

Thank you for your email requesting a copy of the Lambeth Habitat Survey 2007. Attached is a copy of final report submitted to Lambeth based on surveys undertaken by a survey team employed by London Wildlife Trust. The report identifies the nature conservation sites in Lambeth that were recommended to be Sites of Metropolitan, Borough and Local Importance. The report includes a summary description of each site. The document does not include maps of these sites, as we don't appear to have a copy of the Lambeth SINC map that should accompany the report in our electronic files. However, a map of current SINC in Lambeth can be found on the iGiGL web-site <https://www.gigl.org.uk/online/>.

Please note that the final decision as to which sites were given Metropolitan, Borough or Local SINC status would have been a matter for Lambeth through their Local Plan process at that time; and any subsequent changes to SINC boundaries will have been decided through subsequent Local Plan iterations

Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: M031

Site Name: River Thames and tidal tributaries

Summary: The Thames, London's most famous natural feature, is home to many fish and birds, creating a wildlife corridor running right across the capital.

Grid ref: TQ 302 806

Area (ha): 2304.54

Borough(s):

Barking and Dagenham, Bexley, City of London, Greenwich, Hammersmith and Fulham, Havering, Hounslow, Kensington and Chelsea, Kingston upon Thames, Lambeth, Lewisham, Newham, Richmond upon Thames, Southwark, Tower Hamlets, Wandsworth, Westminster

Habitat(s):

Intertidal, Marsh/swamp, Pond/lake, Reed bed, Running water, Saltmarsh, Secondary woodland, Vegetated wall/tombstones, Wet ditches, Wet grassland, Wet woodland/carr

Access: Free public access (part of site)

Ownership: Port of London Authority (tidal banks) and riparian owners (non tidal banks)

Site Description:

The River Thames and the tidal sections of creeks and rivers which flow into it comprise a number of valuable habitats not found elsewhere in London. The mud-flats, shingle beach, inter-tidal vegetation, islands and river channel itself support many species from freshwater, estuarine and marine communities which are rare in London. The site is of particular importance for wildfowl and wading birds. The river walls, particularly in south and east London, also provide important feeding areas for the nationally rare and specially-protected black redstart. The Thames is extremely important for fish, with over 100 species now present. Many of the tidal creeks are important fish nurseries, including for several nationally uncommon species such as smelt. Barking Creek supports extensive reed beds. Further downstream are small areas of saltmarsh, a very rare habitat in London, where there is a small population of the nationally scarce marsh sow-thistle (*Sonchus palustris*). Wetlands beside the river in Kew support the only London population of the nationally rare and specially-protected cut-grass (*Leersia oryzoides*). The numerous small islands in the upper reaches support important invertebrate communities, including several nationally rare snails, as well as a number of heronries. Chiswick Eyot, one of the islands, is a Local Nature Reserve. The towpath in the upper reaches is included in the site, and in places supports a diverse flora with numerous London rarities, both native and exotic.

Ninety per cent of the banks of the tidal Thames and its creeks are owned by the Port of London Authority, whereas the riparian owners are responsible for the non tidal (upriver) banks. The water is not owned by anybody. The River Thames upriver of the Thames Barrier is followed by the Thames Path National Trail.

The Thames in Lambeth is less rich ecologically than either the stretches further upstream, such as Chiswick and Richmond, or further downstream, such as Barking Bay or Thamesmead. This is partly a reflection of the level of disturbance from boat traffic, the structure of the embankment and the limited area of foreshore exposed at low tide. Nonetheless, from the riverside walks, common birds including black-headed, lesser black-backed and herring gulls and mallard are always to be seen, and other species occur on passage and during the winter. Cormorants fish in this stretch of the river – indicating the presence of fish. The foreshore serves as foraging habitat to starlings and feral pigeons. It is also of great importance to invertebrates and to migrating fish. The embankment prevents establishment of significant waterside vegetation. However, in cracks and crevices here and there plants such as hemlock water-dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata*), yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) and celery-leaved buttercup (*Ranunculus sceleratus*) gain a foothold.

Site first notified: 01/04/1986

Citation last edited: 13/04/2006

Boundary last changed: 30/11/2005

Mayor Agreed: 25/11/2002

Site of Borough Grade I Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBI01

Site Name: Streatham Common and The Rookery

Summary: One of Lambeth's most important sites for nature conservation, with well-kept formal gardens at The Rookery.

Grid ref: TQ 305 708

Area (ha): 27.67

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Acid grassland, Amenity grassland, Flower beds, Planted shrubbery, Pond/lake, Running water, Scattered trees, Scrub, Secondary woodland, Semi-improved neutral grassland

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

One of Lambeth's most important sites for nature conservation, Streatham Common includes the largest area of native woodland in the Borough and a small but interesting area of acid grassland. There are magnificent views from the higher parts of the common.

The woodland is almost certainly secondary, dating from approximately the end of the 19th century. The main block of woodland consists of pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*) with some sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and English elm (*Ulmus procera*). In the southern, less disturbed, margin of the woodland are found pendulous and remote sedges (*Carex pendula* and *C. remota*) - both rare in inner London - male-fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas*) and common figwort (*Scrophularia nodosa*). The woodland over the more acidic eastern edge of the common contains bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*), wood sage (*Teucrium scorodonia*) and gorse (*Ulex europaeus*). The wood to the north of the bridleway has a denser shrub layer and, in a localised damp area, contains the inner London rarities creeping yellow-cress (*Rorippa sylvestris*) and plicate sweet-grass (*Glyceria notata*).

The acid grassland on the higher slopes includes notable plants such as early hair grass (*Aira praecox*), welshed thistle (*Carduus crispus*) and hairy sedge (*Carex hirta*). Damper areas contain soft rush (*Juncus effusus*). A single heather plant (*Calluna vulgaris*) survives as a reminder of the common's more botanically diverse past, and yellow meadow ant (*Lasius flavus*) can be found.

At the highest point of the common is a ditch that follows the eastern edge of the common and is quite possibly ancient in origin. Red campion (*Silene dioica*), wavy bitter-cress (*Cardamine flexuosa*), pendulous sedge, wood meadow-grass (*Poa nemoralis*) and soft shield-fern (*Polystichum setiferum*), a London rarity, are found in close association with the ditch.

The Rookery is an area of formal gardens ideal for walking and general relaxation, previously part of the grounds of a large estate house that gives the site its name. There are terraced lawns, a large formal walled garden where the last of the Streatham Spa wells is located, and dense shrubberies with cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster* spp.), barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*) and other berry-bearing species. Close to the pools and streams that run alongside undulating paths are wavy bitter-cress, flowering-rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) and the naturalised monkeyflower (*Mimulus guttatus*). A small belt of dense woodland includes butcher's broom (*Ruscus aculeatus*), probably introduced.

The Capital Ring crosses Streatham Common.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/08/1998

Citation last edited: 11/04/2007

Site of Borough Grade I Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBI02

Site Name: West Norwood Cemetery

Summary: A magnificent cemetery, mostly managed as grassland, with many fine monuments.

Grid ref: TQ 322 721

Area (ha): 15.78

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Flower beds, Planted shrubbery, Scattered trees, Scrub, Secondary woodland, Semi-improved neutral grassland, Vegetated wall/tombstones

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

A magnificent cemetery, mostly managed as grassland, with many fine monuments. It is one of the original 'magnificent seven' London cemeteries laid out in the early 19th century in response to overcrowding in London churchyards. There are more listed monuments and structures than any other cemetery in the country, and the cemetery includes the resting places of Mrs Beeton (cooking), Henry Tate (public art) and Henry Doulton (china).

