

Environment Scrutiny Commission

Tuesday 27 February 2024
7.00 pm
160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

Supplemental One Agenda

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Statement on De-paving in Southwark

October 2023

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Making space for biodiversity:

De-paving for the Octopus Garden, Dunton and Lynton Roads, 2022 / The garden view from Lynton Road, 2023

1. Why should Southwark create a de-paving strategy?

Systematic de-paving is a powerful strategy in moving our community towards climate preparedness, carbon net zero, and better conditions for biodiversity. The associated increase in greenery can also be very effective in improving citizens' physical and mental health, increasing community pride and engagement, as well as improving land values.

De-paving opens up greater opportunities for Southwark to comply with the public authority biodiversity duty (see below). De-paving also has a very strong alignment to the goals of the

Southwark Council Climate Change Resilience and Adaptation Strategy, whose priorities include heat island and flood risk, and a better local food economy. Southwark's Nature Action Plan (2020) calls for Southwark Council Homes to "Retrofit sustainable drainage systems to create enhanced wildlife habitats and green spaces." (p28).

Reduced run-off and flood resilience

Areas of Southwark are already prone to surface water flooding and flash floods, and flood events can only be expected to increase with the acceleration of global warming.

Vegetated land attenuates and allows infiltration of rainwater at a much higher rate than hard surfaces. A [SuDS study in northeast England](#) found that the installation of only 6 trees, including only 2 structural tree pits designed for maximum rooting capacity, reduced peak flow between upstream and downstream manholes by 25-30%.

Reduced heat island effect

Vegetated land absorbs and stores much less heat than paved surfaces, a critical consideration as we face increasing temperatures. De-paving land creates space for larger-canopied trees to be planted, giving them a healthy environment to establish and mature, so that cooling benefits provided through evapo-transpiration and shade are maximised over time.

Carbon sequestration and pollutant filtration and absorption

Sealing the soil with hard surfaces stops plant growth from sequestering carbon and sends valuable rainwater into the sewage system, along with pollutants such as tyre particles and motor oil. Stressed trees, without enough rooting volume to be drought resilient, [cease photosynthesizing and become carbon sources rather than sinks](#).

The production of cement, a vital ingredient in concrete and other paving, accounts for 8% of carbon emissions worldwide, so the less new hard surface we require for public realm improvements, the better.

Encouraging social engagement, active travel and discouraging personal vehicle ownership

A vast area of land in Southwark is currently used for the parking of privately owned vehicles. Dovetailing with Southwark's push towards an increase in car clubs and the reduction of privately owned vehicles, we need a clear strategy for much of this current car-park land to be de-paved, to create healthy green corridors for active travel and pleasant areas for public interaction.

The statutory biodiversity duty

Creating new green spaces and semi-natural habitats would help Southwark to demonstrate its compliance with the public authority biodiversity duty. The guidance under this duty (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/complying-with-the-biodiversity-duty>) includes suggestions to create new areas of habitat for wildlife. Under-used paved areas represent an opportunity in Southwark where the space for additional habitats is otherwise highly constrained by a wide range of competing uses. Commencing work soon would allow inclusion of depaving activity in Southwark's first biodiversity report, due to be published before January 2026.

Biodiversity: Plants, insects, and birds

Protecting and restoring biodiversity is not just about iconic species in far-away places. It is about the soil, plants and living organisms and water quality in our local environment. Furthermore, not all local greening is equal from a biodiversity standpoint. It is important to include as many site-appropriate UK native plants as possible in a new planting, and to include as many UK- wildlife-friendly species as possible. SNAV recommends that any new plantings consist of at least 50% UK-native species and 80% wildlife-friendly species at a minimum, in order to support local wildlife populations. Plantings should also ideally consist of several layers of a variety of native/wildlife friendly plants, including groundcover, native grasses or herbaceous plants, and a woody / structural layer that will provide architecture and cover for larger animals such as birds. Many organisms are not generalists - they depend on a symbiotic co-dependent relationship with specific plants. Lose our native plants, and we lose the micro-organisms, invertebrates and animals that depend on them. Let's recover the soil-based environments they all need to live.

Other ideas to improve conditions for biodiversity have been outlined in the 2020 Southwark Nature Action Plan.

Biodiversity: Soil health

The microorganisms that live in the soil perform essential ecosystem roles that we are not always aware of. Studies of [phage therapy](#) (using bacteria-specific viruses for a more targeted antibiotic), bacteria that digest methane or radio-active waste, [root-nodule bacteria that help plants fix nitrogen](#), cyanobacteria that produce oxygen, [the depleted gut and skin biomes of urban dwellers](#) -- all these point to the vital functions performed by microorganisms in the soil. Healthy soil biota rely on aerobic reactions and carbon and nutrient cycling involving plants, which are severely impeded by soil sealing and compaction.

Mental and Physical Health

There is now much well-established [evidence that access to greenery improves health outcomes](#), and that above and beyond this, [the ability to hear or see wild birds improves mood](#).

Community Pride, Engagement, and Food Production

De-paved land provides more opportunities for communities to gather and engage in nature-based activities such as food production, wildlife gardening, or just observation of natural processes, such as seasonal changes in plant, bird, and insect life.

Many people in Southwark are particularly interested in food production, but the current number of allotments is not sufficient to meet demand. De-paving land can potentially make it more suitable for the development of community allotments or orchards, with bordering habitat for beneficial predatory and pollinating insects.

Land Opportunity

There is a huge amount of wasted land in Southwark - potentially life-supporting soil that is currently trapped beneath little-used hard surfaces. We have created [this map](#) identifying several sites with unnecessary paving, within a small sample area of Camberwell - 1,255m² within 1.25 square kilometres. [Extrapolating this number](#) to the borough as a whole, there may be approximately 28,965m² (approx 3ha) of little-used, unnecessary hard surface

readily available for depaving in Southwark, even without reducing the number of car parking places. De-paving even this relatively small area of land would make a great difference for the pedestrian and resident experience, biodiversity, and flood resilience.

Including land dedicated to parked vehicles greatly increases the area under consideration. [Lambeth's kerbside strategy](#) calculated that its kerbside area alone, currently 94% of which is used for parking, is equal to 194 football pitches, or 1,158,000m² (116ha, over twice the area of Burgess Park).

De-paving also creates the opportunity to join up larger parks with nature corridors, which also can be walking/cycling routes.

Social benefits

The maintenance costs of paved areas are low, but this hides an opportunity cost - that is the potential value of the greenspace that could occupy that area instead of paving. The value per square metre of de-paved land, as calculated through natural capital accounting methods, is potentially significant when taken in aggregate across the borough, considering the land's improved value in terms of contributions to biodiversity, urban cooling, flood resilience, and improved air and water quality. This potential value should be taken into account alongside the inherent and unquantifiable benefits of biodiverse greenspace.

Recycling availability

[FM Conway](#), Southwark's main highways contractor, and [Tarmac](#) both have facilities which can recycle used tarmac and concrete into new paving and other infrastructure products.

