



# Cottington Close RMO Biodiversity and Environmental Action Plan 2021 – 2026

*This Action plan has been designed to mirror Lambeth Council's own plans to improve our estate as managing agents working in partnership with Lambeth Council*

## **Introduction**

Cottington Estate is rich in wildlife, small private gardens, green grassed areas, a community garden with a pond, trees, and an orchard. There are many different species of plants and animals that use these habitats for shelter, feeding or breeding.

*“In terms of the richness and abundance of wildlife – often termed ‘biological diversity’ or ‘biodiversity’, Lambeth is exceptionally lucky. However, we often don’t see our wildlife or don’t fully appreciate what we have and the important contribution it makes to the biodiversity of London or the UK as a whole.*

*Lambeth is home to many wildlife habitats and species abundant and relatively common in London and the UK, which add variety and colour to the lives of people living, working or visiting the borough. Though not under any immediate threat, these habitats and species need managing and looking after so they don’t get out of control or we will put their future wellbeing at risk because of inappropriate management or neglect.*

*Everyone who lives in the London Borough of Lambeth has a central role and responsibility to play in protecting, enhancing, promoting our wildlife and biodiversity. Lambeth Council recognises and reflects this by making sure the protection and improvement of our biodiversity is at the heart of all of our community and corporate priorities.”<sup>1</sup>*

## **What is Biodiversity?**

*“Biodiversity is the amazing variety of life on Earth. It encompasses diversity on many levels; the vast number of species of plants and animals, the genetic diversity within and between*

*these species and the different biomes and ecosystems of which they are part, including rainforest, tundra and desert. Biodiversity also includes the diversity within microscopic organisms, including bacteria, viruses and fungi. Another way to think about it is simply, 'Big Nature!'*<sup>2</sup>

### **Why does Cottington need a Biodiversity Action Plan?**

Lambeth have a 'Biodiversity Duty', set out in Section 40; **the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 (NERC)**. This requires that *'every public body must, in exercising its functions, have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity'*.

As we receive Local Authority funds to run Cottington Estate we should aim to mirror and improve upon Lambeth's standards.

On 7 August 2020 Lambeth ended its use of glyphosates on housing estates and will cease to use the pesticide across all its services by the time its new contracts for waste collection and street cleansing begin in 2021.<sup>9</sup>

### **Biodiversity at Cottington**

Cottington Close estate is approximately 5.26 acres, 42% of which is green space.

Cottington Estate has abundant wildlife including species such as bats which are protected by law. In 2020 two local residents identified over 14 species of birds over one week including; Eurasian Wren, Sparrow, Eurasian Blue Tit, Great Tit, European Gold Finch, Common Blackbird, Song Thrush, Eurasian Jay, Magpie, Rose Ringed Parakeet, Wood Pigeon, Dunnock, European Robin, Carrion Crow and Kestrel.

Other wildlife and species include; bees, butterflies, dragon flies, ladybirds, other insects, foxes as well as fungi and Trees and plants; herbaceous and perennial and annul.

The Community Garden is the heart of community activity for residents and the wider community outside of the Estate. It includes; an orchard of 7 fruit trees (apple), borders planted with perennial flowers, a soft fruit area (raspberry, gooseberry, red/white/black currant, blackberry, a variety of shrubs, 2 x containerised fig trees, a dry bed with agave and rosemary and a natural/wild border with 2 stumperies. Also in the garden are 15 raised beds for family and communal food growing, a wildlife pond, a bug hotel, composting areas, sheds, greenhouse and 3 brick BBQS.

Other trees (11) in the garden include; Willow (*Salix Babylonica*), Ornamental Cherry (*Prunus Kanzan*), Sycamore (*Acer Pseudoplatanus*), Lime (*Tilia*), Loquist and Elder.

### **The Wider Estate**

There is approximately 460m of hedging (mostly *Cotoneaster Horizontalis*) around the edges of the estate.