The highest part of the cemetery includes a fine area of trees; both ancient pedunculate oaks (*Quercus robur*), possibly remnants of the Great North Wood, and a mixture of exotic species including monkey-puzzle (*Araucaria araucaria*) and cedar-of-Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*). The trees, and the layers of shrub including bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), ivy (*Hedera helix*), rose (*Rosa* sp.) and hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), support a wide range of birds including willow warblers, kestrels and tawny owls.

Grassland and woodland plants line the informal paths, and include primroses (*Primula vulgaris*), meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*), common bird's foot trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), cat's-ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*) and dog's mercury (*Mercurialis perennis*).

Most of the cemetery is managed as grassland and much of this contains a very good range of plants. An area of the cemetery near the eastern edge is damp and is managed for nature conservation. Plants such as yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) are being allowed to flourish.

Some stretches of the walls enclosing the cemetery support spectacular growths of ivy, a valuable wildlife resource.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 28/10/2005

Site of Borough Grade I Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBI03

Site Name: Brockwell Park

Summary: A large open space, much loved by people from Brixton, Herne Hill, Tulse Hill and beyond.

Grid ref: TQ 316 741

Area (ha): 48.38

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Flower beds, Planted shrubbery, Scattered trees, Secondary woodland, Semi-improved neutral grassland, Tall herbs, Vegetated wall/tombstones

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

A large and valuable open space serving Brixton, Herne Hill, Tulse Hill and beyond. It combines a variety of formal recreational facilities with large areas of open parkland, woodland and ponds.

The wetland features include a series of small ponds linked by a tributary of the River Effra on the western boundary of the park. On the banks of the stream are yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*), fool's water-cress (*Apium nodiflorum*), pendulous sedge (*Carex pendulosa*), great willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*) and hemlock water-dropwort (*Oenanthe crocata*). In the grassland around the stream grow cuckooflower (*Cardamine pratensis*) and patches of sweet vernal-grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum*).

The northernmost pond is fairly secluded and contains an island of rhododendron (*Rhododendron* sp.) and bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*). Purple-loostrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), buddleja (*Buddleja davidii*) and crack-willow (*Salix fragilis*) occur around the banks and common waterbirds inhabit the open water and overhanging vegetation. The central pond is fringed with a mixture of native and non-native trees including willow (*Salix* spp), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), swamp cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) and blue Atlas cedar (*Cedrus atlantica*).

The main habitat in the park is the close-mown grassland, with a number of flowering plants appearing in patches less frequently mown. The area of rough or 'meadow' grassland in the park has been gradually extended over time and is now a well-defined area which is managed as an area of naturalised grassland. Pignut (*Conopodium majus*) and sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*), characteristic of acid grassland, are present.

There are fine examples of native trees in the park including two mature oaks (*Quercus* spp) in the south-east, which seem to belong to an old field boundary. There are numerous ornamental trees including maidenhair tree (*Ginkgo biloba*) and Caucasian wingnut (*Pterocarya fraxinifolia*). Small pockets of woodland occur, which would benefit from management. Birds such as sparrowhawks, nuthatches and green woodpeckers can be found. There is also a walled Old English Garden in the middle of the park with popular flower displays and a small ornamental pond.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 08/05/2006

Site of Borough Grade I Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBI04

Site Name: Eardley Road Sidings

Summary: Important site for environmental education that has developed on former rail sidings.

Grid ref: TQ 291 702

Area (ha): 1.47

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Bare ground, Roughland, Ruderal, Scrub, Secondary woodland, Tall herbs

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

The site is an area of rail sidings abandoned in the 1960s, which have since developed fine woodland and roughland. The sidings are a superb example of how vegetation can become established through a process of succession on land that was previously bare. The legacy of acidic industrial waste in the underlying soil has created difficult growing conditions, which has led to the development of uncommon habitats.

The woodland is largely composed of silver birch (*Betula pubescens*), the largest birch-dominated stand in the Borough. A dense understorey of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*), dog-rose (*Rosa canina*) is widespread, with a diverse ground flora that includes bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*), cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), dog-violet (*Viola canina*) and wood sage (*Teucrium scorodonia*).

The roughland habitats support a surprising range of plants including sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*), wild carrot (*Daucus Carota*), greater knapweed (*Centaurea scabiosa*) and field scabious (*Knautia arvensis*), the latter two rare in inner London. Another rare species is slender parsley-piert (*Aphanes microcarpa*), known from only one other Lambeth site. Other ruderal species include rat's-tail fescue (*Vulpia myuros*) and procumbent pearlwort (*Sagina procumbens*), with Canadian goldenrod (*Solidago Canadensis*), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*) and bramble.

33 species of bird have been recorded, as well as hedgehogs and wood mice, and the butterflies common blue, small copper, small heath and wall brown.

The site is a proposed Local Nature Reserve, and is used for environmental education and public enjoyment.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 28/10/2005

Site of Borough Grade I Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBI05

Site Name: Peabody Hill

Summary: Open space with good views adjacent to an old Peabody Estate, and the London to Brighton railway line.

Grid ref: TQ 318 734

Area (ha): 8.24

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Amenity grassland, Scrub, Secondary woodland, Semi-improved neutral grassland, Vegetated wall/tombstones

Access: Free public access (part of site)

Ownership: Peabody Trust and Network Rail

Site Description:

Peabody Hill is an open space over the London to Brighton railway line. The site is predominantly woodland, with some grassland areas, and includes railside land and the entrances to the railway tunnel. There are some good views, particularly to the west towards Brockwell Park.

The mixed woodland is varied with sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and an area of birch (*Betula pubescens*) dominated woodland between the housing estates. Ash trees (*Fraxinus excelsior*) occur, with pedunculate (*Quercus robur*) and evergreen (*Quercus ilex*) oaks, wild cherry (*Prunus avium*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) and, in places, poplars (*Populus* spp). The ground flora features much ivy (*Hedera helix*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg) and common nettle. Beneath the more open birch stand you can find *Cladonia* lichens, mosses, common bent (*Agrostis capillaris*), red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), hawkweeds (*Hieracium* spp), sheep's sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*) and common toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris*). The fly agaric toadstool (*Amanita muscaria*) can be found here in late summer.

Grassland areas range from mown amenity grassland to unmanaged and more diverse neutral grassland. Colourful plants such as common knapweed (*Centaurea nigra*), cat's-ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), cut-leaved crane's-bill (*Geranium dissectum*) and goat's beard (*Tragopogon pratensis*) attract all manner of insects in the summer, including the butterflies meadow brown, small tortoiseshell and speckled wood. The vegetation over the southern tunnel entrance is a mix of scrub blending into sycamore woodland.

A variety of birds can be found on the site, including wrens, robins, blackcaps, blue tits and larger species such as great spotted woodpeckers, woodpigeons, jays and magpies.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/08/1998

Citation last edited: 06/01/2006

Site of Borough Grade I Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBI06

Site Name: Streatham Railsides

Summary: Important area of wildlife habitat that can be enjoyed from trains running between Tulse Hill and Streatham, or Streatham Hill and West Norwood.

Grid ref: TQ 313 725

Area (ha): 13.53

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Reed bed, Scrub, Secondary woodland, Semi-improved neutral grassland

Access: Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only

Ownership: Network Rail

Site Description:

Rail travellers between Tulse Hill, Streatham, Streatham Hill and West Norwood in the summer are treated to green and leafy views from both sides of the train. Streatham Hill station is surrounded by walls of trees, and from the platform an undisturbed wooded cutting can be seen.

Leigham Vale Junction includes two wooded cuttings leading into tunnels, and an area of undisturbed grassland between three railway lines. The woodlands are predominantly sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), with elm (*Elmus* spp), pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*), silver birch (*Betula pubescens*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), holly (*Ulex europaeus*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and elder (*Sambucus nigra*). An unusual finding is the lineside reedbed that occurs between Hillside Gardens and Leigham Vale on the north side of the line from Streatham Hill.

