



BLACKHEATH Management Plan

2012



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Blackheath sunset.

VISION & OBJECTIVES – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Blackheath is one of the key open spaces in London. The Heath's character and pattern of use have been determined by its thin soils, overlying gravel, and by its commanding view over the Thames and the city. Everyone values the wild, almost rural, character of the landscape. Blackheath is accessible to all at all times and from all sides, providing an interesting complement to neighbouring Greenwich Park. The Lewisham section of Blackheath is owned by the Earl of Dartmouth, it is managed by the London Borough of Lewisham. The Greenwich side is owned by the Crown & the London Borough of Greenwich.

The Heath is used for a wide range of activities that share the space over different times of day and year. It is world famous for a number of special events such as the London Marathon and annual circuses, which require special management arrangements. Blackheath is one of London's most important open spaces.

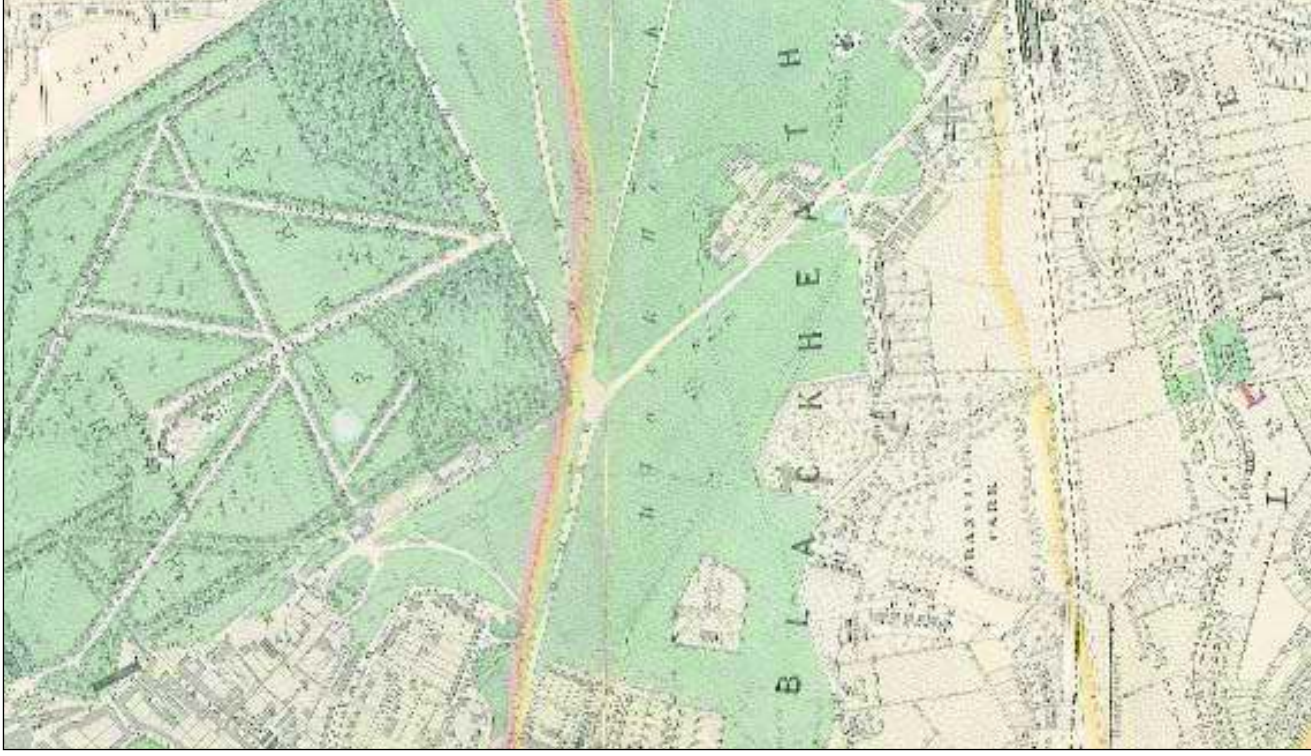
The Heath has a rich tradition of use and provides for an extraordinary variety of activities: weekend sports fixtures, informal games, dog walking, school classes, cycling, running, rollerblading, circuses and fairs to name but a few. Particularly at weekends, visitors come here from all over the capital for activities from kite flying to formal games of football. There is a proud sense of ownership of the Heath by the local community, who use or look into the place on a daily basis. This is a landscape that is loved and enjoyed by many different people in many different ways.

In February 2002 consultants were commissioned to look at a strategy for the next 50 years of Blackheath. The intention of the report was to provide a long term strategy that would be agreed and implemented by all those with responsibility and interest in the Heath. (See Appendix A)

This management & maintenance plan is based on the above strategy and aims to provide the structure for annual maintenance as well as short and long term capital projects and funding bids. The accompanying Action Plans set out key areas for improvement over the course of the coming years.

The London Borough of Greenwich & the London Borough of Lewisham each maintain a portion of the heath, physically divided by the A2, with Lewisham Council being responsible for the majority. Through the Blackheath Joint Working Party both Boroughs seek to:

Make sure that the management and maintenance of this important open space is coordinated, coherent and has the endorsement of the local community. Both Boroughs are committed to the conservation of Blackheath's character and status in London.



Section from Stanford (Edward), Library Map of London and its Suburbs. [1862]



SECTION 1: Introduction to Management Plan

INTRODUCTION TO MANAGEMENT PLAN

1.1: Overview

This Management Plan for Blackheath has been prepared by the London Borough of Lewisham & the London Borough of Greenwich, who are jointly responsible for the management of Blackheath. The management plan has also been prepared in consultation with the Blackheath Joint Working Party (see Section 4.5), which comprises local community groups and societies and is very instrumental to the management of the heath. As part of the development of this management plan consultation has also taken place with national and regional stakeholders, such as English Heritage and Transport For London (TFL), who have caused to directly or indirectly influence activities in and around the heath.

It is intended that Local Authority officers, members, stakeholder groups, and the general public will have access to this plan. This plan is a comprehensive account of all present and future management and maintenance issues for Blackheath. It will be the subject of ongoing review which will draw together all parties involved. The plan will aim to ensure that, where possible, the proposals made in the report 'Blackheath: the next 50 years' take place in a well-organised and structured manner, and that all investment in time and money is managed in a way that achieves the vision for the heath along with its associated benefits.

1.2: Key Aims

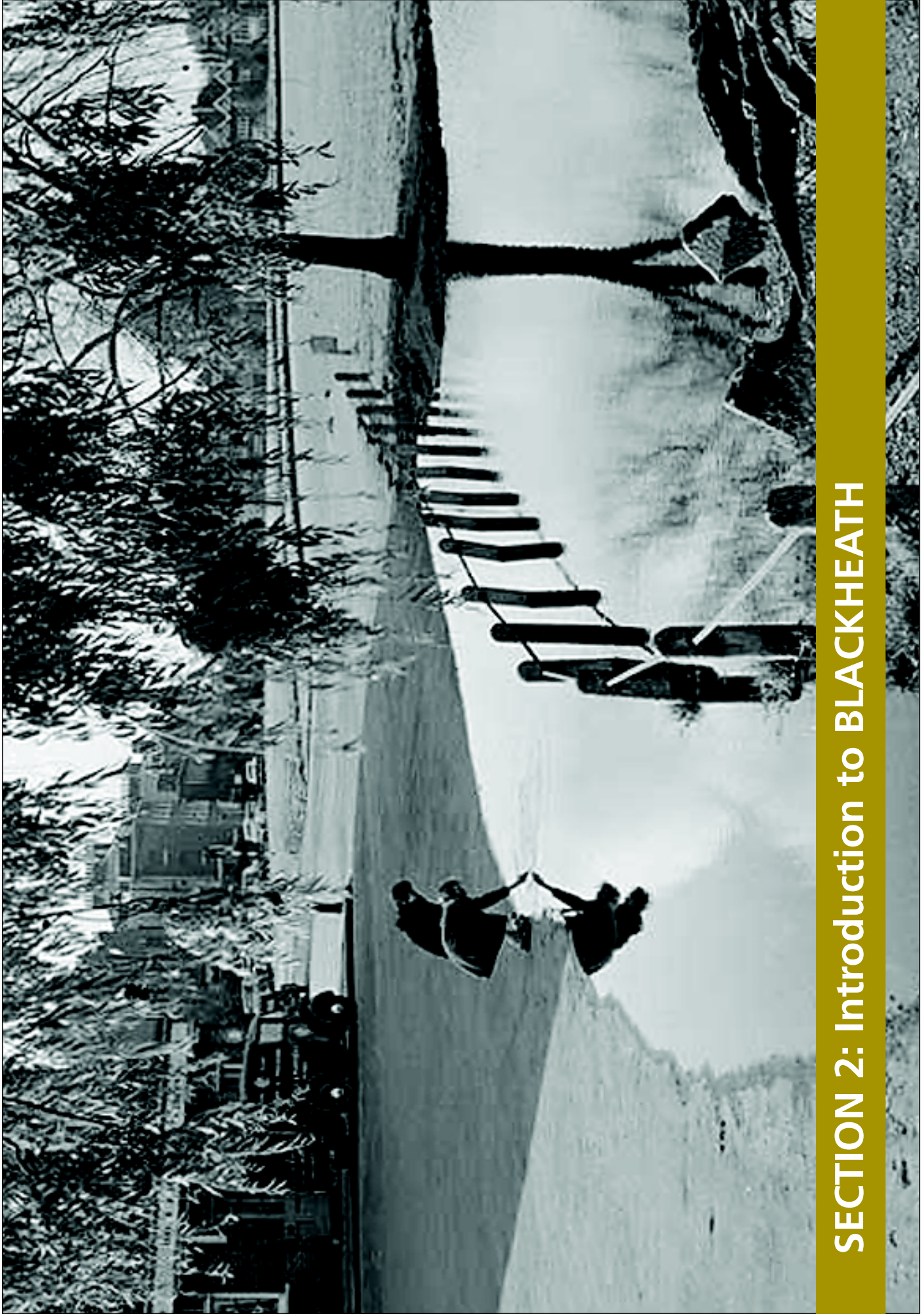
- Provide a clear vision for Blackheath and its development as set out in the Wilkie report "Blackheath the next 50 years"
- Ensure member, stakeholder and community involvement.
- Raise the profile of the heath and increase usage levels.
- Guide future management and ensure continuity of management and maintenance.
- Provide a basis for identifying priorities.
- Programme of scheduled work.
- Assist in Green Flag accreditation.