We will conduct a full survey of all the trees we have on Cottington Estate in 2021, some examples of the 70 Trees we have on Cottington Close Estate:

Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus Altissima*), Plane (*Platanus × Hispanica*), Sycamore (*Acer Pseudoplatanus*) and Silver Birch (*Betula pendula*).

There are 22 x large timber planters filled with various shrubs.

There is a rich, diverse amount of vegetation on Cottington Estate but we need some form of structure and systems to decide what we are going to do to protect the biodiversity we have, and what we can do to improve, extend or enrich it.

### What we can do to improve, extend or enrich Biodiversity?

What	Benefit	Target
Green roofs on sheds, power blocks, awnings and portacabin (to the extent that planning permission isn't required).	Plants: Attract wildlife Reduce and slow down storm water runoff in the urban environment. Filter pollutants from rainfall. Reduce Urban Heat Island Effect Improve Air Quality. Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions. <sup>5</sup>	2023
Swathes of wild flower meadows.	Wild flower meadows Provide shelter and food for important pollinators including bees. There are over 250 species of bee in the UK and they play a vital part in supporting the ecosystem. <sup>6</sup>  Attract a host of other insects and invertebrates such as grasshoppers/bush-crickets, spiders, molluscs etc.	2022
Reduce mowing in a selection of grassed areas to once a year.	<i>"Even a modest reduction in lawn mowing frequency can bring a host of environmental benefits: increased pollinators, increased plant diversity and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. At the same time, a longer, healthier lawn makes it more resistant to pests, weeds, and drought events."</i> <sup>12</sup>  Reducing mowing will also freeing up time for caretakers to do other tasks.	2021
Plant early plants i.e. spring bulbs.	Spring bulbs spread their roots, which helps prevent or minimize soil erosion. Early daffodil blooms attract early pollinators, helping other plants, like fruit trees, set more fruit. Plants such as Hyacinths also provide fragrance and colour sending a message that spring is here and summer is on its way.	2022
Increase green areas by investigating areas which could be de-paved and replaced with rain gardens and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS)	SUDS reduce and slow storm water runoff in the urban environment, and filter pollutants from rainfall. SUDS reduce 'Urban Heat Island Effect' and Improve Air Quality. SUDS reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions.	2023

Find ways of installing SUDS alongside need for car and bike parking spaces and electric vehicle stations on the estate.	Creating needed spaces for cars/ bikes/ electric vehicles whilst enhancing the natural environment.	
Introduce non-chemical based herbicides for removal of unwanted plants in hard to reach areas.	Herbicides have a significant impact on the environment by removing plants that are an important source of food for a variety of native insects.	2021
Rainwater collection from roofs where available	Saving resources by reusing grey water, reducing water runoff.	2022
Increasing accessible habitat for wildlife e.g. bat and bird boxes.	Encouraging nature on an urban inner London Estate.	2022
Audit wildlife on the estate – involving residents.	Will generate a more accurate picture of what biodiversity exists our estate.	2022
Audit the types of trees on the estate and look at their condition – seek Lambeth’s own survey to assist.	Will generate a more accurate picture of what biodiversity exists our estate.	2022
Continue with Community Garden – recommence monthly engagement sessions with families.	Educating and encouraging the next generation, enhancing our community engagement, encouraging physical activity and improving mental health.	2022
Create new Community Garden beds out in the estate - or re-utilise existing, for families to grow veg and fruit	Enhancing the environment for all Encouraging ownership and pride of immediate environment outside front doors of all residents not just ones near the community garden.	2023
Start an Apiary like those in Kennington Park/ Walworth Garden in the community garden or on top of one of the low-rise blocks	Bees are pollinators and increased diversity of wildlife. Production of local honey is good for immune system of residents. Selling honey - 1 hive = x50 jars is income stream for Community Garden projects. Encourage resident engagement and pride in by being responsible in a group project. Bees and pollinators are crucial to the future production of food - education of future generations is vital.	2023
Alongside parking spaces on centre of estate introduce covered walkways planted with fruit bearing trees/plants.	Shade in summer months. Looks beautiful. Fruit for everyone to share.	2023

