Wellington Mills Estate Gardens Management Plan 2020 – 2025



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Executive Summary

This management plan has been written to ensure that the gardens within Wellington Mills Estate are managed and maintained in an effective and efficient manner that benefits the residents.

Checks and measures highlighted in the management plan will help to guide any future development of the gardens and ensure that sustainability and the needs of the residents are central pillars of such development.

Wellington Mills Housing Co-operative Ltd vision is to maintain a peaceful and safe community in the heart of London. Strategic priorities include the maintenance and improvement of the communal green spaces and renovation of disused spaces for the benefit of all residents. To this end, the grounds management plan will be a useful resource.





Site location and description

Wellington Mills Estate is located between Westminster Bridge Road and Kennington Road in central London. The estate comprises Holst Court, Mead Row and Oakey Lane and was built in the years 1970 – 1976. The site was originally occupied by John Oakey & Sons Ltd, a manufacturer of abrasives during the 19th and early 20th Centuries. The estate houses around 300 residents in 137 dwellings and has attractive and secluded grounds and gardens.



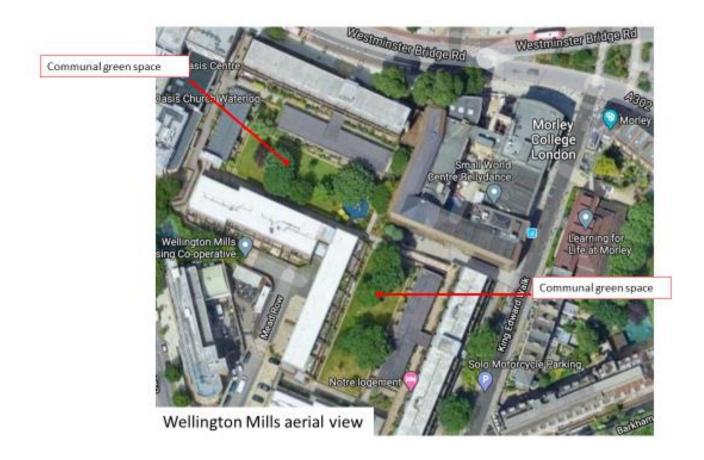


Location plan, site plan and aerial view



Wellington Mills Estate location plan





Management Plan - vision, aims and objectives

This management plan has been written to ensure that the gardens within Wellington Mills Estate are managed and maintained in an effective and efficient manner that benefits the residents.

Vision

'To maintain a peaceful and safe community in the heart of London, built on the success of the last forty years and secure for the future.'

Aims and objectives

Aims

- > To ensure that the grounds and gardens are sustained and enhanced through best horticultural practice
- > To ensure that best practice management processes are employed when directing enhancement and maintenance activities
- > To ensure that the highest practicable standards of environmental and ecological practices are upheld in all enhancement and maintenance activities
- > To ensure that all enhancement and maintenance activities are resident led

Objectives

> The objectives are detailed within the following work plan.

Main stakeholders

The main stakeholders include:

- > London Borough of Lambeth
- Wellington Mills Housing Co-operative Ltd (WMHC)
- Residents
- > The local community
- > Grounds maintenance team

Current management arrangements

The grounds and gardens are currently managed by a full-time estate manager who is employed by WMHC and the maintenance activities are carried out by an employed cleaner and a contracted grounds maintenance company.

The current grounds maintenance contractor has been carrying out the garden maintenance activities for several years and is ideally placed to guide and assist WMHC in undertaking improvement to the grounds and gardens.

As a reference manual, this management plan will provide guidance on all aspects of grounds management. This will hopefully ensure that the gardens are protected against damage and improved and maintained to a high standard in order that it brings pleasure and enjoyment to the current and future generations.

Tree management

Management and maintenance of the trees on the estate is within the remit of the London Borough of Lambeth's Environment Division within Neighbourhoods and Growth. The borough tree policy can be found at the following link: https://www.lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/lpl-trees-policy.pdf

Horticultural maintenance

Horticultural maintenance at Wellington Mills Estate is currently undertaken by Groundcare Landscape Services Ltd. All works to the garden are based on the specification detailed in Appendix A of this document. The works are monitored to ensure that the quality of service is delivered to the highest standards.