1.3: Management Plan Review

This management plan and accompanying action plans, will act as a working document that is reviewed on a regular basis as part of both authorities' commitment to quality and continuous improvement.



Fireworks on Blackheath.



SECTION 2: Introduction to BLACKHEATH

INTRODUCTION TO BLACKHEATH

2.1: Background

Blackheath has a long and varied past. Its strategic significance was first recognised by the Romans who built the London to Dover Road (now the A2) across it. The name 'Blackheath' is popularly but erroneously held to derive from its reputed use as a mass burial ground for victims of the Black Death in the 1340s. Less grisly, but more plausible suggestions for the origin of the name (which was recorded as early as the 11th century) that it is a corruption of 'bleak heath'.

Previous to 1871, the Cator family privately owned Blackheath but in 1871 the management of Blackheath passed by Act of Parliament to the Metropolitan Board of Works. It then passed in 1889 to the London County Council, and on to the Greater London Council. When the GLC closed in 1986 responsibility was given to the two boroughs of Greenwich and Lewisham, although the freehold remains with the Lords of the Manor, the Earl of Dartmouth in Lewisham, the Queen in Greenwich.

In the 17th and 18th centuries, highwaymen frequented Blackheath. At that time the heath was very different in appearance to the open grassland of today, it was instead covered by dense thickets of gorse, sparsely distributed trees and other heathland plants which provided cover and shelter not only for wildlife but also for the footpads and highwaymen. Blackheath used to be a large area of acid grassland, a now rare habitat in London and was home to a very diverse range of species including autumn squill, now extremely rare in south-east England, and a particularly good assemblage of clovers, including clustered and suffocated clovers, both now nationally scarce. It was also home to natterjack toads, stoats, weasels, hares, common lizards, voles, bats and a range of unusual birds including quail, ring ouzel and nightingale.

Blackheath has an honourable place in the histories of many sports, with the oldest golf, rugby and hockey clubs in England and perhaps the world founded here. According to legend, Blackheath Golf Club was established by James I in 1608, however today, golf is banned on the heath though the association with the game is commemorated in the name of Goffers (Golfers) Road.

The heath has always been associated with large gatherings throughout history, crossed by the major route southwards from London to the south coast, the heathland was a natural place for assembly outside the city and commanded a fine prospect over the capital. During the 17th century fairs and livestock markets were a regular occurrence, by the 19th century the heath was one of the country's most important gathering places and had become one of the principal venues around London for both mass celebrations and mass protests.

Today the heath is associated with many important regional events such as the London Marathon. Circuses and fairs are also a regular feature.



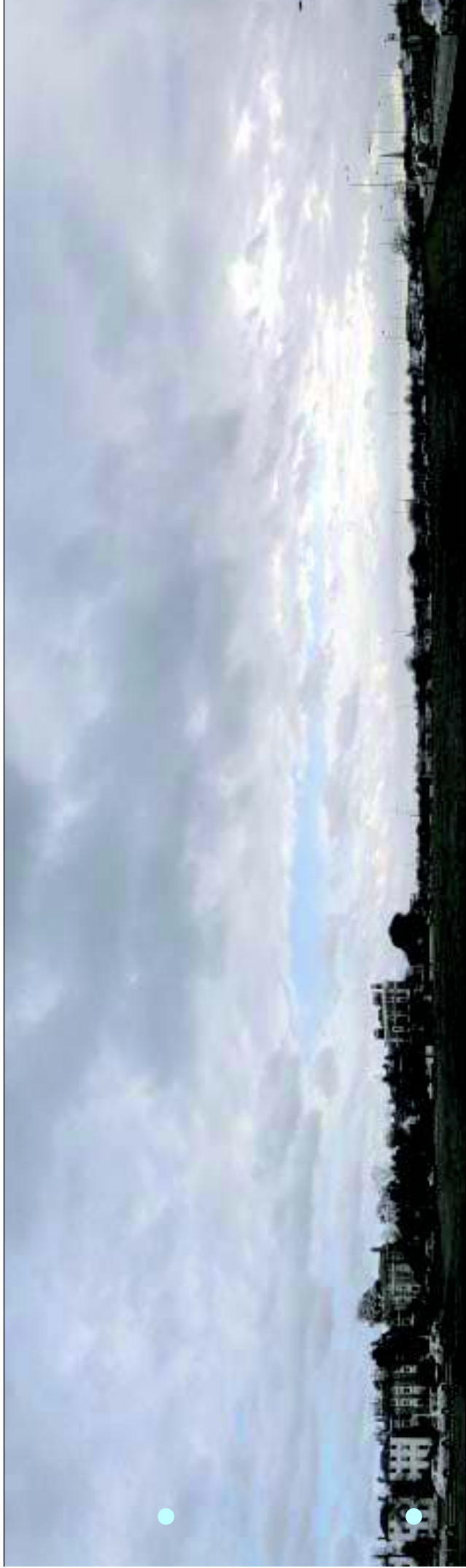
Above: London to Dover Road (now the A2).

Below: Blackheath Panorama.





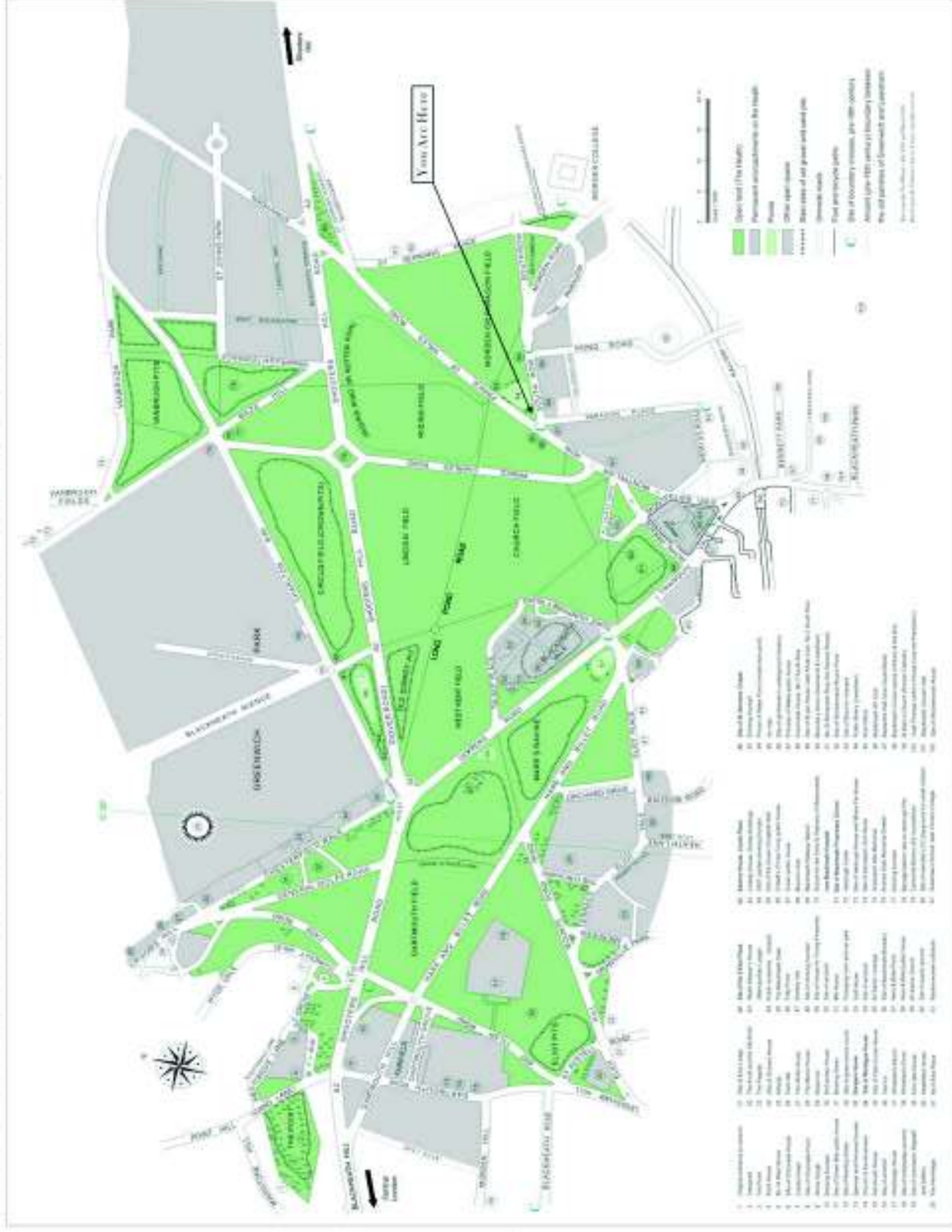
Above: Blackheath the start for the London Marathon.



WELCOME TO BLACKHEATH

LOCAL HISTORY

The south east corner of the Heath marked the front boundary to Morden College (of the 1690s), and Sir Gregory Page's Wicklemarsh Park, from the Cator Estate. The model boat pond - the Prince of Wales pond - was originally a reservoir feeding the ornamental water on the Wicklemarsh estate. It was formally rearranged about 160 years ago to become the model boat pond and now a haven for ducks, swans and geese. Some of Blackheath's finest domestic architecture can be seen from here: The Paragon, Colonnade House, and Montpelier Row - all of the late 18th-early 19th century in origin to the south; St Germans Place to the east, and the so-called 'Captains' Houses' of the late 1830s on Shooters Hill Road to the north.





SECTION 3: The Site Descriptions

THE SITE DESCRIPTIONS

3.1: Location

Blackheath, Shooters Hill. Blackheath (and adjacent Greenwich Heath) together comprise the largest open space in the South East of London. Blackheath Heath is a large expanse of generally flat grassland bisected by several roads though mainly the A2 which also marks the boundary of the different ownerships of the heath, Lewisham being to the South of the road and Greenwich to the North.

3.2: Transport Links

The heath is well serviced by local transport links including buses numbered 53, 54, 380, 202, 89, 108, 286 and nearby train stations at Blackheath, Greenwich and Maze Hill.