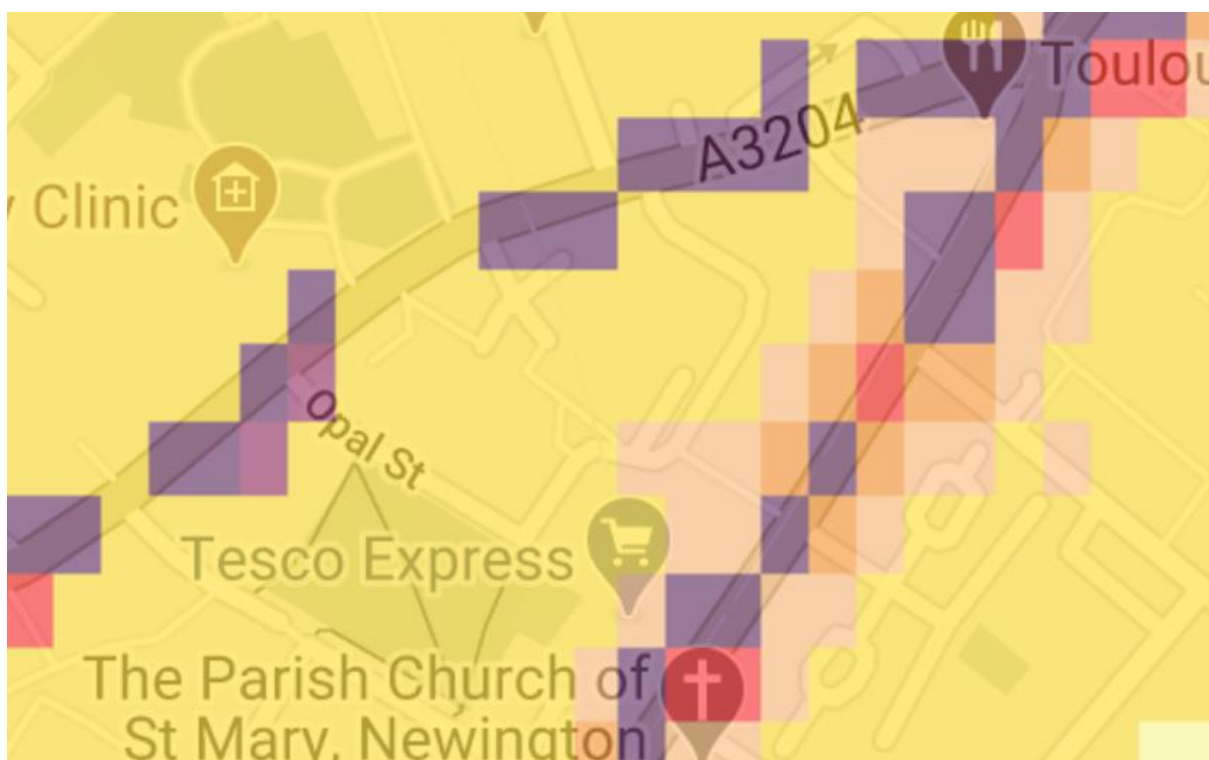
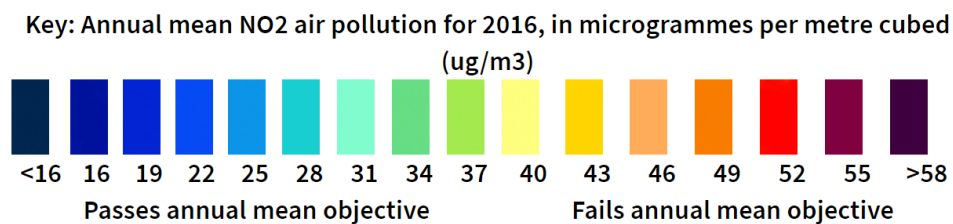
## Environmental

Board Members and residents have long been concerned with the climate emergency and what as an estate we can do to mitigate this. In Lambeth's Borough Plan it states:

*"Environmental sustainability is an important theme throughout the Borough Plan. For the first time, we [Lambeth] have recognised the climate change emergency, and set out a number of objectives in response to this".<sup>3</sup>*

## Air Quality

As you can see from this map air pollution fails the annual mean objective<sup>4</sup> on and around Cottington Estate.



