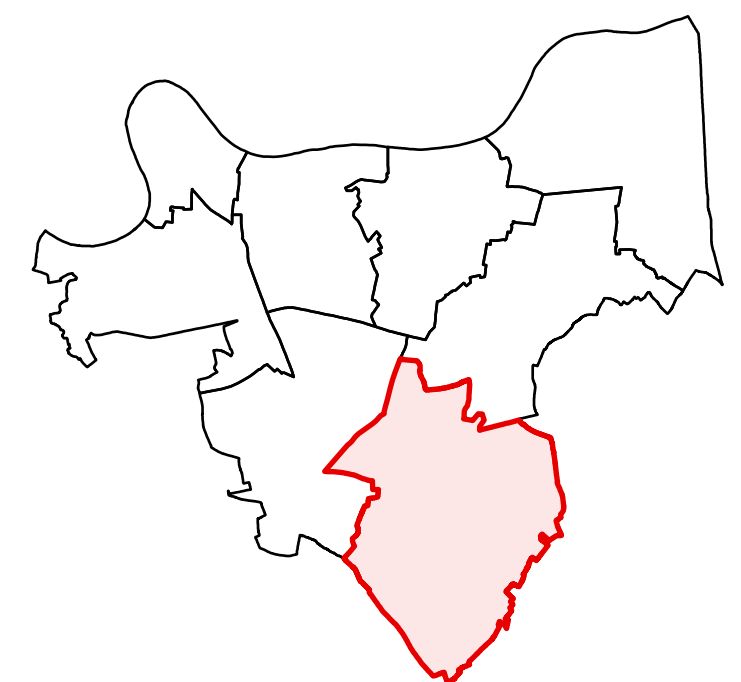
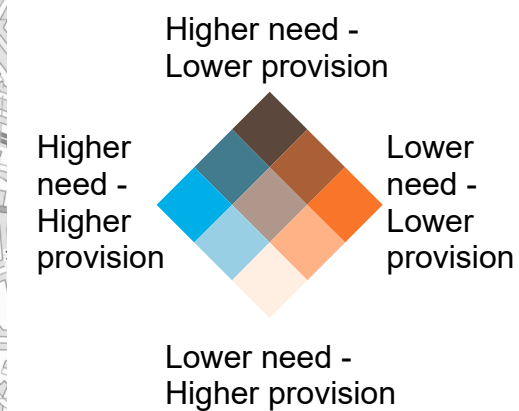
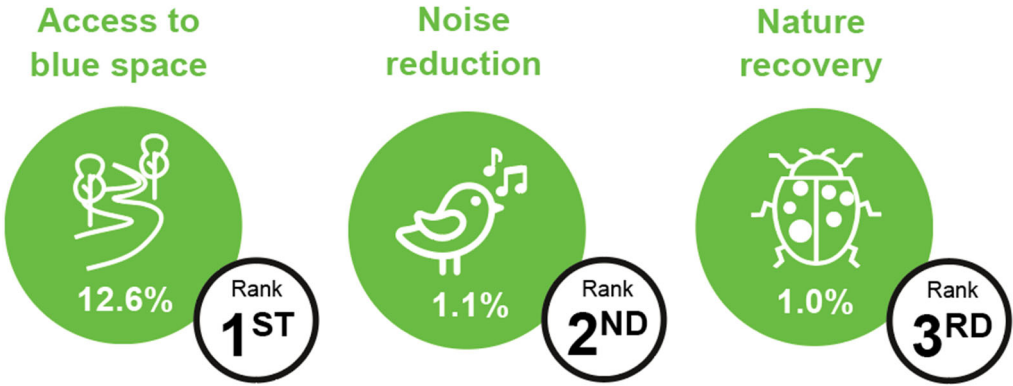


Figure 6.2d: Top three objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision which form the priority objectives for Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham



Improved access to blue space, noise reduction and nature recovery form the priority objectives for Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham.

London GI Framework: Ranking of objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision in Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham

- 12.6% of the analysis area is identified as highest need and lowest provision for improved access to blue space.
- Areas defined as highest need with lowest existing provision for noise reduction cover 1.1% of the analysis area.
- Nature recovery is ranked third (1.0%) for the objective demonstrating the highest need and lowest provision in the analysis area.
- No areas within Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham exhibit highest need and lowest provision for objectives relating to improved access to greenspace, flood risk mitigation, clean water, urban cooling, clean air, greener active travel routes and greener high streets.

Nature recovery

Assets

6.22 There are no statutorily designated nature conservation sites within the analysis area. However, there are several non-statutory SINCs present, which represent all SINC grades from local to metropolitan. SINCs include parks and gardens, golf courses, pasture land, cemeteries and churchyards and sports fields.

6.23 Additionally, there are two long railside corridors connecting east-west, which are each designated as local SINC and form the green corridor open space typology. Although these are not publicly accessible, they form important corridors for ecological connectivity between other SINC in neighbouring areas. This includes Royal Blackheath Golf Course SINC, and the Tarn SINC to the north. Southwood Recreation Ground SINC lies to the south of Mottingham and New Eltham Railsides SINC.

6.24 Priority habitats which form the SINC network include deciduous woodland, which is present in small parcels throughout the analysis area, and wood pasture and parkland located at Royal Blackheath Golf Course South SINC. Additionally, Eltham Palace Fields SINC contains a large area of good quality semi-improved grassland and a small area of traditional orchard, located within a larger parcel of deciduous woodland.

6.25 The analysis area includes extensive areas of SINC designated land, natural and semi-natural greenspaces and parks and gardens which each have good ecological connectivity.

6.26 The River Shuttle provides hydrological connectivity between the borough and the neighbouring borough of Bexley, offering wider connections to Avery Hill Fields SINC.

6.27 Together the SINC network covers 15% of the analysis area. The woodland cover (as informed by the National Forest Inventory), and tree canopy and green cover (as informed by the GLA's London-wide dataset) are presented in **Table 6.4**.

Table 6.4 Woodland, tree canopy and green cover

Woodland cover	Tree canopy cover	Green cover
5%	19%	55%

Pressures and deficiencies

6.28 There is a significant AoD in access to nature (SINC AoD) which extends across 17% of the analysis area, particularly within the south. This AoD stretches to the east into the neighbouring borough of Bexley. Additionally, there is a smaller AoD around Well Hall Road and the A2, which connects as a broad band to the north west through Kidbrooke and Charlton.

6.29 The large residential areas of Eltham, Eltham North, New Eltham, Coldharbour and Mottingham, have limited ecological connectivity, with the exception of habitats of relatively low ecological value within reasonably sized private gardens and amenity greenspace.

Open space

6.30 The provision of open space in Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham analysis area is shown by typology and access level in **Figure 6.2e**. There are 123.17 ha of publicly accessible open space in this analysis area, comprising 56 separate sites. In addition, there is a notable provision of outdoor sports (153.37 ha), all of which has restricted access. Publicly accessible open space is dominated by the provision of parks and gardens. This includes Avery Hill Park, Eltham Park South and Fairy Hill Park. Open space provision is lower in the north of the analysis area.

Quantity

6.31 Overall, the quantity of accessible greenspace in this analysis area is slightly lower than the borough average. Over half of this provision is accounted for by the parks and gardens typology. Compared to other parts of the borough, the analysis area is deficient in natural and semi-natural greenspace. However, large areas of semi-natural greenspace around Shepherdleas Meadow and Wood and Oxleas Wood adjoin this analysis area in the north east. This helps alleviate the deficiency in provision of this typology.

6.32 Compared to the borough average, there is good provision of allotments. The five allotments sites within the Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham analysis area are located in the southern half of the analysis area.

6.33 Provision for children and teenagers includes standalone play areas and play areas within larger parks and gardens. The quantity of this typology is slightly higher in this analysis area compared to the borough average.



Avery Hill Park

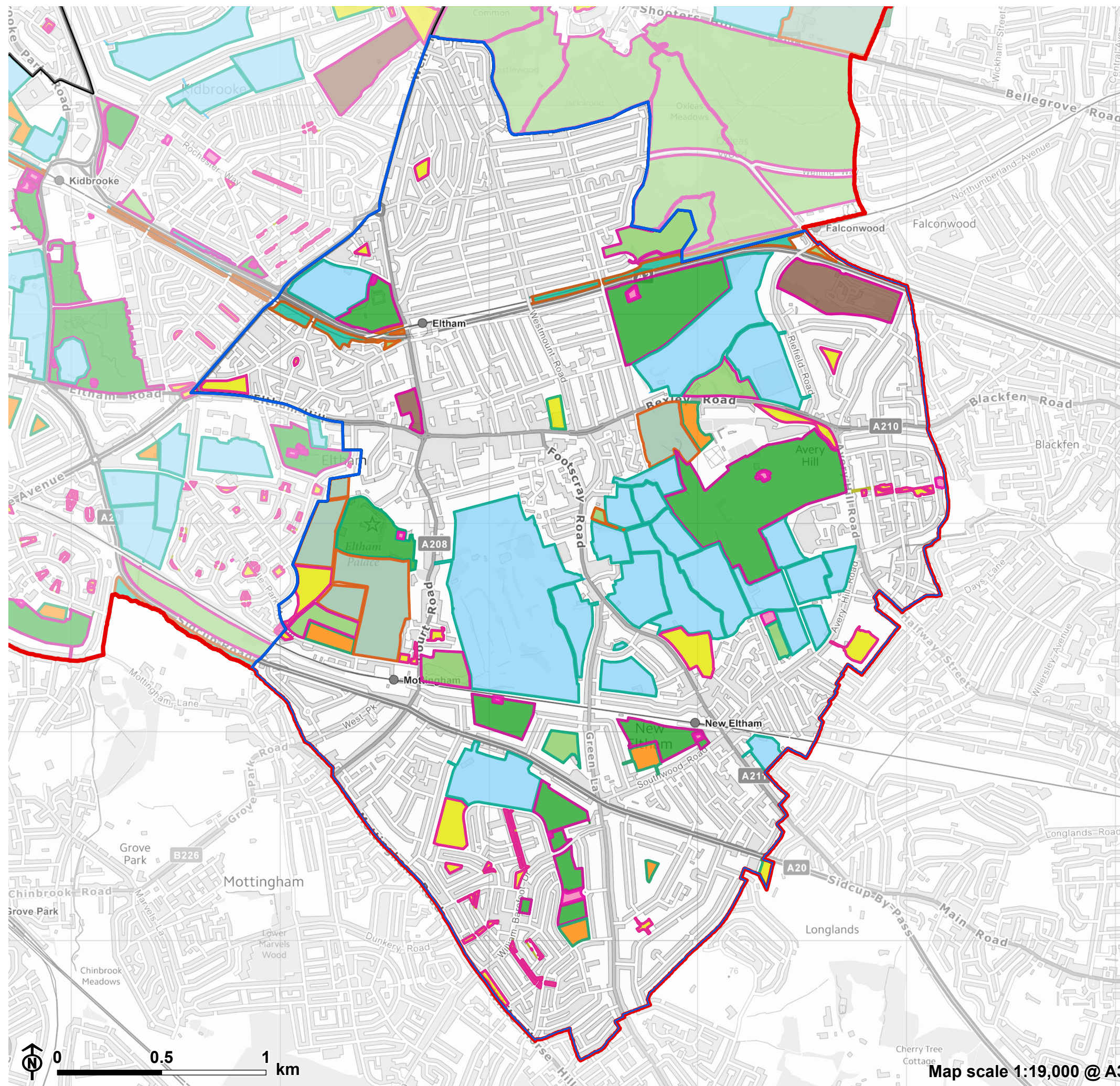


Figure 6.2e: Open space provision in Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- LUC Open Space 2025**
- Agricultural land
- Allotments
- Amenity greenspace
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Civic Space
- Green corridor
- Natural and semi-natural greenspace
- Outdoors sports facilities
- Parks and gardens
- Provision for children and young people
- Access category**
- Freely accessible
- Restricted access
- No public access

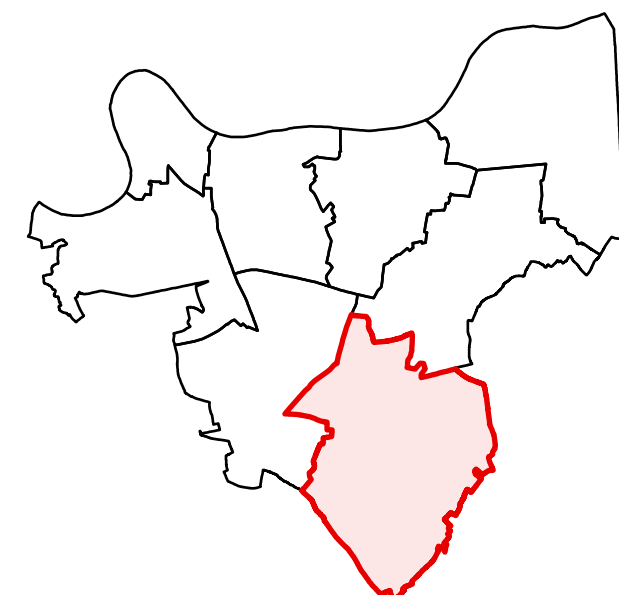


Table 6.5 Performance compared to borough average and quantity standards (as set out in Table 5.5)

Typology	Provision	Comparison to borough average	Performance against standard
Accessible greenspace	2.63 ha / 1,000 population	- 0.13 ha / 1,000 less	0.37ha / 1,000 deficit
Allotments	0.17 ha / 1,000 population	+ 0.10 ha / 1,000 population	+0.10ha / 1,000 deficit
Provision for children and teenager	0.26 ha / 1,000	+ 0.06 ha / 1,000 children	N / A
Parks and gardens	1.70 / ha / 1,000	+ 0.43 ha / 1,000	N / A
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	0.40 ha / 1,000	- 0.82 ha / 1,000	N / A
Amenity greenspace	0.54 ha / 1,000	+ 0.25 ha / 1,000	N / A
Green corridors	0.00 ha / 1,000	- 0.11 ha / 1,000	N / A
Civic space	0.00 ha / 1,000	- 0.04 ha / 1,000	N / A
Cemeteries and churchyards	0.29 ha / 1,000	+ 0.13 ha / 1,000	N / A

Quality and value

6.34 Figure 6.2f shows the quality and value scores of the open spaces assessed (excluding provision for children and teenagers) in 2017 and 2025, against the 2025 benchmarks. Just over a quarter (26%) of the open spaces in Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham analysis area meet both the quality and value benchmarks. The parks and gardens typology tends to be more likely to score above the quality and value benchmarks, compared to the natural and semi-natural greenspace and amenity greenspace. For those open spaces that

meet one benchmark, it is more common that sites meet the quality benchmark than the value benchmark, suggesting investment in facilities and increased community involvement offer potential improvements within open spaces in this analysis area. The majority of natural and semi-natural greenspace (71%) and amenity greenspace (68%) do not meet either benchmark. These are mostly located to the south.

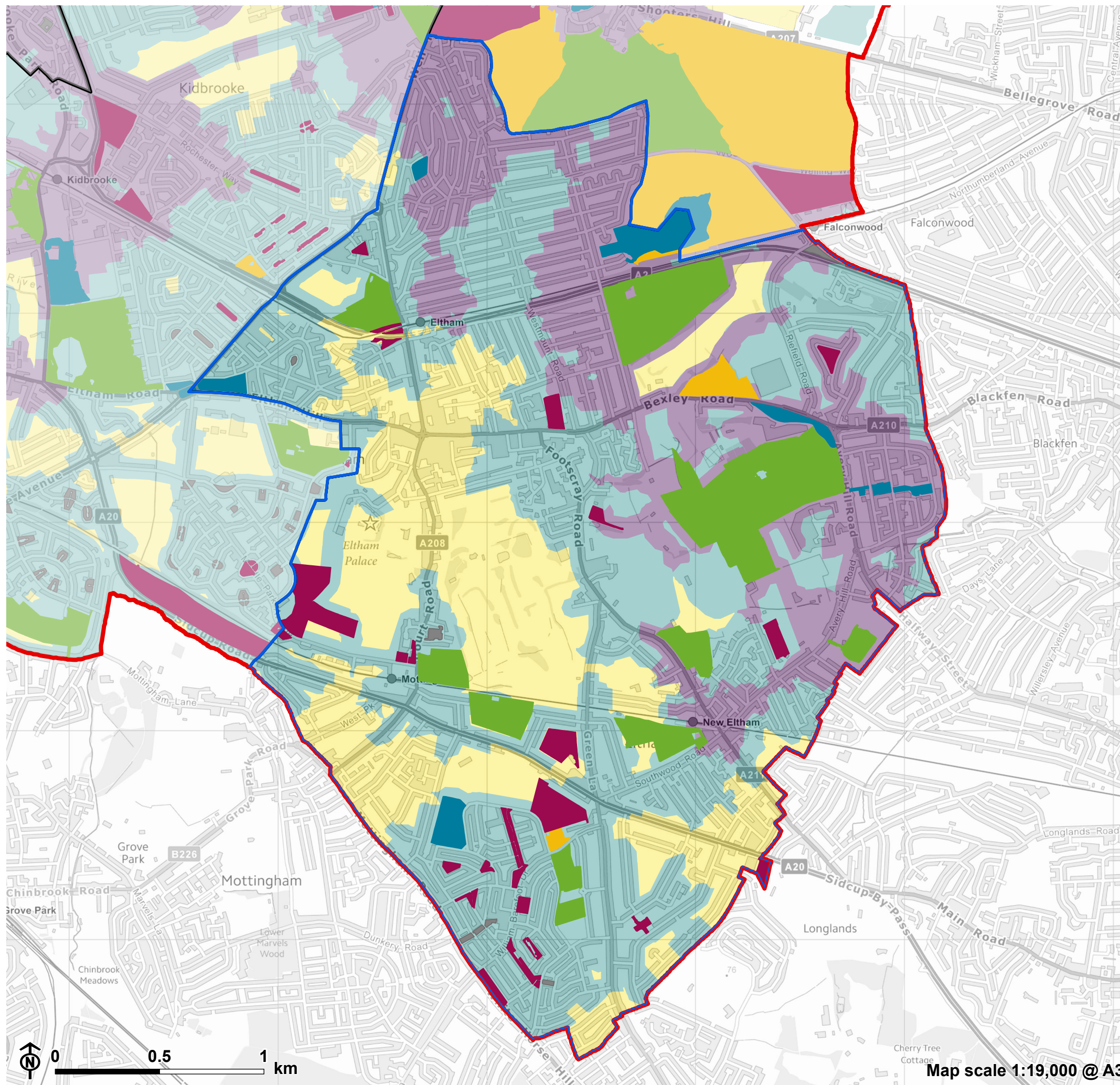
6.35 Figure 6.2g shows the quality and values scores for provision for children and teenagers. This score was calculated for seven play spaces in Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham analysis area. 57% of play spaces in this analysis area scored above the quality and value benchmarks. The remaining play spaces scored above at least one of the benchmarks.

Accessibility

6.36 Overall, access to greenspace in Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham analysis area is lower than in other parts of the borough. Figure 6.2f shows the cumulative areas of deficiency. Over a fifth (22%) of the analysis area is deficient in access to all hierarchies of accessible greenspace. This is more than double the area in the next most deficient area. Areas within an AoD for all three levels of the hierarchy are mostly found in the south west of the analysis area. Most of the areas along the riverside are deficient in two or three levels of the hierarchy. This is the only analysis area where there is no access to the metropolitan level of the hierarchy. Access to the district level of the hierarchy is provided by Avery Hill Park in the east and Shepherdleas Meadow and Wood in the north east. Deficiency in access to the local, small and pocket level of the hierarchy is present within the centre of the analysis area; including around Westmount Road, Eltham High Street and south of this along North Park.

6.37 Overall, access to provision for children and teenagers is variable across Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham analysis area. There is the greatest AoD for the doorstep level of play (95% of the analysis area is deficient in access to this type of play), followed by local play (54% of the analysis area is deficient in access to this type of play). Access is better for neighbourhood play, with only 6% of the analysis area deficient in access to this type of play space (see Figure 6.2g).

6.38 There is access to allotments for around 90% of the Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham analysis area. The deficiency of access is evident in the north of the analysis area.



**Figure 6.2f: Accessible green space provision
in Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New
Eltham**

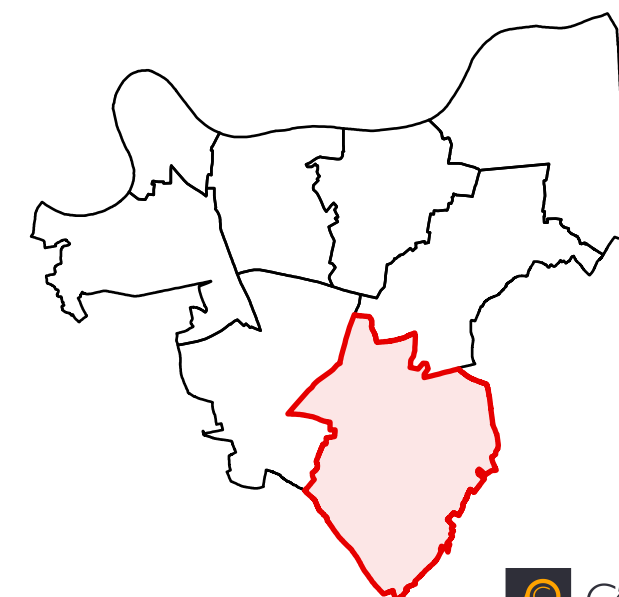
- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary

Accessible green space quality and value score

- Higher quality, higher value
- Higher quality, lower value
- Lower quality, higher value
- Lower quality, lower value
- Not surveyed in 2025 or 2017

Count of Areas of Deficiency

- Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
- Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
- Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy



Map scale 1:19,000 @ A3

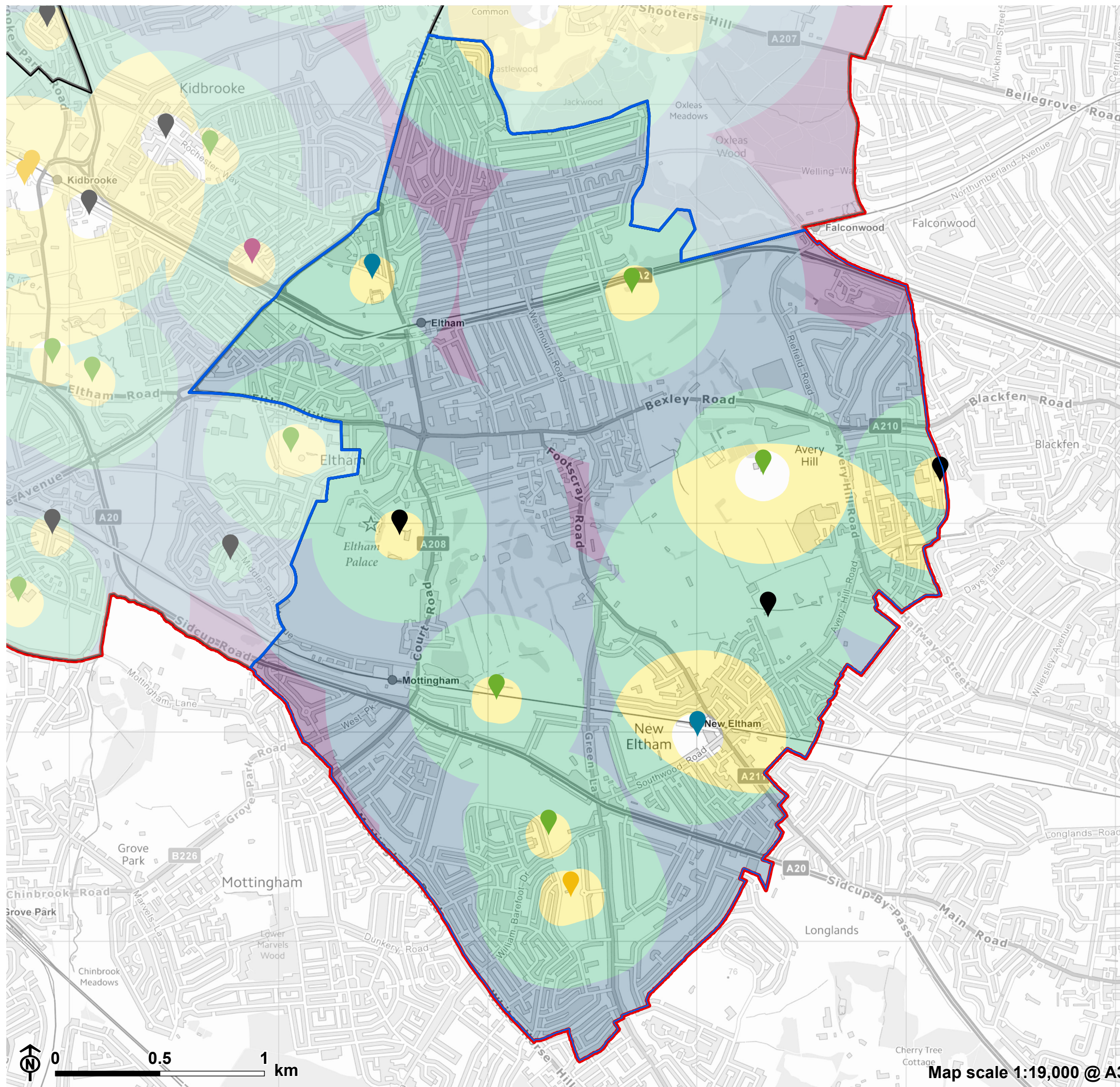
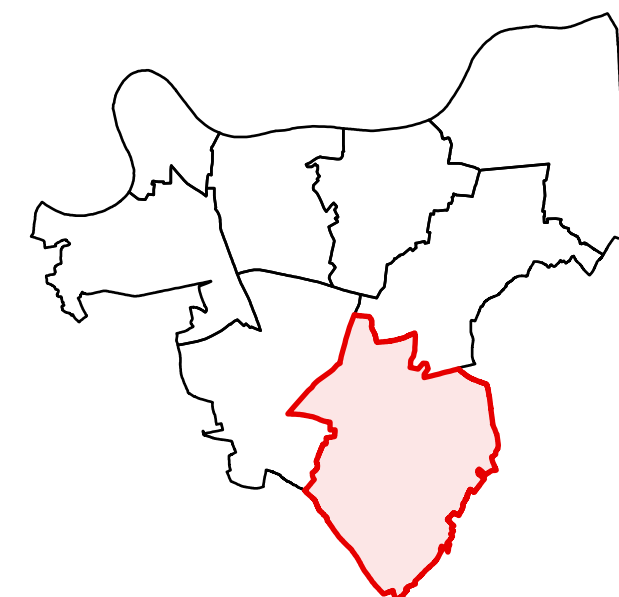


Figure 6.2g: Provision for children and teenagers in Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- Play space quality and value score 2025
- Higher quality, higher value
- Higher quality, lower value
- Lower quality, higher value
- Lower quality, lower value
- Not surveyed
- Play space Areas of Deficiency (AoD)
- Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
- Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
- Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy
- Deficient in all levels of the hierarchy





Tree street planting on Riefield Road

Potential GBI enhancements

- Consider opportunities for creating small / pocket parks in the north of the analysis area around Westmount Road, Eltham High Street and along North Park to reduce access deficiencies. In addition, install improved signage to North Park and Eltham South Park from Eltham High Street to promote active travel. In addition, explore opportunities to enhance the accessibility of existing blue spaces.
- In the south, implement quality and value improvements to amenity greenspaces and explore opportunities to engage local communities in the management and ownership of these spaces to increase multi-functionality. This could include conservation enhancements, food growing activities or use of the greenspaces for community activities. Consider adding small local playable spaces within scattered amenity greenspaces around Southfold Rise, Jason Walk, Speke Hill and Swithland Gardens in the South to improve multi-functionality.

Within existing SINC and greenspaces, the following opportunities exist:

- Delivering ecological enhancements to parks and gardens and amenity greenspaces, especially within the south of the analysis area (south of Mottingham and New Eltham Railsides SINC) will contribute to increasing the ecological value of habitats for wildlife. Enhancements could include the introduction of a relaxed meadow management, supplemented by grass and wildflower seeding in areas which are not used for recreational activities. The incorporation of associated features to support the full lifecycle of invertebrates such as bare ground, butterfly banks and insect hotels should also be considered.
- There are several mapped potential measures within the LNRS for this analysis area, which lie within SINC, semi-natural greenspaces and parks and gardens. At Oxleas Woods, management of ancient trees is recommended to increase their longevity and improve their resilience. Within Great Meadow and Harmony Wood, measures include the restoration, expansion and connection of acid grassland habitat.
- Additionally, there are measures for lowland meadows and urban mosaic habitats within Avery Hill Allotments.

- The River Kidbrooke and Royal Blackheath Golf Course are identified in the LNRS as possible areas for targeting river and stream restoration and enhancing connectivity. Therefore, opportunities should be sought to deliver river restoration initiatives, such as re-naturalising the river bank and river bed, introducing riffles and pools and enhancing bankside marginal vegetation along the Quaggy River.

Outside of the existing SINC and greenspace network, the following opportunities exist:

- Residential areas, which have poor access to semi-natural greenspace may benefit from the creation of pocket parks, community orchards and community gardens. Pocket parks could utilise urban forest principles and incorporate natural play features with dual functionality.
- The Quietway Link, which runs east-west, parallel with the A2 and along Dungevan Road could be enhanced through street tree planting and the creation of wildflower verges for pollinators, raingardens and other retrofitted SuDS features such as swales.
- Additional opportunities exist for enhancing ecological connectivity and reducing noise pollution along linear infrastructure; including Westmount Road, Glenesk Road, Footscray Road, and Green Lane, which offer key connecting roads, running north to south and east to west through the analysis area, and intersecting with other main roads such as the A20 (Sidcup Road) and the railside SINC. Rochester Way, the A2 and A210 lack street tree coverage. Together these roads could be enhanced via tree planting and retrofitting biodiverse surface-level SuDS to deliver improvements in ecological connectivity and flood risk mitigation. Enhancements to A210, Eltham High Street, would also have significant benefit to local residents. This would enhance habitat value between Oxleas Woodlands and the various open spaces throughout this analysis area.
- The LNRS identifies measures for enhancing green corridors through the incorporation of deadwood and scrub management for birds, bats, small mammals and reptiles.

Greenwich, Blackheath & Westcombe Park



Greenwich, Blackheath & Westcombe Park

Greenwich, Blackheath & Westcombe Park occupies land at the borough's western extent. This analysis area includes the internationally important Maritime Greenwich World Heritage Site. Land use is characterised by predominantly urban and residential areas, with greenspace dominated by Greenwich park and Blackheath Park. The corridor of the A102 follows the analysis area's eastern boundary.

Figure 6.3a Location plan

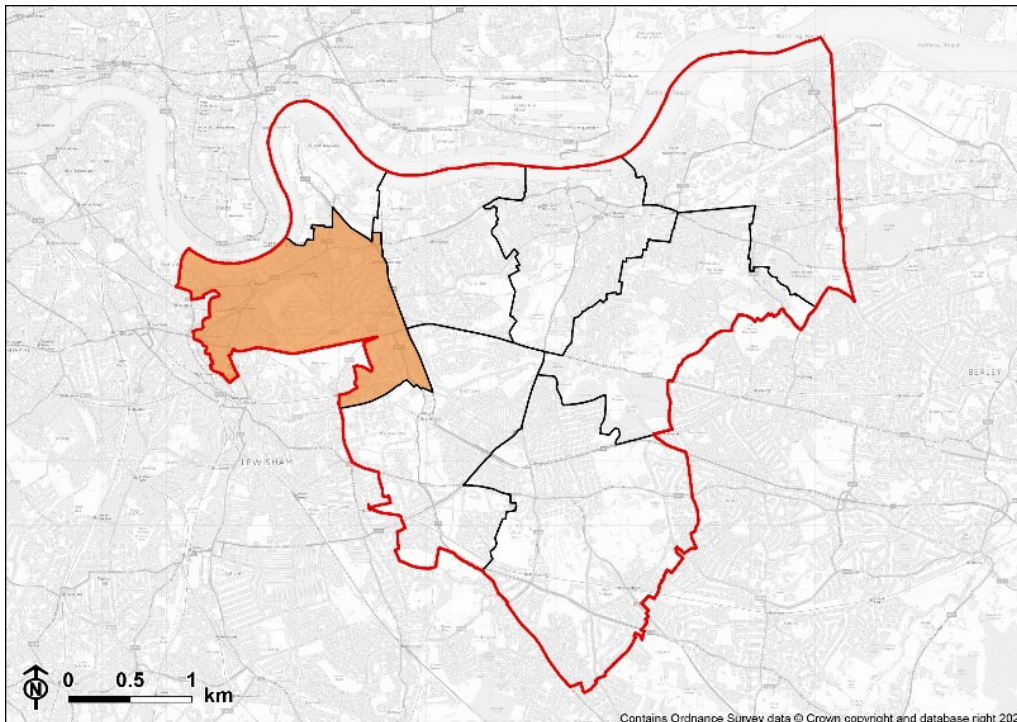
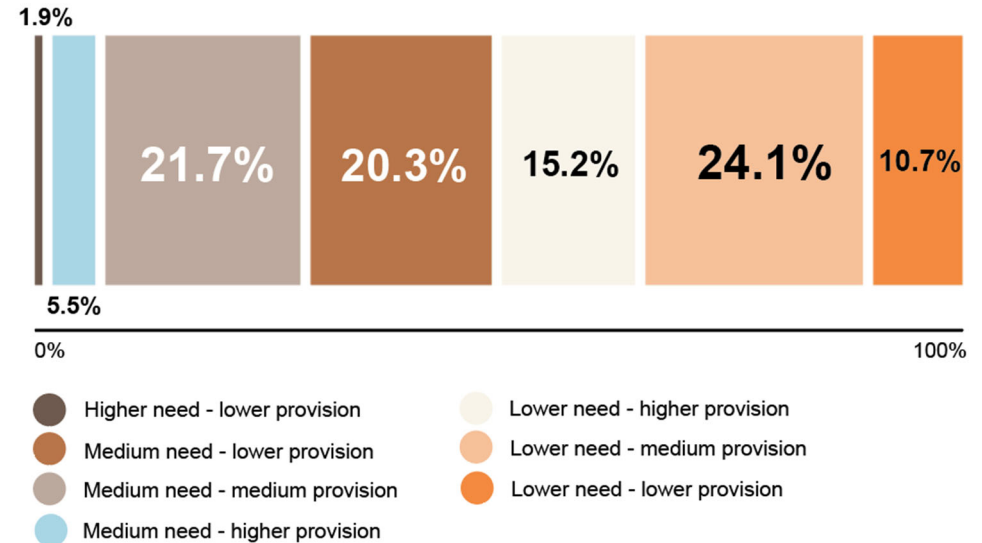


Figure 6.3b Distribution of need / provision ratings for Greenwich, Blackheath and Westcombe Park (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)



London GI Framework: Distribution of need / provision ratings for Greenwich, Blackheath and Westcombe Park (all objectives combined)

- Areas identified as highest need are limited to 1.9% geographical coverage of the analysis area.
- Land centred on the A206 and the A2203 at the north eastern limit of the analysis area, pockets of Greenwich town centre and land to the east of Deptford Creek is defined as medium need with lowest provision.
- Discrete parcels of land at Westcombe Park Station, wider sections of the A206 corridor, areas of Blackheath as well as Greenwich Town Centre exhibit medium need, albeit have medium existing provision.

