

London Bridge Station

London Bridge Green Grid: Updated Action Plan 2024

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1. Introduction

The green spaces around the London Bridge area shed light on its unique culture and history, and on the people and communities shaping its sustainable future as it continues to grow and develop. Being in nature brings multiple benefits, including positive effects on peoples' mental health and general well-being. Riverside parks, community plots, award-winning gardens, churchyards, pocket parks and more all make up the rich web of green spaces in the London Bridge area. These spaces are all within a short walk of each other, creating a rich mosaic of greenery and biodiversity in the middle of the city – a Green Grid.

Since being established in 2006, Team London Bridge have been instrumental in adding to this rich mix of green spaces and pocket parks through their diverse programme of activity. Over 4,000m² of additional urban greening has been delivered by the BID working in partnership with local stakeholders – an area equivalent to the size of Potter's Field Park – one of the larger green spaces in the neighbourhood. Midway through their 4th BID term (2021—26) Team London Bridge are keen to scope opportunities for shaping and delivering further multifunctional green infrastructure within their area. As the area continues to be built up and densified, it is even more critical that each public space provide respite, calm and beauty.

This report builds on previous urban greening research commissioned by TLB including the Green Grid Action Plan (2018), following the strategic Green Grid placeshaping project set out in the London Bridge Plan (2015). The report outlines further ideas for urban greening projects that can be delivered in the near future, underpinned by themes relating to health, amenity, sustainability, biodiversity and inclusivity. This report is a companion piece to the London Bridge Green Grid Management Plan, which sets out the day-to-day management requirements that each of the 20+ green spaces delivered by Team London Bridge since 2006.

2. Vision, aims and objectives

Team London Bridge's vision is:

To make London Bridge one of the most sustainable, culturally innovative and compelling places for business and tourism in the world.

Underpinning this ambition are the three interlinked pillars of supporting and sustaining:

- A great place to work and visit
- An environmentally focused business district
- A thriving community

The role of Team London Bridge's greening programme in supporting this vision cannot be understated. The role of high-quality green spaces in supporting thriving communities is well documented. Increasingly businesses are demanding more of their locations to provide an environment where their staff want to spend time. The health and well-being benefits of access to nature and green space also contribute to this thriving community that Team London Bridge increasingly supports.

As the world emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic, and against the backdrop of the Climate and Ecological emergencies, the role of health and well-being – in all its facets – of people and planet - is fundamental to a flourishing future. London Bridge's rich medical history continues to inform the identity of the area – supported by the medi-culture programme and with a bold vision through SC1 to be a hub for life sciences.

Being in nature helps to make people happier, healthier and more creative. The high-quality network of existing and proposed green space and biodiversity projects identified in this report can help complement and stitch together the diverse communities in London Bridge – residents, businesses and visitors, and can amplify the rich and diverse health related businesses in the area – whether they are historical, cultural, educational, for medical practice or commercial and innovation.

Delivering green space and infrastructure is beyond the ability of most businesses, and this is a gap that the BID can fill for their members. London Bridge's network of streets, public realm and green spaces need to work hard to respond to the challenges and opportunities outlined above. This report outlines how Team London Bridge can continue to shape its programme to deliver robust, beautiful and multifunctional green spaces that support a healthy community, environment and economy.

3. Links with Team London Bridge programme and priorities

The following table outlines the main synergies between the wider Team London Bridge commitments set out in its 2021-26 manifesto and its urban greening work, and suggests future actions to consider in developing its greening programme.

Team London Bridge priorities	Current synergies with urban greening work	What next?
Overarching strategy Health is increasingly becoming an over-arching pillar that informs all of the TLB programme – including across ESG, Culture/Arts and Marketing. Embedding health in projects is a priority and will likely inform the BID manifesto for the next ballot in late 2025/early 2026. The messaging around reducing TLB’s reliance on containerized planting which is more resource intensive needs to be carefully navigated with BID members – TLB need to transition to more sustainable approaches to improving the area, and align with its own principles linked to climate and ecological emergencies. Post-COVID working patterns have changed and there is a need to entice people back into the office. While weekend footfall is back at pre-pandemic levels, there is a need to further support the evening economy.	TLB already raise awareness of their green spaces as sanctuaries in the city – a good example being the guided meditation offered in Gibbon’s Rent. TLB are already doing excellent work around sustainability, and perhaps there is an opportunity to further develop services/advocacy to support managing agents who manage land estates on behalf of landowners not based in the neighbourhood. ‘who’s influencing the managing agents?’	Preparation for BID ballot in late 2025/early 2026 – assess members’ views on the transition away from containerized planting. Shape common vision for future greening projects – opportunity to work with managing agents working on behalf of the principal landowner/estates within the BID area. New public realm interventions are always a visual and impactful way to illustrate to businesses the benefits of a BID during ballot.

