

Tree Service

Strategic Plan 2020-2025



Lambeth's Tree Service – Strategic Plan 2020-2025

VISION

“To proactively manage and increase Lambeth’s tree stock, protecting our historical heritage of trees and providing a wide range of environmental, amenity and wellbeing benefits.”

THE NINE STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES

These principles represent our strategic aims for trees. The Plan covers trees within parks and open spaces, including cemeteries, those on the public highway and on communal Housing land; and relates only to the work of the tree service within the Environment and Streetscene Division.

1 Effective Management and Maintenance

We will maintain a database of all our trees, undertake regular inspections and operate a policy of minimal intervention and tree retention unless there are sound reasons for removal based on arboricultural best practice or for reasons of public safety; and publish a Tree Management Policy



2 Maintaining Historic Landscapes

We will identify and seek to protect all significant, ancient, and veteran trees within the borough and will use best practice to promote their lifespan. We will seek to preserve and restore historic treescapes within the public realm



3 Actively Managing Risk

We will create and work to a risk management policy; and operate our inspections regime based on a risk categorisation of each individual tree



4 Tackling Pests and Diseases

We will work proactively to address the impact of pests and diseases which threaten the integrity of individual trees and public safety; and will implement policies to try and limit the introduction and spread of pests and diseases into and across the borough



5 Tackling Climate Change by Increasing our Tree Stock

We will actively seek opportunities for new tree-planting, on the premise of right tree, right location; and will prioritise street trees, disease-tolerant species, and future veterans in parks



6 Working with Residents

We will actively involve residents in tree-planting schemes, identifying potential planting locations, looking after young trees and tree pits; as well as tree monitoring and interpretation schemes across the public realm



7 Protecting and Valuing our Trees

We will produce a Tree Strategy and calculate the benefits arising from Lambeth's tree stock. We will seek to promote the wide-ranging benefits of trees to residents and businesses and their importance as a constituent part of Lambeth's Green Infrastructure



8 Promoting Net Biodiversity Gain and Sustainability

We will maximise the biodiversity benefits from our trees through appropriate species selection and management. We will aim to make our operations as sustainable as possible, focusing on vehicle and equipment management and waste policies. We will actively contribute towards Lambeth's broader sustainability objectives



9 Aiming High – Ensuring Quality

We will invest in staff training and development, achieve Arboricultural Association accreditation and actively participate in other relevant accreditation and recognition schemes



Delivering Against the Strategic Principles

The following list details the actions we will take to ensure we deliver against our nine strategic principles. **Specific actions to implement these commitments will be included within the annual Service Development Plans for Neighbourhoods.**

Principle	Key Delivery Commitments 2020 to 2025
1. Effective Management and Maintenance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all Lambeth’s trees within the public realm are managed with good tree health and risk management as key underlying principles • Ensure that tree management is fully costed with planned levels of systematic and proactive management that reflects the asset value of the stock • Invest in and utilise new technology to improve the accuracy of tree inspections and reduce the number of trees felled • Maintain a database of all trees within the public realm; with up-to-date records of inspections and work undertaken • Inspect all trees on a regular basis, with the frequency linked to a risk analysis • Implement a Tree Management Policy and update it annually • Produce a Tree Strategy • Have a robust plan in place for dealing with tree-related subsidence and damage • Implement a three-year maintenance programme for newly planted trees • Where resources allow, undertake works and implement changes to operational practices to de-compact and improve soil under key trees • Fell trees only as a last resort after other management options have been exhausted • Mirror industry best practice where appropriate
2. Maintain Historic Landscapes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify all Veteran and Ancient trees within the borough and ensure they are logged on the national database • Record and publicise significant trees within the borough and work to secure their protection • Seek out opportunities for restoring historic planting schemes within parks and open spaces
3. Actively Managing Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a tree risk management policy • Categorise trees according to the level of risk they present and schedule inspections and tree work accordingly
4. Tackling Pests and Diseases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid planting species known to be susceptible to prevalent diseases or plant disease-resistant varieties • Actively reduce the risk from Oak Processionary Moth nests through careful selection and siting of new trees • Ensure appropriate training and briefings for staff

