

# borough tree strategy





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## FOREWORD

**Trees. Almost everyone has something to say about them. Perhaps more than ever before, we recognise how essential they are to our survival.**

**But what a challenge: living things as big as houses that can't be moved. They can't speak. They are sensitive to their environment. They have the potential to outlive us - and the potential to be a source of trouble.**

**A Strategy such as this is an attempt to recognise the complex technical, scientific and human issues that arise when trees and people inhabit the same area. The Strategy provides a framework for managing this huge living resource to bring the best possible solutions for all.**

**The Arboricultural Association endorses the work of Wandsworth Council in the production of The Wandsworth Borough Tree Strategy. The Strategy demonstrates an understanding of the importance of trees and the wide range of influences on them and from them. Most importantly, the Strategy takes on board the views of the many stakeholders who have been part of the consultation process.**

**The production of a strategy is not the end; it is really just the beginning. The challenge now is to address its implementation and to measure success.**

**Chapter 10 lists nineteen actions that flow from this strategy - these can not be left to the Tree Officers alone. It will require co-operation from all levels within the Council, particularly Member support at budget time, and of course active co-operation from those groups who have influenced the document through the consultation process.**

**I believe one of the major challenges coming from The Wandsworth Borough Tree Strategy will be to reverse the trend that has been in place for more than a hundred years: de-forestation. The Strategy identifies that only 2% of the Borough's trees are new plantings and that the aim is to permit no further depletion of the Borough's tree stock. This is a common situation for many councils in the UK and one that will only change through considerable resourcing. The Council's Tree Officers have a crucial role to play in this, but they can not do it alone.**

**I encourage you to embrace this Strategy. In doing so the benefits for Wandsworth Borough residents and visitors will still be felt a century from now.**

*Nick Eden  
Technical Director for the  
Arboricultural Association.*

The Council published 'Who Needs Trees?' in 1997 This was a consultation leaflet asking the public for comments on the Borough's trees.

Ideas put forward in response were included in a draft tree strategy for the Borough.

This was the subject of further public consultation during 1999, and further comments have been incorporated in this finalised strategy.

This strategy constitutes supplementary planning guidance to the Council's Unitary Development Plan

# section one

## 1.0

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.01 Trees are the biggest and oldest living things in our environment. At one time they covered much of the Borough, but the enclosure of land and subsequent urban development have substantially reduced the tree population. Only small remnants of former woodlands and hedgerows survive. The loss of trees for development was partly offset by extensive tree planting in streets and parks particularly during the Victorian era. In recent times, storms, diseases, development, pollution and drought have resulted in the loss of trees, particularly the larger growing ones like Oak, Elm, Ash, Lime and London Plane. Often these have been replaced by small ornamental trees and conifers.

1.02 The great storm of 1987 focused attention on trees in London, and in particular on the dearth of information about the existing tree resource and the lack of any overall policy framework concerning the protection, management and planting of trees for the future.

1.03 In 1997 the Council embarked on the first stage in the preparation of a Borough Tree Strategy with public consultation on its leaflet *Who Needs Trees?*, which set the agenda for this document. Suggestions from the public have been incorporated into this tree strategy.

#### 1.1 What is a Tree Strategy?

1.1.1 A tree strategy is a policy framework covering the status and condition of trees in the Borough, as well as setting out guidance on managing the existing tree stock and enabling local initiatives through an *Action Plan*. It will be supplementary planning guidance to the Council's Unitary Development Plan.

#### 1.2 The Need for a Tree Strategy

-  To promote awareness of the value of trees in our environment.
-  To interpret the London-wide policy framework on trees set by the Countryside Commission and the Government Office for London.
-  To give direction and guidance to local initiatives both public and private.

#### 1.3 National Context

1.3.1 The 1992 *Earth Summit* in Rio culminated in 150 countries signing up to *Agenda 21* - a worldwide programme of action to ensure a sustainable future in the 21st century. The UK Government's response was to promote initiatives on a number of issues. Against this background, and in response to the great storm of 1987, a major research study into urban amenity trees *Trees in Towns* was published in 1993. In 1994 the Government published *Sustainable Development, the UK Strategy* and *Urban Tree Strategies*, recognising the value of trees and the contribution they make in the urban environment.

1.3.2 The Government encourages local authorities to develop long term strategies for the management and care of trees in their ownership. These strategies should plan for the eventual replacement of old trees, enable authorities to take advantage of new opportunities for tree planting provided by other urban improvement measures, and integrate awareness of the contribution which trees make to the quality of life in urban areas into the full range of local authorities' activities.

## 1.4 Londonwide Context

1.4.1 Strategic Guidance for London Planning Authorities was published in 1996 and sets out the planning framework for the 33 London Boroughs. It points to the mosaic of green spaces and open land which characterises London's urban landscape as being one of its greatest assets. It points out that London's trees and woodlands serve a number of purposes:

-  conserving and enhancing biodiversity
-  conserving and enhancing the physical environment
-  maintaining air quality
-  developing opportunities for recreational enjoyment
-  conserving and enhancing landscape and cultural heritage.

1.4.2 Strategic Guidance refers to the Countryside Commission's report, *Action for London's Trees* published in 1993 which identified the concept of *Green Corridors*. These are extensive contiguous areas of trees and open land which straddle the major road, rail and river routes into London. A comprehensive publication, *Planning for London's Trees - Guidelines for Borough Strategies*, prepared for the Countryside Commission and the Government Office for London in 1996, sets out guidelines for the preparation of tree strategies.