Team London Bridge priorities	Current synergies with urban greening work	What next?
Placeshaping Create a green and healthy street environment that puts walking and cycling first. Integrate large scale green infrastructure, rewilding and biodiversity. Provide a welcoming outdoor environment to meet changing business needs post-COVID. Make London Bridge a net zero business district	On-street greening creates more welcoming and inviting spaces that encourage active travel. Team London Bridge has delivered and continues to scope opportunities for increasing urban greening and biodiversity across its area. The network of green spaces created and being scoped by Team London Bridge supports civic life and social interaction. The green spaces being created and scoped by Team London Bridge help sequester carbon and deliver wider environmental benefits such as reducing rainwater run-off. TLB responds to major planning applications and advocates for more and better green infrastructure within new developments in the BID area.	Scope whether the network of green spaces created and managed by Team London Bridge could be collectively designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). Site specific opportunities are captured in section 5 below. Understand carbon impacts of new planting – where is best practice in this? (e.g. code of practice for suppliers, plastic free etc.) Assess the cost/benefit of undertaking natural capital exercise to put a capital value on GI assets delivered by TLB and their partners.
Cleaning and Greening Maximise social value from greening contracts. Manage a calendar of gardening volunteering sessions. Improve community gardens and supporting residents and school groups to green their spaces.	By working with organisations like Putting Down Roots and Oriana's Gardens small and social enterprises are being nurtured. This commitment dovetails with the Responsible Business part of the programme with a roster of gardening volunteer opportunities being programmed throughout the year.	Develop rationale and narrative for reducing the reliance on containerized planting – to help frame conversations with businesses. Identify list of priority capital projects for new green spaces in the TLB area.

Team London Bridge priorities	Current synergies with urban greening work	What next?
Increase biodiversity through careful plant choices. Use recycled and sustainable materials	Recycling materials links to the circular economy aims set out in the Net Zero Routemap and promoted through waste recycling programme	
Responsible business commitments Greater outdoors and skills-based volunteering opportunities for local employees.	Many volunteer events have taken place in green spaces that TLB have helped to create over the years.	Work with contractors (e.g. Oriana's Gardens) to programme volunteer opportunities and regular (e.g.monthly) volunteer gardening activities (this also dovetails with member engagement).
Member Engagement	TLBs investment in high quality green spaces ensures that its members can see the tangible / physical impact that the BID and therefore they as members are having on the neighbourhood.	Ensure that all sites that TLB manage have site information/interpretation about them so that members attribute the greening to TLB.
Arts and Events Increasing visibility of London Bridge as a compelling place to work, live or visit. Partnering with festivals to bring top quality activations to the area (see temporal Christmas forest in Kings X) Promoting businesses and sustainable futures Developing the 'Medi-Culture District' (medical culture and heritage) concept (medicinal plant project?)	TLBs green spaces are varied and high quality, having being designed and delivered by world-class designers including Joe Swift, Sarah Erbele, Darryl Moore, Zandra Rhodes, Macfarlane and Associates and more. TLB's network of green spaces have been used to host arts and culture events over the years.	Explore deeper partnership opportunitywith national Park City through the In a Field festival Develop engagement events and arts programmes that highlight or interpret green spaces in new ways.
Medi-culture		There is plenty of scope to weave the Medi-Cultural narrative into future projects, including

Team London Bridge priorities	Current synergies with urban greening work	What next?
The theme of health and well-being is becoming more of an over-arching theme across the TLB programme, and will likely be a key pillar of the BID manifesto for 2026-31. The medical history of the area coupled with the situation of the Guy's Hospital and KCL campus complete the rationale for embedding themes of health, well-being, medicine and culture within the BIDs work.	There are already projects making use of the green spaces created by TLB – e.g. the guided meditation activity in Gibbon's Rent.	through selection or highlighting use of medicinal plants in planting schemes, through to citizen science activities – e.g. action research with volunteers measuring brain activities in green spaces vs busy streets. Similar activities have been curated by Illuminate Productions – e.g. https://www.illuminateproductions.co.uk/on-your-wavelength Darryl Moore of Cityscapes is also undertaking interesting research into the micro-biology of soil in TLB area and this could also lend itself to creative collaborations relating to the Medi-culture theme.
Low Line Low Line Commons	Work on greening Holyrood, St Thomas's and Druid Streets are all helping to bring to light the ambitions set out in the Low Line Commons strategy.	Opportunities for new projects to be scoped on Druid Street. Delivery of Holyrood Street and St Thomas's Street Visions.
Marketing and area promotion	Visitor map of the green spaces has been created and is a great resource for both businesses/employees and visitors to the area.	Map out visitor itineraries that include green spaces to encourage exploration, dwell time and greater footfall across the London Bridge area. Build narrative of London Bridge as a 'green & sustainable' neighbourhood. Promote the area through Britain in Bloom, Green Flag and other partnerships, e.g. NLA, LFA and Centre for London.

