

## **Improving Londoners' Access to Nature** London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2004) Implementation Report



February 2008



**MAYOR OF LONDON**

**Improving Londoners' Access to Nature**  
London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2004)  
Implementation Report

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## Mayor's Foreword

Parks and green spaces are immensely important to London and Londoners. Our parks and wild places are an essential ingredient of London's unique character. And, as London's climate changes in the years ahead, they will become even more important, for example by providing shade during hot weather and through their capacity to store water during extreme floods.

London has some of the finest green spaces of any major city. Many are rich in wildlife, but this is sadly not the case everywhere. Some parts of London have very few good quality parks, and many of the lower quality spaces also lack wildlife of any significant interest.

The London Plan includes measures to improve the opportunities that people have to enjoy nature. It asks boroughs to create and enhance wildlife habitats, giving priority to those parts of London which have few high quality, accessible wildlife sites. This report lists those sites where I see an opportunity to improve access to nature, and provides guidance on how these improvements can and should be made.



**Ken Livingstone**  
Mayor of London



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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 For many people, parks and green spaces are valued as an opportunity to enjoy contact with nature. In a recent survey by CABE Space, the opportunity to escape the pressures of the city and to experience contact with nature were ranked second and fourth respectively in the values people associate with parks and green spaces<sup>1</sup>.
- 1.2 Access to natural green spaces brings benefits to people's mental and physical health. This stems partly from physical activity, whether it takes the form of a gentle stroll or more vigorous exercise, such as health 'work-outs' or practical conservation work. But it also includes the opportunity to spend time quietly in a relatively tranquil open space, where the sights and sounds of nature are close at hand. This opportunity to relax and unwind is a valued antidote to the hustle and bustle of city life. It has been shown that improving the landscape and biodiversity richness of a previously uninteresting open space can increase its level of use, so that more people benefit from the park<sup>2</sup>. Green spaces with high biodiversity value encourage people to walk and explore more, hence take more exercise<sup>3</sup>.
- 1.3 Policy 3D.14 of the London Plan (Consolidated with Alterations since 2004) - hereafter referred to as the 'London Plan'<sup>4</sup> seeks to improve people's access to nature. The policy states that opportunities to address the deficiency areas in access to nature should be identified. It suggests priority should be given to projects that have potential to improve people's access to wildlife areas, contributing to the target in the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy<sup>5</sup> to reduce areas of deficiency in access to nature, as well as those that contribute to delivering Biodiversity Action Plans. Connecting fragmented habitat and increasing the size of habitat areas could assist in increasing species' resilience to climate change.

## Extracts from the London Plan:

### **Policy 3D.14 Biodiversity and nature conservation (part)**

The Mayor will work with partners to ensure a proactive approach to the protection, promotion and management of biodiversity in support of the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy.

The planning of new development and regeneration should have regard to nature conservation and biodiversity, and opportunities should be taken to achieve positive gains for conservation through the form and design of development. Where appropriate, measures may include creating, enhancing and managing wildlife habitat and natural landscape and improving access to nature. Priority for both should be given to sites which assist in achieving the targets in Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs)

and sites within or near to areas deficient in accessible wildlife sites. DPDs should identify these deficiency areas and the opportunities for addressing them...

### **Paragraph 3.318**

One of the key objectives of the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy is to ensure that all Londoners have ready access to wildlife and natural green spaces. This is particularly important where there is a shortage of green space and in Areas for Regeneration. Access can be improved by making places more attractive and safer, enhancing or creating new wildlife habitats and opening up access to existing habitats. Wherever appropriate, new development should include new or enhanced habitat, or design (such as green roofs) and landscaping that promotes biodiversity, and provision for their management.

- 1.4 The Mayor's Best Practice Guidance (BPG) for Open Space Strategies<sup>6</sup> indicates that opportunities to improve the habitat value and function of new or existing public open spaces in areas of open space deficiency should be prioritised where these can redress both biodiversity and broader open space deficiencies. The Mayor's BPG on development plan policies for biodiversity<sup>7</sup> provides advice on incorporating the aim of reducing areas of deficiency. The Mayor's Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on sustainable design and construction<sup>8</sup> includes the reduction in areas of deficiency of access to nature as an essential standard.
- 1.5 The Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy has two main themes, protecting important wildlife habitat and priority species and improving access to nature. These two themes are reflected in the strategy's two main targets, no net loss of important wildlife habitat and reducing areas of deficiency in access to nature. The London Health Commission's Health Impact Assessment of the Draft Biodiversity Strategy<sup>9</sup> recognised that substantial health benefits are associated with access to, and use of, green spaces. The assessment also noted these benefits are greatest for those in low income groups who are least likely to have access to green space, for example older people, disabled people or families on low income.
- 1.6 The Mayor's Children and Young People's Strategy<sup>10</sup> states that is important that children have access to a variety of open spaces for sport, play and to discover the natural world. The Mayor's Older People Strategy<sup>11</sup> seeks to work with the London boroughs, the London Parks and Green Spaces Forum and other groups to make London's open spaces more accessible and enjoyable for older people. Sections 3.13 and 3.14 of the Mayor's Accessible London SPG<sup>12</sup> emphasises that audits of parks and

open spaces should identify improvements needed to make them accessible and inclusive to all potential users, regardless of disability, age and gender. The Planning for Equality and Diversity SPG<sup>13</sup> states that access issues should be considered in the management of open spaces in order to maximise the potential value and benefits to local communities.

- 1.7 London's Urban Heat Island: A Summary for Decision Makers<sup>14</sup> recognises greening is a cost effective way of ameliorating harsh urban climates from the individual building to the neighbourhood scale. If tree and vegetation planting is integrated with a well designed programme of roof greening the potential gains for human thermal comfort at the neighbourhood scale could be significant. In the case of London the cooling effect of expansive vegetated surfaces such as Richmond, Hyde and Regent's Parks are clear. Additional benefits arising from urban trees are that they act as carbon stores, can reduce urban flooding through intercepting heavy rainfall, can help filter pollutants from the air, and contribute to quality of life.
- 1.8 The Mayor's Ambient Noise Strategy<sup>15</sup> promotes better management of soundscapes and access to quiet. Central government is expected to identify 'quiet areas' under the Environmental Noise Directive 2002/49/EC and Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006; these are likely to be publicly accessible open spaces.
- 1.9 This Implementation Report provides non-statutory advice that demonstrates how the aim of improving access can be achieved by identifying opportunities. More detailed information with suggestions for specific sites has been sent to each borough. The Mayor looks to the boroughs to use this information to inform their local development documents, in the exercise of their planning powers and to actively encourage the implementation of the opportunities. Managers and land owners of open spaces are also encouraged to improve the quality of open spaces and management practices to improve access to nature.

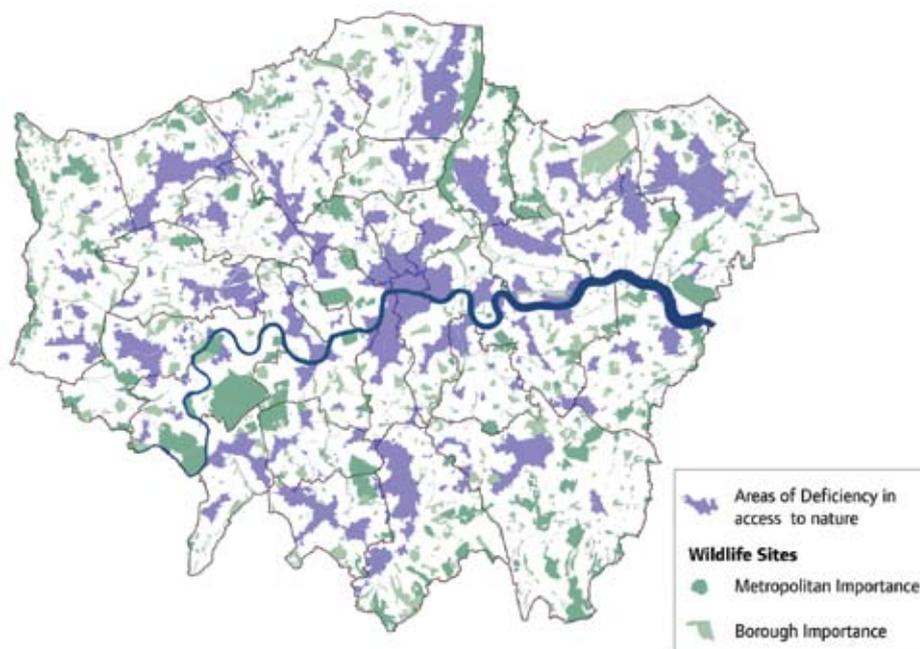
## 2 Areas of deficiency

- 2.1 In order to improve people's access to nature the areas that do not have good quality sites that are rich with wildlife need to be identified. Socio-economic deprivation and access to public open space also needs to be considered when prioritising the opportunities for tackling the deficiency areas.

### Wildlife sites

- 2.2 The Mayor has identified areas of deficiency in access to nature to highlight the parts of London that are in greatest need for improvements in biodiversity using the procedures outlined the Biodiversity Strategy (Figure 1). They are defined as localities that are more than one kilometre walking distance from a publicly accessible Site of Borough or Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation. Sites with restricted access, such as private sports clubs, or where there is a charge for entry, have been excluded. Based on the 2001 Census, it is estimated that 1.75 million Londoners live within the areas of deficiency in Figure 1.
- 2.3 Only sites that offer a substantive experience of nature are taken into account, and sites where the public access is restricted from the chief features of ecological interest are generally excluded. Designated sites where the main ecological interest is of a specialised nature are also discounted, for example, rare mosses or ferns, that would pass un-noticed by the majority of visitors. Full details of how areas of deficiency are defined and identified can be found in Appendix 1.