2. What are Southwark's current obstacles to de-paving?

Lack of joined-up thinking / Lack of prioritisation of de-paving and SuDS

Even now, redevelopment and streetscape projects are currently being built with vast areas of unnecessary hard surface and little to no accommodation for biodiversity, bio-infiltration, or bioattenuation - a poor legacy which will not serve the borough well in years to come. While Southwark's Tree Section is diligently working to plant more trees, often these trees are being placed awkwardly or inappropriately, in tiny tree pits which do not allow sufficient mature rooting volume or provide significant wildlife benefit. Some of these plantings would offer much greater benefit and long term survival rates if coordinated with well-designed de-paving and SuDS.



New barren pavement island installed on treeless Maltby Street

De-paved, planted areas need to be prioritised and incorporated as part of the redesign of each area, including consideration of habitat value. This can be accomplished with just a little forethought, without necessarily adding to budgets. Indeed, planted areas can often be less expensive than hard surfaces depending on design and materials.



A lone eucalyptus tree awkwardly placed in a tiny tree pit within a sea of little-used pavement. Could we de-pave more of the surrounding area, and create more flood resilience and real habitat? The Southwark Streetscape Design Manual (2020) states that "Tree pits should be constructed as large as possible given the constraints of the site."

With the acceleration of global warming, increased flooding events are to be expected. Sustainable urban drainage systems such as bio-infiltration zones, bio-attenuation zones and planters, rain gardens, green roofs, and rainwater capture and storage systems (above or below ground) are urgently needed throughout the borough to avoid overloading the existing drainage network, and should be incorporated in every site to the extent possible, as soon as possible.

Southwark's new "Streets for People Strategy" has suggested that at least 10% of every Highways scheme footprint should be dedicated to planting and nature-based solutions, and calls for a plan for SuDS implementation to be developed "by 2024" (sections 12.2, 12.4).

SNAV would like to point out that 10% for biodiversity is much less than would be appropriate in many schemes (see Liverpool Grove), and 2024 is in only two months from now.

Currently, it appears that highways pedestrianisation projects are being built with no consideration for run-off reduction or habitat creation. While [Southwark's Developer's Guide for Surface Water Management](#) calls for post-development site discharge rates to be equal to greenfield rates, the same standards do not seem to be applied to streetscape pedestrianisation projects. Although the [Southwark Streetscape Design Manual \(2020\)](#) states that "SUDS design must be integrated into new schemes with careful consideration of the maintenance and management responsibilities," and "Tree pits should be constructed as large as possible given the constraints of the site," it does not state a runoff or peak flow reduction requirement or engineering parameters, or any other firm softscape requirements. Note that even permeable paving still has much higher run-off rates than vegetated surfaces.



Liverpool Grove pedestrianisation - a missed opportunity for SuDS and biodiversity. This mostly impermeably paved project is directly adjacent to a large churchyard green space and park. The small amount of planting provided is non-native.

The goal for each redeveloped site should ideally be 100% local infiltration or return to greenfield conditions. If hydrogeologic conditions do not permit local infiltration, well-designed bio-attenuation in order to significantly reduce peak runoff. [Susdrain recommends a goal of 50% reduction of peak runoff](#) for each redeveloped site, and provides information on different land area and storage requirements needed to meet this goal for the most frequent to less frequent rainfall events.

Costs

Southwark's Flood Risk Management Strategy aims to promote the use of SUDS (draft for consultation June 2023), but identifies that funding is an issue. However, it is important to

note that there is a difference between de-paving and SuDS (de-paving simply means that the top hard surfaces are removed, and soil which allows plants to grow is exposed or installed -- while SuDS may include engineered substrates, storage and piping systems, in addition to simpler run-off reduction measures). Schemes incorporating less paving do not necessarily add costs, if site works are already being undertaken.

There are also currently many outside funding streams available for de-paving and climate resilience-related improvement schemes, for example:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/natural-flood-management-programme>

<https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/environment-and-climate-change/parks-green-spaces-and-biodiversity/green-space-funding>

At the Elmington Estate, site improvement costs in 2021 came to approximately £233 per m², including VAT, site protection, health and welfare, de-paving, excavation and disposal, replacement soil to approximately 80cm depth, new concrete edging and unit paving where required, reduction of dropped kerbs, and custom installation of three rain butts.



Some of the Elmington Estate de-paving and landscape improvements (Housing and Flood management joint scheme, through the Great Estates Program)

SNAV was also able to obtain the following recent quote from a professional arborist: For a 1800mm square pit using standard kerbs, new backfill, irrigation tube and stakes, the cost would come to approximately £2000 ex VAT, plus £225 for 3 years watering. Price based on common small tree species such as amelanchier (some species will add £ hence the estimate). Highways team for Local Authority to confirm services and provide permit to

work. Additional costs could include root ball anchoring, upgraded mona irrigation system (reduces ongoing cost though), tiger mulch (or other) permeable surfacing.

Obviously, the cost per m² is much higher for smaller, isolated projects such as a lone small tree pit. **It is much more cost-effective to de-pave and plant larger, more joined-up areas.** In addition, with a larger root zone, the trees have a greater chance of survival, good growth and long life.

More costs for various SUDS interventions are collected in this [2015 DEFRA cost estimation for SUDS](#).

Consideration of underground utilities locations and need for access

Areas with utilities close to the surface are not suitable for planting of woody species, however shallow rooted herbaceous species may still be considered for overplanting, depending on the type and location of lines. Some lines are actually better accessible for service when set in easily replaced herbaceous planting than if buried in concrete; other lines may require hard surface protection. Investigation for de-paving is an occasion for more accurate mapping of underground lines.

Need for vehicle access

Not everywhere can or should be de-paved. It is essential that de-paving and pedestrianisation projects are thoughtfully and professionally designed, with concerns for pedestrian convenience and amenity, biodiversity/habitat/greening, and necessary vehicle accessibility in mind. Where hard surfaces are essential, consider the use of [Grasscrete](#) or similar products which allow both specified vehicle loading and vegetative growth.

Land contamination

Prior to de-paving, soil sampling is advised. If heavy contamination beneath existing paving is detected, measures must be taken so that toxic materials do not become loose in the environment.

Effects on local drainage

In most cases, de-paving improves drainage conditions, increasing attenuation times, reducing peak discharge, improving possibilities for localised infiltration and transpiration, and reducing dependence on overloaded infrastructure. Existing drainage structures can often be maintained or adapted as overflow devices, with proper de-paving design.

However, when de-paving it is important to thoroughly consider local conditions, any re-directed flows, and the possibility of over-saturating an area, leading to undesirable ponding or even instability of local structures. Drainage should be directed away from buildings and any designated infiltration zones should be designed by professionals, generally not to be located within 3-5m of foundations.

Maintenance/management

Not every de-paved area needs to be expensively planted and maintained. With proper initial design, it is possible to create green spaces with very high biodiversity value, and acceptable aesthetic value, through initial seeding of wildflowers, tolerance of volunteer

plants, annual mowing, and ongoing litter picking. Public awareness and increased tolerance of “weeds” is already underway as part of the reduction in spraying of glyphosate throughout the borough. Any de-paved areas engineered as SuDS will have minimal additional maintenance requirements such as periodic unblocking of drains, similar to conventional drainage systems.

The encouragement, definition, and development of Public-Common Partnerships, as suggested in the Southwark Land Commission Report, where local community organisations share responsibility for land management with Southwark as landowner, has great potential to increase community engagement while potentially lightening some of Southwark’s burden of management. For example, Southwark’s 18 community allotment sites are all currently managed by local voluntary organisations.