4. Links with Stakeholder and Partner programmes and priorities

Stakeholder priorities	Current synergies with urban greening work	What next?
Southwark Nature Action Partnership (SNAP) From meetings with Southwark ecology officers, the council are now looking at the work of the SNAP on more of a 'whole system' approach (e.g. rather than looking at nature through the silos of species/habitats). Boroughs also now have responsibility for drawing up Local Nature Recovery Strategies.	TLB is currently a key partner to the partnership, delivering actions relating to the built environment habitat priority area. TLB are playing a vital role in intensifying green infrastructure and nature recovery within their area.	There is scope to explore whether the rich network of TLB green spaces could be could be designated a SINC. There may be opportunities for further on-street greening in the London Bridge area where traffic calming measures are being implemented, particularly around schools – e.g. planting at build outs. TLB's work aligns with Council objectives, and can continue to add value through partnership working, particularly where TLB can commit to on-going revenue costs for maintaining green projects as this is often a barrier for the Council.
London Bridge City Responsible for the estate north of Tooley Street, London Bridge City is developing its sustainability strategy. Increased urban greening and biodiversity is a key component of this. The estate is working	Putting Down Roots garden Green roofs Keen to do more around biodiversity.	The redevelopment of City Hall provides an excellent opportunity to re-focus on improving biodiversity across the estate and for exploring

Stakeholder priorities	Current synergies with urban greening work	What next?
with BOST and is keen to develop this partnership as part of the social value commitments. Gavin Jones is the landscape contractor who maintain the green spaces on site, as well as Potters Field Park. The old City Hall building is being redeveloped with an ambitious landscape and sustainability-led vision for a green building being taken through the planning process currently – echoing the previous William Curtis Ecological park.		further greening projects that could be retrofitted where space allows. On a smaller level LBC are keen to do more around biodiversity, so there could be opportunities to shape small scale creative projects around habitat creation – e.g. bug hotels (solitary bees), bird boxes. There are a number of exemplary green roofs on the estate, could these be better communicated in terms of their biodiversity value. There is also potential to encourage the tenants of the individual buildings to enter their roofs in the annual London in Bloom competition. Broadgate Estates and Grosvenor Estates do this in their areas and it is a great way of engaging some of the larger corporate occupiers/managing agents and fosters healthy competition.
Potters Field Management Trust Trust established in 2005, with 30 year lease on the site, which is owned by Southwark Council. The Trust generates income by hiring out use of the park for promotional events. The site is managed by Gavin Jones. TLB sit on (and currently chair) the board.	Worked closely with Ellie on cultural events and activities. Nadia is Chair of the Board. The St John's compound is currently sub-let to Putting Down Roots and is used to store gardening materials.	Planning permission for the compound on St John's Chuchyard will need to be reapplied for this year. Given Cityscapes (Darryl) is working on the planting design and narrative for the refresh of the planting here in the next few years, there is an

Stakeholder priorities	Current synergies with urban greening work	What next?
The Trust also includes St John's Churchyard, which has more of a community focus. The planting in the park is being re-visited as the original planting needs to be refreshed after 15 years.	There are issues around safety/perception of safety – particularly for women and girls.	opportunity to consider how this links with the wider network of gardens/spaces he and TLB have created across the TLB area. The raised bed in St John's Churchyard by the container is waiting to be planted – was conceived as a vegetable patch but realistically under the big trees this might not be the best approach.
Kings College London Part of the Russell Group of Universities, the Kings College London campus sits in the heart of the area adjacent to and interconnected with the Guy's Hospital campus. KCL is very much a 'civic university in the heart of London'. Investment in their public and green spaces has been underway for a number of years, and they are currently tendering a contract for the management of their green spaces on the London Bridge site. The university are very open to collaboration and view their public and green spaces as an opportunity to showcase their ethos.	Oriana's Gardens do some maintenance on site and KCL are keen to retain these services if possible in support of small business. There is a hidden community garden for staff and students that Oriana has access to and stores some tools in. Involving and engaging KCL staff and students is a priority, and we have good contacts and opportunity to support the community programme. Kings have been positive partners on a number of flagship projects including Greenwood Theatre, Waste to Wildlife and has provided a space for the containers from the Putting Down Roots Chelsea garden.	There is a hot air vent in the Memorial Garden in the KCL campus and this could provide an interesting opportunity to shape an innovative greening project – e.g. build a glasshouse garden? There could be a unique design brief shaped around this. There is also an opportunity to shape/feed into the Biodiversity Action Plan being developed by the University. There are a whole range of courses being delivered through the KCL curriculum that could potentially be tapped in to for research relating to green spaces (e.g. Environmental Research, health & well-being aspects of being in nature etc.)