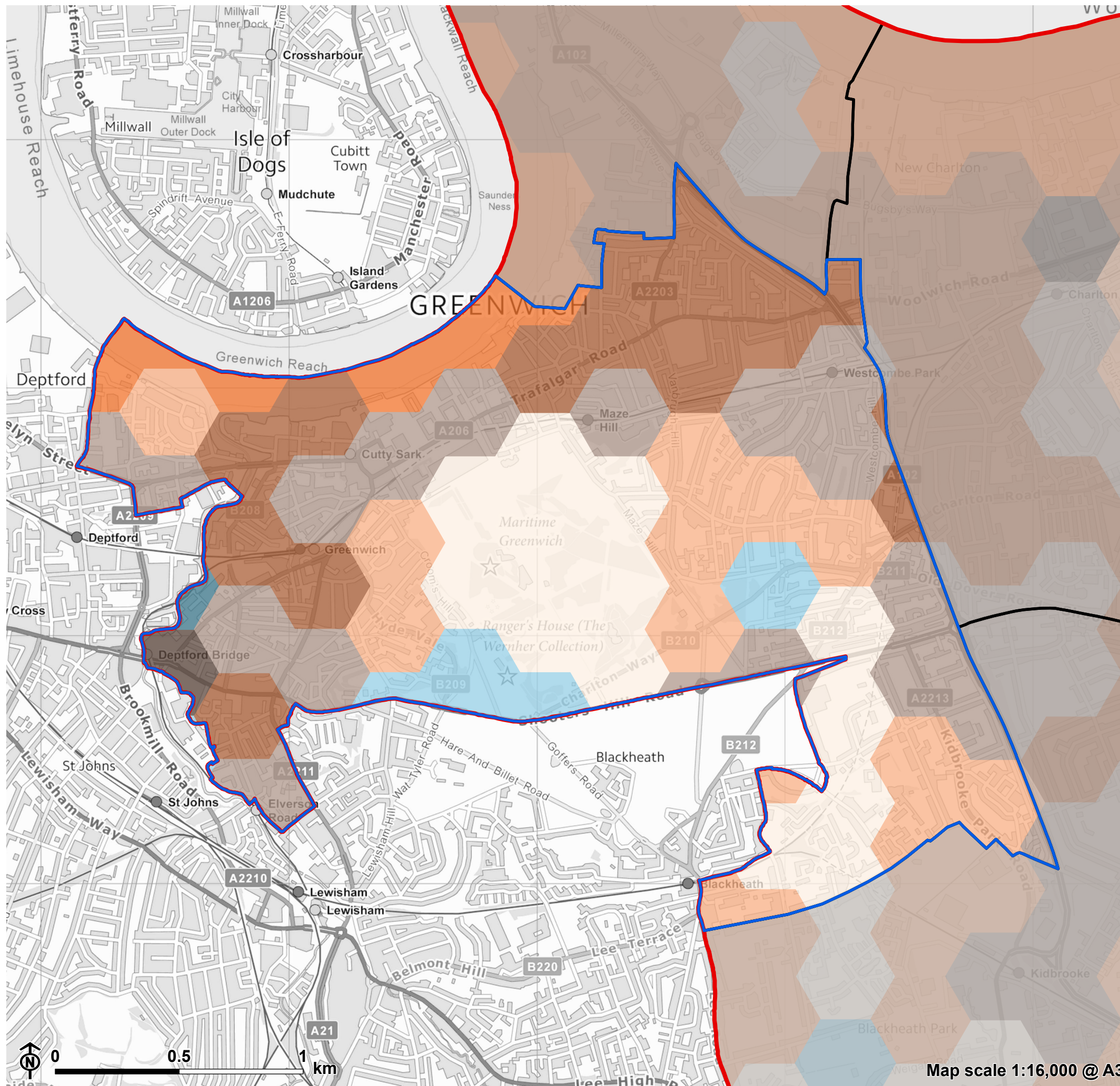


Figure 6.3c: Spatial distribution of need and provision for Greenwich, Blackheath & Westcombe Park (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)

-  Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
-  Greenwich, Blackheath & Westcombe Park
-  Neighbouring analysis area boundary

Need versus provision

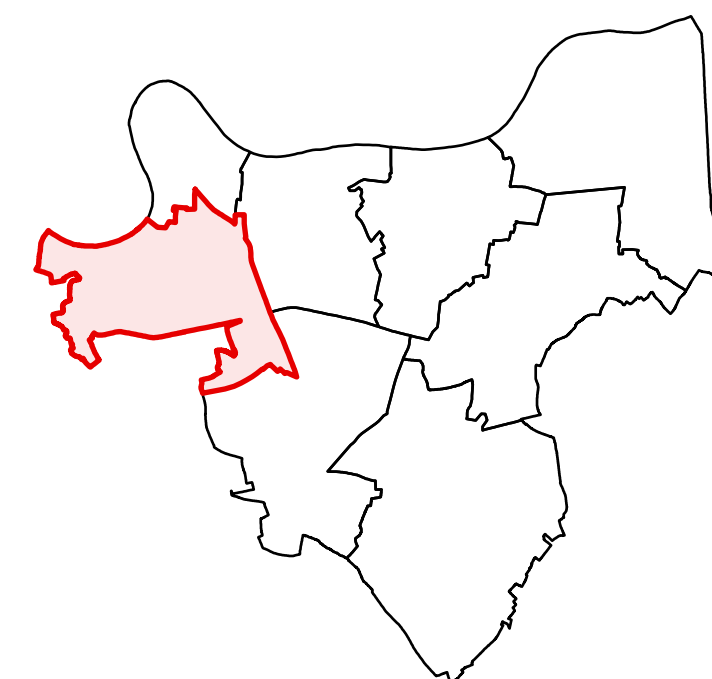
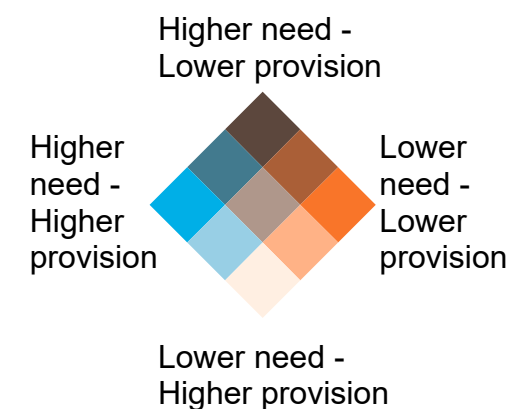
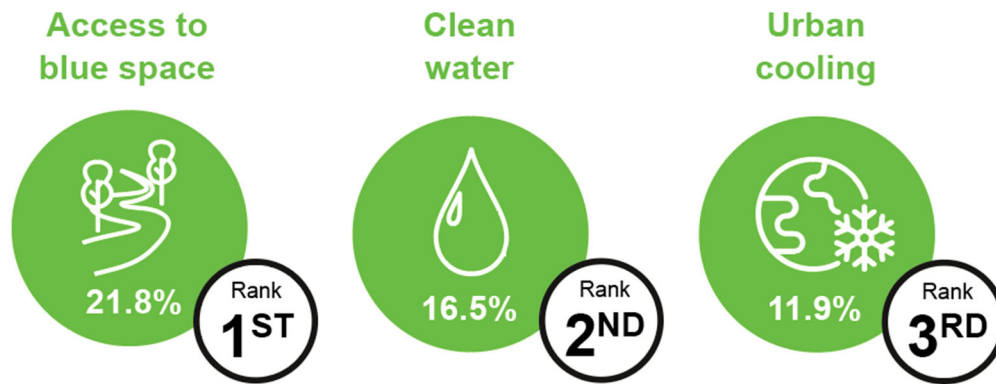


Figure 6.3d: Top three objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision which form the priority objectives for Greenwich, Blackheath and Westcombe Park



Improved access to blue space, clean water and urban cooling form the priority objectives for Greenwich, Blackheath and Westcombe Park.

London GI Framework: Ranking of objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision in Greenwich, Blackheath and Westcombe Park

- 21.8% of the analysis area is identified as highest need and lowest provision for improved access to blue space.
- Areas defined as highest need with lowest existing provision for clean water are ranked second, but cover only 16.5% of the analysis area.
- Urban cooling is ranked third (11.9%) for the objective demonstrating the highest need and lowest provision in the analysis area.
- No areas within Greenwich, Blackheath and Westcombe Park exhibit highest need and lowest provision for the objective relating to nature recovery.

Nature recovery

Assets

6.39 There are no statutorily designated nature conservation sites. However, there are non-statutory SINCs present within the analysis area. These comprise the extensive Blackheath and Greenwich Park Metropolitan SINC, Westcombe Woodlands SINC, Mycenae House Gardens SINC, Westcombe Park RAILSIDES SINC and Blackheath to Falconwood RAILSIDES SINC. Additionally, the River Thames Metropolitan SINC forms the northern boundary to the analysis area.

6.40 Blackheath and Greenwich Park Metropolitan SINC also forms part of Thames Estuary South Important Invertebrate Area (IIA) along with another area of IIA within Thamesmead and Abbey Wood, which is a non-statutory designation recognising the value of habitats to supporting rare and notable invertebrate species.

6.41 Priority habitats include large areas of deciduous woodland and a small area of good quality semi-improved grassland within the wood pasture and parkland setting of Blackheath and Greenwich Park. There are also small parcels of deciduous woodland elsewhere within semi-natural greenspaces and parks and gardens.

6.42 The River Thames supports mudflats along the banks of the river and the tributary of Deptford Creek, which provides hydrological connectivity between the borough and neighbouring Lewisham.

6.43 The two railside SINC's provide some ecological connectivity between the parkland and woodland habitats of Blackheath and Greenwich Park and the adjacent areas of Charlton to the north east and Kidbrooke to the south east. These are recognised as green corridors within the open space typology; however, they do not support public access.

6.44 Together the SINC network covers 23% of the analysis area. The woodland cover (as informed by the National Forest Inventory), and tree canopy and green cover (as informed by the GLA's London-wide dataset) are presented in **Table 6.6**.

Table 6.6 Woodland, tree canopy and green cover

Woodland cover	Tree canopy cover	Green cover
8%	24%	44%

Pressures and deficiencies

6.45 There is a small AoD in access to nature around Halstow Primary School and East Greenwich Pleasaunce park, covering 6% of the analysis area.

6.46 Beyond the extensive area of wood pasture and parkland within Blackheath and Greenwich Park Metropolitan SINC, habitats are heavily fragmented, with only small areas of deciduous woodland remaining in the analysis area.

6.47 With the exception of the large area of semi-natural habitat within Blackheath and Greenwich Park, there are few other areas of semi-natural greenspace or parks and gardens and few stepping stone habitats due to the small number and distance between amenity greenspaces, allotments and other civic spaces. Therefore, the wider area has poor ecological connectivity.

Open space

6.48 The provision of open space in Greenwich, Blackheath and Westcombe Park analysis area is shown by typology and access level in **Figure 6.3e**. There are 125.60 ha of publicly accessible open space in this analysis area, comprising 72 separate sites. Open space provision is dominated by the presence of Greenwich Park, which is a metropolitan grade open space in accordance with the hierarchies set out in the London Plan. Additionally, part of the large natural and semi-natural open space at Blackheath lies within this analysis area. To the south, this open space continues into the neighbouring London Borough of Lewisham. In the southern part of the analysis area, open space provision tends to have restricted or no public access, including areas of amenity greenspace.

Quantity

6.49 Overall, the quantity of accessible greenspace is slightly lower than the borough average. Nearly three quarters of this provision is accounted for by the parks and gardens typology, and

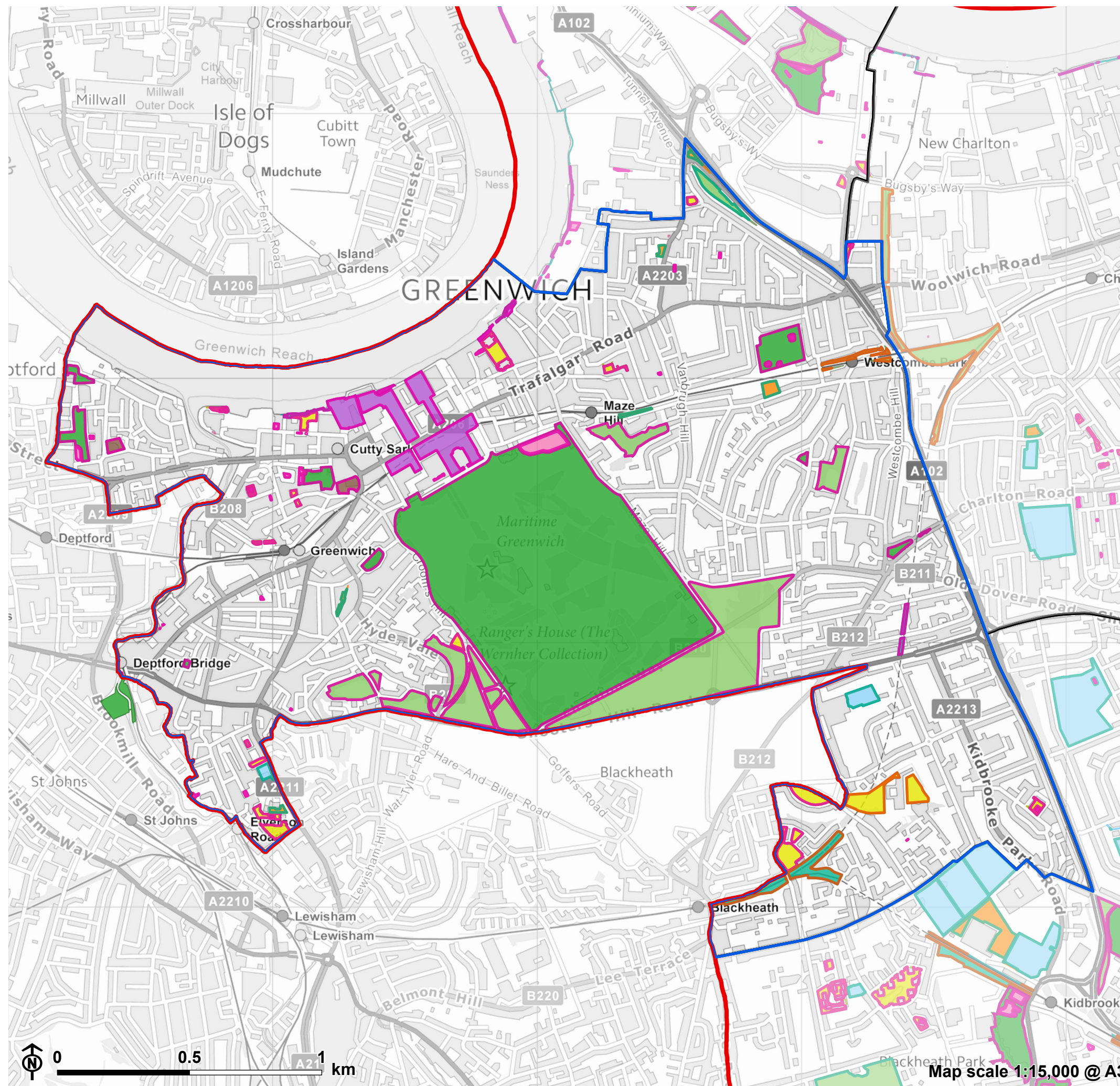
90% of the area of parks and gardens is Greenwich Park. This highlights the important reliance on this open space within Greenwich, Blackheath and Westcombe Park.

6.50 Compared to the borough average, the analysis area has a lower provision of natural and semi-natural greenspace. However, there is additional provision of this in neighbouring Lewisham at Blackheath Common.

6.51 Compared to other analysis areas within the borough, there is a lower provision of amenity greenspace. However, there is above average provision of civic space, including many areas around popular tourist attractions within Maritime Greenwich, including the Cutty Sark and the Old Royal Naval College. These areas may fulfil a similar role to amenity greenspace in more residential settings.

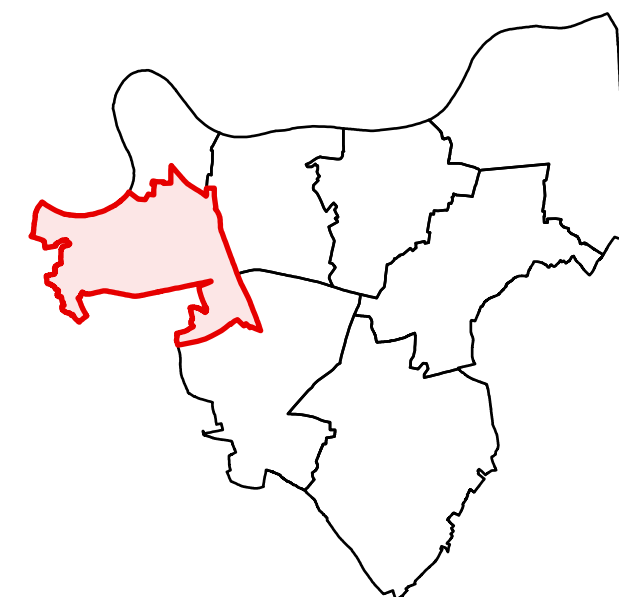
6.52 Compared to the borough average, there is a lower provision of allotments. Allotment sites within Greenwich, Blackheath & Westcombe Park tend to be fairly small and distributed across most of the northern part of the analysis area.

6.53 Provision for children and teenagers includes standalone play areas and play areas within larger parks and gardens. The quantity of this typology is slightly higher in this area compared to the borough average.



**Figure 6.3e: Open space provision in
Greenwich, Blackheath & Westcombe Park**

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich, Blackheath & Westcombe Park boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- LUC Open Space 2025**
- Agricultural land
- Allotments
- Amenity greenspace
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Civic Space
- Green corridor
- Natural and semi-natural greenspace
- Outdoors sports facilities
- Parks and gardens
- Provision for children and young people
- Access category**
- Freely accessible
- Restricted access
- No public access





Andrew Gibb Memorial, Blackheath

Table 6.7 Performance compared to borough average and quantity standards (as set out in Table 5.5)

Typology	Provision	Comparison to borough average	Performance against standard
Accessible greenspace	2.57 ha / 1,000 population	- 0.19 ha / 1,000 population	0.43 ha / 1,000 population deficit
Allotments	0.02 ha / 1,000 population	- 0.05 ha / 1,000 population	0.05 ha / 1,000 population deficit
Provision for children and teenager	0.26 ha / 1,000	+ 0.07 ha / 1,000 children	NA
Parks and gardens	1.84 / ha / 1,000	+ 0.57 ha / 1,000 population	NA
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	0.63 ha / 1,000	- 0.59 ha / 1,000 population	NA
Amenity greenspace	0.10 ha / 1,000	- 0.18 ha / 1,000	NA
Green corridors	0.01 ha / 1,000	- 0.10 ha / 1,000	NA
Civic space	0.17 ha / 1,000	+ 0.14 ha / 1,000	NA
Cemeteries and churchyards	0.02 ha / 1,000	- 0.14 ha / 1,000	NA

Quality and value

6.54 Figure 6.3f indicates the quality and value scores of the open spaces assessed (excluding provision for children and teenagers) in 2017 and 2025, against the 2025 benchmarks. Nearly half (46%) of open spaces in Greenwich, Blackheath & Westcombe Park analysis area meet both the quality and value benchmarks. This includes the metropolitan parks and gardens open space (Greenwich Park) as well as the district level natural and semi-natural greenspace (Blackheath Park). The civic spaces around the world heritage site also score above the quality and value benchmarks. Most of the remaining open spaces do not meet either benchmark. Many of these are smaller amenity greenspaces.

6.55 Figure 6.3g shows the quality and values scores for provision for children and teenagers. This score was calculated for eight play spaces in Greenwich, Blackheath & Westcombe Park analysis area. Only 13% of play spaces in this analysis areas scored above the quality and value benchmarks. However, the remaining spaces all scored above the quality benchmark and only scored below the value benchmark. This suggests that there may be additional investment required in these open spaces.

Accessibility

6.56 Overall, access to greenspace in Greenwich, Blackheath & Westcombe Park analysis area is higher than in other parts of the borough. Figure 6.3f shows the cumulative areas of deficiency. The majority of the analysis area has access to all three levels of the hierarchy. There are no areas within this analysis area that are deficient in access to all levels of the hierarchy. In large parts, this is due to the presence of Greenwich Park which provides access to the metropolitan level of the hierarchy for 95% of this analysis area. Access is poorer for the local, small and pocket levels of the hierarchy than other levels of the hierarchy.

6.57 Overall, access to provision for children and teenagers is better in the north of the Greenwich, Blackheath and Westcombe Park analysis area. The greatest AoD exists for the doorstep level of play (82% of the analysis area is deficient in access to this type of play), followed by local play (32% of the analysis area is deficient in access to this type of play). Compared to other analysis areas, there is a relatively high level of deficiency to neighbourhood play spaces, covering 24% of the analysis area (as shown in Figure 6.3g).

6.58 Access to allotments in Greenwich, Blackheath and Westcombe Park analysis area is better than in other analysis areas. 98% of the analysis area has access to allotments, with areas of deficiency limited to 2% of the analysis area in the north west.

Potential GBI enhancements

- Explore the opportunity to create small pocket parks and greenspaces within pedestrian crossing areas and roundabouts along Westcombe Park Road, Bellot Street in the North and Ashburnham Place and Ashburnham Grove in the west.
- Deliver urban greening interventions through GI retro-fitting within areas of dense urban fabric to help mitigate the urban heat island effect.
- Consider improving the value of play spaces across the analysis area by enhancing the inclusivity of play equipment, installing equipment for a variety of ages and where appropriate provision for teenagers such as teen shelters, table tennis, single basketball hoop, MUGA or a rebound wall.
- Improve the multi-functionality of amenity spaces by considering the potential for community involvement in landscape management, particularly food-growing opportunities. Amenity spaces in the south such as Pond Road, The Paragon, and Chiswell Square offer potential sites for enhancements.
- Consider signage to promote active travel beyond the borough to strengthen the wider network for the benefit of people and nature. This could include areas around Point Hill, Hyde Value and Blissett Street promoting access to Blackheath Common.

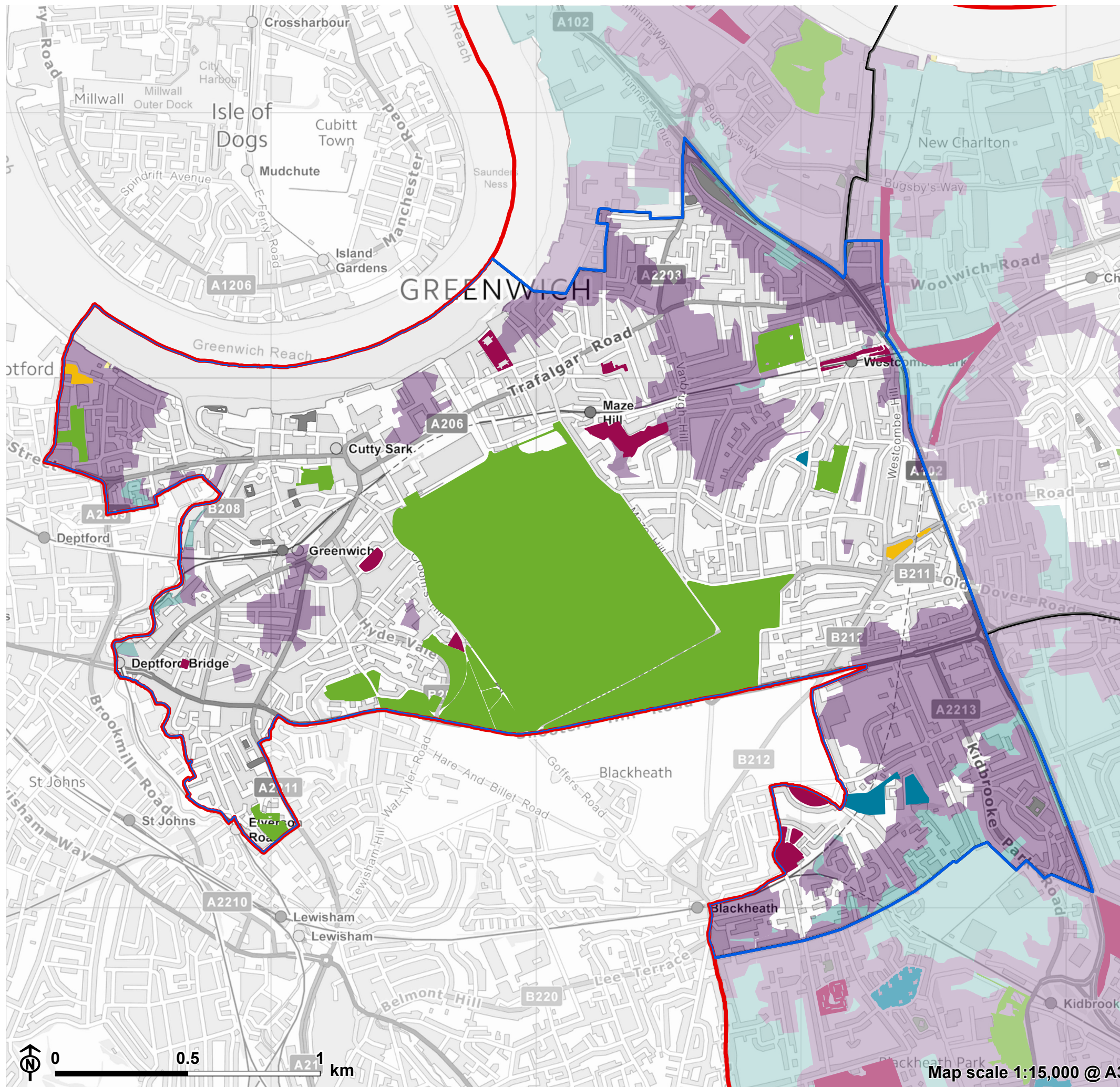
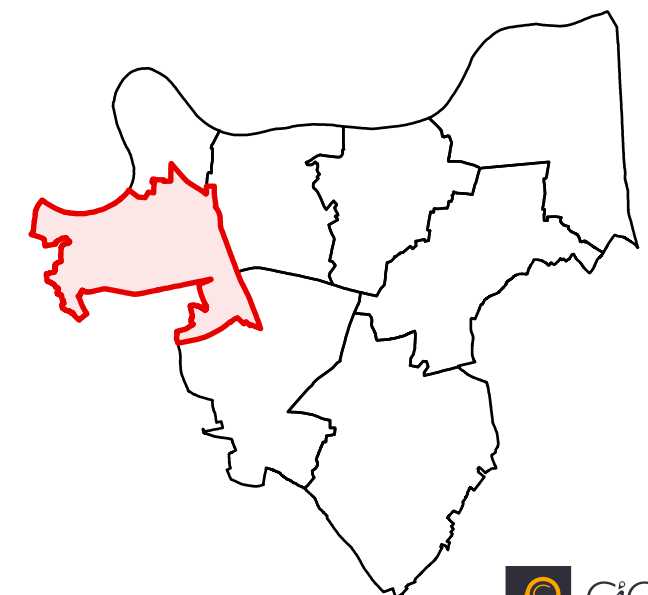


Figure 6.3f: Accessible green space provision in Greenwich, Blackheath & Westcombe Park

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
 - Greenwich, Blackheath & Westcombe Park boundary
 - Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- Accessible green space quality and value score**
- Higher quality, higher value
 - Higher quality, lower value
 - Lower quality, higher value
 - Lower quality, lower value
 - Not surveyed in 2025 or 2017
- Count of Areas of Deficiency**
- Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy



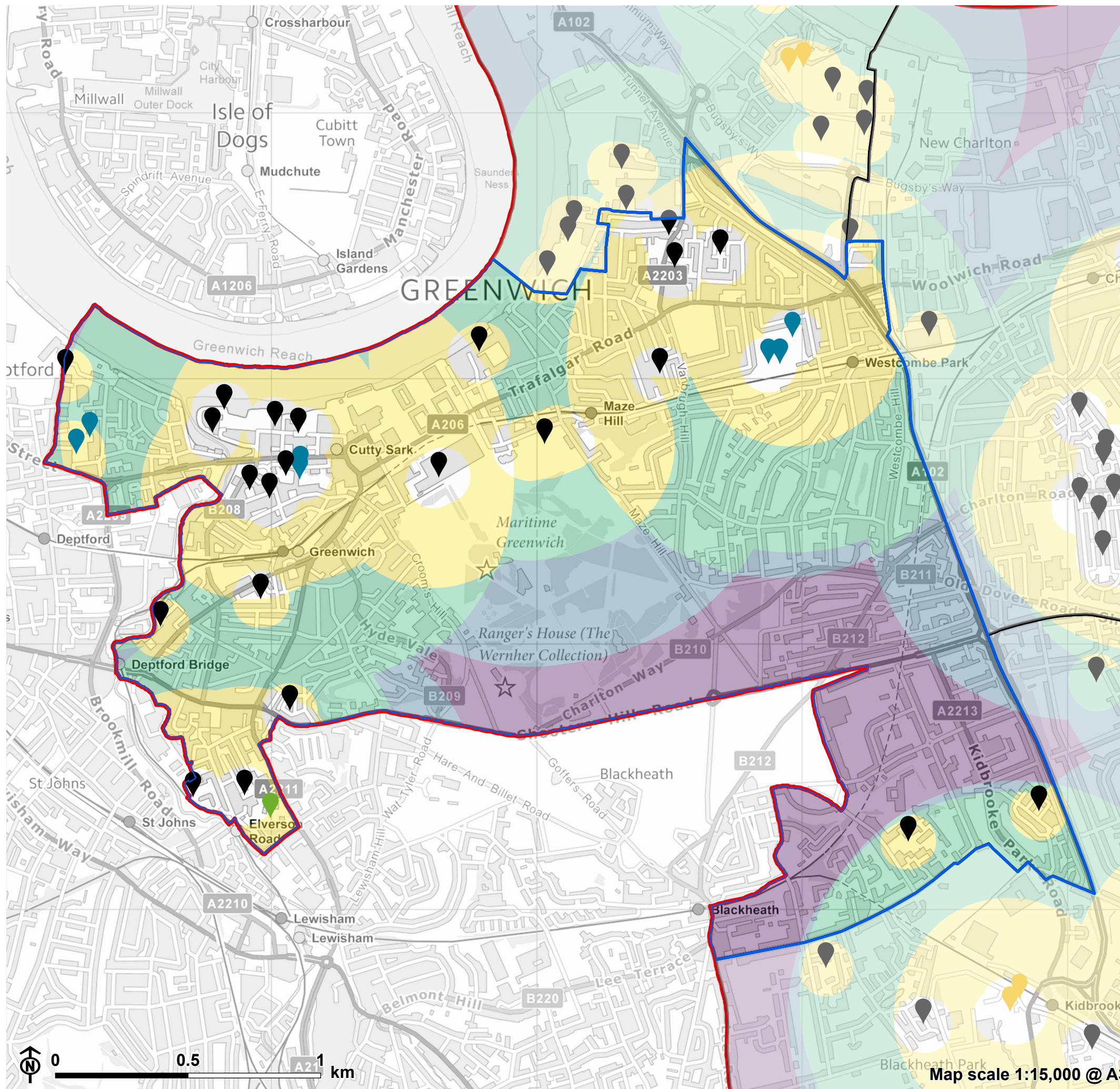
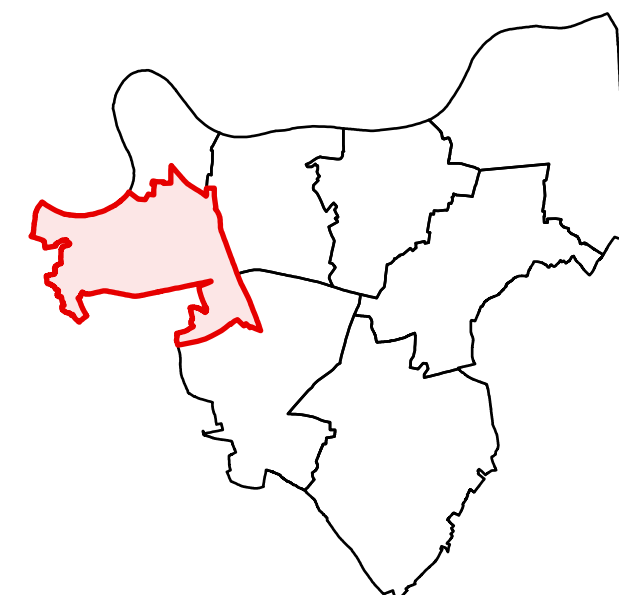


Figure 6.3g: Provision for children and teenagers in Greenwich, Blackheath & Westcombe Park

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich, Blackheath & Westcombe Park boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- Play space quality and value score 2025
 - Higher quality, higher value
 - Higher quality, lower value
 - Lower quality, higher value
 - Lower quality, lower value
 - Not surveyed
- Play space Areas of Deficiency (AoD)
 - Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in all levels of the hierarchy





Humber Road Allotments

Within existing SINC and greenspaces, the following opportunities exist:

- Given the high coverage of SINC, natural and semi-natural greenspace and parks and gardens which exist in this analysis area, coupled with the lower coverage of amenity greenspace, enhancements should be targeted towards existing sites. This will contribute to increasing the ecological value of existing habitats for wildlife. The LNRS potential measures within this analysis area focus on the management, restoration, expansion and connection of broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland and acid grassland habitats. Enhancements could include reductions in nutrient enrichment through appropriate grassland management, management of access to prevent dog walking within the most valuable habitats and scrub management, which retains important areas for breeding birds whilst preventing encroachment of acid grassland habitats. Incorporating associated features to support the full lifecycle of invertebrates associated with acid grassland habitats such as bare ground, butterfly banks and insect hotels should be considered. These measures could be extended to amenity areas adjacent / within Blackheath (e.g. Batley Park) to provide additional stepping stone habitat, though public access management would not be appropriate given the importance of these areas in providing recreational greenspace.
- There are few opportunities for creating or expanding broadleaved, mixed and yew woodland within this analysis area. However, there may be opportunity for improving habitat management of existing woodlands, and increasing overall tree canopy cover within existing greenspaces.
- With regards to opportunities for existing greenspaces within 200m of the River Thames to deliver multiple benefits for nature and health and wellbeing, there are several amenity greenspaces along the banks of the River Thames in this analysis area. These include Delaney House and Grounds of Trinity Hospital, which offer a significant opportunity for providing health and well-being benefits alongside nature benefits given the possible benefits to direct users including residents, patients and hospital staff. The sites currently comprise amenity grassland with scattered trees and scrub. Additionally, Anchor Iron Wharf is currently a sealed surface civic space with block concrete seating, which could be enhanced through the inclusion of natural features which provide dual purpose such as SuDS, play features, and / or assist with the delineation of slow spaces with seating, versus the active travel route of adjacent Thames Path. Enhancements to Anchor Iron

Wharf should take inspiration from Reminder Lane Play Space along the Thames Path in neighbouring Greenwich Peninsula analysis area.

Outside of the existing SINC and greenspace network, the following opportunities exist:

- Consider opportunities to increase tree canopy cover along many key road corridors; including Royal Hill, which forms the Greenwich to Kent House Cycleway located to the west of Greenwich Park, Greenwich South Street, Greenwich High Road, Hyde Vale Road, the A2, Maze Hill, Vanbrugh Hill, Stratheden Road and Kidbrooke Park Road. This would enhance ecological connectivity, providing corridors for dispersal, commuting and foraging birds, bats and insects. In addition, these interventions would contribute to amenity benefits and provide mitigation for air pollution (if appropriately sited). Together these roads could be enhanced via tree planting and retrofitting biodiverse surface-level SuDS to provide supplementary benefits such as cooling and shading and nature based solutions to surface water flooding.
- The Thames Path National Trail could also be considered for localised enhancement, incorporating the features suggested for Anchor Iron Wharf civic space alongside other features such as street tree planting, wildflower verges for pollinators, green walls and intertidal habitat features along flood defences.



Batley Park, Blackheath

Greenwich Peninsula



Greenwich Peninsula

Greenwich Peninsula is located in the north west of the borough, characterised by the meandering corridor of the River Thames. Greenwich Peninsula is a predominantly mixed residential, commercial and light industrial area, with the Thames Path providing a recreational route along the watercourse. The A102 Blackwall Tunnel Approach forms a key vehicular access route from the north to south, with North Greenwich tube station offering wider connectivity.

Figure 6.4a Location plan

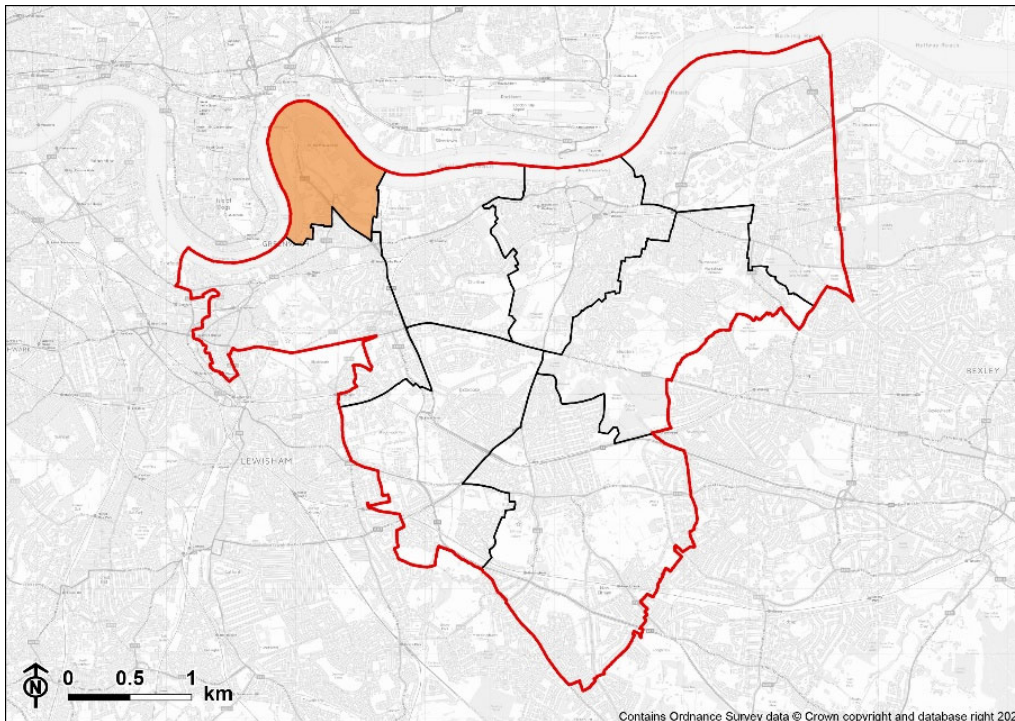
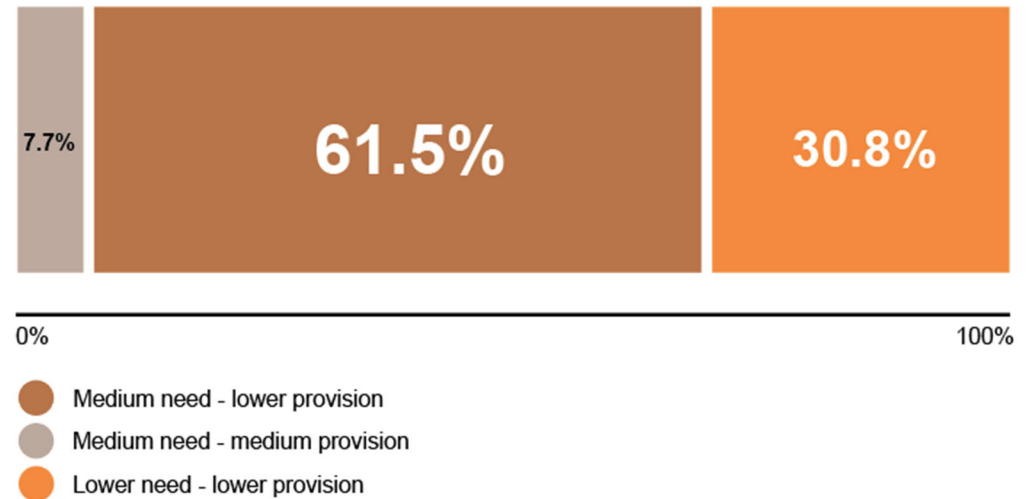


Figure 6.4b Distribution of need / provision ratings for Greenwich Peninsula (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)



London GI Framework: Distribution of need / provision ratings for Greenwich Peninsula (all objectives combined)

- When all objectives are considered and weighted by health and social equity, the analysis area is devoid of areas identified as highest need.
- Areas of medium need and lower provision cover large extents (61.5%) of the analysis area; excluding land surrounding Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park and stretches incorporating the River Thames.
- 30.8% of the analysis area is defined as exhibiting lowest need and lowest provision., primarily centred on sections of the River Thames.