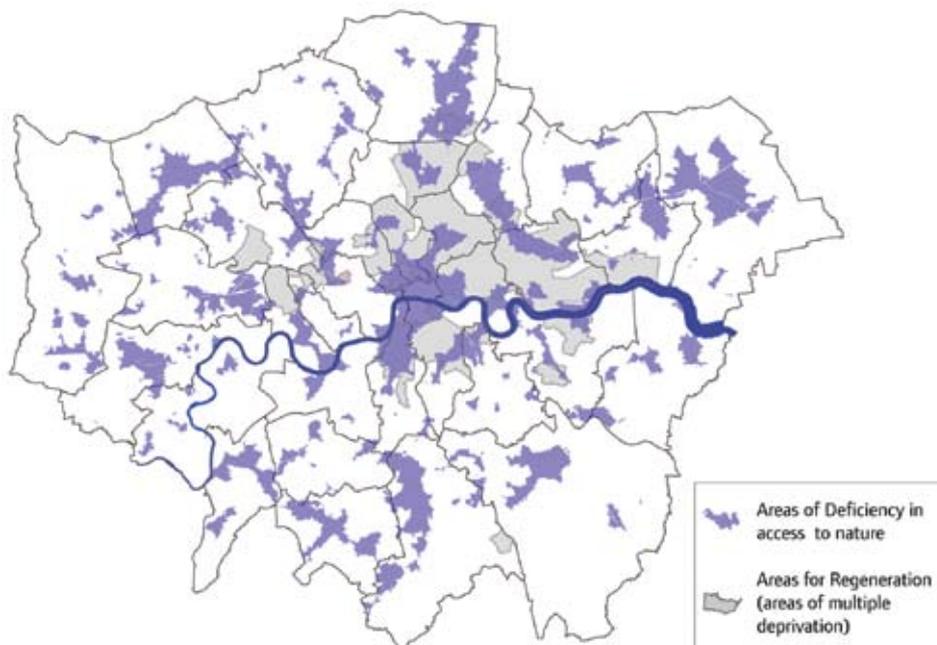
**Figure 1: Wildlife sites and areas of deficiency in access to nature**



### Areas for Regeneration

- 2.4 Areas for Regeneration is the term used in the London Plan to describe areas of multiple deprivation. These areas are the wards in greatest socio-economic need, defined on the basis of the 20 per cent most deprived wards in London, as determined by the government. With a few exceptions, these wards are in inner and east London. It is a priority to improve the quality of life in these areas. The highest priority for improving access to nature is where these areas overlap with areas of deficiency in access to nature. Figure 2 shows the overlap between Areas for Regeneration and areas of deficiency in access to nature.

**Figure 2: Deficiency in access to nature and multiple deprivation**

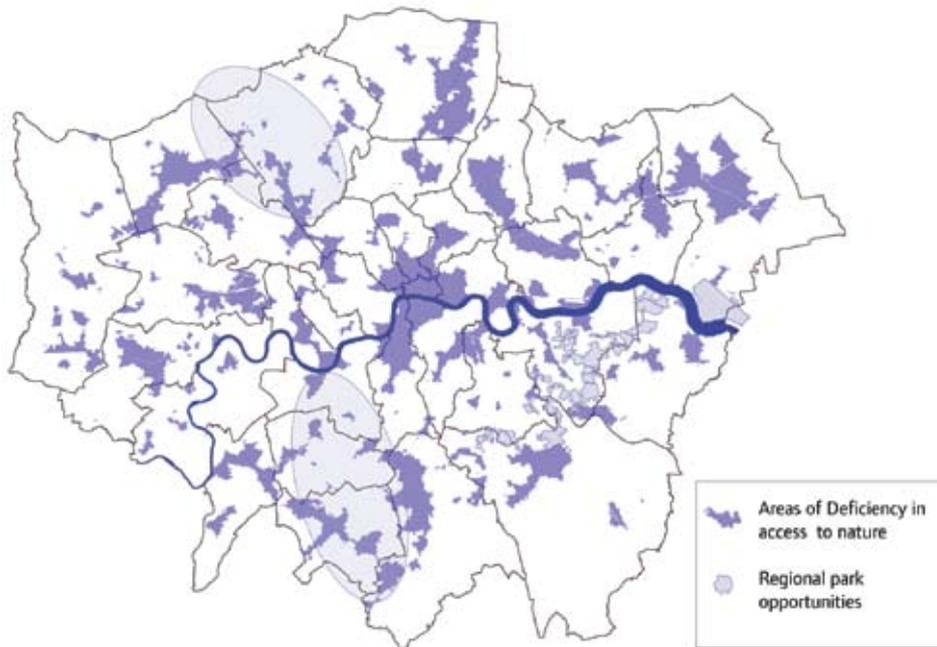


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### Public open space

- 2.5 The London Plan sets out a hierarchy for the provision of public open space across London from local parks to regional parks. The hierarchy includes distances which people should be expected to travel to reach an open space in each category. Areas that lie beyond these distances in each category are regarded as areas of public open space deficiency. The Mayor has worked with partners to identify opportunities to redress the strategic deficiencies for Regional Parks<sup>16</sup>. Where these strategic open space opportunities overlap with areas of deficiency in access to nature (Figure 3), priority should be given to enhance access to nature and contributing to the establishment of new strategic parks at the same time.

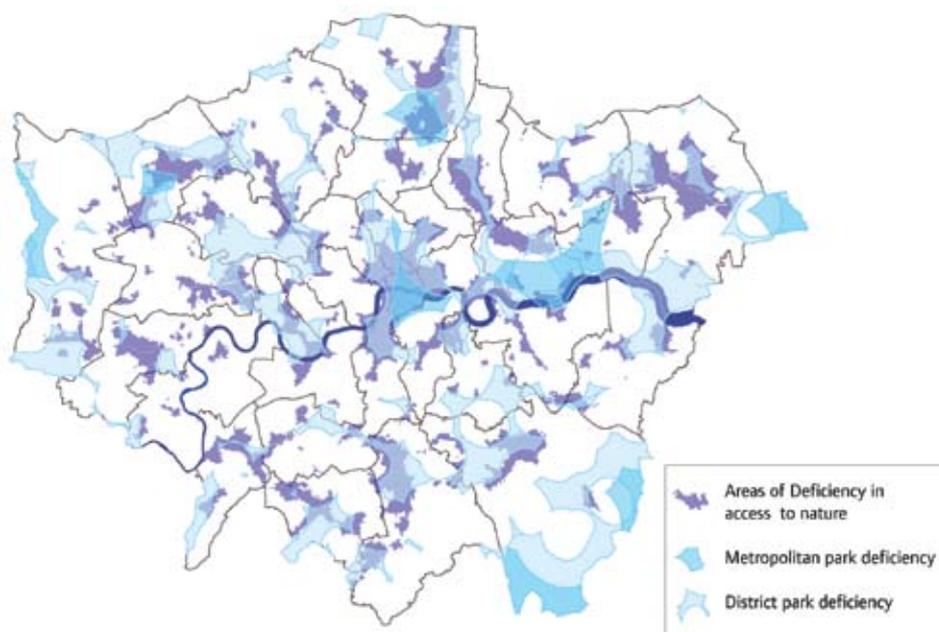
**Figure 3: Areas of deficiency in access to nature and regional park opportunities**



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2.6 In addition, the five Sub-Regional Development Frameworks<sup>17</sup> identify deficiencies for Metropolitan and District Parks across London (Figure 4) whilst borough open space strategies identify deficiencies in Local Parks. In many cases areas of public open space deficiency overlap with areas of deficiency in access to nature.

**Figure 4: Areas of deficiency in access to nature and public open space**



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### 3 Improving access to nature

3.1 Access to nature can be improved in the following ways:

- improving the natural value of an accessible site, or creating new open space, to provide significant experience of nature
- creating new access points to a site providing a significant experience of nature, or opening up access to a previously restricted site
- improving the walking access through areas surrounding a site, extending the catchment area.

3.2 To *reduce* the area of deficiency, the nature conservation interest must be enhanced to meet the designation criteria for Sites of Borough Importance for Nature Conservation. This is the priority, but will not always be practicable, particularly in areas lacking in open space generally. Such spaces have to meet many competing needs and opportunities for improvement to biodiversity may be limited. Smaller scale enhancements may not reduce the area of deficiency, but nevertheless bring visible improvements, greatly appreciated by the local community, which significantly *alleviate* the deficiency in access to nature. Figure 5 illustrates some successes and Figure 6 demonstrates the impact of a project on an area of deficiency.

