

# Environment and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission

Wednesday 20 September 2023  
7.00 pm  
160 Tooley Street, London, SE1 2QH

## Supplemental One Agenda

### List of Contents

Item No.	Title	Page No.
5.	<b>Review: Biodiversity - Lambeth Community Weeding</b> Jason Prentis, Environmental Outreach Project Manager, Lambeth Council, will present on the borough's Community Weeding Scheme and the council's work to go herbicide and pesticide free.  The Community Weeding Volunteers' Manual is enclosed.	1 - 32
8.	<b>Air Quality particulates: sustainable tyres</b> Sam Cooper, Head of Operations, from <a href="#">ENSO Ltd</a> will present.	
13.	<b>Work Programme</b>	33 - 48

#### Contact

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Date: 15 September 2023

# Community Weeding Scheme Volunteers' Manual



**Thanks for joining the scheme!**

## **Welcome to Lambeth Council's Community Weeding Scheme.**

This manual sets out how you can nurture your street's natural biodiversity while maintaining safe pavements and protecting infrastructure.

In here you'll find information on which plants to remove and practical advice on how to remove them. There are examples of 'problem plants' to help you judge when you might need to weed. We've also included a section illustrating some of the many varieties of wild plants that you might see growing in tree pits and pavements in your street.



# Contents

Page 5: Foreword from Cllr Rezina Chowdhury

Page 7: Introduction

Page 8: Part One: Plants in the wrong place

Page 9: Why control weeds?

Page 10: Trip hazards and obstructions

Page 14: Other problem plants

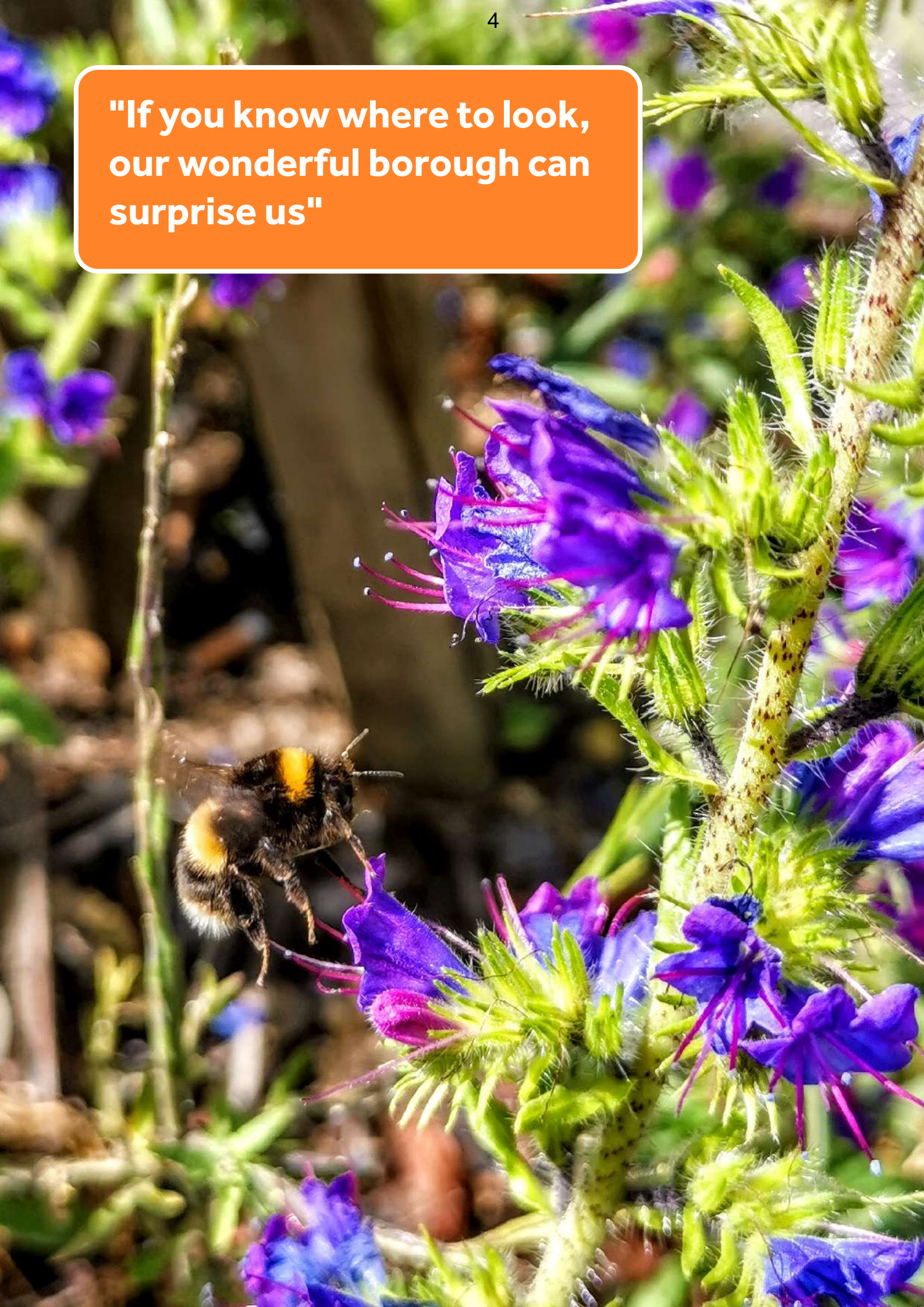
Page 21: Removing unwanted pavement plants