Beyond Leigham Vale, a further two deep, well-vegetated cuttings occur along the route into Streatham. Steep banks support an abundance of wild flowers, and there are a range of trees.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 25/10/2005

Site of Borough Grade II Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBII01

Site Name: South Streatham Railsides

Summary: An impressive range of vegetation along the side of rail tracks in the south of Lambeth borough.

Grid ref: TQ 299 701

Area (ha): 7.68

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Roughland, Ruderal, Scattered trees, Scrub, Tall herbs, Vegetated wall/tombstones

Access: Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only

Ownership: Network Rail

Site Description:

An open mosaic of roughland habitats can be seen on the railside stretch between Tooting Bec Road and Eardley Road. Colourful tall herbaceous plants such as Canadian goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*), Michaelmas daisy (*Aster novi-belgii*), rosebay willowherb (*Epilobium angustifolium*) and everlasting-pea (*Lathyrus latifolius*) can be found. Occasional trees include ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*).

An area of former sidings between Streatham Common and Norbury stations has been colonised by a wide diversity of plants, and includes extensive patches of scrub. Common broomrape (*Orobanche minor*), one of the rarest plants in Lambeth, is found here, and on a railway bridge at Hermitage Green the beautiful and nationally rare maidenhair fern (*Adiantum capillus-veneris*) can be seen growing out of the brickwork.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 08/05/2006

Site of Borough Grade II Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBII02

Site Name: West Norwood Railsides

Summary: Vegetated railsides between West Norwood and Gypsy Hill stations.

Grid ref: TQ 329 714

Area (ha): 4.16

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Allotments, Roughland, Scrub, Secondary woodland, Tall herbs

Access: Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only

Ownership: Network Rail

Site Description:

These railsides support a range of habitats from sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) woodland, to younger trees and shrubs forming a mosaic with bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) scrub, tall herbaceous stands and false-oat (*Arrhenatherum elatius*) grassland. This is classic railside 'roughland'. Breeding birds include dunnocks, wrens and song thrushes, and sparrowhawks have been seen hunting up and down the track.

A narrow strip of allotments adjacent to East Place is included in the site. The railsides can be seen from a number of places, especially Norwood High Street, the Auckland Hill/Gipsy Road intersection, and Norwood Park.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 11/04/2007

Site of Borough Grade II Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBII03

Site Name: Bishop Thomas Grant School Rough

Summary: A patch of wild habitat in the grounds of a school.

Grid ref: TQ 307 712

Area (ha): 1.65

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Scrub, Secondary woodland, Tall herbs, Unimproved neutral grassland

Access: Access by prior arrangement

Ownership: Bishop Thomas Grant School

Site Description:

Formerly open pasture with hedges at the boundaries, this wild patch of habitat in the grounds of the Bishop Thomas Grant School includes scrub, young woodland and a band of old grassland. The school was built in the 1960s, and the site was part of the extensive pastoral grassland associated with Unigate Dairies.

The old hedgerows have grown into an area of scrub and secondary woodland. The dominant species are hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) and sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), as well as elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and English elm (*Ulmus procera*). Ivy (*Hedera helix*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*) and cleavers (*Galium aparine*) can be found in the ground flora, as well as occasional wood avens (*Geum urbanum*), hedge woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*) and Herb-Robert (*Geranium robertianum*).

At the top of the slope, an area of rough grassland survives as a relict of the former pasture. Yorkshire-fog (*Holcus lanatus*), creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*), false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), bird's-foot-trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*) and meadow vetchling (*Lathyrus pratensis*) are found, and the grassland has been colonised by perennials including bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg), common nettle (*Urtica dioica*), great willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), horse-radish (*Armoracia rusticana*) and bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*).

The brown hawker, an impressive dragonfly, has been observed, as well as common butterflies such as holly blue and speckled wood, and birds such as wrens, robins and goldfinches.

Access to the site is through the school and permission to visit should be sought in advance from the Head on 020 8769 4917.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 08/05/2006

Site of Borough Grade II Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBII04

Site Name: Palace Road Nature Garden

Summary: A small public nature garden created by Lambeth council in the 1980s.

Grid ref: TQ 308 730

Area (ha): 0.67

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Bracken, Planted shrubbery, Pond/lake, Scrub, Secondary woodland, Semi-improved neutral grassland, Tall herbs

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

This delightfully tranquil spot was created by Lambeth Council in the 1980s. Habitats include non-native woodland and scrub, rough grassland and tall perennial species. A pond contains perhaps the best aquatic and marginal flora in the Borough of Lambeth.

Trees and shrubs include evergreen oaks (*Quercus* spp), sycamores (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), Swedish whitebeam (*Sorbus intermedia* agg) and several conifers, as well as pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*) and ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), and a dense understory of garden privet (*Ligustrum ovalifolium*), holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and cherry-laurel (*Prunus laurocerasus*). Ivy (*Hedera helix*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg) carpet the ground, with cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*) and bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*).

A wealth of aquatic plants can be found in the pond, including broad-leaved pondweed (*Potamogeton natans*), water-lilies, whorled water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum verticillatum*), water-plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*), arrowhead (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*) and flowering-rush (*Butomus umbellatus*). Tall marginal plants consist of common club-rush (*Schoenoplectus lacustris*), branched bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*), lesser pond-sedge (*Carex acutiformis*), purple-loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), jointed rush (*Juncus articulatus*) and yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*). Triffid bur-marigold (*Bidens tripartita*), marsh-marigold (*Caltha palustris*) and water mint (*Mentha aquatica*) can also be found. A range of pond life including pond-skaters, water boatmen, snails, freshwater mussels and dragonflies occur, together with smooth newts.

The meadow area near the entrances to the garden consist of a number of grasses including red fescue (*Festuca rubra*), rough meadow-grass (*Poa trivialis*), crested dog's tail (*Cynosurus cristatus*), cut-leaved crane's-bill (*Geranium dissectum*), fodder burnet (*Sanguisorba minor* ssp. *muricata*) and spotted medick (*Medicago arabica*), and supports a range of common birds.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 08/05/2006

Site of Borough Grade II Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBII05

Site Name: Lambeth Palace Gardens and Archbishop's Park

Summary: A public open space next to Lambeth Palace, the official residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Grid ref: TQ 307 792

Area (ha): 6.26

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Amenity grassland, Flower beds, Planted shrubbery, Pond/lake, Scattered trees

Access: Free public access (part of site)

Ownership: Church Commissioners and London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

Lambeth Palace is the Archbishop of Canterbury's official residence, the first buildings on site constructed around 1200. The eastern end of the grounds were opened to the local poor in the 19th Century and officially became Archbishop Park in 1901. The Palace gardens are formal gardens, landscaped by John Nash. They include a 'Chinese garden', herb garden and terraced rose garden.

A 'wild garden', at the end furthest from the Palace, incorporates a pond with dipping platform. The pond has been planted with a rich variety of aquatic plants including lesser reedmace (*Typha angustifolia*), reed canary-grass (*Phalaris arundinaceae*), lesser pond-sedge (*Carex acutiformis*) and meadowsweet (*Filipendula ulmaria*), with white water-lily (*Nymphaea alba*), arrowhead (*Sagittaria sagittifolia*) and water-soldier (*Stratiotes aloides*) in the water. Wildflower borders have been planted near the pond.

The gardens have several wide, dense shrubberies which support a range of birds including thrushes and blackbirds, wrens, dunnocks, greenfinches and jays. Goldfinches and garden warblers can be found.

Archbishop's Park offers less in terms of useful wildlife habitat, with much of its area hard-surface games pitches. However, recent renovation of the park has seen the introduction of new shrub and bedding areas at the southern end which have been designed and are to be managed to help encourage wildlife. Birds from the Palace Gardens can be seen feeding and there are avenues of mature plane (*Platanus* sp.), beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), lime (*Tilia* sp.) and horse-chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) above borders of exotic shrubs.