## 1.5 Boroughwide Context

1.5.1 The Unitary Development Plan (UDP), approved in December 1994, sets out the Council's planning policies for the Borough. The following policies, relating to the preservation and protection of trees in the Borough, have been carried forward into a revised UDP, which was approved in June 1999 for deposit:

-  the Council will seek to protect and enhance the natural environment, encourage nature conservation, and make Tree Preservation Orders particularly on major roads across the Borough. (GEN29)
-  the Council will seek to prevent the loss of trees of amenity value when granting planning permission for development or redevelopment. (ON19)
-  tree Preservation Orders will be made where appropriate to protect trees of amenity value, with priority to major routes across the Borough, development sites and situations where important trees are at risk. (ON20)
-  the Council will promote the care and maintenance of trees and will encourage their proper management avoiding removal wherever possible. Where appropriate and safe, dead trees and wood will be left as a habitat for wildlife. (ON21)
-  the Council will support programmes of tree planting and encourage other agencies to plant new trees including in new developments, and give advice on the appropriate type of planting and subsequent care. (ON22)

 landscaping should be an integral part of the design of new developments. It should reflect and enhance the character of the area and surrounding buildings, and take into account the way in which the area is likely to be used. Landscaping should be designed to be readily maintained. (TBE13)

 the Council will promote the enhancement of streets and public spaces, to make them safer and more attractive for use by pedestrians and cyclists, and will identify opportunities for features, tree planting, public art and other enhancements. (TBE21)

1.5.2 the Council has also agreed a *Local Agenda 21* action plan which includes a range of initiatives which impact upon the local environment. The Tree Strategy is one of those initiatives as is the related Biodiversity Action Plan.

# section one

## 2.0 THE VALUE OF TREES IN WANDSWORTH

2.01 Trees enhance the quality for the urban environment and form an integral part of its diversity. They are essential to our health and well-being, not only in filtering out the harmful effects of pollution but enhancing people's enjoyment of urban areas.



Battersea Park, SW11

### 2.1 A Brighter, Greener Borough

Most people prefer to live and work in leafy surroundings. Trees enhance the character and appearance of the Borough, as well as property values. This creates qualities which encourage businesses to locate and attract people to live, enhancing the social and economic life of the Borough.

Trees form an important component of the urban landscape. They provide form, colour, texture and movement and change with the seasons of the year. Trees planted along streets help to define and frame them giving them visual significance and enhancing their appearance.

In urban areas trees help to modify the climate, providing shade from sun in summer, shelter from rain, and reducing wind speeds. These factors help to make public spaces more usable for people. Trees complement buildings through their size, scale massing and colour at different times of the year.

Trees can help reinforce a sense of place in urban areas. They make important landmarks and help people to orientate themselves.

Trees help to provide privacy to our homes.

Trees help to screen eyesores.



Trees enhance this new public square. Battersea Square, SW11



Street trees,  
Streathbourne  
Road, SW17

## 2.2 A Habitat for Wildlife

- Trees, particularly of those species that are indigenous to the area, can provide valuable support to a range of wildlife including birds, insects and bats. This value is only fully realised when the trees are growing in a semi-natural setting such as woodland or with other associated habitats. It is also recognised that there are other habitats such as wildflower meadows and heathlands that are equally valuable to wildlife and which depend on being kept free from trees.

## 2.3 A Healthier, Cleaner Borough

- One of the most common concerns in urban life is the effect of increased levels of pollution on our health and

welfare. Trees are an important agent in reducing these levels. They are able to absorb carbon dioxide from the air, as well as sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide, in the form of smoke and dust.

- Trees can absorb noise. Although not as effective as solid walls, they are far cheaper and a more attractive feature in the environment.
- Trees help to screen harmful ultra-violet rays from the sun. This can be particularly important in shading school playgrounds.
- Trees can have a positive psychological effect, particularly for example with the passing of winter and the sprouting of fresh new leaves.

## 2.4 Re-cycling

- Green waste from urban trees can be re-cycled for use as woodchip or mixed with household green waste to be composted or used for charcoal and other household products.



Wimbledon Common, SW19

# section one

## 3.0 THE PRESENT RESOURCE

### 3.1 Numbers

- 3.1.1 Task Force Trees, who were commissioned by the Countryside Commission at the request of the then Secretary of State for the Environment, carried out a survey of London's trees in 1993. This survey, together with the Council's own records, gives a reasonably accurate picture of the number of trees in Wandsworth.
- 3.1.2 According to the survey of London's trees it is estimated that just over half of the trees in the Borough are maintained by the council. From the records the Council is responsible for approximately 75,000 trees.
- 3.1.3 The number of trees in each London borough largely depends on its area and the density of development. The most useful comparison is the average number of trees per hectare (Mean Tree Density) which gives an indication of the *green-ness* of an area. The London Tree Survey estimate ranges from 8 trees per hectare in the city of London to 43 trees per hectare in Sutton. At 29 trees per hectare, Wandsworth is slightly above the London average.