Dust and allergies

Allowing a healthy plant community to cover a de-paved site protects the soil and reduces airborne dust and pollution particles, which are the most common source of allergies. Unfortunately, many of the plant species which have been found to have high allergenicity also are the most common, popular, and beneficial for wildlife, such as plane, birch and hazel trees. To reduce the problem of wind-borne pollen, plants and trees that are pollinated by insects could be chosen, such as those from the Rose and Malus families which include Apple and Hawthorn.

It has been shown that [higher levels of air pollution in urban areas exacerbates the effects of common pollens](#). When considering allergies, SNAV recommends that Southwark focus on reducing air pollution rather than reducing vegetation.

3. Examples of successful systemic de-paving strategies employed by local authorities

In Portland, Oregon, USA, local government has [partnered](#) with community organisation [De-pave](#) to successfully carry out community de-paving projects for over ten years, so far removing over 22,000m² of hard surface and reducing Portland stormwater sewer loading by over 60,000,000 litres.

In the small town of Douai, France, [systemic implementation of SuDS strategies](#) has reportedly led to the saving of 1 million euros per year, or the equivalent of 30 to 40% of budget compared to a regular rainwater management system of a town that size. (Herin et Dennin, 2016)

[Lambeth’s kerbside strategy](#) calculated that its kerbside area was equal to 194 football pitches, and that “Currently, 94 percent of the borough’s kerbsides (the bit of the road that is immediately next to the pavement) is used for car parking, despite the fact that the majority of Lambeth households don’t actually own a car.” [The strategy](#) proposes to reduce this area currently occupied by cars and replace the use by more pedestrian-centered uses,

including grants for residents wishing to implement kerbside mini-parks, and trees at least every 25m.

Lambeth worked with residents in Kennington, supplying skips and labour to [help residents remove unwanted hard surfaces](#) from private space front gardens / driveways. They have provided a council phone number and email address for other interested residents to get in touch.

Hammersmith and Fulham have produced a [Flood Mitigation Report](#) which proposes an annual public de-paving programme, similar to Lambeth's program in Kennington, and a budget of £6M for other SuDS measures throughout the borough, among other measures.

The city of Amsterdam in the Netherlands has a [de-paving programme](#) where the city supports any resident wishing to de-pave outside their unit.

The London borough of Enfield has established a ["dig-once" programme](#), leveraging the Mayor of London's Infrastructure Coordination Service to incorporate de-paving, suds, and streetscape improvements with already-scheduled necessary subgrade utilities improvements, thereby reducing cost and disruption.

4. De-paving action: What Southwark should do now

In order to make use of the powerful tool of de-paving against the biodiversity and climate crises, SNAV recommends the following actions:

1. Make a program of technical guidance and support available to any residents wishing to de-pave their own private land. Any de-paved private land will benefit the public realm through reduced stormwater run-off. A scheme to fund and incentivise private depaving could be set up by the council in partnership with DEFRA, Thames Water, insurance companies and environmental NGOs like the London Wildlife Trust alongside the local community.
2. Employ an internal design review process to ensure that any new streetscape or housing projects incorporate green SuDS and wildlife habitat to the maximum extent possible, and benefit from community input, possibly through an appointed commission of local volunteer designers, ecologists, and engineers.
3. Source and allocate funds to identify and implement public realm de-paving and SuDS projects throughout the borough, in over-paved sites such as those identified in [the SNAV de-paving study area map](#), including LTN barrier zones. The council's role should be at a minimum to:
 - a. On each site, design, de-pave, edge, and replace soil as required
 - b. Apply a well-adapted native UK seed mix / starter planting, and
 - c. Make it feasible for any interested local residents to adopt de-paved sites.
 - d. If any sites are not adopted, the council would then be responsible for annual mowing and strimming as required, and to continue with regular litter removal as on any public site.

4. Ensure clear communication, liaison, and sharing of resources between Southwark's Flood Risk Team, Ecology / Tree Section, Highways, and Housing, to maximise de-paving programs.
5. Incorporate depaving into council policies/strategies, grants and funding schemes e.g. CGS/Highways/Housing/Tree programmes/Planning policy.
6. Establish a strategic approach to depaving and nature corridors between Southwark's larger parks and green spaces, with a strategic vision for north/south and join-up across boroughs.
7. Coordinate any scheduled infrastructure projects which involve digging or depaving to access subgrade utilities with permanent improvements to improve permeability and increase public green space.

Scrutiny Report: February 2024

Biodiversity: Progress, Delivery and Requirements arising from the Environment Act (2021)

Summary

1. This report provides an update to the Scrutiny panel on the Council's progress in addressing the biodiversity requirements of the Environment Act (2021). This includes the enhanced Biodiversity Duty and reporting requirements, mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and the requirement for a Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

Context

2. Biodiversity informs many aspects of the Council's work and is of strategic importance to the achievement of Corporate, planning policy and programme objectives relating to Southwark's climate emergency. It is widely recognised that the delivery of biodiversity initiatives creates benefits not only for nature, but for the borough's green infrastructure network and 'ecosystem services' (cooling, shading and surface water attenuation).
3. Southwark Council has statutory obligations in relation to biodiversity legislation and policy. It has a legal duty as a 'Responsible Body' to comply with the Biodiversity Duty set out in the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) and strengthened in the Environment Act (2021). The latter states that local authorities must "*from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective*". Evidence must be provided in a Biodiversity Report on the action taken and the outcomes of mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain and other biodiversity initiatives. This is a corporate responsibility that cuts across all Council departments, actions and decision making.
4. The Parks and Natural Environment team are leading on the Biodiversity Duty and Reporting requirements. This includes the coordination of biodiversity initiatives within the Council and regionally, including the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). The Planning team are leading on the implementation and monitoring of Biodiversity Net Gain through the planning application and development process.
5. The Environment Act states that the Council must first consider what action it intends to take to conserve and enhance biodiversity. The [Government guidance](#) states that consideration should include the measures to be taken by the Council to conserve and enhance biodiversity and the specific objectives to deliver these outcomes.
6. The Southwark Nature Action Plan 2020 (SNAP) currently identifies the strategic priorities for biodiversity and sets out actions to protect and enhance biodiversity in Southwark. Work is underway to update this document in line with the Act's requirements, considering the enhanced biodiversity duty and the regional LNRS. The first subsequent Biodiversity Report setting out progress against the agreed priorities, interventions and objectives must be published no later than 1st January 2026. This will include progress made on the delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain.
7. Biodiversity and the natural environment are a key priority area in the council's adopted Climate Change Strategy where we commit to a 'Thriving Natural Environment' in the

borough. This commitment includes improving biodiversity, introducing new green corridors and making our streets a green place to walk, play and relax. The Action Plan for the strategy includes 14 SMART actions for the Thriving Natural Environment priority area.

8. A £1m allocation for capital projects for green space enhancements and biodiversity improvements was agreed in 2022 in response to Climate Change Citizen Jury recommendations. This allocation is managed by the climate change team and a programme of capital projects is underway with a pipeline of new projects being developed by council teams and external stakeholders.
9. The council's new Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy was adopted at cabinet in February 2024 and defines the council's approach to responding to the effects of a change climate. Actions for the strategy will offer opportunities for biodiversity improvements through new green infrastructure and sustainable urban drainage.