Page 22: Part Two: Lambeth's pavement plants

Page 29: Identifying pavement plants

Page 30: Acknowledgements

**"If you know where to look,  
our wonderful borough can  
surprise us"**



## Foreword from Cllr Rezina Chowdhury

**Thank you for volunteering to help protect our borough's biodiversity.**

Most people probably wouldn't think of Lambeth's pavements as being capable of supporting a rich variety of wildlife. Lambeth is, after all, a densely populated inner-London borough, better-known for the diversity of its human inhabitants than for its flora and fauna. However, if you know where to look, our wonderful borough can surprise us. This project aims to make these surprises more frequent, and accessible to more people, by taking care of the wild plants that occur naturally in our built environment. By stopping the use of glyphosate in 2021 we took a huge step towards doing this. The Community Weeding Scheme takes this another huge step further.

Caring for the plants and animals we share our borough with is important, but it's also vital to ensure that our pavements continue to perform their primary function: to enable pedestrians to travel safely. This is very much where your help will be essential. By removing plants that could damage the pavement or cause a trip hazard, you'll be ensuring there's no hindrance to pavement users while protecting those plants that we all want to encourage.

As Cabinet Member for Sustainable Lambeth and Clean Air, I'm responsible for Lambeth's response to the climate and ecological emergency. Increasing biodiversity is a key part of Lambeth's Climate Action Plan. Naturally the Community Weeding Scheme is good for biodiversity, but it's also good for our communities, offering an opportunity for us to connect with the natural world in the streets where we live and work. I'm enormously grateful to you for signing up and becoming a part of our journey towards a greener, happier, and more sustainable Lambeth.

**Cllr Rezina Chowdhury**  
**Cabinet Member for Sustainable Lambeth and Clean Air**





## Introduction

The Community Weeding Scheme began in April 2020 after residents, led by members of Incredible Edible Lambeth, expressed concern about the council's use of glyphosate. Over the following year, around 200 residents from 130 streets volunteered to weed manually to prevent glyphosate from being used on their pavements. The project was so successful that it encouraged the council to stop routine use of glyphosate in May 2021, a few months earlier than planned.

As well as preventing the use of pesticides, the scheme gave residents the opportunity to allow wild plants to grow and flower. This proved to be a popular aspect of the scheme and led to the council's decision to extend it with a new focus on nurturing biodiversity. This manual outlines exactly how this will work in practice.

In the first section, we'll get down to the important business of spotting plants that need to be removed to keep pavements safe for pedestrians. The good news is that this shouldn't be difficult, even for non-gardeners. In many cases, deciding whether to remove a plant will be based on its size and location rather than its species, so strict identification won't be necessary much of the time.

Next, we'll turn our attention to the practicalities by explaining the best way to remove plants, and what to do with them afterwards.

In the final section, we'll look at some of the benefits of the scheme, providing examples of some of the plants you can expect to see growing, and suggesting ways of honing your plant identification skills.