Community involvement

Wellington Mills Estate Co-operative Ltd has a Gardening and Cleaning Sub-committee that is staffed by residents. The Gardening and Cleaning Sub-committee meets twice annually, and its terms of reference in respect of the gardens are:

- To ensure maintenance of the soft landscaping on the estate
- To consult with the estate gardener currently via annual walk around to review the planting (with the gardener) and provide written instruction

All instructions to the gardening team comes from the estate office and these instructions are informed by the Gardening and Cleaning Sub-committee. The Gardening and Cleaning Sub-committee are the representatives of the wider resident community at Wellington Mills Estate.

Environmental and ecological issues

In order to preserve and enhance the character of the gardens, certain landscape principles should be closely adhered to.

These include:

- > The selection of appropriate tree species based on their suitability in the context of an urban garden. Considerations should include mature size and spread, tolerance to drought, allelopathic characteristics, ecological and biodiversity benefits and aesthetic value.
- > The continued use of suitable plant species which provide food and shelter for wildlife. The use of double and multi flowered cultivars should be discouraged.
- > Where appropriate, the use of variegated and coloured foliage plants to illuminate shady areas.
- > When flowering ornamentals are selected, these should be plants that are beneficial to pollinators. A list of suitable species can be found in Appendix C.
- Minimising the use of peat is of great importance and as such no peat products should be used in the gardens. Where practicable, new plant stock should be grown in peat free growing media.
- > Green waste should be 100% recycled, either on site or at a local recycling facility.
- > The use of pesticides (herbicide, insecticide, fungicide) should be kept to a minimum. Where practicable, natural insect predators should be encouraged and biological controls should be employed.

Appendices

A - Horticultural Maintenance Schedule

Maintenance of grass areas

The Contractor shall carry out grass cutting and edge control to all areas within the locations specified. Mowing and edging operations shall be programmed to ensure that the requirements of the Specification are met at all times.

So far as is practical when cutting grassed areas, the Contractor shall:

- > Cut them cleanly and evenly without leaving stalks or flower heads to a length of 20mm at each location and without damaging the existing surface
- > Follow and keep to an approved programme to ensure that all areas are cut on a rota basis
- Complete one area of grass cutting before moving on to the next area
- Ensure that no damage is caused to trees, shrubs, property or furniture. Any damaged caused shall be repaired at the Contractor's own expense and to the satisfaction of the Estate Office
- > Mow all grass with appropriate plant and machinery recognised by the horticultural trade as being suitable to produce a high standard of finish
- > Not use any growth retardant chemicals in maintaining grassed areas at the locations being cut
- > Collect and remove all litter, bulkier items and stones etc situated on grassed areas which might cause damage to plant and machinery prior to the grass cutting operation
- > Rake, collect and remove all fallen leaves from grassed areas, rose/flowerbeds, shrub beds, hedges and any other soft areas
- > The Estate Office and Contractor can agree that in very wet conditions all grass cutting operations shall cease. This shall continue until such time as the Estate Office declares (in consultation with the Contractor) that conditions allow

- such operations to recommence without damaging the surface levels or contours of the grassed areas concerned and/or the rollers or cutters creating divots
- > In other cases where weather conditions may affect the delivery of the service and the ability to meet the service standard the service may be varied with the permission of the Estate Office.
- > The Contractor shall reform and repair all grassed edges to their original line once during the period between the first day of October and the last day of the following March.
- > The Contractor shall reform edges to produce a sharp, neat and vertical edge to straight lines as appropriate. This process of edge formation shall not significantly enlarge shrub/plant beds and channels.
- > The edges of grassed areas which abut shrub beds and rose/flower beds shall be cut evenly and flushed with the grassed area after each programmed grass cut. All edges shall be at 90 degrees to the surface of the grassed edges and should the edges require reforming then this should be undertaken as part of the programmed cut. The Contractor shall be deemed to have allowed for such operations within the tendered price.
- > The edges of grassed areas which abut trees, garden furniture walls, fences or any other non-ground area shall be trimmed to leave the grass at a 20mm height as part of the programmed cut.
- > The Contractor shall, at his own expense, make good any damage caused as a result of the grass cutting operation.
- > The Contractor shall treat at no additional cost any area, which has been missed out or found to be ineffective following the application of herbicides.
- > Grass clippings or any other debris resulting from the work shall not be allowed to lie on pathways, or other hard standing areas and the like and shall be swept up before the end of each day's work and collected and removed from these areas.
- > The Contractor shall inspect grassed areas after each visit and advise the Estate Office of any pest problems that are found.