**Figure 5: Examples of projects that have reduced areas of deficiency**

Site	Organisation responsible	Type of enhancement	Date	Reduction in AOD
Gillespie Park	LB Islington/ Arsenal FC	New footbridge delivered through planning process	2006	30 ha
Eardley Road Nature Reserve	LB Lambeth	Increased public access	2005	16 ha
Mountsfield Park	LB Lewisham/ Groundwork	Habitat creation	2005	162 ha
Bow Creek Ecology Park	Lee Valley Park	Public access provided for first time	2006	61 ha
East India Dock Basin	Lee Valley Park	Public access increased from two to seven days per week	2005	133 ha
Durban Road Open Space	LB Waltham Forest	Improved nature conservation management	2004	30 ha
Queen's Park	City of London	Habitat creation	2004	90 ha
Glentrammon Recreation Ground	LB Bromley	Improved nature conservation management	2002	56 ha

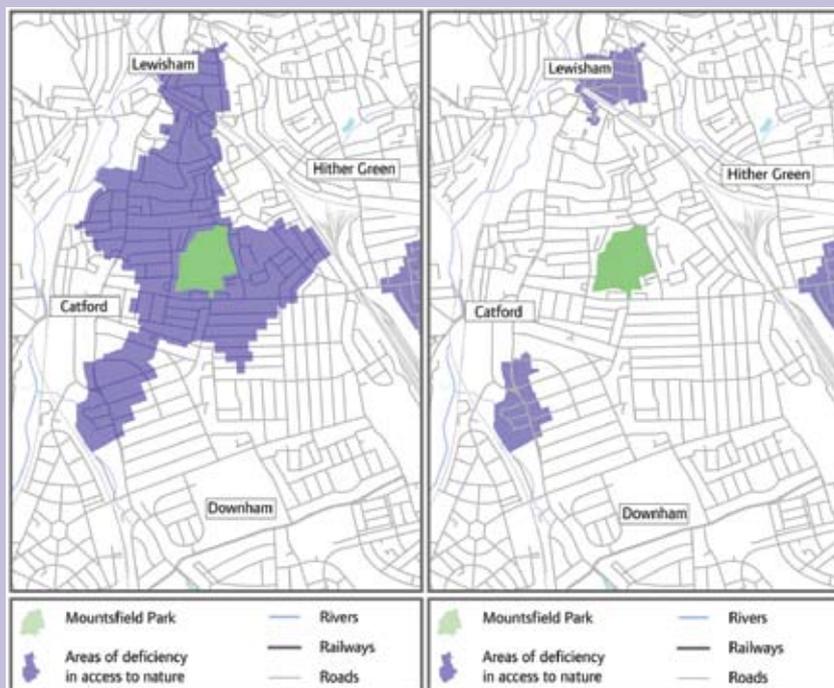
- 3.3 Some improvements will contribute to the Mayor's strategic targets for restoration and re-creation of priority habitats for biodiversity, as set out in the London Plan and as recommended in PPS9<sup>18</sup>. For example, there should be opportunities for enhancement of chalk grassland in parts of south London, lake restoration in many of London's Victorian parks, and naturalisation of river channels as described in the Environment Agency's river restoration strategies for north<sup>19</sup> and south<sup>20</sup> London. In other sites, particularly in inner city locations, effort will be focused more on enhancing visual appeal through wildlife-friendly landscaping; for such projects a horticultural approach may be more appropriate.

**Figure 6: Impact of a project on an area of deficiency**

Mountsfield Park is a large, airy park, offering fine views over London. But its ecological quality was rather limited, hence until 2003 it was only a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation. London Borough of Lewisham instigated a range of improvements, including planting of native trees and shrubs, wetland creation and loggeries for stag beetles. As an old playground was due for renewal, they broke up the tarmac, allowing the natural flora to become established, and then built a new playground elsewhere in the park. Interpretative signs and some fine sculptures helped people to appreciate the special quality of this corner. The site has now been upgraded to Borough Importance, thereby reducing an area of deficiency.

Before Enhancements

After Enhancements



- 3.4 Opportunities that involve enhancements to existing open spaces should improve a site's attractiveness for wildlife and its sensory appeal as well as improving people's experience of nature. Projects will range from discrete enhancements to specific areas through to changes in management across the site. Where public access to a previously inaccessible but ecologically valuable wildlife site is proposed, this must be designed and managed to minimise the impact on the existing wildlife. In each case, an assessment of the site's existing wildlife value at the outset will help to determine the most appropriate way forward.
- 3.5 Projects should respect important landscapes and integrate with the diverse uses of open space. Most projects will not compromise existing functions of the open space, although in some locations a degree of adjustment may be desirable to accommodate larger projects. For example the natural topography is likely to be a major factor in determining where a new channel can be created as part of river restoration proposals and it may be necessary to re-arrange the layout of pitches or identify alternative provision on another site through an open space strategy. In some cases, particularly larger recreation grounds, it may be possible to widen the appeal and uses of a site by introducing new elements alongside the sporting use, such as small plots of woodland or meadow. Where ball games are the principal function of the open space, enhancements are likely to focus on planting in corners and around the perimeter.
- 3.6 Proposals should aim to improve access to and within a site for people previously excluded, such as removing barriers and improving access for disabled people. The Fieldfare Trust has published guidance on improving access to the countryside for all<sup>21</sup> and the Mayor has illustrations of good practice in his Case Study Examples for Accessible London<sup>22</sup>.
- 3.7 Crucially, proposals must take account of public safety. Improvements will need to consider the effects of climate change, such as need for shade and the sustainability of planting schemes. They must be developed in full consultation with, and preferably practical participation of, the local community. In some cases biodiversity enhancements may be delivered as part of a wider restoration of the park. A range of resources is available to guide creation and management of habitat features<sup>23</sup>.
- 3.8 Improvements to the walking environment can encourage people from a wider area to use sites. Transport for London has published a Walking Plan and guidance on improving walkability<sup>24</sup>. As well as creating new physical linkages such as footbridges, improvements can be made to signage and the walking and cycling environment along existing routes between homes and sites.

- 3.9 Housing estates can provide additional opportunities to improve access to nature. The communal areas between and around housing estates often serve a large number of people, thereby potentially offering contact with nature on their doorstep. Ecologically sensitive planting can be incorporated both into new housing developments and in existing estates. Shrubberies, herbaceous borders to attract bees and butterflies, wild flower meadows, wetlands incorporating Sustainable Urban Drainage, roof gardens or even small plots of woodland can all be considered, depending upon the space available and character of the development. Well-managed green spaces by and in between housing are crucial to making neighbourhoods liveable, and contribute to people's quality of life. Guidance on suitable projects for social housing estates is available from Neighbourhoods Green<sup>25</sup>.

#### Example: Clapton Park Estate



At Clapton Park Estate, Hackney, the Grass Roof Company maintains the open spaces for the tenants' management organisation, and has used annual wildflower mixtures in many borders and other areas that were previously sprayed with herbicides.

- 3.10 Some common approaches could include:
- creating wild flower meadows, either through relaxing the management of existing turf, or sowing wild flower seed
  - encouraging the natural urban flora of derelict plots through appropriate management
  - planting hedgerows or shrubbery to improve nesting habitat for birds
  - planting small blocks of woodland or groups of trees
  - restoring a lake
  - making or restoring a wildlife pond
  - opening culverts or re-naturalising river channels
  - enhancing the wildlife value and sustainability of flower beds
  - greening of buildings with climbing plants to provide vertical habitat
  - changes in mowing regimes, shrubbery management or herbaceous planting.

**Example: Southfields Park**

Southfields Park, on the borders of Chiswick and Acton, was a typical urban green space with lines of trees and a wide sweep of amenity grassland, but little else of landscape or ecological interest. The London Borough of Ealing began by planting a small plot of native woodland, followed a few years later by a wild flower meadow. The addition of a wildlife pond with a healthy population of frogs and newts means this site now offers excellent contact with nature for the local community.

**Example: Whittington Park**

Whittington Park in north London lies alongside the noisy, traffic of Holloway Road. Islington Council created a bank of wild flowers, chosen for their bright colours, including both early and late-flowering species in the mix to prolong the flowering season. In high summer it offers a vivid and uplifting spectacle to passers-by, as well as providing habitat for bees and small seed-eating birds.

## 4 Making it happen

### **The Mayor's role**

- 4.1 When planning applications are referred to the Mayor, he may consider using his planning powers to seek improvements in access to nature, either on sites identified in this report or within the proposed development. The Mayor will also encourage boroughs to use Section 106 funding, where appropriate, to deliver the improvements.
- 4.2 Delivery of other Mayoral strategies and priorities, for example the 100 Public Spaces programme, will also provide opportunities to reduce or alleviate areas of deficiency. Transport for London will be important in providing access improvements such as footbridges over roads or railways or in creating new cycleways and public footpaths to improve linkages between sites. The London Development Agency will be important in the delivery of new open spaces, notably in the Thames Gateway, and also integrating wildlife habitat in and around new development.
- 4.3 The Mayor will use his influence with other strategic partners in London to include access to nature principles in their strategies and programmes and ensure the appropriate level of resources required to deliver improvements are made available.
- 4.4 The Mayor will, where appropriate, support and seek funding for some top priority projects, including external funding sponsorship, to provide a strategic lead on delivery. As the first stage of this, the Mayor has provided match funding for a number of priority projects in 2007/08. The Mayor will work with regeneration agencies and funding bodies to ensure this report is recognised in their consideration of funding allocations.
- 4.5 The Mayor will celebrate improvements and promote the use of the existing network of wildlife sites to as wide an audience as possible, so that as many Londoners share the benefits. Appropriate signage and interpretation will be a key component of the programme. The Mayor will also continue to maintain the Wildweb site<sup>26</sup>, encouraging people to make the most of London's wild places by providing information on all London's wildlife sites, including access and transport details.

### **Working in partnership**

- 4.6 Delivering improvements will depend on working with key partners. The London Parks and Green Spaces Forum is a strategic body that draws together parks and open space management personnel from across London. Its biodiversity agenda is delivered primarily through the London Biodiversity Action Plan's Parks and Green Spaces Habitat Action Plan<sup>27</sup> working group, which is led by the Mayor. This group has had a major role in developing the agenda for improving biodiversity and access to nature

in parks, and will continue to develop expertise in managing urban parks for biodiversity and addressing access to nature.