## Sources of Air Pollution

Traffic:

Cottington is bordered on 2 sides by the A3: Kennington Park Road and the A3204: Kennington Lane, both are major arterial routes into the city.

The implementation of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTN's) is beneficial for residents living in the blocked off streets of the wider SE11 and SE1 communities, for Cottington it has meant an increase in traffic surrounding our estate.

Car ownership on Cottington Estate stands at approximately 30% in relation to properties, some vehicles may be high CO2 emitting. Residents also bring work vehicles (vans) overnight.

Other sources include gas boilers in homes and machinery emissions.

### What we can do to improve air pollution?

What	Benefit	By When
More planting and green infrastructure i.e. green roofs, living walls.	Greener planting will help to reduce air pollution and flood risk. In turn, providing more habitat for wildlife.	2023
Plant more trees to protect residents dwellings along the main roads. Investigating the best tree species to plant within 10m of buildings so as not to increase subsidence risk.	Species such as silver birch help to reduce pollution by filtering the air. Providing more habitat for wildlife.	2023
Promote Cycling and install more secure cycle storage with green roof and insect habitats.	Help to reduce emissions. More residents will buy a bike if storage is secure.	2022
Promote anti idling to car drivers on the estate.  Apply to have Opal Street made into one way In by Dumain Ct and out by the office.	Help to reduce emissions.  Stop the flow of van drivers using the estate as a cut through because of increased traffic jams on Kennington Lane due to LTN's therefore reducing emissions on the estate.	2021  2021
Discounted parking charges based on emissions and a surcharge on parking permits for diesel vehicles below Euro VI/6 standards. Surcharges on second cars.	Help to reduce emissions. Encourage residents to own cleaner cars or give up cars.	2022
Installation of electric charging/rapid charger points.	To make it easier for residents to use an electric vehicle will encourage uptake.	2023
Look at having car club bays i.e. Zipcar	Proximity of affordable cars for residents will encourage residents to give up cars. Club car organisation will provide a small income to the estate to help pay for SUDs etc.	2023
Continue to safety check boilers and install new boilers as required.	Maintaining least emissions as possible from serviced/new boilers.	Ongoing
Explore the option of installing hydrogen boilers.	Move away from gas boilers.	2025

Switch gardening equipment to rechargeable electric.	Help to reduce emissions.	2023
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## Carbon Reduction

Lambeth council has declared a climate emergency. As part of the response to this, the council has committed to ensuring that its operations are carbon neutral by 2030.

CCRMO must aim for the same outcome.

In addition to the air quality improvements listed in the air pollution table above carbon is also generated on Cottington Estate by:

**Sodium street lighting:** using 50-60% more energy than LED lighting<sup>7</sup>

In Lambeth's own document<sup>8</sup> it states: *"LED lights have already been installed across all street lighting in the borough. We will look for opportunities to replace non-LED lighting across other parts of the public realm"*

**Electricity Supply:** CCRMO is bound to Lambeth for its estate electricity supply which is not currently green energy.

**Loss of Emissions:** CCRMO office, housed in Lambeth North Housing Office, is not equipped for loss of emissions i.e. cellular blinds, green roof, switching off computers/electrical equipment when not in use, using plastic and other non-recyclable items i.e. plastic cups, water bottles.

**Lambeth buildings taking part in RE:FIT can save up to an estimated 19% of energy usage.**<sup>8</sup>

Questions CCRMO can ask about our organisation include:

Deliveries from suppliers, are we using the least polluting options available?

What do our suppliers do to offset their carbon emissions?

Journeys to work – are staff using high emission cars?

Are staff travelling to meetings in cars?