General Progress

10. The Planning Policy, Parks and Natural Environment and Climate Change teams have been working closely to ensure that the various strands of biodiversity work are considered and joined up. This includes the new requirements of the Environment Act, as well as existing and proposed biodiversity initiatives within the borough. For example, through the statutory plan-making process, the Council has already designated a wide range of sites for protection for their ecological and greenspace value. The Southwark Plan 2022 included the designation of several new Sites of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and new allocations of Borough Open Land (BOL). Together, this has contributed to joining up the greenspace network and ecological corridors across the borough and thus the achievement of the strategic objectives set out in the Southwark Nature Action Plan.
11. The Council has a successful track record of enhancing the biodiversity value of its public parks. This includes measures such as eliminating scheduled pesticide use, relaxing mowing regimes, planting meadows, woodlands and hedgerows, creating ponds and sustainable urban drainage schemes, and installing nest boxes, stag-beetle loggeries and insect hotels. Such measures have occurred throughout the borough, including major enhancements in Burgess Park, Russia Dock Woodland, and Peckham Rye Park.
12. There is an extensive tree planting strategy supported by the Tree Management Policy 2020. This is occurring in accordance with Corporate Delivery Plan and Climate Change Action Plan targets to increase tree coverage across the Borough. In addition, Southwark supports a wide range of programmes for community involvement in conservation activities, either organised directly or through Council-supported third-sector partners, such as the London Wildlife Trust, Bankside Open Spaces Trust and The Conservation volunteers.
13. A range of ecology and biodiversity projects are being developed and delivered in close collaboration with the climate change team, in accordance with the Climate Change Strategy's third priority area, a "Thriving Natural Environment". This is supported by capital funding and a dedicated ecology officer. Table 1 in the Appendix summarises a range of biodiversity-related initiatives being delivered by the Council, including those linked with climate change strategy. Furthermore, the Council Delivery Plan includes a

wide range of metrics related to biodiversity and greening, which are reported on quarterly.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

14. Biodiversity Net Gain is a mandatory component of the Environment Act (2021) and the Council's Biodiversity Duty. It is a way of creating and improving natural habitats by ensuring that development has a measurably positive impact ('net gain') on biodiversity compared to what was there before. From 12 February 2024, BNG will be mandatory for major developments (with some exceptions), classified as developments of over 10 dwellings. Developers must deliver a minimum BNG of 10% over the baseline biodiversity value of the site. Small sites will be required to meet 10% BNG from 2 April 2024.
15. The mandatory requirement for BNG is being led by the Planning department. It is assessed via a two-stage process - at application stage with the submission of a statutory biodiversity metric tool and post-approval, when a Biodiversity Gain Plan must be submitted and approved by the Council before development can legally commence. Biodiversity which is classified by Government guidance as a 'significant' enhancement must be secured using planning obligations or a Conservation Covenant for a period of 30 years. This can be achieved onsite, or offsite, or through 'statutory credits' in exceptional circumstances.
16. It should be noted that Southwark Council will not be able to ask developers to deliver offsite Biodiversity Net Gain on Council-owned land. To do so would require the Council to establish a Habitat Bank Vehicle, a legal entity which would involve the ecological assessment of its land and the establishment of a price per 'biodiversity unit' for each habitat parcel. The units would need to be registered on the Natural England offsite database for purchase by developers, if required.
17. Systems and processes have been implemented to ensure that the Planning department is ready to receive and process applications which include the statutory BNG documentation. Preparation has included training sessions, internal guidance, validation list and pre-application updates and the establishment of a working group. Notable actions to aid implementation have included:
 - The appointment of an Ecologist in the Planning team to lead on the assessment of BNG and a successful bid for £70,000 from the DLUC Skills Funding pot to contribute towards this specialist post.
 - A free GIS mapping trial with data partner Gigl (Greenspace information for Greater London) to map existing ecological data across the borough in a way which is compliant with the statutory Biodiversity Net Gain assessment tool.
 - The inclusion of a monitoring fee for significant BNG in the draft S106 and CIL SPD to cover the cost of the Council's duty to check that biodiversity gains on major developments are delivered over a 30-year period.
 - Achievement of 100% of major sites in Q3 2023/24 achieving the required London Plan Urban Greening Factor target. Whilst non-mandatory, the target is a valuable way of increasing onsite greening through surface coverings such as green walls, green roofs and biodiverse planting. The achievement of the UGF target also contributes towards a site's Biodiversity Net Gain percentage. Achievement of the target has steadily increased following training and greater awareness by applicants and case officers of the benefits of this policy approach.
18. Analysis of applications which have included BNG data has shown that the achievement of BNG generally far exceeds the minimum 10% requirement, given the

low biodiversity baseline value of many urban sites. This has consistently been achieved onsite. The potential to increase the minimum BNG percentage will be investigated as part of the Southwark Plan full review when biodiversity policy P60 is updated. In the meantime, the emphasis from case officers will be on encouraging BNG which is multi-functional, suitable to the site context and joined up with surrounding green space and ecological corridors.

19. The Planning Policy team will monitor the achievement of BNG, including gains expected or achieved and habitat types. This will be fed into the January 2026 mandatory Biodiversity Report. Data will be extracted from the Biodiversity Gain Plans and Habitat Management and Monitoring Plans submitted with planning applications.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

20. The Greater London Authority (GLA) is the designated responsible authority for producing the statutory LNRS for London. In partnership with other London Boroughs, Southwark will work closely with the GLA to inform the production of the statutory LNRS for London. This regional LNRS, once produced, will inform the actions and strategic direction of Southwark's next biodiversity action plan, which will supersede the SNAP, as required as part of the Council's Biodiversity Duty.
21. To inform the LNRS, the production of the next SNAP will involve reviewing and mapping the Borough's existing areas of importance for biodiversity and identifying opportunities for nature recovery. This will occur through habitat creation, regeneration or enhancement, or where nature recovery can contribute to environmental benefits such as carbon storage and pollution reduction. The work will be carried out within the context of other strategy updates, such as the Green Infrastructure Strategy required by the London Plan.

Next Steps

22. The Planning, Climate Change, and Parks and Natural Environment teams will continue to work together on the achievement of biodiversity initiatives within the borough. Parks and Natural Environment will lead on the Biodiversity Duty, including the periodic reporting requirements, and collaborating with the GLA on LNRS production and implementation. Planning will feed into this with data on the achievement and delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain. The Council's first Biodiversity Report will be published in January 2026, documenting the policies and actions carried out to comply with the Biodiversity Duty.