### 3.2 Distribution

- 3.2.1 The survey of London's trees and Wandsworth's own records suggest that most trees (43%) are found in the gardens and grounds of our homes and housing estates. A further 20% grow adjacent to transport routes; mainly in streets and on railway embankments. Another 15% grow in the grounds of schools, colleges, hospitals and so on. Some 11% grow in our parks and open spaces, and 2% grow on business/industrial sites. The remaining 9% grow on *other* diverse sites - such as derelict land, building sites, reclaimed land, river banks etc.

- 3.2.2 The distribution of trees is not even across the Borough. The density of tree cover in the western half of the Borough (Putney, Southfields, Roehampton and Parkside) is greater than in the East and South-East (Battersea, Clapham Junction, Balham and Tooting).

- 3.2.3 The reason for this uneven distribution is the higher density of development in the east, characterised by smaller gardens, and hence less space to grow trees. The proximity of houses to streets and density of services in the eastern part of the Borough also gives fewer opportunities to plant street trees.

### 3.3 Species

- 3.3.1 Only around 30 of the 1,500 or so species of trees found growing in Great Britain are regarded as indigenous. The vast majority have been introduced or are the result of deliberate hybridisation.
- 3.3.2 Wandsworth is fortunate in having a rich diversity of tree species. Currently around 250 differently named species are represented within the Council's own stock, with no doubt considerably more in private gardens. Obviously, some trees are more common than others.
- 3.3.3 The London Tree Survey data shows that over half the Borough's trees are from just 5 different genera - Maples and Sycamores (*acer*), Cherries and Plums (*prunus*), Lime (*tilia*), Lawson's Cypress (*chamaecyparis*), and Rowans and Whitebeams (*sorbus*).

3.3.4 The figures for Wandsworth are broadly similar to those for London as a whole; nine of Wandsworth's top ten genera are also in the top ten throughout London.

3.3.5 A significant proportion of trees throughout the Borough are small ornamental, or fruiting species such as Cherry and Plum (*prunus*), Rowan and Whitebeam (*sorbus*), Apple (*malus*), trees capable of seeding themselves and growing without help such as Maple, particularly Sycamore (*acer*), Birch (*betula*) and Ash (*fraxinus*), or trees commonly used for hedging, e.g. Lawsons Cypress (*chamaecyparis*). With the exception of Birch and Ash, trees indigenous to the British Isles are represented in small numbers. This distribution may be a reflection of garden size, peoples' choice and general availability.

### 3.4 Age

3.4.1 It is well known that trees can live to a great age. Some of the oldest trees in the Borough are around 300-400 years old. However, it is important that there is a balanced age structure in a population of trees.

3.4.2 The larger and older trees are the most important from an environmental, ecological and conservation point of view. In Wandsworth, 41% of trees are *mature* (i.e. have reached over 50% of their height). New planting represents 2% of trees (i.e. less than 3



Private street trees-  
Putney Park Avenue, SW15

years in the ground). The remaining 57% represent immature trees, i.e. ones between 3 years old and maturity.

### 3.5 Ownership

3.5.1 The responsibility for maintaining trees falls on those persons who have a legal interest in the land on which they are growing.

3.5.2 For London as a whole, the percentage of trees in public ownership varies between boroughs from 15% to 75%. Dense urban areas generally have a higher proportion of trees in Council ownership.

3.5.3 In Wandsworth, approximately 50% of the trees are on land owned or managed by the Council with the remainder owned by individuals, companies, or other bodies.

### 3.6 Visual Amenity

3.6.1 The contribution that trees make to the visual amenity of the Borough is dependent on the combined effect of the density of tree cover, the distribution of those species that make a particular visual impact, and location. Large trees planted in groups visible within streets and other public spaces make the most important contribution to visual amenity. Streets characterised by trees of high amenity value include West Hill, SW15/18 (East Putney/West Hill), Putney Park Avenue, SW15 (West Putney), Streathbourne Road, SW17 (Bedford) and Sutherland Grove, SW18 (East Putney/West Hill). Trees of high amenity value are also to be found in the Borough's Historic Parks, Commons and other parks and open spaces.

## section two

# 4.0 ACTION PLAN FOR TREES

- 4.01 Trees frequently outlive buildings. They may take decades to grow, yet they can be felled in an instant. Over the last 100 years there have been more trees lost in the Borough than have been replaced. Trees come under threat from changes in climate, increased pollution; urban growth, disease, improper care and vandalism. Trees in urban areas need to be properly managed, particularly where they are close to buildings. Many trees are removed or damaged because of problems like overshadowing, structural damage or broken drains, or just because of concern that these sort of problems will arise in the future.
- 4.02 The action required includes managing and protecting the existing tree stock, educating people to be more aware of the value of trees, and planting new trees. An essential component is the involvement of the community, and a wide range of agencies and organisations from the public, private and voluntary sector can play their part in ensuring that the number and diversity of trees in the Borough is maintained and enhanced for future generations.

