

SWOT Analysis

BIODIVERSITY IN SOUTHWARK

strengths

'Southwark, the home of nature conservation in London!'

5 nature reserves
 130 open spaces
 60 SINCs
 At least 12 staff in 4-8 organisations working on biodiversity across the borough. Continuity.
 Wide volunteer base (1000 people plus?)
 4 staffed reserves
 Lots of public events
 A biodiversity officer in the Council
 Protected status for most sites
 GIGL, individual knowledge,
 LWT hub
 Gold award Southwark in Bloom
 Great North Wood, Thames, Secondary woodland, created sites, business partnerships,
 Community – local groups, people's passions, expertise, history, continuity.
 Species – lionsmane fungus, stag beetle, peregrine, corky fruited wd, long eared and Leislars
 bats, dragonfly surveys
 Core grants from LBS to 7 groups covering the borough – enabling further funding to be
 brought in (£500K match from TRUE, BOST, LWT alone)

Wildlife gardening
 CGS!
 Innovative projects
 Good record with funders

weaknesses

Fragmenting of effort due to large number of groups, some tasks missed, no one stop shop,
 Poor marketing and communication (signs, websites, etc),
 Cashflow to maintain existing projects
 Low capacity in personnel to deliver new projects
 Time for fundraising for new projects
 Need for long leases to get lottery funds, problems in negotiating these – esp TRUE sites
 Poor perception of some small sites – dogs etc.
 Poor reputation among some of nature conservation movement
 Pressures of reporting – eg GIGL write ups, funders reports
 Less engagement in process from mid-Southwark at present.
 Weak links at present between BAP group and SSEP.
 Sometimes in meetings local agenda and immediate pressures take over from the strategic
 agenda.
 We missed the International Year of Biodiversity!

opportunities

New aerial photography available – eg green roof survey
 Invertebrate survey of Burgess Park needed
 Bat survey needed of movements of mobile species across borough, inc river corridor
 Huma Pearce's bat survey of green roofs
 Partnership fundraising opportunities
 Food Growing movement providing knock on benefits for biodiversity
 New technology – downloadable activities, tweets, Iphone applications
 Increasing recognition of biodiversity in core documents, eg SPDs.
 Developers looking for opportunities to make improvements – read BAP.
 Ameliorating climate change – Sustainable Urban Drainage, Urban Heat Effect = soft
 planting, green walls, street trees.
 New volunteer forces – Work Activity Scheme
 Large amount of corporate team challenges due to proximity of big businesses
 New Executive Member for Environment, and new political structure in Southwark

threats

Invasive species – eg parakeets dislodging bats from roosts. japanese knotweed
 General misuse of open spaces,– dogs, Vandalism, dumping,
 Core groups' insecurity over funding - radical change to biodiversity conservation if cuts are
 extreme.
 Dwindling morale if radical change above.
 Time of political flux
 Climate change and globalisation – threats from eg new tree diseases
 Changes in national funding for volunteering projects
 Recession – probable future decline in repair and maintenance budgets
 Recession – probable future increase in general misuse
 While most sites are now protected in status, they are threatened by strategic over-riding
 projects (eg Thames sewage works), or lack of maintenance.