

**Wandsworth Town’s Blue and Green Corridors**  
**Connecting People to Nature**



## Why Blue and Green Corridors are important for Cities and Urban Areas

Blue corridors follow water courses and green corridors follow areas of grass, woodland, domestic gardens, parks and roadside verges. The term corridor is used as these fragmented habitats can be connected by strips of land allowing wildlife to move between areas in search of food and for the breeding season.

“A water course is an aquatic ecosystem in its own right, supporting communities of plants, fish (vertebrates), invertebrates (insects), animals and micro-organisms. The flow of water shapes the riverbed, riverbank and during times of flood it can shape the external environment. Nutrients and sediments within the water determine the type of organisms which can live in the water course”. (source: <https://riversarelife.com> and <https://www.vedantu.com>)

The blue and green corridors provide access to pleasant areas to walk for people thus improving mental health (<https://mentalhealth.org>) and physical wellbeing (e.g. walking, running and cycling). In addition, corridors can mitigate the effects of climate change by providing a buffer in times of flood and contain trees which can store carbon, produce oxygen and provide shade during heatwaves. The silver birch, London plane tree, oak and horse chestnut trees can store 22 kg of carbon a year (source: <https://www.cpre.org.uk> ).

### The Blue Corridor in Wandsworth Town - Start of the Walk

#### **Wandsworth Town Railway Station**

Come out of Wandsworth Town Railway Station and turn right to go down past the shops and the rain garden pictured below, which is in Old York Road. Be careful of bicycles which can also come up behind you!



**Old York Road Shops and Rain Garden**

#### **Rain Gardens**

The instance of flash flooding is increasing. During the summer of 2004 there were 3 heatwaves and 4 heatwaves in 2025. The summer of 2022 saw the highest recorded temperature in England at 40.3°C, which prompted the first ever Level 4 Heat-Health Alert (HHA) and Red National Severe Weather Warning Service (NSWWS) Extreme Heat warnings to be issued. In addition, 2022 had the highest number of days on which an HHA was issued since the alerting system was introduced in 2004. Heatwaves can end in downpours of rain or thunderstorms as the warm

air rises and condenses with colder air in the atmosphere resulting in flash flooding. The rain garden in Old York Road absorbs some of the water and extra drains have also been provided to take the storm water away via the new Thames Tideway Tunnel or London super sewer to stop pollution entering the River Thames. Wandsworth rain gardens are part of the parklets programme, which are green interventions (e.g. SuDS (sustainable drainage systems) and urban greening) to reduce environmental risks. As part of this work, Wandsworth Borough Council has mapped where the greatest risks are in the boroughs (accounting for exposure to climate-related hazards and social vulnerabilities) to determine where the parklets will produce the biggest benefits. The parklets will be rolled out from winter 2025 onwards. To create a sustainable water management system resilient to flooding and drought, decrease the urban heat island effect, reduce air pollution, create more space for nature, and thus increase access for more residents.

Continue walking along the right hand side of the road crossing Morrie Road carefully and continue straight on. At the Wandsworth Town one way system crossover using the two pedestrian crossings, so you remain on the right hand side of the road. Continue straight ahead and you will find yourself on the River Wandle Road bridge pictured below.



**View from the River Wandle Road Bridge**

At the end of the road bridge are two London plane trees and a weeping willow followed by a flight of steps. Carefully go down the steps onto another pavement. On your left you will see a section of cobbles (pictured below) which are believed to be from around the late 18<sup>th</sup> century to early Victorian era to help with the transport to and from the paper mills on The Wandle.



**The Causeway Cobbles**

Turn right and keep the river on your right – please be aware of vehicles coming up behind you as this is a vehicular access road.

After going under a London yellow brick railway bridge you will emerge from an alleyway onto another river bridge. Please be careful of cyclists as this is a shared cycle way. The yellow London stock bricks were used in the construction of buildings and bridges during the Victorian period. They were made from clay found in the Thames Estuary and surrounding areas, with chalk being mixed in the clay with ash and clinker from London's fire grates to produce a yellow colour (source: Wikipedia). On the rough ground at the end of the alleyway, you will find wildflowers such as red valerian, field mustard, pink mallow and yellow ragwort. Yellow ragwort is the primary food source for the cinnabar moth caterpillar.

### Start of the Blue Corridor Section

From the river bridge you can watch The Wandle, an internationally rare chalk river join the River Thames. On the bridge is a blue plaque and the acknowledged starting point of the Wandle Trail a blue corridor of 12.5 miles ending in Croydon. <https://www.merton.gov.uk/leisure-recreation-and-culture/local-attractions/the-wandle-trail> You are also standing on the Thames Path and the Shakespeare Way.