We hope you find this manual useful!



## Part One

# Plants in the wrong place

## Why control weeds?

Local authorities have a duty to keep highways and footways clean and free from trip hazards and obstructions. Councils form strategies to perform this function which include regular street cleaning and infrastructure inspections. Weed control is part of this work. Traditionally, councils aim to remove wild plants regularly for the following reasons:

- If wild plants are left to grow unabated, they can eventually cause structural damage to the footway
- Wild plants can pose a trip hazard or obstruction if growing in places where pedestrians are likely to walk
- Wild plant growth can be 'visually intrusive' and give the impression that the highway network is being poorly maintained, leading to an increase in environmental crime such as littering, dumping and graffiti
- Wild plant growth in the kerb channel can lead to a build-up of detritus, preventing the effective drainage of rainwater

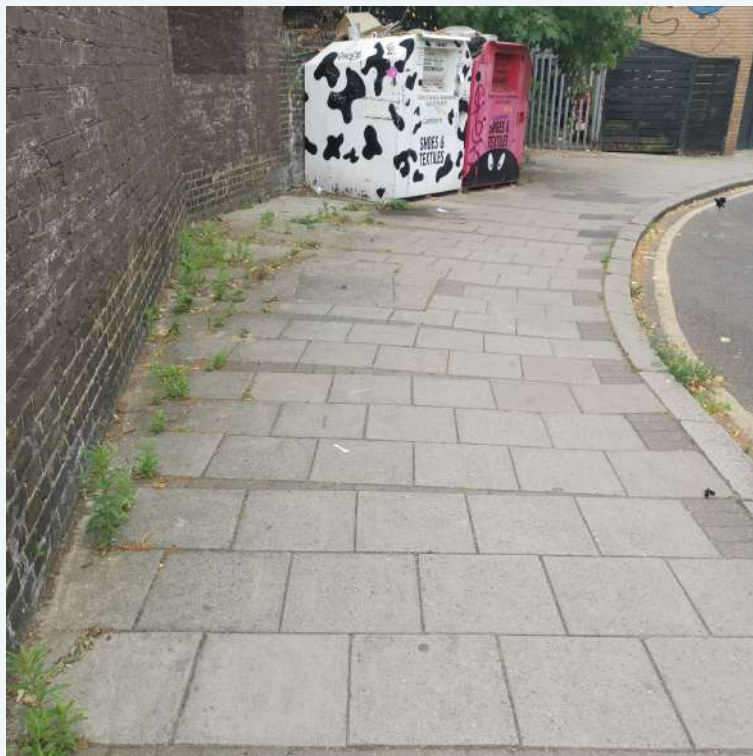
Of course, in practice many wild plants are unlikely to create these problems, and could be left to grow and do their bit for local biodiversity. The Community Weeding Scheme therefore aims to strike a balance between managing pavements so they function for pedestrians, while allowing some plants to grow where they won't cause any harm.

Over the next few pages, we'll look at a variety of situations where pavement plants could cause a problem, either as a trip hazard or obstruction, or by damaging infrastructure. Photographs of examples will help you to identify plants that need to be removed from your pavements, helping to keep them safe and functioning as they should while still providing a home for a diverse range of plants and insects.

## Trip hazards and obstructions

The aim of this project is to protect biodiversity, but the last thing any of us would want is for someone to be injured as a result. It's essential that our pavements allow people to walk safely, without fear of tripping over a rogue tuft of grass. Looking out for potential obstacles and removing them before they become a problem is therefore very important.

In most cases, the footfall of pedestrians serves to prevent wild plants from growing on the parts of the pavement where people walk. This means that trip hazards and obstacles are actually not that common in practice, as wild plants are confined to areas of the pavement that people don't use. For example, in the picture below, there's a clear line between the area where people walk and where they don't; wild plants grow on the part of the pavement where they're not trampled underfoot, and because they're unlikely to get in anyone's way, they can be allowed to grow.