Maintenance of shrub beds

- > The Contractor shall manage and maintain shrubs by carrying out weeding and pruning to seasonable and safety requirements taking into account respect for the landscape, and the heritage and wildlife sensitivity of the area concerned, including its ecological biodiversity
- > Plantings containing shrubs, climbers, etc shall be maintained using recognised horticultural practices and to a good horticultural standard
- > All weak, dead, deceased and spent flower heads and damaged growth shall be pruned. The Contractor shall carry out pruning to maintain the desired shape, size and site lines. Visible dieback shall not be acceptable. Dead or irrecoverable plants shall be removed and occurrences notified to the Estate Office
- > Pruning shall be required to shrubs to maintain a high standard of presentation, display, site lines and plant vigour. All pruning shall be undertaken using recognised horticultural practices and to a good horticultural standard.
- > The Contractor shall undertake the pruning of shrubs within the time period most suited for each individual shrub. Shrub beds contain a variety of shrubs and each shrub shall be pruned at the appropriate time for that shrub and in accordance with the following requirements:
 - ❖ Shrubs suitable for late winter pruning such as *Buddleja* and *Cornus* shall be pruned in March
 - Spring flowering shrubs such as Forsythia or Ribes shall be pruned during June
 - ❖ Shrubs suitable for pruning during the summer such as *Prunus laurocerasus* shall be pruned during July
 - ❖ Summer flowering shrubs such as *Deutzia* shall be pruned during September

Maintenance of Rose and Flower Beds

- > The Contractor shall ensure that all roses, rose and flower beds and borders are kept free of all weeds, pests, diseases and are maintained using recognised horticultural practices and to a good horticultural standard
- > Rose and flower beds and borders shall be pruned in such a way as to not become an obstruction to pedestrians, fences or vehicles
- > The Contractor shall be responsible for the supply, cartage and spreading of mulch to rose and flower beds.
- > Composted bark mulch shall be laid to areas such as rose and flower beds to a depth of 100mm as agreed with the Estate Office
- > Mulch shall be spread evenly and care taken to ensure that none of the plants are damaged or buried during the mulching process. Mulch shall only be spread after the soil surface is levelled off to remove humps and hollows
- ➤ Weeds shall be removed prior to mulching. The Contractor shall be responsible for controlling re-growth of weeds resulting from inadequate preparation. Mulch shall be approved by the Estate Office. Bark mulch must be clean, free of sawdust and dirt with individual pieces no longer than 100mm. A sample of mulch shall be provided to the Estate Office for approval before application
- > The Contractor shall ensure that other materials including soil are not mixed with the mulch during work
- Edges shall be checked and rebuilt or repaired as necessary if damaged during mulching. Where necessary, the soil level shall be reduced. Edges shall hold mulch without spillage

Pruning

- > When pruning rose bushes and rose beds, the Contractor shall:
 - Prune out any dead, dying, diseased, weak or crossing shoots and also removed any footmarks or indentations to leave the soil with a fine tilth
 - ❖ In March or sooner after as frost may allow, prune newly planted rose bushes to within 150mm (six inches) of the union, cutting to an outward pointing bud
 - Shorten large flowering (Hybrid Tea) roses which are over one year old in March (or as soon afterwards as frosts permit) to three or five eyes up from the base. Cuts should be made to an outward pointing bud to encourage a shapely habit
 - The Contractor shall if possible, remove at least one old shoot
 - Prune back flowering (Floribunda) roses which are over one year old in March (or as soon afterwards as frosts permit) to five eyes up from the base to an outward pointing bud
 - ❖ Prune back Floribunda and Hybrid Tea roses in December to remove one-third of the previous season's growth
- > The Estate Office shall agree with the Contractor to vary the times at which pruning tasks take place in order to take account of seasonal variations
- > Throughout the summer, rose bushes shall have any suckers and dead heads removed. Suckers shall be cut from the rose bush as far as reasonably practicable at the junction of the sucker and the root of the rose bush. Dead heads shall be removed and stems pruned by approximately 75mm to an outward facing bud
- > Rose buds or rose flowers shall not be removed from rose bushes during these operations. In the event that a rose has a dead head and that there is a rose bud or flower on the same stem, then the dead head shall be removed carefully without damaging the rose bud or flower at the junction of the stem of the dead head and the stem of the rose bud or flower