Stakeholder priorities	Current synergies with urban greening work	What next?
They are reviewing their biodiversity action plan and this could provide an opportunity for future partnership project work with TLB.		
Guys and St Thomas's Hospital Trust The Trust are developing a sustainability strategy which includes connecting with nature across their estates.	Team London Bridge have delivered a number of greening projects on or adjacent to the Trust's estate including the Waste to Wildlife Garden and the Woodland Garden on the corner of Weston Street and St Thomas's Street.	
Guy's and St Thomas's Foundation The Foundation manage a lot of student and staff accommodation, so making the area attractive is a priority. They are landowner of the Snowsfield Quarter site, currently being prepared for planning application. Greening and landscaping will be a priority for this site, particularly given proximity to Guy's park.	GSTF match funded the Waste to Wildlife garden and the ongoing maintenance of the Orchard Lisle Living Wall. They own the NCP car park which TLB maintains – which is identified for redevelopment.	There are a number of sites including some nurses' accommodation on Newcomen Street where opportunities for further greening can be explored NCP site. Snowsfields Quarter is an opportunity to enhance a green vision for Snowsfields – where TLB has already done so much.

5. Policy Context

- The Environment Act (2021) - Part 6 includes a duty on local authorities to introduce a mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain on new developments, it also introduces a duty on local authorities to produce Local Nature Recovery Strategies which in London will be implemented strategically by the GLA and locally by local authorities.
- the Mayor's Environment Strategy (2018) has an ambition to make London the first National Park City, increase green space in London to 50%, and increase tree cover to 10% by 2050 – while accommodating significant new development.
- The London Plan (2021) contains policy (Policy G5) on the Urban Greening Factor - a planning tool that is implemented at borough level to increase GI in new development
- The Southwark Plan (2022) includes policies that require new development to incorporate green infrastructure and promote biodiversity; and many local organisations have their own corporate responsibility targets to enhance the environment. It also contains policies that embed the Low Line as a walking route.
- The London Bridge Area Vision in the Southwark Plan specifically states that *“New development should support the creation of a distinctive and inspiring world class environment through a mix of inspiring new architecture, restored and reactivated warehouses and other heritage revealed with ‘placemarks’, public art and quality public realm that provides openness, connectivity and a ‘green grid’. Greenery and innovations in environmental resilience should be incorporated into buildings”*
- The Draft Southwark Resilience and Adaptation Strategy (2023) is a strategy for the whole of the borough, and sets out how they will future-proof the borough's buildings, streets and critical infrastructure; work with others to prepare, plan and respond to challenges and shocks; and how they will improve the borough at the same time, such as by improving air quality and biodiversity and reducing inequalities.

6. Guiding principles

The five key green infrastructure themes outlined in the 2018 Green Grid Action Plan are still relevant today and provide the guiding principles to underpin Team London Bridge's work at improving the quantum and quality of green and blue infrastructure in London Bridge.

The themes cut across the three pillars of sustainable development and Team London Bridge's wider programme:

- Environmental – encompassing TLB Net Zero work/routemap
- Social – including individual and collective health and well-being
- Economic – developing models of circularity and reciprocity

Green and beautiful

London Bridge is a crowded place, so providing refuges of tranquillity will increase physical and emotional wellbeing. Integrating greening into streets, spaces, buildings and alleys, will improve connectivity and encourage appreciation of the distinctive character of London Bridge and surrounding areas.

Proposed outcomes:

Vegetation (such as trees, planting areas, green walls and roofs), is visible from every part of the BID.
People have regular contact with high quality greenery.

Cleaner air

The challenge of London's poor air quality is particularly acute locally on Borough High Street and Tower Bridge Road. Team London Bridge is supporting businesses to reduce the impact from freight, and looking at strategies to restrict traffic in the area. The Mayor is supporting the creation of Low Emission Routes and Quietways, which can cut exposure to air-borne pollution by up to 60%. The most beneficial green infrastructure projects will be those which expand the network of Low Emission Routes and Quietways, or encourage their use.

Proposed outcomes:

TLB has planned and delivered several low emission routes. People have the knowledge to make informed choices to reduce their exposure to poor air quality. There are measures in place in London Bridge to help reduce some of the most harmful effects of air pollution.

Collecting and storing rainwater

Climate change brings wetter winters and more frequent, extreme weather events. London Bridge BID is within a critical drainage area, meaning that it is at a high risk of flooding compared to other parts of Southwark. The Mayor requires all new development to

achieve (as a minimum) 50% attenuation of the undeveloped site surface. Attenuating water through soil and vegetation is preferred over underground storage tanks, which provide no additional GI functions. Water is an important resource, so greening should try to store and use rainfall, use drought tolerant plants, and avoid creating gardens or containerised planters which require heavy watering. Retrofit projects such as rain garden planters will improve resilience further.