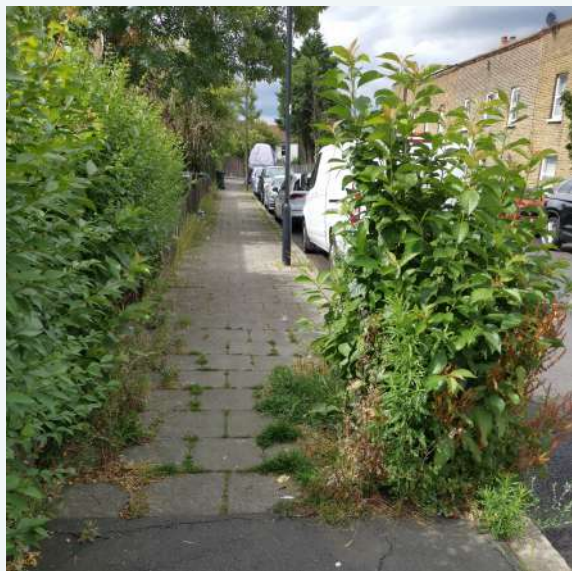
However, there are exceptions to this, where wild plants end up growing in the 'wrong' place and somehow achieve a size that makes them potential trip hazards. Here are some examples:



Wild plants sometimes proliferate in the join between the pavement and the kerb, often next to parked cars that haven't moved for a while. These plants should be removed so that they don't become trip hazards when the cars are eventually moved.



As well as creating potential trip hazards, wild plants can sometimes obstruct the pavement, often when combined with other features such as trees, street furniture or plants overhanging from front gardens.



In cases like these, you should do what you can to make the usable part of the pavement as wide as possible by removing any pavement plants that are contributing to the obstruction. Where the problem is exacerbated by plants growing from private gardens, please **do not** cut them back; let us know about them by emailing [neighbourhoodchampions@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodchampions@lambeth.gov.uk), and we'll write to the occupiers to ask them to cut the plants back.

Where hedges in front gardens overhang the pavement, wild plants will often thrive beneath them. It's worth keeping an eye out for any that are growing particularly large, as these will pose a potential trip hazard when that part of the pavement becomes usable again after the hedge is cut back.

Other problem plants



**In this section we'll be looking mainly at plants that could potentially cause damage to pavements.**

The operative word here is 'potentially', as there's surprisingly little research on this subject. Do the plants cause cracks, or are they simply making use of cracks that were already there? Either way, there are some plants that we'd recommend removing as soon as possible after you've noticed them. Many of these plants have the potential to grow quite large, and we certainly wouldn't rule out the possibility that their roots could cause damage to pavements, roads or properties if left to grow.

So, here's our rogues gallery of plants that should be removed if found growing from the pavement or kerb channel. To find more information and photographs to help with identifying any of these plants, we recommend an internet search.

### **Buddleia**

A popular garden plant due to its attractive purple flowers and ability to attract butterflies, buddleia will grow pretty much anywhere if it gets the chance. Often seen growing out of railway bridges and even the walls of houses, it also loves the gaps between paving slabs, as in the pictures on the previous page and below.





### Red valerian

Another popular garden plant, red valerian flowers for a long time and is a favourite of a variety of insects, particularly the spectacular hummingbird hawk moth. Despite these positives, if found growing on the pavement it's best pulled out before it spreads, which it will do with ease if left to its own devices. Flowers can be pink or white as well as the more usual red.



### Tree of Heaven

Easily recognisable by its distinctive leaves which turn bright red in Autumn, Tree of Heaven is capable of setting up home in all sorts of unlikely places, including pavements. It's relatively easy to remove when small, so it's best dealt with quickly before it has a chance to develop strong roots.



## Ash

The easiest way to identify an ash tree sapling is by its leaves, each one made up of 9-13 smooth or finely toothed leaflets. While the ash is a tree beloved by many, it can spread quite freely, and shouldn't be allowed to grow on the pavement in case it starts to cause damage.



## Sycamore

Sycamore, like ash, can spread easily due to being extremely adaptable, and will often be seen growing from cracks in the pavement. Look out for their easily recognisable leaves which have five lobes and are attached to distinctive reddish stalks.



## Cotoneaster

A shrub that's recognisable by its profusion of white flowers in the summer turning to red berries in the autumn, cotoneaster's roots are aggressive and the plants can spread easily. Some cotoneasters are listed in Schedule 9 of the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, so they shouldn't be allowed to spread beyond gardens.



