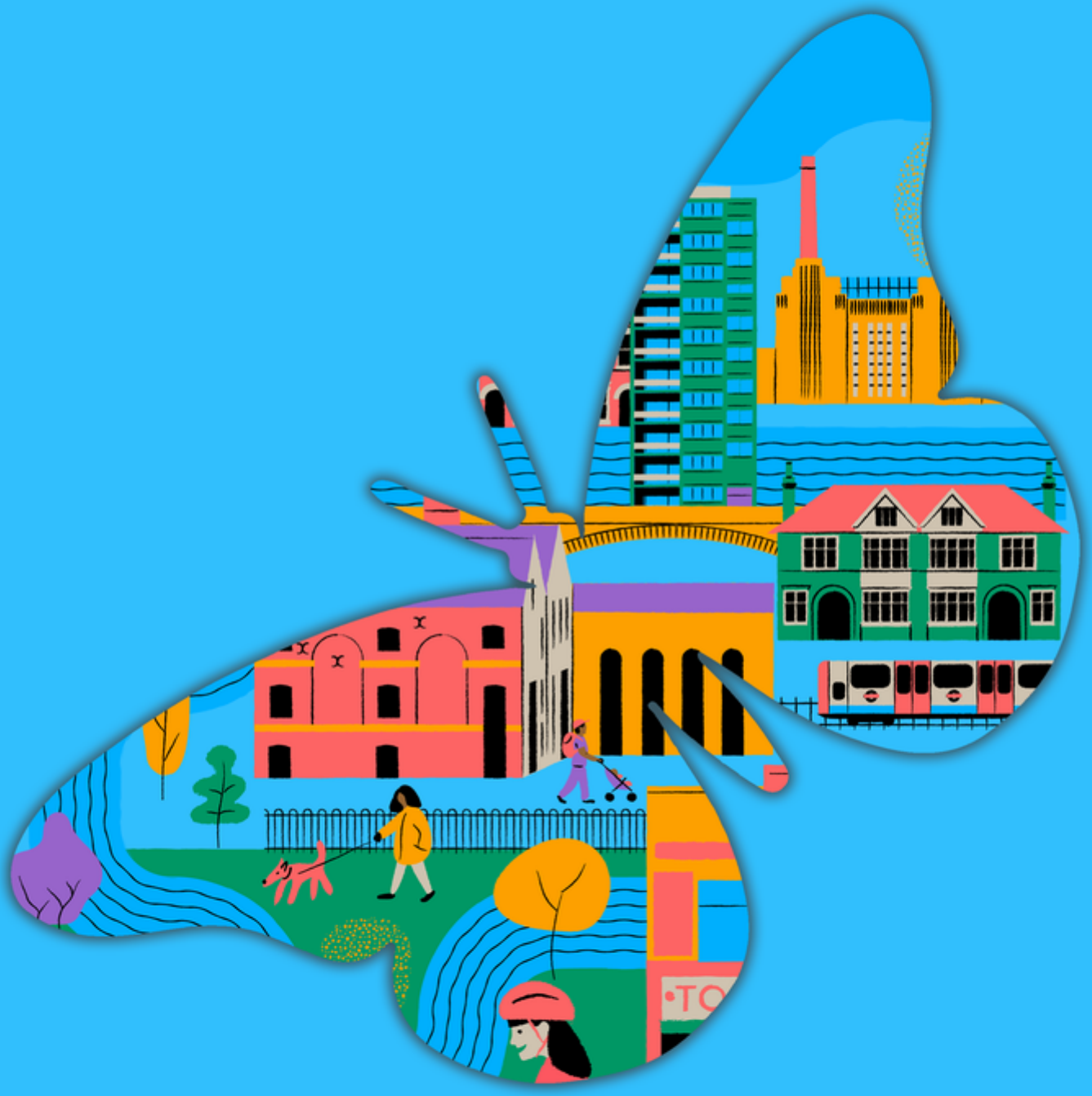
Wandsworth Local Plan

Biodiversity

Supplementary Planning Document

Draft for Consultation



Wandsworth

Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document

1 Introduction

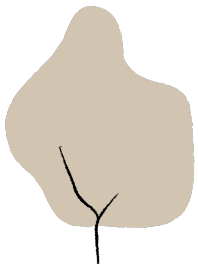
Purpose of the Biodiversity SPD

1.1 The Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) sets out the Council's requirements and guidance in relation to addressing biodiversity through development. The purpose of this document is to provide additional advice to those seeking planning permission for a proposal, to explain what you need to do, what should be addressed, what needs to be provided and when.

1.2 The SPD is not itself part of the local development plan but is a local development document which guides the Council's decision making on planning applications. The SPD supports the implementation of the policies of the Wandsworth Local Plan (2023-2038) and is a material consideration in determining planning applications.

1.3 This document has been produced in line with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement and with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012(as amended).

1.4 This SPD sets out detail about important habitats and species in the borough and how applicants can protect and enhance the borough's biodiversity throughout the development process. While some guidance regarding Biodiversity Net Gain is provided, more information is available on the Council's web pages which will be kept up-to-date.



What is the Biodiversity SPD and why is it important?

1.5 Biodiversity, or biological diversity, refers to the variety of life on Earth in all its forms, including plants, animals, and fungi. It encompasses the living organisms, the genetic differences among them, and the communities in which they exist.

1.6 Biodiversity is essential for the processes that support all life, including humans. It provides benefits to us all through the production of air, food, water, timber, medicines, and the regulation of floods. Spending time in nature is also increasingly understood to lead to improvements in people's physical and mental health. Biodiversity, including the wider ecological and green infrastructure networks, plays a crucial role helping us to adapt to the effects of climate change.

1.7 Biodiversity also matters, in and of itself. Many people argue we have moral duty to protect the other species with which we share this planet and to maintain diversity and genetic variety.

1.8 Sustainable development is often defined as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (Brundtland Commission 1987). Biodiversity and sustainable development are therefore inextricably linked, as the wealth of species and habitats can be seen as an indicator of our environmental health and general well-being.

Legal Context

1.9 The Council, developers, landowners and others involved in the planning process have various legal duties in relation to biodiversity, whilst legislation also provides for specific protections for certain important habitats and species.

1.10 Key legislation relating to biodiversity includes:

- Environment Act 2021 Schedule 7A of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (inserted by the Environment Act 2021
- The Conservation (Natural Habitats etc) Regulations 2017 (as amended). Often referred to as the Habitat Regulations.
- The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended)
- The Protection of Badgers Act 1992.
- The Hedgerow Regulations 1997
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000
- National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949
- The Town and Country Planning (Tree Preservation) (England) Regulations 2012
- The Water Framework Directive 2000

1.11 The statutory framework relating to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is covered in detail on the government's website. The relevant primary legislation for the statutory framework for BNG is

principally set out under Schedule 7A (Biodiversity Gain in England) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This legislation was inserted into the 1990 Act by Schedule 14 of the Environment Act 2021, and was amended by the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. The Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Consequential Amendments) Regulations 2024 made consequential amendments to other parts of the 1990 Act.

1.12 Please see 7 'Appendix 1: Ecological Legislation' for more detailed information on ecological legislation.

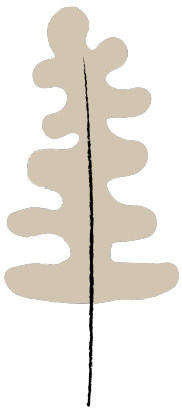
Policy Context

National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – December 2024

1.13 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans can provide for housing and other development in a sustainable manner and is a material consideration to be taken into account when planning applications are determined.

1.14 Section 15 'Conserving and enhancing the natural environment' states that 'planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment'. Paragraph 187 sets out how planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural environment. It explains this should be done by protecting and enhancing sites of biodiversity or geological value, minimising impact on and providing net gains for biodiversity including by establishing coherent ecological corridors and by incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs.



1.15 Paragraph 193 sets out how planning authorities should deal with biodiversity when considering planning applications. This includes application of the 'Mitigation Hierarchy'; development in relation to Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and irreplaceable habitats; support for development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity; and ensuring that '*opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.*'

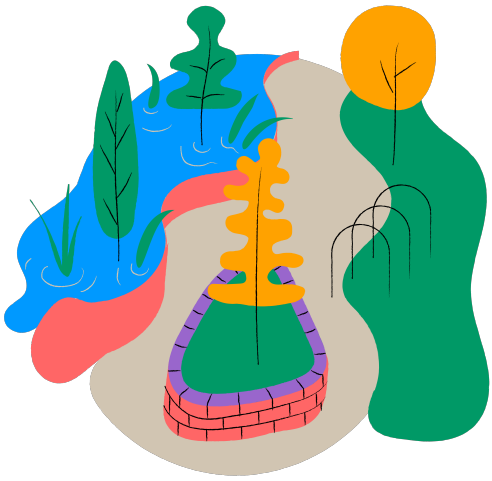
National Planning Policy Guidance (PPG)

1.16 The PPG provides further guidance to support the NPPF and its implementation. Improving biodiversity is a key element of the environmental objective to achieve sustainable development. Guidance on the 'Natural Environment' includes sections on planning for and enhancing biodiversity for planning authorities and applicants. There is also further guidance on BNG and when it is applied during the planning process.

Natural England Standing Advice

1.17 Natural England's guidance (standing advice), 'Protected species and development: advice for local planning authorities' provides details on how planning applications should be assessed when there are protected species on or near a development site. This includes further information on when surveys should be carried out and what habitats and protected species are likely to be found. This guide is to be used to assess if planning applications would cause harm to protected species and if permission should be granted. Natural England can object to planning applications that are likely to harm protected species and can provide further advice on protected species affected by development. Table 1 of the standing advice provides useful advice on where (habitats, buildings or land) protected species are likely to be present.

1.18 Advice on when wildlife licences are required can be found here.



Regional Policy

London Plan

1.19 The London Plan (2021) Policy G6 Biodiversity and Access to Nature seeks to protect Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), secure BNG and ensure development minimises impacts on biodiversity. It states the role of Local Authorities through Local Development Plans is to maximise opportunities to identify, protect and expand priority species and habitats.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

1.20 The Greater London Authority (GLA) is responsible for producing the LNRS for London as required under law by the Environment Act 2021. The LNRS and accompanying spatial habitat map is currently being produced in collaboration with all London Boroughs to ensure London's ecological network is more joined up. The LNRS can inform plan making and is an evidence base which contains information that may be a 'material consideration' in the planning system, especially where development plan documents for an area pre-date Local Nature Recovery Strategy publication.

London Biodiversity Action Plan

1.21 Species Action Plans and Biodiversity Action Plans were developed by the London Biodiversity Partnership and can be viewed here.

Local Policy

Wandsworth Local Plan

1.22 The Wandsworth Local Plan (2023) sets out the framework for future development in the borough and includes several policies that aim to preserve and enhance biodiversity:

- Local Plan Policy LP53 (Protection and Enhancement of Green and Blue Infrastructure (Strategic Policy)) establishes that the Council with protect and enhance the natural environment and in doing so connect and enrich biodiversity through habitat improvement and protection at all scales, including priority habitats.
- Local Plan Policy LP55 (Biodiversity) covers the policy requirements for considering biodiversity in development proposals and seeks to enhance priority habitats, species and protected sites.
- Local Plan Policy LP57 (Urban Greening Factor (UGF)) also considers the importance of biodiversity when applying the principles of UGF.
- Local Plan Policy LP58 (River Corridors) protects the biodiversity value of the Borough's blue infrastructure assets and seeks to ensure new development maximise biodiversity benefits.

1.23 Section 8 'Appendix 2: Local Plan policies relevant to Biodiversity' details the plan policies relating to biodiversity in full.

Protected Sites

1.24 Several sites of significance to biodiversity have been identified within and bordering the borough, all of which have additional protection ranging from international statutory designations to local non-statutory designations.

Designations in or adjacent to the borough		Level
Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)	• Wimbledon Common • Richmond Park*	European (In the UK site information is maintained by the JNCC)
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs)	• Wimbledon Common • Richmond Park* • Barn Elms Wetland Centre*	National (designated by Natural England)
National Nature Reserve (NNRs)	• Richmond Park*	National (Managed by Natural England or organisations approved by Natural England)
Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)	• Battersea Park Nature Areas	Regional (Natural England & Local Authority or other body)
Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs)		Regional (see London Plan Policy G6)
	• River Thames and its tidal tributaries • Wimbledon Common and Putney Heath • Battersea Park • Tooting Common	Metropolitan Importance
	• Wandsworth Common • Putney Lower Common • University of Surrey, Roehampton • Earlsfield Railway Cutting • River Wandle • Beverley Brook • Battersea Power Station • Streatham Cemetery • Wimbledon Park	Borough Importance

Designations in or adjacent to the borough		Level
	• Roehampton Golf Course • St Nicholas Church Yard • Richard Evans Memorial Playfields and Stag Lane • Bank of England Sports Club Ground • Lambeth Cemetery • Wandsworth Cemetery • King George's Park • Clapham Common • Railside land not included within other sites • Putney Vale Cemetery • Wandsworth Park • York Gardens • Putney Old Burial Ground • Putney Park Lane and the Pleasance • Falcon Park & Shillington Street Open Space • Edgecombe Hall Estate • St Mary's Cemetery, Battersea Rise • Spencer Park	Local Importance

Table 1 Biodiversity related designations in or adjacent to the borough

* Denotes site outside the borough boundary
For a full list of sites, their locations and descriptions please see: [Sites with Designations/ Protection for Biodiversity in Wandsworth]

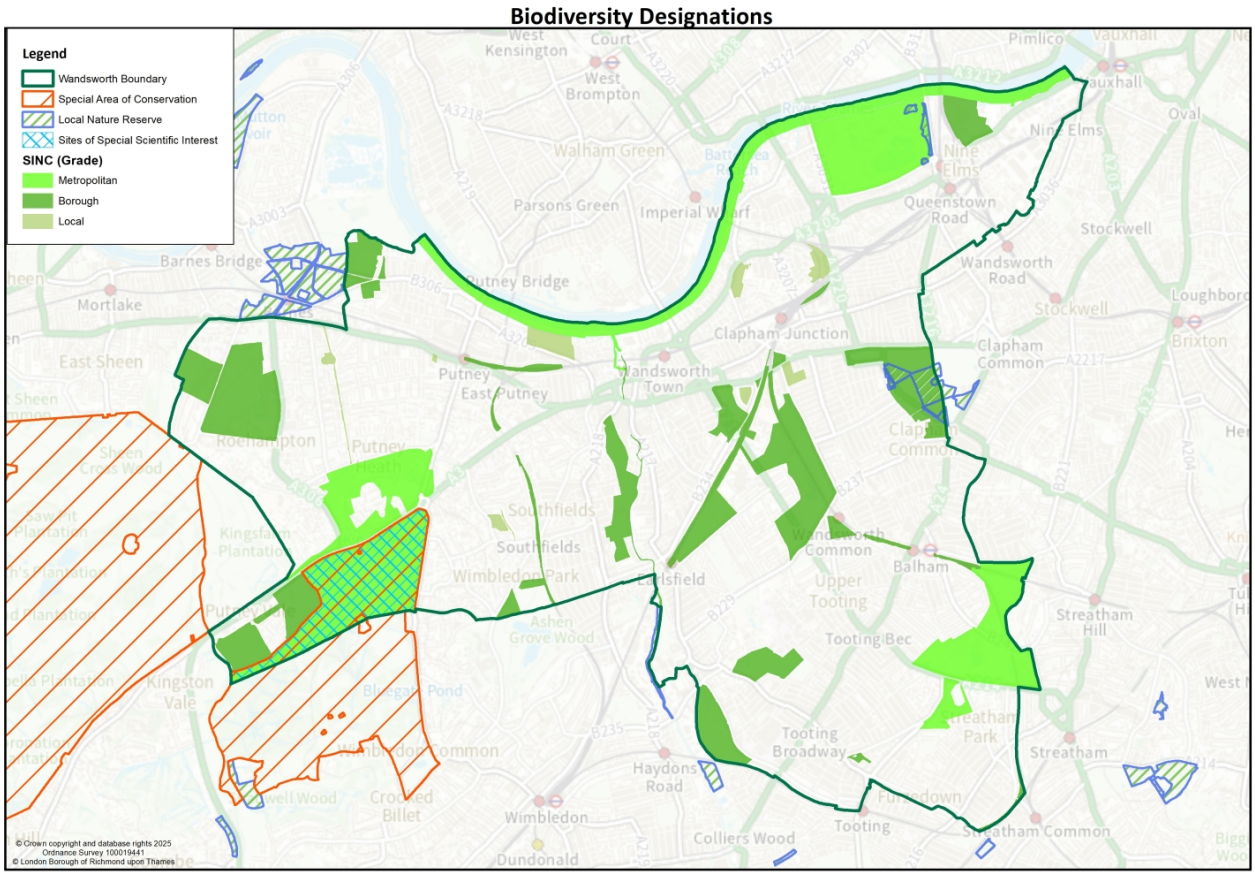


Figure 1 Biodiversity designations in Wandsworth Borough

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs)

1.25 The Council has produced a number of supplementary planning documents (SPDs) to provide additional information on how the Local Plan policies should be implemented.

1.26 This Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) should be read in conjunction with the following related SPDs:

- Trees and Development SPD – to be published December 2025
- Planning Obligations SPD- to be published December 2025
- Retrofit SPD – expected to be published January 2026

1.27 All SPDs can be found on the Council's website.

Council Strategies

1.28 The Council's Environmental Ambition Statement aims for Wandsworth to be a community of global citizens living within environmental limits in an attractive, high quality, local environment. The ambition will be delivered through planning policy and through Council strategies to address local and global environmental issues. The Council has produced several strategies which consider biodiversity in Wandsworth whilst addressing local and global environmental issues.

1.29 The Wandsworth Environment and Sustainability Strategy 2019-2030 (WESS) sets out the strategy for sustainability in the borough. It includes the Council's vision to become the greenest Inner London Borough by committing to urban greening, planting trees, encouraging biodiversity, protecting and enhancing our existing parks and open and green spaces.

1.30 The Wandsworth Biodiversity Strategy emerged as a result of the WESS and provides an implementation plan to conserve and enhance biodiversity in the borough. The Council is producing a Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) to implement the strategy to agree borough-wide priorities and actions.

1.31 The Council's Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2028 prioritises clean air for Wandsworth residents in order to promote healthier lives for all. It seeks to improve green spaces in the borough, maintain the main parks and preserve their biodiversity. This will be achieved through increasing information available to residents about enhancing biodiversity and developing action and project plans to implement the Biodiversity Strategy.