Lambeth Palace Gardens are not normally open to the public, but they do have an increasing number of public events and open days, where the public are admitted on a donation basis. Access outside of these occasions is through permission of the Lambeth Palace Office.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/08/1998

Citation last edited: 11/04/2007

Site of Borough Grade II Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBII06

Site Name: Ruskin Park

Summary: Fine, rolling parkland, named after local Victorian scholar John Ruskin.

Grid ref: TQ 325 756

Area (ha): 14.61

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Amenity grassland, Flower beds, Planted shrubbery, Pond/lake, Scattered trees

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

Originally the private grounds of the 18th century Dane House, this fine rolling park was opened to the public in 1907. Some features of the original house and grounds, such as the porch with pairs of columns, the old pond, and the magnificent tree collection can still be found. The park is named after the Victorian scholar and critic John Ruskin, who lived locally.

The central feature is the pond, one of the park's main attractions. Encircling trees include aspen (*Populus tremula*), ornamental cherry (*Prunus* spp) and Caucasian wingnut (*Pterocarya fraxinifolia*), as well as the Chinese corkscrew willow (*Salix babylonica* "Tortuosa"). Tall fringing vegetation of great willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), purple-loosestrife (*Lythrum salicaria*), water figwort (*Scrophularia auriculata*), Indian balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and pendulous sedge (*Carex pendula*) provides shelter for resident moorhens, mallards and Canada geese.

Dense shrubberies have been planted with a mix of native and exotic species, which provide nesting areas for common birds including blackbirds, robins and dunnocks. The park's history has resulted in the presence of a number of unusual trees, which include Judas-tree (*Cercis siliquastrum*), maidenhair tree (*Ginkgo bilboa*), ashleaf maple (*Acer negundo*) and Indian bean-tree (*Catalpa bignonioides*).

The wider, western area of the park consists mainly of open amenity grassland and scattered trees, and has a great view across central London.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/08/1998

Citation last edited: 08/05/2006

Site of Borough Grade II Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBII07

Site Name: Oasis Children's Nature Garden

Summary: Community nature garden, designed with young people in mind.

Grid ref: TQ 301 765

Area (ha): 0.21

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Flower beds, Planted shrubbery, Pond/lake, Scattered trees, Secondary woodland, Semi-improved neutral grassland, Tall herbs

Access: Access at limited times

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

The Nature Garden is part of the Oasis Children's Venture, a community project to provide opportunities for the children of the Stockwell area. It has an important role in encouraging young people to discover the natural world and become aware of wider environmental issues.

The site includes fruit, vegetable and herb gardens, raised beds, butterfly garden, a small pond, a young wooded area, a wildflower meadow and areas of tall herbaceous species. Toads and smooth newts are found in the pond, and birds such as dunnocks, blue tits, great tits, wrens, blackbirds and greenfinches occur.

The nature garden is open to schools Monday to Friday from 9.30 - 3.00pm and to individual children from 3.30 - 5.30pm. There is also a Saturday Nature Club from 10 - 3.30pm.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 25/10/2005

Site of Borough Grade II Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBII08

Site Name: Harleyford Road Community Garden

Summary: Popular community garden with good facilities that supports some wildlife.

Grid ref: TQ 307 778

Area (ha): 0.23

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Allotments, Flower beds, Hedge, Planted shrubbery, Pond/lake, Scattered trees, Tall herbs

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

This attractive nature garden was created in 1986 as a community garden, with the help of the Harleyford Road Garden Association. It is the only accessible wildlife site of Metropolitan or Borough importance in the area, and includes a children's play area, picnic facilities, small enclosed lawns, numerous shrubberies and a small allotment.

Everything except a few sycamores (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) was created from scratch by volunteers. There is a mix of wild and formal, with areas of long grass and some nettles (*Urtica dioica*) to encourage butterflies and other invertebrates. There are three hedgerows and a small pond with fringing vegetation dominated almost entirely by reed sweet-grass.

Resident birds include blue tits, wrens, blackbirds and thrushes, and greenfinches, pied wagtails, jays and a pair of kestrels are occasional visitors.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 11/04/2007

Site of Borough Grade II Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBII09

Site Name: Roots and Shoots Nature Gardens

Summary: A thriving wildlife garden run by a youth training organisation.

Grid ref: TQ 311 788

Area (ha): 0.35

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Flower beds, Planted shrubbery, Pond/lake, Scattered trees, Secondary woodland, Semi-improved neutral grassland, Tall herbs, Vegetated wall/tombstones

Access: Access at limited times

Ownership: Roots & Shoots

Site Description:

The garden of this youth training facility has been lovingly planted with a mixture of wild and exotic species in a range of specially-created habitats. There is a thriving garden centre producing plants for sale, and the nature garden is used for environmental education.

Habitats include a small area of hazel (*Corylus avellana*) coppice, a summer meadow, a large 'butterfly garden', areas of tall herbaceous species, young trees and shrubs around the perimeter of the site, various climbing plants, and a pond. The pond has a dipping platform, and an area of fringing vegetation that includes reedmace (*Typha angustifolia*), branched bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*) and reed sweet-grass (*Glyceria maxima*).

Roots and Shoots is open Monday to Friday all year from 10 - 5pm, and on Saturdays in May and June from 10 - 2pm.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 25/10/2005

Site of Borough Grade II Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBII10

Site Name: Clapham Common (Lambeth section)

Summary: Famous open space, perfect for relaxation and recreation.

Grid ref: TQ 288 747

Area (ha): 33.91

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Amenity grassland, Flower beds, Planted shrubbery, Pond/lake, Scattered trees

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

Clapham Common is a famous open space, particularly important for sport and recreation, and as a venue for large public events. The Common is large and heavily used, and lies across the Borough boundary with Wandsworth.

Most of the site is amenity grassland with a few scattered trees, but there are several features of higher nature conservation interest, including several ponds. Eagle Pond, the smallest of the three ponds on the Common, was recently restored and now features a number of marginal areas composed of reeds (*Phragmites australis*) and other plants, and provides important areas for wildlife which balance the use of the pond for coarse fishing. Mount Pond, which is in the Wandsworth part of the common, supports a reasonable range of waterfowl and fish. An area of woodland to the north of Mount Pond, consisting mostly of exotic trees, has developed a reasonable structure and supports common birds.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/08/1998

Citation last edited: 06/01/2006

Site of Borough Grade II Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaBII11

Site Name: Unigate Wood

Summary: A very attractive area of woodland and grassland.

Grid ref: TQ 309 716

Area (ha): 1.2

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Scrub, Secondary woodland, Semi-improved neutral grassland, Tall herbs

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

This attractive area of woodland and rough grassland lies on a steep west-facing slope near Well House, the second Streatham Spa, erected around 1800. Despite the absence of any unusual plants, the rough grassland to the north of the site provides habitat for butterflies and moths. The woodland is surprisingly wild for an urban area, and includes a line of fine pedunculate oaks (*Quercus robur*) - remnants of an ancient hedgeline. Some exotic species survive, leftover from the days of the spa. The woodland canopy contains a range of trees, and shrubs including holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) are found. A few bluebells (*Hyacinthoides non-scripta*) thrive at the entrance to the wood.

The site is quiet and secluded, and is a proposed Local Nature Reserve.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 25/10/2005

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL01

Site Name: Knights Hill Wood Nature Reserve

Summary: Some very impressive trees dominate this small wood which is all that is left of the grounds of a 19th century house.