## section two

# 5.0 MAINTAINING AND PLANTING TREES

### 5.1 Wandsworth Council

5.1.1 The division of responsibility for trees within the Council lies with the following departments:

 **Leisure and Amenity Services: trees in parks, open spaces, cemeteries (excluding Streatham and Lambeth cemeteries owned by Lambeth); arboricultural advice including management of trees for all departments.**

 **Technical Services: street trees on Borough roads (excluding Transport for London Road Network (TLRN)); planning applications; tree preservation orders; conservation area tree notices; tree root damage claims.**

 **Housing: trees in the gardens of Council-owned properties on housing estates, on estate roads and in open spaces within these estates. In some areas maintenance is devolved to Tenant Management Organisations.**

 **Education: Trees in school grounds that are controlled by the Council. This excludes grant maintained and private schools, which are responsible for trees in their ownership.**

5.1.2 The Council's street trees are inspected and pruned on a two year cycle to methods which accord with best arboricultural practice. For other trees in Council ownership the cycle of maintenance is every three years, to the same standard. The Council carries out inspections and organises contracts for pruning and replacement tree planting. Trees are pruned by reducing and thinning the crowns to keep them in check. Pollarding, the removal of the crown back to the trunk, is not preferred nowadays for maintaining street trees. This is to allow trees to grow more naturally. Elsewhere, pollarding may be considered where it would enhance wildlife or be in the interests of tree management.

5.1.3 Tree roots can cause problems to buildings and boundary walls, and claims do arise against the Council in respect of tree root damage. Wherever possible trees are pruned to keep their growth in check, to prevent root encroachment and avoid unnecessary loss of trees. However, as a last resort, it may be necessary to remove a street tree to prevent major structural damage to adjoining properties.

5.1.4 Occasionally trees are removed in order to carry out highway alterations. In these circumstances, a replacement tree of a similar species and size is planted in the immediate vicinity wherever practicable.

5.1.5 Healthy, established trees are not removed for the provision of off-street parking or parking bays other than in exceptional circumstances and provided that a tree of similar size can be planted in the immediate vicinity.

5.1.6 The salting of streets and pavements in winter can cause damage to trees, particularly during hard winters when there is a higher frequency of application. Long dry periods can also be damaging to trees. Care is taken over the salting of streets and pavements, and the watering of trees during dry periods, in order to minimise the risk of damage.

5.1.7 Contractors need to protect trees from damage arising from works to install or repair utilities. A voluntary code of practice of the National Joint Utilities Group (NJUG) covers best practice when digging trenches in close proximity to trees.

5.1.8 Wanton vandalism to trees in public spaces is an occasional problem and one that is best addressed through environmental education.

5.1.9 Opportunities for new planting in streets are limited due to the proximity of underground services and buildings.

Some streets do not have any trees as a result, and elsewhere very few new opportunities are likely to arise, except where alterations to highways are carried out. Limited opportunities occur through traffic management schemes.

- 5.1.10 The maintenance and planting of trees in the Borough's Historic Parks, Commons and other parks and open spaces is increasingly governed by landscape management plans. These have been prepared for Battersea Park (a grade II\* Historic Park), Tooting and Wandsworth Commons and Putney Park Lane. In Historic Parks the emphasis is on the restoration and repair of the landscape. The trees provide a valuable setting to formal and informal recreational activities, and some of the Borough's best amenity trees are to be found here.



Trees - Battersea Park, SW11

- 5.1.11 The Council's policy for planting trees on its own land is for mainly indigenous species in order to reinforce local character and identity and because they help to promote biodiversity. The main species of new trees planted on Council-owned land in recent years have been Maple, Cherry, London Plane and Birch.

- 5.1.12 The pruning of trees and shrubs generates substantial tree waste. The Council encourages tree contractors to dispose of waste by taking it to timber stations where it can be re-cycled for wood-chip and compost. However, fallen dead trees and leaf litter in woodland and on the Commons are best left to decompose naturally. Dead trees should be left standing where they would not be a danger to the public. Many fungi and a number of rare insects are only found in such habitats.

## 5.2 Railways

- 5.2.1 Railtrack plc is responsible for lineside maintenance of the railway lines into Victoria and Waterloo, as well as the line from Clapham Junction to Willesden Junction. Its policies on tree planting and maintenance are set out in its Environmental Policy Statement (1997/98). They seek to achieve a balance between control and ecology, to ensure that the primary objective of an efficient rail network is achieved, together with the protection of wildlife corridors.
- 5.2.2 Railtrack, in partnership with the Council, the national Urban Forestry Unit and others, has been involved in a project to plant trees along the Victoria to Gatwick railway corridor. The choice of species reflected the requirements of the location, with large leafed trees excluded as they are most likely to give rise to *leaves-on-the-line* problems. A mixed scrub planting would be particularly beneficial to wildlife in this situation and would avoid many of the management problems associated with mature trees.



Lineside trees - Putney to Barnes, SW15

- 5.2.3 London Underground is responsible for the lineside maintenance of the District Line through Putney and Southfields. The management of trees within the bounds of its operational land is set out in its Track Handbook *Maintaining the Track Environment*. This recommends pruning trees when young to reduce the need for major pruning in the future.

### 5.3 Transport for London

- 5.3.1 Transport for London (TfL) is responsible for maintaining the street trees on the Transport for London Road



Street trees - West Hill, SW18

Network (TLRN) including the A3 and the A205 South Circular Road through Wandsworth, for which a Landscape Strategy has been produced. One of its objectives is to establish joint initiatives with local authorities and other organisations, where appropriate, to achieve a co-ordinated approach to environmental improvements.

#### 5.3.2

For the A3 route east of Tippet's Corner, London Plane and Lime trees will be the preferred species for street trees. West of Tippet's Corner, Oak, Ash, Birch, and Hawthorn will predominate for the more open areas. London Plane is the preferred species for Upper Richmond Road (A205).