Associated Organisations

1.32 Enable Leisure and Culture are an external partner with the Council and are responsible for parks development and strategic management of parks, commons and greenspaces in the borough. They assist the borough by providing expert guidance on parks development and enhancing biodiversity within parks.

2 General Guidance for Applicants

British Standards

2.1 All applicants, developers or ecologists acting on behalf of applicants are encouraged to apply the British Standards relevant to biodiversity when designing and implementing developments.

2.2 The British Standard on Biodiversity (BS 42020:2013) – 'A Code of Practice for Planning and Development' outlines how biodiversity and protected species and habitats should be considered in a planning context. It provides clear guidance and recommendations to ecological consultants, planning applicants and local planning authorities, which ensure that ecological considerations are given the appropriate weight at each stage of the planning process and are sufficiently informed by high quality ecological surveys and assessments.

2.3 The British Standard on Biodiversity Net Gain (BS 8683) – A process for designing and implementing biodiversity net gain is a new British Standard in development and provides good practice requirements in relation to Biodiversity Net Gain, from design to 'spade in the ground' delivery. The standard is applicable for large or small development projects.

2.4 British Standards can be purchased via the links above. Hard copies from the BSI online shop: //www.bsigroup.com/Shop or by contacting BSI Customer Services for hardcopies only: Tel: +44 (0)20 8996 9001, Email: cservices@bsigroup.com. Applicants are advised to ensure they consult the most recent version at the time of scheme development.

Professional advice

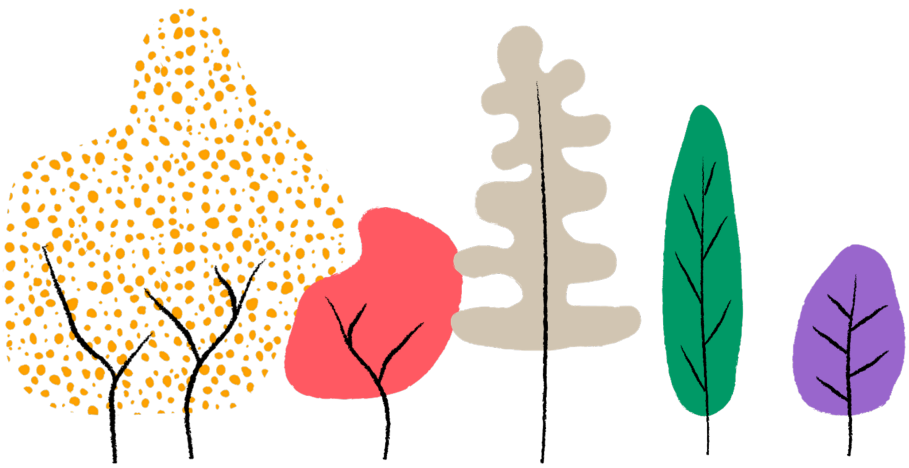
2.5 Surveying and assessing the likely ecological impacts of a development is often complicated, requiring specialist skills and experience, and it is therefore recommended that professional ecological expertise is commissioned. Employing a suitably experienced and qualified ecological consultant can help to avoid potentially costly delays at a later date and help the application to be determined more efficiently. The Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) provides a professional directory of qualified, regulated ecologists.

2.6 The Council reserves the right to refute the findings of ecological reports if it has concerns that they are not robust or accurate, including because they have not been undertaken by a suitably qualified individual.

Data Sharing

2.7 It is both good practice and in line with CIEEM membership regulations that all species and habitat (including habitat condition) survey data gathered during the production of PEAs/EcIAs/Phase 2 surveys should be shared with the Local Records Centre. Within London, this is Greenspace Information for Greater London (GIGL). A recording spreadsheet can be found on the GIGL website and records can be emailed straight to submit@gigl.org.uk. Guidance on data standards can also be found on the GIGL website.

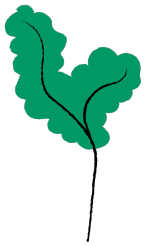
2.8 Data sharing should be completed with 3 months of the planning application decision and a confirmation from GIGL should be submitted to the Council to demonstrate compliance.



3 Guidance for integrating Biodiversity in Development Proposals

3.1 The following is a detailed list of guidance for how developments, including those which impact important habitats or species, should incorporate biodiversity and the biodiversity mitigation hierarchy into the development process. The need for developments to address the specific requirements within this section will depend on the location, nature and scale of the development proposed. Whilst applicants may find it useful to use this guidance as a starting point, they should have full regard to the requirements of legislation, policy and the Local Validation Checklist when determining how their development will need to address biodiversity.

3.2 Various studies, such as a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), may be required depending on the specifics of the site and the scale and type of the proposal. If applicants are uncertain whether surveys are required, please contact the Council for advice for example via the pre-application service. The following guidance outlines at what stages of the development proposal potential outputs such as a PEA may be needed. 9 'Appendix 3: Types of Ecological Reports' provides more detailed information about the purpose of ecological studies. If a proposal borders a sensitive site, the Council is likely to require a PEA. This may not always be necessary, for example for a small scale extension to an existing dwelling where there are no potential bat roosts.



3.3 This section is not an exhaustive guide, exceptions will exist and be handled on a case-by-case basis, but the guide does establish a standard which the Council expects to be met or built on for all proposals that affect biodiversity. **Biodiversity should be considered a priority and woven into every stage of the development process even if the proposal is exempt from biodiversity net gain.**

3.4 Figure 2 below highlights the potential outputs and key considerations that apply in relation to biodiversity at each stage of development. Specific guidance on each stage is provided later in this section.

	Stage	Potential outputs	Key considerations
1	Site Selection	Site selection report	Avoid development that impacts sites of nature-based designation. Identify mitigation measures for any damage to species or habitats.
2	Early Design Stage	Preliminary Ecological Appraisal; Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan; Ecological Impact Assessment; Construction Environment Management Plan; and Early Design Plan	Identify areas of high or low biodiversity value on the site to guide areas for development. Identify baseline biodiversity value.
3	Detailed Design Stage	Detailed Design Plan; External Lighting Plans; Daylight/ Sunlight Plans; Landscaping Scheme; Urban Greening Factor; Biodiversity Net Gain Plan	Avoid design that impacts biodiversity on or next to the development site. Include all mitigation measures within design.
4	Application Stage	External lighting plans; Contextualised daylight/sunlight plans; Construction Environment Management Plan; Biodiversity Net Gain Plan; Landscape and Ecology Management Plan; Protected Species License	Identify how impacts to biodiversity have been avoided and detail all mitigation measures. Detail any compensation that is required.
5	Construction	Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP); Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP).	Organise construction around on site or nearby wildlife to minimise disturbance. Log and compensate for any biodiversity impact.
6	Post-construction	BNG Monitoring and Management Plan	Avoid processes that would see the decline of biodiversity on site, including further development. Actively manage biodiversity and ensure to implement aftercare.

Figure 2 Stages of Development Management

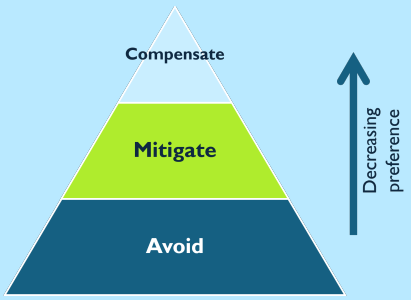
3.5 Types of planning application this guidance can apply to:

- Householder applications (depending on extent of proposals/ecological constraints)
- Applications for Change of Use (depending on nature of proposals)
- Applications for Outline Planning Permission
- Applications for Full Planning Permission
- Reserved Matters applications
- Applications for retrospective Planning Permission (depending on nature of proposals)
- Submission of details
- Variation of conditions

Mitigation Hierarchy

Where planning proposals have the potential to negatively impact wildlife and biodiversity, developers should follow the 'mitigation hierarchy'. The mitigation hierarchy dictates that impacts should be avoided in the first instance, but where impacts cannot be avoided then they should be adequately mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for.

Note – the mitigation hierarchy should be addressed whether the proposal is exempt from BNG Net Gain requirements or not.



Avoidance	Can significant harm to biodiversity be avoided? For example, could the development be located on an alternative site with less harmful impacts?
Mitigation	Where significant harm cannot be wholly or partially avoided, can harm be minimised by design or by the use of effective mitigation measures? Mitigation measures could be secured by way of a planning condition.
Compensation	Where, despite mitigation, there would still be significant residual harm, as a last resort, can this residual harm be properly compensated for by measures to provide for an equivalent or greater value to biodiversity?
Where a development cannot satisfy the requirements of the 'mitigation hierarchy', planning permission should be refused as indicated in paragraph 193 (a) of the National Planning Policy Framework.	

Protected Sites

Where applicants are proposing development on or adjacent to statutory designated sites, avoidance of harm to the ecological attributes for which the site is primarily designated, and/or any other listed features of interest, should be their primary concern. Where this is unavoidable, mitigation and enhancement should aim to preserve and improve the designated sites defining ecological attributes, and/or any other listed features of interest. Full citations for statutory designated sites in Greater London are available from Greenspace Information for Greater London CIC - GIGL.

Stage 1 - Site Selection (if applicable)

Process	Site selection studies should consider the direct and indirect impacts of a proposal on the immediate and adjacent biodiversity of each site. Studies should **identify nature-based designations** including but not limited to: • Special Areas of Conservation, • Sites of Special Scientific Interest, • Local Nature Reserves, and • Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation. For more detail on biodiversity in the borough, please visit the following web pages - • Biodiversity, • Interactive maps, • Biodiversity : Enable Leisure and Culture To see if a proposal must meet the validation requirements for biodiversity, please refer to the Local Validation Checklist. It is worth at this stage considering whether a **wildlife licence** may be needed. Natural England administer licences to permit activities that would otherwise be illegal for most Protected Species, including European Protected Species and badgers. Further information on wildlife licences is available from Natural England. **Not all applications will have a site selection process, for example if applying for a householder development, Stages 1, 2a & 2b may be completed concurrently.** However, Stage 1 is arguably the most important stage in the process. Biodiversity should be integral to site selection and early design stages of proposals. This stage provides the opportunity to consider which sites have the most and least impact on habitats and species and so to avoid direct and indirect impacts on irreplaceable habitats. It is also where applicants can begin the process of designing the proposal around site constraints. For example, by locating development on a part of a site to ensure that all trees are retained and protected trees are safeguarded. It is advisable to start considering at this stage how the development will integrate green infrastructure and provide for urban greening (requirements set out in Local Plan Policy LP57 Urban Greening Factor).
Potential Outputs	• Site selection report
Considerations	Avoidance: Avoid development that would directly or indirectly impact on sites with nature-based designations. Mitigation: If avoidance is not possible, include in the site selection report any mitigatory measures that could be implemented to rectify any possible loss or damage to any identified species or habitat connected with nature-based designation which were captured in the desktop review of each site. Compensation: If mitigation is not sufficient, consider the additional costs that might be accrued from loss or damage to species or habitat identified on each site.

Table 2 Stage 1 - Site Selection (if applicable)

Stage 2a - Pre-application - Early Design Stage

Process	Where a development is proposed on or affecting a site with nature-based designations or the proposal would impact irreplaceable habitats, protected species or protected habitats, it is advised that the applicant requests pre-application advice via the Council's pre-application advice service. Council officers can advise applicants which studies are needed. Planning Performance Agreements (PPA) are encouraged for larger more complex schemes. However, applications of all types and complexity may benefit from a PPA, including discharge of conditions. Prior to any pre-application consultation, applicants are encouraged to commence any necessary surveys and studies (see list in Potential Outputs). These studies should be drafted alongside early design work to ensure the layout of the site has as little impact on biodiversity as possible. It is important to recognise that there are seasonal constraints to surveying some types of species and habitats, and that they can only be surveyed at certain times and months of the year in suitable weather conditions and using nationally recognised standards and methodology. Seasonal constraints therefore need to be factored in when commissioning surveys or ecological assessments and the timeline for developers preparing a planning application. See section 10 'Appendix 4: Survey requirements and when to do them (Survey Calendar)'. The Council will not accept surveys undertaken during inappropriate surveying windows. All studies should be carried out by a qualified ecologist and the Council strongly recommends applicants engage members of a professional institute to ensure they are robust. Report and studies need to adhere to the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) guidance and BSI 42020. CIEEM offers a useful tool for finding qualified consultants who can assist with studies. Applicants should also review the Council's guidance on Biodiversity Net Gain to ensure all requirements are expected to be met.
Potential Outputs	• Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) • Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan (ECOP) • Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA) • Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) • Early Design Plan For more detail see section 9 'Appendix 3: Types of Ecological Reports'
Considerations	Avoidance: Identify areas within a site which have significant biodiversity through a PEA. This is helpful to understand which areas on a site should be excluded from development. Conversely, identifying areas with little to no biodiversity value is useful for knowing where to concentrate development in the later design stage. Mitigation: If avoidance is not possible, capture in more detail the ecological make up of a site to help prepare bespoke mitigation responses which can be incorporated later in the design stage.

	Compensation: If mitigation is not sufficient, capture the baseline biodiversity value of the site to help understand what compensation may be needed. This baseline should be used to inform layout and design choices.

Table 3 Stage 2a - Pre-application - Early Design Stage

Stage 2b - Pre-application - Detailed Design Stage

Process	**For less complex proposals, which require fewer pre-application consultations, the guidance from Stage 2a and Stage 2b may be combined into one stage.** Building on the initial pre-application discussions, the completed ecological studies, and the early design work, applicants should begin preparing a detailed design plan for the site which protects biodiversity and includes ecological enhancements where necessary. It is advised that this detailed plan be discussed with the Council in follow-up pre-application consultation to ensure the design meets Local Plan Policy LP55 (Biodiversity) and supplementary guidance as well as reflects the discussions already had regarding biodiversity on the site. Once the principles of redevelopment have been established, applicants should consider at this stage how planting and lighting, if needed, can be effectively incorporated into the design as well as how the design can integrate with any existing heritage assets. Examples of effective incorporation and good design include (but are not limited to) providing appropriate buffering between a proposed development and the edge of a biodiversity designation and consideration of light spill. All developments should consider from this stage how urban greening can be integrated into site and building design. Greening features, required as part of the urban greening factor, can provide considerable biodiversity benefits when implemented correctly. For major developments, applicants will be expected to discuss at the pre-application stage(s) what their intentions for urban greening are and if they expect to be unable to provide the required amount. More detail can be found in the section Urban Greening Factor. The provision of required external amenity space and play space can in some cases be brought forward sensitively to allow for the possible co-location with areas of biodiversity net gain. Applicants should demonstrate clearly how the overlapping of these uses would not lead to one detracting from the other in their submissions (e.g. amenity grassland being used for amenity space, urban greening, and biodiversity net gain). As discussions evolve at pre-application stage, discuss how biodiversity can form a part of other evidence base reports if they are required. A Contaminated Land Assessment or a Daylight and Sunlight Assessments should pay close attention to surrounding habitats and how the proposed development may impact biodiversity. Flood Risk Assessments should clearly demonstrate how existing biodiversity impacts flood resilience and how any change to the biodiversity on a site would impact the flooding potential for the site and surrounding area. Even if you think your development is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain, applicants are encouraged to complete the Biodiversity Net Gain Checklist (as well as providing a Biodiversity Net Gain Plan if necessary) specifying the reason for the exemption.
Potential Outputs	**Some outputs may have been produced at earlier stages or may be produced here** • Detailed Design Plan

	• External lighting plans • Contextualised daylight/sunlight plans • Landscaping Scheme • Urban Greening Factor (UGF) • Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Plan • Applicants are encouraged to use the Council's Biodiversity Net Gain Checklist. For more detail see section 9 'Appendix 3: Types of Ecological Reports'
Considerations	Avoidance: Focus development on areas of low biodiversity value and avoid designs that might impact biodiversity on site or adjacent to the site. Mitigation: If avoidance is not possible, capture all biodiversity mitigation efforts and ecological enhancements in the detailed design plan (see section Ecological Enhancements for more information). Compensation: If mitigation is not sufficient, calculate the estimated compensation and discuss its appropriateness at pre-application meetings.

Table 4 Stage 2b – Pre-application – Detailed Design Stage

Stage 3 - Submission of application - Validation Requirements

Process	At the point of submitting a planning application, applicants are expected to have addressed the guidance contained in Stages 1, Stage 2a and Stage 2b, including any pre-application advice gained within these previous stages. Applicants should review the Local Validation Checklist, section 9 'Appendix 3: Types of Ecological Reports' and the Council's website to ensure all steps and guidance with regards biodiversity have been taken to complete a valid application: Make a planning application - Wandsworth Borough Council. Applicants should ensure all assessments undertaken in accordance with specified standards by suitably qualified professionals or competent persons.
Potential Outputs	**Some outputs may have been produced at earlier stages or may be produced here** • Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) External lighting plans • External lighting plans • Protected Species License (if needed) • Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) and additional species surveys identified in the PEA. • Biodiversity Net Gain Plan (Applicants are encouraged to use the Wandsworth BNG Checklist) • Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) • Contextualised daylight/sunlight plans For more detail see section 9 'Appendix 3: Types of Ecological Reports'

Considerations	Avoidance: Outline how direct and indirect impacts to biodiversity have been avoided as part of the development of this proposal. Mitigation: If avoidance is not possible, ensure all mitigation is detailed fully in the submission documents. Compensation: The applicant should clearly lay out any compensation that is required with a strong justification for why avoidance and mitigation were unable to be adequately achieved.

Table 5 Stage 3 - Submission of application – Validation Requirements

Stage 4 - Construction

Process	Prior to commencing construction, applicants must discharge any pre-commencement conditions regarding Biodiversity Net Gain and the CEMP. Thereafter applicants should ensure good practice is followed during construction, including protected species impact avoidance, and adhere to mitigation and enhancement recommendations, the Construction Environment Management Plan and the Landscape and Ecology Management Plan requirements. See section 11 'Appendix 5: Biodiversity on Development sites: A hazard prevention checklist during construction and operation'
Potential Outputs	• Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) • Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP)
Considerations	Avoidance: Organise construction around times and places that are most suitable for on site or nearby wildlife to cause the least amount of disturbance. Mitigation: Ensure all mitigations are in place as soon and as appropriately as possible. Compensation: For any unexpected impact to biodiversity during construction, ensure it is logged and appropriate compensation is provided.