3.3: Area

98.92 hectares.

3.4: Ownership

The Earl of Dartmouth managed by London Borough of Lewisham
The Crown managed by the London Borough of Greenwich.

3.5: Statutory Designations & Classifications

London Plan Classification: Local Heath.

PPG17 Classification: Heaths and gardens.

Local Development Framework Classification: Public Open Space.

Other Classifications:

Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.

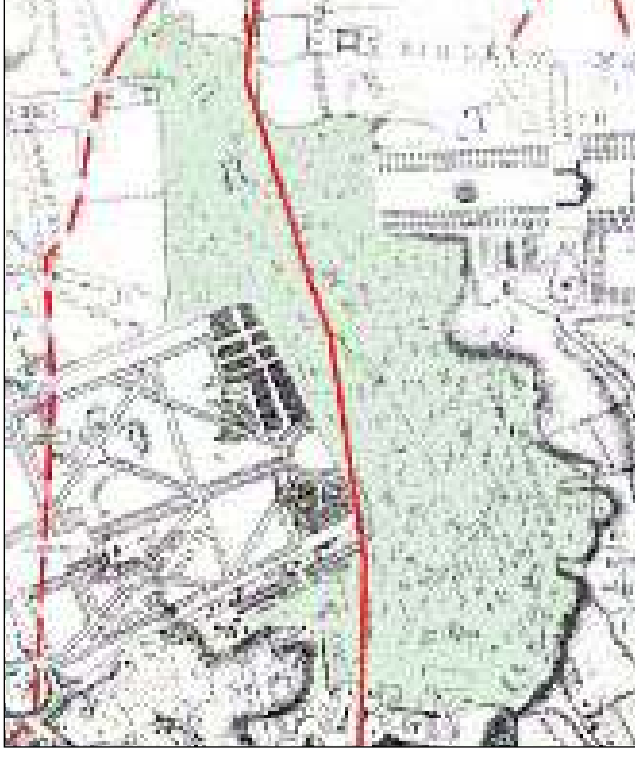
Metropolitan Open Land.

World Heritage Site Buffer Zone.

Area of Archaeological Importance (Lewisham side).

Area of Special Character.

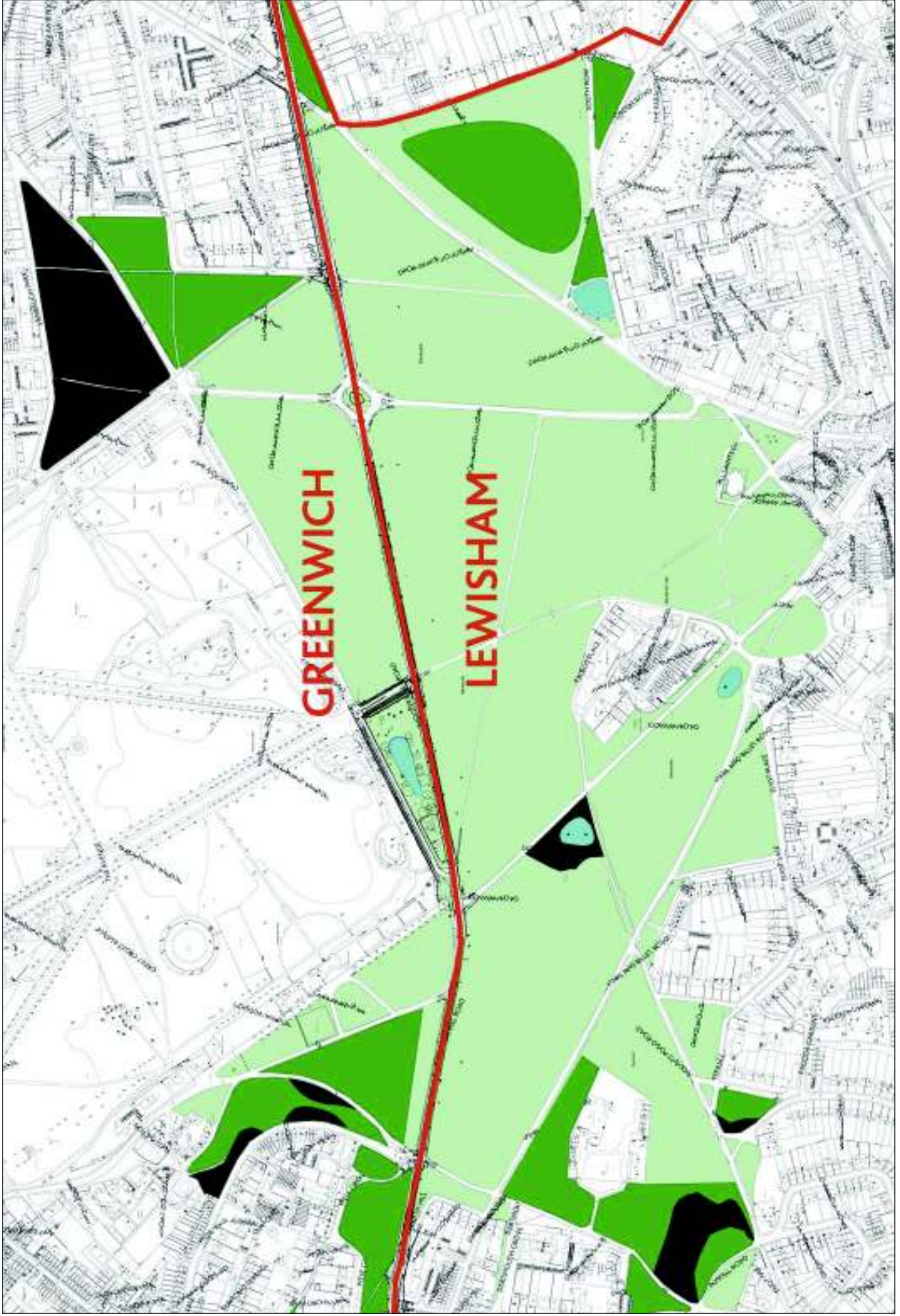
London 'Panorama view' to St Paul's Cathedral.



Above: Possible routes of Roman Roads.

Below: Blackheath is well serviced by bus and train.





3.6: Topography & Geology

Topographically, the conservation area extends to the north and south of the Kidbrook valley aligned east to west. To the north the land rises from the valley at approximately 20m onto Blackheath at a maximum height of around 45m. Close to the northern edge of the Heath the land falls away again into the valley of the River Thames. South of the Kidbrook valley the land also rises, but less so than to the north. Lee Terrace occupies the highest ground south of the valley, reaching a little less than 35m before the land gently falls away again to the south to approximately 15m at Lee High Road. The geology of Blackheath is fairly simple, the area being mainly underlain with the gravelly soils of the Blackheath Beds, underneath which are beds of upper chalk.

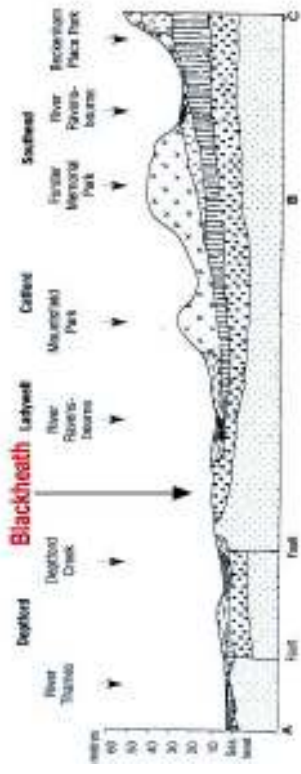
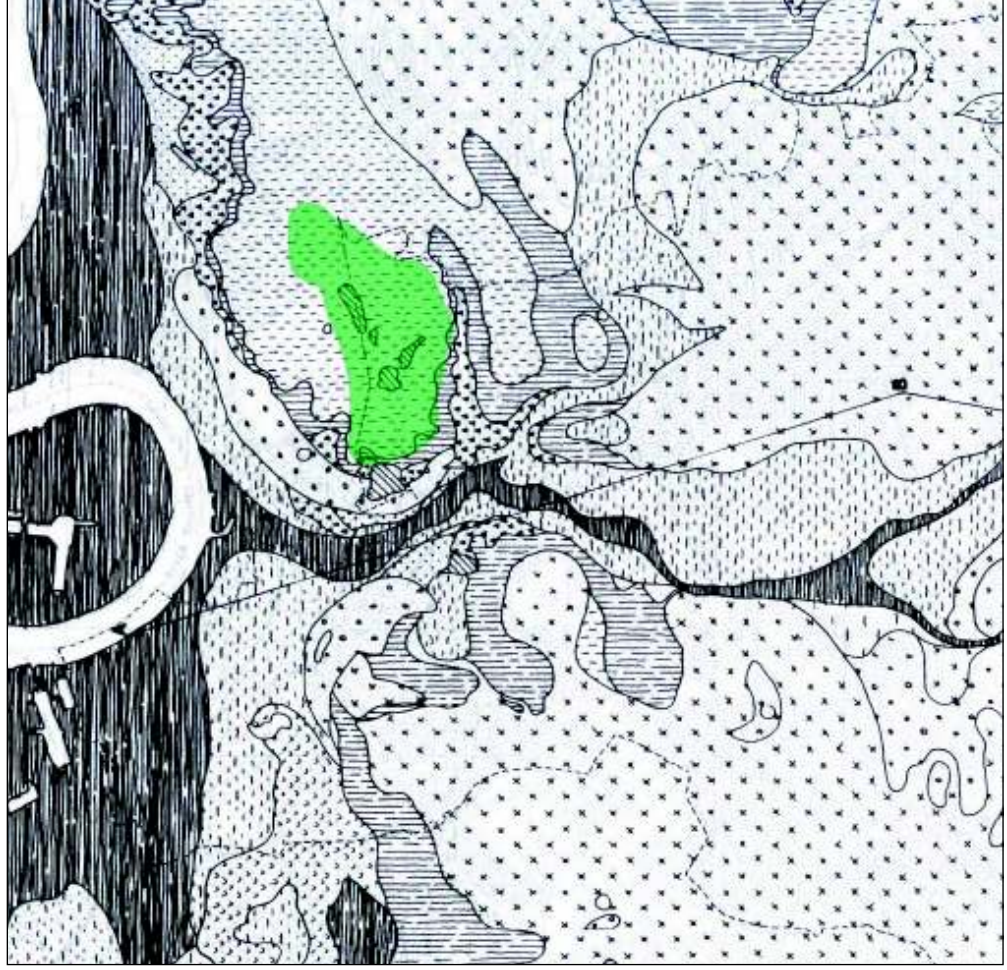
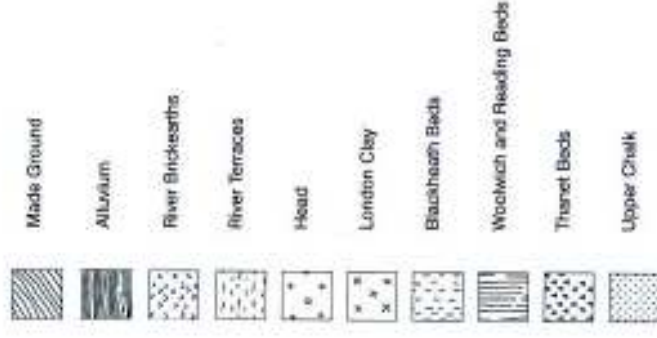