### 5.4 Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators

- 5.4.1 The Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators administer Putney Heath, Putney Lower Common and Wimbledon Common. Their powers were established under the Wimbledon and Putney Commons Act 1871.



Wimbledon Common, SW11

- 5.4.2 The area to the south of Kingston Road (A3) falls within a proposed Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is subject to a Management Agreement between the Conservators and English Nature. A policy of natural regeneration has been adopted for the woodland areas. Oak, Birch, Beech, Hornbeam, and Holly regenerate from naturally dispersed seed. Trees that decay are only removed if there is a danger to the public; otherwise they are left to decay naturally. Many Elm trees were lost in the past to Dutch Elm disease, and there is evidence of its re-occurrence in some trees that have regenerated. Diseases such as this are carefully monitored and appropriate action taken.
- 5.4.3 The policy on tree planting allows for the replacement or introduction of perimeter trees for the purpose of screening. Only indigenous or naturalised trees are used. Some funding for woodland improvement has been secured under the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

## **5.5 Schools and Colleges**

- 5.5.1 The Council is not responsible for maintaining trees in the grounds of grant-maintained and private schools. These bodies are encouraged to keep trees within their ownership properly maintained and to involve children in caring for trees. The grounds to Grove House, within the University of Surrey, are included as a Historic Garden. The University has been encouraged to produce a landscape management plan for the garden.

## **5.6 Churchyards and Cemeteries**

- 5.6.1 The responsibility for the management of trees within churchyards and cemeteries generally lies with the owners. It was traditional for Yew trees to be planted in churchyards. Over the years some of these have been lost and consideration could be given to securing their replacement. It is desirable that landscape management plans be prepared for some of these sites.

## **5.7 Industrial and Commercial Areas**

- 5.7.1 There is scope to improve the visual appearance of many of the industrial and commercial areas of the Borough. In these areas it is desirable that suitable opportunities for tree planting be identified in conjunction with the owners of the land.

# section two

## 6.0 PROTECTING TREES

There are a number of measures that seek to give protection to trees. These include Tree Preservation Orders, Conservation Areas, and conditions attached to planning permissions. The nature and operation of these measures are set out below.

### 6.1 Tree Preservation Orders

6.1.1 Tree Preservation Orders are used to protect selected trees and woodlands if their removal would have a significant impact on the environment and its enjoyment by the public. Priority for Tree Preservation Orders is generally given to trees which are considered to be under threat, for example where development is proposed. A large number of mature trees in the Borough, therefore, have no protection from felling.

6.1.2 In making Tree Preservation Orders, the Council must show that a reasonable degree of public benefit would accrue. The trees should therefore normally be visible from a public place (such as a road or footpath), although exceptionally, the inclusion of other trees may be justified. The benefit may be present or future (for example, when proposed development has taken place).

Trees may be worthy of preservation for their intrinsic beauty or for their contribution to the landscape; or because they serve to screen an eyesore or future development; the value of trees may be enhanced by their scarcity; and the value of a group of trees or woodland may collectively be important. Other factors (such as importance of a site as a wildlife habitat) may be taken into consideration, but alone would not be sufficient to justify the making of an Order.

6.1.3 Wandsworth made its first Order in 1949, and since that time some 270 Orders covering over 7,000 trees have been made. Orders vary in size from a single tree to whole streets covering several hundred trees. The latter form part of the *greenway* initiative, to protect trees in front gardens of major routes through the Borough and routes linking major open spaces.

6.1.4 As land owned by the Council and other public organisations is increasingly transferred to the private sector, control over works to trees shifts from public maintenance to public protection. This generates an increased demand for the making of Tree Preservation Orders. The Council's priorities for making Tree Preservation Orders are:

- (i) individual trees that are at risk and have visual impact on the streetscene.
- (ii) development sites subject to current planning applications and briefs.
- (iii) greenways - major road frontages.
- (iv) re-surveys of sites following re-development.

6.1.5 The statutory procedures for tree preservation were reviewed by the Government in 1994. The outcome of the review recognised that some changes to streamline the procedures were desirable but at that time there was no immediate prospect of new legislation. Certainly a simplification of procedures for administering Tree Preservation Orders would be welcome. It would also be desirable if powers enabling a general protection of trees, particularly from felling, were available, while some general exemption from control over routine pruning may be appropriate.

Copper Beech tree protected by Tree Preservation Order, Westmead, SW15



## 6.2 Conservation Areas

- 6.2.1 The number of conservation areas in the Borough has increased from none in 1968 to 45 in 2000. They now cover approximately 45% of the Borough.
- 6.2.2 Generally all trees in conservation areas have an interim protection. Anyone proposing to carry out works of pruning or felling must give the Council six weeks' notice of their intention. This is to enable the Council to examine the proposal and decide whether or not to make a Tree Preservation Order. All notifications are acknowledged by the Council and responded to. Additional advice on works to trees is given. If the works are considered acceptable and/or a Tree Preservation Order is not justified, then the applicant can proceed. There are some minor exemptions such as trees that are less than 75mm in diameter and fruit trees cultivated for fruit production.



Trees in Putney Park Lane, Dover House Estate Conservation Area, SW15.

6.2.3 Whilst this gives interim protection to a significant number of trees, it does place an increasing emphasis on control through conservation area tree notifications. In 1988 some 98 were received whereas in 2000 this had increased to 715, reflecting in particular a number of new conservation areas designated in 1989, and increasing public awareness of the need to give notice of works. Any disagreement over a proposal means that a TPO must be made.