- 4.7 At the local level, the majority of the projects will depend upon individual boroughs, and many will be delivered in partnership and with the support of a wide range of bodies, including Natural England, Environment Agency, Groundwork, London Wildlife Trust, English Heritage, Olympic Delivery Authority, Neighbourhoods Green, BTCV, Woodland Trust, urban development corporations, regeneration partnerships, registered social landlords and major landowners such as water companies and landfill operators.
- 4.8 Partnership working should involve and engage with community groups, residents associations and the users/non users of the open spaces to identify local aspirations for the site and, where possible, the involvement of the community in practical work. This can foster a sense of local pride and ownership.
- 4.9 For projects involving improvements to rivers, the Environment Agency will be the leading organisation on technical matters. Several of the opportunities identified in the present document have already been highlighted in the river restoration strategies for north<sup>19</sup> and south<sup>20</sup> London.
- 4.10 The London Tree and Woodland Framework<sup>28</sup> advocates a spatial planning framework for woodlands. The Forestry Commission will develop this by including access to nature criteria in the Capital Woodlands Project.
- 4.11 Improving access to nature is one of Natural England's core objectives. It is developing internal funding streams and administering funding streams of others, which will assist in securing the delivery of improvements which are compatible with the approach in this report.

**Example: Brookmill Park**

Before



After

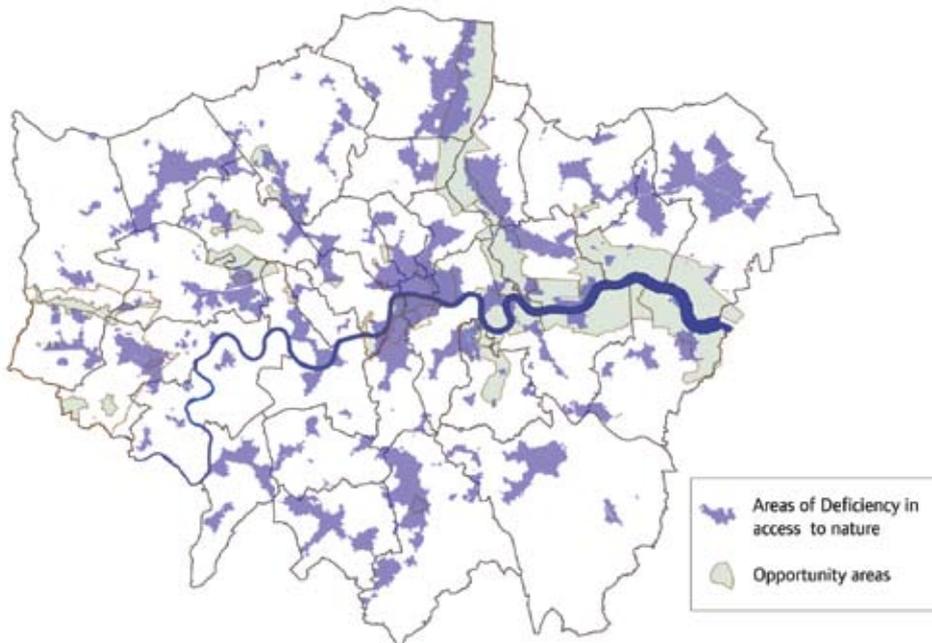
The River Ravensbourne used to run alongside Brookmill Park in a straight concrete channel. This proved to be an ideal route for the Docklands Light Railway, so London Borough of Lewisham negotiated through the planning process to re-create a river channel within the park. A far more natural watercourse was created, with wide banks of wetland vegetation, offering flood storage and greatly improved wildlife habitat. As one of the local residents pointed out to us, 'Now it feels like the countryside'. Planning and development.

**Planning and development**

- 4.12 Some opportunities will arise through the planning process, particularly sites which are currently not accessible but have high wildlife value. Where these could have a significant impact on an area of deficiency in access to nature, without significant detriment to any legally protected species, this potential should be recognised within Local Development Frameworks, encouraging the opportunity to create new or improve existing public open space. The use of planning gain should be considered with respect to the creation, improvement and management of wildlife sites.
- 4.13 Planning proposals for development should maximise the opportunities for habitat enhancement, restoration and re-creation to redress the deficiency areas and contribute to establishing a connected system of habitats. Additional opportunities to those identified in this document can arise through habitat creation, especially in large development projects such as housing estate re-development. Figure 7 indicates broad major development areas, where opportunities for reducing the deficiency areas through creating new sites may exist, and Development Plan Documents should identify such new opportunities at the local level. Where appropriate, habitat creation should aim to contribute to the targets for priority habitats in the London Plan.
- 4.14 In the Thames Gateway, a major driver will be the East London Green Grid. This is an ambitious strategic project that will deliver a network of inter-linked green spaces, as part of urban regeneration. It will include a variety of landscapes and recreational opportunities. The Mayor's East

London Green Grid Framework SPG<sup>29</sup> identifies the deficiency areas in access to nature and provides guidance on how these can be reduced.

**Figure 7: Deficiency in access to nature and planning opportunities**



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### Costs of enhancements

- 4.15 Most projects will require capital funding, and some may involve a minor increase in revenue costs. Some training of staff and/or contractors may also be required to manage the new habitats. In the detailed information on suggested improvements, which will be supplied separately to individual boroughs, a rough indication of costs for each project is given where possible. These figures allow for some ongoing costs above the existing management regime for the first five years. Detailed costings, including management costs, will be worked out as individual project ideas are developed and refined. In each case there should be consideration of the project costs in relation to biodiversity gains and benefit to the local community.
- 4.16 Revenue costs are likely to be a key issue for housing estates where any change may be reflected in the service charges of tenants. Projects should be designed to take the impact of costs on service charges into account.

**Example: Gillespie Park**

Gillespie Park, in Islington, was previously railway land alongside the Great North Railway. When that fell into disuse, nature soon moved in, forming a rich mix of habitats. In the early 1980s, British Rail leased part of the land for a trial ecological park. This became so successful that when development was proposed for the remainder of the site, the railway agreed to give up an additional piece of land to enlarge the park, whilst retaining the rest for development. The park is now a wonderful haven of woodland, scrub and meadow and Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation. When the Arsenal Football Club proposed its new Emirates Stadium, Islington Council negotiated a new footbridge over the railway line as part of the redevelopment. This new walking route allowed people on the other side of the railway line to easily reach the park, reducing a large area of deficiency.

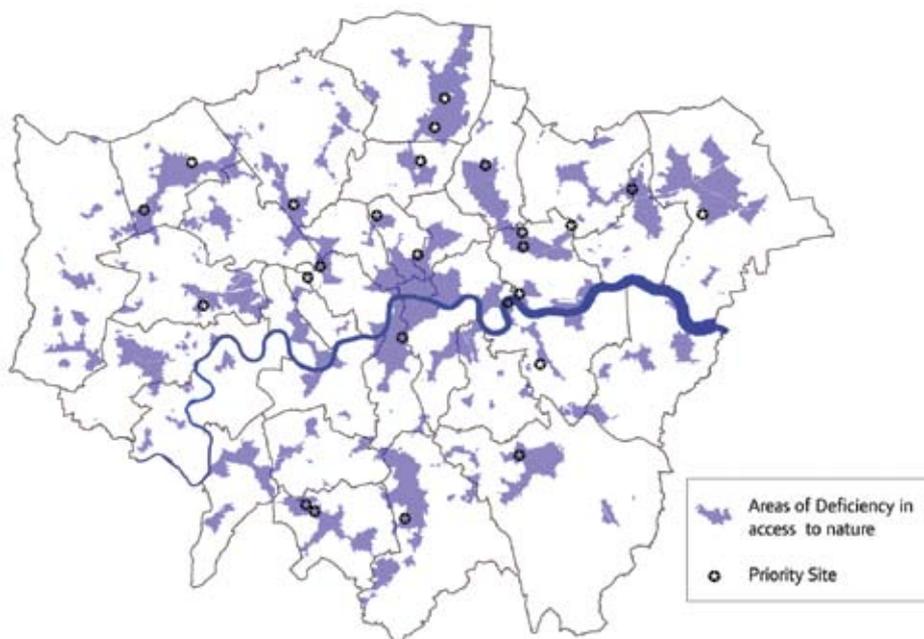
## 5 The priority sites

- 5.1 The list of priority sites for enhancement has been drawn up taking a strategic approach. The large number of potential sites in or near the mapped areas of deficiency in access to nature was refined through site visits and discussion with relevant borough officers. The scoring system in Appendix 2 was used to prioritise the opportunities.

### Reducing areas of deficiency

- 5.2 Appendix 3 provides two ranked lists. List 1 includes all the sites that have the potential to *reduce* areas of deficiency in access to nature. Most of these have the potential to be enhanced to Borough Importance for nature conservation, albeit in some cases in stages over a number of years. It also includes a number of existing Sites of Borough Importance where improved access to features of wildlife interest or habitat enhancement will reduce an area of deficiency. The distribution of the top 25 sites from List 1 is shown in Figure 8. If all 25 of these sites were enhanced to become Sites of Borough Importance, areas of deficiency would be reduced by about 2,500 ha.