### **The River Wandle Entering the River Thames**

On your left hand side, you will see a spur of land known as the spit, jutting into the river which is accessible by foot. This spur of land is surrounded by wild hops, brambles, buddleia and Himalayan Balsam and contains a mix of ash, hawthorn, alder and willow trees. There is a patch of purple marsh wound wort in July. However, this spit also functions as wetland terraces as the post on the photo below shows. The river terraces include plants such as reeds, rushes, sedge and irises and is an important wildlife haven.



### **Wetland Terrace Notice with Wild Hops**

Still on the river bridge turn your back to the River Thames and return down the same alleyway back towards the centre of Wandsworth Town.

On your left hand side, you will see a metal structure with a bell please see the photo below. The bell used to ring at high tide.



On your right hand side is another section of the River Wandle which is tidal. At low tide you will see grey wagtails working along the sandy bank as the river deposits sediment at this point. There are also cormorants catching fish, greylag geese, Eurasian coots and heron. This area is an important breeding ground not only for the aquatic birds but also for the town's wild birds which nest in the alder and willow trees along the river.



**Habitat for Aquatic birds and Town Birds**

Return back up the steps to the one way system and turn left over the river bridge again to the first set of pedestrian traffic lights. There is a metal sign pointing to the town centre and King George's Park – please see the photo below.



**Metal Sign Pointing to the town centre and King George's Park at the Pedestrian Crossing**

Once you have crossed the first pedestrian crossing turn into the new flats development at Chivers Passage please see the photo below.



**The entrance to Chivers Passage, Wandsworth Town**

Continue walking straight ahead, the path will dog leg, and you will see railings in front of you as you pick up the River Wandle again.

The developers of this area have provided a helpful noticeboard of all the mills and industry along the River Wandle in Wandsworth Town. Please see the photo on the next page.



### **Berkeley's Developers Noticeboard of the Mills and Industries along the River Wandle and Wandsworth Town**

Ahead you will see a pedestrian bridge over the River Wandle opposite the Southside Shopping Mall, walk over the pedestrian bridge and this will bring you to a pedestrian crossing to the shopping mall.



**Pedestrian Bridge Over the River Wandle**

Crossover the pedestrian crossing walking towards the entrance of the shopping mall but instead go down the steps to the right into Buckhold Road. Continue down the road as this will take you to the entrance to King George's Park. You will see a section of rotating steel security on top of a wall and the shopping mall multi-storey car park on the corner of Neville Gill Close. Cross the road at Neville Gill Close and enter King George's Park.

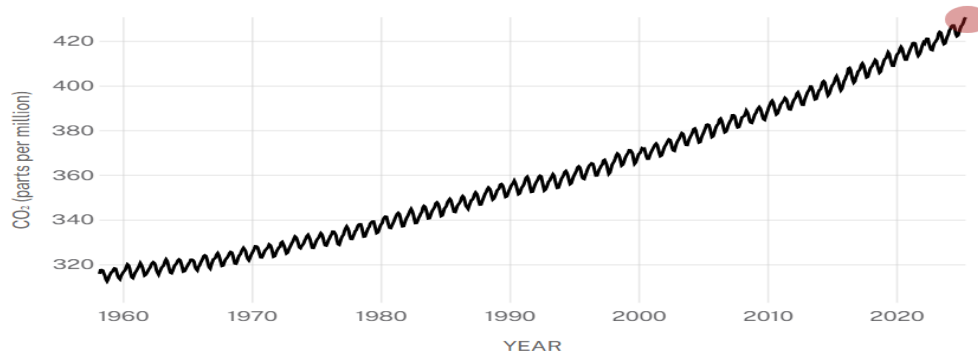


**Entrance to King George's Park off Neville Gill Close**

Parks are the green lungs of London as trees photosynthesise turning carbon dioxide into oxygen. They provide much shade during hot summers as the planet warms up due to climate change. Greenhouse gases, like carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) and methane, trap heat in the Earth's atmosphere. The concentration of CO<sub>2</sub> in the air has reached more than 430 parts per million by volume (ppm), compared to about 280ppm in 1750 (at the start of the Industrial Revolution and burning fossil fuels).