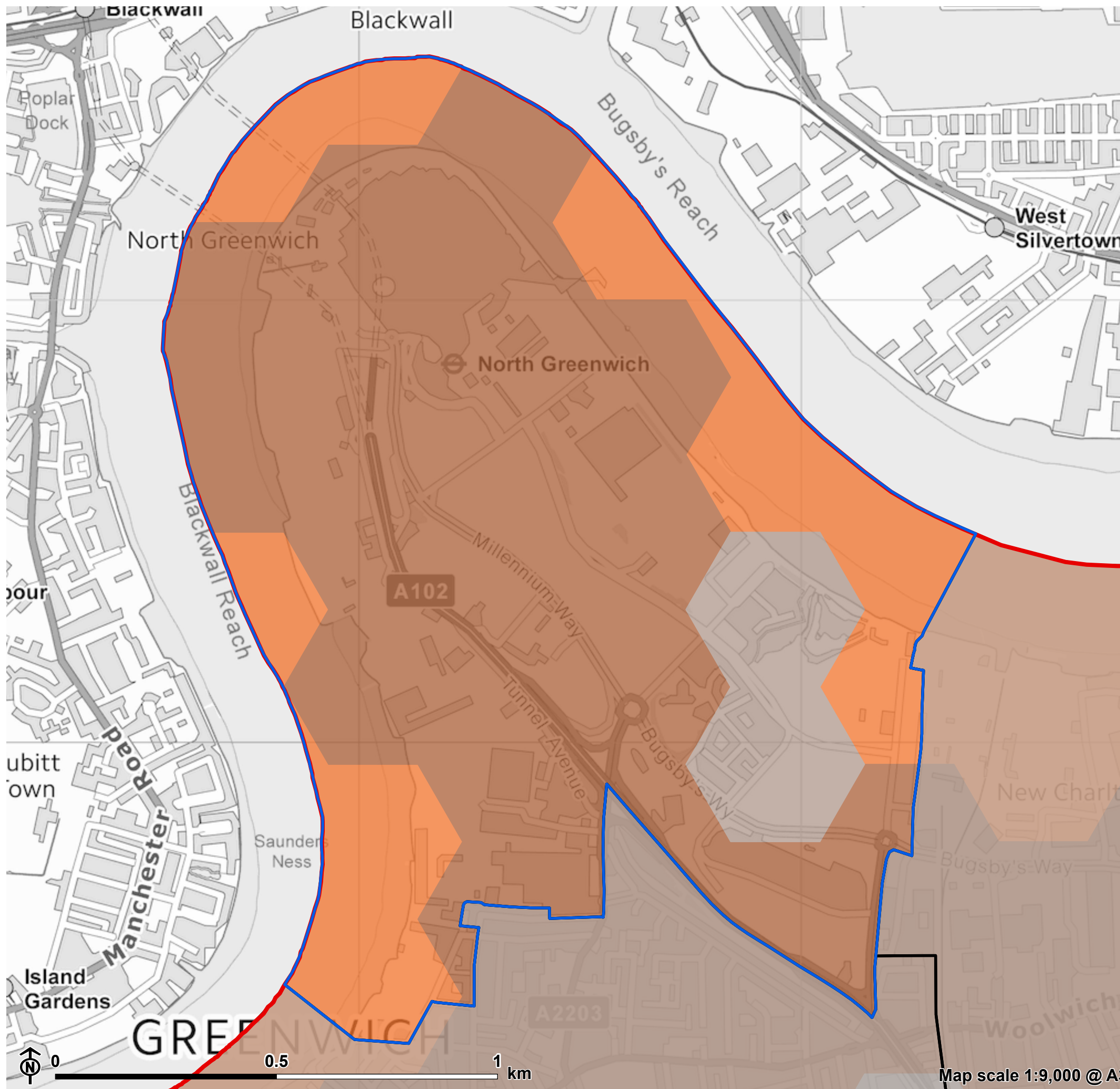


Figure 6.4c: Spatial distribution of need and provision for Greenwich Peninsula (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)

-  Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
-  Greenwich Peninsula
-  Neighbouring analysis area boundary

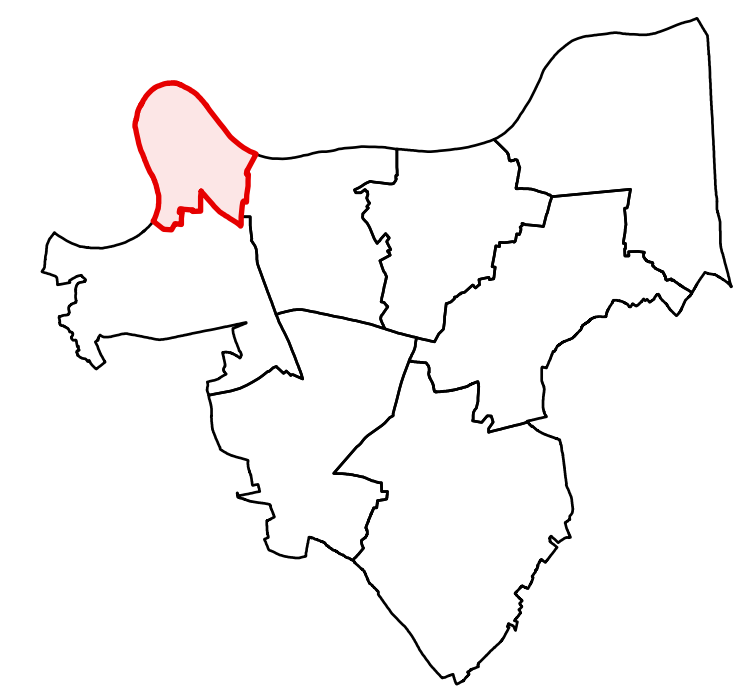
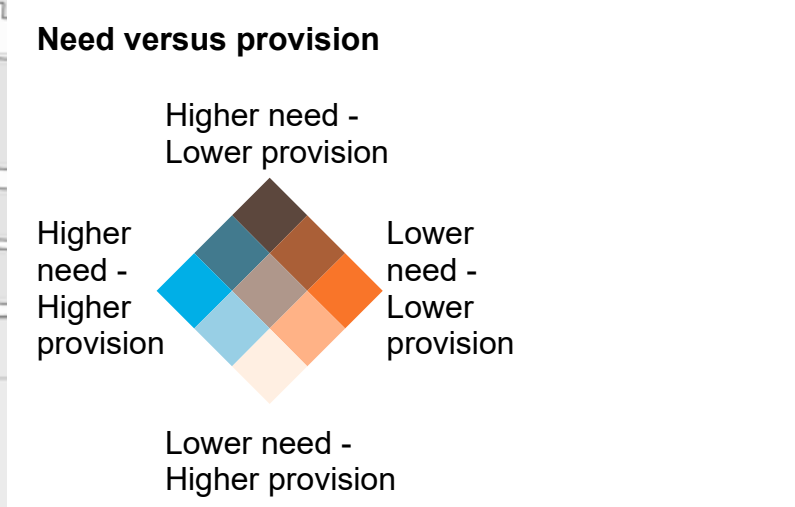
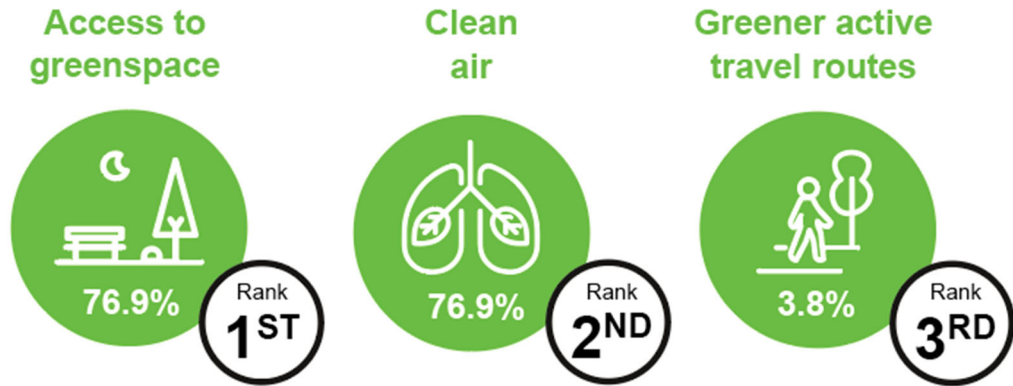


Figure 6.4d: Top three objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision which form the priority objectives for Greenwich Peninsula



Improved access to greenspace, clean air and greener active travel routes form the priority objectives for Greenwich Peninsula.

London GI Framework: Ranking of objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision in Greenwich Peninsula

- 76.9% of the analysis area is identified as highest need and lowest provision for improved access to greenspace.
- Areas defined as highest need with lowest existing provision for clean air cover 76.9% of the analysis area.
- Greener active travel routes are ranked third (3.8%) for the objective demonstrating the highest need and lowest provision in the analysis area.
- No areas within Greenwich Peninsula exhibit highest need and lowest provision for objectives relating to improved access to blue space, nature recovery, flood risk mitigation, clean water, urban cooling, noise reduction or greener high streets.

Nature recovery

Assets

6.59 There are no statutorily designated nature conservation sites and only one non-statutory SINC, Greenwich Ecology Park and Southern Park Borough (Grade I) SINC, located along the bank of the River Thames Metropolitan SINC.

6.60 Priority habitats are limited in extent, including Southern Park which supports good quality semi-improved grassland. Peartree Way amenity greenspace supports a relatively large area of traditional orchards. There is also a small area of deciduous woodland located within a semi-natural greenspace at Blackwall Lane. The banks of the River Thames also support especially large areas of mudflats, given the location of Greenwich Peninsula on the inner meander of the river. The River Thames forms a key connecting corridor providing both ecological and hydrological connectivity with areas up and downstream within the borough and other riverside boroughs across Greater London.

6.61 Although there are very few areas of priority habitat, the semi-natural greenspaces and parks and gardens at Greenwich Park, Southern Park and Central Park offer some ecological connectivity in a swathe along the north of West Parkside Road, with a short gap between habitats of 100m, to the east of John Harrison Way. Ecological connectivity, although not at ground level, is enhanced in this area through the density of green roofs on top of high rise buildings to the north of Central Park and east of Southern Park. These may offer opportunities for insects and birds.

6.62 There are also green roofs present around Banning Street and on top of a hotel near the O2 Stadium.

6.63 Together the SINC network covers 35% of the analysis area. The woodland cover (as informed by the National Forest Inventory), tree canopy and green cover (as informed by the GLA's London-wide dataset) are presented in **Table 6.8**.

Table 6.8 Woodland, tree canopy and green cover

Woodland cover	Tree canopy cover	Green cover
0%	3%	12%



View looking east from the Thames Path National Trail towards Greenwich Yacht Club

Pressures and deficiencies

6.64 There is a broad band of deficiency in access to nature (SINC AoD) covering 26% of the analysis area, particularly along the west, which correlates with the most heavily developed and industrial area. Where habitats do exist, this is predominantly small areas of amenity grassland, or a sports facility such as the Greenwich Peninsula Golf Range. There is a single area of scrub habitat located within the SINC AoD, which appears to be the location of a construction site. Additionally, there are large areas of sealed surface where large car parks exist and around the O2 Stadium and North Greenwich Station.

6.65 Development has resulted in the loss of semi-natural habitats, and this is demonstrated through the loss of former priority deciduous woodland between Blackwall Tunnel Approach and Millennium Way, due to development for cargo storage.

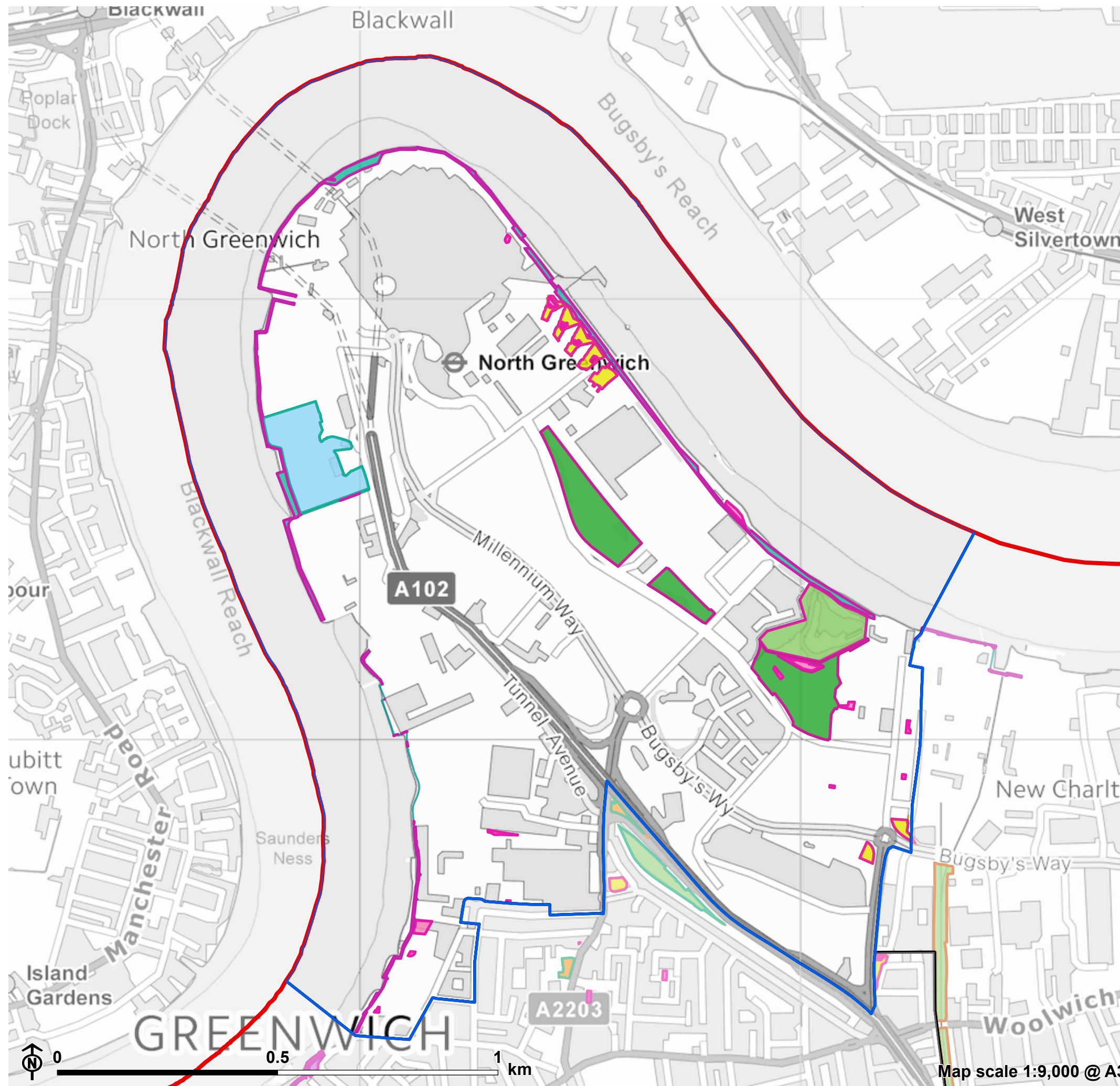
Open space

6.66 The provision of open space in Greenwich Peninsula is shown by typology and access level on **Figure 6.4e**. There are 13.30 ha of publicly accessible open space in this analysis area, comprising 30 separate sites. Open space provision includes a variety of open space typologies. The largest open spaces include Southern Park and Central Park (parks and gardens typology) and Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park (natural and semi-natural greenspace typology). There is continuous provision of green corridors provided by the Thames Path which runs along most the perimeter of this area where it borders the River Thames. Other publicly accessible open space provision is generally located in the eastern half of the analysis area.

Quantity

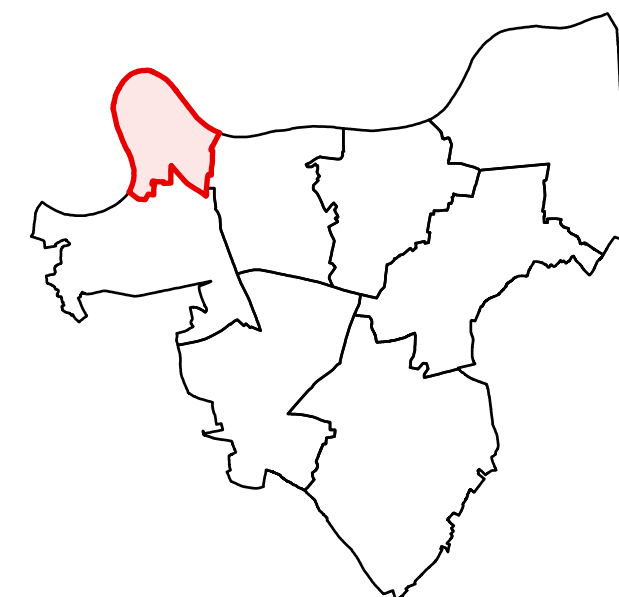
6.67 There is 0.77 ha of accessible greenspace per 1,000 of the population in Greenwich Peninsula. This is lower than the borough average and lower than the provision of accessible greenspace in any of the other areas. This is also less than one third of the recommended provision for accessible greenspace in the borough. In addition, the provision of parks and gardens, natural and semi-natural greenspace and amenity greenspace are all lower than the borough averages.

6.68 There is no allotment provision within Greenwich Peninsula. This makes the area deficient in allotment provision by 0.07ha per 1,000 of the population.



**Figure 6.4e: Open space provision in
Greenwich Peninsula**

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich Peninsula boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- LUC Open Space 2025**
- Agricultural land
- Allotments
- Amenity greenspace
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Civic Space
- Green corridor
- Natural and semi-natural greenspace
- Outdoors sports facilities
- Parks and gardens
- Provision for children and young people
- Access category**
- Freely accessible
- Restricted access
- No public access



6.69 Provision for children and teenagers includes standalone play areas and play areas within larger parks and gardens. The quantity of this typology is higher than the borough average.

Table 6.9 Performance compared to borough average and quantity standards (as set out in Table 5.5)

Typology	Provision	Comparison to borough average	Performance against standard
Accessible greenspace	0.84 ha / 1,000 population	- 1.92 ha / 1,000 population	2.16 ha / 1,000 population deficit
Allotments	0.00 ha / 1,000 population	- 0.07 ha / 1,000 population	0.07 ha / 1,000 population deficit
Provision for children and teenager	0.33 ha / 1,000	+ 0.13 ha / 1,000 children	N / A
Parks and gardens	0.51 / ha / 1,000	- 0.75 ha / 1,000 population	N / A
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	0.21 ha / 1,000	- 1.00 ha / 1,000 population	N / A
Amenity greenspace	0.11 ha / 1,000	- 0.17 ha / 1,000	N / A
Green corridors	0.32 ha / 1,000	+ 0.20 ha / 1,000	N / A
Civic space	0.00 ha / 1,000	- 0.04 ha / 1,000	N / A
Cemeteries and churchyards	0.00 ha / 1,000	- 0.16 ha / 1,000	N / A

Quality and value

6.70 **Figure 6.4f** shows the quality and value scores of the open spaces assessed (excluding provision for children and teenagers) in 2017 and 2025, against the 2025 benchmarks. Three quarters (75%) of open spaces in Greenwich Peninsula meet the quality and value

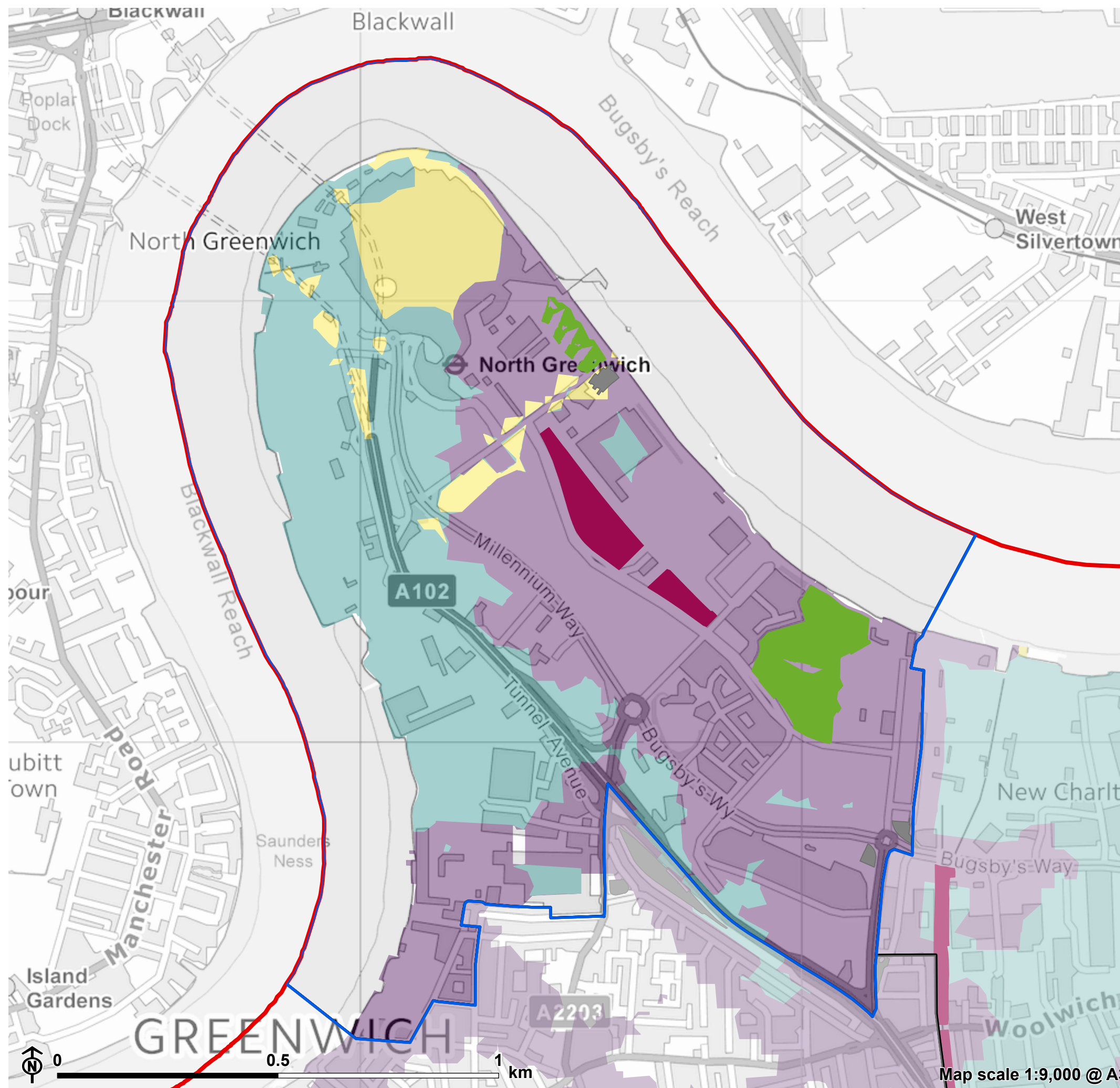
benchmarks. This is higher than in any other analysis area. The remaining two open spaces score below both benchmarks. This analysis area shows a different pattern from any other parts of the borough as amenity greenspaces and natural and semi-natural greenspaces score more favourably than parks and gardens. The only park and garden typology open space (Central Park) does not meet either benchmark.

6.71 **Figure 6.4g** indicates the quality and values scores for provision for children and teenagers. This score was calculated for six play spaces in Greenwich Peninsula. No play spaces in this analysis area scored above both the quality and value benchmarks, nor did any play spaces fail to meet either benchmark. Two thirds of open space met the quality but not the value benchmarks, whilst a third met the value but not the quality benchmark.

Accessibility

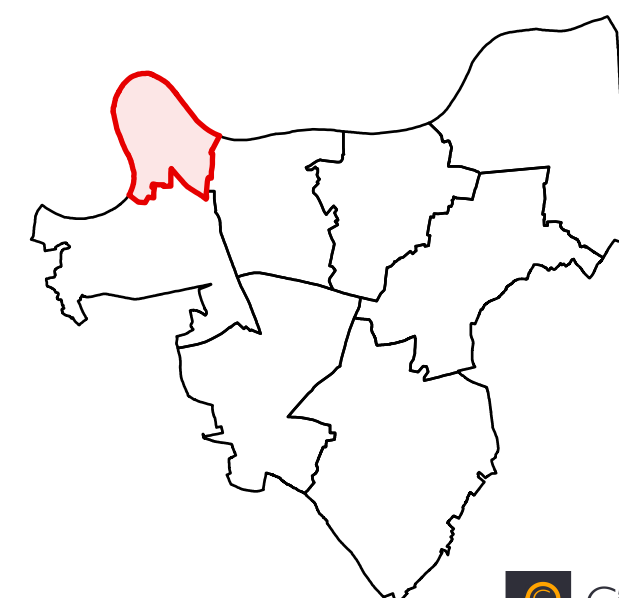
6.72 Compared to other parts of the borough, access to greenspace in Greenwich Peninsula across all the levels of the hierarchy combined is generally poor. **Figure 6.4f** shows the cumulative areas of deficiency, highlighting that there are very little parts of the analysis area with access to all three levels of the hierarchy. However, there are also very few areas with access to no levels of the hierarchy (around 5% which is similar to many other analysis areas). The deficiency is primarily in relation to district level hierarchy sites, which covers just 11% of the area. Access to the local, small and pocket open spaces is strongest in the north and east. Areas of deficiency in the west primarily cover areas of industrial and commercial development. Access to the metropolitan level of the hierarchy is good across Greenwich Peninsula, due to provision at Greenwich Park.

6.73 Overall, there is deficiency in access to all types of provision for children and teenagers within Greenwich Peninsula. 19% of the analysis area is deficient in access to all play spaces and youth spaces, which is higher than in any other analysis area. Furthermore, 24% of the analysis area is deficient in access to neighbourhood play, which is higher than in other parts of the borough and nearly double the average across the borough. Generally, the deficiency in access to provision for children and teenagers is located in the north and west areas of the analysis area, away from residential areas.



**Figure 6.4f: Accessible green space provision
in Greenwich Peninsula**

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
 - Greenwich Peninsula boundary
 - Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- Accessible green space quality and value score**
- Higher quality, higher value
 - Higher quality, lower value
 - Lower quality, higher value
 - Lower quality, lower value
 - Not surveyed in 2025 or 2017
- Count of Areas of Deficiency**
- Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy



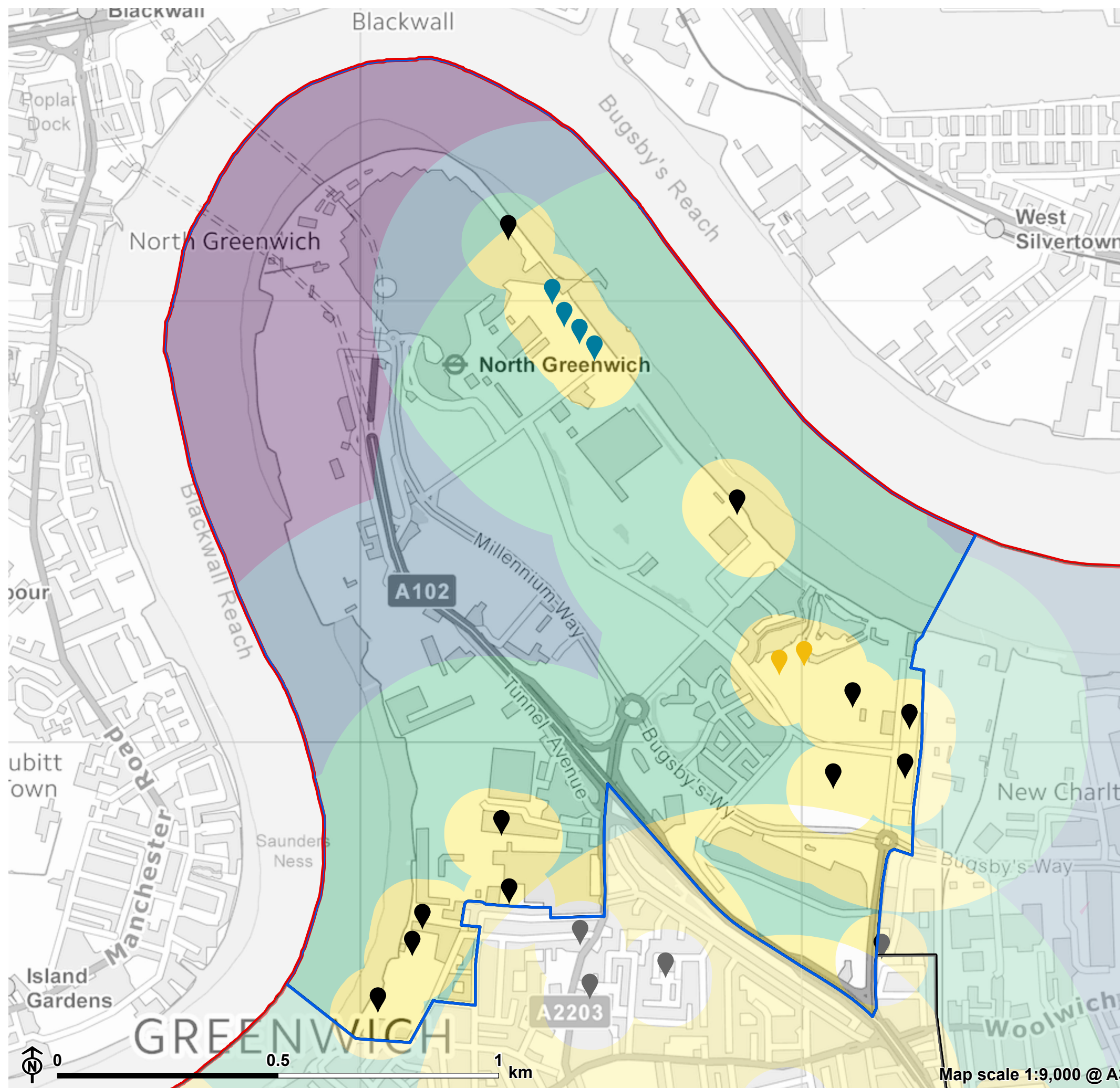
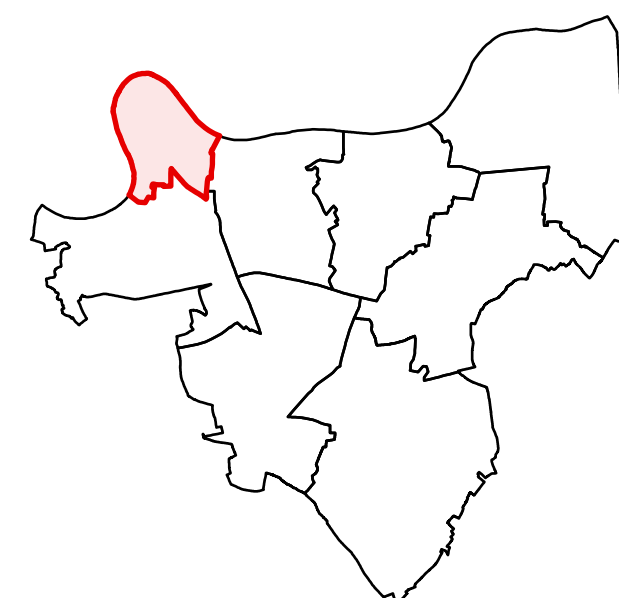


Figure 6.4g: Provision for children and teenagers in Greenwich Peninsula

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Greenwich Peninsula boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- Play space quality and value score 2025
- Higher quality, higher value
- Higher quality, lower value
- Lower quality, higher value
- Lower quality, lower value
- Not surveyed
- Play space Areas of Deficiency (AoD)
- Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
- Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
- Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy
- Deficient in all levels of the hierarchy



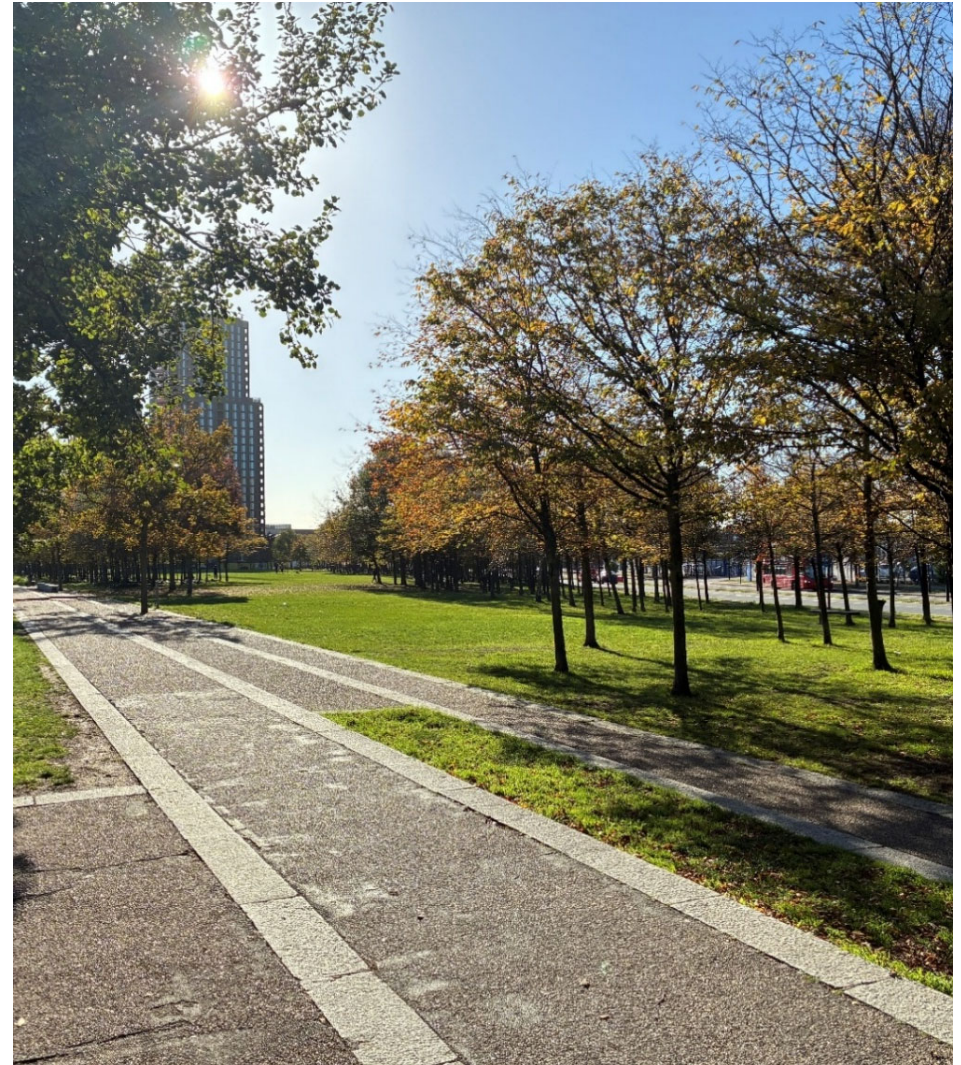
6.74 Access to allotments in Greenwich Peninsula is similar to the average across the borough. 90% of the analysis area has access to allotments, compared to 10% which are deficient in access. The areas of deficiency are in the north of the analysis, characterised primarily by commercial and industrial development.