Appendix

Table of Biodiversity Initiatives by Council Department

Team and Action	Policy/ Initiative/ Task	Lead Team	Cabinet Member
Environment & Leisure			
Southwark Nature Action Plan (2020)	<p>The SNAP provides strategic direction, priorities, and actions to protect and enhance biodiversity and make nature accessible for all in Southwark. It provides over 300 practical actions divided between priority habitat and species action plans that can be implemented by different sectors: private, public and voluntary.</p> <p>The intention is to replace the SNAP with an updated strategy, guided by and informing the production of the London LNRS with the GLA (expected Jan 2025):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review and map the Borough's existing areas of importance for biodiversity. Southwark's nature sites (SINCs) were reviewed in 2015 with 22 additional sites added to the Southwark Plan 2022. - Agree priorities and strategic objectives for nature recovery in the borough - Identify and map opportunities for nature recovery through habitat creation, regeneration or enhancement, or where nature recovery can contribute to other environmental benefits 	Parks and Natural Environment	Cllr Rose
The Southwark Biodiversity Partnership	<p>The SBP is a group of third-sector partners, residents, volunteers, societies, and friends' groups currently managed by Southwark and a principal delivery body of the SNAP. The partnership has successfully raised the profile of biodiversity in Southwark and has delivered many conservation projects, while engaging with the residents and businesses of Southwark.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An independent, voluntary, chair is being hired for the group, to provide administrative support and enhance the potential of the group by facilitating funding and collaborative opportunities. 	Parks and Natural Environment	Cllr Rose
Third-sector Ecology and Environment Contracts	<p>Agreements with BOST, LWT and TCV are in place until 2026 for the ecological management of specific sites of natural conservation importance within Southwark, providing added value through delivery of a range of ecological and environmental services such as community engagement, events, and provision of volunteer opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Between 2019-2022, collectively delivered 1326 volunteer days, 51,766 volunteer hours, 143 events and 258 training and education days. The 2023-2026 contracts are valued at £88,401 per annum. - Delivery is monitored through an agreed set of KPIs based on identified outcomes in the Common Outcomes Framework. KPI targets for 23-24 have almost all been met by Q3, and will be revaluated for 24-25 	Parks and Natural Environment	Cllr Rose

<p>Community/third-sector conservation involvement schemes</p>	<p>Southwark facilitates, funds, or manages a range of community or third-sector led nature improvement projects, in line with the SNAP objectives.</p> <p><i>Examples of recently completed and active projects include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Big City Butterflies: Burgess Park habitat creation with Butterfly Conservation and Friends of Burgess Park. LBS-led habitat works sessions with volunteers to start Jan 2024. - Belair Wood Meadow: To create habitat mosaics for biodiversity and pathways to improve access to nature with Friends of Belair Park. Design consultation held Jul 23. - Tiny Forests: Planting 4 Tiny Forests of around 600 trees with schools and volunteers, facilitated by Earthwatch. 1st forest planted in Peckham Rye Park. 2nd planned for Burgess Park. Site selection ongoing for 3rd and 4th. - Southwark Park Bee Hives: Educational and engagement hives are maintained on agreement in Southwark Park by a local beekeeper, to be renewed in 2024. - Rouel Road Estate: A community gardens and orchard set up in housing amenity space with interest for further biodiversity improvements from the residents in collaboration with Trees for Bermondsey. - Doddington grove Estate Orchard planting: CGS funded project to plant community fruit trees. - Slippers Place Greening: Community gardens, hedge planting and fruit trees planted. - Southwark Blossoms: Planting regime has started for trees in around schools to improve learning environments and biodiversity near schools, with Street Trees for Living. - Lavender Pond improvement: Capital funded project to improve Lavender Pond Nature Reserve site currently managed by TCV. Works completed 2023. - Reuniting Sydenham Hill Woods and Dulwich Woods: Expected project to unite the management of these two woods, includes capital funding to restore infrastructure and woodland habitat, and expand community engagement. Collaborative project between LWT, LBS and the Dulwich Estate. Funding bid submitted to Heritage Lottery Fund Jan 2024. 	<p>Parks and Natural Environment</p>	<p>Cllr Rose</p>
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Parks Projects	<p>In-line with SNAP objectives, parks have adopted widespread nature friendly management practices, while supporting multiple biodiversity enhancement projects.</p> <p><i>Examples of recently completed or active initiatives/projects:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Since 2018 Parks have had no scheduled use of Glyphosate or other pesticides, and the Cleaning Service has reduced pesticide application from three to two, annually, and is investigating alternatives to weed-control through the Pesticide Reduction Strategy. - Relaxed mowing (e.g., 'No-Mow May') implemented across housing estates, road verges and parks, delivered through engagement with Friends of groups, TRAs, residents and maintenance teams. - New meadows have been planted including in One Tree Hill, Russia Dock Woodland, Dulwich Upper Wood, Peckham Rye Park, Burgess Park, Dulwich Park and Camberwell Old Cemetery. Further meadow restoration projects scheduled for spring 2024 in Burgess Park. - Over 1400m of native hedging has been planted in parks including Burgess Park, Southwark Park, Dulwich Park and GMH - New ponds installed, including in Rockingham Estate, Rouel Road Community Garden and Paper Garden - Russia Dock Woodland SUDs: S106 funded scheme to redirect runoff from Quebec Way estate into Russia Dock Woodland, improving wetland habitat in the park. SUDs design phase ongoing with Metis. - Burgess Park Green wall: Creation of a green barrier wall, planted with wildflowers. Works planned for Spring 2024 - Peckham Rye Park 'Lost Peck' Flood alleviation project: biodiversity enhancements following the construction of two bunds in the park, including perennial and meadow planting. - Two new cut and collect flails for meadow establishment and maintenance purchased through a successful Rewilding London Fund to improve grassland management and increase species diversity in parks - A programme of eradication of Japanese Knotweed is in place and has been eradicated in 30 parks. 	Parks and Natural Environment	Councillor Rose
Biodiversity Monitoring	<p>Ecology team collate biodiversity data from a variety of sources including ecological surveys, local nature recorders, and through an SLA with GiGL, who provide quarterly updates on species and habitat records and maintain SINC information. We report on the National Indicator SDL160 (SINCs in positive management).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Currently 89% of Southwark's SINCs are in positive environmental management (3rd in England) 	Parks and Natural Environment	Councillor Rose

Tree Management Policy (2020)	<p>This policy document recognises the positive impact that urban trees have on the environment, biodiversity, and the health and wellbeing of Southwark residents. It aims to maintain a healthy, protected and sustainably managed treescape, through a set of strategic objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - manage existing tree stock in accordance with good practise - maintain a general presumption against the removal of trees and aim - recognise the relationship between trees and the urban environment, promoting a "right tree, right place" philosophy - continue to ensure protection of trees and woodlands subject to TPOs, in Conservation areas and SINCS - promote the value of trees to residents, business and the developers 	Parks and Natural Environment	Cllr Rose
Tree Planting Programme	<p>Since 2020, 27,797 trees have been planted across the Borough, delivering the Tree Management Policy, Corporate Deliver Plan and Climate Change Action Plan Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Audit of Borough's tree stock with condition and drone surveys underway and on track for 23-24: currently at 97,770 trees (Q3). - Tree planting sites identified with active engagement with Friends of Groups, TRAs, Trees for Bermondsey, Herne Hill Tree Watch, Southwark Nature Action Volunteers and more. - 107 volunteers actively engaged in spring 2023 Peckham Rye Park Tiny Forest planting. 6 schools are currently engaged with tree-planting this season 	Parks and Natural Environment	Cllr Rose
New Ecologist appointed	<p>Tree Planting officer appointed in June 2023 and Ecologist appointed in November 2023 to lead on Council tree planting and biodiversity initiatives.</p>	Parks and Natural Environment	Cllr Rose