Grid ref: TQ 318 712

Area (ha): 0.23

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Hedge, Secondary woodland

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

Knights Hill is the long road which uphill from West Norwood Church to the boundary at Crown Point. Knights Hill Wood is near the top of the hill. In the 19th century, this was part of the grounds of Portobello House, the driveway from which divided to pass either side of the wood before reaching the road. After Portobello House was demolished, Cedar House flats were built on the site in 1949. The area encircled by the driveway became quite wild and overgrown, and after development plans for the site were defeated in the 1980s by opposition from residents and the London Wildlife Trust, the Trust took over management of Knights Hill Wood in 1989. The Trust opened up a circular path and added a boundary hedge, as well as planting other species to improve the diversity. Management of Knights Hill Wood reverted to Lambeth Parks & Greenspaces in 2002. It is the intention to declare the wood as a Local Nature Reserve in the near future.

Some very impressive trees dominate the wood, and particularly notable is a large Weymouth pine (*Pinus strobes*) which dates from the days of Portobello House. This particular pine is native to the mid-west of North America and the fact it does not tolerate pollution reflects well on the quality of the air here. Deodar (*Cedrus deodara*), a member of the cedar family, is also found here; it is a native of the western Himalayas and was first introduced to Britain in 1831. Other trees include oak (*Quercus* sp.), ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), common lime (*Tilia x europaea*) and horse-chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), and there is much holly (*Ilex aquilifolium*) and regenerating elm (*Ulmus* sp.) underneath. Cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), herb-robert (*Geranium robertianum*), hedge woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*), rosebay willowherb (*Chamerion angustifolium*), wood avens (*Geum urbanum*) and wood dock (*Rumex sanguineus*) are all common in the ground flora. The songs of a range of woodland and garden birds compete against the sound of the traffic; blackbirds, robins, treecreepers, nuthatches, mistle thrushes, blue tits, chaffinches and song thrushes may all be heard.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 11/04/2007

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL02

Site Name: Rush Common and Raleigh Gardens

Summary: A near continuous linear park which gives a green background for almost the whole eastern side of Brixton Hill.

Grid ref: TQ 308 748

Area (ha): 3.85

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Amenity grassland, Bare ground, Planted shrubbery, Scattered trees

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

Travelling southwards from Brixton centre along Brixton Hill, a near continuous linear park is seen on the left hand side, almost as far as Streatham Hill. In the 19th century, Brixton Hill was lined by small fields and by houses, with many of the houses having fair-sized front gardens. The fields between St Matthew's Church and Brixton Water Lane are now Rush Common North; the fields near Raleigh House (long since demolished) and Raleigh Hall are presently Raleigh Gardens; and from Somers Road nearly to Holmewood Road the former front gardens have been combined to form Rush Common South. Filling in the gaps, some front gardens remain to give the impression of an almost continuous belt of greenery along Brixton Hill's eastern side. The whole was historically known as Rush Common.

Rush Common North is chiefly amenity grassland with a closed canopy of trees. These are mostly mature specimens and include plane, lime, hawthorn, false-acacia, ash, yew, evergreen oak (*Quercus ilex*) and horse-chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*). The false-acacias (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) here are particularly magnificent, their showy white flowers appearing in June. Some of the trees have ivy-clad trunks, which improves the nesting cover for small birds. The Council has recently added some native tree saplings, including field maple (*Acer campestre*) and willows (*Salix* spp.). A few common wild flowers grow in the grass, such as daisy (*Bellis perennis*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) and dove's-foot crane's-bill (*Geranium molle*), with garden bluebells (*Hyacinthoides hispanica*) in spring. The locally uncommon stork's-bill (*Erodium cicutarium*) can be found on bare sandy soil. In autumn, some interesting fungi appear on dead logs which have been left as wildlife habitat. A path winds through Rush Common North and is well used by people on their way to and from central Brixton.

Between Brixton Water Lane and Fairmount Road are a number of large private gardens which are now quite wild and add to the continuity of the wildlife habitat, although they do not form part of this site. South of Fairmount Road and either side of Beechdale Road are Raleigh Gardens, which form part of the site. These are landscaped, and seats have been provided on a lawn away from the noise of Brixton Hill. Dense shrubberies enclose the lawn and behind these, some large trees front the main road. Rush Common South is south of Somers Road and is backed by blocks of flats. Here the trees are fewer and more scattered, and include horse-chestnut, lime (*Tilia* sp.) and hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*). Beyond Upper Tulse Hill, the final part of Rush Common more resembles the closed tree canopy of the northern end.

There is free access at all times to Rush Common, but not to Raleigh Gardens, which is solely for residents.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 12/04/2007

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL03

Site Name: Wynter House Pond

Summary: A small landscaped pond hidden away within the forbidding maze of the Stockwell Park Estate.

Grid ref: TQ 309 760

Area (ha): 0.18

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Planted shrubbery, Pond/lake

Access: Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth Housing Department

Site Description:

This small landscaped pond is hidden away within the forbidding maze of the Stockwell Park Estate. The pond is relatively well cared-for by residents and has significant ecological interest despite its unlikely situation. The pond has been thoughtfully designed with shallow, shelving edges, perfect for the development of marginal vegetation. Most of this vegetation was introduced and here it has flourished. The cobalt-blue flowers of brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*) make an attractive show from May onwards. Yellow iris (*Iris pseudacorus*) and yellow water-lily (*Nuphar lutea*) are also present; an alternative name for the latter is 'brandy-bottle', as not only do the flowers smell distinctly alcoholic, but the fruit capsule also supposedly resembles a carafe of green glass. The attractively-aromatic water mint (*Mentha aquatica*) is also plentiful here, and other emergent plants include water-plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*), hard rush (*Juncus inflexus*), branched bur-reed (*Sparganium erectum*) and great reedmace (*Typha latifolia*).

The grassy edges to the pond have been planted with saplings of crack-willow (*Salix fragilis*) to accompany the one mature tree of the species. Dragonflies and damselflies may be seen hovering over the water during the summer.

There is no general access to the pond edge, as general public access would cause erosion problems, but it can easily be appreciated from outside the low surrounding fence. The pond (like the rest of the estate) is managed by the Stockwell Park Community Trust in partnership with the Council.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 12/04/2007

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL04

Site Name: Lorn Road Allotments

Summary: An active community allotment site and a wildlife area consisting of rough grassland, shrubs and small ponds.

Grid ref: TQ 310 765

Area (ha): 0.3

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Allotments, Pond/lake, Ruderal, Scattered trees, Scrub, Tall herbs

Access: No public access

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth Parks & Greenspaces

Site Description:

This community allotment area occupies backland between Lorn Road and Groveway, just off Brixton Road. Roughly 80 per cent is used as active allotments, the rest consisting of rough grassland, scrub and tall perennial vegetation. Several tall sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), lime (*Tilia* sp.) and ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) trees occur around the perimeter and there are two small ponds at the eastern end, near the entrance gate into Lorn Road. Although tiny, the ponds have marginal plants such as reedmace (*Typha* sp.), floating sweet-grass (*Glyceria fluitans*), and brooklime (*Veronica beccabunga*), with bittersweet (*Solanum dulcamara*) growing nearby. Bittersweet is a relative of the tomato and has similarly coloured, but much smaller, spherical berries. Unlike the tomato however, the fruit of bittersweet is very poisonous. Frogs, water snails and pond-skaters occur in the pond.

Plots being left fallow and boundary strips around active plots support creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), false oat-grass (*Arrhenatherum elatius*), cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) and nettle (*Urtica dioica*), along with many escapes from former cultivation such as fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), cornsalad (*Valerianella* sp.) and borage (*Borago officinalis*). Common birds seen and heard here include blackbirds, robins, wrens and blue tits. The site is well used by pipistrelle bats, which probably roost in nearby houses and feed on abundant flying insects. Stag beetles have been found on site each year, evidence of the policy of leaving dead wood on site to provide habitat and shelter for these splendid beetles as well as fungi and other invertebrates.