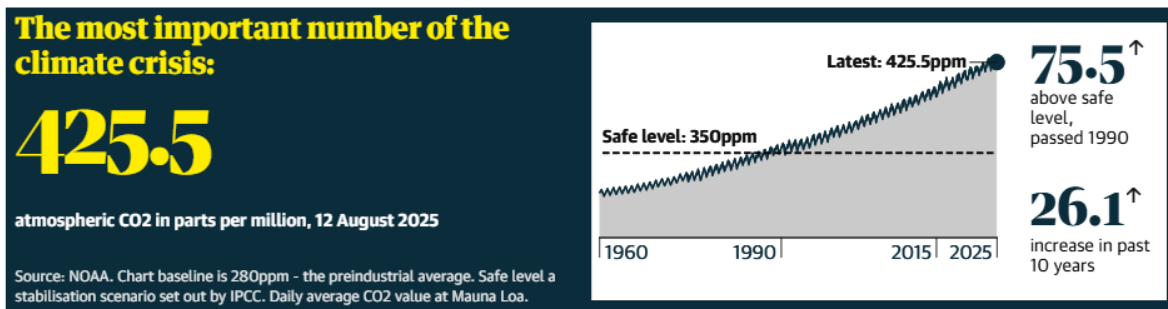
#### **DIRECT MEASUREMENTS: 1958-PRESENT**

Data source: NOAA, measured at the Mauna Loa Observatory



Source of graph: [Carbon Dioxide | Vital Signs – Climate Change: Vital Signs of the Planet](#)

The urban environment generates 40% of all the annual carbon dioxide emissions. (Source: GOV.UK)

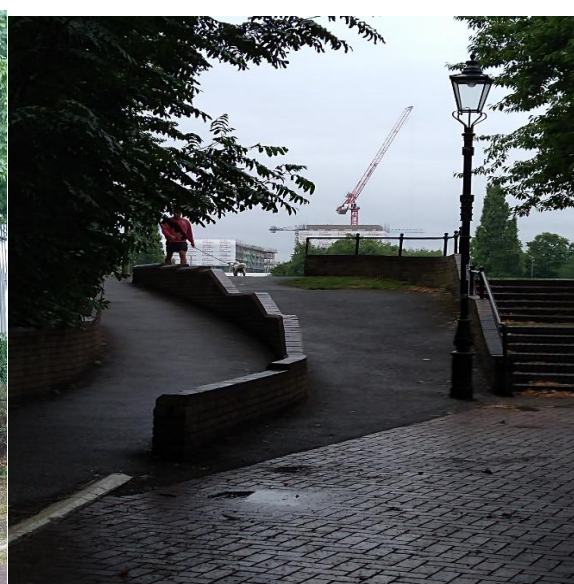
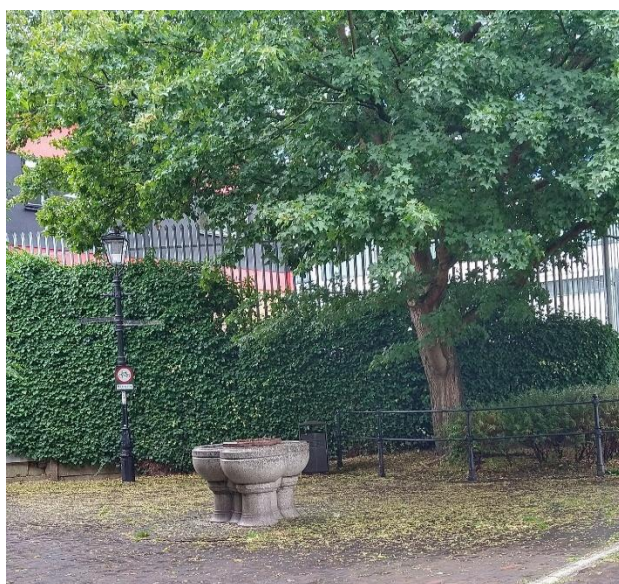


For more information on the greenhouse effect please see the following weblink [Greenhouse gases and climate change - Humans and the environment - KS3 Biology - BBC Bitesize](#)



### Central Path Through King George's Park Behind the Noticeboard

Walk straight ahead down the middle path through the park past the pond on your left, the bowling green and wooden hut, after the garden with brick pergolas and seating, turn left and then right so you have the large greenspace on your right. Continue straight ahead past the water fountain pictured below and up a slope and turn left. You will pass small hornbeam trees, two young bean trees on your right. Can you spot the wingnut tree which has long strings of wingnuts in Summer and Autumn. This tree was introduced into Britain from Iran in 1782 (source: [www.treeguideuk](http://www.treeguideuk)).