The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 exists for the protection and conservation of wildlife and plants. Schedule 9 includes a list of plants that it is illegal to plant or otherwise cause to grow in the wild to prevent them from out-competing native plants. It includes several cotoneasters, as well as a few other plants that can occasionally be seen growing on Lambeth's pavements, such as this manual's cover star, the three-cornered garlic.

Also listed in Schedule 9 is the notorious Japanese Knotweed...

## Japanese Knotweed

Extremely invasive, fast-spreading and very difficult to get rid of, Japanese Knotweed should be treated with extreme caution. Thankfully it's rare to see it growing on pavements in Lambeth as it tends not to spread from gardens. If you do happen to spot some growing on the pavement or on any other public land such as a park or estate, you should let us know immediately. Please don't try to remove it yourself as you might unwittingly cause it to spread. The only effective treatment is the injection of herbicides directly into the stems, and it can take three years to fully eradicate an infestation.

Japanese Knotweed is easy to recognise. Asparagus-like shoots emerge in the Spring, turning to thick, bamboo-like stems with bright green shovel-shaped leaves. In late summer it sports dense spike-shaped clusters of creamy white flowers.





## Removing unwanted pavement plants

**Having identified which plants need to be removed, we'll now look at how to remove them.**

The most effective way to remove unwanted plants is very carefully, by hand. By removing the whole plant including the roots, the plant won't be able to regrow.

- **Wait for rain;** if the soil the plant is growing in is moist, it'll make it easier to pull the roots out with the rest of the plant. Roots will be much more stubborn when the ground is dry.
- **Grab the plant** as close as possible to the pavement to avoid breaking the stem.
- **Slowly pull,** using a wiggling movement to gently loosen the roots from the surrounding soil
- **Use a thin screwdriver** to help loosen roots if they don't come away freely
- **Gently shake the plant** to remove any loose soil from the roots
- **Plug any hole** that's left after the plant has been pulled out with the loosened soil

It might not be possible to remove all plants this way. Some might break at the stem, leaving a section that's too short to grab, preventing the roots from being removed. Other plants might have become too well-established, with roots that refuse to come out. In cases like these it's probably best to cut the stem as close as possible to the ground, although the plant will almost certainly grow back.

Any plants that you remove should be put in your green waste bag. The bag can be put next to your bins on collection day. If you don't have a bag or it goes missing, email [neighbourhoodchampions@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodchampions@lambeth.gov.uk) and we'll deliver a replacement.

**Part Two**



**Lambeth's  
pavement plants**

## Lambeth's pavement plants

In this final section we'll look at some of Lambeth's many species of pavement plants.

You can expect to find some of these either on your own street's pavements or not very far away. Others you might have to search a bit harder for.

### Herb Robert

A very common plant that flowers throughout spring, summer and autumn



### Yellow Corydalis

Originally from alpine foothills of southern Europe, Yellow Corydalis has escaped from gardens to become a ubiquitous sight on pavements around Lambeth.





### Green Alkanet

Another escapee from Southern Europe, green alkanet is a member of the forget-me-not family. Its bright blue flowers are seen regularly on pavements.



### Trailing Bellflower

A very pretty plant which has edible flowers and leaves, although as they grow on the pavement in places where dogs might have relieved themselves, one should proceed with extreme caution (unlike this bee!).



### **Perennial Wall Rocket**

This is the wild cousin of the rocket we buy or grow for salads. It's also edible, but beware in case it's previously been used as a dog's lavatory.



### **Hawkweed Oxtongue**

A member of the daisy family, hawkweed oxtongue can be annual, biennial or perennial. Like many other wild plants, it has a fantastic name.



### Rue-leaved saxifrage

Its wonderful name comes from the latin word for 'stonebreaker'. Being a very small plant, however, it's unlikely to cause very much damage.



### Hare's tail

An attractive grass which escapes from gardens; native to southern Europe. Also known as bunny grass, it can grow in relatively dry conditions.



### Shaggy soldier

Another member of the daisy family, shaggy soldier is native to Mexico, but has been seen near Herne Hill Station.



### Fern grass

A quirky little grass which is often overlooked due to its rather diminutive stature. However, it's on the rise in South London, so look out for it.