## What can we do to improve Carbon reduction?

What	Benefits	By When
Petition Lambeth to change our street lamps to LED.	Longer lifespan of lighting Reduction of electricity consumption Reduction of greenhouse gases.	2023
Petition Lambeth to use green energy suppliers.	Green Energy produces no greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels and reduces some types of air pollution.	2022
Encourage Residents to buy Green Energy.	Produces no greenhouse gas emissions from fossil fuels and reduces some types of air pollution.	2022

Look into community buying power schemes.		
Make sure Lambeth North Housing Office/CCRMO building is on the RE:FIT programme.	Help to reduce emissions.	2025
CCRMO to install cellular blinds, switch off unused equipment.	These changes will be saving energy Reducing emissions from wasted energy Reduce emissions by cutting down amount of deliveries to the office.	2022
Install a water purifier to kitchen sink or use water filter jugs and discontinue water cooler consumption. Encourage staff to use refillable water bottles. Invest in glasses and water jugs instead of plastic cups.	It's been estimated that plastic production and the incineration of plastic waste give rise globally to approximately 400 million tonnes of CO2 a year.	2021
Invest in a dishwasher.	Using a dishwasher once or twice a week uses less water / energy than sink washing.	2022
Look at installing a tap hot and cold-water system.	On tap hot and cold water uses less energy than boiling the kettle many times.	2022
Reduce paper usage e.g. switch to online surveys for repairs. Only buy recycled/eco paper products.	By using less paper, you can reduce your impact on forests, cut energy use and climate change emissions, limit water, air and other pollution and produce less waste. Reducing your demand for paper will also help lessen the social impacts and human rights abuses linked to paper production.	2021
CCRMO to introduce a Cycle to Work Scheme to give its employees access to discounted bikes through salary sacrifice.	Reducing emissions, boosting employee fitness and wellbeing.	2021
Invest in a staff 'pool' bike for visits to other estates/meetings.	Reducing emissions, boosting employee fitness and wellbeing.	2022
CCRMO to exploit the benefits of current IT technology.	Reducing emissions e.g. virtual meetings	Ongoing
Invest in a cargo bike to collect supplies locally.	Reducing emissions, boosting employee fitness and wellbeing.	2022



Increase the take up on the Cottington Give & Take WhatsApp Group to give items away rather than throw away.	Reducing landfill from perfectly good items thrown away.	Ongoing
Take up a free monthly collection from a company who collects clothes, books and electrical items for charity and promote to residents.	Reducing landfill, items will be reused or recycled.	2022
Hard push recycling to residents, take tours of recycling plant in Battersea.	Recycling reduces the amount of waste sent to landfills and incinerators. Conserves natural resources such as timber, water and minerals. Prevents pollution by reducing the need to collect new raw materials. Saves energy.	Ongoing
Look at Resident interest in a 'Food Co-op' ordering system. <sup>10</sup>	Residents join forces in order to buy foods they may otherwise find it hard to get hold of at a price they can afford. By volunteering their time and pooling their buying power they can get produce direct from local farmers or wholesalers.	2024
Advertise milk delivery to residents on the estate.	Little more expensive but cuts out/ down on non-recyclable plastic bottles thrown away. Residents can receive other produce from the milk delivery person – often cheaper than supermarket.	2021
Apply for funding to start our own 'Library of Things'. Convert a space/buy a recycled container – residents donate items to be shared with the community.	More affordable & convenient. Residents will have more money to spend on things important to them. More socially rewarding: 75% of borrowers feel better connected to their community because of Library of Things. Kinder to the planet. <sup>13</sup>	2024
Look at the cost and feasibility of installing solar panels on the roof of blocks to feed into the main grid.	Making use of natural resources to produce green energy. Generate income for the estate longer term.	2026
Look into becoming a zip car host, generating a local car hire for residents and possible income for the estate. Promote to residents to enter their car into a 'car pool' or share rides i.e. <a href="https://liftshare.com">https://liftshare.com</a> <a href="https://uk.getaround.com">https://uk.getaround.com</a>	Proximity of affordable cars for residents will encourage residents to give up cars. Club car organisation will provide a small income to the estate.	2024