Potential GBI enhancements

- Improve the quality of the Thames Path National Trail along the northern and western edge of Greenwich Peninsula by removing graffiti and litter and repairing damaged seating.
- Consider improvements to the multi-functionality of existing open spaces such as Southern Park and Central Park to encourage the delivery of multi-functional benefits; including flood risk alleviation and air quality improvements.
- Consider the Greenwich Peninsula Opportunity area as having the potential to provide a new natural and semi-natural greenspace or network which connects to existing open spaces and promotes greater access to the Thames Path National Trail. Consideration of a district level greenspace should be prioritised to address deficiencies in the analysis area. Any new greenspace should consider the inclusion of a play and / or youth space to address deficiencies particularly development in the north and west.

Within existing SINC and greenspaces, the following opportunities exist:

- The analysis area is characterised by a single SINC (other than the River Thames), located within this analysis area, Greenwich Ecology Park and Southern Park SINC. As this site is open to the public at limited times, there is significant potential for providing new or enhancing existing natural greenspace elsewhere for the benefit of nature and people. Greenspaces which lie in close proximity to this SINC include Southern Park and Central Park, which currently comprise amenity grassland with tree-lined boundaries. Southern Park appears to benefit from relaxed mowing of verge and edge habitats. However, Central Park would benefit from wildflower seeding in areas which are not used for recreational activities. Incorporating associated features to support the full lifecycle of invertebrates and birds such as bare ground, butterfly banks, insect hotels, scrub and hedgerows.



Central Park, Greenwich Peninsula

- Due to the particular lack of semi-natural habitat within this area, bird and bat boxes should be installed within all natural and semi-natural greenspaces, parks and gardens and amenity greenspaces and incorporated into the design of green roofs alongside features for invertebrates.

Outside of the existing SINC and greenspace network, the following opportunities exist:

- The opportunity exists to enhance green corridors through the incorporation of deadwood and scrub management for birds, bats, small mammals and reptiles, and installation of features for wildlife including green walls, bare ground, chalk scrapes and bug hotels for invertebrates, grass verge creation for pollinators.
- Due to the intensity of developed land within the west of this analysis area, and significant lack of semi-natural habitats, opportunities should be sought to retain and enhance remaining natural surfaces and to retrofit or incorporate within new developments habitat features such as trees, grass verges and green walls, and unsealed surfaces.
- The potential exists to enhance road verges and grassed roundabouts for wildlife. Opportunities exist along West Parkside road and Millennium Way, which have a central grassed verge. These should be made more resilient to the impacts of climate change through the incorporation of SuDS and drought tolerant species as part of diversifying the habitats to provide pollinator habitat and increasing aesthetic value. The roundabout between Millennium Way, John Harrison Way, Bugsby's Way and Blackwall Lane is located in close proximity to various grass verges and scrub and tree cover. This could form a central location for enhancement which can radiate out along the road network. Retrofitting landscape enhancements, tree cover within sealed surface areas, incorporating naturalised surface level SuDS where possible and pollinator pathways should also be considered. These enhancements could also be delivered along the Cycleway from Blackfriars to Rotherhithe (along Southern Way)

Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park



Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park

Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park is located in the south west of the borough. The analysis area is characterised by predominantly residential land use. The majority of the analysis area has a relatively low population density, with the exception of the central area around Kidbrooke which is more densely populated. The A2 bisects the analysis area running north to south east, coupled with a railway line. The London Borough of Lewisham borders the area to the west.

Figure 6.5a Location plan

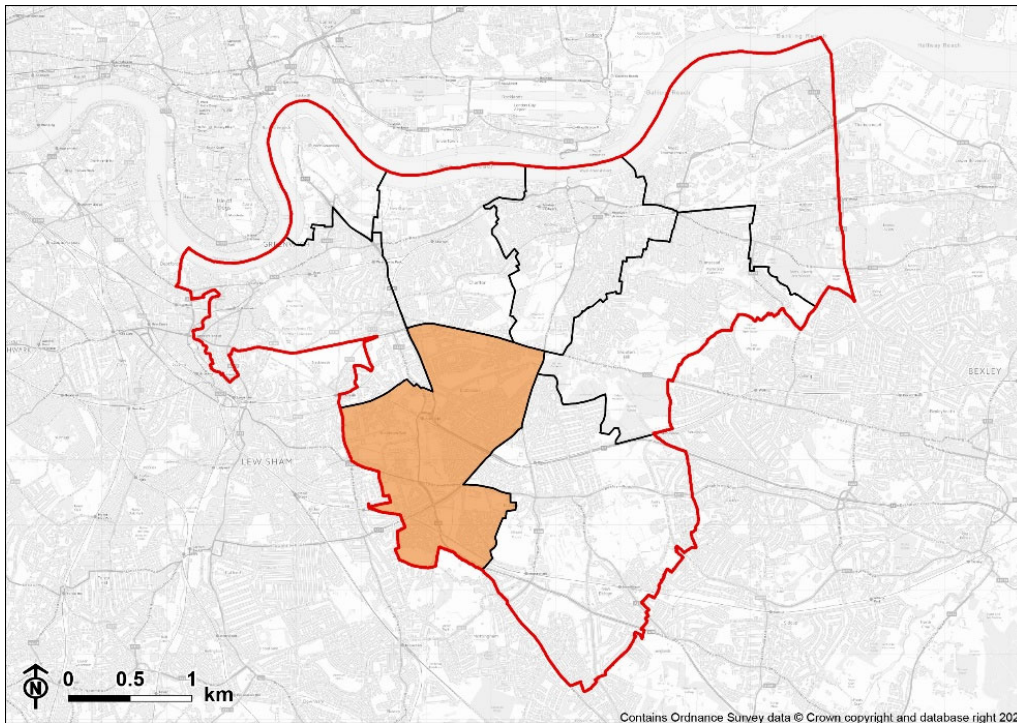
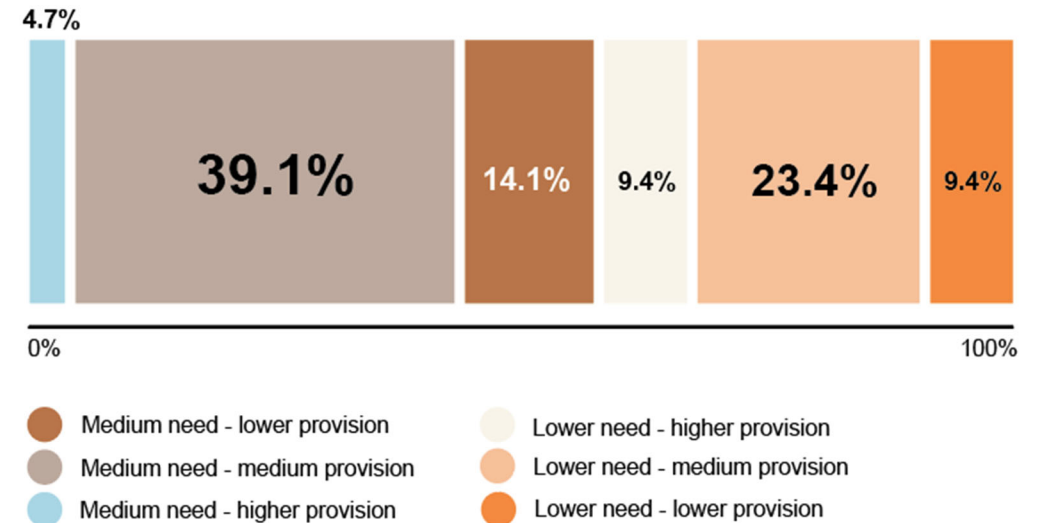


Figure 6.5b Distribution of need / provision ratings for Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)



London GI Framework: Distribution of need / provision ratings for Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park (all objectives combined)

- The analysis area is devoid of areas identified as highest need when all objectives are included, weighted by health and social equity.
- Areas of medium need and lowest provision are dispersed across the analysis area. Locations include residential areas of Kidbrooke, land to the south east of Kidbrooke Station as well as land at the junction of the A20 and A205.
- Land bordering the Quaggy River as well as the area of land centred on the A20 are defined as areas of medium need and highest provision.

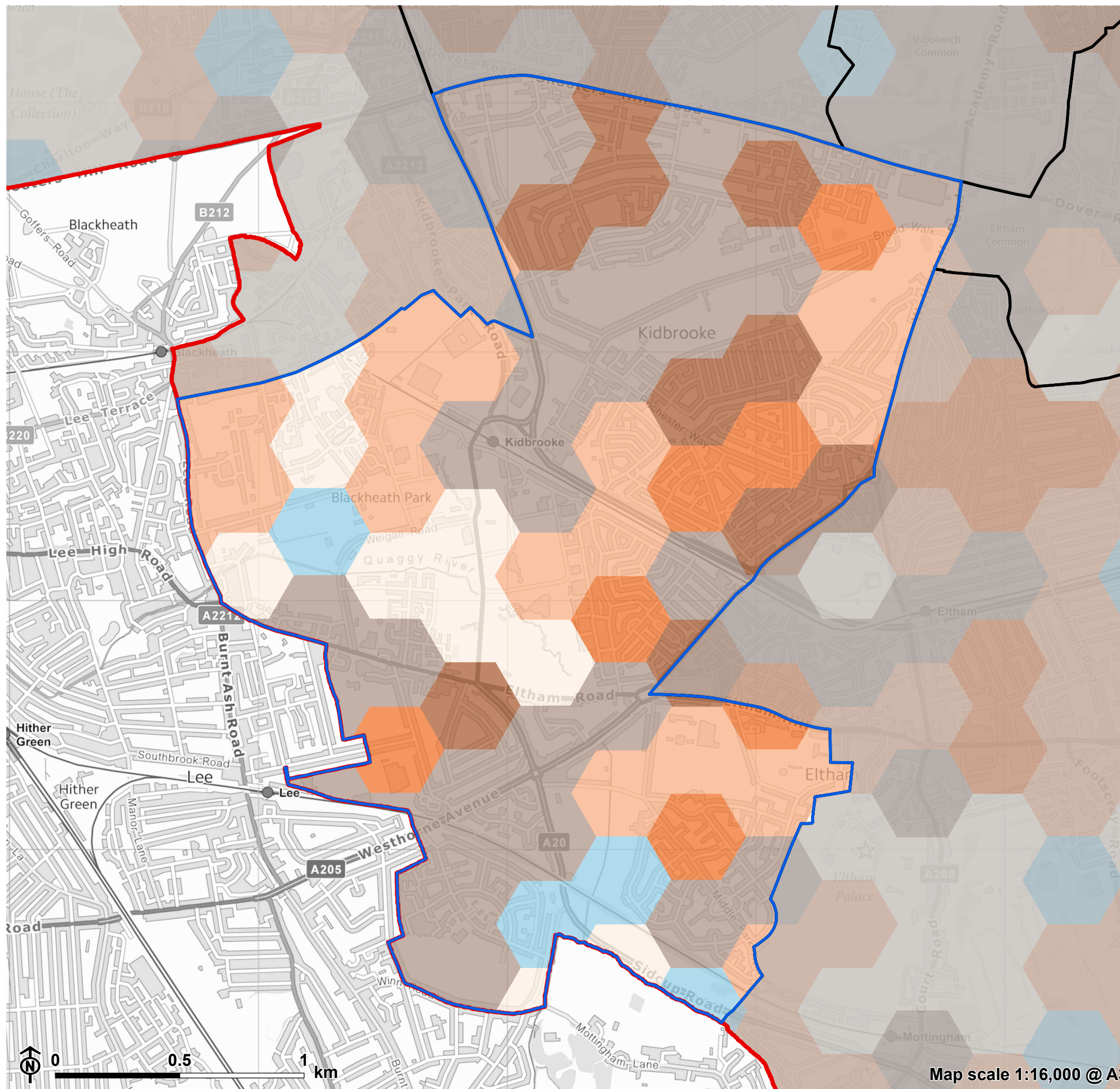


Figure 6.5c: Spatial distribution of need and provision for Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)

-  Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
-  Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park
-  Neighbouring analysis area boundary

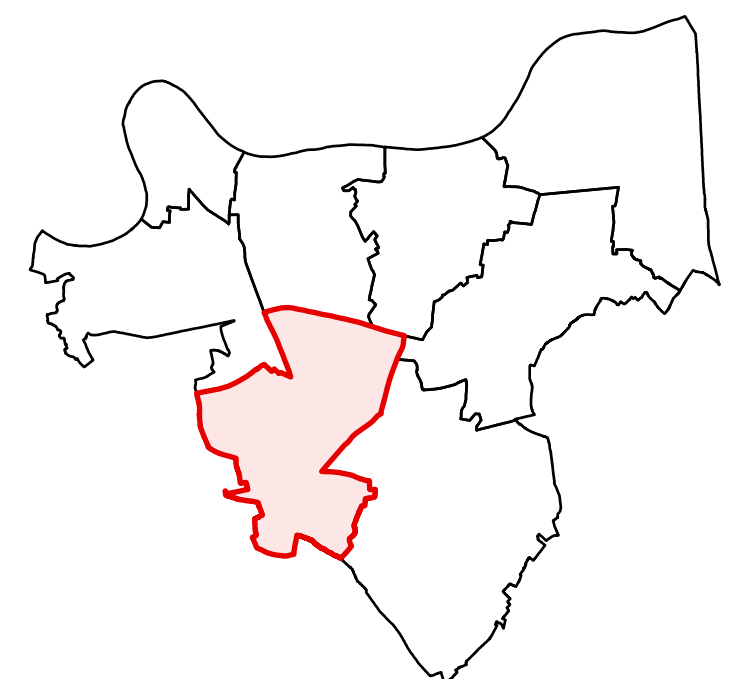
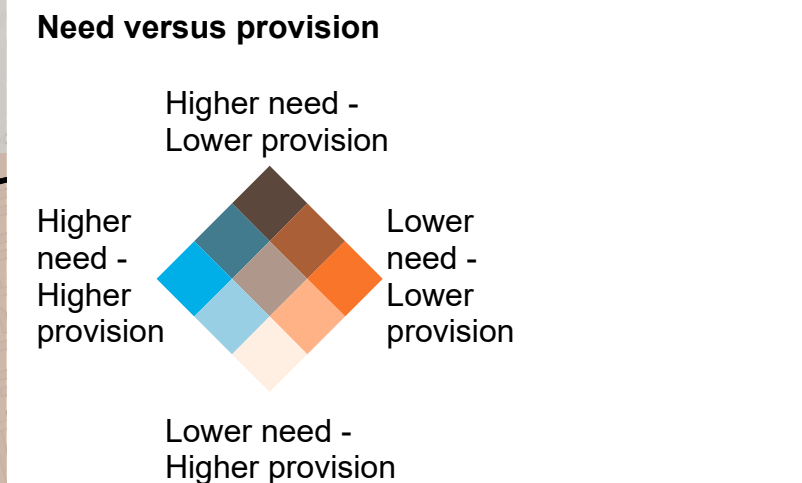
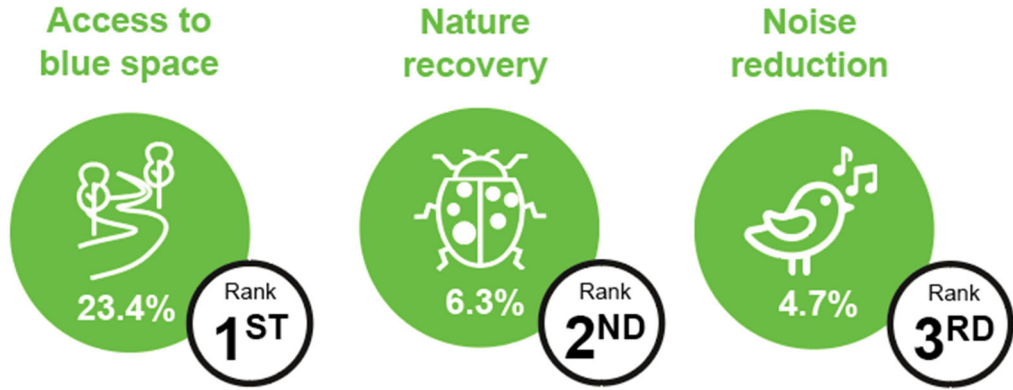


Figure 6.5d: Top three objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision which form the priority objectives for Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village and & Middle Park



Improved access to blue space, nature recovery and noise reduction form the priority objectives for Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village and & Middle Park.

London GI Framework: Ranking of objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision in Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park

- Areas defined as highest need with lowest existing provision for access to blue space cover 23.4% of the analysis area.
- 6.3% of the analysis area is identified as highest need and lowest provision for nature recovery.
- Noise reduction is ranked third (4.7%) for the objective demonstrating the highest need and lowest provision in the analysis area.
- No areas within Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park exhibit highest need and lowest provision for objectives relating to improved access to greenspace, flood risk mitigation, clear water, urban cooling, clean air, greener active travel routes or greener high streets.

Nature recovery

Assets

6.75 There is a single statutorily designated nature conservation site, Sutcliffe Park LNR, located on the Quaggy River, which includes wood pasture, parkland and open water habitat with reedbeds. Sutcliffe Park LNR covers less than 1% of the analysis area. However, it is also a designated SINC and forms a flood alleviation scheme. There are several other SINC; including Greenwich Cemetery and King George’s Field SINC. The remaining SINC in this area are all in close proximity to one another and there is a link of well-connected SINC located within 100m of each other, and / or connected via the Quaggy River. From north to south, these include Kidbrooke Green and Birdbrook Road Nature Reserves SINC, Blackheath to Falconwood Railsides SINC, Cator Park SINC, Quaggy River at Blackheath Park SINC, Sutcliffe Park Flood Alleviation Scheme SINC and then the Quaggy River (though heavily modified) offers hydrological connectivity to Mottingham and New Eltham Railsides SINC and Sidcup Road Grassland and Harmony Wood SINC. Several ecologically low diversity open spaces, such as outdoor sports facilities are also present along this link of connected sites.

6.76 Priority habitats are limited to wood pasture and parkland at Sutcliffe Park, and south of Manor Way. Additionally, there are a few small areas of deciduous woodland, but no other priority habitats. Despite the lack of priority habitats, there is a good coverage of semi-natural greenspaces and parks and gardens throughout the analysis area, with many extensive open space sites of over 7ha. These, alongside the railside SINC provide some ecological connectivity though limited to species which rely mostly on grassland and parkland habitats such as birds, bats, small mammals and insects.

6.77 Together the SINC network covers 7% of the analysis area. The woodland cover (as informed by the National Forest Inventory), and tree canopy and green cover (as informed by the GLA’s London-wide dataset) are presented in **Table 6.10**.

Table 6.10 Woodland, tree canopy and green cover

Woodland cover	Tree canopy cover	Green cover
3%	18%	51%



Sutcliffe Park

Pressures and deficiencies

6.78 The 2024 SINC review identified that there was inappropriate use by motorbikes at Sidcup Road Grassland and Harmony Wood Borough (Grade I) SINC. The findings of the Study concluded that access into the site did not feel safe, and there was no clear entry point, which may be as a result of inappropriate use of the site and council efforts to prevent access. This site should be bought back into beneficial management for wildlife and there was scope identified for delivery of multiple benefits including for biodiversity and wildlife enhancement.

6.79 There is a large AoD in access to nature (SINC AoD) covering 24% of the analysis area, particularly through the north forming a broad band roughly parallel with Rochester Way Relief Road and the parallel Quietway Link active travel route. Outdoor sports fields are located within this AoD and there is a lack of semi-natural habitats and greenspaces. Kidbrooke Green and Birdbrook Road Nature Reserves SINC, which is an accessible site forms lies to the south of the AoD and provides a small area of access to nature. Additionally, there is an AoD in access to nature, which lies north of Horn Park.

Open space

6.80 The provision of open space in Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park analysis area is shown by typology and access level on **Figure 6.5e**. There are 71.03 ha of publicly accessible open space in this analysis area, comprising 71 separate sites. Open space provision tends to include a larger number of smaller open spaces. The largest open spaces are of the parks and gardens typology, including Sutcliffe Park, Cator Parks (north and south) and Horn Park. Publicly accessible open spaces tend to be concentrated in the south of the area.

6.81 In addition, there is a high provision of open space with restricted or no public access. This includes 95.49 ha of outdoor sports. This provision is present throughout the analysis area. Additionally, there are green corridors present along railway lines which have no access.

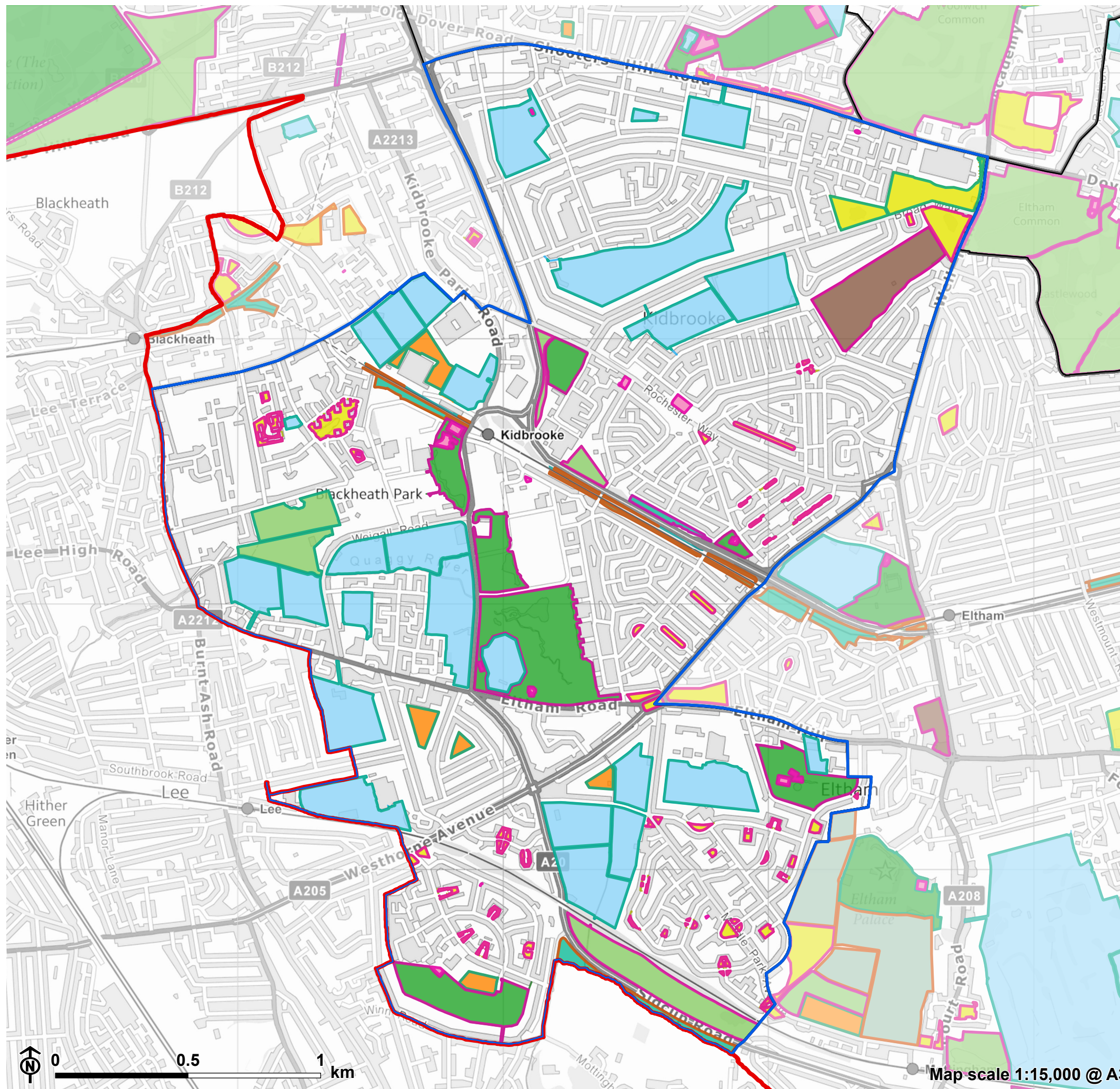
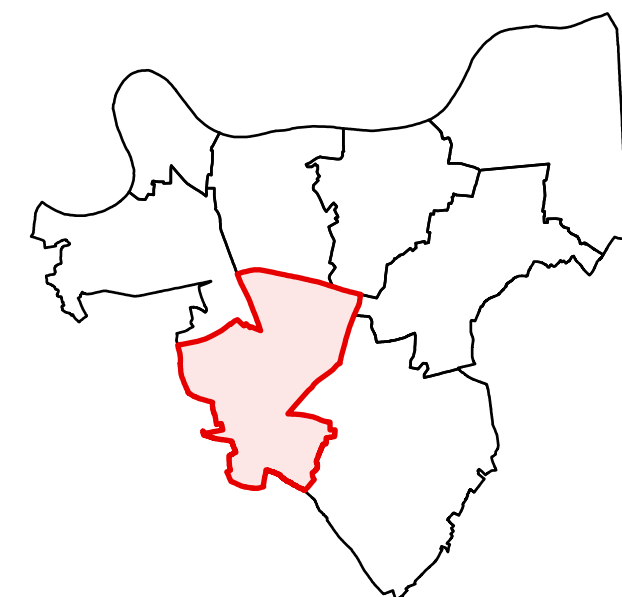


Figure 6.5e: Open space provision in Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- LUC Open Space 2025**
 - Agricultural land
 - Allotments
 - Amenity greenspace
 - Cemeteries and churchyards
 - Civic Space
 - Green corridor
 - Natural and semi-natural greenspace
 - Outdoors sports facilities
 - Parks and gardens
 - Provision for children and young people
- Access category**
 - Freely accessible
 - Restricted access
 - No public access



Quantity

6.82 The provision of 1.64 ha of accessible greenspace per 1,000 of the population in Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village and Middle Park analysis area is lower than the borough average. The greatest deficiency is in provision of natural and semi-natural greenspace and parks and gardens, which are both lower than the borough average. In terms of amenity greenspace provision, this is higher than the borough average. Amenity greenspace is primarily found within the residential areas in the south and east of the analysis area which typically have a more suburban character.

6.83 There is good provision of allotments within Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park analysis area. The provision of 0.14 per 1,000 of the population is double the borough average and the expected quantity standards for allotments. The majority of the allotment provision in the analysis area is in the south.

6.84 Provision for children and teenagers includes standalone play areas and play areas within larger parks and gardens. The quantity of this typology is 0.20 ha per 1,000 of the population. This is equal to the borough average.

Table 6.11 Performance compared to borough average and quantity standards (as set out in Table 5.5)

Typology	Provision	Comparison to borough average	Performance against standard
Accessible greenspace	1.64 ha / 1,000 population	- 1.12 ha / 1,000 population	1.36 ha / 1,000 population deficit
Allotments	0.14 ha / 1,000 population	+ 0.07 ha / 1,000 population	0.07 ha / 1,000 population surplus
Provision for children and teenager	0.19 ha / 1,000	+/- 0.00 ha / 1,000 children	N / A
Parks and gardens	1.08 / ha / 1,000	- 0.19 ha / 1,000 population	N / A

Typology	Provision	Comparison to borough average	Performance against standard
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	0.26 ha / 1,000	- 0.95 ha / 1,000 population	N / A
Amenity greenspace	0.30 ha / 1,000	+ 0.02 ha / 1,000	N / A
Green corridors	0.02 ha / 1,000	- 0.09 ha / 1,000	N / A
Civic space	0.00 ha / 1,000	- 0.04 ha / 1,000	N / A
Cemeteries and churchyards	0.25 ha / 1,000	+ 0.09 ha / 1,000	N / A

Quality and value

6.85 Figure 6.5f shows the quality and value scores of the open spaces assessed (excluding provision for children and teenagers) in 2017 and 2025, against the 2025 benchmarks. Less than a quarter (24%) of open space scored above both the quality and value criteria, whilst over half (57%) scored below both benchmarks. This includes all natural and semi-natural greenspace and over three quarters (76%) of amenity greenspace. Whilst the scoring suggests Cator Park South scores below the value recommendations, in reality, the adjoining provision at Cator Park North and Sutcliffe Park address this shortfall in value.

6.86 Figure 6.5g indicates the quality and values scores for provision for children and teenagers. This score was calculated for nine play spaces in Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village and Middle Park. Two thirds (67%) of play spaces met the quality and value benchmarks. The remaining sites scored below the quality but above the value benchmark (22%) or did not meet either benchmark (11%). This suggests a change in management regime may be more appropriate than an investment in capital play provision within existing play spaces.

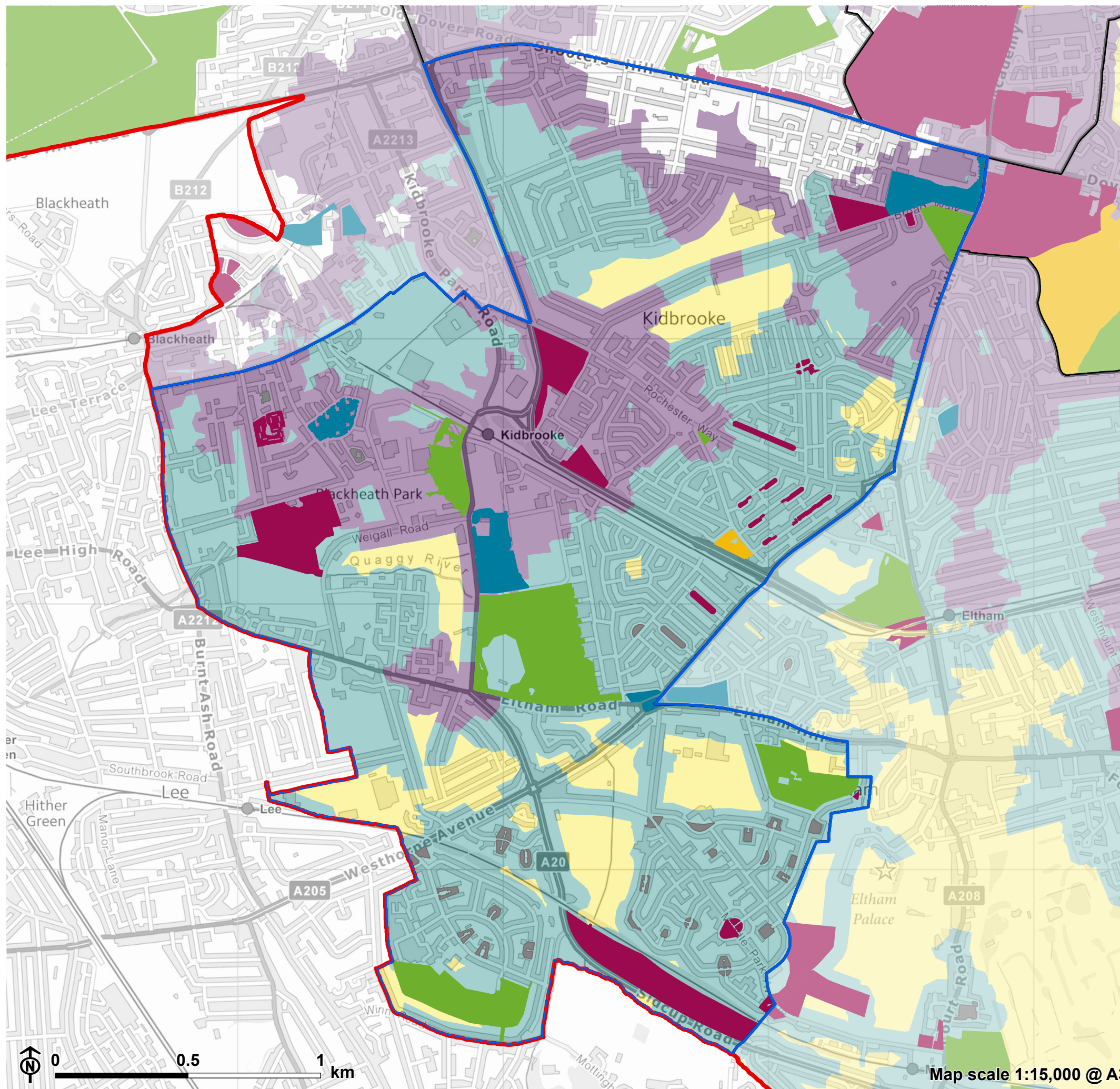
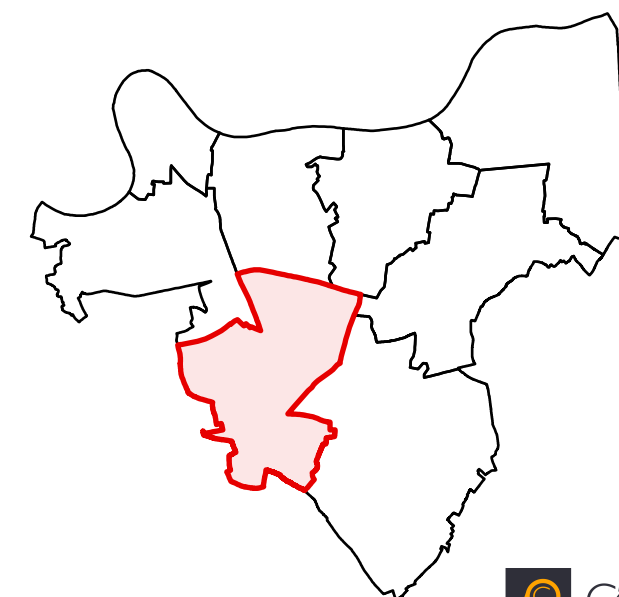


Figure 6.5f: Accessible green space provision in Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
 - Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park boundary
 - Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- Accessible green space quality and value score**
- Higher quality, higher value
 - Higher quality, lower value
 - Lower quality, higher value
 - Lower quality, lower value
 - Not surveyed in 2025 or 2017
- Count of Areas of Deficiency**
- Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy



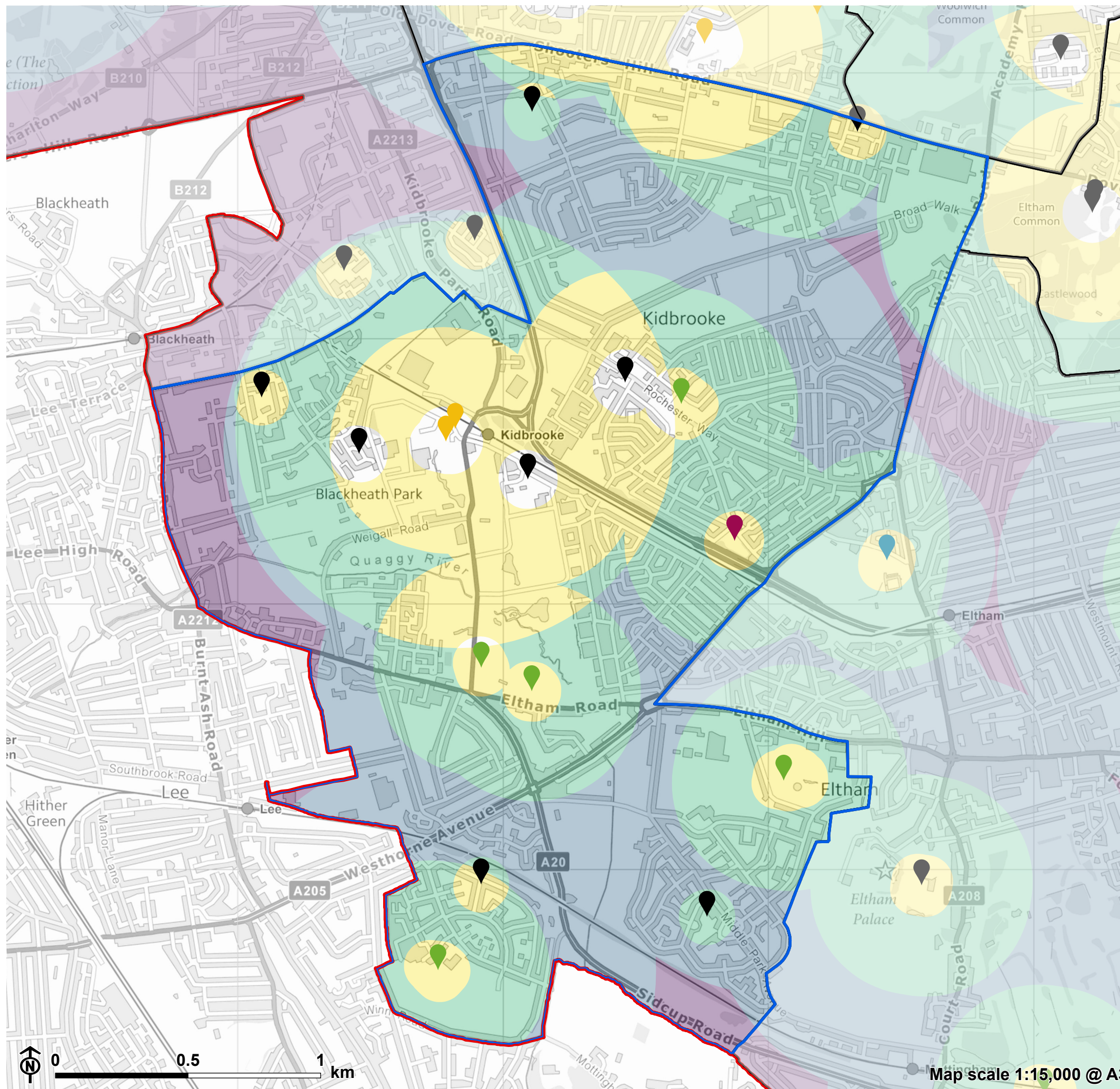
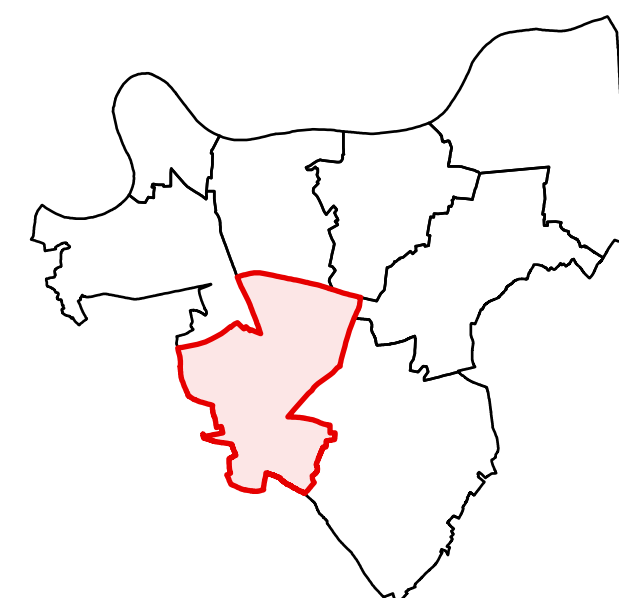


Figure 6.5g: Provision for children and teenagers in Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- Play space quality and value score 2025
- Higher quality, higher value
- Higher quality, lower value
- Lower quality, higher value
- Lower quality, lower value
- Not surveyed
- Play space Areas of Deficiency (AoD)
- Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
- Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
- Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy
- Deficient in all levels of the hierarchy



Accessibility

6.87 There is lower access to greenspace in Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village & Middle Park analysis area compared to other parts of the borough. **Figure 6.5f** shows the cumulative areas of deficiency, highlighting that areas with access to all three levels of the hierarchy are restricted to the northern edges of the analysis area. Deficiency in access to the district level of the hierarchy is particularly acute, with AoD covering 84% of the analysis. This is double the percentage of the whole borough covered by AoD to this level of the hierarchy. In the north, access to this level of the hierarchy is provided by Woolwich Common.