Table 6 Stage 4 - Construction

Stage 5 - Post construction

Process	Applicants will be responsible for working with Council officers to ensure processes and commitments are in place for the continued monitoring of BNG improvements over the required 30-year period. Non-compliance may result in enforcement or other legal action. Outside of BNG requirements, developments are encouraged to plan for the consistent long-term monitoring and management of biodiversity and urban greening. Maintenance, including tree replacement, may be secured by condition.
Potential Outputs	• BNG Monitoring and Management Plan • Address any monitoring or survey requirements in conditions to the planning applications.

Considerations	Avoidance: Avoid employing or introducing processes that would see the decline of biodiversity on site. Avoid introducing further development on the site that could impact directly or indirectly biodiversity on or adjacent to the site. Mitigation: If biodiversity on site begins to decline, ensure a suitably qualified ecologist / Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) member is appointed to undertake a full assessment and to advise on the required actions to prevent decline and increase the overall biodiversity on site. Due to the unpredictability of biodiversity, continued consideration of potential mitigation measures should be conducted and solutions recorded in the event of sudden decline in biodiversity value e.g. a drought or flood reduces an area to very low biodiversity value. Flexibility and adaptation should be considered during the post-construction monitoring phase of the development. Compensation: If an area of biodiversity on the site is chosen to be developed, or if due to unforeseen circumstances unsalvageable, then appropriate compensation should be provided.

Table 7 Stage 5 - Post construction

4 Guidance on Protected species and priority habitats

Protected Species

4.1 For the purposes of this guidance, protected species can be divided into two categories – those which are primarily only protected via the planning system as 'conservation priority species' under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006, and those that are legally protected under UK law.

4.2 The Local Biodiversity Action Plans for London and Wandsworth (link to be provided when available) provide a framework for the recovery of protected and important species which are present within the locality. The specified actions contained within these documents should be used to inform proposal design, mitigation and enhancement strategies.

The following sections provide specific advice on key species which are significant. Other species and habitats exist within the borough and if identified on or adjacent to site should also be considered when designing proposals.

4.3 Information provided within the green boxes sets out actions which applicants will find helpful in considering each species/habitat.

Bats

Bats in Wandsworth

4.4 At least six bat species are known to occur in the borough, including the nationally rare species, Leisler's bat. Important sites for bats in the borough include all of Wandsworth's parks, commons and cemeteries, the River Thames, the River Wandle, Beverley Brook, the extensive network of street trees and the railway lines that intersect the borough. The heatmap below shows the general distribution of bats within the borough. Pipistrelle bats are mapped separately.

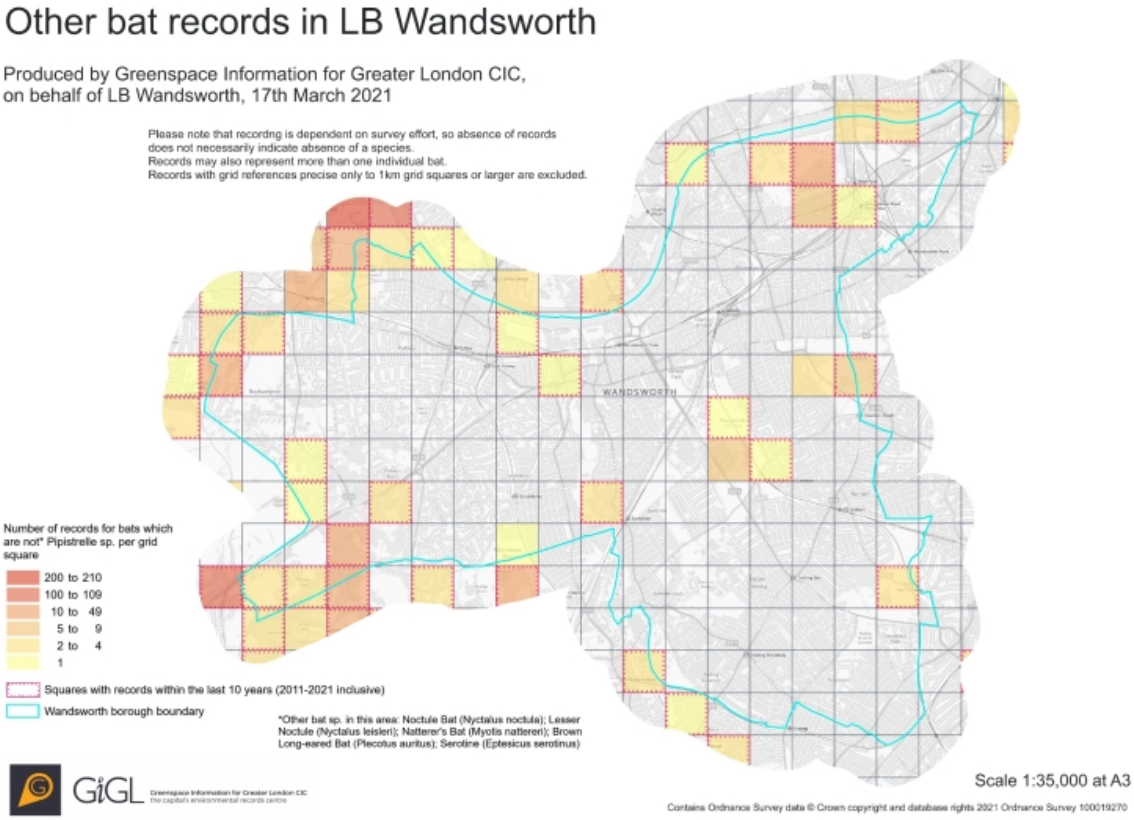


Figure 3 Other Bat Records in Wandsworth

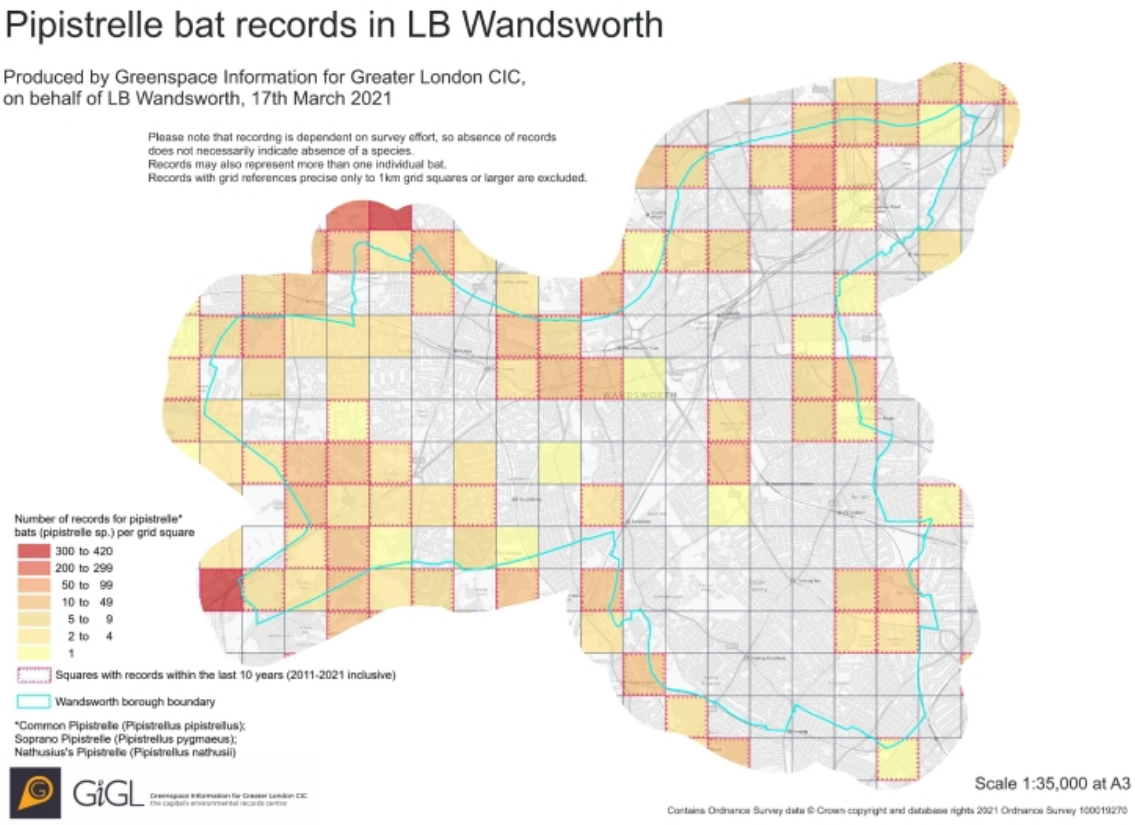


Figure 4 Pipistrelle Bat Records in Wandsworth

Policy and legislation

4.5 Bat populations have suffered significantly over the last 50 years. In Britain, all bat species and their roosts are legally protected under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). The Local Planning Authority has a duty to consider nature conservation in the exercise of its functions under the NERC Act 2006 and the Environment Act 2021, which in practice affords further protection to the core habitats of bats, including foraging areas and commuting routes.

Guidance on whether a survey is needed and when to do it

4.6 Local Planning Authorities may request bat surveys where proposed activities are likely to negatively impact bats and their habitats. Most commonly, the purpose of these surveys will be to assess buildings, trees and structures for their potential to support roosting bats. However, surveys may also be required to assess nocturnal bat activity on a site. Bat surveys are likely to be needed if one or more of the following applies:

- Distribution (current) and/or historical records suggest bats may be present.
- The development site includes or is close to any built structures, on or underground, that provide commuting, foraging or roosting opportunities for bats.
- The development site includes or is close to a SINC or trees, shrubs or water bodies that provide commuting, foraging or roosting opportunities for bats.
- The development proposal includes lighting of buildings or green spaces close to habitats that bats tend to use.

4.7 For Survey calendar, please see section 10 'Appendix 4: Survey requirements and when to do them (Survey Calendar)'.

Impacts on...		
Bats	**Roosting habitats**	**Flight-paths and foraging habitats**
• Physical disturbance • Noise or vibration disturbance • Lighting disturbance • Injury/mortality	• Modification of access point to roost, either physically or through disturbance • Modification of roost, either physically or through disturbance • Loss of roost	• Modification of flight-paths or foraging habitats either physically or through disturbance • Severance of flight-paths • Loss of foraging habitats

Table 8 Negative Impact on Bats from Proposed Development. Taken from: Bat Conservation Trust (2023). Bat Surveys for Professional Ecologists Good Practice Guidelines. 4th Edition

4.8 Please see the earlier section on 'Mitigation Hierarchy'.

Mitigation licencing and the three-stage test

4.9 Mitigation Licences are issued by Natural England. You will need a mitigation licence if your work will have impacts on bats that would otherwise be illegal. This includes:

- Capturing, displacing or disturbing bats
- Damaging or destroying their breeding or resting places
- Obstructing access to their breeding or resting places

4.10 In order for a Mitigation Licence to be issued, your licence application must pass three legal tests:

- The proposal is in the overriding public interest;
- There is no satisfactory alternative; and
- The action authorised will not be detrimental to the favourable conservation status of the species concerned.

New developments can play an important role in preventing further harm to and supporting bats by taking the following actions:

- Installing bat roosts; including bat boxes, bat bricks and bat access tiles.
- Using bat friendly roofing membrane; bitumen 1F felt that has a non-woven, short fibre construction is preferred.
- Including planting and other habitats, such as ponds and deadwood, to encourage flying invertebrates.
- Avoiding lighting where possible and where lighting is required, installing bat friendly lighting. See additional guidance on lighting for more detail.

For more details, please see:

- Providing bed and breakfast - Gardening for bats, Bat Conservation Trust.
- Institution of Lighting Professionals

Swifts and house sparrows

4.11 Once a common sight in parks and gardens, it is now widely acknowledged that there has been a severe decline in the UK house sparrow and swift population. These species naturally nest in the crevices of cliff faces and have adapted to make the urban landscape their home by taking advantage of features that replicate this environment, favouring the eaves and roof space of buildings. Modern building design and the redevelopment of buildings have meant that they have been excluded from many suitable breeding sites which have led to their significant decline in the UK.

4.12 Due to this rapid population decline, both these species have received the highest level of conservation concern, red status, with these species needing urgent action. The reasons for these declines are complex and include disease, availability of food, air pollution and loss of habitat and nesting sites.

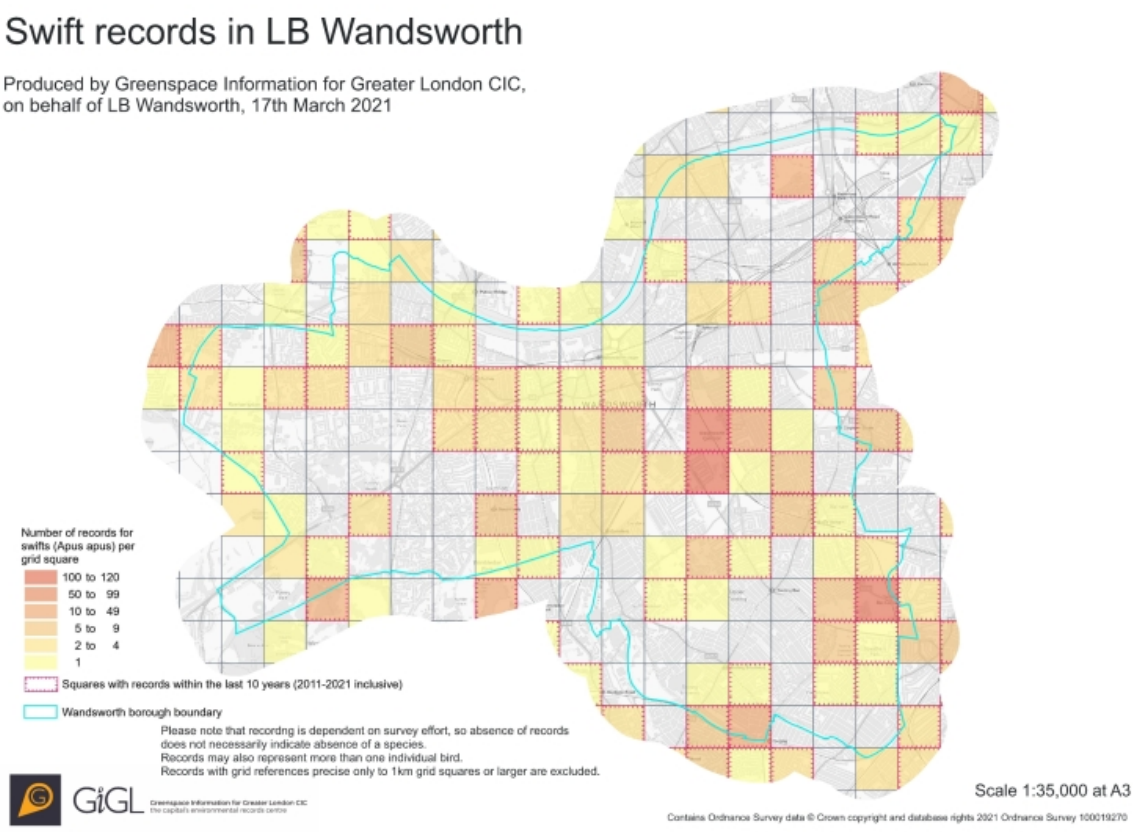


Figure 5 Swift Records in Wandsworth

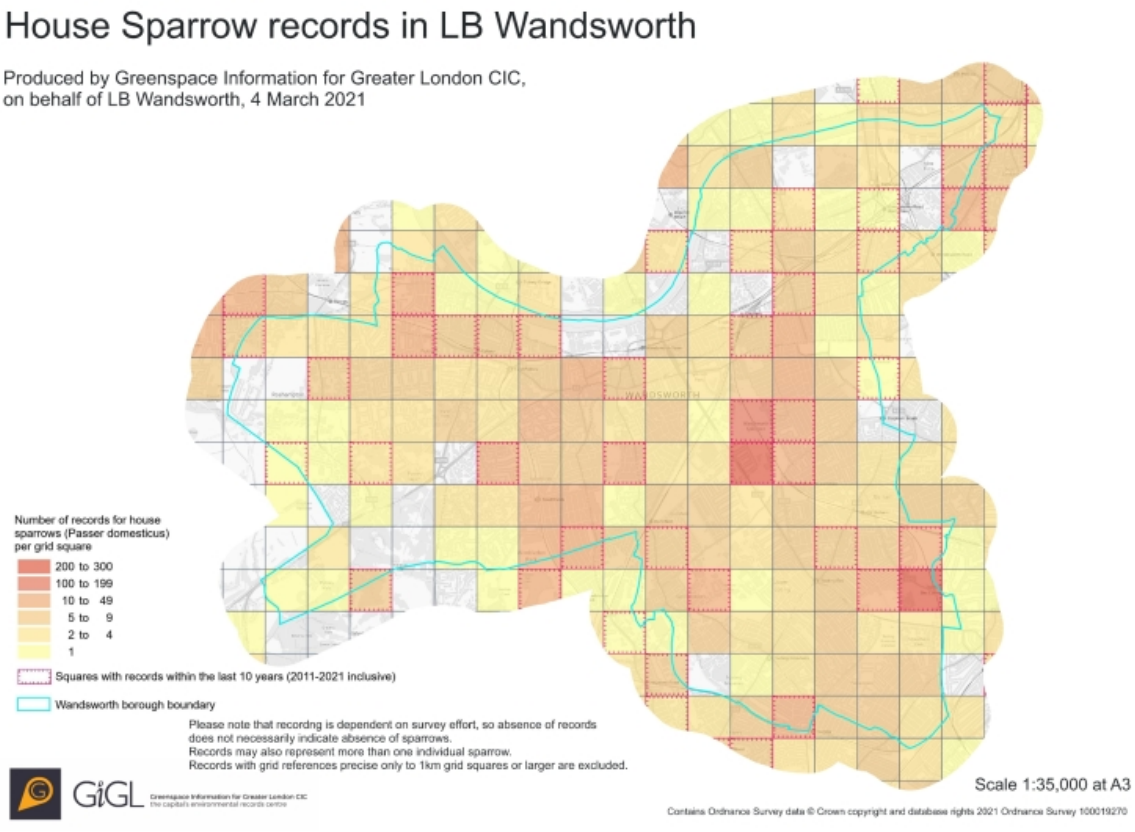


Figure 6 House Sparrow Records in Wandsworth

Legislation

4.13 All wild birds and their nests (whilst active) are protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Further information on Ecological Legislation can be found in section 7 'Appendix 1: Ecological Legislation'.