As you walk on the left hand side of this area of greenspace, please make sure you are not walking in the cycleway. The River Wandle will re-appear beside you behind railings. Wildlife spotted further along this section of the River Wandle and further on include egrets, water voles, bats, dragonflies and damselflies etc. The river fish are brown trout, chub, dace, roach, gudgeon, perch and carp.

Carefully cross Kimber Road at the pedestrian crossing please see the photo below and continue following the river.



The thick green undergrowth between the river and the railings provides important food sources and nesting sites for birds and mammals. Continue following the Wandle until you reach a crossing point of paths please see the photo below. This is where the railings end with a sign for Foster Way. Foster Way commemorates Edward Foster who was awarded the Victoria Cross for capturing an enemy machine gun position at Villers-Plouich, France in World War 1. After the war he returned to his job as a dustman for Wandsworth Council later he was promoted to Dusting Inspector.



### **Turn Left at Fosters Way**

When you reach the end of the railings turn left and then right along a path between the river and the flats – taking time to look over the bridge at the Wandle. Here you can see how shallow the

River Wandle is and the long green stems of watercress foot (blooms with white flowers) which is usually the sign of a healthy river.



### **Shallow River Wandle with Watercress Foot Either side**

At the end of the path between the river and the flats you will enter Riverdale Road please be careful of any cars manoeuvring. You will see railings and the river on your left at the end you will see the former flock mill and the old mill race. The flock mill pictured below processed old clothes, rags, and carpet pieces to produce flock a fluffy material to put in upholstery for chairs.



Carefully walk out of Riverdale Road and turn left and walk up Strathville Road a pleasant road of Victorian villas and turn right into Penwith Road. The view of the Wandle from the bridge is the last time we see the Wandle. (If you want to follow the Wandle Trail it is the same route via Earlsfield Railway Bridge.) You will need to crossover to the other side of the Wandle river bridge. Turn left and cross Garrat Lane the A217 using the pedestrian crossing so you are on the left hand side of the pavement pictured below. Turn right to pass under Earlsfield Railway Bridge.



### **Start of the Green Corridor Section**

After walking under the railway bridge, turn left and you will see the signpost above. The green sign with a person walking shows you have also joined the Capital Ring route around London.

The Capital Ring path is a 78 mile circular walk around London divided into 15 sections. The following weblink takes you to the 5<sup>th</sup> section which is the Wandsworth section [Capital Ring Section 5 - Go Jauntly](#) Continue along the left hand side of Magdalen Road. You will go past Earlsfield Library and the start of the cemetery which also contains war graves. At this point there is an optional diversion to the café in Springfield Park which is London's largest park since the Olympics, opened on the 9<sup>th</sup> July 2025. The café is open 7 days a week 8am-5pm and serves vegetarian food. It will take you 10 minutes to walk to the café down Fieldview Road. There is a zebra crossing to safely crossover from Magdalen Road. At the end of Fieldview Road is a pedestrian island crossing which leads you straight into the park. Please see the photos below.



Continue ahead and you will see the park in front of you, at the junction of paths turn left and go past the public car park (there is a car parking charging system). You will see the café opposite you, please cross the estate road carefully.

Below is one of Springfield Park's wetland areas – the park is 32 acres of grassland, wetlands and ponds for biodiversity. “Biodiversity is essential for the processes that support all life on earth. Without a wide range of animals, plants and micro-organisms there would not be the healthy eco systems we rely on to provide us with air and food e.g. pollinators needed for crop production, plants and micro-organisms can be the source for medicine”. (source: [www.royalsociety.org](http://www.royalsociety.org) ).



**Springfield Park Wetland Area**

If you stop off at the café, go out of the café turn right and you will be facing the main road you crossed. Cross near the café into Openview Road to rejoin the walk for the green corridor section. At the end of Openview Road please cross Magdalen Road so you are on the same side as the cemetery.

Cemeteries have existed for centuries and allow wildlife to thrive in city areas. Earlsfield Cemetery was established in 1878 and consists of 34 acres. Continue along Magdalen Road and turn left at the mini roundabout into Heathfield Road.



### **Turning into Heathfield Road**

Continue walking so you pass Wandsworth Prison a national landmark since opening in 1851. Famous prisoners have included Oscar Wilde and Ronnie Biggs and there is a museum. Wandsworth Prison Museum is usually open for Wandle Fortnight. Outside open weekend events please contact by email: [wandsworthprisonmuseum@justice.gov.uk](mailto:wandsworthprisonmuseum@justice.gov.uk)



### **Wandsworth Prison**

After the railway bridge please cross over the road carefully and walk down to the pedestrian traffic lights on Windmill Road the B234 and cross the road. You will now see the entrance to Wandsworth Common in front of you. Please follow the path onto the common.