The site is accessible to keyholders during daylight hours. However, although there is normally no public access, guided access can be arranged by prior appointment through Lambeth Parks & Greenspaces who own and manage the allotments in partnership with a management committee.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 12/04/2007

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL05

Site Name: Vauxhall City Farm

Summary: A thriving city farm which provides many opportunities for local people.

Grid ref: TQ 307 781

Area (ha): 0.38

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Allotments, Amenity grassland, Hedge, Pond/lake

Access: Access at limited times

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

Vauxhall City Farm has been in existence since 1977 and it attracts visitors and volunteers from a wide surrounding hinterland, often providing them with their first experience of farm animals and rural activities. The farm aims to promote social welfare and environmental awareness. It provides educational, recreational and training opportunities for local youth and residents, with particular reference to disadvantaged young people, the elderly and those with disabilities or special needs. The farm is a registered charity and is open from Wednesday to Sunday from 10.30 am to 4 pm.

The farm houses a variety of farm animals ranging from horses and sheep to chickens and guinea pigs. At the southern end of the farm is a therapeutic riding centre with stabling for six horses and an ecology garden complete with educational composting area, small planted hedge, bug house and wildlife pond. A wildflower area has salad burnet (*Sanguisorba minor*), meadow buttercup (*Ranunculus acris*), red campion (*Silene dioica*), oxeye daisy (*Leucanthemum vulgare*), selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*) and yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*).

Beyond the farmyard, at the opposite end of the site, is a community garden with its 'recycled building' designed and built by volunteers, raised growing beds to facilitate easy access and, allotments where a diverse community of growers produce and exchange their own food.

Opposite the main part of the farm on the other side of Tyers Street are several paddocks adjoining the open space of Spring Gardens. These are composed of grassland where a number of colourful wild flowers can be seen including red dead-nettle (*Lamium purpureum*), cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), creeping cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*), bluebell (*Hyacinthoides* sp.) and common mallow (*Malva sylvestris*).

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 12/04/2007

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL06

Site Name: Sunnyhill Road Open Space

Summary: A small site over the top of a railway tunnel which was formally allotments but has now been reclaimed by nature.

Grid ref: TQ 305 716

Area (ha): 0.12

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Scattered trees, Scrub, Tall herbs

Access: No public access

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth Housing Department

Site Description:

A handkerchief-sized site, occupying a brief break between houses halfway along Sunnyhill Road in Streatham, it is likely that this has always been open as it is sited directly over one of the two railway tunnels between Tulse Hill and Streatham stations. In the past, it was managed as allotment gardens for neighbouring houses, but has since been abandoned and reclaimed by nature.

The vegetation beneath the fruit trees of the old garden has grown up considerably, and scrub of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) has become established, along with roses (*Rosa* spp.), sycamores (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) and pedunculate oaks (*Quercus robur*). Climbers festoon the other vegetation; wild hop (*Humulus lupulus*), bindweed (*Calystegia* sp.) and cleavers (*Galium aparine*) are universally present, together with a long list of other plant species. The site offers a haven for resident wrens, dunnocks and blackbirds.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 12/04/2007

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL07

Site Name: St Leonard's Churchyard, Streatham

Summary: The churchyard of Streatham's parish church and the best preserved of Lambeth's original village churchyards

Grid ref: TQ 299 717

Area (ha): 0.38

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Scattered trees, Unimproved neutral grassland, Vegetated wall/tombstones

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: Diocese of Southwark

Site Description:

St Leonard's is the parish church of Streatham and represents the centre of the original village. A well-used footpath passes through St Leonard's Churchyard, connecting Tooting Bec Gardens to Streatham High Road, and gives a brief glimpse of nature to its users in what is the best preserved village churchyard in Lambeth. The churchyard features a number of fine mature trees, especially along the perimeter, including a cedar-of-Lebanon (*Cedrus libani*), common lime (*Tilia x europaea*), hornbeam (*Carpinus betulus*), yew (*Taxus baccata*), walnut (*Juglans regia*) and a Lucombe oak (*Quercus x pseudosuber*).

The turf between the tombs and headstones retains a diversity of wild flowers, including selfheal (*Prunella vulgaris*), cat's-ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*) and dwarf mallow (*Malva neglecta*). Selfheal was once prized as a cure for sore throats.

The northern and western ends of the churchyard are the quietest, and here the fine collection of tombstones can best be appreciated. In the less-frequently mown borders around these, a variety of native and naturalised wild flowers occur such as yellow corydalis (*Pseudofumaria lutea*), green alkanet (*Pentaglottis sempervirens*), greater celandine (*Chelidonium majus*), hedge woundwort (*Stachys sylvatica*), enchanter's-nightshade (*Circaea lutetiana*) and the uncommon wall lettuce (*Mycelis muralis*). Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) forms small blocks of scrub, where blackbirds, wrens and dunnocks have all bred.

The churchyard has never been cultivated or developed and therefore has an ecological link with its past. Sadly, the churchyard has suffered much abuse and vandalism in recent years. A major restoration took place in 1999, and there are now regular working parties to keep the churchyard in good order. There are also plans to improve the Glebe (the area between the church and the hall where the old rectory once stood).

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 12/04/2007

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL08

Site Name: Tulse Hill Nature Garden

Summary: A nature garden on the Tulse Hill Estate which includes some attractive murals.

Grid ref: TQ 310 742

Area (ha): 0.15

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Ruderal, Scattered trees, Scrub, Tall herbs

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth Housing Department

Site Description:

Set up as a nature garden in 1982 and formally opened in the presence of dozens of enthusiastic children, this small wildlife area, which is located within the Tulse Hill Estate and not far from Brockwell Park, was slow to fulfil its original potential. Neglect through lack of resources had been the main problem, as well as the fact that the people initially involved with the project had long since moved on. Much of the original layout remained, however, including some very attractive murals. One turning point was when Charlie Dimmock and her Groundforce Team came in about 2000 and gave the garden a thorough makeover to both retain its biodiversity value and to improve its presentation. In 2003, Jubilee Primary School was built next to the garden, and value having such a fine resource on hand.

The nature garden is L-shaped, and is overlooked on two sides by flats, on a third side by a school and on the fourth by the back gardens of Leander Road. The colourful murals feature on most of the walls and are still very prominent. A path leads from one end of the garden to the other, and there is access at either end.

Birch (*Betula* sp.), ornamental cherry (*Prunus* sp.) and alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) trees are present, as is scrub of hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) and rose (*Rosa* sp.). Creeping thistle (*Cirsium arvense*) and common nettle (*Urtica dioica*) abound. The nettles are valuable as the larval food-plant of several of our commoner and most brightly coloured butterflies. Common birds, such as blackbirds, also make their home in the nature garden.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 12/04/2007

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL09

Site Name: Durand Gardens, Stockwell

Summary: An old garden square which has developed into a small piece of open woodland amongst some magnificent town houses

Grid ref: TQ 308 767

Area (ha): 0.2

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Secondary woodland, Tall herbs

Access: Can be viewed from adjacent paths or roads only

Ownership: Durand Gardens Residents Association

Site Description:

Durand Gardens is a road of magnificent town houses dating from the first half of the 19th century. Part way along, the road divides either side of an old garden square which has developed into a small piece of open woodland. It is a pleasant spot at any time of the year and surprisingly quiet, at least during the week. There is no general public access, but the site may be easily viewed the whole way round.

The mature trees have all been planted at one time or another; common lime (*Tilia x europaea*), horse-chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), pedunculate oak (*Quercus robur*) and tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) are amongst the trees here, and some have reached a fair size. Tree-of-heaven originates from northern China, but has been growing in Britain since 1751 and is common in the squares and parks of London. It is showing an increasing trend to self-sow, and may become invasive in the near future.