Proposed outcomes: GI elements such as street trees, parklets and green walls, increase the capacity to absorb and store storm water, increasing flood resilience within the BID area. They deliver multiple benefits to the BID by increasing the cover of vegetation at street level and on buildings.

Homes and food for wildlife

A richer more diverse ecosystem will be more stable in the face of climate change. Green spaces and the wildlife they attract improve the quality of life for residents and workers, and create a sense of place that fosters local identity and improves the business environment.

Proposed outcomes: Wildlife can be experienced in every corner of the BID and people feel more connected to nature in their daily lives. TLB partners take an active role in raising their employees' awareness of London's biodiversity.

Reducing energy use

Heating and cooling buildings is a significant source of carbon emissions. London's new buildings will follow the Mayor's energy hierarchy: being lean, being clean and being green; and must meet the targets for emission reductions in the London Plan. New and retrofit projects that incorporate vegetation that can insulate or shade facades will help building performance, reduce energy consumption and provide other GI functions.

Proposed outcomes: Architects, engineers and building managers are fully aware of the benefits vegetation can provide to insulating and cooling buildings. The multiple benefits of designing solar panels with a green roof is common knowledge. Buildings are managed to improve energy performance.

7. Priorities for action

PROJECT BANK

The following outlines high level ideas for capital and revenue investment by TLB and its partners to further shape the development and delivery of green spaces across the BID area in the coming years.

CAPITAL PROJECTS:

A vacant plot on Tower Bridge Road
Druid Street Green Gateway
Tooley Street Green Welcome
Queen Elizabeth Climate Garden
Druid Street Wildlife Meadow Refresh
Elizabeth Newcomen House Medicinal Garden
Room for Nature: London Bridge City
KCL Biotope

ADVOCACY, ENGAGEMENT AND BEHAVIOUR CHANGE:

A Green Shift - Transition away from containerised planting
Connecting businesses with nature
Citizen Science Opportunities
Increase visibility of TLB's Greening activities
Spotlight Hidden Green Roofs
Local Nature Recovery Strategies

A Vacant Plot on Tower Bridge Road:

Site Type: Gateway, Vacant plot

Visual impact: Highly visible on entry from Tower Bridge

Related priorities: Health, Area Promotion, Air Quality

Constraints: Unclear landownerships/development site

Local benefits: Proximity to high end restaurant and hotel.

There is an opportunity for retrofitting greening into this vacant plot on key entry point to London Bridge Area to create an urban oasis next to one of London's iconic landmarks. The blank wall that overlooks could also play a part in activating this space with a green message.

A low-cost, short-term and slightly subversive (Guerilla Gardening) project might be to host a seed ball making workshop with local businesses/residents and then throw the seed balls into the site and observe what happens. A horticultural specialist could advise on a suitable seed mix for the site.

Precedents:

100 Union Street in Bankside is an excellent precedent where a vacant plot was activated creatively through a number of projects over a number of years before finally being redeveloped as a commercial office building.

Cityscape's Waste 2 Wildlife Garden provides a useful local precedent of what is achievable in a relatively low-cost way keeping the garden space private.

A greening-related mural could be explored on the flank wall that overlooks the site – there is an interesting one being brought forward in LB Barnet.

<https://solidspace.co.uk/projects/100-union-street-meanwhile-space/>

<https://www.wayward.co.uk/project/union-street-urban-orchard>

<https://upprojects.com/the-edgware-mural>

<https://www.gardensillustrated.com/features/what-is-guerrilla-gardening>



Above: vacant site on Tower Bridge Road by the junction with Tooley Street.



Above: Union Street Urban Orchard transformed a vacant plot of development land in the summer of 2010.

Druid Street/Tower Bridge Road Green Gateways

Site Type: Gateway, Low Line, Highways

Visual impact: Highly visible point on Low Line

Related priorities: Health, Area Promotion, Air Quality

Constraints: Unclear what the conditions are under ground for retrofitting GI, there are utility boxes around the existing raised planter.

Local benefits: Provides a green gateway on Low Line, improving walking route

The point at where the Low Line crosses Tower Bridge Road is a key point of entry to the TLB area. There is an opportunity to shape a brief for this location that celebrates/demonstrates the ambition of Low Line Commons and also marks a 'green gateway' to the Team London Bridge BID neighbourhood.

Commission project to transform raised bed at corner of Druid Street and Tower Bridge Road into exemplar green gateway into the London Bridge area linking with Low Line and demonstrating Low Line Commons principles.

Precedent:

Alfred Place Gardens, LB Camden

A street, previously dominated by car parking was creatively retrofitted to accommodate a small park, still retaining vehicular access along the street to enable it to still support deliveries and servicing.

<https://worldlandscapearchitect.com/alfred-place-gardens-lda-design/?v=79cba1185463>

Locally, projects like the Snowfields Raingardens demonstrate the potential and impact that retrofitting GI can have on a street.