Climate Change Team			
Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan	<p>The third priority area within our Climate Change Strategy is a 'Thriving Natural Environment' where we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve biodiversity and introduce new green corridors to help wildlife to move. - Make our streets a green place to walk, play and relax. - Further increase tree canopy coverage across the borough with more planting, ensuring any loss of existing trees cover is a last resort and that those trees are replaced. - Increase food growing in the borough, expanding allotments and community gardening. - Enable building and development that works alongside and enhances our natural environment. <p>The Action Plan for the strategy includes 14 SMART actions for the Thriving Natural Environment priority area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create greener streets with more planting (4 actions) - Increase tree coverage across the borough (2 actions) - Residents have greater access to nature (2 actions) - Building and development works alongside and enhances the natural environment (4 actions) - Define an offsetting strategy for residual emissions (2 actions) <p>Delivery of these action points is shared with relevant council teams</p>	Climate Change Team	Cllr McAsh
Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan	<p>This new strategy will be/was adopted on 6 February 2024 and focus on adapting the borough to a changing climate. Two of the priority areas, overheating and flooding, will offer opportunities for new and enhanced biodiversity and green infrastructure through new physical projects.</p>	Climate Change Team	Cllr McAsh
New Ecologist appointed	<p>Ecologist joined the council in January 2024 to implement Ecology and Biodiversity initiatives and projects which form part of the Climate Change Strategy. £980k capital funding is available to fund projects the deliver Climate Change Strategy action points and wider projects. Project development is in preliminary stages.</p>	Climate Change Team	Cllr McAsh

Planning Policy			
Use of the Southwark Plan (2022) policies through Development Management	Several policies in the Southwark Plan aim to retain and enhance biodiversity. These are P57 Open Space, P58 Open water space, 59 Green Infrastructure, P60 Biodiversity, P61 Trees. Review of these policies will occur as part of the Southwark Plan review.	Planning Policy	
Southwark Plan review	The review of the Southwark Plan will involve the development of an updated evidence base to support the updated policies. This which will include a Green Infrastructure Strategy and updated Open Space Needs Assessment. Both strategies are an opportunity to identify where additional greening and biodiversity can be incorporated in the revised spatial plan for the borough.		
Climate and Environment SPD	Guidance will be included on green infrastructure, trees and biodiversity to support policies P59, P60 and P61. The SPD is scheduled for Cabinet in June 2024.	Planning Policy	Cllr Dennis
Biodiversity Net Gain	Systems and processes relating to biodiversity net gain have been implemented within the Planning department and case officers trained. Has included training, guidance, updating Validation checklist and pre-application templates. New Ecologist started in January 2024	Planning Policy	Cllr Dennis
Appointment of Ecology officer	Ecology officer has been appointed to assess BNG in planning applications and advise on BNG guidance.	Planning Policy	Cllr Dennis
GIS mapping of biodiversity data	A free GIS trial has been secured with data partner GiGL as part of their BNG service development. Phase 2 will map the available ecological data across the borough in a manner which is compliant with the BNG statutory assessment tool.	Planning Policy	Cllr Dennis
BNG Reporting	A data system is being designed to capture BNG data, including biodiversity units, percentage uplift and type of habitat. This data will feed into the Council's first Biodiversity Report, due to be published in January 2026.	Planning Policy	Cllr Dennis

From: James Trimmer

Sent: Thursday, November 23, 2023 4:08 PM

To: Timbrell, Julie

Subject: Invite to Southwark's Environment & Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission
- 27 Nov re River Freight

Julie

As I unfortunately cannot attend the session on Monday, I can share a few thoughts on the issues under consideration and the PLA's perspective.

Firstly, I welcome this investigation and believe that the Borough's location, infrastructure and population density makes it particularly suitable to benefit from using the river to deliver freight. In this context, 'freight' is defined as parcels and packages delivered to piers for either last mile delivery or for local click and collect.

The Borough is home to the first destination on the one existing light freight service operating on the river currently, which is undertaken by DHL and serviced by Thames Clippers on a dedicated, branded vessel. This is a daily service of packages from Heathrow airport to Wandsworth Riverside Quarter (by EV), then by vessel to Bankside Pier, where packages (which have been pre-sorted) undergo a further micro-consolidation stage at the pier into final delivery runs, which are then sent out for delivery by cargo-bike and, if necessary, by EV. There is a further stop for the vessel at Wapping Pier in Tower Hamlets. This service is unusual in a couple of ways; firstly, it operates from west to east, when the other customers we're talking to would be running the other way, from large warehouses in the Thames Gateway to the final customer in inner east, central and west London. Secondly, the documents carried are of a value and required at a speed that means the normally logistic industry's principles of economies of scale are not as important.

The benefit of using the river are the decreased carbon emissions per tonne/kilometre (roughly half of the comparable trip on the road) and, importantly, the reliability and certainty. When the vessel leaves after picking up cargo (which is usually in the form of roll cages or palletised), the destination time can be certain, which in view of the mode and timing interdependencies now common in logistics, is a major benefit which can't be equalled by the road. The river can therefore offer a more certain, sustainable connection with final mile services to riparian boroughs throughout the capital. Thames Clippers have secured government funding to construct and trial an electric vessel to deliver light freight, so fully decarbonising this element of the logistics chain.

We've undertaken a number of successful light freight trials (most recently earlier this year, which had Bankside Pier as a destination and used the EV parking bays adjacent to the pier) and know that it can be carried very successfully on the river, having tested multiple pick-ups and drop-offs and return loads. However, now that the fundamentals have proven to work, what is needed now is a move to scale the operation, which will make using the river more comparable in cost terms to the roads and is essential for long-term service

viability. However, this will mean changes are needed at piers where the services (and these will consist of vessel running multiple times from origin loading point downstream into London) operate from and will most probably include pier extensions to handle the vessels and cargo. Additionally, how e-cargo bikes (all the potential customers I'm dealing with are looking at purely sustainable final mile deliveries from piers) are separated from passenger flows may need to be adopted; these issues were considered more fully in the report commissioned by the PLA and Cross River Partnership earlier this year on the principles of best practice in the use of e-cargo bikes at piers.

I know that Bankside Pier is of particular interest to customers and this increase in scale (and the implications arising from that, with the resultant modal shift benefits at a Borough wide level) will need to be discussed with the Council and will be something I may well be coming to discuss in due course. There are a number of exciting developments we're discussing and I'd be really pleased if we could like work together to gain the benefits of moving deliveries from the highway network to the Thames. I really think, if these developments come, that it will be a great opportunity for Southwark to demonstrate to the rest of London how the river can re-establish its role as a principal highway into the capital and the resultant benefit from getting vehicles off local roads. Hopefully I'll be back soon with more details and I'm happy to help if there are further questions from the summary I've outlined above.

Cheers

Jim

James Trimmer
Director of Planning and Development

Port of London Authority

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Item No. 14	Classification: Open	Date: 27 February 2023	Meeting Name: Environment Scrutiny Commission
Report title:		Cover report for the Environment Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2023-24	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		N/a	
From:		Project Manager, scrutiny.	