6.88 Overall, there is relatively low deficiency in access to all types of provision for children and teenagers within Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village and Middle Park analysis area. Access to each type of play space and youth space has a level of access to the average across the borough. Only 6% of the analysis area is deficient in access to all types of provision for children and teenagers (see **Figure 6.5g**). Provision is highest in the centre of the analysis area around Kidbrooke Village.

6.89 Access to allotments in Kidbrooke, Kidbrooke Village and Middle Park analysis area compares favourably with the average for the borough. 90% of the analysis area has access to allotments, compared to 10% which are deficient in access. The areas of deficiency are in the north east of the analysis area.

Potential GBI enhancements

- Consider opportunities for large areas of sport provision to allow other informal recreation at certain times, for example Kidbrooke Playing Fields and sports provision off Eastbrook Road in the North and Weigall Road Flood Storage Area and around Blackheath Wanderers Sports Club in the south.
- Explore opportunities to improve the multi-functionality of amenity greenspace, particularly around Middle Park and Horn Park. This could include additional play equipment, community food growing opportunities and seating.
- Ensure the appropriate siting of GBI along key transport corridors, such as Eltham Road, Sidcup Road and Westthorne Avenue to improve air quality and achieve noise abatement benefits.

- Encourage active travel to nearby natural and semi-natural greenspaces outside the analysis area such as along Broad Walk to Eltham Common and from Horn Park to Grove Park Nature Reserve outside the borough.

Within existing SINC and greenspaces, the following opportunities exist:

- The River Kidbrooke and Royal Blackheath Golf Course are identified in the LNRS as possible areas for targeting river and stream restoration and enhancing connectivity. Therefore, opportunities should be sought to deliver river restoration initiatives, such as re-naturalising the river bank and river bed, introducing riffles and pools and enhancing bankside marginal vegetation along the Quaggy River and River Shuttle.
- Enhancing the wildlife value of Sidcup Road Grassland and Harmony Wood SINC should be sought, alongside any improvements in public access and safety. Enhancements might include scrub management woodland habitat restoration and management and acid grassland restoration. Due to the remoteness of this site, mosaic habitat creation is possible, which has significant value to a range of wildlife, however it requires a dynamic habitat management approach to ensure maximum benefit to a wide range of species assemblages including birds, bats, invertebrates and small mammals.
- Sutcliffe Park and Cator Park form key ecological assets within this area with a combination of terrestrial and aquatic habitats including flowing and standing water. Features of these sites should be replicated elsewhere along the Quaggy River. Opportunities could be sought at Sidcup Road Grassland and Harmony Wood SINC for the expansion of aquatic habitats such as pond creation. This may offer additional flood storage as a nature-based solution to flooding. A feasibility study would be recommended to inform appropriate nature based solution design, location and identify opportunities for delivering multiple benefits for people, nature and the wider environment.



Ornamental planting along Ottley Drive, Kidbrooke

Outside of the existing SINC and greenspace network, the following opportunities exist:

- There is a large provision of sports facilities within this area. Ecological enhancements could be delivered at these sites whilst retaining their recreational value through the sowing of wildflower meadows to increase diversity, the introduction of tree planting along boundaries and spectator areas to provide cooling and shading and the incorporation of pollinator features along entry points, footpaths, and amenity areas within sports grounds. Where these enhancements are delivered within open spaces along the Quaggy River, the interventions will contribute to enhanced public access and ecological connectivity along that corridor.
- Amenity greenspaces within residential areas provide opportunity for ecological enhancement, especially when delivered in association with enhancements of green corridors, and other linear networks such as roads, walking and cycling routes to improve ecological connectivity between stepping stone habitats and the SINC network. Relaxed meadow management and installation of features to support the full lifecycle of invertebrates such as bare ground, butterfly banks and insect hotels, would be best targeted towards the residential area north of Horn Park, north of Sidcup Road and either side of the A2.
- Particular areas which would benefit from enhancement include the amenity greenspaces and residential streets of Eltham West, which lies within an AoD in access to nature. Pocket parks, community orchards and community gardens could be created in this area, utilising urban forest principles and incorporating natural play features with dual purpose such as providing cooling and shading, such as tree logs, stumps, boulders, plants, insect hotels and tree planting.
- Enhancements along public walking and cycling routes could be targeted along the A2, A2213, A20, and the Quietway Link (parallel with Rochester Way Relief Road). Together these roads could be enhanced through increased tree planting and retrofitting biodiverse surface-level SuDS to provide supplementary benefits such as cooling and shading as well as nature based solutions to alleviate surface water flooding.

Plumstead & Shooters Hill



Plumstead & Shooters Hill

Plumstead and Shooters Hill occupies land to the east of the borough. The London Borough of Bexley borders the analysis area to the east. Characterised by predominantly residential areas, this land use is interspersed with a number of semi-natural greenspaces. The corridors of the A206 and A207 form key transport corridors, dissecting the analysis area broadly east-west.

Figure 6.6a Location plan

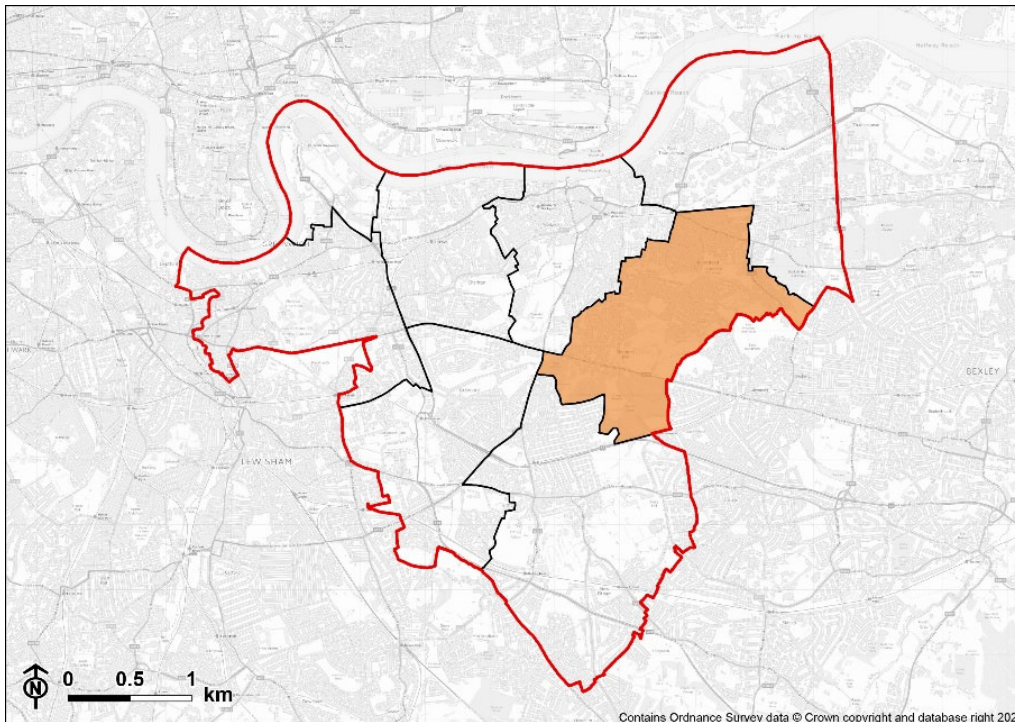
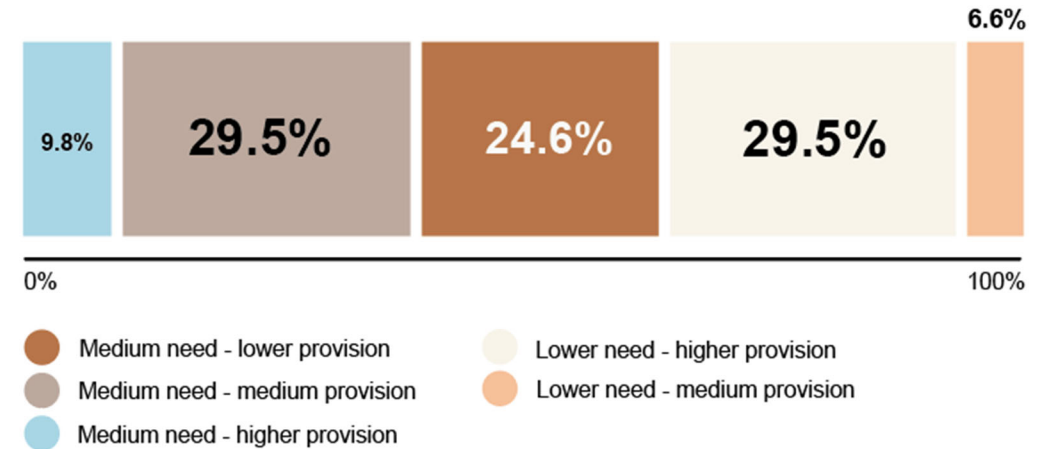


Figure 6.6b Distribution of need / provision ratings for Plumstead & Shooters Hill (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)



London GI Framework: Distribution of need / provision ratings for Plumstead & Shooters Hill (all objectives combined)

- The analysis area is devoid of areas identified as highest need when all objectives are included, weighted by health and social equity.
- Areas defined as medium need equate to 63.9% of the analysis area.
- Dense residential areas lying to the north and south of Plumstead Common, as well as land bordering Plumstead High Street, are defined as medium need and lowest provision.

Figure 6.6c: Spatial distribution of need and provision for Plumstead & Shooters Hill (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Plumstead & Shooters Hill
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary

Need versus provision

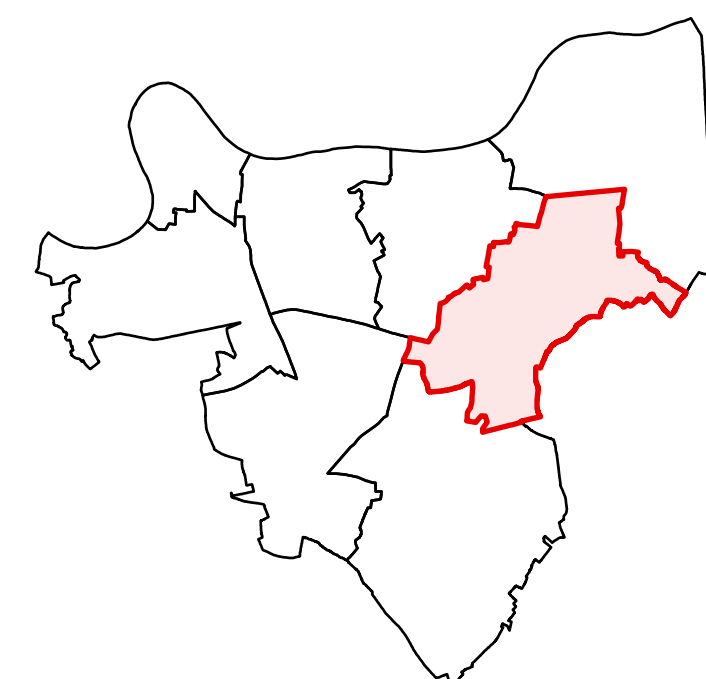
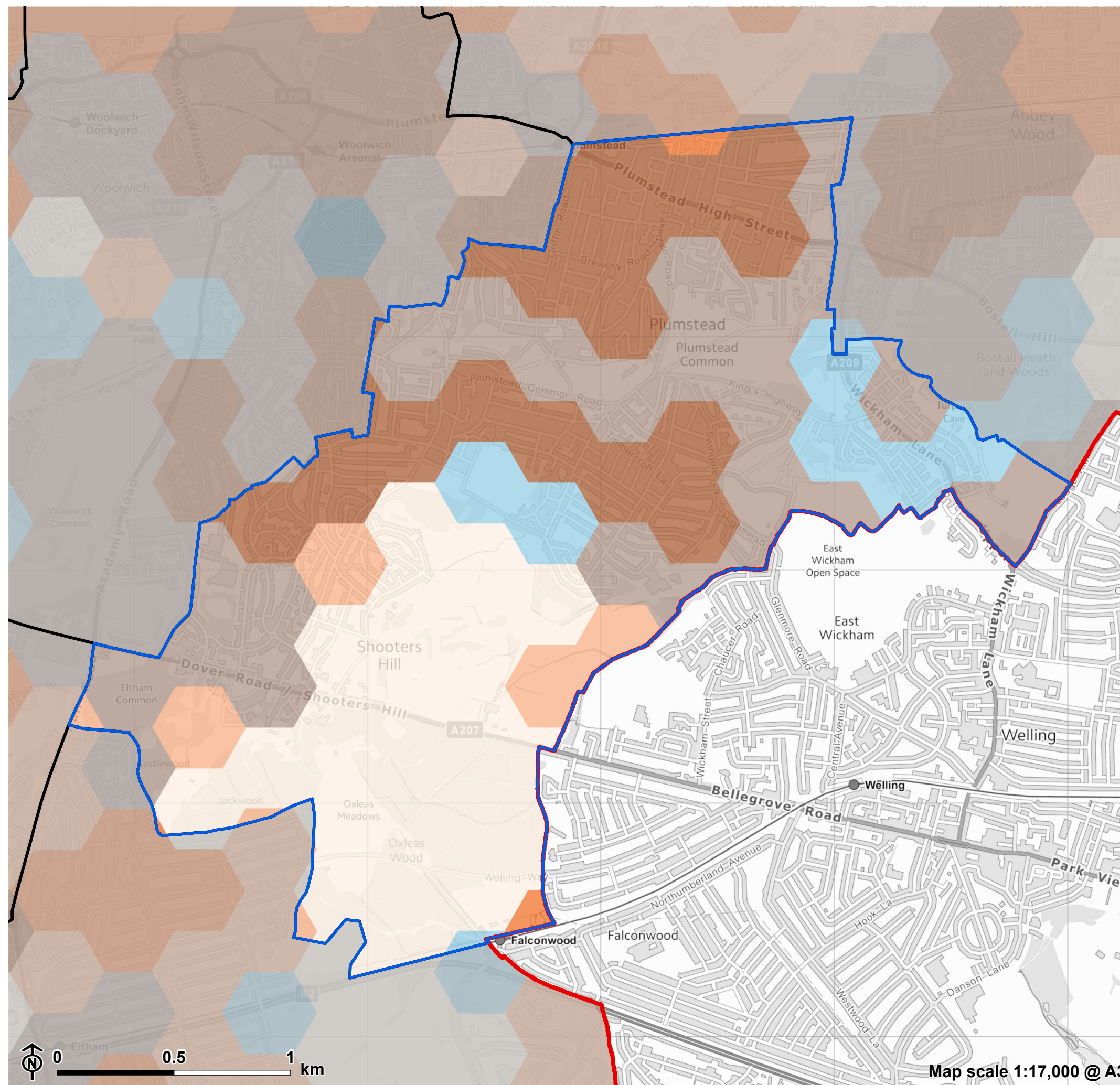
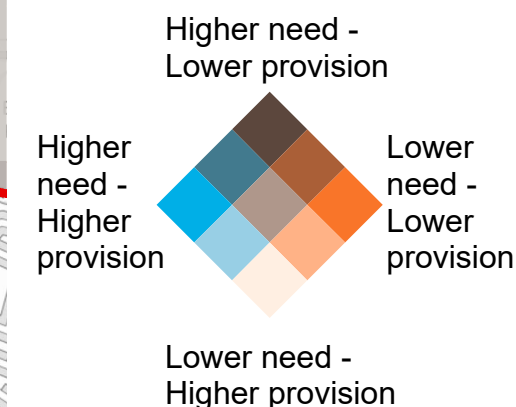
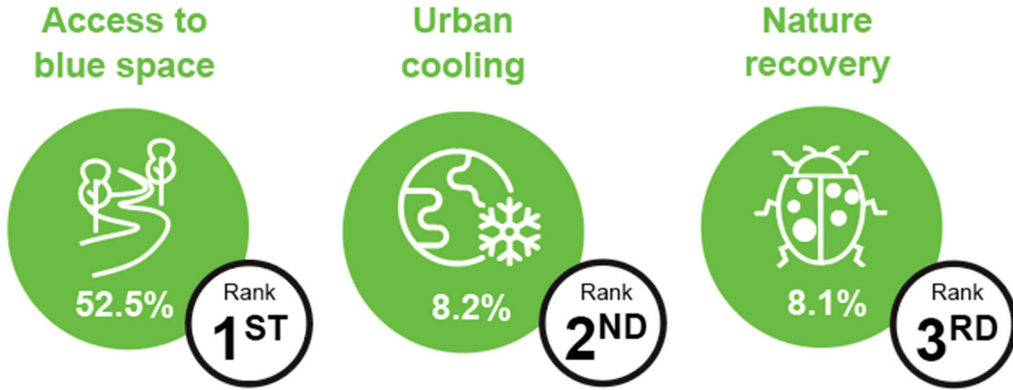


Figure 6.6d: Top three objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision which form the priority objectives for Plumstead & Shooters Hill



Improved access to blue space, urban cooling and nature recovery form the priority objectives for Plumstead & Shooters Hill.

London GI Framework: Ranking of objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision in Plumstead & Shooters Hill

- The analysis area is identified as highest need and lowest provision for improved access to blue space, covering 52.5% of the analysis area.
- Areas defined as highest need with lowest existing provision for urban cooling cover 8.2% of the analysis area.
- Nature recovery is ranked third (8.1%) for the objective demonstrating the highest need and lowest provision in the analysis area.
- No areas within Plumstead & Shooters Hill exhibit highest need and lowest provision for objectives relating to flood risk mitigation, clean water, clean air, greener active travel routes or greener high streets.

Nature recovery

Assets

6.90 Plumstead and Shooters Hill supports the most extensive area of statutorily designated land for nature conservation of all analysis areas, due to the presence of Oxleas Woodlands SSSI, which cover 11% of the analysis area, and the more extensive Oxleas Wood LNR, which covers 18% of the analysis area. Together these designated sites also form various SINC, as they contain the majority of the ancient woodland and deciduous woodland resource within the borough (alongside Lesnes Abbey Woods and Bostall Woods SINC in the Thamesmead and Abbey Wood analysis area). There are also several large and some smaller SINC throughout the analysis area.

6.91 This analysis area supports the largest individual and combined area of priority deciduous woodland. Oxleas Woodlands is one of the most ecologically well connected habitats within the borough, with connecting habitats to the north east through East Wickham Open Space and Lesnes Abbey Woods and Bostall Woods SINC, south through the network of SINC in Eltham, west towards Greenwich Cemetery SINC and north towards Woolwich Common SINC, which has good ecological connectivity to the River Thames SINC.

6.92 Plumstead and Shooters Hill supports the most extensive SINC coverage, with 41% of the analysis area designated as SINC. Additionally, it supports the most extensive woodland, tree canopy and green cover of all analysis areas. The woodland cover (as informed by the National Forest Inventory), tree canopy cover and green cover (as informed by the GLA's London-wide dataset) are presented in **Table 6.12**.

Table 6.12 Woodland, tree canopy and green cover

Woodland cover	Tree canopy cover	Green cover
24%	35%	65%

Pressures and deficiencies

6.93 The 2024 SINC Review identified that Oxleas Meadow Borough (Grade I) SINC, is subject to competing uses. This 2025 open space audit found that of the three open spaces (Oxleas Wood, Oxleas Meadow SINC, and Oxleas Woodlands (Jack Wood)), which make up

this combined area, Oxleas Wood only scored 3/5 for 'Conservation of natural features, wild fauna and flora', whereas the other two sites scored 4/5 and 5/5 respectively. Additionally, for Oxleas Meadow SINC, the open space audit reported that better management was required of this site, given the importance of the site for nature conservation and the recreational pressures which exist. All three sites were subject to walking and dog walking pressures.

6.94 Additionally, the 2024 SINC review identified that Shrewsbury Park was not being managed for nature conservation, and the north eastern section of site was subject to fly tipping of garden rubbish, which had resulted in the introduction of non-native species. Shrewsbury Park, Shooters Hill Golf Course, Dothill Allotments & Woodlands Farm Borough (Grade I) SINC is comprised of up of eight open spaces, two of which were audited in this 2025 open space audit. This 2025 open space audit of Shrewsbury Park scored 4/5 for litter and waste management and only 2/5 for waste minimisation. However, 'Conservation of natural features, wild fauna and flora' scored 4/5. Walking including dog walking and the presence of desire lines were reported, indicating that recreational pressures may be impacting this site.

6.95 There is only a very small AoD in access to nature (SINC AoD) covering less than 1% of the analysis area. Reflective of the very small SINC AoD, there is generally good coverage of semi-natural habitats and greenspace, the exceptions to this being the residential areas which lack greenspace and have few and very small amenity greenspaces, if at all. Private gardens within this analysis area are also smaller in comparison with other analysis areas such as Eltham, Avery Hill, Coldharbour & New Eltham, reducing their value as stepping stone habitats to support ecological connectivity.

Open space

6.96 The provision of open space in Plumstead & Shooters Hill is shown by typology and access level (see **Figure 6.6e**). There are 238.36 ha of publicly accessible open space in this analysis area, comprising 43 separate sites. The provision in hectares is more than any other analysis area, and nearly double the provision in the second ranked analysis area (Thamesmead & Abbey Wood). Open space provision in this area is characterised by the presence of large open spaces. This includes natural and natural semi-natural greenspace in the south around Oxleas Wood at Shooters Hill and parks and gardens in the north around Plumstead Common and an area of agricultural land at Woodlands Farm. In addition, there are also large areas with limited access, including outdoor sports fields and areas of agricultural land.



Oxleas Woodland

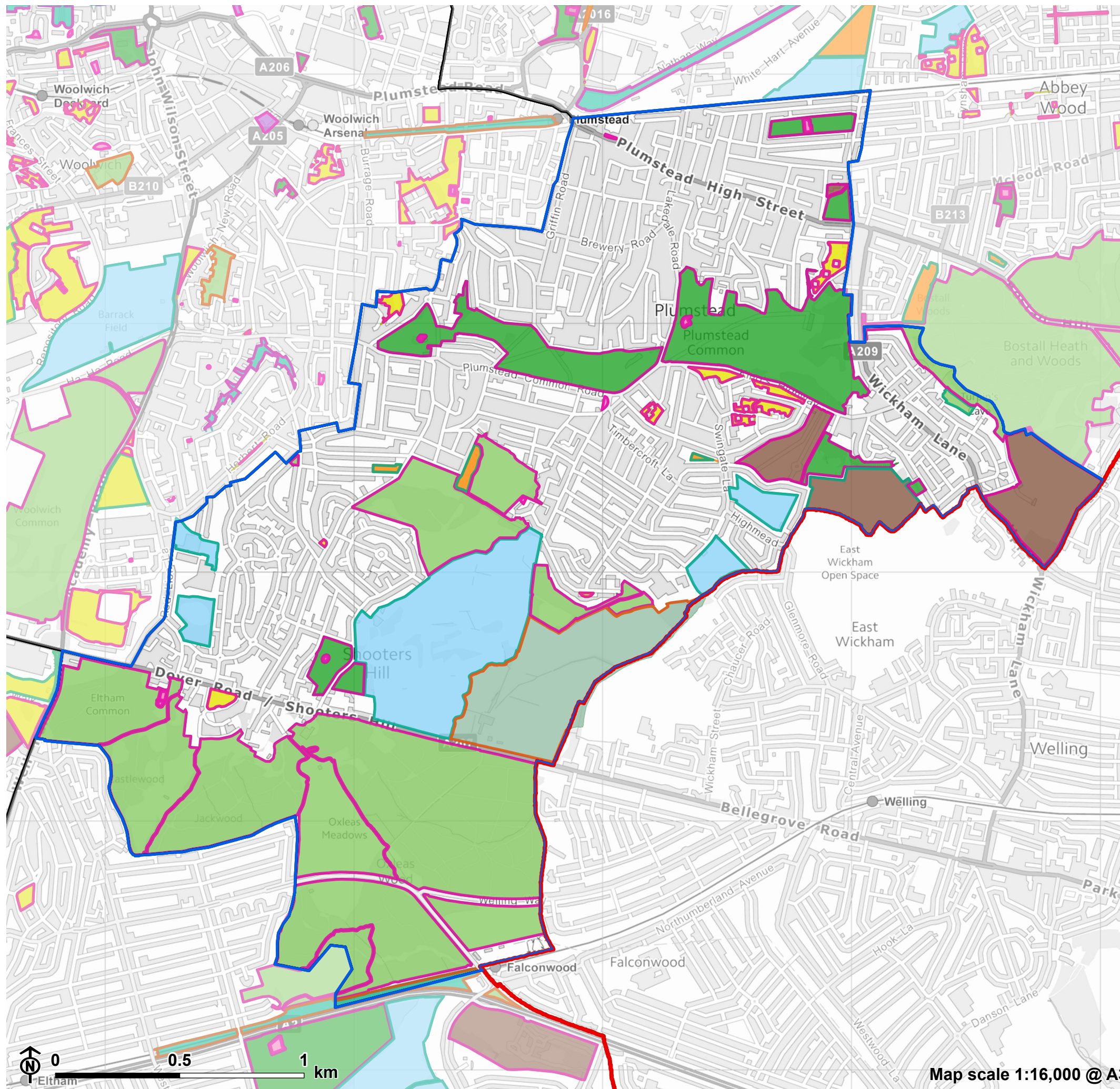
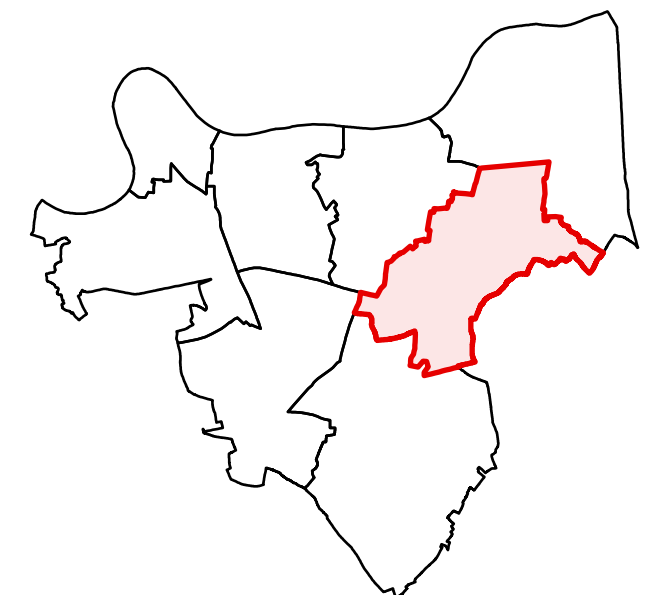


Figure 6.6e: Open space provision in Plumstead & Shooters Hill

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Plumstead & Shooters Hill boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- LUC Open Space 2025**
- Agricultural land
- Allotments
- Amenity greenspace
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Civic Space
- Green corridor
- Natural and semi-natural greenspace
- Outdoors sports facilities
- Parks and gardens
- Provision for children and young people
- Access category**
- Freely accessible
- Restricted access
- No public access



Quantity

6.97 The provision of 5.75 ha of accessible greenspace per 1,000 of the population in Plumstead & Shooters Hill is notably higher than the borough average (more than double). In particular, it is the provision of natural and semi-natural greenspace which contributes to this quantity. Natural and semi-natural greenspace provision is more than three times the borough average. The main contribution to this is the large swathes of natural and semi-natural greenspace on the south of Shooters Hill, comprised of ancient woodland and meadow. Much of this provision is also designated for its ecological value, as already discussed.

6.98 Provision of parks and garden in this analysis area is also greater than the borough average. Plumstead Common and Winn's Common both feature semi-natural areas but also additional amenities which characterise their inclusion in the parks and gardens typology. As with the provision in the south, these parks are closely connected, forming key continuous areas of greenspace. The provision of allotments within Plumstead & Shooters Hill is lower than the borough average. Provision of this typology mostly includes fairly small spaces in the centre of the area.

6.99 Provision for children and teenagers includes standalone play areas and play areas within larger parks and gardens. The quantity of this typology is 0.10 ha per 1,000 of the population. This is notably lower than the borough average.

Table 6.13 Performance compared to borough average and quantity standards (as set out in Table 5.5)

Typology	Provision	Comparison to borough average	Performance against standard
Accessible greenspace	5.75 ha / 1,000 population	+2.99 ha / 1,000 population	2.75ha / 1,000 population surplus
Allotments	0.04 ha / 1,000 population	- 0.03 ha / 1,000 population	0.03ha / 1,000 population deficit
Provision for children and teenager	0.10 ha / 1,000	- 0.10 ha / 1,000 children	N / A

Typology	Provision	Comparison to borough average	Performance against standard
Parks and gardens	1.36 / ha / 1,000	+ 0.09 ha / 1,000 population	N / A
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	4.24 ha / 1,000	+ 3.02 ha / 1,000 population	N / A
Amenity greenspace	0.16 ha / 1,000	- 0.13 ha / 1,000	N / A
Green corridors	0.00 ha / 1,000	- 0.11 ha / 1,000	N / A
Civic space	0.00 ha / 1,000	- 0.04 ha / 1,000	N / A
Cemeteries and churchyards	0.48 ha / 1,000	+ 0.32 ha / 1,000	N / A

Quality and value

6.100Figure 6.6f shows the quality and value scores of the open spaces assessed (excluding provision for children and teenagers) in 2017 and 2025, against the 2025 benchmarks. Less than a fifth (16%) of open space scored above both the quality and value criteria in Plumstead & Shooters Hill. This is lower than in any of the other analysis areas. This includes over three quarters (76%) of amenity greenspace. Many of the larger open spaces do not meet both benchmarks, including larger areas of natural and semi-natural greenspace around Shooters Hill, such as Oxleas Wood and Shepherdleas Meadow & Wood. These meet the value benchmark but not the quality threshold, suggesting that additional or a change in management regimes may be required. In contrast, further north, notable open spaces including Plumstead Common and Shrewsbury Park meet the quality benchmark but not the value benchmark.

6.101Figure 6.6g indicates the quality and values scores for provision for children and teenagers. This score was calculated for play spaces in Plumstead & Shooters Hill. 50% of play spaces met the quality and value benchmarks. The remaining half met the quality benchmark but not the value benchmark. This suggests there may be room for investment in the equipped facilities and design of these spaces.