## 6.3 Planning Briefs and Conditions on Planning Applications

- 6.3.1 Planning briefs are non-statutory guidelines prepared for sites which are expected to be subject to development. Briefs normally contain details of important trees on these sites which it is felt desirable to retain. In order to protect the trees it is normal practice to make a Tree Preservation Order.
- 6.3.2 Conditions are attached to planning permissions:
-  to protect trees during development from damage by plant and machinery;
  -  to require that certain trees are retained;
  -  to require a landscape plan to be submitted showing retained trees together with new planting.

The onus is on the owner or developer to comply with these conditions. Any infringement may render them liable to enforcement action.

## section two

# 7.0

## CELEBRATING TREES

7.01 Trees are part of our history and culture. Recognition of the Borough's trees, their importance, age and visual significance may be a cause of celebration.

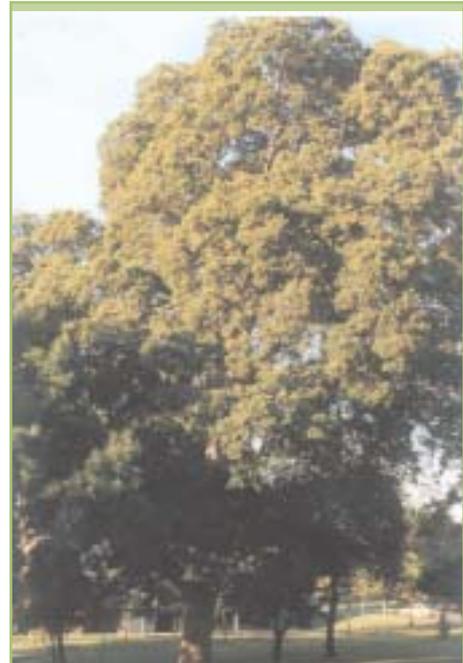
### 7.1 Great Trees of London

7.1.1 As part of the London Tree Survey published in 1994, a number of trees were suggested as having particular importance insofar as they possessed outstanding individual amenity value. This issue was addressed in *Action for London's Trees* and promoted by the London Tree Forum.

7.1.2 *Great Trees* are identified as being worth celebrating on the basis of the following criteria:

-  very old;
-  very big;
-  unusual or interesting shape;
-  culturally or historically interesting;
-  associated with famous events or people;
-  of particular importance for wildlife;

Hybrid Strawberry tree -  
Battersea Park,  
SW11



Lucombe Oak, Danebury Avenue, SW15

7.1.3 A Great Tree may be in a street or park, in the grounds of a factory or office, or in a private garden, but it must be clearly visible to the public and its owner must be willing for it to be publicised. In Wandsworth a hybrid Strawberry tree in Battersea Park and the Roehampton Lucombe Oak have been adjudged Great Trees. The former is considered to have the largest girth of any of this species in the country, and the latter, at 32 metres, is the tallest of its type in London. A tree identified as being a Great Tree will be given protection through the making of a Tree Preservation Order, where it is not owned and maintained by the Council. Great Trees will be commemorated by green plaques placed nearby.

- 7.1.4 Nominations for Great Trees should be sent to the Director of Leisure and Amenity Services, Town Hall, Wandsworth High Street, London, SW18 2PU. The tree officer will assess the tree and send recommendations to a selection panel appointed by the London Tree Forum to be judged as part of a London-wide assessment.

## 7.2 Veteran Trees

- 7.2.1 The Veteran Trees initiative is a partnership between English Nature, the National Trust, English Heritage, the Countryside Commission, The Ancient Tree Forum, the Forest Authority and the Corporation of London. The aim of this partnership is to promote the conservation of *Veteran Trees*.

- 7.2.2 Veteran Trees are *trees which, by virtue of their great age, size, or condition, are of exceptional value culturally, in the landscape or for wildlife*. Such trees will normally be of native or long-established species and particularly old or large for that species.

- 7.2.3 The Council supports the Veteran Trees initiative and encourages groups and individuals to participate in their identification and conservation.

## 7.3 National Tree Week

- 7.3.1 This is a nationwide annual event founded by the Tree Council who since 1973 organise the annual campaigns. National Tree Week is normally commemorated in November marking the beginning of the tree planting season. Events focus on the planting of trees.

## 7.4 Festivals and Other Events

- 7.4.1 The celebration of trees can take place in a variety of ways including religious and arboricultural festivals and local community events. The Jewish festival of Tu Bishvat, the birthday of the trees, is a day which celebrates tree planting. *Trees of Time and Place* and *Trees for London* are current initiatives involving a variety of sponsors with the objective of securing the planting of more trees. Festivals celebrating the importance of trees to the community can involve demonstrations of how to grow trees from seeds, tree planting and care, recycling and so on, which help to raise people's awareness.



Planting the Wandsworth Wishing tree, Vermont Road, SW18

## section two

# 8.0 INVOLVING THE COMMUNITY

- 8.01 An Action Plan for trees must involve all those with an interest in the Borough's trees, including individual residents, tree wardens, voluntary amenity groups, residents' associations, schools, churches, scout and guide associations, businesses, developers, utility companies, transport operators, central government and its agencies, Council departments, national organisations and their local branches, and the media.