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Environment Scrutiny Commission note the work programme attached as the Work Programme, plus appendix.
2. That the Environment Scrutiny Commission consider the addition of new items or allocation of previously identified items to specific meeting dates of the commission.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The general terms of reference of the scrutiny commissions are set out in the council's constitution (overview and scrutiny procedure rules - paragraph 5). The constitution states that:

Within their terms of reference, all scrutiny committees/commissions will:

- a) review and scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the council's functions
- b) review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the cabinet and council officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time in areas covered by its terms of reference
- c) review and scrutinise the performance of the council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas
- d) question members of the cabinet and officers about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects and about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area
- e) assist council assembly and the cabinet in the development of its budget and policy framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues

- f) make reports and recommendations to the cabinet and or council assembly arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process
 - g) consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants
 - h) liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working
 - i) review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the scrutiny committee and local people about their activities and performance
 - j) conduct research and consultation on the analysis of policy issues and possible options
 - k) question and gather evidence from any other person (with their consent)
 - l) consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the scrutiny process and in the development of policy options
 - m) conclude inquiries promptly and normally within six months
4. The work programme document lists those items that have been or are to be considered in line with the commission's terms of reference.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 5. Set out in the Work Programme and review scope appendixes are the issues and reviews the Environment and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission is due to consider in 2023-24.
- 6. The work programme is a standing item on the Environment and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission agenda and enables the commission to consider, monitor and plan issues for consideration at each meeting.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Environment and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission agenda and minutes	Southwark Council Website	Julie Timbrell Project Manager
Link: https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=518		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
	Work Programme 2023-24 Appendix A Appendix B

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Officer	Everton Roberts, Head of Scrutiny	
Report Author	Julie Timbrell, Project Manager, Scrutiny.	
Version	Final	
Dated	25 February 2024	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Governance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Scrutiny Team	25 February 2024	

Environment and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission dates and work-plan 2023/34

Proposed reviews and topics:

- Review: Biodiversity **Appendix A**
- Review: Sustainable Freight **Appendix B**
- Topic: Waste, recycling, reducing fly-tipping and street cleaning : how can we use our resources better? (to coincide with cabinet member interview)

Standing item – cabinet member interviews (tbc):

- Councillor Catherine Rose: Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods, Leisure and Parks
- Councillor James McAsh: Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Clean Air and Streets
- Councillor Helen Dennis : Cabinet Member for New Homes and Sustainable Development

Dates and work-plan

Environment and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission	Date	Item
Meeting 1	Monday 10 July 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work programme - scrutiny review topics and agenda items. • Sustainable Freight scrutiny review – rolled over from previous year. • SNAP and tree management officer report
Outreach		<p>9 August: Tour of Lambeth Council weed free programme co organised by Southwark Nature and PAN</p> <p>12 September: Tour of Rouel Road Estate / Rouel Blue Garden Club and Bermondsey Trees (including Mike Mann estate manager)</p>
Meeting 2	Wednesday 20 September 2023	<p><i>Reducing pesticide and herbicide</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lambeth Council officer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/streets-roads-transport/community-weeding-scheme ○ https://issuu.com/pan-uk/docs/greener_cities_-_a_guide_to_our_pavement_plants See page 18 for a discussion of Lambeth's program. • Pesticide Action Network <p>Air Quality particulates tyre and brake</p>

		<p>Sustainable Tyre manufacturer ENSO Ltd</p> <p>Streets for Peoples Presentation by Cabinet lead and officer</p> <p>Southwark Land Commission Presentation by vice chair Cllr James McAsh based on report to cabinet</p> <p>Consider / note Cabinet responses scrutiny reviews conducted in 22/23 – due 12 September :</p> <p>i) Climate Finance ii) Resident Participation Framework</p>
Meeting 3	Monday 27 November 2023	<p>Air Quality particulates tyre and brake <i>Dr Ian Mudway</i></p> <p>Vehicle Footway Crossover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Royal Horticultural Society report - background info • Pavement channel providers <p>Sustainable Freight :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TfL with particular reference to the London Freight Lab and strategic plans 20 • Officer report and update on highway transport plans in development including planed Freight Strategy 2024, • EV plan presentation (note part of formal action point re cabinet member letter and formal submission to consultation) • Freight service October 23 cabinet paper provided as a written update • Cross River Partnership

Meeting 4	27 Feb	<p>Sitopia Video Carolyn Steel https://www.carolynsteel.com/</p> <p>Incredible Edible</p> <p>Insectinside https://insectinside.me/</p> <p>Meristem information on depaving / SUDS</p> <p>Improving biodiversity in Southwark : Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) de-paving, pocket parks, and other measures <i>Simon Saville</i> <i>Chair of Surrey & SW London Butterfly Conservation</i></p> <p>Southwark Nature Action Volunteers : Recommendations for Nature Recovery In Southwark</p> <p>Officers update on meeting the requirements of the Environment Act including Biodiversity Net Gain, Local Nature Recovery Plan and monitoring and reporting requirements <i>Officers: Planning Policy team will lead on the Environment Act requirements with Environment Dept input in to the paper.</i></p> <p>Officer presentation and input on supporting community food growing and gardening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community garden plan in development and • Community food growing initiative

		<p><i>Officers: Julian Fowgies , Ruth Arnott and Orsetta Hosquet from our Community Gardening team.</i></p> <p>Scrutiny report on Sustainable Freight</p> <p>Port of London briefing as background</p>
Meeting 5	Wed 7 May	<p>Topic: Waste, recycling, reducing fly-tipping and street cleaning : how can we use our resources better?</p> <p>Waste in parks</p> <p>Report from officers regarding Pavement channels and suggest that they meet with providers to discuss issues (tbc)</p> <p>Biodiversity scrutiny report</p>

Scrutiny review scoping proposal

1 What is the review?

Biodiversity

2 What outcomes could realistically be achieved? Which agency does the review seek to influence?

The review is mainly aimed at the council but is also seeking to increase collaboration by the council with the community, voluntary sector and, where appropriate, businesses.

3 When should the review be carried out/completed? i.e. does the review need to take place before/after a certain time?

Completed by the end of the administrative year 2023/24

4 What format would suit this review? (eg full investigation, q&a with executive member/partners, public meeting, one-off session)

Full investigation

5 What are some of the key issues that you would like the review to look at?

Kerbside strategy and the loss of front gardens, including:

- Provision of dropped curbs – Planning controls

- Option to promote pavement channels for EV charging as an alternative
- Impact of paved front gardens on biodiversity
- Ways to mitigate paving for vehicles e.g [grass reinforcement systems](#)

Food production and food consumption with reference to:

- Increasing urban food production, which is secure and affordable
- Reducing scope 3 emissions and ecological degradation caused by consumption of food produced from monocultures and non-carbon sequestering land use, across the UK and beyond
- Increasing consumption of food produced through agroecology

Southwark Land Commission – presentation and discussion of recommendations

33

Southwark Nature Action Plan and the development of the new requirement to have a Local Nature Recovery <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/local-nature-recovery-strategies/local-nature-recovery-strategies>

Planning:

- Biodiversity net gain
- Reducing hard surfaces

Upskilling staff on biodiversity

Does the council requirement to consider the Climate Emergency in reports result in sufficient focus on the ecological and biodiversity emergency ?