Potential impacts

4.14 Construction and demolition works can impact birds nesting in trees, buildings and structures either directly or indirectly. This means that the works could lead to the direct killing or injuring of wild birds and/or the destruction of active nests and live eggs, which would constitute a criminal offence, or they could lead to loss of potential nesting sites if carried out at a time when birds or active nests are not present. Whilst the latter would not constitute a criminal offence, this will have a detrimental cumulative impact on the conservation status of these declining species.

Mitigation and enhancement standards

4.15 Safe and sheltered nesting opportunities may be key to population stability with research in 2023 identifying that low juvenile survival is associated with poor (wet) weather. Species which are highly likely to use buildings for nesting in South West London are swifts, house sparrows, starlings and black redstart. Swift nesting boxes can also be used by other bird species including sparrows, starling and blue tits.

New developments can play an important role in preventing further harm to and supporting the recovery of swifts and house sparrows by taking the following actions:

- All development proposals affecting modifications or demolition of existing buildings should consider potential impacts on nesting birds.
- One of the priority actions for swifts includes installing swift boxes and bricks in new developments and retrofitting swift boxes onto existing buildings. Both swifts and house sparrows are gregarious and prefer to nest in colonies. Swift boxes where possible should be placed in groups of at least three boxes, approximately 1m apart.
- For house sparrows, installing appropriate nesting boxes on new and existing buildings is similarly a high priority. House sparrow 'terraces', which are boxes with two or three separate chambers and entrances are considered most effective. House sparrows are also known to use swift boxes.
- Scrub, hedgerows and fruiting/flowering shrubs are important for providing food and cover for sparrows and should be included where possible in landscaping schemes.
- Create meadow grassland habitats that support diverse aerial invertebrate populations and provide seeds, both essential food sources for swifts, house sparrows and many other bird species.

For more details, please see:

- Installing house sparrow nest boxes, British Trust for Ornithology.
- Swift box instructions, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Badgers

Badgers in Wandsworth

4.16 Badgers are mostly found in the west of Wandsworth. They are likely to be encountered in areas which include or are close to woodland, parkland, meadows, cemeteries, hedgerows, scrub or large gardens.

Badger legislation

4.17 Badgers and their setts are protected by law. The Protection of Badgers Act 1992 prohibits:

- Taking, injuring, ill-treating or killing a badger
- Obstruction, disturbance, damage or destruction of a badger sett

4.18 Badgers could be affected by a development if the proposal causes:

- Damage to setts
- Loss or isolation of setts
- Loss of foraging areas
- Disturbance to badgers whilst occupying a sett

Badger survey

4.19 An initial survey of a site for badger setts or signs of badgers will typically, but not always, be carried out by an ecologist as part of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal. A badger survey is required if historical or current distribution records show that badgers are active in the area, and there is suitable habitat for sett building and foraging on site.

**Please Note: Details of badger sett locations should be kept confidential to avoid the ill treatment of badgers.*

4.20 For Survey calendar, please see section 10 'Appendix 4: Survey requirements and when to do them (Survey Calendar)'.

Mitigation hierarchy

4.21 As is the case with all potential impacts to biodiversity, developers should follow the 'mitigation hierarchy' when addressing negative impacts of development on badgers. Examples of how this could be applied include:

Avoidance	Mitigation	Compensation
• Design a layout that avoids damaging badger setts or isolating the badgers' territory • Avoid artificial lighting around setts • Retain vegetation around setts to provide cover • Avoid disturbance around setts • Keep heavy machinery and excavation work away from setts • Avoid activity between dusk and dawn when badgers are most active	• Maintain foraging space and watering areas • Maintain habitat connectivity with road tunnels, underpasses and green corridors • Covering of trenches and capping pipes on active construction sites • Undertaking temporary sett closure or professionally supervised excavation for the installation of subterranean infrastructure	• Creation of artificial setts where there is a permanent or temporary loss of a badger sett.

Table 9 Examples of Mitigation Hierarchy

Badger mitigation licencing

4.22 A Badger Mitigation Licence may be required if a proposed development would impact badgers through activities which would otherwise be illegal. In order for a Mitigation Licence to be issued, your licence application must pass three legal tests:

- The proposal is in the overriding public interest;
- There is no satisfactory alternative; and
- The action authorised will not be detrimental to the favourable conservation status of the species concerned.

New developments can play an important role in preventing further harm to and supporting badgers by taking the following actions:

- Maintaining access in the landscape for badgers to move between setts and foraging grounds.
- Providing safe routes across busy roads.
- Avoiding the loss of badger setts and foraging habitat.
- Providing suitable alternative foraging habitats such as hedgerows and amenity grassland.
- Introducing preventative measures on sites to avoid killing or injury of badgers during the construction phase.

For more details, please see:

- Guides for Developers, Ecologists and Planners, the Badger Trust

Hedgehogs, mammals and fencing

4.23 Connectivity between gardens and peripheral habitats in urban environments has been significantly curtailed by the increased number of new fences and walls. Garden fences that have no gaps at ground level restrict the movement of hedgehogs, amphibians, badgers and other mammals. Hedgehogs in particular are completely reliant on access to inter-connected patches of habitat where they can forage and find refuge.

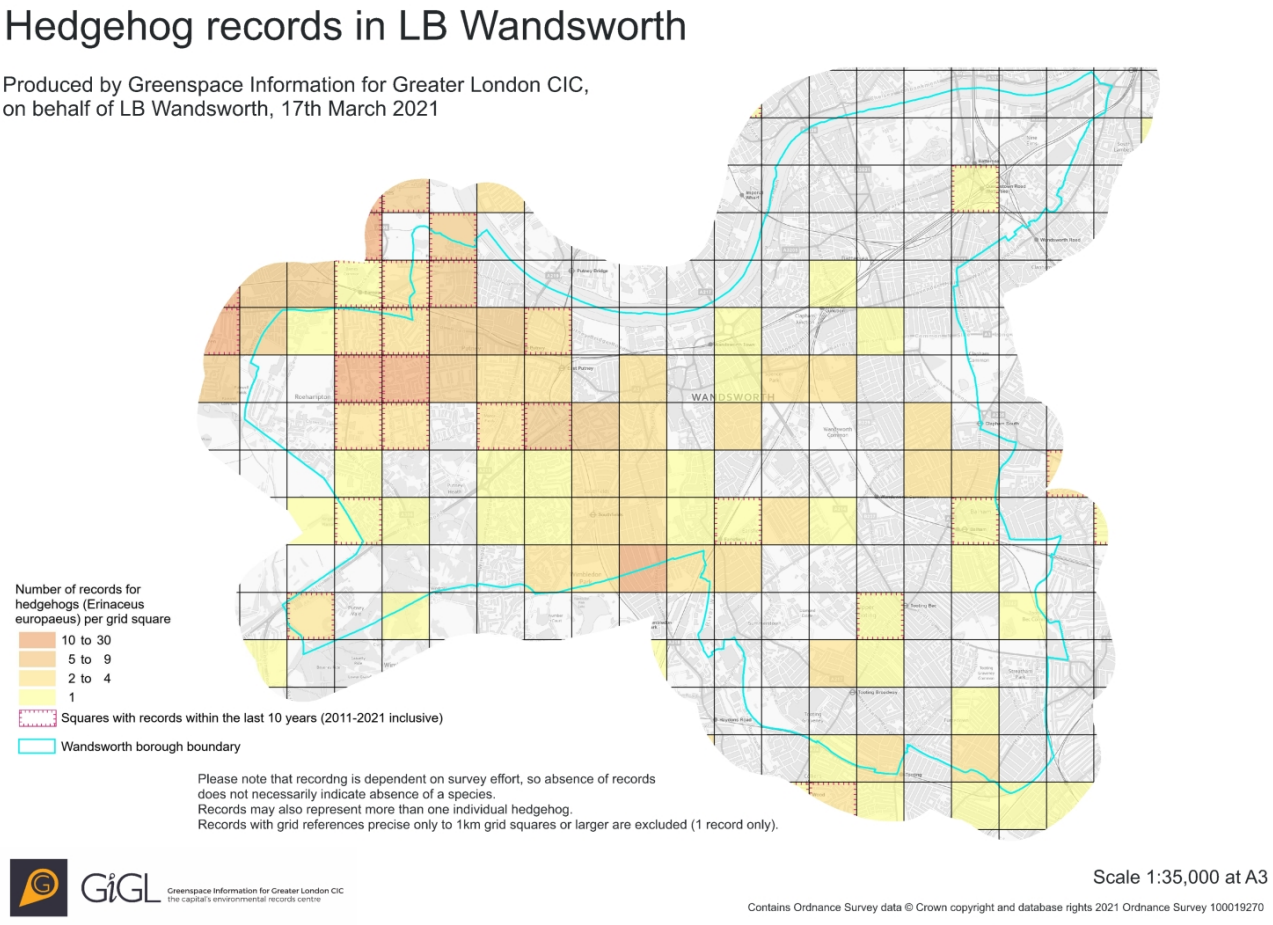


Figure 7 Hedgehog Records in Wandsworth

New developments can play an important role in preventing further harm to and supporting the recovery of hedgehogs by taking the following actions:

- All new fencing and walling are expected to provide connectivity gaps for hedgehogs where appropriate.
- Paving front gardens for parking reduces green space for all wildlife. Manicured gardens do not favour hedgehogs: they prefer long grass, compost heaps and wood piles for nesting and foraging, and retaining/creating such areas where appropriate in peripheral areas of a development site or property can have significant benefits for urban nature.
- Measures should also be implemented during demolition and construction to prevent harm to hedgehogs and other small mammals including sensitively removing vegetation and deadwood piles, as well as covering trenches and pipes or providing ramps to prevent mammals from becoming trapped.

For more details, please see:

- Further specification for this, along with other aspects of landscape design which are important for hedgehogs and other species can be found in the following joint publication Encouraging hedgehogs in your neighbourhood, from People's Trust for Endangered Species and British Hedgehog Preservation Society.
- Paving front gardens

Black Redstart

4.24 The black redstart is a small robin-sized bird that has adapted to live in the urban environment. There are fewer than 100 breeding pairs in the UK and the black redstart features on the red list of birds of conservation concern.

4.25 The black redstart was first reported in London in the 1920s and the species has adapted to living in industrial and urban areas. The population increased significantly following the Blitz when bombsites provided the ideal habitat. The rubble between the bombed-out shells of buildings replicated the bare and stony cliffs of black redstarts' natural habitat. Central London and sites adjacent the River Thames are an extremely important location for this species. The population is probably made up of resident pairs and breeding birds that travel from western to southern England between March and May and return to wintering sites from September.

4.26 The Black Redstart's population has seen a drop in numbers over the decades which have mainly been linked to loss of breeding sites as buildings have been redeveloped.

New developments can play an important role in preventing harm to and supporting local populations of black redstart by taking the following actions:

- Increasing the number of **biodiverse roofs** across the borough, particularly in the areas around the Wandle Delta and Nine Elms, is likely to be key to the long-term success of this species.
- Providing **open nesting boxes** for black redstarts alongside biodiverse roofs.

For more details, please see:

- Black redstart, London Biodiversity Partnership
- Biodiverse roofs, The Green Roof Organisation

Brown Trout

4.27 Brown trout are now present in the River Wandle having been restocked in recent years following a long absence. The brown trout is a medium to large fish that inhabits fast-flowing, gravelly, and stoney rivers. Its primary food sources include insect larvae, small fish and flying insects, such as mayflies. Spawning takes place between January and March, a process by which females bury their fertilised eggs in the gravel. Once the juvenile fish, or 'fry', hatch, they start by feeding on the yolk sac and then progress onto invertebrates.

New developments can play an important role in preventing harm to and supporting local populations of brown trout by taking the following actions:

- With the brown trout being one of the first species to be negatively impacted by pollution, any developments that take place along the River Wandle should implement measures to prevent any harm to brown trout, their food sources and habitats. An ecologist is required to ascertain potential construction and post-construction impacts on this species.
- Furthermore, any developments along Wandsworth's rivers should consider the possibility for in-river habitat enhancements to support the continued success of this species in Wandsworth.

For more details, please see:

- Wild Trout Trust

Peregrine Falcon

4.28 Peregrine falcons have been present in the Wandsworth for over 20 years. They are given the highest degree of legal protection under Schedule 1 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. The species is present in many urban areas with the nesting sites closely monitored. Around 20% of the European peregrine population breeds in the UK and therefore it is important to protect this species.

4.29 The peregrine falcon's natural habitat consists primarily of cliff ledges. These birds are attracted to the built environment where tall buildings and other structures mimic this habitat. The species also act as a natural predator of pigeons, and

parakeets. It is important that the nesting sites of these birds are protected, that artificial nests are installed at appropriate locations and building managers and occupiers are made aware of their significance and protected status.

New developments can play an important role in preventing harm to and supporting local populations of peregrine falcons by taking the following actions:

- Installing artificial nests.
- Implement mitigation measures to prevent harm to nesting peregrines during and post-construction.

For more details, please see:

- Peregrine advice note, London Biodiversity Partnership
- London Peregrine Partnership

Starling

4.30 Despite being a familiar garden bird across the UK, the starling has suffered a significant population decline since the 1980s and is now a Red List bird of high conservation concern. The exact cause of this decline is unknown, although it is suspected to be primarily due to a loss in nesting and foraging habitat.

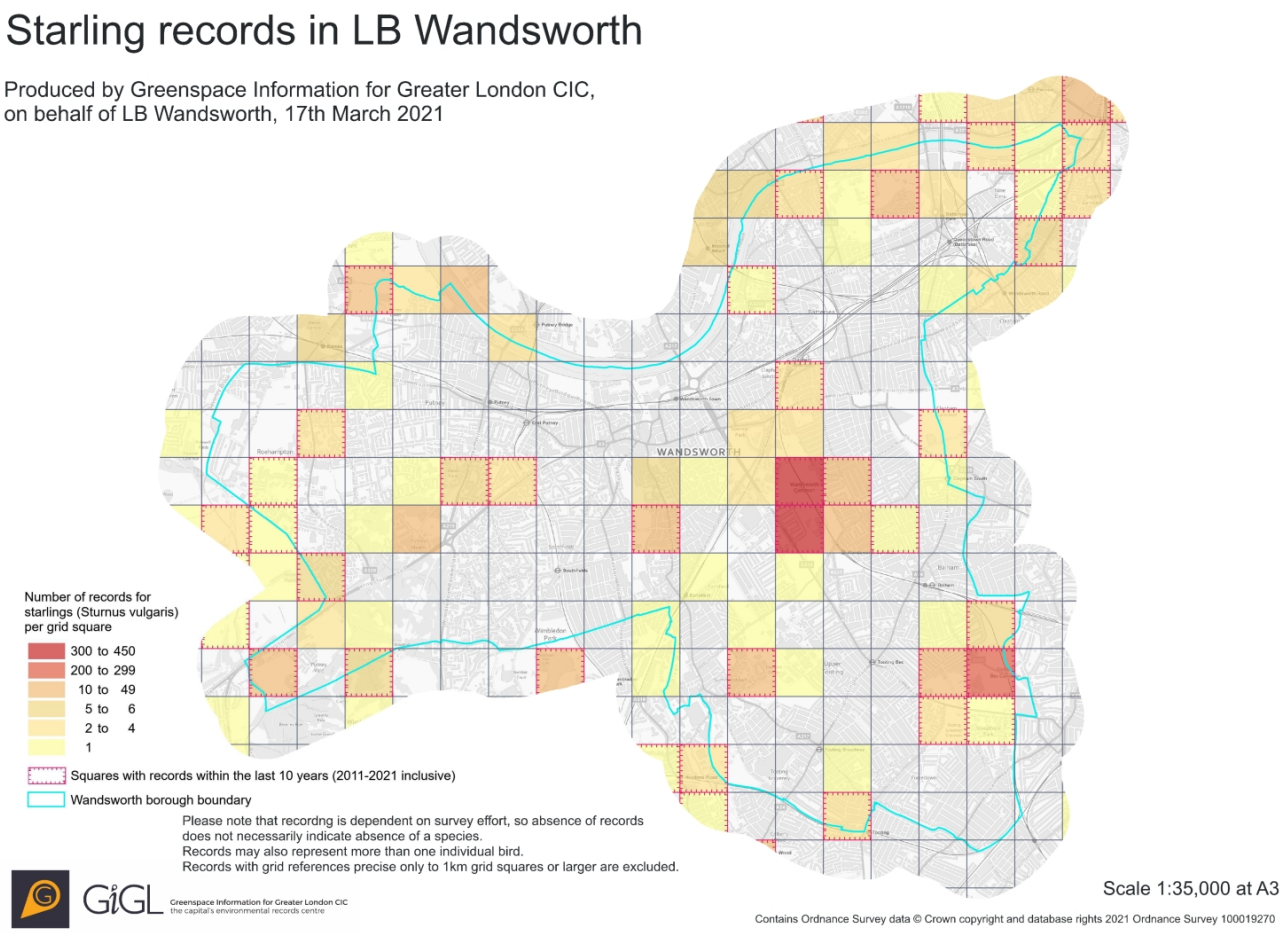


Figure 8 Starling Records in Wandsworth

4.31 Starlings primarily nest in holes in buildings and trees as well as nest boxes. The male is responsible for building the nest using dried leaves and grass, whilst the female insulates the nest with softer materials such as wool, feathers and moss. Starlings eat a wide range of foods including invertebrates – such as earthworms, moths and spiders – seeds, nuts and fruit.

New developments can play an important role in preventing further harm to and supporting the recovery of starlings by taking the following actions:

- Installing nest boxes, as well as providing food sources through planting. Starlings can be very territorial, so if you are planning to install nesting boxes for multiple species, we recommend speaking to an ecologist about the best way to design the space to reduce competition.

For more details, please see:

- RSPB, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Stag Beetle

4.32 The Stag Beetle is the UK's largest ground living beetle with a significant population in South West London. The Lesser Stag Beetle has also been observed across the borough.

4.33 Stag Beetles have a lengthy life cycle lasting up to seven years from egg to adult. The larvae rely on dead or decaying wood such as fallen trees, branches and stumps. The Stag Beetle is a nationally threatened species. The population decline is related to habitat loss due to development, and the sanitisation of parks and gardens with the removal of dead and rotting material. Predators such as foxes can also disrupt the Stag Beetles from completing their life cycle. Rising public awareness of the Stag Beetle, its life cycle and the benefits of dead and decaying wood, leaf litter and avoiding 'tidying up' green spaces, will help create suitable habitats for the wider invertebrate population.