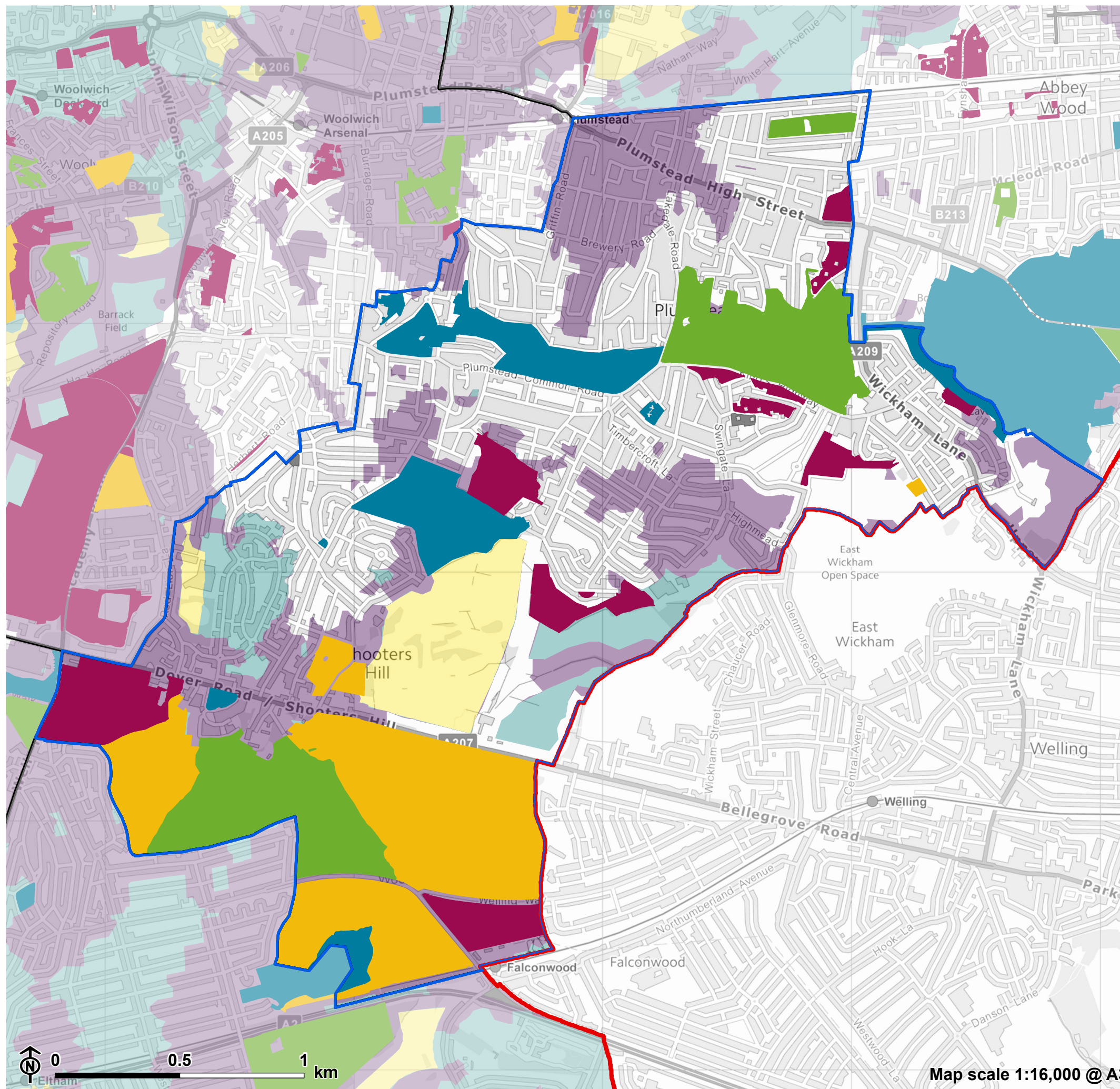
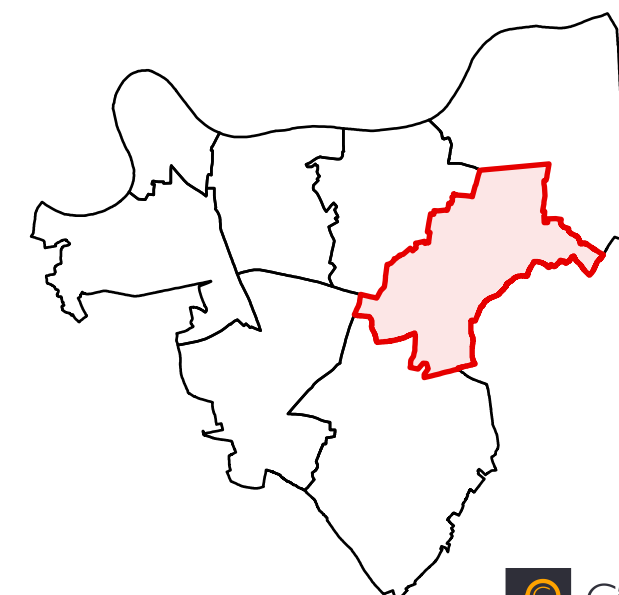


Figure 6.6f: Accessible green space provision in Plumstead & Shooters Hill

-  Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
-  Plumstead & Shooters Hill boundary
-  Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- Accessible green space quality and value score**
-  Higher quality, higher value
-  Higher quality, lower value
-  Lower quality, higher value
-  Lower quality, lower value
-  Not surveyed in 2025 or 2017
- Count of Areas of Deficiency**
-  Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
-  Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
-  Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy



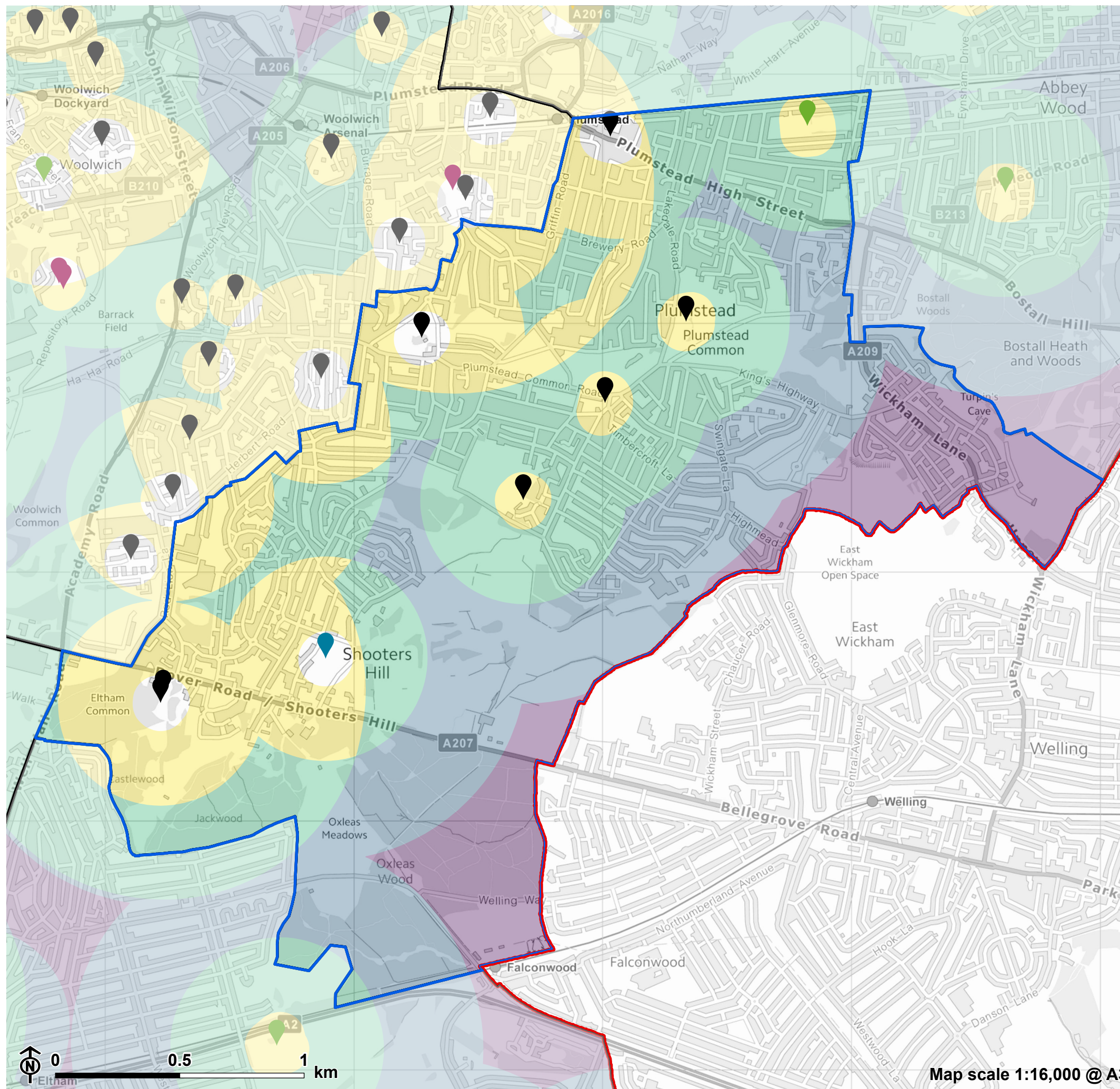
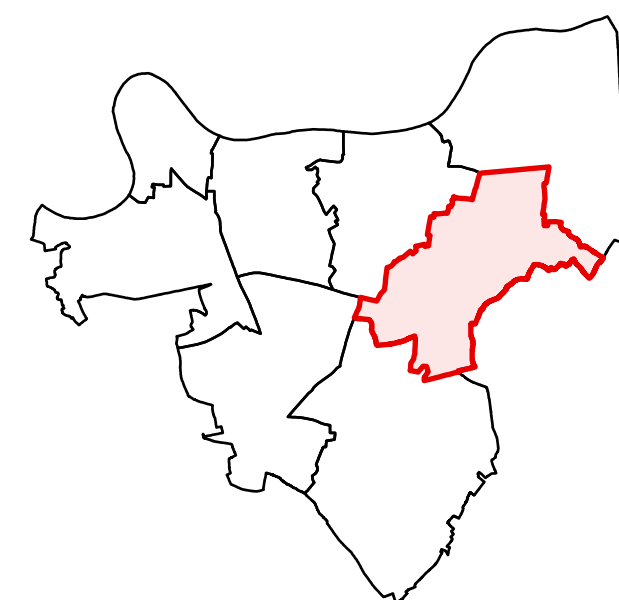


Figure 6.6g: Provision for children and teenagers in Plumstead & Shooters Hill

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Plumstead & Shooters Hill boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- Play space quality and value score 2025
 - Higher quality, higher value
 - Higher quality, lower value
 - Lower quality, higher value
 - Lower quality, lower value
 - Not surveyed
- Play space Areas of Deficiency (AoD)
 - Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in all levels of the hierarchy





Oxleas Meadows

Accessibility

6.102 There is increased access to greenspace in Plumstead & Shooters Hill analysis area compared to other parts of the borough. **Figure 6.6f** shows the cumulative areas of deficiency. In the north east, the majority of the analysis area has access to all three levels of the hierarchy, with small pockets of deficiency in access to one level (either the local, small or pocket hierarchy). In the south west, most of the analysis area has access to one level of the hierarchy (mostly the metropolitan hierarchy). Much of the area covered by this AoD is open space around Shooters Hill. The population within this AoD is limited to the north west corner of Shooters Hill. Overall, approximately 5% of Plumstead & Shooters Hill analysis area is within an AoD for all levels of the hierarchy, an area which encompasses Shooters Hill Sixth Form College and Shooters Hill Golf Club, rather than residential areas.

6.103 Overall, the deficiency in access to all types of provision for children and teenagers within Plumstead & Shooters Hill analysis area is slightly higher than the average across the borough. Whilst access to neighbourhood and local play, as well as youth spaces are similar to the average for the whole borough, access to doorstep spaces is generally lower. 94% of Plumstead & Shooters Hill analysis area is in an AoD for doorstep play (see **Figure 6.6g**).

6.104 Access to allotments in Plumstead & Shooters Hill analysis area compares favourably to the average for the borough. 87% of the analysis area has access to allotments, compared to 13% which are deficient in access. The areas of deficiency are in south of the analysis area, and mostly cover areas of natural and semi-natural habitats rather than populated residential areas.

Potential GBI enhancements

- Explore the opportunity to provide a community garden or orchard in Plumstead Common and Winn's common to provide food growing opportunities in the north.
- Standalone play spaces should be prioritised in areas around Eglinton Hill in the west and Flaxton Road in the east. Investment in equipped facilities and the design of these spaces should be reviewed to improve the value of sites.
- Consider expanding existing play spaces within parks to introduce new play equipment for a variety of ages and more inclusive equipment. Ensure that play spaces also provide provision for teenagers and all equipment is maintained to a high standard.

- Enhance the management regimes in amenity greenspaces across the analysis area to improve the quality of site facilities and features. Consider opportunities to increase the multi-functionality of these spaces by understanding the local community needs and the potential opportunities amenity greenspace may provide.
- Introduce improved management in natural and semi-natural greenspace around Shooters Hill e.g. Oxleas Wood to balance the safety and facilities for visitors with important habitats. Improved connectivity between these areas could allow them to function as one district level open space, improving access across this analysis area and beyond to that level of the hierarchy.
- Provision of very small spaces to improve access to this level of the hierarchy in the north around Conway Road and Brewery Road and in the west around Eastview Avenue, Thornhill Avenue and Duncroft.

Within existing SINC and greenspaces, the following opportunities exist:

- Improved habitat management is required for Oxleas Meadow SINC and Shrewsbury Park, Shooters Hill Golf Course, Dothill Allotments & Woodlands Farm SINC to address recreational pressures and issues with fly tipping.
- The creation of new open water habitats such as ponds, streams, ditches and naturalised surface-level SuDS features, should be targeted towards large SINC and greenspaces such as Plumstead Common (Winn's Common, Bleak Hill and the Slade) SINC and surrounding amenity greenspaces including those to the north and south of Plumstead Common. This could form part of the broader initiative recommended to create a blue / green corridor along the Wogebourne watercourse, which flows along the east of this analysis area. The blue / green corridor should extend north towards the Ridgeway SINC. This would provide enhanced ecological connectivity, whilst improving access to blue space.
- The LNRS identifies the opportunity to deliver restoration, expansion and connection of terrestrial linear habitats and particularly hedgerows within Shooters Hill Woodlands SINC and Shrewsbury Park, Shooters Hill Golf Course, Dothill Allotments & Woodlands Farm SINC. Other linear habitats suitable to enhancement in this area include tree lines and woodland shelterbelts.

Outside of the existing SINC and greenspace network, the following opportunities exist:

- A new blue / green corridor should be created using pocket park principles to create a network of well-connected habitats; including grasslands, woodlands, tree lines, hedgerows and open water habitats. Any new blue / green corridor should enhance ecological connectivity with Lesnes Abbey Woods and Bostall Woods SINC to the north east and to Plumstead Gardens open space to the north, continuing north into neighbouring Thamesmead and Abbey Wood. This intervention would provide direct functional connectivity with the Ridgeway SINC and beyond into the neighbouring borough of Bexley.
- This analysis area benefits from significant areas of natural and semi-natural habitats. However, ecological connectivity through the developed residential areas could be improved. There are particular opportunities for enhancements through tree planting and retrofitting biodiverse surface-level SuDS to provide supplementary benefits such as cooling and shading and nature based solutions to surface water flooding along the following roads: White Heart Road, Plumstead High Street, Plumstead Common Road, Shooters Hill, Lakedale Road and King's Highway.
- Where linear terrestrial habitats, such as hedgerows can be enhanced, expanded, or created as part of road and active travel route improvements these should be prioritised to enhance ecological connectivity north to south and east to west between larger areas of natural and semi-natural greenspace. Potential locations include Oxleas Meadow SINC and Shrewsbury Park, Shooters Hill Golf Course, Dothill Allotments & Woodlands Farm SINC with smaller parks and gardens such as Plumstead Common, Rockcliffe Gardens and north towards St Nicholas Garden and Plumstead Gardens.

Thamesmead & Abbey Wood



Thamesmead & Abbey Wood

Thamesmead & Abbey Wood is located at the north eastern limit of the borough. The River Thames forms the northern boundary of the analysis area. Located in the north, Thamesmead forms an area of residential land use surrounded by semi-natural greenspaces and surrounding marshland. Lying to the south, Abbey Wood is predominantly residential in character. The London Borough of Bexley borders the analysis area to the east.

Figure 6.7a Location plan

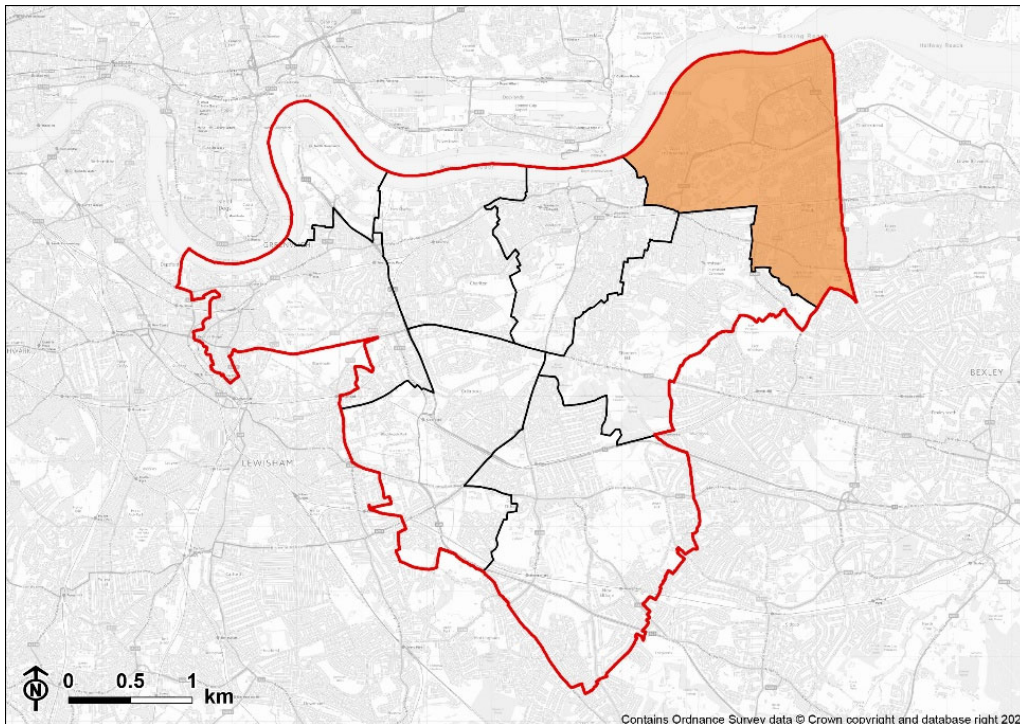
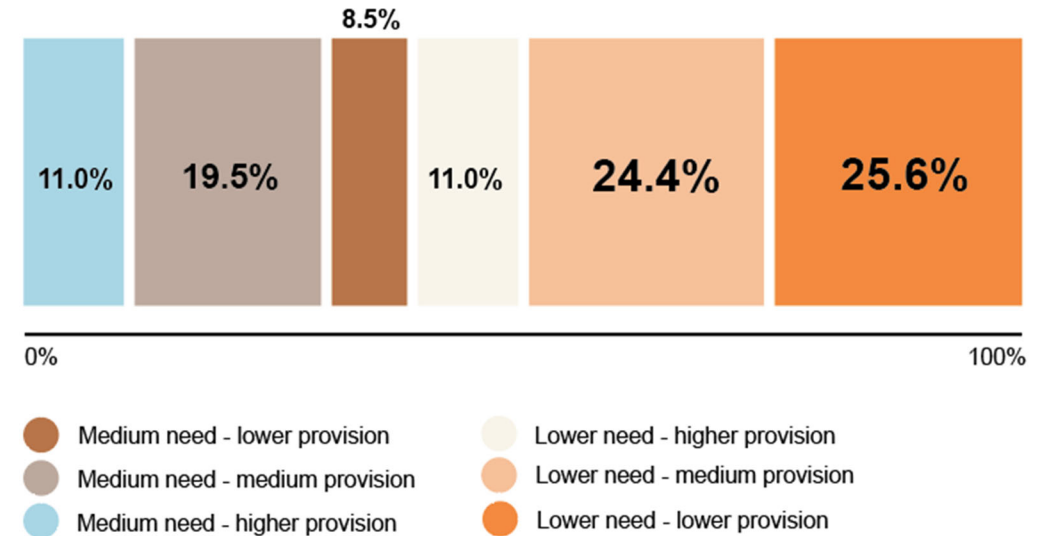


Figure 6.7b Distribution of need / provision ratings for Thamesmead & Abbey Wood (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)



London GI Framework: Distribution of need / provision ratings for Thamesmead & Abbey Wood (all objectives combined)

- The analysis area is devoid of areas identified as highest need when all objectives are included, weighted by health and social equity.
- Small pockets of land within central Thamesmead and dense residential areas within Abbey Wood are defined as medium need and lowest provision.
- Larger swaths of land bordering the River Thames, sections of Thamesmead and land to the north of Abbey Wood station are described as exhibiting lowest need and lowest provision.

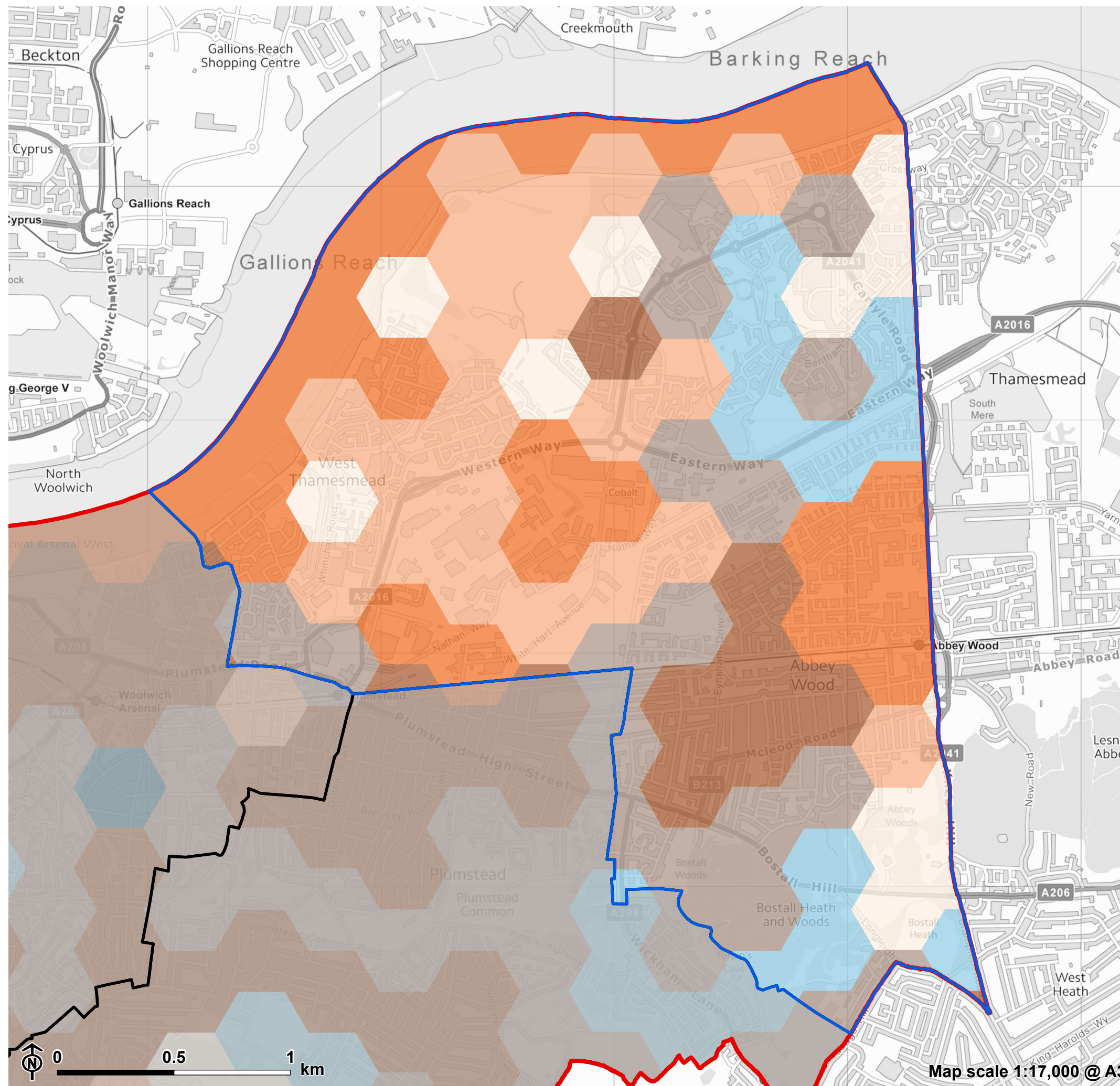


Figure 6.7c: Spatial distribution of need and provision for Thamesmead & Abbey Wood (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Thamesmead & Abbey Wood
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary

Need versus provision

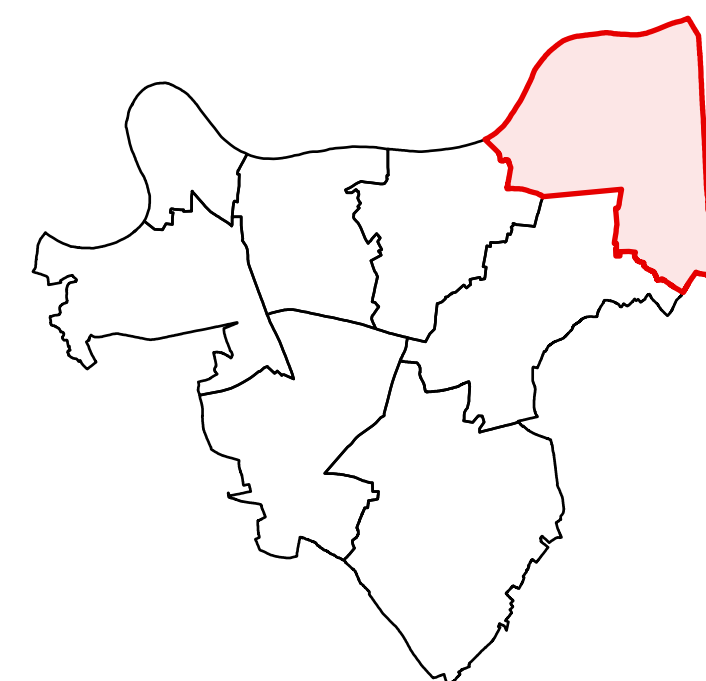
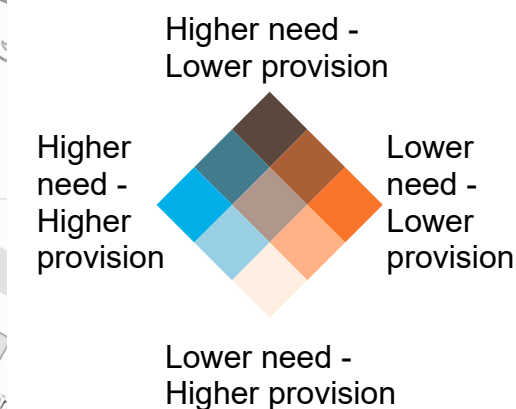
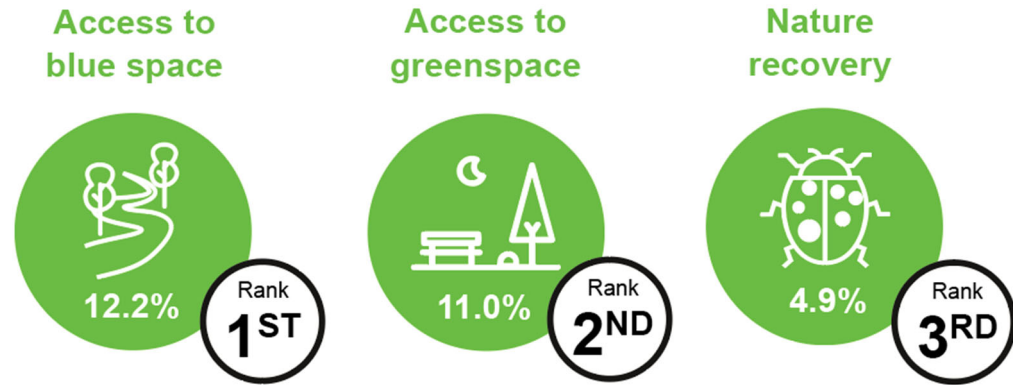


Figure 6.7d: Top three objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision which form the priority objectives for Thamesmead & Abbey Wood



Improved access to blue and greenspace as well as nature recovery form the priority objectives for Thamesmead & Abbey Wood.

London GI Framework: Ranking of objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision in Thamesmead & Abbey Wood

- The analysis area is identified as highest need and lowest provision for improved access to blue space, albeit this covers only 12.2% of the analysis area.
- Areas defined as highest need with lowest existing provision for improved access to greenspace cover only 11.0% of the analysis area.
- Nature recovery is ranked third (4.9%) for the objective demonstrating the highest need and lowest provision in the analysis area.
- No areas within Thamesmead & Abbey Wood exhibit highest need and lowest provision for objectives relating to flood risk mitigation, clean water, clean air, greener active travel routes and greener high streets.

Nature recovery

Assets

6.105 There are no statutorily designated nature conservation sites. However, there are several non-statutory SINC's present within the area, including the extensive Lesnes Abbey Woods and Bostall Woods Metropolitan SINC and linear Ridgeway in Greenwich Borough (Grade II) SINC. There is a large area of potential SINC at Thamesmead, as identified in the 2024 SINC review. This correlates with an area recognised as Thames Estuary South IIA.

6.106 Priority habitats are varied and include deciduous woodland, wood pasture and parkland, good quality semi-improved grassland and lowland heathland.

6.107 There is good ecological connectivity afforded between habitats to the north, and habitats to the south of the A2016. The Ridgeway SINC is a recognised green corridor which offers connectivity between the large area of well-connected SINC's to the east in the neighbouring Borough of Bexley and to the west via the Plumstead Railway Cutting SINC of Woolwich analysis area. It also offers connectivity with an allotment and sports grounds near Abbey Wood. North of the A2016, there are several parks and gardens including Birchmere Park and Gallions Hill which provide ecological connectivity between the SINC's in neighbouring Bexley to the east, and the Thamesmead SINC's and other semi-natural greenspaces, green corridors and parks and gardens including Thamesmead Canal, Gallions Park, Broadwater Dock and Erebs Drive towards the River Thames.

6.108 Together the SINC network covers 29% of the analysis area. The woodland cover (as informed by the National Forest Inventory), tree canopy and green cover (as informed by the GLA's London-wide dataset) are presented in **Table 6.14**.

Table 6.14 Woodland, tree canopy and green cover

Woodland cover	Tree canopy cover	Green cover
12%	21%	46%



View towards Lookout Hill and The Tor, Gallions Reach Park

Pressures and deficiencies

6.109The 2024 SINC review identified that at Birchmere Borough (Grade I) SINC, the lake and its surroundings were well used by the local community, which constrains its biodiversity value. This 2025 open space audit, identified that there were desire lines present, which builds on the findings of the 2024 review. The 2025 audit also identified scope for biodiversity and wildlife enhancement.

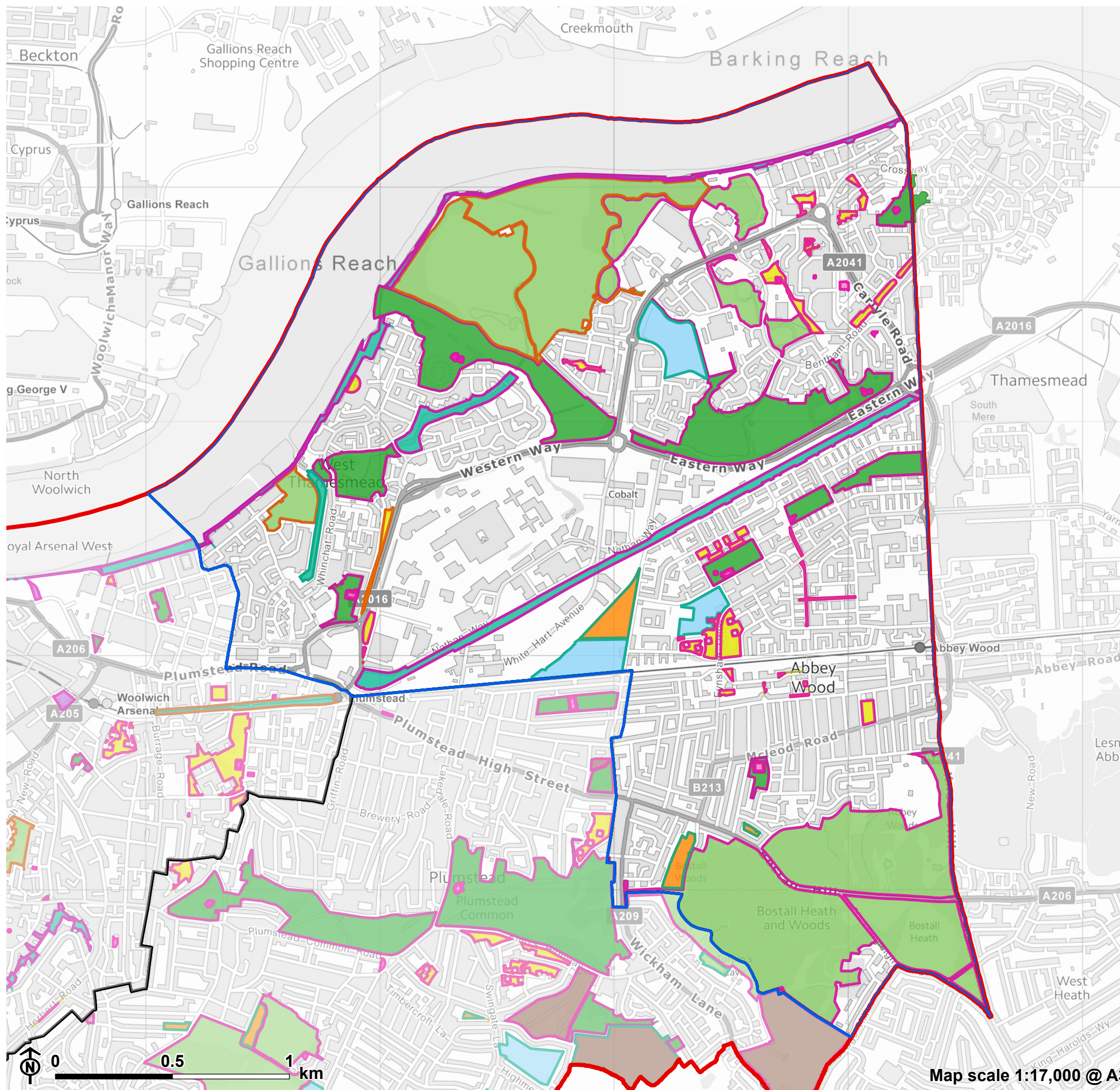
6.110There are several medium sized areas of deficiency in access to nature, covering a total of 8% of the analysis area, mostly to the north of Greenwich Ridgeway SINC, with one area located immediately south at the location of the allotment and sports grounds near Abbey Wood. In addition to the areas of deficiency, Abbey Wood forms a dense residential area, though it is in close proximity to Lesnes Abbey Woods and Bostall Woods SINC.

Open space

6.111The provision of open space in Thamesmead & Abbey Wood analysis area is shown by typology and access level on **Figure 6.7e**. There are 176.11 ha of publicly accessible open space in this analysis area, comprising 51 separate sites. In the south, open space provision is dominated by natural and semi-natural greenspace, around Bostall Heath, which forms an important metropolitan grade open space within the hierarchy. In the north, open space provision includes natural and semi-natural greenspace with no access (e.g. Plumstead Marshes) and publicly accessible parks and gardens (e.g. Gallions Hill and Birchmere Park). There are a number of green corridors, particularly in the north, including alongside the River Thames and the Ridgeway which runs south west to north east across the analysis area.

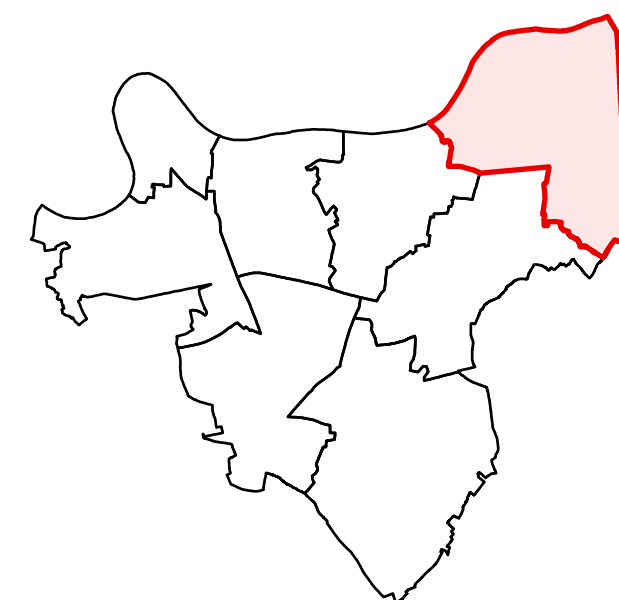
Quantity

6.112The provision of 3.36 ha of accessible greenspace per 1,000 of the population in Thamesmead & Abbey Wood analysis area is a higher than the borough average, and above the standard for accessible greenspace. In particular, it is the provision of natural and semi-natural greenspace which contributes to the total. Natural and semi-natural greenspace provision is higher than the borough average, one of only two analysis areas to be above the average. The main contribution to this is Bostall Heath to the south of the area. Much of this site is also designated for its ecological value, as already discussed. The provision of both parks and gardens and amenity greenspace is slightly under the borough average.



**Figure 6.7e: Open space provision in
Thamesmead & Abbey Wood**

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Thamesmead & Abbey Wood boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- LUC Open Space 2025**
- Agricultural land
- Allotments
- Amenity greenspace
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Civic Space
- Green corridor
- Natural and semi-natural greenspace
- Outdoors sports facilities
- Parks and gardens
- Provision for children and young people
- Access category**
- Freely accessible
- Restricted access
- No public access



Map scale 1:17,000 @ A3

6.113 The provision of allotments within Thamesmead & Abbey Wood analysis area is higher than the borough average and standard. Provision of this typology is mostly found in the south of the analysis area, including Cooks Farm Allotments and Church Manorway Allotments.

6.114 Provision for children and teenagers includes standalone play areas and play areas within larger parks and gardens. The quantity of this typology is 0.09 ha per 1,000 of the population. This is less than half the borough average, as well as being below the recommended standard.

6.115 In addition, there is a notably high provision of green corridors, which is more than four times the borough average. These spaces have an important role in providing additional connectivity between open spaces.

Table 6.15 Performance compared to borough average and quantity standards (as set out in Table 5.5)

Typology	Provision	Comparison to borough average	Performance against standard
Accessible greenspace	3.36 ha / 1,000 population	+ 0.59 ha / 1,000 of the population	0.36 ha / 1,000 population surplus
Allotments	0.11 ha / 1,000 population	+ 0.04 ha / 1,000 population	0.04 ha / 1,000 population surplus
Provision for children and teenager	0.09 ha / 1,000	- 0.11 ha / 1,000 children	NA
Parks and gardens	1.17 / ha / 1,000	- 0.09 ha / 1,000 population	NA
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	1.95 ha / 1,000	+ 0.73 ha / 1,000 population	NA
Amenity greenspace	0.24 ha / 1,000	- 0.05 ha / 1,000	NA
Green corridors	0.47 ha / 1,000	+ 0.35 ha / 1,000	NA
Civic space	0.00 ha / 1,000	- 0.04 ha / 1,000	NA

Typology	Provision	Comparison to borough average	Performance against standard
Cemeteries and churchyards	0.00 ha / 1,000	- 0.16 ha / 1,000	NA

Quality and value

6.116 Figure 6.7f shows the quality and value scores of the open spaces assessed (excluding provision for children and teenagers) in 2017 and 2025, against the 2025 benchmarks. 33% of open space scored above both the quality and value criteria in Thamesmead & Abbey Wood. Whilst there are variable scores in all typologies, generally the natural and semi-natural greenspace typologies score more poorly and parks and gardens score more highly.

6.117 Figure 6.7g indicates the quality and values scores for provision for children and teenagers. This score was calculated for 10 play spaces in Thamesmead & Abbey Hill analysis area. Nearly three quarters (70%) of the of play spaces scored above the quality and value benchmarks. This is higher than in other parts of the borough. No play spaces scored below both benchmarks.

Accessibility

6.118 There is a larger degree of access to greenspace in Thamesmead & Abbey Hill analysis area compared to other parts of the borough. Only 4% compared of the analysis area is within AoD for all levels of the hierarchy, compared to 8% across the borough. This is shown in **Figure 6.7f**. Areas included within these areas are generally not residential areas, but comprise HMP Belmarsh, Woolwich Polytechnic School for Boys and small areas adjacent to the Thames Path National Trail. Generally, access is better in the south, with many parts of Abbey Wood having access to all levels of the hierarchy. Access to the metropolitan level of the hierarchy is particularly strong compared to the borough average (17% in the AoD compared to 42%).