Tree management and increasing the canopy.

Addressing biodiversity holistically including soil health, insects, vegetation

Accelerating the phasing out of herbicides/pesticides

Communicating and engaging with residents and communities on the work of the council on biodiversity, and its importance.

Nature corridors (see <https://southwarknature.org.uk/camberwell-nature-corridors/> and <https://southwarknature.org.uk/elmington-nature-corridor-2023/>)

Increasing the strategic provision of low carbon water supplies (eg water butts, solar pumps)

Enabling more Community Gardening

Supporting community groups and community action.

Enhancing Streets for People

<https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/documents/s115187/Appendix%201%20Streets%20for%20People%20Strategy%202023-2030.pdf>

6 Who would you like to receive evidence and advice from during the review?

Incredible Edible

Southwark Nature Action Volunteers

Insectinside Me

Oriana's Gardens – work with London Bridge BID etc (tbc) <https://www.orianasgardens.co.uk/projects>

Carolyn Steel :

- Sitopia: How Food Can Save the World
- Urban Farm in Greenwich

George Monbiot

Henry Dimbleby

Pesticide free London.

Initiatives by other London councils (e.g. Lambeth) to reduce use of herbicides/pesticides
Lambeth

<https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/streets-roads-transport/community-weeding-scheme>

Loughborough Farm See: <https://loughboroughjunction.org/home/loughborough-farm-a-patchwork-of-community-growing-spaces>

Pesticide Action Network UK (PAN UK) : Greener Cities: A guide to the plants on our pavements
[Costs-of-going-pesticide-free.pdf \(pan-uk.org\)](#)

PAN-UK has published this excellent guide to the plants which may grow in our pavements [here](#):
https://issuu.com/pan-uk/docs/greener_cities_-_a_guide_to_our_pavement_plants

See page 18 for a discussion of Lambeth's program.

RHS report <https://www.rhs.org.uk/science/pdf/Gardening-matters-Front-Gardens-urban-greening.pdf>

Evidence that loss of front gardens is environmentally damaging, destroying corridors of

biodiversity. See work the Royal Horticultural Society has done work on impact and mitigation
<https://www.rhs.org.uk/communities/archive/PDF/Greener-Streets/greening-grey-britain-report.pdf>

Southwark Biodiversity Partnership:

- [The Conservation Volunteers](#)
- [Team London Bridge](#)
- [Walworth Garden](#)
- [Centre for Wildlife Gardening](#)
- [Surrey Docks Farm](#)
- [Bankside Open Spaces Trust](#)
- [IdVerde](#)
- [Better Bankside](#)
- [GIGL](#)
- [London Wildlife Trust](#)

7 Any suggestions for background information? Are you aware of any best practice on this topic?

Included above

8 What approaches could be useful for gathering evidence? What can be done outside committee meetings?
e.g. verbal or written submissions, site visits, mystery-shopping, service observation, meeting with stakeholders, survey, consultation event

Commission meeting presentations, outreach visits, roundtable.

Scrutiny review scoping proposal

1 What is the review?

Sustainable Freight

2 What outcomes could realistically be achieved? Which agency does the review seek to influence?

Outcomes

That the Council has a coherent and realistic plan to deliver Sustainable Freight that dovetails with existing strategies and plans, including the Air Quality Action Plan, Streets for People, and Climate Emergency Action Plan.

That the energy, skills and experience of local groups delivering and advocating for Sustainable Freight are well utilised.

That TfL/ GLA plans to support Sustainable Freight are understood and that these bodies are lobbied effectively to support the Council's plans.

Agencies and partners

The review seeks principally to influence the Council, as well, potentially, as others such as TfL/ GLA to a lesser extent.

3 When should the review be carried out/completed? i.e. does the review need to take place before/after a certain time?

By the end of the administrative year.

4 What format would suit this review? (eg full investigation, q&a with executive member/partners, public meeting, one-off session)

Full investigation

5 What are some of the key issues that you would like the review to look at?

- Plans to ensure the Council's internal fleet of vehicles is zero or low emissions
- Plans to ensure that the Council's goods and services move around the borough in a way that minimises emissions
- How the Council ensures that the goods and services it procures are delivered by Sustainable Freight
- How Planning Policy, Highways and TfL are delivering the transport and road infrastructure required support Sustainable Freight
- How local organisations can work with the Council in encouraging and facilitating local businesses to use Sustainable Freight
- How large and small business are making the switch and what can be done to catalyse this
- How the Council and Business Improvement Districts can deliver Logistical Hubs/ Micro Logistical Hubs to enable hubs to receive, and then deliver the 'last mile' of online shopping by e cargo bikes.
- Encouraging and enabling citizens to make the switch to Sustainable Freight – for example opting for “click and collect” rather than door-to-door delivery.
- Establishing the principle source and destination of freight moving around the borough
- How particulates from tyres and brakes from growing numbers of Electrical Vehicals (EV) are contributing to Air Quality and what can be done to mitigate this
- How River Freight can contribute to decarbonising freight

6 Who would you like to receive evidence and advice from during the review?

The following council departments and units:

- Fleet Services
- Planning Policy
- Highways
- Procurement
- Environmental Protection (Air Quality)

- Climate Emergency

Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development

TfL / GLA

Companies and community groups providing or advocating sustainable freight, including

- Peddle My Wheels, OurBike scheme
- PeddleMe

Dr Ian Mudway – Imperial

Cross River Partnership

Port of London Authority

7 Any suggestions for background information? Are you aware of any best practice on this topic?

Previous recommendations made on Air Quality are summarised in the attached appendix one.

Leeds have pioneered the switch to electric vehicles:

<https://takeclimateaction.uk/climate-action/how-leeds-making-all-council-vehicles-electric>

Council Air Quality Action Plans

The current Air Quality Action Plan 2017 - 2022 and includes 'a freight consolidation solution for Southwark' see section 4 points 4.2- 4.5 – with specific actions for Procurement and Environmental Protection.

The Draft Air Quality Action Plan, for the period 2023 – 2027 . Two of its seven themes are relevant to 'sustainable freight':

- *Delivery servicing and freight: Goods and service vehicles are usually diesel powered and have high NO2 emissions. Low emission logistics requires alternatively fuelled vehicles to combat air pollution from this source;*

- *Borough fleet actions: Southwark's fleet includes light and heavy duty diesel-fuelled vehicles such as mini buses and refuse collection vehicles with high primary NO2 emissions. Southwark can review its own fleet procurement to lead by example;*

The current and draft Air Quality Action Plan will be used to frame the review and a session October, with the following departments, who have all been involved in drawing up current plans contained in the Draft Air Quality Action plans will be invited to attend on 11 October including :

- Fleet Services
- Procurement
- Environmental Protection
- Planning Policy
- Highways
- Climate Emergency

The council's Movement Plan is being refreshed
<https://www.southwark.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy-and-transport-policy/transport-policy/policy-and-guidance-documents/movement-plan>

Streets for People <https://www.southwark.gov.uk/transport-and-roads/streets-for-people>

8 What approaches could be useful for gathering evidence? What can be done outside committee meetings?

e.g. verbal or written submissions, site visits, mystery-shopping, service observation, meeting with stakeholders, survey, consultation event

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Environment Scrutiny Commission

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023-24

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