**Entrance to Wandsworth Common**

Wandsworth Common consists of grassland, woodland and ponds. There have been sightings of hedgehogs and bats in this precious grassland area. The loss of natural habitats results in domestic gardens being crucial for wildlife survival particularly sources of water, food and sites for reproduction and bringing up young. Additional feeding of wildlife during winter and providing water at times of drought are also essential for survival.

There are seats on this part of Wandsworth Common walking straight ahead you will see a bus stop on the far right. (Next to the bus stop is a subway which takes you under the road to another part of Wandsworth Common which as you can see has been fragmented by road and rail routes). For this walk continue straight ahead and then take a cut through path please see the photo below, which takes you onto Wandsworth Common Road West Side and cross the road with care.



**Path Leading to Wandsworth Common West Road**

There is a noisy, but short section of road ahead alongside the dual carriageway of the A214. Even on this road there are rare sections of hedging which are recognised ecological environments in their own right. At the end of Wandsworth Common West you will need to

cross two sets of traffic lights at the road junction on your right. Then you will be able to cross the main road safely at a third set of pedestrian traffic lights on the road bridge. Turn left and cross an access road carefully, you will come to the entrance of the Huguenot cemetery pictured below, which is the start of another green corridor.



**Street Entrance and Gated Entrance to the Huguenot Cemetery**

When you leave the Huguenot Cemetery turn left and along the pavement to an area with trees. At the traffic lights on your right carefully cross the road. Turn right, pass by Alma Road and another road and go down Birdhurst Road which is a vital green corridor with an enclosed bean tree.



**Entrance to Birdhurst Road Green Corridor – Can you Spot the Bean Tree**

Green corridors along with parks are vital areas of habitat. Enable Leisure and Culture are contracted by Wandsworth Council to maintain and improve the parks and greenspace. In 2025 Enable published the results of the garden survey completed by 750 Wandsworth Town residents to identify wildlife present, the quality and connectivity of garden habitats for the development of a new Biodiversity Action Plan. The interactive maps of stag beetles, bats,

starlings, and hedgehogs for example can be viewed via the following weblink: [On your street: What can you find in your garden? The results are in! : Enable Leisure and Culture](#)

Continue on the right hand side of the pavement and then turn right into Podmore Road. At the end of Podmore Road you will see the railway embankment and a railway bridge. The green strips along the railway tracks are also green corridors and provide an extensive network of a variety of habitats.



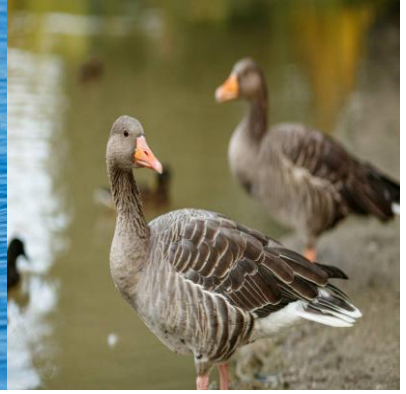
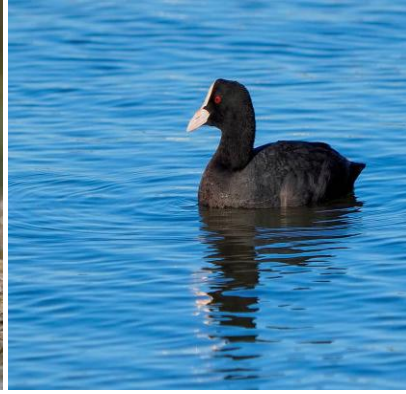
#### **Railway Embankment and Pedestrian Path Under the Railway Bridge in Podmore Road**

Walk under the railway bridge which is a pedestrian area, and you will be in Bramford Gardens turn left through the gardens and on the right, you will see Transition Town Wandsworth's Community Garden on the left hand side which you are welcome to visit. Promoting sustainability and combating climate change with drought and frost tolerant planting. There are other community gardens on Wandsworth housing estates too. This is the end of the walk please return to Wandsworth Town Railway Station under the railway bridge to your left.



#### **Transition Town Wandsworth Community Garden**

**Quiz – Wildlife Along the Blue and Green Corridors**



**Match to the above Greylag Goose, Cormorant, Eurasian Coot, Egret, Canada Goose, Grey Wagtail, Valerian, Wingnut Flower, Field Mustard, Wild Mallow, Woundwort, Wild Carrot.**

Notes