## **Cottington could become a Transition Estate by 2030**

<https://transitionnetwork.org>

**Transition is a movement that has been growing since 2005. It is about communities stepping up to address the big challenges they face by starting local. By coming together, they are able to create solutions together.**

**Transition seek to nurture a caring culture, one focused on connection with self, others and nature. They are reclaiming the economy, sparking entrepreneurship, reimagining work, reskilling themselves and weaving webs of connection and support.<sup>11</sup>**

### **Principles**

Here are some principles which guide what Transition do:

We respect resource limits and create resilience: the urgent need to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, greatly reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and make wise use of precious resources is at the forefront of everything we do.

We promote inclusivity and social justice: the most disadvantaged and powerless people in our societies are likely to be worst affected by rising fuel and food prices, resource shortages and extreme weather events. We want to increase the chances of all groups in society to live well, healthily and with sustainable livelihoods.

We adopt subsidiarity: self-organisation and decision making at the appropriate level. The intention of the Transition model is not to centralise or control decision making, but rather to work with everyone so that it is practiced at the most appropriate, practical and empowering level.

We pay attention to balance: in responding to urgent, global challenges, individuals and groups can end up feeling stressed, closed or driven rather than open, connected and creative. We create space for reflection, celebration and rest to balance the times when we're busily getting things done. We explore different ways of working which engage our heads, hands and hearts and enable us to develop collaborative and trusting relationships.

We are part of an experimental, learning network: Transition is a real-life, real-time global social experiment. Being part of a network means we can create change more quickly and more effectively, drawing on each other's experiences and insights. We want to acknowledge and learn from failure as well as success - if we're going to be bold and find new ways of living and working, we won't always get it right first time. We will be open about our processes and will actively seek and respond positively to feedback.

CCRMO as an organisation could adopt Transitions Head, Heart and Hands vision:

Doing Transition successfully is about finding a balance between these:

The Head: We act on the basis of the best information and evidence available and apply our collective intelligence to find better ways of living.

## The Heart:

We work with compassion, valuing and paying attention to the emotional, psychological, relational and social aspects of the work we do.

## The Hands:

We turn our vision and ideas into a tangible reality, initiating practical projects and starting to build a new, healthy economy in the place we live.

## Appendix:

1. Lambeth Biodiversity Action Plan 2019 – 2024
2. <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/what-is-biodiversity>
3. [BoroughPlanCabReport1207.pdf \(lambeth.gov.uk\)](#)
4. <https://www.londonair.org.uk/london>
5. <https://www.nps.gov/tps/sustainability/new-technology/green-roofs/benefits.htm>
6. <https://www.kew.org/read-and-watch/meadows-matter>
7. <https://www.betterworldsolutions.eu/led-street-lights-are-energy-savers/>
8. Corporate Carbon Reduction Plan: Becoming a Carbon Neutral Council by 2030 – Lambeth Council.
9. <https://love.lambeth.gov.uk/lambeth-ends-use-of-glyphosate-weedkillers-on-housing-estates/#:~:text=Lambeth%20has%20been%20phasing%20out,street%20cleansing%20begin%20in%202021.>
10. <https://www.sustainweb.org/foodcoopstoolkit/>
11. <https://transitionnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/The-Essential-Guide-to-Doing-Transition-English-V1.2.pdf?pdf=essential-guide-to-transition-v-1>
12. <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/12/191219074744.htm#:~:text=%22Even%20a%20modest%20reduction%20in,and%20reduced%20greenhouse%20gas%20emissions.>
13. <https://www.libraryofthings.co.uk/why>

<b>Cottington Close RMO Biodiversity and Environmental Action Plan 2021 – 2026</b>	
<b>What</b>	<b>Date</b>
Created	January 2021
Approved by CCRMO Board	Wednesday 27 January 2021