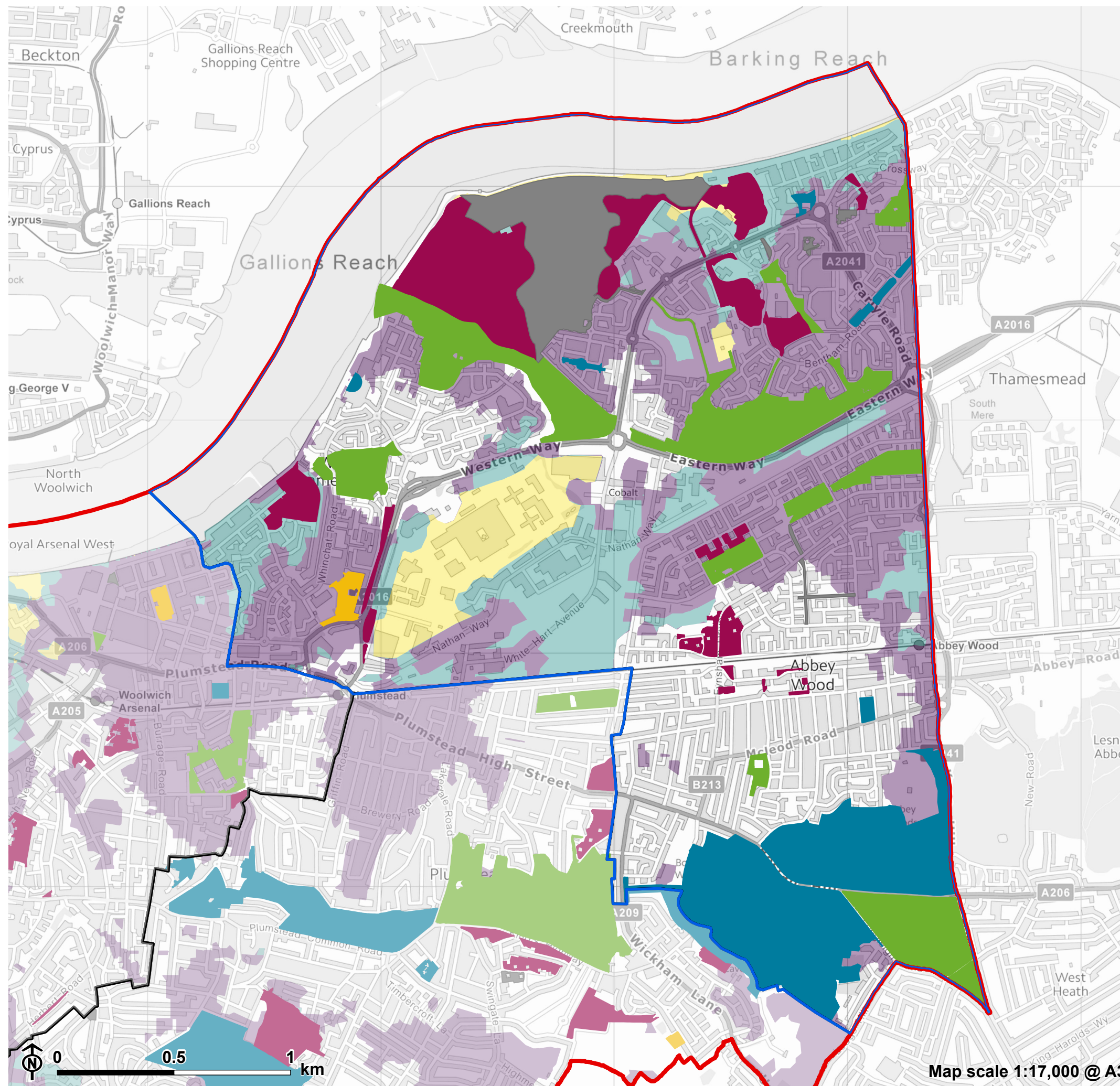
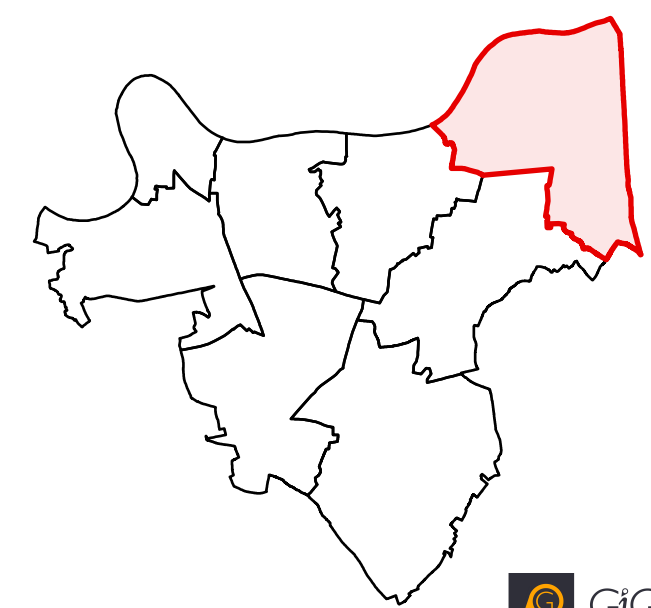


Figure 6.7f: Accessible green space provision in Thamesmead & Abbey Wood

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
 - Thamesmead & Abbey Wood boundary
 - Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- Accessible green space quality and value score**
- Higher quality, higher value
 - Higher quality, lower value
 - Lower quality, higher value
 - Lower quality, lower value
 - Not surveyed in 2025 or 2017
- Count of Areas of Deficiency**
- Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy



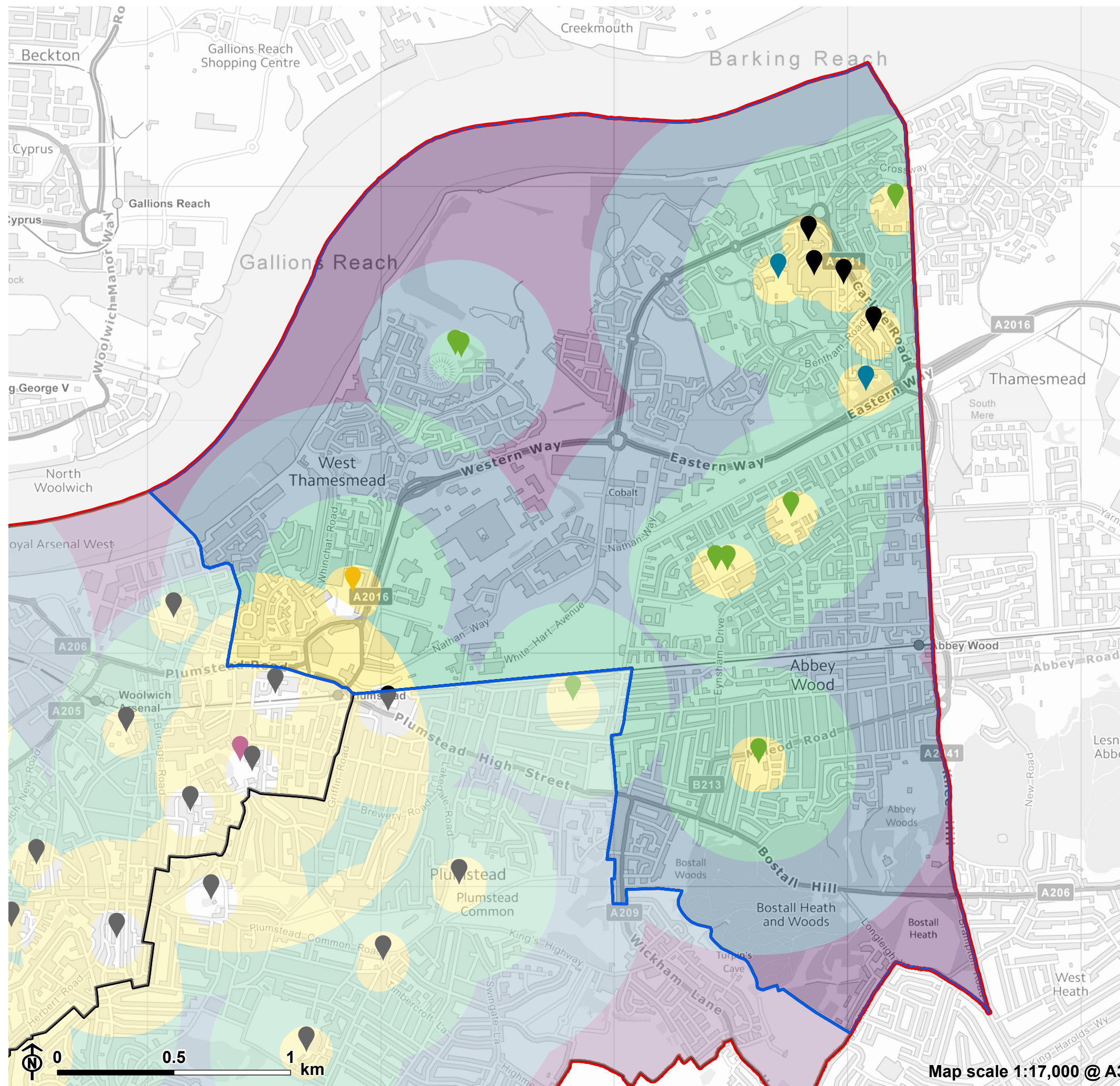
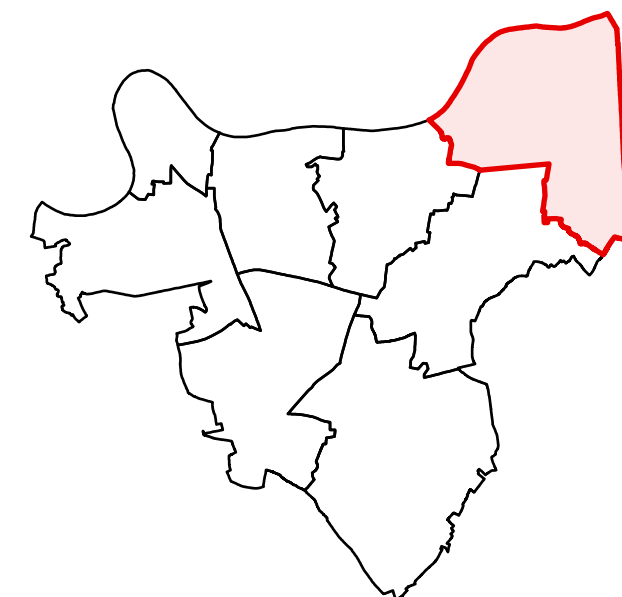


Figure 6.7g: Provision for children and teenagers in Thamesmead & Abbey Wood

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
 - Thamesmead & Abbey Wood boundary
 - Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- Play space quality and value score 2025
- Higher quality, higher value
 - Higher quality, lower value
 - Lower quality, higher value
 - Lower quality, lower value
 - Not surveyed
- Play space Areas of Deficiency (AoD)
- Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in all levels of the hierarchy



6.119 The deficiency in access to all types of provision for children and teenagers within Thamesmead & Abbey Wood is higher than the average across the borough. The areas covered by AoD are notably higher for youth spaces (97% compared to 64%) and neighbourhood spaces (24% compared to 13%). This is shown in **Figure 6.7g**. Access to play spaces is generally afforded in the centre of the analysis area, with both the northern and southern parts of the analysis area covered by AoD. Access to stand-alone youth spaces is restricted to a small corner in the west of Thamesmead & Abbey Wood analysis area.

6.120 Access to allotments in Thamesmead & Abbey Wood covers 64% of the analysis area. Whilst this is higher than the average cover across the whole borough, much of the AoD covers the River Thames and industrial uses alongside the river.

Potential GBI enhancements

- Explore opportunities where provision for children and teenagers could be expanded e.g. Gallions Park and Birchmere Park to meet the quantity benchmark.
- Consider opening up some of the natural and semi-natural greenspace around Plumstead Marshes for access to nature and / or to provide greater connectivity to the Thames Path National Trail.
- Introduce enhanced management regimes in natural and semi-natural greenspace for Bostall Woods and sites around Plumstead Marshes to improve value score of this district wide site.
- Consider the Thamesmead and Abbey Wood Opportunity Area as an opportunity to provide a new amenity greenspace with a play space that provides equipment for a variety of ages and is inclusive. Improvements to public transport should be complemented with GBI interventions to encourage active travel to nearby open spaces.
- Consider signage to promote active travel beyond the borough to strengthen the wider network for the benefit of people and nature e.g. along the B213 towards Lesnes Abbey Wood.

Within existing SINC and greenspaces, the following opportunities exist:

- Due to the particular recreational pressures reported at Birchmere SINC, it may be necessary to introduce public access management to enable habitat restoration

particularly where desire lines have formed. This is particularly important when considering future development and growth in the analysis area and the potential for increased recreational pressure on the SINC network. Delivering the recommendations of the 2024 SINC review to designate Thamesmead potential SINC and deliver a long-term management strategy focused on habitat creation and enhancement to protect sensitive habitats will contribute to the delivery of nature conservation outcomes.

- The LNRS identifies the opportunity to deliver restoration, expansion and connection of terrestrial linear habitats and particularly hedgerows within Lesnes Abbey Woods and Bostall Woods SINC. Other linear habitats suitable to enhancement in this area include tree lines and woodland shelterbelts. Additionally, the restoration, expansion and creation of heathland habitat should be targeted within this site.
- The various SINC and natural and semi-natural greenspaces present within 200m of the River Thames, including most notably Plumstead Marshes, Tripcock Park, Gallions Reach Park and Erebus Drive hold the most potential within the borough for delivering habitat enhancement and creation along the River Thames, due to their large size. Initiatives which contribute to the existing wildlife and ecological value of these habitats alongside delivering wider benefits for nature, the environment and for health and well-being of people should be sought, such as the restoration and expansion of open mosaic habitat on previously developed land, for the benefit of invertebrates and birds. This could contribute to the creation of a more diverse local landscape with opportunities for education and engagement with nature. This type of initiative may offer opportunity for off-site BNG delivery so long as it doesn't contradict existing ecological value or result in loss of high distinctiveness habitats, or habitats which are the result of a long period of establishment (such as mature deciduous woodland or species-rich grassland).

Outside of the existing SINC and greenspace network, the following opportunities exist:

- As recommended in the 2025 Biodiversity Assessment for the borough, in order to enhance the function of The Ridgeway SINC as a green corridor, optimisation of intervening habitats as stepping stones should be sought, maximising the principles of bigger, better, more joined up. This could be achieved through delivering enhancement to roadside verges and unused land, which provide connectivity between the green corridor and nearby greenspaces. Enhancements would need to focus on large scale, well connected and biodiverse features such as wildflower verges, species-rich hedgerow

planting, scrub creation and beneficial management of unused areas of land for nature by providing additional stepping stone habitat.

- There are several enhancement measures identified by the LNRS for linear features within this area including blue / green corridors such as canals, including restoring, expanding, creating and connecting terrestrial linear habitats such as hedgerows and scrub habitat, improving biodiversity value of canals and enhancing and expanding reedbed habitats. Measures should be targeted towards the following canals to enhance ecological connectivity: Harrow Canal, Butts Canal, Western Canal, Gallions Canal.
- There are opportunities for enhancement of walking and cycling routes through tree planting and retrofitting biodiverse surface-level SuDS to provide supplementary benefits and nature-based solutions such as urban cooling and the alleviation of surface water flooding along the following roads: A2041, Eynsham Drive, Bentham Road, and Bostall Hill.
- The Thames Path National Trail could also be enhanced, incorporating features such as street tree planting, wildflower verges for pollinators, green walls and intertidal habitat features along flood defences.

Woolwich



Woolwich

Woolwich is located in the north of the borough, bordering the River Thames. Land parallel to the watercourse is characterised by a number of urban regeneration projects and development sites. The corridor of the A205 runs broadly north-south and bisects the analysis area. Lying immediately west of this route, Woolwich Common forms a large open space stretching from the analysis area's southern extent to the centre of Woolwich.

Figure 6.8a Location plan

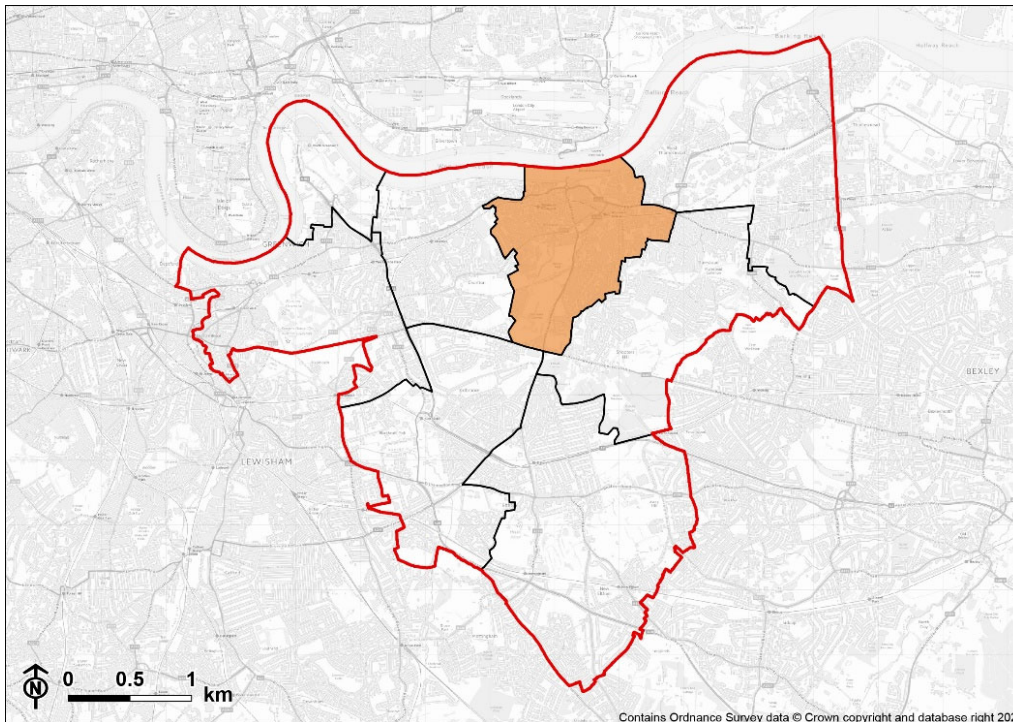
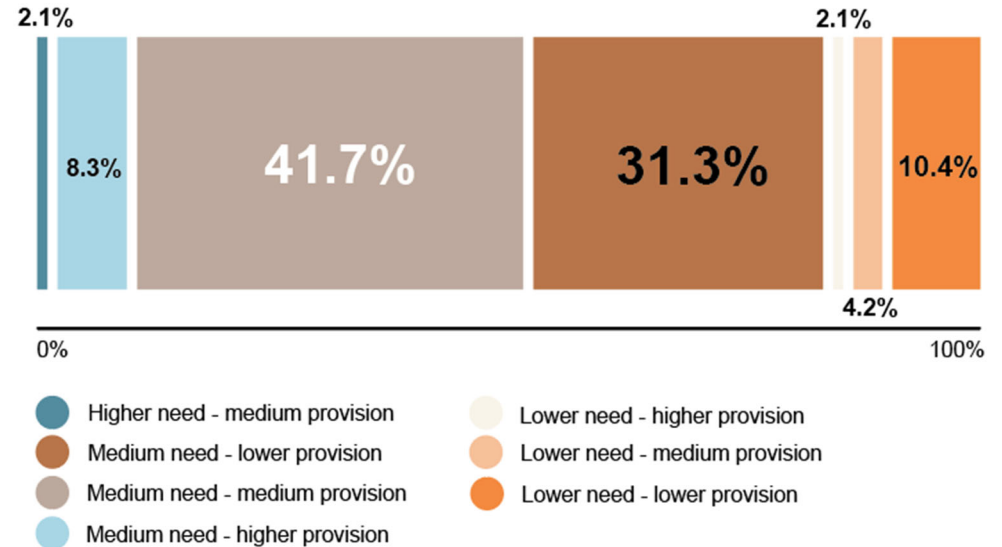


Figure 6.8b Distribution of need / provision ratings for Woolwich (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)



London GI Framework: Distribution of need / provision ratings for Woolwich (all objectives combined)

- Areas of highest need and medium provision are limited to land within Woolwich.
- The analysis area is devoid of areas identified as highest need and lowest provision or highest need and higher provision when all objectives are included, weighted by health and social equity.
- Land defined as medium need and lowest provision is dispersed across the analysis area; including land centred and bordering the A206 corridor and pockets of residential land use within Woolwich which adjoin the analysis area's western extent.

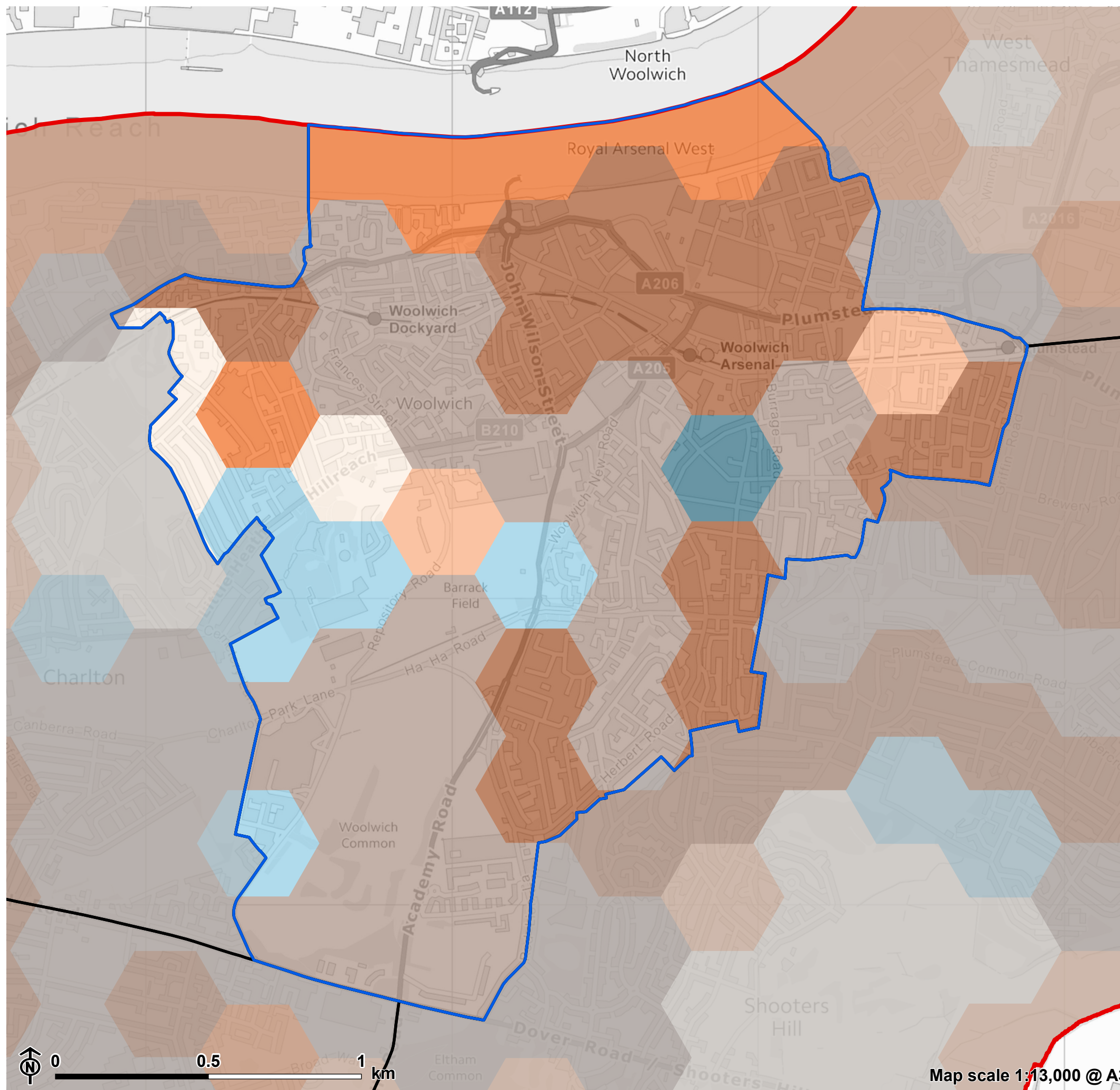


Figure 6.8c: Spatial distribution of need and provision for Woolwich (all objectives included, weighted by health and social equity)

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Woolwich
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary

Need versus provision

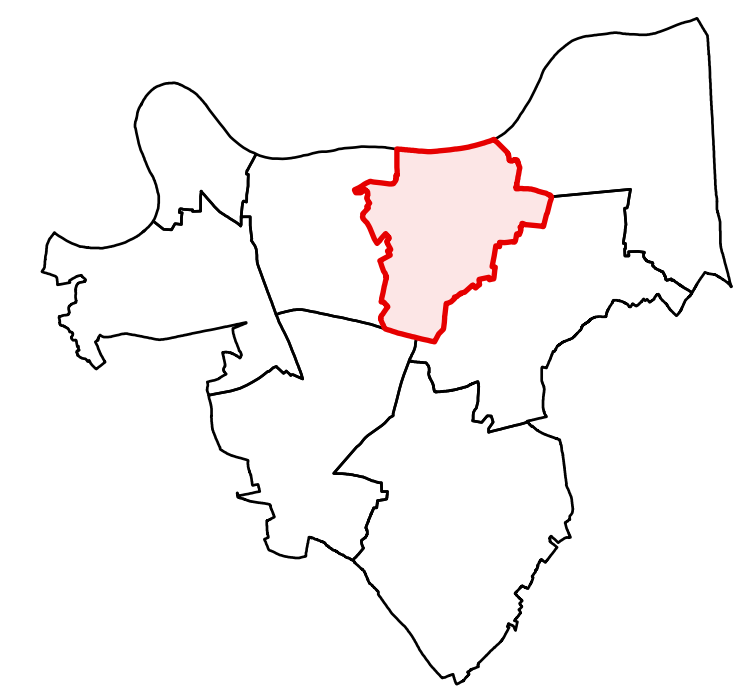
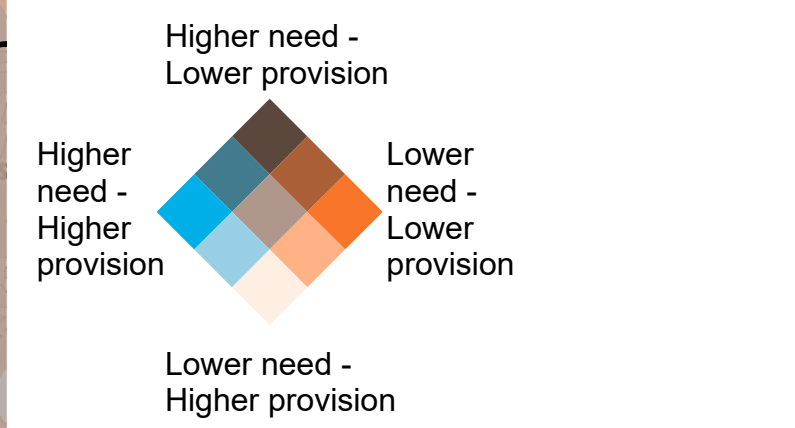
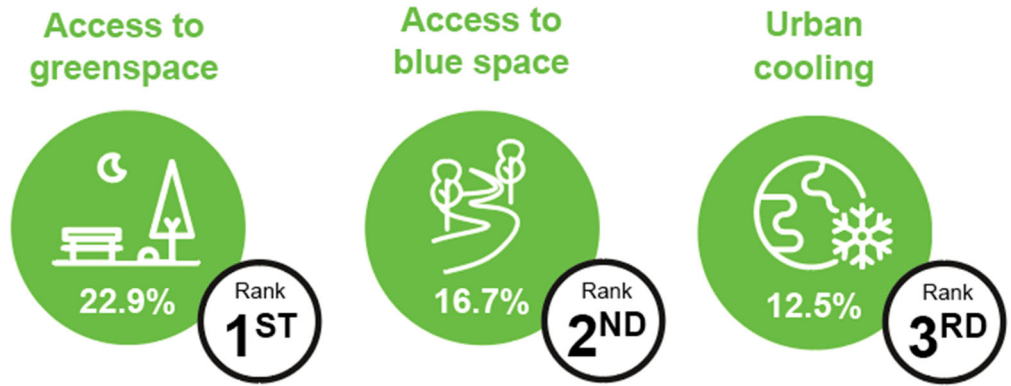


Figure 6.8d: Top three objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision which form the priority objectives for Woolwich



Improved access to green and blue space as well as urban cooling form the priority objectives for Woolwich.

London GI Framework: Ranking of objectives rated as highest need and lowest provision in Woolwich

- 22.9% of the analysis area is identified as highest need and lowest provision for improved access to greenspace.
- Areas defined as highest need with lowest existing provision for improved access to blue space cover 16.7% of the analysis area.
- Urban cooling is ranked third (12.5%) for the objective demonstrating the highest need and lowest provision in the analysis area.
- No areas within Woolwich exhibit highest need and lowest provision for objectives relating to nature recovery, flood risk mitigation or clean water.

Nature recovery

Assets

6.121 There are no statutorily designated nature conservation sites within the analysis area. However, there are several non-statutory SINCs present, including the extensive Woolwich Common, which contains areas of wood pasture and parkland and priority deciduous woodland. Together with habitats within Repository Wood SINC, and similar habitats in neighbouring Charlton and Plumstead and Shooters Hill analysis areas, these sites form a significant area of combined habitat with good ecological connectivity. Each habitat area is no more than 100m apart, separated by mostly tree-lined roads which offer ecological connectivity for birds, bats and flying insects in particular. The ecological value of the wood pasture and parkland habitats in this analysis area are enhanced by the presence of good quality semi-natural grassland at Charlton Cemetery and Charlton Park SINC.

6.122 Additional priority habitats present include traditional orchards, near Academy Place Orchard SINC and mudflats along the River Thames.

6.123 There are significant areas of amenity greenspace at Repository Woods South and Napier Lines, which contain semi-natural habitats including deciduous woodland, a lake and an area of tall grassland which appears to be under relaxed management. This offers a significant ecological asset within the network of well-connected habitats.

6.124 Together the SINC network covers 20% of the analysis area. The woodland cover (as informed by the National Forest Inventory), tree canopy and green cover (as informed by the GLA's London-wide dataset) are presented in **Table 6.16**.

Table 6.16 Woodland, tree canopy and green cover

Woodland cover	Tree canopy cover	Green cover
5%	18%	42%

Pressures and deficiencies

6.125 The 2024 SINC review identified that the northern part of Woolwich Common Borough (Grade I) SINC had a history of inappropriate use, both official and unofficial, and was still

subject to considerable pressure. This 2025 open space audit identified that Woolwich Common scored very low at 2/5 for 'Conservation of natural features, wild fauna and flora' and there were lots of desire lines with potential to damage habitats, which further builds on the findings of the 2024 review. A key recommendation of the audit was that a management plan is needed to balance the needs of people with the needs of nature.

6.126 There is a significant AoD in access to nature (SINC AoD) covering 21% of the analysis area. This area coincides with an area of significant developed land of varying types and few very small semi-natural greenspaces and parks and gardens.

Open space

6.127 The provision of open space in Woolwich is shown by typology and access level on **Figure 6.8e**. There are 81.77 ha of publicly accessible open space in this analysis area, comprising 56 separate sites. The largest open space in the area is Woolwich Common, which forms the only district grade open space in Woolwich. There are notable areas of amenity greenspace and green corridors which form important areas of open space.

Quantity

6.128 The provision of 1.56 ha of accessible greenspace per 1,000 of the population in Woolwich is a lower than the borough average, and below the standard for accessible greenspace. In particular, there is a lack of provision for parks and gardens. There are just four parks and gardens within Woolwich which are all relatively small. This also includes St Mary's Gardens, which includes areas of graveyard but functions as a park and garden (possibly due to the relative lack of other parks and gardens nearby).

6.129 Compared to other areas, there is a high level of amenity greenspace within the area, which often includes large spaces close to residential areas.

6.130 There is no provision of allotments within this analysis area.

6.131 Provision for children and teenagers includes standalone play areas and play areas within larger parks and gardens. The quantity of this typology is 0.14 ha per 1,000 of the population. This is less than half the borough average.



General Gordon Place

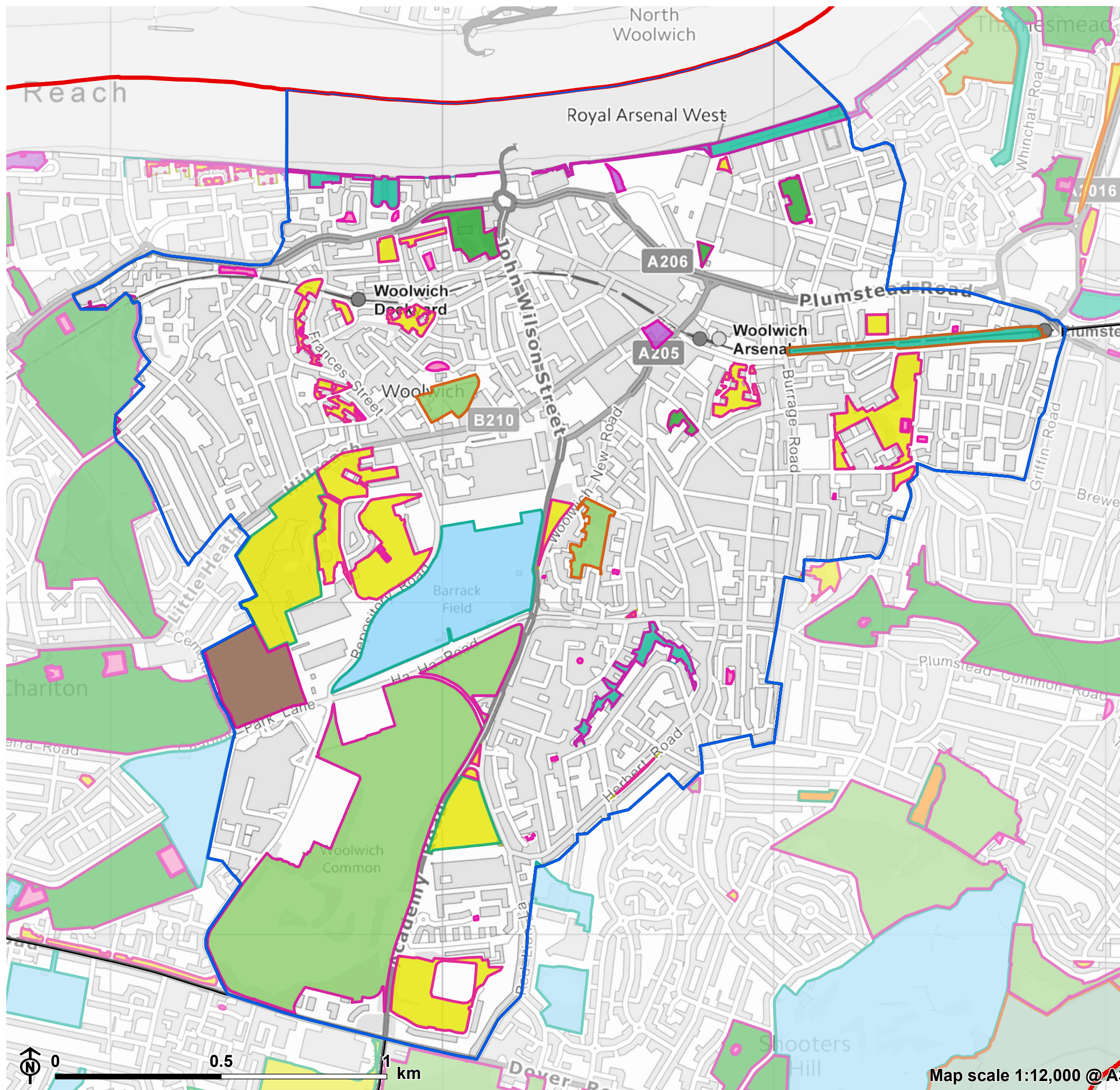


Figure 6.8e: Open space provision in Woolwich

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Woolwich boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- LUC Open Space 2025**
- Agricultural land
- Allotments
- Amenity greenspace
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Civic Space
- Green corridor
- Natural and semi-natural greenspace
- Outdoors sports facilities
- Parks and gardens
- Provision for children and young people
- Access category**
- Freely accessible
- Restricted access
- No public access

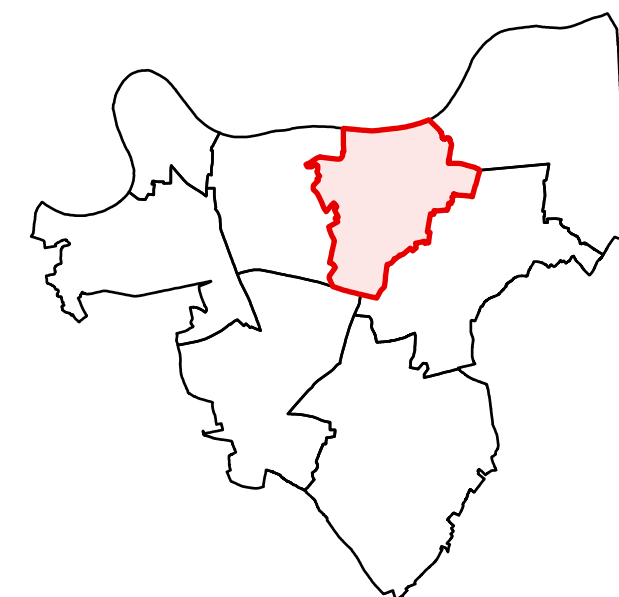


Table 6.17 Performance compared to borough average and quantity standards (as set out in Table 5.5)

Typology	Provision	Comparison to borough average	Performance against standard
Accessible greenspace	1.57 ha / 1,000 population	- 1.19 ha / 1,000 of the population	1.43 ha / 1,000 of the population surplus
Allotments	0.00 ha / 1,000 population	- 0.07 ha / 1,000 of the population	0.07 ha / 1,000 of the population surplus
Provision for children and teenager	0.14 ha / 1,000	- 0.05 ha / 1,000 of the children	N / A
Parks and gardens	0.08 ha / 1,000	- 1.18 ha / 1,000 of the population	N / A
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	0.98 ha / 1,000	- 0.23 ha / 1,000 of the population	N / A
Amenity greenspace	0.51 ha / 1,000	+ 0.23 ha / 1,000 of the population	N / A
Green corridors	0.13 ha / 1,000	+ 0.02 ha / 1,000 of the population	N / A
Civic space	0.02 ha / 1,000	- 0.02 ha / 1,000 of the population	N / A
Cemeteries and churchyards	0.13 ha / 1,000	- 0.03 ha / 1,000 of the population	N / A

Quality and value

6.132Figure 6.8f shows the quality and value scores of the open spaces assessed (excluding provision for children and teenagers) in 2017 and 2025, against the 2025 benchmarks. Less than a fifth (19%) of open space scored above both the quality and value criteria in Woolwich, whilst over half (58%) did not meet either benchmark. The percentage of open spaces which did not meet both criteria is higher than in other neighbourhood areas. In particular, amenity greenspaces scored below the benchmarks, as well as Woolwich Common which is the largest open space in Woolwich.