### 8.1 Tree Wardens

- 8.1.1 The Council's Tree Warden Scheme is open to anyone with an interest in trees.
- 8.1.2 Tree Wardens are volunteers who can assist in the care, protection and promotion of trees in Wandsworth. They can assist the Council by reporting instances of damage, of trees which need attention, of where trees could be planted, and so on. The Council provides training and information to increase their knowledge about trees and related topics, and encourages people to take an active interest in the health and well being of trees in their local area.
- 8.1.3 They can be of assistance to their local community by informing people, such as their local residents' or tenants' association, of the importance of trees, by encouraging others to take an interest in trees and planting.

Involving school children in caring about trees.



### 8.2 Amenity Groups

- 8.2.1 In Wandsworth, the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV), London Wildlife Trust, Groundwork Trust, the Woodcraft Folk, and local amenity societies are involved with trees. The type of work they undertake is:

- organising and co-ordinating local initiatives;
- joining together with other groups as partners in action;
- carrying out tree planting schemes;
- informing and encouraging neighbourhood groups.

### 8.3 Businesses

- 8.3.1 The involvement of businesses in planting, sponsoring and caring for trees is established and should continue to be encouraged, particularly through partnership schemes and within town centres. Businesses should be encouraged to develop the following:

- initiating landscape schemes and planting trees on street frontages where space permits;
- sponsoring and helping facilitate tree planting in town centres and other parts of the Borough;
- caring for and managing existing trees on business premises in accordance with best practice.

### 8.4 Schools

- 8.4.1 Educating people to be aware of the value of trees starts at nursery school. A number of initiatives can be developed:
- adopting a tree for life;
  - growing trees from seeds;
  - joining local groups who are involved in caring for trees;
  - donating or sponsoring trees for planting.

## section two

# 9.0 IMPLEMENTATION

- 9.01 The Council as a land owner with responsibility for around 50% of the trees in the Borough will take a leading role in the continued maintenance and enhancement of the Borough's trees. The tree strategy provides a guiding framework for action, including partnership arrangements to secure external funding for tree planting, promotion, and environmental education initiatives. Opportunities to secure tree planting will be identified through various existing and future delivery programmes.
- 9.02 Where the Council is not the land owner, it can achieve many of the objectives set out in the strategy by encouraging other land owners to adopt a best practice approach to tree care. It can protect trees on private land through Tree Preservation Orders, and can encourage private owners to carry out tree planting in connection with the implementation of development. It can also join with the local community in events and festivals celebrating trees.

## section two

# 10.0 ACTIONS

- 1 to manage the Borough's tree stock in accordance with best arboricultural and ecological practices (para 5.1);
- 2 to encourage other public bodies, private owners and Tenant Management Organisations to adopt best practice in the maintenance and planting of trees in their care (paras 5.1 - 5.7);
- 3 to offer specialist advice to the public on tree matters (paras 5.1 and 6.3.1);
- 4 to promote awareness of trees through environmental education (para 5.1);
- 5 to prevent the unnecessary loss of trees and to secure the planting of replacement trees, where practicable, in order to avoid the overall depletion of the Borough's treestock (para 5.1, 6.1-6.3);
- 6 to encourage re-cycling of tree waste (para 5.1.11);
- 7 to encourage the planting of species of trees within the Borough which will promote biodiversity (para 5.1 - 5.7), taking account of the value of different species in different situations (para 2.1 - 2.3);
- 8 to promote tree planting schemes in partnership with others (para 5.1 - 5.7 and 7.1 - 7.4);
- 9 to produce literature illustrating best practice on a range of tree matters, and in particular landscape design guidance for new development (paras 5.1 & 6.3);
- 10 to identify suitable opportunities for planting Yew trees within churchyards within the Borough in partnership with the Church Commissioners and the Yew Conservation Trust (para 5.6);
- 11 to improve the appearance of industrial areas through carefully designed landscape schemes (para 5.7);
- 12 to make individual Tree Preservation Orders on privately owned trees in order to safeguard the character and appearance of the Borough (para 6.1);
- 13 to press the Government for changes to streamline the procedures for tree preservation (para 6.1.5);
- 14 to impose conditions on planning applications requiring applicants to protect trees on development sites (para 6.3.2);
- 15 to liaise with organisations promoting projects which celebrate significant events such as National Tree Week, Veteran Trees, Great Trees of London, Trees for London and other initiatives (paras 7.1 - 7.4);
- 16 to foster a greater awareness of the value of trees, their maintenance and the appropriateness of planting among the general public and children in particular (para 8.0);
- 17 to encourage people to become tree wardens (para 8.1);
- 18 to increase awareness of trees among school children through environmental education programmes and to identify projects that enable them to become actively involved in growing, planting, caring for, and celebrating trees, and to consider appropriate partners for sponsorship (para 8.4); and
- 19 to encourage residents and businesses in the Borough to get involved in planting and caring for trees (paras 8.2 - 8.5).