Beneath the trees, daffodils (*Narcissus* sp.) and bluebells (*Hyacinthoides* sp.) are seen in the early spring, followed by cow parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*) in May and June. The small yellow flowers of wood avens (*Geum urbanum*) can be seen throughout the summer, and Canadian goldenrod (*Solidago canadensis*), rosebay willowherb (*Chamerion angustifolium*) and yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) are also present. The iron boundary fence is covered by climbers, chiefly bindweed (*Calystegia* sp.) and bittersweet (*Solanum dulcamara*).

The site is owned and managed by the Durand Gardens Residents Association who have also installed a number of nest boxes for birds in the gardens.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 12/04/2007

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL10

Site Name: Archbishop Sumner Nature Garden

Summary: An interesting nature garden which also has some attractive murals by the children.

Grid ref: TQ 312 786

Area (ha): 0.12

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Pond/lake, Ruderal, Scattered trees

Access: No public access

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

Occupying the site of a demolished house, this secluded nature garden is only accessible through a gate from the playground of Archbishop Sumner Church of England Primary School in Kennington. A path from the entrance leads through a grassy area and small pond. Buddleia (*Buddleja davidii*), goat willow (*Salix caprea*) and bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) grow in the scrub around the edge of the site. The pond acts as a focal point, along with murals and a large London plane (*Platanus x hispanica*) tree. The pond has a stone surround and aquatic flora includes water-plantain (*Alisma plantago-aquatica*), white water-lily (*Nymphaea alba*) and water fern (*Azolla filiculoides*). Along the foot of the adjacent house are murals by the schoolchildren illustrating some of the flowers and butterflies, other insects and snails that may be seen in the garden.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 12/04/2007

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL11

Site Name: St John's Nature Garden

Summary: An attractive garden behind a Baptist chapel in Clapham, with an open grassed lawn and a wooded area

Grid ref: TQ 300 759

Area (ha): 0.12

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Amenity grassland, Flower beds, Planted shrubbery, Scattered trees, Secondary woodland, Tall herbs

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: Baptist Union of Great Britain

Site Description:

This nature garden is located behind St John's Baptist Chapel, with its neo-classical façade on Clapham Road. The garden is fenced and access is permitted by the church during daylight hours. There are two parts to the garden: an open grassed lawn with shrub and flower borders, separated from a more enclosed, wooded section by a boarded fence.

The central lawn is bordered by a path. A traditionally high water table in the past allowed the planting of crack-willows (*Salix fragilis*) on either side of the path and these have taken to form an avenue of pollarded willows. Flower beds along the perimeter of the lawn have been planted with a mix of mostly exotic shrubs such as fig (*Ficus carica*), buddleia (*Buddleja davidii*), rosemary (*Rosemarinus officinalis*) and lavender (*Lavandula* sp.) to provide a rich source of nectar.

The trees and shrubs of the wooded area include sycamore (*Acer pseudoplatanus*), elder (*Sambucus nigra*) and wild cherry (*Prunus avium*). Trees such as ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), small-leaved lime (*Tilia cordata*), field maple (*Acer campestre*) and hazel (*Corylus avellana*) have also been planted in the open area. The ground flora consists of nettle (*Urtica dioica*), docks (*Rumex* spp.), red campion (*Silene dioica*), greater celandine (*Chelidonium majus*) and chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*), the last named surviving from the former vicarage garden.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 12/04/2007

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL12

Site Name: St Paul's Churchyard, Clapham

Summary: The churchyard of the original parish church of Clapham is overlooked by several tall trees, including an enormous grey poplar, and has an attractive community garden

Grid ref: TQ 292 760

Area (ha): 0.34

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Ruderal, Scattered trees, Semi-improved neutral grassland, Vegetated wall/tombstones

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: Diocese of Southwark

Site Description:

Located just south of Wandsworth Road, this is the churchyard of the original parish church of Clapham, which dated from the 12th century. It should not be confused with the rather more prominent and better known Holy Trinity Church on Clapham Common opposite the Old Town, which is now the parish church. When Holy Trinity was built and ready for use in 1776, the old parish church was demolished and a new church constructed and dedicated to St Paul, and opened in 1815.

The churchyard is currently managed by Lambeth Parks & Greenspaces and is well used by the local community. A number of improvements for public access and safety have been made, including improvement of the public footpath, Matrimony Place, through the centre of the churchyard with new lighting and fencing. Many of the church's events during the summer months take places out of doors.

Part of St Paul's Churchyard has been used since 2001 by 'Eden at St Paul's', a church parish charity, for their 'Eden Community Garden'. This is a small community garden with raised beds, allotments, natural seating and wildflower areas. Because of the presence of the Eden Community Garden, the biodiversity value of the churchyard has increased substantially since 2001.

Behind St Paul's Church is a wide open space on two separate levels, enclosed by a wall and overlooked by several tall trees. These include an enormous grey poplar (*Populus x canescens*) which showers its fluffy seeds all over the churchyard in late May and June. Around the tombs and gravestones there are patches of vegetation containing bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.), bracken (*Pteridium aquilinum*), male-fern (*Dryopteris felix-mas*), willowherbs (*Epilobium* spp.) and ivy (*Hedera helix*). The grass between these is kept short, but buttercups (*Ranunculus* spp.), including a mass of lesser celandine (*R. ficaria*), and other wild flowers such as clovers (*Trifolium* spp.), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) and common mouse-ear (*Cerastium fontanum*) can be found between the various grasses.

Adjacent to the Churchyard proper (although not part of the actual site) are Iveley Road Allotments, a small triangular area of land used for allotments. These also provide many habitats and features attractive to wildlife, and add to the ecological value of the Churchyard and the Clapham area.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 12/04/2007

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL13

Site Name: St Julian's Farm Road Playing Field

Summary: A long-abandoned school playing field which is now almost impenetrable but provides a refuge for wildlife

Grid ref: TQ 313 717

Area (ha): 0.44

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Ruderal, Scattered trees, Scrub

Access: No public access

Ownership: Streatham & Clapham High School

Site Description:

This site consists of a long-abandoned school playing field which is now dominated by scrub, creating a haven for wildlife, surrounded as it is by residences on all sides. There is no access to the site, but it is highly valued by local residents as shown by their strong resistance to past proposals for development.

The perimeter of the playing field is fringed by tall lime trees (*Tilia* sp.), which overhang a broad belt of dense bramble (*Rubus fruticosus* agg.) and blackthorn (*Prunus spinosa*) scrub, making access almost impossible. A thick tangle of Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia japonica*) solidly blocks the narrow passageway which originally gave access to the ground from St Julian's Farm Road. Here too may just be seen the derelict pavilion which has been overwhelmed by the rampant growth of scrub. Common birds nesting here include wrens, blackbirds, and song thrushes, and residents report use by foxes, bats and owls.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 12/04/2007

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL14

Site Name: Kennington Park

Summary: A classic example of a Victorian park, with a collection of magnificent trees, a lodge designed by Prince Albert and a peaceful garden hidden away behind the cafe.

Grid ref: TQ 314 777

Area (ha): 7.92

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Amenity grassland, Bare ground, Flower beds, Planted shrubbery, Ruderal, Scattered trees

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth Parks & Greenspaces

Site Description:

Kennington Park was originally created from Kennington Common and was opened as a public open space in March 1854. Kennington Common had previously been the scene of executions, large public meetings and marches (not all at the same time). The park at first appears to simply consist of amenity grassland and mature trees. However, hidden away and easily overlooked is the Flower Garden, which provides a bonus in terms of wildlife value. Another interesting feature is the lodge at the entrance on Kennington Park Road, opposite the junction with Kennington Road. The lodge was designed by Prince Albert as two cottages to show what model housing for families should be like. It was originally at the Great Exhibition of 1851 in Hyde Park, and is known to everybody as the 'Prince Consort Lodge' in recognition of its history and designer.