FIGURE 3
Schematic geological section through Lewisham

Based on the British Geological Survey 1:25,000 map with the permission of the Director, British Geological Survey
© National Environmental Research Council



Local geological analysis showing Blackheath on the raised resistant conglomerates between the Thames and the Ravensbourne - Nature Conservation in Lewisham.

3.7: Ecology & Vegetation Cover

Today the heath is no longer so biologically diverse, primarily because of the infilling of pits with bomb rubble after WWII (created initially through gravel extraction during the 18th Century). Furthermore, large areas are used for sports activities with their associated fertilization and improvement of soils for pitches and golf courses. This has turned what was acid heathland into mainly neutral grassland and so caused a decline in biodiversity.

However, some areas of acid grassland can still be found. The best areas are between Hyde Vale and Cade Road, and around The Point (like Vanbrugh Pits, these two areas lie in Greenwich) and, on the Lewisham side, to the east of Granville Heath, between South Row and Morden Road and on the cricket field to the east of Goffers Road.

The Ponds: Blackheath has four ponds, three of these, Hare and Billet Pond, Mounts Pond and the Prince of Wales Pond, are on the Lewisham side of the Heath and form the majority of the boroughs standing water habitat, while the fourth pond, Folly Pond is in Greenwich.

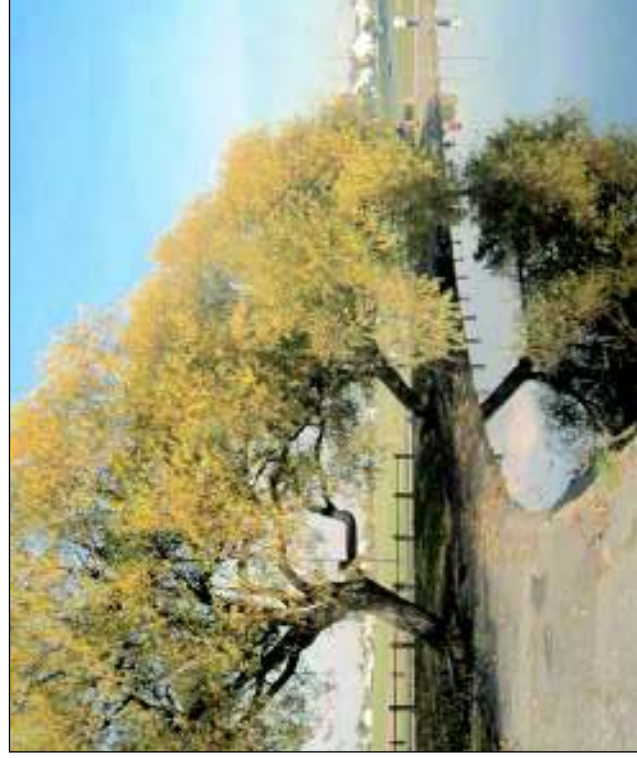
Hare and Billet Pond is the most naturalized of the ponds, marginal vegetation providing the most protection for local wildlife. The Prince of Wales Pond is built of concrete walls preventing the growth of marginal vegetation and therefore has very low biodiversity but is very popular with model boat enthusiasts. Mounts Pond is only seasonally wet and suffers to great extent with erosion from people and dogs. Although work was put in place in 1994 to try and alleviate this problem, it is still a problem today. The final pond, the Folly is overwhelmed by the New Zealand pigmyweed (*Crassula sp*) that reduces the opportunity for other species to flourish in the habitat. The situation is managed by annual dredging where the vast majority of the weed is physically removed. Care is taken to avoid damage to the ecology of the pond, otherwise.

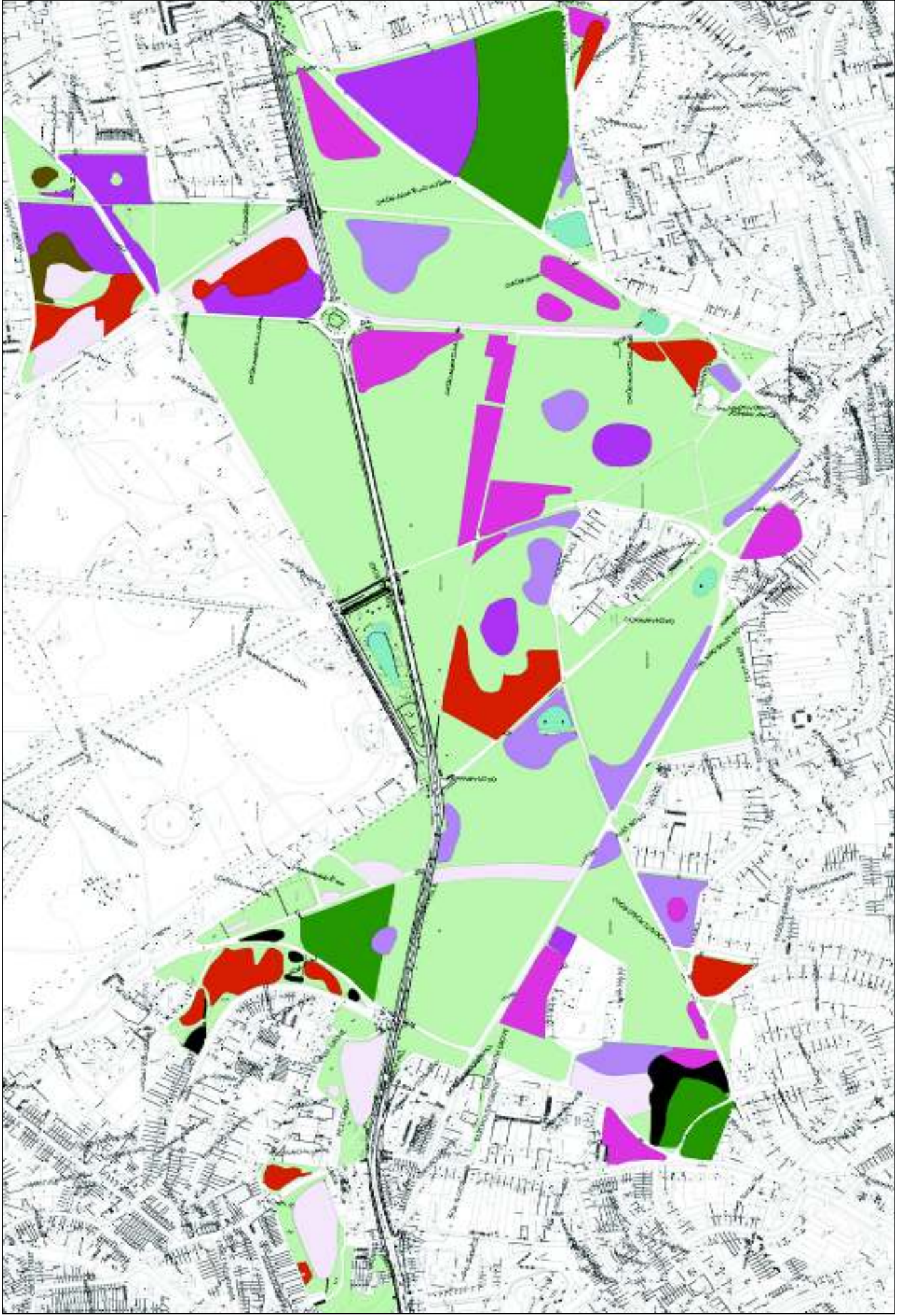
The predominant vegetation cover in the area is grassland although this is found in two different types. Where remnants of acidic grassland remain, common species consist of common bent (dominant grass species) and red fescue. Wild flowers specific to the acid grasslands are cat's-ear and autumn hawkbit. A small population of harebells also survives in the acid grasslands of the Vanbrugh Pits. Here other pits have been in-filled and sports development has caused changes to the soils profile, there is little of interest botanically. The dominant species of grass is perennial rye grass, which is highly competitive, which gives little chance to wild flowers. Where the neutral grassland is left to grow long, more wild flower species are now being seen including oxeye daisy and spotted medick.



Above: Paragon Field.

Below: The Prince of Wales Pond.

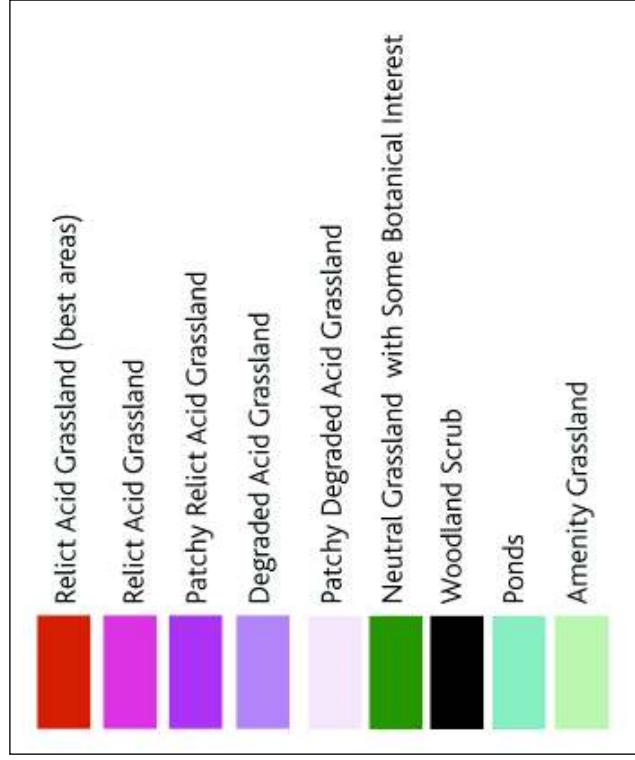






Above: Folly Pond.