## Jersey Cudweed

Jersey cudweed is listed as critically endangered\*; despite this, it's cropping up more and more in London, including Lambeth.



We've already mentioned Schedule 9 of The Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, which lists plants that it's illegal to deliberately cause to grow in the wild. Schedule 8, conversely, lists plants that it's an offence to deliberately pick, uproot or destroy.

## Identifying pavement plants

**Despite the seemingly inhospitable nature of our urban environment, it's possible to find upwards of 50 different plants in the space of a single street.** It's natural to want to know what they all are, so in this section we'll look very briefly at the basics of plant identification.

There are a number of plant identification apps available for smartphones which allow the user to upload photos of plants and then suggest one or more species. They're a useful starting point, but it's also essential to take into account a few basic principles, as none of these apps are 100 per cent reliable.

- Look out for distinctive characteristics on stems
- Note the shape and size of leaves
- Check how leaves are arranged on stems
- Note presence and description of fruits or flowers (number of petals etc.)
- Look for hairs, barbs or thorns
- Note the smell – some plants' leaves have a distinctive smell when rubbed between fingers

When using an app, try and upload photos that clearly show different features, such as the shapes of leaves, and of course any flowers. Then you can cross reference the app's suggestions with your observations based on the bulleted list above to make a reasonable guess as to the identity of the plant you're looking at.

The Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland 's website is a great resource for anyone interested in botany and plant identification. For a wide range of helpful pointers including book recommendations, social media groups and web-based resources, visit [bsbi.org/get-involved](https://www.bsbi.org/get-involved).

## Acknowledgements

**We'd like to thank the following people, without whose enthusiasm, guidance and knowledge this manual, and indeed, the project itself, would not have been possible.**

**Incredible Edible Lambeth** whose passion and persuasiveness were a driving force behind the introduction of the Community Weeding Scheme.

**Dr Amanda Tuke**, whose knowledge of South London's richly varied pavement plants made this manual something that we hope its recipients will find useful and interesting. Amanda also supplied the plant photographs on pages 26-28.

**Caroline Pankhurst** of the South London Botanical Institute, who got behind the project and introduced us to Dr Tuke.

**List of plants in main illustrations:****Front page:** Three-cornered garlic**Page 2:** Wood forget-me-not**Page 4:** Viper's bugloss**Page 6:** Welsh poppy**Page 14:** Buddleia**Page 20:** Guernsey fleabane**Page 22:** Love-in-a-mist (nigella)**Back page:** Nipplewort





**Contact:** [neighbourhoodchampions@lambeth.gov.uk](mailto:neighbourhoodchampions@lambeth.gov.uk)

<b>Item No.</b> 13	<b>Classification:</b> Open	<b>Date:</b> 20 September 2023	<b>Meeting Name:</b> Environment and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission
<b>Report title:</b>		Cover report for the Environment and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2023-24	
<b>Ward(s) or groups affected:</b>		N/a	
<b>From:</b>		Project Manager, scrutiny.	

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Environment and Community Engagement 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**

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

**APPENDICES**

<b>No.</b>	<b>Title</b>
	Work Programme 2023-24 Appendix A Appendix B

**AUDIT TRAIL**

<b>Lead Officer</b>	Everton Roberts, Head of Scrutiny	
<b>Report Author</b>	Julie Timbrell, Project Manager, Scrutiny.	
<b>Version</b>	Final	
<b>Dated</b>	15 September 2023	
<b>Key Decision?</b>	No	
<b>CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER</b>		
<b>Officer Title</b>	<b>Comments Sought</b>	<b>Comments Included</b>
Director of Law and Governance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	No	No
<b>Date final report sent to Scrutiny Team</b>	15 September 2023	

## 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**
- Joint review with the Environment and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission: Environmental Health with reference to Streets for People and Air Quality ( **working title and scope in development**)
  
- 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"> <li>• Work programme - scrutiny review topics and agenda items.</li> <li>• Sustainable Freight scrutiny review – rolled over from previous year.</li> <li>• SNAP and tree management officer report</li> </ul>
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><b><i>Reducing pesticide and herbicide</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lambeth Council officer               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <a href="https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/streets-roads-transport/community-weeding-scheme">https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/streets-roads-transport/community-weeding-scheme</a></li> <li>○ <a href="https://issuu.com/pan-uk/docs/greener_cities_-_a_guide_to_our_pavement_plants">https://issuu.com/pan-uk/docs/greener_cities_-_a_guide_to_our_pavement_plants</a> See page 18 for a discussion of Lambeth's program.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Pesticide Action Network</li> </ul>