# contacts

## wandsworth council

### **borough planner's service [technical services department]**

Tree Strategy	(020) 8871 6631/6371
Tree Preservation Orders	(020) 8871 6631
Conservation Area Tree Notices	(020) 8871 6631
Highway Tree Enforcement	(020) 8871 6712

### **tree section [leisure and amenity services department]**

Council-owned trees	(020) 8871 6371/6372
Advice on pruning, planting, diseases	(020) 8871 6371/6372
Street trees and parks and open spaces	(020) 8871 6371/6372
Ecology of trees and woodlands	(020) 7223 5831

**visit the council's web site: [www.wandsworth.gov.uk](http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk)**

# Other Useful Contacts

## **Arboricultural Association,**

Ampfield House, Romsey, Hampshire, SO51 9PA  
Tel: 01794 368717

## **British Trust for Conservation Volunteers (BTCV),**

36 St Mary's Street, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 0EU  
Tel: 01491 839766

## **Common Ground,**

Seven Dials Warehouse, 44 Earlham Street, London WC2H 9LA  
Tel: (020) 7379 3109

## **Countryside Commission,**

South East Regional Office, 4th Floor, 71 Kingsway, London WC2B 6ST  
Tel: (020) 7831 3510

## **English Heritage,**

Historic Parks & Gardens Division, 23 Savile Row, London W1X 2HE  
Tel: (020) 7973 3000

## **English Nature,**

Northminster House, Peterborough, PE1 1UA  
Tel: 01733 455101

## **Esso Treewatch,**

C/o Shropshire Wildlife Trust, 167 Frankwell, Shrewsbury, SY3 8LG

## **The Forestry Commission,**

Great Eastern House, Tenison Road, Cambridge, CB1 2DU  
Tel: 01223 314546

## **Friends of the Earth,**

26-28 Underwood Street, London NW1 7JQ  
Tel: (020) 7490 1555

## **Garden History Society,**

Station House, Church Lane, Wickwar, Wootton-under-Edge, Gloucestershire, GL12 8NB  
Tel: 01454 294888

## **Great Trees of London,**

London Tree Forum, PO Box 15146, London WC2B 6SJ

## **Groundwork Trust,**

85-87 Cornwall Street, Birmingham, B3 3BY  
Tel: (0121) 236 8565

## **Learning Through Landscapes,**

Third Floor, Southside Offices, The Law Courts, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 9DL  
Tel: 01962 846258

## **London Tree Officers Association (LTOA),**

Third Floor, Crowndale Centre  
218 Evershot Street, London, NW1 1BD  
Tel: (020) 7974 4124  
email: ltoa@dial.pipex.com

## **National Urban Forestry Unit,**

The Science Park  
Stafford Road, Wolverhampton, WV10 9RT  
Tel: 01902 828600

## **Royal Society for Protection of Birds,**

The Lodge, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 2DL  
Tel: 01767 680551

## **Trees of Time and Place,**

96 Victoria Street, London SW1E 5JW  
Tel: 0345 078 139

## **The Tree Council,**

51 Catherine Place, London SW1E 6DY  
Tel: (020) 7828 9928

## **Trees for London,**

Prince Consort Lodge, Kennington Park, Kennington Park Place, London SE11 4AS  
Tel: (020) 7587 1320  
Email: treesforlondon@aol.com

## **The Yew Conservation Trust,**

The Conservation Foundation, Kensington Gate, London SW7 2AR  
Tel: (020) 7823 8842

## **Woodland Trust,**

Autumn Park, Dysart Road, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 6LL  
Tel: 01476 581111





English

If you have difficulty understanding this in English please contact:

Wandsworth Interpreting Service  
Bedford House,  
at 215 Balham High Road,  
SW17 7BQ  
Telephone: (020) 8672 1043/3649

Hindi

यदि आपको इसे अंग्रेज़ी में समझने में कठिनाई होती है, तो कृपया सम्पर्क करें:

वॉन्डज़वर्थ इन्टरप्रिटिंग सर्विस  
Bedford House  
215 Balham High Road  
SW17 7BQ  
टेलीफोन: (020) 8672 1043/3649

Bengali

এই লিফলেটটি বুঝতে অসুবিধা হলে  
দয়া করে যোগাযোগ করুন:

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Bedford House  
215 Balham High Road  
SW17 7BQ  
ফোন: (020) 8672 1043/3649

Punjabi

ਜੇਕਰ ਇਸ ਨੂੰ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਵਿਚ ਸਮਝਣਾ  
ਤੁਹਾਡੇ ਲਈ ਮੁਸ਼ਕਿਲ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ  
ਕਰਕੇ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ:

ਵॉन्डज़वर्थ इन्टरप्रिटींग सर्विस  
Bedford House  
215 Balham High Road  
SW17 7BQ  
टेलीफोन: (020) 8672 1043/3649

Gujarati

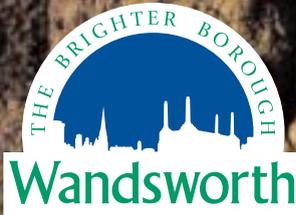
જો આને અંગ્રેજીમાં સમજવી તમારા માટે  
મુશ્કેલ છે, તો અહરબાની ક્ષતી સંપર્ક  
સાધો:

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Bedford House  
215 Balham High Road  
SW17 7BQ  
ટલિફોન: (020) 8672 1043/3649

Urdu

اگر اسے انگریزی میں سمجھنے میں آپ کو کوئی  
مشکلات ہیں تو براہ مہربانی رابطہ قائم کریں:

وونڈزورث انٹریپریٹنگ سروس  
Bedford House  
215 Balham High Road  
SW17 7BQ  
ٹیلی فون: (020) 8672 1043/3649



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Department of Leisure and Amenity Services

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