Below: Key to page 13.



3.8: Local Biodiversity

Local Action Plans for Lewisham and Greenwich have been drafted which aim to create a greater diversity of habitats and species - see Appendix F for details.

3.9: Sports

Today Blackheath is well known as the start of the London Marathon and in recent times has also hosted the Race for Life. One of the world's most famous athletic competitions, the London Marathon began as an emotional letter written by Olympic champion and journalist Chris Brasher to UK newspaper, The Observer. Brasher had just finished running the 1979 edition of the New York Marathon - one of a group of prestigious races now known as the five annual World Marathon Majors, including the Boston, Berlin and Chicago Marathons. The New York Marathon left Brasher very favourably impressed with the joy and camaraderie surrounding the event, and inspired him to conclude his letter by asking, "...whether London could stage such a festival?"

The London Marathon was born within months as a result, with Brasher himself studying the organisation and financing of the New York and Boston races and applying it to the London project. He quickly managed to obtain £50,000 in financing and established the event as a charity. On March 29, 1981, the first London Marathon was run, with more than 20,000 applicants. Since this very successful debut, the event has steadily increased in size and importance. It now attracts crowds of around one million along the route, with many more following the event on television. The high prize money offered to first place winners attracts world-class athletes.

The course of the Flora London Marathon - the official name of the event - has been described as fast and flat. The 42.195 km (26 miles and 385 yards) course begins in Blackheath and currently ends at the Mall, right in front of Buckingham Palace. More precisely, a 'blue' start at Blackheath is reserved for elite, ballot and wheelchair athletes; a 'red' start at Greenwich Park for overseas runners and a 'green' start at the edge of Blackheath for age and media runners.



Right: The London Marathon starts on Blackheath.

Football is played on the Lewisham side of the heath and this year Glendale have organised a number of professional organisations to promote and run coaching sessions outside school hours within the parks. These organisations have included LSA and Millwall football club.

Bowls Club and Tennis

Greenwich provides a bowling green and hard surfaced tennis courts for public hire.

There is a healthy and active bowling club who work with the Council to manage the greenand surrounds. The income received is used towards the maintenance costs. Changing facilities are provided. Following representation from the respective bowling club to Greenwich council the bowling green was re surfaced and levelled and improvements made to the ditch and surrounds during the autumn of 2011.

3.10: Access

Due to its very open nature the area is always accessible 365 days a year, day and night. There are no gates or areas that are fenced off.



Above: Marked out football pitch.

Below: New signage for the Heath.





SECTION 4: Visitor/Community Usage and Marketing

VISITOR / COMMUNITY USAGE AND MARKETING

4.1: Visitor Facilities & Services

Blackheath offers changing and toilet facilities in the centre of the heath. Refreshments can be purchased at the Tea Hut which is an independently run stall found on the junction between the A2 and Goffers Road.

The Village of Blackheath offers a wide range of refreshment opportunities as does the Royal Park of Greenwich.

4.2: Accessibility & proximity to World Heritage Site – The Royal Park of Greenwich

One of the principle entrances to the Greenwich World Heritage Site is through the Royal Park gates on Blackheath. Greenwich became a royal seat in 1417, when the manor of Greenwich passed to the Duke of Gloucester. Greenwich Park was created in 1432 by the enclosure of 200 acres of Blackheath for Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester (the brother of the late Henry V). After 1660 the garden was re-designed for Charles II by Le Notre, to link to the Park and the Royal Observatory. A diamond configuration of avenues was laid out across the Park. The relationship between Greenwich Park and Blackheath remains an interesting one. The seventeenth-century Lordship of East Greenwich map and the eighteenth-century Rocque map show the rough open space of Blackheath contrasting with the formal enclosure of Greenwich Park. Following the study by Land Use Consultants in 2001, the Royal Parks Agency took the decision to restore the semi-circular 'Rounds', offering the opportunity for a major entrance to the World Heritage Site from the Heath.

4.3: Health & Safety - Security

Personal security is a concern for all heath users whatever their age. Heath maintenance staff are employed, and there is a residence for staff at the restored lodge (Greenwich side). This accommodation is only available to heath maintenance staff, therefore ensuring that a member of staff lives and works on the heath. Heath maintenance staff manage the heath and encourage greater interaction with the public.

The heath is well lit to provide safety to heath users at twilight and after dark and site lines across the heath are very good.



Above: Facilities sign.

Below: Gates to Greenwich Park.



4.4: Marketing and Communication Plan

Blackheath is a suburb of London, divided between the London Borough of Lewisham and the London Borough of Greenwich. The Borough boundary runs across the middle of the heath; Blackheath Village is on the South side of the Heath, in Lewisham while the Blackheath Standard area and Westcombe Park lie on the North-east side, in Greenwich.

The main aim of the Marketing Strategy is to provide a realistic and achievable plan for the coming twelve months. This is signed off by both boroughs through the BJWP.

Marketing is carried out in the following ways; on both boroughs' websites, local newspapers and magazines and through event specific flyers. After every large event a monitoring report will be produced which will highlight any issues that occurred during the event. These issues will be addressed and recorded for improvement for the following year.

Regular research and customer monitoring through surveys will be implemented throughout 2008 - 2012. Links with the local Press have improved during 2008 and many press releases were printed within the local newspapers. Promotion of funding bodies which will help event organisers in the costs of events, areas which are seen as deficient will gain an increased chance of being awarded funding, Glendale can help with advice for completion of applications and parks which are likely to be awarded funding if events are to be achieved.

Monitoring and Feedback

Monitoring of activities will be carried out on an ongoing basis. We intend to use observation and customer survey methods to monitor activities.

Park Services

The parks service is an integral part of the marketing strategy as the Park/Heath Keepers are the most highly visible members of staff, amongst their duties they are met by the public on a day-to-day basis, updating the parks notice boards as well as distributing information about forthcoming parks events to the park users.

Park keepers also take part in the monitoring process by assisting with the customer survey process. The customer survey form is essential for effective feedback.

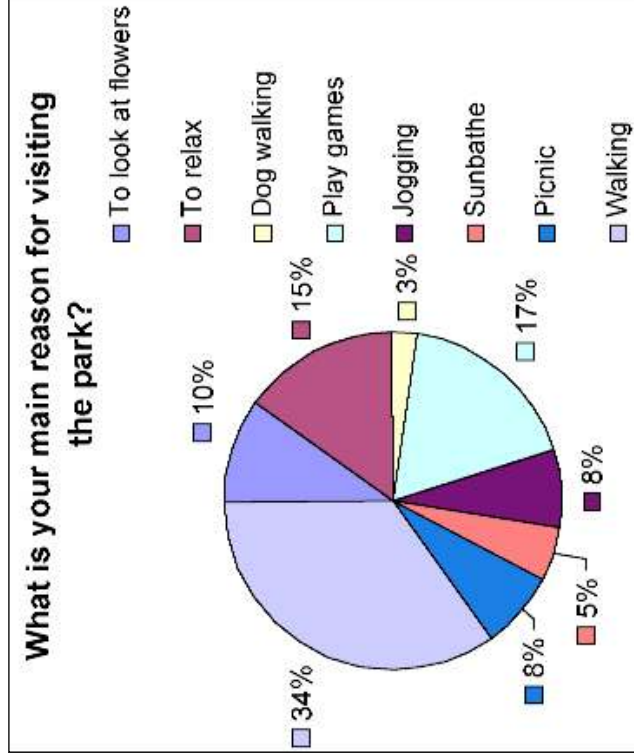
Events

An annual events survey will be distributed in order to collate information about the local community requirements. The results from the surveys will determine the type of improvements required for events.



Above: Heathkeepers Lodge.

Below: Market Research.



4.5: Stakeholders & Community Consultation: The Blackheath Joint Working Party

Blackheath has an admirable history of local involvement. The first formal organisation came in 1856, when local residents formed the Blackheath Improvement Association to look after the Heath; collecting rubbish, removing graffiti and policing illegal digging. This group wound themselves up after the passing of the Metropolitan Commons Act as it felt that the Board of Works would take on these responsibilities. They reformed as the Blackheath Preservation Trust to put forward the views of local residents to the Commissioners and the Board of Works. Today the Blackheath Joint Working Party meets six times per year to discuss the management and maintenance of the heath. The group also holds an annual public open meeting to ensure the public are kept updated. Established in 1987, the Joint Working Party oversees and co-ordinates the work of the Boroughs of Lewisham and Greenwich on Blackheath with respect to nature conservation, maintenance, traffic and events. This unique management arrangement allows both the local community and the two boroughs to meet and agree management and maintenance actions for the heath.

This group has produced a brochure called "Blackheath Nature Trail" (see Appendix H), which contains a map of the principal nature points in Blackheath. The booklet includes visits to Hare and Billet Pond, Whitfield Mount and Pond, The Point and Eliot Pits.

The Blackheath Joint Working Party is made up of representatives from most of the local societies and groups in the area:

- Blackheath Society
- Greenwich Society
- Westcombe Society
- Greenwich Environment Forum
- Blackheath Preservation Trust

Other Blackheath stakeholders include English Heritage, The Royal Parks Agency, The World Heritage Site coordinator and Transport for London.

Park Survey

An Open space survey was undertaken in the Spring of 2011 and the outcomes have influenced the key themes and action plan of the Open Space Strategy 2011-16

Key Findings

A total of 301 web surveys and 130 postal surveys were completed.

Reasons for visiting the park or open space

The most popular reasons stated for visiting our parks and open spaces were to relax, to walk, to see the birds and wildlife, to enjoy the peace and quiet, to walk for exercise and



Above: Monitoring.