- > When pruning has been completed, the Contractor shall remove all footmarks and indentations to the surface of the soil
- > Paths and roads shall be kept clear of excess or overhanging growth at all times

Maintenance of Hedges

- > Hedges shall be maintained using recognised horticultural practices and to a good horticultural standard
- > Hedges shall be maintained at a time which that means that nesting birds will not be disturbed by doing so
- > Hedges shall never become an obstruction to pedestrians, fences or vehicles
- > Hedges shall be replaced when necessary as instructed by the Estate Office in their absolute discretion by plants obtained from a nursery approved by the Estate Office
- > The Contractor shall:
 - Carry out hedge pruning operations in order to maintain hedges with a neat, tidy and pleasing appearance
 - Maintain the heights of hedges at the height of the previous pruning/trimming unless otherwise instructed by the Estate Office
 - ❖ Establish and maintain a strong framework of the hedge with the appropriate shape and width in relation to the height of hedge
 - Ensure that the width and height of the hedge does not present a hazard or obstruction to roadways, pathways, car parks, signage, street lighting and the like
 - Prune out any uncharacteristic growth
 - Prune in such a way as to maintain a high standard of finish and appearance

- ❖ Prune in such a way as to minimise risk of storm wind damage and the risk of fire
- Prune using equipment that is appropriate to the hedge/plant/shrub being pruned
- * Remove all debris and equipment from the site at the end of each workday
- * Rake clean all areas at the end of each day with a leaf rake
- ❖ The Contractor shall cultivate the base of hedges to remove all weeds and leave the soil with a fine tilth

Improving Existing and Changes to Horticultural Areas

- > The Contractor will in discussion with the Estate Office agree an annual plan for the improvement and replanting of grassed areas, shrub, rose and flower beds and hedges. Changes will be made only with the agreement of the Estate Office at the annual review meeting
- > Such changes shall be to the standards noted in this Specification or as specifically agreed with the Estate Office
 Pricing of both changes and subsequent maintenance will be based upon the rates and prices contained within the
 Response Document
- > The Contractor will need to provide evidence that the provision of any new planting offers value for money in terms of the price and quality of the plants, turf or seed provided

Control of Pests Weeds and Fertiliser

- > In the first instance the Contractor will examine the use of the indigenous predators and biological controls for the control of pests and weeds. This will include the use of complementary planting to encourage natural predators or deter pests
- > Herbicides and Pesticides will not be used other than with the express agreement of the Estate Office. Where agreed it must be used according to the manufacturer's recommendations and in accordance with any legislation, regulations or standards that apply at the time of use
- > The use of organic fertiliser will be encouraged and used in discussion with the Estate Office
- When used, complete fertiliser shall be granular in composition and contain 30% to 50% of nitrogen in a slow or controlled release form. The ratio of nitrogen to potash shall be 1:1 or 2:1 for complete fertiliser formulations. Phosphorous shall be no more than the recommended percentage of the nitrogen level. All fertilisers shall also contain magnesium and micronutrients such as manganese, iron, zinc and copper
- > Fertiliser shall be swept off walkways and drives onto lawns or beds
- > After fertilisation, as a minimum, the recommended level of water for the fertiliser applied shall be used by the Contractor

B – Biodiversity enhancement opportunities

Sustainable lawn maintenance

Mow lawns higher to develop and maintain a strong root system, an important aspect of healthy soil. Healthy established turf grass decreases soil erosion and help to keep nutrients on the lawn.

Set the mowing deck height at 70mm to ensure only the top ¹/3 of the grass blade is removed during mowing. In general, less maintenance is required with higher mowing cut heights, because higher mowing cut heights promote deeper root systems. Deeper root systems have better access to nutrients and water in the soil. Additionally, taller grass provides shade to the soil which conserves moisture and prevents weed from germinating, thereby reducing the need for weed control measures. This cut height advice differs from that stated in the current specification.