New developments can play an important role in preventing further harm to and supporting stag beetles by taking the following actions:

- Retaining existing trees, stumps and deadwood where possible.
- Ensuring mitigation measures are implemented during construction to prevent harm to stag beetles such as removing any dead wood habitat being impacted by works by hand.
- The creation and long-term maintenance of stag beetle loggeries and dead wood piles as part of landscaping schemes is essential to supporting this species.

For more details, please see:

- How to build a stag beetle loggery, People's Trust for Endangered Species
- Stag Beetle Action Plan, London Biodiversity Partnership

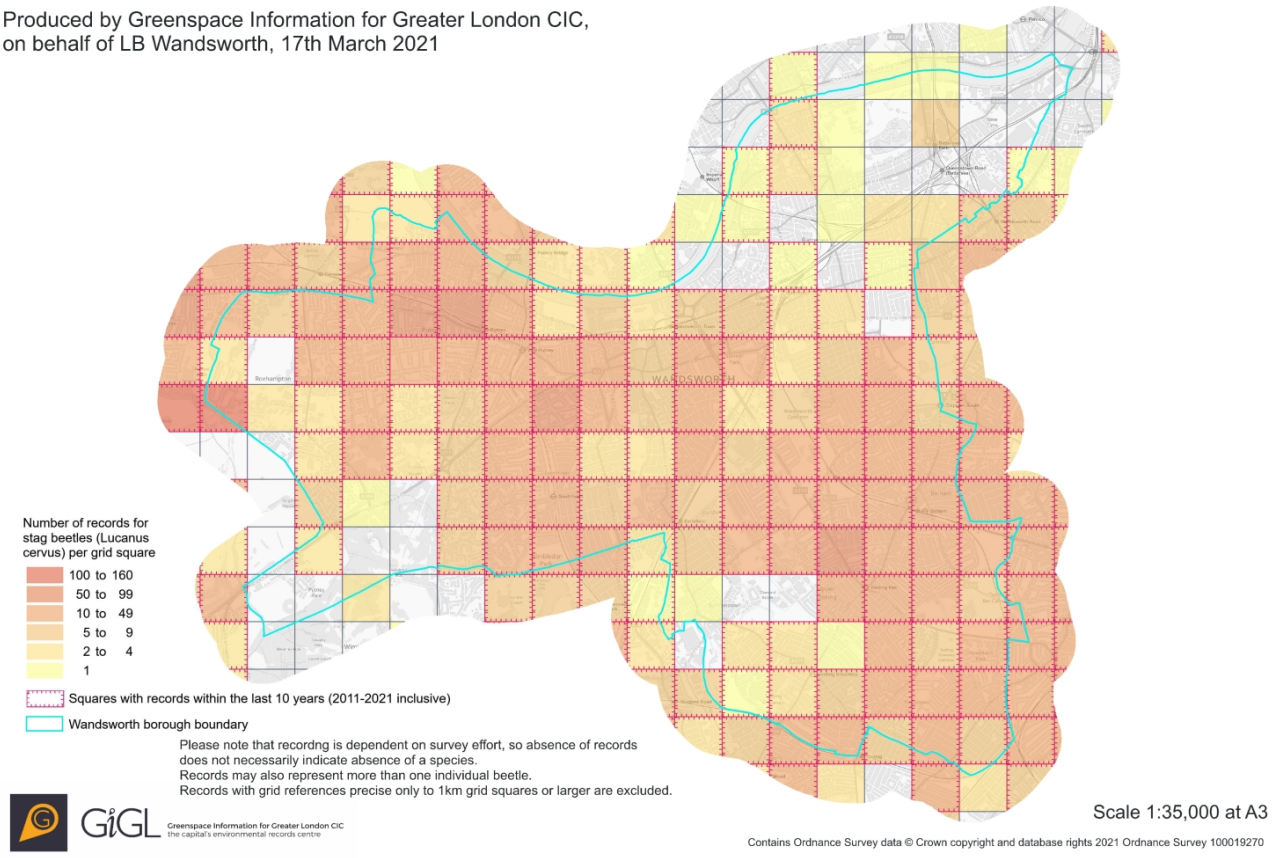


Figure 9 Stag Beetle Records in Wandsworth

Tawny Owl

4.34 The tawny owl (Strix aluco) possesses highly sensitive vision and hearing, along with the capability to fly silently thanks to the soft, furry edges of its feathers. These traits make it an expert predator, able to swoop down silently on small rodents like mice and voles. For this reason, rather than being seen, the presence of a tawny owl is often recognized by the distinctive 'hoo-hoo-hoo-hoo' call of the male and the 'ker-wick' call of the female. When food is scarce, they will also consume insects, worms, amphibians, small birds, and even bats.

4.35 The natural habitat of the tawny owl includes broad-leaved and mixed woodlands, but this species has also adapted to living in urban parks and suburban gardens. They nest in tree cavities or nest boxes and typically breed from late January to July. Established pairs are highly territorial, with territorial behaviours such as calls and visual displays increasing in the autumn when juveniles leave the nest. The young usually do not disperse far, often settling just a few kilometres from where they hatched. Tawny owls also seem to avoid crossing larger expanses of water and open landscapes.

4.36 Since the 1970s, the tawny owl population in the UK is estimated to have declined by more than a third and in 2015 the species was moved onto the Amber List of Birds of Conservation Concern. It is suspected that the loss and fragmentation of woodland habitat, loss of suitable nesting sites and increase in artificial lighting have all contributed to this decline.

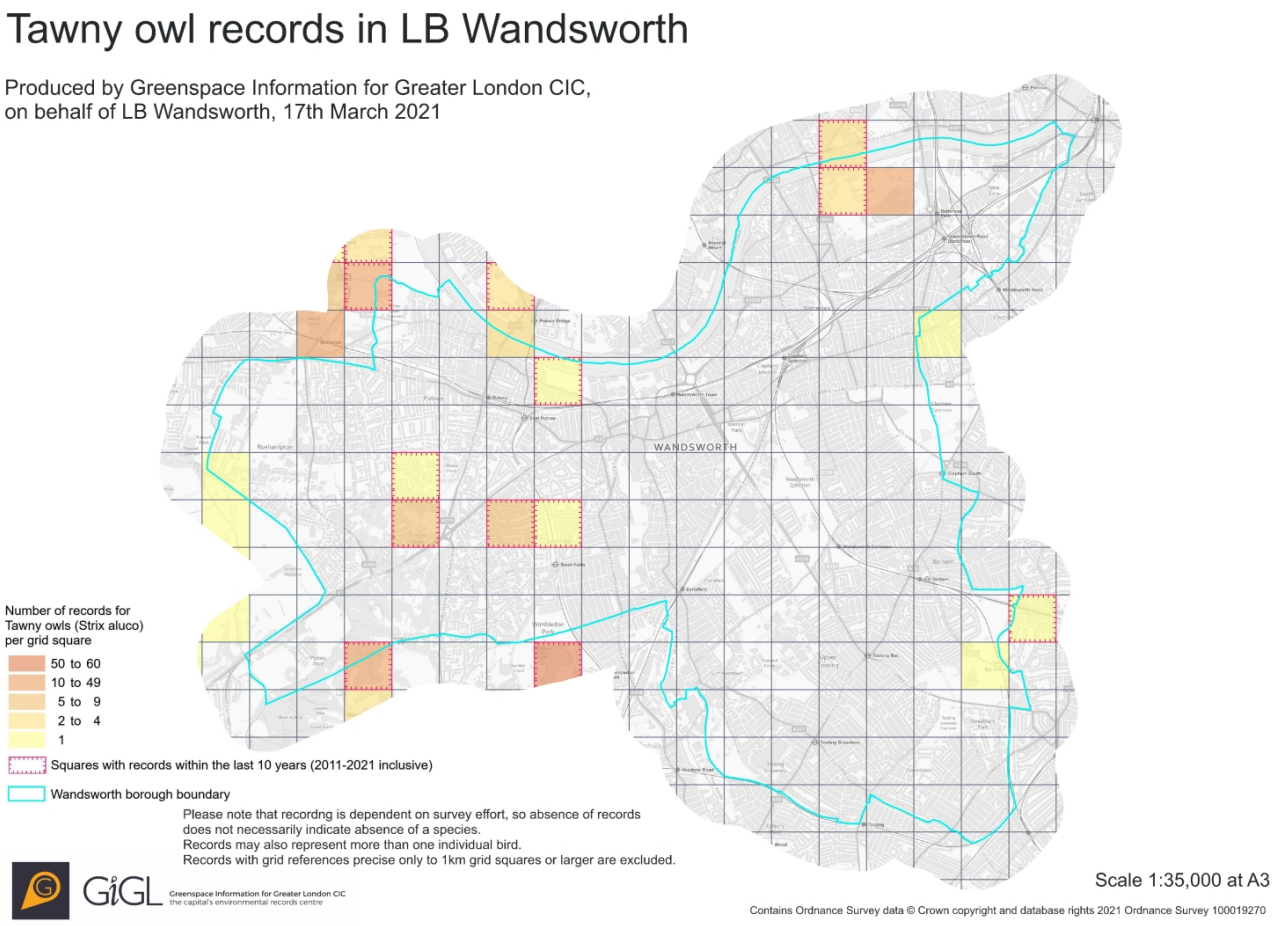


Figure 10 Tawny Owl Records in Wandsworth

New developments can play an important role in preventing further harm to and supporting the recovery of the tawny owl by taking the following actions:

- Providing nesting boxes in suitable locations, preventing the fragmentation of woodland habitat, expanding woodland habitat where possible, and by providing a vegetative buffer if the new development borders a woodland.

For more details, please see:

- Tawny Owl, British Trust for Ornithology
- Installing a Tawny Owl Nesting Box, British Trust for Ornithology

Pollinators

4.37 The UK is home to a huge variety of pollinating insects. This includes flies (6700 species) butterflies and moths (2200), bees (around 275), hoverflies (around 250), and other insects such as wasps, thrips and beetles.

4.38 Pollination is necessary for plant reproduction and therefore pollinators play a vital role in producing the food we eat and the wild plants that support many other species. Unfortunately, long term data relating to UK pollinators presents a concerning picture. For example, three species of bumblebee have gone extinct, half of the remaining bumblebee species are in decline and two thirds of moths and 71% of butterflies are also in long term decline. The causes of this decline include: the loss and fragmentation of habitat e.g. since the 1930s the UK has lost 97% of all flower-rich grassland (equivalent to an area the size of Wales); climate change; increase reliance on pesticides; poor management of existing flower-rich sites; and the loss of and damage to brownfield sites.

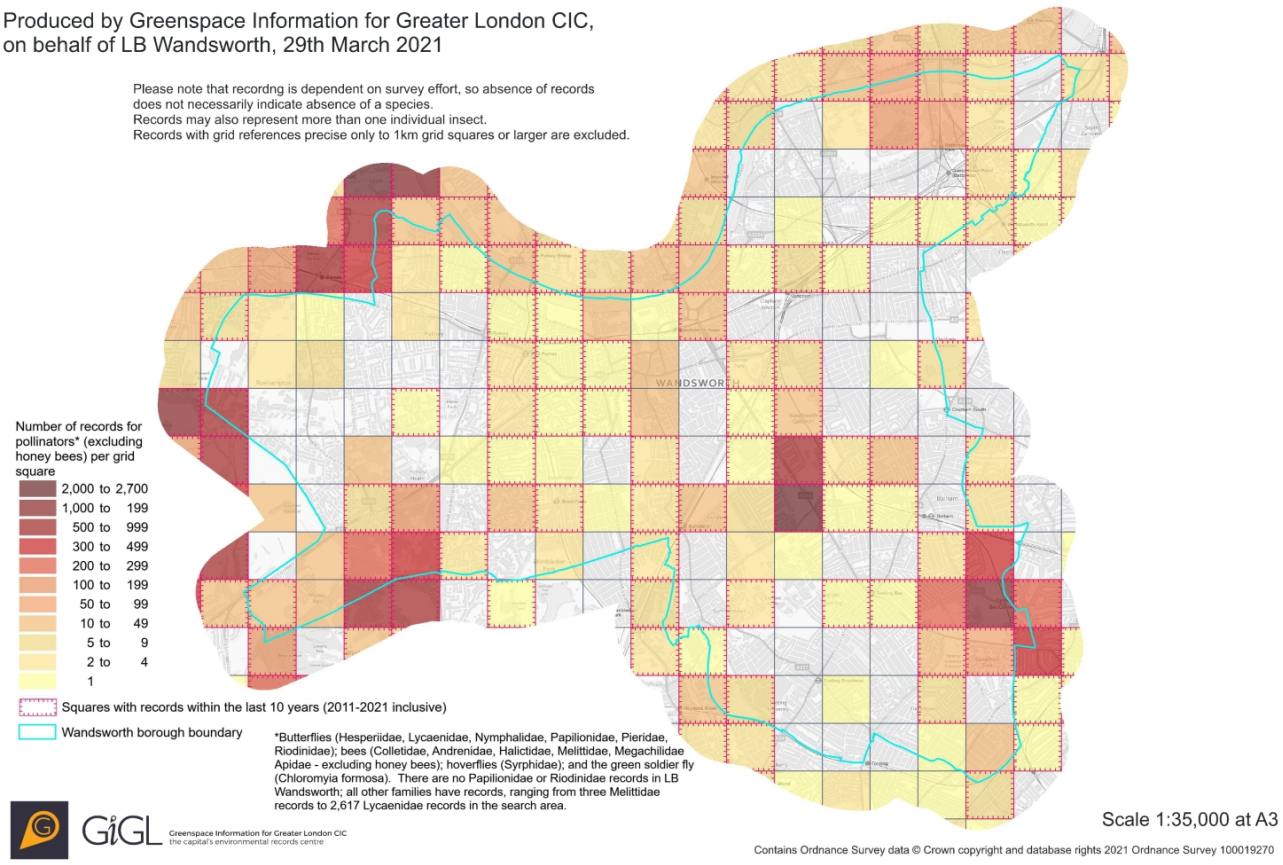


Figure 11 Pollinator Records in Wandsworth

New developments can play an important role in preventing further harm to and supporting the recovery of pollinators by taking the following actions:

- Abiding by the mitigation hierarchy and where possible designing new buildings and landscaping around established habitats.
- Looking at how new developments provide an opportunity to contribute to pollinator corridors.
- Planting native and non-native UK pollinator friendly species that provide forage, nesting and hibernation habitat for pollinators throughout the year.
- Where practical incorporating biodiverse roofs.
- Providing nesting sites for pollinators ranging from bee bricks and nesting boxes to sand piles and areas of bare ground.
- Making sure landscape management plans prioritise hand weeding and promote the avoidance of the use of herbicides except under exceptional circumstances.
- Incorporating practices in the landscaping management plans such as leaving some seed heads and areas of longer grass during the winter for invertebrates to hibernate in.

For more details, please see:

- Wildlife Gardening – Building for Bees, Bugslife.

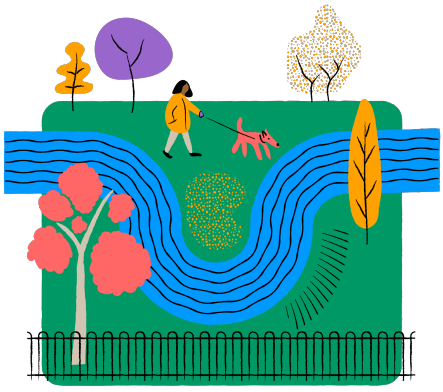
Priority Habitats

4.39 Priority Habitats are those listed under Section 41 of the NERC Act 2006 Habitats and species of principal importance in England - GOV.UK.

4.40 Mitigation and enhancement for priority habitats will largely be delivered through the principles of biodiversity net gain and driven by the London Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) (link to be provided when avaliable). Priority habitats should be retained, restored and enhanced within proposal designs as far as possible, and where proposals will result in the loss of or degradation to priority habitats, compensation will be required.

4.41 Following the principles of biodiversity net gain, enhancement of habitats can involve either the improvement of existing habitats or the creation of new ones. Improvement of existing habitats should aim to exceed the baseline condition of the habitat, for example, from poor to moderate or moderate to good condition. Creation of new habitats should always consider the baseline habitat which will be sacrificed to make way for the new habitat, and therefore the new habitat should always be of the same or higher distinctiveness to the baseline habitat.

4.42 Furthermore, the Local Biodiversity Action Plans of London and Wandsworth as well as the LNRS (links to documents to be provided when available) provide a framework for the recovery of priority habitats which are present within the locality, and the specified actions contained within these documents should be used to inform proposal designs, mitigation and enhancement strategies.



Aquatic and riverine environment

Current and future challenges to the riverine environment

4.43 Our aquatic and riverine environments are a core part of the environment that we live in. In Wandsworth our rivers, their banks and surrounding environments contribute to the special and distinctive character of the borough. The rivers are important components of the wider Green Infrastructure network and provide valuable habitats for wildlife and recreational opportunities for local communities.

4.44 As the effects of climate change continue, and with necessary changes to the operation of the Thames Barrier imminent, flooding within riparian riverside areas will undoubtedly become more common and more significant. The protection of people, properties and infrastructure from the risk of fluvial and tidal flooding is essential in this borough and the integrity of the flood defence infrastructure must therefore be maintained.

4.45 Local Plan Policy LP59 Riverside Uses, including River-dependent, River-related and Adjacent Usestates that new development on sites adjoining the River Thames, River Wandle, and Beverley Brook will be supported where it promotes the naturalisation of the riverbanks where feasible.

Buffer zones

4.46 Development adjacent to the river corridors will be expected to contribute to improvements and enhancements to the river environment. Furthermore, to prepare and protect the borough against future flood events, a buffer zone of 8 metres will be required on all new developments adjacent to the borough's rivers (including the fluvial Thames) with a 16m buffer required on sites adjacent to the tidal Thames. This presents opportunities for significant habitat enhancements on these sites. There may however be situations where it is not feasible to set back development by the above amounts. Where applicants wish to depart from these standards, full justification must be provided at planning application stage and agreed with the Environment Agency.