**Figure 8: Priority sites for reducing areas of deficiency**



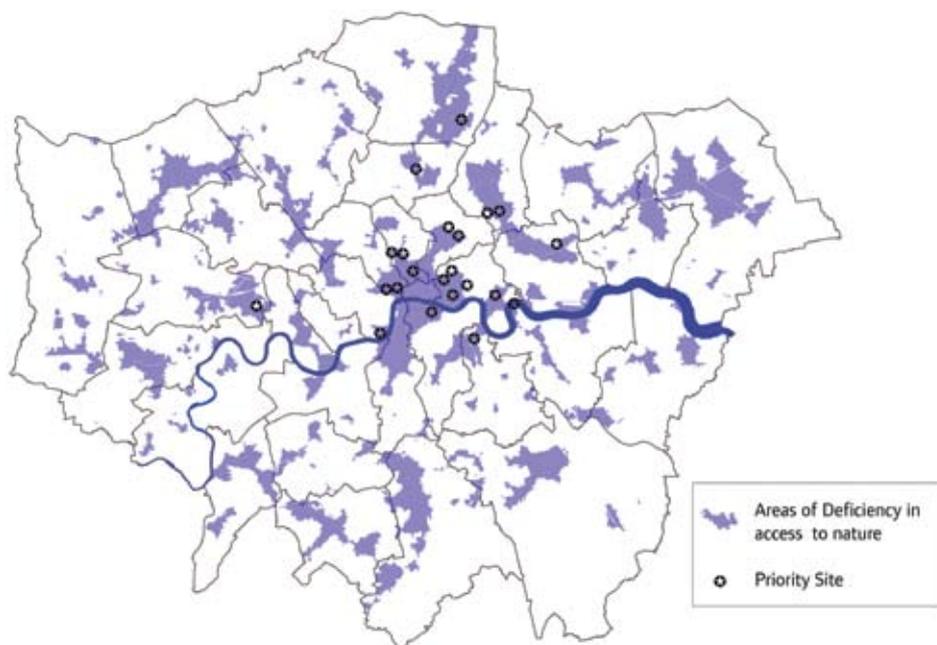
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### Alleviating deficiency

- 5.3 List 2 comprises other priority sites for *alleviating* deficiency in access to nature. These are sites where significant enhancement should be possible but the site is unlikely to reach Borough Importance, and hence will not reduce an area of deficiency. The distribution of the top 23 sites on List 2

(those with an overall score of 20 or above, based on the scoring system described in Appendix 2) is shown in Figure 9.

**Figure 9: Priority sites for alleviating deficiency**



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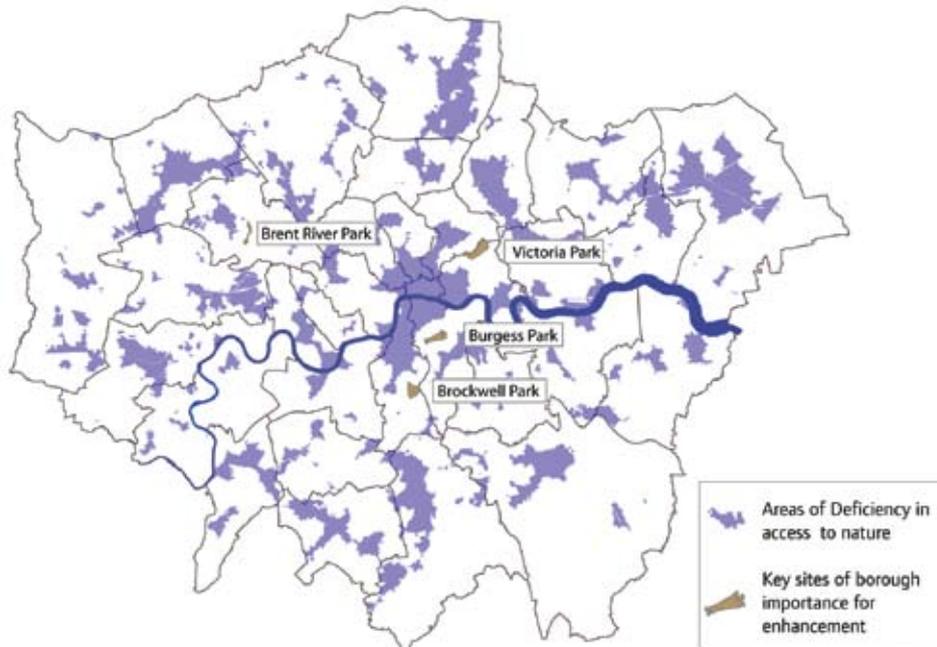
### Enhancing access to key Sites of Borough Importance

5.4 The sites highlighted in the two lists are all in or near areas of deficiency in access to nature. A few additional sites have been identified as priorities for enhancing access to nature. These are already designated as Sites of Borough Importance for nature conservation, and hence are not in areas of deficiency. However, further improvements to the experience of nature they provide would be a significant enhancement in access to nature for large numbers of people. Four such sites have been identified and are shown in Figure 10, Burgess Park, Brockwell Park, Victoria Park, and Brent River Park. These sites have several features in common:

- they are the only site providing significant access to nature in a substantial area
- they lie in or near the 20 per cent of most deprived wards in London
- there are opportunities to significantly improve the experience of nature they provide.

5.5 The GLA's Biodiversity Team can provide specific information on high priority sites for each borough, including ideas for habitat enhancement. Appendix 4 provides some examples of advice on possible improvements.

**Figure 10: Priority borough wildlife sites for enhancing access to nature**



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## Appendix 1: Identifying areas of deficiency in access to nature

### Introduction

Many parts of London are well blessed with fine green spaces, which support a wealth of wildlife. However, this is by no means the case across the whole of the capital. The GLA Biodiversity Group has developed a systematic method of identifying those parts of London where people do not enjoy good access to green spaces with significant wildlife value. These areas are called Areas of Deficiency in Access to Nature.

### Identifying Areas of Deficiency in Access to Nature

First it is necessary to map Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). These are graded in four tiers, as described in the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy, Appendix 1:

- Sites of Metropolitan Importance – important in a London-wide context

- Sites of Borough Importance – important in a borough context. These are further subdivided into:

  - Borough grade 1

  - Borough grade 2

  - Sites of Local Importance

Localities where people are further than 1km walking distance from a publicly accessible Site of Borough or higher level of significance for nature conservation are defined as Areas of Deficiency in access to nature.

### Technical details that are taken into account in mapping Areas of Deficiency in Access to Nature

#### *Measuring the 1km distance to a wildlife site*

The mapping process is based on actual walking routes to Sites of Nature Conservation Importance via roads, bridges, footpaths or accessible open spaces. In some cases the walking distance takes account of routes through housing estates, if the route is not too complex and it can be assumed that people with a reasonable level of local knowledge will know of these routes or could find them.

#### *Access points*

The distance measured relates to access points into the sites of nature conservation importance. If a site has only one access point, people who live on the far side of the site from the entrance will have further to walk to enter the site, hence an Area of Deficiency boundary may be shown nearer to the site than might otherwise be expected. This is especially common in cemeteries – Paddington, West Norwood and Streatham Cemeteries all have only one entrance and AODs approach very close to the site. However,

Tottenham Cemetery has no fewer than seven entrances, and AODs are accordingly much further away from the site boundaries.

Where an access point is currently closed, or where a new access is proposed but not yet open, this is discounted until the gateway is actually open.

#### *Sites with restricted opening times*

To be counted as providing significant access to nature, a site must be open for at least five days a week. Hence Greenwich Peninsula Ecology Park, which is open 10-5 on Wednesday to Sunday inclusive is considered to give sufficient access. However, at Roe Green Park, a Borough Grade II site in Brent, although most of the park is freely accessible, the main nature conservation interest lies within a garden that is usually open only on one morning per week. This Site was therefore not considered relevant in reducing an AOD.

Increasing the opening hours of a previously restricted site can change an AOD boundary. For example, East India Dock Basin in Tower Hamlets was formerly only open at weekends and so an AOD was drawn up to its boundaries. When it became open every day, the AOD was redrawn to begin one kilometre from the site.

#### *Sites in which the main nature conservation interest is limited to a part of the site that has restricted access*

If only part of a Borough grade site is normally accessible, and the accessible part on its own would not achieve Borough status, then this is not considered to relieve an Area of Deficiency. For example, Lambeth Palace Gardens with Archbishops Park is a Borough Grade II site. However, the main ecological interest is in Lambeth Palace Gardens (which are usually inaccessible) and Archbishops Park on its own would not rank higher than a Local Site. Therefore, although there is access here to a reasonably sized BII site, it is not considered to give sufficient access to nature.

A comparable, although rather different, situation is a Borough Grade II railside site in north-west London. Most of this site is inaccessible railside land. However, the site also includes a field of rough grassland, adjacent to and accessible from a local housing estate. On its own, this field would rank only as a Local Site at the most, hence the site is not counted for the purposes of relieving an AOD.

Similarly, one Borough Site in Tower Hamlets has an excellent wildflower meadow, but this lies within a children's play area, which is only accessible to children under ten years of age and their carers. Hence it is not considered to be freely accessible.

### *Sites with entry charges*

Where payment has to be made to access a site (for example Kew Gardens or Highgate Cemetery), this is not regarded as freely accessible and is not used to reduce Areas of Deficiency (AOD).

### *Location of the interest within a site*

In general, access is measured from the nearest accessible edge of the site, even where a short walk into that site is needed to find much beyond mown grass and a few trees, as, for example, at Clapham Common. However, where large parts of a SINC have little or no accessible ecological interest (for example extensive areas of hard surfaces, buildings, or close-mown sports pitches), measurement can be made to where the accessible ecological interest is felt to start.

Some sites (for example Mile End Park and Wandsworth Common) are split up into several smaller components, and some small outliers can be little more than mown grass and a few trees. However, because they are historically and administratively part of the same park or common, these outliers have been given the same grading as the main body of the SINC. In these cases, the outlying areas of little ecological interest are excluded when assessing AODs.

### *SINCS with specialised interest*

If a site is a Metropolitan or Borough Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) chiefly for a specialist interest, for example lichens in a churchyard or great crested newts in a pond, the SINC will only be judged to relieve an AOD if it has other features which also give an experience of nature. This may be the case if the churchyard is otherwise reasonably wild, or the pond is sufficiently large, with attractive vegetation that supports many other kinds of wildlife. Similarly, if a park is designated as a Borough grade SINC mainly because of interesting plants within an area of grassland which is normally so close mown that the wild flowers will not be noticed by a casual visitor, then this also is not regarded as accessible nature.

### *Judging whether a site offers sufficient access to nature*

Some sites that have high ecological value none the less do not provide significant 'hands on' experience of nature to be counted, for the purposes of this exercise, as accessible nature. This is taken to mean being able to walk through natural areas, rather than just look at them from a distance.