Mulching blades should be used to return the clippings and their nutrients to the soil. Grass clippings mulched like this can provide lawns with more than 50% of their annual fertiliser requirements. Utilising these lawn maintenance techniques will promote healthy turf which will reduce fertiliser and herbicide use.

Integrated Pest Management

Develop an efficient and effective Integrated Pest Management (IPM) plan by selecting processes and products that are lest harmful to humans and the environment.

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) combines biological, cultural, physical and chemical controls in a manner that minimises economic, health and environmental risks. Gardeners should inspect turf and shrubs on a regular basis to assess the health of plants and to be watchful for pest presence and/or damage. Maintain good turf quality to reduce the use of herbicides for weed control. Turf maintenance practices such as, scarification, aeration, the correct mowing height (70mm) and using mulching blades, can reduce the use of herbicides considerably. Non-chemical strategies and approaches should be

implemented prior to resorting to chemical use. For example, horticulture oil should be used, whenever possible, to control insect pests. If a chemical application is required, spot spraying should be utilised instead of a general full coverage approach, and the least hazardous pesticide should be selected. Staff who apply regulated pesticides must be NPTC Safe Use of Pesticides certified and maintain their Continuous Professional Development. Application equipment should always be maintained and calibrated using the product label guidance. When specifying new plants, resistance to pest and disease should be a consideration.

Sustainable shrub bed maintenance

The use of greater plant density and groundcover plants is preferable to the continuous use of organic mulch for protection of the soil surface, moisture control and weed control. Where organic mulch is used around woody shrubs and trees, always ensure the mulch is kept back from the trunk.

When pruning shrubs always use clean, sharp tools. Do not leave stubs – always prune back to a lateral branch or bud. Sustainable pruning is carried out to improve plant health or direct growth.

Soils in established shrub beds should not be cultivated deeply as this practice can disturb plant roots and damage mycorrhizal associations. If soil cultivation is required for aesthetic reasons, shallow surface cultivation should be utilised. Organic fertilisers should be the preferred option when plants are showing signs of nutrient deficiency. These are derived from plant or animal sources and include seaweed, hoof and horn, dried blood, fish blood and bone, bone meal, poultry manure pellets and liquid comfrey feed. However, healthy soil structure and pH are as important as fertiliser application in the prevention of plant nutrient deficiencies. Well-rotted manure and composts improve soil structure which allows plants better access to nutrients and water.

New plants introduced to the planting beds should, where practicable, be selected from the plants for pollinators list in Appendix C of this document.

Gardening for wildlife

Areas of the lawns should be left to grow long, and native wildflowers should be incorporated.

Resist the urge to tidy planting beds too much in autumn and winter. Seed heads left uncut are food for birds, plant stems and leaves are used by insects for winter shelter and herbaceous perennials left standing are used by ladybirds and other insects to overwinter.

If slugs and snails are a problem, avoid using pellets that are based on metaldehyde or methiocarb as these can get into the food chain and harm birds and mammals. Other methods of control are the use of pellets based on ferrous phosphate and products that create barriers, such as, copper bands and gritty sands.

Log piles at the back of borders mimic fallen trees and are used by small mammals and insects for shelter. Within a year or two a wildlife community can form in and around a log pile.

Installation of bird nesting boxes and bat roost boxes should be encouraged within the gardens.

Sowing hardy annuals in fence and wall lines

The use of high nectar and pollen annual flowers should be encouraged along the wall and railing edges of the communal grass areas, where these adjoin to estate common areas such as footpaths. These floriferous strips would create invaluable food sources and movement corridors for wildlife. They will also reduce the maintenance tasks and herbicide use to keep these strips presentable during the growing season whilst simultaneously increasing their aesthetic value.

To create these floral features, the ground should be prepared as a hardy annual seedbed and a proprietary seed mix should be broadcast sown and raked in. Seeds can be protected from birds by a horticultural fleece until after germination.

In some cases, it is prudent to trial these hardy annual strips in one area before rolling out to the wider estate. In this way, both the performance of the strips and residents' reaction to them, can be evaluated.

Information and signage

Sometimes it is useful to erect temporary signage to inform garden users of changes to management practices. These notices can also be used to inform users of the environmental benefits of the new practices as well as allaying any fears around perceived neglect of the gardens.