Above, The raised planter on the Druid St / Tower Bridge Road junction offers an opportunity to be reimaged as a key gateway along the Low Line.



Above: Alfred Place Park in LB Camden shows how a street can be reprofiled to support more useable green infrastructure.

Tooley Street Green Gateway

Site Type: Gateway, Thames Path, Highways

Visual impact: Highly trafficked pedestrian route – part of Thames Path

Related priorities: Health, Area Promotion

Constraints: The redevelopment of Colechurch House

Local benefits: Provides a green gateway on the Thames Path

The gateway to London Bridge from Montague Close behind Southwark Cathedral is one of the busiest pedestrian stretches of the Thames Path in London Bridge. Carrying millions of pedestrians from around the world every year the current public realm is poor quality, partly constrained by the proposed redevelopment of Colechurch House.

There is an opportunity to create world-class and exemplary green welcome to London Bridge along this space. In the near-term a more temporary/experimental creative brief could be commissioned for the space, that tests out design principles and elements, for a permanent transformation that then gets delivered when Colechurch House is redeveloped.

Precedents:

Temporary and experimental projects like LB Lambeth's Low Emissions Neighbourhoods tested out temporary measures before implementing permanent changes to the highway spaces. The green gateway at the junction of Atlantic Road and Coldharbour Lane is a good example of this.

At a more high profile level, a series of temporary measures were explored along Exhibition Road before it was permanently transformed into the space it is today.

https://www.c40knowledgehub.org/s/article/How-to-enable-temporary-use-to-activate-your-city?language=en_US



Above: The stretch of Tooley Street that goes under London Bridge offers a poor quality gateway to the London Bridge neighbourhood.



Above: Reimagining the space as a verdant gateway could offer a green welcome to visitors to the area.

Queen Elizabeth Climate Garden

Site Type: Pocket Park, Highways

Visual impact: Medium

Related priorities: Health, Area Promotion, Net Carbon Zero

Constraints: The site is on a traffic island on Tooley Street

Local benefits: Provides a pocket park at the eastern end of Tooley Street and is overlooked by public and private residential buildings, restaurant and hotel.

Restaurant Story which sits next to Queen Elizabeth Garden is a 2 Michelin starred restaurant anchoring the eastern end of Tooley Street. It has recently undergone extensive refurbishment and is keen to connect with the green space within Queen Elizabeth Garden.

An opportunity exists to work with Southwark Council and Restaurant Story to reimagine the planting in Queen Elizabeth Garden as an exemplar climate resilient garden that adds a further green stepping stone in the network of green infrastructure at the eastern end of Tooley Street and aligns with the high quality ethos of the adjacent restaurant.

Precedent:

Noma Restaurant, Copenhagen

<https://landezine.com/landscape-in-front-of-noma-by-werk/>



Above: Queen Elizabeth Gardens at the eastern end of Tooley Street is tired and needs a refresh



Above: The renowned Noma Restaurant in Copenhagen is characterised by a carefully designed garden that supports its unique ethos.

Druid Street Wildlife Meadow Refresh

Site Type: Pocket Park, Housing, Low Line

Visual impact: High

Related priorities: Health, Area Promotion, Net Carbon Zero, Low Line Commons

Constraints: The site is on Southwark Housing, and is sometimes used as a muster point for Southwark Council during fire drills in their offices on Tooley Street.

Local benefits: Provides a pocket park on this busy stretch of Druid Street. It creates a link between Tooley street and the Low Line.

The Druid Street Wildlife Meadow has been a flagship project for Team London Bridge demonstrating its sustainability and community focussed credentials. Over time since it was installed the meadow has slowly become dominated by grass species and is in need of refreshing.

In parallel to this, Cityscapes are again working on a show garden for the 2024 Chelsea Flower Show, with a design underpinned by re-using materials from previous years' show gardens, and there is an opportunity to re-purpose and relocate this garden in the Druid Street Wildflower Meadow site.

This could provide a further key Low Line 'moment' as it sits adjacent to the viaduct, and could help demonstrate creatively and practically principles that underpin Low Line Commons.

Precedent:

Harris Bugg Studio Garden, Vauxhall

<https://nineelmslondon.com/news/chelsea-flower-show-award-winner-hugo-bugg-opens-new-garden-in-vauxhall/>



Above: The Druid Street Wildlife Meadow needs rejuvenating.



Above: Building on the success of the relocation of the Putting Down Roots Garden from Chelsea Flower Show, further gardens could be relocated to the London Bridge area.

Elizabeth Newcomen House Medicinal Garden, Newcomen Street

Site Type: Pocket Park, Housing

Visual impact: Medium

Related priorities: Health, Net Carbon Zero, Low Emissions Routes

Constraints: The site is owned by Guy's Foundation.