The magnificent mature trees scattered across the park reflect the Victorian planting tastes and consist of London plane (*Platanus x hispanica*), Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), sycamore, evergreen oak (*Quercus ilex*) and tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*). Not far from the café is the Flower Garden. This provides a quiet haven with seating where visitors may enjoy the horticultural wizardry of earlier landscape designers. As well as many typical cottage garden plants, this garden also contains several species which seed naturally in roughland around London, for example evening-primrose (*Oenothera* sp.), red valerian (*Centranthus ruber*), buddleia, feverfew (*Tanacetum parthenium*), mallow and tansy, although only the last two of these are actually UK native species. Many of them are excellent nectar sources for bees and butterflies. Also here are many colourful weeds typical of the London area, such as the yellow composites perennial sow-thistle (*Sonchus arvensis*), bristly oxtongue (*Picris echioides*), Oxford ragwort (*Senecio squalidus*), Indian balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and rosebay willowherb.

Kennington Park has recently been extended to the east of St Agnes Place, but since this is physically quite separate from the original Victorian park, the extension has not been included within this site. Although one of the main uses of the extension is training young people to play cricket, it is hoped that in due course, the ecological interest of the extension will also be increased. The original park is scheduled as being of historic interest by English Heritage.

In early 2007, Lambeth Council secured funding from the SITA Environmental Trust's 'Enriching Nature' fund for the 'Kennington Meadows' project, which will see the introduction of wildflower meadows and other biodiversity enhancements in the park over the next three years. The third party contribution required by SITA has been provided by the Mayor of London.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 12/04/2007

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL15

Site Name: Norwood Park

Summary: A large undulating park with fine views which is now increasingly being managed with nature conservation in mind, including the creation of a woodland walk

Grid ref: TQ 326 712

Area (ha): 13.02

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Amenity grassland, Scattered trees

Access: Free public access (all/most of site)

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth Parks & Greenspaces

Site Description:

The land on which Norwood Park is located was purchased from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners by the London County Council in 1909 and opened as a public park two years later. The park is interestingly contoured, sloping down westwards to Elder Road and northwards towards the railway line. From the summit the visitor can enjoy sweeping views over Dulwich Woods as they climb towards the Sydenham Hill ridge and Crystal Palace, and far beyond to the buildings of central London and Docklands.

Approached from the western side, with its wide open field, this park does not appear to be a particularly significant wildlife site. However, towards the top of the hill the landscape becomes far more interesting. Some grand old oak trees (*Quercus robur*) on the north-eastern hillside are clearly much older than the surrounding residential streets. There are also some fine holm oaks (*Q. ilex*) and a thicket of willows (*Salix* spp.) and alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) in a damp area (which is perhaps a natural spring line).

Lambeth Parks & Greenspaces recognise the strategic importance of the park as the only large open space in the extreme south-east of the Borough, and is now managing the park to encourage nature conservation. The mature trees are sensitively managed, retaining dead wood where possible in the tree canopy. As a result, this is an excellent site for birds, with all three British species of woodpecker - great spotted, lesser spotted and green - as well as typical parkland birds such as jay, sparrowhawk and parties of tits. A very attractive woodland walk has been developed alongside the railway embankment between Salter's Hill and the entrance to the park alongside Finch Avenue. Now that some of the grass is allowed to grow a little longer, wild flowers such as teasel (*Dipsacus fullonum*), great willowherb (*Epilobium hirsutum*), pendulous sedge (*Carex pendula*) and buttercups (*Ranunculus* spp.) can be found here, together with butterflies such as the speckled wood.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 12/04/2007

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL16

Site Name: South London Botanical Institute Garden

Summary: An astonishing find in Tulse Hill, the garden is a wonderful haven with over 500 labelled species.

Grid ref: TQ 317 731

Area (ha): 0.09

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Flower beds, Planted shrubbery, Pond/lake, Scattered trees, Tall herbs

Access: Access at limited times

Ownership: South London Botanical Institute

Site Description:

On arrival at number 323 Norwood Road in Tulse Hill, one is greeted by a sign announcing Hume's South London Botanical Institute. Adding credence to this, a fine specimen of maidenhair tree (*Ginkgo biloba*) dominates the front garden. This tree is something of a botanical curiosity, being the only surviving representative of an order of trees which reached its evolutionary zenith in the Jurassic in the Jurassic and Cretaceous periods. It provides a taster of further botanical delights to be discovered in the garden at the rear of the house.

The Institute was founded in 1910 by the philanthropist Allan Octavian Hume, a keen natural historian who had spent much of his working life in India. After his retirement, he initiated the creation of the Indian National Congress in the call for Indian independence. On returning to England, in 1909 he bought the house in Norwood Road with the intention of making the study of plants accessible to the working classes. After the garden had suffered a period of neglect, a rescue operation was mounted in 1975. Swathes of vegetation had to be removed before the numbered beds found today could be established.

Densely planted, themed borders are formally laid out and separated by a grid of paved paths. The space is compact but the garden contains over 500 labelled species. A medicinal border contains plants used in both pharmaceutical and popular herbal remedies. Gerard's Border is a selection of plants recorded by John Gerard of Holborn in his *Herball* of 1596. Herbalists were the general practitioners of the day, prescribing these plants for a number of Tudor ailments. The southern hemisphere area has plants from Australasia and South Africa. British natives, ferns, scented plants, drought tolerant plants, and unusual vegetables are also represented. Unusual trees help to create an ideal environment for shade loving plants. These include Kowhai (*Sophora tetraptera*) from New Zealand with yellow pea flowers, delicate foliage and bead-like seed pods. At the heart of the garden is the pond supporting native wetland plants and providing a home for frogs and newts. Sky blue water forget-me-not (*Myosotis scorpioides*) flowers throughout the summer.

The contents of the house are nearly as fascinating as the garden. There is a reference library holding some 3,000 volumes on the world's flora. At least two rooms are full of stacked boxes consisting of a vast herbarium of about 100,000 specimens. Other donated collections include those of botanists working locally. The Institute is open on Thursdays between 10 am and 4 pm, and at other times by appointment. It is closed in August.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 22/12/2006

Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

Site Reference: LaL17

Site Name: Hill Mead Schools Nature Gardens, Moorlands Estate

Summary: Two small school nature gardens on the Moorlands Estate in the heart of Brixton

Grid ref: TQ 315 753

Area (ha): 0.14

Borough(s):

Lambeth

Habitat(s):

Amenity grassland, Hedge, Planted shrubbery, Pond/lake, Ruderal, Scattered trees, Tall herbs

Access: No public access

Ownership: London Borough of Lambeth

Site Description:

These two small nature gardens are located within the Moorlands Estate, which is hidden away behind a nine-storey barrier block on Coldharbour Lane, the object of which was to protect residents from noise generated by the later abandoned Ringway Motorway. Surrounded by railways and the barrier block, the community of some 700 low-rise dwellings arranged around courtyards is quite isolated from the rest of Brixton.

The northern nature garden originally used to be in the grounds of Hill Mead Infants School, and contains a pond supporting frogs and aquatic vegetation, and also has some planted hedgerows of oak (*Quercus robur*), hazel (*Corylus avellana*), hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) and Norway maple (*Acer platanoides*), with a variety of other trees including silver birch (*Betula pendula*), field maple (*Acer campestre*) and grey alder (*Alnus incana*). The two open areas on either side of the central path are quite different, with wilder thistles and coarse grasses contrasting with the well-kept, mown southern area. The southern, now within the newly merged Hill Mead Primary School, is smaller and more landscaped in appearance, although it was designed in a naturalistic manner.

Site first notified: 01/12/1994

Boundary last changed: 01/12/1994

Citation last edited: 12/04/2007