4.47 These buffer zones should be free of hard landscaping where appropriate, and be designed in relation to four objectives, including:

- Reducing surface-water runoff into rivers and streams
- Providing space for the maintenance and future upgrade of flood defences
- Enhancing biodiversity
- Increase public access alongside and to the river

4.48 Planting schemes within buffer zones should consist of native, locally sourced plants, shrubs and trees where possible. Thought should be given to the mature height of newly planted trees and shrubs to prevent overshading of the channel, in addition to the density and aspect of the planting. Trees and shrubs planted on north-facing riverbanks will cast greater shade on the river.

4.49 If the buffer zone between the development and the river includes the water's edge, then native marginal semi-aquatic vegetation should be planted or encouraged to grow. This may be aided by the use of fixable infrastructure such as floating biohavens, coir rolls or pre-planted coir pallets.

4.50 Buffer zones should contribute to creating and maintaining 'dark corridors' along rivers and should be void of all but the minimal most essential artificial lighting at night. Any essential lighting should avoid direct spillage of light onto the river and the water's surface. See also section on Lighting.

4.51 Where barriers to fish movement, such as weirs, are present in a watercourse adjacent to or within a development, the design should include the removal of that barrier, or where not feasible, measures to allow for the natural movement of fish within the watercourse.

4.52 Ecological terracing to provide fish refuge and wading bird forage should be considered. Improved fish/eel refuges are encouraged with new pontoons or structures within the watercourse.

River Thames

4.53 Whilst the River Thames rises in Thames Head in Gloucestershire, the tidal section of the Thames runs for 95 miles from Teddington lock in west London and enters the North Sea around Tilbury, Essex, and Gravesend, Kent, via the Thames Estuary. A Site of Metropolitan Importance for Wildlife, the Tidal Thames, which runs along the north of Wandsworth, is home to over 100 species of fish, including many endangered species such as European eels, seabass and smelt. Recent research by the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) has shown that as well as being a pathway between freshwater habitat and the open seas, the Tidal Thames provides vital nursery habitat for many fish species, affording protection from predators and strong tides.

For more details, please see:

- Fish conservation in the tidal Thames, Zoological Society of London

River Wandle

4.54 The River Wandle is an important river corridor, which runs for 14 kilometres from Croydon, through Sutton, Merton and joins the River Thames at Wandsworth. As a fast-flowing river, it has been used to power mills since the Roman times and was heavily industrialised during the 17th,18th and 19th centuries, playing an important role during the Industrial Revolution. Becoming one of the most polluted rivers in England, the River Wandle has benefited from significant environmental improvements in recent decades and in 2011 was named by the Environment Agency as one of the most improved rivers in England and Wales.

4.55 Where appropriate, and in line with Local Plan Policy LP59 (Riverside Uses, including River-dependent, River-related and Adjacent Use), development alongside and adjacent to the River Wandle is expected to improve the river habitat, prioritising naturalisation where possible, as well as improved, managed access to the river for the local community.

Beverley Brook

4.56 The Beverley Brook is a 14.5 kilometre long river, rising in Sutton and joining the Thames at Barn Elms. It also has two tributaries, the Ply Brook and the East Ply which meet at New Malden. The Beverley Brook moves through several green spaces including Wimbledon Common, Richmond Park and Barnes Common. In recent years, multiple river restoration projects have been carried out along the Beverley

Brook, particularly within these green spaces, to help improve the ecological functioning of the river and to create more habitats for wildlife.

4.57 Where appropriate, developments alongside and adjacent to the Beverley Brook should improve the river habitat, prioritising naturalisation where possible, as well as securing improved, managed access to the river for the local community.

Ponds and Lakes

4.58 Ponds and lakes are vital habitats for aquatic, semi-aquatic and avian wildlife. Proposals affecting or close to ponds and lakes must seek, in the first instance, to avoid the loss of or degradation to these habitats. Where ponds and other standing water bodies fall within a development site, efforts should be made to enhance their biodiversity value as part of the scheme. There should be no net loss of ponds and any loss of ponds resulting from a development proposal should be appropriately compensated for by the installation of new wildlife ponds within the site. These should be of a similar size and equal or better biodiversity value to the ponds being lost and there should be no net loss of ponds.

4.59 Where ponds are present on or close to a development site, the potential for the presence of great crested newts must be considered. **Great crested newts** are a protected species in the UK, and a Natural England Mitigation Licence may be required to carry out works on site which would otherwise constitute a legal offence in relation to great crested newts. As part of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA), the ecologist should complete a desk study of local record distribution and a Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) assessment of any ponds on or within the development site, in order to determine if further measures are necessary to protect great crested newts within the development proposals.

For more details, please see:

- Freshwater Habitat's Trust Pond Creation Toolkit, Freshwater Habitats Trust.

Watercourses and Biodiversity Net Gain

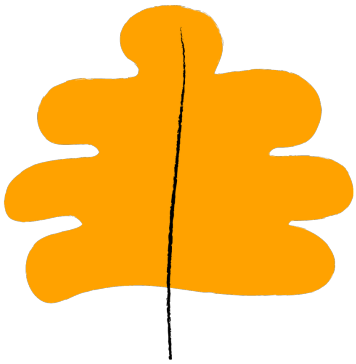
4.60 The Watercourse Unit Module (previously referred to as the Watercourse Metric and/or Rivers and Streams Metric) is one component of the Biodiversity Metric. Any river or stream that lies within 10m of the red line boundary must be included, with a minimum of 10% net gain of Watercourse Habitat Units delivered. For canals, ditches and culverts, the Watercourse Unit Module is applied where it is located within 5m of the red line boundary. Watercourse Units cannot be traded across other habitat types. Uplift in Area Habitat Units and Hedgerow Units will need to be achieved separately where these habitats are present.

5 Guidance on associated policy and how developments can make ecological enhancements

5.1 The following sections provide supporting information to ensure applicants can successfully integrate biodiversity into their proposals. It sets out guidance on how designing for biodiversity interconnects with other policy objectives such as the Urban Greening Factor (UGF) and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and how these objectives relate to each other.

5.2 It also provides guidance on types of planting and clear information as to how green and other features can be successfully incorporated into a development plan. Detail is included as to how new green features, such as green roofs and biodiverse gardens, can be holistically incorporated into sites and how lighting can be included in a complimentary way.

5.3 This section will help applicants ensure their developments can successfully mitigate and enhance biodiversity on site, such as through screening/ buffering from adverse environmental impacts including artificial light, noise, pollution, and overuse/inappropriate use from people and domestic animals.



Associated policies and considerations

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

5.4 A complete Biodiversity Gain Plan and BNG Metric are now required to discharge the mandatory pre-commencement BNG condition which should be submitted with the planning application. Applicants are encouraged to complete the Biodiversity Net Gain Checklist to show how their development has considered, or is exempt from, biodiversity net gain.

5.5 Natural England have published a BNG irreplaceable habitats list. This list has also been set out in regulations (The Biodiversity Gain Requirements (Irreplaceable Habitat) Regulations [2024].

For more details, please see:

- Mandatory biodiversity net gain requirements for guidance on Biodiversity Net Gain in Wandsworth, how and what to provide and what exemptions exist
- Even if you think your development is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain, please complete the Biodiversity Net Gain Checklist specifying the reason for the exemption.

5.6 **Please note, applications exempt from BNG will still be subject to existing policy and wildlife legislation and these applications are still expected to demonstrate their potential impacts on biodiversity either on or adjacent to the development site, how any impacts will be mitigated, as well as provide biodiversity enhancements onsite**.

5.7 Please see also the section on Watercourse and Biodiversity Net Gain and the section below on conservation covenants.

Urban Greening

5.8 Local Plan Policy LP57 states that **all** development proposals should contribute to the greening of the borough and to integrate urban greening into a site and building design from the start where possible. Measures to consider include:

- High quality landscaping
- Green roofs and walls
- Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

5.9 **Major proposals** must follow the London Plan's UGF guidance to:

- calculate their Urban Greening Factor score
- Meet or exceed the UGF targets set by the London Plan (2021):
  - 0.4 for residential developments
  - 0.3 for commercial developments

5.10 These are the minimum UGF scores expected unless otherwise justified.

5.11 UGF serves as an effective tool to promote visible and structural greening within development projects. **However, it should be viewed as complementary to the statutory BNG requirement established under the Environment Act 2021, rather than a replacement.** The UGF emphasises the quantity and structure of greening initiatives, while BNG evaluates the ecological function, habitat type, and condition using a nationally standardised metric.

5.12 UGF interventions can contribute to BNG outcomes, especially through habitat creation or enhancement. However, they should not be included twice unless they comply with the specific criteria set by the BNG metric. It is recommended that applicants coordinate UGF and BNG strategies to ensure that urban greening efforts also provide genuine biodiversity benefits wherever feasible. Aligning both frameworks during site design enhances multifunctionality, climate resilience, and compliance with regulatory requirements. Landscaping plans should also be coordinated with UGF and BNG strategies to avoid conflict and ensure deliverability is feasible.

5.13 In exceptional circumstances, where it is not feasible to meet the UGF thresholds, for example due to heritage constraints, this must be clearly demonstrated. Applicants should also demonstrate that greening opportunities have been maximised and provide justification for this approach within the planning submission.

5.14 Please see the Checklist for UGF Submission Requirements in section 12 'Appendix 6: Checklist for UGF Submission Requirement'.

Conservation covenants

5.15 A conservation covenant is a private, voluntary agreement between a landowner, including developers, and a designated responsible body, for the long-term conservation of the natural or historic features of land. The agreement must have a conservation purpose, be for the public good, and state the positive or restrictive obligations needed to achieve the purpose. Obligations with respect to payments and monitoring can also be included. The conservation covenant must be executed as a deed and registered as a local land charge, and the obligations are legally binding on the landowner (and their successors) and the responsible body. There is no template agreement, as they can be used in many different ways.

5.16 The landowner must either be the freeholder of the land or a leaseholder with more than seven years remaining on the lease. Responsible bodies are approved by DEFRA, which maintains a published list, and can be a local authority, a public body or charity, or a private sector organisation working in the conservation sector. The current list can be found at this link: Conservation covenants: list of designated responsible bodies. The responsible body will monitor the land and ensure compliance with the agreement and can charge for its services.

5.17 Conservation covenants can be used by individuals or organisations (including local authorities) to agree and fund work for biodiversity on private land, outside the planning process. For example, one might be used to agree how land is managed to conserve a rare habitat or species, or to prevent harmful actions such as spraying pesticides. In these circumstances, the length of the agreement can vary according to the specific circumstances and wishes of the parties. The covenant can be discharged, modified or transferred to another responsible body through mutual agreement.

5.18 Conservation covenants can also be used to agree how land can contribute towards Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and to secure the 30-year maintenance period. Whilst section 106 agreements are likely to be used by local authorities to secure net gain and financial contributions relating to on-site BNG, conservation covenants are more flexible and particularly suited to securing off-site BNG or habitat bank units: conservation covenants are not governed by the Community Infrastructure Levy regime; developers can make the agreement with any responsible body; and they can be put in place ahead of the planning process, reducing delays.

5.19 A conservation covenant for BNG purposes will last for a minimum of 30 years. Where linked to a planning permission, it must not be ended unless another mechanism is in place for securing those biodiversity gains for the remaining time of the agreement.

Relationship with Heritage

5.20 Protecting and enhancing nature is an important consideration when conserving heritage assets which may already be home to biodiversity such as lichen, ferns, mosses and have features such as bat boxes.

5.21 Developments in conservation areas, or those which could affect other designated and non-designated heritage assets including their settings, need to carefully consider how biodiversity can be incorporated without adversely impacting on the character, function and preservation of a specific area or asset. There is no one-size-fits-all approach or solution to encouraging biodiversity in the historic environment. Applicants should not presume that a viable and sustainable solution cannot be found or be provided. Ultimately, the merits of a proposal and any potential harm to a heritage asset will need to be considered and assessed on a case-by case basis, as it will depend on site specific circumstances and the significance of the heritage asset/s affected.

Types of Planting

5.22 All new planting within landscaping schemes should prioritise a mixture of native and non-native wildlife friendly species and should be locally sourced where possible. It is also of paramount importance that plants and trees come from reputable nurseries with strong biosecurity protocols, as imported trees and plants are often vectors for pests and diseases which affect native plant and tree health. It is also important to consider planting schemes that are more sustainable and require less watering.

For more details, please see:

- Plants for Pollinators - Garden plants, the Royal Horticultural Society. This resource provides a list of garden plants which will flower throughout the year providing a constant nectar source for pollinators.

5.23 It is recommended that a minimum of 60% of the planting schedule is derived from the species on this list or other native, locally occurring species and that the remainder be a mixture of seasonally flowering plants and shrub species. The Bat Conservation Trust's Wild About Gardens - Stars of the Night guide provides a list of night scented species that should also be considered.

5.24 As well as pollinator friendly species, plants that provide fruit and seeds are also important. Furthermore, combining plants that provide a variety of structure and food sources should also be considered to better support a greater range of wildlife and life stages of individual species. For example, a mixed native species hedge along the boundary line of a new development, interspersed with trees and with an adjacent wildflower meadow, will have much greater biodiversity value than any of these habitats on their own.

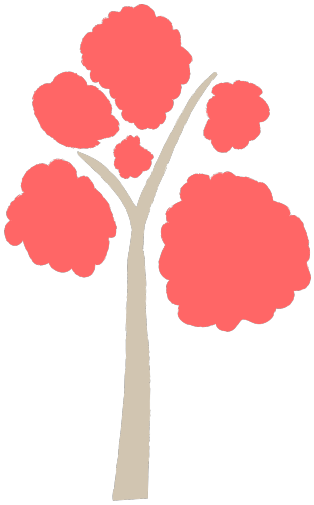
5.25 Trees and hedges present an opportunity for creating good quality habitats on new developments and so it is important to consider the wildlife value of the species selected, as well as their amenity value.

For more details, please see:

- 10 Trees to Attract Birds and Other Wildlife, Woodland Trust. This guide provides information about wildlife friendly tree species.
- Plant a hedge for wildlife, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. Provides guidance for planting hedges for wildlife.

5.26 It is the Council's expectation that new development makes provision for the incorporation of new trees. Due to the impacts of climate change, native species are not always appropriate instead species that provide the same amenity value (crown size, flowering characteristics, seasonal colour and appearance) are encouraged. For detailed guidance and recommendations on tree planting for new developments please see the Council's Trees SPD (link to be provided when available).

5.27 For larger schemes, a Landscape Management Plan may be required to ensure that new planting is implemented and maintained effectively for maximum biodiversity and amenity value. Aftercare and management during the first three to five years after planting are critical for a tree's establishment.



Invasive Non-Native Species and Biosecurity

5.28 Invasive non-native plants, where present on a development site, must be managed or eradicated, and not allowed to spread onto adjacent land. For some species, which are listed on Schedule 9 Part 1.B of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, it is a legal offence to cause or allow their spread into the wild.

5.29 The London Invasive Species Initiative - Species of Concern list provides a comprehensive list of plants, shrubs and trees which should under no circumstances be included in landscaping proposals for new developments. This includes cherry laurel *(Prunus laurocerasus)* and butterfly-bush (*Buddleia davidii*).

5.30 As well as avoiding invasive species and ensuring that all plants purchased come from reputable nurseries with strong biosecurity protocols, it is essential that biosecurity measures are implemented and adhered to by all workers on site. Footwear, tools and equipment can spread organic matter and pathogens. Also, workers travelling between sites or moving between different habitats within a site, such as between a garden and standing water, pose an even greater risk of cross-contamination. More information on plant passports is available on the Government's website including when they are required.

Incorporating new features

5.31 Local Plan Policy LP55 (Biodiversity) is clear that proposals are required to protect and enhance biodiversity, and this can be through incorporating or creating new habitats or biodiversity features within sites. Local Plan Policy LP57 (Urban Greening Factor) also requests that proposals contribute towards urban greening. It is common practice to attach conditions to permissions to ensure that these enhancements are delivered. The type of new feature that would be appropriate may relate to the nature of the site and any recommendations made as a result of the submitted ecological reports.

Types of features which could be included in a scheme:

- Incorporating green or biodiverse roofs into the proposal's design
- Nesting boxes for species appropriate to the location, for example tawny owls, bats, etc.
- Bee bricks/boxes
- Swift bricks
- Bat bricks and access roof tiles
- Small mammal passages (such as hedgehog holes and tunnels)
- Creation and long-term maintenance of stag beetle loggeries and dead wood piles as part of landscaping schemes is essential to supporting this species

More information is included relating to specific species in the section above.

Front gardens and cross-overs

5.32 All areas of green and open space provide biodiversity benefits, including front gardens. It is encouraged that front gardens and the small areas of landscaping that they contain are retained. Effectively designed front gardens can provide biodiversity benefits whilst providing parking for residents.

5.33 Introducing permeable or plantable paving instead of hard paving will reduce localised flooding and regulate the air temperature around our homes. Permitted development requires areas over 5sqm to be permeable or provide direct run-off for the water to a porous area.

5.34 Guidance is provided in the Council's Housing SPD (adopted 2016) (see in particular Chapter 5) on how to create a parking space in your front garden and what permission you may need. The guidance includes details on vehicle crossovers, what permission is needed and points to consider. The installation of a dropped kerb or vehicular crossover can also have implications for trees, which need to be considered from the outset. Please refer to the Council's Trees SPD (link to be provided when available) for further guidance.

For more details, please see:

- Guidance on permeable surfacing for front gardens, the Environment Agency.
- The Royal Horticultural Society's website includes a series of design guides and advice for best practice in front garden design.
    - The front garden designing advice provides guidance on how to balance a green front garden with car parking.
    - For inspiration on how to design your front garden, see the front garden inspiration webpage.
    - The Front Gardens: Planting guidance provides suggestions and consideration for planting in front gardens.
    - The guide how to green your grey front garden provides advice on low maintenance ways to green your front garden.

Creating biodiverse gardens

The importance of garden habitats

5.35 With 20% of land in Wandsworth categorised as private gardens, residents have an important role to play in protecting and promoting biodiversity, as well as maximising opportunities for nature recovery.

5.36 Gardens include a range of habitats and are inter-connected green spaces for animals such as hedgehogs that need to roam over large areas. Gardens are particularly important for pollinators as they support a diversity of plants flowering throughout the whole year. As well as being wildlife habitats, gardens offer benefits in terms of drainage and water conservation, air cooling, air quality, and general health and well-being.