Below: Feedback.



to visit the playground.

Frequency of visit

47% of users visited the park or open space on a daily basis in the summer months with a further 44% on a weekly basis. This figure dropped to 29% visiting on a daily basis and 42% weekly during the winter months.

Method of Transport

88% of visitors walked to their local park or open space with 8% travelling by bicycle

Distance from park

47% of visitors lived less than 5 minutes walk time to get to their local park with a further 34% living less than 10 minutes walk time

Customer satisfaction

38% of users were very satisfied that their local park or open space was clean and cared for, with a further 46% of users saying they were satisfied.

Protecting open space

An unsurprising 95% of responders strongly agreed that the Council should protect parks and open spaces from development such as housing.

Feeling safe

28% strongly agreed that they felt safe using their park or open space with a further 52% agreeing that they felt safe.

Events

74% would like to see more farmers markets with 61% liking to see more concerts/music festivals and community festivals. 57% would like to see more children's activities.

4.6 The London Olympics 2012

Greenwich Park plays an integral role as the event site for the equestrian events for both the Olympics and Paralympics. The circus field on Blackheath will be used as the key logistics site in preparation for the games and will accommodate stables and the venue entrance arrangements. Blackheath itself will form part of the 'last mile' which covers the spectator route from Blackheath train station across the heath to the park. The heath will be 'dressed' for the occasion. Lewisham Council is also holding an Olympic 'Live Site' for the duration of the games, adjacent to the All Saints Church, which will include a large screen showing the Olympic events in addition to stalls, and cultural activities.

At the time of writing Greenwich Council were in negotiation with LOCOG in respect of the planning application for use of the circus field to ensure at the very least it's restored to the condition it was handed to the event organisers prior the games.



SECTION 5: Joint Management Structures

JOINT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURES

5.1: Management Structures

Portions of the heath are managed separately by the London boroughs of Greenwich and Lewisham and coordinated through the Blackheath Joint Working Party. Management structures, work programmes and service standards for Greenwich and Lewisham are included in Appendix C.

5.2: Byelaws

The London Boroughs of Lewisham and Greenwich have been working on new joint byelaws for Blackheath and these documents can be found in Appendix E. The Heath maintenance staff have a responsibility for ensuring that byelaws and other legislation are adhered to.

5.3: A Welcoming Place

Good and Safe Access

Blackheath provides safe and equal access for everyone, there are no gates or fenced off areas and the heath is accessible day and night, 365 days of the year. Whilst the heath does not have actual entrances it is important to ensure that the entrance 'gateways' to the heath, i.e. pathways leading across the heath, are kept clear of clutter and that sightlines are kept clear. Lewisham Council have worked closely with English Heritage and the Blackheath Society to make improvements to the foot and cycle path lighting, the condition of the pathways and improvements to the junction of Long Pond and Duke Humphrey paths. New heritage style columns have been installed funded directly by English Heritage.



Above: Clear signage.

Below: No gates or fenced off areas.





Above: New signage for the Heath

Effective Signage

New clear and visible location signage was installed in July 2008, giving information about the specific area of the heath. Notice boards also give other information including ownership and management of the site, and contact telephone numbers. Parks and other relevant information is also available from information boards situated in the park. The feasibility of a proposed extension to the South-East London Green Chain Walk from Eltham to Greenwich will be examined. Potentially the walk would enter the heath from Morden College at the eastern section, cross east to west along Long Pond pathway, turning right along Duke Humphrey pathway and across the A2 to Greenwich Park at Blackheath Gates. The walk will be signed with the distinctive Green Chain walk posts which will incorporate cycle signage and so reducing signage clutter.

5.4 HEALTHY, SAFE AND SECURE

Management Action: Personal Security in the Park
Security Monitoring

Blackheath is predominately wide open common land and incidents of anti-social behaviour are rare. Heath maintenance staffs manage the heath and promote community involvement. The newly restored heath keepers' lodge on the Greenwich side ensures that a member of the maintenance staff lives and works on the heath, providing a constant presence. The heath is appropriately lit and site lines across the heath are very good. Where cycle and footpaths cross busy roads central refuges are placed to provide a mid road security space for pedestrians.

Both boroughs have a park security team who are CRB checked and have the powers of local authority enforcement. Working very closely with wardens, Police Community Support Officers (PCSO) and the police, the park security team gives not only the park users a sense of personal security but also the park keeper. The park security teams patrol and monitor activity in the park to ensure a safe environment for everyone.

The Lewisham Visible Presence Forum is a group that was established in January 2003 by the Metropolitan Police in Lewisham to bring together all uniformed groups working in the borough, beat officers, PCSOs, council wardens, railway police, CCTV, ASBAT and Park staff. The purpose of the group is to facilitate communication and understanding between the service managers so that, with regard to crime reduction, 'joined-up' services can be provided.

The sharing of information is essential if the fear of crime is to be reduced and since the initiation of the forum a much clearer understanding of the elements involved in creating a safer environment has been achieved. The main benefit from the parks perspective has been better communication (in particular with the beat officers and Park staff).

In Greenwich there is a joint enforcement team arrangement where various enforcement bodies including the police, enforcement officers and other agencies work together to target anti-social behaviour.

Joint draft Bylaws will be adopted and a full copy of the draft Bylaws is available on the Council's web sites.

It is the responsibility of Park staff to enforce bylaws and other legislation as appropriate.

Dog Fouling

The Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005 introduced new powers and fixed penalties for local authorities to counter and reduce environmental crime. This includes irresponsible dog owners through the introduction of the Dog Control Order which both Councils adopted in autumn 2009. Following consultation the Councils approved the borough wide adoption with the following offences:

- Fouling of land by dogs and failing to remove faeces
- Not keeping a dog on a lead in designated areas
- Not putting a dog on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer
- Permitting a dog to enter land from which dogs have been excluded
- Taking more than four dogs onto specified areas

Glendale has been authorised by Lewisham Council to enforce the Order and their security team have been trained to issue fixed penalty notices. Greenwich Council has a team of warranted officers to undertake enforcement duties.



Above: Dog bin



Above: Bound gravel paths

Safe Equipment and Facilities

All staff operates in accordance with the Health and Safety Policy and Codes of Practice, copies of which are issued to all members of staff. Risk assessments are undertaken and procedures are adhered to in all aspects of works in the parks. Both boroughs regard the Health and Safety policy as a working document, which is continually updated.

The work programmes dovetail with the Service Standards set (Appendix C) and Glendale is bound by its Method Statements, which give detail of how it will carry out the service to be performed, as set out in the specification. Greenwich uses a directly employed workforce.

Pathway lighting in Lewisham is maintained under a new joint PFI contract with the London Borough of Croydon and managed by Skanska. Faulty lighting can be reported directly onto the Council's website listing the columns that are not working correctly.

The park staffs are responsible for carrying out inspections to ensure the park is safe for public use and to deal with any emergency that may arise, especially where it poses a threat to the public.

5.5 WELL MAINTAINED AND CLEAN

Service Standards

The cleanliness of the heath is of priority importance and both Councils have dedicated teams available to ensure that the heath is clean and tidy at all times. Lewisham Council has adopted service standards and performance indicators that relate to the following (see Appendix I):

Greenwich Council regularly monitors service performance.

Litter – Blackheath should be maintained to a Grade A standard as set out in the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA). Blackheath is designated a site of high intensity use and must be returned to a Grade A standard within a maximum of 6 hours of being reported during operational hours. (Special arrangements are put in place to return the heath to Grade A following the London Marathon and November Fireworks displays.)

Litter and Dog Bins Litter bins are emptied and the mobile cleansing teams picks litter throughout the park daily. Each bin is formally inspected every 14 days and a record of condition and usage is kept together with records of trends, usage, vandalism and suitability.

Litter bins are spread evenly around the park, particularly next to seating areas. Litter and dog bins will not be left to overflow, any bin reported as overflowing will be emptied within 3 hours.

Litter and Waste Management

The works programme (Appendix K) dovetail with the standards set by the Parks and Open Spaces Services.

Graffiti –Where possible, small items of graffiti and minor repairs are carried out by the Mobile Cleansing and monitoring officer. The mobile graffiti team deals with larger incidents of graffiti. A vital part of the monitoring officer's role is to identify and document any incidents of vandalism or deterioration in the fabric of the park. Where possible the monitoring officer should rectify the problem, where this is not possible the fault should be reported to the Parks Service Supervisor. On notification graffiti will be removed within 24 hours and within 1 hour of notification of racist, sexist or clearly offensive graffiti.

Complaints – will be responded to within 9 working days. See Appendix J

Playgrounds – Although there is no current provision for children's play the Lewisham Blackheath ward assembly have aspirations to install active recreation equipment which if installed will be included on the Play safe monitoring system.

Dog Fouling and Dog Bins - All areas are inspected and cleared of dog faeces using a ride-on FIDO unit. This machine visits the park on a cyclical basis. The mobile cleansing teams will also clear dog faeces manually during their daily patrol. A one-hour 'call-out' service is provided in response to complaints requesting excrement removal. This service operates seven days a week during park opening hours. Details of FIDO machine procedure can be found in appendix 8.

Each dog bin will be formally inspected every 14 days and a record of condition and usage kept together with records of trends, usage, vandalism and suitability. Each bin will be formally inspected every 14 days and a record of condition and usage kept together with records of trends, usage, vandalism and suitability.

Clinical Waste - All syringes etc will be collected by the Park staff and inserted into a lockable 'sharps' box. The location of the 'sharps' will be recorded and when full, the box will be transported to the clinical waste disposal point.

Leaves - All leaves are cleared as required to maintain a safe surface. The majority are recycled as shredded mulch and re-used in various local open spaces.

Dust and Silt - All hard surfaces are swept with a stiff broom or suitable mechanical sweeper once a week or as necessary.

Chewing Gum pollution - To include chewing gum boards in suitable locations to address the problem.



Above: Litter bin



Above: Heathkeepers Lodge

Building and Infrastructure Maintenance

Glendale undertakes an annual buildings maintenance plan for all buildings within the parks contract. The Mobile Inspector monitors and reports on the general infrastructure of the park with particular attention to all play equipment, signage and park furniture. All fences, paths, walls and gates are inspected at timely intervals in accordance with the Method Statement.