C – Plants for pollinators

Spring (March - May)

Ajuga reptans

Armeria juniperifolia

Berberis darwinii

Berberis thunbergii

Bergenia species

Ceanothus species

Chaenomeles species

Cornus mas

Crataegus monogyna

Crocus species (Spring flowering types)

Erysimum species

Euphorbia amygdaloides

Euphorbia characias

Geranium species

Geum rivale

Hebe species (Spring flowering types)

Helleborus species (Spring flowering

types)

Lamium maculatum

Lunaria annua

Mahonia species (Spring flowering

types)

Malus domestica

Malus hupehensis

Muscari armeniacum

Ornithogalum umbellatum

Primula veris

Primula vulgaris

Prunus laurocerasus

Pulmonaria species

Ribes sanguineum

Skimmia japonica

Smyrnium olusatrum

Stachyurus chinensis

Stachyurus praecox

Vaccinium corymbosum

Summer (June - August)

Achillea species Actaea japonica

Agastache species

Ageratum houstonianum

Alcea rosea Allium species

Alstroemeria species Angelica archangelica

Angelica gigas

Angelica sylvestris

Antirrhinum majus Aquilegia species

Armeria maritima

Astrantia major Borago officinalis

Brachyglottis (Dunedin Group)

`Sunshine'

Buddleja davidii Buddleja globosa

Buphthalmum salicifolium

Calamintha nepeta Calendula officinalis

Callicarpa bodinieri var. giraldii

Campanula glomerata Campanula latifolia Campanula persicifolia

Campsis radicans

Caryopteris × clandonensis

Centranthus ruber

Cirsium rivulare 'Atropurpureum'

Clematis vitalba Cornus alba Dahlia species

Dianthus barbatus
Digitalis species

Echinacea purpurea

Echinops species
Echium vulgare

Elaeagnus angustifolia

Erigeron species
Escallonia species

Eupatorium maculatum

Foeniculum vulgare Fuchsia species

Gaura lindheimeri Helenium species

Hydrangea anomala subsp. petiolaris

Jasminum officinale Lavandula angustifolia

Lavatera olbia

Leucanthemum vulgare Limnanthes douglasii

Linaria purpurea

Lonicera periclymenum

Malva alcea Monarda didyma Nicotiana alata

Nicotiana langsdorffii

Nicotiana sylvestris

Origanum vulgare Penstemon species

Perovskia atriplicifolia

Persicaria amplexicaulis

Persicaria bistorta

Phlomis species

Phlox paniculata

Polemonium caeruleum

Pyracantha species

Rosmarinus officinalis

Rudbeckia species

Salvia species

Solidago species

Stachys byzantina

Tanacetum vulgare

Thymus species

Verbena bonariensis

Verbena rigida

Veronicastrum virginicum

Viburnum opulus Weigela florida Zinnia elegans

Autumn (September - October)

Aconitum carmichaelii

Actaea simplex

Anemone hupehensis

Anemone × hybrida

Ceratostigma plumbaginoides

Chrysanthemum species & hybrids

Clematis heracleifolia

Colchicum species

Crocus species (Autumn flowering types)

Dahlia species & hybrids

Elaeagnus pungens

Elaeagnus × submacrophylla

Fatsia japonica

Hedera colchica

Hedera helix

Leucanthemella serotina

Machaeranthera tanacetifolia

Symphyotrichum species and hybrids

Winter (November - February)

Clematis cirrhosa

Crocus species

Eranthis hyemalis

× Fatshedera lizei

Galanthus nivalis

Helleborus species and hybrids (Winter flowering types)

Lonicera × purpusii

Mahonia species (Winter flowering types)

Sarcococca confusa

Sarcococca hookeriana

Viburnum tinus

D - Hardy Annual Seed Mixes

Virgina Stocks mixed

Larkspur mixed

Echium

Cornflower mixed

Cosmos mixed

California Poppy

Glysophilia

Candytuft

Chrysanthemum mixed

Mignonette

Calendula

Alyssum

Glysophilia

Cornflower

California Poppy

Godetia

Coreopsis tinctoria mixed

Virginia Stocks mixed

Linum mixed

Nigella

Tagetes patula

Calendula

Adonis aestivalis