The River Thames and the Docks in central and east London have not been defined as offering sufficient access to nature, as generally people can only view their bird life at a distance. Also much of the ecological

interest is of course in the water itself and invisible to the passer by. The Canal towpath in central London, although officially part of a Metropolitan Site, is little more than a concrete path next to water, as at the recently 'restored' Paddington Basin. Hence this is also excluded. However, the Thames on the south side of Hammersmith Bridge, or in much of the Thamesmead area, for example, is regarded as offering accessible nature as there is a footpath through vegetated areas alongside semi-natural river banks.

Footpaths that cross otherwise inaccessible green landscapes, for example golf courses, are judged according to how easily the surrounding habitats can be appreciated from the path. For example, the footpath across Bromley Common passes between hedgerows and alongside a number of woodlands. Although none of the woodlands or adjacent fields are officially accessible, the path gives a very real sense of walking through fine countryside and as such is used for measuring Areas of Deficiency in the nearby built-up areas. In contrast, the path across Stanmore Golf Course in Harrow is enclosed for its entire distance by high wire fencing and in this case could not be regarded as giving real access to nature.

### *City Farms*

For the purposes of this document, city farms are generally not regarded as giving sufficient actual experience of nature to relieve an area of deficiency. However, it is recognised that for many people the experience of contact with farm animals is comparable with feeding ducks or watching birds at a bird table. An exception is made where a city farm also has a nature trail, as in the case of Mudchute Farm on the Isle of Dogs which is a Site of Metropolitan Importance for nature conservation with great biological diversity.

### *Potential to provide an enjoyable experience of nature*

Some consideration is given to the broader environmental quality of a site. If a site is covered in rubbish, or is narrow and noisy, an assessment is made as to whether someone would really walk one kilometre to visit it. For example, a narrow Borough Grade II site in West London is located alongside a noisy by-pass, and it also has considerable quantities of litter and rubbish. Although accessible, it was not regarded as giving sufficient enjoyment of nature to prevent an AOD being mapped nearby.

### *Differences in standards for site grading between inner and outer London boroughs*

Borough sites are identified by comparison with other sites in the same borough, hence there is some difference in their intrinsic quality between the London boroughs. A Borough Site in an inner city location such as Lambeth

or Islington will frequently be of lower quality than a Borough site in an outer borough such as Bromley or Hillingdon. In some cases it may even be similar to, or of lower quality than, a Local Site in an outer borough.

To work towards a more even standard in what is defined as an Area of Deficiency, some accessible Borough grade sites in inner boroughs are not considered to give sufficient access to nature to relieve an AOD. This is especially the case for very small sites. Generally, only by visiting a site or knowing it well can a judgement be made on whether it offers sufficient feeling of tranquillity, wildness and experience of nature to be taken into account in assessing AOD boundaries.

On the other hand, a few high quality Local sites in outer boroughs have been considered to be good enough at present to prevent an AOD being defined, pending their possible upgrading at some future date to Borough status.

#### *Green Belt and Metropolitan Open Land*

In general, localities which are more than 1km from a Site of Borough or higher significance for nature conservation, but which lie within Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land, are not mapped as Areas of Deficiency, as few people live or work in such areas. However, where schools, rows of houses or even entire villages or airports such as Northolt lie within the Green Belt or MOL, and the area otherwise meets the criteria for Areas of Deficiency, they are included in the AOD. An example is Wennington village in Havering. However, groups of less than ten dwellings within the Green Belt are not mapped as AOD.

#### *Inaccessible Metropolitan and Borough sites within AOD boundaries*

If an inaccessible Metropolitan or Borough SINC lies within an AOD, the boundary of the AOD is generally drawn to exclude that site on the grounds that anyone living within that site will have access to nature. Golf courses are a good example of this. If, though, a Local Site (or a Borough Site which is not regarded as having sufficient access to nature) lies within an AOD, the AOD boundaries are drawn to include these.

#### *Access to nature from commercial and industrial sites*

Where the criteria are met, Areas of Deficiency may include industrial, commercial and shopping areas (or in fact any built-up area) as it is felt to be important that people should have access to nature from where they work, at lunchtimes or after work.

*Mapping Areas of Deficiency around the boundaries of Greater London*

Where a built-up area borders the Greater London boundary, and is potentially within an Area of Deficiency, it is necessary to look at nearby open spaces in the surrounding counties and try to assess how they would be graded if they were within the London borough. For example, sites in Surrey (such as Nonsuch Park and Banstead Downs) are of importance when mapping AODs in Sutton, and sites in Essex (Hainault Estate and others) when mapping Redbridge.

*Mapping Areas of Deficiency around larger residential properties*

Where the criteria are met, some houses with very large gardens can be mapped as lying within an Area of Deficiency (for example parts of Wimbledon, South Cheam or the Woodcote Park Estate in South Croydon), despite the fact that the gardens have potential to offer good access to nature. This reflects the possibility that there may be people living in flats who do not have access to a garden. None the less such areas are of lower priority for work to improve access to nature.

## Appendix 2: The scoring system

The scoring system is based on the following factors:

**Feasibility (F)** i.e. how far the site can be improved for biodiversity without compromising its existing uses to an unacceptable degree. A score of 4 or 5 represents potential to reach Borough Importance for nature conservation; score 3 represents a noticeable change which should be appreciated by the local community but falls short of Borough Importance; score 1-2 represents smaller scale improvements such as hedgerow or tree planting. These scores also include an element of likelihood – how far the suggestions are realistic.

**Impact (I)** i.e. how large a part of an Area of Deficiency would be removed if the site was brought up to Borough Importance. As the area of deficiency redressed increases, the score is increased up to a maximum of 5. The approximate correlation between the scores and reduction of Areas of Deficiency is shown below.

Effect score	Reduction in AODs (ha)
0.5	< 5
1	10
1.5	15
2	20
2.5	30
3	40
3.5	50
4	75
4.5	100
5	150

**Areas for Regeneration (R):** In order to give higher priority to sites in areas of particular socio-economic need, the score is multiplied x2 if the site is in an Area for Regeneration<sup>5</sup> or x 1.5 if it is near (i.e. <1km from) an Area for Regeneration.

**Strategic Park (S):** in order to prioritise sites which have potential to contribute as part of one of the Mayor's proposed new Strategic Parks, preliminary scores are multiplied x 1.25 if the site lies in an Area of Search for a Strategic Park.

The final **Score** (column N) is thus calculated as:

**F x I x R x S**

Where F=feasibility; I= Impact; R = multiplier for Area for Regeneration;  
and S = multiplier for Strategic Park

## Appendix 3: Priority sites lists

### List 1: Priority Opportunities to reduce Areas of Deficiency in access to nature

Location	Boro*	Type of change	Planning opportunity?	Cost £ <30k; ££ 31-100k; £££ >100k	Overall Score
West Ham Park (managed by City of London)	Ne	Improve biodiversity		££	50.0
Pymmes Park	En	Improve biodiversity		£££	40.0
Regent's Canal - Camden Lock to Victoria Park	Ca, Is, TH	Improve biodiversity	yes	££	40.0
Regent's Canal - Kensal Gn Cemetery to Maida Vale	We, RBKC	Improve biodiversity	yes	££	40.0
Kennington Park	La	Improve biodiversity		££	32.0
Whittington Park with Foxham Gardens	Is	Improve biodiversity		£	32.0
Paddington Recreation Ground	We	Improve biodiversity		£££	30.0
Bow Creek & Thames Wharf	Ne	Improve access	yes		30.0
Dome nature conservation area	Gr	Improve biodiv + access	yes		30.0
Jubilee Park	En	Improve biodiversity		££	30.0
Lloyd Park	Wf	Improve biodiversity		£££	30.0
Pyl Brook Stonecot	Su	Improve biodiversity	yes	£££	25.0
Anton Cresc Wetland	Su	Improve access		£	25.0
Forest Lane Park	Ne	Improve biodiversity		££	24.0
Lordship Lane Rec	Hg	Improve biodiversity		£££	24.0
Little Ilford Park (Webster's Land)	Ne	Improve biodiversity		££	24.0
North part of Kidbrooke Green	Gr	Improve access		£££	24.0
Martins Hill and Church House grounds	By	Improve biodiversity		£££	22.5
The Rattler	Hw	Improve biodiv + access		££ or more	22.5
Walpole Park & Lammas Park	Ea	Improve biodiversity		££	20.0
Harrow Lodge Park	Hv	Improve biodiversity		££	20.0
Newton Park & Ecology Centre	Hw	Improve biodiversity		£££	20.0
St Chad's Park	B&D	Improve biodiversity		££	20.0
Clitterhouse Rec	Ba	Improve biodiversity	yes	£££	20.0
Duppas Hill	Cr	Improve biodiversity			20.0
Headstone Manor Rec	Hw	Improve biodiv + access			18.0
Kingston Cemetery	Ki	Improve biodiversity		££	18.0
Telegraph Hill Park	Le	Improve biodiversity		£	18.0