Encouraging biodiversity in private gardens

5.37 The Wandsworth Biodiversity Action Plan (link to be provided when available) contains a wealth of further information on how nature recovery can be supported in private gardens. As a starting point, measures to enhance and encourage biodiversity in private gardens should target priority and protected species, including:

- Birds: Song thrush, house sparrow, swift
- Mammals: Hedgehogs, badgers, bats
- Plants and trees: Native bluebell, elm
- Invertebrates: Stag beetle, bees (all species), butterflies (all species)
- Amphibians: Common frog, common toad, smooth and palmate newt
- Reptiles: slow worm and common lizard

Species group	Interventions
Invertebrates	• Creation of stag beetle and hoverfly loggeries • Creation of bee banks and installation of solitary bee sand planters • Creation of wildflower lawns • Establishment of flowering planted borders
Birds	• Swift and house sparrow boxes • Dense shrub and meadow grassland establishment
Flora	• Planting native bulbs, trees and seeds • Planting of disease-resistant elm trees
Mammals	• Sensitive lighting schemes • Holes in fences and walls • Planting of native flowering shrubs and trees

Species group	Interventions
	• Compost heaps • Planting of hedgerows
Amphibians and reptiles	• Pond creation • Hibernacula • Compost heaps • Measures to encourage invertebrates

Table 10 Interventions to encourage these important species in gardens

For more details, please see:

- Gardening for the Environment, Royal Horticultural Society.

Creating ponds

5.38 Ponds provide a unique and biodiverse wildlife habitat and play an important role in our history and culture. Sadly, many ponds are threatened by pollution, the changing climate, drainage, and development, and many are in very poor condition.

5.39 However, it is estimated that that the nation's gardeners have created an additional two to three million garden ponds. These small waterbodies increase the habitat available for our freshwater wildlife and may link fragmented wildlife communities.

5.40 Ponds and wetlands can be created using a variety of methods and can range from very large to very small. It is not necessary to reserve a large amount of space for garden ponds. Development proposals which retain and create ponds within the landscape, and which capture and direct rainfall or grey water, will be encouraged.

For more details, please see:

- Make a Big Splash for Nature, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust. This guidance provides information on how to create and manage wildlife ponds in gardens.

Green Roofs

5.41 Where green roofs are to be incorporated, applicants are encouraged to provide biodiverse roofs which include wildlife friendly planting and other habitat features such as log piles, sand piles, rope, ephemeral scrapes etc. These are the types of green roof that will have the greatest value for local wildlife.

Types of Green Roofs

- **Extensive Green Roof:** These lightweight, low-maintenance systems feature a shallow substrate depth that is typically less than 100mm. They do not require irrigation and are commonly planted with sedum or other drought resistant species. Although they provide modest biodiversity benefits, they can contribute to cooling buildings and reducing stormwater runoff.
- **Biodiverse Roof:** Specifically designed for habitat creation and enhance biodiversity, these roofs are constructed to support a targeted set of species or a broader range of biodiversity. They may include elements such as deadwood, gravel, logs, and varied substrates to accommodate invertebrates, birds, and pioneer plants (lichens, mosses, and grasses).
- **Semi-Intensive Green Roof**: With substrate depths ranging from 100 to 200mm, these roofs support a greater variety of plants compared to extensive systems, including grasses, herbs, and small shrubs. They may require occasional irrigation and maintenance, offering improved biodiversity.
- **Intensive Green Roof (Roof Garden)**: These high maintenance, irrigated systems feature substrate depths exceeding 200mm. They can support a wide array of plants, including trees and lawns, effectively creating landscaped gardens on rooftops. Due to their resource demands, biodiversity benefits vary depending on planting choices.

Design Guidance

5.42 All green roof proposals should:

- Be developed according to best practice guidelines, such as the most recent Green Roof Code of Best Practice.
- Include comprehensive details of the design, species selection, substrate depth, and planned maintenance regime.
- Maximise biodiversity potential through the incorporation of native planting where feasible.
- Consider orientation, height, wind exposure, and structural load capacity.
- Demonstrate how long-term benefits to biodiversity will be maintained.

5.43 Please check the Local Validation List for the latest requirements.

For more details, please see:

- The GRO Code of Best Practice, the Green Roof Organisation.

Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SuDS)

5.44 Applicants should approach SuDS as not only as a flood risk tool but as an opportunity to create high quality habitats and contribute to ecological enhancement. By doing so, developments can support ecological recovery while complying with the requirements of the Local Plan (including Local Plan Policies LP10 (Responding to the Climate Crisis) and LP12 (Water and Flooding)) and contributing to the Council's climate resilience and nature recovery objectives.

5.45 The design of SuDS features—such as swales, rain gardens, filter strips, detention basins, green roofs, and permeable paving—should contribute to the borough's green infrastructure network and support locally distinctive habitats and species.

5.46 Wherever possible, SuDS should be designed to:

- Support local biodiversity targets, including habitats for pollinators, invertebrates, amphibians, and birds, particularly those identified in Wandsworth's Local Nature Recovery Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Enhance ecological connectivity, linking fragmented green spaces such as parks, commons, river corridors (e.g. the Wandle and Thames), and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs).
- Incorporate native and climate-resilient planting, with a focus on species-rich, low-maintenance vegetation suited to urban conditions.

5.47 Applicants are encouraged to provide long-term management and maintenance plans that ensure biodiversity objectives are upheld throughout the lifetime of the development.

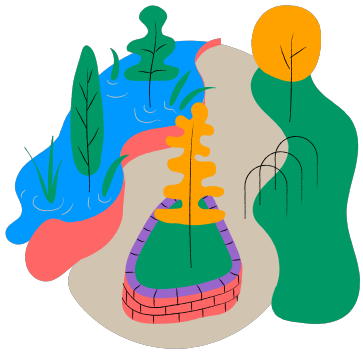
5.48 Applicants should demonstrate how SuDS features have been embedded into the layout and landscape of the site from the outset, supporting several strategic local plan policies such as Wandsworth Town (PM2), as well as Local Plan Policy LP12 (Water and Flooding), and Local Plan Policy LP10 (Responding to the Climate Crisis) of the Wandsworth Local Plan. This approach should also align with the borough's aspirations to support biodiversity net gain, climate resilience, and environmental justice, particularly in areas with poor access to nature or a history of surface water flooding.

For more details, please see:

- Guidance on Biodiversity Net Gain, Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs.
- Urban Greening Factor Guidance, Greater London Authority.

5.49 Trees are also an important consideration when incorporating SuDS into development. This applies to the planting of new trees, which can naturally perform SuDS-like features, but also existing trees, which need to be considered and protected when SuDS are being designed and implemented, for example, during basement development. Please refer to the Council's Trees and Development SPD (link to be provided when available) for further guidance.

5.50 By treating SuDS as multifunctional ecological assets, developments can deliver visible, measurable contributions to Wandsworth's nature recovery goals, while enhancing placemaking and providing benefits for both people and wildlife.



Lighting

Impacts of artificial light at night

5.51 Artificial light at night (ALAN) has increased by approximately 49% over the last 30 years. Exposure to artificial light has the potential to have a negative impact on a wide range of wildlife, from birds, bats, and fish to plant life, insects and other flora and fauna. The impact of artificial lighting on biodiversity is known to be complex and varies between species. It can either attract or repel certain species, interfering with natural feeding, breeding and migration patterns.

5.52 The extent of urbanised land is increasing, which could have a negative impact on habitat quality and wildlife corridors. Studies show that activity of pipistrelle bats (our most common bat species) is reduced in areas where the proportion of built surface exceeds 60%.

Guidance for lighting design

5.53 When designing lighting schemes in urban spaces, a number of factors will have a bearing on the effects to wildlife. These include:

- Brightness
- Colour temperature
- Direction of beam
- Intermediate attenuation
- Hours and periods of use
- Proximity to important habitats
- Glazing treatments on buildings

5.54 Lighting schemes which are designed to be ecologically sensitive will be encouraged by the Council. Such schemes may incorporate the following:

- Avoidance of light-spill onto sensitive habitats, in particular river corridors
- Lower lumen bulbs
- Use of downward lighting and avoidance of upward lighting
- Use of 'warmer' coloured bulbs, <3000K, ideally <2700K
- Use of baffles, cowls or screens to minimise directional light spill
- Lighting on short timers, or motion-triggered timers
- Lighting schemes restricted to certain periods of use, such as during the winter months (November to March)
- Lighting schemes with early curfews
- Low-transmittance glazing in building fenestration
- Dimmable lighting fixtures

For more details, please see:

- Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night, The Institute of Lighting Professionals. and Bat Conservation Trust. This jointly created document provides guidance to aid the design and implementation of ecologically sensitive lighting schemes, which should be referred to during the planning stage of your project.

Lighting plans

5.55 When submitting a development proposal which includes artificial lighting, applicants will be required to submit full details and specifications of the proposed lighting scheme or secure this via a condition, including lux contour plans, which demonstrate the level of lux spill onto the surrounding areas and habitats via overlay onto a suitable basemap. The contours (and/or coloured numbers) for 0.2, 0.5, 1, 5, and 10 lux must be clearly shown, as well as appropriate contours for values above these.

5.56 It is preferred that **major** development proposals provide isobars and 3D images. These would also be advisable on all other schemes along with contour plans being the minimum requirement. Where there is already existing lighting, comparing the existing and proposed lighting on site will be necessary.

For more details, please see:

- Guidance Note on the Reduction of Obtrusive Light, the Institute of Lighting Professionals.

6 Glossary

Environment Agency (EA) – A UK government agency concerned mainly with rivers, flooding, and pollution and providing public information.

Green Chains – A series of linked open spaces and river corridors forming extended parkways for the public and wildlife in natural surroundings. These can cross borough boundaries.

Green Corridor – Relatively continuous areas of open space leading through the built environment, which may link to each other and to the Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land. They often-consist of rivers, railway embankments and cuttings, roadside verges, canals, parks, playing fields and extensive areas of private gardens. They may allow animals and plants to be found further into the built-up area than would otherwise be the case and provide an extension of the habitats of the sites they join.

Green and Blue Infrastructure – Comprises the network of parks, rivers, water spaces and green spaces, as well as the green features of the built environment, such as street trees, green roofs and sustainable drainage systems, all of which provide a wide range of benefits and services.

Green Space – All vegetated open space of public value (whether publicly or privately owned), including parks, woodlands, nature reserves, gardens and sports fields, which offer opportunities for sport and recreation, wildlife conservation and other benefits such as storing flood water, and can provide an important visual amenity in the urban landscape.

Local Plan – A Local Development Document which includes policies encouraging development, allocating sites or including development management policies as set out in Regulation 6 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

London Plan – The plan is a spatial development strategy for the Greater London area, to deal with matters of strategic importance to the area. The current London Plan was published by the GLA in 2021.

Local Nature Reserve (LNR)– A site of local nature conservation or geological significance, identified by local planning authorities.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) – A local nature recovery strategy will agree priorities for nature recovery and propose actions in the locations where it would make a particular contribution to achieving those priorities. Every strategy must contain a local habitat map and a written statement of biodiversity priorities.

Metropolitan Open Land (MOL) – An area of predominantly open land which is of significance to London as a whole, or to a part of London.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the Government's Planning Policies.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) – The Government's detailed planning guidance. Also referred to as **Planning Practice Guidance** (PPG).

Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC) – A site generally identified for special protection because of its local importance for flora or fauna.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)– A sequence of management practices and control structures designed to drain surface water from buildings and hardstanding in a sustainable way.

7 Appendix 1: Ecological Legislation

Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006

Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006 places a duty to conserve biodiversity on public authorities in England. All local authorities, community, parish and town councils, police, fire and health authorities and utility companies must have regard for the purposes of conserving biodiversity in a manner that is consistent with the exercise of their normal functions.

Section 41 provides a list of species and habitats for which their conservation must be afforded consideration within the exercise of local authority functions. Most notably are water vole, otter, hedgehog, stag beetle, reptiles, common toad, great crested newt, certain bat species, European eel, house sparrow, starling and song thrush, and habitats found extensively in the borough such as acid grassland, ponds, rivers, reedbeds, deciduous woodland and parkland.

Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981

The Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) is the primary legislation which protects animals, plants and habitats in the UK. Part One of the act gives protection to native species and controls the release of non-native species.

- **Section 1** prohibits the intentional killing, injuring or taking of any wild bird and the taking, damaging or destroying of the nest (whilst being built or in use), or eggs. It is an offense to disturb nesting birds listed on Schedule 1 of the act. The Schedule 1 listed species perhaps most likely to be encountered by the departments of Richmond Council include but are not limited to:

    - Kingfisher – River habitats, works within close proximity to riverbank;
    - Red kite – Tall trees, woodland and parkland;
    - Barn owl – Woodland and parkland with old, hollowed trees; works in and around the Royal Parks;
    - Peregrine – Tall buildings
    - Black redstart – crevices and cavities in buildings
    - Short-toed treecreeper – Mature woodland
    - Cetti's warbler – Works in close proximity to reedbeds, ponds and lakes.

    Offenders may face a fine and/or 6 months imprisonment, or 2 years and/or an unlimited fine on indictment.

- **Section 9** prohibits the intentional killing, injuring or taking, possession and trade of wild animals listed in Schedule 5. In addition, places used for shelter and protection on safeguarded against damage, destruction and obstruction, and animals must not be disturbed whilst occupying those spaces. Species most likely to be encountered during the functional undertakings of London Borough of Richmond-Upon-Thames include:

    - Water vole and otter – Work within close proximity to river habitats;
    - Bats – Work affecting buildings and trees, removal of hedgerows, external lighting, new street lighting, work affecting river habitats;
    - Reptiles* (slow worm, grass snake, common lizard, adder) – Work affecting grassland, scrub, bracken, woodland edge and brownfield habitats, work in close proximity to railway and river embankments. (*Protected from killing, injuring and sale only).
    - Great crested newt – Work affecting ponds and habitat within 250m of ponds.

    Offenders may face a fine and/or 6 months imprisonment, or 2 years and/or an unlimited fine on indictment.

- **Section 14** prohibits causing plants listed on Schedule 9 Pt. II to grow or spread in the wild. This list includes regularly encountered species such as:

    - Japanese knotweed
    - Himalayan balsam

- Giant hogweed
- Floating pennywort
- *Elodea* waterweeds
- Montbretia
- Three-cornered garlic
- Variegated yellow archangel
- *Cotoneaster*species

Any works which cause spread of these species through disturbance or transportation are likely to constitute an offence. Schedule 9 invasive species are often overlooked in aquatic habitats where they may be less conspicuous, in particular in ponds and lakes.

Offenders may face a £5000 fine and/or 6 months imprisonment, or 2 years and/or an unlimited fine on indictment.

Environmental Protection Act 1990

The Environmental Protection Act (EPA) sets out the appropriate methods of removing, transporting and disposing of 'controlled waste', which includes any soil, water or plant materials contaminated with certain invasive weeds including Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed. It places a duty of care on the producer and anyone they employ to dispose of soil or other material at a licenced facility who must deal with it in an appropriate way.

The EPA also empowers local authorities and the Environment Agency to issue notices to landowners requiring them to take action to control the spread of invasive plants.

Protection of Badgers Act 1992

This act protects badgers from killing, injuring, taking or treating cruelly, and prohibits damage, destruction, disturbance or interference with their setts. There are many badger setts in the borough, including on council land.

8 Appendix 2: Local Plan policies relevant to Biodiversity

LP53 Protection and Enhancement of Green and Blue Infrastructure (Strategic Policy)

A. The Council will protect the natural environment, enhance its quality and extend access to it. In considering proposals for development, the Council aims to create a comprehensive network of green and blue corridors and places, appropriate to the specific context. In doing so, it seeks to connect and enrich biodiversity through habitat improvement and protection at all scales, including priority habitats; and extend access to and maximise the recreation opportunities of our urban open spaces.

B. The Council will protect and extend access to existing public and private green and blue infrastructure in the borough and where appropriate secure its enhancement, including Metropolitan Open Land, major commons, wetlands, rivers, ponds, parks, allotments, trees and playing fields as well as smaller spaces, including play spaces.

C. Areas of open space, including those identified on the Policies Map, such as Metropolitan Open Land, and smaller areas not identified on the Policies Map will be protected, enhanced and made more accessible. Green chains and open spaces along them will be protected, made more accessible, and, where appropriate, enhanced in accordance with opportunities identified in the relevant All London Green Grid Area Framework.

D. New development on or affecting public and private green and blue infrastructure or open space will only be permitted where it does not harm the character, appearance or function of the green and blue infrastructure or open space. In assessing proposals, any impacts of the cumulative effect of development will be taken into account.

E. Any development which results in a reduction of green or blue infrastructure assets including protected open space as set out in Parts B and C above will not be supported, if exceptional circumstances exist, compensatory provision has to be made. In determining the amount, form and accessibility of open space provided for within a new development scheme, account will not be taken of the proximity and adequacy of existing open space.

LP55 Biodiversity

A. The Council will protect and, where appropriate, secure the enhancement of the borough's priority species, priority habitats and protected sites as well as the connectivity between such sites. This includes but is not limited to Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves, Local Wildlife Sites and Sites of Importance to Nature Conservation.

B. Development proposals will be required to protect and enhance biodiversity, through:

1. Ensuring that it would not have an adverse effect on the borough's designated sites of habitat and species of importance, as well as other existing species, wildlife, habitats and features of biodiversity value;
2. The incorporation and creation of new habitats or biodiversity features on development sites including through the design of buildings and use of Sustainable Drainage Systems where appropriate. Developments will be required to deliver a net gain in biodiversity, through the incorporation of ecological enhancements;
3. Ensuring that new biodiversity features or habitats connect to the existing ecological and green and blue infrastructure networks and complement surrounding habitats;
4. Enhancing wildlife corridors for the movement of species, including river, road and rail corridors, where opportunities arise; and
5. Maximising the provision of ecologically functional habitats within soft landscaping.

C. Development which would have an impact on priority species or priority habitat(s) will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where:

1. It has been demonstrated that there is no alternative site layout or site that would have a less harmful impacts; and
2. The impact has been adequately mitigated either through on or off-site measures

LP57 Urban Greening Factor

A. All development proposals should contribute to the greening of Wandsworth borough by including urban greening as a fundamental element of site and building design, and by incorporating measures such as high-quality landscaping (including trees), green roofs, green walls and nature-based sustainable drainage.

B. Development proposals will be required to:

1. Follow the guidance on the Urban Greening Factor (UGF) in the London Plan for calculating the minimum amount of urban greening required as well as for the thresholds different types of development will be required to meet;
2. Incorporate as much soft landscaping and permeable surfaces as possible; and
3. Take into consideration the vulnerability and importance of local ecological resources (such as water quality and biodiversity) when applying the principles of the UGF.