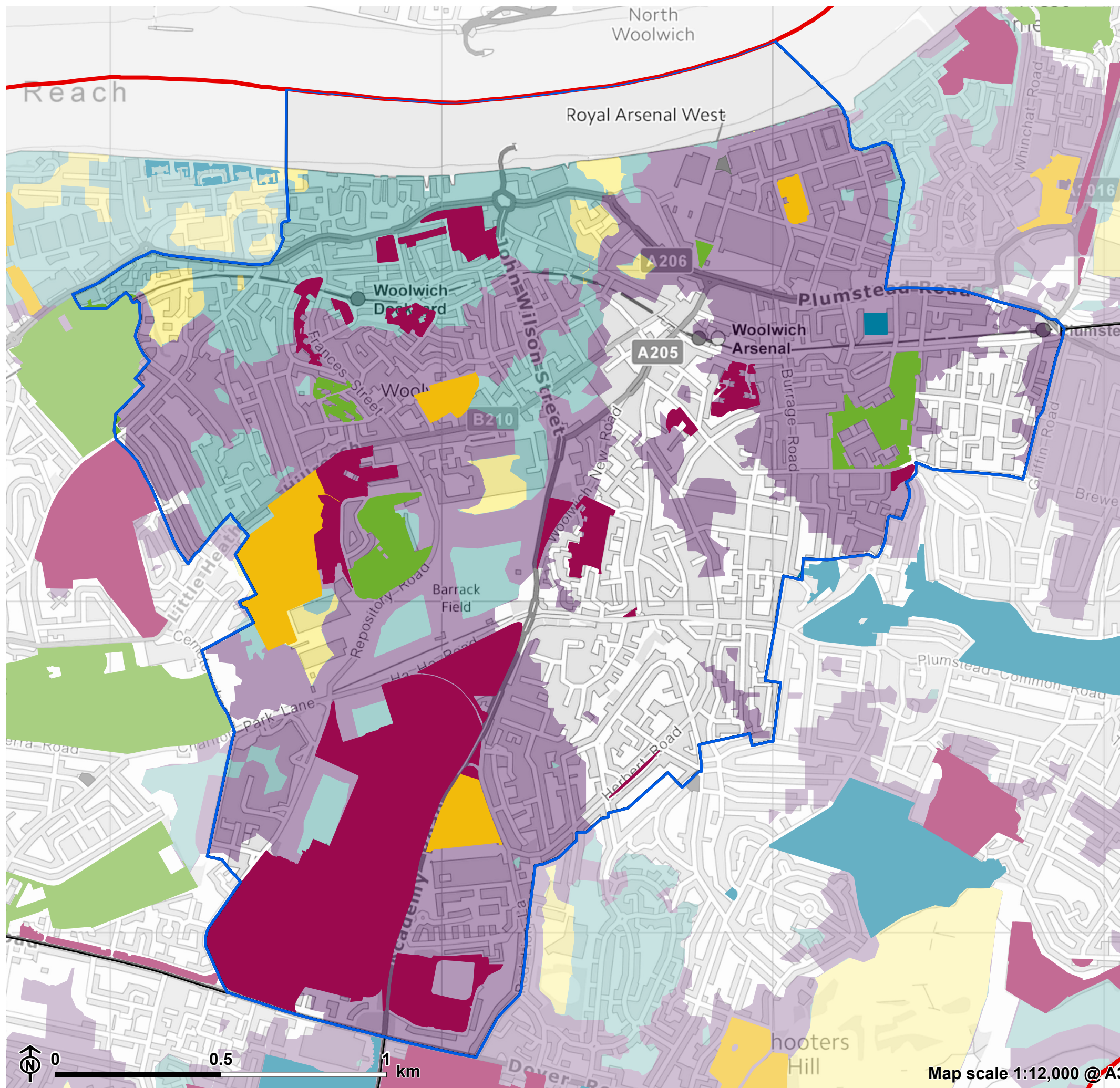
6.133Figure 6.8g indicates the quality and values scores for provision for children and teenagers. This score was calculated for four play spaces in Woolwich. One site scored above the benchmarks for quality and value. The other three sites did not meet either benchmark. These results suggest play spaces in Woolwich are performing poorly compared to other parts of the borough. However, this result is inconclusive due to the low number of play sites audited.

Accessibility

6.134Access to greenspace in Woolwich is higher compared to other parts of the borough. Only 2% compared of the analysis area lies within AoD for all levels of the hierarchy, compared to 8% across the borough. Areas which are deficient in access to all levels of the hierarchy occur in small pockets in the north and west of Woolwich. Good levels of access are evident at the district level of open space, with only 28% of Woolwich in the AoD for this (in the north of analysis area). Access to this level of open space is provided by Woolwich Common, which falls below the quality and value benchmarks.

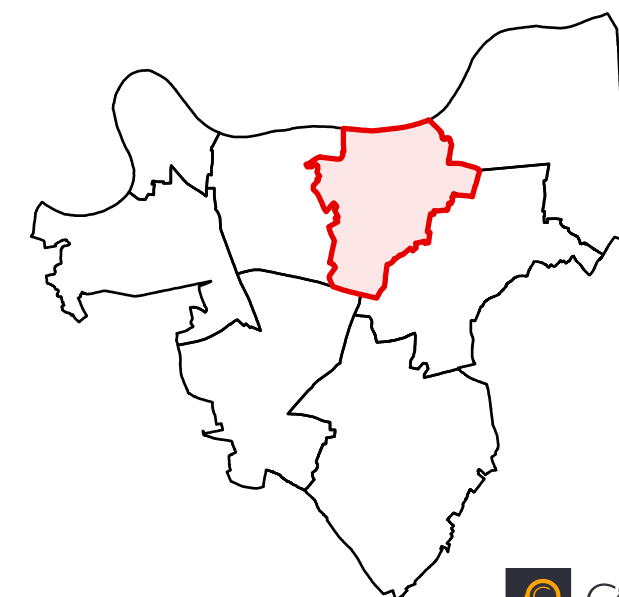
6.135Compared to other parts of the borough, access to provision for children and teenagers in Woolwich is generally good, with only 4% of the analysis area lying within an AoD for any type of play or youth space. Access is particularly good for neighbourhood and combined play spaces which provide access to 91% of the analysis area. Much of the AoD for this type of play spaces includes Woolwich Common and the River Thames, with only a small residential area deficient in access to this play type in the north east of Woolwich. Less provision is available for local, doorstep and stand-alone youth spaces.

6.136Compared to other parts of the borough, access to allotments in Woolwich is relatively poor. 65% of the analysis area is within the AoD for allotments, compared to 21% across the borough. This is notably higher than any other analysis area.



**Figure 6.8f: Accessible green space provision
in Woolwich**

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
 - Woolwich boundary
 - Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- Accessible green space quality and value score**
- Higher quality, higher value
 - Higher quality, lower value
 - Lower quality, higher value
 - Lower quality, lower value
 - Not surveyed in 2025 or 2017
- Count of Areas of Deficiency**
- Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy



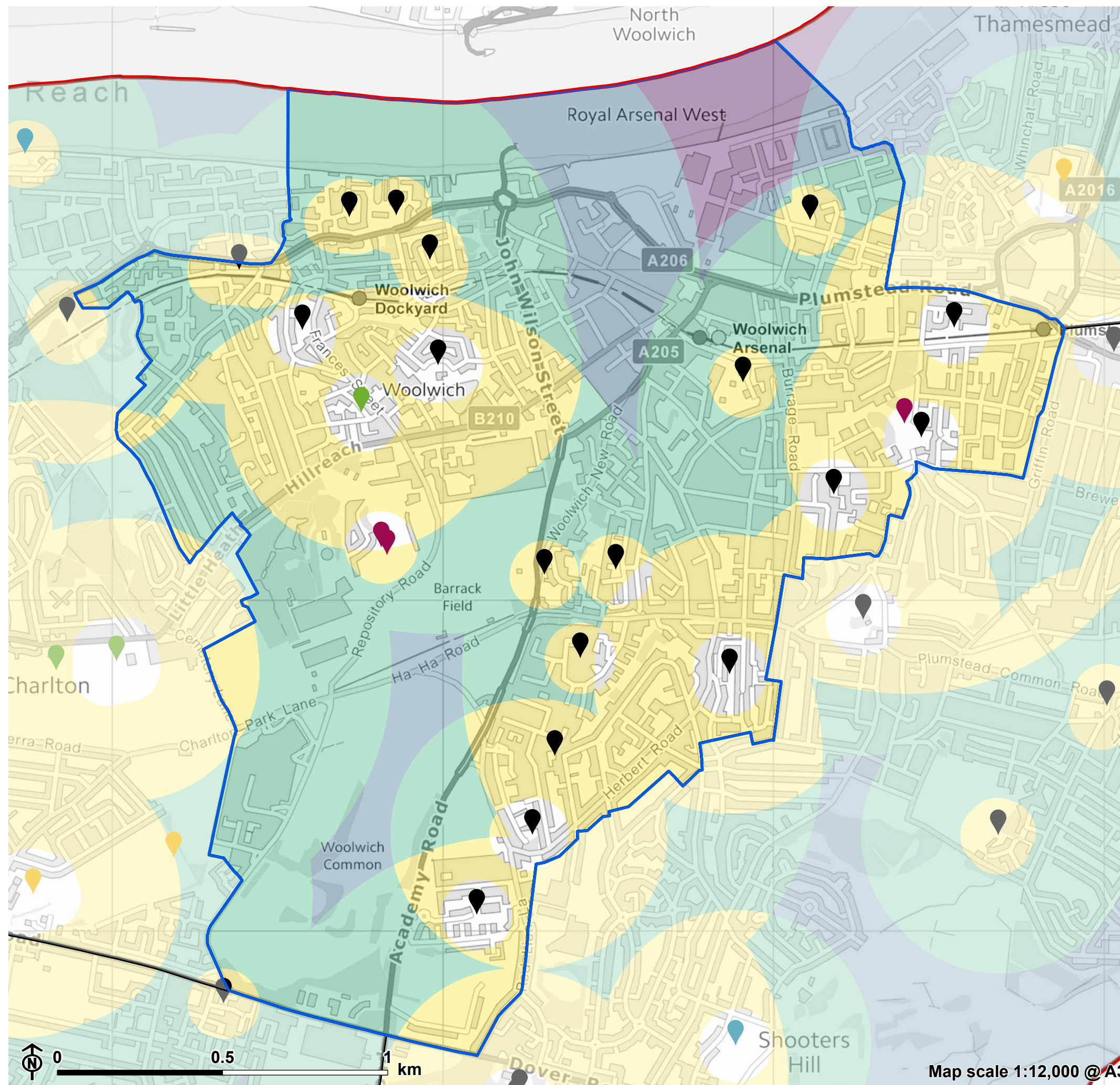
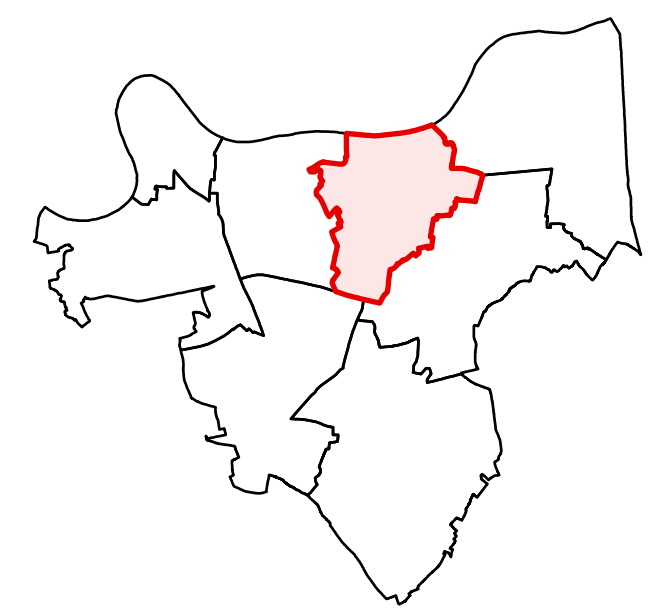


Figure 6.8g: Provision for children and teenagers in Woolwich

- Royal Borough of Greenwich boundary
- Woolwich boundary
- Neighbouring analysis area boundary
- Play space quality and value score 2025
 - Higher quality, higher value
 - Higher quality, lower value
 - Lower quality, higher value
 - Lower quality, lower value
 - Not surveyed
- Play space Areas of Deficiency (AoD)
 - Deficient in 1 level of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 2 levels of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in 3 levels of the hierarchy
 - Deficient in all levels of the hierarchy





Cadogan Road, Royal Arsenal West

Potential GBI enhancements

- Seek to enhance management regimes in Woolwich Common and amenity greenspace to balance the safety and facilities for visitors with important habitats. Improved connectivity between these areas could allow it to function as one district level open space, facilitating access across this analysis area and beyond to this level of the hierarchy.
- Explore opportunities to engage local communities in the management and ownership of publicly accessible open spaces to increase multi-functionality e.g. marketing and promotion of spaces online and via public noticeboards, food growing activities or use for community activities.
- Consider expanding existing play areas found with amenity greenspaces e.g. Napiers Line and Glyndon Open Space to meet quantity standard for provision for children and teenagers.
- Review open spaces to identify where potential community food growing opportunities could be located to provide accessible allotments to the analysis area. Potential sites may include areas within amenity greenspaces.
- Ensure the appropriate siting of GBI along key transport corridors, such as the A206 and along the railway line to improve air quality and achieve noise abatement benefits. Consider additional signage along the A206 connecting to the Thames Path National Trail to provide greater connectivity and access.
- Consider the Woolwich Town Centre Opportunity Area as the potential to provide allotment provision, as well as the creation of a park and garden to meet the quantity standard.

Within existing SINCs and greenspaces, the following opportunities exist:

- A habitat management plan is required for Woolwich Common to balance the needs of people with the needs of nature, due to a history of inappropriate use of the site. This should consider the opportunity for lowland heathland restoration, expansion and connection, as identified by the LNRS. Enhancing this habitat within Woolwich Common as well as seeking opportunities for expanding the habitat cover within nearby greenspaces should be sought.

- Opportunities for delivering enhancements to lowland meadow habitat at Charlton Cemetery should also be explored, as identified within the LNRS.
- Ecological connectivity could be enhanced through the north of the analysis area by enhancing amenity greenspaces, alongside increases in tree cover along streets to provide well connected corridors for dispersal between habitat areas. Amenity greenspaces could be enhanced through relaxed meadow management, supplemented by grass and wildflower seeding in areas which are not used for recreational activities. Incorporate associated features to support the full lifecycle of invertebrates such as bare ground, butterfly banks and insect hotels.
- There may be opportunity for delivering new blue-greenspace within areas of hard standing within 200m of the River Thames such as the Royal Arsenal (the location of the Royal Arsenal Panorama mural) and near Royal Arsenal Pier, off No. 1 Street. Other opportunities include the civic space at Warren Lane, and Maribor Park which comprises amenity grassland, ornamental planting, scrub and a few individual trees. The Royal Arsenal, civic space at Warren Lane and Maribor Park all offer most opportunity for offsite BNG delivery as they provide opportunities for establishing habitats and habitat mosaics, given the available area of land.

Outside of the existing SINC and greenspace network, the following opportunities exist:

- Within the north of Woolwich there are significant opportunities to deliver enhancements to amenity and civic spaces, which lie outside of the open space network. These interventions offer the opportunity to provide urban cooling benefits. There are significant areas of amenity grassland within residential areas, which together could form important stepping stone habitats for birds, bats and invertebrates through simple interventions such as relaxed meadow management, tree planting and incorporating habitat features such as bug hotels. Larger areas of amenity grassland could form community orchards or community gardens. This would provide combined benefit for people through enhanced wellbeing, whilst also contributing to urban cooling.
- Along linear infrastructure routes, there are opportunities for enhancing walking and cycling routes whilst contributing to enhanced ecological connectivity through tree planting and retrofitting biodiverse surface-level SuDS to provide supplementary benefits such as cooling and shading and nature based solutions to surface water flooding. These

enhancements could be targeted towards the following roads and active travel routes: B210, A205, A206, Ha Ha Road, Repository Road, Frances Street, Woolwich High Street, Blackfriars to Rotherhithe Cycleway, Greenwich to Woolwich Quietway and Woolwich to Lea Cycleway. Additionally, there is a significant lack of tree cover in Royal Arsenal West.

- The Thames Path National Trail could also be enhanced, incorporating features such as street tree planting (where appropriate), wildflower verges for pollinators, green walls and intertidal habitat features along flood defences.



Chapter 7: Policy recommendations

Chapter 7

Policy recommendations

Introduction

7.1 Planning plays a critical role in the delivery of GBI and open space. This includes setting clear expectations within Local Plan policy, along with other planning tools that support delivery. This chapter outlines the planning mechanisms and tools that can be used to help protect, enhance and deliver high-quality GBI in the borough and provides recommendations for their use.

7.2 The planning system provides a primary mechanism for the protection, enhancement and delivery of GBI. Through plan-led and development management processes, the planning system enables multi-functional GBI to be planned strategically in the right places, appropriately within new development and to be maintained in the long term.

7.3 At the strategic level, Local Plans can establish a framework for GBI networks, identifying key assets and areas for enhancement. At the site allocation stage, planning provides the opportunity to embed GBI principles within site design, ensuring the protection of existing features and the incorporation of new ones such as SuDS, tree planting and natural play. Furthermore, mainstreaming GBI across all policy areas ensures that multi-functional benefits are realised and that GBI contributes to wider placemaking and sustainability objectives.

7.4 Additional tools and mechanisms can support the delivery of GBI. Natural England's GI Standards provide benchmarks for quality, accessibility and functionality, guiding the preparation of evidence bases and local policy (see **Chapter 5**). The Urban Greening Factor (UGF), as set out in the London Plan can also secure a variety of multi-functional green features on a development site. Developer contributions, secured through Section 106 agreements or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), represent an important means of funding GBI implementation and long-term management.

7.5 This chapter is structured as follows:

- A discussion of good practice in embedding GBI within policy and guidance, drawing on sources such as Natural England's GI Process for Local Authorities and the London Plan.
- An appraisal of the Council's proposed draft GBI policies, accompanied by policy recommendations.
- An analysis of planning mechanisms available to support the effective delivery of GBI, both on-site and off-site.
- A case study and some next steps for the potential to develop a fund which would enable the allocation of S106 funds for open space and GBI into an identified pipeline of strategic projects.

Good practice

7.6 This section outlines examples of good practice in embedding GBI within planning policy and guidance. It draws on key sources, including Natural England's GI Process for Local Authorities and the London Plan, to illustrate effective approaches for integrating GBI principles into local policy frameworks.

Natural England GI Process for Local Authorities

7.7 Natural England's GI Process Journey for Local Planning Authorities sets out a six-stage approach to help councils strategically plan, embed, and deliver high-quality GBI. It supports integration into Local Plans and wider strategies by guiding authorities through:

- Stage 1: Partnerships;
- Stage 2: Vision informed by strategic context;
- Stage 3: Evidence;
- Stage 4: Plan strategically and develop green infrastructure policy and targets;
- Stage 5: Integrating the green infrastructure strategy; and
- Stage 6: Managed, valued, monitored and evaluated.

7.8 The Natural England GI Framework identifies some key principles that should be reflected in policy on GBI and urban greening. These include:

- Setting out a vision for GBI: to enable developers and their design teams to understand how their proposal can contribute or 'plug-in' to the wider strategic network.
- Providing a good evidence base: enable developers and their design teams to deliver meaningful contributions by being able to access or commission the most appropriate information.
- Developing clear strategy and policies: the need to give developers certainty over what GBI is needed on a site, including by defining quantitative standards / targets and site-specific requirements in site allocation policies.
- Influencing the design process: the need for developers and their design teams to consider multi-functional GBI design from the pre-application stage onwards through engagement with relevant stakeholders and analysis of the site and wider context. GBI should be multi-functional, varied, connected (for people and nature), designed to be accessible for all and responsive to an area's landscape / character.
- Ensuring long-term management, maintenance and monitoring: the need for developers and their design teams to provide sufficient information about long-term management and maintenance to ensure new GBI provides the long-term benefits desired. The importance of local authority monitoring and evaluation of GBI delivery is also emphasised.

London Plan Guidance

7.9 The London Plan is the strategic plan for London, setting out an economic, environmental, transport and social framework for development. It provides direction to boroughs on a wide range of matters, including the protection, enhancement and delivery of GBI and open space.

7.10 Chapter 8 of The London Plan provides a framework to guide the preparation of policies relating to GBI and open space. Boroughs are required to meet each of these in their Local Plan and evidence base:

- The requirement for each borough to prepare a GI Strategy to ensure that GBI is embedded in policy and decision making;
- The designation and protection of Metropolitan Open Land (MOL);
- The preparation of open space needs assessments, considering the quality, quantity and accessibility of open spaces;

- The use of the UGF to determine the level of greening required in new developments;
- The protection and enhancement of SINC's and associated ecological corridors;
- The protection and expansion of London's urban forest, including retention or replacement of trees and a target to increase canopy cover by 10% by 2050;
- The protection of allotments and encouragement of urban agriculture, including meanwhile use of vacant sites;
- The integration of natural flood management measures, such as SuDS, within new development;
- Recognition of the strategic role of waterways as multi-functional GBI; and
- The integration of GBI into building design to manage heat risk, improve air quality and support health and wellbeing outcomes.

Recommendations for the borough

7.11 This section provides an appraisal of the Council's proposed draft GBI policies 'Policy EN1: Green and Blue Infrastructure' and 'Policy EN2: Open Space'. Each policy is assessed against recognised good practice principles to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

Policy EN1: Green and Blue Infrastructure

Policy EN1: Green and Blue Infrastructure

1. Royal Greenwich will protect and enhance the borough's green and blue infrastructure to maximise social, environmental and economic benefits.

Urban Planting

1. New development must ensure the provision of urban planting within new, or existing urban realm. Urban planting will be considered to include, but is not limited to: trees, green walls, planted boundary treatments, blue-green roofs, edible gardens, rain gardens and other planted features and spaces.

2. Applications for major developments will be required to include some form of urban planting on-site and make provision for ongoing maintenance, set out in a Landscaping Strategy.

3. Non-major developments should deliver urban planting within external communal amenity space or public realm. A Landscaping Strategy should be submitted with all applications involving the provision of new dwellings.

Protecting Trees

4. Trees providing amenity, ecological and climate resilience, and/or historic value and those which contribute to the character and appearance of the townscape will be protected.

Food growing spaces and allotments

5. The provision of new allotments or community food growing spaces, including their ongoing maintenance, even at a micro level, should be provided on residential development sites or developments involving community facilities, except where robust evidence is provided that this would be impracticable or unviable.

6. Existing allotments will be protected, and development affecting these sites should contribute to their growth and improved management where feasible.

Urban Greening Factor

7. Residential developments should attain an Urban Greening Factor score of 0.4, and non-residential developments should attain an Urban Greening Factor score of 0.3, using the metric set out in London Plan policy G5 Urban greening.

8. Applicants will be expected to provide evidence that the Urban Greening Factor required for the site can be feasibly achieved, and if not, that urban greening will be maximised on site, with contributions sought for off-site greening measures to compensate for not reaching the UGF target score.

Green links and footpaths

9. Any development which would obstruct the path of Green Chain walks, Riverside walks or protected footpaths within Royal Greenwich will not be permitted.

Appraisal

7.12 EN1 is a strong policy that performs well against London Plan requirements and Natural England's Process Journey and it provides a clear framework for embedding GBI into new development. The inclusion of the UGF ensures consistency with London standards. Similarly, the requirement for a Landscaping Strategy for all development types demonstrates good practice in securing design quality, delivery and long-term maintenance. Some recommendations for further enhancement include:

- The policy supports the protection and enhancement of GBI but lacks reference to a GBI evidence base. It is recommended to link the policy explicitly to this Study.
- Does not indicate where or how GBI networks should be strengthened, missing an opportunity to spatially align with the LNRS.
- There is strong reference to tree protection, but there is no canopy cover target. It is recommended to include reference to a canopy target consistent with London Plan's 10% increase by 2050, or a clear tree replacement policy.

Policy EN2: Open Space

Policy EN2: Open Space

1. *Provision of, and access to open space in Royal Greenwich will be protected and enhanced wherever possible.*
2. *New open spaces created through development and existing open spaces improved as part of redevelopment, should be designed and managed to ensure high quality multi-functional spaces, with high levels of accessibility, usability and environmental value.*
3. *Open spaces should accommodate a range of sports and recreational activities wherever possible to meet the growing needs of the population. The development of new ancillary facilities for these activities are likely to be supported unless these are considered to be inappropriate in scale or appearance to the open space, or would compromise any existing climate, biodiversity or other function of the space.*

Metropolitan Open Land, Borough Open Land and the South East London Green Chain

4. Development in Metropolitan Open Land (MOL), Borough Open Land and the South East London Green Chain is inappropriate unless one of the following exceptions applies:

- *a. the provision of appropriate facilities (in connection with the existing use of land or a change of use), including buildings, for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation, cemeteries and burial grounds and allotments, as long as the facilities preserve the openness of the MOL or BOL;*
- *b. the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building, and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within MOL or BOL;*
- *c. the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces; or*
- *d. limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed land (including a material change of use to residential or mixed use including residential), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not cause substantial harm to the openness of the MOL or BOL.*

5. Special consideration will be given to development proposals on land fringing, abutting or otherwise having a visual relationship with MOL or BOL where development could be detrimental to its visual amenity or character. Opportunities for opening up visual links and green corridors or creating new access points into or between areas of open land will be supported.

6. Inappropriate development in MOL and BOL will not be permitted unless very special circumstances apply. Very special circumstances will not exist unless the potential harm to the space by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Non-designated open spaces

7. Development may only be supported on open spaces not designated as MOL or BOL in exceptional circumstances, when:

- *a. the site is not located in an area of deficiency of open space and the development would not result in the creation of any new deficiency of open space in the borough; and*
- *b. it would not result in the loss of land with amenity, beauty or heritage value.*

8. *Proposals for the regeneration of housing estates or public institutions which impact on open space on-site will re-provide the open space elsewhere on the site, at a sufficient quantum and with improved quality, allowing some level of public access to the open space where this is appropriate.*

New open spaces

9. *Major residential and mixed-use with residential developments must provide new or improved public open space in areas deficient in access to open space or where a deficiency would be created as a result of the development, unless robust evidence can be provided that this is impracticable.*

10. *If sufficient evidence is provided that providing new or improved public open space on site would be impracticable, a payment in lieu will be accepted to be used for the improvement of local public open spaces, or improvements to the accessibility of these. The provision of open space on site and its ongoing management, or alternately payment required for improvements to local public open spaces, will be secured by legal agreement with the council.*

Playing fields

11. *Development proposals impacting on playing fields will only be supported if:*

- *a. an assessment has been undertaken which clearly shows the sports and recreational land or facilities to be surplus to requirements (for the existing or alternative sports and recreational provision) at the local and sub-regional level, informed by the Royal Greenwich Playing Pitch Strategy;*
- *b. the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable location; or*
- *c. the development is for alternative sports and recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use.*

Appraisal

7.13 EN2 demonstrates strong conformity with the London Plan and Natural England's Process Journey. It establishes a framework for protection of open spaces at all tiers (MOL, BOL, non-designated) and provides delivery mechanisms for new provision. Some recommendations include:

- The policy lacks measurable standards (e.g. hectares per 1,000 population, accessibility thresholds, Green Flag benchmarks). It is recommended that the policy incorporates these additional items. Even if this does not secure new open space in the context of a densely populated borough, this will provide a clear policy hook to secure S106 contributions towards the enhancement of other open spaces.
- The policy doesn't explicitly link new open spaces to the borough's existing GI strategy or London LNRS. Including a cross-reference may help to enhance the multi-functionality of new open spaces.

Planning Mechanisms

7.14 There are a variety of other planning mechanisms which the borough could use to enable the delivery of GBI both on-site and off-site GBI and open space.

On-site Delivery

London Plan's UGF

7.15 London Plan Policy G5 requires all major developments to include urban greening as a fundamental element of site and building design. The policy introduces the use of UGF to evaluate the quantity and quality of urban greening provided by a development proposal. The London Plan Guidance for the UGF further states that UGF target scores should be set out in Local Plans.

7.16 Where Local Plans do not have locally set UGF scores, the London Plan UGF scores of 0.4 for residential developments and 0.3 for commercial developments will apply.

Integrating the standard into policy

7.17 The integration of the UGF standard within Policy EN1 represents a clear strength, demonstrating alignment with London Plan Policy G5 and supporting the delivery of high quality, multi-functional greening in new development.

Standard 5: Urban Tree Canopy Cover

7.18 As outlined earlier in this chapter, Natural England's GI Framework highlights the importance of GBI and natural spaces for health and wellbeing, local communities and inclusive

spaces. The GI Framework provides guidance to help local planning authorities and developers to meet GBI requirements through the planning system and outside it, including on setting five 'Headline GI standards'.

7.19 The Urban Tree Canopy Cover Standard seeks to increase urban tree cover as a means of improving air quality, providing shade, supporting biodiversity and enhancing the visual and environmental quality of urban areas. The area wide standard asserts that local authorities should work to raise the overall canopy cover based on a locally defined baseline, taking account of spatial constraints and opportunities.

7.20 The major development standard requires major developments to contribute to these targets through the incorporation of new and existing trees into site layouts. The exact standard applied to major development should be identified through the testing of previous applications to explore what is aspirational yet viable in the local context. Alongside a tree canopy cover standard, in line with the NPPF, a tree canopy cover standard should incorporate a requirement for all new streets to be tree lined and long-term maintenance should be secured to ensure canopy establishment and resilience.

Integrating the standard into policy

7.21 At the strategic level, policies should set targets for increasing canopy cover. The Council should undertake local testing to identify if a tree canopy cover standard is viable beyond the 10% as recommended in the policy recommendations above.

Section 106 (S106) Agreements

7.22 S106 agreements allow a planning authority to enter a negotiated agreement (or 'planning obligation') to mitigate the impact of a specific development to make it acceptable in planning terms. Where a development fails to meet local criteria, such as any adopted Natural England GI Framework major development standard, S106 agreements could be used to secure financial support for local GBI projects. It will be essential to have clear and transparent GBI policy requirements so that the tests for S106 agreements can be met (that they are necessary, relevant to planning, and directly, fairly and reasonably related to the proposed development).

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

7.23 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a national statutory requirement introduced in 2024, requiring all major development to deliver an uplift of at least 10% in biodiversity. BNG should be delivered on-site unless it can be evidenced that this is not possible, in which case off-site contributions may be accepted. On-site provision should enhance the GBI on a development site while off-site BNG contributions will be an important source of funding for strategic GBI opportunities.

Off-site delivery

7.24 Beyond securing high quality GBI and open space within new development sites, delivery of off-site GBI and open space will be essential to build a robust strategic GBI and open space network across the borough that responds to all the challenges and opportunities set out in this Study. Broadly, the following mechanisms are available for securing off-site GBI through the planning system:

Section 106 (S106) agreements

7.25 As above, S106 agreements allow a planning authority to enter a negotiated agreement (or 'planning obligation') to mitigate the impact of a specific development to make it acceptable in planning terms. This can also be used as a tool to deliver GBI and open space enhancements off-site.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

7.26 CIL is a locally based development tax which allows local authorities to fund infrastructure by charging on new development in their area. A CIL has been adopted by the Council with a new charging schedule adopted in 2024. Contributions will be used to help fund the strategic infrastructure needed as set out in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) and Infrastructure Funding Statements.

Planning conditions

7.27 Planning conditions are a straightforward approach to secure delivery of specific actions or off-site works, such as habitat enhancement. Planning conditions cannot require financial

contributions and must meet the specific tests (necessity, relevant to planning and the development, enforceable, precise and reasonable).

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

7.28 As above, BNG is a national statutory requirement introduced in 2024, requiring all major development to deliver an uplift of at least 10% in biodiversity. Whilst BNG should be delivered on-site, off-site contributions may also be accepted where it can be evidenced that on-site provision is not possible. This can then be used to deliver biodiversity enhancements in other areas of the borough.

Section 278 Agreements (S278)

7.29 Section 278 Agreements (S278) are agreements for developers to fund or carry out works on the public highway linked to their development. This allows GBI, such as street trees and swales, to be integrated into highway works and contribute to improve connectivity of the GBI network. S278 agreements only apply where development affects public highways and tends to focus on transport/safety function rather than GBI quality.

Partnership and external funding

7.30 Partnership and external funding blends involve pooling developer contributions with external grants and funding to deliver larger, more ambitious GBI projects by combining multiple funding streams. This approach requires external funding availability and strong coordination among partners.

Feasibility of a fund for developer contributions

7.31 The Council has expressed interest in establishing a specific fund which would pool developer contributions and invest them strategically in identified GBI and open space enhancement projects.

Case study: Camden Greenspaces Investment Programme 2026 – 2030

The establishment of a dedicated fund for S106 contributions to support the delivery of GBI has been adopted in other London boroughs, such as Camden. This is demonstrated in the Council's Greenspaces Investment Programme (GSIP).

What the fund is

The GSIP is a five-year investment programme developed by Camden Council to ensure that future investment in the borough's parks and greenspaces best aligns with its 'We Make Camden' ambitions and the Council's Missions.

Its purpose is to identify areas of greatest need across the borough and then match available funding to deliver targeted projects over the period.

The programme is reviewed annually and structured so that current year projects are fully approved, while later years remain provisional, allowing flexibility in response to changing needs or funding opportunities.

How it is administered

The GSIP is administered by Camden Council's Greenspaces team. The funding pool is drawn from multiple sources, including developer contributions via S106 agreements, CIL funds, external grants and bids, capital receipts and the Council's central capital allocations.

Projects are selected through a prioritisation process (identifying sites in greatest need, aligning with key priorities: health/well-being, inclusivity, climate resilience) and then profiled over the five-year programme. Annual approvals are made for the current year of the programme and each subsequent year is subject to review and revision.

What does it fund?

The GSIP funds capital investment in parks and green infrastructure across Camden. This includes initiatives such as:

- Upgrades to landscaping, planting for climate resilience and biodiversity.
- Replacement or improvement of play equipment and outdoor sports and fitness facilities.
- Improvements to access and accessibility of greenspaces (paths, seating, signage) to promote inclusion and usage.
- Projects that support the Council's wider programmes: e.g., climate adaptation (increasing tree canopy, sustainable drainage), health outcomes, equity of access to greenspaces.

Next Steps

7.32 A series of next steps have been identified should the Council wish to take a similar approach.

Define scope and purpose

7.33 The Council should first establish the overarching aims of the fund. This should involve improving the quality, accessibility and resilience of green and blue spaces, supporting climate adaptation and addressing spatial inequalities in access. The fund should be explicitly linked to the objectives and priorities set out in this Study and Local Plan policies.

Developing an evidence base

7.34 The up-to-date assessment of open space quality, quantity and accessibility provided in this strategy should be used to identify areas of greatest need and opportunity. This will then inform the prioritisation of projects that deliver multi-functional benefits, such as biodiversity enhancement, flood risk management, or improved health and wellbeing.

Identify and secure funding sources

7.35 The primary source of funding would be developer contributions through S106 agreements, supplemented where possible by CIL receipts and external grants. Incorporating the fund within the Council's capital investment programme would help ensure a consistent flow of investment over a defined period (e.g. five years).