Location	Boro*	Type of change	Planning opportunity?	Cost £ <30k; ££ 31-100k; £££ >100k	Overall Score
Lady Trower Trust Playing Fields	Ne	Improve access	yes?		18.0
St Mary's Gardens	We	Improve biodiversity		££	18.0
Sunny Hill Park	Ba	Improve biodiversity			17.5
Wandle Park	Cr	Improve biodiversity	yes	£££	17.5
Wantz Lake & Crowlands Open Space	B&D	Improve access			16.0
Hammersmith (Margravine) Cemetery	H&F	Improve biodiversity		£££	16.0
Green Lanes, Sutton, Merton and Kingston	Me	Improve biodiv + access	???	££	16.0
Well Hall Pleasaunce & adjacent sports grounds	Gr	Improve biodiversity		£	16.0
Peckham Rye Common	So	Improve biodiversity		£	15.0
Roe Green Park	Br	Improve biodiversity		££	15.0
St Mary's Wood End and Town Hall Park	Hi	Improve biodiversity		£££	15.0
The Warren and adjacent railside habitat	Su	Improve biodiv + access			15.0
King George's Park, Wandsworth & Lower Wandle	Wa	Improve biodiversity		££	15.0
The Mutton Brook	Ba	Improve biodiversity			12.5
Atkinson Morley's Hospital Woodland	Me	Improve access	yes?		12.5
South Park	H&F	Improve biodiversity		££	12.0
Inwood Park	Ho	Improve biodiversity		££	12.0
Raphael Park	Hv	Improve biodiversity		£££	12.0
The Thames between Seething Wells and Kingston Town	Ki	Improve biodiversity	yes		12.0
Norwood Park	La	Improve biodiversity		£	12.0
Diageo Lake and Coronation Gardens	Br	Improve access			12.0
Norbury Park & Brook	Cr	Improve biodiv + access		£££	12.0
Plumstead Common LNR and west end of the Common	Gr	Improve biodiversity			12.0
Playing field south of Goodmayes park	Re	Improve biodiversity		£££	12.0
Worcester Park Green Lanes in Sutton	Su	Improve biodiversity		£££	12.0
Beddington Farmlands	Su	Improve access			12.0
Osterley Fields	Ho	Improve access			11.3
Hendon Park	Ba	Improve biodiversity		££	10.0
East Finchley Cemetery	Ba	Improve biodiversity			10.0
Welsh Harp eastern end	Ba	Improve access			10.0

Location	Boro*	Type of change	Planning opportunity?	Cost £ <30k; ££ 31-100k; £££ >100k	Overall Score
Cane Hill Hospital west	Cr	Improve biodiv + access	yes		10.0
Southall Park, nature conservation area and surrounds	Ea	Improve biodiversity			10.0
Herlwyn Park Rec	Hi	Improve biodiversity			10.0
Islip Manor	Hi	Provide public access			10.0
Beverley Park by Beverley Brook	Ki	Improve biodiv + access			10.0
Bandon Hill Cemetery, access through allotments to west	Su	Improve biodiv + access		££	10.0
Chingford Mount Cemetery	WF	Improve biodiversity			10.0
Pitshanger Park	Ea	Improve biodiversity			8.0
Brett Havering Aggregates West	Hv	Improve access	yes		8.0
Mayflower Park	Su	Improve access	yes		8.0
Waddon Ponds	Cr	Improve biodiversity		£	7.5
Morden Rec	Me	Improve biodiversity			7.5
Parsloes Park south	B&D	Improve biodiv + access		££	6.0
Barham Park	Br	Improve biodiversity		£	6.0
Erith Quarry	Bx	Improve access	yes		6.0
Rectory Park nature area, and the rest of the park	Ea	Improve biodiversity			6.0
Havelock Cemetery	Ea	Improve biodiversity			6.0
Hillingdon Court Park	Hi	Improve biodiversity		£	6.0
Rainham Marshes north (between A13 and railway)	Hv	Improve access			5.0
Ladywell Fields	Le	Improve biodiversity		££	5.0
Woodcock Park	Br	Improve biodiversity		££	4.0
Western edge of Kemnal Woodlands	Bx	Improve access			4.0
Bruce Castle Park and Museum	Hg	Improve biodiversity			4.0
Welsh Harp, north-eastern end	Ba	Improve access			2.5
Hilly Fields	Le	Improve biodiversity		££	2.5
Grange Park	Hi	Improve biodiversity			2.0
Battersea Rise Cemetery	Wa	Improve biodiversity			2.0

## List 2: Other high priority sites for improving access to nature in Areas of Deficiency

Location	Boro*	Type of change	Planning opportunity?	Cost £ <30k; ££ 31-100k; £££ >100k	Overall Score
Lincoln's Inn Fields	Ca	Improve biodiversity		£	35.0
Barnard Park	Is	Improve biodiversity		££	35.0
King Square Gardens	Is	Improve biodiversity		££	31.5
St Matthias Churchyard and Poplar Recreation Ground	TH	Improve biodiversity		£	30.0
Folkestone Gardens	Le	Improve biodiversity		££	28.0
St Mary the Virgin, Leyton	Wf	Improve biodiversity		££	27.0
Bridge House Meadows	Le	Improve biodiversity			26.3
Hackney Downs	HC	Improve biodiversity		£££	24.0
Clapton Square & St John's Churchyard	Hc	Improve biodiversity			24.0
Plashet Park	Ne	Improve biodiversity		££	24.0
Weavers Fields	TH	Improve biodiversity		££	24.0
Stepney Green, Stepping Stones City Farm & St Dunstan	TH	Improve biodiversity		£££	24.0
Allen Gardens	TH	Improve biodiversity		££	24.0
Dagenham Brook & land either side of Marsh Lane	Wf	Imp biodiv + access		£££	24.0
Belmont Recreation Ground	Hg	Imp biodiv + access		£-££	24.0
Acton Park, nature conservation area etc	Ea	Improve biodiversity		£	22.5
Salmon's Brook and Montague Rec.	En	Improve biodiversity		£££	22.5
Thames around the Greenwich Peninsula	Gr	Improve access	yes		22.5
Phoenix Community Garden and St Giles Churchyard	Ca	Improve biodiversity		£	21.0
Bingfield Park	Is	Improve biodiversity			21.0
St George's Square Gardens	We	Improve biodiversity		££	20.3
Leathermarket Community Park	So	Improve biodiversity			20.0
St George in the East	TH	Improve biodiversity			20.0
Potter's Fields	So	Improve biodiversity	yes		18.8
London Fields	Hc	Improve biodiversity		££	18.0
Downhills Park	Hg	Improve biodiversity		£	18.0
Chestnuts Park	Hg	Improve biodiversity		£	18.0

Location	Boro*	Type of change	Planning opportunity?	Cost £ <30k; ££ 31-100k; £££ >100k	Overall Score
Keir Hardy Rec.	Ne	Improve biodiversity		££	18.0
St Andrew's Garden	Ca	Improve biodiversity		££	18.0
St George's Garden	Ca	Improve biodiversity		££	18.0
Craig Park	En	Improve biodiversity		£	18.0
Pegamoid Road Rec	En	Improve biodiversity			18.0
Shoreditch Park	Hc	Improve biodiversity		£	18.0
Priory Park	Ne	Improve biodiversity		£	18.0
Myatt's Field	La	Improve biodiversity		£	17.5
Surrey Canal Walk	So	Improve biodiversity			17.5
Anglesea Road	Gr	Improve biodiversity			16.0
Ashburton Wood and adjoining Recreation Ground	Ne	Improve biodiversity		£	16.0
Victory Park and Elba Place nature garden	So	Improve biodiversity			16.0
Hogsmill River in Central Kingston	Ki	Improve biodiv + access	yes	££??++	15.8
Valence House Gardens	B&D	Improve biodiversity		££	15.0
Natwest Sports Fields	Me	Improve biodiversity		££	15.0
Butterfield Green & Shakespeare Walk	Hc	Improve biodiversity			15.0
Dartmouth Park Hill	Is	Improve biodiversity		£	15.0
Melfort Ave Rec	Cr	Improve biodiv + access			15.0
New River Sports Ctre, White Hart Lane Rec & Woodside	Hg	Improve biodiversity			15.0
Oldfield Grove Green Walk	Le	Improve biodiversity			15.0
Wilmington Square	Is	Improve biodiversity		££	15.0
Waterloo Millennium Green	La	Improve biodiversity		£	15.0
Geraldine Mary Harmsworth Park	So	Improve biodiversity			15.0
Tabard Gardens	So	Improve biodiversity		£	15.0
Dicken's Square Park	So	Improve biodiversity	concern	£	15.0
Swedenborg Gardens	TH	Improve biodiversity			15.0
Central Park (Dagenham)	B&D	Improve biodiversity			14.0
Kilburn Grange Park	Ca	Improve biodiversity		££	14.0
Westbourne Green	We	Improve biodiversity			14.0
Deptford Park	Le	Improve biodiversity		£	14.0
Warwick Gardens	So	Improve biodiversity			14.0

Location	Boro*	Type of change	Planning opportunity?	Cost £ <30k; ££ 31-100k; £££ >100k	Overall Score
Norbury Hall Park	Cr	Improve biodiversity		£	13.5
Trinity Way Nature Area	Ea	Improve biodiversity			13.5
North Acton Cemetery	Ea	Improve biodiversity			13.5
West Ham Cemetery	Ne	Improve biodiversity			13.5
Gordon Square	Ca	Improve biodiversity		£	13.1
Westbere Copse, etc	Ca	Improve access			13.1
Southfields Rec Nature Area	Ea	Improve biodiversity			12.5
St Mary Magdalene Garden	Is	Improve biodiversity			12.5
Ealing Common	Ea	Improve biodiversity			12.0
Sutton Playing Field	Ho	Improve biodiversity		££	12.0
Clayhall Park	Re	Improve biodiversity		££	12.0
St James's Gardens	Ca	Improve biodiversity		£	12.0
Old Farm Park & allotments & access to stream	Bx	Improve biodiv + access		££	12.0
Albany Park and Turkey Brook	En	Improve biodiv + access		£££	12.0
Archbishop's Park	La	Improve biodiversity		£	12.0
All Saints Poplar churchyard	TH	Improve biodiversity		£	12.0
Kenning Hall Open Space	En	Improve biodiversity			12.0
Beckton Gas Works	Ne	Improve biodiversity	yes		12.0
South Bermondsy Railway Embankments	So	Improve access			12.0
River Roding west bank beside Little Ilford Park	Re	Improve access			12.0
St Mary's Churchyard, Woolwich	Gr	Improve biodiversity			16.0
The Course	Gr	Improve biodiversity			11.3
Avondale Park	K&C	Improve biodiversity		£	11.3
Sutton Cemetery	Su	Improve biodiversity		£	11.3
Benhill Rec	Su	Improve biodiversity			11.3
Whitehall Recreation Ground	By	Improve biodiversity		£££	10.5
Barking Abbey Ruins & St Margaret's Churchyard	B&D	Improve biodiversity		££	10.5
Addiscombe Railsides	Cr	Improve access	yes	£	10.5
King Edward VII Park	Br	Improve biodiversity		£	10.5
Southwood Road Rough, New Eltham	Gr	Improve biodiversity			10.5
Fairlands Park	Su	Improve biodiversity			10.5