C. In exceptional circumstances, if it can be clearly demonstrated that meeting the thresholds would not be feasible, a financial contribution may be acceptable to provide for the improvement of biodiversity and green and blue infrastructure assets within the locality.

LP58 River Corridors

A. The natural, historic and built environment of the River Thames corridor and watercourses within the borough will be protected and, where appropriate, enhanced to ensure the achievement of a high-quality and accessible environment including through the provision of connections to existing and new communities and to maximise biodiversity benefits.

B. The biodiversity value of the borough's blue infrastructure assets will be protected and enhanced including that of the River Thames, River Wandle and Beverley Brook. Developments along the River Thames will be required to comply with The Thames Estuary Partnership Estuary Edges design guidance (2019).

C. Measures to protect and enhance rivers as a valuable resource for wildlife and biodiversity, including wildlife corridors and green chains will be supported (see LP55 Biodiversity). Development should not encroach within a minimum of 16m (tidal Thames) or 8m (other rivers including those culverted) of the top of the riverbank.

D. Existing river infrastructure that provides access to the river and the foreshore, such as piers, jetties, drawdocks, slipways, steps and stairs will be protected. New and enhanced infrastructure, including piers for riverbuses and the provision of enhanced services, will be supported.

E. Development which encroaches onto the river foreshore will not be supported. In accordance with Policy LP12 (Water and Flooding) development should be set back from river banks and existing flood defence infrastructure. Opportunities will be taken, in consultation with partner agencies including Natural England, the Port of London Authority and the Environment Agency, to create new habitats and reduce flood risk in accordance with the requirements of the Thames Estuary 2100 Plan and its riverside strategy approach.

LP59 Riverside Uses, including River-dependent, River-related and Adjacent Uses

A. New development on sites adjoining the River Thames, River Wandle, and Beverley Brook will be supported where it:

1. Provides sustainable transport choices including through the provision of access to public transport routes and incorporates public riverside walks and cycle-paths;
2. Protects identified strategic and local views;
3. Provides for new or enhanced open spaces and other community-based facilities and amenities;
4. Protects and enhances the habitat value of the river and shoreline, promotes the naturalisation of the riverbanks where feasible, and does not cause harm to the operation of the river regime, or its environment, biodiversity or archaeology (including to its banks, walls and foreshore);
5. Does not adversely impact on neighbouring sites and uses, including to docks, safeguarded wharves or other river-based infrastructure;
6. Provides appropriate riparian life-saving equipment and suicide prevention measures, where appropriate alongside riverside areas;
7. Does not cause harm to the special recreational character and function of Putney Embankment, including in connection with river sports. Facilities and activities which contribute to Putney Embankment's special recreational character will be protected and new facilities that make a positive contribution will be supported; and
8. Does not harm the stability or continuity of tidal or flood defences (in accordance with LP12 Water and Flooding).

B. Only river related or water compatible uses will be acceptable in river channels (in accordance with LP12 Water and Flooding).

C. Where appropriate, the Council will seek financial contributions towards the provision, or upgrading, of riverside infrastructure including to achieve the objectives of the Wandle Valley Regional Park.

D. The Council will resist the redevelopment of existing river-dependent or river-related industrial and economic uses (LP40 Safeguarding Wharves) to non-river related economic uses or residential uses, unless it can be clearly demonstrated that neither this nor any other river-dependent or river-related use is feasible or viable.

E. An assessment of the effect of the proposed development on the operation of existing river dependent uses (LP40 Safeguarding Wharves) or riverside gardens and their associated facilities on and off-site will be required by the Council; or an assessment of the potential of the site for river-dependent uses and facilities if there are none existing will be required.

Thames Policy Area & Focal Points of Activity

F. Along the riverside within the Thames Policy Area, mixed-use development will be supported where it would create safe high-quality environments, provide new homes, leisure, social and cultural infrastructure facilities, provide public spaces, incorporate riverside walks and cycle ways and increased public access to the river.

G. Within Focal Points of Activity uses including restaurants, cafes, bars, cultural space and small-scale retail will be permitted in order to create vibrant and active places, subject to compliance with Policy LP43 (Out of Centre Development). High-quality and well-designed public spaces with good access should be provided to form new destinations which are designed to make full use of the amenities offered by the riverside. Successful clusters of existing economic floorspace should be re-provided, where possible, in accordance with Policy LP35 (Mixed Use Development on Economic Land). The Focal Points of Activity are located at:

1. Wandsworth Riverside Quarter and Wandle Delta
2. Lombard Road/ York Road Riverside
3. Ransome's Dock

9 Appendix 3: Types of Ecological Reports

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) - describes a rapid assessment of the ecological features present, or potentially present, within a site and its surrounding area. A PEA is normally made up of a desk study and a walkover survey.

A PEA is normally the first step in assessing the ecological value of a site.

The key objectives of a PEA are to identify:

- the likely **ecological constraints** associated with a project,
- any **mitigation measures likely to be required**, following the Mitigation Hierarchy,
- any **additional surveys that may be required** and
- opportunities offered by a project to deliver **ecological enhancement**.

A PEA can also be used to inform, for example:

- scoping for an Environmental Impact Assessment;
- an Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA);
- whether a particular site should be included as a site allocation in a development plan;
- nature conservation management plans;
- sustainability appraisals and ratings assessments (e.g. BREEAM); or
- an assessment of likely compliance with statutory obligations for developments which do not require planning consent or developments utilising Permitted Development Rights, where needed.

The results of a PEA **can** be presented in a **Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEAR)**.

More information:

- Please see the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) webpages for more information.

Preliminary Ecological Appraisal Report (PEAR)

The results of a PEA should be presented in a **PEAR**, which is normally produced to inform an applicant and their design team about the key ecological constraints and opportunities associated with a project, possible mitigation requirements and any further surveys that are required. The PEAR may also be accompanied by an **Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan (ECOP)**. If a PEA is required, it is expected that the report and any other survey reports recommended by the PEA, will be submitted as part of the planning application. If the PEAR and/or additional required surveys are not submitted, the Council's ecologist will request the reports, and this could slow down the application process.

Preliminary Bat Roosting Assessment is an initial survey conducted to evaluate the potential for bats to roost in a structure or site and to record any evidence of bats which might be present. This assessment is often required for planning applications where development activities might impact bat habitats. The goal is to determine if further, more detailed bat surveys are needed.

Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Plan (ECOP) An ECOP is a useful method of illustrating the key points gathered from PEA baseline studies and may be used to illustrate key constraints and opportunities to consider when proposals are designed.

An ECOP may be quite simple in format and content (e.g. when illustrating relevant ecological features associated with an application for the construction of a single dwelling) or may be extensive in its coverage (e.g. when applied to a large-scale project across a wide area with many ecological features present).

Ecological Impact Assessment (EcIA). EcIA is the process of identifying, quantifying and evaluating the potential effects of development-related or other proposed actions on habitats, species and ecosystems and uses data collected as part of the PEA.

Under normal circumstances surveys should be completed and any necessary measures to protect biodiversity should be in place, or secured through conditions and/or planning obligations, before permission is granted. The need to carry out further surveys should only be secured through planning conditions in exceptional circumstances , for example because the survey data will be out of date before implementation.

More information:

- CIEEM have produced Guidelines for Ecological Impact Assessment in the UK and Ireland - Terrestrial, Freshwater, Coastal and Marine and an EcIA Checklist.

Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) is a working document that considers and details how a development will protect, and increasingly conserve and enhance, the environment and mitigate against any potential impacts to the local community and species - particularly during the construction phase.

The Council's Local Validation Checklist states that CEMPs should have specific regard to invasive non-native species, detailing method statements regarding protected and priority species and habitats, timeframes and post clearance monitoring.

Landscape and Ecology Management Plan (LEMP) is a document that outlines how landscapes and ecological features of a development site will be managed and maintained over the long term, often as a requirement of planning permission. It ensures that habitats and biodiversity are protected, enhanced, and managed in line with the development's goals and legal requirements.

10 Appendix 4: Survey requirements and when to do them (Survey Calendar)

The calendar below provides a guide of the seasons to undertake ecological surveys to obtain the most accurate results to support a planning application.

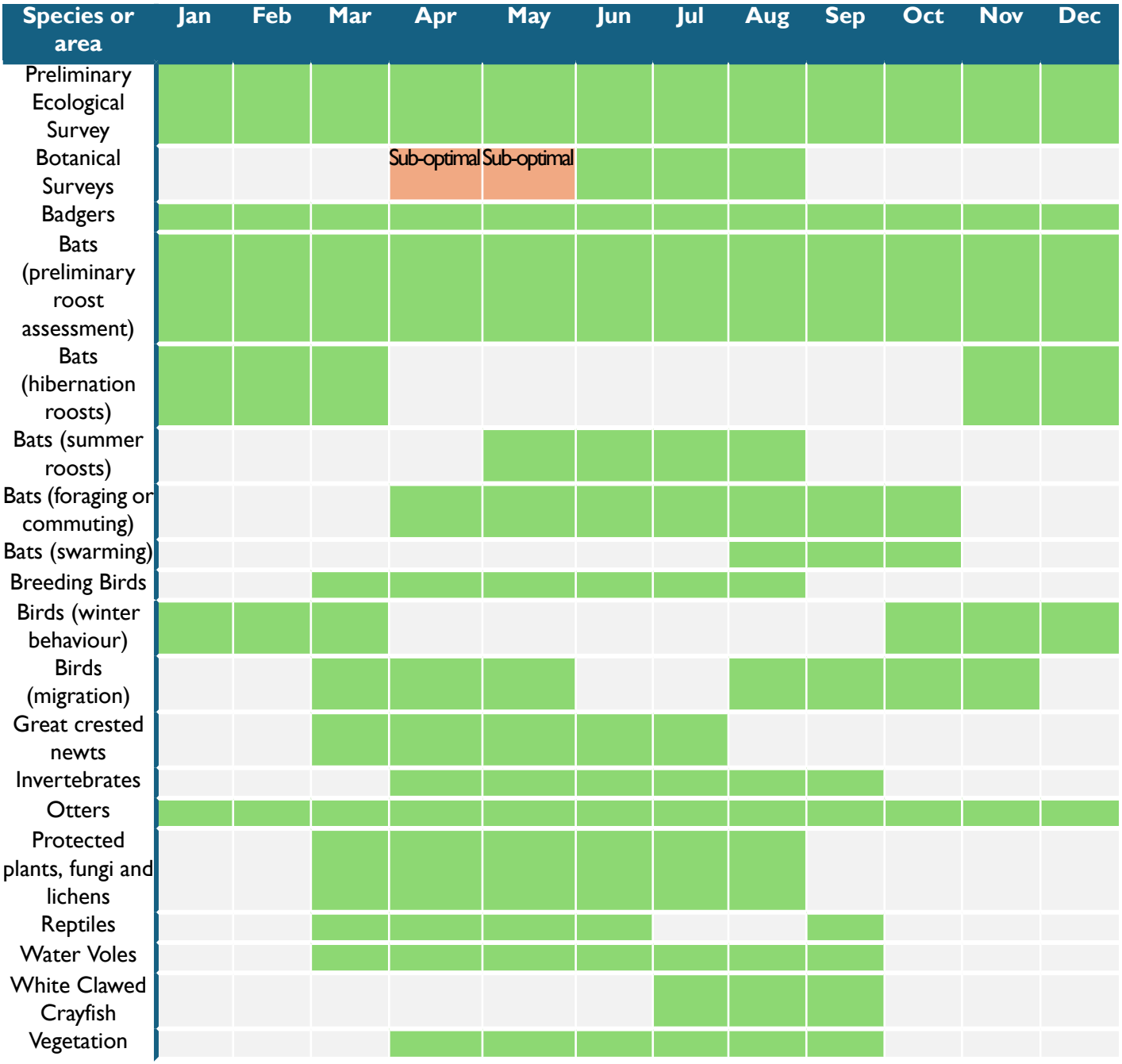


Table 11 Ecological Survey Seasons (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/protected-species-how-to-review-planning-applications)

11 Appendix 5: Biodiversity on Development sites: A hazard prevention checklist during construction and operation

The checklist below aims to help implement the mitigation hierarchy to avoid impacts and embed mitigation during construction as well as inform the design and location of compensation post construction.

Hazard	Considerations
Construction Phase	
Lighting	Ensure that lighting does not intervene with animal behaviour by minimising light spill and allowing for dark areas around trees and greenspaces.
Vegetation clearing	Ensure that the timing of removal is appropriate to minimise impact and meet legislative requirements so that wildlife is not disrupted i.e. nesting birds. If necessary implement a sensitive vegetation removal method which may also require supervision by the ECoW.
Temporary fencing	Plan locations in advance and ensure fencing is in good condition and not in danger of falling. Ensure fencing reaches fully to the floor to prevent egress and animals accessing construction areas, unless a defined corridor is proposed. In this case, the corridor must be checked daily and any obstructions removed. Ensure any fencing is taught to prevent animals and birds getting tangled.
Temporary offices and compounds	Plan locations in advance and site well away from sensitive areas. Include in Ecology report site plan.
Temporary access for construction vehicles	Ensure access locations are planned in advance and site well away from sensitive areas. Include in Construction Environment Management Plan.
Introduction of imported soils	Ensure that imported topsoil or nutrient-rich topsoil is generally avoided as if it is inappropriate for the site as it can promote the spread of invasive plants. Refer to BS3882:2015 for more information.
Demolition	Ensue that falling materials and storage areas for demolished structures do not cause damage to habitats and wildlife.
Ancillary surfaces	Ensure that their design, location and construction include biodiversity features such as vegetated permeable paving.
Piling/ drilling	Ensure appropriate risk assessment is carried out to ascertain suitable piling/drilling methods. Particular care must be taken when the site is close to sensitive habitats, such as a watercourse, with low vibration methods required and appropriate forward planning essential to avoid certain times of the day/night and year, such as when fish spawning takes place. There may be circumstances when non-invasive methods, such as rafts, are necessary.
Operation phase	
Landscape management	Ensure that new planting is accompanied with aftercare so that it can successfully integrate with existing wildlife.
Pets	Ensure that scheme design minimises the risk of damage from pets to habitats or nesting boxes by creating buffers.

Public access	Allow for public access to enjoy the amenity value of natural features without damaging such areas.

Table 12 Hazard prevention checklist

12 Appendix 6: Checklist for UGF Submission Requirement

The London Plan UGF requirements apply to major developments. The assessment can form part of the Planning Statement or Design and Access Statement, or as a standalone report.

Urban Greening Factor (UGF) Submission Guide

When preparing a planning application it is essential to meet the Urban Greening Factor (UGF) requirements as set out by both the Greater London Authority (GLA) and Wandsworth Council. The UGF is a tool to evaluate the quality and quantity of green infrastructure in new developments. This guide outlines the key elements to include and how to present them effectively.

1. Establishing the UGF Target

To meet UGF requirements, you should identify your development's minimum UGF target—0.4 for residential and 0.3 for commercial or mixed-use projects—using the official calculator. Include details of each green surface type, its UGF value, and the overall greening score in your submission.

2. Classifying Surface Types

Classify all site areas using GLA surface categories (e.g. trees, green roofs, permeable paving, shrubs, grass, water features). Assign the correct UGF factor to each, using precise area measurements and avoiding rounding. Clearly describe any mixed or combined planting and explain assumptions in a supporting note.

3. Responding to Local Context

Alongside GLA expectations, proposals should address Wandsworth's planning priorities, especially Local Plan Policies LP53, LP55 and LP57. Designs should support green infrastructure aims—like boosting biodiversity, ecological connectivity, tree canopy, and nature access. Referring to the Green Infrastructure Focus Map can show alignment with these goals.

4. Professional Oversight and Accuracy

UGF submissions should be prepared with input from qualified professionals, such as landscape architects, ecologists, or arboricultural consultants. This ensures technical accuracy and credibility. Your submission should be accompanied by a landscape plan clearly showing all green and blue infrastructure proposals, with surface types annotated and areas measurable from the drawing. The UGF calculation should be consistent with the site plan and include a transparent methodology statement outlining any assumptions or calculations used.

5. Biodiversity and Ecological Enhancements

A Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) assessment is now required for most major developments. You should aim to demonstrate a net gain of at least 10%, as required under the Environment Act 2021. This involves providing a baseline ecological assessment, mapping of habitats, and identifying enhancement measures—such as native planting, bird and bat boxes, log piles, or features that support pollinators. These measures should complement the UGF strategy and contribute to the site's ecological value.

6. Incorporating Sustainable Drainage (SuDS)

Urban greening should support sustainable water management. Wherever possible, green infrastructure should double as SuDS features—for example, rain gardens, tree pits with stormwater capture and green roofs. These elements should be designed to slow surface runoff while also contributing to the UGF score.

7. Phased or Outline Applications

For outline or phased developments, it is necessary to demonstrate how the overall UGF targets will be achieved in the final design. This can be done through illustrative masterplans, parameter plans, and a feasibility statement outlining assumptions about tree growth, planting mixes, or phasing of greening measures. Interim and long-term landscape strategies should ensure that each stage contributes proportionally to the UGF requirement.

8. Verifying the Submission

Prior to submission, verify that the entire site area is accurately included in the UGF calculation. Provide clear justifications for any exclusions, such as existing access roads or retained structures. Confirm consistency between UGF values, areas, and surface types with the landscape drawings. Any deviations from the minimum UGF requirement must be thoroughly explained, with mitigation measures such as on-site enhancements or documentation of unique site constraints ideally provided.

9. Justifying Shortfalls in UGF

If it is not possible to meet the minimum UGF target due to site-specific constraints, a clear and robust justification must be provided. This justification should explore why alternative greening measures are not feasible and outline any compensatory measures or off-site contributions considered.

Required Documentation Checklist

Your UGF submission should include the following documents as part of your planning application:

- A completed UGF calculation table or spreadsheet
- A detailed and scaled landscape plan with surface types annotated
- A statement explaining the calculation methodology and any assumptions
- An arboricultural report detailing existing and proposed trees (if applicable)
- A BNG assessment with ecological enhancement measures
- A water management strategy integrating SuDS and greening
- A feasibility note if the application is outline or phased
- A justification statement if UGF targets are not fully met

For more information write to:

Spatial Planning and Design,

Place Directorate,

Wandsworth Town Hall,

London SW18 2PU

Telephone: (020) 8871 6000

Email: Wandsworthplanningpolicy@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

Or visit our website:

www.wandsworth.gov.uk/planning-and-building-control/planning-policy/

Wandsworth