Periodic inspections are carried out on all buildings and infrastructure. Externally, this will cover the roof, guttering, security lights and windows etc. Internally, this will cover emergency exits, lighting, floor tiling, ceilings, electrical systems and boilers. Park infrastructure which cannot be repaired or maintained with the current infrastructure maintenance team will be outsourced to approved sub contractors.

In Greenwich, Building Maintenance and Repairs are carried out by the corporate building maintenance group as a responsive service.

Landscape Maintenance

Grounds

The performance standard is that parks and open spaces shall be maintained in respect of the grounds and horticulture to meet the applicable provisions of BS7370.BS3936, BS4428:1998. Areas within Blackheath include general grass areas, meadow, shrub beds, hedgerows, new and young trees, a bowling green, tree pits, plants and soft landscape maintenance. These are all maintained to the British Standards as a minimum requirement and the core values provide a safe, attractive and stimulating environment for the users of Blackheath and beyond. To safeguard and enhance the natural environment the Council's actively support staff training and apprentices schemes to increase the level of expertise within the workforce.

The Grounds maintenance teams use a work programme system to ensure consistent and high quality service. Task frequency and specification is identified. (Appendix C)

Hard Surfaces

The boroughs comply with their Method Statement or work programmes for ensuring that weeds in all hard areas are controlled throughout the year. The use of herbicide will be kept to a minimum. A path-sweeping regime is an integral part of the management. The paths are swept weekly using a mechanical sweeper and daily by cleansing staff when required to remove glass and debris.

Equipment Maintenance

All equipment is purchased centrally with great consideration for staff safety in regards to emissions and vibration. All staff are inducted before using machinery and equipment to ensure the equipment is used efficiently and effectively. Annual service programs are in place for all equipment and daily safety checks are carried out and recorded. The Glendale contract has a dedicated mechanics workshop with 3 trained staff maintaining the equipment to a high standard and being refreshed on new developments when required. Greenwich also has a horticultural equipment workshop dedicated to the repair and maintenance of equipment, with two staff employed.

Street Furniture

Both boroughs have agreed a simple palette of furniture, lighting and bollards, in line with English Heritage 'Streets for all' publication:

Seats: David Ogilvie Engineering Ltd – KC Seat

Bins: David Ogilvie Engineering Ltd – Balmoral Bin

Dog Bins: Earth Anchors – HGN45A 66lit

Path Surfaces – It is proposed to 'dress' the cycle paths with resin bonded gravel and the footpaths with tar and chip to give a more rural character to the heath.

Signs – Should be kept to a minimum. Where possible signs should be on path or road surfaces to minimise clutter and on black or dark green posts. The new Green Chain walk signage will use the walks dark green palette of signage.

Bollards – have been removed from a number of areas to reduce clutter. Where bollards are deemed necessary they should be heavy duty green oak timber or cast iron.

Lighting – New heritage style pathway lighting has been installed on the Lewisham side of the heath, funded by a grant from English Heritage.



Above: Classic Seating



Above: Mature tree management

5.6 SUSTAINABILITY

Environmental sustainability – energy and natural resource conservation, pollution

Work undertaken by Glendale is subject to the local authority's environmental policies and is subject to regular Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS) inspections and controls. EMAS is a voluntary initiative designed to improve companies' environmental performance. Glendale itself is accredited with EN / ISO 14001. Glendale operating within Lewisham is audited by the national quality auditors every 3 years to ensure compliance with ISO 14001 and to demonstrate the contract's continual improvement. The contract within Lewisham is internally audited twice per year, which exceeds NQA's monitoring recommendations.

All green waste collected from Blackheath is recycled. In addition litter and debris is now separated and recyclable waste is placed into clear sacks and recycled as part of the Lewisham recycle and reduce campaign, or taken to the municipal urban recycling facility (MURF) in Greenwich.

Increase wildlife and biodiversity

Mowing regimes

Longer grass provides an important habitat for many invertebrates and small animals. Areas that are not greatly used for amenity have been identified and here mowing regimes are relaxed to maintain a longer sward of grass. The meadow is cut once a year in the months of September to October and the arisings are removed after 48 hours. Through winter, the meadows are cut as amenity grass on fortnightly basis. Where longer grass abuts paths short grass edges are maintained. This is to reinforce in the public's mind that the park is cared for and also to provide textural contrast in appearance. Care must be taken to keep these areas of longer grass litter-free.

Field Boundary Bunds

Following the success of the A2 bunds Lewisham has installed a new bund along the eastern side of Prince Charles Road to protect the heath from encroachment. The bund has been seeded with a wildflower meadow mix to encourage growth.

Structure planting

Shrubs are pruned with respect to their natural shape and form. Structural (height) and species diversity are maintained and developed with the intention of promoting biodiversity. Low growing hardy shrubs have been planted on the margins of the heath and large areas of wildflower meadows are present to encourage biodiversity.

Training

It is essential that staffs assigned to manage and promote wildlife areas are equipped with the skills necessary to do so. Glendale's Nature Conservation Officer alongside Lewisham's Nature Conservation Officer run conservation volunteering sessions called "Nature's Gym" in the parks and nature reserves. Through Nature's Gym, the volunteers learn and practice

new skills in conservation. In addition to the M.Sc. qualification in Environmental Science and Management, the Conservation Officer has also attended courses in BTCV site management, wildlife surveys and wildlife education courses. All staff in Greenwich receives appropriate training or has suitable experience to allow them carry out their work competently and to a high standard.

GLA Habitat Survey Team

All parks in Lewisham were surveyed by the Habitat Survey Team in Spring Summer 2005/6. This data has been used to identify existing habitats and to assist with habitat creation in parks. Lewisham Council has bought into the Greenspace Information for Greater London (GIGL) as a means of storing and manipulating data for open spaces and biodiversity. The GLA data will be added to this database. Lewisham surveyed all of its meadow grasslands in 2006/7 and has used the data for Blackheath to modify mowing regimes at priority sites. The data is also used to support Sites of Importance for Nature conservation (SINC) designation

Lewisham Biodiversity Plans

There are currently seven Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) in production covering selected species/habitats for Lewisham – Black Redstart, Song Thrush, Green Roofs, House Sparrow, Rivers, Railway Linesides and Stag Beetle. Glendale is committed to try and accommodate additional objectives enshrined in these BAPs into the management of the park.

The Greenwich Biodiversity Action Plan has been fully adopted by the Council. Target species for special consideration are: Bats, Black Redstart, Hedgehog, Stag Beetle, Water vole and Black Poplar. And Habitats: Acid Grassland and Lowland Heath land, Parks and Green spaces, Wasteland, Waters edge, Rivers, Ponds and wetlands, wetlands, Woodlands and Tidal Thames. Greenwich Council is committed to the objectives identified in the Plan where possible and practical.

Pollution Reduction, Water Efficiency and Energy Efficiency

Large vehicles are not encouraged into the heath and staff empty bins by hand, taking the rubbish out to the vehicles where possible.

Waste from the dog walking area is appropriately contained and disposed of.

Noise generated by vehicles and machinery is kept to a minimum. Mufflers are used and vehicles and machinery are well maintained.

Records of any pollution incidents/complaints are kept within the Glendale's and Greenwich's ISO 14001 procedures.

Pesticides

The use of pesticides is kept to a minimum, and where they are used, the most eco-friendly products are selected. All staff must be trained to PA1 or PA6 standard. The purchase,



Above: Hare & Billot pond

Below: All Saints Church



storage, usage and disposal of chemicals are carefully controlled under ISO 14001.

Peat Use

Peat is not used on Blackheath. Where appropriate recycled products are used.

Reducing and Re-using Green Waste

Glendale and Greenwich have identified two ways of tackling this problem 1) reducing actual production of green waste and 2) re-using green waste after composting, with the emphasis being on the former of these. Green Waste can be reduced by avoiding unnecessary pruning, using herbicides correctly and allowing leaves to decompose naturally amongst shrubs and hedge bottoms. Almost all of the horticultural green waste generated on Blackheath is recycled on-site; the remainder is recycled by Glendale or is taken to the MURF in Greenwich.

Recycling

We provide information to park users on nearest local recycling centres via the notice board.

Glendale is reducing the amount of waste being disposed at landfill by staff separating domestic waste found at Blackheath and disposing of in the Lewisham recycling scheme.

Arboriculture and Woodland management

Glendale and Greenwich Council are responsible for all young trees planted within the park. Mature trees are inspected and maintained by external contractors, Connick Tree Care or in the case of the Greenwich side of the Heath by its arboriculture manager or supervisor. The Councils have purchased the Abortrack package to assist in the data logging and audit of all trees within the park. Glendale works in partnership with Connick in order to reuse wood chipping within the park. The Councils will be auditing and mapping the tree stock on Blackheath in 2010/11.

5.7 CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE

Conservation of natural features, wild fauna and flora

The Heath is already rich with wildlife habitats even more so after the increased wildflower and hedge planting projects in 2008. A Nature Trail for Blackheath has been produced and identifies all areas of natural interest, to ensure these areas are not compromised in any way and to implement suitable management techniques and policies in order to safeguard and enhance the natural features.

Conservation of Landscape Features

The heath is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) of Metropolitan Importance and contains several features of wildlife interest such as relict acid grasslands (see section 3.7) and ponds. Hare and Billet pond and mounts pond are part of Lewisham council's portfolio of sites of conservation importance. Lewisham's Local Biodiversity Action Plan, 'A Natural Renaissance for Lewisham 2006-11' and Greenwich's draft Biodiversity Action Plan are both contained in appendix F. These documents outline strategies for conservation and enhancement of biodiversity in their boroughs. The Greenwich draft plan highlights acid grassland and heath land as a priority habitat.

Mowing regimes have, in recent years been relaxed to encourage a diversity of meadow grasslands. See appendix C for work programmes and mowing regimes. Landscape features will continue to be conserved and enhanced through implementation of the joint management plan.