Location	Boro*	Type of change	Planning opportunity?	Cost £ <30k; ££ 31-100k; £££ >100k	Overall Score
Hogsmill Valley Sewage Works and Hogsmill River	Ki	Improve access	yes	££	10.5
Little Chef Pasture	Hv	Improve access			10.5
Tavistock Square Gardens	Ca	Improve biodiversity		££	10.5
River Ravensbourne and Norman Park	By	Improve access		££	10.5
Sidmouth Park	WF	Improve biodiversity		£	10.1
Friary Park	Ba	Improve biodiversity		££	10.0
Queens Road Cemetery, Croydon	Cr	Improve biodiversity			10.0
Kenton Rec and rough	Hw	Improve biodiversity			10.0
York Gardens	Wa	Improve biodiversity		£	10.0
Shepherds Bush Green	H&F	Improve biodiversity		££	10.0
Ducketts Common	Hg	Improve biodiversity		£	10.0
Stratford Park	Ne	Improve biodiversity		£	10.0
Woodgrange Park Cemetery	Ne	Improve access			10.0
North Acton Playing fields	Ea	Improve biodiversity		£	10.0
St Pauls Open Space	H&F	Improve biodiversity			10.0
Langtons Park	Hv	Improve biodiversity			10.0
Haynes Park	Hv	Improve biodiversity		£££	10.0
Manor Park	Su	Improve biodiversity			10.0
Rush Common	La	Improve biodiversity		££	10.0
Lucas Gardens	So	Improve biodiversity			10.0
Graham Park	Ba	Improve biodiversity			9.4
Purley Way East Playing Fields	Cr	Improve biodiversity			9.4
Pollards Hill	Cr	Improve biodiversity			9.4
Chandos Rec	Hw	Improve biodiversity			9.4
Wandsworth Park	Wa	Improve biodiversity			9.4
Highbury Fields	Is	Improve biodiversity		£	9.4
Woodrush Way lake	B&D	Improve biodiversity			9.0
Slade Green Rec/Whitehall rec	Bx	Improve biodiversity		££	9.0
Russell Park	Bx	Improve biodiversity		££	9.0
Pickhurst Green and Cupola Wood	By	Improve biodiversity		££	9.0
Park Hill	Cr	Improve biodiversity			9.0

Location	Boro*	Type of change	Planning opportunity?	Cost £ <30k; ££ 31-100k; £££ >100k	Overall Score
Haling Grove Park	Cr	Improve biodiversity			9.0
Mellow Lane Fields	Hi	Improve biodiversity			9.0
Beaversfield Park	Ho	Improve biodiversity		££	9.0
Westlands Rough	Hv	Improve biodiversity			9.0
Romford Cemetery	Hv	Improve biodiversity			9.0
Mawney Park	Hv	Improve biodiversity		££	9.0
King Edward Rec & Kelvin Grove Allotments	Ki	Improve biodiversity			9.0
Raynes Park Sports Ground and areas to the east	Me	Improve biodiversity			9.0
Collingwood Rec	Su	Improve biodiversity			9.0
St John the Baptist Churchyard, Eltham	Gr	Improve biodiversity		£	9.0
Well Street Common	Hc	Improve biodiversity			9.0
Bethlem Royal Hospital	By	Improve access			9.0
Ingrebourne Valley (between A127 & Upminster)	Hv	Improve access			9.0
Greenwich Cemetery western entrance	Gr	Improve access			9.0
Larner Road Estate Rough and adjacent land	Bx	Improve biodiversity		£	9.0
Northend Road Rec	Bx	Improve biodiversity		££	9.0
Greyhound Road OS	H&F	Improve biodiversity			9.0
Dickerage Lane Rec	Ki	Improve biodiversity			9.0
Blagdon Road Rec, New Maldon	Ki	Improve biodiversity			9.0
Pyl Brook by Trafalgar Ave	Me	Improve biodiversity			9.0
Woodland between East and West Parkside	Gr	Improve biodiversity			9.0
Fordham Park	Le	Improve biodiversity			9.0
Victoria Embankment Gardens	We	Improve biodiversity			9.0
Railside Land Senegal Railway Banks	Le	Improve access			9.0
Cherry Lane Cemetery & surrounds	Hi	Improve biodiv + access			9.0
Stevens Park	Bx	Improve biodiversity		££	8.8
Murray Park	Ri	Improve biodiversity		££	8.8
Gap Road (Wimbledon) Cemetery	Me	Improve biodiversity		£	8.8
Alexandra Park	Hw	Improve biodiversity			8.8
Clairefield Park	Ba	Improve biodiversity			8.8
All Saints Benhilton	Su	Improve biodiversity		£	8.8

Location	Boro*	Type of change	Planning opportunity?	Cost £ <30k; ££ 31-100k; £££ >100k	Overall Score
Bethune Rec	Ba	Improve biodiversity			8.0
Verges of A20, Sidcup bypass, Hoblands Wood	Bx	Improve biodiversity		££	8.0
Cottons Park	Hv	Improve biodiversity			8.0
Platford Green OS	Hv	Improve biodiversity			8.0
The Dell	Hv	Improve biodiversity			8.0
Honeypot Lane Rec	Hw	Improve biodiversity			8.0
St Mary's Churchyard, Walthamstow Village	Wf	Improve biodiversity		£	8.0
Rochester Terrace Gardens	Ca	Improve biodiversity		£	8.0
Ferrier Estate	Gr	Improve biodiversity	yes		8.0
Paradise Park	Is	Improve biodiversity			8.0
All Saints Churchyard, West Ham	Ne	Improve biodiversity		£	8.0
Uxbridge Road Scrub, Hayes	Hi	Improve access			8.0
Eastern edge of Kemnal Woodlands over the A20	Bx	Improve access			8.0
Allotments nature park	Ba	Improve biodiv + access			8.0
Barking Creek west of River road	B&D	Improve biodiv + access			8.0

**\*Borough abbreviations**

B&D	Barking and Dagenham	Ho	Hounslow
Ba	Barnet	Is	Islington
Bx	Bexley	RBKC	Kensington and Chelsea
Br	Brent	Ki	Kingston-upon-Thames
By	Bromley	La	Lambeth
Ca	Camden	Le	Lewisham
Cr	Croydon	Me	Merton
CoL	City of London	Ne	Newham
Ea	Ealing	re	Redbridge
En	Enfield	Ri	Richmond-upon-Thames
Gr	Greenwich	So	Southwark
Hc	Hackney	Su	Sutton
H&F	Hammersmith and Fulham	TH	Tower Hamlets
Hg	Haringey	WF	Waltham Forest
Hw	Harrow	Wa	Wandsworth
Hv	Havering	We	Westminster
Hi	Hillingdon		

A much larger table giving information on all the 750 or so sites that were considered in this study is available from the GLA's Biodiversity Team. This gives the details of the various components of the score for each site.

## Appendix 4: Examples of possible improvements

### **Paddington Recreation Ground, City of Westminster**

This is a very popular park in a densely built up area of North Paddington. It has heavily used sports and play facilities, but also features an imaginative landscape design with planted scrub and hedgerows in the eastern half of the site. The suggestions below would develop the wildlife interest further, giving potential to bring the site up to Borough Importance for nature Conservation. Westminster Council has plans to develop an Environmental Studies Centre in a vacant part of the site.

- Develop areas of wildflower meadow around the edges of the sports fields
- Develop a wildlife pond and meadow near proposed Environment Centre
- Woodland management of planted scrub to improve nesting habitat and perceived security.

### **Norbury Park, Croydon**

A large open park with a fairly open landscape mainly comprising extensive short mown grass and scattered trees. A few plots of native species woodland were planted some years ago. The Norbury Brook runs in an underground culvert beneath the park. The suggestions below are aimed at increasing biodiversity and creating a more interesting and attractive landscape.

- Develop plots of 'picture meadow', aiming for maximum colour and flowering season. Invite the local community to help in sowing seed.
- Explore scope for restoring the Norbury Brook as an open meandering stream. Investigate and address causes of pollution.
- Plant native species hedgerow along north-west boundary

### **West Ham Park, Newham (managed by City of London)**

The largest park in Newham, located in central West Ham, managed by the City of London. Part of the park is an historic ornamental garden with fine mature trees and good bird interest. The rest is mainly open grassland, used mainly for sports, especially cricket, which is popular with the neighbouring Bangladeshi community. There is a small nature garden, plus other small areas of longer grass, and several very large greenhouses, managed on sustainable lines, where plants for the City of London are grown.

- Develop broad band of meadow grassland around the edges of the park, integrated with daffodils (which have recently been planted by local schoolchildren). The wild flower mix should be selected to include appropriate species to follow on from the daffodils.

- Develop a large, sunny, wildlife pond, integrated with an area of rough grassland, to provide habitat for amphibian and dragonflies
- Increase the amount of understorey planting in the park to improve habitat for nesting birds. A majority of the planting should be native species. Where security it seen to be a problem, plant against walls, use plenty of prickly species, and/or plant climbers to increase cover.

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