Local benefits: Provides an amenity for residents of the nurses' accommodation and adds further benefits to the Newcomen St/Snowsfields 'green corridor'

Newcomen Street and Snowsfields are slowly being transformed by the efforts of TLB into a green and verdant corridor, with a network of urban greening projects contributing to an improved public realm and supporting active travel.

The site of Elizabeth Newcomen House offers a stretch of space behind their railings on to Newcomen Street that could be transformed into a wildlife-rich garden that offers amenity to the busy residents of the building, and supports the growing network of high quality green infrastructure that characterises the street.

A creative brief, linking with the Medi-Culture strand of the TLB programme could be shaped with residents of the building to create a garden and planting scheme based on medicinal herbs and other plants.

Precedents:

Union Street Physic Garden

<https://www.wayward.co.uk/project/urban-physic-garden>

NHS Forest

<https://nhsforest.org/green-your-site/staff-garden-areas/>



Above: The sliver of space in front of Elizabeth Newcomen House could support a creative medicinal themed planting scheme.

Room for Nature: London Bridge City

Site Type: Corporate estate, Thames Path

Visual impact: Very High

Related priorities: Net Carbon Zero, Low Emissions Routes, Culture

Constraints: The site is managed by Savills on behalf of the landowner

Local benefits: Provides more space for biodiversity and raises awareness of the importance of a network of linked green infrastructure in the neighbourhood.

The extensive estate of London Bridge City is already home to a rich network of small green spaces and exemplary green roofs. It is used every day by many workers and supports millions of visitors to the area every year. There is an appetite within London Bridge City to build on the success of recent projects including the Putting Down Roots Garden on Battlebridge Lane, and to promote greater biodiversity across the site.

A creative commission, such as an engaging and fun design competition to develop a suite of habitat structures that could support pollinating insects including solitary bees, birds and other species across the estate, could help raise awareness and visibility of biodiversity across London Bridge City and more widely.

Such a commission could be used as springboard to further engage London Bridge City and its tenants in developing a longer-term action plan and strategy to support biodiversity across its estate.

Precedents:

Wild West End

<https://www.wildwestend.london/>

Grosvenor Biodiversity Strategy

https://www.grosvenor.com/getattachment/9e734d09-6566-47c7-89f6-f0ec11114b8b/Valuing-Nature_GPUK-Biodiversity-Strategy_v9.pdf



KCL Biotope

Site Type: University/Hospital Campus

Visual impact: High

Related priorities: Net Carbon Zero, Medi-Culture, Area Promotion

Constraints: The site is on Kings College London land.

Local benefits: Provides a creative focal point on the Kings/Guys Campus with a focus on climate change and sustainability.

The Kings College and Guys Campus anchor the London Bridge area, these two key centres of learning have long shaped the character of the neighbourhood. The addition of the Science Gallery has augmented this impact.

Kings College aspire to be a Civic University in the Heart of London. To support this vision, there is potential for a creative public art / green infrastructure project to be commissioned, that harnesses the heat from the vent in Kings College Courtyard.

The theme of this commission could help raise awareness of the value of greenspace in the London Bridge neighbourhood, and highlight the health benefits of connecting with nature and reveal the wealth of research and learning that takes place within the University.

Precedents:

Beyond the Lab

<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/beyond-the-lab-exploring-art-on-campus>

The Horticultural Spa

<https://thebrickbox.co.uk/projects/the-horticultural-spa/>

Biotope - <https://shjworks.dk/biotope-2018/>



Above: The Horticultural Spa, a temporary intervention on the Thames Riverside in Vauxhall provided an immersive multi-sensory experience linking nature and well-being.

ADVOCACY, ENGAGEMENT AND BEHAVIOUR CHANGE

A Green Shift - Transition away from containerised planting:

Since its inception in 2006, Team London Bridge's greening programme has evolved from delivering on-street containerized planting to the design and delivery of world-class urban greening projects such as the Waste 2 Wildlife Garden on Great Maze Pond and the London Bridge SuDS Pilot.

These exemplar projects have delivered 'in-ground' green spaces which reduce considerably the need for watering and deliver multiple environmental benefits (e.g flood risk mitigation, biodiversity, urban cooling) which are more difficult to achieve with containerized planting.

There may continue to be a need for targeted containerized planting in discrete locations in the London Bridge neighbourhood where space for implementing more permanent and in-ground solutions are impeded by the built fabric (e.g. the space to the north of London Bridge Station).

In the near-term the railing mounted planters by the woodland garden on Weston/St Thomas's St could be removed as Team London Bridge have implemented a rich woodland garden behind these railings. Similarly, some hanging baskets along Newcomen Street could be removed, as extensive in-ground urban greening has been implemented along this corridor at Bethsham/Northfleet House, Green Theatre, around the NCP car park and Snowsfield Rain Garden.

It is also recommended that the planters on Tooley St by Colechurch House could be redeployed elsewhere where they will have greater impact and a permanent improvement be planned for this gateway location (see Tooley Street Gateway project outlined above).