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a Biosecurity Policy, including a move to purchasing only UK-grown or quarantined trees from nurseries with strong biosecurity control measures • Check mature London planes in well frequented areas annually for Massaria disease (caused by the fungus <i>Splanchnonema platani</i>) • Educate and encourage stakeholders and tree owners to identify and report pests and diseases • Increase species diversity across the borough to increase resilience • Adopt working practices which improve biosecurity • Monitor and record the presence of pests and diseases • Seek to eradicate or contain newly identified outbreaks • Work proactively with the appropriate authorities to monitor, record, report and manage pests, pathogens, and invasive species • Adopt working practices which reduce stress on our trees, for example avoiding unnecessary pruning, promoting good rooting conditions and avoiding root compaction, de-compacting root zones and caring for newly planted trees
<p>5. Tackling Climate Change by Increasing our Tree Stock</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt the principle of ‘right tree, right place’ • Complete a detailed analysis of existing canopy cover. This will help inform the new Tree Strategy, give us a robust baseline against which to measure increases; and help identify priority areas for new tree-planting • Prioritise replacement planting in vacant tree pits • Seek out opportunities for creating new copses (small woods) and hedgerows and improving existing ones • Seek out capital and external funding opportunities • Seek funding for a dedicated tree-planting co-ordinator • Try to ensure revenue implications are covered through capital schemes • Work proactively with the Capital Studio and Highways team to maximise tree-planting opportunities within public realm improvement and highway maintenance works • Work more closely with ward councillors to help facilitate local engagement over tree-planting • Work closely with the Sustainable Growth and Climate Change Response team to ensure a joined-up approach and added value to tree-planting, for example to help address flooding and pollution issues • Achieve a net increase in tree biomass on an annual basis • Continue to work with park stakeholders to identify appropriate opportunities and funding for tree-planting in parks and open spaces, so that successional planting is planned and taking place wherever possible • Achieve the Council’s target to plant at least 1,000 street trees between 2018 and 2022, with a strong focus on achieving long-term successful establishment (subject to funding) • Ensure that tree-planting targets are costed as part of a long-term sustainable climate change resilience strategy with guaranteed delivery through secured funding streams

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate a tree-planting sponsorship scheme • Adapt planting plans to anticipate future impacts of climate change, choosing more tolerant species and increasing diversity
6. Working with Residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate with adjacent households over tree-planting proposals • Consult over the proposed felling of healthy trees in line with any new Government requirements • Provide a range of online information about trees in Lambeth • Ensure easy to use systems are in place for residents to contact Lambeth for tree-related issues • Encourage residents and Street Champions to adopt newly planted trees, with an agreed set of actions, including watering • Where appropriate, felled trees will be used to create opportunities for play • Where possible excess wood chip will be made available to community projects • Support and encourage the community to develop tree trails and other educational activities focusing on trees • Support residents wishing to act as informal tree wardens, possibly through the existing Street Champion scheme • Provide training for ‘citizen scientists’ to take part in data collection affecting trees • Improve signage relating to tree works to explain what is being done, particularly when works are delayed, for example due to nesting season • Allocate Tree officers to fixed geographical areas, allowing them to build relationships with relevant stakeholder groups
7. Protecting and Valuing our Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to ensure that the importance of mature trees is recognised for their amenity and environmental benefits as part of development plans for Council owned sites so that their retention is prioritised over automatic mitigation planting • Seek to ensure that trees are enshrined as a financial asset across the Council • Estimate the financial value of our trees using the CAVAT method (Capital Asset Value for Amenity Trees), <i>i-Tree</i>, or other recognised valuation systems • Produce CAVAT valuations for planning in relation to trees scheduled to be felled as part of new developments • Identify and publish a list of significant (notable) trees within the borough • Produce a trees and streetworks document with the aim of better protecting trees on the public highway
8. Promoting Net Biodiversity Gain and Sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wildlife value will be one of our key criteria in selecting tree species to plant • Where it is safe to do so, standing deadwood will be left when trees die or are felled • Where appropriate, felled trees and branches will be left in situ to rot down • Plant species for specific wildlife benefits, e.g. those that are foodplants for butterfly and moth caterpillars

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use electric or hybrid vehicles and battery-powered handheld equipment wherever operationally feasible • Our operational depot and offices will remain within the borough to reduce vehicle movements • Focus on sustainable disposal and use of waste arisings, ensuring materials are either left on site, used for mulch within the borough, or disposed of for composting or energy production • Avoid the use of herbicides in routine operations
9. Aiming High – Ensuring Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively participate in the London Tree Officers Association (LTOA) • Gain and retain accreditation with the Arboricultural Association • Ensure that all practice and processes meet as a minimum, industry best practice guidelines

Lambeth’s Borough Plan 2019-2021

Through this Strategic Plan our tree service contributes to Lambeth’s Borough Plan priority of:

Making Lambeth a place where people want to live, work and invest

Specifically, it supports the goal of:

We will maintain Lambeth’s award-winning parks, and invest in a wider network of green spaces to support community activity and wellbeing

Mayor of London’s Environment Strategy 2018

Green Infrastructure is covered in Chapter 5 of the Mayor’s Environment Strategy, with three core objectives:

OBJECTIVE 5.1 MAKE MORE THAN HALF OF LONDON’S AREA GREEN BY 2050

OBJECTIVE 5.2 CONSERVING AND ENHANCING WILDLIFE AND NATURAL HABITATS

OBJECTIVE 5.3 VALUE LONDON’S NATURAL CAPITAL AS AN ECONOMIC ASSET AND SUPPORT GREATER INVESTMENT IN GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Delivery of our Strategic Plan will contribute towards all of these objectives. In terms of supporting specific aspirations, our Plan will primarily support the following proposal:

Proposal 5.1.1.e

The Mayor will develop programmes and deliver projects, including a major tree planting programme, to ensure that London’s urban forest is maintained and expanded.

The urban forest consists of street trees, garden trees, trees in parks and open spaces, copses, woodlands, and extensive areas of semi-natural forest. The Mayor wants to increase the urban forest by ten per cent by 2050, with London boroughs forming one of the key partners in achieving this aim. This will require both protection of the existing tree stock, as well as increasing the rate of tree-planting.