		<p><b>Air Quality particulates tyre and brake</b>  Dr Ian Mudway - Imperial  Sustainable Tyre manufacturer ENSO Ltd</p> <p><b>Streets for Peoples</b>  Presentation by Cabinet lead and officer</p> <p><b>Southwark Land Commission</b>  Presentation by vice chair Cllr James McAsh based on report to cabinet</p> <p><b>Consider / note Cabinet responses scrutiny reviews conducted in 22/23 – due 12 September :</b></p> <p>i)Climate Finance  ii) Resident Participation Framework</p>
Meeting 3	Monday 27 November 2023	<p><b>Dropped kerbs: loss of front gardens and public space</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report by Highways incorporating planning and legal advice</li> <li>• Royal Horticultural Society (tbc)</li> <li>• Pavement channel providers</li> <li>• Ealing Council work (tbc)</li> </ul> <p><b>Sustainable Freight :</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TfL with particular reference to the London Freight Lab</li> <li>• Officers: Supporting nests and establishing gaps and available information on freight movement through the borough (tbc) including update on possible planning application for a cargo hub / distribution centre at Old Kent Road.</li> <li>• Port of London Authority – increasing river freight and Bankside project</li> </ul>

		<p><b><i>Cabinet lead member interviews ( tbc by commission and cabinet lead )</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cllr Rose</li> <li>• Cllr Dennis</li> </ul>
Meeting 4	Monday 19 February 2024 – will move to January	<p>Officers update on meeting the requirements of the Environment Act including Biodiversity Net Gain, Local nature recovery and monitoring and reporting requirements (tbc)</p> <p>Officer update on pesticide strategy ( to be discussed) with reference to plans to review the current approach to the use of pesticides in the public realm to better protect residents, wildlife and promote biodiversity</p> <p>Officer presentation and input to roundtable on supporting community food growing, gardening and rewilding and in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community garden plan in development and</li> <li>• Community food growing initiative</li> </ul> <p>Roundtable by community groups ( tbc)</p> <p>Agree scrutiny report on Sustainable Freight</p>
Meeting 5	Tuesday 30 April 2024	<p>Topic: Waste, recycling, reducing fly-tipping and street cleaning : how can we use our resources better?</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 related issues of pavement channels for EV charging, dropped kerbs and paved front gardens).

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 mono-cultures 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

Is the Southwark Nature Action Plan sufficient to address biodiversity or is another strategy warranted.

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?

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](#)

Southwark Nature Action Volunteers

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](https://issuu.com/pan-uk/docs/greener_cities_-_a_guide_to_our_pavement_plants)

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

**Evidence that loss of front gardens is environmentally damaging, destroying corridors of biodiversity.** See work the Royal Horticultural Society has done work on ([Geosynthetics - RHS Publishes Report - Why Greening Grey Britain is important?](#))

**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, Movement Plan, 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 Nests 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

**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

**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>

**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

# Environment and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission

**MUNICIPAL YEAR 2023-24**

## **AGENDA DISTRIBUTION LIST (OPEN)**

**NOTE:** Original held by Scrutiny Team; all amendments/queries to Julie Timbrell Tel: 020 7525 0514

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		Julie Timbrell, Scrutiny Team SPARES <b>External</b>	10
<b>Electronic Copy</b>  <b>Members</b>  <u>Councillors:</u>  Councillor Margy Newens (Chair) Councillor Graham Neale (Vice-Chair) Councillor Cassandra Brown Councillor Youcef Hassaine Councillor Leo Pollak Councillor Reggie Popoola Councillor David Watson  <u>Coopted member:</u>    <b>Reserves Members</b>  Councillor John Batteson Councillor Rachel Bentley Councillor Kimberly McIntosh Councillor Natasha Ennin Councillor Gavin Edwards Councillor Renata Hamvas Councillor Adam Hood			<b>Total: 10</b>  <b>Dated: September 2023</b>