Connecting businesses with nature

Work with contractors (e.g. Oriana's Gardens) to programme volunteer opportunities and regular (e.g. monthly) volunteer gardening activities (this also dovetails with member engagement).



Citizen Science Opportunities

Develop programme of live research on projects to collate evidence across different metrics relating to the benefits of green space – environmental, health etc, linking with King's College, the Science Gallery and Guy's Hospital.

Develop citizen science opportunities as part of this programme.

Precedents:

Urban Releaf - <https://eu-citizen.science/project/486>

Dublin BETA - <http://dccbeta.ie/>

Clean Air Mini Neighbourhood -

<https://airqualitynews.com/local-government/bankside-project-to-push-clean-pedestrian-routes/>



Increase visibility of TLB's Greening activities

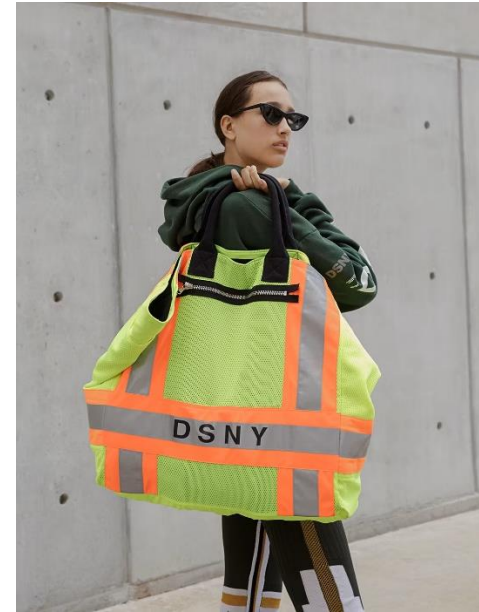
Explore a creative collaboration with the Fashion and Textile Museum to devise a new livery for the gardening operatives working on TLB sites to improve their visibility (and safety!).

Audit signage across sites and devise coherent signage strategy to tell the story of individual sites and the network of spaces created by TLB.

Precedent:

NYC Department of Sanitation -

<https://www.dazeddigital.com/fashion/article/32705/1/heron-preston-artist-department-of-sanitation-fashion-week-garbage-men>



Spotlight Hidden Green Roofs

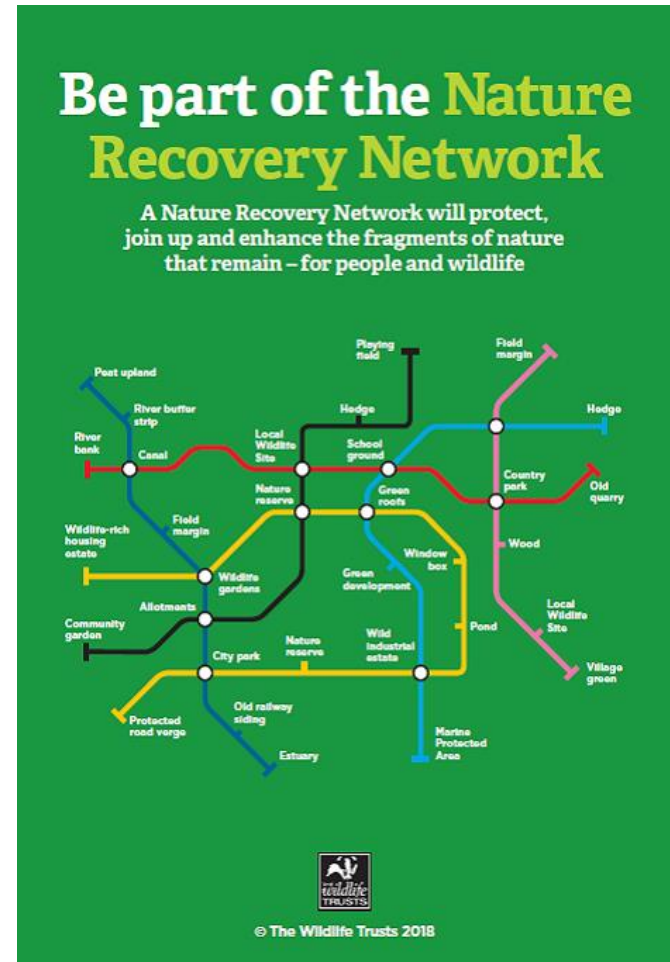
Work with major occupiers / managing agents to enter their Green Roofs in the annual London in Bloom competition which has a category for Green Roofs.

In other parts of London (e.g. in Grosevenor Estate and in City of London) this is helping to foster healthy competition between buildings and their occupiers/managing agents and raising awareness of the importance of green roofs.



Local Nature Recovery Strategies

Assess whether TLB's and their partners' network of Green Spaces could be designated as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation.





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