Conservation of Buildings and Structures

The whole of Blackheath is a designated as World Heritage Buffer Zone, sitting adjacent to Royal Greenwich. The Grade 2 listed All Saints Church, designed by Benjamin Ferrey and built in 1856-57, stands at the south of the heath close to Blackheath Village. The Gibb memorial, a drinking fountain and shelter stands at the northern edge of the heath opposite the Greenwich War Memorial. It was erected in 1931 to commemorate Andrew Gibb, one of the first Aldermen of the metropolitan Borough of Greenwich and a generous supporter of local charities. The Gibb Memorial was fully restored in 2003 by Greenwich Council. The London Borough of Greenwich and Lewisham are committed to conserving the rich cultural heritage of Blackheath through promoting events and community involvement.

5.8 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Community involvement in management and development including outreach work

Blackheath Joint Working Party

Details of the Joint working Party are shown in paragraph 4.5

The workings of the heath are also discussed at the Lewisham Blackheath Ward Assembly who meet quarterly. The assembly takes the views of a wide range of local people including young people and the group are interested in provided some discreet form of children's play and can allocate ward assembly funding towards such initiatives.

new skills in conservation. In addition to the M.Sc. qualification in Environmental Science and Management, the Conservation Officer has also attended courses in BTCV site management, wildlife surveys and wildlife education courses. All staff in Greenwich receives appropriate training or has suitable experience to allow them carry out their work competently and to a high standard.

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Above: Hare & Billot pond



Above: Tennis courts

Natures Gym

To increase the involvement for Communities and local schools, Glendale and Lewisham Council introduced in June 2008, Nature's Gym. Nature's Gym offer opportunities for volunteers to improve their fitness by taking part in practical environmental (nature) conservation activities in local Parks and Nature Reserves. It's free, fun and no experience is needed. The sessions take place every Thursday and once a month on a Saturday from 11 am-2 pm. Nature's Gym caters for a range of abilities and there are usually a variety of tasks to carry out. Tools and refreshments are provided and there is a mid-session tea break. Nature's Gym provides a great opportunity to meet people, find out about the local area, learn new practical skills and make a positive contribution to the local environment. Nature Gym attends to a number of areas on the heath for example the Hare and Billet Pond.

Nature Conservation

Biodiversity Action Team (BAT) Southeast London promotes healthy hearts and a healthy environment. This initiative operates in some parks and nature reserves. Activities include the clearance of a Thames tributary and hedge planting. The intention is that volunteers keep fit by helping to develop and maintain wildlife areas.

Visitor Surveys

Being aware of and responding to the needs and expectations of park users and non-users is essential for the continued success of the park. An annual parks user survey has helped to gauge customer satisfaction and feedback on the service provided. Information is collated in the form of tables and spreadsheets and then made available for the client to review. By ensuring that a representative cross-section of the community is monitored, staff are more able to respond accurately to the requirements of local people.

Customer Care

All staff are supplied with a briefing pack outlining the importance of providing prompt, effective, efficient service and good presentation at all times. The pack contains advice on dealing with difficult customers and promotes friendly and efficient teamwork with communication seen as being a main priority.

All complaints are dealt with in accordance with the complaints procedure.

5.9 MARKETING AND EVENTS

Marketing, Promotion & Provision of Appropriate Information

A marketing plan has been developed by the both Lewisham and Greenwich boroughs for the borough's parks and open spaces. The aims of marketing Blackheath are to:

- Attract more people to visit the park
- To raise the profile of the park in the local area
- To raise the profile of the park in the borough
- To raise the profile of the park throughout London and nationwide
- To increase awareness of the park and its facilities for use by the public
- To raise awareness of environmental and educational issues associated with parks
- To improve access for all and to increase social inclusion
- To raise and maintain public perception of park personnel and Lewisham Council

Blackheath hosts a number of annual festivals, fairs and events. See Appendix D.

A number of leaflets and guides are available which include Blackheath. The park can be found on both Councils' web sites, promoting the heath as an attractive green space, available for the whole community.

Lewisham Council has redesigned its web site and 'Parks and Recreation' are advertised under the 'Leisure and Culture' site.

<http://www.lewisham.gov.uk/LeisureAndCulture/ParksAndRecreation/LocalParks/Blackheat h.htm>

In Greenwich it can be found under parks and gardens www.greenwich.gov.uk

Provision of appropriate educational interpretation/information

The Conservation Officer's/Outreach Workers responsibilities include encouraging local schools and colleges to use the park as an educational resource. The Conservation Officer will also provide assistance to individuals, user groups and the general community to encourage greater use of the park and greater participation in service provision. This will involve giving talks to schools, user groups and other interested parties and organising guided walks around the park as required.



Above: Fair on Blackheath



Above: Monitoring

Events

A joint events policy for the heath has been adopted by both Council's. Both Councils are keen to continue to promote a varied programme of events and activities that can offer both cultural benefits and active enjoyment whilst recognising the needs of existing users and local residents as well as the importance of protecting the fragile ecology of the heath from over-use. The policy sets out the key aims and how the two Council's will achieve these aims. It sets out how applications will be evaluated, the roles of the Blackheath Joint Working Party, Glendale, the two Council's and the respective Safety Advisory Groups. It sets out the application process and requirements for the application.

5.10 MANAGEMENT

Resources and Skills

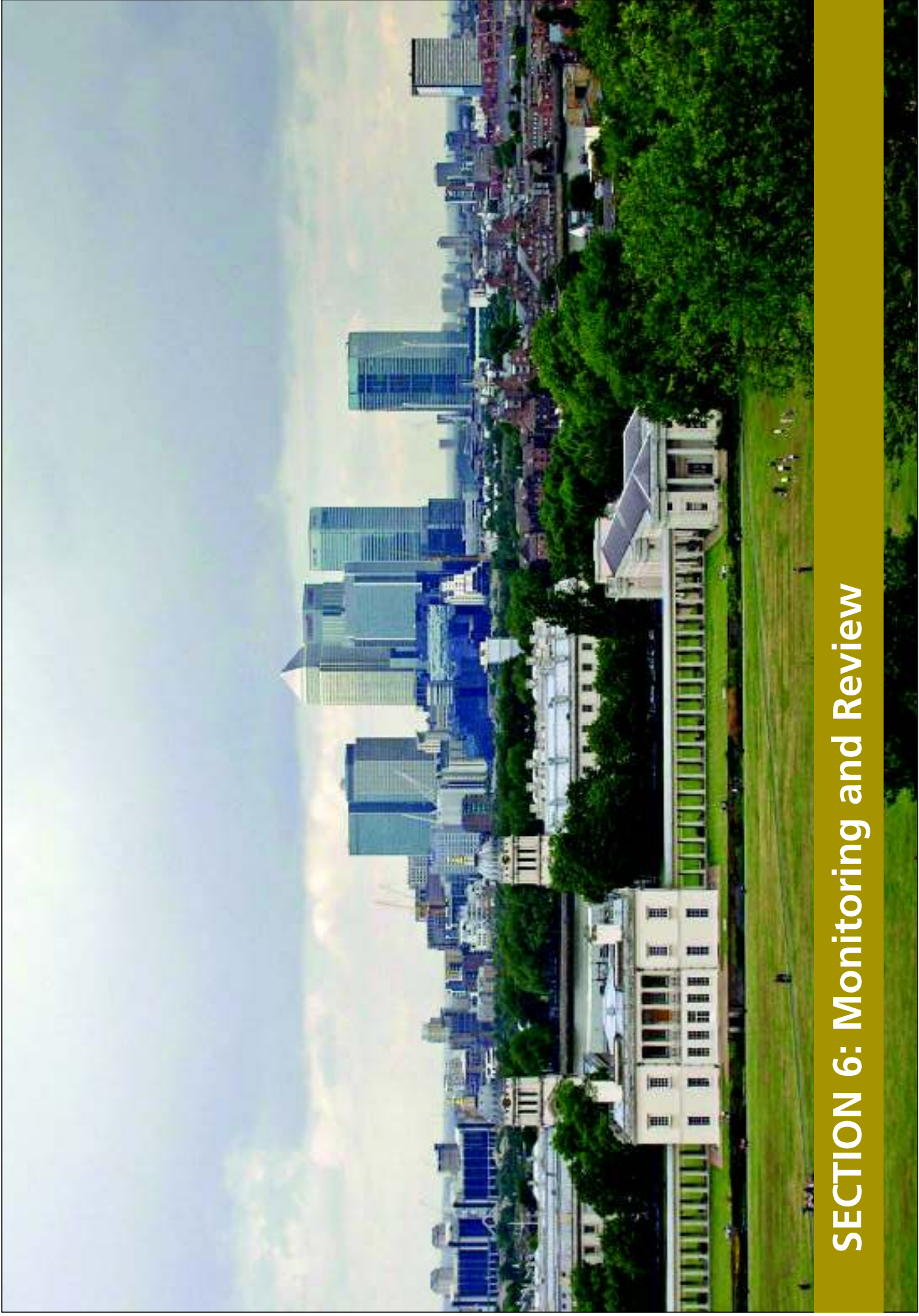
The production of a detailed management plan provides a tool identifying maintenance and management tasks. Resources can then be matched accordingly with some areas requiring more input than others, and ultimately allowing Value for Money to be achieved.

The management plan is perpetually evolving and is used as a live management tool and not kept on the shelf after production.

The management structure has a very skilled and varied team consisting of land surveyors, IT professionals, accountants, event managers, system analysts, environmental scientists and health and safety professionals.

We continue to carry out internal and external training to improve our current skill base and believe that the green flag process will help us to become more proficient in managing Blackheath.

Glendale and Greenwich operate an Apprenticeship scheme which has proved successful over the past 7 years and aim to have a number of staff qualified to NVQ level 2 in horticulture in 2011.



SECTION 6: Monitoring and Review

MONITORING AND REVIEW

6.1: Monitoring the management plan

The plan is monitored and organised against the objectives and the three year Action Plan. The Action Plan is edited and revised in October each year by the Blackheath Joint Working Party for the following year.

6.2: Reviewing the management plan

Although the plan is going to be continually reviewed, it also must take into account the time for the management plan to achieve its goals, some of which will take a few years to accomplish in full. These are all identified and planned; any variations to the plan will be outlined and planned. The review will consult stakeholders, users of the heath and staff. However there may be changes in demands for some of the facilities within the heath, changes in resources available, in management structures and in the operations and nature of the organisation using or influencing the management of the heath which necessitate a change in certain aspects of the plan.



Above: Monitoring.

Below: Dusk over Blackheath.

